*Torquato Tasso.**

"Peace to Torquato's injured shade."
CHILDE HAROLD. *Canto* IV, *Stanza* 39.

There is no error in opinion or judgment, no widespread prejudice, so difficult to eradicate or overcome as one that is founded on sentiment, and when the sentiment is a generous one, seeking to make some atonement for supposed injustice done in the past, in thought or in deed, the prejudice will be apt to cling the more tenaciously. "Peace to Torquato's injured shade," exclaims Byron in his heart-stirring lines—but was this a just apostrophe? Nobly gifted, deeply afflicted and unfortunate though he was, was Tasso indeed injured, as implied, by his fellow man? Most sad and suffering as his life became, we may be committing a deep injustice in asserting it to have been brought upon him by cruelty or even unkindness; and a fair impartial review of his whole life and circumstances would seem to reveal a far different history. This has been most forcibly impressed by reading the pages of one who from the outset seems to have believed in the grievous wrong done to Tasso by Alfonso d'Este, and to have viewed every event by the light of a preconceived opinion; while to one coming without opinion formed to the perusal of these pages, ignorant until then of the course of events, they would seem, we think, strikingly to set forth the very opposite view; the very facts the author brings forward in evidence of his assertions seeming to furnish the strongest indications of a contrary explanation. To any one coming with even a moderate knowledge of mental disease to the study of this sad life, it will surely seem one in which the tendency to, and at length declaration of, this malady can be most clearly traced out from the very early days of Tasso down to the very last hour of his life. This is not to disturb the shade of Tasso, rather to yield it the desired rest; for who would not rather think of him as bowed beneath the weight of a sad inscrutable affliction sent by no mortal hand, than as the victim of cruelty and injustice, which would indeed have been scarcely human in their refinement, but of which we must consider Alfonso d'Este may have been most unjustly accused?

If we follow through in review the course of Tasso's life, we shall see how the usual forerunners and indications of the illness that at length more fully declared itself are presented

* The Life of Torquato Tasso. By the Rev. R. Milman. In 2 Vols.

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to us—the melancholy, the extreme self-exaltation and inordinate love of praise and distinction; then the disorder of his bodily health immediately preceding suspicions of enmity and danger; his restlessness and flight from Ferrara, and his unreasonable return to it had his suspicions and fears had true cause and foundation. It is also to be noted that Tasso in his calmer hours seemed aware of his real illness—did not deny it but rather alluded to it, in his letters more than once adverting to his deep melancholy, his alarms and suspicions. It is not requisite to take the statements of Serassi or others, supposed to write as friends of the d'Este family; but simply following the narrative as here set forth by one who takes so different a view, it unfolds to us the gradual development of this illness in Tasso, sad indeed to mark when we remember the mind that was "here o'erthrown;" and this seems to have been sincerely felt and lamented by Alfonso and also by others whom Tasso, in his morbid state of mind, imagined to be inimical to him. But much as there may have been to admire and to love in Tasso, it is evident that his was not a healthy tone of mind nor a nature wholly admirable or loveable. He alludes to his own desire of being preeminently honoured; and this exacting spirit might well create dislike and anger in those who did not appreciate so highly his noble talents as to view leniently these defects in his, in many respects, superior and noble nature.

It is not needful to dwell minutely on the early years of Tasso, though they were indeed marked by a marvellous precocity. At six months old we are told he began not merely to move his tongue, but to speak. His great susceptibility likewise early manifested itself, and was fostered rather than allayed by the circumstances of his religion, as it is said that at nine years of age he made his first communion, "participating in the mystery with the deepest fervour and devotion, though not fully understanding it." While still very young his ardour in his studies was great, and at Naples, under the instruction of the Jesuits, he attained some proficiency in Greek; in reading, speaking, and writing both prose and verse, he attained such facility as at ten years of age publicly to recite some of his own compositions.

His father's chequered and wandering life had necessitated a temporary separation from his wife and family, and, unable to accomplish his desire of rejoining them, he determined on his son Tasso coming to him. The parting between his mother and himself was an anguish to both, and they were

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never destined to behold each other again. He became the sharer of his father's vicissitudes, but also the object of that father's solicitude and pride and love, and Tasso maintained for his father throughout life and for his memory after death the strongest regard and affection.

