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ABSALOM.

The waters slept. Night's silvery veil hung low
On Jordan's bosom, and the eddies curled
Their glassy rings beneath it, like the still
Unbroken beating of the sleeper's pulse.
The reeds bent down the stream—the willow leaves,
With a soft check upon the lulling tide,
Forgot the lifting winds—and the long stems,
Whose flowers the waters, like a gentle nurse,
Bear on its bosom, quietly gave way,
And leaned, in graceful attitudes, to rest.
How strikingly the course of nature tells,
By its light heed of human suffering,
That it was fashioned for a happier world!

King David's limbs were weary. He had fled
From *for* Jerusalem, and now he stood
With his faint people for a little rest
Upon the shore of Jordan. The light wind
Of morn was stirring, and he bared his brow
To its refreshing breath, for he had worn
The mourner's covering, and he had not felt
That he could see his people until now.
They gathered round him on the fresh green bank,
And spoke their kindly words—and as the sun
Rose up in Heaven, he knelt among them there,
And bowed his head upon his hands to pray.
Oh! when the heart is full—when bitter thoughts
Come crowding thickly up for utterance,
And the poor common words of courtesy
Are such a very mockery—how much
The bursting heart may pour itself in prayer!
He prayed for Israel; and his voice went up
Strongly and fervently—he prayed for those
Whose love had been his shield; and his deep tones
Grew tremulous—but oh! for Absalom—
For his estranged, misguided Absalom—
The proud, bright being who had burst away,
In all his princely beauty, to defy
The heart that cherish'd him—for him he pour'd,
In agony that would not be control'd,
Strong supplications, and forgave him there
Before his God, for his deep sinfulness.

The pall was settled. He who slept beneath
Was straiten'd for the grave; and as the folds
Sunk to the still proportions, they betrayed
The matchless symmetry of Absalom.
His hair was yet unshorn, and silken curls
Were floating round the tassels, as they sway'd
To the admitted air, as glossy now
As when, in hours of gentle dalliance, bathing
The snowy fingers of Judea's girls.
His helm was at his feet—his banner, soiled
With trailing through Jerusalem, was laid
Revers'd beside him—and the jewell'd hilt,
Whose diamonds lit the passage of his blade,
Rested like mockery on his cover'd brow.

The soldiers of the king trod to and fro,
Clad in the garb of battle, and their Chief,
The mighty Joab—stood beside his bier,
And gazed upon the dark pall steadfastly,
As if he feared the slumberer might stir.
A slow step startled him. He grasped his blade,
As if a trumpet rang; but the bent form
Of David entered, and he gave command
In a low tone to his few followers,
And left him with his dead. The King stood still
Till the last echo died; then throwing off
The sackcloth from his brow, and laying back
The pall from the still features of his child,
He bowed his head upon him, and broke forth
In the resistless eloquence of woe:—

"Alas, my noble boy—that thou should'st die!
Thou, who wert made so beautifully fair—
That death should settle in thy glorious Eye,
And leave his stillness in this clustering hair!
How could he mark thee for the silent tomb,
My proud boy Absalom?"

"Cold is thy brow, my son!—and I am chill,
As to my bosom I have tried to press thee—
How was I wont to feel my pulses thrill,
Like a rich harp-string, yearning to caress thee!
And hear thy sweet "*my Father*" from these dumb
And cold lips, Absalom!"

"The grave hath won thee—I shall hear the gush
Of music, and the voices of the young—
And life will pass me in the mantling blush,
And the dark tresses to the soft wings flung—
But thou no more, with thy sweet voice, shall come
To meet me, Absalom!"

"And now farewell! 'tis hard to give thee up,
With death so like a gentle slumber on thee—
And thy dark sin!—Oh, I could drink the cup,
If from this woe its bitterness had won thee—
May God have called thee, like a wanderer, home,
My erring Absalom!"

He covered up his face, and bowed himself
A moment on his child—then giving him
A look of melting tenderness, he clasp'd
His hands convulsively, as if in prayer,
And as a strength were given him of God,
He rose up calmly, and compos'd the pall
Firmly and decently, and left him there,
As if his rest had been a breathing sleep.

Shakespeare calls her,

The singing mason building roofs of gold.

DR. ROWLAND TAYLOR.

On the 9th of February, in the year 1553, Dr. Rowland Taylor, vicar of Hadleigh in Suffolk, one of the first towns in England that entertained the Reformation, suffered death there for resisting the establishment of papal worship in his church.

