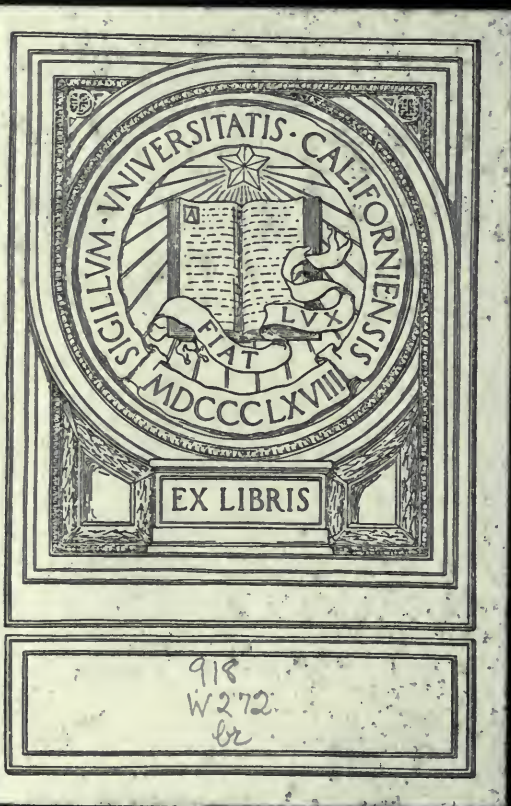


BRASENOSE ALE

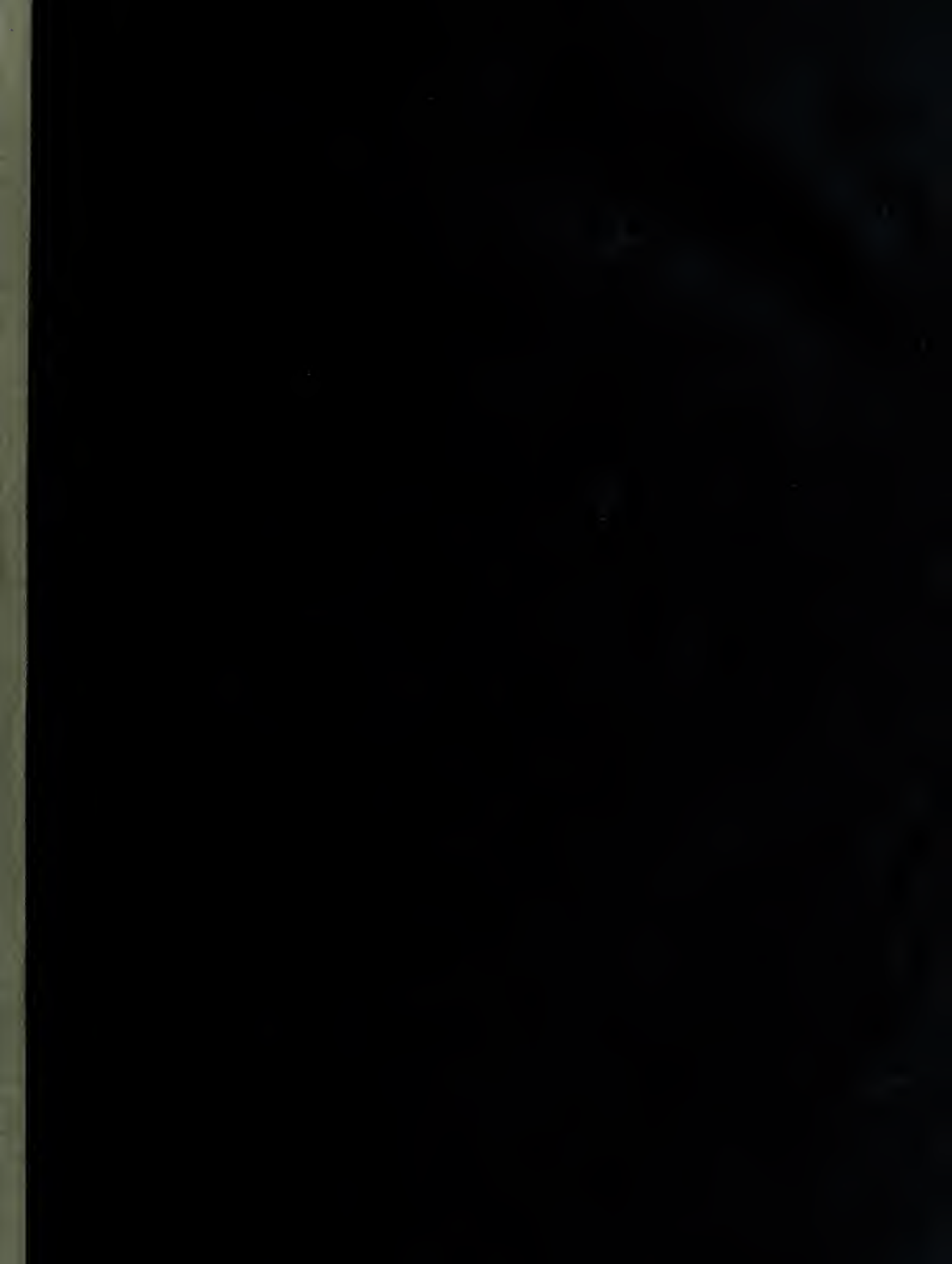
W. B. Brase



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BRASENOSE ALE.



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PLATE I.
THE CHALICE
OF THE
SACRAMENT
OF THE
EUCARISTIA
IN THE
CATHEDRAL
OF
SALZBURG
BY
J. H. M. W. J. VAN
DER
WATER
1857

W. H. J. VAN
1857

Brasenose Ale:

*A Collection of Verses annually presented
on Shrove Tuesday, by the Butler
of Brasenose College,
Oxford.*

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

Fecundi calices quem non fecere disertum?

*Printed for Private Circulation by Robert Roberts,
Boston, Lincolnshire, 1878.*

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA



P R E F A C E .

IN 1857 a small volume was printed which contained all the copies of "Brasenose Ale" verses at that time known. The present collection includes, in addition, all the verses that have been presented since that date, and two earlier copies, which are all that a diligent search has been able to bring to light. It differs, however, from the former volume, in being more carefully printed, and in containing short but (it is hoped) sufficient explanations of all obscure allusions.

A few verbal alterations have been made, sometimes by the authors of the verses and sometimes by the Editor, where faulty grammar or halting metre seemed to require it. In one or two instances, also, some lines of too trenchant criticism of persons or classes have been expunged. But for the rest, the verses remain as they were originally printed. The Editor has not presumed to interfere with either the local or the imperial politics of the various authors, nor to rob the most passionate declamations of their youthful fire.

The three earliest poems require a word of notice.

(1.) That dated 1709 was preserved by Hearne in his diary, and first printed by Dr. Bliss in his Selections from that storehouse of Oxford antiquities. It was not known to the compilers of the earlier collection of Ale-verses. The

question concerning this poem is, what is its date? The year 1709 has been arbitrarily assumed ; but it has no better authority than the fact that the lines are quoted in Hearne's diary for that year. On the other hand, the Buttery books show that the " Mr. Edward Shippary," whom Hearne mentions, ceased to be Butler in 1705, though he *began* to be Butler at least as early as 1659. His signature as " Promus " occurs in the years 1659, 1682, 1701, and 1705, while in 1706-7 John Featley signs his name as Butler. The verses cannot, therefore, be later than 1705, and may be something earlier. That the date cannot be much earlier is evident from the Butler complaining of " age and sickness ;" and yet, to what " true English king " dare any one drink in or about the year 1705, or, as is a still more probable date for the verses, during the time when " Dutch William " was reigning alone? It would seem that the allusion was a bit of Jacobitism, very slightly disguised. But what would have been dangerous and treasonable elsewhere was safe in Jacobite Oxford.*

(2.) The verses attributed to Heber were unluckily discovered too late to be printed in their proper place in the volume. We owe them to Mr. W. B. Taylor, Hulmian Exhibitioner of the College, who had them from his uncle, the Rev. J. Taylor, of Colne, Lancashire (an old Brasenose man), who received them as undoubtedly Heber's. Internal evidence, it must be owned, supports their claim of genuine-

* The exclamation " 'pon rep," " upon my reputation," was a very fashionable oath at the beginning of the last century.

ness. They seem to have never been printed, but *recited* in Hall, as was the invariable custom till many years after Heber's date. The practice was that the MS. copy of verses should after the recitation be handed up to the High Table, then left for a time in the Common Room, and then transferred to the Principal's Lodgings, whence, alas ! it never emerged. Thus all the verses before Heber's, except the solitary copy preserved by Hearne, have disappeared, as have many subsequent copies by nameless authors and one by the greatest of the sons of Brasenose, Henry Hart Milman. In a letter to the present Principal in 1857, the late Dean of St. Paul's confesses to having written the Ale-verses in his day, but is unable to remember a single line of them. All he can remember (and it is worth preserving) is the motto from Henry VI., "of which," he says, "I recollect being rather proud. It was impertinent about "*gaudy days,*

" 'The gaudy, babbling, and remorseful day,'
 " which, considering the nonsense talked on such days even
 " in high quarters, and the next morning headache, too
 " frequent in those days, even in tutorial skulls, I thought
 " very appropriate."

(3.) The verses dated 1811 are given not from the old collection, but from a scarce, privately-printed quarto, "the Brase Nose Garlande," issued by the author, the Rev. Thomas Dunbar, formerly keeper of the Ashmolean Museum. A copy of this, after passing through the libraries of Mr. Heber (the book-collector), Dr. Bliss, and Mr. Corser, was secured by the Rev. W. E. Buckley, Rector of Middleton

Cheney, and formerly Fellow of the College, to whose kindness we are indebted for the use of it in the preparation of this volume.

The frontispiece is etched by Mr. W. M. McGill from the old Hanaper Cup bequeathed by Dr. Samuel Radcliffe (who was Principal from 1614 to 1648) to his successors in the Headship of the College. As the oldest piece of plate which the College possesses (its date is 1577), it was thought to be most worthy of the honour of standing in the forefront of a volume in which so many *vates sacri* have helped to celebrate a custom probably older than the cup itself.

J. PRIOR, *Butler.*

OL. SOCIUS, *Editor of the Volume.*

NOTE.—The Editor is only responsible for those foot-notes which are marked ED. The others are due to the authors of the various poems.



BRASENOSE ALE.

I.

Verses spoken at Brazen-Nose College, on Shrove-Tuesday, by the Butler, who, after presenting a spice-bowle of ale, and speaking these verses, has money given to him by the House. (These by Mr. Shippery.)

WITH age and sickness, though unactive grown,
My duty still shall in my verse be shown,
And, while my strength and sprightly heat de-
cays,

My grateful Muse still her attendance pays :
For Aristotle sure will ne'er admitt,
From want of health to argue want of witt.
Thus, old and blind, the Græcian Homer sung,
His muse was, like his Phœbus, ever young.
But though my rhymes should heavy be, and dull,
My bowl shall still be good, shall still be full.
For while this yearly tribute here I bring,
'Tis much at one, whether I say or sing ;
And if the criticks should my verse expose.
The bowl sounds well in downright honest prose.

Here's none of your new-fangled stuff brought from *Vigo* ;
 This comes from the cellar where Michael and I go !
 For this generous liquor we ne'er cross the main,
 Nor want either commerce with *France* or with *Spain*.
 Old *England* affords us whatever we lack,
 Give us ale,—and a fig for their claret or sack.
 Then in true *English* liquōr, my masters, begin,
 Six go-downs upon rep. to our true *English* King !
 In this orthodox health let each man keep his station,
 For a Whig will conform upon such an occasion.

[1709. Reprinted from Hearne's Diary.—ED.]



II.

Plenum opus ALE-æ.—HOR.



ALL ye, who round the butt'ry hatch,*
 Eager await the opening latch,
 Our barrels to assail ;
 Come, listen, while, in pleasing gibe,
 The rare ingredients I describe,
 Which float in Brase Nose Ale.

Guiltless alike of malt and hop,
 Our butt'ry is a druggist's shop,
 Where Quassia's draughts prevail ;
 Alum the muddy liquor clears,
 And mimic wormwood's bitter tears
 Compose our Brase Nose Ale.

All ye, who physick *have* profess'd,
 Sir Kit, and Potticary West,†
 Your practice gone bewail !

* The buttry is an emporium of bread, butter, and what is facetiously miscalled ale. It is commonly surrounded by a thirsty crew of duns, scouts, scullions, porters, and poachers.

† Sir Chr. Pegge, M.D. Regius Professor of Medicine, and Mr. West, Apothecary.

The burning mouth, the temples' throb,
Sick stomach, and convulsive sob,
Are cured by Brasenose Ale.

As poisons other poisons kill ;
So, should we with convivial swill
Old Syms's* wine assail,
Or Latimer's † immortal Tun,
Herbert yclept or Abingdon,
We're cured by Brasenose Ale.

The fair Cheltenia's opening salt,
Must yield to our factitious malt,
What double sounce can fail? ‡
But if you want some tonic stuff,
You readily will find "quant. suff.,"
A gill of Brasenose Ale.

Mysterious, as the Sibyl's leaves,
The batels are which each receives,§
But, Freshmen, cease to rail !

* An Oxford wine merchant.

† Also an Oxford wine merchant, called *Bishop* Latimer, from the circumstance of his wine being most palatable when converted into the beverage denominated *Bishop*. O Bishop Latimer ! Oxford still feels *thy persecution* ! Oxford still rues the eternity of thy *spirituous* torments !

‡ Any improprieties committed in Hall are punished by a double or single sounce, *i. e.* by being obliged to drink a gallon or half a gallon of ale.

§ The *batels* are the College quarterly accounts, delivered on narrow

You're fed and physick'd, in your bills
 Each week is Vinegar of Squills,
 Bark, salts, and Brasenose Ale.

Oh, that our Bursar * would consent
 To give the Bottled Porter vent,
 Porter beloved by Dale, †
 Smuggled no more by Joey's stealth,
 It would improve the College health,
 Well scour'd by Brasenose Ale.

My Muse, a half-reluctant prude,
 In dudgeon vile, George Smith pursued,
 Afraid his verse should fail ;
 When next the annual ode he woos,
 May he invoke a different Meux, ‡
 To improve our Brasenose Ale.

Shrove Tuesday, Feb. 26th, 1811.

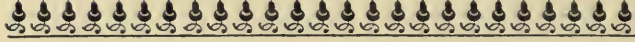
T. D.

slips of paper, containing the gross amount of each week, but without particulars.

* The College Purveyor.

† The Rev. Joseph Hodgkinson, and the Rev. Joseph Dale, lovers of double X.

‡ Meux's Intire. *Vide London passim.*



III.

YE elvish Naiads, who delight to lave
 Your auburn tresses in the Lambswool wave,
 Who, like the Hags of old, a hellish train,
 Riot on broomsticks o'er the Student's brain,
 When the glad Wretch in Ale libations deep,
 Hies him to "tricks that make the Angels weep,"
 Give me one *Bitian* tippie from your bowl,*
 And in the Nectar deluge flood my soul!

For now the Muse, with retrospective gaze,
 Turns to forgotten scenes, to bye-past days;
 And peering thro' the mist of time, can trace
 The grim, gaunt shadows of that matchless race,
 Which erst, old Brasenose, thro' the midnight damp,
 Fed with thy Ale their intellectual lamp.
 Yes, in that golden age, each classic Sot
 Worshipp'd in turn the Volume and the Pot;
 This stored his mind with science and with art,
 That ope'd the softer virtues of his heart;
 And when to soothe his ills the first might fail,
 There was a blessed anodyne in Ale.

* "Tum Bitiæ dedit increpitans."

And ye, the pictured Worthies of our Hall,
 Whose antique forms these pleasing dreams recall,
 In bosoms warm'd like yours, is shewn full well,
 The magic influence of the Cellar spell ;
 And when for Brasenose Ale I raise my voice,
 Attest it, gracious Duchess, thrifty Joyce.
 Last, but not least, amid the patron throng,
 Whose virtues claim the honours of my song,
 Hail, bounteous *Betty* ! * whose unpictur'd fame
 Shall live coeval with each prouder name ;
 And envy's self shall laud these grateful lines,
 When the *Scout* tipples, and the *Tutor* dines ; †
 When the first's visage shews a deeper dye,
 And roguish devils wanton in his eye.

Then long may here the ale-charg'd Tankards shine,
 Long may the Hop-plant triumph o'er the Vine !
 Long may *this* rival of Pieria's spring,
 To Fame's bright shrine its blushing vot'ries bring !
 Long may it swell the classes of our Schools,
 A glorious recipe for curing fools !

1815.

W. G.

* Mrs. Elizabeth Morley, of blessed memory. She has not been deemed worthy of a picture.

† This alludes to her Legacies of a dinner to the Fellows, and a jolification to the Servants of B.N.C.



IV.

“ Antiquum et vetus est { Ale Æn. Nas. } dicere laudes.”
 alienas

CEASE your calumny, Wits, and no longer assail
 With abuse undeserv'd your poor Brasenose Ale ;
 Ah, cease, or before you repeat the offence,
 Permit me, at least, to submit my defence.
 In that sad Iron Age when the *Cross* ruled the Roast,
 Marking who were to dine with Duke Humphrey their host,
 When at dinner-time desolate, meagre, and thin,
 Look'd “ The Hall,” for no Commoner scarce could get in ;
 Cask'd for weeks, without chance of e'er proving my merit,
 No wonder I lost my *strength*, *colour*, and *spirit* ;
 Now, *this* “ *Prince* of Vice-Principals,” excellent pattern,
 Has revived the glad days of the kind-hearted Saturn,
 No longer with half-eaten scraps teems the Larder,
 Or the Cellar with Ale—growing harder and harder.
 'Tis now you must try me, but judge not in haste,
 First listen to rules which must please every taste.
 Get a glass (if in Hall such a thing can be found,
 For glasses abound not in Classical ground,
 Tho' in praise be it said, by this College I know
 Some dozen where purchased a few years ago)—

Get a glass, and some sugar—then warming your Beer,
 You'll find your draught lively, and frothy, and clear,
 Whilst you see your own cup soon replenished aspire
 To the lips of your friend from the bars of the fire.
 If in pints, and in darkness each Commoner sups,
 I'll not answer for what they may do in their cups :
 If in glass, categorical proof cannot fail ye,
 Since you see what you swallow, " Quid," " quantum," and
 " quale."

This is bold, but the liquor will well stand the test
 Of all Brasenose Ales, most decidedly best.
 Nay, start not, nor think my assertion presuming,
 Sir Christopher now is his practice resuming ;
 Sir Christopher—formerly said to turn pale
 Seeing " jalup—out-jalup'd " by *Brasenose Ale*.*
 Notwithstanding, if any still scruple to credit
 My title to *Best*—here's my Pedigree—read it :

A Grand Cross of " Malta," one night at a Ball,
 Fell in love with and married " Hoppetta the Tall."
 Hoppetta, the bitterest, best of her sex,
 By whom he had issue—the first, " *Double X*."
 Three others were born by this marriage—" a girl,"
 Transparent as *Amber*, and precious as *Pearl*—
 Then a Son—twice as strong as a Porter or Scout,
 And another as " Spruce " as his brother was " Stout."

* See p. 3, note.—ED.

Double X, like his Sister, is brilliant and clear,
Like his Mother, tho' bitter, by no means severe,
Like his Father, *not small*, and resembling each brother,
Joins the spirit of one to the strength of the other.

'*Tis He* who presents this petition, '*tis He*—
Who demands from our Cellar to take his Degree,
Who desires that *no Cross* shall the College perplex,
Save the cross on the Barrel which marks "Double X."

1816.

J. Y., Æn. Nas. Coll. Al(e)umnus.



V.

AWAY, ye crowd profane ! ye fools and Tinkers !
 Aid me ye sainted Ghosts of mighty drinkers,
 Who liv'd of yore, but now alas ! are dead,
 And took your Tankard ere you took to bed ;
 To raptur'd chords the mighty strain prolong,
 For Brasenose Ale demands the tide of song,
 E'en now I feel thy fumes, nectarious liquor,
 My pen runs faster, and the ideas flow thicker,
 And though nice Tutors say thou art not massic,
 And the Greek-lecturer swears my strain's not classic,
 Yet sing I will, nor ceremony 'pon stick,
 Since ale demands my lay anacreontic.

When first thy Quad, O Brasenose, sprung from earth,
 (Not the Back-buildings, they're of later birth,)
 A mystic voice was heard (I did not hear it
 But there are other persons who will swear it),
 And thus it spake, and long its words shall last,
 While bricklayers star'd, and masons stood aghast :
 " This be thy Charter, College ! o'er thy name
 Shall beam the trophied blazonry of fame,
 Thy nose shall live, that stumbling-block of fools,
 And first-class men astound the list'ning schools,

Long as thy ale, so good without pretence,
Crowns the rich bowl, and woos the "ravish'd sense."
Thus heav'n decreed ! and thus the College wills
That clear as muddy pool, and sweet as pills,
Old Smith shall (heaven bless his gen'rous soul !)
As long as months and years and ages roll,
Serve us with ale—to keep us all from ailing,
And send it up as commons without failing.
And though with quassia perhaps a little dingy,
Which some queer folks think not a little stingy,
Yet still 'tis Ale—d'ye doubt me ? good and stout :
And they who won't have that may go without.



VI.



HEARD you the Butler hasten to the task ?*
 Heard ye the spiggot rattle in the cask ?
 In settled dinginess of nut-brown dye,
 Foul to the taste, yet pleasing to the eye,
 The froth-crown'd liquor stands—no Morrell swipes,
 No baleful juice, precursor to the gripes ;
 All, all one tap—no spurious birth it glows,
 Through vent-pegged cask no quassia mixture flows,
 But animate alone with hops and malt,
 It quits the cobwebb'd precincts of the vault.

Bright kindling with a tippler's dear delight
 Each scout's eye tracks the liquor's fateful flight,
 While King's fair cheek with hope's bright lustre glows,
 And claims proud kindred with the mystic Nose.
 Tott'ring he stands, or, if some Fellow call,
 Walks the scarce passable, and crowded hall ;
 Light as he treads, along th' enamour'd wind
 His coat's black skirts flap heavily behind,

* These verses will be recognised as a parody of Milman's famous Newdegate, *The Apollo Belvedere*, beginning, "Heard ye the arrow hurtle through the sky ?"—ED.

And as he clears each hungry Fellow's plate,
Exults to show the honors of his gait.

Yes—mighty Butler—after dinner's cares
Each thirsty scout descends the cellar's stairs,
Views the vast conclave of hoops, casks, and pegs,
And taps the barrel to imbibe the dregs.
Contagious fury fires each god-like man,
And all bow low before the tapster's can.
For mild it seems as that far-famed Bohea
Drank in the Oriel common room for tea ;
Heady, as tales can prove, when all round Cain
Join the wild dance the Undergraduate train ;
Or frantic rush some freshmen to assail,
And with loud howlings load the midnight gale ;
Or stand half muzzy on the cellar's brink,
Too full to empty, and too drunk to drink.



VII.

THRON'D on his regal cask in *gaudy* state
 One festal eve the Cellar-genius sate ;
 His faithful vot'ries thickly strew'd around
 In lawless postures clog the groaning ground,
 And fondly true to her who gave them birth
 In close embraces hug their mother-earth ;
 When fired by Lambswool up the monarch sprang,
 And with these words his vaulted kingdom rang :—

Since first the Sun his course began
 And gaz'd upon this world of man,
 This busy scene of toil and strife,
 Where little dwells to sweeten life,
 How soon each pleasure we devour
 That gives us one ecstatic hour ;
 But what like thee can e'er avail,
 Thou nectar-potion, Brasenose Ale ?
 All ranks, all ages own thy sway,
 The wisest must thy power obey,
 Thou fill'st the mind with big, ambitious dreams,
 Inspirest none save mighty themes,
 And, strange antithesis ! canst steep
 The maddest brain in harmless sleep.

What ? tho' the pride of Oriel be
Old maids' elixir, mawkish tea ?
In spite of awful Oriel's choice
For Brasenose Ale I'll raise my voice.
'Tis not the mind alone it rules
With brilliant lessons for the Schools,
But the mind's index oft arrays
In one unvaried, vivid blaze.
No rouge, like this, the female face
Illumines into rosy grace ;
No tutor, though from Tully sprung,
Like thee can rouse the dullest tongue.

Then hail, thou big and foaming bowl,
Hail, constant idol of my soul.
How laughingly the bubbles ride
Upon thy rich and sparkling tide ;
Meet emblem of the joy that cheers
Those who shed none but cellar-tears,
And who like me all cares will drown,
As thus, sweet bowl, I drink thee down.



VIII.

TOUCH, touch the tuneful lyre,
 Make the joyful strings resound :
Ale, blest Spirit, doth inspire,
 Ale with smiling hop-wreath crown'd.

See, the welcome Brewhouse rise,
See, the priest his duty plies;
And, with apron duly bound,
Stirs the liquor round and round.
O'er the bubbling cauldron play
Mirth and Merriment so gay,
Melancholy hides her head,
The frowns of Envy, all are fled,
Youthful Wit and Attic Salt
Infuse their savour in the Malt,
And Love and Harmony combine,
To confer their gifts divine.

Then touch, touch the tuneful lyre,
 Make the joyful strings resound :
Ale, blest Spirit, doth inspire,
 Ale with smiling hop-wreath crown'd.

BRASENOSE ALE.

The dismal reign of muddy beer,
 Has fallen with the ended year,
 And amber Ale, in golden days,
 To Brasenose a visit pays.

Joyous the cry of welcome rose,
 Welcome, welcome, foaming Ale !
 Welcome genuine Malt and Hops !
 Welcome ye to Brasenose !

Long may his Worship sojourn here !
 Long may his joys our bosoms cheer !
 Thy Bursar, Brasenose, shall be,
 The High-Steward of the deity :
 And lasting Fame
 Shall bless his name,
 And waft his merits to Posterity.

Touch then, O touch the tuneful lyre,
 Make the joyful strings resound :
 Ale, blest Spirit, doth inspire,
 Ale with smiling hop-wreath crown'd.



IX.

Εἶπω τι τῶν εἰωθότων, ὦ δέσποτα,
ἐφ' οἷς αἰεὶ γελῶσιν οἱ θεώμενοι ;

MOST potent Critics ! pray give ear ;
Your Ale draws Voters far and near ;
But not to swell the puff of flattery,
Suppose we analyze its ἀρετή,

And, for the honour of the Schools,
We'll steer by Aristotle's rules.

First then, its limits let us fix,
And build our theme with Logic bricks.
We praise a thing, at least we should,
For its own sake, because 'tis good.
Its essence ψυχὴ ἐνεργητικὴ—
Then sure it must be ἐδεργετικὴ.
But this depends, as will be seen,
Upon our hitting on the *mean* ;
A mean it is, as fix'd as fate,
For brewers call it "*Intermediate*."
Now this runs very smooth in Thesis,
But ah ! we want that thing φρόνησις.

For sure as we shall call out *εἴτι*,
 So sure we plunge beyond the jetty.
 But how to construe the next head?
 We cannot praise it when 'tis *dead*,
 Yet it can boast a rare *stout* claim,
 Most logically opposed to shame.
 But see the next sophistic scheme;
 Now this precisely suits our theme.
 Th' extremes we toss from side to side,
 And swear no mean exists beside;
 When a man swills two gallons off,
 We say, "that man has had *enough*."
 If but one pint, "a moderate Fellow,
 He'll never reel, or fight, or bellow."

But hark! what strange voice from that barrel,
 Hoarse as the horn of Mr. Morrell? *
 What form so *brown*, and *stout*, and *hale*,
 Oh Hercules! 'tis the God of Ale!

"Mortals—how sore my soul you vex—
 You make me croak *βρεκεκεκέξ*—
 Why all this sudden hurly-burly?
 Why, Undergrads, dine ye so early?
 What? all that black-rob'd posse, must I
 Inflate those Artium Magistri,
 And cause their tongues to bay the moon,

* This brewer was then a Master of Hounds.—Ed.

In spirits up as air-balloon?
 For such stout qualities, remember,
 'Tis I, Sirs, ought to be your *Member!*
 I'd quickly frame a *swelling Bill,*
That Catholics should have their fill!
 And, for all those who swig and glut,
 Convert his Popeship to a *Butt!*
 Was it not I that penn'd the wonder—
 That letter* wing'd with Logic thunder?
 By heav'n! my fumes, in ev'ry page,
 Breath'd from the nostrils of the sage,
 As o'er his jug he *brew'd* a hit,
 A cask of thought—a butt of wit!
 Was not that monster born in ale,
 With 'cloven feet,' and 'forked tail?'
 Full sure he dream'd that Aristotle
 Spouted his 'Rhetoric' o'er the bottle;
 And thus it was, no doubt that he
 Stagger'd so drunk into the sea!
 For, though the Letter is anonymous,
 The style, so '*bald,*' is very ominous.
 Now see if I can hit him off—
 The man—*αἰρότατος*—the very *σόφ!*
 With stick in hand, and all agog,

* The obscure allusions that follow have reference to one of the numerous Oxford Letters on the Catholic controversy, and to Archbishop Whately, at this time Principal of St. Alban Hall. Hence 'Alban rules,' &c.—ED.

Marching behind his learned dog,
 He seems to whisper in 'The Clouds,'
 'Ἄεροβατῶ—off, growling crowds !'
 At School, at College, I'm the prop ;
 For who like me could flog a top ?
 I'll edge your intellectual swords ;
 For who like me can deal in *words* ?
 I've just now hatch'd, with 'tail and toes,'
 A Catapulta for my foes ;
 Of double power to cut and thrust,
 'Not that it may, but that it must.'
 In fact, an iron frame this is,
 To force a good προαίρεσις :
 With this I fight for Dan and Shiel,
 And gird my Logic loins for PEEL !
 And for this course I've reasons ample ;
 You'll be content with one example :

*"Pat is a sprout of England's growing,
 But Ireland a war is brewing ;
 Ergo, Old England falls to ruin ?*

"Or thus, by rule of *A* and *The*,
 See 'Rhetoric,' I think, page three :

"Good Sirs, as for a *Stall* I hope,
 I lov'd, converted, wedded, *A Pope*,
 But hated, loath'd, detested, *The Pope* !

“ Fools will not soon resolve this riddle ;
But you, Sirs, see a ‘ *double middle*.’

“ Thus runs his ‘ *ratio probandi* ;’
These ‘ Alban ’ rules we’re forc’d to stand by,
Glu’d like a ‘ *head tattoo’d for sale*,
Fast to a Dutch red-herring’s tail !
Still we must own him, though so odd,
No common stamp, no heavy sod ;
But, like my amber-colour’d Beer,
With brains not thick, but deep and clear ;
Born with fine *taste*, like *Double X*,
Not apt to ‘ puzzle or perplex.’

“ But soft, I hear the supper bell ;
You’ve drank me empty, so farewell.

“ Good Sirs, if in a merry mood,
I trust you have not thought me rude.”



X.

“Laudibus arguitur vini vinosus Homerus.”

HIGH o'er the windings of a vault
 That joins the new-born house of malt,*
 Where still in fame a Fabric grows
 That proudly rears her Giant Nose :
 That nose that snuff'd with Spartan scent
 The track that God-like Heber went,
 And bids her brazen sons aspire,
 And fans the Poet's infant fire :
 While brooding in my long arm'd chair,
 A steamy vapour mounts the air,
 And as the fumes my soul relax,
 Sleep seals my eyes as close as wax.
 When lo ! a Shade of wond'rous size
 In gait like Bacchus seem'd to rise,
 But thrice as fat—so round and hale
 As tho' he swill'd not wine, but ale ;
 His grisly beard he 'gan to stroke,
 He wav'd his hand and thus he spoke :—

* The College brewery, built at this time.—ED.

