The Visions of the Sleeping Bard eBook

The Visions of the Sleeping Bard by Ellis Wynne

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PREFACE

At the National Eisteddfod of 1893, a prize was offered by Mr. Lascelles Carr, of the Western Mail, for the best translation of Ellis Wynne's Vision of Hell. The Adjudicators (Dean Howell and the Rev. G. Hartwell Jones, M.A.), awarded the prize for the translation which is comprised in the present volume. The remaining Visions were subsequently rendered into English, and the complete work is now published in the hope that it may prove useful to those readers, who, being unacquainted with the Welsh language, yet desire to obtain some knowledge of its literature.

My best thanks are due to the Rev. J. W. Wynne Jones, M.A., Vicar of Carnarvon, for much help and valuable criticism; to the Rev. R Jones, *Ma*., Rector of Llanfair-juxta-Harlech, through whose courtesy I am enabled to produce (from a photograph by Owen, Barmouth) a page of the register of that parish, containing entries in Ellis Wynne's handwriting; and to Mr. Isaac Foulkes, Liverpool, for the frontispiece, which appeared in his last edition of the Bardd Cwsc.

R. *Gwyneddon Davies*.
Caernarvon,
1st July, 1897.

INTRODUCTION.

I.—THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

Ellis Wynne was born in 1671 at Glasynys, near Harlech; his father, Edward Wynne, came of the family of Glyn Cywarch (mentioned in the second Vision), his mother, whose name is not known, was heiress of Glasynys. It will be seen from the accompanying table that he was descended from some of the best families in his native county, and through Osborn Wyddel, from the Desmonds of Ireland. His birth-place, which still stands, and is shown in the frontispiece hereto, is situate about a mile and a half from the town of Harlech, in the beautiful Vale of Ardudwy. The natural scenery amidst which he was brought up, cannot have failed to leave a deep impression upon his mind; and in the Visions we come across unmistakeable descriptions of scenes and places around his home. Mountain and sea furnished him with many a graphic picture; the precipitous heights and dark ravines of Hell, its caverns and its cliffs, are all evidently drawn from nature. The neighbourhood is also rich in romantic lore and historic associations; Harlech Castle, some twenty-five years before his birth, had been the scene of many a fray between Roundheads and Cavaliers, and of the last stand made by the Welsh for King Charles. These events were fresh in the memory of his elders, whom he had, no doubt, often heard speaking of those stirring times; members

of his own family had, perhaps, fought in the ranks of the rival parties; his father's grand-uncle, Col. John Jones, was one of those who erstwhile drank of royal blood."

It is not known where he received his early education, and it has been generally stated by his biographers that he was not known to have entered either of the Universities; but, as the following notice proves, he at least matriculated at Oxford:-

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Wynne, *Ellis*, s. Edw. of Lasypeys, co. Merioneth, pleb. Jesus Coll. matric. 1st March 1691-2, aged 21; rector of Llandanwg, 1705, & of Llanfair-juxta-Harlech (both) co. Merioneth, 1711. (Vide Foster's Index Eccles.)

Probably his stay at the University was brief, and that he left without taking his degree, for I have been unable to find anything further recorded of his academic career. {0a} The Rev. Edmund Prys, Vicar of Clynnog-Fawr, in a prefatory englyn to Ellis Wynne's translation of the "Holy Living" says that "in order to enrich his own, he had ventured upon the study of three other tongues." This fact, together with much that appears in the Visions, justifies the conclusion that his scholarly attainments were of no mean order. But how and where he spent the first thirty years of his life, with the possible exception of a period at Oxford, is quite unknown, the most probable surmise being that they were spent in the enjoyment of a simple rural life, and in the pursuit of his studies, of whatever nature they may have been.

According to Rowlands's Cambrian Bibliography his first venture into the fields of literature was a small volume entitled, Help i ddarllen yr Yscrythur Gyssegr-Lan ("Aids to reading Holy Writ"), being a translation of the Whole Duty of Man "by E. W., a clergyman of the Church of England," published at Shrewsbury in 1700. But as Ellis Wynne was not ordained until 1704, this work must be ascribed to some other author who, both as to name and calling, answered to the description on the title-page quoted above. But in 1701 an accredited work of his appeared, namely, a translation into Welsh of Jeremy Taylor's Rules and Exercises of Holy Living, a 12mo. volume published in London. It was dedicated to the Rev. Humphrey Humphreys, D.D., Bishop of Bangor, who was a native of the same district of Merionethshire as Ellis Wynne, and, as is shown in the genealogical table hereto {0}, was connected by marriage with his family.

In 1702 {0b} he was married to Lowri Llwyd—anglice, Laura Lloyd—of Hafod-lwyfog, Beddgelert, and had issue by her, two daughters and three sons; one of the daughters, Catherine, died young, and the second son, Ellis, predeceased his father by two years. {0c} His eldest son, Gwilym, became rector of Llanaber, near Barmouth, and inherited his ancestral home; his youngest son, Edward, also entered the Church and became rector of Dolbenmaen and Penmorfa, Carnarvonshire. Edward Wynne's son was the rector of Llanferres, Denbighshire, and his son again was the Rev. John Wynne, of Llandrillo in Edeyrnion, who died only a few years ago.

The following year (1703), he published the present work—his magnum opus—which has secured him a place among the greatest names in Welsh Literature. It will be noticed that on the title-page to the first edition the words "Y Rhann Gyntaf" ("The First Part") appear; the explanation given of this is that Ellis Wynne did actually write a second part, entitled, The Vision of Heaven, but that on hearing that he was charged with plagiarism in respect of his other Visions, he threw the manuscript into the fire, and so destroyed what, judging from the title, might have proved a greater success than the first part, as affording scope for lighter and more pleasing flights of the imagination.

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It is said by his biographers that he was induced to abandon the pursuit of the law, to which he was educated, and to take holy orders, by Bishop Humphreys, who had recognised in his translation of the Holy Living marked ability and piety, and that he was ordained deacon and priest the same day by the Bishop, at Bangor, in 1701, and presented on the following day to the living of Llanfair-juxta-Harlech and subsequently to Llandanwg.

All these statements appear to be incorrect. To deal with them categorically: I find no record at the Diocesan Registry of his having been ordained at Bangor at all; the following entry in the parish register of Llanfair shows that he was not in holy orders in July, 1704: "Gulielmus filius Elizaei Wynne generosi de Las ynys et uxoris suis baptizatus fuit quindecimo die Julii, 1704.—W. Wynne Rr., O. Edwards, Rector." His first living was Llandanwg, and not Llanfair, to which he was collated on January 1st, 1705. Moreover, the above-named Owen Edwards was the rector of Llanfair until his death which took place in 1711. {0d} From that date on to 1734, the entries in the register at Llanfair church are all in Ellis Wynne's handwriting; these facts prove conclusively that it was in 1711 he became rector of the latter parish.

In 1710 he edited a new and revised edition of the Book of Common Prayer, at the request of his patron, the Bishop of Hereford (Dr. Humphreys) and the four Welsh bishops,—a clear proof of the confidence reposed in him by the dignitaries of his church as a man of learning and undoubted piety. He himself published nothing more, but A Short Commentary on the Catechism and a few hymns and carols were written by him and published posthumously by his son, Edward, being included in a volume of his own, entitled Prif Addysc y Cristion, issued in 1755.

The latter part of his life is as completely obscure as the earlier; he lapsed again into the silence from which he had only just emerged with such signal success, and confined his efforts as a Christian worker within the narrow limits of his own native parts, exercising, doubtlessly, an influence for good upon his immediate neighbourhood through force of character and noble personality, as upon his fellow-countrymen at large by means of his published works. His wife died in 1720, and his son, Ellis, in 1732; two years later he himself died and was buried under the communion table in Llanfair church, on the 17th day of July, 1734. {0e} There is no marble or "perennial brass" to mark the last resting-place of the Bard, nor was there, until recent years, any memorial of him in either of his parish churches, when the late Rev. John Wynne set up a fine stained-glass window at Llanfair church in memory of his illustrious ancestor.

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Ellis Wynne appeared at a time when his country had sore need of him, when the appointed teachers of the nation were steeped in apathy and corruption, when ignorance and immorality overspread the land—the darkest hour before the dawn. He was one of the early precursors of the Methodist revival in Wales, a voice crying in the wilderness, calling upon his countrymen to repent. He neither feared nor favored any man or class, but delivered his message in unfaltering tone, and performed his alloted task honestly and faithfully. How deeply our country is indebted to him who did her such eminent service in the days of adversity and gloom will never be known. And now, in the time of prosperity, Wales still remembers her benefactor, and will always keep honored the name of Ellis Wynne, the *sleeping bard*.

II.—THE TEXT.

The Bardd Cwsc was first published in London in 1703, a small 24mo. volume of some 150 pages, with the following title-page

"*Gweledigaetheu* Y *Bardd Cwsc*. Y Rhann Gyntaf. Argraphwyd yn Llundain gan E. Powell i'r Awdwr, 1703." {0f}

A second edition was not called for until about 1742, when it was issued at Shrewsbury; but in the thirty years following, as many as five editions were published, and in the present century, at least twelve editions (including two or three by the Rev. Canon Silvan Evans) have appeared. The text followed in this volume is that of Mr. Isaac Foulkes' edition, but recourse has also been had to the original edition for the purpose of comparison. The only translation into English hitherto has been that of George Borrow, published in London in 1860, and written in that charming and racy style which characterises his other and better known works. He has, however, fallen into many errors, which were only natural, seeing that the Visions abound in colloquial words and phrases, and in idiomatic forms of expression which it would be most difficult for one foreign to our tongue to render correctly.

The author's name is not given in the original nor in any subsequent edition previous to the one published at Merthyr Tydfil in 1806, where the Gweledigaetheu are said to be by "Ellis Wynne." But it was well known, even before his death, that he was the author; the fact being probably deduced from the similarity in style between the Visions and an acknowledged work, namely, his translation of the Holy Living. The most likely reason for his preferring anonymity is not far to seek; his scathing denunciation of the sins of certain classes and, possibly, even of certain individuals, would be almost sure to draw upon the author their most bitter attacks. Many of the characters he depicts would be identified, rightly or wrongly, with certain of his contemporaries, and many more, whom he never had in his mind at all, would imagine themselves the objects of his satire;

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he had nothing to gain by imperilling himself at the hands of such persons, or by coming into open conflict with them; he had his message to deliver to his fellow-countrymen, his Visions a purpose to fulfil, the successful issue of which could not but be frustrated by the introduction of personal hatred and ill-will. Ellis Wynne was only too ready to forego the honor of being the acknowledged author of the Visions if thereby he could the better serve his country.

The Bardd Cwsc is not only the most popular of Welsh prose works, but it has also retained its place among the best of our classics. No better model exists of the pure idiomatic Welsh of the last century, before writers became influenced by English style and method. Vigorous, fluent, crisp, and clear, it shows how well our language is adapted to description and narration. It is written for the people, and in the picturesque and poetic strain which is always certain to fascinate the Celtic mind. The introduction to each Vision is evidently written with elaborate care, and exquisitely polished—"ne quid possit per leve morari," and scene follows scene, painted in words which present them most vividly before one's eyes, whilst the force and liveliness of his diction sustain unflagging interest throughout. The reader is carried onward as much by the rhythmic flow of language and the perfect balance of sentences, as by the vivacity of the narrative and by the reality with which Ellis Wynne invests his adventures and the characters he depicts. The terrible situations in which we find the Bard, as the drama unfolds, betoken not only a powerful imagination, but also an intensity of feeling which enabled him to realise the conceptions of such imagination. We follow the Bard and his heavenly guide through all their perils with breathless attention; the demons and the damned he so clothes with flesh and blood that our hatred or our sympathy is instantly stirred; his World is palpitating with life, his Hell, with its gloom and glare, is an awful, haunting dream. But besides being the possessor of a vivid imagination, Ellis Wynne was endowed with a capacity for transmitting his own experience in a picturesque and life-like manner. The various descriptions of scenes, such as Shrewsbury fair, the parson's revelry and the deserted mansions; of natural scenery, as in the beginning of the first and last Visions; of personages, such as the portly alderman, and the young lord and his retinue, all are evidently drawn from the Author's own experience. He was also gifted with a lively sense of humor, which here and there relieves the pervading gloom so naturally associated with the subject of his Visions. The humorous and the severe, the grotesque and the sublime, the tender and the terrible, are alike portrayed by a master hand.

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The leading feature of the Visions, namely the personal element which the Author infuses into the recital of his distant travels, brings the reader into a closer contact with the tale and gives continuity to the whole work, some parts of which would otherwise appear disconnected. This telling of the tale in propria persona with a guide of shadowy or celestial nature who points out what the Bard is to see, and explains to him the mystery of the things around him, is a method frequently adopted by poets of all times. Dante is the best known instance, perhaps; but we find the method employed in Welsh, as in “The Dream of Paul, the Apostle,” where Paul is led by Michael to view the punishments of Hell (vide Iolo MSS.). Ellis Wynne was probably acquainted with Vergil and Dante, and adopted the idea of supernatural guidance from them; in fact, apart from this, we meet with several passages which are eminently reminiscent of both these great poets.

But now, casting aside mere speculation, we come face to face with the indisputable fact that Ellis Wynne is to a considerable degree indebted to the Dreams of Gomez de Quevedo y Villegas, a voluminous Spanish author who flourished in the early part of the 17th century. In 1668, Sir Roger L’Estrange published his translation into English of the Dreams, which immediately became very popular. Quevedo has his Visions of the World, of Death and her (sic) Empire, and of Hell; the same characters are delineated in both, the same classes satirized, the same punishments meted out. We read in both works of the catchpoles and wranglers, the pompous knights and lying knaves—in fine, we cannot possibly come to any other conclusion than that Ellis Wynne has “read, marked and inwardly digested” L’Estrange’s translation of Quevedo’s Dreams. But admitting so much, the Bardd Cwsc still remains a purely Welsh classic; whatever in name and incident Ellis Wynne has borrowed from the Spaniard he has dressed up in Welsh home-spun, leaving little or nothing indicative of foreign influence. The sins he preached against, the sinners he condemned, were, he knew too well, indigenous to Welsh and Spanish soil. George Borrow sums up his comments upon the two authors in the following words: “Upon the whole, the Cymric work is superior to the Spanish; there is more unity of purpose in it, and it is far less encumbered with useless matter.”

The implication contained in the foregoing remarks of Borrow—that the Bardd Cwsc is encumbered to a certain degree with useless matter, is no doubt well founded. There is a tendency to dwell inordinately upon the horrible, more particularly in the Vision of Hell; a tiring sameness in the descriptive passages, an occasional lapse from the tragic to the ludicrous, and an intrusion of the common-place in the midst of a speech or a scene, marring the dignity of the one and the beauty of the other.

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The most patent blemish, however, is the unwarranted coarseness of expression to which the Author sometimes stoops. It is true that he must be judged according to the times he lived in; his chief object was to reach the ignorant masses of his countrymen, and to attain this object it was necessary for him to adopt their blunt and unveneered speech. For all that, one cannot help feeling that he has, in several instances, descended to a lower level than was demanded of him, with the inevitable result that both the literary merit and the good influence of his work in some measure suffer. Many passages which might be considered coarse and indecorous according to modern canons of taste, have been omitted from this translation.

From the literary point of view *the visions of the sleeping bard* has from the first been regarded as a masterpiece, but from the religious, two very different opinions have been held concerning it. One, probably the earlier, was, that it was a book with a good purpose, and fit to stand side by side with Vicar Pritchard's Canwyll y Cymry and Llyfr yr Homiliau; the other, that it was a pernicious book, "llyfr codi cythreuliaid"—a devil-raising book. A work which in any shape or form bore even a distant relationship to fiction, instantly fell under the ban of the Puritanism of former days. To-day neither opinion is held, the Bardd Cwsc is simply a classic and nothing more.

The Visions derive considerable value from the light they throw upon the moral and social condition of our country two centuries ago. Wales, at the time Ellis Wynne wrote was in a state of transition: its old-world romance was passing away, and ceasing to be the potent influence which, in times gone by, had aroused our nation to chivalrous enthusiasm, and led it to ennobling aspirations. Its place and power, it is true, were shortly to be taken by religion, simple, puritanic, and intensely spiritual; but so far, the country was in a condition of utter disorder, morally and socially. Its national life was at its lowest ebb, its religious life was as yet undeveloped and gave little promise of the great things to come. The nation as a whole—people, patrician, and priest—had sunk to depths of moral degradation; the people, through ignorance and superstition; the patrician, through contact with the corruptions of the England of the Restoration; while the priesthood were

"Blind mouths, that scarce themselves knew how to hold
"A sheep-hook, or had learnt aught else the least
"That to the faithful herdman's art belongs."

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All the sterner and darker aspects of the period are chronicled with a grim fidelity in the Visions, the wrongs and vices of the age are exposed with scathing earnestness. Ellis Wynne set himself the task of endeavouring to arouse his fellow-countrymen and bring them to realize the sad condition into which the nation had fallen. He entered upon the work endowed with keen powers of perception, a wide knowledge of life, and a strong sense of justice. He was no respecter of person; all orders of society, types of every rank and class, in turn, came under castigation; no sin, whether in high places or among those of low degree, escaped the lash of his biting satire. On the other hand, it must be said that he lacked sympathy with erring nature, and failed to recognize in his administration of justice that "to err is human, to forgive, divine." His denunciation of wrong and wrong-doer is equally stern and pitiless; mercy and love are rarely, if ever, brought on the stage. In this mood, as in the gloomy pessimism which pervades the whole work, he reflects the religious doctrines and beliefs of his times. In fine, when all has been said, favourably and adversely, the Visions, it will readily be admitted, present a very faithful picture of Welsh life, manners, and ways of thought, in the 17th century, and are, in every sense, a true product of the country and the age in which they were written.

III.—A BRIEF SUMMARY.

I. VISION OF THE WORLD.

One summer's day, the Bard ascends one of the mountains of Wales, and gazing a long while at the beautiful scene, falls asleep. He dreams and finds himself among the fairies, whom he approaches and requests permission to join. They snatch him up forthwith and fly off with him over cities and realms, lands and seas, until he begins to fear for his life. They come to a huge castle—Castle Delusive, where an Angel of light appears and rescues him from their hands. The Angel, after questioning him as to himself, who he was and where he came from, bids him go with him, and resting in the empyrean, he beholds the earth far away beneath them. He sees an immense City made up of three streets; at the end of which are three gates and upon each gate a tower and in each tower a fair woman. This is the City of Destruction and its streets are named after the daughters of Belial—Pride, Lucre and Pleasure. The Angel tells him of the might and craftiness of Belial and the alluring witchery of his daughters, and also of another city on higher ground—the City of Emmanuel—whereto all may fly from Destruction. They descend and alight in the Street of Pride amidst the ruined and desolate mansions of absentee landlords. They see there kings, princes, and noblemen, coquettes and fops; there is a city, too, on seven hills, and another opposite, with a crescent on a golden banner above it, and near the gate stands the Court of Lewis XIV. Much traffic is going on between these courts, for the Pope, the Sultan and the King of France are rivals for the Princesses' hands.

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They next come to the Street of Lucre, full of Spaniards, Dutchmen and Jews, and here too, are conquerors and their soldiers, justices and their bribers, doctors, misers, merchants and userers, shopmen, clippers, taverners, drovers, and the like. An election of Treasurer to the Princess is going on—stewards, money-lenders, lawyers and merchants being candidates, and whoso was proved the richest should obtain the post. The Bard then comes to the Street of Pleasure, where all manner of seductive joys abound. He passes through scenes of debauchery and drunken riot, and comes to a veritable Bedlam, where seven good fellows— a tinker, a dyer, a smith and a miner, a chimney-sweep, a bard and a parson—are enjoying a carousal. He beholds the Court of Belial's second daughter, Hypocrisy, and sees a funeral go by where all the mourners are false. A noble lord appears, with his lady at his side, and has a talk with old Money-bags who has lent him money on his lands—all three being apt pupils of Hypocrisy.

The Angel then takes him to the churches of the City; and first they come to a pagan temple where the human form, the sun and moon, and various other objects are worshipped. Thence they come to a barn where Dissenters imitate preaching, and to an English church where many practise all manner of hypocrisy. The Bard then leaves the City of Destruction and makes for the celestial City. He beholds one man part from his friends and, refusing to be persuaded by them, hasten towards Emmanuel's City. The gateway is narrow and mean, while on the walls are watchmen urging on those that are fleeing from Destruction. Groups from the various streets arrive and claim admittance, but, being unable to leave their sins, have to return. The Bard and his Guide enter, and passing by the Well of Repentance come in view of the Catholic Church, the transept of which is the Church of England, with Queen Anne enthroned above, holding the Sword of Justice in the left hand, and the Sword of the Spirit in the right. Suddenly there is a call to arms, the sky darkens, and Belial himself advances against the Church, with his earthly princes and their armies. The Pope and Lewis of France, the Turks and Muscovites fall upon England and her German allies, but, the angels assisting, they are vanquished; the infernal hosts, too, give way and are hurled headlong from the sky; whereupon the Bard awakes.

II. THE VISION OF DEATH.

It is a cold, winter's night and the Bard lies abed meditating upon the brevity of life, when Sleep and his sister Nightmare pay him a visit, and after a long parley, constrain him to accompany them to the Court of their brother Death. Hieing away through forests and dales, and over rivers and rocks, they alight at one of the rear portals of the City of Destruction which opens upon a murky region—the chambers of Death. On all hands are myriads of doors leading into the Land of Oblivion, each guarded by the particular death-imp, whose name was inscribed above it. The Bard passes by the portals of Hunger, where misers, idlers and gossips enter, of Cold, where scholars and travellers go through, of Fear, Love, Envy and Ambition.

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Suddenly he finds himself transported into a bleak and barren land where the shades flit to and fro. He is straightway surrounded by them, and, on giving his name as the "Sleeping Bard," a shadowy claimant to that name sets upon him and belabours him most unmercifully until Merlin bid him desist. Taliesin then interviews him, and an ancient manikin, "Someone" by name, tells him his tale of woe. After that he is taken into the presence of the King of Terrors himself, who, seated on a throne with Fate and Time on either hand, deals out their doom to the prisoners as they come before him. Four fiddlers, a King from the neighbourhood of Rome with a papal dispensation to pass right through to Paradise, a drunkard and a harlot, and lastly seven corrupt recorders, are condemned to the land of Despair.

Another group of seven prisoners have just been brought to the bar, when a letter comes from Lucifer concerning them; he requests that Death should let these seven return to the world or else keep them within his own realm—they were far too dangerous to be allowed to enter Hell. Death hesitates, but, urged by Fate, he indites his answer, refusing to comply with Lucifer's request. The seven are then called and Death bids his hosts hasten to convey them beyond his limits. The Bard sees them hurled over the verge beneath the Court of Justice and his spirit so strives within him at the sight that the bonds of Sleep are sundered and his soul returns to its wonted functions.

III. THE VISION OF HELL.

The Bard is sauntering, one April morning, on the banks of the Severn, when his previous visions recur to his mind and he resolves to write them as a warning to others, and while at this work he falls asleep, and the Angel once more appears and bears him aloft into space. They reach the confines of Eternity and descend through Chaos for myriads of miles. A troop of lost beings are swept past them towards the shores of a death-like river—the river of the Evil One. After passing through its waters, the Bard witnesses the tortures the damned suffer at the hands of the devils, and visits their various prisons and cells. Here is the prison of Woe-that-I-had-not, of Too-late-a-repentance and of the Procrastinators. There the Slanderers, Backbiters, and other envious cowards are tormented in a deep and dark dungeon. He hears much laughter among the devils and turning round finds that the cause of their merriment are two noblemen who have just arrived and are claiming the respect due to their rank. Further on is a crowd of harlots calling down imprecations upon those that ruined them; and in a huge cavern are lawyers, doctors, stewards and other such rogues. The Princesses of the City of Destruction bring batches of their subjects as gifts to their sire.

A parliament is summoned and Lucifer addresses his princes, calling upon them to do their utmost to destroy the rest of mankind. Moloch makes his reply, reciting all that he has done, when Lucifer in rage starts off to do the work himself, but is drawn back by an invisible hand. He speaks again, exhorting them to greater activity and cruelty. Justice

brings three prisoners to Hell and returning causes such a rush of fiery whirlwinds that all the infernal lords are swept away into the Uttermost Hell.

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The Bard hears the din of arms and news comes that the Turks, Papists, and Roundheads are advancing in three armies. Lucifer and his hosts immediately set out to meet them and after a stubborn contest succeed in quelling the rebellion. More prisoners are brought before the King— Catholics, who had missed the way to Paradise, an innkeeper, five kings, assize-men and lawyers, gipsies, laborers and scholars. Scarcely is judgment passed on these than war again breaks out—soldiers and doctors, lawyers and userers, misers and their own offspring, are fighting each other. The leaders of this revolt having been taken, another parliament is called and more prisoners yet brought to trial.