Rowland Taylor was "a doctor in both the civil and canon lawes, and a right perfect divine." On induction to his benefice, he resided with his flock, "as a good shepherd abiding and dwelling among his sheep," and "not only was his word a preaching unto them, but all his life and conversation was an example of unfained Christian life and true holinesse: he was void of all pride, humble and meeke as any child, so that none were so poore but they might boldly, as unto their father, resort unto him; neither was his lowliness childlike or fearfull; but, as occasion, time, and place required, he would be stout in rebuking the sinfull and evil doers, so that none was so rich but he would tell him plainly his fault, with such earnest and grave rebukes as became a good curate and pastor." He continued in well-doing at Hadleigh during the reign of king Edward VI. till the days of queen Mary—when one Foster, a lawyer, and one John Clerk, of Hadley, "hired one Avert, parson of Aldam, a right popish priest, to come to Hadley, and there to give the onset to begin again the popish masse; to this purpose they builded up, with all haste possible, the altar, intending to bring in their masse again about the Palme Munday." The altar was thrown down in the night, but on the following day it was replaced, and the Aldam priest entered the church, attended by Foster and Clerk, and guarded by men with swords and bucklers. Dr. Taylor, who was in his study, and ignorant of this irruption, hearing the church bells ring, repaired thither, and found the priest, surrounded by his armed force, ready to begin mass, against whom he was unable to prevail, and was himself thrust, "with strong hand, out of the church." Two days afterwards, he was summoned by Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, to come before him at London, and answer complaints. His friends counselled him to fly; but Taylor determined to meet his enemies, "and, to their beads, resist their false doings." He took his departure amidst their weeping, "leaving his cure with a godly old priest named Sir Richard Yeoman, who afterwards, for God's truth, was burnt at Norwich." On his appearance, bishop Gardiner, who was also lord chancellor, reviled him, "calling him knave, traitor, heretike, with many other villainous reproaches." Taylor listened patiently; at last he said, "My lord, I am neither traitor nor heretike, but a true subject, and a faithfull Christian man; and am come, according to your commandment, to know what is the cause that your lordship hath sent for me?" The bishop charged upon him that he was married. "Yea," quoth Taylor, "that I thank God I am, and have had nine children, and all in lawful matrimony; and blessed be God that ordained matrimony." Then the bishop charged him with having resisted the priest of Aldam in saying mass at Hadleigh. Taylor also admitted this, and, after stout dispute, was committed to the king's bench, where he spent his time in praying, reading the scriptures, writing, preaching, and exhorting the prisoners to repentance and amendment of life. There he found "master Bradford," whom he comforted by his courage. While imprisoned, he was cited to appear "in the Arches at Bow church," and was carried thither, and "deprived of his benefice because he was married." On the 20th of January, 1553, Taylor was again taken before Gardiner and other bishops. He gives a long account of his disputations with them on that and like occasions. They urged him, and others with him, to recant; the prisoners refused, and "then the bishops read sentence of death upon them."

After condemnation, Dr. Taylor was "bestowed in the Clinke till it was toward night, and then he was removed to

the counter by the Poultry." On the 4th of February, Bonner, bishop of London, came to the counter to degrade him; first wishing him to return to the church of Rome, and promising him to sue for his pardon. Whereunto Taylor answered, "I woulde you and your followers would turne to Christ; as for me, I will not turn to Antichrist." "Well," quoth the bishop, "I am come to degrade you, wherefore put on these vestures." "No," quoth Dr. Taylor, "I will not." "Wilt thou not?" said the bishop; "I shall make thee ere I goe." Quoth Doctor Taylor, "You shall not, by the grace of God." Then Bonner caused another to put them on his back; and when thus arrayed, Taylor, walking up and down, said, "How say you, my lord, am I not a goodly foot? How say you, my masters; if I were in Cheap, should I not have boys enough to laugh at these apish toys, and toying trumpery?" The bishop proceeded, with certain ceremonies, to his purpose, till at the last, when, according to the form, he should have struck Taylor on the breast with his crosier, the bishop's chaplain said, "My lord, strike him not, for he will sore strike again." Taylor favoured the chaplain's suspicion. "The cause," said he "is Christ's; and I were no good Christian if I would not fight in my master's quarrel." It appears that "the bishop laid his curse upon him, but struck him not;" and after all was over, when he got up stairs, "he told master Bradford (for both lay in one chamber) that he had made the bishop of London afraid; for, saith he, laughingly, his chaplain gave him counsell not to strike with his crosier-staff, for that I would strike again; and by my troth, said he, rubbing his hands, I made him believe I would doe so indeed."

Thus was Taylor still cheerful from rectitude. In the afternoon his wife, his son, and John Hull, his servant, were permitted to sup with him. After supper, walking up and down, he impressively exhorted them, with grave advice, to good conduct and reliance on Providence. "Then they, with weeping tears, prayed together, and kissed one the other; and he gave to his wife a book of the church service, set out by king Edward, which in the time of his imprisonment he daily used; and unto his sonne Thomas he gave a latine booke, containing the notable sayings of the old martyrs, gathered out of *Ecclesiastica Historia*; and in the end of that booke he wrote his testament and last rule." In this "vale," dated the 5th of February, he says to his family, "I goe before, and you shall follow after, to our long home. I goe to the rest of my children. I have bequeathed you to the onely Omnipotent." In the same paper he tells his "dear friends of Hadley, to remain in the light opened so plainly and simply, truly, thoroughly, and generally in all England," for standing in which he was to die in flames.

In the morning at two o'clock, the sheriff of London, with his officers, brought him, without light, from the counter to Aldgate. His wife, suspecting that he would be carried away thus privately, had watched, from the time they had parted, within the porch of St. Botolph's church, having her daughter Mary with her, and a little orphan girl named Elizabeth, whom the honest martyr had reared from three years old to her then age of thirteen; and when the sheriff and his company came nigh to where they stood, the child Elizabeth cried, "O my dear father! Mother, mother, here is my father led away!" The darkness being so great that the one could not see the other, his wife cried, "Rowland, Rowland, where art thou?" Taylor answered, "Dear wife! I am here," and he stayed; and the sheriff's men would have forced him, but the sheriff said, "Stay a little, my masters, I pray you, and let him speak to his wife." Then he took his daughter Mary in his arms, and he, and his wife, and the orphan girl, kneeled and prayed; and the sheriff, and many who were present, wept; and he arose and kissed his wife, and shook her by the hand, and said, "Farewell, my dear wife; be of good comfort, for I am quiet in my conscience—God shall stir up a father for my children." He had

three others, besides his daughter Mary and the young Elizabeth. He then kissed Mary, and then Elizabeth, and he bade them also farewell, and enjoined them to stand steadfast in their faith. His weeping wife said, "God be with thee, dear Rowland—I will, with God's grace, meet thee at Hadleigh." Then he was led on to the Woolsack inn, at Aldgate, where he was put in a chamber, under the custody of four yeomen of the guard and the sheriff's men. Here his wife again desired to see him, but was restrained by the sheriff, who otherwise treated her with kindness, and offered her his own house to abide in; but she preferred to go to her mother's, whither two officers conducted her, charging her mother to keep her within till their return.

