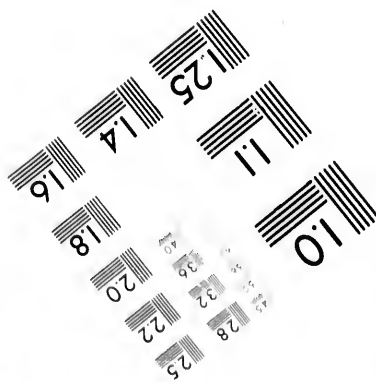
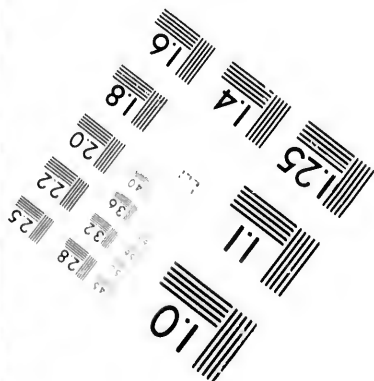
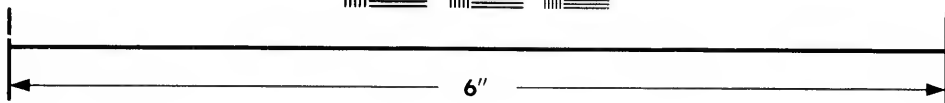
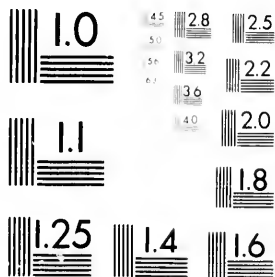


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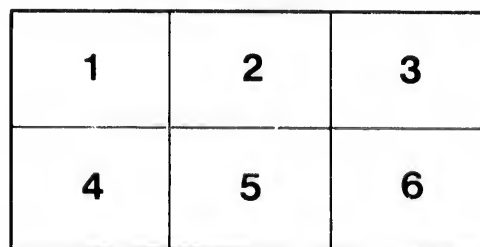
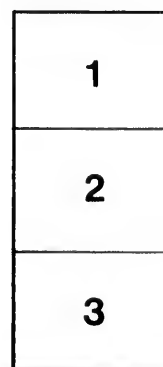
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Alexander D.

*EPITAPHS*  
OR  
*CHURCH-YARD*  
*GLEANINGS.*

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1484-1811



*Henry J. Morgan*

**GLEANINGS**

1895

*from the*

T

**CHURCH-YARD**

A SELECTION  
OF  
OLD INSCRIPTIONS.

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Arranged  
*with*  
Brief Comments  
*by*  
A. D. FORDYCE  
Fergus Ontario

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1880.



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# CHURCH-YARD

## GLEANINGS.

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A word or two first, about the *Church-yard*, and the *Gleanings*, may not be out of place. The various designations given to these quiet resting-places of those who once lived and moved on earth, and had joys and sorrows, duties and cares, such as our own, are exceedingly suggestive. To commence with the most common.

*Church-yard*, from the Greek word KURIOS 'the Lord' meaning the enclosure, round and in a sense guarding the 'House of God'; *Burying-ground*, derived from the German, BIRGEN 'to hide,' conveying the idea of a hiding place; and *Cemetery*, from the Greek word KOIMAO 'to sleep,' literally a sleeping chamber. Do not these all point one way? The Almighty and Everlasting God has a possession still, in those who are laid aside for a time. Will not all hear the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God, when they that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt? Surely then the designations given to their resting places, are appropriate.

The term *God's Acre*, borrowed from the German, is of much the same import as *Church-yard*. The extent of the enclosure is apparently defined, but the word *acre* may be used notwithstanding, in a loose sense, implying rather the fact of its being set apart for God's use, than of its being necessarily limited or restricted in size. The main idea is precisely the same with *Church-yard*.

The Lord Jesus not only knoweth them that are *His* peculiarly, and in due time will bring them to light, but kindred and friends mark with interest, the spot where dear ones have been laid ; and it has been their practice, not only to revisit it from time to time, but also to record there, as durably as may be, various particulars respecting those who have gone before, and who, by a figure, are represented in some cases, as encouraging, counselling, or warning survivors ; bidding them prepare to meet their God—warning them that the time for preparation is short and uncertain—and sometimes, holding out the prospect of the higher than worldly enjoyment they have themselves already partially entered on. Nay, how often in times when the Roman-Catholic Faith was the prevalent one in Britain, were the departed represented, as addressing on their own behalf, those yet engaged in the active pursuits of life, in the words of entreaty—

“For Jesus’ sake, pray for me !

