

THE ALDERMAN'S FUNERAL.

BY ROBERT SOUTHEY.

Stranger. Whom are they ushering from the world, with all
This pageantry and long parade of death?

Townsmen. A long parade, indeed, sir; and yet here
You see but half; round yonder bend it reaches
A furlong farther, carriage behind carriage.

Stranger. It is but a mournful sight, and yet the pomp
Tempt me to stand a gazer.

Townsmen. Yonder schoolboy,
Who plays the treant, says, the proclamation
Of peace was nothing to the show; and even
The chairing of the members at election
Would not have been a finer sight than this,
Only that red and green are prettier colours
Than all this mourning. There, sir, you behold
One of the red-gown'd worthies of the city,
The envy and the boast of our exchange.
Ay, who was worth, last week, a good half million,
Screwed down in yonder hearse.

Stranger. Then he was born
Under a lucky planet, who to-day
Puts mourning on for his inheritance.

Townsmen. When I first heard his death, that very wish
Leap'd to my lips; but now the closing scene
Of the comedy hath waken'd wiser thoughts;
And I bless God, that when I go to the grave,
There will not be the weight of wealth like his
To sink me down.

Stranger. The camel and the needle—
Is that, then, in your mind?

Townsmen. Even so. The text
Is gospel wisdom. I would ride the camel—
Yea, leap him flying, through the needle's eye.
As easily as such a pumper'd soul
Could pass the narrow gate.

Stranger. Your pardon, sir,
But sure this lack of Christian charity
Looks not like Christian truth.

Townsmen. Your pardon, too, sir,
If with this text before me, I should feel
In the preaching mood! But for these barren fig-trees,
With all their flourish and their leafiness,
We have been told their destiny and use,
When the axe is laid unto the root, and they
Cumber the earth no longer.

Stranger. Was his wealth
Stored fraudfully, the spoil of orphans wronged
And widows who had none to plead their right?

Townsmen. All honest, open, honourable gains,
Fair legal interest, bonds and mortgages,
Ships to the east and west.

Stranger. Why judge you, then,
So hardly of the dead?

Townsmen. For what he left
Undone;—for sins not one of which is mention'd
In the ten commandments. He, I warrant him,
Believed no other gods than those of the creed:
Bowed to no idols—but his money-bags;
Swore no false oaths, except at the custom-house:
Kept the sabbath idle: built a monument
To honour his dead father: did no murder;
Never pick'd pockets; never bore false witness;
And never with that all-commanding wealth,
Coveted his neighbour's house, nor ox, nor ass.

Stranger. You know him, then, it seems.

Townsmen. As all men know
The virtues of your hundred-thousanders;
They never hide their lights beneath a bushel.

Stranger. Nay, nay, uncharitable sir! far often
Doth bounty like a streamlet flow unseen,
Fresh'ning and giving life along its source.

Townsmen. We track the streamlet by the brighter green
And livelier growth it gives; but as for this—
The rains of heaven engender'd nothing in it
But slime and foul corruption.

Stranger. Yet even these
Are reservoirs, whose public charity
Still keeps her channels full.

Townsmen. Now, sir, you touch
Upon the point. This man of half a million
Had all these public virtues which you praise;
But the poor man rung never at his door;
And the old beggar at the public gate,
Who, all the summer long, stands hat in hand,
He knew how vain it was to lift an eye
To that hard face. Yet he was always found

Among your ten, and twenty pound subscribers,
Your benefactors in the newspapers.
His alms were money put to interest
In the other world, donations to keep open
A running-charity account with heaven:
Retaining fees against the last assizes,
When, for the trusted talents, strict account
Shall be required from all, and the old arch lawyer
Plead his own cause as plaintiff.

Stranger. I must needs
Believe you, sir; these are your witnesses,
These mourners here, who from their carriages
Gape at the gaping ground. A good March wind
Were to be prayed for now, to lend their eyes
Some decent rheum. The very hireling mute
Bears not a face blanker of all emotion
Than the old servant of the family!
How can this man have lived, that thus his death
Cost not the soiling of one white handkerchief!

