

residence. But multitudes remained, especially persons of the poorer class, who, crowded together in narrow streets and alleys, seemed marked out by the Angel of Death as his certain prey; among these his ravages were most awful; they chiefly swelled the amount of deaths reported from week to week, rising from hundreds to thousands, till, during the month of September, the terrific number of 10,000, at least, was the weekly average of the bills of mortality. In one night, it is said, 4,000 died—a night long to be remembered. One shop after another, one dwelling after another, was closed. The long red cross, with the words, "Lord, have mercy upon us," inscribed on the door, indicated that within Death was doing his work. The watchmen, appointed by the magistrates, stood at the entrance, armed with halberds, to prevent all communication between the inmates and other persons, and thus to limit, as far as possible, the spread of the contagion. Instead of the busy crowds that once filled the thoroughfares, a few persons might be seen walking cautiously along in the middle of path, fearful of each other's touch. The highways were forsaken, and the travellers walked in byeways. A coach was rarely met, save when, with curtains closely drawn, it conveyed some plague-stricken mortal to the pest-house. The wain, laden with timber and other materials had disappeared; for men had no heart to build; and the half-finished structure was left to premature ruin. The cart, bearing provision, came not within the city gate; the market was held in the outskirts, where the seller was afraid to touch the money of the buyer, till it had been dropped into a vessel of vinegar. In many of the streets the grass sprang up, and a fearful silence brooded everywhere, in harmony with the wide spread desolation. The London cries, the sounds of music, the murmur of cheerful groups, the din of business, had ceased. That deep solitude, in a great city, must have been overwhelming. And how must the lonely passenger, as he walked along, have shuddered, while now and then this portentous silence was broken, as there darted from an open window the shrieks of some miserable being, in the agony of disease or bereavement! In some cases, no human sounds, even of terror, broke the awful tranquillity of the scene. Whole streets were desolate—the doors left open—the windows shattering with the wind—the houses empty—the inmates gone.

Suddenly did the disease strike the patient. Sometimes they suddenly dropped in the streets; others, perhaps, had time to go to the next stall or porch, and just sit down and die. The man who drove the death-cart, expired on his way to the huge pit dug for the reception of thousands, or fell down dead upon the heap of corpses that he was tumbling into that rude place of burial. A person went home hale and strong; at even-tide there was trouble, and before morn he was not. A mother nursed the babe, the purple spot appeared on her breast; and in a short time the helpless little one would be clinging to its lifeless parent—to follow her in a few brief moments to another world. Every man who was affected with sickness naturally thought his hour was come; and who but must be deeply affected with the following passage in Pepy's Diary: "June 17.—It struck me very deep this afternoon, going with a hackney-coach down Holborn, from the Lord Treasurer's, the coachman I found to drive easily and easily and at last stood still, and came down, hardly able to stand, and told me that he was suddenly struck sick, and almost blind, he could not see; so I alighted and went into another coach, with a sad heart for the poor man, and for myself also, lest he should have been struck with the plague."

In some cases the disease lurked for several days in the system without discovering itself, yet all the while proving contagious; and it was very sad to reflect how such a person had been walking about destroyer, perhaps for a week or a fortnight—how he had ruined those whom he would have hazarded his life to save, and had been breathing death upon them, even, perhaps, in his tender blessings and embracings of his own children. When the disease reached its crisis, it was often attended with delirium in the most appalling forms, and the pitiable sufferers would start from their beds—rave on the passer-by whom they saw from the open casement,—perhaps rush down stairs—burst into the street,—screaming in the most terrific manner,—then haste to the river, and terminate their earthly agonies by suicide. Awful as were the real horrors of the plague year, they were augmented by excited imagination. Men saw in the heavens portentous forms, blazing stars, and angels with flaming swords; and on the earth, they discerned spectres, in insignificant and menacing attitudes. Some fancied themselves inspired; one of these persons made the silent streets ring with the deep cry, "Yet forty days and London shall be destroyed." And another, with nothing but a girdle round his loins, and bearing a vessel of burning coals upon his head, paced the city by night and by day, exclaiming, "Oh the great and dreadful God!" There were individuals, even as amidst the plague of Athens, who spent their days in merriment and folly—who feared neither the displeasure of God nor the laws of man:—not the former, because they deemed it the same thing whether they worshipped or neglected to do so, seeing that all in common perished; nor the latter, because no one expected his life would last till he received the punishment of his crimes. But the greater number of the population looked on the calamity in the light of a judgment from God, trembled at his displeasure and sought his mercy. Multitudes were ready to welcome religious instruction, by whomsoever conveyed.—Those whose health continued, thronged to hear the preaching of the Gospel; and such as were smitten by disease, but capable of holding conversation, were glad of the visit of the Christian minister. There was a wide field open for their exercise and diligence and zeal.—Some of the clergy availed themselves of the opportunity to attend to the spiritual wants of their dying flocks, but others, of a different temper, fled from the scene of suffering. When one of the pastors fell sick, it was no easy to supply his lack of service.

