



Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

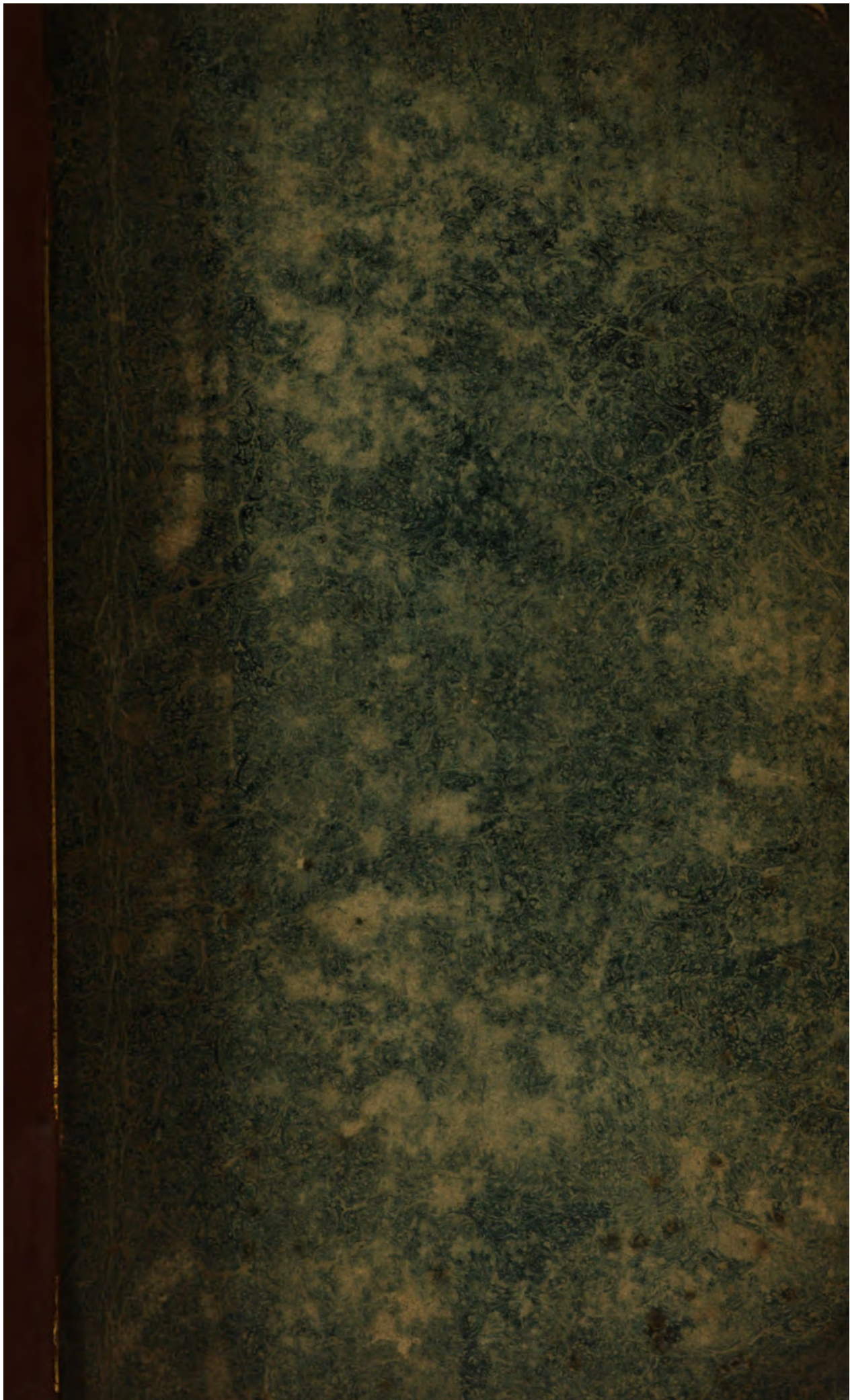
This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>



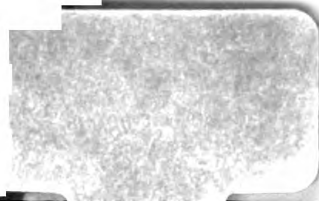
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.





600017474T

ES
ETS
VOL
I



THE
WORKS
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS.

WITH
PREFACES,
BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,
BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED BY JOHN NICHOLS;

FOR J. BUCKLAND, J. RIVINGTON AND SONS, T. PAYNE AND SON, L. DAVIS, B. WHITE AND SON, T. LONGMAN, B. LAW, J. DODSLEY, H. BALDWIN, J. ROBSON, C. DILLY, T. CADELL, J. NICHOLS, J. JOHNSON, G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON, R. BALDWIN, H. L. GARDNER, P. ELMSLY, T. EVANS, G. NICOL, LEIGH AND SOTHEBY, J. BEW, N. CONANT, J. MURRAY, J. SEWELL, W. GOLDSMITH, W. RICHARDSON, T. VERNOR, W. LOWNDES, W. BENT, W. OTTRIDGE, T. AND J. EGERTON, S. HAYES, R. FAULDER, J. EDWARDS, G. AND T. WILKIE, W. NICOL, OGILVY AND SPEARE, SCATCHERD AND WHITAKER, W. FOX, C. STALKER, E. NEWBERRY. 1790.



600017474T

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

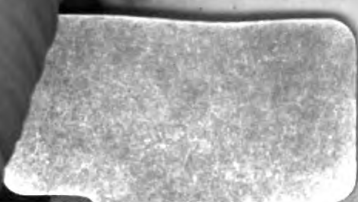
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

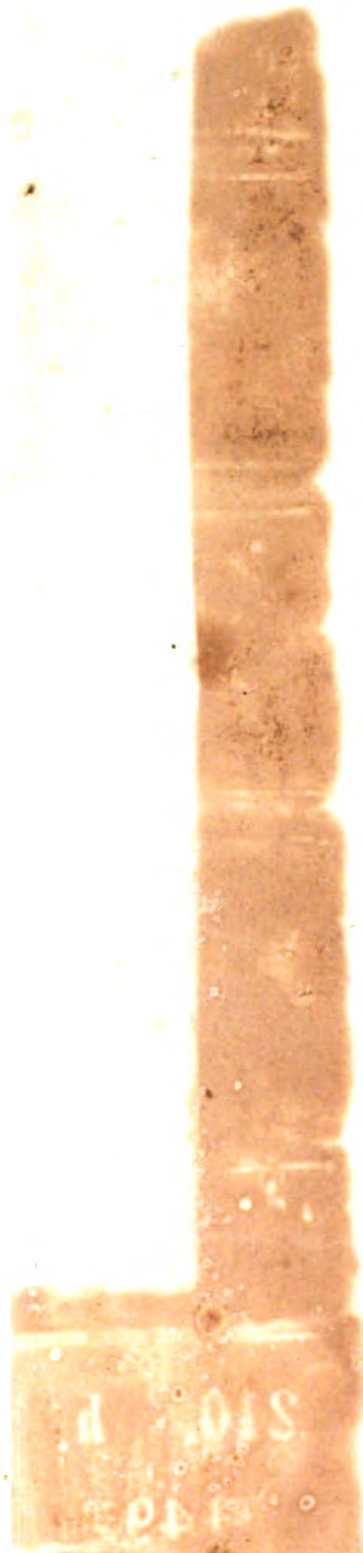
REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

INVESTIGATION OF

BY

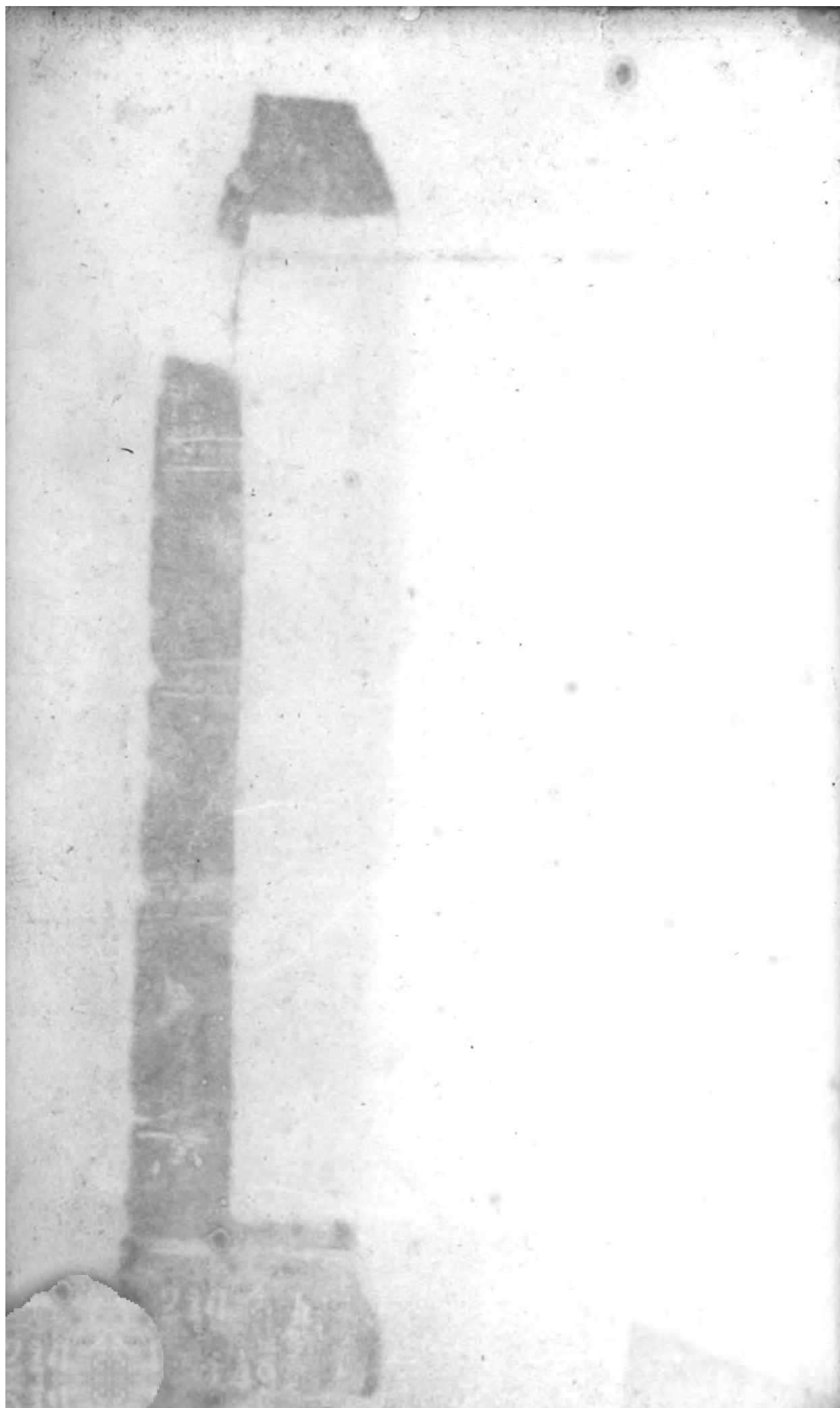
UNIT OF





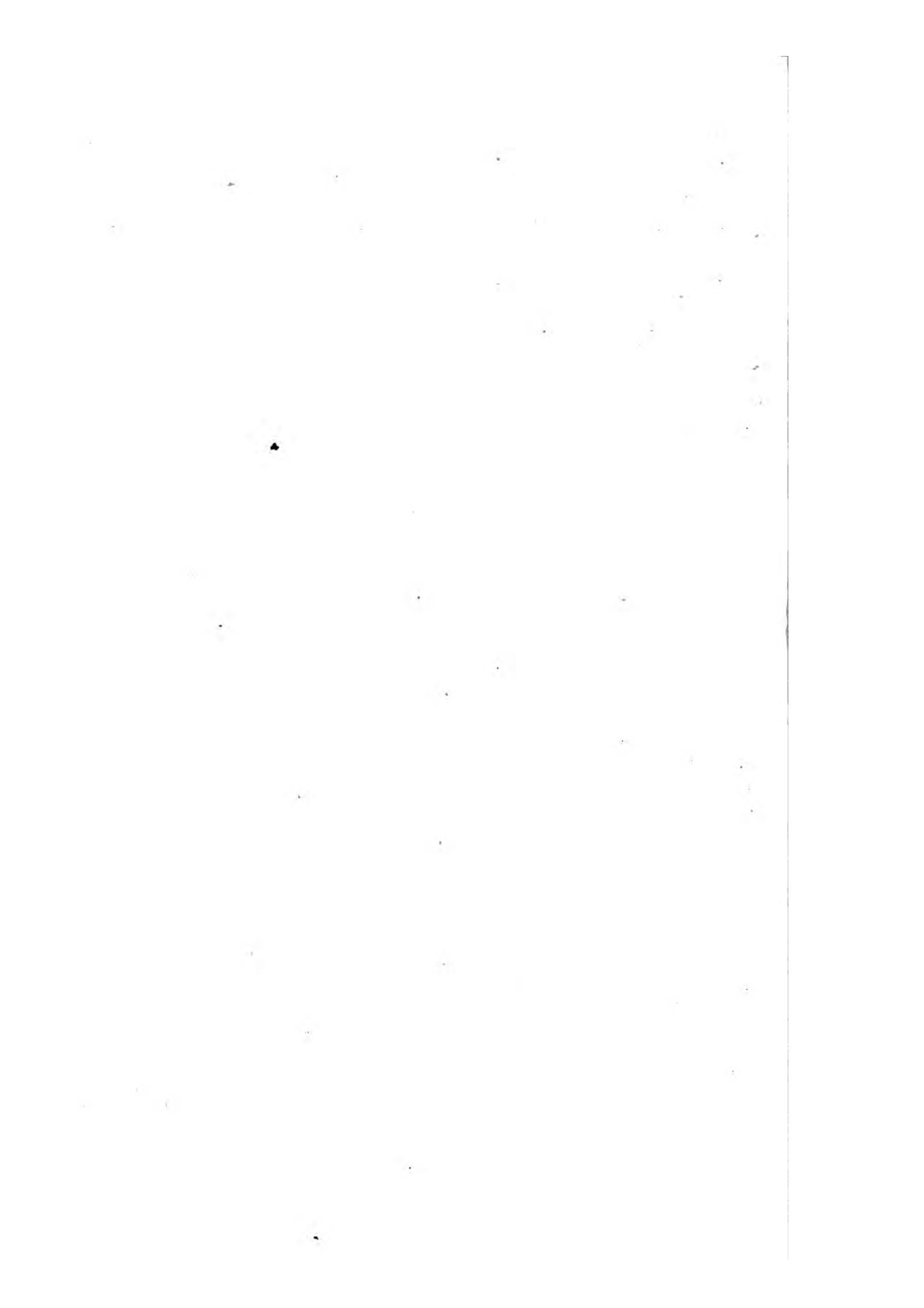
1018

1018



Contents

Chaucer	Shakespeare	Giles Fletcher
Gower	Davies	J. Beaumont
Skelton	Donne	Brounse
Surrey	Hall	Davenant
Wyat	Sterling	Habington
Gascoigne	Jonson	Suckling
Turberville	Corbet	Cartwright
Spenser	Carew	Crashaw
Daniel	Drummond	Sherburne
Drayton	J. J. Beaumont	Brome
Warner	P. Fletcher	Cotton.



THE
WORKS
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS,

FROM CHAUCER TO COWPER;

INCLUDING THE

SERIES EDITED,

WITH

PREFACES, BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,

BY DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON:

AND

THE MOST APPROVED TRANSLATIONS.

THE

ADDITIONAL LIVES

BY ALEXANDER CHALMERS, F. S. A.

IN TWENTY-ONE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

CHAUCER.

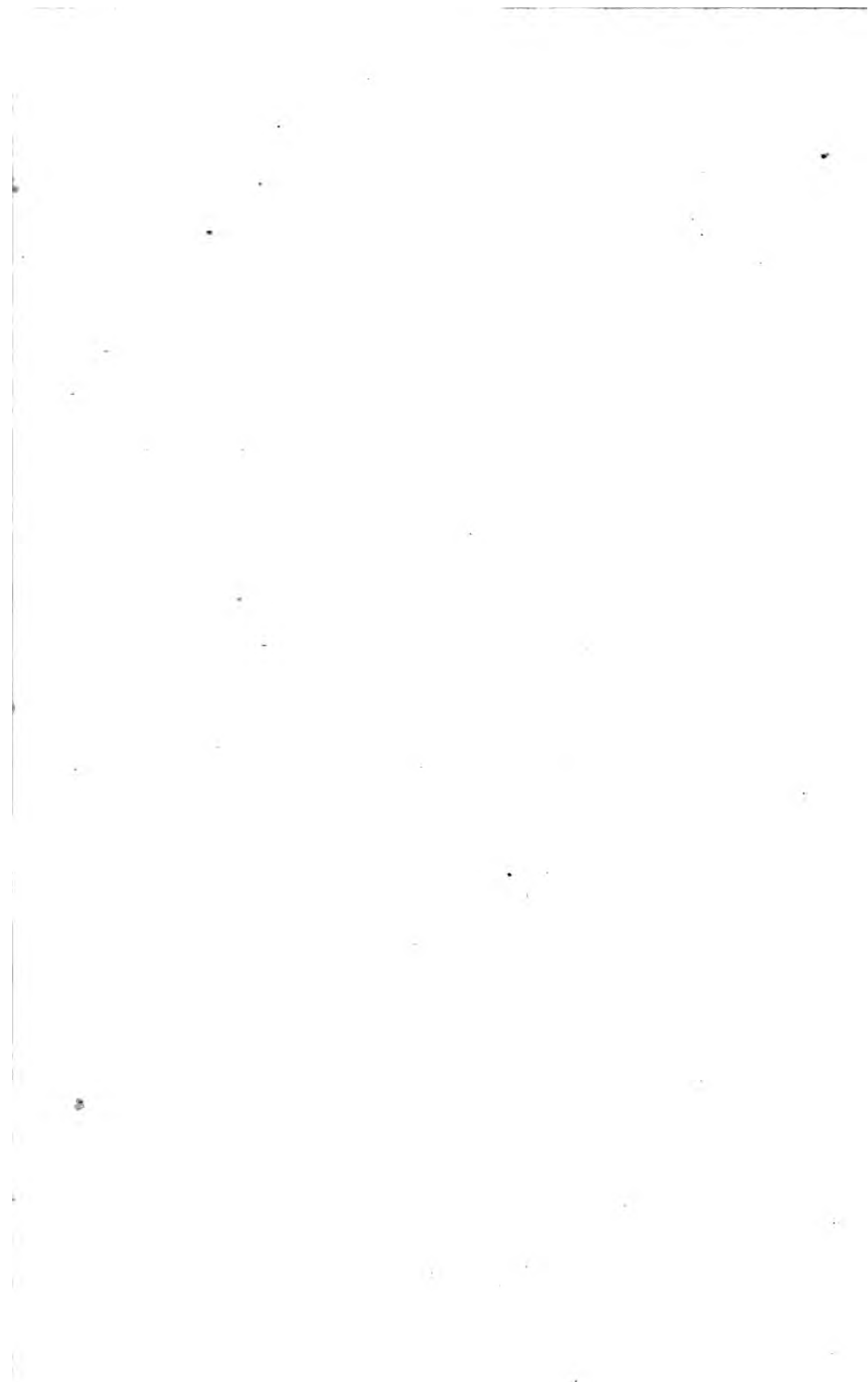
LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON; J. NICHOLS AND SON; R. BALDWIN; F. AND C. RIVINGTON; W. OTRIDGE AND SON; LEIGH AND SOTHEBY; R. FAULDER AND SON; G. NICOL AND SON; T. PAYNE; G. ROBINSON; WILKIE AND ROBINSON; C. DAVIES; T. EGERTON; SCATCHERD AND LETTERMAN; J. WALKER; VERNOR, HOOD, AND SHARPE; R. LEA; J. NUNN; LACKINGTON, ALLEN, AND CO.; J. STOCKDALE; CUTHELL AND MARTIN; CLARKE AND SONS; J. WHITE AND CO.; LONGMAN, HURST, REES, AND ORME; CADELL AND DAVIES; J. BARKER; JOHN RICHARDSON; J. M. RICHARDSON; J. CARPENTER; B. CROSBY; E. JEFFERY; J. MURRAY; W. MILLER; J. AND A. ARCH; BLACK, PARRY, AND KINGSBURY; J. BOOKER; S. BAGSTER; J. HARDING; J. MACKINLAY; J. HATCHARD; R. H. EVANS; MATTHEWS AND LEIGH; J. MAWMAN; J. BOOTH; J. ASPERNE; P. AND W. WYNNE; AND W. GRACE, DEIGHTON AND SON AT CAMBRIDGE, AND WILSON AND SON AT YORK.

1810.

910 h 140

**C. WHITTINGHAM, Printer,
Goswell-Street, London.**



PREFACE.

THE Preface to a collection like the present, necessarily involves an attempt to apologize for its defects, and from this some degree of egotism is inseparable. Candour, however, will not fail to make liberal allowance for the many difficulties which surround an undertaking of this magnitude: and it is hoped that the excuses which are offered, if not satisfactory, will at least be received as marks of respect. The labour of some years in forming this collection has been exerted with an anxious desire that it may prove worthy of public favour, but at the conclusion of the task, I cannot flatter myself that I have succeeded in forming the best plan, or in executing the plan which I formed.

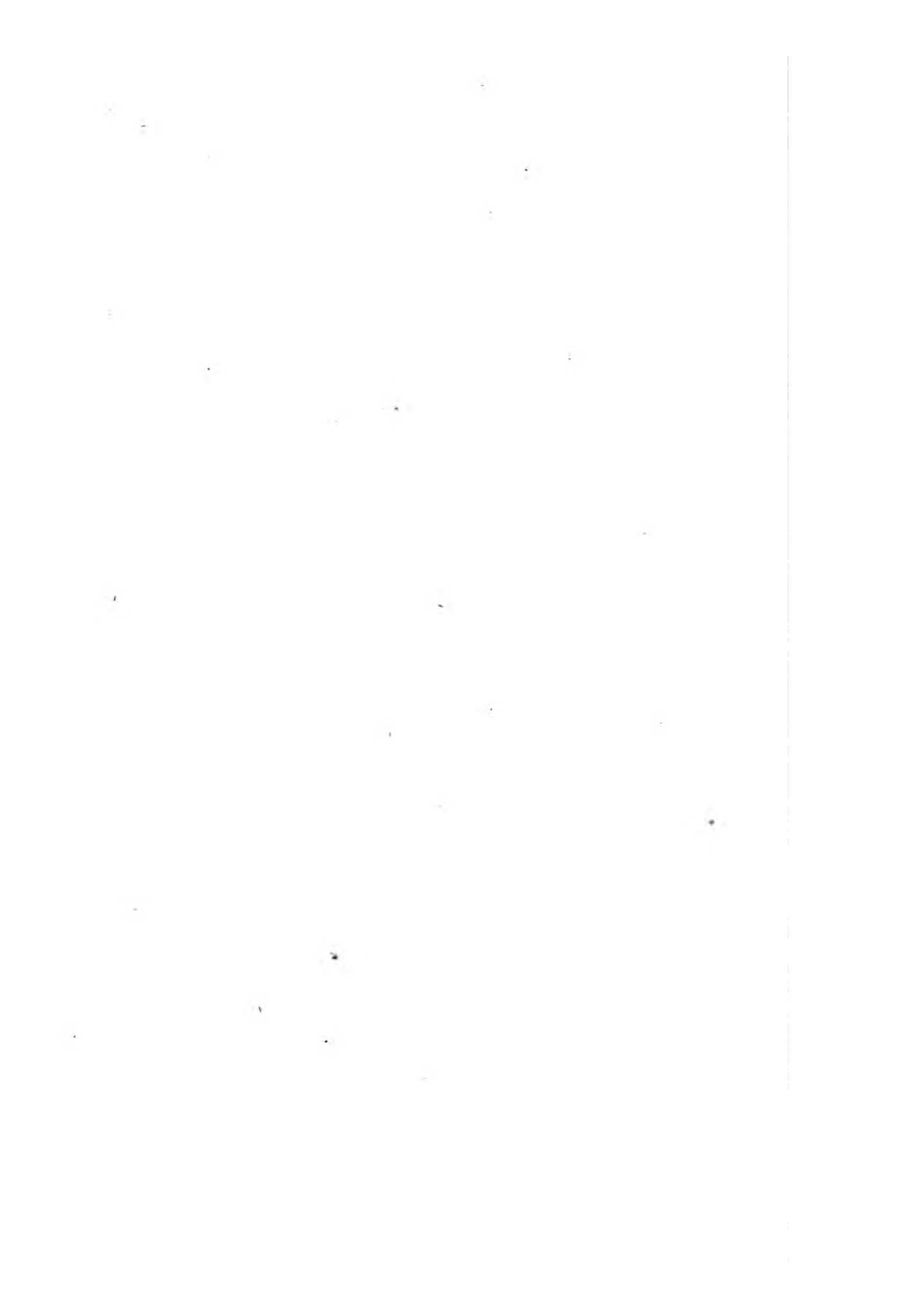
The fate of the few collections which have been made of this kind readily pointed out that the objections of critics would be directed, either against redundancy, or defect, and it is as likely that I shall be blamed for admitting too many, as for admitting too few, into a work professing to be a **BODY OF THE STANDARD ENGLISH POETS**. It cannot, however, be unknown to those who have paid any attention to the subject, that the question of too much or too little in these collections, does not depend on the previous consideration of the merit of the poet, so frequently as on the relative rank which he seems destined to hold among his brethren. Some may be admissible in a series, who would make but an indifferent figure by themselves, and it is not improbable that by perpetuating editions in this manner, the fame that has sunk in one revolution of taste may be revived in another.

There are perhaps but two rules by which a collector of English poetry can be guided. He is either to give a series of the **BEST** poets, or of the most **POPULAR**, but simple as these rules may appear, they are not without difficulties, for whichever we choose

to rely upon, the other will be found to interfere. In the first instance, the question will be perpetually recurring "who *are* the best poets?" and as this will unavoidably involve all the disputed points in poetical criticism, and all the partialities of individual taste, an editor must pause before he venture on a decision from which the appeals will be numerous and obstinately contested.

On the other hand, he will not find much more security in popularity, which is a criterion of uncertain duration, sometimes depending on circumstances very remote from taste or judgment, and, unless in some few happy instances, a mere fashion. Any bookseller can tell an editor that popularity will frequently elude his grasp, if he waits for the decision of time; that authors, popular within the memory of some of the present generation, are no longer read, and that others who seemed on the brink of oblivion, if not sunk in its abyss, have by some accountable or unaccountable revival, become the standing favourites of the day. It has often been objected to Dr. Johnson's Collection, that it includes authors who have few admirers, and it is an objection which perhaps gains strength by time, but it ought always to be remembered, that the collection was not formed by that illustrious scholar, but by his employers, who thought themselves, what they unquestionably were, the best judges of vendible poetry, and who included very few, if any, works in their series for which there was not, at the time it was formed, a considerable degree of demand.

Aware of the difficulties of adding to that collection without reviving the usual objections, what is now presented to the public could never have been formed, had I imposed on myself the terms either of abstract merit, or of popular reception. When applied to, therefore, by the proprietors, and left at liberty, generally, to form a collection of the more ancient poets to precede Dr. Johnson's series, and of the more recent authors to follow it, I conceived that it would be proper to be guided by a mixed rule in admitting the additions from these two classes. Although the question of popularity seemed necessary and decisive in selecting from the vast mass of poetical writers since the publication of Dr. Johnson's volumes, yet in making up a catalogue of the older poets, it was requisite to advert to the only uses which such a



catalogue can at all be supposed to answer. Popularity is here so much out of the question, that however venerable some of the names are which occur in this part of the work, it will probably be impossible by any powers of praise or criticism to give them that degree of favour with the public which they once enjoyed.

For these reasons, in selecting from this class, it was the Editor's object to give such a series as might tend, not only to revive genuine and undeservedly neglected poetry, but to illustrate the progress and history of the art from the age of Chaucer to that of Cowley. What has been done so excellently by Mr. Ellis, in SPECIMENS, it was the intention to execute more amply by ENTIRE WORKS, copied from the best editions, and as nearly as possible in a chronological succession¹: and a plan of this kind, to him who does not attempt to execute it, will appear to have every advantage, and not many difficulties.

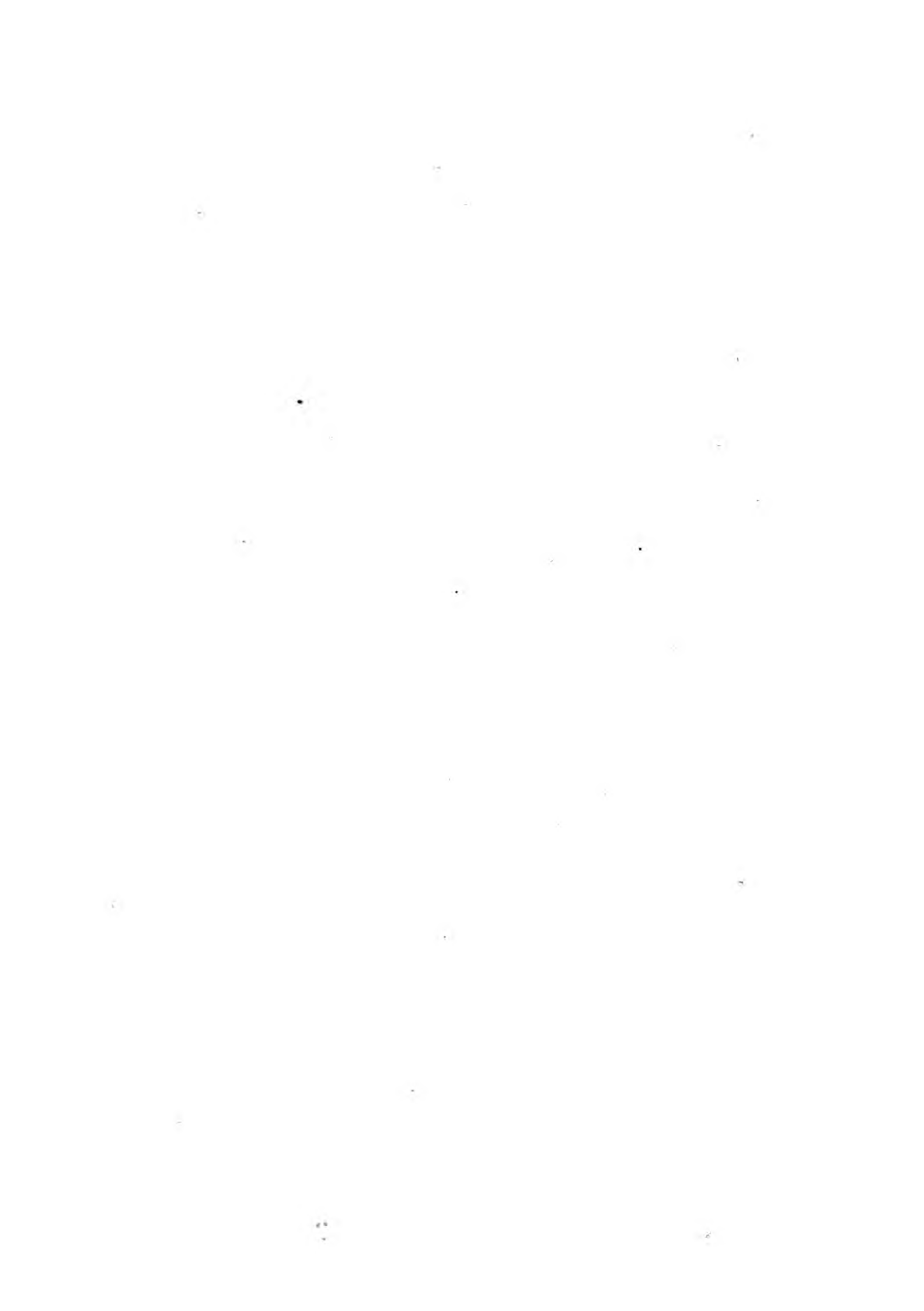
On trial, however, it was soon discovered that some limits must be set to such a collection; that it would be in vain to attempt to revive authors whom no person would read, and to fill thousands of pages with discarded prolixities, merely because they characterized the dulness of the age in which they were tolerated. It was also discovered, that the plan of giving entire works would be objectionable in another point of view, and that the licentious language of some of our most eminent poets, whether their own fault or that of their age, must necessarily be omitted. In this dilemma, therefore, a SELECTION has been attempted, with less severity of rule than in the case of the modern poets, and it is presented to the public with the diffidence in which it was made, and with the deference due to superior judgment.

Besides the difficulties which presented themselves from the circumstances just noticed, another embarrassment, of late origin indeed, but almost invincible, was occasioned by the extreme rarity and high price of many of the works which it would have been desirable to reprint. To professed collectors of ancient English poetry it would be superfluous to enter upon any explanation of the causes of this high price, and to others it may be

¹ This has been departed from in a few instances, owing to the difficulty of procuring the copies at the time they were wanted, but the deviations, it is hoped, will be found slight.

sufficient to intimate, that within the last twenty years, a taste for collecting the writings of our old poets has diffused itself so widely as to put them wholly out of the reach of moderate fortunes, as well as to induce those into whose hands they have fallen, to guard them with the most scrupulous anxiety. Even where, as in the present instance, the spirit of the proprietors would not have suffered the high price to keep back what was necessary, it was sometimes found that private sales and barter among the tribe of collectors had almost entirely removed the articles in question from the public market.

But notwithstanding these impediments, I hope I have succeeded in procuring such a number of the rarer authors as is, in a great measure, if not quite, sufficient to preserve somewhat more than an outline of the principal revolutions of our poetical taste and style, and probably more than sufficient to gratify the curiosity of those who do not wish to pursue the study of poetical antiquities in all its branches. By those who have that taste, and who are not only readers, but students of poetry, (a class which seems to be increasing) more ample gratification must be derived from the libraries of the collectors, and from the labours of the Wartons, the Ritsons, the Ellis's, the Parks, the Hazlewoods, and the Brydges'. Nor can I quit this part of my subject without acknowledging the obligations I owe to the writings of these eminent antiquaries and critics, as well as to the personal kindness of some of them, which it was my intention to have acknowledged more particularly had I not been afraid of implicating them in what may be found objectionable. Yet something must be added, which cannot involve this consequence. To Thomas Hill, Esq. I consider myself as highly indebted. This gentleman's very valuable collection of English poetry is open to the inspection and use of every literary inquirer, and his rarest volumes were lent to me with a ready confidence and kindness that demand my sincerest thanks. I have likewise to acknowledge the liberal offers of Sir Egerton Brydges, Richard Heber, Esq. and Mr. Park. The public will hear with gladness, and may with confidence, that Mr. Park is now engaged on a new edition, and continuation, of Warton's History of Poetry; and from his well known taste, and superior accuracy, there can be





no doubt that he will render this work all that the utmost hopes of its original author could have reached. In the biographical part of this collection, I owe much to the contributions and hints of my intelligent and steady friends, Mr. Nichols and Mr. Payne, but I am restrained by an obvious delicacy from expatiating on their kindness.

In forming this collection, it yet remains to be mentioned that Dr. Johnson's Lives are retained, with some additional notes, originally given in the edition of his works, printed in 1806. Few words, however, are necessary in making this intimation. Dr. Johnson's Lives, after all the objections that have been offered, must ever be the foundation of English poetical biography. To substitute any thing in their room would be an attempt, by the ablest, hazardous, and by inferior pens, ridiculous.

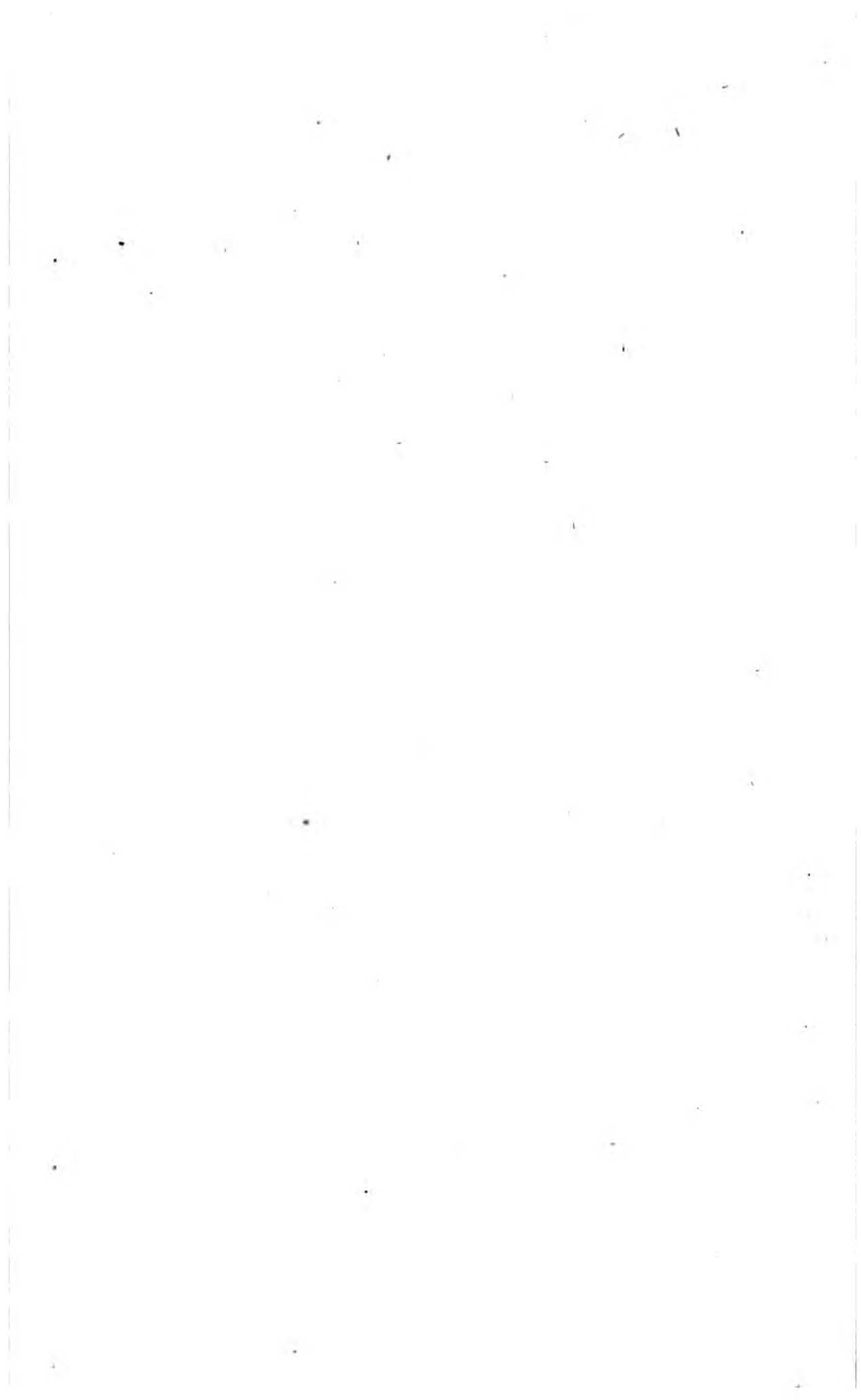
With respect to the NEW LIVES, a part of this work for which I am particularly responsible, they are the result of more anxious and painful research than may appear to those who do not examine my authorities. In rectifying preceding accounts, many of which I found erroneous and inconsistent, either from carelessness or partiality, and in procuring original information, in which I hope it will appear that I have not been altogether unsuccessful, it was my object to ascertain those truths, in whatever they might end, which display the real character. And I am sorry it should be necessary to add, that I have not thought it incumbent to represent every man whose works are here admitted as a prodigy of genius or virtue. This practice, it is true, has been lately adopted in collections of biography, as well as in single lives; but I am yet to learn what advantages can be reaped, and what solid interest can be promoted by a practice which violates the principles of truth, destroys public confidence, and defeats every valuable purpose of biography. The imaginary beauties of the biographer are, at least, as absurd as those of the portrait-painter, while they have less excuse, and are attended with far more pernicious consequences. After the lapse of a few years it becomes a matter of inferior importance how a man looked, but it is always important to know how he thought and how he acted. Nor if the practice alluded to proceeds from real feeling, or only an affectation of sympathy and veneration, is it less ob-

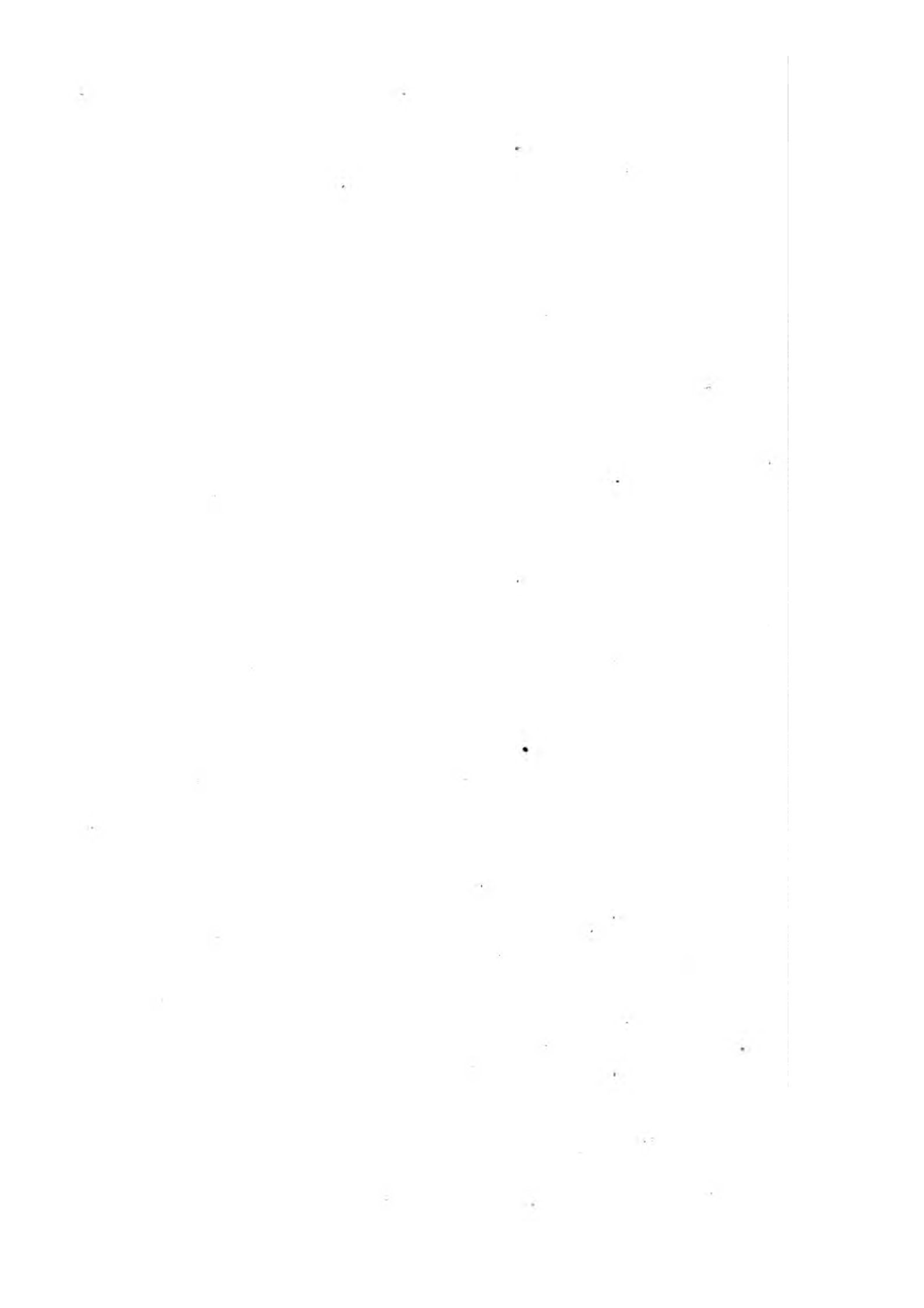
jectionable. It is a gross error in judgment that any man, who deserves to be commemorated, can be the worse for a disclosure of his failings, unless, indeed, he has no virtues to counterbalance them, and even in that rare case, the portrait, if faithfully given, is not without its uses. It would be happy if a closer correspondence could be found between an author and his writings, if genius were always dignified by virtue, and wisdom always recommended by urbanity; but we look in vain for objects of uniform panegyric, and the fair display of the striking contrarieties we find in the human character must ever be preferable to those unnatural sketches in which there is no discrimination, but all is purity and perfection, or in which the most degrading vices are either suppressed by fraud, or vindicated by sophistry. Of all human beings, the sons of imagination require to be led most carefully to correct notions of virtue and happiness, and to be reconciled to a world in which their splendid dreams cannot be realized, and which makes no allowance for irregular desires and extravagant passions.

The CRITICISMS advanced in these lives are as sparing as appeared consistent with the general plan, and are the opinions of one who is aware that reputation is not in his gift. As, however, they are the result of a judgment derived from no partial school, I have only to hope they will not be found destitute of candour, or improperly interfering with the general and acknowledged principles of taste.

A. C.

London, Nov. 1809.





GENERAL INDEX OF NAMES.

	Vol.		Vol.
ADDISON	IX.	DUKE	IX.
AKENSIDE	XIV.	DYER	XIII.
ARMSTRONG	XVI.		
BEATTIE	XVIII.	FALCONER	XIV.
BEAUMONT, F.	VI.	FAWKES	XVI.
——— SIR J.	VI.	FENTON	X.
BLACKLOCK	XVIII.	FLETCHER, G.	VI.
BLACKMORE	X.	———, P	VI.
BLAIR	XV.	GARTH	IX.
BOYSE	XIV.	GASCOIGNE	II.
BROME	VI.	GAY	X.
BROOKE	XVII.	GLOVER	XVII.
BROOME	XII.	GOLDSMITH	XVI.
BROWNE	VI.	GOWER	II.
BUTLER	VIII.	GRAINGER	XIV.
BYROM	XV.	GRAY	XIV.
		GREEN	XV.
CAMBRIDGE	XVIII.	HABINGTON	VI.
CAREW	V.	HALIFAX	IX.
CARTWRIGHT	VI.	HALL	V.
CAWTHORNE	XIV.	HAMMOND	XI.
CHATTERTON	XV.	HARTE	XVI.
CHAUCER	I.	HUGHES	X.
CHURCHILL	XIV.		
COLLINS	XIII.	JAGO	XVII.
CONGREVE	X.	JENYNS	XVII.
COOPER	XV.	JOHNSON	XVI.
CORBETT	V.	JONES	XVIII.
COTTON	VI.	JONSON	V.
COTTON, DR.	XVIII.		
COWLEY	VII.	KING	IX.
COWPER	XVIII.		
CRASHAW	VI.	LANGHORNE	XVI.
CUNNINGHAM	XIV.	LANSDOWNE	XI.
		LLOYD	XV.
DANIEL	III.	LOGAN	XVIII.
DAVENANT	VI.	LOVIBOND	XVI.
DAVIES	V.	LYTTELTON	XIV.
DENHAM	VII.		
DODSLEY	XV.	MALLETT	VII.
DONNE	V.	MASON	XVIII.
DORSET	VIII.	MICKLE	XVII.
DRAYTON	IV.	MILTON	VII.
DRUMMOND	V.	MOORE	XIV.
DRYDEN	VIII. AND IX.	OTWAY	VIII.

GENERAL INDEX OF NAMES.

	Vol.		Vol.
PARNELL	IX.	STIRLING.....	V.
PHILLIPS, A.	XIII.	SUCKING	VI.
———, J.....	VIII.	SURREY	II.
PITT	XII.	SWIFT.....	XI.
POMFRET	VIII.	THOMSON, J.....	XII.
POPE	XII.	———, W.	XV.
PRIOR	X.	TICKELL	XI.
ROCHESTER	VIII.	TURBERVILLE	II.
ROSCOMMON	VIII.	WALLER	VIII.
ROWE	IX.	WALSH	VIII.
SAVAGE	XI.	WARNER	IV.
SCOTT	XVII.	WARTON, J.	XVIII.
SHAKSPEARE	V.	———, T.	XVIII.
SHEFFIELD	X.	WATTS	XIII.
SHENSTONE	XIII.	WEST	XIII.
SHERBURNE	VI.	WHITEHEAD, P.	XVI.
SKELTON	II.	———, W.	XVII.
SMART	XVI.	WILKIE	XVI.
SMITH	IX.	WYAT	II.
SOMERVILE	XI.	YALDEN	XI.
SPENSER	III.	YOUNG	XIII.
SPRAT	IX.		
STEPNEY.....	VIII.		

 TRANSLATIONS.

VOL. XIX.

POPE'S HOMER'S ILIAD.
 ——— ODYSSEY.
 DRYDEN'S VIRGIL.
 ——— JUVENAL.
 PITT'S VIRGIL'S ÆNEID.
 ——— VIDA.
 FRANCIS' HORACE.

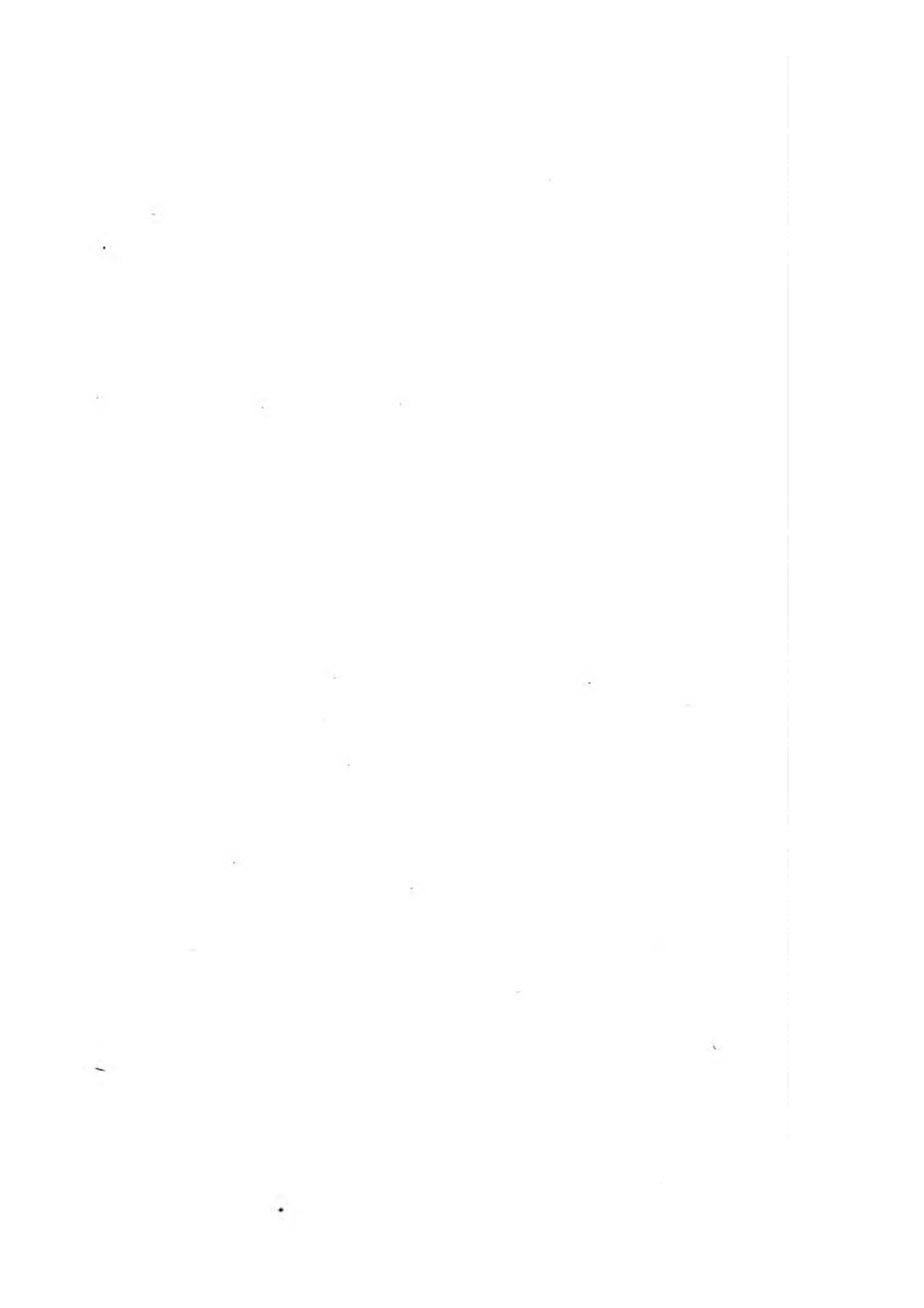
VOL. XX.

ROWE'S LUCAN.
 GRAINGER'S TIBULLUS.
 FAWKES'S THEOCRITUS.

FAWKES'S APOLLONIUS RHODIUS.
 ——— COLUTHUS.
 ——— ANACREON.
 ——— SAPPHO.
 ——— BION AND MOSCHUS.
 ——— MUSÆUS.
 GARTH'S OVID.
 LEWIS' STATIUS.
 COOKE'S HESIOD.

VOL. XXI.

HOOLE'S ARIOSTO.
 ——— TASSO.
 MICKLE'S LUSIAD.



ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.

VOL. III. SPENSER.

P. 6. line 33, for *it* read *them*.

VOL. V. ALEXANDER, EARL OF STIRLING.

P. 292. Since writing this life, I have discovered the following information respecting the family and title of the earl of Stirling. The person who assumed that title, and fought on the side of America, in the war 1774-82, and who died in 1783, was no relation of our poet. The title of earl of Stirling has been extinct since 1641, when the poet died. His corpse was deposited in a leaden coffin, in the family aile, in the church of Stirling, above ground, and remained entire till within these thirty years. Being much involved in debt at his death, and his descendants very poor, they never thought of making good their title to that dignity, till a very considerable time thereafter; but the mansion-house or church, which stood upon the banks of the river Devon, near Stirling, in which the records of the family descent were deposited, being swept away by a rapid current of the river after an uncommon fall of rain, rendered it impossible for the nearest akin to the family to make good his claim to the title. Several branches of this family still live¹ at a village called Mainstry, on the above river, about three miles from Stirling, the oldest of which is the fourth in descent from the earl, and is a reputable farmer, and known by all the old people about that part of the country to be the real and nearest descendant of the earl of Stirling.

¹ From a letter inserted in the London Chronicle, Oct. 1776, and signed GENEALOGIST. Beatson says, I know not upon what authority, that the title was not extinct until 1759.

VOL. XIV. CHURCHILL.

P. 267, line 3 from the bottom, dele the comma after "Churchill's next" &c.

FALCONER.

P. 384, line 7, for *always* read *often*.

BOYSE.

P. 516, line 5 from the bottom, for *project* read *prospect*.

P. 523. Some time before his death he wrote a very penitent letter to the Rev. James Hervey, author of the Meditations, &c. who appears to have endeavoured to impress him with a sense of his situation. See Smollett's British Magazine, vol. v. p. 655.

VOL. XV. WILLIAM THOMSON.

P. 4. According to Mr. Isaac Reed's MS. obituary, now in my possession, he died in 1765.

LLOYD.

P. 74. His name appeared, in 1761, to a translation of Voltaire's works, with that of Smollett, and in 1763, to a translation of Marmontel's Tales with that of C. Denis.

COOPER.

P. 503, for Thurgaton, read Thurgarton, *bis*.

VOL. XVI, SMART.

P. 10. Poor Smart's custom of praying in the streets was very common. My friend, Mr. Nichols,

informs me, that he has seen him repeating the Lord's Prayer on his knees at the door of Islington church.

P. 13. Mrs. Smart, his widow, died at Reading, March 16, 1809.

LOVIBOND.

P. 283. Mrs. Lovibond died at Frognaal, near Hampstead, Aug. 7, 1770.

ARMSTRONG.

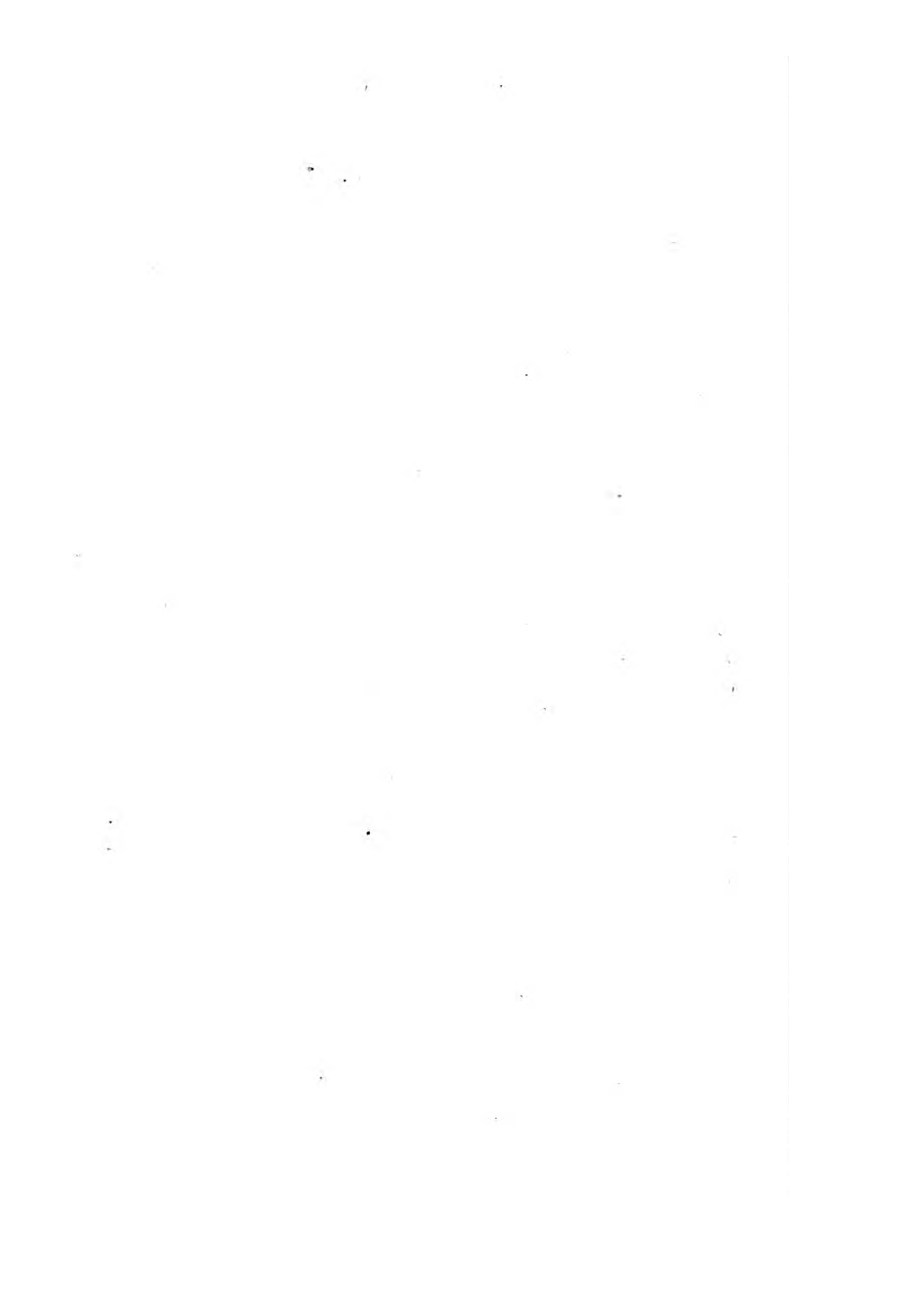
P. 517, line 18, for *between place*, read *place between*.
 ——— line 19, for *servng*, read *served*.

VOL. XVIII.

T. WARTON.

P. 77, lines 5 and 6, for *Aristotle*, read *Ariosto*.

The "Guide to the Companion," ascribed to Mr. Warton, I have been since informed on good authority, was the production of Mr. Huddesford.



THE
LIFE OF GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THE life of Jeffery, or Geoffrey Chaucer, is involved in much obscurity. The age which succeeded him was not favourable to those researches which could have gratified curiosity by displaying his private history ; and if his transactions, as a public character, were more accurately known, they could throw no light on his merit as a poet and a scholar, with which alone we are now concerned. A formal life of Chaucer, as Mr. Tyrwhitt has observed, must now be a very meagre narration, if composed only of facts ; and, we may add, a very useless detail, if stuffed with the comments and conjectures by which some of his biographers have endeavoured to supply the want of them. The editor of the *Biographia Britannica* has collected a very considerable body of evidence on the subject ; but a great part of it is of a very suspicious kind, and the whole hangs together so loosely, even when rectified by Mr. Tyrwhitt's more judicious remarks, that too much caution cannot be observed in any attempt to separate matters of fact from those of conjecture.

Of his birth and family nothing has been decided. It has been contended on the one hand, that he was of noble origin ; on the other, that he descended from persons in trade. Even the meaning of his name in French, *chaucier*, a *shoemaker*, has been brought in evidence of a low origin, while the mention of the name Chaucer, in several records, from the time of William the Conqueror to that of Edward I. has been thought sufficient to prove the contrary. Leland says he was *nobili loco natus* ; but Speght, one of his early biographers, informs us that, "in the opinion of some heralds, he descended not of any great house, which they gather by his arms ;" and Mr. Tyrwhitt is inclined to believe the heralds rather than Leland. Speght, however, goes further, and makes his father a vintner, who died in 1348, and left his property to the church of St. Mary Aldermary, where he was buried. This is confirmed by Stowe, who says, "Richard Chaucer, vintner, gave to that church his tenement *and tavern*, with the appurtenance, in the Royal-streete the corner of Kerion-lane, and was there buried, 1348." But neither Stowe nor Speght afford any proof that this Richard Chaucer was the father of our poet.

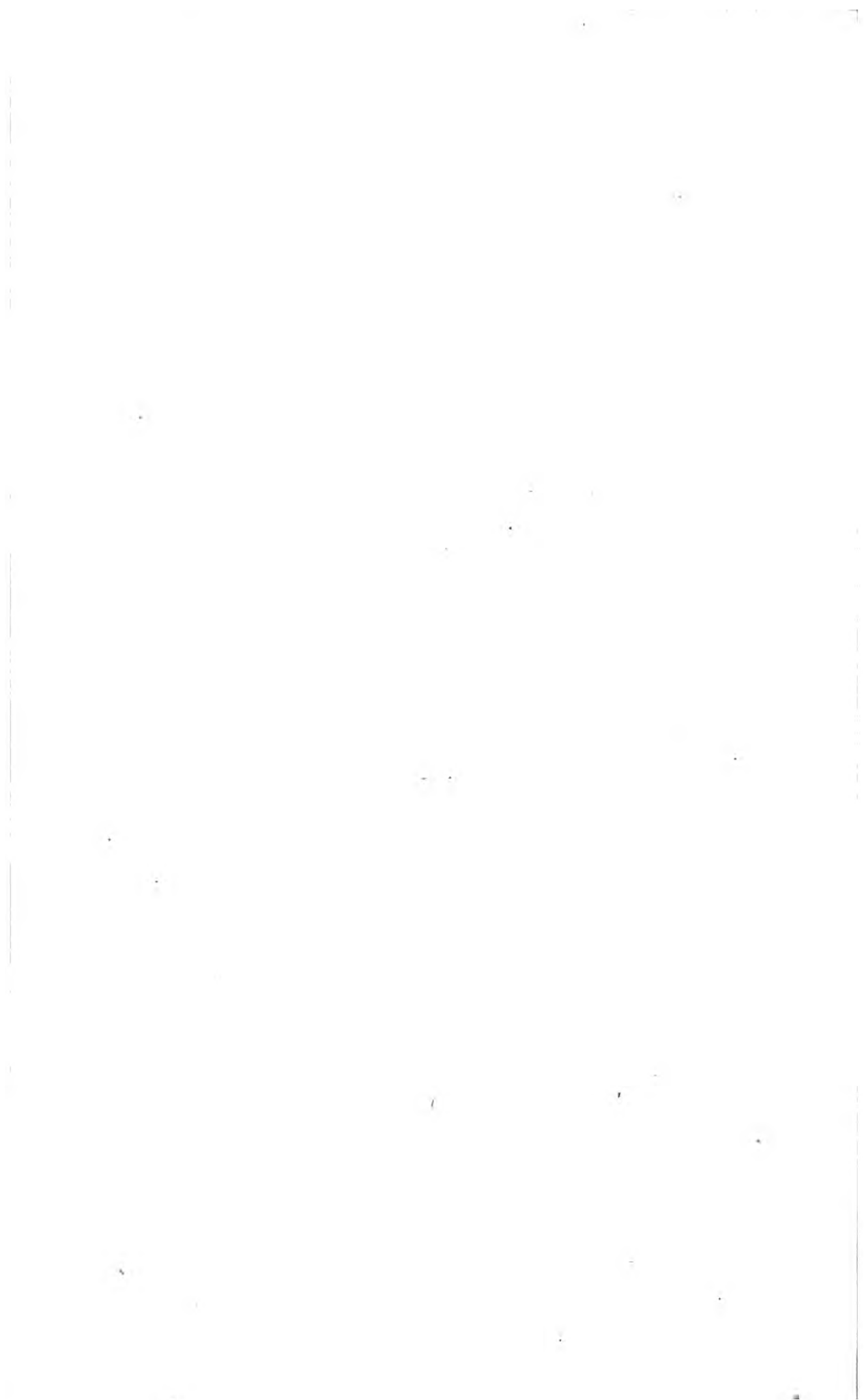
With respect to the place of his birth, we cannot produce better authority than his own. In his Testament of Love, he calls himself a Londoner, and speaks of the city of London as the place of his "kindly engendrure." In spite of this evidence, however, Leland, who is more than usually incorrect in his account of Chaucer, reports him to have been born in Oxfordshire or Berkshire. The time of his birth is, by general consent, fixed in the second year of Edward III, 1328, and the foundation of this decision seems to have originally been an inscription on his tomb, signifying that he died in 1400 at the age of seventy-two. Collier fixes his death in 1440; but he is so generally accurate, that this may be supposed an error of the press. Phillips is more unpardonable; for, contrary to all evidence, he instances the reigns of Henry IV, V, and VI, as those in which Chaucer flourished.

His biographers have provided him with education both at Oxford and Cambridge, a circumstance which we know occurred in the history of other scholars of that period, and is not therefore improbable. But in his Court of Love, which was composed when he was about eighteen, he speaks of himself under the name of Philogenet of Cambridge, clerk. Mr. Tyrwhitt, while he does not think this a decisive proof that he was really educated at Cambridge, is willing to admit it as a strong argument that he was not educated at Oxford. Wood, in his Annals (Vol. I. Book I, 484) gives a report, or rather tradition, that "when Wickliff was guardian or warden of Canterbury college, he had to his pupil the famous poet called Jeffry Chaucer (father of Thomas Chaucer of Ewelme in Oxfordshire, Esq.) who, following the steps of his master, reflected much upon the corruptions of the clergy." This is something like evidence, if it could be depended on: at least it is preferable to the conjecture of Leland, who supposes Chaucer to have been educated at Oxford merely because he had before supposed that he was born either in Oxfordshire or Berkshire. Those who contend for Cambridge, as the place of his education, fix upon Solere's hall, which he has described in his story of the Miller of Trompington, but *Solere's hall* is merely a corruption of *Soler hall*, i. e. a hall with an open gallery, or *solere window*¹. The advocates for Oxford are inclined to place him in Merton college, because his contemporaries Strode and Occleve were of that college. It is equally a matter of conjecture that he was first educated at Cambridge, and afterwards at Oxford.

Wherever he studied, we have sufficient proofs of his capacity and proficiency. He appears to have acquired a very great proportion of the learning of his age, and became a master of its philosophy, poetry, and such languages as formed the intercourse between men of learning. Leland says he was "*acutus dialecticus, dulcis rhetor, lepidus poeta, gravis philosophus, ingeniosus mathematicus, denique sanctus theologus.*" It is equally probable that he courted the Muses in those early days, in which he is said to have been encouraged by Gower, although there are some grounds for supposing that his acquaintance with Gower was of a later date.

After leaving the university, we are told that he travelled through France and the Netherlands; but the commencement and conclusion of these travels are not specified. On his return, he is said to have entered himself of the Middle Temple, with a view to study the municipal law; but even this fact depends chiefly on a record, without a date, which, Speght informs us, a Mr. Buckley had seen, where Geoffrey Chaucer was fined

¹ Mr. Warton thinks that Solere-Hall was Aula Solarii, the hall with the upper story, at that time a sufficient circumstance to distinguish and denominate one of the academical hospitia. *Hist. of Poetry*, vol. i. p. 432, note n. C.



“two shillings for beating a Franciscane frier in Fleet Street.” Leland speaks of his frequenting the law colleges after his travels in France, and perhaps before. Mr. Tyrwhitt doubts these travels in France, and has indeed satisfactorily proved that Leland’s account of Chaucer is full of inconsistencies. Leland is certainly inconsistent as to dates; but from the evidence Chaucer gave in a case of chivalry², we have full proof of one journey in France, although the precise period cannot be fixed.

Whatever time these supposed employments might have occupied, we discover, at length, with tolerable certainty, that Chaucer betook himself to the life of a courtier, and probably with all the accomplishments suited to his advancement in the court of a monarch, who was magnificent in his establishment, and munificent in his patronage of learning and gallantry. At what period of life he obtained a situation here is uncertain. The writer of the life prefixed to Urry’s edition supposes he was not more than thirty, because his first employment was in quality of the king’s page; but the first authentic memorial, respecting Chaucer at court, is the patent in Rymer, 41 Edward III. by which that king grants him an annuity of twenty marks³, by the title of *Valettus noster*⁴, “our yeoman,” and this occurred when Chaucer was in his thirty-ninth year. Several mistakes have arisen respecting these grants, from his biographers not understanding the meaning of the titles given to our poet. Speght mentions a grant from king Edward four years later than the above, in which Chaucer is styled *valettus hospitii*, which he translates *grome of the pallace*; sinking our author, Mr. Tyrwhitt observes, as much too low, as his biographer in Urry’s edition had raised him too high, by translating the same words *gentleman of the king’s privy chamber*. Valet or yeoman was, according to the same acute scholiast, the intermediate rank between *squier* and *grome*.

It would be of more consequence to be able to determine what particular merits were rewarded by this royal bounty. Mr. Tyrwhitt can find no proof, and no ground for supposing that it was bestowed on Chaucer for his poetical talents, although it is almost certain that he had distinguished himself, as a poet, before this time. The Assemblée of Foules, the Complaint of the Blacke Knight, and the translation of the Roman de la Rose, were all composed before 1367, the era which we are now considering. What strengthens Mr. Tyrwhitt’s opinion of the king’s indifference to Chaucer’s poetry, is his appointing him, a few years after, to the office of comptroller of the custom of wool, with an injunction that “the said Geffrey write with his own hand his rolls touching the said office in his own proper person, and not by his substitute.” The inferences, however, which Mr. Tyrwhitt draws from this fact, viz. “that his majesty was either totally insensible of our author’s poetical talents, or at least had no mind to encourage him in the cultivation or exercise of them,” savours rather too much of the conjectural spirit which he professes to avoid. He allows that, notwithstanding what he calls “the petrifying quality, with which these custom-house accounts might be expected to operate upon Chaucer’s genius,” he probably wrote his House of Fame while he was in that office. Still less candid to the memory of Edward, will these inferences appear, if we apply modern notions of patronage to the subject; for in what manner could the king

² Life prefixed to Urry’s Edit. sig. d. C.

³ About two hundred pounds of our money. C.

⁴ Mr. Ellis observes that this office, “by whatever name we translate it, might be held even by persons of the highest rank, because the only science then in request among the nobility was that of etiquette, the knowledge of which was acquired, together with the habits of chivalry, by passing in graduation through the several menial offices about the court.” Ellis’s Specimens, vol. i. p. 202.

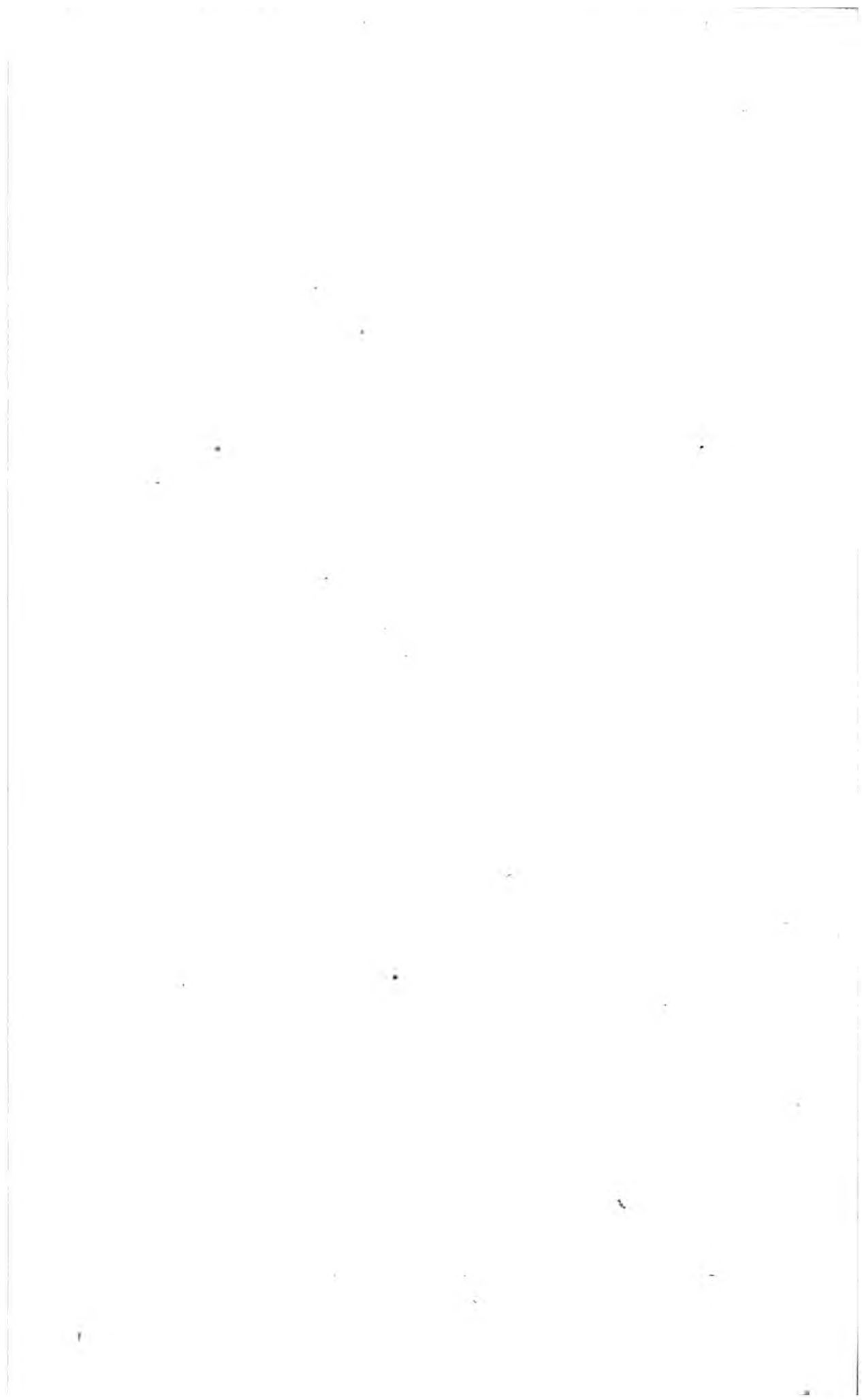
more honourably encourage the genius of a poet, than by a civil employment which rendered him easy in his circumstances, and free from the suspicious obligations of a pension or sinecure ?

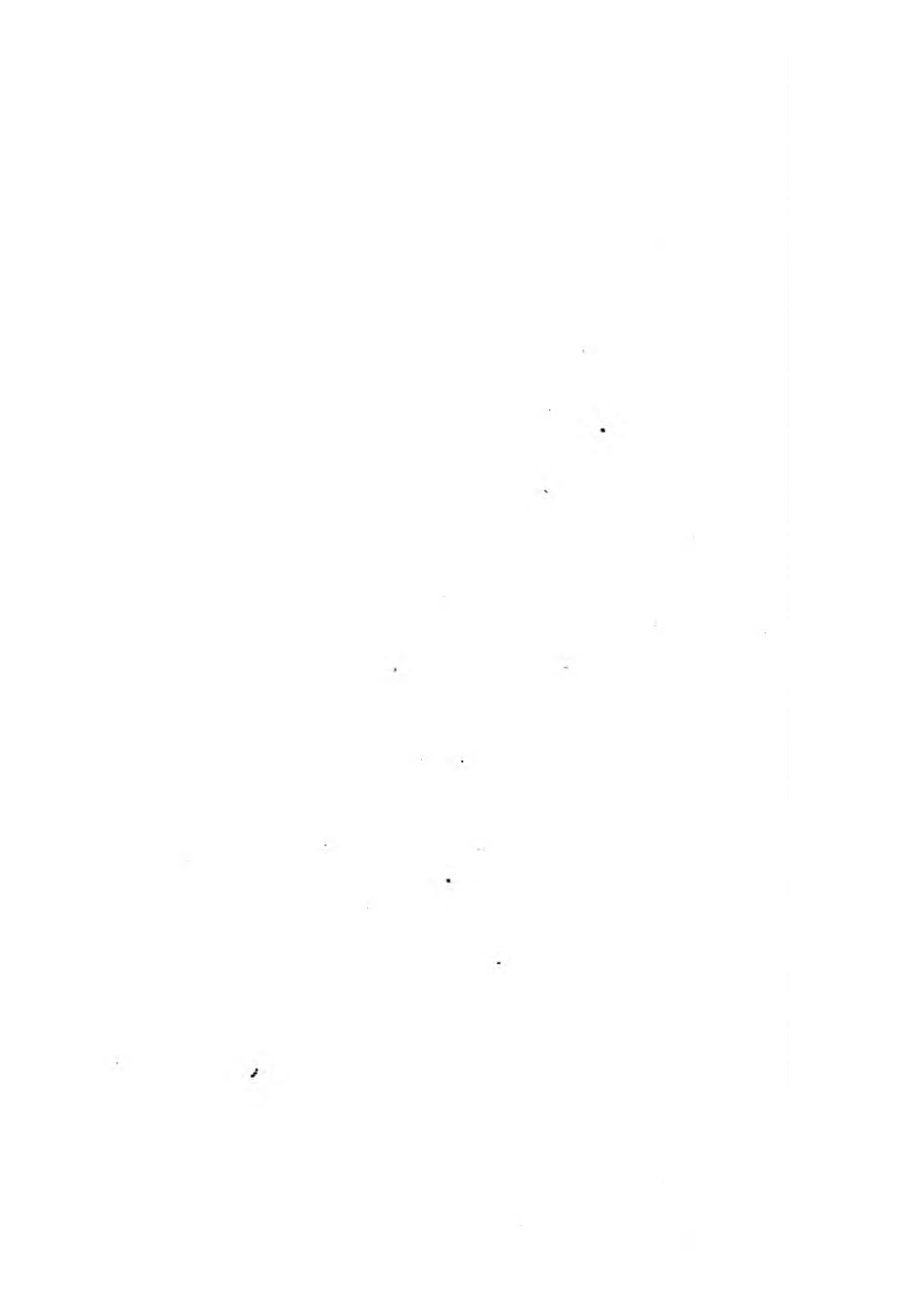
Chaucer's biographers have given some particulars of his life before the office just mentioned was conferred upon him. He is said to have been in constant attendance on his majesty, and when the court was at Woodstock, resided at a square stone house near the park gate, which long retained the name of Chaucer's house ; and many of the rural descriptions in his works have been traced to Woodstock park, the favourite scene of his walks and studies. But besides his immediate office near the royal person, he very early attached himself to the service of the celebrated John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, and from this connection his public life is to be dated.

The author of the life prefixed to Urry's edition observes that the duke's "ambition requiring all the assistance of learned men, to give it a plausible appearance, induced him to do Chaucer many good offices, in order to engage him in his interest." But although the assistance of learned men to an ambitious statesman is very well understood in modern times, it is somewhat difficult to conceive what advantage could be derived from such assistance before the invention of printing. It is more probable that the duke had a relish for the talents and taste of Chaucer, and became his patron upon the most liberal grounds, although Chaucer might afterwards repay his favours by exposing the conduct of the clergy, who were particularly obnoxious to the duke by their monopoly of power.

One effect of this connection was the marriage of our poet, by which he became eventually related to his illustrious patron. John of Gaunt's duchess, Blanche, entertained in her service one Catharine Rouet, daughter of sir Payne or Pagan Rouet, a native of Hainault, and Guion king at arms for that country. This lady was afterwards married to sir Hugh Swinford, a knight of Lincoln, who died soon after his marriage, and on his decease his lady returned to the duke's family, and was appointed governess of his children. While in this capacity she yielded to the duke's solicitations, and became his mistress. She had a sister, Philippa, who is stated to have been a great favourite with the duke and duchess, and by them, as a mark of their high esteem, recommended to Chaucer for a wife. He accordingly married her about the year 1360, when he was in his thirty-second year, and this step appears to have increased his interest with his patron, who took every opportunity to promote him at court. Besides the instances already given, we are told that he was made shield-bearer to the king, a title at that time of great honour, the shield-bearer being always next the king's person, and generally, upon signal victories, rewarded with military honours. But here again his biographers have mistaken the meaning of the courtly titles of those days. In the 46 Edward III, 1372, the king appointed him envoy, with two others, to Genoa, by the title of *scutifer noster*, "our squier." *Scutifer* and *armiger*, according to Mr. Tyrwhitt, are synonymous terms with the French *escurier*; but Chaucer's biographers, thinking the title of *squier* too vulgar, changed it to shield-bearer, as if Chaucer had the special office of carrying the king's shield. With respect to the nature of this embassy to Genoa, biography and history are alike silent, and from that silence, the editor of the Canterbury tales is inclined to doubt whether it ever took place, or whether he had that opportunity of visiting Petrarch, an event which his biographers refer to the same period.

But although history is silent as to the object of Chaucer's embassy, his biographers have endeavoured to supply the defect, by conjecturing that it might be for the purpose





of hiring ships for the king's navy. They find that in those days, though we frequently made great naval armaments, we had but very few ships of our own, and were therefore obliged to hire them from the free states either of Germany or Italy. Having thus discovered an object for Chaucer's embassy, they represent it as being so successful, that the king bestowed new marks of favour upon him; and it is certain, whatever might be the cause, that at the distance of two years, namely in the forty-eighth year of that reign, 1374, he had a grant for life of a pitcher of wine daily; and in the same year a grant, which has already been mentioned, during pleasure, of the offices of comptroller of the custom of wools, and comptroller of the *parva custuma vinorum*, &c. in the port of London. This office, we are told, he filled with great integrity, as well as advantage, his conduct not being in the least tainted with any of those connivings or frauds which had become frequent in the customs, and were detected towards the latter end of Edward's reign.

About a year after this, the king granted to him the wardship of sir Edmund Staplegate's heir, for which he received £104, and in the next year some forfeited wool to the value of £71. 4s. 6d^s. These, and his other pecuniary advantages, are said to have raised his income to a thousand pounds *per annum*, a prodigious sum at that time, but quite incredible. Whatever his income was, however, he informs us in the Testament of Love, it enabled him to live with dignity and hospitality. In the last year of king Edward III, 1377, he was sent to France, with sir Guichard Dangle, and Richard Stan, or Sturry, to treat of a marriage between the prince of Wales, Richard, and a daughter of the French king. Such is Froissart's account; but the English historians Hollingshed and Barnes inform us, that the principal object of his mission was to complain of some infringement of the truce concluded with the French, and that although they were not very successful in their remonstrance, it produced some overtures towards the said marriage, and this ended in a new treaty.

Whichever of these accounts is the true one, it appears that this was the last political employment which Chaucer filled, although he did not cease to take an interest in the measures of his patron, the duke of Lancaster. On the accession of Richard II. in 1377, his annuity of twenty marks was confirmed, and another annuity of twenty marks granted to him in lieu of the daily pitcher of wine. He was also confirmed in his office of comptroller.

When Richard II. succeeded his grandfather, he was but eleven years of age, and his uncle the duke of Lancaster was consequently entrusted with the chief share in the administration of public affairs. One of his first measures was to solemnize the young king's coronation with great pomp, previously to which a court of claims was established to settle the demands of those who pretended to have a right to assist at the ceremony. Among these Chaucer claimed, in right of his ward, who was possessed of the manor of Billington in Kent; and this was held of the crown, by the service of presenting to the king three maple cups on the day of his coronation; but this claim was contested, and if it had not, is remote enough from the kind of information which it would be desirable to obtain respecting Chaucer. All we know certainly of this period is, that the duke of Lancaster still preserved his friendship for our poet, and probably was the means of the grants just noticed having been renewed on the accession of the young king.

Soon after this, however, Chaucer's biographers concur in the fact that he experienced

¹ The sums have been calculated to amount to £3500. of our money. See Ellis, vol. i. p. 204.

a very serious reverse in his affairs, which in the second year of Richard II. were in such disorder, that he was obliged to have recourse to the king's protection in order to screen him from the importunities of his creditors. But as to the cause of this embarrassment, we find no agreement among those who have attempted a narrative of his life. Some think his distresses were temporary, and some that they were artificial. Among the latter, the writer of his life in the *Biographia Britannia*, hazards a supposition which is at least ingenious. He is of opinion that Chaucer about this time found out a rich match for his son Thomas, namely Maud, the second daughter of sir John Burghershe, and in order to obtain this match he was obliged to bring his son somewhat upon a level with her, by settling all his landed estates upon him : and that this duty might occasion those demands which put him under the necessity of obtaining the king's protection. The conclusion of the matter, according to this conjecture, must be, that Chaucer entailed his estates upon his son, and found means to put off his creditors, a measure not very honourable. But we are still in the dark as to the nature of those debts, or the existence of his landed property, and it is even doubtful whether this Thomas Chaucer was his son⁶. We know certainly of no son but Lewis, who was born in 1381, twenty-one years after his marriage, if the date of his marriage, before given, be correct.

It appears from the historians of Richard II. that the duke of Lancaster, about the third or fourth year of that monarch's reign, began to decline in political influence, if not in popularity, owing to the encouragement he had given to the celebrated reformer Wickliffe, whom he supported against the clergy, to whose power in state affairs he had long looked with a jealous eye. Chaucer's works show evidently that he concurred with the duke in his opinion of the clergy, and have procured him to be ranked among the few who paved the way for the reformation. Yet when the insurrection of Wat Tyler was imputed to the principles of the Wicklevites, the duke, it is said, withdrew his countenance from them, and disclaimed their tenets. Chaucer is likewise reported to have altered his sentiments ; but the fact, in neither case, is satisfactorily confirmed. The duke of Lancaster condemned the doctrines of those followers of Wickliff only, who had excited public disturbances ; and Chaucer was so far from abandoning his former notions⁷, that, in 1384, he exerted his utmost interest in favour of John Comberton, commonly called John of Northampton, when about to be re-chosen mayor of London. Comberton was a reformer on Wickliff's principles, and so obnoxious on that account to the clergy, that they stirred up a commotion on his re-election, which the

⁶ "After reading, in the circumstantial accounts of Chaucer's biographers, that he was married in 1360 to Philippa Rouet, by whom he had issue Thomas Chaucer and other children, we are surprised to learn that it is doubtful whether Thomas Chaucer was his son ; that the earliest known evidence of his marriage is a record of 1381, in which he receives a half-year's payment of an annuity of ten marks, granted by Edward III. to his wife as one of the maids of honour (*domicellae*) lately in the service of queen Philippa ; that the name of Philippa Rouet does not occur in the list of these maids of honour, but that Chaucer's wife may possibly have been Philippa Pykard ; that, notwithstanding this, his said wife was certainly sister to Catharine Rouet, who married a sir John Swynford, and was the favourite mistress, and ultimately the wife, of the duke of Lancaster ; and that Chaucer himself mentions no son but Lewis, whom he states to have been born in 1381, a date which seems to agree with the record above mentioned, and to place the date of his marriage in 1380." Ellis's *Specimens*, vol. i. p. 206.

⁷ His biographers say he died a member of the church of Rome. Fox claims him as a reformer. *Acts and Monuments*, vol. ii. p. 42, edit. 1684. Dr. Warton (*Essay on Pope*) observes that Chaucer, as well as Dante, asserted that the church of Rome was Antichrist, a notion Bossuet has taken much pains to refute. C.

king was obliged to quell by force. The consequence was, that some lives were lost, Comberton was imprisoned, and strict search was made after Chaucer, who contrived to escape first to Hainault, then to France, and finally to Zealand. The date of his flight has not been ascertained; but it was no doubt upon this occasion that he lost his place in the customs.