Lucifer asks the advice of his peers as to whom he should appoint his viceroy in Britain. Cerberus, first of all, offers the service of Tobacco; then Mammon speaks in praise of Gold and Apolyon tells what Pride can do; Asmodai, the demon of Lust, Belphegor. the demon of Sloth, and Satan, devil of Delusion, each pleads for his own pet sin; and after Beelzebub has spoken in favour of Thoughtlessness, Lucifer sums up, weighs their arguments, and finally announces that it is another he has chosen as his vicegerent in Britain. This other is Prosperity, and her he bids them follow and obey. Then the lost Archangel and his counsellors are hurled into the Bottomless Pit, and the Angel takes the Bard up to the vault of Hell where he has full view of a three-faced ogress, Sin, who would make of heaven, a hell, and thence departing, a heaven of hell. The Angel then leaves him, bidding him, as he went, to write down what he had seen for the benefit of others.

TO THE READER.

Let whoso reads, consider;
Considering, remember,
And from remembering, do,
And doing, so continue.
Whoso abides in Virtue’s paths,
And ever strives until the end
From sinful bondage to be free,
Ne’er shall possess wherewith to feed
The direful flame, nor weight of sin
To sink him in th’ infernal mire;
Nor will he come to that dread realm
Where Wrong and Retribution meet.
But, woe to that poor, worthless wight
Who lives a bitter, stagnant life,
Who follows after every ill
And knows not either Faith or Love,
(For Faith in deeds alone doth live).
Eternal woe shall be his doom —

More torments he shall then behold
Yea, in the twinkling of an eye
Than any age can e’er conceive.

THE VISIONS OF THE SLEEPING BARD

I.—VISION OF THE WORLD.

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On {1a} the fine evening of a warm and mellow summer I betook me up one of the mountains of Wales, {1b} spy-glass in hand, to enable my feeble sight to see the distant near, and to make the little to loom large. Through the clear, tenuous air and the calm, shimmering heat, I beheld far, far away over the Irish Sea many a fair scene. At last, when mine eyes had taken their fill of all the beauty around me, and the sun well nigh had reached his western ramparts, I lay down on the sward, musing how fair and lovely compared with mine own land were the distant lands of whose delightful plains I had just obtained a glimpse; how fine it would be to have full view thereof, and how happy withal are they, besides me and my sort, who have seen the world's course. So, from the long journeying of mine eye, and afterwards of my mind, came weariness, and beneath the cloak of weariness came my good Master Sleep {1c} stealthily to bind me, and with his leaden keys safe and sound he locked the windows of mine eyes and all mine other senses. But it was in vain he tried to lock up the soul which can exist and travel without the body; for upon the wings of fancy my spirit soared free from out the straitened corpse, and the first thing I perceived close by was a dancing-knoll and such a fantastic rout {4a} in blue petticoats and red caps, briskly footing a sprightly dance. I stood awhile hesitating whether I should approach them or not, for in my confusion I feared they were a pack of hungry gipsies and that the least they would do, would be to kill me for their supper, and devour me saltless. But gazing steadfastly upon them I perceived that they were of better and fairer complexion than that lying, tawny crew; so I plucked up courage and drew near them, slowly, like a hen treading on hot coals, in order to find out what they might be; and at last I addressed them over my shoulder, thus, "Pray you, good friends, I understand that ye come from afar, would ye take into your midst a bard who wishes to travel?" Whereupon the din instantly ceased, every eye was turned upon me, and in shrill tones "a bard" quoth one, "to travel," said another, "into our midst," a third exclaimed. By then I had recognised those who were looking at me most fiercely, and they commenced whispering one to another some secret charms, still keeping their gaze upon me; the hubbub then broke out again and everyone laying hands upon me, lifted me shoulder-high, like a knight of the shire, and off like the wind we go, over houses and lands, cities and realms, seas and mountains, unable to notice aught so swiftly were they flying. And to make matters worse, I began to have doubts of my companions from the way they frowned and scowled when I refused to lampoon my king {4b} at their bidding.

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“Well, now,” said I to myself, “farewell to life; these accursed, arrant sorcerers will bear me to some nobleman’s larder or cellar and leave me there to pay penalty by my neck for their robbery, or peradventure they will leave me stark-naked and benumbed on Chester Marsh or some other bleak and remote place.” But on considering that those whose faces I knew had long been buried, and that some were thrusting me forward, and others upholding me above every ravine, it dawned upon me that they were not witches but what are called the Fairies. Without delay I found myself close to a huge castle, the finest I had ever seen, with a deep moat surrounding it, and here they began discussing my doom. “Let us take him as a gift to the castle,” suggested one. “Nay, let us throw the obstinate gallows-bird into the moat, he is not worth showing to our great prince,” said another. “Will he say his prayers before sleeping,” asked a third. At the mention of prayer, I breathed a groaning sigh heavenwards asking pardon and aid; and no sooner had I thought the prayer than I saw a light, Oh! so beautiful, breaking forth in the distance. As this light approached, my companions grew dark and vanished, and in a trice the Shining One made for us straight over the castle: whereupon they let go their hold of me and departing, turned upon me a hellish scowl, and had not the Angel supported me I should have been ground fine enough to make a pie long before reaching the earth.

“What is thy errand here?” asked the Angel. “In sooth, my lord,” cried I, “I wot not what place here is, nor what mine errand, nor what I myself am, nor what has made off with mine other part; I had a head and limbs and body, but whether I left ’em at home or whether the Fairies, if fair their deed, have cast me into some deep pit (for I mind my passing over many a rugged gorge) an’ I be hanged, Sir, I know not.” “Fairly, indeed,” said he, “they would have dealt with thee, had I not come in time to save thee from the toasting-forks of the brood of hell. Since thou hast such a great desire to see the course of this little world, I am commanded to give thee the opportunity to realize thy wish, so that thou mayest see the folly of thy discontent with thine own lot and country. Come now!” he bade, and at the word, with the dawn just breaking, he snatched me up far away above the castle; and upon a white cloudledge we rested in the empyrean to see the sun rising, and to look at my heavenly companion, who was far brighter than the sun, save that his radiance only shone upwards, being hidden from all beneath by a veil. When the sun waxed strong, I beheld in the refulgence of the two our great, encircled earth as a tiny ball in the distance below. “Look again,” said the Angel, and he gave me a better spy-glass than the one I had on the mountain-side. When I looked through this I saw things in a different light and clearer than ever before.

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I could see one city of enormous magnitude, with thousands of cities and kingdoms within it, the wide ocean like a whirlpool around it, and other seas, like rivers, dividing it into parts. After gazing a longwhile, I observed that it was made up of three tremendously long streets, with a large and splendid gateway at the lower end of each street; on each gateway, a magnificent tower, and on each tower, in sight of all the street, a woman of exceeding beauty; and the three towers at the back of the ramparts reached to the foot of that great castle. Of the same length as these immense streets, but running in a contrary direction, I saw another street which was but narrow and mean compared with them, though it was clean and upon higher ground than they, and leading upwards to the east, whilst the other three led downwards northerly to the great towers. I could no longer withhold from asking my friend's permission to speak. "What then," said the Angel, "if thou wilt speak, listen carefully, so that there be no need of telling thee a thing twice." "I will, my lord, and prithee," asked I, "what castle is that, away yonder to the north?" "That castle aloft in the sky," said he, "belongs to Belial, prince of the power of the air, and ruler of all that vast city below; it is called Castle Delusive: for an arch-deluder is Belial, and it is through delusion that he is able to keep under his sway all that thou see'st with the exception of that little bye-street yonder. He is a powerful prince, with thousands of princes under him. What was Caesar or Alexander the Great compared with him? What are the Turk and old Lewis of France {7a} but his servants? Great, aye, exceedingly great is the might, craftiness and diligence of Prince Belial and of the countless hosts he hath in the lower region." "Why do those women stand there?" I asked, "and who are they?" "Slowly," cried the Angel, "one question at a time; they stand there in order to be loved and worshipped." "No wonder, in sooth," said I, "so lovely are they that were I the possessor of hands and feet as once I was, I too would go and love or worship them." "Hush! hush!" cried he, "if that is what thou wouldst do with thy members 'tis well thou'rt wanting them: know, foolish spirit, that these three princesses are no other than three destroying enchantresses, daughters of Prince Belial; and that all the beauty and gentleness which dazzles the streets, is nought else but a gloss over ugliness and cruelty; the three within are like their sire, full of deadly venom." "Woe's me, is't possible," cried I sorrowfully, "that their love wounds?" "'Tis true, the more the pity," said he, "thou art delighted with the way the three beam on their adorers: well, there is in that ray of light many a wondrous charm, it blindens them so that they cannot see the hook; it stupifies them so that they pay no heed to their danger, and consumes them with an insatiate lust for more, even though it be a deadly poison, breeding diseases which

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no physician, yea, not death itself can ever heal, nor aught at all unless a heavenly medicine called Repentance be had to purge the evil in good time ere it become too deeply rooted, through gazing upon them too long." "Wherefore will not Belial have this adoration to himself?" asked I. "It is the same thing," said he, "for so long as a man adheres to these or to one of them, that man is sure to bear the mark of Belial and wear his livery."

"By what names are these three enchantresses called?" "The furthest away is called Pride, the eldest daughter of Belial; the second is Pleasure, and the nearest to us is Lucre; these three are the trinity the world adores." "I would fain know the name of this vast, madding city," said I, "hath it a better name than great Bedlam?" "Yea, 'tis called the City of Destruction." "Alas!" I cried, "are all that dwell therein ruined and lost?" "All," said he, "save a few that flee from it into yon upper city which is King Emmanuel's." "Woe is me and mine! how shall they escape while ever staring at what makes them more and more blind, and preys upon them in their blindness?" "It would be utterly impossible for any man to escape hence were it not that Emmanuel sends his ministers from on high, night and morn, to persuade them to leave the rebels and turn to Him, their true Sovereign, and sends to some a gift of precious ointment called Faith to anoint their eyes, and whoso obtains that genuine ointment (for there is an imitation of this as of everything else in the City of Destruction) and anoints himself therewith, at once becomes aware of his own wounds and madness, and will not tarry here a moment longer, even though Belial gave him his three daughters, yea, or his fourth who is greatest of all, for staying."

"What are the names of these immense streets?" I enquired. "They are called, each according to the name of the princess who rules therein; furthest is the Street of Pride, the middle, the Street of Pleasure, and next, the Street of Lucre." "Who, prithee, dwell in these streets? What tongue is spoken there? Wherefrom and of what nations are their inhabitants?" "Many people," answered he, "of every language, religion, and nation under the sun dwell there; many a one lives in each of the three streets at different seasons, and everyone as near the gateway as he can; and very often do they change about, being unable to stay long in the one because they so greatly love the princess of the other street. And the old renard, slyly looking on, lets everyone love whichever he prefers, or the three if he will—all the more certain is he of him."

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“Come nearer to them,” said the Angel, snatching me downwards in the veil through the noxious vapours rising from the city. We alighted in the Street of Pride, on the top of a great, roofless mansion with its eyes picked out by the dogs and crows, and its owners gone to England or France, there to seek what might be gotten with far less trouble at home; thus in place of the good old country-family of days gone by, so full of charity and benevolence, none keep possession now but the stupid owl, the greedy crows, or the proud-pied magpies or the like, to proclaim the deeds of the present owners. There were thousands of such deserted palaces, which but for pride might still be the resort of noblemen, a refuge for the weak, a school of peace and all goodness, and a blessing to the thousands of cottages surrounding them. From the top of these ruins we had plenty of room and quietness to see the whole street on both sides. The houses were very fine, and of wonderful height and grandeur, and good reason why, for emperors and kings lived there, princes in hundreds, noblemen and gentlemen in thousands, and a great many women of all grades. I could see many a horned coquette, like a full-rigged ship, strutting as if set in a frame with a fair store of pedlery about her, and pearls in her ears to the value of a good-sized farm: some were singing so as to be praised for their voices, some dancing, to show their figures; others coloring, to improve their complexion, others having been a good three hours before a mirror trimming themselves, learning to smile, pinning and unpinning, making grimaces and striking attitudes. Many a coy wench was there who knew not how to open her lips to speak, much less to eat, or from very ceremony, how to look under foot; and many a ragged shrew who would contend that she was equal to the best lady in the street, and many an ambling fop who might winnow beans by the wind of his train.

Whilst I was looking from afar at these and a hundred similar things, lo! there came by us a gaudy, strapping quean of arrogant mien, and after whom a hundred eyes were turned; some made obeisance, as if in worship of her, a few put something in her hand. I could not make out what she was, and so I enquired. “Oh,” said my friend, “she is one whose entire dowry is on show, and yet thou see’st how many fools there are who seek her, and the meanest is received notwithstanding all the demand there is for her; whom she will, she cannot have, and whom she can, she will not; she will only speak to her betters because her mother told her that a young woman can make no greater mistake than to be humble in courtship.” Thereupon a burly Falstaff, who had been alderman and in many offices, came out from beneath us, spreading out his wings as if to fly, when he could scarcely limp along like a pack-horse, on account of his huge paunch, and the gout, and many other gentlemanly complaints; but for all that you could not get a single glance

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from him except as a great favour, remembering the while to address him by all his title and offices. From him I turned my eyes to the other side of the street, and saw a bluff young nobleman with a numerous following, smiling graciously and bowing low to everyone he met. "It is strange," said I, "that these two should belong to the same street." "It is the same princess—Pride, who governs them both," answered he, "this one's errand is but to speak fair; he is now making a bid for fame with the intent thereby to attain the highest office in the State; he is most ready to weep with the people, and tell them how greatly they are wronged through the oppression of wicked ministers; yet it is his own exaltation, and not the common weal that is the main object of his pursuit."

After looking for a longwhile I saw close by the Porch of Pride a fair city on seven hills, and over its magnificent court the triple crown, the swords and cross-keys. "Well, here is Rome," quoth I, "here lives the Pope, is it not?" "Yes, most often," said the Angel, "but he hath a court in each of the other streets." Over against Rome I could see a city with a very fine court, whereon was raised on high a crescent on a golden banner, by which I knew the Turk was there. After these came the court of Lewis XIV. of France, as I perceived by his arms—the three fleur-de-lys on a silver banner reared high. Whilst admiring the loftiness and magnificence of these palaces, I observed that there was much traversing from one court to another, and asked the reason. "Oh, there is many a dark reason," said the Angel, "existing between these three potent and crafty monarchs, but though they deem themselves fitting peers to the three princesses up yonder, their power and guile is nought compared with theirs. Yea more, great Belial deems the whole city, notwithstanding the number of its kings, unsuitable for his daughters. Although he offers them in marriage to everybody, he has never actually given them to anyone. Keen rivalry has existed between these three for their hands; the Turk, who calls himself the god of earth, would have the eldest, Pride, to wife. "Nay," said the king of France, "she is mine, for I keep all my subjects in her street, and bring her many from England and many other realms." Spain would have the Princess of Lucre, spite of Holland and all the Jews, and England, the Princess of Pleasure in spite of the Pagans. But the Pope claimed the three, and for better reasons than all the others; and Belial admits him next to them in each street." "Is that the cause of this commerce?" said I. "No," said he, "Belial has made peace between them upon that matter long ago. But now he has bid the three put their heads together to consider how they can the soonest destroy yon bye-street; that is the City of Emmanuel, and especially one great mansion therein, out of mere jealousy, perceiving it to be a finer edifice than any in all the City of

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Destruction. And Belial promises half his kingdom during his life, and the whole on his decease, to him who succeeds in doing so. But notwithstanding the magnitude of his power, the depth of his wiles, and the number of emperors, kings and crafty rulers that are beneath his sceptre in that huge City of Destruction, notwithstanding the courage of his countless hosts beyond the gates in the lower region, that task will prove too difficult for them; however great, powerful and untiring his majesty may be, in yon small street is a greater than he."

I was not able to give very close attention to his angelic reasons, being occupied in watching the frequent falls people were having on the slippery street. Some I could see with ladders scaling the tower, and having reached the highest rung, falling headlong to the bottom. "Where do those fools try to get to?" I asked. "To a place that is high enough--they are endeavouring to break into the treasury of the princess." "I warrant it be full," quoth I. "Yes," answered he, "of everything that belongs to this street, to be distributed among its denizens: all kinds of weapons for invading and extending territories; all kinds of coats-of-arms, banners, escutcheons, books of genealogy, sayings of the ancients, and poems, all sorts of gorgeous raiments, boastful tales and flattering mirrors; every pigment and lotion to beautify the face; every high office and title—in short, everything is there which makes a man think better of himself and worse of others than he ought. The chief officers of this treasury are masters of the ceremonies, roysters, heralds, bards, orators, flatterers, dancers, tailors, gamblers, seamstresses and the like."

From this street we went to the next where the Princess of Lucre rules supreme; this street was crowded and enormously wealthy; yet not half so magnificent and clean as the Street of Pride, nor its people so foolishly haughty, for here they were for the most part skulking and sly. Thousands of Spaniards, Dutchmen, Venetians, and Jews were here, and also a great many aged people. "Prithee, sir," said I, "what manner of men might these be?" "They are pinchfists one and all. In the lower end thou shalt see the Pope once more together with conquerors of kingdoms and their soldiery, oppressors, foresters, obstructors of public paths, justices and their bribers, and all their progeny from the barrister to the constable; on the other side, physicians, apothecaries, leeches, misers, merchants, extortioners, money lenders, withholders of tithes, wages, rents or doles left to schools, almhouses and the like; drovers, dealers who regulate the market for their own benefit; shopmen (or rather, sharpers) who profit on the need or ignorance of their customers; stewards of all grades; clippers {14a} and innkeepers who despoil the idlers' family of their goods and the country of its barley, which would otherwise be made into bread for the poor. All these are arrant robbers, the others in the upper end of the street are mostly small fry, such as highwaymen, tailors, weavers, millers, grocers and so on."

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In the midst of this I could hear a terrible commotion towards the far end of the street, and a great crowd of people thronging the gate, and such pushing and quarelling as made me think that there was a general riot afoot, until I asked my friend what was the matter. "There is very valuable treasure in that tower," said the Angel, "and the reason for this tumult is that they are about to choose a treasurer for the Princess, instead of the Pope, who has been driven from office." So we went to see the election.

The candidates for the post were the stewards, the money-lenders, the lawyers, and the merchants, and it was the wealthiest of these that was to have it (for the more thou hast, the more wilt thou have and seek for--an insatiate complaint pertaining to this street). The stewards were rejected at the outset, lest they might impoverish the whole street and, just as they had erected their mansions upon their masters' ruins, in the end dispossess the princess herself. The contest then lay between the other three. The merchants had more silk, the lawyers more mortgages on land, and the money-lenders more bills and bonds and fuller purses. "Ho, they won't agree this night," said the Angel, "come away; the lawyers are richer than the merchants, the money-lenders than the lawyers, the stewards than the money-lenders, and Belial richer than all; for they and all that belongs to them are his." "Why does the princess keep these robbers about her?" "What more befitting, seeing that she herself is arch-robber?" I was amazed to hear him call the princess by such name, and the proudest gentry in the land arrant robbers. "Why, pray my lord," said I, "do you consider these great noblemen worse thieves than highwaymen?" "Thou art a simpleton—think on that knave who roves the wide world over, sword in hand, and with his ravagers at his back, slaying and burning, and depriving the true possessors of their states, and afterwards expecting to be worshipped as conqueror; is he not worse than the petty thief who takes a purse on the highway? What is a tailor who filches a piece of cloth compared to a squire who steals from the mountain-side half a parish? Ought the latter not be called a worse robber than the former, who only takes a shred from him, while he deprives the poor of pasture for his beast, and consequently of the means of livelihood for himself, and those depending upon him? What is the stealing a handful of flour in the mill compared with the storing up of a hundred bushels to rot, in order to obtain later on for one bushel the price of four? What is a threadbare soldier who robs thee of thy clothes at the swords' point when compared with the lawyer who despoils thee of thy whole estate with the stroke of a quill, and against whom thou canst claim no recompense or remedy? What is a pickpocket who steals a five-pound in comparison to a dice-sharper who robs thee of a hundred pounds in the third part of a night? And what the swindler that deceives thee in a worthless old hack compared with the apothecary who swindles thee of thy money and life too, for some effete, medicinal stuff? And moreover, what are all these robbers compared with that great arch-robber who deprives them all of everything, yea, of their hearts and souls after the fair is over?"

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From this foul and disorderly street we proceeded to the street of the Princess of Pleasure wherein I saw many English, French, Italians and Paynims. The Princess is very fair to behold, with mixed wine in one hand, and a fiddle and a harp in the other; and in her treasury, innumerable pleasures and toys to gain the custom of everybody, and retain them in her father's service. Yea, many were wont to escape to this pleasant street to drown their grief for losses and debts they had incurred in the others. It was exceedingly crowded, especially with young people; whilst the Princess is careful to please everyone, and to have an arrow ready for every mark. If thou art thirsty, here thou will find thy favorite beverage; if thou lovest song and dance, here thou shalt have thy fill. If the beauty of the Princess has kindled thy lust, thou need'st but beckon one of her sire's officers (who, although invisible, always surround her) and they will immediately attend thy behest. There are here fair mansions, fine gardens, full orchards, shady groves fit for every secret intrigue, or to trap birds or a white rabbit or twain; clear streams, most pleasant to fish in; rich, boundless plains, whereon to hunt the hare and fox. Along the street we could see them playing interludes, juggling and conjuring, singing lewd songs to the sound of the harp and ballads, and all manner of jesting. Men and women of handsome appearance danced and sang, and many came hither from the Street of Pride in order to be praised and worshipped. Within the houses we perceived some on silken beds wallowing in debauchery; some at the gaming-table, cursing and swearing, others tossing dice and shuffling cards. Some from the Street of Lucre, having a room here, ran hither to count their money, but stayed not long lest aught of the countless geegaws that are here should entice them to part with their money without interest. Others I saw at tables feasting with somewhat of every created thing before them; and when everyone, mess after mess, had guzzled as much of the dainties as would afford a moderate man a feast for a whole week, grace followed in the form of blasphemous howling; then the king's health was called for, and that of every boon companion, and so on to quench the taste of the viands, and drown their cares. Then came tobacco, and then each one began to talk scandal of his neighbour—whether true or false it mattered not as long as it was humorous or fresh, or, best of all, degrading. At last, what with a round of blasphemy, and the whole crowd with clay pistols belching smoke and fire and slander of their neighbours, and the floor already befouled with dregs and spittle, I feared lest viler deeds should happen, and craved to depart.

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Thence we went where we heard a loud noise, beating and clamouring, crying and laughing, shouting and singing. "Well, here's Bedlam and no mistake," quoth I. By the time we got in, the turmoil had ceased; one man lay like a log on the ground, another was vomiting, another nodding his head over a hearth full of battered flagons, and broken pipes and mugs. On enquiring, what should it be but a carousal of seven thirsty neighbours—a tinker, a dyer, a blacksmith, a miner, a chimney-sweep, a bard, and a parson who had come to preach sobriety, and to show in his own person how repulsive drunkenness is; and the beginning of the recent altercation was a discussion and dispute they had as to which of the seven callings loved best the pot and pipe; the bard had beaten all but the parson and, due regard being observed for the cloth, he was adjudged victor and worthy to be leader of his good comrades, and so the bard wound up the discussion thus:

"Where can ye find such thirsty seven,
"Search every clime and land?
"And quaffing off the ruddy ale,
"Bard and parson lead the band."

Thoroughly tired of these drunken swine, we drew nearer the gate in order to spy out the blemishes in the magnificent court of Love, the purblind king, wherein it is easy to enter, but difficult to get out again, and where are chambers innumerable. In the hall opposite the door stood giddy Cupid, with two arrows in his bow, darting a languishing venom called lust. Along the floor I saw many fair and comely women walking with measured steps, and following them, wretched youths gazing upon their beauty, and each one begging a glance from his mistress, fearing a frown even more than death; now and then one, bowing to the ground, would place a letter in his goddess' hand, and another a sonnet, the while in fear expectant, like schoolboys showing their task to the master. They in return would favour their adorers with a simpering smile or two, just to keep their desires on edge, but granting nought more lest their lust be sated and they depart healed of the disease. Going on into the parlour I saw them having lessons in dancing and singing, with voice and hand, in order to make their lovers sevenfold madder than before; on again into the dining hall where they were taught coy smartness in eating; into the cellar, where potent love philtres were being mixed of nail parings and the like; in the upper rooms we could see one in a secret chamber twisting himself into all shapes, practising gentlemanly behaviour when in his mistress' presence; another before a mirror learning how to smile correctly without showing his teeth too prominently to his ladylove; another preparing his tale to tell her, repeating the same thing an hundred times. Wearied with this insipid babbling we came to another cell: here a nobleman had sent for a poet from the Street of Pride to indite him a sonnet of praise to his angel, and an eulogy of himself; the bard was discoursing of his art:

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“I can,” said he, “liken her to everything red and everything white under the sun, and her tresses to an hundred things more yellow than gold, and as for your poem, I can trace your lineage through many knights and princes, and through the water of the deluge right up to Adam.” “Well, here’s a poet,” quoth I, “who is a better genealogist than I.” “Come, come,” said the Angel, “their intention is to deceive the woman, but, once in her presence, you may be sure they will have to meet trick with trick.”

