



MORNING, IN OUR FATHER-LAND.

THRONED on a radiant cloud of golden light,
The rosy-fingered morn rides up the sky,
Glittering with gems insufferably bright,
Mid the pale glory of her forehead high.
Over her shining ear the fairy hours,
With silver wings, in airy circles fly,
Bidding the fragrant winds go forth and sigh
Their waking music to the sleeping flowers.
Perched in the covert of their leafy bowers,
The shrill-voiced minstrels sing their matin lay,
And dewdrops, coloured by the sun's pure ray,
Fall from the waving boughs in pearly showers.
The streamlet wakes anew his mellow song,
As 'mid the daisied banks he glides along.

Wild summer roses to the blushing morn
Their fragrant incense from the hedgerows fling;
And violets, purpling 'neath the shadowy thorn,
Breathe their rich odours; and the musky wing
Of the low-whispering breeze is scattering round
A thousand sweets at day's awakening.
The valleys lift their voice, the meadows sing,
The everlasting hills, with verdure crowned,
Fling back the echoes of the joyous sound,
The ocean glitters in the deepening glow,
While silver waves with softest music flow
On shingled beach, or kiss their rocky bound.
And men from pleasant dreams of sleep arise,
As morning journeys o'er the azure skies.

T. W. A.

The Poetical Works of Charles Churchill. With copious Notes, and a Life of the Author. By W. TOOKE, F.R.S. 3 vols. 12 mo. London: 1844.

(From the Edinburgh Review, for Jan. 1845.)

[CONCLUDED.]

ON the second day, another was presented—a man whose name is now one of our English household words, but who unhappily thought more of himself that day as the *King's Sergeant Painter*—a dignity he had just received and was to wear for some brief months—than as that *Painter of the People* who had from youth to age contended against every form of hypocrisy and vice, and, the unbribed and unpurchasable assailant of public and private corruption was to wear that dignity for ever. As Chief-Justice Pratt delivered his immortal judgment against General Warrants, Hogarth was seen in a corner of the Common Pleas, pencil and sketch-book in hand, fixing that famous caricature, from which, as long as caricature shall last, Wilkes will squint upon posterity. Nor was it his first pictorial offence. The caricaturing had begun some little time before, greatly to the grief both of Wilkes and Churchill; for Hogarth was on friendly terms with both, and had indeed, within the past two years, drunk "divine milk-punch" with them and Sir Francis Dashwood in the neighbourhood of Medmenham Abbey. Disregarding their earnest remonstrance, he assailed Pitt and Temple at the close of the preceding year in his first print of the *Times*. The *North Briton* retaliated; and the present caricature of Wilkes was Hogarth's rejoinder. It stung Churchill past the power of silence.

The *Epistle to William Hogarth* was published in July 1763. With here and there those strangely prosaic lines which appear in almost all his writings, and in which he seems to make careless and indolent escape from those subtler and more original words which were alike at his command, this was a dashing and vigorous work. With an avowal that could hardly have been pleasing to Wilkes himself—that railing thousands and commending thousands were alike uncared for by the writer—it struck Hogarth where he was weakest: in that subjection to vanity which his friends confessed in him; in that enslavement to all the unquiet distrusts of envy, "who, with giant stride, stalks through the vale of life by virtues side," which he had even confessed in himself. We do not like to dwell upon it, so great is our respect for Hogarth's genius; but, at the least, it spared that genius. Amid its savage ferocity against the man, it was remarkable for a noble tribute to the artist. It predicted the duration of his works to the most distant age; and the great painter's power to curse and bless, it rated as that of "a little god below."