*I may not pray, now pray ye*”—or thus ;

“Of your charity, pray for the soul of (so and so,)” or seeking to secure the good offices of canonized saints, by the earnest appeal, “*Orate pro nobis!*” (Pray for us.)

Powerless as we may be, to help such as have passed the bourne whence no traveller returns,—there is an instinctive desire felt alike by those who depart, to be remembered by those who have loved them on earth, and who remain a while behind,—and by those who thus remain, to remember in thought, word and act, those who have been taken away from them. Hence, Inscriptions or Epitaphs have always been found, commemorative

of the departed ; not always conceived we may think, in the best style, not always free from the blemish of stilted language and hyperbole ; not invariably calculated to impress us with the absolute truthfulness of what is said, nor always devoid of sentiments in which we cannot altogether concur—where the future condition of the departed is predicated, on what we must regard as insufficient grounds ; but in very many cases touchingly beautiful, or eloquently and yet simply expressive of the virtues which are ascribed to the individual.

In the older Inscriptions, (with which this selection has chiefly to do,) amusement may be occasioned by very rapid and abrupt transitions owing to the discovery of a loftier flight having been taken than could be kept up. In the Church-yard of Montrose there is an instance of this, the writer candidly admitting his failure in these words—  
 “To write eulogies on the dead I find is not my strain ;”  
 and concluding with the thought, suggested perhaps by the precept of the wise man, “Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man ;”—

“If men are honest, and fear God,  
 They’re free from future pain.”

If we cannot suppress a smile at the extravagant language that is sometimes used, we should not perhaps, lay that to the account of the departed, who quite probably might have disclaimed the terms employed with a view to their honor ; nor indeed, need we visit the writer of such lines as we sometimes find, with the charge of abject sycophancy, or assert that such strains cannot be regarded in any other light than that of utter insincerity—

rather let us charitably hope, that there was some good ground for encomiums which appear to us preposterously overstrained ;—and conceive, that excellences which were real and substantial, loomed up in extraordinary beauty before the writer, as he strove adequately to portray departed worth. That there was no unworthy use made of the Tomb-stone or Monumental Tablet it would be rash to allege—no fulsome adulation of the living by untruthful descriptions of the dead : had there not been, such an Inscription as the following could not have had any place. All we plead for is, that with extravagancy of language, and modes of thought and expression with which we are not now familiar, there may not have been all that insincerity some might be apt to imagine. The existence of the practice is evidently taken for granted in the Epitaph referred to, and the dread of its being employed in his own case, was as evidently real on the part of the subject of that Epitaph. It is to be found at Mold in Flintshire, and is without doubt, characteristic.

“ *William Wynne* of Tower, *D. D* ; sometime Rector of Llanvechan, died 3d Mar. 1776 aged 77.

“In conformity to an antient usage, from a proper regard to decency, and a concern for the health of his fellow-creatures, he was moved to give directions for being buried in the adjoining Church-yard and not in the Church : and as he scorned flattering of others while living, he has taken care to prevent being flattered himself when dead, by causing this small memorial to be set up in his lifetime.

*God be merciful to me a sinner !”*

There are some features which are common to a large number of old Tombstones :—the ‘*Memento Mori*’ (Remember death !)—the skull and cross-bones—the scythe and hour-glass, all directing attention to the rapid approach of the grim destroyer—the certainty of his coming, and the entire uncertainty as to when he may come. The following frequently recurring apothegms strikingly press these truths on all, but chiefly on the thoughtless. ‘*Mors certa, dies incerta*’ ; or ‘*Mors patet, hora latet*’—both expressing the thought that death is sure and near, altho’, how soon he may be with us, or how near he may be to us, not the wisest of men can ever determine. In like manner the pointed words ‘*Hodie mihi, cras tibi*’, remind the reader that his own turn may be the very next. Some of these terse remarks go a little further, and aim at giving brief religious instruction ; as, for example :—

“Life is uncertain, Death is sure :

Sin is the wound, Christ is the cure ;”

but, not only to such as enter the Burying-ground and peruse its Inscriptions, are their lessons conveyed ; over the Entry to the Gray-Friars’ Church-Yard Edinburgh, were these lines, given by Monteith in his Collection :—

“Remember man, as thou goes by,

As thou art now, so once was I ;

As I am now, so shalt thou be :

Remember man, that thou must die.”