Upon leaving these we had a glimpse of cells where fouler deeds were being done than modesty permits to mention, and which caused my companion to snatch me away in anger from this fatuous court into the princess’ treasury (for we went where we list notwithstanding doors and locks). There we saw myriads of fair women, all kinds of beverages, fruits and dainties, stringed instruments and books of songs,—harps, pipes, odes and carols, all sorts of games,—backgammon, dice {20a} and cards; pictures of various lands, towns and persons, inventions and amusing tricks; all kinds of waters, perfumes, pigments and spots to make the ugly fair, and the old look young, and the leman’s malodorous bones smell sweet for the nonce. In short, the shadow of pleasure and the guise of happiness in every conceivable form was to be found there; and sooth to say, I almost think I too had been enticed by the place had not my friend instantly hurried me away far from the three alluring towers to the top end of the streets, and set me down near an immense palatial castle, the front view of which seemed fair, but the further side was mean and terribly ugly, though it was scarcely to be seen at all. It had a myriad portals—all splendid without but rotten within. “An’t please you, my lord,” asked I, “what is this wondrous place?” “This is the court of Belials’ second daughter whose name is Hypocrisy; here she keeps her school, and there is no man or woman throughout the whole city who has not been a pupil of hers, and most of them have imbibed their learning remarkably well; so that her lessons are discernible as a second nature intertwined with all their thoughts, words, and deeds from very childhood almost.” I had been looking awhile on the falsity of every part of the edifice when a funeral came by with many weeping and sighing, and many men and horses in mourning trappings; and shortly the poor widow, veiled so as not to see this cruel world any more, came along with piping voice and weary sighs, and fainting fits at intervals. In truth, I could not help but weep a little out of pity for her. “Nay, nay,” said the Angel, “keep thy tears for a more worthy occasion; these voices are only what Hypocrisy has taught, and these mourning weeds were fashioned in her great school. Not one of these weep sincerely; the widow, even before the body had left the house, let in another husband to her heart; were she rid of the expenses connected with the corpse she would

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not care a straw if his soul were at the bottom of hell; nor do his own kindred care any more than she: for when it went hardest with him, instead of giving him good counsel and earnestly praying for mercy upon him, they were talking of his property, his will or his pedigree; or what a handsome robust man he was, and such talk; and now this wailing {21a} on the part of some is for mere ceremony and custom, on the part of others for company's sake or for pay."

Scarcely had these gone by than another throng came in sight: a most gallant lord with his lady at his side, slowly advancing in state, to whom many men of position doffed, and many were on tiptoe with eagerness to show him obeisance and reverence. "Here is a noble lord," said I, "who is worthy such respect from all these!" "Wert thou to take everything to consideration thou wouldst speak differently. This lord comes from the Street of Pleasure, she is of the Street of Pride, and yon old man who is conversing with him comes from the Street of Lucre, and has a mortgage on almost every acre of my lord's, and is come to-day to complete the loan." We drew nigh to hear the conversation. "In sooth, sir," Old Money-bags was saying, "I would not for all that I possess that you should lack anything which lies in my power to enable you to appear your own true self this day, especially seeing that you have met so beautiful and lovely a lady as madam here" (the wily dog knowing full well what she was). "By the —— by the —— ," said the lord, "next to gazing at her beauty, my greatest pleasure was to hearken to your fair reasons; I had liefer pay you interest than get money elsewhere free." "Indeed, my lord," said one of his chief friends called Flatterer, "nuncle pays you not a whit less respect than is due to you, but an it please you, he has bestowed upon her ladyship scarce the half her mead of praise. I defy any man," quoth he, "to show a lovelier woman in all the Street of Pride, or a nobler than you in all the Street of Pleasure, or a kinder than you, good mine uncle, in all the Street of Lucre." "Ah, that is your good opinion," said my lord, "but I cannot believe that any couple were ever more united in the bonds of love than we twain." As they went on the crowd increased, and everyone had a pleasant smile and low bow for the other, and hastened to salute each other with their noses to the ground, like a pair of gamecocks on the point of striking. "Know then," said the Angel, "that thou hast seen naught of civility nor heard one word which Hypocrisy has not taught. There is no one here, after all this gentleness, who has a hap'orth of love one to another, yea, many of them are sworn foes. This lord is the butt {23a} of everybody, and all have their dig at him. The lady looks only to his greatness and high degree, so that she may thereby ascend a step above many of her neighbours. Old Money-bags has his eye on my lord's lands for his own son, and all the others on the money he

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received as dowry; for they are all his dependants, his merchants, tailors, cobblers and other craftsmen, who have decked him out and maintained him in this splendor, and have never had a brass farthing for it, nor are likely to get aught save smooth words and sometimes threats perhaps. How many layers, how many folds had Hypocrisy laid over the face of Truth! He, promising greatness to his love, while his lands were on the point of being sold; she, promising him dower and beauty, while her beauty is but artificial, and cancer is consuming both her dowry and her body." "Well, this teaches us," said I, "never to judge by appearances." "Yes verily," said he, "but come on and I will show thee more."

At the word he transported me up to where the churches of the City of Destruction were; for everyone therein, even the unbelieving, has a semblance of religion. And it was to the temple of the unbelievers that we first came, and there I saw some worshipping a human form, others the sun, the moon and a countless other like gods down to onions and garlic; and a great goddess called Deceit was universally worshipped. However, there were some traces of the influence of Christianity to be found in most of these religions. Thence we came to a congregation of mutes, {24a} where there was nothing but sighing and quaking and beating the breast. "Here," said the Angel, "is the appearance of great repentance and humility, but which in reality is perversity, stubbornness, pride and utter darkness; although they talk much about the light within, they have not even the spectacles of nature which the heathen thou erstwhile saw, possess."

From these dumb dogs we chanced to turn into an immense, roofless church, with thousands of shoes lying at the porch, whereby I learnt it was a Turkish mosque. These had but very dark and misty spectacles called the Koran; yet through these they gazed intently from the summit of their church for their prophet, who falsely promised to return and visit them long ago, but has left his promise unfulfilled.

From thence we entered the Jewish synagogue—these too were unable to flee from the City of Destruction, although they had grey-tinted spectacles, for when they look a film comes over their eyes from want of anointing them with that precious ointment—faith.

Next we came to the Papists. "Here is the church that beguiles the nations," exclaimed the Angel, "it was Hypocrisy that built this church at her own cost. For the Papists encourage, yea, command men to break an oath with a heretic even though sworn on the sacraments." From the chancel we went through the keyholes, up to the top of a certain cell which was full of candles, though it was broad daylight, and where we could see a tonsured priest walking about as if expecting someone to come to him; and ere long there comes a buxom matron, with a fair maid in her wake, bending their knees before him to confess their sins. "My spiritual

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father," said the good wife, "I have a burthen too heavy to bear unless I obtain your mercy to lighten it: I married a member of the Church of England!" "What!" cried the shorn-pate, "married a heretic! wedded to an enemy? forgiveness can never be obtained!" At these words she fainted, while he kept calling down imprecations upon her head. "Woe's me, and what is worse," cried she when come to herself, "I killed him!" "Oh ho! thou hast killed him? Well, that's something towards gaining the reconciliation of the Church; I tell thee now, hadst thou not slain him, thou wouldst never have obtained absolution nor purgatory, but a straight gate and a leaden weight to the devil. But where's your offering, you jade?" he demanded with a snarl. "Here," said she, handing him a considerable bag of money. "Well," said he, "now I'll make your reconciliation: your penance is to remain always a widow lest you should make another bad bargain." When she was gone, the maiden also came forward to make her confession. "Your pardon, father confessor," cried she, "I conceived a child and slew it." "A fair deed, i'faith," said the confessor, "and who might the father be?" "Indeed 'twas one of your monks." "Hush, hush," he cried, "speak no ill of churchmen. {25a} What satisfaction have you for the Church?" "Here it is," said she and handed him a gold trinket. "You must repent, and your penance will be to watch at my bedside to-night," he said with a leer. Hereupon four other shavelings entered, dragging before the confessor a poor wretch, who came about as willingly as he would to the gallows. "Here's for you a rogue," cried one of the four, "who must do penance for disclosing the secrets of the Catholic Church." "What!" exclaimed the confessor, looking towards a dark cell near at hand: "but come, villain, confess what thou hast said?" "Indeed," began the poor fellow, "a neighbour asked me whether I had seen the souls that were groaning underneath the altar on All-souls' day; and I said I had heard the voice, but had seen nothing." "So, sirrah, come now, tell everything." "I said moreover," he continued, "that I had heard that you were playing tricks on us unlettered hinds, that, instead of souls, there was nothing but crabs making a row under the carpet." "Oh, thou hell-hound! cursed knave!" cried the confessor, "but, proceed, mastiff." "And that it was a wire that turned the image of St. Peter, and that it was along a wire the Holy Ghost descended from the roodloft upon the priest." "Thou heir of hell!" cried the shriver, "Ho there, torturers, take him and cast him into that smoky chimney for tale-bearing." "Well, this is the church Hypocrisy insists upon calling the Catholic Church, and she avers that these only are saved," said the Angel; "they once had the proper spectacles, but they cut the glass into a thousand forms; they once had true faith, but they mixed that salve with substances of their own, so that they see no better than the unbelieving."

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Leaving the cell we came to a barn {26a} where someone was delivering a mock sermon extempore, sometimes repeating the same thing thrice in succession. "These," said the Angel, "have the right sort of spectacles to see 'the things which belong unto their peace,' but there is wanting in their ointment one of the most necessary ingredients, namely, perfect love. People come hither for various reasons; some out of respect to their elders, some from ignorance, and many for worldly gain. One would think, looking at their faces, that they are on the point of choking, but they will swallow frogs sooner than starve; for so does Princess Hypocrisy teach those meeting in barns.

"Pray tell," said I, "where may the Church of England be?" "Oh, it is yonder in the upper city, forming a large part of the Catholic Church, but there are in this city a few probationary churches belonging to the Church of England, where the Welsh and English stay for a time on probation, so that they may become fit to have their names enrolled as members of the Catholic Church, and ever blessed be he who shall have his name so enrolled. Yet, more's the pity, there are but few who befit themselves for its citizenship. For too many, instead of looking thitherwards, allow themselves to be blinded by the three princesses down below; Hypocrisy too, keeps many with one eye on the upper city and the other on the lower; yea, Hypocrisy is clever enough to beguile many who have withstood the other enchantresses. Enter here, and thou shalt see more," he said, and snatched me up into the roodloft in one of the Welsh churches, when the people were at service; there we saw some busily whispering, some laughing, some staring at pretty women, others prying their neighbour's dress from top to toe; others, in eagerness for the position due to their rank, keep shoving forward and showing their teeth at one another, others dozing, others assiduous at their devotions, and many of these too, dissimulating. "Thou hast not yet seen, nay, not even among infidels shamelessness so barefaced and public as this," said the Angel, "but so it is, I am sorry to say, there is no worse corruption than the corruption of the best." {28a} Then they went to communion, and everybody appeared fairly reverent before the altar; yet through my friend's glass I could see one taking unto himself with the bread the form of a mastiff, another, that of a mole, another, that of an eagle, a pig or a winged serpent, and a few, ah, how few, received a ray of bright light with the bread and wine. "There," he pointed out, "is a Roundhead, who is going to be sheriff, and because the law calls upon a man to receive the sacrament in the Church before taking office he has come here rather than lose it, and although there are some here who rejoice on seeing him, we have felt no joy at his conversion, because he has only become converted for the occasion. Thus thou perceivest that Hypocrisy, with exceeding boldness, approaches the altar in the presence of the God that cannot be deceived. But though she wields great power in the City of Destruction, she is of no avail in the City of Emmanuel beyond those ramparts."

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Upon that we turned our faces from the great City of Destruction and ascended towards the other city, which was considerably less; and on our way we met several at the upper end of the streets who had made a move as of turning away from the temptations of the gates of Destruction, and making for the gate of life. But they either failed to find it or grew weary on the way; very few went through—one man of rueful countenance, ran in earnest while crowds on all sides derided him, some mocking, {28b} some threatening him, and his kindred clinging to him, begging him not to condemn himself to lose the whole world at one stroke. "I lose but a small portion of it, and were I to lose all, what loss, I pray you, would it be? For what is there in the world to be desired, unless it be deceit, oppression and squalor, wickedness, folly and madness? Contentment and rest is man's supreme happiness—this is not to be found in your city. For who of you is content? {29a} 'Higher, higher,' is the aim of all in the Street of Pride, 'More, more' cry all that dwell in the Street of Lucre, 'Sweet, sweet, yet more' is the voice of everybody in the Street of Pleasure. And as for rest, where is it, and who hath obtained it? If a man is of high degree, adulation and envy almost kill him; if poor, everybody is ready to trample and despise him. If one would prosper, he must set his mind upon being an intriguer; if one would gain respect, let him be a boaster or braggart; if one would be godly, and attend church and approach the altar, he is dubbed a hypocrite, if he abstain from doing so, he becomes at once an antichrist or a heretic; if he is light-hearted, he is called a scoffer, if silent, a morose cur; if he practises honesty, he is but a good-for-nothing fool; if well dressed, he is proud, if not, he is a pig; if gentle of speech, he is double-faced and a rogue, whom none can fathom; if rough, he is an arrogant and froward devil. This is the world you make so much of, and pray you take my share of it and welcome," and at the word he shook himself free of them all, and away he sped boldly to the narrow gate, and spite of all, pushing onwards he entered, and we too at his heels. Upon the battlements on either side of the gate were many men dressed in black, encouraging the man and applauding him. "Who are those in black up yonder?" I asked. "They are the watchmen of King Emmanuel," answered he, "who in their sovereign's name invite men hither and help them through the gate."

By this we were at the gate: it was very low and narrow, and mean, compared with the lower gates; around the door the Ten Commandments were graven—the first table on the right hand and above it, "Thou shalt love God with all thy heart," and above the other table on the left, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," and above the whole "Love not the world neither the things that are in the world." I had not been looking on long before the watchmen began calling in a loud

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voice upon the condemned men: “Flee, flee for your lives!” But it was few that gave any heed at all to them, though some enquired, “What are we to flee from?” “From the prince of this world, who ruleth in the children of disobedience; from the corruption that is in the world through the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; from the wrath that is coming upon you.” “What is your beloved city? " cried a watchman, “but a huge charred roof over the mouth of hell, and were ye here ye should see the conflagration beyond your walls ready to burst in and consume you even unto the bottomless pit.” Some mocked, others, menacing, bade them have done with their wicked nonsense; yet one here and there would ask, “Whither shall we flee?” “Hither,” answered the watchmen, “flee hither to your rightful king, who through us still offers you reconciliation, if ye return to your allegiance, and leave that rebel Belial and his bewitching daughters. However fair they appear, it is all sham; Belial is but a very poor prince at home; he has nought but you as faggots for the fire and for food, both roast and boiled, and never will ye suffice him; never will his hunger be appeased or your pain cease. Who would ever in a moment of madness enter the service of such a malignant slaughterer, and suffer eternal torments, when he might live well under a king who is merciful and kind to his subjects, and who hath never done them aught but good on all sides, and kept them from Belial, so that in the end he might give to each one a kingdom in the realm of light. Oh, ye fools, will ye have that terrible foe, whose lips are parched with thirst for your blood, and reject the compassionate prince who hath given his own blood to save you?” Yet these reasons which would melt the rock seemed to have no good effect upon them, and chiefly because few had the time to listen to them, the others were too intently gazing at the gates; and of those listening, very few reflected thereon, and of these again, many soon forgot them; some would not believe they served Belial, others would not have it that this untrodden little hole was the gate of Life, and that the other bright portals, and this castle, were a delusion to prevent them seeing their doom before coming face to face with it.

Just then, behold a troop of people from the Street of Pride, knocking boldly enough at the gate; but they were all so stiff-necked that they could never enter a place so low without soiling their periwigs and horns, so they sulkily retraced their steps. In their wake there came up a group from the Street of Lucre: “And is this the Gate of Life?” asked one; “Yea,” said the watchman overhead. “What must be done to enter?” he enquired. “Read what is inscribed above the doorway and ye shall know.” The miser read the Ten Commandments through: “Who will say that I have broken one of these?” he exclaimed. But when he looked up, and saw the words, “Love

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not the world, nor the things that are in the world," he was amazed, and could not swallow that hard saying. There was one, green-eyed and envious, who turned back when he read: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." There was a gossip and a slanderer who became dazed on reading: "Thou shalt not bear false witness." When he read, "Thou shalt not kill," "This is not the place for me" quoth the physician. In short, everybody saw something which troubled him, and so they all returned together to consider the matter. I saw no one yet come back who had conned his lesson; they had so many bags and scripts tightly bound to them, that they could never have got through such a narrow needle's eye, even if they had tried to. After that a drove from the Street of Pleasure walked up to the gate. "Where, pray, does this road lead to?" asked one of the watchmen. "This," answered he, "is the way that leads to eternal joy and happiness." Whereupon all strove to enter, but failed, for some were too stout to pass through such a strait opening; others too weak to struggle, being enfeebled through debauchery. "Oh, ye must not attempt to take your baubles with you," said the watchman, observing them; "ye must leave behind your pots and dishes, your minions, and all other things, and then hasten on." "How shall we live?" asked the fiddler, who would have been through long since but that he feared to smash his fiddle. "Ye must trust the king's promise to send after you as many of these things as will do you good," said the watchman. This made them all prick their ears, "Oh, oh!" said one, "a bird in hand is worth two in the bush," and at that they with one accord turned back.

"Let us enter then," said the Angel, and drew me in; and there in the porch I first of all perceived a large baptismal font, and hard by, a well of salt water. "What is this doing in the middle of the road?" I asked. "Because everybody must wash therein before obtaining citizenship in the Court of Emmanuel; it is called the well of repentance." Overhead I could see inscribed "This is the gate of the Lord." The gateway, and street also, widened and became less steep as we went on, and after proceeding a short distance I heard a voice behind me slowly saying, "That is the way, walk ye in it." The street trended upwards, but was very clean and straight, and though the houses there were not so lofty as those in the City of Destruction, they were fairer to behold; if there was less wealth, there was also less dissension and care; if the choice dishes were fewer, pain was more rare; if there was less turmoil, there was less grief and more undoubtedly of true joy. I wondered at the silence and sweet tranquility there, when thinking of what was going on below. Instead of the cursing and swearing, the scoffing, debauchery and drunkenness, instead of the pride and vanity, the torpitude of one quarter and the violence of another, yea, for all the bustle and the pomp,

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the hurly-burly and the brawl which there unceasingly bewildered men, and for the innumerable and unvarying sins, there was nothing to be seen here but sobriety, kindness and cheerfulness, peace and thankfulness, compassion, innocence and contentment stamped upon the face of every man, except where one or two silently wept, grieving that they had tarried so long in the enemy's city. There was no hatred or anger, except towards sin, and this was certain to be overcome; no fear, but of displeasing their king, who was more ready to be reconciled than to be angry with his subjects; no sound, but that of psalms of praise to their Saviour. By this we had come in sight of an exceedingly fine building, oh, so magnificent! No one in the City of Destruction, neither the Turk nor the Mogul nor any one else, has anything equal to it. "This is the Catholic Church," said the Angel. "Is it here Emmanuel holds his court?" asked I. "Yes, this is the only royal court he has on earth." "Are there many crowned heads beneath his sway?" "A few—thy queen, some of the princes of Scandinavia and Germany, and a few other petty princes." "What is that compared with those over whom great Belial rules—emperors and kings without number?" "For all that," said the Angel, "not one of them can move a finger without Emmanuel's permission—no, not even Belial himself. For Emmanuel is his rightful liege too, only that he rebelled, and was in consequence bound in chains to all eternity; although he is still allowed for a short period to visit the City of Destruction where he entices all he can into like rebellion, and to bear a share of his punishment; and though he well knows that by so doing he increases his own penalty, {34a} yet malice and envy urge him on whenever he has a pretext, and so much does he love evil that he seeks to destroy this city and this edifice, although he knows of yore that its Saviour is invincible."

"Prithee, my lord," said I, "may we approach so as to obtain a better view of this magnificent royal court (for my heart waxed warm towards the place since first I had beheld it). "Oh yes, easily," answered the Angel, "for therein is my place, my duty and my work." The nearer I came thereto the more I wondered at the height, strength, splendour, grandeur, and beauty of its every part, how skilful the work was, and how apt the materials. Its base was an enormous rock wondrously fashioned, and of strength impregnable; upon it were living stones, laid and joined in such perfect order that no stone could possibly appear finer elsewhere than in its own place. One part of the church projected in the form of a wonderfully handsome cross, and the Angel saw me looking at it, and said, "Dost thou recognise that part?" I knew not what to answer. "That is the Church of England," he said. I was somewhat startled, and looking up beheld Queen Anne on the church-top enthroned, with a sword in each hand--the one in the left called "Justice," to defend

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her subjects against the inhabitants of the City of Destruction, the one in the right, to preserve them from Belial and his spiritual evils, and this was called “the sword of the Spirit,” or the Word of God. Beneath the left sword lay the statute book of England, and beneath the other, a big Bible. The sword of the Spirit was fiery, and of immense length, and would kill further away than the other would touch. I could see the other princes with like arms defending their part of the church, but I deemed mine own queen fairest of all, and her arms the brightest. At her right hand I observed throngs clad in black—-archbishops, bishops, and learned men upholding with her the sword of the Spirit, while soldiers and officials, with a few lawyers, supported the other sword. I was allowed to rest awhile, by one of the magnificent doors where people came in to obtain membership in the Universal Church, and whereat a tall angel was doorkeeper. The interior of the church was lit up so brilliantly that Hypocrisy dared not show her face therein, and though sometimes she appeared at the threshold she never entered. Just as I saw, in the space of a quarter of an hour, a Papist, who thought that the Catholic Church belonged to the Pope, came and claimed its freedom. “What have you to prove your right?” demanded the porter. “I have plenty of the traditions of the fathers, and of councils of the church,” he answered, “but what need I more certain than the word of the Pope, who sits in the infallible chair?” Then the doorkeeper opened a huge Bible—a load in itself; “This,” said he, “is our only statute book—prove your right from this or go.” And he straightway departed.

Then came a flock of Quakers, who wished to enter with their hats on, but were turned away for being so ill-mannered. After them some of the barn-folk, who had been there only a short while, began to speak: “We have the same statute book as ye have,” they averred, “and therefore show us our privileged place.” “Stay,” said the bright porter, steadfastly gazing on their foreheads, “I will show you something: see yon mark of the rent ye made in the church when leaving it without cause or reason? And would ye now have a place therein? Get ye back to the narrow gate, and wash thoroughly in the well of repentance, to see if ye will reach some of the royal blood ye erstwhile drank {36a} and bring some of the water of that well to moisten the clay, so as to make up yonder rent and then ye are welcome.”

Before we had gone a rood westward I heard a noise coming from above, from among the princes, and everybody, great and small, was taking up arms and donning his armour as if for war, and ere I had time to cast about me for a refuge, the whole sky became black, and the city darker than when an eclipse befalls; the thunder roared, the lightning flashed to and fro, and ceaseless showers of deadly shafts were directed from the lower gates against the Catholic Church, and had there not

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been in each man's hand a shield to receive the fiery darts, and had the foundation rock not been so strong that nothing could ever harm it, we all would have become one burning mass. But alack, this was but a prologue or foretaste of what was to follow; for suddenly the darkness became sevenfold more intense, and Belial himself advanced in the densest cloud, and around him his chief officers both earthly and infernal, ready to receive and accomplish his behest at their several posts. He had entrusted the Pope and his other son of France {37a} with the destruction of the Church of England and its queen; the Turks and Muscovites were to strike at the other sections of the Church, and slay the people, and especially the queen and the other princes, and above all to burn the Bible. The first thing the queen and the other saints did was to bend the knee and tell of their wrongs to the King of Kings in these words: "The stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, oh Emmanuel." And immediately a voice replied: "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." And then commenced the greatest and most terrible conflict that ever took place on earth. When the sword of the Spirit began to be whirled round, Belial and his infernal hosts began to retreat; then the Pope began to waver, while the King of France still held out, though he too was almost giving up heart, seeing the queen and her subjects so united, while he himself was losing ships and men on the one hand, and on the other many of his subjects were in open revolt; and the onslaught of the Turk also was becoming less fierce. Just then, woe's me, I saw my beloved companion shooting away from me into the welkin to join a myriad other bright princes. Thereupon the Pope and the other earthly commanders began to slink off and become prostrate through fear, and the infernal princes to fall by the thousands. The noise of each one falling seemed to me as if a great mountain fell into the depths of the sea, and between this noise and the agitation on losing my friend, I awoke from sleep, and returned to this oppressive sod, most unwillingly, so pleasant and enjoyable it was to be a free spirit, and above all to be in such company, notwithstanding the great danger I was in. Now I had no one to comfort me save the Muse, and she was rather moody—scarcely could I get her to bray out these lines that follow:-

Behold this wondrous edifice,
Both heaven and earth comprising,
The universe and all that is
At God's command arising —
This world, with ramparts wide from pole to pole,
Down from its starry, brilliant dome,
E'en to the depths where angry billows roll,
And beasts that through the forest roam —
All things that sea and sky afford,
Thy faithful subjects eke to be;
A lesser heaven, a home for thee
Oh! man, creation's lord.

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But once that thou desired to know
The ways of sin, seductive,
The hellish tempter, to our woe,
Became a power destructive;
He cursed our earth and ruin brought on all,
Yea, very nature felt the bane —
Its blighted walls now totter to their fall,
And soon disorder rules again.
This earthly palace then at last,
Unroofed, dismantled and decayed,
A hideous, barren waste is laid
By desolation's blast.

