Extracts from **William Hall Burnett** (former Editor of the Middlesbrough Daily Exchange and Poet) **OLD CLEVELAND - Local Writers and Local Worthies 1886**

Local Literature.

A Plea for Local Writers.—Antiquity of Literature.—Influence of Association.

THERE is no doubt that a series of very profitable papers may be written on the subject of our local literature. Few book readers, and still fewer newspaper readers, are aware of its extent and importance. For a quarter of a century past I have been in the habit of collecting the works of local writers, which have been a source of great interest to me, and have afforded much valuable information and knowledge which could have been obtained from no other source, and which indeed has been invaluable at times in various circumstances in which I have been placed. The query may be put at the outset, "Are there any local writers?" Middlesbrough is so new a town that its very newness is apt to limit and circumscribe our vision, until we may practically come to think that all our interest and all our endeavour is enshrined in the material works that we see around us. Indeed we are all of the opinion of Mr. Fallows, the historian of ***Old Middlesbrough***, expressed in a sense different to that we are considering, that in Middlesbrough we have no past at all. "We have no forefathers," therefore our sole delight is in contemplating the results of the great trade which we have created, rather than in seeking to meditate on the works that were done "in our fathers' days, and in the old time before them." The citizens of Middlesbrough, and of the new colonies and communities which the iron trade within this last thirty or forty years has brought together on the Tees littoral, might with profit endeavour to realise that though they live in a mighty big place, and one that, rightly enough, has made a great stir and noise in the world, there still remains the fact that it is surrounded by a district in which aforetime many famous men have accomplished wonderful things, not only in the domain of trade and commerce, but in the larger worlds of art and literature. I am aware I shall be met at the outset with that feeling of scepticism which places under a ban all local efforts to attain distinction in such enterprises as may be undertaken in a sphere in which, necessarily, so few can rise to any permanent eminence. We are all of us familiar with the scriptural saying that a prophet has not honour in his own country, and especially is it true of the man of letters—whether he be a poet or a philosopher, or a follower of some lower branch of ***belles lettres***—that the laws of mental and moral perspective have a great deal to do with the permanence and character of his reputation. The near and familiar are very closely scanned, and no man is a hero to his own valet.

Human nature is persistent in insisting that it will not discover a genius or a hero its next door neighbour; and, unfortunately, the best of us are naturally, as to o higher senses, so depraved and vulgar that we rather recognise an overweening conc in the literary pretensions of our friends than any degree of eminence or merit. T local writer has, in most ages and places, been regarded with contumely, if not wi scorn, by those about him: not that he might be destitute of merit, but that t world will insist upon living its humdrum and jog-trot life, and cannot endure to reminded of things out of the common, and of ideals and achievements that have relation to the common pursuit of bread and butter. Nevertheless, the *locus* must there. Philosophers and poets are not disembodied creatures of the air, living abo the clouds and vapours of the earth, like their own ideals. Homer and Aristot Virgil and Cicero, Shakespeare and Burns, were born, and lived somewhere, and know for fact that none of them were considered prodigies by their own townspeop Had they been so Homer would not have had to beg his bread, the facts of Shakspear life would not have remained unwritten, and Burns would not have died in comparati destitution and neglect. We must get rid of a merely local view of things, if the is to be any profit derived from the examples of local writers and local literature whi may be brought before us in this and the succeeding papers.

It may be possible the prejudices of some who follow these sketches may ruffled by the crude statement of principles which must necessarily be indulged in writing upon such a subject. There is a common idea prevalent that literature, so f as England is concerned, is entirely a modern creation, belonging to the last few hundr years. There is, indeed, a view of literature which would warrant such a conclusic There is another conception of the subject, and a description of the thing, which wou show that the mental product of which we treat, notwithstanding that there were, the far-away ages, no methods of transmitting thought, was evolved in great quantit and would compare in quality, probably in volume, with the word fabrics of later a more garrulous times. Literature now suffers from the superabundance of words, a from the increased facilities of utterance, by which means individual intellects can expr themselves in thousand-fold forms of articulation. Thoughts of lesser or greater mome are thinned out over acres of space. The lesser vocabulary of earlier times, and t absence of material aids to the dissemination of thought necessitated, other things bei also equal, a terseness and strength of expression, a simplicity and majesty of diction, a a power of thought, the loss of which we may look back upon with regret. I ne quote no examples to prove so patent a truth.

Literature is influenced by association. The character of the mind itself is affect by the association of natural objects and by its own experience of the events of li An instance may be mentioned of this striking truth. In Scotland, during the religic contentions of the Reformation, music and song were entirely shut out from the servi

of the Church. "The kist o' whistles" was an abomination to the stern covenanter, and the plaintive litanies and the sweetly gliding Psalms, with their ascent and descent of cadences, no longer re-echoed through the aisles of such noble fanes as Melrose and Dunblane. What was the result? The singing voice of the people, stifled in one direction, broke out in another, and every hill-side and every stream was made to bear witness to the fact that natural aspirations must infallibly assert themselves. No country is so rich in local lyrics as Scotland; and in no country are the songs more homely, more intense in their feeling, and more pathetically affecting. They are not only the reflection of the life of a simple domestic people: they are also the product of the mountain scenery and the clear, quick-running waters. To use a Hibernianism, England has no Scotch song, because England lacks the setting of Scotch circumstances and Scotch conditions. As we say of an Irishman's jokes, "They are racy of the soil." You could not grow them anywhere else; they could not be conceived under a different set of mental circumstances and physical conditions. We have all of us more or less felt the influence of natural scenery in affecting the imagination and the emotions. The towering hill answers to the mental aspirations; the sweeping plain to the inclusive faculty of the intellect, which in its breadth would seem at either extreme to border on the infinite; the running, sparkling water, to the mind-music which shapes the utterances of the soul so that they sparkle and trip and run, and are not vocal as the raven croaks; the stars at night answer to the creations of the beautiful in which the imagination revels: and so in all things the greater world is reflected in the microcosm, man. Taking these considerations into account as regards the higher literature, there is nothing in the physical circumstances of the Cleveland district that would seem to preclude the successful cultivation, on the part of the born genius and the zealous student, of "the faculty divine." True, you must first catch your hare, for, alas! it is still true in all art, *nascitur non fit*. Many colleges have been built, but as yet there has been no market discovered in which you may buy brains. Having our hero, of what need we complain? Cleveland is a glorious champaign, or was before the days of iron mining and blast furnaces. The Cleveland hills are not insignificant mole heaps, and we have grey ruins and running streams, a storied past, a simple primitive people, and all the associations amid which a hardy literature might fairly struggle for existence. That it did so struggle, and that it not only struggled but expressed itself, in more than one instance very successfully, we shall find in the records by and bye. To these it is my pleasure to direct attention.

Early Writers.

THE GODODIN.—ANEURIN.—BEOWULF.—CÆDMON.

IF we are to believe the author of *Cassell's Library of English Literature*, long before the Christian—which is another word for the historical as compared with the legendary—times, in the sphere of poetry great things were accomplished. The warrior bard, Aneurin, must in the old Celtic days have been resident within this immediate district, so that we may fairly claim that hereabouts English Literature had its first beginning. It is at least fair conjecture that the first of English epic poems was strung together line by line and verse by verse by a bard who, wandering amongst the valleys of the Swale, might now and again visit the fair plain of Cleveland in the golden east. To Aneurin is ascribed the important fragment of Celtic literature, *The Gododin*, being the lament for the dead who fell in the battle of Cattraeth, identified with Catterick in Yorkshire, where the Cymry met the advancing and invading Teutons at the "confluence of rivers," and fought with them unsuccessfully for seven days, being at length worsted with fearful slaughter. Of this battle *The Gododin* tells us—

"The warriors marched to Cattraeth with the day;
In the stillness of night they had quaffed the white mead;
They were wretched, though prophesied glory and sway
Had winged their ambition. Were none there to lead
To Cattraeth with loftier hope in their speed?
Secure in their boast, they would scatter the host
Bold standard in hand; no other such band
Went from Eiddin as this, that would rescue the land
From the troops of the ravagers. Far from the sight
Of home that was dear to them, ere they too perished,
Tudvwlch Hir slew the Saxons in seven days' fight.
He owed not the freedom of life to his might,
But dear is his memory where he was cherished.
When Tudvwlch amain came that post to maintain,
By the son of Kilydd, the blood covered the plain."

The metre of this poem is very varied. It comprises altogether 97 stanzas, each devoted to the memory of some one of the many chiefs who fell. It has been translated into modern English in part by Gray, Evans, and by the Rev. John Williams.

Professor Morley, in his *First Sketch of English Literature*, tells us that Gray found in a translation of it the passage which he thus put into music of his own:—

"To Cattraeth's vale in glittering row
Twice two hundred warriors go;

Every warrior's manly neck
Chains of regal honour deck ;
Wreathed in many a golden link ;
From the golden cup they drink
Nectar that the bees produce,
Or the grapes ecstatic juice.
Flush'd with mirth and hope they burn ;
But none from Cattraeth's vale return,
Save Aeron brave and Conan strong
(Bursting through the bloody throng).
And I the meanest of them all,
That live to weep and sing their fall."

The battle began on a Tuesday, and continued for a week. The Cymry fought to the death, and of three hundred and sixty-three chiefs who had led their people to the conflict, only three, says Aneurin, besides himself, survived. "Morien lifted up again his ancient lance, and, roaring, stretching out death towards the warriors, whilst towards the lovely, slender, blood-stained body of Gwen, sighed Gwenaby, the only son of Gwen. . . Fain would I sing, 'would that Morien had not died.' I sigh for Gwenaby the son of Gwen." Thus Aneurin ends his plaint over the crowning triumph of the Teuton. But hearts had beaten high among the Cymry, and from souls astir with feeling song had been poured throughout the days of long resistance that had come before. Urien was the great North of England chief who led the battle of the Cymry for their homes and liberties against invading Angles. Llywarch the Old (Llywarch Hen) Prince of Argoed, whom the remains of verse ascribed to him show to have been first in genius among the Cymric bards, was Urien's friend and fellow-combatant at Landisfarne, between the years 572 and 579. There, after the death of Urien, he carried the chief's head in his mantle from the field. "The head," he sang, "that I carry carried me ; I shall find it no more ; it will come no more to my succour. Woe to my hand, my happiness is lost!" After Urien's death Llywarch joined arms with Cyndyllan, Prince of Powys, at his capital, where Shrewsbury now stands. Cyndyllan fell in a battle at Tarn, near the Wrekin. "The hall of Cyndyllan," then sang his friend Llywarch, "is gloomy this night, without fire, without songs—tears afflict the cheeks ! The hall of Cyndyllan is gloomy this night, without fire, without family —my overflowing tears gush out ! The hall of Cyndyllan pierces me to see it, roofless, fireless. My chief is dead, and I alive myself." Twelfth century tradition says that this bard was for a time one of King Arthur's counsellors. Llywarch had many sons ; he gave to all of them his heart to battle for their country, and lost them all on the battlefield. "O, Gwenn," he sang of his youngest and last dead, "O, Gwenn, woe to him who is too old, since he has lost you. A man was my son, a hero, a generous warrior, and he was the nephew of Urien. Gwenn has been slain at the ford of Morlas. . . . Sweetly sang a bird on a pear tree above the head of Gwenn before they covered him with the turf. That broke the heart of the old Llywarch."

Professor Morley, in this work, further tells us that on the English coasts strong settlements were effected by the pagan Teutons, who, between 600 and 700, made frequent incursions on our shores. "The Teutonic settlers brought with their battle songs an heroic legend of a chief named Beowulf." This legend assumed vast shape, probably in the seventh century, and is one of the earliest specimens of English literature. The poem contains 6,357 lines, and is the most ancient heroic poem in any Germanic language. "Its hero sails from a land of the Yothis to a land of the Danes, and there he frees a chief named Hrothgar from the attacks of a monster of the fens and moors, named Grendel. Afterwards he is himself ruler, is wounded mortally in combat with a dragon, and is solemnly buried under a great barrow on a promontory rising high above the sea. And round about the mound rode his hearth-sharers, who sang that he was of kings, of men, the mildest, kindest, to his people sweetest, and the readiest in search of praise! In this poem real events are transformed into legendary marvels; but the actual life of the old Danish and Scandinavian chiefs, as it was first transferred to this country, is vividly painted. It brings before us the feast in the mead-hall, with the chief and his hearth-sharers, the customs of the banquet, the rude beginnings of a courtly ceremony, the boastful talk, reliance upon strength of hand in grapple with the foe, and the practical spirit of adventure that seeks peril as a commercial speculation—for Beowulf is undisguisedly a tradesman with his sword. The poem includes also expression of the heathen fatalism, 'What is to be goes ever as it must,' tinged by the energetic sense of men who feel that fate helps those who help themselves; or, as it stands in Beowulf, that 'the Must Be often helps an undoomed man when he is brave.'"

"The original scene of the story," continues Mr. Morley, "was probably a corner of the island of Sæland, upon which now stands the capital of Denmark, the corner which lies opposite to Gothland, the southern promontory of Sweden. But if so, he who in this country told the old story in English metre did not paint the scenery of Sæland, but that which he knew. A twelve mile walk by the Yorkshire coast, from Whitby northward to Bowlby Cliff, makes real to the imagination of all the country of Beowulf as we find it in the poem. Thus we are almost tempted to accept a theory which makes that cliff, the highest on our eastern coast, the ness upon which Beowulf was buried, and on the slope of which—Bowlby then being read as the corrupted form of Beowulfs-by—Beowulf once lived with his hearth-sharers. High sea-cliffs, worn into holes or 'nickerhouses many,' with glens rocky and wooded running up into great moors, are not characters of the coast of Sæland opposite Sweden, but they are special characters of that corner of Yorkshire in which the tale of Beowulf seems to have been told as it now comes to us in first English verse."

Chambers' *Cyclopædia of English Literature*, which makes no mention of the Celtic bard, Aneurin, and his poem or ballad of *The Gododin*, speaks of the *Lay of Beowulf* as the oldest poem of an epic form in Europe. A few words will give an idea of the language of the composition :—

Thâ com of môre	Then came from the moor,
Under mist-hleodhun	Under mist-hills,
Grendel gongan ;	Grendel to go ;
Geddes yrre bar.	God's ire he bare.

The poem contains about six thousand of these short lines, and is remarkable, like all Norse poetry, for its rich colouring, its musical sweetness, and its mystic wailing sadness. The great burden of these old world lays is wonder, awe, melancholy, fear, and mystery.

It is unnecessary to notice the guess made by Professor Morley as to the residence of Beowulf on the Bowlby cliffs. It is merely a conjecture, and nothing more. That picturesque locality, inaccessible to invasion as it must have been in these early times, was certainly a fit spot to be the cradle of English song. It is an inspiration to stand on the verge of its perpendicular wall in the early morning, and to see the sunbeams smite the waters and the rocks. High and steep as the cliff is, there has been from time immemorial a pathway down from its summit to the beach. This could only be used by men and horses, and was very zig-zaggy in character. Might it not have been originally scaled and descended by our ancestral sea-rovers ? At any rate, Bowlby cliffs were a splendid station from which to overlook the German main, and it requires no stretch of imagination to believe that more than a thousand years ago, from this watch tower, day by day, eager eyes kept a sharp outlook for the signs of coming invasion or unfriendly attack, and that here, amid the influence of natural scenery and exciting events, and existing in a more or less original relation towards the universe around them, men in the rudest times felt their souls "possessed," and sought to liberate their swelling emotions in musical language and exalted ideas.

It is to Cædmon, a monk, of Whitby Abbey, that we owe the original conception of the world-famous epic of *Paradise Lost.* Cædmon is indeed the reputed father of English song, and he is, as Professor Morley has pointed out, the first metrical author in our vernacular language. His composition is described by one author as a kind of religious hymn, celebrating the praises of the Creator, and which is preserved to us in the translation of Bede by Alfred. Cædmon flourished in the seventh century. In order to show the peculiarities of his verse, and to make plain how the poet of the Revolution, a thousand years later, travelled upon the lines he laid down, a few quotations may be given from the poem with which his name is associated. Thus, speaking of the fallen spirits who have been hurled over heaven's battlements by the victorious angels, he describes their future habitation, and says :—

" This narrow place is most unlike
That other, that we formerly knew
High in heaven's kingdom,
Which my Master bestowed on me,
Though we it, for the All-powerful,
May not possess,
Must cede our realm."

How this recalls to our mind the language of the lost archangel, when bemoaning his changed fortunes, in the finished diction of the later poet :—

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
Said then the lost Archangel, this the seat
That we must change for heaven, this mournful gloom
For that celestial light."

Other extracts will also bring to our mind the same resemblance, as, for example :—

"He hath struck us down
To the fiery abyss of the hot hell."

Milton, in modern language, and with a greater command of the resources of verse tells us :—

"Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from the etherial sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire."