While in Zealand, he maintained some of his countrymen, who had fled thither upon the same account, by sharing the money he brought with him, an act of liberality which soon exhausted his stock. In the meantime, the partizans of his cause, whom he left at home, contrived to make their peace, not only without endeavouring to procure a pardon for him, but without aiding him in his exile, where he became greatly distressed for want of pecuniary supplies. Such ingratitude, we may suppose, gave him more uneasiness than the consequences of it; but it did not lessen his courage, as he soon ventured to return to England. On this he was discovered, and committed to the Tower, where, after being treated with great rigour, he was promised his pardon if he would disclose all he knew, and put it in the power of government to restore the peace of the city. His former resolution appears now to have forsaken him, or, perhaps, indignation at the ungrateful conduct of his associates induced him to think disclosure a matter of indifference. It is certain that he complied with the terms offered; but we are not told what was the amount of his confession, or what the consequences of it were to others, or who they were whom he informed against. We know only that he obtained his liberty, and that an oppressive share of blame and obloquy followed. To alleviate his regret for this treatment, and partly to vindicate his conduct, he now wrote the Testament of Love; and although this piece, from want of dates, and obscurity of style, is not sufficient to form a very satisfactory biographical document, it at least furnishes the preceding account of his exile and return.

The decline of the duke of Lancaster's interest contributed not a little to aggravate the distresses of our author, and determined him to take leave of the court and its intrigues, and retire in pursuit of that happiness which his years and habits of reflection demanded. With this view, it was necessary to dispose of those pensions which had been bestowed upon him in the former reign, and which, notwithstanding his espousing a cause not very acceptable to the sovereign, had been continued to him in the present. Accordingly, in May 1388, he obtained his majesty's license to surrender his two grants of twenty marks each, in favour of one John Scalby. After this he retired to his favourite Woodstock, and, according to Speght, employed a part of his time in revising and correcting his writings, and enjoying the calm pleasures of rural contemplation. It is thought that the composition of his Canterbury Tales was begun about this time, 1389, when he was in the sixty-first year of his age, and when, contrary to the usual progress of mind, his powers seem to have been in their fullest vigour^s.

It was not long after this period that the duke of Lancaster resumed his influence at court; but whether Chaucer was enabled to profit by this reverse, or whether he had seen too much of political revolutions to induce him to quit his retreat, his biographers are doubtful. It appears, however, probable that the duke of Lancaster had it still as much in his will as in his power to befriend him, and it might be owing to his grace's influence

^s Chaucer's fame rests chiefly on his Canterbury Tales, and Dryden's on his Fables, both written towards the decline of life. Dryden was seventy, and Chaucer before he finished what we have of his Tales, was probably not much less. C.

that, in 1389, we find him clerk of the works at Westminster, and in the following year at Windsor and other palaces; but Mr. Tyrwhitt doubts whether these offices were sufficient to indemnify him for the loss of his place in the customs. In the Testament of Love, he complains of "being berafte out of dignitie of office, in which he made a gatheringe of worldly godes;" and in another place he speaks of himself as "once glorious in worldly wefulnessse, and having such godes in welthe as maken men riche." All this implies a very considerable reverse of fortune, although Speght's tradition of his having been possessed of "lands and revenues to the yearly value almost of a thousand pounds," remains utterly incredible.

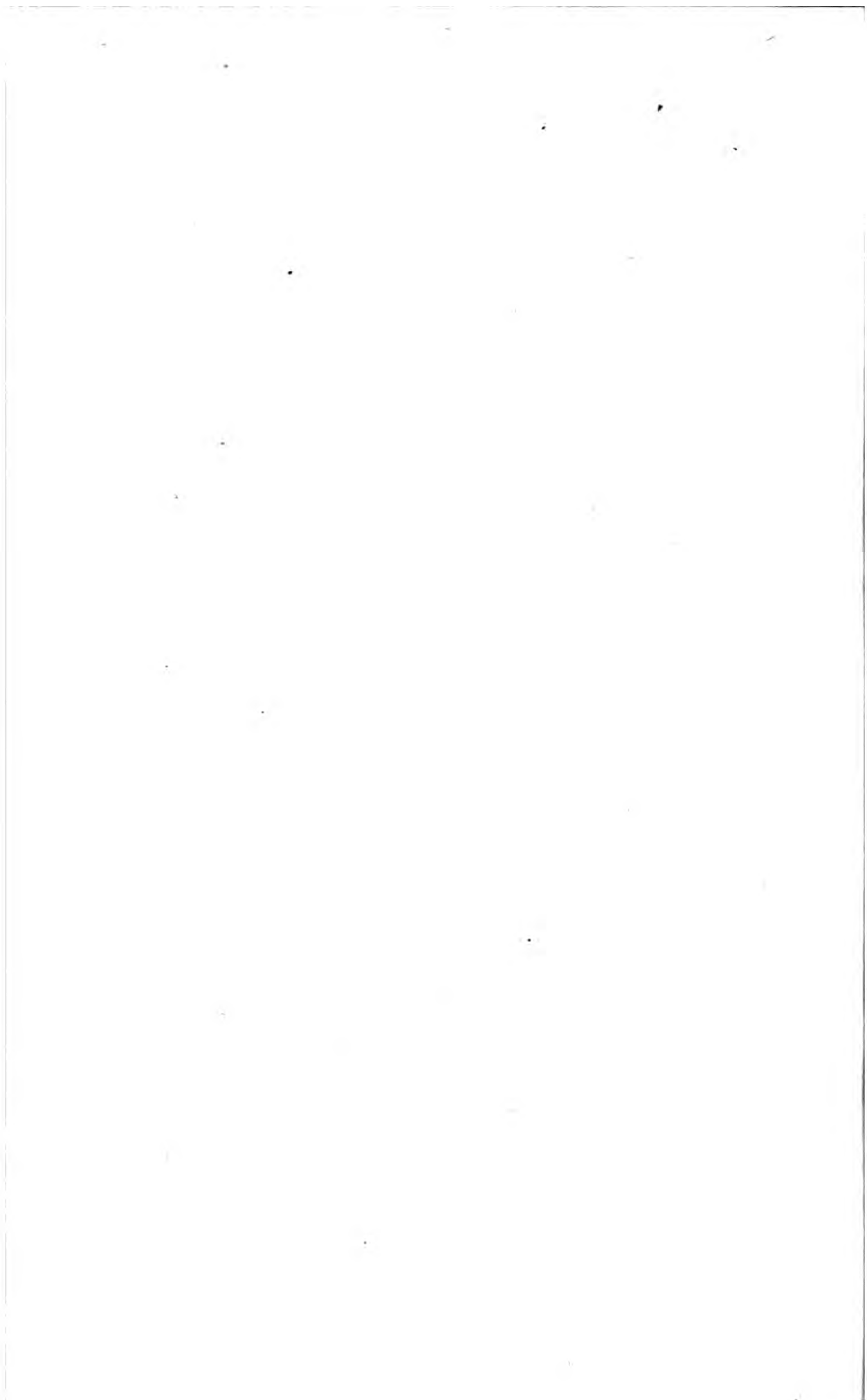
But the king's favour did not end with the offices just mentioned. In the 17th year of his reign, 1394, he granted to Chaucer a new annuity of twenty pounds; in 1398, his protection for two years; and, in 1399, a pipe of wine annually. From the succeeding sovereign Henry IV. he obtained, in the year last mentioned, a confirmation of his two grants of £20 and of the pipe of wine, and at the same time an additional grant of an annuity of forty marks. Notwithstanding this dependent state of his affairs, some of his biographers represent him as possessed of Dunnington castle in Berkshire, which he must have purchased at the time he received the above annuity of twenty pounds, for up to that date (1394) it was in the possession of sir Richard Abberbury. Mr. Tyrwhitt remarks that the tradition which Evelyn notices in his *Sylva* of an oak in Dunnington park called *Chaucer's oak*, may be sufficiently accounted for, without supposing that it was planted by Chaucer himself, as the castle was undoubtedly in the hands of Thomas Chaucer for many years.

During his retirement in 1391, he wrote his learned treatise on the Astrolabe, for the use of his son Lewis, who was then ten years old, and this is the only circumstance respecting his family which we have on his own, or any authority that deserves credit. Leland, Bale, and Wood, place this son under the tuition of his father's friend Nicholas Strode (whom, however, they call Ralph) of Merton college Oxford; but if Wood could trace Strode no further than the year 1370, it is impossible he could have been the tutor of Chaucer's son in 1391.

The accounts we have of Chaucer's latter days are extremely inconsistent. His biographers bring him from Woodstock to Dunnington castle, and from that to London, to solicit a continuation of his annuities, in which he found such difficulties as probably hastened his end. Wood, in his *Annals*, informs us that although he did not repent at the last of his reflections on the clergy, "yet of that he wrote of love and baudery it grieved him much on his death-bed: for one that lived shortly after his time, maketh report⁹, that when he saw death approaching, he did often cry out, 'Woe is me, woe is me, that I cannot recall and annull those things which I have written of the base and filthy love of men towards women: but alas they are now continued from man to man, and I cannot do what I desire.'" To this may be added, that the affecting lines "Gode Counsaile of Chaucer," are said to have been made by him when on his death-bed, and in great anguish.

It seems generally agreed that he died Oct. 25, 1400, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, in the great south cross-aisle. The monument to his memory was erected above a century and a half after his decease by Nicholas Brigham, a gentleman of Oxford, a poet and a warm admirer of our author. It stands at the north end of a magnificent

⁹ Th. Gascoigne in 2 parte Dictionar. Theolog. p. 377. MS. "Fuit idem Chawserus pater Thomæ Chawseri Armigeri qui Thomas sepult. in Nuhelm juxta Oxoniam.



recess, formed by four obtuse foliaged arches, and is a plain altar, with three quatrefoils, and the same number of shields. The inscription, and figures on the back, are almost obliterated ¹⁰.

Although Chaucer has been generally hailed as the founder of English poetry and literature, the extent of the obligations which English poetry and literature owe to him has not been decidedly ascertained. The improvement he introduced in language and versification has been called in question, not only by modern but by ancient critics. The chief faults attributed to him, are the mixture of French in all his works, and his ignorance of the laws of versification.

A formal discussion of these points is not intended in the present sketch; but some notice of them becomes necessary, and the student of Chaucer need not be told that very little of this kind can be attempted without following the track of the judicious Tyrwhitt.

With respect to the mixture of French words and phrases in Chaucer's writings, it must be observed that the French language was prevalent in this country several centuries before his time. Even previously to the Conquest, the Normans had made it a fashion to speak French in the English court, and from thence it would naturally be adopted by the people; but after the Conquest this became the case in a much greater proportion ¹¹. It was a matter of policy in the conqueror to introduce his own language, and it would soon become a matter of interest in the people to acquire it. We uniformly find that where new settlers appear, even without the superiority of conquerors, the aborigines find it convenient to learn their language. The history of king William's conquest and policy, shows that his language must soon extend over a kingdom which he had parcelled out among his chiefs as the reward of their valour and attachment. One step which he took must above all others have contributed to naturalize the French language. He supplied all vacancies in the ecclesiastical establishment with Norman clergy; and if, with all this influence, the French language did not universally prevail, it must at least have interfered in a very considerable degree with the use of the native tongue. At schools, French and Latin were taught together in the reign of Edward III. and it was usual to make the scholars construe their Latin lessons into French, a practice which must have greatly retarded the progress of the native tongue towards refinement. Some check, indeed, appears to have been given to this in the reign of the same sovereign; but the proceedings in parliament, and the statutes, continued to be promulgated in French for a far longer period. t

These circumstances have been advanced to prove that Chaucer ought not to be blamed for introducing words and phrases, with which his countrymen were familiar long before his time, and which they probably considered as elegancies. If Chaucer was taught at school, as other youths were, it is plain that he must have learned French while he was learning his mother-tongue, and was taught to give a preference to the former by making it the vehicle of translation.

The language, therefore, in use in Chaucer's days, among the upper classes, and by all that would be thought learned, was a Norman-Saxon dialect, introduced by the influx and influence of a court of foreigners, and spread wherever that influence extended. Journeys to France were also common, for the purposes of improvement in such accomplishments as were then fashionable; and this kind of intercourse, which is always in

¹⁰ Malcolm's *Londinium*, vol. i. p. 149. C.

¹¹ But see Mr. Ellis's chap. ii. of the *Introduction to his Specimens*, vol. i. p. 58. C.

favour of the country visited, would perhaps tend to introduce a still greater proportion of French phraseology. But still the foundation was laid at home, in the prevailing modes of education.

With respect to the progress of this mixture, and the effects of the accessions which in the course of nearly three centuries the English language received from Normandy, the reader is referred to Mr. Tyrwhitt's very elaborate essay on the language and versification of Chaucer, prefixed to his edition of the *Canterbury Tales*. It appears, upon the whole, that "the language of our ancestors was complete in all its parts, and had served them for the purposes of discourse, and even of composition in various kinds, long before they had any intimate acquaintance with their French neighbours." They had therefore "no call from necessity, and consequently no sufficient inducement, to alter its original and radical constitutions, or even its customary forms." And accordingly, notwithstanding the prevalence of the French from the causes already assigned, it is proved by Mr. Tyrwhitt, that "in all the essential parts of speech, the characteristic features of the Saxon idiom were always preserved: and the crowds of French words, which from time to time were imported, were themselves made subject, either immediately, or by degrees, to the laws of that same idiom."

As to what English poetry owes to Chaucer, Dr. Johnson has pronounced him "the first of our versifiers who wrote poetically;" and Mr. Warton has proved, "that in elevation and elegance, in harmony and perspicuity of versification, he surpasses his predecessors in an infinite proportion: that his genius was universal, and adapted to themes of unbounded variety; that his merit was not less in painting familiar manners with humour and propriety, than in moving the passions, and in representing the beautiful or the grand objects of nature with grace and sublimity. In a word, that he appeared with all the lustre and dignity of a true poet, in an age which compelled him to struggle with a barbarous language, and a national want of taste: and when to write verses at all, was regarded as a singular qualification"¹².

The Saxons had a species of writing which they called poetry, but it did not consist of regular verses, nor was it embellished by rhyme. The Normans it is generally thought were the first who introduced rhyme or metre, copied from the Latin rythmical verses, a bastard species, which belongs to the declining period of the Latin language. To deduce the history of versification from the earliest periods is impossible, for want of specimens. Two very trifling ones only are extant before the time of Henry II. namely, a few lines in the Saxon Chronicle upon the death of William the Conqueror, and a short canticle, which, according to Matthew Paris, the blessed Virgin was pleased to dictate to Godric, an hermit near Durham. In the time of Henry II. Layamon, a priest, translated chiefly from the French of Wace, a fabulous history of the Britons, entitled *Le Brut*, which Wace himself, about the year 1155, had translated from the Latin of Geffry of Monmouth. In this there are a number of short verses, of unequal lengths, but exhibiting something like rhyme. But so common was it to write, whatever was written, in French or Latin, that another century must be passed over before we come to another specimen of English poetry, if we except the *Ormulum*¹³, and a moral piece upon old age¹⁴, &c. noticed by Mr. Tyrwhitt, and which he conjectures to have been written earlier than the reign of Henry II.

¹² Hist. of Poetry, vol. i. p. 457.

¹³ A paraphrase on the Gospel histories, written by one Orme or Ormin. C.

¹⁴ A specimen of this is given in Dr. Johnson's Introduction to his Dictionary. C.

Between the latter end of the reign of Henry III. and the time of Chaucer, the names of many English rhymers have been recovered, and many more anonymous writers, or rather translators, of romances flourished about this period; but they neither invented nor imported any improvements in the art of versification. Their labours, however, are not to be undervalued. Mr. Warton has very justly remarked, that "the revival of learning in most countries appears to have first owed its rise to translation. At rude periods the modes of original thinking are unknown, and the arts of original composition have not yet been studied. The writers, therefore, of such periods are chiefly and very usefully, employed in imparting the ideas of other languages into their own." But as many of these metrical romances were to be accompanied by music, they were less calculated for reading than recitation. o/

These authors, whatever their merit, were the only English poets, if the name may be used, when Chaucer appeared; and the only circumstances under which he found the poetry of his native tongue, were, that rhyme was established very generally; that the metres in use were principally the long Iambic, consisting of not more than fifteen, nor less than fourteen syllables, and broken by a cæsura at the eighth syllable; the Alexandrine metre consisting of not more than thirteen syllables, nor less than twelve, with a cæsura at the sixth: the octosyllable metre; and the stanza of six verses, of which the first, second, fourth, and fifth, were in complete octosyllable metre; and the third and last catelectic, i. e. wanting a syllable or even two.

Such were the precedents which a new poet might be expected to follow. But Chaucer composed nothing in the first or second of these four metres. In the fourth he wrote only the Rime of Sir Thopas, which being intended to ridicule the vulgar romances, seems to have been purposely written in their favourite metre. In the third, or octosyllable metre¹⁵, he wrote several of his compositions, particularly an imperfect translation of the Roman de la Rose, the House of Fame, the Dethe of the Duchesse Blanche, and his Dreame, all which are so superior to the versification of his contemporaries and predecessors, as to establish his pre-eminence, and prove that the reformer of English poetry had at length appeared.

But the most considerable part of his works entitle him to the honour of an inventor. They are written in the heroic metre, and there is no evidence of any English poet having used it before him. He is not indeed to be considered as the inventor in the most extensive sense, as the heroic metre had been cultivated by Dante, Petrarch, and Boccace; but he was the first to introduce it into his native language, in which it has been employed by every poet of eminence to the present day. r/

The age of Chaucer had little of what we now understand by refinement. The public shows and amusements were splendid and sumptuous, they had all somewhat of a dramatic air: at their tournaments and carousals, the principal personages acted parts, with some connection of story, borrowed from the events, and conducted according to the events and manners of chivalry. But the national manners and habits were barbarous, unless where the restraint of religion repressed public licentiousness; and, with respect to taste, the spectacles in which the higher orders indulged, were such as would not now be tolerated, perhaps, even at a fair. What influence they had on public decency, it is difficult to ascertain. In Chaucer's time there was indeed no *public*, because there was

¹⁵ So called by Mr. Tyrwhitt, (whose opinions are chiefly followed on this subject) from what he apprehends to have been its original form, in which although it often consists of nine and sometimes of ten syllables, the eighth is always the last accented syllable. C.

little or nothing of that communication of sentiment and feeling which we owe to the invention of printing.

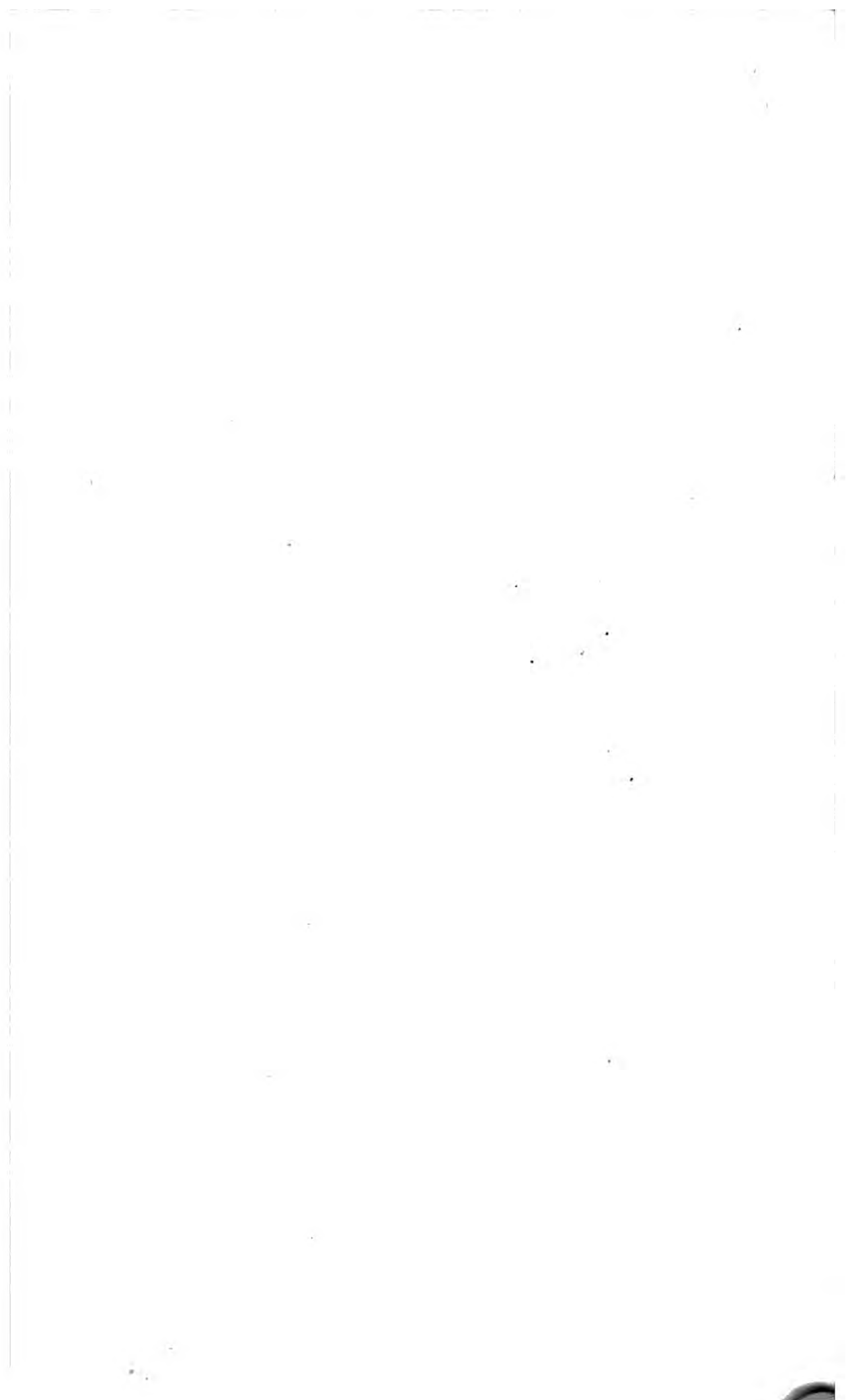
In such an age it is the highest praise of Chaucer, that he stood alone, the first poet who improved the art by melody, fancy, and sentiment, and the first writer, whether we consider the quantity, quality, or variety of his productions. It is supposed that many of his writings are lost. What remain, however, and have been authenticated with tolerable certainty, must have formed the occupation of a considerable part of his life, and been the result of copious reading and reflection. Even his translations are mixed with so great a portion of original matter, as, it may be presumed, required time and study, and those happy hours of inspiration which are not always within command. The principal obstruction to the pleasure we should otherwise derive from Chaucer's works, is that profusion of allegory which pervades them, particularly the *Romaunt of the Rose*, the *Court of Love*, *Flower and Leaf*, and the *House of Fame*. Pope, in the first edition of his *Temple of Fame*, prefixed a note in defence of allegorical poetry, the propriety of which cannot be questioned, but which is qualified with an exception which applies directly to Chaucer. "The incidents by which allegory is conveyed, should never be spun too long, or too much clogged with trivial circumstances, or little particularities." But this is exactly the case with Chaucer, whose allegories are spun beyond all bounds, and clogged with many trivial and inappropriate circumstances.

For upwards of seventy years after the death of Chaucer, his works remained in manuscript. Mr. Tyrwhitt enumerates twenty-six manuscripts which he had an opportunity of consulting in the various public and private libraries of London, Oxford, Cambridge, &c. but of all these he is inclined to give credit to only five. Caxton, the first English printer, selected Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, as one of the earliest productions of his press, but happened to copy a very incorrect manuscript. This first edition is supposed by Mr. Ames to have been printed in 1475 or 1476. There are only two complete copies extant, one in his Majesty's library, and another in that of Merton college, both without preface or advertisement. About six years after, Caxton printed a second edition, and in his preface apologized for the errors of the former. No perfect copy of this edition is known. Ames mentions an edition "collected by William Caxton, and printed by Wynken de Worde, 1495, folio," but the existence of this is doubtful. Pynson printed two editions, the first, it is conjectured, in 1491, and the second in 1526, which was the first in which a collection of some other pieces of Chaucer was added to the *Canterbury Tales*. Ames notices editions in 1520 and 1522, but had not seen them, nor are they now known.

In 1532, an edition was printed by Thomas Godfrey, and edited by Mr. Thynne, which Mr. Tyrwhitt informs us was considered, notwithstanding its many imperfections, as the standard edition, and was copied, not only by the booksellers, in their several editions of 1542, 1546, 1555, and 1561, but also by Mr. Speght in 1597 and 1602. Speght's edition was reprinted in 1687, and in 1721 appeared Mr. Urry's, who, while he professed to compare a great many manuscripts, took such liberties with his author's text as to render this by far the worst edition ever published.

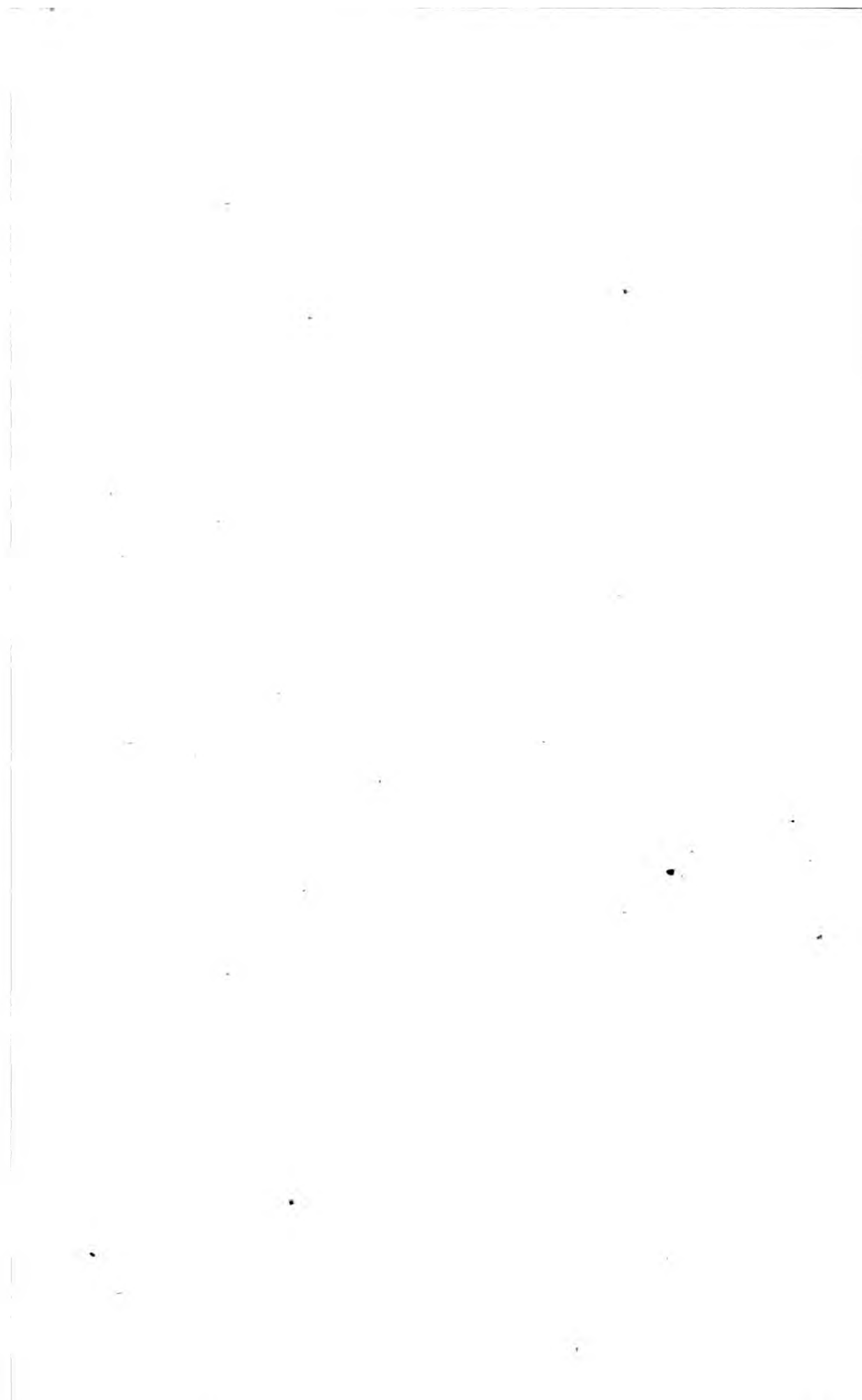
There is an interleaved copy of Urry's edition in the British Museum, presented by Mr. William Thomas, a brother of Dr. J. Thomas¹⁶ who furnished the preface, and the

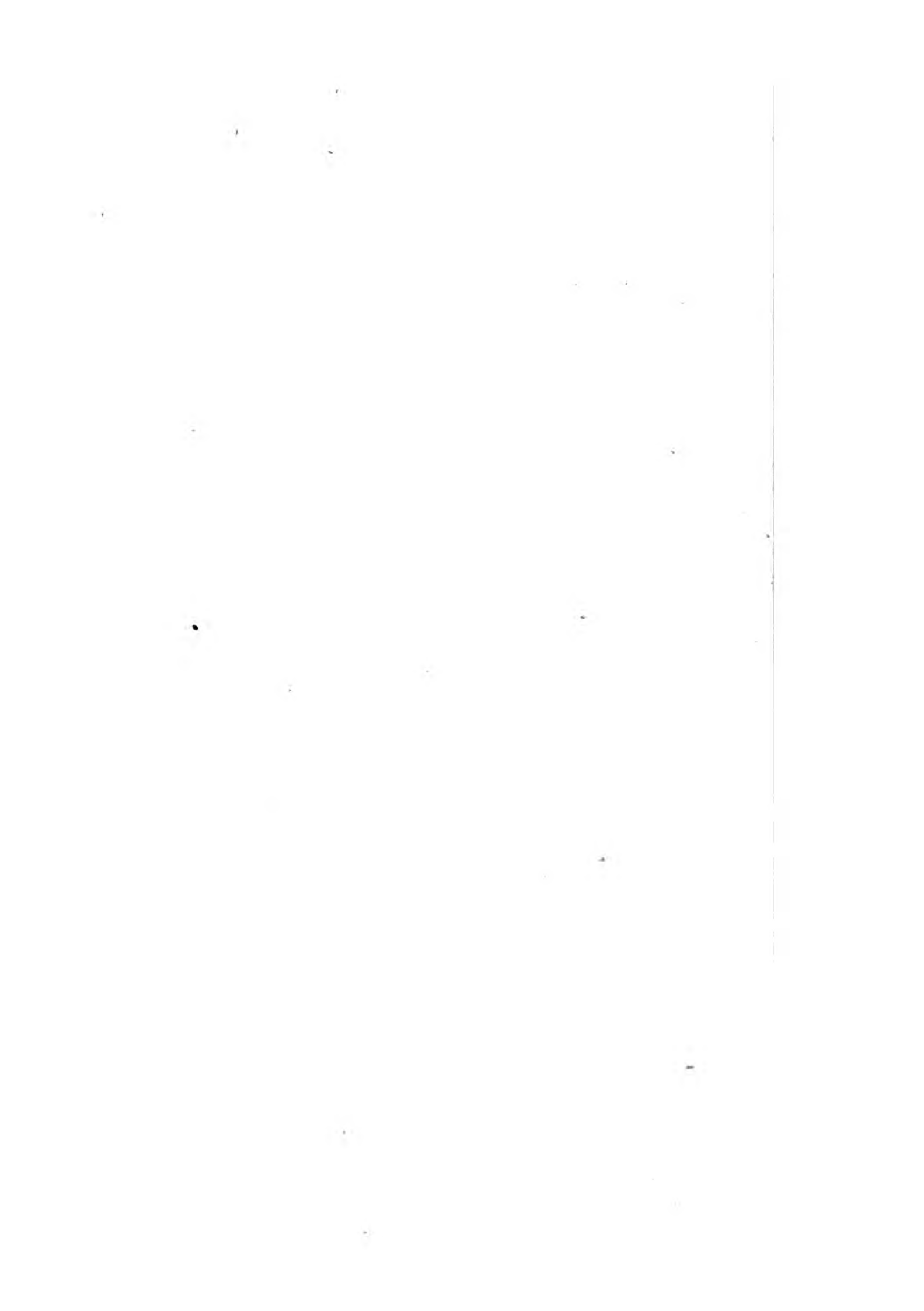
¹⁶ Rector of Presteigne in Radnorshire. A large paper copy of this edition, with the same MSS. notes as that in the Museum, and a presentation copy from Dr. Thomas, was lately purchased by the present writer. C.



Glossary, and upon whom the charge of publishing devolved after Mr. Urry's death. This copy has many manuscript notes, and corrections. From one of them we learn that the life of Chaucer was very incorrectly drawn up by Mr. Dart, and corrected and enlarged by Mr. William Thomas ; and from another, that bishop Atterbury prompted Urry to this undertaking, but " did by no means judge rightly of Mr. Urry's talents in this case, who though in many respects a most worthy person, was not qualified for a work of this nature." Dr. Thomas undertook to publish it, at the request of bishop Smalridge. In the Harleian collection is a copy of an agreement between William Brome, executor to Urry, the dean and chapter of Christ Church, and Bernard Lintot the bookseller. By this it appears that it was Urry's intention to apply part of the profits towards building Peckwater Quadrangle. Lintot was to print a thousand copies on small paper at £1. 10s. and two hundred and fifty on large paper at £2. 10s. It does not appear that this speculation succeeded. Yet the edition, from its having been printed in the Roman letter, the copiousness of the glossary, and the ornaments, &c. continued to be the only one consulted, until the publication of the *Canterbury Tales* by Mr. Tyrwhitt in 1775. This very acute critic was the first who endeavoured to restore a pure text by the collation of MSS. a labour of vast extent, but which must be undertaken even to greater extent, before the other works of Chaucer can be published in a manner worthy of their author. In the present edition, in which a more regular arrangement has been attempted, Mr. Tyrwhitt's text has been followed for the *Canterbury Tales* ; and for the remainder of his works, the black letter editions, which, with all their faults, are more to be depended on than Urry's.

Mr. Warton laments that Chaucer has been so frequently considered as an old, rather than a good poet, and recommends the study of his works. Mr. Tyrwhitt, since this advice was given, has undoubtedly introduced Chaucer to a nearer intimacy with the learned public, but it is not probable that he can ever be restored to popularity. His language will still remain an unsurmountable obstacle with that numerous class of readers to whom poets must look for universal reputation. Poetry is the art of pleasing ; but pleasure, as generally understood, admits of very little that deserves the name of study.

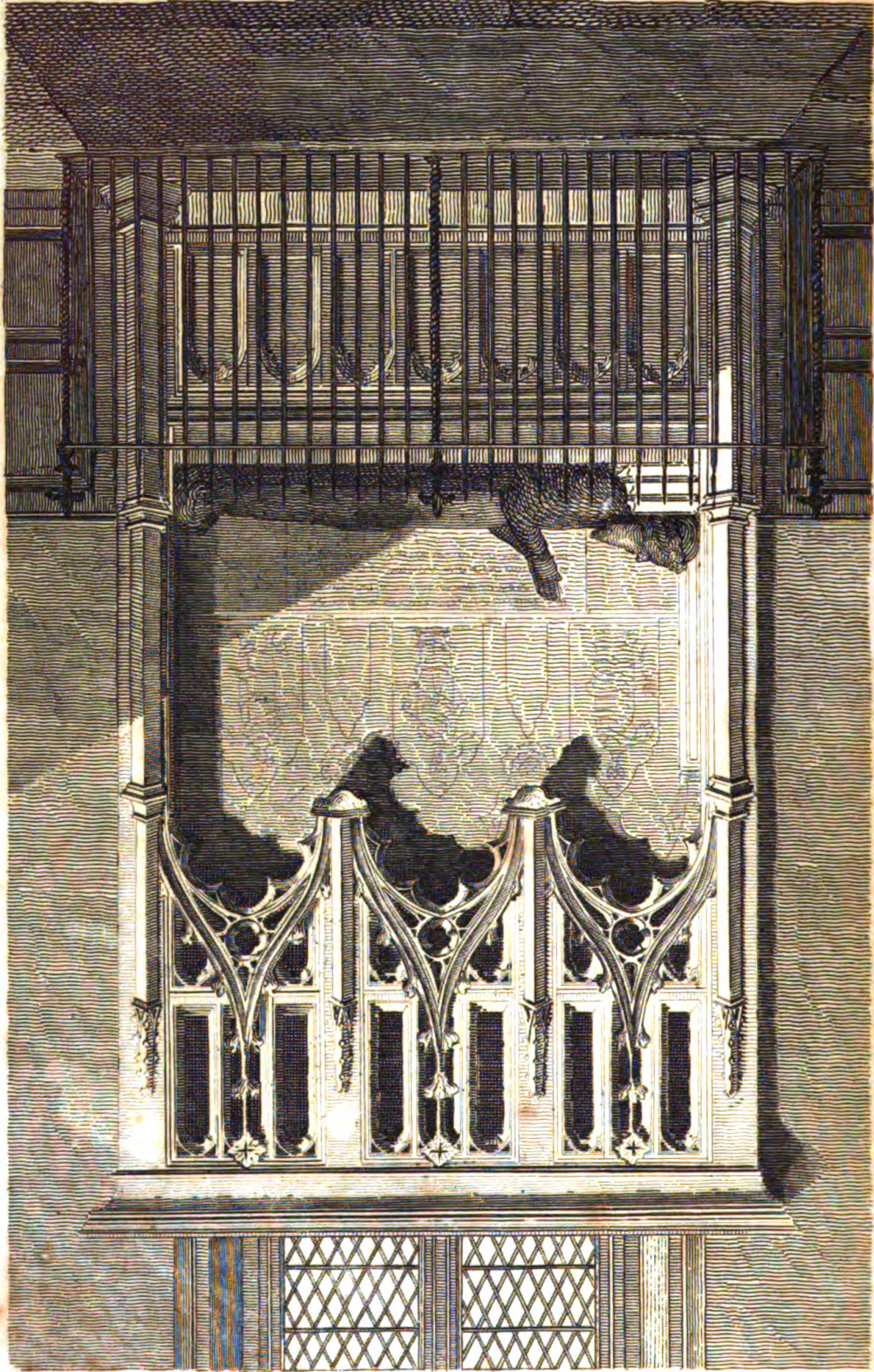






Gower's Monument, in St Saviour's Church, Southwark

Drawn & Engraved by J. Nash



From Messrs King, 1830. P. 11. Pl. 402

THE
LIFE OF JOHN GOWER.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

AMONG the few poets who flourished in the first periods of our poetical history, the name of Gower has been handed down to us with peculiar honour, as fit to be coupled with that of Chaucer, to whom some have supposed he was prior in his attempt to meliorate our poetry, and others have asserted that he was the early guide and encourager of Chaucer's studies. Yet there is not much in this, were it confirmed, to detract from Chaucer's superiority. Gower might have possessed the judgment of a critic, without the fire of a poet; and it is not uncommon for a pupil to excel his master. We know, however, too little of the history of either, to believe that they stood in these relations, and the point of precedency must still remain conjectural, while we have more substantial evidence that as an English poet Gower was far inferior to his great contemporary.

John Gower is supposed to have been born before Chaucer, but of what family, or in what part of the kingdom, is uncertain. Leland was informed that he was of the ancient family of the Gowers of Stitenham, in Yorkshire, and succeeding biographers appear to have taken for granted what that eminent antiquary gives only as a report. Other particulars from Leland are yet more doubtful, as that he was a knight and some time chief justice of the Common Pleas, for no information respecting any judge of that name can be collected either in the reign of Edward II. during which he is said to have been on the bench, or afterwards. Weaver asserts that he was of a Kentish family, and, in Caxton's edition of the *Confessio Amantis*, he is said to have been a native of Wales.

He appears, however, to have studied law, and was a member of the Society of the Middle Temple, where it is supposed he met with, and acquired the friendship of Chaucer. The similarity of their studies, and their taste for poetry, were not the only bonds of union. Their political bias was nearly the same. Chaucer attached himself to John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, and Gower to Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, both uncles to king Richard II. The tendency of the *Confessio Amantis* in censuring the vices of the clergy coincides with Chaucer's sentiments, and although

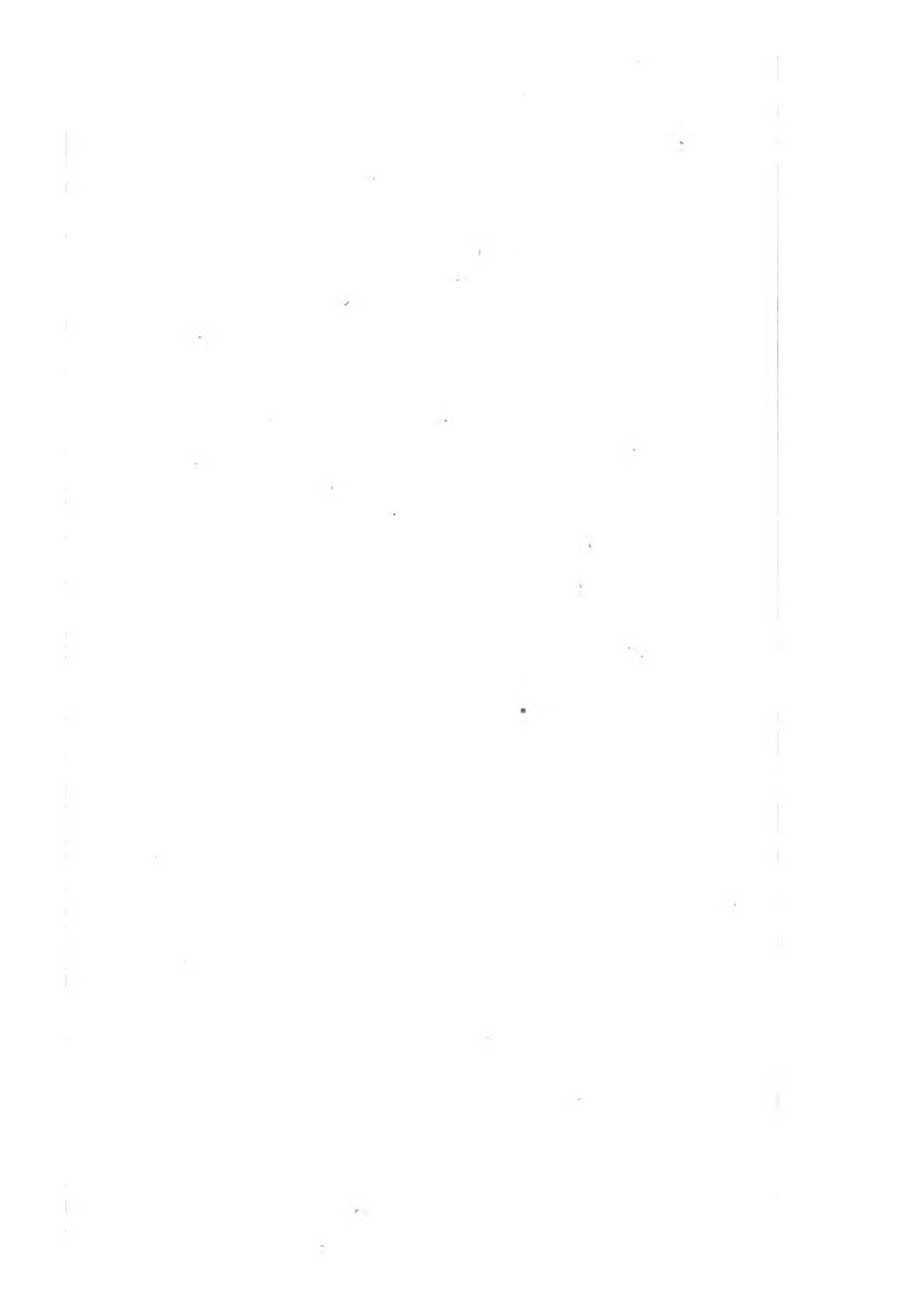
we have no direct proof of those mutual arguings and disputes between them, which Leland speaks of, there can be no doubt that their friendship was at one time interrupted. Chaucer concludes his *Troilus and Cresside*, with recommending it to the corrections of "moral Gower," and "philosophical Strode;" and Gower, in the *Confessio Amantis*, introduces Venus praising Chaucer "as her disciple and poete." Such was their mutual respect; its decline is less intelligible. Mr. Tyrwhit says, "If the reflection (in the Prologue to the *Man of Lawes Tale*, ver. 4497.) upon those who relate such stories as that of Canace, or of Apollonius Tyrius, was levelled at Gower, as I very much suspect, it will be difficult to reconcile such an attack to our notions of the strict friendship which is generally supposed to have subsisted between the two bards. The attack too at this time must appear the more extraordinary on the part of our bard, as he is just going to put into the mouth of his *Man of Lawe* a tale, of which almost every circumstance is borrowed from Gower. The fact is, that the story of Canace is related by Gower in his *Confessio Amantis*, B. iii. and the story of Apollonius (or Apollynus, as he is there called) in the viiith book of the same work: so that, if Chaucer really did not mean to reflect upon his old friend, his choice of these two instances was rather unlucky."

"There is another circumstance," says the same critic, "which rather inclines me to believe, that their friendship suffered some interruption in the latter part of their lives. In the new edition of the *Confessio Amantis*, which Gower published after the accession of Henry IV. the verses in praise of Chaucer (fol. 190. b. col. 1. ed. 1532.) are omitted. See MS. Harl. 3869. Though perhaps the death of Chaucer at that time had rendered the compliment contained in those verses less proper than it was at first, that alone does not seem to have been a sufficient reason for omitting them, especially as the original date of the work, in the 16 of Richard II. is preserved. Indeed the only other alterations, which I have been able to discover, are towards the beginning and end, where every thing which had been said in praise of Richard in the first edition, is either left out or converted to the use of his successor¹."

As this is the only evidence of a difference between Chaucer and Gower, we may be allowed to hope that no violent loss of friendship ensued. As to their poetical studies, it is evident that there was a remarkable difference of opinion and pursuit. Chaucer had the courage to emancipate his muse from the trammels of French, in which it was the fashion to write, and the genius to lay the foundation of English poetry, taste and imagination. Gower, probably from his closer intimacy with the French and Latin poets, found it more easy to follow the beaten track. Accordingly the first of his works was written in French measure. It is entitled "*SPECULUM MEDITANTIS, Un Traitteé, selonc les aucteurs, pour ensampler les amants marietz, au fins qils la foy de lour seints espousailles, pourront per fine loyalte garder, et al honeur de Dieu salvement tener.*" Of this, which is written in Ten Books, there are two copies in the Bodleian library. It is a compilation of precepts and examples from a variety of authors, in favour of the chastity of the marriage bed.

His next work is in Latin, entitled *VOX CLAMANTIS*. Of this there are many copies extant; that in the Cottonian library is more fully entitled "*Johannis Gower Chronica, quæ Vox Clamantis dicitur, siue Poema de Insurrexione Rusticorum contra ingenuos et nobiles, tempore Regis Richardi II. et De Causis ex quibus talia contingunt*"

¹ Introductory Discourse to the *Canterbury Tales*, § xiv. and note 15. C.



LIFE OF GOWER.

Enormia : libris septem." Some lesser pieces are annexed to this copy, historical and moral. That in the library of All Souls College, Oxford, appears to have been written, or rather dictated, when he was old and blind. It has an epistle in Latin verse prefixed, and addressed in these words; "Hanc epistolam subscriptam corde devoto, misit senex et cæcus Johannes Gower, reuerendissimo in Christo patri ac domino suo principio D. Thomæ Arundel Cantuar. Archiepiscopo, &c. Pr. Successor Thomæ, Thomas humilem tibi do me." This, therefore, is supposed to have been the last transcript he made of this work, probably near the close of his life. Mr. Warton is of opinion that it was first written in 1397.

The *CONFESSIO AMANTIS*, which entitles him to a place among English poets, was finished probably in 1393, after Chaucer had written most of his poems, but before he composed the *Canterbury Tales*. It is said to have been begun at the suggestion of King Richard II. who meeting him accidentally on the Thames, called him into the royal barge, and enjoined him "to booke some new thing." It was first printed by Caxton in 1493. In 1516, Barclay, the author of the *Ship of Fools*, was requested by sir Giles Aylington to abridge or modernize the *Confessio Amantis*. Barclay was then old and infirm, and declined it, as Mr. Warton thinks, very prudently, as he was little qualified to correct Gower. This anecdote, however, shews that Gower had already become obsolete. Skelton, in the *Boke of Philip Sparrow*, says "Gower's Englishe is old." Dean Colet studied Gower as well as Chaucer and Lydgate, in order to improve his style. In Puttenham's age, about the end of the sixteenth century, their language was out of use. In the mean time, a second edition of the *Confessio Amantis* was printed by Berthelette in 1532, a third in 1544, and a fourth in 1554. At the distance of two centuries and a half, a fifth is now presented to the public. The only stain on his character, which Mr. Ritson has urged with asperity, but which is obscurely discernible, is the alteration he made in this work on the accession of Henry IV. and his consequent disrespect for the memory of Richard, to whom he formerly looked up as to a patron.

The only other circumstances of his history are, that he was esteemed a man of great learning, and lived and died in affluence. That he possessed a munificent spirit, we have a most decisive proof in his contributing largely, if not entirely, to the rebuilding of the conventual church of St. Mary Overry, or, as it is now called, St. Saviour's church, Southwark, and afterwards founded a chantry in the chapel of St. John, now used as a vestry.

He appears to have lost his sight in the first year of Henry IV. and did not long survive this misfortune, dying at an advanced age in 1402. He was interred in St. Saviour's church, and a monument was afterwards erected to his memory, which, although it has suffered by dilapidations and injudicious repairs, still retains a considerable portion of antique magnificence. It is of the Gothic style, covered with three arches, the roof within springing into many angles, under which lies the statue of the deceased, in a long purple gown; on his head a coronet of roses, resting on three volumes entitled *Vox Clamantis*, *Speculum Meditantis*, and *Confessio Amantis*. His dress has given rise to some of those conjectures respecting his history which cannot now be determined, as his being a knight, a judge, &c.

Besides these larger works, some small poems are preserved in a MS. of Trinity College, Cambridge, but possessing little or no merit are likely to remain in obscurity².

² Ritson's *Bibliographia Poetica*, art. Gower. C.

Mr. Warton speaks more highly of a collection, contained in a volume, in the library of the marquis of Stafford, of which he has given a long account, with specimens. They are sonnets in French, and certainly are more tender, pathetic, and poetical than his larger poems. As an English poet, however, his reputation must still rest on the *Confessio Amantis*, but although he contributed in some degree to bring about a beneficial revolution in our language, it appears to be the universal opinion of the critics that he has very few pretensions to be ranked among inventors. Mr. Warton's analysis of the *Confessio* will be no improper apology for the meagerness of this biographical article.

The *Confessio Amantis*, "is a dialogue between a lover and his confessor, who is a priest of Venus, and like the mystagogue in the Picture of Cebes, is called GENIUS. Here, as if it had been impossible for a lover not to be a good catholic, the ritual of religion is applied to the tender passion, and Ovid's Art of Love is blended with the breviary. In the course of the confession, every evil affection of the human heart, which may tend to impede the progress or counteract the success of love, is scientifically subdivided: and its fatal effects exemplified by a variety of apposite stories, extracted from classics and chronicles. The poet often introduces or recapitulates his matter in a few couplets of Latin long and short verses. This was in imitation of Boethius.

"This poem is strongly tinctured with those pedantic affectations concerning the passion of love, which the French and Italian poets of the fourteenth century borrowed from the troubadours of Provence. But the writer's particular model appears more immediately to have been John of Meun's celebrated *ROMAUNT DE LA ROSE*. He has, however, seldom attempted to imitate the picturesque imageries, and expressive personifications, of that exquisite allegory. His most striking portraits, which yet are conceived with no powers of creation, nor delineated with any fertility of fancy, are Idleness, Avarice, Micherie or Thieving, and Negligence, the secretary of Sloth. Instead of boldly clothing these qualities with corporeal attributes, aptly and poetically imagined, he coldly, yet sensibly, describes their operations, and enumerates their properties. What Gower wanted in invention, he supplied from his common-place book; which appears to have been stored with an inexhaustible fund of instructive maxims, pleasant narrations, and philosophical definitions. It seems to have been his object to crowd all his erudition into this elaborate performance. Yet there is often some degree of contrivance and art in his manner of introducing and adapting subjects of a very distant nature, and which are totally foreign to his general design.

"In the fourth book, our confessor turns chemist; and discoursing at large on the Hermetic science, develops its principles, and exposes its abuses, with great penetration. He delivers the doctrines concerning the vegetable, mineral, and animal stones, to which Falstaffe alludes in Shakspeare, with amazing accuracy and perspicuity; although this doctrine was adopted from systems then in vogue. In another place he applies the Argonautic expedition in search of the golden fleece, which he relates at length, to the same visionary philosophy. Gower very probably conducted his associate Chaucer into those profound mysteries, which had been just opened to our countrymen by the books of Roger Bacon.

"In the seventh book, the whole circle of the Aristotelic philosophy is explained; which our lover is desirous to learn, supposing that the importance and variety of its speculations might conduce to sooth his anxieties by diverting and engaging his attention. Such a discussion was not very likely to afford him much consolation: especially, as hardly a single ornamental digression is admitted, to decorate a field

naturally so destitute of flowers. Almost the only one is the description of the chariot and crown of the sun; in which the Arabian ideas concerning precious stones are interwoven with Ovid's fictions and the classical mythology.

"Perhaps, in estimating Gower's merit, I have pushed the notion too far, that because he shews so much learning he had no great share of natural abilities. But it should be considered, that when books began to grow fashionable, and the reputation of learning conferred the highest honour, poets became ambitious of being thought scholars: and sacrificed their native powers of invention to the ostentation of displaying an extensive course of reading, and to the pride of profound erudition. On this account, the minstrels of these times, who were totally uneducated, and poured forth spontaneous rhymes in obedience to the workings of nature, often exhibit more genuine strokes of passion and imagination than the professed poets. Chaucer is an exception to this observation: whose original feelings were too strong to be suppressed by books, and whose learning was overbalanced by genius.

"This affectation of appearing learned, which yet was natural on the revival of literature, in our old poets, even in those who were altogether destitute of talents, has left to posterity many a curious picture of manners, and many a romantic image. Some of our ancient bards, however, aimed at no other merit than that of being able to versify: and attempted nothing more, than to cloath in rhyme those sentiments, which would have appeared with equal propriety in prose³."

Mr. Warton's account of the sonnets in the marquis of Stafford's library occurs in the emendations and additions to his second volume.

In this library "there is a thin oblong manuscript on vellum, containing some of Gower's poems in Latin, French, and English. By an entry in the first leaf, in the hand-writing, and under the signature, of Thomas Fairfax, Cromwell's general, an antiquarian, and a lover and collector of curious manuscripts, it appears, that this book was presented by the poet Gower, about the year 1400, to Henry the Fourth; and that it was given by lord Fairfax to his *friend and kinsman* sir Thomas Gower, knight and baronet, in the year 1656. By another entry, lord Fairfax acknowledges to have received it, in the same year, as a present, from *that learned gentleman* Charles Gedde, esq. of St. Andrews in Scotland; and at the end are five or six Latin anagrams on Gedde, written and signed by lord Fairfax, with this title, 'In NOMEN venerandi et annosi Amici sui Caroli Geddei.' By king Henry the Fourth it seems to have been placed in the royal library: it appears at least to have been in the hands of king Henry the Seventh, while earl of Richmond, from the name Rychemond, inserted in another of the blank leaves at the beginning, and explained by this note, 'Liber Henrici septimi tunc Comitis Richmond, propria manu scripsit.' This manuscript is neatly written, with miniated and illuminated initials: and contains the following pieces. I. A Panegyric in stanzas, with a Latin prologue or rubric in seven hexameters, on king Henry the Fourth. This poem, commonly called *Carmen de pacis commendatione in laudem Henrici quarti*, is printed in Chaucer's works (Vol. I. p. 548). II. A short Latin poem in elegiacs on the same subject, beginning, '*Rex cæli deus et dominus qui tempora solus.*' (MSS. Cotton. Otho. D. 1. 4.) This is followed by ten other very short pieces, both in French and English, of the same tendency. III. CINQUANTE BALADES, or fifty sonnets in French. Part of the first is illegible. They are closed with the following epilogue and colophon:

³ Hist. of Poetry, Vol. ii. 1—31 passim. C.

LIFE OF GOWER.

O gentill Engleterre a toi iescrits,
 Pour remembrer ta ioie qest nouvelle,
 Qe te survient du noble Roy Henris,
 Par qui dieus ad redreste ta querele,
 A dieu purceo prient et cil et celle,
 Qil de sa grace, au fort Roi corone,
 Doignit peas, honour, ioie et prosperite.

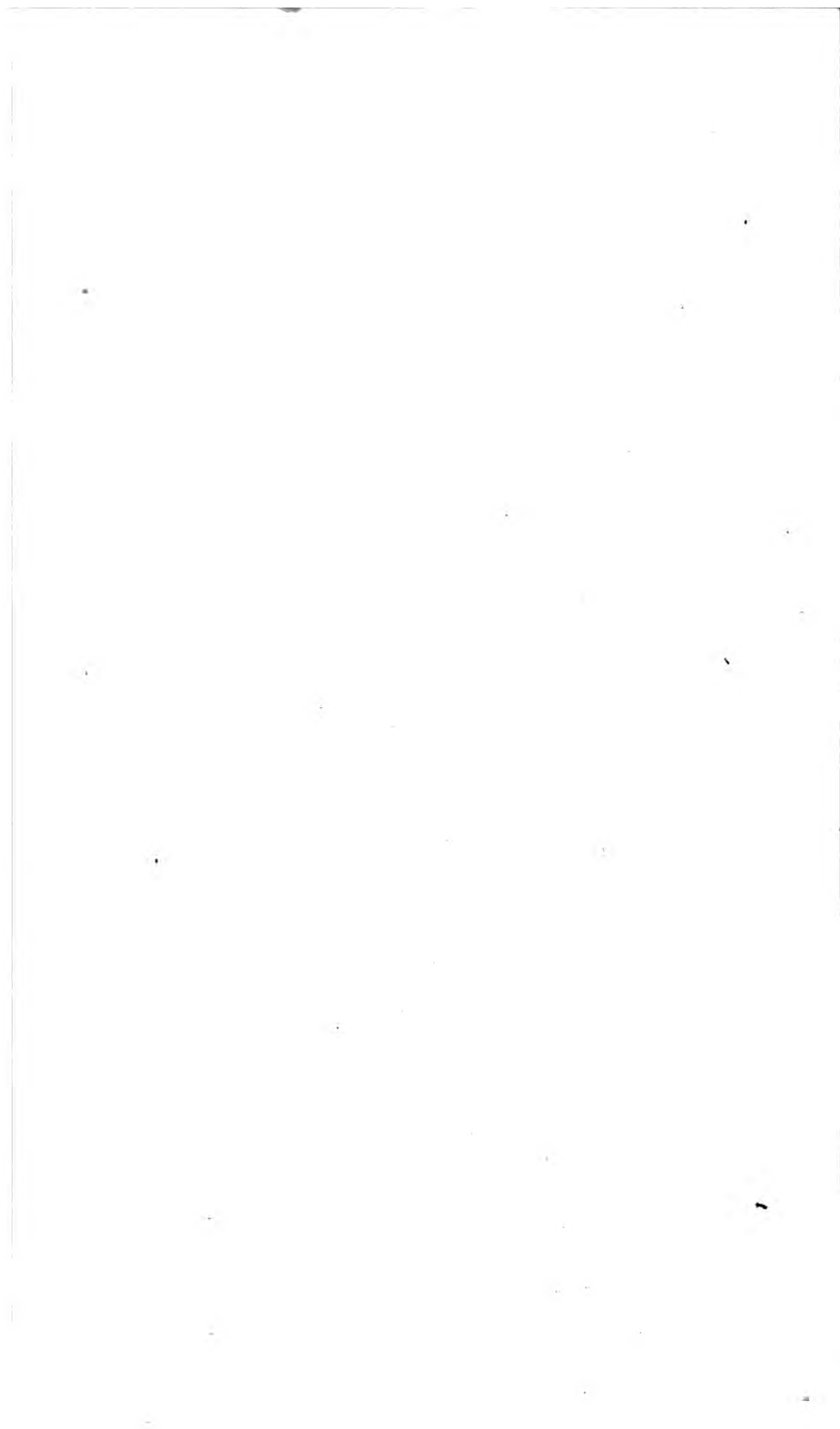
Expliciunt carmina Iohis Gower que Gallice compesita BALADES dicuntur. IV. Two short Latin poems in elegiacs, the first beginning, '*Ecce patet tensus ceci Cupidinis arcus.*' The second, '*O Natura viri potuit quam tollere nemo.*' V. A French poem, imperfect at the beginning, On the Dignity or Excellence of Marriage, in one book. The subject is illustrated by examples. As no part of this poem was ever printed, I transcribe one of the stories.

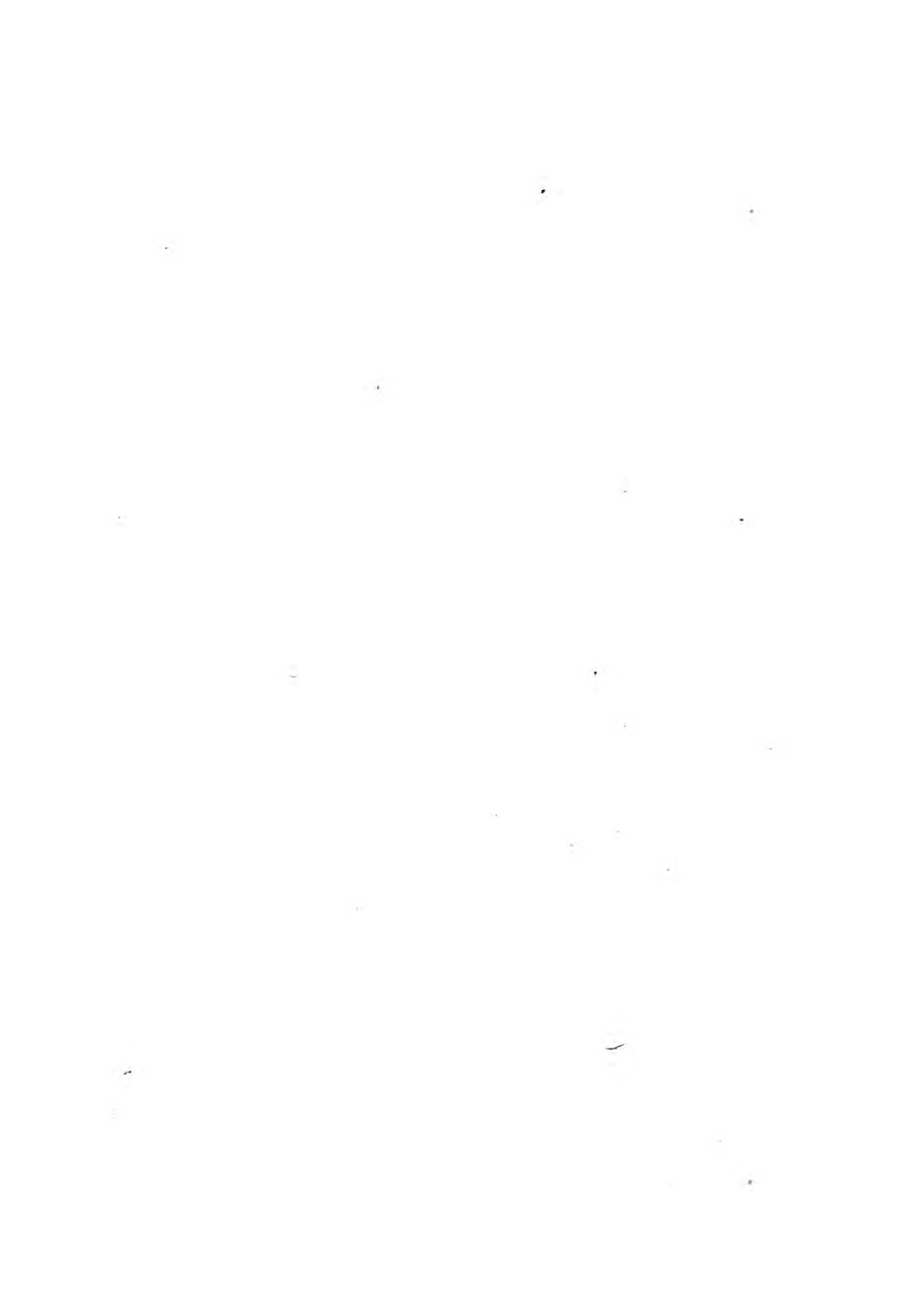
"Qualiter Iason uxorem suam Medeam relinquens, Creusam Creontis regis filiam sibi carnaliter copulavit. Verum ipse cum duobis filiis suis postea infortunatus perit."

Li prus Iason qeu lisle de Colchos
 Le toison dor, pour laide de Medee
 Conquist dont il donour portoit grant loos
 Par tout le monde encourt la renomee
 La joefne dame oue soi ad amenee
 De son pays en Grece et lespousa
 Ffreinte espousaile dieus le vengera.
 Quant Medea meulx qui de etre en repos
 Ove son mari et qelle avoit porte
 Deux fils de luy lors changea le purpos
 El quelle Iason permer fuist oblige
 Il ad del tout Medeam refuse
 Si prist la file au roi Creon Creusa
 Ffrenite espousaile dieux le vengera.
 Medea qot le coer de dolour cloos
 En son corous et ceo fuist grant pite
 Sas joefnes fils queux et jadis en clos
 Veniz ses costees ensi com forseue
 Devant ses oels Iason ele ad tue
 Ceo qeu fuist fait pecche le fortuna
 Ffrenite espousaile dieux le vengera.

Towards the end of the piece, the poet introduces an apology for any inaccuracies, which, as an Englishman, he may have committed in the French idiom.

Al universite de tout le monde
 IOHAN GOWER ceste Balade evoie ;
 Et si ieo nai da Francois faconde,





LIFE OF GOWER.

ix

Pardonetz moi qe ieo de ceo forsvoie.
Ieo suis Englois: si quier par tiele voie
Etre excuse mais quoyque mills endie
L' amonr parfait en dieu se justifie.

It is finished with a few Latin hexameters, viz. " Quis sit vel qualis sacer order connubialis." This poem occurs at the end of two valuable folio manuscripts, illuminated and on vellum, in the Bodleian library, viz. MSS. Fairfax. iii. and NE. F. 8. 9. Also in the manuscript at All Souls college, Oxford, MSS xxvi. And in MSS. Harl. 3869. In all these, and, I believe, in many others, it is properly connected with the *Confessio Amantis* by the following rubric. " Puisqu' il ad dit cidevant en Englois, par voic dessample, la sotie de celui qui par amours aimie par especial, dirra ore apres en Francois a tout le mond en general une traitie selonc les auctors, pour essemplar les amants mariez, &c. It begins

Le creature du tout creature.

" But the Cinquante Balades, or fifty French sonnets above-mentioned, are the curious and valuable part of (this) manuscript. They are not mentioned by those who have written the life of this poet, or have catalogued his works. Nor do they appear in any other manuscript of Gower which I have examined. But if they should be discovered in any other, I will venture to pronounce, that a more authentic, unembarrassed, and practicable copy than this before us, will not be produced: although it is for the most part unpointed, and obscured with abbreviations, and with those misspellings which flowed from a scribe unacquainted with the French language.

" To say no more, however, of the value which these little pieces may derive from being so scarce and so little known, they have much real and intrinsic merit. They are tender, pathetic, and poetical; and place our old poet Gower in a more advantageous point of view than that in which he has hitherto been usually seen. I know not if even any among the French poets themselves, of this period, have left a set of more finished sonnets: for they were probably written when Gower was a young man, about the year 1350. Nor had yet any English poet treated the passion of love with equal delicacy of sentiment, and elegance of composition. I will transcribe four of these Balades as correctly and intelligibly as I am able: although I must confess, there are some lines which I do not exactly comprehend.

BALADE XXXVI.

Pour comparer ce jolif temps de Maij.
Ieo dirrai semblable a Paradis:
Car lors chantoit et merle et papegai,
Les champs sont vert, les herbes sont floris:
Lors est Nature dame du paijs:
Dont Venus poingt l'amant a tiel assai,
Qencoutre amour nest qui poet dire Nai.

LIFE OF GOWER.

Quant tout ceo voi, et que ieo penserai,
 Coment Nature ad tout le mond suspris.
 Dont pour le temps se fait minote et gai,
 Et ieo des autres suis souleni horspris,
 Com al qui sanz amie est vrais amis,
 Nest pas mervaile lors si ieo mesmai,
Qencontre amour nest qui poet dire Nai.

En lieu de rose, urtie cuilleraï,
 Dont mes chapeals ferrai par tiel devis,
 Qe tout ioie et confort ieo lerrai,
 Si celle soule en qui iai mon coer mis,
 Selonc le ponit qe iai sovent requis,
 Ne deigne aleggier les griefs mals qe iai,
Qencontre amour nest qui poet dire Nai.

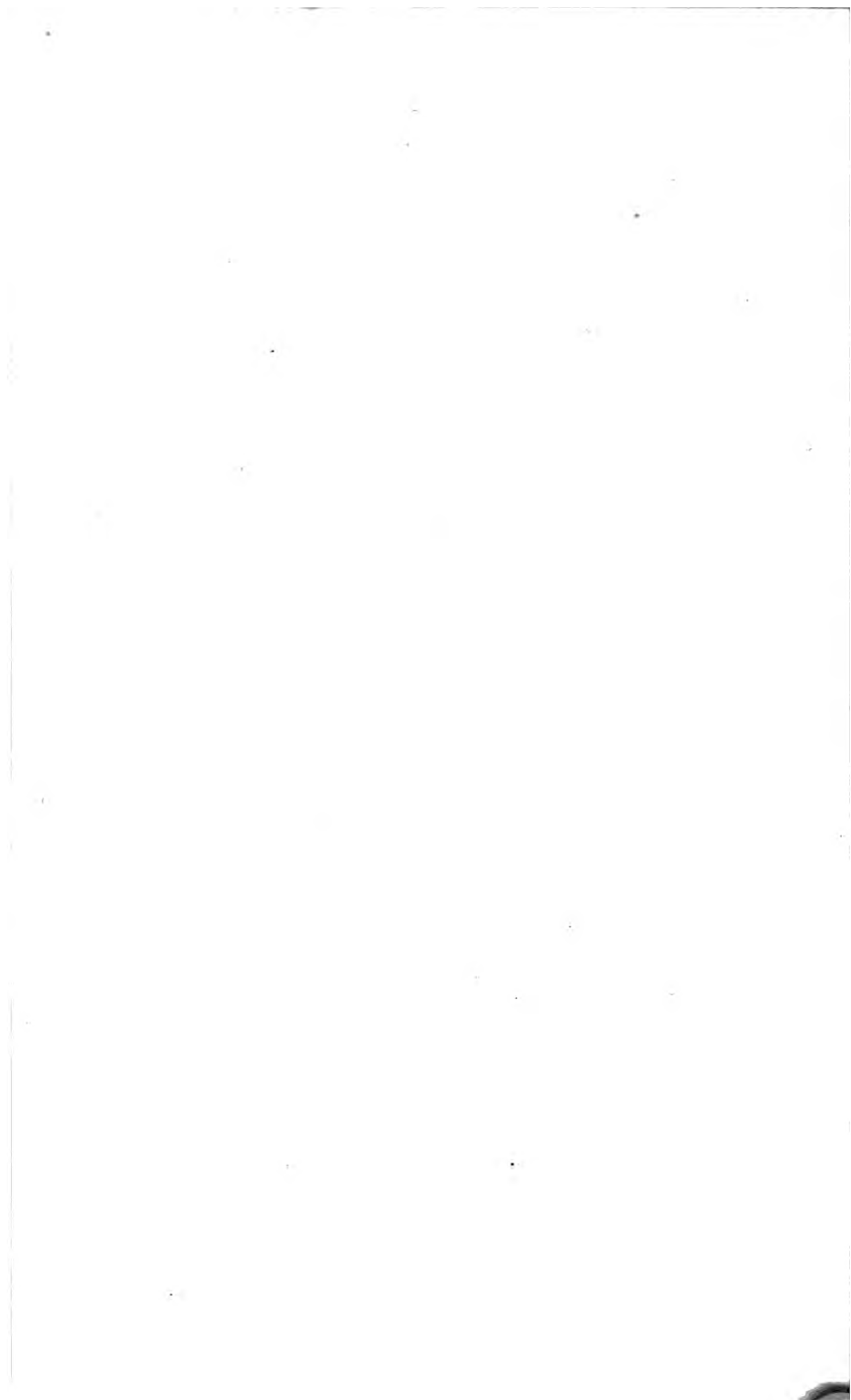
Pour pite querre et pourchacer intris,
 Va ten balade ou ieo tenvoierai,
 Qore en certain ieo lai treshien apris
Qencontre amour nest qui poet dire Nai.

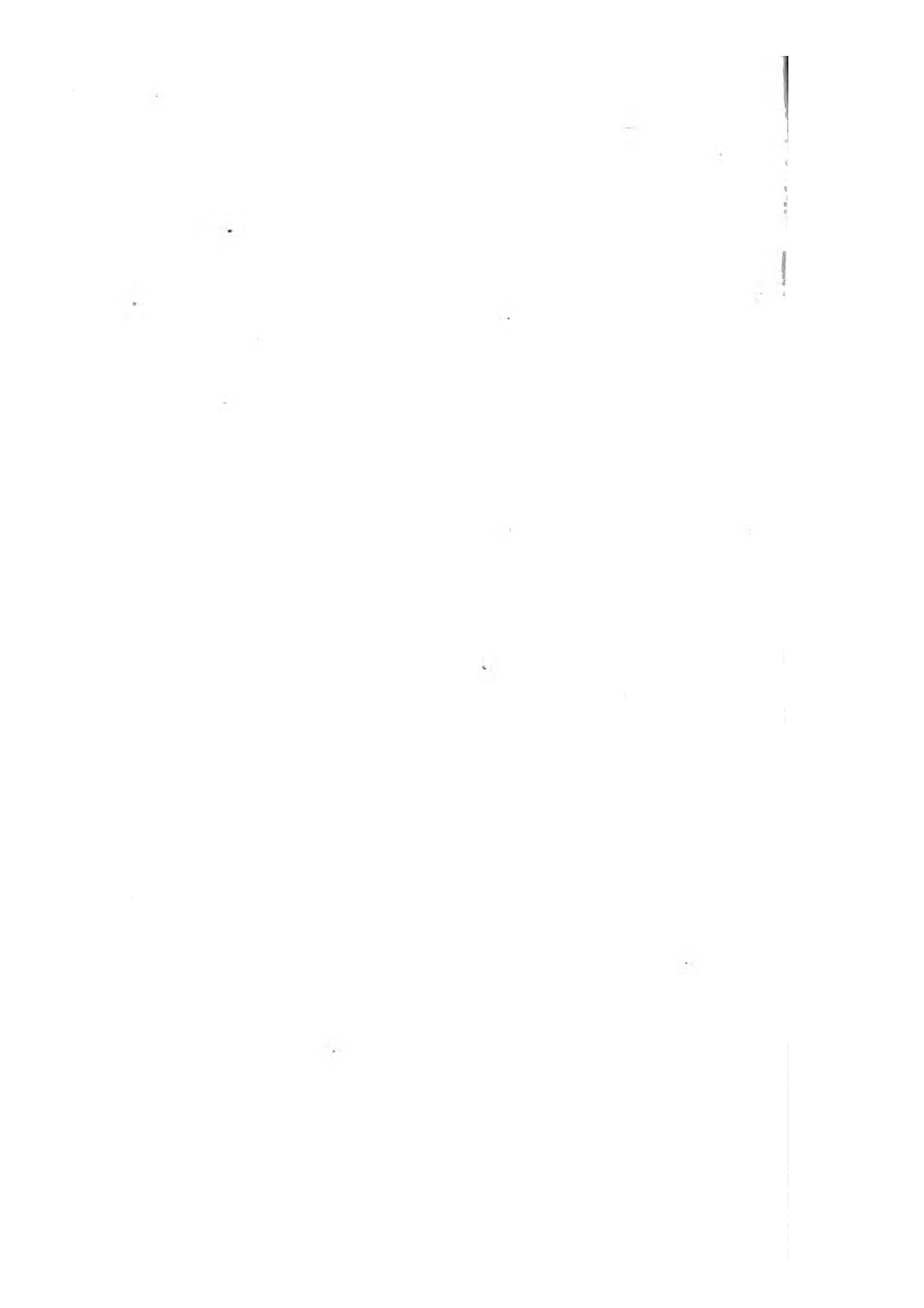
BALADE XXXIV.

Saint Valentin, l'Amour, et ia Nature,
 Des touts oiseals ad en gouvernement,
 Dont chascun deaux, semblable a sa mesure,
 Un compaigne honeste a son talent
 Eslist, tout dun accord et dun assent,
 Pour celle soule laist a covenir:
 Toutes les autres car nature aprent
Ou li coers est le corps falt obeir.

Ma douce Dame, ensi ieo vous assure,
 Qe ieo vous ai eslieu semblablement,
 Sur toutes autres estes a dessure
 De mon amour si tresentierement,
 Qe riens y falt pourquoi ioiousement,
 De coer et corps ieo vous voldrai servir,
 Car de reson cest une experiment
Ou li coers est le corps falt obeir.

Pour remembrer iadis celle aventure
 De Alceone et ceix enseinent,
 Com dieus muoit en oisel lour figure,
 Ma volente serroit tout tielement
 Qe sans envie et danger de la gent,
 Nous porroions ensemble pour loisir
 Voler tout francs en votre esbatement
Ou li coers est le corps falt obeir.





LIFE OF GOWER.

xi

Ma belle oisel, vers qui mon pensement
 Seu vole ades sanz null contretenir
 Preu cest escript car ieo sai voirement
Ou li coers est le corps falt obeir.

BALADE XLIII.

Plustricheros qe Iason a Medee,
 A Deianire ou q' Ercules estoit,
 Plus q' Eneas q' avoit Dido lassee,
 Plue qe Theseus q' Adriagne ^a amoit,
 Ou Demophon qut Phillis oubliot,
 Te trieus, helas, qamer iadis soloie,
 Dont chanterai desore en mon endroit
Cest ma dolour qe fuist amicois ma joie.

Unques Ector qama Pantafilee ^b.
 En tiele haste a Troie ne sarroit,
 Qe tu tout mid nes deniz le lit couche
 Amis as toutes quelques venir doit,
 Ne poet chaloir mais qune femme y soit,
 Si es comun plus qe la halte voie,
 Helas, qe la fortune me deçoit,
Cest ma dolour qe fuist amicois ma joie.

De Lancelot si fuissetz remembre,
 Et de Tristans, com il se countenoit,
 Generides ^c, Fflorent ^d, par Tonope ^e,
 Chascun des ceaux sa loialte gardoit;
 Mais tu, helas, qest ieo qe te forsvoit
 De moi qa toi iamaiz mill iour falsoie,
 Tu es a large et ieo sui en destroit,
Cest ma dolour qe fuist amicois ma joie

Des toutz les mals tu qes le plus maloit,
 Ceste compleignte a ton oraille envoie
 Sante me laist, et langour me recoit,
Cest ma dolour qe fuist amicois ma joie.

BALADE XX.

Si com la nief, quant le fort vent tempeste,
 Pur halte mier se torna ci et la,
 Ma dame, ensi mon coer manit en tempeste,
 Quant le danger de vo parrole orra,
 Le nief qe votre bouche soufflera,

^a Ariadne. ^b Penthesilea. ^c A name corruptly written. ^d Florence de Rome. ^e Parthenope,
 or Parthenopeus.

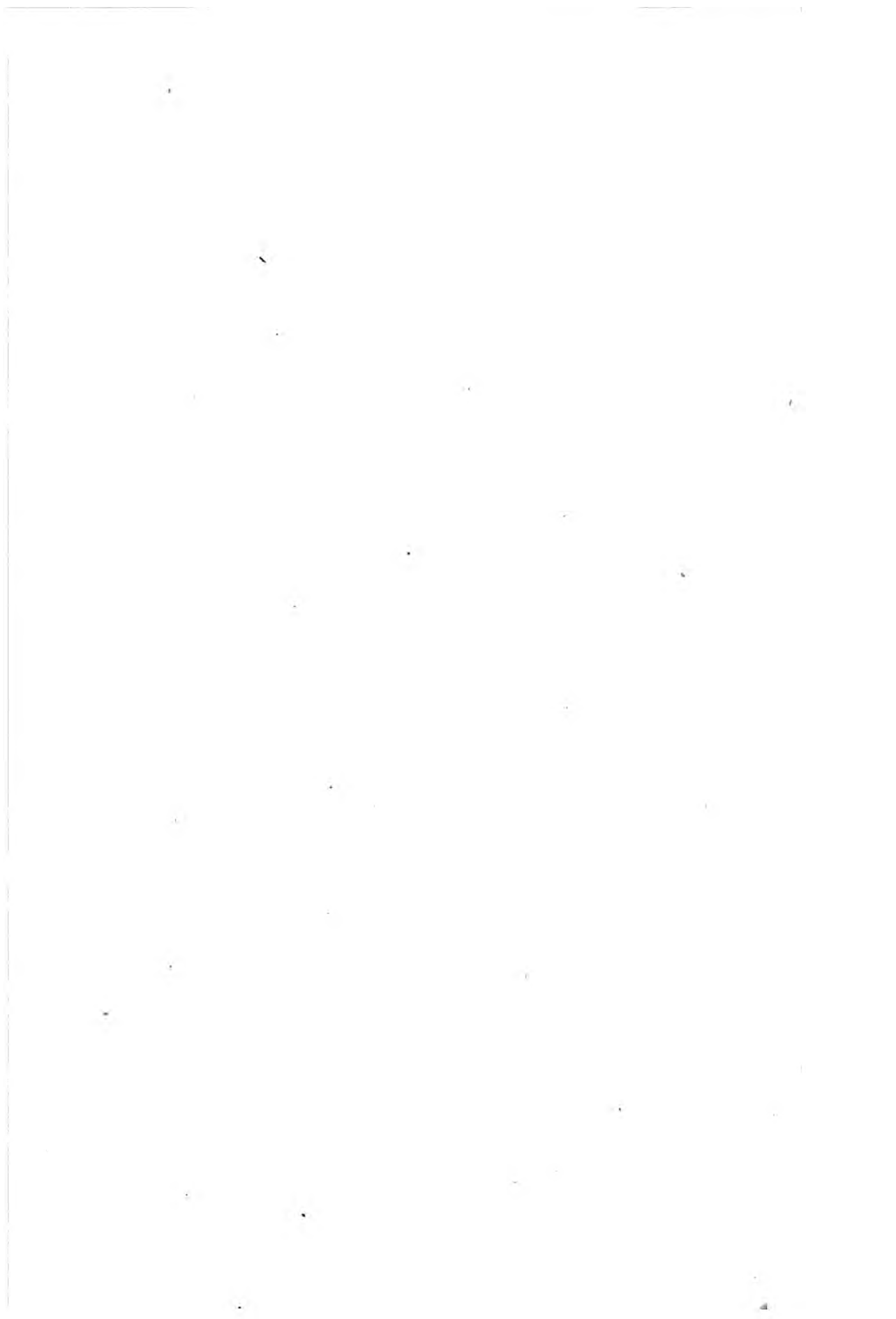
LIFE OF GOWER.

Me fait sigler sur le peril de vie,
Qest en danger falt quil mera supplie.

Rois Ulyxes, sicom nos dist la Geste,
 Vers son paiis de Troie qui sigla,
 Not tiel paour du peril et moleste,
 Quant les Sereines en la mier passa,
 Et la danger de Circes eschapa,
 Qe le paour nest plus de ma partie,
Qest en danger falt quil mera supplie.

Danger qui tolt damour tout la feste,
 Unques un mot de confort ne sona,
 Ainz plus cruel qe nest la fiere beste
 Au point quant danger me respondera.
 La chiere porte et quant le nai dirra,
 Plusque la mort mestoie celle oie
Qest en danger falt quil mera supplie.

Vers vous, ma bone dame, horspris cella,
 Qe danger manit en votre compainie,
 Cest balade en mon message irra
Qest en danger falt quil mera supplie."



THE
LIFE OF JOHN SKELTON.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS eccentric satyrist, descended from an ancient family in Cumberland, was born towards the latter part of the fifteenth century, and appears to have studied in both universities. Wood claims him for Oxford, although without conceiving that he was a very honourable addition to his list of worthies. The late Mr. Cole, in his collections for the *Athenæ Cantabrigienses*, is of opinion that he belongs to Cambridge, partly because he alludes to his being curate of Trompington in 1507, and mentions Swaffam and Soham, two towns in Cambridgeshire, and partly because there occurs the name of one *Schelton*, M. A. of Cambridge in the year 1484¹. On the other hand, Wood reckons him of Oxford, from the authority of Bale in a MS. in the Bodleian library: and in the preface of Caxton's Translation of the *Æneids* he is said to have been "lately created poet laureate in the unyversite of Oxenforde," and to have been the translator of some of the Latin classics.

This laureatship, however, it must be observed, was not the office now known as pertaining to the court, but was a degree conferred at the university. Churchyard, in the poem prefaced to Skelton's works, says

Skelton wore the lawrell wreath,
And past in schoels ye knoe.

This honour appears to have been conferred on him about the year 1489, and if our author was the Schelton discovered by Mr. Cole, he had now left Cambridge for Oxford; but Mr. Malone says that, a few years after this, he was permitted to wear the laurel publicly at Cambridge, and had been previously honoured by Henry VII. with a grant to wear either some peculiar dress, or some additional ornament in his ordinary apparel. In addition to this, it may be inferred from the titles of some of his works that he was poet laureate to king Henry VIII.; but Mr. Malone has not been able to

¹ See the editor's preface to the edition of 1736. C.

discover whether he received any salary in consequence of this office⁹. The origin of the royal laureat is somewhat obscure. According to Mr. Warton he was only a graduated rhetorician employed in the service of the king, and all his productions were in Latin, until the time of the Reformation, which, among other advantages, opened the way to the cultivation of the English tongue.

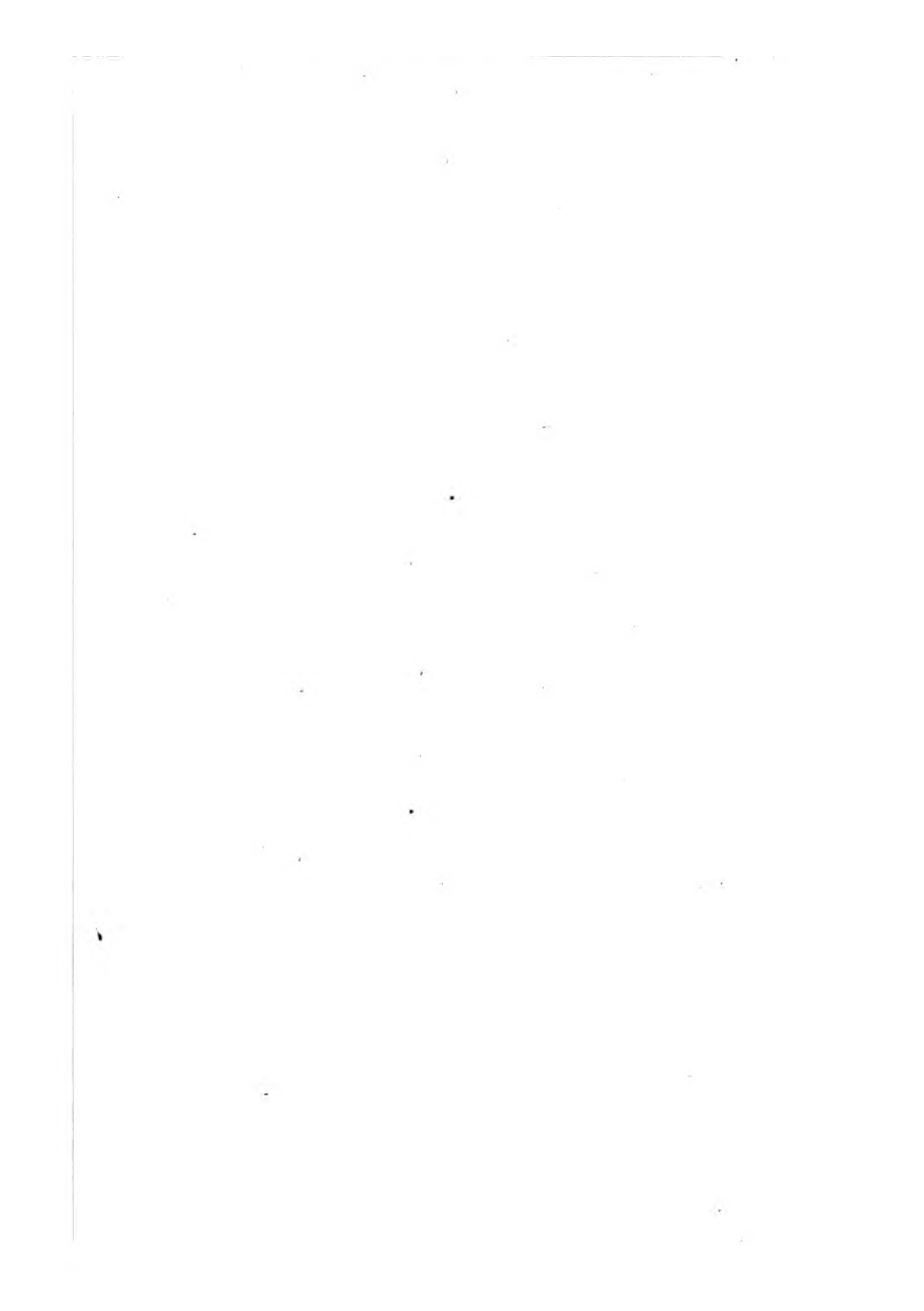
In the page where Skelton mentions his being curate of Trompington, he informs us that he was at the same time (1507) rector of Diss in Norfolk, and probably had held this living long before. Tradition informs us that his frequent buffooneries in the pulpit excited general censure. Of what nature those buffooneries were we cannot now determine, but it is certain that at a much later period the pulpit was frequently debased by irreverent allusions and personal scurrilities. There appear to have been three subjects at which Skelton delighted to aim his satire; these were the mendicant friars, Lilly the grammarian, and cardinal Wolsey. From what we find in his works, his treatment of these subjects was coarse enough in style, and perhaps illiberal in sentiment, and there is some reason to think that he did not preserve a due reverence for the forms and pomp of the established religion, which above all other faults would naturally tend to bring him into disgrace and danger. Those who felt his satire would be glad to excite a clamour against his impiety; and it must be allowed that the vices of his age are frequently represented in such indelicate language, as to furnish his enemies with the very plausible reproach, that he was not one of those reformers who begin with themselves.