Behold oh, man! this glorious place
In the empyrean hovering
While all is but a treach'rous face
Foul swamps and quagmires covering.
Thy sin, that whelmed this earth in days of yore,
Shall draw upon it quenchless fire
With flaming torrents wildly rushing o'er —
A prey to conflagration dire;
If thou wouldst 'scape this dreadful fate,
I pray thee counsel take from me,
To Mercy's city straightway flee
For life within its gate.

Behold that city's peerless might
Withstanding all oppression —
Then flee thereto in thy sad plight,
Be free from sin's possession.
Behold thy refuge in this dreary land
Where all may find true, peaceful rest,
A rock, impregnable on every hand,
Where perfect love reigns ever blest;
We sinful men, the way must search,
And there in faith for pardon pray,
And live a blissful, tranquil day
Within the Holy Church.

II.—THE VISION OF DEATH IN HIS NETHERMOST COURT

One long, cold, and dark winter's night, when one-eye'd Phoebus well nigh had reached his utmost limit in the south and, from afar, lowered upon Great Britain and all the Northern land, and when it was much warmer in the kitchen of Glyn Cywarch {43a} than at the top of Cader Idris, and better in a cosy room with a warm bedfellow than in a shroud in the lychgate, I was meditating upon a talk I had had by the fireside with a neighbour concerning the brevity of human life, and how certain it was that death would come to all, and yet how uncertain its coming. Thus engaged, I had just lain down, and was half-asleep, when I felt a heavy weight stealthily creeping over me, from head to heel, so that I could not move a finger—my tongue only was unbound. I perceived, methought, a man upon my chest, and above him, a woman. After eyeing him carefully I recognised by his strong odours, dewy locks and blear eyes, that the man was no other than my good Master Sleep. "I pray you, sir," cried I, squeaking, "what have I done to you that you bring that witch here to torment me?" "Hush," said he, "it is only my sister Nightmare; we twain are going to pay our brother Death {43b} a visit, and want a third to accompany us, and lest thou shouldst resist we came upon thee, just as he does, unawares. Consequently come thou must, willy-nilly." "Alas,"

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I cried, “must I die?” “Nay,” said Nightmare, “we will spare thee this time.” “But an’t please you,” said I, “your brother Death has never spared anyone yet who came beneath his stroke—he who wrestled with the Lord of Life himself, though it was little he gained by that contest.” Nightmare, at that word, rose up angrily and departed. “Come along,” cried Sleep, “thou wilt never repent of thy journey.” “Well,” said I, “may there never be night in Sleepton, and may Nightmare never have rest save on an awl’s point if ye bring me not back where ye found me.”

Then away we went over hills and through forests, across seas and valleys, over castles and towers, rivers and rocks, and where should we alight but at one of the gates of the daughters of Belial, at the rear of the City of Destruction, where I noticed that the three gateways of Destruction contracted into one at the back, and opened upon the same place—a murky, vaporous, pestilent place, full of noisome mists, and terrible lowering clouds. “Prithee, good sir,” asked I, “what place be this?” “The chambers of Death,” replied Sleep. And no sooner had I asked than I could hear some wailing, groaning, and sighing; some deliriously muttering to themselves or feebly moaning, others in great travail, and with all the signs of man’s departure from life; and, now and then, would one give a long-drawn gasp, and lapse into silence. At that moment, I heard a key being turned in a lock, and at the noise I looked around for the door, and gazing steadfastly, perceived thousands upon thousands of doors, seemingly afar off but really close at hand. “Please, Master Sleep, where do these doors open upon?” asked I. “Upon the land of Oblivion,” was the answer, “an extensive domain {44a} under the sceptre of my brother Death, and this great rampart is the boundary of vast Eternity.” By this I could see that there was a little death-imp at every door, each one bearing arms, and a name different from that of his fellows; though it was evident that they, one and all, were the ministers of the same king. Nevertheless they were continually quarrelling about the sick; one would snatch the patient to take him as a gift through his own door, while another strove to take him through his.

On our approach, I observed that over each door the name of the Death who kept it was written, and also that at each door were an hundred various things left all of a heap, showing plainly that those who went through were in haste. Over one door I saw “Hunger,” and yet on the floor close by were full purses, and bags, and brass-nailed trunks. “This is the Porch of Misers,” said Sleep. “Whom do those rags belong to?” “To the misers, mostly,” he replied, “but there are some which belong to idlers, gossipmongers and others, who, poor in everything except in spirit, preferred to die of hunger rather than ask for help.” Next door was Death-by-Cold, and when I came opposite him I could hear much shuddering and shivering, and

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at his door, were many books, pots and flagons, a few sticks and bludgeons, compasses, cords and ship's tackle. "Scholars have gone this way," said I. "Yea, lonely and helpless, far from the succour of those who loved them, their very garments stolen from them. Those," he continued, pointing to the pots, "are relics of the boon companions, whose feet were benumbed under the benches, while their heads were seething in drink and noise; those things over there belonged to those who journeyed amid snow-clad mountains, and to North Sea traders." The next was a lanky skeleton called Fear-Death—so transparent you could see he had no heart; at his door, too, there were bags and chests, bars and strongholds. Through this one went userers and traitors, oppressors and murderers, though many of these last called at the next door, at which was a Death named Gallows, with a rope ready round his neck. Next to him was Love-Death, and at his feet thousands of musical instruments and song-books, love-letters, spots and pigments to beautify the face, and hundreds of tinselled toys for the same purpose, together with a few swords: "With these rivals have fought duels for their mistresses, and some have killed themselves," said Sleep. I could see that this Death was sandblind. At the next door was a Death whose colour was worst of all, and whose liver was entirely gone—his name was Envy. "This is the Death," said Sleep, "which brings hither those who have lost money, slanderers, and a rideress or two, who are jealous of the law which demands that a wife should submit herself unto her husband." "Pray, sir, what is a rideress?" "A rideress is a woman who will over-ride her husband, her neighbourhood, and the whole country if she can, and by dint of long riding, at last, rides a devil from that door down to the bottomless pit." Next was the door of Ambition-Death for those who hold their heads high, and break their necks, for want of looking on the ground they tread on; at this door lay crowns, sceptres, standards, petitions for offices, and all manner of arms of heraldry and war.

But before I had time to notice any more of these innumerable doors, I heard a voice bidding me by name to be dissolved, and at the word I felt myself beginning to melt like a snowball in the heat of the sun; then my master gave me a sleeping draught, so that I slumbered; and when I awoke, he had taken me by some road or other far away on the other side of the castle. I perceived myself in a pitch-dark vale of infinite radius, methought, and shortly, I saw by a few bluish lights, like the flickering flame of a candle, countless, ah! countless shades of men, some afoot and some on horseback, rushing back and fro like the wind, in awful silence and solemnity; the land was barren, bleak and blasted, without either grass or hay, trees or animals, save deadly beasts and poisonous vermin of every kind—serpents, snakes, lice, frogs, worms, locusts, gids and all such that exist on man's

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corruption. Through a myriad shades and reptiles, graves, churchyards and tombs, we made our way to view the land unmolested, until I happened to see some turning round and looking at me; in an instant, notwithstanding the prevailing silence, a whisper passed from one to another that there was a man from earth there. “A man from earth!” cried one, “a man from earth,” exclaimed another, while they crowded round me, like caterpillars, from every quarter. “Which way came you, sirrah?” asked a morkin of a death-imp. “Indeed, sir,” said I, “I know not any more than you do.” “What is your name?” he asked. “Call me here in your own country what ye will, but at home I am called the Sleeping Bard.”

At that word I could see an ancient mannikin, bent double, head to feet, like a bramble, straightening himself, and looking at me more malignantly than the red devil, and without a word he hurled a big skull at my head, but, thanks to a sheltering tombstone, missed me. “Truce, sir, I pray you,” cried I, “to a stranger who was never here before, and will never come again, could I but once find the way home.” “I’ll make you remember you’ve been here,” quoth he, and, again setting upon me with a thighbone, he beat me most unmercifully, while I dodged about as best as I could. “Ho ho!” I cried, “this country is very unmannerly towards strangers; is there no justice of the peace here?” “Peace, indeed,” said he, “thou, surely, hast no right to sue for peace, who disturbest the dead in their graves.” “Pray, sir, might I know your name, for I wot not that I have ever molested anyone from this country?” “Sirrah!” cried he, “know then that I, and not you, am the Sleeping Bard, and have been left in peace these nine centuries by all but you,” and again he set upon me. “Withhold, brother,” said Merlin {48a} who stood near, “be not too hasty; thank him rather for that he hath kept your name in respected memory on earth.” “In great respect, forsooth,” quoth he, “by such a blockhead as this. Are you, sirrah, versed in the four and twenty metres? Can you trace the line of Gog and Magog and of Brutus son of Silvius {48b} down to a century before the destruction of Troy? Can you prophesy when, and how the wars between the lion and the eagle, and between the stag and the red deer will end? Can you?” “Ho there! let me ask him a question,” said another who stood by a huge seething cauldron, {48c} “draw near, and tell me the meaning of this:-

“Upon the face of earth I’ll be
  “Until the judgment day,
“And whether I be fish or flesh
  “No man can ever say.” {48d}

“I would know your name, sir,” said I, “so that I might the more befittingly give answer.” “I am Taliesin, Chief of the Western Bards, {48e} and those are lines from my mystery-song.” “I know not what your meaning may be, if it be not the yellow plague which destroyed Maelgwn Gwynedd, {49a} slew you upon the sea, and divided you between the ravens and fishes.” “Tush, you

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fool," cried he, "I was foretelling of my two callings—as lawyer and poet—and which sayest thou now bears greatest resemblance, whether a lawyer to a raven, or a poet to a whale? How many will a single lawyer lay bare of flesh to swell his own paunch, and oh! so callously doth he shed blood and leave the man half dead! The poet, too, what fish can gulp as much as he? And though he hath always a sea round him, not all the ocean can quench his thirst. And when a man is both a poet and a lawyer, who can tell whether he is fish or flesh, and especially if he be a courtier as well, as I was, and had to change his taste with every mouth. But tell me, are there many of these folk now on earth?" "Yes, plenty," answered I, "if a man can patch together any sort of metre, straightway he becomes a chaired bard. And of the others, there is such a plague of barristers, petty lawyers, and clerks that the locusts of Egypt preyed less heavily on the country than they. In your time, sir, there were only roadside bargains and a hands-breadth of writing on the purchase of a hundred pound farm, and a cairn or an Arthur's quoit {49b} raised as a memorial of the purchase and boundaries. People have not the courage to do so nowadays, but more cunning, knavery, and written parchment, wide as a cromlech, is necessary to bind the bargain, and for all that it would be strange if no flaw existed or were contrived therein." "Well, well," said Taliesin, "I would not be worth a straw there, I may as well be here; truth will never be found where there are many bards, nor justice where many lawyers, until health be found where there be many doctors."

Upon this a grey-haired, writhled shrimp, who had heard of the presence of an earthly man, came and fell at my feet, weeping profusely. "Alack, poor fellow," cried I, "what art thou?" "One who suffers too much wrong on earth day by day," he replied, "and your soul must obtain me justice." "What is thy name?" I enquired. "I am called Someone," was the answer, "and there is no love-message, slander, lie, or tale to breed quarrels, but that I am blamed for most of them. 'In sooth,' said one, 'she is an excellent wench, and has spoken highly of you to Someone, although someone great was seeking her.' 'I heard Someone,' said another, 'reckoning a debt of nine hundred pounds on such and such an estate.' 'I saw Someone yesterday,' said the beggar, 'with a mottled neckerchief, like a sailor, who had come with a grain vessel to the next port;' and so every rag and tag mauls me to suit his own evil purpose. Some call me 'Friend.' 'A friend told me,' saith one, 'that so and so does not intend leaving a single farthing to his wife, and that there is no love lost between them.' Others further disgrace me and call me a crow: 'a crow tell me there is some trickery going on,' they say. Yea, some call me by a more honoured name—Old Man, and yet not a half of the omens, prophecies, and cures attributed to me are really mine. I never counselled

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walking the old way if the new were better, and I never intended forbidding men to church by saying: 'Frequent not the place where thou art most welcome,' and a hundred such. But Someone is the name generally given me, and most often heard of when anything uncommonly bad happens; for if you ask one where that scandalous lie was told and who told it. 'Indeed,' he will say, 'I know not, but Someone in the company said it,' and if you enquire of all the company concerning the story, all have heard it of Someone, but no one knows of whom. Is it not a shameful wrong?" he cried, "I beg of you to inform everybody who names me that I uttered nought of such things. I never invented or repeated a lie to disgrace anyone, nor a single tale to cause kinsmen to fly at each other's throats; I do not come near them; I know nothing of their scandal, or business, or accursed secrets—they must not charge me with their evils, but their own corrupt brains."

Hereupon a little Death, one of the King's secretaries, asked me my name, and bade Master Sleep carry me at once into the King's presence. I had to go, though most unwilling, by reason of the power that took me up like a whirlwind, 'twixt high and low, thousands of miles back on our left, till we came, a second time, in sight of the boundary wall, and in an enclosed corner we could see a vast palace, roofless and in ruins, extending to the wall wherein were the countless doors, all of which led to this terrible court. Its walls were built of human skulls with hideous, grinning teeth; the clay was black with mingled tears and sweat, the lime ruddy with gore. On the summit of each tower stood a Deathling, with a quivering heart on the point of his shaft. Around the court were a few trees—a poisonous yew or twain, or a deadly cypress, and in these owls, ravens, vampires and the like, make their nests, and cry unceasingly for flesh, although the whole place is but one vast, putrid shamble. The pillars of the hall were made of thighbones, and those of the parlour of shinbones, while the floors were formed of layer upon layer of all manner of charnel.

I had not to wait a longwhile ere I came in view of a tremendous altar, where we could see the King of Terrors devouring human flesh and blood, while a thousand impish deaths, from every hole, were continually feeding him with warm, fresh meat. "Here is a rogue," said the Death that led me thither, "whom I found in the midst of the land of Oblivion, having approached so light-footed that your majesty never tasted a bite of him," "How can that be?" demanded the king, opening his jaws, wide as a chasm, to swallow me. Whereupon I turned trembling to Sleep. "It was I who brought him hither," said he. "Well then, for my brother Sleep's sake," said the awful and lanky monarch, "you can retrace your steps for the nonce; but beware of me the next time." Having been for some time cramming his gluttonous maw with carrion, he caused his subjects to be called together, and moved

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from the altar to a very lofty and dreadful throne, to adjudge newly-arrived prisoners. In an instant, lo! the dead in countless multitudes paid homage to the king, and took their places in wonderful array. King Death was in his regal robe of brilliant scarlet, whereon depicted were wives and children weeping and husbands sighing; on his head a dark-red, three-cornered cap, a gift his cousin Lucifer had sent him, on the corners of which were written Grief, Sorrow, and Woe. Above his head were a myriad pictures of battles on land and sea, of towns aflame, of the earth yawning, and of the waters of the deluge; the ground beneath his feet was nought else than the crowns and sceptres of all the kings he had ever conquered. At his right hand sat Fate with a morose and scowling visage, reading an enormous tome that lay before him; at his left, was an old man called Time, warping innumerable threads of gold, silver, copper, and many of iron—some threads were growing better towards the end, a myriad worse; along the threads were marked hours, days and years, and Fate, at his book, cut the thread of life and opened the doors in the boundary wall between the two worlds.

I had not been looking about me long, when I heard four fiddlers, just dead, summoned to the bar. "How is it," asked the King of Terrors, "that ye, who are so found of joy, did not stay on yonder side of the chasm? For on this side joy never existed." "We have done no man ever any hurt," said one of the minstrels, "but on the contrary have made them merry, and quietly took whatever was given us for our pains." "Have ye caused no one," said Death, "to lose time from his work, or to absent himself from church, eh?" "No," replied another, "unless we were some Sundays after service in an inn till the morrow, or in summer time on the village green, and indeed we had a better and more beloved congregation than the parson." "Away, with them to the land of Oblivion," cried the terrible king, "bind the four, back to back, and pitch them to their partners, to dance barefoot on glowing hearths, and scrape their fiddles for ever without praise or pay."

The next to come to the bar was a king from near Rome. "Raise thy hand, caitiff," bade one of the officers. "I hope," said he, "ye have somewhat better manners and favor for a king." "Sirrah, you too," said Death, "ought to have kept on the other side of the gulf where everybody is king; but know that, on this side, there are none besides myself and another, who dwelleth down below, and you shall see that that king and myself will set no value upon the degree of your greatness, but rather upon the degree of your wickedness, and so make your punishment proportionate to your crimes; therefore give answer to the questions." "Sir, allow me to tell you that you have no authority to arrest and examine me," said he, "I hold a pardon under the Pope's own hand for all my sins. Because I served him faithfully, he gave me a dispensation to go straight to Paradise,

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without a moment's stay in Purgatory." At that the king, and all the lean jaws, gave a dismal grin in imitation of laughter, and the other, angered at their laughing, ordered them to show him the way. "Silence, lost fool!" cried Death, "Purgatory lies behind thee, on the other side of the wall, for it was in life thou hadst ought to have purified thyself, and Paradise is on the right, beyond that chasm. Now there is no way of escape for thee, neither across this abyss to Paradise, nor through the boundary wall back to earth; for wert thou to give thy kingdom—though thou hast not a ha'penny to give—the warder of those doors would not let thee look once, even through the keyhole. This is called the irremeable wall, for once it is passed there is no hope of return. But since you are so high in the Pope's favor, {54a} you shall go and get his bed ready with his predecessor, and there you may kiss his toe for ever, and he, the toe of Lucifer." At the word, four death-imps raised him up, now trembling like an aspen leaf, and snatched him away out of sight, with the speed of lightning.

Next after him, came a man and woman; he had been a boon companion, and she a kind and lavish maid, but there they were called by their plain, unvarnished names, a drunkard and a harlot. "I hope," said the drunkard, "I may obtain some favor in your eyes, for I despatched hither on a flood of good ale many a fatted prey, and when I failed to slay others, I willingly came myself to feed you." "By the court's leave," said the minion, "not half so many as I have despatched to you as a burnt offering ready for table." "Ha, ha," exclaimed Death, "it was to feed your own accursed lusts, and not me, that all this was done. Let them be bound together and hurled into the land of darkness." And so they too were hurried away headlong.

Next to them came seven recorders, who, on being bidden to raise their hands {55a} to the bar, pretended not to hear the command, for their palms were so thickly greased. One of them, bolder than the rest, began to argue, "We ought to have had fair citation, in order to prepare our reply, instead of being attacked unawares." "Oh, we are not bound to give you any particular notice," said Death, "because ye have, everywhere, and everywhile throughout your lives, warning of my advent. How many sermons on the mortality of man have ye heard? How many books, how many graves, knells and fevers, how many messages and signs, have ye seen? What is your Sleep but my brother? Your heads but my image? Your daily food but dead creatures? Seek not to lay the blame of your ill hap on my shoulders—ye would not hear of the summons, although ye had it an hundred times." "Pray what have you against us?" asked one ruddy recorder. "What indeed?" exclaimed Death, "the drinking the sweat and blood of the poor, and the doubling your fees." "Here is an honest man," he said, pointing to a wrangler behind them, "who knows I never did aught but what was fair, and it is not fair in you to detain us here, seeing you have no specific charge to prove against us." "Ha, ha!" cried Death, "ye shall bring proof against yourselves; place them on the verge of the precipice before the throne of Justice; there they will obtain justice, though they practised it not."

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There were yet seven other prisoners, who kept up such commotion and clamour—-some blandishing, gnashing the teeth and uttering threats, others giving advice and so on. Scarcely had they been summoned to the bar than the whole court darkened sevenfold more hideously than before, a murmuring and great confusion arose around the throne, and Death became more livid than ever. Upon enquiry it seemed that one of Lucifer's envoys had arrived, bearing a letter to Death, concerning these seven prisoners; and shortly, Fate called for silence to read the letter which, as far as I can recollect, was as follows:-

"*Lucifer*, King of the Kings of Earth, Prince of Perdition and Archruler of the Deep, To our natural son, mightiest and most terrible King Death, greeting, wishing you supremacy and booty without end:

"Whereas some of our swift messengers, who are always out espying, have informed us that there lately came into your royal court seven prisoners of the seven most worthless and dangerous species in the world, and that you are about to hurl them over the precipice into my realm: our advice is, that you endeavour, by every possible way, to let them return to the earth; there they will be more serviceable—to you, in the matter of food, to me, for supplying better company. We had too much trouble with their partners in days gone by, and our kingdom is, even now, unsettled. Wherefore, turn them back or retain them yourself; for, by the infernal crown, if thou cast them hither, I will undermine the foundations of thy kingdom, until it fall and become one with mine own great realm.

"From our Court, on the miry Swamp in the glowing Evildom, in the year of our reign, 5425."

King Death, his visage green and livid, stood for a time undecided. But while he was meditating, Fate turned upon him such a grim frown that he trembled. "Sire," said Fate, "consider well what you are about to do. I dare not allow anyone to repass the bounds of Eternity—the insurmountable ramparts, nor deign you harbour any here, wherefore, send them on to their doom, spite of the great Evil One. He has been able to array in a moment many a haul of a thousand or ten thousand souls, and allot each one his place, and what difficulty will he have with these seven now, however dangerous they may be? Whatever happen, even if they overturn the infernal government, send them thither instantly, lest I be commanded to crush thee to untimely nothingness. As for his menaces, they are false, and although thy doom, and that of yon ancient (looking at Time), are not many pages hence, yet, thou need have no fear of sinking down to Lucifer, for however glad everybody there would be to have thee, they never will; for the eternal rocks of steel and adamant, which roof Hell, are somewhat too firm to be shattered." Whereupon Death, in great agitation, called for someone to indite thus his reply:-

“*Death*, King of Terrors, Conqueror of Conquerors, To our most revered kinsman and neighbour, Lucifer, Monarch of the Endless Night, and Emperor of the Sheer Vortex, Salutation:

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“After giving earnest thought to this your royal wish, it seemeth to us more advantageous, not only to our state, but also to your vast realm, that these prisoners be sent to the furthest point possible from the portals of the impervious wall, left their putrid odour should so terrify the entire City pf Destruction that no one would ever enter Eternity from that side of the gulf, and I, in consequence, would be unable to cool my sting, and you should have no commerce betwixt earth and hell. But I leave you to judge them, and to cast them into the cells you deem most secure and befitting.

“From our Lower Court in the Great Tollgate of Destruction: from the year of the restoration of my Kingdom, 1670.”

After hearing all this, I was itching to know what manner of folk these seven might be, seeing that the devils themselves feared them so much. But ere long, the Clerk to the Crown calls them by name, as follows: “Mister Busybody, alias Finger-in-every-pie.” This fellow was so fussily and busily directing the others, that he had no leisure to answer to his name until Death threatened to sunder him with his dart. Then, “Mr. Slanderer, alias Foe-of-Good-Fame,” was called, but no response came. “He is rather bashful to hear his titles,” said the third, “he can’t abide the nicknames.” “Have you no titles, I wonder?” asked the Slanderer, “call Mr. Honey-tongued Swaggerer, alias Smoothgulp, alias Venomsmile.” “Here,” cried a woman, who was standing near, pointing to the Swaggerer. “Ha, Madam Huntress!” cried he, “your humble servant; I am glad to see you well, I never saw a more beautiful woman in breeches, but woe’s me to think how pitiable is the country, having lost in you such an unrivalled ruler; and yet, your pleasant company will make hell itself somewhat better.” “Oh, thou scion of evil,” cried she, “no one need a worse hell than to be with thee—thou art enough.” Then the crier called, “Huntress, alias Mistress o’ the Breeches.” “Here,” answered someone else, she herself not saying a word because they did not “madam” her. Next was called the Schemer, alias Jack-of-all-Trades. But he, too, failed to answer, for he was assiduously plotting to escape the Land of Despair. “Here, here,” cried someone behind him, “here he is spying for a place to break out of your great court, and unless you be on your guard, he has a considerable plot against you.” “Then,” said the Schemer, “Let him also be called, to wit, The Accuser-of-his-Brethren, alias Faultfinder, alias Complaint-monger.” “Here, here he is,” cried the Litigious Wrangler—for each one knew the other’s name, but none would acknowledge his own. “You are also called,” said the Accuser, “Mr. Litigious Wrangler, alias Cumber-of-Courts.” “Witness, witness, all of you, what names the knave has given me,” cried the Wrangler. “Ha, ha, ’tis not according to the font, but according to the fault, that everybody is named in this land,” said Death, “and with your permission, Mr. Wrangler, these names must stick to you for evermore.” “Indeed,” quoth the Wrangler, “by the devil, I’ll make it hot for you; although you may put me to death, you have no right to nickname me. I shall enter a plaint for this and for false imprisonment, against you and your kinsman Lucifer, in the Court of Justice.”