For some time his father would appear to have been anxious that his son should be trained to some decided occupation or profession, and not live as he had himself done, dependent upon the favour of princes—a courtier's precarious existence. Torquato eagerly availed himself of the opportunities of acquiring learning and knowledge which his father, in spite of straightened circumstances, provided for him; but his father's desire that he should be settled in the legal profession was wholly repugnant to him. At Padua, while he attended in form the lectures upon law, he gave far more time and attention to those on philosophy, poetry, and eloquence, and indeed was composing an epic poem when in supposed attendance on law lectures.* Soon after this, at Bologna, he began his great epic the "Jerusalem Delivered." His father's pride and delight in his son's achievements and success in poetry probably reconciled him to abandoning his other views for him, though he saw, in that event, no other prospect than that Tasso should enter on the courtier's life which he had so often deprecated.

His father would seem soon after this to have exerted himself to make interest with his own former patron Cardinal Luigi d'Este, to whom by his directions Torquato had already dedicated his "Rinaldo." After some interval the Cardinal gave Torquato an appointment among his gentlemen, and summoned him to Ferrara so that he should arrive before the expected entry of the Arch-duchess of Austria, the betrothed of Duke Alfonso the Second, the Cardinal's elder brother. Thus, at twenty years of age Tasso arrived at Ferrara and was evidently almost at once taken into extreme favour by the d'Este family. Cardinal Luigi remained himself absent at Rome, and Tasso would seem to have been in constant attendance at Alfonso's court, and to have been distinguished by the greatest kindness, not from the Duke alone but from both his sisters, the Princesses Lucrezia and Leonora. In the society of the Princesses he now passed many hours, reading to them his own poems and composing sonnets in celebration of their even minutest doings and occu-

* During his first year at Padua, he wrote his first epic poem "The Rinaldo."

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pations. They obtained for him the privilege, regarded as a coveted distinction, of dining at the "tavolo ordinaria," the daily table of the Princes themselves. And here for a brief period we may behold Tasso in the happiest portion of his life, beloved and honoured, distinguished by the affection and kindness of the d'Este family; he had attained a position he had himself coveted, and realizing in a measure his own dreams of pre-eminent favour and distinction—and this at only twenty years of age. It is worthy of note here that even now, at this age, and in these happy circumstances, Tasso's taciturnity and gloominess, and his great absence of mind are already spoken of as being very manifest; it is said that "he could when he pleased" (rather, we should imagine when sufficiently wrought upon and drawn out of himself by the excitement of society and that emulation which had such power over him) "throw the greatest brilliancy and charm both of manner and eloquence over his carriage and conversation in society."

Tasso had thus early attained almost the summit of his wishes, and if we now trace the sad decline and fall of all his hopes, we shall have to seek the cause far more from within than from without, and be forced to admit that, allowing even for rivalries, jealousy, envy, or even also for malice and detraction, which the great honour and distinction in which he was held may have drawn upon him from less favoured aspirants, the real cause of his future calamities was the disastrous malady that beset him; the morbid tone of his mind being, perhaps, more fed and fostered in his exalted position than if he had remained obscure and unknown. Tasso himself admits the insatiable love of praise and self-exaltation that existed in his nature. We find him acknowledging in a letter:—"I marvel that I have never written down the promises which I make myself, and the gifts and the graces from emperors, kings, and mightiest princes, which I am always imagining and forming at my will." Such a nature, possessed with so exaggerated a notion of its merits, and such prolific imagination of rewards and honours showering upon it, would be injuriously excited and moved by many honours and distinctions actually bestowed upon it, rather than beneficially influenced and made really happier.

With regard to the alleged attachment of Tasso to the Princess Leonora, upon which, according to some, all his misfortunes hinged, the most substantial arguments in

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proof of its existence seem to be many exaggerated expressions in poetry, in which, it must be observed, it is necessary often to *infer* that Leonora was the object of them. Had she been certainly so, this, indeed, would not render them a proof of any weight—the hyperbolical language of praise and adulation of that age must be taken into account; in fact, Tasso could not well have used stronger language than in praise of Alfonso at a time when, according to his biographer, he had conceived a well-founded horror and distrust of the Duke; and in the days of his first favour with the d'Este family it was his custom to record their doings in lyrical effusions, devoting his talents to exalting and extolling them—not Leonora alone, or even principally or specially, but her sister also, and the Duke himself.