“ Mortal attend ! no vulgar theme
Has roused me from my Stygian dream.
Hast thou not heard the festive tale,
The mystic wonders of the new-brew’d ale?
Or seen the vapours of the reeking cloud?
Sweet incense to the Drinking God !
’Tis said that Cain and Abel shook
Their sides with laughing at the joke.
How late so quick a plan was found
To make the men so plump and round.
For ho ! too well we’d cause to rue
The trash full fraught with Devil’s blue,
Drain’d from a muddy brackish mass
That would have turn’d the nose of Brass.
For swipes and dregs and vile small beer,
Have been our lush for many a year.
Hence the dire cause our sons were fools,
And looked so sheepish in the Schools ;
As though they lived on Aristotle,
And never ate or crack’d a bottle.
How could they swell with Pindar’s rage ?
Or drink the flowing Homer’s page ?
But now—ye Nine, your pinions wave—
The God inspires me and I rave—
See the bright beverage frothing up,
See the juice sparkle in the cup !
Oh ! for a mouth from ear to ear
To swallow hogsheads of such beer !
See to the banquet Nestor-King

Slowly the foaming goblets bring,
 And as he rolls his gloating eye,
 He sighs—' my day of drink's gone by !'
 But see, the scouts are scouring by,
 The Hall resounds—' more Ale—quick—fly,'
 And the new Butler * cries ' Odd zooks,
 This swells the reck'ning of my books :
 Forsooth ! a lucky change for me,
 The Porter's for the Tapster's key !
 Lord of this cask, I'll rule the roast ;
 For sure my claim's a *Prior* boast !'
 What tho' the teeming barrel favor
 The *soporiferum papaver*,
 The virtues of the pregnant malt
 Are new-spun wit and attic salt.
 The time draws nigh when one good glass
 Shall nerve men for the fiery Pass,
 While wrapt in awe the School shall class
 Their blushing honors on the Nose of Brass !
 And more my prophet Muse could tell :—
 But soft—my time is spun—Farewell !"

This said, the Genius fled like smoke ;
 I started, rubb'd my eyes, and woke.

1828.

W. W. E.

* Smith, the old Butler, died, and Prior, Sen., succeeded in 1827 :
 King was the Hall-man."—ED.



XI.

Δόγος ἐστ' ἀρχαῖος, οὐ κακῶς ἔχων,
οἶνον λέγουσι τοὺς γέροντας, ὦ πάτερ,
πέιθειν χορεύειν οὐ θέλοντας.

Eriphus ; quoted by Athenæus.

THOUGH to versify no *Chauntrey*, I, I must *rechaunt*,
I find,
My *home-brewed* lay, for woe's the day ! if *Prior's* caught
behind !
My *measure* just, *suits* each, *I trust*, and makes *Dry's credit*
short,
For *Foy*, you'll find, will sooth your mind, when *deep* with
Davenport !
Who dares accuse the good old Muse, if *Bacchanals* she
praise ?
Since all at will *puff'bacco* still, and *Ale* demands our lays.
Some think *puns* queer to *gild our beer*, what *FUNERAL's* with-
out *fun* ?
But were *their sum* in praise of *rum*, all then would a *pun-cheon*.
'Tis plain, I think, when *nations* drink *rum free from vitiation*,
That all who praise such *simple* ways love *abstract rumination*.
Our actions must be *plain* and just, when done upon *Cham-*
pagne,

And therefore proved *not far removed* if *Burgundy* constrain.
 Oh ! wondrous craft, or *check* or *draught*, she'd help to *cure-*
a-sore,

And though a *scald Burns* might be called, to find that
Little's Moore !

Our Ministry none sure can free from *entertainment* call,
 Since *all as* talks are ruled by *Vaux*, the Cabinet's *Vaux-all*.
 And sure you'll shun to call what's done in House of *Com-*
mons strange !

For though they storm now on *Reform*, they'll never never
change !

They've *Hunt-ing* there you'd almost swear, a *Saddler* fits
 the *Grey*,

Though no *Fox* seen, for *Rats* I ween they'll *Weather-all*
 the day.

Go ! *use* your *pen*, O *worthy* men ! if *you's* not worth a *penny* !
 For *Demi* mix in *POLI-tics*, whose *tics* ne'er deem I many.
 Indeed 'tis sure the *supper poor*, *poor sure-tics* oft *pur-sue*;
 And though their purse no *dollar nurse*, find each *tic dolor-*
eux.

Tis *natural* that, if not *flat*, you're *sharp*, so *blunt* be gone,
 For the *dun* is then most *red-dy* when, *black* thought ! the
red-dy's done !

Believe 'twere well o'er *Principle* no *Vice* should throw its
 pall.

And since *all* ye love jollity, drink ALL IN HALL to *Hall* !
 What matter though the *Boroughs* go disfranchised every jot,
 Here *Burrowes* stay, which Schedule *A* must turn to *B* I
 wot.

List ! when *Oceana* you greedily do *swallow* down,
You're out of tune, if you impugn the *works of Harington* !
Ale ! rarest *flower* of Toper's bower ! the *pink* of all that's
rare !
Of all that please, the best *heart's ease*, first *promised blossom*
there !

1829.

G. T.



XII.

“ Nil spissius illā

Dum bibitur.”

Quoted by *Walter Harris*, in his *Antiquities of Ireland*,
from *Henry of Avraunches*, a Norman Poet.



USTOM requires that I should chant
The praises of our cheer,
But can I sing when thus I am
A bearer of the *Beer*?

Monks they say, in auld lang syne,
Had in these walls a home,
Who, though bound down by strictest vows,
Were all inclined to *Roam*.

Then was it meet and proper too,
For some right lustye Friar,
Ne suiteth it my dignitie,
I wot, who am a *Prior*?

However, like a man I'll try
To sing this song of mine,
For 'tis my way, whene'er I *ail*,
I always scorn to *whine*.

Since last I sung, a year hath past,
Full of events most strange,
And therefore not a golden year,
Since it was full of *change*.

For Papists now can eat our *loaves*,
And hold right *high* their head ;
Yet bawling loud and scrambling too,
Was certainly *low-bred*.

Some say the Church is better for't,
Some say she's gone to rack ;
And clear it is, the Preachers of
Whitehall look very *black*.

The papers too swore that O'Con
Hatch'd treason every bit ;
But could it be, when that the law
Declar'd he could not *sit* ?

York-minster too had nigh been burnt
By a most naughty *spark* ;
Yet strange it is a *Martin* should
Be punish'd for a *lark*.

'The world's a stage,' our Bard hath sung,
The truth all men must feel ;
For all our *Spokesmen*, Lords and *Knaves*,
Make up one common-*weal*.

In our dominions too, the love
 Of letters ne'er can fail,
 For here each office is a *post*,
 And every man a *male*.

Our ministry can not be bad,
 There must be wisdom in't ;
 He surely must grow *Sage in time*
 Who's Master of the *Mint*.

'Twould seem they nothing in the House
 Of Commons do but eat,
 For when a measure they reject,
 They say it is not *meet*.

Howe'er on this she may rely,
 Old England's Ocean's daughter,
 She ne'er will find in hour of need
 One backward to *sup-port-her*.

Th' excise of malt they ne'er will raise
 I trust, and that's a cheerer,
 For every British heart would *whine*,
 To find his ale *made-dearer*.

Yet beer they tell us now will be
 Much cheaper than before ;
 Still if they take the duty off,
In duty we drink more.

Autumn's the time for *ale*, in proof
Of this I will adduce,
That in the Spring our butts of Beer
Are nothing but *verjuice*.

Of this our Poets now-a-days
Swill tankards by the score,
For Little were but little worth,
Until he cried out *Moore*.

A Laureate justly gave the wreath
To ale in classic lay,
But here our PRIOR humbly prays
The *prior praise* to-day.

No common beverage tempts the eye,
But fit in verse to shine,
As good as *Bishop*, since it is
A *Beverage Divine*.

Delicious beverage ! how oft
Thy virtue is belied !
An aching head who would not bear
To be an *Akenside* !

Our *Dryden*, ne'er may he be dry,
Our *Bowles* too never fail,
For *Cooper* makes our English *Butts*,
And *Crabbe* our bellies ail.

BRASENOSE ALE.

That Heathen sage I ween he was
 A *Morrall*-headed wight,
 For wine that makes us *stagger wrong*,
 Made him a *Stagyrite*.

The sons of *Wales* like Fishes drink,
 And Scotsmen like a *Mull*,
 Their ale is mild as milk in *Cowes*,
 In *Oxon* soft as *wool*.

And now to Church, and King, and Trade,
 We'll drink in brimmers full,
 As England's staple trade consists
 (Ask *Lyndhurst*) in her *wool*.

So pray ye now excuse my rhyme,
 And each unseemly pun,
 For though I've doubtless *punish'd* you,
 'Twas only meant in fun.

And pardon too my halting lines,
 Like lame men without props,
 For try my best I could but write
 In *limping* verse of *Hops*.

Thus having spun this lengthen'd yarn,
 At length we'll make a halt,
 And if you'd rightly praise our Beer,
 Pray get a little *Malt*.



XIII.

SHROVETIDE is come ! hurra ! hurra !
 Let's welcome in th' auspicious day :
 Our tables all their store display
 Each member to regale.
 Gadney sends greeting from Spithead,*
 Prior has to a first-rate † sped,
 And King majestically spread
 The cates and sparkling Ale.

Old Bacon ‡ form'd a scull and face
 Of blushless empty sounding brass,
 Which spoke, 'tis said, like Balaam's ass,
 Then fell, and prov'd too frail.
 But far more meritorious those
 Who shap'd the glorious Brasen-nose,
 In which a charm more potent flows,
 We mean the nut-brown Ale.

* Gadney was the cook : hence *Sput*-head.—ED.

† *Quasi* a vessel of first rate quality.

‡ Tradition attributed not only to Roger Bacon the "Brazen Head" but a connexion with Brasenose College. Greene in *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, [acted 1591] makes Bacon say,

Why flock you thus to Bacon's secret cell,
 A friar newly stalled in Brazen-nose ?

It is to be feared that this interesting tradition cannot be established historically.—ED.

Shrovetide returns ! so crown the bowl
With liquor that sublimes the soul ;
Let care beneath its bright waves roll,
 And cheerfulness prevail.
For studious men, profoundest thinkers,
For amorous beaux, gay Fashion's pinks, sirs,
For sportsmen blithe, and social drinkers,
 There's nought like Brasenose Ale.

Avaunt, thou Censor grim, avaunt,
Nor hover round our social haunt,
Our glee to dash, our courage daunt,
 And make our spirits quail.
And as returns this welcome day,
We'll still our gratitude display,
And sing in merry roundelay,
 The praise of Brasenose Ale.



XIV.



HALL all our singing now be o'er,
 Since Christmas Carols fail?
 No ! let us shout one stanza more,
 In praise of Brasenose Ale !

A fig for Horace and his juice,
 Falernian and Massic ;
 Far better drink can we produce,
 Though 'tis not quite so Classic.

Not all the liquors Rome e'er had
 Can beat our matchless Beer ;
 Apicius' self had gone stark mad,
 To taste such noble cheer.

E'en the High Table, well I know,
 In this will coincide ;
 I see it stamped upon his brow,*
 That yonder doth preside.

* The Rev. Samuel Hall, Vice-Principal, of convivial fame.—ED.

Ne'er had that eye so jocund been,
 That goodly form so sleek,
 That merry face we ne'er had seen,
 Had Brasenose Ale been weak.

BRASENOSE, with all thy faults, we must
 Acknowledge one and all,
 A Jovial Butt'ry thou canst boast,
 And eke a jovial HALL.

And since our BURSAR's learnt to brew,*
 E'en he has grown more stout ;
 His Colleague daily fattens too,
 From sympathy, no doubt.

And if the Undergraduates drank,
 As much beer as their betters,
 The College ne'er had lost her rank,
 In Cricket, Boating, Letters.

For once she was in manly play
 The pride of Bullingdon ;
 And ever on the racing day
 First on the River shone.

But why are all her triumphs o'er ?
 The reason well I guess ;

* See note, p. 41.—ED.

BRASENOSE ALE.

39

Hock and Champagne we drink much more,
And Brasenose Ale much less.

Then let us leave French Wine to fools ;
For just as well may we,
To fortify us for the Schools,
Drink Hyson and Bohea.

If we our places would regain
In Honour's bright career,
Away with Claret, Hock, Champagne,
And let us stick to Beer.

Once more shall Brasenose be first,
Both in the Schools and out,
When we have learnt to quench our thirst,
With Gallons of Brown Stout.

Then good luck to the Barley Crops,
And never may they fail ;
So may we nought but Malt and Hops
E'er find in Brasenose Ale.

1832.

N. M.



XV.

“Alifero tollitur axe Ceres.”—Ov. FAST.
Ceres high borne upon a Brewer's dray.



ENIUS! that held'st of yore thy POTENT sway,
By SPIRITING the sober sense away,
Whate'er thy awful name ;
_ Come from the tankard's depth, and help
me BREW
A CANTO on a theme full worthy you ;
For mine's a *Prior* claim.

No WEAKLY subject spurs my ambling pen,
Whose strength demands the loud *Alecaic* strain,
And much I fear to fail ;
Ask ye the task that frights my modest Muse ?
Ah ! learn the labour with the weighty news :
Freshmen, 'tis *Brasenose Ale* !

Oh ! for the depth of some potential soul,
To sing the curious mixtures of the bowl,
Its mystic birth unveil ;

What herbs, what simples, aid its silent power ;
 What secret incantations charm the hour
 That brews our Brasenose Ale.

Our Brewer, zealous for the College health,
 **Burrowing* amid the Apothecary's wealth.
 Consults the Leech's art ; †
 Knows to a nicety the quantum suff,
 Of pulv. and haust. to make his wholesome stuff,
 Part nourish, purge in part.

First in the Cauldron boils the well-dried Malt,
 The tempering Hop corrects its sweeter fault,
 And then? Forbear to rail ;
 Aperient Senna's leaf and Quassia's bitter,
Albumen too, than which no drug is fitter
 To clear our Brasenose Ale.

O say, ye Judges, if in any Beer
 Such science is exhibited as here,
 Such kindly cares prevail?
 Not that it quenches only praise is due,
 For we are physicked in the bargain, too,
 By this our Brasenose Ale.

* The Rev. Jos. Burrows was the Bursar who built the brewhouse.—ED.

† "Sunt aliis scriptæ, quibus *Alea* vertitur artes."

Is there a stomach racked by furious ache?
Let but the suffering wretch a tankard take,
 The remedy can't fail ;
What Student need the throbbing brow endure?
Our Barrels hold a Panacean cure,
 In shape of Brasenose Ale.

Then drink, ye College Scions, drink around,
For long and much I've laboured to compound
 Your *Lambswool* all this morn :
And praise my stanzas—for my wits have been
Wool-gathering the live-long night, I ween,
 And now I'm closely *shorn*.

And thou, *Aleluring* genius, disappear,
Till summoned from thy haunts another year :
 Till then each lip regale.
Thy empire is the throat of man ; thy home
Is in the Barrel's round, amid the foam
 That crowns our Brasenose Ale.



XVI.

Ἐκ κριθῶν μέθυ.

O SHADE of Whitbread, man of ale,
 Look down upon my lay ;
 As thou would'st say, " With swelling gale
 I urge my prosperous way."

O College Ale, O College Ale,
 Of thee what praise can speak enough ?
 Of all thy virtues the long tale
 To tell my verse is weak enough.

We know grim warriors us'd of old
 To drink from empty skulls,
 And modern ale fills oft, we're told,
 The empty heads of fools.

We know that such is not thy fate,
 Thou Ale of Brasenose ;
 We know that many a learned pate
 Thou lullest to repose.

O Brasenose Ale, I cannot view
 In thee one single fault ;

I'm not one of those persons who,
Like Brummel, never malt.

Thou mightest in thy liquid flow
From peasant please to Guelph ;
Ah ! if thy praise inspires me so,
What would'st thou do thyself ?

I ask, with philosophic breast,
("A moderate-minded bard"),
Ye Gods, one very slight request :
To grant it is not hard :—

A glass of ale like Denham's verse,
Though gentle, yet not dull,
(How prettily exprest, and terse !)
Though not o'erflowing, full.



XVII.

'Αλλ' ἄρσενάς τοι τήσδε γῆς οἰκίτορας
εὐρήσεται εὖ πίνοντας ἐκ κριθῶν μέθυ.

BROWN as the nut, yet crystal as the wave
Where Delphian maids their sweeping tresses lave ;
What more than mortal drink, or human cheer,
Stands like the bev'rage of some by-gone year ?

See, big with Ale, with liquor that defies
The tap of Whitbread, and Guinness outvies ;
Conscious of giant strength, as if it knew
The gods themselves would bless them at the view—
The tankard stands ; though mild, awakens still
Freshman's mute gaze, and Fellow's rapt'rous thrill ;
And proud that Oxford sports no better malt,
It quits the gloomy regions of the vault.
Lo ! Prior hastens with his motley crew,
To pour the foaming liquor to our view :
Clasps his firm hand in all a Butler's pride
The cup no Brasenose Fellow e'er denied :
Yet secret triumph o'er his brow has cast
That Ale the sweetest, as that brew the last !

“ Away, ye lighter drinks ! ye swipes, away,
“ Where masters bully, and where boys obey,”
The brewer cried ; and taught the Ale to live
With all the charms that malt and hops could give.
Warm’d at his touch, behold the vapours rise
In all their genuine fragrance to the skies : .
No beer-shop bev’rage, such as Cockneys buy,
Foul to the taste, and loathsome to the eye ;
No dingy mixture, vulgarly call’d swipes ;
No quassia juice, promoter of the gripes ;
But true proportions of good hops and malt,
Mingled with care, then stow’d within the vault :
The hue that tells its potency—the scent
That breathes as if from blest Arabia sent.
Still o’er his Ale fond Prior hangs confest,
And joy and triumph swell his manly breast.

Yet beams that Ale with colours bright alone ?
Nought but the fragrance left ? the flavour gone ?
Taste, yet again—repeat the luscious draught,
Such as the Greek or Roman never quaff’d ;
Taste, till the rapt imagination deem
The fabled Nectar was not all a dream ;
O’er earth and hell this strong power has prevail’d,
And quell’d the rabble when all else had failed ;
Back to their dens seditious leaders hurl’d,
Bade faction tremble—and sustain’d the world.

Such, glorious liquor of the olden time,
When to be drunk with Ale was deem'd no crime :
When in the morn and eve and mid-day stood
Upon our fathers' boards old English food ;
Such hast thou been, 'mid war and change the same,
Link'd with the poet's and the scholar's name,
Mellow'd by age—but still with flavour higher,
The pride of Brasenose, and the boast of Prior.

1835.

R. J. B.



XVIII.

Οὐ πίνουσ' αἶθρα οἶνον,
 Τοῦνεκ' ἀναίμονές εἰσι, καὶ ἀθάνατοι καλέονται.



TOUCH, touch ye the tuneful chord, and sing
 Of that olden festival,
 When Alfred sate at his royal board,
 And drank of his foaming Ale.

With many a smoking haunch and loin
 That glorious board was crown'd ;
 And many a laughing eye was there
 As the "mantling bliss" went round.

Oft had it pass'd on that merry day,
 When the Prophet-king upsprang,
 And the vaulted roof and trophied walls
 With cheers of his courtiers rang.

" Few years, I ween, shall pass away,
 " Few kings give up their sceptred sway,
 " Ere there shall ope its portals wide
 " A College rear'd in Gothic pride ;
 " Far fam'd for many an age to come,
 " Call'd from my own Brasinium ;

" Yes, College, henceforth charter'd be,
 " And *Brasin-huse** yclep'd by me.
 " Thy foaming Ale in future days
 " Shall be the theme of deathless praise ;
 " Full many a rich nectareous bowl
 " Shall flood right deep each Fellow's soul ;
 " Full many thro' the midnight damp
 " Shall feed the scholar's mental lamp ;
 " To fame shall bid each son aspire,
 " And fan the poet's infant fire ;
 " Shall bid him swell with Pindar's rage,
 " And drink in raptures Homer's page.
 " And eke as each succeeding year
 " Shall shed fresh honours on the ' cheer,'
 " For aye its fame shall last, I trow,
 " And glory be as great as now.
 " Some scion of the noble shrine,
 " Gifted with powers of *verse divine*,
 " Shall weave a strain to tell the tale
 " Of *Brasin-huse* and its matchless Ale.
 " The Butler too, whose right shall be,
 " A right for ever held in fee,
 " His tenure—it is all I ask,

* " His palace (viz. Alfred's) adjoining it, is called by himself in his Laws the ' King's Hall ' ; and the then important accommodation of a Brasinium, Brewhouse or *Brasin-huse*" . . . which, no doubt, is the etymon of Brasen Nose. Vid. Ingram's Mem. of Oxford, No. 8, page 2.
 —ART. *Church of St. Mary the Virgin.*

" *A yearly present of one cask,**
 " Shall, as each Shrove-tide passes by,
 " Right gladly to the cellar fly,
 " And bid that cask forsake its rest
 " To cheer each vot'ry's longing breast,
 " When Bursar, Fellows, Scholars, all
 " Shall hie them to the College Hall."

Thus spake the seer—anon his courtier throng
 Hail'd their good Liege in wassail loud and long.

And well did the Prophet-king predict
 To his College deathless name,
 For it long has stood, and long shall stand,
 Rank'd high in the roll of Fame.

And there he looks from the canvas down,
 And glad is his beaming eye,
 To have seen and see his sons fulfil
 His glorious Prophecy.

1836.

R. P. H.

* These words, it must be confessed, are somewhat obscure, but happily they have received every elucidation from time; in fact, the prophecy contained in them has been fulfilled to the letter, for in the present day the tenure by which the Butler holds his office is a cask of ale presented annually to the College on Shrove Tuesday.



XIX.

Αἶνει δὲ παλαιὸν
 μὲν οἶνον, ἄνθεα δ' ὕμνων
 νεωτέρων.

AS the Gods once at dinner were found,
 With their usual celestial party,
 While the Nectar passed gaily around,
 And all seemed to be merry and hearty:—

Jolly Bacchus, their Common Room Steward,
 Being told that their stock was but poor,
 Proposed, 'tis so said, to the Board,
 They should speedily choose out *a Brewer*.

Now if those who inhabit this earth,
 As was said by the Sages of yore,
 Have all passed through some previous birth,
 And lived many ages before ;

No doubt but our Brasen-nose Prior
 Has trod their Vulcanian hall,
 And stood by Minerva's great Sire,
 With his urn of Ambrosial Ale.

For some truly Promethean fire,
And the purest ethereal dew,
Must have mixed with the malt from which Prior
Has formed this celestial brew.

And now should our Brasen-nose rowers
Not put on because No-man will steer ;
Why, still they can ship all the oars,
And pull at the Brasen-nose beer.

For what sets the soul all on fire,
Dispels every gloom, every fear,
Or the *fancy's* bright *hits* can inspire,
Half so well as a tankard of beer ?

No *Sappho* will now need despair,
Or her *Phaon's* desertion will fear ;
Her distress would soon vanish in air,
With a tankard of Brasen-nose beer.

The sportsman who, worn out and spent,
Has returned from the toils of the day ;
What will sooner restore him his strength,
Or drive fatigue sooner away ?—

The student who, pale with reflection,
Plies a task there's so little to cheer,
Finds relief from his weary dejection
In his commons of Brasen-nose beer.

Then here is a *Holy Alliance*,
An empire divided is here,
When the sons of true learning and science,
Confess their allegiance to beer.

Then let palaces all around rise,
Where the Gin-Demon fixes his throne ;
Our Beer shall not flee to the skies,
While Brasen-nose claims it her own.

So success to our College, our learning !
And may all but our battel rise higher !
As we wish, with each Shrove-tide returning,
Long life to our Ganymede *Prior*.

1837.

H. F.



XX.

'Αθανάτων ὅτι κλέψας
 ἀλίκεσσι συμπόταις
 νέκταρ ἀμβροσίαν τε
 δῶκεν. Olymp. Od. i. 98.

LET other bards of ladies dream,
 And bright eyes without number ;
 My harp shall find some newer theme,
 Or shall for ever slumber.

Heroic measures some may follow,
 Or cultivate Melpomene :
 But me from crape preserve, Apollo ;
Audi poetam, domine !

The height how great ! I dare not jump it,
 But wisely keep the middle,
 Nor lift my soul to Harper's trumpet
 Or Paganini's fiddle.

No scenes of tragedy wake high,
 Or martial notes inspire ;
 I pass the other Muses by,
 And court my own Thalia.

Yet music from her lute shall swell
Articulate and mellow,
As e'er from Caradori fell,
From Grisi or Novello.

She is of Epicurus' sect,
A lover of good cheer ;
Her ethics then will not reject
The name of Prior's beer.

Champagne and Burgundy may fail ;
Or if our taste be classic,
The wines of Rome and Greece are stale,
Falernian and Massic.

And though to Claret and to Hock
The Muse has no objection,
She'd rather turn the buttery cock ;
'Tis genuine perfection.

'Tis soft as dews in distillation ;
Then deem it not unable
To rouse to lofty admiration
The synod of High Table.

Lo ! Zeno starts with sudden grace,
The virtuous and dreamy ;
And o'er the depths of Euclid's face
Approving smiles are gleamy.

Plump Æsop swears his juice but vile,
 And half deserts the bottle ;
Astrides from the chair meanwhile
 Nods health to Aristotle.*

Then not like Dido in the story
 Our lips the flood shall stir,
 For “summo tenus attigit ore”
 The Poet sang of her.

The fingers grasp the tankard's side,
 And o'er the crested brim,
 Where pouts the nectar in its pride,
 The drunken optics swim.

But lest some faces should look cold,
 (They wrong the beer, not us),
 To prove it orthodox and old,
 I'll quote Herodotus.

He clearly states in Book the second,
 And seventy-seventh chapter,
 That beer was first in Egypt reckon'd
 A native manufacture.

And as to Bacchus (he names two),
 My mind a theory shapes :

* These names are of course intended for the Tutors and Lecturers of the period.—ED.

The one prepared good malt and true ;
The other dealt in grapes.

Then wisdom learn from the description
Which our historian wrote us ;
As for myself, I'll turn Egyptian
To live on beer and lotus.*

1838.

C. G.

* Τὸ ἐκ τοῦ μέσου τοῦ λωτοῦ, τῆ μήκωνι ἐὼν ἐμφερές, πτίσαντες,
ποιεῖνται ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἄρτους ὀπτοῦς πυρί. Herod. Lib. ii. cap. 92.



XXI.

“ And yet, amidst that joy and uproar,
 Let us think of them that sleep,
 Full many a fathom deep,
 By thy wild and stormy steep,
 Elsinore ! ”—CAMPBELL.



SEE where yon goblet beaming
 Invites the wistful eye !
 Whose smile luxuriant gleaming
 Proclaims a fragrance nigh !
 While gladsome spirits thronging round
 To taste its richness press ;
 And fair the scene, and loud the sound
 Of mirth and happiness !

Bright antidote of sorrow !
 Some kind enlivening ray
 From thee we fain would borrow,
 To warm our grateful lay :
 For oft, I ween, thy kindling glance
 The drooping heart hath cheered ;
 Poured round the soul a joyous trance,
 And visions gay up-reared.

Full many a day of gladness
Hath hailed the welcome cheer ;
Full many a thought of sadness
Hath fled, transported, here.
And still, through years of fleeting change,
Each passing youthful train,
Ere it might tempt the wide world's range,
Hath paused the cup to drain.

While warm affection glowing
Bids mean suspicion fly,
Our youthful hearts bestowing
On most that hover nigh ;
Though outward promise seem sincere,
And lasting all our joy,
Yet cherished hopes and memories dear
Unkindness may destroy.

The word of coldness spoken
Inflicts a bitter smart :
The tie of friendship broken
Torments the aching heart :
But sadder far the hopeless pain,
When death's remorseless hand
Hath all untimely snapped in twain
Affection's golden band.

Since first in lofty seeming
Up-sprung these walls to-day,

And the sweet nectar streaming
 Each Shrovetide claimed the lay,
 Full oft hath fled the hopeful brood
 That here for shelter pressed ;
 And many a race of noblest blood
 Forgotten lies at rest.

But, though our friends forget us,
 Let one kind thought restore
 Their names, who once have met us.
 But ne'er may meet us more.
 And if, perchance, my memory's light
 Departed friends we view,
 Oh ! let that memory still be bright
 And may our hearts be true !

When last the cup was flowing,
 ONE* graced our smiling Hall,
 Whose eye with kindness glowing
 Inspired the festival.
 But now that bright and honoured head
 Rests in the darkling tomb :
 And ours it is to mourn the dead
 In unavailing gloom.

Forgive the Muse, if, erring,
 She drop a plaintful word :

* The Rev. James Smith, Vice-Principal.—Ed.

If, thoughts of sorrow stirring,
She strike too harsh a chord.
She would not mar the festive scene,
Nor give a wanton pain :
And, though her strain have saddening been,
She bids you smile again !

In banquet-hall 'tis meetest
To raise the echoing laugh :
In jocund hour 'tis sweetest
The bowl's deep flood to quaff.
Aye ! let your mirth be loud and long !
Let voice and heart be free !
And 'midst the din of shout and song
Let all feast merrily !

Go forth, my sons, to glory !
Go climb the steeps of fame !
Go ! and in future story
Enroll your shining name !
May no dark cloud obscure your sky ;
No ill your soul dismay ;
Nor keener sorrow dim your eye
Than claims the tear to-day !



XXII.

"Fies nobilium tu quoque fontium."—HORACE.

Ἴν', ὅταν τάμωσι βότριν,
 ἄνοσοι μένωσι πάντες,
 ἄνοσοι δέμας θειγόν,
 ἄνοσοι γλυκύν τε θυμὸν,
 ἐς ἔτους φανέντος ἄλλου.—ANACREON.



IS ALE, immortal Ale, I sing !
 Bid all the Muses throng !
 Bid them awake each slumbering string,
 Till the loud chord responsive ring
 To swell the lofty song !

They come ! they throng in fair array !
 They wake the slumbering string !
 While, to add honour to the day,
 Bacchus himself inspires the lay,
 Bold Wassail's generous King !

Yet, though the merry God combine,
 No discord need we fear :
 If they the poet's thought refine,
 The poet ever loved his wine,
 And they the God of Beer.

Long hath a friendship kind and true
 Proclaimed their firm good-will :
 And oft hath gleamed the Ivy's hue
 Where the bright Nine the maze pursue
 Beside Castalia's rill.*

But count it not a poet's lie ;
 Deem it no idle tale :—
 That fount so dear to Bacchus' eye—
 Famed source of noblest minstrelsy—
 That fountain flowed with—ALE !

Each bard of yore impatient pressed
 To taste the inspiring wave :
 And, as he drank with eager zest,
 A frenzy filled his maddening breast,
 And loftiest ardour gave.

Or, if denied its genial spray,
 Those bards of dauntless soul,
 They broached the cask—nor knew dismay—
 Each in his solitude away,
 And quaffed the flowing bowl.†

* Sophocles, (Edip. Tyr. 1105.
 εἶθ' ὁ Βακχεῖος, ναί-
 ων ἐπ' ἄκρων ὀρέων, εὖ-
 ρημα δέξατ' ἔκ του
 Νυμφᾶν Ἑλικωνίδων,
 αἷς πλείστα συμπαίξει.