Meantime, as soon as Taylor entered the chamber, he prayed; and he remained at the inn until the sheriff of Essex was ready to receive him. At eleven o'clock the inn gates were shut, and then he was put on horseback within the gates. When they arrived outside, Taylor saw his son Thomas standing against the rails, in the care of his man John Hull; and he said, "Come hither, my son Thomas." John Hull lifted the child up, and set him on the horse before his father; and Taylor put off his hat, and spoke a sentence or two to the people in behalf of matrimony, and then he lifted up his eyes and prayed for his son, and laid his hat on the child's head, and blessed him. This done, he delivered the child to John Hull, whom he took by the hand, and he said to him, "Farewell, John Hull, the faithfullest servant that ever man had." Having so said, he rode forth with the sheriff of Essex and the yeomen of the guard to go to his martyrdom in Suffolk.

When they came near to Brentwood, one Arthur Taysie, who had been servant to Taylor, supposing him free, took him by the hand and said, "Master Doctor, I am glad to see you again at liberty;" but the sheriff drove him back. At Brentwood, a close hood was put over Taylor's face, with holes for his eyes to look out at, and a slit for his mouth to breathe through. These hoods were used at that place to be put on the martyrs that they should not be known, and that they should not speak to any one, on the road to the burning-places.

Yet as they went, Taylor was so cheerful, and talked to the sheriff and his guards in such wise, that they were amazed at his constancy. At Chelmsford they met the sheriff of Suffolk, who was there to carry him into his county. At that time he supped with the two sheriffs. The sheriff of Essex laboured, during supper, to persuade him to return to queen Mary's religion, telling him that all present would use their suit to the queen for his pardon, nor doubted they could obtain it. The sheriff reminded him that he had been beloved for his virtues, and honoured for his learning; that, in the course of nature, he was likely to live many years; and that he might even be higher esteemed than ever; wherefore, he prayed him to be advised: "This counsel I give you," said the sheriff, "of a good heart and good will towards you;" and thereupon he drank to him; and the yeomen of the guard said, "In like manner, upon that condition, master Doctor, we all drink to you." When they had so done, and the cup came to Taylor, he staid awhile, as studying what he might say, and then answered thus: "Master sheriff, and my masters all, I heartily thank you for your good will. I have hearkened to your words and marked well your counsels; and, to be plain with you, I do perceive that I have been deceived myself, and am likely to deceive a great many of their expectation." At these words they were exceedingly glad. "Would ye know my meaning plainly?" he said. "Yea, good master Doctor," answered the sheriff, "tell it us plainly." "Then," said Taylor, "I will tell you:" and he said, that, as his body was of considerable bulk, and as he thought, if he had died in his bed, it would have been buried in Hadleigh churchyard, so he had deceived himself; and, as there are a great

many worms there abiding, which would have mealed handsomely upon him, so they, as well as himself, were deceived; "for," said he, "it must be burnt to ashes, and they will thereby lose their feeding." The sheriff and his company were thereupon astonished at him, as being a man without fear of death, and making a jest of the flames. During their progress, many gentlemen and magistrates were admitted to see him, and entreated him in like manner—but he remained immovable.

Thus they drew near to Hadleigh; and when they rode over Hadleigh bridge, a poor man, with his five small children, awaited their coming. When they saw Taylor, they all fell down on their knees and held up their hands, and cried aloud, "God help and succour thee, as thou hast many a time succoured me and my poor children." The streets of Hadleigh were crowded on each side by men and women, of the town and country, sorely weeping, and with piteous voices loudly bewailing the loss of their pastor, praying that he might be strengthened and comforted in his extremity, and exclaiming, "What shall become of this wicked world!" Taylor said, "I have preached to you God's word and truth, and am come to seal it with my blood." When he came to the almshouses, he put some money, that had been bestowed on him during his imprisonment, into a glove, and this he is said to have given to the poor almsmen as they stood at their doors, to see their wonted benefactor pass. At the last of the almshouses he inquired, "Is the blind man and blind woman, that dwell here, alive?" He was answered, "Yes; they are there within." Then he threw glove and all in at the window, and so rode forth towards the field of his death.

Coming where a great multitude were assembled, he asked, "What place is this, and what meaneth it that so much people are gathered hither?" It was answered, "This is Aldham common, the place where you must suffer." He said, "Thanked be God, I am even at home." Then he alighted from his horse, and with both his hands rent the hood from his head. His hair was unseemly, for Bonner, when he degraded him, had caused it to be clipped in manner of a fool's. At the sight of this ancient and revered face, and his long white beard, the people burst into tears, and prayed for him aloud. He would have spoken to them, but whenever he attempted, one or other of the yeomen of the guard thrust a tipstaff into his mouth.

Then he desired licence to speak, of the sheriff; but the sheriff refused him, and bade him remember his promise to the council. "Well," quoth Taylor, "promise must be kept." What the promise was is unknown. Seating himself on the ground, he called to one in the crowd, "Soyce, I pray thee come and pull off my boots, and take them for thy labour; thou hast long looked for them, now take them." Then he arose, and putting off his under-clothes, then also he bestowed. This done, he cried with a loud voice, "Good people! I have taught you nothing but God's holy word, and those lessons that I have taken out of God's blessed book, the Holy Bible; and I am come hither this day to seal it with my blood." One Holmes, a yeoman of the guard, who had used him cruelly all the way, then struck him a violent blow on the head "with a waster," and said, "Is that the keeping of thy promise, thou heretick?" Whereupon Taylor knelt on the earth and prayed; and a poor, but faithful woman, stepped from among the people to pray with him. The guards would fain have thrust her away—they threatened to tread her down with their horses; but she was undismayed, and would not remove, but remained and prayed with him. Having finished his derisions, he went to the stake, and kissed it, and placed himself in a pitch-barrel which had been set for him to stand in; and he stood with his back upright against the stake, and he folded his hands together, and he lifted his eyes towards heaven, and he prayed continually. Then they bound him with chains, and the sheriff called one Richard Domingham,