But this did not avail against the terrible severity. There is a passage beginning, "Hogarth, I take thee, Candour, at thy word;" marked by a racy, idiomatic, conversational manner, flinging into relief the most deadly abuse, which we must fairly think appalling. All who knew the contending parties stood agast. "Pray let me know," wrote Garrick, then visiting at Chatsworth, to Colman, "how the town speaks of our friend Churchill's *Epistle*. It is the most bloody performance that has been published in my time. I am very desirous to know the opinion of people, for I am really much, very much hurt at it. His description of his age and infirmities is surely too shocking and barbarous. Is Hogarth really ill, or does he meditate revenge? Every article of news about these matters will be most agreeable to me. Pray, write me a heap of stuff, for I cannot be easy till I know all about Churchill and Hogarth." And of course the lively actor sends his "loves" to both Hogarth and Churchill. "Send me Churchill's poem on Hogarth," writes old money-loving Lord Bath from Spa; "But if it be long, it will cost a huge sum in postage." With his rejoinder, such as it was, Hogarth lost little time. He issued for a shilling, before the month was out, "The Bruiser C. Churchill, (once the Rev.) in the character of a Russian Hercules, regaling himself after having killed the monster Caricatura that so sorely galled his virtuous friend the heaven-born Wilkes." It was a bear, in torn clerical bands, and with paws in ruffles; a pot of porter that has just visited his jaws hugged on his right, and a knotted club of *Lies* and *North Britons* clutched on his left; to which, in a later edition of the same print, he added a scoffing caricature of Pitt, Temple, and Wilkes. The poet meanwhile wrote to the latter, who had gone to Paris to place his daughter at school, and told him that Hogarth, having violated the sanctities of private life in this caricature, he meant to pay it back with an *Elegy*, supposing him dead; but that a lady at his elbow was dissuading him with the flattery (and "how sweet is flattery," he interposes, "from the woman we love") that Hogarth was already killed.

That the offending painter was already killed, Walpole and others beside this nameless lady also affirmed: and Colman boldly avouched in print, that the *Epistle* had "snapped the

last cord of poor Hogarth's heartstrings." But men like Hogarth do not snap their heartstrings so easily. The worst that is to be said of the fierce assault is bad enough. It embittered the last years of a great man's life; and the unlooked-for death of assailant and assailed within nine days of each other, prevented the reconciliation which would surely, sooner or later, have vindicated their common genius, the hearty English feeling which they shared, and their common cordial hatred of the falsehoods and pretences of the world.

The woman whose flattery Churchill loved, may not be omitted from his history. His connexion with her, which began some little time before this, gave him greater emotion and anxiety than any other incident of his life. "I forgot to tell you," writes Walpole to Lord Hertford, "and you may wonder at hearing nothing of the Rev. Mr. Charles Pylades, while Mr. John Orestes is making such a figure; but Doctor Pylades, the poet, has forsaken his consort and the muses, and is gone off with a stone-cutter's daughter. If he should come and offer himself to you for chaplain to the embassy!" The circumstance has since been told by a sincerer man; and we shall alike avoid the danger of too much leniency and too great a severity, if we give it in his temperate language. "He became intimate with the daughter of a tradesman in Westminster," says Southey in the *Life of Cowper*, (she is described by others as the daughter of a "highly respectable sculptor,") "seduced her, and prevailed on her to quit her father's house and live with him. But his moral sense had not been thoroughly depraved; a fortnight had not elapsed before both parties were struck with sincere compunction, and through the intercession of a true friend, at their entreaty, the unhappy penitent was received by her father. It is said she would have proved worthy of this parental forgiveness, if an elder sister had not, by continued taunts and reproaches, rendered her life so miserable, that, in absolute despair, she threw herself upon Churchill for protection." He again received her, and they lived together till his death; but he did not, to himself or others, attempt to vindicate this passage in his career. A poem called the *Conference*, in which an imaginary lord and himself are the interlocutors, happened to engage him at the time; and he took occasion to give public expression to his compunction and self-reproach, in a very earnest and affecting manner.

It may be well to quote the lines. They are not only a confession of remorse; they are also a proud profession of political integrity, in which all men may frankly believe. The Poem, one of his masterpieces, followed the *Epistle to Hogarth*; right in the wake of the abundant personal slander which had followed that work, and the occurrence we have named. It began with a good picture of *my lord* lolling backward in his elbow-chair, "with an insipid kind of stupid stare, picking his teeth, twirling his seals about—*Churchill, you have a poem coming out?*" The dialogue then begins, and some expressions are forced from Churchill as to the straits of life he has passed; and the public patronage, his soul abhorring all private help, which has brought him safe to shore. Alike secure from dependence and pride, he says, he is not placed so high as to scorn the poor, "Nor yet so low that I my lord should fear, or hesitate to give him sneer for sneer." But that he is able to be kind to others, to himself most true, and, feeling no want, can "comfort those who do," he proudly avers to be a public debt. The lord rebukes him: and setting forth the errors of his private life, draws from him this avowal.