On the whole, it must be said that the proofs of any real attachment on his part to the Princess Leonora would seem to rest on very slight foundations, if indeed they can be said to have any true ones. On the contrary, the supposition of it is at variance with much in his own conduct, and with expressions in his letters to intimate friends, while many circumstances in the conduct of herself and her own nearest relations—the Duke himself and the Princess Lucrezia—render the fact of it, or of their having entertained any belief in it, wildly improbable. Is it conceivable that when, later on, Tasso's illness was first coming on, had the Duke been acting in anger towards him, and had he believed in the existence of a presumptuous attachment, he would have allowed him to accompany him to Bel-riguardo, and to be the special guest of Princess Leonora herself, by her invitation? Surely it is far more reasonable and consistent to suppose that they saw in the change that came over him, with deep regret, the dread malady that threatened their honoured favourite, and sought to avert the impending calamity, and to soothe him by timely rest and absence from Ferrara. This is somewhat anticipating what is to come hereafter. But in tracing the further steps of his sad life the question must arise whether in this point also and throughout this matter injustice has not been done to Alfonso and the d'Este family; failing to see wherein the Duke manifested displeasure or illwill, we rather find much concern and solicitude, and patience and consideration too, shown in his treatment of Tasso, more especially when we remember how in those days madness was viewed, and how the victims

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of it were shunned. And quite consistently we may believe also that Alfonso may have at last felt and evinced irritation when Tasso refused to submit to treatment, persistently returned to Ferrara, to fly from it again, spreading abroad his belief of Alfonso's wish and intention to compass his death.

After a time Tasso was summoned suddenly to the death-bed of his father. Even here one might trace his inability to bear much painful strain in life, as we read that his anxiety during his father's illness, and his grief at his death, brought on a dangerous illness. On his recovery he returned to Ferrara, and from thence, at the close of 1572, accompanied the Cardinal into France, and at the Court of Charles received from the King and from others many marks of distinction and favour. Here something of that restlessness of spirit, which was to manifest itself so greatly hereafter, first declared itself; a suspicion likewise of the dislike and enmity of others towards him evinced itself, without any real ground apparently for his entertaining such a belief. We are told—"Tasso moreover was beginning to be desirous of quitting the service of the Cardinal, or rather of returning to Ferrara. He speaks in one of his letters as if Luigi were angry with him, but no sufficient reason appears why he should be so." Mr. Milman supposes that the Cardinal may have withdrawn his usual allowance, or given other tokens of displeasure, when he found that Tasso wished to leave him; but unless any more reason than is given in the text existed for such a supposition, it is hardly borne out. Tasso requested his dismissal, which the Cardinal granted, wishing him, however, to defer his departure for a while; the subsequent illness of the Cardinal further delayed it; but in December they left France together, and arrived at Rome, where, as his biographer admits, the reality of anger on his patron's part would seem to be little proved, Tasso having been kindly and honourably entertained in the house of that patron's uncle, the Cardinal of Ferrara.

The poet's desire was to obtain a situation in Alfonso's service, and to this the two Princesses contributed their aid. The Duke willingly accorded his wish, allowing him a specific salary, and conferring a greater benefit on him in exempting him from any particular duties, that he might have leisure for his studies, and for the completion of his great poem. How unlikely that, either the Princesses should have urged, or the Duke have acceded to, his wish to enter

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his service, had any attachment existed, or have been even erroneously supposed to exist, between himself and the Princess Leonora! Now, in temporary quiet and repose at the Court of Ferrara, he finished his poem, "The Aminta," and it was represented at the Court with every requisite accessory, including the choicest music, Tasso himself directing all, and Italy resounding with applause.

In this record of his life, so greatly is it dwelt upon that he suffered much persecution and neglect, much affliction and want, that we cannot but remark how often we learn that honours and praises were lavishly showered upon him; even affluence was sometimes his, and at other times pressed upon him, but rejected by him: he could not rest even when in possession of it. That he did at length suffer much distress and poverty is too true; but this came about through actions of his own, not avertible by others, and too probably beyond his own control. At this juncture of so much applause and renown, we are told that "from this time the origin of his misfortunes is dated. His triumph and renown, and favour with the Royal Family, awakened the jealously and malice of the courtiers. They began to lay their trains from this moment of his prosperity. They were, for a season, carefully disguised; but, before long, their working was only too evident, and from that hour Tasso was never altogether free from suspicion and alarm." But it is necessary, in no captious spirit, to bear in mind that at about this time his bodily health had begun to suffer; he had accompanied his patron Cardinal Luigi to Venice, and in the hot, unhealthy season had succumbed to an attack of ague, from which, or its consequences, he suffered during many months. As the bodily effects wore off, the mind would appear to have become more morbid and disturbed. Now we first hear of his return of restlessness, of his wish to quit Ferrara, without assignable cause for doing so, and of his desire to go to reside in Rome. We are told that "he must have had strong reasons for projecting this change of residence," and that "it is plain that he had strong suspicions of impending danger;" but we are afforded little reason for one or the other of these assertions. It is said, however, that some interruption of his correspondence with Scipio Gonzaga took place about this time; and Gonzaga, to whom Tasso had written of his danger and his fears, seems to have been desirous that he should exchange the service of Alfonso for that of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and on Tasso's