And again :—

"Of these hell doors are
The ways obstructed ;
So that with aught I cannot
From these limb bonds escape."

Milton, as we are aware, causes his "superior fiend" to journey to hell's gates, when he, too, finds them shut, and guarded by loathsome shapes, one of whom we are told, stood

"Black as night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,"

An "obstruction" of the "way," formidable enough in all conscience, and realising to the full the crude idea of the earlier poet. Besides this poem detailing the fall of Adam, and the consequences attendant upon that event, Cædmon is credited with having written a long Saxon poem, but the authorities are very doubtful. It is considered by those who accept its genuineness to be a later production. It was published by the Society of Antiquaries in octavo in 1832. Like the earlier poem, it consists of a paraphrase of certain portions of the Scriptures. Cædmon is also believed to have written the first letter in the English language of which we can find any trace.

He is said to have died about 680. He sprang from the common people, and was little indebted to education. At one time he acted in the capacity of a cowherd. Bede, the Venerable, whose tomb in Durham Cathedral remains to this day, gives the circumstances under which his talents were first developed. We are told that he was so much less instructed than any of his equals, that he had not even learned any poetry ; so that he was frequently obliged to retire, in order to hide his shame, when the harp was moved towards him in the hall, where at supper it was customary for each person to sing in turn.

On one of these occasions, it happened to be Cædmon's turn to keep guard at the stable during the night, and, overcome with vexation, he quitted the table and retired to his post of duty, where, laying himself down, he fell into a sound slumber. In the midst of his sleep, a stranger appeared to him, and, saluting him by his name, said: "Cædmon, sing me something." Cædmon answered: "I know nothing to sing; for my incapacity in this respect was the cause of my leaving the hall to come hither." "Nay," said the stranger, "but thou hast something to sing." "What must I sing?" "Sing the Creation," was the reply; and, thereupon, Cædmon began to sing "verses which he had never heard before," and which are said to have been as follows:—

Nu we sceolan herian	Now we shall praise
heofon-rices weard,	the guardian of heaven,
metodes mihte,	the might of the creator,
and his mod-ge-thonc	and his counsel,
wera wuldor fæder!	the glory-father of men!
saw he wundra ge-hwæs	how he of all wonders,
ece dryhten	the eternal lord,
oord onstealde.	formed the beginning.
He ærest ge-scéop	He first created
ylda bearnum	for the children of men
heofon to hrófe,	heaven as a roof,
halig scyppend!	the holy creator!
Tha middan-geard	then the world
mon-cynnes weard,	the guardian of mankind,
ece dryhten,	the eternal lord,
æfter teode	produced afterwards,
firum foldan,	the earth for men,
frea ælmihtig!	the almighty master!

Cædmon then awoke, and he was not only able to repeat the lines which he had made in his sleep, but he continued them in a strain of admirable versification, a feat of memory which many modern writers, smitten with a faculty for verse-writing, will greatly envy him. In the morning he hastened to the town-reeve, or bailiff, of Whitby, who carried him before the Abbess Hilda; and there, in the presence of some of the learned men in the place, he told his story, and they were all of opinion that he had received the gift of song from Heaven. They then expounded to him, in his mother-tongue, a portion of Scripture, which he was required to repeat in verse. Cædmon went home, with his task, and the next morning he produced a poem which excelled in beauty all they had been accustomed to hear. From Turner's *Anglo-Saxons*, and Thorpe's edition of Cædmon, two short extracts may be given:—

SATAN'S HOSTILITY.

"The universal Ruler had of the angelic race, through His hand-power—the holy Lord—a fortress established. To them He well trusted that they His service would

follow, would do His will. For this He gave them understanding, and with His hands made them. The holy Lord had stationed them so happily. One He had so strongly made, so mighty in his mind's thought, let him rule so much—the highest in Heaven's kingdom; He had made him so splendid, so beautiful was his fruit in Heaven, which to him came from the Lord of Hosts, that he was like the brilliant stars. Praise ought he to have made to his Lord; he should have valued near his joys in Heaven; he should have thanked his Lord for the bounty which in that brightness he shared, when he was permitted so long to govern. But he departed from it to a worse thing. He began to upheave strife against the Governor of the highest Heavens that sits on the holy seat. Dear was he to our Lord; from whom it could not be hid that His angel began to be over-proud. He raised himself against his Master; he sought inflaming speeches, he began vainglorious works; he would not serve God, he said he was His equal in light and shining, as white and as bright in hue. Nor could he find it in his mind to render obedience to his God, to his King. He thought in himself that he could have subjects of more might and skill than the Holy God. Spake many words this angel of pride. He thought through his own craft that he could make a more strong-like seat higher in the Heavens."

SATAN'S SPEECH.

"'What! shall I for His favour serve, bend to Him in such vassalage? I may be a God as He. Stand by me, strong associates, who will not fail me in the strife. Heroes stern of mood, they have chosen me for chief, renowned warriors!' . . . . Boiled within him his thought about his heart; hot was without him his dire punishment. Then spake he words: 'This narrow place is most unlike that other that we formerly knew, high in Heaven's kingdom, which my Master bestowed on me, though we it, for the All-powerful, may not possess. We must cede our realm. Yet, hath He not done rightly, that He hath struck us down to the fiery abyss of the hot hell, bereft us of Heaven's Kingdom, hath decreed to people it with mankind. That is to me of sorrows the greatest, that Adam, who was wrought of earth, shall possess my strong seats; that it shall be to him in delight, and we endure this torment—misery in this hell. Oh! had I the power of my hands, and might one season be without, be one winter's space, then with this host I—— But around me lie iron bonds, presseth this cord of chain; I am powerless, me have so hard the clasps of hell so firmly grasped. Here is a vast fire above and underneath; never did I see a loathlier landscape; the flame abateth not, hot over hell. Me hath the clasping of these rings, this hard polished band, impeded in my course, debarred me from my way. . . . . About me lie huge gratings of hard iron, forged with heat, with which me God has fastened by the neck. Thus perceive I that He knoweth my mind.'"

The poetry is not in rhyming verse, but is alliterative. There are three alliterative words in the following couplet—two in the first line and one in the second. In the third line, also, two alliterative words occur :—

"*L*ike was he [Satan] to the *l*ight stars ;
The *l*aud [praise] of the Ruler ought he to have wrought,
*D*ear should he hold his *d*elights in heaven."

Cædmon, in the circumstances of his life, if not in the character of his writings, is the Burns of his period. He is an incentive and encouragement to struggling worth everywhere. Especially was it true of literature in these early times, as a local writer, Edward Marsh Heavisides, has told us in one of his suggestive sonnets—

"Gifted minds are ever with the lowly.
Exceptions prove the melancholy rule,
And genius lights at times her holy flame
Amid the temples of the nobly born."

And the reason is not far to seek. It lies in the unfettered, unconventional existence : in what Emerson has phrased as "the original relation to the universe," which belongs to the state of simple life, with its chaste pleasures and unsophisticated joys, its natural and uncurbed feelings, its single and disinterested outlook on the world, its physical virility and power. Cædmon's life seems to say to us—and again I quote the felicitous language of Edward Marsh Heavisides—"the poor are not always poor in being poor," but their estate is blessed with much wealth of pleasure and enjoyment that the rich cannot purchase. Not that we need sneer at wealth, but only that we should emphasize the fact that under various conditions its differing and most real attributes may be possessed, for, though the ordinary herd see it not, there are many descriptions of riches. Not, also, that we need expect to find a Cædmon in every plough-boy that whistles over the Cleveland clays, for that would be, indeed, an unpardonable and unforgivable assumption. But rather that in the nature of things we should reverence all humanity for that of which the meanest men are capable; and that none of us need be discouraged when those of so lowly a station have accomplished so much, and by the mere exercise of their untutored wits have attained an immortality that belongs not to conquerors or kings.

Again, we find the ***habitat*** of the poet all that the poetic fancy need wish, upon which, so to speak, to browse and graze. Whitby's cliffs figure in the descriptions of the romantic muse of Sir Walter Scott. The Esk is a noble stream as it ploughs its way through the mountain gorges, over big boulders, and by the shoulders of the everlasting hills. The hills, themselves, especially in the neighbourhood of Grosmont and Glaisdale, are grand in their contour and outline. In the summer sunshine, and in the winter gloom, what varying aspects they wear ! Now-

a-days painters paint them, and the "beauty spots" figure in academic exhibitions. Cædmon had no pigments but those of a vivid imagination, and no doubt from that wonderful *atelier* of art he sought to produce his word-sketches and to put in fit verse some of the scenes amongst which he had revelled in the clear and bright days of his boyhood and youth.

Some features of and circumstances relating to these early poems cannot fail to strike us. They form the very basis of our English literature, and it is a historical fact, which the residents in Cleveland may pride themselves upon, that they dwell in a district that witnessed their birth. Of this we may have more to say anon. For the present it is more instructive to point out that these early writers deal, so far as the subject matter of their poems is concerned, in "feats and broils of battle," in thoughts of God and the unknown, in matters of mystery and fate. Without heroic deeds, and thoughts of great ideals, and problems of mystery, these early poets could not weave their rhymes. Such things were indeed, in a sense, their stock-in-trade, the warp and woof of all their conceptions. Probably a narrow world, but how intensely emotional and soul-stirring! How wonderful the thought that their methods of dealing with its revelations have been seriously copied, even in these later times! The epic art is like many other arts, still strictly governed by first principles. Its main staple is the same now as it was a thousand years ago, when Cædmon betook himself into his Whitby stable to liberate himself of the great thoughts and profound conceptions that stirred his soul. In a state of society in which the progress of knowledge and the advance of science dissolve all mysteries, the epic art may find its vocation gone; but the weary mind, even then, may turn to the founts of the world's more original age for refreshment and delight—for the natural human emotions and the mind's ideals, no matter how cribbed, cabined, and confined by the sobriety of civilization, are ever, in essence and quality, if not in quantity and power, one and the same.

Middle Age and Later Writers.

GOWER, THE MORAL.—ROGER ASCHAM, THE PRINCE OF SCHOOLMASTERS.—BISHOP BRIAN WALTON.

MY aim in these pages is more to furnish a catalogue of local writers and their works than to give a circumstantial account of their performances. In any case in which allusion is made at length to the works and characteristics of Cleveland Authors, it is because their merits may in some degree have been overlooked, or that public interest in their career has not been evoked in a measure commensurate with the merit of their writings, and therefore it has seemed necessary that their names should be rescued from that neglect which has befallen them.

Between Cædmon and Gower, whom Chaucer styled "the moral," there is a long interval. I have not the hardihood in the face of the facts to claim Gower unreservedly as a Cleveland man of letters, though that has already been done. Evidence is not wanting, however, that his family resided in Yorkshire, and though some accounts describe him as having been born in Norfolk, Cunningham in *The English Nation*, boldly asserts that he was born at Stitenham, in Yorkshire. This Stitenham, Tweddell alleges, was situate in the parish of Sheriff Hutton, in the Archdeaconry of Cleveland, and it is therefore but a fair claim to make that he at least should be considered in a notice of our local literature. The same authorities tell us that though his genealogy is undoubtedly disputed, he was descended from an ancient and substantial family. Tweddell alleges they were resident at Sexhow, near Stokesley, and that their arms (azure, a chevron between three talbot dogs *passant gardant*) are quartered and emblazoned on the shield of the Allens of Blackwell. Gower was born sometime about 1326, and, we are assured by his biographers, received as liberal an education as the age could afford. Having finished his preliminary studies, he became a student of law of the Inner Temple, where he was distinguished for his professional ability, and showed himself as great an adept in general literature as he was in jurisprudence. His character, talents, and industry were such that he acquired a competency, and the knowledge of this circumstance explains the allusions which are made by Chaucer to the sober and moral character of his friend. His principal object in devoting himself to literature appears to have been the correction of those follies and vices which had been engendered by the luxury of the nobles and the grossness of the people.

His works were solid and grave, and consisted of three parts—*Speculum Meditantis*, *Vox Clamantis*, and *Confessio Amantis*—and were first printed by Caxton,

who introduced the printing press into this country, in 1483. The later poem is said to have been written by command of Richard II. The chief merit of Gower is that he can lay claim to Chaucer as his disciple, though the latter far excelled him in the range and spirit of his poetry.

Speaking of Gower's poem of *Confessio Amantis* a well-known authority says —The general style is grave and sententious, and its enormous length (about thirty thousand lines) renders it tedious ; but it is occasionally relieved by stories and episodes drawn from the collection of novels known as *Gesta Romanorum*. But Gower himself explains the sources of his inspiration :—

Full ofttime it falleth so
My ear with a good pittance
Is fed, with reading of romance
Of Isodyne and Amadas,
That whilom were in my case ;
And eke of other many a score.
That loved long ere I was bore :
For when I of their loves read,
Mine ear with the tale I feed ;
And with the lust of their historie
Sometime I draw into memorie,
How sorrow may not ever last,
And so hope cometh in at last.

The following Story of the Caskets is taken from *Confessio Amantis*, Book V. :—

In a cronique this I rede :
Aboute a king, as moste need
Ther was of knyghtes and squires
Great route, and eke of officers :
Some of long time him had hadden served,
And thoughten that they have deserved
Avancément, and gon withoute :
And some also ben of the route,
That comen but awhile agon
And they avanced were anon.
These old men, upon this thing,
So as they durst, ageín the king,
Among hemself *a* compleignen ofte ;
But there is nothing said so softe,
That it ne comith out at laste :
The king it wiste, and al so faste,
As he which was of high prudénce :
He shope therefor an evidence
Of hem *b* that pleignen in the cas,
To knowe in whose defalte it was ;
And all within his owne entent,
That non ma wisté what is ment.
Anon he let two cofres make
Of one semblance, and of one make,
So lich, *c* that no lif thilke throwe,
That one may fro that other knowe ;
There were into his chamber brought,
But no man wot why they he wrought,
And natheless the king hath bede
That they be set in privy stede,
And he that was of wisdom slih ;
Whan he therto his time sih,*d*
All prively, that none it wiste,
His owné hondes that one chiste
Of fin gold, and of fin perie,*e*
The which out of his tresorie
Was take, anon he fild full ;
That other cofre of straw and mull *f*
With stones meynd *g* he fild also :
Thus be they full bothé two.
To that erliche *h* upon a day
He had within, where he lay,
Ther should be tofore his bed
A bord up set and fairé spred :
And that he let the cofres fette *i*
Upon the bord, and did hem sette.
He knewe the names well of tho *j*
The whiche ageín him gratched so,
Both of his chambre and of his halle,
Anon and sent for hem alle ;
And seidé to hem in this wise :
There shall no man his hap despise :
I wot well ye have longe served,
And God wot what ye have deserved ;
But if it is along on me
Of that ye unavanced be,

a Themselves. *b* Them. *c* Like. *d* Saw. *e* Jewels, or precious stones. *f* Rubbish. *g* Mingled. *h* Early. *i* Fet *j* These.

Or elles if it belong on yow,
The sothé shall be proved now :
To stoppé with your evil word,
Lo? here two cofres on the bord ;
Chese *k* which you list of bothé two ;
And witeth well that one of tho
Is with tresor so full begon,
That if ye happé therupon
Ye shall be riché men for ever ;
Now chese and take which you is lever,
But be well ware ere that ye take,
For of that one I undertak
Ther is no manner good therein,
Wherof ye mighten profit winne
Now goth *l* together of one assent,
And taketh your advisement ;
For, but I you this day avance,
In stant upon your owné chance,
Al only in defaulte of grace :
So shall be shewed in this place
Upon you all well afyn, *m*
That no defalté shal be myn.
They knelen all, and with one vois
The king they thonken of this chois :
And after that they up arise,
And gon aside and hem avise,
And at lasté they accorde
(Wherof her *n* talé to recorde
To what issue they befalle)
A knyght shall speké for hem alle :
He kneleth doun unto the king,
And seith that they upon this thing,
Or for to winne, or for to lese, *o*
Ben all avised for to chese.
Tho *p* toke this knyght a yerd *q* on honde,
And goth there as the coffres stonde,
And with assent of everychone *r*
He lieth his yerde upon one,
And seith *s* the king how thilke same
They chese in reguerdon *t* by name,
And preith him that they might it have.
The king which wolde his honour safe,
Whan he hath heard the common vois,
He granted hem her owne chois,
And toke hem therupon his keie ;
But for he woldé it were seie *u*
What good they have as they suppose,
He bad anon the cofre unclose
Which was fulfild with straw and stones :
Thus be they served at all ones.
This king than, in the samé stede,
Anon that other cofre undede,
Wher as they sihen gret richesse,
Wel moré than they couthen gesse.
Lo ! seith the king, now may ye se
That there is no defalte in me ;
Forthy *v* my self I wol aquite,
And bereth ye your owné wite *w*
Of that *x* fortune hath you refused.
Thus was this wise king excused ;
And they lefte off her evil speche,
And mercy of her king beseche.