'Tis not the babbling of a busy world,
Where praise and censure are at random hurl'd,
Which can the meanest of my thoughts control,
Or shake one settled purpose of my soul.
Free and at large might their wild curses roam,
If all, if all, alas! were well at home.
No! 'tis the tale which angry conscience tells,
When she with more than tragic horror swells
Each circumstance of guilt; when stern, but true,
She brings bad actions forth into review,
And like the dread handwriting on the wall,
Bids late remorse awake at reason's call:
Arm'd at all points, bids scorpion vengeance pass,
And to the mind holds up reflection's glass:
The mind which, starting, heaves the heart-felt groan,
And hates that form she knows to be her own.
Enough of this. Let private sorrows rest,
As to the public, I dare stand the test:
Dare proudly boast, I feel no wish above
The good of England, and my country's love.

This man's heart was in the right place. "Where is the bold Churchill?" cried Garrick, when he heard of the incident as he travelled in Rome. "What a noble ruin! When he is quite undone, you shall send him here, and he shall be shown among the great fragments of Roman genius, magnificent in ruin!" But not yet was he quite undone. His weakness was as great as his strength, but his vices were not so great as his virtues. In the unequal conflict thus plainly and unaffectedly revealed by himself, those vices had the worst of it. What rarely happens where such high claims exist, has indeed happened here; and the loudest outcry against the living Churchill has had the longest echo in our judgment of the dead: but there is a most affecting voice in this and other passages of his writings, which enter on his better behalf the final and sullying appeal. Nor were some of his more earnest contemporaries without the justice and generosity to give admission to it, even while he lived. As hero of a scene which shows the range of his character wider than the limits of his family, his dependents, or his friends. (for the kite can be as comfortable to the brood beneath her as the pelican or dove,) the young-hearted and enthusiastic Charles Johnson has depicted Charles Churchill in *Chrysalis, or the Adventures of a Guinea*.

Whilst he was one night "staggering" home, as he says, after a supper in which spirited wit and liveliness of conversation, as well as rectitude and sublimity of sentiment, had gilded gross debauchery, a girl of the street addressed him. "Her figure was elegant, and her features regular; but want had sicklied o'er their beauty; and all the horrors of despair gloomed through the languid smile she forced, when she addressed him. The sigh of distress, which never struck his ear without affecting his heart, came with double force from such an object. He viewed her with silent compassion for some moments; and reaching her a piece of gold, bade her go home and shelter herself from the inclemencies of the night at so late an hour. Her surprise and joy at such unexpected

charity overpowered her. She dropped upon her knees in the wet and dirt of the street, and raising her hands and eyes toward heaven, remained in that posture for some moments, unable to give utterance to the gratitude that filled her heart." Churchill raised her tenderly; and as he would have pressed some instant refreshment upon her, she spoke of her mother, her father, and her infant brother, perishing of want in the garret she had left. "Good God!" he exclaimed, "I'll go with you myself! But stop. Let us first procure nourishment from some of the houses kept open at this late hour for a very different purpose. Come with me! We have no time to lose." With this he took her to a tavern, loaded her with as much of the best as she could carry, and putting two bottles of wine in his own pocket, walked with her to her miserable home. There, with what pains he could, he assuaged the misery, more appalling than he fancied possible; passed the whole night in offices of the good Samaritan; nor changed his dress next morning till he had procured them a new and better lodging, and provided for their future comfort: when, repressing as he could their prayers and blessings, he took leave." How the Recording Angel sets down such scenes, and enters up the debtor and creditor account of such a man, *My Uncle Toby* has written.