While we may be disposed to think that the repulsive features of death are sometimes made unnecessarily prominent,—the grand theme of the Early Christians (the Resurrection,) is by no means kept wholly out of sight.

“In hope of a blessed immortality,”—“In hope of a glorious resurrection,”—“Resurgam” (I shall rise again,) and so on, indicate this ; while we frequently find representations of the Archangelic summons given on this or that humble Tombstone, or highly ornamented Tablet. The words “Mors janua vitæ” (Death is the gate of life) are by no means uncommon : and, on the Tombstone of *John Hoare* Rector of Hayes in Kent, who died on the 11th of Feb. 1584, the same thought is put in these terms.

“Who faine would lyve,  
He must not feare to dye ;  
Death is the waie  
That leades to lief and glorious Joies,  
That tryumphes over Claie.  
Come poor, bewaile this want ; Come friend  
Lament and saie with me,  
This man did dye to lyve, and lyves  
Though dead his body be.”

My chief authorities for the selections here given, are Britton and Brayley's *Beauties of England and Wales*, and ‘*A Theater of Mortality* by R. Monteith M.A. 1704, re-printed at Glasgow, 1834.’ The latter Collection of Epitaphs contains one which I am tempted to include, altho’ it can scarcely be called a Church-Yard Gleaning, as, in all probability it never appeared on Monumental Stone ; but the gentle, harmless satire by which it is pervaded, seems to commend it, as a fitting rebuke to such as “are not afraid to speak evil of dignities,” regardless of the peculiar difficulties inseparable from the position they occupy, and the forbearance reasonably due them.

A glance will shew that *King James VI* of Scotland  
and *I* of England, is the subject of the Epitaph.

“All who have eyes, awake and weep ;  
For He whose waking wrought our sleep,  
Is fall’n asleep himself, and never  
Shall wake again, till wak’d for ever :  
Death’s iron-hand hath clos’d those eyes,  
Which were at once three kingdoms’ spies ;  
Both to foresee and to prevent  
Dangers, as soon as they were meant.  
That head, whose working brain alone  
Wrought all men’s quiet but his own,  
Now lies at rest. O let him have  
The peace he lent us, in his grave.  
If that no Naboth, all his reign,  
Was for his fruitful vineyard, slain ;  
If no Uriah lost his life,  
Because he had too fair a wife ;  
Then let no Shimei’s curses wound  
His honour, or profane this ground.  
Let no black-mouth’d, nor rank-breath’d cur  
Peaceful JAMES his ashes stir.  
Princes are Gods ; O do not then  
Rake in their graves, to prove them men.  
For two and twenty years long care ;  
For his providing such an heir,  
Who, to the peace we had before,  
May add twice two-and-twenty more ;  
For his day’s travels and night-watches ;  
For his craz’d sleep stol’n by snatches ;

For two fair kingdoms joined in one,  
 For all he did, or meant t'have done ;  
 Do this for him, write on his dust,  
 James the peaceful and the just."

The two following singular Epitaphs—the first on the Family of *Pollexfen*, said to be found where their remains are laid, in a vault under their dwelling, adjoining the Church of St Stephen Walworth, London ; the other, on the *Porterfields* of Porterfield, at Kilmalcolm Scotland, of date 1650, I cannot pretend satisfactorily to explain. The interpretation hazarded on each, may suffice, till a more likely one can be suggested. The one is—

"Who lies here?—Whie, don't 'e ken—

The Family of *Pollexfen*

Who, bee they living, or bee they dead,  
 Like theirre own house over theirre head ;  
 That, whene'er theirre Saviour comme,  
 They allwaies may bee found at hommè."

Incongruous to say the least, as this language seems, might it not be just the writer's clumsily expressed way of intimating his conviction, that those who were laid to rest under the Pollexfen roof, had not put off till a dying hour, preparation for welcoming the summons, "The Master hath come and calleth for thee?"—that the answer "Not at home," given in some circles to unwelcome visitors, or to visitors at an inconvenient season, had found no place in the wiser arrangements of this household, in respect of the grand concerns of a future state.