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By this I could see the armies of Death in array and armed, looking to the king for the word of command. Then the king, standing erect on his throne, spoke as follows: “My terrible and invincible hosts, spare neither care nor haste to despatch these prisoners out of my territories, lest they corrupt my country; throw them in bonds headlong over the hopeless precipice. But as to the eighth, this cumbrous fellow who menaces me, let him free on the brink beneath the Court of Justice, so that he may make good his charge against me, if he can.” No sooner had he sat down than the whole deadly armies surrounded and bound the prisoners, and led them towards their appointed dwelling. And when I, having gone out, half-turned to look at them. “Come hither,” cried Sleep, and flew with me to the top of the loftiest tower on the court; from whence I saw the prisoners going forth to their everlasting doom. Before long a sudden whirlwind arose, and drove away the pitch-dark mist usually hovering over the Land of Oblivion, and in the wan light, I could see myriads of livid candles, and by their gleam, I obtained a far-off view of the mouth of the bottomless abyss. But if that was a horrible sight, overhead was one still more horrible—Justice, on her throne, guarding the portal of hell, and holding a special tribunal above the entrance thereto, to pronounce the doom of the damned as they arrive. I beheld the seven hurled headlong over the terrible verge, and the Wrangler, too, rushing to throw himself over, lest he should once look on the Court of Justice, for, alas, the sight thereof was intolerable to guilty eyes. I was only gazing from a distance, yet I beheld more dreadful horrors than I can now relate, nor then could endure; for my spirit so strove and panted through exceeding fear, and struggled so violently, that all the bonds of Sleep were burst; my soul returned to its wonted functions, and I rejoiced greatly to perceive myself still among the living, and resolved to lead a better life, for I would rather suffer affliction an hundred years in the paths of holiness than, perforce, take another glance at the horrors of that night.

1 Must I leave home and fatherland,
  And every charm and pleasure?
Leave honored name and high degree
  Enjoyed in life’s brief measure?

2 Leave beauty, strength, and wisdom, too,
  All won in hard employment, —
All I have learnt, and all I’ve loved,
  And all this world’s enjoyment.

3 Can I evade the stroke of Death
  That rends all ties asunder?
Do not his awful shambles gape
  For me to be his plunder?

4 Ye gilded men would fain enjoy
  The wealth your souls engrossing,

But ye must bow to him and go
The journey of his choosing.

Ye favored fair, whose lightest word
Has caused ten thousand errors,
Think not your garish, tinselled charms
Can blind the King of Terrors.

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6 Ye who rejoice in heedless youth
  And follow fleeting pleasures,
Know that ye cannot conquer Death
  By valor, arts, or treasures.

7 Ye who exult in madding song
  The giddy dances treading,
Think not that all the mirth of France
  Can thwart the fate you're dreading.

8 Ye who have roamed the wide world o'er,
  Where have ye found the tower,
With walls and portals strong enough
  To check Death's awful power?

9 Statesmen and learned sages, all
  Of godlike understanding,
What will your craft and skill avail?
  'Tis Death who is commanding.

10 The greatest foes of man are now
  The world, the flesh, the devil;
And yet, ere long, we'll surely find
  In Death a greater evil.

11 How little now it seems to die —
  To gain the suit or lose it?
But when the doom is of thyself
  How great thy care to chose it?

12 We care, at present, not a jot
  Which way our gains may turn us;
Eternal life, howe'er so great,
  We think can not concern us.

13 But when thou'rt hedged on every side
  And Death himself is nearest,
For one brief, ling'ring space we'll give
  Whate'er to us is dearest.

14 Think not that thou canst make thy terms
  For thine eternal dwelling,
On either side of that dread gulf,
  With death thy steps compelling.

15 Repentence, faith, and righteousness,
  Alone are thy Salvation,
And in the agony of Death
  Shall be thy consolation.

16 And when the world is passing by,
  Its joys and pleasures ending,
Infinite thou wilt deem their worth
  When to the bourne descending!

III.—THE VISION OF HELL

One April morning, bright and mild, when earth was with verdure laden, and Britain, like a paradise, had donned its brilliant livery, foretelling summer's sunshine, I sauntered along the banks of the Severn, while around me, chaunting their sweet carols, the forest's little songsters in rivalry poured forth songs of praise to their Maker; and I, who was far more bounden than they to give praise, at one while lifted up my voice with the gentle winged choristers, and at another read "The Practice of Piety." {67a} For all that, my previous visions would not from my mind, but time after time broke in upon every other thought. They continued to trouble me until after careful reasoning I concluded that every vision is a heaven-sent warning against sin, and that therefore it was my duty to write them down as a warning to others also. And whilst occupied with this work, and sadly endeavouring to recall some of those awful memories, there fell upon me at my task such drowsiness that soon opened the way for Master Sleep to glide in perforce. No sooner had sleep taken possession of my senses than there drew nigh unto me a glorious apparition

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upon the form of a young man, tall and exceeding fair; his raiments were whiter sevenfold than snow, the brightness of his face darkened the sun, his wavy, golden locks rested on his brow in two shining coronal wreaths. “Come with me, thou mortal being,” he exclaimed, when he had drawn near. “Who art thou, Lord?” said I. “I am the Angel of the realms of the North,” answered he, “guardian of Britain and its queen. I am one of the princes who stand below the throne of the Lamb, receiving his commands to protect the Gospel against all its enemies in Hell, in Rome and in France, in Constantinople, in Africa and in India, and wherever else they may be, devising plans for its destruction. I am the Angel who saved thee beneath the Castle of Belial, and who showed thee the vanity and madness of all the earth, the City of Destruction and the splendor of Emmanuel’s City; and again have I come at his bidding to show thee greater things, because thou art seeking to make good use of what thou hast seen erstwhile.” “How can it be, Lord,” asked I, “that your glorious highness, guardian of kings and kingdoms, does condescend to associate with carrion such as I?” “Ah,” said he, “in our sight a beggar’s virtue is more than a king’s majesty. What if I am greater than all the kings of earth, and supreme to many of the countless lords of heaven? Yet, since our eternal Sovereign vouchsafed to take upon Himself such unutterable humiliation—put on one of your bodies, lived in your midst, and died to save you, how dare I deem it otherwise than too sublime for my office to serve thee and the meanest of men, who are so high in my Master’s favor? Hence, spirit, cast off thine earthy mould!” he cried, gazing upwards: and at the word, I beheld him fall free of all bodily form, and snatch me up to the vault of heaven, through the region of thunder and lightning, and all the glowing armouries of the empyrean; higher, immeasureably higher than I had previously been with him, and where the earth appeared scarcely wider than a stack-yard. Having allowed me to rest awhile, he hurried me upwards a myriad miles, until the sun appeared far beneath us; through the milky way, past Pleiades, and many other stars of appalling magnitude, catching a distant glimpse of other worlds. And after journeying for a long time, we come at last to the confines of the great eternity, in sight of the two courts of the vauntful King of Death—one to the right, the other to the left, but very far apart from one another as there lay an immense void between them. I asked whether I might go and see the court on my right hand, for I observed that this was not at all like the other I had previously seen. “Thou shalt perchance,” said he, “see, somewhile, more of the difference there is between them. But now we must proceed in another direction.” At that we turned away from the little world, and across the intervening space we let ourselves descend into the Eternal Realm between the two courts, into the formless void, a

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boundless tract, most deep and dark, chaotic and uninhabited, at one time cold, at another hot, {69a} now silent, now resounding with the roaring of cataracts falling and quenching the fires, and anon of the fire bursting out and burning up the water. Thus, there was neither order nor completeness, nor life nor form: nought but this dazing dissonance, this mysterious stupor which would have made me for ever blind, had not my friend laid bare once more his vesture of heavenly sheen. By the light he gave I saw before me to the left the Land of Oblivion, and the borders of the Wilds of Destruction; and to my right, methought, the base of the ramparts of Glory. "This is the great abysm between Abraham and Dives," said he, "which is called Chaos: this is the land of the matter which God did first create, and here is the seed of every living thing; of these the Almighty Word created your world and all it doth contain—water, fire, air, earth, beasts, fishes, insects, birds and the human body; but your souls are of a higher and nobler origin and stock."

Through the huge, frightful chaos we at length broke forth to the left; and ere we had journey'd far therein where every object grew uglier and uglier, I felt my heart in my throat, and my hair erect like a hedgehog's bristles, even before perceiving anything; but what I did perceive was a sight no tongue can describe nor the mind of a mortal dwell upon. I fainted. Oh, that limitless abyss, so dire and terrible, opening out upon another world! How those awful flames crackled incessantly as they darted upwards above the banks of the accursed ravine, and the shafts of impetuous lightning rent the thick, black smoke which the yawning chasm belched forth! When my beloved companion awoke me, he gave me ambrosial water to drink, of most excellent flavor and color. After drinking this heavenly water I felt some wonderful power within me,—-wit, courage, faith, and many other divine virtues. Thereupon I drew nigh with him unfearingly to the edge of the precipice, shrouded in the veil, whilst the flames parted asunder around us, and dared not touch denizens of the supernal regions. Then from the edge of that dread gulf, we let ourselves descend, like two stars falling from the canopy of heaven, down, down for myriad millions of miles, over many sulphurous rocks, and many a hideous cataract and fiery precipice, where all things bent downwards ever, with impending aspect; yet they all avoided us, except when once I poked my nose out of the veil, there struck me such a stifling and choking stench as would have ended me had he not saved me out of hand with the reviving water. When I had recovered, I could see that we were come to a halt, for in all that stupenduous chasm no sooner stay were possible, so sheer and slippery was it. There my Guide allowed me once more to rest; and during that respite it chanced that the thunder and the fierce whirlwinds were a little hushed, and above the roar

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of the foaming cataracts, {71a} I could hear from afar, louder than all, the noise of such awful shrieks, wails, cries, and loud groans, of swearing, cursing and blaspheming, that I would rather have set a bargain upon my ears than listen. And before we had moved an inch, we heard from above such hip-drip-drop that had we not straightway stepped aside, there would have fallen upon us hundreds of unhappy men whom a host of fiends were hurling headlong, and too hurriedly to a woful fate. “Ho, slowly sir!” quoth one sprite, “lest you displace your curly lock;” and to another “Madam, will you have your soft cushion? I fear me you will be much disordered before you reach your resting-place.”

The strangers were most reluctant to advance, insisting that they were on the wrong road; still, onward they went, up to the bank of a wide, dark torrent, whilst we followed in their wake and crossed over with them, my companion, meanwhile, holding the water to my nostrils to protect me from the stench rising out of the river. When I beheld some of the inhabitants (for till now I had not seen a single devil, though I had heard their voices) I asked: “What, pray, my Guide, is the name of this death-like stream?” “The river of the Evil One,” answered he, “wherein all his subjects are immersed to render them accustomed to the country; its cursed waters changed their countenance, washing away every relic of goodness, every shadow of hope and happiness.” And on seeing the horde pass through, I could perceive no difference in loathsomeness between the devils and the damned. Some wished to crouch at the bottom of the river, there to remain in suffocation to all eternity, rather than find further on a worse dwelling; but as the proverb says: “He whom the devil urges must run,” so these damned beings, thrust on by the demons, were swiftly borne along the stream of destruction to their eternal ruin; where I too saw at the first glimpse more tortures and torments than man’s heart can imagine, far less a tongue repeat; to see one of which was enough to cause one’s hair to stand on an end, his blood to freeze, his flesh to melt, his bones to give way, yea and his spirit to swoon within him. Why speak I of such deeds as the impaling or sawing of men alive, the tearing of the flesh in pieces with iron pincers or the broiling of it, chop by chop, with candles, or the jambing of skulls as flat as a slate, in a press, and all the most frightful degradation the earth ever witnessed? All such are but pleasures compared with one of these. Here, a million shrieks, harsh groans and deep sighs; there, fierce lamentations and loud cries in answer: the howling of dogs were sweet, delightful music compared with these voices. Before we had gone far from the shores of that accursed river into wild Perdition, we could see by the light of their own fire, here and there, men and women without number, whom a countless host of devils unceasingly and with all their might

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kept always torturing; and as the devils were shrieking from the intensity of their own suffering, they made the damned give response to the utmost. I observed the part nearest me more minutely: there, the devils with pitchforks hurled them head foremost upon poisonous hatchels formed of terrible, barbed darts, thereon to struggle by their brains; then shortly, they threw them together, layer on layer, upon the summit of one of the burning crags, there to blaze like a bonfire. Thence they were snatched away up the ravines amidst the eternal ice and snow; {73a} then plunged again into an enormous flood of seething brimstone to be parched, stifled, and choked by the direful stench; thence to a quagmire of vermin, to embrace hellish reptiles far more noxious than serpents or vipers. After that the devils took knotted rods of fiery steel from the furnace, wherewith they beat them so that their howls resounded throughout all Hell, so inexpressibly excruciating was the pain, and then they seized hot irons to sear the bloody wounds. No swoon or trance is there to beguile with a moment's respite, but an unchanging strength to suffer and to feel; though one would have thought that after one awful wail there never could be the strength to raise another as weirdly-loud; yet never will their key be lowered, with the devils ever answering: "This is your welcome for aye." And worse, were it possible, than the pain, was the scorn and bitterness of the devils' mockery and derision, but worst of all, their own conscience was now thoroughly awakened, and devoured them more relentlessly than a thousand infernal lions.

Still down we go, down afar—the further we go the worse the plight; at the first view I saw a horrid prison wherein a great many men were uttering blasphemous groans beneath the scourges of the devils: "Who are all these?" asked I; "This," answered the Angel, "this is the abode of Woe-that-I-had-not." "Woe that I had not been cleansed of all manner of sin in good time," quoth one. "Woe is me that I had not believed and repented before my coming here," quoth another. Next to the cell of Too-late-a-repentance, and of Pleading-after-judgment, was the prison of the Procrastinators, who were always promising to mend their ways, but who never fulfilled the promise. "When this trouble is past," saith one, "I will turn over a new leaf." "When this hinderance goes by, I'll be another man yet," said another. But when that comes about, they are no nearer; some other obstacle ever and anon occurs to preventing their starting towards the gate of holiness; and if sometimes a start is made, it takes but little to turn them back again. Next to these was the prison of Presumption, full of those who, whenever they were urged of old to be rid of their Wantonness, or drunkenness, or avarice, would say: "God is merciful, and better than His word; He will never damn his own creature upon a cause so trivial." But here they yelped blasphemy, asking: "Where is that

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mercy boasted to be infinite?" "Silence, ye whelps!" said a huge, crabbed devil who heard them, "Silence! would he have mercy who did nought to obtain it? Would ye that Truth should make its word a lie, merely to gain the company of dross so vile as ye? Was too much mercy shewn you, a Saviour, a Comforter given you, and the angels, books, sermons and good examples? Will ye not cease plaguing us now, prating of mercy where it never was."

While making our exit from this glaring pit, I heard one moaning and crying dolefully: "I knew no better; no pains were ever taken to teach me to read my duties, nor could I spare the time to read and pray whereof I had need in order to earn bread for myself and my poor family." "Indeed," quoth a crookback devil who stood close at hand, "hadst thou no leisure to tell merry tales, no idle roasting before thy fire through the long winter evenings when I was up the chimney, so that no time might have been given to learning to read or pray? What of thy Sabbaths? Who was it that was wont to accompany me to the alehouse rather than the parson to the church? How many a Sunday afternoon was spent in vain, noisy talk of worldly things, or in sleeping, instead of in learning to meditate and pray? Didst thou act according to thy knowledge? Silence, sirrah, with thy lying chatter!" "Thou raving bloodhound!" exclaimed the condemned, "'tis not long since thou wert whispering other words in mine ear; hadst thou said this another day, it is not likely I would have come hither." "Ah!" said the devil, "it matters not that we tell you the hateful truth here; for there is no fear of your returning hence now to carry tales."

Lower down I could see a deep, valley whence arose the bluish glare of what seemed to be a countless number of enormous, burning mounds; and after drawing nigh, I knew by their howling that they were men piled mountains high with terrible flames crackling through them. "That hollow," said the Angel, "is the abode of those who after committing some heinous deeds, exclaim: 'Well, I am not the first—I have plenty of companions,' and thus thou see'st they have plenty, to verify their words and add to their affliction." Opposite this was a large cellar where I saw men tortured just as withes are twisted or wet sheets wrung. "Who, prithee, are these?" asked I. "They are the Mockers," said he, "and the devils from pure derision essay to find whether they can be twisted as pliantly as their tales." A little below, but scarcely visible, was another gloomy dungeon-cell, wherein was what had once been men, but now with the faces of wolf-hounds, up to their lips in a morass, madly howling blasphemy and lies as often as they got their tongues clear of the mire. Just then a legion of devils passed by, and some attempted to bite the heels of ten or twelve of the devils that had brought them there: "Woe and ruin take you, ye hell-hounds!" exclaimed one of the bitten devils, at the same time stamping

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upon the quagmire until they sank in the reeking depths. “Who more deserving of hell than ye, who gossipped and imagined all manner of tales, who retailed lies from house to house so that ye might laugh, after setting the entire neighbourhood at war? What more would one of us have done?” “This,” said the Angel, “is the abode of the slanderers, defamers and backbiters, and of all envious cowards who always do hurt in word or deed behind one’s back.”

From thence we went past an enormous lair, the vilest I had yet seen, and the fullest of vermin, of soot, and of stench. “This,” said he, “is the place of those who hoped for heaven because they were harmless, in other words, because they were neither good nor bad.” Next to this foul pit I saw a great multitude sitting down, whose groans were more fierce than anything I had heard hitherto in hell. “Save us all!” cried I, “what makes these complain more than all others, seeing there be no pain, nor demon near them?” “Ah,” answered the Angel, “if the pain without is less, that which is within is more,—here are stubborn heretics, the godless and unchristian, many of the worldy-wise, of apostates, of the persecutors of the church, and millions such as they, who have utterly been given over to the more bitterly painful punishment of the conscience, which now without let or ceasing has its full sway over them. “I will not this time,” quoth conscience, “be drowned in beer, or blinded by rewards, or deafened by song and good company, or hushed or stupified by a thoughtless torpor; now I will be heard, and never shall the truth, the stinging truth, cease dinning in your ears.” The will creates a desire for the lost paradise, the memory reproaches them with the ease wherewith it might have been gained, and the reason shews the greatness of the loss, and the certainty that nought awaits them but this unspeakable gnawing for ever and ever; so by these three means, conscience rends them more terribly than would all the devils in hell.

Coming out of that wondrous defile, I heard much talking, and for every word such wild horse-laughter as if some five hundred devils would shed their horns with laughing. But after I had drawn near to behold the very rare sight of a smile in hell, what was it but two gentlemen, lately arrived, appealing for the respect due to their rank, and the merriment was intended only to give affront to them. A pot-bellied squire stood there with an enormous roll of parchment, his genealogical chart, declaring from how many of the Fifteen Tribes of Gwynedd he had sprung, how many justices of the peace, and how many sheriffs there had been of his house. “Ha ha,” cried one of the devils, “we know the merit of most of your forebears, were you like your father, or great-great-grandsire, we would not have deigned to touch you. But thou, thou art but the heir of utter darkness, vile whelp, thou art hardly worth a night’s lodging; and yet thou shalt have some

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nook to await the dawn." And at the word the impetuous monster pierces him with his pitchfork, and after whirling him thirty times through the fiery welkin, hurled him into a hole out of sight. "That is right enough for a half-blood squire," said the other, "but I hope ye will be better mannered towards a knight who has served the king in person; twelve earls and fifty knights can I recount from mine own ancient line." "If thine ancestors, and thy long pedigree are all thy plea, thou canst go the same gate," quoth a devil, "for we remember scarce one old estate of large extent which some oppressor, some murderer or robber has not founded, leaving it to others as arrant as they, to idle blockheads or to drunken swine. To maintain lavish pomp, they had to grind their vassals and tenants, and if there be a beautiful pony or a fine cow which my lady covets, she will have them, and well it happens if the daughters, yea, even the wives, escape the lust of their lord. And the small free-holders around them must either vainly follow or give bail for them, resulting in their own ruin, the loss of their possessions, and the sale of their patrimony, or expect to be hated and despised, and forced to every idle pursuit. Oh how nobly they swear to gain the confidence of their minions or of their tradesmen, and when decked out in their finery, how contemptuously they look upon many an officer of importance in church and state, as if such were mere worms compared with them. Woe's me, is not all blood of one color? Was it not the same way that ye all entered the world?" "For all that, craving your pardon," said the knight, "there are some births purer than others." "For the great doom all your carcases are the same," said the imp, "everyone of you is defiled by the sin that took its origin in Adam." But, sir," continued he, "if your blood is aught better than another, the less scum will there be when shortly it will be bubbling through your body, and if there be more, we must examine you, part by part, through fire and through water." Thereupon, a devil in the shape of a fiery chariot receives him, and the other mockingly lifts him thereinto, and away he goes with the speed of lightning. Ere long the angel bade me look, and I saw the poor knight most horribly sodden in an enormous boiling furnace with Cain, Nimrod, Esau, Tarquin, Nero, Caligula, and others who first established lineage, and emblazoned family arms.

After wending our way onward a little, my guide bade me peer through a riven wall, and within I saw a group of coquetts busily primming up, doing and undoing the deeds of folly they were formerly wont to do on earth; some puckering their lips, some plucking their eyebrows with irons, some anointing themselves, some patching their faces with black spots to make the yellow look whiter, and some endeavouring to crack the mirror; and after all the pains to color and adorn, upon seeing their faces far uglier than the devils',

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they would tear away with tooth and nail all the false coloring, the spots, the skin and the flesh all at once, and would shriek most dismally. “Accursed be my father,” said one, “it was he who forced me when a girl to wed an old shrivelling, and it was his kindling my desires with no power to satiate them, that doomed me to this place.” “A thousand curses on my parents,” cried another, “for sending me to a monastery to be taught to live a life of chastity; they might as well have sent me to a Roundhead to learn how to be generous, or to a Quaker to be taught good manners, as to a Papist to be taught honesty.” “Fell ruin seize my mother,” shrieked a third, “whose covetous pride refused me a husband at my need, and so drove me to obtain by stealth what I might have honestly obtained.” “Hell, a double hell to the raging bull of a nobleman who first tempted me,” cried another, “had he not by fair and foul broken through all bounds, I would not have become a common chattel, nor would I have come to this infernal place;” and then would they lacerate themselves again.

I made all haste to leave their loathsome kennel, but I had not proceeded far before I observed, to my astonishment, another prison full of women, still more abominable; some had become frogs; some, dragons; some, serpents, and there they swam about, hissing and foaming, and butting one another, in a foetid, stagnant pool that was much larger than Bala Lake. “Pray, what can these be?” asked I. “There are here,” said he, “four chief classes of women, not to mention their minions—Firstly: Panders, who maintained harlots to sell their virginity an hundred times, and the worst of these around them. Secondly: Mistresses of gossip, surrounded by thousands of tale-bearing hags. Thirdly: Huntresses followed by a pack of cowardly, skulking hounds, for no man ever dared approach them, unless in fear of them. Fourthly: The scolds, become a hundredfold more horrid than snakes, always grinding and gnashing their venomous stings.” “I would have deemed Lucifer too gracious a monarch to place a noble lady of my rank with these vulgar furies,” complained one, who much resembled the others, but was far more hideous than a winged serpent. “Oh, that he would send hither seven hundred of the basest demons of hell in exchange for thee, thou poisonous hellworm,” cried another ugly viper. “Many thanks to you,” quoth a gigantic devil, overhearing them, “we regard our place and worth as something better; though ye would cause everyone as much pain as we, yet we do not choose to be deprived of our office in your favor.” “And Lucifer hath another reason,” whispered the Angel, “for keeping strict guard over these, and that is, lest on breaking loose, they might send all hell into utter confusion.”

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Thence we still descended until I saw an immense cavern wherein was such fearful clamor that I had never heard the like before—swearing, cursing, blaspheming, snarling, groaning and yelling. "Whom have we here?" I asked. "This," answered he, "is the Den of Thieves; here are myriads of foresters, lawyers and stewards, with old Judas in their midst." And it grieved them sorely to behold a pack of tailors and weavers above them in a more comfortable chamber. Hardly had I turned round when a demon, in the shape of a steed, bore in a physician, and an apothecary, and hurled them into the midst of the pedlars and horse cheats, because they had sold worthless drugs. And they too began murmuring against being allotted to such low society. "Stay, stay," cried one of the devils, "ye deserve a better place," and he pitched them down amongst conquerors and murderers. There were vast numbers in here for playing false dice and cheating at cards, but before I had time to observe them closely, I could hear by the door a huge crowd in wild tumult and shouts—hai, hw, ptrw-how-ho-o-o-p—as of cattle being driven along. I turned round to see the cause of it, but could perceive only the horned demons. I enquired of my Guide if there were cuckolds with the devils. "No," said he, "they are in another cell; these are drovers who wished to escape to the prison of the Sabbath-breakers, and are sent here against their will." Thereupon I look and saw that they had on their heads the horns of sheep and kine; and those that were driving them on, cast them down beneath the feet of blood-stained robbers. "Lie there," said one, "however much ye feared footpads on the London road erstwhile, ye yourselves were the very worst class of highwaymen, who made your living on the road and on robbery, yea and by the perishing of many a poor family whom ye left in hunger, vainly hoping for the sustenance of their possessions, while ye were in Ireland or in the King's Bench laughing at them, or on the road with your wine and lemans." On leaving the furnace-like cave, I caught a glimpse of a haunt, which for loathsome, stinking abomination, went beyond anything (with one sole exception) that I had set my eyes upon in hell,—-where an accursed herd of drunken swine lay weltering in the foulest slime.