Speculum Meditantis is written in French, and is divided into ten books, occupied with general delineations of virtue and vice, "with exhortations and advice to the reprobate for their restoration to hope, and with eulogies on the virtues to be cultivated in the marriage state. *Vox Clamantis* is written in Latin, and comprises seven books, dealing with the events of the insurrection which shook the throne of the unfortunate Richard to its foundations."

The *Confessio Amantis* is the work which vindicates Gower's claim to be an English writer. "The occasion of its being composed," says Cunningham, "affords proof of the fame he had acquired by the preceding parts of the poem. While rowing one day on the Thames, the King happened to meet him in the Royal barge, and no sooner recognised his person, but gave him a signal to enter. The conversation between the monarch and the poet lasted for some time, and at its conclusion, his Majesty desired him to resume his poetical labours, expressing his wish in the significant phrase, that he would 'book some new thing!'" The King's command was

k Choose. *l* Go. *m* At last. *n* Their. *o* Lose. *p* Then. *q* A rod. *r* Every one. *s* Sayeth to the king. *t* As their reward. *u* Seen. *v* Therefore. *w* Blame. *x* That is, that which.

obeyed, and the *Confessio Amantis* was the result. This poem "embodies the rules of love laid down by the three very distinct teachers on the subject, the romantic troubadours, the Platonic Italians, and the sensual Ovid. In illustration of these rules, the author expends all the learning of his age and leaves uncited neither historian nor philosopher of whose works or even of whose name he had ever heard." The poem is said to exhibit little invention and to be tame in expression. It is, however, very superior to the other literary productions of the time.

Gower was far advanced in years when he produced this poem. Chaucer had been his intimate friend from an early period of his life, and there are allusions in the works of each which show how sincerely they esteemed each other. In the *Confessio Amantis*, the author puts the following words into the mouth of Venus :—

Grete well Chaucer whan ye mete,
As my disciple and my poete,
For in the flours of his youth,
In sundrie wise, as he well couth,
Of detees, and of songs glade,
The which he for my sake made,
The loude fulfilled is over all
Whereof to him in speciall
Above all other I must holde.

And Chaucer, equally complimentary, thus concludes his Troilus and Cresseide :—

O moral Gower, this boke I directe
To the, and to the philosophical Strode,
To vouchsafe their hede is for to conecte
Of your benignities and zelis gode.

It is not to their common pursuits alone that we must look for the intimacy which existed between these distinguished men, for in these early times artists were not, in the same pursuits, wholly destitute of the spirit of chivalry. An additional cause is assigned for their friendship. While Chaucer possessed the patronage of John of Gaunt, Gower was equally attached to Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, the other of the King's uncles who shared in the project of ruling the nation without the interference of the young monarch. It is probable that both the young poets took a deep interest in the events of the times, and that each exercised considerable influence over the party to which he belonged. Strict rectitude of conduct, a mutual recognition of an uncommon ability tested in unusual circumstances, these alone were sufficient to excite that mutual regard which is exhibited in the writings of the two poets. Gower's death took place in 1402, and the sumptuous monument beneath which his remains are deposited speaks alike of his taste and his munificence. The Church of St. Saviour's, Southwark, destined soon to become the Cathedral of London south of the Thames, was some time before his death destroyed by fire; and it was to the exertions he made, and his own large contributions, that the rebuilding of that splendid fabric was due. His own monument is a representation of his

great work, in the form of three gilt volumes, lettered with the respective titles of the parts into which the poem is divided. He founded a chantry at his tomb, and "the time-hallowed aisle of St. Mary Overee—as the church was formerly called—is still sacred to his memory," though the religious rite which he instituted has for ages been omitted.

It is not for me to speculate as to the position which Gower occupies in English literature. But for the superior radiance of Chaucer's fame, he would have held a foremost place. The one service he rendered to letters is described briefly in the epithet which is applied to him. He wedded poetry and morals. Hitherto theology and the priests had had the guidance of the people in their higher aspirations. Gower was the first to endeavour to supply the silent teaching of good books, one tendency of which would be to show that morality in itself was adequate to its own preservation and perpetuation. The lesson need not be lost in these later times. "The ministers of all denominations" are too apt, from mere human infirmity, to unduly magnify their office. Churchman and Nonconformist, Romanist and Protestant professors—all become perfunctory, and imagining, or being taught by their little systems, that they are specially commissioned to speak in the name of the Deity, too often use their office to terrify the credulous, and, presenting even the truth in the baldest outlines, make it repressive and forbidding, a slavery, and not the glorious liberty whereby Christ has made us free. The spectacle, indeed, too often presented to our gaze, calls up the idea, that the finite minister is the acting partner in a concern in which there is a sleeping Deity, who looks with indifference on His own universe, and would allow it, in a moral sense, to drift into wreck and ruin but for his finite helpmate. Gower, and the poets after him, the moral seers, get beyond this miserable official egoism, and tell us how "there's a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will." In other words, that the Deity, through His own unerring laws, has His own universe, so to speak, well in hand, and, in its moral government, neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Many of the, to us, quaint expressions in the vocabulary of Gower are still in use in the Cleveland district. "Ee" for "eye," and "ax" for "ask," as Tweddell points out, are very common. He also might have added "algate," occurring in *The Envious Man and the Miser*, for the word is still used in these parts. "Thou's gine a fine gate" means that a man is adopting a "fast" mode of conduct, which is not to his credit, and that he requires to be restrained in his course. "What gate is tha gine" means "what way, or by what method, are you going to travel;" and "Ah think thou's gine algates" means that the person addressed is wanting in fixidity of purpose, and is generally going in any direction but the right one, or that he does not care which road he goes and what conduct he displays so long as he attains the end he has in view.

John Hall Stephenson, the friend of Laurence Sterne, speaks of the Chaloner family as

> A generous race, from Cambro-Griffin traced,
> Famed for fair maids and matrons, wise and chaste.

The poet might also have added famed also for warriors, authors, and statesmen, for in all these respects it is the one family still surviving in Cleveland to whom premier honours must be awarded. Sir Thomas Chaloner, the elder, and the founder of the family, who was born in London about the year 1515, and is said to have been descended from Trahayrne the Great, son of Maloc Krwme, one of the fifteen peers of North Wales, and of Gwenllyan, daughter of Howell Koedmore, a lineal descendant of Griffith, son of Llyllyan ap Jerworth, Prince of Wales, combined in his own person the functions of warrior, statesman, and poet. He was knighted for the part he took in the battle of Pinkie, fought near Musselburgh on the 10th of September, 1547. On the 20th of July, in the same year, he procured, by letters patent, possession of the house and site of the late priory of Guisbrough, which has ever since been a family possession.

Sir Thomas Chaloner was a strong Protestant, but does not seem to have suffered any mischance in the troublous reign of Queen Mary because of the principles he had espoused. By Queen Elizabeth he was sent as ambassador to the Emperor of Germany, Ferdinand the First, and subsequently, in 1561, in the same capacity to the Court of Philip the Second, of Spain. Here, in his moments of leisure, he wrote his work of ***Restoring the English Republic.*** In 1564 he forwarded a Latin elegy—for the monkish tongue was still the language of literature—to his sovereign, in which he asked to be allowed to return again to England. His petition was granted, but he did not live long to enjoy his well-earned leisure. "He died," so Tweddell tells us, "in 1565, in a house which he had built in Clerkenwell Close, London, and was buried in St. Paul's, Sir Wm. Cecil, his friend and relative, acting as chief mourner." In addition to the work above enumerated, Sir Thomas composed a ***Dictionary for Children;*** translated from the Latin, a treatise ***Of the Office of Servants,*** and other works. He was one of the contributors to the well-known work, ***A Myrroure for Magistrates.***

Sir Thomas Chaloner the younger, was born in 1559, and was the only son of the worthy to whose works I have just been referring. Sir William Cecil carefully watched over his education after his father's death, which took place when the younger Chaloner was only six years old. He was sent to St. Paul's School, and afterwards to Oxford. In 1580 he made the tour of Europe, and on his return he seems to have acquired a ***penchant*** for natural science, for we find him publishing ***A Short Discourse on the most Rare and Excellent Virtue of Nitre*** in 1584.

He married for his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Fleetwood, Recorder of London. He was knighted in 1591. Subsequently on visiting Scotland, he was appointed guardian and governor of Prince Henry, with the control of his education and household. On the death of his first wife, who bore him many children, he married Judith, the daughter of a well-to-do commoner, William Blount, of London, who survived him two years, and who bore him a considerable family. He died November 17, 1615, aged 56 years, and his remains were interred in Chiswick Church. To this worthy we owe the introduction of the alum manufacture into England, concerning which some curious stories are told. For generations alum was made on the Chaloner estate at Guisbrough, and the works have only been closed since modern chemical researches have discovered a more facile method of manufacture.

Edward, the second son of the foregoing, born in 1590, or thereabouts, received a liberal education, and entered into holy orders, becoming subsequently a Doctor of Divinity, Fellow of All Souls' College, a chaplain to James I. and Charles I., and principal of Alban's Hall, Oxford. He frequently preached in St. Mary's, Oxford, and his sermons seem to have been of a highly-spiced, controversial order. Many of them were published, but it would only be inflicting a tedious catalogue upon the reader were I to give their names. As a divine, he took a middle course between Papists and the extreme men of the new learning, and dealt blows with equal vigour and calmness upon both. More than one of his volumes were dedicated to the Earl of Pembroke, who was a great patron of literature at this period. In one of his epistles dedicatory he makes a most felicitous comment on the proverb, "An idiot may propound more in an hour than the learnedest in a kingdom can resolve in a year," which he applies to the Roman controversialists of the times, who sought to harass and put to flight their opponents by opening upon them with a whole battery of questions.

Thomas Chaloner was the third son of Sir Thomas the younger, and flourished in the troublous times of the Commonwealth, and was one of the regicides. His only literary work—besides some political pamphlets which he published—if it may be called such, was *The Answer of the Commons assembled in Parliament to the Scots Commissioners' Papers of the 20th, and their Letter of the 24th of October last*, and which was ordered by the House to be printed, November 28, 1646.

James Chaloner, a brother of Thomas, was the author of the *Description of the Isle of Man*, published in the original edition of King's *Vade Royal*. He died in 1649.

Continuing this narrative in somewhat inexact chronological order, I next come to Roger Ascham, prince of English schoolmasters, born at Kirby Wiske in the year 1515. He was the third son of John and Margaret Ascham, who, after living together as man and wife for forty-seven years, both died in one day, and nearly in the same

year. Young Ascham was the third son of the worthy pair, and had the good fortune to be received into the family of Sir Anthony Wingfield, and was educated with the two sons of his patron, under the tutorship of Mr. Robert Bond. In the year 1530, Roger was sent to college at the expense of his patron. Just then, according to Dr. Johnson, "the last great revolution of the intellectual world was filling every academical mind with ardour or anxiety. The destruction of the Constantinopolitan Empire had driven the Greeks, with their language, into the interior parts of Europe; the art of printing had made the books easily attainable, and Greek now began to be taught in England. The doctrines of Luther had already filled all the nations of the Romish communion with controversy and dissension. New studies of literature, and new tenets of religion, found employment for all who were desirous of truth or ambitious of fame. Learning was at that time prosecuted with that eagerness and perseverance which, in this age of indifference and dissipation, it is not easy to conceive. To teach or to learn was at once the business and the pleasure of academical life; and an emulation of study was raised by Cheke and Smith, to which even the present age, perhaps, owes many advantages, without remembering or knowing its benefactors."

The last sentence of a writer of most sonorous and classic English is very pregnant of meaning and fruitful in suggestion. It is too true that we rarely realise who are the creators and motors, so to speak, of new ideas. We shall never settle who discovered the first principle of the steam engine, no more than we shall be able to point with our finger to the providential agent who first started the wave that grew into the Oxford movement. "These things seem to be in the air," for such was the wise solution of the problem suggested by Archbishop Tait. They come and go, like the births, growths, and deaths of the world in their appointed seasons. It seems a painful recollection that the memory of men cannot retain the names of their benefactors: has never cared to know them. To take an example. What invention has been more useful and has brought more comfort in its train than that of the lucifer match? Yet how many know that it was the invention of a worthy tradesman of Stockton? Again, who knows anything about the inventor of the wheel, yet without it what wonderful works of men would remain unaccomplished! And so we might indefinitely lengthen the catalogue. But worse even, and more regrettable than the non-recognition of inventors and of the original promulgators of great ideas, is that unconscious and almost sinful homage which men pay to the successful plagiarists who succeed them and don their prophetic mantles, making money and reputation by the ostentatious exhibition of their cast-off clothing. Everybody—that is the multitudinous and unthoughtful public—imagines, and pays worshipful tribute accordingly, that it is to Carlyle's genius we owe the wonderful sketch of the city at midnight, with its roofless houses and strangely contrasting interiors; yet the picture was

limned in the fertile imagination of Le Sage. So it is with Macaulay's New Zealander, who comes to sketch the ruins of London and St. Paul's. The interesting savage has been discovered really and literally in a volume of the *Annual Register*, published probably before Macaulay was born. Yet everybody thinks of Macaulay, and credits Macaulay with his creation whenever the artistic Maori crops up either in books or conversation. It is as though one sowed purposely for another to reap, and as though he who sowed never reaped the due reward and recognition of his labours.

Roger, on entering St. John's College, Cambridge, applied himself diligently to the study of Greek, and Johnson tells us that, as the student became a Grecian, he also became a Protestant. In February, 1534, he took the degree of B.A., and, when only eighteen years of age, he was elected a fellow of his college. At the age of twenty-one, Ascham took the degree of M.A., and already enjoyed a high reputation as a tutor. At this time he read lectures in the University on the Greek language; and in 1544 he was chosen University orator, and filled the post with remarkable ability. He issued his first work—*Toxophilus, the School, or Partitions of Shooting*—on attaining his new position, and this he dedicated to King Henry VIII., who had just married, as Tweddell tells us, Lady Catherine Parr, widow of Lord Latimer, of Danby Castle, in Cleveland. This work, which was in dialogue, showed the scholar and the man of original and full intellect, and gained for Ascham the patronage of Sir William Paget; and the King, pleased with the dedication, settled upon him a pension of ten pounds a year. This, added to a former pension which he held from Edward Lee, Archbishop of York, placed our rising author above all consideration for the carking cares of poverty and want.

Ascham was famed as a writer of pure and natural English, and also for the beauty of his handwriting. The latter acquirement procured for him an engagement at Court to teach penmanship to Prince Edward, the Princess Elizabeth, and Henry and Charles, the two sons of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. He was also at the same time, according to Hartley Coleridge, the University Amanuensis, and wrote all the letters which Cambridge addressed to the King and other people of quality.

On the death of bluff King Hal, Ascham's pension was continued to him by his royal pupil, Edward the Sixth, and he now lived at Cambridge, in great friendship with Martin Bucer. In 1548 Ascham was re-called to Court as classical master to the Princess Elizabeth, and in his letters we have some beautiful pictures of the life he led, and of the intimacy which existed between him and his royal pupil. In 1550 he was called upon to accompany Sir Richard Morysine on his embassy to the Court of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, and during the prosecution of this mission he manifested marvellous diligence and energy, as well in the pursuit of scholastic studies as in the duties of his post. He wrote the *Report or Discourse of the*

Affairs and State of Germany, of the Emperor Charles V., and His Court, which, however, was not published until 1570.

In the troublous times which followed Ascham's return to England, he was one of the few leading Protestants who fared well. He obtained the patronage of Bishop Gardiner, who secured for him the office of Latin Secretary. On the 1st of June, 1554, Ascham married "Mistress Margaret Howe, a lady of some fortune, and good family." When Queen Elizabeth came to the throne, Ascham was still in good luck, and was continued in his office of Latin Secretary, and was restored to his Greek Preceptorship by his whilome royal pupil. In 1559 he was made a Prebend of York, which proved to be his last preferment and appointment.

Tweddell, in his *Bards and Authors of Cleveland and South Durham*, to which I am indebted for many of the foregoing particulars, tells us that "Ascham was slender in form, and weak in constitution; and he had injured his health by night studies, which he was obliged at last to relinquish. But towards the close of the year 1569, he imprudently sat up several nights successively to finish a poem, which he was addressing to the Queen, on the advent of the new year. This brought on a severe attack of hectic fever, a complaint to which he was subject. Sleep—'Nature's soft nurse'—entirely forsook him; opiates, and even rocking him in a cradle, were tried in vain. He took to his bed on the 28th of December, and died on the 30th of the same month, at the age of 53. Dr. Alexander Rowell, then Dean of St. Paul's, attended to render him religious consolation, and preached his funeral sermon on January 4, in which he declared that he had never known any man live more honestly and die more Christianly. He was buried, without parade, in the church of St. Sepulchre, London. The learned George Buchannan wrote his epitaph, in Latin. Many poor scholars, to whom his purse was always open, grieved for his loss; and Queen Elizabeth asserted that she would 'rather have thrown ten thousand pounds into the sea than have lost her Ascham.'" Ascham left behind him in manuscript his famous work, *The Schoolmaster; or, a Plain and Perfect Way of Teaching Children to Understand, Write, and Speak the Latin Tongue*, which was subsequently published by his widow.

