



Ellis Wynne
The Sleeping Bard



Cockatrice Books
Y diawl a'm llaw chwith

Translated by T. Gwynn Jones
With an introduction by Rob Mimpriss

THE SLEEPING BARD

Thomas Gwynn Jones (b. 1871, Betws yn Rhos, near Abergelle; d. 1949), was a highly distinguished and influential poet, a translator from Irish, German, Norwegian, Latin, Greek and English into Welsh, and from Welsh into English, a novelist, playwright, critic, biographer and journalist. Although self-taught, he was appointed to the Gregynog chair of Welsh literature in 1919, and received honorary doctorates from the University of Wales and the National University of Ireland. His book, *Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom*, is also published by Cockatrice.

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Translation by T. Gwynn Jones
Introduction and notes by Rob Mimiriss



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This translation of Ellis Wynne's *The Sleeping Bard* (1703) by T. Gwynn Jones (1871-1949) first appeared in a bilingual edition of 150 copies, published by Gwasg Gregynog, Y Drenewydd in 1940.

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‘y Ddaiar fawr gwmpasog megis pellen
fechan gron ymhell odditanom’

Ellis Wynne

INTRODUCTION

An unnamed poet, set upon by the Fey, is rescued by an angel in Ellis Wynne's triptych of religious visions, *Gweledigaethau y Bardd Cwsc*, and is given a tour of the cosmos, including the City of Doom ruled by Belial's daughters; the realm of Death, a cousin of Lucifer, who constantly feasts on the flesh of the damned; and Hell, where a council of demons debate their plans for the perdition of the human race. The book, drawing on the visions of Francisco de Quevedo (1627),¹ is published in 1703. Fifty years have passed since the other Welsh-language classic of the period, the *Llyfr y Tri Aderyn* of Morgan Llwyd, which sought to convince the Welsh people of the necessity of Puritan rule,² forty-two since Vavasor Powell's *The Bird in the Cage*, which mourned the Commonwealth's passing.³ England and Scotland have shared one monarch for a hundred years, and the Act of Union which will dissolve Scotland's parliament is just four years away. England has become a locus of global capitalism,⁴ a path that will take it through imperialism to the threshold of fascism;⁵ and like its conquest of Wales,⁶ its union with Scotland will help it increase its own wealth, destroying Scotland's potential as a competitor in global trade, while facilitating the appropriation of its resources.⁷ Wales has become a stateless nation in the modern sense, politically subsumed by England although socially and culturally distinct, and regarded by its English rulers as a 'closed

society,' an 'internal colony,'⁸ much as it is regarded today.⁹ As such it is developing the cultural nationalism which will shape its political life in the twentieth century. The exclusion of Welsh from official life¹⁰ and the anglicisation of the Welsh upper class¹¹ fuel William Richards' fear of the imminent extinction of the language, Thomas Jones' of the Welsh as a people.¹² Meanwhile the British stand at the dawn of an age that will make them, as Ellis Wynne puts it, 'invaders and... oppressors' (p. 57), 'conquerors and murderers' (p. 126), 'killing and burning and stealing' (p. 59) their way across the globe.

By contrast the Poet's desire for travel, represented by the spy-glass which makes far things seem near and small things look big (p. 45), is occasioned not by a greed for land, but by a desire to see the world's beauties, and by an impatience with the narrow environs of Wales. His soul now released from his body in sleep, the Poet immediately sees the Fey at a playground nearby, requests entrance to their company as a fellow-traveller, and is promptly grasped and lifted in flight towards the castle of their master, Belial. Gaiety and carnival are common aspects of the Fey recorded in Welsh folklore, but they also have a darker side as fallen angels, the 'children of hell' (p. 48) doomed to an eternity of music and dance which they cannot enjoy.¹³ In this mixture of beauty and cruelty, gaiety and misery, they resemble the harlot with the rotten bones, the cankered beauty (pp. 64, 67) who is an image of the City of Doom itself, and when the Poet refuses to 'lampoon [his] own King'¹⁴ (p. 46) they threaten to let him drown in the castle moat. If the Poet learns from the Angel to despise the criminality which is concealed behind pride in descent and the rapacity which is glorified by the

name of conquest, he learns also of the divine protection enjoyed by England's rulers as defenders of the Anglican church and champions of the Protestant religion. The folkish Welsh symbol of the *tylwyth teg* begins a book which nevertheless embraces the destiny of Great Britain and the union of its peoples as part of a divine plan for the salvation of the world, and is juxtaposed with the Poet's glimpse of the earth from a great height, reduced to the size of a ball.

The earth is likewise reduced by the great City of Doom which, like Megalopolis, Lewis Mumford's 'vast urban hive,'¹⁵ sprawls across its surface, encompassing 'thousands of cities and realms,' 'all tongues, religions and races under the sun' (pp. 44-47). And this includes the people of Wales, for it is in a Welsh-owned mansion on one of the great streets of the city that the Poet and the angel come to earth. For Tony Conran, 'the hospitality extended by the great to the small' is 'the over-riding symbol' of the Welsh 'good life.' The house of the nobleman where the itinerant poet is rested and entertained is both the necessary foundation of culture in Wales and the central symbol of mediaeval praise poetry which for Conran is a deeply humanist achievement.¹⁶ Yet for Gwynfor Evans this foundation of Welsh culture is threatened by the anglicisation of the upper class; and the house now stands derelict and roofless, abandoned by its owners for brighter lives in England or France, along with the social conscience of Wales's once-civilised landowners, and along with the culture of Wales.¹⁷

The city's three main streets, Pride, Pleasure, and Wealth, are each the domain of one of its ruler Belial's daughters, and the city's inhabitants move from street to street while vying for the favours of the daughters themselves. The first of the

Poet's visions is both a clergyman's satire of life as it is lived without purpose or principle, and a countryman's impression of a great city in all its fascination at the start of the imperial age. And while the city's inhabitants gaze on Belial's daughters in their hypnotising beauty, while the Poet gazes on that restless procession of lovers, money-lenders, aristocrats and pleasure-seekers who throng its streets, it is the task of the angel to remind the Poet of the 'ugliness and cruelty' (p. 50), the hypocrisy and oppression, behind the spectacle he sees.

For Erich Fromm, our collective insanity, our '*folie à millions*'¹⁸ is to be seen in the facility and ferocity with which we make war, in the bad faith and mistrust with which we broker peace and break it,¹⁹ in an economic system which deliberately restricts access to food whilst producing the instruments of war in abundance, in a literate society where literature is sidelined for the banalities and fantasies of advertising and mass media.²⁰ For Guy Debord, the 'Spectacle' of such media extends beyond the boundaries of the consumerist societies which give it birth into every continent and culture,²¹ which it seeks to unify and standardise through its power to render them trivial,²² destroying all relations except that of the Spectator to the Spectacle itself,²³ for the Spectacle is an illusion which has nevertheless been made real.²⁴ It likewise dominates all time, imposing on the consumer and worker a cycle of production and consumption in an empty mimicry of the cycles of pre-industrial work,²⁵ and a forgetfulness of history and culture and of the possibility of progress which history and culture represent.²⁶ It exercises absolute cultural dominance as the economic system's 'never-ending monologue' of praise to

itself, to which there is no possible response except the hypnotised state of passive submission which is the Spectacle's intended result.²⁷ It is urban²⁸ because its function is 'the concrete manufacture of alienation'²⁹ in those 'lonely crowds' who will be aware of nothing except the Spectacle and their consumption of it,³⁰ and for Hannah Arendt the lonely crowd, homogeneous and rootless, is especially helpless to resist the allure of totalitarianism.³¹

For Erich Fromm, the road to sanity ends in a society designed to reflect human nature in its spiritual, social and cultural needs, being humanist and communitarian. Our current indifference to such needs must end in the Death of Man as surely as the Nineteenth Century brought about the Death of God, leaving us a race of 'golems' without the spiritual capacity to restrain our powers of destruction.³² For Lewis Mumford, the rise of Megalopolis is placed in doubt by history's cycles of urban rise and fall, and by our vulnerability to war and environmental destruction.³³ For Mike Davies the rise of a 'planet of slums' leads to 'Vietnam Street,' a place of chronic insurgency and counter-insurgency; but hope for the human spirit remains as slum-dwellers neglected by the state establish their own authorities.³⁴ For Ellis Wynne, the Anglican clergyman, hope lies in the City of Emmanuel adjoining the City of Doom, and devoted not to selfishness or material gain but to the values of self-sacrifice to God and service to the community on which the Christian religion is founded. All are welcome if they will submit to its king, even the Catholics whose worship is tainted by idolatry, or the Puritans, like Morgan Llwyd and Vavasor Powell, whose stubbornness and pride have torn the Protestant church apart. The city's strongholds

include the Kingdom of England, its defenders England's queen, and its powerful enemies also, in the rulers of Rome and France and Turkey, led to battle by Belial himself, who are committed to its destruction. And it is with an image of England valiantly fighting overwhelming foreign and supernatural forces, but helped and defended by the angels of God, that the Poet's first vision comes to an end.

Beyond the gates of the City of Doom lies the Land of Oblivion, and it is here, in the company of his second guide, Master Sleep, that the Poet is later conducted. This is the shortest of Ellis Wynne's three visions, and it might also seem redundant, predicting in both image and structure the Poet's third vision of Satan's court. In Dante's *Divine Comedy* the torments of Purgatory differ from those of the Inferno in preparing the soul for entry to Heaven,³⁵ yet in the Protestant totalitarianism of damnation, redemption and damnation are completed in this life (p. 99); and the underworld of the poet's second vision resembles neither the mountain of Dante's Purgatory nor the stately palace of Quevedo's Queen of Death, but a place of judgement and punishment, a charnel-house inferior in its terrors only to Hell itself.

Keith Thomas describes the mediaeval church as a community uniting the living with the dead through a wealth of commemorative and intercessory ritual, committed to ensuring the welfare of the dead in purgatory and the influence of past generations on social and cultural affairs.³⁶ When this continuity of past and present is broken, when the abbeys and chantries are forced to close and ghosts cease to visit the earth as emissaries to the living,³⁷ society

loses its ability to conceptualise or be consoled in death, and death ceases to give life meaning.³⁸ For Guy Debord, the Spectator can no longer face death because he has given up life for the fantasies of the Spectacle, and the Spectacle treats the Spectator as a unit of productivity, whose loss is not the tragic fulfilment of a life, but the obsolescence of a component.³⁹

The Poet's second tour begins in the Chambers of Death, 'a place of mist, dark and cold and baneful' (p. 88), lined with portals to the realm of Oblivion, filled with the groans of the dying who are watched over and quarrelled over by imps representing the miseries of death. And these are not like the deaths of Mynyddog Mwynfar's three hundred, who fell on the battlefield defending the Brythonic supremacy and are commemorated by the poet Aneirin.⁴⁰ Neither are they like the death of Llywelyn ap Gruffydd, who though his head was displayed on the streets of London, was mourned in verse by Gruffydd ab yr Ynad Goch, for the very freedom of Wales died with him.⁴¹ Rather, these are deaths by hunger, cold and fear, whose modern counterparts might include David Bevan, who died in a queue in the Job Centre at Llanelli reportedly weeks after being told to look for work,⁴² or Stephen Smith, who died after being declared fit for work weighing just six stone,⁴³ or Mercy Beguma, who after losing her job was found dead next to her malnourished child,⁴⁴ or an unknown number of people who committed suicide after the help they needed and had a right to receive was stopped, and whose records of that injustice were destroyed⁴⁵ as the 'violent bureaucracy' of the Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition and of the subsequent Conservative government brought hunger and want and cruelty home to Britain.⁴⁶ And

while the Poet's guide castigates misers, gamblers and drinkers, duellists and suicides, who died of their own follies, we discern behind them the value of the finite, fallible individual, on which rests the humanist response to death.

For Ernest Becker the terror of death is the fundamental human impulse arising from our sense of ourselves as both spiritual and mortal beings, and the way we respond to that paradox enables us to master our fear. Civilisation provides us with 'hero systems' of family, nation, party and religion, collective identities outlasting the human lifespan and outweighing the desires of the individual; and it is through participation in these that we transcend the finality of our individual deaths.⁴⁷ Hence we find Ellis Wynne in his conventional pieties, loyal to the Church of England and its queen, but in rarer cases we find the artist who rejects the 'hero systems' of his society, using art to make sense of the world which presents itself to him as a problem, and making himself worthy of immortality through his strivings and through the quality of his work.⁴⁸

The mediaeval Welsh poet commemorates the traditions which embody the spiritual life of his people, while giving praise to the king who ensures its physical survival, and in doing so immortalises himself.⁴⁹ Modern Welsh writers work through the medium of a language whose speakers are relatively few and whose future remains uncertain,⁵⁰ committing their personal immortality to its fortunes, and to the failure of those who would wish it extinct,⁵¹ so that the roles of artist and language activist are combined.⁵² But the writer in English who seeks to make Wales known to outsiders and to itself is sidelined by a difference in cultural assumptions and by the Spectacle of the British state. Hence

a literary agent whose clients are well known tells me, quite kindly, that my devotion to a minority culture will curtail a promising literary career, and another returns my manuscript with a slur against the people of Wales scrawled across the front.

For observers, the threat of social fragmentation and ethnic conflict which a minority culture represents can be overcome by the peaceful extinction of the indigenous group, the assimilation of its people into a richer and more varied culture which has already appropriated aspects of theirs, and in doing so has outgrown nationalism — and, one infers, by the anodynes of the Spectacle. Hence one finds Valery Tishkov writing for *Izvestia* of the ‘right’ of Russia’s national minorities to forget their cultures, a process he compares with the right of Solzhenitsyn’s children, raised in Vermont, to forget their Russian, and with the voluntary assimilation of the native American peoples.⁵³ The article is no doubt informed by the suffering that attended the breakdown of the Soviet Union, and by the ethnic conflicts between Ingush and Ossetian, between Kyrgyz and Uzbek, of which Tishkov is an authority⁵⁴ and which few in the West understand. Yet those who harangue us for speaking Welsh in public places⁵⁵ have less reason to fear our propensity for violence than to fear their own,⁵⁶ and their threats of violence are inspired not merely by our language but by our supposed inferiority as a race.⁵⁷ Moreover, Tishkov’s article rests on what Will Kymlicka would call a ‘misunderstanding’ of nationalism, for assimilation is a ‘right’ which few groups seek voluntarily. The émigré seeks actively to adapt to the opportunities of a new land, yet the indigene wishes merely to be left in peace in his own, and assimilation replaces one

form of nationalism with another, since all sovereign governments, whether they are called nationalist or not, use the tools of state to promote their national cultures.⁵⁸

For Tishkov the extermination of a culture can be achieved painlessly and without moral cost, yet for Becker it is a profound act of violence against the human spirit. Hence one witnesses on the one hand the ‘fighting and fornication,’ the ‘alcoholic stupor’ of the native Americans driven from their lands,⁵⁹ and on the other the terrible revolt of Albert Razin’s self-immolation.⁶⁰ Yet our desire to escape our mortal limits through membership of immortal groups explains ‘the utter equanimity with which groups kill,’ turning murderers into ‘holy heroes,’ atrocities into ‘holy missions’ whose perpetrators seem willing to follow their leaders even to hell.⁶¹ And the Hell of Ellis Wynne’s third vision is a place of ‘war without end’ (p. 135), where Puritans, Catholics and Muslims break their bounds and advance on Lucifer’s throne, and where a parliament sits to discuss which demon among them should be appointed Lucifer’s vice-regent of Great Britain.

In the summer of 2016 a referendum was held to decide the political future of the U.K. It was, we were subsequently told by its victors, a triumph of democracy, asserting the primacy of Britain’s people and Britain’s parliament and laws over unelected officials in Strasbourg and Brussels, a bloodless revolution which rendered Britain a fully independent nation, able freely to choose its leaders and determine its destiny for itself.⁶² As fuel and food shortages came to Britain,⁶³ as the roads out of Dover became jammed with lorries because freedom of movement had ended,⁶⁴ as the

rivers were clogged with sewage because there were no chemicals to treat it,⁶⁵ and as the British government's cruelty and negligence during a pandemic inflicted on its people one of the highest death tolls in the world,⁶⁶ its Brexit Minister, David Frost, declared the beginnings of a 'British renaissance,' an age of 'freedom from control by others' in a country no longer to be 'subsumed in a Greater Europe': a golden age of prosperity, unity and democracy that he claimed will make Britain the envy of the world.⁶⁷

Who should rule this glorious new Britain? For Lucifer and his attendant demons, prosperity is the snare that will blind its people to their spiritual state, just as, in the Poet's first vision, wealth and power enable exploitation and oppression whose crimes vastly outweigh the petty dishonesties of the poor. For the Conservative authors of *Britannia Unchained*,⁶⁸ prosperity is both the fruit of the energy and ingenuity of the British people and the cause of its decadence, which they see among benefit claimants, unionised workers, and the rioters of 2011.⁶⁹ Social renewal lies in the idealised worker ambitious for 'the cars [he] want[s]... the things [the kids] want,' who works a sixty-hour week for his millionaire employer without sick pay or holiday pay or a pension, who despises 'the lazy, feckless, benefits cheats,' and is 'not a great one for the Nanny State' except when that state is represented by the queen.⁷⁰

For R. H. Barrow, discussing the values of Roman civilisation, prosperity is not the focus of life, but the basis of a leisure which nurtures the life of the mind, and the life of the mind is a defence against barbarity and decadence alike.⁷¹ For Tony Conran also, Welsh poetry expresses an 'essentially Celtic' civilisation 'that deserves to be called *classical*' because

of its emphasis on personal development within a human-centred society and a way of life its people deem good.⁷² But for the authors of *Britannia Unchained*, an interest in the arts and humanities proves the ‘laziness’ of the British worker, drawn to academic subjects which are ‘easier’ than the sciences⁷³ — a view which scientists and technicians themselves might dismiss as crass,⁷⁴ just as the government dismisses their advice on public spending and austerity,⁷⁵ on Brexit and Europe,⁷⁶ on the Coronavirus and infection control,⁷⁷ drawing its power from a movement which ‘frankly... has had enough of experts.’⁷⁸ For Erich Fromm, capitalism demands the accumulation of wealth as an end in itself, a perversion which prevents its use or enjoyment,⁷⁹ like the *tylwyth teg*, doomed to a ceaseless carnival which they can never enjoy. And one infers that a materialistic society is doomed to cycles of exploitation and decadence, just as the life of the Spectator is a cycle of consumption and the production of what will be consumed. And the rejection of progress as a source of purpose and hope inspires a belief in the cyclical nature of history whose symbol is the ever-turning wheel, the swastika.

If Britain leaves the EU poorer, it can nevertheless be united, for as David Frost tells his fellow Conservatives, it leaves as ‘one nation’ whose prospects will be a source of hope and pride to all. For the Conservative MP for Conwy, Robin Millar, the belief that the Welsh are ‘the ultimate source of authority in Wales’ is ‘wrong in fact and in law,’ devolution a threat to the principle of democracy to which, it seems, his knowledge of politics and geography can provide no precedent. The narrative of Welsh democracy and sovereignty, based on ‘ancient stories’ which nationalists are

‘more adept at telling,’ must therefore be addressed by the unionist narration of ‘a rich and contemporary story of British sovereignty.’⁸⁰ But if such a story is represented by David Frost’s ill-mannered and dishonest account of Britain’s liberation from its European oppressors, then the narrative on which Welsh nationhood draws is contained in the histories told by J. E. Lloyd, Gwynfor Evans and John Davies, by O. M. Edwards, Gwyn Alf Williams and A. H. Dodd; in the community experiences of Tryweryn and Aberfan and family memories of the Penrhyn Lockouts and the Welsh Not. It is encoded in the Welsh language and Welsh literature and in the names we give our children; is preserved in parliament’s records of its greed to destroy the Welsh language;⁸¹ is indelible on the landscape in the Ring of Steel, in the slate tips and slag-heaps which climate change is making unsafe;⁸² in the road and rail network which serves the extractive needs of our neighbour, yet snubs those of us who need to travel through our own country.⁸³ Instead of narrative, which links the present and the past, reveals cause and effect, and deepens the sense of the self in its relationships with others, unionists like Millar will seek to preserve their union’s power through the stupefying qualities of the Spectacle: the junketing which will accompany the queen’s jubilee,⁸⁴ the hysteria which will mark her eventual death,⁸⁵ and the investiture of the next Prince of Wales.

It remains to assess the prospects of democracy in David Frost’s Britain. According to José Ortega it is the crowds born from the rise of urban life and the assimilation of scattered ethnic groups,⁸⁶ the inheritors of a liberal, scientific and industrial age, accustomed to effortless economic growth and increasing opportunities and comforts,⁸⁷ who seek to

impose their prejudices in the place of democratic debate. Entitled,⁸⁸ ignorant⁸⁹ and self-satisfied,⁹⁰ they derive their sense of the self and its rectitude from being interchangeable with each other,⁹¹ and so they are drawn to political mass movements, anti-intellectual, authoritarian and intolerant of all difference, whose favoured means of expression is the lynch mob.⁹² Such mobs vilify benefit claimants and the disabled,⁹³ threaten violence against leading Remainers,⁹⁴ deny the reality of climate change and the Holocaust,⁹⁵ and intimidate health workers during a global pandemic.⁹⁶ And while hate crimes and riots remain on the social periphery, the ideas that inspire them are expressed in the media and at the despatch box,⁹⁷ for the mob unites the detritus of every level of society, and therefore claims to represent society as a whole.⁹⁸

For Eric Hoffer, mass movements recruit from those whose inner lives are impoverished, providing them with a sense of meaning which they cannot gain from within.⁹⁹ For Erich Fromm, fascism promises not only the restoration of a society's influence and power, but escape from mortality itself in the follower's absorption in the fascist crowd, and the leader's extension of himself into the mass of his followers.¹⁰⁰ For Robert O. Paxton, the moral and intellectual vacuity of fascism enables it to adapt to changing times and local prejudices: in America as Protestant and white supremacist, in Western Europe as Islamophobic and secular, or in Russia as Orthodox and antisemitic.¹⁰¹ As I write, Russian forces seek to crush the European aspirations of Ukraine, compelling it through indiscriminate destruction and slaughter to accept the status of a partitioned and powerless Russian satellite,¹⁰² an *okraina*. As they do so,

England's nationalist right demands that the Republic of Ireland rejoin the UK,¹⁰³ and campaigns for the repeal of Welsh-language protections and the abolition of Welsh democracy as the fulfilment of Brexit;¹⁰⁴ for in Britain the mob is aroused by resentment at the loss of empire, and by England's fading authority in a union which the end of the imperial age has made obsolete.¹⁰⁵ And Welsh political memorials are defaced with swastikas, in an apparently fascist assault on the people of Wales in their right to remember and relate their own history.¹⁰⁶

For the deputy editor of *Conservative Home*, the comparative success of the Welsh government in containing the Coronavirus outbreak and its economic effects¹⁰⁷ shows the folly of allowing it to act differently from England; its undemocratic political class uses invented grievances and anti-English sentiment to protect its own interests. The response must be a British government which is 'smarter' in undoing devolution by stealth, in an article published on the day that Russian tanks began their political obliteration of Ukraine.¹⁰⁸ An article by Vladimir Putin, expressing his Russian irredentist beliefs, is vastly more erudite and intelligent than Henry Hill's, but shows the same barriers to thought. Ukraine's government, incompetent and corrupt, seeks to provoke anti-Russian sentiment in its people by 'mythologizing and rewriting' as a *Holodomor*, a killing by starvation, 'the shared tragedy of collectivization and famine,' turning its back, not only on economic relations with Russia, but on the 'spiritual unity' of their peoples.¹⁰⁹ By contrast, Timothy Snyder cites the Soviet state's records of its 'enforced' starvation of four million Ukrainians and its genocide of indigenous minorities by quota.¹¹⁰

For Gwynfor Evans, Britishness is an imposition of the state, designed to subsume the Celtic nations as it supposedly transcends the English. The 'totalitarianism' of that state is represented by its indifference to unemployment and depopulation in Wales, by its use of the media to destroy Welsh language and culture and to crush Welsh political aspirations, and by its willingness to override Welsh democracy when the Welsh people seek control of their own resources. And Wales's struggle to preserve its cultural heritage and the dignity of its people has universal significance, for everywhere 'the inhuman machinery of the huge and rootless systems... is trampling on man's humanity and shattering his personal life,' reducing 'the human person' to 'the abstract man,' 'rootless' in his proletarianism or 'vainly' suburban, ignoring the 'dire need' 'in every part of the world' for a society which 'respects the identity of each human person[,] which gives priority to quality of life in community.'¹¹¹

For Ortega, the antithesis of the fascist is to be found in the 'creative minority,' 'nobles' defined not by class but by a mode of being, 'for whom life is a perpetual striving' towards excellence in the things of the mind.¹¹² For Ernest Gellner, the nationalism of stateless nations is a seeming part of that excellence, a counter to the homogenising ambitions of the modern state, and necessary if human culture in its richness is to be preserved.¹¹³ Yet for Ortega, the nation state is an implement of the past, for the movement of history as a whole is towards ever larger and more complex polities.¹¹⁴

For Evans, hope for Wales lies not in 'the deracinated and ambitious crowd' of Britain's political leaders, but in 'the new shepherds on the old hills,' those with 'the cause, the

conviction and internal resource' to renew the cultural life of their country, 'warm, immortal men' and women who, although not educated or wealthy, have devoted their lives and resources to the language and culture of Wales.¹¹⁵ Because of them he finds the hope to envisage 'a Britannic confederation of free and equal nations... [securing] unity in diversity,' peacefully tending their national lives in a world which has outgrown empire.¹¹⁶ For Ortega the collapse of European power, the threat of decadence and the rise of fascism call for a union built on Europe's philosophical heritage,¹¹⁷ a 'genuine creation' of the will to live together.¹¹⁸ In a world paralysed by the in-fighting of nations, terrified by the prospect of nuclear warfare¹¹⁹ and ecological collapse,¹²⁰ one thinks of the Poet in his first flight, when he sees 'the great round earth, like... a small ball' far beneath him (p. 48): Teilhard de Chardin's promise of planetisation¹²¹ on the blue marble we share as our home.

