

observer—doubts arose as to its ability to cope with tempests, portentous clouds brooded over the little vessel as it was loosed from its moorings and began its aberrant voyage. But no craft ever bore a more valued cargo for it contained a heaven-born genius, whose mission was to teach the world the priceless worth of time to live an age without a day, to die before the sun passed a sextant of its course. The mists of life's morning are slowly cleared away and the spirit of the voyager holds communion with the external world, and to the voices of nature utter responsive songs. He, like Shakespeare, has a potential capacity for all knowledge and his sleepless mind is fast becoming a transcript of the universe; but a storm that had long been gathering burst suddenly forth and the spirit craft writhes amid violent waves. Now, exulting it overtops the highest surges; anon, it is engulfed in despondent gloom.

Like the voyage of the fairy ship is the story of Chatterton's life—a life replete with ambitious strivings, radiant hopes, colossal toils, baffled endeavors to overcome the insurmountable, melancholy broodings, dark despair. This life, so romantic in its varied experience of joy and suffering, so tragic in its end has become a theme for philosophers, poets, statesmen, divines. More than thirty five works by eminent men attest his excellence and will perpetuate his memory as long as human sympathy shall endure. "Paint for me an angel," says the child, "with a trumpet to trumpet my name over the world." He was to become the angel-trumpeter of his own fame and the melody of his childish voice, like the music of an Æolian harp, reaches us, touching our hearts with its low sweet trembling notes.

Thomas Chatterton was born on the 20th of November, 1752, near St. Mary Redcliffe Church in Bristol. His apparent dullness in childhood gained for him the imputation of idiocy but at the age of six he became interested in the illuminated capitals of a music folio and henceforth manifested an intense activity in the acquisition of knowledge. At eight he was an insatiable devourer of books, and had already begun that study of antiquity that was to make his name immortal. What he says of "Cannyng" may be said of himself—

"In all his simple gambols and child's play
I kenned the purpled light of wisdom's ray."

The poet Eliot has painted a picture of his childhood—

"In Severn's vale a wan and moon struck boy,
Sought by the daisy's side a pensive joy,
Held converse with the sea birds as they passed,
And strange and dire communion with the blast;
And read in sunbeam and the starry sky
The golden language of eternity.

Age saw him and looked sad, the young men
smiled,

And wondering maidens shunned his aspect wild;
But he, the ever kind, the ever wise,

Who sees through fate with omnipresent eyes,
Hid from the mother, while she blest her son,

The woes of genius and of Chatterton."

At eight he entered a charity school where he remained till fourteen; but neither in the routine of study nor in his companions did he take an interest. His mind was lifted above this sordid world of ours into a world of chivalry and heroism. His school was the attic in his mother's house, filled with antique parchments, or the beautiful church of St. Mary Redcliffe, in the shadow of

which he was born; and his associates, the generous Cannyng, the gifted Rowley, valorous knights and beautiful maids who lived and loved in a nobler age. With these ideal beings of the fourteenth century he toiled night and day, and to them he gave real existence in numerous lyrics and tragedies, antique in form but exhibiting a luxuriance and energy of thought that would have done credit to Dryden and a grace and harmony of numbers of which Pope might well have been proud.

His three long years of servitude as a lawyer's clerk, his indomitable energy in the prosecution of his plans, his repeated attempts to break the chains that bound him and to gain recognition from the public, his final release and his journey to London have all the breathless interest of a romance; while his four months life in the metropolis seems like the last act of tragedy in its climax of suffering, in its agony of death.

Observe him now alone in the cold, selfish world. The visions of beauty that were wont to float before his eyes have been dispelled. The pale cheek, the haggard features show that he has been without food for several days, and the wild desperation in those intelligent but sunken, languid eyes indicates that the fatal hour has come; and he has no friend—never had he one in all this world—to rescue him from the enthrallment of deep, dark gloom. On the 25th of August 1770 he failed to appear at the accustomed time and his door was found to be locked. This was soon broken in. The floor was strewn with manuscripts and the lifeless body of the child genius lay stretched upon his bed. A pinch of arsenic in a glass of water had done the work. The ephemeral voyage was ended—the mission of the voyager, accomplished. The frail craft lies wrecked upon the wave-worn rocks, and the spirit of the voyager mingles once more with that of his infinite father.

Where he was buried will never be known, but a beautiful Gothic monument with a statue of the poet at the top has been erected to his memory near St. Mary Redcliffe church, in a spot he so dearly loved.

Thus died Chatterton at the age of seventeen years and nine months whom a great poet of nature well has named,
"That marvelous boy,

The sleepless soul that perished in his pride."

And Shelley has written that he,

"The inheritor of unfulfilled renown,
Rose from a throne built beyond mortal thought,
Far in the unapparent."

What motives prompted this last rash act—what mad thoughts crowded that burning brain, for-bear to ask. But approach and read the epitaph, composed by himself, inscribed upon his monument—

"Reader judge not. If thou art a Christian, believe that he should be judged by a superior power. To that power alone is he now answerable." G. W. B.

Prep.—"The infernal angles of a Socrates triangle are equal to twice the square of the hypothesis."

It is said that Emerson failed repeatedly to pass his examinations while in college. His rank in scholarship was very low, but the names of the geniuses who out-ranked him are forgotten. This seems to indicate that neither talent nor genius can be gauged by any artificial grading or denoted through competitive examinations.

—Reveille.