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arrival in Rome Gonzaga exhorted him to do so. To this, however, he would not accede, purposing ultimately to return to Ferrara; and, in justice to him, it must be remembered that, in the first instance, he desired to visit Rome, and did travel there and to other cities also, that he might have the opportunity of obtaining the judgment and criticisms of poets, and of others whose opinions were of value to him, upon his poem of "Jerusalem Delivered." But in the midst of his own anxiety with regard to the bringing out of his poem, and the ardour and impatience with which it was being looked for by others—showing the renown to which he had already attained—the calamity of increasing illness seems to have come upon him. His biographer reverently traces the afflicting hand laid upon him, chastening and correcting him just as his character needed such purifying and chastening; we must needs, however, see the real outcome of the tendencies of his nature, which had been latent or partially manifested for years.

From this time we find him pursuing a very restless course, and constantly influenced by vague and, apparently, in great measure, groundless fears and suspicions, several times quitting Ferrara, sometimes in almost a horror of apprehension, but anon, without change of circumstances to warrant it, voluntarily returning there again, or earnestly desirous of doing so. There does seem to have been some secret interference with his papers, for what purpose it does not appear; it may be that as his strange suspicions and assertions had already gained some publicity, there was an endeavour made in his absence to seize upon his papers to discover what assertions he might be making in them. The discovery that his papers and locks had been tampered with, wrought to a still higher pitch Tasso's disturbed state of mind, and he began to dread accusations of heresy before the Inquisition. He meditated flight, yet still lingered at Ferrara, and himself appealed to the tribunal of the Inquisition to forestall the terrible denunciation he dreaded. We read that "His justifications were accepted, and the Duke caused some favourable expressions to be conveyed to him, as if to cure him of his terror." Throughout it is the same: the Duke with apparent considerate affection trying to allay his fears, to soothe and calm him; and it was at this time that the Princess Leonora received him as her guest for some days at a palace of her family beautifully situated on the river Po.

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His biographer would have us look even on this visit as a snare set in his way, but there seems no just cause for so considering it. Tasso returned from it only little improved, and terrible fears of being secretly made away with grew stronger and stronger. Soon after, he meets, in the court of the ducal palace, the (as he believes) treacherous friend who had been an actor in the searching of his papers, and expostulates with him; the friend replies in anger, and, it is said, with revilings and insolence; Tasso strikes him in the face. A subsequent encounter takes place; Tasso is slightly wounded, though defending himself victoriously against three or four combatants. Tasso appeals to the Duke for justice. Manso says that Alfonso had him arrested, but Serassi affirms the Duke to have been full of attention and kindness. Tasso himself says that he had remained in his room some days, but had paid a visit to the Duchess and to the Princess Leonora. Soon Tasso believed that new enemies were arising, and he was induced to go to Modena for a time. The change and congenial society there for a while did him some good, and temporarily had some effect in lessening his disquietude. He was then again greatly disturbed by receiving a forged letter, purporting to come from his great friend Scipio Gonzaga, but full of reproaches and scornful taunts against his poem and his own character. Tasso must doubtless have incurred the enmity of some who executed this cruel forgery to distress him; at the same time he was from many receiving the most flattering letters and verses. He again returns to Ferrara, then again thinks that malicious eyes are following him, and is anew filled with dread of the Inquisition.

About this time he appears to have dwelt much upon his spiritual state, passing in review his past life, rejoicing in his renouncement of the sins of his early life, and, one is tempted to say, morbidly analysing his past doubts and feelings, as a mind and temperament like his would be prone to do. Then comes the remarkable confession: "And often I heard, horribly resounding in my imagination the angel trumpets of the great day of rewards and punishments. And I saw Thee sitting upon the clouds, and heard Thee speak the alarming words, 'Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire,' and this terror pressed so heavily upon me that I was frequently forced to impart it to a friend or acquaintance; and if in confession I omitted any fault from negligence or shame, however trifling and unimportant, I would reiterate the