Rob Mimirriss
Bangor, 2022

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- 2 1653. See *A Book of Three Birds*. Trans. Rob Mimpriss (Cockatrice, 2017).
- 3 Vavasor Powell, *Tsofer Bepah, or The Bird in the Cage, Chirping Four Distinct Notes to his Consorts Abroad* (London: 1662).
- 4 John Davies, *A History of Wales* (Harmondsworth: Allen Lane/Penguin, 1993), 292.
- 5 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 2017), 163, 206, 209, 504.
- 6 Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development, 1536-1966* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press), 69, 82, 92.
- 7 Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism*, 83-85.
- 8 John Davies, *A History of Wales*, 225.
- 9 Suspicion and paternalism marked English discussion of Welsh nationhood in the wake of its government's Cymraeg 2050 programme. *The Guardian* published an article describing the Welsh government's Cambrophile education policies as 'child abuse' while *The Telegraph* polled its readers on the use of the Welsh language in Welsh schools, both apparently assuming that interest in and support of the language was confined to Welsh-speakers, resented rather than supported by the wider Welsh population. The same assumption betrayed James Moore, a senior employee of the Welsh Ambulance Service, who compared the official status of the Welsh language with the race laws under South Africa's apartheid, and called on non-speakers to 'stand up to the oppressor' (Mark Smith, 'Welsh Ambulance Service boss leaves role after comparing the treatment of non-Welsh speakers to "apartheid."' *Wales Online*, 17th September 2021, <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/health/welsh-ambulance-service-boss-leaves-21586546>). During the housing crisis occasioned by Brexit and Covid travel restrictions, when the *Mail Online* urged its readers to buy second homes in the UK

to 'make no-deal Brexit a success for Britain' (Michael Powell, 'Ten ways YOU can help make No Deal Brexit a success for Britain.' *Mail Online*, 12th December 2020, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9047129/Ten-ways-help-make-No-Deal-Brexit-success-Britain.html>), and when second homes accounted for almost half of house sales in Dwyfor Meirionnydd (Gareth Williams, 'Almost half of house sales in Dwyfor Meirionnydd to buyers using them as second homes, new figures show.' *Nation Cymru*, 9th July 2021, <https://nation.cymru/news/almost-half-of-house-sales-in-dwyfor-meirionnydd-to-buyers-using-them-as-second-homes-new-figures-show/>), second home-owners from outside Wales who were required to pay council tax at the same rate as their Welsh neighbours, as a partial response to the housing crisis they had helped to create, cited this as evidence that Wales was a closed society, hostile to outsiders ("I'm thinking of selling up": Second home owner complains about tax hike.' *Nation Cymru*, 17th September 2021, <https://nation.cymru/news/im-thinking-of-selling-up-second-home-owner-complains-about-tax-hike/>). See also Katy Jenkins, 'Second home owner complains tax premium isn't "fair" and asks for rebate.' *Nation Cymru*, 14th May 2021, <https://nation.cymru/news/second-home-owner-complains-tax-premium-isnt-fair-and-asks-for-rebate/>).

I stopped to chat to an elderly neighbour on the other side of the mountain in brilliant sunshine in the summer of 2021. '*Mae pawb yn groeso byw yng Nghymru*,' he said. '*On'd mae'n rhaid iddyn nhw ddeall bod ni gyd yn Gymry*': 'Everyone is welcome to live in Wales. But they need to understand that we [including, by implication, they] are all Welsh.'

- 10 John Davies, *A History of Wales*, 236.
- 11 John Davies, *A History of Wales*, 301.
- 12 John Davies, *A History of Wales*, 302.
- 13 Wirt Sikes, *British Goblins: The Realm of Faerie* (1880. Cockatrice, 2020), 30, 98. See also Owen Wynne Jones, *Hallowe'en in the Cwm*. Trans. Rob Mimirpriss (Cockatrice, 2017), 86-87.
- 14 See also p. 61. Queen Anne succeeded William III on 8th March, 1702, and the vision contains references to both.
- 15 Lewis Mumford, *The City in History: Its Origins, its Transformations, and its Prospects* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World), 3.
- 16 Tony Conran, introduction to *Welsh Verse* (Bridgend: Seren, 2003), 19, 44-45, 20.

- 17 Gwynfor Evans, *Land of My Fathers: Two Thousand Years of Welsh History* (Swansea: John Penry, 1974), 306-307.
- 18 Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society* (2nd ed. London: Routledge, 1991), 15.
- 19 Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society*, 4.
- 20 Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society*, 5.
- 21 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*. Trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone, 1995), 15, 27, 29, 37.
- 22 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 38, 120.
- 23 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 22-23.
- 24 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 14, 17.
- 25 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 110-111.
- 26 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 114, 132-133.
- 27 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 19.
- 28 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 121-124.
- 29 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 23.
- 30 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 22-23.
- 31 Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, 431 f, 455 ff, 466.
- 32 Erich Fromm, *The Sane Society*, 27-66, 283-285, 360-361.
- 33 Lewis Mumford, *The City in History*, 525.
- 34 Mike Davis, *Planet of Slums* (London: Verso, 2007), 199-206, 38-41.
- 35 Mark Musa, introduction to Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy, Volume ii: Purgatory* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985) x-xi.
- 36 Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 603.
- 37 Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 603, 589.
- 38 Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, 605, 604.
- 39 Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 115.
- 40 For a modern translation of *The Gododdin* see, for example, Gillian Clark (London: Faber, 2021) or Steve Short (Burnham-on-Sea: Llanerch, 1994).
- 41 The significance of Llywelyn's death, finalising the English crown's rule over Wales and bringing to an end the vision of Welsh independence, is explored by J. E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales*, 531-532, where Gruffydd ab yr Ynad Goch is quoted; the poem is translated by Tony Conran in *Welsh Verse*, 161-164.
- 42 Anna Savva, 'Man drops dead in queue for Jobcentre while waiting for benefits appointment.' *Daily Star*, 18th November 2019, <https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/man-drops-dead-queue-jobcentre-20907713>.

- 43 May Bulman, “‘Let down by the system’: Six-stone emaciated man deemed fit for work by DWP dies.’ *The Independent*, 22nd April 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/stephen-smith-dwp-benefits-dies-sick-ill-disability-esa-fit-work-a8881001.html>.
- 44 Liam Thorp, ‘DWP boss refuses sympathy for mum who died next to starving child.’ *Liverpool Echo*, 2nd September 2020, <https://www.liverpoolecho.co.uk/news/liverpool-news/dwp-boss-refuses-sympathy-mum-18864373>.
- 45 Rob Merrick, “‘Cover-up’: DWP destroyed reports into people who killed themselves after benefits were stopped.’ *The Independent*, 26th February 2020, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/dwp-benefit-death-suicide-reports-cover-ups-government-conservatives-a9359606.html>.
- 46 Jamie Redman and Del Roy Fletcher, ‘Violent bureaucracy: A critical analysis of the British public employment service.’ *Critical Social Policy*, 23rd March 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F02610183211001766>.
- 47 Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death* (New York: Free Press, 1975), 11-12, 87, 26, 89, 90, 159-60, 188-189.
- 48 Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death*, 171-172, 185.
- 49 Tony Conran, introduction to *Welsh Verse*, 26, 40.
- 50 Robert J. Jones, “‘Perceptions and Realities: The Current Challenges to the Welsh Language and a Prognosis for the Future’ Part I.’ *The Pianosa Chronicle*, 28th June 2015, www.thepianosachronicle.com/?p=258.
- 51 See, for example, Judith Judd, ‘Welsh language should die.’ *Independent*, 28th February 1997, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/welsh-language-should-die-1280944.html>. Oli Dugmore, ‘Let it go: the Welsh language should be consigned to history.’ *The Tab*, undated article apparently from 2015, <https://thetab.com/2015/10/29/let-it-go-the-welsh-language-should-be-consigned-to-history-59795>. Gareth Davies, ‘Furious Welsh speakers slam BBC Radio 5 Live after researcher asks for volunteers to say why the language should DIE.’ *MailOnline*, 3rd August 2016, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3722155/Dreadful-stupid-verging-racism-Fury-Radio-5Live-researcher-asked-people-debate-Welsh-language-die.html>. While hostility to the Welsh language in England enjoys a seeming superiority, appealing to economic or historic necessity, or to the human rights of English-speaking children, in Wales it is never untouched by spite. For example, see Harri Evans, ‘Anti-Welsh “crappy, dying language” comments linked to councillor’s

- Facebook account.’ *NorthWalesLive*, 30th August 2019, <https://www.dailypost.co.uk/news/north-wales-news/anti-welsh-crappy-dying-language-16833399>. One also thinks of Joan Willson (@JoanWillson1), who compared Wales with South Africa as she boasted that English residents in Wales are ‘keeping the language at bay’ (quoted by Ianto Phillips, 14th March 2018, https://twitter.com/phillips_ianto/status/973722010923732998).
- 52 For example, Tony Conran, introduction to *Welsh Verse*, 87-96 discusses the relationship between language, literature and politics in the case of Saunders Lewis and his contemporaries.
- 53 The article in Russian, dated 12th September 2019, is to be found at <https://iz.ru/920557/valerii-tishkov/narod-ne-umiraet-s-iazylkom>.
- 54 Valery Tishkov, *Ethnicity, Nationalism and Conflict in and after the Soviet Union* (London: Sage 1997).
- 55 See, for example, ‘Greggs shop employee “compared Welsh to Tourette’s.”’ *Nation Cymru*, 5th November 2017. ‘Woman “told to leave shop in Pwllheli” after speaking Welsh.’ *Nation Cymru*, 5th August 2019, <https://nation.cymru/news/women-told-to-leave-shop-in-pwllheli-after-speaking-welsh/>. ‘Oxfam shop anti-Welsh language tirade “must not happen again.”’ *Nation Cymru*, 14th March 2019, <https://nation.cymru/news/oxfam-shop-anti-welsh-language-tirade-must-not-happen-again/>. ‘1 in 5 Welsh speakers “prevented” from speaking the language with someone else.’ *Nation Cymru*, 1st October 2021, <https://nation.cymru/news/1-in-5-welsh-speakers-prevented-from-speaking-the-language-with-someone-else/>. Whilst living in student accommodation in Cardiff I found that Welsh-language literature left in communal part of the house would be defaced or damaged, and my fellow tenants warned me that because Welsh was a ‘hateful’ and ‘inferior’ language they had ‘banned it from the house.’
- 56 One might cite Jonathan Jennings (@WomenObeyUKIP), who described the Welsh people as ‘sub-normal, sub-human Marxist vermin’ who should be ‘genocided [sic] at the earliest opportunity’ (13th June 2016; account deleted); or the author of a graffito which appeared on a pavement in Mold calling for ‘all Welsh’ to ‘die of Covid’ (Steve Craddock, ‘Anger after offensive graffiti scrawled on pavement in Mold.’ *the Leader*, 21st May 2020, <https://www.leaderlive.co.uk/news/18465032.anger-offensive-graffiti-scrawled-pavement-mold/>).
- 57 See ‘Call to close anti-Welsh sites down.’ *WalesOnline*, 17th January 2010,

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/call-close-anti-welsh-sites-down-1940179>. Among the hate groups listed by the article and now apparently closed down by Facebook were 'I Hate the Welsh,' 'I Hate the Welsh and Wales,' 'For All Those Who Hate the Welsh,' and 'I Fucking Hate Welsh People,' where members discussed not only the Welsh language but Welsh in-breeding, bestiality and criminality, and boasted of their hatred of and desire to kill Welsh people. In subtler forms such racism is widespread. An English woman, by no means ill-natured or uneducated, and by no means a newcomer to Wales, mentioned to me quite airily that although the people of Wales are equipped with good singing voices they need the English for intellectual leadership. Another confessed to me that when she moved to Wales and found her neighbours slow-speaking, she initially assumed that 'the Welsh' were mentally slow.

- 58 Will Kimlycka, 'Misunderstanding Nationalism.' In *Theorizing Nationalism*. Ed. by Ronald Beiner (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), 131-133.
- 59 Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death*, 189.
- 60 Albert Razin, who burned himself to death in protest at the Russian federation's policies towards the Udmurt language, is mentioned by Valery Tishkov in his article in *Izvestia*. See note above.
- 61 Ernest Becker, *The Denial of Death*, 135-139.
- 62 'A Triumph for Our Democracy.' Editorial. *The Sun*, 25th June 2016, <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/1339673/a-triumph-for-our-democracy/>. 'We will make our own laws when we leave the EU, PM says.' *ITV News*, 23rd August 2017, <https://www.itv.com/news/2017-08-23/britain-outlines-plans-for-post-brexit-break-away-from-european-court-of-justice/>. Kathryn Cain, "'DID HE REALLY SAY THAT?'" Nigel Farage slammed for saying Brexit victory came 'without a bullet being fired.' *The Sun*, 24th June 2016, <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/1335761/nigel-farage-slammed-for-saying-brexit-victory-came-without-a-bullet-being-fired-just-one-week-after-mp-jo-cox-was-murdered/>.
- 63 Ian Dunt, 'Who could guess Brexit would cause food and gas shortages? Actually, anyone.' *Washington Post*, 1st October 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/09/30/brexit-food-gas-shortage-predictable/>.
- 64 Adam Forrest, 'Brexit checks mean lorry queues at Dover "only going

- to get longer”, says union.’ *The Independent*, 27th January 2022, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-dover-lorry-queues-delays-b2002005.html>. Sam Bright, ‘DOVER INSIDER: 95% of Problems Caused by Brexit.’ *Byline Times*, 9th February 2022, <https://bylinetimes.com/2022/01/28/dover-insider-95-of-problems-caused-by-brexit/>.
- 65 Andrew Adonis, ‘The raw sewage disaster is a direct consequence of Brexit and austerity.’ *Prospect*, 21st October 2021, <https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/politics/the-raw-sewage-disaster-is-a-direct-consequence-of-brexit-and-austerity>.
- 66 Miranda Bryant, ‘UK first country in Europe to pass 150,000 Covid deaths, figures show.’ *The Guardian*, 8th January 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/08/uk-first-country-in-europe-to-pass-150000-covid-deaths-figures-show>. See also Prof. Danny Dorling, who argues that the UK’s death toll would have been far higher had austerity not already culled the most vulnerable members of the population. ‘Why has the UK’s COVID death toll been so high? Inequality may have played a role.’ *The Conversation*, 4th March 2021, <https://theconversation.com/why-has-the-uks-covid-death-toll-been-so-high-inequality-may-have-played-a-role-156331>.
- 67 David Frost, Speech to the Conservative Party Conference. Manchester, 4th October 2021. Streamed live by EuroNews to Youtube, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNNYxWt-o6A>.
- 68 Kwasi Kwarteng et al. *Britannia Unchained: Global Lessons for Growth and Prosperity* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
- 69 *Britannia Unchained*, 1-2.
- 70 *Britannia Unchained*, 61-63.
- 71 R. H. Barrow, *The Romans* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1949), 12-13.
- 72 Tony Conran, 44.
- 73 Kwasi Kwarteng et al, *Britannia Unchained*, 42-43. Among the ‘non-courses’ (sic) listed by the book’s authors is Creative Writing at Glamorgan University (now part of the University of South Wales) where Philip Gross, who holds the T. S. Eliot Prize, and Christopher Meredith, who holds the Eric Gregory Award, are among former staff. The same ‘non-course’ is offered at the University of Central England, at the Universities of Surrey and Westminster, at the Universities of Warwick and Oxford, where the Welsh author Clare Morgan offers a Masters’ degree in the subject, and at the University of Norwich, which

lists the Nobel laureate Kazuo Ishiguro among its alumni — perhaps the Nobel Prize for Literature is ‘easier’ to win than the Nobel Prize for Economics or Chemistry, even if still ‘harder’ than the Nobel Peace Prize. One therefore wonders why Glamorgan especially should be singled out for the authors’ scorn, if not because the concept of Welsh universities strikes them as especially hilarious.

- 74 Rebecca Attwood, “Life depends on science but the arts make it worth living.” Scientist claims true fulfilment is achievable only through the humanities, writes Rebecca Attwood.’ *Times Higher Education Supplement*, 17th March 2011, <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/life-depends-on-science-but-the-arts-make-it-worth-living/415521.article>. Adam Ruben, ‘Scientists should defend, not defund, the humanities.’ *Science*, 23rd September 2015, <https://www.science.org/content/article/scientists-should-defend-not-defund-humanities>. ‘Branches from the same tree: The case for integration in higher education.’ Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, 5th February 2019, <https://www.pnas.org/content/116/6/1865>. Martin Braund and Michael J. Reiss, ‘The “Great Divide”: How the Arts Contribute to Science and Science Education.’ *Canadian Journal of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education* 19 (2019), 219–236. Kim van Broekhoven et al, ‘Differences in creativity across Art and STEM students: We are more alike than unlike.’ *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 38 (December 2020). DOI: 10.1016/j.tsc.2020.100707. See also James A. W. Heffernan, ‘Why We Need the Humanities: The word itself contains the answer.’ *The American Scholar*, 30th October 2021, <https://theamericanscholar.org/why-we-need-the-humanities/>.
- 75 Anushka Asthana, ‘Lib Dems refuse to support Tory spending cuts: Nick Clegg describes George Osborne’s plans to slash budgets as “economic masochism.”’ *The Guardian*, 14th March 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2010/mar/14/lib-dems-refuse-support-tories>. Paul Krugman, ‘The case for cuts was a lie. Why does Britain still believe it?: The austerity delusion.’ *The Guardian*, 29th April 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/ng-interactive/2015/apr/29/the-austerity-delusion>. Larry Elliott, ‘Austerity policies do more harm than good, IMF study concludes.’ *The Guardian*, 27th May 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2016/may/27/austerity-policies-do-more-harm-than-good-imf-study-concludes>.

- 76 Sonia Sodha et al, 'Economists overwhelmingly reject Brexit in boost for Cameron.' *The Guardian*, 28th May 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/may/28/economists-reject-brexit-boost-cameron>. Lianna Brinded, 'Brexit does not provide a single major opportunity to improve the UK economy in the long term.' *Business Insider*, 29th March 2017, <https://www.businessinsider.com/article-50-trigger-does-brexit-create-any-opportunities-for-the-uk-2017-3>. Anushka Asthana and Jill Tremain, 'Nobel prize-winning economists warn of long-term damage after Brexit.' *The Guardian*, 19th June 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/jun/19/eu-referendum-nobel-prize-winning-economists-warn-of-long-term-brexit-damage>. Pippa Crerar, 'Each Brexit scenario will leave Britain worse off, study finds.' *The Guardian*, 18th April 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/apr/18/each-brexit-scenario-will-leave-britain-worse-off-study-finds>.
- 77 Helen Ward, 'We scientists said lock down. But UK politicians refused to listen.' *The Guardian*, 15th April 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/apr/15/uk-government-coronavirus-science-who-advice>. Ian Sample, 'Covid: ministers ignored Sage advice to impose lockdown or face catastrophe.' *The Guardian*, 12th October 2020. Linda Geddes, 'Politics trumps Covid science in Javid's push to "live with the virus."' *The Guardian*, 4th July 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/04/politics-trumps-covid-science-in-javids-push-to-live-with-the-virus>.
- 78 Henry Mance, 'Britain has had enough of experts, says Gove.' *Financial Times*, 3rd June 2016, <https://www.ft.com/content/3be49734-29cb-11e6-83e4-abc22d5d108c>.
- 79 Erich Fromm, *Escape from Freedom* (NY: Henry Holt, 1994), 109-110.
- 80 Robin Millar, 'The Union and the Tale of the Two Dragons.' In *Strength in Union: The Case for a United Kingdom*. Ed. Andrew Bowie. (Centre for Policy Studies, 2021), 36-37, <https://cps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/211001211002-CPSUNIONESSAYCOLLECTION31.pdf>.
- 81 William Williams, 'Education in Wales.' *Hansard*, 10th March 1846, https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1846/mar/10/education-in-wales#S3V0084P0_18460310_HOC_6. *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales*. London: William Glowes, 1848.
- 82 William Wallis, 'Wales needs £500m-£600m to make abandoned slag heaps safe.' *Financial Times*, 26th October 2021, <https://www.ft.com/>

- content/94a08a9e-8579-4586-8940-ccd86df28ea7. 'UK Government can 'show commitment to the Union' by helping to clear up coal tips says Drakeford.' *Nation Cymru*, 26th October 2021, <https://nation.cymru/news/uk-government-can-show-commitment-to-the-union-by-helping-to-clear-up-coal-tips-says-drakeford/>.
- 83 George Monbiot, 'Dr Beeching turned the country I have come to love into an outpost of empire: The Welsh rail map is a classic indicator of an extractive economy, with lines extended towards London and the ports.' *The Guardian*, 30th December 2008, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2008/dec/30/comment-and-debate>.
- 84 Kelly-Ann Mill et al, 'Details of four day Queen's Jubilee Bank Holiday that will be "biggest event ever" in UK.' *WalesOnline*, 10th October 2021, <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/uk-news/details-four-day-queens-jubilee-21813184>.
- 85 In the days following the queen's death, British Cycling ordered cyclists not to cycle on the day of the funeral (Sean Ingle, "'We Got This Wrong": British Cycling Apologises for Advice on Queen's Funeral,' *The Guardian*, September 15, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2022/sep/15/british-cycling-apologies-for-advice-queen-funeral>); Center Parcs announced first that its residents would have to leave their accommodation for the night, and later that they would be permitted to stay, but would have to stay indoors in their cabins (Joanna Partridge, 'Center Parcs Backtracks over Eviction of Holidaymakers for Queen's Funeral,' *The Guardian*, September 13, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/sep/13/center-parcs-closes-uk-resorts-queen-funeral>. Ben Hurst, 'Center Parcs Now Tells Guests They Cannot Go Outside Lodges,' *MyLondon*, last modified September 14, 2022, <https://www.mylondon.news/news/uk-world-news/center-parcs-now-tells-guests-25014883>); food banks were closed and funerals and medical treatment cancelled ('Opinion: This Time of "National Mourning" Is Getting out of Hand,' *The Independent*, last modified September 15, 2022, accessed September 22, 2022, <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/queen-funeral-food-banks-funerals-medical-appointments-b2167095.html>); numerous republicans were arrested ('Arrests of Anti-Monarchy Protesters an Affront to Democracy – Campaigners,' *The Independent*, last modified September 12, 2022, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/charles-iii-scotland-oxford-police-officers-people-b2165616.html>); a lawyer

protesting against the succession was threatened with arrest for holding up a blank sign ('UK Compared to Russia after Man Threatened with Arrest over Blank Piece of Paper,' *The Independent*, last modified September 14, 2022, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/anti-monarchy-protest-russia-police-b2166183.html>); Lindsay Hoyle, the Speaker of Parliament, described the funeral as 'the most important event the world [would] ever see' ('Lindsay Hoyle Says Queen's Funeral Is 'Most Important Event Ever,'" *The London Economic*, September 18, 2022, <https://www.thelondoneconomic.com/news/lindsay-hoyle-describes-queens-funeral-as-most-important-event-the-world-will-ever-see-335379/>), and the queen's disgraced second son released a statement claiming that she remained his personal guide and was watching over her people, describing her as 'the mother of the nation,' 'infinite, with no boundary or containment,' 'Dear Mummy, Mother, Your Majesty, three in one' ('Duke of York Pays Tribute to His Mother the Queen,' *Nation.Cymru*, last modified September 18, 2022, <https://nation.cymru/news/duke-of-york-pays-tribute-to-his-mother-the-queen/>), effectively declaring Her Majesty, like her late husband (Caroline Davies, 'Prince Philip: The Unlikely but Willing Pacific Deity,' *The Guardian*, April 10, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/apr/10/prince-philip-south-sea-island-god-duke-of-edinburgh.>) to be a god. Had it been more widely suspected that the coffin being used for public display was empty and her body stored safely elsewhere (Simone Carter, 'Royal Conspiracy Theory Claims Queen Elizabeth's Body Is Not in Her Coffin,' *Newsweek*, last modified September 14, 2022, <https://www.newsweek.com/royal-conspiracy-theory-claims-queen-elizabeths-body-not-her-coffin-1743010>. For the conflicting rumours and conspiracy theories that circulated among the disciples of Jesus following his death, see Geza Vermes, *Jesus the Jew: A Historian's Reading of the Gospels*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981. pp. 37-41 and Marcus J. Borg and N. T. Wright, *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. pp. 130-135), we might now be seeing the birth of a new religion.

- 86 José Ortega y Gasset, *The Revolt of the Masses: Authorized Translation from the Spanish* (1930. New York: Norton, 1964), 13.
- 87 José Ortega, *The Revolt of the Masses*, 55-58.
- 88 José Ortega, *The Revolt of the Masses*, 58-59.
- 89 José Ortega, *The Revolt of the Masses*, 82, 87, 102.

- 90 José Ortega, *The Revolt of the Masses*, 62-63, 69-70, 97.
- 91 José Ortega, *The Revolt of the Masses*, 14-15.
- 92 José Ortega, *The Revolt of the Masses*, 73-77, 81, 18, 116.
- 93 Ben Riley-Smith, 'Disability hate crime: is "benefit scrounger" abuse to blame?' *The Guardian*, 14th August 2012, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2012/aug/14/disability-hate-crime-benefit-scrounger-abuse>. Jane C. Healy, "'It spreads like a creeping disease': experiences of victims of disability hate crimes in austerity Britain.' *Disability & Society* 35, no. 2 (12th June 2019): 176-200, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2019.1624151>.
- 94 An image tweeted by Kaya Burgess of *The Times* from the Brexit Betrayal March on 9th December 2018 shows a life-sized gallows being carried through the streets. Another tweet from the same day describes cries of 'string them up' and 'off with their heads' in response to a speech by the leader UKIP, Gerard Batten, <https://twitter.com/kayaburgess/status/1071772713289740288>. An image tweeted by @CDotTweets on 17th February 2019 shows a middle-aged man at a pro-Brexit rally, smiling as he looks towards the camera and holding up a sign which reads, 'For Treason. Remoaners to the gallows.' <https://twitter.com/CdotTweets/status/1097070637137494016>.
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FOREWORD

These visions, written by Ellis Wynne (1671-1734), a Merionethshire cleric, and first published in 1703, have long been known to readers and students of Welsh literature as a classic. Twenty-three editions of the original text have appeared, also two English translations, the first by George Borrow (1860) and the second by Robert Gwynedd Davies (1897). These versions are no longer easily obtainable. Borrow's version, although in many ways a brilliant performance, is frequently — and perhaps unavoidably — quite inaccurate in detail. In this matter, Davies' work is that of a competent scholar.

The present translation has been undertaken at the request of the Gregynog Press. The translator wishes here fully to acknowledge his debt to his predecessors, and to the studies of later scholars (notably the late Sir John Morris-Jones), whose labours have made it possible now to provide at least an accurate rendering of the text.

It will be observed that the author reflects acquaintance with earlier literature of the vision type, including particularly the *Sueños* of Quevedo. To this work, which is probably known to him through L'Estrange's English translation, first published in 1667, Wynne is indebted for some material to be found in each of his own visions, often no more than mere expressions or suggestions. The scale of

his own terrific descriptions reminds one of Milton, but the raw realism of his detail, like that of Dante, shows more affinity with mediaeval writings.

The author's own description of these three Visions as a 'First Part' suggests that he had in mind the issue of more work of the kind, and a vague tradition claims that he finally destroyed his attempt at a Vision of Heaven. Such material, if ever written, seems at any rate to have perished.

It has been justly claimed that, in economy and order, Wynne has improved upon L'Estrange's version of the Spanish; and certainly his development of some of the ideas, taken from the same source, is original to himself, and the work of a master of literary style and of Welsh tradition.

He displays a keen knowledge of men, with much freedom of thought, yet reflects many prejudices of his period and class, especially in his politico-religious satire, where he appears less free from asperity than Quevedo. His satire is always vigorous and his grim humour at times makes it difficult to take quite seriously some aspects of what may be described as the contemporary controversial element in his work.