But although we can now have very little sympathy with the injured feelings of the begging friars, it is not improbable that some of his poems or ballads might very justly rouse the vigilance of his diocesan, the bishop of Norwich, who, Mr. Warton thinks, suspended him from his functions. Anthony Wood asserts that he was punished by the bishop for "having been guilty of *certain crimes as most poets are.*" According to Fuller, the "*crime of most poets*" in Skelton's case was his keeping of a concubine, which yet was at that time a less crime in a clergyman than marriage. Skelton, on his death-bed, declared that he conscientiously considered his concubine as his wife, but was afraid to own her in that light; and from this confession and the occasional liberties he has taken with his pen in lashing the vices of the clergy, it is not improbable that he had imbibed some of the principles of the Reformation, but had not the courage to avow them unless under the mask of such satire as might pass without judicial censure.

With respect, however, to Wolsey, his prudence appears to have deserted him, as he felt bold enough to stigmatize the personal character of that statesman, then in the plenitude of his power. Whether such attacks were made in any small poems or ballads, or only in his poem of *Why come ye not to Court?* is not certain; but the latter does not appear to have been printed until 1555, and was too long to have been easily circulated in manuscript. Wolsey, however, by some means or other, discovered the abuse and the author, and ordered him to be apprehended. Skelton took refuge in the sanctuary of Westminster abbey, where the abbot Islip afforded him protection until his death, which took place June 21, 1529, not long before the downfall of his illustrious prosecutor. He was interred in St. Margaret's church-yard, with the inscription

I. Sceltonus Vates Pierius hic situs est.

⁹ Malone's Life of Dryden, vol. i. p. 83. where the reader will find a very useful appendix to Mr. Warton's discoveries on the nature of the office of laureat. C.



Skelton appears to have been a more considerable personage, at one time at least, than his contemporaries would have us to believe. It is certain that he was esteemed a scholar, and that his classical learning recommended him to the office of tutor to prince Henry, afterwards king Henry VIII. who, at his accession, made him royal orator, an office so called by himself, the nature of which is doubtful, unless it was blended with that of laureat. As to his general reputation, Erasmus in a letter to Henry VIII. styles him *Britannicarum literarum decus et lumen*, a character which must have either been inferred from common opinion, or derived from personal knowledge. Whatever provocation he gave to the clergy, he was not without patrons who overlooked his errors and extravagancies for the sake of his genius; and during the reign of Henry VII. he had the enviable distinction of being almost the only professed poet of the age. Henry Algernon Percy, fifth earl of Northumberland, one of the very few patrons of learned men and artists at that time, appears to have entertained a high regard for our author. In a collection of poems magnificently engrossed on vellum for the use of this nobleman, is an elegy on the death of the earl's father written by Skelton. This volume is now in the British Museum; but the elegy may be seen in Skelton's works, and in Dr. Percy's Relics,

When a favourite author betrays grossness and indecency, it is usual to inquire how much of this is his own, and how much may be referred to the licentiousness of his age? Warton observes that it is in vain to apologize for the coarseness, obscenity, and scurrility of Skelton, by saying that his poetry is tinctured with the manners of his age, and adds that Skelton would have been a writer without decorum at any period. This decision, however, is not more justly passed on Skelton than it ought to be on others in this collection whom it has been the fashion to vindicate by an appeal to the manners of their age. The manners of no age can apologize for the licentiousness of the writer who descends to copy them. There are always enough in an age that has a court, a clergy, and a people, to support the dignity of virtue and to assert the respect due to public decency. If we knew more minutely of the manners of our country in those remote periods, it would probably be found that licentiousness has upon the whole been more discouraged than patronised by the public voice.

Although it is impossible to lessen the censure which Skelton incurred among his contemporaries, and immediate successors, it is but fair to say that his indelicacies are of no very seductive kind; that they are obscured by cant words and phrases no longer intelligible, or intelligible but to few; and that the removal of them is a matter of less trouble and less injury to the collection than his biographers, who have copied one another, would insinuate. As to his poetry, Mr. Warton's character may in general be followed with safety, and ought to be preserved with the respect due to so excellent a critic.

"Skelton's characteristic vein of humour is capricious and grotesque. If his whimsical extravagancies ever move our laughter, at the same time they shock our sensibility. His festive levities are not only vulgar and indelicate, but frequently want truth and propriety. His subjects are often as ridiculous as his metre: but he sometimes debases his matter by his versification. On the whole, his genius seems better suited to low burlesque, than to liberal and manly satire. It is supposed by Caxton, that he improved our language; but he sometimes affects obscurity, and sometimes adopts the most familiar phraseology of the common people⁴." After quoting some lines from

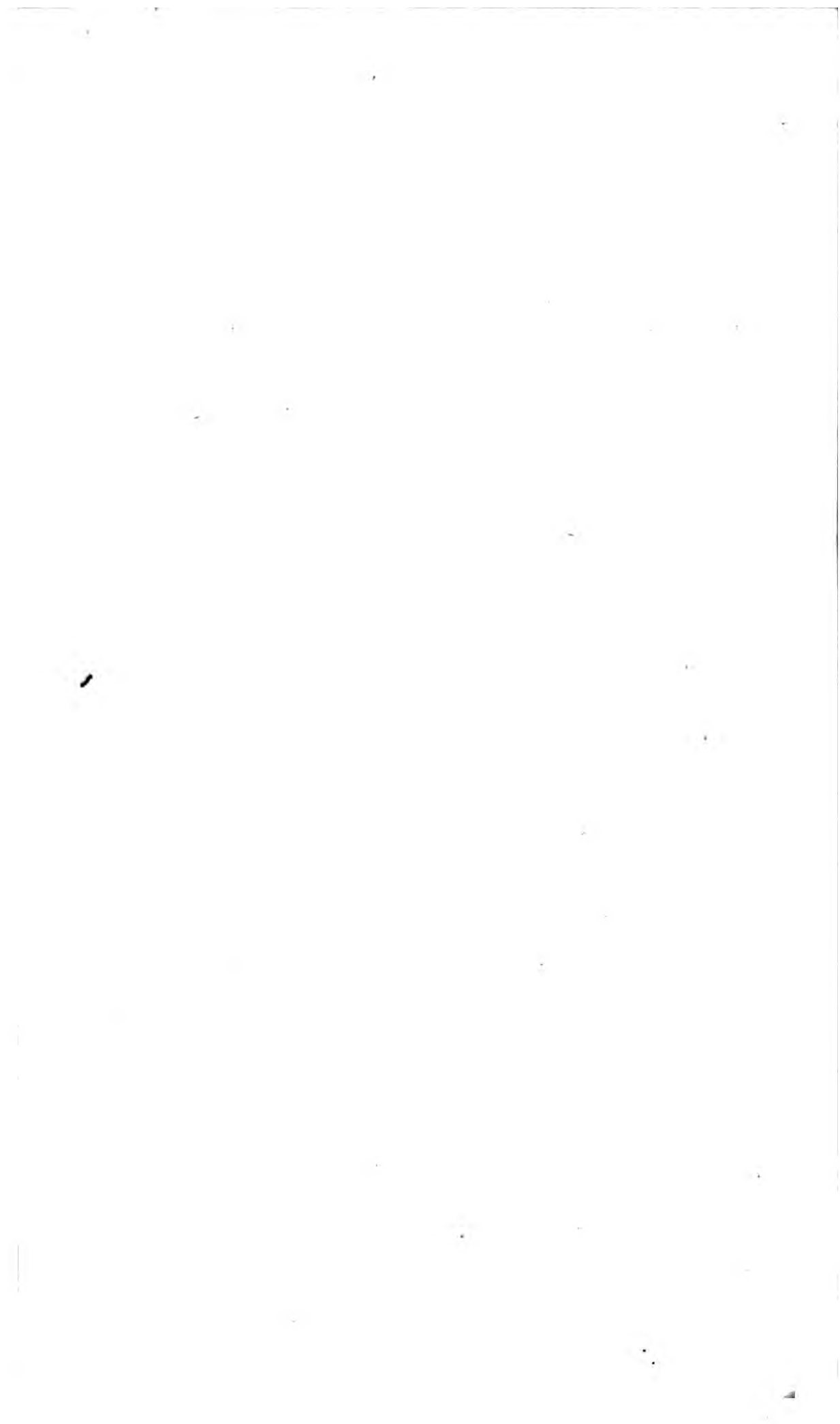
⁴ Warton's Hist. of Poetry, vol. ii. p. 342. C.

the Boke of Colin Cloute, Mr. Warton remarks that these are in the best manner of his petty measure, which is made still more disgusting by the repetition of the rhymes; but allows that in the poem called *The Bouge of Court, or the Rewards of a Court*, the author, by "adopting the more grave and stately movement of the seven-lined stanza, has shown himself not always incapable of exhibiting allegorical imagery with spirit and dignity,"

Skelton, however, is very unequal, although his natural bias, and what he seems most anxious to revert to, is comic buffoonery. That the author of the *Prayers to the Trinity*, and the lines on the death of lord Percie, could have written the *Tunning of Elinour Rumming*, is almost incredible. His multiplied repetition of rhymes, arbitrary abbreviations of the verse, cant expressions, hard and sounding words newly coined, and patches of Latin and French, Warton supposes to be peculiar, though not exclusively to our author; but his new-coined words and Latin and French phrases occur so often, that other critics appear to have been too hasty in asserting that he wrote only for the mob. There is occasionally much sound sense, and, it is to be feared, much just satire on the conduct of the clergy, which we know was such as to justify the plunder of the church by Henry VIII. in the eyes of the people at large. As a poet, however, Skelton contributed very little to the improvement of the poetical style, and seems often more disposed to render versification ridiculous. His vein of humour is copious and original, and had it been directed to subjects of legitimate satire, and regulated by some degree of taste, he might have been thought more worthy of a place in a collection of English poets, and more credit would have been given to what he insinuates, that he was disliked and reviled for having honestly, though bluntly, exposed the reigning follies of his day. Mrs. Cooper calls him, with some degree of truth, "the restorer of invention in English poetry;" and by Bradshaw, a very indifferent poet of the fifteenth century, he is complimented as the *inventive* Skelton.

His works have hitherto been ushered into the world without much care. It yet remains to explain his obscurities, translate his vulgarisms, and point his verses. The task would require much time and labour, with perhaps no very inviting prospect of recompense. Besides the works now before the reader, Mr. Ritson⁵ has given a list of pieces, the most of which are easily accessible, and might have been added to the present collection had they appeared to throw any important light on the character of the author, or of his age. But Mr. Ritson thinks it utterly incredible that "the *Nigramansir*," described by Warton, as printed by Wynken de Worde, in 1504, ever existed.

⁵ In his *Bibliographia Poetica*, p. 102. C.



THE
LIFE OF HENRY HOWARD, EARL OF
SURREY.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS highly accomplished nobleman has been peculiarly unfortunate in his biographers, nor is there in the whole range of the English series a life written with less attention to probability. Even the few dates on which we can depend have been overlooked, with a neglect that is wholly unaccountable in men so professedly attentive to these matters as Birch, Walpole, and Warton.

The story usually told consists of the following particulars:—

“ Henry Howard, earl of Surrey, was the eldest son of Thomas, the third duke of Norfolk, lord high treasurer of England in the reign of Henry VIII. by Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Stafford, duke of Buckingham. He was born either at his father's seat at Framlingham, in Suffolk, or in the city of Westminster¹, and being a child of great hopes, all imaginable care was taken of his education. When he was very young, he was companion, at Windsor Castle, with Henry Fitzroy, duke of Richmond, natural son to Henry VIII. and afterwards student in Cardinal College, now Christchurch, Oxford. In 1532, he was with the duke of Richmond at Paris, and continued there for some time in the prosecution of his studies, and learning the French language; and upon the death of the duke in July, 1536, travelled into Germany, where he resided some time at the emperor's court, and thence went to Florence, where he fell in love with the fair Geraldine, the great object of his poetical addresses, and in the grand duke's court published a challenge against all who should dispute her beauty: which challenge being accepted, he came off victorious. For this approved valour, the duke of Florence made him large offers to stay with him; but he refused them, because he intended to defend the honour of his Geraldine in all the chief cities of Italy. But this design of his was diverted by letters sent to him by king Henry VIII. recalling him to England. He left Italy therefore, where he had cultivated his poetical

¹ A friend at Oxford has suggested that he may have been born at Lambeth, or at a house near Bishopsgate in London, which were the occasional residences of his father. C.

genius by the reading of the greatest writers of that country, and returned to his own country, where he was considered as one of the first of the English nobility who adorned his high birth with the advantages of a polite taste and extensive literature. On the first of May, 1540, he was one of the chief of those who justed at Westminster as a defendant against sir John Dudley, sir Thomas Seymour, and other challengers, where he behaved himself with admirable courage and great skill in the use of his arms; and, in 1542, served in the army, of which his father was lieutenant-general, and which, in October, this year, entered Scotland and burnt divers villages. In February or March following, he was confined to Windsor Castle for eating flesh in Lent, contrary to the king's proclamation of the 9th of February, 1542. In 1544, upon the expedition to Boulogne, in France he was field-marshal of the English army; and after taking that town, being then knight of the garter, he was in the beginning of September, 1545, constituted the king's lieutenant and captain general of all his army within the town and country of Boulogne. During his command there in 1546, hearing that a convoy of provisions of the enemy was coming to the fort at Oultreau, he resolved to intercept it; but the Rhingrave, with four thousand Lanskinets, together with a considerable number of French under the marshal de Briez, making an obstinate defence, the English were routed, and sir Edward Poynings, with divers other gentlemen, killed, and the earl of Surrey himself obliged to fly: though it appears, by a letter of his to the king, dated Jan. 8, 1545-6, that this advantage cost the enemy a great number of men. But the king was so highly displeased with this ill success, that from that time he contracted a prejudice against the earl, and soon after removed him from his command, appointing the earl of Hertford to succeed him. On this sir William Paget wrote to the earl of Surrey, to advise him to procure some eminent post under the earl of Hertford, that he might not be *unprovided in the town and field*. The earl, being desirous in the mean time to regain his former favour with the king, skirmished against the French, and routed them; but soon after, writing over to the king's council, that as the enemy had cast much larger cannon than had been yet seen, with which they imagined they should soon demolish Boulogne, it deserved consideration whether the lower town should stand, as not being defensible; the council ordered him to return to England, in order to represent his sentiments more fully upon those points, and the earl of Hertford was immediately sent over in his room. This exasperating the earl of Surrey, occasioned him to let fall some expressions which savoured of revenge, and a dislike of the king and an hatred of his counsellors; and was, probably, one great cause of his ruin soon after. His father, the duke of Norfolk, had endeavoured to ally himself to the earl of Hertford, and to his brother, sir Thomas Seymour, perceiving how much they were in the king's favour, and how great an interest they were likely to have under the succeeding prince; and therefore he would have engaged his son, being then a widower, (having lost his wife Frances, daughter of John earl of Oxford), to marry the earl of Hertford's daughter, and pressed his daughter, the duchess of Richmond, widow of the king's natural son, to marry sir Thomas Seymour. But though the earl of Surrey advised his sister to the marriage projected for her, yet he would not consent to that designed for himself; nor did the proposition about himself take effect. The Seymours could not but perceive the enmity which the earl bore them; and they might well be jealous of the greatness of the Howard family, which was not only too considerable for subjects of itself, but was raised so high, by the dependence of the whole popish party, both at home and abroad, that they were likely to be very dangerous competitors for

the chief government of affairs, if the king should die, whose disease was now growing so fast upon him, that he could not live many weeks. Nor is it improbable that they persuaded the king, that if the earl of Surrey should marry the princess Mary, it might embroil his son's government, and perhaps ruin him. And it was suggested that he had some such high project in his thoughts, both by his continuing unmarried, and by his using the arms of Edward the confessor, which, of late, he had given in his coat without a diminution. To complete the duke of Norfolk's and his son's ruin, his duchess, who had complained of his using her ill, and had been separated from him about four years, turned informer against him. And the earl, and his sister, the duchess dowager of Richmond, being upon ill terms together, she discovered all she knew against him; as likewise did one Mrs. Holland, for whom the duke was believed to have had an unlawful affection. But all these discoveries amounted only to some passionate expressions of the son, and some complaints of the father, who thought that he was not beloved by the king and his counsellors, and that he was ill used in not being trusted with the secret of affairs. However, all persons being encouraged to bring informations against them, sir Richard Southwel charged the earl of Surrey in some points of an higher nature; which the earl denied, and desired to be admitted, according to the martial law, to fight in his shirt with sir Richard. But, that not being granted, he and his father were committed prisoners to the Tower on the 12th of December, 1546; and the earl, being a commoner, was brought to his trial in Guildhall, on the 13th of January following, before the lord chancellor, the lord mayor, and other commissioners; where he defended himself with great skill and address, sometimes denying the accusations, and weakening the credit of the witnesses against him, and sometimes interpreting the words objected to him in a far different sense from what had been represented. For the point of bearing the arms of Edward the confessor, he justified himself by the authority of the heralds. And when a witness was produced, who pretended to repeat some high words of his lordship's, by way of discourse, which concerned him nearly, and provoked the witness to return him a braving answer; the earl left it to the jury to judge, whether it was probable that this man should speak thus to him and he not strike him again. In conclusion, he insisted upon his innocence; but was found guilty, and had sentence of death passed upon him. He was beheaded on Tower-hill on the 19th of January, 1546-7; and his body interred in the church of All Hallows, Barking, and afterwards removed to Framlingham, in Suffolk."

Such is the account drawn up by Dr. Birch for the "Illustrious Heads," from Anthony Wood, Camden, Herbert, Dugdale, and Burnet's History of the Reformation. The principal errors (corrected in this transcription), are, his making the earl of Surrey son to the *second* duke of Norfolk², and the duke of Richmond natural son to Henry the *Seventh*.

His next biographer to whom any respect is due was the late earl of Orford, in his Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors. The account of Surrey, in this work, derives its chief merit from lord Orford's ingenious explanation of the sonnet on Geraldine, which amounts to this, that Geraldine was Elizabeth, (second daughter of Gerald Fitzgerald earl of Kildare) and afterwards third wife of Edward Clinton earl of Lincoln,

² The same error appears on the monument erected to the earl's memory at Framlingham, in 1612, by his second son, Henry, earl of Northampton. Dugdale admits the error in p. 268, but corrects it in p. 274, vol. II. C.

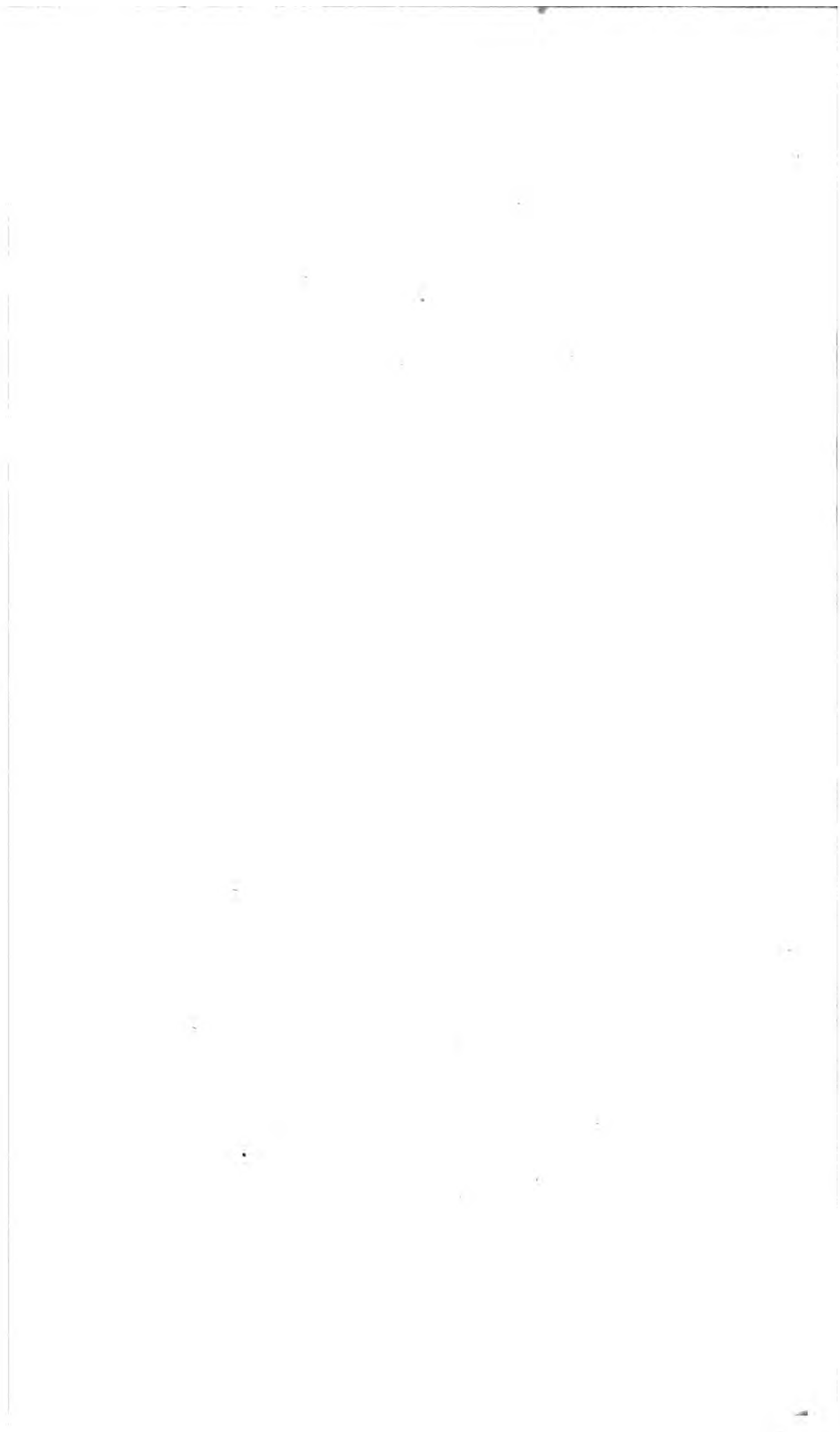
and that Surrey probably saw her first at Hunsdon-house in Hertfordshire, where, as she was second cousin to the princesses Mary and Elizabeth, who were educated in this place, she might have been educated with them, and Surrey, as the companion of the duke of Richmond, the king's natural son, might have had interviews with her, when the duke went to visit his sister.—All this is ingenious; but no light is thrown upon the personal history of the earl, and none of the difficulties, however obvious, in his courtship of Geraldine removed, or even hinted at, nor does lord Orford condescend to inquire into the dates of any event in his life.

Mr. Warton commences his account of Surrey, by observing, that “lord Surrey's life throws so much light on the character and subject of his poetry, that it is almost impossible to consider the one, without exhibiting a few anecdotes of the other.” He then gives the memoirs of Surrey almost in the words of lord Orford, except in the following instance.

“A friendship of the closest kind commencing between these two illustrious youths, (Surrey and the duke of Richmond) about the year 1530, they were both removed to cardinal Wolsey's college at Oxford.—Two years afterwards (1532) for the purpose of acquiring every accomplishment of an elegant education, the earl accompanied his noble friend and fellow pupil into France, where they received king Henry, on his arrival at Calais to visit Francis I. with a most magnificent retinue. The friendship of these two young noblemen was soon strengthened by a new tie; for Richmond married the lady Mary Howard, Surrey's sister. Richmond, however, appears to have died in the year 1536, about the *age of seventeen*, having never cohabited with his wife. It was long before Surrey forgot the untimely loss of this amiable youth, the friend and associate of his childhood, and who nearly resembled himself in genius, refinement of manners, and liberal acquisitions.”

After adopting lord Orford's explanation of the sonnet on Geraldine, Mr. Warton proceeds to Surrey's travels, beginning with a circumstance on which much more attention ought to have been bestowed.

“It is not precisely known at what period the earl of Surrey began his travels. They have the air of a romance. He made the tour of Europe in the true spirit of chivalry, and with the ideas of an Amadis; proclaiming the unparalleled charms of his mistress, and prepared to defend the cause of her beauty with the weapons of knight-errantry. Nor was this adventurous journey performed without the intervention of an enchanter. The first city in Italy which he proposed to visit was Florence, the capital of Tuscany, and the original seat of the ancestors of his Geraldine. In his way thither, he passed a few days at the emperor's court, where he became acquainted with Cornelius Agrippa, a celebrated adept in natural magic. This visionary philosopher shewed our hero, in a mirror of glass, a living image of Geraldine, reclining on a couch, sick, and reading one of his most tender sonnets by a waxen taper. His imagination, which wanted not the flattering representations and artificial incentives of allusion, was heated anew by this interesting and affecting spectacle. Inflamed with every enthusiasm of the most romantic passion, he hastened to Florence; and on his arrival, immediately published a defiance against any person who could handle a lance, and was in love, whether Christian, Jew, Turk, Saracen or Cannibal, who should presume to dispute the superiority of Geraldine's beauty: as the lady was pretended to be of Tuscan extraction, the pride of the Florentines was flattered on this occasion; and the grand duke of Tuscany permitted general and unmolested ingress into his dominions of the combatants of all countries,



till this important trial should be decided. The challenge was accepted, and the earl victorious. The shield which he presented to the duke before the tournament began is exhibited in Vertue's valuable plate of the Arundel family, and was actually in the possession of the late duke of Norfolk.

“ These heroic vanities did not, however, so totally engross the time which Surrey spent in Italy, as to alienate his mind from letters: he studied with the greatest success a critical knowledge of the Italian tongue; and, that he might give new lustre to the name of Geraldine, attained a just taste for the peculiar graces of the Italian poetry.

“ He was recalled to England, for some *idle reason*, by the king, much sooner than he expected; and he returned home the most elegant traveller, the most *polite lover*, the most learned nobleman, and the most accomplished gentleman of his age. Dexterity in tilting, and gracefulness in managing a horse under arms, were excellencies now viewed with a critical eye, and practised with a high degree of emulation. In 1540, at a tournament held in the presence of the court at Westminster, and in which the principal of the nobility were engaged, Surrey was distinguished above the rest for his address in the use and exercise of arms; but his martial skill was not solely displayed in the parade and ostentation of these domestic combats. In 1542 he marched into Scotland as a chief commander in his father's army, and was conspicuous for his conduct and bravery at the memorable battle of *Flodden-field*, where James the Fourth of Scotland was killed.”

The only other passage in which Mr. Warton improves³ upon his authorities is a very proper addition to the above account of lord Surrey's travels.

“ Among these anecdotes of Surrey's life, I had almost forgot to mention what became of his amour with the fair Geraldine. We lament to find that Surrey's devotion to this lady did not end in a wedding; and that all his gallantries and verses availed so little. No memoirs of that incurious age have informed us whether her beauty was equalled by her cruelty, or whether her ambition prevailed so far over her gratitude, as to tempt her to prefer the solid glories of a more splendid title, and ample fortune, to the challenges and the compliments of so magnanimous, so faithful, and so eloquent a lover. She appears, however, to have been afterwards the third wife of Edward Clinton, earl of Lincoln. Such also is the power of time and accident over amorous vows, that even Surrey himself outlived the violence of his passion: he married Frances, daughter of John, earl of Oxford, by whom he left several children. One of his daughters, Jane, countess of Westmoreland, was among the learned ladies of that age, and became famous for her knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages.”

It is truly wonderful that lord Orford and Mr. Warton, delighted as they were with the “romantic air” of lord Surrey's travels, should by any enchantment have been prevented from inquiring whether the events which they have placed between the years 1536 and 1546, when lord Surrey died, were at all consistent with probability: had they made the slightest inquiry into the age of lord Surrey, although the precise year and day of his birth might not have been recoverable, they could not have failed to obtain such information as would have thrown a suspicion on the whole story of his knight-errantry.

The birth of lord Surrey may be conjectured to have taken place some time between the years 1515 and 1520: my opinion, which however I do not mean to obtrude, is in

³ It is perhaps unnecessary to point out the many little embellishments in this story, for which we are entirely indebted to Mr. Warton's elegant pen. C.

favour of the former year, or one earlier than 1520⁴. He was, it is universally agreed, the school companion of the duke of Richmond, who died in 1536, in his seventeenth year; and if we allow that Surrey was two or three years older⁵, it will not much affect the high probability that he was a very young man at the time when his biographers made him fall in love with Geraldine, and maintain her beauty at Florence. None of the portraits of Surrey, as far as the present writer has been able to ascertain, mention his age, except that in the picture-gallery at Oxford, on which is inscribed that he was beheaded in "1547, æt. 27:" the inscription, indeed, is in a hand posterior to the date of the picture (supposed to be by Holbein); but it may have been the hand of some successful inquirer; and that in Arundel castle, which is inscribed æt. 29. None of the books of peerage notice his birth or age, nor are these circumstances inserted on his monument at Framlingham. Conjecture, it has been already observed, supposes him to have been born sometime between 1515 and 1520: if we take the earliest of these dates, it will still remain that his biographers have either crowded more events into his life than it was capable of holding, or that they have delayed his principal adventures until they become undeserving of credit, and inconsistent with his character.

Mr. Warton observes, that "it is not precisely known at what period the earl of Surrey began his travels;" but this is a matter of little consequence in refuting the account usually given of those travels, because all his biographers are agreed that he did not set out *before* the year 1536: at this time he had ten years only of life before him, which have been filled up in a very extraordinary manner. First he travels over a part of Europe, vindicating the beauty of Geraldine; in 1540 he is celebrated at the justs at Westminster; in 1542 he goes to Scotland with his father's army; in 1543 (probably) he is imprisoned for eating flesh in Lent; in 1544-5 he is commander at Boulogne; and lastly, amidst all these romantic adventures or serious events, he has leisure to marry the daughter of the earl of Oxford, and beget five children; which we may suppose would occupy at least five or six of the above ten years, and these not the last five or six years, for we find him a widower a considerable time before his death. Among other accusations whispered in the ear of his jealous sovereign, one was his *continuing* unmarried (an expression which usually denotes a considerable length of time) after the period when a second marriage might be decent, in order that he might marry the princess Mary, in the event of the king's death, and so disturb the succession of Edward.

The placing of these events in this series would render the story of his knight-errantry sufficiently improbable, were we left without any information respecting the date of Surrey's marriage; but that event renders the whole impossible, if we wish to preserve any respect for the consistency of his character: Surrey was actually married

⁴ In his letter addressed to the lords of the council when he was in the Tower, previous to his trial and execution, we find him more than once pleading his youth: he requests their lordships to "impute his error to the furie of rechelesse youth"—"Let my youth, unpractised in durance, obtain pardon"—"Neither am I the first *young man* that, governed by fury, hath enterprised such things as he hath afterwards repented." These expressions give some countenance to the supposition that the dates on his portraits above-mentioned are nearly right. See the above letter in Mr. Park's valuable edition of *The Royal and Noble Authors*. C.

⁵ My Oxford correspondent informs me that Richmond was a year older than Surrey. C.

before the commencement of his travels in pursuit or in defence of Geraldine's beauty. His eldest son Thomas, fourth duke of Norfolk, was eighteen years old when his grandfather died in 1554⁶: he was consequently born in 1536; and his father, it is surely reasonable to suppose, was married in 1535⁷. It would therefore be unnecessary to examine the story of Surrey's romantic travels any farther, if we had not some collateral authorities which may still show that whatever may be wrong in the present statement, it is certain that there is very little right in the common accounts which have been read and copied without any suspicion.

If it be said that Surrey's age is not exactly known, and *therefore* allowing 1536 the date of his travels to be erroneous, it is *possible* that he might have been enamoured of Geraldine long before this; and it is *possible* that his travels might have commenced in 1526, or any other period founded on this new conjecture: this, however, is as improbable as all the rest of the story; for it can be decidedly proved that there was no time for Surrey's gallantries towards Geraldine, except the period which his biographers, however absurdly, have assigned, namely, when he was a married man. The father of lady Elizabeth, the supposed Geraldine, married in 1519 one of the daughters of Thomas Grey, marquis of Dorset, and by her had five children, of whom Elizabeth was the *fourth*, and therefore probably not born before the year 1523 or 1524: if Surrey's courtship, therefore, must be carried further back, it must be carried to the nursery; for even in 1536, when we are told he was her knight-errant, she could not have been more than eleven or twelve years old: let us add to this a few particulars respecting Geraldine's husband. She married Edward lord Clinton: he was born in 1512, was educated in the court, and passed his youth in those magnificent and romantic amusements which distinguished the beginning of Henry VIII's reign; but did not appear as a public character until the year 1544, when he was thirty-two years of age, Geraldine about twenty-four, and Surrey within two years of his death, and most probably a widower. This earl of Lincoln had three wives; the date of his marriage with any of them is not known, nor how long they lived; but Geraldine was the third and only one by whom he had no children, and who survived his death, which took place in 1584, thirty-eight years after the death of Surrey. Mr. Warton, in his earnest desire to connect her with Surrey, insinuates that she might have been either cruel, or that her "ambition prevailed so far over her gratitude, as to tempt her to prefer the solid glories of a more splendid title and ample fortune, to the challenges and the compliments of so magnanimous, so faithful, and so eloquent a lover." On this it is only necessary to remark, that the lady's ambition might have been as highly gratified by marrying the accomplished and gallant Surrey, the heir of the duke of Norfolk, as by allying herself to a nobleman of inferior talents and rank; but of his two conjectures, Mr. Warton seems most to adhere to that of cruelty, for he adds that "Surrey himself outlived his amorous vows, and married the daughter of the earl of Oxford." This, however, is as little deserving of serious examination as the ridiculous story of Cornelius Agrippa showing Geraldine in a glass, which Anthony Wood found in Drayton's Heroical Epistle, or probably, as Mr. Park thinks, took it from Nash's fanciful Life of Jack Wilton, published in 1594; where, under the character of his hero, he professes to

⁶ Collins, &c. C.

⁷ If, according to the conjecture of some, he was born in 1515, he was now twenty years of age; but had he been born in 1520, the more usual supposition, there are not wanting instances of as early marriages in past times: the duke of Richmond, we find, died a married man at seventeen. C.

have travelled to the emperor's court as page to the earl of Surrey. But it is unfortunate for this story, wheresoever borrowed, that Agrippa was no more a conjurer than any other learned man of his time; and that he died at Grenoble the year before Surrey is said to have set out on his romantic expedition. Drayton has made a similar mistake in giving Surrey as one of the companions of his voyage, the great sir Thomas More, who was beheaded in 1535, a year likewise before Surrey set out. Poetical authorities, although not wholly to be rejected, are of all others to be received with the greatest caution; yet it was probably Drayton's Heroical Epistle⁸ which led Mr. Warton into so egregious a blunder as that of our poet being present at Flodden-field in the year 1513. Dr. Sewell, indeed, in the short memoir prefixed to his edition of Surrey's poems, asserts the same; but little credit is due to the assertion of a writer who at the same time fixes Surrey's birth in 1520, seven years after that memorable battle was fought.

It is now time to inquire whether the accounts hitherto given can be confirmed by internal evidence. It has been so common to consider Geraldine as the mistress of Surrey, that all his love poems are supposed to have a reference to his attachment to that lady. Mr. Warton begins his narrative by observing that "Surrey's life throws so much light on the character and subjects of his poetry, that it is almost impossible to consider the one without exhibiting a few anecdotes of the other." We have already seen what those anecdotes are; how totally irreconcilable with probability, and how amply refuted by the dates which his biographers, unfortunately for their story, have uniformly furnished. When we look into the poems we find the celebrated sonnet to Geraldine the only specious foundation for his romantic attachment; but as that attachment and its consequence cannot be supported without a continual violation of probability, and in opposition to the very dates which are brought to confirm it, it seems more safe to conjecture that this sonnet was one of our author's earliest productions, addressed to Geraldine, a mere child, by one who was only not a child, as an effort of youthful gallantry in one of his interviews with her at Hunsdon. Whatever credit may be given to this conjecture, for which the present writer is by no means anxious, it is certain that if we reject it, or some conjecture of the same import, and adopt the accounts given by his biographers, we cannot proceed a single step without being opposed by invincible difficulties. There is no other poem in Surrey's collection that can be proved to have any reference to Geraldine; but there are two with the same title, viz. The Complaint of the absence of *her* lover being upon the Sea, which are evidently written in the character of a wife lamenting the absence of her husband, and tenderly alluding to "his faire litle sonne." Mr. Warton indeed finds Geraldine in the beautiful lines beginning "Give place, ye lovers, here before;" and from the lines "Spite drave me into Boreas reign," infers that her anger drove him into a colder climate, with what truth may now be left to the reader: but another of his conjectures cannot be passed over. "In 1544," he says, "lord Surrey was field-marshal of the English army in the expedition to Boulogne, which he took. In that age love and arms constantly went together; and it was amidst the fatigues of this protracted campaign that he composed his last sonnet called The Fancies of a wearied Lover: but this is a mere supposition. The poems of Surrey are without dates, and were arranged by their first editor without any attention to a matter of so much importance. The few

⁸ See Drayton's works, vol. IV. p. 96. et seq. C.

allusions made to his personal history in these poems are very dark; but in some of them there is a train of reflections which seems to indicate that misfortunes and disappointments had dissipated his quixotism, and reduced him to the sober and serious tone of a man whose days had been "few and evil." Although he names his productions *songs* and *sonnets*, they have less of the properties of either than of the elegiac strain. His scripture-translations appear to be characteristic of his mind and situation in his latter days: what, unless a heart almost broken by the unnatural conduct of his friends and family, could have induced the gay and gallant Surrey, the accomplished courtier and soldier, to console himself by translating these passages from Ecclesiastes which treat of the shortness and uncertainty of all human enjoyments, or those Psalms which direct the penitent and the forsaken to the throne of almighty power and grace? Mr. Warton remarks that these translations of Scripture "show him to have been a friend to the reformation;" and this, which is highly probable, may have been one reason why his sufferings were embittered by the neglect, if not the direct hostility, of some of his relations. The translation of the Scriptures into prose was but just tolerated in his time; and to familiarize them by the graces of poetry must have appeared yet more obnoxious to the enemies of the reformation. I have said *some* of his relations; his father I should hope cannot be enumerated in this class. After Surrey's execution, his sister, the duchess of Richmond, took care of the education of his children, and engaged Fox the martyrologist to be their tutor; and the duke, when this zealous protestant was pursued by the bloody Gardiner, screened him from his fury; and when he found it no longer safe to keep him, conveyed him abroad in spite of Gardiner's vigilance. This surely was not the act of a bigotted papist.

Although the present writer has taken some liberties with the historian of English poetry in his account of Surrey's life, he has not the presumption to omit Mr. Warton's elegant and just criticism on his poems. "Surrey, for justness of thought, correctness of style, and purity of expression, may justly be pronounced the first English classical poet. He unquestionably is the first polite writer of love-verses in our language, although it must be allowed that there is a striking native beauty in some of our love-verses written much earlier than Surrey's." It is also worthy of notice, that while all his biographers send him to Italy to study its poetry, Mr. Warton finds nothing in his works of that metaphysical cast which marks the Italian poets, his supposed masters, especially Petrarch. "Surrey's sentiments are for the most part natural and unaffected, arising from his own feelings, and dictated by the present circumstances: his poetry is alike unembarrassed by learned allusions, or elaborate conceits. If our author copies Petrarch, it is Petrarch's better manner; when he descends from his Platonic abstractions, his refinements of passion, his exaggerated compliments, and his play upon opposite sentiments, into a track of tenderness, simplicity, and nature. Petrarch would have been a better poet had he been a worse scholar: our author's mind was not too much overlaid by learning."

The translation of the two books of the *Eneid* is "executed with fidelity, without a prosaic servility; the diction is often poetical, and the versification varied with proper pauses." Its principal merit, however, is that of being the first specimen in the English language of blank verse, which was at that time growing fashionable in the Italian poetry. It is very probable that he intended to have translated the whole; and he is so much more elegant and correct in this than in his other translations, that the *Eneid* appears to have been the production of his happier days. The other authors

who preceded Milton in the attempts to break through the shackles of rhyme were Turberville, Gascoyne, Riche, Peele, Higgins, Aske, Vallans, Breton, Chapman, Marlow, &c.⁹

The fidelity which Mr. Warton attributes to the translations from Virgil our author has not preserved in his translations from Scripture, which are very liberal; and by frequent omissions and a different arrangement made to suit his situation and feelings at the time they were written, which was probably when he was in the Tower.

Surrey's poems were in high reputation among his contemporaries and immediate successors, who vied with each other in compliments to his genius, gallantry, and personal worth. They were first printed in 1557 by Tottel, in 4to. with the title of "Songes and sonettes by the right honorable Henry Howard, late earl of Surrey, and other." Several editions of the same followed in 1565, 1567, 1569, 1574, 1585, and 1587. So many editions prove a degree of popularity which fell to the lot of very few poems of that age; but after the time of Elizabeth they became gradually obscure, and we find no modern edition until Pope's incidental notice of him (in Windsor Forest) as the "Granville of a former age," induced the booksellers to employ Dr. Sewell to be the editor of Surrey's, Wyatt's, and the poems of uncertain authors: but the doctor performed his task with so little knowledge of the language, that this is perhaps the most incorrect edition extant of any ancient poet. It would have been surprising had it contributed to revive his memory, or justify Pope's comparison and eulogium.

The translation of the second and fourth book of the Eneid was published in 1557; but it seems doubtful whether together or separately. The translations of the Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and the few additional original poems were printed¹⁰, but not published, many years ago, by Dr. Percy, from a MS. now in the possession of Thomas Hill, esq. who, with his usual liberality, has permitted a transcription for the present edition¹¹.

⁹ These specimens were long ago collected by Dr. Percy, bishop of Dromore, to be added to an edition of Surrey's poems, which is now nearly ready for the press; but will probably be anticipated by an elaborate edition prepared by the Rev. Dr. Nott, whose inquiries, he obligingly informs me, have produced a very singular fact, namely, that lord Surrey's lady survived him, and married a second husband. This, although not essential to the support of what I have presumed to advance with respect to Surrey's history, is an additional proof of the carelessness of those writers who lived nearest his time. What becomes of Henry VIII's jealousy of his designs on the princess Mary? C.

¹⁰ The whole impression was consumed in the destructive fire which took place in Mr. Nichols's premises, Jan. 1808.

¹¹ This MS. descended from the Harrington family: see Mr. Park's edition of the *Nugæ Antiquæ*. In his edition of the Royal and Noble Authors are some interesting particulars respecting the various editions of Surrey's poems. C.

THE
LIFE OF SIR THOMAS WYAT.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

A LIFE of sir Thomas Wyat appeared in the second number of lord Orford's *Miscellaneous Antiquities*, from materials collected in the British Museum, by his friend Gray, the poet; and augmented by his lordship from other writers, particularly Anthony Wood and Lloyd, but not without some inaccuracy. A few notices are now added of more recent authority.

Sir Thomas Wyat, the only son and heir of sir Henry Wyat of Allington Castle in Kent, was born in the year 1503. His mother was the daughter of John Skinner of the county of Surrey. His father was imprisoned in the Tower in the reign of Richard III., when he is said to have been preserved by a cat which fed him while in that place, for which reason he was always pictured with a cat in his arms, or beside him¹. On the accession of Henry VII. he had great marks of favour shewn him, among which was the honour of knighthood, and a seat in the privy council. One of the last services in which he was employed by that king was conducting to the Tower the unfortunate earl of Suffolk, who was afterwards beheaded by Henry VIII. He was also a member of Henry VIII's privy council, master of the jewel office, and of the van-guard of that army, commanded by the king in person, which fought the memorable *battle of the Spurs*². He died in 1533.

The honour of educating our poet has been claimed for both universities, by Carter for St. John's College, Cambridge, and by Anthony Wood for Oxford, because he resided for some time on the establishment of cardinal Wolsey's new college, now Christ Church. He then set out on his travels according to the custom of that age, and returned after some years, a gentleman of high accomplishments and elegant manners, and of such conversation talents, both as to sense and wit, as to have attracted the admiration of all ranks, and particularly of his sovereign, who bestowed on him the order of knighthood, and employed him in various embassies. Mr. Warton appears offended with Wood for saying that "the king was in a high manner delighted with his witty jests;" while he

¹ Hasted's *History of Kent*, vol. ii. p. 183.

² Lodge's *Illustrations*, vol. i. p. 1.

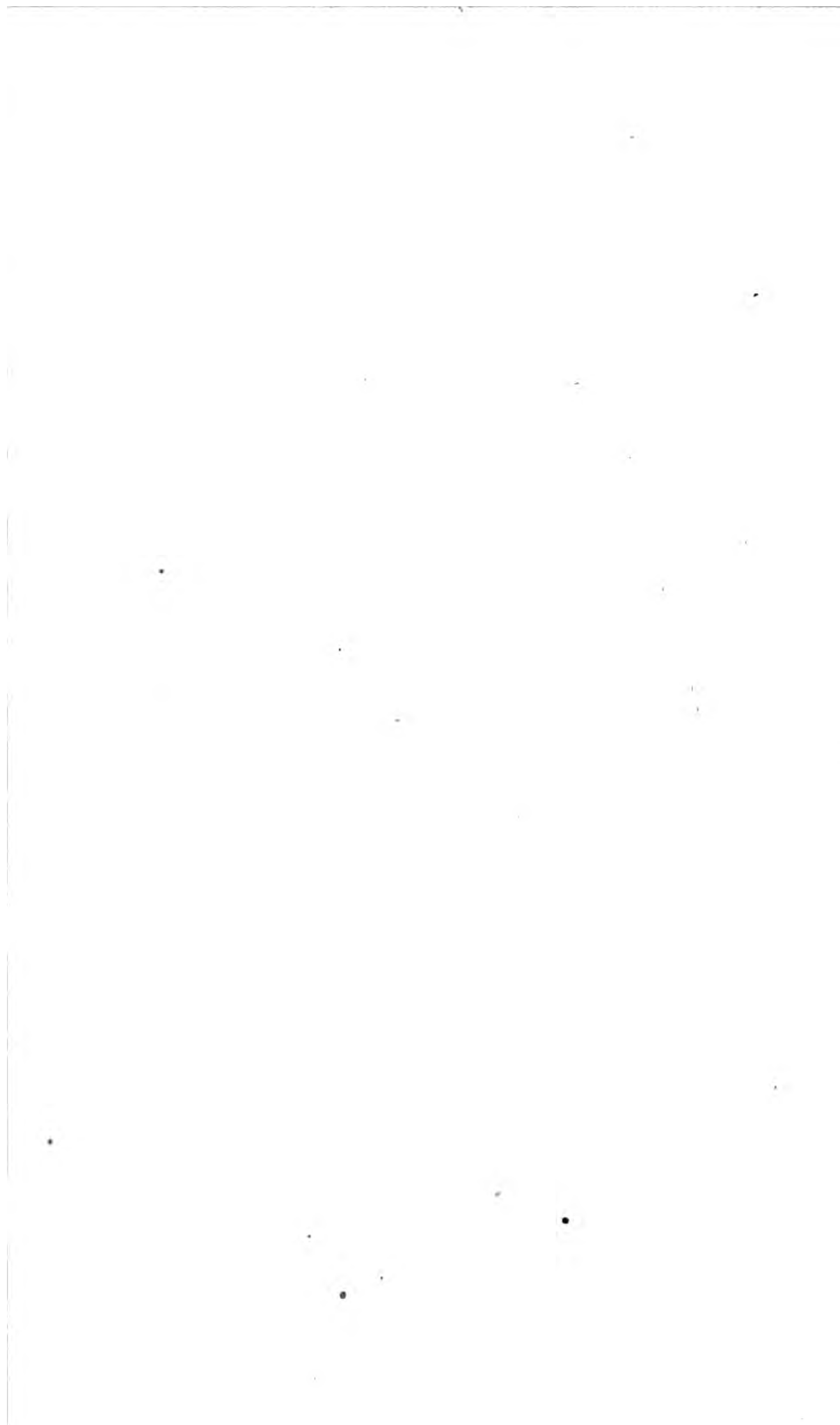
allows that Henry was probably as much pleased with his repartees as his politics. Lloyd, whom Mr. Gray and lord Orford have adopted as an authority, reports enough of his wit to convince us that he might delight a monarch of Henry's fickleness and passionate temper. Persons of this character are often more easily directed or diverted by a striking expression than by a train of argument.

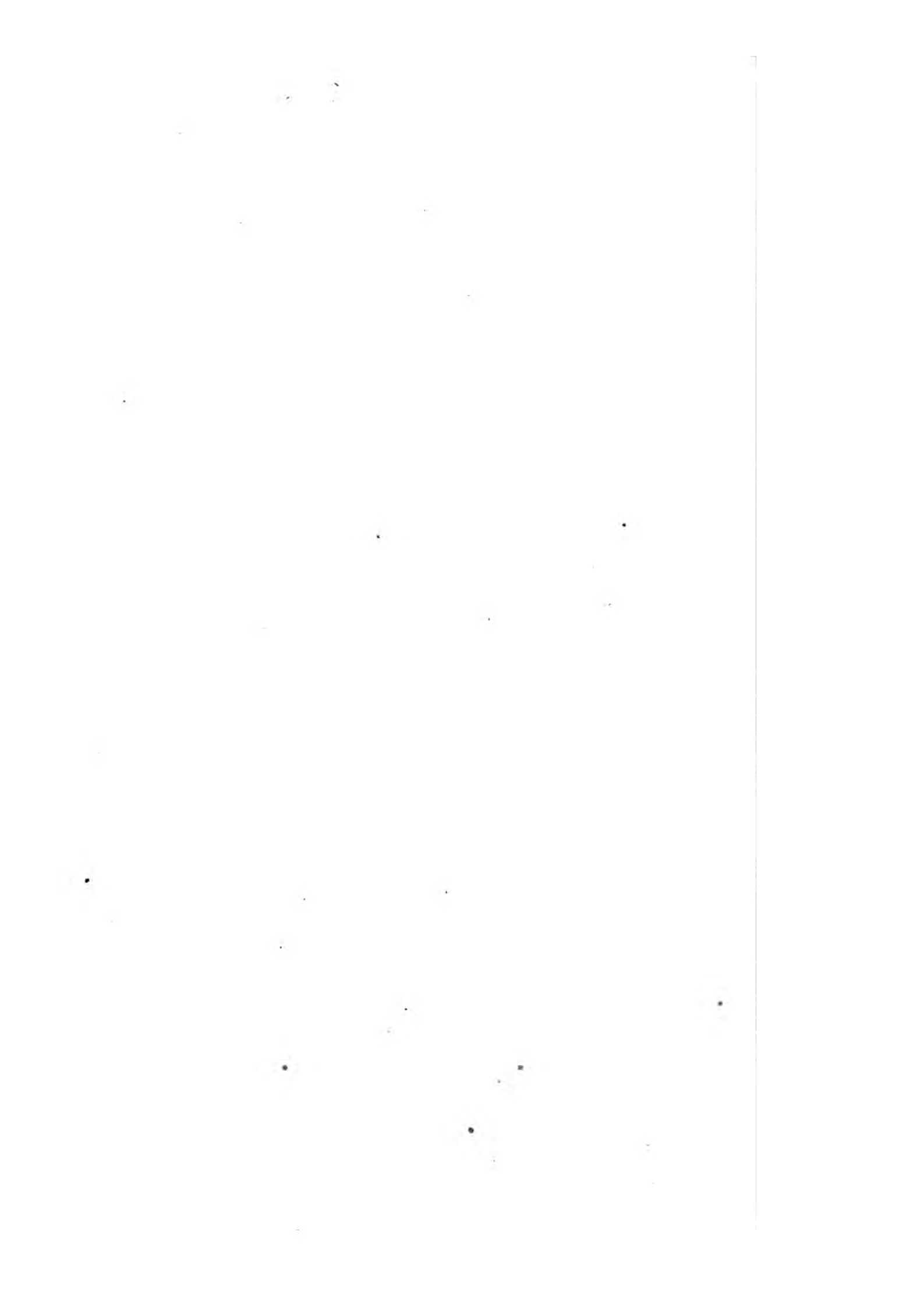
According to Lloyd, Wyatt was frequently honoured with the king's familiar conversation, which never put him so much off his guard as to betray him into any fooleries inconsistent with his character. When urged by the king to dance at one of the court-balls, he replied that, "He who thought himself a wise man in the day-time, would not be a fool at night." His general deportment is said to have been neither too severe for Henry VIII's time, nor too loose for Henry VII's; with whose court, however, he could have little acquaintance. In him also was said to have been combined the wit of sir Thomas More, and the wisdom of sir Thomas Cromwell. It is no small confirmation of this character that his friend Surrey describes him as of "a visage stern and mild;" a contrariety which seems to be very happily preserved in Holbein's incomparable drawing lately published by Mr. Chamberlain.

But his wit was not evanescent. We are told that he brought about the Reformation by a *bon mot*, and precipitated the fall of Wolsey by a seasonable story. When the king was perplexed respecting his divorce from queen Catherine, which he affected to feel as a matter of conscience, sir Thomas exclaimed, "Lord! that a man cannot repent him of his sin without the pope's leave!" A truth thus wittily hinted was afterwards confirmed by the opinion of Cranmer and of the universities; and became a maxim of church and state. The story by which he promoted the fall of Wolsey has not descended to our times. Lloyd merely says that when the king happened to be displeased with Wolsey, "sir Thomas ups with a story of the curs baiting the butchers' dog, which contained the whole method of that great man's ruin." Few readers require to be told that Wolsey was the son of a butcher at Ipswich.

In the early state of the Reformation the clergy were discontented, because afraid of losing their valuable lands. "Butter the rooks nests," said sir Thomas, "and they will never trouble you." The meaning, not very obvious, was that the king should give the church lands to the great families, whose interest it would then be to prevent the re-establishment of popery. The wit, however, of this advice is more remarkable than the wisdom; for notwithstanding the robbery of the church, which has kept her poor ever since, popery was effectually re-established in queen Mary's reign. The liberality of the only other *bon mot* recorded of sir Thomas may be questioned. One day he told the king that he had found out a living of £100 a year more than enough, and prayed him to bestow it on him; and when the king answered that there was no such in England, sir Thomas mentioned "the provost-ship of Eaton; where a man hath his diet, his lodging, his horsemeat, his servant's wages, his riding charge, and an hundred pounds *per annum* besides."

Sir Thomas was a man whose acquaintance was much courted, for his splendid entertainments; his knowledge of the political relations of the kingdom; his discernment in discovering men of parts, and his readiness to encourage them; and for the interest he was known to possess at court. It became a proverb, when any person received preferment, that "he had been in sir Thomas Wyatt's closet." To this may be added, that his conversation had that happy mixture of the grave and gay which excludes dullness as well as levity; and his manners were so highly polished that he differed in





opinion with the utmost civility, and expressed his doubts as if he needed the information which he was able to impart.

Amidst this prosperous career, he had the misfortune, like most of the eminent characters of this reign, to fall under the severe displeasure of the king, and was twice imprisoned³, but for what offences his biographers are not agreed. Fuller says he had heard that he fell into disfavour about the business of queen Anne Bullen. Lloyd insinuates the same, and some have gone so far as to accuse him of a criminal connection with her. But this is in part erroneous. From the oration which he delivered on his second trial, and which lord Orford has printed in his *Miscellaneous Antiquities*, he expressly imputes his first imprisonment to Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk. "His first misfortune flowed from a court-cabal; the second from the villainy, jealousy, and false accusation of that wretch Bonner, bishop of London, whose clownish manners, lewd behaviour, want of religion, and malicious perversion of truth, sir Thomas paints with equal humour and asperity." Bonner accused him of a treasonable correspondence with cardinal Pole, and this with some treasonable expressions concerning the king, formed the principal charges against him, which he repelled with great spirit, ease, and candour. The words which he was accused of having uttered were, "that the king should be cast out of a cart's a—e: and that by God's blood, if he were so, he was well served, and he would he were so." Sir Thomas acknowledged the possibility of his having uttered the first part of this sentence, and explained his meaning, viz. that between the emperor and the king of France, his master Henry would probably be left in the lurch.

He was tried for this by a jury before a committee of the council, and probably acquitted; as we find that he regained the confidence of the king, and was afterwards sent ambassador to the emperor. His eagerness to execute this commission, whatever it was, proved fatal; for riding fast in the heat of summer he was attacked by a malignant fever, of which he died at Shirebourne in Dorsetshire, 1541, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, and was buried in the great conventual church there⁴.

Lord Orford informs us, that in Vertue's manuscript collections he found that Vertue was acquainted with a Mr. Wyat, who lived in Charterhouse-yard, and was the representative descendant of that respectable family. In 1721, and at other times, Vertue says, at that gentleman's house he saw portraits of his ancestors for seven descents, and other pictures and ancient curiosities⁵.

Our poet has usually been termed sir Thomas Wyat *the Elder*, to distinguish him from sir Thomas Wyat, his son, who suffered death for high treason in the reign of queen Mary. His lady, according to Wood, was Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Brooke, lord Cobham⁶. His son left issue, by Jane his wife, daughter and co-heir of William Hawte of Bourne, knight, a son named George Wyat of Boxley in Kent, restored 13. Elizabeth.

³ See his Sonnet to sir Francis Bryan. C.

⁴ Lord Orford contradicts Anthony Wood's account of sir Thomas's death, by playing in his usual way upon words, but unfortunately upon words which are not to be found in the *Athenæ*. See *Misc. Antiquities*, p. 18. note, and compare with Wood, vol. i. col. 57. C.

⁵ "Drayton, in his Verses to Master George Sandys, treasurer for the English colony in Virginia, mentions the name of a Wyat, who probably might be a descendant of our poet's. Sandys was related to the Wyat family." Headley's *Beauties*, i. lxvi.

⁶ She afterwards married sir Edward Warner, bart. Hasted's *Kent*, vol. II. p. 183.

Sir Thomas's biographers are in general silent on the subject of his connection with lord Surrey. It is known, however, that they were closely allied by friendship, and similarity of taste and studies. Surrey's character of Wyatt is a noble tribute to his memory. The year following his death, Leland published a volume of elegiac verses, some of which are very elegant, and all highly encomiastic, entitled "*Næniæ in mortem Thomæ Wiati, equitis incomparabilis, Joanne Lelando Antiquario, Auctore, 4to.*" This scarce pamphlet has a wood cut of Wyatt, supposed to be by Holbein, but representing him as a much older man than he was, and with a huge bushy beard hiding more than half his features. The copy in the British Museum is dated 1552.

His poems were first published by Tottell, along with Surrey's, and the collection by uncertain authors. The authenticity of Surrey's and Wyatt's poems seems to be confirmed by this care of Tottell to distinguish what he knew from what he did not know, and what, from the ignorance of an editor of so much taste, I apprehend were not generally known. Mr. Warton has favoured us with a very elaborate and elegant criticism on Wyatt, but has found it impossible to revive his poetical fame. He contributed but little to the refinement of English poetry, and his versification and language are deficient in harmony and perspicuity. From a close study of the Italian poets, his imagination dwells too often on puerile conceits and contrarities, which, however, to some are so pleasing that they are not to this day totally excluded from our poetry. As a lover, his addresses are stately and pedantic, with very little mixture of feeling or passion; and although detached beauties may be pointed out in a few of his sonnets, his genius was ill adapted to this species of poetry. In all respects he is inferior to his friend Surrey, and claims a place in the English series chiefly as being the first moral satirist, and as having represented the vices and follies of his time in the true spirit of the didactic muse.

Lord Surrey, we have seen, praises his version of David's Psalms, a work about the existence of which bibliographers are not agreed. No copy is known to be extant, nor is it noticed in any history of the English press, nor in any library printed or manuscript. In 1549 were published Certayne Psalms, a transcript of which has been made for the present edition, without, I am afraid, adding much to the author's reputation. Mr. Warton observes, that the pious Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins are the only immortal translators of David's Psalms. But indifferent as they are now thought, there is nothing to be found of a superior kind before their time. In the library of Bene't College, Cambridge, is a manuscript translation of the Psalms into Scotch metre of the fourteenth century.

Tottell's edition of Surrey and Wyatt contains also the Poems of UNCERTAIN AUTHORS, on which Mr. Warton has bestowed the whole of sect. xxi. and part of xxii. of his History of Poetry. He notices this collection as the first printed poetical miscellany in the English language, and is of opinion that sir Francis Bryan, George Boleyn, lord Rochford (brother to queen Anne Boleyn), and lord Vaux, "all professed rhymers and sonnet-writers," were large contributors. Sir Francis Bryan's and lord Rochford's shares have not been ascertained. Lord Thomas Vaux⁷ is the author of *The Image of Death*, and of the *Assault of Cupide upon the Fort in which the Lover's Heart lay wounded*. He has been confounded by some writers with Nicholas Vaux, his father, who was no poet; and with his son William, who wrote several poems in the

⁷ See Mr. Park's Life of this nobleman in his edition of the Royal and Noble Authors, vol. I. p. 309.

collection called *The Paradise of Dainty Deuises*. Mr. Ritson⁸ has produced Churchyard's authority that he also was a contributor of "many things" to this collection, but they are not specified.

Mr. Warton is of opinion that all these pieces were written between the years 1530 and 1550, and most of them, perhaps, within the first part of that period. The *Songes* written by N. G. at the close of the collection are attributed to Nicholas Grimoald, a man of extensive learning, a critic, and a poet, and the second, after lord Surrey, who wrote in blank verse. Mr. Warton gives him the high praise of having added to Surrey's efforts new strength, elegance, and modulation, and thinks that as a writer of verses in rhyme, he yields to none of his contemporaries, for a masterly choice of chaste expression, and concise elegancies of didactic versification. The remainder of these poems await the researches and conjectures of some future and indefatigable antiquary.

⁸ Ritson's *Bibliographia Poetica*, in art. Churchyard.



THE
LIFE OF GEORGE GASCOIGNE.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THE life of this ingenious poet has long been involved in obscurity. Most of his biographers have either not seen his works, or have not read them with attention, and the rarity of all the editions for many years past has prevented curious inquirers from an opportunity of resolving their doubts. Anthony Wood's life of Gascoigne is, upon the whole, more free from errors than might have been expected in a biographer who was wont to undervalue the sons of the Muses. Bishop Tanner's and Dr. Berkenhout's accounts are abridged from Wood, but a very judicious sketch may be seen in the first volume of the *Censura Literaria*, and in addition to that, and other notices scattered over the same useful publication, I am now enabled to avail myself of a manuscript life written by the late Richard Gough, Esq. for the *Biographia Britannica*, and, what probably may be considered as of more importance, of a pamphlet of uncommon rarity, which has lately been brought to light, after a concealment of nearly a century.

Bishop Tanner is the first who notices this pamphlet, under the title of "A Remembrance of the well employed life, and godly end of George Gascoigne, Esq. who deceased at Stamford in Lincolnshire, 7th October 1577, reported by George Whetstone." But it is very extraordinary that the learned prelate should inform us of this pamphlet being in his possession, and at the same time express his doubt, "*Vita an nostri an alius Geo. Gascoignii?*" when a very slight inspection must have convinced him that it could be no other, and that, in its principal facts, it agreed with the account he had just transcribed from Wood. Since the antiquities of poetry have become a favourite study, many painful inquiries have been made after this tract, but it could not be found in Tanner's library, which forms part of the Bodleian, or in any other collection, private or public, and doubts were entertained¹ whether such a pamphlet had ever existed.

¹ This ought not to have been the case, as Herbert mentions that Aggas had a licence to print it, which I find, by the books of the Stationers' Company, was granted on the fifteenth of November 1577. C.

About three years ago, however, it was discovered in the collection of a deceased gentleman, a Mr. Voight of the Custom-house, London, and was purchased at his sale by Mr. Malone. It consists of about thirteen pages small quarto, black letter, and contains, certainly not much *life*, but some particulars unknown to his biographers, which are now incorporated in the following sketch, and a transcript of the whole is subjoined.

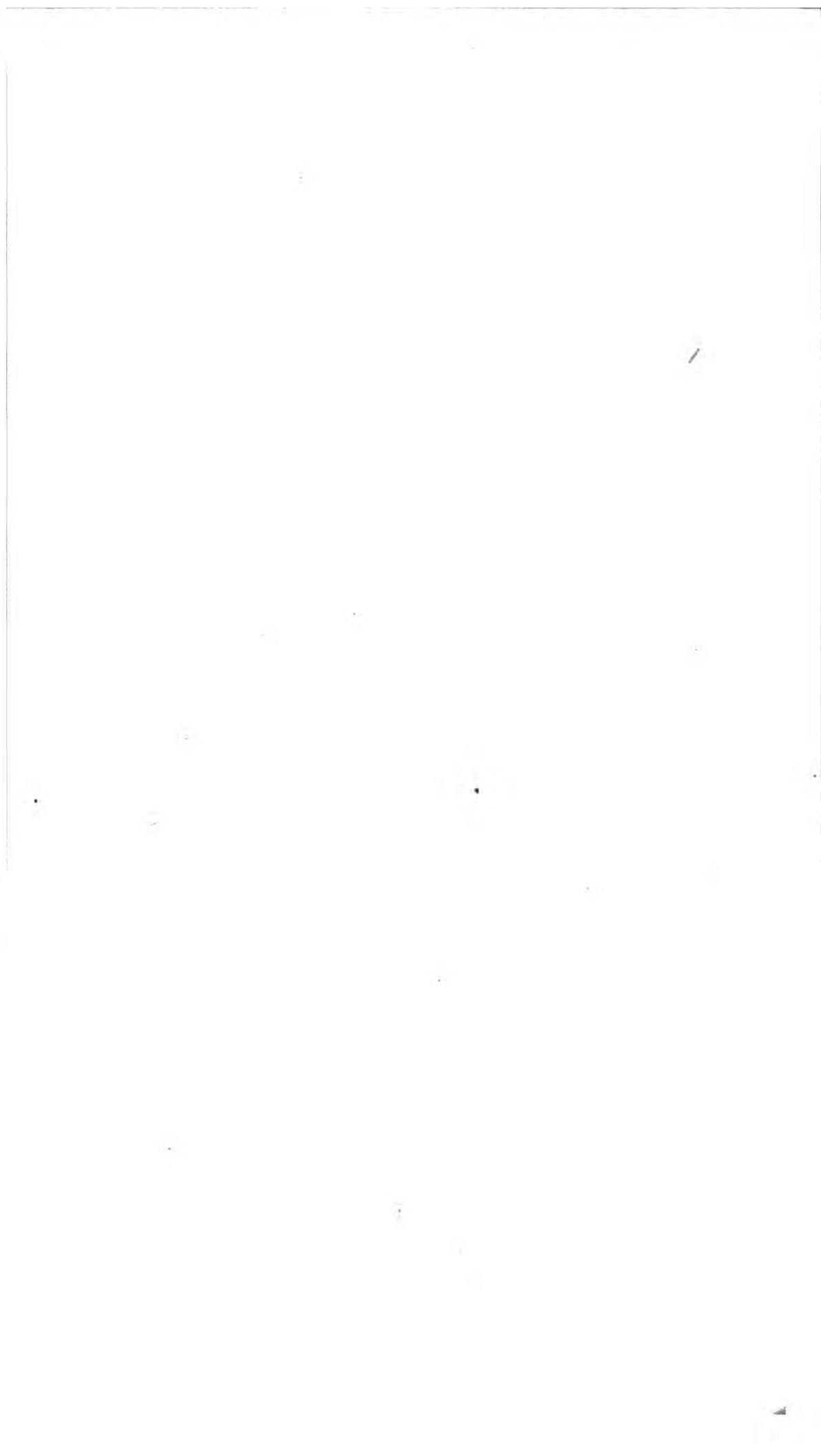
George Gascoigne was born of an ancient and honourable family in Essex, and was son and heir of sir John Gascoigne, who, for some reason not assigned in Whetstone's account, chose to disinherit him. Previously to this harsh step, he had been privately educated under a clergyman of the name of Nevinson, perhaps Stephen Nevinson, L.L.D. prebendary and commissary of the city and diocese of Canterbury. After this he was removed either to Oxford or Cambridge. Wood says, he "had his education in both the universities, though chiefly, as he conceives, in Cambridge;" but Gascoigne himself, in his *Steele-Glasse*, informs us that he was a member of the university of Cambridge, without mentioning Oxford. His progress at Cambridge is unknown; but he removed from it to Gray's Inn, for the purpose of studying the law. It is probable that in both places he wrote a considerable number of his poems, those of the amatory kind particularly, as he seems to include them among his youthful follies.

Wood now informs us, that Gascoigne, "having a rambling and unfixed head, left Gray's Inn, went to various cities in Holland, and became a soldier of note, which he afterwards professed as much, or more, as learning, and therefore made him take this motto, *Tam Marti quam Mercurio*. From thence he went to France to visit the fashions of the royal court there, where he fell in love with a Scottish dame." In this there is a mixture of truth and error. The story of the Scottish dame has no better foundation than some lines in his *Herbes*, written probably in an assumed character. His being in France is yet more doubtful, and perhaps the following is nearly the fact. While at Gray's Inn he incurred the expences of a fashionable and courtly life, and was obliged to sell his patrimony, whatever that might be; and it would appear that his father, dissatisfied with his extravagance, refused him any farther assistance, and, probably about this time, disinherited him.

Without blaming his father, unless by calling his disinheritance "a froward deed," he now resolved to assume the airs of independence, in hopes that his courtly friends would render him in reality independent; but he soon found, what is no uncommon case, that their favours were not to be obtained without solicitations incompatible with a proud spirit. A more honourable resource then presented itself. William, prince of Orange, was at this time endeavouring to emancipate the Netherlands from the tyranny of the Spanish monarch, and Gascoigne, prompted by the hope of gaining laurels in a field dignified by patriotic bravery, embarked on the 19th of March 1572, for Holland. The vessel being under the guidance of a drunken Dutch pilot was run aground, and twenty of the crew who had taken to the long boat were drowned. Gascoigne, however, and his friends, remained at the pumps, and being enabled again to put to sea, landed safe in Holland. The drunkenness of the pilot he never forgot:

"Wel plaste at length, among the drunken Dutch."

Having obtained a captain's commission under the prince of Orange, he "acquired



considerable military reputation; but an unfortunate quarrel with his colonel retarded his career. Conscious of his deserts, he repaired immediately to Delf, resolved to resign his commission to the hands from which he received it; the prince in vain endeavouring to close the breach between his officers.

“While this negotiation was mediating, a circumstance occurred which had nearly cost our poet his life. A lady at the Hague (then in the possession of the enemy) with whom Gascoigne had been on intimate terms, had his portrait in her hands (his “counterfayt,” as he calls it), and resolving to part with it to himself alone, wrote a letter to him on the subject, which fell into the hands of his enemies in the camp; from this paper they meant to have raised a report unfavourable to his loyalty; but upon its reaching his hands, Gascoigne, conscious of his fidelity, laid it immediately before the prince, who saw through their design, and gave him passports for visiting the lady at the Hague; the burghers, however, watched his motions with malicious caution, and he was called in derision “the Green Knight.” Although disgusted with the ingratitude of those on whose side he fought, Gascoigne still retained his commission, till the prince coming personally to the siege of Middleburg, gave him an opportunity of displaying his zeal and courage, when the prince rewarded him with 300 guilders beyond his regular pay, and a promise of future promotion. He was, however, surprised soon after by 3000 Spaniards when commanding, under captain Sheffield, 500 Englishmen lately landed, and retired in good order, at night, under the walls of Leyden. The jealousy of the Dutch was then openly displayed by their refusing to open their gates; our military bard with his band were in consequence made captives. At the expiration of twelve days his men were released, and the officers, after an imprisonment of four months, were sent back to England.”

These particulars, so accurately gleaned from his works by the intelligent correspondent of the *Censura Literaria*², are confirmed in some measure by the information he gave to Whetstone. In this he adverts to his heroic spirit in volunteering his services for the Dutch, appeals to “his slender gaine,” as a proof what little share avarice had in his conduct, and insinuates that after he

“Cacht by sly hap, in prison vile was popt,”

his life would have been in danger, had he not exerted his utmost eloquence with his foe, which, we are told, he was enabled to do by his familiarity with the Latin, Italian, French, and Dutch languages³.

On his return to England, he resided partly in Gray's Inn, and partly at Walthamstow. In his *Flowers* he informs us, that he had, in the midst of his youth, determined to abandon all vain delights, and to return to Gray's Inn, there to undertake *again* the study of the common law; and that at the request of five gentlemen of the Inn, namely, Francis and Anthony Kinwelmersh, Messrs. Vaughan, Nevile, and Courtop, he wrote what he calls his *Memories*. These tasks, however, may have been pre-

² Vol. I. p. 109. &c. C.

³ In the dedication of the *Hermit's Tale* to queen Elizabeth, hereafter mentioned, he says, “Such Italian as I have learned in London, and such Latin as I forgot at Cambridge, such French as I borrowed in Holland, and such English as I stole in Westmoreland, even such and no better have I here poured before you.” From this last expression, the writer of his life in the *Censura* thinks he may have been a native of Westmoreland. C.

formed at an earlier period of life, if it can be proved that he left the Inn twice before this time; but his general design now was to trust to his wit, and to "ope the windows of his Muse;" in other words, to publish his early poems, and those other works, written in his more serious moments, that were intended to counteract the licentious tendency of his amatory verses. As a general apology for the latter, he asserts that they "do showe

"The woes of love, but not the wayes to love."

In the summer of 1575, he accompanied queen Elizabeth in one of her stately progresses, and wrote for her amusement, in the month of July, a kind of mask, entitled *The Princely Pleasures of Kenelworth Castle*⁴. Some of the verses were not only written, but spoke by him on this occasion; but the whole of the entertainment, owing to the unfavourable weather, was not performed. This piece was first printed in the posthumous edition of his works.

On his return from this progress, his principal residence, while preparing his works, was at Walthamstowe. Here, it appears by Whetstone's account, he wrote *The Steele Glasse*, *The Glass of Government*, *The Delicate Diet*, a *Book of Hunting*⁵, and *the Doom's Day Drum*, which last was not published until after his death. He left other pieces behind him, some of which were afterwards printed in various collections, but without his name.

Although he enjoyed the esteem of many of his poetical contemporaries, and the patronage of lord Grey of Wilton, the earl of Bedford, sir Walter Rawleigh, and other persons of distinction, yet during this period he complains bitterly of what poets in all ages have felt, the envy of rivals and the malevolence of critics, and seems to intimate that, although he apparently bore this treatment with patience, yet it insensibly wore him out, and brought on a bodily distemper which his physicians could not cure. In all his publications, he takes every opportunity to introduce and bewail the errors of his youth, and to atone for any injury, real or supposed, which might have accrued to the public from a perusal of his early poems, in which, however, the proportion of indelicate thoughts is surely not very great.

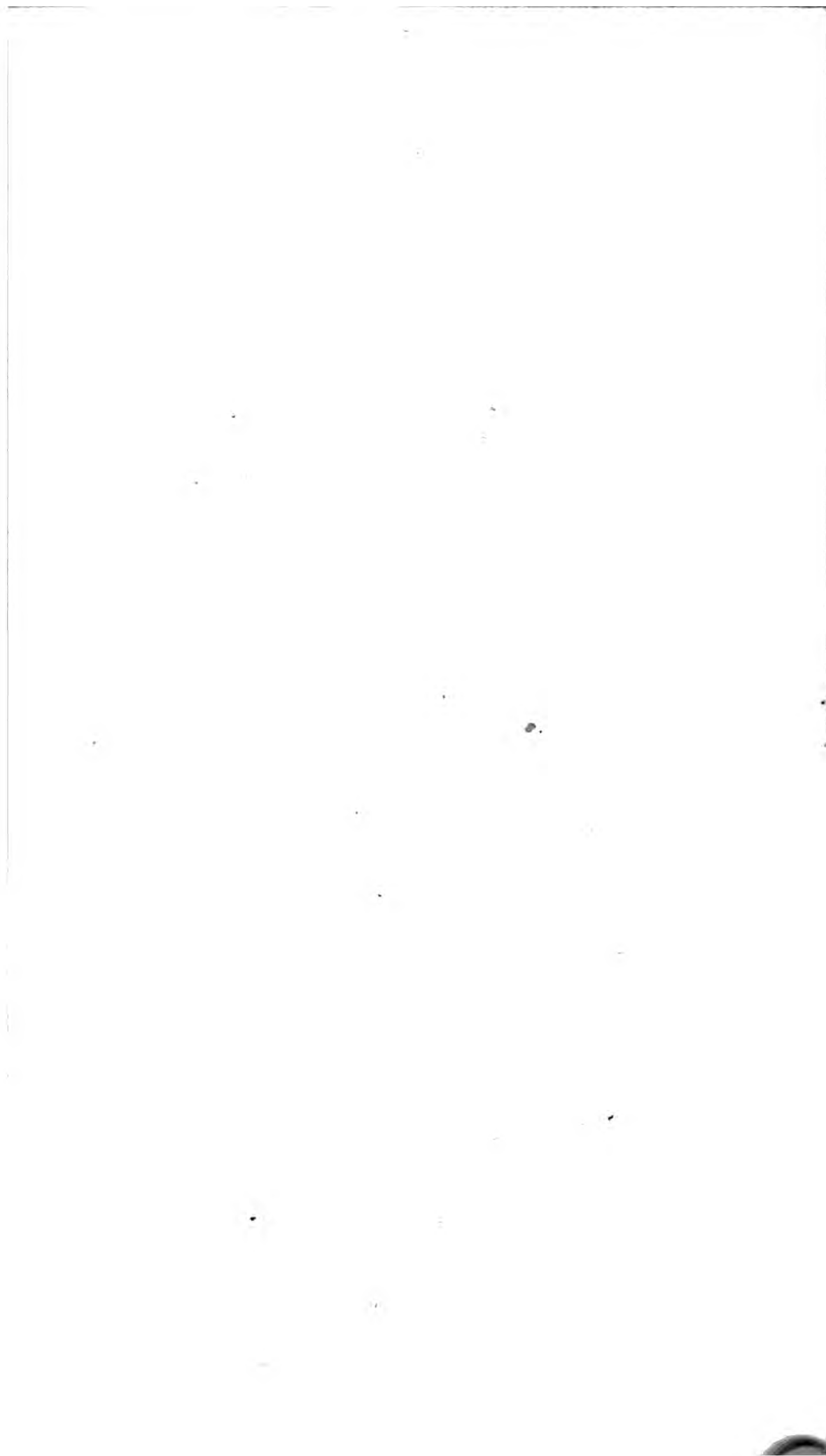
His biographers, following the Oxford historian, have hitherto placed his demise at Walthamstowe in the year 1578; but Whetstone, on whom we can more certainly rely, informs us that he died at Stamford in Lincolnshire, Oct. 7, 1577. He had perhaps taken a journey to this place for change of air, accompanied by his friend Whetstone, who was with him when he died, so calmly that the moment of his departure was not perceived. He left a wife and son behind him, whom he recommended to the liberality of the queen, whether successfully, or what became of them, cannot now be known. The registers of Stamford and of Walthamstowe have been examined without success⁶.

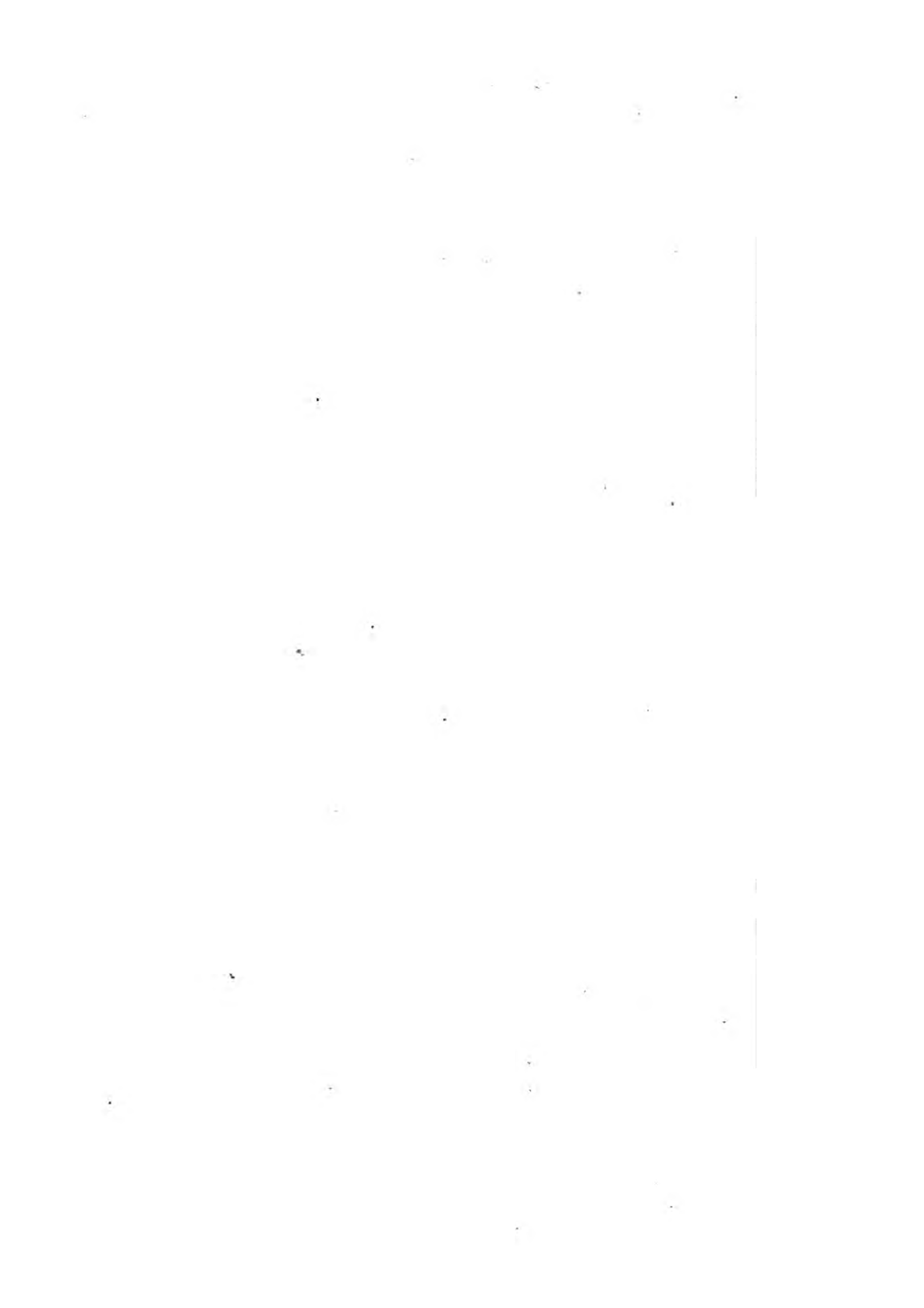
Although his age is not mentioned by any of his biographers, yet from various expressions in his works, it may be conjectured that it did not exceed forty years, and

⁴ See many curious particulars of this entertainment in Nichols' *Progresses of Queen Elizabeth*, vol. I. C.

⁵ This is not known. He has commendatory verses before Turbervile's *Art of Venerie*. C.

⁶ By the author of his life in the *Censura Literaria*. C.





even a much shorter period might be fixed upon with great probability. His stay at Cambridge was perhaps not long; in 1566⁷, when his comedy of the *Supposes* was acted at Gray's Inn, he was denominated *one of the students*. In one of his prefaces, he calls himself of middle age; his exploits in the army are consistent with the prime of life; and it is certain that he did not survive these above five years.

As the editions of Gascoigne's works are all extremely scarce, and often imperfect, it may be necessary to give a more particular account of them than has yet been published.

The first, and by far the most rare edition of Gascoigne's works, is a quarto volume printed in 1572, and entitled "A Hundreth sundrie Flowres bounde vp in one small Poesie. Gathered partely (by translation) in the fyne outlandish Gardins of Euripides, Ouid, Petrarke, Ariosto, and others: and partly by inuention, out of our owne fruitefull Orchardes in Englande: Yelding sundrie sweete sauors of Tragical, Comical, and Morall Discourses, bothe pleasaunt, and profitable to the well smellyng noses of learned Readers. Meritum petere, graue. At London, Imprinted for Richarde Smith."

This volume contains, "First an excellente and pleasante Comedie entituled *Supposes*. The second, the wofull tragedie of *Jocasta*, containing the vtter subuersion of *Thebes*. Thirdly, a pleasant discourse of the aduentures of master F. J. conteyning excellent letters, sonets, Lays, Ballets, Rondlets, Verlays and verses. Fourthly, diuers excellent deuises of sundry Gentlemen. Fifthly, certayne deuises of master Gascoyne, conteyning his anothamie, his arrignment, his prayse of mistresse Bridges now Lady Sands, then his praise of *Zouche* late the lady Grey of Wilton. Gascoyne his passion; libell of diuorce; praise of his mistresse; Lullabie; Recantation; five notable deuises upon five sundry theames giuen to him by five sundry Gentlemen in five sundry meeters; gloze vpon *Dominus iis opus habet*; good morrowe; good night; counsell to *Douglas* Diue; counsell to *Bartholomew Wythipole*; Epitaph vpon *Captaine Burcher* lately slayne in *Zelande*, called the tale of the stone; deuise of a maske; wodomanship; gardening; last voyage into *Holland* in *Marche*; Lastly the dolorous discourse of *Dan Bartholomew* of *Bathe*, wherin is conteyned his triumphes, his discourse of loue, his extreme passion, his libell of request to *Care*, his last will and testament, his farewell; Last of all the reporter⁸."

Of this very rare edition, only two perfect copies are known, one which was in Mr. Steevens's collection, and a second in Emanuel college library, placed there probably by Dr. Farmer; a third, now before the editor, is the property of Thomas Hill, esq. and was completed by manuscript from Dr. Farmer's copy. Mr. Steevens's account of it was, that it differed very materially from its successor in 1587, and contained several pieces not to be found in it: it was, in short, an *unchastised* work, published, as it should seem, without the formal consent of Gascoigne, though not perhaps without his connivance. The pages in all the copies extant break off abruptly at 164, and recommence at 201.

⁷ It appears from the records of Gray's Inn, that in 1565 George Gascoigne being called an Ancient, paid his fines for the vacations past, to complete the number of nine vacations required by the statutes of the society. If this was the poet, which is very probable, his pursuit of his studies must, at this time, have been serious. See Malcolm's Lond. Rediv. vol. II. p. 246.

⁸ Ariosto allegorized, a short piece, not very delicate, is the only omission I can discover in the subsequent editions. C.

It appears, however, from his "Epistle to the Reverend Divines," prefixed to the edition of 1575, that he made a present of the pieces in this volume to his publisher, and was not unwilling the same should be imprinted for various reasons which the reader may peruse in that epistle. As to the interruption in the paging, although it seems to indicate the cancelling of some part, yet the matter and number of the page accords with the table of contents and the list of the errata, which runs from folio 163 to 206: Mr. Herbert's supposition that different printers were employed, will not account for so large an omission.