The other Inscription alluded to as equally strange, is—



“Bureit, heir lyis, that Deth defyis,  
 Of *Porterfield's* the Race  
 Quho be the Spirit, to Christ unite,  
 Are heirs of gloir throu grace.”

Setting aside as inconceivable the idea that the writer's notion was that of canonizing a whole family, or generation ; or in other words, claiming for them as a whole, an undoubted interest in the Heavenly Inheritance ; is it not possible that the following paraphrase, might come pretty near the meaning intended to be conveyed?—

“Here lie buried, the Family of Porterfield. If, through grace, they (any, or all,) were united to Christ, and so, became ‘heirs of glory ;’ such may now triumphantly exclaim “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? — thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The stated avocations of individuals during life, frequently suggested to those who composed their Epitaphs, apt analogies for readily pointing the moral they meant to convey, or for illustrating the character they wished to honor. From the Head-stone placed to mark the resting place of his ‘battered hulk’ accordingly, the old sailor is made in more Church-Yards than one, to address the reader in these words, sometimes slightly varied :—

“Tho’ Boreas’ blasts and Neptune’s waves  
 Have tossed me to and fro ;  
 In spite of both, by God’s decree  
 I harbour here below :  
 Where, at an anchor I do lie,  
 With many of our fleet,

And once again we must set sail,  
Our Admiral *Christ* to meet."

The peculiar phraseology incident to the profession, formed a convenient medium for illustrating truth, which the departed one is supposed to press on others, many of whom might be unconcerned about the future.

On a Monument in Carisbrook Church in the Isle of Wight, one of these veterans, Captain *William Keeling* 'Groom of the Chamber to James the First, and General for the Hon. East India Adventurers,' who died in 1619, is represented sitting on the deck of his vessel—a crown of glory suspended over his head, with the words *fides, spes, verbum Dei*, (Faith, Hope, God's Word,) written on the sail, anchor and compass, and these lines :

"Fortie and two years in this vessel fraile  
On the rough seas of life did *Keeling* sail ;  
A merchant fortunate, a captain bould ;  
A courtier gracious, yet, alas ! not old.  
Such wealth, experience, honour and high praise  
Few winne in twice soe manie years or daies ;  
But, what the world admired, he deemed but drosse  
For Christ,—without Christ, all his gains but losse ;  
For Him and His dear love, with merrie cheere  
To the Holy Land his last course he did steere ;  
*Faith* served for sails ; the *Sacred Word*, for card ;  
*Hope* was his anchor, *Glory* his reward ;  
And thus with gales of grace, with happy venter  
Thro' Straits of *Death*, *Heaven's* Harbor he did enter."  
Much to the same effect are the lines in Latin, faithfully

enough rendered, for the benefit of the general reader, in Monteith's volume: and said to be found on the Monument of *Robert Sterlin*, 'skipper and merchant' Dundee.

"Per freta dum mundi instabilis malefida ferebar,  
 Anchora spes; *verbum* nautica pyxis erat;  
*Sacra fides*, baculus; distendens Carbasa ventus,  
*Pneuma Hagion*; solus tu mihi *Christe* polus:  
 Nunc cœlum tuti statio super æthera portus,  
 Et rerum incertas rideo sperno vices."

The translation referred to, is in these words:—

"The world's tempestuous sea while I did plow,  
 My anchor, *hope*; the *word* my compass too;  
*Blest Faith* my helm; the wind, to fill my sails,  
 The *Holy Spirit* with its blessed gales;  
 North-Star, thou *Christ* alone; I steered to thee,  
 Thou still was in mine heart, and in mine eye,  
 In *Heaven* above, my safest port, whence I  
 Despise and scorn all earth's uncertainty."

The craft of the Architect, when his skill has ceased to be of use to his fellows, is also laid hold of, to commend to them that mansion which is more durable in its character, than the most substantial one they could erect;  
 "The house eternal built by God, to lodge the holy mind, when once those prison walls have fallen, by which 'tis now confined:"—as the old Scotch Paraphrase has it.