From the writings of Dr. Bing, it appears that the Bishop of London found it necessary to threaten the refugees with expulsion from their livings if they did not resume

their posts. "It is said my Lord Bishop of London hath sent to those pastors that have quitted their flocks, by reason of these times, that if they return not speedily, others will be put into their places."

The plague was not confined to London. Many places suffered from its visitation, and were, at the same time, the scenes of ministerial self-denial and activity. A touching story is told respecting the prevalence of the disease at Eyam, a little village in Derbyshire, and the heroism of the clergyman. A box of cloth was sent from London to a tailor at Eyam, who soon after he had taken out the contents, fell sick and died. The pestilence presently swept away all in the house save one. Every day fresh victims fell—one whole family perished, with the exception of a little boy. A grave stone still remains to tell the story,—seven persons of the name of Hancock, it appears from the inscription died within eight days.—The church yard was not sufficient for the burial of the dead. Graves were dug in the fields, and on the hill-side, where the putrid corpses were hastily interred. The clergyman was Mr. Mompesson, a young man of twenty-eight. His wife, alarmed for the safety of her beloved husband and their two sweet children, besought him to flee from the fearful scourge; but the minister of Eyam was devoted to his office, and would not leave his flock, though it was to save his life. His zeal, however, was associated with a tender regard for his family, and he earnestly desired the removal of his wife and little ones to some place of security. But the heroism of a woman's love, while sought his safety, she was prepared to share his danger; and, agreeing to the removal of the children, she was resolved to remain in the parsonage, to cheer her husband's heart, and aid him in his exertions. And there they were for seven months ministering spirits of mercy. While the Angel of Death was ravaging the village, Mompesson sought to prevent the extension of the disease. In conjunction with the Earl of Devonshire, his patron, who resided at Chatworth, he arranged that all communication with the neighboring places should be cut off, and that the inhabitants of Eyam should remain in the village, and calmly await their fate; that no one should go beyond a boundary marked by certain stones, where people from other parts came and left provisions, and where the buyer was to put the money in a vessel of clear spring water.—A line of circumvallation was thus drawn around the place and the people were as men besieged, except that the confinement was voluntary, and endured, not for the sake of themselves but others. Combining singular prudence with fervent zeal, Mompesson provided for the continuance of religious services, without hazarding the health of his parishioners by bringing them into a crowded church.—He performed the service in the open air. In Cucklett Dale, beside a running brook, with a rock for a pulpit, and craggy hills on one side, and lofty trees on the other for the walls of his sanctuary, he and his flock assembled for worship after the manner of the Covenanters. One can see him, with his devoted wife sitting by his side, and can well suppose what must have been the calm energy of such a man in preaching at such a time. He was wonderfully preserved from contagion, by means, it was thought, of an incision of his legs, to which he was persuaded to have recourse by her whose life was bound up in his. The plague was just about to decline, and health to be restored to the village, when the wife of Mompesson fell a victim to its power; and so the joy that he felt on the disappearance of the pestilence, and its limited range, effected through the blessing of God, on his wise precautions, was dashed with this bitter sorrow. Disinterestedness seems to have been the very soul of this good man's life, for when he was offered the Deanery of Lincoln, he declined it in favor of his friend, Dr. Fuller.

This worthy minister of the Establishment deserves, as he received, the praises of posterity.

"I'll bet a cent," said an old Meredith to his other half, "that our boy Otho is going crazy. For he is grinning at the plough, and he's grinning at the barn, and he is grinning at the table, and he is grinning to himself wherever he goes."

"Poh," replied the woman, "don't you know he got a love letter this morning?"

WHERE HE WAS HURT.—"Were you wounded in the wars?" asked a man of a little drummer.

"Oh, yes, badly," replied he.

"In what part were you shot?"

"Oh, sir, I was shot in the drum."

An angry woman in order to be revenged on her husband, tipped the tick of the bed, and sent all the feathers afloat in the air, and then rushing to the balusters of the stairs, and breaking her arm upon them, she exclaimed with insane energy: "Now you scoundrel, you must pay for a surgeon!"

Latour Manborg lost his leg in the battle of Leipsic.—After he had suffered amputation with the greatest courage, he saw his servant crying, or pretending to cry in the corner of the room. "None of your hypocritical tears, you idle dog," said the master—"you know you are very glad, for now you will have only one foot to clean instead of two."

"I think," said an old toper commenting upon the habits of a young man, who was fast making a beast of himself, "when a man reaches a certain pint in drinkin', he ort to stop."

"Well, I think," said old Beeswax dryly, "he ought to stop before he reaches a pint."