I give the foregoing particulars of this remarkable character at length, because he is one of the chief of our Cleveland worthies, if not the head of them all. His writings are not only those of a scholar, but of a man of wide intellect, of much observation of men and things, and of a wise and judicious judgment, who could discern what lay beneath the surface, and who could import his own original thoughts into the language best fitted to reach other men's minds. He was pre-eminently a scholar and a student, and had a mind adapted by Nature, not only to receive the impress of his studies, but to transmute what his memory contained into new knowledge, fitted to the circumstances of his times.

And there is one further note I may be permitted to make. It is always a profitable task to endeavour to discover the utility of long-existing institutions, even on the Voltairian principle, that whatever is may be reasonably accounted for. It is well to remember that the biographies I have already given show how literature, in its first beginnings, was stimulated by the patronage and favour of people of rank; how it flourished in courts and palaces; how it seemed, indeed, to lean upon some socially influential personage for growth and support. That the atmosphere agreed with it we may gather from the fact that the writers of the most robust works in the English language clung as the ivy to the oak around historic names and courtly personages. There was no necessity then to adopt the *ad captandum vulgus*, which lowers the faculty and degrades the theme, because of the necessity of stooping to meet the comprehension of the uncultured mass. Writing for bread and butter—or, for that matter, for the highest market—is but a labourer's task, and reduces literature to the level of an article of commerce, which we may measure by the tape-line and sell by the ell. An aristocracy may in these modern times, as well as in the days of Gower and Ascham, be made to subserve the noblest purposes in stimulating literary effort and guiding the public taste. It would certainly be a social, as well as an intellectual calamity, were the highest order of society to become so degenerate that it would be in vain to expect from it any recognition of literary effort in those higher and more unselfish spheres which the greater and more adventurous minds of a generation infallibly mark out for their exertions.

Since the estate of Ingleby Manor, near Stokesley, became the property of the Foulis family, notwithstanding its secluded and retired situation, it has been their principal residence; and here that eminent historian and divine, Henry Foulis, was born, his younger days being partly spent in Scotland (from whence his family came) and partly in Yorkshire. He was afterwards sent to Queen's College, Oxford, where he continued till he took his master's degree, and was elected Fellow of Lincoln College in the year 1659. He entered first into holy orders; but his genius inclining to history, he betook himself chiefly to that study, and, being much disgusted at the extremes which then prevailed (Presbytery and Popery), wrote two books highly resented by both those parties—viz., the ***History of the Wicked Plots and Conspiracies of our Pretended Saints and Presbyterians***, printed in the year 1662, and dedicated to his brother, Sir David Foulis, Bart., and his virtuous consort, the Lady Catherine. This book, it seems, highly pleased the Churchmen—insomuch that some of them, it is said, had it chained to their churches, and other places, to be read by the vulgar—but so disgusted the Presbyterians, that Molinœus, and others of that party, have fallen foul of him for it. He also wrote a ***History of the Romish Treasons and Usurpations***, &c., printed after his death, in folio, 1671. Anthony Wood says:—"The products of his writings show him to have been a true son of

the Church of England, a hater of Popery, Presbytery, and sectarianism. He was endowed with a happy memory; conversant in histories, especially those that were private and obscure. He also understood books and the ordering of them so well, that with a little industry he might have gone beyond the great Philobiblos Jamesius. He had also in him a most generous and noble spirit, a carelessness of the world and the things thereof (as most bookish men have), a most becoming honesty in his dealings; a just observance of collegiate discipline; and a hatred to new fangles, and the French fooleries of the times." A true lover of the Church he was nevertheless unable to emancipate himself from the prosecuting spirit of the times, and wrote in favour of religious persecution. He died December 24, 1669, aged 37, and was buried in the chancel of St. Michael's Church, Oxon., under the north wall.

In the year 1600, at the village of Seamer-in-Cleveland, Brian Walton, destined to become Bishop and Doctor of Divinity, was born "in a small cottage nearly opposite the church," according to tradition. Seamer is one of the prettiest of our Cleveland villages. Seated upon a hill, itself crowned by a church tower, from its neighbourhood some of the most beautiful landscapes the "country-side" affords are to be obtained by the spectator. To the south is the range of the Cleveland Hills, with the fields and woods of Cleveland, the village plantations and orchards in the vale beneath; to the east, Roseberry's rude cone springs sharply from the plain to the height of a thousand feet; on the north, we have the winding Tees, the towns of Middlesbrough and Stockton, the swampy flats from which Seamer derives its name, and the level plain beyond; and, to the west, fair Richmond's hills and the valley of the Swale. From all parts of Cleveland this pleasant village is approached by footpaths and highways, and though it has little in itself to attract attention, its situation makes it a kind of watch-tower from which we may take in at a glance all that is green, and lovely, and beautiful in the country around. To those of my readers who have not yet paid it a visit, I say "go there on the first sunny day."

In July, 1616, Walton was admitted a sizar of Magadalene College, Cambridge, whence he was removed to Peterhouse as a sizar also in 1618. Afterwards we find him employed as a curate in Suffolk, having previously in 1619 become Bachelor, and in 1623, Master of Arts. "Sizar" means a poor scholar, and the boy who was born in a "humble cottage" would doubtless have to pick up his education by means of hard service rather than hard cash. Upon leaving Essex he became assistant priest at All-Hallows, Bread Street, and in 1626—so rapid was his promotion—he was made rector of St. Martin's, Ongar. Noted for activity and diligence it was not to be expected that he should remain a mere looker-on in the controversies of the times. He was put forward by the clergy

as their exponent in a dispute relative to the payment of the tithes of the city. Concerning this contention Cunningham says: "A Statute is said to have been enacted in the reign of Henry VIII, which fixed the tithes or oblations at two shillings and ninepence in the pound on the rent. The citizens resisted this impost, and when James the first came to the throne the clergy sought redress from the legislature. This being refused by Parliament, the clergy, in 1634, renewed their petition for relief in a statement to King Charles the first, setting forth the greatness of their benefices in former days, and the meanness of them at that time, together with an exposition of the causes of the deficiency. The King undertook to be the arbitrator between the parties, and valuations were ordered on both sides. Two committees were appointed; one for the city, consisting of three Aldermen; and one for the clergy, consisting of three of their number, including Dr. Walton." These proceedings, were however, soon closed by the eventful times which succeeded. Dr. Walton composed a regular and complete treatise on the subject of these claims, about 1640, which was published in 1752, in the *Collectanea Ecclesiastica*, or treatises relating to the rights of the clergy of the Church of England, by Mr. Samuel Brewster.

In 1639 we find Dr. Walton a Prebendary of St. Paul's and chaplain to the King, to whose cause he remained faithful to the end. He was subsequently, and before the civil commotions, instituted to the two rectories of St. Giles in the Fields, London, and of Sandon, in Essex. He is supposed about the same time to have been collated a prebend in St. Paul's. In 1639, according to Cunningham, or 1665 according to Tweddell, the degree of doctor of divinity was conferred upon him by his own university, where, in keeping what is called "his act" on the occasion, he maintained the thesis: ***Pontifex Romanus non est judex infallibilis in controversiis fidei.*** (The Pope of Rome is not an infallible judge in controversies of the faith.)

In the midst of these honours and emoluments he was called, says Cunningham, to mourn the loss of a beloved wife, whom he buried in the chancel of Sandon, in 1640, raising to her memory, as was the custom of the times, a monument with an epitaph highly commendatory and affectionate.

In ecclesiastical matters Walton was a disciple of Laud, the martyred Archbishop. He could not therefore expect to be otherwise than a marked man in times when every man's hand might be said to be against his neighbour. He was attacked on the ground of his pluralities, and his zeal for ecclesiastical ceremonies as re-established or confirmed by Archbishop Laud. His parishioners presented a petition to Parliament on the subject, for the Commons were now arbiters in all matters either of law or gospel. He was also accused of another offence. He had omitted the afternoon sermon, and he had refused them the

privilege of procuring a lecturer, and supporting him themselves. In all probability the lecturer these amiable people desired was of a character distasteful to the learned Walton, a heated pulpiteer of Genevan proclivities, and affected by the political heresies of the times. But the catalogue of accusations was even more formidable than I have yet represented. Dr. Walton was censured for demanding tithes, for these were times in which people preferred rather to rob the church than to contribute to her sustenance. He was denounced for proceeding to law to enforce his claims when his demands were refused. He was represented as exacting his claims with threats, and harassing his parishioners with informations and excommunications, making them a prey to officers and leaving them at last, though wronged, without relief. But worst offence of all, and I now quote from a quarto pamphlet, of fourteen pages, in which many sins of "omission and commission" were duly set forth; and wherein "his subtle tricks and Popish innovations are discovered," he is represented as insisting upon placing with "his own hands the communion table under the east window," and with disgracefully and contemptuously aspersing "those persons of quality and wealth which at this time serve the Commonwealth in the honourable House of Parliament, as men chosen for the knights and burgesses of the city; affirming that the city had chosen Soame because he would not pay ship money; Vassal because he would not pay the king his customs; Pennington because he entertains silenced Ministers; and Cradocke to send them over into New England." They had a very easy method of settling such contentions in these times. I cannot learn that Dr. Walton was ever called upon to enter a defence before the committee of Parliament, to whom the complaints were referred, but we read that shortly afterwards he lost (or found it convenient to retire from) both his rectories, and took refuge in Oxford, where the Royalist party were greatly in the ascendancy. His misfortunes, like those of many other remarkable men, were not wholly without their beneficial outcome, for it was at Oxford that Dr. Walton formed his design for publishing his great work the ***Polyglot Bible.*** Upon the final collapse of the King's cause he returned to London, where he forthwith proceeded to carry out his great design. He submitted his scheme to most of the eminent persons then living who were fitted to advise him in his enterprise. He published a description of his intended work in 1652, together with a recommendatory letter by Nisbet, Sheldon, and others. Before the close of the year £4,000 in subscriptions had been promised for the work, and soon afterwards the amount was more than doubled. The council of State under Cromwell—the times being more settled—subscribed £1,000 to the undertaking, and to Cromwell belongs the honour of having been the first to take off the paper duty—the tax on knowledge—for at his instance the paper for the work was exempted from duty, a similar concession and privilege

having been previously allowed by the Lord Protector to the editors of the *Critici Sacri*.

Nothing now stood in the way of Walton's success in the completion of his great and laborious undertaking. Collecting around him such collaborators as Castell, Usher, Pocock, Lightfoot, Hyde, Casaubon, Selden and others, the *Polyglot Bible*, in six volumes and nine languages, assumed form, and was issued from the press, volume by volume, as each part was finished, the last volume appearing towards the close of 1657. It will ever remain a noble monument of industry and learning, and need not fear comparison with more pretentious works of later times, when the facilities for the production of such books are so greatly increased

> "He lived in troubled times. Let us forget
> How paltry squabbles about tythes would fret
> His soul and those of others: nor need we
> Fight o'er again with paper chivalry
> The struggle anent lectures. 'Tis alone
> As scholar Brian Walton will be known
> Age after age, for ne'er will be forgot
> His famous Bible yclept the *Polyglot*."
>
> —*Peter Proletarius.*

With more haste than profit I have now carried the reader through a long epoch of our national life, fruitful in events, and the suggestions to which they naturally give rise. Beginning with a dim vision of a Celtic bard in a far-away misty period in which we can with no certainty dissociate the fact from the fiction—and wherein one wonders at times if all is not fiction and there is no fact—we have passed along through the idyllic Saxon times, through the rich and gorgeous Middle Ages with their triumphs in architecture, literature, and art, till we are arrived at the strange times of the Commonwealth, in which men take a new outlook on the world, and in which, so far as literature is concerned, all mists and shadows disappear. Legend is now no more: the fact begins its sway, for the printing press is everywhere becoming busy, and learning is no longer the property only of the cultured few. By and by we find the library in the cottage, whereas, in former times, it was the rich treasure of the college and the monastery. It is not my purpose, except in cursory fashion as my space allows, to comment upon the writings of the illustrious men whose lives I have been endeavouring to depict, or to draw at length any lesson from the circumstances of the times in which they lived and flourished. Such a disquisition would in itself occupy volumes, and in proper hands might also, I believe, be made as enchanting as a fairy tale. The experiences of great men, their conquests over ignorance, their own heroic struggles under adverse circumstances, the legacies they have left to mankind—what themes they furnish for the pen of the ready writer, with enthusiasm awakened

and imagination duly equipped for so high a theme!' The bloodless fields of literature have a fascination all their own. In them we may not gather the blood-red rose of military glory, but they are rich in the lily of light, and their luminous flowers turn to seeds and fruits by which come the healing of the nations.

Modern Writers.

THOMAS PEIRSON.—REED, THE DRAMATIST.—EDWARD MARSH HEAVISIDES.

BYRON somewhere says, to him the hills are feeling. The thought expresses the sensibility of the poetic nature in the presence of natural scenery. It is deeply affected in gazing upon the high towering mountains, and seeks to express the images and sensations that they convey and create. We have no mountains in Cleveland, but we have soaring hills, looking down over pleasant and flowery vales, which are none the less charming in that, in the summer sunshine, they reveal in their recesses the sinuous courses of glistening streams, whose tufted and wooded banks seem richer from the sustenance they derive from the life-giving waters they enclose. Chief of all the Cleveland Hills is the conical mount variously named Ounesberry, Ormesbrough, and Roseberry Topping. Chief, not because it is the loftiest member of the Cleveland chain, but because its peculiar form so readily distinguishes it from the rest, and that its isolated situation gives it a distinct individuality. In stature it does not appear by any means commanding: the Ordnance Survey gives its height as 1022 feet above the level of the sea. Henry Heavisides, the Stockton poet, calls it "the lofty Mont Blanc of the plain," but this is poetic license. When viewed from the west it is certainly of pleasing outline, and of commanding form. It seems to rise abruptly from the plain, and its bold acclivities terminate in the softest and most rounded of cones. For generations it has been the resort of *health and pleasure* seekers, and more than a dozen prose writers, and as many poets, have expatiated upon its undoubted attractions. Thomas Peirson, a Stokesley Schoolmaster, somewhat troubled, as most thoughtful writers, are, with a villainous bad liver, published a poem in blank verse, filling a whole volume in praise of Roseberry. Quoth he—

> Of Atlas Mount let poets antique sing,
> Whose summit bare supports the bending sky;
> Of Roseberry's rude rock I deign to write,
> The height of Topping, and its oozing rill.

And so he wrote and published his poem of ***Roseberry Topping***, issuing it from the press in the year of Grace, 1783. But little is known of the writer and the date of his birth is unrecorded. Local biography tells us that our pedagogue was a kind of Jack-of-all-trades, being tutor, blacksmith, watchmaker,

and Custom-house Officer by turns. It also says he had "a little place" in the Customs at Stockton, where he died on the 8th of August, 1791. In addition to his poem of *Roseberry Topping* he wrote one play, *The Treacherous Son-in-Law*. Both his poem and his play were printed at Stockton; of the poem a second edition was issued by the well-known Stockton printer, Thomas Jennett, and was edited and annotated by John Walker Ord. *Biographia Dramatica*, vol. I, part 2, page 572, assures us that Peirson's drama is founded on a fact which happened between forty and fifty years ago in the North of England, of a son-in-law attempting to take the lives of a pious father, a brother, sister, and others. It was performed at Stokesley, in Yorkshire, under the author's inspection.

Roseberry Topping is a poem in blank verse, and describes, as in a catalogue, the varied scenery which, on a clear day, may be discovered from the top of the hill. The strings of names of towns and villages in each verse are linked together with much skill and adroitness; the measure is well preserved, and there are many apposite classic references and comparisons, and here and there an exhibition of a genuine vein of poetry. The following lines are a fair specimen of the whole :—

"On this Parnassus as I musing stand,
Behold the ocean, or the land survey,
A gale Favonian cheers my drooping mind.
Mild, aromatic, fragrant, pure, and cool
The summer's breeze serenely comes, and sweet
Blown from Hesperian orchards, groves or plains.
Let me descend to taste the limpid spring,
In days of yore well-known, then oozing on
When famed Northumbria's monarch ruled the realm,
Whose son, Prince Oswy, perished in the rill.
This trickling brook, like the Pierian well,
Will aid my muse, on the Aonian mount,
Instruct my fancy Nature's height to gain,
To know its depth, true wisdom to explore,
As near this Druid's ancient hut I stand,
And view, and mourn the half-demolished cell."