The next den was the abode of Gluttony, where Dives and his companions, wallowing on their bellies, devoured dirt and fire alternately, with never a drop to drink. A little below this, was a very extensive roasting-kitchen, where some were being roasted and boiled, others broiling and flaming in a fiery chimney. "This is the place of the merciless and the unfeeling," said the Angel. Turning a little to the left, where there was a cell lighter than any I had so far seen, I asked what place it was: "The abode of the Infernal Dragons," said he, "which growl and rage, rush about and rend one another every instant." I drew near and oh! what an indescribable sight they were! It was the glowing

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fire of their eyes that gave all that light. “These are the descendants of Adam,” said my Guide, “scolds and raving, wrathful men; but yonder are some of the ancient seed of the great Dragon, Lucifer;” but verily I could not perceive any difference in loveliness between them. In the next dungeon dwell the misers in awful torment, being linked by their hearts to chests of burning coin, the rust of which was consuming them without end, just as they had never thought of an end to the piling of them, and now they were tearing themselves to pieces with more than madness through grief and remorse. Below this was a charnel vault where some of the apothecaries had been ground down and stuffed into earthenware pots with Album graecum, dung, and many a stale ointment.

Ever downward we were journeying through the wilderness of ruin, in the midst of untold and eternal tortures, from cell to cell, from dungeon to dungeon, the last alway surpassing in monstrous ghastliness, until finally we came within view of an enormous entrance hall, most unsightly of all that I had previously seen. It was very spacious and terribly steep, running in the direction of a gloomy red corner, full of the most inconceivable abominations and horrors: it was the royal court. At the upper end of the king’s accursed hall, amidst thousands of other dread sights, by the light my companion shed, I could see in the darkness two feet of prodigious size, and so enormous as to overcast the whole infernal firmament. I inquired of my Guide what such immensities might be. “Thou shalt have a fuller view of this monster when returning,” said he, “but, come now, let us to see the court.” As we were going down that awful entrance hall, we heard behind us the noise as of very many people advancing; on stepping aside to let them pass I noticed four divers host, and upon enquiry I learnt that it was the four princesses of the City of Destruction leading their subjects as an offering to their sire. I distinguished the troop of the Princess of Pride, not only because they insisted upon the foremost position, but also because they stumbled now and then from want of keeping their eyes upon the ground. She led captive kings without number, princes, courtiers, noblemen and braggarts, many Quakers, and women innumerable and of all grades. Next to these came the Princess of Lucre with her sly and crafty followers—a great many of the brood of Simon Skinflint, money lenders, lawyers, userers, stewards, foresters, harlots, and some of the clergy. Then came the gracious Princess of Pleasure and her daughter Folly, leading her subjects—players of dice, cards and back-gammon, conjurers, bards, minstrels, storytellers, drunkards, bawds, balladmongers and pedlars with their trinkets in countless number, to be at length instruments of punishment to the damned fools.

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When these three had taken their captives into the court to receive judgment, Hypocrisy, last of all, brings in a more numerous troop than any of the others, of every nation and age, from town and country, patrician and plebeian, men and women. In the rear of this double-faced legion we came within sight of the court; passing through the midst of many dragons and horned demons, and hell's giants, the dusky porters of the devil-hunted fire; I, the while, carefully hiding within the veil, we entered that direful edifice: wonderful, and of amazing roughness was every part of it; the walls were cruel rocks of burning adamant; the floor was one unendurable extent of sharp-cutting flint, the roof of fiery steel, meeting in an arch of greenish and blood-red flames, similar, except in its size and heat, to a tremendous circular oven. Opposite the door, upon a flame-encompassed throne sat the Evil One with the lost archangels around him, seated on benches of terrible fire, according to the rank they formerly bore in the region of light—-the lovely whelps—it would only be a waste of words to attempt to describe how atrociously ugly they were, and the longer I gazed upon them, sevenfold more frightful did they become. In the centre above Lucifer's head was a huge hand grasping an awful bolt. The princesses, after paying their courtesy, immediately returned to their duties on earth. No sooner had they departed than at the King's bidding, a gigantic devil with cavernous jaws set up a roar, louder than the discharge of a hundred cannon, and as loud, were it possible, as the last trump, to proclaim the infernal Parliament, and behold, without delay, the court and hall are filled by the rabble of hell in every shape, each upon the form and image of that particular sin he was wont to urge upon men. After enjoining silence, Lucifer, looking steadfastly upon the chieftains nearest him, began and spake these gracious words:-

"Ye peers of this profoundest gulf, princes of the hopeless gloom, if we have lost the place we erst possessed, when, clothed with brightness, we dwelt in those celestial, happy realms; yet, however great our fall, 'twas glorious, nought less than all did we hazard, nor is all lost—for, behold regions wide and deep extending to the utmost bounds of desolate Perdition still 'neath our sway. 'Tis true we reign while racked with raging torment, yet, for spirits of our majesty, 'tis better to reign in hell than serve in heaven. {85a} And what is more, we have well nigh won another world, a greater than a fifth of earth has been for long beneath my standard. And although our Omnipotent Enemy sent his own Son to die for them, I, by my pleasing guile, gain ten for every one He gains through his crucified Son. Though we cannot aspire to do hurt to Him on high who hurls His all-conquering thunder, yet revenge by whatsoever means is sweet. {85b} Let us then bring ruin on the rest of men who adore our Destroyer. Well do I recollect the time when

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ye caused them, their armies and their cities, to be consumed in horrible combustion, yea and caused nigh all the dwellers on the earth to fall through the whelming waters into this fire. But now, although your strength and innate cruelty are no whit less, ye have been somewhat listless; were it not for this, we would have long ago destroyed the godly few, and brought the earth one with this our vast domain. But know this, ye grim ministers of my wrath, if ye henceforth be not up and doing, valiantly and with all haste, seeing the brevity of our alloted time, I swear by Hell and by Perdition, and by the vast, eternal gloom, that upon you, yourselves, my ire first shall fall, with pain the like of which the oldest amongst you hath never proved." Whereupon he frowned until the court became sevenfold darker than before.

Next him, Moloch one of the infernal potentates, stood up, and after making due obeisance to his king, spake thus:- "Oh Emperor of the Sky, great ruler of the darkness, none ever doubted my desire to practice utmost bale and cruelty, for that has always been my pleasure; no sound was more delightful to mine years than the shrieks of children perishing in the flames outside Jerusalem, where in former days they were sacrificed to me. And also after our crucified foe had returned to his celestial home, I, during the reigns of ten emperors, continued as long as it availed me, slaying and burning his followers in my attempt to sweep the Christians off the face of the earth. And afterwards in Paris, in England, and in several other places, did I cause many a massacre of them; but what have we gained? The tree whose branches are lopped off grows but the quicker; we snarl without the power of biting."

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Lucifer, "shame! cowardly hosts that ye are! Never more will I place my trust in you. This work I myself will perform, this enterprise none shall partake with me. {87a} In mine own imperial majesty will I descend upon the earth, and alone will I devour all therein contained; henceforth no man shall there be found to worship the Most High." Thereon he gave one terrific flying leap to start—a blaze of living fire, but the hand overhead whirls the terrible dart so that he trembles notwithstanding his rage, and ere he had gone far, an invisible hand drags the brute back by the chain for all his struggles; his rage becomes sevenfold more vehement, his eyes more fierce than dragons, thick black clouds of smoke issue from his nostrils, livid flames from his mouth and bowels, while he gnaws his chain in his grief, and mutters fearful blasphemy and awful oaths.

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At last, finding how futile was his attempt to sunder his bonds and how unavailing to contend against the Almighty, he returned to his throne and resumed his speech, in words somewhat more calm, but twice as malignant: “Though none but the Omnipotent Thunderer could overcome my power and my guile, to Him I am unwillingly constrained to submit; but I can pour forth the vials of my wrath here below, nearer at hand, and let loose my ire upon those who are already under my banner, and within the length of my chain. Arise, ye too, ministers of destruction, lords of the unquenchable fires, and as my anger and my venom overflow, and my malice rush forth, do ye assiduously scatter all broadcast among the damned, and chiefly among the Christians; urge on the engines of torture to their uttermost; devise and invent; increase the heat of the fire and the ebullition, until the hissing flood of the cauldrons overwhelms them; and when their unutterable woes are extremest, then sneer at them and mockingly reproach them, and when ye have exhausted all your store of scorn and gall, hie to me and ye shall be replenished.”

A great stillness had brooded over hell for some time, while the pains grew far more unbearable by being given no vent. But now the silence which Lucifer had enjoined was broken, when the fierce butchers, like bears maddened by hunger, fell upon their captives; then there arose such doleful cries, such dismal howling, from every quarter, louder than the roar of rushing torrents, than the rumble of an earthquake, till hell itself became ten times more horrible. I would have died, had not my friend saved me. “Quaff deep this time,” said he, “to give thee strength to behold things yet more dire.” Hardly were the words from his lips, when lo! heavenly Justice, who sits above the abyss, guardian of the gates of Hell, advanced scourging three men with rods of fiery scorpions. “Ha ha,” cried Lucifer, “here are three reverend gentlemen whom Justice thought worthy himself to conduct to my kingdom.” “Woe’s me,” said one of the three, “who ever wanted him to take the trouble?” “That matters not,” answered he, with a look that made the fiends wax pale, and tremble so that they knocked one against the other, “it was the will of the Infinite Creator that I myself should lead to their home such accursed murderers.” “Sirrah,”—addressing one of the demons,—“open me the fold of the assassins, where Cain, Nero, Bradshaw, Bonner, Ignatius and innumerable others like them dwell.” “Alack, alack! we have never slain any man,” cried one. “No thanks to you that you did not, for time only was wanting,” said Justice. When the den was opened, there came out such a hideous blast of blood-red flames, and such a shriek as if a thousand dragons were uttering their death-wail. As Justice was passing by on his return, in an instant he caused such a tempest of fiery whirlwinds to fall upon the Evil One and his princes that Lucifer was swept away, and with him Beelzebub, Satan, Moloch,

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Abadon, Asmodai, Dagon, Apolyon, Belphegor, Mephistopheles, and all their compeers, and they were hurled headlong into a whirlpool which opened and closed in the centre of the court and which, both in aspect and in the execrable stench that arose from it, was a hundredfold more foul and horrid than anything I had ever seen. Before I could ask aught, quoth the Angel: "This is the gulf that reaches to another great world." "What, pray, is that world called?" I enquired. "'Tis called the bottomless pit or the Nethermost Hell, the home of the devils, whither they now have gone. And those vast, dreary wilds, parts of which thou hast traversed, are called the Region of Despair, ordained for the condemned until the Judgment Day; then it will become one with the utmost, bottomless Hell; then will one of us come and seal up the devils and the damned together, never more to open upon them, never to all eternity. In the meantime they have leave to come to this colder country to torment lost souls. Yea, often are they suffered to wander through the air, and about the earth, to tempt men into the pernicious ways that lead to this horrible prison whence no man returns."

While listening to this account, and wondering that the entrance of Perdition should differ so from that of the Upper Hell, I heard the tremendous clash of arms, and the roar of artillery, from one quarter, and what seemed like loud-rumbling thunder answering from another quarter, while the deadly rocks resounded. "This is the turmoil of war!" I cried, "if there be war in hell." "There is," said he, "there cannot be but continuous warfare here." When we were on the point of going out to know of the affair, I beheld the jaws of the Pit open and belch forth thousands of hideous, greenish candles—for such had Lucifer and his chiefs become after surviving the tempest. But when he heard the din of war he turned more livid than Death, and began to call out, and levy armies of his proven veterans to suppress the tumult. While thus occupied he came across a little imp, who had escaped between the feet of the warriors. "What is the matter?" demanded the King. "Such a matter as will endanger your crown, an you look not to it." Close upon this one's heels another devilish courier in a harsh voice cries: "You that plan the disquietude of others, look now to your own peace; yonder are the Turks, the Papists and the murderous Roundheads in three armies, filling the whole plain of Darkness, committing every outrage and turning everything topsy-turvey." "How came they out?" demanded the Evil One, frowning more terribly than Demigorgon. "The Papists," said the messenger, "somehow or other broke out of their purgatory, and then, to pay off old scores, went to unhinge the portals of Mahomet's paradise, and let loose the Turks from their prison, and afterwards in the confusion, through some ill chance, Cromwell's crew escaped from their cells." Then Lucifer turned and peered beneath his throne, where every damned

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king lay, and commanded that Cromwell himself should be kept secure in his kennel, and that all the sultans should be guarded. Accordingly, Lucifer and his host hurried across the sombre wilds of darkness, each one's own person furnishing light and heat; guided by the tumultuous clangor he marched fearlessly upon them. Silence was proclaimed in the King's name, and Lucifer demanded the cause of such uproar in his realm. "May it please your infernal majesty," said Mahomet, "a quarrel arose between myself and Pope Leo as to which had done you the better service—my Koran or the Romish religion; and when this was going on a pack of Roundheads, who had broken out of their prison during the disorder, joined in and clamoured that their Solemn League and Covenant deserved more respect at your hands than either; so, from striving to striking from words to blows. But now, since your majesty hath returned from hell, I lay the matter for your decision." "Stay, we've not done with you yet," cried Pope Julius, and madly they engage once more, tooth and nail, until the strokes clashed like earthquakes; the three armies of the damned tore each other piecemeal, and like snakes became whole again, and spread far and wide over the jagged, burning crags, until Lucifer bade his veterans, the giants of Hell, separate them, which indeed was no easy task.

When the conflict ceased, Pope Clement spake—"Thou Emperor of Horrors, no throne has ever performed more faithful and universal service to the infernal crown than have the bishops of Rome, throughout a large portion of the world, for eleven centuries, and I hope you will allow none to vie with them for your favor." "Well," said a Scotch-man of Cromwell's gang, "however great has been the service of the Koran for these eight hundred years, and of popish superstitions for a longer period, yet the Covenant has done far more since its appearance, and everyone begins to doubt the others and be weary of them, but we are still increasing, the wide world over, and have much power in the island of your foes, that is, in Britain and in London, the happiest city under the sun." "Ha ha," exclaimed Lucifer, "if I hear rightly ye too are about to suffer disgrace there. But whatever ye may have done in other kingdoms, I will have none of your rioting in mine. Wherefore make your peace forthwith under the penalty of more woes, bodily and spiritual." And at the word I could see many of the fiends and all the damned, with their tails between their hoofs, steal away to their holes in fear of a change for the worse.

Then after ordering all to be locked up in their lairs, and punishing and dismissing the officers whose carelessness had allowed them to break loose, Lucifer and his counsellors returned to the court, and sat once more upon the fiery thrones, according to their rank; and when silence had been obtained, and the court cleared, a burly, lob-shouldered devil threw down at the bar a fresh load of prisoners. "Is this the way to

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Paradise?" asked one (for they had no idea where they were). "Or if this be Purgatory," said another, "I have a dispensation under the Pope's own signet to pass straight on to Paradise, without a moment's delay anywhere; wherefore show us the way, or by the Pope's toe, we will have him punish you." "Ha ha," laughed a thousand demons, and Lucifer himself opened his tusked jaws some half a yard in scornful laughter. At which the new comers were sore amazed. "Look ye," said one, "if we have missed our way in the dark, we will pay for guidance." "Ha ha," cried Lucifer, "ye shall not hence till ye have paid the uttermost farthing." But on searching them it was found that they had one and all left their trouser behind. "Ye went past Paradise on the left above those mountains there," said the Evil One, "and although it is easy to descend hither, to return is next to impossible, so dark and intricate is the country, so many steep ascents of flaming iron are there on the way, and huge imminent rocks, overhanging glaciers of insurmountable ice, and here and there, a headlong cataract, all too difficult to clamber over, if ye have not nails as long as a devil's. Ho there! convey these blockheads to our paradise to their companions." Just then I heard voices drawing nigh, swearing and cursing fearfully. "Fiends' blood! a myriad devils seize me if ever I go!" and immediately the noisy crew were cast down before the court. "There," exclaimed the steed that bore them, "there is fuel with the best in hell." "What are they?" asked Lucifer. "Past masters in the gentle art of swearing and cursing," said he, "who knew the language of hell as well as we do." "A lie to your face, i' the devil's name!" cried one. "Sirrah! wilt take my name in vain?" said the Evil One. "Ho, seize them and hook them by their tongues, to that burning precipice, and be at hand to serve them; if on one devil they call, or on a thousand, they shall have their fill."

When these had departed, a gigantic fiend calls loudly for clearing the bar, and throws down thereat a man who was a load in himself. "What hast thou there?" demanded Lucifer. "An innkeeper," answered he. "What?" cried the King, "only one innkeeper, when they used to come by the thousands. Hast thou, sirrah, not been out for ten years, and dost bring hither but one, and such an one as would serve us in the world better than thee, foul lazy hound!" "You are too just to condemn me before hearing me," pleaded he, "he was the only one laid to my charge, and now I am rid of him. But I despatched you from his house many an idler who drank his family's maintenance, and now and then a dicer, and card player, a fine swearer, an innocent glutton, a negligent tapster and a maid, harsh in the kitchen, but never a kinder abed or in the cellar." "Although this fellow deserves to be with the flatterers beneath," said the Evil One, "natheless take him to his comrades in the cell of the liquid-poisoners, among

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the apothecaries and drugsters who have concocted drinks to murder their customers; boil him well for that he did not brew better beer." "By your leave," began the innkeeper tremblingly, "I deserve no such treatment, the trade must be carried on." "Couldst thou not have lived," quoth the Evil One, "without allowing rioting and gambling, wantonness and drunkenness, oaths and quarrels, slanders and lies? and wouldst thou, old hell-hound, now live better than we? Prithee, tell what evil have we here which thou hadst not at thine home, save the punishment alone? Indeed, to speak the plain truth here, the infernal heat and cold are nothing new to thee. Hast thou not seen sparks of our fire upon the tongues of the cursers and the scolds, whilst dragging their husbands home? Was there not a deal of the undying flame on the drunkard's lips or in the eyes of the angry? And couldst thou not perceive a trace of hellish cold in the rake's generosity, and especially in thine own kindness towards him as long as he had anything in his possession; in the mocker's jest; in the praise of the envious and of the defamer, in the promises of the lecherous, or in the limbs of thy boon companions, benumbed beneath thy tables? Is hell strange to thee whose very home is a hell? Aroint thee, flamhound, to thy penance!"

After that ten devils, panting heavily, drop their burdens upon the fiery floor. "What have ye?" asked Lucifer. "We have what a day or two ago were called kings," answered one of the fiendish steeds. (I sought carefully to see whether Lewis of France were among them.) "Throw them here," bade the King; and at that they were thrown amongst the other crowned heads that lay beneath Lucifer's feet; and following the monarchs came their courtiers and their flatterers to receive sentence. Before I had time to ask any question, I heard the blast of brazen trumpets and shouts. "Make way, make way," and at once there came in view a herd of assize-men and devils bearing the train of six justices, and millions of their race—barristers, {95a} attorneys, clerks, recorders, bailiffs, catchpolls, and the litigous busybody. I wondered that none of them was examined; but in truth, they knew the matter had gone too far against them, so none of the learned counsels opened their lips, but the busybody threatened that he would bring an action for false imprisonment against Lucifer. "Thou shalt have good cause of complaint now," said the Evil One, "and never see a court at all." Then he donned his red cap, and with unbearable, haughty mien, said: "Go, take the justices to the hall of Pontius Pilate, to Master Bradshaw, who condemned King Charles; pack the barristers with the assassins of Sir Edmundbury Godfrey, {95b} and their other false co-partners who simulate mutual contention, merely in order to slay whomsoever might interpose. Go, greet that prudent lawyer, who, when dying offered a thousand pounds for a good conscience, and ask whether

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he is now willing to give more. Roast the lawyers by the fire of their own parchments and papers till their learned bowels burst forth; let the litigous busybodies hang above them with their nostrils deepest down the roasting chimneys, in order to inhale the noxious vapors arising thence, to see if they will ever get their fill of law. Throw the recorders amongst the retailers who prevent or forestall the sale of corn, who mix it and sell the mixture at double the price of the pure corn: similarly, they demand for wrong double the fees formerly given for right. As to the catchpolls, let them free to hunt about and lie in the ravines and bushes of the earth, to capture those that are debtors to the infernal crown; for what devil of you could do the work better than they?"

Shortly there appear twenty demons, like Scotch-men, with packs across their shoulders, which they cast down before the throne of despair, and which turned out to be gipsies. "Ho there!" cried Lucifer, "how was it that ye who knew the fortune of others so well, did not know that your own fortune was leading you hither?" No answer was given, for they were amazed at seeing here beings uglier than themselves. "Throw the tan-faced loons to the witches," bade the King, "there are no cats or rush-lights here for them, but divide a frog between them every ten thousand years, if they will be quiet and not deafen us with their barbarous chatter."

After them came, methought, thirty labourers. Everybody wondered to see so many of that honest calling, so seldom did any of them appear; but they did not all come from the same parts nor for like faults—some for raising prices, many for withholding their tithes, and defrauding the parson of his dues, others for leaving their work to follow after the gentry, and who in trying to stride along with their masters, strained themselves, some for doing work on the Sabbath, some for thinking of their sheep and kine in church, instead of giving attention to the reading of Holy Writ, and others for wrongful bargains. When Lucifer began to question them, lo! they were all as pure as gold, and not one of them found anything amiss in himself so as to deserve such a dwelling place. One can scarcely believe what neat excuses each one had to hide his sin, although they were already in hell for it, offering them merely out of evil disposition to thwart Lucifer and to accuse the righteous Judge, who had condemned them, of injustice. But it was still more astonishing to see how cleverly the Evil One exposed their foul sins, and how he answered with a home-thrust their false excuses. When these were about to receive their infernal doom, forty scholars were borne forward by porpoise-shaped fiends, uglier, if possible, than Lucifer himself. And when they heard the labourers pleading, they too waxed bold to give excuses, but what ready answers the old Serpent had for them with all their knavery and learning! As it happened that I heard similar pleas in another court of justice I will hereafter recount them together, and now proceed with what I saw in the meantime.

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Lucifer had barely pronounced their sentence—that they should be driven to the great glacier in the land of eternal ice, a doom that set their teeth a-gnashing, even before they saw their prison, when suddenly, hell again most marvellously resounded with the crash of terrible bolts, with loud-rolling thunder, and with every noise of war. Lucifer loured and grew pale; in a moment, there flew in a wry-footed imp, panting and trembling. "What is the matter?" cried Lucifer. "A matter fraught with the greatest peril for you since hell is hell," said the dwarf, "all the ends of the kingdom of darkness have risen up against you and against each other, especially those between whom there was longstanding enmity, who are already locked together fang to fang, so that it is impossible to pull them apart. Soldiers have attacked the doctors for taking away their trade of slaughter; a myriad userers have fallen upon the lawyers, for claiming a share in the business of robbery; the busybodies and the swindlers are tearing the gentlemen, limb-meal, for unnecessary swearing and cursing, whereby they gained their living. Harlots and their minions, and a million other old friends and former comrades have fallen out with one another irreconcilably. But worst of all is the fray raging between the misers and their own offspring, for wasting the goods and money which, the old pinchfists aver, 'cost us much pain on earth, and here endless anguish.' Their sons, on the other hand, cursing and rending them outrageously, call for eternal ruin upon their heads for leaving overmuch wealth to madden them with pride and riotous living, when a little, under the blessing of heaven, would have rendered them happy in both worlds." "Enough, enough," cried Lucifer, "there is more need of arms than words. Return, sirrah, and play the spy in every watch to find the where and why of this great negligence, for there's some treachery in the air we wot not of as yet." The imp departed at his bidding, and in the meantime Lucifer and his compeers arose in terror and exceeding fear, and ordered the levying of the bravest armies of the black angels; and having disposed them, he himself started foremost to quell the rebellion, his chieftains and their hosts going other ways. The royal army, like shafts of lightning across the hideous gloom, advanced (and we in their rear); ere long the uproar falls upon their ears; a fiendish bellower cries, "Silence, in the King's name!" to no purpose, it would be an easier task to hale apart old beavers than one of these. But when Lucifer's veterans dashed into their midst, the growls, and blows, and battering lessened. "Silence in Lucifer's name!" roared the devil a second time. "What is this," demanded the King, "and who are these?" "Nothing, sire, but that in the general confusion, the drovers came across the cuckolds, and set a-butting to prove whose horns were the harder; it might have turned out seriously, had not your horned giants joined in the affray." "Well," said Lucifer, "since ye are all so ready with your arms, come with me to trounce the other rebels." But when the rumour reached these that Lucifer was approaching with three horned armies, everyone made for his lair.

