

NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY

THE
LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF
HENRY HETHERINGTON.

'We, the Directors of the Poor of the parish of St. Pancras, at present assembled, sincerely deplore the loss of our much-respected friend, Mr. Henry Hetherington; and cannot allow the earliest opportunity to pass without offering this poor tribute to his worth, talent, energy, urbanity, and zeal. In him the poor, and more especially the infant, have lost a powerful advocate, the Directors a valuable coadjutor, the ratepayers an economical distributor of their funds, and mankind a sincere philanthropist.'
—Passed, unanimously, at a meeting of Members of the Board of Directors, on Friday, Aug. 24, 1849.

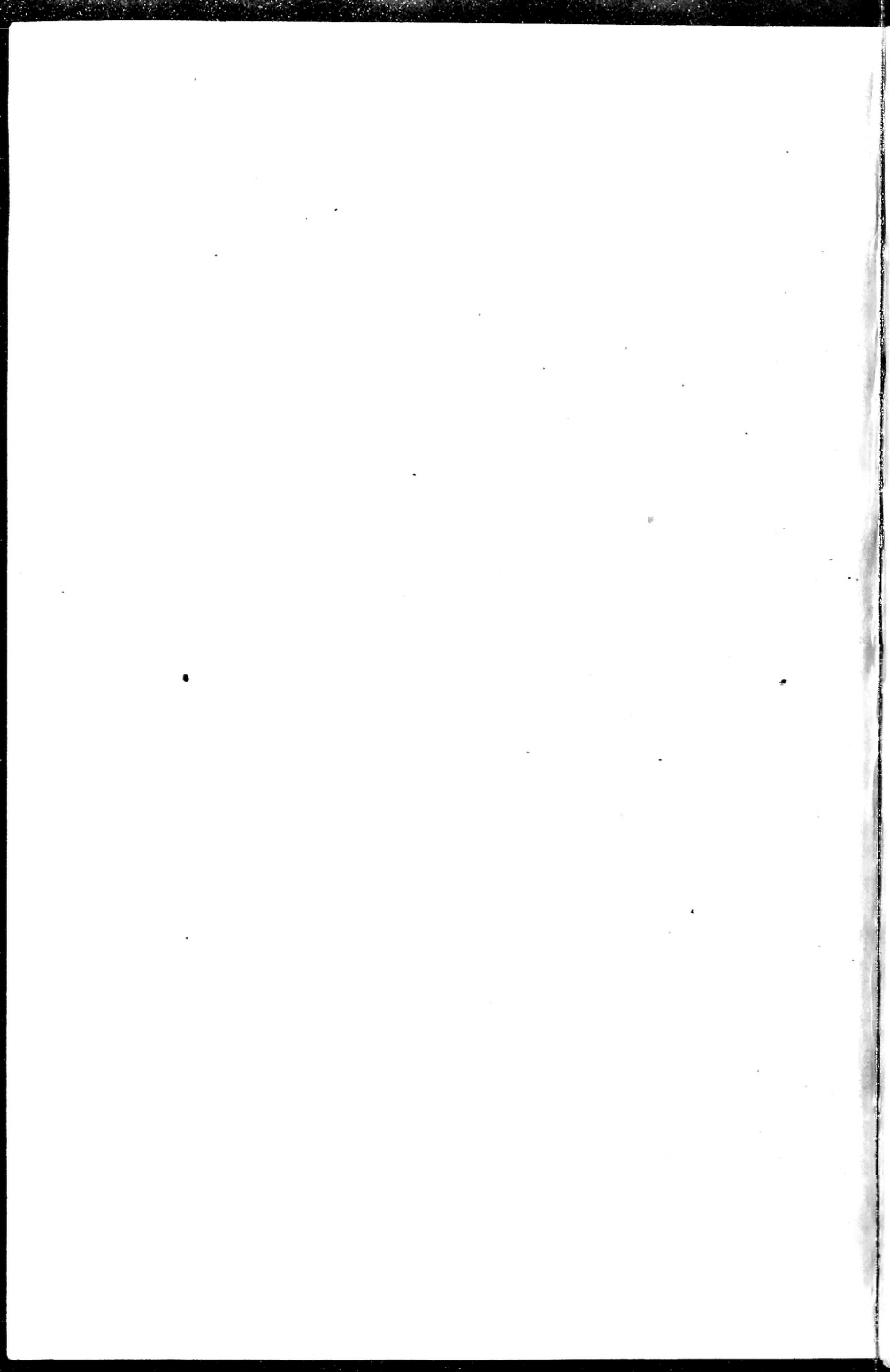
[PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SURVIVORS.]

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1849.

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## PREFACE.

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A COMMITTEE of the Directors of the Literary and Scientific Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square, who issue this Memorial of their late esteemed colleague, for the benefit of his survivors, have entrusted its compilation to me. The various matter is extracted from the *Reasoner*, where Hetherington was gratified to think that all relating to him would appear. The chief abridgment for which I have to apologise is that of Mr. Cooper's Éloge, which could not be retained entire without greatly exceeding the limits prescribed for this Memento. Its condensation has been a task of difficulty and delicacy. But I have, I believe, preserved its spirit entire; and if it has lost anything in effect, Mr. Cooper's reputation can bear it; and I trust—the cause being considered—his generosity will forgive it.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.

*Reasoner* Office,  
3, Queen Head Passage, Paternoster Row,  
September 8th, 1849.