Townsmen. Who should lament for him, sir, in whose heart
Love had no place, nor natural charity!
The parlour spaniel, when she heard his step,
Rose slowly from the hearth, and stole aside
With creeping pace; she never raised her eyes
To woo kind words from him, nor laid her head
Upraised upon his knee, with fondling whine.
How could it be but thus! Arithmetic
Was the sole science he was ever taught.
The multiplication-table was his creed,
His paternoster and his decalogue.
When yet he was a boy, and should have breathed
The open air and sunshine of the fields,
To give his blood its natural spring and play,
He in a close and dusty counting-house,
Smoke-dried, and seared, and shrivelled up his heart.
So, from the way in which he was train'd up,
His feet departed not; he toil'd and toil'd,
Poor muckworm! through his threescore years and ten,
And when the earth shall now be shovelled on him,
If that which served him for a soul were still
Within its husk, 'twould still be dirt to dirt.

Stranger. Yet your next newspapers will blazon him
For industry and honourable wealth
A bright example.

Townsmen. Even half a million
Gets him no other praise. But come this way
Some twelvemonths hence, and you will find his virtues
Trimly set forth in lapidary lines,
Faith with her torch beside, and little Cupids
Dropping upon his urn their marble tears.

ADMIRAL SIR ISAAC COFFIN.

There were some things about this personage so much out of the
common course as not to allow of letting him go down to his
grave without a volley. Our readers all know that the Admiral
was a Bostonian. He loved to speak of the times when he was
"a dirty faced little rascal licking molasses with the boys on Long
wharf." This was before the Revolution.

Isaac was not destined, however, to always licking molasses. He
went regularly and rigorously, we believe, through all the ordinary
grades in the British Navy, till he reached the fourth step from the
summit of a list which is always long enough to discourage the hard-
est aspirant. During this long service he must have lived over
strange scenes. At one time, the Duke of Clarence was under him,
as midshipman, we believe. William got greatly attached to his
commander too, who, though "rude in speech" sometimes, had
yet, as the Indians say, a soft heart, and a large one. As Duke
and King, the middy afterwards did all he could for Coffin's pro-
motion, nor was he content to relinquish his society after coming
to the throne. It is about three years since William, inviting him
to dine, was informed by the Admiral, that the gout, his great
enemy, had wholly disabled him: he was obliged to be trundled
about in an easy chair. "Well, then, come with your easy
chair," was the royal sailor's response to his old comrade; and
go with his easy chair he did. He had long before this, received a
splendid medal on some occasion from his Sovereign's hand. This
he carried with him on land and sea, and he had it when he was
cast adrift on the Atlantic ten years ago or more, by the burn-
ing of the "Boston."

Our neighbour Osgood, the artist, was on board the Boston. He
describes the fire (lightning in a cotton ship) and the whole
scene, as terrific. The sea ran mountains high, and it seemed
doubtful if a boat could live, yet the Admiral never blanched. He
was disabled, and his companions were very anxious to save him.
Mr. O. says that as several were about to go below for that pur-
pose, they encountered the veteran at the head of the cabin stairs.
He, having heard of the danger, had ascended thus far, by the
assistance of his servant, and with great and painful exertion. A
mattress was laid in the whale boat, which was on the quarter. On

this he was placed, with his servant by his side, while a man was
stationed at each tackle. He at the bow seemed well aware of
the critical situation in which they were placed; but the man at
the stern took out his knife, and when the wave rose to the boat,
cut the tackle, so that when the latter rose again, the other
end being fast, the boat was half filled with water, and the sailor
at the stern thrown into the deep. By this time the bow-tackle
was unhooked, the boat cleared from the side, and the old tar
taken, half-drowned, from the sea, to receive a pretty severe re-
primand from the fearless man whom he had so unintentionally
immersed in a cool bath.

