The Grim Reaper: Attitudes toward Death in Victorian England, 1837-1902

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THE GRIM REAPER:
ATTITUDES TOWARD DEATH IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND
1837 - 1902

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of the Department of History
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In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by
Sigrid Payne Milner
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APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Author

Approved, August 1972

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FOR MY FATHER

CARL M. MILNER

WHO HAS

ALWAYS

ENCOURAGED AND INSPIRED ME
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter I. The Ceremony of Death</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II. Death in Fiction</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III. The Reality of Death</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A. Funeral Costs</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B. The Order for the Burial of the Dead</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vita</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to study the English attitudes toward death in the Victorian period, to explain why it was necessary for the Victorians to develop these attitudes, and to form tentative conclusions about the effect which they had on the individual and the society.

These attitudes are apparent in contemporary documents—etiquette books, novels, and letters and diaries.

Each source contributes a different perspective on death. Books of manners and etiquette prescribe the ritual of death and mourning, describing what was the proper and accepted practice. Being a standard, such books present the ideal of behavior. Victorian novels also present an idealized picture. Although non-factual, novels deal with the way Victorian society saw death and mourning. Contemporary letters and diaries indicate that novels and etiquette books did present a realistic picture of society's attitudes, at least in some instances.

All three sources point to the way in which Victorian society coped with death and bereavement so that the high death rates did not demoralize it. It established specific and rigid expectations of external behavior and dress from the death to the end of the mourning period. This freed individuals from the guilt and anger components of grief and enabled them to integrate their loss. Instead of being morbidly obsessed with death, Victorian society developed a system which enabled its members to make the best possible adjustments to the obtaining mortality statistics.
THE GRIM REAPER:
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INTRODUCTION

Death has been a significant factor in every human culture. It has been a force impinging on all areas of life, including economics, religion, and society. Every culture has had to come to terms with death just as every individual must. The way in which a particular culture views death and the way in which it copes with the problems created reveal that society's attitudes towards life as well as towards death. Most of the customs surrounding death attempt to contain its impact. Thus some primitive tribes, affected by high infant mortality, do not consider babies to be people. They are not given names until after a certain age and the lesser emotional investment in them lessens the impact of their death. Other cultures minimize the significance of death by their belief that the dead are still present, although in a different form, and are watching and guiding the actions and fortunes of those they loved. These two instances exemplify the two conflicting ways in which societies need to accept death: they need to push the dead away (in order to resume the ongoing life of the group), but they also need the dead alive in some way, so that those left alive will not feel anxiety about their own future deaths. A formal mourning period of a defined length can accomplish
these two ends.¹

Victorian England, like all other cultures, developed a response to death that met the needs of its people. An absence of formal mourning was certainly not the case in Victorian England. The period has sometimes been characterized as morbid or obsessively concerned with death. The death rate was very high, of course, and it was highest for the young. Of every 1000 babies born in England and Wales in 1841, 132 would die before their first year and another 228 would be dead before fifteen. (For the sake of comparison, of 1000 live births in England and Wales in 1969, 18 children under one year died.) This meant that more than one in every three children died. The rate varied greatly according to class and location: contemporary sources stated that as late as 1881-83, only 450 of every 1000 offspring born to the poor would live to complete their fifth year. But 640 of 1000 middle-class children and 820 of the rich reached that age. A contemporary observer gave the deathrate

¹Modern psychologists believe that an absence of formal mourning may result in unlimited private mourning and complete inability of the survivors to resume a normal life. The following psychological studies were used in preparing this paper: Edgar N. Jackson, Understanding Grief (New York, 1957); Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (Standard ed.; New York, 1950), XIV, 237-258; Edoardo Weiss, Principles of Psychodynamics (New York, 1950); Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, On Death and Dying (London, 1970); Liston O. Mills, Perspectives on Death (Nashville and New York, 1969); Robert Fulton (ed.), Death and Identity (New York, 1965); Jacques Charon, Death and Western Thought (New York, 1963); and Robert Blauner, "Death and Social Structure," Psychiatry, XXIX (1966), 378-394.
of infants in London in 1889 as 38 percent in the East End and 11 percent in the wealthy parishes. According to a medical study, the mean annual death rate of English and Welsh children under one year from 1848-72 was 203 per 1000 for males and 162 for females. Of these deaths roughly 18 percent were due to infectious diseases, 1 percent to violence, 27 percent to developmental and wasting diseases, and 12 percent to premature birth. The statistics of contemporary censuses and a recent study of children born to peers reveal that 876 of each 1000 children born to the nobility between 1850 and 1874 lived to their fifteenth birthday, but only 674 per 1000 born to the general population in a comparable period did so. Male members of the nobility had about the same mortality rate in adult ages as the general population after 1841, but the rate for women and children of the nobility was much lower. The death rate of commoners' infants was about equal to that for peers' children 100 years before. Throughout the nineteenth century the nobles' mortality rate continued to decline, although the general infant mortality rate remained about the same. Therefore, of 1000 peers' scions born from 1875-99, 927 lived to be fifteen, while 730 of the general population did.

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3The peers' advantage was lost, however, in World War I when three times as many young officers were killed as ordinary soldiers. Only 582 of the same noble group reached the age of fifty, compared to 585 of the others.
The death rate for adults was also high, though not so high as the infant mortality. Between 1848 and 1872, 23.5 men died per 1000, including all ages; and for women the rate was 21.4 per 1000. For comparison, 11.9 per 1000 was the crude death rate for England in 1968, as given by the United Nations. The two statistics are not strictly comparable since no adjustment has been made for change in age distribution or other factors which might influence the death rate, but they will serve to indicate that deaths have fallen about 50 percent since the Victorian period. The expectation of life for a member of the general population born in 1846 was 41.6 years. Thirty years later it was 48.5 years. The peerage had been able to expect the same length of life in 1752 and 1793, respectively. A peer's son born in 1850 had a life expectancy of 54.7 years, but for those born in 1875, the figure had dropped to 53.8, because of World War I. Their sisters born in 1850 could expect to live 62.8 years, and 25 years later, 67 years. Life expectancies for the general population were 39.9 for men and 43.1 for women born 1840/1; 46.1 and 50.9 for those born 1875/6. The death rate for noblewomen improved considerably between the cohort born 1825-49, and that of 1850-74. For those from 15 to 40, the mortality fell 46 percent. It was during this time that the female advantage over the male became very marked, as can be seen from the figures above.4

4This drop in the death rate of women has been attributed to such medical improvements as the establishment of
The decrease in death rates for both children and adults where it occurred was due in large part to the decrease in deaths from infectious diseases. Of particular significance to those under age nine was the decline in deaths from smallpox because of vaccination. A substantial reduction in infant mortality was also brought about by a change in the scarlet fever bacillus, which made the disease less dangerous. Deaths from diarrhea, a primary killer of children, were reduced in the older ages, but not from ages 0-4. The chief reduction in deaths, however, came in the numbers of those dying of tuberculosis. The rising standard of living and improved diet cut the death rate from respiratory tuberculosis in half between 1851-60 and 1881-90. Because tuberculosis struck mainly women and children, it contributed greatly to their reduced mortality without having a significant influence on that of an adult male.


5 McKeown and Record, "Decline of Mortality," pp. 94-122.
These death rates, combined with the typically large Victorian family meant that each family, even those of peers, suffered loss through death. And the Victorian society as a whole had a need to deal with death in a fashion which would be psychologically economical, and would comfort and support the survivors through their bereavement until they could resume their normal lives. So the Victorians devised an elaborate ritual and etiquette as complicated as that of any primitive tribe, to reduce the impact of death both upon society and the individual. This ritual covered dying, the funeral, and the mourning period. It was described and commented on in etiquette books, novels, and diaries, which are the sources of the discussion of Victorian death which follows this introduction.

The Victorian way of death was different from that which came before, the eighteenth century, and that which came after, the twentieth, even as those societies were different from the Victorian. The death rate of the eighteenth century was somewhat higher than that of the nineteenth. The general mortality rate for the third quarter of that century was 25 per 1000 population. Five out of twelve infants born between 1774 and 1781 were dead before they were two, and seven out of ten before they were 26. But the death rate was not a great deal higher, since the peak of mortality was during the reign of Charles II, and it had been declining since then. It was not so high that they were unable to cope with it. The difference is to be
accounted for in the philosophy of the two periods rather than in statistics.

The eighteenth century in death as in life was more concerned with style and wit than with spirituality. The temper of the time was deistic; even those who still clung to the forms of religion, doubted its realities. Yet the men of the eighteenth century died well. They tended to die with a quip or heroic speech upon their lips rather than a blessing, and they sought for the applause of this world rather than the approbation of the next, but their courage did not fail. Madame de Pompadour restrained the priest as he rose to leave her deathbed, saying, "One moment, M. le Cure, and we will depart together." Not many Englishmen could make such remarks, but they strove for dignity and unsentimentality. Dr. John Jortin, Vicar of Kensington, said to a servant who was offering him food, "No, I have had enough of everything." Lord Chatham ordered a servant to read Homer's description of the burial of Hector and the mourning which followed. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu repeated over and over, "It has all been very interesting." Even Eugene Arum, sentenced to hang for murder, wrote a final letter which said in part,

To die is natural and necessary. Perfectly sensible of this, I fear no more to die than I did to be born. But the manner of it is something which should, in my opinion, be decent and manly.