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confession again and again, often repeating the general confession also." And so he proceeds to comment minutely on his state of mind and feelings in a similar strain to that so often heard by those who have listened to the coherent self-reproaches and subjective revelations of diseased minds, in his case heightened by the vivid imagination of a poet and the terrible beliefs of that age. Meantime, though his fears and suspicions still abounded, his renown seems to have been increasing. He was possessed with an intense jealousy of any rivals to fame, and, one would say, had an insane attachment to his patrons—an exacting one, full of suspicions and doubts of them, yet uneasy when voluntarily absenting himself from them; doubtless in those times, when those who had offended were secretly put to death and no certain tidings were ever forthcoming, there was enough to work terror in one who imagined he had given offence and was suspected of treason, but the proof is not manifest of any enmity or secret evil design on Alfonso's part towards Tasso. It much more strongly appears that great consideration and forbearance were shown, true concern felt at the failing of so great a mind, and that both regard and sorrowful compassion led Alfonso and the Princesses to try many means to restore his mind or alleviate his state; but in all probability his mind was so full of strange suspicions and jealousies, that Tasso's presence had become a danger, and reluctantly, at last, some restriction was forced to be placed upon him.

He was arrested one evening in the rooms and presence of the Duchess of Urbino on a charge of having, in a fit of frenzy, seized upon a knife and raised it against one of the attendants, and he was then confined in some rooms overlooking the court-yard of the Palace. Maffeo Veniero writes to the Grand Duke of Tuscany that he had drawn his knife upon a servant in the presence of the Duchess, and says that he was apprehended rather with a view to the cure of his disorder than for punishment; and it would be difficult to conceive a more valid cause for interference, or that any milder course could have been pursued. Reflections that the evil Tasso had been dreading had now come upon him, as if from evil machinations against him, truly seem out of place and unjust at such a crisis. Keenly he felt his confinement, entreated and supplicated to be released, promising to *have himself cured;* for it is needful of special remark that Tasso himself admitted the illness his biographer would, as if a disgrace to him,

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deny. The Duke consented that he should return to his own apartments on condition of submitting to medical treatment. He renewed his expressions of compassion, and after a time desired that he should accompany him to his country palace of Bel-riguardo. Tasso's accomplished biographer strangely seems to view all in a similar light to that in which Tasso then did, as a subtle art and design with evil intent on the Duke's part, this being exactly the view that a man in Tasso's state of mind would take of the most simple acts of kindness; but it does cause surprise that a biographer, years after, should dispassionately coincide in such unreasoning beliefs and imaginations. Alfonso is held up as a very adept of wicked art and design in all his words and acts at Bel-riguardo. Apparently the time passed with him there convinced the Duke of the hopelessness of Tasso's state, and the impossibility of leaving him at liberty. He was then, by Alfonso's directions, carried back to Ferrara, and confined in the convent of St. Francesco.

On the Duke necessarily fell all the responsibility of taking this step, and on him, apparently, has also fallen the odium even to the present day. It was not likely that Tasso himself should believe in the necessity or admit the justice of the course taken, yet he does seem to be in a measure conscious of his state and need of treatment, though he writes to Alfonso that *he* is not so much *mad* as *Alfonso deceived*. "You believe," he says, "that you have delivered me from the Inquisition, and I am only the more entangled in it." The Duke forbids correspondence with himself or writing to the Duchess. Tasso finding a moment when he was unguarded, escaped from the convent. He managed to make his way across the Roman territories and over the mountains of the Abruzzi into Sorrento, where he had a sister, Cornelia Sersale, a widow, residing. Here he remained almost in hiding, as it would appear that he was under sentence of condemnation for treason in Naples. The entire quiet, rest, and change of scene, and the companionship of his young nephews and nieces, had a most beneficial influence on his state, and he became much calmer and better for a while; but ere a year had passed, the old restlessness came upon him, and the determination again to return to the place he had fled from, although allowed to dwell unmolested in peace where he now was. We are told that the Princess Leonora wrote urging his return to their Court, but this is at variance with