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U. S. Green House, No. 1, Phoenix

1843

THE  
LIFE OF HENRY HETHERINGTON,

ABRIDGED FROM THE ÉLOGE

Delivered at the Literary Institution, John Street, on Sunday evening, Aug. 26, 1849 ;  
by THOMAS COOPER, author of the 'Purgatory of Suicides.'

WHILE the instruments of royal and aristocratic tyranny have their pompous eulogies at the close of their evil career, it becomes the advocates of freedom to take care that the death of the humblest opposer of misrule should not go uncommemorated. Every step in the life of a struggler for human enfranchisement, if it could be beheld by the great Dead, must fix their attention as big with the fate of Progress. And, surely, the living would do well and wisely to bestow their anxieties in this humble direction, rather than on the gew-gaws which attract the unthinking. One word of bold and firm defiance against legalised oppression—one act of self-sacrificing and manly resistance to privileged power—is of deeper import to the true welfare of mankind than all the victories of Marengo and Austerlitz, of Trafalgar and Waterloo.

Henry Hetherington was born in 1792, fifty-seven years ago, in Compton Street, Soho; and many remain, I am told, who remember the intelligence and kindly disposition of his boyhood. He was apprenticed to the trade of a printer, and served his time with the father of the well-known Luke Hansard, now living. The printing business was either dull or overstocked with hands when his apprenticeship ceased, and he was eighteen months out of work. It was now that he went to Belgium, and worked there at his trade for a short period. He was in the habit of telling an anecdote, in his own felicitous way, of a conversation with a fellow-workman in a workshop at Ghent, that is worth recording. The report had just reached the Netherlands, of the superb munificence with which England had rewarded her 'iron duke,' the conqueror at Waterloo. Our friend, full of attachment to his native country, immediately exclaimed, with the exaggerated emotion of youth, 'Ay, see there! Look what a fine country ours is! You see how we reward our soldiers for fighting for us! You would not hear of any other country giving money and estates to their public servants like our country!' The Belgian workman was older than our friend: he darted an expressive look at him, and then replied, in broken English, 'Ay, ay, it is a *tam* fine country, and a *tam* fine ting for de Duke; but it is a *tam* bad country, and a *tam* bad ting for de People!' The repartee dwelt in his mind, and led to his ultimate Radicalism. Our friend's marriage occurred shortly before this visit to Belgium, or shortly after, and the fruit of it were nine children, only one of whom—his son, Mr. David Hetherington—is now living. Among his earliest connections was that with the 'Free-

thinking Christians'—a body of religionists at one time much talked of in London, and numbering among its professors several names of considerable talent. It was in relation to this society that Hetherington produced the pamphlet, which, so far as I know, was his first essay in print. Its date is 1828: just twenty-one years ago; and it is entitled 'Principles and Practice contrasted; or a Peep into "the only true church of God upon earth," commonly called Freethinking Christians.'

He was one of the earliest and most energetic of working men engaged in the foundation of the Mechanics' Institute. His intelligence and zeal procured him the friendship of the excellent Birkbeck. The doctor frequently called upon Henry Hetherington at his shop in the Strand, even in his sorest times of persecution.

The pamphlet mentioned as published in 1828, was issued from his shop at 13, Kingsgate Street, Holborn. Here, also, he commenced his warfare against the false Whigs, by issuing the first number of the *Poor Man's Guardian*. This was in 1831. At the close of 1830, he was appointed by the radical working men of London, to draw up a circular for the formation of Trades' Unions. That document was sanctioned by a meeting of delegates, and formed the basis of the 'National Union of the Working Classes'—which eventually led to Chartism.

William Carpenter, another distinguished name in the history of working men's politics, had issued his 'Political Letter' in 1830, and been prosecuted for it; and now government pounced upon Henry Hetherington. Three convictions were obtained against him for publishing the *Poor Man's Guardian*. He was ordered to be taken into custody, but the Bow Street magistrates could not enforce their order for some time. Henry Hetherington, with all that deliciously provoking coolness for which he was characterised, actually sent a note to the magistrates to tell them that 'he was going out of town!' Then, he printed the note in his *Guardian*, and commenced a tour through the country.

At Manchester, he narrowly escaped being taken by Stevens, the Bow Street 'runner'; but he might have continued at large for some time longer, had he not resolved to hasten up to London, in order to have a last look at his dying mother. He reached the door of his house, on a night in September—knocked hard, but was not answered—the Bow Street spies came upon him before his second knock had been heard—he clung to the knocker, but was dragged away; and none of his family knew till he was lodged in Clerkenwell gaol. Here he remained six months. The *Guardian*, however, was still carried on.

At the end of 1832, when he had not been many months at liberty, he was *again* convicted, and *again* imprisoned for six months in the same gaol; and now it was that his friend Watson became his fellow-prisoner—also for the same 'high crime and misdemeanour' of selling, in 'Free' England, a penny paper without a taxed stamp! Their treatment during these six months was most cruel. An opening, called 'a window,' but which was without a pane of glass, let in the snow upon their food, as they ate it; cold and damp filled their bodies with pain; and the 'Liberal' Government seemed intent on trying by these means whether they could not break their spirits.

John Cleave and his wife were seized, as they were proceeding to Purkiss's, the news-agent in Compton Street, in a cab, with their papers.

Heywood of Manchester, Guest of Birmingham, Hobson and Mrs. Mann of Leeds—with about 500 others in town and country, were imprisoned as vendors of the 'Unstamped.' The spirit displayed by the vendors is worthy of remembrance. They carried the 'Unstamped' in their hats, in their pockets: they left them in sure places 'to be called for;' and when, for a few weeks, government actually empowered officers to seize parcels, open them in the streets, and take out any unstamped publications—Henry Hetherington (while at large) made up 'dummy' parcels, directed them, sent off a lad with them one way, with instructions to make a noise, attract a crowd, and delay the officers, if they seized him: meanwhile, the *real* parcel for the country agent was sent off another way!