a butcher, and commanded him to set up the faggots; but he said, "I am lame, sir, and not able to lit a faggot." The sheriff threatened to send him to prison, but the man refused to obey his command notwithstanding. Then the sheriff appointed to this labour one Mulleine, of Careey, "a man for his virtues fit to be a hangman." Soyce, a very drunkard, a man named Warwick, and one Robert King, "a deviser of interludes." These four set up the faggots, and prepared for making ready the fire, and Warwick cast a faggot at the martyr, which lit upon his head and wounded his face, so that the blood ran down. Taylor said, "O, friend! I have harm enough, what needeth that?" Then, while he repeated the psalm *Miserere*, in English, Sir John Shelton struck him on the mouth. "You knave," said he, "speak Latin, or I will make thee." At last they set the faggots on fire; and Taylor, holding up both his hands, called on God, crying, "Merciful Father of Heaven! for Jesus Christ our Saviour's sake, receive my soul into thy hands!" He stood during his burning, without crying or moving, till Soyce struck him on the head with a habert, and the brains falling out, the corpse fell down into the fire.

While some may deem this narrative of Rowland Taylor's conduct too circumstantial, others, perhaps, may not so deem. It is to be considered as exemplifying the manners of the period wherein the event occurred, and may at least be acceptable to many. It will assuredly be approved by a few who regard inflexible adherence to principle, at the hazard of death itself, as preferable to a conscience-consuming subserviency, which, while it truckles to what the mind judges to be false, depraves the heart, and saps the foundations of public virtue.

THE BLIND BOY.

The day was bright and beautiful—
The boys to play had gone—
Save one, who sat beside the door,
Dejected and alone;
And as the tone of merry sport
Came faintly to his ear,
He sighed, and from his swelling lids
He brushed the falling tear.

His little heart was rent with pain—
He could not join their play;
He could not run about the fields,
And by the brook side stray.
The rolling hoop—the bounding ball—
The kite borne by the wind—
The acorn hunt—were nought to him;
For he, alas! was blind.

He could not see the setting sun,
And watch the glowing skies—
The beauty of the moon and stars
Fell not upon his eyes.
The rainbow, when it spanned the clouds,
Was lost unto his sight—
And waving woods, and sparkling streams—
For all to him was night!

These truths came fresh into his mind,
While sitting thus apart—
No wonder that the tear drop fell,
And heavy was his heart.
Ah, little did the youthful throng,
Whose hearts were full of joy,
Reflect upon the lonely state
Of that poor, sightless boy!

LIBRARY.

When I look around upon my library, consisting of the literary remains of the most eminent authors that once lived, what an enormous wealth of intellect I behold before me, bequeathed by them to their posterity, which is often as much squandered and neglected by thousands of its thankless heirs, who care as little for the inheritance as for the memory of the testator. It is only a choice few, as it is in family inheritances, who appreciate and improve the treasures, and with the servant in the parable, put out their talent to usury.

If a library be the wardrobe of literature, it is a wardrobe that manifests the taste and intellect of the possessor, as the character of an individual may be generally estimated by his dress and company with which he usually associates. Some wardrobes contain clothing all decorated with tinsel and ornaments, but too flimsy and thin to conceal the wearer's nudity, and protect him from the inclemency of the elements. Such are works of the depraved imagination, which neither edify the understanding nor benefit the heart. Others are more substantial, and destined perhaps to outlast the wearer, but they are too cumbersome to put on, and, consequently, useless.—These are works on speculative metaphysics and subtle theories of philosophy, which, living only in the brains of their inventors, are found to be of no practical utility, and are, therefore, only remembered for the sake of the genius which devised them. Some dresses are coloured with so precarious a dye as to soil the individuals who put them on; and such are all works which offend the eye of moral delicacy and tend to demoralize the mind and the heart of the reader. Others again are not only durable but beautiful in their appearance and texture, affording a warmth, dignity and grace to all who wear them; and such are all those works which tend to improve the powers of the mental and moral understanding, and to call forth a kindred spirit of love and admiration from all who contemplate the moral picture. It is in the wardrobe of literature, as it has been at the marriage feasts of the orientals, every one is privileged to obtain the richest suit without cost; and all that is required of him is simply to enter the temple of knowledge, and wait upon the goddess till she grants him the unpurchasable boon.

Books may be also termed the chests or repositories of thought. And as we would not estimate a chest by the richness of the external ornaments, but by the value of what it contains, so those books which have nothing to recommend them but their outward dress, are only ornamented chests, destitute of any thing that is worth possessing. Yet who does not now-a-days enter rooms misnamed libraries, containing books, it is true, but proving, on examination, to be merely empty chests, neither benefiting the owner nor his enquiring friends. Let my literary trunks be ever so unsightly, as it respects their covers, if only they contain plenty of the pure mental coin within them. I surrender to any one who pleases the empty satisfaction of possessing golden caskets, but mock jewels, gaudy frames, but daubed-up pictures to disgust the eye of the discriminating critic.

BEAUTY AND POETRY.

Beauty is to a woman what poetry is to a language, and their similarity accounts for their conjunction; for there never yet existed a female, possessed of personal loveliness, who was not only poetical in herself, but the cause of poetry in others. Were the subject to be properly examined, it would be discovered that the first dawn of poetical genius in a man proceeds almost invariably from his acquaintance with the other sex. Where love exists, poetry must exist also; for one cannot possibly have being without the fellowship of the other—they live together, and together they perish.