I am indebted to Professor J. W. H. Atkins, E. Tegla Davies, and my son Arthur ap Gwynn, for valuable assistance in the revision of the text and in proof-reading.

T. G. J.

24th August, 1939

THE SLEEPING BARD

VISION OF THE WORLD

One mellow afternoon in the long, golden warmth of summer, I made my way to the top of one of the mountains of Cambria, bearing with me a spying-glass to aid my feeble sight in beholding as near what was far away, and to make things small to look big. Through the thin, clear air and the calm, glittering sunshine, far away over the Irish sea, I beheld many a pleasant sight.

At last, having fed my eyes on all kinds of loveliness around me, until the sun was about to reach its ramparts in the West, I lay me down on the grass, and ever it ran in my mind how fair and how lovely, compared with my own land, were those regions far away, of whose pleasant plains I had caught a glimpse; how delightful it were to have of them a full view, and how happy those must be who had seen the world, as against me and my like.

Thus having travelled long with my eye and then in my mind, weariness came upon me, and along with weariness came my Master Sleep, stealthily to bind me; and with his leaden keys, tightly and securely he locked the windows of my eyes, with all my other senses.

Yet was it vain for him to seek to lock up the soul, which may live and travel without the body; and so the spirit escaped on the wings of fancy out of the shackled flesh. And the first thing I beheld nigh unto me was a playground, with

such a medley of beings in blue petticoats and red caps, lightly and busily dancing.

For a while I stood doubting whether to draw near to them or not, for, flurried as I felt, I feared they were but a crowd of hungry gipsies, who might do no less than to kill me for supper, swallowing me without salt. But, gazing a while at them, I saw they were somewhat better and more comely in looks than that yellow-skinned race of liars.

And so I dared to draw near to them, slowly, as a hen stepping on cinders, to make out what they might be, and half holding myself back, I begged leave of them thus:

‘Pray, gentle company — I gather you are folk from afar — would you take along with you a Bard who would fain go travelling?’

At these words, the hubbub ceased, all of them staring at me. Then, squeaking, ‘Bard!’ said one, ‘travelling!’ said another, ‘with us!’ said a third. By this time, I had called to mind some of them who were staring at me most viciously of all. Then one to the other they began to whisper some secret charms, staring at me the while. At that, the moot broke up, and each one taking hold of me, they lifted me on to their shoulders, as a knight of the shire is lifted, and away we sped, like the wind, over dwellings and lands, cities and kingdoms, seas and mountains, myself unable to take notice of aught because of the speed of their flight. And what is more, I began to doubt my companions when they fell a-scowling, frowning at me for not having lampooned my own King.

‘Well,’ I said to myself, ‘I am now undone; these accursed witches will take me to the pantry or cellar of some nobleman, and there they will leave me to make amends, hanging by the tongue, for their own theft. Or they will leave

me stark naked to perish of cold on Chester Marsh or some other frosty, out-of-the-way spot.'

But as I remembered that those among them whose faces I had known were already dead and buried, and that whilst those would have dropped me, others were upholding me above each hollow, I understood they were not witches, but those beings called Fairies. Ere I had time to think, I found myself near a huge castle, the finest I had ever seen, surrounded by a wide moat. Here they began to consider my fate.

'Let us take him to the Castle as a gift,' said one.

'Nay,' said another, 'let us cast the stubborn wretch into the moat; he is not fit to be shown to our great prince.'

'Will he say his prayers ere he sleep?' asked the third.

As they spoke of prayer, I sighed heavenwards for forgiveness and help, and as soon as the thought came to me, I beheld a light break forth from afar, oh, so beautiful! As the light was drawing nearer, my companions grew darker and vanished; and instantly, the Shining One made straight towards us over the Castle. Then they let go their hold upon me, and in leaving, turned to me with an infernal scowl; and had the Angel not upheld me I should have been broken into bits small enough to make a pasty ere I had reached the ground.

'What,' asked the Angel, 'is thy errand here?'

'In truth, my Lord,' I answered, 'I neither know what place this may be, what my errand is, what I myself am, nor what has become of my other part, for I had four limbs and a head, and whether I left them at home or whether — for I remember travelling over many a rugged ravine — they were

dropped into some pit by the Fairies, if their deeds be fair, I cannot say, sir, though I be hanged.'

'Fair,' said he, 'would have been thy lot at their hands, had I not come betimes to save thee from the claws of the children of Hell! As thou hast so much longing to see the course of this little world, I am commanded to give thee a view of it, so that thou mayst see thy own folly in being discontented with thy lot and with thy own country. Follow me, or return.'

And with the word, as it was beginning to dawn, he snatched me far away above the Castle, and upon a ledge of shining white cloud we rested in the height, to behold the rising of the sun, and I to look at my heavenly companion who was much brighter than the sun itself, but that the light of him shone upwards because of the protecting veil that lay between him and the depth.

When the sun had risen, by the brightness of both, I beheld the great round earth, like unto a small ball far beneath us.

'Now, look,' said the Angel, giving me a spying-glass, of greater power than that I had had with me on the mountain. When I had looked through this glass, I beheld things in another manner, clearer than ever before. Thus I could see one city of exceeding great size, within which were thousands of cities and realms, the great ocean like unto a lake around it, and other seas, like rivers, dividing it into parts.

When I had looked long I beheld the city in three great streets, with a large and noble gate at the lower end of each street and a fair tower over each gate. And upon each tower there stood a wondrously beautiful woman in full view of the

whole street, and the three towers at the back of the walls reached up to the foot of that great castle. Midway athwart these three streets, I beheld another street, and this was only small and mean, compared with the others, but that it was seemly and on higher ground, leading higher and higher eastward, the other three leading downwards to the north and on to the great gates. I could no longer abide without asking my friend for leave to speak.

‘Then speak,’ said the Angel, ‘attend and be mindful that there be no cause to tell thee aught more than once.’

‘I will do so, my Lord,’ said I, ‘and pray, what place is that Castle to the north?’

‘The Castle above in the sky,’ said he, ‘is owned by Belial, Prince of the Realm of the Air and ruler of the great city below. It is called the Sorcerer’s Castle, for Belial is a great Sorcerer, and by means of magic he keeps under his rule all that thou mayst see, save only that tiny cross street. He is a powerful prince who hath thousands of princes under him. Compared with him, what was Caesar or Alexander the Great? What are the Turk and old Lewis of France but servants of his? Great and very great are the might, the cunning and the diligence of Prince Belial and the numberless hosts which are his in the lower region.’

‘Why stand these women on the towers?’ I asked, ‘and who are they?’

‘Slowly,’ replied the Angel, ‘one question at a time. They are there to be loved and worshipped.’

‘No wonder, verily,’ said I, ‘seeing how lovely they are. Had I still my feet and hands, as at one time I had, I should also go to woo and to worship them.’

‘Be silent,’ said he, ‘for if that be what thou wouldst do with thy limbs, it is well for thee thou art without them. Know thou, foolish spirit, that these three Princesses are but three destructive Sorceresses. They are daughters of Prince Belial, and all their beauty and grace, which bedazzle the streets, are but a mask for ugliness and cruelty; for within, like their father, the three are full of deadly poison.’

‘Alas, may that be?’ I asked most sadly, well-nigh sickening for love of them.

‘Too true, alas!’ he replied. ‘It seems to thee a marvel how they beam upon those who worship them. Yet in that beam there is many a wondrous charm; it blinds them so that they see not a hook, it dazes them so that they heed not their danger, and burns them with a sateless lust for more of it, though it be deadliest bane, breeding in them diseases that none may escape, that neither leech nor even death itself can ever heal, nor may aught else, unless a heavenly potion called repentance be got, so that the evil be spewed in good time ere it become too deeply ingrained through over-much gazing upon them.’

‘Why,’ I asked, ‘does not Belial take all the worship himself?’

‘But it is one and the same thing,’ said he. ‘The old fox is himself worshipped in his daughters, for while a man cleave unto them, or unto one of them, then verily he bears the mark of Belial and wears his livery.’

‘And what,’ I asked, ‘are the names of the three Sorceresses?’

‘The one yonder,’ said he, ‘is named Pride, the eldest daughter of Belial, the second is Pleasure, and the nearest to

us is Lucre. These three are the Trinity worshipped by the world.'

'Pray, then,' I asked, 'what is the name of this great, mad city, if it have a better than the great Bedlam?'

'It is called the City of Doom,' replied the Angel.

'Alas!' I cried, 'then are all those who dwell therein the children of doom?'

'So are they all,' he replied, 'save only those who now and then flee into the upper city, which is subject to King Emmanuel.'

'Woe to me and mine!' I cried. 'How may they escape, while they are ever staring at that which blinds them more and more, destroying them in their blindness?'

'None,' he replied, 'might ever escape hence were it not that Emmanuel from above at dusk and dawn sends his messengers to persuade them to turn to Him, their rightful King, from the rebel, sending also to some of them a gift of the precious ointment called Faith, therewith to anoint their eyes; and he who gets that true salve — for there is the semblance of this as of all else in the City of Doom — and who anoints himself with it, becomes aware of his sores and his madness, and will no longer tarry there, were Belial to grant him his three daughters, yea, even the fourth who is the greatest of all, for staying.'

'What then are these great streets called?' I asked.

'Each is called,' he replied, 'after the name of the Princess ruling therein. The furthestmost is the Street of Pride, the middle, the Street of Pleasure, and the next, the Street of Lucre.'

'Pray,' I asked, 'who are they who dwell in these streets,

what speech is theirs, what are their ways and of what race are they?’

‘There are many,’ he replied, ‘of all tongues, religions and races under the sun who dwell in each one of the great streets below, and many dwell in each of them in turn, the nearer to the gate the better. Very often they move, as they may not stay long in one street for the love they bear to the Princess of another. And the old Fox, with a wink, allows everyone to woo his choice, or the three of them if he wish, for thus are they all the more sure to be his own. Come nearer to them,’ added he, as he snatched me down in the protecting veil, through much foul fog arising from the City; and in the Street of Pride we alighted on the top of a straggling mansion, large and roofless, robbed of its eyes by birds and beasts, its owners having gone to England or France, there to seek for what might, a hundred times more easily, have been found at home; and so, instead of the old family of former times, benevolent, good and homely, there is now in charge but the silly owl, or greedy crows or proud magpies, or the like, to sing the praises of the present owners.

There were thousands of such forsaken mansions which, were it not for Pride, might still have been as of yore the haunt of worthy men, the refuge of the weak, the school of peace and of all goodness, and a blessing to a thousand small dwellings around them. On the top of this ruin, we had enough room and quiet to behold the whole street on both sides. The houses were very handsome, of wondrous height and splendour, as was meet, for therein dwelt hundreds of emperors, kings and princes, thousands of great men and gentlefolk and a great many women of all degrees. Many a

horned wench I beheld, like a ship in full sail, walking as it were in a frame, with quite a pedlar's shop about her, and dangling from her ears the price of a goodly farm in pearls. Some were singing so they might hear the praise of their voices; some danced in order to show their figures; others were painting to improve their complexions, and yet others had been fully three hours at the mirror decking themselves, practising how to smile, placing and replacing pins, making gestures and postures. Many a prude there was who knew not how to open her lips to speak, much less to eat, or from sheer devotion how to mind her steps. Many a ragged scold would claim to be as good a lady as the best in the street; many an ambling coxcomb could have winnowed beans by the blast from his train.

As I looked from afar at these and a hundred others of the kind, I beheld coming past us a strapping mistress, speckled and haughty, with a crowd in her rear, some bowing as if in worship of her, one now and then putting something into her hand. Having failed to guess what she was, I asked.

'Oh,' answered my friend, 'she is one whose whole dowry is visible, yet thou seest how many fools seek her, the meanest of them good enough, so far as there is aught to be got by her. She will not take whom she may have and may not have whom she would take; she will not speak to her betters because her mother taught her there is no worse wile in a maiden than to be lowly in love.'

At this point, a bulky fellow who had been an alderman and had held many offices, came out just beneath us, spreading his wings as if about to fly, although he could barely hobble along from step to step like a huckster's hack, because of the gorbelly and the gout and divers other noble

diseases; yet in spite of all this, unless by great favour, you could not get from him as much as a glance, in spite of the utmost care to address him by all his titles and offices.

From him I turned my eyes to the other side of the street, where I beheld a sturdy young nobleman followed by a crowd. He had a gracious smile and a low bow for all who met him.

‘It is strange,’ I said, ‘that this one and the other should belong to the same street.’

‘Oh, Princess Pride rules both,’ said my guide. ‘This one only speaks fair so that he gain his own purpose, for he is now spreading his own praise, as he is thereby about to raise himself to the highest office in the kingdom. He finds it easy to weep before the people because of the wrongs they suffer at the hands of wicked officials who oppress them, yet it is his own glory, not the good of the realm, that is the goal of his game.’

Gazing a good while, I beheld near the gateway of Pride a very fair city on seven hills, and over its most noble court were the triple cross and the swords and keys crossed.

‘Is not this Rome?’ I asked, ‘and does not the Pope dwell here?’

‘Yes, mostly,’ said the Angel, ‘but he has a court in each of the streets.’

Facing Rome I beheld a city with a very fine court bearing at a great height the crescent moon on a golden banner. Thus I knew that the Turk dwelt there. Next to these was the court of Lewis XIV of France, as I understood from his arms, three *fleurs-de-lis* on a silver banner hung on high. In looking at the height and magnificence of these courts I noticed much

coming and going from one to the other, and inquired of the cause.

‘Oh, there are many dark matters,’ answered the Angel, ‘in which these three mighty and crafty heads have a share. But though they deem themselves to be fitting suitors for the three Princesses, yet their own might and guile are but nought compared with theirs. Yea, great Belial deems not the whole city, in spite of all the Kings who dwell therein, to be worthy of his daughters. Though he offers them as brides for any or all, yet has he never given one of them altogether as a spouse for anyone. There has been strife between these three for them: the Turk, who styles himself the god of the earth, would have Pride, the eldest, as his spouse. “Not so,” quoth the King of France, “for she is mine, as I keep all my subjects in her street, and also bring to her many from England and other kingdoms.” Spain would have Princess Lucre, in spite of all the Jews; and England would have Princess Pleasure, in spite of the Paynims. But the Pope would have the three, for reasons better than those of all the others, and Belial allows him to be nearest to them in the three streets.’

‘Is that the cause of the coming and going now?’ I inquired.

‘No.’ said he, ‘Belial has made accommodation between them in that matter a while ago. But now the three have put their heads together to devise how they may most readily destroy the cross street over there, that is, the city of Emmanuel, and particularly one great court which is there; this out of veriest jealousy, because it is a nobler building than any in the City of Doom. Whoever may do that deed, Belial promises him one half of his kingdom whilst he himself lives and the whole of it after his death. But in spite of the

extent of his might and the depth of his wiles, in spite of the number of the Emperors, Kings and other cunning rulers who are under his banner in this huge City of Doom, and in spite of the bravery of his numberless hosts beyond the gates in the lower region, yet shall they find this too much of a task for them. However great, however strong and however wary this great one may be, there is in that little street a greater than he.'

I had not the peace to listen well to his angelic discourse because of the stumbling from time to time among the folk in the slippery street below. I beheld some with ladders scaling the tower, and having reached the topmost rung, they would fall headlong to the bottom.

'Where do those fools seek to go?' I asked.

'Anywhere if it be high enough,' he replied, 'they now seek to break into the treasury of the Princess.'

'A place well-filled, I warrant,' said I.

'Yes,' he answered, 'there are all things that are to the taste of this street, to be distributed among the dwellers: all kinds of weapons of war meant for conquest and expansion, all manner of armorial bearings, banners, escutcheons, books of pedigrees, poems of antiquity, cowiths,¹ all sorts of fine robes; tales of adventure, false mirrors; all pigments and waters to make fair the face; all high offices and titles; verily, there are all the things that cause a man to have a better opinion of himself and a worse of others than he should have. The chief officers of this treasury are masters of ceremonies, champions, pedigree-men, poets, orators, flatterers, dancers, tailors, pellmongers, seamstresses and the like.'

From this great street we went to the next, where

Princess Lucre rules. This was a crowded and wondrously wealthy street, yet not half so gay and neat as the street of Pride; neither were the folk half so rash and disdainful, for most of them here were sneaking and sly-looking. There were in this street many thousands of Spaniards, Hollanders, Venetians, with Jews here and there, and a great many aged persons.

‘Pray, sir, what kind of folk may these be?’ I inquired.

‘They are a catch-penny lot, all of them,’ he replied. ‘At the lower end, thou shalt again see the Pope, invaders and their troops, oppressors, forest robbers, filchers of common land, justices and their bribers, with all their brood, from pleader to catchpole. On the other side are the physicians, apothecaries, leeches, misers, merchants, extortioners, money-lenders, with-holders of tithes, wages, rents or alms left for the benefit of schools, alms-houses and the like; drovers, profiteers who control the market for their own benefit; shop-men (or sharpers) who make wealth out of the want or witlessness of customers; stewards of all grades, clippers, innkeepers who rob the families of idlers of their goods and the country of barley for the bread of the poor. All these are arrant thieves, and those at the upper end of the street are mainly smaller thieves, such as highwaymen, tailors, weavers, millers, falsifiers of measures wet and dry, and the like.’

At this, I could hear a villainous babble towards the lower end of the street, where a big crowd flocked towards the gate with such wriggling and wrangling that methought there must have been a common riot going on, until I asked my friend what was the cause.

‘There is an exceeding great treasure in that tower,’ said the Angel, ‘and all this commotion is because of the election of a treasurer for the Princess, instead of the Pope, who has been turned out of office.’

And so we went on to see the election. Those who sought the office were the stewards, money-lenders, lawyers, and merchants, and the most wealthy of these would get it (for the more you have, the more you want and seek, an unappeasable distemper belonging to the street).

The stewards were turned down at the first bid, lest they should impoverish the whole street and, having raised their own mansions on the ruins once their masters’ lot, lest they might at last dispossess the Princess herself. Then the suit lay between the other three. The merchants owned more silks, the lawyers held more land mortgages, and the money-lenders had heavier purses, with bills and bonds.

‘Ha! they will not agree to-night,’ said the Angel, ‘let us go — the lawyers are wealthier than the merchants, the money-lenders than the lawyers, and the stewards than the money-lenders, and Belial than all of them, for he owns them all and their goods as well.’

‘Why will the Princess keep all these thieves about her?’ I inquired.

‘What better befits,’ asked he, ‘she being the arch-thief herself?’

I marvelled that he should speak of the Princess, and of the proudest among these gentry, as arrant thieves. ‘Pray, my lord,’ I asked, ‘how is it you say that these noble gentlemen are worse thieves than the highwaymen?’

‘Thou art easily deceived,’ said he. ‘Is not the knave who goes about the world, sword in hand and followed by his

ravagers, killing and burning and stealing states from their rightful owners, and who afterwards expects to be hailed as a conqueror, is he not worse than a petty thief who takes a purse on the highway? What is the tailor who steals a piece of cloth, beside the great man who, out of the mountain, steals the half of a parish? As against the one, ought not the other to be called an arrant thief? The other stole only scraps, whereas he has taken from the poor man the food of his beast and so his own living and that of his weak ones. What is the stealing of a handful of flour at the mill to the storing of a hundred bushels to rot so that later one bushel may be sold for the price of four? What is the half-clad soldier, who takes thy clothes at the point of the sword, to the lawyer who steals thy whole estate from thee with a goose-quill, so that thou have neither right nor remedy against him? And what is a cut-purse, who steals five pounds, to the dice-loader who robs thee of five score pounds in the third part of a night? And what is a swopper who would deceive thee in some decrepit old hack to the apothecary who cheats thee of thy money and thy life with some useless drug? What are all these thieves, compared with that great queen of thieves who robs them all of these goods and of their hearts and souls at the end of the fair?’

From this dirty, disordered street we went to the street of Princess Pleasure, where I saw many Britons, Frenchmen, Italians, Paynims and others. This Princess was very fair to behold, in one hand bearing medicated wine and in the other a croud and a harp.² And in her treasury were numberless pleasures and toys wherewith to win the custom of all and to keep them in the service of her sire. Yea, many there were who were wont to flee to this pleasant street, to be rid of

their sadness on account of their losses and debts in the others. This street was overfull of folk, particularly of young people, and the Princess was mindful to please everybody and to keep an arrow for every mark. If you be athirst, here is for you your choice in drink. If you love song and dance, here is plenty for you. If her own beauty hath inflamed you with the desire of a woman's body, she need only lift a finger to one of her father's servants (who surround her at all times, though unseen) and they will forthwith hand you a female, or the body of a newly-buried mistress, into which one of them will enter as soul, so that you may not be baulked of such a goodly purpose. Here are fine dwellings and most pleasant gardens, rich orchards, bowery groves, meet for all secret appointments, for the catching of birds or now and again a pretty cony, bright and pleasant rivers for fishing, long, wide fields, delightful for the hunting of hare or fox. Along the street in the open, you might see the playing of interludes, jugglery and all tricks of magic; hear all kinds of wanton songs for voice and strings, ballad-singing and all manner of pastime; males and females of all types of beauty, singing and dancing, and many coming from the street of Pride to be praised and worshipped.

In the houses we beheld some on beds of silken down soaking themselves in wantonness, others cursing and swearing above the tables, others throwing dice and shuffling cards. Some folk from the street of Lucre, who own rooms here, would slip hither to count their gains; but such tarried not long, lest some of the countless toys found here should tempt them to part with their money without interest. Others I saw in companies at table feasting, with scraps of every creature in front of them, and when each,

from dish after dish, had stuffed himself with so much of the dainties as would have made a feast for a temperate person for a whole week, then the grace after meat would be belching. Then would they drink the health of the King, of every boon companion, so to drown the stench of victuals and their own cares as well. Then to the tobacco, each one with a tale about his neighbour, whether true or lying would not matter if only it were funny, or else new, or for a surety if it were anything scandalous.

Then as, at last, with many a heavy belch, each one with his clay pistol was blowing forth smoke and fire, slandering his neighbour the while, the floor already soiled by drink-spilling and spitting, I became afraid that still fouler tricks might be near, and prayed that we might leave.

Thence we came to a place where was a great tumult, banging and chattering, bawling and laughing, shouting and singing.

‘Well, here’s Bedlam, without a doubt,’ I said. By the time we had made our way indoors, the strife had died down. One fellow lay stretched on the floor; one was spewing, another nodding above a hearthful of battered flagons, broken pipes and goddets. Having inquired, we found that here was a carousal of seven thirsty neighbours, a tinker, a dyer, a smith, a miner, a chimney-sweep and a poet, with a parson who had come to preach sobriety and to show in his own person the absurdity of drunkenness. The start of their strife had been the disagreement and wrangling that arose between them as to which of the seven callings was best at pot and pipe. The poet had won the day against all but the parson who, out of respect for the cloth, had been hailed as

the chief of the pot-companions. And so the poet ended the matter with a rhyme:

‘What seven may be so dry as we
On earth, I’d like to know it?
But best of the lot at pipe and pot —
The parson and the poet.’

Weary of these besotted swine, we came nearer to the gate, to see the sights of the splendid Court of Love, the purblind King, a place one gets into with ease and gets out of with ache, and in which are rooms without number. In the hall, facing the door, stood Cupid the light-headed, with two arrows to his bow, shooting out a languishing poison called lust.

There I saw many women, handsome and becomingly clad, who walked about as if by rule, followed by some wretched youths, gazing at their beauty, each praying his idol to give him but a glance, with more fear of a frown than of death itself. Here and there, bowing to the ground, one would slip a letter into the hand of his goddess, and the next a ditty, both timidly waiting a while like scholars showing their tasks to their master. And the women in turn would bestow a beguiling smile so to keep their adorers in desire, but never more than that, lest they break their bonds and so depart healed of the distemper. Entering the parlour, I saw others who were taught dancing, singing and the playing of instruments, so that their lovers’ lot grew seven times worse than before. Then into the dining hall, where mincing modes of eating were taught; to the cellar, where strong philtres were prepared, mixed with nail-parings and the like. Upstairs, we saw one in a secret chamber putting himself

into all manner of postures, thus teaching himself to please his mistress by his gentle behaviour; another stood before the mirror studying how to smile properly without disclosing too much of his teeth to his beloved; another touching up his speech for his meeting with his own, repeating the same words a hundred times over.

Tired of this mere trifling we sought another cell, where we found a nobleman who had summoned a poet from the street of Pleasure to fashion him a poem of praise to his goddess and another for himself.

Explaining his own art, the poet said: 'I can liken her to all things red and white under the sun, and her hair to a hundred things yellower than gold; and as for the poem to yourself, I can trace your descent back through the veins of a host of knights and princes, and through the waters of the deluge, all quite clear up to Adam.'

'Well,' I remarked, 'here is a bard who beats me at pedigree hunting!'³

'Come, come,' replied the Angel, 'these men have a mind to deceive the woman, but when they go to her, they will of a certainty meet with trick for trick.'

In leaving these we had a glimpse of other cells where fouler feats than may with modesty be spoken of were being practised, which caused my companion to snatch me in anger out of this giddy court into the Princess' treasury, for we went where we wished, in spite of doors and locks.

There we saw thousands of fair women, all kinds of drink, fruits, dainties, all sorts of instruments and books of music for voice and strings, harps, pipes, cowiths, carols &c., and all sorts of checker-board games, dice, cards &c.; pictures of all countries, towns and folks, inventions and amusing tricks; all

sorts of waters, scents, pigments and patches to make the plain look beautiful, the old to look young, or to cause the odour of the harlot, with her rotten bones, to be sweet for a time. In short, there was the shadow of all pleasure, the shade of every delight. And sooth to say, I would not affirm that this place might not also have seduced me, were it not that without more ado my guide snatched me far from the three towers of sorcery to the upper end of the streets, dropping me beside a castellated court of huge size and of very pleasant aspect at first, but mean and fearsomely foul on the further side, although that side could only with great difficulty be seen. A myriad doorways led into it, which were all fair without but foul within.

‘Pray, my lord,’ I asked, ‘if it please you, what is this surprising place?’

‘This,’ he replied, ‘is the court of Belial’s second daughter, named Hypocrisy. Here she keeps school, and in the whole city there is neither male nor female who has not been her pupil, most of them taking their training with marvellous aptness, so that her lessons are discovered as a second nature, wrought into all their thoughts, words and deeds almost from childhood.’

When I had been looking a while at the false-face of every part of the building, a funeral came along, with a world of weeping and wailing, with many men and horses covered with black mourning. Anon came the poor widow, veiled so that she might no longer look at this vile world, weakly moaning and feebly sighing between swoons. Verily, I could not abide but that I wept some tears for pity.