After the verdict of the 'Justifiable Homicide' upon the policeman slain at the Calthorpe Street meeting, a letter appeared in the *Poor Man's Guardian*—signed *Palafox junior*, but really written by Julian Hibbert—containing something more than inuendo, in an advice to the people attending such meetings in future to take bread and cheese with them, and a *good long, sharp-pointed, and strong-backed knife* with which to cut it.

In 1833 Hetherington removed from 13, Kingsgate Street, to his well-known shop 126, Strand. The *Destructive* which he issued here, ironically styled the *Conservative*, was also unstamped. The *London Dispatch*, which followed, reached at one time 25000 weekly. In 1834 he defended himself on a trial for publishing the *Guardian*, and obtained an acquittal, but was condemned for the *Conservative*.

Not having grown fond of prison from his experiences of it, he took a snug little box at Pinner, and by going out of his house in the Strand at the back, by an outlet into the Savoy, and by entering it the same way—and *in the disguise of a Quaker!*—he contrived to enact the real Simon Pure so well, that he evaded the keen eyes which were on the look out for him.

But the government revenged themselves by making a seizure for £220, in the name of the Commissioners of Stamps, on the false pretext that he was not a registered printer. They swept his premises. But undaunted, our heroic friend resumed his work—rising out of the midst of ruin. Julian Hibbert, from the moment that he learned Hetherington was in danger of another imprisonment in consequence of the publication of the 'Palafox' letter, set him down in his Will for 450 guineas; nor did he cancel the gift when the proceedings were abandoned. Henry Hetherington then purchased another printing machine—for no printer would undertake his work—and continued to publish the *Unstamped*, until the government consented to reduce the newspaper stamp to one penny, when he issued (stamped) the *Twopenny Dispatch*, of which Mr. James Bronterre O'Brien was the talented editor.

He incurred some embarrassments by the publication of part of an Encyclopædia, at the suggestion of his friend, Dr. Birkbeck. The *Odd-Fellow*, another penny periodical, was more successful. The comparatively narrow circumstances of our friend in after years are to be attributed to his tenderness. He could not have the heart to sue *his* debtors at law, though others sued *him*.

He wrote his 'Cheap Salvation' in consequence of conversations with

the chaplain of Clerkenwell gaol. In 1841, he was tried on a charge of publishing a 'blasphemous' work—'Haslam's Letters to the Clergy of all Denominations'—and sentenced to four months' imprisonment in the Queen's Bench prison. He represented London and Stockport, in the great Convention of 1839, of which the beloved exile Frost was a member. His latter years were devoted to Socialism and Chartism. In this institution we have all witnessed his rare enthusiasm and fervour, and his clear judgment, so often mingled with the humour that always rendered him a welcome speaker. The quality I marked in him, the very first time I saw him—which was at the second Sturge Conference, at Christmas, 1842—he always displayed when I shared in our common friendship for him, in this institution: the faculty of reconciling misunderstandings and preventing ill-feeling arising from differences.

With regret, it must be stated that there is too strong reason to conclude that our friend's decease was hastened by a want of proper care. His strict temperance—for he had been almost an absolute teetotaler, for many years—warranted him in believing that he was not very likely to fall a victim to the prevailing epidemic. When he was seized with it, he refused—from what we must call a prejudice—to call in medical relief. Our friend Holyoake prevailed with him to have a physician called, after having himself stayed the cramp he suffered from. It was too late, however, for medicines to relieve his case—although several medical friends were successively brought to his bed-side. His natural frankness and humour were exhibited even in his last hours. 'Why did you not call for help sooner?' said one medical friend to him. 'Why, you know,' he replied with a smile, 'I don't like you physic-folks; and besides, I have had Doctor Holyoake attending me; and he has done all that could be done.'

Happily the gloomy bigot can forge no tales of death-bed horrors in this instance: he can derive no lessons from it to frighten children. We say this with satisfaction—for although the mind of man may sometimes wander in his last hours, and the true philosopher will not resort to the account of them for the test of a man's opinions,—yet it is well for the sake of others that the death of a Freethinker can be shown by unquestionable testimony to be without the horrors in which the superstitious delight to clothe it. I care not whether all of us agree in every item of our deceased friend's convictions: I, for one, do not. But we are the foes of priest-craft and superstition, and therefore we make common cause in his opposition to those twin-plagues of the human race; and we honour his memory for the courage with which his free thought was proclaimed in life, and fortitude with which the confession of it was signed in death.

I add my humble testimony to his many excellences, from our friendship of the last four years; and entreat you to follow his example wherein he was worthy of your imitation—in his earnestness; his readiness to labour at all times and seasons for the common good of man and for the advancement of public liberty; in his perseverance; in his spirit of self-sacrifice; in the fidelity of his friendships; and in his spirit of kindness and good-humour. Let each man among us display the courage, perseverance, and unsubduable energy of Henry Hetherington, and England, Europe, the World, will soon be free and happy, and the Universal Brotherhood be speedily realised.