At Sarnsfield in Herefordshire, *John Abel* who died in 1694 at the age of 97, has the characteristic Epitaph—

"This craggy stone a covering is  
 For an Architector's bed,

That lofty buildings raised high,  
 But now lies low his head ;  
 His line and rule so death concludes,  
 Are locked up in store ;  
 Build they who list, or they who wist,  
 For he can build no more.

His house of clay could hold no longer :  
 May Heaven's joy build him a stronger."

Even those whose pursuits were mainly of a literary character, had the most made of such occupations after they were gone, for the benefit of succeeding generations. A Prebendary of Westminster Abbey who died 28 Dec. 1621, has the following Inscription on his Tombstone :

"With diligence and truth most exemplary  
 Did *William Lawrence* serve a Prebendary ;  
 And for his pains, now past, before not lost,  
 Gain'd this remembrance at his Master's cost.  
 Oh ! read these lines again ! you seldom find  
 A servant faithful, and a master kind—  
 Short-hand he wrote, his flower in prime did fade :  
 And hasty death short-hand of him hath made.  
 Well couth he numbers, and well measur'd land ;  
 Thus doth he now that ground whereon you stand,  
 Wherein he lies so geometrical :  
 Art maketh some, but this will nature, all."

On *Alexander Duncan's* Monument in the Church-Yard of Montrose, the varied length of human life is referred to in a singular way. One of those interred there, (*And. Duncan*, who died in 1667) was 99 yrs 8 mo. old.

"As ev'ry thing a center hath, to which it doth incline,  
 So all men, being made of earth, to earth return in time,  
 These who do here from labours rest,  
 More lines stretch from a center,  
 Some short, some long, as he thought best.  
 Who is the Divine painter."

At Boughton-Aluph in Kent, is this Inscription—  
 "Sacred to the memory of *Ameye* wife of *Josias Clarke*  
 of Essex Gent. and daughter to *Robert Moyle* Esq. of  
 Buckwell, aged 31, A.D. 1631."

"To the tender trust  
 Of this sad earth,  
 Which gave it birth,  
 We recommend this sacred dust:  
 The precious oyntment of her name,  
 That had no taint, that had no foil,  
 We keep to oyle  
 The wings of fame.  
 The highest storie  
 Of her rare soul  
 The heavens enroll  
 In sheets of glory.  
 If perfect good did e'er reside  
 In common flesh and blood,  
 In her it lived, in her it dyed.  
 Reader, 'tis thought our universal  
 Mother  
 Will hardly ope her womb for  
 Such another."

Little comment is needed on the Epitaphs immediately following (six in number.) Some of them like the last seem to be of the rather extravagant class : others present a strange medley of grotesque imagery and simple natural description. All, we may think, would have been a good deal more effective, with less attempt at display.

In the 'Dissenters' Burial-Place, near Bunhill Fields, London,' were these lines on *Samuel Okey*, who was born 11th December 1706, and died 4th July 1711.

"Here lyes for Adam's first Offence,  
Beauty, Wit, and Innocence :  
E'er such another turns to Earth,  
Time shall throw a Dart at Death."

In the Church-Yard of Dundee is a Monument, erected by Captain *Alexander Baxter* to the memory of his daughter *Katharine*, who died 20 Mar. 1632, aged 17.

"So falls by winter blasts, a virgin rose ;  
For blotless, spotless, blameless did she die :  
As many virtues nature did disclose  
In her, as oft in greatest age we see.

Ne're Jason glor'd more in the golden fleece,  
Than her brave sire, in bringing her from Greece."

Among the illustrious dead in Westminster Abbey, one of the Monuments commemorates a lady whose brief term of wedded life was passed in troublous times : viz.

"*Grace*, eldest daughter of *Sir Thomas Mauleverer* of Alerton Mauleverer in Yorkshire, Baronet ; born 1622, married to *Colonel Scott* a Member of the Honourable House of Commons in 1644, and died 24 Feb. 1645 ;—

“He that will give my *Grace*, but what is her’s,  
 Must say, her death has not  
 Made only her dear *Scott*,  
 But virtue, worth and sweetness—‘widowers.’