The interval of absence from London during the progress of the General Warrants case he passed at Oxford with Colman and Bonnell Thornton; and in Wales with her who had asked from him the protection she knew not where else to seek, and whom he ever after treated as his left-handed wife, united to him by moral ties. On his return in the autumn of 1763, he heard that Lloyd had been thrown into the Fleet. The *Magazine* he was engaged in had failed, and a dispute of the proprietorship suddenly overwhelmed him with its debts. Churchill went to him; comforted him as none else could; provided a servant to attend him as long as his imprisonment should last; set apart a guinea a-week for his better support in the prison; and at once began a subscription for the gradual and full discharge of his heavy responsibilities. There was all the gratitude of the true poet in this; for, whatever may be said to the contrary, poets are grateful. Doctor Lloyd had been kind to Churchill: Churchill never deserted Dr. Lloyd's son. And when, some few months later, he pointed his satire against the hollow Mæcenases of the day; in rebuke to their affected disclaimer of his charge that they would have left a living Virgil to rot, he bade the vain boasters to the Fleet repair, and ask, "with blushes ask, if Lloyd is there?"

The close of the year witnessed one or two notable events, not needful to be other than slightly dwelt upon, since history has attended to them all. On the motion of Mr. Grenville (whose jealousy of Pitt had broken the Temple phalanx) in the lower House, the *North Briton* was ordered to the hangman's hands to be burnt; and on the motion of Lord Sandwich in the Upper, Wilkes was committed to the hands of the Attorney-General for prosecution; as writer of a privately printed immoral parody of Pope's *Essay on Man*. Some whispers of this latter intention had been carried to Churchill before the session opened, in Wilkes's temporary absence at Paris; but, according to the affidavit of one of the printers concerned, the poet scorned the possibility of public harm to his friend from a private libel; of which not a copy that had not been stolen (a man named Kidgell, whom Walpole calls a dirty dog of a parson, was the thief and government-informant) was in circulation. He therefore roughly told the printer who brought him his suspicions, that "for any thing the people in power could do, they might be damned." But he had greatly underrated, if not the power of these people, their power of face.

Lord Sandwich rose in his place in the House of Lords, the *Essay on Woman* in his hand, with all the indignant gravity of a counsel for the entire morality of the kingdom. "It was blasphemous!" exclaimed the first Lord of the Admiralty. And who should know blasphemy better than a blasphemer? His Lordship was expelled by the Beef-steak Club for the sin he charged on Wilkes. But he knew his audience, and went steadily on. He read the *Essay on Woman* till Lord Lyttleton begged the reading might be stopped: he dwelt upon a particular Note, which, by way of completing the burlesque, bore the name of Pope's last editor, till Warburton rose from the bench of Bishops, begged pardon of the devil for comparing him with Wilkes, and said the blackest fiends in hell would not keep company with the demagogue when he should arrive there. Nothing less than the expulsion of the man from Parliament (he was already expelled from the Colonelcy of the Bucks militia, and Lord Temple from the Bucks lord-lieutenancy for supporting him) could satisfy this case.

Expulsion was a happy expedient for controlling the elective franchise, which the popular Walpole had himself resorted to; but in such wise that the popular franchise seemed all the more safely secured by it. Now the people saw it revived and enforced, for purposes avowedly and grossly unpopular. They were asked to sanction the principle, of a politician made accountable for immorality, by men whose whole lives had shamelessly proclaimed the prevailing divorce between politics and morals; and morality herself, howsoever regretting it, might hardly blame them for the answer they gave. They resisted. They stood by Wilkes more determinedly than ever; and excitement was raised to a frightful pitch. A friend of Sandwich's, who, the day after his motion against the *Essay*, cried exultingly that "nobody but he could have struck a stroke like this," was obliged to confess within eight days more, that "the blasphemous book had fallen ten times heavier on Sandwich's head than on Wilke's, and had brought forward such a catalogue of anecdotes as was incredible." Nay, so great the height things went to, Norton's impudence forsook him; and Warburton, who had expunged Pitt's name for Sandwich's in the dedication to his forthcoming *Sermons*, thought it best to reinstate it suddenly.