## HIS DEATH.

EARLY on Tuesday morning, August 21, I was apprised that Hetherington was ill. Knowing his anti-medicinal views I took medicine with me, and gave him some instantly. I found that he had been suffering a fortnight from premonitory symptoms of cholera. It is attributable to his temperate habits that he had had so long a warning. After receiving some relief, he wanted to rise and finish the arrangement of his books, as he seemed to think his malady might terminate fatally. His rising I positively forbade, and had by gentle force to prevent it. (On the preceding day he left my daily paper at my door himself.) While this was occurring, his favourite physician, Dr. Richard Quain, was sent for. He was unfortunately out of town. Next, Dr. Epps was summoned, who promptly sent medicine. But as he was unable to come, Dr. Jones was called upon, when, as fatality would have it, he was out. I immediately put on my hat and fetched Mr. Pearse, Surgeon of Argyle Square. The next morning Mr. Kenny took a note from me to Dr. Ashburner, of Grosvenor Street, who generously attended and saw him twice, though at great inconvenience to himself. Mr. George Bird, Surgeon, of Osnaburg Street, Regent's Park, paid friendly visits, and rendered his usual able, and unwearied assistance. Mrs. Martin, whose courageous nursing and intelligent resources might have saved our patient at an earlier period, also attended till a late hour on Wednesday night. Most of this day he was unconscious. On Thursday morning, August 24, 1849, about 4 o'clock, he expired. His age was 57. He left the following document, which speaks for itself.

## LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT.

As life is uncertain, it behoves every one to make preparations for death; I deem it therefore a duty incumbent on me, ere I quit this life, to express in writing, for the satisfaction and guidance of esteemed friends, my feelings and opinions in reference to our common principles. I adopt this course that no mistake or misapprehension may arise through the false reports of those who officiously and obtrusively obtain access to the death-beds of avowed Infidels to priestcraft and superstition; and who, by their annoying importunities, labour to extort from an opponent, whose intellect is already worn out and subdued by protracted physical suffering, some trifling admission, that they may blazon it forth to the world as a Death-bed Confession, and a triumph of Christianity over Infidelity.

In the first place, then—I calmly and deliberately declare that I do not believe in the popular notion of the existence of an Almighty, All-wise, and Benevolent God—possessing intelligence, and conscious of his own operations; because these attributes involve such a mass of absurdities and contradictions, so much cruelty and injustice on His part to the poor and destitute portion of His creatures—that, in my opinion, no rational reflecting mind can, after disinterested investigation, give credence to the existence of such a Being. 2nd. I believe death to be an eternal sleep—that I shall never live again in this world, or another, with a consciousness that I am the same identical person that once lived, performed the duties, and exercised the functions of a human being.

3rd. I consider priestcraft and superstition the greatest obstacle to human improvement and happiness. During my life I have, to the best of my ability, sincerely and strenuously exposed and opposed them, and die with a firm conviction that Truth, Justice, and Liberty will never be permanently established on earth till every vestige of priestcraft and superstition shall be utterly destroyed.

4th. I have ever considered that the only religion useful to man consists exclusively of the practice of morality, and in the mutual interchange of kind actions. In such a religion there is no room for priests—and when I see\* them interfering at our births, marriages, and deaths, pretending to conduct us safely through this state of being to another and happier world, any disinterested person of the least shrewdness and discernment must perceive that their sole aim is to stultify the minds of the people by their incomprehensible

\* This phrase, 'when I see,' should be when they are seen, as it does not follow that 'any disinterested person,' &c. must perceive the stultifying aim of the priests in the way the remainder of the sentence states, because Hetherington saw it. It was this *non sequitur* to which allusion is made farther on within brackets.

doctrines, that they may the more effectually fleece the poor deluded sheep who listen to their empty babblings and mystifications.

5th. As I have lived so I die, a determined opponent to their nefarious and plundering system. I wish my friends, therefore, to deposit my remains in unconsecrated ground, and trust they will allow no priest, or clergyman of any denomination, to interfere in any way whatever at my funeral. My earnest desire is, that no relation or friend shall wear black or any kind of mourning, as I consider it contrary to our rational principles to indicate respect for a departed friend by complying with a hypocritical custom.

6th. I wish those who respect me, and who have laboured in our common cause, to attend my remains to their last resting place, not so much in consideration of the individual, as to do honour to our just, benevolent, and rational principles.

I hope all true Rationalists will leave pompous displays to the tools of priestcraft and superstition. If I could have my desire, the occasion of my death and burial should be turned to the advantage of the living. I would have my kind and good friend, WATSON, who knew me intimately for many years—or any other friend well acquainted with my character—to address to those assembled such observations as he may deem pertinent and useful; holding up the good points of my character as an example worthy of imitation, and pointing out my defects with equal fidelity, that none may avow just and rational principles without endeavouring to purge themselves of those errors that result from bad habits previously contracted, and which tarnish the lustre of their benign and glorious principles.

