

sauros he incontinently "fell in love"—to use his mother's expression, and the anxious matron took advantage of the passion to indoctrinate him with a knowledge of the alphabet. A black-lettered Bible next lent its attractions, and from its antique typography the stripling soon learned to read. Thus "coming events cast their shadows before!"

When we next get a glimpse of Thomas, it is as a pupil of Colston's Charity-school, a status which he attained during the currency of his eighth summer. From the following particulars it will be seen that a more unpropitious nursery for a bantling of the poetic Muse, than the academy in question, could not well be imagined:—

"This seminary (says Jeremiah Milles, Dean of Exeter, and one of Chatterton's commentators) founded by Edward Colston, Esq., is situate at St. Augustine's Back in Bristol, and is much upon the same plan with Christ's Hospital in London—the only plan, perhaps, on which a charity-school can be generally useful—the boys being boarded in the house, and taught reading, writing and arithmetic. The rules of the institution are strict. The school hours in summer are from seven o'clock till twelve in the morning, and from one till five in the afternoon; and in winter from eight to twelve, and from one to four. The boys are obliged to be in bed every night in the year at eight o'clock, and are never permitted to be absent from school, except on Saturday's and saints' days, and then only from between one and two in the afternoon, till between seven and eight in the evening."

It is not strange that under such a "wet-blanket" system, Chatterton, during the first two years of his residence at Colston's school, did not manifest any inklings of idealism. One little incident, however, detailed by his sister, demonstrates that even then, he felt the incipient heavings of the indwelling afflatus.

When very young, a manufacturer promised to make Mrs. Chatterton's children a present of some earthen ware. On asking the boy what device he would have drawn upon his—"Paint me (said he) an angel, with wings, and a trumpet, to trumpet my name over the world!"

About his tenth year Thomas acquired a taste for reading, and voraciously did he feed his new appetite. Every trifle which he could scrape together was expended in a neighbouring circulating library, and ere his twelfth year he had written a catalogue of the books he had perused, amounting to the number of seventy. This document has not been preserved, but his sister states that the works mainly consisted of divinity and history.

Chatterton began to write and read contemporaneously. Amongst his earliest productions was "A Hymn for Christmas day," of which the subjoined stanzas are a specimen;—

"How shall we celebrate the day,  
When God appeared in mortal clay,  
The mark of worldly scorn;  
When the Archangel's heavenly lays,  
Attempted the Redeemer's praise,  
And hail'd Salvation's morn!"

"A humble form the Godhead wore,  
The pains of poverty he bore,  
To gaudy pomp unknown:  
Though in a human walk he trod  
Still was the man Almighty God  
In glory all his own.

"Despis'd, oppress'd the Godhead bears,  
The torments of this vale of tears;  
Nor bid his vengeance rise;  
He saw the creatures he had made,  
Reville his power, his peace invade;  
He saw with mercy's eyes."

These lines were composed when the author had barely passed over the threshold of his eleventh year. We question much whether the most precocious of our anthologists, ever, under similar circumstances, produced an ode of equal dignity, and cognate correctness of versification.

On the 1st of July, 1767, Chatterton left the charity-school, and, so far, as amenity of sphere was concerned, passed from the frying-pan into the fire. He was bound "thrall" or apprentice to one John Lambert, Attorney of Bristol, for seven dreary years, to learn the art and mystery of a scrivener! Alas! poor poet!

Anent the aforesaid Lambert we have been unable to expiscate any note worthy memorabilia. Upon the whole he does not appear