Nevertheless, the result of the ministerial prosecution drove Wilkes to France. There was a design that Churchill, after publication of the poem which arose out of these transactions, and which Horace Walpole thought "the finest and bitterest of his works," (the *Duellist*.) should have followed his friend; enquiries being meanwhile set on foot whether the French government would protect them in efforts to assail their own. The answer was favourable, but the scheme was not pursued. It has been on excellent grounds surmised that Churchill's English feelings revolted at it; and he was essential to its success. His reputation, limited as his themes had been, was

not limited to England. "I don't know," wrote Horace Walpole to Sir H. Mann, in one of his lately published Letters, "whether this man's fame has extended to Florence; but you may judge of the noise he makes in this part of the world by the following trait, which is a pretty instance of that good-breeding on which the French pique themselves. My sister and Mr. Churchill are in France. A Frenchman asked him if he was Churchill *le fameux poète*. Non. *Ma foi, Monsieur, tant pis pour vous!*" To think that it should be so much the worse for a son of a General, and the husband of a Lady Maria, daughter to an Earl, not to be a low-bred scribbler! Nevertheless, to this day, the world takes note of only one Charles Churchill! Whether so much the worse, or so much the better, for the other, it is not for us to decide.

The poet, then, stayed in England; and worked at his self-allotted tasks with greater vigour than ever. Satire has the repute of bringing forth the energies of those who, on other occasions, have displayed but few and feeble. Even Mason lost his cramps and stiffness among the bubbles of these hot springs. It is certain that Churchill, with his Beef-steak and other clubs to attend to, his *North Briton* to manage, and, not seldom, sharp strokes of illness to struggle with, never sent forth so many or such masterly works as in the last nine months of his rapid and brilliant career.

And he was able to do so much because he was thorough master of what he had to do. He understood his own powers too completely, to lay any false strain upon them. The ease with which he composed is often mentioned by him, though with a difference. To his friend he said, that nothing came out till he began to be pleased with it himself; to the Public, he boasted of the haste and carelessness with which he set down and discharged his rapid thoughts. Something between the two would probably come nearest the truth. No writer is at all times free from what Ben Johnson calls "pinching throes;" and Churchill often confesses them. It may have been with a bitter sense of their intensity that he used the energetic phrase, afterwards remembered by his publisher—"blotting was like cutting away one's own flesh." He did not particularly affect the life of a man of Letters, and for the most part, avoided that kind of society; for which Dr. Johnson pronounced him a blockhead. Boswell remonstrated. "Well, sir," said Johnson, "I will acknowledge that I have a better opinion of him than I once had; for he has shown more fertility than I expected. To be sure, he is a tree that cannot produce good fruit; he only bears crabs. But, sir, a tree that produces a great many crabs is better than a tree which produces only a few."

Such as it was—and it can afford this passing touch of blight—the tree was now planted on Acton Common. After the departure of Wilkes, he had moved from his Richmond residence into a house there, described by the first of his biographers, two months after his death, to have been furnished with extreme elegance; and where he is said, by the same worthy scribe, to have "kept his post-chaise, saddle-horses, and pointers; and to have fished, fowled, hunted, coursed, and lived in an independent, easy manner." He did not however so live, as to be unable carefully to lay aside an honorable provision for all who were dependent on him. This, it is justly remarked by Southey, was his meritorious motive for that greediness of gain with which he was reproached;—as if it were any reproach to a successful author that he doled out his writings in the way most advantageous to himself, and fixed upon them as high a price as his admirers were willing to pay. Cowper has made allusion to some of these points in his fine delineation of his old friend and schoolfellow in the *Table talk*.

The *Author*, published almost contemporaneously with the *Duellist*, had the rare good fortune to please even his critics. Horace Walpole could now admit, that even when the satirist was not assailing a Holland or a Warburton, the world were "transported" with his works, and his numbers were indeed "like Dryden's." The Monthly Reviewers sent forth a frank eulogium: even the Critical found it best to forget their ancient grudge. And in the admirable qualities not without reason assigned to it, the *Author* seems to us to have been much surpassed by his next performance, *Gotham*.

When Cowper fondly talked, as it was his pleasure and his pride to do, of "Churchill, the great Churchill, for he well deserved the name," it was proof of his taste that he dwelt with delight on this "noble and beautiful poem." Its object was not clearly comprehended at the first, but, as it proceeded, became evident. It was an *Idea of a Patriot King* in verse; and in verse, of which, with all its carelessness, we hold with Cowper that few exacter writers of his class have equalled, for its "bold and daring strokes of fancy; its numbers so hazardously ventured upon and so happily finished; its matter so compressed and yet so clear; its colouring so sparingly laid on and yet with such a beautiful effect." We would have quoted much, and regret that we can but quote a fragment of one passage. It is brief and unconnected, but part of a fine strain of descriptive poetry. The reader's national pride will not intercept his admiration of the wit of the line which precedes the fine picture of the cedar; and he will admire the excellent and subtle art with which the verse seconds the sense.