DOMESTIC PEACE.

Vain would truth reflect in song
 What nameless fascinations throng
 Around that quiet hearth alone,
 Where tenderness hath rear'd its throne.
 Oh! there are feelings, rich but faint,
 The hues of language cannot paint;
 And pleasures, delicately deep,
 Which, like the palaces of sleep,
 Melt into dimness, when the light
 Would look upon their fairy sight;
 And there are chords of happiness
 Whose spirit-tones our fancy bless,
 And make the music of our joy
 Complete without one harsh alloy—
 Yet, vain would words one note reveal
 Of melody which mind can feel—
 But who hath left some calm domain,
 Where home was charin'd by woman's reign,
 And trifles, through some magic, were
 An air they never breathed before—
 And enter'd where a proud abode
 To ruder man its splendour owed,
 Nor felt the contrast sternly cold,
 Like winter o'er his spirit roll'd?
 Yet there may garden, grove, and bower,
 Attend on each retiring hour;
 There painting, with impassion'd glow,
 The poetry of columns show;
 While volumes, rank'd in rich array,
 The heroes of the mind display;
 Yet, like a face, when death hath chill'd
 The light that once each feature fill'd,
 Contrasted with its living power
 Beheld in some excited hour—
 Are homes where single man is seen,
 With homes where woman's spell hath been.

THE TWO VILLIERS', DUKES OF BUCKINGHAM.

George Villiers, the son of a Leicestershire knight, was born in 1592. About the age of twenty-two he was introduced into the court of James the First. The households of kings were, at that time, the surest avenues to great preferment. Whatever were the talents or disposition of the sovereign, the court was crowded by multitudes of dependants, who trusted to attract notice by applying their abilities to the reigning wisdom of the reigning folly. Notice begat preferment, and preferment was at once rank, wealth and consequence. James, who was always taken with handsome persons and fine clothes, became soon the friend rather than the master of the young Villiers. The ambition of the latter was admirably seconded by his talents, and he very soon acquired an entire ascendancy over the king. In a short time he was made a baron, a viscount, an earl, a marquess, a duke, lord high admiral, and master of the horse. Estates poured in upon him as fast as titles. He ruled the court, and at that time the court ruled the country. The kind of deference then paid by the lower ranks to the gentry, by the gentry to the nobility, by the nobility generally to the courtiers, and by the courtiers universally to the Duke of Buckingham (Villiers' title) is such as in these days we can scarcely comprehend. The highest points of rank, wealth and power, centred in this man. Every thing calculated to gratify an aspiring mind was his. He possessed the advantage of being the favourite alike of the reigning prince and of the heir apparent; and the dominion of Buckingham was increased rather than diminished, by the accession of Charles the First to the throne. Yet, the end of those things was an early and a violent death. He was stabbed at Ports-

mouth, in the thirty-sixth year of his age, by John Felton, who, having watched his opportunity, thrust a long knife with great strength into his breast.

The Duke, when he received the stroke, clapping his right hand on his sword-hilt, cried out, "The villain has killed me!" His duchess and sister-in-law, hearing a noise in the hall, ran into a gallery which overlooked it, and saw from thence the duke, with blood gushing from his breast, nose and mouth. He pulled out the knife himself, and having been carried to a table, he soon expired. Charles the First was at public prayers when the event was announced to him. He continued unmoved in gesture or in countenance till the service was ended, when he suddenly departed to his chamber, where, throwing himself upon his bed, he lamented, with abundance of tears, the loss he had sustained.

The son of this duke was an infant at the period of his parent's death. In him were united all his father's vast possessions and rank, together with the greatest abilities. Every thing, however, throughout his career was marred by the want of principle, and of a steady perseverance of purpose. He held the same place in the court of Charles the Second which the former duke had done in that of the preceding monarchs. His riches were increased by a wealthy marriage—his wit and his talent were, even in those witty and talented days, unrivalled. But his profligacy was unmeasured, and self was the idol to which he sacrificed every thing. Dryden, who knew him well, described him as—

A man so various that he seem'd to be
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
 Still in opinion, always in the wrong—
 Was every thing by starts, and nothing long;
 But, in the course of one revolving moon,
 Was chemist, fiddler, statesman and buffoon;
 Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
 Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
 In squandering wealth was his peculiar art,
 Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
 He laugh'd himself from court—then sought relief
 By forming parties, but would ne'er be chief.

He had great liveliness of wit, with a peculiar faculty of turning all things into ridicule; but he had no principles of religion, virtue, or friendship. Pleasure, frolic, or extravagant temporary diversion, was all his object. And it is no wonder that he outlived his fortune, health and reputation. His death was almost as remarkable as that of his father. Being seized by a fever, the man who had been the wealthiest peer in Britain, the delight of courts, and the envy of the world, ended his days without friends or attendants, in an obscure and miserable cottage near Kirby Moorside, in Yorkshire. It is to this fact that Pope alludes, in the lines—

In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half hung,
 The floors of plaster and the walls of dung,
 On once a flock-bed, but repair'd with straw,
 With tape-tied curtains never meant to draw;
 The George and Garter dangling from that bed,
 Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red—
 Great Villiers lies! alas, how changed from him
 That life of pleasure and that soul of whim—
 No wit to flatter, left of all his store!
 No fool to laugh at, which he valued more—
 There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends
 And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends.

In his last moments he bitterly mourned the follies of his life, his ingratitude to God, and inattention to the duties of religion. He exhibited great contrition for his past offences, and very shortly before his spirit left this world he received the sacrament from the parochial minister. He died in the sixtieth year of his age, leaving no heirs. He was

buried at Kirby Moorside; and the register, which is still preserved, contains, among other burials, that of "*Gorges vilans, Lord duke of bookingham,*" as taking place April 17th, 1687.