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So he marched on across the desolate plains unresisted, and seeking in vain the cause of the revolt. After a while, however, one of the King's spies returns, quite out of breath: "Most noble, Lucifer! Moloch, your prince, hath subdued part of the North, and hath cut thousands to pieces upon the glaciers, but there are three or four dangerous evils still threatening you." "Whom meanest thou?" asked Lucifer. "The Slanderer, the Busybody, and the Lawmonger, have broken out of their prisons and got free." "No wonder then," said the Evil One, "if further troubles arise." Then there comes another spy from the South, informing that matters would soon reach a dire pass in that quarter if the three who had already thrown the West into utter confusion be not taken, namely, the Huntress, the Rogue and the Swaggerer. "Since the day I tempted Adam from his garden," said Satan, who stood next but one to Lucifer, "I have never seen so many evils of his race at liberty together. The Huntress, the Swaggerer, the Rogue, on the one hand, and on the other, the Slanderer, the Lawmonger and the Busybody—a mixture would make devils reach." "Little wonder, verily," said Lucifer, "that they were so much hated by all on earth, seeing that they are capable of causing such trouble to us here." Not long after, the Huntress comes to meet the King upon the way. "Ho! grandam o' the breeches," cries a shrill-voiced demon, "good night to you." "Thy grandam on which side, prithee?" said she, displeased because he did not "madam" her. "You are a fine king, Lucifer, to keep such impudent rascals about you; a thousand pities that such a vast realm should be under so impotent a ruler; would that I might be made its regent." Then comes the Swaggerer, nodding in the dark—"Your humble servant, sir," saith he to one, over his shoulder; "Are you quite well?" to another; "Can I be of any service to you?" addressing a third, with a leering smirk, and to the Huntress: "Your beauty quite fascinates me, madam." "Oh oh," cried she, "away with the hell-hound;" and all join in the shout: "Away with this new tormentor, hell on hell that he is!" "Let both be bound together hand and foot," commanded Lucifer. Soon after the Lawmonger comes on the scene between two devils. "Ho, ho, thou angel of peace," exclaimed Lucifer, "hast thou come? Keep him safe, guards, at your peril!" Before we had gone far, the Rogue and the Slanderer appeared, chained between forty devils, and whispering to one another. "Most noble Lucifer," began the Rogue, "I am very sorry there is so much disturbance in your kingdom; but if I may be heard, I will teach you a better method. Under the pretence of holding a Parliament, you can cite all the damned into the burning Evildom, and then bid the devils hurl them headlong to bottomless perdition, and lock them up in its vortex, to trouble you no more." "But the Common Meddler is still missing," said Lucifer, frowning most darkly at the Rogue.

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When we reached once more the entrance of the infernal court, who should come straight to meet the King but the Busybody. “Ah, your majesty, I have a word with you.” “And I have one or two with you, peradventure,” said the Evil One. “I have been over the half of Hell,” said he, “to see how your affairs went. You have many officers in the East who are remiss, and take their ease instead of attending to the torturing of their prisoners and to their safe keeping; it was this that gave rise to the great rebellion. And moreover many of your fiends, and of the lost whom you sent to the world to tempt men, have not returned, although their time is up, and others have come, but hide rather than give an account of their doings.”

Then commanded Lucifer his herald to summon a second Parliament, and in the twinkling of an eye all the potentates and their officers were again in attendance at their infernal Eisteddfod. The first thing done was to change the officers, and to order a place to be made round the mouth of the pit for the Swaggerer and the Huntress, linked face to face, and for the other rebels, bound topsy-turvy together; and a law was published that whosoever of the demons or of the damned thenceforth transgressed his duty should be thrown into their midst till doomsday. At these words all the fiends and even Lucifer himself trembled and were sore perturbed. Then next came the trial of the devils and the lost who had been sent to earth to find “associates and co-partners of their loss;” the devils gave a clear account, but the statement of the damned was so hazy and uncertain, that they were driven to the ever-burning school, and there scourged with fiery, knotted serpents to teach them their task the better. “Here’s a wench that’s pretty enough when dressed up,” said an imp, “she was sent up into the world to gain you new subjects; and whom should she first tempt but a weary ploughman, homeward wending his way, late from his toils, who, instead of succumbing to her wiles, went on his knees praying to be saved from the devil and his angels.” “Ho there!” cried Lucifer, “throw her to that worthless losel who long ago loved Einion ab Gwalchmai of Mona.” {102a} “Stay, stay,” pleaded the fair one, “this is but my first offence; there is yet scarcely a year since the day when all was over with me, when I was condemned to your cursed state, Oh king of woes!” “No, there is not yet three weeks,” said the demon that had brought her there. “How therefore,” said she, “would you have me be as skilled as those lost beings who have been here three or four centuries hunting their prey? If you desire better service at my hands, let me go free into the world once more to roam about uncensured; and if I bring you not twenty adulterers for every year I am out, mete me what punishment you list.” Nevertheless the verdict went against her, and she was doomed to live a hundred long years under chastisement, that she might be more careful a second time. Presently, another devil

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entered, pushing to the front a man. “Here is a fine messenger,” he said, “who wandering the other night in his old neighbourhood above, saw a thief stealing a stallion, but could not help him even to catch the foal without showing himself; and the thief, when he saw him, abandoned that career for ever.” “Begging the court’s pardon,” said the man, “if the thief’s child was endowed with power from above to see me, could I help that? Moreover, this is only a single case; ’t is not a hundred years since that day which put an end to all my hopes for ever, and how many of my own family and of my neighbours have I enticed here after me in that time? Perdition hold me, if I am not as dutiful to my trade as the best of you, but the wisest is sometimes at fault.” Then said Lucifer: “Throw him into the school of the fairies, who are still under castigation for their mischievous tricks in days gone by, when they were wont to strangle and threaten their neighbours, and so awaken them from their torpor; for their fear probably had more influence upon them than forty sermons.”

Then came four constables, an accuser, and fifteen of the damned, dragging forward two devils. “Lest you lay the blame of every wrongful service upon the children of Adam,” said the accuser, “here are two of your old angels who misspent their time above as much as the two who were last before the court. Here is a rogue quite as worthless as that one at Shrewsbury the other day, when the Interlude of Doctor Faustus was being played, amidst all manner of most wanton and lascivious revelries, and where many things were going on conducive to the welfare of your realm; when they were busiest, the devil himself appeared to play his part, and so drove all away from pleasure to prayers. Even so this one, in his wanderings over the world: he heard some people talk of walking round the church {104a} to see their sweethearts, and what should the fool do but show himself to the simpletons in his own natural form, and though their fright was great they recovered their senses, and made a vow to leave that vanity for ever; whereas had he only assumed the form of some vile jades, they would have held themselves bound to accept those; and so the foul fiend might have been master of the household with both parties, since he himself had mated them. And here is another, who went, last Twelfth Night, to visit two Welsh lasses who were turning their shifts, and instead of enticing them to wantonness in the form of a fair youth, to one he took a bier, to make her thoughts more serious; to the other, he went with the tumult of war in a hellish whirlwind, to make her madder than before; and this was quite needless. Nor was this all; for after he had entered the maiden, and had thrown her about, and sorely tormented her, some of our learned enemies were sent for to pray for her and to cast him out, and instead of tempting her to despair and endeavouring to win over the preachers, he began to

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preach to them, and to disclose the mysteries of your kingdom, thus aiding their salvation instead of hindering it." At the word "salvation" I saw some leaping up, a living fire of rage. "Every tale is fair till the other side be told," quoth the devil, "I hope Lucifer will not allow one of the earth-born race of Adam to contend with me, who am an angel of far superior kind and stock." "His punishment is certain," said Lucifer, "but do thou, sirrah, give clear and ready answer to these charges; or by hopeless Hell I will—." "I have led hither," said he, "many a soul since Satan was in the Garden of Eden, and I ought to understand my business, better than this upstart accuser." "Blood of infernal firebrands," cried Lucifer, "did I not bid thee answer clearly and readily?" "By your leave," said the demon, "I have preached a hundred times, and have denounced many of the various ways that lead to your confines, and yet at the same breath, have quietly brought them hither safe and sound by some other delusive path, just as I did while preaching recently in the German States, in one of the Faro Isles, and in several other places. In this manner, through my preaching have many Papist beliefs, and old traditions come first into the world, and all in the guise of goodness. For who ever would swallow a baitless hook? Who ever gained credence for a tale which had not some truth mingled with the false, or some little good overshadowing the bad? So, if whilst preaching I can instil one counsel of mine own among a hundred that are good and true, by means of that one, through heedlessness or superstition, will more weal betide your kingdom than woe through all the others ever." "Well," said Lucifer, "since thou canst do so much good in the pulpit, I bid thee dwell seven years in the mouth of a barndoor preacher who always utter what first comes to his mind; there thou wilt have an opportunity of putting in a word now and then to thine own purpose."

There were many more devils and damned darting to and fro like lightning about the awful throne, to count and to receive offices. But suddenly without any warning there came a command for all the messengers and prisoners to depart from the court, each one to his den, leaving the King and his chief counsellors alone together. "Is it not better for us also to depart, lest they find us?" I asked my friend. "Thou needest have no fear," answered the angel, "no unclean spirit can ever pierce this veil." Wherefore we remained there invisible, to see the issue.

Then Lucifer began graciously to address his peers thus:- "Ye mightiest spirits of evil, ye archfiends of hellish guile, the utmost of your malicious wiles am I now constrained to demand. All here know that Britain and its adjacent isles is the realm most dangerous to my state, and fullest of mine enemies; and what is a hundredfold worse, there reigns now a queen most dangerous of all, who has never once inclined hither, nor along the old way of Rome on the one hand

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nor yet along the way of Geneva on the other: to think what great good the Pope has for a long time done us there and Oliver even to this day! What therefore shall we do? I fear me we shall entirely lose our ancient possession of that mart unless we instantly set-to to pave a new way for them to travel over, for they know too well all the old roads that lead hitherwards. Since this invincible hand shortens my chain, and prevents me from going myself to the earth, your advice I pray. Whom shall I appoint my viceroy to oppose yon hateful queen, Our Enemy's vicegerent?"

"Oh! thou great Emperor of Darkness," said Cerberus, {106a} the demon of tobacco, "'tis I that supply the third of that country's maintenance, I shall go, and I will despatch you a hundred thousand of your foemen's souls through a pipe stem." "In sooth," said Lucifer, "thou hast done me some good service, what with causing the slaughter of the owners in India and poisoning those that indulge in it, through the saliva, sending many to wander with it idly from house to house, others to steal in order to obtain it, and millions to grow that fond of it that they cannot spend a single day without it, and be in their right mind. For all this, go and do thy best, but thou art nought to our present purpose."

Whereupon Cerberus sat down; then rose Mammon, the devil of money, and with surly skulking mien began: "'T was I who pointed out the first mine whence money was to be obtained, and ever since I am praised and worshipped more than God, and men lay their pain and peril, all their mind, their affection and their trust upon me, yea, there is no man content, but all crave more of my favor; the more they obtain, the further still are they from rest, until at last, while seeking ease, they come to this region of everlasting woes. How many a crafty old miser have I enticed hither over paths that were harder to traverse than those that lead to the realm of bliss? Whenever a fair was held, a market, assize or election, or any other concourse, who had more subjects than I or greater power and authority? Cursing, swearing, fighting, litigation, falsehood and deceit, beating, clawing, murdering and robbing one another, Sabbath-breaking, perjury, cruelty, and what black mark besides, which stamps men as of Lucifer's fold, that I have not had a hand in placing? For which reason have I been called 'the root of all evil.' Wherefore, an it please your majesty, I will go."

He ceased. Then Apolyon uprose and spoke: "I know of nought more certain to lead them hither than what brought you here, {107a} and that is Pride; once it plants its straight stake in them and puffs them up, there is no need to fear that they will condescend to bear the cross or go through the narrow gate. I will go with your daughter Pride, and before they can realise where they are, I will drive the Welsh hither headlong while admiring the pomp of the English, and the English while imitating the vivacity of the French."

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After him arose Asmodai, the devil of lust: "'T is not unknown to you, mightiest King of the deep, nor to you, princes of the land of despair, how many of the gulfs of hell have I filled through voluptuousness and lewdness. What of the time I kindled such a flame of lust over all the world that the deluge had needs be sent to clear the earth of men, and to sweep them all into our unquenchable fire? What of Sodoma and Gomorrah, fine and fair cities, which I so consumed with licentiousness that a hell-shower blazed in their infernal lusts and beat them down here alive, to burn for ages on ages. And what of the great hosts of the Assyrians, who were all slain in one night on my account? I disappointed Sarah of seven husbands' {108a} and Solomon and many a thousand other kings did I bring to shame through women. Wherefore let me and this sweet sin go, and I will kindle the hellish spark so generally that it will at length become one with this inextinguishable flame, for scarce one will ever return from following me to walk in the paths of life." At that he sat down.

Then Belphegor, chief of sloth and idleness, stood up and spake thus: "I am the great prince of listlessness and sloth, who have great influence upon millions of all sorts and conditions of men; I am that stagnant pond where the spawn of every evil is bred, where the dregs of every corruption and baleful slime grows rank. What good wouldst thou be, Asmodai, or ye, chief damned evils, were I not? I, who keep the windows open and unguarded that ye may enter into the man when ye will, through his eyes, his ears and his mouth. I will go and roll them all over the precipice unto you in their sleep."

Then Satan, the devil of delusion, who was on Lucifer's left hand, arose, and turning his grim visage to the king, began: "It is unnecessary for me to recount my deeds to thee, Oh lost Archangel, or to you, swarthy princes of Destruction: for 'twas I who dealt the first blow to man, and mighty was that blow, to be the cause of death from the beginning of the world to its end. Is it likely that I, who erst ravaged all the earth, could not now give advice that would serve one little isle? Could not I, who deceived Eve in Paradise, overcome Anne in Britain? If inborn craft and continuous experience for five thousand years profit aught, my advice is that you adorn your daughter Hypocrisy to deceive Britain and its queen: you have no other as serviceable as she; her sway extends more widely than that of all the rest of your daughters, and her subjects are more numerous. Was it not through her that I beguiled the first woman? And ever since she has remained on earth and waxed very great therein, so that by now the world is hardly anything but one mass of hypocrisy. And were it not for the craftiness of Hypocrisy how could anyone of us do business in any part of the world? For what man would ever have aught to do with sin, did he once behold it in its true color and under its own proper

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name? He would sooner clasp a devil in his own infernal shape and garb. If it were not that Hypocrisy can disguise the name and nature of every evil under the semblance of some good, and give a bad name to every goodness, no man at all would put forth his hand to do evil or would lust after it. Walk through the entire city of Destruction and ye will perceive her greatness in every quarter. Go to the street of Pride and ask for an arrogant man or for a penny-worth of affectation mixed through pride: 'Woe is me,' exclaims Hypocrisy, 'there is no such thing here,' no, nor for a devil, anything else in the whole street save proud demeanour. Or walk into the street of Lucre and enquire for the miser's house: pshaw, there is no one of the kind therein; or for the dwelling of the murderer among the doctors, or for the abode of highwaymen amongst the drovers; thou wouldst sooner be thrown to prison for asking than that one should confess to his own name. Yea, Hypocrisy crawls in between a man and his own heart, and so skilfully does she hide every wrong under the name and guise of some virtue that she has caused well nigh all to lose cognisance of their own selves. Greed she calls thrift; in her tongue riotous living is innocent joy; pride is courtesy; the froward, a clever, courageous man; the drunkard, a boon companion; and adultery is a mere freak of youth. On the other hand, if she and her scholars' {110a} are to be believed, the godly is a hypocrite or a fool; the gentle, a coward; the abstemious, a churl, and so for every other quality. Send her thither in all her adornment, and I warrant you she will deceive everyone; she will blinden the counsellors, the soldiers, and all the officers of church and state, and will draw them hither in hurrying multitudes with the varicolored mask upon their eyes." Whereupon he too sat down.

Then Beelzebub, the devil of thoughtlessness stood up, and in a harsh voice said: "I am the great prince of heedlessness whose duty it is to prevent a man taking reflective heed of his state; I am chief of the incessant hell-flies who utterly amaze men, ever dinning in their ears concerning their possessions or their pleasures, and never willingly allowing them a moment's leisure to think of their ways or of their end. No one of you must dare enter the lists against me in feats serviceable to the realm of darkness. For what is tobacco, but one of my meanest weapons to stupefy the brain? What is Mammon's kingdom but a part of my great dominion? Yea, were I to loosen the bonds I have upon the subjects of Mammon and Pride, and even of Asmodai, Belphegor and Hypocrisy, no man would for an instant abide their domination. Wherefore I will do the work and let no one of you ever utter a word."

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Then great Lucifer himself arose from his burning seat, and having turned his hideous face to both sides, thus began: "Ye chief spirits of the Eternal Night, princes of hopeless guile, although the vasty gloom and the wilds of Destruction are more bounden to none for their inhabitants than to mine own supreme majesty—for it was I who erewhile wishing to usurp the Almighty's throne, drew myriads of you, my swarthy angels, at my tail into these deadly horrors, and afterwards drew unto you myriads of men to share this region—yet there is no gainsay that ye all have done your share in maintaining and extending this great infernal empire." Then he began to answer them one by one: "Considering thy recent origin, Cerberus, I will not deny but that thou hast gained for us much prey in the island of our foes through tobacco. For they that carry, mix, and weigh it, practise all manner of fraud; and by its indulgence some are led on to habitual drinking, some to curse and swear, and some to seek it through blandishment, and to lie in denying their use of it—not to speak of the injury it inflicts upon many, and its immoderate use upon all, body as well as soul. And better than that, myriads of the poor, whom else we never should touch, sink hither through laying the burden of their affection upon tobacco, and allowing it to be their master, to steal the bread from their children's mouth. Then, brother Mammon, your power is so universal and so well-known on earth that it is a proverb, 'Everything may be had for money.' And without doubt," said he, turning to Apolyon, "my beloved daughter Pride is most serviceable to us, for what can there be more pernicious to a man's estate, to his body and soul, than that proud, obdurate opinion which will make him squander a hundred pounds rather than yield a crown to secure peace. She keeps them all so stiff-necked and so intent on things on high that it is amusing to see them, while gazing upwards, and 'extolling their heads to the stars' fall straightway into the depths of hell. You too, Asmodai, we all remember your great services in the past; there is none more resolute than you to keep safe his prisoners under lock and key, nor any so unimpeachable. Nowadays a wanton freak provokes only a little laughter, but you came near perishing there from famine during the recent years of dearth. And you, my son Belphegor, verminous prince of sloth, no one has afforded us more pleasure than you; your influence is exceeding great among noblemen and also among the common people, even to the beggar. And were it not for the skill of my daughter Hypocrisy in coloring and adorning, who ever would swallow a single one of our hooks? But after all, if it were not for the unwearying courage of my brother Beelzebub in keeping men in heedless dazedness, ye all would not be worth a straw. Let us once more recapitulate. What good wouldst thou be, Cerberus, with thy foreign whiff, if Mammon did not succour thee? What merchant would ever

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run such risks to obtain thy paltry leaves from India, except for Mammon's sake? And only for him what king would receive them, especially into Britain, and who but for his sake would carry them to every part of the kingdom? Yet how worthless thou too wouldst be, Mammon, if Pride did not lavish thee upon fair mansions, fine clothes, needless lawsuits, gardens and horses, extravagant relatives, numerous dishes, floods of beer and ale, beyond the power and station of their owner; for if money were spent within the limit of necessity and of becoming moderation, what would Mammon avail us? Thus thou art nought without Pride; and little would Pride profit without Wantonness, for bastards are the most numerous and the most fierce of all the subjects of my daughter Pride. And thou, Asmodai, what wouldst thou profit us were it not for Sloth and Idleness? Where wouldst thou obtain a night's lodging? Thou wouldst not dare expect it from a laborer or diligent student. And who, for the dishonor and the shame, would ever give thee, Belphegor the Slothful, a moment's welcome, if Hypocrisy did not disguise thy foulness under the name of an internal disease, or as a good intent or a seeming despisal of wealth or the like. She too—my dear daughter Hypocrisy—-what good is or ever would she be, notwithstanding her skill as a seamstress, and her boldness, without thy aid, my eldest brother, Beelzebub, great chief of Distraction: if he gave people peace and leisure to reflect seriously upon the nature of things and their differences, how long would it take them to find holes in the folds of Hypocrisy's golden garments, and to see the hooks through the bait? What man in his senses would gather together toys and fleeting pleasures, surfeiting, vain and disgraceful, and choose them in preference to a calm conscience and the bliss of a glorious eternity? Who would refuse to suffer the pangs of martyrdom for his faith for an hour or a day, or affliction for forty or sixty years, if he considered that his neighbours suffer here in an hour more than he could suffer on earth for ever. Tobacco is nothing without Money, or Money without Pride, and Pride is but a weakling without Wantonness, nor is Wantonness aught without Sloth, nor Sloth without Hypocrisy, nor Hypocrisy without Thoughtlessness. Wherefore, now," said Lucifer, lifting his infernal hoofs on their claw-ends, "to give my own opinion: however excellent all these may be, I have a friend better suited than all to our foe of Britain." Then could I see all the archfiends open wide their horrid mouths upon Lucifer in eager expectation as to what this could possibly be, while I too was as anxious as they. "A friend," continued Lucifer, "whose true worth I have too long neglected, just as thou, Satan, tempting Job of yore, didst foolishly turn upon him with severity. This, my kinswoman, I now appoint regent in all matters appertaining to my kingdom on earth, next to myself. Her name is Prosperity:

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she has damned more than all of you together, and little would ye avail without her presence. For who in war or peril, in famine or in plague, would lay any value by tobacco, or by money or by the sprightliness of pride, or who would deign welcome licentiousness or sloth? And men in such straits are too wide-awake to be distraught by Hypocrisy, or even by Thoughtlessness; none of the infernal vermin of Distraction dare show himself in one such storm. Whereas Prosperity, with its ease and comfort, is the nurse of all of you; beneath her peaceful shadow and upon her tranquil bosom ye all are nourished, and every other hellish worm that has its place in the conscience and will be for ever here gnawing its possessor. As long as one is at ease, there is no talk but of merriment, of feasts, bargains, genealogies, tales, news and the like; the name of God is never mentioned except in profane oaths and curses, whereas the poor and the afflicted have His name upon their lips and in their hearts always. Go ye, the seven of you, and follow her and be mindful to keep all a-slumbering and in peace, in good fortune, in ease and in perfect carelessness; then shall ye see the honest poor become an untractable, arrogant knave, once he has quaffed of the alluring cup of Prosperity; ye shall behold the diligent laborer become a careless babbler and everything else that pleases you. For all seek and love happy Prosperity; she neither hearkens to advice nor fears censure; the good she knows not, the bad she nurtures. But this is the greatest mishap: the man that escapes her sweet charms must be given up in despair, we must bid farewell to his company for ever. Prosperity then is my earthly vicegerent; follow her to Britain, and obey her as ye would our own royal majesty."

At that instant the huge bolt was whirled, and Lucifer and his chief counsellors were swept away into the vortex of Uttermost Perdition; woe's me, how terrible it was to behold the jaws of Hell yawning wide to receive them! "Come now," said the Angel, "we will return, but what thou hast seen is as nothing compared with all that is within the bounds of Hell; and if thou didst see everything therein that again would be as nought when compared with the unutterable woe of the Bottomless Pit; for it is impossible to have any conception of the life in the Uttermost Hell." Then suddenly the heavenly Eagle caught me up into the vault of the accursed gloom by a way I knew not, where, from the court, across the entire firmament of dark-burning Perdition, and all the land of oblivion up to the ramparts of the City of Destruction, I obtained full view of the hideous monster of a giantess whose feet I had previously observed. "Words fail me to describe her ways and means; but of herself I can tell thee, that she was a three-faced ogress: one villainous face turned towards Heaven, yelping and snarling and belching forth cursed abomination against the heavenly King; another face (and this was

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fair to look upon) towards earth, to allure men beneath her baneful shadow; and the other direful face towards the infernal abyss, to torture all therein for ages without end. She is greater than the earth in its entirety, and still continuously increases; she is a hundredfold more hideous than all Hell which she herself created and which she peoples. If Hell were rid of her, the vasty deep would be a Paradise; if she were driven from the earth, the little world would become a heaven; and if she ascended into Heaven, she would make an uttermost hell of that blissful realm. There is nought in all the worlds which God has not created, save her alone. She is the mother of the four deadly enchantresses; she is the mother of Death and of all evil and misery, and her terrible grasp is upon every living being. Her name is Sin. Blessed, ever blessed be he who escapes from her clutches," said the Angel. Thereupon he departed, and I could hear the distant echo of his voice saying; "Write down what thou hast seen; and whosoever readeth it thoughtfully will never repent."

WITH HEAVY HEART.

With heavy heart I sought th' infernal coast
And saw the vale of everlasting woes,
The awful home of fiends and of the lost
Where torments rage and never grant repose —
A lake of fire whence horrid flames arose
And whither tended every wayward path
Its prey to lead 'midst cruel dragon-foes;
Yet, though I wandered through withouten scath,
A world I'd spurn, to view again that scene of wrath.

With heavy heart oft I recall to mind
How many a loving friend unwarned fell
To bottomless perdition, there to find
A dread abode where he for aye must dwell;
Who erst were men are now like hounds of Hell
And with unceasing energy entice
To dire combustion all with wily spell,
And to themselves have ta'en the devils' guise,
Their power and skill all ill to do in every wise.

With heavy heart I roamed the dismal land
That is ordained the sinner's end to be;
What mighty waves surge wild on every hand!
What gloomy shadows haunt its canopy!
What horrors fall on high and mean degree!

How hideous is the mien of its fell lords,
What shrieks rise from that boundless glowing sea,
How fierce the curses of the damned hordes,
No mortal ken can e’er conceive or paint in words.