† See Horace, I. Epist. xix. 1—8.

'Twas this that roused the tragic pride
 Of Æschylus the brave :*
 And fed his † flame, who grieved and died,
 When in sad waste out-poured he spied
 The wine he could not save. ‡

Then raise the sparkling draught on high !
 The bright brown goblet drain !
 All by-gone ages we defy :
 We too can boast our Castaly :
 With us the Muses reign !

The Fount within our College wall
 Which springs so rich and clear ;
 And gladdens now our favoured Hall,
 Holding each raptured heart in thrall—
 'Tis *that* inspires us here !

We spread its deathless praises wide ;
 And well bestowed we deem

* Athenæus, Deipnosoph. I. c. xix. μεθύων δὲ ἐποίει τὰς τραγωδίας Αἰσχύλος, ὃς φησι Χαμαιλέων.

† Cratinus retained to the last his aversion to *teetotalism*, as was evinced by the title and tenor of his last play (the Πυτίνη); to say nothing of the anecdote related by Aristophanes concerning the manner of his death.

‡ Aristophanes, Pax 700.

The yearly tribute, while with pride
Into the song's full flowing tide
We fling the honeyed theme.*

And yearly may those praises know
A welcome kind from all :
And yearly may that Fountain flow
To cheer with warm convivial glow
Our Shrovetide festival !

Unquenched by time, undimmed by blame,
Those virtues shall prevail :
Ages to come shall own the flame,
And ever celebrate the name
Of our immortal Ale !

1840.

G. T. D.

* Pindar, Nem, vii. 16.

*εἰ δὲ τύχη τις ἔρδων, μελίφρον' αἰτίαν
ῥοαῖσι Μοισῶν ἐνέβαλεν.*



XXIII.

“ Ay, you spake in Latin then too ; but 'tis no matter : I'll ne'er be drunk whilst I live again, but in honest, civil, godly company.”—*Merry Wives of Windsor*.

IMMORTAL Nose ! tho' weak my Muse to soar
 To thy proud height—above our College door,
 Be not upturned in scorn of my poor lays ;
 No paltry Nose of these degenerate days ;
 O give me omens good, nor let me deem
 Thy tip unbrightened by my mighty theme !
 See, the eyes twinkle ! I will swear they do,
 And the bright tip assumes a ruddier hue !
 Thanks, Jolly Nose—now aid, ye tipsy Nine,
 Round each full cask a joint-stock wreath we'll twine,
 Yours be the laurel crowns, so that the beer be mine.

Ye spirits of past beers, that linger still
 Where Prior's hands the foaming goblets fill ;
 And you, ye classic pots, whose radiance falls
 In lines of glory on our buttery walls ;
 Thou ponderous Book, ye shades profound, that hold
 Your haleow'd treasures, *hopeful* stores untold ;
 And ye, bright blossoms, which in times bygone
 Tipp'd the proboscis of each College don,

Fresh budding on each younger Nose, O deign,
 Kind Spirits all, to aid my labouring brain,
 In praise of mighty beer to rouse the lofty strain.

For oft, 'tis said, at midnight's stilly hour,
 When studious eyes see double with thy pow'r,
 That Cain and Abel, at Tom's summons deep,
 Relax their limbs at once, and start from sleep ;
 Seize the dear pots, which bound by laws no more
 Troop forth spontaneous from the buttery door,
 With antics wild the brimming nectar quaff,
 Wink at the wondering Nose, and drink, and laugh ;
 The drowsy Tutor opens half an eye,
 And starts aghast, exclaiming with a sigh,
 " Oh dear, what are they at ? Confound those boys, say I."

If such thy potent strength, that with thy fumes
 E'en the dead stone unwonted life assumes,
 Well may they triumph, boasting without fear
 The pink of butlers, and the best of beer.
 Match'd with the burnished Nose in revel's fight,
 The *Star** turns pale, and owns its feeble light ;
 The *Mitre* totters o'er its gateway then ;
 E'en the wild *Roebuck* shrinks into its den ;
 The *Angel's* wings hang down ; the *Vine* alone
 Can boast a nectar something like our own,
 And o'er the empty *Cups* assumes to set its throne.

* Some of these hotels have changed their names, and some have disappeared by this time.—ED.

Then welcome to my lips, great king of frolic,
 Stern foe to headache, devils blue, and cholick—
 No dandy soda water bring to me,
 No Lady's lemonade, no soft bohea ;
 Thy sterner aid I claim, and ask thy might
 To quell the riots of that punch last night.
 Brasenose, I love thee still ; what though there be
 Thy speech-struck hall, thy pleasant library ;
 So short each meal, so long each battels-bill ;
 While such rare beer thy foaming tankards fill,
 In spite of all thy faults, Brasenose, I'll love thee still.

Yes, Childe of Ale, well named, you too can tell
 The virtues of that beer you love so well ;
 While with nice skill, and mixture true, you float,
 Beer for the crew, the water for the boat ;
 Empty and dry the craft, the tankards full,
 Stout hearts to cheer them, and strong arms to pull ;
 We'll fear no rival boat shall match our speed ;
 Wadham's blue ties shall still look blue indeed ;
 The startled Universe shall ask for quarter.
 Why, scan those stalwart forms that well have fought her ;
 Think you such shoulders broad were ever bred on water ?

No ! let weak drinks to weaker heads give cheer,
 As for ourselves, we'll swim our souls in beer,
 Nor grow tee-totals in our honour'd hall
 At boating feast, or Shrove-tide festival ;
 See how each frothy pot, a liquid bliss,

Drunken itself, invites the toper's kiss ;
 Nay, be not coy—each founder known to fame
 Looks with approving joy from out his frame ;
 Grave Sutton's eyes are glistening with the sight ;
 E'en the great Duchess looks less stern to-night,
 Peacocks her swelling breast, and fairly grins delight.

Stop ! pass ye not the Buttery by, but look
 Where stands the guardian genius of the book :
 With such an air he straddles 'fore the fire
 As conscious worth alone and—beer inspire ;
 Bright as his own effulgent pots his face ;
 Soft as their frothy crests, his manly grace :
 From 'neath each arm his flapping coat-tails fly,
 Pow'r in his port, and triumph in his eye ;
 Bacchus he seems, as when on Delphian plain
 He sports with mountain nymphs, nor sports in vain :
 Silenus hands the pots, and stirs the revel vein.

But who is he, the *great*, the *awful* form,
 Girt by no tempest, sandall'd by no storm :
 In humble guise of common mortal drest,
 On his broad back his graceful fingers rest ;
 Who late descending to these shades below,
 Chats social gossip with the Butler now ?
 The portly chin, majestic shape, the eye,
 Bespeak a hero, or—a Bossom * nigh.

* This most famous of porters occupied the lodge till his death in 1861.
 —E.D.

Shine on, twin Stars—while Brasenose keeps her name,
And worth and truth are not unknown to fame,
Respect and friendship, too, ye both shall justly claim.

1841.

E. G.



XXIV.

“Hic dies anno redeunte festus
 Corticem adstrictum pice demovebit
 Amphoræ.”—HORACE, Carm. Lib. III. 8.

THE revel is loud in the College Hall,
 When midnight booms from the giant bell,
 And the shadows grow dim on roof and wall,
 And the revellers pause in their festival
 As the doors open wide as by magic spell.

Then glides through the midst in fantastic guise
 A mighty proboscis of burnished brass ;
 A merry light beams from its twinkling eyes
 Which glow on each side of its *bridge of size*
 As they gaze upon tankard, and flagon, and glass.

Warmly those eyes on the revellers rest
 Each ruddy carbuncle with ecstasy heating :
 A gay pocket-handkerchief forms its vest,
 Two pipes are its legs, and an ale-glass its crest,
 And thus in glad tones it addresses the meeting :—

Sons of my love, and co-heirs of my brass
 (A property shared I must own by all Colleges),

Fill, fill to the brim ev'ry goblet and glass,
 With ale whose bright nectar what draught can surpass ?
 Whose mild inspiration what heart but acknowledges ?

Drink to the memory of those who are gone ;
 Drink to the honours in store for posterity ;
 Drink to his * praise, in whose conduct there shone
 An affection for all, a preferring of none,
 A regard for the good, for the vicious severity.

Drink to his honours, and long may he wear them,
 With content to enhance, and with health to enjoy,
 May the malice of foes or the world ne'er impair them,
 But the breath of detraction, that blasts others, spare them
 To bloom till the mild hand of time shall destroy.

Fill, fill again—bright beyond all compare is
 Our ale, whose rich stream has no crudeness to barb it ;
 Fill to his praise, who of all I declare is
 The man of my heart, *homo emunctæ naris*,
 The poet in soul, not in letter-press, Garbett.

Here's to the crews that have been, and will be again
 If they stick to our ale ; but sadly I fear it
 Is scarce to be hoped that such times we shall see again,

* The Principal, Dr. Gilbert, elevated to the Bishopric of Chichester.
 The 'poet' Garbett was the Rev. James Garbett, elected Professor of
 Poetry about this time.—ED.

If they take to their gin, and their rum, and brandy again,
 For how can strength lie in half mortal, half *spirit* ?

No—quaff the bright draught, our delight and our glory,
 The poet's inspirer, the scholar's true friend,
 As he threads the dark mazes of classical story,
 Urged on by our arguments drawn *a Priori*
 Our ale's ruddy stream with Castalia to blend.

With the rich flow of soul and of malt in alliance
 No brainsick delusions my sons shall distress :
 Thus armed let them set ev'ry fear at defiance,
 Who boast of a *Butler* to aid them in science,
 Whose prowess in *battels* what pen can express ?

No fear that we ever shall come to a pinch—
 (By the bye, pray has any one here got a snuff-box ?
 Sir, I thank you)—if e'er we are ready to flinch,
 One flagon of ale ; then to fight inch by inch,
 And with courage renewed give dull care's ear a rough box.

But see where the grey dawn the East 'gins to dapple,
 And bids me depart, though I fain yet would stay,
 Farewell, my sons, dear to me as my eye's apple,
 These my fatherly precepts let memory grapple,
 Still bright when myself shall have melted in day.

1842.

T. P. W.



XXV.

DEM. πῶς δ' ἂν μεθύων χρηστόν τι βουλευέσαιτ' ἀνὴρ ;
 NIC. ἄληθες, οὗτος ; κρουνοχυτρολήραιον εἶ.
 ὅταν πίνωσι ἄνθρωποι, τότε
 πλουτοῦσι, διαπράττουσι, νικῶσιν δίκας,
 εὐδαιμονοῦσιν, ὠφελοῦσι τοὺς φίλους.

ARISTOPHANES, KNIGHTS, 88.

LET others rejoice in the praises of wine
 From Xerxes, Oporto, or banks of the Rhine,
 To a theme far more noble I bid you give ear,
 While I sing you the praises of Brasenose Beer.

I've heard of Malvoisie that's quaff'd by the Knight,
 Our Beer, Sirs, is drunk both by *day* and by *night* :
 I've heard, too, of Burgundy lov'd by a Friar ;
 What's that to our Beer, which is brew'd by a *Prior* ?

Behold now the figure of Bossom our Porter ;
 Does he look like a man to be tempted by water ?
 That form so majestic, 'tis perfectly clear,
 Has thriven on pretty well Brasenose beer.

They say that good wine never needeth a bush ;
 That a sign is not wanted to shew the best lush :

He lies in his throat who says our Beer is poor,
Though a jolly *Brass Nose* does hang over the door.

“What! our College a Public?” Aye, listen to me,
While I quote you a D.D.’s high authority:*
Dr. Ingram asserts, and his side I espouse,
Brasenose is but an alias for King’s Brewing-house.

Come—a pull at the tankard—each rubicund face
Wears a jollier look and a mellower grace;
Gaunt Logic avaunt—nor ye Classics draw near
On the night that is hallow’d to Brasenose Beer.

Answers Logic, half-pettish, “Good Sirs, do not flout me,
I’ll shew that you’ll do better with than without me.
Put your lips to the tankard—the liquor will then shew
The wonderful use of Simplex Apprehensio:

“Then Judicium—those smacks of the lips clearly tell
That your judgment distinguishes tol’rably well:
And as for Discursus—just hark to the row!
Sure you never had need of my aid more than now.”

Lo! a host of thin spirits now flit round the Hall,
While vine-clad Anacreon thus answers for all:
“Oh, had but our times known such excellent cheer,
We might now have been drinking your Brasenose Beer.”

* Vide *Memorials of Oxford*, Vol. III. St. Mary the Virgin;
account of Church, p. 2.

'Mid scenes so rejoicing, yet still to my eyes
The visions of days that are past will arise,
When the first on the river, the first in the Schools,
Your fathers ne'er yielded to striplings or fools.

Then foremost again your old places resume,
Leave others behind you to pant and to fume :
Yourselves be again what your fathers once were ;
Ye eat the same commons, ye drink the same Beer.

My muse now shuts up with a pain in her jaws,
A pretty strong hint that it's time I should pause ;
I think so myself, or I very much fear
You'll all be soon fuddled by Brasenose Beer.

One moment yet stay, ere I bid you adieu,
Let us have one good shout as we once used to do :
Come—Hip ! Hip ! Hurrah ! let us raise the loud cheer,
As we part (p'raps for ever) from Brasenose Beer.



XXVI.

Οἶνω δὲ ἐκ κριθέων πεποιημένῳ διαχρέωνται· οὐ γάρ σφί εἰσι ἐν
τῇ χώρῃ ἀμπελοι.—HERODOT. ii. 77.

“Hic dies, anno redeunte, festus
Corticem astrictum pice dimovebit
Amphoræ.”—HORAT. Lib. iii. Od. 8.



OW the shades of evening fall,
And the sun, retreating,
Once again within the Hall
Brings our hour of meeting :
Now the fire is blazing bright,
And darkness closes thicker,
What shall be our toast to-night ?
What shall be our liquor ?

What ?—there needs no second thought ;
For ours are toasts of yore,
Themes on which our grandsires thought,
And we will evermore.
Drink in heart, if not in voice,
To all we love and honour ;
To our Queen—her wedded choice—
Blessings be upon her !

Church and State, and ruling powers,
 Friends of stormy weather,
 Friends of bright and happy hours,
 Toast them all together ;
 To homes, to Alma Mater dear,
 To none of all we fail ;
 Drink them—but what shall be our cheer ?
 What—but our Brasenose Ale ?

What meeter to bid cares depart,
 For all what better charm,
 For student pale—to cheer his heart,
 For oar—to nerve his arm ?
 Then touch again the tankard's brink,
 Again the can assail,
 Now to our own—to Brasenose drink,
 Drink in her own bright Ale.

Albeit with the name be joined
Some saddening retrospections
 Of lectures stern—chains tightly bound—
 And grim, white-tied Collections :
 Though harsh, Macbeth-like,* sound the bell
 To murder sleep ere dawn,
 And Dons protect the grass-plot well,
 Because they love *the lawn*.

* Macbeth *does murder sleep*, the innocent sleep,
 MACBETH, Act ii. Scene 2.

Though in our path, with perils fraught,
Lie dread Examinations ;
Though teeming* joys be dearly bought
By mournful rustications :
“ We will not think on themes like these,”
Nor let their shades prevail ;
Chase them like snow before the breeze,
Drown them in Brasenose Ale.

They sang of old, that Lethe quaffed
Oblivion deep could bring :
Not such shall be our genial draught,
Our Shrove-tide offering.
Nay rather, as the can we drain,
Let past with present blend,
Think on each once-famed Brasenose name,
Think on each parted friend.

So when each now familiar face
From these our haunts has fled,
And we and ours, a changing race,
To other scenes have sped,
What potion bland—what charmed cup
Old times shall then prevail
In memory's eye to summon up?—
One draught of Brasenose Ale !

1843.

J. G. C.

* Query—“teaming?”—*Printer's Devil*.



XXVII.

“ ’Tis merry in Hall, when beards wag all,
And welcome merry Shrove-tide.”

HENRY IVth, Part II.

HUZZAH for the spigot, the faucet, and pail,
Huzzah for our tankards of bonny brown Ale,
Let us all be prepared for a jolly day.
Away with reflection, or dull retrospection,
Let no timid bosom suggest an objection,
For this is our annual holiday.

Of true British growth is the nectar we boast,
The homely companion of plain boil'd and roast,
Yet suited for Hall or for Parlour.
Whenever with friends we're inclined to be merry,
'Tis better to give honest Ale than bad Sherry,
Or hope to deceive with Marsala.

Then round let it pass, in our Rooms or in Hall,
For its foam the bright eyes of our love shall recall,
Or the smiles of a fair one so winning ;
While our bosoms are glowing, our thoughts overflowing,
Our tongues with a railway celerity going,
And heads with the lambs-wool are spinning.

'Tis the season of mirth, 'tis the eve of delight,
Then give all the honour we owe to this night,
 Such moments are truly delicious ;
Our spirits shall waft us to regions of bliss,
For one can of liquor so precious as this
 Would tickle the ribs of Apicius.

Oh yield not to thoughts of the good days of old,
When head of the river our boat was enroll'd,
 No daring competitor caught us ;
'Till careless or idle—secure in our strength,
Our vigour decreasing, we fulfil at length
 The tale of the hare and the tortoise.

Regret cannot speed us—let's turn to our Ale,
Its nourishing powers descend by entail,
 While time does away with its blemishes ;
Our courage shall rise, and our vigour return,
When senior and freshman shall equally learn
 'Tis made to be drunk on the premises.

Father Mathew may boast what water can do,
We'll shew him what liquor our Prior can brew,
 What spirits his bumpers can foster :
No proselyte here shall be ever secure,
But turn to the Pope for a cold water cure ;
 No Mathew shall be Pater-noster.

If any there be who, in spite of our fame,
Would quench the bright lustre that circles our name,
 The merits of spring-water skill'd in,
To let well alone such poor youths must prepare,
Or else, when the dinner is over, repair
 To the pump in the little back building.

For we'll push round the can pretty briskly to-night,
Our sconces to wit and to mirth shall give light,
 And the Hall shall be rocking with laughter ;
Not a spirit shall shrink, to a man we'll all drink,
To our friends, with our friends, nor allow time to think
 Of any effect to come after.

1844.

F. P.



XXVIII.

“Mund an und ab, Mund ab und an,
 So lang’ ich dich noch halten kann!
 Nun nimmer leer-und stille stehn,
 Nun nimmer, nimmer müssig gehn,
 Wo’s giebt noch volle Flaschen.”

Trinklied.—MÜLLER.

“Hic noctem ludo ducunt, et pocula læti
 Fermento atque acidis imitantur vitea sorbis.”

GEORG. III. 379-80.

“If with water you fill up your glasses,
 You ’ll never write anything wise;
 For *ale* is the horse of Parnassus,
 Which hurries a bard to the skies!”

Odes to Anacreon.—MOORE.



HE era of Polka has beamed forth its light,
 And many a heart has it thrill’d with delight,
 But can it compare with the silvery smile,
 Of the tankard, where’ lurking so potent a wile?

’Twas glorious to see the “Ocean’s child,
 The Spaniard and Turk, and the Indian wild,”*

* “Last night a Fancy Dress and Polka Ball was given at Brasenose College, Oxford, which was numerous and fashionably attended.”—*Morning Post*, Jan. 31st.

Quaff champagne to the weal of the Phoenix, and boat,
And cheer the flag onwards in vict'ry to float.

But oh ! that our Ale had bade us to cheer,
Then Christ Church and Merton no more should we fear !
Oh ! that our Prior had stood in the place
Of Sims, Gammon, and Guy, and their dangerous race.

Though stern is the conflict 'tween Church and State,
Since the Seven * joined heads in grim debate,
As the Seven who joined their nodding helmets,
To scatter the might of the Theban realms ;

Yet ours be the season for mirth and glee,
To Seniors we'll leave dire heresy,
And merrily rhyme in our verses free,
The weight of Bossom, and old B.N.C.

Let the Scotchman prate of his "usquebaugh ;"
Oh ! verily, won't we believe it a' ?
Let Paddy swear to his smoky "potheen,"
By the "sowl of St. Patrick, ye Saxon spalpeen !"

Let the Welshman boast of his "cwrw da ;"
St. Tafydd may vouch for all he saw,

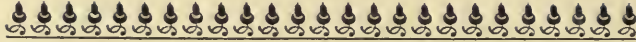
* This evidently refers to some theological dispute engaged in by the "Seniority," *i. e.* the Principal and six Senior Fellows, who in *præ*-commission days formed the Governing Body of the College.—Ed.

And drank—but we'll stick to our Brasen-nose,
And we'll quaff it in Hall and under the rose.

And if needs we must swear, why we'll swear by "*our nose*,"
Which high o'er the portal in mystery glows,
Which "lamb's-wool" has dyed, and which Shrove-tide shall
see
With "lamb's-wool" aye toasted in three times and three.

1845.

B. O. J.



XXIX.

“ Illud est Catonis senis : a quo cum quæreretur, quid maxime in re familiari expediret ? respondit, ‘ Bene pascere.’ ”

Cicero de Officiis, Lib. II. cap. 25.



STRONG Brasenose Ale, to us the fruitful spring
Of joys unnumber'd, Undergraduates sing ;
That Ale, which gave, in these our boating days,
To all the racing crew immortal praise.

Declare, O Muse, how many years ago,
Who built the brew'ry, bade the tankard flow.

When England's king with many a warlike band,
His course directed to broad Isis' strand,
Thrice had kind victory deign'd her son to crown,
And thrice in desperate fight the Danes done brown ;
Now peace invited here to build a town
And raise aloft the glories of the gown.
The town is built, and pointed domes arise,
Where Brasenose gateway proudly sees the skies ;
Before the gate the admiring monarch stands,
Lauding it thus to his surrounding bands :—
“ Approach, ye English, and behold the sight,
A palace fit for any Lord or Knight ;
Its fame shall fill the world's remotest ends,
Wide as the morn her golden beam extends.
If aught your tender consciences offend,

To all complaints a gracious ear we lend."
 He said ; the Schools with loud applauses sound ;
 The hollow Quads each deafening shout rebound.

Then spoke his son, for wisdom long approved,
 And hemming twice, he thus his father moved ;—
 “ Monarch of nations, whose superior sway
 Assembled states and lords of earth obey ;
 The laws and sceptres to thy hand are given,
 And millions own the care of thee and heaven.
 Strict are thy statutes ; no top boots we wear,
 No warlike swords upon our thighs we bear ;
 No clothyard shafts we from our bows let fly,
 Lest we smash lamps, knock out some tutor’s eye ;
 No marble in circles on the hall-steps rolls,
 We cannot play lag-out, nor yet three-holes.*
 Hear then a thought, not now conceived in haste,
 At once my present judgment and my past.
 When I in distant climes, my country left,
 Passed my sad school days, of all joy bereft,
 One thing alone did cheer this mournful soul ;
 There all day long the Burschen pass the bowl,
 And circling eddies from their long pipes roll, }
 Grant then, O grant it, Alfred, father dear,
 The only solace of our life,—some Beer ;
 That, lectures done, and reading o’er, we may
 With good strong lamb’s-wool drive our cares away.”

* See the Statutes :—*De vestitu et habitu scholastico ; De ludis prohibitis.*

Thus spake the prince, who set us all afloat,
 And pull'd first stroke in the old Brasenose boat.
 Not then did Gadney's messenger alert
 Bring round the tale of muffins and dessert,
 Nor billiard rooms their portals free display'd,
 To lure the freshman, or the crafty blade.
 No wonder then with joy the students glow'd,
 Ev'n Alfred stared, and smiling, " Well I'm blow'd !
 O truly great ! in whom the gods have join'd
 Such strength of body with such force of mind ;
 To thy petition freely I incline,
 To give thee gen'rous beer and musty wine ;
 Yet more, some one to brew—nor knight, nor squire—
 Who knows what beer is well,—some jolly Prior."

Gentles, my tale is told, how Alfred free
 Gave to our College beer and brewerie ;
 Yet still I bid you mark in after ages
 What happen'd in our history's later pages ;
 How Oxford gownsmen, without guile or fraud,
 Against the usurper Stephen fought for Maude,
 How, when all England in deep darkness lay,
 Oxford for Charles almost restored the day ;
 How Heber from our College walls set out,
 And in the theatre gained the applauding shout.
 What did all these ? Let temp'rance men grow pale ;
 It was, no one can doubt it, Brasenose Ale.



XXX.

Φρόθμεα φλάγον ὀφ'
 βρᾶζ' ἐν ὡς ἄλλη
 στουτ' ἂν δ' ὦλλδ' ἂν δ'
 ἀς ἄμβερ παῖλ.

Fragmentum nescio cujus comici—
 apud Athenæum.



OME, troll the jovial flagon,
 Come fill the bonny bowl,
 Come, join in laughing sympathy
 Of soul with kindred soul ;
 Cast rules of dull formality
 With their barriers to the wind,
 Leave care and pale sobriety
 With their kill-joy train behind.

For merry Shrovetide's festival
 Invites me to the tale,
 To sing the annual praises
 Of our Butler and our Ale ;
 So, having turned the magic *peg*
 In Pegasus' right ear,*

* "The Indian turned a small peg in the right ear of his horse, which at the same moment rose with him, with the rapidity of lightning, before the eyes of the whole court."—*Enchanted Horse, Arab. Nights.*

I mount with him to Helicon
To laud our Prior's cheer.

But while so gently wafted up
Through æther's tide we go,
From the saddle of old *Al(e)ifer**
I gaze on all below ;
The year that's past, its memories,
Come crowding o'er my mind,
And a glorious vision fills my soul
As I leave the world behind.

Far far beneath my courser
Extend earth's lessening plains,
And to my sight retiring still
Nought else but mist remains ;
Save where from the murky wilderness
One bright *oasis* beams ;
One glittering scene, like the emerald's green,
Through the gathering darkness streams.

I looked—and memory with a smile
Her telescope produced ;
I looked—it was our well-known quad
That meteor light effused ;
And round about its verdant turf
A festive band with might

* Bentley proposes to restore the word to its original form *Aleifer*.

Their glowing hearts and voices glad
In one great cheer unite.

I listened to their merriment
As it rose through the echoing air,
And I heard the oft-sung praises
That the heaven-bound breezes bear ;
“ The pluckiest crew on Isis stream
“ By victory caressed,
“ Is the one that has sacked the Christ Church Boat,
“ And distanced all the rest.

“ Let us all defend with heart and hand
“ The flag we have unfurled ;
“ Then B.N.C. shall dauntless bid
“ Defiance to the world :
“ But fast would flow the College tears,
“ If Christ Church hands should seize
“ The flag that has weathered a precious tough year
“ The battle and the breeze.”

Fainter, still fainter sounding
On my ear their voices throb,
Till they die in cadence exquisite,
Like the night wind's fitful sob ;
But just then poised a moment
My courser looks around,
Ere he sinks with speed centrifugal
To the Muses' sacred ground.

Downward, down, my steed and I,
 As fresh as when he did begin it,
 And we land at Hippocrene, just having done
 The last eighty leagues in a minute.
 Having bedded him up, and seen him all right,
 I sally forthwith to the fountain,
 And these are the fruits of the hearty long pull
 I took at the tap on the mountain.

O ale ! *aurum potabile* !
 That gildest life's dull hours,
 When its colour weareth shabbily,
 When fade its summer flowers :
 We've many friends around us,
 But who will e'er avow
 That friends, my amber Brasenose Ale
 As faithfull are as thou ?

A juice thou art, extracted
 From the tongues of women fair,
 Mixed with spirits from the lion's heart,
 Good sooth ! decoction rare :
 For when that we have quaffed enough,
 We'll talk away for ever,
 And fight old Nicholas himself
 Under any form whatever.

We're told once from Magnesia
 (I mean a part of Greece)

An Argonautic party sailed,
 To win some golden *fleece* :
 But, I maintain, those jolly boys
 Were nought, with all their cargo,
 But a club who drank enough *lambswool*
 To float a ship called Argo.

I sing not private schoolboy trash,
 They nickname dingy swipes,
 Not Bass's p'l' ale, nor foreign wines
 Promoters of the gripes.
 Yet still I do not Bacchus slight,
 Of charity for lack O !
 No! though my strains sing Prior's Ales,
 I love a *puff of 'bacco*.

Dry toasts to thee shall never be,
 Fell heartburn to promote ;
 But like as when the Muse's swans
 O'er the crystal fountain float,
 First dip their bills in the water,
 Then sing as on they glide,
 We, too, will sing, having dipped our beaks
 In thy flagon's inspiring tide.

There's *Punch* for the seedy player,
 There's *Spruce* too for the swell,
Madeiry for each dark-eyed fair,
Champagne suits schoolboys well ;

The sailor bold delights in *Port*,
The soldier loves his *Tent*,
All singers praise *Canary*, and
On *Sack* the miller's bent.

His thin, thin wines the Gaul may drink,
And prate of their *bouquet* rare ;
The German his hock may eulogise,
But at best they're *ordinaire* ;
Instead of their *hoc* fill a *hujus* bowl
Of such tippie as life sustains ;
Old Ale I am certain will mount to our heads,
But I think it won't add to our brains.

When other lips and future bards
Shall sing of B.N.C. ;
When the ringing laugh now echoing here
Shall hushed for ever be ;
Some few bright tales from memory's store
Shall of the past be told,
And the listener shall look proudly back
On the palmy days of old,

When the vigour of a Meynell's arm .
Upheld her sinking name,
And the sinews of a Cocks or Tuke
Pulled fresh laurels for her fame :

B R A S E N O S E A L E .

95

When, cheered by Prior's mighty Ale,
To victory we steered,
And o'er the vanquished Varsity
Our flag triumphant reared.

1846.

J. S. B.



XXXI.

“Salvere jubet *Prior*.”—HORAT. EPIST.

“The grace cup served with all decorum.”—POPE.

“*Libera lingua loquuntur ludis liberalibus*.”—NÆVIUS.



O offspring of the fruitful vine,
 From crystal goblet quaffed,
 Inspires this lowly muse of mine ;
 She sings a humble draught,
 Yet not disdained : for carols bold,
 Ere we “the silken sail
 Of infancy” unfurled, have told
 Of mantling Brasenose Ale.

Our Butler holds a high domain ;
 Our cellars are full stored ;
 But not with wine of France or Spain
 We grace the College board.
 With foaming liquor, malt-distilled,
 (Our Butler’s good largesse)
 Stand the huge flagons brimming filled,
 Which to our lips we press.

Old recollections, in a crowd,
 Are with the theme imbued ;

Here, ere the College he endowed,
 The Royal Saxon brewed.
 And here—within our ancient hall—
 The stream, which ne'er hath failed,
 Our mighty giant, strong and tall,
 "The Childe of *Hale*," *inhaled*.

Here Prelate, Statesman, Poet, Sage,
 As annual Shrovetides came,
 Have drunk their College beverage,
 And sung its deathless fame.
 Here Heber, Brasenose' holy son,
 Here Milman, poet-priest,
 And here the courtly Addington,
 Have kept their College feast.

Perchance the amber draught bestows
 Some inspiration bright ;
 Perchance some name to rival those
 Is echoed here to-night ;
 And future worthies yet unborn,
 May drain the tankards old
 And sing our Ale when we are gone,
 And our last knell is toll'd.

So let it be :—when others haunt
 These scenes we love so well,
 May sweet and heartfelt strains still vaunt
 Our annual festival :

Still may each Brasenose heart respond
To strains with Brasenose rife,
And College friendships form a bond
Only to break with life.