In a Burial Ground formerly quoted from, (Bunhill-Fields) a fond mother who modestly with-holds names, solicits sympathy in her affliction, in the following lines :

“Reader, pay thy Tribute here,  
 A Tear, a Rose, and then a Tear.  
 Grief may make thee Marble too ;  
 Yet weep on, as Marbles do.  
 Gently let the Dust be spread  
 O’er a gentle Virgin’s head :  
 Press’d by no rude Passer by,  
 Nothing but a Mother’s Eye.  
 Sacred Tomb, with whom we trust,  
 Precious Piles of lovely Dust ;  
 Keep them safely, sacred Tomb,  
 ’Till a Mother ask for Room.”

At Toddington in Bedfordshire, the following tribute is paid to the memory of *Maria Wentworth*, daughter of *Thomas, Earl of Cleveland*. She died in the month of January 1632, being no more than 18 years of age.

“And here the pretious duste is layde,  
 Whose pverile tempered clay was made  
 So fine that it the gvest betrayed.  
 Else the soyle grew so fast within,  
 It broke the outward shell of sinne,  
 And so was hatch’d a cherubinn.

In height it soar'd to God above,  
 In depth it did to knowledge move,  
 And spread in breadth, in general love.  
 Before, a pious dutye shin'd  
 To parents ; civrtesie behind :  
 On either side, an equal mind.  
 Good to the poore, to kindred deare,  
 To servants kind, to friendshipp cleare,  
 To nothing but herself, severe.  
 Soe, though a virgin, yet a bride  
 To everie grace, she justified  
 A chast poligamie, and dyed."

The Monument of *Sir Cope D' Oyley*, and his Lady,  
 at Hambledon, Buckingham-shire, has the Inscription :

(Under the figure of the Knight,)

"Ask not of me, 'Who's buried here?'  
 Goe ask the commons, ask the shire  
 Goe ask the church, they'll tell thee who,  
 As well as blubber'd eyes can do  
 Goe ask the heraulds, ask the poor,  
 Thine ears shall hear enough to ask no more.  
 Then if thine eyes bedew this sacred urne,  
 Each drop a pearl will turne,  
 T'adorne his tombe ; or if thou canst not vent,  
 Thou bring'st more marble to his monument."

(Under the figure of the Lady,)

"Would'st thou, reader, draw to life  
 The perfect copy of a wife,



Read on, and then redeem from shame  
 That lost, but honorable name.  
 This was once in spirit a Jael,  
 Rebecca in grace, in heart an Abigail,  
 In works a Dorcas, to the church a Hannah,  
 And to her spouse, Susanna ;  
 Prudently simple, providently wary :  
 To the world a Martha, and to heav'n a Mary."

It may be some relief, to look now at an Epitaph of a different kind. Its simplicity may commend it even to some whose actual ability to assist those in distress, is not less than that of the subject of the eulogium, but who have not yet realized the blessedness of acting on the assurance, "There is that scattereth and yet increaseth."

It is thus that *Mary Taylor* eldest daughter of *John Taylor* Esq. of Bifrons, who died in Mar. 1771 in her 91st year, has a life of quiet, active benevolence, pleasingly commemorated, at Patricksbourne in Kent:—

"Beneath this marble rests the mortal part  
 Of her who once delighted every heart :  
 How good she was and what her virtues were  
 Her guardian angels can alone declare :  
 The friend that now this little tribute pays  
 Too exquisitely feels to speak her praise  
 Yet would'st thou know the pious life she spent,  
 How many from her hands receiv'd content,  
 How many breasts, that poverty had chill'd,  
 Her charity with peace, with rapture fill'd  
 The Village nigh shall gratify thy ears,  
 And tell thee, some with words, but most with tears."

Let us turn now to another class of Epitaphs. In one case, the sad record of bereavement is given in childlike submission to the appointment of one who is too wise to err, and too good needlessly to wound :—in another case, what can alone sustain in bitterest trials, seems to be lost sight of : while in another, the destroying angel (as death is characterized in the case referred to,) is querulously addressed in the wail of remonstrance, following a sad account of repeated and heart-rending afflictions.

In the Church-Yard of Stevenston we find what goes in Monteith's Collection by the name of 'The childless mother's resolution' as it had appeared on the Monument of the *Rev. John Bell* minister there, in these words :—

“Strength to my tryal hath my Lord made eaven,  
Oh to bedew his feet that tears were given,  
His wil's my weel, in him my soule content,  
Nor greevs to goe, nor gieve what he hath lent.”