‘Ah. yes,’ said the Angel, ‘keep your tears for something more worthy. These cries are but the teaching of Hypocrisy,

and these black robes have all been fashioned at her great school. Of all these folk not one weeps in earnest. The widow, ere the dead body left the house, had already taken to her heart another man. Were she but free of the cost of burying his body, she would not care a straw were his soul at the bottom of hell, neither would his folk any more than she; for when he was in direst straits, instead of giving him good counsel and praying in dead earnest for mercy to him, they spoke only of his goods and chattels, of his last will or of his descent, of his good looks and his strength and the like. And now this weeping is solely, on the part of some because of custom and usage, of others for company, of others for pay.'

This crowd had scarcely passed by when another hove in sight, some mightily fine nobleman, his lady at his side, slowly moving on in state, with many responsible men doffing their caps to him, and thousands on foot likewise showing him every humility and respect. By the favours they wore, I understood that this was a wedding.

'Here goes a most noble lord,' I said, 'who is worthy of so much honour from all these folk.'

'Wert thou to consider everything, then wouldst thou say otherwise,' said the Angel. 'This nobleman is from the Street of Pleasure and the lady is of the street of Pride. The old fellow who speaks to him is from the street of Lucre, and he holds mortgages on almost all the lands of the nobleman, and is come this day to hand over the rest of the loan.'

We drew nigh to hear the conversation.

'In truth, sir,' said he of the purse, 'I would not for all I own that you should want for aught I could do, so that you might this day appear like yourself, and surely so, as you

have found such an uncommonly winsome lady' (though the wily old rogue knew well enough what she was).

'By —, by —, by —,' said the nobleman, 'next to the pleasure of beholding her beauty would be that of listening to your pleasant arguments. I had rather pay interest to you than have money free from anyone else.'

'Verily, my lord,' said one of his chief companions, called Flatterer, 'mine uncle shows but the respect you deserve; yet, by your leave, he hath not given my lady one half the praise due to her. I challenge any man to point out a fairer than she in the whole street of Pride, or a finer than yourself in the street of Pleasure, or any kinder than you, mine uncle, in the street of Lucre.'

'Ah, that is your good opinion,' said the nobleman, 'but I do not believe that ever a couple came together more for love than ourselves.'

As they moved on the crowd grew bigger, everyone with his best smile and his lowest bow to the other as they ran to meet each other, with their noses almost touching the ground, like two cocks about to strike.

'Know then,' said the Angel, 'that thou hast not seen a motion or heard a greeting here that is not of the teaching of Hypocrisy. There is not one here, in spite of all the gentility, who has a farthing's worth of love for the other; yea, many of them are enemies. This nobleman is but a butt for the others, and each of them has a jibe at him. The lady hath set her mind upon his station and descent, so that she may be ahead of many of her neighbours. He of the purse has his eye on the other's land for his own son, while the others look to what he has gotten by way of dowry, for they are his dependants, that is, his merchants, tailors, shoe-makers and other craftsmen,

who have clad him and maintain him in all this great splendour, not yet having got a farthing by it, nor are they ever like to have more than fair words, with now and then some threats, maybe. And now, with how many fakes and folds hath Hypocrisy covered the face of truth? Here this man promises greatness to his beloved, whilst he is at the point of selling his lands; she promising a dowry and a beauty not her own, having naught but a beauty borrowed, while the age-long canker wastes away dowry and body alike.'

'Well,' said I, 'here is proof one ought never to judge by appearance.'

'Verily,' said he, 'but come further and I shall show thee more.'

With this, he bore me up to the part where were the churches of the City of Doom, for all who dwell therein, even the unbelieving, have a semblance of religion. First we went to the Temple of the unbelievers. There I beheld some folk worshipping the image of man, others the sun, others the moon and numberless other such gods, down to onions and garlic, and a great goddess hight Deceit, worshipped by one and all. Yet you might note some traces of the Christian religion amongst most of these.

Thence we came to a meeting of mutes, where was naught but sighing, quaking and beating of breasts.

'This,' said the Angel, 'seemeth to be much repentance and humility, but is in truth no more than opinion, frowardness, pride and dense darkness. In spite of all their talk of their inner light, they have not as much as the spectacle of nature, which even the unbelievers have.'

Quitting these dumb dogs, it happed that we turned into a

big, roofless church, with heaps of shoes in the porch, whereby I became aware that it was a Turkish mosque. These folk had but very dark and misty spectacles called Alcoran; yet through these, from the top of their temple, they were ever peering for a sight of their prophet, who long ago gave them his lying word that he would come again to them, but kept not his promise.

Thence we went into the Synagogue of the Jews. They likewise failed to find the way out of the City of Doom, although they have dusky spectacles so that, when they gaze, a kind of film comes over their eyes, for lack of anointing them with the precious salve of Faith.

Next we went to the Papists. 'Here,' said the Angel, 'is the church that misleads the nations. Hypocrisy built this church at her own expense. For the Papists allow, yea, they command, that an oath be not kept with a heretic, though sworn by the sacrament.' From the chancel we went through the keyholes up to a cell apart, a place full of candles in broad daylight. There we beheld a tonsured priest walking to and fro as if awaiting for some others about to come to him. After a while, a buxom housewife, with a comely lass at her heels, came and knelt before him to confess her sins. 'My spiritual father,' said the goodwife, 'I have a burden too heavy to bear without your mercy to lighten it: I have wedded one of the Church of England.' 'What?' cried the bald pate; 'married a heretic! married an enemy! There is no forgiveness.' At that word she fainted, while he still muttered curses upon her. 'And what is worse,' she added when she had recovered, 'I have killed him!' 'Aha, thou hast killed him? Well, that is something towards reconciliation. I say, had you not killed him, there would have been neither absolution nor

purgatory for you; weighted with lead you would have gone straight to the devil. But where is your offering, you wretch?' said he, gnashing his teeth. 'Here,' she replied, giving him a well-filled purse. 'Well,' said he, 'now I shall reconcile you. Your penance is ever to remain a widow, lest you make another bad bargain.'

When she had gone, the maiden came forward to make her own confession. 'Your pardon, father-confessor,' said she, 'I conceived and have killed my child.' 'In faith, a pretty tale,' said the confessor, 'and who was the father?' 'In truth, it was one of your monks,' she replied. 'Hush, hush!' cried he, 'no slandering of the orders! What amends have you to make the Church?' 'Here it is,' said she, giving him a piece of gold. 'You must repent and your penance is to watch at my bedside this night,' said he, with a leer.

At that, four other bald-pates dragged to the confessor a manikin who came as willingly as he would have gone to the gallows. 'Behold here a knave,' said one of the four, 'to take his penance for disclosing the secrets of the Church.' 'What,' said the confessor, casting a glance at a dark dungeon near by, 'confess, thou villain, what didst thou say?' 'In truth,' replied the poor wretch, 'a neighbour asked me whether I had seen the souls that groaned under the altar on All Souls' Day, and I said I had heard the sounds but that I saw naught.' 'Is that so, sirrah,' said one of the others, 'now tell the whole story!' 'I told them,' said the man, 'I had heard that you play tricks upon us unlearned folk, and that there are no souls at all, only crabs croaking under the carpet.'⁴ 'O, son of perdition, O, you mug of malediction!' cried the confessor, 'but go ahead, you mastiff.' 'And that the image of St. Peter,' added the man, 'was turned by means of a wire,

and that the Holy Ghost came down upon the priests along a wire from the roodloft.' 'O, thou heir of hell!' cried the confessor, 'ho, ho! you torturers, take and throw him into the smoking chimney over there for telling tales.'

'Now,' said the Angel, 'see thou this is the church Hypocrisy wills to be called the Catholic Church, whose members alone are saved. At one time, they had the right spectacles, but they drew on the glass a thousand images: once they had true faith, but they mixed that salve with new notions of their own, so that they see not any more than the unbelievers.'

From this place we went to a barn, where was one who made a show of preaching by rote, sometimes mouthing the same thing three times over. 'Well,' said the Angel, 'these folk have the right spectacles to see the things that belong to their peace, but their ointment lacks one of the most necessary elements, called perfect love. Several causes send people here — some come out of respect to their forebears, some for want of knowledge and many for the sake of worldly gain. They make faces that would lead thee to think them nigh unto choking, but they can swallow toads if need be. And so Princess Hypocrisy teaches some in barns.'

'Pray,' I asked, 'where then may the Church of England be?'

'Oh,' he replied, 'it is in the upper city, forming an ample part of the Catholic Church, but there are in this city some probationary churches that belong to the Church of England, in which Welshmen and Englishmen are tested for a time so they may become worthy to have their names in the book of the Catholic Church, and whoever may be found worthy of that, blest is he for ever! Yet, unhappily, there are but few

who make themselves worthy of privilege in that church. For, instead of looking thitherwards, too many of them are blinded by the three Princesses below, and Hypocrisy keeps many with one eye on the city above and the other on that below; yea, Hypocrisy is bold enough to seduce many out of the way even though they have overcome the other three sorceresses. Enter here and thou shalt see more.'

Saying which, he snatched me up into the roodloft of a church in Wales, when the people were at service. There we beheld some whispering one to the other, some laughing, some staring at comely women, others scanning their neighbours' clothing from head to heel, some pushing their way and showing their teeth in claiming their station, some napping, others much occupied with their devotions, many of those but feigning.

'Thou hast not yet seen,' said the Angel, 'no, not even among unbelievers, such open shamelessness as this, but unhappily, so it is — the corruption of the best is the worst corruption of all.'

Then they went to communion, seeming all to have much reverence for the altar. Yet, through my friend's glass, I beheld one here and there, along with the bread, taking into his body the semblance of a mastiff, another a mole, another an eagle, another a swine, another a winged serpent, and a few, oh, how few, receiving a ray of shining light with the bread and the wine.

'See there,' said he, 'a Roundhead, who is to be made sheriff, and as the law demands communion at Church before the taking of office, he has come here so as not to lose it, and although there are here some who are glad to see him, there has yet been no joy amongst us because of his conversion, for

unhappily he has been converted only for a season; and so thou mayst see that Hypocrisy is over bold in coming to the altar, in the presence of Emmanuel who may not be deceived. Yet, however great she may be in the City of Doom, even she has no power in the City of Emmanuel on the upper side of those ramparts.'

With that word, we turned our faces from the great City of Doom, climbing towards the other city, that is but small. As we went on we saw many at the upper end of the streets who had half-turned away from the sorcery of the Gates of Doom and were seeking the Gate of Life; but they either failed to find it or were awearied of the way, so that very few went through. But one sad-faced man still ran forward in earnest, while crowds on both sides were teasing him, some mocking, some threatening, while his kindred clung to him and besought him not to cast himself away, losing all the world at once.

'I am,' said he, 'losing only a small portion of it, and were I to lose the whole, pray, what loss is that? For what is there in this world so desirable, unless a man desire deception, oppression, wretchedness and evil, vanity and madness? To be content and quiet,' he added, 'is the happiness of man, but such is not to be found in your city. For here who is content with his lot? "Higher, ever higher" is the aim of all in the Street of Pride; "more, more" saith every one in the Street of Lucre; "sweet, let us have more"' is the cry of all in the Street of Pleasure. And as for quiet, where is it and who finds it? If one be of high degree, then flattery and envy come near to killing him; if poor, then let everybody stamp upon and scorn him. Shouldst thou wish to prosper, then set thy mind upon becoming a schemer; if thou wouldst have respect, be a

boaster and a braggart. Shouldst thou be pious, betaking thee to church and communion, thou art called an impostor; if thou doest not these things, then art thou an antichrist or a heretic; be thou merry, thou art called a scoffer; silent, then a jealous churl; follow honesty, thou art but a useless fool; if neatly arrayed, then proud, if not, a swine; if thy speech be smooth, then art thou false or a rogue that none may aread; if gruff, then a peevish, insufferable devil. This is the world you magnify; pray, take ye my share of it.'

With that word, he shook himself free of them and, nothing daunted, off he sped to the narrow gate in spite of them all, and pushing his way, in he went, we following, whilst many men in dark raiment, from the walls on each side of the gate, welcomed and praised him.

'Who are they in black up above?' I inquired.

'They are the watchmen of King Emmanuel,' he replied, 'who, in the name of their master, bid men come hither and help them through the gate.'

By this we had come to the gate, which was very low and narrow and but mean, compared with the lower gates. On each side of the door were the Ten Commandments, the first tablet on the right, with the words above it, 'Thou shalt love God with all thy heart,' and above the second tablet 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 long been looking when the watchmen began calling upon the men of doom: 'Flee, flee for your lives!' But only a few turned even once to them, though some asked: 'What should we flee from?' 'From the prince of this world who ruleth in the children of disobedience,' replied the

watchman; '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,' cried another watchman, 'is your beloved city but a huge loft full of the charred fuel of hell? Were you here you would see the fire beyond your walls about to flare up and burn them so that you fall into the bottomless pit.'

Some scoffed at them, others with threats bade them leave off such unseemly nonsense, yet here and there one would ask: 'Whither shall we flee?' Then said the watchmen: 'Flee here to your rightful King who through us still offers you pardon, if you return to your allegiance from the rebel Belial and his deluding daughters. Be they ever so fair in appearance, that is but guile; Belial is but a sorry prince at home; there he hath but you for fuel, but you, roasted and boiled, to be chewn, and never may you be fully cooked, never may his hunger be appeased or your pains abated. And who in madness would for a moment serve such a malignant butcher, then ever to remain in torture, who might have true life under a King merciful and kind to his subjects, who hath never done them aught but what is good, saving them from Belial so as to give each one of them a kingdom at last in the land of light! Oh, fools, will you take that horrible enemy, whose mouth burns with thirst for your blood, instead of the merciful Prince who gave his own blood to save you?'

Yet, it seemed not that these arguments, which would have softened a rock, did much good to them, and the greatest cause thereof was that few of them had the time to listen because of looking so steadfastly at the gates, and of those who did listen, only a few stopped to consider the arguments, and even of those, but a few remembered them

long. Some would not believe that they were worshipping Belial; others would not have it that such an unsought little wicket could be the Gate of Life, and would not believe that the other bright gates and the castle itself were but a delusion to keep them from seeing their own doom until there was no escape.

Just then a troop of people from the Street of Pride came boldly knocking at the Gate, but they were all so stiff-necked that they could never have passed through such a low entrance, without befouling their periwigs and horns, and so they sulkily turned back. At the tail of these, there came to us a crowd from the Street of Lucre, one of them asking: 'Is this the Gate of Life?' 'Yea,' replied the watchman above. 'What must be done,' he asked, 'in order to go through?' 'Read on each side of the door, so that you may know,' was the reply.

The miser read the Ten Commandments through. 'Who shall say,' asked he, 'that I have ever broken one of these?' But when he looked higher and saw the words 'Love not the world nor the things that are in the world,' he was astonished, and could not swallow that hard saying.

Another, pale-faced and envious, turned away when he read: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' There came a questman and a slanderer who quickly turned away when they read: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness.' When the words were read: 'Thou shalt not kill,' the physicians said: 'This is no place for us.' In short, everyone saw something to vex him, and so they all returned to study the matter, but I saw not even one come back having learnt his lesson, for they had so many bags and writings about them that they could never have got through such a narrow slit had they tried.

Just then, a drove from the Street of Pleasure walked up to the gate. 'By your leave,' said one of them to the watchmen, 'whither doth this gate lead?' 'This,' answered a watchman, 'is the way that leads to everlasting joy and happiness.' Then all of them sought to enter but failed, for some of them were too stout for such a narrow passage, others too weak to push their way through, enfeebled as they were by women, who still held them back by their wanton weakness. 'Oh,' said a watchman who beheld them, 'here you may not seek to take your toys with you; all your pots, dishes and harlots you must leave behind, and then make haste.' Said a fiddler who might have been through long since but for fear of breaking his fiddle: 'What about our living?' 'Oh,' replied the watchman, 'you must take the King's word that as many of those things as may be good for you shall be sent after you.' This set them all a-listening. 'Ha ha!' cried one, 'a bird in hand is worth two in the bush,' whereat all of one mind they turned themselves back.

'Now, come through,' said the Angel, drawing me in, and I first of all beheld in the porch a large baptismal font and thereby a well of salt water. 'What means this right midway here?' I inquired. 'It is placed here,' answered he, 'because everyone must wash himself in it ere he have privilege in the court of Emmanuel: it is called the Well of Repentance.' Overhead I saw written the words: 'This is the gate of the Lord.'

The gateway and also the street widened and became lighter as we went on. Having gone somewhat higher, I heard behind me a solemn voice saying: 'This is the way, walk ye in it.'⁵ The street led upwards, but was very clean and straight, and although the houses here were less lofty than in the City

of Doom, they were more pleasant; for if there be less wealth, there is also less strife and care; if the fare be simpler, qualms are fewer; if there is less noise, there is also less sadness, and verily more true joy. I marvelled how soothingly quiet and still it was there, compared with the place below. Instead of the oaths and curses, the scoffing, the harlotry and the carousing; instead of pride, vanity and sloth in one quarter and violence in the other; yea, instead of all the folly of the fair, the bragging, the brawling and the squabbling down there, that kept stunning folk without stop; instead of the countless evils always to be found there, you beheld but sobriety, gentleness and cheerfulness, peace and thanksgiving; pity, innocence and content clearly to be seen in every face, save that now and then one might be seen quietly weeping because of the stain of having so long tarried in the enemy city. Here was neither hatred nor anger, save for sin alone, with the certainty of overcoming such; no fear, save that of offending the King, who is more ready to forgive than to be offended with his subjects; no sound but of psalms in praise of the Saviour.

By this time we had come within sight of a building most fair to behold, oh, how glorious! None in the City of Doom, neither Turk nor Mogul nor any of the others, has anything like unto this.

‘Now, this is the Catholic Church,’ said the Angel. ‘Is this where Emmanuel holds his court?’ I inquired. ‘Yes,’ he replied, ‘this is his only earthly court.’ ‘Are there many crowned heads under him?’ I asked. ‘A few,’ he replied, ‘thine own queen, with some Scandinavian and German rulers and a few other lesser princes.’ ‘What is that,’ I asked, ‘compared with those that follow Belial, emperors and kings without

number?' 'For all that,' said the Angel, 'not one of them may move a finger without leave of Emmanuel, nor may Belial himself, for Emmanuel is his rightful King as well, but that he rebelled, wherefore he was bound as prisoner for ever; yet is he allowed for a brief while to visit the Doomed City where he draws whomsoever he may into the same rebellion and to share the punishment. And although he knows full well that so much will only add to his own punishment, yet malice and envy allow him not to refrain when he may have a passing chance. And for sheer love of evil he seeks to destroy this city and this building as well, although he has ever known that its Saviour may not be overcome.'

'Pray, my lord,' said I, 'may we draw nearer so that we may have a fuller view of this rare court?' (for my heart had been warmed at the first sight of the place). 'We may freely,' replied the Angel, 'for therein is my place, my charge and my calling.'

The nearer we drew to it, the more I marvelled at the height, the might and the beauty, the purity and the loveliness of each part of the court, the skill of the work and the agreeableness of the materials. The base of it was a great rock of unspeakable mass and might, with living stones upon that, set and put together in a way so marvellous that not a stone could have been as beautiful in any place other than its own. One part of the church I beheld standing out in the form of a cross, beautiful and very wonderful, and the Angel saw I had set my eyes upon it. 'Dost thou know that part?' he asked me. And I knew not what to answer. 'That,' he spoke, 'is the Church of England.' I was somewhat moved, and when I had looked up, I could see Queen Anne on the top of the church, with a sword in each hand, the one in the left called

Justice, which was to defend her subjects against men of the City of Doom; the other in the right to defend them against Belial and his spiritual evils, this being called the Sword of the Spirit, or the Word of God. Under the left sword lay the statute book of England; under the other was a big Bible. The Sword of the Spirit was fiery and of over-great length, and might slay at a point the other might not reach. I saw other rulers, with weapons alike, defending their own parts of the church, yet fairest to me was the part of my own queen and brightest her weapons. At her right hand I beheld a host of black-robed ones, archbishops, bishops and men of learning, upholding with her the Sword of the Spirit with soldiers and office-bearers, but only a few of the lawyers, who along with her upheld the other sword.

I had leave to rest awhile beside one of the glorious doors, where some came to have housing in the Universal Church. A mighty Angel guarded the door, and the church within was so dazzlingly bright that Hypocrisy might not show her face there, though she would sometimes appear at the door, but had never entered. In less than a quarter of an hour, I beheld a Papist who deemed that the Pope owned the Catholic Church and claimed a right for himself as well. 'What have you to prove your right?' asked the doorward. 'I have much,' replied the other, 'in the traditions of the Fathers and the Councils of the Church; but wherefore have I need of any more than the word of the Pope who sits in the infallible chair?' Then the doorward opened a Bible of great size. 'This,' he said, 'is our only statute book. Prove your right by this or leave.' At this he left.

Then came a drove of Quakers who would go in wearing their hats, but they were turned away for having such bad

manners. After that, some of the tribe of the barn, who had stood there awhile, began to speak. 'We,' they said, 'have but the same statute as yourselves, therefore show us our privilege.' 'Stay,' said the shining doorward, gazing at their foreheads, 'I will show you something. There, do you see the breach you made in the Church, leaving her without cause or meaning? And now, would you have room here? Go back to the narrow porch and solemnly wash yourselves in the well of Repentance, to see if you spew some of the royal blood you onetime swallowed, then bring some of that water to temper the clay for the repair of that breach, and you shall be welcome.'

But ere we had gone a rood westwards, I heard a murmur among the commanders above, and then all from great to small were taking up arms and harnessing themselves for war; and ere I could espy a place wherein to flee, the sky around had grown black and the city had become darker than at an eclipse; thunder growled, lightnings flashed on all sides; unabating showers of deadly arrows sped from the lower gates to the Catholic Church, and had not everyone in his hand a shield ready to stay the fiery darts, and were it not that the rock base was too mighty for aught to mark, we had all become one burning mass. But alas! this was but a beginning or an earnest of what was to follow, for shortly the darkness became seven times more black, and Belial himself rode in the thickest cloud, surrounded by his chief warriors, both of earth and hell, to take his orders and to do his will, each at his own post. He had commanded the Pope and his other son of France to destroy the Church of England and its queen; the Turks and the Muscovites to strike at other parts of the Church and to slay the folk, particularly the queen and

the other rulers, and, above all, to burn the Bible. The first thing the queen and the other saints did was to kneel and to make their plaint to the King of Kings in these words: 'The stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Emmanuel.' Instantly a voice answered: 'Resist the devil and he will flee from you.'⁶ And then began the mightiest and most furious battle ever fought on earth. When the Sword of the Spirit was brandished, Belial and his infernal hosts began to give way; soon the Pope began to lose courage, the King of France still holding out, but he also was well-nigh disheartened, seeing the queen and her folk so united, and having lost his own ships and men on the one side, with many of his folk in revolt on the other, whilst the Turk was beginning to grow faint.

Then, alas! I saw my beloved companion dart up from me into the height, to join a myriad other bright leaders, and then the Pope and the other earthly captains began to hide themselves and to faint, and the infernal chieftains fell in myriads, each of them in falling making such a noise, methought, as if a huge mountain had fallen into the depth of the sea.⁷ And between this noise and the excitement of having lost my guide, I awoke out of slumber, returning most unwillingly to my own heavy clod, so glorious it had been and delightful to be a free spirit, and above all in such company, in spite of all danger. But by this time I had none to comfort me save the muse, so fretful that I might only get her to stammer for me what follows in rhyme.

To the tune of 'Gwêl yr Adeilad'

I

O, man, behold, and wonder,
This globe, from nought asunder,
Proudly ascending;
The Lord of all hath laid it,
Securely planned and made it,
All else transcending —
The world,
With battlements up-hurled,
From starlit sweeps
To mountain heaps,
And ocean deeps,
Where beasts and birds and fish
For man abound in plenty
To meet each want and wish.

For man

He wrought this wondrous plan,
A heaven-like home
With dazzling dome,
Where man might roam
In liberty and love,
In innocence possessing
The blessing from above.

II

But man, for lust of prying,
And God's own word defying,
Soon fell in folly;
The earth became malicious,

A hag all vile and vicious,
Disfigured wholly
By guilt.
Her walls so stoutly built,
Since that fell season
All shake, by reason
Of hell's own treason,
And all its dastard deeds,
And pleasant plains and orchards
Now bear but whin and weeds.
The keep,
The ramparts strong and steep,
The roofs now crumble
With raucous rumble,
The turrets tumble
That once were fair to see,
And meteors gleam, foreboding
The burning soon to be.

III
Behold, O man, the building
From sea to sky is yielding.
It sways and shivers.
The floor is rent and riven,
And soon shalt thou be driven
Where hell-fire quivers;
O, thou,
Thy sin alone, ere now,
Brought on in ire
The deluge dire,
And living fire

Shall soon the world consume,
And thou in endless dying
Shalt bear a direr doom.

Yet see
There is one place for thee,
A city bright
Beyond the blight
Of nether night
And fiery lakes forlorn.
Who seeketh not its succour,
Alack that he was born.

IV

See thou the seat supernal,
Above in might eternal
And stern reliance,
All-powerful in freeing
What sin brought into being
With hell's defiance.

Mankind
May there a refuge find,
One rock fast-founded,
With ramparts rounded,
And grace unbounded.
Seat of Salvation,
This is the Church triumphant,
Whose children all are one;
And He,
Though vile our sins may be,
He still relenteth,
If man repenteth

And so lamenteth,
His pardon yet to gain,
So that herein and after
We be his own again.

Amen.

VISION OF DEATH IN HIS LOWER COURT

When one-eyed Phoebus was about to reach his furthest limit in the south, frowning from afar upon Britain and the Northern lands, on a long winter night, dark and cold, when it was much warmer in the kitchen of Glyn Cywarch than on the ridge of Cadair Idris, and better in a cosy room with a warm bedfellow than in a shroud at the lychgate, I brooded over a talk I had had with a neighbour by the fireside, touching the shortness of a man's lifetime, the certainty that all must die, and the uncertainty of the last hour. I had only just laid down my head and still lay half awake, when I felt a great weight stealthily come over me from head to foot, so that I could not move a finger, naught but the tongue, and I beheld what seemed like a male form on my breast, with a female on top of that.

Having stealthily looked at the form, by his heavy scent, his bedewed tresses and his bleared eyes, I knew that the male was my Master Sleep.

'Pray, sir,' I stammered, 'wherein have I offended you that you bring that witch to oppress me?'

'Hush,' said he, 'there is no one here but my sister Nightmare. We both go to visit our brother Death. We are in need of a third, and lest thou deny us we have come upon

thee (as *he* is wont to come) without warning. Thus thou shalt come, with a will or not.'

'Alas,' I said, 'and must I die?'

'Nay,' said Sleep, 'we shall spare thee this time.'

'But, by your leave,' I said, 'your brother Death never spared anyone yet who came within reach of his stroke, he who dared to wrestle with the Lord of Life himself, though even he gained but little in that trial.'

At this word Nightmare arose in anger and left.

'Ho!' cried Sleep, 'come away, thou'lt not be sorry for the journey.'

'Well,' said I, 'may never a night come to Sleeping Church, and may Nightmare never rest save upon the point of a bradawl, if you do not bring me back to the place where you found me.'

