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POEMS
AND
BALLADS
OF PROTESTANTISM

T. C. O'CONNOR.

WYCLIFFE BALLADS ;

A Biography in Verse,

WITH OTHER

POEMS AND BALLADS

OF

PROTESTANTISM.

BY

T. CLIFFORD O'CONNOR, B.A.

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare!”

“These harbingers of good, whom bitter hate
In vain endeavoured to exterminate.”

WORDSWORTH.

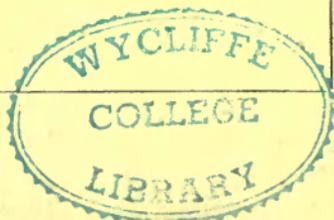
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CONTENTS.

“Within this frail form lay a temper quick and restless, an immense energy, an immovable conviction, an unconquerable pride. The personal charm which ever accompanies real greatness only deepened the influence he derived from the spotless purity of his life. As yet indeed even Wyclif himself can hardly have suspected the immense range of his intellectual power.”—*J. R. Green.*

WYCLIFFE BALLADS.

PRELUDE :—

	PAGE.
1. WYCLIFFE AND ENGLAND,	1

I.—*WYCLIFFE, REFORMER IN CHURCH & STATE* :—

2. THE GREAT PESTILENCE,	5
3. THE FRIAR'S MENDICANT,	9
4. PAPAL EXACTIONS,	15
5. THE TEMPORAL POWER AND ENGLAND,	17
6. AT BRUGES,	21
7. THE GOOD PARLIAMENT,	22
8. ALIEN DIGNITARIES,	25

II.—*WYCLIFFE, ECCLESIASTICAL WITNESS AND CONFESSOR* :—

9. AT ST. PAUL'S,	27
10. AT LAMBETH,	32

III.—*WYCLIFFE, DOCTRINAL REFORMER* :—

11. THE GREAT SCHISM,	36
12. THE FRIARS BY WYCLIFFE'S SICK BED,	41
13. RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT, TRACTS, TRANSLATIONS, AND “GOSPEL PRIESTS,”	43
14. FREE AND FREEING OTHERS,	47

IV.—*WYCLIFFE, DOCTRINAL WITNESS AND CONFESSOR* :—

	PAGE
15. BEFORE COUNCIL OF OXFORD UNIVERSITY,	52
16. THE EARTHQUAKE SYNOD,	56
17. BEFORE CONVOCATION IN OXFORD,	59
18. CITATION TO ROME,	63

V.—*WYCLIFFE, TEACHER, TRANSLATOR AND MARTYR* :—

19. LAST DAYS AND LABOURS,	65
20. PEACE,	72
21. HIS SECRET OF STRENGTH,	74
22. POST MORTEM,	80
(1) CONSTANCE. THE INQUEST,	80
(2) LUTTERWORTH. THE EXHUMATION,	82

L'ENVOI :—

23. WYCLIFFE AND THE WORLD,	87
(1) GOD'S PROVIDENCE,	87
(2) WYCLIFFE'S SERVICE,	88

POEMS AND BALLADS OF PROTESTANTISM :—

24. LUTHER'S PILGRIMAGE FROM WITTEMBURG TO WORMS,	95
25. "JESUS CHRIST AND HIS ENSIGNS,"	121
26. LOUIS DE BERQUIN,	126
27. A MARTYR OF TELL,	140
28. JOHN LEAF, CHANDLER'S APPRENTICE AND MARTYR,	143
29. RAWLINS WHITE, FISHERMAN AND MARTYR,	148
30. MRS. CICELY ORMES, MARTYR, AND TWO OTHERS,	151
31. ROWLAND TAYLOR, VICAR OF HADLEY, AND MARTYR,	159

LAYS OF LONDONDERRY :—

32. THE APPRENTICE BOYS' "NO SURRENDER,"	185
33. KING JAMES IN DUBLIN,	190
34. THE FLIGHT NORTHWARDS,	193
35. KING JAMES BEFORE DERRY,	195
36. THE GARRISON'S "NO SURRENDER,"	198
37. THE FIRST SABBATH OF THE SIEGE,	205
38. THE RELIEF,	209
39. THE SYRO-PHENICIAN,	225
40. NEHEMIAH,	231
NOTE,	224



Prelude.

I.

WYCLIFFE AND ENGLAND.

JOHN WYCLIFFE was born about 1324 in Wycliffe village, near Richmond, Yorkshire. At age of 14 entered Oxford University. Became successively Fellow of Merton, Warden of Balliol, Head of Canterbury Hall, and Lecturer in Theology. Was made rector of Fillingham, 1361, rector of Lutgershall, 1368, and in 1375 rector of Lutterworth, in Leicestershire, where he died, 1384, having received the Master's call while celebrating Divine Service in his parish church.

PILGRIM to our Isles of England, drawn, for love of
England's name,
To her fields of former conflict, to her fanes of ancient
fame,
To the great ancestral mansions of her nobles and her
squires,
To the marvels which the genius of her modern life
inspires,
To the homes and haunts seclusive of her sages and her
bards,
Where his time-transfigured legends lone age-dim
Tradition guards,

To her birthplaces of heroes, to her sepulchres of kings,
To her towers and squares whence martyrs pass'd to
Heaven on torture's wings ;—

Not in Yorkshire, far-famed Yorkshire, thou of such
shalt fewest greet,
Nor in Leicester county, either, thou of such shalt
fewest meet.

Pilgrim to these Isles of England, drawn, for love of
England's name,
To the haunts and tow'rs and temples consecrated to
her fame,

Fail thou not in thy pleased wand'rings till where, fed
by numerous rills,
Tees flows hard by Wycliffe village hid 'mong Yorkshire's
frontier hills.

Nor yet fail thou till thou comest where the Swift
stream, winding down
Through flat Leicester fields tow'rds Avon, passes
Lutterworth's old town.

There was Wycliffe—first Reformer, latest of the school-
men—bred ;

Here for four-and-forty winters slept his bones among
the dead.

There the hills stand, fall the waters, sweep the storms,
the calm vales lie,
In whose midst the boy was nurtured ; *here* the man's
last years went by.

There the church wherein, a babe, he to Christ's Church
on earth was given ;

Here the church in which his summons came to join the
Church in heaven.

So, when treading Oxford's classic courts, forget not all
the years

Of his student-life, although to-day no trace of these
appears.

Merton's Fellow, Balliol's Warden, eke of Canterbury
Hall,

Theologic Lecturer—his Oxford honours there recall ;

For herein lies certain token England's worthiest, who
knew

All his life, esteemed him worthy ere he rose to public
view.

But thou, wanderer through England, drawn for love
of England's name,

Pilgrim to her shrines historic, hoar memorials of her
fame,

Count thy grateful task unfinished till thou bless God on
bent knees,

Where by Lutterworth the Swift rolls and by Wycliffe
Glen the Tees :

For, I say it as I think it, in the roll of England's
fame—

Of her soldiers, sages, martyrs,—Wycliffe shines the
noblest name !



Wycliffe, Reformer in Church and State.

II.

THE GREAT PESTILENCE.

“This visitation of the Almighty (1348) sounded like the trumpet of the judgment day in the heart of Wycliffe.”—*D’Aubigné*, vol. v., p. 110.

WYCLIFFE’S years are four and twenty when to
Oxford’s cloisters come
Rumours wild of Plague and Earthquake, through all
Europe scattering doom.

From the East, past Earthquake’s havoc, like the Rider
on that Horse
Of the apocalyptic vision, took the Pestilence its course.

Slew its hosts of every nation ; strowed its heaps by every
shore ;
Proudest cities left as charnels ; countless terrors whirled
before.

No most lonely mountain hamlet ’scaped its desolating
blast ;
Cattle pasturing in the open perished where the Black
Death pass’d.

Ships, the sport of tide and tempest, freighted with the
dead alone,
Told how far across mid-ocean had th' avenging Shadow
flown.

So men wailed up, Come back, Earthquake! Famine,
wealth may face thy breath!
War, the brave can welcome! Deluge—God, all plagues
save this Black Death!

And the Shadow now holds England, not fore-run by
earthshocks here,
But by storm and rain incessant for the space of half a
year.

Everywhere in every city, in the prison, in the fane—
Everywhere in every county, by the roadside, in the
lane—

In the hamlet, in the castle, round the well-spring,
(thither led
By the raging thirst that slew them,) piles of dying and
of dead!

Vain all skill of all physicians, vain all mothers'
tenderest care;
But one passion holds the stricken, it is absolute despair.

Soon the bravest and the kindest cease with such a foe
to cope;
In the present see no pity—in the future see no hope.

England mourns one half her people ; Oxford owns like
agony.

Wait the pale survivors wondering, scarcely fearing,
what shall be.

Waits, pale-smitten, one survivor—not in fleshly doubt
or fear—

“ Meaneth this the Age’s ending ? That the judgment
hour is near ? ”

Back he turns him to that Volume sought and studied
then of few ;

Not as student now or doctor : deeper ends he hath in
view.

Now he seeks it, ’neath the shadow of impending doom,
o’er-awed :

Seeks it for one question’s answer, How shall man be
just with God ?

And he finds that question’s answer, as it may be found
by all

Who, while pondering its pages, for the Inspirer’s
guidance call.

As from Saul, when Jesus met him, now from startled
Wycliffe, too,

Came that cry unto the Master, “ Lord, what wouldst
Thou have me do ? ”

As from fishers and taxgatherers by the Lake of Galilee,
Chose that Master His apostles, His Reformers so chose
He !

From poor miners, herds, and craftsmen, Luther and his
brethren chose :
Both forerunners—Baptist, Wycliffe—from among the
priesthood rose.

Stayed John Baptist in Judæan deserts till to Israel
sent :
Oxford cloisters held John Wycliffe till his prime of
life was spent.

Dear from tenderest years those cloisters to his heart
have been, shall be :
Dearer to their agèd exile's—exile banned for "heresy."

Dearer when that question's answer, "Lord, what
wouldst Thou have me do?"
("Be the Better Day's Preparer and its Morning
Star!") he knew.



III.

THE FRIARS' MENDICANT.

"A stout and valiant champion of the faith; vanquishing by the force of the Scriptures all such who by their wilful beggary blasphemed and slandered Christ's religion."—*From Oxford University's "Publike Testimonie" in 1406.*

"It was about the year 1360 that the name of Wycliffe is first mentioned in history. He was then engaged in a fierce but ridiculous controversy with the various orders of friars."—*Lingard, R. C. Historian, iv. 213.*

In all wisdom of th' Egyptians Israel's Lawgiver was
learned;
And like praise from Roman Oxford had our First
Reformer earned.

Having master'd all the knowledge prized by Schoolmen
of his age,
One Book more, by few then studied, did his heart and
mind engage.

Therefore Friars feared this David more than chiefs of
prouder looks;
His sure weapons, smooth stones taken from the
Scripture's running brooks.

By Tradition's light and Reason's, Conscience's and
Nature's rules,
Others ere his time had striv'n for large reform within
their schools:

So had Greathead, Lincoln's Bishop, famed for life and
 doctrine pure ;
 While Armagh's Fitzralf died wailing labours vain or
 immature.

These are two great names of many : but the Church's
 heart was faint,
 Sick the head then,—so our travelling monks experienced
 no restraint.

(Still a very jibe and scorn they live in every poet's
 rhyme,
 In the homely correspondence and the annals, of that
 time.)

Vices had they? Were they yet not spies in every
 realm and home?
 And the most successful salesmen, too, of "pardons hot
 from Rome"?

Wycliffe, drinking at a deeper, purer fountain, plainly
 urged,
 "One the cure is, Let the Church of Able-Beggary be
 purged.

* * * * *

"Many think give they a penny to a monk God must
 forgive,
 Though all ten commandments brake they; therefore
 heed not how they live.

“But I say to thee for certain, Though thy priests and
friars sing,
Though thou daily hear their masses, all thy life go
pilgriming,

“Though thou found thee many colleges and chantries,
all thou hast
Give to pardoners and prelates—all were worthless at
the last ;

“Worthless in themselves ! . . . Love Jesus, and, tho’
halfpence none be given,
Thine shall be eternal pardon and th’ unbroken bliss of
Heaven.”

* * * * *

Whilst in human nature Conscience and Concupiscence
survive,
Where the gospel-truth is hidden, pardon-trafficking
must thrive.

Even though of prelates only were God’s pardon to be
bought,
It were still an evil system with innumerable evils
fraught.

But when arm’d with power t’ exclude from heaven or
from hell to save,
Marvel you if kind-souled rival friars cheaper pardon
gave ?

Vowed to poverty, yet heaping wealth together day by day :

Vowed to purity, their crimes were such as none may dare to say.

In their great "Caim's castles"* hidden, at most sumptuous tables fed,

While from door to door they travelled gathering poor men's pence and bread,

Vowed "the offscouring of all things" as pilgrims on this earth to be,

They became all things' offscouring by their vile iniquity.

And the sum of all these friars' faith was, "You the Pope obey :

Be alms-giving to the Friar : to Dominic or Francis pray."

So crime flourished, immorality increased where'er they went ;

Though we hold this not accorded with their founders' first intent.

Drinking at a purer fountain than these drank at, Wycliffe urged,

"One the cure is, Let the Church of Able-Beggary be purged !

* Caim's=Cain's Castles. So styled by Wycliffe from the initial letters of the "Four Orders'" names, Carmelites, Augustinians, Jacobites (Dominicans) and Minorites (Franciscans).

“ Reformation of abuses ? Rottenness of heart reform ?
These are not abuses, but the system’s natural brood and
swarm.

* * * * *

“ If your pardon is a spiritual gift and comes from
Heaven,
‘ What has freely been received,’ Christ teaches, ‘ should
be freely given.’

“ Let a rich man dearly buy, although of criminals the
worst,
He has pardon to a thousand years ; the poor may die
accurst.”

Soon the friars feared this David more than chiefs of
prouder looks,
For his weapons—smooth stones chosen from the
Scriptures’ running brooks.

* * * * *

“ ‘ Lading men with burdens grievous to be borne which
ye touch not ’ :—
Poverty impose on others, revel you in wealth ill-got !

“ ‘ Widows’ houses too devour ye, making long pray’rs
for a show ’ :—
Wring from parting sinners’ terrors what should to
their orphans go !

“ ‘Passing o’er God’s love and judgment ; tithing
cummin, mint, and rue :—

Let men keep your fasts and feasting, pay your ‘dues,’
content are you.

“ ‘Whited sepulchres fair-seeming, full of rottenness
within’ :—

Vow yourselves to stainless chastity, yet live in loath-
some sin !

“ ‘God’s commandments make you void with vain
traditions,’ precepts wrong :—

With your penances and shrivings, shrines and pilgrim-
ages long !

“ ‘And ye keep the key of knowledge, nor will enter in
yourselves

Nor let others’ :—So God’s word is Latin-locked in
Convent shelves !”

* * * * *

Thus it was that Wycliffe, drinking at Truth’s sources,
plainly urged,—

“ One the cure is, let the Church of Able-Beggary be
purged !”



IV.

PAPAL EXACTIONS.

“The vigour of English life . . . gave nobler signs of its activity in the spirit of national independence and moral earnestness which awoke at the call of Wycliffe.”—*Green’s “Hist. of Eng. People,”* Chap. v., Sec. i.

NOR this controversy only was distracting England then:
Urban’s arrogant exactions vexed anew the souls of
men.

Alien priests held our best livings. As he were Lord
Temporal too,
Urban’s tollmen freely ranged the length and breadth of
England through.

And the voice of Wycliffe sounded north and south
throughout the land:

“Let the King and people rouse them such presumption
to withstand.

* * * * *

“Christ and Peter were kings’ subjects; Popes and
Prelates well may be.

Kings God’s vicars, God-ordained, are; in His vicars
God dread ye.

“Christ disowned all earthly kingship there in Pilate’s
judgment hall;

Now by Kings’ and Princes’ titles we His ministers must
call!

“Christ would not be drawn to judgment ’twixt two
men, of worldly goods ;
Yet His vicar claims to arbitrate in all the nations’
feuds !

“ ‘Gentile monarchs lordship practise, their great ones
authority,’
Christ once said, ‘Not so among you ; as your least
your greatest be.’ ”

Thus it came that Wycliffe, drinking at Truth’s sources,
boldly urged—

“Let our nation be no longer by Popes’ Temporal Lord-
ship scourged !”

And in reverent recognition of his blamelessness of life,
Of his learning, of his prowess in all such polemic
strife,

Oxford named him Balliol’s Warden, nor did Edward
fail to mark

By much favour his appraisalment of “the King’s
peculiar clerk ;”

Of “the Clerk ” who had gone with him when to war
with France he went,

In defiance of the Pontiff, with his people’s full consent ;

Of “the Clerk ” who yet should show him how to strive
tow’rds loftier heights,

For his nation’s independence and its Church’s ancient
rights.

V.

THE TEMPORAL POWER AND ENGLAND.

“As yet (1366) his quarrel was not with its (the Church’s) doctrine, but with its practice : it was on the principles of Ockham that he defended the Parliament’s indignant refusal of the tribute which was claimed by the Papacy, the expulsion of the bishops from office by the Duke of Lancaster, and the taxation of Church lands. But his treatise on ‘The Kingdom of God’ shows how different his aims really were from the selfish aims of the men with whom he acted.”—*Green’s “Hist. of Eng. People,”* Chap. v., Sect. iii.

WYCLIFFE’S years were two and forty when Pope Urban’s letter came,—

“England’s tribute, England’s fealty, as John gave, again I claim.”

Edward’s summon’d to Avignon for his homage, due arrears,
And to answer for this long delay of three and thirty years.

Straightway then the monarch questioned thus his knights and barons, “Say,
Had King John the right to bind our English nation in such way?”

Many were the angry voices heard among our people then :

“Homage from our Sovereign! Is a vassal lord of Englishmen?”

“ England’s King is the Third Edward, not to-day the
craven John :

Not two peoples—Norman, Saxon—England’s nation
now is one.”

“ Laws reformed, extended commerce, battles with great
victories crowned,

Universities already through wide Europe well re-
nowned,

“ And our fear upon the nations, might have warned
this Pontiff proud

That we may not insults brook to-day our fathers not
allow’d.”

“ See, the tax we pay this Frenchman * for Church
dignities alone,

Is fivefold what th’ English nation pays our King on
England’s throne!

“ See, Italian Priests, French Prelates our best benefices
hold,

Leaving here their flocks untended, wasting there our
English gold !

“ Englishmen in their own country are become as hewers
of wood,

To a servile hierarchy almost all of alien blood !

* The national animosity then existing between England and France greatly helped the opposition to the Papal claims. Many of the Popes being Frenchmen, had exhibited much partiality for their own country, where they then resided, in the appointments to benefices, bishoprics, etc.

“ Yet all this for nothing reckons since our King takes
not his way
France-ward, with his thousand pieces, vassal’s homage
there to pay ! ”

Soon the Parliament of England came together to
debate
What reply the haughty Pontiff should receive from
King and State.

“ England owns no King but Edward. Urban’s province,
too, is plain :—
Let him keep within the spiritual ; from the secular
refrain ;

“ And within that province, also, gross abuses promptly
stay,
Or the King and State of England shall have other
words to say.”

Grand response ! and well became it Commons, prelates,
peers and King
Of the nation that from Crecy and Poitiers could victory
wring.

Yet no token of the battles, save their names, have we
to-day ;
But this greater triumph’s influence can never pass
away.

Other kings and other armies have trod out all signs
of those :

Wycliffe's work, all these surviving, forward with the
ages goes.

Thus, from that hour to this moment Papal summons
never crost

Sea or land to England's monarch for the vassalage
then lost ;

And from that hour to this moment every bolt that
England hurl'd

'Gainst Rome's Empire but advanced us 'mong the
nations of the world.

Yet while England's voice was heard here, it was
Wycliffe's hand had wrought ;—

These great principles of freedom it was Wycliffe's pen
had taught.



VI.

AT BRUGES (1374).

“A circumstance which manifests, beyond all question, the importance and notoriety of his previous labours, and the confidence both of the Crown and Parliament in his intrepidity and wisdom.”—*Le Bas' Wiclif*, Chap. iv.

NEXT in Bruges, some eight years later, Wycliffe stands to public sight:

There before the Papal legates representing England's
might;

Calling for redress of grievances that caused his Church
much smart;

Calling for abuses' ending that were eating at her
heart.

They who only in remonstrance deal with Rome find
little gains;

Yet he came not back with nothing but his labour for
his pains.

For in Papal Bruges the Papacy was seen at closer
view;*

And thenceforward Gaunt for many years proved his
protector true.

* “He returned from this treaty, like Cranmer and Luther from Rome, more than ever convinced of the necessity of a thorough reformation in ecclesiastical affairs.”—*Brit. Reformers*.

VII.

THE GOOD PARLIAMENT (1376).

“Never had her (the Church’s) spiritual or moral hold on the nation been less; never had her wealth been greater. Out of a population of little more than two millions, the ecclesiastics numbered between twenty and thirty thousand, owning in landed property alone more than a third of the soil; their ‘spiritualities’ in dues and offerings amounting to twice the royal revenue.”—*Green’s “Hist. of Eng. People,”* Chap. v. Sect. v.

CROWN against tiara! Still that struggle rends the realm
in twain.

Vain our law of Præmunire, our Provisors’ statute
vain.*

Treaty and remonstrance worthless ‘gainst ecclesiastic
fraud!

Criminal-in-chief, Christ’s Vicar—the Infallible Vice-
God!

So once more met th’ English Senate, now resolved
Power’s iron hand

Shall enforce the realm’s enactments, though the Pope
himself withstand.

*“The celebrated Statute of Provisors declared void any collation to dignity or benefice, which should be at variance with the rights of the King. The Statute of Præmunire forbade, under the severest penalties, the introduction or circulation of bulls or mandates, prejudicial to the King or people; and all appeals to the Papal Court in questions of property, from the judgment of the English tribunals.”
Le Bas’ Wiclif, Chap. iv.

“ God has given His flock to shepherds to be fed, not
shorn or shaven :

But ‘ the brokers of that sinful city, Rome ’ make sale
of Heaven.

“ Sale of all things ! In wide Christendom where reigns
the Prince, doth own

Larger revenue than Urban takes from Edward’s realm
alone ?

“ See, by firstfruits, reservations, annates, taxes many
more,

Twenty thousand marks go yearly to the Pope from th’
English shore :

“ While our alien dignitaries, at the Papal Court who
dwell,

Yearly more than twenty thousand marks in English
money tell.

“ So some laymen, thus Pope-guided, their trust also
dare abuse,

And to bad men sell their patronage, as Christ was sold
to Jews.

“ Grievously do such abuses hurt our English Church
and realm ;

Give to that a baneful priesthood, this in poverty
o’erwhelm.”

'Twas a Parliament of "Romanists" the large indictment
framed ;

Not a "heretic" among them who as English law
proclaimed,

"To the Parliament of England, be it known, it has
seemed good

All our laws against provisions from the Pope are now
renewed."

Thus the Pope's own English revenue has ceased at
England's will,

Tho' her alien dignitaries hold their benefices still.

And the grateful English nation named this Parliament
"The Good :"

Nor was it by statutes only they thenceforth the Pope
withstood.

Crown against tiara ! England thus her second triumph
scores :

Papal jurisdiction ceases : mistress she within her
shores.

And the Patriot who had roused her to maintain, "No
vassal she,"

Was the man who marched her forces to this greater
victory.

VIII.

ALIEN DIGNITARIES.

“The grievances were no trifling ones. At this very time the deaneries of Lichfield, Salisbury and York, the Archdeaconry of Canterbury, which was reputed the wealthiest English benefice, together with a host of prebends and preferments, were held by Italian Cardinals and priests, while the Pope’s collector, from his office in London, sent twenty thousand marks a year to the Papal treasury.”—*Green’s “Hist. of Eng. People,”* Chap. v., Sec. iii.

THUS the Pope’s own English revenue had ceased at
England’s will :

But his alien dignitaries held their benefices still.

So once more both King and Senate to the Patriot-
Statesman look :

“Counsel us, should we this foreign charge on our
Church revenues brook ?

“True, the Pope ’tis who these aliens to our dignities
advance,

But ’tis true they take some thousands yearly into hostile
France.”

Gladly then they hailed his answer : th’ argument
hailed gladly too,

Which from Nature, Conscience, and The Book, proved
his conclusions true.

Proved with loud exhortings : “’Spite Pontific menace
or demand,

Keep your English treasure in your own, and from your
foeman’s hand.

“ Claims the Pontiff as Lord temporal ? Say he sits in
Peter’s chair—

Lordship temporal ? What the Fisher never had he
left his heir ?

“ Christ’s Apostles laid no taxes, they invited offerings
free :

England’s gifts were gifts—were alms, not tribute—
to the Papal See.

“ Let the Pope choose this or that—apostleship or
earthly power :

But ’tis not men’s custom that the poorer should the
richer dower.

“ Let war-burdened, Pope-taxed, England keep what
gold she has at home,—

Keep it from French Pontiffs’ pockets at Avignon or at
Rome.”

And the Parliament responded, “ Never vacant benefice
Be appointed to henceforward saving with the King’s
advice.”

Crown against Tiara ! England stands again the victress
here ;

Towards her great emancipation making surely year by
year.

First, the Pope no *temporal* lordship hath within her
four seas’ foam ;

Next, her *Church* is independent of both Church and
Pope in Rome.

Now, our England claims *the sole control* of all that hers
 may be,
 Nor without her will, to Pope or foe, shall her gold
 cross the sea.

