

in King James' time. His daughter, Anne Bradstreet, who knew more than he of English poetry, said his poem, which she had seen in black and white (that is, printed, I suppose), outshone hers, and was on the subject of "The Four Parts of the World," having his initials, "T. D.," signed to it. I have never found such a work, and we are not told that he ever published any prose works.

The little piece, so often printed and attributed to him, ending with the line :

"My epitaph's,—I died no *libertine*,"

is of doubtful origin. His name or initials were not attached to it. Tradition says it was found in his pocket. That does not prove anything. If he had wished to father it or publish it, why did he not sign it?

In the most reliable manuscript of his life, it ends,—

"Mine Epitaph's—*I did no hurt to Thine.*"

This manuscript sketch of his life was the only one preserved by his family.

There is some poetical merit in the verses, and he might possibly have written them. They say he had lived nearly 77 years, therefore he must have penned them, if at all, in his very last days, when his life was nearly faded out. He says,—

"My soul's with Christ, my body dead."

His eyes were "dim" and his ears "deaf," he says. 'The poor old war-horse of the colony was not in a proper mood and condition to write poetry or even describe his faith. Why should we judge by this, what he had been, as a poet or a saint? He says,—

"My dream is vanished, shadows fled."

What dream? Did he not live a real life? And had he not a good deal to show for what he had done?

There is one good line at least,—

"Bear poverty; live with good men."

He was quite rich as his will shows. Why does he want us to bear poverty. He means, perhaps, do not steal for the sake of *avoiding poverty*? Be patient and struggle on.

Mrs. Bradstreet, in 1642, dedicated her volume of poems to her father.

The following lines are from the poetic Dedication :