The second edition is entitled "The Posies of George Gascoigne Esquire. Corrected, perfected, and augmented by the Authour, 1575. *Tam Marti, quam Mercurio.* Imprinted at London by H. Byneman for Richard Smith." This begins with a dedication to the reverend divines, in defence of his former publication. An address to young gentlemen, and an advertisement to the readers generally; and contains, after many commendatory verses, "FLOWERS, viz. The Anotamie of a Louer; the arraignmente of a Louer; the passions of a Louer; the diuorce of a Louer; the Lullabie of a Louer; the lamentation of a Louer; the lookes of a Louer enamored; the lookes of a Louer forsaken; the recantation of a Louer; praise of lady Sands; praise of lady Grey; praise of the author's mistresse; Gascoigns good morrowe—good night—*De Profundis*—memories—an Epitaph upon Captaine Bourcher; a deuise of a Maske; the refusall of a Louer; pryde in Court; Despised things may liue; in trust is treason; the constancie of a Louer; the frute of Foes; a Louer once warned and twice taken; a Louer encoraged by former examples; the Historie of Dan Bartholomewe of Bathe; the frutes of Warre. HEARBES, containing The Comedy called Supposes; The Tragedie called Jocasta; the fruite of Reconciliation; the force of true Frenship; the force of loue in strangers; the praise of browne beautie; the Partrich and the Merlyn; the vertue of Ver; the complainte of a Dame in absence; the praise of a Countesse; the affection of a louer; the complaint of a Dame suspected; a riddle; the shield of Loue; the gloze upon *Dominus iis opus habet*; Gascoignes counsel to Diue—counsel to Wythipole—wodmanship—gardenings—journey into Hollande. WEEDES, containing, The fruite of Fetters; the complaynt of the green Knight; the farewell to Fansie; the fable of Ferdinando Jeronimi and Leonora de Velasco; the praise of a Gentlewoman neither fair nor wel favoured; the praise of Phillip Sparrowe; Farewel with a mischief; the doale of disdaine; Mars in despite of Vulcane; Patience perforce; a letter for a yong louer; Dauid saluteth Bersabe; Sone acquainted, sone forgotten;" and an article not noticed in the table of contents, entitled "Certayne notes of Instruction concerning the making of verse or ryme in English, written at the request of Master Edouardo Donati." In this edition the pages of the Flowers run from 1 to 149, and Hearbes from 1 to 290. The Certayne Notes of Instruction which conclude the volume are not paged.

In this edition, it is more material to notice that F. I. or Freeman Jones, is altered to Ferdinando Jeronimi; Elinor to Leonora de Velasco, Fraunces into Francischini; and the signatred initials of G. T. &c. are wholly omitted.

These are the only editions of Gascoigne's poetry collected in his life-time, although Herbert, p. 1077, notices an edition printed in 1575, for Christopher Barker.

His separate publications appeared in the years 1575 and 1576. The first was "The Glasse of Gouvernement. A Tragical Comedie so entituled, bycause therein are handled aswell the rewardes for Vertues, as also the punishment for Vices. Done by George

Gascoigne Esquire, 1575. Blessed are they that feare the Lorde, their children shalbe as the branches of Oliue trees rounde about their table. Seen and allowed, according to the order appointed in the Queenes majesties iniunctions. Imprinted at London for C. Barker." According to Herbert, there was a second edition of this piece in the same year. The dedication noticed, by Herbert, in these editions, to sir Owen Upton, is wanting in the copy now before me.

The Steele Glas was published in 1576, "A Satyre compiled by George Gascoigne Esquire, together with The Complaint of Phylomene. An Elegie deuised by the same Author. *Tam Marti, quam Mercurio.* Printed for Richard Smith." In the title is an ornamental wooden cut, representing Time drawing the figure of Truth out of a pit or cavern, with this legend, OCCULTA VERITAS TEMPORE PATET. Dr. Percy, in whose Reliques, Book III. Vol. 2. this device is copied, with some variations, observes that "it is not improbable but the accidental sight of this, or some other title page containing the same device, suggested to Rubens that well-known design of a similar kind, which he has introduced into the Luxemburg gallery (Le Tems decouvre La Verite), and which has been so justly censured for the unnatural manner of its execution." On the back of the title is Gascoigne's portrait in armour, ruff, large beard; on his right hand a musket and bandaleers; on his left, books, &c. and underneath his motto *Tam Marti, &c.* This edition of the Steele Glas is extremely rare, and with the portrait, yet more rare.

In the same year he published "A Delicate Diet for daintie mouthde Drounkards: wherein the fowle abuse of common carousing and quaffing with heartie draughtes is honestly admonished." Imprinted Aug. 22, 1576, on three sheets, octavo. This prose tract was lately republished by Mr. Waldron, in his Literary Museum, from a copy, the only one known, in the possession of Mr. Steevens. The Dedication to "the Right Worshipfull his singuler good friend Lewes Dyve of Broomcham, in the Countie of Bedforde, Esquyer" is dated Aug. 10, 1576: it is partly a translation from St. Augustine, and partly compiled from other authors, with a view to prove the proposition, that "all droonkardes are beastes."

The Hermits tale, at Woodstock, 1575, is printed in Mr. Nichols's Progresses of Queen Elizabeth, from a manuscript in the British Museum. Mr. Andrews, in his Continuation of Dr. Henry's history, has the following note; "The poet Gascoigne, as he draws his own picture, presenting his book to Elizabeth, has a pen for an ear ornament, and thus he sings,

"Beholde, good queene, a poett with a speare;
(Straunge sightes well mark'd are understode the better)
A soldier armde with pensyle in his eare,
With pen to fighte, and sworde to write a letter.

Frontispiece to Gascoigne's Translation of "The Heremyte."

Some verses of Gascoigne's are prefixed to Cardanus comforte, 1576; Hollyband's "French Littleton;" Sir Humphrey Gilbert's "Discourse of a Discoverie of a new Passage to Cathaia," and probably to other works of contemporaries.

The only posthumous work of our author, published in 1586, is entitled "The Droome of Doomes Day. Wherein the frailties and miseries of mans life are lively portrayed and learnedly set forth. Deuided as appeareth in the Page next following.

Translated and collected by George Gascoigne Esquyre. *Tam Marti quam Mercurio*. At London, Imprinted by John Windet, for Gabriel Cawood: dwelling in Paules Churchyard, at the signe of the Holy Ghost, 1586." The division "on the Page next following," or back of the title, will give the reader an outline of this work. "This work is deuided into three partes, the first whereof is entituled, *The View of worldly Vanities*, Exhorting us to contempne, all pompes, pleasures, delights and vanities of this life. And the second part is named, *The shame of sinne*, Displaying and laying open the huge greatnesse and enormities of the same, by sundrie good examples and comparisons. And the third part is called, *The Needels Eye*, Wherein wee are taught the right rules of a true Christian life, and the straight passage vnto euerlasting felicitie. Hereunto is added a priuate Letter, the which doth teach remedies against the bitterness of Death." In the dedication to his patron the earl of Bedford, we are informed that this work is principally a translation from an old volume he found in his library; which wanting the beginning and end, he could not ascertain the author's name; that he was prompted to translate, arrange and publish the same, partly to atone for mispent time, and partly in consequence of the suggestion of a friend, who, after allowing his poetry its full merit, said "hee woulde like the gardiner much better if he would employ his spade in no worse ground, then either diuinitie or moral philosophie." The dedication is dated "From my lodging where I finished this trauaile in weake plight for health as your good Lordshippe well knoweth this 2 of Maye, 1576." The private letter at the end of the work, teaching remedies against the fear of death, is said to have been written by J. P. to his familiar friende G. P.

In 1587, the third, and most complete edition of his works was published, under the title of "The whole woorkes of George Gascoigne Esquire: Newlye compyled into one Volume, That is to say: His Flowers, Hearbes, Weedes, the Fruites of warre, the Comedie called Supposes, the Tragedie of Jocasta, the Steele Glasse, the complaint of Phylomene, the Storie of Ferdinando Jeronimi, and the pleasure at Kenelworth Castle. London, Imprinted by Abell Jeffes, dwelling in the Fore Streete, without Creeplegate, neere unto Grubstreete," small quarto, b. l. This is an uniform edition of the pieces mentioned, and may be reckoned the best, except that the errors pointed out in the former editions are not corrected in this.

The testimonies to Gascoigne's merit by his contemporaries are so numerous, that we are at a loss to know who those enemies were, and what their numbers and force, which gave Gascoigne that uneasiness of which he complains with all the bitterness of wounded sensibility. Besides the eulogies prefixed to his works, he is celebrated by Gabriel Hervey as one of the English poets who have written in praise of women.

Claucerusque adsit. Surreuis et inclytus adsit
Gascoignoque aliquis sit, mea Corda locus⁹.

Arthur Hall, in the dedication prefixed to his Translation of Ten Books of Homer, compliments "the pretie pythic Conceits of M. George Gascoigne." Thomas Nash, in his Address to Gentlemen Students, prefixed to Green's Arcadia, says, "Who euer my priuate opinion condemne as faultie, Maister Gascoigne is not to be abridged of his deserued esteeme, who first beate the path to that perfection which our best poets

⁹ Gratulationes Valdinenses, Edit. Binneman, 1578, 4to. Lib. IV. p. 22. C.

have aspired to since his departure, whereto hee did ascend, by comparing the Italian with the English, as Tully did *Græca cum Latinis*."

This testimony, it is observed by a writer in the *Censura Literaria*, will be sufficient to obviate Mr. Park's suspicion that Nash intended to satirize Gascoigne in his *Pierce Pennilesse*, as "the greasy son of a clothier." On examining the passage in Nash whence this suspicion seems to arise, I find that the principal ground is the quotation of Gascoigne's motto *Tam Marti quam Mercurio*. No other particular stated can apply to Gascoigne, if the account we have been able to furnish be accurate; but as to the motto, it is well known that after Gascoigne's death it was used by, or appropriated to his old friend sir Walter Raleigh, who might, and perhaps with as little reason, be the object of Nash's coarse abuse.

Webbe, in his discourse of English Poetrie, 1586, mentions Gascoigne "as painful a soldier in the affairs of his prince and country as he was a witty poet in his writing;" and Puttenham gives the prize to him for "a good meter and for a plentifull vayne." Bolton only, in his *Hypercritica*, contents himself with the sparing notice that "among the lesser poets, George Gascoigne's works may be endured."

If we consider the general merit of the poets in the early part of the Elizabethan period, it will probably appear that the extreme rarity of Gascoigne's works has been the chief cause of his being so much neglected by modern readers. In smoothness and harmony of versification he yields to no poet of his own time, when these qualities were very common; but his higher merit is, that in every thing he discovers the powers and invention of a poet, a warmth of sentiment tender and natural, and a fertility of fancy, although not always free from the conceits of the Italian school. As a satirist, if nothing remained but his *Steele Glass*, he may be reckoned one of the first. There is a vein of sly sarcasm in this piece, which appears to me to be original; and his intimate knowledge of mankind, acquired indeed at the expence probably of health and certainly of comfort and independence, enabled him to give a more curious picture of the dress, manners, amusements, and follies of the times than we meet with in almost any other author.

To point out the individual beauties of his miscellaneous pieces, after the specimens exhibited by Mrs. Cooper, Messrs. Percy, Warton, Headley, and Ellis, would be unnecessary; but there are three respects in which his claims to originality require to be noticed as *æras* in a history of poetry. His *Steele Glass* is among the first specimens of blank verse in our language; his *Jocasta* is the second theatrical piece written in that measure; and his *Supposes* is the first comedy written in prose. In his *Jocasta*, which is partly paraphrased and partly abridged from the *Phoenissæ* of Euripides, he was assisted by his fellow-student of Gray's Inn, Francis Kinwelmersh, who translated the first and fourth acts. Mr. Warton, who has given an account of this play, in the third volume of the *History of Poetry*, remarks that "so sudden were the changes or the refinements of our language, that in the second edition of this play, printed again with Gascoigne's poems in 1587, it was thought necessary to affix marginal explanations of many words, not long before in common use, but now become obsolete and unintelligible." These obsolete words, however, were explained in the *second* edition of our author's works, printed in 1575, which Mr. Warton had probably not seen.

Shakspeare's obligations to the *Supposes* have been stated by Mr. Warton and Dr. Farmer; by the former in his *History of Poetry*, and by the latter in the notes on the *Taming of a Shrew*, in Johnson and Steevens' edition of Shakspeare.

It remains yet to be noticed, that there is in the British Museum a poem written by our author which has not been added to his works: it is entitled *The Grief of Joy, Certeyne Elegies*, wherein the doubtful Delightes of Manes Lyfe are displaid. Written to the Queenes most excellent Majestie, 1576. Mr. Beloe has printed the dedication, and a specimen of this poem in his *Anecdotes of Literature and scarce Books*; and most readers will probably think that more is unnecessary.

A REMEMBRANCE

of the wel imployed life, and godly end of
GEORGE GASKOIGNE Esquire, who
deceased at Stalmford in Lin-
colne Shire the 7 of October

1577

The reporte of GEOR. WHETSTONS
Gent. an eye witnes of his
Godly and charitable
end in this world.

Formæ nulla Fides

IMPRINTED AT LON-
don for Edward Aggas, dwelling
in Pauls Churchyard and
are there to be solde.

The wel imployed life, and godly end of
G. Gascoigne, Esquire.

AND is there none, wil help to tel my tale,
Who (ab) in helth, a thousand plaints have shone?
teeles all men joy? tā no mā skil of bale¹?
O yes I see, a comfort in my mone.
help me good George, my life and death to touch
some man for thee may one day doo as much.

Thou seest my death, and long my life didst knowe,
my life; nay death, to live I now begin:
But some wil say, *Durus est hic sermo*,
Tis hard indeed, for such as feed on sin.
Yet trust me friends (though flesh doth hardly bow)
I am resolv'd, I never liv'd til now.

And on what cause, in order shall ensue,
My worldly life (is first) must play his parte:
Whose tale attend, for once the same is true,
Yea Whetston thou, has knowen my hidden hart
And therefore I conjure thee to defend:
(When I am dead) my life and godly end.

¹ I suspect some inaccuracy in transcribing this line. C.

first of my life, which some (amis) did knowe,
 I leve mine armes, my acts shall blase the same
 Yet on a thorne, a grape will never growe,
 no more a churle, dooth breed a childe of fame.
 but (for my birth) my birth right was not great
 my father did, his forward sonne defeat².

This froward deed, could scarce my hart dismay,
 Vertue (quod I) wil see I shall not lacke:
 And wel I wot *Domini est terra*,
 Besides my wit can guide me from a wrack.
 Thus finding cause, to foster hye desire:
 I clapt on cost (a help) for to aspire.

But foolish man deckt in my peacock's plumes,
 my wanton wil commaunded strait my wit:
 Yea, brainsick I, was drunk with fancies tumes,
 But, *Nemo sine crimine vivit*.
 for he that findes himself from vices free
 I give him leve, to throwe a stone at me.

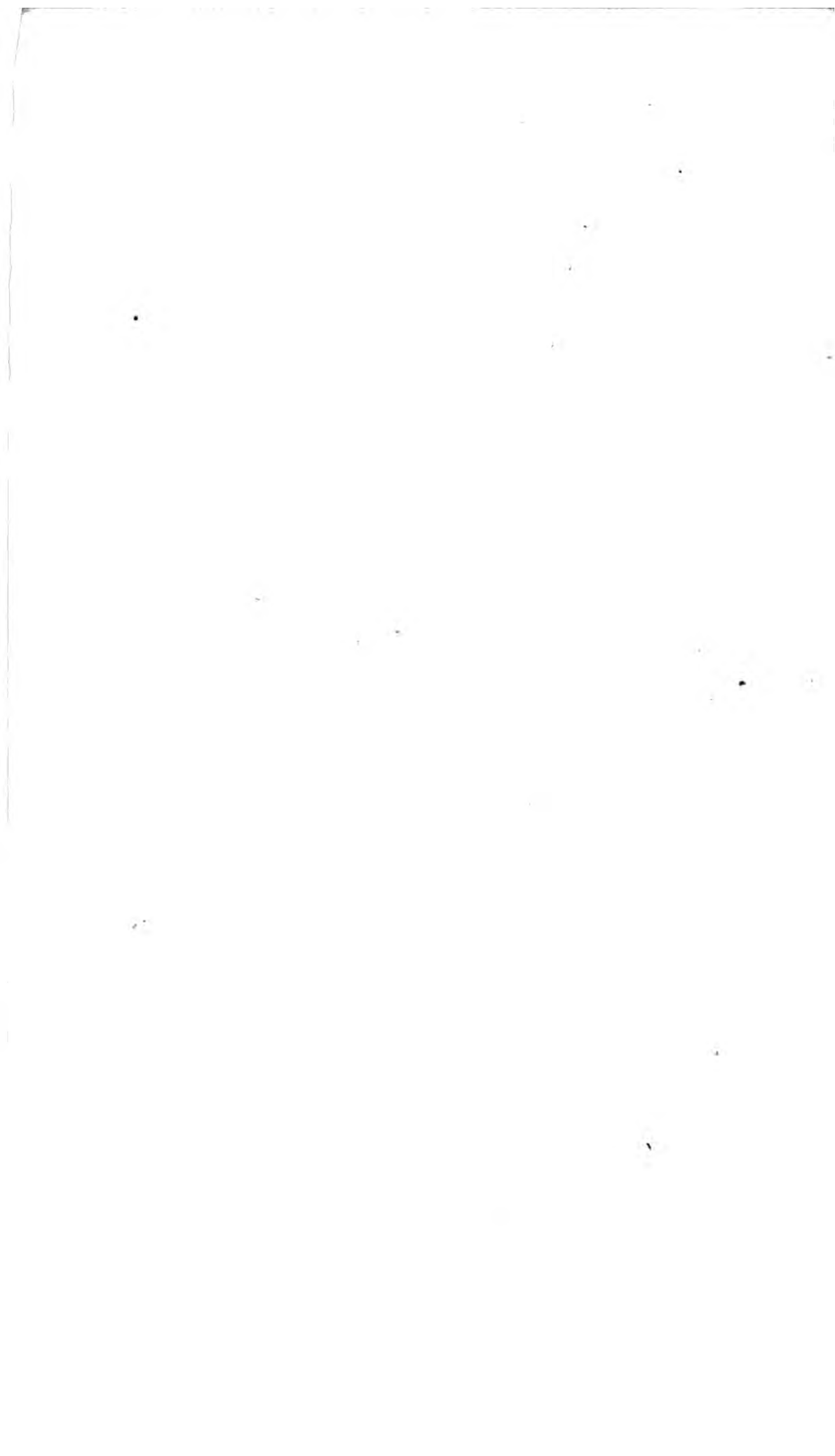
It helps my praise, that I my fault recite,
 The lost sheep found, the feast was made for joy:
 Evil sets out good, as far as black dooth white.
 The pure delight, is drayned from anoy.
 But (that in cheef which writers should respect)
 Trueth is the garbe, that keepeth men uncheckt.

And for a trueth begilde with self conceit,
 I thought that men would throwe rewards on me
 But as a fish seld bites without a baight,
 So none unforst, mens needs will hear or see.
 and begging sutes, from dunghil thoughts proceed:
 the mounting minde, had rather sterve in need.

Wel leave I hear of thriftles wil to write,
 wit found my rents, agreed not with my charge:
 The sweet of war, sung by the carpet knight,
 In poste haste then shipt me in Ventures barge
 These lusty limes, *saunce use* (quod I) will rust:
 That pitee were, for I to them must trust.

Wel plaste at length, among the drunken Dutch,
 (though rumours lewd, impayred my desert)
 I boldely vaunt, the blast of fame is such,
 As proves I had a froward sours hart.

² " He was Sir John G. sonne and heire disinherited." Marginal note in the original. C.





My slender gaine a further witnes is:
for woorthiest men, the spoiles of war do mis.

Euen there the man, that went to fight for pence,
Cacht by sly hap, in prison vile was popt:
Yea had not woordes, fought for my lives defence³,
for all my hands, my breth had there been stopt
But I in fine, did so persuade my foe:
As (set free) I was homewards set to goe.

Thus wore I time, the welthier not a whit,
Yet awckward chance, lackt force to heard my hope
In peace (quod I) ile trust unto my wit,
The windowes of my muse, then straight I ope
and first I showe, the travail of such time:
as I in youth, imployd in looving rime.

Some straight way said (their lungs with envy fret)
those wanton layes, inductions were to vice:
Such did me wrong, for (*quod nocet, docet*)
our neyghbours harms, are items to the wise.
And sure these toyes, do showe for your behoof:
The woes of loove, and not the wayes to love.

And that the worlde might read them as I ment,
I left this vaine, to path the vertuous waies:
The lewd I checkt, in Glas of goverment,
And (laboring stil, by paines, to purchase praise,)
I wrought a Glasse, wherin eche man may see
Within his minde, what canckred vices be.

The druncken soule, transformed to a beast,
my diet helps a man, again to make.
But (that which should, be praisd above the rest)
My Doomes day Drum from sin doeth you awake
for honest sporte which doeth refresh the wit:
I have for you a book of hunting writ.

These few books, are dayly in your eyes,
Parhaps of woorth, my fame alive to keep:
Yet other woorks (I think) of more emprise,
Cought close as yet, within my cofers sleep.
yea til I dy, none shall the same revele:
So men wil say, that *Gaskoign* wrote of zeale.

³ "He had the Latin, Italian, French and Dutch languages." Marginal note. C.

O Envy vile, foule fall thee wretched sot
 Thou mortal foe, unto the forward minde:
 I curse thee wretch, the only cause God wot,
 That my good wil, no more account did finde.
 And not content, thy self to do me fear:
 Thou nipst my hart, with *Spight*, *Suspect* and *Care*.

And first of spight foule Envies poysoned pye,
 To Midas cares, this as hath Lyntius eyes:
 with painted shewes, he heaves himself on hie.
 full oft this Dolte, in learned authors pries,
 But as the Drone, the hony hive doth rob:
 with woorthy books, so deales this idle lob.

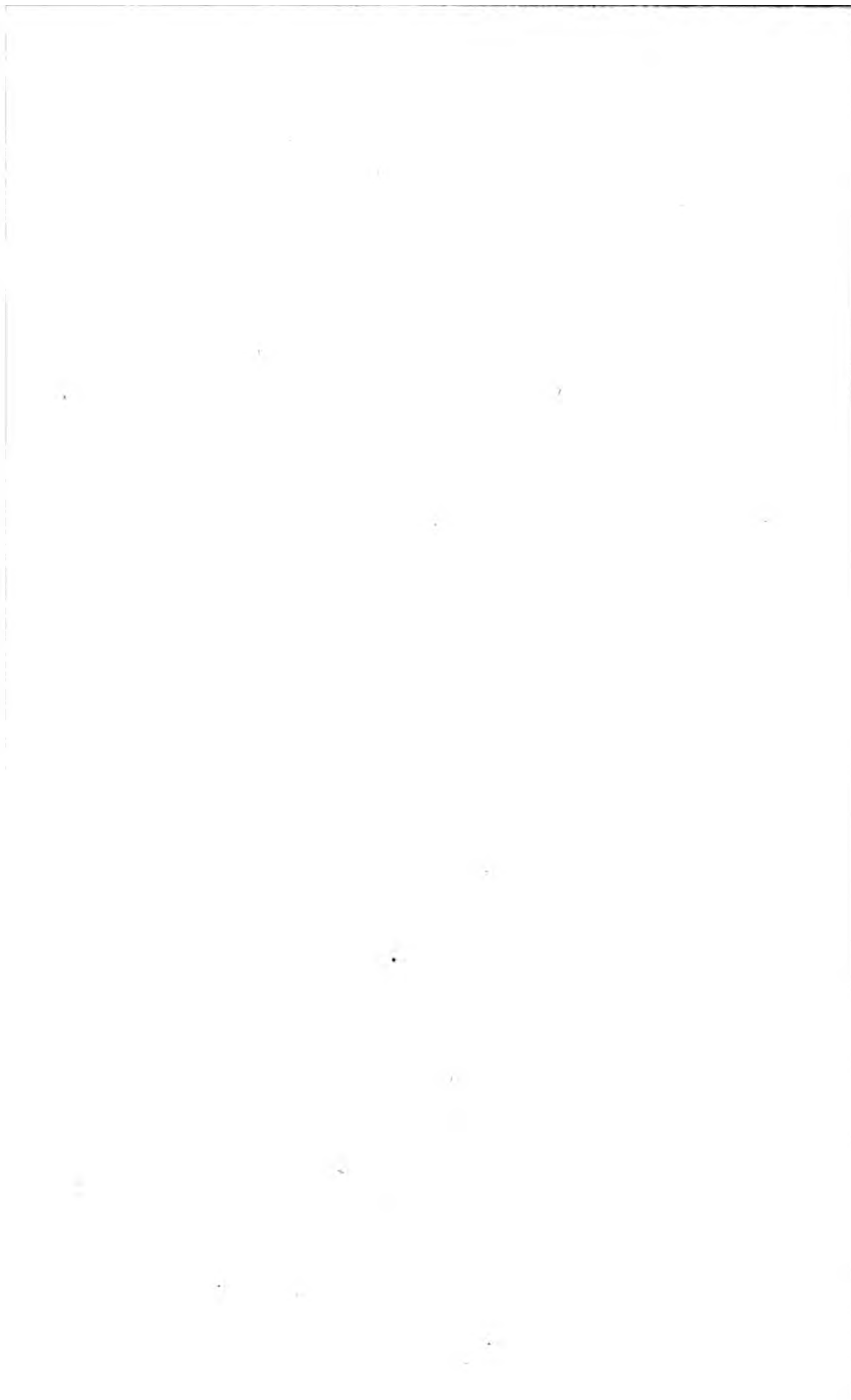
He filcheth tearms, to paint a pratling tung,
 When (God he knowes) he knows not what he saies
 And lest the wise should finde his wit but yung,
 he woorkes all means, their woorkes for to dispraise.
 To smooth his speech, the beast this patch doth crop
 he shows the bad, the writers mouthes to stop.

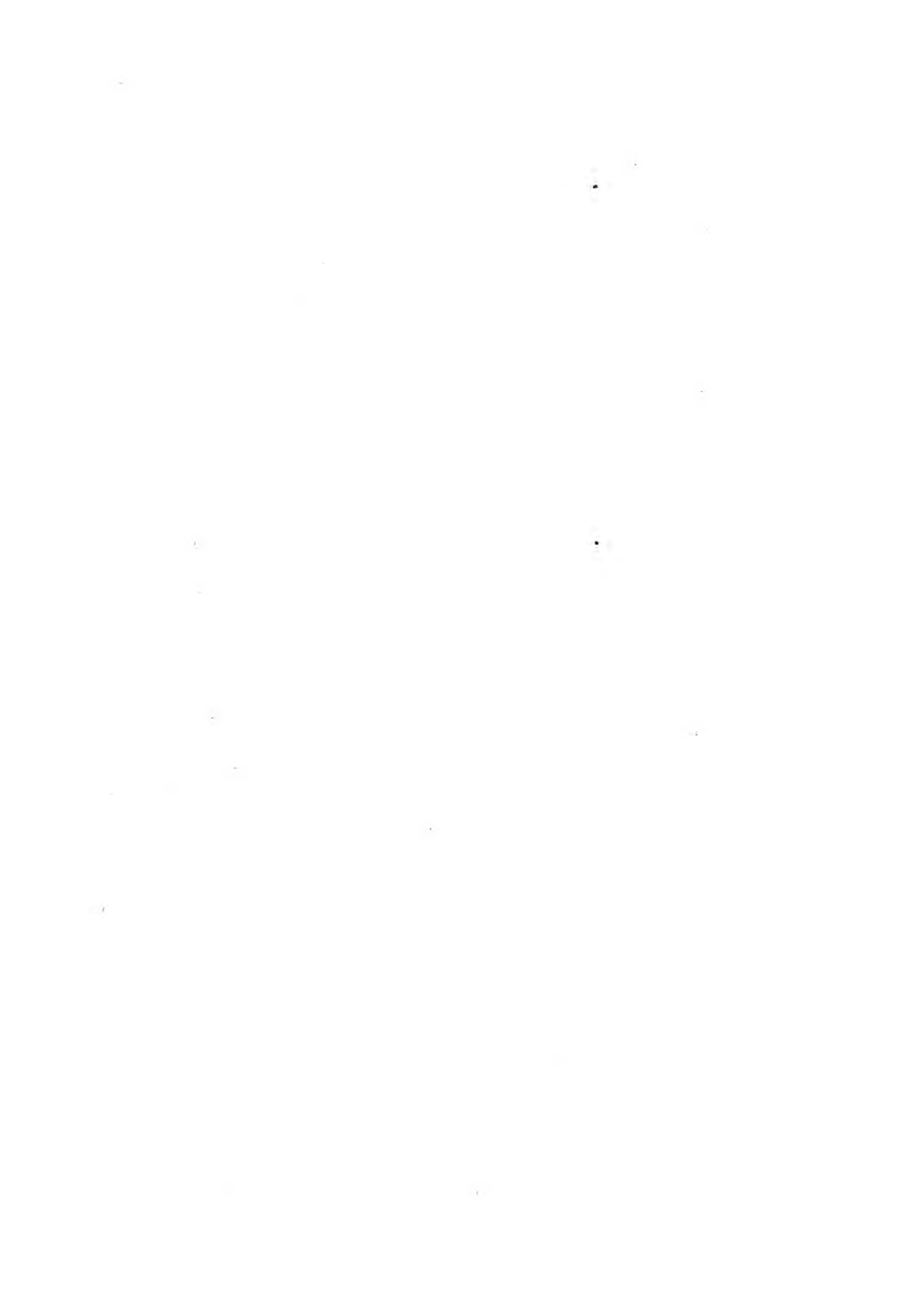
Ye woorse than this, he dealeth in offence,
 (Ten good turnes, he with silence striketh dead)
 A slender fault, ten times beyond pretence,
 This wretched *spight* in every place doth spread.
 And with his breth, the Viper dooth infect:
 The hearers heads, and harts with false suspect.

Now of *suspect*: the propertie to showe,
 he hides his dought, yet still mistrusteth more:
 The man suspect, is so debar'd to knowe,
 The cause and cure of this his ranckling sore.
 And so in vain, he good account doeth seek,
 who by this Feinde, is brought into mislike.

Now hear my tale, or cause which kild my hart,
 These privy foes, to tread me under foot:
 My true intent, with forged faults did thwart:
 so that I found, for me it was no boot.
 to woork as Bees, from weeds with hony dranes
 when Spiders turnd, my flowers into banes.

When my plain woords, by fooles miscontred were
 by whose fond tales reward held his hands back
 To quite my woorth, a cause to settle care
 within my brest, who wel deserv'd, did lack,
 for who can brook, to see a painted crowe
 Singing aloft, when Turtles mourn belowe.





What man can yeld, to starve among his books
 and see pied Doultles, uppon a booty feed?
 What honest minde, can live by favring looks,
 And see the lewd, to rech a freendly deed?
 what hart can bide, in bloody warres to toile,
 when carpet swads, devour the soldiers spoile?

I am the wretch, whom fortune stirted soe,
 These men were bribed, ere I had breth to speak.
 Muse then no whit, with this huge overthrowe
 though crushing care, my giltles hart doth break,
 But you wil say, that in delight doo dwell,
 my outward showe no inward greef did tel.

I graunt it true, but hark, unto the rest,
 The Swan in songs, dooth knolle her passing bel:
 The Nightingale, with thornes against her brest
 when she might mourn, her sweetest laye doth yel.
 The valiant man, so playes a pleasant parte
 When mothes of mone, doo gnaw upon his hart.

for prooffe myself, with care not so a feard,
 But as hurt Deere waile (through their wounds
 When stoutly they doo stand among the heard) alone.
 So that I saw, but few hark to my mone,
 made choise to tel deaf walles, my wretched plaint:
 in sight of men, who nothing seemd to faint.

But as oft use, doeth weare an iron cote,
 as misling drops, hard flints in time doth pearse
 By peece meales, care so wrought me under foot
 but more than straunge is that I now rehearse,
 Three months I lived, and did digest no food:
 when none by arte my sicknes understood.

What helpeth then? to death I needs must pine,
 yet as the horse, the use of warre which knowes;
 If he be hurt, will neither winch nor whine,
 but til he dye, poste with his Rider goes.
 Even so my hart, whilst lungs may lend me breth:
 Bares up my limmes, who living go like death.

But what availes, *Achilles* hart, to have,
 king *Cressus* welth, the sway of all the world;
 The Prince, the Peere, so to the wretched Slave,
 when death assaults, from earthly holdes are whorld.
 yea oft he strikes ere one can stir his eye:
 Then good you live, as you would dayly dye.

You see the plight, I wretched now am in,
 I looke much like a threshed ear of corne:
 I holde a forme, within a wrimpled skin,
 but from my bones, the fat and flesh is worne.
 See, see the man, hate plesures minion:
 pinde to the bones, with care and wretched mone.

See gallants see, a picture worth the sight,
 (as you are now, myself was heretofore)
 my body late, stuft ful of many might
 As bare as *Job*, is brought to Death his doore,
 My hand of late, which fought to win me fame:
 Stif clung with colde, wants forse to write my name.

My legges which bare, my body ful of flesh,
 Unable are, to stay my bones upright:
 My tung (God wot) which talkt as one would wish
 In broken words, can scarce my minde recite.
 My head late stuft, with wit and learned skill
 may now conceive, but not convay my wil.

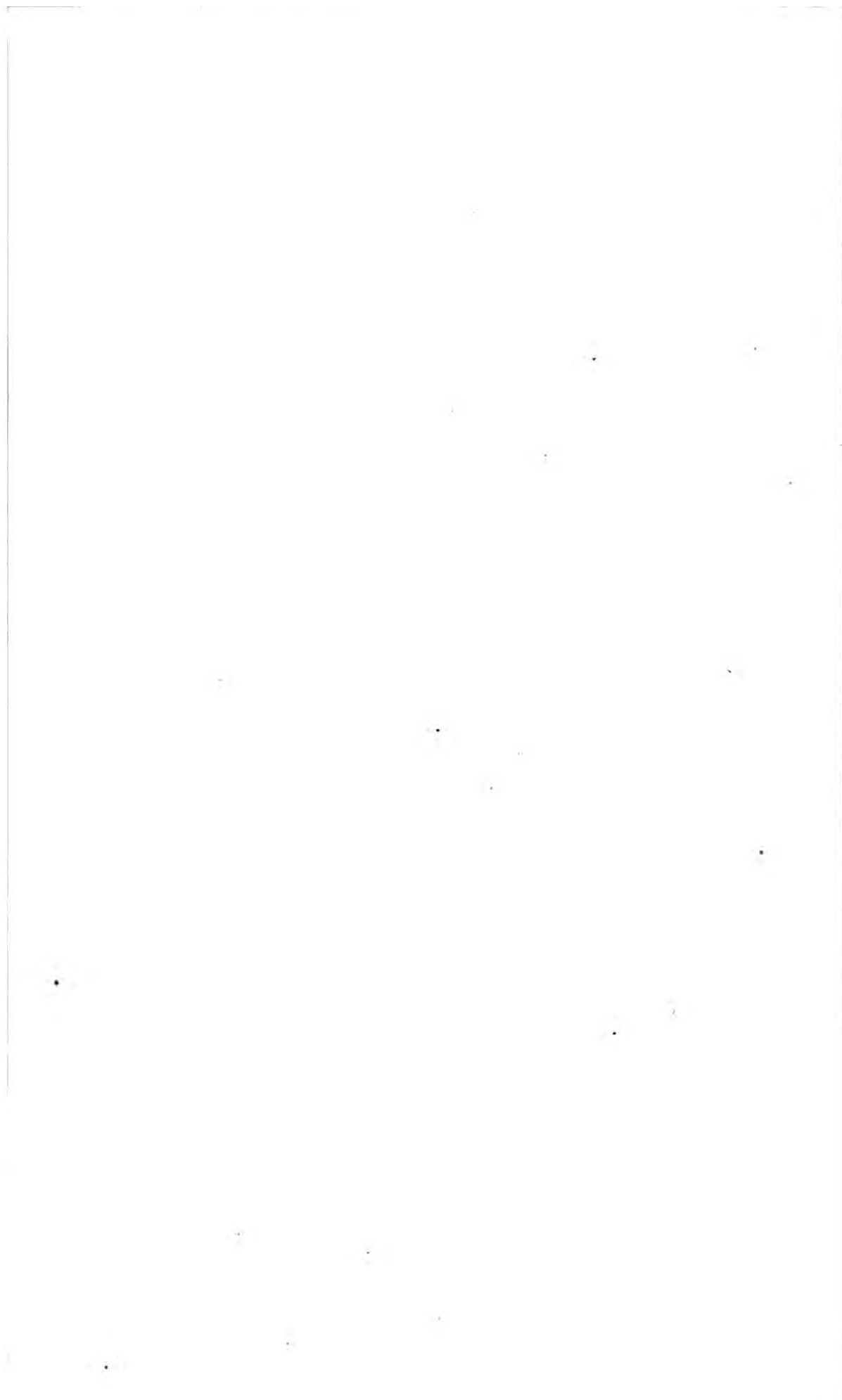
What say you freends, this sudain change to see
 you rue my greef, you doe like flesh and blood.
 But mone your sinnes, and never morne for me,
 And to be plain, I would you understood
 My hart dooth swim, in seas of more delight:
 Then your who seems, to rue my wretched plight.

“ What is this world? a net to snare the soule †,
 A mas of sinne, a desart of decett:
 A moments joy, an age of wretched dole,
 A lure from grace, for flesh a toothsome baight,
 Unto the minde, a cankerworm of care:
 Unsure, unjust; in rendring man his share.

“ A place where pride, oreruns the honest minde,
 Where rich men joynes, to rob the shiftles wretch
 Where bribing mists, the judges eyes doo blinde,
 Where Parasites, the fattest crummes do catch.
 Where good deserts (which chalenge like reward)
 Are over blowen, with blasts of light regard.

“ And what is man? Dust, Slime, a puff of winde,
 Conceivd in sin, plaste in the woorld with greef,
 Brought up with care, til care hath caught his minde,
 And then, (til death, vouchsafe him some relief)

† These lines between commas form a poem called A Description of the World, by Gascoigne
 the Paradise of Dainty Devises. Edit. 1592. C.



Day yea nor night, his care dooth take an end:
To gather goods, for other men to spend.

“ O foolish man, that art in office plaste,
Think whence thou camst, and whether the shall goe:
The huge hie Dkes, small windes have over cast,
when slender reeds, in roughest wethers growe.
Even so pale death, oft spares the wretched wight
And woundeth you, who wallow in delight.

“ You lusty youths, that nourish hie desire,
Abase your plumes, which makes you look so big:
The Colliers cut, the Courtiars steed wil tire,
Even so the Clark, the Parsones grave dooth dig
whose hap is yet, heer longer life to win:
Dooth heap (God wot) but sorowe unto sinne.

“ And to be short, all sortes of men take heede,
the thunder boltes, the loftye Towers teare:
The lightning flash, consumes the house of reed,
Yea more in time, all earthly things will weare,
Save only man, who as his earthly living is:
Shall live in wo, or els in endles blis.”

More would I say, if life would lend me space,
but all in vain, death waits of no mans will:
The tired Jade, dooth trip at every pace,
when pampered horse, will prounce against the hil,
To helthfull men, at long discourses sporte,
when few words, the sick would fain reporte.

The best is this, my will is quickly made,
my welth is small, the more my conscience ease:
This short accompt (which makes me ill a paid)
my loving wife and sonne, will hardly please.
But in this case, to please them as I may:
These folowing woords, my testament do wray.

My soule I first, bequeath Almighty God.
And though my sinnes are grevous in his sight:
I firmly trust, to scape his firy rod,
when as my faith his deer Sonne shall recite
whose precious blood (to quench his Father's ire)
Is sole the cause, that saves me from hel fire.

My body now which once I decked brave
(from whence it came) unto the earth I give:
I wish no pomp, the same for to ingrave,
once buried corn, dooth rot before it live.

And flesh and blood in this self sorte is tryed:
Thus buriall cost, is (without proffit) pride.

I humbly give my gracious sovereign Queene
(by service bound) my true and loyall hart:
And trueth to say, a sight but rarely seene,
As Iron greves from thadamant to parte.
her highnes so, hath recht the Grace alone:
To gain all harts, yet gives her hart to none.

My loving wife, whose face I fain would see,
my love I give, with all the welth I have:
But since my goods (God knoweth) but slender bee
most gracious Queene, for Christ his sake I crave
(not for any service that I have doon)
you will vouchsafe, to aid her and my sonne.

Come, come deer Sonne, my blessing take in parte.
and therwithall I give thee this in charge:
first serve thou God, then use bothe wit and arte,
thy fathers det, of service to discharge,
which (forste by death) her Majestie he owes:
beyond desarts, who still rewardes bestowes.

I freely now all sortes of men forgive,
Their wrongs to me, and wish them to amend;
And as good men, in charitte should live,
I crave my faults may no mans minde offend,
So heer is all, I have to bequest:
And this is all, I of the world request.

Now farwell Wife, my Sonne, and frends farwel,
farwell O world, the baight of all abuse:
Death where is thy sting? O Devil where is thy hel?
I little forse, the forses you can use,
yea to your teeth, I doo you both defye
Vt essem Christo, cupio dissolui.

In this good mood, an end worthy the showe,
Bereft of speech, his hands to God he heavd:
And sweetly thus, good *Gaskoigne* went a *Dio*,
yea with such ease, as no man there preceivd
By struggling signe, or striving from his breth;
That he abode, the pains and pangs of Death.





EXHORTATIO.

His *sean* is playd, you folowe on the act,
 Life is but Death, til flesh and blood be slain :
 God graunt his woords, within your harts be pact
 As good men doo, holde earthly pleasures vain.
 The good for their needs, *Vtuntur mundo* :
 And use good deeds, *Vt fruantur Deo*.

Contemne the change (use nay abuse) not God
 Through holy shows, this worldly muck to scratch :
 To deale with men and Saints is very od
 hypocrisie, a man may over catch.
 But hypocrite, thy hart the Lord dooth see :
 who by thy thoughts (not thy words) wil judge thee.

Thou jesting foole, which makst at sin a face,
 Beware that God, in earnest plague thee not :
 for where as he, is coldest in his grace,
 Euen there he is, in vengeance very hot.
 Tempt not to far, the lothest man to fight :
 When he is forste, the lustiest blowes dooth smight.

Your Courtiers, check not, Merchants for their gain,
 you by your losse, doo match with them in blame :
 The Lawyers life, you Merchants doo not staine,
 The blinde for slouth, may hardly check the lame.
 I meane that you, in Ballance of deceit :
 wil Lawyers payre, I feare with over waight.

you Lawyers now who earthly Judges are,
 you shal be judgd, and therefore judge aright :
 you count *Ignorantia Juris* no bar.
 Then ignorance, your sinnes wil not acquite.
 Read, read Gods law, with which yours should agre :
 That you may judge, as you would judged bee.

You Prelats now, whose woords are perfect good,
 make showe in woorkes, that you your woords insue.
 A Diamond, holdes his vertue set in wood,
 but yet in Golde, it hath a fresher hue,
 Even so Gods woord, told by the Devil is pure ;
 Preacht yet by Saints, it doth more heed procure.

And Reader now, what office so thou have,
 to whose behoofe, this breef discourse is tolde:
 Prepare thy self, eche houre for the grave,
 the market eats as wel young sheep as olde.
 Even so, the Childe, who feares the smarting rod:
 The father oft dooth lead the way to God.

And bothe in time, this worldly life shall leave,
 thus sure thou art, but knowst not when to dye:
 Then good thou live, least death doo the deceive,
 as through good life, thou maist his force defye.
 for trust me man, no better match can make:
 Then leave unsure, for certain things to take.

Viuit post funera virtus.

AN EPITAPH,

WRITTEN BY G. W. OF THE DEATH, OF M. G.
 GASKOYGNE.

FOR Gaskoygnes death, leave to mone or morne
 You are deceived, alive the man is stil:
 Alive? O yea, and laugheth death to scorne,
 in that, that he, his fleshly lyfe did kil.

For by such death, two lyves he gaines for one
 His soule in heaven dooth live in endles joye
 his woorthy woorks, such fame in earth have sowne,
 As sack nor wrack, his name can there destroy.

But you will say, by death he only gaines.
 And now his life, would many stand in stead:
 O dain not Freend (to counterchaunge his paynes)
 If now in heaven, he have his earned meade,
 For once in earth, his toyle was passing great:
 And we devourd the sweet of all his sweat.

Finis.

Nemo ante obitum beatus.



LIFE OF GEORGE TURBERVILLE.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS poet, descended from a family of considerable note in Dorsetshire, was a younger son of Nicholas Turberville of Whitchurch, and supposed to have been born about the year 1530. He received his education at Winchester school, and became fellow of New College, Oxford, in 1561; but left the university without taking a degree, and resided for some time in one of the inns of court. He appears to have accumulated a stock of classical learning, and to have been well acquainted with modern languages. He formed his ideas of poetry partly on the classics, and partly on the study of the Italian school. His poetical pursuits, however, did not interfere with more important business, as his well-known abilities recommended him to the post of secretary to Thomas Randolph, esq. who was appointed queen Elizabeth's ambassador at the court of Russia.

While in this situation he wrote three poetical epistles to as many friends, Edward Davies, Edmund Spenser (not the poet¹), and Parker, describing the manners of the Russians. These may be seen in Hackluyt's *Voyages*, vol. I. p. 384. After his return he was much courted as a man of accomplished education and manners; and the first edition of his *Songs and Sonnets*, published in 1567, seems to have added considerably to his fame. A second edition appeared in 1570, with many additions and corrections².

His other works were, translations of the Heroical Epistles of Ovid, of which four editions were printed; and the *Eclogues* of B. Mantuan, published in 1567. The only copy known of this volume is in the royal library. Wood, who appears to have seen it, informs us that one Thomas Harvey afterwards translated the same *Eclogues*, and availed himself of Turberville's translation, without the least acknowledgement. Among the discoveries of literary historians, it is to be regretted that such tricks are to be traced to very high antiquity. Another very rare production of our author, although twice

¹ Such at least is Mr. Park's opinion, preferable in this instance to that of Dr. Tanner, and certainly to that of Dr. Berkenhout. C.

² A perfect copy of this edition is very rare. That used on the present occasion was obligingly lent by Mr. Hill. There is another in Trinity College, Cambridge, a present from Mr. Capell. C.

printed in 1576 and 1587, is entitled "Tragical Tales, translated by Turberville, in time of his troubles, out of Sundrie Italians, with the argument and L'Envoye to ech tale." What his troubles were we are not told. To the latter edition of these Tales were annexed "Epitaphs and Sonets, with some other broken pamphlettes and Epistles, sent to certaine of his friends in England, at his being in Moscovia, Anno 1569." Wood has mistaken this for his "Epitaphs, Epigrams, Songs and Sonets," from which it totally differs.

Our author was living in 1594, and in great esteem; but we have no account of his death. There appear to have been two other persons of both his names, both natives of Dorsetshire, and nearly contemporaries; one of whom was a commoner of Gloucester Hall in 1581, aged eighteen, and the other a student of Magdalen Hall in 1595, aged seventeen. Wood was not able to tell which of the three was the author of "Essays, politic and moral," which were published in 1608, nor of the "Booke of Falconrye and Hawking, heretofore published by G. Turberville, Gent. and now revived, corrected and augmented by another hand, Lond. 1611." But the intelligent editor of Phillips's *Theatrum* is of opinion that this work was the production of our poet, from its having commendatory verses prefixed by Gascoigne; and, I may add, that the present collection confirms our poet's intimacy with the art of falconry and hawking. The curious biographical tract of Whetstone now printed in this volume before Gascoigne's works, notices a production of that author on hunting, which Mr. Park thinks is the one printed with the above Booke of Falconrye, and usually attributed to Turberville. Besides these, our poet wrote commendatory verses to the works of several of his contemporaries³.

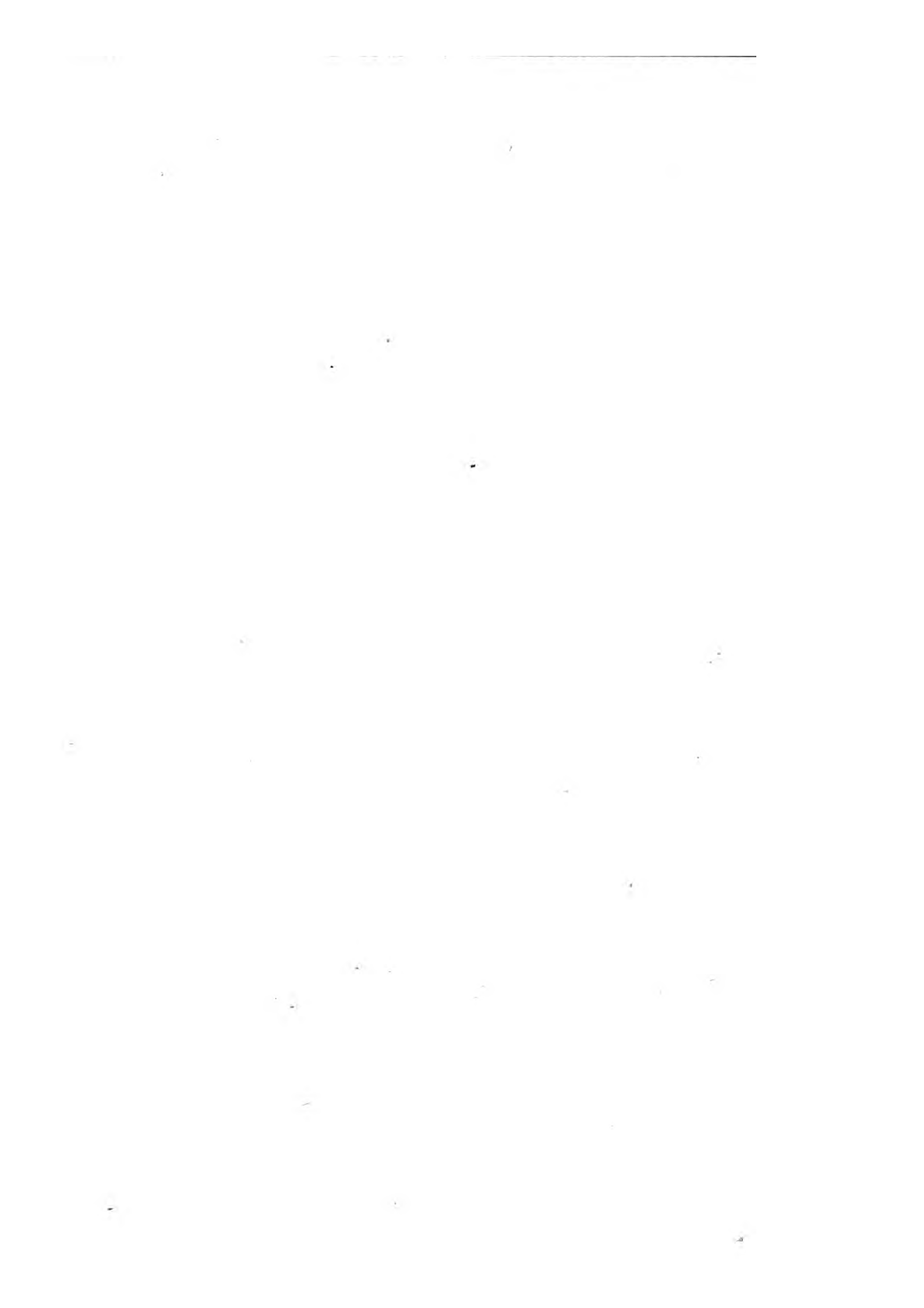
Among the "Elegant and Witty Epigrams of sir John Harrington, 1625," we find the following *Epitaph in commendation of George Turberville, a learned gentleman*.

"When times were yet but rude, thy pen endeavour'd
To polish barbarism with purer style:
When times were grown most old, thy heart persever'd,
Sincere and just, unstain'd with gifts or guile.
Now lives thy soul, tho' from thy corpse dissever'd:
There high in bliss here clear in fame the while:
To which I pay this debt of due thanksgiving:
My pen doth praise thee dead: thine grac'd me living."

Turberville has a place in these volumes as a sonneteer of great note in his time; although, except Harrington, his contemporaries and successors appear to have been sparing of their praises. It is probably to some adverse critics that he alludes in his address to Sycophants. We have seen Gascoigne complain of the Zoilus's of his time.

There is a considerable diversity of fancy and sentiment in his pieces; the verses in praise of the countess of Warwick are ingeniously imagined, and perhaps in his best stile, and his satirical effusions, if occasionally flat and vulgar, are characteristic of his age. Many of his allusions, as was then the fashion, are taken from the amusement of hawking, and these and his occasional strokes on large noses and other personal redundancies or defects, descended afterwards to Shakspeare, and other dramatic writers. He entitles his pieces Epitaphs and Epigrams, Songs and Sonnets, but the reader will

³ See Ritson's *Bibliographia*, art. Turberville. C.



seldom recognize the legitimate characteristics of those species of poetry. His epitaphs are without pathetic reflection, being stuffed with common place railing against "the cursed cruelty" of death; and his epigrams are often conceits without point, or, in some instances, the point is placed first, and the conclusion left "lame and impotent." His love sonnets, although seemingly addressed to a real mistress, are full of the borrowed passion of a translator, and the elaborate and unnatural language of a scholar. The classics in his age began to be studied very generally, and were no sooner studied than translated; this retarded the progress of invention at a time when the language was certainly improving: and hence among a number of authors who flourished in this period, we seldom meet with the glow of pure poetry. It may, however, be added in favour of Turberville, that he seldom transgresses against morals or delicacy: it is also necessary to apprise his readers that his obsolete words are almost all to be found in the glossary to Chaucer.

As it further be seen by the party that
Edmund & son do of the law have spent the same Duke
in giving the keeping of all the money wth I found
in Balligamin & of the money & books w^{ch}
making any payment & also do relevant
to the Duke's full sum one hundred in the
bank of King's Head for the sum of £1000 & the value in
some of notes. And also in the sum of £100
years to repay the sum of £1000 for the
said & in all other sums to the good use of the
said to the Duke & his



Edmund & son

THE
LIFE OF SPENSER,

BY MR. CHALMERS.

ALTHOUGH the language of the great poet whose works are now before us is less obsolete than that of Chaucer, yet it may be doubted whether Spenser has been much more a favourite with those who read to be entertained, and whose demand for entertainment is too urgent to admit of previous learning, or fixed attention. That he has been read and studied by poets in all ages, is only saying that he has been read and studied by men to whom the history of their art cannot be indifferent, and who have found in Spenser whatever can animate and invigorate their powers. But however tedious the perusal of Spenser may be to a frivolous taste, his works must necessarily compose an essential part of every BODY OF ENGLISH POETRY, not only upon account of their transcendent merit, not only because in the powers of imagination he excels all others, but because he was the founder of a school more numerous than any other, a school of which it is sufficient praise that Cowley, Milton, and Dryden acknowledged their obligations to it, and that in more recent times it has conferred celebrity on Prior, Gay, Akenside, and Beattie¹.

Of the life of Spenser, as of the lives of men of literature in general before the seventeenth century, our accounts are very defective. Modern biographers have generally been content to copy the few particulars within their reach, and to transmit them in varied styles, without examining very scrupulously whether what they had was correct, what they had not was recoverable. Of late, however, Spenser has met with a biographer worthy of him, one who unites the taste of the poet to the skill of the annalist. Those who have perused Mr. Todd's Spenser need not be told that it is to

¹ Dr. Beattie's experience in imitating Spenser has probably been that of his brethren. "I am surprised to find the structure of (Spenser's) complicated stanza so little troublesome, I was always fond of it, for I think it the most harmonious that ever was contrived. It admits of more variety of pauses than either the couplet, or the alternate rhyme: and it concludes with a pomp and majesty of sound, which, to my ear, is wonderfully delightful. It seems also very well adapted to the genius of our language, which, from its irregularity of inflexion and number of monosyllables, abounds in diversified terminations, and consequently renders our poetry susceptible of an endless variety of legitimate rhymes." Forbes' Life of Beattie. The present collection of English poetry will show that the names mentioned above do not include above half of the poets who have practised the stanza of Spenser. C.

him I owe all that is valuable in the following sketch, and will be pleased to hear that the text used in this edition is that which he has so ably corrected and harmonized.

EDMUND SPENSER, descended from the ancient and honourable family of Spencer, was born in London in East Smithfield by the Tower, probably about the year 1553. In what school he received the first part of his education has not been ascertained, nor is of great consequence, as at that time much knowledge was not to be obtained in any lesser seminaries, previous to academical studies. He was, however, admitted, as a sizer, of Pembroke Hall in Cambridge², May 20, 1569, proceeded to the degree of bachelor of arts, January 16, 1572-3, and to that of master of arts, June 26th, 1576. Of his proficiency during this time, a favourable opinion may be drawn from the many classical allusions in his works, while their moral tendency, which if not uniform was more general than that of the writings of his contemporaries, incline us to hope that his conduct was irreproachable.

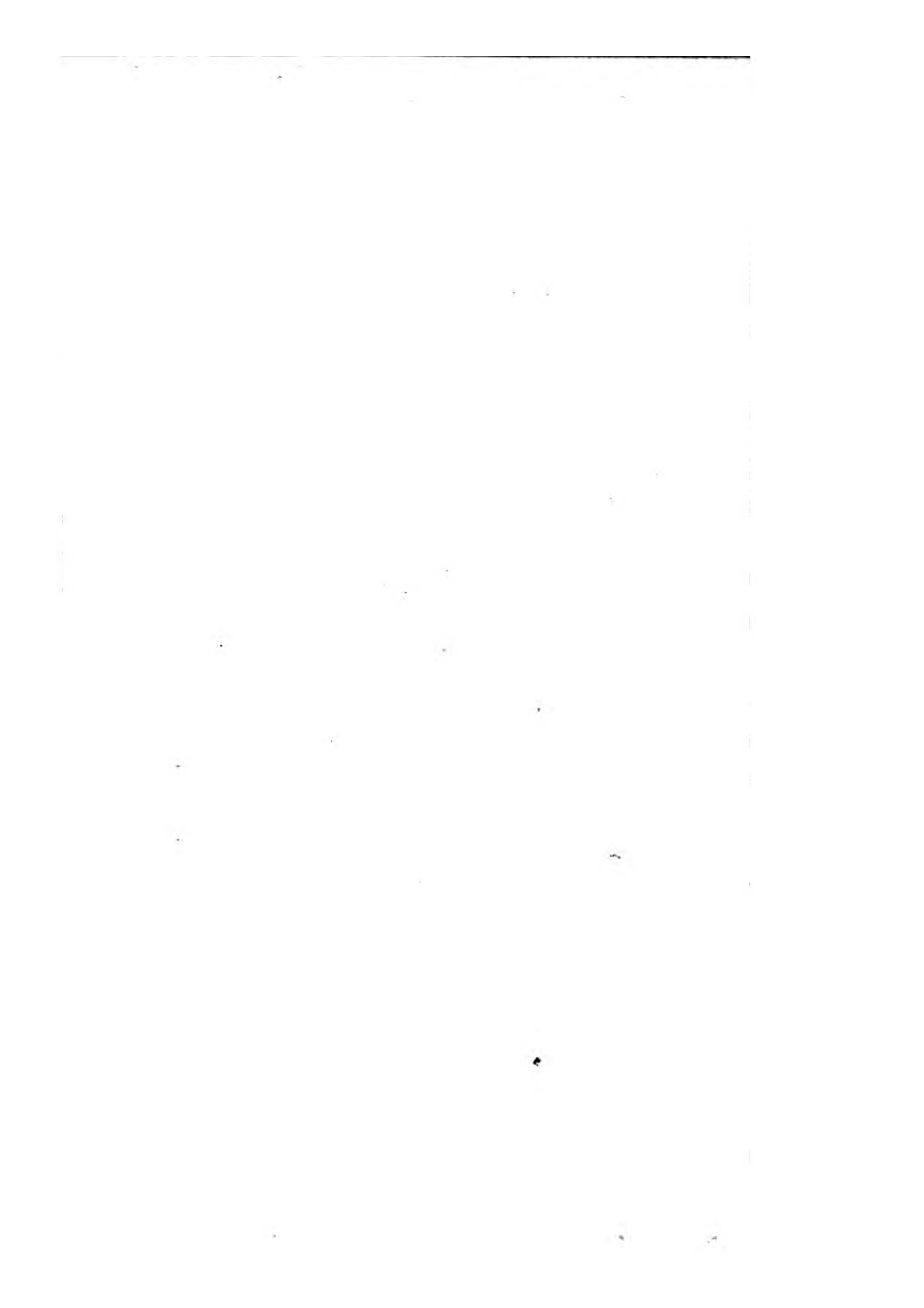
At Cambridge he formed an intimacy with Gabriel Harvey, first of Christ's College, afterwards of Trinity Hall, who became doctor of laws in 1585, and survived his friend more than thirty years. Harvey was a scholar, and a poet of no mean estimation in his own time³. He appears also as a critic to whose judgment Spenser frequently appeals, looking up to him with a reverence for which it is not easy to account. We are, however, much indebted to his correspondence with Spenser, for many interesting particulars relating to the life and studies of the latter, although some of them afford little more than probable conjectures.

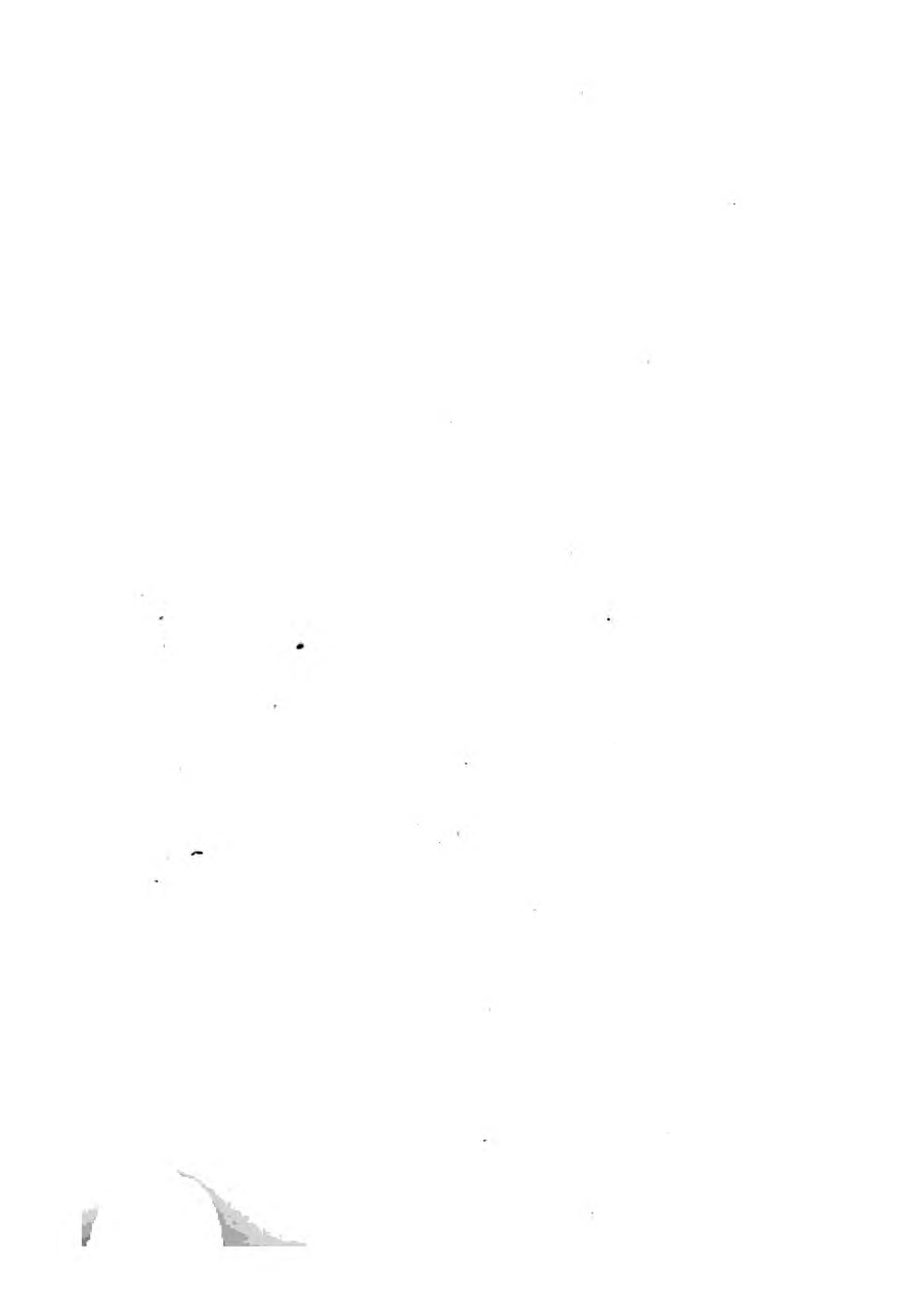
It is now fully disproved that Spenser was an unsuccessful candidate for a fellowship in Pembroke Hall, in competition with Andrews, afterwards successively bishop of Chichester, Ely, and Winchester. The rival of Andrews was Thomas Dove, afterwards bishop of Peterborough. But from one of Harvey's letters to Spenser it appears that some disagreement had taken place between our poet and the master or tutor of the society to which he belonged, which terminated his prospects of further advancement in it, without lessening his veneration for the university at large, of which he always speaks with filial regard.

When he left Cambridge, he is supposed to have gone to reside with some friends in the north of England, probably as a tutor. At what time he began to display his poetical powers is uncertain, but as genius cannot be long concealed, it is probable that he was already known as a votary of the Muses among his fellow-students. There are several poems in the *Theatre for Worldlings*, a collection published in the year in which he became a member of the university, which are thought to have come from his pen. The *Visions* in this work were probably the first sketch of those which now form a part of his acknowledged productions. Absolute certainty, however, cannot be obtained in fixing the chronology of his early poems; but it may be conjectured with great probability that his Muse would not be neglected at an age when it is usual to court her favours, and at which he had much leisure, the scenery of nature before his eyes, and no serious

² There is a good portrait of Spenser in the common room of Pembroke Hall, to which the society have ever looked up with reverence, and it was by their liberality that the monument in Westminster Abbey was restored in 1778. C.

³ Harvey was rather a Latin than an English poet: but there is mention of his English hexameters in his correspondence with Spenser. He is supposed to have been the same Gabriel Harvey, LL. D. who died in 1630, when he must have been nearly ninety years old. *Phillipps' Theatrum*, edit. 1800. C.





cares to disturb his enthusiasm. His *Shepherd's Calender* was published in 1579. The tenderness of complaint in this elegant poem, appears to have been inspired by a mistress whom he has recorded under the name of *Rosalind*⁴, and who, after trifling with his affection, preferred his rival. He is supposed also to allude to the cruelty of this same lady in Book VI. of the *Faerie Queene*, under the name of *Mirabella*.

The year preceding the publication of this poem, he had been advised by his friend *Harvey* to remove to London, where he was introduced to sir *Philip Sidney*, and by him recommended to his uncle, the earl of *Leicester*. There is a wide difference of opinion, however, among Spenser's biographers, as to the time and mode of the former of these events. Some suppose that his acquaintance with sir *Philip Sidney* was the consequence of his having presented to him the ninth canto of the *Faerie Queene*. Others think that his first introduction was owing to the dedication of the *Shepherd's Calender*; but a long letter from Spenser to *Harvey*, which *Mr. Todd* has preserved, proves that he was known to *Sidney* previous to the publication of the *Shepherd's Calender* in 1579.

It is certain that in consequence of this introduction, by whatever means procured, he became a welcome guest in sir *Philip's* family, and was invited to their seat at *Penshurst* in *Kent*, where it is conjectured that he wrote, at least, the ninth eclogue. Under such patronage, the dedication of the *Calender*, when finished, to "*Maister Philip Sidney*," became a matter of course, as a mark of respectful acknowledgment for the kindness he had received. The praise, however, bestowed on this poem was but moderate, and the name of the author appears to have been for some time not generally known. *Dove*, whose translation of it into Latin is extant in the library of *Caius College*, *Cambridge*, speaks of it, not only as an "unowned" poem, but as almost buried in oblivion. On the other hand, *Abraham Fraunce*, a barrister as well as a poet of that time, selected from it examples to illustrate his work entitled *The Lawier's Logike*; but *Fraunce*, it may be said, was the friend of sir *Philip Sidney*, and would naturally be made acquainted, and perhaps induced to admire, the productions of a poet whom he favoured.

The patronage of men of genius in Spenser's age was frequently exerted in procuring for them public employments, and Spenser, we find, was very early introduced into the business of active life. In July 1580, when *Arthur*, lord *Grey* of *Wilton* departed from England, as lord lieutenant of *Ireland*, Spenser was appointed his secretary, probably on the recommendation of the earl of *Leicester*. Although the office of secretary was not at that time of the same importance it is now, and much might not be expected in official business from a scholar and a poet, yet Spenser appears to have entered with zeal into political affairs, as far as they were connected with the character of the lord lieutenant. In his *View of the State of Ireland*, which was written long after, he takes frequent opportunities to vindicate the measures and reputation of that nobleman, and has, indeed, evidently studied the politics of *Ireland* with great success.

After holding this situation about two years, lord *Grey* returned to England, and probably accompanied by his secretary. Their connection was certainly not dissolved, for in 1586, Spenser obtained, by his lordship's interest and that of *Leicester* and *Sidney*, a grant of three thousand and twenty eight acres in the county of *Cork*, out of the

⁴ *Warton* was of opinion that *Rosalind* is an anagram, and the letters of which it is composed will make out her true name. This I think doubtful. Spenser was indeed an anagrammatist in many of his names, as when he makes *Algrind* out of *Grindal*, and *Morel* out of *Elmer*. But he must have been peculiarly fortunate to find a name which he could anagrammatize into *Rosalind*. C.

forfeited lands of the earl of Desmond. As far as sir Philip Sidney was concerned, this was the last act of his kindness to our poet, for he died in October of the same year, "praised, wept, and honoured" by every man of genius or feeling.

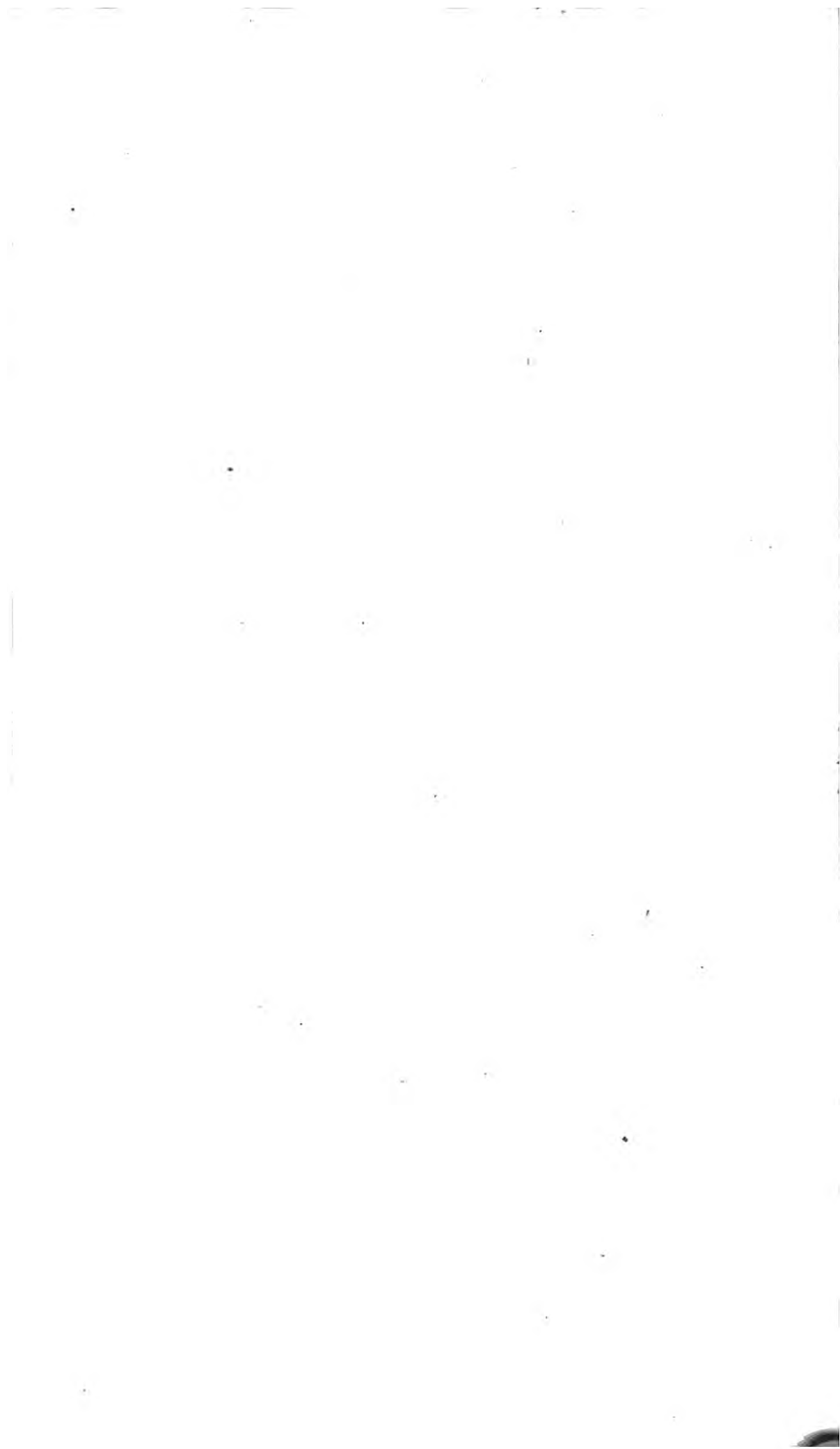
Such were the terms of the royal patent, that Spenser was now obliged to return to Ireland, in order to cultivate the land assigned him. He accordingly fixed his residence at Kilcolman, in the county of Cork, a place which topographers have represented as admirably accommodated to the taste of a poet by its romantic and diversified scenery. Here he was visited by sir Walter Raleigh, with whom he had formed an intimacy on his first arrival in Ireland, who proved a second Sidney to his poetical ardour, and appears to have urged him to that composition which constitutes his highest fame. In 1590 he published *The Faerie Queene*; disposed into Twelve Books, fashioning XII. Moral Vertues.

This edition contains only the first three books. To the end of the third were annexed besides the letter to Raleigh, the poetical commendations of friends to whose judgment the poem had been submitted. The names of Raleigh and Harvey are discernible, but the others are concealed under initials. These are followed by his own Sonnets to various persons of distinction, the number of which is augmented in the edition of 1596. Mr. Todd remarks that in that age of adulation, it was the custom of the author to present, with a copy of his publication, a poetical address to his superiors. It was no less the custom also to print them afterwards, and, we may readily suppose, with the full consent of the parties to whom they were addressed.

It appears certain that these three books of the *Faerie Queene* were written in Ireland. In a conversation, extracted from his friend Ludowick Bryskett's *Discourse of Civill Life*, and which is said to have passed in that country, Spenser is made to say, "I have already undertaken a work in heroical verse, under the title of a *Faerie Queene*, tending to represent all the moral virtues, assigning to every virtue a knight, to be patron and defender of the same; in whose actions feats of arms and chivalry, the operations of that virtue, whereof he is the protector, are to be expressed, and the vices and unruly appetites that oppose themselves against the same, to be beaten downe and overcome."

Such was his original design in this undertaking, and having prepared three books for the press, it is probable that he accompanied Raleigh to England, with a view to publish it. Raleigh afterwards introduced him to queen Elizabeth, whose favour is supposed by some to have extended to his being appointed poet laureate, but Elizabeth, as Mr. Malone has accurately proved, had no poet laureate. Indeed in February 1590-1, she conferred on Spenser a pension of fifty pounds a year, the grant of which was discovered some years ago in the chapel of the Rolls, and this pension he enjoyed till his death, but the title of laureate was not given in his patent, nor in that of his two immediate successors.

The discovery of this patent, by Mr. Malone, is of further importance, as tending to rescue the character of lord Burleigh from the imputation of being hostile to our poet. The oldest date of this reproach is in Fuller's *Worthies*, a book published at the distance of more than seventy years, and on this authority, which has been copied by almost all the biographers of Spenser, it has been said that Burleigh intercepted the pension, as too much to be given "to a ballad-maker," and that when the queen, upon Spenser's presenting some poems to her, ordered him the gratuity of one hundred pounds, Burleigh asked, "What! all this for a song!" on which the queen replied, "Then give him



what is reason." The story concludes, that Spenser having long waited in vain for the fulfilment of the royal order, presented to her the following ridiculous memorial :

I was promised on a time
To have reason for my rhyme;
From that time unto this season
I receiv'd nor rhyme nor reason;

on which he was immediately paid; but for the whole of this representation, there appears neither foundation nor authority.

After the publication of the *Faerie Queene*, Spenser returned to Ireland. During his absence, in the succeeding year, the fame he had now obtained, induced his bookseller to collect and print his smaller pieces, one of which only is said to have been a republication. The title of this collection is, *Complaints, containing sundrie small Poems of the World's Vanitie*, viz. 1. *The Ruines of Time*. 2. *The Teares of the Muses*. 3. *Virgils Gnat*. 4. *Prosopopoeia, or Mother Hubbards Tale*. 5. *The Ruines of Rome, by Bellay*. 6. *Muiopotmos, or the Tale of the Butterflie*. 7. *Visions of the Worlds Vanitie*. 8. *Bellayes Visions*. 9. *Petrarches Visions*.

Spenser appears to have returned to London about the end of 1591, as his next publication, the beautiful elegy on Douglass Howard, daughter of Henry lord Howard, entitled *Daphnaida*, is dated Jan. 1, 1591-2. From this period there is a long interval in the history of our poet, which was probably passed in Ireland, but of which we have no account. It would appear, however, that he did not neglect those talents of which he had already given such favourable specimens. In 1595, he published the pastoral of Colin Clouts come Home again, the dedication to which bears date Dec. 27, 1591, but this Mr. Todd has fully proved to be an error. The pastoral elegy of *Astrophiel*, devoted entirely to the memory of sir Philip Sidney, and perhaps written on the immediate occasion of his death, was published along with this last mentioned piece.

It is conjectured that in the same year appeared his *Amoretti*, or Sonnets, in which the poet gives the progress of his addresses to a less obdurate lady than Rosalind, and whom he afterwards married, if the *Epithalamion*, published along with the Sonnets, is allowed to refer to that event. Mr. Todd deduces from various passages that his mistress's name was Elizabeth, and that the marriage took place in Ireland, on St. Barnabas day, 1594. Other biographers seem to be of opinion that he had lost a first wife, and that the courtship of a second inspired the *Amoretti*. Where we have no other evidence than the expression of a man's feelings, and that man a poet of excursive imagination, the balance of probabilities may be equal. Spenser was now at the age of forty-one, somewhat too late for the ardour of youthful passion so feelingly given in his Sonnets; but on the other hand, if he had a first wife, we have no account of her, and the children he left are, I think, universally acknowledged to have been by the wife he now married.

The Four Hymns on Love and Beauty, which the author informs us were written in his youth, as a warning to thoughtless lovers, and the *Prothalamion*, in honour of the double marriages of the ladies Elizabeth and Catherine Somerset to H. Gilford and W. Peter, esqrs. were published in 1596. In the same year the second part of the *Faerie Queene* appeared, with a new edition of the former part accompanying it. This contained the fourth, fifth, and sixth books. Of the remaining six, which were to complete the original design, two imperfect cantos of *Mutabilitie* only have been recovered, and were first in-

roduced in the folio edition of the *Faerie Queene*, printed in 1609, as a part of the lost book, entitled *The Legend of Constancy*.

It is necessary, however, in this place, to notice a question which has been started, and contested with much eagerness by Spenser's biographers and critics, namely, whether any part of the *Faerie Queene* has been lost, or whether the author did not leave the work unfinished as we now have it. Sir James Ware informs us that the poet finished the latter part of the *Faerie Queene* in Ireland, "which was soone after unfortunately lost by the disorder and abuse of his servants, whom he had sent before him into England." The authority of sir James Ware, who lived so near Spenser's time, and gave this account in 1633, seems entitled to credit; but it has been opposed by Fenton, who thinks, with Dryden, that "upon sir Philip Sidney's death, Spenser was deprived both of the means and spirit to accomplish his design," and treats sir James Ware's account as a hearsay or a fiction. Dr. Birch, on the other hand, contends that the event of sir Philip Sidney's death was not sufficient to have prevented Spenser from finishing his poem, since he actually gave the world six books of it after his patron's death. The author of Spenser's life in the *Biographia Britannica*, after gaining some advantage over Dr. Birch's inferences from incorrect dates, argues against the probability of a manuscript of the last six books, principally from the shortness of the poet's life after the year 1596. The late Dr. Farmer is of the same opinion, but appears to me somewhat too hasty in asserting that the question may be effectually answered by a single quotation. The quotation is from Brown's *Britannia's Pastorals*, 1616, and merely amounts to this, that Spenser died

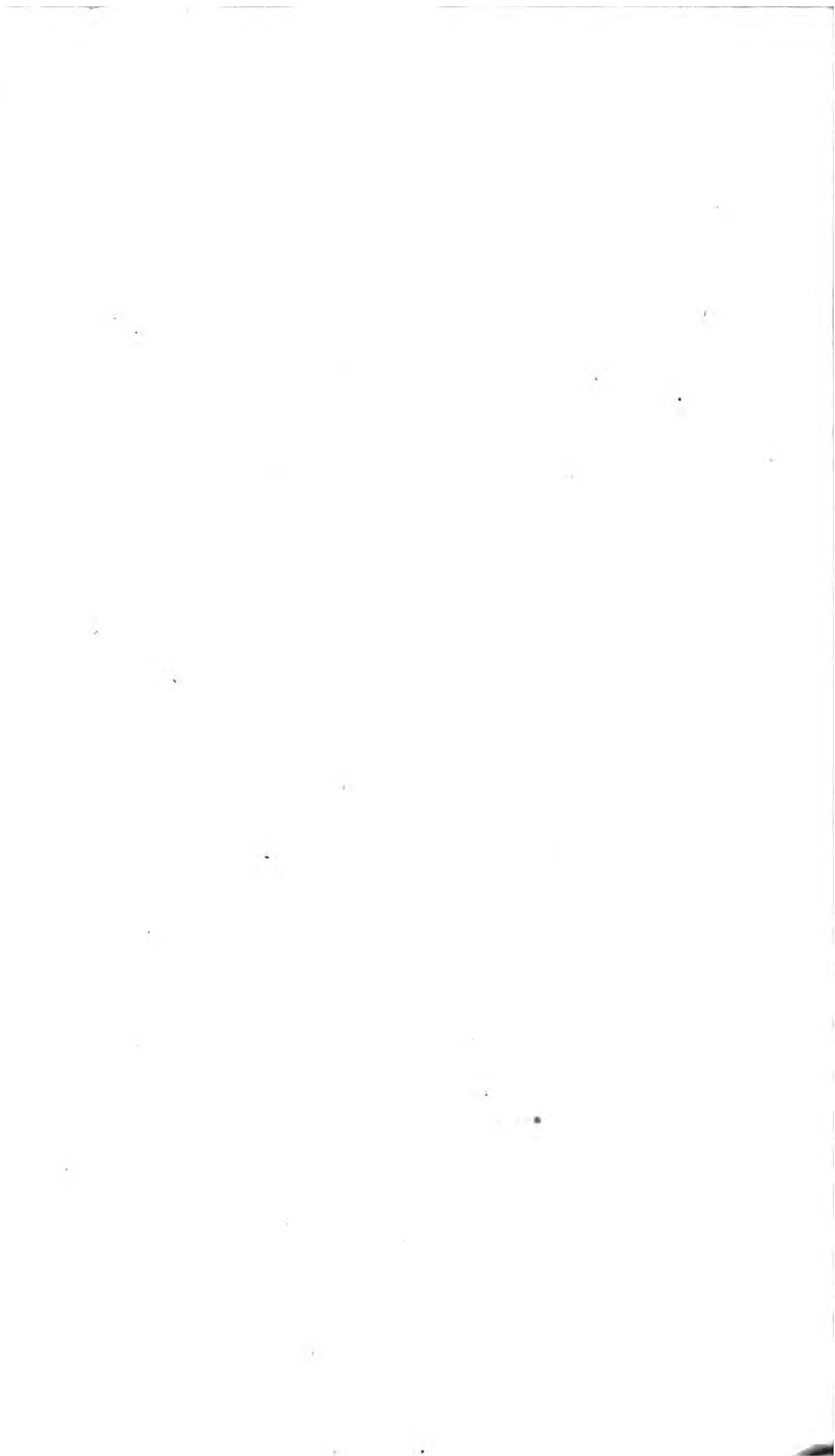
Ere he had ended his melodious song.

Mr. Todd has advanced a similar evidence from sir Aston Cokain, in 1658, intimating that Spenser would have exceeded Virgil had he lived so long

As to have finished his faery song.

But Mr. Todd produces afterwards a document, more to the purpose, in support of the belief that some of Spenser's papers were destroyed in the rebellion of 1598. This is an epigram written by John (afterwards sir John) Stradling, and published in 1607, and plainly intimates that certain manuscripts of Spenser were burnt in the rebellion. Two years after the publication of this epigram, part of the *Legend of Constancy*, the only manuscript that had escaped the fury of the rebels, was added to the second edition of the *Faerie Queene*. It appears therefore highly probable that among the manuscripts destroyed was some part of the six last books of the *Faerie Queene*, although they might not have been transcribed for the press, nor in that progress towards completion which ran in Fenton's mind when he contradicted sir James Ware with so little courtesy.

The same year, 1596, appears to have been the time when Spenser presented his political, and only prose work, *The View of the State of Ireland*, to the queen. Mr. Todd, having seen four copies of it in manuscript, concludes that he had presented it also to the great officers of state, and perhaps to others. Why it was allowed to remain in manuscript so long as until 1633, when sir James Ware published it from archbishop Usher's copy, has not been explained. If, as Mr. Todd conjectures, it was written at the command of the queen, and in order to reconcile the Irish to her government, why did it not



receive the publicity which so important an object required? I am more inclined to think, from a perusal of this work, as we now have it, that it was not considered by the court as of a healing tendency; and the extracts from some of the manuscript copies which Mr. Todd had an opportunity of procuring, seem to confirm this conjecture. Viewed in another light, it displays much political knowledge, and traces the troubles of that country, in many instances, to their proper causes. It is valuable also on account of the author's skill in delineating the actual state of Ireland. "Civilization," says Mr. Ledwich, the learned Irish antiquary, "having almost obliterated every vestige of our ancient manners, the remembrance of them is only to be found in Spenser; so that he may be considered, at this day, as an Irish antiquary." It ought not to be omitted that in a note on one of the manuscript copies of this work, Spenser is styled, "clerke of the counsell of the province of Mounster."

In 1597 he is said to have returned to Ireland; and by a letter which Mr. Malone has discovered, from queen Elizabeth to the Irish government, dated Sept. 30, 1598, it appears that he was recommended to be sheriff of Cork. The rebellion of Tyrone, however, took place in October, and with such fury as to compel Spenser and his family to leave Kilcolman. In the confusion of flight, manuscripts would be forgotten, for even one of his children was left behind; and the rebels, after carrying off the goods, burnt the house, and this infant in it. Spenser arrived in England, with a heart broken by these misfortunes, and died January following, 1598-9, in the forty-sixth year of his age.

There are some circumstances respecting Spenser's death which have been variously represented. Mr. Todd, from unquestionable evidence, has fixed the day January 16, 1598-9; and the place, an inn, or lodging-house, in King-street, Westminster; the time, therefore, which elapsed from his arrival in England to his death was very short. But it has been asserted that he died in extreme poverty; which, considering how recently he was in England, and how highly favoured by the queen only a month before he was compelled to leave Ireland, seems wholly incredible. The only foundation for the report appears to be an expression of Camden, intimating that he returned to England *poor*; which surely might be true, without affording any reason to suppose that he remained poor. His pension of fifty pounds, no inconsiderable sum in his days, continued to be paid; and why he should have lost his superior friends, at a time when he was a sufferer in the cause of government, is a question which may be asked without the risk of a satisfactory answer. The whining of some contemporary poets afford no proof of the fact, and may be rejected as authority; but the reception Mr. Warton has given to the report of Spenser's poverty, is entitled to higher regard. It might, indeed, be considered as decisive, if Mr. Todd's more successful researches did not prove that he founds all his argument upon the mistaken supposition that Spenser died in Ireland. Nor will Mr. Warton's agree with the lamentations of the poets; for they represent Spenser as poor by the neglect of his friends and country, and Mr. Warton, as dying amidst the desolations of rebellion.

Spenser's remains were interred in Westminster Abbey, near those of Chaucer, and the funeral expenses defrayed by the earl of Essex, a nobleman very erroneous in political life, but too much a friend to literature to have allowed Spenser to starve, and afterwards

† Phineas Fletcher, in his *Purple Island*, speaks most decisively in favour of Spenser's poverty at the time of his death. C.

insult his remains by a sumptuous funeral. His monument, however, which has been attributed to the munificence of Essex, was erected by Anne, countess of Dorset, about thirty years after Spenser's death. Stone was the workman, and had forty pounds for it. That at present in Westminster Abbey was erected, or restored, in 1778.