Crown against Tiara! England stands up conqueror
 once more;
 And her leader's he who led her twice to victory before.

IX.

AT ST. PAUL'S (1377).

“Lancaster, whose object was to humiliate, had found a strange ally in Wycliffe, whose aim was to purify, the Church. . . . Lancaster, feudal to the core, resented the official arrogance of the prelates, and the larger share which they drew to themselves of the temporal power. Wycliffe dreamt of restoring by apostolical poverty, its long-lost apostolical purity to the clergy. From points so opposite, and with aims so contradictory, were they united to reduce the wealth and humble the pride of the English hierarchy.”—*Professor Shirley's "Fasciculi Zizaniorum,"* xxvi.

By much peril oft encompassed, pressed by persecution
 sore,
 Thus his testimony Wycliffe as a Christian patriot bore—
 Friars well might be forgiven if they loved him not too
 well;
 And what Roman Prelates' hate means Christian annals
 often tell.

'Twas their hour too : our Third Edward linger'd now
 as past his time ;
 While his greater son, the Black Prince, lay adying ere
 his prime.

John of Gaunt, the mind-lost monarch's second son,
 tho' still he stood
 Wycliffe's patron, was not trusted of the general
 multitude.

And the Princess—that great sorrow pressing up into
 her life—
 Might be trusted not to meddle in, scarce understand,
 the strife.

'Tis their hour : the power of darkness it to Wycliffe
 must appear ;
 Though since opened the ‘ Good Parliament ’ not yet
 has passed a year.

Yet—strange seems it when you notice—Wycliffe
 has not once assailed
 Any doctrine of the Church yet Why as heretic then
 hailed ?

Nineteen articles *they* draw up from his writings ; but
 (strange sin !)
 All pertaining to Church politics, or laws, or discipline.

“From the secular jurisdiction monk or cleric is not free :

Nor can man, till by himself first, excommunicated be.

“There is nought, save sin, can sever from Christ’s Church a human soul :—

In this province Pope or Prelate has no absolute control.”

“Humanly-invented charters to affect the life beyond—An inheritance eternal—what can be more vain or fond ?”

“Christ gave priests no licence to exact by censure temporal things.”

“It is lawful that delinquent churches censured be by kings.”

’Tis their hour—they know it. Wycliffe to St. Paul’s must now repair.

Primate Sudbury and Courtenay, his worst foe, await him there.

John of Gaunt, Lord Henry Percy, other nobles at his side,

Of their favour come to see that no injustice shall betide.

And the crowds of London citizens press and sway and close amain,

So that e’en Earl Marshal Percy scarce has way made for his train.

Straight betwixt the Bishop Courtenay and these war-
like nobles rose

Altercation fierce and lengthened, as between relentless
foes,

Till the gathered people, heark'ning, in two camps
divided were ;

Though Lancaster's sympathizers seemed by far the
fewer there.

But as when, a captive, Paul before the Chief Priests'
Council stood,

And was saved because of variance in the assembled
multitude,

So our prisoner too was rescued, as he waited un-
dismayed

'Fore his judges, 'mid that concourse by conflicting
passions swayed.

Silent to the close sat Sudbury, mute stood Wycliffe at
the bar,

Whilst before, behind, about them raged the words'
tumultuous war ;

Nor had Wycliffe heard indictment or been called on to
defend,

When at nine o'clock the Primate rose and bade the
Council end.

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Safe escaped from snare of fowler, from the net laid
privily,
Praised his thankful heart, "Out of them all the Lord
delivered me."

Praised and wrought—by voice and pen wrought. Out
his counter-challenge sounds,
In a tractate by his preachers borne round England's
outmost bounds:—

"Peoples cannot, Jesus did not, give Rome's Pontiffs
world-wide power". . .

"All Christ's members equal rights have in His Church's
blood-bought dower."

Little thought as yet Popes give him: but though
Rome may slight him yet,
Those "Christ's members," Bishop Courtenay and his
colleagues, not forget.



X.

AT LAMBETH (1378).

“Bold as the defiance was, it won him the support of the people and the Crown. When he appeared at the close of the year at Lambeth Chapel to answer the Archbishop’s summons, a message from the Court forbade the Bishop to proceed, and the Londoners broke in and dissolved the session.”—*Green’s “Hist. of Eng. People,”* Chap. v., Sec. iii.

BUT deliverance yet greater found him in a darker hour.
Both the Edwards sleep their last sleep; John of Gaunt
has fallen from pow’r.

E’en th’ Archbishops—gentle Sudbury, Lollard Neville
—are not told

In the Council of twelve nobles who young Richard’s
powers hold.

There is one, one only, potent one in all the English
Court—

The Queen-Mother—tow’rds whom Wycliffe may at
all look for support.

While from Rome (th’ Avignon exile being ended)
Gregory

Hurls his five bulls ’gainst this Lollard and the Lollard
heresy.

England’s prelates are commanded, “Seize him :—but
if this you fear,

Cite him publicly before us, three months’ hence to
answer here.”

England's monarch, England's princess, England's sons
of high renown,
Are enjoined to aid the Bishops heresies in trampling
down.

Oxford too is well admonished,—“Would you be with
Rome at peace ?

This heresiarch imprison : let his doctrines 'mong you
cease.”

Yet were some among the prelates who held Wycliffe's
teaching true ;

While 'mong priests and people daily the Reformer's
following grew.

Therefore from his seizure shrank they—shrank the
men of hate and guile—

Even shrank from publishing the Bulls in England for
a while.

While aloud these same men boasted what they would—
would not—do : so,

Once again, this time at Lambeth, wait they as a year
ago.

Once again the meek Reformer dares before them to
appear ;

Nobler now without his nobles, reverent but void of fear.

Yet all Rome's and England's forces 'gainst one man
did Gregory call !

But the one man has ONE with him Who is stronger than
they all.

Calm his written protest placed he in his judges'
 hands :—" Here find
 These strange doctrines fully stated with their sanctions
 in my mind.

* * * * *

" Here before you these my theses, with myself, I now
 submit,
 Ready to retract whatever's shown opposed to Holy
 Writ."

A great crowd of London citizens for the issue watched
 intent ;—

A great crowd this time whose wishes mainly with the
 prisoner went.

And the great crowd's voices went up, while most
 earnestly they plead,—

" With the Patriot-Priest deal kindly though a taint be
 on his creed."

Vain the plea and the entreaty: he is in the hands of foes,
 And the bitter hate of Courtenay for himself and patron
 knows.

So he meekly bides the sentence on his fenceless head to
 fall,

When a stir is in the porch heard and a silence fills the
 hall ;

For Sir Lucius Clifford enters—messenger from Princess
 Joan ;—

Slowly steps he tow'rd's the prelates (he himself a
 Lollard known :)

And the Royal message runs thus, "Your proceedings
stay at once ;

Nor presume you any sentence on John Wycliffe to
pronounce."

* * * * *

Many prayers went up from London homes that night
for Princess Joan,

But the gratefullest of all most grateful hearts was
Wycliffe's own.

Him had Courtenay with malignant glance watched
passing through the porch ;

Yet than Wycliffe was no lealer son that day of "Holy
Church."

Safe once more from snare of fowler, from the net laid
privily,

Praised his thankful heart, "Out of them all the Lord
delivered me."

Praised and wrought—by voice and pen wrought. Out
his counter-challenge rings ;

"Priests o'er nations should not lord it : Popes should
subject be to Kings."

While his bitter persecutor, baffled of his teeth-pierced
prey,

Hied him home revolving surer vengeance for another
day.



Wycliffe, Doctrinal Reformer.

XI.

THE GREAT SCHISM (1378).

“ In the time of Urban VI. rose the 22nd (or 26th) Schism, of all schisms the worst and the most puzzling. For it was so intricate that not even the most learned and conscientious were able to decide to which of the Pretenders they were to adhere, and it continued to the time of Martin V.” (Upwards of 40 years).—*Platina, R. C. Historian.*

“ From this time the theological element, in our modern and narrower sense of the word, becomes predominant in his works ; he begins to write English tracts, to speak of the translation of the Bible . . . and, lastly, arriving at a conclusion to which he had long been tending, he put out in the Spring of 1381, a paper containing twelve propositions in which he denied the doctrine of transubstantiation.”—*Shirley, Fasc. Zizan, xlii.*

Yes, that day from Courtenay's presence when
triumphant Wycliffe went,
Courtenay's Church had no more loyal son, despite his
discontent.

Nay, his sonship's leal devotion in the past had urged
him on :

And its power remained still with him when from
Courtenay's presence gone.

Wrath of Courtenay, friends' foreboding, nought avails
against such love :

Foul disfigurements of ages from the Church he must
remove.

Champion leal of England's Freedom he had been and
would endure ;
Still would strive her Church to render in its outward
workings pure,
Never having searched the heart out of the evils of his
times,
Nor the sure source recognized once of his Church's
sores and crimes,
But for that Great Western Schism when Pope against
Pope first arose,
And each summoned Christian nations to the slaughter
of his foes ;
And the question 'twas of questions which to every heart
came home,—
“ Is the Church's head, Christ's Vicar, at Avignon or at
Rome ? ”
Realms in arms, fierce-fought battles, pardons granted,
Heav'n made good
By each Pontiff to the soldiers who beneath his banners
stood,
Set the Lutterworth Apostle thinking strange things—
strange but true:
And his tractate on “ the Schism ” set others thinking
strange things too.
“ Where hath Christ once taught His shepherds they
might raise crusades, and kill
Sheep and lambs that He has given them, or despoil
such at their will ? ” . . .

“ He is Antichrist who many thousand lives puts for
his own,
Since the Christ laid down His one life for the many to
atone.” . . .

“ Now is Antichrist divided and one part 'gainst t'other
fights ;
'Tis when rogues betray each other honest folks come by
their rights.” . . .

“ Help has been ordained of Heaven against you and
your wicked tricks,
Who all censurers of Pontiffs would denounce as
heretics.

“ By the Popes being thus divided, help is given ; so, at
length,
Shall their malice better known be ; for ‘dividing
littleth strength.’ ” . . .

“ And if Popes Christ's Vicars falsely were self-styled
in th' ages gone,
May some doctrines not be false, too, which they stamped
His name upon ? ” . . .

Earth-shocks from the world's love shook him while he
stood in manhood's porch :
Schism-shocks now, felt through wide Christendom,
shall lose him to the Church.

For that day when, leaving Lambeth, Wycliffe sought
his peaceful home,
He was still a leal and loving son of spiritual Rome.

Only through this Papal schism he for the first time
came to know

The main fountain of his Church's shame, his nation's
sins and woe.

“ For if Popes have falsely called themselves Christ's
vicars in times gone,

May the doctrines not be false, too, which they stamped
Christ's name upon ?

“ Other guides than Popes blood-guilty, selfish, must
for souls be found ;

Let the Word of God no longer from plain folks be
Latin-bound.

“ Antichrist's traditions hinder men from knowing God's
commands,

But the Scripture truth abides still and man's debt to
know it stands.

“ And 'tis not a light thing surely one of God's laws to
unbind :

Of God's laws then seek we knowledge. Cease, blind
guides, to lead the blind.” . . .

“ And of all false doctrines heretofore by Antichrist
brought in,

This of putting priest for Scripture doth involve the
greatest sin.

“ Paul the apostle teaches, All before Christ's judgment
seat must stand

To give answer for the goods received as stewards from
His hand.

“Since nor prelate nor attorney may avail the sinner
then,

Shall the Book, these goods declaring and their use, be
shut from men ?

“Go ye into all the world ; the Gospel preach ye unto
all’—

Preach the Gospel : let all sinners hear the Saviour’s
loving call.” . . .

“Why should Friars hinder others God’s pure Word
to understand ?—

Wish they to be thought the only men who know it, in
the land ?

“Still to keep back what they like not would they fain
retain the pow’r ?

‘Teaching some, some hiding, docking some,’ to suit
the changing hour ?

“Fear they that their faults of doctrine and of morals
must be shown,

Were God’s law in their own language to the common
people known ?” . . .

“Ope the Page of Inspiration, with bared head, in
loving awe.

God move lords and bishops to stand up for knowing of
His law.” . . .

Monks and Friars, take you warning ; further you shall
censured be.

Monks and Friars, loud rejoice you ; on his deathbed
lieth he.

So 'tis said—upon his deathbed, never more to lift his
voice

'Gainst the Pardoners and Beggars. Monks and Friars,
loud rejoice!

XII.

THE FRIARS BY WYCLIFFE'S SICK BED.

“Some of the Friars, hoping that the prospect of death might bring with it fear of ecclesiastical censures, waited upon him to require that he would revoke what he had taught against the Mendicant Orders.”—*Book of the Church.*

THEY have heard that he is dying—they will come to
him : of course

He, the Holy Friars' traducer, is o'erwhelmèd with
remorse.

They will speak him fair, will wish him well, for his
distemper grieve ;

All his penitential utterances will graciously receive.

“Many others scoffed at Friars and repented : some at
death

Passed their riches to our convents with their last
remorseful breath.

“Wycliffe has no wealth to leave us, but much glory
must redound
To our orders if the Heresiarch be but compunctious
found.”

So they came, so ruled their conduct, the Four Orders’
delegates.

Wycliffe on his couch of weakness, patient, silent,
watches, waits.

Then he signed to his attendants, who upraised him in
his bed :

Fixed his keen eyes on th’ intruders as with all his
voice he said,—

“Die I shall not, but shall live th’ ill deeds of Friars
to declare ;

Live, not die, shall I, and publish my Lord Christ’s
words everywhere.”

Ere a moment in confusion the affrighted Friars fled,
Nor had long to wait for token Wycliffe purposed as he
said.



XIII.

RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT: TRACTS,
TRANSLATIONS, AND "GOSPEL PRIESTS."

"Wyclif no longer looked for support to the learned or wealthier classes on whom he had hitherto relied. He appealed, and the appeal is memorable as the first of such a kind in our history, to England at large. With an amazing industry he issued tract after tract in the tongue of the people itself. . . . Wyclif had organized an order of poor preachers, 'the Simple Priests,' who now formed a priceless organization for the diffusion of their master's doctrines,"—*Green's "Hist. of Eng. People,"* Chap v., Sec. iii.

SOMETHING new is heard in England—yet to Rome it is
not new :

Albigenses and Waldenses have already held it true.

Not on Pope or Council calls he ; not to Doctors has he
sent

His appeal (e'en as a challenge): not to King or Parlia-
ment.

(How the Prelates held their breath once, how the monks
refused belief,

When they heard him bid the nation's Council judge
the Church's chief !)

To the Court of Human Conscience, lo, he boldly makes
appeal !

Each man's judgment must decide for each man's
spiritual weal.

“Search the Scriptures for they testify of Me’--the
Father’s Word ;

‘Ye do err not knowing the Scriptures,’ said to common
folks the Lord.”

As if viewless spirits aided, tract on tract abroad is
flung,

Most momentous truths discussing in the common
people’s tongue.

Filled with sayings from the Book, too, which their
Church, until to-day,

In the Latin cupboard safe kept out of common people’s
way. . . .

Hear the cry of Rome’s resentment :* “Christ the
gospel only gave

To the clergy, that the clergy might the common people
save.

“Now broadcast the Gospel pearls are trodden under
foot of swine :

Nay, the Book itself is taken and translated line by
line ;

“And his Gospellers are gone forth : ‘Simple Preachers,’
everywhere

Reading from their Scripture portions, souls innumerable
snare.

* Knighton’s Chronicle.

‘ God has given you the sun,’ these say, ‘and eyes to use
its light.

God has given you this Scripture too and understand-
ing’s sight.

‘ You, not being blind, ask none to lead you when the
sun makes day :

Why not judge for your own souls then, where this
Word’s light shines ? ’ they say.

For ’twas Wycliffe’s vow, before he left that convalescent
couch

Where the Friars looked to find him in remorseful
anguish crouch,—

“ I will fill the realm of England with God’s light ; so
priestly fears

Shall make haste to flee, as spectres of the night when
morn appears.

“ From Truth’s Latin-darkened lantern I have flashed
some rays o’ the Light,

Just enough to show the dangers and the denseness of
the night :

“ I’ll remove that lantern wholly. ’Tis my faith this
light can glow,

Though all clouds pour down their waters, though all
raging tempests blow.

“ So I’ll fill the realm of England with God’s light, and
monkish fears

Shall make haste to flee as spectres o’ the night when
morn appears.”

Therefore sat he down at Lutterworth, with men of
kindly mind,

From the Latin case which darked it to men's eyes
God's word to unbind.

Yes, with brand of heresy though English Prelates
stamp his name ;

Though Pope's menace and anathema have doomed him
to hell's flame ;

Though Perdition's doom hereafter, in this life imprison-
ment,

Over his disciples hang by King's and Pontiff's strange
consent ;

Though his very books are banned to burning, whereso-
ever found ;

Though of early death God's sentence in his palsied
frame is bound ;

Lone, abandoned, persecuted, in health broken,—hour
by hour

Toils he that poor folks may know in their own speech
God's word of pow'r.

Then, as portion after portion passed completed through
his hand,

Two by two his " Gospel Preachers " bare their tran-
scripts through the land.

By the fireside of the peasant, in the castle of the lord,
In the market-square and churchyard, souls were taught
the Gospel Word :—

All God's counsel—from the first page Moses wrote of
the Creation,—

All God's counsel—to John's latest chapter in the
Revelation.

'Tis his glory, God's whole counsel was not known in any
land,

Till he wrought, in any language common people under-
stand.

XIV.

FREE, AND FREEING OTHERS.

“Once fairly freed from the trammels of unquestioning belief
Wyclif's mind worked fast in its career.”—*Green's Hist.*, Chap. v.,
Sec. iv.

SLAVE, wouldst rend another's fetters, see thine own are
sundered first.

Clings one broken link about thee, thou art still a thrall
accurst.

Yes, for thee a happy moment 'twas that crashed thy
bonds in twain ;

Loosing thee from prison, even if not ridding of the
chain.

True it is their weight impedes thee, grates on th' ear
their clanking sound :

Better such than all their silence and thy pillow,
prison-bound.

But most happy is the moment when at last their latest
clasp

Hath relaxed from limb or body its intolerable grasp.

Came for Wycliffe that first moment—of the snapping
of his chain—

When the Papal Schism shook Europe, and both Popes
shed blood, to reign.

This last moment—when the last link fell from his
Rome-shackled soul,

Came to Wycliffe just before his spirit touched its final
goal.

Soul ne'er captive, their slow progress nor ungainly
gait contemn,

Who have surely burst their fetters but not yet got rid
of them.

Yet not slow was Wycliffe's progress when he once had
cast aside

Papal soul-stays, and to Holy Scriptures turned as his
sole guide.

One by one old errors vanished while that Book he
bowed him o'er.

One by one the clouds so scatter, as the dawn develops
more.

No less surely must Truth's fulness in upon such souls be
borne,

Than through all Night's void abysses Dawn once risen
must swell to Morn.

And as one by one the old truths in upon his spirit
brake,

Tract by tract bade all men welcome in his blessing to
partake.

Thus:—"The Supper is in figure blood and body of the
Lord :

But both bread and wine remain there though a Pope
have said the word.

"Bodily in His own Person Christ is not there, whole
or part ;

Yet He verily is present in the true believer's heart."..

"All exterior confession is superfluous for you
Of the contrite heart, whose spirit's broken by repen-
tance true.

"Have you but this true repentance and true faith,
(nought else can save),

All exterior confession's worthless, or to priest or
knave."..

"By the sentence of the Gospel, if you but repent your
sin,

Though you speak not one word after, but the life of
Faith begin,

Christ forgives you—as this woman at His feet in
Simon's home.

Shrive you to Him, and forsake you these new whisper-
ing shrifts of Rome."

Thus as one by one the old truths in upon his spirit
brake,

Tract by tract bade all men welcome in his blessing to
partake ;

Till he stood the one Reformer who, deserted and alone,
Dared deny the only creed in all the realm around him
known.

But meanwhile his efforts slack not, nor his friends' of
kindly mind,

From the Latin case which darked it to men's eyes God's
word to unbind.

Mitred rivals, fierce contending, Europe their broad
battlefield,

Give small heed to th' English pastor who 'gainst both
his pen doth wield.

Thus his shelter is the tempest. Yet, though Rome
may not molest,

There are English persecutors watching to disturb his
rest.

* * * * *

Well and truly was he named "The Reformation's
Morning Star,"

Though before him other watchers by that morn were
smit afar.

Other lights at times had twinkled in the Church's
troubled heaven,

Ere this brightest one, to announce the Blessed Morn's
approach, was given.

But this light's peculiar glory is, At last it held its
way

Calm above all storm and tumult, where no darkness
dimmed its ray.

Through all clouds of superstition, error's night, its
radiance shone ;

Only paling in the presence of the Reformation Sun.

Wycliffe stands the first Reformer who, abandoned and
alone,

Dared deny the only creed in all the realm around him
known.





Wycliffe, Witness and Confessor.



XV.

BEFORE COUNCIL OF OXFORD UNIVERSITY.

“With the formal denial of the doctrine of Transubstantiation which Wyclif issued in the Spring of 1381 began that great movement of revolt which ended, more than a century after, in the establishment of religious freedom . . . The century which followed the triumph of Courtenay is the most barren in its (Oxford’s) annals.”—*Green’s “Hist. of Eng. People,”* Chap. v., Sec. iv.

“’TWAS the doctrine of Rome’s early Church, as Berengare has said,

‘After words of benediction bread and wine stay wine and bread.’

“And the consecrated host which we behold on th’ altar dim,

Is not Christ nor any part—but an effectual sign—of Him.”

Such the doctrine Wycliffe published from his professional chair

In twelve Theses; and from wayside, desk, and pulpit dared declare.

Soon these Theses under sentence fell of Courtenay and
his court ;

Theses (fearing now, now wishing) Oxford scrupled to
support.

Chancellor and congregation—Doctors twelve—together
came,

Transubstantiation's miracle full broadly to proclaim.—

“ When the words of consecration have been spoken by
the priest,

Bread and wine remain no longer in the sacramental feast.

“ For their substance has been changed into the substance
of the Lord,—

Though their accidents remain there—by the consecrat-
ing word.

“ Christ is there, not figured, but in essence, substance,
perfectly ;

Nor His blood and body only, but His soul and
deity.” . . .

“ Preach such doctrines, excommunications major on
you wait :

Hear such doctrines, excommunications minor are your
fate.”

Yet while thus the man they censure, 'gainst his doctrines
thus declaim,

“ For they feared the people,” never once they mention
Wycliffe's name.

In a lecture hall at Oxford, in his professorial chair,
See him next. Attentive pupils throng in crowds
around him there.

This the question which to-day his hearers' presence
has enticed,

“Are the consecrated elements the flesh and blood of
Christ?”

But the Congregation's officers appear: ere day is done
Numbered are his days in Oxford; his, great Oxford's
greatest son.

For a moment glancing round him as if taken by
surprise,

Ere another moment rose he in his simplest, stateliest
guise:—

“Tell your masters I obey them, but am no less
resolute;

For my doctrines neither Chancellor nor assessors can
refute.” . . .

Only once again looked Wycliffe on loved Oxford's
mystic walls;

Only once again woke Wycliffe's voice the echoes of her
halls.

But no century so barren do her chronicles present,
As the century which followed on John Wycliffe's
banishment.

Let us hearken that same Oxford, conscience-smitten,
 through her tears,
 When his voice had in her halls been hushed some five
 and twenty years :—

“ With one heart and voice and testimony we our
 witness bear ;
 Boy and man and priest among us, still he showed a
 virtue rare. . . .

“ Therefore by these presents signify we to you and to all,
 Since in tender years he sought us we nought ill of him
 recall ;

“ Nought recall but what was worthy,—of his con-
 versation, toil
 For God’s glory, man’s salvation, and to rid the Church
 of soil.

“ So in answering, reading, preaching, he behaved him
 laudably
 As the Faith’s strong champion, champion strong ’gainst
 Able-Beggary.

* * * * *

“ God forbid that by our Prelates one for probity so
 famed,—
 Scholar peerless too among us,—should with heretics be
 named.”

Such the witness Oxford bare him, conscience-smitten,
 through her tears,
 When his voice had in her halls been hushed some five
 and twenty years.

XVI.

"THE EARTHQUAKE SYNOD."

"Wyclif, though summoned, had made no appearance at the 'Council of the Earthquake' . . . He seems indeed to have been sick at the moment, but the announcement of the final sentence roused him to life again."—*Green's "Hist. of Eng. People,"* Chap. v., Sec. iv.

'Twas in thirteen hundred and eighty-two, the Peasants
being o'erthrown,—
Met the Council, in our annals as "The Earthquake
Synod" known.

Courtenay, Primate now of England, ruled th' assembly:
with him were
Bishops nine and fifty others, Rome's new breaches to
repair.

To them Wycliffe:—"Needless perils at your bar I
shall not tempt,
For mine Oxford office from your jurisdiction lies
exempt."

Days had passed within the Council when at last the
Doctors came
To discuss John Wycliffe's "errors"; but they scarce had
named his name,

When an earthquake shook the city, shook the great
dome overhead,
Shook the hearts within their bosoms, shook their
consciences with dread;

And some ventured to suggest their own and others' fears—to say,

“ Might it be that God is angry with our purpose here to-day ? ”

But the Primate quick recovering from his fright, that subtle mind

Could another explanation for the fearful portent find:—

“ Foul airs, earth-imprisoned, are by violence alone set free :

Only thus the earth is purged, and only thus the Church can be.