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the declaration of the Duke. "If he proposes to return, we will condescend to receive him;" but goes on to say that he must acknowledge his melancholy humours, consent to keep quiet, and to put himself under treatment; that if he again utters such words as he had formerly done, and refuses medical treatment, "we shall forthwith banish him from our states, with a charge never to return any more." But in spite of this, and of the warnings and persuasions to the contrary of his friends and relations, Tasso was bent on returning to Ferrara, and did so in the February of 1578. But he is no sooner arrived there than he is bitterly disappointed at finding that no apartments are assigned to him, and that he is not received at Court. He again fled from the place, and this time to Mantua, but the Duke refused to receive him. The ignorant fear of madness which then prevailed was probably the cause of the coldness shown to Tasso occasionally in his wanderings, when, uninvited, he appeared at other courts after leaving Ferrara. Vincenzo Gonzaga, the Duke's son, however, showed him much kindness and regard, but he had not much in his power to do for him, and the unhappy Tasso fell into great poverty. He wandered to Padua, to Venice, everywhere an unwelcome guest, all shunning and dreading him as one "from himself ta'en away." One nobleman at Venice interceded for him with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, in whose service Tasso then desired to be. This appeal was unsuccessful.

Tasso went to Urbino, where he might, as far as can be seen, have rested in safety, the Duke of Urbino being full of kindness and affection. Here he writes the strange statement that to return to Ferrara is in his power, for that his departure tormented Alfonso, who had sent a gentleman by post after him to prevail on him to return. If this were so, probably the many assertions and accusations made by Tasso against the Duke may have influenced him in making him unwilling that Tasso should be wandering from Court to Court, spreading these assertions. Tasso goes on to add that since his departure "there have been many princes who would have gladly received me into their service," which statement is quite at variance with the picture we have had set before us of the distress and want which he had suffered, and is possibly rather due to his exalted and erroneous imagination than to facts. Tasso, discovering that the rumour of his madness had spread far and wide, besought his friends, and especially Scipio Gonzaga, to banish this

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false imagination; but is it usual that the fact is admitted as truth by him who is the victim of the disease? Speedily came the old return of restlessness, and at this time he at first admitted the necessity of, and submitted to, some medical treatment; however, after a while suddenly and secretly he set forth from Urbino, travelling towards Savoy, as under the Duke of Savoy he had now determined to seek shelter. On the way he was hospitably entertained, and probably recognised, his wanderings being by this time well known; his appearance was striking, his stature unusual, and his features must long have been made familiar by portraits to those who had never hitherto beheld him. At Turin he was thus recognised by Angelo Ingegneri, a distinguished Venetian. He introduced him to the palace of the Marquis d'Este, who had known Tasso in former days at the Court of Ferrara, and who now received him with the greatest hospitality and kindness. Others, too, of rank and distinction vied with him in honouring Tasso, and would gladly have received him into their houses. Nowhere do we trace neglect or unkindness, and yet again the eternal unrest seizes upon him, and the unreasoning desire to return to Ferrara, from which he had twice fled in such apparent terror and horror; again he speaks and thinks only of returning, of "*undeceiving and conciliating Alfonso.*" Those about him earnestly dissuade him—entreat him to remain in quietness and happiness at Turin. Alfonso sends the reasonable intimation that he is willing to receive Tasso back if he will submit to medical treatment and to his guidance and direction. Tasso is dissatisfied, speaks again of Alfonso as of him who "guided him, who imprisoned him, who promised to him, who deluded him,"—still seems to have thought some "glorious return" should have been his to Ferrara; yet his friends cannot long succeed in detaining him at Turin, and the celebration of Alfonso's third marriage determined him on returning. He returns again, and miserable is it to read of his position there, so different from the once exalted one he had held, and so different from his own imaginings, for, blind to all the sad changes wrought in himself, he dreamed that to repair to the same scenes must be to recover the happiness and the distinction of the never-to-be recalled past. The author speaks, as a reproach to the d'Este family, of their doors being closed against him—no promises fulfilled. But it would seem to be always in a season of returning excitement that the wild desire to

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return to Ferrara came upon Tasso, and he was at that time probably most unfit for the notice and honours he then most coveted. Miserable and suffering, Tasso breaks out in lamentations and reproaches against the Duke and his Court. By Alfonso's order he is again apprehended, with many expressions of the Duke's concern. Why are we to believe them otherwise than sincere? In former days he and his family had had Tasso constantly with them, had shown him unwonted kindness and favour, and when it was impossible to retain him with them on the old footing had forborne to interfere with him or lay any restraint upon him as long as it was practicable. We must charitably believe Tasso's state was a sorrow to them, but that his illness had increased. He is now declared to be mad, and placed in the Hospital of St. Anna, in which the insane of various classes were confined. And here indeed it is too likely his misery in the then wretched condition of such abodes—unclassified, untended except by ignorance, and that instigator of cruelty, fear—may need no heightening of exaggerated language or sensational terms to depict it; too well, to those who have knowledge of these things, are the horrors of such places in even much more recent days known, and appalling would it be to Tasso's refined, sensitive, and exalted nature to find himself amid such surroundings. But to attribute this to cruelty or even want of feeling on Alfonso's part would be most unjust. They knew no other course, nor realised madness but as something terrible, utterly removing a human being from his kind. Far later, fearful were the revelations of the state of some of the Italian Asylums. Thankful we may be if even yet reform has come in all of them; we know that much later than Tasso's time it had not so come in England. His condition in such an abode was indeed most pitiable, for there is no doubt whatever that he was perfectly well able to estimate the horror of his position and of his surroundings.