A sadder lamentation can scarcely be conceived, than is made by fond and sorrowing parents, at Ashbourne in Derbyshire, over the death of an only and darling child.

“To *Penelope*

only child of *Sir Brocke* and *Dame Susannah Boothby*,

Born April 11, 1785. Died March 13, 1791.

She was in form and intellect most exquisite.

The unfortunate parents ventured their all

On this frail bark, and the wreck was total.”

How very similar is the language employed by the pious and amiable Hervey, in his 'Meditations among the Tombs, when describing such another visitation :—

“Here lies the grief of a fond mother, and the blasted expectation of an indulgent father. The youth grew up like a well-watered plant, he shot deep, rose high, and bid fair for manhood. But, just as the cedar began to tower, and promised ere long to be the pride of the wood and the prince among the neighbouring trees, behold, the axe is laid unto the root, the fatal blow struck, and all its branching honours tumbled to the dust. And, did he fall alone? No—the hopes of his father that begat him, and the pleasing prospects of her that bare him, fell and were crushed together with him.” (*Meditations* 1746.)

Again, in the following Inscription, to be found in the Church-Yard of Montrose, the desolation of a household is thus mournfully, if not murmuringly bewailed.

“O cruel death, O furious death,  
What fury makes thee rage,  
Thus to cut down young pleasant plants,  
And pass by crooked age?”

The counterpart of this lamentation, (suggested by it we might almost think,) we derive from the same source, but accompanied by the recognition the other apparently overlooked, that trials may be ‘blessings in disguise’: and the sentiment of the poet might safely have been added—

“Kind, loving, is the hand that strikes,  
However keen the smart,  
If sorrow’s discipline can chase  
One evil from the heart.”

Hervey’s reflection is in some respects strikingly similar.

“One is tempted to exclaim against the king of terrors,

and call him capriciously cruel. He seems, by beginning at the wrong end of the register, to have inverted the laws of nature. Passing over the couch of decrepit age, he has nipped infancy in its bud, blasted youth in its bloom, and has torn up manhood in its full maturity. Terrible indeed are these providences, yet not unsearchable the counsel, 'For *us* they sicken, and for *us* they die.'—"Ye mourning parents, dry up your tears; why should you be so dissatisfied with that kind precaution which housed your pleasant plant, and removed into shelter a tender flower before the thunders roared, before the lightning flew, before the tempest poured its rage? O, remember they are not lost, but taken away from the evil to come."

Of an altogether different class of Epitaphs, only a few specimens can be given in this brief selection. Naturally the desire is felt, to be assured as far as we can be, of the future well-being of those who have left our companionship here, for an untried state of existence beyond. Besides this however, there is a very common desire to let others know how we believe it now fares with those who have been taken away. What we think of their condition *may* give constraint to our expressions, which in that case will in all probability, be hesitating, if not ambiguous. In other cases, as suggested already, defective views on the part of the writer of the Epitaph, may account for a different reliance seeming to be attributed to its subject, than we would fain believe was really his. In a very little while, correct estimates regarding departed friends, will be confirmed; partial and erroneous ones, reversed or

rectified, and every one whatever assigned his true place. Respecting such as we may unhappily, be in doubt of on their leaving us, we cannot be wrong in suspending our record. 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' Some, we feel well warranted in expressing our confident assurance of, as 'safe within the veil.' Others, whose excellences were not, perhaps, very apparent here, may have them brought fully to light hereafter. Blemishes, which seemed to obscure almost wholly the excellences of others, may dwindle away in the light of Eternity, and every true disciple of the Lord Jesus be clearly revealed. We need not be very solicitous about an earthly record: sufficient if, with all humility yet confidence we can say,

"And now my witness is on high,  
And now my record's in the sky.  
Not in *mine* innocence I trust,  
I bow before *Thee*, in the dust;  
And, through my Saviour's blood alone  
I look for mercy, at Thy throne."

These remarks may suffice, in connection with the remaining Epitaphs, which we now proceed to give.

The following Inscription on a Tombstone at Prestonkirk in East-Lothian, indicates a degree of caution on the writer's part, seldom expressed as it is here.

"Erected by *William Slight* in memory of his spouse who died 10th August 1811. Here are also deposited four of his children. If they are in the Lord, it is expressly said—When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, they shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.'