Addison's adjuration in the Spectator was similar: "The end of a man's life is often compared to the winding up of a well-written play, where the principal Persons still act in
Character, whatever the Fate they undergo." These quotations demonstrate much dignity and courage but no strong religious conviction. The emphasis lies on being true to one's self, rather than to God, and worthy of the living rather than of heaven. Not every person of the eighteenth century died like this, but many did, thus differing from those who died in the nineteenth century. In fact, an eighteenth century woman who survived into the Victorian period, Lady Stanley of Alderley, condemned the Victorian way of death. Her niece had written concerning the death of Catherine Stanley: "All hope is gone ... the last ten hours we have all been in her room. ... The Soul seems winged for flight--she is lying in the most heavenly state. ..." Lady Stanley responded angrily:

I want to hear more of the dear child's bodily state and less of her mental or spiritual, because I consider the instances given of that as bordering on fever and it is incomprehensible to us all that she sh'd have been allowed to be so surrounded, and to talk so much, and above all the extreme excitement of constant Cathedral musick--keeping her hearing and feeling on the constant strain. I really think you have all lost your wits. ...

This altercation beautifully points up the differences in the attitudes of the two centuries.

The feelings of the eighteenth century were different

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from those of the nineteenth not only toward the deathbed scenes, but also toward the funeral and mourning period. The funerals of the eighteenth century were similar to those of the nineteenth, with elaborate trappings, hired mourners, and well-plumed hearse. Similar, too, were the restrictions of the mourning period, but the eighteenth was likely to satirize rather than idealize these trappings of death. Henry Fielding mocked the mourning of the widowed Mrs. Bridget Blifil in *The History of Tom Jones*:

> [she] conducted herself through the whole season . . . with the strictest regard for all the rules of custom and decency, suiting the alterations of her countenance to the several alterations of her habit; for, as this changed from weeds to black, from black to grey, from grey to white, so did her countenance change from dismal to sorrowful, from sorrowful to sad, from sad to serious, till the day came when she was allowed to return to her former serenity.8

Mrs. Blifil undoubtedly deserved this satire, but not even a Victorian like Charles Dickens, who described the coffin of Mrs. Joe Gargery with its six bearers, as a "blind insect with twelve human legs, shuffling and blundering along," would cast doubt on the sincerity of the absurd mourners.9 To the eighteenth century the emotion of grief seemed out of keeping with the age of reason; to the nineteenth the actions of the mourners and the funeral might seem ridiculous, but the emotions were never so.

The twentieth century has gone one step beyond both

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9 See below, p. 40.
the eighteenth and nineteenth. A modern Englishman thinks both the emotions and conventions are, if not absurd, at least silly and embarrassing. He has no rules of etiquette which tell him how to behave in any of the situations with which the Victorian was familiar—when someone else is dying, when he is bereaved, when in the presence of someone else bereaved, or when dying himself. In Geoffrey Gorer's study, Death, Grief and Mourning, he found that almost everyone was embarrassed to meet those recently bereaved, and tried to avoid them. "I don't know what to say, to mention it or not," was a typical comment. The bereaved felt that they had been abandoned both by the dying, and by their friends. They expressed anger and guilt toward the dead and became confused and bewildered because there were no clear guidelines as to how they should feel or act.¹⁰

To many people the discussion of death seems morbid, and the wisest behavior is to avoid either thinking or talking of it. This is a recent convention and a matter of taste. The twentieth century is the first which could take this attitude; all other periods of Western history have had to be much concerned with death because of its frequency. We cannot afford, however, to let our ethnocentered opinions on such a subject obscure scholarly analysis. We do not always comprehend or sympathize with Victorian attitudes to death. For example, the jest in The Pickwick Papers of Dickens's

character, Sam Weller, about the man who made himself into sausages, may seem a shocking lapse into sick humor. Or, the instance which Lady Stephenson gave to illustrate the "delightful" humor of her aunt, Lady Frederick Cavendish: "I recall the astonishment of the clerk in the shipping office when appealed to for an assurance that her return ticket to South Africa would 'do for my coffin.' These jokes may not seem funny today, but we must recognize that our opinions are greatly influenced by our inhibitions about death. At worst such opinions prevent study, and at best they have no actual relevance to an analysis of the part which death played in the Victorian culture.

Lady Longford remarks that in the nineteenth century "interest in death-bed scenes was quite normal. . . Today we are interested in sex and the marriage bed has supplanted the death bed in our literature." Elizabeth Longford, Queen Victoria: Born to Succeed (New York, 1965), p. 310. In this connection it is interesting that the murderer Sweeney Todd, who made his victims into meat pies, "has required expurgation for modern readers." Kathleen Tillotson, Novels of the Eighteen-Forties (Oxford, 1954), p. 67.

In the Victorian period, the etiquette which surrounded a death was extensive and complicated. There were three main phases: the death-bed, the funeral, and the mourning period. Etiquette books of the time carefully prescribed what should be done in each phase, with the aim of making the death a meaningful experience for everyone. When it was suspected that an illness was terminal, the family gathered to pay their respects. The spiritual aspect of death was particularly emphasized at this time, rather than the physical dissolution which had been more important in the seventeenth century. The dying relation either knew or was told that he was dying, and he turned his thoughts toward heaven. Children were brought to the bedside to receive last messages.

One of the assembled relatives sometimes played hymns softly on an organ or piano. For aristocrats who were dying in the city, the area about the house might be blocked off to carriages and horses. Relatives, friends, and spiritual advisers suspended all normal activities and concentrated their full attention on the dying person. Part of their purpose was to hear and cherish his last words, both as proof of his
affection for them and of his salvation. The lack of final words (because of a sudden death or loss of consciousness, for example) left the ceremony incomplete and survivors unsatisfied. They hovered at the bedside of an unconscious relative for hours, hoping for a return of consciousness. If this was impossible, the last words that had been spoken, even though some time before death, could be used symbolically. Words of farewell before an earthly journey were most suited to such reinterpretation as a spiritual leave-taking. Sometimes, those involved in dangerous events, such as young men touring Europe, or women about to be delivered of a child, tried to provide for their possible death by leaving letters of counsel and comfort, which were to be opened if they died. Such letters, or the last words, with descriptions of the last moments, were very important since they would form the core of private memorial services kept by relatives on the anniversary of the death for many years afterward, and sometimes for their entire lives.¹

If a Victorian died at home, as most frequently happened, a "passing bell" was rung to announce his departure

¹The facts about manners used in this chapter have been compiled from the following etiquette books which are representative of the large number published during the Victorian period. A complete list of etiquette books referred to for this paper is found in the bibliography. John Henry Skelton, My Book; or, The Anatomy of Conduct (London, 1837); The Handbook of Etiquette (London and New York, 1860); Thomas Low Nichols, How to Behave: A Manual of Manners and Morals (London, 1873); Manners and Tone of Good Society by a Member of the Aristocracy (London, [1879]); and Modern Etiquette in Public and Private (London and New York, [1887]).
to the parish. The knowledgeable could guess from the num-
ber and type of peals who had died. A double knell signified
a woman, a triple a man. The smaller bells rang for dying
women and children, and the largest bell for aged men. The
death of the incumbent, the bishop, or a member of the royal
family was marked by the especially beautiful tenor bell,
and deceased persons of local or national importance were
honored by complicated change-ringing on all the bells, muf-
bled for the occasion.\(^2\)

The passing bell was the culmination of the ceremony
of dying. It represented the height of the dying one's co-
operation with his bereaved family in order to make the
death a meaningful occasion. A Victorian deathbed had the
dramatic quality of a theatrical performance, but to the
participants it was the drama of higher reality, not of un-
reality. Ideally all non-spiritual concerns were put aside.
The everyday personalities used in the petty details of liv-
ing were put off and the inner personality was unashamedly
cought up in the grandeur of death. The dying one tried to
be courageous and hopeful, knowing that the scene would be
remembered and repeated by those he was leaving behind. The
mourners wept at the loss, but were comforted by the prayers
and devotions read in the sickroom, and their strong faith
often enabled them to rejoice at the deliverance of their

\(^2\)Thomas L. Papillon, "Bell," The Encyclopaedia
Brittanica, III (11th ed.; 1911-12), 687-692.
friend or relative from further bodily pain or from the
temptations of life. Bishop King, Lord Bishop of London,
for example, comforted a colleague on the death of his child
by writing, "One great consolation we may have in the death
of the young, that they are taken away from the evil and
trials of this life to the brighter and far happier life
above." ³

By law, at least forty-eight hours had to elapse
between death and burial, but usually more than two days was
needed for completion of the necessary arrangements. After
the death had occurred, the blinds were immediately drawn
and remained down until the day after the funeral. Crape⁴
was tied to the door knocker—white for children and un-
marr ied persons, black for married persons, widows or widowers,
and white and black for women dead in childbirth. The
undertaker was called, and the family chose a coffin and
furnishings and planned the funeral. It was usually the
undertaker who sent out invitations and tickets of admission
to the funeral. The invitation was on black-bordered paper
and read:

The favour of your company is requested on _______
next, the _____ of _____, to attend the funeral
of the late __________________. The mourners will
assemble at _______________ late residence,
_____________ at _____ o'clock, to proceed to _______.