There is abundant evidence of the illness that existed—Tasso himself at times was aware of and admitted it; but he speaks with anguish—and it is an anguish to read—of his fearful dread of endless imprisonment, and how the indignities to which he was subjected increased it—the foulness of his dress, his hair, his beard, the filth and damp around him, and the awful solitude. This last do we not fail sufficiently to realise even now for those who are thus isolated, though without the horrible and degrading aggravations of those days?

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His biographer feelingly and truly reflects: "He had loved renown, society, the sweet face of nature, the praise of men, the affection of women. He had been delicate in his food, particular in his dress, fastidious in his person. He had a dread, we have seen, as many imaginative persons have, of confinement, of scorn, of solitude. The cell in which he was shut up, was narrow, dim and unfurnished; there was no prospect from it. His only objects of view were the blank damp walls around him, and "the gate ever shut in his face!" a terrible picture indeed—all the more terrible as being probably true. It was the usual treatment pursued in the ignorance of those days; it in nowise proves that the lamented Tasso was falsely said to be mad. Milman wonders that his biographers speak often so lightly of his calamities. He cannot surely have reflected how custom dulls the power to realise torture and cruelty systematically inflicted, and knew not perhaps how, not in Tasso's day only, but, much later on, those esteemed as mild and benevolent have complacently been aware of miseries enacting under their own sanction and taken no step to alter them. Tasso had writing materials accorded to him, which in such times must, one would imagine, have been an exception especially made in his favour. Doubtless the use of them was an infinite resource to him. His biographer remarks on his courage and self-command in being able to use them; but, on the contrary, it will be well known how in such states of mind as Tasso's then was, such a means is eagerly grasped at and abundantly employed, as by him, in letters of entreaty for release, and also even in original compositions; so that we marvel not, even in those terrible circumstances, to learn that he composed poetry and elaborate philosophical dialogues. Ill-judged and miserable as was the system and treatment, it is no wonder the unhappy Tasso languished and grew worse; at the same time he would hardly seem to have been intentionally neglected or forgotten, but received occasionally a visit; one from Vincenzo Gonzaga, the young Prince of Mantua, which cheered and reanimated him for a time. He wrote again after the visit, and described the communion he held, in imagination, with spirits in his solitary cell. It is evident that Tasso heard voices at this time, and also that he was in some sort aware of his alienation of mind, though hardly able to understand what it was or whence it had arisen; he seems to have felt it might be a malady allied to genius. He was conscious

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of a deep melancholy possessing him and writes—"Those who are melancholy, not through any malady, but by nature, are of singular genius, and I am melancholy from both causes."

A great trial came to him at this time in the publication, without his knowledge or consent, and in a most imperfect condition, of his great poem, "Jerusalem Delivered," to which he had looked forward to bring him lasting renown. He had delayed its publication in order to bring it to greater perfection. The edition was printed in Venice, Celio Malaspina having obtained possession of those parts of the Poem which had been submitted to the perusal of his master, the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Soon after this the Princess Leonora, who had been gradually declining, died. Tasso had during her illness transmitted to her a message expressive of deep grief at her illness. It is surely a straining indeed for hidden motives and influences to conceive, as his biographer does, that Tasso's reluctance to lament her illness in verse, arose from a knowledge of the danger of his doing so, and still more far-fetched to suppose, as he inclines to do, Leonora's failing health to be attributable to Tasso's confinement, or that it was in any way, but coincidently as to time, connected with that. As for Tasso himself, sincerely as he might have been attached to both the Princesses, his own troubles at this time far outweighed probably all other sorrow and losses; his health was weakened, his long imprisonment and the apparent almost oblivion into which he had now fallen had reduced him to hopelessness. Shortly before this time Montaigne had visited him and writes, "I had even more indignation than compassion when I saw him at Ferrara in so piteous an estate, a living shadow of himself and of his works."

