DR. PETER CHAMBERLEN

Physician to Stuart Kings and Baptist Pastor.

Born May 8th, 1601; died December 22nd, 1683.
Buried in the Churchyard of Woodham Mortimer, Maldon, Essex.

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Woodham Mortimer Hall, Maldon, Essex, where Dr. Peter Chamberlen (1601–1683) passed the later years of his life. Behind the cedar tree, on the left side of the picture, one may see the East end of the church. In the North-east corner of the churchyard, quite near to the Hall property, stands the monument which marks the Doctor’s last resting-place—"the grave my hardest, but my easiest bed."
The Chamberlen Tombstone—North side, with Family and Personal Memorials.
Tombstone—South side, with Verses "ordered for his Epitaph."
Tombstone—West end, with Arms. Well defined after two centuries' exposure to "wind and weather."
THE CHAMBERLEN TOMBSTONE.

INSCRIPTION ON THE NORTH SIDE.

Here lies ye body of Docter Peter Chamberlen, who was borne on 8 ye 8th of May, 1601, & dyed on 22nd of December, 1683; being aged 82 years, 7 months, & 14 days. He had 2 wives, & by ye first Jane Middleton had 11 sons, & 2 daughters, & amongst them 45 grand children & 8 great grand children: whereof were living at his death three sons: viz: Hugh, Paul, & John, & his two daughters, and 20 grand children, and 6 great grand children.

By ye second Anne Harrison had 3 sons & 2 daughters; whereof only Hope was living at his Death who hath Erected this Monument in Memory of his Father.

INSCRIPTION ON THE SOUTH SIDE.

Death my last sleep, to ease my carefull head,  
The grave my hardest, but my easiest bed.  
The end of sorrow, labour and of care;  
The end of trouble, sickness and of fear.

Here I shall sin no more, no more shall weep,  
Here's onely to be found, a quiet sleep.

Death's but one night, my life hath many seen;  
My life brought death, death brings me life again.

Seeds rise to trees, hearts rise againe fro"m leade  
Shall bodies then of men obtaine worfe speed.

Wee dayly dye, entomb'd in sleep and night;  
But in the morning, we renew our light.

These verses were found made written, and ordered by

Hence spryng my Ioyes,& confortes evermore  
I cannot feel, but what Chri$t felt before.  
Wes now believe, and hear, and talk by guels;  
Then i shall fee, and what i fee posses.

And when i wake, wrapt in eternall light;  
Of God and Chri$t, i knowno more of night.

Crown'd with eternal glories, ever blei:;  
Oh! happy rest, that brings me all the rest.

Bodies Calcin'd to iems, like stars shall sing  
Ravish't with iones, & prai'es of my King.

Praiiod be God my Saviour, praiHe his name  
Angels & Saints, ling with me of his fame.

Docter Peter Chamberlen,  
here interred for his Epitaph.

Note.—In all, there are 460 words. In the second and third lines of the North-Side inscription, observe the astronomical signs indicating the dates—one (apparently) indicating the Sun and the other Saturn. These signs would imply that the Doctor was born on Sunday, May 8th, and died on Saturday, December 22nd.

As a fact, however, May 8th was not Sunday, but Friday; and it would appear that an error on the part of the stone-mason is responsible for the mistake—the (defective) Circular Shield of the Sun was not supplied with the pendant cross so as to form the Looking-Glass of Venus, whence Vendredi, or Friday (?).

Aveling has overlooked the astronomical signs; but he reproduces a record from the French Church in Threadneedle-street (preserved at Somerset House) which shows that Peter was baptized, or christened, on Tuesday, May 12th, presumably four days after his birth (on Friday).

The stone-mason's representation of the Scythe of Saturn is quite rudimentary; and it is noteworthy that the date of death, December 22, is followed by 'th' and not 'nd.'