The hedge-row elm; the pine, of mountain race;
The fir, the Scotch fir, never out of place;
The cedar, whose top mates the highest cloud,
Whilst his old father Lebanon grows proud
Of such a child, and his vast body laid
Out many a mile, enjoys the filial shade;
The oak, when living, monarch of the wood;
The English oak, which, dead, commands the flood!

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The sun, who, travelling in eastern skies,
Fresh, full of strength, just risen from his bed,
Though in Jove's pastures they were born and bred,
With voice and whip, can scarce make his steeds stir,
Step by step, up the perpendicular;
Who, at the hour of eve, panting for rest,
Rolls on amain, and gallops down the west
As fast as Jehu, oil'd for Ahab's sin,
Drove for a crown, or postboys for an inn.

Gotham was less successful than the more personal satires, and the author might have felt, as his "great high priest of all the nine" did, when he remembered the success of *MacFlecknoe*, amid the evil days on which the *Religio Laici* and *Hind and Panther* had fallen. Nothing ever equalled a satire for a sale, said the old bookseller Johnson to his son

Samuel—a good swingeing satire, "or a *Sacheverell's Trial!*" Churchill was reminded of it by his quondam friend Foote; but the advice need hardly have been given. So timely a subject came unexpectedly to hand, that in no case could Churchill have resisted it. Lord Sandwich became a candidate for the high stewardship of Cambridge University. "I thank you," wrote Lord Bath to Colman, "for the *Candidate*, which is, in my opinion, the severest, and the best, of all Churchill's works. He has a great genius, and is an excellent poet." Notwithstanding which praise from such a critic, we shall not hesitate to aver, that the *Candidate* really is an excellent poem, with lines as fine in it as any from Churchill's hand. Such are those wherein the miseries of evil counsel to royalty are dwelt upon; and Kings are described as "made to draw their breath in darkness thicker than the shades of Death." The portrait of Lord Sandwich is also excellent, and has several fine touches; though, undoubtedly, were we to compare it with that of Buckingham by Dryden, it might seem as a mere impressive and startling list of materials for satire, beside the subtler extract of the very spirit of satire itself. But it is writing of a most rare order.

The *Farewell*, and the *Times*, (the latter only to be referred to as Dryden refers to some of the nameless productions of Juvenal, tragical provocations tragically revenged,) now followed in rapid succession; and *Independence*, the last work published while he lived, appeared at the close of September, 1764. It is a final instance of Mr. Tooke's misfortunes in criticism, that though he admits this poem to display "vigour" in some scattered passages, he sets it down as "slovenly in composition, hacknied in subject, and common-place in thought." It is very far from this! A noble passage at the commencement, is worthy of Ben Johnson himself, and very much in his manner.

What is a Lord? Doth that plain simple word
Contain some magic spell? As soon as heard,
Like an alarm bell on Night's dull ear,
Doth it strike louder, and more strong appear
Than other words? Whether we will or no,
Through reason's court doth it unquestion'd go
E'en on the mention, and of course transmit
Notions of something excellent?

The same poem contains a full-length portrait of the poet, with the unscrupulous but lifelike mark of his own strong, unflattering hand. He laughs at himself as an "unlick'd" bear; and tells us that Hogarth, "even envy must allow," would draw to the life his awkward foppery, "were Hogarth living now." Hogarth was "living now," but at the moment when the words were written, within view of his death-bed. Churchill little knew how nearly he approached his own; and yet, in the unfinished *Journey*, the last fragment found among his papers, (for the severe and masterly *Dedication to Warburton* was of earlier date,) there was a strange unconscious kind of sense of the fate that now impended. The lamentations of his good-natured friends, that but for his unhappy lust of publishing so fast, "he might have flourished twenty years or more, though now, alas! poor man, worn out in four," were here noticed in some of his most vigorous verse. He proposes to take their advice, but finds the restraint too hard. Prose will run into verse. "If now and then I curse, my curses chime; nor can I pray, unless I pray in rhyme." He therefore entreats that they will once more be charitable even to his excesses, and read, "no easy task, but probably the last that I shall ask," that little poem. He calls it the plain unlaboured *Journey of a Day*; warns off all who resort to him for the stronger stimulants; exhorts the Muses, in some of his happiest satire, to divert themselves with his contemporary poets in his absence; bids them so their appetite for laughter feed; and closes with the line, "I on my *Journey* all alone proceed!" The poem was not meant to close here; but a Greater Hand interposed. That line of mournful significance is the last that was written by Churchill.

