

The Poems of Jonathan Swift, ed. William Ernest Browning, 2 vols.
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A SATIRICAL ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF A LATE FAMOUS GENERAL

HIS Grace! impossible! what, dead!
Of old age too, and in his bed!
And could that mighty warrior fall,
And so inglorious, after all?
Well, since he's gone, no matter how,
The last loud trump must wake him now;
And, trust me, as the noise grows stronger,
He'd wish to sleep a little longer.
And could he be indeed so old
As by the newspapers we're told?
Threescore, I think, is pretty high;
'Twas time in conscience he should die!
This world he cumber'd long enough;
He burnt his candle to the snuff;
And that's the reason, some folks think,
He left behind so great a stink.
Behold his funeral appears,
Nor widows' sighs, nor orphans' tears,
Wont at such times each heart to pierce,
Attend the progress of his hearse.
But what of that? his friends may say,
He had those honours in his day.
True to his profit and his pride,
He made them weep before he died.
Come hither, all ye empty things!
Ye bubbles raised by breath of kings!
Who float upon the tide of state;
Come hither, and behold your fate!
Let Pride be taught by this rebuke,
How very mean a thing's a duke;
From all his ill-got honours flung,
Turn'd to that dirt from whence he sprung.