Then away he took me, over hills and through forests, over seas and vales, castles and towers, rivers and rocks, and where should we alight but at the gates of one of Belial's daughters, at the back of the City of Doom, where I saw that the three gates were narrowed into one, leading into the same place, a place of mist, dark and cold and baneful, filled with unwholesome fog and awesome overhanging clouds.

'Pray, sir,' I said, 'what is this place?'

'The chambers of Death,' replied Sleep.

I had barely time to ask ere I could hear folk weeping, others groaning, some sighing, some muttering, some feebly moaning, others in great labour, with all the signs of the passing of men, some here and there falling into silence with a great sob.

Then instantly I heard the turning of a key, and at the sound I turned me to look for the door. Steadfastly looking, I

beheld myriads of doors, that seemed far from me and yet beside me.

‘May it please you, Master Sleep,’ I asked, ‘whither do these doors lead?’

‘They open,’ he replied, ‘upon the Land of Oblivion, a wide region under the rule of my brother Death, and this huge rampart is the edge of the vast Everlasting.’

I then saw there was a little Death at each door, not one of them named or armed like the other, yet one might know from their appearance that all of them were servants of the same king, although they often strove amongst themselves for the sick; one would snatch the sufferer to be taken as a gift through his door, while the other would have him go through his own. Drawing nearer, I read above each door the name of the death in charge of it, and at every door a hundred things of all kinds had been left in a heap, showing that those who had gone through had all been in a hurry. Above one door was written ‘Hunger,’ although near to it were purses and bags all full and trunks nailed up.

‘This,’ said Sleep, ‘is the door of the misers.’

‘Who,’ I enquired, ‘were the owners of these rags?’

‘Misers, mostly,’ he replied, ‘but there are some that belonged to idlers, tonguesters and others who, poor in all but spirit, had liefer die of hunger than beg.’

Around the next door, where stood the Death of Cold, I heard the sound of much shivering. Near this door were many books, some pots and flagons, here and there a stick or a club, some compasses with cords and ship-tackle.

‘Scholars have gone this way,’ I remarked.

‘Yes,’ said he, ‘lonely and helpless ones, far from the care of those who loved them, even stripped of their very

clothing. Here,' he added, looking at the pots, 'are things left by boon companions, whose feet were wont to be chilled beneath benches the while their heads steamed with drink and prating. And the things over there belonged to travellers over snowy mountains, and merchants of the North Sea.'

The next was a wasted skeleton of a death called Fear, right through which one saw that he had no heart. At his door there were likewise bags and chests, locks and strongholds. Usurers, false neighbours, and oppressors were wont to go through this door, with some murderers, but many of these last called at the next door, where stood a death called Gibbet, with his rope ready around his neck. Next to this was the Love death. At his feet were thousands of all kinds of instruments and books of music and song, with love-letters, patches and pigments to beautify the face, and a host of useless baubles for such purposes, also some swords.

'These are swords,' said my guide, 'with which rivals have fought for mistresses, and sometimes slain themselves.'

I noticed that this death was purblind. At the next door stood the most evil-hued death of all, whose liver was wanting, called Envy.

'This death,' said Sleep, 'brings hither money-lenders, slanderers and now and then a rideabout, vexed at the command that a wife should obey her husband.'

'Pray,' I asked, 'what then is a rideabout?'

'A rideabout,' he replied, 'is what they here call the woman who rides her husband, her neighbourhood and her country if she may, and who through much riding will at last ride a devil from that door to Hell.'

Next was the door of the death of Ambition, for those

who tilt up their noses and break their necks for lack of minding their steps.

Near this door were crowns, sceptres, standards, numberless petitions for offices, all devices of heraldry and war.

But ere I could look at more of those countless doors, I heard a voice that, by my own name, commanded my dissolution, and instantly I felt myself beginning to melt, like a snowball in the heat of the sun. Then my master gave me some sleeping draught so that I slumbered, and by the time I awoke, he had borne me a distance out of all reckoning, to the other side of the stronghold.

I beheld myself in a pitch-dark vale of immeasurable size to which, as I supposed, there was no end; and after a while, by a blue light here and there, like unto a candle on the point of going out, I saw hosts — oh, their number! — of human shades, some afoot, some mounted, in a whirl as of the wind, all silent and awesomely solemn. The region was barren, bleak and blighted, with neither reeds nor grass, neither tree nor beast, save for deadly monsters and baneful vermin of all kinds, serpents, snakes, lice, toads, worms, locusts, maggots and the like, that live on the corruption of human flesh.

Through myriads of shades and creeping things, with graves, tombstones and sepulchres, we passed on without hindrance to see the country, until I beheld certain shades turn round to gaze at me; and at once, breaking the silence, formerly so deep, a whisper ran from one to the other that an Earthling had come. 'Earthling!' cried one, 'Earthling!' cried another as, like caterpillars, they crowded around me.

'Sirrah, how came you hither?' cried some carrion-like little death there.

‘In sooth, sir,’ I replied, ‘I know not any more than you do.’

‘What are you called?’ asked he.

‘Call me what you will here in your own country,’ I replied, ‘but at home I am called the Sleeping Bard.’

Whereat an old man, bent like a bramble that hath both ends in the ground, straightened himself up and looked at me more viciously than the red little devil, and ere he spoke a word he threw a big skull just past my head — thanks to the tombstone that saved me.

‘Truce, sir, pray you,’ said I, ‘to a stranger who was never here before and will never come again, once he finds his way home.’

‘I’ll make you remember being here!’ said he, and again with a thigh-bone he made for me like a very devil, whilst I did my utmost to evade him.

‘Why,’ I cried, ‘this is a most unmannerly country for a stranger! Is there no Justice of the Peace here?’

‘Peace!’ he cried, ‘what peace dost thou deserve, who wilt give no peace to men in their graves?’

‘Pray, sir,’ said I, ‘would you give me your name, for I do not know that I ever vexed anyone of this country.’

‘Sir,’ he replied, ‘know then that I, and not you, am the Sleeping Bard, and that I have had peace here for nine hundred years from all but you,’ and he made for me once more.

‘Stay, my brother,’ said Merlin, who was near by, ‘do not be too fiery; thank him rather for keeping your name in respectful memory on earth.’

‘Verily, great respect,’ said the other, ‘from such a blockhead as this. Can you, sir, make verse in the twenty-four

metres,⁸ can you trace the descent of Gog and Magog and the descent of Brutus son of Silvius⁹ back a hundred years before the fall of Troy? Can you foretell the end of the wars between the Lion and the Eagle and between the Dragon and the Red Stag? Speak, sirrah!

‘Ha! Let me also question him,’ said another, standing beside a huge cauldron¹⁰ which was bubbling and boiling over, sock, sock, de-glock, de-glock. ‘Come nearer,’ said he, ‘what is the meaning of this? —

‘Here on earth till doomsday dawn
I shall come and go.
Whether fish or flesh am I,
None may ever know.’

‘I would have your name, sir,’ I said, ‘so that I may more fittingly answer you.’

‘I,’ said he, ‘am Taliesin, chief of the Bards of the West, and those words are part of my riddle.’

‘I know not, I replied, ‘what may have been in your mind, unless the yellow plague, that killed Maelgwn Gwynedd,¹¹ may have likewise killed you on the beach and that you were divided between the crows and the fish.’

‘Hush, hush,’ quoth he, ‘I speak of my two callings, a man of law and a poet. And which, sayest thou now, would be most alike the one to the other, is it a lawyer to a greedy raven, or a poet to a whale? How many must one lawyer pick bare of their flesh to swell his own maw, and oh! how heedlessly he lets the blood flow, leaving a man half dead? And again, the poet, what fish may swallow as much as he? And though he lack not a tide at any time, the sea itself will never break his thirst. And if a man be a poet and a lawyer,

who could tell whether he be flesh or fish? And surely so, if one were a courtier, as I was, having to change his taste to suit each mouth? But tell me, are there still any such on earth?

‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘many; if one can patch up any kind of a ditty, then is he a chaired bard. But of the others, there is, between pleaders, petty attorneys and clerks, such a plague of them that the locusts of Egypt were no burden to the country, compared to them. In your time, sir, there were only clumsy bargains, and a deed no bigger than the palm of your hand, in the case of a hundred-pound tenement, with a cairn or an Arthur’s quoit¹² to keep the bargain and the boundaries in memory. There is not the might to rely upon that now, but there is more vicious cunning, and one must have a written piece of parchment as wide as a cromlech to secure the bargain. And in spite of all that, ’tis a wonder if it go without chink or challenge.’

‘Well, well,’ said Taliesin, ‘I should not be worth a straw there, I may as well stay where I am: there never will be truth where there are many poets, nor justice where there are many lawyers, until there be health where there are many physicians!’

At this point a grizzled little wisp of a man, who had heard of the coming of an Earthling, fell at my feet, weeping.

‘Alas, poor wretch,’ I cried, ‘what art thou?’

‘One who is from day to day too much wronged in the world,’ said he, ‘and there is neither a go-between secret, a slander, a lie nor any tale that set folks quarrelling, but that I must take the blame for most of them. “Indeed,” saith one, “she is a most worthy woman and she spoke well of you to someone, although she is sought by someone great.” “I heard

someone," saith the other, "reckon up a debt of nine hundred pounds on that estate." "Yesterday," saith a beggar, "I saw someone wearing a spotted neckcloth like a seaman, who had come with a big cargo of corn to the nearest harbour," and so every lout must drag me into his own wiles. Some call me Friend. "I have been told by a Friend," saith one, "that So-and-So does not mean to leave his spouse a farthing and that there is not much love lost between them." Others make still less of me, calling me a Bird. "A bird tells me there are evil doings," they say. Yea, some give me a more respectful name, calling me an Old Man, yet am I not accountable for one half of the beliefs, soothsayings and counsels reputed to the Old Man. I have never advised one to stick to the old way, if the new be better, nor did I ever think of hindering any from going to church in saying "Do not go too often where you are most welcome," or a hundred such things. But I am most commonly called Someone; that is the name you most often hear in all villainies, for if you ask anyone whereat or by whom such a disgraceful lie was told, "Indeed," he will say, "I know not by whom, but someone in the company said so." You question all the lot about the tale; everyone hath heard it from Someone, but none knows from whom. Is not this a shameful injustice? Pray, sir, will you tell everybody whom you hear mentioning my name that I never said any of these things, that I never devised or told any lie to disgrace anyone, nor any tale to set kinsmen at each other's throats? I come not near them, I know none of their tales, of their business or of their court secrets; they must not father their wrongdoings upon me, but on their own befouled brains.'

Hereat comes a puny little death, one of the notaries of the King, asking me my name and commanding my master

Sleep to take me at once into the presence of his Majesty. I had to go, sorely against my will, along with the power that swept me back, between high and low, thousands upon thousands of miles to the left, until we again came within sight of the boundary wall, and in a sharp angle we beheld a huge crag-like court, battered and roofless, reaching up to the wall, with numberless doors leading into this monstrous hall. The walls were formed of human skulls, frightfully grinning. The clay was black, tempered with tears and sweat, the lime outside besmeared with phlegm and gore and inside with dark blood. On the top of each tower stood a deathlet with a heart yet warm on the point of his dart. Around the court there were a few trees, here and there a baneful yew, a deadly cypress, in which owls, ravens, kites and the like were nestling and ever calling out for flesh, though the place was nought but one great stinking store of flesh. All the columns of the hall were made of thigh-bones, the pillars of the parlour of shin-bones, and the floors were wrought with layers of all kinds of flesh. But without more ado, I found myself within sight of a huge altar, where I beheld the King of Terrors, devouring the flesh and blood of men, with a thousand deathlets from hole to hole ever feeding him with fresh, warm meat.

‘Behold,’ spoke the deathlet who had brought me there, ‘a rogue I found in the middle of the Land of Oblivion, having come so light-footed that your Majesty never tasted a morsel of him.’

‘How may that be?’ asked the King, opening his jaws like unto an earthquake to swallow me. Trembling, I turned towards Sleep.

‘I brought him here,’ said Sleep.

‘Well,’ said the monarch, lean and terrible, ‘for the sake of my brother Sleep, you may make the best of your feet this time, but beware of me henceforth.’

After he had been for a while casting corpses into his insatiable maw, he ordered his subjects to be summoned and went from the altar to a very high throne to pass judgment upon the newly arrived. In an instant the dead in countless hosts made obeisance to the monarch, and took their stand in wonderful order. And there sat Death the monarch in his royal robes of bright scarlet, upon which were pictures of women and children weeping and men lamenting. On his head he wore a dark-red three-cornered cap (a gift from his kinsman Lucifer), on the angles of which were written the words Sorrow and Sobbing and Woe, and above were myriad pictures of wars on sea and land, towns burning, the earth cracking and the waters of the deluge; and beneath his feet there were the crowns and sceptres of all the kings he had ever conquered. On his right hand sat Fate, with a dark, morose look, reading what was written in a huge book. On the left there was an ancient one called Time, warping numberless threads of gold, silver, copper and many of iron, some threads growing better towards the end, thousands of others growing worse. Along the threads were hours, days and years, and Fate, according to the Book, cutting the thread of life and opening the doors in the boundary wall between the two worlds.

Before I had looked long, four fiddlers, newly dead, were called to the bar.

‘Why,’ asked the King of Terror, ‘seeing that you are so fond of merriment, did you not remain on the other side of

the cleft, for there never was merriment on this side of the chasm.'

'We,' said one of the music-makers, 'never did harm to anyone, but made them merry and quietly took what we got for our pains.'

'Did you ever cause any men to lose time and to neglect their work, or to stay away from church, tell me?' asked Death.

'No,' replied another, 'but that now and then on Sundays after service, we would be at a tavern until next day, or in summertime on the playground, and indeed, we were more pleasant and luckier in getting a congregation than the parson.'

'Away, away with these to the Land of Oblivion,' said the terrible King; 'bind the four back to back and throw them to their companions, to dance bare-footed on glowing hearths and everlastingly to scrape on their fiddles, with neither fame nor fee.'

The next to come to the bar was a King of somewhere near to Rome.

'Raise thy hand, prisoner,' commanded one of the officers.

'I hope,' replied the prisoner, 'you have somewhat better manners and favour for a King.'

'And you, sir,' said Death, 'you should have remained on the other side of the chasm, where all are kings, yet know ye that on this side there are none but myself and one other, who is down below, and you shall see that neither he nor I shall take any heed of the degree of your majesty, but of the degree of your evil-doing, so that we may fit your fate to your faults; therefore, answer the question.'

‘Sir,’ he replied, ‘understand that you have no right to arrest me or to question me; I have absolution of all my sins under the hand of the Pope himself: because I faithfully served him, he granted me a dispensation to go straight to Paradise, staying not a minute in Purgatory.’

At this, the monarch and all his lean-lipped demons bared their teeth in an effort to simulate laughter, whilst the prisoner, angered thereby, commanded them to show him the way.

‘Be silent, damned fool!’ cried Death, ‘Purgatory is on the other side of the wall behind thee — thou shouldst have purified thyself in life — and Paradise is to the right beyond the abyss. And there is now no possible way of escape for thee, neither over the abyss to Paradise nor through the boundary wall back to the world, for wert thou to give thy kingdom — and now hast thou not a mite to give — the doorward there would not do as much as to let thee spy once through the keyhole. This is called the Irrepassable Wall, for, once through, there is no return. But as you are so favoured by the Pope, you shall go to make ready his bed with the one who held office before him, and there you may for ever kiss his toe, as he kisses the toe of Lucifer.’

And at once, shivering like an aspen leaf, seized by four of the smaller deathlets, he was snatched away out of my sight with the speed of lightning.

Next came a man and woman, he having been a boon companion and she a winsome wench of easy habits, but here they were called by their naked titles, drunkard and harlot.

‘I hope,’ said the drunkard, ‘you may show me some favour, for I have sent you many a goodly prey in a flood of

good ale, and when I could no longer slay others, I have willingly come myself to feed you.'

'By leave of the court,' said the harlot, 'he sent not one half the number I have sent you, offered as burnt sacrifice, roast flesh ready for table.'

'Ho! ho!' cried Death, 'all this was done for the sake of your own accursed lusts, not for my feeding. Bind them face to face, old friends as they are, and cast them into the Land of Darkness, to puke and poke at one another until doomsday.'

And so they were swept away, headlong. Next came seven recorders.

Bidden to show their hands to the bar, they heeded not this command for that the palms were greasy. But one of them began more boldly to plead:

'We should have been fairly summoned, so that we might have prepared our answer instead of being thus stealthily rushed here.'

'Oh, we are not bound to have summoned you at any fixed time,' replied Death, 'for, everywhere and at all times throughout life, you have notice of my coming. How many sermons have you heard on the mortality of man? How many books, how many graves, funerals, fevers, messengers and signs have you known? What is your sleep but my own brother? What are your skulls but images of me? What is your daily food but dead creatures? Seek not to blame me for your misfortune; you would not give any heed to the summons, although you got it a hundred times.'

'Pray,' said one red-faced recorder, 'what have you against us?'

‘What?’ quoth Death, ‘you drank the sweat and blood of the poor, and charged double fees.’

‘Here is an honest man,’ said the other, pointing to a bickerer standing behind them; ‘he knows that I never did anything but what was just. It is not fair that you should detain us here without any particular fault to prove against us.’

‘Ho, ho!’ cried Death, ‘you shall bring proof against yourselves. Place them on the edge of the precipice, before the throne of justice: there they shall have right though they did it not.’

There were yet remaining some prisoners, who made such bother and uproar, some of them flattering, some muttering, some threatening, some giving advice and so forth. They had barely been called before the bar when the whole court became seven times darker than before, there was murmuring and great turmoil around the throne, and Death became paler than ever. Enquiry having been made, it was found that one of the messengers of Lucifer had brought a letter to Death, touching the case of these seven prisoners, and forthwith Fate commanded silence and the reading of the letter which, as I remember, was thus worded:

‘Lucifer, King of the Kings of the World, Prince of Hell and chief Ruler of the Depth, to our natural brother, the most Mighty and Terrible King Death, greeting, triumph and everlasting spoil.

‘Inasmuch as some of our fleet messengers, who are always out spying, have made known to us that there have lately come into your royal court seven prisoners of the seven worst and most dangerous kinds in the world, and that

you are about to shake them over the precipice into my own kingdom: my counsel is that you thoroughly prove every possible way of sending them back to the world; there they will do more service to you in the procuring of food, and to me in the bringing here of better fellowship, for we had rather have their room than their company here, having a while ago had much trouble with their fellows, while my Kingdom is already disturbed. Therefore, turn them back or keep them yourself. For, by the imperial crown, if thou cast them down here, I shall undermine the foundations of thy kingdom so that it fall and become one with my own.

‘From our royal court on the Swamp in the Fiery Region, in the year of our reign 5425.’

Green and blue in the face, King Death stood for a while between two minds: but whilst he was yet pondering, Fate turned upon him such a steel-black scowl that he trembled. ‘Sire,’ said Fate, ‘beware what you do. I dare not let anyone pass back again over the boundary mound of eternity, the Irrepassable Wall; neither may you harbour them here: therefore, send them on to their doom, in spite of the great Accurst. He has been able to send many hauls of a thousand or ten thousand souls, each to his own place in a minute, and what hardship can befall him now, with only seven, in spite of their dangerous character? Whatever may hap, even should they overthrow the infernal government, do thou forthwith send them thither, lest I should be commanded to strike thee into naught before thy time. As to his threats, they are but lying; for though thy own end with that of the aged one yonder (looking at Time) be drawing nigh, within a few leaves in my unerring book, yet needest thou have no

fear of sinking to Lucifer, for however much they who are there might wish to awe thee, yet they never may. The everlasting rocks of steel and adamant, that form the roof of Hell, are somewhat too mighty to be shattered.'

Then Death, all astir, called for one to write out his answer, in this wise:

'Death, King of Terrors, Conqueror of Conquerors, to our most honoured kinsman and neighbour, Lucifer, King of Nether Night, chief-ruler of the Bottomless Pit, greeting.

'After deep consideration of this your royal wish, we have seen it to be, not only more profitable for our own government, but also for your extensive kingdom, to send these prisoners as far as possible from the doors of the Irrepassable Wall, lest their stench frighten those dwelling in the City of Doom so that never a man may enter eternity from this side of the cleft, and that thus I should nevermore cool my sting, nor should you have further dealing between earth and hell. But, be it for you to judge and to condemn them to the cells you may deem the most fitting and the safest wherein to house them.

'From my Lower Court at the great Gates of Doom above Destruction. In the year of the renewal of my reign, 1670.'

Having heard all this, I was itching to know what kind of folk these seven might be, that even the devils themselves should fear them so much. But ere long, the clerk of the Crown thus called them by their names:

'Master Meddler, alias Finger-in-every-pie,' who was so bustling and busy in advising others that he found no time to answer for himself until Death threatened to pierce him with

his dart. Then: 'Master Slanderer, alias Foe-of-good-Fame.' No answer.

'He is shy at hearing his titles,' said the third, 'he can't abide the nicknames.'

'I wonder,' cried Slanderer, 'whether there are no titles for you? Call,' be added, 'for Master Mealy-mouth Bombast, alias Glib Glubber, alias Beaming Bane.'

'Ready!' cried a woman, pointing to Slanderer.

'Oh!' he retorted, 'Madam Rideabout, your poor servitor! I am delighted to see you look so well — I have never seen a more handsome lady in breeches. But alas! to think how wretched is the state of the country for the loss of such a mighty mistress as yourself, yet your delightful company will make Hell a bit better.'

'O, son of the great devil!' said she, 'along with thee, none need have another Hell — thou'rt quite enough!'

Then the crier called for Rideabout, alias Mistress in Breeches.

'Ready!' shouted someone else, but she spake never a word more, for want of having been styled Madam.

Next was called the Schemer, alias Jack-of-all-Trades, but he answered not, being too busy contriving a way to escape from the Land of Despair.

'Ready, ready!' cried one behind him, 'here he is, spying for a spot to break out of your noble court-house; unless you be wary of him, he will bring much craft against you.'

'Then,' said Schemer, 'may it please you to call Master Informer-against-his-fellows, alias Faultfinder, alias Plaintiff-monger.'

'Ready, ready! here he is,' cried Plague of the Pleas, for

each well knew the other's name though none would admit his own.

'Then,' said Informer, 'call Master Plague of the Pleas, alias Curse of the Courts.'

'Witness, witness, all of you what the knave called me!' shouted Plague.

'Ho, ho!' cried Death, 'in this country, each one is named, not at the font but by the failing, and by your leave, Master Plague, those are the names that will stick to you evermore.'

'Say you so?' cried Plague, 'by the devil, I'll make trouble for you too; although you might kill me, you have no right to nickname me! I shall make a joint complaint for that and for unlawful imprisonment, against you and your kinsman Lucifer, in the Court of Justice.'

Here I observed that the hosts of Death had arrayed and armed themselves, having their eyes fixed upon the King, awaiting command. Then, having straightened himself on his royal seat, he spoke thus:

'My dread, invincible hosts, spare neither care nor haste in taking these prisoners out of my boundaries, so that they befoul not my country. Bind and cast them headlong over the Hopeless Precipice. But as to the eighth, that cumbersome fellow who threatens me, leave him unbound on the brink, beneath the Court of Justice, to make good his plaint against me, if he can.'

And as he sat, all the hosts of Death, having surrounded and bound the prisoners, started with them towards their den. Just as I had gone out and was casting a glance after them, 'Come thou hither,' said Sleep, and he snatched me to the top of the highest tower of the court, whence I saw the prisoners depart to their everlasting doom. Ere long a gust of

wind arose, scattering the pitch-dark mist ever lying over the Land of Oblivion, so that there was a glimmer of light, and I beheld myriads and myriads of bluish candle-lights, by the gleam of which I caught from afar a glimpse of the edge of the bottomless abyss. And if that view was terrible in very truth, above there was a still more terrible sight, that of Justice on her throne guarding the door of Hell, and holding a special court above the abyss to give judgment upon the lost as they came. I saw the seven prisoners thrown headlong, and Plague of the Pleas also rushing to cast himself over the terrible brink, so that he might not once behold the Court of Justice, for alas! the sight of it was too awful for guilty eyes. I was gazing only from afar, yet I saw more dread atrocity than I may now speak of, than I could then have borne, for my spirit struggled and strained for dire fear, and strove with such straining that all the bonds of Sleep were burst and my soul returned to her usual offices. And I felt great joy at finding myself once more among the living, and vowed to live ever better, for I had rather have a hundred years of affliction in the paths of holiness than to have another glimpse of the horror of that night.

To the tune of Leaveland, or Gadel y Tir.

I

Lands and chattels all must go
(Brief the might of man below),
Pleasure sweet and pride and show,
We part with them for ever.

II

Strength we leave and beauty too,
All that sense may here pursue,
Learning wise and kinsmen true,
And all we love, we leave them.

III

May we not flee from giant Death,
Him who robs and murdereth?
Good and bad he plundereth,
Then makes of us a morsell!

IV

Men of wealth, were it not gay
Ever in your state to stay?
Haply you may find a way
To buy this giant's favour.

V

You so fair of form and face,
Scrambling for your pomp and place,
Haply you, with looks or lace,
May blind this mighty monster.

VI

You so light of foot, so gay,
In the bloom of youth to-day,
Haste! for fame is theirs who may
Escape the monster's arrow.

VII

Great the fame of song and dance
That ward off many an evil chance,
'Tis woe that not the wit of France
Can move this mighty monster.

VIII

And you, all travellers renowned,
In journeying the earth around,
Pray tell, have you a stronghold found
That Death may not discover?

IX

Ye scholars wise and courtiers gay,
Who know all things as gods, they say,
May not your wisdom show the way
That Death may fail to follow?

X

The World, the Devil, Flesh, all these
Of men are mightiest enemies,
Yet Giant Death gives no release
From passing through his portals.

XI

Of Death, men think not here below,
Or of his gates to weal or woe,
Yet, thou, when all alone thou go,
What of the way and whither?

XII

It boots not now what be thy state
When thou mayst cross, or soon or late,
For everlasting things and great
Are now to thee but trifles.

XIII

When Death upon thee comes one day
To ope the gate that shuts for aye,
Then know the price that thou must pay
Shouldst thou a step have stumbled.

XIV

Then when thy soul stand by the gate,
And thou shalt go to meet thy fate,
What boots it whether then thy state
Be woe or weal unending?

XV

Belief, and grief for evil deeds,
And holy life that heavenward leads,
These are for men the only needs
The sting of Death to conquer.

XVI

And here, if these be nought to thee,
In passing to Eternity,
Thereat shalt thou their virtue see,
When all for ever endeth.

XVII

When thou at last art done with earth,
And 'reft of all its empty mirth,
Then shalt thou know their weight and worth,
Beside that gulf unfathomed.