1847.

A. J.



XXXII.

“ Plenum opus ale(æ).”

MERRY the soul of the jolly punch-bowl,
 As it whirls round the table in giddy career ;
 But merrier me, when the flagon flows free,
 Discussing the choicest of Brasenose Beer !

Merry the sound, as the bottle flies round,
 Of voices discordantly greeting the ear :
 But nor punch-bowl nor sherry, though never so merry,
 Can equal the glories of Brasenose Beer.

Whose heart beats not high, as he drains the cup dry,
 And proposes a toast to good friends and good cheer ?
 That heart is not true, if it thrill not anew,
 As we quaff the bright goblet of Brasenose Beer.

Come, wildest of Muses ! (for who ever chooses
 The Goddess of Sadness his patroness here ?)
 Strike loudly thy lyre to the praises of Prior,
 Till each chord swell the triumph of Brasenose Beer.

So much for our Beer ! but our claims rest not here ;
 No less in pure water unrivall'd our fame :
 When we've roam'd the world over, we still shall discover
 On the smooth waves of Isis unchalleng'd our name.

Search the annals of rowing, and who'll be for showing,
 As each year it grows brighter, a stain on our crown ?
 Entwin'd is our story with garlands of glory,
 And wreath'd with the laurels of endless renown.

What more ? since in Beer our honours are clear,
 Since in water triumphant we never can fail ;
 But one thing we need to complete us indeed—
 One soul-cheering goblet of Brasenose Ale.

Even beer of the best must then poor be confess'd,
 Then Magdalen's choicest her glory must veil,
 And New College proof must keep farther aloof,
 Nor compete with a goblet of Brasenose Ale.

For Beer of our own to this liquor alone
 Yields the palm as the best of Oxonian Ale ;
 And, though easy to shew, as we very well know,
 That our College stands high in the watery scale,

Still *ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ* 's a maxim to brood o'er,
 And reflect once again ere such facts we retail ;
 For I think that our poet would never allow it,
 Were he pledg'd in a goblet of Brasenose Ale.

BRASENOSE ALE.

And now for a toast, lest such liquor be lost !
Let each goblet foam gaily, each flagon flow free !
Let nobody shrink, as we merrily drink,
As we merrily cheer with a three times three.

The London Press say, if believe them we may,
Who profess to be "all eyes and ears" for the nation,
That each gentleman there, when he dines with the Mayor,
Drinks a health to his host and the whole Corporation.

And why should not we in such doctrine agree ?
For 'tis certain no Alderman ventures to cross him ;
And why not propose, ere our festival close,
One round to the grand Corporation of B——m ?

1847.*

H. T.



XXXIII.

“ And here’s a pot of good double beer, neighbour ; drink, and fear not
your man.

Let it come, i’ faith, and I’ll pledge you all ; and a fig for Peter !”

2nd Part of King Henry VI. Act 2, Scene 3.



OME, quickly troll the nut-brown bowl,

Come, send it gaily round,

No man to fail to drink this ale

Shall ever here be found.

With jovial laugh the rich bowl quaff,

So sparkling, bright, and clear ;

It seems to say, this is the day,

The merriest of our year.

Ye Masters all, within this hall,

Ye Bachelors so blest,

Each Scholar here, and Commoner,

And each invited guest,

This day once more, as oft before,

Your cups the Butler brings ;

This single time, with bounden rhyme,

Your trembling poet sings.

With measured mirth first praise their worth,

Whose wealth and piety

These walls did raise, that learning's ways
Might not forgotten be :
For this shall they, now past away,
Be blest for what they've given,
And so enjoy, without alloy,
Eternal rest in Heaven.

For such return their gifts will earn,
From which, on us bestowed,
We well may deem a bounteous stream
Of excellence has flowed.
Here Heber learnt what Hodson taught,
And Cleaver ruled herein ;
Here Wrangham's song and Dunbar's* wit
First had their origin.

Nor these alone : for Addington
Here learnt 'twas best to choose
Honour and truth in politics ;
Here Milman wooed his muse :
And as each year brought Shrovetide round,
As on this festival,
Have such as these, and many more,
Made merry in this hall.

* Hodson and Cleaver (afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph) were Principals ;
Wrangham (afterwards Archdeacon) and Dunbar were Tutors of the
College.

Then praise their name whose former fame
Adds to our high estate ;
And drink to those who now sit here,
Since they may be as great.
Perhaps one here will charm the ear
With witching poesy :
Perhaps some statesman or divine
Unnoted here may be.

Nor want we legendary tales
To prove our ancient worth,
Since we can claim great Alfred's name,
As his who gave us birth ;
And here good store of learning's lore
Erigena once taught ;
And learning then for learning's sake
Was diligently sought.

The King's Hall then was famed, nor now
Do we disgrace her name,
Since Henley knows how Brasenose
Kept up her wonted fame ;
When rose a cry of victory
On either crowded shore,
And echo, as she onward rolled,
The glorious tidings bore.

Let Christ Church say how gallantly,
For twenty anxious nights,

(Till fatal chance, by envy moved,
Deprived us of our rights)
In every race we held that place
Which we shall hold again,
Since to gain glory which was lost
We may not strive in vain.

Then drink success to this year's boat ;
Come, pledge me in this ale ;
And, as you drink, dare not to think
That wish shall ever fail.
Mere giant strength may profit much,
But confidence still more ;
And pluck shall gain the victory,
As many a time before.

So must it be—yes ! drink again ;
Drink deep, and you shall find
The nectar in this sparkling cup
An emblem of the mind.
For it is sound, for it is strong,
Pure as the virgin gold,
And tempered with befitting age ;
Yet spirited, though old.

Sweet, yet not cloying to the taste,
That brings satiety ;
Spiced, but yet full of Nature still,
And Nature's purity.

And when the cup is drained off,
And our life too shall end,
Still fragrant odours from the bowl
Shall heavenwards ascend.

1848.

G. W. L.



XXXIV.

“Plenum opus Ale(æ)”—HORACE.

“’Twas not the porter’s fault, it was the beer.”

MACBETH TRAVESTIE.

“Sheer ale supports him under everything. It is meat, drink, and cloth,
bed, board, and washing.”—GUY MANNERING.

AGAIN, our festival to grace,
The nut-brown ale is streaming ;
Again the light of other days
Around our heads is beaming :
Those days of old, when the “Childe” so bold
Drained his tankard as blithely as we,
And welcomed by all was the Shrovetide call
To the board of old B.N.C.

Yes, proudly then did Brasenose boast
A high ancestral name,
Nor have we yet our glories lost,
Or marred our early fame :
’Twas the Hall of a King, as old Chroniclers sing,
And kingly it ever shall be :
Then merrily still our flagons we’ll fill
To the praise of old B.N.C.

To-day the memory recalls
Of ages past and gone,
When first within our ancient walls
The light of learning shone :
And each gem so bright in that circle of light,
Which illumined her infancy,
Still gilds with its ray the meridian day
Of our time-honoured B.N.C.

And many a bard in future days
Shall drink our college ale,
And tell in soul-inspiring lays
This oft-repeated tale :
Long, long may we hear these echoes so dear,
Still often these tankards see,
And as years roll along make our annual song
To the praise of old B.N.C.

And while we quaff the goblet here,
Forget we not their worth,
Whose honoured names we all revere
“ As those who gave us birth :”
While we welcome with pride each merry Shrovetide,
While their portraits around we see,
Forget not to raise our tribute of praise
To the Founders of B.N.C.

To their munificence we owe
A long and bright array

Of names which we can proudly show,
The noblest in their day :
Yes, Prelate and Peer, and Statesman here,
With Noble of high degree,
Have kept in this Hall their festival,
And rejoiced in old B.N.C.

And still we hear a good old name
Each Shrovetide echoed here ;
It bids us remember our former fame,
Nor disgrace our college cheer ;
It bids us be brave on the Isis' wave,
That the Oxford world may see
That the " Childe of Hale " can never fail,
Nor the oars of old B.N.C.

1849.

H. T.



XXXV.

“’Twill make a man forget his woe,
 ’Twill heighten all his joy ;
 ’Twill make the widow’s heart to sing,
 Though the tear were in her eye.”

BURNS.—*John Barleycorn.*



WINE Anacreon’s lays inspired,
 And all his soul with rapture fired :
 Then let not, Muse, a poet fail,
 When he sings the praise of Ale :—
 Ale so strong, yet soft as silk,
 Flowing down like mother’s milk :
 Ale, that courage gave, and might,
 To our forefathers in the fight :
 Ale with learning always joined,
 For College Ale thè best you find ;
 And if you search all Oxford round,
 The best at Brasenose will be found.
 For did not Brasenose Ale inspire
 Our Barham’s* wit, and Heber’s lyre,
 And others, whose immortal praise
 Has been proclaimed in happier lays ?
 I need not tell how long supreme
 Our College reigned on Isis’ stream ;

* The well-known author of the *Ingoldsb’ry Legends*.—ED.

Or how from Henley's banks the cries
Of victory assailed the skies :
The self-same Ale, that to those arms
Lent strength, e'en now our bosoms warms.
But while we feast within this hall,
There's one o'erlooks us from the wall,
Whose praise, alas ! delayed too late,
Let it be mine to vindicate ;
Who, had he lived in days of old,
A hundred pens his fame had told,
His glory through all lands had spread,
And wreaths of laurel crowned his head.
For he was first of all mankind
In crystal fetters Ale to bind ;
When, after due probation past
In subterranean vault, at last
It issues forth our lips to greet,
More fresh, more sparkling, and more sweet.
Then all your tardy thanks express,
And Nowell's* name with rapture bless.
Come, then, as free libations pour
As men to Bacchus did of yore.
Though wine a proper god may boast,
Yet think not thus our cause is lost :

* Said to have been the first who ever bottled ale. [All old Brasenose men will remember that thanks are appropriately given in the grace after dinner "*pro Alexandro Nowell et Jocosa Frankland aliisque benefactoribus nostris.*"—Ed.]

Our god, although without a name,
No more shall be unknown to fame ;
To him we'll rear a nobler shrine
Than e'er was raised to God of Wine.
Let Brasenose then his temple be,
And his ardent votaries we ;
Let Shrovetide be his annual feast,
And Prior his immortal priest.

1849.*

H. P.



XXXVI.

“ Quem virum aut heroa lyra vel acri
 Tibia sumis celebrare, Clio?
 Quem Deum, cujus recinet jocosa
 Nomen imago ? ”

ONCE more returning Shrovetide bids us hail
 The Feast of Pancake and the Flow of Ale
 In Brasenose held, prime revel of the year—
 Day of unmatched, unmitigated Beer.

Oh, for a forty-poet power to pay
 The well-earned tribute of a worthy lay,
 And in meet verse elaborate a strain
 To praise the luscious fragrant flood we drain !
 Thou, genuine progeny of malt and hop,
 Mirth's keenest spur, the weary's stoutest prop,
 Chief potentate of Ale, long dost thou reign,
 And well thy famed *Priority* maintain ;
 For mighty magic's powers in thee are shown,
 And the Ale-Genius claims thee for his own.

Yes ! let us learn a lesson from the Greek,
 And for our model copy the antique ;
 When Fancy peopled Heaven with deity,
 And loved in every gift a God to see—

Those countless legions whom old Hesiod sings—
 Gods, Nymphs, and Heroes of all sorts of things.

'Tis true the Greeks adored no God of Ale,
 Which was not then an article of sale :
 Ἐκ κριθῶν μέθυ had no favourite shops ;
 And why? they *had* the malt, but *lacked* the hops.
 But had they chanced one glass like this to lap,
 They would have deemed it Nectar—Jove's own tap ;
 Made its inventor second in the sky ;
 Perchance e'en loved it more than you or I.
 Anacreon had not sung the praise of wine,
 Or Horace thought Falernian divine.

So in our creed a want I would supply,
 Apostle of a new Divinity,
 And preach to Brasenose in a modern style
 A piece of Hero-worship (from Carlyle) ;
 And with each cheering draught would bid you hail
 The Patron-Genius of the Brasenose Ale.

From skulls our pagan fathers used to quaff,
 (As we've known heads too full of Ale by half) ;
 The Saxon Franklin and the jovial monk
 Brewed of the best, and on the best got drunk ;
 Till art, proceeding on with favouring gale,
 Finds her climacteric in Brasenose Ale.

See round our walls what varied portraits shine
 Of Poet, Scholar, Statesman, and Divine,
 The giant intellects of races gone,
 Whom Brasenose nursed, and loved to call-her own ;
 Men whose renown from age to age has shed

Reflected rays of glory on her head.
Think ye they lived a Water-Company,
Or irrigated brains like theirs with tea ?
No ! the rich liquid lives in every face ;
Spiced Ale in every lineament we trace.
Theirs are the mighty shades that dimly glide
Where Victory beams upon the turf or tide,
And watch succeeding races, unrevealed,
First on the river, foremost in the field.

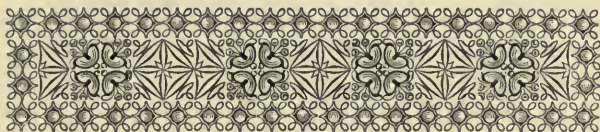
Such was their glory once : and must we deem
Those scenes of triumph but a transient gleam,
That, like the pageants of some festal day,
Charm but an instant, and then pass away ?
For Brasenose spirit clouded seemed and cold,
Deaf to the lessons taught her sons of old,
When three sad summers saw, with sorrowing eye,
Reft from her brows the wreath of victory
So long her pride—as if in genial air
It loved to root itself and blossom there—
Why then has Fortune donned this April face,
That spot deserting which she used to grace ?
Is not some debt of gratitude unpaid,
Some homage due, some sacrifice delayed ?
Yes ! 'tis the Genius, whose constant toil
Has planted blessings in a heedless soil ;
Till now in warning, more than ire, he lifts
A chastening arm to make us own his gifts.
Then let us haste these errors to atone ;
Entreat his favour whilst he may be won :

Propitiate his wrath with lowliest notes,
And pour a long libation—down our throats.
In his rich Ale be all your sorrows sunk ;
Be devotees ; but don't, like it, be drunk !

The spell is broke ! the new half century
Dawns upon men who pant for victory,
That pride of place, those laurels to restore,
Which we have won and worn so oft before.
Already, see, another era comes,
Visions of " Conquering heroes," " sound the drums,"
Throng on my sight ; I hear the clamours rise,
Peal after peal and thunder to the skies ;
While they, low lowering once, propitious hail,
And pouring welcome greet the joyous tale ;
As hopes, fears, doubts, we sink them—all the lump—
In one " tarnation everlasting " bump !

1850.

J. H. L.



XXXVII.

“ Impium
 Lenite clamorem, sodales,
 Et cubito remanete presso.”



THAT my arms, my hands, my feet,
 Had voices to be heard !
 To tell the rapturous joy by which
 My inmost soul is stirred.

The years roll on and seasons pass,
 And find us as we were,
 And this Shrove Tuesday finds us yet
 Sworn friends unto our Beer.

To celebrate the golden flood
 Has been our yearly aim ;
 But, while ye drink, forget not him
 Who has a “ Prior claim.”

We'll praise him also while we sing
 The praise of Brasenose Ale :
 The gift is good ; the giver's due
 To pay we should not fail.

The poets of a former day
Once drank the joys of wine ;
Their consecrating lays knew not
A subject more divine.

The golden bowls before us foam,
So drink we while we may ;
And let our joyous fancy roam,
While yet 'tis called to-day.

Call back the hours and bygone years ;
The past count as to-day ;
Impersonate past hopes and fears
In this our present lay.

Around these boards have many sat
Who are but names to-day ;
They quaffed the goblet's brimming flood,
And owned its thrilling sway.

Those whose titles hallowed are
And stamped on Memory's page,
Undying honours, wide and far,
Will gain from age to age ;

Still will *his* * name, our greatest pride,
Fond admiration guard ;

* This may be either Dean Milman or Bishop Heber.—Ed.

Yet breathes enshrined in our hearts
The memory of the bard.

Once too he drank of Brasenose Ale—
Perchance the cup you taste
His lips have hallowed once, and with
Immortal honour graced.

And others too have slaked their thirst
In that Lethean bowl,
Whose memory, for ever dear,
Shall warm the grateful soul.

Theirs were the days when reverence deep
Time's hallowing influence blest :
Each gift received they strove to keep,
The present thinking best.

A change has now obscured the dream,
With blessedness once teeming ;
Now better doth the future seem,
In fancied colours gleaming.

Time-honoured institutions fall ;
Our countrymen are changed :
And we might say our senators
Were hopelessly deranged.

What ! shall our Alma Mater find
Ransacked her ancient walls,
While all that was revered of old
In revolution falls ?

One Church we own ; one faith ; one Queen
Our loyalty receives :
Why leave the unity inscribed
On Inspiration's leaves ?

Time-honoured halls, ye ne'er were meant
For throngs of every creed ;
Nor at your boards should e'er Dissent
Its rankling venom feed.

What mean ye then, ye counsellors ?
Ye cannot fuse all schism :
Your efforts are the efforts of
Satanic Liberalism !

As soon will acid vinegar
Mix with emollient oil :
Then why in such vain trifling
Our institutions spoil ? *

* It will be observed that these gloomy lines were written just twenty years before the passing of the Tests Abolition Act, which does not as yet seem to have ruined the harmony of Brasenose dinners or the prowess of Brasenose oars.—ED.

But stay, enough ; ye revellers all
Be thankful for the past ;
Then after pray the palmy days
Of B.N.C. may last.

And days there have been—days of fame,
In glory glistening bright ;
Toast as ye drink each honoured name
Of proud ancestral might !

The day from this not distant far
Shall memory not recall,
When Isis' waters owned her sway,
Long ere they saw her fall ?

Let this year then call back to her
The trophies won and lost,
And may the final heat behold
Her at the rightful post !

The oar uplifted shall pay back
Her own prescriptive due :
The borrowed homage let her take
From each admiring crew !



XXXVIII.

“Clear and bright it should be ever,
Flowing like a crystal river.”—TENNYSON.



DEPART not thus, ye Muses, O not thus
Desert your chosen haunts of Brasenose ;
A little longer yet abide with us,
Where still the unstinted full libation flows ;
Though our Professorship * hath seen its close,
Let Brasenose brewery still your presence hail,
Nor let our yearly verses sink to prose ;
But shed your influence upon Brasenose Ale,
That as it flowed of old, to flow it may not fail.

’Twas to Apollo Brasenose Ale gave birth,
As foam-sprung Venus ancient bards have sung ;
“No perishable denizen of earth,”
Minerva-like, from Milman’s brain he sprung ;
And “Bacchus, ever fair and ever young,”
Hath long forsaken his Falernian wine,
To reign alone our Shrovetide joys among,
To be sole essence of that draught divine,
Whose might in Brasenose owned, is owned in *Palestine*. †

* That held by the Rev. James Garbett, see p. 72, note.—ED.

† The allusion of course is to Heber’s well-known poem.—ED.

Hear then, O Bacchus, hear, and, as of yore,
Again unto thy votaries appear,
Clad in the glory thou wast clad before,
And gird thee on thy strength of Brasenose Beer.
Come quickly, for if once in Gath they hear
That Oxford men invoke a Grecian god,
Then haply shall some rude Commissioner
Insult us with accusing swiftmess shod,
While wrathful stands on end the grass of Brasenose Quad.

By the full tankard that begins to foam,
As of some influence conscious not its own,
The god vouchsafes to take it for his home,
(A glorious god and no inglorious throne,)
And, by the god that hath the tankard flown,
Bacchus ascending left to me his mantle ;
And by that sound hiccough betwixt and groan,
And by the thoughts that scarce I clearly can tell,
Bacchus my whirling brain instructeth how to rant well.

For Brasenose Beer is as some fleecy cloud,
That as it lightly floateth through the air,
The noonday glory of the sun doth shroud ;
And yet but little lack of glory there :
For that fair cloud, than solar rays more fair,
The light of day with envy turneth pale,
Nor rudest blasts that cloud to scatter dare,
(The sun confessed less beauteous than his veil) :
And such the virtue is of Brasenose College Ale.

And is there one, who, when his eyes are dim,
 "And all the god comes rushing on his soul,"
 When Bacchus lords it o'er his every limb,
 And fiery fancy bids his eyeballs roll,
 Could wish that he had left untouched the bowl,
 Were guiltless as the tankard drained of beer?
 Back to thy native milk, thou ass's foal!
 Though thou be senior or but fresh this year;
 Lest Bacchus scornful ask "What doth this greenhorn here?"

Or Brasenose Beer is a slow solemn tune,
 That chaseth all unseemly thoughts away,
 Soft'neth the soul that seems from marble hewn,
 Refresheth as with heav'nly dew her clay,
 Rouseth the passions, doth the passions lay,
 The rude refineth, light'neth the opprest,
 And maketh discord concord to obey,
 And quick'neth fancy, fancy doth arrest,
 And Brasenose Ale hath power to soothe the savage breast.

But ye, O birds, if ever in your flight
 In College quad ye check the weary wing—
 If that indeed a bird's-eye-view can quite
 Or pierce through walls, or through yet grosser thing—
 How 'twas the twice dead earth-grown barley, sing,
 Celestial essence, quickening soul up-sprung;
 Ye saw, nor did ye see unmurmuring,
 Beyond your reach your favoured barley flung,
 But the great issue saw and full forgiveness sung!

For where a stately building towers betwixt
 Back quad and front, obscurest realms among,
Ye saw, how weakest things in union mixt
 Become e'en by that very union strong ;
And, when ye knew the god, forgot your wrong,
Eager to be the first to bid him hail,
 And sung his praises in your choicest song :
Which we re-echoing, will never fail,
Our Brasenose Prior to praise, to drink our Brasenose Ale.

1852.

H. S. B.



XXXIX.

SHALLOW.—“By the mass, you’ll crack a quart together. Ha! will you not?”—2ND PART OF HENRY IV.



O doubt it is a very tedious thing
 To undertake a folio work on law,
 Or metaphysics, or again to ring
 The changes on the Flood or Trojan War :
 Old subjects these, which Poets only sing
 Who think a new idea quite a flaw ;
 But thirst for novelty can’t fail in liking
 The theme of Ale, the aptitude’s so striking.

To speak of Ale will first of course suggest
 Some mention of the place where it is brewed ;
 For though well known, yet it must be confessed
 To omit it altogether would be rude.
 In Alma Mater, then, one of the best
 Of England’s Kings, amongst his other prudent
 thoughts of comforts for his loyal subjects,
 A brewery built to best promote his objects.

The beer being good was soon a great attraction,
 For e’en a learned man needs strong support

In learning's toilsome work, lest a reaction
Should after too much toil produce a sort
Of weakness in him, such that like a fraction
Reduced to lowest power, as now is taught
In these new Statutes, he'll waste to a spectre,
Condemned to gruel, toast, and Chinese Nectar.

These Sages, then, (most sage, I often think,
First built a Hall—when built King's Hall they call'd it—
In which to read, and, when they'd read, to drink :
('Twas just midway 'twixt Magdalen and St. Aldate ;))
Though now, as all things under age must sink,
A newer building stands where once the Hall did ;
And this, intended for a home of knowledge,
Is very aptly surnamed Brasenose College.

And from these walls has been upraised to fame
A race of heroes, and of men whose worth
Reflects a brilliant lustre on the name
Of that dear home which gave their glory birth,
Though, since to honour all who honour claim
Would be to search each corner of the earth,
I'll do no more than with all rev'rence utter
The name of Heber, Bishop of Calcutta.

True Englishmen these worthies lived and died ;
True English inspiration fired their brain ;
No foreign stimulants their wit supplied,
Nor sought they aids to mirth from France or Spain :

Heroes for valour worth the world beside,
They trusted not in Port, Hock, or Champagne,
But, Falstaff like (excuse my bad quotations),
They drank of Beer, "eschewing thin potations."

And well : for powers there are in Brasenose Beer
Which I don't think the " Powers of Fluids " notes.
For instance :—heavy bodies, as is clear
Most plainly in the case of eight-oared boats,
When buoyed up by it, though others sink, will peer
High o'er them all, like Ayckbourn's Patent Floats.
And should a doubt arise that I could prove it,
The " Childe of Hale " will once for all remove it.

And charms it has for men of science too :
For since that Liebig, to improve the sale
Of Allsopp's Beer, has fitted all anew
The " Organon " to malt both brown and pale,
And bids us in a scientific brew
To analyse—not arguments, but Ale ;
We humbly beg to recommend to critics
Our version of the Prior Analytics.

Yet still no prophet is required to tell
That some, who, in our new Reformers' bold
And frantic onslaught, bear away the bell,
May damn e'en Brasenose Beer for being old ;
Since, loving change not wisely but too well,
Antiquity they ruthlessly remould ;

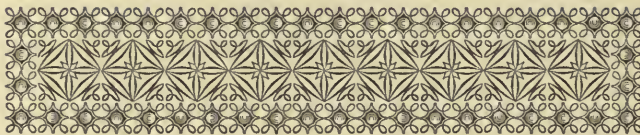
And, lest ought good perchance escape perdition,
T' improve it forthwith issue a Commission.

But hold : Reform ! thy first-fruits woe have wrought,
And killed " the Duke," our Chancellor, outright :
Who, thinking, noble hero, that he ought
To swallow and digest, if e'er he might,
The blue and bitter pill of that Report,
With courage greater than of old to fight
Did strive—with zeal, too, nought by age diminished—
But strove in vain, and fell before he finished.

Let draughts of Ale, then, drown our honest grief,
In hope that once again the " golden age "
Is " looming in the future " with relief
For all the ills of simpleton and sage.
Abuses dead, each bold reforming chief
Must follow suit for want of wars to wage :
And now, Reformers, spare your indignation
At my imploring this bless'd consummation.

1853.

J. C. E.



XL.

Πίνε, πῖν' ἐπὶ συμφοραῖς.

SIMONIDES.

“Stick to punch and Buttery ale.”

THACKERAY.—*Esmond*.

SHROVE TUESDAY comes again, the chosen day
 On which our annual tribute we must pay
 To Brasenose Beer. Could minstrel choose a theme,
 More glorious than the Beer, which reigns supreme
 O'er faithful subjects?—save perhaps a few
 Poor plotting knaves, who other monarchs brew;
 Such as the bastard rebel Indian Ale,
 Bitter from envy, and from weakness pale.

Yes! Beer of Brasenose, here we own thy sway
 Though Morrell murmur—Truman turn away;
 Though Barclay frown, and Perkins vainly sneer,
 (In whose deep vats the Negroes disappear);
 Though art of ales the Ale, of beers the very Beer!

In various ways with us thy power is felt;
 Moistened by thee, the arid “Commons” melt;
 Of thy refreshing stream the “Hedges” * tell,

* Hedges was a well-known College servant, and Heather the barge-
 man.—ED.

And the dry "Heather" knows thy fountains well.
Beneath thy influence the Dons descend
From height sublime, and all their stiffness bend ;
With sportive majesty they look around,
While classic wit, and ponderous jokes abound.
No more at sight of them the Freshmen quail ;
New courage comes with every draught of ale.
The hand which trembled, trembles now no more ;
Strong is the voice which shook with fear before.
Inspired by thee see issue forth in state
The mighty leader of the fierce debate ;*
With studied attitude he takes his stand,
Serenely silly, and grotesquely grand—
Now he begins, and like some French alarum,
(I mean the thing which people use to scare 'em
In early morn) when once he has begun,
Nothing on earth can stop him till he's done.
With rapid gesture and with speed immense,
Heedless alike of grammar and of sense,
He fires away, and boobies round him sit
Who kindly laugh at all his borrowed wit.
The jaded scholar, who, with downcast looks
Crept to his place as musty as his books,
By thee refreshed, departs with altered pace,
The generous liquor mantling o'er his face,
Where roses now usurp the lily's place ;

* A Union orator of the time ; a member of the College, whose name
οὐκ εἰμι πρόθυμος ἐξηγήσθαι.—ED.

With quickened genius he resumes his pen,
And writes for glory in his lonely den.

But while we celebrate with just applause
Thy mighty influence in learning's cause,
We would recall the pluck, the power and pace—
With all the triumphs of the well-tried race—
The sinewy strength, by beef sustained and thee,
Which brought her laurels back to B.N.C.
Long may she keep them who can keep them best ;
Long wave her flag triumphant o'er the rest :
May each succeeding year her fame renew,
And add fresh lustre to her noble crew.

Thus far thy fame is sung : nor stops it here.
M.P.'s ere now have blessed the God of Beer.
Bacchus has influence, when others fail,
To change a voter's mind, and turn the scale.
Our late election shows, as all may see,
How much the shifty Peelite owes to thee.
Did not the seniors of this ancient hall
Combine together for the Tory's fall ?
What meant those luncheons and those breakfasts here,
The feast of treason, and the flow of Beer ?

Did not the parsons, who, from distant shires,
Had left, with vain regret, their Christmas fires,
Weary from travelling, from hunger pale,
Accept with joy the proffered Brasenose Ale ?
Each had a place, the greatest and the least,
Their generous hosts invited all to feast ;
Then while they feasted, round their victims closed,

And all the Tories' foolish shifts exposed.
 Of treacherous "Frails"* they needed not the aid,
 Their silent agent worked unseen, unpaid.
 Their W. B. no scrutiny could fear,
 It stood for nothing else but Wholesome Beer.
 'Twere easy, then, the inward change to note,
 How Dudley lost, how Gladstone gained a vote.
 Could rustic arguments long time prevail .
 'Gainst College eloquence and College Ale ?
 Oh, Dudley Perceval, thou fallen star,
 Whose only light shone from so very far, †
 Why didst thou let them lead thee by the nose,
 To start two thousand voters from repose ?
 Was it for thee inglorious to creep
 Amid the dirt which Chandos thought too deep ?
 To try the treacherous ground where others slid,
 To do, in fact, what Dr. Marsham did ?
 Why didst thou trust the knave of "clubs" in town ?
 Where was the host they promised to send down ?
 "Lo, a troop cometh !" cried one bitter Rad :
 His hearers looked around—and saw but "G. A. D.," ‡

* Mr. Frail, the most famous of electioneering agents. W. B. is William Beresford, the Tory Whip.—Ed.

† Mr. Perceval was a Classman in 1822. [He was a son of the Right Hon. Spencer Perceval, and unsuccessfully contested the seat against Mr. Gladstone in this election. So at other times did Dr. Marsham, Warden of Merton, and Lord Chandos, now Duke of Buckingham. Lord Chandos, however, on this particular occasion, refused to stand.—Ed.]

‡ George Anthony Denison.

Enough of this : the warmth of either side
Let us cool down and in the tankard hide ;
And drink to Alma Mater—drink to all
Who would not see her Institutions fall.
May she keep safe, when danger near her lurks,
From Jews, John Russell, Infidels, and Turks.

1853.*

G. J. W.



XLI.

“*Prior est : Prior, inquit, ego adsum.*”—*JUV. Sat. I.*

—————“*Sous mes yeux*

Mousse un nectar digne des dieux.”—*BERANGER.*

“*Bursch! if foaming Beer content ye,*

Come and drink your fill ;

In the cellar there is plenty :

Himmel! how you swill !”—*BON GAULTIER.*



CUSTOM long time has been prevalent here
Which, although 'tis a custom, we ought to revere :

Yet to me it is clear

That once in each year

To sing praises of Beer

Is a task rather hard.

And the subject seems slack,

When we glance a bit back

On the well-beaten track

Of each bard :

Though a bard could scarce fail,

In the praise of such Ale,

To bring out each year quite a different tale

From the last ;

If of fancy he'd stock,

Like the fount in the rock,

Which at Moses his knock

Bubbled fast.