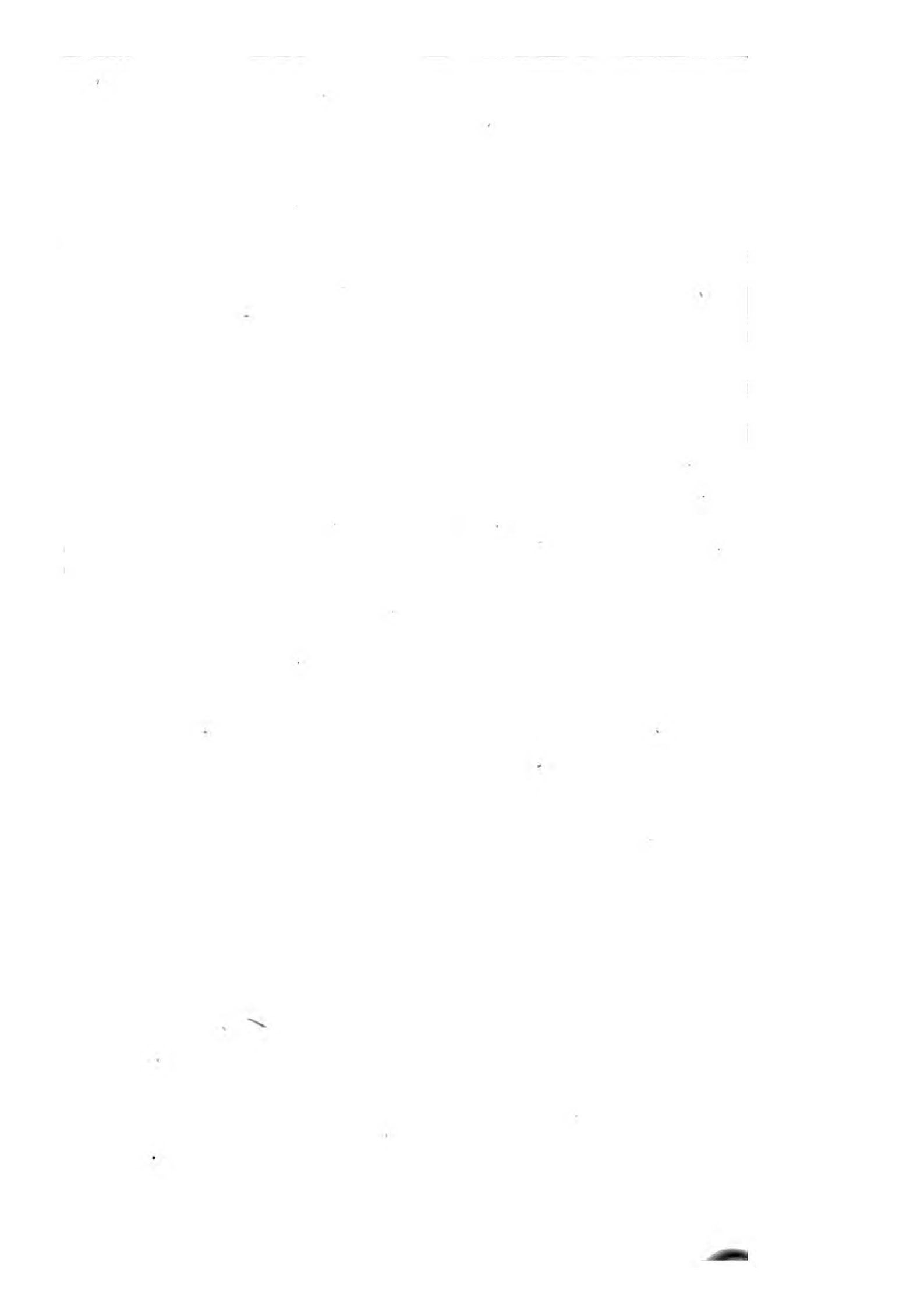
It does not appear what became of Spenser's wife and children. Two sons are said to have survived him, Sylvanus and Peregrine. Sylvanus married Ellen Nangle, or Nagle, eldest daughter of David Nangle, of Moneanymy, in the county of Cork, by whom he had two sons, Edmund and William Spenser. His other son, Peregrine, also married, and had a son, Hugolin, who, after the restoration of Charles II. was replaced by the court of claims in as much of the lands as could be found to have been his ancestor's. This Hugolin, however, attached himself to the cause of James II.; and, after the Revolution, was outlawed for treason and rebellion. Some time after, his cousin William, son of Sylvanus, became a suitor for the forfeited property, and recovered it by the interest of Mr. Montague, afterwards earl of Halifax, who was then at the head of the treasury. He had been introduced to Mr. Montague by Congreve, who, with others, was desirous of honouring the descendant of so great a poet. Dr. Birch describes him as a man somewhat advanced in years, but unable to give any account of the works of his ancestor which are wanting. The family has been since very imperfectly traced.

It remains to be observed, almost in the words of Mr. Todd, that Spenser is the author of four Sonnets, which are admitted into this edition of his works, of which three are prefixed to separate publications, and the fourth occurs in letters by his friend Harvey. He is conjectured to be the author of a Sonnet, signed E.S. addressed to master Henry Peacham, and entitled, *A Vision upon his Minerva*; and of some poor verses on Phillis, in a publication called *Chorus Poetarum*, 1684. The verses on queen Elizabeth's picture at Kensington, have been likewise given to Spenser; but lord Orford ascribes them to the queen herself. As Britain's *Ida* has been usually printed with the works of Spenser, it is here retained, although the critics are agreed that it was not written by him. The lost pieces of Spenser are said to be, 1. His Translation of *Ecclesiasticus*; 2. Translation of *Canticum Canticorum*; 3. *The Dying Pelican*; 4. *The Hours of our Lord*; 5. *The Sacrifice of a Sinner*; 6. *The Seven Psalms*; 7. *Dreams*; 8. *The English Poet*; 9. *Legends*; 10. *The Court of Cupid*; 11. *The Hell of Lovers*; 12. *His Purgatory*; 13. *A Se'nights Slumber*; 14. *Pageants*; 15. *Nine Comedies*; 16. *Stemmata Dudleiana*; 17. *Epithalamion Thamesis*. If his pen was thus prolific, there is very little reason to suppose that he might not have had leisure and industry to have nearly completed his *Faerie Queene*, before the fatal rebellion, which terminated all his labours.

Of the personal character of Spenser, if we may be allowed to form an opinion from his writings, it will be highly favourable. With a few exceptions, their uniform tendency is in favour of piety and virtue. His religious sentiments assimilate so closely with those of the early reformers, that we may conjecture he had not only studied the controversies of his age, but was a man of devotional temper and affections.

Of Spenser, as a poet, little can be added to the many criticisms which have been published⁶, since his importance in the history of English poetry became more justly

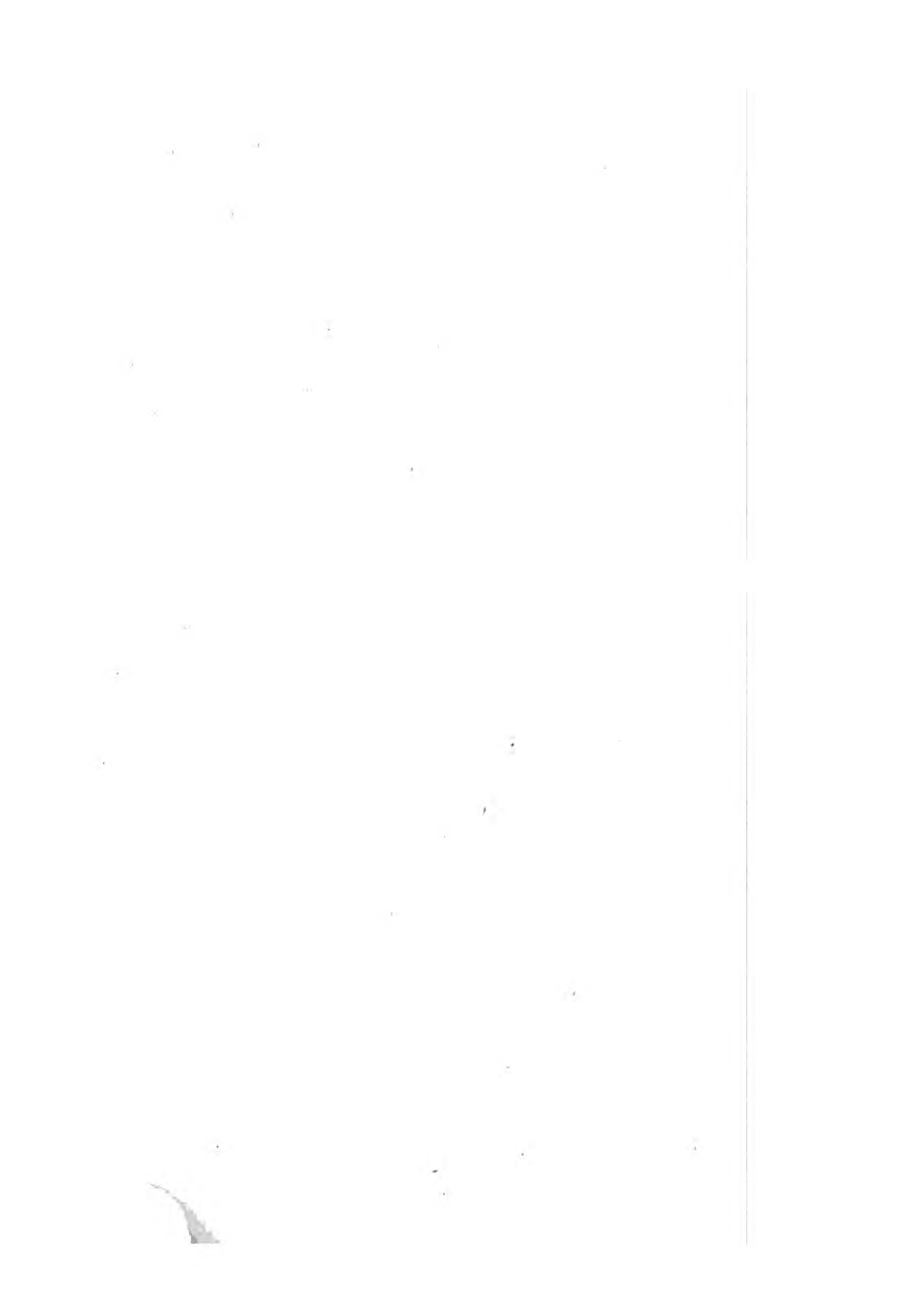
⁶ Jortin, Hurd, Church, Upton, but, above all, Mr. Thomas Warton, in his *Observations on the Faerie Queene*. There are also some ingenious remarks in Pope's *Discourse on Pastoral Poetry*; and, indeed, in every writer who has treated the subject of English poetry. C.

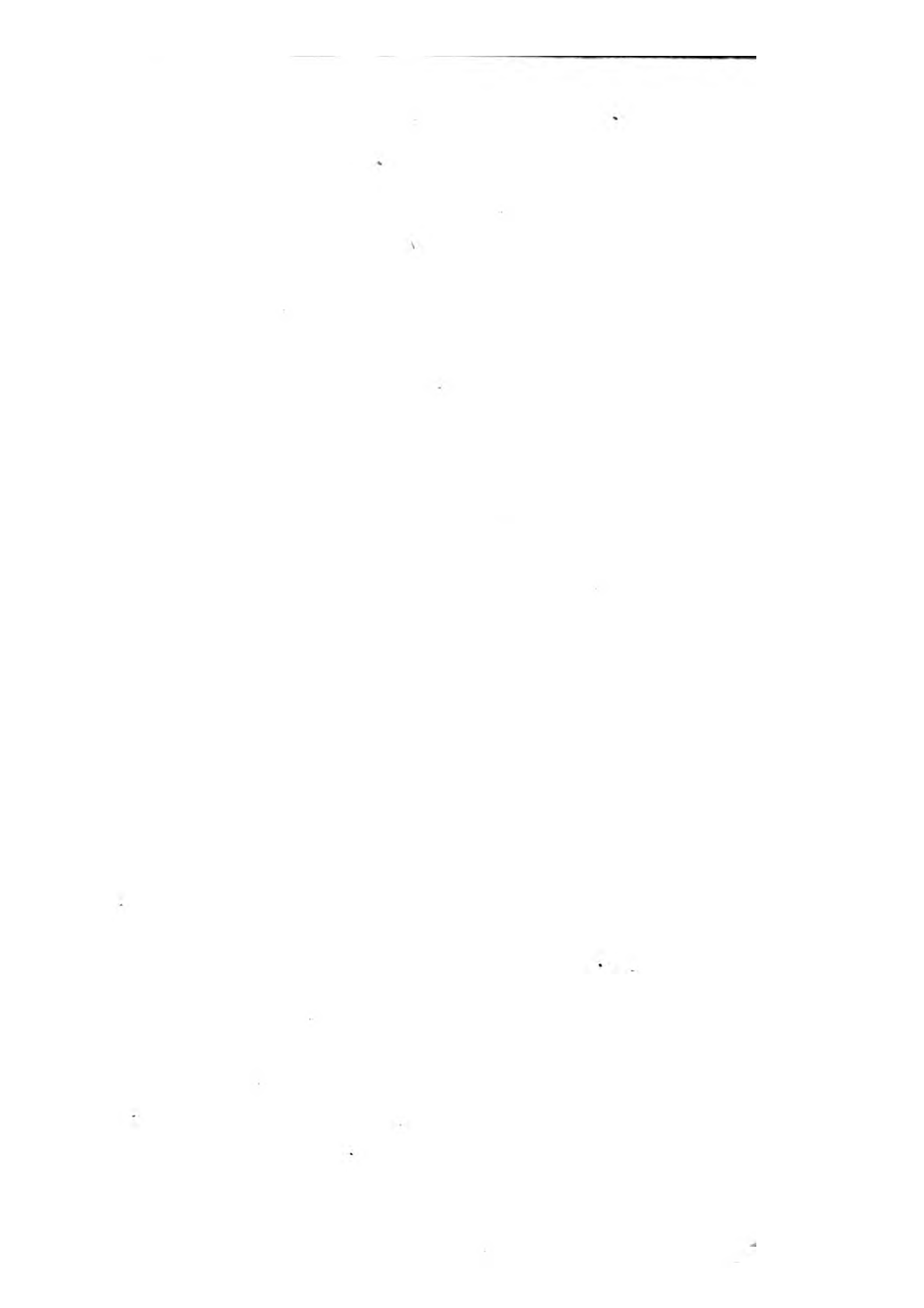


appreciated. His lesser pieces contain many beauties. Dryden thought *The Shepherds Calender* the most complete work of the kind which imagination had produced since the time of Virgil. It has not, however, risen in estimation. The language is so much more obsolete than that of the *Faerie Queene*, the groundwork of which is the language of his age, that it required a glossary at the time of publication. It is, however, the *Faerie Queene* which must be considered as constituting Spenser one of the chief fathers of English poetry. Its predominant excellences are imagery, feeling, taste, and melody of versification. Its defects are partly those of his model, Ariosto, and partly those of his age. His own errors are the confusion and inconsistency admitted in the stories and allegorical personages of the ancients, and the absurd mixture of christian and heathenish allusions. Mr. Spence has fully exemplified these in his *Polymetis*. It is, indeed, impossible to criticise the *Faerie Queene* by any rules; but we find in it the noblest examples of all the graces of poetry, the sublime, the pathetic, and such powers of description as have never been exceeded. Bishop Hurd has therefore judiciously considered it under the idea of a Gothic rather than a classical poem. It certainly strikes with all the grand effect of that species of architecture; and perhaps it is not too much to say that, like that, its reputation has suffered by the predominant taste for the more correct, higher, and more easily practicable forms of the Grecian school.

Hume was among the first who endeavoured to depreciate the value of the *Faerie Queene*, by asserting that the perusal of it was rather a task than a pleasure, and challenging any individual to deny this. Pope⁷ and lord Somers are two who might have accepted the challenge with hope of success. But, in fact, Spenser will not lose much if we admit the assertion. That the perusal of the *Faerie Queene* must be, at first, a task, and a very irksome one, will be confessed by all who are unacquainted with any English words but what are current. If that difficulty be surmounted, the reader of taste cannot fail to relish the beauties so profusely scattered in this poem. With respect to the objections that have been made to the allegorical plan, it is sufficient to refer to its antiquity; it was one of the earliest vehicles of pleasure blended with instruction; and although modern critics object to a continued allegory, which, indeed, it is extremely difficult to accomplish without falling into inconsistencies, yet specimens of it, detached personifications, aiming at the sublimity of Spenser, still continue to be among the efforts by which our best writers wish to establish their fame. Perhaps the same remark may be extended to the stanza of Spenser, which critics have censured, and poets, praised by those critics, have imitated. After all, it is to the language of Spenser that we must look for the reason why his popularity is less than that of many inferior poets. Spenser, Chaucer, and, indeed, all the early poets, can be relished, not by common readers, but by students; and not separately, but as connected with times, characters, and manners, the illustration of which demands the skill and industry of the antiquary.

⁷ "There is something," said Pope, "in Spenser, that pleases one as strongly in one's old age as it did in one's youth. I read the *Faerie Queene*, when I was about twelve, with a vast deal of delight: and I think it gave me as much when I read it over about a year or two ago." Spence's *Anecdotes*, quoted by Dr. Warton, who very justly censures Pope's *Imitation of Spenser*. See Pope's *Works*, Bowles's edit. vol. ii. 289. C.





THE
LIFE OF DANIEL,

BY MR. CHALMERS.

SAMUEL DANIEL, the son of a music-master, was born near Taunton in Somersetshire, in the year 1562. In 1579 he was admitted a commoner of Magdalen-hall, Oxford, where he continued about three years, and by the help of an excellent tutor made considerable improvement in academical studies. He left the university, however, without taking a degree, and pursued the study of history and poetry, under the patronage of the earl of Pembroke's family. This he thankfully acknowledges in his *Defence of Rhime*, which is retained in this edition, as a necessary document to illustrate the ideas of poetry entertained in his time. To the same family he was probably indebted for an university education, as no notice occurs of his father, who, if a music-master, could not well have escaped the researches of Dr. Burney.

The first of his productions, at the age of twenty-three, was a Translation of Paulus Jovius's *Discourse of rare Inventions*, both military and amorous, called *Impresse*, London, 1585, 8vo. to which he prefixed an ingenious preface. He afterwards became tutor to the lady Anne Clifford, sole daughter and heiress to George, earl of Cumberland, a lady of very high accomplishments, spirit, and intrepidity. To her, when at the age of thirteen, he addressed a delicate admonitory epistle. She was married, first to Richard, earl of Dorset, and afterwards to the earl of Pembroke, "that memorable simpleton," says lord Orford, "with whom Butler has so much diverted himself." The pillar which she erected in the county of Westmoreland, on the road-side between Penrith and Appleby, the spot where she took her last leave of her mother,

..... still records, beyond a pencil's power,
The silent sorrows of a parting hour,
Still to the musing pilgrim points the place,
Her sainted spirit most delights to trace.²

Among her other munificent acts was a monument to the memory of our poet, on which she caused it to be engraven that she had been his pupil, a circumstance which

¹ See Mr. Park's valuable edition of the Royal and Noble Authors. C.

² Roger's *Pleasures of Memory*, quoted by Mr. Park, ubi supra. C.

she seems to have remembered with delight at the distance of more than half a century after his decease.

At the death of Spenser, Daniel, according to Anthony Wood, was appointed poet laureat to queen Elizabeth, but Mr. Malone², whose researches lead to more decisive accuracy, considers him only as a volunteer laureat, like Jonson, Dekker, and others, who furnished the court with masks and pageants. In king James's reign he was made gentleman extraordinary, and afterwards one of the grooms of the privy chamber to the queen consort, who took great delight in his conversation and writings. Some of his biographers attribute this promotion to the interest of his brother-in-law, Florio, the Italian lexicographer, but it is perhaps more probable that he owed it to the Pembroke family. Mrs. Cooper, in her *Muses' Library*, observes that in the introduction to his poem on the Civil Wars, he acknowledges the friendship of one of the noble family of Mountjoy, and this, adds our female critic, is the more grateful and sincere, as it was published after the death of his benefactor.

He now rented a small house and garden in Old Street, in the parish of St. Luke's, London, where he composed most of his dramatic pieces, and enjoyed the friendship of Shakspeare, Marlowe, and Chapman, as well as of many persons of rank, but he appears to have been dissatisfied with the opinions entertained of his poetical talents; and towards the end of his life retired to a farm which he had at Beckington, near Philips-Norton, in Somersetshire, where, after some time devoted to study and contemplation, he died, and was buried Oct. 14, 1619. He had been married to his wife, Justina, several years, but left no issue.

Of Daniel's personal history we know little, but the inferences to be drawn from his works are highly favourable. He is much praised by his contemporaries, although chiefly with a view to his genius. In *Choice Drollery*, 8vo. 1656, an anonymous writer terms him

The pithy Daniel, whose salt lines afford
A weighty sentence in each little word.

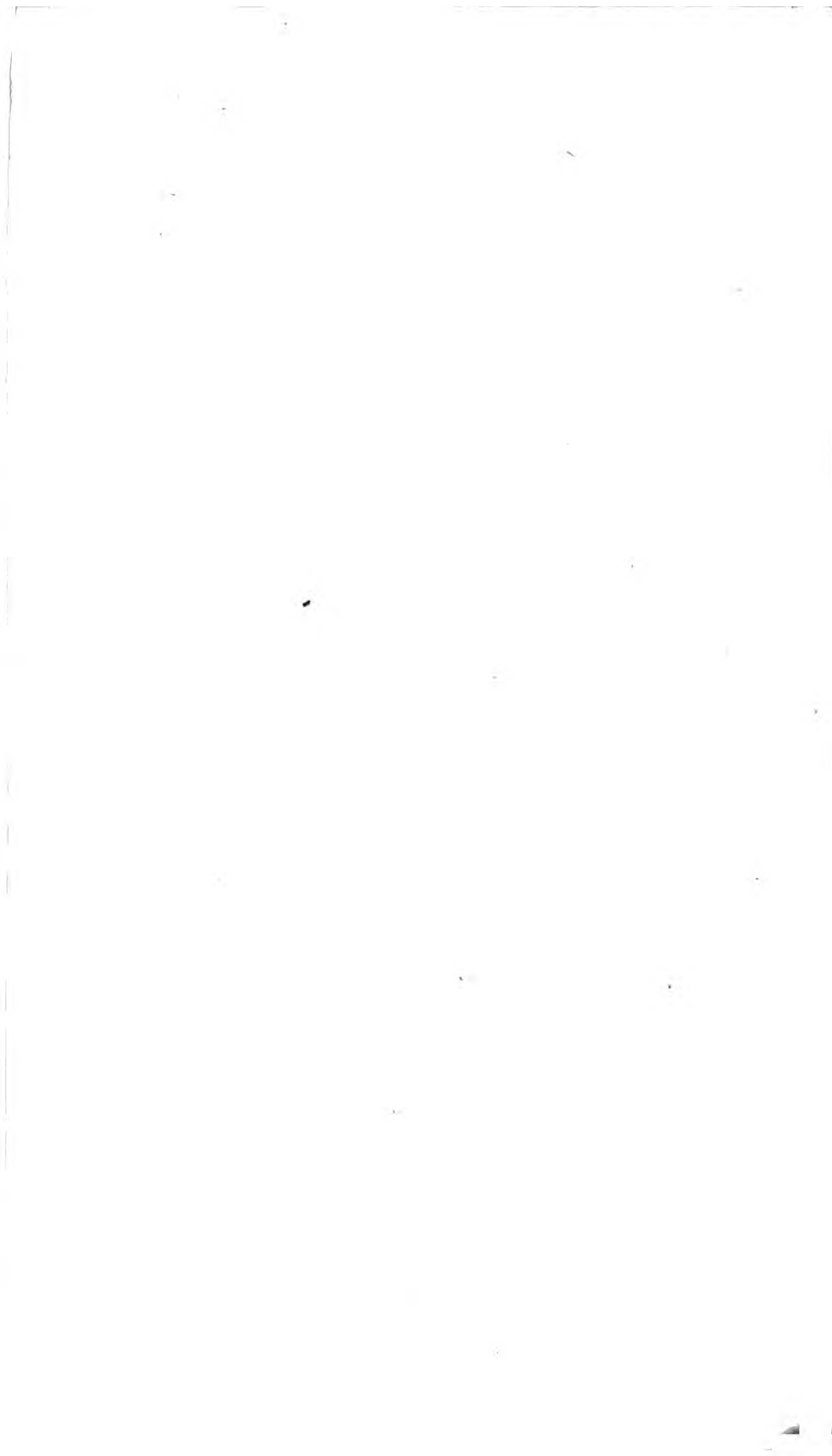
Another, in *Sportive Wit*, 8vo. in some verses called *A Censure of the Poets*, speaks of him thus:

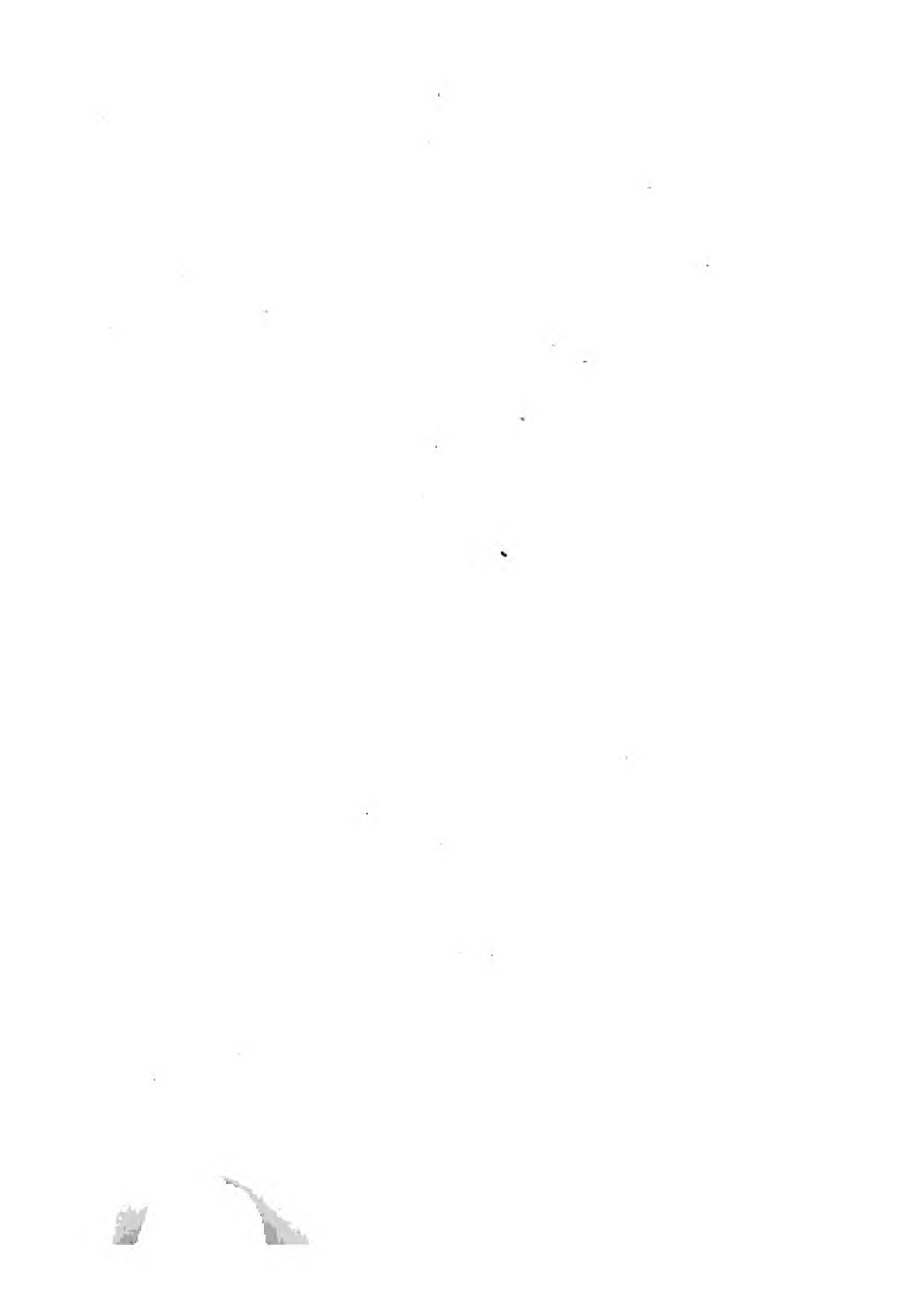
Amongst these Samuel Daniel, whom I
May speak of, but to censure do deny:
Only have heard some wise men him rearse
To be too much historian in verse.
His rhimes were smooth, his metres well did close;
But yet his manner better fitted prose.

His friend, Charles Fitz-Geoffry, wrote the following Latin epigram in his praise.

Spenserum si quis nostrum velit esse Maronem,
Tu, Daniele, mihi Naso Britannus eris.
Sin illum potius Phœbum velit esse Britannum,
Tum, Daniele, mihi tu Maro noster eris.
Nil Phœbo ulterius: si quid foret, illud haberet
Spenserus, Phœbus tu, Daniele, fores.
Quippe loqui Phœbus cuperet si more Britanno,
Haud scio quo poterat, in velit ore tuo.

² Life of Dryden, vol. i. p. 85. C.





Thus translated in the *Biographia Britannica* :

“ If Spenser merits Roman Virgil's name,
Daniel at least comes in for Ovid's fame.
If Spenser rather claims Apollo's wit,
Virgil's illustrious name will Daniel fit.
No higher than Apollo we can go :
But if a loftier title you can show,
That greater name let Spenser's Muse command,
And Daniel be the Phœbus of our land.
For in my judgment, if the god of verse
In English would heroic deeds rehearse,
No language so expressive he could choose,
As that of English Daniel's lofty Muse.”

Sylvester, in his *Du Bartas*, calls him

“ My deer sweet Daniel, sharp-concepted, brief,
Civil, sententious, for pure accents chief.”

Edmund Bolton, in a criticism on the style of our poets before the year 1600, says,
“ The works of Samuel Daniel containe somewhat aflat, but yet withal a very pure and copious English, and words as warrantable as any mans, and fitter perhaps for prose than measure.”

Gabriel Harvey, in his *Four Letters, and Certaine Sonnets*, cordially recommends him, with others, for his studious endeavours to enrich and polish his native tongue.

Fuller's account, who lived near enough to the time of his death to have known something of his character, is worth transcribing.

“ He was born not far from Taunton, in this county, (Somersetshire) ; whose father was a master of music ; and his harmonious mind made an impression on his son's genius, who proved an exquisite poet. He carried in his Christian and surname two holy prophets, his monitors, so to qualify his raptures, that he abhorred all prophaneness. He was also a judicious historian ; witness his *Lives of our English Kings since the Conquest until King Edward III.* wherein he hath the happiness to reconcile brevity with clearness, qualities of great distance in other authors. He was a servant in ordinary to queen Anne, who allowed him a fair salary. As the tortoise burieth himself all the winter under the ground, so Mr. Daniel would lye hid at his garden-house in Old-street, nigh London, for some months together, (the more retiredly to enjoy the company of the Muses) and then would appear in publick, to converse with his friends, whereof Dr. Cowel and Mr. Camden were principal.

“ Some tax him to smack of the old cask, as resenting of the Romish religion ; but they have a quicker palate than I who can make any such discovery. In his old age he turned husbandman, and rented a farm in Wiltshire, nigh the Devises. I can give no account how he thrived thereupon. For though he was well versed in Virgil, his fellow husband-man poet, yet there is more required to make a rich farmer than only to say his *Georgics* by heart ; and I question whether his Italian will fit our English husbandry. Besides, I suspect that Mr. Daniel his fancy was too fine and sublimated to be wrought down to his private profit.”

His works consist of, 1. *The Complaint of Rosamond*, Lond. 1594, 1598, 1611, and 1623, 4to. 2. *Various Sonnets to Delia*. 3. *Tragedy of Cleopatra*, Lond. 1594;

1598, 4to. 4. Of the Civil Wars between the Houses of Lancaster and York, Lond. 1604, 1609, 8vo. and 1623, 4to. 5. The Vision of the Twelve Goddesses, presented in a Mask, &c. Lond. 1604, 8vo. and 1623, 4to. 6. Panegyric congratulatory, delivered to King James at Burleigh Harrington, in Rutlandshire, Lond. 1604, and 1623, 4to. 7. Epistles to various great Personages, in verse, Lond. 1601, and 1623, 4to. 8. Musophilus, containing a general defence of learning, printed with the former. 9. Tragedy of Philotas, Lond. 1611, &c. 8vo. 10. Hymen's Triumph; a Pastoral Tragi-Comedy, at the Nuptials of Lord Roxborough, Lond. 1623, 4to. 2d edit. 11. Musa; or a Defence of Rhime, Lond. 1611, 8vo. 12. The Epistle of Octavia to M. Antonius, Lond. 1611, 8vo. 13. The First Part of the History of England, in Three Books, Lond. 1613, 4to. reaching to the end of king Stephen, in prose; to which he afterwards added a Second Part, reaching to the end of king Edward III. Lond. 1618, 1621, 1623, and 1634, folio; continued to the end of king Richard III. by John Trussel, sometime a Winchester scholar, afterwards a trader and alderman of that city. 14. The Queen's Arcadia, a Pastoral Tragi-Comedy, 1605, 1623, Lond. 4to. 15. Funeral Poem, on the Death of the Earl of Devon, Lond. 1623, 4to. In the same year his poetical works were published, in 4to. by his brother John Daniel.

The editor of Phillips's *Theatrum*, (1800) to whom I am indebted for the above list, adds, that "the character of Daniel's genius seems to be propriety, rather than elevation. His language is generally pure and harmonious; and his reflections are just. But his thoughts are too abstract, and appeal rather to the understanding than to the imagination, or the heart; and he wanted the fire necessary for the loftier flights of poetry."

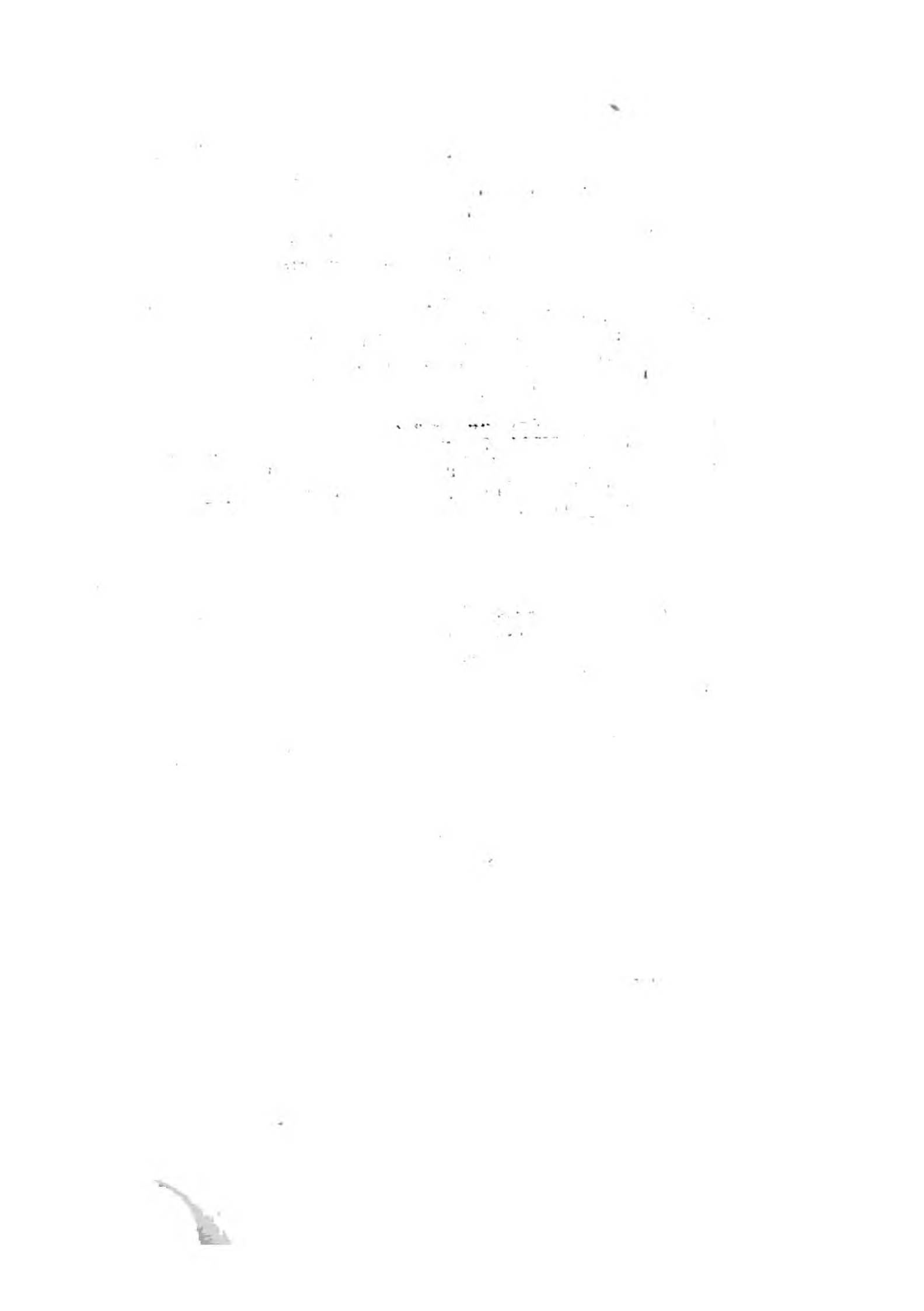
Mr. Headly, who appears to have studied his works with much attention, thus appreciates his merit. "Though very rarely sublime, he has skill in the pathetic, and his pages are disgraced with neither pedantry nor conceit. We find, both in his poetry and prose, such a legitimate and rational flow of language as approaches nearer the style of the eighteenth than the sixteenth century, and of which we may safely assert that it never will become obsolete. He certainly was the Atticus of his day. It seems to have been his error to have entertained too great a diffidence of his own abilities. Constantly contented with the sedate propriety of good sense, which he no sooner attains than he seems to rest satisfied, though his resources, had he but made the effort, would have carried him much farther. In thus escaping censure, he is not always entitled to praise. From not endeavouring to be great, he sometimes misses of being respectable. The constitution of his mind seems often to have failed him in the sultry and exhausting regions of the Muses; for, though generally neat, easy, and perspicuous, he too frequently grows slack, languid, and enervated. In perusing his long historical poem, we grow sleepy at the dead ebb of his narrative, notwithstanding being occasionally relieved with some touches of the pathetic. Unfortunate in the choice of his subject, he seems fearful of supplying its defects by digressional embellishment; instead of fixing upon one of a more fanciful cast, which the natural coolness of his judgment would necessarily have corrected, he has cooped himself up within the limited and narrow pale of dry events; instead of casting his eye on the general history of human nature, and giving his genius a range over her immeasurable fields, he has confined himself to an abstract diary of Fortune; instead of presenting us with pictures of truth from the effects of the passions, he has versified the truth of action only; he has sufficiently, therefore, shown the historian, but by no means the poet. For, to use a sentiment of sir William Davenant's, 'Truth narrative and past, is the idol of historians, (who worship a dead thing) and





truth operative, and by its effects continually alive, is the mistress of poets, who hath not her existence in matter but in reason." Daniel has often the softness of Rowe without his effeminacy. In his Complaint of Cleopatra he has caught Ovid's manner very happily, as he has no obscurities either of style or language, neither pedantry nor affectation, all of which have concurred in banishing from use the works of his contemporaries. The oblivion he has met with is peculiarly undeserved: he has shared their fate, though innocent of their faults."

The justice of these remarks cannot be disproved, although some of them are rather too figurative for sober criticism. Daniel's fatal error was in choosing history instead of fiction; yet in his lesser pieces, and particularly in his sonnets, are many striking poetical beauties; and his language is every where so much more harmonious than that of his contemporaries, that he deserves his place in every collection of English poetry, as one who had the taste or genius to anticipate the improvements of a more refined age. As a dramatic writer, he has been praised for his adherence to the models of antiquity; but whoever attempts this, attempts what has ever been found repugnant to the constitution of the English theatre.





MICHAEL DRAYTON, Esq;
A Memorable Poet of this Age,
Exchanged his Laurel for a Crown of Glory, 1631.
Do pious Marble, let thy Readers know
What they, and what their Children owe
To DRAYTON's Name, whose sacred Dust
We recommend unto thy Trust;
Protect his Memory, and preserve his Story.
Remain a lasting Monument of his Glory;
And when thy Ruins shall disclaim
To be the Treasurer of his Name,
His Name that cannot fade, shall be
An everlasting Monument to THEE .

Printed for W. Reeve at Shakespears Head in Fleet Street.

THE
LIFE OF MICHAEL DRAYTON.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS once eminent poet was of an ancient family which derived its name from the town of Drayton in Leicestershire; but his parents having removed into Warwickshire, he was born in the village of Harshul or Hartshill, in the parish of Atherston¹ in that county, near the river Anker, about the year 1563. In what situation or circumstances his parents were² is not recorded; but they were probably not opulent, as we find him very soon indebted to patronage for the benefits of education. His early discovery of talents, and sweetness of disposition and manners, recommended him to some person of distinction, whom he served in quality of page, and who bestowed what was needful for the cultivation of his mind.

In his youth he discovered a propensity to read poetry, and was anxious to know "what kind of creatures poets were." To gratify this curiosity, the works of Virgil, and other classics, were put into his hands, which inspired him with a taste superior to his years, and made him dislike vulgar ditties, especially the ballads of one Elderton, a drunken poet, at that time in much fame among common readers. Whether sir Henry Godere of Polesworth was his first patron, is uncertain; but that gentleman is said to have maintained him for sometime at Oxford, where, however, his name does not occur among the scholars of any college or hall. From his description of the Spanish invasion in 1568, it has been supposed that he was an eye-witness of the defeat of the armada, and held some commission in the army; and this, however doubtful, is the only intimation we have of his having applied to any regular profession.

Besides sir Henry Godere, he found a liberal patron and friend in sir Walter Aston of Tixhall in Staffordshire, to whom he gratefully dedicates many of his poems; and sir Henry Godere, sometime before his death, recommended him to the countess of Bedford. By means of sir Walter Aston and sir Roger Aston, gentlemen of the bed-chamber to king James in his minority, he is said to have been employed as a confidential agent in a correspondence between the young king of Scotland and queen Elizabeth: but this part of his history rests on no very solid foundation. It is more certain that

¹ Fuller, mistaking this for Atherston on the Avon, says, that "he was born within few miles of William Shakspeare, his countryman and fellow-poet, and buried within fewer paces of Jeffrey Chaucer and Edward Spencer." Worthies. C.

² Aubrey says that his father was a butcher, "which is probably false." Philips's *Theatrum*, new edit. C.

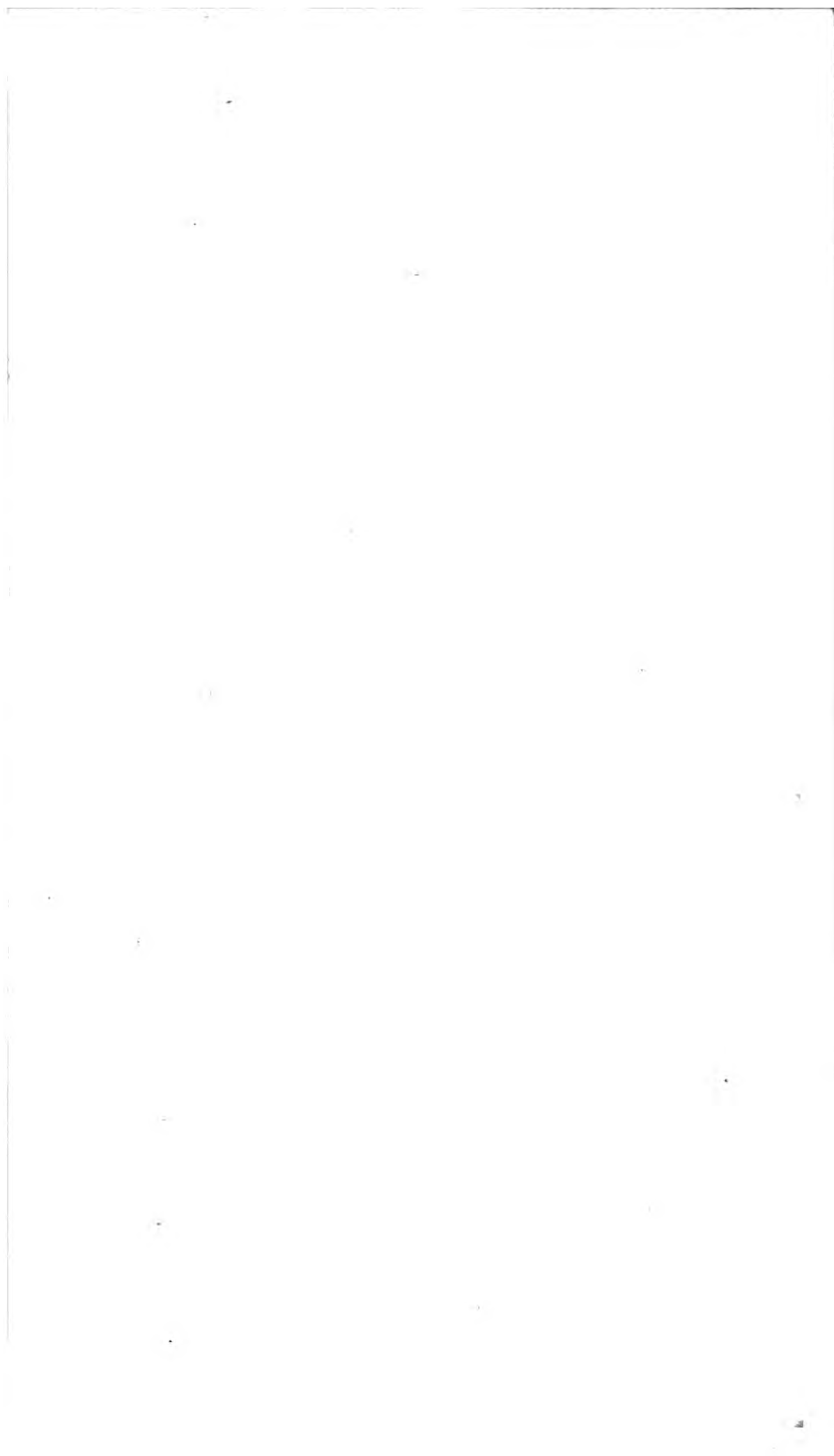
he rendered the services and homage of a poet to king James, among the first who congratulated him on his accession to the British throne, and even condescended to praise his majesty's poetical talents in a sonnet of which he was afterwards ashamed³. On the same happy occasion, he appeared as one of the squires who attended sir Walter Aston, when he was created a knight of the Bath. His duty to his king, however, was so ill repaid, that he gave up all hopes of rising at court, and his fable of *The Owl*, published a year after the coronation, is supposed to glance at persons and incidents connected with his disappointment. He adverts to the same subject, but so obscurely as to convey no information, in the preface to his *Poly-olbion*, nor from this time have we any account of his personal history; and can only conjecture from certain hints in his dedications and prefaces, that although he obtained the additional patronage of the justly celebrated Thomas Sackville, lord Buckhurst, earl of Dorset, and retained the esteem and kind offices of many private friends, he rose to no situation of wealth or eminence, and did not always derive much advantage from his numerous publications⁴. He died Dec. 23, 1631, and was buried in Westminster Abbey under the north wall, near a door which then opened to one of the prebendal houses. His monument, a tablet of blue marble, with a bust, and some lines by Ben Jonson, was erected at the expense of the countess of Dorset in the south aisle. Aubrey, from whose MSS. this information was obtained, attributes the verses, not to Jonson, but to F. Quarles.

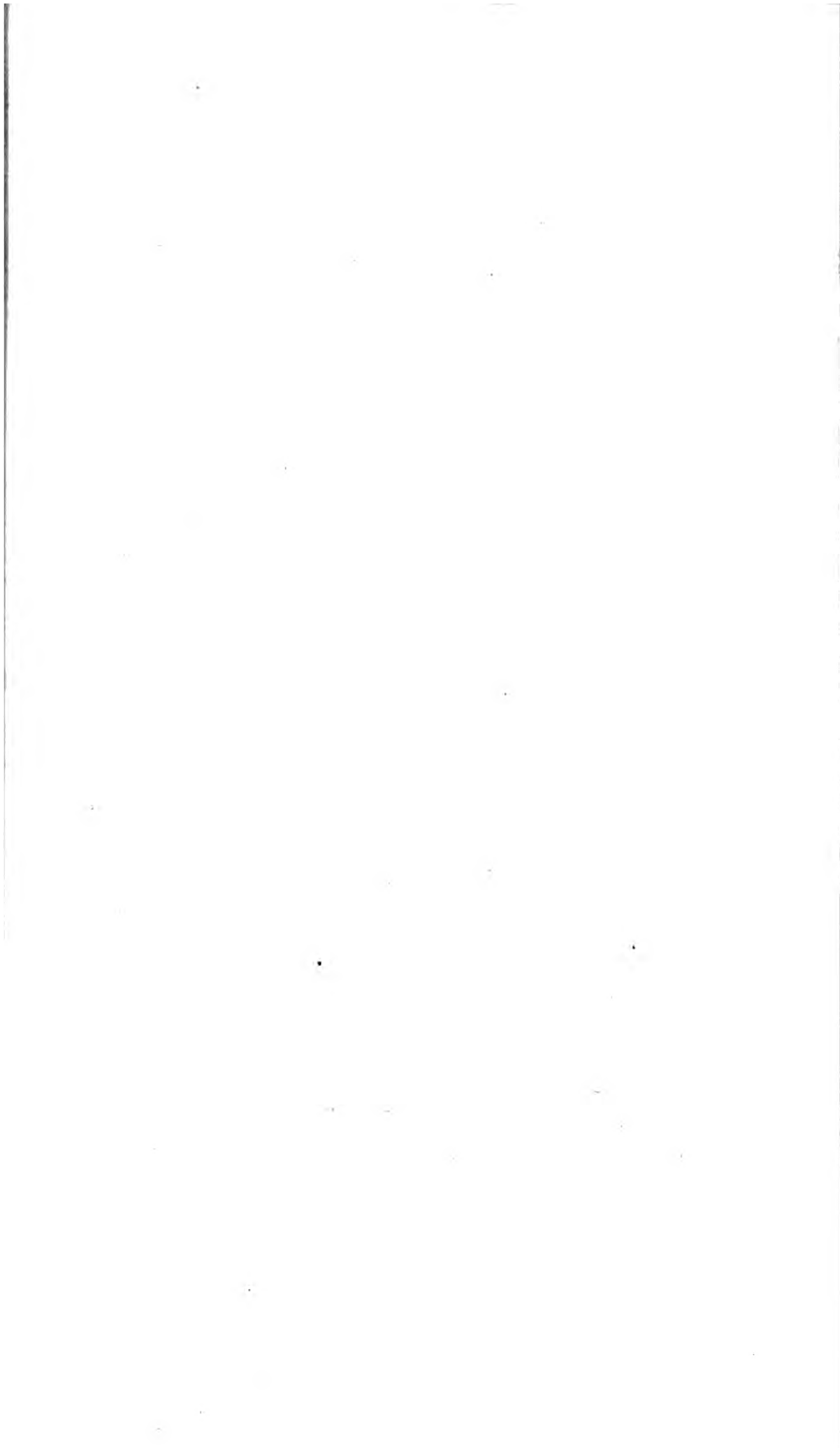
It is not very easy to recover the exact dates of his various pieces, as some of them were printed without that necessary appendage, and the titles of a few were changed on republication. Mr. Ritson, whose accuracy may be in general relied upon, arranges them in the following order. 1. *The Harmonie of the Church*, containing the spiritual Songs, and holy Hymnes of godly Men, Patriarches and Prophets, all sweetly sounding to the Glory of the Highest; printed by R. Jones, 1591, 4to. This, which is a very rare book, and was unknown to his editor Oldys, has not been reprinted in any edition of his works. 2. *Idea: the Shepherd's Garland*, fashioned in nine Eglogs: and Roland's Sacrifice to the nine Muses; printed for T. Woodcocke, 1593, 4to. From the title of this last performance Drayton was sometimes called *Rowland* by his contemporaries. The *Shepherd's Garland* was afterwards reprinted by the author under the title of *Pastorals*, containing Eglogues, with the *Man in the Moon*. In subsequent editions we find a tenth Eglogue added. 3. *Matilda*, the fair and chaste Daughter of Lord Robert Fitzwalter; 4to. one of his heroical epistles. 4. *Mortimeriados*; the lamentable Civil Warres of Edward the Second and the Barons; printed by J. R. for Matthew Lownes, 1596, 4to. and published afterwards under the title of *The Barons Wars*. 5. *England's Heroical Epistles*; 1598, 8vo. 6. A gratulatorie Poem to the Majestie of K. James; 1603, 4to. not reprinted in any edition of his works. 7. *The Owle*; 1604, 4to. 8. *Moses in a Map of his Miracles*; 1604, 4to. 9. A Pæan triumphall, composed for the Society of Goldsmiths of London, on king James's entering the city; 1604, 4to. not reprinted. 10. *Poems*; 1605, 8vo. 11. *The Legend of Great Cromwell*; 1607, 4to. added afterwards to his other Legends. 12. *Poly-olbion*: the first eighteen books⁵, 1612; and the whole thirty books in 1622, fol. 13. *Poems*, viz. *The Barons Warres*, *England's Heroical Epistles*,

³ See Addenda. C.

⁴ In a Letter to his friend Drummond, he informs him of his having made further progress in the *Poly-olbion*, but adds, "it lyeth by me; for the booksellers and I are not in terms, and they are # company of base knaves, whom I both scorn and kick at." Drummond's works, 1711, p. 155. C.

⁵ Ritson says the first "twelve," and the whole "twenty-two books." C.





Idea, The Legend of Robert Duke of Normandy, of Matilda, and Pierce Gaveston; 1613, 8vo⁶. Poems, 1619, folio, and without date, 8vo. 14. The Battle of Agincourt; 1627, fol. 15. The Muses Elizium, lately discovered, by a new Way over Parnassus; 1630, 4to.

In addition to these, Mr. Ritson mentions some poems inserted in England's Helicon, 1600; and a poem signed M. D. before Marley's Ballets, 1600, probably by Drayton, who has also commendatory verses before Middleton's Legend of D. Humphrey, 1600; Murray's Sophonisba, 1611; Davies's Holy Roode, 1609; Chapman's Hesiod, 1618; Vicars's Menuduction, 1622; sir John Beaumont's poems, 1629; in Annalia Dubrensis, 1636; and before Holland's Posthume, 1626. The supposition that he wrote a play called The Merry Devil of Edmonton has been satisfactorily refuted by the editor of the Biographia Dramatica; but in the Censura Literaria the following is attributed to his pen, *Ideas Mirrour Amours in quatorzains, che suve e tace assair domanda*, 4to. 1594. These stanzas are dedicated, in a poetical address, to "the deare chyld of the Muses, and his ever kind Mæcenas, Antony Cooke, esq."—A collection of his principal works was printed in a folio volume in 1748, and a more complete, but still imperfect one, in 1753, in four volumes, 8vo. In 1788 the late Mr. Hurdis republished his Heroic Epistles with notes and illustrations, 8vo.

Few men appear to have been more highly respected by his contemporaries, and there is reason to think he associated on very familiar terms with Jonson, Shakspeare, Selden, and other men of the first eminence for literary character and personal worth. Meres, a divine and poet of considerable note in his time, informs us that Drayton, "among scholars, soldiers, poets, and all sorts of people, was helde for a man of virtuous disposition, honest conversation, and well-governed carriage, which," he adds, "is almost miraculous among good wits in these declining and corrupt times." And an anonymous dramatic writer introduces his name in a piece entitled The Return from Parnassus, or the Scourges of Symony, with this character: "He wants one true note of a poet of our times, and that is this: he cannot swagger it well at a tavern, or domineer in a hot-house." Mr. Warton introduces this encomium in his analysis of Hall's Satires, with the following remarks: "Our poets, too frequently the children of idleness, too naturally the lovers of pleasure, began now to be men of the world, and affect to mingle in the dissipations and debaucheries of the metropolis. To support a popularity of character, not so easily attainable in the obscurities of retirement and study, they frequented taverns, became libertines and buffoons, and exhilarated the circles of the polite and the profligate. Their way of life gave the colour to their writings: and what had been the favourite topic of conversation was sure to please, when recommended by the graces of poetry. Add to this, that poets now began to write for hire, and a rapid sale was to be obtained at the expense of the purity of the reader's mind."

Drayton's character appears to have been perfectly free from censures of this kind; but the testimonies to his merit as a poet are yet more copious, and deserve to accompany every edition of his works. If they have no other value, they serve to illustrate the history of taste, and the instability of fame. By Fitz Geoffrey, a divine and poet who flourished at the latter end of queen Elizabeth's reign, he is styled, "the golden-mouthed poet, for the purity and preciousness of his phrase." Allot, in his England's Parnassus, is no less partial to his writings; and Robert Tofte, the translator of Ariosto's Satires, speaks of him as "not unworthily bearing the name of the chief archangel (Michael) singing after his

* This edition is not noticed by Mr. Ritson. C.

soul-ravishing manner." Burton, the historian of Leicestershire, asserts that he may be compared with Dante, Petrarch or Boccace, Marinella, Pignatello or Stigliano; but why, he exclaims, "should I go about to commend him, whose own works and worthiness have sufficiently extolled to the world?" Drummond of Hawthornden commends the *Poly-olbion*, as being one of the smoothest poems he had seen in English, and said he should dare to compare some pieces in it with the best transmarine poems. To these testimonies we may add the no less liberal praises of Bolton, Bodenham, sir John Beaumont, and Alexander, earl of Sterling.

Phillips, who is supposed to speak sometimes the sentiments of his illustrious relation, Milton, remarks that Drayton in his time (Drayton's) was not much inferior to Spenser and sir Philip Sydney for fame and renown in poetry: "however, he seems somewhat antiquated in the esteem of the more curious of these times, especially in his *Poly-olbion*, the old fashioned kind of verse⁷ whereof, seems somewhat to diminish that respect which was formerly paid to the subject, as being both pleasant and elaborate, and thereupon thought worthy to be commented upon by that once walking library of our nation, Selden; his England's Heroical Epistles are more generally liked; and to such as love the pretty chat of nymphs and shepherds, his *Nymphs*, and other things of that nature, cannot be unpleasant."

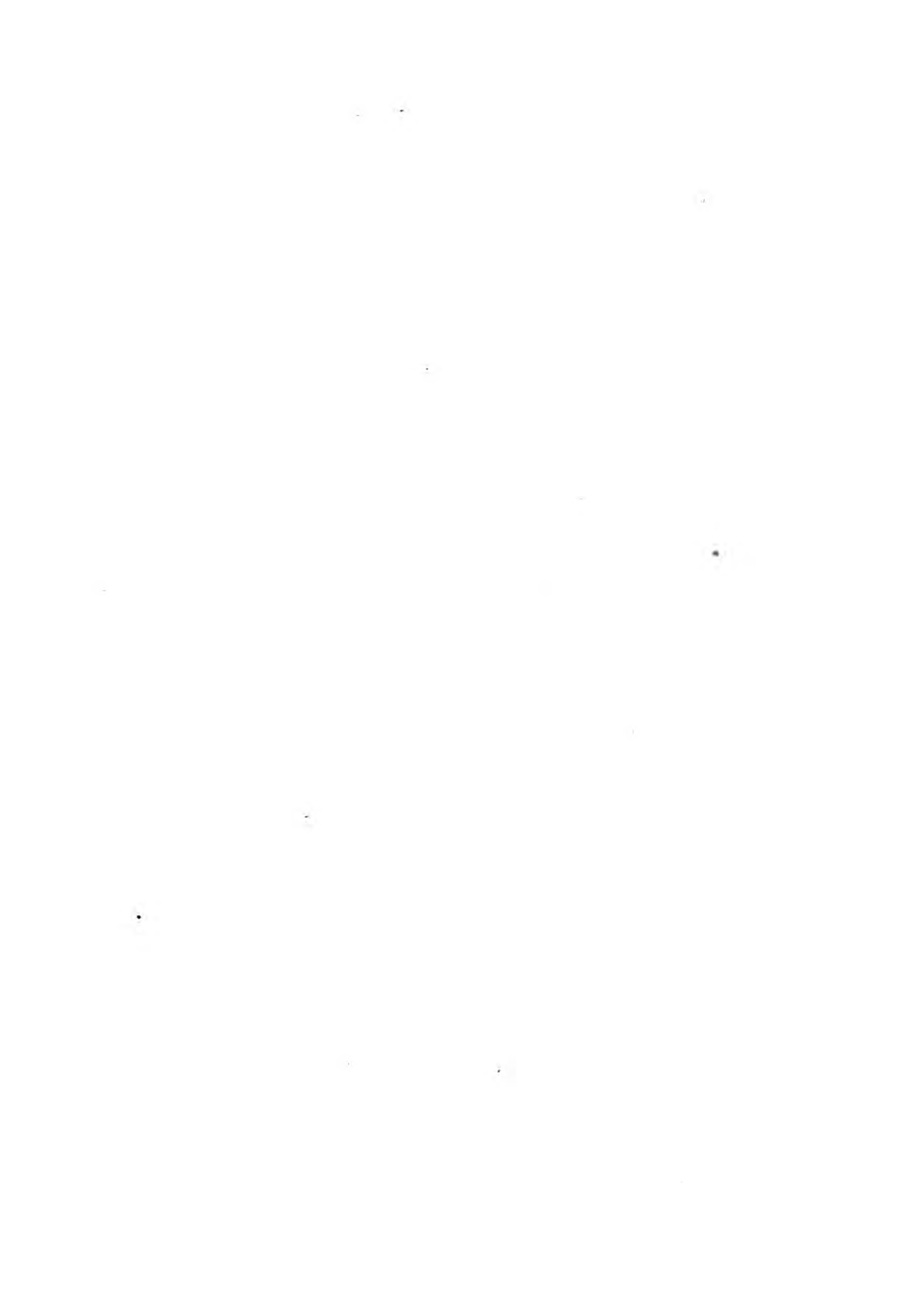
Notwithstanding this decline, an attempt was made to revive Drayton about half a century ago, by Oldys⁸, who obtained subscriptions for a folio edition of his works, and this, as already noticed, was followed by another in octavo. To each was prefixed an Historical Essay on the author's life and writings, almost a continued panegyric, but insisting chiefly on points unconnected with the character of genuine poetry. The deductions, indeed, must be many when we find that the highest praise is paid, not to the inventive powers of the poet, but to the fidelity of the historian, and the accuracy of the topographer. In these respects we are assured that Drayton may yet be consulted with advantage; we have the authority of Mr. Gough that the *Poly-olbion* contains many particulars which escaped Camden's notice; but when in this, or in his *Barons' Wars and Legends*, we look for the beauties of imagination, the search, although it does not always end in disappointment, must be allowed to be too painful for common curiosity. Drayton was certainly not destitute of genius. His *Pastorals* and his *Nymphidia* may be advanced in proof of a more than common share of original fancy, and his descriptions are sometimes very striking; but the pains he took to be accurate, and the historical terms of "the truth and nothing but the truth," which he imposed on his Muse, left no scope for imagination, and made invention appear almost a crime. As he wrote with such views and such a taste, it is impossible to blame the present age for not being easily reconciled to go through his works, unless as a task.

Mr. Headley labours, with more than usual effort, to convince us that the neglect into which Drayton has fallen is owing to the discouragement which his "voluminousness" presents, and which induces most readers to skim his works superficially, without going deep enough to be real judges of his excellence. But when this amiable critic descends to particulars, he affords, perhaps, a better apology for those superficial readers. After giving all the merit due to the *Poly-olbion*, which entirely resolves itself into the use

⁷ This old-fashioned kind of verse is very ably defended by an anonymous critic in *Gent. Mag.* Vol. LVI. p. 1059. C.

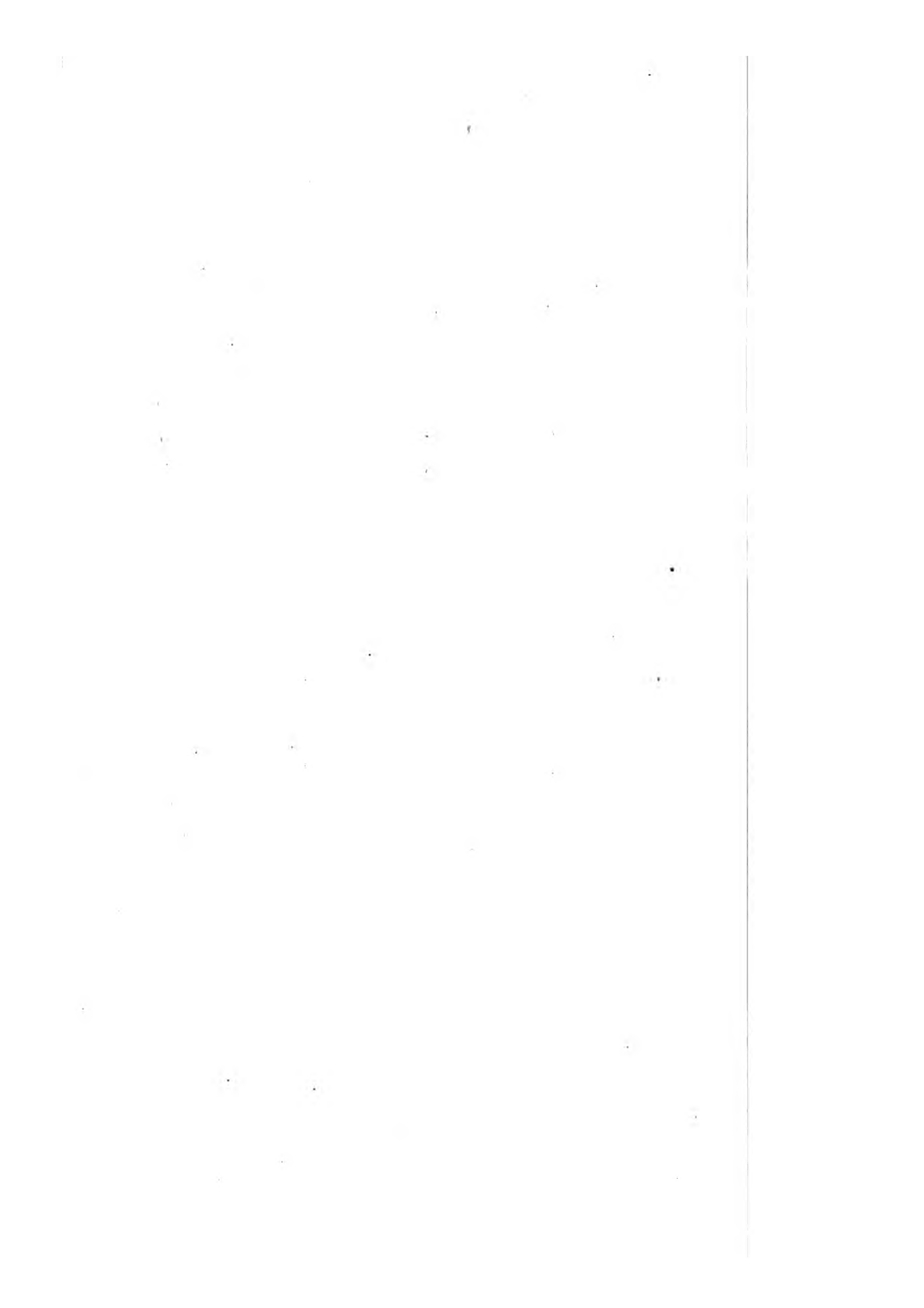
⁸ I know not on what authority this is asserted. Oldys certainly wrote his *Life* in the *Biog. Brit.* *C.

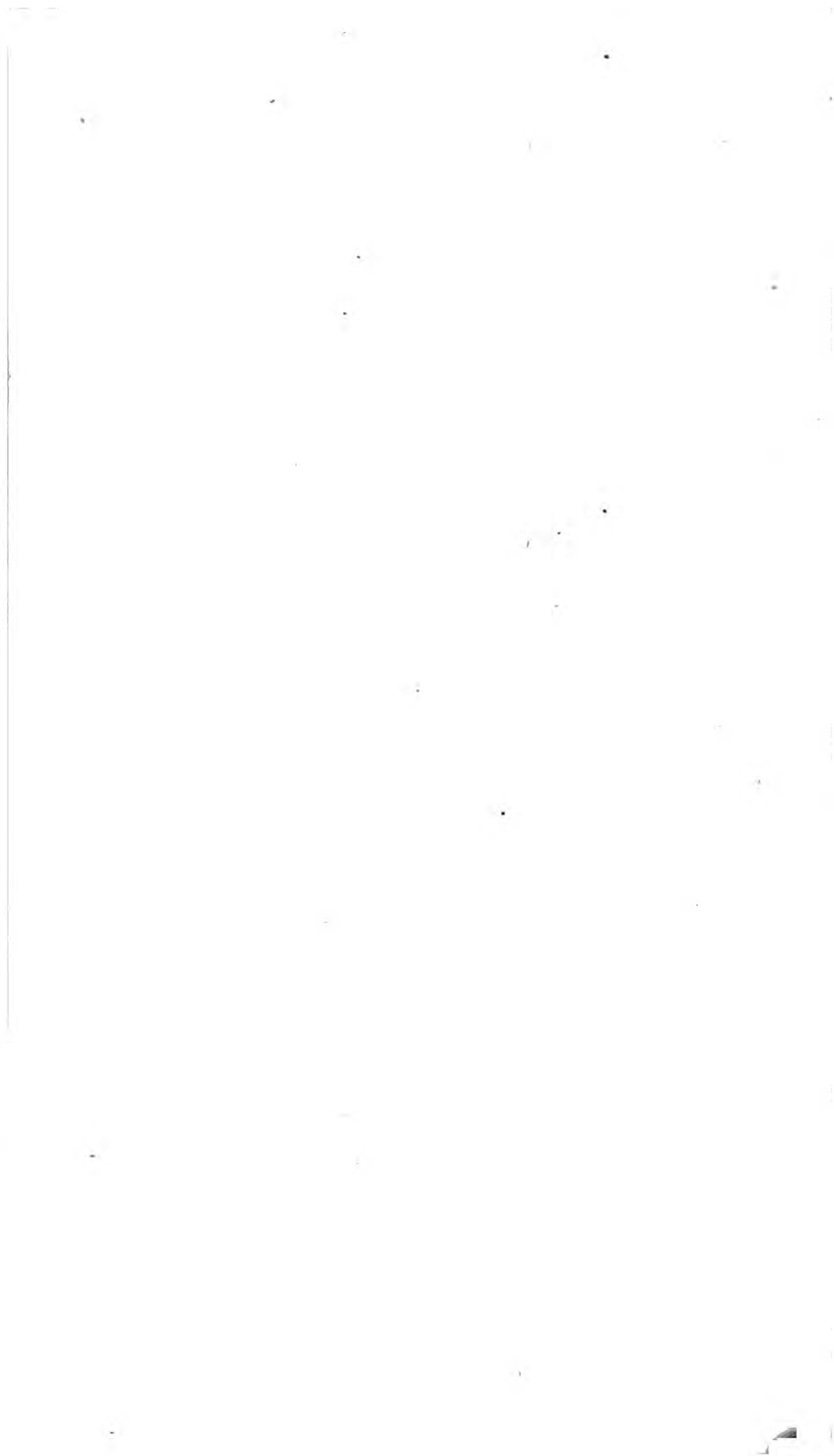




that may be made of it by antiquaries, he is compelled to allow, "that his continual personifications of woods, mountains, and rivers, are tedious; and, on the whole, we must be satisfied to read rather for information than pleasure. In the *Legends and Heroical Epistles*, both the time and events are properly limited; the attention is gratified, but not satiated. In the *Barons' Wars* too extensive a subject is opened, and the province of the historian too far trespassed upon. In order to be introduced to good incident and reflection, we must toil through dry facts, listen with patience to the development of uncertain primary causes, and at last, perhaps, are obliged to have recourse to a prose explanation in the notes." Mr. Headley, however, has proved that while Drayton's works were sinking into oblivion, his poetical successors availed themselves of many of his thoughts and expressions. Milton, Rochester, and Pope, are supposed to have been considerably indebted to him.

The learned and elegant editor of Phillips's *Theatrum* appears to me to have appreciated the poetry of Drayton at its full value, when, at the same time that he thinks his taste less correct and his ear less harmonious than Daniel's, he asserts that "his genius was more poetical, though it seems to have fitted him only for the didactic, and not for the bolder walks of poetry. The *Poly-olbion* is a work of amazing ingenuity; and a very large proportion exhibits a variety of beauties, which partake very strongly of the poetical character; but the perpetual personification is tedious, and more is attempted than is within the compass of poetry. The admiration in which the *Heroical Epistles* were once held, raises the astonishment of a more refined age. They exhibit some elegant images, and some musical lines. But in general they want passion and nature, are strangely flat and prosaic, and are intermixed with the coarsest vulgarities of ideas, sentiment, and expression. His *Barons' Wars* and other historical pieces are dull creeping narratives, with a great deal of the same faults, and none of the excellencies which ought to distinguish such compositions. His *Nymphidia* is light and airy, and possesses the features of true poetry."





THE
LIFE OF WILLIAM WARNER,

BY MR. CHALMERS.

As in the scanty notices of this poet's life, there is little either to excite or gratify curiosity, they are here given nearly in the words of their respective authors, and nearly in the order in which they are arranged by the judicious editor of the late edition of Phillips's *Theatrum Poetarum*.

William Warner, a good honest plain writer of moral rules and precepts, in that old fashioned kind of seven-footed verse, which yet sometimes is in use, though in different manner, that is to say, divided into two. He may be reckoned with several other writers of the same time: i. e. queen Elizabeth's reign; who, though inferior to Sidney, Spenser, Drayton, and Daniel, yet have been thought by some not unworthy to be remembered and quoted: namely, George Gascoigne, Th. Hudson, John Markham, Thomas Achely, John Weever, Ch. Middleton, George Turberville, Henry Constable, sir Edw. Dyer, Thomas Churchyard, Charles Fitzgeoffry¹.

William Warner was a native of Oxfordshire, born, as Mr. Ellis is inclined to think, about 1558, and probably published his first work at the age of twenty-five². He was educated at Oxford, but spent his time in the flowery paths of poetry, history, and romance, in preference to the dry pursuits of logic and philosophy, and departed without a degree to the metropolis, where he soon became distinguished among the minor poets. It is said, that in the latter part of his life he was retained in the service of Henry Carey, lord Hunsdon, to whom he dedicates his poem. Mr. Ritson adds to this account, that by his dedications to Henry and George, successive barons of Hunsdon, he appears to have been patronized by, or in some measure connected with, that family³.

In the fourth edition of Percy's *Ballads*, we find the following extract from the parish register of Amwell, in Hertfordshire, communicated by Mr. Hoole, although first given by Scott, in his poem of Amwell, edit. 1776:—

¹ Phillip's *Theatrum*. c.

² Ellis's *Specimens*, vol. u. p. 297. e.

³ Ritson's *Bibliographia Poetica*. e.

" 1608-1609—Master William Warner, a man of good yeares, & of honest reputation: by his profession an attorneye of the Common Pleas: author of Albion's England, diynge suddenly in the night in his bedde, without any former complaynt or sicknesse, on Thursday night, beeing the 9th day of March: was buried the Saturday following, and lyeth in the church at the corner, under the stone of Walter Ffader."

His *Albion's England* was his principal work, and was not only a favourite with his own age, but has received very high praise from the critics of our time. It is an epitome of the British history, and, according to the editor of the *Muses' Library*, Mrs. Cooper, is written with great learning, sense, and spirit: in some places fine to an extraordinary degree, of which an instance is given in the story of *Argentill and Curan*, a tale which, Mrs. Cooper adds, is full of beautiful incidents, in the romantic taste, extremely affecting, rich in ornament, wonderfully various in style, and, in short, one of the most beautiful pastorals she ever met with. To this opinion, high as it is, Dr. Percy thinks nothing can be objected, unless perhaps an affected quaintness in some of his expressions, and an indelicacy in some of his pastoral images.

Warner's contemporaries ranked him on a level with Spenser, and called him the *Homer and Virgil* of their age. But Dr. Percy remarks, that he rather resembled *Ovid*, whose *Metamorphoses* he seems to have taken for a model, having deduced a perpetual poem from the deluge down to the reign of queen Elizabeth, full of lively digressions and entertaining episodes. And though he is sometimes harsh, affected, and indelicate, he often displays a most charming and pathetic simplicity.

He was numbered in his own time among the refiners of the English tongue, which "by his pen was much enriched and gorgeously invested in rare ornaments and resplendent habiliments." Such is the opinion of *Meres* in his *Wit's Treasury*, but the progress Warner made in refining the English tongue, was certainly very inconsiderable. He owed his simplicity to his taste, but he had not the courage to abandon the uncouth and quaint expressions so peculiar to his time, and to show that wit and point might exist without them. His style, however, was then thought elegant, and such was his power of pleasing, that *Albion's England* superseded that very popular work *The Mirror of Magistrates*.

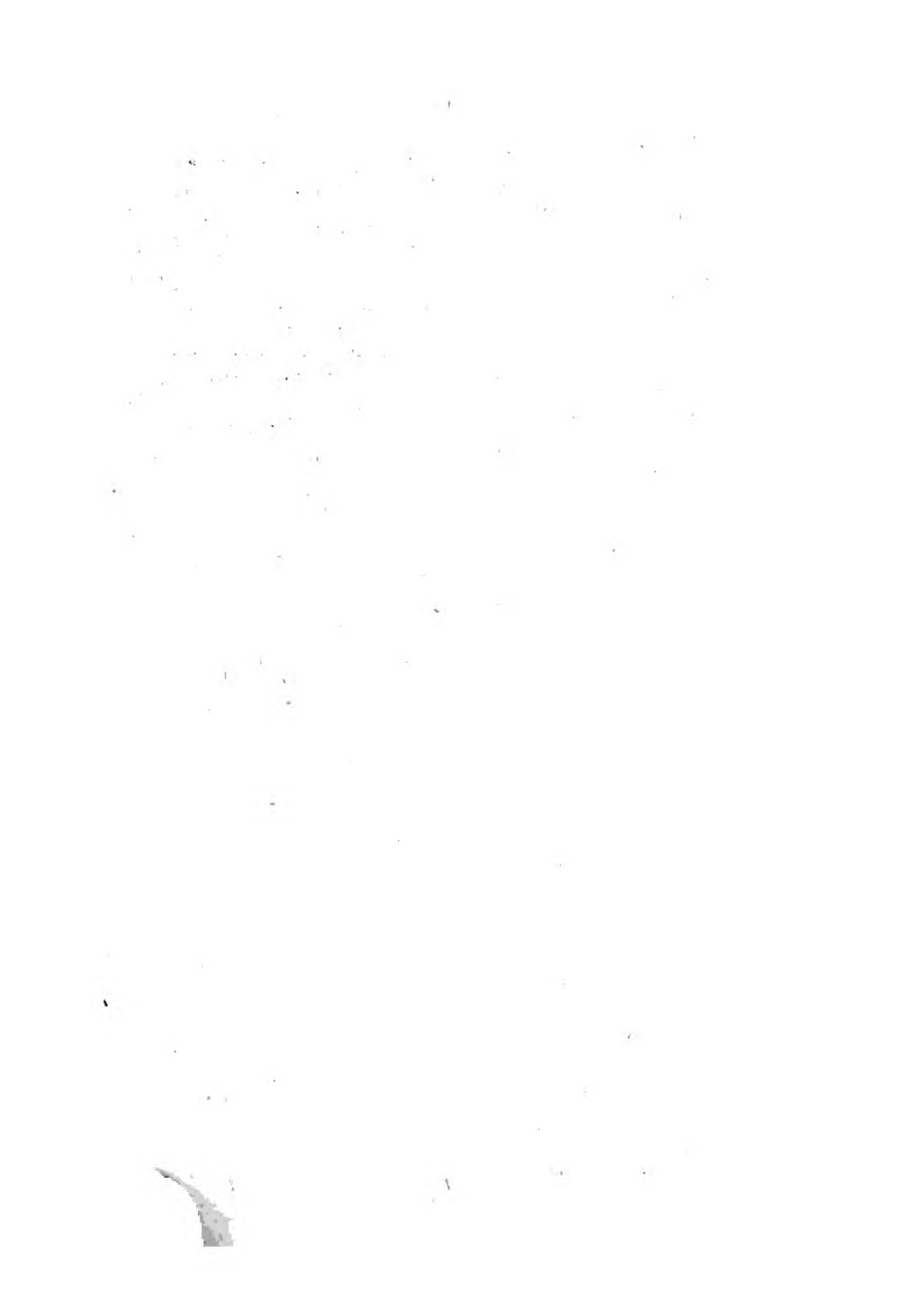
Warner was a writer of prose. His work was entitled, "*Syrinx, or a Seauenfold Historie, handled with varietie of pleasant & profitable, both commical & tragical argument,*" printed in 1597. *Warton* calls it a novel, or rather a suite of stories, much in the style of the adventures of *Heliodorus's Ethiopic Romance*. He appears also to have translated *Plautus's Menæchmi*, published in 1595.

Ritson informs us that, by an entry in the *Stationers' book*, on the 17th of October, 1586, "The wardens upon serche of Roger Ward's house, dyd find there in printing, a book in verse, intytled *England's Albion*, beinge in English, and not aucthorised to be printed, which he had ben forbidden to prynte, aswell by the L. archb. of *Canterburye*, as also by the said wardens at his own house;" and for as much as he had done this "contrary to the late decrees of the hon. court of *Starre-*



chamber, the said wardens seised three heaps of the said England's Albion." Why this work was prohibited, except for the indelicacies already noticed, is not very apparent. We know that bishop Hall's Satires incurred the displeasure of the guardians of the press at no long distance from this time.

Mr. Headley, who has extracted many beauties from Warner, says that his tales, though often tedious, and not unfrequently indelicate, abound with all the unaffected incident and artless ease of the best old ballads, without their cant and puerility. The pastoral pieces that occur are superior to all the eclogues in our language, those of Collins only excepted. He also quotes Drayton's lines on Warner, which the reader will find in his piece Of Poets and Poesy. In the present edition, the division of the lines adopted by Mr. Ellis in his specimens has been followed throughout the whole.





C. Warren del.

^s List of the different engravings from the Chandofan Shak-
speare :

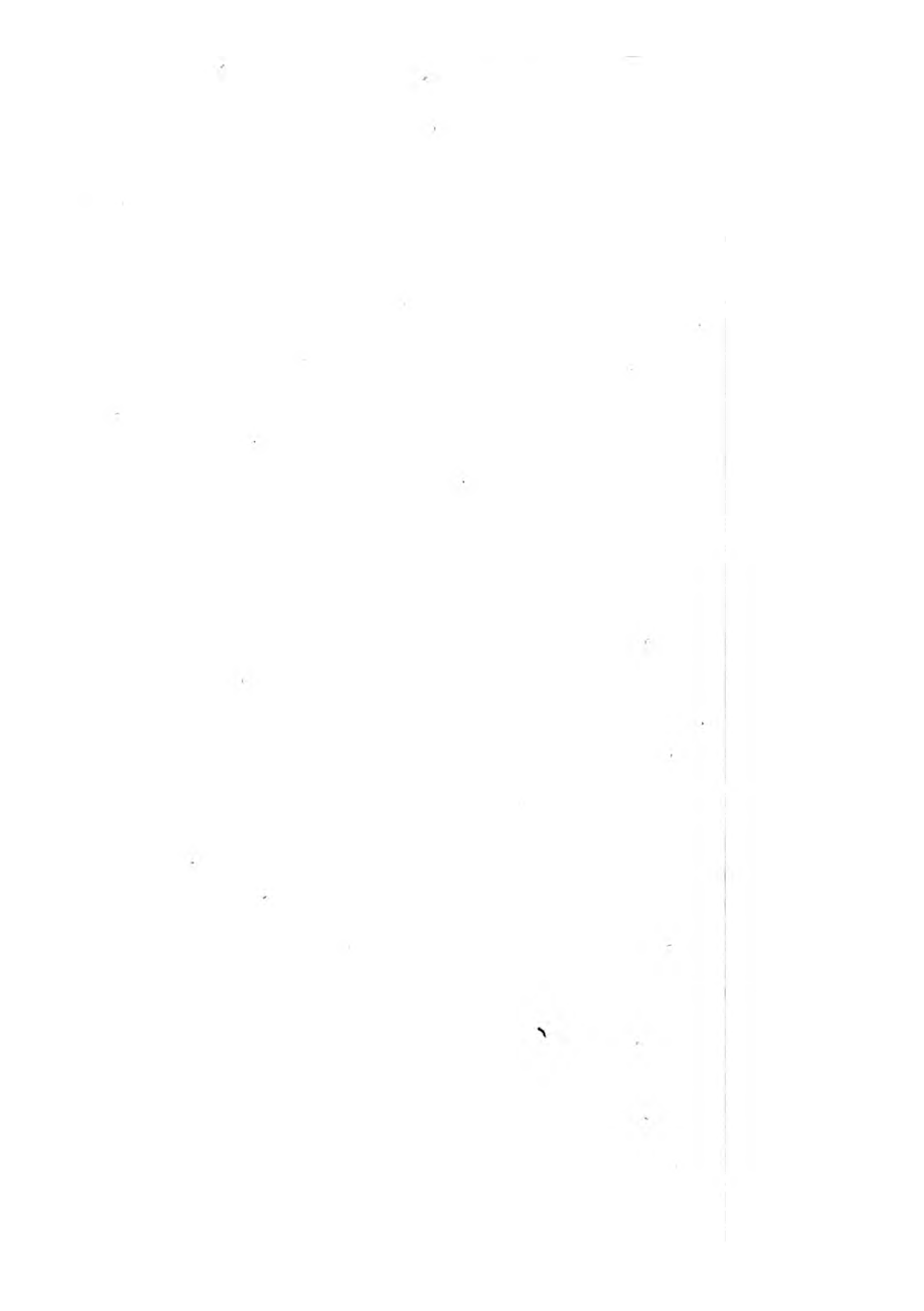
By Vandergucht, to Rowe's edit.	1709.
Vertue, half sheet, Set of Poets	1719.
Do. small oval, Jacob's Lives	1719.
Do. to Warburton's 8vo.	1747.
Duchange, 8vo. to Theobald's	1733.
Gravelot, half sheet, Hanmer's edit.	1744.
Houbraken, half sheet, Birch's Heads	1747.
Millar, small oval, Capell's Shakspeare	1766.
Hall, 8vo. Reed's edit.	1785.
Cook, 8vo. Bell's edit.	1788.
Knight, 8vo. Mr. Malone's edit.	1790.
Harding, 8vo. Set of Prints to Shakspeare	1793.

No two of these Portraits are alike ; nor does any one of them
bear the slightest resemblance to its wretched original. G. S.



W. SHAKSPEARE.

Engraved by J. Goffe.
Published by J. Nichols and Son, &c. Nov. 30, 1810.



THE
LIFE OF SHAKSPEARE,

BY MR. CHALMERS.

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, in Warwickshire, on the 23d day of April, 1564. Of the rank of his family it is not easy to form an opinion. Mr. Rowe says, that by the register and certain public writings relating to Stratford, it appears that his ancestors were "of good figure and fashion" in that town, and are mentioned as "gentlemen," an epithet which was certainly more determinate than at present, when it has become an unlimited phrase of courtesy. His father, John Shakspeare, was a considerable dealer in wool, and had been an officer and bailiff (probably high-bailiff or mayor) of the body corporate of Stratford. He held also the office of justice of the peace, and at one time, it is said, possessed lands and tenements to the amount of five hundred pounds, the reward of his grandfather's faithful and approved services to king Henry the Seventh. This, however, has been asserted upon very doubtful authority. Mr. Malone thinks "it is highly probable that he distinguished himself in Bosworth Field on the side of king Henry, and that he was rewarded for his military services by the bounty of that parsimonious prince, though not with a grant of lands. No such grant appears in the chapel of the Rolls, from the beginning to the end of Henry's reign." But whatever may have been his former wealth, it appears to have been greatly reduced in the latter part of his life, as we find, from the books of the corporation, that in 1579 he was excused the trifling weekly tax of four-pence levied on all the aldermen; and that in 1586 another alderman was appointed in his room, in consequence of his declining to attend on the business of that office. It is even said by Aubrey¹, a man sufficiently accurate in facts, although credulous in superstitious narratives and traditions, that he followed for some time the occupation of a butcher, which Mr. Malone thinks not inconsistent with probability. It must have been, however, at this time, no inconsiderable addition to his difficulties that he had a family of ten children. His wife was the daughter and heiress of Robert Arden of Wellingcote, in the county of Warwick, who is styled, "a gentleman of worship." The family of Arden is very ancient, Robert Arden of Bromich, esq. being in the list of the gentry of this county,

¹ MSS. Aubrey, Mus. Ashmol. Oxon. examined by Mr. Malone.

returned by the commissioners in the twelfth year of king Henry the Sixth, anno Domini 1433. Edward Arden was sheriff of the county in 1568. The woodland part of this county was anciently called *Ardern*, afterwards softened to *Arden*: and hence the name.