With heavy heart we mourn true friends or kin
And grieve the loss of home, of liberty,
Of that good name which all aspire to win
Or health and ease and sweet tranquility;
When dim, dark clouds enshroud our memory
And pass ’tween us and heaven’s gracious smiles,
’Tis sadder far to wake to misery
And feel that Pleasure now no more beguiles,
That sin has left nought but the wounds of its base wiles.

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With heavy heart the valiantest of men
Lays low his head beneath th' impending doom;
In terror he descends death's awsome glen;
While there appear flashing through the gloom
The lurid shades of deeds which in the bloom
Of youth he dared; at last the conscience cries
With ruthless voice: "There's life beyond the tomb;"
His dying thoughts all vanities despise
As on the threshold of Eternity he lies.

The heavy heart that suffers all such grief
May, while the breath of life doth still remain,
Hope for a joyous peace and blest relief;
But if grim Death his fated victim gain,
Woe's him that entereth the realm of pain —
For e'er on him its frowning portals close,
Nor gleam of hope shall he perceive again,
For in that vast eternal night he knows
A woe awaits that far surpasseth earthly woes.

The heavy heart beneath its weight is crushed,
And at its very name—Damnation writ,
All men their vain and froward clamors hushed;
But when within the fiery gaping pit
Whose flaming ramparts none will ever quit,
Above the thunder's roar th' accursed host
Raise such loud cries, it passeth human wit
To dream of aught so dire, for at the most,
All woes of earth as pleasures seem unto the lost.

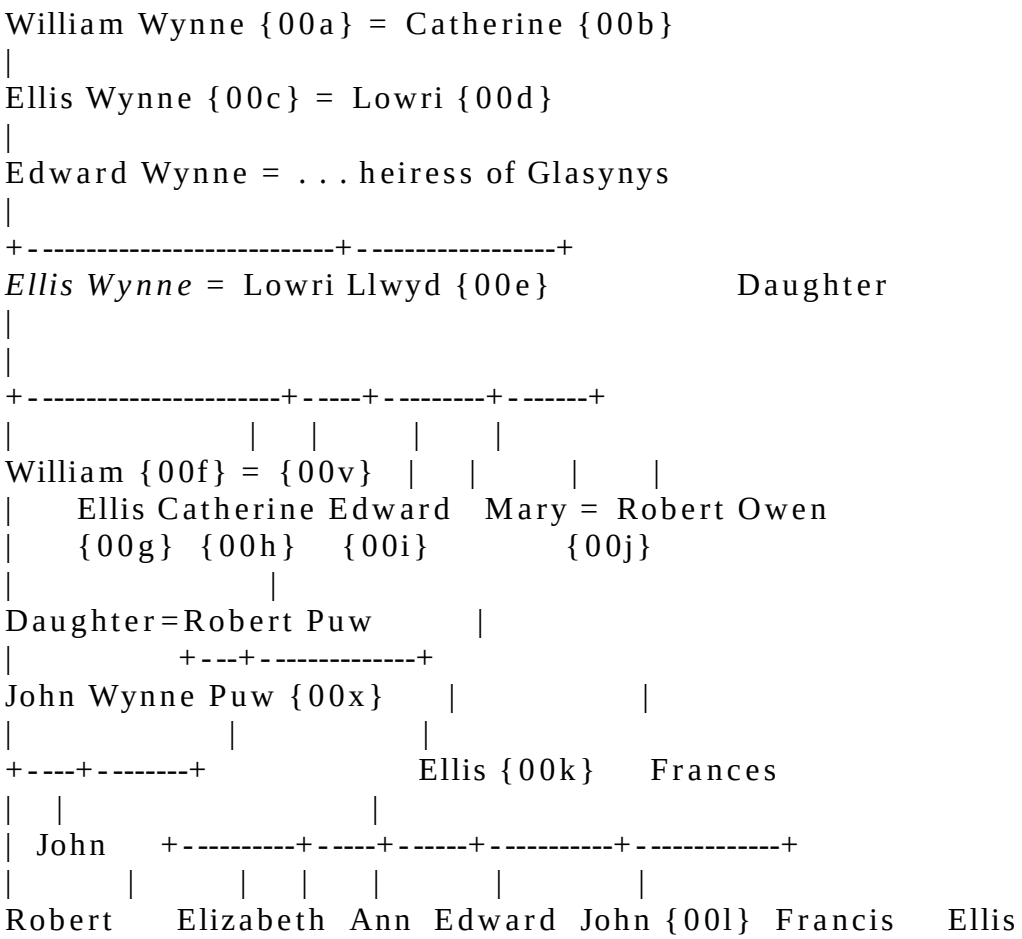
From every vain complaining, cease, my friend,
Since thou art yet not numbered with the dead
But turn thy thoughts unto thy destined end,
Behold thy Fates spin out the vital thread,
And often as thy mind to Hell be led,
To contemplate the doleful gloom aglow,
There will forthwith possess thee such a dread,
Which Christ's unbounded mercy doth bestow,
Lest thou be doomed to that eternal realm of woe.

Footnotes:

{0} The genealogical tables in the book are in graphic form. They are reproduced here in a more textual format—DP.

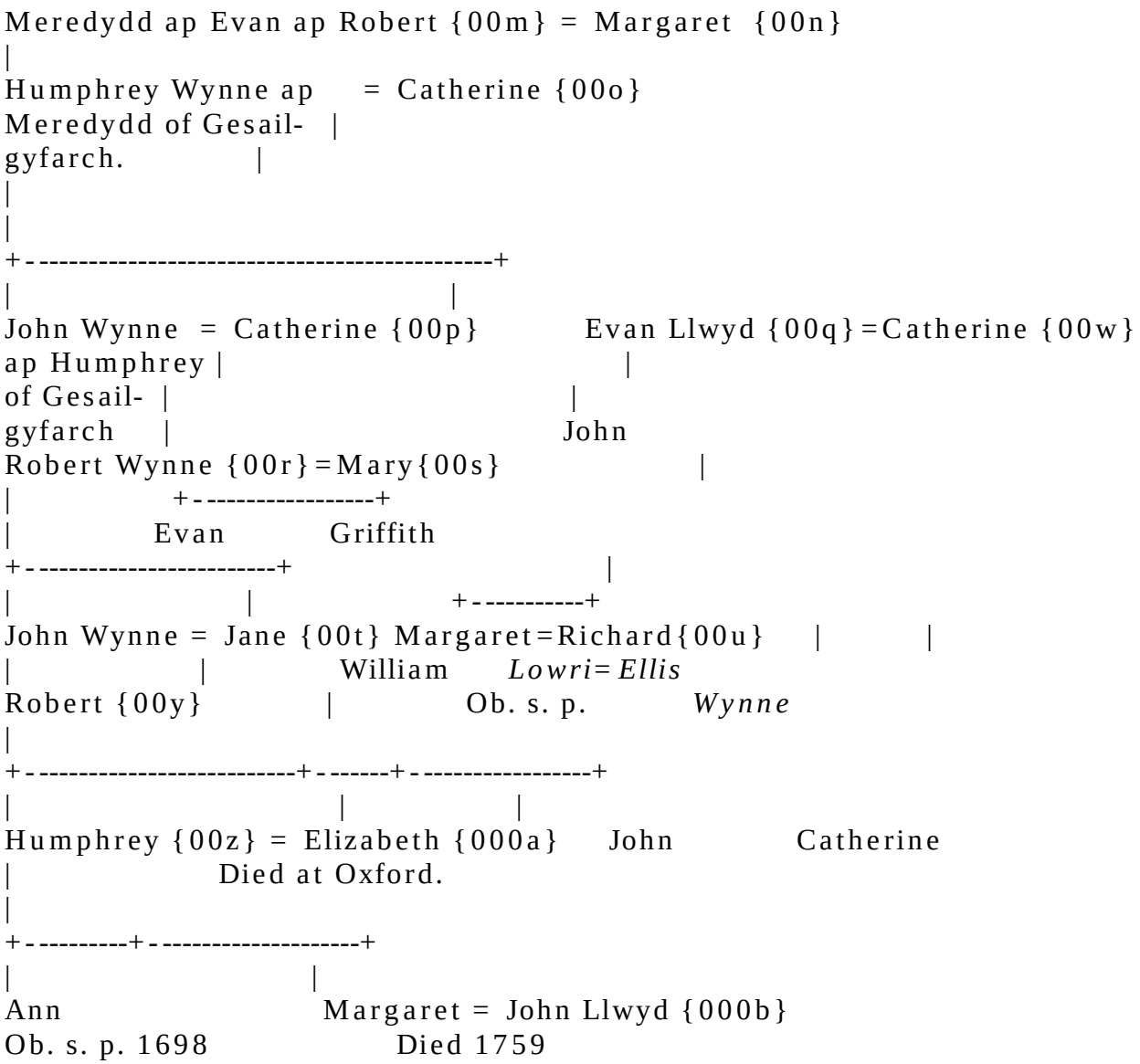
ELLIS WYNNE'S PEDIGREE

(I am indebted to E. H. Owen, Esqr., F.S.A., Tycoch, Carnarvon, for most of the information comprised in the following Tables.)



THE RELATION BETWEEN ELLIS WYNNE & BISHOP HUMPHREYS.

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{00a} William Wynne of Glyn [Cywarch]. Sheriff of Merioneth 1618 & 1637. D. 1658. 12th in direct male descent from Osborn Wyddel.

{00b} Catherine, daughter of William Lewis Anwyl of Park. Died 1638.

{00c} Ellis Wynne, 3rd son who probably lived at Maes-y-garnedd, Llanbedr.

{00d} Lowri, only daughter and heiress of Ed. Jones of Maes-y-garnedd, eldest borther of Col. Jones, Cromwell's brother-in-law who was executed in 1660 as a regicide.

{00e} Lowri Llwyd of Hafod-lwyfog Beddgelert.

{00f} Rector of Llanaber.

{00g} Ellis Died 1732.

{00h} Catherine Died young.

{00i} Edward Rector of Penmorfa.

{00j} Robert Owen of Tygwyn Dolgellau.

{00k} Rector of Llanferres.

{00l} Rector of Llandrillo.

{00m} 11th in male descent from Owen Gwynedd. Died 1525.

{00n} Daughter of Morris ap John ap Meredydd of Clunnenau.

{00o} Daughter and heiress of Evan ap Griffith of Cwmbowydd.

{00p} Daughter of William Wynne ap William of Cochwillan.

{00q} Of Hafod-lwyfog.

{00r} Died 1637.

{00s} Daughter of Ellis ap Cadwaladr of Ystumllyn.

{00t} Daughter of Evan Llwyd of Dylase.

{00u} Richard Humphreys of Hendref Gwenllian, Penrhyndeudraeth. Desceneded in male line from Marchweithian. An Officer in the Royal Army through Civil War. Died 1699.

{00v} . . . Lloyd of Trallwyn.

{00w} Catherine, Daughter of Griffith Wynne of Penyberth.

{00x} Robert Puw of Garth Maelan.

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{00y} Robert Wynne of Gesail-gyfarch, Barr.-at-law. Ob. s. p. 1685.

{00z} Humphrey. Born 1648. Dean of Bangor, 1680, Bishop 1689. Bishop of Hereford, 1701. Died 1712.

{000a} Elizabeth, daughter of Dr. Morgan Bishop of Bangor 1678, son of Rd. Morgan, M.P. for Montgomery Boroughs.

{000b} John Llwyd of Penylan, Barr.-at-law, son of Dr. W. Lloyd, Bishop of Norwich, deprived in 1691 as one of the Nonjurors.

{0a} "A Catalogue of Graduates in the University of Oxford between 1659 and 1850" contains the following entry: —"Wynne (Ellis) Jes. *Ba*., Oct. 14, 1718, *Ma*., June 13, 1722." But one can hardly suppose this to have been the Bardd Cwsr, as in 1718 he would be 47 years of age.

{0b} The following entries are taken from the register at Llanfair-juxta-Harlech: —- "Elizaeus Wynne Generosus de Lasynys et Lowria Lloyd de Havod-lwyfog in agro Arvonensi in matrimonio conjuncti fuere decimo quarto die Feb. 1702."

{0c} "Elizaeus Wynne junr. de Lasynys sepultus est decimo die Octobris A.D. 1732."

{0d} "Owenus Edwards cler. nuper Rector hums ecclesiae sepultus est tricesimo die Maii A.D. 1711." (From the Llanfair parish register.)

{0e} "Lowria Uxor Elizaei Wynne cler. de Lasynys vigesimo quarto die Augti. sepulta est Ano. Dom. 1720."

"Elizaeus Wynne Cler. nuper Rector dignissimus huius ecclesiae sepultus est 17mo. die Julii 1734." (From the parish register at Llanfair.)

{0f} "The Visions of the Sleeping Bard. First Part. Printed in London by E. Powell for the Author, 1703,"

{1a} The opening lines.—Ellis Wynne opens his vision as so many early English poets are wont, with a description of the season when, and the circumstances under which he fell asleep. Compare especially Langland's Visions, prologus:

In a somer seson whan soft was the sonne
I went wyde in this world wondres to here,
Ac on a May mornynge on Malvern hulles
Me befel a ferly of fairy me thoughte,
I was wery forwandred and went me to reste
Under a brode bank bi a bornes side

And as I lay and leued and loked in the wateres
I slombred in a slepyng it sweyved so merye.

{1b} One of the mountains.—The scene these opening lines describe was one with which the Bard was perfectly familiar. He had often climbed the slopes of the Vale of Ardudwy to view the glorious panorama around him from Bardsey Isle to Strumble Head, the whole length of rock-bound coast lay before him, while behind was the Snowdonian range, from Snowdon itself to Cader Idris; and often, no doubt, he had watched the sun sinking “far away over the Irish Sea, and reaching his western ramparts” beyond the Wicklow Hills.

{1c} Master Sleep.—Cp.:

Such sleepy dulness in that instant weigh’d
My senses down.

—Dante: Inf. C.I. (Cary’s trans.)

Now leaden slumber with life’s strength doth fight.

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—Shakespere: Lucrece, 124.

{4a} Such a fantastic rout.—Literally “such a battle of Camlan.” This was the battle fought between Arthur and his nephew Medrod about the year 540 on the banks of the Camel between Cornwall and Somerset, where Arthur received the wounds of which he died. The combatants being relatives and former friends, it was characterised with unwonted ferocity, and has consequently come to be used proverbially for any fray or scene of more than usual tumult and confusion.

So all day long the noise of battle roll’d
Among the mountains by the winter sea,
Until King Arthur’s table, man by man,
Had fallen in Lyonness about their Lord.

—Tennyson: Morte d’Arthur.

{4b} To lampoon my king.—The Bard commenced this Vision in the reign of William *iii*. (v. also p. 17, “to drink the King’s health”) and completed it in that of Queen Anne, who is mentioned towards the end of the Vision.

{7a} The Turk and old Lewis of France.—The Sultan Mustapha and Lewis XIV. are thus referred to.

{14a} Clippers.—The context seems to demand this meaning, that is, “those who debase coin of the realm,” rather than “beggars” from the Welsh “clipan.”

{20a} Backgammon and dice.—These games, together with chess, were greatly in vogue in mediaeval Wales, and are frequently alluded to in the Mabinogion and other early works. The four minor games or feats (gogampau) among the Welsh were playing the harp, chess, backgammon, and dice. The word “ffristial a disiau” are here rendered by the one word “dice”—ffristial meaning either the dice-box, or the game itself, and disiau, the dice.

{21a} This wailing is for pay.—Cp.

Ut qui conducti plorant in funere dicunt
et faciunt prope plora dolentibus ex animo.

—Horace: Ars Poetica, 430-1.

{23a} The butt of everybody.—Whenever a number of bards, in the course of their peregrinations from one patron’s hall to another, met of a night, their invariable custom was to appoint one of the company to be the butt of their wit, and he was expected to give ready answer in verse and parry the attacks of his brethren. It is said of Dafydd ap

Gwilym that he satirized one unfortunate butt of a bard so fiercely that he fell dead at his feet.

{24a} Congregation of mutes.—At the time Ellis Wynne wrote, the Quakers were very numerous in Merioneth and Montgomery and especially in his own immediate neighbourhood, where they probably had a burying-ground and conventicle. They naturally became the objects of cruel persecution at the hands of the dominant church as well as of the state; their meetings were broken up, their members imprisoned and maltreated, until at last they were forced to leave their fatherland and seek freedom of worship across the Atlantic

{25a} Speak no ill.—A Welsh proverb; v. Myv. Arch. III. 182.

{26a} We came to a barn.—The beginning of Nonconformity in Wales. In the Author's time there were already many adherents to the various dissenting bodies in North Wales. Walter Cradoc, Morgan Llwyd and others had been preaching the Gospel many years previously throughout the length and breadth of Gwynedd; and it was their followers that now fell under the Bard's lash.

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{28a} Corruption of the best.—A Welsh adage; v. Myv. Arch. III. 185.

{28b} Some mocking.—Compare Bunyan's Christian starting from the City of Destruction: "So he looked not behind him, but fled towards the middle of the plain. The neighbours came out to see him run, and as he ran, some mocked, others threatened and some cried after him to return."

{29a} Who is content.—Cp.

Qui fit, Maecenas, ut nemo, quam sibi sortem
Seu ratio dederit seu fors obiecerit, illa
Contentus vivat, laudet diversa sequentes?

—Horace: Sat. I. i.

{34a} Increases his own penalty.—Cp.

—the will
And high permission of all-ruling heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others.

- Par. Lost: I. 211-6.

{36a} Royal blood—referring to the execution of Charles I.

{37a} The Pope and his other son.—The concluding lines of this Vision were evidently written amidst the rejoicings of the nation at the victories of Marlborough over the French and of Charles XII. over the Muscovites

{43a} Glyn Cywarch.—The ancestral home of the Author's father, situate in a lonely glen about three miles from Harlech.

{43b} Our brother Death.—This idea of the kinship of Death and Sleep is common to all poets, ancient and modern; cp. the "Consanguineus Leti Sopor" of Vergil (AEneid: VI. 278); and also:

Oh thou God of Quiet!
Look like thy brother, Death, so still,—so stirless —
For then we are happiest, as it may be, we
Are happiest of all within the realm
Of thy stern, silent, and unawakening twin.

- Byron: Sardanapulus, IV.

{44a} An extensive domain.—Compare what follows with Vergil's description (Dryden's trans.):

Just in the gate and in the jaws of Hell,
Revengeful cares and sullen sorrows dwell,
And pale diseases and repining age —
Want, fear, and famine's unresisted rage;
Here toils and death, and death's half-brother, Sleep,
Forms terrible to view, their sentry keep.

—AEneid: VI. 273-8

{48a} Merlin.—A bard or seer who is supposed to have flourished about the middle of the fifth century, when Arthur was king. He figures largely in early tales and traditions, and many of his prophecies are to be found in later Cymric poetry, to one of which Tennyson refers in his Morte d'Arthur:

I think that we
Shall never more, at any future time,
Delight our souls with talks of knightly deeds
Walking about the gardens and the halls
Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
I perish by this people which I made —
Though Merlin sware that I should come again
To rule once more—but let what will be, be.

{48b} Brutus, the son of Silvius.—According to the Chronicles of the Welsh Kings, Brwth (Brutus) was the son of Selys (Silvius), the son of Einion or AEneas who, tradition tells, was the first king of Prydain. In these ancient chronicles we find many tales recorded of Brutus and his renowned ancestors down to the fall of Troy and even earlier.

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{48c} A huge, seething cauldron.—This was the mystical cauldron of Ceridwen which Taliesin considered to be the source of poetic inspiration. Three drops, he avers, of the seething decoction enabled him to forsee all the secrets of the future.

{48d} Upon the face of earth.—These lines occur in a poem of Taliesin where he gives an account of himself as existing in various places, and contemporary with various events in the early eras of the world's history—an echo of the teachings of Pythagoras:

Morte carent animae; semperque priore relicta
Sede, novis habitant domibus vivuntque receptae.

—Ovid: Metam. XV. 158-9.

{48e} Taliesin.—Taliesin is one of the earliest Welsh bards whose works are still extant. He lived sometime in the sixth century, and was bard of the courts of Urien and King Arthur.

{49a} Maelgwn Gwynedd.—He became lord over the whole of Wales about the year 550 and regained much territory that had once been lost to the Saxons. Indeed Geoffrey of Monmouth asserts that at one time Ireland, Scotland, the Orkneys, Norway and Denmark acknowledged his supremacy. Whatever truth there be in this assertion, it is quite certain that he built a powerful navy whereby his name became a terror to the Vikings of the North. In his reign, however, the country was ravaged by a more direful enemy—the Yellow Plague; "whoever witnessed it, became doomed to certain death. Maelgwn himself, through Taliesin's curse, saw the Vad Velen through the keyhole in Rhos church and died in consequence." (Iolo MSS.)

{49b} Arthur's quoit.—The name given to several cromlechau in Wales; there is one so named, near the Bard's home, in the parish of Llanddwywe, "having the print of a large hand, dexterously carved by man or nature, on the side of it, as if sunk in from the weight of holding it." (v. Camb. Register, 1795.)

{54a} In the Pope's favor.—Clement XI. became Pope in 1700, his predecessor being Innocent XII.

{55a} Their hands to the bar.—Referring to the custom (now practically obsolete) whereby a prisoner on his arraignment was required to lift up his hands to the bar for the purpose of identification. Ellis Wynne was evidently quite conversant with the practice of the courts, though there is no proof of his ever having intended to enter the legal profession or taken a degree in law as one author asserts. (v. Llyfryddiaeth y Cymry, sub. tit. Ellis Wynne.)

{67a} “The Practice of Piety.”—Its author was Dr. Bayley, Bishop of Bangor; a Welsh translation by Rowland Vaughan, of Caergai, appeared in 1630, “printed at the signe of the Bear, in Saint Paul’s Churchyard, London.”

{69a} At one time cold.—Cp.:

I come
To take you to the other shore across,
Into eternal darkness, there to dwell
In fierce heat and in ice.

- Dante: Inf. c. III. (Cary’s trans.).

{71a} Above the roar.—Cp.:

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The stormy blast of Hell
With restless fury drives the spirits on:
When they arrive before the ruinous sweep
There shrieks are heard, there lamentations, moans,
And blasphemies.

- Dante: Inf. c. V. (Cary's trans.).

{73a} Amidst eternal ice.—Cp.:

Thither . . . all the damned are brought
. . . and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce!
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infix'd and frozen round
Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.

- Par. Lost, II. 597-603.

{85a} Better to reign.—This speech of Lucifer is very Miltonic; compare especially —

—in my choice To reign is worth ambition, though in hell; Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven.

- Par. Lost, I. 261-3.

{85b} Revenge is sweet.—Cp.:

Revenge, at first though sweet
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils.

- Par. Lost, IX. 171-2.

{87a} This enterprize.—Cp.:

—this enterprize None shall partake with me.

- Par. Lost, II. 465.

{95a} Barristers.—The word cyfarthwyr, here rendered "barristers," really means "those who bark," which is probably only a pun of the Bard's on cyfarchwyr—"those who address (the court)."

{95b} Sir Edmundbury Godfrey.—A London magistrate who took prominent part against the Catholics in the reign of Charles II. At the time the panic which the villainy of Titus Oates had fomented was at its height, Sir Edmundbury was found dead on Primrose Hill, with his sword through his body; his tragic end was attributed to the Papists, and many innocent persons suffered torture and death for their supposed complicity in his murder.

{102a} Einion the son of Gwalchmai.—This is a reference to a fable entitled “Einion and the Lady of the Greenwood,” where the bard is led astray by “a graceful, slender lady of elegant growth and delicate feature, her complexion surpassing every red and every white in early dawn, the snow-flake on the mountain-side, and every beauteous colour in the blossoms of wood, meadow, and hill.” (v. Iolo MSS.) Einion was an Anglesey bard, flourishing in the twelfth century.

{104a} Walking round the church.—Referring to a superstitious custom in vogue in some parts of Wales as late as the beginning of the present century. On All Souls’ Night the women-folk gathered together at the parish church, each with a candle in her hand; the sexton then came round and lit the candies, and as these burnt brightly or fitfully, so would the coming year prove prosperous or adverse. When the last candle died out, they solemnly march round the church twice or thrice, then home in silence, and in their dreams that night, their fated husbands would appear to them.

{106a} Cerberus, et seq.—Compare the seven deadly sins in Langland’s Vision of Piers Plowman, Pride, Luxury (lecherie), Envy, Wrath, Covetousness, Gluttony, and Sloth. See also Chaucer’s Persones Tale, passim. A description of these seven sins occurs very frequently in old authors.

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{107a} What brought you here.—Pride is the greatest of all the deadly sins. Compare Spenser's Faery Queen I. c. IV, where "proud Lucifera, as men did call her," was attended by "her six sage counsellors"—the other sins. Shakespere names this sin Ambition:

Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition,
For by this sin fell the angels.

{108a} Sarah.—v. Apocrypha, the book of Tobit, c. VI.

{110a} If she and her scholars—Cp.:

At nos virtutes ipsas invertimus atque sincerum cupimus vas incrustare. probus quis nobiscum vivit multum demissus homo: illi tardo cognomen pingui damus. his fugit omnes insidias nullique malo latus obdit apertum pro bene sano at non incauto fictum astutumque vocamus.

- Horace: Sat. I. iii.

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