³ Edward, Bishop King, Spiritual Letters of Edward

⁴ This spelling is the Anglicized version used during
the Victorian period.
It was permissible to add, "An early answer to ________, undertaker, will oblige ________," since he would need to determine the number of mourning coaches required. The answers also should be written on black-edged paper but with much narrower edges. Two of the undertaker's men, called "mutes," stood on each side of the door, bearing draped wands, and if the deceased had had a coat of arms, his escutcheon was displayed over the door. In some cases an announcement was inserted in the newspapers and if the deceased was a member of the royal family, all the arrangements were announced in the Gazette. At state funerals, at least, no one was admitted without the ticket of admission obtainable in Downing Street. The Times condemned the exclusiveness of Lord Charles Canning's funeral at Westminster Abbey which prevented a gray-haired soldier from seeing his old commander one last time because he had no ticket.

When necessary, the bodies of aristocrats were moved from place of death to the family estate for the funeral in a lengthy and expensive train journey. Once in the shire dominated by the deceased's family, the procession passed through streets lined with tenants and shopkeepers eager to pay their last respects. The body of the deceased was then either displayed at home or in the chapel surrounded with flowers which had been sent.

6 The Times (London), 20 June 1862.
The mourners assembled at the house on the day of the funeral wearing capes and hatbands of the proper color supplied by the undertaker. The family gave them matching kid gloves, either black or white or both, like the crape on the door depending on the marital status of the deceased. These "fittings" were also given to the minister. In addition, close relatives wore large scarves of crape, a hard stiff silk black fabric, and unrelated mourners wore soft black silk ones.

In the eighteenth century it had also been the custom to present the chief mourners with delicate gold mourning rings engraved with a melancholy motto. By the Regency period the rings had become massive gold hoops enamelled with the name of the deceased, but such mourning rings had become obsolete by the 1840's. Instead, the Victorian custom was to present memorial cards to mourners at the funeral and to send them to other friends and relatives. These cards gave the name, age, date of death, where interred, date of interment, and an appropriate verse of Scripture. Sometimes they also included the number of the grave for those who wanted to visit it.

8 See Appendix A, Funeral Costs.
If the family was wealthy and spared no expense, they sent a mourning coach for each guest to convey them to the house of the deceased. Otherwise the coaches all waited outside the house to begin the procession to the church. They were drawn by black horses wearing tall black plumes on their heads. The coffin was placed in the first coach, and bystanders were expected to remove their hats as it passed. In the 1840's, the coffin was covered with black cloth tacked on with brass nails; later a polished casket was used. Both were decorated with silver handles and plates. The procession was arranged first by nearness of relation to the deceased and then by rank.

The service in the church was alternately chanted by the choir and read by the minister. It consisted of Biblical words of hope and comfort: "I am the Resurrection and the Life;" "I know that my Redeemer liveth." A favorite choice was the 39th Psalm:

6 Behold, thou hast made my days as it were a span long; and mine age is even as nothing in respect of thee.

15 O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength; before I go hence, and be no more seen.

The minister read a lesson and the choir sang a chorale. Then the congregation of mourners resumed the same order as in the previous procession and the hearse led the way. The priest spoke the brief and somber graveside ser-

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11Ibid., p. 346.
12See Appendix B, The Order for the Burial of the Dead.
vice. It began with the familiar words, "We brought nothing into this world and it is certain that we take nothing away." It ended with earth being thrown on the coffin. Sometimes one of the female mourners threw flowers into the grave. Women were not required to go to the cemetery, for fear they might be overcome by grief, but working class women frequently did and some aristocratic women did so as well.

After the ceremony, the mourners returned to a luncheon at the deceased's home. This luncheon marked the beginning of the period of mourning for the bereaved family.

Complete mourning apparel had already been obtained for both the family and the household servants, but it was not required until the day of the funeral. Most undertakers were drapers, too, able to supply the clothes, and there were several "mourning warehouses" in London which catered exclusively to this need. Four such warehouses were located in Regent Street. Like other shops of the time, they provided spacious showrooms where the customer might relax on a sofa while garments were brought for approval. Every mourning garment, from caps to mantles, and lengths of silk, could be purchased here. (Special mourning underwear was not necessary; black ribbons were simply threaded through white underwear.) The staff at such a warehouse could instruct confused mourners in the apparel proper for their grief.

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Men had no need for an entirely new suit of clothes to express their grief since their everyday clothing was becoming increasingly somber. To that they added a band of crape around the tophat, varying in width from seven inches, worn by a husband for his wife, to two and a half, and a crape armband on the left arm. But mourning to a woman meant a complete and drastic change in her garments. She began with deepest black but was gradually able to vary her costume through shades and degrees of mourning complicated enough to confuse anyone but a professional.

The first type of mourning garment, worn by widows during deep or full mourning, was a plain black dress of lustreless paramatta (bombazine of wool and cotton or silk) entirely covered with crape and a close-fitting widow's cap. Queen Victoria modified this cap, "à la Marie Stuart," so that it formed what we call a widow's peak over the forehead. Long crape falls hung down the back. When going outdoors, a widow put over this cap a crape-trimmed bonnet with a crape veil, and used a parasol almost entirely covered with crape and without lace or fringe.\(^1\)

Toward the end of the period of full mourning, the widow "slighted her mourning" by reducing the amount of crape and using it chiefly in drapes and pleats. She could now wear very deep furs such as seal or astrachan, add a mourning fringe to her parasol, and wear ornaments of matt

or shiny jet. After two years, half mourning permitted her to wear fashionably styled black clothes, and towards the end of the year of half mourning, people sometimes wore quarter mourning of white, grey, violet, solid or striped. Gradually widows were permitted to wear appropriate jewelry: lockets containing curls of their dead husband's hair; uniquely Victorian hairwork bracelets, composed entirely of his hair braided, plaited, or wrought into his initials; or memorial brooches decorated with urns, willow trees, and weeping female figures. Black-edged handkerchiefs and black-edged writing paper and envelopes sealed with black wax were proper accessories.

A widow did not go into society at all for a year, except to attend church, although she might attend private family parties after about six months. No lady should dance during the two years of deep mourning. A widower mourned his wife for a similar length of time but was expected to attend social events in less than a year.

These rules of etiquette were the standard, but there were always exceptions in both directions. Some widows, especially older women, wore full mourning for the rest of their lives and never again went into society, but others

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18 Manners and Tone of Good Society, by a Member of the Aristocracy (London, [1879]), pp. 163-171.
remarried before the two years of deep mourning was up. In such circumstances, the bride wore a white dress with a black lace veil or a grey costume with white hat, without flowers or jewelry, and resumed full mourning the next day. Some widowers also mourned the death of their wives for their entire lifetime. But if one remarried before two years had passed, his second wife was expected to wear black or half-mourning for the rest of her husband's mourning.

The length of time during which mourning was worn, and social behavior restricted, varied according to the relationship of the deceased. Three years of mourning was the longest period required for a deceased husband, two years in complete widow's weeds and one year in lesser mourning. A young child mourned for his parent sixteen months, and an older child or a parent for his child, twelve to fifteen months. The mourning for grandparents was nine months; for a brother or sister, six to twelve months, depending on closeness in age and intimacy. A niece wore mourning for her aunt or uncle for three to six months, but without crape. For a relation as distant as a brother-in-law's sister, only one month of mourning was required. Mothers wore black without crape as complimentary mourning for the mother- or father-in-law of their married children. The length of time was even established during which a second wife should grieve for the death of the first wife's parents. In each case except

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that of widows, about half the total mourning time was to be full mourning with or without crape, and half in half mourning, which could be lightened, if one chose, to quarter mourning toward the end. Finally, when the complete mourning period had been observed, the women of the family could resume wearing fashionably styled and colored dresses and once again go to the balls and parties they had given up.

The mourning period was the end of a process, or a rite of passage, which began with the death and funeral of a close relative. In this process, a person who had been a wife, a husband, a child, stood at the bedside offering his strength of affection and faith to the one who was dying. In return the dying one gave courage and blessing to his bereaved family; he died with memorable words of prayer and belief upon his lips. The funeral was designed to offer the mourners all the comfort of their religion. They could find consolation for their grief by reminding themselves of the joy which the deceased had now attained. Next came the mourning period when external symbols of clothing and accessories were used to express the grief of the mourners. As these external symbols lightened, so presumably did the sharpness of their grief, although the memory of the deceased was still cherished. This is the picture of death and mourning which is drawn by Victorian etiquette books and religious manuals. It is, of course, an ideal picture; the question of how this ideal picture related to reality must be answered from other sources, such as contemporary novels, and diaries.
CHAPTER II
DEATH IN FICTION

The previous chapter demonstrated that Victorian etiquette books laid down rules of ideal behavior in the presence of death. Their authors believed that this rite of passage was important enough to occupy a section as large as that on marriage, for example. Authors of Victorian fiction also emphasized death and dying. In fact the Victorian novelists practically invented the deathbed scene. Before, such a convention had not existed, and since, it has faded and changed considerably. In Jane Austen's novels written in the early 1800's, for example, there are only two deaths. Both take place in Sense and Sensibility, occurring in the first few pages. Here the emphasis is on questions of inheritance and entails, rather than religion or emotions. The twentieth century, too, has lost interest in the fulsome Victorian death scene. In C. P. Snow's The Masters, the entire plot revolves around the dying of the Master of the College and its effect upon family, friends, and colleagues. There is no death scene: "As we were going into hall on December 4th, the

news was brought that the Master had just died."² No Victorian writer would have ignored the opportunity for a death scene. The reaction of the dons of the college to this news was "the healthy selfishness which one needs for self-protection in the face of death."³ Such a phrase as "healthy selfishness" would have been completely alien—even shocking—to a Victorian's understanding of the proper attitude in the face of death. The etiquette books clearly decreed an attitude of compassion, meditation, and selflessness, and many people expected to see this attitude portrayed at length in the novels they read. The surest indications of the Victorian novelist's familiarity with death and his ease in using it as an artistic device are the numerous minor characters who die in the course of a novel. Even more than the dramatic and lengthy death of a main character, the minor cousins and friends and distant connections who are always dying, sometimes in England, more often in the farflung colonies; set the Victorian novel apart from both its predecessors and its successors.