There is a man in Grant county, Ky., who is so miserly, that whenever he sends his negro servant down into the cellar for apples, he makes him whistle all the way down to the apple box and back, to prevent him eating any of the fruit. Fact!

They don't call the political prints, "our party press," in New Jersey; they are styled "our side-er presses."

#### "WOOD UP."

A Hoosier editor makes the following irresistible appeal to his debtors for a supply of fuel:—"those in arrears for the last year, or those who wish to pay their subscriptions in wood for this year, would accommodate us and perhaps save the country the cost of an inquest, by sending it before we freeze."

"Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh." The Literary Gazette gives the following as the prayer taught to the children of Scarborough wreckers in times of yore:—"God bless daddy! God bless mammy! God send a ship ashore before morning! Amen!"

Beauty attracts us men, but if, like an armed magnet, it is pointed with gold or silver beside, it attract with ten-fold power.—Jean Paul.

### CANADIAN AFFAIRS.

#### LORD ELGIN'S OFFICIAL DESPATCH.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MONTREAL, April 30, 1849.

My Lord,—I regret to state that rioting, attended with some consequences much to be regretted, though happily with no injury to life, or, except in one instance, to person, has taken place in the city of Montreal during the last few days. I hasten to furnish your lordship with an account of what has actually occurred, lest you should be misled by exaggerated reports conveyed thro' the United States.

2. In consequence of the unexpected arrival of vessels with merchandize at the port of Quebec, it became necessary for me to proceed, on a short notice, to Parliament, on Wednesday last, in order to give the royal assent to a customs bill which had that day passed the legislative council; and I considered that, as this necessity had arisen, it would not be expedient to keep the public mind in suspense by omitting to dispose, at the same time, of the other acts in which the two branches of the local Parliament had at an earlier period of the session, concurred, and which still awaited my decision. Among these was the act to provide for the indemnification of parties in Lower Canada whose property was destroyed during the rebellion in 1837 and 1838, with respect to which, as your lordship is aware, much excitement has unhappily been stirred.

3. I herewith enclose, for your lordship's perusal, a printed copy of the act in question, and I shall not fail by the first mail to furnish you with full information respecting its character and objects, the circumstances which led to its introduction, and the grounds on which I resolved, after much reflection, to sanction it. No money can be paid under it as indemnity for a considerable period, so that her Majesty's power of disallowance can be exercised with effect, should her Majesty be so advised, notwithstanding the course which I have taken. As I am writing this despatch in haste, with a view to its transmission by way of New York, I shall confine myself for the present to a statement of the proceedings by which the peace of the city has been disturbed.

4. In order, however, to render this narrative intelligible, I must premise that for some time past the House of Assembly, as at present constituted, has been the object of bitter denunciation, and not unfrequently of reckless menaces, on the part of a certain portion of the press of the province, and more especially of that of Montreal.—Your lordship will probably recollect that the body in question is the product of a general election which took place about eighteen months ago, under the auspices of the political party now in opposition, and after a dissolution, to which I had recourse on their advice, for the purpose of strengthening them in their position as a Government. The result of this measure was in the last degree unfavourable to those who had recommended it; nor, however, so much so in Lower Canada, where the complexion of the representation was little affected by the dissolution, as in the upper province, where several constituencies, among which were some of the most populous, rejected Conservative in favour of Liberal candidates.—On a question of confidence raised at the commencement of the session, immediately after the general election, the Administration was defeated by a majority of more than two to one, and a change of Government, as a matter of course, ensued.

5. This alteration in the political complexion of the Assembly, and the change of Government consequent upon it, were therefore clearly and distinctly traceable to a revision of sentiment in the British constituencies of Upper Canada. In Lower Canada nothing had occurred to account for either. This circumstance has, however, failed to secure for the decisions of the popular representative body either forbearance or respect from a certain section of those who profess to be emphatically the supporters of British interests. To denounce the Parliament as French in its composition, and the Government as subject to French influences, has been their constant object, and the wildest doctrines have been broached with respect to the right which belongs to a British minority of redressing by violence any indignity to which it may be subjected from such a source. I have now before me an article that appeared in one of the principal English newspapers of Montreal at a very early period of the session, of which I transcribe the concluding paragraph, as illustrative of the temper and language in which, even at that time, and before the public mind had been excited by the discussion of the Rebellion Losses Bill, a portion of the press ventured to criticise the proceedings of the local Parliament.—The article treats of a measure affecting the townships, to which, I believe, no great objection was raised in Parliament. It terminates, however, in the words,—“We are very glad of it—the sooner the cloven foot is made visible the better; the obvious intention of that majority, composed of Frenchmen, aided by traitorous British Canadians, is to force French institutions still further upon the British minority in Lower Canada. The intention is obvious, as we said, and we are very glad that it is openly shown. We trust that the party of the Government will succeed