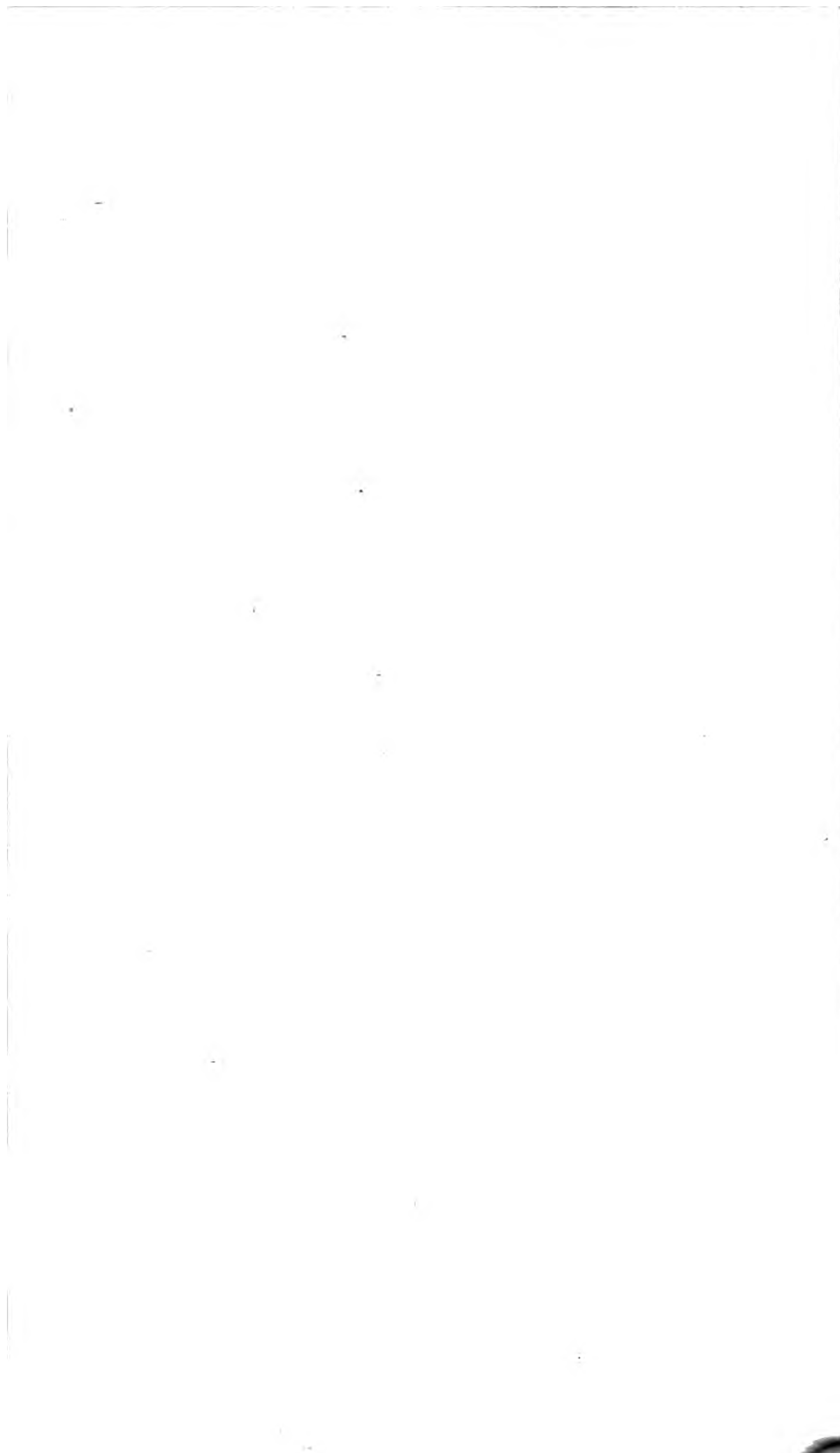
Our illustrious poet was the eldest son, and received his early education, whether narrow or liberal, at a free-school, probably that founded at Stratford; but from this he appears to have been soon removed, and placed, according to Mr. Malone's opinion, in the office of some country attorney, or the seneschal of some manor court, where it is highly probable he picked up those technical law phrases that so frequently occur in his plays, and could not have been in common use unless among professional men. Mr. Capell conjectures that his early marriage prevented his being sent to some university. It appears, however, as Dr. Farmer observes, that his early life was incompatible with a course of education, and it is certain that "his contemporaries, friends and foes, nay, and himself likewise, agree in his want of what is usually termed literature." It is, indeed, a strong argument in favour of Shakspeare's illiterature, that it was maintained by all his contemporaries, many of whom have left upon record every merit they could bestow on him; and by his successors, who lived nearest to his time, when "his memory was green;" and that it has been denied only by Gildon, Sewell, and others, down to Upton, who could have no means of ascertaining the truth.

In his eighteenth year, or perhaps a little sooner, he married Anne Hathaway, who was eight years older than himself, the daughter of one Hathaway, who is said to have been a substantial yeoman in the neighbourhood of Stratford. Of his domestic economy, or professional occupation, at this time, we have no information, but it would appear that both were in a considerable degree neglected by his associating with a gang of deer-stealers. Being detected with them in robbing the park of sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecote, near Stratford, he was so rigorously prosecuted by that gentleman as to be obliged to leave his family and business, and take shelter in London. Sir Thomas, on this occasion, is said to have been exasperated by a ballad Shakspeare wrote, probably his first essay in poetry, of which the following stanza was communicated to Mr. Oldys:

" A parliemente member, a justice of peace,
At home a poor scare-crowe, at London an asse,
If lowsie is Lucy, as some volke miscalle it,
Then Lucy is lowsie whatever befall it:
 He thinks himself greate,
 Yet an asse in his state
We allowe by his ears but with asses to mate.
If Lucy is lowsie, as some volke miscalle it,
Sing lowsie Lucy, whatever befall it."

These lines, it must be confessed, do no great honour to our poet, and probably were unjust, for although some of his admirers have recorded sir Thomas as a "vain, weak, and vindictive magistrate," he was certainly exerting no very violent act of oppression, in protecting his property against a man who was degrading the commonest rank of life, and had at this time bespoke no indulgence by superior talents. The ballad, however, must have made some noise at sir Thomas's expense, as the author took care it should be affixed to his park-gates, and liberally circulated among his neighbours.

On his arrival in London, which was probably in 1586, when he was twenty-two





years old, he is said to have made his first acquaintance in the play-house, to which idleness or taste may have directed him, and where his necessities, if tradition may be credited, obliged him to accept the office of call-boy, or prompter's attendant. This is a menial whose employment it is to give the performers notice to be ready to enter, as often as the business of the play requires their appearance on the stage. Pope, however, relates a story, communicated to him by Rowe, but which Rowe did not think deserving of a place in the life he wrote, that must a little retard the advancement of our poet to the office just mentioned. According to this story, Shakspeare's first employment was to wait at the door of the play-house, and hold the horses of those who had no servants, that they might be ready after the performance. But, "I cannot," says his acute commentator, Mr. Steevens, "discuss this anecdote without observing that it seems to want every mark of probability. Though Shakspeare quitted Stratford on account of a juvenile irregularity, we have no reason to suppose that he had forfeited the protection of his father, who was engaged in a lucrative business, or the love of his wife, who had already brought him two children, and was herself the daughter of a substantial yeoman. It is unlikely, therefore, when he was beyond the reach of his prosecutor, that he should conceal his plan of life, or place of residence, from those who, if he found himself distressed, could not fail to afford him such supplies as would have set him above the necessity of *holding horses* for subsistence. Mr. Malone has remarked in his "Attempt to ascertain the Order in which the Plays of Shakspeare were written," that he might have found an easy introduction to the stage; for Thomas Green, a celebrated comedian of that period, was his townsman, and perhaps his relation. The genius of our author prompted him to write poetry; his connection with a player might have given his productions a dramatic turn; or his own sagacity might have taught him that fame was not incompatible with profit, and that the theatre was an avenue to both. That it was once the general custom to ride on horse-back to the play, I am likewise yet to learn. The most popular of the theatres were on the Bank Side; and we are told by the satirical pamphleteers of that time, that the usual mode of conveyance to these places of amusement was by water, but not a single writer so much as hints at the custom of riding to them, or at the practice of having horses held during the hours of exhibition. Some allusion to this usage, (if it had existed) must, I think, have been discovered in the course of our researches after contemporary fashions. Let it be remembered too, that we receive this tale on no higher authority than that of Cibber's *Lives of the Poets*, vol. i. p. 130. Sir William Davenant told it to Mr. Betterton, who communicated it to Mr. Rowe, who, according to Dr. Johnson, related it to Mr. Pope." Mr. Malone concurs in opinion that this story stands on a very slender foundation, while he differs from Mr. Steevens as to the fact of gentlemen going to the theatre on horseback. With respect likewise to Shakspeare's father being "engaged in a lucrative business," we may remark that this could not have been the case at the time our author came to London, if the preceding dates be correct. He is said to have arrived in London in 1586, the year in which his father resigned the office of alderman, unless indeed we are permitted to conjecture that his resignation was not the consequence of his necessities.

But in whatever situation he was first employed at the theatre, he appears to have soon discovered those talents which afterwards made him

"Th' applause! delight! the wonder of our stage."

Some distinction he probably first acquired as an actor, although Mr. Rowe has not been able to discover any character in which he appeared to more advantage than that of the ghost in Hamlet. The instructions given to the player in that tragedy, and other passages of his works, show an intimate acquaintance with the skill of acting, and such as is scarcely surpassed in our own days. He appears to have studied nature in acting as much as in writing. But all this might have been mere theory. Mr. Malone is of opinion he was no great actor. The distinction, however, which he obtained as an actor could only be in his own plays, in which he would be assisted by the novel appearance of author and actor combined. Before his time, it does not appear that any actor of genius could appear to advantage in the wretched pieces represented on the stage.

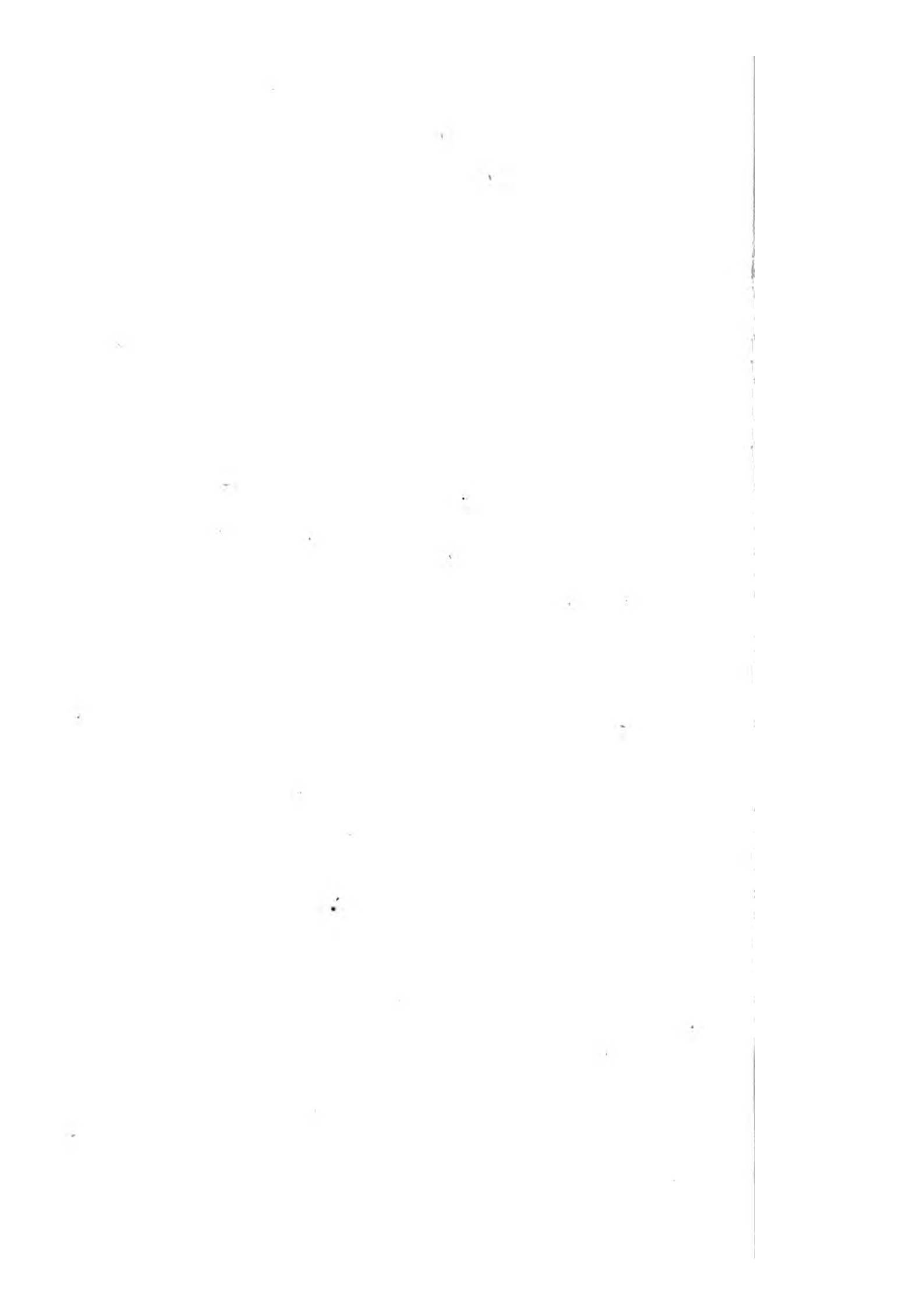
Mr. Rowe regrets that he cannot inform us which was the first play he wrote. More skilful research has since found that *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Richard II.* and *III.* were printed in 1597, when he was thirty-three years old; there is also some reason to think that he commenced a dramatic writer in 1592, and Mr. Malone even places his first play, *First Part of Henry VI.* in 1589². His plays, however, must have been not only popular, but approved by persons of the higher order, as we are certain that he enjoyed the gracious favour of queen Elizabeth, who was very fond of the stage; and the particular and affectionate patronage of the earl of Southampton, to whom he dedicated his poems of *Venus and Adonis* and his *Rape of Lucrece*. On sir William Davenant's authority, it has been asserted that this nobleman at one time gave him a thousand pounds to enable him to complete a purchase. At the conclusion of the advertisement prefixed to Lintot's edition of *Shakspeare's Poems*, it is said, "That most learned prince and great patron of learning, king James the First, was pleased with his own hand to write an amicable letter to Mr. Shakspeare: which letter, though now lost, remained long in the hands of sir William D'Avenant, as a credible person now living can testify." Dr. Farmer, with great probability, supposes that this letter was written by king James in return for the compliment paid to him in *Macbeth*. The relater of the anecdote was Sheffield, duke of Buckingham³. These brief notices, meagre as they are, may show that our author enjoyed high favour in his day. Whatever we may think of king James as a "learned prince," his patronage, as well as that of his predecessor, was sufficient to give celebrity to the founder of a new stage. It may be added that his uncommon merit, his candour, and good-nature are supposed to have procured him the admiration and acquaintance of every person distinguished for such qualities. It is not difficult, indeed, to suppose that Shakspeare was a man of humour and a social companion, and probably excelled in that species of minor wit not ill adapted to conversation, of which it could have been wished he had been more sparing in his writings.

How long he acted has not been discovered, but he continued to write till the year 1614. During his dramatic career he acquired a property in the theatre⁴ which he must have disposed of when he retired, as no mention of it occurs in his will. His connection with Ben Jonson has been variously related. It is said that when Jonson was

² See the lists of Mr. Malone and Mr. George Chalmers.

³ Note, by Mr. Malone, to *Additional Anecdotes of William Shakspeare*. C.

⁴ In 1603, Shakspeare and several others obtained a licence from king James to exhibit comedies, tragedies, histories, &c. at the Globe Theatre and elsewhere. C.



unknown to the world, he offered a play to the theatre, which was rejected after a very careless perusal, but that Shakspeare having accidentally cast his eye on it, conceived a favourable opinion of it, and afterwards recommended Jonson and his writings to the public. For this candour he was repaid by Jonson, when the latter became a poet of note, with an envious disrespect. Jonson acquired reputation by the variety of his pieces, and endeavoured to arrogate the supremacy in dramatic genius. Like a French critic, he insinuated Shakspeare's incorrectness, his careless manner of writing, and his want of judgment; and, as he was a remarkable slow writer himself, he could not endure the praise frequently bestowed on Shakspeare of seldom altering or blotting out what he had written. Mr. Malone says, that "not long after the year 1600 a coolness arose between Shakspeare and him, which, however he may talk of his almost idolatrous affection, produced on his part, from that time to the death of our author, and for many years afterwards, much clumsy sarcasm, and many malevolent reflections." But from these, which are the commonly received opinions on this subject, Dr. Farmer is inclined to depart, and to think Jonson's hostility to Shakspeare absolutely groundless; so uncertain is every circumstance we attempt to recover of our great poet's life. Jonson had only one advantage over Shakspeare, that of superior learning, which might in certain situations be of some importance, but could never promote his rivalry with a man who attained the highest excellence without it. Nor will Shakspeare suffer by its being known that all the dramatic poets before he appeared were scholars. Greene, Lodge, Peele, Marlowe, Nashe, Lily, and Kyd, had all, says Mr. Malone, a regular university education, and, as scholars in our universities, frequently composed and acted plays on historical subjects¹.

The latter part of Shakspeare's life was spent in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends. He had accumulated considerable property, which Gildon (in his *Letters and Essays*, 1694) stated to amount to three hundred pounds per annum, a sum at least equal to one thousand pounds in our days; but Mr. Malone doubts whether all his property amounted to much more than two hundred pounds per annum, which yet was a considerable fortune in those times, and it is supposed that he might have derived two hundred pounds per annum from the theatre while he continued to act.

He retired, some years before his death, to a house in Stratford, of which it has been thought important to give the history. It was built by sir Hugh Clopton, a younger brother of an ancient family in that neighbourhood. Sir Hugh was sheriff of London in the reign of Richard III., and lord mayor in the reign of Henry VII. By his will he bequeathed to his elder brother's son his manor of Clopton, &c. and his house by the name of the *Great House* in Stratford. A good part of the estate was in possession of Edward Clopton, esq. and sir Hugh Clopton, knt. in 1733. The principal estate had been sold out of the Clopton family for above a century at the time when Shakspeare became the purchaser, who having repaired and modelled it to his own mind, changed the name to *New Place*, which the mansion-house, afterwards erected, in the room of the poet's house, retained for many years. The house, and lands belonging to it, continued in the possession of Shakspeare's descendants to the time of the Restoration, when they were repurchased

¹ This was the practice in Milton's days. "One of his objections to academical education, as it was then conducted, is, that men designed for orders in the church were permitted to act plays, &c." Johnson's *Life of Milton*. C.

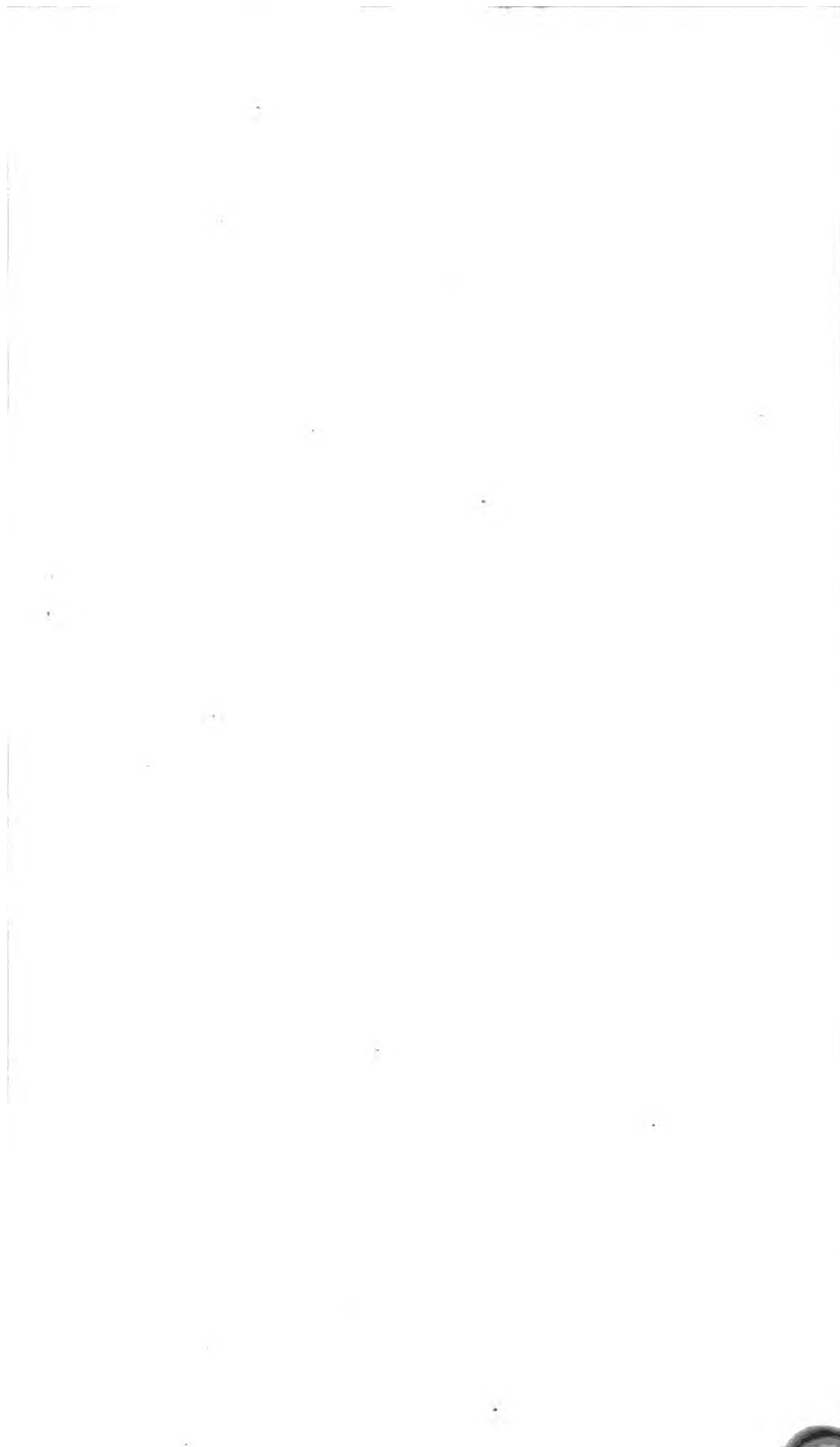
by the Clopton family. Here in May 1742, when Mr. Garrick, Mr. Macklin, and Mr. Delane visited Stratford, they were hospitably entertained under Shakspeare's mulberry tree, by sir Hugh Clopton. He was a barrister at law, was knighted by king George I. and died in the 80th year of his age, in Dec. 1751. His executor, about the year 1752, sold New Place to the Rev. Mr. Gastrell, a man of large fortune, who resided in it but a few years, in consequence of a disagreement with the inhabitants of Stratford. As he resided part of the year at Lichfield, he thought he was assessed too highly in the monthly rate towards the maintenance of the poor, but being very properly compelled by the magistrates of Stratford to pay the whole of what was levied on him, on the principle that his house was occupied by his servants in his absence, he peevishly declared, that *that* house should never be assessed again; and soon afterwards pulled it down, sold the materials, and left the town. He had some time before cut down Shakspeare's mulberry tree⁶, to save himself the trouble of shewing it to those whose admiration of our great poet led them to visit the classic ground on which it stood. That Shakspeare planted this tree appears to be sufficiently authenticated. Where New Place stood is now a garden. Before concluding this history, it may be necessary to mention that the poet's house was once honoured by the temporary residence of Henrietta Maria, queen to Charles I. Theobald has given an inaccurate account of this, as if she had been obliged to take refuge in Stratford from the rebels, which was not the case. She marched from Newark, June 16, 1643, and entered Stratford triumphantly, about the 23d of the same month, at the head of three thousand foot and one thousand five hundred horse, with one hundred and fifty waggons, and a train of artillery. Here she was met by prince Rupert, accompanied by a large body of troops. She resided about three weeks at our poet's house, which was then possessed by his grand daughter, Mrs. Nash, and her husband.

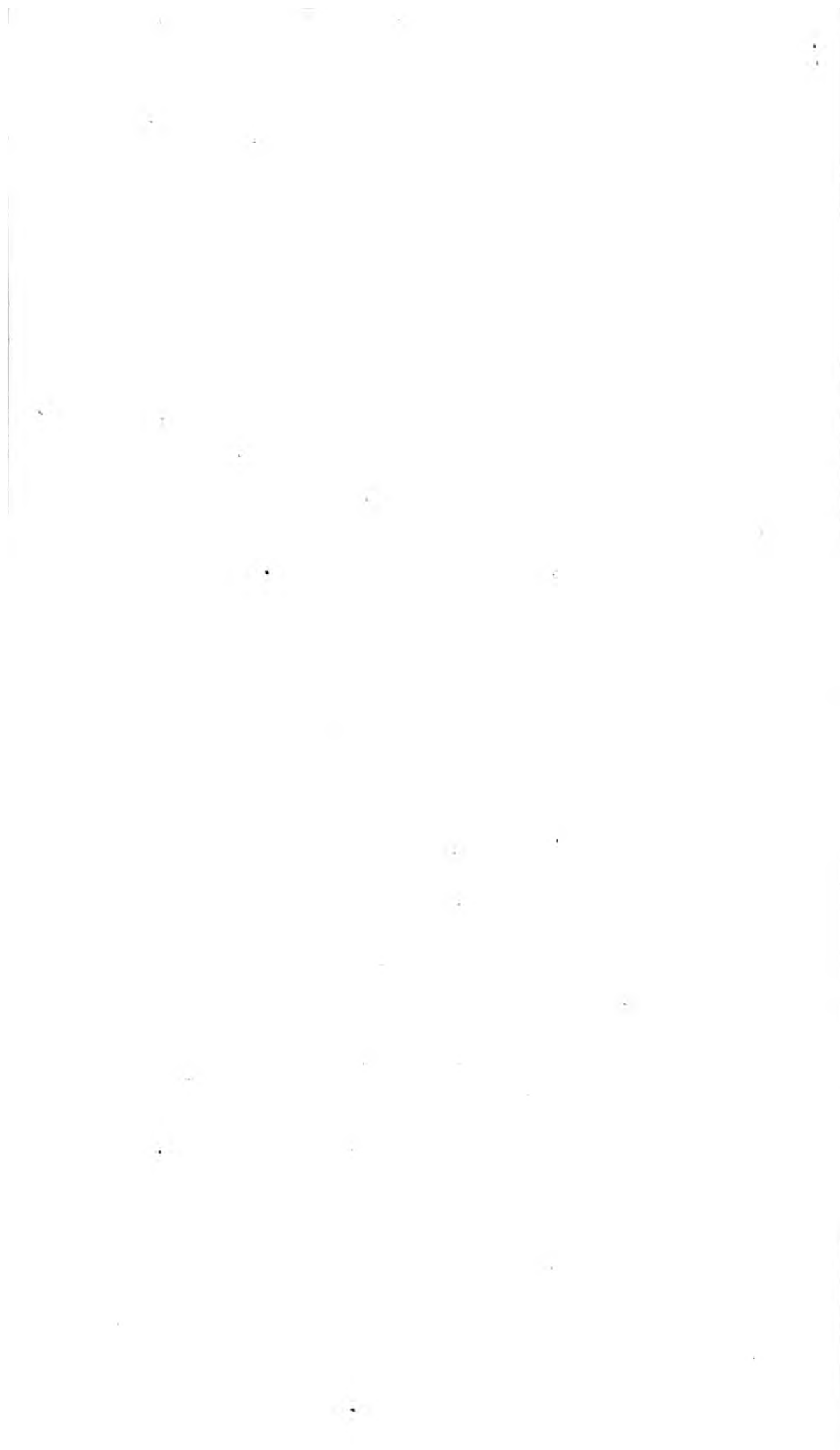
During Shakspeare's abode in this house, his pleasurable wit, and good nature, says Mr. Rowe, engaged him the acquaintance and entitled him to the friendship of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood. Among these, Mr. Rowe tells a traditional story of a miser, or usurer, named Combe, who, in conversation with Shakspeare, said he fancied the poet intended to write his epitaph if he should survive him, and desired to know what he meant to say. On this Shakspeare gave him the following, probably extempore.

" Ten in the hundred lies here ingrav'd,
 'T is a hundred to ten his soul is not sav'd.
 If any man ask, who lies in this tombe?
 ' Oh! ho!' quoth the Devil, ' 't is my John-a-Combe.'"

The sharpness of the satire is said to have stung the man so severely that he never forgave it. These lines, however, or some which nearly resemble them, appeared in various collections both before and after the time they were said to have been composed,

⁶ " As the curiosity of this house and tree brought much fame, and more company and profit to the town, a certain man, on some disgust, has pulled the house down, so as not to leave one stone upon another, and cut down the tree, and piled it as a stack of firewood, to the great vexation, loss, and disappointment of the inhabitants; however, an honest silversmith bought the whole stack of wood, and makes many odd things of this wood for the curious." Letter in Annual Register, 1760. Of Mr. Gastrell and his lady, see Boswell's Life of Dr. Johnson, vol. ii. 490; iii. 443. C.





and the inquiries of Mr. Steevens and Mr. Malone satisfactorily prove that the whole story is a fabrication. Betterton is said to have heard it when he visited Warwickshire on purpose to collect anecdotes of our poet, and probably thought it of too much importance to be nicely examined. We know not whether it be worth adding of a story which we have rejected, that a usurer in Shakspeare's time did not mean one who took exorbitant, but any interest or usance for money, and that ten in the hundred, or ten per cent. was then the ordinary interest of money. It is of more consequence, however, to record the opinion of Mr. Malone, that Shakspeare, during his retirement, wrote the play of Twelfth Night.

He died on his birth-day, Tuesday, April 23, 1616, when he had exactly completed his fifty-second year⁷, and was buried on the north side of the chancel, in the great church at Stratford, where a monument is placed in the wall, on which he is represented under an arch, in a sitting posture, a cushion spread before him, with a pen in his right hand, and his left rested on a scroll of paper. The following Latin distich is engraved under the cushion.

Judicio Pylium, genio Socratem, arte Maronem,
Terra tegit, populus mæret, Olympus habet.

"The first syllable in Socratem," says Mr. Steevens, "is here made short, which cannot be allowed. Perhaps we should read Sophoclem. Shakspeare is then appositely compared with a dramatic author among the ancients; but still it should be remembered that the eulogium is lessened while the metre is reformed; and it is well known that some of our early writers of Latin poetry were uncommonly negligent in their prosody, especially in proper names. The thought of this distich, as Mr. Tollet observes, might have been taken from The Faëry Queene of Spenser, b. ii. c. ix. st. 48, and c. x. st. 3.

"To this Latin inscription on Shakspeare may be added the lines which are found underneath it on his monument:

"Stay, passenger, why dost thou go so fast?
Read, if thou canst, whom envious Death hath plac'd
Within this monument; Shakspeare, with whom
Quick Nature dy'd; whose name doth deck the tomb
Far more than cost; since all that he hath writ
Leaves living art but page to serve his wit."

Obiit An^o Dni. 1616. æt. 53, die 23 Apri.

"It appears from the verses of Leonard Digges, that our author's monument was erected before the year 1623. It has been engraved by Vertue, and done in mezzotinto by Miller."

On his grave-stone underneath are these lines, in an uncouth mixture of small and capital letters.

"Good Frend for Iesus SAKE forbear
To ditte T-E Dust EnclōAsed HERe
Blese be T-E Man T spares T-E's Stones
And curst be He T moves my bones."

⁷ The only notice we have of his person is from Aubrey, who says, "He was a handsome well-shaped man," and adds, "verie good company, and of a very ready, and pleasant and smooth witt." C.

It is uncertain whether this request and imprecation were written by Shakspeare, or by one of his friends. They probably allude to the custom of removing skeletons after a certain time and depositing them in charnel-houses, and similar execrations are found in many ancient Latin epitaphs.

We have no account of the malady which, at no very advanced age, closed the life and labours of this unrivalled and incomparable genius.

His family consisted of two daughters, and a son named Hamnet, who died in 1596, in the twelfth year of his age. Susannah, the eldest daughter, and her father's favourite, was married to Dr. John Hall, a physician, who died Nov. 1635, aged 60. Mrs. Hall died July 11, 1649, aged 66. They left only one child, Elizabeth, born 1607-8, and married April 22, 1626, to Thomas Nash, esq. who died in 1647, and afterwards to sir John Barnard of Abington in Northamptonshire, but died without issue by either husband. Judith, Shakspeare's youngest daughter, was married to a Mr. Thomas Quiney, and died Feb. 1661-62 in her 77th year. By Mr. Quiney she had three sons, Shakspeare, Richard, and Thomas, who all died unmarried. Sir Hugh Clopton, who was born two years after the death of lady Barnard, which happened in 1669-70, related to Mr. Macklin, in 1742, an old tradition, that she had carried away with her from Stratford many of her grandfather's papers. On the death of sir John Barnard, Mr. Malone thinks, these must have fallen into the hands of Mr. Edward Bagley, lady Barnard's executor, and if any descendant of that gentleman be now living, in his custody they probably remain. To this account of Shakspeare's family, we have now to add, that among Oldys's papers is another traditional story of his having been the father of sir William Davenant. Oldys's relation is thus given.

"If tradition may be trusted, Shakspeare often baited at the Crown Inn or Tavern in Oxford, in his journey to and from London. The landlady was a woman of great beauty and sprightly wit, and her husband, Mr. John Davenant, (afterwards mayor of that city) a grave melancholy man; who, as well as his wife, used much to delight in Shakspeare's pleasant company. Their son, young Will. Davenant (afterwards sir William) was then a little school-boy in the town, of about seven or eight years old, and so fond also of Shakspeare, that whenever he heard of his arrival, he would fly from school to see him. One day an old townsman observing the boy running homeward almost out of breath, asked him whither he was posting in that heat and hurry. He answered, to see his *god*-father Shakspeare. 'There's a good boy,' said the other, 'but have a care that you do n't take *God's* name in vain.' This story Mr. Pope told me at the earl of Oxford's table, upon occasion of some discourse which arose about Shakspeare's monument then newly erected in Westminster Abbey."

This story appears to have originated with Anthony Wood, and it has been thought a presumption of its being true that, after careful examination, Mr. Thomas Warton was inclined to believe it. Mr. Steevens, however, treats it with the utmost contempt, but does not perhaps argue with his usual attention to experience when he brings sir William Davenant's "heavy, vulgar, unmeaning face" as a proof that he could not be Shakspeare's son.

In the year 1741, a monument was erected to our poet in Westminster Abbey, by the direction of the earl of Burlington, Dr. Mead, Mr. Pope, and Mr. Martyn. It was the work of Scheemaker, (who received three hundred pounds for it) after a design of Kent, and was opened in January of that year. The performers of each of the London theatres gave a benefit to defray the expenses, and the dean and chapter of Westminster

took nothing for the ground. The money received by the performance at Drury Lane theatre amounted to above two hundred pounds, but the receipts at Covent Garden did not exceed one hundred pounds.

From these imperfect notices, which are all we have been able to collect from the labours of his biographers and commentators, our readers will perceive that less is known of Shakspeare than of almost any writer who has been considered as an object of laudable curiosity. Nothing could be more highly gratifying than an account of the early studies of this wonderful man, the progress of his pen, his moral and social qualities, his friendships, his failings, and whatever else constitutes personal history. But on all these topics his contemporaries and his immediate successors have been equally silent, and if aught can hereafter be discovered, it must be by exploring sources which have hitherto escaped the anxious researches of those who have devoted their whole lives, and their most vigorous talents, to revive his memory and illustrate his writings. In the sketch we have given, if the dates of his birth and death be excepted, what is there on which the reader can depend, or for which, if he contend eagerly, he may not be involved in controversy, and perplexed with contradictory opinions and authorities?

It is usually said that the life of an author can be little else than a history of his works; but this opinion is liable to many exceptions. If an author, indeed, has passed his days in retirement, his life can afford little more variety than that of any other man who has lived in retirement; but if, as is generally the case with writers of great celebrity, he has acquired a pre-eminence over his contemporaries, if he has excited rival contentions, and defeated the attacks of criticism or of malignity, or if he has plunged into the controversies of his age, and performed the part either of a tyrant, or a hero in literature, his history may be rendered as interesting as that of any other public character. But whatever weight may be allowed to this remark, the decision will not be of much consequence in the case of Shakspeare. Unfortunately we know as little of the progress of his writings as of his personal history. The industry of his illustrators for the last thirty years has been such as probably never was surpassed in the annals of literary investigation, yet so far are we from information of the conclusive or satisfactory kind, that even the order in which his plays were written rests principally on conjecture, and of some plays usually printed among his works, it is not yet determined whether he wrote the whole, or any part.

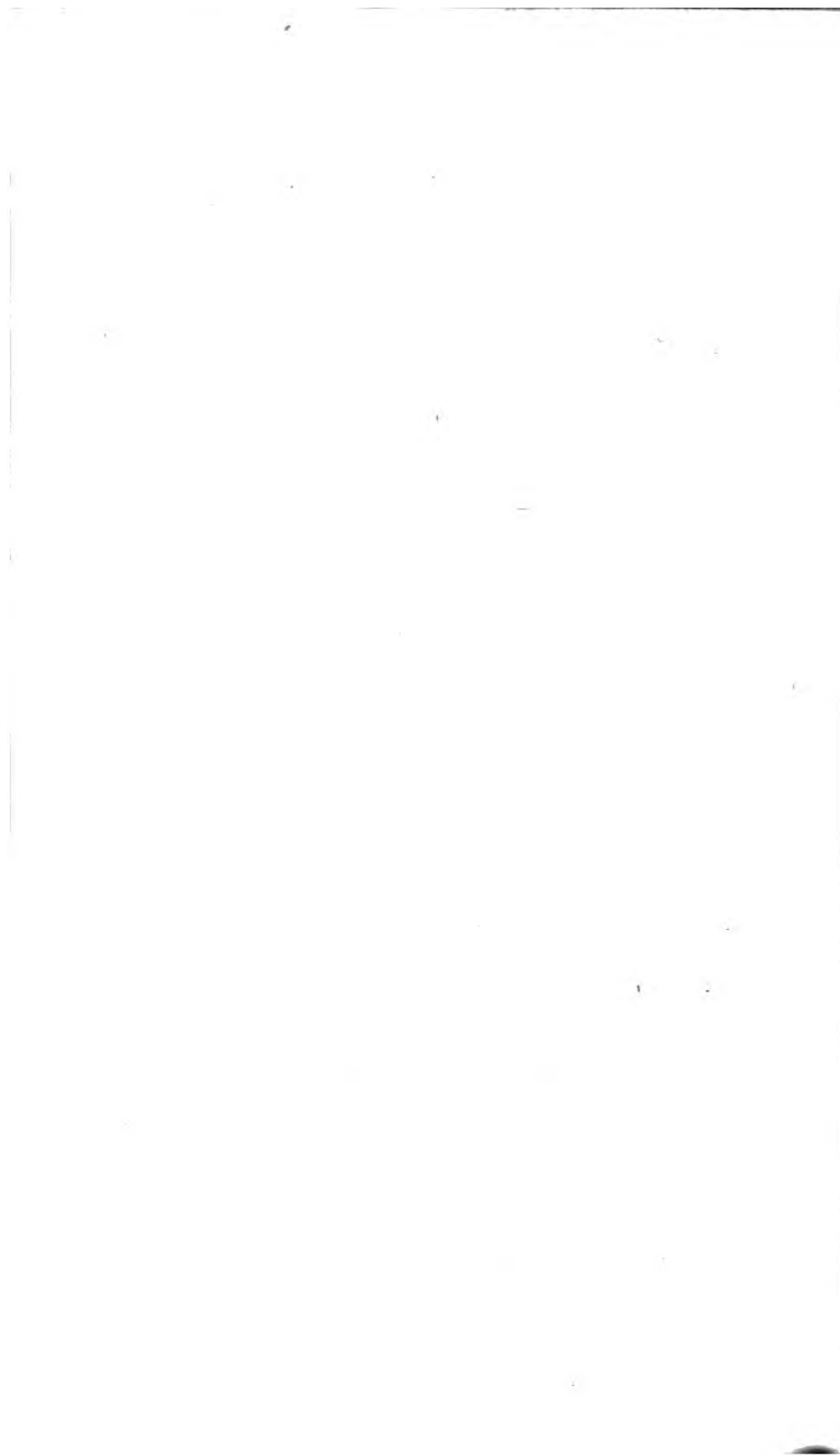
Much of our ignorance of every thing which it would be desirable to know respecting Shakspeare's works, must be imputed to the author himself. If we look merely at the state in which he left his productions, we should be apt to conclude, either that he was insensible of their value, or that while he was the greatest, he was at the same time the humblest writer the world ever produced; "that he thought his works unworthy of posterity, that he levied no ideal tribute upon future times, nor had any further prospect, than that of present popularity and present profit^s." And such an opinion, although it apparently partakes of the ease and looseness of conjecture, may not be far from probability. But before we allow it any higher merit, or attempt to decide upon the affection or neglect with which he reviewed his labours, it may be necessary to consider their precise nature, and certain circumstances in his situation which affected them; and, above all, we must take into our account the character

^s Dr. Johnson's preface. C.

and predominant occupations of the times in which he lived, and of those which followed his decease.

With respect to himself, it does not appear that he printed any one of his plays, and only eleven of them were printed in his lifetime. The reason assigned for this is, that he wrote them for a particular theatre, sold them to the managers when only an actor, reserved them in manuscript when himself a manager, and when he disposed of his property in the theatre, they were still preserved in manuscript to prevent their being acted by the rival houses. Copies of some of them appear to have been surreptitiously obtained, and published in a very incorrect state, but we may suppose that it was wiser in the author or managers to overlook this fraud, than to publish a correct edition, and so destroy the exclusive property they enjoyed. It is clear therefore that any publication of his plays by himself would have interfered, at first with his own interest, and afterwards with the interest of those to whom he had made over his share in them. But even had this obstacle been removed, we are not sure that he would have gained much by publication. If he had no other copies but those belonging to the theatre, the business of correction for the press must have been a toil which we are afraid the taste of the public at that time would have poorly rewarded. We know not the exact portion of fame he enjoyed; it was probably the highest which dramatic genius could confer, but dramatic genius was a new excellence, and not well understood. Its claims were probably not heard out of the jurisdiction of the master of the revels, certainly not beyond the metropolis. Yet such was Shakspeare's reputation that we are told his name was put to pieces which he never wrote, and that he felt himself too confident in popular favour to undeceive the public. This was singular resolution in a man who wrote so unequally, that at this day the test of internal evidence must be applied to his doubtful productions with the greatest caution. But still how far his character would have been elevated by an examination of his plays in the closet, in an age when the refinements of criticism were not understood, and the sympathies of taste were seldom felt, may admit of a question. "His language," says Dr. Johnson, "*not being designed for the reader's desk*, was all that he desired it to be, if it conveyed his meaning to the audience."

Shakspeare died in 1616, and seven years afterwards appeared the first edition of his plays, published at the charges of four booksellers, a circumstance from which Mr. Malone infers, "that no single publisher was at that time willing to risk his money on a complete collection of our author's plays." This edition was printed from the copies in the hands of his fellow-managers Heminge and Condell, which had been in a series of years frequently altered through convenience, caprice, or ignorance. Heminge and Condell had now retired from the stage, and, we may suppose, were guilty of no injury to their successors, in printing what their own interest only had formerly withheld. Of this, although we have no documents amounting to demonstration, we may be convinced, by adverting to a circumstance which will in our days appear very extraordinary, namely, the declension of Shakspeare's popularity. We have seen that the publication of his works was accounted a doubtful speculation, and it is yet more certain that so much had the public taste turned from him in quest of variety, that for several years after his death the plays of Fletcher were more frequently acted than his, and during the whole of the seventeenth century, they were made to give place to performances, the greater part of which cannot now be endured. During the same period only four editions of





his works were published, all in folio ; and perhaps this unwieldy size of volume may be an additional proof that they were not popular ; nor is it thought that the impressions were numerous.

These circumstances which attach to our author and to his works, must be allowed a plausible weight in accounting for our deficiencies in his biography and literary career ; but there were circumstances enough in the history of the times to suspend the progress of that more regular drama of which he had set the example, and may be considered as the founder. If we wonder why we know so much less of Shakspeare than of his contemporaries, let us recollect that his genius, however highly and justly we now rate it, took a direction which was not calculated for permanent admiration, either in the age in which he lived, or in that which followed. Shakspeare was a writer of plays, a promoter of an amusement just emerging from barbarism ; and an amusement which, although it has been classed among the schools of morality, has ever had such a strong tendency to deviate from moral purposes, that the force of law has, in all ages, been called in to preserve it within the bounds of common decency. The church has ever been unfriendly to the stage. A part of the injunctions of queen Elizabeth is particularly directed against the printing of plays ; and, according to an entry in the books of the stationers' company, in the forty-first year of her reign, it is ordered that no plays be printed except allowed by persons in authority. Dr. Farmer also remarks that, in that age, poetry and novels were destroyed publicly by the bishops, and privately by the puritans. The main transactions, indeed, of that period could not admit of much attention to matters of amusement. The Reformation required all the circumspection and policy of a long reign, to render it so firmly established in popular favour as to brave the caprice of any succeeding sovereign. This was effected, in a great measure, by the diffusion of religious controversy, which was encouraged by the church, and especially by the puritans, who were the immediate teachers of the lower classes, were listened to with veneration, and usually inveighed against all public amusements, as inconsistent with the Christian profession. These controversies continued during the reign of James I. and were, in a considerable degree, promoted by him, although he, like Elizabeth, was a favourer of the stage, as an appendage to the grandeur and pleasures of the court. But the commotions which followed, in the unhappy reign of Charles I. when the stage was totally abolished, are sufficient to account for the oblivion thrown on the history and works of our great bard. From this time, no inquiry was made, until it was too late to obtain any information more satisfactory than the few hearsay scraps and contested traditions above detailed. " How little," says Mr. Steevens, " Shakspeare was once read, may be understood from Tate, who, in his dedication to the altered play of King Lear, speaks of the original as an obscure piece, recommended to his notice by a friend ; and the author of *The Tatler* having occasion to quote a few lines out of *Macbeth*, was content to receive them from Davenant's alteration of that celebrated drama, in which almost every original beauty is either awkwardly disguised, or arbitrarily omitted ¹⁰."

In fifty years after his death, Dryden mentions that he was then become " a little obsolete." In the beginning of the last century, lord Shaftesbury complains of his " rude, unpolished style, and his antiquated phrase and wit." It is certain that, for nearly an hundred years after his death, partly owing to the immediate revolution and rebellion, and partly to the licentious taste encouraged in Charles II.'s time, and perhaps partly to

¹⁰ Mr. Steevens's Advertisement to the Reader, first printed in 1773.

the incorrect state of his works, he was almost entirely neglected. Mr. Malone has justly remarked, that "if he had been read, admired, studied, and imitated, in the same degree as he is now, the enthusiasm of some one or other of his admirers in the last age would have induced him to make some inquiries concerning the history of his theatrical career, and the anecdotes of his private life."¹¹

His admirers, however, if he had admirers in that age, possessed no portion of such enthusiasm. That curiosity which, in our days, has raised biography to the rank of an independent study, was scarcely known, and, where known, confined principally to the public transactions of eminent characters. And if, in addition to the circumstances already stated, we consider how little is known of the personal history of Shakspeare's contemporaries, we may easily resolve the question why, of all men who have ever claimed admiration by genius, wisdom, or valour, who have eminently contributed to enlarge the taste, promote the happiness, or increase the reputation of their country, we know the least of Shakspeare: and why, of the few particulars which seem entitled to credit, when simply related, and in which there is no manifest violation of probability, or promise of importance, there is scarcely one which has not swelled into a controversy. After a careful examination of all that modern research has discovered, we know not how to trust our curiosity beyond the limits of those barren dates which afford no personal history. The nature of Shakspeare's writings prevents that appeal to internal evidence which, in other cases, has been found to throw light on character. The purity of his morals, for example, if sought in his plays, must be measured against the licentiousness of his language; and the question will then be, how much did he write from conviction, and how much to gratify the taste of his hearers? How much did he add to the age, and how much did he borrow from it? Pope says, "He was obliged to please the lowest of the people, and to keep the worst of company;" and Pope might have said more: for, although we hope it was not true, we have no means of proving that it was false.

The only life which has been prefixed to all the editions of Shakspeare of the eighteenth century, is that drawn up by Mr. Rowe, and which he modestly calls "Some Account, &c." In this we have what Rowe could collect when every legitimate source of information was closed, a few traditions that were floating nearly a century after the author's death. Some inaccuracies in his account have been detected, in the valuable notes of Mr. Steevens and Mr. Malone; who, in other parts of their respective editions, have scattered a few brief notices, which are incorporated in the present sketch. The whole, however, is unsatisfactory. Shakspeare, in his private character, in his friendships, in his amusements, in his closet, in his family, is no where before us; and such was the nature of the writings on which his fame depends, and of that employment in which he was engaged, that, being in no important respect connected with the history of his age, it is in vain to look into the latter for any information concerning him.

Mr. Capell is of opinion that he wrote some prose works, because "it can hardly be supposed that he, who had so considerable a share in the confidence of the earls of Essex and Southampton, could be a mute spectator only of controversies in which they were so much interested." This editor, however, appears to have taken for granted a degree of confidence with these two statesmen which he ought first to have proved. Shakspeare might have enjoyed the confidence of their social hours, but it is mere conjecture that

¹¹ Mr. Malone's Preface to his edition, 1790.

they admitted him into the confidence of their state affairs. Mr. Malone, whose opinions are entitled to a higher degree of credit, thinks that his prose compositions, if they should be discovered, would exhibit the same perspicuity, the same cadence, the same elegance and vigour, which we find in his plays. It is unfortunate, however, for all wishes and all conjectures, that not a line of Shakspeare's manuscript is known to exist, and his prose writings are no where hinted at. We have only printed copies of his plays and poems, and those so depraved by carelessness, or ignorance, that all the labour of all his commentators has not yet been able to restore them to a probable purity; many of the greatest difficulties attending the perusal of them yet remain, and will require what it is scarcely possible to expect, greater sagacity, and more happy conjecture, than have hitherto been employed.

Of his POEMS, it is, perhaps, necessary that some notice should be taken, although they have never been favourites with the public, and have seldom been reprinted with his plays. Shortly after his death, Mr. Malone informs us, a very incorrect impression of them was issued out, which in every subsequent edition was implicitly followed, until he published a correct edition, in 1780, with illustrations, &c. But the peremptory decision of Mr. Steevens, on the merits of these poems, must not be omitted. "We have not reprinted the Sonnets, &c. of Shakspeare, because the strongest act of parliament that could be framed would fail to compel readers into their service. Had Shakspeare produced no other works than these, his name would have reached us with as little celebrity as time has conferred on that of Thomas Watson, an older and much more elegant sonneteer." Severe as this may appear, it only amounts to the general conclusion which modern critics have formed. Still it cannot be denied that there are many scattered beauties among his Sonnets, and in *The Rape of Lucrece*; enough, it is hoped, to justify their admission into the present collection, especially as the Songs, &c. from his plays have been added, and a few smaller pieces selected by Mr. Ellis. Although they are now lost in the blaze of his dramatic genius, Mr. Malone remarks, "that they seem to have gained him more reputation than his plays: at least, they are oftener mentioned, or alluded to."

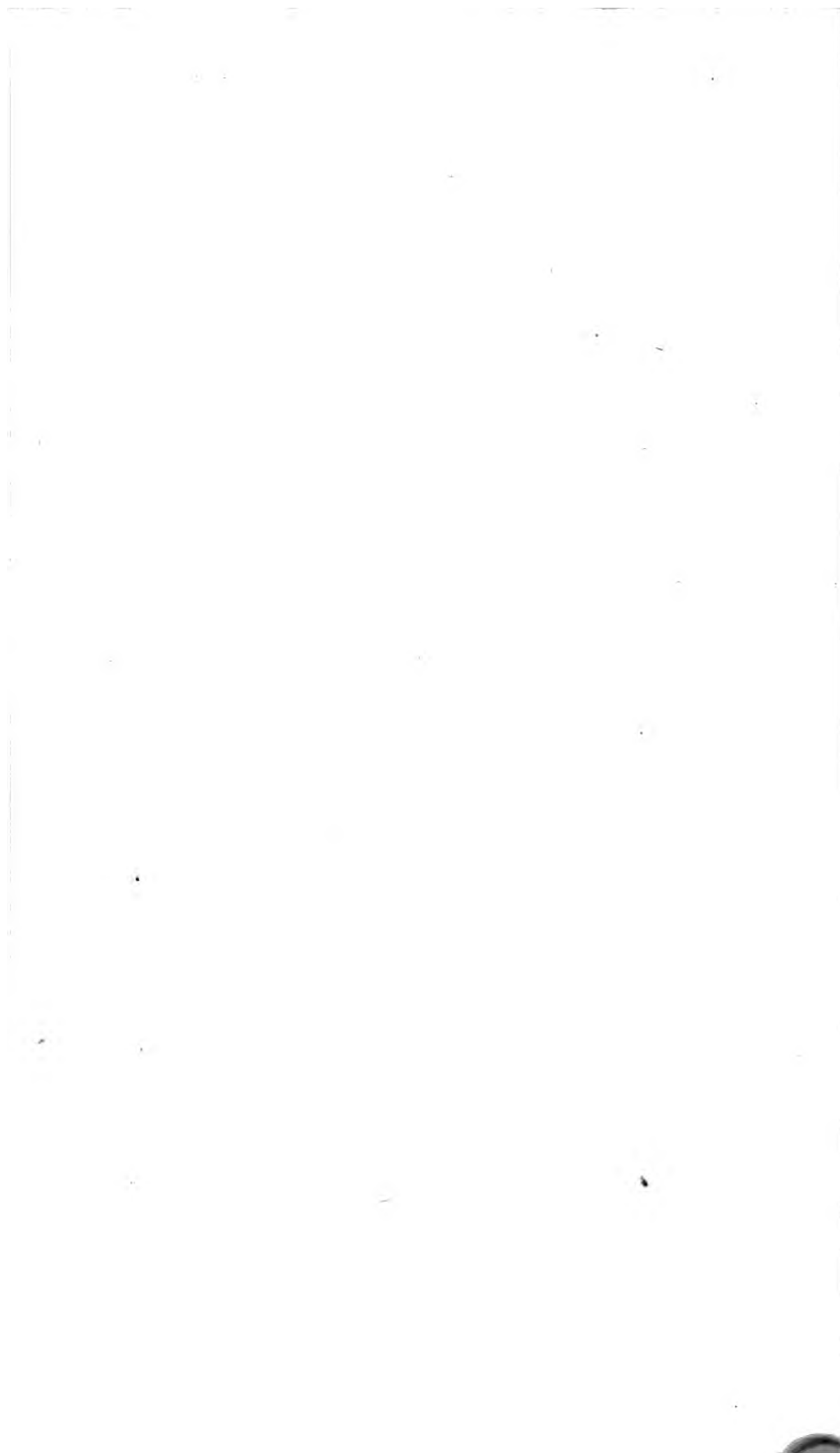
The elegant Preface of Dr. Johnson gives an account of the attempts made, in the early part of the last century, to revive the memory and reputation of our poet, by Rowe, Pope, Theobald, Hanmer, and Warburton; whose respective merits he has characterised with candour, and with singular felicity of expression. Shakspeare's works may be overloaded with criticism; for what writer has excited so much curiosity, and so many opinions? But Johnson's Preface is an accompaniment worthy of the genius it celebrates. His own edition followed in 1765; and a second, in conjunction with Mr. Steevens, in 1773. The third edition of the joint editors appeared in 1785, the fourth in 1793, and the last, and most complete, in 1803, in twenty-one volumes, octavo. Mr. Malone's edition was published in 1790, in ten volumes, crown octavo, and is now become exceedingly scarce. His original notes and improvements, however, are incorporated in the editions of 1793 and 1803, by Mr. Steevens. Mr. Malone says, that from the year 1716 to the date of his edition in 1790, that is, in seventy-four years, "above thirty thousand copies of Shakspeare have been dispersed through England." To this we may add, with confidence, that since 1790 that number has been doubled. During the year 1803, no fewer than nine editions were in the press, belonging to the proprietors of this work; and if we add the editions printed by others, and those published in Scotland, Ireland, and America, we may surely fix the present as the highest

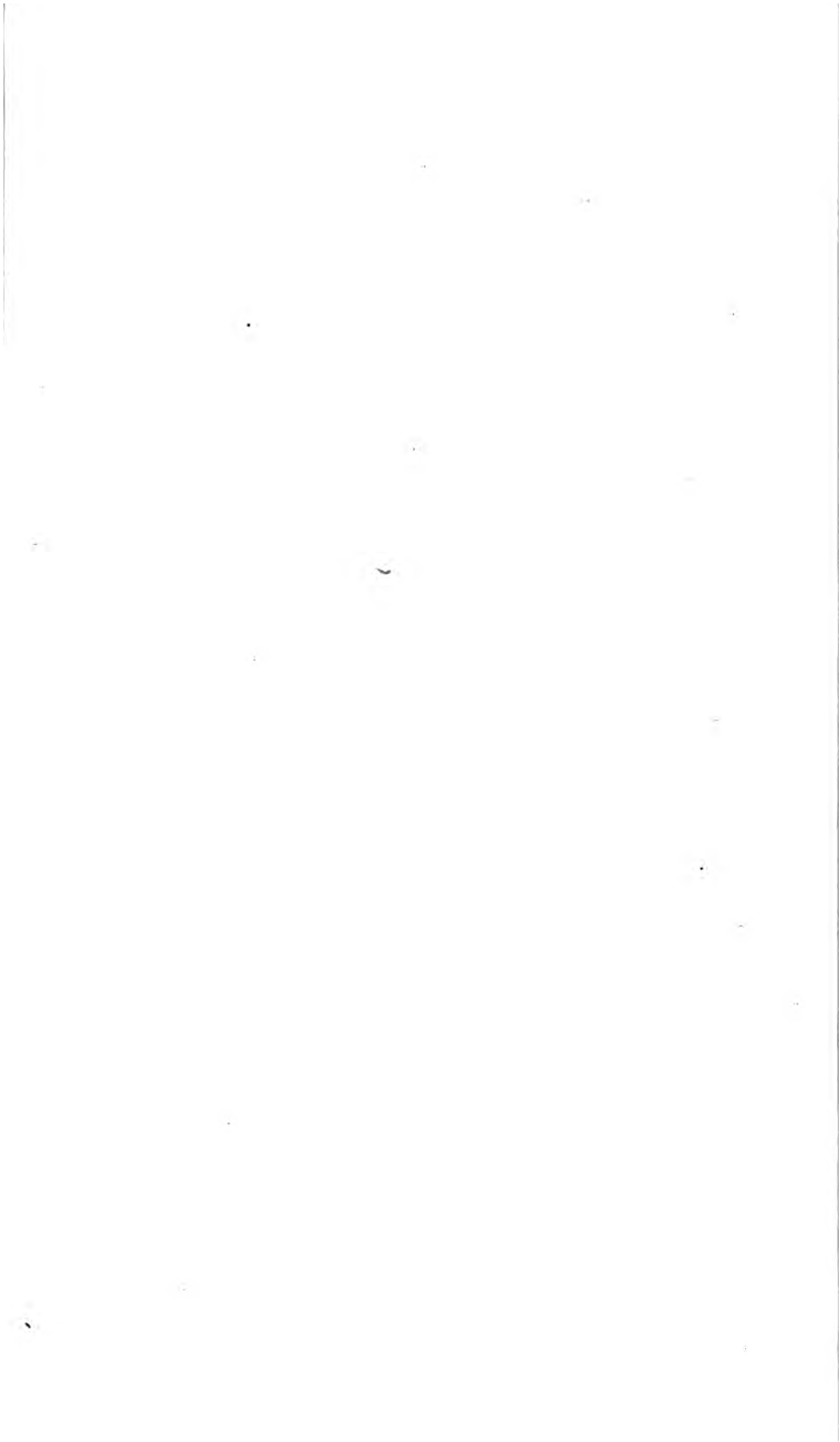
era of Shakspeare's popularity. Nor, among the honours paid to his genius, ought we to forget the very magnificent edition undertaken by Messrs. Boydell. Still less ought it to be forgotten how much the reputation of Shakspeare was revived by the unrivalled excellence of Garrick's performance. His share in directing the public taste towards the study of Shakspeare was, perhaps, greater than that of any individual in his time; and such was his zeal, and such his success, in this laudable attempt, that he may readily be forgiven the foolish mummery of the Stratford Jubilee.

When public opinion had begun to assign to Shakspeare the very high rank he was destined to hold, he became the promising object of fraud and imposture. This, we have already observed, he did not wholly escape in his own time, and he had the spirit, or policy, to despise it¹². It was reserved for modern impostors, however, to avail themselves of the obscurity in which his history is involved. In 1751, a book was published, entitled "A compendious or brief Examination of certayne ordinary Complaints of divers of our Countrymen in those our Days: which, although they are in some parte unjust and frivolous, yet are they all by way of Dialogue, throughly debated and discussed by William Shakspeare, gentleman." This had been originally published in 1581; but Dr. Farmer has clearly proved, that W. S. gent. the only authority for attributing it to Shakspeare in the reprinted edition, meant William Stafford, gent. Theobald, the same accurate critic informs us, was desirous of palming upon the world a play called *Double Falsehood*, for a posthumous one of Shakspeare. In 1770 was reprinted at Feversham, an old play called *The Tragedy of Arden of Feversham and Black Will*, with a preface attributing it to Shakspeare, without the smallest foundation. But these were trifles, compared to the atrocious attempt made in 1795-6, when, besides a vast mass of prose and verse, letters, &c. pretendedly in the hand-writing of Shakspeare and his correspondents, an entire play, entitled *Vortigern*, was not only brought forward for the astonishment of the admirers of Shakspeare, but actually performed on Drury Lane stage. It would be unnecessary to expatiate on the merits of this play, which Mr. Steevens has very happily characterised as "the performance of a madman, without a lucid interval," or to enter more at large into the nature of a fraud so recent, and so soon acknowledged by the authors of it. It produced, however, an interesting controversy between Mr. Malone and Mr. George Chalmers, which, although mixed with some unpleasant asperities, was extended to inquiries into the history and antiquities of the stage, from which future critics and historians may derive considerable information¹³.

¹² Mr. Malone has given a list of fourteen plays ascribed to Shakspeare, either by the editors of the two later folios, or by the compilers of ancient catalogues. Of these, *Pericles* has found advocates for its admission into his works. C.

¹³ This sketch of Shakspeare's Life was drawn up by the present writer for a *variorum* edition of his works published in 1804; and no additional light having since been thrown on Shakspeare's history, it is here reprinted with very few alterations. C.





THE
LIFE OF DAVIES,

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS poet was the third son of John Davies, of Tisbury, in Wiltshire, not a tanner, as Anthony Wood asserts, but a gentleman, formerly of New Inn, and afterwards a practitioner of law in his native place. His mother was Mary, the daughter of Mr. Bennett, of Pitt-house, in the same county.

When not fifteen years of age he was sent to Oxford, in Michaelmas-term, 1585, where he was admitted a commoner of Queen's College, and prosecuted his studies with perseverance and success. About the beginning of the year 1588 he removed to the Middle Temple, but returned to Oxford in 1590, and took the degree of bachelor of arts. At the Temple, while he did not neglect the study of the law, he rendered himself obnoxious to the discipline of the place by various youthful irregularities, and after being fined was at last removed from commons. Notwithstanding this, he was called to the bar in 1595, but was again so indiscreet as to forfeit his privileges by a quarrel with Mr. Richard Martin, whom he beat in the Temple Hall. For this offence he was, in February 1597-8, expelled by the unanimous sentence of the society. Martin was, like himself, a wit and a poet, and had once been expelled for improper behaviour. Both, however, outlived their follies, and rose to considerable eminence in their profession. Martin became reader of the society, recorder of London, and member of parliament, and enjoyed the esteem of Selden, Ben Jonson, and other men of learning and genius, who lamented his premature death in 1618.

After this affair our poet returned to Oxford, where he is supposed to have written his poem on *The Immortality of the Soul*. There is some mistake among his biographers as to the time of its publication, or even of its being written. If, as they all say, he wrote it at Oxford in 1598, and published it in 1599, how is either of these facts to be reconciled with the Dedication to Queen Elizabeth, which is dated July 11, 1592? Mr. Park, whose accuracy and zeal for literary history induced him to put this question to the readers of *The Biographia Britannica*, has not attempted a solution; and it must remain in this state, unless an edition of the *Nosce Teipsum* can be found, of a prior date, or any ground for supposing that the date of the Dedication was a typographical error.

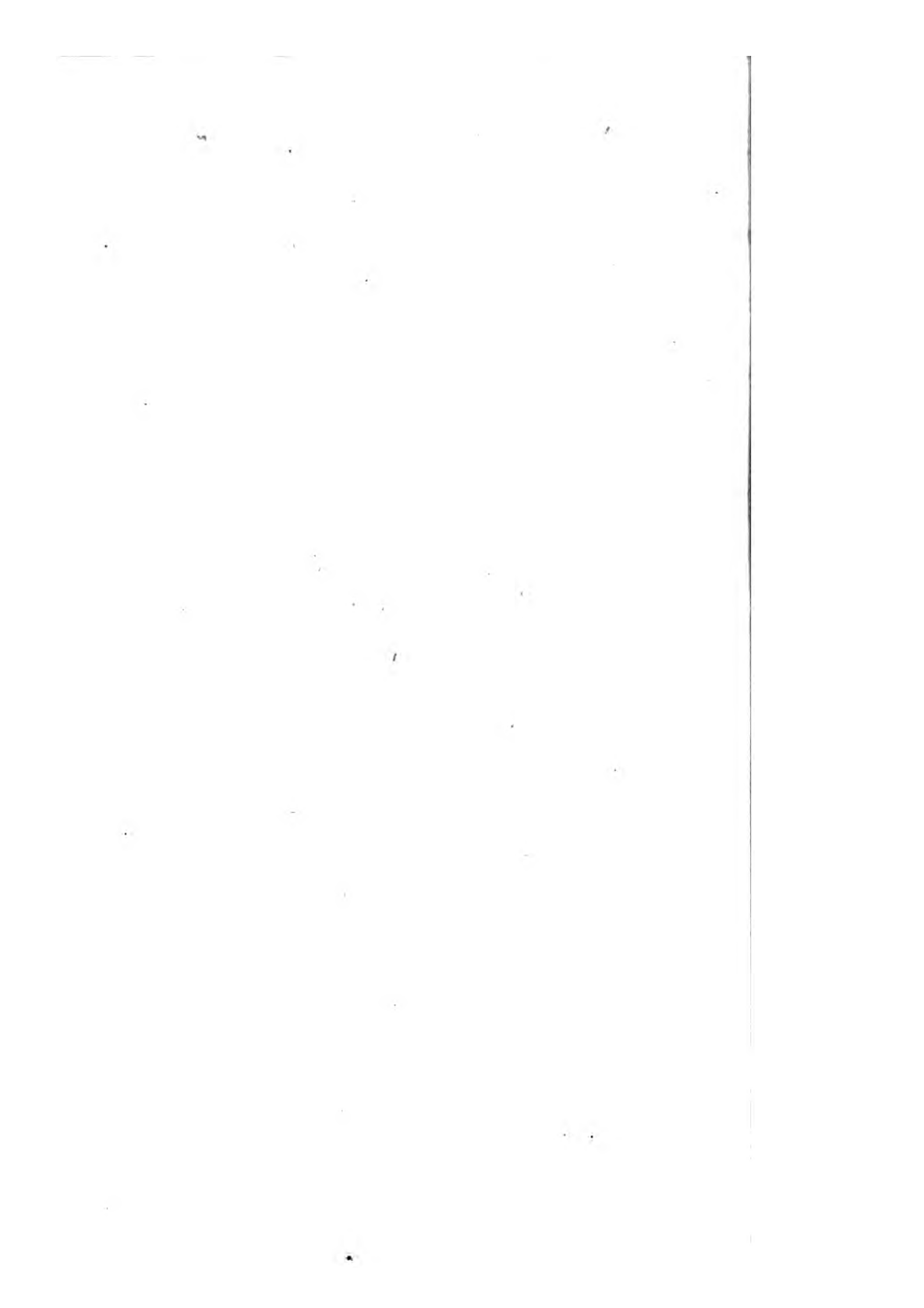
His poem, however, procured to him, as he deserved, a very high distinction among the writers of his time, whom, in harmony of versification, he has far surpassed. Whether Elizabeth bestowed any marks of her favour, does not appear. He knew, however, her love of flattery, and wrote twenty-six acrostic hymns on the words *Elizabetha regina*, which are certainly the best of their kind.

It is probable that these complimentary trifles made him known to the courtiers, for when the queen was to be entertained by Mr. Secretary Cecil, our poet, by desire, contributed his share in A Conference between a Gentleman Usher and a Post, a dramatic entertainment, which does not add much to his reputation. A copy exists in the British Museum, Harl. MS. No. 286. His progress from being the *terræ filius* of a court to a seat in parliament is not known, but we find that he was chosen a member in the last parliament of Elizabeth, which met on the 27th of October 1601. He appears to have commenced his political career with spirit and intelligence, by opposing monopolies, which were at that time too frequently granted, and strenuously supporting the privileges of the house, for which the queen had not the greatest respect.

In consequence of the figure he now made, and after suitable apologies to the judges, he was restored, in Trinity-term 1601, to his former rank in the Temple. Lord Chancellor Ellesmere appears to have stood his friend on this occasion, and Davies continued to advance in his profession, until the accession of James I. opened new prospects. Having gone with lord Hunsdon to Scotland to congratulate the new king, the latter finding that he was the author of *Nosce Teipsum*, graciously embraced him, as a mark of his friendship, and certainly no inconsiderable proof of his taste.

In 1603 he was sent as solicitor-general to Ireland, and immediately rose to be attorney-general. Being afterwards appointed one of the judges of assize, he conducted himself with so much prudence and humanity on the circuits as greatly to contribute to allay the ferments which existed in that country, and received the praises of his superiors, "as a painful and well-deserving servant of his majesty." In Trinity-term 1606, he was called to the degree of serjeant at law, and received the honour of knighthood, on the 11th of February 1607. His biographer attributes these promotions to the patronage of lord Ellesmere and the earl of Salisbury, with whom he corresponded, and to whom he sent a very interesting account of a circuit he performed with the lord deputy in July 1607. Such was Ireland then that a guard of "six or seven-score foot and fifty or three-score horse" was thought a necessary protection against a peasantry *recovering* from their wildness.

In 1608 he was sent to England, with the chief justice, in order to represent to king James the effects which the establishment of public peace, and these progresses of the law, had produced, since the commencement of his majesty's reign. His reception on such an occasion could not but be favourable. As his residence in Ireland afforded him many opportunities to study the history and genius of that people, he published the result of his inquiries in 1612, under the title of *A Discovery of the true Causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued till the Beginning of his Majesty's Reign*. This has been reprinted four times, and has always been considered as a most valuable document for political inquirers. Soon after the publication of it, he was appointed the king's serjeant, and a parliament having been called in Ireland in the same year, he was elected representative for the county of Fermanagh, the first it had ever chosen; and after a violent struggle between the Roman Catholic and Protestant members, he was chosen speaker of the house of commons. In 1614 he interested himself in the revival



of the society of antiquaries, which had been instituted in 1590, but afterwards discontinued, and was now again attempted to be revived by sir James Ley; at this period it could enumerate among its members the names of Cotton, Hackwell, Camden, Stow, Spelman, and Whitlock.

In 1615 he published Reports of Cases adjudged in the King's Courts in Ireland. These, says his biographer, were the first reports of Irish judgments which had ever been made public, during the four hundred years that the laws of England had existed in that kingdom. To the Reports is annexed a preface, addressed to lord chancellor Ellesmere, "which vies with Coke in solidity and learning, and equals Blackstone in classical illustration and elegant language."

In 1616 he returned from Ireland, and found that a change had taken place in the English administration. He continued however, as king's serjeant, in the practice of the law, and was often associated as one of the judges of assize. Some of his charges on the circuits are still extant in the Museum. In 1620 we find him sitting in the English parliament for Newcastle-under-line, where he distinguished himself chiefly in debates on the affairs of Ireland, maintaining, against Coke and other very high authorities, that England cannot make laws to bind Ireland, which had an independent parliament.

Amidst these employments, he found leisure to republish his *Nosce Teipsum* in 1622, along with his *Acrostics*, and *Orchestra*, a poem on the antiquity and excellency of dancing, dedicated to Charles, prince of Wales, originally published in 1596. But this first edition has escaped the researches of modern collectors, and the poem, as we now find it, is imperfect. Whether it was not so in the first edition may be doubted. His biographer thinks it was there perfect, but why afterwards mutilated cannot be ascertained.

Sir John Davies lived four years after this publication, employed probably in the duties of his profession; and at the time when higher honours were within his reach, he died suddenly of an apoplexy in the night of the 7th of December 1626, and in the fifty-seventh year of his age. He had previously supped with the lord keeper Coventry, who gave him assurances of being chief justice of England. He was buried in St. Martin's Church in the Fields, where a monument was erected to his memory, which appears to have been destroyed when the old church was pulled down.

He married, while in Ireland, Eleanor, the third daughter of lord Audley, by whom he had one son, who was an idiot and died young, and a daughter, Lucy, who was married to Ferdinando, lord Hastings, afterwards earl of Huntingdon. Sir John's lady appears to have been an enthusiast; a volume of her prophecies was published in 1649, 4to. Anthony Wood informs us that she foretold the death of her husband, who turned the matter off with a jest. She was harshly treated during the republic, for her officious prophecies, and is said to have been confined several years in Bethlehem-hospital and in the Tower of London, where she suffered all the rigour that could be inflicted by those who would tolerate no impostures but their own. She died in 1652, and was interred near her husband in St. Martin's church. The late earl of Huntingdon informed lord Mountmorres, the historian of the Irish parliament, that sir John Davies did not appear to have acquired any landed property in Ireland, from his great employments.

The character of sir John Davies as a lawyer is that of great ability and learning. As a politician he stands unimpeached of corruption or servility, and his Tracts are valued as the result of profound knowledge and investigation. They were republished with some originals in 1786, by Mr. George Chalmers, who prefixed a Life of the Author, to which the present sketch is greatly indebted.

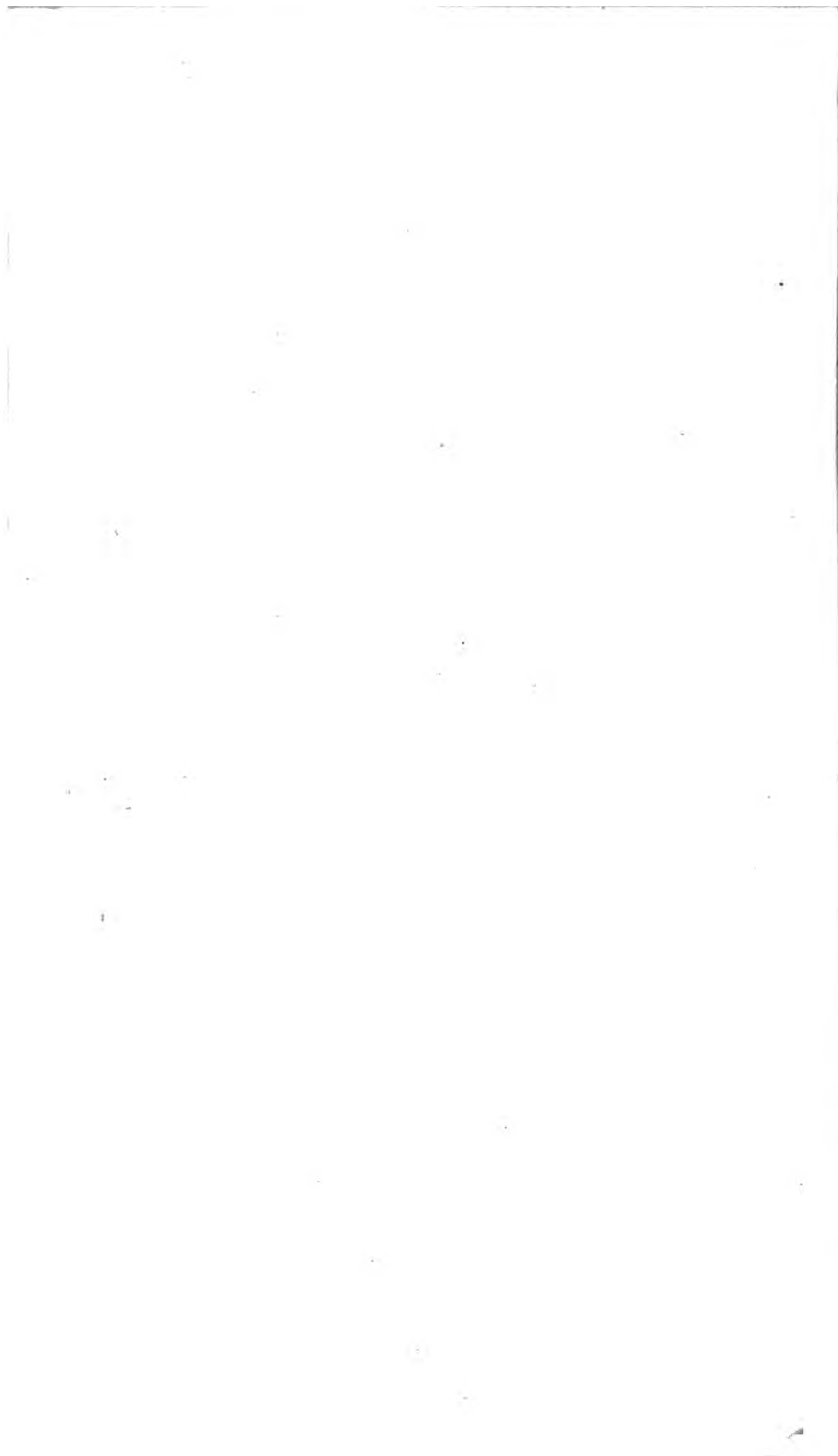
As a poet, he was one of the first of his day, but has been unaccountably neglected, although his style approaches the refinement of modern times. The best arbiters of poetical merit, however, seem to be agreed that his *Nosce Teipsum* is a noble monument of learning, acuteness, command of language, and facility of versification. It has none, indeed, of the sublimer flights which seem adapted to philosophical poetry, but he is particularly happy in his images, which strike by their novelty and elegance. As to his versification, he has anticipated the harmony which the modern ear requires more successfully than any of his contemporaries.

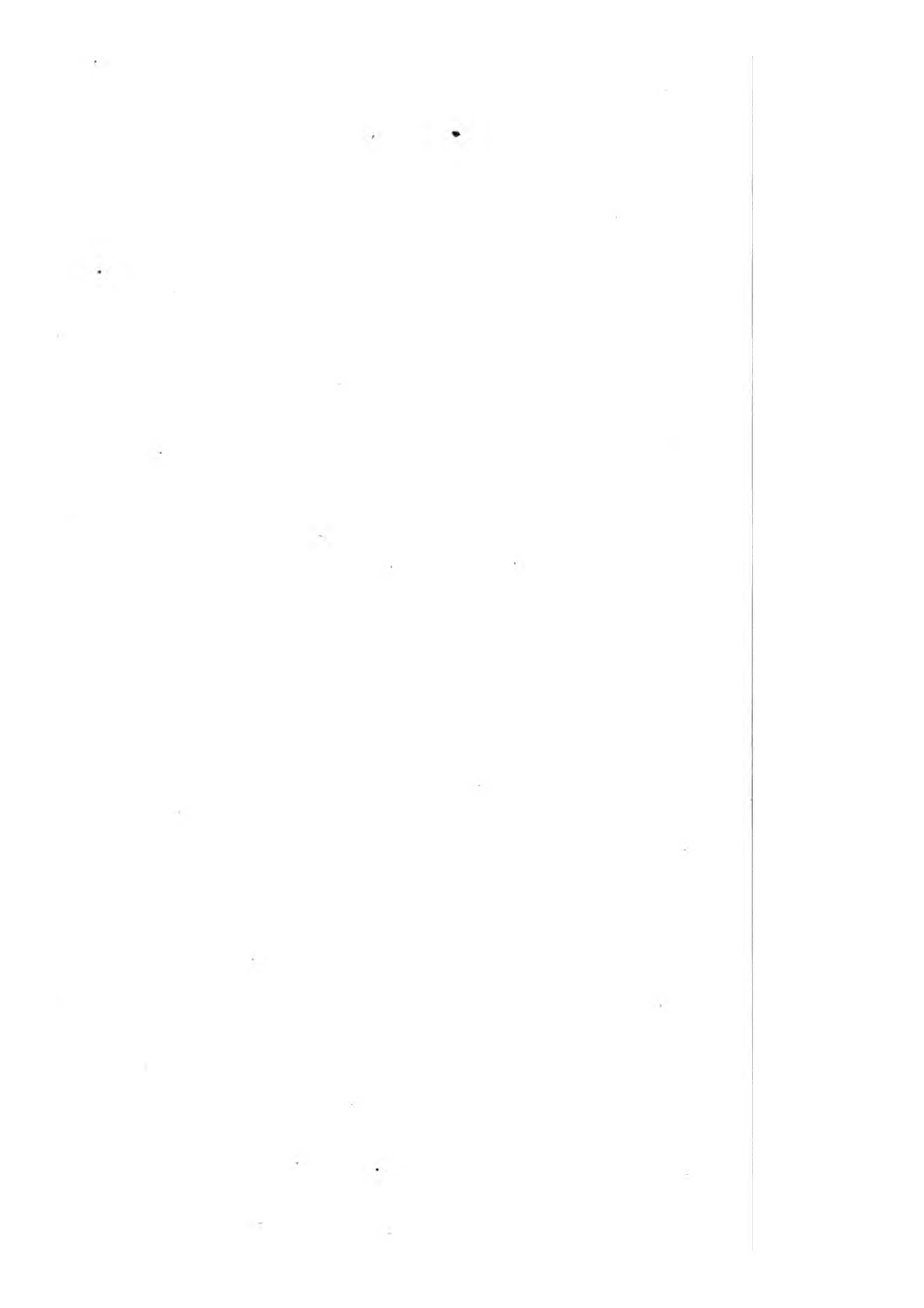
His *Orchestra*, if we consider the nature of the subject, is a wonderful instance of what a man of genius may elicit from trifles. Whether Soame Jenyns be indebted to him in his poem on the same subject, the reader has now an opportunity of examining. His *Acrostics* are considered as the best ever written, but that praise is surely not very great. It is amusing, however, to contemplate him gravely endeavouring to overcome the difficulties he had created, and seeking with great care to exchange an intruding word for one better suited to his favourite initials.

According to Wood, he wrote a version of some of the *Psalms*, which is probably lost. It is more certain that he wrote epigrams, which were added to Marlow's translation of *Ovid's Epistles*, printed at Middleburgh in 1596. Mr. Ellis has given two of them among his *Specimens*, which do not excite much curiosity for the rest. Marlow's volume is exceedingly scarce, which may be accounted for by the following information. In 1599, the hall of the stationers underwent as great a purgation as was carried on in *Don Quixote's* library. Marston's *Pygmalion*, Marlow's *Ovid*, the *Satires of Hall and Marston*, the *Epigrams of Davies*, &c. were ordered for immediate conflagration by the prelates Whitgift and Bancroft¹. There are other pieces frequently ascribed to sir John Davies, which, Mr. Ritson thinks, belong to John Davies of Hereford; but as our author superintended the edition of his poems printed about four years before his death, he included all that he thought proper to acknowledge, and probably, if we except the *Epigrams*, nearly all that he had written.

The lord Dorset recommended an edition of his works to Tate, who published the *Nosce Teipsum*, with the preface now annexed. In 1773, another edition was published by Mr. Thomas Davies, from a copy corrected by Mr. William Thomson, the poet, including the *Acrostics* and *Orchestra*.

¹ Warton's *History of Poetry*, vol. iii. p. 488. C.





THE
LIFE OF DONNE,

BY MR. CHALMERS.

DR. DONNE was born in the city of London in 1573. His father was descended from a very ancient family in Wales, and his mother was distantly related to sir Thomas More, the celebrated and unfortunate lord chancellor, and to judge Rastall, whose father, one of the earliest English printers, married Elizabeth, the chancellor's sister. Ben Jonson seems to think that he inherited a poetical turn from Haywood, the epigrammatist, who was also a distant relation by the mother's side.

Of his father's station in life we have no account, but he must have been a man of considerable opulence, as he bequeathed to him three thousand pounds, a large sum in those days. Young Donne received the rudiments of education at home under a private tutor, and his proficiency was such, that he was sent to the university at the early, and perhaps unprecedented, age of eleven years. At this time, we are told, he understood the French and Latin languages, and had in other respects so far exceeded the usual attainments of boyhood, as to be compared to Pegasus, one that was "rather born, than made wise by study." He was entered of Hart Hall, now Hertford College, where at the usual time he might have taken his first degree with honour, but having been educated in the Roman Catholic persuasion, he submitted to the advice of his friends, who were averse to the oath usually administered on that occasion. About his fourteenth year, he was removed to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he prosecuted his studies for three years with uncommon perseverance and applause; but here likewise his religious scruples prevented his taking any degree.

In his seventeenth year, he repaired to London, and was admitted into Lincoln's Inn, with an intention to study law; but what progress he made we are not told, except that he continued to give proofs of accumulated knowledge in general science. Upon his father's death, which happened before he could have been regularly admitted into the society of Lincoln's Inn, he retired upon the fortune which his father left to him, and had nearly dissipated the whole before he made choice of any plan of life. At this time, however, he was so young and so submissive as to be under the guardianship of his mother and friends, who provided him with tutors in the mathematics, and such other branches of knowledge as formed the accomplishments of that age; and his love of learning, which was ardent and discursive, greatly facilitated their labours, and furnished

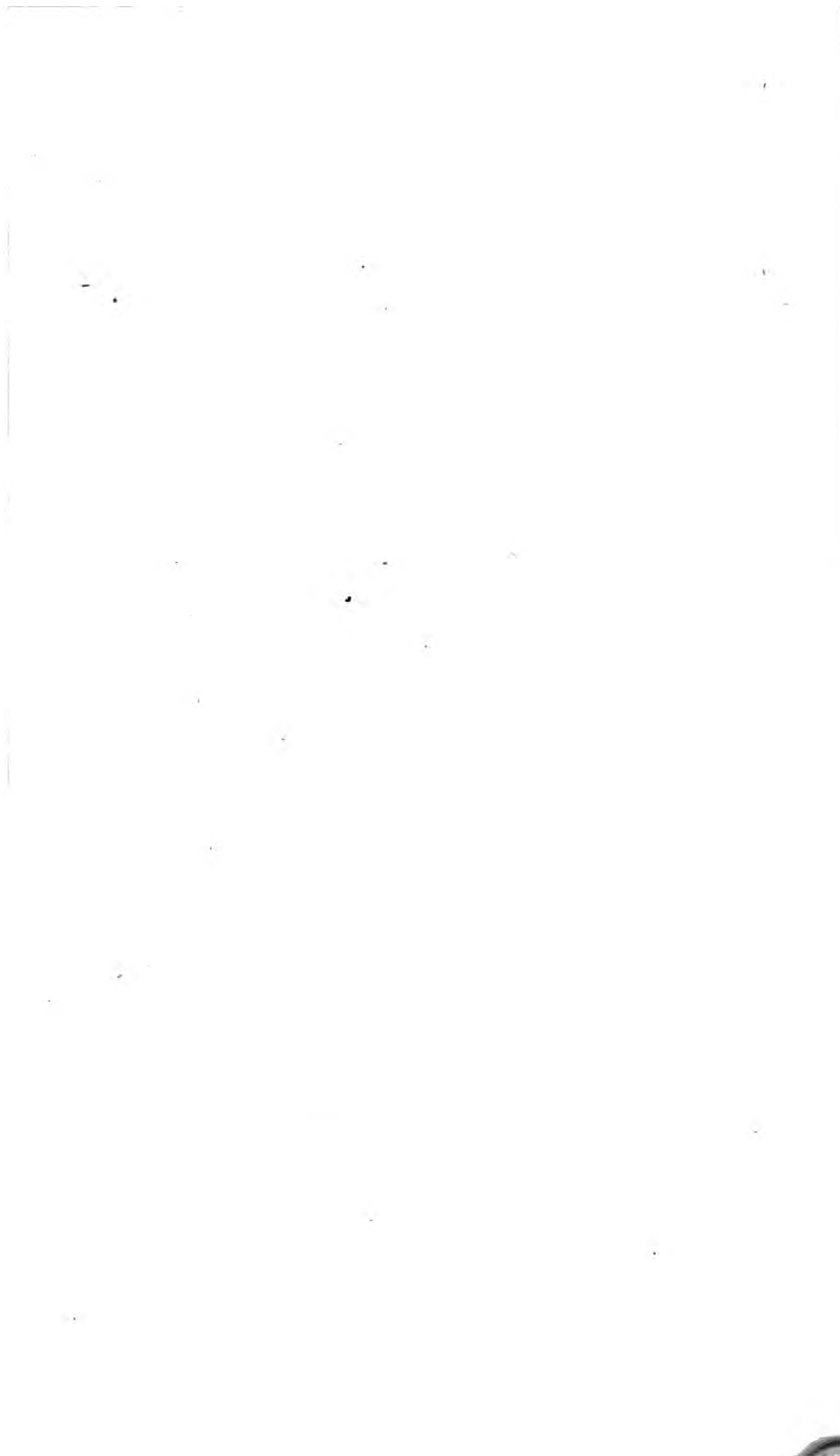
his mind with such intellectual stores as gained him considerable distinction. It is not improbable also that his poetical attempts contributed to make him more known.