Peirson's poetry is not all so flowing and agreeable as this quotation, and I am afraid that it is open to the accusation that it contains much classic pedantry, —as was the affectation of the times—and but little poetic force. The poet's atrabilious temper crops out when he describes the place of his birth :

"There Stokesley shines, my native spot, my home,
Asylum sure! bright Phœbus gilds the town;
Plac'd on the Leven, seated on a plain,
Adorn'd with trees, it gaily peeps abroad:
Its present state, alas! is changing still,

Varies and turns, as luxury and pride
Increase and fall, as mirth and sloth abound
Where sensual riot, merriment obscene,
Employ the day, and revel through the night;
Justice too little rules, no order guides,
But stiff opinion every man protects.
Party awes party, self-divided town!
The stronger clan the weaker always rules:
A stranger thus preceptor is become,
By salary won, by wages brought to teach
Sublime philosophy and science deep,
The starry courses and the solar height,
With whims by millions, fables without end,
The world's great period and its final year."

Poor poet and pedagogue to be thus put aside by a mere adventurer! But why enlist the muses in the fray, and blacken the character of a whole town because in all probability a few of its inhabitants preferred a newer method of "schooling" for their children, an improvement perhaps upon that which was adopted by the blacksmith-watchmaker-schoolmaster? Jackson, of Hutton Rudby, who criticized Peirson's poems, says plainly that Peirson poured the most virulent abuse on the gentlemen of Stokesley because, as it appears, they did not subscribe liberally to his work. The poet and the critic are often at mutual extremes in feeling, and may unconsciously be about equally distant from the exact fact. Stokesley was probably not so black in a moral sense as it was painted, and the critic perhaps drew quite a poetic long-bow when he attempted to account for the motives of the poet in thus darkening the character of his native town.

I extract the following brief memoir of John Hall Stevenson, of Skelton Castle, author of *Crazy Tales*, and other pieces of singular merit, from the latest improved edition of his works, published by J. Debrett, in the year 1795:—"This gentleman was a native of the county of York, where he inherited a considerable paternal estate, of which Skelton Castle, near Guisbrough, was the family seat. He was born in 1718, and died in March, 1785. Where he was instructed in the first rudiments of learning, we have no information; but it is well known that he completed his classical education at Jesus' College, in the University of Cambridge. Here, it has been generally supposed, that the friendship commenced between him and Mr. Sterne, who was of the same college, which continued without interruption while they both were spared to enjoy it; though, as they were both educated in Yorkshire, it is not improbable that their acquaintance commenced at a more early period. Mr. Hall afterwards made the tour of Europe; and that he had made it with the best effect was evident in his conversation on the subjects connected with it. He was an excellent classic scholar, and perfectly acquainted with the *belles lettres* of Europe; he could engage in the grave discussions of criticisms

and literature with superior power, while he was qualified to enliven general society with the smile of Horace, the laughter of Cervantes; or he could sit in Fontaine's easy chair, and unbosom his humour to his chosen friends. When he resided in London, he lived as other men of the world do whose philosophy partakes more of Epicurus than of the porch; and in the country, when Skelton Castle was without company, and he was threatened with the spleen, to which he was occasionally liable, he had recourse to a very fine library, and a playful muse. That he was a man of singular genius, and a peculiar cast of thought, must be acknowledged by all who read his works; that while he caught the ridicule of life, he felt for its misfortunes, will be equally evident to those who read the page that contains the epitaph on Zackary Moore; and nothing surely can be wanting to confirm the latter opinion when we have added that he was the Eugenius of Sterne."

The district which, as I have already shown, has produced a whole gallery of eminent personages, famous in most ranks of literature, had not as yet given birth to a writer who was essentially a dramatist. The vacant niche, however, is to be filled. Joseph Reed, who was destined to attain a more than passing celebrity in connection with the stage, was born at Stockton-on-Tees in 1722, according to Tweddell, and in March, 1723, according to the writer of an anonymous sketch which appeared in the the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*, Oct. 13, 1883. He was taught the business of rope-making, a family calling, and succeeded his father when the latter retired from active work. His parents were Presbyterians of the straitest sect, steeped to the core in Calvinism, and had, says my anonymous authority, "the same contemptuous abhorrence (if the expression be allowable) of stage-players and play-goers of all grades and classes as the coarse and scurrilous author of *Histrio Mastix*, the Puritan Prynne, felt and expressed. Under such untoward circumstances it was a remarkable thing, though by no means a singular one, that the lad should have taken to play-writing when he grew up." He gives the following whimsical account of the influences that led him to assume in some degree the literary vocation in an autobiographical sketch which he contributed to the *Gentleman's Magazine* or the (the Roman letters are in the anonymous account from which I am quoting) *Monthly Review*:—

"I am, by Divine Providence, the sole surviving male of a very ancient family. My ancestors, so far as I have been able to rake them out of the rubbish of obscurity, for three generations preceding my father, could neither read nor write. The gentleman by whom I had the honour to be begot was a very eminent passport or halter-maker; and, notwithstanding the hereditary ignorance of the family, made such a considerable progress in literature, that he was able to cast accounts and scrawl a letter on business so intelligibly, that he could be understood by the major part of those with whom he had any dealings. His natural abilities were very extensive, though he was no conjurer in learning; and so fully was he convinced of the disadvantages of illiterature, that he was determined to give his children as good an education as his purse and their capacities would admit.

As my elder brother's upper chambers were not extremely well furnished, my father was in no great anxiety about giving him a liberal education; but a certain brat of the family raising his expectations, he was resolved to spare no pains or expense in the

cultivation of his understanding. At seven years old, little master, *videlicet*, my sweet Self, was to be put into Gaffer Hoole's leading strings to the Latin tongue; but being at that time seized by an ill-natured ague, which, some few intervals excepted, visited me almost three years, my entrance into grammatical trammels was postponed. My father being under great grief and perplexity, on account of my tertian visit, used every method in his power to rid the house of so troublesome an intruder, and at length succeeded by employing an old snarler of the faculty to bark him out of the family. I was no sooner freed from my late engagement, than a second-hand grammar was purchased, and, at the first quarter day, I was to begin my Latin; but an unlucky accident had almost disconcerted the scheme of my education; this was no less than the death of my honoured Papa.

When the violence of our grief for the loss of our common supporter was over, ways and means were to be found out for the maintenance of a widow and six children. A council ot three was accordingly called, which was composed of two female wry-faced Presbyterians, and an old cankered shipwright, of the same sect, who might with justice be called the greatest old woman of the three. They unanimously agreed, that my brother should be instructed in our paternal occupation, to keep up the dignity of the family; but could not, till after various meetings, and a great consumption of tobacco and old pipes, resolve how to dispose of Pilgarlick. One of them was for lessening the small claim I seemed to have to manhood, by putting me 'prentice to a taylor, another to a barber; for they very wisely observed, as I was but a very puny chap, and much of the family of the Slims, I should not be able to endure any hard labour. It was at last resolved, *nemine contradicente*, that I should, at a proper age, be put to a cabinetmaker. This resolution had assuredly passed the maternal assent, had not a gentleman of learning, a distant relation by my mother's side, interposed, and offered to supply me with books and board, till I had perfected my education at a grammar school. This generous proposal, though opposed with great warmth and bitterness by my mamma's privy council, was prudently accepted by my mother, who was not a little elevated with the hopes of her son's arriving at the dignity of thumping the cushion. Well, I was put to school, and hurried with such vast rapidity through Messrs. Hoole, Lilly, Cato, and Corderius, that my master declared I was the finest boy he had ever under his care. Before I had been a fortnight entered in Mynheer Erasmus, I had the misfortune to lose my master, who died of a distemper not uncommon in this island, a scolding wife. A successor was immediately called from that great nursery of bum-brushers, Appleby school. With this preceptor, after the first half-year, I lived in perpetual uneasiness on account of his notorious, not to say villainous, partiality to the vicar's nephew, between whom and myself there was as great an emulation, as perhaps was ever known in those great seminaries of literature, the schools of Eton and Westminster. Under this grammatical tyrant, learning became the most insupportable burthen; however, being wearied out by the usage of this rascally pedagogue, I broke through my slavery, and was put to a school in my native town. Here I began to recover my small relish of the classics; but my brother unfortunately dying before I had been four months fixed in my new situation, I was most barbarously torn from school to supply the place of the deceased. All my Latin books were immediately seized by order of the council, and inhumanly kept from me with as much strictness as pen and ink from a state prisoner; by which means my progress in that language hath been no further serviceable to me than in teaching me to write tolerable grammar in my mother tongue. This, though it seemed to me an act of great oppression, was no more than the effect of sound policy; for it was very sagely concluded, that my love of learning would naturally increase my aversion to business. However, under these restraints I could not be easy; and as Latin authors were denied me, with my small allowance I purchased an old, crabbed, unfashionable book, called "Paradise Lost," written by a son of darkness, one John Milton. The author was at first too hard for me, but by frequent reading, I began to understand and relish him. After I had finished old Common-wealth, I hired, at the important sum of two pence per week, a queer, obsolete author, that you may perhaps have heard of, one William Shakspeare, a great play-wright; but unluckily while I was perusing the first volume, I was detected by a dissenting clergyman, who was loved in our family. This gentleman, though a man of great worth and learning, had caught the common infection, and was of opinion, that the knowledge of Shakspeare was altogether unnecessary to a halter-maker. Well, what was to be done? I was so charmed with my cousin Shakspeare, that I could not forget him: and to read him openly was downright defiance to my mother and her ministry. In this exigence I had resource to a variety of wiles, by which I secured to myself the pleasure of perusing my favourite author without discovery.

In 1754 Reed removed to London, and settled at King David's Fort, Ratcliffe Highway, where he had a very extensive manufactory. Before he left his native town he published a farce, entitled ***The Superannuated Gallant***, which was printed in Newcastle, and enacted there by a company of strolling players. In 1758, his mock tragedy of ***Madrigal and Truletta*** was performed at the Theatre Royal, in Covent Garden, for one night only, the 6th of July, 1758, under the direction of Theophilus Cibber. "Cibber it is said had promised to perform in it himself, but neglected to fulfil his engagement, and it was by a hastily collected, and very

slightly disciplined company that it was enacted, and that so badly that they narrowly escaped being hissed off the stage." The production of this burlesque appears to have led to considerable controversy in the journals of the time, in which personalities more coarse than biting, were freely used. Our author is, however, chiefly known and celebrated throughout Yorkshire by his farce of *The Register Office*, which was originally performed at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, in 1761, meeting with great approval, and was published the same year by Davies, in a small octavo pamphlet. A circumstance in connection with the production of this clever sketch should not go unrecorded. "In August, 1758," says the same anonymous writer to whom I am already so considerably indebted, "Mr. Reed put into the hands of Mr. Foote, that clever impersonator of all sorts of odd characters, a piece called *The Register Office*, which is a master-piece in its way. But Garrick's more than nominally unscrupulous rival, who seems never to have felt any compunctions about stealing other people's ideas and giving them to the world as his own, instead of producing it at the Haymarket Theatre, as he had assured Mr. Reed he would, finding a character in the piece which he could adapt to his own style of acting, made free with the property entrusted to his care, and, in violation of every principle of honour or probity, transferred it in 1760, into his comedy of *The Minor*, converting Mr. Reed's 'Gulwell,' the London Register Office keeper, into 'Mother Cole,' in the same line of business. Foote had a short while before played precisely the same trick on his intimate friend Murphy, and when taxed with his dishonesty, in both cases, he only laughed when he could not justify his act."

The author reaped no pecuniary advantage from the production of his farce, owing, as we are told, to some misunderstanding with his manager. Reed seems to have been a true worshipper of Thalia, and was not so far daunted by his first defeats on the stage as to be prevented from undertaking similar enterprises. He wrote a tragedy, *Dido*, which Mrs. Cibber applauded in very high terms, and which, after some negotiation, was produced by Garrick, on the 28th of March, 1767. A comic opera, *Tom Jones*, was performed at the Covent Garden Theatre, in 1769, for several nights, amid considerable signs of appreciation, and proved also a success financially. Reed wrote several other dramatic pieces, nearly the whole of which appear to have been lost and forgotten. Such labours formed the diversion of his leisure hours. He was also a contributor to a popular political paper, *The Monitor*; wrote several pamphlets on theatrical matters, and in 1786 he printed *St. Peter's Lodge, a Serio-Comic Legendary Tale in Hudibrastic Verse*, inscribing it to the Prince of Wales, afterwards George II. It was not only the pursuit of *belles lettres* that occupied his mind, for indeed he appears to have had a most practical and circumspect genius. Accordingly we find him in 1762—twenty-four years before he embarked upon his *Legendary Tale*—publishing a very useful work, *The Tradesman's*

Companion ; or Tables of Avoirdupois Weight, from Eighty Pounds to Five Shillings per ton, calculated to a Farthing. The book was printed in 12mo, and contained other tables than those relating to avoirdupois weight, and showed that our author was well-grounded in this branch of arithmetic.

The following quotation, from *Dido*, I give as a specimen of Reed's heroic style :—

> In all the train of vice there's not a monster
> More foul, more ugly, than Ingratitude.
> It is a fiend of blackest hue, begot
> By the demon Envy on the Sorceress Pride,
> And littered in a base, a thankless heart.
> In want 'tis humble ; licks, yet, if it durst,
> Would bite the hand that ministers relief.
> In power 'tis proud ; repays past benefits
> With scorn, neglect, or insult. Its sharp tooth
> Strikes deeper than the serpent's poisonous sting ;
> And he that entertains this sooty guest,
> Harbours as rank a devil in his heart,
> As hell hath ever gender'd.

The character of 'Margery Moorpout,' in Reed's farce of *The Register Office*, is the one literary creation which has tended to preserve his reputation to these later times. Margery is a native of Great Ayton, near Stokesley, and speaks the broad Yorkshire of her native village in all its undiluted purity. She has long been referred to as one of the typical Yorkshire characters. Having left her native village, she finds herself in London, compelled to seek employment at a Register Office, and this is the amusing dialogue which takes place between herself and the sly and sleek keeper, Gulwell :—

Margery : Sur, an a body may be sa bowld, Ah's cum te ax an ye've sped (succeeded) about t' woman sarvant 'at ye advertahs'd for ?

Gulwell : I have not. Come nearer, young woman.

Margery : Let me steyk't (shut) deer first, and ye please. [Shuts the door.]

Gulwell : What country-woman are ye ?

Margery : Ah's Yorkshur, by mah truly ! Ah wor bred and boorn at Lahtle Yatton, aside o' Roseberry Toppin.

Gulwell : Roseberry Toppin ! Where's that, my pretty maid ?

Margery : Sartainly, man, ye knaw Roseberry ! Ah thowght onny fual hed knawn Roseberry. It's t'biggest hill i' all Yorkshur. It's aboon a mahle an' a hawf heegh, an' as cawd as ice at t' top on't i' t' yattest day i' summer : that it is.

Gulwell : You've been in some service, I suppose ?

Margery : Hey, Ah'll uphod ye hev E, ivver sin E wor neen yeear awd. Neea makkins ! Ah'd mi' god's penny (the money that tied a bargain at a country hirings, now generally a shilling, like the queen's shilling that enlists the soldier) at Stowslah (Stokesley) Market aboon hawf a yeear afoore at Ah wor neen (nine) ; an' as good a sarvant Ah've been, thof Ah say 't mysel, as ivver com within a pair o' deers (doors). Ah can milk, ken, (churn) fother, beeak, brew, sheear, winder, caird, spin, knit, sew, an' deea ivvery thing 'at belangs to a husbandman, as weel as onny lass 'at ivver ware clog-shun ; an' as te mah charicter, Ah defy onny boddy, gentle or simple, te say black's mah nail.

Gulwell : Have you been in any service in London ?

Margery : Hey, an' ye pleease. Ah lived wi' Madame Shrillpipe, i' St. Paul's Kirk Garth ; but wor foorc'd te leeave mah pleeace afoore 'at Ah'd been a week o' days in't.

Gulwell : How so ?

Margery : Marry, because she ommost flighted an' scauded me oot o'mah wits. She wort' arrantest scaud 'at ivver Ah met wi i' my boorn days. She had sartainly sike a tongue as nivver wor i' onny woman's heead bud her awn.

It wad ring, ring, ring, like a larum, fra moorn te neeght. Then she wad put hersel inte sike flusters that her feeace wad be as black as t' recken creeak. Neea, for t' matter o' that, Ah wor nobbut reeghtly sarrad; for Ah wor tell'd afoorehand by some varra 'sponsible fowk 'at she wer a mere donnot. Howsumivver, as Ah found money grow less an' less ivvery day (for Ah'd browght mah good sieven an' twenty shilling te neen groats an' tuppence), Ah thought it wad be better te tak up wi' a bad plceace than neea place at all.

Gulwell: And how do you like London?

Margery: Marry, sur, Ah like nowther egg nor shell on't. They're sike a set o' fowk as Ah nivver seed wi' mah een. They laugh an' fleer at a body like onny thing. Ah went nobbut t'other day te t' beeaker's shop for a leeaf o' breead, an' they fell a giggling at mah, as if Ah'd been yan o' t' grittest gawvisons i' t' warld.