These are my views and feelings in quitting an existence that has been chequered with the plagues and pleasures of a competitive, scrambling, selfish system; a system by which the moral and social aspirations of the noblest human being are nullified by incessant toil and physical deprivations; by which, indeed, all men are trained to be either slaves, hypocrites, or criminals. Hence my ardent attachment to the principles of that great and good man—ROBERT OWEN. I quit this world with a firm conviction that his system is the only true road to human emancipation; that it is, indeed, the only just system for regulating the affairs of honest, intelligent human beings—the only one yet made known to the world, that is based on truth, justice, and equality. While the land, machines, tools, implements of production, and the produce of man's toil, are exclusively in possession of the do-nothings; and labour is the sole possession of the wealth producers—a marketable commodity, bought up and directed by wealthy idlers—never-ending misery must be their inevitable lot. ROBERT OWEN'S system, if rightly understood and faithfully carried out, rectifies all these anomalies. It makes man the proprietor of his own labour and of the elements of production—it places him in a condition to enjoy the entire fruits of his labour, and surrounds him with circumstances that will make him intelligent, rational, and happy. Grateful to Mr. OWEN for the happiness I have experienced in contemplating the superiority of his system, I could not die happy without recommending my fellow-countrymen to study its principles and earnestly strive to establish them in practice. Though I ardently desired to acquire that benign spirit, and to attain that self-control, which was so conspicuous in the character of the founder of the Rational System, I am aware I fell immeasurably short of my bright exemplar; but as I never in thought, word, or deed, wilfully injured any human being, I hope that I shall be forgiven by those whom I may have inadvertently or unconsciously jostled in this world's scramble. I have indefatigably, sincerely, and disinterestedly laboured to improve the condition of humanity—believing it to be the duty of every man to leave the world better than he found it; and if I have not pursued this object with that wisdom and discretion that should mark at all times the conduct of a rational man, I have zealously maintained what appeared to me to be right, and paid the penalty of what my opponents may term my indiscretions in many cruel persecutions. I freely forgive all who have injured me in the struggle; and die in the hope and consolation that a time is approaching when the spirit of antagonism will give place to fraternal affection and universal co-operation to promote the happiness of mankind.

(Signed) HENRY HETHERINGTON

Witnessed by GEORGE JACOB HOLYOAKE,

HENRY ALLSOP IVORY,

JOHN KENNY

August 21, 1849.

[Hetherington, it may be necessary to explain, composed this document himself. A year and half, or more, before his death, he gave the original in his own hand-writing to me and Mr. Watson to read, saying, that if he died in his then opinions, he intended to leave that behind him as his testimony. He had copies made to distribute to a few friends. On the Tuesday (August 21) on which I was called to him he ordered a copy to be given into my charge. On the evening of the same day he signed the will of his personal property. On taking it away I handed to him the 'Testament of his Opinions,' saying 'Will you sign this also?' I spoke in that inquiring tone which implied 'If you still see fit do so.' He at once re-adjusted his glasses, looked at the paper with an air of perfect recognition, and wrote his name with a firm hand. The copy which I received, and which he signed, I believe to be an exact copy of the original in his own hand-writing which he formerly gave to me, as it contains (in the '4th' paragraph) even a grammatical error, involving a logical absurdity, which I pointed out, and at which he laughed heartily at the time, and said he should correct it. But I found it still there. The document is incontestably Hetherington's. Messrs. Kenny and Ivory are too young to be able to draw up a declaration in the same maturity of tone; and it contains some passages which I should express very differently, and others (those relating to the priests) which I should not express at all, in any way. But I give the 'Testament' faithfully as I received it. It is a manly declaration of what was true to the conscience and right in the judgment of him who signed it. The signed and attested copy I have placed in the *Reasoner* office for the inspection of any who are curious or sceptical.]

#### THE FUNERAL AND PROCESSION.

On the evening after his death, a special meeting of the committee of the John Street Institute was held, when they, as a mark of respect to their deceased colleague, undertook the conduct of the burial. The arrangements were confided to Mr. Tiffin, of the New Road; and the event showed that they could not have been placed in more judicious hands. Everything was done in quiet taste. The proceedings were decorous without gloom. There was conscientious propriety without a particle of ostentation or affected display. The hearse was covered by a canopy of puce coloured silk, on each side of which appeared, in silver letters, the words of a frequent phrase of Hetherington's—

WE OUGHT TO ENDEAVOUR TO LEAVE THE WORLD BETTER THAN WE FOUND IT.

At the end of the hearse appeared, in similar letters—

HENRY HETHERINGTON.

Mutes were superseded by pages with white and blue coloured wands, and the officers of the John Street Institution, and various friends of the deceased, walked with similar wands on each side the procession. The Messrs. Tiffin bore maces. David Hetherington, the only surviving son (who is with Mr. Heywood, of Manchester), a relative, Mr. Watson, and myself occupied the cab next the hearse. Twenty-five other cabs followed, and the rear was composed of a long procession of friends. The road, during the long journey to the cemetery, was lined with people. At times the scene was very affecting, as women following wept as though Hetherington was some Christ of Labour. The ground for the interment was that lately purchased by Mr. W. D. Saull, and Hetherington is the first who occupies it.\* The concourse of persons at the grave was very great. To name all, who would be known to the public if named, would occupy a page. There were editors, lecturers, publishers, guardians of the poor, foreign Socialists and politicians of note, who respected Hetherington, or had co-operated with him. Adjoining the grave is the monument of 'Publicola,' the author of the well-known Letters of the *Weekly Dispatch*. The eminence was appropriate. I stood upon that tomb to speak

\* On the morning after Mr. Saull announced at John Street that he had purchased a piece of ground in Kensal Green Cemetery, to serve as a burying place for our friends, Hetherington said to me—'Saull has bought a grave, and says he is able to give a friend a lift—there's a chance for us.'

## THE ORATION OVER THE GRAVE

It seems to me that he who is appointed to speak on an occasion like this should prepare what he will say, that no effort of memory or art, in recalling a fact or turning a sentence, should interrupt that simple expression of feeling which alone is suitable on this spot—and that no inapt word should occur to mar the unity of that regret, which is the only tribute left us to offer at the grave of our common friend.

The usual Church Service on these occasions is omitted, out of obedience to the wishes of the friend whom we lament—and its omission also meets with our own approbation, as that service is little instructive, throws no light on personal character, and is, in some respects, a libel both on the dead and the living. And to say this much is in accordance with the wishes of Henry Hetherington, whom we inter here, and whose indomitable opposition to clerical error he desired to be perpetuated after his death.

