

The Ancient Order

by Ambrose Bierce

Hardly had that ancient order, the Sultans of Exceeding Splendour, been completely founded by the Grand Flashing Inaccessible, when a question arose as to what should be the title of address among the members. Some wanted it to be simply "my Lord," others held out for "your Dukeness," and still others preferred "my Sovereign Liege." Finally the gorgeous jewel of the order, gleaming upon the breast of every member, suggested "your Badgesty," which was adopted, and the order became popularly known as the Kings of Catarrh.