

Barrie James Matthew

Neither Dorking nor the Abbey



James Barrie

Neither Dorking nor the Abbey

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J. M. Barrie

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NOTE

In England recently there died a great man – the greatest of his day. Immediately there arose much vain contention as to whether or no his dust should be given resting place among that of his peers in Westminster Abbey. Finally came the decision that Westminster was not to be so honored; and the urn containing all of him that had outlived the fire was placed in the sunny graveyard of Dorking village. Looking down toward it from the long level summit of Box Hill – his hill, – with the sunlight glinting from its marbles and along the silver Mole that winds threadlike beside it, the little cemetery seems almost a living cheerful thing in the dark green of the surrounding landscape. Surely here, if anywhere, was appropriate resting-place for this great lover of life and joy.

The tribute to Meredith contained in the following pages, perhaps the most fitting and beautiful of any inspired by his death, was originally published in the London "Westminster Gazette" for May 26, 1909.

NEITHER DORKING NOR THE ABBEY

All morning there had been a little gathering of people outside the gate. The funeral coach came, and a very small thing was placed in it and covered with flowers. One plant of the wallflower in the garden would have covered it. The coach took the road to Dorking, followed by a few others, and in a moment or two all seemed silent and deserted, the cottage, the garden, and Box Hill.

The cottage was not deserted, as they knew who now trooped into the round in front of it, their eyes on the closed door. They were the mighty company, his children, – Lucy and Clara and Rhoda and Diana and Rose and old Mel and Roy Richmond and Adrian and Sir Willoughby and a hundred others, and they stood in line against the box-wood, waiting for him to come out. Each of his women carried a flower, and the hands of all his men were ready for the salute.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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