Gulwell: Pray, what is a gawvison?

Margery: Whah, you're a gawvison for nut knawing what it is. Ah thought you Lunnoners hed hev knawn ivverything. A gawvison's a ninnyhammer. Now, d'ye think at' Ah leeak owght like a gawvison?

Gulwell: Not in the least my pretty damsel.

Margery: They may brag as they will o' their manners; but they've neea mair manners than a miller's horse, Ah can tell 'em that, that Ah can. Ah wish Ah'd been still at Canny Yatton.

Gulwell: As you had so great a liking to the place, why did you leave it?

Margery: Marry, sur, Ah wor foorc'd, as you may say, te leeave 't; 't 'squire wadn't let mah be; by mah truly, he wor efter me moorn, neean, and neeght. If Ah wad but hae consented tiv his wicked ways, Ah mud hae had gowd by gowpins, that Ah mud. 'Seah ye, squire,' says Ah, 'you're mistakken i' mah; Ah's neean o' theer soort o' cattle; Ah's a varteous young woman, Ah'll asseer ye; ye'er udder fowk's fowk—wad ye be sike a teeastrill (scoundril) as to ruin mah?' But all wadn't deea; he kept follo'in an' follo'in, an' teazin' an' teazin' me. At lang run, Ah tell'd mah awd deeame (my mother), an' she advahs'd mah te gan te Lunnon, to be oot o' hiz way; that she did, like an honest woman as she wor. Ah went te mah cousin Isbel, an' says Ah tiv her, 'Isbel,' says Ah, 'will t' gowa te Lunnon?' an' tell'd t' yal affair atween me an 't squire. 'Odsbobs! mah lass,' says she, 'Ah'll gan wi' thee to t' warld's end.' An' away we com i' good yennest (earnest).

Gulwell: It was a very *varteous* resolution. Pray, how old are you?

Margery: Ah's neenteen, com Collop Monday (the day before Shrove Tuesday—Pancake Day).

Gulwell: Would you undertake a housekeeper's place?

Margery: Ah's flay'd Ah can't mannish't, if it beean't i' a husbandman's house.

Gulwell: It is a very substantial farmer's in Buckinghamshire: I am sure you will do. I will set you down for it. Your name?

Margery: Margery Moorpout, an' ye pleease.

Gulwell: How do you spell it?

Margery: Neea makkins! Ah knaw nowt o' speldring. Ah's neea scholard.

Gulwell: Well, I shall write to him this evening. What wages do you ask

Margery: Neea, marry, for t' matter o' that, Ah wadn't be ower stiff about wages.

Gulwell: Then I can venture to assure you of it. You must give me half-a-crown, my pretty maid. Our fee is only a shilling for a common place; but for a housekeeper's we have always half-a-crown.

Margery: There's twea shilling; an' yan, twea, three, fower, fahve, saxpenn'orth o' brass, wi' a thoosand thenks. A blessing leeght o' ye, for Ah's seer ye'er t' best frind Ah've met wi' sen Ah com fra Canny Yatton, that ye are. When mun E call again, sur?

Gulwell: About the middle of next week.

Margery: Sur, an' ye please, gud morning te ye.

[*Exit.*

As a picture of simple country manners Reed's sketch is charming. Margery is in no respect overdrawn. As a type she is wholly obsolete, unless it be in one or two instances of survival in the more remote Cleveland vales. Schools and railways have played sad havoc with rural dialects. A hundred years ago such a character as Margery in London would be a delicious and piquant rarity, for London then was as far distant, in point of time, from Canny Yatton as New York now is. The cost of a journey thither would be equally great, and would be attended with risks and difficulties of a more annoying character, so that such undertakings would be but seldom embarked upon by persons of the labouring class. I can remember the time when a travelled Yorkshireman or Yorkshirewoman was a great rarity, and when a person who had been to London was

looked upon with far more awe and curiosity than in these modern days even the common people regard a skipper who has crossed the line and visited the most far-away regions of the earth. Several of my own relations had never been more than ten miles from the place of their birth, though some of them lived far beyond the allotted three score years and ten. Volumes might be written on the revolution that has taken place in Cleveland, and, indeed, in English manners and habits during the last fifty years.

Reed's farce, from which I have quoted so extensively, is still in print. The popular penny edition published by Dick, and of which I recently procured a copy, contains many errors both of spelling and sense. In a work which I published a few years ago—*Broad Yorkshire*—I gave many other specimens of local wit and humour, in which I have endeavoured to preserve the phonetic characteristics of the Cleveland dialect as it was spoken in the Cleveland towns and villages a quarter of a century ago.

Reed lived a sedentary life, was a thoroughly hard-working Yorkshireman, and so devoted himself to his studies and to his business affairs, taking little exercise, that he brought on a disorder which terminated his life, on the 15th of August, 1787, in the sixty-fifth year of his age. He left a handsome fortune to be divided amongst his children "in equal proportions." One of the sons, John Watson Reed, followed the profession of the law in London, and another—Shakespere Reed—carried on the paternal business, and added to its prosperity.

I have now to consider a wholly different character from that which I have just been pourtraying. John Castillo, ridiculously styled by some the Cleveland Burns, has probably made a greater reputation amongst his own countrymen than any other Cleveland writer. His fame may be accounted for by the fact that he wrote mostly in the local dialect, and that his poems are largely permeated by the peculiar principles of the Wesleyan Methodists, as they were generally entertained by the common people some half century ago. I find myself wholly unable to agree with the many eulogies that his poems have inspired. I consider him to have been greatly over-rated, and consistently with this view my notice of him will, necessarily, be more curtailed than those which have been given by previous writers on his claims and pretensions, and who have gone so far as to credit him with the possession of poetic genius of a high order. Genius is not vanity and ignorance exerting itself to produce a creation *in vacuo*. It does not put pigmies upon stilts for the world to gaze at, more in morbid curiosity than in wonder and reverence. It re-lights no baleful *ignis fatuus* fires of superstition to terrify and alarm the ignorant, but burns with the steady and unquenchable radiance of eternal truth. It is never moodily monomaniacal, always reverting to some gloomy thought that has obtained a permanent dominance over the mind. In one view it

is a great educational force; in another it is a marvellous intellectual lamp. In neither case are its powers given out under the restraint of vanity, or of an overweening egotism that obtrudes itself in all its naked hideousness to the eyes of the beholder. It is indeed like the diamond, which seems to be, and is, under no compulsion to shine, but emits its brilliance by the law of its nature, and which in its secret powers and qualities is a wonder and a miracle.

John Castillo was not a Yorkshireman by birth. He was born at Rathfarnum, near Dublin, in or about the year 1792. He was brought to England by his parents, poor Irish emigrants, in his second or third year. The Castillos settled down at Lealholme Bridge, a picturesque part of Cleveland, not so far distant from the spot where the Saxon cowherd, Cædmon, conceived, in his pastoral solitude, the wonderful incidents in the drama of Paradise Lost. The principal part of his life was spent in the parish of Danby, which the Rev. J. C. Atkinson has since made so famous by his literary labours, in diverse fields, as novelist, antiquarian, naturalist, and historian. At twelve years of age young Castillo had to mourn the loss of his father, who had sent him to school, taken him regularly to Mass, and generally given him such training as he was capable of. Leaving Cleveland he became a servant boy in Lincolnshire, where he spent two years, at the end of which term he returned to Lealholme, where he learnt the trade of a stone mason, which he subsequently followed. Wesleyan revivalism was everywhere making itself felt at this time, and Castillo fell under the spell, being admitted into class amongst the Methodists, April 5, 1818, at the chapel at Danby End. He was then twenty-six years of age, and the harsh views he imbibed appear to have made a permanent impression upon his character. He became an energetic revivalist in the Wesleyan Society, and appears never to have wavered from his religious convictions. His lines, to quote the expressive scriptural phrase, do not appear to have fallen in pleasant places. His life was a roving one, and his journeys in search of work were numerous, and attended with many privations.

"In the months of January and February, 1837," says Tweddell in his *Bards and Authors of Cleveland and South Durham*, "Castillo caught a succession of colds, which added to previous hardships brought on influenza; and he never afterwards was the strong man whose brawny arm had hewn out and dressed the freestone of the Cleveland Hills, happy if he could but earn daily bread by his hard toil, and assist in the labours of the sect with which he had allied himself. That year on his partial recovery, he was invited during the summer to Stockton-on-Tees with a brother-revivalist, 'but' says he, 'we carried rather too coarse metal for that refined place,' Methodism always changing its character when wealthy folks join the society." It was in the dales of the Cleveland Moorlands

where Castillo met with his most striking successes as a poet as well as a revivalist. Here the people were densely ignorant, and superstitious, and amongst them the man who could jingle rhymes together in their own uncouth tongue—and preach and pray as well—was regarded as a prodigy and an oracle, and treated as such. Castillo died at Pickering, April 16, 1845, at the age of fifty three.

Castillo's poems are steeped with his religious belief. The material hell—the grosser and gloomier hell—of the Calvinistic theology is his favourite theme. No matter what may be his topic, he must finish it up with some morbid moralising linked with some of the narrow ideas then prevalent amongst his sect and called religious. Lovefeasts, prayer meetings, tea meetings, revival services, these were the inspiring occasions of his muse. He was, as Tweddell rightly says, cramped in mind. Merrymaking of any kind was a crime in his eyes. Like all "cock-sure" saints, anyone who did not agree with him were relegated to eternal damnation. Such men are ever dangerous, indeed are the pests of society, no matter to what Church or sect they belong, Roman or Anglican, Presbyterian or Unitarian, believer or agnostic. In any educated society, Castillo would have made but little headway. As it was, one of his poems in the Cleveland Dialect, "Awd Isaac," ran through several editions, and is invariably reproduced in works which are published to illustrate the phonetic peculiarities of the Cleveland brogue. One element in the success of Castillo's poems was the local subjects he chose for his efforts: he nearly always devoted his skill to some event or place connected with the district in which he lived. The index to his poems gives the following, amongst a vast number of subjects:—"Stonegate Gill," "Sheep Washing at Westerdale," "The Building of Glaisdale New Bridge," "A Visit to Farndale," "Castleton Fair," "A Strange Effusion, or Wesleyanism at Easby in the Stokesley circuit," "On a Meeting of Revivalists near Staithes"—and so the list goes on, all dealing with place-names and even with persons whose names are not withheld. It is not difficult to imagine that in an illiterate community even doggerel verse—which dealt so freely with the towns and villages of a restricted district, and the personages and events associated with them—would evoke a natural curiosity, not unfavourable to the sale of poems in which they were described in all the uncouthness of the local tongue.

Castillo was a great imitator of Scotia's immortal bard. His principal poem, "Awd Isaac," is written in the favourite stanza of Burns. It was in form only that the similitude was attained. The melting tenderness, the exquisitely beautiful music, the tear-starting pathos, the majestic human breadth, the lyrical grace of the Scotch poet are nowhere to be discovered in Castillo's writings. "We start, for soul is wanting there." Indeed, a careful perusal of Castillo's poems causes but a

feeling of distress and uneasiness. No matter from what point of view he commences he always reverts to the same moral and the same theme. All his tracks trend to the same isolated point: a kind of stone post—a guide post it may be—on a solitary and barren moor, "the wilderness of this world," according to Bunyan, in which he dwelt. His poems are indeed gloomy revival discourses in verse, and have mainly for their object the reader's conversion to his own narrow creed. He cannot even be jocose without moralising, and if he strays for a moment or two away into pleasing verse, he returns again to his hobby with a kind of painful consciousness that life is a serious business, and trifling in any sense is not to be tolerated.

This as to the manner and spirit of his muse. As to the art of his compositions I need make no comment. At times it is smooth-flowing, at times the reverse. Castillo was, if a poet in any sense, an illiterate one: and, if we may readily admit that he had a musical ear, a cursory examination of his poems shews us that they have many structural defects. Great poets, however, have transgressed in these particulars, and it is not by the form of the expression so much as by the power and the quality of the thought that we would care to judge our great masters, though style and method may be great elements in their successful appeals to posterity as well as to their contemporaries.

I conclude with an example from a poem of Castillo's, "Tea among the Rocks, or the Whitby Missionary Party in Arncliff Wood on their way to Gazedale."

"Old Lumber distant shakes his hoary locks,
Where spiny larches show a passage free,
Pointing to heaven, where down among the rocks
The congregation sat around for tea.

The other side old Snowdon Nab appears,
When rainbow splendour does the valley span,
Like some old castle of a thousand years,
Which long has mocked the puny arm of man.

* * * * * *

Such footsteps seldom sounded in the glen,
Old Arncliff seldom saw so proud a day,
So worthy of recording with the pen;
The trees rejoiced in all their best array!

* * * * * *

Old Arncliffe wears its generations out,
And new ones gaze and wonder as they pass
At those huge rocks, and trees of massy root,
Whose branches whisper, "All flesh is but grass."

For a fuller account of Castillo I refer my readers to Tweddell's *Bards and Authors of Cleveland and South Durham.* The poet's works are now out

of print. The late Mr. Scotson, Printer, of Stokesley, had an edition in the press at the time of his death. His poems are still much sought after by the dales-people, and if a new edition were issued it would be eagerly bought, and could not fail to be remunerative.

John Walker Ord is the one Cleveland writer of modern times who may be said to have obtained a literary reputation of any permanence and breadth. In his lifetime he achieved a fame which was more than local. His influence was due as much to a charming personality, as to any superiority of talent or genius which he might possess. He was a character whom to know was to love and admire. He inspired the greatest confidence in a more than ordinarily numerous and warm-hearted circle of friends, as to the achievements that were within his reach. The applause bestowed upon him by his friends accounts in great measure for his having embarked on so many and such diverse literary adventures, for we find him in turns, writing history, editing newspapers, making political speeches, and composing poems. His genius indeed took the most ambitious range, and was not deterred from many a time and oft endeavouring to encompass themes which were wholly beyond its power and ability, and in the execution of which conspicuous failure is only too legibly shown.

The future historian of his own native vale was born at Guisbrough, on the 5th of March, 1811, where his family have been located for more than one generation, and in which town his father successfully carried on the business of a currier, then one of the staple industries of the place. He received his elementary education at the Grammar School of his native town, a foundation of Robert Pursglove, the last Prior of the beautiful Middle English Priory, the remains of the eastern gable of which form so prominent a landmark for the district around, standing out as they do amidst umbrageous trees, and encircled by the blue hills of the Cleveland range. From Guisbrough, Ord was transferred to Thirsk, but we have no record of the progress he made in his studies, of the habits he formed, or the peculiar aptitudes which he displayed as a boy at school. Being destined for the medical profession by his parents, he proceeded to Edinburgh as a student, in 1829. He entered the University there, and became a pupil of Dr. Knox, the anatomist, and it is worthy of record that between teacher and pupil there sprang up a mutual affection which developed into a life-long intimacy. Before Ord visited the modern Athens, he had undoubtedly been addicted to verse making, for I find poems dated previously to that year appear in his works, and a pretentious lyrical effort *The Bard*, doubtless inspired by the muse of Sir Walter Scott, was, according to his admirer and friend, John Lodge, written by him in his 19th year, in all probability before he entered upon his medical studies. In Edinburgh we find him interesting himself in all manner of questions, excepting those immediately concerning his profession,

and in letters home to his friends he dwells, in a more or less exaggerated manner, on his views, experiences, and achievements. These letters I am bound to confess, are not, to my mind, pleasant reading: they discover a vanity which is evidently fed by the flattery of his admirers; and they are written with a view to create effect and evoke admiration. They are decidedly not the letters we should expect from a young man of modest and ingenuous mind; and they are couched in a phraseology which I cannot but characterise as stilted and unreal. They are also very lengthy effusions, are crowded with strong epithets, and with vigorous denunciations of contemporaries and opponents, which do not by any means indicate a sound and healthy judgment. Writing to his life-long friend, John Jackson, of Lackenby Old Hall, about the time of the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act, he spoke of the Romanists as "idolatrous wretches," and Sir Robert Peel is dubbed as a "black apostate," and this by a young man not yet 19! I have not the temerity to inflict upon my readers the whole of a letter indulging in such exaggerations, and to transcribe which would involve a painful effort. One brief quotation must therefore suffice as a taste of our author's peculiar style of treating such grave questions:

"Are Darkness and Error," he asks, "again to stride over the land, and again cast the dark shadows (*sic*) of error (*sic*) and superstition over the rising purity and civilization of its inhabitants? Are our churches, which now echo with the songs of praise, and the holy breathings of eternal life, to be once more lit up with the flame of waxen tapers, and be polluted with the idolatrous mummery of Papacy? Oh, God, little as my mind has been touched with the pure spirit of religion, still I cannot think of the doctrines whether of Cranmer, or Luther, or Calvin, or Wesley being thus again surmounted by the veiled form of Popery, without shrinking beneath the thought, and lifting up my voice among the other true Protestants of Great Britain, indignantly against the men who could thus permit such a dangerous inroad into the constitutions and laws of the land. The Catholics have long striven for this. Thirty years ago did one of their speakers first bring forward the motion before the House of Commons, and at that time almost every individual in that House shrunk with indignation at the attempt. Since that time their eyes have never been removed from the contemplation of this great work; the abbeys and monasteries and rich lands of former times, have no doubt always been before their imagination. Be this as it may, they have attempted by every means, directly and indirectly, to further their schemes; and at length after Sheridan, and Gratton, and Burke, and Fox, had expended their eloquence in vain—*at length*—oh, tell it not in Gath—Robert Peel has, in the year 1829, carried by intrigue and secresy, and in spite of the petitions of the English nation, this hated and abominable measure,—fatal alike to the Protestant interests of this realm and the rising intelligence of individuals. Such is my view of the subject; and, had I room, I would prove my assertions by a hundred arguments: but, as I do not sit down to write to you on politics, I will not detain your time further on the subject."