But now, since I've taken
 Upon me to waken
 New notes from the strings which have been so much shaken,
 In order to save my poetical bacon,
 May the great god of wine,
 And the musical nine,
 In pity incline
 To each halting line,
 And help me to sing, with all due decorum,
 Of a Beer which my readers have now got before 'em,
 And of which if they drink much, 'tis certain to floor 'em,
 Or at least make them argue like Philpotts or Gorham.*
 For Brasenose Beer is no thin meagre liquor,
 Like that which poor curates so often wish thicker,
 When invited to dine with their reverend Vicar,
 Considered by some of them quite a predica-
 ment once in the week ;
 When the fare is but scanty, domestic the rations,
 And washed down their throats by insipid potations,
 And flavoured perhaps with dry Latin quotations,
 Or even with Greek,
 If the Vicar's a Scholar, with some little knowledge
 Of hackneyed old phrases he picked up at College.
 But the slightest inspection will make it quite clear
 What a different liquor is Brasenose Beer,
 Which we on each Shrove Tuesday celebrate here,

* "The Gorham case," and the arguments of that prince of contro-
 versialists, Bishop Philpotts of Exeter, need no explanation here.—ED.

And challenge the world, though they look far and near,
 To discover a better, or even its peer,
 As a mere beverage ;
 Though in this clever age
 Brewers there are, as I'm told, not a few,
 (And what I am told is by courtesy true,)
 Who, badgered by Doctors, quite chemical grew,
 And by rules scientific and principles new
 (And very remarkable principles too),
 Most medical mixtures endeavour to brew
 Which are not even fit for a damnable Jew.
 But this last remark I think's rather undue,
 So I'd better retract, or perhaps might ensue
 An action for slander brought by some Hebrew,
 Who in a court Christian was willing to sue
 'Gainst the line so obnoxious ;—that is if he knew
 Who the author was, as he's at present anonymous,
 What is called "keeping dark," the expression's synonymous,
 "Idem et unum," as says Hieronymus :
 (Those who think that St. Jerome did never promulgate
 This remark, only show that they've not read the Vulgate.)
 Now some people speak on
 The praise of " Archdeacon,"
 A Beer which is famous at Merton ;
 And some still obey the Ale-monarchs' sway,
 Who reign so triumphant at Burton :
 But all who have travelled, and all who have drank hard,
 Come back, like the Prodigal Son, to a tankard
 Of Brasenose Ale, when sugar and spice

Judiciously blend to render it nice,
 When nutmeg and ginger together combine,
 With perhaps just a dash—a mere soupçon of wine,
 To make it a beverage almost divine,
 Fit for Bacchus himself, as I humbly opine,
 Should that powerful Deity ever incline
 Just for once with the Dons, who adore him, to dine :
 If he did, I am sure he would think it expedient
 To get the receipt of each subtle ingredient,
 To take to Olympus with due expedition
 Of various compounds this grand coalition,
 As a gift to his Principal Bolt-hurling Jove
 From the Brasenose Principal Cradock (late Grove).*

How Jove would regale !

And each deity thirsty

Would drink till he burst ; he

Had never before tasted Brasenose Ale !—

But this “ coalition ” of which I now sing,
 As all may observe, is a different thing
 From that to which scorn is for ever affixed ; †
 (I allude to the porridge the Scotchman has mixed,
 And which, though he'll probably burn himself soon,
 For the present is stirred with the Autocrat's spoon.)
 Yet points of resemblance there may be between
 Prior's Beer, and the “ cauld kail ” of old “ Aberdeen.”

* The present Principal changed his name from GROVE to CRADOCK.

† The date (1854) explains these allusions, to the Crimean War, the Aberdeen ministry, &c.—ED.

For instance, this liquor, without any doubt,
 Is kept by the tankard from running about ;
 And Aberdeen's porridge, 'tis equally clear,
 Were Palmerston absent, would soon disappear ;
 And thus, as in him all their fortunes are anchored,
 I humbly submit that he's like the tankard.
 The sharp acid lemon again will afford
 A simile fitting for Palmerston's Lord,
 Who the fat Oxford Dons from their slumber has woke,
 And has made the rich citizens swallow their smoke.
 As a real useful compound, it may suit the bard well
 To find in the malt a resemblance to Cardwell ;
 But the man, (or the compound,) who always must fill
 The proudest position, is " Exchequer Bill ;"
 Yes ! Gladstone's the hop plant who twined himself long
 Round the hop pole at Tamworth* so sturdy and strong.
 With the farmers of England he cannot condole,
 For he, like the needle, is true to his " pole ;"
 He rides a high hobby with dangerous speed,
 And " Anglican Church " is the name of his steed.
 Yet the " seat," strange to say, was constructed to carry
 The " Protestant Bulwark," good old Sir R. Harry :
 But the pace was too killing, and lately we took a
 Final farewell of his blue coat and bouquet.
 Next little John Russell, that prize-fighter rare,
 To the nutmeg or ginger we well may compare ;

* Sir R. Peel was member for Tamworth. " Sir R. Harry " is Sir R.
 H. Inglis, whom the University preferred to Peel in a memorable election.
 —ED.

When laid on the shelf he's an innocent thing,
 But let a tongue touch him—and out comes the sting !
 If you grate him he bites you ; but who can refuse
 To laugh when he annually barks for the Jews ?
 " Give the devil* his due," we admire his courage.—
 Next, whom shall we find to resemble the burrage ?
 Bernal Osborne's† the man, that political pickle !
 His use, like the burrage, is only to tickle ;
 First-rate on a platform, but, when he has spoke,
 He leaves no impression beyond a good joke.
 Let us shake up the tankard ; you'll see for a while
 A sediment rising—like youthful Argyle,
 Or his grace of Newcastle :—but let it remain
 And the sediment sinks to the bottom again.
 Now a certain resemblance I think you will own
 'Twixt some compounds of each coalition is shown.
 There are many besides, but for fear of their wrath
 I will only just add that they make up the froth ;
 While floating about on the surface is seen
 A great piece of dry toast—and that's old Aberdeen.

1854.

G. J. W.

* A mere proverbial expression—*of course*, his Lordship is not like a devil ;—'*of course not.*'—*Printer's Devil*.

† Mr. Osborne cannot be altogether like the burrage, which has *no* taste ; whereas Mr. Osborne has shown several instances of *bad taste*.



XLII.

LET the brown haunch, the ruby sirloin, be,
Knives, forks, and plates, and listen unto me,
Mine is no strain that wars against good cheer,
I hymn the praises of old Brasenose Beer.

Unworthy I of such a theme sublime,
Which worthier throats has filled from time to time.
Yet often have I drank thy wisdom in,
And now inspired by thee I fain would sing.
So I'll essay, and if perchance I fail,
You too your throats may fill with Brasenose Ale.

In days of old there was a giant swain,
Who came to Brasenose in Charles's reign :
The Childe of (H)ale, the Buttery was his haunt,
As shows a giant hand, huge, strong and gaunt.
Our men are now scarce less than was this one ;
The *Swain* is gone, but still we have his *son*.
Thou bring'st such men of weight to grace our Hall ;
And from thy influence may we never fall,
And we're not fallen, though true—too true—I fear,
That little *Potts* can never hold much beer.
Then let th' ill-natured snarl, or Man, or Don ;
I smile, while thro' my teeth I say *Curze-on*.*

* Messrs. Swainson, (a very big man) Pott and Curzon were well-known undergraduates of the College at this time.—Ed.

Eight men each year by naval prowess show
That through thine aid they all have learnt to row :
And ever, while our boat shall keep its place,
Each man will say thou mad'st them go the pace.
But one word more (the dinner won't be cold) :—
Say what I may, thy glory's nigh untold :—
Is not thy proudest boast th' inspiring draught
Which the "pale student" has so often quaffed,
What time the dusky schools enclose their prey,
And sixteen men their fate learn in one day ?
What trembling limbs hast thou made strong again :
What fainting hearts, and brains that think in vain,
Warmed by thine influence have gone bravely through,
And done what they had never thought to do !
My strain is ended, and I've done my best ;
A flowing subject makes no standing jest :
Yet with my song should any not agree,
May they find joy in bitter raillery.



XLIII.

“Hic noctem ludo ducunt, et pocula læti
Fermento atque acidis imitantur vitea sorbis.”—VIRGIL.

“One sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise and taste.”—MILTON.

“Bring ale!—bring a flagon—a hogshead—a tun!
’Tis the same thing to you;
I have nothing to do;
And ’fore George, I’ll sit here, and I’ll drink till all’s blue.”

INGOLDSBY.

OH! for a new beginning, a novel thought to vary
The matter, style, and metre of our *Carmen Sæculare*,
To aid the wight whom Brasenose hath chosen for the year
The Minstrel of her Buttery, the Laureate of her Beer.
“Fill high the cup” would scarcely be commencement good
to-night:
The injunction’s very needless, the idea rather trite.
The War all deem a used-up theme, and fraught with omens
sinister:
’Twere more precipitate than wise to praise the new Prime
Minister.
Then if the present smile not—if the future be o’ercast—
An olden tale of Brasenose Ale we’ll gather from the past.

It was on a Shrove Tuesday (if the date you wish to fix,
Three centuries since then have passed and years some
forty-six),
And savoury steamed the lordly beef, and gaily smoked the
mutton,
And by the side of Bishop Smith sat stout Sir Richard Sutton.
In jyouous mood our founders good applied them to their
cheer ;
When there came the dismal tidings, "There isn't any Beer!"
Wroth was the Knight—words not polite expressed his in-
dignation ;
The Bishop dropt a gentle hint of excommunication :
Grimly he glared, as if he wished the College all to slaughter,
For he felt 'twas not episcopal to tipple toast and water.
He wished to Oxford ne'er he'd come, but stayed in Lincoln's
high city ;
"Indeed they heard one little word"—it wasn't "*Benedicite*."
When suddenly amid the row there came from out the But-
tery
The semblance of an aged man : but deigning nought to
utter he
Stalked slow and silent up the Hall ; and awe struck each
beholder,
As they marked the crown upon his brow, the ermine on his
shoulder.
He passed by flagon and by flask, by pitcher and by pail,
He touched them—and they sparkled to the brim with hot
spiced Ale :
And vanishing, before the Scouts knew what to say or do,

He melted like a jelly-fish—like a dissolving view.
 Then every one began to ask, and nobody to tell—
 Who was he, whence and how and why he came—that
 spectral swell ?

Till said the Bishop (taking, ere he let them understand,
 A long pull and a strong pull at the tankard in his hand):—
 “ King Alfred (he who thrashed the Danes and gave us trial
 by jury)

“ Had, as I've read in Holinshed, upon this spot a Brewery :
 “ He called it a *Brasinium* (though the King I'm far from
 slighting,

“ I beg you'll never put that word in a piece of Latin
 writing).

“ He's just come here and given us Beer like that of which
 he drank hard.

“ *Orate pro*”—the rest was lost within that massive tankard.
 'Twas strange that night, the Bishop said, he never could
 forget

How Cain and Abel seemed to do a dizzy pirouette ;
 Sir Richard had an *æger* on next day—not being well, he
 Affirmed upon his knightly word 'twas from the currant jelly.
 Still to maintain such matchless Beer a method they devised ;
 They sent to Dr. Daubeny and had it analysed :
 And thus to get that prime receipt these ancient Dons were
 able—

The words in “ Oxford Nightcaps ” are, their products on
 the table.

And each Shrove Tuesday since that day has added to the
 tale

Of deeds that Brasenose men can do inspired by Brasenose Ale.
 For to this generous liquor's potent spell is due the praise
 Of all whom B. N. C. has reared in these and other days :
 As Foxe the " Book of Martyrs " man—so slanged by Mr.
 Churton—

Heber as Bard and Bishop famed, and Melancholy Burton :
 'Twas this that made Tom Ingoldsby the queerest funniest
 writer ;

Led Milman to a deanery, and Gilbert to a mitre :
 'Tis this that bids us in the Schools defy the shafts of Fate,
 And undiminished still maintains the glories of our " Eight."
 And so we meet, year after year, a changed and changing crew ;
 For every time its Freshmen hath, to whom the scene is new ;
 And men depart (for whom a tear now glistens in my dimmer
 eye),

And some go to Sebastopol, and others go to " Skimmery."
 Yet one the flagging Muse should name, nor pass unhonoured
 o'er

The cheery laugh, the sparkling eye, that we may mark no
 more ;

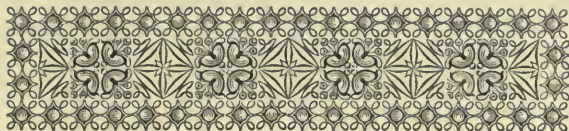
Though far away, Ulysses-like, he tastes Phæacian cheer,
 This night of old festivity his soul is with us here.
 Drink, Gallants, drink !—but while the ale untasted yet is
 glowing,

Let Memory turn to him that's gone—drink to the health
 of BOWEN.*

1855.

K. S.

* George Bowen, fellow of the College, was appointed Secretary to the Lord High Commissioners of the Ionian Islands about this time. He is now Sir George Bowen, K.C.M.G., Governor of Victoria.—ED.



XLIV.

“ Quid illud gaudii est ? ”—TERENCE.

“ ‘ Bring it,’ quoth the Cloud-compeller—
And the Wine-God brought the beer—

‘ Port and claret are like water
To the noble stuff that’s here.’ ”—BON GAULTIER.

“ Now let them drink till they nod and wink,
Even as good fellows should do ;
They shall not miss to have the bliss
Good ale doth bring men to.”—BISHOP STILL (1575.)

—

YES—it’s all very well for you dozens who’re here
For a glance at the Ode and a pull at the Beer—
Dons, Bachelors, Men—or these lyrics to turn
Your critical looks superciliously stern :
To make of their length or their shortness a crime ;
To cut up this sentence and question that rhyme.
But it’s no joke to do them : and (*experto crede*)
The subject has now got excessively seedy ;
When for years men have written to say they can’t write,
And to mourn for its triteness has grown very trite.
What a pity no vendor has ever been found
Of jokes by the thousand, or songs by the pound—
No means of procuring an Ode ready-made—
Which we might perhaps do from one branch of the trade,

From those places we've lately read so much about
 Where the Clergy get lithographed sermons turned out—
 Where spouters of Charges get scribblers to do 'em,
 Forgetting the difference of "*meum*" and "*Tuam*"—
 Those Ecclesiasticâl slop-shops, in fact,
 Whence announcements like these we may shortly expect :—
 "To Bishops and others in preaching unskilled.
 Keep your hearers awake and your churches well filled !
 Try our sermons ! they've not an unorthodox statement ;
 All marked in plain figures, from which no abatement.
 We've something on both sides of every dispute—
 Tea-meetings or Vespers—we're cêrtain to suit :
 'On the Westerton case' (either side—eighteen-pence) ; *
 'Controversial' (when analysed, free from all sense) ;
 'Quiet Grinds' (keep them dry—recommended for families) ;
 'A sermon preached after the battle of Ramilies,'
 ('Twill suit any victory, altering the name,
 And the copyright nobody's living to claim).
 In person apply, or else send, in a letter, a
 Few words as to doctrine, dimensions, *et cetera.*"

Now don't exclaim "Question !"—you cannot refuse
 A poetical ticket-of-leave to the Muse,
 By virtue of which any subject she reaches,
 Like Planché's burlesques, or like Palmerston's speeches,
 Or the epilogue tacked to a Westminster play,
 (Facetious performances all in their way).

* The famous case of *Westerton v. Liddell*, in which "the aggrieved parishioner" appeared almost for the first time.—Ed.

E'en so does the Muse, when elated with Beer,
 Dash wildly at will o'er the themes of the year,
 Unsteady of gait, and just pausing, when weary,
 To mark some event by a note or a query.
 (Not wholly unlike, we may say without malice, is
 The style of that terminal bore—the Analysis ; *
 Where men seem to think, taking Donaldson's view,
 The historical facts are remarkably few.)

The Beer Bill's repealed ; the advice, "Go to Church,"
 No more raises scenes like the sacking of Kertch :
 No more in Hyde Park is a Whitechapel mob
 Placed to teach the Police to score "one for his nob ;"
 But with us the Commission may perhaps interfere,
 And endeavour "to rob a poor man of his beer."
 Let them try it ! I fancy their efforts would fail ;
 Though they're virtuous, we'd still have our pancakes and
 Ale.

Yet even in Oxford we've had a reform,
 Which might have got up quite a similar storm
 'Gainst those cunning old shavers whose ordinance strips
 The rust from our razors, the hair from our lips,
 Whence bare as an egg is each countenance here ;
 No moustache is now dripping with Brasenose Beer ;
 Which ornament (swellish, yet somewhat *outré*)
 Can be only assumed with the hood of B. A.

* An Analysis of some Book of the Old Testament was at this time required in Collections. Dr. Donaldson's "Book of Jashar" is alluded to in the next line.—ED.

Ye statesmen of England, consistency's type,
 Who of peace are so eagerly puffing the pipe,
 How sage were your counsels, your treaties how clear,
 Did you join to your smoking a sip of our Beer!
 'Twould give our diplomatists sense and success;
 What the writers intended their notes would express;
 And playful young Pam would exulting declare
 That our Brewin' had vanquished the Muscovite Bear.

Then change the measure, for the song no more is of the
 present:
 Since other days than ours have found this tippie very
 pleasant:
 And when our spiced potations have locked us all in sleep,
 They say that phantoms in the Hall a wondrous revel keep.
 Old Dons, who heard (with ecstasy) King James's Greek
 oration,
 And Men, who studied Aldrich, when a recent publication;
 From shadowy Vice the tankard glides to unsubstantial
 Dean,
 And Founders from the walls step down to mingle in the
 scene.
 And, with our own elixir filled to slake those elders' thirst,
 There gleam the ghosts of all the cups we gave King Charles
 the First.
 And when our Benefactresses have melted off to Hades,
 King Alfred rises to propose "The Duchess and the Ladies;"
 But, ere they vanish, with a faint sepulchral three times three,
 Those spectres drink prosperity to glorious B.N.C.

Then may the year that passes before we meet again,
To hold our ancient festival, its choicest blessings rain
On merry England's noble realm and Gaul's confederate
 nation,
And keep the Queen and Emperor in splendid preservation,
And guard the warlike Albert safe through every martial
 danger,
And give the lovely Eugénie a welcome little stranger ;
And most on gallant Brasenose its dearest gifts bestow,
And save our Dons from growing fierce, our men from
 growing slow ;
In racing-chart and class-list our old renown maintain,
By proofs from river and from schools of muscle and of
 brain ;
And nurse the brave old spirit yet, and many a deed to
 show it ;
And keep our Ale sublime as now, and raise a better poet.

1856.

K. S.



XLV.

[A bold denizen of the Back Quadrangle, despising precedent,
composeth the following canticle.]



O' all the Tuesdays in the year,
Shrove Tuesday's mine most clearly;
For then we get such lots of beer,
And I love beer most dearly.

I hope, too, that we shall not fail
To have the proper poem ;
Though, as for jokes on Brasenose Ale,
Why—hang it—we all know 'em.

For puns you'll find, if puns they be,
Connecting Beer with Bacon ;
Though if they meant our "Shoe-black," he
Will swear they were mistaken.

A sad tale, too, inspection tells
Of seedy jokes on "Prior ;"
And though we've got some deepish "Wells,"
Our poets still get drier.

"Dry Hedges" is a fav'rite jest,
And lasts them long together ;

And when they're very hardly press'd,
They use instead "Dry Heather."

Now things like these perhaps were swell,
When first they were invented :
But still a change would be as well,
And make one more contented.

And since they've served so many years,
And with such good intentions,
Why, let 'em have three hearty cheers,
And nice retiring pensions.

And if our poets can't devise
Some friends with fresher faces,
A London company supplies
"Right things for the right places."

The right men they can recommend
For Office, Bench, and Mitre ;
And, if required, no doubt they'd send
A first-rate Ale-verse writer.

But these remarks, I do protest,
Are by no means intended
For more than a suggestion, lest
"Rex Faber"* feel offended.

* King Smith, a scholar of the College, author of the verses of 1855
and 1856.—E.D.

Yet though a minnow in the art
Of which he's such a Triton,
I hope he'll let me just impart
Some hints for him to write on.

In search of Beer, then, he must know—
Both home-brew'd, Bass, and Burton—
I've tried each College, high and low,
From Pembroke up to Merton.

I've had some practice, and at length
I'll lay a trifling wager
That of each tap I know the strength
As well as any gauger.

At Worcester, as you might expect,
The strong beer is but mildish ;
And though the fact they don't detect,
Their " mild " is truly childish.

At Exeter I must presume
(Although I'm no alarmer)
That all the stuff which they consume
Was brew'd by William Palmer.*

At Balliol an accident,
(Although you may not know it),

* Not of Magdalen, but of Rugeley.

Which spoilt the beer, to some extent
Accounts for Mr. Jowett.

A student versed in Arian Lore
One day let fall his book in-
to the large vat, as he leant o'er
The edge, just for to look in.

And, strong in hops and heresy,
The beer, though they mayn't think it,
Has wholly Arianised the very se-
lect few who dare to drink it.

At Magdalen I attend a Don,*
Who on alternate Mondays
Explains the "Novum Organon"
Which Blyth performs on Sundays.

A friend stands lunch ; and you will find
Their tap first-rate for clearing
The powers perceptive of the mind,
As well as of the hearing.

At Merton they've a tidy brew,
Ycleped by them Archdeacon ;
Though, just between myself and you,
Its strength they mustn't weaken.

* Professor Mansel.—ED.

The state of beer at Butler's Hall*
 I really can't arrive at :
 For though I tried, I couldn't call ;
 The place did look so private.

Still, I would risk an even sov-
 'reign that I should condemn it ;
 To judge but by the appearance of
 Its solitary J——.

So, once more calmly resting here,
 I've learnt this by my labours,
 That, after all, our Brasenose Beer
 Is better than its neighbours.

And these researches I present
 To any one who'll use them,
 In hope that, as they're kindly meant,
 He'll kindly not abuse them.

He'll find them help to show the truth,
 That honest ale won't hurt you ;
 And prove to Undergraduate youth
 That drinking it's a virtue.

I've done :—and leave him to explain
 How in a doubtful crisis,

* The Rev. George Butler was one of the first who opened a private Hall. His one inmate was "the solitary J——," spoken of below.—ED.

There's nought but Beer which can maintain
The headship on the Isis.

He must, by all means, too, connect
The late campaign's successes
With Brasenose Ale, which did effect
Those deeds which England blesses.

He'll show that men must not demur
To taxes for the Baltic ;
While we so gladly here incur
A more than double malt-tick.

He'll bid you o'er and o'er re-fill
Those tankards now before ye,
And drink them off with right goodwill
" To England's fame and glory."

And here's a moral for his tale ;
And may no time efface it :—
" Who once has tasted Brasenose Ale
Will ne'er, for shame, disgrace it."



XLVI.

Poculis accenditur animi lucerna
 Cor inbutum nectare volat ad superna
 Gualterus de Mapes, *Archidiaconus Oxon* : Sec. xi.



H Clarence, what a happy fate was thine,
 Drown'd in a hogshead of thy favourite wine !
 As damp Undina kissed her spouse to death,
 So drown'd in wine you sipped away your breath.
 Alas ! my case resembles yours, I fear,
 Morally drowned to death in Brasenose Beer.
 I dare not pause to ponder on my theme,
 Or leave my fancy unrestrained to dream,—
 So grand the subject, and so high thy praise,
 So far beyond my simpler, humbler lays :
 So high the point at which my muse should stop,
 So very near Parnassus' rugged top :—
 I dare not think on't ! heart and pluck would fail,
 My Pegasus would kick me o'er his tail,
 And soaring high beyond my power to follow,
 Mount on unconscious to his master's hallo !
 I, bruised and battered by my humbling fall
 Loudly and vainly on my muse should call,

Or, dying, on a rock engrave my tale
“He died in honour of the Brasenose Ale.”

Breathes there the Brasenose man with soul so dead,
And taste so vile as never to have said :
“It is my own, my country’s glory here !”
When home returned from lands unblest with Beer,—
From tribes whom Bass and Allsopp never fire,
From nations (oh, ye Gods !) unknown to Prior ?
If such there be, go—mark the creature well ;
Of *him* no record of renown shall tell,
For *him* no minstrel weave the thrilling tale
Of lands regenerate by the strength of Ale,
For *him* no plaintive history begs a tear,
Who pays no homage due to gen’rous Beer.

Not such as he by Isis’ crowded shore,
Propel the solemn eight or graceful four,
Upset the light and suicidal skiff,
Or seek more safety in the hybrid whiff.
The white-winged cutter has no charms for him :
He never sinks to teach his friends to swim—
“Fired by the thought, my genius spreads her wing,”
And longs the praises of our eight to sing,
To teach less happy Freshmen to revere,
The men who *once* were trained on Brasenose Beer.

I well remember once in time gone by,
I watched a lark soar upward to the sky ;

High on the verge of sight she trilled her song,
 A hundred octaves o'er the baser throng ;
 Sublime o'er all she poised, alone and great,
 'Till, wearied of her solitary state,
 Her wings she folded, and her head she bow'd
 And stoop'd once more to mix among the crowd :—
 So they who deem our Brasenose Boat debased,
 Misjudge the case, and all their pity waste,
 "She stoops to conquer !" Doubters, taste your Beer,
 While Brasenose men drink this there's nought to fear.

Descend, ye Jove-born, from Olympus' height :
 Come forth, ye gods of Erebus and night :
 Down from Parnassus, choral sisters bend
 Nymph, faun, and fairy, to my presence wend.
 Arise, ye Heroes, from the shades of death ;
 Sages of ancient days, take back your breath ;
 Beauties of yore, whose charms a world could fire,
 And gods and demigods with love inspire,—
 Cross back the Styx !—Stand forth a mighty troupe,
 And, Charon, come thou too, to fill the group.
 Now tell me,—ye who on Olympus big,
 Lead a calm life of *otium cum dig* :—
 Ye who on Mount Parnassus woo the moon,
 For ever singing, never out of tune ;—
 Ye shades who roam in Pluto's dull abodes,—
 Thou stern old ferryman of shadowy loads,—
 All who have tasted nectar—tell me : Here
 On earth what most resembles nectar ?—" Beer !"

As with a single voice, the shadowy throng
Pronounced the praises that to Beer belong.
—More they'd have answered had I asked them more ;
But I, in haste, betook me to the door—
In truth (my room is in the lesser quad :)
Jove nearly smashed the building with his nod—
The shock was dreadful !

I, to drown my fear,
Was forced to drink a pint of Brasenose Beer.

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1857.

J. W. M.



XLVII.

Haustum longum, haustum fortem, haustum omnes simul.

LORD DUFFERIN.

I likes a drop of *good Beer*,
I'm particularly partial to Beer.—VULGAR SONG.



HI, Dons of Brasenose, many chapel'd Brasenose,
Dear Dons of Brasenose, hear me ere I die !
The Principal is silent in his bed ;
Cain and his brother counterchange the grass
With steadfast shadow ; and the Bursars sleep ;
And stertorous slumber shakes each drowsy Dean ;
Hush'd is the cat's mew ; I alone awake,
I suffering from the pangs of Brasenose Beer.

Oh, Dons of Brasenose, hear me ere I die !
Hear me, oh men, oh scouts, oh roofs, oh walls,
That house the long-tailed rats ! Oh list, and hear !
Far off the loud bell called me from my rooms ;
Far off the solitary dim lamp broke
The darkness of the stairs : I stumbling down
By zigzag steps, and juts of splinter'd deal,
Came on the gravell'd levels of the quad.

Oh, Dons of Brasenose, hear me ere I die !
 Gown-clad we came to that red-curtain'd bower
 With robes subfusk ; it was the time of food.
 Uncertain freshmen interspersed the hall,
 And brimming tankards glitter'd on the board.

Oh, Dons of Brasenose, here me ere I die !
 Oxonian freshman, academical,
 Green as the grass, new done by Brasenose Wells,
 Upraised the foaming pewter to his lips,
 And groaned, and cried, " Can this be Brasenose Beer ? "

Oh, Dons of Brasenose, hear me ere I die !
 Oh, sour and strange as in dark winter morn
 The earliest call of loud awaking scout
 To sleepy ears, when unto sleepy eyes
 The casement slowly grows a glimmering square,
 So strange, so sour the Beer, I'll drink no more.

And now that painful task is done, in strains of Alfred
 Tennyson,
 With rage of zealous Westerton, or bold Archdeacon Denison,
 With introduction classical, and solemn peroration,
 To slang the stuff called Brasenose Beer, that vile conglom-
 eration ;
 (But yet I trust in future, Prior has better lush to send meant,
 And fancy in the latest tap, I can discern amendment ;)
 Before my Muse to Shotover, our Helicon, can trudge it,
 I'll tell this company the news, and ope the annual budget.

Of course you'll all rejoice with me at Phipps' elevation,*
 His military title, and his warlike decoration ;
 Which great event was prophecied in David's Psalms, *i.e.*,
 The David of Jerusalem, not he of B. N. C.
 Kings with their host discomfited, did flee on every side,
 And they that of the Household were, the spoil did then divide.

We've quarrelled at the Union, and had our rows of course,
 On coffee first, elections next, and finally divorce,
 Lord, how we cursed the other side, and how both cursed
 half measurers,
 And how we howl'd at Presidents, and how we sat on
 Treasurers ;
 And how we proved with arguments in clear concatenation,
 That every man except ourselves was ruining the nation.

And last when England, anxious to illuminate the state,
 Requested leave to copy out our Union debate ;
 We snubbed reporting amateurs, and sent them to perdition,
 Until the house should have decreed, if it would grant per-
 mission ;
 Of course within the Uniõn walls we never talk of rot,
 But yet if I must speak my mind, I think we'd better not.

Last term the Dons a conclave held, to settle the grave matter,
 If they the products should reform of tailor, and of hatter ; †

* See the *Court Circular* and *London Gazette* of the time.—ED.

† This refers to the abortive attempt to reform that admitted but un-
 reformable eye-sore, the Commoner's Gown.—ED.

The classics were for garbing men in toga Ciceronian !
 The moderns doubted if 'twould suit the latitude Oxonian ;
 The mediævals talked of robes of taffety, and minivere,
 As worn by Arthur, Launcelot, and their fair lady Guinevere ;
 " Let's wear the cap without the gown," cried Charley Neate,
 the Radical ;
 But others said, " Why then a man would look like what a
 cad I call."
 The great point was, (before my mind thus memory the
 pleading brings,)
 That commoners should be released from ignominious lead-
 ing strings,
 And scholars wear a velvet patch behind, 'tis my impression,
 Like gentlemen of travelling equestrian profession.

For minor news Brunel at last, tho' very long she tarried,
 Has launched his great Leviathan ; the Princess has been
 married ;
 Here's may her bliss be multiplied like legal fares of cabbies,
 And may the royal groom and bride have scores of royal
 babbies.
 In scientific war of words the " telegraph " is sacked,
 And sorrowfully Wadham hears the news, Big Ben is cracked ;*
 They've missed Napoleon again, the twentieth time, odd
 rot 'em,

* The late Warden of Wadham was sometimes irreverently called by this name, and the disaster which happened to the Westminster bell was consequently much joked about in Oxford.—E.D.

I shouldn't quite have broke my heart, if they had really
shot him ;
Their troops curse "*perjide Albion*," the Emperor looks glum ;
While John Bull sits indifferent with nose approaching thumb.