VISION OF HELL

On a bright morning in mild April, when earth greened with quickening, and Britain was a paradise robed in lucent livery, the signs of summer days, I wandered on the banks of Severn, amid the sweet warbling of the little song-makers of the woods who, in all measures, strove sweetly to voice the praise of the Creator; and I so much more in duty bound, now sang with the winged choir, now read a portion of the book called *The Practice of Piety*.¹³ Yet, in spite of all, my earlier visions would not leave my memory, but ever and anon cutting in, they would thwart all other thoughts. And more and more they worried me until, closely reasoning with myself, I considered that visions come but from above, as a warning for one to beware, and that thereby I was bounden to write them down as a warning to others as well.

And in the midst of such work, whilst pensively I sought to bring together some of those awful memories, I dozed over my papers, thus giving my master Sleep the chance to slip in upon me unawares. And hardly had Sleep thus locked my senses when there was, making its way towards me, a glorious apparition, like unto a young man, tall and exceeding fair, whose robes were much whiter than the snow, and whose face made the sun grow dark by its brightness, and his golden-waved tresses lay parted above into two gleaming plaits, in the shape of a crown.

‘Follow me, mortal man,’ said he when he had come up to me.

‘Who art thou then, my Lord?’ I asked.

‘I am,’ said he, ‘the Angel of the realms of the North, guardian of Britain and its queen. I am one of the princes who stand below the throne of the Lamb, receiving command in defence of the Gospel, to protect it from all its enemies in Hell and in Rome, in France and Constantinople, in Africa and in India, and wheresoever they devise means for its destruction. I am the Angel who erstwhile saved thee below Belial’s Castle, and showed thee the vanity and folly of the whole world, the City of Doom and the splendour of the City of Emmanuel, and I am come again at his own bidding to show thee greater things, because thou wouldst make use of what thou hast already seen.’

‘How may it be, my Lord,’ I asked, ‘that your glorious Highness who hath charge of kingdoms and kings, should humble yourself to accompany a wretch such as I am?’

‘Ah,’ said he, ‘with us, the virtue of a beggar stands above the greatness of a king. What if I be greater than all the kings of earth, and above many of the countless heavenly rulers? Even so, if our almighty Lord saw fit to take upon himself such an unspeakable humiliation as to wear one of your bodies, dwelling amongst you and dying to redeem you, how should I dare to do otherwise than to regard my own office as more than worthy in serving thee and the meanest of men, who are so high in my master’s favour? Spirit, come forth and shed thou thy shell of earth!’

Thus he spake, looking upwards, and with the command, I felt myself become free of all parts of my body, and being snatched by him up to the height of the heavens, through the

region of lightning and thunder and all the white-heat armouries of the firmament, numberless degrees higher than I had been with him before, from where I beheld the earth, hardly of the size of a barnyard.

Having allowed me to rest a while, he again raised me a myriad miles, until I could see the sun far beneath us, and through the galaxy, past the Pleiades and many other very great stars, to behold from afar still many more worlds. And after long journeying, behold, we were come to the confines of the awful Eternity, in sight of the two courts of the mighty King Death, one to the right, the other to the left, far away one from the other, parted by an over-great void. I prayed that I might go to see the court on the right, for methought it was not like unto the other I had seen before.

‘Maybe,’ he said, ‘thou shalt sometime see more of the difference between one court and the other, but now we must take another way.’

Then we turned away from the little world, and through the mid-space we let ourselves down into the everlasting realm between the two courts, a region huge, very deep and dark, chaotic and unpeopled, now cold, now hot, now silent, now resounding as cataracts of water fell on to the fires and quenched them; then shortly one might see a blast of fire break out, burning up the water. Thus there was naught following a regular course, nothing whole, nothing living, nothing formed, naught but this dazing discord and dark amazement which would have blinded me for ever, had not my companion again spread out his celestial veil. By the light he gave out, far to the left I saw the Land of Oblivion and the edge of the wilds of Destruction, and to the right what looked like the base of the ramparts of Glory.

‘This,’ said he, ‘is the great gulf between Abraham and Dives, which is called Chaos; this is the realm of matter, first created by the Creator; here is the seed of every living thing, and out of these the Almighty Word made your world and all things in it, water, fire, air, land, animals, fish and insects, winged birds and the bodies of men, but your souls are of higher and nobler beginning and descent.’

Through chaos, huge and terrible, we at last struck out to the left, and ere we had travelled much there, where all things became ever and ever more hideous, I felt my heart in my throat and my hair on end like the bristles of the hedgehog, even before I could see aught; but when I beheld, ah! a sight that no tongue may describe and that the spirit of mortal man may not support, I fainted. Oh, the endless diffusion of that direst abyss, opening out upon another world! Oh, how the frightful flames crackled as they leapt over the brink of the accursed chasm, how the writhing, dragon-like lightning rent the thick black smoke flung up by that immense mouth!

When I had been revived by my dear companion, he gave me to drink some spiritual water, oh how excelling in taste and hue! and when I had drunk of that celestial water, I felt within me a wondrous strength, with understanding, courage, faith and divers other heavenly virtues. Thereupon, with him in the veil, I fearlessly drew to the edge of the precipice, the flames parting on both sides and shunning us, not daring to touch those who dwell in the hallowed Height.

Then from the top of that woeful bank we let ourselves down, as you might see two stars fall from the height of heaven, down, a thousand million miles, over many rocks of brimstone, many a horribly ugly cascade and many a fiery

cliff, all things, frowningly over-hanging, ever downward, yet did they all shun us, but when once I poked my nose out of the veil, I was struck by such a blast of choking and stifling stench as might have made an end of me had my guide not quickly saved me with the living water.

When I had revived, I saw that we had come to some standing-place, for in all that immense chasm it had not yet been possible to find a halt, steep and slippery as it was. There, my guide allowed me to rest a while again. During that pause, it chanced that the roar of thunder and whirlwind was somewhat abated, and in spite of the sound of the rugged cascades, I heard from afar another sound greater than all, as of direful shrieking, shouting, crying and mighty groaning, cursing, swearing and blasphemy, so that I would have bartered my ears for deafness. Ere we had moved an inch we heard from above such a *drap-hul-rup-rap-de-dump-de-damp*, and had we not quickly stepped aside, there would have fallen upon us some hundreds of unhappy creatures going headlong in extreme hurry into evil plight, driven by a host of demons.

‘O, sir,’ said one devil, ‘take time, lest you undo your curled locks.’ And then to another: ‘Madam, would you have a soft cushion? I am afraid you’ll be sadly disarrayed by the time you reach your lodging.’

These strangers were stubbornly unwilling to go on, asserting that they were out of the way, yet on they went, we following, onwards to a black torrent of immense size, through which they waded and above which we crossed, my companion holding the water to my nostrils to strengthen me so that I might bear the stench of the river and the sight

of some of those who dwelt there, for so far I had not beheld as much as a single devil, having only heard their voices.

‘Pray, my guide,’ I asked, ‘what is this murky river called?’

‘The river of the Evil One,’ he replied, ‘into which all his subjects are plunged in order to adapt them to the country. This accursed water changes their appearance, washing away all trace of goodness, all shadow of hope and comfort.’

And when I beheld the host coming through, I could discern no difference in deformity between demon and damned. Some of them wished to hide themselves at the bottom of the river and to remain there, ever choking, for fear of worse lodging further on. But, as the proverb saith, ‘He must run whom the devil drives,’ and the damned were forced by the devils following them to go forward to the shallows of destruction and on to their everlasting doom. And there I saw at the first sight more tortures and torments than the heart of man can ever imagine, let alone what the tongue may tell; to behold one of them was enough to cause the hair to stand erect, the blood to run cold, the flesh to melt, the bones to yield and the spirit to faint. What is it to impale or to saw men alive, to tear the flesh in bits with iron pincers, or to broil the flesh rasher by rasher at the flame of a candle, or to crush the skull into sheets in a press, and all the most frightful outrages ever done on earth? They are all but mere pastime compared to one of these deeds. Here, numberless shouts and groans, hoarse and harrowing, and deep sighing; there harsh lamenting, answered by piercing cries — the howling of dogs is sweet, delicious music, compared to these sounds. When we had gone a little from the accursed beach into the Wilds of Destruction, here and there, by their own fire, I saw men and women beyond

number, ever tortured without cease by countless demons; and as the demons yelled because of their own pain, they made the damned answer their cries to the utmost. Taking more notice of the part nearest to me, I beheld devils with forks tossing them headlong on to poisoned hackles of rough, barbed spear-heads, there to hang squirming by the brain, after a while to be hurled in heaps to the top of one of the burning cliffs, there to be charred like wood in a heath-fire. Thence they were snatched far away to the ridge of a pass in the everlasting snow and ice; then back into an immense flood of boiling brimstone, to be plunged into parching, choking and stifling fumes of insufferable stench; thence to a swamp of reptiles, to embrace infernal creeping things, much more frightful than serpents and vipers. Then the demons, taking knotted rods of flaming steel from the furnace, would beat them until their yells in their unutterably distressful pain filled the whole range of the Utter Darkness, and then with red hot irons they seared the bleeding wounds. And there is neither fainting nor swooning to simulate a moment's respite, but lasting strength to suffer and to feel, though one would have thought, having heard one agonised shriek, there might never be the power to utter another such cry; yet their pitch is never lowered, and the demons ever answer them: 'This is your welcome for ever and ever.'

And were that possible, worse than the pain was the banter and bitterness of the demons' jeering and scoffing, but worst of all was that their own conscience, now thoroughly awakened, more fiercely rent them than a thousand of the infernal lions. But as we still went down, down — and the further we went the greater the woe — the

first thing I saw was a vast prison where a great crowd of men, scourged by the demons, were groaning and cursing.

‘Who are these?’ I inquired.

‘This,’ replied the Angel, ‘is the lodging of those who cry “woe-me-that-I-did-not.”’

‘Woe to me I did not purify myself from all sin in time,’ said one. ‘Woe to me I did not believe and repent before coming hither,’ said another. Next to the cell of too late repentance and of pleading after judgment, was the prison of the delayers, who always promised to improve but never did so. ‘When this trouble is past,’ one would say, ‘I shall turn over a new leaf.’ ‘When this obstacle is out of the way, I shall yet be a new man,’ another would promise. But when that may happen, things are never any better; there is always something else to hinder them from taking the way to the gate of holiness, and if sometimes a start were made, it would want but little to turn them back. Next to this was the prison of Presumption, which was full of those who, erstwhile advised to forsake their lust or drunkenness or avarice, would say: ‘God is merciful and better than His word, and He will never damn His own creature for such a small matter.’ But in this cell, they were barking out blasphemy and asking, ‘Where is the mercy boastfully said to have been without end?’

‘Silence! curs,’ cried a huge, lobster-like demon who heard them. ‘Silence, would you have mercy who never did aught to deserve it? Would you that Truth should make its own word a lie, merely to have the company of such loathsome leavings as yourselves? Were you shown too much mercy? Given a Saviour, a Comforter, with the angels, books, sermons and good examples, will you not at last cease to

trouble us with your babbling about mercy, where mercy never was?’

In going out of this fiery pit, I heard one dolefully groaning and grunting: ‘I knew no better; nothing was ever spent upon teaching me to read my duty; and in striving to win bread for myself and my poor family I had no time either to read or to pray.’

‘And is that so?’ inquired a stooping little devil hard by, ‘was there no time to tell funny stories? No idle roasting of yourself on long winter nights, when I was up the chimney, and could not some of that time have been given to read or pray? What about Sundays? Who used to come to the tavern, instead of going with the parson to church? How many Sunday afternoons were spent in vain babbling about worldly things, or in sleeping, instead of learning to meditate and to pray? And did you fulfil what you were aware of? Have done, sirrah, with your cheat’s chatter.’

‘O, blasted blood-hound!’ cried the damned, ‘it is not long since thou wert whispering other things in my ear! Hadst thou then said this, I might not have come here.’

‘Oh,’ replied the devil, ‘we don’t mind telling you the ugly truth here — there is no longer any fear you shall ever go back tale-telling.’

Below this cell I could see a big valley, wherein were what seemed to be myriads of huge mounds, fiercely burning. Drawing nearer, I knew by the howling that arose from them that they were men, heaped up into hills, the savage flames crackling through them.

‘That hollow,’ said the Angel, ‘is the lodging of those who, having done some evil, were wont to say, “Ho! I am not the first, there are plenty of mates for me!” And thou mayst see,

they have companions enough to warrant their words and to add to their woes.'

Facing this place was a vast cellar, where I saw men being twisted, as withies are twisted, or as sheets are wrung.

'Pray,' I inquired, 'who are these?'

'Here,' he replied, 'are the Mockers, and in sheer mockery the demons are now testing whether they may be as easily spun as their own yarns.'

A little lower, we but barely saw another dungeon, most dark, wherein were things that aforesaid had been men, now with heads like unto the heads of wolfhounds, sunk to the mouth in a swamp, madly barking out blasphemy and falsehood, whenever they might get the tongue out of the slime. Suddenly a host of demons swept by, and some of the wolf-headed ones snapped out and bit the heels of ten or a dozen of the devils who had brought them there.

'Rack and ruin take you, hell-hounds,' yelled one of the demons, striking the swamp so that they sank in the stinking slime. 'For whom is Hell more meet than for you, once wont to gather and to make up tales and to whisper lies from house to house, so you might laugh when you had set the whole country at each others' throats? What more could any of us do?'

'This,' said the Angel, 'is the lodging of the slanderers, makebates and tale-bearers and all the envious cowards who wound ever from behind with blow or tongue.'

Thence we passed by an enormous den, the vilest I had yet seen and fullest of vermin, of soot and stench.

'Here,' said he, 'is the place of those who hoped for heaven for being without malice, that is for having been neither good nor bad.'

Next to this stinking pit, I saw a great crowd, sitting and howling more cruelly than any I had yet seen in hell.

‘Save us all!’ I cried, ‘wherefore do these bewail more than any, though there be neither dolour nor devil anywhere near them?’

‘Ah,’ said the Angel, ‘there is more pain within if there be less without. Here are stubborn Heretics, godless ones, many of the unchristian and worldly-wise, those who forsook the Faith, persecutors of the Church and a myriad of the kind, altogether left to the more bitterly grievous penalty of the conscience, which has its full sway over them without stop or stay. “I shall no longer,” saith conscience, “suffer myself to be drowned in ale, to be blinded by bribes, to be deafened by song and company, to be lulled or dulled in reckless sloth; I shall now make myself heard, and never may the taunt of the unwelcome truth cease in your ears. The will revives the want of the bliss now lost; memory reminds how easily it might once have been won; intelligence shows how great is the loss and how certain it is that henceforth there may be naught but this unspeakable gnawing for ever and ever. And so by means of these three things, conscience more ruthlessly rends them than all the demons in Hell.’

As I came out of that strange recess, I heard much talking, and at every word such villainous merriment as if there had been some ten score devils nigh unto shedding their horns for laughter. When I had drawn near to behold the great rarity of even a smile in Hell, the cause proved to be two noblemen, newly come, who claimed the respect due to their station, and all the merriment was but to offend these gentlemen.

One sturdy squire bore a big roll of parchment, his

pedigree chart, showing from how many of the Fifteen Tribes of Gwynedd¹⁴ he was sprung, how many members of his family had been justices of the peace and sheriffs.

‘Ha, ha!’ cried one of the demons, ‘we know the merits of most of your forebears; were you anything like your sire or great-great grandsire, we should not have dared to touch you. But you are only an heir of Nether Night, a vile hell-hound, thou’rt barely worth a night’s kennelling, yet, thou’lt have a hole to wait for day.’

And with those words the ruthless demon, having with his fork given him above thrice ten turns in the fiery air, flung him so that he fell into a hole out of sight.

‘That is good enough for a mere parchment squire,’ said the other, ‘but I hope you may have better manners for a knight who has served the King himself, and of whose own ancient stock there were twelve earls and fifty knights whose names I can give.’

‘If your forebears and your long line be all you have to plead,’ said one of the devils, ‘then you may go the same way; for we remember hardly one old estate not founded by some oppressor or murderer or arrant thief leaving it to others as oppressive as themselves, or to lazy blockheads or drunken swine. And to maintain their prodigal pride, vassals and tenants must be crushed; if there be either a pretty colt or a pleasing cow, Mistress must have it if she wish, and it will be well if the daughters, yea and the wives, escape the master’s lust. And the smaller gentry around them, those must either follow them in folly, become bail for them, to the ruin of themselves and their property and parting with their patrimony, or otherwise look out for dislike and frownings, and being dragged into all kinds of idle doings so long as they

live. Oh! how gently they take oaths so as to be believed by their mistresses or their tradesmen! And when they have decked themselves out, how lightly they look upon many who bear goodly offices in Church and State, not to speak of the common folk, as if those were but mere worms to themselves! Damme! Is all blood not of one colour? Have not all of you come out by the same way, between lye and dung?’

‘For all that, by your leave,’ said the knight, ‘some births are much purer than others.’

‘To the great damnation!’ cried the demon, ‘is the husk of any of you better than another? You are all stained with the original sin from Adam! But, sir, if your blood be better than the blood of others, there well be less scum in it to boil out of you by and by, and if there be more, we shall examine every part of you by fire and water!’

At this word, a demon in form like a fiery chariot was ready to receive him, the other in mockery lifting him in, and away with him like lightning. In a moment the Angel bade me look, and I saw the poor knight horribly steeped in a huge boiling furnace, along with Cain, Nimrod, Esau, Tarquin, Nero, Caligula and the others who first kept pedigrees and devised family arms.

A little further on, my guide bade me peer through a rift in the rock, and there I beheld a crowd of coquettes, decking themselves up, doing and undoing all the follies they had done on earth, some pursing their lips, some with implements plucking their eyebrows; some anointing themselves; some patching their faces with black spots to make the yellow look somewhat whiter; some seeking to break the mirror; and after all this trouble at painting and patching, when they saw that their faces were more frightful

than those of the devils, then with nail and tooth they tore off all the paint and patches, with skin and flesh together, howling the while beyond comparison.

‘The uttermost curse,’ cried one, ‘upon my father who made me as a girl marry a withered stump of an old man, whose kindling of a lust he could not allay brought me to this place!’

‘A thousand curses upon my parents,’ cried another, ‘for sending me to a nunnery to be taught chastity: it were no worse for them to have sent me to a Roundhead to be taught bounty, or a Quaker to be taught manners, than to send me to a Papist to be taught honesty.’

‘May utter destruction take my mother,’ said a third, ‘whose grasping pride denied me a husband of my own choice, thus driving me to get by stealth what I might have honestly got.’

‘Hell and double Hell to the mad bull of a nobleman who first began to entice me,’ said another. ‘Had he, by fair means or foul, not broken through, I should not have become an open cell to all, and should not have come to this devilish den!’ Saying which, she again tore her flesh.

But others, having heated themselves, went about from hole to hole, dragging the demons between their feet. Sometimes the demons fled from them, sometimes gave them fire for fire, poking them with rods of red-hot steel until they had enough of friction, their flesh hissing and bubbling. I was not loth to depart from the loathsome kennel of these wanton bitches.

But ere we had gone much further, I marvelled to see another prisonful of doubly loathsome females. Some of these had become toads, some dragons, some serpents

swimming and hissing, drivelling and butting at one another in a stinking stagnant pool of a size much bigger than Lake Tegid.

‘Pray, what may these be?’ I inquired.

‘Here,’ he replied, ‘are four classes of expert females, together with their underlings: firstly, bawds who were wont to keep lesser sluts, selling the same maidenhood a hundred times over, along with some of the chief courtesans. Secondly, gossip mistresses, surrounded by a host of jangling bags. Thirdly, termagant rideabouts, together with a pack of sneaking curs, for no man would ever go near them, but for fear. Fourthly, scolds, become a hundred times more frightful than vipers, ever gnawing, *de-rink, de-rink*, with their baneful fangs.’

‘I would have supposed that Lucifer had been a more becoming monarch than to place a gentlewoman of my degree with these sorry she-devils,’ said one like unto a winged serpent, though much more fierce.

‘Oh! that he would send here seven hundred devils of the worst in hell in exchange for thee, thou rancorous hell-worm!’ cried another ugly viper.

‘O, thank you!’ snapped a giant-demon who had heard their words, ‘we reckon that our station and merits are somewhat better. Though you would torment everyone as much as we do, yet we shall not yield office to you.’

‘Lucifer,’ whispered the Angel, ‘has very good reason for placing these in safe keeping, for if they broke out they might turn all Hell topsy-turvy.’

From this place, going ever downward, we came where I saw a great cave, whence arose cries more affrighting than I

had yet heard, what with cursing and swearing, blasphemy and gnashing of teeth, groaning and shouting.

‘Who are here?’ I inquired.

‘This,’ he replied, ‘is the robbers’ cave. There is here a multitude of forest robbers, lawyers, stewards, with Judas himself amongst them.’

They were much annoyed at seeing wretched tailors and weavers above them on a somewhat more comfortable ledge.

Scarcely had I turned round when a horse-demon brought a physician and an apothecary, throwing them amongst the pedlars and horse-swoppers, for selling bad and stale drugs. They forthwith began to grumble against being put in such poor company.

‘Stay, stay,’ said one of the devils, ‘you deserve a more fitting place,’ and he flung them down to the conquerors and murderers.

Here were myriads imprisoned for playing with loaded dice and cheating at cards, but ere I could take notice of them, I heard near the door the shouting of a huge crowd, bawling out *hi, hi, hi-ptroo-how, ho, ho-o-o-o-hoop!* Turning to see what might be the cause, I beheld naught but horned demons. I asked of my guide whether the devils were bringing in the cuckolds.

‘No,’ he replied, ‘those are in another cell. These are cattle drovers, who would escape to the quarters of the Sabbath-breakers, and who are driven here against their will.’

Turning round I beheld their skulls covered with horns like sheep and cattle, and the demon drovers threw them down under the feet of the blood-stained robbers.

‘Hide yourselves there,’ said one demon; ‘although you had one time such fear of robbers on the London road, you were but the worst kind of highwaymen yourselves, living on the roads and on robbery, yea, on the killing of poor families, keeping open many hungry mouths, awaiting for their own property to feed them, whilst you were in Ireland or in the King’s Bench, making merry at their expense, or somewhere on the way with your wine and your wenches.’

In leaving this broiling cave I had a view of a lair, the worst but one that I saw in Hell for horrible, foul stench, where were a drove of drunken swine, spewing and swallowing, swallowing and spewing fearsome filth without rest. The next hole was the lodging of Gluttony, where Dives and his companions lay flat on their bellies, eating dung and fire in turn, without a drop to drink. A rung or two lower was a very spacious kitchen, where some were being roasted and boiled, others frying and flaming in a red-hot chimney.

‘This is the place of the merciless and the callous,’ said the Angel, turning a little way to the left, where I saw a cell lighter than any I had seen in Hell. I asked what place this was.

‘It is the dwelling,’ he replied, ‘of the infernal dragons, who growl and grow fierce, setting upon and tearing each other every instant.’

I drew near and alas! the unspeakable sight of them — the living fire in their eyes alone gave what light there was.

‘These are all children of Adam,’ said my guide, ‘scolds and angry, raging men. But behold there some of the offspring of the great dragon Lucifer.’ And verily I saw no choice in comeliness between one kind and the other.

In the next cell were the misers in extreme torment, bound by their hearts to chests of fiery coins, the rust from which consumed them without end, just as they had never bethought them of an end to the seeking of them. And now, for sorrow and remorse, they tore themselves with more than fury. Beneath this cell there was a stifling nook where some of the apothecaries had been minced and stuffed into earthenware pots, with *album graecum*, the dung of geese and swine and many a rank unguent.

Ever downward we journeyed along the wildering waste, amid countless torments unutterable and endless, from cell to cell, cellar to cellar, each in turn exceeding the rest in monstrous horror. At last we came within sight of a huge entrance hall, more forbidding than anything I had so far seen. Very large and of grim steepness, its threatening length led to a dark-red corner of incredible frightfulness and atrocity, wherein was the royal court. At the upper end of this accursed hall, among a thousand other horrors, by the light of my companion I saw in the pitch darkness two feet of monstrous size, so monstrous as to cover the whole firmament of Hell. I asked my guide what that monstrosity might be.

‘Thou shalt have a fuller view of that monster in returning,’ he replied, ‘but come now to behold the royal court.’

As we went down along that frightful hall, we heard behind us the sound as of a great multitude of folk. Having moved aside to make room for them to pass on, I could see there were four several hosts, and upon inquiry, found that the four Princesses of the City of Doom were bringing their subjects as a gift to their father. I recognized the host of

Princess Pride, not only because they would have priority over the others, but also because they often stumbled for want of looking under foot. This Princess had amongst her folk thousands of kings, rulers, courtiers, noblemen and braggarts, many Quakers and numberless women of all grades. Next came Princess Lucre with her host, crafty and sly-looking, with a great many of the offspring of Rakepenny Rack, lawyers, usurers, stewards, foresters, harlots and some ecclesiastics. Following, there came the gentle Princess Pleasure and her daughter Folly, leading her own folk, now players of dice, cards, backgammon and tricks of magic, then poets, minstrels, story-tellers, drunkards, wanton women, ribald rogues and pedlars, with myriads of all kinds of trifles, soon to be engines of torture for the doomed fools.

These three having taken their prisoners into the court to be sentenced, last of all came Hypocrisy, leading a larger crowd than either of the others, of all races and ages, from cities and countries, gentry and common folk, men and women. At the tail end of this double-faced host, we came in view of the court, and passing between many dragons, horned demons and Hell-giants, the dusky doorwards of the Glowing Den, I carefully hiding myself in the protecting veil, we entered the terrible building. Every part of it was of amazing and more than amazing ruggedness. The walls were of horrific rocks of glowing adamant, the floor one stretch of unbearable bladed flint; the dome of fiery steel, vaulted after the manner of a stone-wrought arch, with bluish-green and dark-red flames, the whole, but for its size and heat, like unto a mighty oven, rounded and terrific. Facing the doorway, on a flaming throne, sat the Accurst, flanked on both sides by the chief of his black angels, seated on benches of direst fire,

according to their former degrees in the Realm of Light — then amiable scions — you may as well take this much as an idle preachment seeking to recount what a gruesome grimness was theirs, and the longer I looked at any of them, the sight became even more frightful.