The analysis of fiction must inevitably raise the question: Can fiction be used as a historical source? All documents produced during a period are sources of that age, whether they are true or false. For example, the Donation of Constantine, although a forgery, is an important source of ecclesiastical history. Similarly, all literature, however

³Ibid., p. 113.
fantastical, is evidence of what was being written and read. But beyond this, how much can literature, specifically fiction, which is by definition "untrue," be used as evidence of the lives of the people, of their behavior and attitudes?

Victorian novels tend to encompass autobiographical details, and some authors, such as George Eliot, can be used by social historians almost without caution. Others seem more distant from reality, but where historical parallels exist, they are sometimes found to be factual. In this case, a question on Victorian attitudes to death, largely philosophical and intellectual, fiction is most useful and enlightening. Even if the scenes were not factual, they would reflect something of the author's philosophy. If, in addition, there are correspondences between reality and the novel, these correspondences will justify the use of novels in this study of Victorian attitudes to death.

There are many child deaths in Victorian novels that are handled in an extremely pathetic manner. The most famous of these are deathbed scenes of Charles Dickens' Little Nell and Paul Dombey. Little Nell in The Old Curiosity Shop died surrounded by her friends. "She never murmured or complained . . . she every day became more earnest and more grateful to them—and faded like the light upon a summer's evening."4 Her friends gathered, "knowing that the end was drawing on." At first they read and talked to her, but

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later she fell asleep and dreamed, often crying, "God bless you!" in her sleep. At last she awoke, and begged them to kiss her once more. Then she turned to her grandfather with a lovely smile upon her face—such, they said, as they had never seen, and never could forget—and clung with both her arms about his neck. They did not know that she was dead, at first.

A little child who had been Nell's friend begged to be allowed to see her. He said, they need not fear his being alarmed, for he had sat alone by his young brother all day long, when he was dead, and had felt glad to be so near him.

He was allowed to go in and "was in his childish way a lesson to them all." Her grandfather was overcome by sorrow. He was kept away from the funeral, although he heard the church bell as it "rang its remorseless toll for her, so young, so beautiful, so good." Finally he too died of grief and was found lying upon her grave.

They laid him by the side of her whom he had loved so well; and, in the church where they had often prayed, and mused, and lingered hand in hand, the child and the old man slept together.

Paul Dombey's death in Dombey and Son is also described at great length, but is portrayed from his point of view rather than those with him. In his sick delirium he was obsessed with the fast and flowing river, and believed it was carrying him away. He knew his father was greatly disturbed by his illness, and asked his attendants every morning to tell

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5 Ibid. 6 Ibid., p. 545.
7 Ibid., p. 546. 8 Ibid., p. 551.
papa that "I am a great deal better, thank you!".Whenever Paul saw his father he called, out, "Don't be so sorry for me, dear papa! Indeed I am quite happy!" He asked for his old nurse, and for his friend Waller; he said good-bye to everyone, and asked his father to remember that he was fond of Waller. Again the vision came of a golden river, which he was sailing on, and his dead mother was awaiting him on the shore. He clasped his sister in his arms and folded his hands in prayer. Then

the old, old fashion! The fashion that comes in with our first garments, and will last unchanged until our race has run its course, and the wide firmament is rolled up like a scroll. The old, old fashion—Death!

Dickens then commented,

Oh thank God, all who see it, for that older fashion yet, of Immortality! And look upon us, angels of young children, with regards not quite estranged, when the swift river bears us to the ocean!

The Old Curiosity Shop was published serially, and each installment was eagerly awaited by readers in England and America. When the part containing Little Nell’s death was brought by ship to Boston, four thousand Americans crowded the wharf asking, "Is she dead?" Lord Jeffrey wrote

10 Ibid., p. 215.
11 Ibid., p. 218.
12 May L. Becker, Foreward to Dickens, The Old Curiosity Shop, pp. v-vi.
to Dickens that he had "cried and sobbed" over the death of
Paul Dombey, and found nothing like it "since that divine
Nelly;" and Thackeray himself was deeply moved. The Sun
of April 13, 1848, stated, "We envy not the man who can read
for the first time the account of the death of little Paul
Dombey with a heart unmoved and an eye tearless." But others
were critical of such scenes. Henry Hallam described himself
as "so hardened as to be unable to look on [the death of
Paul] with any light but pure 'business.'" Fitzjames
Stephen said that Dickens "gloats . . . touches, tastes,
smells and handles as if [the death of Little Nell] were some
savory dainty." John Ruskin in 1880 accused him of killing
Little Nell as a butcher kills a lamb, for the market. This
comment suggests that there was a considerable Victorian mar­
ket for such scenes.

Dickens also wrote less extravagant and more humorous,
but no less touching, scenes, as in the opening of Great
Expectations. The orphaned and lonely Pip was accustomed to
play in the marshy graveyard, about the tombstones of his
father and mother. He connected the shape of the letters in

13Lord Cockburn, Life of Lord Jeffrey (2 vols.;
Philadelphia, 1852), II, 321.

14C. Brookfield and F. Brookfield, Mrs. Brookfield
and Her Circle (2 vols.; New York, 1905), I, 255.

15Fitzjames Stephen, "The Relation of Novels to Life,"
Cambridge Essays (3 vols.; London, 1855), I, 175, as quoted
in Tillotson, Novels of the Eighteen-Forties, p. 49.

16John Ruskin, "Fiction Fair and Foul," John Ruskin's
the inscriptions with the person described, and concluded that his father had been short and stout with curly hair, and that his mother, "Also Georgiana," was freckled and sickly. Beside the couple lay the smaller stones of Pip's five brothers; Pip believed they had been born, had lived, and had died with their hands in their trousers pockets because of the rectangular shape of the small stones. Dickens offered no explanatory remarks; the scene is written as young Pip would have told it. It is therefore unconsciously humorous, but it is also moving in a restrained way. When the convict discovered Pip and threateningly asked where his mother was, Pip answered, "Here, sir." Like the child in William Wordsworth's bathetic poem, "We are Seven," Pip was left to deal with death in his own way. He had probably been given a conventional explanation using the concepts of God and heaven to explain what had happened to his family, but his childish psychology had metamorphosed it into a more fantastic but more comprehensible understanding.

The death of Helen Burns in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* conforms to the stereotyped image of the Victorian deathbed scene which used religion and sentiment for maximum effect on the reader. The pertinent part of the book is set in Lowood School, a charity institution where orphaned and otherwise unwanted girls were educated. Jane, the heroine, was sent to Lowood by her cruel aunt, and there befriended Helen, who had been sent by her new stepmother who hated her. Jane learned to admire Helen, who was a strange girl; she had
developed her own theistic creed, and willingly endured the privation of the school and punishments unjustly visited upon her. Both their relatives may have subconsciously desired the girls' deaths.

Lowood was situated in a swampy and unhealthy area; food and clothing were meager; and discipline was harsh. An epidemic of typhus broke out which affected over half the girls. Helen, already weakened by a tubercular chest, fell victim to the disease and was segregated in the headmistress's room. Jane did not sicken, and even thrived under the relaxed discipline and increased food, until one day she learned from the nurse that Helen would "not be here long."17 She experienced horror, grief, and then a strong desire to see her friend. Late that night she crept to the room, dreading that she would see only a corpse, but Helen was alive and awake. When Jane saw her calm look, the fear of Helen's death was dissipated, but Helen told her that she was just in time to say good-bye. "Are you going somewhere, Helen? Are you going home?" "Yes; to my long home--my last home."18 Jane wept then. Helen was seized with a fit of coughing. Then Jane lay down in the bed, and she and Helen lay in each other's arms. Helen tried to comfort her by saying she was very happy and did not wish for grieving at her death.

We all must die one day, and the illness which is removing me is not painful; ... my mind is at rest.