A sudden desire to see Wilkes took him hastily to Boulogne on the 2nd of October, 1764. "Dear Jack, adieu! C. C." was the laconic announcement of his departure to his brother At Boulogne, on the 29th of October, a military fever seized him, and baffled the physicians who were called. The friends who surrounded his bed gave way to extreme distress: it was a moment when probably Wilkes felt: but Churchill preserved his composure. He was described afterwards, checking their agitated grief, in the lines with which he had calmly looked forward to this eventful time:

Let no unworthy sounds of grief be heard,
No loud laments, not one unseemly word;
Let sober triumphs wait upon my bier,
I won't forgive that friend who sheds one tear.
Whether he's ravish'd in life's early morn,
Or in old age drops like an ear of corn,
Full ripe he falls, on nature's noblest plan,
Who lives to reason, and who dies a man.

He sat up in his bed and dictated a brief, just will. He left his wife an annuity of £60, and an annuity of £50 to the girl he had seduced. He provided for his two boys. He left mourning rings to Lord and Lady Temple; to Wilkes, Lloyd, Cotes, Walsh, and the Duke of Grafton; and he desired his "dear friend, John Wilkes, to collect and publish his works, with the remarks and explanations he has prepared, and any others he thinks proper to make." He then expressed a wish to be removed, that he might die in England; and the imprudent measures of his friends, in compliance with this wish hastened the crisis. On the 4th of November, 1764, at Boulogne, and in the thirty-third year of his age, Charles Churchill breathed his last.

Warburton said he had perished of a drunken debauch; a statement wholly untrue. Actor Davies said his last expression was, "What a fool I have been!"—a statement contradicted by the tenor of his will, and specially denied by Wilkes. Garrick, who was in Paris, wrote to Colman when their common friend had been six days dead: "Churchill, I hear, is at the point of death at Boulogne. I am sorry, very sorry, for him. Such talents, with prudence, had commanded the nation. I have seen some extracts I don't admire." What is not to be admired in a satirist, is generally discovered just before or just after his death; what is admired, runs equal danger of unseasonable worship. There was a sale of his books and furniture, at which the most extravagant prices were given for articles of no value. A common steel pen brought five pounds, a pair of plated spurs sixteen guineas. The better to supply, too, the demands of public curiosity, vulgar letters were forged in his

name; one of which was a few years since reproduced for his in the *Colman Correspondence*. A death-bed scene by the same busy scribe (in which the dying man was made to rave of his poor bleeding country, and of her true friend Mr. Pitt, and of Scotsmen preying upon her vitals, and of dying the death of the righteous) was also served up to edify the public, and satisfy their enquiring interest. "Churchill the poet is dead," wrote Walpole to Mann on the 15th November. "The meteor blazed scarce four years. He is dead, to the great joy of the ministry and the Scotch, and to the grief of very few indeed, I believe; for such a friend is not only a dangerous but a ticklish possession."

There were friends who had not found him so. Lloyd was sitting down to dinner when the intelligence was brought to him. He was seized with a sudden sickness, and thrust away his plate untouched. "I shall follow poor Charles," was all he said, as he went to the bed from which he never rose again. Churchill's favourite sister, Patty, said to have had no small share of his spirit, sense, and genius, and who was at this time betrothed to Lloyd, sank next under the double blow, and in a few short weeks followed her brother and her lover. The poet had asked that none should mourn for him, and here were two broken hearts offered up at his grave! Other silent and bitter sorrows were also there.