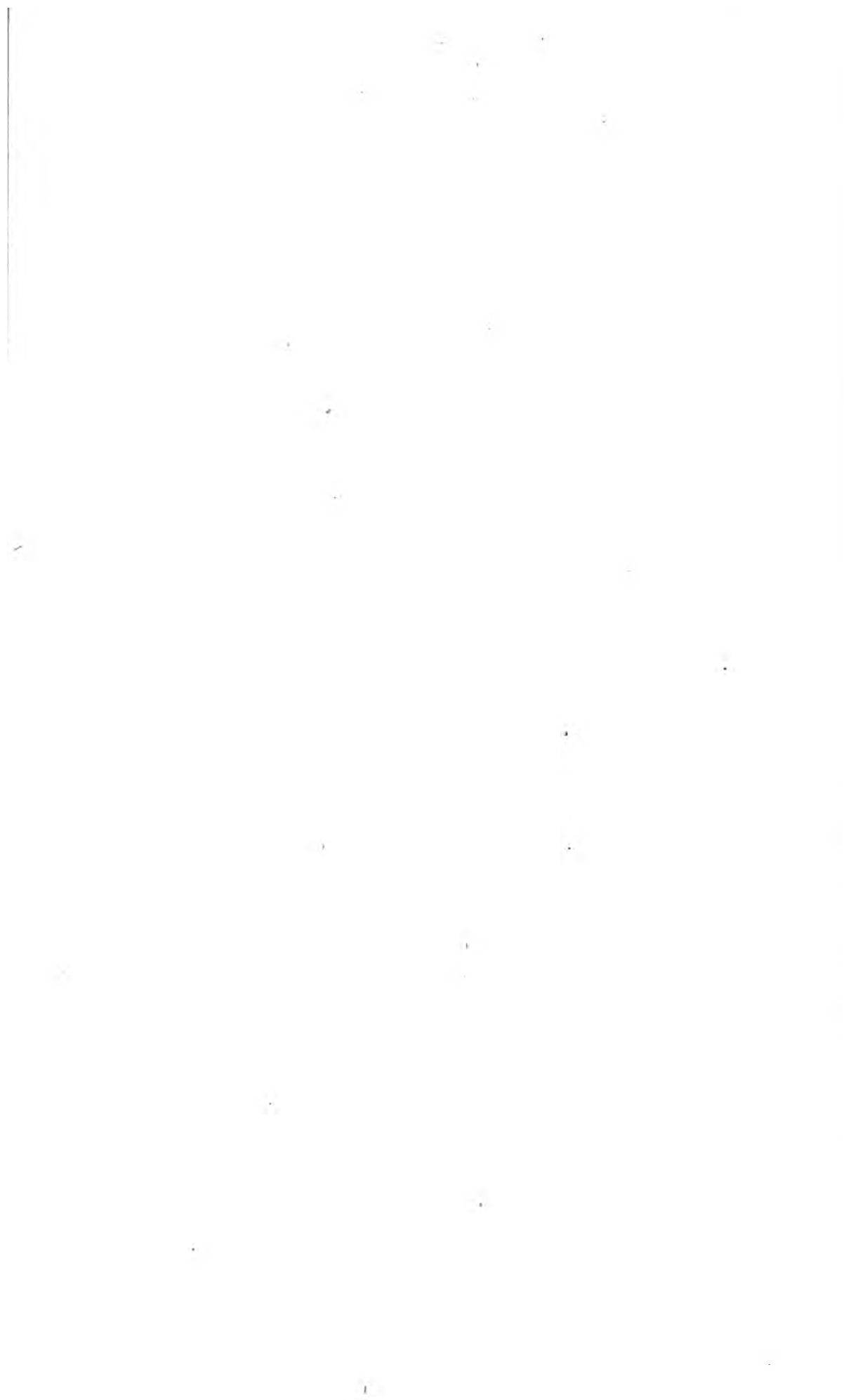
It was about the age of eighteen that he began to study the controversy between the protestants and papists. His tutors had been instructed to take every opportunity of confirming him in popery, the religion of his family, and he confesses that his mother's persuasions had much weight. She was a woman of great piety, and her son, in all the relations of life, evinced a most affectionate heart. Amidst these allurements, however, he entered on the inquiry with much impartiality, and with the honest intention to give way to such convictions only as should be founded in established truth. He has recorded, in his preface to *Pseudo-Martyr*, the struggles of his mind, which he says he overcame by frequent prayer, and an indifferent affection to both parties. The result was a firm, and, as it afterwards proved, a serious adherence to the doctrines of the reformed church.

This inquiry, which terminated probably to the grief of his surviving parent and his friends of the Romish persuasion, appears to have occupied a considerable space of time, as we hear no more of him until he began his travels in his twenty-first year. He accompanied the earl of Essex in his expedition in 1596, when Cadiz was taken, and again in 1597, but did not return to England until he had travelled for some time in Italy, from whence he meant to have penetrated into the Holy Land, and visited Jerusalem and the holy sepulchre. But the inconveniences and dangers of the road in those parts appeared so insuperable that he gave up this design, although with a reluctance which he often repeated. The time, however, which he had dedicated to visit the Holy Land, he passed in Spain, and both there and in Italy studied the language, manners, and government of the country, allusions to which are scattered throughout his poems and prose works.

Not long after his return to England, he obtained the patronage of sir Thomas Egerton, lord Ellesmere, lord chancellor of England, and the friend and predecessor of the illustrious Bacon. This nobleman appears to have been struck with his accomplishments, now heightened by the polish of foreign travel, and appointed him to be his chief secretary, as an introduction to some more important employment in the state, for which he is said to have pronounced him very fit. The conversation of Donne, at this period, was probably enriched by observation, and enlivened by that wit which sparkles so frequently in his works. The chancellor, it is certain, conceived so highly of him, as to make him an inmate in his house, and a constant guest at his table, where he had an opportunity of mixing with the most eminent characters of the age, and of obtaining that notice, which, if not abused, generally leads to preferment.

In this honourable employment he passed five years, probably the most agreeable of his life. But a young man of a disposition inclined to gaiety, and in the enjoyment of the most elegant pleasures of society, could not be long a stranger to love. Donne's favourite object was the daughter of sir George Moor, or More, of Loxly Farm in the county of Surrey, and niece to lady Ellesmere. This young lady resided in the house of the chancellor, and the lovers had consequently many opportunities to indulge the tenderness of an attachment which appears to have been mutual. Before the family, however, they were probably not very cautious. In one of his elegies he speaks of spies and rivals, and her father either suspected, or from them had some intimation of a connection which he chose to consider as degrading, and therefore removed his daughter to his own house at Loxly. But this measure was adopted





too late, as the parties, perhaps dreading the event, had been for some time privately married.

This unwelcome news, when it could be no longer concealed, was imparted to sir George Moor, by Henry, earl of Northumberland, a nobleman who, notwithstanding this friendly interference, was afterwards guilty of that rigour towards his youngest daughter, which he now wished to soften in the breast of sir George Moor. Sir George's rage, however, transported him beyond the bounds of reason. He not only insisted on Donne's being dismissed from the lord chancellor's service, but caused him to be imprisoned, along with Samuel Brook, afterwards master of Trinity College, and his brother Christopher Brook, who were present at the marriage, the one acting as father to the lady, the other as witness.

Their imprisonment appears to have been an act of arbitrary power, for we hear of no trial being instituted, or punishment inflicted, on the parties. Mr. Donne was first released¹, and soon procured the enlargement of his companions; and, probably at no great distance of time, sir George Moor began to relent. The excellent character of his son-in-law was so often represented to him, that he could no longer resist the intended consequences of such applications. He condescended therefore to permit the young couple to live together, and solicited the lord chancellor to restore Mr. Donne to his former situation. This, however, the chancellor refused, and in such a manner as to show the opinion he entertained of sir George's conduct. His lordship owned that "he was unfeignedly sorry for what he had done, yet it was inconsistent with his place and credit to discharge and re-admit servants at the request of passionate petitioners." Lady Ellesmere also probably felt the severity of this remark, as her unwearied solicitations had induced the chancellor to adopt a measure which he supposed the world would pronounce capricious and inconsistent with his character.

Whatever allowance is to be made for the privileges of a parent, the conduct of sir George Moor, on this occasion, seems entitled to no indulgence. He neither felt as a father, nor acted as a wise man. His object in requesting his son-in-law to be restored to the chancellor's service, was obviously that he might be released from the expense of maintaining him and his wife, for, when disappointed in this, he refused them any assistance. This harshness reduced Mr. Donne to a situation the most distressing. His estate, the three thousand pounds before mentioned, had been nearly expended on his education and during his travels; and he had now no employment that could enable him to support a wife, accustomed to ease and respect, with even the decent necessaries of life. These sorrows, however, were considerably lessened by the friendship of sir Francis Wooley, son to lady Ellesmere by her first husband, sir John Wooley of Pitford in Surrey, knight. In this gentleman's house Mr. and Mrs. Donne resided for many years, and were treated with an ease and kindness which moderated the sense of dependence, and which they repaid with attentions, that appear to have gratified and secured the affection of their benevolent relation.

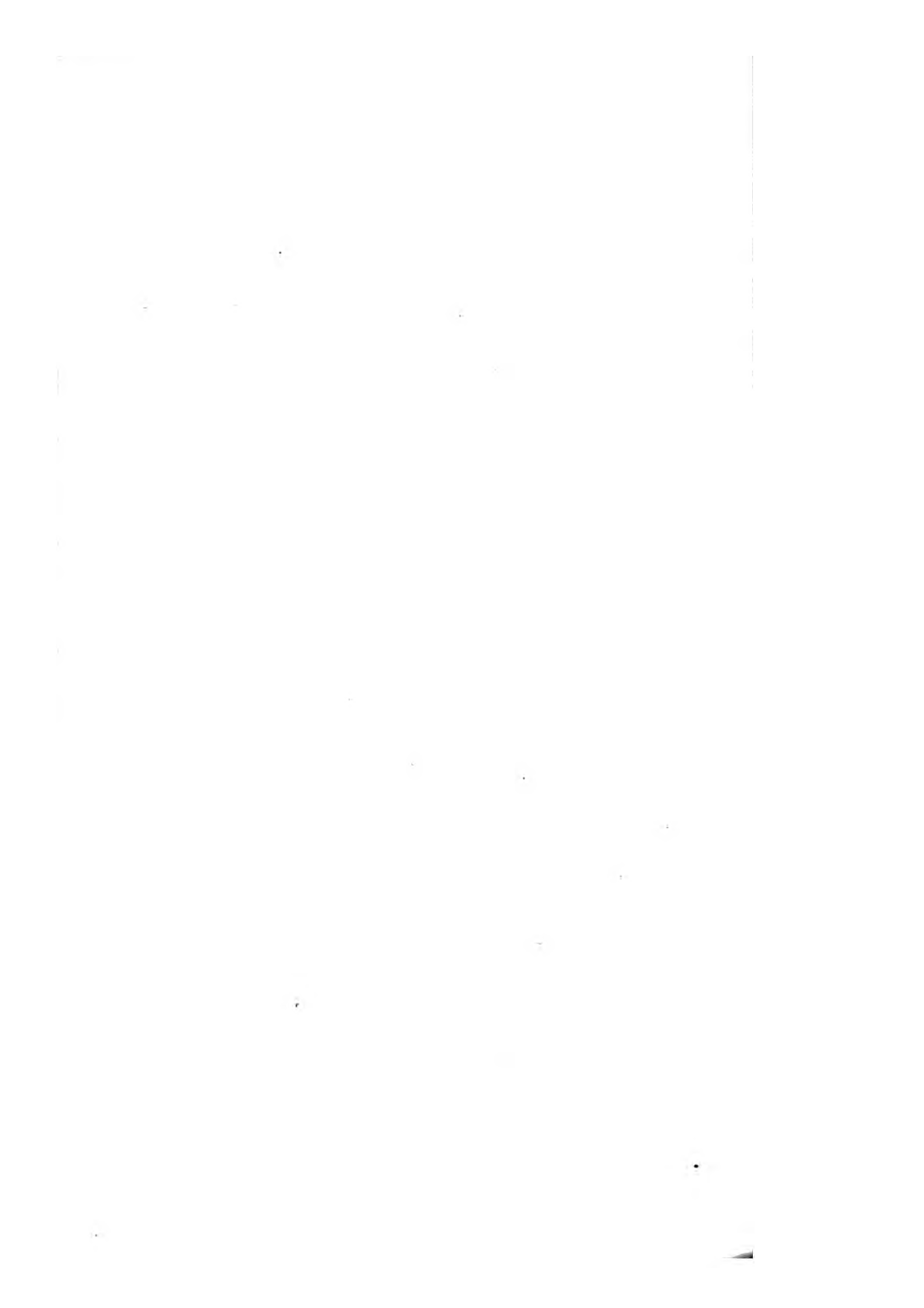
It has already been noticed that, in his early years, he had examined the state of the controversy between the popish and protestant churches, the result of which was his firm

¹ He dates a letter to sir H. Goodere, June 13, 1607, in which he expresses some hopes of obtaining a place at court in the queen's household. This may have been soon after his release, but his biographer, Walton, gives few dates, and takes no notice of this circumstance. Donne's Letters, p. 81. In another letter he makes interest for the place of one of his majesty's secretaries in Ireland, but this has no date. *ibid.*, p. 145. C.

attachment to the latter. But this was not the only consequence of a course of reading in which the principles of religion were necessarily to be traced to their purer sources. He appears to have contracted a pious turn of mind, which, although occasionally interrupted by the intrusions of gay life, and an intercourse with foreign nations and foreign pleasures, became habitual, and was probably increased by the distresses brought on his family in consequence of his imprudent marriage. That this was the case, appears from an interesting part of his history, during his residence with sir Francis Wooley, when he was solicited to take orders. Among the friends whom his talents procured him was the learned Dr. Morton, afterwards bishop of Durham, who first made this proposal, but with a reserve which does him much honour, and proves the truest regard for the interests of the church. The circumstance is so remarkable, that I hope I shall be pardoned for giving it in the words of his biographer.

The bishop "sent to Mr. Donne, and intreated to borrow an hour of his time for a conference the next day. After their meeting, there was not many minutes passed before he spoke to Mr. Donne to this purpose:—'Mr. Donne, the occasion of sending for you is to propose to you what I have often revolved in my own thought since I saw you last; which, nevertheless, I will not declare but upon this condition—that you shall not return me a present answer, but forbear three days, and bestow some part of that time in fasting and prayer; and after a serious consideration of what I shall propose, then return to me with your answer. Deny me not, Mr. Donne, for it is the effect of a true love, which I would gladly pay as a debt due for yours to me.' This request being granted, the doctor expressed himself thus: 'Mr. Donne, I know your education and abilities: I know your expectation of a state employment, and I know your fitness for it; and I know too the many delays and contingencies that attend court promises; and let me tell you, that my love, begot by our long friendship, and your merits, hath prompted me to such an inquisition after your present temporal estate, as makes me no stranger to your necessities, which I know to be such as your generous spirit could not bear if it were not supported with a pious patience. You know I have formerly persuaded you to wave your court-hopes and enter into holy orders: which I now again persuade you to embrace, with this reason added to my former request: the king hath yesterday made me dean of Gloucester; and I am also possessed of a benefice, the profits of which are equal to those of my deanery. I will think my deanery enough for my maintenance, (who am and resolve to die a single man) and will quit my benefice, and estate you in it (which the patron is willing I shall do) if God shall incline your heart to embrace this motion. Remember, Mr. Donne, no man's education, or parts, make him too good for this employment, which is to be an ambassador for the God of glory: that God who, by a vile death, opened the gates of life to mankind. Make me no present answer, but remember your promise, and return to me the third day with your resolution.'

"At hearing of this, Mr. Donne's faint breath and perplexed countenance gave a visible testimony of an inward conflict; but he performed his promise, and departed without returning an answer till the third day, and then his answer was to this effect: 'My most worthy and most dear friend, since I saw you I have been faithful to my promise, and have also meditated much of your great kindness, which hath been such as would exceed even my gratitude; but that it cannot do, and more I cannot return you; and that I do with an heart full of humility and thanks, though I may not accept of your offer. But, sir, my refusal is not for that I think myself too good for that calling, for



which kings, if they think so, are not good enough; nor for that my education and learning, though not eminent, may not, being assisted with God's grace and humility, render me in some measure fit for it; but I dare make so dear a friend as you are my confessor. Some irregularities of my life have been so visible to some men, that though I have, I thank God, made my peace with him by penitential resolutions against them, and by the assistance of his grace banished them my affections, yet this, which God knows to be so, is not so visible to man as to free me from their censures, and it may be that sacred calling from a dishonour. And besides, whereas it is determined by the best of casuists, that God's glory should be the first end, and a maintenance the second motive to embrace that calling; and though each man may propose to himself both together, yet the first may not be put last, without a violation of my conscience, which he that searches the heart will judge. And truly my present condition is such, that if I ask my own conscience whether it be reconcileable to that rule, it is at this time so perplexed about it, that I can neither give myself nor you an answer. You know, sir, who says, happy is that man whose conscience doth not accuse him for that thing which he does. To these I might add other reasons that dissuade me; but I crave your favour that I may forbear to express them, and thankfully decline your offer."

This transaction, which, according to the date of Dr. Morton's promotion to the deanery of Gloucester, happened in 1607, when our poet was in his thirty-fourth year, is not unimportant, as it displays that character for nice honour and integrity which distinguished Donne in all his future life, and was accompanied with a heroic generosity of feeling and action which is, perhaps, rarely to be met with, unless in men whose principles have the foundation which he appears to have now laid.

Donne and his family remained with sir Francis Wooley until the death of this excellent friend, whose last act of kindness was to effect some degree of reconciliation between sir George Moor and his son and daughter. Sir George agreed, by a bond, to pay Mr. Donne eight hundred pounds on a certain day, as a portion with his wife, or twenty pounds quarterly, for their maintenance, until the principal sum should be discharged. With this sum, so inferior to what he once possessed, and to what he might have expected, he took a house at Mitcham for his wife and family, and lodgings for himself in London, which he often visited, and enjoyed the society and esteem of many persons distinguished for rank and talents. It appears, however, by his letters, that his income was far from adequate to the wants of an increasing family, of whom he frequently writes in a style of melancholy and despondence which appear to have affected his health. He still had no offer of employment, and no fixed plan of study. During his residence with sir Francis Wooley, he read much on the civil and canon law, and probably might have excelled in any of the literary professions which offered encouragement, but he confesses that he was diverted from them by a general desire of learning, or what he calls, in one of his poems, "the sacred hunger of science."

In this desultory course of reading, which improved his mind at the expense of his fortune, he spent two years at Mitcham, whence sir Robert Drury insisted on his bringing his family to live with him, in his spacious house in Drury Lane; and, sir Robert afterwards intending to go on an embassy, with lord Hay, to the court of France, he persuaded Donne to accompany him. Mrs. Donne was at this time in a bad state of health, and near the end of her pregnancy; and she remonstrated against his leaving her, as she foreboded "some ill in his absence." Her affectionate husband determined, on this account, to abandon all thoughts of his journey, and intimated his resolution to sir Robert, who,

for whatever reason, became the more solicitous for his company. This brought on a generous conflict between Donne and his wife. He urged that he could not refuse a man to whom he was so much indebted, and she complied, although with some reluctance, from a congenial sense of obligation. It was on this occasion, probably, that he addressed to his wife the verses, "By our first strange and fatal interview, &c." She had formed, if this conjecture be allowed, the romantic design of accompanying him in the disguise of a page, from which it was the purpose of these verses to dissuade her.

Mr. Donne accordingly went abroad with the embassy; and two days after their arrival at Paris, had that extraordinary vision which has been minutely detailed by all his biographers. He saw, or fancied he saw, his wife pass through the room in which he was sitting alone, with her hair hanging about her shoulders, and a dead child in her arms. This story he often repeated, and with so much confidence and anxiety, that sir Robert sent a messenger to Drury House, who brought back intelligence, that he found Mrs. Donne very sad and sick in bed, and that, after a long and dangerous labour, she had been delivered of a dead child, which event happened on the day and hour that Mr. Donne saw the vision. Walton has recorded the story on the authority of an anonymous informant; and has endeavoured to render it credible, not only by the corresponding instances of Samuel and Saul, of Bildad, and of St. Peter, but those of Julius-Cæsar and Brutus, St. Austin and Monica. The whole may be safely left to the judgment of the reader.

From the dates of some of Donne's letters, it appears that he was at Paris with sir Robert Drury in 1612²; and one is dated from the Spa, in the same year; but at what time he returned is not certain. After his return, however, his friends became more seriously anxious to fix him in some honourable and lucrative employment at court. Before this period he had become known to king James, and was one of those learned persons with whom that sovereign delighted to converse at his table. On one of those occasions, about the year 1610, the conversation turned on a question respecting the obligation on Roman Catholics to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy; and Donne appeared to so much advantage in the dispute, that his majesty requested he would commit his sentiments in writing, and bring them to him. Donne readily complied, and presented the king with the treatise published in that year, under the title of *Pseudo-Martyr*. This obtained him much reputation, and the university of Oxford conferred on him the degree of master of arts, which he had previously received from Cambridge.

The *Pseudo-Martyr* contains very strong arguments against the pope's supremacy, and has been highly praised by his biographers. Warburton, however, speaks of it in less favourable terms. It must be confessed that the author has not availed himself of the writings of the judicious Hooker, and that in this, as well as in all his prose-writings, are many of those far-fetched conceits which, however agreeable to the taste of the age, have placed him at the head of a class of very indifferent poets.

At this period of our history, it was deemed expedient to select such men for high offices in the church as promised, by their abilities and zeal, to vindicate the reformed religion. King James, who was no incompetent judge of such merit, though perhaps too apt to measure the talents of others by his own standard, conceived, from a perusal of

² It may be necessary to mention, that the dates of some of his letters do not correspond with Walton's narrative, and it is now too late to attempt to reconcile them. C.

the Pseudo-Martyr, that Donne would prove an ornament and bulwark to the church, and, therefore, not only endeavoured to persuade him to take orders, but resisted every application to exert the royal favour towards him in any other direction. When the favourite earl of Somerset requested that Mr. Donne might have the place of one of the clerks of the council, then vacant, the king replied, "I know Mr. Donne is a learned man, has the abilities of a learned divine, and will prove a powerful preacher; and my desire is to prefer him that way, and in that way I will deny you nothing for him."

Such an intimation must have made a powerful impression; yet there is no reason to conclude, from any part of Mr. Donne's character, that he would have been induced to enter the church merely by the persuasion of his sovereign, however flattering. To him, however, at this time, the transition was not difficult. He had relinquished the follies of youth, and had nearly outlived the remembrance of them by others. His studies had long inclined to theology, and his frame of mind was adapted to support the character expected from him. His old friend, Dr. Morton, probably embraced this opportunity to second the king's wishes, and remove Mr. Donne's personal scruples; and Dr. King, bishop of London, who had been chaplain to the chancellor when Donne was his secretary, and consequently knew his character, heard of his intention with much satisfaction. By this prelate he was ordained deacon, and afterwards priest; and the king, although not uniformly punctual in his promises of patronage, immediately made him his chaplain in ordinary, and gave him hopes of higher preferment.

Those who had been the occasion of Mr. Donne's entering into orders, were anxious to see him exhibit in a new character, with the abilities which had been so much admired in the scholar and the man of the world. But at first, we are told, he confined his public services to the churches in the vicinity of London; and it was not until his majesty required his attendance at Whitehall on an appointed day, that he appeared before an auditory capable of appreciating his talents. Their report is stated to have been highly favourable. His biographer, indeed, seems to be at a loss for words to express the pathos, dignity, and effect of his preaching; but in what he has advanced, he no doubt spoke the sentiments of Donne's learned contemporaries. Still the excellence of the pulpit oratory of that age will not bear the test of modern criticism; and those who now consult Mr. Donne's sermons, if they expect gratification, must be more attentive to the matter than the manner. That he was a popular and useful preacher is universally acknowledged; and he performed the more private duties of his function with humility, kindness, zeal, and assiduity.

The same month, which appears to have been March 1614, in which he entered into orders, and preached at Whitehall, the king happened to be entertained, during one of his progresses, at Cambridge, and recommended Mr. Donne to be made doctor in divinity. Walton informs us, that the university gave their assent as soon as Dr. Harsnet, the vice-chancellor, made the proposal. According, however, to two letters from Mr. Chamberlain to sir Dudley Carlton, it appears that there was some opposition to the degree, in consequence of a report that Mr. Donne had obtained the reversion of the deanery of Canterbury. Even the vice-chancellor is mentioned among those who opposed him. It is not very easy to reconcile these accounts, unless by a conjecture that the opposition was withdrawn when the report respecting the deanery of Canterbury was proved to be untrue. And there is some probability this was the case, for that deanery became vacant in the following year, and was given to Dr. Fotherby, a man of much less fame and interest.

But whatever was the cause of this temporary opposition at Cambridge, it is certain that Dr. Donne became so highly esteemed as a preacher, that within the first year of his ministry, he had the offer of fourteen different livings, all of which he declined, and for the same reason, namely, that they were situated at a distance from London, to which, in common with all men of intellectual curiosity, he appears to have been warmly attached.

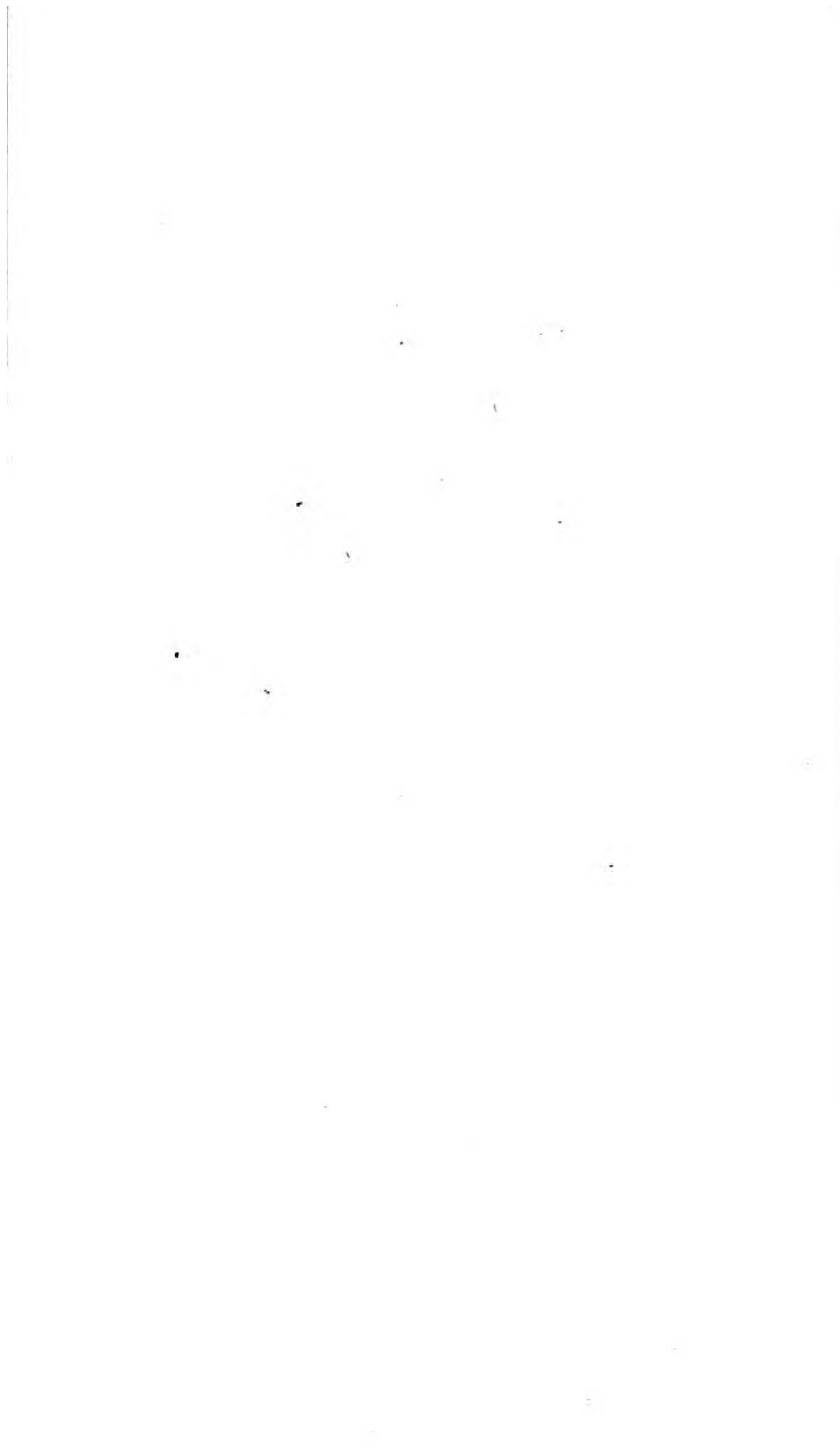
In 1617 his wife died, leaving him seven children. This affliction sunk so deep into his heart that he retired from the world and from his friends, to indulge a sorrow which could not be restrained, and which for some time interrupted his public services. From this he was at length diverted by the gentlemen of Lincoln's Inn, who requested him to accept their lecture, and prevailed. Their high regard for him contributed to render this situation agreeable, and adequate to the maintenance of his family. The connection subsisted about two years, greatly to the satisfaction of both parties, and of the people at large, who had now frequent opportunities of hearing their favourite preacher. But on lord Hay being appointed on an embassy to Germany, Dr. Donne was requested to attend him. He was at this time in a state of health which required relaxation and change of air, and after an absence of fourteen months he returned to his duty in Lincoln's Inn, much improved in health and spirits, and about a year after, in 1620, the king conferred upon him the deanery of St. Paul's.

This promotion, like all the leading events of his life, tended to the advancement of his character. While it amply supplied his wants, it enabled him at the same time to exhibit the heroism of a liberal and generous mind, in the case of his father-in-law, sir George Moor. This man had never acted the part of a kind and forgiving parent, although he continued to pay the annual sum agreed upon by bond, in lieu of his daughter's portion. The time was now come when Dr. Donne could repay his harshness by convincing him how unworthily it had been exerted. The quarter after his appointment to the deanery, when sir George came to pay him the stipulated sum, Dr. Donne refused it, and after acknowledging more kindness than he had received, added, "I know your present condition is such as not to abound, and I hope mine is such as not to need it. I will therefore receive no more from you upon that contract," which he immediately gave up.

To his deanery was now added the vicarage of St. Dunstan in the West, and another ecclesiastical endowment not specified by Walton. These, according to his letters, (p. 318) he owed to the friendship of Richard Sackville, earl of Dorset, and of the earl of Kent. From all this he derived the pleasing prospect of making a decent provision for his children, as well as of indulging to a greater extent his liberal and humane disposition. In 1624, he was chosen prolocutor to the convocation, on which occasion he delivered a Latin oration, which is printed in the London edition of his poems, 1719.

While in this full tide of popularity, he had the misfortune to fall under the displeasure of the king, who had been informed that in his public discourses he had meddled with some of those points respecting popery which were more usually handled by the puritans. Such an accusation might have had very serious consequences, if the king had implicitly confided in those who brought it forward. But Dr. Donne was too great a favourite to be condemned unheard, and accordingly his majesty sent for him and represented what he had heard, and Dr. Donne so completely satisfied him as to his principles in church and state, that the king, in the hearing of his council, bestowed high praise on him, and declared that he rejoiced in the recollection that it was by his persuasion Dr. Donne had become a divine.





About four years after he received the deanery of St. Paul's, and when he had arrived at his fifty-fourth year, his constitution, naturally feeble, was attacked by a disorder which had every appearance of being fatal. In this extremity he gave another proof of that tenderness of conscience, so transcendently superior to all modern notions of honour, which had always marked his character. When there was little hope of his life, he was required to renew some prebendal leases, the fines for which were very considerable, and might have enriched his family. But this he peremptorily refused, considering such a measure, in his situation, as a species of sacrilege. "I dare not," he added, "now upon my sick bed, when Almighty God hath made me useless to the service of the church, make any advantages out of it."

This illness, however, he survived about five years, when his tendency to a consumption again returned, and terminated his life on the 31st day of March 1631. He was buried in St. Paul's, where a monument was erected to his memory. His figure may yet be seen in the vaults of St. Faith's under St. Paul's. It stands erect in a window, without its niche, and deprived of the urn in which the feet were placed. His picture was drawn sometime before his death, when he dressed himself in his winding sheet, and the figure in St. Faith's was carved from this painting by Nicholas Stone. The fragments of his tomb are on the other side of the church. Walton mentions many other paintings of him executed at different periods of his life, which are not now known.

Of his character some judgment may be formed from the preceding sketch, taken principally from Zouch's much improved edition of Walton's Lives. His early years, there is reason to think, although disgraced by no flagrant turpitude, were not exempt from folly and dissipation. In some of his poems we meet with the language and sentiments of men whose morals are not very strict. After his marriage, however, he appears to have become of a serious and thoughtful disposition, his mind alternately exhausted by study, or softened by affliction. His reading was very extensive, and we find allusions to almost every science in his poems, although unfortunately they only contribute to produce distorted images and wild conceits.

His prose works are numerous, but, except the Pseudo-Martyr and a small volume of devotions, none of them were published during his life. A list of the whole may be seen in Wood's Athenæ and in Zouch's edition of Walton. His sermons have not a little of the character of his poems. They are not, indeed, so rugged in style, but they abound with quaint allusions, which now appear ludicrous, although they probably produced no such effect in his days. With this exception, they contain much good sense, much acquaintance with human nature, many striking thoughts, and some very just biblical criticism.

One of his prose writings requires more particular notice. Every admirer of his character will wish it expunged from the collection. It is entitled *Biathanatos*, a Declaration of that Paradox, or Thesis, that Self-homicide is not so naturally Sin, that it may never be otherwise. If it be asked what could induce a man of Dr. Donne's piety to write such a treatise, we may answer in his own words, that "it is a book written by Jack Donne and not by Dr. Donne." It was written in his youth, as a trial of skill on a singular topic, in which he thought proper to exercise his talent against the generally received opinion. But if it be asked why, instead of sending one or two copies to friends with an injunction not to print it, he did not put this out of their power by destroying the manuscript, the answer is not so easy. He is even so inconsistent as to desire one of his correspondents neither to burn it, nor publish it. It was at length

published by his son in 1644, who certainly did not consult the reputation of his father; and if the reports of his character be just, was not a man likely to give himself much uneasiness about that or any other consequence.

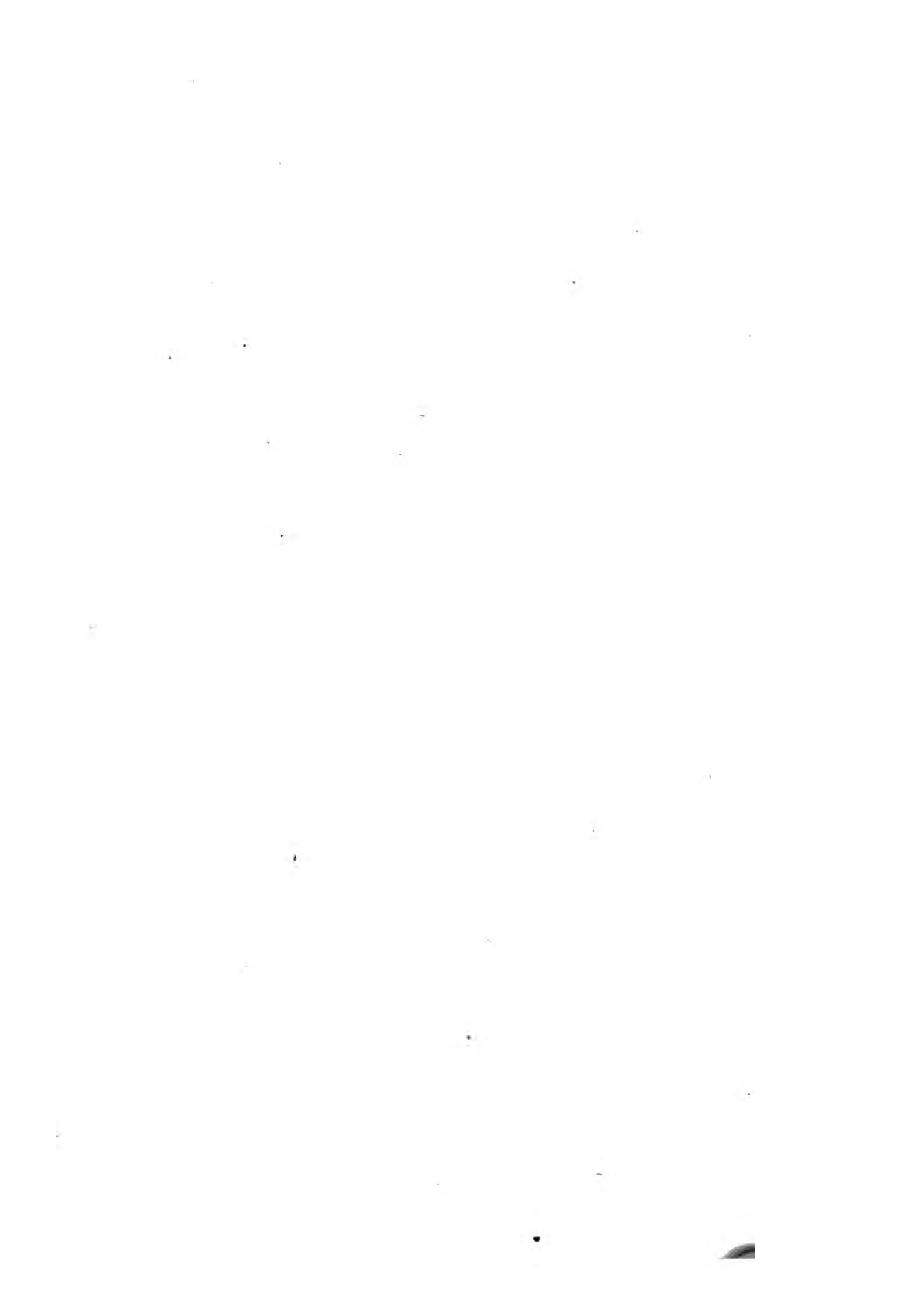
Dr. Donne's reputation as a poet was higher in his own time than it has been since, Dryden fixed his character with his usual judgment; as "the greatest wit, though not the best poet, of our nation." He says afterwards³, that "he affects the metaphysics, not only in his Satires, but in his amorous verses, where nature only should reign, and perplexes the minds of the fair sex with nice speculations of philosophy, when he should engage their hearts, and entertain them with the softnesses of love." Dryden has also pronounced that if his Satires were to be translated into numbers, they would yet be wanting in dignity of expression. The reader has now an opportunity of comparing the originals and translations in Pope's works, and will probably think that Pope has made them so much his own as to throw very little light on Donne's powers. He every where elevates the expression, and in very few instances retains a whole line.

Pope, in his classification of poets, places Donne at the head of a school, that school from which Dr. Johnson has given so many remarkable specimens of absurdity, in his life of Cowley, and which, following Dryden, he terms the metaphysical school. Gray, in the sketch he sent to Mr. Warton, considers it as a third Italian school, full of conceit, begun in queen Elizabeth's reign, continued under James and Charles I. by Donne, Crashaw, Cleveland, carried to its height by Cowley, and ending perhaps in Sprat.

Donne's numbers, if they may be so called, are certainly the most rugged and uncouth of any of our poets. He appears either to have had no ear, or to have been utterly regardless of harmony. Yet Spenser preceded him, and Drummond, the first polished versifier, was his contemporary; but it must be allowed that before Drummond appeared, Donne had relinquished his pursuit of the Muses, nor would it be just to include the whole of his poetry under the general censure which has been usually passed. Dr. Warton seems to think that if he had taken pains he might not have proved so inferior to his contemporaries; but what inducement could he have to take pains, as he published nothing, and seems not desirous of public fame? He was certainly not ignorant or unskilled in the higher attributes of style, for he wrote elegantly in Latin, and displays considerable taste in some of his smaller pieces and epigrams.

At what time he wrote his poems has not been ascertained; but of a few the dates may be recovered by the corresponding events of his life. Ben Jonson affirmed that he wrote all his best pieces before he was twenty-five years of age. His Satires, in which there are some strokes levelled at the Reformation, must have been written very early, as he was but a young man when he renounced the errors of popery. His poems were first published in 4to. 1633, and 12mo. 1635, 1651, 1669, and 1719. His son was the editor of the early editions.

³ On the Origin and Progress of Satire. C.





THE
LIFE OF JOSEPH HALL, D. D.

BISHOP OF EXETER AND NORWICH.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

OF this author Mr. Warton has remarked, that "so variable are our studies, and so fickle is opinion, that the *poet* is better known than the *prelate* or the *polemic*." But so far is this from being the case, that of many thousands who have read bishop Hall's *Meditations and Sermons* with pleasure and advantage, few have ever heard that he was a poet, and still fewer that his poems were once proscribed by authority as unfit to be circulated or read; and although the history of his poetry forms a very small part of his life, the latter surely deserves more attention than has been paid to it by the editors of the *Biographia Britannica*. It would be difficult to mention a prelate of more excellent and distinguished character, or one, of his time, whose talents and misfortunes, whose zeal in prosperity and courage in adversity deserved more honourable mention. Still as he appears in the present collection as a poet only, it will probably not be expected that the following sketch should equal the more ample detail which his theological labours would necessarily demand.

He was born July 1, 1574, in Bristow Park, within the parish of Ashby de la Zouch, in Leicestershire. His father was an officer to Henry earl of Huntingdon, then president of the north, and under him had the government of that town, which was the chief seat of the earldom. His mother was of the family of the Bembridges, and, according to his own account, a woman of great piety. His parents had twelve children; and although disposed to bring up Joseph for the church, were inclined from motives of economy to confine his education to the care of a private tutor. But Mr. Gilby, fellow of Emmanuel College, hearing of this design, represented its disadvantages in such a manner to Mr. Hall's eldest son, that the latter importuned his father that Joseph might be sent to the university, and generously offered to sacrifice part of his inheritance, rather than prevent his brother from enjoying the advantages of academical education. His father, struck with this mark of brotherly affection, declared that, whatever it might cost him, Joseph should be sent to the university.

He was accordingly removed to Cambridge at the age of fifteen, and admitted of Emmanuel College, of which he was chosen scholar, and took the degree of bachelor of arts. His residence, however, was not without its difficulties. In 1591, as his expenses began to be felt in so large a family, he was recalled to fill the office of schoolmaster at

Ashby de la Zouch, and would have been prevented from ever returning to college, had not Mr. Edmund Sleigh of Derby, an uncle by marriage, offered to defray half the expenses of his residence at Cambridge, until he should attain the degree of master of arts; and this he liberally performed. Another difficulty, however, presented itself. In 1595 his scholarship expired, and the statutes of the college permitting only one person of a county to become fellow, he was about to leave the university a second time, when the earl of Huntingdon prevailed on his countryman and tutor, Mr. Gilby, to resign his fellowship, on promise of being made his lordship's chaplain, and receiving higher promotion. Mr. Gilby consented, and the days of examination for the fellowship were appointed; but before two of the three days of trial had expired, news was brought of the sudden death of the earl, by which event Mr. Gilby was likely to be deprived of the conditions on which he resigned. Alarmed at this, our author with very honourable feeling went to the master of the college, Dr. Chaderton, and stated the case, offering at the same time to leave college, and hoping that Mr. Gilby could be re-admitted. The latter, however, he was told, could not take place, as the fellowship had been declared void, and the election must proceed whether he continued to be a candidate or not. Mr. Hall accordingly went to the third examination, and was unanimously chosen.

In 1596 he took his degree of master of arts, and acquitted himself on every public trial with great reputation. He read also the Rhetoric Lecture in the schools, but resigned it, when he found that it interfered with an object more dear to him, the study of divinity; and soon after entered into holy orders. As we have no account of him when at college, except the few particulars in his Specialities, written by himself, we cannot trace the progress of his Muse. It is not improbable that, like other juvenile poets, he had written some pieces at a very early period of life. All that is certain, however, is, that his Satires were published in 1597 and 1598, in the following order: *Virgidemiarum*¹, Sixe Bookes. First Three Bookes of Tooth-less Satyrs: 1. Poetical; 2. Academicall; 3. Moral; printed by T. Creede for R. Dexter. The Three last Bookes of Byting Satyrs, by R. Bradock for Dexter, 1598; both parts, 1599.

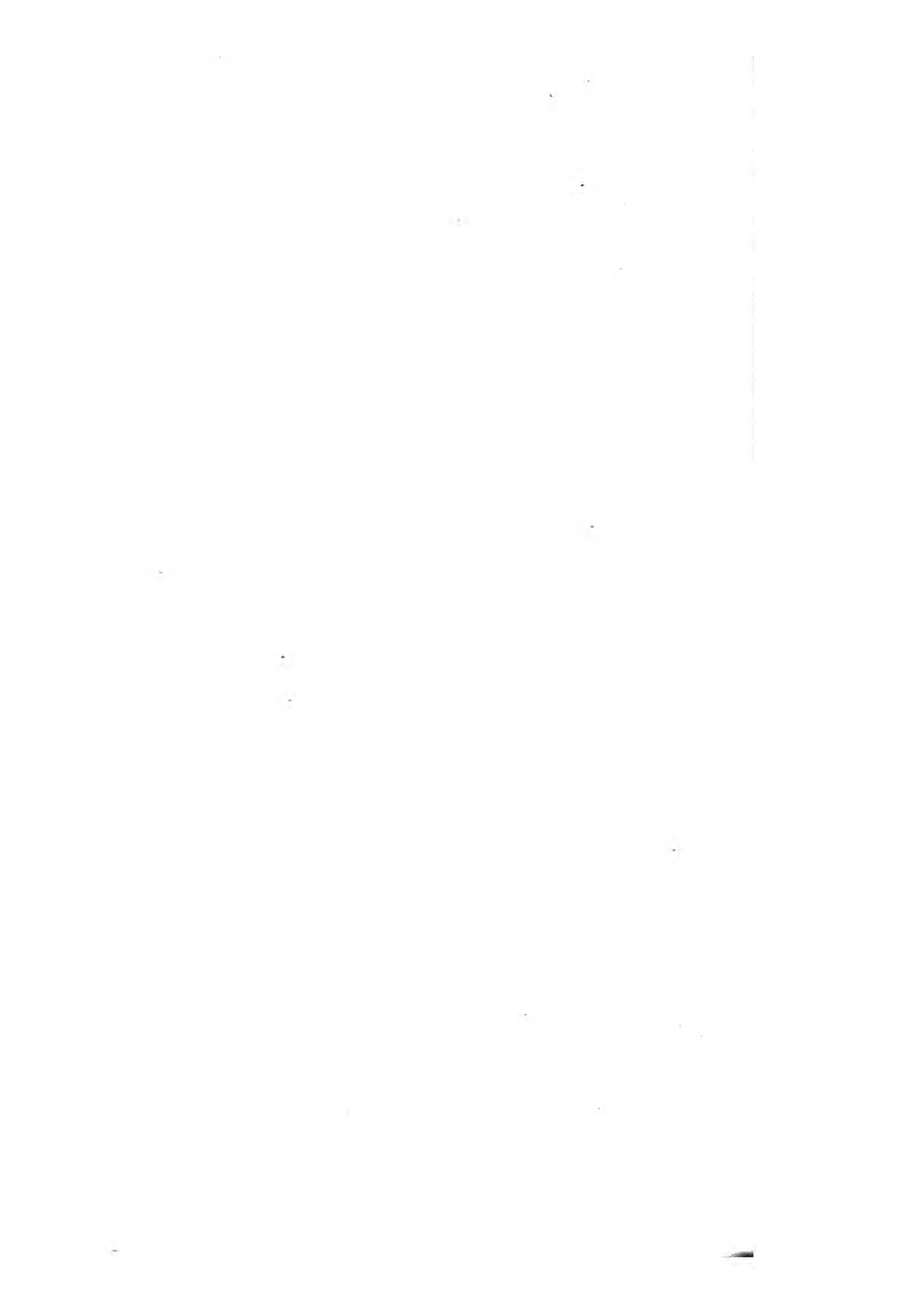
Soon after his entering into the church, he was recommended by Dr. Chaderton to the lord chief justice Popham, to be master of Tiverton school in Devonshire, then newly founded by Mr. Blundel, but he had scarcely accepted the appointment when lady Drury of Suffeld offered him the rectory of Halsted near St. Edmundsbury, which induced him to relinquish the school. Two years after his settlement at this place, he married a daughter of sir George Winniff of Bretenham.

In 1605 he accompanied sir Edmund Bacon to the Spa, where he composed his *Second Century of Meditations*, the first having been published before he set out. At Brussels he entered into a conference with Coster the jesuit, and confirmed his own religious persuasion by what he had occasion to see of the practices and actual state of the Romish church, which he states as the principal object that induced him to take this journey. About a year and a half after, happening to be in London, he was invited to preach before prince Henry at Richmond Palace, which he performed so much to his highness's satisfaction that he made him one of his chaplains².

His errand to London was a dispute with his patron sir Robert Drury, whom we have

¹ *i. e.* A gathering or harvest of rods. C.

² Wood says that on Oct. 30, 1611, he was collated to the archdeaconry of Nottingham upon the promotion of Dr. John King to the see of London. Wood's Ath. vol. i. Fasti. 155. C.



noticed as the patron of Donne also, but who in Mr. Hall's case does not appear to have acted with liberality or justice. He had detained about ten pounds per annum belonging to the living of Halsted, notwithstanding the remonstrances of the incumbent who assured him that with such a deduction it was an incompetent maintenance, and that he had been obliged to write books in order to be able to buy some. But these arguments did not prevail, and he was about to resign Halsted, when Edward, lord Denny, afterwards earl of Norwich, gave him the donative of Waltham Holy Cross in Essex. About the same time (1612) he took the degree of doctor in divinity.

He now returned home, and resumed his professional duties, happy in having overcome his perplexities, and in the acquisition of a new patron, whom he valued so highly as to refuse the prince's invitation to reside near his person, and in the road to higher preferment. He was afterwards made a prebendary of the collegiate church of Wolverhampton, a very small endowment, but acceptable to our author from the prospect it afforded of public usefulness; and after many law-suits he was the means of recovering some revenues belonging to the church which had been unjustly withheld. He is said by all his biographers to have retained the living of Waltham for twenty-two years, and this assertion is founded on his own words in his *Specialties*; but as he expressed the time in numerals there may be a mistake in the printing, for if he remained at Waltham twenty-two years, he must have kept that living after he was bishop of Exeter, which is not very probable, especially as we find there were three incumbents on the living of Waltham before the year 1637.

In 1616 he attended the embassy of James Kay, viscount Doncaster, into France, and during his absence king James performed a promise he had made before his setting out, of conferring upon him the deanery of Worcester. In the following year he accompanied his majesty into Scotland as one of his chaplains, but on his return it was insinuated to the king that Dr. Hall leaned too much to the presbyterian interpretation of the five points³, the discussion of which at that time occupied the attention of the protestant world; on this he was required to give his opinion in writing, and the king was so well satisfied, and so much of his way of thinking, as to command it to be read in the university of Edinburgh. In 1618 he was sent to the synod of Dort, which was summoned by the States General, and consisted of the most eminent divines deputed from the United Provinces, and churches of England, Scotland, Switzerland, &c. its object was to decide the controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians respecting the five points. Dr. Hall's companions on this mission were Dr. Carleton, bishop of Landaff and afterwards of Chichester; Dr. Davenant, master of Queen's College, Cambridge; and Dr. Ward, master of Sidney; but the state of his health requiring his return after about two months, his place was supplied by Dr. Goad. During his short residence, however, he preached a Latin sermon before the synod, and on his departure, among other honourable testimonies of their esteem, received from them a rich gold medal, which is painted suspended on his breast in the fine portrait now in Emmanuel College. It appears by his treatise, entitled *Via Media*, that he was not extremely rigid with respect to all the five points; but his was not an age for moderation, and no party sought a middle way.

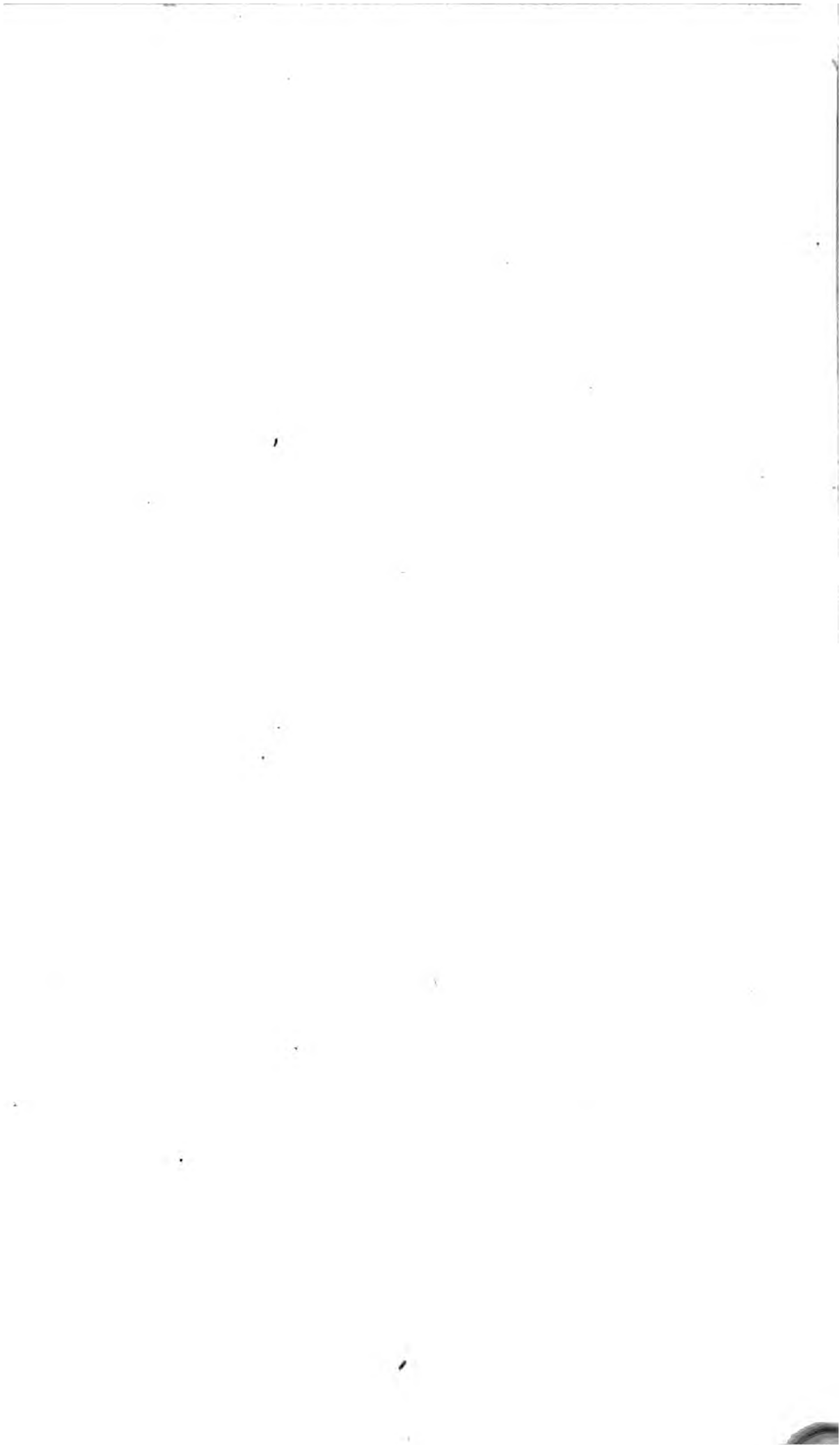
In 1624 he refused the bishopric of Gloucester, but in 1627 accepted that of Exeter,

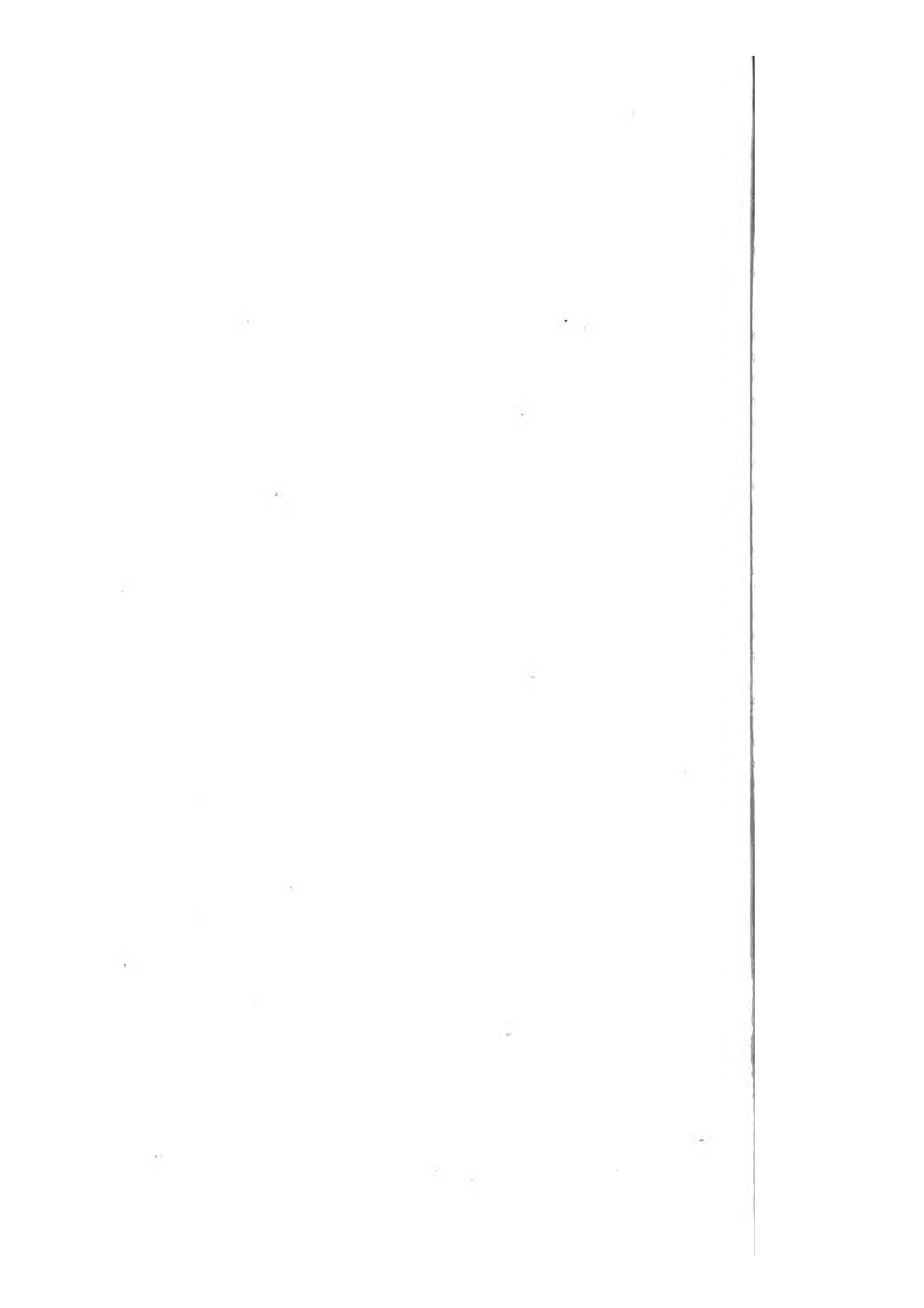
³ Viz. Predestination; the extent of Christ's death; man's free-will and corruption; the manner of our conversion to God; and, perseverance. C.

to which he was consecrated Dec. 23, holding with it in commendam the rectory of St. Breock in Cornwall. At this time he appears again to have lain under the suspicion of being a favourer of the puritans. What he says in his defence is worthy of notice. "I entered upon that place (the bishopric) not without much prejudice and suspicion on some hands; for some who sat at the stern of the church, had me in great jealousy for too much favour of puritanism. I soon had intelligence, who were set over me for spies; my ways were curiously observed and scanned.—Some persons of note in the clergy, finding me ever ready to encourage those whom I found conscionably forward and painful in their places, and willingly giving way to orthodox and peaceable lectures, in several parts of my diocese, opened their mouths against me, both obliquely in the pulpits, and directly at the court, complaining of my too much indulgence to persons disaffected, and my too much liberty of frequent lecturings within my charge. The billows went so high, that I was three several times upon my knees to his majesty, to answer these great criminations; and what contest I had with some great lords concerning these particulars, it would be too long to report: only this, under how dark a cloud I was hereupon, I was so sensible, that I plainly told the lord archbishop of Canterbury, (Laud) that rather than I would be obnoxious to these slanderous tongues of his misinformers, I would cast off my rochet: I knew I went right ways, and would not indure to live under undeserved suspicion."

It must be allowed that the religious principles which he inculcated from the pulpit and the press were much more consonant to what the puritans maintained, than the lax Arminianism for which Laud contended; but at the same time bishop Hall's zeal for episcopacy was not inferior to that of any supporter of the church. Few men indeed wrote more, or suffered more, in the cause. He published, even when publishing became hazardous, several able treatises in defence of the liturgy and church discipline, and was the powerful antagonist of Marshall, Calamy, Young, Newcomen, and Spurstow, who wrote a celebrated book called *Smectymnuus*, (a title made up of their initials, christian and surname) and all this he boldly ventured, when the republican party had possessed themselves of the fortresses of civil and ecclesiastical government, and were about to substitute persecution for argument; nor was it long before they made him experience the dangers of a high station in the church.

On the 15th of November 1641, he was translated, by the little power now left to the king, to be bishop of Norwich, but on the 30th of December following, having joined with the archbishop of York, and eleven other prelates, in a protest against the validity of such laws as should be made during their compelled absence from parliament, he was ordered to be sent to the Tower with his brethren, on the 30th of January 1641-2. Shortly after they were impeached by the commons of high treason, and on their appearance in parliament were treated with the utmost rudeness and contempt. The commons, however, did not think fit to prosecute the charge of high treason, having gained their purpose by driving them from the house of lords, and he and his brethren were ordered to be dismissed; but upon another pretext they were again sent to the Tower, and it was not until June following that he was finally released on giving bail for five thousand pounds. He immediately returned to Norwich, and being received with rather more respect than could be hoped for in the then state of popular opinion, he resumed his functions, frequently preaching, as was his custom, to crowded audiences, and enjoying the forbearance of the predominant party till the beginning of April 1643, when the destruction of the church could no longer be delayed. About this time, the ordinance for





sequestering notorious delinquents having passed, and our prelate being included by name, a distinction which his writings and his popularity had merited, all his rents were stopped, even the half-year then due; and a few days after the sequestrators entered his palace, and began the work of devastation with unfeeling brutality, seizing, at the same time, all his property, real and personal. Some notion of their proceedings may be formed from his own brief account.

“The sequestrators sent certain men appointed by them (whereof one had been burned in the hand) to appraise all the goods that were in my house; which they accordingly executed with all diligent severity, not leaving so much as a dozen of trenchers, or my childrens’ pictures, out of their curious inventory. Yea, they would have appraised our very wearing apparel, had not some of them declared their opinion to the contrary. These goods, both library and household stuff of all kinds, were appointed to be exposed to public sale; but in the mean time, Mrs. Goodwin, a religious good gentlewoman, whom yet we had never known or seen, being moved with compassion, very kindly offered to lay down to the sequestrators the whole sum at which the goods were valued; and was pleased to leave them in our hands, for our use, till we might be able to re-purchase them. As for the books, several stationers looked on them, but were not forward to buy. At last, Mr. Cook, a worthy divine of this diocese, gave bond to the sequestrators to pay them the whole sum whereat they were set: which was afterwards satisfied out of that poor pittance which was allowed me for my maintenance.”

This “poor pittance” had at first the appearance of liberality, for when he applied to the committee of sequestrators at Norwich, they were either so ashamed of what they had been compelled to do, or entertained so much respect for his character, as to agree that he should have £400 a year out of the revenues of the bishopric. But their employers at the seat of government disdained to vary their proceedings by such an act of generosity, and the Norwich committee were told that they had no power to allow any such thing; but if his wife needed a maintenance, upon her application to the lords and commons she might receive a fifth part. After long delays, this was granted; but the sequestrators produced such confused accounts, that the bishop could never ascertain what a fifth part meant, and was obliged to take what they offered. And that even this pittance might wear the appearance of insult and persecution, after they had cut off all his resources, they demanded assessments and monthly payments for the very estates they had seized, and levied distresses upon him, in spite of every assurance that he had given up all. They even commanded him to find the arms usually furnished by his predecessors, although they had deprived him of all power over his diocese.

While he remained in his palace, he was continually exposed to the insolence of the soldiery and mob, who were plundering and demolishing the windows and monuments of the cathedral. At length he was ordered to leave his house, and would have been exposed to the utmost extremity, had not a neighbour offered him the shelter of his humble roof. Some time after, but by what interest we are not told, the sequestration was taken off a small estate which he rented at Higham, near Norwich, to which he retired. His sufferings had not damped his courage, as, in 1644, we find him preaching in Norwich, whenever he could obtain the use of a pulpit; and, with yet more boldness, in the same year he sent A modest Offer of some meet Considerations, in favour of episcopacy, addressed to the assembly of divines. During the rest of his life he appears to have remained at Higham, unmolested, performing the duties of a faithful pastor, and exercising such hospitality and charity as his scanty means permitted.

He died September 8, 1656, in the eighty-second year of his age, and was buried in the church-yard of Higham, without any memorial. In his will he says, "I leave my body to be buried without any funeral pomp, at the discretion of my executors, with this only monition, that I do not hold God's house a meet repository for the dead bodies of the greatest saints." His wife died in 1647. He left a family behind, according to Lloyd, of whom Robert, the eldest son, was afterwards a clergyman and D. D.

His prose works were published at various periods, in folio, quarto, and duodecimo. They have lately been collected in a very handsome edition, by the rev. Josiah Pratt, in ten volumes, octavo. The Meditations have been often reprinted. As a moralist, he has been entitled the Christian Seneca; his knowledge of the world, depth of thought, and eloquence of expression, place him nearer our own times than many of his contemporaries, while he adorned his age by learning, piety, and the uniform exercise of all the Christian graces.

Mr. Warton has bestowed more elegant discussion on the merits of bishop Hall, as a poet, than on any of the Elizabethan age; and as this part of his History of Poetry has not been published, it may be considered as possessing the value of a manuscript. No apology can, therefore, be necessary for adopting it in this place.

ANALYSIS

OF

BISHOP HALL'S SATIRES;

BY MR. WARTON.

From the few sheets of Vol. IV. of his History of Poetry, which were printed, but not published.

THESE Satires are marked with a classical precision, to which English poetry had yet rarely attained. They are replete with animation of style and sentiment. The indignation of the satirist is always the result of good sense. Nor are the thorns of severe invective un-mixed with the flowers of pure poetry. The characters are delineated in strong and lively colouring, and their discriminations are touched with the masterly traces of genuine humour. The versification is equally energetic and elegant, and the fabric of the couplets approaches to the modern standard. It is no inconsiderable proof of a genius predominating over the general taste of an age when every preacher was a punster, to have written verses, where laughter was to be raised, and the reader to be entertained with sallies of pleasantry, without quibbles and conceits. His chief fault is obscurity, arising from a remote phraseology, constrained combinations, unfamiliar allusions, elliptical apostrophes, and abruptness of expression. Perhaps some will think, that his manner betrays too much of the laborious exactness and pedantic anxiety of the scholar and the

student. Ariosto in Italian, and Regnier in French, were now almost the only modern writers of satire: and I believe there had been an English translation of Ariosto's Satires. But Hall's acknowledged patterns are Juvenal and Persius, not without some touches of the urbanity of Horace. His parodies of these poets, or rather his adaptations of ancient to modern manners, a mode of imitation not unhappily practised by Oldham, Rochester, and Pope, discover great facility and dexterity of invention. The moral gravity and the censorial declamation of Juvenal, he frequently enlivens with a train of more refined reflection, or adorns with a novelty and variety of images.

In the opening of his general Prologue, he expresses a decent consciousness of the difficulty and danger of his new undertaking. The laurel which he sought had been unworn, and it was not to be won without hazard.

I first adventure, with fool-hardy might,
To tread the steps of perilous despight:
I first adventure, follow me who list,
And be the second English satirist.

His first book, containing nine Satires, is aimed at the numerous impotent yet fashionable scribblers with which his age was infested. It must be esteemed a curious and valuable picture, drawn from real life, of the abuses of poetical composition which then prevailed; and which our author has at once exposed with the wit of a spirited satirist, and the good taste of a judicious critic. Of Spenser, who could not have been his contemporary at Cambridge, as some have thought, but perhaps was his friend, he constantly speaks with respect and applause.

I avail myself of a more minute analysis of this book, not only as displaying the critical talents of our satirist, but as historical of the poetry of the present period, and illustrative of my general subject. And if, in general, I should be thought too copious and prolix in my examination of these Satires, my apology must be, my wish to revive a neglected writer of real genius, and my opinion, that the first legitimate author in our language of a species of poetry of the most important and popular utility, which our countrymen have so successfully cultivated, and from which Pope derives his chief celebrity, deserved to be distinguished with a particular degree of attention.

From the first Satire, which I shall exhibit at length, we learn what kinds of pieces were then most in fashion, and in what manner they were written. They seem to have been tales of love and chivalry, amatorial sonnets, tragedies, comedies, and pastorals.

Nor ladie's wanton loue, nor wandering knight,
Legend I out in rimes all richly dight:
Nor fright the reader, with the pagan vaunt
Of mighty Mahound, and great Termagaunt¹.
Nor list I sonnet of my mistress' face,
To paint some Blowesse² with a borrow'd grace.
Nor can I bide³ to pen some hungrie⁴ scene
For thick-skin ears, and undiscerning eene:

¹ Saracen divinities.

² In modern ballads, Blousilinda, or Blousibella. Doctor Johnson interprets blouze, a ruddy fat-faced wench. Dict. in V.

³ Abide, bear, endure.

⁴ Perhaps the true reading is *angrie*, that is, *impassioned*. These Satires have been most carelessly printed.

LIFE OF HALL.

Nor euer could my scornfull Muse abide
 With tragicke shoes⁵ her anckles for to hide.
 Nor can I crouch, and withe my fawning tayle,
 To some great patron, for my best auayle.
 Such hunger-starven trencher poetrie⁶,
 Or let it neuer liue, or timely die !
 Nor vnder euerie bank, and euerie tree,
 Speake rimes vnto mine oaten minstrelsie:
 Nor carol out so pleasing liuely laies
 As might the Graces moue my mirth to praise⁷.
 Trumpet, and reeds, and socks, and buskins fine,
 I them bequeathe⁸, whose statues th' wandring twise
 Of iuie, mix'd with bayes, circles around,
 Their liuing temples likewise lawrel-bound.
 Rather had I, albe in careless rimes,
 Check the disorder'd world, and lawless times.
 Nor need I craue the Muse's midwifry,
 To bring to birth so worthless poetry.
 Or, if we list⁹, what baser Muse can bide
 To sit and sing by Granta's naked side ?
 They haunt the tided Thames and salt Medway,
 Eer since the fame of their late bridal day.
 Nought have we here but willow-shaded shore,
 To tell our Grant his bankes are left forlore¹⁰.

The compliment in the close to Spenser, is introduced and turned with singular address and elegance. The allusion is to Spenser's beautiful episode of the marriage of Thames and Medway, recently published, in 1595, in the fourth book of the second part of *The Fairy Queen* ¹¹. "But had I," says the poet, "been inclined to invoke the assistance of a Muse, what Muse, even of a lower order, is there now to be found, who would condescend to sit and sing on the desolated margin of the Cam? The Muses frequent other rivers, ever since Spenser celebrated the nuptials of Thames and Medway. Cam has now nothing on his banks but willows, the types of desertion."

I observe here, in general, that Thomas Hudson and Henry Lock were the Bavius and Meuius of this age. In *The Return from Parnassus*, 1606, they are thus consigned to oblivion by Judicio. "Locke and Hudson, sleep you quiet shavers among the shavings of the press, and let your books lie in some old nook amongst old boots and shoes, so you may avoid my censure ¹²." Hudson translated into English Du Bartas's poem of *Judith and Holofernes*, in which is this couplet :

And at her eare a pearle of greater valew
 There hung, than that th' Egyptian queene did swallow.

Yet he is commended by Harrington for making this translation in a "verie good and

⁵ Buskins. ⁶ Poetry written by hirelings for bread. ⁷ Perhaps this couplet means comedy.

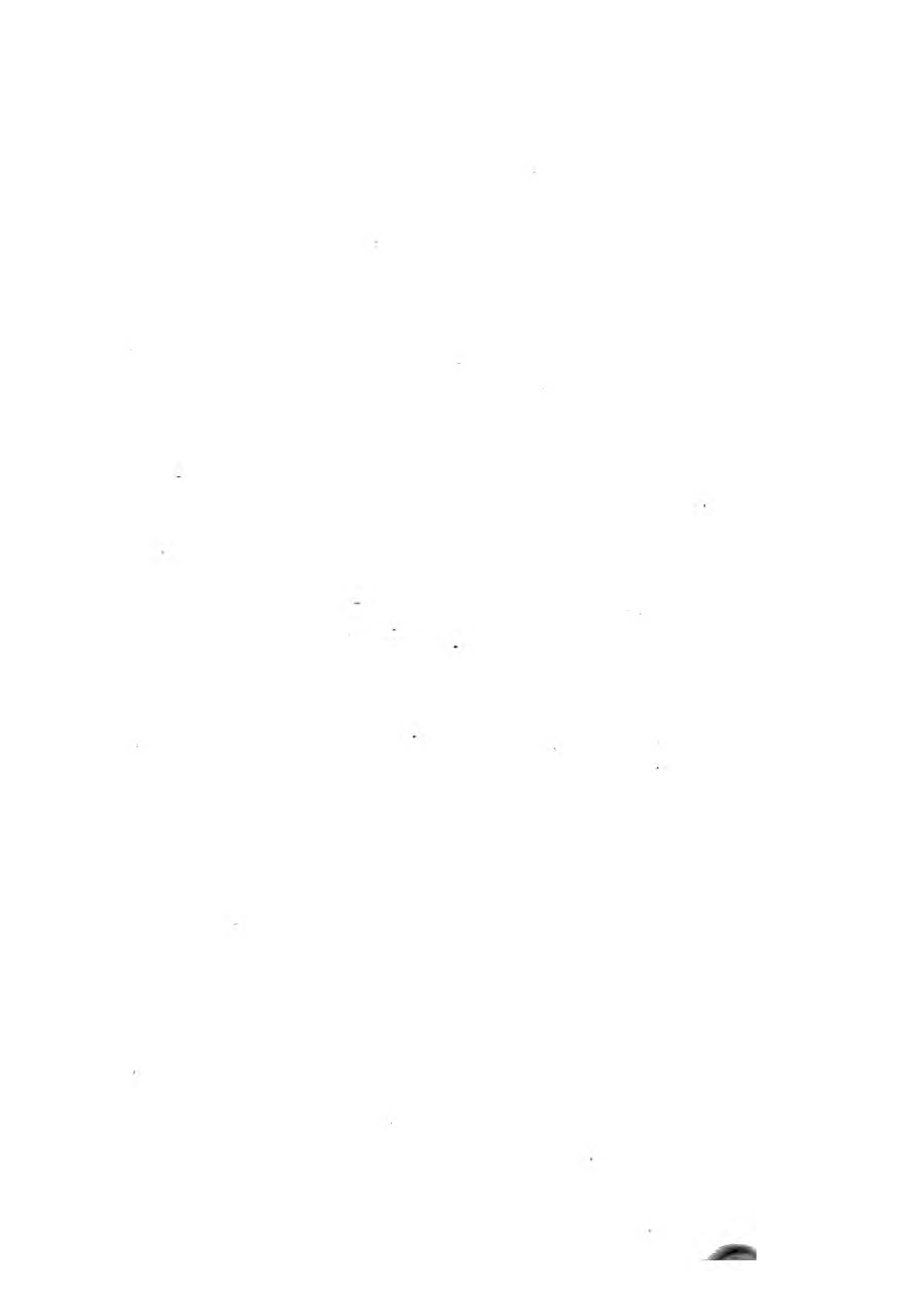
⁸ Heroic poetry, pastorals, comedy, and tragedy, I leave to the celebrated established masters in those different kinds of composition, such as Spenser and Shakspeare; unless the classic poets are intended. The imitation from Persius's Prologue is obvious.

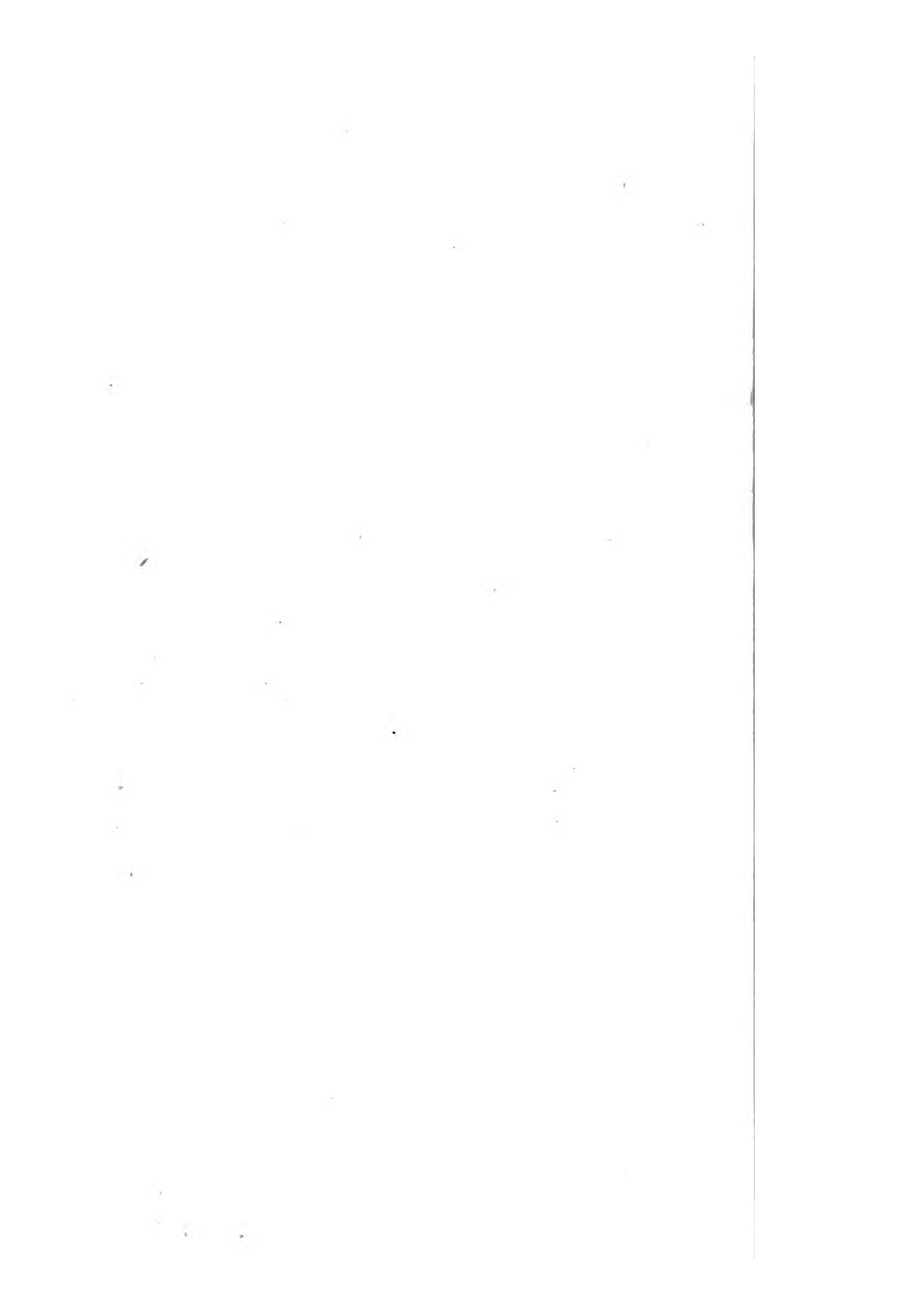
⁹ Or, even if I was willing to invoke a Muse, &c.

¹⁰ B. i. l. f. l. edit. 1599.

¹¹ B. iv. C. xi.

¹² A. i. S. ii.





sweet English verse¹³," and is largely cited in England's Parnassus, 1600. Lock applied the sonnet to a spiritual purpose, and substituting Christian love in the place of amorous passion, made it the vehicle of humiliation, holy comfort, and thanksgiving. This book he dedicated, under the title of *The Passionate Present*, to queen Elizabeth, who, perhaps, from the title, expected to be entertained with a subject of a very different nature¹⁴.

In the second Satire, our author poetically laments that the nine Muses are no longer vestal virgins.

Whilom the Muses nine were vestal maides,
And held their temple in the secret shades
Of faire Parnassvs, that two-headed hill
Whose avncient fame the southern world did fill:
And in the stead of their eternal fame
Was the cool stream, that took his endless name
From out the fertile hoof of winged steed:
There did they sit, and do their holy deed
That pleas'd both Heaven and Earth.....

He complains, that the *rabble of rymesters new* have engrafted the myrtle on the bay; and that poetry, departing from its ancient moral tendency, has been unnaturally perverted to the purposes of corruption and impurity. The Muses have changed, in defiance of chastity,

Their modest stole to garish looser weed,
Deckt with loue-fauours, their late whoredom's meed—

while the pellucid spring of Pyrene is converted into a poisonous and muddy puddle,

.....Whose infectious staine
Corrupteth all the lowly fruitfull plaine¹⁵.

Marlow's Ovid's Elegies, and some of the dissolute sallies of Green and Nash, seem to be here pointed out. I know not of any edition of Marston's *Pygmalion's Image* before the year 1598; and the *Caltha Poetarum*, or *Bumble-Bee*, one of the most exceptional books of this kind, written by T. Cutwode, appeared in 1599¹⁶. Shakspeare's *Venus and Adonis*, published in 1593, had given great offence to the graver readers of English verse¹⁷.

¹³ Transl. Orl. Fur. Notes, B. xxxv. p. 296. 1633. Hence, or from an old play, the name of *Holofernes* got into Shakspeare.

¹⁴ I have before cited this collection, which appeared in 1597, vol. iii. 445. That was a second edition. To his *Ecclesiastes* there is a recommendatory poem by Lilly. Some of David's Psalms in verse appear with his name the same year.

¹⁵ B. i. 2. f. 4.

¹⁶ To R. Olave, April 17, 1599. Registr. Station. C. f. 50. b.

¹⁷ This we learn from a poem entitled, *A Scourge for Paper Persecutors*, by J. D. with an *Inquisition against Paper Persecutors* by A. H. Lond. for H. H. 1625, 4to. Signat. A. 3.

Making lewd Venus with eternall lines
To tye Adonis to her loues designes:
Fine wit is shown therein, but finer 't were
If not attired in such bawdy geere :-
But be it as it will, the coyest dames
In priuate reade it for their closet-games.

In the subsequent Satire, our author more particularly censures the intemperance of his brethren; and illustrates their absolute inability to write, till their imaginations were animated by wine, in the following apt and witty comparison, which is worthy of Young.

As frozen dunghills in a winter's morn,
That void of vapours seemed all before,
Soon as the Sun sends out his piercing beams,
Exhale forth filthy smoak, and stinking steams;
So doth the base and the fore-barren brain,
Soon as the raging wine begins to rain.

In the succeeding lines, he confines his attack to Marlow, eminent for his drunken frolics, who was both a player and a poet, and whose tragedy of Tamerlane the Great, represented before the year 1588, published in 1590, and confessedly one of the worst of his plays, abounds in bombast. Its false splendour was also burlesqued by Beaumont and Fletcher in *The Coxcomb*; and it has these two lines, which are ridiculed by Pistol, in Shakspeare's *King Henry the Fourth*¹⁸, addressed to the captive princes who drew Tamerlane's chariot:

Holla, you pamper'd jades of Asia,
What, can ye draw but twenty miles a day?

We should, in the mean time, remember, that by many of the most skilful of our dramatic writers, tragedy was now thought almost essentially and solely to consist, in the pomp of declamation, in sounding expressions, and unnatural amplifications of style. But to proceed:

One, higher pitch'd, doth set his soaring thought
On crowned kings that fortune low hath brought;
Or some vpreared high-aspiring swaine,
As it might be the Turkish Tamberlaine¹⁹:
Then weeneth he his base drink-drowned spright
Rapt to the threefold loft of Heauen's hight:
When he conceiues upon his faigned stage
The stalking steps of his great personage
Graced with huff-cap termes, and thundering threats,
That his poor hearers hair quite vpright sets,
So soon as some braue-minded hungrie youth
Sees fitly frame to his wide-strained mouth,

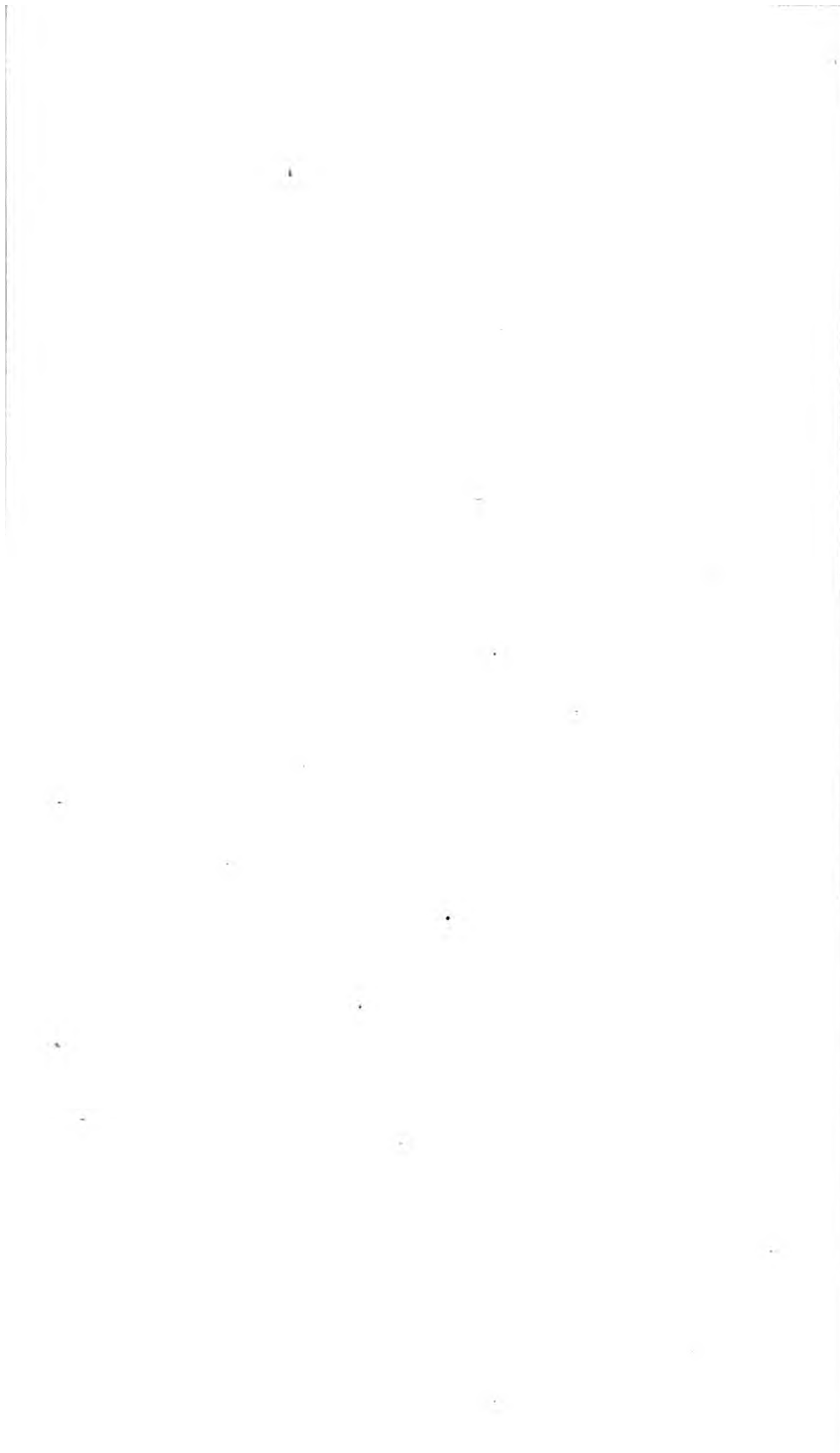
See also Freeman's *Epigrams*, the second part, entitled, *Run and a great Cast*. Lond. 1614, 4to. Epigr. 92. Signat. K. 3.