“ Opportunely comes this portent ; it is God's approving sign

Of the duty laid upon us—ordered by His will Divine.”

Not alone God's Word in Scripture for His ends can Satan use,

He God's Word in Nature also can pervert to suit his views.

This expulsion of ill humours from the earth was omen good

Of th' expulsion of ill humours from the Church, he understood.

Thus he calmed that awed assembly, quelled their conscience-startled fears ;

There they signed his dreadful sentence 'gainst John Wycliffe and his peers.

While from Richard's dread wrung Courtenay the
decree, "Let all who prate
Lollard doctrine be immured within the prisons of the
State." . . .

But such sophistries availed not with the Seer of
Lutterworth :

From his still seclusion promptly came the Rector's
answer forth.

Not "with 'bated breath," nor yet "in whispering
humbleness," 'twas sent :

O'er the Primate's head appeals he both to King and
Parliament.

Nor appeals as mere defendant; for he, turning on his
foes,

In the Court of Public Conscience potent cause against
them shows.

"Rome's a market where in open day our cures of souls
are sold

To the highest bidders, (not in grace or learning, but)
in gold. . . .

"All religious vows let be suppressed: the clergy be
maintained

By the free alms of their people: tithes be for the poor
distrained.

"Let our laws of Præmunire and Provisors be enforced
'Gainst the Popedom: clerics be from secular offices
divorced.

“Let imprisonment henceforth for excommunication
cease ;

And our ‘ simple priests’ their doctrine of the Supper
preach in peace.”

Thus rang out his counter-challenge for all men to hear,
once more ;

As at all times of deliverance from like peril heretofore.

And that persecuting edict, ere another year had
gone,

Was repealed, but not ere evil to the Lollards had been
done.

And no power the Primate wielded, and no law he might
enact,

Could secure John Wycliffe’s silence or constrain him
to retract.

XVII.

BEFORE CONVOCATION AT OXFORD.

“If he appeared in the following year before the Convocation at Oxford, it was to perplex his opponents by a display of scholastic logic which permitted him to retire without any retraction of his sacramental heresy.”—*Green’s “Hist. of Eng. People,”* Chap. v., Sec. iii.

FOILED by King and Senate, Courtenay next on Con-
vocation calls.

Surely here’s a more obsequious court in cleric Oxford’s
halls.

Here, where he himself can sit chief judge ; his col-
leagues, too, secure ;
Fix the hour, e'en pack the audience—here his triumph
must be sure.

So his summonses are issued. Crowds of clergy gather
there :
And six Bishops sit as judges with the Primate in the
chair. . . .

Yet one other comes to Oxford, one who from his early
youth
Had drunk deeply of her fountains, thirsting all the
more for Truth.

Forty years before, in loneliness and meek humility,
Knocked a youth at Oxford's portals :—" Mother, all
thou know'st teach me."

Forty years ! These halls of Oxford all the labours of
his youth,
All his manhood's toil had witnessed, all his strivings
after Truth.

Forty years ! And is it marvel if the old man now
recalls
With emotion all his triumphs as a teacher in its halls ?

Forty years ! For now, if Oxford wore of Learning's
fanés the crown,
Well the old man knew his greatness made good part
of her renown.

Forty years! And yet the old man not that day to
Oxford came
To receive her great ones' homage or her people's glad
acclaim.

In a hall of his past triumphs stands he prisoner at the
bar ;
And his judges, holy Prelates, his accusers also are.

Lone the old man stands where often he God's Gospel-
truth had preached
To admiring auditories—stands a heretic impeached.

“At mine answer none stood by me,” said the Apostle :
so thinks he,
Friend-forsaken, foe-encompassed, like Christ in
Gethsemane.

But in danger's night the God's voice, “Fear not,” he
has also heard ;
And celestial visitations unto him have minister'd.

After forty years a prisoner chiefly for that he has
said,
“After words of consecration bread and wine are wine
and bread.”

With the courage of the martyr, with the scholar's skill
and care,
In those hostile judges' presence Wycliffe spake and
did not spare :—

Spake the truth in Christ and lied not, as his conscience
witness bore ;

While the mask from Prelates' aims and doctrine he
unflinching tore ;—

Till, exulting in his spirit, as with zeal his great heart
burned,

On his conscience-smitten judges, as their judge, at last
he turned :—

“ Why such error propagate you of the simple
sacrament ?

‘ Accident without the subject, subject without
accident !’

“ Why, but that like priests of Baalim you would fain
your masses vend ?

You're the heretics (not Lollards) for such doctrines
who contend.

“ And with whom contend you, think you ? With an
old man verging doom ?

No :—with TRUTH, undying, stronger than you, sure to
overcome.”

While he spake he turned and left them : awed, none
hinder, none pursue,

As at Nazareth the Master safe his foemen's midst
passed through.



XVIII.

CITATION TO ROME.

“The appeal of the Prelates to Rome was answered at last by a brief ordering him to appear at the Papal Court. His failing strength exhausted itself in the cold sarcastic reply——”—*Green's Hist.*, Chap. v., Sec. iii.

KING and Senate, Convocation, University alike—
All have failed, at Courtenay's bidding, Wycliffe, as he
willed, to strike.

Yet one Power remains to appeal to : over lands and
over seas
Courtenay's cry is gone that Urban summon Wycliffe
to his knees.

So these two men now were pitted, one 'gainst t' other,
'fore the world,
Priest of Lutterworth—Rome's Pontiff. Surely
Wycliffe's flag is furled.

From the couch of his infirmity prompt came his answer
then ;
He “ must witness also bear at Rome,” if not by voice by
pen :—

“ Were it not a Higher Power than Urban bade him
stay at home,
He had gladly given answer for his words and deeds,
at Rome.

“ Since the Pontiff is Christ’s Vicar he like Christ will
surely be ;—

Surely justice deal to all men, to the erring sympathy.

“ Nor doubts Wycliffe, this so being, if he from the
Truth have strayed,

All his error will be shown him and the way of Truth
displayed.

“ And no doubt, like Christ, Christ’s Vicar (Christ the
lowly one and meek),

Worldly greatness or dominion, worldly kingship, does
not seek.

“ And no doubt the worldly lordship Urban is compelled
to bear

Is a burden he would thankfully be rid of, with its care.

“ Which so being, how should Urban welcome one
traded because,

He had taught, Like Christ, Christ’s Vicars should sub-
mit them to kings’ laws.”

Papal practices and doctrines then, in like ironic strain,
Held he high before the mirror of God’s Word, to man’s
disdain.

So again he fell back victor, while his haters saw with
fear,

They had only higher lifted him and called the nations
near !



Wycliffe, Translator and Martyr.

XIX.

LAST DAYS AND LABOURS.

“The first Reformer who dared, when deserted and alone, to question and deny the creed of the Christendom around him, to break through the tradition of the past, and with his last breath to assert the freedom of religious thought against the dogmas of the Papacy.”—*Green's "Hist. of Eng. People,"* Chap. v., Sec. iii.

LONE and tranquil, high the lighthouse lifts its head
into the storm,
Far below while hungry surges, raging to destroy it,
swarm !

Howl the tempests, let all billows up its steep sides burst
in wrath,
Still aloft through blackest darkness cleaves that
radiance its far path.

In his lone home Wycliffe's spirit, like that rock-set
splendour, kept,
Calm, unbow'd, 'spite monks and prelates, while their
rage o'er England swept.

Let kings counsel take together, calm he lifts that light
on high,—

Nothing flinching, nothing faltering,—to all pilgrims
sailing by.

Yes; alone he lifts it. Earlier allies have fallen away,
Since doctrinal reformation he had ventured to assay.

Patriot-statesmen's aim and effort to preserve their
native land

From the thrall of foreign King or Pontiff, they could
understand :

But these questions of strange doctrine not within their
province came,

Save they mourned the hurt his separate action wrought
their joint-won fame.

Yet, in Wycliffe's mind, as temporal to eterne to these
were those ;—

As one bad result of many, to the spring whence all
arose.

Vain the effort towards extinction of flower, foliage, and
fruit,

Whilst not even you not let alone, but cultivate, the
root.

'Tis man's spirit rules man's progress, not the king's
or statesman's art :

They the hands have who the heart have, and 'tis
doctrine holds the heart.

If a man can make his Maker—or if you believe he
can,—

And can bless you on your deathbed to eternity, or ban ;

To that man within whose province these prerogatives
both lie,

(Prelate, Pope, or Priest), what earthly claim he makes
can you deny ?

Let the Priest be but the pastor, Popes Heaven's porters
cease to be,

And all ground is gone from under Temporal Supremacy.

But his lordly friends forsook him, having sought in the
earlier strife,

“ Meat ” of worldly profit only, not “ to everlasting
life.”

And a loneliness more grievous falls upon him : one by
one,

Forced by persecution, trusted brethren from his side
are gone.

Some through fear denied the doctrine, some in prisons
close are pent,

Some in secret places lurking, some far off in banish-
ment.

Lone, nor knowing how a moment may affect his palsied
frame,

Nor what moment Courtenay's jailers may his tottering
body claim,

Only sure of this, they will come. Yet 'twas ordered
by God's grace,
Not through martyrdom's fire-chariot Wycliffe was to
see His face.

"None of these things move me," thinks he, "neither
count I my life dear,
If my Lord Christ in my suff'rings only magnified appear.

"Since to live, and live in silence, were for me the worst
of crimes.

Than such treason's guilt towards Jesus better death
a thousand times.

"I AM's mystic providences, monks' and prelates' pow'r
and hate,
Know I:—with strong heart and trusting, meekly, all
the worst I wait."

But, in ways his brave soul saw not, men were held from
doing their "worst."

Gaunt in kind remembrance kept him, though not with
him now as erst.

'Cæsar's daughter' from Bohemia, good Queen Anne
in th' English Court,
Openly read Wycliffe's Bible, and with Lollards did
consort.

Rival Popes intent on raising armies, East, West, South,
and North,
Had but little thought to spare for this poor priest of
Lutterworth.

While the Prelates, who more clearly saw what
Wycliffe's movement meant,
"For they feared the people," dared not yet accomplish
their intent.

So they bind him to his parsonage and parish; they
can wait

Till his years and much infirmity release him from their
hate.

So they bind him, but the Word of God they cannot
bind; and still

By his "simple priests" and writings he his mission may
fulfil.

Though his voice is hushed in Oxford, nor in London
may he stand,

Still his tracts and scripture portions are a power
throughout the land.

And he lives the First Reformer who, deserted and alone,
Dared deny the only creed in all the realms around him
known.

Lone? "And yet alone I am not, for the Father is with
me,"

Said the Master, treading surely towards thy depths,
Gethsemane.

And the Master's words still cheered him, "Let your
heart not troubled be,

Neither fearful: ye believe in God, believe also in Me."

*

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*

Statesmen of our Isles of England, called Earth's state-
liest barque to guide

'Twi'x the shoals of Superstition, rocks of Intellectual
Pride!

As your Chart and your Great Charter see you take
the Blessed Book,

Which, for weal of souls and peoples, Wycliffe, Priest
and Statesman, took.

Not as Gaunt be,—like vine-tenders fain to shelter
flower and fruit;

No thought taking for wise tillage of the soil that feeds
the root.

Let it Order, Fate, or Chance be, your Ship's fortunes in
the past

Still have varied as this Volume you made light of or
held fast.

So misprize it not,—a Blessing's in it—in the Blessed
Tome,

Which, wherever brought, brings blessing; be it nation,
church, or home.

Other peoples for their rights against usurping Pontiffs
fought;

Other peoples, too, laughed Rome's ecclesiastic claims
to nought;

Yea, and conquered: oft, in seeming, conquered surelier
than you,

Yet in time that proud Pretender's yoke, as erstwhile
fettered, drew.

They had forced and cherished dearly flower and foliage
and fruit,

While the root they slighted sorely and the soil that
fed the root.

Gaunt-like statesmen they, of whom the quarry was not
prized or known,

Whence true Law-and-Freedom Temples can be hewn,
and whence alone.

Pilots, then, of Ancient England, called Earth's state-
liest barque to guide

'Twixt the shoals of Superstition, rocks of Intellectual
Pride!

As your Chart and your Great Charter see you take the
Blessed Book

Which, for weal of souls and peoples, Wycliffe, Priest
and Statesman, took.



XX.

PEACE.

“A second attack (paralysis) which seized him in his church proved fatal (Dec. 31st, 1384), when he was about sixty years of age.—*Southey's "Book of the Church."*”

“Admirable, that a hare so often hunted, with so many packs of dogs, should die, at last, quietly sitting in his form.”—*Fuller.*

So from day to day he laboured, toiled from week to week, alone,

God's whole counsel, as he found it in His Scriptures, to make known ;—

Chiefly as opposed to errors with which Rome God's Spirit vext ;

His chief joy and care the perfecting his English Bible's text.

Till one peaceful day in winter, with his people worshipping,

Came the summons, “Come up higher, to the presence of the King.”

With the old year passed he from them ; in the new they laid him down

To his rest, where Swift's clear waters wind by Lutterworth's old town.

To his rest men laid him lovingly among the valley's clods ;

Angels bore him to his triumph in the Presence that is God's. . . .

Weep you not, Christ-lovers,—loving him ; though
dead he speaketh yet.

Heed you not his foes' rejoicing : on His Throne still
God is set.

And his message than the messenger is greater ; shall
remain

When the messenger passed beyond the reach of hate
or pain.

Let them chant above his sepulchre their pœans of
delight ;

Nothing recks he where, before God's Throne, he walks
in raiment white.

Let them dig his ashes from the earth and cast on every
gale ;

But they cannot cast them farther than his doctrine
shall prevail.

Let them foul his name with slanders, these shall yet
stand manifest ;

And the name reviled for Christ's sake shall be graved
on Jesu's breast.

* * * * *

It had come to him—the day desired of prophets and
the wise,

When the Word of God's Salvation should lie open to
all eyes.

It had come, and his the hand had bade that utmost
darkness cease:—

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant hence depart in love
and peace.

It had come ; so he, its morning star, pales gladly with
the gloom :—

Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant unto Thee in peace
to come.

Glad he passed away—assured well, “ Truth must grow
though I decrease.”

Calm he passed away in triumph to God’s heaven of
Love and Peace.

XXI.

HIS SECRET OF STRENGTH.

“ We find Wycliffe zealously inculcating the lessons of inspiration on the fall of man and the consequent depravity of human nature ; on the excellence and perpetual obligation of the moral law ; on the exclusive dependency of every child of Adam on the atonement of Christ for the remission of his sins ; and for victory over temptation, and the possession of holiness on the aids of Divine Grace.”—*Vaughan*.

SUCH the man, and such the manner of his death and of
his life.

Hast thou looked into the secret of his strength in all
that strife ?

Faith was his, and Love as surely ;—not a Faith content,
‘ God lives :

So his Providence will care that Time to Truth the
triumph gives.’

Not a Love on vague abstractions vaguely wasting its
resource :

But his heart’s response to that which caught him from
hell’s headlong course.

Christ to him was more than Saviour : Christ was his
Exemplar hailed ;

Christ his intimate Companion : Christ the Friend that
never failed.

All that Christ was to him—Saviour, Pattern, Friend,
Companion true,—

’Twas his faith that Christ would fain be to all mortals
whom he knew.

And his love constrained him hourly, as he toiled to
draw men nigh

ONE who would be all men’s Saviour, Pattern, Friend
and Fast Ally.

Yes, I rate John Wycliffe highly as the Statesman and
the Priest :

Of Reformers if not greatest, certes, he was far from
least :

As a Patriot I praise him, as a Scholar I revere :

But as Witness to the Gospel’s simplest truths I hold
him dear.

Simplest truths? So simple, even lisping babes may understand ;

Though not known to many wise men of his age in any land ! . . .

“ Keep thou surely in remembrance all God’s goodness from the first :—

How He made thee in His Likeness, how He saved the self-accurst.

“ Read the story of His Passion. Ponder o’er it line by line.

Whose the crimes that caused such travail? Whose the follies? Thine and mine.

“ O bethink thee with thine whole heart of the wondrous Love which brought

Him—the Highest—to souls’ rescue that had sold themselves for nought !

“ Brought Him down to be our Brother—and our meanest brother too :

Through a mortal anguish brought Him no mere mortal ever knew.

“ And bethink thee that the Mercy which availed to save, is still

Strong to strengthen when Temptation ’gainst thy weakness threatens ill.

“ O bethink thee that the Love which brought Him down on earth to die,

Still secures on all thy fortunes one sure sympathizing eye!

“That the Love which took Him heavenward to pre-
pare for thee and plead,
Sent the Paraclete from Heaven, thee to comfort, stay,
and lead.”

* * * * *

“Other name for man’s salvation than His Name hath
not been given :
Nor hath human life another perfect pattern under
Heaven.

“Of the wicked, doomed to dying, shall God’s glory
ne’er be known :
True men seeking Life and Glory find it in the Lord
alone.

“Once I went about, by coveting and riches life to
gain ;
In lusts’ swallow and flesh wantonness—in vain : the
quest was vain.

“Then with worldly feres I took me where the mirth
rang wild and free,
But no Blessedness was known there : there no Saviour
joyed with me.

“Now in ‘good work’ self-deceiving, now in Pharisaic
rite,
I assayed the boon so longed for ; but no Jesus met
my sight.

“Not all these, nor any of them, profit did to me impart.

Spake His Spirit to my spirit,—‘Blessed are the poor in heart.’

“So with humbled soul I sought Him : sought of weakness, He was found

Lying in the Bethlehem manger, in poor swaddling garments bound.

“Want’s privations my life burdened ; I my griefs to Him would tell :—

In the wilderness He hungers ; thirsteth, weary, by the well.

“All at evening sought their own homes ; He unto the mount is gone

With the night-dews and the night-chills : home the Son of Man has none.

“Slanders and reproofs assailed me ; my best acts were judged of evil :

‘He is mad,’ of Him His friends say ; and His foes,
‘He hath a devil.’

“Foul Disease involved my body ; and my heart Bereavement’s gloom :

But He *touch’d* the loathsome leper, wept by Lazarus’ tomb.

“I would flee the vain world’s follies, far from crowds my bosom still :

He is fasting in the desert, praying lonely on the hill.

“ For the Truth shall I be fettered ? He this way has
also trod.

In my flesh for Truth’s sake suffer ? Pilate’s scourges
drip with blood.

“ Mental tortures must I dare too ? Shames and
mockeries and scorn ?

Ecce Homo ! Lo, the Purple Robe, the Reed and Crown
of Thorn !

“ Always mine, but mine most surely in the death hour,
when I call—

THOU who for us trod a deeper, darker valley than we
all.

* * * * *

“ Art thou out in search of Jesus when sun shines or
shadows lour ?

Art thou longing for His presence in Life’s prime or
parting hour ?

“ Know, a false man finds not Jesus, cannot see Him
when he stands

In His presence ; could not feel Him tho’ he touched
Him with his hands.

Soul, gone forth in search of Jesus, thou shalt find Him
without fail,

If thou, sorrow-crushed, sin-weary, would’st all souls’
sole Healer hail.”

XXII.

POST-MORTEM.

(1.) CONSTANCE : THE INQUEST.

“The Holy Synod doth further declare and define the said John Wycliffe to have been a notorious heretic, and to have died obstinate in heresy, by excommunicating him and condemning his memory, and doth judge that his body and bones, if they can be distinguished from those of the faithful, shall be disinterred, or dug out of the ground, and cast at a distance from the sepulchre of the Church.”—*Decree of Council of Constance, 1415.*

CONSTANCE city by Lake Constance where from this the
Rhine stream flows!

Far beyond, tower Alpine summits crowned with ever-
lasting snows.

Constance city by Lake Constance! There the Church's
Fathers see
Gathered in the fifteenth summer of the fifteenth
century.

“Councils over Popes supreme are,” they in Council
have proclaimed.

(Pio* other doctrine as the truth, four centuries later,
named.)

So three anti-Popes deposed they and declared Colonna
Popc.

(Ah, if true is Pio's doctrine, once the Church did
darkly grope.)

* Pius IX.—Papal Infallibility declared in Rome, 1870.

So three anti-Popes,—John, Benedict and Gregory,—
they dethroned :

And three heretics accursed they, and their heresies
disowned.

To hell-fire all three accursed they : two to death by
fire they doomed ;

While their master's, Wycliffe's, ashes from his grave
must be exhumed.

Must exhumed be, burned and drowned be ; so be earth
no more accurst

With one trace of the vile heretic who broached such
doctrines first.

Constance town ! Two thousand Holy Fathers then in
Council met

With the Empire's Chief and great ones, in their rolls
this sentence set.

Pitifullest spite of men that have no more that they can
do !

Chiefs and Fathers of the Church of CHRIST ? your
father's works work you.



(2.) LUTTERWORTH: THE EXHUMATION.

“The brook (Swift) did convey his ashes into Avon; Avon into Severn; Severn into the narrow seas; they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over.”—*Fuller*.

BEING dead yet speaks he—yea, dead Wycliffe to good purpose spoke.

Huss and Jerome willing shoulders long had bowed beneath his yoke.

Huss and Jerome must die therefore—die the cruel death by fire!

But the faith of Huss and Jerome shall not in their flames expire.

Thirty years their master's bones in Lutterworth Church-yard had lain:

Thirty years his soul had risen past all reach of hate or pain.

Thirty years the dead was speaking:—potenter to-day his tones,

Or to bind the breaking-hearted or to startle Falsehood's thrones.

Thirty years! And still in monkish and prelatie breasts his name

Is the fuel of a hatred which no lapse of years can tame.

“ Worse than Jerome, worse than Huss, than both together he appears,
By whose doctrine all Bohemia has been poisoned all these years.

“ He is past our power to make him feel the fires we make them feel.
Dig his bones from out their grave and drown them for the Church’s weal.”

Hellish plotters not at all times may their hellish agents find.

Passed some years ere Lincoln’s Bishop was of Constance Council’s mind.

Four-and-forty years have Wycliffe’s bones here lain in mortal trance.—

Look upon this ghastly picture with reverted, hurried glance! . . .

Monks and priests and prelates gather:—’tis some solemn function high

Bids them here, if you would judge them by the triumph in each eye.

Here are also spade and mattock:—’tis some burial rite, no doubt?

Careful delvers too are delving: tonsured clerics crowd about.

Burial, and ne’er a coffin? Burial, no corpse being seen?
Burial, and no vex’d visage, voice of wail, or weeping e’en?

Burial? nay, exhumation! Past are four-and-forty years,
Since men laid here Wycliffe's body while they praised
him through their tears.

And to-day, though from no eyelid o'er that opened
grave tears start,
Down at Lutterworth's old village there are old folks
sore at heart.

There are old folks telling young folks of the tall spare
form they knew ;
Of the face benign and masterful—their pastor's, kind
and true.

There are old folks telling strange folks of the hand
theirs oft had prest,—
Yea the hand that traced the tracts and Scripture
portions they love best.

There are old folks there with old folks, words recalling
that he spake,—
All the doctrines on account of which the priests his
slumbers brake.

There are old and young folks in whose hearts some
truths those heard him say,
Not unburied but revived are, by this hellish deed to-
day.

Exhumation? Profanation! Flee hence—yet, if stay
one must,
With reverted hurried glances note that work of
ghoulish lust.

They have reached the mouldered coffin, all the mould'-
ring bones are told :

They have surely scraped together what they find of
richer mould.

List ! A Prelate's voice is lifted : 'tis th' anathema of
dread

Which the Fathers of that Constance Council 'gainst
John Wycliffe sped.

See ! Christ's priests, as heathen, have already piled a
funeral pyre :—

Pah ! the air reeks with weird savor—mortal earth and
bones in fire !

But the flames grow dim and dimmer : cold at last those
ashes lie !

Carefully they now are gathered 'neath that Prelate's
careful eye.

And again his voice is lifted in th' anathema of dread
Which the Church's Holy Fathers 'gainst the dead John
Wycliffe sped.

And those ashes in Swift's waters, hard by Lutterworth's
old town,

Next, with curse of bell and candle and of book, they
bravely drown !

But the winds that smoke which scattered, and the
main to which Swift bore

Wycliffe's ashes, Wycliffe's doctrine since have sown
by every shore.

And since then in sure proportion as they cherished or
disdained

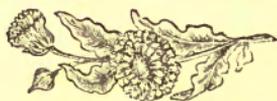
Wycliffe's doctrine, Wycliffe's Bible, have the nations
waxed or waned.

Constance town by Constance waters! There the
Church's Fathers, met

With the Empire's chief and great ones, in their rolls
such sentence set!

Holy Fathers—cursed ashes? . . . Holy ashes—Fathers
curst?

Which? ye after ages answer, realms that have
Rome's bondage burst.





L'Envoi.

XXIII.

WYCLIFFE AND THE WORLD.

(1.) GOD'S PROVIDENCE.

“God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform ;
He plants His footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm.”
“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.”

CLOUDS and darkness, storm and tempest—these are of
our nether air :

But beyond are the infinite spaces, and God's stars and
heavens are there.

God ? nay, God is here beneath them, God within them
working still—

God within them ever working some new mercy to fulfil.

Wycliffe may be scorned or troubled ; Wycliffe's ashes
ocean-drowned ;

Huss and Jerome, his disciples, to the cruel stake be
bound ;

Many of his faithful Lollards in the coming hundred
years

Suffer cruelly for Truth's sake—villeins, clerics, knight
and peers,—

But the seeds they sow are nourished by their blood
and sweat and tears,

And the green will shoot up greener at the ending of
their years.