But his poem of "Jerusalem," now published, was praised on every side; still the unhappy author was languishing in his miserable "estate." Whether his condition mentally now became somewhat ameliorated and led to an improvement in his treatment, or that it had been represented to Alfonso how dreadful this treatment really was, he was removed to a better apartment, to which another was afterwards added, large enough, he said, "to walk in and philosophize." Prince Vincenzo Gonzaga again visited him, and Tasso began to be hopeful of release; Maurizio Cataneo, Secretary to Cardinal Albano at Rome, giving him encouraging assurances from his master, and wisely urging him to

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speak and write of Duke Alfonso with greater respect. He received also a letter from his sister Cornelia, telling him of her being again married, and she and her husband, Ferrante Speziano, gave Tasso pressing invitations to come to them at Naples; a cousin, also, of Duke Alfonso's, lately married to the Marquis of Massa and Carrara, charmed with Tasso's poem, obtained permission for him to pass a day at her villa. Here he entered with enjoyment on some of the old subjects of discourse, and it must have seemed as life to the dead indeed to find himself in scenes of refinement, and again participating in intellectual converse, after the way in which he had lately lived. His confinement was, however, still continued; but had Alfonso been purposely wrongfully confining him and declaring him to be insane, knowing him not to be so, he would have jealously excluded him from the sight of others, instead of allowing them, as he did at this time, to flock to see him. That some of these visitors, even those distinguished by ability, should have thought him to be quite sound, is no proof that he was so, when we take into consideration the notion of madness then, and much later on, or even now commonly entertained—that a man could no more converse at any time or on any subject as a rational being if mad, and that one who had the power to do so could not certainly be mad.

Amongst others who thought much of him at this time was Angelo Grillo, a monk of Monte Cassino, a philosopher and a poet; he seems to have gone to Ferrara on purpose to help and comfort Tasso, to have obtained leave from Alfonso to visit him as often as he wished, and to have spent whole days with him, doubtless, indeed, much conducing, not to his comfort alone, but to his restoration. Tasso, also, from various quarters, received many presents in money at this time. His bodily health had now terribly given way, and in his weakened state his mental distresses and apparitions beset him again more powerfully. He writes thus to a professor of medicine at Padua, whose advice he desired—"It is many years since I have been unwell, and what my complaint is I know not; nevertheless, I certainly judge myself to be ill. But whatsoever is the cause of my disorder, its effects are these: intestinal pain, with somewhat of a flux of blood; ringings in the ears and head, sometimes so strong that it seems to me as if there were in it one of those clocks which strike; unceasing mental images of all kinds, but all painful, which disturb me,

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so that I cannot apply my mind to my studies for five minutes together. And the more I force myself to attend, the more I am distracted with those changing apparitions, and sometimes, with most violent disgusts, rising up in me according to the various fancies which present themselves. Besides this, after eating, my head fumes and burns, and in all the sounds which I hear, I keep imagining a human voice, so that it very often seems as if inanimate things were speaking to me." He was advised to submit to a cautery in the leg, to abstain altogether from wine, and to have recourse to broths and gruels; but Tasso was not willing to follow these prescriptions.

Angelo Grillo exerted himself earnestly to promote Tasso's release; Alfonso had Tasso brought into his presence, and promised that before long his liberty should be given him. Under some care and supervision he was now allowed to go forth occasionally to pay visits and attend spectacles and also mass and confession. Then after a while he was again much more secluded, and not permitted to be visited so freely; perhaps too much had been attempted, and an unfavourable change in Tasso's state caused this renewal of greater seclusion. A. C. M.

(To be continued.)

Case of Sudden and Complete "Aphasia" and Partial "Right Hemiplegia," Lesion of "Broca's Convolution," with a Small "Hæmorrhage" in Substance of Corpus Callosum, &c. By Ringrose Atkins, M.A., M.D., &c., Assistant Medical Officer District Lunatic Asylum, Cork.

The particulars of the following case may be sufficiently interesting to place on record, as bearing on the morbid anatomy of aphasia, and, further, as illustrating the negative results which follow localised destruction of convolutions posterior to the "Fissure of Rolando." The patient, an elderly imbecile female, had been an inmate of the Cork District Lunatic Asylum for the last forty-five years. She was invariably quiet and docile, clean in her habits and person, and sufficiently rational to answer ordinary questions addressed to her quite correctly. She spoke slowly, and with emphasis, but always used the right words to express her meaning; and there was never any noticeable defect in her speech, so far as

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