18Ibid., p. 70.
I leave no one to regret me much. . . . By dying young, I shall escape great sufferings.19

Jane asked questions about where she was going and if they would meet again. Helen explained her beliefs about God and Heaven, and then at last they lay together, tired and quiet. "How comfortable I am!" said Helen. "I feel as if I could sleep; but don't leave me, Jane." They said good night, kissed, and fell asleep. The next morning the headmistress found them, "my face against Helen Burns's shoulder, my arms round her neck. I was asleep, and Helen was--dead."20 This death scene, which is so essentially "Victorian" in its sentimentality, is apparently semi-autobiographical—Bronte actually attended a school which served as model for Lowood, and experienced something like the death of Helen Burns.21

Another Bronte, Anne, wrote a novel that is the epitome of much in Victorian England, The Tenant of Wildfell Hall. The plot, like part of Jane Eyre, deals with the question: What is it proper to do when one is married to a monster? In the Tenant, the spouse in question was a husband, a monster of drunken depravity, but not insane; and unlike Rochester, Helen Huntingdon never forgot her duty. Because she feared for her son, who was being corrupted by his father, and after she had tried all manner of persuasion on her husband in vain, she ran away after five years of marriage, and

19 Ibid., p. 71.
20 Ibid., p. 72.
and went to live incognito near her brother. Misunderstandings about Helen's sexual morality which arose from her brother's visits were eventually cleared up and a neighboring farmer fell in love with Helen. But she had already repulsed one would-be suitor and although she loved this one in return, she could not be false to Mr. Huntingdon. At this point her husband injured himself by falling from his horse, and was confined to his room; his servants deserted him. Helen knew her duty; she returned to her husband to nurse him back to health. Contrary to the doctor's instructions, Huntingdon demanded strong drink, and upon discovering that his wife had watered the pale port, he threw it out the window, forced the butler to bring him the strongest wine in the cellar, and drank it all. He blamed his relapse on Helen, who "treated him like a baby or a fool."^22 But he was fearful of dying and refused to think of it. Although the physician had promised recovery, Helen pointed out that he should think of it now in case he should not recover, when it would be too late. At the next visit, the doctor saw that "mortification" had taken place due to the patient's overindulgence, and he no longer offered any hope. Huntingdon believed he was getting better, and although Helen tried not to depress him, she urged him to prepare for death. Despite his fear of death, he was not sorry for his wicked deeds themselves and only regretted their consequences to himself. Such an attitude

was unacceptable to Helen who demanded true repentance, that
is, sorrow for the deeds without regard to their consequences.
When she advised him to think of God, he responded, "What is
God?—I cannot see Him or hear Him—God is only an idea."23
Huntingdon acted very badly; he wept and shrieked, begged
Helen not to leave him, wished she would die in addition to
or instead of him. He clutched her with all his strength,
and at last he died pitiably. Helen was able to find hope in
"purging fires"24 which would purify his soul. This death
scene of a sinner has the "truth of tract," according to Anne
Bronte's friend, Mrs. Humphry Ward; "there can be little
doubt that many of the pages are close transcripts from
Branwell's [Bronte's] conduct and language."25 The author
herself stated that she did not suppose Huntingdon was a
common type in society: "the case is an extreme one . . .
but I know that such characters do exist."26 The death of a
rake is the kind of event which history itself might not de-
scribe; novels like the Tenant usefully portray Victorians
who did not die well, who did not follow the advice of the
etiquette books, therefore serving as a contrast to the more
typical Victorians who did.

In the stern books of Thomas Hardy, there are also
scenes like the one in Dickens' Great Expectations, which on
the one hand do not conform to the stereotype of Victorian
morbidity, but are not modern either. In Tess of the

\[23\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 457.}\]
\[24\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 459.}\]
\[25\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. xv.}\]
\[26\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. xxiii.}\]
D'Urbervilles, the death of Tess's illegitimate baby was expected, but because it had not been baptized, Tess feared its eternal damnation. Her drunken and brutal father would not permit her to send for the parson, and as the baby grew worse, Tess became more frantic. She envisioned all the details of torment after death which she had learned; she saw the baby in the lowest pit of Hell, for its double sin of being illegitimate and unbaptized, tossed on a three-pronged pitchfork. She cried incoherent prayers to God until at last the mad solution came to her, that she should baptize the baby herself, with her little brothers and sisters as a congregation. "Ah, perhaps baby can be saved! Perhaps it will be just the same." Using water from the washstand, she went through the entire baptismal service, instructing her siblings when to say amen, and named the child "Sorrow." She concluded the ceremony with the usual exhortation to the baby to fight manfully against sin, the world, and the devil, and to be a faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end. Hardy used these words to present the eventual death of the baby in slightly ironic terms.

Poor Sorrow's campaign against sin, the world, and the devil was doomed to be of limited brilliancy—luckily perhaps for himself, considering his beginnings. In the blue of the morning that fragile soldier and servant breathed his last...

After this, Tess was calmer, but she wondered about the efficacy of such a baptism.


28 Ibid., p. 120.
Finally Tess asked the Vicar whether the result would be the same for little Sorrow as if he had been bap-
tized properly. Not wishing to hurt her, the Vicar agreed, but his conscience would not permit him to bury the baby.

So the baby was carried in a small deal box, under an ancient woman's shawl . . . and buried by lantern-light, at the cost of a shilling and a pint of beer to the sexton, in that shabby corner of God's allotment . . . where all unbaptized infants, notorious drunkards, suicides, and others of the conjecturally damned were laid.29

Tess made a small cross for the head of the grave and put flowers in a marmalade jar at the foot. The restraint of this scene and Tess's acceptance of the child's death, empha-
size her strong belief in the baptism. The death of child-
ren was such a common thing that in novels it generally had little impact by itself, unless given a long buildup of sentimentality, or tangled, as in Tess, with questions of convention and religion. The important part of this little death scene and pitiable funeral is not the tragedy of a baby's death but the effect of it upon the girl-mother's life and mind. The pity of Hardy's Victorian readers was directed chiefly at Tess rather than toward the child. There was even a feeling that dying in infancy prevented the trials and miseries of adult life:

I laid him down,
   For some voice told me that, in after years,
   He should know naught of passion, grief, or fears,

29Ibid., p. 122.
A scene from Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* stirs the reader with its description of the deaths of children. It is not so much the deaths, however, as the despair and confusion which caused them, that impresses the reader. Hardy used the deaths to comment upon society, as he had in the scene from *Tess*. Sue and Jude had come again to Christminster, with "Little Jude," the child of Jude's first marriage, and their own two children whom Hardy gave no names. They found it nearly impossible to get rooms, since no one would lodge a couple with children; but at last they got a place for one night, for Sue and the children at least. Because of Little Jude's strange maturity and Sue's distress, she agreed that children were frequently a disadvantage and sometimes it seemed better to be out of the world than in it. Then she told him she was expecting another child, and he became angry with her for "sending for another." He could not understand how she could do such a thing when they were already in trouble. Sue's sexual inhibitions made her unable to explain fully the compulsions which might result in an unwanted child. Finally he went to bed and she heard him say, "If we children was gone, there'd be no trouble at all." She peremptorily ordered him to go to sleep. All was quiet until late the next morning when she went to the children's room to awaken them for breakfast. She found the three hanging by cord from hooks on the back of the door, and fainted with a cry. Jude hastened to her aid, finding the door strangely heavy to move, and saw the "triplet of little corpses." The boy had left a
note saying, "Done because we are too menny." Sue and Jude were overcome by the horror of the scene for some time; and that is also the predominant feeling of the readers. But the scene has never been condemned, as was Dickens's death of Little Nell, for ghoulishness and commercialism. It was one in an accumulating burden of hardships, designed by a cruel Nature which ended by destroying both Sue and Jude. The real horror was not the deaths, so much as the despair which had caused them. The scene, however brutal, is artistically consistent with both Hardy's overall philosophy and the design of this particular book.

If death scenes were a favorite of Victorian novelists, funerals were not so popular. Dickens described several, including the funeral of Pip's sister in Great Expectations, but his tone is sardonic. "Trabb and Co.," the village dry goods shop, was furnishing the funeral.

Two dismally absurd persons, each ostentatiously exhibiting a crutch done up in a black bandage—as if that instrument could possibly communicate any comfort to anyone . . .

stood beside the door. Inside the house, Mr. Trabb himself "had just finished putting somebody's hat into black longclothes, like an African baby. . . ." The chief mourner, the deceased's husband, Joe, wore a black cloak with a large bow, and the other mourners wore black. Refreshments had


been prepared in the parlor for after the funeral: plum cake, oranges, sandwiches, and biscuits and two decanters, of port and sherry. Mr. Trabb dressed all the mourners and formed them into twos to follow the bier. Joe would have preferred to carry his wife to the church himself with three or four friends, but had been persuaded that it would be wanting in respect. Trabb ordered all pocket handkerchiefs out and the procession wound through the village. The coffin was carried by six bearers, covered by a black velvet housing with white border, so that it looked like a "blind monster with twelve human legs" being guided by two other men who were not blinded by the pall. In the churchyard, the service was read, reminding man how he brought "nothing into the world and can take nothing out and that life fleeth like a shadow and never continueth long in one stay." The mourners returned to the house, finished the buffet, some of which had been consumed before the funeral, and then went home. Although Dickens is known for his grotesque characters, this funeral which he described seems to follow closely those recommended in the etiquette books discussed in the preceding chapter. It is informative that the blacksmith desired a simple funeral for his wife, and that she received one so imitative of those of the upper classes. This lends force to the remarks of the Quarterly Review and the Supplementary

33 Ibid., p. 216.

Report . . . into the Practice of Interment . . . that the poor were imitating the expensive funerals of their betters, to their financial and moral detriment.