I do not give this extract from one of Ord's letters in order to comment upon the subject on which it treats. I have no political end in view in writing this series of biographical sketches. After the very natural reflection that our young letter-writer's modesty does not come out in a favourable light, when we see him penning such rigmarole on questions he could not possibly understand, one feels constrained to remark that we have actually survived all the dreadful calamities which he pictured for us. We are sometimes inclined to think that inflamed and excited politicians who

"Prey until they bust
On what the party chooses,"

are a peculiar production of our times, but it is not so. In these matters as in many others, it is indeed as the *Gloria* strikingly says "as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be." The theme changes from Memphis to Athens, from Athens to Rome, and from Rome to London, but in all ages and in all climes, and under the most diverse circumstances, political feeling and political parties run in much the same channels, and observe almost identically the same courses and tactics of bitter narrow-mindedness.

In the same letter Ord speaks unreservedly to his friend as to his intentions in matters matrimonial. He says "I am determined, some way or other, to be married by the time I am twenty-one," and one can only wish that he had been able to follow out his intentions. To such a nature early marriage might have proved the greatest of earthly blessings and safeguards. Then he makes the foolish vow "if I am once disappointed where I have fairly fixed my affections, I will never utter another word of 'wooing' to any woman under the face of the sun. * * * * * * My epitaph should be—Here lies JOHN W. ORD, Æt. 21, a young man highly respected by all who had the honour to know him, but so damnable a fool as to die of love." What wretched stuff, and blackguardly withal, did we not foresee that the youth who could amuse himself with such painful exhibitions of his own personal importance, was from the first suffering from the sad malady of incipient lunacy. It is this consideration which must moderate all our strictures upon his excesses, and which must ever cause us to feel in the true assessment of his works, that any path but that of literature, especially in the times in which he lived, would have been best for him.

In Edinburgh, we are told upon the authority of Tweddell, who manifests a most tender regard for the memory of his friend and fellow-worker in many a local enterprise,—Ord made the more than passing acquaintance of such men as Professor Wilson, James Hogg, and Henry Glassford Bell, the latter then editor of the *Edinburgh Literary Journal*, to which Ord at times contributed. When here he also wrote for *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, and published a work, *The Wandering Bard and other Poems*, in 12mo. Tweddell gives lengthy quotations from the early work, which is very variable in structure, and appears to me to have no cogent aim or purpose. It seems to be largely influenced by the spirit of Shelley and Scott, deriving from the former some of his more striking conceptions, and from the latter his form and method of procedure. Tweddell points out that the careful reader cannot fail to notice how even in this early effort "our author has brooded over insanity—as though he had some presentiment that the mental malady which had attacked Nat Lee, Sir Isaac Newton, Collins, Fergusson, Cowper, Ritson, and other literary men, would also fix its fangs on him, and there were good and substantial reasons," continues his sympathising friend, "why he should dread so

melancholy a fate. Gifted with an unbounded"—I should say an unhealthy—"imagination and with the intensest passions, there needed the sternest reason to hold the mental reins, or, alas for him, and for all so gifted!"

It was at Edinburgh that Ord had to face the situation we find him alluding to in the letter I have quoted. He became that sad and unfortunate wight, a rejected lover. He fixed his affections upon a daughter of the renowned Christopher North, but his appeals were not favourably responded to. There are no means of judging whether our ardent poet had any reason to believe that his attentions were in any way desired, but with such a nature as Ord's that would be wholly a minor consideration. He wooed and was rejected, and thereupon we are to believe that he bade farewell alike to Edinburgh and to the serious duties of his profession. He stayed until he saw the lady of his love wedded to another, and then "with aching heart and throbbing brow, he left Scotland, as he thought for ever: but, alas! to return there in after years, an incurable lunatic." There seems, however, to be another and more probable reason for his departure from the land o' cakes. With a fellow student and bard, M. S. Milton, he had got into scrapes by writing satirical verses on persons in authority, and for which they twain were bound to answer in a court of law. The difficulty and peril of the situation was solved by their both resolving to flee the country before the matter came on for trial, so that in all probability it was a judicious fear and not an injudicious love which caused Ord to leave Edinburgh before he had completed his studies. The incident seems to have put an end to his medical pursuits, for we find they were about this time relinquished, and were never again renewed, our young student finding in literature a more congenial pursuit.

In 1834, Ord travelled in Wales and Holland in company with his old friend and tutor, Dr. Knox, going principally upon foot. We can imagine how so ardent a temperament as Ord's would seize on the beauties of the Welsh mountains and hills, the peculiarities of Dutch landscapes, the quaint manners and customs of the people, and endeavour to give them some literary form. The sober conversations of Dr. Knox would have their own soothing effect upon a too easily excited imagination, and it is therefore with regret that I discover but little trace of these tours in the poet's published writings, and in the accounts which his contemporaries have given of them.

The first work of John Walker Ord, which secured any considerable attention, was published in 1834. *England—a Historical Poem*, was dedicated, the first volume to the King's most Excellent Majesty, and the second to the Duke of Wellington, and was published by subscription, in two large volumes demy octavo. The dedications are from Guisbrough, Cleveland, Yorkshire, the first volume being dated November 4, 1833, and the second October 1, 1834. The first volume

contains 263 and the second 251 pages. In a note to this work, the author complains of the unavoidable delays which had occurred in its progress through the press. It is in great part written in the Spenserian stanza, and deals with a vast variety of subjects relating to the characters and events of English history. In the introduction to the second volume the poet indulges in the following invocation, which I transcribe with the painful feeling that it is astounding to me how persons of culture could applaud performances marked with such evident morbidness of feeling:—

But I must close my strain. Yet, not alone,
For this. Sad, weary, worn, and desolate,
Still must I wander on, 'mid tear and frown—
I, who was once so happy and elate,
And deem'd the world could never change my state!
Alas, the oil is scattered and the light
Is quench'd! I nothing see but hungry hate,
And murky clouds, where all was once so bright;
And where the sunbeams play'd is now tempestuous night!

Ye sacred Nine, so often sore perplexed
By unknown voices! Ye, who sit afar,
Where nought of earthly sorrow ever reign'd,
Beside the morning and the evening star,
And where the spheres join their melodious jar,
Hear me, and bear me up, nor let me fall!
Ye unto whom the moonbeams make a car;
Into whose ears heaven's voices ever call,
Oh lift me from the dust into your sacred hall!

The gauzy fleeced clouds attire ye well,
Richer than Indian silk's embroidery;
Among your locks the brightest sunbeams dwell,
And for your jewels, shines the starred sky;
Innumerable worlds delight your eye;
The halo of young stars affords your zone;
And, for your sandals, early breezes fly,
Incensed and perfum'd all for you alone;
And ye have constant rest beside the eternal throne.

You view the Northern streamers in their flight,
And hunt them in your glee. You see the moon,
And fill your urns with her celestial light,
Ye see the midnight in its starry noon,
And greet the planets clear. And late and soon,
'Tis yours to view the wondrous glories spread,
When blushing morning from her couch comes down;
And when the gorgeous evening sinks to bed;
And when pale phantoms seek the dwellings of the dead.

We must remember that whatever signs of immaturity there may be in these voluminous poems is attributable to the fact that their writer was only 22 years of age at the time of their publication. He attempted too much. It is

not extraordinary under the circumstances that he should have given way to despondency of feeling—his mind was overtaxed. The greater part of his writings show that he strained after effect, and sought to accomplish the unattainable both in idea and feeling. There is no sequence in his lines of thought, but little connection at times between the subject and its treatment, and there is always an obtrusion of self and of his own morbid feelings which makes the mere perusal of his poetry anything but a pleasure. In treating upon a subject like England why should he condemn his readers to listen to such a wail as that with which he begins the verses I have just quoted. But it was ever an affectation of the poets of the period to express their disgust with their mundane lot. How different, however, is Ord's strained and unnatural picture of his own woeful condition to that of the pathetic and tender bard, who thus addresses the lustrous lamp of night:—

"Oh, thou pale orb that silent shines
Whilst care untroubled mortals sleep,
Thou see'st a wretch who inly pines
And wanders here to wail and weep.

With woe I nightly vigils keep
Beneath thy wan unwarming beam,
And mourn in lamentation deep
How life and love are all a dream."

If I dwell thus lengthily on one peculiar characteristic of Ord's poetry it is because of the general interest that his career and writings have excited, and because in spite of such undoubted blemishes as I have pointed out, there is here and there in his works undoubted evidence of a poetic genius of a high order, on which subject I shall have more to say, and some examples to quote, anon. I may note before I dismiss this part of my subject that Ord's two-volume poem was patronised by some of the foremost men of the day, leaders of society and men of letters. The Duke of Wellington, the Archbishop of York, the Marquis of Londonderry, were amongst the patricians who favoured our author's muse, and Jos. Pease, M.P., G. Grote, M.P., Miss L. E. Landon, Leigh Hunt, R. Southey, T. Campbell, Jas. Hogg are names that I find dispersed amongst those in the somewhat numerous list of subscribers appended at the end of the second volume.

"Dr. Knox," says Tweddell, "who visited the young poet at Gisbro', failed to induce him to prefer the practice of medicine to the more uncertain one of authorship; and, in April, 1836, his friend and fellow-outlaw, Matthew S. Milton, and himself, commenced, in London, the publication of a weekly three-penny ***Metropolitan Journal of Literature, Science, the Fine Arts, &c.***, with the motto—'Eyes to the blind, ears for the deaf, limbs for the maimed;' which appeared for sixteen Saturdays, and then left the blind, the deaf, and the maimed, to shift for them-

selves. A project, however, in the meantime had been brought to maturity, to establish a new Tory weekly newspaper in London, which Ord and Milton were engaged to edit, and which was launched at once under the imposing title of *The Metropolitan Conservative Journal.* My friend's slashing articles took well with his party, and I will pass them over without further comment than that his grand panacea for the ills of Ireland was—that the head of Daniel O'Connell should roll on the scaffold! In 1838, *The Church of England Gazette*, edited by the Rev. Michael A. Gathercole, was united to the *Metropolitan Conservative Journal;* it was during their joint-editorship that I became acquainted with Walker Ord; and on my naming his clerical co-adjutor, he remarked, 'I have no hesitation in stating, that if the reverend gentleman had his own way, he would very soon relight the fires of Smithfield.' High Tory as he was, Walker Ord had no sympathy with Gathercole's religious intolerance; and he removed, in 1839, to Sunderland, where the Tory beacon had for some time been burning with a very dim light, and which re-appeared, under our author's management for a time, on the fourth of October, re-christened *The Northern Times.* Before leaving London, he had become intimate with Thomas Campbell, Richard Sheridan Knowles, the Countess of Blessington, and other literary characters, and only the night before he left he became personally acquainted with Douglas Jerrold. Several of the political and other pieces given in his *Bard and Minor Poems*, published in 1842, originally appeared in the *Metropolitan Conservative Journal*, or in the *Northern Times.* This volume was nominally edited by John Lodge, of Stockton-on-Tees, but the 'Preface' and the 'Note to the Reader,' though bearing Lodge's initials, were Ord's. Lodge got the subscribers, and had the profit for his pains."

This volume was issued in small foolscap octavo, being printed by William Tait, the well-known Edinburgh publisher. It was dedicated, for Ord was ever loyal, to H.R.H. the Prince Albert, and contained 284 pages. Local subjects are mostly treated upon in these poems, though there are many lyrical effusions interspersed. I quote one of the latter as affording an example of our author's more natural manner:

TO A GIRL OF FIFTEEN.

Gentle, blooming spirit,
Creature of delight!
Whence doest thou inherit
Loveliness so bright?

Eyes as clear as morning,
Locks that mock the noon,
Cheeks like Eve's adorning,
Forehead like the moon!

Naïad of the fountain,
Mermaid of the sea,
Fairy of the mountain,
Scarce can match with thee.

Not the snow-drop weeping,
Not the harebell blue,
Not the violet sleeping,
Are more pure than thou.

Virtue's every treasure,
Love and truth divine,
Blessings without measure,
Charming maid are thine.

All the world's before thee,
Dreams of thought and sense,
All bright things adore thee,
Shapes of innocence!

Fair thy path as summer,
Or the azure way,
When the stars out-number
All the blooms of May.

Thus, when storms are roaring,
And the Winter's near,
Thy spirit meekly soaring
Shall reach its heavenly sphere.

Such verses show that Ord had a happier and more musical mood, and though we may still discover a singular want of sequence and order in the marshalling of his thoughts, we can easily perceive that with patience, and the restraint of a too morbid and riotous fancy, he could produce good work. The lines in italic are to my thinking felicitously poetical. Evidently, like our latter Arthurian poet, Tennyson, our Cleveland bard felt that a simple maiden in her flower is an altogether exceedingly beautiful and worthful creation, and a fitting subject for the true poetic muse.

In 1845—for he never wearied in his literary pursuits—Ord published ***Rural Sketches and Poems.*** These effusions were chiefly relating to his native vale, and amongst them are to be found some of his most striking and original compositions. As a literary effort his version of the Legend of Roseberry Topping, ***Prince Oswy,*** is perfection itself. This beautiful ballad has been reprinted on several occasions, by different commentators on Ord's writings. As it is an altogether unique thing in our local literature, I make no excuse for giving it at length:—

PRINCE OSWY: A LEGEND OF ROSEBERRY.

"What is good for a bootless bene?"
And the lady answered, "Endless sorrow."
Inscription on Bolton Priory.

"The harvest moon was waning
O'er Arncliff's rich domain,
The silver stars shone sweetly
On rock and woody plain,
When from her stately dwelling
Northumbria's princess trode,
To question that famed Augur
In Arncliffe who abode.

"O say, mysterious stranger
(That to these sightless eyes
Dost seem of Royal lineage;)
What seek'st thou of the skies?
I know each planet's motion,
Can track each silent star,
And comet-like can wander
The firmament afar!"

"O wise and dreadful wizard,
A god-like gift is thine;
To read each starry missal,
To con each planet-line!
Of proud Northumbria's treasure,
The darling of my love,
What speak yon heavenly prophets?
What say yon orbs above?"

Awhile the wizard pondered,
Awhile absorbed he stood;—
"Who shall bring back the treasure
That lies 'neath ocean's flood?
To-morrow shall thy darling
In death's embraces lay;
So speak the starry prophets—
'Tis midnight *now*—away!"
. . . . . .

Back to her stately palace
The sorrowing lady trod :—
"This night, at least, my darling
I trust thee to thy God ;
These arms shall guard my orphan,
This breast thy pillow be,
And, ere the break of morning,
I'll bear thee safe with me."
. . . . . .

It was an autumn dawning,
Soft lights o'er hill and plain ;
Bright lay the golden harvest,
Glad rose the reaper's strain—
When, winding down the valley,
The cavalcade rode on,
Smart steeds and gay retainers,
The Princess and her son.

The slumbering peasants started
To hear the clattering throng,
The milkmaid in the paddock
Stopt short her warbled song ;
Osmotherly and Ingleby,
Swainby, and Stokesley town,
Much marvelled, greatly wondered,
To see that rout come down.

Below the oak tree forest
Of Osnaberg's† huge hill
The proud procession halted,
The cavalcade stood still :—
"Take forth the silk pavilion,
High let the streamers flow—
Then to the rocky summit
My boy and I will go !"

With toilsome, weary marching
She reached the towering height,
Rejoiced that free from danger,
She bore that cherub bright—
Who sometimes gambolled near her,
All playful as a fawn,
Or plucked the lovely wild flowers
Glist'ning with dews of dawn.

Now, safe beneath the awning,
The happy mother sate,
Nor recked the cruel Augur
Stars, prophecy, or fate ;
Yet, would the lady shudder
To view the boundless sea—
Even silver Tees brought terror,
So lovely though it be.

