

Torquato Tasso.

"Peace to Torquato's injured shade."

CHILDE HAROLD. *Canto IV, Stanza 39.*

(Concluded from page 406.)

About this time an attack was made by the Academy della Crusca in Florence on his "Jerusalem." To violent abuse of himself, of his poem, and of his father and his father's poems, Tasso replied more for his father's sake than for his own, for his heart was filled with one desire, and his chief energies were constantly employed in appealing to everyone of influence or power, to obtain his release from confinement. He wrote to Bergamo a touching appeal, which it is said moved the Council to tears, and they despatched an embassy to Alfonso, petitioning for their compatriot's release and sending Alfonso a present of an inscription relating to the antiquity of the d'Este family, which he was very desirous of possessing. The Duke promised before long to comply with their request, and declared that he only kept Tasso in confinement to try to cure him of his disorder. Perhaps he was influenced too, in some degree, by a fear of Tasso's renewal of language against him at other Courts in the event of his release. At all events Serassi confesses "He would have granted the urgent prayers of so many noble patrons, and set him at liberty with pleasure, but reflecting that poets are naturally 'genus irritabile,' and fearing that Tasso once free would revenge himself for his long confinement and his ill-treatment in the Ferrarese Court with that formidable weapon, his pen, he could not bring himself to the resolution of suffering him to escape from his States, without being first assured that he would make no attempt on the honour and reverence due to so great a Prince." Two years more thus passed—Tasso in constant hopes of being free, able at times to write sonnets gracefully and with his old power; at times mixing more in the world, then apparently withdrawn again from it; weak and suffering in body, and his terrible apparitions and images increasing upon him, his cell appearing full of them. Flames wreathed and twined themselves in it; rats and other animals seemed to him to crawl across the vault of the room. His ears were filled with noises—ringings of bells, clocks striking; in his sleep and even when waking he thought himself engaged in strife with the

spectres around him, and asserted that when no person had been in his prison his closets were broken open, his clothes taken from him, his books pulled down and flung about his room, his gloves or letters drawn out from locked boxes at night and scattered over the floor in the morning. In the midst of this distress both of body and mind he believed that "there appeared in the air the form of the glorious Virgin with her Son in her arms, in the centre of bright and glittering clouds."

Pope Sixtus the Fifth, moved by Tasso's earnest appeals to him, made interest for him with Cesare d'Este, who, strengthened by the co-operation of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, assisted also by the Duke of Mantua and his son Vincenzo, interceded with Alfonso for his release. Alfonso consented that he should be liberated on condition that he would remain under the charge of the Duke of Mantua, and submit to what treatment should be necessary for him. But at this time Tasso became too seriously ill to move, and the physicians called to attend him began to despair of his life. He trusted himself to the Virgin's intercession, he says, and seems to have had a vision glorious and comforting to him. He recovered in a short time from this severe attack, and after much delayed hope and waiting, and after the condition of his release as to his remaining under strict surveillance at Mantua had been reiterated, the longed-for day did at length arrive. Costantini and a gentleman of Vincenzo's arrived with an order for his deliverance, and after more than seven years' confinement he departed with them. The conditions laid down, further than his surveillance, were that Vincenzo and his father were to be responsible for him; he was to engage not to write against the Ferrarese Court, and was never again to appear in Ferrara.

The stipulation that he should return no more to Ferrara does not support the supposition that the increased liberty given him soon after the death of the Princess Leonora was influenced by that event; otherwise on that ground reasons for desiring his absence from Ferrara would have ceased. It is more probable that his presence, when at large there, had become always exciting to himself, and a source of alarm and even danger to others.

When the time came that he was indeed to go forth, that his intense and protracted longing was about to be attained, Tasso, in a kind of reaction perhaps, seems to have suc-

cumbed more completely for a time to bodily weakness, and to have realised all the change wrought in himself in the long, suffering years through which he had passed. He had fondly dreamt that with liberation his own former feelings would return and that happiness and renown might again be his. Alas! instead of this he found himself worn and dejected, with a restlessness and melancholy upon him not to be shaken off. He was still only forty-two years of age, but he went forth broken in spirit and health to recommence something of the same precarious life of dependence that had for so many years been his. But on his arrival in Mantua he was most kindly received by the Duke, lodged in his palace, and tended with every consideration and regard; and numerous friends of talent and distinction bestowed much attention upon him. Here he would seem to have attained to a respite and rest, feeling it so himself in the first instance. He devoted his care to the restoration of his health, earnestly requesting one of his medical friends to supply him with some remedy for the failure of memory he felt so strongly coming over him. The remedies they would have enforced, such as purging and bleeding, he persistently refused to adopt. He also composed new works and completed old ones, showing that much vigour still remained, if memory was failing; he even wrote a letter treating of the respective merits and advantages of different forms of government, which the Duke of Mantua is said highly to have valued. The Carnival came round, and he seems to have regained some of his former spirit, and his love of and susceptibility to female beauty. But when the season of Lent commenced he turned from such thoughts and gave himself up to theological studies.