And their own souls shall stand firmer, and their own
faith surer grow

In proportion as the persecution-blasts about them
blow.

And the Home Beyond shall welcome greater Throngs
before the Throne,

And more Blessèd, for the greater Tribulations they
have known.

(2.) WYCLIFFE'S SERVICE.

“To Wycliffe we owe more than to any person who can be mentioned, our ENGLISH LANGUAGE, our ENGLISH BIBLE and our REFORMED RELIGION.”—*Prof. Montague Burrows.*

YES, I say it as I think it,—In the roll of England's
fame,—

Of her soldiers, sages, martyrs,—Wycliffe shines the
noblest name.

Stands he not the First Reformer who, abandoned and
alone,

Dared deny the only creed in all the realm around
him known?

So that men have truly named him Reformation's
 Morning Star,
 Though before him other watchers by that morn were
 smit afar.

Morning Star o' the Reformation—not in England's
 realm alone:—
 In Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, Wycliffe's name was
 loved and known.

Huss had pondered o'er his pages, had transcribed
 them: not for nought,
 Ere a hundred years, to Luther Huss has Wycliffe's
 doctrine taught.

Morning Star o' the Reformation? Nay, all secular
 blessings, too,
 In our modern life, to Wycliffe, wholly or in part, are due,

Came through him the Reformation? what of all we
 boast in, then,
 Came not through its liberation of man's conscience,
 mind, and pen?—

Came not even to the nations who against its creed
 protest,
 But whose very air hath savour of its doctrines un-
 confest?

Certes, from his time to our time England crowned no
 greatness yet
 Whose substructure or foundation had not been by
 Wycliffe set.

Think you not he was her liberties' inaugurator true
Who the people's judgment first invoked 'twixt man and
Prelate : who

Took the Pope from 'twixt the subject and the
sovereign in our land ;
Whilst he taught, 'Twixt Christ and Conscience priest
or pontiff should not stand ?

Was not he the Founder, likewise, of her modern
literature,
Who first fixed our English language on lines popular
and sure ?

And I hold that Bacon, Shakspeare, Watt and Newton
of him sprung,
Just as surely as his Lollards and the Marian martyr-
throng :—

That his force went with the breezes which the Spaniard's
vessel bore,
And the Dutchman's, to Columbia's coast and far
Australia's shore :—

That his spirit fired the bosoms of the crew of the May-
flower
When they dared the ocean rather than be slaves to
Prelates' power :

And that still it stirs the strong and striving nation-
alities,
England's empire-children, springing up afar in south-
ern seas ;

While from pole to pole our missionaries, wheresoever
sent,

Are his "Gospel-priests'" successors, who by twos
through England went.

But his likeliest disciples are the toilers day and night
Who give other realms in their own speech God's
saving word of light.

Yes, I say it as I think it, in the roll of England's
fame,—

Of her soldiers, sages, martyrs,—Wycliffe's shines the
noblest name :

That his brave heart was th' one acorn whence the
mighty forest grew,
Whose leaves now are for the nations' healing all the
wide world through.

So, thou Pilgrim through our England, drawn for love
of England's name ;

Pilgrim to her shrines historic—monumental of her
fame,—

Count thy grateful task unfinished till thou bless God
on bent knees,

Where by Lutterworth the Swift rolls and by Wycliffe's
glen the Tees.

For I say it as I think it, in the roll of England's
fame,—

Of her soldiers, sages, martyrs,—Wycliffe's shines the
noblest name.





POEMS AND BALLADS

OF

PROTESTANTISM.





Luther's Pilgrimage

FROM

Wittemberg to Worms.*

—o—

“Nothing could exceed his submissiveness and humility when a choice was left him whether to be humble or daring, but when conscience spoke, no other consideration was for a moment attended to, and he certainly did then shake the forest in his magnificent ire. . . . What is also remarkable in a man of his indubitable and profound piety is, that he had no sanctified airs, no austerity . . . no show, no parade of sanctity about him . . . His piety was not put on him, but broke out of him.”—*See Preface to Hazlitt's Translation of Michellet's Life of Luther.*”

* Martin Luther, son of a miner, was born at Eisleben, 1483; entered free school Eisenach, 1489. At Eisenach was greatly befriended by Dame Ursula Cotta. Entered Erfurth University, 1501; opened a Bible for first time, 1503. In 1505 entered Erfurth Monastery, (changing his name to Augustine), where he found a chained copy of the Holy Scriptures. Ordained, 1507. Professor in Wittemberg University, 1508. Visited Rome, 1512. First meeting with Melanethon, 1518. At Augsburg, before the Legate Cardinal Cajetan, 1518. Appeals from the Pope to the Church, 1518. Disputes at Leipsic with Dr. Eck, 1519. Burns publicly Pope's Bull against forty-one propositions extracted from his writings, 1520. Summoned to Diet of Worms by Charles V., 1521.

PRELUDE : IN WITTEMBERG

(APRIL 2ND, 1521.)

1.

AMONG a grave remonstrant group
 He lingers, ready to depart ;
 Like one scarce greater, questioning,—
 “ Why will ye weep and break mine heart ?
 “ For I am ready not alone
 To suffer bonds for Jesu's name.”
 “ The will o' the Lord be done,” also
 Upon his ear for answer came.
 “ Yet,” urges one, “ why go whilst thus
 By bodily weakness bowed ; until——”
 “ God calls me when the Emperor calls :
 I bow me humbly to God's will.
 “ God, when He calls, gives answering strength ;
 And so to Worms I go : e'en though
 Each step from Wittemberg on couch
 Of sickness borne, to Worms would go.
 He lives through whom unhurt the Three
 Bel's seven times heated furnace trod.
 God cannot fail for lack of me,
 But what of me if I fail God ? ”

II.

Without, the Imperial herald waits,
Th' Imperial Eagle o'er him borne.
The streets are thronged with crowds who wait
To greet—no Emperor's bridal-morn.

They wait to cheer no warrior chief,
Fresh from victorious battle-fields :
No statesman whose large policy
From want or war a nation shields.

Among a few most feeble folk,—
His friends—about to part, he stands,—
Earth's greatest, by his greatest girt,
A friar to his feet commands.

Yet less upon that Emperor
And princely court in Worms this morn,
Than on this group in Wittemberg
Of monks—a Papal Legate's scorn,
The after ages' fortunes hang,
The generations' yet unborn.

III.

The saddest face of a sad group—
It is Melanchthon's : unto whom,—
"Brother, most dear of all my brothers,"
Spake Luther, "why this brow of gloom" ?

“ Why? would to God I too might go
And share the perils of your way ” . . .

“ 'Tis God who orders both our lots ;
He calls me hence, *He* bids you stay.

So^r you survive, it matters not
Though all my foes have power to slay

“ For should I never more return
Thou'lt labour the more earnestly :—
Labour, my brother, in my place
When labour is no more for me.

“ And now with me commit my soul
To Him in whom we both believe ” . . .
They part ; and whilst his longing eyes
Pursued, thus did Melanchthon grieve,—

“ My Father, whom God gave to me
In place of country, kith, and kind :
Whom, ever as I contemplate,
Still greater than himself I find ! ”

IV.

Without, th' Imperial herald waits :
And anxious thousands throng about
Where Wittemberg's Town Council's gift,
A covered wagon, waits without.

Here Luther's fellow-travellers wait :—
Leal friend, skilled pleader, Jerome Schurff ;
Chivalrous Suaven, student, knight ;
And, bravest of the brave, Amsdorff.

Now silence holds the street,—he comes !
 And as he enters with bowed head
 'Tis silence ; till, whilst sinking back,
 “ Now, in the name of God,” he said.

V.

THE PILGRIMAGE. .

“ Whither, with thousands' sobs and cheers,
 O monk, accused of heresy ? ”

“ I go before the Emperor
 And all the Empire's chivalry :
 I go to speak for Truth and Christ,
 And for our German Liberty.”

“ Yes, Liberty is more than gold—
 And Truth and Christ more precious still.
 God guard thee on thy perilous way ;
 God shield thee round from every ill !

“ But Papal Legates love not Truth,
 And Christ seems little more than name,
 And Tyrants love not liberty ;—
 Recant, or speed back whence you came.—
 Chains are for troublers of the realm ;
 For heretics a faggot's flame.”

“ No heretic, if God be true,
 No troubler of the realm am I.
 To all I yield in all except
 God's word to abandon or deny.

“ I answer still, God's will be done !

My Saviour Christ, who is my hope,
Will through His Spirit strengthen me
With Satan's ministers to cope.

“ ‘Recant’ ? Thus I recant ;—I've taught,
The Pope Christ's vicar is and word.
Now, th' Evil One's apostle he,
The adversary of the Lord.”

VI.

Long passed are Wittenberg's great plains ;
No welcome out hath Leipsic sent ;
No greeting gives, save Rhenish cup
Of customary compliment.

Which hints, “ Pass on, O man of doom !
Duke George, no doubt, with hatred sore
Hates priests' and prelates' practices ;
He hates the Lutheran doctrines more.”
(And still the people press to see,
At every window, every door.)

“ Monk, monk, observe you not what these
Timeservers bode anent your fate ?
What prudent souls, who hate you not,
But love themselves, prognosticate ? ”

“ On, on, still on, for God is strong :
Mysterious still are ways He uses.
And oft the weak things of the world
Things mighty to confound He chooses.”

VII.

Naumburg! Here, as elsewhere, the crowds
Are out to warn and welcome him ;
With faces pale for love and awe,
With eyes that tears of pity dim.

Here through the throngs a priest has pressed,
Who in his hand a portrait * bears,
Which 'neath the pilgrim's eye is placed
In silence : but the pilgrim hears

A voice within him, " *This* man died
For morals pure and liberty.
But *thou* wilt first change *doctrine*, wilt
Thus only make man good and free.
If this reformer suffered so,
What hope, poor German monk, for thee ?"

He gazed ; and as he gazed, the fire
That always burned within his glance,
Leaped up ; the while a trance-like smile
Took all his rugged countenance ;—

"Savonarola suffered sore ;
Fire-girt, Savonarola died.
Better Savonarola's woe
And death than recreant life," he sighed.

* Savonarola's.

Tears glisten in his upturned glance,
 Lips quiver as he spake once more ;—
 “To martyrs what their martyrdom,—
 How light and brief,—on yonder shore !”

Now strong resolve takes all his face,
 As wont ; “’Tis Satan who would fain
 Prevent the Truth from being confessed
 ’Fore Princes who his power maintain.
 He dreads the ruin which the Truth
 Once known must bring unto his reign.”

With fixèd face, with glance severe
 The priest had watched him earnestly,—
 In silence from the first had watched :
 But now, swift-vanishing, spake he,
 “Abide thou by this Truth of God,
 The God of Truth will ’bide by thee.”

Yet, as he journeyed on, that face
 His fancy haunted still, and woke
 Such meditations as (like one
 Who thinks aloud) thus once he spoke,—

‘Savonarola was a Saint,
 And lives in Blessedness : for, though
 Some Papal error to him clave,
 In Whom he hoped ’twas his to know.
 Popes burned his bones, his memory ban ;
 Christ canonized him long ago.

VIII.

Weimar hath welcome, warning too.

“See,” spake the Herald, “everywhere
Th’ Imperial edict ’gainst your books.

Dare you still forward?” “Yes, I dare.
Though under ban in every town
Through which I pass, I forward fare.

“I trust the Emperor’s guaranty.”

“Safe-conduct, ay? Hast heard of Huss
And Sigismond,” one calls anear,
“That thou wilt be befooléd thus?”

“I’ve heard of Sigismond and Huss.

My soul to Jesus I commit.
My life or death is little worth,—
’Tis God’s affair; He’ll see to it.
So be it life or be it death,
As Truth shall have more benefit.”

Duke John has gracious words, and gifts

To meet the charges of his way,
And open house and open church
In which to preach the Word next day.
For ’mong the Princes too were some
Whose hope in Luther’s doctrine lay.



IX.

There is a flutter at his heart :

His glance a strange wild yearning fires,
As ever and anon he peers
For Erfurth's towers, for Erfurth's spires.

At last! It is dear Erfurth town:—

The University where fled
His student hours; the convent where
His years of pain and penance sped.

Again the young Augustine hears

The wise and gentle Staupitz' voice:—
“Look to the wounds of Jesus Christ,
And through His sufferings rejoice.”

Lives that old monk who spake to him,

“Christ died for sinners to atone.
In sins' forgiveness I believe,
Not others' only but mine own.”

Yes, Erfurth's University

Is known to earth's remotest bound;
And Erfurth Convent hath a name
That through the ages shall resound:

For once in that a student found

A dust-heaped Bible hid away;
And once in this the Scriptures chained
Were a monk's study day by day.

But what sees he along the road,
At least a league from Erfurth town?—
The citizens to welcome him:
In front some doctors of renown.
Right glad the welcome they accord;
Right glad his greeting in return.
Two thousand voices fill the air,
Two thousand hearts in triumph burn.
And Erfurth's streets are still the same
As when the monk Augustine trod
From door to door, and blindly begged
His convent's alms for love of God!
One other night in Erfurth, one
Within its ancient convent bounds,
(If ne'er another,) God gives him.
He strays among the grassy mounds
Where sleep the brothers who no more
The floor of Erfurth convent tread;
With pious reverence pores he o'er
Each brief memorial of the dead.
“Now whose may be yon wooden cross
New-planted in this field of death?”
A brother's truly, tried and true;
A brother too in Jesu's faith.
Loosed is the fountain of his tears:
The Man of Iron bows him down
Above a brother dearly loved,
Of late forgot, in Erfurth town.

One from the convent seeks him out :—

“The convent’s closing hour is past.”

“See, father, where *he* rest, while I——”

His troubled look to Heaven is cast.

With thankful heart he hears the tale

Of his dead brother’s parting hour ;

Of how he triumphed over death,

And triumphed in the Saviour’s pow’r.

But ere he sought his cell that night

At least another hour was sped

Beneath Heaven’s open vault, among

The mounds and crosses of the dead.

Ask you, this mourner by a grave

How shall *he* brave kings’ wrath, popes’ ban ?

Just speak to him the word “Retract,”

Methinks you’ll meet another man.

Just follow him in Erfurth town

Itself, next morn, to Erfurth church,

Thronged with attentive auditors

From altar steps to outmost porch.

Hear him denounce the public vice,

The priests’ false teaching, prelates’ pride :

His text, “Peace be to you : He said

And showed to them his hands and side.”

And when, his ire ’gainst wrong being ceast,

He turns the wounds of Christ to show,

In one half hour this double man

Of wrath and pity you shall know.

But life is such love rules not all :
 Oft tho' hearts break must veil her crown ;
 And earth for him hath dearer haunts
 Than even this dear Erfurth town.

x.

Past Gothen now and Rheinendbrunn :—
 Beloved Eisenach at last !
 (Still all the towns and villages
 Poured forth their people as he pass'd.)

'Tis Eisenach, dear Eisenach !
 It seems, to Worms while journeying on,
 Through all his life he travels back,
 Through manhood, youth and boyhood's dawn.

'Tis Eisenach, dear Eisenach !
 "Halt!" and the covered wagon stays
 Before the door was Cotta's once . . .
 Whilst with uncovered head he prays,

"The pious Shunamite" he sees
 In fancy on the threshold stand :—
 Her face of kindness sees who takes
 A solitary singer's hand.

Now to his friends in tears he turns :—
 "Earth nothing has from sea to sea
 So tender as a woman's heart
 When 'tis the abode of piety."

One moment paused he. "Spurn you not
 Poor scholars singing at your door,
 Who *panem propter Deum* ask ;
 For Luther has done so before.

"I would not now my fortunes change
 With him who fills the Grand Turk's throne ;
 Not for the wealth of all the world
 Surrender some things that I own ;

"But ne'er had kings stayed on a voice
 Once suppliant in this street for bread,
 Had I ne'er learned to read ; my soul
 Ne'er been to Truth's pure fountain led."

And now in kindly scorn one calls,—
 A military chieftain high ;—

"You he who dares the impossible,—
 The Popedom to reform ?" "Yes, I,
 Before me are God's word and law,
 And on His promise I rely."

In altered tones the officer
 Spake back :—"No doubt you well deserve ;
 And much is hid in what you say.

I serve the mighty Charles : you serve
 A Mightier. He will assist
 And shield you ; only do not swerve."

Dear Eisenach ! and has he come
 At Eisenach beloved to die ?
 Fond fearful friends around his couch
 Herein Heaven's warning-sign descry.

“ My Father, friends and foes have warned :
’Tis God himself doth warn thee now.
Hearken submissive : to His will,
Thus plainly manifested, bow.”

“ God warns by friends and foes, and oft
His special providences guide.
So, too, He tries His children’s faith :
He trieth me who Abram tried.”

And Eisenach is left behind.

Death in his face he passed its bound,
Scarce of the sympathetic crowds
Aught recking, that his ear surround,

Till one calls to him, “ Cardinals
And Bishops at Constance gave Huss
A welcome of the warmest : what
If now at Worms they serve you thus ? ”

His eyeballs flashed, as, with raised head,
In thunder-tones his answer came,
“ Though they should make a fire to reach
From Wittemberg to Worms, whose flame
Would touch the high Heaven, still would I pass
Right through and through in Jesu’s name ;

“ Before these princes would appear,
And treading ’twixt Behemoth’s jaws
Would break his teeth, confess the name
Of Jesus and maintain my cause.

“He lives through whom unhurt the Three
 Bel’s seven times heated furnace trod.
 God cannot fail for lack of me ;
 But what of me if I fail God ? ”

XI.

He Spalatin from Frankfort writes :—

“If you adjudge our progress slow,
 Know Satan hindered, hinders still,
 By various devices ; so

“From Eisenach till now Disease
 Has had me in her bitter care.
 But as Christ lives I enter Worms
 Despite Hell’s gates and powers of air,
 ’Tis not that Satan will fright me,
 But I will drive him to despair.”

Within the school of William Nesse

He spake to the assembled youth :—
 “Your chiefest study be God’s Word,
 Your chiefest search that after truth.”

And he who blessed the children there,
 High-honoured of the wise and good,
 Thence an aged widow’s blessing took
 In love and lowly gratitude.



XII.

In Worms fear seizes friend and foe
As Luther's advent draweth near.
His friends, "no faith with heretics,"
Among the prelates whispered hear.
His foes know what is darkness' doom
If dawn once touch the firmament.
So friend and foe for once are one
His nearer progress to prevent.

XIII.

At Oppenheim his heart is glad
For Bucer's coming. "Ho, what cheer?
At head of horsemen, too?" . . . "The Knight
Of Sickingeen still holds thee dear.
"He sends me forward with this troop
For thy convoyal to his hold.
Since Charles' confessor, Glapion,
Would warn thee 'gainst being over-bold.
"Once found in Worms thou'lt surely burn.
He comes to Ebernberg, and there
You two shall end the empire's fears.
But of the nuncio beware—
"Of Alexander." Bucer thus:
Amsdorff and Schurff in silence wait.
Jonas is doubtful what to say,
But Luther does not hesitate:—

"What, Bucer? Sickingen? List, all:—
 If the Emperor's confessor so
 Desireth to have speech with me,
 My answer is, *To Worms I go.*"

Still Bucer urged:—"Tis Sickingen
 Who sends; what truer friend than he?
 The brave Von Hütten joins with him;—
 His guest, as both would have you be."

"Take Luther's words to both his friends,"
 (Now Luther spake in gentler tone),
 "He goes on his appointed way;
 His shield the Lord of Hosts alone."

XIV.

At Piffenheim beside the road
 A peasant's planting elms. "Let me
 Plant one, and may my doctrines thrive
 As shall the branches of this tree."

(It throve. For nigh a century
 From far and near, of every grade,
 Devoted Lutherans to rest
 'Neath "the Reformer's Elm" were laid.)

XV.

Of all the princes now in Worms
 Attendant on th' Imperial throne,
 Luther holds one in steadfast faith—
 The Elector Frederick alone.

“Back to your master,” Luther spake ;—
Give him my answer in square terms :
Held Worms as many devils as tiles
Upon its roofs, I’d enter Worms.”

XVI.

Thus openly, victoriously,
With world and flesh was he engaged,
A subtler warfare in his soul
With Satan’s self was often waged.

As from an angel of the light
Came promptings of most heavenly hue ;—
Such as, The altar may be God’s,
But art thou priest or victim true ?

Such as, The altar may be God’s,
And thou be priest or victim true,
But is the fire thou bringest “strange,”
Or such as to such service due ?

Two voices thus within him strove ;
And now the voice Christ’s grace withstood
Did seem an angel of the light,
And now—a brother’s of his blood.—

“What hast thou done with those few sheep
In Wittemberg’s far wilderness ? ”
’Tis but a proud and naughty heart
Has brought thee to the battle’s stress.

“*Thou* might'st leave Kings and Courts alone :
Yon sphere was large enough for thee.
Here die ; the world is nothing more,
And yonder flock roams helplessly.”

But “Is there not a cause ?” Still came
That answer on his heart with pow'r.
“God called me when the Emperor called :
'Tis God has called me to this hour.”

“And *thou* before the Emperor
And Empire's chivalry wilt stand
In friar's frock—a David, but
Without sling or stone in hand ?
Speed, speed thee back, poor fatuous soul ;
Return at once to thine own land.”

“O no, not so. I forward go,
As David's God shall be my stay.
In mine own strength I face no foe,
And not unarmed I brave the fray.

“I bring no stones from rushing brook ;
For this my warfare vain were such :
My weapon's one—the Spirit's sword.—
I've put its prowess to the touch
Already. David's God, through me
And it, already hath done much.

“The bears and lions” I have slain
Are lies and wiles that barred truth's way,
And this Goliath, Empire-Power,
If it oppose, shall be as they.

“’Tis with its blade the pardon trade
Was struck to death in Saxony.
Its point at Augsburg pricked to nought
A Cardinal’s diplomacy.

“Shame on the sophists’ monstrous brood
At Leipsic its hilt-jewels pour’d:—
Popes’ bulls blanch everywhere before
The shining of my magic sword ;
And Kings’ decrees (if false) as these
Shall be, alongside of The Word.”

Two voices thus within his breast
Strove ever while he journeyed on ;
Their sharpest struggles waged when he
From human faces was withdrawn.
But ’spite occasional sore stress
The True in every conflict won.

XVII.

’Twas April’s sixteenth morn when Worms,
Crowned with her towers, before him rose.
Upstanding in his car he sang,
“God is our Refuge from our foes.”

And now the sentry’s trump in Worms
Is heard from the Cathedral tow’r ;
And all the waiting city knows
What means the warning at this hour.

So, while he chants his psalm, from out
 The gates of Worms press cavalcade
 On cavalcade and crowd on crowd,
 By various passions driven and swayed.

Till 'neath the ancient walls of Worms
 It seemed the Saxon wagon ne'er
 Might find a passage, for the throngs
 Of townsfolk congregated there.

XVIII.

In guise grotesque, with taper lit
 And funeral cross, who comes? The crowd
 Force difficult passage for him; some
 In wonder, some with laughter loud.

Bavaria's ducal jester 'tis,
 With chant monotonous he comes;—
 "Welcome, thou much desired, for whom
 We have been looking in these glooms!"

"Children and fools oft speak the truth,"
 A citizen makes answer hot,
 And, in the cheers which follow, soon
 The wretched spectacle's forgot.

For greater crowds are out than hailed
 The Emperor. For, tho' Worms' night
 Is at its darkest, it is stirred
 By boding thrills of morning light.

And when Charles came, the crowds were out
Imperial pageantry to scan.

When Luther comes, the crowds are out
To welcome and well-speed a Man.

Their morning meal scarce tasted, all
The folks of Worms are out to view
The Man Huss spake of when he said,
"I die, but God will visit you."

Nor streets alone, the windows all,
Are filled with faces : from "the tiles
Upon the housetops" come to him
Not "devils'" frowns but human smiles.

And all along that progress slow
Past those last houses unto where
Stands "Th' Hospitallers' of St. John,"
The people's shoutings shook the air.

There stepped he down : but when he felt
The stones of Worms beneath his tread,
One moment standing to his height,
"God, God will be my strength," he said.



XIX.

L'ENVOI: IN WORMS.

APRIL 16TH, 1521.

WHILE Chiefs and Princes awed thy streets,
 Awed in their turn by him the Crown
Imperial who wore, O Worms,—
 Well happened it for thy renown,

When at thy portals knocked a MAN,
 Thou knewest him a MAN no less
For that within thy walls he passed
 In Saxon wagon and monk's dress.





“JESUS CHRIST AND HIS
ENSIGNS.”





“Jesus Christ and His Ensigns !”

A STORY OF

France's First Martyr.

(See D'Aubignes History of the Reformation, Book xii).

HEAR a story of France's First Martyr.—

Louise ruled the realm for her son,
Duprat then was chancellor ; Beda
As Syndic controlled the Sorbonne.
These two were as right hand and left hand
To the Regent, what'er she designed :
For Francis, when France's first martyr
Was doomed, in captivity pined.

Louise the Devout and the Wanton
To Syndic and Cardinal spake,—
“How may we uproot these new doctrines ?”
Prompt came their response, “By the stake.”
As prompt her rejoinder, “So be it ;”
As promptly the edict was signed.
The one “heretic” Bishop, Briçonnet,
Seceded, with some of like mind.

Mazurier has gone with Briçonnet,
And got a rich canonry so.
Lefevre, the Roussels, and Farel
Have wisely retreated from Meaux :
Have gone, to the little flock saying,
“ Hold fast ; He remains though we go.
Keep secret. . . . ’Twill pass : in the meantime
God’s Gospel seed elsewhere we sow.”