Henry Hetherington, around whose grave we stand, was the well-known publisher, lately residing at 57, Judd Street, Brunswick Square. He was a native of London, and was one of the early members of the London Mechanics' Institution, founded by Dr. Birkbeck, to which he owed many advantages. Henry Hetherington first became known to the public by the stand which he took when he thought that institution was about to be perverted from the designs of its founders. A printer by trade, he became afterwards a publisher; and during the struggle for the emancipation of the press from the fetters of the Newspaper Stamp, he became an accredited leader. He published the *Poor Man's Guardian* to try, as he said, the strength of 'Right' against 'Might;' and he continued it in defiance of prosecutions which extended over three years and a half—during which time 500 persons were imprisoned in the struggle: at last a special jury under Lord Lyndhurst declared it a 'strictly legal publication.' They ought to have declared that the brave and resolute editor was strictly invincible, and that his *Guardian* became legal because it could not be put down—for Hetherington continued to conduct it, in gaol and out, and no accumulation of imprisonment, nor amount of loss, intimidated him. Hetherington represents the Unstamped agitation, and this is his great political and historical distinction. It was he who was appointed to draw up that 'Circular' which was the foundation of the 'National Union of the Working Classes.' The *Charter* Newspaper, of 1839, gave his portrait as one of the delegates to the 'National Convention.' And since he has constantly been—when not in prison for the people—working for them through the press and in connection with public institutions.

In conjunction with his valued friends and old coadjutors, Watson and Lovett, he exerted himself for the establishment of the National Hall, Holborn. For the last few years his ardent services have been given to the Literary and Scientific Institution, John Street, Fitzroy Square, which has embodied in its management the development of his most cherished ideas of religious liberty, political enfranchisement, and social reformation. How profoundly he was esteemed in that institution the arrangements of this day, and the presence of the John Street friends, testify. In the parish of St. Pancras, of which he was a Director of the poor, he has commanded, even amid those who dissented from him, esteem for his benevolent views, his practical ability, and good sense. And it is not a little gratifying that the last public body which enjoyed the honour of his co-operation was the Newspaper Stamp Abolition Committee, who are associated to accomplish that reformation with which the name of Henry Hetherington is so honourably and so indissolubly connected.

Whatever may be useful to others, Hetherington would desire to be said of him; hence it may be remarked, that though he has fallen a victim to the prevailing epidemic, it is highly probable he might have lived had not a fixed aversion to medicine prevented him seeking proper aid in time. He calculated, as he had a right to do, on a life of temperance as a great safeguard. But though a wise temperance will save us from half the maladies of the day, it does not supersede the necessity—when really in danger—for that help which the observation and experience of the physician can afford us.

As respects our friend's death, I can bear personal testimony how much it became his life. As soon as he found himself in danger, I was summoned to his

bed-side, and, with few interruptions, I was with him till his decease. Having always believed to the best of his understanding, and acted to the best of his ability, he had no reason for fear, and he manifested none. He alluded to his probable death with so much good sense, and his bearing to the last hour was so quiet and so full of equanimity, that I could discern no difference between his death and his life, save in his failing strength. As sickness could not alter the evidence on which his principles rested, they underwent no change. He died the avowed, the explicit, the unchanging foe of Priestcraft, Superstition, and Oppression; and he strongly and rightly concluded that a life devoted to the welfare of humanity in this world, was no unsuitable preparation for any other.

Viewed in his public relations, Hetherington was an exemplar of the school of politicians amid which he was reared. We are now verging on a phase in which we chiefly affirm positive principles. The school of politicians (to which, indeed, we owe our present liberty) now going a little out of fashion, was that which asserted a right, and antagonised it. Of this school Hetherington was the most perfect type which remained among us. He did not look upon a political victory as something to be won by *exposition* so much as by *assault*. Hence he was more soldier than advocate; and it must be admitted that political corruption never had a more resolute opponent, nor popular right a more doughty champion.

It augments my admiration of my friend to know that he desired no blind eulogist to illustrate his character. In a document which he put into my hands shortly before his decease, he expressed a manly wish that his faults as well as his virtues might be made to minister to the instruction of others. This enables me to explain the two-fold aspect of his character. He had a two-fold character distinctly marked. Many in the ranks above our friend never fully understood him. To them he seemed to wear a repulsive air. He gave that impression through that error of party politics, in which each man regards an opponent as an opponent in consequence of personal interest, rather than through difference of understanding; and hence Hetherington shrank from the rich and bland, and wrapped himself up in the integrity, and poverty, and ruggedness of his own order. He seemed to feel that to reciprocate blandishments with wealth was to betray his cause. He regarded it as the inclined plain, polished as marble but slippery as glass, upon which, if the foot of the patriot was once placed, he would inevitably slip down to political corruption. Yet he had an integrity which could stand alone, which was as proof against smiles as against frowns; but it was not his temper to trust it. Those, however, who approached him on his own ground, who had the honour of working or suffering with him, never knew a more genial nature allied to so stout a spirit. He was a personification of good-humoured Democracy. The very tones of his voice bespoke the fulness of honesty and pleasantries. And beneath his uncompromising exterior and jocular speech, lay the diamond ore of courage, and truth, and toil. He had a hand as true as ever friendship grasped. In the hour of political danger, every coadjutor knew that the secrets of life and liberty could be entrusted into Hetherington's keeping. As for toil, he was unwearied. He worked till his last days. He carried out in practice that exalted creed of duty of which Rome's great Triumvir, Mazzini, is the exponent and highest type. With him, Hetherington seemed to hold that 'ease is the death of the soul;' and when he enlisted in the army of progress, he enlisted for life; and, as he never faltered, though he served without pay or pension, let it be remembered to his honour:

For to side with truth is noble, when we share her wretched crust  
Before her cause brings fame or profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just.