His wishes had now been met thus far—he had obtained his release, was living in competence and ease, and was treated with kindness and distinction. But soon the spirit within him could no longer let him rest; the old desire for change came upon him. Milman attributes it to his feeling himself too near to Alfonso and to Ferrara, but does not give his ground for the conjecture, nor suggest that any interference with Tasso had been attempted. He speaks of his having been disappointed of paying a visit to Sassuolo, where he was to have met Ferrante Gonzaga and other friends and patrons, but a return of his illness prevented him from accomplishing this visit and increased his melancholy. It seems more probable

that after an interval of much greater calmness had followed for a time on his release from his long confinement, his restoration to society and all the beneficial influence and refreshment of this change, a return of the old and terrible malady came upon him, renewing his deep melancholy, his fears and restlessness. The surveillance under which, however necessarily, he was placed must at times have been galling to him, and on the slightest increase of his illness would chafe and fret him still more, and renew the old suspicions of danger. He was considerably and kindly treated, the Duke taking him to a villa called Marmiolo, where he met a pleasant society; he was also to have accompanied the Duke to Florence, but this project was frustrated, the Duke being himself obliged to forego his visit. He had a fresh cause of vexation in the publication by Licino of his "Discourses on the Art of Poetry," with a collection of his letters, without his permission, and indeed unknown to him, and which he would have desired to revise and correct himself before publication. He next fixed his thoughts upon Rome, desiring to try his fortunes there. When we read of this ever-recurring restlessness and desire of change of residence from city to city, we feel that blame can hardly be justly attributed to others on account of the want to which Tasso was subsequently at times reduced; for we see that when in safety and in ease of circumstances he could not long rest, and that no persuasions of his friends could induce him to tarry when once the fever of change had come upon him.

The wish to try his fortune at Rome had now become so predominant that although at this juncture an offer was made him of the Ethical and Poetical Chair of the Academy of the Addormentati, at Genoa, with a promise of at least four hundred crowns a year, he was unwilling to accept it; his friend Angelo Grillo had obtained him this offer, which was accompanied by a flattering letter from the President of the Academy. It is said that he was uncertain of being allowed to accept it, and feared to ask it, dreading that it might lead to further restriction of his liberty. He was permitted to visit Bergamo, where he was received with every possible honour by his fellow-citizens, but could not even then shake off his melancholy. His thoughts were still bent upon Rome. He apparently wrote to many patrons and friends regarding it, receiving only discouraging replies, excepting from Scipio Gonzaga,

who was now Patriarch of Jerusalem. Cardinal Albano entreated him to continue in the service of the Prince of Mantua; "Cataneo represented to him that he must first perfectly re-establish his reputation for wisdom and prudence before he could expect any profitable employment." All this did not turn Tasso from his purpose, though it delayed the carrying of it out. Angelo Grillo again wrote urging his acceptance of the offer from Genoa. Tasso sent this letter to the Duke of Mantua's Chancellor, requested permission to leave Mantua, and also asked for some pecuniary help. Just at this time, however, Duke William, the father of Vincenzo, died, and Tasso, putting aside Genoa, hastened back to Mantua on the succession of Vincenzo, who had been so great a friend to him; but he was doomed again to disappointment, Vincenzo being now so absorbed in affairs of State and other occupations that Tasso found himself almost excluded from his presence or thoughts. He had returned to Mantua with freshly raised hopes of attaining that glory and renown and distinction for which he had craved throughout his life, and ever thought himself entitled to claim. His pride deeply resented the neglect which he now met with in Mantua; all the more did he rebel against it as coming immediately on his return from his sojourn at Bergamo, where all these feelings had been fostered by his reception.