At the midmost point, right above Lucifer's head, there was a huge fist, holding a fearsome bolt. Having made their curtsey, the Princesses forthwith returned to the world and their charge therein. No sooner had they withdrawn than a wide-mouthed giant demon, at a nod from the King, gave a shout more mighty than the firing of a hundred cannon, as loud, were that possible, as the blast of the last trumpet, to proclaim the foregathering of the parliament of Hell. And instantly the rabble of Hell in all shapes filled the entrance hall and the court, in the form and likeness of the particular sin that each of them took delight in urging upon men. Having called for silence, Lucifer, with an eye on the rulers next to him, began thus graciously to speak:

‘Ye Rulers of Hell, princes of Black Despair! If we have lost the power in which we were once wont to shine, along with the blest realms of high Heaven, great as was our fall, it was yet glorious. We aimed at nothing less than All; neither have we lost all, for behold, we have realms both wide and deep, unto the confines of the wilds of Doom, yet under our own rule. In sooth, we reign in dire torture, yet spirits of our pride had rather reign in penance than serve in ease. And added to this, we have nearly won another world — more than five parts of the earth have been under my banner for a long time. And although the almighty enemy sent his own Son to die for men, yet I, by means of my toys, claim ten souls for every one he may get through his crucified Son. And

though we may not come to do battle in the highest with him who hurls the invincible thunder, yet is it sweet to have revenge in any way. Let us then finish the destruction of the rest of men who are in favour of our Destroyer. I remember the time when you caused them to be burnt in hosts, in cities, yea, that a whole earthful of them sank through water to us into fire. But now, although your natural strength and cruelty are not a grain the less, you have grown somewhat lazy. And were it not for that, we might long since have destroyed the few pious ones and have gained earth and made it one with this great realm. But know ye this, you black servants of my wrath, if you be not bolder and busier now, seeing how brief is our time, then, by Hell and Destruction, by the great everlasting darkness, you shall first prove the weight of my anger upon yourselves, in a manner new and strange to the oldest among you.'

And having thus spoken he frowned, so that the court became darker than before. Then arose Moloch, one of the infernal leaders, and having made his obeisance to the King, he said:

'O, Emperor of the Air, great Ruler of Darkness, none ever doubted my will for utter malice and cruelty, for such have ever been my pleasure. Above all would it be my delight to hearken to the cries of the children who perished in fire, as formerly when they were sacrificed to me outside Jerusalem. Moreover, after the crucified enemy had returned to the height, during the reign of ten emperors, I slew and burnt his followers, seeking to sweep all Christians off the face of the earth so long as this prospered with me. Then at Paris and in England and divers other places, I made many a great slaughter of them. But what hath it availed us? Even when its

branches were lopped off, the tree would still grow. All this is but to show the teeth without being able to bite.'

'Fie!' growled Lucifer, 'a fig for such a faint-hearted lot! I shall no longer rely upon you. I shall do the work myself and take all the spoils undivided. I shall go to earth in my own royal person and devour all, not a man shall ever more be found on earth to worship the most High.'

Thereupon, in fury he took a flying leap wherewith to start, like a vault of living fire. But the fist overhead swung the terrible bolt so that he trembled in his rage, and ere he had gone far, a hand unseen, in spite of his bluster, dragged the false one back by his chain, as he raged in seven-fold fury, his eyes more fiery than lightning, thick black smoke bursting out of his nostrils and bluish-green flame out of his mouth and entrails, as he gnawed his chain in his misery and muttered horrible blasphemies and frightful oaths. But seeing how vain it was to seek to break his chain and to struggle against the Almighty, he again took his place and went on with his speech, somewhat cowed, but with redoubled malevolence:

'Though none but the Almighty Thunderer could overcome my strength and strategy, having perforce to bow to Him have I no remedy; still I may vent my wrath lower down and nearer my own self, pouring it in showers upon those already in my power and within reach of my chains. Arise then, office-bearers of Destruction, rulers of the fires that may never be quenched; and as my own anger and hatred gather and my malice boils over, see ye that you earnestly spread them all among the damned and chiefly the Christians; make use of the engines of torture to the utmost; devise; redouble the heat and the boiling until the seething

spume of the cauldrons break in blasts upon them, and when they be at the extremity of unutterable anguish, then mock at them, scoff at them and taunt them; and when all you may do in scorn and bitterness shall have failed you, then hasten to me and you shall have more.'

There had been stern silence throughout Hell for a space of time, with anguish all the more keenly cruel through being kept within. But now the silence erstwhile commanded by Lucifer was broken, and the frightful butchers, like bears in raging hunger, rushed upon their prisoners, so that on all hands there arose such wailing and howling, louder than the sound of floods or the roar of an earthquake, making Hell itself more terrible than ever. And I had swooned had I not been saved by my beloved friend, who said: 'Now, do thou drink deeper to give thee the strength to behold things still more awful.'

Scarcely had he spoken these words when, behold, heavenly Justice, stationed above the abyss, in charge of the gates of Hell, came scourging three men with rods of fiery scorpions.

'Ha, ha!' laughed Lucifer, 'here are three reverend gentlemen whom Justice himself has deigned to accompany into my kingdom.'

'Woe is me!' said one of the three, 'who asked him to take the trouble?'

'That matters not,' said Justice, with a look that made the demons tremble so that they jostled each other, 'it was the will of the Creator that I myself should come to send such abominable murderers to their home. Sirrah!' he added, 'open for me the den of the murderers where Cain, Nero,

Bradshaw, Bonner and Ignatius¹⁵ and numberless others of the kind are found.'

'Oh, oh!' cried one of the three, 'we did not slay anyone.'

'No thanks to you, for you had no time, through being hindered,' replied Justice.

When the cave was opened, there burst out of it such a blast of gory flames and such a cry as might have been the dying yell of a thousand dragons. As Justice swept by in returning, such a tempest of fiery whirlwinds struck the Evil one and his princes that Lucifer himself, then Beelzebub, Satan, Moloch, Abaddon, Asmodai, Dagon, Apollyon, Belphegor, Mephistopheles and all others of the chief demons, were snatched away and hurled headlong into some slime-pit, a hundred times more loathsome and terrible in aspect and abominable stench, than any I had seen, the which kept opening and shutting in the middle of the Court.

'This,' said the Angel, ere I had time to question, 'is a hole that descends into another vast world.'

'And what, I pray thee, is that world called?' I inquired.

'It is called the Bottomless Pit, or Nethermost Hell,' he answered, 'the home of the devils, whither they have now gone. The great wilds, over some of which thou hast come, are called the Land of Despair, a place ordained for men who have been damned to remain until doomsday, and then that realm shall fall in and become one with Nethermost Hell, which is bottomless. Then shall one of us come and lock in the devils and the damned, and never more to all eternity shall they be let out. But in the meantime they have leave to come into this cooler region to torment the souls of the lost. Yea, they are often allowed to go out into the air and around

the earth to tempt men into the ways of destruction, leading into this horrific prison, from which there is no return.'

In the course of this account, as I marvelled that the mouth of Nethermost Hell should be so different from the jaws of Upper Hell, I could hear a great sound of arms and the furious firing of guns from one point, answered by what was like unto growling thunder from another, so that the deadly rocks resounded with the noise.

'These are the sounds of war,' I said, 'if there be war in Hell.'

'There is,' replied he, 'and there may not be anything but war without end.'

As we were starting out to see what was happening, I saw the mouth of the Bottomless Pit open and hurl upwards thousands of grimly-green candle lights, which were Lucifer and his captains having weathered the tempest. But when he heard the din of war, he became paler than Death, and began to call and to bring together hosts of his aforetime proven warriors to quell the commotion. In the midst of this, he hit upon a little cur of a devil who had escaped between the legs of the warriors.

'What is this tumult?' demanded the King.

'A tumult that may put your crown in danger, ' said the demon, 'unless you see to it yourself.'

Whereupon came another demon runner, hoarsely shouting: 'As you cause disquiet for others, now see to your own peace; the Turks, Papists and murderous Roundheads, in three armies, and filling all the plain of Black Hell, are doing all kinds of evil deeds and turning everything topsy-turvy.'

'How did they get out?' demanded the Evil One, scowling more fiercely than Demigorgon.

‘The Papists,’ said the messenger, ‘in what way I know not, broke out of their Purgatory, and then, because of ancient feud, they went to unhinge the hatches of Mahomet’s Paradise, letting out the Turks from their prison, and then in the tumult, some weak spot was found whereby the spawn of Cromwell broke out of their cells.’

Then Lucifer turned and looked under his throne, where were all the condemned monarchs, and he commanded that Cromwell himself be kept in his kennel, likewise that all the Emperors of the Turks be secured. And so, along the grim wilds of Darkness, Lucifer hastened with his hosts, each one having light and heat at his own cost. Led on by the mighty din, he boldly advanced against them.

Then, silence was ordered in the name of the King, and Lucifer demanded: ‘What is the cause of this tumult in my Kingdom?’

‘May it please your infernal majesty,’ said Mahomet, ‘a dispute arose between myself and Pope Leo, as to which had done you more service, whether my own Alcoran or the religion of Rome. At that point came a drove of Roundheads, having broken out of their own prison, and they struck in, claiming that their own League and Covenant deserved more honour at your hands than either, and so from jeering to jostling, from words to weapons. But now, your majesty having returned from the Depth, I leave the matter to yourself.’

‘Hold, we have not yet done with you,’ said Pope Julius, and to it they went once more, tooth and nail, so that the impact sounded like an earthquake, and the three armies of the damned cut each other to pieces which, like mangled snakes, joined together again, as they sprawled all over the

jagged, flaming crags, until Lucifer ordered the summoning of his old warriors, giants of the Deep, to part them, which was no easy task.

When the tumult was at last silenced, Pope Clement spoke:

‘O, Emperor of Atrocities, no seat ever gave more faithful and more general service to the infernal crown than was given by the Bishops of Rome over many parts of the globe in the course of eleven hundred years. I hope you may allow none to strive with us for your favour.’

‘Well,’ said a Scot of the brood of Cromwell, ‘in spite of the service of Alcoran during eight hundred years, and the superstitions of the Pope from even earlier times, yet the Covenant, ever since it was first put forth, has done more. All men begin to have doubt and distaste of the others, but we still increase all over the world, and have power in your Enemy Island, that is Britain, and in London, the happiest city under the sun.’

‘How now!’ said Lucifer, ‘if what I hear be true, you are also about to go under a cloud there. But whatever you may have done in other kingdoms, I will not have you disturb my own Kingdom. For that reason, come to terms at once, under threat of greater pains, physical and spiritual.’

Whereupon I saw many of the demons and all the damned drop their tails between their hoofs and steal away each to his den, for fear of a change for the worse. Then, when he had ordered all to be locked up in their lairs, and had punished and replaced the careless officers who had allowed them to break out, Lucifer and his counsellors returned to the royal court and sat them once more according to their degrees upon their burning thrones. And

when silence had been proclaimed and the place cleared, behold a huge crump-shouldered demon set down before the bench a pack of captives newly come.

‘Is this the way to Paradise?’ asked one of them, for they had no notion where they might be.

‘Or, if this be Purgatory,’ said another, ‘we have a dispensation signed by the Pope, whereby we may go straight to Paradise, without a minute’s delay anywhere. Therefore, show us the way, and if not, then by the Pope’s toe, we shall see that he punish you!’

‘Ha, ha, ha, he!’ shouted some eight hundred devils, and Lucifer himself parted his tusks fully half a yard in a kind of bitter laugh.

The newcomers marvelled at all this, and said one of them: ‘Well, if we have got out of the way in the dark, we shall pay for guidance.’

‘Ha, ha!’ cried Lucifer, ‘you shall pay the uttermost farthing ere you leave’ — (but when search was made, it was found that all of them had left their breeches behind) — ‘You passed by Paradise on the left above the mountains over there,’ added Lucifer, ‘and although it is so easy to come down here, it is next to impossible to go back, the country being so dark and tangled, with so many hills of fiery iron on the way, great overhanging cliffs and sheer walls of impassable ice, and many a mighty cascade, all too stark to be scaled, if your nails be not of devilish length. Ho, ho!’ he added, ‘take these fools to their fellows in our own Paradise!’

At this, I heard others coming, cruelly cursing and swearing, ‘O, fiend! fiend’s blood! ten million fiends! a million million fiends take me, if I go!’ and in spite of all they were in an instant thrown before the bar.

‘Here’s for you,’ said the Steed that brought them, ‘a load of fuel as fine as any in Hell.’

‘What are they?’ asked Lucifer.

‘Masters in the noble art of cursing and swearing,’ replied the other, ‘men who know the speech of Hell as well as any of us.’

‘You lie in your teeth, by the devil!’ cried one of them.

‘Sirrah, do you take my name in vain?’ asked the great Ogre. ‘Ho! take them and hook them by the tongue to the burning cliff over there, and be ye ready to serve them; if ever they call for a devil or a hundred devils, they shall have their fill.’

When these had gone, a giant demon asked for the clearing of the bar, and threw down before it a man quite a load in himself.

‘What have you there?’ demanded Lucifer.

‘An innkeeper,’ replied the demon.

‘What?’ queried Lucifer, ‘one innkeeper only, whereas they used to come six or seven thousand at a time? Have you not been out for ten years, sirrah, and you bring us but one, who would have done us more service in the world than you, lazy stinkard?’

‘You are too fair-minded to condemn before hearing me,’ said the other. ‘Only this one had been placed in my charge, and I am now rid of him. But yet, from his own house, I have sent you many a wastrel who had drunk the maintenance of his family, many a dice or card-player, many a pretty swearer, many a soft, simple sponger, many a careless waiter, many a maid, sullen in the kitchen but never a sweeter at the tap or abed.’

‘Well,’ said Lucifer, ‘though the innkeeper deserve to be

amongst the flatterers beneath us, take him now to his fellows in the cell of the wet murder, along with many apothecaries and poisoners who made drink to kill their customers; boil him well for that he brewed not better beer.'

'By your leave,' said the innkeeper, trembling, 'I have not deserved such treatment; must not the trade live?'

'Could you not live,' questioned Lucifer, 'without abetting waste and gambling, harlotry, drunkenness, oaths, quarrels, slander and lying? And, you hell-hound, would you now have a better living than we have? Pray, what evil have we here that thou hadst not at home, save only the penalty? And as the plain truth may be spoken here, the heat and the cold of Hell were not unknown to you. Did you not see a spark of our fire in the tongues of swearers, and the scolds when they sought to take home their husbands? Was there not much of the fire that may not be quenched in the mouth of the drunkard, the eye of the angry, and in the heat of the harlot? And could you not have seen something of the cold of Hell in the kindness of the spendthrift, and surely in your own pleasant ways with them whilst they had anything to spend, in the jests of the mockers, in the praise of the envious and the slanderers, in the vows of the wanton or in the legs of the boon companions, benumbed under your tables? Is Hell so strange to thee who hadst a hell for home? Away with thee, hell-dog, to thy doom.'

At this moment, ten demons, mightily snorting, cast their burdens on the glowing floor.

'What have you there?' asked Lucifer.

'Here,' said one of the demon-steeds, 'we have five things that were the day before yesterday called Kings.' (I sought a while to see whether Lewis of France were one of them).

‘Cast them hither,’ said the King, and they were thrown to the other crowned heads under the feet of Lucifer.

Next to the kings came the courtiers and flatterers, many. Each of these was thrown under the seat of his own king, as the kings were under the devils’ buttocks in Lucifer’s stool of office. But there was a part of the stool beneath the vilest devils, where the witches, ever as they were wont to do on Thursday nights, were kissing the buttocks of the demons. I had not much time to look round ere I heard the blowing of brazen trumpets and the shouting of ‘Make way! make way! make way!’ When we had waited a while, there came a drove of assize-men, with devils carrying the train of half-a-dozen justices, followed by a myriad of their tribe, such as pleaders, attorneys, notaries, recorders, bailiffs, catchpoles and Curse of the Courts. I marvelled that not one of them was questioned — they had understood that matters had gone too far against them, so that not one of the learned pleaders parted his lips. But Curse of the Courts spoke of lodging a complaint for wrongful imprisonment against Lucifer.

‘You shall have cause to complain of your lodging by and by,’ said Lucifer, ‘and never more set an eye upon any court.’

Then Lucifer put on his red cap, and with an insufferably arrogant look, he said: ‘Take the justices to the room of Pontius Pilate, to Master Bradshaw, who condemned King Charles. Stick in the pleaders with the murderers of Sir Edmondbury Godfrey¹⁶ and their double-dealing lot, who pretend to quarrel one with the other so they may slay whomsoever comes between them. Go ye and greet that prudent law-man who, at death, offered a thousand pounds for a good conscience, and ask him whether now he would not give more. Roast the lawyers at the blaze of their own

parchments and papers, till their learned bowels ooze out, and so that they may breathe that vapour, hang the wrangling litigants above it, noses down, in the roasting chimneys, to test whether they may ever have their bellies full of law. Throw the recorders for the present among the profiteers, who hold back or buy corn beforehand and then mix it, selling the impure at double the price of the pure; and so the recorders, they charge for wrong double the fees formerly paid for right. As to the catchpoles, leave them free to prowl about and to be sent back to earth there, in holes and corners, to catch those in debt to the crown of Hell, for what devil amongst you could better do that job?’

Just then came a score of demons, like Scotsmen with shouldered packs, and laid down their burdens in front of the throne of no hope. When questioned, it was found they had brought Gipsies.

‘Aha!’ cried Lucifer, ‘how did you know so well the fortune of others but knew not that your own would lead you to this place?’

There was no answer, for they marvelled at seeing things more unsightly than themselves.

‘Throw them,’ said the King, ‘to the witches in the upper office — their yellow hides will match well with the dung. We have here neither cats nor rush lights for them, but let them have a toad between them once every ten thousand years, if they be quiet and don’t deafen us with their glib-glab gibberish.’

Next to these came, as I supposed, some thirty peasants. All marvelled at seeing there so many of that honest calling, seeing that they so seldom came. But they were not all of the same folk nor for the same faults. Some had come for having

put up the market prices, many for withholding tithes and cheating the parson of his rights, others for having left work to run after the gentry, seeking to keep pace with those folk and falling, split in the fork; some for working on Sunday, some for taking with them to church the thought of their sheep and cattle, instead of taking heed of God's word; others for evil bargains.

When Lucifer began to question them, Oh, they were all as pure as gold: none of them was aware of aught in himself to deserve such a lodging. Scarcely could one believe what neat excuses they made up to hide their guilt, although they were already in Hell because of it — all this out of a wayward humour, just to cross Lucifer and to make a charge of unfairness against the righteous Judge who had condemned them. Yet would one have marvelled more how cleverly the Evil One uncovered the sores and drove home his answers to their empty excuses. But when they were at the point of being doomed, there came some forty scholars, borne by leaping demons more unsightly, had that been possible, than Lucifer himself. And when the scholars heard the peasants, they also began more boldly to excuse themselves. But oh, how readily the old Serpent answered them, in spite of their guile and their learning, but as it happened that I heard the like pleading at another seat of justice, I shall give an account of it all at the same time, now following what I saw in the meantime. Lucifer had scarcely given judgment upon these, sending them, because of their cool quibbling, to the great ice gorge in the Land of Everlasting Frost, so that their teeth already began to chatter even before they beheld their prison, when Hell once more began mightily to resound with terrific blasts and peals of roaring thunder and all the din of

war. Lucifer grew black and livid in turn, and in a minute a skew-hoofed devilkin scudded in, panting and shivering.

‘What is the trouble?’ asked Lucifer.

‘The most serious trouble for you ever since Hell is Hell,’ replied the little devil: ‘all the outlying wastes of the Kingdom of Dusk have rebelled against you and against each other, particularly those between whom there was long-standing feud. They are at it tusk to tusk so that they may not be parted. The warriors are in strife with the physicians for having stolen their killing trade. A myriad usurers are wrangling with the lawyers, claiming part of the robbing trade. The informers and horse-swoppers are near to tearing to pieces the gentry for cursing and swearing without cause, whereas they lived by the trade. The harlots and their companions, and a myriad of aged kinsfolk and old friends, have villainously fallen out. But worse than all is the battle between the old misers and their own spawn for having squandered goods and gold which, say the old ones, “cost us so much pain on earth and untold anguish here for ever.” On the other hand, the sons foully curse and tear the scrapers, putting the blame for their everlasting doom upon their fathers for having left them twenty times too much, to make them mad with pride and vanity, whereas a little, with God’s blessing, might have made them happy in both worlds.’

‘Now,’ cried Lucifer, ‘enough, enough! There is more need of weapons than of words. Return, sirrah! Spy about in every watch. Find out where this great neglect has happened, and what may have been the cause of it. There are yet abroad some evils unknown.’

Away went the demon forthwith. Then Lucifer and his captains arose with fear and foreboding. He commanded the

mustering of the boldest warriors among the black angels. When this had been done, he first set out with his own force to quell the rebellion, his captains with their hosts taking other ways. Ere the royal army had gone far, rushing like lightning through the frightful darkness (and we in their wake), the uproar drew nearer, and the forces met.

‘Silence, in the name of the King!’ shouted a demon crier. None heard him — it was easier to drag out of his den the lake-monster of old¹⁷ than to part any of these factions. But when the proved veterans of Lucifer struck into their midst, the snarling, butting and battering began to lessen.

‘Silence, in the name of Lucifer!’ shouted the loud-voiced one again.

‘What is the trouble,’ demanded the King, ‘and who are these?’

There was an answer: ‘It is naught but that in the medley the drovers hit upon the cuckolds and started butting to prove whose horns were the harder. It might have become goring in dead earnest had your own horned giants not struck in.’

‘Well,’ said Lucifer, ‘as you are so ready at arms, follow me to trounce the other rioters.’

But when the rumour reached the other rebels that Lucifer was leading three horned armies against them, all of them sought their dens. And so without hindrance, Lucifer marched through the waste wilds, questioning and searching out what had been the beginning of the uproar, without word from any in answer. At last, one of the King’s spies returned, panting for breath. ‘O! most excellent Lucifer,’ said he, ‘Prince Moloch has quelled the tumult in a part of the North, hacking thousands to pieces among the glaciers. But

there are three or four dangerous evils still abroad, so 'tis said.'

'Who are they?' demanded Lucifer.

'Slanderer, Meddler and Plague of the Pleas,' he replied, 'have broken their prisons and are abroad.'

'It would be no marvel, then, were there still more trouble,' remarked the Evil One.

At this, another spy returned from the South with the tale that trouble would soon spread there, unless Rideabout, Schemer and Bombast, who had already turned everything upside down in the West, were imprisoned at once.

'Well,' said Satan, standing next but one to Lucifer, 'ever since I enticed Adam out of his garden, I have not seen so many evils due to his offspring out at the same time — Rideabout, Curse of the Courts and Bombast, a mixture that might set a thousand devils spewing out their bowels!'

'No wonder,' remarked Lucifer, 'that they were so loathed by all on earth, seeing they are able to cause us so much trouble here.'

A short space further on, the great termagant Rideabout suddenly bestruck against the King in his course.

'Ho, my aunt of the breeches!' cried a shrill devil, 'good night to you!'

'Indeed, your aunt — on what side, pray?' said she, angered at not having been addressed as Madam. 'You are a fine king, Lucifer,' she added, 'that you maintain about you such ill-bred blockheads! It is a crime that a kingdom of such extent should have for king one so unskilled in government. Would that I were made lieutenant over it!'

At this point, stumbling in the dark, Bombast arrived.

‘Your servant, sir,’ said he, addressing one, over his shoulder. ‘Are you well and happy?’ he asked another. ‘Could I be of any service to you?’ he inquired of the third, and with a cynical smirk, ‘Your beauty charms me, madam,’ said he to the Shrew.

‘Woe, woe! away with this hell-hound!’ she cried, and the others shouted, ‘Away with this new torment! This fellow is Hell upon Hell!’

‘Bundle and bind them up head to heel!’ cried Lucifer.

Just then, Curse of the Courts was brought in between a couple of devils.

‘Oho, angel of peace, art thou come?’ cried Lucifer, then to his officers: ‘Hold him fast, upon your peril!’

Ere we had gone far, Schemer and Slanderer, whispering one to the other, were brought forward, bound between forty devils.

‘O, most excellent Lucifer!’ said Schemer; ‘it grieves me greatly that there is so much disturbance in your kingdom, but I will teach you a better way, if I may be heard. Making an excuse of calling a parliament, you need only summon all the damned to the flaming pandemonium, and then bid the devils to cast them headlong into Nether Night and then lock them up in the swamp, so may you then be rid of them.’

‘Now,’ said Lucifer, turning upon Schemer a most malignant frown, ‘the common Meddler is yet missing.’

By the time we had again come to the forepart of the accursed court, who should be coming most smilingly to meet the King but Meddler.

‘Oh, my King,’ said he, ‘I would have a word with you.’

‘And I one or two with thee, perchance,’ said the great Ogre.

‘I have been all over one half of Hell,’ said Meddler, ‘seeing how your affairs stand. You have many officers in the East who do nothing whatsoever but sit at case, seeing neither to the torturing of their prisoners nor to their safe-keeping, and that is just what brought about this great commotion. Moreover, many of the demons and damned that you sent to the world to tempt men have not returned although their time is up; others, having returned, are in hiding, instead of coming to give an account of their doings.’

Then Lucifer bade his herald to proclaim another Parliament, and the chiefs and their officers lost not an instant in foregathering to make up the diabolical session once more. The first thing done was to change the officers, and to make room beside the mouth of the pit for the Termagant and Bombast to be placed, nose to nose, along with the other rioters, bound head to heel, and to proclaim a law to the effect that whosoever, thereafter, might fail in his duty, whether demon or damned, should be cast amongst them until doomsday. At these words you might have seen all the wretches, yea, even Lucifer himself, tremble and become troubled.

The next proceeding was to call to account certain of the devils and the damned sent to earth to gather companions. The devils told a plain tale of their own, but some of the damned who had but a stumbling story were sent to the Scorching School, scourged with knotted fiery serpents, for lack of better learning of their task.

‘Here’s a winsome wench, when she’s dressed up,’ said a little devil, ‘sent up to bring you new subjects by the groin: the very first to whom she offered herself was some wearied workman on his way home late from his toil, and he, instead

of joining her in wanton ways, went on his knees to pray for deliverance from the devil and his angels. At another time she would go to a sickly fellow.'

'Ha,' cried Lucifer, 'throw her to that worthless wanton who courted Einion ap Gwalchmai¹⁸ of Mona long ago.'

'Stay, this is only the first offence,' said the wench, 'not one year has yet gone by since the day I was undone and condemned to your accursed Kingdom, you King of torment!'

'No, not yet quite three weeks,' remarked the devil who had brought her.

'If that be so, then,' she asked, 'how could you expect me to be as skilled as those of the lost who have been here from three to five hundred years, when out to bring you spoil? If you would have better service from me, then let me out again for a turn or two without reproof, and if I fail to bring you a score of adulterers for every year I may be out, then chastise me as you choose.'

But the verdict went against her, and she was doomed to spend a hundred years in durance so that she might do better a second time.

At this another devil brought to the bar a male, saying: 'Here you have a fine decoy, who wandered about his former neighbourhood the other night and saw a thief about to steal a stallion, and he could not even help the thief to catch the colt without letting himself be seen, so that the thief has been crossing himself ever since.'

'By leave of the court,' said the captive, 'if the child of the thief got the gift from above to behold me, could I help that? But this is only one case,' he added, 'it is not above a hundred years since the dire day I was undone, and yet how many of my own kinsfolk and neighbours have I enticed to follow me

here during that time? May I be in Lower Hell if I have not as good a will for the trade as the best of you, but even the wisest fails sometimes.'

'Ha!' cried Lucifer, 'throw him to the School of the Fairies, who are still lashed for their former tricks, when they throttled and threatened their neighbours, thereby awaking them out of their heedlessness, so that the fright would be like to have more effect upon them than forty sermons.'