The publications which he edited, and pamphlets which he wrote, attest his great industry—and something more; for, when he was an author, it required not only ability to write, but courage to defend it. And he not only defended the liberty of the press, he defended the liberty of conscience and the liberty of speech. When tried on an indictment for blasphemy, in 1840, his defence was so well conceived that Lord Denman paid him the compliment of saying that 'he had listened to it with feelings of interest and with sentiments of respect;' and this tribute he won, no less by his unassuming but firm bearing, than by his judicious address.

Those who know what political trials and imprisonments are at the hands of an oppressive government and vindictive priesthood, know that language is inadequate to express the losses and sufferings which are included in those familiar but frightful words. But Hetherington knew not only how to work, but how to *suffer*—nor has it been in vain.

Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record  
 One death-grapple, in the darkness, 'twixt old systems and the Word:  
 Truth for ever on the scaffold, Wrong for ever on the throne;  
*Yet that scaffold sways the future*, and, behind the dim unknown,  
 Standeth Progress in the shadow, keeping watch above its own.

No less remarkable than his political consistency was the fervour with which our friend embraced and advocated the views of Robert Owen. They fell on his paths like a stream of light; they mellowed his manners; they interested his practical understanding; they gratified his humanity, and filled him with hope.

The old world is *effete*: there man with man  
 Jostles; and, in the brawl for means to live,  
 Life is trod under foot.

Hetherington felt this deeply, and he never ceased to reverence Mr. Owen for his benevolent and ceaseless labours, and his remedial proposals.

My co-operation with my friend has extended over many years. But now, as at the first hour of our acquaintance, there are two qualities of his which I have been struck with more than with others—his utility and his bravery. He was decidedly the most useful public man I ever met with. At a public meeting he was of unexampled service. He would do a man's duty at a moment's notice. He would take the chair or speak. He never hesitated to do what everybody else declined to do. He had no vanity to be consulted—no egotism stood in the way of his co-operation with others: he had no ambition but to be useful. And he was as brave as he was devoted. He never shrunk from danger. To the last day of his life he would have suffered his home to be broken up, and himself dragged to prison, to champion an important principle. Many men can be patriots in the fervour of youth and the presence of applause. Hetherington had a spirit which was neither chilled by age nor damped by neglect. But we have the satisfaction of observing that the respect paid to his memory by the public, the press, and his coadjutors, early and late, is a proof that private worth and public service bring with them individual esteem and general honour. A life spent like his

Will rear  
 A monument in Fate's despite,  
 Whose epitaph will grow more clear  
 As truth shall rise and scatter light  
 Full and more full from Freedom's height.

Let it be graven on his tomb:—  
 'He came and left more smiles behind;  
 One ray he shot athwart the gloom,  
 He helped one fetter to unbind:  
 Men think of him and grow more kind.'

In Henry Hetherington the people have lost an advocate and truth a resolute partisan. Every honest politician has lost an able coadjutor, every patriot an exemplar, and every true man among us a friend. In taking our last Farewell of him at this grave, we should tell him (could he hear our voice) that we do it with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow. We even feel a triumph in his life, while we part with profound sadness at the loss of so noble a friend. In those social reunions, where he has been so great a charm, we shall be all the merrier as we remember his unclouded humour. And as we continue that struggle, to which his life has been devoted, we shall take new courage from his example—we shall inspire new confidence in what one man can do, as we remember what one man has done: and when in future times the pilgrims of Industry shall visit this shrine, they will exclaim—

'HERE LIES A POOR MAN'S GUARDIAN!'

and poor men will drop tributary tears over his grave.

## MR. WATSON'S SPEECH.

WHEN Mr. Watson rose to speak, the assembly again uncovered. He laboured under such evident emotion that it communicated itself to those around. He said the grave at his feet was about to separate from him one who had been not only his political associate, but his personal friend for twenty years. And however painful it was to him, he could not resist compliance, in some form, with the wish of Mr. Hetherington, in saying a few words over his remains. To the correctness of what his friend Mr. Holyoake had said he could bear his personal testimony. It was his misfortune to be out of town when Mr. Hetherington's illness was first communicated to him. He at once returned home; and when, after a long journey, he hastened to his friend's door—it was to find him dead. He could assure them that he felt deep, intense, inexpressible distress that it was denied to him to be also at his bed-side, as Mr. Holyoake had been, to administer to his wants: and he felt deeply grateful to those who were there, as he knew that all was done which friendly consideration could suggest or execute. He and Hetherington had suffered imprisonment together, and he knew that the pecuniary difficulties which had embittered his latter years, were almost altogether induced by his sacrifices and losses in the people's service. And his friendship was as disinterested as his patriotism. Himself and Hetherington were both booksellers, but there never was between them the smallest degree of that rivalry which was so commonly found, and which degraded trade into a low, a disingenuous, a selfish, and a miserable contest. Whatever book he had undertaken, Hetherington promoted its sale just as though it was his own. They did so by each other, and their single friendship never knew two interests. Did his feelings leave him the power of speech, he could dwell long on the virtues of his friend. They had heard the tribute paid him by Mr. Holyoake. Let them inquire into its truth. It would bear the inquiry—and if they found it true, let each go, and to the extent of his power do what Hetherington had done. There were many young men around him. On them it devolved to carry forward the work to which he whom they deplored had made the unwearied contribution of his life. Let all who professed esteem for Hetherington *imitate him*. There could be no tribute more eloquent—no honour to him greater than that.