He then more determinedly still fixed upon Rome as the goal where his desires would attain their fulfilment, and finally declined going to Genoa. He implored permission to depart from Mantua, requesting to be completely set at liberty. The Duke rendered him no definite answer, and did not furnish him with money; but Tasso, who was not to be deterred, contrived to raise a small fund, chiefly among his relations at Bergamo, and started in the direction of Rome, taking with him only a few books, a desk containing writings, and his valise of clothes. His first intention was to perform a pilgrimage to Loreto, to which he had bound himself by vows. He would have failed both in means and strength, however, to carry this out had not Ferrante Gonzaga, travelling with a retinue in the same direction, overtaken him and carried him on with him. At Loreto Tasso confessed and communicated repeatedly, entering on these religious observances with the utmost devotion and penitence. Here he would have been reduced to the greatest destitution had not the Governor of the place

and Giulio Amici sought him out and succoured him. His devotion to the Virgin, who had, as he believed, appeared to him in prison in his time of despair, was so intense that he could scarcely tear himself from her shrine; and the exaggerated character of his devotion was evidently quite consistent with the tone and state of his mind. Amici befriended Tasso further by providing him with the means of pursuing his journey to Rome, where he arrived in safety four days after quitting Loreto. He entered Rome with high expectations, and was received with kindness and courtesy. Praises and promises were bestowed upon him by those high in name and power. Tasso thought that Rome must be his resting place, and was happy in his first reception, but was anxious to obtain some position of independence; and this was no easy matter to attain. He was received with kindness by Gonzaga, whose guest he was; but Cardinal Albano and his secretary Cataneo were displeased that Tasso had come to Rome against their advice. The Pope, to whom he was desirous of being presented, was too much taken up with other matters to be regardful of him; Gonzaga's affection, too, would seem to have cooled towards him, and his failing hopes weighed down his spirit anew. We may infer that his hopes had been raised too high, and that to do for him all he desired was impracticable, while the greatness of his expectations must have tried and disheartened those who most admired and were desirous of aiding him.

At this time the Duke of Ferrara, displeased that his stipulations had been disregarded, conveyed remonstrances to the Duke of Mantua on the subject. This alarmed Tasso afresh; he feared to lose his hardly gained liberty, and, added to the disappointments he had again met with in Rome, induced him to quit it and to go to Naples. He had obtained full permission to return to that city, and was advised to repair there and endeavour to recover his mother's dowry, to which he was entitled. Weak in health and almost destitute of means, we are told, he now again left Rome and started for Naples. He resorted to a Benedictine Convent, and amid the quiet around him and the great kindness he received found again some rest and refreshment, though little hope of the restoration of his health was given him by the physicians whom he consulted. He was unsuccessful in obtaining the recovery of his property, but passed four or five otherwise tranquil months at the monastery. Many flocked from Naples to see him, but his

abode enabled him to select his visitors, and to secure retirement when he desired it. He made and enjoyed the friendship and had the companionship of Manso, Marquis della Villa (the friend also of Milton in later times).

For a while Tasso was much benefitted by his sojourn here, gaining a calmer tone of mind, and, as ever at the commencement of his abode in a fresh place, felt more safe and happy, and believed he had now found his resting-place and home. He engaged himself in altering and partly re-composing his "Jerusalem;" but the old feelings would not let him long rest in peace and security. He began to entertain fears that his presence and melancholy were a burden to the monks, and his restlessness returned. He had likewise many pressing invitations from numerous friends, and was at length about to pay a visit to the young Count of Paleno, who earnestly desired it; but the Count's father refused his permission to the reception of Tasso. He then determined, actuated, it is thought, by a considerate feeling for the young Count's difficulty, to leave Naples for a season, and was persuaded by Manso to visit him at his castle at Bisaccio, in the Abruzzi mountains. Here, when the weather was fine, he spent whole days on the mountains hunting the roe and the wild boar. Manso's castle was filled with tenants and guests, including the improvisatore and improvisatrice for which the province was famous, and with them the evenings or days of wet weather were passed, or in the still greater enjoyment of the companionship of Manso alone. They would retire together, and hold discourse on literary, poetical, or more serious topics; and then would Tasso speak of the continual communings held by him with a spirit, affirming his conviction that it was not an evil spirit, as it conversed with him on religious subjects, and persuaded him to devotion and piety. Long discussions seem to have taken place between himself and Manso on this subject of the voices which Tasso heard, he affirming that they could not be fruits of his imagination only, as they declared to him things that he had never read or heard before. Tasso, finding that his arguments left Manso still unconvinced, declared to him that he would convince him by Manso himself beholding the apparition, but, as might have been anticipated, it remained invisible. Tasso called to him to behold it, while his own gaze was fixed in a wrapt manner upon the window. Manso, with all his efforts, could behold no unusual appearance, though Tasso was absorbed