A death-bed may always be made an instructive lesson to survivors; and the following picture of the state of mind of this celebrated man, drawn by himself, when the world and its follies had ceased to interest him, may not be without its uses. How many thousands upon thousands of God's poorest subjects are there, who have throughout life enjoyed more happiness than this envied favourite owns himself ever to have known; and who, when upon their death-beds, will have a greater and surer reason for the hope that is in them than he ever was able to give. We often need only know the real condition of others, to be cured of all envy.

From the younger Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, when on his death-bed:—

DEAR DOCTOR,

I have always looked upon you to be a person of true virtue, and know you to have a sound understanding; for, however I may have acted in opposition to the principles of religion, or the dictates of reason, I can honestly assure you I have always had the highest veneration for both. The world and I shake hands—for I dare affirm we are heartily worthy of each other. O, what a prodigal have I been of that most valuable of all possessions—Time! I have squandered it away with a profusion unparalleled; and now, when the enjoyment of a few days would be worth the world, I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of half a dozen hours. How despicable, oh my dear friend, is that man who never prays to his God but in the time of distress. In what manner can he supplicate that Omnipotent Being in his afflictions, whom, in the time of his prosperity, he never remembered with reverence?

Do not brand me with infidelity when I tell you that I am almost ashamed to offer up my petitions at the throne of grace, or to implore that divine mercy in the next world which I have scandalously abused in this. Shall ingratitude to man be looked upon as the blackest of crimes, and not ingratitude to God, to whom we are indebted for all we have enjoyed? Shall an insult offered to the king be looked upon in the most offensive light, and yet no notice be taken when the King of kings is treated with indignity and disrespect?

The companions of my former libertinism would scarcely believe their eyes were you to show this epistle. They would laugh at me as a dreaming enthusiast, or pity me as a timorous wretch, who was shocked at the appearance of futurity; but, whoever laughs at me for being right, or pities me for being sensible of my errors, is more entitled to my compassion than my resentment. A future state may well enough strike terror into any man who has not acted well in this life; and he must have an uncommon share of courage indeed, who does not shrink at the presence of God. The apprehensions of death will soon bring the most profligate to a proper use of his understanding. To what a situation am I now reduced! Is this anxiety of mind becoming the character of a Christian? From my rank I might have expected affluence to wait upon my life—from religion and understanding, peace to smile upon my end; instead of which I am afflicted with poverty, and haunted with remorse—despised by my country, and, I fear, forsaken by my God.

There is nothing so dangerous as extraordinary abilities. I cannot be accused of vanity now, by being sensible that I was once possessed of uncommon qualifications, especially as I sincerely regret that I ever had them. My rank in life made these accomplishments still more conspicuous, and, fascinated by the general applause which they procured, I never considered the proper objects to which they should have been applied. Hence, to procure a smile from a block-

head, whom I despised, I have frequently treated virtue with disrespect; and sported with the holy name of Heaven to obtain a laugh from a parcel of fools who were entitled to nothing but contempt.

What a pity that the Holy Writings are not made the criterions of true judgment; or that any person should pass for a fine gentleman in this world, except he that appears solicitous about his happiness in the next.

I am forsaken by all my acquaintances—utterly neglected by the friends of my bosom and the dependents on my bounty; but no matter. I am unfit to converse with the former, and have no ability to serve the latter. Let me not, however, be wholly cast off by the good. Favour me with a visit as soon as possible. Writing to you gives me some ease, especially on a subject I could talk on for ever. I am of opinion that this is the last visit I shall ever solicit from you; my distemper is powerful—come and pray for the departing spirit of the poor unhappy

BUCKINGHAM.

ASH

ASH WEDNESDAY.

This is the first day of Lent. It is called *Ash Wednesday*, because, in the Roman Catholic Church, the priest blesses ashes on this day, and puts them on the heads of the people. These ashes are made of the branches of brushwood or palms, consecrated the year before. The ashes are cleaned and dried, and sifted, fit for the purpose. After the priest has given absolution to the people, he prays "Vouchsafe, O, to bless and sanctify these ashes—that whosoever shall sprinkle these ashes upon them for the redemption of their sins, they may obtain health of body and protection of soul," &c. Prayers ended, the priest sprinkles the ashes with holy water, and perfumes them thrice with incense, and the people coming to him and kneeling, he puts ashes on their heads in the form of a cross, with other ceremonies.

Platina, a priest, and librarian to the Vatican, who wrote the lives of the popes, relates that Prochetus, Archbishop of Geneva, being at Rome on Ash Wednesday, he fell at the feet of pope Boniface VIII., who blessed and gave out the ashes on that day, in order to be signed with the blessed ashes, as others had been. Thinking him to be his enemy, instead of uttering the usual form, "Remember, O man, because thou art dust, thou shalt return to dust," &c., the pope parodied the form, and said, "Remember thou art a Ghibelline, and with the Ghibellines thou shalt return to ashes," and then his holiness threw the ashes in the archbishop's eyes.

It is observed by Mr. Fosbroke that ladies wore friars' girdles in Lent. This gentleman quotes, from "Camden's Remains," that Sir Thomas More, finding his lady scolding her servants during Lent, endeavoured to restrain her; "Tush, tush, my lord," said she, "look, here is one step to heavenward," showing him a friar's girdle. "I fear me," said he, "that one step will not bring you up one step higher." There are various instances of belief in the virtues of garments that had been worn by monks and friars; some of them almost surpassing belief.