Another village cortege is described in Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*. A woman and her illegitimate baby died in the Casterbridge Unionhouse, and were given a pauper's burial. A wagon containing boughs and flowers received the plain elm coffin. "Fanny Robin and Child" was scrawled in chalk on the lid, and one of the workers covered the whole with a threadbare black cloth and the boughs and flowers. They were buried in the reprobates' part of the churchyard with the parish paying the half crown grave fee, but without a bell which would have cost another shilling.

William Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* is filled with deaths, but like the famous description of George Osborne's death at Waterloo, Thackeray treats them satirically, rather than pathetically. However, he is sympathetic to the extreme grief which Amelia, Osborne's widow, showed. She was distracted and almost out of her mind with grief and


37"No more firing was heard at Brussels--the pursuit rolled miles away. Darkness came down on the field and city; and Amelia was praying for George, who was lying on his face, dead, with a bullet through his heart." William Thackeray, *Vanity Fair* (New York, 1950), p. 334.
shock, so much that she was unaware of what happened or who passed. She was prostrate for many months and her doctors feared for her life or her brain until she had borne her son. The birth of this child was George returned to her, and she doted upon him completely as a compensation for her loss. Still she wore widow's weeds and transformed her room into a sort of shrine with George's picture at its heart. Believing that her husband had given her a piano which came as an anonymous gift, she had spoken to it about George after his death, played his favorite airs on it and wept. Many years later when a friend of George's proposed, she angrily answered, "George is my husband, here and in heaven. How could I love any other but him?"

These excerpts from Victorian fiction serve as useful additions to the descriptions of etiquette books. Like the etiquette books, fiction portrays a nonreal or at least nonfactual view of deaths and funerals. But where the former lays down ideal behavior, the latter sometimes portrays less than ideal acts. These may be based on autobiographical incidents or be totally imaginary. When compared with other sources, they are a valuable counterpoise; for example, they sometimes show working or lower class funerals and deathbed scenes seldom mentioned elsewhere. The final comparison and check must of course be made with what we know of facts—how people actually died and how a funeral was really carried out in Victorian England.

38Ibid., p. 626.
CHAPTER III
THE REALITY OF DEATH

Death was always a familiar presence for the Victorian. Nearly everyone had close brushes with death in the form of sickness and accidents. Diphtheria, typhus, cholera, and the like, remained constant threats well into the twentieth century. Medical science was still primitive in many ways, and sometimes the treatment was more dangerous than the disease. Even a chill might turn into pneumonia.

Fatal accidents were a commonplace, particularly for the leisured classes when occupied at their favored activities of shooting and riding. Shooting accidents in which one huntsman mistakenly shot either another hunter or a bystander were so common that few shooting seasons were without accident. Incidents connected with horses were also more frequent than it is easy to believe today. For example, the Bishop of Winchester was killed instantly when his horse stumbled on a grassy slope. Lady Frederick Cavendish said that she had "been off [a horse] in every possible way: having been kicked off, come off at a jump, come down with, and knocked over," although she was not seriously injured in any of

1John Bailey (ed.), The Diary of Lady Frederick Cavendish (2 vols.; New York, 1927), II, 192; hereafter cited as Cavendish.
of these accidents. However, Kate Russell, later the mother of Bertrand Russell, suffered unconsciousness and loss of memory (probably a concussion) when her pony bolted and pulled her cart up against a log, flinging her out on the ground.²

Another common cause of death was pregnancy and childbirth, events eagerly awaited and welcomed, yet endangering life among Victorian women. Many poor women died from the experience. But Lucy Cavendish saw a rise in deaths from this cause among aristocratic women, which she attributed to drinking wine.³ When her mother went to London for her eleventh confinement, Lucy wrote in her diary, "God bring her safe through it!" And later after a safe delivery she records her feelings: "Thank God, oh! thank God! ... No. 11, a seventh son ... little and thin, but prosperous, as is his Mamma, thank God!" But two years later her mother died, from complications following her twelfth confinement. Mrs. William Harcourt died in her second confinement leaving one child; Lady Fortescue died, leaving thirteen; the Duchess of St. Albans died a fortnight after her third confinement at the age of 22, leaving three children; and Lady Anne Butler, 30 years old, died in her second confinement. Women, on nearing the time of their delivery, knew they might die. Lady Amberley left a note in her diary before the

²Her observation does not appear to be born out by such studies as T. H. Hollingsworth, The Demography of the Peerage (London, 1964).
³Cavendish, I, 28.
birth of her first child:

There is nothing about the baby I could wish to say to him [Lord Amberley] if I died. . . . If I should die I should like him to have it much with him & make a great companion of it & then call it Kätzchen. 4

Many babies also died during delivery, and of those who survived, many more died in early childhood. Partly this was due to the same dangers of disease and medical treatment from which adults suffered. In addition upper class infants endured sometimes careless and sometimes criminal treatment from their nurses. Frank Russell's first nurse came with high recommendations, but she said that she hated him. She stuffed the sponge and her fingers into his mouth, let him lie screaming on the floor, put wet diapers on him, and refused to let the wetnurse feed him. When the wetnurse and others informed his parents of this treatment, the nurse was dismissed; except for these loyal servants it might have been some time before her cruelty was discovered. Apparently the nurse also gave him gin, because Mrs. Jane Welsh Thomas Carlyle comforted Lady Amberley by citing her own example:

My own Nurse used to put me into dead sleep with whiskey, when she had assignations outside! And my Mother was always of opinion that my sleeplessness in after life was owing to having been drunk so often as a Baby!! 5


5Ibid., I, 427.
Other nurses tied their charges into chairs. As a result some were burned to death. Babies were also given opium and other drugs to calm them and make them sleep. No wonder the death rate was so high for those under five.

Because Victorians saw death often, and thought of the possibility of their own death and of others', they came to conclusions about what death was and how it should be faced, how one should die. The evidence of etiquette books shows that Victorian society had thought about death in a general way to the extent of formulating rules of procedure. Entries in journals and comments in letters demonstrate that individuals had thought about death in a more personal fashion and experienced it in some way. Perhaps they were therefore enabled to form philosophical attitudes which they could use in more direct confrontations with death, and the rules of behavior reflected the society's philosophy.

The classic Victorian deathbed scene, as portrayed in novels, was often astoundingly close to actual deaths. The same pathos, and the same confidence of salvation were to be found in both cases. Many dying Victorians seem to have followed the suggestions given by etiquette books about gathering their family around and blessing them all. Lady Lyttelton's death, for example, was particularly peaceful. She had a strong and real religious faith; and she had been sick for the previous six months since the birth of her last child. As she became weaker, and gradually became aware that she was going to die, she could prepare herself to die
gracefully. She began to speak of her death to her older children; her daughter wrote that the "soul-light on her face makes her wonderful to look at." Her twelve children, ranging in age from six months to 18 years, were brought to her. She kissed each one and said good-bye, giving a special word of remembrance to each. She took holy communion with those who were old enough to have been confirmed, and "then she lay still, waiting." She awaited death without fear. "Her precious eyes were very blue and clear, shining strangely, and looking on, away, beyond us, except when she turned them on us with a depth of wistful tenderness." Such a deathbed was a source of comfort to the bereaved family—it removed some of the guilt and anger which psychologists consider basic in grief feelings toward the deceased, helped them believe she had gone to a better world, and set them a shining example of courage and devotion.6

Some years later May Lyttelton, a daughter of Lady Lyttelton, died. She was in her twenties. She was nursed devotedly for many weeks by her aunt, Mrs. William Gladstone, until Palm Sunday when at last it was evident that she was going to die. Her brothers and sisters, their spouses, and the childhood nurse for whom May had called, gathered in the house. Her aunt stroked her hair, while the nurse held her hand. Some of her relative knelt around her bed, and a brother-in-law, who was a bishop, prayed. Everyone gave what

6Cavendish, I, 57.
comfort he could; her sister Lucy repeated Keble's Evening Hymn, her brother Alfred softly played solemn music. Her aunt said, "It's all right, darling; God is taking such care of you." Imperceptibly her breathing died away as her uncle, also a clergyman, read the last prayer. The gathered relatives were a comfort to May, and were able to comfort each other after she died. They saw a spiritual loveliness in her calm face which inspired them. Nevertheless the death of a grown child is the most traumatic of all deaths, and may have contributed to the death of her father about ten months later.

Lord Lyttelton had been subject to fits of depression for many years, but as he became older he was less able to recover his equilibrium. Toward the end of such a bout of melancholy, he sent condolences to Archdeacon Horn, whose daughter had just died; this may have reawakened his own grief at May's death. The next morning he evaded his attendant and either fell or threw himself over the banisters and down the stairs. He did not die until after midnight, but his family was not all able to reach his bedside in time. This death was difficult to accept. It had not been peaceful and inspiring as had his wife's and daughter's; his family had not been present and had received no last farewells, and the manner of his death, a possible suicide, was abhorrent to religious orthodoxy. In their mourning, the family turned to memories of him for comfort. Rather than accept the verdict suicide, they called it an act of God, a "messenger of release.

7Ibid., II, 189.
(God seeing that His true and loving servant could no longer bear the anguish).\textsuperscript{8} By means of this psychological rejection of part of his death, one of his daughters, Lady Frederick Cavendish, was better able to accept the rest of it. Her experience with the previous deaths had taught her how to bear loss.

