

**GOTTLOB,
ET CETERA**

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Gottlob, Et Cetera by William Young

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WILLIAM YOUNG

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ET CETERA**

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BY

WILLIAM YOUNG

AUTHOR OF 'SONGS OF BÉRANGER'

LONDON

C. KEGAN PAUL & CO., 1 PATERNOSTER SQUARE

1879

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GOTTLOB.

From the French of 'Le Justicier,' by François Coppée.

ONE month since Easter, on St. Philip's Day,
The fifteenth century being three years old,
The very high and very puissant Gottlob
Surnamed the Brutal, Count of Schnepfenthal,
Baron of Hilburghausen, of Elbenau
Grand Bailiff, and hereditary Margrave
Of Schlotemsdorff, by water and by land
Lord, chief and oldest among Saxon knights,
And of a proud, despotic race the last,
Having—despite the rain-storm and his age,
For he was ninety-four—been forth to see
Three peasants hanged, at the hour of Angelus,
After his supper, calmly, with the host
Laid to his lip and his lean hands outspread
Upon the crucifix, gave up the ghost,
At his stronghold of Ruhn upon the Elbe.

Seeing the black flag, the whole country breathed ;
For civil war raged. Drunken Wenceslas
Bartered his towns for gold. The rulers ruled,
Each as he listed. Law and rights were none.
Grasping and cruel ever had he been,
The well-nigh centenarian lying there
All pale, his outlined form beneath the sheet
Drawn to its full length. He had reimposed
All the old imposts—on the vintage, tax ;
Tax on the harvest ; tax on mills, fish, game ;
Poll-tax on pilgrims even. Halberdiers,
Demons of violence, with blows enforced
Reluctant dues. Death was the penalty
Paid for refusal. Various in its form
Was the grim Margrave's vengeance. Clad, gloved,
vizored,
In iron all, he came upon the spot
Girt with his pikemen, waved his hand, and straight
The barren gibbets budded. Vassals died
By steel, or cord, or rod. Youth donned perforce
His archers' harness ; for the old and weak
There was nought left, save in their leprous rags
Wearily, after vespers, to besiege
The convent doors and clamour for a crust
Of hard black bread. Along the broad highway
Beggars in troops laid bare their hideous sores.
Burying their coin in the earth, the citizens

Thought, at the outset, to protest. They chose
 One of their number, grey-haired and discreet,
 Sending him secretly to Trèves, to plead
 Their cause with the Archbishop and set forth
 Their grievances ; but Gottlob, having wind
 Of their intention, in advance despatched
 To the Elector-Primate two fine mules
 With golden pyxes and with velvet copes
 Heavily charged. The saint-like Patriarch,
 Zealous in serving God, received the gifts,
 And hanged the townsmen's delegate. No more
 Was said about the matter.

Now was woe
 Redoubled, Gottlob bidding fair to touch
 His hundredth year. Apparent was no term
 To all this desolation. Beldames called him
 Satan's accomplice. One and all despaired,
 Wailing for mercy. In the end he died.
 He was dead, certès. Then, as in a wood
 The little nests are resonant of joy
 When down the wind fierce squalls have swept the
 hawk,
 So the poor people this departure hailed
 With shouted plaudits. Bonfires were lit up ;
 And round about the gallows hand in hand
 Danced the glad peasants. In the castle walls
 The soldiers listened to the festive din