Fast held they, in covert close keeping ;
Still trusting themselves to Christ’s care.
Lone hut, hidden copse, dingy garret,
There places of gathering were.
And one from among them stood forward
In their secret assemblies to preach ;
From house to house daily was welcomed
To comfort, encourage, and teach.

Leclere the wool-carder. No college
This France’s first martyr had taught :
No Bishop ordained him : of scarcely
One book save The Book knew he aught.
But the power of Christ’s spirit was on him,
And the force in his soul of Christ’s love :
And God with exceptional graces
Had filled him, great mountains to move.

Yet a zeal not accordant with prudence
Still marred him : forgot he too oft,
There’s a time for abiding in ambush
As for flaunting the banners aloft.

So, traversing daily the city,
His spirit was daily more grieved
Because of the thousand devices
With which deathless souls were deceived.

Whither hasten the priests and the people?
And the friars—what haste they to see?
Before the Cathedral porch gathered
They read, in large letters and free,—
“No Saviour but Christ for poor sinners;
No guide but His Spirit and Word,
As Antichrist soon shall the Pope be
Destroyed in the day of the Lord.”

Whither hasten the priests and the people?
And the friars—what haste they to see?
Three days in succession what causes
Such crowds in the streets to be?
Three days through the streets they drave him,
Hands bound, and back bared: each day
You might follow his course by the traces
Were left of his blood on the way.

Three days through the tumult came voices
Of fierce execration and wrath:
Some voices in tenderness also,
To help him along that fell path.
And one voice was heard through all voices
Of sympathy, pity, and hate:—
’Twas the voice of the wool-comber’s mother,
Who bade him exult in his fate.

And when executioner's scourges

Some deeper sign left in his flesh,—

“I bear my Lord's marks on my body,”

That mother's voice called out afresh.

And again when yet farther the whips bit

And larger stain left on their way,

“Our sins scarred Him deeper!” this mother

Of France's first martyr would say.

At last the third journey is ended :—

He stands in the thousands 'midst now.

The hangman his irons has heated

For branding the “heretic's” brow.

And the wool-comber's mother still waits there,

A witness, but silent and weak,

Hark! A shout has gone up from the people,

Not swelled by her wail or her shriek.

That brand on his brow stands for ever,

And silence has seized on the crowd—

A silence unearthly, oppressive. . . .

Out rang then a cry clear and loud,

“Jesus Christ and His ensigns for ever!” *

No heart in its bosom but shook.

'Twas the voice of the wool-comber's mother,

Of France's first martyr's so spoke.

Parted the great crowd in sunder

To make her a laneway clear.

Sought she her homestead in silence,

None daring to interfere.

* Vive Jesus Christ et ses enseignes !

“ Jesus Christ and His ensigns for ever !
 Our sins deeper scarred Him,” said she,
 “ Who loves more than me son or daughter,
 Of me is not worthy,” saith He.

“ Go hence, Jean Leclerc, and be careful
 Our town never sees you again ”
 One night may our France's first martyr
 In the home of his mother remain.
 And oft, while his bruises she tended
 And wounds, while the heart in her bled,
 “ Jesus Christ and His tokens for ever ! ”
 “ Our sins deeper scarred Him,” she said.

But when, some months later, flame-girdled,
 Stands France's first martyr in Metz,*
 'Mong the thousands around him she stands not :
 Yet think you that cry he forgets ?
 Than angels' glad welcome more helpful,
 More near was that voice as life speed,
 “ Jesus Christ and His ensigns for ever ! ”
 “ Our sins scarred Him deeper,” which said.

* “ The contemplation of such fortitude at once frightened the adversaries and greatly confirmed believers After undergoing these tortures, Leclerc was burned at a slow fire, in conformity with the terms of his sentence. Such was the death of the first martyr of the Gospel in France.”—*D' Aubigné*.





Louis de Berquin.

(See D'Aubigne's "History of the Reformation, Book xii.)

IN the very court of Ahab
Was an Obadiah found :
In the court of the first Francis,
Berquin moved, for worth renown'd.
Like to Saul, for Falsehood zealous
While it sat on his Faith's throne :
Like to Paul, for Truth as ardent
When as truth the Truth was known.

He, while lost in Papal error,
In an evil court and age,
High aloft upheld the standard
Of good morals, learning sage ;
Greatly favoured of his sovereign,
Who, no anchorite himself,
Honoured goodness : who, no scholar,
Wisdom higher placed than pelf.

So, while yet this "scholar-noble"
Built on Peter as "The Rock,"
Him did shepherds hate who solely
For the fleece' sake loved the flock.

Since, beneath his king's protection,
He to laugh and weep was free
At Prelatic follies, friars',
Monks' and priests' hypocrisy.

With his laughter laughed the nation,
And his weeping thrilled its heart,
And his laughter and his weeping
Made the shameless shepherds smart.
But when crimes of persecution
Crowned their other crimes, his breast
Was with pity for their victims,
Sorrow for his church, opprest.

“Live Christ Jesus and His ensigns!”—
To his ears had come that cry
Of the poor wool-comber's mother
To her son set forth to die.
So, such doctors now are “tyrants,”
And his wit-shafts 'gainst them hurl'd :
And such monks “most hateful hornets
Grown the terror of the world.”

But the favour of his sovereign
Shields him still from the Sorbonne :
And the blackest deed of all deeds
(In their eyes) he hath not done.
If at priests' and prelates' vices
He can strike a hurtful blow,
Still the “heresy” of Luther
Finds in France no subtler foe.

Scornfully as his pure spirit
Of monks' plots and vices deemed,
To his gentle soul more hateful
These new persecutions seemed.
Till at last he said, What mean these
Heresies for which men die?
And those Scriptures? Such strange doctrines
Their true meaning must belie.

So he oped the Sacred Scriptures,
Oped them confident and blind.
But, as page by page, he pondered,
Light broke fuller on his mind.
There not Papal doctrine found he,
But of Luther: there he found
More was needful than reforming
Priests within the Church's bound.

Like to Saul, for falsehood striving
While it sat on his faith's throne,
Like to Paul, for Truth henceforward
Strives he, since as truth 'tis known.
So, by night and day he travails,
By his prayers and voice and pen,
That the light which fills his own soul
May illumine his countrymen.

And with power and with acceptance
He has preached the Gospel Word;
And his tractates and translations
Have drawn souls to Christ the Lord.

So 'twas said, another Luther
 Were in Berquin surely known
 If another Frederick only
 Sat upon King Francis' throne.

Vain are now his knightly manners,
 Vain his life without a stain ;
 Vain his alms deeds and his fastings—
 Learning, virtues, all are vain.
 And his foes are now his judges ;
 So, nor legal lore nor wit
 May the "heretic" avail now.
 Nor his skill in Holy Writ.

Hear th' offences he stands charged with :—
 " 'Jesus Christ alone,' he says,
 'Is our hope, our life, not Mary :'
 And to God alone he prays.
 And he holds 'tis wrong on Mary
 As the source of grace to call.
 Grace is gotten through God's Spirit
 And not otherwise got at all."

Once and twice and yet a third time
 The Sorbonnists him arraign ;
 Once and twice and yet a third time
 Francis bade them loose his chain,—
 Warning him henceforth such notions
 Must keeps bounds in his own breast,
 But convictions like de Berquin's
 Heed nor friend's nor foe's behest.

The halting Scholar-chief Erasmus,
 Writes him,—“Flee your native land!
 See the thousand-headed monster
 Venom darts on every hand.
 Mark you do not compromise me.
 E'en your king's defence must fail.
 Were your cause clear as the Saviour's,
 Even that would not avail.”

But the conscience-voice within him
 More than any king's decree,
 And the word God's Spirit taught him
 Than all doctors', revered he.
 Hark, he summons the Sorbonnists!—
 “For some heresies you teach,—
 These twelve propositions taken
 From your books,—I you impeach:—

“I before the King impeach you
 As the heretics *you* are.”
 And the Gallio-like monarch
 Laughed to see the tide-turned war.
 While the rage of the Sorbonnists
 Burst all bounds;—“To think that they,
 France's light, th' Church's pillars,
 Thus should seem a Lutheran's play.”

But the vacillating monarch
 Loved his tourney and his jest:
 Loved to see the proud Sorbonnists
 By a “heretic” thus prest.—

“These your doctrines, saith de Berquin,
 With the Scriptures not agree.
 Name a day for your refutal
 Of his follies,” answered he.

Many were the fond excuses
 For that day’s postponement, till
 Lucky chance and zealot folly
 Came in aid of wicked will:
 For a fanatic o’er-fervent,
 At the corner of a street,
 Maimed a statue of Our Lady
 Of two fingers and both feet.

And a cry went through the city
 From the monks of the Sorbonne,
 Taken up in wrath or pity ;—
 “See what Berquin’s books have done!
 Such the fruit of Berquin’s teaching!
 Nothing’s safe where ’tis allow’d,—
 Faith or throne or constitution! . . .”
 Such the voices filled the crowd.

And the populace’s voices
 Reached up to the monarch’s ear,
 And the wily Syndic’s whisperings
 Filled his mind with doubt and fear.

* * * * *

Now de Berquin’s lodged in prison:
 While the King, at Blois sojourning,
 Hopes men may have come to reason
 By the time of his returning.

Fortune favours still the Syndic ;—

Nay, our Lady, it was said,

By miraculous advantage

Did his prosecution aid.

Brave de Berquin scarce was fettered

When a trouble seized his mind,

For some writings it were better

That the friars should not find.

So he wrote a note in secret,

To a secret friend address'd.

It was carried from the prison

Hidden in a servant's vest.

“Quick ! burn all such books and papers

As might aid the Syndic's ban,

Which you find within my chambers :”

Thus the hurried message ran.

Well this servant loved his master ;

Yet a superstitious heart

Caused him dire misgiving,—Should he

Thus the Church's counsel thwart ?

At the Pont du Change arriving,

All his terror now had sway :

So, before our Lady's statue,

There he swooned, and fell, and lay.

Passers-by have gather'd round him,

And (to give him fuller breath),

While unbuttoning his doublet

Find the letter underneath.

“ ’Tis a miracle ! . . . our Lady—
 She has done it ! ” now they cry.
 (By which “ miracle ” our Lady
 Brave de Berquin dooms to die).

Spake the angel once,—“ Hail Mary,
 Full of grace, with thee’s th’ Lord ! ”
 Say, Christ’s mother, doth this please thee—
 Death and doom by fire or sword ?
 Nazareth’s daughter, wife, and widow,
 Serving Son and Saviour purely—
 Can it be the monks’ “ Our Lady ”
 Is the Gospel’s Mary surely ?

Well I’m doubtful—but no matter :
 Haste our story towards its close.
 Berquin stands before his judges
 For the sentence of his foes.
 He must walk with head uncovered,
 Lighted taper in his hand,
 To the Place de Greve to witness
 Burning of his books, Church-bann’d.

Next, before famed Notre Dame he
 Must be ta’en from Place de Greve :
 There “ to God and to His mother ”
 Penance do ; their pardon crave.
 There his tongue is to be pierced through—
 That unrighteous instrument.
 Thence must he be ta’en to prison
 And within four stone walls pent.

There within four walls a captive
To his death ; nor pen and ink,
Nor a book shall he be granted—
Let him breathe and feel and think !
This if he abjure his doctrine :
But if not a fiery death——
Cruel are the tender mercies
Of the wicked, Scripture saith.

For a moment shocked and startled,
Silent stood he—not through fright,
But the sentence so inhuman
Seemed, he doubted heard he right.
But one moment stood he silent ;
Out his accents clear did ring,
As he answered, “ I abjure not :
I appeal unto the King.”

Vain appeal ! at Blois sojourning
Nought knows Francis of his pain ;
And the fierce Sorbonne will surely
See that he appeals in vain.
Yet is one 'mong his twelve judges,
(Great Budœus, known to fame),
Who in secret favours doctrines
Which as judge he must disclaim.

Well de Berquin too he honoured,
And de Berquin fain would save :
So he hastens to the prison,
Of his convict boon to crave.

“ Do the public penance asked for,
Save thy life but for a week,
Till the King is back in Paris
Or his will by letter speak.”

“ Have I not appealed to Francis?
They must wait upon their King.”

“ Nay, I tell thee thy submission
Or thy death this week shall bring.”

“ Then so be it : my submission
It shan't be, as Christ will aid.”

“ Oh, for Christ's sake and His truth's sake,
Think again,” Budœus said.

“ When for France—for Church and nation—
Breaks the better time long due,
Where will our French Luther's voice be
And the crown he forfeits, too?
But the martyr answered, “ Needeth
Christ your life or mine? I'd say,
Probably our death would better
Serve to speed that longed-for day.”

O'er and o'er again so reasoned
At his feet, with tears, the judge,
But each nobler plea was treated
As some subtler subterfuge.

“ Ye shall be as gods then knowing
Good and ill,” the serpent said :
“ Thou shalt be a light far glowing,”
Through Buduces now he pled.

Even flint by falling rain-drops
Hath been channelled, it is told.
And resolve must needs be steadfast
Which against Love's pleas shall hold.
And an hour came when Budœus
Lay along the prison earth,
Clasping Berquin's feet, and wailing,
"Is *my* judgment nothing worth?"

"Here I charge thee in God's presence —
By my love and by my tears ;
By my wisdom and my knowledge ;
By my hopes and by my fears :
Go, to burning give thy body,
Yet thou lackest charity,
God abandoning and country
In their utmost need of thee !"

Then the strong man bowed him, shaken ;
Then the Holy Spirit's pow'r
(Saith the Chronicler,) seemed deadened
In his bosom, one brief hour.
"To the Syndic and his minions
You from me this message bring,—
I would pardon beg to-morrow,
Openly, of God and King."

Joyed, Budœus left the prison ;
Grieved, de Berquin stayed behind :
He has found a darker prison
Than of stone within his mind.

Lo, his eyes to Heaven are turned .
But that act, which ever brought
Joy and comfort to his spirit,
Now hath anguish in the thought.

And shall he go forth to-morrow—
Say of Christ, I knew Him once?
Of the gospel of salvation
To his soul, say, I renounce?
Lord, who pitying looked on Peter,
Look on me who pity crave.
Worthy of Thy service truly
Were the life I thus should save !

When Budœus next returned,
There was that in Berquin's face
Told him, ere a word was spoken,
He had found the martyr's grace.
Now Budœus pleads with Beda ;—
“ Not a day,” the Syndic spake,
On the sixth day from his sentence
Berquin stands beside the stake.

Through the city wide that morning
Had the news like terror flown :
So, great crowds besieged the prison
Till its gates were open thrown.
When at last, the gates thrown open,
Issued the procession forth,
Not among the countless faces
Showed their one of nobler worth.

And the Chroniclers have told us
 Some things the spectators said,
 One to other, as they marked him,
 While the long procession sped.
 "He is liker one who sitteth,"
 Said they, "in some temple high,
 On things holy meditating,
 Than a convict bound to die."

 "See," said some, "his brave apparel :
 He is surely liker one
 To his bridal banquet going,
 Than to burn ere set of sun."
 (Truly spake they ; for, that morning
 He had spoken, "Lo ! to-day
 Enter I my great King's presence ;
 Let me have my best array)."

 "He is going—whither going ?"
 Answers some one, "To the stake.
 See you not the wretched tumbril,
 Wont such victims there to take ?"
 "He is going—whither going ?"
 "Whither going but to die ?
 Executioners and soldiers
 Saw you not go with him by ?"

 "Whither going ?" . . . Ask the martyr.
 "Whither going ?"—he would say.
 "I shall to Elijah's chariot
 From this tumbril step to-day.

‘Whither going?’ In that chariot
I shall cleave yon azure space,
And this night my loving Saviour
To His bosom me embrace.”

At the Place de Greve alighted,
While he stood beside the stake,
He would fain to that great audience
Speak a word for Jesus’ sake.
But, at signal from the friars,
Clash of arms and tumult loud
Caused the last words of the martyr
To be lost upon the crowd.

It was not his voice God wanted,
But his death, to speak to France.
From that stake, his eyes uplifted,
Meek, heroic countenance,
And his prayers for foes and country—
Friends and Truth, a sermon preached
Which, through all the nation, farther
Than a thousand sermons reached.

And his stake, too, was the candle
Whereat Calvin, standing by,
Lit the torch that from Geneva
Lighted peoples by and by.
’Mong the throngs had watched de Berquin
Brave to death Rome’s cruel ban,
Went one Sceptic an Apostle,
Went one youth from thence a man.



A Martyr of Tell.



CLOSE to her breast her babe she prest,
And faced the crowds, alone.
Unknown her place of birth, her race,—
Her very name unknown.
But this all know, Six months ago
She came 'mong them to dwell ;
And has not been at priest's knee seen,
Or shrine of saint, in Tell.

(For name and blood are of the brood
Of ancient Albigenſe :
And truths that feed her ſpirit's need
Are loved in old Valleneſe.
A grave knows ſhe in Italy ;—
No dearer ſpot earth holds.
That 'narrow houſe' ! Her martyr'd ſpouſe
In dreamleſs ſleep, it folds).

From ſouth to north the cry is forth
'Gainſt heretics once more.
Therefore in Tell ſuch voices ſwell
Around yon chapel door.

Therefore the din is heard within,
Of those who fight, who fly;
Of those who hate, who supplicate;
Of those who slay, and die.

Therefore before this alien's door
Is heard the rabble's shout.
Louder they greet as to the street
Their victim is thrust out.
"Proclaim it, pray, why you to-day
Six months among us dwell,
And have not been at priest's knee seen,
Or shrine, or mass, in Tell."

Close to her breast her babe she prest,
And so before them stood;
With pitying face, with stately grace,
With firm unaltered mood.
And for a space the crowd that face
Watch, silent as the grave. . .
"Once only Christ was sacrificed,
And He alone can save.

"Therefore can't I to priestly eye
Unveil this heart of mine;
Nor yet appear your altars near,
Nor at your Virgin's shrine."
"Your *life's* at stake," a friar spake;
"Your life *now*, understand."
"His life, to save my life, Christ gave:
My life is in His hand."

She spake once more, calm as before,—

“From wealth, from all most dear,
From ‘ain countrée,’ I did not flee
My Lord to abandon here.”

“Speak not so wild: think of your child,—
Is it to die or live?”

“‘To Him,” said she, “who gave for me
His Son, my son I give.”

“But say we leave him life to grieve
And wither day by day?”

“The birds of air are Heaven’s care;
My boy is more than they.”

“Doomed heretic!” the friars shriek,
“Thou art not fit to live.”

“Yet graced to die.”

A stander-by
Has snatched her babe’s reprieve.

One stroke: she fell. And men of Tell
Rushed in with frantic cries . . .
. . . Her name, her race unknown, and place
Of birth ’neath alien skies.

But this I trow, a mansion now
Is her’s among the blest:
And a new name given with the same,
Is graved on Jesus’ breast.





John Leaf,

CHANDLER'S APPRENTICE AND MARTYR.

—o—

I.

BUT yesterday the 'prentice stood
His master's bench behind,
As common place of air and face
As any you could find :
To-day you notice him because
His hands are chained, and he
Is but a youth ; the only youth
In all that company.

Before the Bishops' Bench to-day
He comes to hear his fate ;
And Bishop Bonner has, with pomp,
Assumed the place of state.
I know not what you think : I know
That youth I'd rather be—
John Leaf in chains,—than Bonner, tho'
London's proud Prelate he.

No downcast tearful visage shows
The youth while standing there.
He shoots no high heroic glance,
Sheds no self-conscious air.

As yesterday, his master's bench
 Behind, himself he bore,
 To-day before the Bishops' Bench
 He seems, not less nor more.

Alone, arraigned for heresy,
 At Bonner's bar he stood.
 "No heresy seek I," said he,
 "But the true light of God."
 "Rash, arrogant, presumptuous youth,
 ('Tis Bonner's opening speech,)
 So, you are one of those, forsooth,
 Whom Pope or Church can't teach."

"My Lord, 'twere easy me to teach ;
 I cannot read or write :
 Yet cannot change my creed as you
 Or others may invite."
 "What is your creed?" "The doctrines which
 I learned from earliest youth ;
 Of which, sir, in King Edward's time,
 I've heard you swore the truth."

"Herodian oath and to be broke ;
 The Church has pardoned me :
 Our Holy Father loosed that yoke,
 The Church can pardon thee."
 "But will God pardon if I say
 Before Him, I believe
 This doctrine and that other, which
 He knows I can't receive ?"

“What doctrine can you not receive?”

Spake Bonner waxing wroth.

“Your doctrine of the Host is one,”

Leaf answered, nothing loth.

“Nor have I from the Scriptures heard

One proof, the very least.

That I should pray to Saints, or seek

Soul-pardon from a priest.”

“What need we further witness?” now

Indignant Bonner spake.

“To prison! yet one kindness thou

Shalt have, for thy youth’s sake.

Two bills anon—the indictment one,

The recantation, two,—

We send; and as to which you sign

The choice shall rest with you.”

II.

Within his noisome prison-cell

He bows in earnest prayer:—

So rapt doth bow, one enters now

Unto to him unaware.

“I bring you these two bills; in one

Their stern indictment see;

In one your recantation, which

But sign and you are free.”

“Sir, all my thanks are yours to-day
For all your kindly heed.

But being unlettered I must pray
That you be pleased to read.

First let me hear the indictment bill.”

The indictment bill was read.

“Well, God I praise no charge they raise
Of fraud or hurt,” he said.

“And yet to die for phrase and word
In fulness of your youth?”

“Not phrase and word but conscience stirred,
And Heaven and love and truth.

My Father, God ; my Saviour, Christ ;
The Holy Ghost, my Guide :

They love me so, how could I go
Through life, Their grace denied ?

“*Their* grace, not priests’. Their love, not works
Or sufferings of mine.

Their zealous care that hearkens my prayer,
And doth my hap assign.

Then take you hence my reverence ;
And also say, He said

‘ I cannot write but I can seal,’
And, see ! the seal is red. . . .

“ I cannot write but I can seal.”

He pierced a finger’s vein,
And spake, while o’er the accusing score
Sprinkling the ruddy stain :—

“To Bonner say, His ‘guilty’ plea
Makes your indictment good.
Already the accusation he
Has sealed—see, with his blood.”

Not long until at Smithfield’s stake,
Not lonely, he appears,—
(Aged Bradford shall with him partake,
This youth of nineteen years.
No high heroic glance, no look
Of grief or doubt, shows he :
Still as in warehouse, jail, and dock,
The soul of constancy.

And while John Bradford’s latest words
Ring in his inmost soul,
His spirit burst its fleshly cords
And clasped its final goal.
Such was his faith, I doubt if death
Brings nearer sense of God,
Than was his stay when day by day
Through London streets he trod.

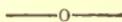




Rawlins White,

FISHERMAN AND MARTYR.

(CARDIFF.)



I.

ONLY another night remains to him of life :
He thinks of Heaven and home, of children, friends
and wife.

“Send me my marriage robe,” to her his message sped :
(The shroud in which the fires to-morrow he must
tread.)

II.

Over that “marriage robe” his russet coat he wore,
(Well-worn that russet coat),—and passed the prison
door.]

And paused in quick surprise at all the guards that wait
With bills and weapons : then he questioned from the
gate,

“Alas, what meaneth this? I would not run away.
My God and King I praise who brought me to this day.”

III.

Half-way along their route he sudden doth espy
His children and his wife, who make a loud outcry.
The heart within him shrinks ; thick sobs his utterance
choke ;

Tears trickle down his face, till to himself he spoke,—
“Ah, Flesh! and is it so? How! Thou wouldst
hinder me?
Praise be to God, my Lord hath won the victory.”

IV.

Sure fixèd stands the stake, the faggots lie prepared ;
At sight whereof with step more swift he forward fared,
And stumbled as he went ; whereat he stayed a space
To bow (on hands and knees) down to the earth his face.
“Earth unto earth, and dust to dust! so unto thee,
Who art my mother, I return content,” said he.

V.

He takes his friend apart, a parting boon to seek :—
“I am but earth, you see ; and human flesh is weak.
Pray, pray for me : pray more if I look like afraid ;
And thy raised finger be my recollection’s aid.”

VI.

He has embraced the stake and straight beside it stands.
With undistracted mind and with his captive hands,
He shows the smith how one might be more surely
bound ;
And helps the officers who place the faggots round.

For still his lowly soul his own strength trusted not :—
“It is God’s grace alone has stayed me to this spot ;
God’s grace alone, on which no claim, sirs, have I got
’Gainst e’en the slightest pang not ordered in my lot.

And if the flesh had power one instant, I'd away :
 So fix the chain right fast and give the fires full play."'
 Then upwards rose his soul on wings of earnest pray'r,
 That Christ would grant him grace, all He allowed to
 bear.

With cheerful mien his hands for straw and reeds he
 reached,

And these about him placed, while one the sermon
 preached ;

Which he not seemed to hear save when was wrongly
 turned

Some text; and then his eye in wrath or pity burned:—

"Hither, good people: what! not a false prophet
 know?"

"Ah, wicked hypocrite! God's Scripture using so?"

Then would the friars call, "Put fire, forthwith, put
 fire."

At last the friars have their cruel heart's desire. . . .

Longer than most who had before him faced such pain

Alive amid the fires this martyr did remain.

But whilst his voice remained one cry still upwards
 soared,—

"Jesus receive my soul:" . . . "Receive my spirit, Lord."