When Lord Stanley of Alderley died, however, it was the first such bereavement that his daughter Kate had experienced. She came from London by train and joined the rest of the family who were gathered there. Lord Stanley asked her if she would like to have an unbroken horse named Orlando, and she said she would. He was conscious, although he did not understand all that was said and slept a great deal. Once he said to his wife, "I love you all so dearly, you have all been so kind to me." All nine of his children were kneeling around his couch when he gave two great gasps and died. "It was much less awful than I had anticipated," wrote Kate.\textsuperscript{9} He lay on his couch like a marble statue until the coffin was ready. It was of massive polished oak with brass handles. Then it was placed in the middle of the drawing room with the curtains shut and wax candles surrounding it, to give light. The people of the village and of Lord Stanley's estates were allowed to come in and view the open coffin. All his children and his four sons-in-law were gathered for the funeral, which took place a week after Lord

\textsuperscript{8}Ibid., II, 195.

\textsuperscript{9}Amberley, II, 269-270.
Stanley died.10

The death which had the greatest impact in the nineteenth century was that of Prince Albert. The doctors had decided to tell neither Albert nor the Queen that he had typhoid, since he had fatalistically decided that he would die if he contracted this disease. Thus, for much of his illness he wandered deliriously about in Windsor, talking and playing with the children. When he finally stayed in bed, his attending physicians wheeled the bed from room to room to allay his restlessness. He began to babble in German and French. Princess Alice played his favorite hymn. The Prince of Wales was summoned from Cambridge by telegram, but the message was so cautiously worded, that the Prince did not expect anything serious and was stunned by the sight of his wasted and delirious father. Each of his children except the baby came in and kissed his hand, but he paid no attention to them. The Queen knelt beside him, asking for "ein Kuss." He moved his lips. She took his left hand, while Princess Alice, Princess Helena, the doctors, and his secretary, knelt around his bed. The gentlemen of the Household stood in the hallway. Albert drew two or three deep breaths and then was dead. Victoria stood, kissing his forehead and calling to him until she was drawn away. The bell of St. Paul’s Cathedral was rung repeatedly, to inform the nation of its loss.11

10 Ibid., II, 271.
In this deathbed scene, unlike the others, no message of comfort was given to the mourners. Albert said "Good Child" to Princess Alice, and this was accounted a great solace to her, but he was too ill and feverish to say anything to the others. When this happened, that someone died without the customary final blessing, it left the survivors with a feeling of incompleteness. In another example, the Duchess of Argyll attended a dinner party at the home of Lord and Lady Frederick Cavendish. The Duchess was recovering from a stroke; during dinner she had another stroke, and became unable to speak. Shortly she lapsed into unconsciousness and never spoke again, dying about 3:30 a.m. All of her children had been summoned and, except five who were not in London and did not arrive in time, they came. "A terrible sorrow it was to the poor Duke not to have one look, one word, of farewell." The farewell, including affectionate words of comfort and blessing, was a crucial part of the Victorian deathbed scene, and it may have had a significant role in carrying the survivors through the funeral and the mourning period which were still to come.

The same diaries which contain long narrations of deathbeds, usually omit the funerals. A fairly standardized funeral service was unable to provide as much comfort as a highly individual death scene. Of the deaths described above which were recorded in diaries, only the account of Lord Stanley's goes on to include the funeral. It took place at

\[12\] Cavendish, II, 219-220.
noon, one week after his death. The widow drove to the church. The rest of the family formed in procession at the house: first the two unmarried children; then the three sons; followed by the four married daughters, in order of their ages, with their husbands. Three sets of bearers carried the heavy coffin, and the tenants of the estate walked behind. The choir sang a psalm and the hymn, "Thy Will Be Done." After the service the mourners went down into the vault and placed handmade wreaths of oak leaves and water lilies on the casket. Then they separated and went home. Lord and Lady Amberley visited the graveyard where a stillborn child of theirs was buried, and laid a wreath there. Then they, too, walked home.  

The funeral of Lord Frederick Cavendish was much more elaborate. He had been assassinated on the day after his arrival in Ireland as chief secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant, and died immediately; there had been no farewell scene. Two days later he was brought back to Chatsworth, the family home of the Cavendishes, where he lay in state. His widow and her family spent the afternoon laying the many flowers and wreaths around the coffin. Lady Frederick laid a locket with her hair in it upon his breast. On the next morning the funeral took place. The House of Commons adjourned for four days, and 300 M. P.'s made the long trip to Chatsworth and followed his coffin to the grave. The bereaved widow and her sister-in-law Lady Louisa drove

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13 *Amberley, II, 271-272.*
together to the graveside. Cavendish’s father, the Duke of Devonshire, and his two remaining sons, with a great multitude of 30,000 mourners, walked. Edward Talbot, Lady Frederick’s brother-in-law and later Bishop of Winchester, read the service, concluding, “Give peace in our time, o Lord;” the mourners hoped that the death of Lord Frederick would not be in vain, but would bring peace to Ireland. As a last act of affection, Lady Frederick dropped a wreath of roses into the grave.\(^14\)

Prince Albert’s funeral was much more elaborate, even though the Queen decided to have as small and private a funeral as possible under the circumstances. He died on December 14, 1861. Funeral bells tolled all the next day, not only in St. Paul’s in London but also in all the major cities of England. His funeral was delayed for nine days to permit the arrival of representatives of foreign courts, but during this time the body was not lying in state. During this time four coffins were prepared: the inner one of polished mahogany; then a lead casing with a silver plate giving the style and titles of the Prince; another plain mahogany coffin with a silver plate engraved with the name and dates of birth and death; and finally the State coffin of crimson velvet on which was another silver gilt plate repeating the Prince’s titles. At twelve noon on the day of the funeral the procession formed of the mourning coaches, hearse, and military escort. The horses had black housings and feathers; the regimental colors

\(^{14}\)Cavendish, II, 323-324.
of the honor guards were shrouded in crape; and the officers wore scarves, swordknots, and rosettes of crape. As the procession wound its way from the Henry VIII gate to St. George's chapel, the bells tolled each minute. When the procession reached the chapel, the supporters of the pall moved the coffin on to the bier.

The funeral service in the church began: "I am the resurrection and the life... I know that my redeemer liveth... We brought nothing into this world... "

The attendants; completely covered by the crimson pall, moved the bier slowly up the center of the church, following a white guideline laid down the center of the aisle, until the bier rested on the platform at the entrance to the Royal Vault. The chief mourners, Prince Albert's sons, stood around the coffin, while others placed the deceased's baton, sword, and hat at the foot of it and the crown at the head. Then the mechanism slowly lowered the coffin until it disappeared from sight into the vault. As earth fell upon the coffin, even those few mourners not before affected now wept. The powerfully dramatic spectacle of such a funeral put an end to the initial stages of grief, particularly denial of the death of the deceased. Despite the hopeful words of the service, the surroundings and movements of the funeral brought home the finality of death and of the separation of loved ones. They were designed to evoke tears and pave the way for the much longer mourning process which followed the funeral.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{15}The Times (London), 24 December 1861.
Not unnaturally, diaries seldom commented on mourning garments as such, although Lucy Cavendish does note in hers that within a year of her marriage she had worn mourning four times. Rather, mourning behavior was recounted, providing interesting and valuable information about the Victorian way of coping with loss after the funeral.

Queen Victoria's mourning for her husband was typical of the attitudes of some Victorians. She simply never forgot him or stopped grieving for him. She wore widow's weeds for the rest of her life, and for some time, in a move severely criticized by contemporary newspapers, she refused to take part in certain social events. She delegated her authority in many ceremonies to either the Prince or Princess of Wales. The rest of the royal family also wore mourning for longer than prescribed. The wedding of Princess Alice six months after Albert's death was entirely in black and her trousseau was also black. Each night the Queen had the Prince Consort's clothes laid out with hot water and a clean towel. It is hard to know how much of this behavior was spontaneous mourning on the part of the Queen, and how much was due to the customs of the time. Lady Frederick Cavendish also mourned her husband, and wore black for the forty-three years remaining in her own life. Other nineteenth century people preserved death-chambers, especially royal ones. Czar Nicholas' bedroom remained exactly as when he had died in it, with his shaving equipment ready for use. Lord Brougham kept his dead daughter's

16 Longford, Queen Victoria, p. 310.
room untouched all his life. Even Edward VII preserved the last tube of toothpaste used by his son.\textsuperscript{17} Similarly, the Duke of Devonshire never forgot his wife after her early death. He remained a widower for the remaining fifty years of his life. He could never bear to have his birthday mentioned, because she had died on that day, and he always spent it secluded with his memories. He remembered other days connected with her, too, such as the day they first met.\textsuperscript{18}

There were other Victorians, though, who followed a more normal course of mourning and recovery. Lord Lyttelton, for example, with his family grieved for the death of Lady Lyttelton for a long time. The nursemaid taught Alfred, the youngest son, to kiss his mother's picture and call her name at the age of eighteen months. Her daughter Lucy wrote a "memorial" of her mother for the children too young to remember her and read it to them on the anniversary of the death. Lucy herself read it and wept over it for at least ten years and probably longer. Gradually in this way the memory of Lady Lyttelton was limited to certain times and places. Major family events, as well as the death date, evoked thoughts of her. She was remembered at the coming-of-age speeches for her eldest son; the first important ball to which her daughters went; at engagements and weddings; and at the birth of babies. Lucy noticed that her father whistled for the first time, five years after his loss. In another year the room in

\textsuperscript{17}Ibid., p. 311.