Here there came four catchpoles and an accuser, with fifteen others of the damned, dragging two demons to the bar.

'Now,' said the accuser, 'so that you may not make all the charges of neglect of duty against the children of Adam, here are two of your one-time angels who misspent their time above quite as badly as the couple last before you. Here is a rogue second to the one who showed himself at Salop the other day in the middle of the interlude of *Doctor Faustus*, when some folk, as is the custom, were wantoning with their eyes, some with their hands, others making trysts for the same purpose, and many other doings profitable for your kingdom — when they were thus most busily at it, the devil himself appeared to play his part, driving all from their pleasures to their prayers. So this fellow, going about his business in the world, chanced to over-hear some youths talk about walking around the church to have a sight of their sweethearts,¹⁹ and what did he but show himself to those fools, in his own form when he is at home. In spite of their fright, when they recovered their senses they vowed never to do such things again. If he had only made himself seen in the form of some wanton sluts, they would have felt themselves bound to take those for their sweethearts, and

this dirty demon could have been a master of the house with both parties, having himself made the match. And here is another,' he added, 'who went, last Twelfth Night, to a couple of lasses in Wales who, following custom, were watching for the appearance of their future mates, and instead of cajoling the girls into wanton play, in the shape of a comely youth, he took a bier to sober the mind of one, and with the din of war in a blast of Hell, he drove the other out of her senses further than before, without need. Nor was that all, for when he had got into the wench, thrown her down and sorely tormented her, some of our learned enemies were sent for to pray for her and to cast him out of her. Instead of tempting her into despair and seeking to win over some of the preachers as well, he turned preacher himself, revealing some secrets of your realm, thus helping instead of hindering their salvation.'

At the word salvation, I saw some of them startled into living flames of anger.

'Every tale holds till the other side is heard,' said the demon. 'I hope Lucifer will not allow any of the dirty spawn of Adam to match himself with me who am an angel of much higher order and origin.'

'Ha!' cried Lucifer, 'his penalty is sure. But, sirrah, you answer their charges, forthwith and clearly, or, by the hopeless perdition, I shall—'

'I have brought here,' answered the demon, 'many a soul, from the time Satan was in the Garden of Eden, and I ought to know my trade better than this upstart informer.'

'Blood of hell's firebrand!' shouted Lucifer, 'have I not commanded you to answer clearly and readily?'

'By your own command,' said the demon, 'I have a

hundred times preached and warned persons against divers ways leading to your boundaries, and yet quietly, with the same breath, along some other false path I have brought them here safely enough, as I did lately in Germany, in one of the Faroe Islands and several other places. Thus many of the superstitions of the Papists and of the tales of antiquity first came into the world through my preaching, all of them in the guise of some good. For who will swallow a hook without bait? Who ever got others to believe any story unless there were a measure of truth mixed up with the lying, or some shadow of good to hide the evil? And so, if in preaching I may be allowed, amongst a hundred points of honest and good advice, to bring in one of my own, then, by means of that one point, through mischance or superstition, I shall do more in your favour than all the others may ever do against you.'

'Well,' said Lucifer, 'as you have such power in your pulpit, you may tarry for seven years in the mouth of some barn preacher, who says what may first come between his cheeks; there thou shalt have the chance now and then of putting in a word to thine own purpose.'

There were many more demons and damned darting like lightning around the terrible throne, to report their doings and to have their charges renewed. But suddenly and without explanation, all the messengers and prisoners were bidden to quit the court and to hie them each to his own hole, leaving there only the King and his counsellors.

'Would it not be best that we should likewise leave,' I asked my companion, 'lest they discover us?'

'Thou needest have no fear,' replied the Angel, 'no unclean spirit may ever see through this veil.'

And so, there we stayed, unseen, to behold what might

hap. Then Lucifer began thus graciously to speak to his counsellors:

‘Ye Over-lords of spiritual evils, ye Chiefs of the cunning of Nether Hell, in straits I call for the utmost of your malice and guile. It is not unknown to anyone here that Britain and its out-isles is the kingdom most dangerous to my authority and fullest of my enemies. And what is a hundred times worse, there now rules over that isle a queen most dangerous of all, who has not once been minded to turn hitherward, neither along the old way of Rome on the one hand nor along that of Geneva on the other, much as the Pope has done for us there a long while, and Oliver even unto this day. What, then, shall we do now? I fear that we may lose what formerly we held there and our mart altogether, unless we forthwith have a new way for them to traverse, for too well they know all the old roads leading here. As that invincible Fist shortens my chain and stays me from going to earth myself I ask your advice as to whom I shall appoint to be my viceroy in combating that hateful queen, the deputy of our own enemy.’

‘O, thou great Emperor of Darkness,’ said Cerberus, the demon of tobacco, ‘a third of the revenue of that crown I provide. I shall go and send you a hundred thousand enemy souls through a mere pipe-line.’

‘Doubtless,’ replied Lucifer, ‘thou hast done me much good service, what with causing the tobacco growers to be slaughtered in India; killing those who use the weed by means of the drivel; sending many idlers to make a show of bearing it about from house to house; causing others to steal in order to get it, and a myriad to breed such a craving for it that they cannot be a day in their proper senses without it.

Yet, go thou and do thy might, thou art not to the purpose for the present.'

At this, Cerberus sat down and Mammon, the money demon, stood up and with the look of a sneaking cur, said: 'I am he who discovered to men the first mine whence money might be gotten, and ever since I have been more praised and worshipped than God himself, and men devote to me all their pains and perils, all their thoughts, affections and trust. Yea, no men are ever content without more of my favour, and the more they get, the further they are from rest, so that at last, for lust of ease, they come hither to everlasting woe. How many a sly miser have I enticed hither, along paths more painful than those leading to the realm of bliss? Whether it be at fair or market, session or election, or any foregathering of folk, who hath more followers than I? Cursing and swearing, fighting and litigation, trickery and deceit, pining and scraping, slaying and stealing, Sabbath-breaking, perjury, uncharitableness, and what black mark is there beside these, branding men as of the fold of Lucifer, in the making of which I have not had a hand?'

And he sat. Apollyon then arose, saying: 'I know not of anything surer to bring them here than that which brought you here yourself, that is Pride. If she be suffered to plant in them the stake of her own stiffness and to puff them up, there need be no fear that they shall ever bend them to take up the cross or to pass through the narrow door. I shall go, together with your daughter Pride, and shall cause the Welsh, looking up to the pomp of the English, and the English, imitating the fickleness of the French, to tumble down here ere they have a notion where they may be.'

Next came Asmodai, the demon of wantonness.

‘Tis not unknown to you, most powerful King of the Depth,’ said he, ‘nor to you Princes of the Land of Despair, how many of the nooks of Hell I have filled through lust and wantonness. What of the time when I kindled such a fame of lust throughout the world that the Deluge had to be sent to purify the earth and to sweep men here to the fire that may never be quenched? What of Sodom and Gomorrah, fair and pleasant cities, that I filled with burning lust so that the blight of Hell blazed in their infernal appetites, driving them alive down here for ever and ever? And what of the great host of the Assyrians all slain in one night because of me? What of Sarah, by me disappointed of seven husbands,²⁰ and of Solomon, wisest of men, and many thousands of kings whose undoing I caused through women? Therefore, let me out with this sweet sin, and it will kindle so widely in the world this infernal spark that it shall become one with this undying flame, for there shall scarce be one who shall ever return from following me to walk in the paths of life.’

Thereat he sat down and Belphegor, the lord of listlessness and sloth, arose.

‘I am,’ said he, ‘the prince of listlessness and sloth. My power is great over men of all ages and degrees. I am the pool, mute and motionless, wherein the spawn of all evils breed, where the dregs of all noisome filth and slime curdle up. What art thou, Asmodai, or you other greater evils without me to keep open and unguarded the windows for you to enter into man, through eyes, ears, mouth and every other orifice, whenever you may wish? I will go and roll them all over the edge to you in their sleep.’

Then arose Satan, the demon of delusion, seated next to

Lucifer on his left, and having turned to the King a grimly wrinkled mask, he began:

‘There is no need for me to tell thee of my deeds, Archangel of the Lost, or you, black princes of Destruction, for I struck man the first blow of all, and a mighty blow it was, to remain deadly from the beginning of the world to the end of it. Is it likely that I, who despoiled the world, should now be unable to give serviceable advice in the matter of one small islet? And could not I, who misled Eve in Paradise, overcome Anne in Britain? Should my inborn guile and constant trial of five thousand years avail aught, then, my counsel to you is that you deck out your daughter Hypocrisy to deceive Britain and its queen. You have not in the world a daughter so serviceable as she. She hath wider authority and more numerous subjects than have all your other daughters together. Was it not through her that I misled the first of womankind? And ever since, she has remained and greatly prospered on earth. And now the world is nothing more than one mass of Hypocrisy throughout. And were it not for the skill of Hypocrisy, how should any of us have commerce with any part of the world? For if men beheld sin in its own colour and under its own name, what man would ever touch it? He would sooner embrace a devil in his own infernal form and dress. Were it not that Hypocrisy is able to disguise the name and the nature of every evil, so that it wear the shape of some good, and to cause all good to be nicknamed as some evil, none would ever touch or ever desire evil. Walk through all parts of the City of Doom and you may see how great is Hypocrisy everywhere. Go to the Street of Pride and ask for an arrogant person, or for a pennyworth of coquetry mixed with pride, “Woe is me,” saith Hypocrisy, “no such things are

to be found here,” though there be nothing else in the whole street but arrogance. Or go to the Street of Lucre and ask for the dwelling of the miser — fie, no miser may be found on that street. Or seek the house of the murderer amongst the physicians, or the lodging of the arrant thief amongst the drovers, you would sooner get into prison for asking than get anyone to confess his own name. Yea, Hypocrisy creeps in between man and his own heart, and so skilfully does she hide every vice under the name and guise of some virtue, that she has made them well nigh unable to know themselves. Greed she calls thrift in her own terms; waste is harmless enjoyment; pride is good manners, the arrogant is a smart, brave fellow; the drunkard is a boon companion, and adultery is mere youthful frolic. On the other hand, if she and her pupils be believed, the pious is either a hypocrite or a blockhead, the gentle is but a coward and the sober-minded only a churl; and so, with every other virtue. Send her to earth, fully robed,’ he added, ‘and I warrant you she will deceive them all; she will hoodwink the counsellors, and the soldiery and all the officials of Church and State, and will forthwith draw them here in multitudes with the mask of many colours over their eyes.’

And with this he likewise sat down. Then arose Beelzebub, the demon of indifference, and with a rudely rasping voice, said he:

‘I am the great Prince of bewilderment. It is mine to keep men from heeding and considering their state. I am lord of the relentless gadflies of Hell who daze men, keeping them ever babbling about their possessions and their pleasures, never of my own will giving them a moment’s rest to think of their ways or their end. None of you may strive with me in

deeds profitable to the realm of darkness. For what is tobacco but one of the meanest of my weapons wherewith to bewilder the brain? And what is the kingdom of Mammon but a part of my dominion? Yea, were I to undo the bonds by means of which I hold the subjects of Mammon and Pride, yea, of Asmodai, Belphegor and Hypocrisy, no man would tarry a moment longer under the rule of any one of them. Therefore, I will do the work, otherwise, let none of you ever speak of it.'

Then great Lucifer himself arose from his fiery seat, and having cast a winning (or a warning) glance at this side and that, he spake:

'Ye prime Spirits of Nether Night, chiefs of the hopeless cunning; although the dire dusk and the wilds of Doom owe no more to anyone for their dwellers than to my own royal majesty, seeing that erstwhile for want of power to drag the Almighty from his possession, I dragged in my train into this our den of endless horror a myriad of you, my black angels, and later dragged hereunto a myriad men to share our fate. Yet, may it never be denied that you have all done your part in the defence and growth of this our great infernal empire.'

Then Lucifer began to answer each of them in turn.

'And,' said he, 'for one who has but lately arisen, I deny not that thou, Cerberus, hast taken for us many spoils in the enemy island, by reason of the tobacco, counting the fraud that is part of the carrying of it from place to place; the blending and the weighing of it, and the numbers enticed by it to drink beer, to swear, curse or flatter in order to get it, and to lie in denying the use of it, still further counting the harm it does to many bodies and that too much of it is hurtful to all bodies, to say nought of the soul. And what is

still better, there are hosts of the poor who would otherwise never come to be handled by us, but who sink here through their over-fondness for this weed, which they allow to master them to the taking of the bread from the mouths of their children. And next, brother Mammon, your power is so widespread and well-known on earth that it has become a saying, "Money buys everything." And it is doubtless,' added he, turning to Apollyon, 'that my beloved daughter Pride is very profitable to us, for what is there that may cause more evil to a man in his affairs, in body and soul, than the proud, stubborn wilfulness which causes him to waste five score pounds rather than bend to give a crown piece for the sake of peace? She keeps them so stiff-necked, with their eyes so fixed upon lofty things, that it is amusing to watch them when, staring and stretching themselves skywards, they suddenly tumble into the depth of Hell. And you, Asmodai, we are all mindful of your great service of yore; none is stouter in the keeping of captives under lock and key, nor is there anyone so blameless as you. One only laughs a little at a wanton weakness, but thou wert near to dying of hunger there during the recent years of scarcity. But you, my son Belphegor, lousy chief of sloth, none has given us more pleasure than you. Your authority is exceeding great among the nobility and common folk, down to the beggar. And were it not for the skill of my daughter Hypocrisy in colouring and disguising, who would ever swallow a hook of ours? But after all, were it not for the steady stoutness of my brother Beelzebub in holding men in stupid thoughtlessness, none of you would be worth a hair. Now let us recount all this. What wouldst thou avail, O, Cerberus, with thy foreign whiff, were it not that Mammon support thee? What merchant would

ever seek thy mere leaves at such perils, all the way from the Indies, were it not for Mammon's part? And but for him, what king would admit it, especially into Britain? And who, but for Mammon, would carry it to all parts of the kingdom? In spite of this, what wouldst thou avail, Mammon, without Pride, to squander thee on fair houses, fine clothes, useless lawsuits, gardens, steeds, and costly harness, many dishes, beer and ale in rivers, all these above the power and station of the owner? And, if money were used within the bounds of what is needful and decent, what good would Mammon be to us? Thus thou dost not avail without Pride. But Pride would not be of much use without wantonness, for the most numerous and fierce of my daughter's subjects in the world are bastards. And you, Asmodai, the lord of lust, what would you avail without sloth and idleness, where would you find a night's lodging? It were vain for you to look for it from any industrious workman or student. And thou, Belphegor the Lazy, who, for shame and disgrace, would ever welcome thee for a moment were it not for Hypocrisy, who hides thy unseemliness under the name of some disorder of the body, or by saying thou hast a good purpose or wouldst despise wealth, and the like? And she, my dear daughter Hypocrisy, what would she avail or have availed, skilful sempstress and keen as she is, but for your help, my elder brother Beelzebub, the great prince of light-headedness? If he gave folk quiet and time to consider the nature of things and their diversities, how long would it take them to spy holes in the folds of Hypocrisy's golden robe and to see the hooks through the bait? What man in his senses would run after mere baubles and fleeting pleasures, surfeiting, foolish and disgraceful, preferring them to peace of mind and the joy of

glorious eternity? Who would hesitate to suffer an hour's or a day's martyrdom for his faith, or to bear affliction for forty or sixty years, were he to reflect that his neighbours down here suffer more in an hour than he may ever suffer on earth? Tobacco is naught without money, nor money without pride, nor is pride but feeble without lust, nor lust without sloth, nor sloth without hypocrisy, nor hypocrisy without heedlessness. And now,' added he, lifting himself on the horny claws of his demon hoofs, 'for my own mind. Good as all these are, I have a friend who is better to meet the enemy Britain than all of them.'

At these words, I beheld the chief demons open their terrible jaws, staring at Lucifer, awaiting to know what this friend might possibly be, and I was as anxious as any of them to know.

'She,' said Lucifer, 'is one I have been too long without considering her merit, as thou wert, Satan, in tempting Job, turning thy ugly side to him, like a fool. She, my kinswoman, I now ordain to be ruler of all matters in my earthly dominion, next to myself; she is called Ease. She has more men than all of you, and you would avail but little without her. For in war or peril, hunger or fever, who would prize either tobacco or money or the sprightliness of pride, or would dare to think of giving welcome either to lust or sloth? And men in those trials are too watchful to be misled by hypocrisy or heedlessness; not one of the bewildering wasps of Hell dare show itself in one of these storms. But Ease, all soft and safe, is the nurse of all of you; in her quiet shade and on her gentle bosom you are all nurtured, with all other infernal worms nestling in the conscience, which at last shall come here to gnaw their owners for ever without cease.

Whilst one is still at ease, there is no talk of aught but mirth, feasting, bargains, pedigrees, tales, news and such matters; God is not mentioned, save in vain oaths and curses, whereas the needy and the sick have God's name upon their lips and the thought of him in their hearts every minute. Then let the seven of you go in the wake of Ease, and do you keep all in slumber and sloth, in prosperity and quietude, in plenty and carelessness. Then you may see the honest poor become an arrogant, unmanageable churl, once he drink of the magic cup of Ease; you shall see the thrifty peasant become a silly babbler; and all things will please you, for pleasant Ease is sought and beloved of all men; and she neither heareth good counsel nor feareth reproof; if aught be good, she sees it not; if evil, she fondles it. She is the topmost temptation; the man who keeps away from her pleasant charms, you may throw your cap at him, for we may never have his company. Ease is then my deputy on earth; follow her to Britain, and obey her as you would our own royal highness.'

At this, the great bolt was swung and Lucifer and his chief counsellors were struck down into the nether swamp of Hell, and oh! how terrible to behold was the opening of the mouth of the pit to receive them.

'Now,' said the Angel, 'we shall return. But thou hast not yet seen all within the confines of Destruction, and hadst thou seen all, yet is that nothing to the untold misery there is in the depth, for it may not be imagined what is the state of Nethermost Hell.'

With these words the heavenly eagle snatched me, following a way I had not hitherto seen, to the height of the vault over the accursed pit whence, from the court, along the firmament of black Destruction and all the Land of Oblivion,

to the walls of the City of Doom, I had a full view of the monstrous giantess whose feet I had seen before. And I have not the words to describe her form. But I can tell you that she is a three-faced Ogress, one most vicious face turned towards Heaven, barking, howling and spitting accursed blasphemy against the heavenly King; another face, which is fair, turned towards earth, to entice men to tarry under her shadow, and the other atrocious face turned towards Nether Hell, there to torment the inmates for ever and ever.

‘She is greater than the whole earth, and still groweth from day to day, and is a hundred times more horrible than all Hell. Hell was made because of her, and she fills it with inmates. Were she got out of Hell, then would Nethermost Hell become a paradise. And if she were got out of earth, the little world would become Heaven. And could she but get into Heaven, she would turn bliss into uttermost Hell. In all the worlds there is naught else that was not wrought by God. She is the mother of the four Sorceresses of Doom, she is the mother of Death, and of all evil and misery is she the mother; and she has a terrible hold upon every living man. She is called Sin. He who may escape her talons, blest is he forever.’ So spake the Angel.

With this he left me, and I could hear the echo of his voice, saying:

‘Write what thou hast seen, and whosoever may wisely read, this he shall never rue.’

To the tune called Heavy-Heart, or Trom-Galon

I

Sad the heart of him who sounded
Depths of Nether Night unbounded,
Demons saw, with baleful features,
In that den, and human creatures;
Saw the end of ways all crooked,
Floods all flaming,
Doom that giveth
No remission;
Not again for worlds unnumbered
Would I witness
All the horrors
Of my vision.

II

Sad the heart the while the vision
Yet retaineth stark precision;
Sad to see those, once so kindly,
Facing thitherward so blindly
Erstwhile men but now beguiling
Folk unheeding
To the fetid
Den to follow;
Then with soul to sin abandoned,
Demon-natured
As the dwellers
Of that hollow.

III

Sad the heart that felt the terror,
All the woes of wilful error,
All the shame and degradation,
Heeding neither stock nor station;
None may tell what forms affrighting,
Or what torments
There await them,
Grim and gory;
None may tell, and none would hearken,
Words avail not
For the telling
Of that story.

IV

Sad the heart for friends departed,
Kinsmen true and open-hearted;
For the loss of power, dominion,
Freedom, health, or good opinion,
Loss of quiet and contentment,
Peaceful living,
Every pastime
Of earth's making;
Lapse of mind, though for a season,
Is affliction
And a burden
Unto breaking.

V

Sad the heart when thoughts awaken,
When at last by terror shaken,
When by sin and sorrow riven,
Sore it seeks to be forgiven;
When no longer pleasure pleaseth,
 When accusing
 Phantoms fearful
 Fill the gloom;
Conscience stricken lies in labour
 That the new birth
 Save the sinner
 From his doom.

VI

Sad the heart, that knew no fearing,
When the hour of death is nearing;
When the flesh in pain is riven
And the soul in dread is driven
Into hopelessness foreboding
 Endless anguish;
 Sore the passing,
 Stern the story;
End of all this life delusive,
 Where beginneth
 Everlasting
 Gloom or glory.

VII

Sad the heart and sore that beareth
 Sorrows that no other shareth,
 Yet were these one cloudburst falling,
 There is sadness more appalling;
 Though there be of hope a glimmer,
 Ere death cometh,
 Still remaining
 For all mortals,
 Yet all hope must they abandon
 Once behind them
 Death has closed
 His mighty portals.

VIII

Sad the heart that there must tarry,
 (Sights I saw yet haunt and harry)
 Light were every earthly sorrow
 By the sight of that bleak morrow;
 This is Doom the everlasting,
 Dire departure
 Into darkness
 Dense and dreary;
 Where with demons men shall house them,
 Ever hopeless,
 Ever wailing,
 Ever weary.

IX

So bewail not what oppress thee,
While the light of day may bless thee;
Turn thy mind from evil-doing,
Grave and constant thoughts pursuing;
Of this dungeon everlasting
Think, and forthwith
Thou shalt turn thee
From thy error;
And the thought of that fell prison
Through the Saviour
Shall redeem thee
From its terror.

Amen.

End of the First Part

NOTES

1. *cowiths*: i.e. *cywyddau*. The *cywydd* is a poetic form marked by its use of rhyme and strict metre.
2. *a croud and a harp*: The crowd or *crwth* is a six-stringed instrument played with a bow, superseded by the violin.
3. *a bard who beats me at pedigree hunting*: Ellis Wynne's great grandfather, William, was sheriff of Merionethshire, and a descendant, through Osborn Wyddel, of Rhys ap Tewdwr, King of Deheubarth.
4. *crabs croaking under the carpet*: The belief that mediaeval priests used crabs to impersonate apparitions is discussed by Keith Thomas in *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 589.
5. *This is the way, walk ye in it*: The passage quotes Isaiah 30:21: 'And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left' (*King James Version*).
6. The passage quotes Isaiah 8:8 and James 4:7.
7. The description echoes Psalm 46:1-2: 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not

we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea' (KJV).

8. *the twenty-four metres*: The reference is to *cynghanedd*, a metrical system defined by complexities of stress, alliteration and internal rhyme. Iolo Morganwg records the tradition that twenty-four such metres were in use at the court of King Arthur. See Edward Williams et al, *The Myvyrian Archaiology of Wales* (Denbigh: Thomas Gee, 1870), 1235.

9. *Brutus son of Silvius*, a descendant of Aeneas of Troy, is exiled to Greece after accidentally killing his father, but there meets descendants of Priam, whom he leads to Britain, where he becomes king. The story is told by Geoffrey of Monmouth in the early chapters of *A History of the Kings of Britain*.

10. *another, standing beside a huge cauldron*: The image identifies Taliesin, who obtains the gift of prophecy when by chance he drinks three drops from the cauldron of Ceridwen, which he is tending. The potion is intended for Ceridwen's son, Afagddu. See T. Gwynn Jones, *Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom* (Cockatrice, 2020), 33.

11. *the yellow plague, that killed Maelgwn Gwynedd*: Maelgwn Gwynedd, who ruled from Deganwy in the Sixth Century, died while sheltering from the plague in a church near his court at Deganwy, when he caught sight of the 'loathly monster,' yellow of eye, tooth and hair, through the keyhole. See J. E. Lloyd, *A History from Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest* (Cockatrice, 2021), 105-106.

12. *an Arthur's quoit*: a common name for a cromlech, the stone remains of a burial mound. See J. E. Lloyd, *A History of Wales from the Earliest Times to the Edwardian Conquest* (Cockatrice, 2021), 23.

13. *The Practice of Piety: Directing a Christian How to Walk, that He May Please God*, by Lewis Bayly (1565-1631), a native of Caerfyrddin, was published in English in 1611, and in Welsh in 1630, and was responsible for John Bunyan's religious awakening.

14. *the Fifteen Tribes of Gwynedd*: Iolo Morganwg records the tradition that because of intermarriage only fifteen heads of families of pure Welsh Brythonic descent could be found to represent Gwynedd at the parliament summoned by Hywel Dda. See Taliesin Williams, ed., *Iolo Manuscripts: A Selection of Ancient Manuscripts* (Liverpool: I. Foulkes, 1888), 477-479.

15. *Bradshaw, Bonner and Ignatius*: John Bradshaw (1602-1659) was Lord President of the High Court of Justice during the trial of Charles I; Edmund Bonner (1500-1569), known as 'Bloody Bonner,' was Bishop of London under Mary I, and instrumental in the torture and execution of Protestants. Theories concerning Jesuit involvement in assassination and murder were commonplace in Protestant England. A satire (1611) depicting Machiavelli in Hell praises Ignatius of Loyola for pursuing a 'spirituall warre... against the Church' and for opening 'waies, even into Kings chambers, for [his] executioners.' John Donne, *Ignatius His Conclave*. ed. T. S. Healy (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), 29.

16. *Sir Edmondbury Godfrey*: Godfrey's murder in October 1678 was used by his associate, the conspirator and perjurer, Titus Oates, to arouse popular suspicion and ill-feeling against Catholics.

17. *to drag out of his den that lake-monster of old*: The *afanc* is dragged to dry land by the oxen of Hu Gadarn after it floods the waters of Llyn Llion. See T. Gwynn Jones, *Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom* (Cockatrice, 2020), 112.

18. *that worthless wanton who courted Einion ap Gwalchmai*: Einion ap Gwalchmai is separated from his wife Angharad by the enchantment a monster disguised as a beautiful woman, until he places his wife's ring to his eye, and the spell is broken. The tale is recorded by Iolo Morganwg, and quoted in Wirt Sikes, *British Goblins: The Realm of Faerie* (Cockatrice, 2020) 208-212.

19. *walking around the church to have a sight of their sweethearts*: In T. Gwynn Jones, *Welsh Folklore and Folk Custom* (Cockatrice, 2020), 161, this form of divination can provide either a vision of one's future bride or groom or an intimation of one's death.

20. *Sarah... disappointed of seven husbands*: Sarah's husbands are killed by the demon Asmodius before her marriages can be consummated, in the Book of Tobit, ch. 3.



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