A few short lines, and one more theme, and then my task
is done,
We'll drink the boat, and drink the crew, good pluck'd ones
every one ;
They may not join us in our draught, but well they've
earned applause ;
True patriots they, their blood has flowed to serve their
country's cause.

Another week will soon be passed, and Isis shores shall see
The blue and yellow uniform go forth to victory.
And long and loud shall rise the cheers in one triumphant yell
At every bump of the good boat that ever pulls so well ;
Once more a noble victory our gallant oars awaits,
And Brasenose shall row head again in Torpids and in Eights.

SHROVE TUESDAY,
1858.

F. L. L.



XLVIII.


“Dost thou think, because thou art virtuous, there shall be no more
Cakes and Ale?

Yes, by St. Anne, and Ginger shall be hot i' the mouth.”

TWELFTH NIGHT.

“We'll drink it out of the Quart, my brave boys.”—POT-HOUSE SONG.

“For a Quart of Ale is a dish for a King.”—WINTER'S TALE.

'  IS sweet to hear the curfew toll the knell
Of parting day ; softly its music flows,
But sweeter far to hear the dinner-bell,
And of all bells the bell of Brasenose :

'Tis sweet to drown in beer our cares and woes
On ordinary days, but oh, how jolly
When round and round the brimming tankard goes,
On this our own dear Pancake-day, to wholly
Cut the connection of old moping Melancholy.

Hurrah for those who left their lives in story,
Whose lips have touched the very cups we quaff :
Whose names are blazoned on the scroll of glory,
With whose bright sparkling wit and merry laugh
These walls have oft resounded. Here the chaff
Of Tom of Ingoldsby was heard, and here,
Not from the mongrel power of shandy-gaff,
Or wine, or punch, but from the soul of Beer
The inspiration poured that charms the listener's ear.

Freshly remember in the flowing bowl
 Erdeswick* and Ashmole, Foxe and Addington,
 Nowell and Burton (melancholy soul),
 Heber and Milman, and grave Egerton
 The Chancellor of England ; he was one
 Who served that old bright occidental star Queen Bess :
 I cannot quite remember each great gun,
 But these are specimens, and they I guess
 Would ne'er have been such swells had they of Beer drank less.

Strangers beware, you little know its strength,
 For like a lion in the veins it leaps, ,
 And it would lay a giant at full length,
 So strong the influence with which it steeps
 The brain, and o'er it domination keeps :
 Strangers beware, nor tempt its might in scorn,
 For one there is who for such boldness weeps,
 A wiser man he rose the morrow morn,
 A moral he did point, a tale he shall adorn.

A child of Erin dined in hall one year ;
 I don't know if he's fond of mountain dew,
 But very fond he seemed of our strong beer,
 And by St. Patrick, sirs, he drank "a few ;"
 So that at last we half began to rue
 That we had asked him, and while in a funk

* Sampson Erdeswicke, gentleman commoner of B.N.C. in 1553. He was a Staffordshire antiquarian. See Word's *Athenæ*, Bliss' edit., vol. i., ch. 736. The other names are comparatively well known.—ED.

Lest he should get into a state of screw
 He cried with warmth (and from the Tankard shrunk)
 "I *shall* be sober; none, oh none, *will* make me drunk."

But like his fellow-countryman, when he
 Plunged in the billows of the ocean, cried—
 "I will be drowned and none shall rescue me,"
 And had his heart's desire, and sank and died;
 T'wixt *shall* and *will* no difference he descried;
 We gave him of the cup that conquers "Bass,"
 He drank, and like a lotus-eater sighed,
 And ever 'fore his eyes there seemed to pass
 "Two goblets of white foam shut in a nose of brass."

"O eight, eight, eight, O withering might" arise
 And blossom into glory, goodness knows,
 If long on Isis' breast so low she lies,
 What will become of dear old Brasenose:
 Though "mods" and cricket prosper, down she goes
 If ever she should cease to rule the waves.
 Drink, therefore, whosoe'er thou be'st that rows,
 Drink, and be fortunate, and know my braves
 The men of B.N.C. by Jove will ne'er be slaves.

Drink! be the nectar circling through your veins
 And muscles, too, ye gallant Torpid-men,
 Our boat has been victorious, and with pains
 Our boat shall be victorious again.
 Train for the strife your mighty thews, and when
 The conflict comes, let all the world behold
 Though other Colls may better use the pen

There's none like us to pull the oar so bold,
That all must bow before the SABLE and the GOLD.

Pembroke's before and Exeter behind,
Leave we the south and run down into Wales
And though our little tour may be a grind
A change of situation seldom fails
To raise the system : if the barges' rails
Do not resound with one all-victor cheer
The fault is ours and not the Childe of Hale's,
Good Knight ! who charged Don Quixote-like last year
"The House" ; and overcame the Knights of Devonshire.

SHROVE TUESDAY,

C. C.

March 8th, 1859.

In Memoriam

J. P.*

But I must tune my song to notes of woe,
For he has gone the faithful and the true ;
I would not mar the mirth o' the feast, but oh !
Give him one thought, for much he thought of you :
His heart was in our joys and griefs, we knew
How well *he* loved with large and generous hand
To deck our festival, who from our view
Hath passed for ever to the happy strand,
Through His dear merits' sake who died in Holy Land.

C. C.

* The elder Prior died in May, 1858.—ED.



XLIX.

“Fill the cup, and fill the can :
Have a rouse before the morn.”—TENNYSON.

“CHEER up, sir! or by this good liquor we will banish thee from the joys of blithesome company, into the mists of melancholy, and the land of little ease. Here be a set of good fellows willing to be merry : do not scowl on them like the devil looking over Lincoln.—KENILWORTH.

(AIR—“They may rail at this life.”)



HEY may rail at our Beer—from the night I
first drank it

A thirsty young freshman—I've blessed
Prior's skill,

And until they can show me a bumper to flank it
As social and jovial I'll stick to it still.

As long as our Hall has such beer-loving fellows
As round me this evening close-crowded I see,
They may say what they will of their various cellars—
Brasenose Ale is the stuff, sirs, for you and for me.

At Magdalen the “Proof” tho' the butler may bring it
Fresh-foaming and strong from its butts round and deep,
Yet since 'tis not blessed with a poet to sing it,
Must sink to the grave where the songless shall sleep.
But as long as our Ale its old strength doesn't weaken,
And the Nose our divine inspiration shall be,
They may talk as they will of their Merton “Archdeacon”—
Brasenose Ale is the stuff, sirs, for you and for me.

But stay—a murmur creeping round rebukes our stolen lays,
 “ If the Beer were not so heavy, we might give it all this
 praise : ”

Well, be it so : our lips will not disdain a lighter brew ;
 While a little variation in our verse would please us too.
 For tho’ “ the whirligig of Time ” brings round with each
 Shrovetide

No thought that’s not been used up, and no measure that’s
 untried,

Still must the jolly Muse attempt to wake a mirthful chord,
 And, prelude the Pancakes, show her presence at our
 board.

So while we search for something new, forgive our floundering
 hand,

If, rashly free, we splash and dash, a fish upon the sand :
 And if nor rhyme nor reason to your critic eyes appear—
 “ If there be thistles, there are grapes,” if nonsense, there’s
 the beer :

Our draughts of which, so quick they leave the tankard’s
 silver sheen

To glitter in its emptiness, would shock Carlisle’s dry Dean,
 Who headed late a silly team, of toast-and-water fond,
 Like some big, cackling goose that leads his fellows of the
 pond.

And shall not toasts we pass and pledge this gaudy-night
 of ours

Have more than common virtue, as our Ale than common
 pow’rs ?

Then drink to our old College : may she ever hold in shame

The low-bred villany of vice that apes a manlier name.
 And drink to this our Shrovetide feast, and may it time-
 long be—

The don or man that drinketh not, no Childe of Hale is he !
 And drink to those who here last year sat 'mid us light and gay,
 Who've left some little place unfilled, perhaps unfilled for aye :
 But no sentimental sorrow shall be ours for them to-night,
 We'll wish them all that could be wished, lives fortunate
 and bright.

And drink to those for whom the blood throbs quicker in
 our breast,
 When dastard Frenchmen gloat o'er homes by England's
 daughters blest.

So drink deeply to our rifles*—and the Common Sense that
 held

Fair Oxford's best and wisest in the rank their fathers swelled,
 When mere obstructive donnishness to squash those Rifles
 met,

And fell as Gaelic knaves shall fall before our bayonet.
 And here's to him who mixes here as far as Prince may do,
 Tho' his fickle heart may leave us for our Sister's lighter blue :
 And while he rides at hedge and ditch, with steady hand
 and head,

May his shadow grow yet longer ere his growing days have
 sped.

So, so : the tankard's empty : for awhile let drinking stay :

* The O. U. R. V. Corps was formed at this time, not without some little opposition. The lines in the text were inspired by the "Invasion Panic."—ED.

Let us raise the fallen curtain, and review Time's latest play.
 In solemn silence pass we by the honoured names and true
 Gone from us ere the old year's knell, changing, rang in
 the new.

We'll not talk of last year's conflict, where French eagles
 made their feast,

Or its little imitation at St. George's-in-the-East :

The first we'll leave to those who would to useless freedom
 raise

The land that hardly fosters now the men of Roman days ;
 The last with all our hearts, we'll leave to strive its brutal strife
 With the "Record" and the "Union," and their narrow
 views of life.

We'll have nought of last year's monsters,—its Revivals and
 its Strike,

Its Big Ben, its Great Eastern—all a nine days' tale alike :
 Nor its diplomatic squabbles, when Pam pitched the toss
 and won,

And the Derby horse was jostled by that "Artful Dodger"
 John.

Change the strain : ay, longer, stronger, let a merrier
 measure flow,

'Tis the boat demands our praises : meed deserved to them
 we owe :

While we ever seek the bottom of the tankard, foaming nigh,
 They are sitting only sipping, with dry throat and wistful eye.
 Some are suffering—hear them whisper—suffering as the
 poets tell

Poor old Dionysus suffered, when he crossed the stream
 of hell,

Pulling like an untrained Freshman, bow to Charon's lusty
stroke,

Till the sweat poured streaming over saffron jersey, lion-cloak:
While around him, broken-winded, rose the chorus of the frogs
Croaking in provoking discord over Acherusian bogs.

Thus they suffer, and down-sitting, gingerly they meet their
doom,

Gingerly in Hall and Chapel, gingerly in lecture-room.

Ay: our boat shall speed her swiftly, lifting as her strong
oars bend,

Ugliest of the ugly, bumping upward to her race's end.

Once she stooped—to conquer only: soon her flag shall
crown the mast,

With the colours of her rivals flapping 'neath it to the blast:
Soon from bank and crowded towpath, soon from boat and
barges' rail,

Ladies' kerchiefs, men's deep voices, all shall join to bid
her hail,

When she holds the place of honour, all her own in days
of yore,

Rolling back a shout of triumph to each boat's uplifted oar
My Laureatship's brief time is o'er: the task 'twas mine
to do

Is done: the Muse is fain to drink, and bids *Wassail* to you.
And oh! be not too hard upon such halting rhymes as these,
But spare a kinder thought for him—at least he wished to
please,

Whose heart is with his College, tho' his arm be all untried
To swell the score on Cowley Marsh, or sweep the Isis tide.

And ere the tankard leave your lips, drink deeply once again
To long, long days of happiness to College, Dons, and Men :
For Principal, and Vice, and Deans, light sleep and easy lives :
For Bursars and for Tutors—for the wisest of them—wives,
And for ourselves, for we'll be wise, right pretty mates and true.
And let those that like the Fellowships, get them and keep
them too.

And when the times are rolling on, and we no longer here,
When poets yet unheard of chaunt the yearsong of our Beer
Still may we meet as now we do in country or in town,
Nor lay aside our friendships with our undergraduate gown.
So, when other bosoms beat for us, and other lips delight,
Full oft will rise the thoughts of hours like these we pass
to-night,
And port and walnuts round the fire shall hear some mirth-
ful tale
Of days in which with College friends we drained our Brase-
nose Ale.

SHROVE TUESDAY,
February 21st, 1860.

A. B. S.



L.

“ Now since we're met, let's merry, merry be
 In spite of all our foes ;
 And he that will not merry be,
 We'll pull him by the nose.
 Let him be merry, merry there,
 While we're all merry, merry here,
 For who can know, where he shall go,
 To be merry another year.”—*Old Song*.

“ I stuff my skin so full within
 Of jolly good ale and old.”—*Bishop Still* (1575.)

“ Let there be gall enough in thy ink ; though thou write with a
 goosepen, no matter.”—*Twelfth Night*, Act iii., Sc. 2.



NCE again we come before you, as the poet
 came of old,
 When above the buzzing benches loud his
 choral satire rolled.

And to-night while all around us sit ἐπ' ἀκρῶν—see the play—
 Thinking on this well-worn subject what their poet still
 can say :

While to grand old Dionysus, here, as on that altered stage,
 Steams this mingled apple-fragrance with the brew of mellow
 age :

Ours it is to string in order strains of Pancakes and of Ale,
 Strains that are, if weak and slipshod, not, like College
 Rhymes, for sale.

Known to all, from darkest ages there hath been a custom
here,
Yearly welcomed—but to-night, Sirs, can we truly praise
our beer ?
From the depths of Brasenose cellars, like an oft-repeated
catch,
Came a voice deep-toned in anguish, ringing thro' the
buttery-hatch :
This the stuff that lifts our College highest 'mid her boating
peers,
Gave our brave young Lucknow chaplain* claim to those
Sheldonian cheers !
This the stuff that girds our Classmen to the toils that must
be borne,
Burning thro' the reckless midnight " lights that do mislead
the morn !"
And your Butler heard, and meekly with his hand upon his
breast
Bowed his head in answering silence, bowed it at your stern
behest :
And your Butler—and your Poet—are not those two words
the same ?—
Quick betook him to the Tripod whither ancient rhymesters
came ;
Brewed a better vat and tasted ; froths it for you strong and
bright,
Writes his Saturnalian verses for your Shrovetide gaudy-night.

* The Rev. James Parker Harris, B.A., had an Honorary M.A. degree conferred upon him at Commemoration, 1860. He had been Chaplain at Lucknow.—ED.

Drink then, while the tankard's foaming, while the tap is
flowing free,

Drink the toast that each may think of, drink to glorious
B.N.C.

And, in drinking, this remember—don't abuse the critic's
hour ;

Two days hence St. Valentine will try your own poetic power.

What shall be our *arrière pensée* ? What shall be our song
to-night ?

O to soar above Parnassus like a school-boy's paper kite !
Thus on some bold train of fancy, that all eager followers
mocks,

Like to his, who from the pulpit wove the parable of Clocks !
Shall we tell of wiry fire-guards, mythical as Mah'met's hearse,
Till the College—dear old Lady—bought them from her
children's purse ?

Shall we sing our gorgeous Chapel "blazon'd fair" from
roof to floor,

Till the line of beauty wanders, where no beauty was before ?
Shall we tell how sage Professors shouted round the Sanscrit
chair,

Painting up opposing champions, as they wished them, foul
and fair ;

Just as round some borough hustings Whigs and Tories
mutual shout ;

Just as Southwark's "local member" painted him who turned
him out ?

Grimly smiles the Muse, and sternly to new Victims points
her hand :

Flesh your knife, let's have no mercy, be a Shylock in demand.
 On the waves of Congregation rode a statute tempest-tost, *
 Built for war on Lodging-Houses, leaky, water-logged, then
 lost :

Lost :—lost happily for Oxford, for her Dons, her Common-
 Sense,

Lost :—in spite of those who manned it in its folly of defence.
 Aye ! hurrah ! we triumph o'er it, glad such wisdom failed
 and fell,

And to words we'd give our triumph, words that should
 become it well :

And shall donnish, mean suspicion, find a fault where none
 we own,

Just because those words are rising from beneath no Fellow's
 gown ?

Thro' the year that's left behind us flies the Muse with foot-
 steps fast,

While the scenes her magic raises seem but shadows whirling
 past.

Where Italia's fields lie sodden, flushed with more than
 sunset's light,

There she pauses for an instant, watches all the shifting fight,
 Hears the long, dull roll of cannon, where a people vengeance
 wreaks,

While the Vatican re-echoes to a female's fitful shrieks.

And she turns her vision homeward, sees that Johnny wrig-
 gling still,

* Dean Burgon's recent attack is not the only one that the Lodging
 Houses have had to undergo.—Ed.

Penning for Sardinian guidance cautious prophecies of ill :
Writing warm congratulations, when the battle's fought and
won—

All the danger past and over, all the risk so boldly run.
Hush ! we'll leave him, half-repentant, half-committed to his
word,

While the House in sulky silence hates reform so often heard,
And more cruel than Othello—too polite at once to kill—
Does to death by lingering tortures that abortion, Johnny's
Bill.

Nose of Brass ! that ever o'er us watchest from above our
gate,
Whether Fortune frown or flatter, grinning early, grinning late !
Ere this verse, thy beery tribute, to the finish spurts along,
Up, and aid thy chosen poet with a loud heart-stirring song.
Not in that sonorous music that thou well may'st make in
sleep,
When thy cares and ours have vanish'd, drowned in alecups
strong and deep :
But in tones full loudly ringing, worthy of thy sons, who've
strained
Arms and lungs to wildest tension, sought new honours,
sought and gained.
Sing—when Balliol's rising Torpid strove to wrench us from
our place,
How the pluck that knows no yielding kept us thro' that
hard-won race.
Sing—still later, when thro' storm-clouds summer's sunlight
flickered rare,—

Fairer forms and softer faces wearing colours that we wear,—
How the Childe, one bump accomplished, left the others
still to be,

While our Dons—hurrah ! for them, Sirs—cheered us on
right lustilie.

Lastly sing our brawny four-oar, and the victory doubly won,
Latest title to be woven in thy roll of glories done.

So for these, our Torpid, sipping sips that make the Bacchæ
weep,

These who bear our honour with them, or to lose it, or to keep
Breathe thine ancient spirit in them, till thine ancient place
they hold,

Tho' " the ruddy lion rampant " roar behind on field of gold.
Nose of Brass ! may nothing daunt thee, nothing ever dis-
appoint ;

Nothing, save the bumps thou makest, ever put thee out of
joint.

Roaming fly our thoughts thro' distance, where they
oftenest choose to roam,

Whispering of the hearts that love us, those we love, else-
where, at home :

May to them and us—together for a moment nearer drawn
By this deep-pledged toast—all pleasures, all delights and
joys be borne.

Here we sit : and some among us, sitting here, shall quaff
no more

Draughts that from our butler's tripod draw wild scraps of
poet-lore.

With the circling of the seasons fly our friendships, broadly
cast,

Specks upon the world's horizon, shadows of the sunny past.
Slowly from yon middle table creeping upward, as we crept,
Freshmen rise to take the places that, before us, others kept.
Not for all another Shrovetide shall return with "feastful
mirth,"

Not for all another laureate travail with a puny birth :
Only somewhere in life's battle, fighting bravely at our post,
Some as Parsons, Lawyers, Doctors, some with those we care
for most,

Some away from merrie England, far 'neath India's branding
sun,

Shall we read perchance the verses by a later poët done.
So, ere yet the clash of tankards dies in silence thro' the hall,
Ere at Wines, in ripe discussion, friendly critics toss the ball,
Ere these lines 'mid prosy battles lie uptossed on buttery
shelves,

While the lambswool still is brimming—drink we gaily to
Ourselves.

SHROVE TUESDAY,
February 12th, 1861.

A. B. S.



LI.

“ Diem noctemque continuare potando nulli probum. . . . Potui humor ex hordeo aut frumento in quendam similitudinem vini corruptus.”

Tacitus—Germania 22.

“ Five years! a long lease for the clinking of pewter.”

Henry IV., Part i., Act 2.

CUSTOMS, we know, in these enlightened days,
 Are apt to meet with censure more than praise ;
 Though not in vain have some repelled the storm
 Of fell Destruction, and her sire Reform.
 And never may that custom pass away,
 Which all the College celebrates to-day.
 None will deny the merits of our beer,
 We sing its well-known praises every year ;
 Yet, lest the casks (avert the omen !) fail,
 We must perform one penance for our ale.
 We all may drink ; but yet these rhymes to-night,
 'Tis yours to read—an easier task than write.
 The “ mild ” to-night for service volunteered,
 But at the thought the very tankards sneered,
 And vowed that should such practice come to pass
 They would sell out, retiring *vice* glass.
 The nose above the gate (portentous sign),
Retroussé curled, instead of aquiline ;
 Nor did the butler stand such pressure long,
 But smiled approval, and produced the “ strong,”

Adding the herbs, that all who enter here
Might taste unaltered genuine Brasenose beer.

As usual, I believe, a year has passed,
Since in our Hall we welcomed Shrovetide last.
Scarce has our mourning garb been laid aside,
Still we lament the day when Albert died,
He, whom we owned, ere his short course he ran,
In all but birth, a perfect Englishman.
Dark was the hour when mourning England gave
Prince, husband, statesman to an early grave.

The year has passed in mourning ; the year has passed in
blood,

Where through Virginian forests rolls the Potomac's flood ;
By prairie and by river, on mountain and on plain,
Contend a severed people that can ne'er unite again.
The North contends for empire, for liberty the South,
Rightly no word of sympathy proceeds from England's mouth ;
For to those who fight for empire, the sword once freedom
gave,

And they who fight for freedom are the tyrants of the slave.
May the day ne'er dawn for England when *her* volunteers
shall leave

The foeman on her soil upon a battle's eve.
Here in the hour of danger one corps would never fail,
And of that corps one company is drinking Brasenose Ale.
In the Council of the nation, the year now past has seen
Stranger fate for Liberal measures than for long time has been,

By each county and each borough that sends new members
 there,
 Is swelled the serried phalanx that is seated left the chair.
 For the Church it fought undaunted and at last in triumph
 rose,
 When the Speaker said, 'mid silence, " My voice is with the
 Noes."*

Aye, soon the coalition will find their efforts vain,
 And the country speed to office our Chancellor again.
 The year has left its landmarks—still think we of the sight,
 When in the Putney waters the dark blue beat the light.
 Patti has reigned in opera, and thousands have been drawn
 To Leotard, to Blondin, or the deathless Colleen Bawn.
 Nor less have lawyers profited by the year that now has flown,
 Let Chambers, Cairns, and Coleridge mark it with whitest
 stone.

Turn we to Brasenose ; here a chosen few,
 With Spartan pluck the ale-crowned bowls eschew ;
 Proud in privation still, for well they know
 The vulgar herd may drink ; 'tis theirs to row
 Theirs to maintain before their task is done
 The pride of place that last year's Torpid won ;
 When Exeter full early learned her fate,
 (May she succumb this year before our Eight !)
 And the gay line with various bunting dressed
 Showed Brasenose colours floating o'er the rest.
 And on a welcome eve in glorious June,

* Refers to the debate and division on Church rates.—ED.

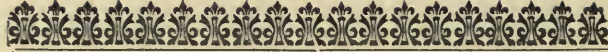
While o'er the meadows peals a martial tune,
 (Martial, I trust, for scarce could we endure
 Or "In the Strand," or worse, "The Perfect Cure,")
 Then may our flag be still seen floating there,
 While shouts of triumph echo through the air.
 See near the crowded barge our boat they moor!
 See where her conquered rivals raise each oar!
 Still for that day does Brasenose hoping wait,
 Soon may it dawn with victory for the Eight!

And here my task is ended; a rhymester should not speak
 Of questions theological *or* the Regius Chair of Greek.
 And though we all have volunteered, yet still recruits we be,
 And next year's bard can better praise a *veteran* "Number
 Three."

Next year! the scene is changing, we shall not all be here,
 Many to-night are drinking, for the last time, Shrovetide beer.
 But when the day approaches, Memory will bring us *all*
 Back to the dear old College, the well-remembered Hall.
 Some by their English firesides will recollect the day,
 Others in distant cities, in countries far away;
 All will be here in fancy, and think upon the night.
 May all have many pleasures, be all their troubles light.
 Then quickly pass the tankard; and in the fight of life
 May each obtain his wishes, be they wisdom, wealth, or wife.
 But whate'er success attend us, in one thing all must fail,
 When College days are over there'll be no more Brasenose Ale.

SHROVE TUESDAY,
 1862.

J. M. L.



LII.

“ That’s a brave God and brews celestial liquor :
I will kneel to him.”

“ O Stephano, hast any more of this ? ”
“ The whole butt, man.”



ALL hail the flagons foaming high—the tankards
bright all hail,
That beam right full with pure lambswool, with
streams of nut-brown Ale :

All hail to merry Shrovetide ! we welcome thee once more
The kingday of our Calendar, scor’d with the chalk of yore—
The day of all the days that gild our Academic year,
The Brasenose Saturnalia—The feast of Brasenose Beer !

Heavens, what a blustering prelude ! doubtless ’tis the well-
worn story,

We may, like the swell in Horace, look for “ *fumum ex
fulgore* ”—

(If the Honour men—poor beggars—would parade their
classic *voûs*

They may cite the farrowing mountains, and the idiotic
mouse) :

But avaunt such sneering critics : Brothers, drain the cup
instead,

And shew pardon to your poet—for the Beer is in his head !
Drain the cup, and as its contents, fast retiring more and more

Shew the full round orb of silver, where the liquor was before,
Straightway from the mist of ages, there shall greet your boosy
gaze,

Many a thought of Brasenose glory, and the pride of by-gone
days.

Think upon the lordly Bishop, of Sir Richard, noble wight,
Smiling from their dusty canvas, upon this our gaudy-night :
Think upon that bounteous lady—Scholars best can sing her
worth—

Little savour of scholastic sees she in such Shrovetide mirth ;
From his misanthropic vista, gazing on our jollity,
Even melancholy Burton seems to feel a twinge of glee ;
We can well nigh see Dean Nowell, plodding forth with mazy
tread,

Brandishing, with festive gesture, all his fish-hooks o'er his
head,

While ennobl'd Mrs. Frankland, heroine of Collegiate fame,
Forth to meet her learned compeer, dances from her musty
frame !

Think upon a thousand others—and as thus your fancies flow,
As each generation changes, varying as they come and go,
Fired with thoughts of by-gone glories, ne'er let Brasenose
honour fail,

We have heaps of Brasenose spirit—butts untold of Brasenose
Ale—

Let each stock, with fresh endeavours, strive to hold that
honour fast,

Strive to add, with pluck unflagging, new-won laurels to the
last !

So our boat shall ride unconquer'd, monarch of the Isis wave,
 And another Four recover what the last strove hard to save :
 So shall shortly, borne triumphant, speed "The Nose" to
 victory,

While o'er all the baffled buntings, floats the flag of B. N. C.
 Cherish we those hard-earn'd guerdons, coveted full oft before,
 Hither brought in twofold triumph, trophies of the Henley
 Oar,—

Honour to the pluck that won them,—every honour, too,
 be his

Hailed by thousand acclamations—Champion of Tamesis !*
 May such glories ne'er be sullied, long may we retain the prize,
 And may future Henley Victors, future Champions, arise :
 But remember, every Freshman, soon the work will be your
 own,

Your's 'twill be to keep the laurels, which your predecessors
 won !

Wondrous, surely, such a doctrine : lives there one who dare
 refuse

What a Regius hath dictated—dare reject the "Daily News?"†
 If our Sires, benighted dotards, chose to win Gibraltar's
 height,

Shall their Sons endorse such theories—countenance that
 might is right ?

What ! are we to hold their winnings ? Let them cost us so
 and so—

* W. B. Woodgate.

† This refers to the letters on Colonial Independence which Mr. Goldwin Smith, then Regius Professor of Modern History, was at this time publishing in the *Daily News*.—ED.

Us—enlightened generation? No—the “Daily News” says
No.

Nose of Brass, hold fast thy honours—full thy cup of glory fill,
Spite of all the “Daily Newses,” dare be called a bigot still :
Spite of never-ceasing bluster—spite of democratic storm,
Swell thy nostrils at Retrenchment—Snort, O snort, upon
Reform !

Those the vaunted Liberal passwords, that the everlasting call,
Clamour'd upon every hustings, shriek'd in every Borough
Hall ;

That the would-be patriots hobby, who must take the House's
sense

Upon every puny pension—on a vote of eighteenpence.

But Reform . . . how hope we ever fitly to extol their praise,
Who ensandwich'd Modern Science with the lore of early days.
Blessings on them who discover'd Knowledge had so many
keys,

It has struck them now at Durham—they'll be trying it at
Bees ;

Glory to those noble spirits, benefactors of the nation,
Who admitted keen aspirants to a Liberal Education ;
Broke down time-encrusted barriers, raked the “*loca senta
situ*,”

Lit, with Social Science matches, Toleration's lamp to light
you !

Out upon your “close Foundations”—threadbare, worn-out
sort of thing,

Every man his own promoter—Competition for a King :
Shall your bigoted old Founders still be thought of? No,
Good Gad,

No, the Age demands Advancement—Honour to the Christian Cad :

Room for "Freedom of Opinion"; what's the use of Founder's Kin ?

Let the Conscientious Ranter, and the unshorn Hebrew in :
Let the new-Connection Spouter travel the high road to fame,
And the brown-breech'd Quaker trample upon every Founder's name,

Let Colenso's primest Zulu take Stinks honours: and, ye Gods,
Every howling Muggletonian get a Double First in Mods !
We must halt : in times hereafter, future bards may rise to tell
Mr. Bright installed as Chancellor—Garibaldi D. C. L.,
While enchanted Convocation, with triumphant joy elate,
Chatter o'er the falling fragments of a severed Church and State :

Ours a simpler happier duty: drink, my boys, while drink ye may,

Leaving dreams of dusky Future, drink the Brasenose of To-day,

Drink to every one around us, mindful that another year,
Far may be those well-known faces which to-night are beaming here,—

Far away full many among us may his loyal heart regale,
With a deep-drawn draught of Memory, froth'd with Fancy's Brasenose Ale ;

Even now in fond affection, many a thought is centred here,
Hovering round the brimming tankards for a sniff of Prior's Beer :

Many a by-gone Son of Brasenose, with his pipe and bottle filled,

BRASENOSE ALE. 193

Thinking how we now are swilling as himself so oft hath swilled,
Many a one that joins the bumper, as we drink it, each and all,
Drink with heartiest happiest spirits—Honour to the Old
King's Hall!

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1863.

S. R. C.



LIII.

“ Now we’re met like jovial fellows,
 Let us do as wise men tell us,
 Sing Old Rose and burn the bellows ;
 When the jowl with claret glows,
 And wisdom shines upon the nose,
 O then is the time to sing Old Rose,
 And burn, burn, burn the bellows.”—SONG, TEMP. CHARLES I.

“ Gros nez ! Qui te regarde à travers un grand verre
 Te juge encor plus beau.

Tu ne ressembles point au nez de quelque herbe
 Qui ne boit que de l'eau.”—JEAN LE HOUX.

“ Ay ! Stand by your glasses—steady ! ”—ANON.



GAIN from haunts of ghostly verse
 Come trooping Shrovetide Rhymes together :
 Each year your Butler feels it worse,
 This circling with the same short tether.

Your Butler-poet ! Faintly wet
 With dew of praise his bay leaf glitters ;
 He would his lot with his was set,
 Who serves, unsung, the steaming fritters.

Each year he takes his well-worn text,
 He thinks it cannot last much longer,
 But still he scribbles, sadly vexed
 To find his Pegasus no stronger.

His beer's best praise, he holds, should cling
To highest place in class, on river ;
The brew he gives to-night can bring
No better guerdon to the giver.