VII.

Me, in my trial hour,
 Grant, Lord the Good and Just,
 This fisher's trust in God,
 This martyr's self-distrust.



Mrs. Cicely Ormes.

—o—

“Just twelve months ago to-day ;”—

(With herself she museth lone,)

“O was ever year so dreary,

O was ever year so weary,

To a mortal bosom known ?” . . .

“Just twelve months ago to-day”—

Seems 'tis all that she can say

Musing in her chamber lone ;

For the burden of a grief

Weighs within her heart like stone. . .

Now her musing must be brief,

For the noise she waits to hear

Strikes unwelcome on her ear ;

'Tis the noise of many feet,

Many voices, in the street,

Drawing near.

Nearer and more near it draws.

Well she understands the cause.

In a moment she is gone,

With the great crowd pressing on ;

Murmuring ever and anon,

As her thought works all the way,

“Just twelve months ago to-day.”

In the mixed procession's van
 March a woman and a man,—
 Eliza Cooper, Simon Miller,—
 Convicts 'neath the Church's ban ;
 Not for theft of gold or silver,
 Not for murder.—Heresy
 Is all the crime for which they die.

“Cicely, what takes you here?”
 One has whispered in her ear.
 “What takes *you*?” is her reply,
 Looking full in t' other's eye.
 “Do you think that woman, friend,
 Like to brave it to the end ?
 Just twelve months ago to-day,
 As you know, I answered Yea,
 When I should have answered Nay.”

II.

Stay! They halt. Both man and woman
 Have their several stations ta'en
 'Mong the faggots, (no uncommon
 Sight in Mary Tudor's reign.)
 There are sobs and imprecations,
 There are groans and gratulations,
 There are prayers and curses loud,
 For their hearing, from the crowd.

While the sticks are piled around them
And the chains made fast that bound them,
Mistress Ormes approaching near,
One has whispered in her ear,—
“ You have had enough before,
 Cicely, of brands and stake ;
 So, keep silence, for God’s sake.”

But she answered back once more,
“ Just twelve months ago to-day
When I should have answered Nay
‘ For God’s sake,’ I answered Yea.
But to-day as God shall guide
I will speak if I be tried.”

They have knelt, both man and woman ;
Knelt and prayed till that inhuman
Sheriff bids them rise and burn ;—
Bids them rise and burn or turn.
For, kind soul, he has it by—
Pardon,—if they but deny.
Plain to Mistress Ormes’ own thinking,
If there be a thought of shrinking
In the mind of either martyr,
 It is with Elizabeth.

But she, too, has spurned that charter
 Of her pardon, choosing death.

Bound and waiting they appear :—
 Praying, O so earnestly !
 Praying, praying, save when he
Speaks a kindly word of cheer

To his fellow. Standing near,
Mistress Ormes still watches both,
But the woman most : more loth,
Every moment that goes by,
To behold that woman die,
And no word of hope or cheer
To have whispered in her ear.

But the fire is drawing near,
And the woman shrinks ; and fear
For her constancy possesses
 One spectator's breast ; when, loud,
 (Though the flame hath caught his shroud,)
Simon Miller's voice addresses
His " stake-fellow." . . " Sister dear,
Banish every thought of fear.
Jesus calls us, do not fail Him.
In a little we shall hail Him.
Though the billows show so strong,
Yet the passage is not long ;
And to-night we two shall feast
Gaily with our great High Priest." .
Then spake Cicely Ormes aloud
In the hearing of the crowd ;—
" Sister Mellor, do not falter ;
Willing victim on Christ's altar.
Just twelve months ago to-day
I, unworthy, answered Yea
When I should have answered Nay.

But I promise you 'fore God,
And by virtue of Christ's blood,
In the cup you're drinking of
I'll soon pledge you both with love."

Solaced thus, Elizabeth
Joyously encountered death.

And the faggots still were burning
When, in view of all beholders,
On this Cicely Ormes' shoulders,
Hands were roughly laid. She, turning,
Met an officer she knew :
Knew his speech's meaning too,—
"To the Chancellor come you."

III.

As she turned with him to go
Who had spoken to her so,
In her voice or glance or mien
Nothing of suprise was seen.

Spake to her the Chancellor,
"You and I have met before.
If my memory is true,
It is not a year since you——"
"Just twelve months ago to-day
I, unworthy, answered Yea
When I should have answered Nay."

“Ho, this is it? Tell me, pray,
When the priest uplifts the bread
What he holds above his head?”
And she answered, “Bread, of course;
And if better it is worse.”

“List to me,” the Chancellor spake,
“Folks are wise to shun the stake.
I have been to you more kind
Than most others of your mind.
Even still would be your friend. . . .

Keep you but a quiet tongue,
Regularly mass attend,
You shall not be burnt or hung.
None shall ask what you believe.”

“Vain your pardon or reprieve.
Public statements I’ve prepared
Of my doctrine: have declared
All my sorrow that to-day
Twelve months since, I answered Yea
When I should have answered Nay.
Death or torture cannot grieve
Like that memory, I say.”

“Then it must be: to the stake
You shall go.” The Chancellor spake.

IV.

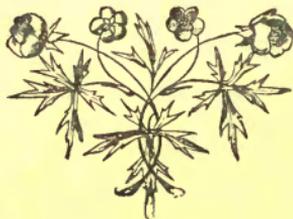
As she stood beside the stake
Thus unto the crowd she spake ;—
“ Notice well, good people, I
Solely on my Lord rely
 For salvation of my soul.
Though for love of Him I die
 Gladly ; yet, in part or whole,
Of my countless sins not one
By my dying is undone !
For no fault can it atone.
This my voluntary death
Is but witness to my faith
In the virtue of the blood
From my Saviour’s side which flow’d.”

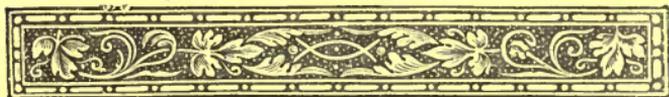
On the stake her hands she laid :
“ Welcome, Cross of Christ,” she said.

To that stake they now have bound her ;
Have the faggots piled around her,
 And the torch applied. Up tow’rd
 Heaven spring the flame and smoke :
And, while stillness holds the crowd,
 Out upon the stillness broke
Her *Magnificat*, clear, loud ;—
Thus, My Soul doth magnify
 The Lord,

And my Spirit doth rejoice
 In God my Saviour.
Nought save gladness in her eye,
 Nought save triumph in her voice,
 Nought of doubt in her behaviour.
Even with her latest breath
Triumphs she in death o'er Death.

Then into the flame and smoke,
As beneath some pleasant yoke,
Down she bowed her head : and so
Came her "Finis" to all woe.
So she entered into rest,
As a babe whose pain hath ceast
Seeks, for sleep, its mother's breast.





Rowland Taylor.

I.

HEARD you Rowland Taylor's story,
Of Queen Mary's time?—
Cranmer's Chaplain, Hadley's Vicar,
Martyred in his prime.

“I am come,” he said to Gardiner,
“As you summoned me.
Loyal subject, faithful Christian
In your presence see.”

“Art thou come, thou villain? Knowest
Who has bid thee come?”
“Winton's Bishop, England's Chancellor,
Death is all men's doom.

“And, my Lord, if your looks lordly
Should my heart appal,
How shall you face God in judgment
Who is Lord of all?”

“Nay, for shame how look you any
Christian in the eye,
Since the truth you have forsaken
And your oath deny?”

“That was Herod’s oath unlawful,
Worthy to be broke :
And the Pope hath well discharged me
Of its hated yoke.

“You resist the Queen’s proceedings,
So the priest she sent
Must not dare say mass in Hadley.—
Do as I : repent.”

“I, my Lord, am Hadley’s Vicar ;
And as such maintain
’Twere against all right and conscience
Should I mute remain

“When among the flock Christ gave me,
One, whoe’er, would pass
To infect them with the venom
Of the Popish mass.”

“’Gainst the holy mass blaspheming,
Heretic, again ?”

“Christ died *once*, passed into heaven,
And doth there remain.

“*Once* He died for our redemption,
Nevermore to die.
Only bread upon your altar,
And no Christ doth lie.”

“Slave,” quoth Gardiner with flushed visage.

“ We too long have slept.—

See you,” spake he to the warders,

“ He be straitly kept.”

II.

’Twixt his friends Bradford and Saunders,

Rowland Taylor now

Stands at bar of the five Bishops,

With untroubled brow.

“ Which would you ?—Make recantation

Or your sentence hear ?

Once to Holy Church submitting,

You have nought to fear.”

Spake the martyrs, “ Yes, we should have

Worse than fire to fear ;—

Should towards God and man no longer

Have a conscience clear.”

From the “ witnesses ” no answer

Save this answer came,

Till the sentence dread was spoken

Dooming them to flame,

When they raised their voices praising

God for this great good,

And admonishing their judges

He requireth blood.

III.

In the Poultry Compter Taylor
For a week had lain,
When the brutal Bonner sought him ;
Loosed his prison chain,

And addressed him :—" Doctor, even
Now remember you ;
Turn you back to Holy Mother
And for pardon sue.

" I am here to promise pardon
Surely in such case."

" Turn *you* rather and your fellows,
And implore Christ's grace.

" As for me, to Papal fleshpots
Ne'er shall I return."

" I am here then to degrade you,
You are doomed to burn."

So the Bishop scraped his fingers,
Thumbs and crown of head ;
Did the rest of such observance
And the curse he said,

But the crosier-stroke he gave not,
For he feared return :
And the lofty martyr stooped not
His base fear to spurn.

Only when the curse was spoken
And removed each vest,
Spake the Witness, "Though you curse me,
God, be sure, hath blest.

"And my conscience beareth witness
You have wrought me ill.
Yet I pray, God grant you pardon
And repentance still."

IV.

That same night wife, son, and servant
Supped with him and prayed ;
And, by kindness of his keepers,
Till the midnight stayed.

After supper, in that chamber
Walking up and down,
Thanked he God with loud thanksgiving
For his martyr-crown.

Praised he Jesus who had bought him
With His precious blood,
And the Spirit, the grace-giver,
In whose strength he stood.

Then his son—his eldest—Thomas
Took he to his breast,
For a space, in silence, bosom
Was to bosom prest ;

Till, "My dear son," spake the father,
"May thy father's God
Bless thee : still His Spirit's guidance
Grant thee on life's road.

"So shalt thou be Christ's true servant,
Learn His word, and stand
By His truth till thou rejoin me
In that Better Land.

"Shun the broad road, broad and downward ;
Serve thou God alway ;
Be His word thy constant study ;
Daily to him pray.

"But in any wise obedient
To thy mother be :
Be thy youth ruled by her counsel :
Evil comrades flee ;

"Flee all lewd and filthy living :—
Ne'er forget that I
Now, thy father, in defence of
Holy marriage, die.

"And another day when surely
God shall bless my boy,
Love and cherish all poor people :
Count thy chiefest joy,—

“Count thy chiefest riches ever—
To be rich in alms ;
Rich in poor hearts’ blessings—sweeter
Than archangels’ psalms.

“And when age bows down thy mother,
Still forsake her not ;
Still provide for her, according
To thine earthly lot.

“So thy father’s God shall bless thee
With prosperity,
And long life, then bliss of Heaven.—
’Tis my prayer for thee.”

Spake he to his wife :—“Continue
Steadfast as God’s child.
From all Popish superstition
Keep you undefiled.

“I’ve to you been true yokefellow
As have you to me:
For the which may God reward you
To eternity.

“See our children surely brought up
As God’s children too ;
Skilled in learning, strong to vanquish ;
Teachers false and new.”

To John Hull, his servant, spake he
Words of kindly pow'r. . . .
Much they wept and prayed together
Till the parting hour.

For it came, that hour of parting :
Midnight hour was spent
When all three, wife, son, and servant,
From his presence went.

v.

Some hours after, by St. Botolph's
Doth the lone wife stand :
Two fair children with her waiting—
One on either hand.

One, Elizabeth, an orphan
Whom they had upbrought :
One their daughter Mary ; children
Both, in years and thought.

Evil doers love the darkness ;
So by Botolph's gate
For the prey of evil-doers,
These three pilgrims wait. . .

'Tis the nearing tramp of soldiers !
Cries Elizabeth,—
“ Mother, mother, see him—Father
Led away to death ! ”

Dim eyes in the dimness saw not,
But the voice she knew
Which gave answer, and according
Straightway towards him drew.

While the captive clasped his daughter
In a fond embrace,
To the captains called the sheriff,
“Let them speak a space.”

There the four knelt down together
By St. Botolph's ; then,
As he led, they prayed, in presence
Of the armed men.

Still in hearing of the soldiers,
To his wife he spake :—
“It is well with me, believe me :
Weep not for my sake.

“I am going to our children,
Robert, Zachary,
Ellen, Susan, George, there waiting,
As you here, for me.

“There my Saviour's welcome waits me
On that happy shore ;
And ‘the noble army's’ welcome
God's White Throne before.

“Say to my dear friends at Hadley—
All whom my words reached :—
‘I depart with quiet conscience
As to what I’ve preached.

“I have preached, just as I found it
In God’s word, God’s truth :
So beware that you deny not
God for fear or ruth.

“All of you beware you sin not
’Gainst the Holy Ghost,
Now that such a light has broken
Once on England’s coast.’ ”

So he spake, and, in the presence
Of the armèd men,
Took to his embrace his daughters
And his wife again.

(Thin and thinner wanes the darkness ;
Even while he spoke
And embraced, across the city
Morning greyly broke.)

And his wife spake while they parted,
“God be with thee still.
We shall meet again at Hadley
If God’s grace so will.” . . .

Soldiers sob, who in fierce battle
Never felt a fear :
And the blackest bigot's eyelid
Glistens with a tear.

But they two met not at Hadley :
Never met they more
Till he hailed her from the martyrs'
Throng, God's Throne before.

VI.

Essex' sheriff gives him escort
Now from London's gate.
By the roadside his son Thomas
And his servant wait.

"Lift my boy here : " And he placed him
'Fore him on the horse ;
Raised his hat and to the people
Spake with all his force.

" This is mine own son, in lawful
Matrimony born :
And for lawful matrimony
God be praised this morn. "

So he spake, and in thus speaking
Surely testified
That one cause was priestly marriage
For the which he died.

Then with eyes upturned to heaven,
Tears upon his face,
With his hand upon his boy's head,
Prayed he, a brief space.

Then to Hull he gave his Thomas,
Saying as he gave,
"Fare you well, John Hull, most faithful
Servant man could have."

So he rode on pleased and grateful,
As to bridal cheer ;—
As there were no Aldham Common
And no stake anear :

Speaking gay words, speaking grave words,
Urging, as he went,
On the sheriff and his yeomen,
"While 'tis day repent."

VII.

Come to Chelmsford, Suffolk's sheriff
Hath him now in ward.
After supper both the sheriffs
Tax their captive hard :

Tax him hard in loving-kindness,
That he should deny ;—
He was in his prime of living,
Pity 'twere to die.

For his wife and children pity ;
Pity for the Church,
That a guide so good and learned
Should put out his torch.

Times would change ; for his convictions
Then he might make strife :—
“ Only now revoke these doctrines,
So to save thy life.

“ This in kindness we advise thee,
As we hope in God.”
Thus the sheriffs ; and the yeomen
Earnestly applaud.

While they spake, across his visage
Glanced a sudden smile,
And his answer, slow and studied,
Gave them hope awhile.

Stillness held them while that answer
Rang adown the hall :—
“ Take my heart’s thanks, master sheriff,
And my masters all.

“ I have hearkened to your counsel,
Your advice well weighed :
Have to heart, for all your goodness,
All your wishes laid.

“ And I find, to speak you plainly,
I have been deceived :—
I, and with me many others
Who like me believed.”

Then the sheriffs and the yeomen,
In each other's eyes
Looking, variously gave utterance
To their pleased surprise.

“ Now, good master Doctor, bless you,”
Spake the sheriffs ; “ thus
You have spoke the wisest sentence
You yet spake to us.

“ Cast yourself away thus vainly ?—
You were folly's thrall :
Favour waits you surely.” Likewise
Also said they all.

But he still maintains his silence,
Till their wondering gaze
Notes the smile that o'er his visage,
Now as erstwhile, plays.

So the sheriff'cross the table
Eagerly doth lean ;—
“ Master Doctor, tell us, prithee,
What it is you mean.

“ You have been deceived, you tell us ;
Others are deceived :
Say, were we mistaken also
In what we believed ? ”

“ I will tell you,” spake the Doctor,
“ How I’ve been deceived,
Many shall deceive who like me
Heretofore believed.

“ I’m a man, you see, of body
Which I hoped should lie
In dear Hadley’s acre (when I
Hoped in bed to die.)

“ I’ve herein been disappointed ;
And the worms that wait
Shall be also disappointed
Of this looked-for bait.

“ I and they are disappointed :
For this carcass-frame
Shall not rest in Hadley’s acre,
But be food for flame.”

Much the sheriffs and the yeomen
Marvelled, as he spake,
At the soul serene death’s terrors
Could not even shake.

And his jest more surely taught them
Than more sober speech,
That to win him to their purpose
Lay beyond their reach.

Ever thus his words he suited—
Grave and gay alike—
To the audience (here rude soldiers)
On whose ears they strike.

VIII.

Lanham town in Suffolk—there he
Waits two days, and there
Knights and justices and nobles
Unto him repair.

One from Gardiner brings proffer
Of a bishopric,
If he but disown his doctrines
As a heretic.

One hath the Queen's pardon ready,
Signed, and sealed, and sure ;
And they all have tears, and prettexts,
Why he should abjure.

But for him earth's noblest prizes,
All her fairest joys,
To the Crown that waits him yonder
Are as children's toys.

And the faith of Rowland Taylor
 Was not built on sand ;
 So 'gainst Satan's worst devices
 It was sure to stand.

IX.

Unto him, once lightly mounting,
 Thus the sheriff spake,—
 “Master Doctor, how so blithely
 Riding to a stake ?

“Say how feel you ? ” “Master, never
 Better heretofore ;
 Being now but two stiles distant
 From my Father's door.

“But, good master sheriff, shall we
 Not through Hadley pass ? ”
 “Yes, alas ! ” “Kind master, say not
 For my sake ‘ alas ! ’

“For I bless God for the promise
 I again shall see
 All that precious flock in Hadley
 Christ to keep gave me.

“As I taught them may Christ give them
 Grace to live and die :
 May no soul I fed in Hadley
 E'er His truth deny.”

X.

Hadley town and Hadley steeple
Are at length in view,
Not one, 'mong those crowds of people
Waiting, but he knew.

There the poor wait whom he loved so,
Wait the rich he taught;
Whom fortnightly in their turns
Among the poor he brought.

Not a household in all Hadley
But his power had felt;
Not a homestead in all Hadley
Where he had not knelt.

Stands within yon church the pulpit
Vacant, whence to all
He with power and with acceptance
Preached the Gospel call.

There the Font (his mind's eye sees it,)
Ancient as the church,
Where to Christ he gave the children,—
Just within the porch.

There the Board on which The Supper
He so oft had spread,
Facing which their marriage pledges
Men and women said. . . .

Oh ! it all rose plain before him ;—
All the pews were filled.
All the faces turned up toward him
Preaching as God willed.

And without was Hadley churchyard
Where he often stood
With them (all of them in turn,)
Above the sundered sod ;

Where they too with him had sorrowed
O'er the open clay ;
For without, in Hadley churchyard,
His five children lay.

So no marvel he moves onward
As one blind and lone,
While his heart to Hadley's churchyard
And its church has flown.

Brief the space which 'fore his fancy
Had those visions brought. . . .
And the tear mist now is banished
And recalled his thought.

Dear is Hadley, Heaven is dearer,
God is everywhere,
And His sleepers in the churchyard
Are His singers There.

Even were his waiting Saviour
Not to him so dear,
He hath more dear hearts up yonder
Than he leaveth here.

XI.

Hark, 'tis the first voice from Hadley !
O'er the bridge they ride.
There a peasant waits ; five children
Huddled at his side.

“O dear Father! O Good Shepherd!
Doctor Taylor, be
God thy succour as thou often
Wert to mine and me.”

XII.

Hadley town they now have entered
And its street they find
With great crowds from town and country,
Of all ages, lined.

Onward moves the weird procession]
Watched with weeping eyes,
'Companied by lamentations
And indignant cries.

“O dear father, faithful shepherd,
Is there God that knows?”
“Child, look where to death and torture
Our good pastor goes!”

“Gracious Lord, to Doctor Taylor
Grant all needful grace.”

“What will come of this bad world,
In which such wrongs have place?”

Back and forward sway the people ;
And his escort's spears
Seem too weak to quell the tumult
Which the sheriff fears :

For the martyr's silence only
Angered more the crowd.
Then the sheriff gave permission,
And he spake aloud ;—

“I have taught you all God's counsel :
God is ever good.
And to seal the truths I taught you
Come I—with my blood.”

XIII.

At the first almshouse he halteth,—
Halts at each in turn,
To distribute his last bounty
'Mong their inmates lorn.

At the last almshouse he noteth
None its gate before.
“Holds this house the blind old couple
Whom I knew of yore?”

“They within wait.” His last pieces
Binding in his glove,
He has flung them through the window
And doth onward move.]

What he aye was—self-forgetful—
Shows he still, and here,
As there were no Aldham Common
And no stake anear.

XIV.

They have come to Aldham Common,
And he asketh, Where
Have they come, and why the thousands
Have assembled there?

“This is where you have to suffer,
And they come to see.”
“Praises be to God in Heaven,
I’m at home,” saith he.

Off his horse then lightly leaping,
From his face that hood
With both hands he tore, in presence
Of the multitude.

Which, on seeing his disfigured
Grey hairs, reverend face
And the long white beard, lamented
Variously his case.

“ Now God save thee, Dr. Taylor ;
 Jesu be thy aid,
And the Holy Ghost thy comfort ! ”
 So his people prayed.

Moved at heart by such affection
 He would fain have spoke ;
But each time his voice upraised he,
 Came a cruel stroke.

Now one yoeman, now another
 Harshly at him gave :—
One into his mouth the tipstaff
 Of his office drave.

Spake the sheriff when appealed to,
 “ Hath thy memory slept ? ”
Meekly answered back the martyr,
 “ Promise must be kept.”

XV.

Next the Royal Pardon's proffered,—
 “ Which she yearns to grant.
Hence depart a free man, only
 Say you, ‘ I recant.’ ”

Never a word he spake in answer
 But he sat him down ;—
Round him glanced and to a loiterer
 Called, of Hadley town :—

“Hither, Soyce : thou long hast waited
For these boots of mine.
Prithee, pull them off, and make them
For thy labour thine.”

Then he rose, put off his garments
Even to the shroud ;
And he gave them to some poorer
Folks among the crowd.

Gave them with such words as often
He had used before
When distributing his bounty
From the vicar’s door.

Then his great voice shook the people :—
“Trust me, God is good.
Here I stand, the truths I taught you
Sealing with my blood.”

Yet again that yeoman struck him,
As his master erst :—
“Is this keeping of thy promise,
Heretic accurst !”

So, since they would not permit him
Speak at all aloud,
Down he knelt, and one poor woman
Joined him from the crowd.

Joined him there and knelt beside him :
Would not be gainsaid,
Though the soldiers thrust and threatened :
Knelt with him and prayed.

Till he ended, till he rose up,
Kindly blessings spake,
Set himself in that pitch barrel
Fastened by the stake.

Setting there his back uprightly,
'Gainst the stake, his hands
Folding close, with eyes toward Heaven,
So he prays and stands :—

Stands and prays. Absorbed in prayer,
Nought seems he to know
Of the chains that bind his body,
Faggots piled below.

Till his face was with a faggot
Struck, when meek reproof,
Fell as from far heights, "O Friend, is
There not harm enough?"

David's psalm, "Have mercy on me,"
Now aloud he prays.
One more buffet, "Knaves, speak Latin";
But no more he says.

And the fire at last is kindled
Praying still, with hands
Folded close, with eyes tow'rd Heaven,
Thus the martyr stands.

Never moved he, never cried he
Till a halberd stroke
Clove his skull in, and the body
Sank in flame and smoke.

* * * * *

“Thus died one of whom not worthy
Was the world, in truth,”
Writes who first wrote down this story
Woven of wrath and ruth.





Lays of Londonderry.

THE APPRENTICE BOYS' 'NO SURRENDER.'

TO LORD ANTRIM'S REGIMENT.

"No Surrender! No Surrender!"

Round the City rushed the cry,
As the flame across a prairie
By long summers wasted dry.

"No Surrender! No Surrender!"

From the Ferry Gate it came;
So, where falls the careless spark, thence
Springs the far devouring flame.

"No Surrender! Let the wisehead

And the weak heart palter still,
But the 'Prentice Boys of Derry
This one hour shall work their will.

Talk of Sovereign and duty!

Look yon Ultoghs in the face:
Tho' no sign of present hate or
Ancient feud therein you trace——

What! surrender homes and city
To a guardianship so base?