in the apparent contemplation, and presently appeared to enter into earnest discourse and argument, as he supposed, with other voices, his words being heard, now in proposition, now in reply. Although of course no other voice rejoined, yet Manso could trace from Tasso's words the replies he must have supposed himself to be receiving. This continued for some time, and when Tasso implied that the spirit had departed, he appealed to Manso if he was not now convinced, and when the latter said that it was indeed far otherwise, saying that he had heard much that was marvellous, but seen nothing that Tasso had promised to show him to clear up his doubts, Tasso smiled and said, "You have heard and seen much more of what, perhaps—" and then stopped. Muratori supposes that Tasso may have been so deeply imbued with the remembrance of Socrates' familiar spirit as to have imagined himself to be companioned in like manner; his biographer faintly suggests the effects of dyspepsia—after partaking of wine and chestnuts, and after a siesta; but another explanation will probably be given to it by those who are perfectly familiar with such forms of hallucination.

Soon after his return to Naples, Tasso resolved on revisiting Rome, and wrote again to the Duke of Mantua, entreating him to let his books be sent to him. He was only able to prosecute his journey to Rome through the kindness of a kinsman at Bergamo, who supplied him with the necessary means; and even as it was, his portmanteau was detained at the Dogana, he not having the four crowns needful for obtaining its admission. Without it and in this poverty he arrived at the palace of Scipio Gonzaga, now a cardinal, but was so ill received that he sent in haste to the Paduan abbot of Mont Olivet, happily then in Rome. The kind abbot hastened to succour him, released his baggage from the Dogana, and carried Tasso at once with him to the Olivetan Monastery of Santa Maria Nuova at Rome. He seems to have been then oppressed with many fancies, and suffered from a return of fever, but anxiously occupied himself in endeavouring to collect his works, with the idea of himself bringing them out in a complete form. This he was, however, never able to do, though even in this state of discouragement and ill health he did succeed in bringing out a collection, in three volumes, of his minor poems; he likewise produced an oration in honour of the house of Medici, and also composed two beautiful canzoni; but in

order to publish them was obliged to solicit aid from those whom he considered unfriendly to him.

And now he was indeed in great suffering and poverty, wandering from one abode to another; for a time in Gonzaga's palace again, then, on Gonzaga quitting Rome, illtreated by the Cardinal's people, and driven from the palace. His friend Costantini had entered the service of the Duke of Mantua, and through him Tasso had presented to the Duke a canzone to celebrate the birth of the Duke's third son. He pours out to Costantini his troubles and destitution, saying that he fears he shall have to die in a hospital. The Duke sent to him clothes and money, but it is said they never reached him, being sent through the hands of Alario, Gonzaga's secretary. The abbot insisted on his returning to the monastery, where he remained only for a short time; for he quitted it soon, and before long was so reduced as to be received out of charity in the hospital of the Bergamaschi, of which his immediate relations had been the founders. His cousin Alexander here found him, and he was again removed to the monastery of Santa Maria Nuova. He was promised and afforded some pecuniary help, and informed of the Duke of Mantua being desirous of his return to his Court. Tasso excused himself from returning, pleading his ill health and the deep melancholy with which he was oppressed. Now also he received, more than once, presents in money from the Duke of Tuscany and invitations to Florence and Mantua. Comforted by these tokens of love and reconciliation, he needed, he said, for his perfect consolation but the favour of his ancient master, the Duke of Ferrara, but it does not appear that from him he ever again received any communication.

Being after a time a little recovered he did resort to Florence; he lodged at the Olivetan Monastery there, and all the literary and other world of Florence, including the Grand Duke himself and his family, flocked to behold him, to welcome him or simply to look upon him. Still he was suffering and conscious of his state, saying that his disorders will not let him rest in Mantua, in Rome, in Florence, in Naples. He wandered from one to another of these cities, and when in them restlessly removed from one abode to another. For a time he was again at Naples the guest of Manso, and one would have imagined, to a man sick and weary in mind and body, in a haven of grateful and perfect earthly rest. Everything in the situation of Manso's abode was calculated

to charm and soothe; he must have felt in perfect safety there; he had no anxieties as to the mere sustenance of life; and above all he had the friendship, companionship and sympathy of Manso. He here made great progress with his "Jerusalem Conquered," and commenced, at the request of the mother of Manso, an aged, learned and devout lady, a sacred poem, entitled, "The Seven Days," or "The Universe Created," a poem descriptive of the Scriptural History of Creation. Here he, however, only rested temporarily, for on receiving a command from the Pope he resorted to Rome for a season. It was on his journey at this time thither that detained with those who travelled with him by fear of the then powerful brigands, headed by Marco Sciarra, this brigand chief, in deference and out of honour to Tasso, sent to him offering him a free passage and escort, but as Tasso would not accept this for himself only, Marco Sciarra announced that he would, to allow them to proceed without conditions, withdraw himself altogether for a time, and did so.