Oh ! Had he but a Leech's brush,
He'd paint Silenus with his pitcher,
No amphora of nectar-lush,
A tankard filled with something richer ;
O'er Bacchus' arm he'd throw a skin
With dappled spots of black and yellow ;
On tuns with Brasenose Beer within
Each Satyr should outleap his fellow.

Were his the cynic pen, the frown
Half sad, His* kindly heart belying,
Whose wheels of life ran soonest down,
Impatient of the year's slow dying :
He'd lash this Fair of Vanity,
And drones their petty dogmas urging,
And waves of party running high,
And truth half-drowned amid their surging.

For up and down the old world reels,
A motley fool in garb fantastic,
And hides the wounds it gives and feels
'Neath bristling scorn and love sarcastic ;
Such scorn, such love, as lavish fly
Thro' congress-notes, where, lightly tripping,

* Thackeray died in December, 1863.—ED.

“ My Sister ” and “ My Brother ” try
 Each not to see the other slipping.

And little princes take their cue
 To steal a crown, while great ones falter :
 And while the old world talks, the new
 Still tighter draws a tightened halter ;
 And Sorrow smiles in tears away
 A tearful laugh, half-born of sorrow,
 While Chickamauga wins to-day
 What Chattanooga takes to-morrow.*

Nay, leave the silly world alone
 To work its way to death, thro' madness ;
 A Brasenose Butler holds his own,
 The mirth to choose, refusing sadness :
 Tho' Cobden snarls, Delane's dark crimes
 Don't spoil his after-dinner sherry ;
 “ The faithless coldness of the Times ”
 Is, spite of all, the life most merry.

O Spirit-poet, Scald, whoe'er
 Erst sang brave deeds the Norseman's duty,
 Who chantest now to Odin's ear
 Of that white star of softest beauty,

* These allusions to the American war, to contemporary European politics, and to Mr. Cobden's quarrel with *The Times*, will be understood by reference to any History of the year.—ED.

His daughter whom we call our own,
 Our Queen to be in years delaying ;—
 O'er us thy power of song be thrown,
 Ours be the heart that knows no staying :

That these, our youngest oars, may take
 The place where victory long has beckoned,
 And stronger arms, in summer, break
 The charm that keeps us only second.*
 Say, shall the Childe for ever know
 A stern that flies his sharp endeavour,
 His flag's proud cross droop sad below
 Another's flaunting silk for ever ?

So, when the longest sunbeams fold
 Round slender tower, and elm-grown alley,
 And fairer guards that green barge hold,
 And brave beneath our colours rally ;
 One moment, lying breast to breast,
 Those two loved boats shall cease their yearning,
 The one in her own place at rest,
 The other cheer for cheer returning.

Woke by the clash of falling lid
 On empty tankard ringing clearly,
 Come shadows of the weeks that slid
 From term to sunny term so cheerly ;

* Trinity was Head of the River for several years about this time.—
 ED.

And all the long vacation-days,
By lake, and hill, and sea together,
Cold plashings over rainy ways,
Wide ramblings, ankle-deep in heather.

And sunny corners of the quad
Are bright again with sunny faces,
Old friends from well-known windows nod,
And sit once more in well-known places :
And well-remembered voices ring
To Eights and Torpids nightly started ;
And hearts that stay, still backward fling
Their challenge to the hearts departed.

Ah ! well—they pass, they steal away,
These friends of calm and cloudy weather ;
Some fall with honour in the fray
Of saucy hat and dainty feather ;
And round them floats their wedding-peal,
Gay dirge above their ended story :
And some in life's blind sandstorm reel,
Mocked by the mirage-palms of glory.

And some from alabaster heights
Roll out the long, sonorous sermon,
While we, beneath those pillared lights,
Drink in their dew, like thirsty Hermon :
Round some the wordy battle clangs,
In wig and gown they strut their paces :

And some are gone, and o'er them hangs
Their misty shroud in marshy places.

And as to one who, with his friend,
Hears on the beach the wave retreating,
The swirling tides their fancies lend
Of rathe farewell, and future greeting ;
So to some strong hearts, watching yet
This Shrovetide wave down-creeping slowly,
It's last faint ripple brings regret,
But not unmixed with gladness wholly :

For over tightened hands that make
A meeting in the years before us,
And over every parting shake,
Our voices still shall wake the chorus—
Our grand old name no oar shall fail,
And us and it no dark cloud sever,
But Brasenose Tower, and Brasenose Ale,
And Brasenose friendships last for ever.

SHROVE TUESDAY,
Feb. 9th, 1864.

A. B. S.



LIV.

YE gods and goddesses, ye tuneful nine,
 List to my glorious theme, your ears incline ;
 Apollo haste, come Bacchus and inspire
 My swelling spirit with a poet's fire.

Fair Hebe, as they say, once Nectar poured,
 While gods and goddesses adorned the board ;
 'Twas Nectar was it ? Yes, I greatly fear
 That Jupiter, by Jove, ne'er tasted "beer."

Fancy the Thunderer shouting for his ale,
 And queenly Juno tasting Allsopp's Pale,
 The thirsty Vulcan with ungainly halt
 Showing the gods the way to floor the malt.

Had but the Satyrs known its peerless taste,
 They'd been satirical and left to waste
 Their Nectar. Surely it was not their fault
 That they indulged in "Hops" but not in "Malt."

Since, then, the gods have drunk, and poets told
 The glories of the wine they loved of old,
 Why should I cease, why need my spirit quail,
 To sing the bracing power of Brasenose Ale.

The very emblem of this College shows
Her beer's potency, else why the Nose,
Save that in earlier times 'twas painted "Red,"
But sober ages made it gilt instead.

When up the running stream by stout hands sped,
One boat an easy victor shoots ahead,
We hail at once, while rival cheeks turn pale,
Our Brasenose Torpid, fed on Brasenose Ale.

When in the summer term, with eager pride,
One crew triumphant o'er the waters ride,
We hoist the Black and Yellow with a cheer,
And hail our eight—the fruit of Brasenose beer.

And when beside fair Thames we went to view
The glorious victory of our stalwart crew ;
With cries of *Oxford wins ! the spell's not broke.*—
We proudly claimed as ours the Brasenose Stroke.*

O hapless they, devoid of healthy cheer,
Who know not of the joys of Brasenose beer,
Barclay would tremble could he only be
To-night within the hall of B. N. C.

But *we* will aye with eager hearts outpour
Eternal thanks to those old souls of yore,
Who raised this ancient College and who knew
Not only how to drink but how to brew.

* D. Pocklington.

Now perhaps I ought to finish, but remember each one here,
That the license of Shrove Tuesday comes but only once a year.
Only once to us is given, as the year rolls quickly past,
To attempt to lay before you some slight memory of the last.

Many a heart on this glad evening ponders on the days gone by,
Thinks of Brasenose and her glories with a long regretful sigh.
Many a spirit too is present at this well-remembered scene,
Though the body cannot follow and the ocean roll between.

So, forgetful of the future, 'tis the past I would explore,
And resuscitate the memory of poor eighteen-sixty-four ;
It has borne with it prosperity and rather weal than woe,
And yet there are a few things that had better not been so.

There's been war throughout America, our warnings we set forth,
Yet neither did we aid the South nor intimidate the North,
Till they say the British bull-dog is no longer dread to sight,
For though he still retains his bark, yet has he lost his bite.

We're in a mess about Japan ; the fault in this doth lie
We needs must have a finger in everybody's pie.
We talked of aid to Denmark, we were but broken reeds,
Our words were very mighty, but very small our deeds.

There's been no lack of murder, but Müller's case will show
Societies' pretentious interference is no go,
That justice still is kept alive, nor Doctors all combined,
Can prove nigh every murderer to be of unsound mind.

In Oxford, too, are many things with which one can't agree,
 And though to chide one's seniors is dangerous for me,
 Our Proctors are precocious, and there's one above the rest
 Who is "*alieni appetens*," too greedy for the "chest."

Another grievance is there, too, to which they did combine,
 The early closing movement of billiard rooms at "nine,"
 And taking in the *pros* and *cons*, I'm sure it would be better
 Would they only keep the statutes by the spirit not the letter.

As for the doings and decrees of mystic Convocation,
 The way they treat Professors is a scandal to the nation,
 And though they've somewhat changed the schools and let
 us off with two
 Instead of three I cannot see the good that will accrue.

And now, for time is waning, while you the ale outpour,
 Drink to our last success in "Greats ;"* you've drunk the
 toast before,
 And may the dear old College keep up the ancient rules,
 Be first upon the river and foremost in the Schools.

Let's drink then to our country, her people, and our Queen,
 Let's drink to those who *are* here and those who here *have*
 been.
 Let's drink unto our noble Prince, his Bride, and Baby-boy,
 And may they ever meet with prosperity and joy.

* S. W. Skeffington obtained a First Class in Michaelmas Term, 1864.
 —ED.

May Brasenose ever prosper as in the days of old,
Long may her deeds of glory in flood and field be told.
May all her doings flourish and her children never fail
To sing aloud with grateful tongue in praise of Brasenose Ale.

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1865.

W. A. O.



LV.

“ ——— That mild, luxurious,
And artful beverage, Beer.”

Verses and Translations by C. S. C.



ET öther bards sing with Anacreon Moore the
praise of the deep-blushing wine ;
Let gay serenaders still twang their guitar 'neath
the shade of the olive and vine ;
Let love-sick young swains and Parnassian soarers
Chant of golden-haired darlings and lost Leonoras,
And rave about moonlight and whispering trees,
Or mistake the East wind for a soft summer breeze,—
I'll sing not of beauty, I'll sing not of wine,
A theme no less worthy, nor hackneyed, is mine.
Fill up the bright tankard, glad Shrovetide is here,
Let us praise, whilst we quaff, our brave Brasenose beer !
Though our days here be brief, let us never complain,
“Whilst there's life there is hope,” drain the tankard again !
In one flowing cup let us banish all sorrow,
And laugh at the storms and the ills of to-morrow.

But soft ! Let Fancy loose awhile to roam thro' scenes of yore,
And mark what goodly company glides thro' the open door !
With doublet slashed, and nodding plume, and long rapier
on thigh,

Queen Bess's gallant courtiers join the evening's revelry ;
 And as they raise the silver bowl, full many a jest is past,
 And many a merry gibe is heard, and wild Will Shakspeare's
 " Last."

E'en now our " mind's eye " seems to see the bright be-rib-
 bon'd throng,
 And still we hear, or seem to hear, the burden of their song—
 A song of the Armada, which makes the rafters ring,
 And the good Hall of Brasenose re-echoes as they sing.
 And some men talk of Cunnor, and its fair imprisoned prize,
 And drain a cup on bended knee to Amy Robsart's eyes.*

And now another vision glides across our ancient Hall,
 Again gay cavaliers are there, and warriors stout and tall,
 But sad and stern the warriors look, and woeful is their plight,
 Their draggled plumes proclaim the end of Naseby's fatal fight.
 But yet no matter for their wounds, or cheeks with anguish pale,
 They bless their luckless lord the King, and quaff the College
 ale.

Another change ! Our rafters ring with hymns and sturdy
 cheers
 From Cromwell's grim old Iron-Sides, and Rupert's Cavaliers,
 Here Sergeant Fight-the-fight-of-Faith howls forth his psalm
 of praise,

* Amy, or Anne, Robsart died in 1560, twenty-eight years before any
 " Songs of the Armada " were likely to be current, and four years before
 " Wild Will Shakspeare's " birth. But poets are not pedantically accurate.
 —ED.

There Roger Wildrake trolls aloft his loudest loyal lays.
 And now once more the crop-eared crew have left the battle
 plain,
 And Brasenose hears the welcome news, " King Charles is
 come again !"

Again the picture changes ! Yet still the tankard flows,
 For other lips the bright ale leaps in genial Brasenose.
 And as the spectres of the Past on dusky wings have fled,
 The learned, the pious, and the brave, with Heber at their head,
 The Present claims our notice, unheeding Fancy's call,
 We join the Shrove-tide feasting this ev'ning in our Hall.
 What meed of praise can Poets find for those whose prowess
 gave

Once more our proud pre-eminence on Isis' glancing wave ?
 Our flag flies first—that flag which oft the eager race has led—
 And now we hold the envied *sculls* as well as keep the *Head*.
 And like our Viking sires we float, the monarchs of the wave,
 And in our hearts the motto bear—"Success is to the Brave !"

A clash and clamour in the startled air,
 Beside the pastures green and river fair,
 The clamorous forge—the hammer's pond'rous ring—
 On such a theme how shall your Poet sing ?
 Alas ! Woe worth the day that ever drove
 The grimy band to Academus' grove,
 And gave to base mechanic arts the spot
 Where science ruled, and railway kings were not !

Not here should blatant Progress dare to show,
 Not to advance "is all the art we know."
 And yet the many-mouthed have had their way,
 And railways rule, and Oxford mourns the day,
 Soon clouds of smoke will veil our stately towers,
 And sulphurous steam enshroud our lovely bowers ;
 The navy's yell will wake the cowardly Town,*
 No more will arms yield tamely to the gown.

Where dim October's sombre sunlight plays
 O'er grey memorials of long vanished days,
 The weeping Muse with stealthy footstep creeps
 Where England's toil-worn Statesman calmly sleeps ;
 And gives her loving tribute to the grave
 Where rests the wise, the gifted, and the brave.
 No more his skilful hand shall guide the State,
 No more his jest shall cheer the dull debate ;
 Let England's longest, saddest moan be made
 O'er the still tomb where Palmerston is laid.

And now send round the beaker,
 And let all quaff the Ale,—
 The ruddy boating Triton,
 The grave-eyed Scholar pale.

And as the golden liquor flows,
 Recall the vanished "Long ;"

* This prophecy of woe refers to the project for establishing the G. W. R. Works at Oxford ; a project soon abandoned.—ED.

The days with Amaryllis,
The croquet and the song.

O think of Edith's blushes,
And bright Maude's sunny smile,
And the flatt'ry and flirtation
Along "The Lady's Mile."

Think of the friends who've left us,
Gone forth to join the fight
Of daily life and labour,
Till comes the darkling night.

Soon *we* too shall be severed,
And take our destined place,
Some first among the foremost,
Some lagging in the race ;

Some with bright hopes and fortunes
Will battle for renown,
Others grasp fleeting shadows
And win a barren crown ;

Some in the mighty Senate
Will lead the fierce debate,
Some in the death-strewn battle
Will find a soldier's fate ;

Whilst some grow fat in livings,
And some plead at the Bar,
And some make giant fortunes
In sunny lands afar ;

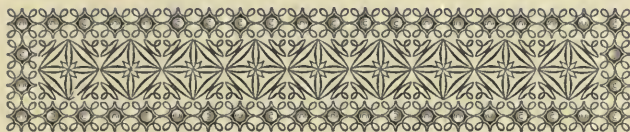
And some in dingy attics
Will ply the author's craft,
And others take the welcome fee
And mix the nauseous draught ;

And some sleep sound and peaceful
Where tropic palm-trees wave,
And others in their native land
Glide calmly to the grave ;—

Yet none will find more happy days,
And free from care than those,
When friend and friend sat side by side,
In dear old Brasenose.


SHROVE TUESDAY, 1866.

H. J. W. B.



LVI.

“Dum luditur *Ale-a* pernox.”

“VENING came on and stiller grew the world”—*
 (I say it craving our prize-poet's pardon)—
 Stiller the heaven; the clouds were “lightly
 curled,”

Most softly restful; in the heavenly garden
 Celestial flowers celestial petals furled
 And went to sleep; the gods, like Enoch Arden,
 Came home again, from many a varied task,
 Whose nature it were long to tell, or ask.

First Jove, a trifle tired of cloud-compelling,
 Then Venus, whom her friends call Aphrodité,
 Juno and Mars, and crowds beyond all telling
 Flocked to the palace; Hercules the mighty,
 Phoebus and Hermes, in ‘finance’ excelling,
 (Unmatched in craft and in those actions flighty
 Which gods call ‘pretty tricks’ and men call robberies)
 And blithe young Bacchus, more or less *οἶνοβαρήs*.

* The Newdigate was this year won by a Brasenose man, George Yeld. The first line of his poem is here appropriated.—ED.

Nectar being stale, they didn't "lie beside it"
 (See Tennyson), this troop of gods and goddesses,
 But to arm-chairs or cool verandahs hied it
 With unlaced sandals and with loosened bodices,
 (A pretty theme, and Homer never tried it !
 It might have made the ground of three new Odysseys !)
 —Till, inspiration lighting up his eye,
 Jove suddenly observed "I'm very dry !"

Then all at once—(the saying *then* was new)—
 Broke "Happy thought !" from all the assembled deities ;
 And "so am I" "and I" ran round, till few
 Had failed to make the same remark : "Dear me ! it is
 Very remarkable, but I am too !"
 Said Juno ; so did Phœbus ; for you see it is
 Undoubted fact that the first man at first, he
 Got from the Gods the art of feeling thirsty.

Jove was for naming drinks ; a dry cracked shout
 Proclaimed his vote—"Martell and Hennessy ;"
 And Hercules opined that "for a bout
 Toddy was very near the mark"—so he ;
 And Vulcan thought his system needed Stout,
 And chaste Diana chastely sighed "Bohea !"
 Bacchus, whose tastes were always somewhat classic,
 Wasn't quite sure—Falernian or Massic ?

Which Juno, turning up a queenly nose,
 Scouted ; and Venus, earnest half, half mocking,

Just lisped "Champagne and Seltzer;" then uprose
 Minerva, spectacled, and (oh! how shocking!)
 The motion of her rising did disclose
 An inch or two of very bright blue stocking!
 Which she unheeding calmly did unroll
 Something that looked extremely like a scroll,

And so began:—"If it would stir no heavy rage
 In minds celestial, I would fain implore
 Your favour on this poem of mine; the beverage
 It praises, is salubrious—no more:
 The words are Latin, but in this most clever age
 That can't be an objection; just fourscore
 Lines elegiac, sound in shape and sense—
 What? no one speak? then I'll at once commence.

*"Sarsaparilla, altis dignissima potio divis,
 "Apta fatigatis Sarsaparilla viris——"*

A shriek of "Shop!" clashed on her startled ear
 A clamorous "mouthing out of hollow 'Ohs!'"
 From this side and from that, from front and rear
 A most vexatious shout of laughter rose;
 A ha-ha chorus; not the faintest cheer
 Consoled the goddess; smarting as from blows
 She stood and glared; then, as a consummation,
 Subsided in majestic indignation.

The shrieks subsided too; calm followed storm;
 And with the calm, by way of retribution,

Thirst grew, and yet the problem, like Reform,
 Was just as far as ever from solution ;
 And each backed each ones former choice, and warm
 Grew the debate, until a revolution
 Was wrought quite suddenly by—no less, no more,—
 A voice that floated through the open door !

A voice of some one very sweetly singing,
 Now falling, falling, in a silver cadence,
 Now loud ; now soft and yet sustained ; now ringing
 From arch to echoing arch ; fresh, like a maiden's,
 Clear, like a chorister's : then Phœbus, bringing
 Professional skill to bear, said—" Oh, its Haydn's ;"
 At which, most impolitely, " Bosh !" said Juno ;
 " It's Ganymede and his eternal Gounod."

{ (Ganymede singeth without : }
 { Air, ' Sérénade Berceuse.' } }

*“ Quand vous dieux exercez
 Le soir les voix, les bras,
 Et vous déesses, ma pensée
 Me fait dire tout bas—
 Laissez donc ces querelles,
 Çà attriste les jours ;
 Buvez, buvez mes belles,
 Buvez, buvez toujours !*

*Can't you, calm and secure,
 Accept the chance that's here ;*

*Take it, foaming and pure,
Bright bubbling Brasenose Beer ?
Think you 'twill be as well
If you fly from the lure ?
Don't make, don't make, mes belles
Don't make, don't make, too sure !*

He entered then, all smiling and so fair
That mortal pen declines description ; older
Than when he played on Ida's slopes ; his hair
Jet masses falling on an ivory shoulder
Et cætera ; then performing ' with an air,'
A graceful bow to Venus, and a bolder
To Pallas, once again his voice exerted
With—"Well, divinities, are you all converted ?

"I heard your squabbling, and you heard my song,
My song that I devised to stop your quarrel :
You winebibbers, you tea-folk all are wrong ;
You heard my song, now you shall hear its moral,
My panegyric, neither loud nor long,
But true : so, ready with a wreath of laurel,
Or let him bring them who the greenest bays knows,
To crown me when I've sung the Ale of Brasenose !

"This, this—(pray pardon the prophetic story ;
With gods, what's future is already done)—
Has nerved the arms that pulled two boats to glory,
Proving 'Two *Heads* are better far than one ;'

Has floored the Cambridge stumps, *non indecorè*,
 Which, if immortals are allowed to pun,
 Caused people to remark, as I am told,
 That Cambridge, just for once, was *over-bowled*.*

“ This won the Hundred Yards, this, this . . . but why
 Tell all the honours gained by bone and brain ?
 Why ? to these last let Class-Lists testify,
 And for those first, let them be won again !
 They will be won, they will be kept, and I
 Will cheer the conquerors on with might and main.
 So, athletes, conquer : our applause rewards you ;
 Go in and win :—Ladies, I look towards you ! ”

He said, and raised the tankard to his lips,
 Well as a pair of young white arms could raise it ;—
 A massive cup, whose splendour did eclipse
 Moons, comets, constellations, though I says it ;—
 Then smiling, took two very modest sips,
 And, scarcely pausing to condemn or praise it,
 Straightway the cup to Venus did deliver,
 And on the rim was graved “ **Head of the River.** ” †

She drank, and promised to abjure Champagne ;
 Then Hercules, and straight abandoned toddy ;

* This year was famous in the annals of Brasenose athletics. The College was head in Eights and Torpids : E. L. Fellowes bowled splendidly at Lord's ; and Colmore won the University Hundred Yards.—ED.

† Mr. Morrison's Challenge Cup came into the possession of the College for the first time this year.—ED.

Then Bacchus, and the whole celestial train,
And all were swift converted : everybody
Swore fealty ; and when I looked again

The cup was drained : each goddess dozed : each god, he
Snoozed : Jove himself the soundest slumber held,
And till next morn the clouds went uncompelled.

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1867.

T. H. W.



LVII.

Et cantare pares et respondere parati.



FELL a-dreaming the other night,
 What was the cause I can scarcely say :
 A seductive supper perhaps, or fright
 At the near approach of the fatal day,
 When in dress scholastic and tie lint-white
 To the dreaded Schools I must wend my way.

Yet spite of supper and spite of fears
 That kept me awake most nights, and kept
 And keep lights burning till dawn appears,
 A slumber over my eyelids crept ;
 And with brain full of Vergil, and in my ears
 The Eclogues ringing, I sank and slept.

Slept : but straightway before my eyes
 Rose a vision that troubled me ;
 Rose confuséd, as dreams *will* rise,
 Discomposing and strange to see ;
 A medley that reason and rhyme defies
 Heterogeneous as dream could be.

The scene Vergilian half, half not ;
Corydon, pipe in hand, stood there,
And skin-clad Thyrsis, a queerish lot,
Singing both ; yet around the pair
Rose a well-known quad for a shepherd's cot,
And instead of Mantua, Radcliffe Square !

And yet—and yet—(do I see aright ?)
The forms of both as I stand and look
Fade and change to my wondering sight,
Pipes and goatskins and staff and hook ;
In Corydon's stead lo ! a stout old Knight,
And a Bishop's crozier for Thyrsis' crook !

Just as he stands at King Alfred's side
In the old Hall-picture, our Founder, viz.,
“ Smith, Bishop,” in all his Episcopal pride,
And Sir Richard Sutton, (whose glory is
To have helped said bishop,) his features wried
With that most comfortless coat of his.

Amaryllis' praises are silent now,
Daphnis' virtues, Damocetas' crimes ;
I hear no longer the lovelorn vow ;
But instead thereof, the sonorous rhymes
Of Knight and Bishop, complaining how
Speed the centuries, change the times.

Knight.

Lord Bishop, welcome ! Time, that changes all,
 That makes the rose droop and the oakleaf fall,
 Leaves you unchanged, unchanging ; dress and book
 All in the old style ; amice, cope, and crook,
 All as they always were, and—(who'd have thought it ?)—
 Your mitre looks as well as when you bought it !

Bishop.

Sir Knight, I greet you ! lo, the year's swift pace
 Makes no impression on your grim old face ;
 The look severe, the fixed unsmiling lip,
 The old hand resting on the ancient hip,
 All as they used to be, and—(well, I never !)—
 Your bugled coat is just as quaint as ever !

Knight.

Yet look abroad—how swift the steps and strange :
 No sameness anywhere, but all is change.
 Nought as of old ; look outward and confess
 New buildings, manners, tastes, sports, studies, dress !

Bishop.

Hardly the Oxford that we used to know
 In *our* day, nigh four centuries ago !
 No Colet, no Erasmus as of yore,
 No More to-day—and echo cries, *no more !*

Knight.

No stop, no stay : they trick the city's face
 With new devices and, they say, new grace ;

From fierce contractors, architects self-willed,
The cry's the same, "*demolish and rebuild!*"

Bishop.

Look forth and see where Merton fills the gap
With crude, harsh block; or, turning, it may hap,
From where at Randolph's feet the Taylor cowers,
See "Balliol, like a mist, rise into towers!"

Knight.

Look thence, and turn your dazed and 'wilder'd eyes
To where in pride of strength Museums rise,
Where press, men say, with hastening feet and hurried
Sciences born since we were dead and buried!

Bishop.

All changes; yet within these ancient walls
One thing remains that totters not, nor falls;
One relic that will last till bards shall fail
To sing, or men to drink it, one, *The Ale!*

Knight.

The Ale, the Ale, the very virtuous Ale,
Pure, pensive, primitive, and not too pale!
Though fools and foes cast stones and scoffers rail,
Brasenose will heed them not,—she has her Ale.

Bishop.

Heard you its wonders wrought these later days?
How one of ours Orbilius' ferule sways,

And in Keate's sacred mantle sits arrayed,
Amid "the towers that crown the watery glade?" *

Knight.

Heard you how one † who led a noble crew
Rowed his boat *head*, and kept it there? Heard you
How one to whom the world all praise accords
This year as Captain leads his team to Lord's?

Bishop.

Saw you *our* Star that, shooting through the night,
Blinded the poor world with excess of light? ‡
Or him, who all the river-flowers culls,
Whose *brilliant head* won him the *Diamond Sculls*?

So, in bucolic fashion, sing the pair,
What can I do? just stand amazed, and stare;
Just stand and stare and hear how, Thyrsis-wise,
The Bishop praises and the Knight replies.
Yet as I stand with ears up-pricked to hear,
Sudden the forms recede, they disappear;
The singing droops, wanes, ceases; yet, ere quite
The phantom singers faded from my sight,

* The Rev. J. J. Hornby, Fellow of Brasenose, was appointed Head Master of Eton in this year.—ED.

† Arthur Shepherd. The Captain of the Eleven was E. L. Fellowes, and the winner of the Diamond Sculls was W. C. Crofts.—ED.

‡ An Amateur Dramatic Company, called 'the Shooting Stars,' had played successfully in Oxford. One of its greatest lights was a Brasenose man.—ED.

Ere quite each venerable bard became
A prim old picture in a prim old frame,
E'er my dream passed and I was left forlorn,
Lo ! with a clash of bells, in broke the morn ;
With it, a hand I oft had heard before
Came tapping, tapping, at my chamber door,
And a soft voice just whispered, 'mid the din,
" Sir, half-past seven ! Do you breakfast in ? "

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1868.

T. H. W.



LVIII.*

“Git ma my yaäle, for I bëänt a gooin’ to brëäk my rule.

TENNYSON.—“Northern Farmer.”



LEAVE me here, I say, you fellows, with the
mild tobacco fumes ;

Leave me here ; and, when you want me, send
the porter to my rooms.

’Tis the place I’ve seen so often ; every one the purlieus
knows ;

Dreary were the Square of Radclyffe, if it had no Brasenose ;

Brasenose, that in the distance sees—and, as it sees, admires—
All the pretty, perfumed dandies patronising Mr. Spiers. .

Many a night from yonder window, ere in sleep I closed my eye,
Could I see the lonely freshman sloping slowly down the High.

Many a night I saw the Proctors, driving an enormous trade,
With their sleeves of sable velvet, and their streaks of gilded
braid.

* This whole poem was written under what fortunately was a misap-
prehension ; namely, that the recent admission of “Bass” into the
College cellars implied that no more “Brasenose Ale” would be brewed.
—ED.

Here for years I once resided, nourishing a beard sublime,—
Grown by scientific coaxing and the long result of Time ;

When I plodded over Plato, dived into Divinity ;
When I went to all my lectures in the hope of a degree ;

When I dipt into the future far as human eye could see ;
Saw a vision of my home, and all the wonder there would be.

In the Hall the Dons and Tutors scoffed not at the brimming
cup ;
In the Hall the sober English drank the English liquor up ;

In the Hall the “livelier Irish” swallowed that potation pale ;
In the Hall each gownsmen’s fancy lightly turned to Brase-
nose Ale.

Once a year, that Ale, at dinner was it drunk and was it sung ;
And the College did it justice with its throat and with its
tongue.

In each bright and brimming tankard came there colours,
amber lights,
As of goblets that one reads of in the old “Arabian Nights.”

Men took up their glass of Ale, and saw it clear of speck or
mote ;
Every tumbler, rightly taken, ran unaided down your throat.

Men took up their glowing goblet ; drank it up with huge
 delight ;
 Drank it up, and of itself it passed instanter out of sight.

Many an afternoon at Cowley did we hear the welkin ring,
 When our brave Eleven practised for the pleasure of the thing.

Many an evening by the river did we watch our noble crew ;
 And their bodies swung together, each man doing all he knew.

O my College, fickle-fancied ! other Ale must cool my throat !
 O the team at Lord's defeated ! O the unsuccessful boat !

Fickle-fancied, foolish College ! shall we then, another Term,
 Drink ignoble malt and hops, supplied us by a brewing firm ?

Is it well to wish thee happy?—having drunk such Ale—alas !
 To be buying liquor from a party by the name of Bass !

(Up to this I have been writing—Hope you haven't found
 it pall ;

But it was so very easy !—in the style of “ Locksley Hall.”

Still, I know that there are some who don't approve of
 parodies ;
 Therefore for the rest we'll try a different metre, if you please.)

Soft fell the night ; and soft the stars, on high
 Like hanging lamps, were glimmering in the sky ;

The winds with folded wings were lulled to rest ;
Faded the last faint crimson from the west ;
The moon, in the mid-space of light and dark,
Launched on a sea of cloud her silver bark ;
Stole from the sleeping sun his paler ray,
And woke the world into a dreamful day.
On such a night, when Silence breathed, and Sleep
Yielded her Empire unto Thought to keep,
Sad fancies filled my mind of Brasenose Ale,
So bright, so beautiful, so pure, so pale.
Then I bethought me, with a heart-wrung sigh,
That the sad hour was nearing and was nigh,
When sweet Shrove Tuesday should no longer bring
The Ale we drank, the song we used to sing.
Sadly I longed for some quaint Christmas "Carroll,"*
To chant the praises of our final barrel ;
Sadly I wished that one more fit than I
Should hymn our Ale and speak its Elegy,—
That one more eminent than I were here,
To buckle-to and "chronicle small beer."
No ! it remains for my unworthy tongue
To sing what others have so bravely sung,
Narrate our festal meetings, and repeat
Our joys—continuous and yet discreet ;
To greet our Ale, with ardent aspiration
Say "Hail," and give my last, long salutation.