We at least shall not ; nor may we
 Slight full many a danger sign :—
 Lord Mount Alexander's letter
 Menacing some dread design :
 Every smiths' main occupation
 Forging skeane, half-pike, and lance :
 Secret stores of knives, chain-bridles,
 And firearms, disclosed by chance :
 Hints occasional that reach us,
 How their priests some texts construe,—
 'Saul's sore sin in saving *one*
 Of the Amalekitish crew.'—
 If, our sires, you have forgotten
 What you saw in 'Forty-one,
 We, be sure, have not forgotten
 What you tell us off and on !"
 Such the mingled voices sent up,
 In that moment big with fate,
 By the 'Prentice Boys of Derry,
 As they closed the Ferry Gate.
 Ferry Gate is closed securely,
 Shipquay Gate is duly barred ;
 Bishop's Gate is bolted surely,
 And the Gate by Butcher's Yard.
 Changed the guards are ; Campsie's wounded
 But the magazine's made good :
 Of the Thirteen his this glory—
 He was first to shed his blood.
 So 'twas done ; and from the moment
 It was done, all knew 'twas right :

No leal doubter but, that moment,
 Felt as scales fell from his sight.
 Young and agèd, wives and daughters,
 Sons and sires, caught up the cry—
 ‘No Surrender!’ From all voices,
 O’er the city it swept by,
 As the flame devours a prairie
 By long summers wasted dry.

* * * * *

So the guards were changed and passwords;
 And the gates securely barr’d.
 Derry’s townfolk stood at leisure
 Their position to regard.
 Certes, such it was the boldest
 Well might view it with affright:
 Not three-hundred men among them
 Able to bear arms in fight;
 Drawbridges long time neglected,
 Scarce a ditch their gates before,
 Chains long rusted; not a dozen
 Casks of powder in their store;
 Of provisions scarce a handful
 To compare with all their need—
 Yet the Elders, now, of Derry,
 Glory in their children’s deed.
 “Better die, if needs must, nobly
 On our walls, in open fight,
 Than be butchered by yon rabble
 In our homesteads, day or night;

Better die of slow starvation,—
Trust in God and do the right.”

“Trust in God,” said Derry’s Elders,
“Trust in God and do the right.”

“Derry’s ’Prentice Boys, of Derry
Nobly have deserved on the eve
Of planned massacre, refusing
Its apt agents to receive.
No King’s livery upon them,
No King’s Captain with them seen,
Never notice of their coming,
All their weapons clubs and skeane;
And among them no few faces
To our jailors known:—we say,
Derry’s ’Prentice Boys of Derry
Nobly have deserved to day.

Praise we then,” cried Derry’s Elders,
“Him who oftentimes reveals
To the babes what from the aged,
Wise, and prudent, He conceals.
Praise Him who Tyrconnell’s counsel
And our fears confounded so,
Leaving our unguarded townfolk
Free to answer thus their foe;
For ’tis true He leads the blind still,
By a way they do not know.”
“Better,” Derry’s youths responded,
“On our walls to die in fight,

Than be butchered by yon rabble,
 In our homesteads, day or night ;—
 Better die of slow starvation,—
 Trust in God and dare the right ! .

“Trust in God,” cried Derry’s Elders,
 Trust in God and do the right.”

“No Surrender !” Wives and daughters,
 Sons and sires, caught up the cry,
 “No Surrender !” O’er the city,
 From all voices it swept by ;
 As the flame devours a prairie
 By long summers wasted dry.

* * * * *

(Thus, one seventh of December,
 Nigh two hundred years ago,¹
 Thirteen ’Prentice Boys of Derry
 Flung defiance at her foe ;
 Saved their City, saved their Country,
 Won high honour,—as we know.

Londonderry, Enniskillen,—
 Ulster’s fair twin daughters ! Long
 Live you for like noble daring !
 Live your old renown in song !)





King James in Dublin,

—o—

WITH French crowns four hundred thousand,
And French officers five score,
And five times five hundred soldiers,
James has touched our Irish shore,*
Here to find all as he wished it,
Thanks to his Lord Viceroy's care:—
Thirty thousand foot, eight thousand
Horsemen at his orders were.
Munster, Connaught and all Leinster
Owned him king. Our Ulster too
Had within her many thousands—
Kerne and tory—to him true.
Welcome glad Kinsale has given,
Gladder still has Cork bestowed ;
Into Dublin City proudly,
As a monarch should, he rode.
But amid its populace's
Loud huzzas, his angered look,
Sends he nor'ward to two cities
Who his sov'reignty not brook :—

* At Kinsale, March 12th, 1689.

Londonderry, Enniskillen,
Ulster's fair twin daughters ! long
Live you for like noble daring :
Live your old renown in Song !

To his Council then spake Stuart,
(It was of an April day) :—
“ I'm for Ulster, bid both Houses
Meet me on the seventh of May,
When I'll tell you how we captured
Derry town, without delay.”
From that Council Hall the monarch,
As a monarch should, did stride,
Looking, “ To our next gay meeting,”
At his creatures either side.
To his favourite whip he whispers,
“ See the horses are stirred on,
See you catch up General Hamilton
Before those walls are won ;
For I wish myself the glory
Of that exploit when 'tis done.”
With himself he communes gaily :—
“ 'Tis some poor small place, I'm told,
And quite certain to surrender
When my regiments they behold.
When they see my twenty thousand
Halt their puny walls before :
When they view my kingly presence
Good for twenty thousand more.

I'll have glory without danger——”
 ('Tis some heroes' favourite way) . . .
. . . One last word to faithful Commons,
 “I'll be back without delay ;
And I'll tell you all about it,
 When we meet, the seventh of May.”

Ah, but other thoughts had Derry—
 ‘ Other men and other minds.’
If ‘ a poor place ’ few the poor hearts
 That King James in Derry finds.
One such heart, no child of Derry's,
 Has command of walls and guns ;
Still confounds, still paralyzes,
 The best counsels of her sons.
Trust not in him, fallen monarch ;
 He is now as good as known—
William's name in his commission
 Leaves him life and it alone—
For that name's sake, while a doubt was,
 He could not be overthrown.
With all doubt his power is over,
 And not even William's name
Now might shield him in his office
 Or his memory from shame.



The Flight Northwards.

—o—

On the fifteenth day of April
Cladyford was lost and won :
On the sixteenth, James caught up with
The triumphant Hamilton.
Everywhere had fortune favoured
Stuart plans and policy,
'Spite some failures and reverses
As at Coleraine and Ardtrea,
Nor'ward, Nor'ward flee the Protestants,
Hamilton's dread march before.
Faster, faster as the news spread
Of the routal at Dromore.
Nor'ward, Nor'ward humbler folks flee,
Nor'ward, or ' protection ' take.
Many yoemen, squires and nobles
Cause and native land forsake :
Many more a loftier purpose
Have before their spirits set ;
Fighters who, retreating nor'wards,
Keep their faces southwards yet.
Massarene Castle, Lisburn, Antrim
Have been given over to loot ;

Hillsborough Castle with its thousand
Pounds and food store followed suit.
Coleraine's at last abandoned ;
Cladyford lost yesterday ;
And Lōrd Kingston called from Sligo
Leaves to Connaught open way.
What if Enniskillen yields not,
Derry's ruler is secured ;
And a messenger from Derry
Its surrender has assured.
So no marvel when the monarch,
With such cheer on every hand,
Reached his camp, within five miles of
Derry town, he gave command
That his vanguard should move forward
From St. John's to Upper Strand.





King James before Derry.

On the seventh of December,
Sixteen hundred and eighty eight,
Derry Boys called "No Surrender!"
And shut fast the Ferry Gate.
Four months later other leader
Than Lord Antrim sought our walls;
Other army than his rabble
For admittance at them calls.
Antrim's master is that other
Leader—James of Stuart breed.
His that other army—come of
Many nations, one in creed.
One their Church, the Church which many
A race with slavery has banned;
And which never for man's freedom
One unselfish battle planned.
Yes, yon Captain is James Stuart,
Pope-blest monarch, sanguine, vain;
Towards the southern gate advancing
With a small attendant train.

Just nine score and seven paces
From the southern gate halts he,
For a survey of the City
Sure so soon his prize to be ;
That the townfolk might distinguish
Him among his company.
Brief his halt is. " From yon ramparts,"
Said he, " see the gunners now—
Can it be? A gay salute, sirs,
In our honour, I avow.
They have been but waiting for us—
Let us forward " . . . Monarch vain !
At your side's a fallen captain,
Several wounded in your train.
And the echoes of that one burst
Scarce had woke the dells around,
When the monarch and his escort
For dear life tread safer ground.
Puzzled monarch—that his escort
Could outstrip himself in flight,
And that Derry held defenders,
Who would dare to show him fight.
Soon with angered voice and visage,
" What means all we have been told ?
Treaty of Capitulation ?
Yet these gunners uncontrolled ?
Ah, fallen monarch, Lundy's Council
Is not Derry's but his own.
Tho' therein are some who hate you

Yet his treachery gives it tone,
And he sways no more in Derry
For his treachery is known.
So this king might have been answered
In his camp at the Upper Strand.
"Back, to-morrow, to St. Johnstown,"
Is his Majesty's Command.





The Garrison's "No Surrender."

(To King James.)

NOTE.—On April 18, four months after the closing of the Gates by the Apprentice Boys, King James rode out from his camp on the Upper Strand, towards the City, quite confident that, immediately on his appearance before the Walls, the Garrison would surrender. But the enraged citizens, who had been strongly suspecting treachery on the part of their chief (Col Lundy,) sent a cannon shot in the King's direction; whereupon he returned to his camp faster than he had set out. About same hour Captain Murray was seen coming from Culmore at head of 50 troopers; a rumour having reached him that the City's surrender was determined upon. There were about 30,000 people at this time crowded within the walls. Walker, (till then the only Ulster Leader who had at all been successful in resisting the invading force,) Baker, afterwards joint governor with Walker, and the other Ulster Chiefs, were observing Lundy; on the one hand resolved there should be no surrender, and, on the other, slow to depose Lundy from an office to which he had been commissioned by King William, until he had taken steps openly to effect the capitulation, or had done some other overact which would be their justification for resorting to such an extreme measure. This prudent conduct on their part did not satisfy the impatient populace, and so the arrival of Captain Murray precipitated the crisis; as recorded below.

YES, Brave King, almost the moment
You from out your camp did ride,
By your glance to conquer Derry,—
From Culmore, on t'other side,
Rode there out another Chief who
At its flood will take this tide.—

Came another Captain, saying,
Not—Give *me* up Derry town :
Thinking, not—How your surrender
Shall redound to my renown :—
But the loyal lover praying,
As he thought ;—" O city gay,
Be you not more fair than worthy :
Live your pure renown always !
All my service now I offer,
All in this one life of mine ;
What is mine, or any other's
Life or name, compared with thine ?
Here come fifty true men with me ;
And within your boundary walls
Thousands are who thus will answer,
When your trumpet to them calls.
But yield not to yonder wooer,
Yet forget not ancient fame,
Nor by any base surrender
Yield your memory to shame."

From the walls our townfolk watch him,
Cheer his progress with huzzas ;
And with waving hands forbid him
Either to return or pause.
Still he nears us, surely, surely,
At his fifty troopers' front :
Now unhindered, now opposing
Some sharp battle's sudden brunt :

Still with gestures energetic,
Ere his voice could reach our ear,
Warning us 'gainst the surrender
Vagrant rumour made him fear.

One has rushed into the council ;—
“ Murray's now at Pennyburn,
Spurring from Culmore to ”——“ Bear him
Our fixed orders to return.”

One comes thirty minutes later ;—
“ Murray's at the Shipquay Gate
And demands admittance.”——“ Tell him,
He may on the Shipquay wait.”

Yet again ; “ The soldiers clamour
To admit him and his train.”

“ Drop a rope to hale him up by :
Let his troop without remain.”

And the messenger to Murray
Has the shameful message ta'en.

Once he upwards glanced with scorn,

Once he smote the gate amain ;

“ Open !” called he ; and the sentry

Swung it open for the entry

Of a hero and his train.

Honour we the noble sentry,

Hight James Morrison, who entry

Gave to Murray and his train.

And he entered, and his horsemen—

Fifty cavalry all told.

Round about him throng the towsfolk,
Sons and fathers, young and old ;
Grandams, mothers, wives and daughters,
Round and round about him close :—
“ Here at last has come a chieftain
Who at least his purpose knows.” . . .
“ Other Chieftains in our city
Are as brave and leal, no doubt ;
But this one both knows his purpose
And unawed will see it out.” . . .
“ Derry’s Chief plans with no purpose,
Or one purpose—to betray ;
And has still fine explanations
For his folly or foul play.” . . .
“ Ulster’s captains, too, distrust him,
But they will not thrust him hence,
For he bears in his commission
William’s name :—most poor pretence,
When the traitor is but plotting
To restore King James the Crown.”
Then would wail the weak and fearful,—
“ O Sir, save us ; save our town ! ”

But through all the wild confusion,
In short pauses still was heard
Murray’s voice—his broken speeches
Urging all the timid fear’d ;
Till amid the crowd’s hushed silence
All the heart within him spoke,—

‘What it cost our sires and grandsires
To reject the Papal yoke :
How it was our bounden duty
To our children to pass on,
Free from stain and diminution,
All our ancestors had won :
How an Empire’s fate was hanging
On our action there that hour :
How the fortunes of our Faith, too,
God had given into our power.’
“Live as freemen, or die freemen,
But our children yet unborn,
When their father’s names are mentioned,
Must not shrink ’neath rebels’ scorn.”

Then, observing one and other
Of the great crowd, here and there,
Who by glance or sob gave token
They not wholly with him were,
Spake he ;—“Say, then, we surrender ;
Are you one whit more secure ?
Certain guarantees they proffer ;
Are you of their sanctions sure ?
When your garrison’s disbanded,
And your arms have been laid down ;
When yon rabble has free quarters,
And free scope, in Derry town,—
Will your lives be, or your freedom,
Worth the price of James’s crown ?

By your wives' and daughters' honour,
Sires and lovers, what say you?
By your own and children's honour,
Girls and matrons, answer true!
No! Live freemen or die freemen,
But our children yet unborn,
When their fathers' names are mentioned,
Must not shrink 'neath rebels' scorn."

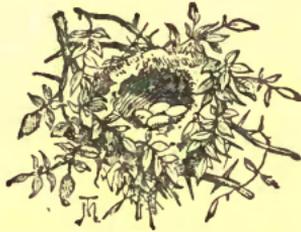
Then he paused; and still the crowd paused,
Till he spake in accents low:—
"There are traitors, there are tremblers
In our City. Let us know
Who our friends are. Once the watchword
'No Surrender!' had a charm.
You whose vow is 'No Surrender!'
Wear a white badge on your arm."
Then, before by word or gesture
Might the great crowd give reply,
Stood the hero to his full height,
Lifting sword and voice on high,—
"No Surrender!" And the great crowd
As one man caught up the cry.
Off to Stuart's Camp that shout went,
Out to ocean, up to sky:
"No Surrender! No Surrender!"
From all voices it swept by,
As the flame devours a prairie
By long summers wasted dry.

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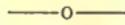
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Thence he strode upon the ramparts ;
Round and round the walls he stept.
Changed the guards, and charged the gunners,
Saw the keys securely kept ;
While the shout of " No Surrender !"
Round and through the City swept.





The First Sabbath of the Siege,



It was on a Thursday Morning,
And 'twas April's eighteenth day,
When the first gun from our ramparts
Sent King James in fright away.
On the following Sunday Morning
They their first shot did essay.

'Mong us crashed it, with much terror
For our wives and children fraught;
Ay, with terror for our heroes
Who of wives and children thought;
Rather for it was the first, than
For the evil that it wrought.

Yet the feeling of the Sabbath
Was that day in Derry town;—
Manifested in our people's
Faces, moving up and down
To and from the fair Cathedral,
Of our Derry height the Crown.

And, be sure, not slow our youths were
The dread challenge to resent.
So, while our unarmed townsfolk
Meekly to their worship went,
Our Commanders had a sortie
Planned, the foe to circumvent.

Note that bold commanding figure
Stepping firmly up the street,
As if snows of seventy winters
Never on his forehead beat.
Note the eagle glance that searches
Every face that it may meet.

From beneath the gown's deep purple
Cuirass-gleams your glance withstand:—
Crimson sash across his shoulder,
Round his neck the cleric's band,
In one hand he grasps a Bible,
On his sword-hilt rests one hand.

This is WALKER. From the consult
Of the Colonels comes he now,
To a place his heart loves better
And the work of his youth's vow;
For already the great concourse
Doth within St. Colomb's bow.

There they wait—nor vainly wait—him.
How our hearts his voice used hold,

As with words and glance of fire he
The grand story did unfold
Of God's marvellous deliv'rances
And promises of old!—

“For thy promises of old are
Sure and everlasting;’ so
Wait we here, in no chance trusting;
Forth, not in man's strength they go:
Here wait *we* 'neath God's protection;
They in God's strength seek the foe.”

It was the first word we heard of 't;
And the word was scarcely spoke
When the rattle of the battle
Into the Cathedral broke.
But our great commander-cleric
Yet our audience did invoke.

“Like as Moses on the mountain
Did with Hur and Aaron pray,
Let us pray; and God shall answer
As He answered on that day.”—
And we prayed, “O God of battles,
Help, who didst help Joshua.”

And HE helped us; often after
Sent like help in doubtful fray.
Often after were we gathered
In like fashion, there, to pray;
And to hear such words of courage
As our Governor's that day.

Nor his only. In our city
Eighteen Clergymen were found,
With eight Presbyters. St. Colomb's
Unto all was common ground ;
And through every voice St. Colomb's
Pulpit gave the same sure sound.

In the morn Episcopalians
Thronged within its sacred walls :
In the evening Presbyterians
Answered to its belfry calls ;
While upon our leaders' councils
No religious discord falls.

God was with us ; God among us ;
As herein was sureliest shown.—
Praise we Him by whom not only
Were our enemies o'erthrown,
But ourselves restrained from marring
Work was all the Almighty's own.





The Relief.

ONCE again a Sabbath morning
O'er the 'leaguered city broke :

From the roof of the cathedral

Once again our cannon spoke,
And our flag was dipped, in token

To the fleet of last distress ;

Whilst within the old cathedral

Once again our people press.

“Once again !” In every bosom

This one feeling uppermost,—

Ere another Sabbath morning

Derry shall be saved or lost.

Once again on board the Swallow

Brave Micaiah Browning stopt ;

Once again implored the General

His proposals to accept :—

“Sir, of your five thousand soldiers

Not a man those guns who heard,

But his heart is with compassion,—

Yes, with indignation, stirred.

What then must the breast be like to

Of a native of the place ;

One whose starving wife and babies

Share yon city's evil case ? ”——

Kirk spake, sharply interrupting,
“I know all that you would say.
General Schomberg has sent orders
That admit of no delay.
Hold you ready, and the Dartmouth
Shall convoy you. Give command
That six guns their eight guns answer,
To announce relief at hand.”

How his true men cheered Micaiah,
As he climbed the Mountjoy's side,—
Every man a man from Derry !
How they laboured : with what pride !
How they watched and watched the Dartmouth ;
Watched for flowing of the tide !

When, towards eve, the Dartmouth signalled,
(Captain Leake, Commander stout),
Both the Mountjoy and the Phoenix
Had their canvas all flung out.
Inwards move they with the frigate,
Wind and tide in favour now . . .
Four good miles of water stretching
'Twixt the quay and foremost prow
When, (where meet the lough and river,)
Fort and Castle of Culmore
Thunder on them with great fury,
And the troops from either shore.
Nobly Leake has done his duty,
Bravely Browning's work is done.

Gallant Douglas follows after
 Till the frith within is won,
 Where the frigate casts her anchor,
 While the victuallers sail on !
 'Tis the hour of evening service ;
 And our gathered people wait,
 (Not much happier for the six guns
 That had answered to our eight* :)—
 Wait our Governor. “ 'Twas Sabbath ;
 He was preaching,” one recalls,
 “ When our men first proved their prowess
 In a fight outside the walls.
 Then he mainly talked of courage
 And of duties to fulfil ;
 Mainly now of trust, endurance,
 And submission to God's will.”
 'Tis the hour of evening sermon :
 For the last time Walker stands
 In the pulpit of St. Colomb's,
 Lifting heavenward holy hands :—
 Hands, methinks, no whit less holy,
 That for Freedom, Home, and Creed,
 He hath wielded warrior's weapon
 In their hour of deadly need.
 No less holy that he pleads not
 Sable gown or whitened hair ;
 Takes in all his people's peril
 And privation manhood's share :

* They had been so often disappointed already. General Kirke is very generally condemned for being so long in the Bay without having made any serious effort for the town's relief.

No less holy than the Temple,
 Where he worships, is to-day
 For that Derry's ammunition
 In its vault is stowed away :
 For that from its roof and tower
 Look our guns in greatness down,
 Speaking terror to our foemen,
 Shedding safety on our town.

'Tis the hour of evening sermon.—
 For the last time Walker stands
 In the pulpit of Saint Colomb's,
 Lifting heavenward holy hands.

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“In His care who first our spirits
 To this lofty path impell'd ;
 In His care, the God whose spirit
 Hath till now our cause upheld,
 Can we not still trust, my brethren ?
 His arm shortened ? Cannot save ?
 Who poured bread on starved Samaria,
 Sank proud Egypt in the wave ?
 It was when a lord despairing
 Said, “Shall Heaven's window open ?”
 To Elisha, that Elisha's
 God fulfilled His servants' hope.
 When the foe was close behind them
 And the deep sea close before—
 Then 'twas God, through walled-up waters,
 Caused His people to pass o'er. . . .

View we now His special mercies
 To ourselves these hundred days :
 Supernatural providences,
 Often by most natural ways. . . .
 Hearts, look up in full thanksgiving !
 Tears of weakness, cease to fall !
 We at last are wholly helpless :
 Now is God's time : on Him call."——
 Hark, that shout ! What means this rushing
 Of the soldiers in the street ?
 One has entered, hushed and eager,
 To announce, " The Fleet ! The Fleet !"
 From the tower of the Cathedral
 Sentinels have called, " They come."——
 Speed their way, God, past the castle,
 Past the batteries and the boom !

Ah, to see the men of Derry—
 Women, men, and children too,—
 Crowding on the walls of Derry,
 Crowding roof and tower, to view !
 Ah, to see the pale-black, sunken
 Cheeks take other hue ; to see
 Eyes, in which so long gleamed famine,
 Glance with hope's quick energy !
 How they cheered, how blest, each other,
 'Spite their weakness, 'spite the din,
 As the frigate quelled the castle
 And the three good ships swept in !

But that momentary gladness—
It hath passed. Three miles remain
Of a low and narrow river
To be traversed by the twain.
Of a low and narrow river
Held on both banks by the foe :
And the boom, THE BOOM ! God only
Doth as yet the issue know.
Faces up towards Heaven are turned,
Hearts in longing thither go.

“ If I perish, then I perish,”
Spake the self-devoted queen.
Seemed as if the stately storeships
Sailed death’s very jaws between.
Oft the belching fire from both banks,
Pouring from small guns and great,
Smoke-enveiling both the vessels,
Left us doubting of their fate.
But the nearing fire still told us
They were nearing. On they came,
As a strong man through a tempest,
Through the death-hail, fire, and flame.

How we hoped and feared in Derry !
How we wondered, watched, and prayed !
Some were bowed in the Cathedral,
Some within their own homes stayed.
Longing so intense possessed them,
Famine-worn, they dared not cope

With the harrowing alternation—
 Hope and fear, and fear and hope.
 Some, combining their last efforts,
 Waved the standard from the tow'r :
 Some the minute-gun kept firing,
 As denoting the last hour.
 On the crowded walls and ramparts,
 Various gestures, various cries,
 From the strongest of the watchers
 Told of glad or sad surprise.
 Hands are stretched towards the vessels ;
 Hands are clenched towards the foe.
 Faces all upturn to Heaven ;
 Thither all heart's cryings go.

* * * * *

“ 'Tis the Mountjoy ! 'tis our townsman !
 Bold Micaiah takes the lead.
 But the Boom, THE BOOM ! ” they whisper,
 As the storeships nearer speed.
 “ See, the batteries, that cover
 It at both ends, ready wait
 See, the ambushed musket-volleys
 Are enough to seal their fate !
 God, look on us and our brothers,
 And thy glory vindicate.”
 As a strong man through a tempest,
 Through this hail and storm of death,
 Drive the Mountjoy and the Phœnix :
 But our boldest hold their breath,

And the soldiers of King Stuart
Yet within their camp detained,
Watch the issue of this moment
With a vision no less strained,
When the batteries are opened,
And the musket volleys pour,
With a fury twice redoubled,
From the lines on either shore.

On the Mountjoy sweeps majestic,
While upon its loftiest deck
Stands the gallantest Commander
Ever braved a battle's wreck.
Roar of cannon, din of muskets,
And all else despite, was yet
Heard the shock through all the battle
When the boom and vessel met.
And the boom remains unbroken
But hath felt its mortal wound ;
Whilst the ship in its recoiling
Swerves aside and lies aground.

Like one—closed in a death-struggle,
And assured his hour is come,—
Who already in his foeman's
Flashing eye hath read his doom ;
But for one last effort gathers
All his yet remaining might,
That the other, though his victor
May have cause to rue this fight :

So the boom shook back the good ship ;
Cast its conqueror aground ;
But, though lying yet unbroken,
Hath received its mortal wound.

Then a cry of exultation,
As of demons loosed from hell,
From the Stuart army went up——
Ah, we knew its meaning well.
Blacker in each other's faces
Looked we in that fateful hour,
When we knew the boom unbroken
And the Mountjoy in their power :
As we saw them gaily rushing
For the boats, our ship to board ;
Whilst the guns from both the batteries
All their fury on her poured.