On Tasso's safe arrival in Rome, he attached himself especially to the service of Cintio, the son of the Pope's sister, and subsequently a Cardinal. Tasso was assured that he should be exempt from all attendance and enjoy full leisure for philosophy and poetry: he occupied himself in bringing out his second "Jerusalem," which he himself preferred to the first, thinking it much superior to it. He was honoured and beloved by the two nephews of the Pope, distinguished with favour by the Pope himself, and dwelt in security and peace; scholars and authors, we are told, eagerly seeking the privilege of his society and conversation. When the summer months came round he returned to Naples, to avoid the unhealthy season at Rome. While at Naples the Prince of Venosa, who was friendly to him, and for whom he had composed some madrigals, was about to proceed to Ferrara to be married to the sister of Cesare d'Este. By Tasso's suggestion he wrote to Alfonso proposing or asking to bring Tasso in his company, who was sincerely desirous of kissing his hands and obtaining his forgiveness before he died; but Alfonso refused this request, and remained firm to the resolution he had made when Tasso last quitted Ferrara, of never beholding him or allowing him to re-visit Ferrara more. Tasso, calm in mind and spirit now, and knowing that death was surely approaching near to him, doubtless reverted

in thought to the days of his earlier career, and seems anxiously to have desired some token that Alfonso accorded him pardon for aught in which he had offended in the past. He writes to Alfonso for the last time:—

“If past events might be recalled, there is nothing which would so rejoice me as to have been always engaged in your Highness’ service. But since it is impossible to amend the past, in that space of life yet left me, which is but a momentary interval, I will guard myself more carefully from offending your Highness than any other person. This has been my resolution for many years, though often interfered with, and but ill carried into effect. Once more I implore your Highness to have compassion upon me, and I pray God most devoutly to grant me His pardon, and that of your Highness.”

Alfonso would appear to have made no response, and we cannot feel much surprise if he was unable to believe in the power of Tasso to keep effectually, in the future, resolutions that had so failed in the past; especially as he had never beheld him since the calmer spirit had come over him, and, health and life declining, the old feelings were dying out, and his mind becoming healed and restored.

As we draw near the close of Tasso’s troubled career, it seems evident that in his decaying health and strength a much calmer state of mind did become his. Although at his death he was only fifty years of age, his strength and energies had failed, and the wild longing for undue exaltation had quite died out. It is almost sad to find him now, when he had resorted to Naples, only for a time, to avoid the unhealthy season at Rome, seeming quite to have forgotten Rome and all his ardent aspirations once connected with it, and all the hopes of preferment he had so earnestly entertained. He had when he left Rome, however, only quitted it temporarily, and Cardinal Cintio was not willing that Tasso should remain away permanently; to recal him and to ensure his return, it was decided to confer upon him the Laureate Crown which—though conferred afterwards on many less worthy—had once been conferred on Petrarch. His friends at Naples, even including Manso, wished him not to reject this offer. He himself was nowise elated by it, even shrunk from it, and though in compliance with the pressing entreaties sent from Rome, and the persuasions of those around him, he consented to repair to Rome, he declared to Manso that though he went by his advice he was convinced

the honour proposed for him would come too late, and took leave of Manso as never expecting to see him more. He was received at the gates of Rome by the household of the two Cardinals (nephews of the Pope), and by a great part of the Pope's suite, besides many other persons of distinction, conducted in state to the Vatican Palace, and the following day solemnly introduced to the Duke's presence, who formally apprised him of the honour intended to be conferred upon him. All produced in Tasso no pride or exultation; the longing for praise and exaltation seeming to be quite extinguished. Unfavourable weather and the winter season deferred the event taking place; meantime the city was full of preparations for it, and Rome was to be especially adorned for the occasion. Many were thronging there to be present at the ceremony—Poems were indited to celebrate it. Tasso alone remained unmoved, sad and calm. His kinsman Ercole Tasso having read to him a flattering sonnet, his reply was Seneca's line, "*Magnifica verba mors prope admota excutit.*"