And, what a gorgeous vision
Lay stretched beneath her feet,
The groves of sweet Upleatham,
The shores of Cargo Fleet.
Old Gisbrough's graceful Priory,
Beneath the sunbeams glow'd,
And many a swan-like vessel
By Marske and Redcar rode.

She saw the ripening orchards,
The fields of golden grain,
The groves and pleasant hedgerows,
The glories of the plain.
And far midst mists of azure
The mountains of the West,
Tynemouth and rocky Hartlepool
Reposed on ocean's breast.

And now the sun had pointed
The altitude of noon,
The heavens were still and breathless,
Ceas'd was the reaper's tune ;
No cloud obscured the azure,
The distant groves were still,
When slumber, soft as snow-flakes,
Oppress'd the lady's will.

So like a marble statue
In holy sleep she lies,
The moss her couch of slumber,
Her canopy the skies ;
And near her, like an angel,
The royal orphan trips,
Now twin'd her raven tresses,
Now kiss'd her ruby lips.

Then, weary of his dalliance
He sought the grassy mound,
Pluck'd oft the azure harebell,
The foxglove tapering round ;
And then, O lovely vision,
Beneath the mountain's brow,
A fountain, fair, enchanting,
With heaven's own colours true.

What is't that fills with wonder
The laughing cherub's eyes ?
Why claps his hands with rapture
Why crows with glad surprise ?
Within that crystal mirror
He views a lovely form—
Cheeks fair as summer weather,
Locks beauteous as the morn.

† The ancient name of Roseberry.

And wondrous—still more wondrous—
  Whilst beckoning it to come,
With equal love entreats him
  Into its watery home.
O, fear,—O, dread,—he clasps it—
  One cry and all is o'er—
The treacherous spring enfolds him—
  Prince Oswy is no more!

And who shall tell the waking,
  The sorrow, and the pain?
The bitter pangs of agony,
  That wrung the mourner's brain?

When, low beneath the sedges,
  In pulseless death he lay,—
"But *God* HIS ways will vindicate,"
  Still did the lady say.

And on the rocky precipice,
  Beneath the wooded knoll,
A hermitage the lady reared
  With masses for his soul:
And with the holy hermit,
  Full oft devoutly prays,
"Whom God hath given, God takes away
  And vindicates his ways."

But, though John Walker Ord, if he were anything, was essentially a poet, it was not in the domain of the Muses that he was to achieve his most lasting and striking success. Encouraged by his friend, Wm. Braithwaite, of Stokesley, whose efforts as a printer to promote the well-being of local literature are quite on a par with those of Ord as an author, he embarked upon the publication of his ***History and Antiquities of Cleveland***, which has ever since been the standard work on the subject. This was begun in 1844, and was completed in 1846. It was issued in quarto in half-crown parts, and was beautifully illustrated and printed, every number containing one or more full-sized steel or copper engravings, and equally striking illustrations in wood appeared interspersed amid the letterpress. The work is one showing great learning and research, and great love for the subjects treated upon—though it is spoiled here and there with rhapsodies on scenery and places, which are inexcusable in what professes to be a grave and learned treatise. The writing of this history was too much for Ord's overtaxed powers; the malady, which it is quite evident from his earliest writings he had always feared, made its presence apparent, and he developed peculiarities of manner and conduct which made him a source of anxiety to his more intimate friends. To make matters worse he became a too frequent patron of that enemy which the bard of Avon tells us men put into their mouths to steal away their brains. I have heard those who knew him speak of the excitement which he ever betrayed upon occasions of public festivity; and a female acquaintance of my own, who had good opportunities of judging, speaks of the alarm which was felt by the family of the Braithwaites, with whom he was necessarily intimate, whenever he stayed with them over-night, lest he should occasion them trouble by his habit of walking abroad after they had retired to rest. Evidently he suffered from what the Psalmist graphically describes as "terrors by night." However his history was completed, and even other works were undertaken after this, for it was not till 1847 that the firm of Jennett, of Stockton, issued his ***Roseberry Topping, a Poem*** by Thomas Peirson, ***with Notes, and also a Notice of the Author, and a Memoir of the late Thomas Jennett.*** This, so far as I can gather,

was the last work which he issued from the press previous to his laying aside the pen for ever. His friends found it was necessary shortly afterwards to place him under restraint. He was conveyed to the lunatic asylum at Morningside, near Edinburgh, with mind incurably diseased, and it was here, in the land of the stranger, that he died on the 29th of August, 1854, aged 42 years. He was buried in the churchyard of his native Guisbrough, as he had expressed a wish to be in his poem of "Home Revisited," which was published in *Tait's Magazine* in 1840 :—

> And 'mid this vale of my kinsfolk, my comrades—
> Here where the loved and the cherished repose—
> Here, where the abbey salutes the last sunbeams,
> Grant me a grave.

His last resting place is almost in a direct line to the north of the abbey ruins, which he was never tired of picturing in his poems. A simple obelisk, bearing a clear and simple inscription, marks the spot. In one of my visits to Guisbrough I went to see his grave, and was greatly affected to find that even in his own country, in which it is said the prophet has no honour, this devoted lover of his native vale was not wholly forgotten. An old man, well stricken in years, was standing, with bent form, in tearful sympathy, over the grassy mound of the ill-fated poet. On making his acquaintance I found it was none other than his life-long friend John Jackson, of Lackenby. How beautiful is such quiet and unaffected hero-worship, and more's the pity that it seems to be dying out amongst us. Mr. Jackson informed me that he never visited Guisbrough without "worshipping," for so he phrased it, at the shrine which contained all that was earthly of his beloved friend. He spoke the words with unaffected emotion, and as I walked away from the grave-side in his company, I could not but realise that the man who could inspire such a great and long-enduring regard was no ordinary character, and that our Cleveland historian and bard, notwithstanding his many blemishes and defects, was a man for whose memory the district might well entertain the highest respect and veneration.

The list of works to which I have referred, by no means exhausts all that our author attempted and accomplished. Though we find him saying twice in the letter from which I have given so lengthy a quotation, that he had little of the spirit of religion, he nevertheless entered upon the domain of sacred poesy, and prepared for publication an epic poem on the subject of *Bible Oracles*. I have not been able to procure a copy of this work. He was also the author of a strangely fatuitous and very lengthy pamphlet *On the Sympathy Existing between the Body and the Mind especially during Disease*. He was also the principal contributor to a weekly news journal published by Mr. William Braithwaite, of Stokesley, under the name of the *Cleveland Repertory*, the sketches "Angliana," and signed

Zeta, being wholly from his pen. He was indeed a most voluminous writer, and gave his mind too little rest, the main consequence being crude workmanship, and the exhibition of much offensive and ill-digested thought.

Ord was of commanding stature and appearance. One of the peasantry of the district, who knew him intimately, speaks of him as a "grand man." He had a bright and vivacious manner, and had the knack of making friends wherever he went. All his familiars spoke of him as "Mr." Ord, so that intimacy did not in his case produce that feeling of contempt which a somewhat unpleasant proverb tells us always attends upon familiarity. He was an able public speaker, and his services were in great request at such banquets as were then held in Stockton, Guisbrough, Stokesley, and other places. He was unsordid and generous to a degree, and though he used strong epithets in his writings, I am assured by one who knew him well, that he never meant them. His works contain abundant evidence that he was well read in ancient and contemporary literature. He knew the whole range of the poets, and had evidently committed the best portions of their respective works to memory. His writings met with a larger sale, and made headway with more cultured readers, than those of any preceding or succeeding local writer. His heart's best affections, and his mind's best powers, were given to the portrayal of the charms and attractions of his own beloved Cleveland, whose blue hills, clear-running streams, fertile meadows, and wooded landscapes he never tired of depicting whether in prose or verse. In this sense he was a true patriot, and of him it could never be said, to slightly alter the words of Scott, that he was

> A man with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself had said,
> This is my own my native land.

I cannot better conclude this short account of one of our foremost local writers than by quoting, from his *Rural Sketches*, a felicitous poem having reference to one of the main features of the landscape of his native district:—

> Sweet vale of the Leven, how calm is thy stream,
> Gliding onward and onward like love's youngest dream;
> Happy vales and green meadows thy waters enclose,
> And fresh like a bridegroom doth nature repose.
>
> The hedge rows bloom gaily with blossoms of June,
> The birds in their eyries sing joy's sweetest tune:
> And harmony swelling o'er woodland and glade,
> Bears music with heaven's brightest colours arrayed.
>
> The sun from his far golden towers in the West,
> Showers warmth and delight through the wanderer's breast;
> The clear silver voice of the river is heard,
> Chiming softly, divinely, with each forest bird.

Nor nature alone pours her charms on the scene,—
Human hearts beat in chorus, rejoicing serene,
On the grass, soft reposing, what happiness dwells,
And the heart of young lovers with buoyancy swells.

Though the blackbird's far music in joyance arise,
And the throstle's clear melody pierce to the skies,—
Though the lark soars aloft, like a spirit of heaven,
And the linnet is heard through the copses of Leven,

That maiden hath notes more enchanting than they,
Now warm with emotion, now gentle as May,—
Tis' the heart that is speaking the voice of the soul,
That divine as the songs of the seraphim roll !

There is joy in the woodlands—delight in the trees ;
A pleasure unspoken that lives in the breeze ;
But oh ! there is rapture more stedfast than this,
Of true hearts reposing in innocent bliss !

Flow on, gentle river, in harmony swell !
Long, long, shall thy banks in our memory dwell ;
Thy richest of foliage,—thy groves blooming bright,—
And the friends who partook in those scenes of delight.

Mid' the world's darkened shadows thy radiance shall come,
And the heart looking back, find a treasure and home,—
And when hope glows less brightly, and life shall decline,
Like the clouds round yon Sun-God, REMEMBRANCE shall shine.

There is a grave in the God's Acre of Holy Trinity Church, in Stockton, which contains the remains of all that is mortal of one, who, perishing in his mature youth, gave such promise of moral character and intellectual merit, as to make it a lasting shrine to all who witnessed the efforts of his genius, as shown in the two volumes of his works that have been issued to the public. Edward Marsh Heavisides was a character who a little more than forty years ago was regarded in a literary sense, as the rose and expectancy, to use the Shakesperian phrase, of the district that had witnessed his budding powers. His name and his works were familiar to most of the book-readers in the various towns of the Cleveland district. His writings, of the poetical order, were peculiarly fitted to make an abiding impression on those who read them. His stirring song "Let Us All be Friends Together," set to music by a Hartlepool musician, Mr. T. J. Taylor, was a household ditty at the time of which I am writing. This is the opening verse :—

"Let us all be friends together,
And be happy while we may,
Like the clouds in sunny weather
All unkindness pass away.
Let all scorn and malice vanish,
And the course of hate be run ;
Every bitter feeling vanish,
Love alone must cheer us on."

Simple, but true and sweet and musical! Shall I depict how his muse could ascend to a higher than the social altitude?

Have we not in the following lines the patriot feeling *in excelsis?*—

'Twas wisely said by one who knew too well
Its truth—"Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn." Around us swell
Life's self-accumulating ills, to fan
The flame of discontent. Oppression's hand
Still seeks to crush the feeble of the land,
And Might, the giant that should rend the chain
That binds the suffering million, piles on high
The barriers of their long captivity,
And mocks the bitter cries of human pain:
When will the blessèd dawn of Freedom break
The weary darkness of the lingering night?
When will the nations of the world awake,
And burst the clouds that dim the long-expected light?

Edward Marsh Heavisides was not only favourably known as a poet, but he wrote a number of sketches and essays, principally on local topics, which are remarkable for their thoughtfulness and dignity of style. These essays were contributed to the newspapers then published in the district, and which were then "few and far between," and were issued only once a week, on the Saturday. They were, after the author's death, compiled by his father, Henry Heavisides, himself a poet, and published in a subscription volume, entitled *The Poetical and Prose Remains of Edward Marsh Heavisides.* This volume had a large sale, and, as it contained the efforts of a maturer faculty, is, on that account, the more abiding monument of the poet's muse. I believe the time is close at hand when a more general homage will be paid to the author of these *Remains.* I could only wish that it were in my power to accelerate that epoch, and to ensure the tribute of general admiration being duly paid to one whom many regard, whose regard is worth having, as a truly remarkable genius.

Edward Marsh Heavisides was born at Stockton-on-Tees, on the 20th of November, 1820, and was the third son of Henry Heavisides, printer, and author of *The Pleasures of Home,* and other poems. He received his education in the National Schools of his native place. At the age of thirteen he was placed as an apprentice in the printing office of Thomas Jennett, who is a figure in local history, and was I believe more than once Mayor of the ancient borough. During his apprenticeship, he devoted his leisure hours to study, and to the perusal of the standard works of English literature, and before he attained his majority, he produced many of the minor pieces of poetry which afterwards appeared in his *Songs of the Heart.* Having served his apprenticeship, he left his master's service, and went to London in search of employment. "Here," to quote his father's words, in

his published memoir, "he became acquainted with Allan Cunningham, the poet, at that time manager of Sir Francis Chantrey's marble works, in Pimlico. The lodge, at the entrance to these works, was at that period occupied by Mr. Young, Edward's uncle, then one of Chantrey's principal workmen. Cunningham, in the course of his business engagements, was a frequent visitor at Mr. Young's, where it was Edward's privilege and pleasure occasionally to spend some happy moments in his company. On such occasions, Edward's flute, on which he was an excellent performer, was a ceaseless source of mutual interest, as he frequently, at the poet's request, played some of the old familiar Scotch airs, which were linked with early and dear associations; and as he ran tastefully over the soft, touching music, the full warmth of the poet's heart was roused, and a pleasure in each other's society excited, the remembrance of which to Edward's latest day, never ceased to afford him delight." In 1843, we find the poet residing in Stokesley, and superintending the printing establishment of Mr. Wm. Braithwaite. Here his ***Songs of the Heart*** were published in 1845, and met with a most favourable reception. In 1847, in the bleak month of December, our poet married a young lady of Stockton, to whom, his father assures us, he had been devoutly attached from his boyhood, and some three or four months after his marriage we find him settled down once more in his native place, as foreman to Mr. Tinkler, printer and bookseller. His devotion to literature increased with his years, and in the spring of 1849 he projected the series of Suggestive Sonnets, one of which I have already quoted. A series of papers ***Past and Present Characteristics of South Durham***, were written about the same period, and appeared in the columns of ***The Darlington and Stockton Times***. "It was his intention," says his father, "to continue the prose series, but, alas! his intentions were frustrated, for he was unexpectedly attacked by cholera on the 6th of September, 1849, and rapidly sinking under the malignant violence of the disease, gently breathed his last on the following day, in the twenty-eighth year of his age," in the plenitude of his powers and the maturity of his promise.

With this brief and altogether unworthy sketch of one to whose writings I have always been more than partial, I bring to an end my somewhat sketchy and light descriptions of local authors and their works. I have given the reader some glimpse of the word-fabrics they have woven. I would fain hope that there are some elements of permanence in even their more modern writings: that some of them at least are true artists. Words are the houses in which ideas dwell; and when the words are true poetic words inhabited by true poetic thoughts, airy though they may seem, may they not be more enduring than the blocks of masonry which the mason and the builder bring together? The great thoughts of men live longer than those material fabrics which are the result of human thought in action. Have our local authors

any claim to consideration as having given expression to eternal verities? I must refer the reader to their works for fuller illustration. At least we can revere their memories for this, that they endeavoured to realise the higher possibilities of their nature, and left on record "thoughts that breathe and words that burn" as a healthy stimulus to those lovers of their kind who would fain also lead th heroic life, and shape the world's accidents and events into order, rhythm, and harmony.

THE POET'S WORK.

Look kindly on the Poet's work!
  Speak gently of his name;
Nor seek to crush one germ of thought,
  Nor blight one bud of fame.
Love every bard, who struggles hard,
  In penury and pain,
Through good and ill, heart yearning still,
  The meed of praise to gain.

Look kindly on the Poet's work!
  Always, everywhere,
For Nature, Feeling, Truth, and Love,
  Have left their impress there.
The quenchless light of genius bright
  A hallowed thing should be,
For day and night it yields delight—
  The shackled bard sets free.

Look kindly on the Poet's work!
  Uproot the love of gold,
And walk in kindred spirit with
  The mighty minds of old;
Change worldly store for mental lore,
  Imperishably bright,
To guide you on, like morning sun,
  From darkness into light.

Look kindly on the Poet's work!
  Let time-worn fanes decay—
His spirit-labours crumble not,
  Nor pass like dust away.
One meteor-thought that comes unsought
  To light the poet's page,
Unsoiled by clime, unchanged by time,
  Lives on from age to age.

Look kindly on the Poet too,
  For joy to all he brings:
The boundless universe his lyre,
  The souls of men his strings.
His fancy speeds o'er flowery meads,
  Where Beauty lies reposing;
His spirit roams through nature's homes,
  Life, Light, and Truth disclosing.

EDWARD MARSH HEAVISIDES.