Mr. W. J. Linton has forwarded to the *Reasoner* the following passage, which he would fain hang garland-like on Hetherington's tomb. The language in which it is expressed, no less than the friendship which dictated it, entitles it to a place in this Memorial.

## TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF HETHERINGTON.

Of all the men in the battle for the People's Right, I have known none more single-minded, few so brave, so generous, so gallant as he. He was the most chivalrous of all our party. He could neglect his own interests (which is by no means a virtue, but there is never lack of rebukers for all failings of that kind), but he never did, and never could, neglect his duty to the cause he had embraced, to the principles he had avowed. There was no notoriety-hunting in him: as, indeed, so mean a passion has no place in any true man. And he was of the truest. He would toil in any unnoticeable good work for freedom, in any 'forlorn hope,' or even, when he saw that justice was with them, for men who were not of his party, as cheerfully and vigorously as most other men will labour for money, or fame, or respectability. He was a real man, one of that select and 'glorious company' of those who are completely in earnest. His principles were not kept in the pocket of a Sunday coat (I don't know that he always had a Sunday change of any sort); but were to him the daily light which led his steps. If strife and wrath lay in his path, it was seldom from any fault of his; for though hasty, as a man of impulsive nature, and chafed by some afflictions, he was not intolerant, nor quarrelsome, nor vindictive. Men who did not know him have called him violent. He was, as I said before, hasty and impetuous, but utterly without malice; and he would not have harmed his worst enemy, though, in truth, he heartily detested tyranny and tyrants. Peace be with him, on the other side of this fitful dream which we call life: peace, which he seldom knew here, though his nature was kindly and his hope strong, though he loved Truth and wilfully

injured no man. One of the truest and bravest of the warm-hearted has laid down among the tombs, not worn out, but sorely wearied. May we rest as honourably, with as few specks to come between our lives and the grateful recollections of those who have journeyed with us. If our young men, in the vigour of their youth, will be but as enthusiastic and as untiring as was Hetherington, even in the last days of his long exertion, we need not despair of Freedom, nor of a worthy monument to a noble life, which else would seem but as a vainly-spoken word, wasted and forgotten.

Yet again, peace be with him; and in his place, the copy and thankful remembrance of the worth we loved in him.

W. J. LINTON.

It is a peculiarity, which has been the subject of some remark, that I *read* my address at the grave. In addition to the reasons I there urged, one not noticed—a public one—actuated me, which for public reasons I state. It seems to me that nothing is gained by dispensing with the Church Service unless something, as carefully considered and more personally conscientious, is put in its place. It seems to me that, in point of solemnity and decorum, the Church Service is perfect; and in every substitution of ours, the qualities of propriety and earnestness should be most anxiously and effectually preserved. It has come under my observation, that some burials of our friends have been conducted where the possibility has been left open of irrelevant things being said—and sometimes they have been said. As far as this can be guarded against it should be—and to write what facts and thoughts are proposed to be expressed is the best precaution we can take to prevent it. It must not be left open for any man to think that freedom of thought, which we claim to exercise, is not quite compatible with good taste. That philosophy which wants sensibility is false. It must be put past all doubt that scepticism of clerical error does not deprive us of the feelings of men, or the reverence of humanity. It does not matter to me that to read a speech is supposed to mar oratorical effect; this it by no means necessarily does. Victor Hugo's late speech at the Peace Conference in Paris, which has won so much applause in Europe, and so moved those who heard it, was *read*. But if reading did impair rhetorical effect, it would matter nothing in a funeral oration—as every appearance of display is best banished, and that is the most effective, on such an occasion, which is the most decorous, unambitious, simple, and earnest. My apology for making these remarks here, is my desire to see some fixed and well-considered canon of taste regulate the practice of our friends on these occasions, and this seems a suitable opportunity for suggesting it.

At the conclusion of the service at the grave, I signed my name at the Lodge as 'Officiating Clergyman.' Mr. Watson was required to do the same. We had no power to alter an official form, but I have since been instructed by a legal observer, that we might have written after our names 'Officiating friends,' thus determining our own qualification consistently with our views. The fact is worth mentioning, as it may guide others. The John Street Directors provided 2000 copies of Hetherington's 'Will and Testament' for distribution to the assembly. In order that nothing should be done, which could interfere with the etiquette which the Committee of the Cemetery might be anxious to preserve, these were not given except *outside* the gates. Several reprints have already been made of the document, here inserted. But the distribution and sale of it, in a separate form, has been discontinued, as it might be better circulated in connection with the matter in this Memorial, and the proceeds, which may thence arise, be appropriated, either to perpetuate Hetherington's memory in some obviously durable form, or to the advantage of his survivors—there being dependents to whom he was deeply attached—for whom it does not appear that any provision exists. Messrs. Watson and Whitaker are assiduously engaged in the arduous and difficult labour of adjusting his very confused and involved affairs, which his continuous adversities and sudden death have left in seemingly inextricable difficulties. And if the matter of this brief Memorial should not sufficiently compensate those who may purchase or circulate it, perhaps the reflection that they may thus contribute to the welfare of those whom Hetherington regarded, may prove an adequate satisfaction. For, he who cared more for the public than he cared for himself, is perhaps entitled (in the persons of those belonging to him) to some posthumous care in return.

G. J. HOLYOAKE.