Then, as loftily the sea-cliff
Fronts all wrath of heaven and air,
Fronts all wrath of storm and ocean,
Nor regards the lightening's glare,
Soul-unshaken, self-sufficing,
Towered that steadfast spirit : then
In that hour of fate our captain
Spoke his orders, cheered his men :—
“ God who brought us here can bring us
Farther. I've one fear, but one,
Lest our consort have the crowning
Of our work so well begun ;

Sunder that which we have shaken ;
 Take our prize through this delay.—
 Men, our babies' fathers must be
 First in Derry town to-day. . . .

“At the worst, we may these boatmen
 Bid return.” His gunners heard,
 And a broadside on the landside
 Sent them back dispersed and scared.
 It did more. The guns rebounding,
 Aided by the rising tide,
 Shook the ship from shore and left her
 Free once more, Foyle river's pride.

In the meantime,—while the Mountjoy
 Had been labouring, righting,—some
 In the long boat have been plying
 “Axe and lever” ’gainst the boom ;
 So when next the good ship faced it,
 Scarcely shaken she passed through,
 And triumphant, through the battle
 Smoke, emerged to Derry's view.
 Oh, the shout that from the ramparts
 Then ascended to the sky !
 All the strength in our starved bodies
 Was centred in that cry.
 For one moment we remembered
 Nothing of privations braved :
 Nothing but our rescued city
 And our cause and honour saved.

Yet not long our loud acclaiming
 Lasted ; for our hearts quick were
 With our loved ones and our lost ones
 Who our triumph might not share.
 Sobs were mingled with thanksgiving,
 Tear blind eyes to Heaven cast,
 While through " Ross's Bay " the Phoenix
 And the Mountjoy upwards pass'd.

In that hour of passion-tumult
 Some fell dead in Derry town.
 In some lives the light of reason
 Was for ever stricken down.
 Some had risen from sick-couches,
 But in vain, the ships to greet.
 Some set out, but, hunger-conquered,
 Fell down swooning in the street.
 Some sped home to cheer the sick ones ;
 Some, to bid the dead revive :
 Some half went, ere recollecting
They no longer cry nor strive.

" What is this ? The Mountjoy beaten ? "
 " Captain Browning loiter thus ? "
 " Let the Phoenix, e'en, outstrip her,
 In the race for home and us ? "
 " Browning ! Gallantest commander
 Ever braved a battle's wreck ! " . . .
 . . . Ah, the brave Micaiah Browning
 Lieth dead upon his deck.

Oh, for many a long year after,
And by many a crowded hearth,
Loved his men to tell the story
Of their Chief's last hour on earth.
How he held his lofty station
Through the bullets and the balls,
Up the long course of the river,
Pointing still to Derry walls.
How, aground when struck the vessel,
Never cloud passed o'er his thought,—
How he cheered them, how inspired them,
How he blessed them, as they wrought.
How, when next they faced the barrier,
Cried he, "God for Derry town!
Men, this river and this moment
Shall be posts of our renown."
How, as through the boom they burst in,
And, in triumph, him they view'd,
Than himself e'en greater, nobler,
He, like one transfigured, stood.
How, when through the smoke they struggled,
And the ramparts' shout came down,—
"Think you, hearts, hath Heaven such music
As these cheers from Derry town?"—
How just then the bravest Captain
Ever strode through battle's wreck,
With a bullet in his forehead,
Fell down dead upon the deck!
Fell down dead, his sword tow'ard Derry,
Where his heart was all the while.

And his face e'en in the coffin
Had not lost that triumph-smile.

Still with shout and shot they follow
The two vessels sailing on.
But when once the boom was broken
Derry walls were lost and won.
Well they knew it, and we knew it,
And the angels looking down.—
Did our dead, we wondered, know it—
They who died for Derry town?

Night was falling when the Phoenix
Came alongside the Ship quay,
With its stores from Scotland. (Scotland
True to Ulster stand away !)
Never shouting nor acclaiming
From the throngs awaiting there :
Sobs were mingled with the blessing,
With thanksgiving misery's pray'r.
Cheers befitting yonder triumph,
And o'er-burdened hearts relieved ;
But in silence, as from Heaven,
Their restored lives are received.

And not one is there among them
Whom the hundred days have left
With unwounded heart or spirit,—
Of some loved ones unbereft.

And the gallantest Commander
That e'er braved a battle's wreck,
Derry's son and her deliverer,
Lieth dead upon his deck.

Night had fallen when our people,
Young and old, whose strength allowed,
With one heart and with one purpose,
Were within the old church bowed.
Oh, to see the breathing spectres
Up and down the aisles that tread!
Seem they sleepers just half-wakened
From some City of the Dead.
Faces wan and bodies wasted—
Still that strange sepulchral air
Clung about them, still that starkness,
Even when most rapt in pray'r.
Not until the prayer was ended,—
Spake the pastor, "Let us praise,
And a psalm of loud thanksgiving
To our God and Saviour raise":—
Not until the psalm essayed they,
Found their human hearts relief:
Sobbed the agéd with the children,
Sobbed and wept, but not for grief.

No heart there whose pure thanksgiving
Reached not up to Heaven's height,
Though no song of loud thanksgiving
Touched the Church's roof that night.

"City of the Dead?" Ay, rightly
 Derry might have been named so,
 Out of her prolonged entombment
 And its multitudinous woe.
 Yards and churchyard overburthened
 With the taken prey of death :
 Atmosphere with rankness reeking
 Of a pestilence's breath.
 Whilst her living look like corpses
 Of shrunk form and ghastly glare :
 With just life enough for motion,
 And just heart enough for prayer.
 Yet shall place be found in Derry
 For a grave full six-foot deep,
 Where to lay Micaiah Browning
 In his calm triumphant sleep.
 (Browning's widow, Browning's orphans,
 Day of mourning 'tis for you.—
 Day of pride through all the ages,
 Yours and your descendants' too.)
 Here it shall be—in the chancel
 Of our old cathedral—set.
 Never Bishop lived, more nobly
 Earned this pious honour yet.

* * * * *

Never yet sincerer mourners
 Followed car of King or liege,
 Than the concourse which attended
 This last funeral of the siege.

NOTE.

PROTESTANT readers will not think less kindly of this work because they find one or two Bible characters introduced among our Reformation witnesses to Bible truth. In the "Wycliffe Ballads" we are brought in view of the bondage under which our National Churches groaned five centuries ago, and of the conditions under which their exodus commenced. In the "Poems and Ballads," &c., attention is directed to the greatness of the price by which our inheritance has been secured: all this, to evoke gratitude, to stimulate endeavour, and, by God's blessing, to bring about in some minds greater willingness to face the minor hardships or sacrifices that Protestant Christians in our day are being, or may be, called upon to endure. There are some who, in the presence of every passing cloud, give up all effort of their own in sheer despair; there are others who refrain from effort because they cannot do every thing themselves, or because they are indifferent, or have satisfied themselves that it is God's work and care, and so must come right in the end. To the one class the Author would earnestly say, you can at all events strive in prayer with the Master as did the woman of Syro-Phœnicia, and to the other he would respectfully recommend a more careful study of the character and work of Nehemiah.

One profound regret has followed the Author through a work that has been in all other respects a source of pleasure and advantage to him. It has been still a grief that one could not extol the heroism of the confessor or the constancy of the martyr without also making mention of the traitor's infamy and the persecutor's cruel hate. But even towards traitor and persecutor alike Protestants may well be charitably minded to-day, when they recall how the "witnesses" themselves forgave their enemies and prayed God's pardon for them with their dying breath: how in most cases the system was more to blame than the individual; and how that the great All-Disposer has ever over-ruled the subtle devices of men for the accomplishment of His own wise ends; so that in every age it has been still found true, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church."

DONOUGHMORE RECTORY,

Baltinglass, *Dec. 20th*, 1857.



The Syro=Phœnician.

“ And Joseph saw his brethren, and he knew them, but made himself strange to them, and spake roughly to them.”—GEN. xlii. 7.

By thankless Galileans spurned,
Towards the Phœnician plain He turned,
To seek 'mong aliens the repose
Refused Him by His household foes :
Yet in this Pagan place to hear
A cry strike sudden on his ear,
As one invoked Him by that name
To which “ His own ” denied His claim,
And “ Mercy, Son of David, Lord ! ”
For her demoniac child implored.

“ Up from Judæa, Galilee,
Thy rumour reached us,” waileth she :
“ Down from our cities, Sidon, Tyre,
Zarephath—all our coasts, desire
Drew mighty multitudes who brought
Back blessings far beyond their thought.
On her who cannot of Thee know,
On me who could not leave her woe,
Have mercy, Son of David, Lord ! ”
He never answered her a word.

“Of all the ills that I have heard
Were healed by Thee, what one appeared
Drier than mine? I toil and weep;
Long vigils, tortured, maddened, keep;
Nought of my anguish for her woes,
Nought of my pain my darling knows:
Out of her face of misery
Sends never look of love to me,
But often wrath and hatred, Lord—”
And still He answers her no word.

His followers speak: “Send her away;
She crieth after us,” they say.
He answers them, “Ye might have known
To Israel’s lost sheep alone
Have I been sent.” With strained ears
The disappointing words she hears.
Despite their harshness, their disdain,
Her bitter cry is heard again,
“Have mercy on me, help me, Lord!”
But still he answers not a word.

“Mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son
Of David!” Still the cry goes on.
“Mercy on me, and on my child,
Whose misery sets e’en strong men wild.
Mercy on me who oft have wept
She has not with the dead long slept:
Mercy on her whose tender frame
Foul spirits for their dwelling claim:

Have mercy on me, help me, Lord!"
He never answers her a word.

Answers? 'Twould seem He from her hides :
Within-doors hidden now abides !
But vain the door and vain the crowd
That would repel her. See her bowed ;
Bowed o'er His travel-wearied feet,
Ere He quite resteth in his seat.
Hands clasped, ...one glance of misery
From tearless eyes cast upwards, ...she
Wails, breathless, fainting, " Help me, Lord !"
Hark ! He will answer her a word !

Woman, look up from thy deep woe :
Look up and hope, O woman ! Lo,
It is His voice who bids be fed
The thousands hunger'd ; bids the dead
Start from their slumber ; awes the storm ;
While from His advent devils swarm
Affrighted—such as hold thy child !
And yet compassion's tones most mild
Are those which truliest thy Lord's
True heart express : then hark his words.

" Must not the children first be fed ?
Meet were it we the children's bread,
Ere they have finished their repast,
To the little dogs * should take and cast ?"

* *Little dogs* in original.

How looked He then—this Brother born
 Unto adversity and scorn?
 Love's Priest and Victim, how looked He
 On that crushed suppliant soul, while she
 Moaned up, "Lord, help me; help me, Lord,"
 And He gave answer with such word?

Joy, not resentment, flashed *her* brow.
 Not tearless eyes uplifts she now—
 To settle on that grand calm FACE.
 Her hands unclasp—as though to embrace
 His feet—one moment; clasp once more,
 But not in misery as before.
 "The *little dogs*,"... "the children *first*,"
 Swift mused she... Seemed her heart must burst
 The while she answers back, "Truth, Lord!
 I bless Thee for that answering word:—

"Truth; for, though ours such lowest place,
 The household yet doth us embrace;
 Nor, do I ask Thee 'take and cast,'
 I claim what *falls* from the repast—
 The little dogs' just share, which they
 For their glad portion have alway.
 Here over Israel's border line,
 The table's verge, I claim Thee mine,
 Thee and Thy power to bless me, Lord!"
 He answers her another word.

"Great is thy faith, O woman! Be
 It as thou wilt e'en to thee.

For this thy saying it is done,
The devil from thy daughter gone.”
How looked He then, this Brother born
Unto adversity and scorn ?
Love's Priest and Victim, how looked He
On that sufficèd soul, while she,
Bowed down before Him, blessed her Lord :
Then rose and blessed Him for that word ?

Homewards, O mother, hie thee straight,
Where friends and neighbours wond'ring wait,
Surely to find it as He said,—
Thy daughter laid out on the bed ;
No longer anguish-racked, self-rent,
Nor by fierce demon-strugglings spent.
To drink her looks of love hie home ;
And love to tell, all years to come,
Tried and triumphant, how thy Lord
Was “ snared ” by thee in his own word.

Nor one gift only brought that hour :—
To thy strong faith its perfect power ;
Thy hands the door of gospel hope
Unto the Gentile world to ope ;
Wherever Christ is known, men's praise
And love and blessing all the days :—
Which triple wreath now forms the crown,
From shore to shore, of thy renown ;
Safe-kept by thine harsh-seeming Lord,
And granted with the wished-for word.

Poor heart within me, often spent
With doubts and fears and discontent ;
Because there comes no sign He hears
Or marks thy cryings strong and tears,
While others tell at touch of them
Flows mercy from His garment's hem ;
Trust, as her hour's protracted pains
Proved nought compared with its great gains,
A larger gift prepares thy Lord
For thee than means the wished-for word.

Think, while the silence stays unbroken,
At least refusal is not spoken :
Behind His coldest countenance
Surprise love lurking in His glance !
Out of the eater still comes meat :
Out of the strong that which is sweet :
Still Faith, Humility, and Love,
More than a match for God can prove ;
Still wring rich blessing from thy Lord,
Though now He answers with " rough " word !





Nehemiah.

A MODEL FOR IRISH PROTESTANTS.

A HOMELY SERMON IN HOMELY VERSE.*



I HAVE no doubt at all that Nehemiah
Was "a good man and true :"
Stands, though he lived in th' Olden dispensation
Fit MODEL for the New.

Like Moses, friend of princes, choosing rather
To suffer with his race,
Than in the court of earth's most potent monarch
To fill a favoured place.

He not disowned his nation at the lowest,
But sought its benefit ;
And so, like Moses, lawgiver and leader,
In time, became to it.

e LOVED HIS NATIVE LAND not in proportion
As this might bring him gain :
When for himself prayed for her ; e'en to Heaven
Confessed her shames with pain ;

* Specially addressed to my brethren of the Loyal Orange Association.

And when came opportunity to serve her,
Did willingly resign
Wealth, dignity, and ease, as sacrifices
At love-of-country's shrine.

From first to last for guidance, help, and blessing
He doth to Heaven cling.
"So PRAYED I to the God of Heaven," writes he,
"And said unto the King—."

And when his growing wall Tobiah jeers at,
"Hear, O our God," he cries.
And when the wall is crowned,"—For 'twas God's doing
Our foes have downcast eyes."

From first to last his heart he lifts to Heaven
In praise or prayer of faith:—
"According to my God's good hand upon me,"
At each advance he saith.

And yet, with all this Trust, he recognizes
GOD'S FELLOW-HELPERS WE.
As if sole on his shoulders lay the burden,
So watched, so laboured he.

Note with what prudence, with what forethought took he
Full powers from the King;
Full contributions for his work secured he
While onward journeying.

And when at last arrived within the City,
By night with anxious care
The length of ruin traversed, gauging fully
The work before him there.

Not rashly his allies and friends were chosen ;
The words not rashly spoke
With which he did the help of chiefs and elders
'Gainst their " reproach " invoke.

Still God's good hand is with him, so they answer,
" Let us rise up and build ; "
Though foemen's mouths are wide with scornful laughter,
Their hearts with hatred filled.

But hostile threat or bitter scoff he needs not,
Nor needs he look at all
Beyond the City, would he find sufficient
Mere brave men to appal.

The work's extent, the coldness and the grudging
Of some he came to aid :
Traitors within his camp, leal friends whom even
Their love still made afraid.

'Gainst all which he his people cheers, reminding
Of paths THEIR FATHERS trod ;
Of THEIR OWN MANHOOD ; while in secret prayer
He stays his heart on God.

So, Brothers, shrink you not for your work's vastness,
 For cries of friends fear-curst,
 For treachery in your fold, or for the lagging
 Of some who should be first.

Like difficulties have been faced and conquered
 By your brave sires before :
 E'en Derry's self was not without its TRAITORS
 And TIMESERVERS of yore.

But ROES are also there whose MOCKING laughter
 The builders hear far off.
 "That which they build a passing fox would tumble,"
 Is grieved Tobiah's scoff.

Yes, they may scoff. The brave Tirshatha blenched not,
 For taunts from such as they,
 Nor answered once their ridicule. My brothers,
 So hold you on your way.

So, when you are reviled revile you never.
 Your cause, so just and true,
 Should lift you far above the bigot's level,
 However lowly you.

"Sancta simplicitas!" cried Hüss the martyr,
 In pity, from the fire,
 To see an agèd zealot heap the faggots
 In hate around his pyre.

Distinguish 'twixt the honestly mistaken
 And him who follows fraud :
 The credulous and criminous ; the bigot
 And him who mocks at God.

Meet sophistries with Sense: 'gainst Love's scared
 pleadings
 Your hearts to firmness school.
 Meet menace with the strong hand armed and ready ;
 With silence—ridicule.

FALSE ACCUSATION, too, is tried :—“ What, will you
 Against the King rebel ? ”—
 We too are “ loyalist rebels ” !—Nehemiah
 Just let his conduct tell.

But treacherous friend and timid sympathizer
 Foes' strength EXAGGERATE.
 Soon Nehemiah's preparations tested
 The weakness of their state.

His workmen shall be warriors :—“ SWORD AND TROWEL.
 While th' enemy is near ! ”
 With one hand they shall labour at the building,
 With one hand hold the spear.

“ And with me he shall stand who sounds the trumpet ;
 And where you hear it blow,
 Haste thither all ; there is the post of weakness
 And there th' attacking foe.

“Suburban dwellers, every man among you,
 Gather within the wall.
 All else, e'en ties domestic, are as nothing
 When shrine and country call.”

A people thus united what could conquer :—
 Brave souls so far above
 All selfish views? Pray for ourselves, my brothers,
 Like Wisdom, Courage, Love.

Be not of THE TIMESERVERS, “Curse ye Meroz :
 Against the mighty she
 Come not to help the Lord. Jehovah's angel
 Saith, curse ye bitterly.”

Deny not truth for fear :—hast fallen like Peter,
 Shun not his contrite after course.
 Betray not truth for gain :—Wouldst be a Judas
 Without Iscariot's remorse?

Why should the word “MINORITY” affright us,
 If it means not, in sooth,
 “Minority” in enterprise and virtue,
 Intelligence and truth.

The Protestant minority this moment
 Rules all the world. Think you
 The Protestant minority to-morrow
 Would not hold Ireland too?

'Tis the prerogative of Protestantism
 To govern :—look and see !
 And Ireland, if from England loosed to-morrow,
 Would no exception be.

Now, mockery having failed, false accusation
 And threats of war, his foes
 Try stratagem ; and now, as if in kindness,
 A CONFERENCE propose.

He might have answered them, “ I’ll not walk into
 Your snare with open eyes.”

“ You fence for time, or, in their leader’s absence,
 My people would surprise.

“ When strong, or not found out, some folks’ choice
 weapons
 Are fraud and violence ;
 But driven at bay, with airs of outraged friendship,
 They call for—Conference.”

Two answers he had choice of :—“ I distrust you
 Who have so oft misled : ”

Or, “ I’ve a great work here and cannot leave it : ”—
 And this is what he said.

So, POLITIC AND COURTEOUS be towards all men ;
 And when two answers you,
 One bitter and one kind, have, send the kind one,
 E’en to worst foes, if true.

Scorn, slander, shows of war, and plotted ambush
 Their force have vainly spent.

And now the talk is of assassination :—

A THREATENING LETTERS'S sent.

“To-night hide in the Temple ; else masked murder
 Shall take you unaware.

There surely are the strongest walls ; most surely
 Is God's protection there.

SCARED FRIENDS cry,—“ God can build these walls with-
 out you :

He not requires your life ;
 Surely prefers His child at altar kneeling
 Than striking in the strife.”

So some good Christians “ in the temple ” hide them,
 “ Leave all to God,” to-day.

“ Good Christians, heirs of Heaven, should content them
 With trusting Heaven ” they say.

But other thoughts inspire the brave Tirshatha,
 And other hopes in Heaven ;—
 That God's protection is most surely over
 The post of duty given.

“ God surely can rebuild these walls without me,
 But yet GOD WILLS NOT SO.
 And while they are unbuilt, and while foes menace,
 I to no Temple go.

“ Here will I pray while working with my trowel :
 And if I must wield spear,
 Here will I pray ; assured He bides as near me,
 As in the Temple, here.”

God could have built those walls without him, yet He
 Without him would not ; so,
 God will not your Faith's bulwarks keep, my brothers,
 Save to His help you go.

“ Should such as I flee ? I, so charged, commissioned,
 God's fellow-helper, I ?
 To save my life flee even to the Temple ?
 Not I, I durst not fly.

And when, to-day, men tell us we must gather
 Our household goods and go ;
 And take our Bibles and our high traditions
 Across the ocean's flow ;

Leave our own land where God as lights has placed us
 'Mid superstition's night ;
 As builders to build up the broken bulwarks
 Of Freedom, Faith, and Right ;—

Go hence as convicts or rejected aliens,
 What shall our answer be ?—
 Same as, and prompt as, this Tirshatha's, “ Should we,
 A people like us, flee ?

“SUCH AS WE FLEE? what answer give those waters
That roll by Oldbridge town?
And what the walls which cross the Foyle look nor’ ward,
Our ramparts of renown?

“What say th’ Apostles who first consecrated
Dear Erin’s soil to God?
Martyrs and pastors of past generations
Who sleep within her sod?

“What saith the Book we owe to their devotion?
Trust in the Lord: do good:
DWELL IN THE LAND of thy heart’s love, and surely
Thou shalt not lack for food.’”

Nor fear you lack a GREATER ONE’S EXAMPLE
For deeds resolved and bold:
But see you all such deeds are by an earnest
Passion for Peace controlled.

The Prince of Peace is He. No doubt, ‘Come to me’
Is His most constant word:
And yet as surely He has said, “I come not
Peace bringing, but a sword.”

“Come unto me all burdened ones,”—yet see Him
Who take the small cords’ scourge;
Drive the profaners *from Him*, when ’twas needed
His Father’s house to purge.

But see you that, through all, the work makes progress:
 And, have you but one hand,
 And may make choice betwixt the sword and trowel,
 The trowel then demand.

Yes, many a noble soul Christ-loved, Christ-loving,
 Has gone to his reward
 From duty's post amid the carnage-tumult
 On Battle's slippery sward ;

But of all deaths the death most near the Master's
 Is that which Stephen faced :
 And round His Throne the Martyr's noble army,
 Methinks, is nearest placed.

Strong by his faith, the brave Tirshatha cowed not
 Before the mongrel hordes.
 He cast his burden on the Lord, and heartened
 His people with brave words.

And, after all, *this man of warlike seeming*
 Was *Peace's truest friend* :
 For just because he stood prepared, his people
 Had not to fight in th' end.

He kept his patience 'spite all provocations
 And challenges, all through :
 No smart retort from him, no "One of us is
 As good as three of you."

For Peace he laboured : as the veriest coward
 Could act and speak things smooth,
Until his great commission was imperilled,
 Till Peace endangered Truth.

And note, "THE WORK" WENT ON 's spite all distractions,
 Political, or aught.

"We laboured in the work," and "Each one over
 Against his own house wrought."

"The people had a mind to work." Love never
 Can fail of some device
To keep her altar smoking, for WHERE LOVE IS
 THERE MUST BE SACRIFICE.

Behold the Greater One on Hill of Olives
 Weep Zion's sins and doom.
He to the alien boasts, Save out of Zion
 Salvation cannot come.

Yet the Jerusalem He so mourns over,
 The same is which hath slain
His seers and messengers : whose chiefs already
 Have planned his death of pain.

The Via Dolorosa lies before him,
 Up which he soon shall go ;
Gethsemane, Golgotha, and the Garden ;—
 Yet hear his hearts cry, "Oh,

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often
 Would I have gathered thee
 As doth a hen her brood beneath her bosom,
 But ye would not—even ye !”

O PATRIOT OF PATRIOTS in all things
 Our best example thou !
 One with thy country in a midnight blacker
 Than threats my country now

And now one last and loving word, my Brother :—
 What of THAT OTHER WALL—
 THE SPIRITUAL, within thee ? Makes it progress ?
 Or, hast thou built at all ?

Lies it a ruin under World-love’s rubbish ?
 Gates burned by fire of Lust ?
 And that fair shrine, the soul, thou shouldst have
 cherished,
 ’Neath throne of Satan thrust ?

Waken, my Brother, waken, though awaken
 Thy foes when thou upstand :—
 Far subtler foes than ever troubled Ezra’s
 Or Nehemiah’s band.

Not Horonite, Arabian, or of Ammon,
 Though thine are also three.
 The world, the flesh, the devil, are the troublers
 That watch to harass thee.

Though various are their forces and their weapons,
And thou, alas, so small ;
Stand to thy duty, Brother ! One is with thee,
ONE stronger than they all.

From loftier Palace-heights than Nehemiah's,
Through deeper loss and shame,
To win that shrine, to help thee build its bulwarks,
This Prince more mighty came.

Take to you God's whole armour, buckler, breastplate,
Sword, girdle, helmet, greaves ;
Still praying ever for the grace which ever
His trusting child receives.

So shalt thou trample sin ; shall fierce temptation
Before thy onset fall.
And thou shalt grow in strength to help the battle
Of some beyond thy wall.

For in the world's regeneration, also,
God's fellow-helper thou.
Yonder are Crowns and Rest : bless him who placed
thee
Builder and Fighter now.

He needs not thee ; just out of loving favour
Thy loving help demands.
Up ! Answer thou :—Here come I, loving Saviour,
A HELPER WITH BOTH HANDS.

11



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