Ash Wednesday is observed in the Church of England by reading publicly the curses denounced against impenitent sinners; to each malediction the people being directed to utter, amen. Many, who consider this as cursing their neighbour, keep away from church on the occasion; which absence, from these motives, Mr. Brand regards as "a folly and superstition worthy of the after-midnight, the spirit-walking time of popery." On this eloquent remark, and Mr. Brand is seldom warmed to eloquence, it may be observed, that persons far removed from superstition, and who have never approached "the valley of the shadow of popery," deem the commination of the "Common Prayer Book" a departure from the Christian dispensation, and its injunctions of brotherly kindness.

MEMORY.

Stand on a funeral mound,
Far, far from all that love thee,
With a barren heath around,
And a cypress-bower above thee;
And think, while the sad wind frets,
And the night in cold gloom closes—
Of spring, and spring's sweet violets—
Of summer, and summer's roses.

Sleep where the thunders fly
Across the tossing billow;
Thy canopy the sky,
And the lonely deck thy pillow;
And dream (while the chill sea-f foam
In mockery dashes o'er thee)
Of the cheerful hearth, and the quiet home,
And the kiss of her that bore thee.

Watch in the deepest cell
Of the foeman's dungeon-tower,
Till hope's most cherish'd spell
Has lost its cheering power;
And sing (while the galling chain
On every stiff limb freezes)
Of the huntsman hurrying o'er the plain—
Of the breath of the mountain-breezes.

Talk of the minstrel's lute,
The warrior's high endeavour,
When the honied lips are mute,
And the strong arm crush'd for ever;
Look back to the summer sun,
From the mist of dark December,
Then say to the broken-hearted one,
" 'Tis pleasant to remember!"

JUDGE JEFFERIES.

On the 18th April, 1689, the infamous Judge Jefferies died in the Tower of London, whither he had been committed by the lords of the council, after he had been taken in the disguise of a common sailor, for the purpose of leaving England. He was born at Aton, near Wrexham, in Denbighshire, and being raised to the bench, polluted its sanctity by perversions of the law. His habits and language were vulgar and disgusting. John Evelyn says, "I went this day to a wedding of one Mrs. Castle, to whom I had some obligation; and it was to her fifth husband, a lieutenant-colonel of the city. She was the daughter of one Bruton, a broom-man, by his wife, who sold kitchen-stuff in Kent-street, whom God so blessed, that the father became very rich, and was a very honest man; and this daughter was a jolly, friendly woman. There were at the wedding the lord mayor, the sheriff, several aldermen, and persons of quality; above all, Sir George Jefferies, newly made lord chief justice of England, who, with Mr. Justice Withings, danced with the bride, and werz exceeding merry! These great men spent the rest of the afternoon, till eleven at night, in drinking healths, smoking tobacco, and talking much beneath the gravity of judges that had but a day or two before condemned Mr. Algernon Sidney, who was executed the 7th of December, 1683, on Tower-hill, on the single witness of that monster of a man, Lord Howard of Escrick, and some sheets of paper taken in Mr. Sidney's study, pretended to be written by him, but not fully proved." James II. found Jefferies a fit instrument for his arbitrary purposes. After the defeat of the Duke of Monmouth in the west, he employed the most sanguinary miscreants, and Jefferies among the rest, to wreak his vengeance on the deluded people. Bishop Burnet says, that Jefferies' behaviour was brutally

disgusting, beyond any thing that was ever heard of in a civilized nation: "He was perpetually either drunk or in a rage, liker a fury than the zeal of a judge." He required the prisoners to plead guilty, on pretence of showing them favour; but he afterwards showed them no mercy, hanging many immediately. He hanged, in several places, about six hundred persons. The king had a daily account of Jefferies' proceedings, which he took pleasure to relate in the drawing-room to foreign ministers, and at his table he called it Jefferies' campaign. Upon Jefferies' return, he created him a peer of England, by the title of Earl of Flint. During these "bloody assizes," the lady Lisle, a noble woman of exemplary character, whose husband had been murdered by the Stuart party, was tried for entertaining two gentlemen of the Duke of Monmouth's army; and though the jury twice brought her in not guilty, Jefferies sent them out again and again, until, upon his threatening to attain them of treason, they pronounced her guilty. Jefferies, before he tried this lady, got the king to promise that he would not pardon her; and the only favour she obtained was the change of her sentence from burning to beheading. Mrs. Gaunt, a widow, near Wapping, who was a Baptist, and spent her time in acts of charity, was tried on a charge of having hid one Burton, who, hearing that the king had said that he would sooner pardon rebels than those who harboured them, accused his benefactress of having saved his life. She was burned at the stake. The excellent William Penn, the Quaker, saw her die, and related the manner of her death to Burnet. She laid the straw about her for her burning speedily, and behaved herself so heroically, that all melted into tears. Six men were hanged at Tyburn, on the like charge, without trial. At length, the bloody and barbarous executions were so numerous, that they spread horror throughout the nation. England was an *aceldama*; the country, to six sixty miles together, from Bristol to Exeter, had a new and terrible sort of sign-posts or gibbets, bearing the heads and limbs of its butchered inhabitants. Every soul was sunk in anguish and terror, sighing by day and by night for deliverance, but shut out of all hope, till the arrival of the Prince and Princess of Orange, on whom the two houses of parliament bestowed the crown. Jefferies had attained, under James II., to the high office of Lord Chancellor.

ON CONTENTEDNESS.

Suppose thyself in as great sadness as ever did load thy spirit—wouldst thou not bear it nobly and cheerfully, if thou wast sure that within a certain space some excellent fortune would relieve thee, and enrich thee, and recompense thee, so as to overflow all thy hopes, and desires, and capacities! Now, then, when a sadness lies heavy upon thee, Remember that thou art a Christian, designed to the inheritance of Jesus.