Thus the scene went on till all were afloat, in boats, three hun-
dred miles from land. One soon died of exhaustion. The rest
were on allowance of a third of a biscuit and a gill of water a day.
The Admiral not only shared all, but he alone kept up the life of
the company, giving them every encouragement, and wind-
ing up occasionally with one of his best songs. Fortunately, this
lasted but a night and day. The passengers got into this port not
long after. The Admiral went to the Tremont again, just as if all
was not lost. Moreover, he sat to the artist, and paid him double
price. He also gave Capt. Mackay, who rescued the company, a
douceur of five hundred dollars and a splendid gold watch.

This is a long story, but it shows the whole man. He was a
sailor of the old school. Smollet would have gloried in him, but
he was too good for Smollet. His impulses were noble, and he
yielded to them. He once commanded a ship when a man was
knocked overboard in a gale; his comrades hesitated, but not
Coffin; in five minutes he had the fellow on deck again, heels
over head. "Ah, you blackguard," he cried, as he shook the
water out of his trousers. "You've cost me a new hat!" At
another time he had a fire suddenly discovered below, which
proved to be close to the magazine, and even the old sailors were
so frightened that 60 of them swam ashore. The Admiral, how-
ever, led on the rest to the rescue, and the fire was with great
exertions extinguished. As to liberality his character is well
known. We see that he has lately been publicly thanked as a
leading benefactor of the "Naval School." Everybody knows
that the Coffin School, consisting wholly of persons of that family,
has long been flourishing by his beneficence, at Nantucket, where
there are said to be, at least, 500 of the name.—*Bos. Trans.*

AN "AFFAIR" BETWEEN A WHALING CAPTAIN
AND A MILITARY OFFICER.

Captain Zachariah Lovett, after having performed several whal-
ing voyages to the Pacific, found himself in command of a small
brig belonging to New York on a voyage to Demerara.

While his little brig *Cinderella* lay at anchor in Demerara River,
Captain Lovett one afternoon entered a Coffee House, where he
met with a friend—and they amused themselves by knocking the
balls about in the billiard room. Soon after, and before the
game was half finished—some military officers entered, one of
whom, Capt. Bigbee, stepped up to Capt. Lovett, who was array-
ed in a very plain, not to say ordinary costume, and with a bully-
ing air demanded the table, as himself and brother officers wished
to play a match.

Warm words followed, which ended with Lovett knocking the
military officer down.

His brother officers, who were with him, had the good sense
to see that Bigbee was to blame—and although they looked rather
black at the Yankees they forbore to molest them further—but
assisted the stunned bully to another room, where, by the help of
some restoratives, he soon recovered his senses. His rage and
mortification at the result of the rencontre, knew no bounds, and
with many a bitter oath he declared he would have satisfaction.

Before Captain Lovett left the coffee house, a billet was handed
him by Lieutenant James, which proved to be a challenge from
Captain Bigbee, in which it was insisted that arrangements should
be made for an early meeting, that he might have an opportunity
to wash off the affront he had received, in Captain Lovett's heart's
blood.

Captain Lovett smiled when he saw such manifestations of
Christian spirit. 'Tell Capt. Bigbee,' said he, 'that I will not
balk him. He shall have the opportunity he so earnestly seeks.
Although not a fighting man, I am familiar with the duel laws—
and if he will be to-morrow morning on the back of the green
Canal, near the South Quay, rather a secluded spot, he shall have
satisfaction to his heart's content.'

Capt. Lovett went on board the *Cinderella* soon after—and
ordered his mate, Mr. Starbuck, also a veteran whale hunter, to
select the two best harpoons, have them nicely ground and fitted
—as an opportunity might offer on the morrow, of striking a por-
poise. Mr. Starbuck obeyed his superior officer with alacrity,
although he wondered not a little why Captain Lovett expected to
find porpoises in Demerara river.

The next morning, as soon as all hands were called, Captain
Lovett ordered the boat to be manned, and requested Mr. Starbuck
to take the two harpoons, to each of which some eight or ten
fathoms of rattling stuff were attached, and accompany him on
shore. In a few moments the boat reached the South Quay
where Captain Lovett was met by several of his countrymen, who