\textsuperscript{18}Cavendish, I, 235-236.
which the Baroness died was used again. Twelve years later
the widower remarried. The best evidence of the completeness
and healthiness with which the mourning work had been done is
the affection with which this second wife and stepmother was
welcomed by the entire family.¹⁹

Victorian etiquette books prescribed closely the
proper behavior in deathbeds and at funerals. In many in-
stances the prescriptions were closely followed and eased the
difficult situation of bereavement. As for mourning, the
etiquette books could only legislate on such matters as the
amount of crape on a dress or the width of black border on
mourning letter-paper. They did not intrude into matters of
feeling. But because these external things could be taken
for granted, the mourner was better able to come to terms with
his grief. The organization of a Victorian death to the last
day of quarter mourning, was designed to enable the survivors
to bend under the weight of their losses, and because they
had bent, not to break. The culture could not afford to
desert those who had been bereaved; in the nineteenth century
everyone was bereaved. The conventions surrounding death
were psychologically adapted to help them cope with this
loss and return to a normal and productive life. The evidence
of contemporary etiquette books, novels, and diaries testi-
ifies to the success of these conventions.

¹⁹ Ibid., II, 71.
CONCLUSION

The frequency with which deaths occurred in the Victorian period meant that the idea of death held an important place in the psychology of the time, and was influenced by its important trends. Social climbing and attempts to imitate the nobility undoubtedly influenced the Victorians' mourning habits. The middle class and even the working class, concerned with both respectability and status, quickly copied the upper classes in their mourning dress and behavior. Even the foster mother of a charity boy said that she paid money to a burial club for him. She therefore could not send him to school, but she concluded that it was "comfortable to be sure to be well buried."¹ The Romantics, with their taste for ruins, graveyards, memento mori, willow trees, and weeping widows were another factor. They were partly responsible for the increasing sentimentality, as common in the nineteenth century as it had been uncommon in the eighteenth. This sentimentality wept copiously over the deaths of young children. That is not to say that their feelings were insincere, but that they were felt and expressed in accord with the temper of their time. The Evangelicals also played a role, by emphasizing emotion more than

reason. Their hymns and sermons described emotional conversions, and demanded an emotional response rather than a strictly logical one. Right feeling, and a good heart became significant in this religion; earlier some had opposed the cold deism of the eighteenth century, but only in the Victorian period was this opposition widely successful. The combination of romanticism and evangelicalism was potent enough to set much of the period's tone, and to influence the manner in which Victorians dealt with death.

To deal with death was obviously a necessity. A society in which 23 per thousand died, and the child mortality rate was one in three before the age of 15, had a compelling reason for developing a method of coping with such loss. The impact of every death was increased by the large families, which meant that in a family of twelve children, four could be expected to die. A death had a wide ripple effect within the network of relationships which composed Victorian society. A loss in modern England is contained chiefly within the limits of the small nuclear family, typically husband, wife, and two children. The force of a bereavement in Victorian times was felt by a much larger nuclear family as well as level upon level of relations, both by blood and by marriage. The number of people whose lives were touched by a single death must have been huge, if we accept the etiquette of mourning for fourth and fifth cousins, first wives' parents, and sisters-in-law's brothers. Psychiatrists say that the greatest psychological cost of death in terms of grief and
disruption, occurs when the one who dies is neither old nor young, aged somewhere between 30 and 60. For Victorians, especially, the grief was greatest then for two reasons: death was least expected (unlike, for example, the deaths of children); and many relatives depended on such a person—parents, children, brothers and sisters, and spouses—economically as well as emotionally. Such a person, whether man or woman, was also likely to have the greatest number of contacts outside the family, to be active in business or public life, and involved in charitable organizations. This was precisely the age span in which Victorians were most likely to die: today it is chiefly the old who die, retired and living in hospitals or other institutions, where they are less and less part of life.\(^2\) Even those Victorians who died at advanced ages (Carlyle, for example) did so at home or at work, actively participating in the world. Thus not only the numbers who died, but also the age at which they died, made death an acute psychological problem. In order to prevent the emotional crippling of survivors by anger and guilt (which are the major components of modern grief\(^3\)), Victorian society devised a system which would impose specific, rigid and somewhat uncomfortable restrictions during mourning. The mourner


had already attended the deathbed and received a blessing, and he knew that his loved one had not willingly abandoned him (belief in such an abandonment being the main cause of anger). He could be sure that he was doing what was right; he was shored up by social conventions, and thereby avoided guilt. His society also permitted him to weep without embarrassment and by means of regulations for both the bereaved and the friends of the bereaved, it gently guided him back to full participation and normal position in life. Modern psychologists condemn the twentieth century manner of death; they say that the typical death in a hospital does not satisfy either the dying or the bereaved, that the funeral does not enable survivors to accept the death as reality and come to terms with it, and that the absence of prescribed mourning behavior does not prevent bewilderment and guilt. Ironically the Victorian period, termed prudish and morbid by the modern age, devised a system which accomplished these goals.
APPENDIX A

FUNERAL COSTS

Cassell's Household Guide published descriptions of funerals available in 1879. The least expensive and the most expensive are quoted below:

Funeral costing £3 5s.: Patent carriage with one horse; smooth elm coffin, neatly finished, lined inside, with pillow, &c.; use of pall, mourners' fittings, coachman with hat-band; bearers; attendant with hat-band, &c.

Funeral costing £53: Hearse and four horses, two mourning coaches with fours, twenty-three plumes of rich ostrich-feathers, complete velvet covering for carriages and horses, and an esquire's plume of best feathers; strong elm shell, with tufted mattress, lined and ruffled with superfine cambric, and pillow; full worked glazed cambric winding-sheet, stout outside lead coffin with inscription plate and solder complete; one and a half inch oak case, covered with black or crimson velvet, set with three rows round, and lid panelled with best brass nails; stout brass plate of inscription, richly engraved; four pairs of best brass handles and grips, lid ornaments to correspond; use of silk velvet pall; two mutes with gowns, silk hat-band and gloves; fourteen men as pages, feathermen, and coachmen, with truncheons and wands, silk hat-bands, &c; use of mourners' fittings; and attendant with silk hat-band, &c.

THE ORDER FOR THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

Here is to be noted, that the Office ensuing is not to be used for any that die unbaptized, or excommunicate, or have laid violent hands upon themselves.

The Priest and Clerks meeting the Corpse at the entrance of the Church-yard, and going before it, either into the Church, or towards the Grave, shall say, or sing,

I AM the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.

I KNOW that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.

WE brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord.

After they are come into the Church, shall be read one or both of these Psalms following.

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Psalm xxxix.

Psalm xc.

Then shall follow the Lesson taken out of the fifteenth Chapter of the former Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians.

When they come to the Grave, while the Corpse is made ready to be laid into the earth, the Priest shall say, or the Priest and Clerks shall sing:

MAN that is born of a woman. 
Hath but a short time to live, 
and is full of misery. He cometh up, 
and is cut down, like a flower; he fleeth as it were a shadow, and never continueth in one stay.

In the midst of life we are in death: of whom may we seek for succour, but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased?

Yet, O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death.

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts; shut not thy merciful ears to our prayer; but spare us, Lord most holy, O God most mighty, O holy and merciful Saviour, thou most worthy Judge eternal, suffer us not, at our last hour, for any pains of death, to fall from thee.

Then, while the earth shall be cast upon the body by some standing by, the Priest shall say,

FORASMUCH as it hath pleased Almighty God of his great mercy to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother here departed, we therefore commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the Resur-
reurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.

Then shall be said or sung,

I HEARD a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, From henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord ; even so saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labours.

Then the Priest shall say,

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

OUR Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. They will be done in earth, As it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

Priest.

ALMIGHTY God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity; We give thee hearty thanks, for that it hath pleased thee to deliver this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world; be-seeching thee, that it may please thee, of thy gracious goodness, shortly to accomplish the number of thine elect, and to hasten thy kingdom; that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy Name, may have
our perfect consummation and bliss, 
both in body and soul, in thy eternal 
and everlasting glory; through Jesus 
Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Collect.

O MOST merciful God, the Father 
of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is 
the resurrection and the life; in whom 
whosoever believeth shall live, though 
he die; and whosoever liveth, and be-
lieveth in him, shall not die eternally; 
who also hath taught us, by his holy 
Apostle Saint Paul, not to be sorry, 
as men without hope, for them that 
sleep in him; We meekly beseech thee, 
O Father, to raise us from the death 
of sin unto the life of righteousness; 
that, when we shall depart this life, we 
may rest in him, as our hope is this 
our brother doth; and that, at the 
general Resurrection in the last day, 
we may be found acceptable in thy 
sight; and receive that blessing, which 
thy well-beloved Son shall then pro-
nounce to all that love and fear thee, 
saying, Come, ye blessed children of 
my Father, receive the kingdom pre-
pared for you from the beginning of 
the world: Grant this, we beseech 
thee, O merciful Father, through Jesus 
Christ our Mediator and Redeemer. 
Amen.

THE grace of our Lord Jesus 
Christ, and the love of God, and 
the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be 
with us all evermore. Amen.
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