Wilkes professed unassuageable grief, and sacred intentions to fulfil the duty assigned to him in the will. "I will do it to the best of my poor abilities. My life shall be dedicated to it." "I am better," he exclaimed, a fortnight after the death, "but cannot get any continued sleep. The idea of Churchill is ever before my eyes." "Still I do not sleep," he wrote some weeks later; Churchill is still before my eyes." Other expressions of his various letters run after the same fond of fashion. "I believe I shall never get quite over the late cruel blow." "Many a sigh and tear escape me for the death of dear Churchill." "You see how much I have at heart to show the world how I loved Churchill." "I am adequate to every affliction but the death of Churchill." "The loss of Churchill I shall always reckon the most cruel of all afflictions I have suffered." "I will soon convince mankind that I know how to value such superior genius and merit." "I have half-finished the projected edition of dear Churchill." "How pleased is the dear shade of our friend with all I have done." In truth the dear shade could hardly be displeased, for all he had done was *nil*. He wrote a few paltry notes; and they came to nothing. But a year after the sad scene at Boulogne, the Abbé Winckelman gave him an antique sepulchral urn of alabaster, and he placed on it a Latin inscription to his friend's memory; which he was sufficiently pleased with to transfer to a Doric column in the grounds of his Isle of Wight cottage, erected of materials as fragile and perishable as his own patriotism. "Carolo Churchill, amico jocundo, poetæ acri, civi optime de patriâ merito, P. Johannes Wilkes, 1765." Horace has used the word *acer* in speaking of himself. Wilkes imperfectly understood its precise signification, or did not rightly understand the genius of his friend.

Meanwhile, in accordance with his own request, the body of Churchill had been brought over from France, and buried in the old churchyard which once belonged to the collegiate church of St. Martin at Dover. There is now a tablet to his memory in the church, and, over the place of burial, a stone inscribed with his name and age, the date of his death, and a line taken from that most manly and unaffected passage of his poetry, in which, without sorrow or complaining, he anticipates this humble grave.

Let all (nor shall resentment flush my cheek)
Who know me well, what they know, freely speak;
So those (the greatest curse I meet below)
Who know me not may not pretend to know.
Let none of those, who bless'd with parts above
My feeble genius, still I dare to love,
Doing more mischief than a thousand foes,
Posthumous nonsense to the world expose,
And call it mine: for mine, though never known,
Or which, if mine, I living blush'd to own.
Know all the world, no greedy heir shall find,
Die when I will, one couplet left behind.
Let none of those whom I despise, though great,
Pretending friendship to give malice weight,
Publish my life. Let no false sneaking Peer
(Some such there are), to win the public ear,
Hand me to shame, with some vile anecdote,
Nor soul-gall'd Bishop damn me with a note.
Let one poor sprig of bay around my head
Bloom whilst I live, and point me out when dead:
Let it (may Heaven, indulgent, grant that prayer!)
Be planted on my grave, nor wither there:
And when, on travel bound, some rhyming guest,
Roams through the churchyard whilst his dinner's drest,
Let it hold up this comment to his eyes,
Life to the last enjoy'd, Here Churchill lies:
Whilst (oh what joy that pleasing flattery gives!)
Reading my works, he cries, Here Churchill lives.

On "travel bound," a "rhyming guest" stood at the grave in the Dover churchyard, fifty years after this pathetic aspiration. He, too, had lived in defiance of the world's opinions; had written the most masterly satires; had achieved a popularity unattained by any English poet since the grave at which he stood received its inhabitant; like him, was now leaving his native country in early manhood, to be brought back dead: and the moral to which he shaped his thought, was on "the Glory and the Nothing of a name." But a name is *not* an illusion, when it has been won by any strenuous exertion either of thought or action in an honest purpose. Time's purgatorial fire may weaken the strength of the characters it is written in, but it eats out of them also their mistakes and vices; and BYRON might have had greater hope for the living, and less pity for the dead, at the grave of CHARLES CHURCHILL.

POISON o. FOOD.

Peel retains the tax on bread,
While making arsenic duty free—
So that wretches dearly fed,
May very cheaply poisoned be!

CURIOUS FACT.—How many insects make a landlord?—
Ten-ants.

Is there a word in the English language contains all the vowels?—
—there is, *unquestionably.*