*John Weever* the Antiquarian, who died in 1632, has this Epitaph in St James's Clerkenwell, London :—

“Lancashire gave me birth, Cambridge—education ;  
Middlesex gave me death ; this Church, my humation :  
And Christ to me hath given  
A place with Him in Heaven.”

At Rickmansworth Hertfordshire, is this Inscription :

“Here lyeth buried vnder this Stone  
The body of *Thomas Day*,  
And his two wives *Alice* and *Foane* ;  
The times here see you may.  
*Alice* deceased—the 10th of July 1585.  
*Foane* . . . . the 6th of Avgvst 1598.  
*Thomas* . . . . the 10th of July 1613.  
“These three, no doubt, had faith in Christ,  
Their sins for to forgive ;  
And they can tell, that knew them well,  
The poore they did relieve.”

On the tomb of *Elihu Yale Esq.* sometime President of Madras, who died in 1724, is the following Epitaph :  
(His remains lie at Wrexham, in Denbigh-shire.)

“Born in America, in Europe bred,  
In Afric' travell'd and in Asia wed,  
Where long he liv'd and thriv'd, at London dead.  
Much good, some ill he did, so hope all's even,  
And that his soul through Mercy's gone to heaven.  
You that survive and read this tale, take care  
For this most certain exit to prepare,  
Where, blest in peace, the actions of the just  
Smell sweet and blossom in the silent dust.”

A word or two to the reader, before we part.

To any thoughtful mind, a quiet stroll among those resting-places of the departed, will forcibly suggest such considerations as these. Generation after generation is rapidly passing away :—dissimilar in some respects, yet how much alike in others ! Do we enquire—‘Where are the dead?’ If we take the plain unvarnished record of Inspiration to guide us, we must admit with the poet,—“In Heaven or Hell, their disembodied spirits dwell.” We are ourselves hastening to the one or the other. To which? Such thoughts can never be inappropriate, and by God’s blessing may be salutary. The mind naturally feels solemnized in the Church-Yard, and revolts from what is calculated to excite mirth ; and yet there are Inscriptions to be found there, which, involuntarily call it forth. We can only pity those who can write such Epitaphs, and those who find pleasure in reading them.

Of such Inscriptions however, as compose the ‘Gleanings’ here given, it should be remembered, that they are in keeping with the habits of the times in which they were written. Gardens were laid out with geometrical accuracy : bushes were cut into all sorts of odd, fantastic shapes, and an unnatural appearance generally prevailed. Manners were no less stiff and precise ; but was there no heart at all? Underlying all the absurdities of fashion, there assuredly was, in many and many a case.

Still, we are thankful for greater simplicity in our day, in most respects, and not least, in our Church-Yards or Cemeteries—in the Inscriptions on Tombstones or Tablets—in the home-like appearance of the enclosures, kept

tastefully, and tended carefully ; serving to perpetuate the recollection of kind words and deeds of those whose hands and feet, once so active, are now still and motionless ;—whose lips are now closed and mute for a season.

And yet, while we much prefer the simplicity which is now the rule rather than the exception, will not the lessons taught by these old Inscriptions, quaint and humiliating tho' they be, retain some power to benefit?

The disposition to postpone indefinitely, the thoughts of death and the grave in relation to ourselves, is so very common, that whatever may prevent the consideration being entirely lost sight of, ought surely to be welcomed. The fact remains, dismiss it as we may, that every one for himself must say to corruption, "Thou art my father : to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister."

The humbling considerations rather than the elevating ones, may have been made more prominent by our forefathers in their Monumental Inscriptions. This may have been in the belief, that such lessons were more needed by the great majority, than those so peculiarly consolatory to the true Christian, who knows, that, despite the loathsomeness inseparable from the grave, the bodies of those who were united to Christ on earth, cannot, altho' laid in the grave be holden by it, any more than their Lord was ; but that, in response to the Archangelic summons—

“Those bodies that corrupted fell

Shall incorrupted rise,

And mortal forms shall spring to life,

Immortal in the skies.”



“A bright or dark *Eternity* in view,  
With all its fixed, unutterable things,  
What madness in the living to pursue,  
As their chief portion, with the speed of wings,  
The joys that death-beds always turn to stings !”  
(“*Live for Eternity*”—by CARLOS WILCOX.)

