

*In Loren's Copy of the Religious
Newspaper clipping,*

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I was deterred by unavoidable circumstances from attending a lecture delivered by Mr. W. Eassie, at the House of the Society of Arts on Wednesday evening last on "The Systems of Cremation in use upon the Continent." It would be more strictly accurate, perhaps to say that Mr. Eassie read (simply) a paper on this important topic, since I gather that his discourse contained nothing of a directly argumentative character. There are few persons, I apprehend, who, after having visited the airy and cheerful Columbaria of Rome, and afterwards explored the dank and gloomy Catacombs, have not — for the time, at least — acknowledged the abstract merits of "urn burial". But unconquerable prejudice seldom fails to reassert its empire after a time; and objections to cremation are strengthened by the reflection that it is a purely pagan manner of disposing of the dead. Will the prejudice ever be vanquished I wonder? Meanwhile, no harm can be done by thorough and temperate ventilation of the question.

Mem: It is curious to note that Dryden has two magnificent passages vindicated the claims of cremation and of "earth to earth" burial respectively. The heroic stanzas on the Death of Oliver Cromwell conclude with these lines:

His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest;
His name a great example stands, to show
How strangely high endeavours may be blest
Where piety and valour jointly go.

But Dryden also wrote the tremendous verses:

When rattling bones together fly
From the four corners of the sky;
When sinews o'er the skeletons are spread
Those clothe the flesh, and life inspires the dead;
The sacred poets first shall bear the sound
And foremost from the tomb shall bound,
For they are covered with the slightest ground.

Thus the Cremation Society and Mr. Seymour Haden might equally claim "Glorious John" as an advocate.

G. A. S.

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