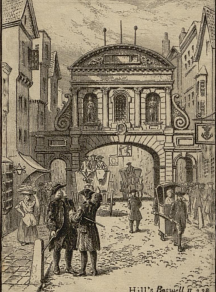


I	A. EDWARD NEWTON	9
EX LIBRIS		OAK KNOLL
O	"Sir, the biographical part of literature is what I love most."	9

**T**HIS dainty little manuscript has an interest for the writer entirely apart from its value as a Lamb item.

Twenty-five years ago, in London, early in his book-collecting days, the writer came across a bundle of dusty volumes in an old book-shop in the Strand and bought the lot for, as he remembers, two guineas.

Subsequently, on going through them carefully, he found that he had acquired what appeared to be quite a valuable little parcel. There were the following:

TALES FROM SHAKESPEARE, Baldwin and Cradock, Fifth Edition, 1831.

LAMB'S PROSE WORKS, 3 volumes, Moxon, 1836.

THE LETTERS OF CHARLES LAMB, 2 volumes, Moxon 1837, with the inscription "To J. P. Collier, Esq. from his friend H. C. Robinson."

FINAL MEMORIALS OF CHARLES LAMB, by Talfourd. 2 volumes, 1848.

Wordsworth's copy with his signature on the title page of each volume, observing for the first time that the book was dedicated to him.

Loosely inserted in several of the volumes were newspaper clippings, a number of pages of manuscript in Collier's handwriting, a fragment of a letter from Mary Lamb addressed to Jane Collier, Payne Collier's mother, and in several of the volumes were notes in Collier's handwriting referring to matters in the text, as where, against a reference to Lamb's essay on "Roast Pig," Collier says, in pencil, "My mother sent the pig to Lamb." Again where Talfourd refers to an evening with Lamb saying: "We mounted to the top story and were soon seated beside a cheerful fire; hot water and its better adjuncts were soon before us." Collier writes "Both Lamb and Talfourd died of the 'Better Adjuncts.'" There were a large number of such pencil notes.

The pages of manuscript in Collier's heavy and as he calls it "infirm" hand begin:

"In relation to C. Lamb and Southey, Mr. Cosens possesses as interesting a MS. as I know. It is bound as a small 4 to. but the writing of Lamb, and chiefly by Southey is post 8vo. They seem to have been contributions to an 'Annual Anthology' published by Cottle of Bristol."

"The MS. begins with an 'Advertisement' in the handwriting of Southey, and it is followed immediately by a poem in Lamb's handwriting, headed *Elegy on a Quid of Tobacco* in ten stanzas rhiming alternately thus:

It lay before me on the close grazed grass,  
Beside my path, an old Tobacco quid:  
And shall I by the mute adviser pass  
Without one serious thought? now Heaven forbid!"

Evidently, the next day, Collier copied more of the poem for on another sheet headed—"Insert here 'A'" — he remarks: "As my hand is steadier to-day I have copied the remaining stanzas."

Elsewhere, referring to Mr. Cosens' MS., Collier writes: "the whole consists of about sixty leaves chiefly in the handwriting of Southey and it contains . . . productions by Lamb, one a sort of *feu d'esprit* called *The Rbedycinian Barbers* on the hair-dressing of twelve young men of Christ Church College, and the other headed *Dirge for Him Who Shall Deserve It*", which he quotes at length. This, Collier says, "has no signature but the whole is in Lamb's young

clear hand, and it shows very plainly that he partook not only of the poetical but of the political feeling of the time."

The signatures are various, Erthuryo, Ryalto, Walter (a name several times erased), S.D. 1796, etc. and at the end are four *Love Elegies* and a serious poem by Charles Lamb entitled *Living without God in the World*.

"How many of these were printed elsewhere, or in Cottle's 'Anthology,' I do not know.

"I would willingly copy more did not my hand fail me.

J. P. C."

Twenty years later, in New York one day, George D. Smith, the bookseller, asked the writer if he would care to buy an interesting volume of Southey MSS. and to my surprise put in my hand the identical little quarto, which Collier had many years before found so interesting that he had made excerpts from it. It might not have made such instant appeal to his recollection of his earlier purchase in London had it not been for an inserted note, almost identical with the one on the loose slip in his Lamb volume, obviously in Collier's "infirm" hand:

"A highly interesting though not a very curious MS. It is mainly in the handwriting of Southey, but, what is more to my taste, part of it is the autograph of Charles Lamb when he was quite a young man: for instance the first poem, and one of the very best, 'On a *Quid of Tobacco*,' is by Lamb, written in his neatest and earliest hand. What is entitled (page 158) 'The *Rhedycinian Barbers*' is also by Lamb. I find nothing by Coleridge, but he was also a contributor to 'The Annual Anthology.' I never have been able to procure a copy of that book. Payne Collier."

The signature, "Payne Collier", is evidently in the hand of the former owner, Mr. Cosens, who adds: "In 1798 or 1799 Charles Lamb contributed to the 'Annual Anthology' which a Mr. Cottle a bookseller of Bristol published jointly with Coleridge and Southey.

This manuscript is partly in the handwriting of Southey and was formerly the property of Cottle of Bristol."

Upon investigation the writer ascertained that the little volume of manuscript verse had passed from Mr. Cosens' possession into the library of Augustin Daly, at whose sale it had been catalogued as a Southey MS. with small reference to its Lamb interest. Although the price was high the temptation to buy it was too strong to be resisted.

So after many years the small quarto volume, and the notes which it suggested in the "infirm" hand of Collier, came together in the library of the writer. For him the little productions of Lamb are at least as valuable and interesting as the Southey contributions, although the number of these is very largely in excess of those by Lamb.

They have been buried for a century or more in the little quarto volume labeled "SOUTHEY MSS." a long time since the property of "a Mr. Cottle of Bristol."

To extract them and make them available in their present form has been the pleasant labor of

A. EDWARD NEWTON

"Oak Knoll"

Dalesford, Pa.

September, 1913.

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BOUND BY H. TICKER, CHICAGO

about  
285 words



LAMB MS. · DIRGE FOR HIM WHO SHALL DESERVE IT