Or have they taken all from me! What now? let me look about me: they have left me the sun, and the moon, fire and water, a loving wife, and many friends to pity me, and some to relieve me; and I can still discourse; and, unless I list, they have not taken away my merry countenance, and my cheerful spirit, and a good conscience; they still have left me the providence of God, and all the promises of the Gospel, and my religion, and my hopes of heaven, and my charity to them too; and still I sleep and digest, I eat and drink, I read and meditate; I can walk in my neighbour's pleasant fields, and see the varieties of natural beauties, and delight in all that in which God delights, that is, in virtue and wisdom, in the whole creation, and in God himself. And he that hath so many causes of joy, and so great, is very much in love with sorrow and peevishness, who loses all these pleasures, and chooses to sit down upon his little handful of thorns.—JEREMY TAYLOR.

* The widow of one of the Regicides, who sat in judgment on King Charles I.—E. S. M.

EARTH'S WEARY ONES.

Open the grave, the vaulted grave,
For the weary ones of earth—
They are pressing on, and their bosoms heave.
For the morn of heavenly birth;
They are pressing on, in the strength of power,
And the pride of wealth—they wait the hour.

Ye may trace them in the hall of song,
By the lamp's high flaming light,
Where pipe and tabret their notes prolong,
And jewels are sparkling bright.
In the show of beauty, of mirth, and pride,
Light down the mazy dance they glide;
By the pallid cheek, 'neath the smiles they wear,
And the smothered sigh, ye may trace them there.

They are deck'd in the ruby's ruddy glow,
And wealth of the far down sea;
And the diamond shines but to mock their woe,
And proclaim the spirit free.
But, alas! alas! for the fond hopes crushed
For the ones of love in the dark tomb hushed,
For affection changed and vows forgot—
Nor gems, nor pearls, can that memory blot.

Raise ye the veil at the festal hour,
From that fair unfurrowed brow—
A bride!—but wo for the bridegroom's power—
The grave ye may open now;
From the glittering robes of royalty,
Peers the broken heart through the sunken eye;
And the wreath of fame crowns the weary band—
'Mid the honoured crowd, the hopeless stand.

Ye may trace them in the house of prayer,
On the lowly bended knee—
With uplifted eye, and a brow of care—
The burdened soul to free.
Then open the grave—they are pressing on,
In beauty and youth, but a visage wan;
In festal halls—'neath the laurel's wave,
They are weary of earth—open the grave!

A QUADROON GIRL.

She was a most lovely, clear-skinned quadroon girl. She could not have been twenty; tall and beautifully shaped. Her long coal-black tresses were dressed high on her head, which was bound round with the everlasting Madras handkerchief, in which pale blue was the prevailing colour; but it was elegantly adjusted, and did not come down far enough to shade the fine development of her majestic forehead—Pasta's, in *Semiramide*, was not more commanding. Her eyebrows were delicately arched, and sharply defined, and her eyes of jet were large and swimming; her nose had not utterly adorned its African origin, neither had her lips—but, notwithstanding, her countenance shone with all the beauty of expression so conspicuous in the Egyptian sphinx—Abyssinian, but most sweet—while her teeth were as the finest ivory, and her chin and throat, and bosom, as if her bust had been an antique statue of the rarest workmanship. The only ornaments she wore were two large virgin gold earrings, massive yellow hoops without any carving, but so heavy that they seemed to weigh down the small thin transparent ears which they perforated; and a broad black velvet band round her neck, to which was appended a large massive crucifix of the same metal. She also wore two broad bracelets of black velvet, clasped with gold. Her beautifully moulded form was scarcely veiled by a cambric *chanise*, with exceedingly

short sleeves, over which she wore a rose-coloured silk petticoat, short enough to display a finely formed foot and ankle, with a well selected pearl-white silk stocking, and a neat low-cut French black kid shoe. As for gown she had none. She wore a large sparkling diamond ring on her marriage finger.

WALTZING.

Time was—girls scarce could understand
The pressure of the waltzer's hand,
By slight advances gently placed
Below the chin, above the waist,
And many a virgin cheek had blush'd,
And snowy breast with crimson flush'd,
And prudish feeling then had sought,
Perchance, to check some rising thought;
But now, in "conscious virtue bold,"
Belles can their stoic beaux unfold,
And not a vein shall e'er betray
The pulse in more than usual play;
And beaux can scan the female form,
As if 'twere not with life-blood warm—
And clasp it too—indifferent grown,
As though the beautiful thing were—stone!
Oh! let the blind fanatic rage,
This—this is surely virtue's age!

AN ENGLISH INN.

The wayside inns of staid Scotland will not bear comparison with those of merry England. There you see them smiling, with their trellised gables, low windows, and overhanging eaves all a-twitter with swallows, a little way off the road, behind a fine tree, palisaded in the front circle—

"In winter, shelter, and in summer, shade."

The porch is bloomy; and the privet hedge, running along the low wall, does not shut out a culinary garden, deficient neither in flowers nor in fruits, with a bower at the end of the main gravel-walk, where, at tea or toddy, in love or friendship, you may sit, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot;" or take an occasional peep at the various arrivals. Right opposite, on entering, you see the bar—and that pretty bar-maid, she is the landlord's daughter. "The parlour on the left, sir, if you please," says a silver voice, with a sweet southern—that is, English accent—so captivating to every Scotchman's ear—and before you have had time to read the pastoral poem on the paper that gives the parlour walls their cheerful character, the same pretty creature comes trippingly in with her smoothed hair comb-surmounted, and having placed you a chair, begins to wipe the table, already dustless as the mirror in which she takes a glance at her shadow, as you take a gaze on her substance; and having heard your sovereign will and pleasure expressed with all the respectful tenderness of a subject, retires with a curtsy—and leaves you stroking your chin, in a mood of undefinable satisfaction with her, with yourself, and with all the world.

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