The prepared-for event was destined never to take place. Now, when honours were to be lavished upon him, he desired them no more; sick and weary, *rest* was the greatest earthly boon to be given. His weakness and illness increased, and he requested earnestly permission to retire to the Convent of St. Onofrio—his former place of shelter. In a farewell letter to Costantini, he expresses himself as fully aware that his end was approaching very near, and speaks of the ingratitude of the world in triumphing in bringing him a beggar to the grave. But had his life now been prolonged, the Pope had assigned him a regular pension and others had proposed to add to it. Peace however seem to have come to his spirit immediately after this, and from the time that his state was pronounced to him to be hopeless, "He spoke," Manso tells us, "no more of anything relating to this life;" his thoughts occupied only with preparations for the future, he lay engaged in prayer and spiritual communing. He partook of the last sacred rites of his church, and on the 25th of April he passed away chaunting the words, "*In manus tuas, Domine.*" Then came the griefs and lamentations and regrets that the bestowal of the Laureate Crown had been procrastinated until too late to place it on his brow, while yet in life; but that it should still be borne by Tasso,

it was resolved that it should even in death be his. The body was gorgeously arrayed, the laurel placed around his head, and on a stately bier he was borne from St. Onofrio through the Borgo and the Piazza of St. Peter and back to the church of St. Onofrio, followed by a numerous procession. He had desired to be buried in the church of St. Onofrio, and there in the evening of the same day on which the procession had taken place he was quietly laid to rest. The Cardinal Cintio intended to have had a solemn and grand funeral celebration hereafter, but time passed on and nothing of this was done. Two years after, Manso visiting his burial place found no monument of any kind marking it, not even an inscription to commemorate his name; he appealed earnestly to Cintio, but Cintio seemed unwilling that any one else but himself should do anything, yet himself still deferred. Manso induced the brethren of the Monastery in the meantime to erect some simple memorial, and a small marble slab was placed over the grave, with the following short inscription upon it:—

D. O. M.
 Torquato Tassi
 ossa
 Hic Jacent
 Hoc ne nescius
 Esses Hospes
 Fres Hujus Eccl.
 P. P.
 M. D. C. L.
 Obiit Anno MDXCV.

At the end of eight years Cardinal Cintio died, without anything more having been done. At length a monument was erected (on the left hand on entering the church) by Cardinal Bonifazio Bevilacqua, of Ferrara, his parents having been great friends of Tasso. So through Ferrara at last the honour paid to him was ordained to come. The monument had the portrait of Tasso in relief and bore also an inscription of some length. Many were the honours, however, subsequently paid to him; medals were struck, cameos cut, and a colossal statue was erected in the principal Piazza of Bergamo, the laurel crown upon his head. Another statue was erected in Padua by the students of the University. Portraits were painted of him by many painters, representing him at various periods of his life. A cast had been taken of

him as he lay dead in the Convent of St. Onofrio, and we are told that it is very striking in its aspect, seeming to depict both the genius and the suffering that had been his.

If his biographer has taken a mistaken view of the source of these sufferings, it was an error on the noble side, from such a point of view as his, strenuously to strive to rescue the memory of Tasso from an imputation of madness. It is but another instance of the still uneradicated feeling of a kind of disgrace attaching to it. A source of far keener suffering than the malice of the most ingenious enemies could have inflicted upon him would this malady be to him, but no disgrace. Sad as his sufferings were, we may trust that they were not in wrong and cruelty inflicted upon him, but that the inscrutable hand of disease was upon him. That the anguish of his soul was indeed great we may well believe; there was no need of earthly agents to aggravate the sufferings of such an imagination when afflicted by this dread malady. The names of those who would seem to have loved and pitied him, to have tended and befriended him as long as it remained possible to do so, and who tried to save him from himself, have been held up in powerful language to obloquy, execration, and scorn, as the authors of his misery and wrongs, but we have seen how, again and again, honours, distinction and prosperity might have been his; but again and again this was frustrated by the irresistible spirit that took possession of him, by his fears and restlessness, his terrible apprehensions. It is indeed a sad and troublous career to trace, and calls forth the deepest pity. We marvel not that when at length in his last illness his physician announced to him that there was no hope of his recovery, "Tasso embraced him with a tranquil countenance and thanked him with fervour for the announcement; and then immediately raising his eyes and keeping them fixed on Heaven, with yet greater earnestness and affection, he gave humble thanks to the merciful God who was pleased at last, after so many and violent tempests, to bring him thus to the desired harbour."

A. C. M.