* It must be confessed that the metre of the last stanzas of this poem was suggested by Lewis Carroll's *Phantasmagoria*.—Ed.

With laughter loud and trickling tears
My memory brings before me
The frantic hopes, the foolish fears,
The odd adventures of the years
Which Time has wafted o'er me.

Oh ! Brasenose Ale, I shrewdly guess,
You, if you have a conscience,
To many blunders must confess,
To many hours of idleness,
And failures in Responsions.

But then again, no doubt, could you
Tell us a cheerful story
Of cricket-triumphs won by few,
Of bumps achieved by gallant crew,
And gowns put on with glory.

What gleeful evenings you inspired !
What festive little dinners !
How often was your aid required,
To celebrate the speed untired
Of fleet-foot Brasenose winners.

How oft you helped us at the boats,
For which we have to thank you !
How many high and tuneful notes
Did you elicit from the throats
Of gentlemen who drank you !

And now, in most ungrateful mood,
We're going to do without you :
You are no longer to be brewed.
How if the fact should cause a feud,
And make us fight about you ?

To make an old quotation new,—
“ Beer is than water thicker ; ”
Yet I must say goodbye to you.
Goodbye, my friend so tried and true,
Incomparable liquor !

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1869.

T. H. W.



LIX.

'Tis merry in Hall, when beards wag all,
And welcome merry Shrove-Tide.

HENRY IV., PART II.

NIGHT'S gloom had enshrouded the spire of St. Mary,
Night's dew was refreshing the sun-stricken sod,
When with gloom on my brow and heart worn and weary
I roamed round the gravel of Brasenose quad.

Above the stars shimmered on steeples and houses,
And faintly illumined the nose on the gates ;
Below the lamps glimmered on oyster-carouses,
Or where some pale student was grinding for Greats.

But I all unheedful of work and of wassail,
Unheedful of *cátarrh* and *tic-douloureux*,
Paced on my dull round, pale Misery's vassal,
Alone in the night with the dark and the dew.

What grief had beguiled me (the stars might have muséd)
From the coze and the comfort of coffee and chair,
From the coals long unpoked and the crib unperuséd
To wander a pilgrim beneath the night air ?

It was not a fear of next term's Moderations,
It was not a dread of importunate Huns,
For my books were all read, bar two Verrine orations,
And at night there's a truce from the terror of Duns.

It was not a flight from my neighbour's piano,
Nor that "baccy" and beer had bemuddled my brain ;
It was not a quest for the loan of a "tanner,"
Or a darkling design on the statue of Cain.

Unrestrained might the tuneful one murder his "Weber,"
Unadorned might the leaden one murder his brother,
For I cared not to stifle the noise of my neighbour,
Nor with pipe and moustache deck the face of the other.

No ! this was the cause of my sadness and sorrow,
Which cumbered my heart and my brain like a curse—
When Vesper had lifted his veil from the morrow
Stern Prior would demand the late meed of my verse.

While mournful I mused and painful I pondered
How could I escape his imperious call ?
A noise as of revelry rose where I wandered
From beneath the dark archway of Brasenose Hall.

A splendour appeared to my petrified vision,
As if some one had suddenly lit all the gas,
So with haughty disdain of the Dons' prohibition
I cut right across the cold dew-dripping grass.

Full swiftly I stole up the steps of the portal,
Full noiselessly peeped through a chink in the door,
And there I descried a sight more than mortal—
A sight such has never been witnessed before.

For there was a banquet which well might elicit
The rapture of Swatten,* the praises of Prior,
Not Soyer nor Ude would have ventured to quiz it,
But have hymned its perfection, though loath to admire.

As “magister bibendi” at the head of the table,
There was sitting King Alfred regarding a speaker,
Who with gesture unsteady and footing unstable
Was directing the company’s gaze to a beaker.

“Drink,” cried he, “my liege, Drink ye dons and ye doctors,
“And drink ye fair dames, let not prudence prevail;
“For here there’s no fear or of ‘pros’ or of proctors,
“So drink deep and daring of Brasenose Ale.”

There was Buckingham’s Duke at the side of the hall; he
Was taking advantage of where he was placed,
And in flirting with Lady Elizabeth Morley
Had got his right arm round that damozel’s waist.

There was Burton who wrote the Anat. Melancholy
(The title’s too long to get all of it in),

* For many years Hall-porter.—ED.

But looking at this time excessively jolly,
And trying to balance a knife on his chin.

Foxe, Gilbert, I recognised too by their faces,
However their present potations might mar 'em ;
So also the speaker, spite grins and grimaces,
That riddle of rhymesters "Tom Ingoldsby Barham."

And there were the phantoms of Joe, John, and Harry,
With tankards of ale foaming fresh from the cellar ;
And when there was nothing else left them to carry
Joining loud in the chorus of "Jolly good feller."

Several toasts were proposed and drank with much cheering,
When King Alfred arose amid cries of Hear ! Hear !
And addressed them, at times very leisurely clearing
His throat with a draught from a flagon of beer :—

"Unused though I am to this species of parley
"I've a toast to propose with mixed pleasure and pain
"Of one we can ne'er cease regretting—(Here, Charley,
"Just take this pint-tankard and fill it again.)

"He has long reigned among us, and oft of a verity
"We have wished he could ever remain to command ;
"But now that he's leaving, here's health and prosperity,
"In musical honours,—'Vice Principal Shand !' "*

* The Rev. T. H. R. Shand accepted the living of East Ham in this year.—Ed.

Then long was the cheering and loud was the chorus,
It stunned all my hearing, I'm free to confess ;
Scarce heard I Dean Milman's cry, " Bumpers before us,
" Let us wish him all happiness, health and success !"

Then the monarch arose to adjourn the gay meeting,
Spite Barham's remonstrance, " Sit down, Sir, sit down !"
While Dame Morley with watch in her hand kept repeating,
" Five minutes to four, gentles., time we were gone !"

Was I waking or sleeping? The light faded from me,
The hall slowly waned from my wondering view ;
No longer I heard the rich trolling of Tommy
Rehearsing the praises of Brasenose brew.

No longer I witnessed the " spread and the splendour,"
No longer the revelry rose on the air,
For with pipe in my mouth and feet on the fender
I had been all the time fast asleep in my chair.

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1870.

H. L. St. B.



LX.

Volito vivu' per ora virûm.



BEER! Beer! Beer!
 Bring me the nut brown ale,
 Let it be bright and clear,
 And let not the flagon fail.

Beer! Beer! Beer!
 Where is the best to be got?
 Seek for it far and near,
 In hostel, in hall, and cot.

Barclay and Perkins and Bass,
 Trueman and Morrell's Entire
 Fill up the cottager's glass,
 And gladden the heart of the Squire.

But the ale of the ruddiest dye,
 The ale that most genial flows,
 Is the ale that the privileged buy
 At the sign of the Brazen Nose.

"Seniores" they say are "Priores,"
 Which means that the Dons like it well,

Undergraduates sing of its glories
And own its o'erpowering spell.

'Twas from Isis, you'll find, if you look
In Herodotus, Book No. 2,
That this *ἐκ κριθῶν μεθὺν* first took
Its rise at the Barley Mew.

And in these degenerate days
To her memory and her fame
Each votary tribute pays
To the river that bears her name.

Then Isis, fair Goddess, all hail !
As children we sit in thy lap,
And drink to thy health in strong ale
Drawn fresh from the Brasenose tap.

The sparkling grapes of Champagne
Lie drowned in a ruddier flood,
The vines of the Loire and the Seine
Are wasted in carnage and blood.

Mars dressed in his glittering array
At conquered and conqueror laughs,
But his victims lie cold in the clay
And deadly the draught that he quaffs.

Trodden down are the vines in fair France,
Yet never let Englishmen fear ;

We won't give the Prussians a chance
To rob a poor man of his beer.

Our college eleven is taught
By this ale to none other to yield,
As our rivals experience have bought
When they've longed for it "out in the field."

And though, and I say it with shame,
On the river we failed last year,
'Twas ill fortune we had to blame,
And it was not the fault of the beer.

But triumphant we once more shall be,
For of this I can have no doubt,
There's as good fish in B.N.C.
As have ever yet come out.

Then to this year's boat let us drink,
And pledge them in foaming ale,
And dare not a moment to think
That this wish can ever fail.

And though strength and weight help a crew,
And though confidence help it still more,
Yet 'tis pluck that shall pull us through
As it has many times before.

For wherever in friendly strife,
With cricket bat or with oar

You'll find that all through life
The Nose is to the fore.


Then let us cheek by jowl,
At this our Shrove-tide cheer,
Drink deep with heart and soul
To Brasenose and its beer.

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1871.

C. J. O.



LXI.


 NCÆNIA, fair feast of fine founders was come,
 With its usual flourish, and rum-ti-tum-tum ;
 Mirth mooned through Minerva's monotonous
 homes ;
 Cool cloisters, gray gardens, tall towers, and dusk domes ;
 And Oxford Gownsmen were "blithe and gay
 Keeping a festive holiday."

—Two lines which most persons have heard before now
 In a sweet pretty ditty—"The Mistletoe Bough."

Now this one Commem., as will after be seen,
 Was one of the strangest Commems. that have been.
 To begin with—the air was peculiarly keen,
 Cold, dampness, and rawness all mixed up together,
 Not the least bit resembling the June's wonted weather ;
 The place, too,—with ease I could very soon see at a
 Glance—not at all like the Sheldonian Theatre.

The day was Shrove-Tuesday : the time—early even ;
 The hour was the hour that divides five and seven ;
 The place has been doubtless conjectured by all,—
 The place of Encænïa was Brasenose Hall,
 More renowned for its beauty than space I much fear ;
 And Commem. was the Feast of the Brasenose Beer !

The Sitter who graced the Vice-Chancellor's Chair,
 His name there is surely no need to declare ;
 And most of the worthies, who held the high places
 Of proctors, and doctors, and dons, were known faces,
 Seen not far from the Radcliffe at various times,
 But unmentioned from reasons attaching to rhymes.

Then loud rang the revel and festive the cheering,
 That greeted each old well-known hero appearing,
 Summoned *causâ honoris* to the Nose to be knighted,
 And to hear the Shrove-Tuesday Beer-Poem recited ;
 —Old friends, and good fellows whose heart, head, and limb
 Kept Brasenose glory full well “ in the swim.”
 And up rose the plaudits, rose louder and louder,
 With “ Baxter ” and “ Woodgate,” “ Crofts,” “ Shepherd,”
 and “ Crowder,”
 With “ Fellowes ” and “ Evetts ” and a host of names more,
 But “ old Arthur Shepherd ” * was aye to the fore.

Then last but not least, mid “ Bravo ! ” and “ Hear, hear ! ”
 Poet Prior recited the prize-poem “ Beer,”
 That beer which is fitter than fittest Falernian,
 And thus, thus he hymned it in metre Swinburnian : †

O nozzle not golden but gilded !
 O hall of the best of our Kings !

* Brasenose men of recent generations will recognise these as names of famous oars and cricketers.—Ed.

† Vide “ Dolores,” *Poems and Ballads*, Swinburne.

O bursary beauteous, rebuilt !
O home of immutable things !
O mystical charm of the College !
O strange derivation unclear !
O source of unknowable knowledge,
Our Brasenose Beer !

O lips full of youth and of laughter,
Gay lips that shall sing and not grieve,
Drink hard, lest glad others come after,
To drink what you languidly leave.
Not Trinity, Magdalen, nor Merton,
Thus, thus your soft souls can regale,
O better, more bitter, than Burton,
Our Brasenose Ale !

We purchase poor port and worse sherry,
Quaff wines that we know not and know,
We "try our old nutty fine" (very !),
Champagne and Sauterne and Clicquot.
Wine-hampers may swarm through the portal,
Wine-bottles may vanish and fail,
May fail, but we know Thee immortal,
Our Brasenose Ale !

Yet, yet in the strife for existence,
Thou hast gotten thee "change upon change,"
Where, then, shall we go for assistance,
Where then to find fire shall we range ?

But though thou art milder and thicker,
 Thou art dear to us still, thou art dear,
 O subtle somniferous liquor,
 Our Brasenose Beer !

By the bumps that we made in the past time,
 By those that at present we don't,
 By the hopes and the fears at the class-time,
 By the "firsts" that we might get and won't,
 By the freshmen, and "good-sort-of-fellars,"
 By the dons who are zealous and rail,
 I adjure thee, respond from thy cellars,
 Our Brasenose Ale !

Then, while more wildly through the windows bright,
 The plaudits rang upon the startled night,
 (The last two lines, I here perhaps may state,
 Have done—will do—for any Newdigate,)
 —Sudden, there came a change, as changes will
 Come so conveniently a pause to fill ;
 More faint the voices of the revel grew ;
 Why, I don't know : it's what they always do.

So to the close. The dodge, who doesn't know it ?
 The yearly joke of each Shrove-Tuesday poet :
 For the climax, (I mean, anticlimax,) prepare ;
 "*I had been all the time fast asleep in my chair !*"



LXII.

“Potui humor ex hordeo aut frumento in quendam similitudinem
vini corruptus.” TACITUS, *Germania* 23.

CORRUPTUS!—As you love your ghost,
Don't stray from Hades here,
You'd be *de trop* 'mid walls that boast
Their name from brewing beer!
Besides—'tis rare—but for the nonce
You'd have to stand a thundering sconce.

You might, I know, write epigrams
On floors of strange deflections,
And other venerable shams
“Cream,” “perkisites,” “collections;”
And chapels kept for the promotion
Of discipline, miscalled devotion.

But, by the bye, what liquor, pray,—
Falernian? or Massic?—
Inspired our ancestors that day
(Your style's concise and classic!)
To kick your legionary crania
About the woods of old Germania!

You ancients temples raised of yore
 To streams or washy ocean,
 But B.N.C. enshrines a more
 Exhilarating potion ;
 A merrier sort of fane is here !
 A jollier god—good English beer !

'Tis true that bards of sunnier skies
 Have daintier drinks to verse on,
Ours hardly sparkles like the eyes
 Of —— never mind the person !
 Amontillado and Madeira
 Are reckoned both a trifle clearer.

Who cares ? let Spanish students drain
 Their patriarchal testa,
 And kill their time with music's strain
 Or languishing siesta !
 Bologna's sons may take their plenty,
 Of love, and *dolce far niente*.

Let slow Bavaria's watery swipes
 Be-sot Bonn's boozing Burschen,
 Whose exercise is smoking pipes
 And duels their diversion.
 'Tis said they've tried their hands at cricket,
 But no one would defend the wicket !

But good King Alfred—he who beat
 The Northmen—had a truer eye,

For side by side with learning's seat
He built a beauteous brewery,
Which afterwards became a College,
As all historians acknowledge.

Besides, some bricklayers—which must
All cavillers dumbfounder—
'Neath our foundations found the bust
Of our right Royal founder.
And—lest the portrait should perplex—
'Twas labelled—“ Aluredus Rex.”

And when folks scoffed, the fact to prove
Our Dons had in Inspector I,
Who found it—sure enough!—above
The door of the refectory,
Which shows that Smith's and Richard Sutton's
Pretensions are not worth two buttons!

Then drink to Alfred's glorious name
In liquor of his liking,
That we may ne'er the memory shame
Of him who thrashed the Viking!
Nor ever this its temple fail,
In worthy votaries of Ale!

Then fill the glittering tankards high
With honest English beer;
The nurseling of a stormier sky
A sturdier draught is here!

Fit emblem of a race whose muscle
Was born to labour and to tussle.

A race—which spite of Gladstone's cant
Retains its self-reliance ;
Which still—though banded despots rant
Shall hurl them back defiance !
Who trusting in her strong right hand
Has made the world her fatherland !

A race, who shrinking from no fight
The trigger still 's the last to pull ;
Who levelled in the cause of right
The bastions of Sebastopol ;
And still—again if Russia mocks us
Again shall crush her—on the Oxus !

Then broach the cask !—Champagne has blushed
With redder streams than wine,
Nor maidens' feet alone have crushed
The grapes of laughing Rhine,
But Heaven shall fall ere foeman's tent
Be pitched among the hops of Kent !

Then bring the brimming bumpers forth,
The deuce take duns and ploughs !
And let the nut-brown nectar froth
As Thames before our bows,
And take a pull as long and strong
As that that shoots our eight along !

And drink that our propitious Nose
May press the stern of Pembroke,
(Once on a time, the story goes,
While chasing them—our stem broke !)
And sure if ought could urge our men on
’Twill be the sight of our new pennon ! *

Here’s to its donor ! and the crew
Who’ll spurt upon a crisis,
And seize for B.N.C. anew
The diadem of Isis !
And hoist once more—*subjectis parcite*—
Our flag victorious o’er the ’Varsity !

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1873.

A. J. E.

* A new flag was presented to the boat-club this year.—Ed.



LXIII.

THE LAY OF THE LAST MODOC.

“Trained from his tree-rocked cradle to his *bier*,
A Stoic of the woods, a man without a tear.”

CAMPBELL.

SHROVE Tuesday's Festival again is near,
(A moralist might hint 'twere, perhaps, our last,)
To grace our banquet, we would summon here
Some Brasenose hero of the mouldering past;—
But whom we know not, for we rather fear
Jack Mitton might be thought a little fast—
The name of Burton,* too, perhaps would tinge
Our cups with sadness—or our rights infringe.

Commemoration has been held in hall,
And all acknowledged that no sight was fairer ;—
The pictures have been summoned from the wall,
When Alfred quaffed his pint to Duchess Sara ;

* Burton—an equivocal term—referring primarily to the celebrated Author of the “Anatomy of Melancholy,” but bringing before the minds of many a town on the Trent, whose tap is second only to that at B.N.C. Each interpretation is provided for.

But change is always sweet, and now that all
 The Persian host* has left our shores, if ne'er a
 Guest can be found who'd like to taste our beer,
 We cite "the last Red Indian" to appear.

Now Spirits hear what kindred Spirits tell,
 And thus invited came he all too soon,
 Morose and restless, for he knew full well
 That he'd be *murdered* towards the end of June,†
 His comely locks in wild confusion fell,
 His very voice had lost its wonted tune,
 Like some tall oak, when storms have stripped its glory,
 With bleak bare limbs he thus began his story ;—

"Who can recount the gladness of our race,
 "Before the hated pale face touched our soil?
 "The pipe of peace, the pleasures of the chase,
 "The just and sweet division of the spoil,
 "No slain to mourn for, and no foe to face,
 "We lived contented, free from care and toil,
 "Ere those confounded Pilgrim Fathers brought a
 "Curse to the land—the hated fire water."

He stopped ; and plainly showed with silent grief,
 How for his happy hunting grounds he hankered,

* Refers to the Shah's visit.—Ed.

† The subject for the Newdigate in 1874 was "The Last of the Red Indians."

Where his wild tribe once followed him as chief,
But now—his young men slain, his heart was cankered—
Wildly he looked around for some relief,
And seized in desperation on a tankard,
Drained every drop, and then a smile came o'er
His stern grave face, that never smiled before.

“ Ugh ! if my countrymen had only guessed
“ That liquor such as this was on your shore,
“ The dusky warriors of the far off West,
“ Would soon have shown themselves far off no more ;
“ Not then a people conquered and oppressed,
“ You would have seen a mighty nation pour
“ Its gathered forces over hill and dale,
“ To seek this Panacea—Brasenose Ale.

“ This would have roused our noble braves to fight,
“ Conquer your land, and deal you out new laws,
“ Make Brasenose men wear cap and gown at night,
“ And open Worcester to strong-minded squaws ;
“ Our children would have grown in breadth and height,
“ And had you asked in wonder for the cause,
“ Nursed on this beverage they could scarcely fail
“ To emulate the ancient Child of (H) ale.

“ We have an interval—and then, alas !
“ Our place no longer holds us for its own ;
“ Some let this interval in pleasure pass,
“ Some are to art æsthetically prone,

“ But as for *me*, fill up my foaming glass
“ With Brasenose Ale, and leave me here alone ;
“ I only fear my interval will seem
“ Too short—too pleasant—too much like a dream.

“ Prior, great medicine man, another bowl !
“ Oh ! if a cask or two had come with Penn,
“ Isis would now our Susquehanna roll,
“ And well read Mingoës plough your wretched men ;
“ No dreary dull despair—Beer lifts the soul
“ To elevation calm, sublime ;—Oh, then,
“ Oxford for once had made a good selection,
“ And turned out Cardwell at the late election.”*

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1874.

A. R. A.

* This was written after the first but before the second election of 1874. Mr. Cardwell, it will be remembered, accepted a peerage, which made a new election necessary for the City of Oxford. In that the Modoc's wishes were gratified, and Mr. Cardwell's old opponent returned.—ED.



LXIV.

“Jacta est ale-a.”

“Ebrius ac petulans.”

WHEN any toping or unguarded soul
 Applies too often to the flowing bowl,
 He passes through three stages—so 'tis said—
 Before he loses finally his head.

First, after dinner, with a moderate mirth
 He views with kindness every thing on earth,
 Enjoys his good things, yet a sober man,
 As only Dons or Dignitaries can.
 Next, takes a maudlin and sarcastic view,
 Part very false, part most unkindly true.
 Last, as he gave excessive blame before,
 He now gives praises due—and something more—
 Then shuts his puzzled eyes and sinks upon the floor.
 So let my song on this occasion dear
 Flow on and imitate thy workings—Beer !

First, let me state, (or guess it by my look !)
 I've been with Prior, and I've read that book,
 That precious little volume * which contains
 Tribute to Brasenose Beer from Brasenose brains.

* The old collection of Ale-poems—ancestor of the present volume.—ED.

O for some fancy, some idea unused,
 To deck a theme so old, so oft be-mused !
 O for some spirit that could make a pun—
 They've been and plagiarised them every one !
 But if—since no pun comes, (and more's the pity)—
 I won't be sorry and I can't be witty,
 " Brief let me be," like Hamlet's Father's Ghost,
 And say my say in fourscore lines at most.

So, to my subject—and the beer I'll praise :
 But is it what it was in ancient days ?
 I do not know ; it matters not to me ;
 Fibs do not count in love or poetry.
 So joyous let me sing, and shed no tear
 Like Milton mourning o'er a watery *bier*.
 And may my words fall neither flat nor dead,
 But, like good ale, mount upwards to the head !
 Shall I talk politics ? Lo ! to the shore
 Sweeps such a wave as never swept before ; *
 Brewers and publicans begin to smile,
 'Tis the embodied spirit of our Isle.
 Tremble, ye Rads ! but Tories, cease to fear,
 Ye mount, ye rise upon a wave of beer :
 Onwards, the glistening foam upon its crest,
 It rolls and bursts : from out its cavernous breast
 There springs a leader Dizzy from the strife,
 And Bright looks black, and Horseman rides for life !

* The Parliament of 1874 has sometimes been called the Brewers' Parliament.—E.D.

Or shall I turn to prophesy to-night?
 (Beer sometimes does give people second sight)—
 Shall boating honours be the pleasing theme
 On Isis fair or Thames's broader stream?
 Shall I exalt our Brasenose Three, and say
 How Cambridge *R(h)odes* must yield to th' Oxford *Way*?*
 Shall I show Beer prevailing in the race,
 The Brasenose Torpid keeping well her place,
 The Eight regaining hers, (she cannot fail!)
 And fortune smiling on the Childe of (H)ale?

But ah! I'm coming to the second stage,
 The picture's other side; (pray you, no rage!)
 When gentlemen sit quiet in their places,
 And fling no bread into their neighbours' faces,
 When you may see the new-made Phoenix-man
 With trembling pride his coat no longer scan;
 When Greek no longer drops from lips of fools,
 Learned in Hall, but boobies in the Schools;
 When horsy men no longer turn their minds
 To silly plotting of forbidden "Grinds;" †
 When babes cease betting; when precocious rips
 Remember there's but down upon their lips;
 When infant controversialists no more
 Choose Hall for waging theologic war;

* The two strokes in the University Race. Messrs. Way, Edwards-Moss, and Marriott are the "Brasenose Three."—ED.

† The Proctorial proclamation against steeple-chasing, &c., had lately been issued, but was not altogether kindly received.—ED.

When dull well-mannered men like you and me,
Selfish as only Englishmen can be,
Cease to be quite so selfish, and to say
That life means but to loaf, and lunch, and play ;—
When that dim, doubtful, far-off time we see,
Why, what a Paradise will Oxford be !

But stay ; Shrove Tuesday's here ; forget my spite
The beer's still good on this auspicious night ;
Drink we to-night—to-morrow comes repentance ;
Fill high my can, and here's my final sentence :—
Health to the Nose, the Butler, and the Head !
Health to old B.N.C., and so to bed !

SHROVE TUESDAY,

R. J. A.

Feb. 9, 1875.



LXV.

Air.—Men of Harlech.

MEN of Brasenose, good ale's streaming
 Brightly in your tankards gleaming,
 Joints are on your tables steaming
 On this jovial night.

Let the liquor golden
 All your hearts embolden ;
 Drive away
 Your cares this day
 By generous draughts upholden.
 Now let jest and laugh come thicker,
 Let the beef and Prior's liquor
 Make your pulses beat the quicker,
 And your waistbands tight.

Beef and ale like this our yeomen
 Ate and drank, those famous bowmen
 Who dealt death among our foemen
 Fighting at Creci.
 This ale may be trusted,
 "Curious port, old, crusted,"

If we knew
What's in the brew,
Would make us much disgusted.
Champagne often is gooseberry,
Fiery wine is Oxford sherry,
Claret cannot make one merry,
Harmless though it be.

Oft before my vision crosses
Spectral-wise our gilt proboscis,
And I marvel what strange process
Made the gold appear.

Thus my song discloses
How to win gold noses
Fairer much
Than colours such
As lilies have or roses.

'Twas an ancient Brasenose fellow
Who quaffed deep our liquor mellow,
Till his nose had blossomed yellow,
Golden as his beer.

Now that nose is made immortal,
Proudly fixt above our portal,
And its presence shall exhort all
To adore our beer.
And this symbol most rum
Is a sovereign nostrum,

'Twill procure
 Us victory sure
 By glittering on our rostrum ;
 When the oars of Univ. shudder,
 As the nose comes near their rudder,
 Struggling past the Cherwell's flood, or
 When our barge they near.

Ah ! we must all soon or later
 Leave the halls of *Alma mater* ;
 But wherever maid or waiter
 Draws us glass of beer,
 Back let fancy wander
 On the past to ponder,
 (Every day
 We stay away
 Will make us all the fonder,)
 Let each sacred tower and gable,
 And our statue, Cain and Abel,
 And Shrove Tuesday's well-spread table
 Rise to memory clear.

SHROVE TUESDAY,
Feb. 29, 1876.

M. M.



LXVI.

The Lay of the Bachelor.

SHROVE Tuesday here again! but what a change
 Since at the Freshmen's table I devoured
 Pancakes and apple-fritters; all was strange,
 No duns had harassed then, no schools had soured.

Oxford was all my fancy painted her;
 Her towers and trees, her streets, her shady lanes
 Charmed my young eyes: and little did I care
 For rain and fogs and floods and open drains.

That was the time when daily on the river,
 A very galley-slave I'd tug the oar,
 Or down at Marston bravely stand and shiver,
 Nor think Athletic Sports at all a bore.

Then did I love in shops whole hours to spend,
 To wear new clothes and strut about the High;
 Now all my spare cash to my duns I send,
 And 'a remittance' is the tailor's cry.

The men who got first-classes in the Schools,
 Far more than common mortals then I reckoned;
 I half suspect now most of them were fools;
 Why, Brown and Smith got firsts, and I a second!

The brilliant oar, the bowler straight and fast—
 I watched them and I worshipp'd from afar.
 Alas, alas ! their very names are past,
 Dead is their light that shone, and set their star.

And then the dons—but dare I be so bold
 The truth about them freely to declare ?
 Dons are but men—and some—and some—but hold !
 I'll dig a hole and leave *that* secret there.

The gilt *is* off the gingerbread in truth ;
 My early dreams have vanished into air ;
 Gone are the visions that inspired my youth,
 And faded all that seemed so fresh and fair.

But not the Beer ! ah, no ! that goodly brew
 Is still as strong and potent as of yore ;
 Still lends its vigour to our torpid crew,
 Still keeps the Nose in all things to the fore.

The self-same tap that cheered those mighty hearts,
 Whom shrove-tide poets sang in olden times,
 Gives life and strength to men of feebler parts,
 And inspiration to my halting rhymes.

The selfsame tankards with the selfsame liquor
 Thrill freshmen's souls as whilome mine was thrilled ;
 Their hearts to-night, as mine of yore, beat quicker :—
 Beat on, fresh hearts, as yet unstayed, unstilled !

Soon will your little day, like mine be o'er ;
 Soon will success, or failure, crown desire.
What boots a little less, a little more ?
 The future's dim : shall you the less aspire ?

Shrove Tuesday here again ! and down each row
 The flagons pass, soon emptied to the lees ;
These—these at least no disenchantment know :—
 But John—a glass of toast and water, please.

SHROVE TUESDAY,

W. H.

Feb. 13th, 1877.

APPENDIX.

[The following verses, the probable date of which is 1806, are attributed to Reginald Heber, who was elected to a fellowship in 1807. They were discovered too late for insertion in their proper place.]



ATTEND, ye freshmen, to my tale,
 And do not me mistake,
 I sing the praise of College Ale,
 For Mr. Barker's * sake.

Oh ! may my verse be strong and clear
 To spread its glory wider,
 Not windy, like to bottled beer,
 Or gripe-compelling cyder,

But clear as amber, bright as gold,
 That all men may admire,
 While I in lofty terms unfold
 The fame of our *Entire*.

When Bacchus thro' the Indian land
 Pursued his conquering way,
 He held a hop-pole in his hand,
 And rode upon a dray.

Tame tabby cats his chariot drew,
 (I construe thus the Greek)
 For Ale ('twas thus the proverb grew)
 Can make a cat to speak.

* Then Butler of the College.—ED.

Lord ! how the negroes stared to see,
And wondered much to hear,
His smockless nymphs with tuneful glee
Proclaim the praise of beer.

Some talk how sweet, how rich, Tokay,
I do not mean to doubt it,
But since I can't afford to pay
Content myself without it.

I love not Gin, I love not Rum,
I laugh at Port and Sherry,
With Ale I feel my spirits come,
And all my heart-strings merry.

Ah me ! how many a ruby face
Well crammed with Ale and knowledge,
In days of yore was seen to grace
The chapel of our College.

We now, alas ! a graceless crew,
Esteem our fathers fools,
Indulge in Port and Claret too,
And laugh at Ale and Rules.

Yet still within this learned dome
Its virtues much avail ;
You call in vain—no porters come
Unless you give them ale.

St. Mary's bells with joyful din
Our new-made fellows hail,
They care not who may lose or win,
They ring but for the ale.

If workmen, you complain, are slow,
To make them work the quicker,
But bid them to the buttery go,
And take a draught of liquor.

Then each resolve with pot in hand
To make a goodly cheer,
And drink as long as we can stand
To Brasenose and its beer.

I wish (to close my humble verse)
Our present Tap were ended,
Our liquor never can be worse,
And may perhaps be mended.*

* These last lines agree in spirit with the verses of 1811, etc. It is comforting to notice that no such complaints recur within the last half-century.—Ed.



INDEX OF AUTHORS.

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1839	G. T. DRIFFIELD.	1866	H. J. W. BUXTON.
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* These were second copies of verses submitted to the Butler, but not printed and circulated on Shrove-Tuesday.



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