TO MASTER WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Shakespeare, that nimble Mercury thy braine, &c.
Who list reade lust, there 's Venus and Adonis,
True model of a most lasciuious letcher.

¹⁸ A. ii. S. iv.

¹⁹ There is a piece entered to R. Jones, Aug. 14, 1590, entitled, *Comicall Discourses of Tamberlain the Cithian [Scythian] Shepherd*. Registr. Station, B. f. 262. b. Probably the story of Tamerlane was introduced into our early drama from the following publication: *The Historie of the great Emperour Tamerlane*, drawn from the antient Monuments of the Arabians. By messire Jean du Bec, abbot of Mortimer. Translated into English by H. M. London, for W. Ponsonbie, 1597, 4to. I cite from a second edition.



He vaunts his voice vpon a hired stage,
 With high-set steps and princelie carriage.—
 There if he can with termes Italianate,
 Big-sounding sentences, and words of state,
 Faire patch me vp his pure iambicke verse,
 He rauishes the gazing scoffolders²⁰.

But, adds the critical satirist, that the minds of the astonished audience may not be too powerfully impressed with the terrors of tragic solemnity, a Vice, or buffoon, is suddenly and most seasonably introduced.

Now lest such frightful shews of fortvne's fall,
 And bloody tyrant's rage, should chance appall
 The dead-struck audience, mid the silent rout
 Comes leaping in a self-misformed lout,
 And laughs, and grins, and frames his mimic face,
 And jostles straight into the prince's place.—
 A goodlie hotch-potch, when vile russetings
 Are match'd with monarchs, and with mighty kings;
 A goodly grace to sober tragick Muse,
 When each base clowne his clumsy fist doth bruise²¹!

To complete these genuine and humorous anecdotes of the state of our stage in the reign of Elizabeth, I make no apology for adding the paragraph immediately following, which records the infancy of theatric criticism.

Meanwhile our poets, in high parliament,
 Sit watching euerie word and gesturement,
 Like curious censors of some doutie gear,
 Whispering their verdict in their fellows ear.
 Woe to the word, whose margin in their scrole²²
 Is noted with a black condemning coal!
 But if each period might the synod please,
 Ho! bring the iwie boughs, and bands of bayes²³.

In the beginning of the next Satire, he resumes this topic. He seems to have conceived a contempt for blank verse; observing that the English iambic is written with little trouble, and seems rather a spontaneous effusion, than an artificial construction.

Too popular is tragick poesie,
 Straining his tiptoes for a farthing fee:
 And doth, beside, on rimeless numbers tread:
 Unbid iambicks flow from careless head.

²⁰ Those who sate on the scaffold, a part of the play-house which answered to our upper-gallery. So again, B. iv. 2. f. 13.

When a craz'd scaffold, and a rotten stage,
 Was all rich Nenius his heritage.

See the conformation of our old English theatre accurately investigated in the Supplement to Shakespeare, i. 9. seq. [See supr. vol. iii. 327.]

²¹ In striking the benches to express applause.

²² Copy.

²³ B. i. 3. f. 8.

He next inveighs against the poet, who

..... in high heroic rimes
Compileth worm-eat stories of old times.

To these antique tales he condemns the application of the extravagant enchantments of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, particularly of such licentious fictions as the removal of Merlin's tomb from Wales into France, or Tuscany, by the magic operations of the sorceress Melissa²⁴. The *Orlando* had been just now translated by Harrington.

And maketh up his hard-betaken tale
With strange inchantments, fetch'd from darksome vale
Of some Melissa, who by magick doom
To Tuscans soile transporteth Merlin's tomb.

But he suddenly checks his career, and retracts his thoughtless temerity in presuming to blame such themes as had been immortalised by the Fairy Muse of Spenser.

But let no rebel satyr dare traduce
Th' eternal legends of thy Faerie Muse,
Renowned Spenser! whom no earthly wight
Dares once to emulate, much less dares despight.
Salust²⁵ of France, and Tuscan Ariost,
Yield vp the lawrell garland ye haue lost²⁶!

In the fifth, he ridicules the whining ghosts of *The Mirrour of Magistrates*, which the ungenerous and unpitying poet sends back to Hell, without a penny to pay Charon for their return over the river Styx²⁷.

In the sixth, he laughs at the hexametrical versification of the Roman prosody, so contrary to the genius of our language, lately introduced into English poetry by Stanishurst the translator of Virgil, and patronised by Gabriel Harvey and sir Philip Sidney.

Another scorns the homespun thread of rimes,
Match'd with the lofty feet of elder times.
Give me the numbred verse that Virgil sung,
And Virgil's selfe shall speake the English tounge.—
The nimble dactyl striving to outgo
The drawling spondees, pacing it below:
The lingering spondees labouring to delay
The breathless dactyls with a sudden stay²⁸.

His own lines on the subject are a proof that English verse wanted to borrow no graces from the Roman.

²⁴ See *Orl. Fur.* iii. 10. xxvi. 39.

²⁵ *Du Bartas*.

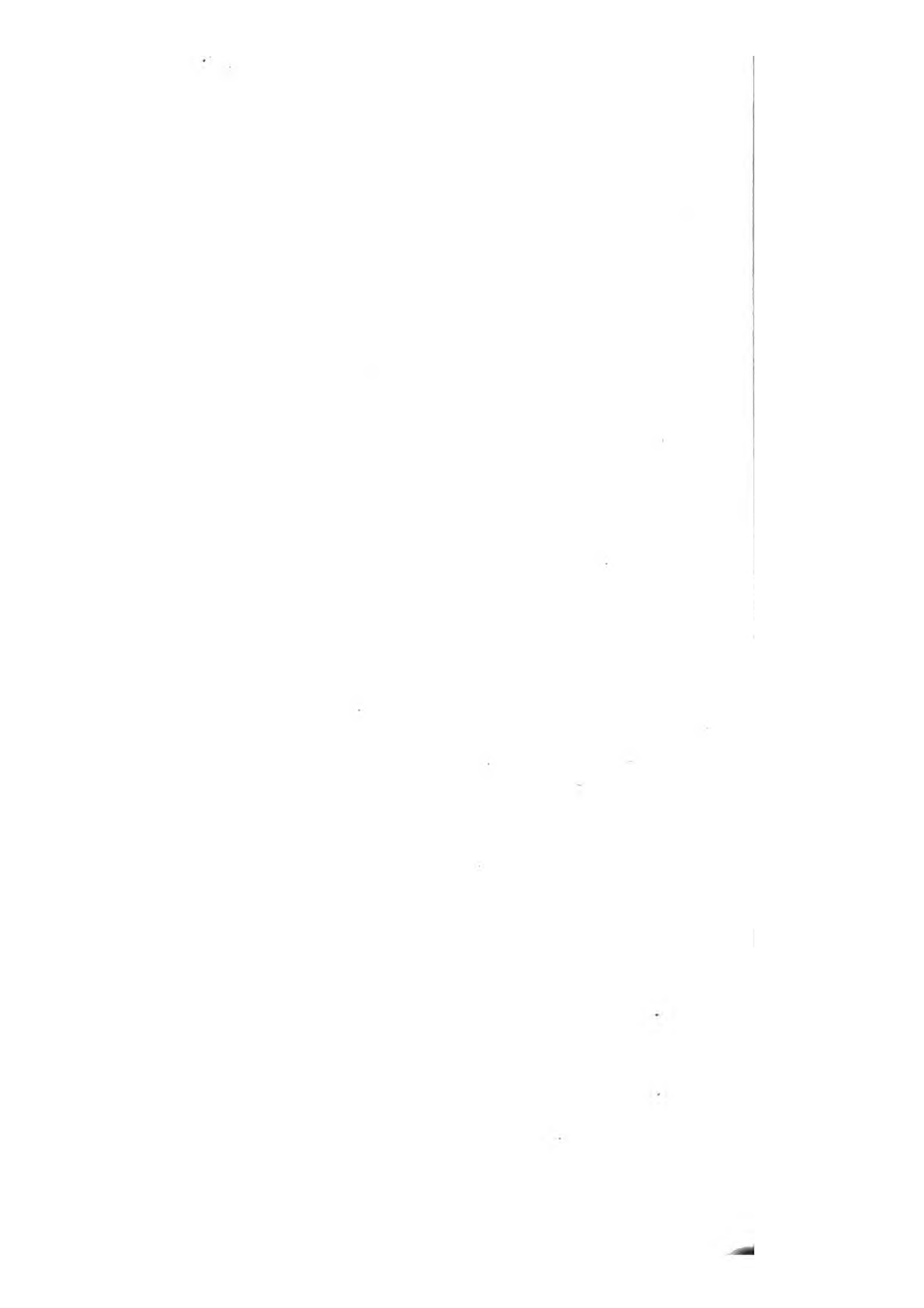
²⁶ *B. i. 4. f. 11*. In the stanzas called *A Defiance to Envy*, prefixed to the *Satires*, he declares his reluctance and inability to write pastorals after Spenser.

At Colin's feet I throw my yielding reede.

But in some of those stanzas in which he means to ridicule the pastoral, he proves himself admirably qualified for this species of poetry.

²⁸ *B. i. 6. f. 13, 14*.

²⁷ *B. i. 5. f. 12*.



The false and foolish compliments of the sonnet-writer, are the object of the seventh Satire.

Be she all sooty black, or berry brown,
She 's white as morrow's milk, or flakes new-blown.

He judges it absurd, that the world should be troubled with the history of the smiles or frowns of a lady; as if all mankind were deeply interested in the privacies of a lover's heart, and the momentary revolutions of his hope and despair²⁹.

In the eighth, our author insinuates his disapprobation of sacred poetry, and the metrical versions of scripture, which were encouraged and circulated by the puritans. He glances at Robert Southwell's *Saint Peter's Complaint*³⁰, in which the saint *weeps pure Helicon*, published this year, and the same writer's *Funerall Teares of the Two Marias*. He then, but without mentioning his name, ridicules Markham's *Sion's Muse*, a translation of Solomon's Song³¹. Here, says our satirical critic, Solomon assumes the character of a modern sonneteer; and celebrates the sacred spouse of Christ with the levities and in the language of a lover singing the praises of his mistress³².

The hero of the next Satire I suspect to be Robert Greene, who practised the vices which he so freely displayed in his poems. Greene, however, died three or four years before the publication of these Satires³³. Nor is it very likely that he should have been, as Oldys has suggested in some manuscript papers, Hall's contemporary at Cambridge, for he was incorporated into the university of Oxford, as a master of arts from Cambridge, in July, under the year 1588³⁴. But why should we be solicitous to recover a name, which indecency, most probably joined with dulness, has long ago deservedly delivered to oblivion? Whoever he was, he is surely unworthy of these elegant lines:

Envy, ye Muses, at your thriving mate!
Cupid hath crowned a new laureate.
I sawe his statue gayly tir'd in green,
As if he had some second Phebus been:
His statue trimm'd with the Venerean tree,
And shrined fair within your sanctuary.
What he, that erst to gain the rhyming goal, &c.

He then proceeds, with a liberal disdain, and with an eye on the stately buildings of his university, to reprobate the Muses for this unworthy profanation of their dignity.

Take this, ye Muses, this so high despight,
And let all hatefull, luckless birds of night,
Let screeching owles nest in your razed roofs;
And let your floor with horned satyr's hoofs
Be dinted and defiled euerie morn,
And let your walls be an eternal scorn!

²⁹ B. i. 7. f. 15.

³⁰ Wood says that this poem was written by Davies of Hereford. *Ath. Oxon.* i. 445. But he had given it to Southwell, p. 334.

³¹ See *supr.* vol. iii. p. 318.

³² B. i. 8. f. 17.

³³ In 1593, Feb. 1, a piece is entered to Danter called *Greene's Funerall*. *Registr. Station.* B. f. 304. b.

³⁴ *Registr. Univ. Oxon. sub ann.*

His execration of the infamy of adding to the mischiefs of obscenity, by making it the subject of a book, is strongly expressed.

What if some Shoreditch³⁵ fury should incite
Some lust-stung lecher, must he needs *indite*
The beastly rites of hired uenery,
The whole world's vniuersal bawd to be?
Did neuer yet no damned libertine,
Nor older heathen, nor new Florentine³⁶, &c.

Our poets, too frequently the children of idleness, too naturally the lovers of pleasure, began now to be men of the world, and affected to mingle in the dissipations and debaucheries of the metropolis. To support a popularity of character, not so easily attainable in the obscurities of retirement and study, they frequented taverns, became libertines and buffoons, and exhilarated the circles of the polite and the profligate. Their way of life gave the colour to their writings: and what had been the favourite topic of conversation, was sure to please, when recommended by the graces of poetry. Add to this, that poets now began to write for hire, and a rapid sale was to be obtained at the expense of the purity of the reader's mind³⁷. The author of *The Return from Parnassus*, acted in 1606, says of Drayton, a true genius, "However, he wants one true note of a poet of our times, and that is this: he cannot swagger it well in a tavern³⁸."

The first Satire of the second book properly belongs to the last. In it, our author continues his just and pointed animadversions on immodest poetry, and hints at some pernicious versions from the *Facetiæ* of Poggius Florentinus, and from Rabelais. The last couplet of the passage I am going to transcribe, is most elegantly expressive.

But who conjur'd this bawdie Poggie's ghost
From out the stewes of his lewde home-bred coast;
Or wicked Rablais' drunken reuellings³⁹,
To grace the misrule of our tauernings?
Or who put bayes into blind Cupid's fist,
That he should crowne what laureates him list⁴⁰?

By *tauernings*, he means the increasing fashion of frequenting taverns, which seem to have multiplied with the play-houses. As new modes of entertainment sprung up, and new places of public resort became common, the people were more often called together, and the scale of convivial life in London was enlarged. From the play-house they went to the tavern. In one of Decker's pamphlets, printed in 1609, there is a cu-

³⁵ A part of the town notorious for brothels.

³⁶ Peter Aretine.

³⁷ Harrington has an Epigram on this subject. Epigr. B. i. 40.

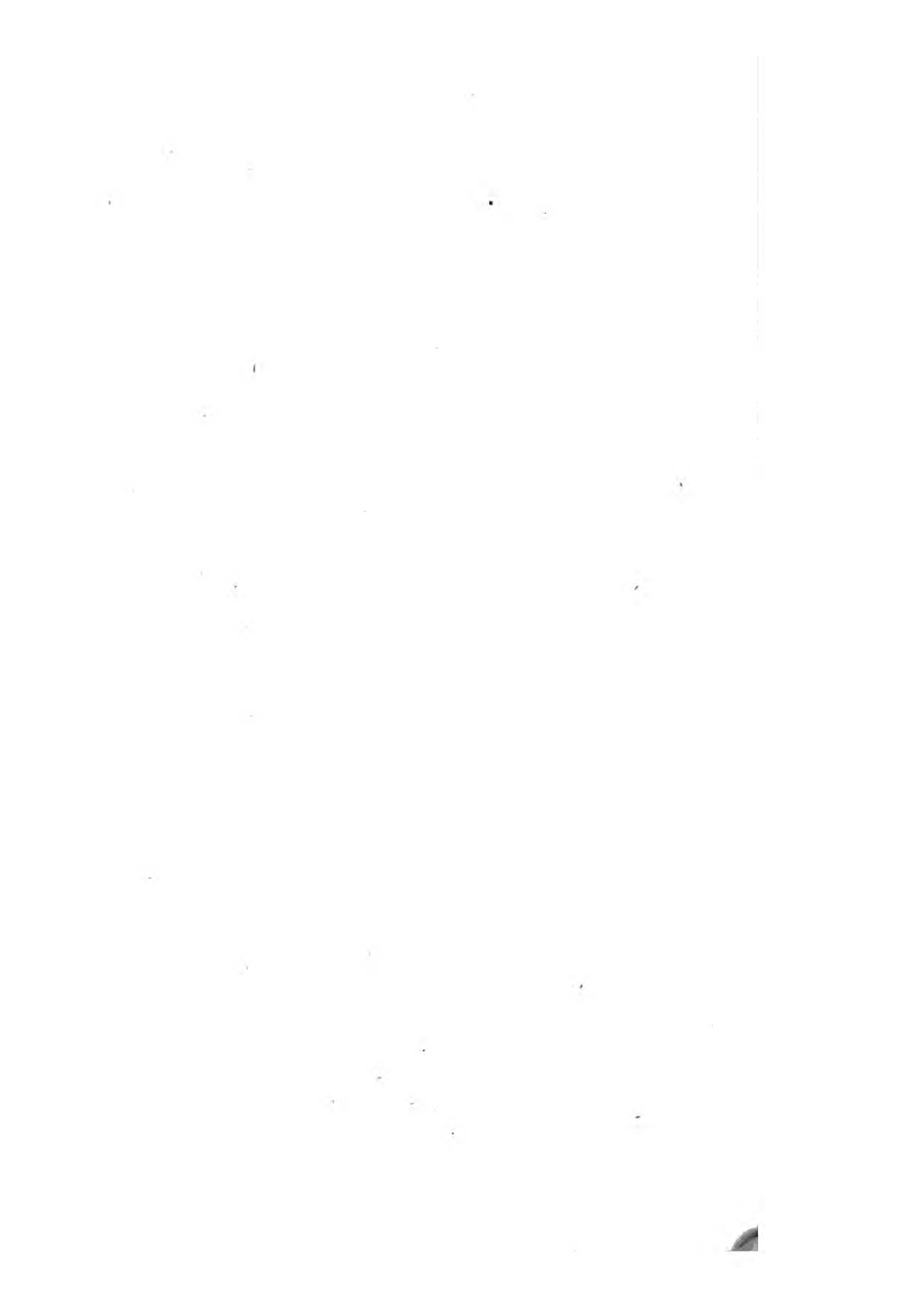
Poets hereaft for pensions need not care,
Who call you beggars, you may call them lyars;
Verses are grown sveh merchantable ware,
That now for sonnets, sellers are and buyers.

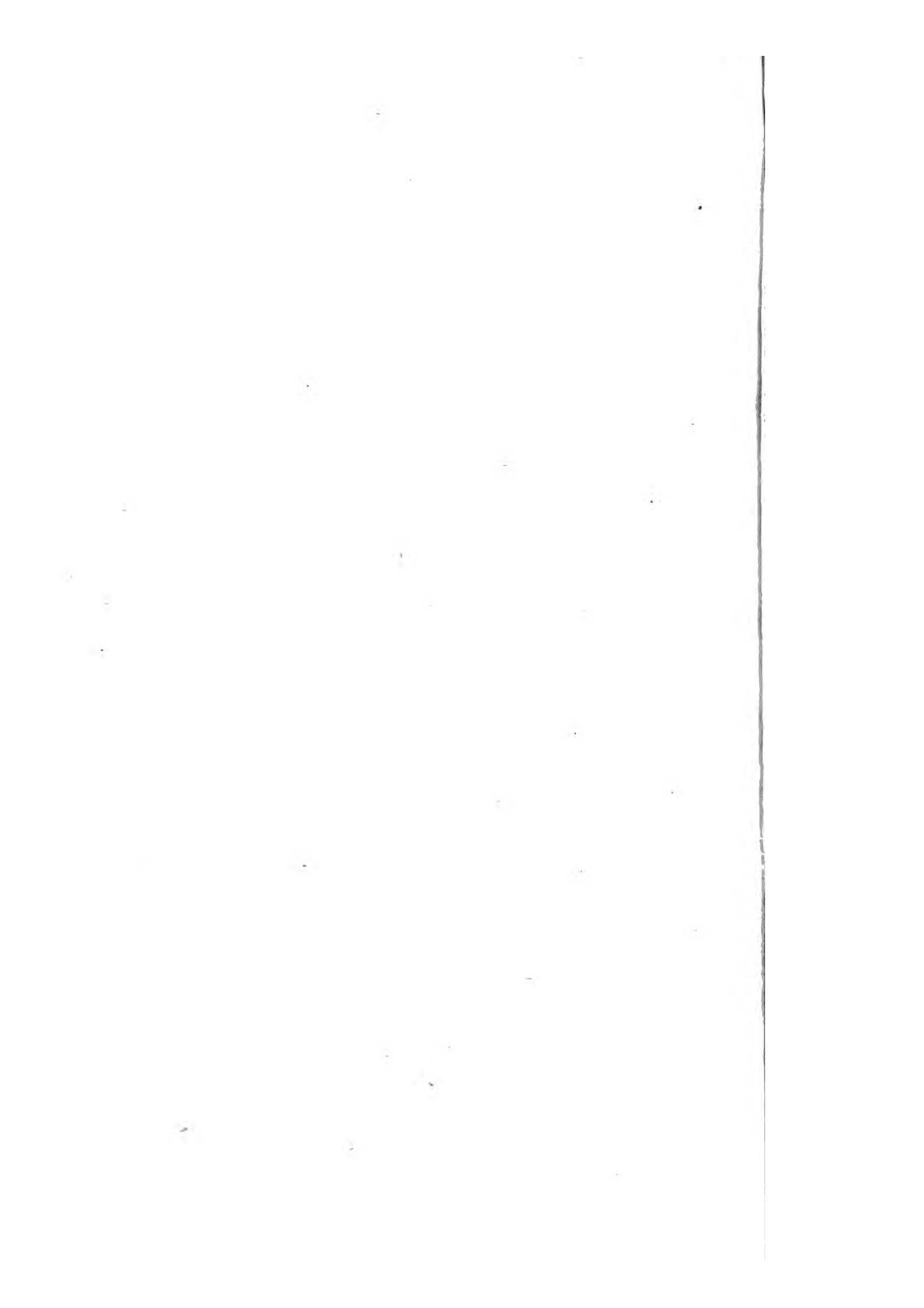
And again, he says a poet was paid "two crownes a sonnet." Epigr. B. i. 39.

³⁸ A. i. S. ii.

³⁹ Harvey, in his *Four Letters*, 1592, mentions "the fantastical mould of Aretine or Rabelays." p. 48. Aretine is mentioned in the last Satire.

⁴⁰ B. ii. 1. f. 25.





rious chapter, "How a yong Gallant should behave himself in an Ordinarie⁴¹." One of the most expensive and elegant meetings of this kind in London is here described. It appears that the company dined so very late, as at half an hour after eleven in the morning; and that it was the fashion to ride to this polite symposium on a Spanish jennet, a servant running before with his master's cloke. After dinner, they went on horseback to the newest play. The same author, in his *Belman's Night Walkes*⁴², a lively description of London, almost two centuries ago, gives the following instructions: "Haunt tavernes, there shalt thou find prodigalls: pay thy two-pence to a player in his gallerie, there shalt thou sit by an harlot. At ordinaries thou maist dine with silken fooles⁴³."

In the second Satire, he celebrates the wisdom and liberality of our ancestors, in erecting magnificent mansions for the accommodation of scholars, which yet at present have little more use than that of reproaching the rich with their comparative neglect of learning. The verses have much dignity, and are equal to the subject.

To what end did our lavish auncestours
Erect of old those statclie piles of ours?
For thread-bare clerks, and for the ragged Muse,
Whom better fit some cotes of sad secluse?
Blush, niggard Age, be asham'd to see
Those monuments of wiser auncestrie!
And ye, faire heapes, the Muses sacred shrines,
In spight of time, and enuious repines,
Stand still, and flourish till the world's last day,
Vpraiding it with former loue's⁴⁴ decay.
What needes me care for anie bookish skill,
To blot white paper with my restlesse quill:
To pore on painted leaues, or beate my braine
With far-fetch'd thought: or to consvme in uaine
In latter euen, or midst of winter nights,
Ill-smelling oyles, or some still-watching lights, &c.

He concludes his complaint of the general disregard of the literary profession, with a spirited paraphrase of that passage of Persius, in which the philosophy of the pro-

⁴¹ Dekker's *Guls Horne Book*, p. 22. There is an old quarto, *The Meetings of Gallants at an Ordinarie, or the Walkes of Powles*; 1604. Jonson says of lieutenant Shift, *Epigr.* xii.

He steales to ordinaries, there he playes
At dice his borrowed money.....

And in *Cynthia's Revells*, 1600, "You must frequent ordinaries a month more, to initiate yourself." A. iii. S. i.

⁴² The title-page is *O per se O, or A newe Cryer of Langthorne and Candle Light, &c.* Lond. 1612. 4to. Bl. Lett. For J. Busbie. There is a later edition 1620, 4to.

⁴³ Ch. ii. Again, in the same writer's *Belman of London* bringing to light the most notorious Villanies that are now practised in the Kingdom, signat. E. 3: "At the best ordinaries where your only gallants spend afternoones, &c." Edit. 1608, 4to. Bl. Lett. Printed at London for N. Butter. This is called a second edition. There was another, 1616, 4to. This piece is called, by a contemporary writer, the most witty, elegant, and eloquent display of the vices of London then extant. *W. Fennor's Comptor's Commonwealth*, 1617, 4to. p. 16.

⁴⁴ Of learning.

found Arcesilaus, and of the *ærumosi Solones*, is proved to be of so little use and estimation⁴⁵.

In the third, he laments the lucrative injustice of the law, while ingenuous science is without emolument or reward. The exordium is a fine improvement of his original.

Who doubts, the laws fell downe from Heauen's hight,
Like to some gliding starre in winter's night ?
Themis, the scribe of god, did long agone
Engrave them deepe in during marble stone :
And cast them downe on this unruly clay,
That men might know to rule and to obey.

The interview between the anxious client and the rapacious lawyer is drawn with much humour ; and shows the authoritative superiority, and the mean subordination, subsisting between the two characters, at that time.

The crowching client, with low-bended knee,
And manie worships, and faire flatterie,
Tells on his tale as smoothly as him list ;
But still the lawyer's eye squints on his fist :
If that seem lined with a larger fee,
" Doubt not the suite, the law is plaine for thee."
Though⁴⁶ must he buy his vainer hope with price,
Disclout his crownes⁴⁷, and thanke him for advice⁴⁸.

The fourth displays the difficulties and discouragements of the physician. Here we learn, that the *sick lady* and the *gouty peer* were then topics of the ridicule of the satirist.

The sickly ladie, and the gowtie peere,
Still would I haunt, that loue their life so deere :
Where life is deere, who cares for coyned drosse ?
That spent is counted gaine, and spared losse.

He thus laughs at the quintessence of a sublimated mineral elixir.

Each powdred graine ransometh captive kings,
Purchaseth realmes, and life prolonged brings⁴⁹.

⁴⁵ B. ii. 2. f. 28. In the last line of this Satire he says,

Let swinish Grill delight in dunghill clay.

Gryllus is one of Ulysses's companions transformed into a hog by Circe, who refuses to be restored to his human shape. But perhaps the allusion is immediately to Spenser. Fair. Qu. ii. 12. 81.

⁴⁶ Yet even.

⁴⁷ Pull them out of his purse.

⁴⁸ B. ii. 3. f. 31. I cite a couplet from this Satire to explain it.

Genus and Species long since barfoote went
Upon their tentoes in wilde wonderment, &c.

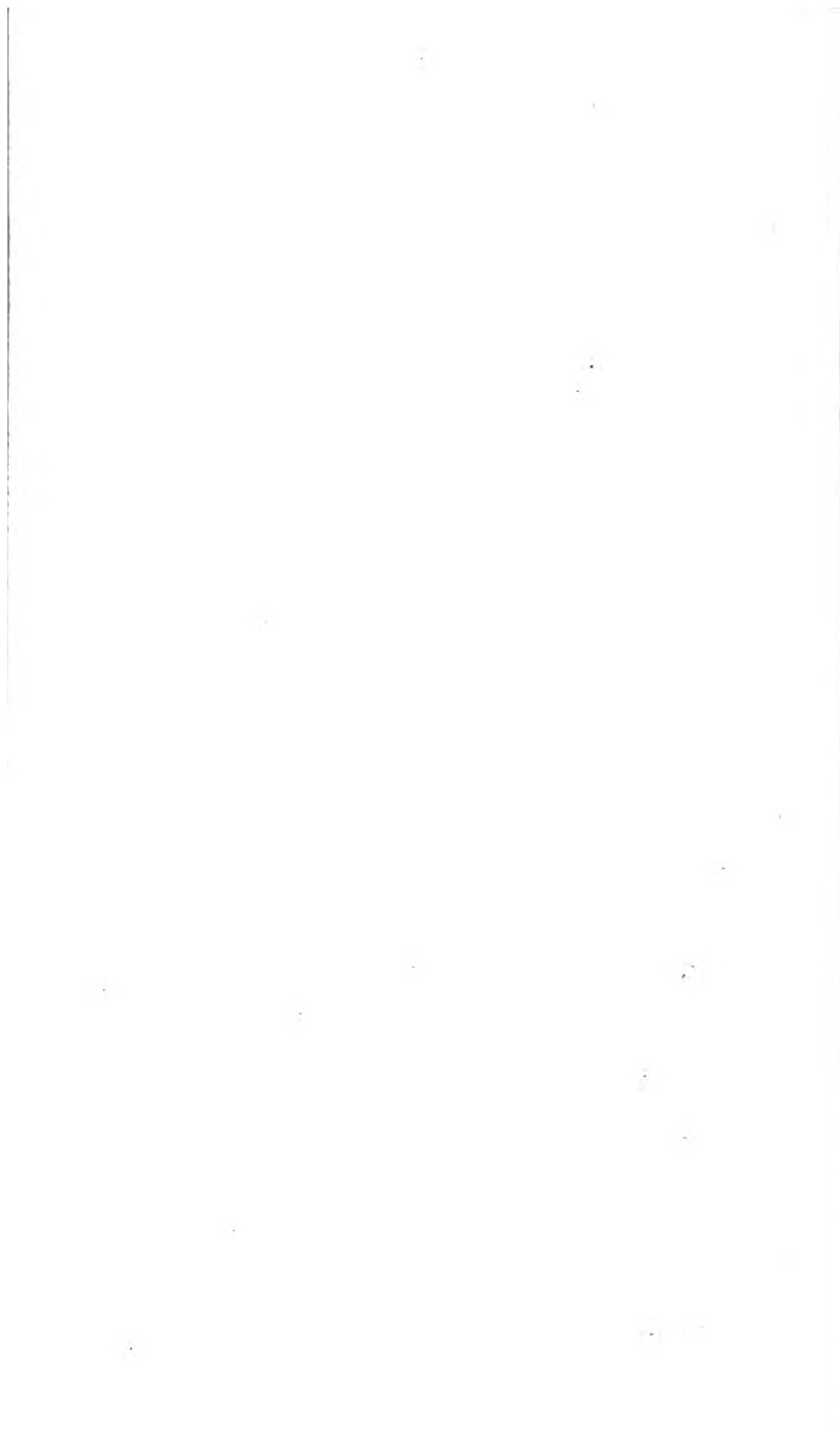
This is an allusion to an old distich, made and often quoted in the age of scholastic science.

Dat Galenus opes, dat Justinianus honores,
Sed Genus et Species cogitur ire pedes.

That is, the study of medicine produces riches, and jurisprudence leads to stations and offices of honour : while the professor of logic is poor, and obliged to walk on foot.

⁴⁹ B. ii. 4. f. 35.





Imperial oils, golden cordials, and universal panaceas, are of high antiquity: and perhaps the puffs of quackery were formerly more ostentatious than even at present, before the profession of medicine was freed from the operations of a spurious and superstitious alchymy, and when there were mystics in philosophy as well as in religion. Paracelsus was the father of empiricism.

From the fifth we learn, that advertisements of a *living wanted* were affixed on one of the doors of Saint Paul's cathedral.

Sawst thou ere Siquis⁵⁰ patch'd on Paul's church dore,
To gaine some vacant vicarage before?

The sixth, one of the most perspicuous and easy, perhaps the most humorous, in the whole collection, and which I shall therefore give at length, exhibits the servile condition of a domestic preceptor in the family of an esquire. Several of the Satires of this second book, are intended to show the depressed state of modest and true genius, and the inattention of men of fortune to literary merit.

A gentle squire would gladly entertain
Into his house some trencher-chapelaine⁵¹;
Some willing man, that might instruct his sons,
And that would stand to good conditions.
First, that he lie vpon the truckle-bed,
While his young maister lieth o'er his head⁵²:
Second, that he do, upon no default,
Neuer presume to sit about the salt⁵³:

⁵⁰ Siquis was the first word of advertisements, often published on the doors of Saint Paul's. Decker says, "The first time that you enter into Pauls, pass thorough the body of the church like a porter; yet presvme not to fetch so much as one whole turne in the middle ile, nor to cast an eye vpon Siquis doore, pasted and plaistered vp with seruingmens supplications, &c." *The Guls Horne Booke*, 1609. p. 21. And in Wroth's *Epigrams*, 1620, Epigr. 93,

A mery Greeke set vp a Siquis late,
To signifie a stranger come to towne
Who could great noses, &c.

⁵¹ Or, a table-chaplain. In the same sense we have *trencher-knight*, in *Love's Labour's Lost*.

⁵² This indulgence allowed to the pupil, is the reverse of a rule anciently practised in our universities. In the statutes of Corpus Christi College at Oxford, given in 1516, the scholars are ordered to sleep respectively under the beds of the fellows, in a truckle-bed, or small bed shifted about upon wheels. "Sit unum [cubile] altius, et aliud humile et rotale, et in altiori cubet socius, in altero semper discipulus." Cap. xxxvii. Much the same injunction is ordered in the statutes of Magdalen College, Oxford, given 1459. "Sint duo lecti principales, et duo lecti rotales, *trookyll beddys* vulgariter nuncupati, &c." Cap. xlv. And in those of Trinity College, Oxford, given 1556, where *troccle bed*, the old spelling of the word *truckle bed*, ascertains the etymology from *troclea*, a wheel. Cap. xxvi. In an old comedy, *The Return from Parnassus*, acted at Cambridge in 1606, Amoretto says, "When I was in Cambridge, and lay in a trundle-bed under my tutor, &c." A. ii. Sc. vi.

⁵³ Towards the head of the table was placed a large and lofty piece of plate, the top of which, in a broad cavity, held the salt for the whole company. One of these stately saltcellars is still preserved, and in use, at Winchester College. With this idea, we must understand the following passage, of a table meanly decked, B. vi. i. f. 83:

Now shalt thou never see the salt beset
With a big-bellied gallon flagonet.

In Jonson's *Cynthia's Revells*, acted in 1600, it is said of an affected coxcomb, "His fashion is, not to take knowledge of him that is beneath him in clothes. He never drinkes *below the salt*." A. i. S. ii.

LIFE OF HALL.

Third, that he neuer change his trencher twise ;
 Fourth, that he use all common courtesies :
 Sit bare at meales, and one half rise and wait :
 Last, that he never his yong maister beat ;
 But he must aske his mother to define
 How manie jerks she would his breech should line.
 All these observ'd, he could contented be,
 To give five markes, and winter liverie⁵⁴.

From those who despised learning, he makes a transition to those who abused or degraded it by false pretences. Judicial astrology is the subject of the seventh Satire. He supposes that Astrology was the daughter of one of the Egyptian midwives, and that having been nursed by Superstition, she assumed the garb of Science.

That now, who pares his nailes, or libs his swine ?
 But he must first take covnsel of the signe.

Again, of the believer in the stars, he says,

His feare or hope, for plentie or for lack,
 Hangs all vpon his new-years's *Almanack*.
 If chance once in the spring his head should ake,
 It was fortold : " thus says mine *Almanack*."

The numerous astrological tracts, particularly pieces called Prognostications, published in the reign of queen Elizabeth, are a proof how strongly the people were infatuated with this sort of divination. One of the most remarkable, was a treatise written in the year 1582, by Richard Harvey, brother to Gabriel Harvey, a learned astrologer of Cambridge, predicting the portentous conjunction of the primary planets, Saturn and Jupiter, which was to happen the next year. It had the immediate effect of throwing the whole kingdom into the most violent consternation. When the fears of the people were over, Nash published a droll account of their opinions and apprehensions while this formidable phenomenon was impending; and Elderton a ballad-maker, and Tarleton the comedian, joined in the laugh. This was the best way of confuting the impertinencies of the science of the stars. True knowledge must have been beginning to dawn, when these profound fooleries became the objects of wit and ridicule⁵⁵.

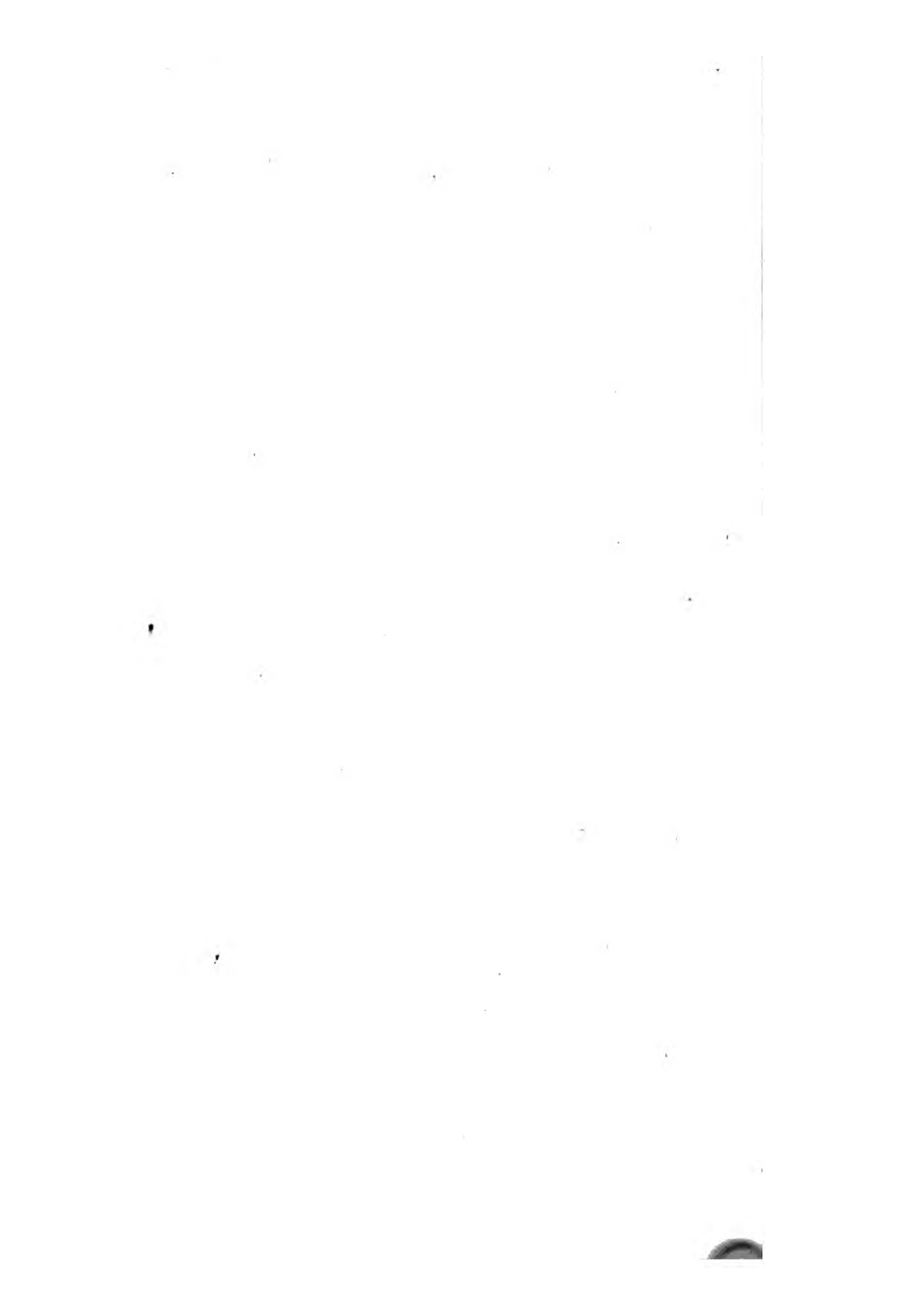
The opening of the first Satire of the third book, which is a contrast of ancient parsimony with modern luxury, is so witty, so elegant, and so poetical an enlargement of a shining passage in Juvenal, that the reader will pardon another long quotation.

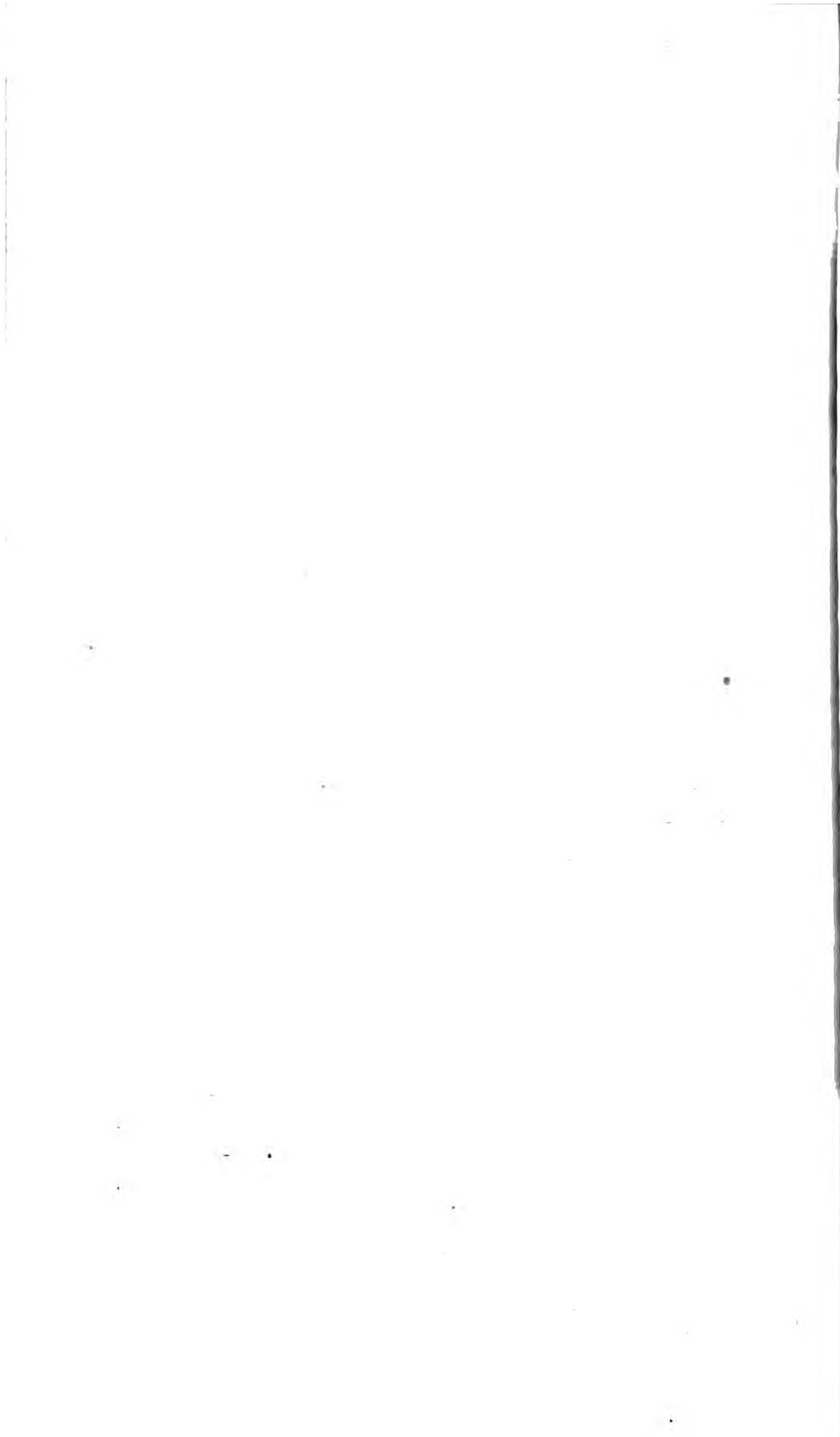
So Dekker, *Guls Horne Booke*, p. 26: " At your twelue penny ordinarie, you may giue any iustice of the peace, or young knight, if he sit but one degree towards the equinoctiall of the saltsellar, leaue to pay for the wine, &c." See more illustrations, in Reed's *Old Plays*, edit. 1780, vol. iii. 285. In Parrot's *Springs for Woodcocks*, 1613, a guest complains of the indignity of being degraded below the salt. Lib. ii. Epigr. 188 ;

And swears that he below the salt was sett.

⁵⁴ B. ii. 6, f. 38.

⁵⁵ See Nash's *Apology of Peers Penniless*, &c. Lond. 1593, 4to. f. 11.





Time was, and that was term'd the time of gold,
 When world and time were young, that now are old :
 When quiet Saturne sway'd the mace of lead,
 And pride was yet unborne, and yet unbred.
 Time was, that whiles the autumnne-fall did last,
 Our hungrie sires gap'd for the falling mast.
 Could no unhusked akorne leaue the tree,
 But there was challenge made whose it might be.
 And if some nice and liquorous appetite
 Desir'd more daintie dish of rare delite,
 They scal'd the stored crab with clasped knee,
 Till they had sated their delicious ce.
 Or search'd the hopefull thicks of hedgy-rows,
 For brierie berries, hawes, or sowrer sloes :
 Or when they meant to fare the fin'st of all,
 They lick'd oake-leaues besprint with hony-fall.
 As for the thrise three-angled beech-nut shell,
 Or chesnut's armed huske, and hid kernell,
 Nor squire durst touch, the lawe would not afford,
 Kept for the court, and for the king's owne board.
 Their royall plate was clay, or wood, or stone,
 The vulgar, saue his hand, else he had none.
 Their onlie cellar was the neighbour brooke,
 None did for better care, for better looke.
 Was then no 'plaining of the brewer's scape⁴⁶,
 Nor greedie vintner mix'd the strained grape.
 The king's pavilion was the grassie green,
 Vnder safe shelter of the shadie treen.—
 But when, by Ceres' huswifrie and paine,
 Men learn'd to burie the reuiuing graine,
 And father Janus taught the new-found vine
 Rise on the elme, with manie a friendly twine :
 And base desire bade men to deluen lowe
 For needlesse metalls, then gan mischief growe :
 Then farewell, fayrest age ! &c.—

He then, in the prosecution of a sort of poetical philosophy, which prefers civilized to savage life, wishes for the nakedness or the furs of our simple ancestors, in comparison of the fantastic fopperies of the exotic apparel of his own age.

They naked went, or clad in ruder hide,
 Or homespun russet void of foraine pride.
 But thou canst maske in garish gawderie,
 To suite a fool's far-fetched liuerie.
 A Frenche head joyn'd to necke Italian,
 Thy thighs from Germanie, and breast from Spain:
 An Englishman in none, a foole in all,
 Many in one, and one in seuerall⁴⁷.

One of the vanities of the age of Elizabeth was the erection of monuments, equally costly and cumbersome, charged with a waste of capricious decorations, and loaded with superfluous and disproportionate sculpture. They succeeded to the rich solemnity of the

⁴⁶ Cheats.

⁴⁷ B. iii. 1. f. 45.

gothic shrine, which yet, amid the profusion of embellishments, preserved uniform principles of architecture.

In the second Satire, our author moralizes on these empty memorials, which were alike allotted to illustrious or infamous characters.

Some stately tombe he builds, Egyptian-wise,
 Rex Regum written on the pyramis:
 Whereas great Arthur lies in ruder oke,
 That neuer felt aught but the feller's stroke⁵⁸,
 Small honour can be got with gaudie graue,
 A rotten name from death it cannot saue,
 The fairer tombe, the fowler is thy name,
 The greater pompe procuring greater shame.
 Thy monument make thou thy living deeds,
 No other tomb than that true virtue needs!
 What, had he nought whereby he might be knowne,
 But costly pilements of some curious stone?
 The matter nature's, and the workman's frame
 His purse's cost:—where then is Osmond's name?
 Deservedst thou ill? well were thy name and thee,
 Wert thou inditched in great secrecie;
 Whereas no passengers might curse thy dust, &c⁵⁹.

The third is the description of a citizen's feast, to which he was invited,

With hollow words, and ouerly⁶⁰ request.

But the great profusion of the entertainment was not the effect of liberality, but a hint that no second invitation must be expected. The effort was too great to be repeated. The guest who dined at this table often, had only a single dish⁶¹.

The fourth is an arraignment of ostentatious piety, and of those who strove to push themselves into notice and esteem by petty pretensions. The illustrations are highly humorous.

Who euer giues a paire of velvet shoes
 To th' holy rood⁶², or liberally allowes
 But a new rope to ring the curfew bell?
 But he desires that his great deed may dwell,
 Or grauen in the chancell-window glasse,
 Or in the lasting tombe of plated brasse.

The same affectation appeared in dress.

Nor can good Myron weare on his left hond,
 A signet ring of Bristol-diamond;

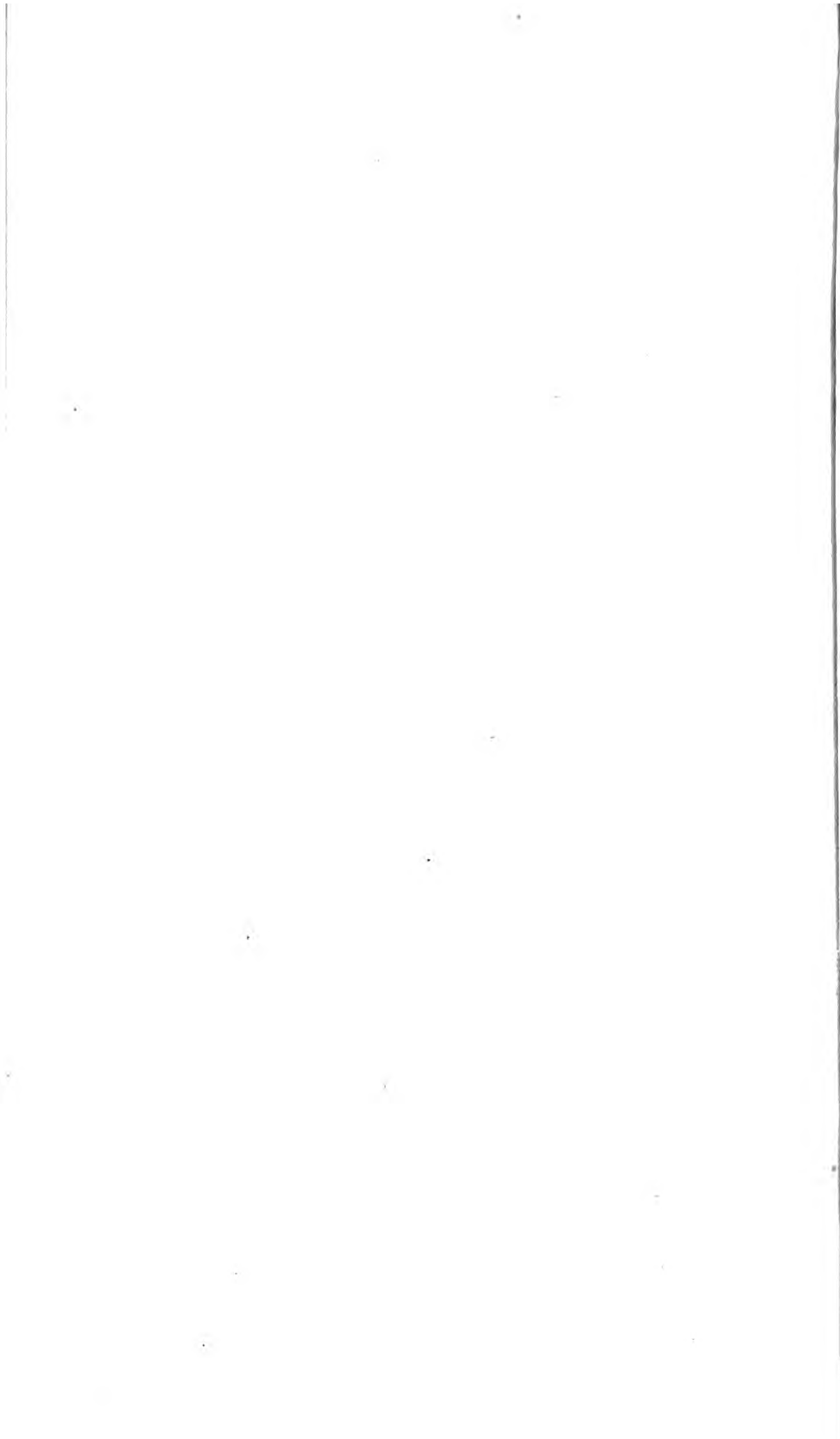
⁵⁸ He alludes to the discovery of king Arthur's body in Glastonbury Abbey. Lately, in digging up a barrow or tumulus on the downs near Dorchester, the body of a Danish chief, as it seemed, was found in the hollow trunk of a huge oak for a coffin.

⁵⁹ B. iii. 2. f. 50.

⁶⁰ Slight; shallow.

⁶¹ B. iii. 3. f. 52.

⁶² In a gallery over the screen, at entering the choir, was a large crucifix, or rood, with the images of the holy Virgin and saint John. The velvet shoes were for the feet of Christ on the cross, or of one of the attendant figures. A rich lady sometimes bequeathed her wedding-gown, with necklace and ear-rings, to dress up the Virgin Mary. This place was called the rood-loft.



But he must cut his gloue to show his pride,
That his trim jewel might be better spied:
And, that men might some burgesse⁶³ him repute,
With sattin sleeves hath⁶⁴ grac'd his sacke-cloth suit⁶⁵.

The fifth is a droll portrait of the distress of a *lustie courtier*, or fine gentleman, whose periwinkle, or peruke, was suddenly blown off by a boisterous puff of wind while he was making his bows⁶⁶.

He lights, and runs and quicklie hath him sped
To ouertake his ouer-running head, &c.

These are our satirist's reflections on this disgraceful accident.

Fie on all courtesie, and unruly windes,
Two only foes that faire disguisement findes!
Strange curse, but fit for such a fickle age,
When scalpes are subject to such vassalage!—
Is 't not sweet pride, when men their crownes must shade
With that which jerkes the hams of everie jade⁶⁷!

In the next, is the figure of a famished gallant, or beau, which is much better drawn than in any of the comedies of those times. His hand is perpetually on the hilt of his rapier. He picks his teeth, but has dined with duke Humphry⁶⁸. He professes to keep a plentiful and open house for every *stragling cavaliere*, where the dinners are long and enlivened with music, and where many a gay youth, with a high-plumed hat, chooses to dine, much rather than to pay his shilling. He is so emaciated for want of eating,

⁶³ Some rich citizen.

⁶⁴ That is, *he* hath, &c.

⁶⁵ B. iii. 4. f. 55.

⁶⁶ In a set of articles of inquiry sent to a college in Oxford, about the year 1676, by the visitor bishop Morley, the commissary is ordered diligently to remark, and report, whether any of the senior fellows wore *periwigs*. I will not suppose that bobwigs are here intended. But after such a proscription, who could imagine, that the bushy grizzle-wig should ever have been adopted as a badge of gravity? So arbitrary are ideas of dignity or levity in dress! There is an Epigram in Harrington, written perhaps about 1600, Of Gallia's goodly Periwigge. B. i. 66. This was undoubtedly false hair. In Hayman's Quodlibets or Epigrams, printed 1628, there is *one* To a Periwiggian. B. i. 65. p. 10. Again, To a certaine Periwiggian. B. ii. 9. p. 21. Our author mentions a periwig again, B. v. 2. f. 63.

A golden periwigg on a blackmoor's brow.

⁶⁷ B. iii. 5. f. 57.

⁶⁸ That is, he has walked all day in Saint Paul's church without a dinner. In the body of old Saint Paul's was a huge and conspicuous monument of sir John Beauchamp, buried in 1358, son of Guy, and brother of Thomas, earls of Warwick. This, by a vulgar mistake, was at length called the tomb of Humphry duke of Gloucester, who was really buried at Saint Alban's, where his magnificent shrine now remains. The middle aisle of Saint Paul's is called the *Dukes Gallery*, in a chapter of the Guls Horne Booke, "how a gallant should behaue himself in Powles Walkes." Ch. iii. p. 17. Of the humours of this famous ambulatory, the general rendezvous of lawyers and their clients, pickpockets, cheats, bucks, pimps, whores, poets, players, and many others who either for idleness or busines found it convenient to frequent the most fashionable crowd in London, a more particular description may be seen in Dekker's Dead Terme, or Westminster's Complaint for long Vacations and short Termes, under the chapter, Pawles Steeples Complaint. Signat. D. 3. Lond. for John Hodgetts, 1608, 4to. Bl. Lett.

that his sword-belt hangs loose over his hip, the effect of *hunger and heavy iron*. Yet he is dressed in the height of the fashion,

All trapped in the new-found brauerie.

He pretends to have been at the conquest of Cales, where the nuns worked his bonnet. His hair stands upright in the French style, with one long lock hanging low on his shoulders, which, the satirist adds, puts us in mind of a *native cord*, the truly English rope, which he probably will one day wear.

His linen collar labyrinthian set,
Whose thousand double turnings neuer met:
His sleeves half-hid with elbow-pinionings,
As if he meant to fly with linen wings⁶⁹.
But when I looke, and cast mine eyes below,
What monster meets mine eyes in human show?
So slender waist, with such an abbot's loyne,
Did neuer sober nature sure conjoyne!
Lik'st a strawe scare-crow in the new-sowne field,
Rear'd on some sticke the tender corne to shield⁷⁰.

In the prologue to this book, our author strives to obviate the objections of certain critics who falsely and foolishly thought his Satires too perspicuous. Nothing could be more absurd than the notion, that because Persius is obscure, therefore obscurity must be necessarily one of the qualities of satire. If Persius, under the severities of a proscription and sanguinary government, was often obliged to conceal his meaning, this was not the case of Hall. But the darkness and difficulties of Persius arise in great measure from his own affectation and false taste. He would have been enigmatical under the mildest government. To be unintelligible can never naturally or properly belong to any species of writing. Hall of himself is certainly obscure: yet he owes some of his obscurity to an imitation of this ideal excellence of the Roman satirists.

The fourth book breathes a stronger spirit of indignation, and abounds with applications of Juvenal to modern manners, yet with the appearance of original and unborrowed satire.

The first is miscellaneous and excursive, but the subjects often lead to an unbecoming licentiousness of language and images. In the following nervous lines, he has caught and finely heightened the force and manner of his master.

Who list, excuse, when chaster dames can hire
Some snout-fair stripling to their apple squire⁷¹,

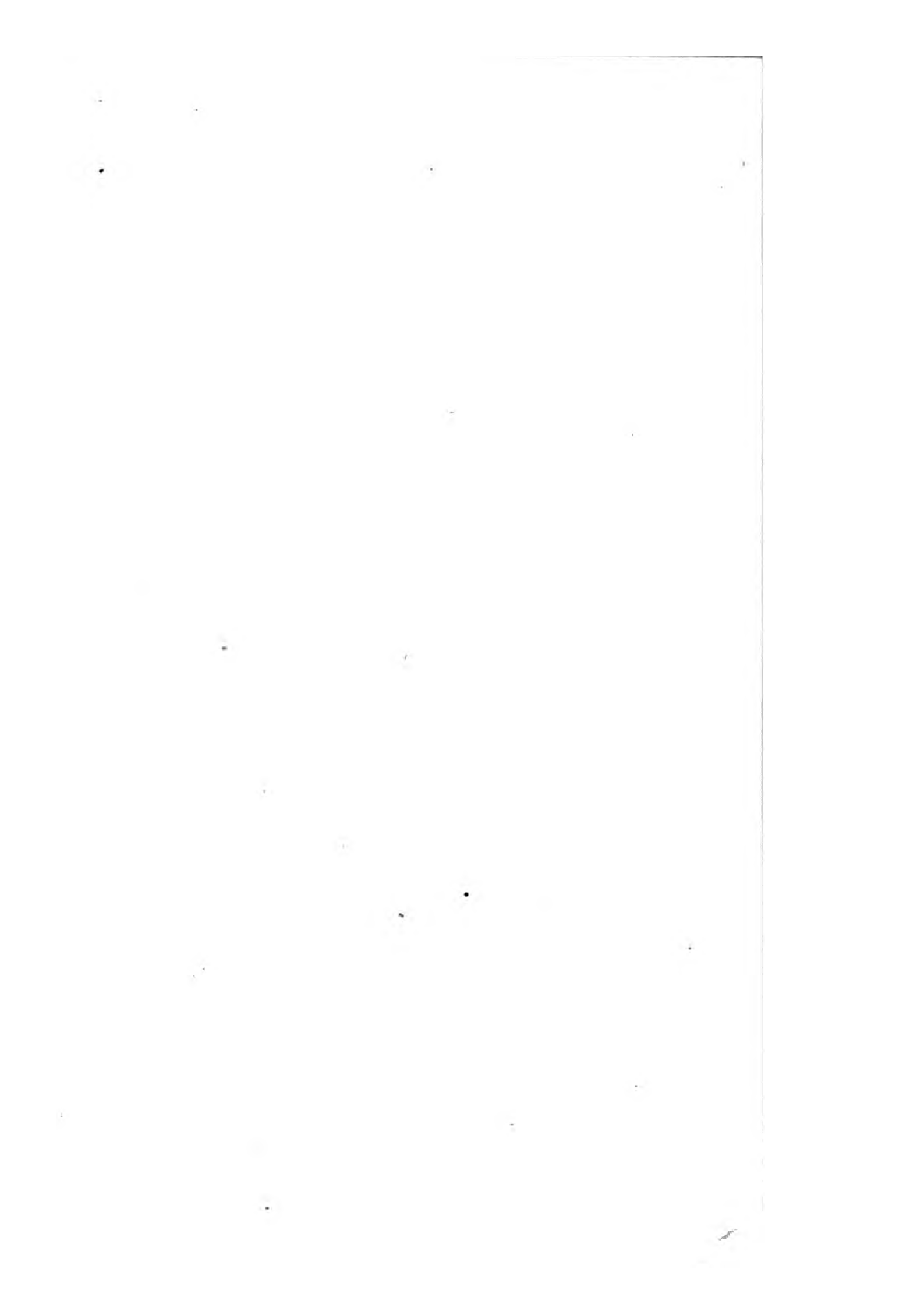
⁶⁹ Barnaby Rich in his *Irish Hubbub*, printed 1617, thus describes four gallants coming from an ordinary. "The third was in a yellow-starched band, that made him looke as if he had been troubled with the yellow jaundis.—They were all four in white bootes and gylt spurres, &c." Lond. 1617, 4to. p. 36.

⁷⁰ B. iii. 7. f. 62.

⁷¹ Some fair-faced stripling to be their page. Marston has this epithet, *Sc. Villan. B. i. 3.*

Had I some snout-faire brats, they should indure
The newly-found Castilion calenture,
Before some pedant, &c.

In *Satires and Epigrams*, called *The Letting of Humors Blood in the Head-Vayne*, 1600, we have "some pippin-squire." *Epigr. 53.*





Whom staked vp, like to some stallion steed,
 They keep with eggs and oysters for the breed.
 O Lucine! barren Caia hath an heir,
 After her husband's dozen years despair:
 And now the bribed midwife swears apace,
 The bastard babe doth beare his father's face.

He thus enhances the value of certain novelties, by declaring them to be,

Worth little less than landing of a whale,
 Or Gades spoils⁷², or a churl's funerale.

The allusion is to Spenser's Talus in the following couplet:

Gird but the cynicke's helmet on his head,
 Cares he for Talus, or his flayle of leade?

He adds, that the guilty person, when marked, destroys all distinction, like the cuttle-fish concealed in his own blackness.

Long as the craftie cuttle lieth sure,
 In the blacke cloud of his thicke vomiture;
 Who list, complaine of wronged faith or fame,
 When he may shift it to another's name.

He thus describes the effect of his satire, and the enjoyment of his own success in this species of poetry.

Now see I fire-flakes sparkle from his eyes,
 Like to a comet's tayle in th' angrie skies;
 His pouting cheeks puft vp about his brow,
 Like a swolne toad touch'd with the spider's blow:
 His mouth shrinks side-ways like a scornful playse⁷³,
 To take his tired ear's ingrateful place.—
 Nowe laugh I loud, and breake my splene to see,
 This pleasing pastime of my poesie:
 Much better than a Paris-garden beare⁷⁴,
 Or prating poppet on a theater,
 Or Mimo's whistling to his tabouret⁷⁵,
 Selling a laughter for a cold meal's meat.

⁷² Cadiz was newly taken.

⁷³ A fish. Jonson says, in *The Silent Woman*, "of a fool, that would stand thus, with a playse mouth, &c." A. i. S. ii. See more instances in *Old Plays*, vol. iii. p. 395, edit. 1780.

⁷⁴ "Then led they cosin (the gull) to the gase of an enterlude, or the beare-bayting of Paris Garden, or some other place of thieving." *A Manifest Detection of the most vyle and detestable use of Dice Play*, &c. No date, Bl. Lett. Signat. D. iiiii. Abraham Vele, the printer of this piece, lived before the year 1548. Again, *ibid.* "Some ii or iii (pickpockets) hath Paules church on charge, other hath Westminster hawle in terme time, diuerse Chepesyde with the flesh and fishe shambles, some the Borough and beare-bayting, some the court, &c." Paris Garden was in the Borough.

⁷⁵ Piping or fifing to a tabour. I believe Kempe is here ridiculed.

It is in Juvenal's style to make illustrations satirical. They are here very artfully and ingeniously introduced⁷⁶.

The second is the character of an old country 'squire, who starves himself, to breed his son a lawyer and a gentleman. It appears, that the vanity or luxury of purchasing dainties at an exorbitant price began early.

Let sweet-mouth'd Mercia bid what crowns she please,
 For half-red cherries, or greene garden pease,
 Or the first artichoak of all the yeare,
 To make so lavish cost for little cheare.
 When Lollo feasteth in his revelling fit,
 Some starved pullen scoures the rusted spit:
 For els how should his son maintained be
 At inns of court or of the chancery, &c.
 The tenants wonder at their landlord's son,
 And blesse them⁷⁷ at so sudden coming on!
 More than who gives his pence to view some tricke
 Of strange Morocco's dumbe arithmeticke⁷⁸,
 Or the young elephant, or two-tay'd steere,
 Or the ridg'd camel, or the fiddling freere⁷⁹,
 Fools they may feede on words, and live on ayre⁸⁰,
 That climbe to honour by the pulpit's stayre;
 Sit seuen yeares pining in an anchor's cheyre⁸¹,
 To win some patched shreds of minivere⁸²!

He predicts, with no small sagacity, that Lollo's son's distant posterity will rack their rents to a treble proportion,

And hedge in all their neighbours common lands.

Enclosures of waste lands were among the great and national grievances of our author's

⁷⁶ B. iv. 1. f. 7.

⁷⁷ Themselves.

⁷⁸ Bankes's horse called Morocco. See Steevens's note, Shaksp. ii. 292.

⁷⁹ Shewes of those times. He says, in this Satire,

..... 'Gin not thy gait
 Untill the evening owl, or bloody bat;
 Neuer untill the lamps of Paul's been light:
 And niggard lanterns shade the moon-shine night.

The lamps about Saint Paul's were at this time the only regular night-illuminations of London. But in an old collection of jests, some bucks coming drunk from a tavern, and reeling through the city, amused themselves in pulling down the lanterns, which hung before the doors of the houses. A grave citizen unexpectedly came out and seized one of them, who said in defence, "I am only snuffing your candle." Jest to make you Merie. Written by T. D. and George Wilkins. Lond. 1607, 4to. p. 6. Jest. 17.

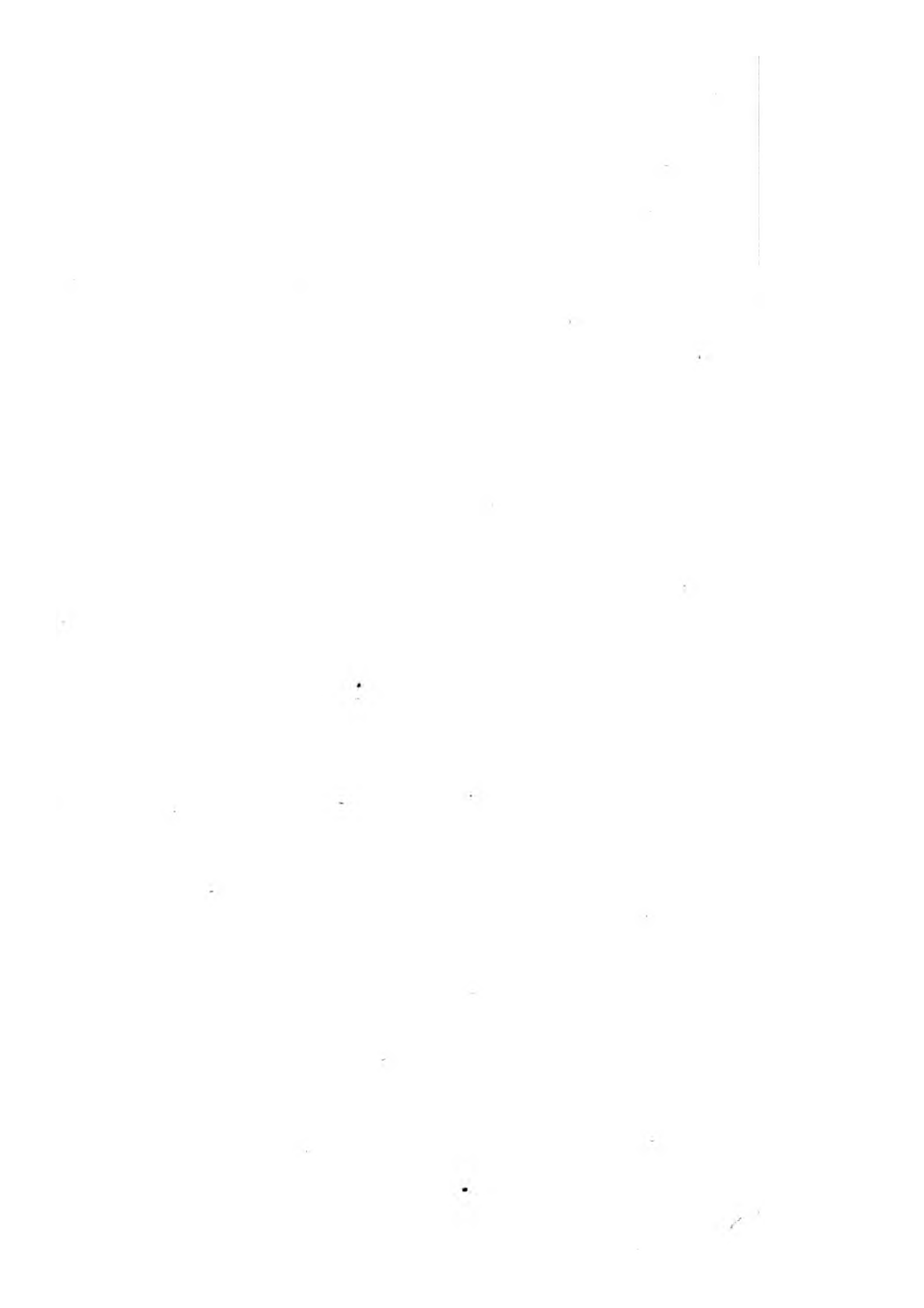
⁸⁰ The law is the only way to riches. Fools only will seek preferment in the church, &c.

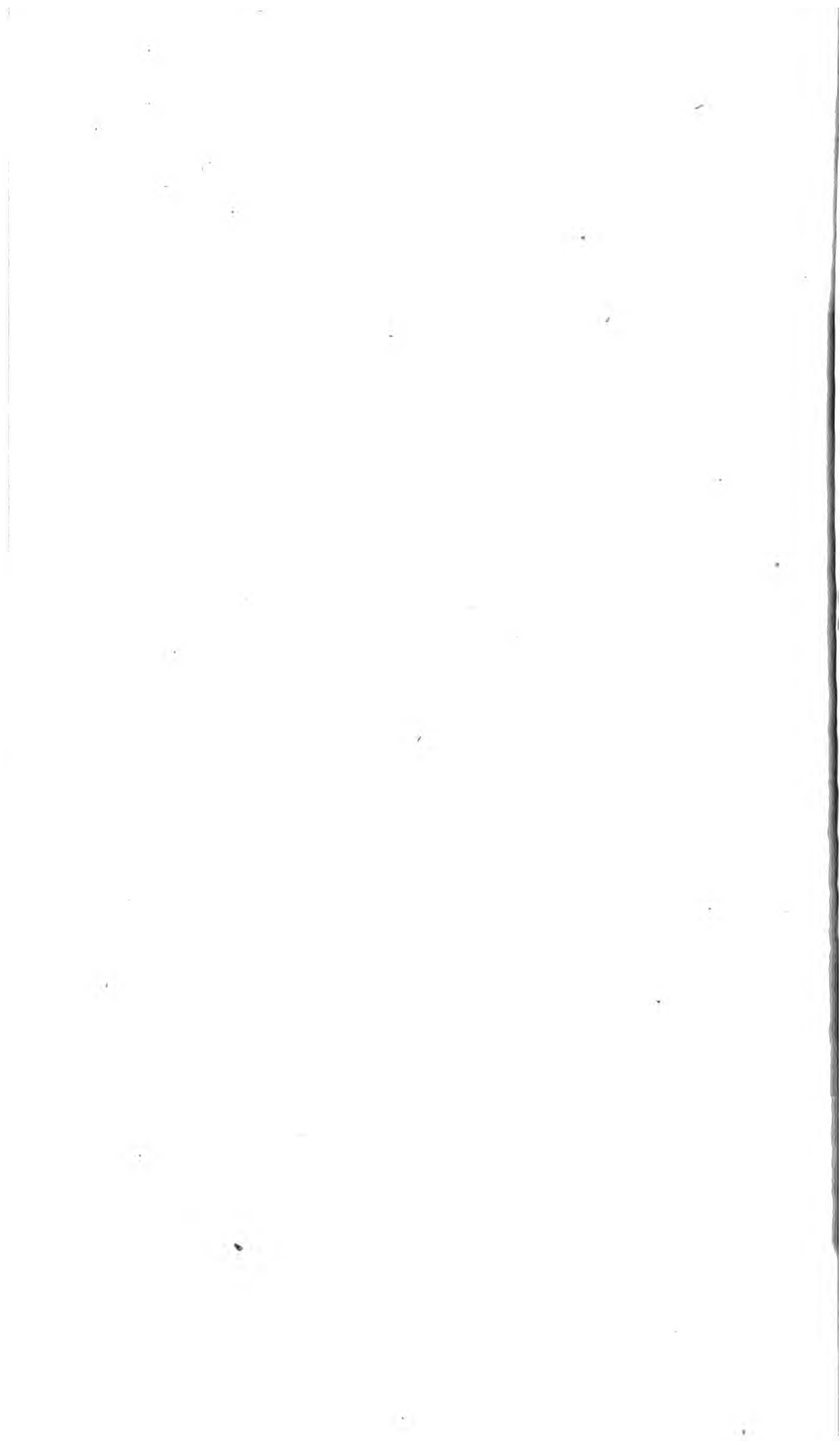
⁸¹ In the chair of an anchoret.

⁸² The hood of a master of arts in the universities. B. iv. 2. f. 19. He adds:

And seuen more, plod at a patron's tayle,
 To get some gilded chapel's cheaper sayle.

I believe the true reading is *gelded* chapel. A benefice robbed of its tythes, &c. Sayle is sale. So in The Return from Parnassus, A. iii. S. 1: "He hath a proper *gelded* parsonage."





age⁸³. It may be presumed, that the practice was then carried on with the most arbitrary spirit of oppression and monopoly.

The third is on the pride of pedigree. The introduction is from Juvenal's eighth satire; and the substitution of the memorials of English ancestry, such as were then fashionable, in the place of Juvenal's parade of family statues without arms or ears, is remarkably happy. But the humour is half lost, unless by recollecting the Roman original, the reader perceives the unexpected parallel.

Or call some old church-windowe to record
The age of thy fair armes.....
Or find some figures half obliterate,
In rain-beat marble neare to the church-gate,
Upon a crosse-legg'd tombe. What boots it thee,
To shewe the rusted buckle that did tie
The garter of thy greatest grandsire's knee?
What, to reserve their relicks many yeares,
Their siluer spurs, or spils of broken speares?
Or cite old Ocland's verse⁸⁴, how they did wield
The wars in Turwin or in Turney field?

Afterwards, some adventurers for raising a fortune are introduced. One trades to Guiana for gold. This is a glance at sir Walter Rawleigh's expedition to that country. Another, with more success, seeks it in the philosopher's stone.

When half his lands are spent in golden smoke,
And now his second hopefull glasse is broke.
But yet, if haply his third fornace hold,
Devoteth all his pots and pans to gold.

Some well-known classical passages are thus happily mixed, modernised, and accommodated to his general purpose.

Was neuer foxe but wily cubs begets;
The bear his fiercenesse to his brood besets:
Nor fearfull hare falls from the lyon's seed,
Nor eagle wont the tender doue to breed.
Crete euer wont the cypresse sad to bear,
Acheron's banks the palish popelar:
The palm doth rifely rise in Jury field⁸⁵,
And Alpheus' waters nought but oliue yield:
Asopus breeds big bullrushes alone,
Meander heath; peaches by Nilus growne:

⁸³ Without attending to this circumstance, we miss the meaning and humour of the following lines, B. v. 1.

Pardon, ye glowing eares! needes will it out,
Though brazen walls compass'd my tongue about,
As thick as wealthy Scrobio's quickset rowes
In the wide common that he did enclose.

Great part of the third Satire of the same book turns on this idea.

⁸⁴ See *supr.* vol. iii. p. 314.

⁸⁵ In Judea.

LIFE OF HALL.

An English wolfe, an Irish toad to see,
Were as a chaste man nurs'd in Italy ⁸⁶,

In the fourth, these diversions of a delicate youth of fashion and refined manners are mentioned, as opposed to the rougher employments of a military life.

Gallio may pull me roses ere they fall,
Or in his net entrap the tennis-ball ;
Or tend his spar-hawke mantling in her mewe,
Or yelping beagles busy heeles pursue :
Or watch a sinking corke vpon the shore ⁸⁷,
Or halter finches through a privy doore ⁸⁸,
Or list he spend the time in sportful game, &c.

He adds,

Seest thou the rose-leaues fall ungathered ?
Then hyc thee, wanton Gallio, to wed.—
Hye thee, and giue the world yet one dwarfe more,
Svch as it got, when thou thyself was bore.

In the contrast between the martial and effeminate life, which includes a general ridicule of the foolish passion, which now prevailed, of making it a part of the education of our youth to bear arms in the wars of the Netherlands, are some of Hall's most spirited and nervous verses.

If Martius in boisterous buffe be drest,
Branded with iron plates upon the breast,
And pointed on the shoulders for the nonce ⁸⁹,
As new come from the Belgian-garrisons ;
What should thou need to enuy aught at that,
When as thou smellst like a ciuet-cat ?
When as thine oyled locks smooth-platted fall,
Shining like varnish'd pictures on a wall ?
When a plum'd fanne ⁹⁰ may shade thy chalked ⁹¹ face,
And lawny strips thy naked bosom grace ?
If brabbling Makefray, at each fair and 'size ⁹²,
Picks quarrels for to shew his valiantize,
Straight pressed for an hvngry Switzer's pay
To thrust his fist to each part of the pray ;
And piping hot, puffs toward the pointed ⁹³ plaine,
With a broad scot ⁹⁴, or proking spit of Spaine :
Or hoyseth sayle up to a forraine shore,
That he may liue a lawlesse conquerour ⁹⁵.
If some such desperate huckster should devise
To rowze thine hare's-heart from her cowardice,
As idle children ⁹⁶, striving to excell
In blowing bladders from an empty shell.

⁸⁶ B. iv. 3. f. 26.

⁸⁷ Angle for fish.

⁸⁸ A pit-fall. A trap-cage.

⁸⁹ With tags, or shoulder-knots.

⁹⁰ Fans of feathers were now common. See Harrington's Epigr. i. 70. And Steevens's Shakespeare, i. p. 273.

⁹¹ Painted.

⁹² Assise.

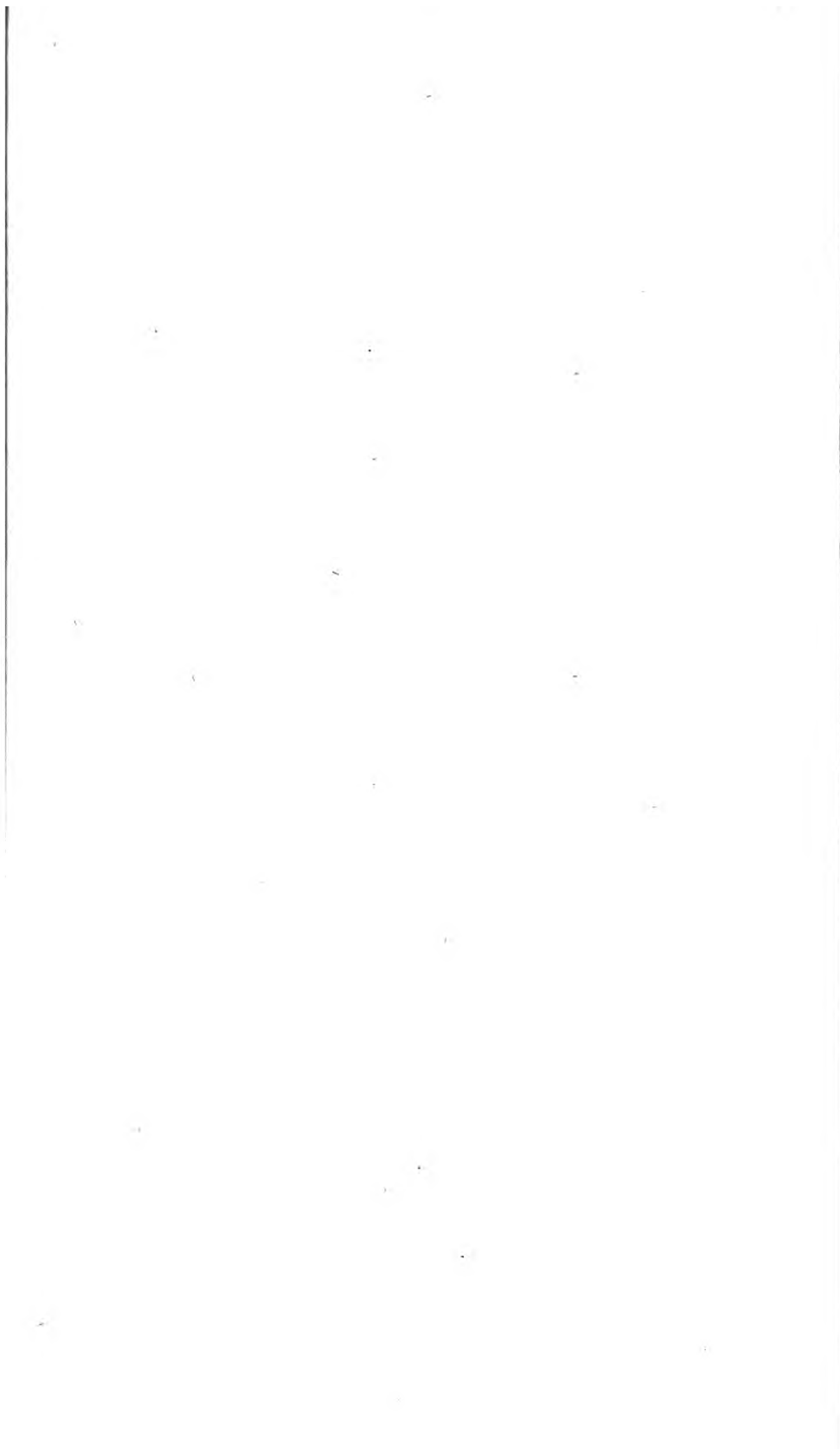
⁹³ Full of pikes.

⁹⁴ A Scotch broad sword.

⁹⁵ Turn pirate.

⁹⁶ It will be like, &c.





Oh, Hercules, how like ⁹⁷ to prove a man,
 That all so rath ⁹⁸ his warlike life began !
 Thy mother could for thee thy cradle set
 Her husband's rusty iron corselet ;
 Whose jargling sound might rock her babe to rest,
 That neuer plain'd of his vneasy nest :
 There did he dreame of dreary wars at hand,
 And woke, and fought, and won, ere he could stand ⁹⁹.
 But who hath seene the lambs of Tarentine,
 Must guesse what Gallio his manners beene ;
 All soft, as is the falling thistle-downe,
 Soft as the fummy ball ¹⁰⁰, or Morrion's crowne ¹⁰¹.
 Now Gallio gins thy youthly heat to raigne,
 In every vigorous limb, and swelling vaine :
 Time bids thee raise thine headstrong thoughts on high
 To valour, and adventurous chivalry.
 Pawne thou no gloue ¹⁰² for challenge of the deede, &c. ¹⁰³

The fifth, the most obscure of any, exhibits the extremes of prodigality and avarice, and affords the first instance I remember to have seen, of nominal initials with dashes. Yet in his postscript, he professes to have avoided all personal applications ¹⁰⁴.

In the sixth, from Juvenal's position that every man is naturally discontented, and wishes to change his proper condition and character, he ingeniously takes occasion to expose some of the new fashions and affectations.

Out from the Gades to the eastern morne,
 Not one but holds his native state forlorne.
 When comely striplings wish it were their chance,
 For Cenis' distaffe to exchange their lance ;

⁹⁷ Likely.

⁹⁸ Early.

⁹⁹ O Hercules, a boy so delicately reared must certainly prove a hero ! You, Hercules, was nursed in your father's shield for a cradle, &c. But the tender Gallio, &c.

¹⁰⁰ A ball of perfume.

¹⁰¹ Morrion is the fool in a play.

¹⁰² He says with a sneer, "Do not play with the character of a soldier. Be not contented only to show your courage in tilting. But enter into real service, &c."

¹⁰³ B. iv. 4. In a couplet of this Satire, he alludes to the Schola Salernitana, an old medical system in rhyming verse, which chiefly describes the qualities of diet.

Tho neuer haue I Salerne rimes profest,
 To be some lady's trencher-critick guest.

There is much humour in *trencher-critick*. Collingborn, mentioned in the beginning of this Satire, is the same whose Legend is in The Mirrour of Magistrates, and who was hanged for a distich on Catesby, Ratcliff, lord Lovel, and king Richard the Third, about the year 1484. See *Mirr. Mag.* p. 455, edit. 1610, 4to. Our author says,

Or lucklesse Collingbourne feeding of the crows ;

That is, he was food for the crows when on the gallows. At the end, is the first use I have seen, of a witty apothegmatical comparison, of a libidinous old man.

The maidens mocke, and call him withered leeke,
 That with a greene tayle has an hoary head.

¹⁰⁴ B. iv. 6. Collybist, here used, means a rent or tax-gatherer. *Κολλυβιστης*, nummularius.

And weare curl'd periwigs, and chalk their face,
 And still are poring on their pocket-glasse;
 Tyr'd¹⁰⁵ with pinn'd ruffs, and fans, and partlet strips,
 And buskes and verdingales about their hips:
 And tread on corked stilts a prisoner's pace.

Beside what is here said, we have before seen, that perukes were now among the novelties in dress. From what follows it appears that coaches were now in common use¹⁰⁶.

Is 't not a shame, to see each homely groome
 Sit perched in an idle chariot-roome?

The rustic wishing to turn soldier, is pictured in these lively and poetical colours.

¹⁰⁵ Attired, dressed, adorned.

¹⁰⁶ Of the rapid increase of the number of coaches, but more particularly of hackney-coaches, we have a curious proof in *A pleasant Dispute between Coach and Sedan*, Lond. 1636, 4to. "The most eminent places for stoppage are Pawles-gate into Cheapside, Ludgate, and Ludgate Hill, especially when the play is done at the Friars: then Holborne Conduit, and Holborne Bridge, is villanously pestered with them, Hosier Lane, Smithfield, and Cow Lane, sending all about their new or old mended coaches. Then about the Stockes, and Poultrie, Temple Barre, Fetter Lane, and Shoe Lane next to Fleet Streete. But to see their multitude, either when there is a masque at Whitehall, or a lord mayor's feast, or a new play at some of the playhouses, you would admire to see them how close they stand together, like mutton-pies in a cook's oven, &c." Signat. F. Marston, in 1598, speaks of the *jouling coach* of a Messalina. Sc. Villan, B. i. 3. And in Marston's Postscript to *Pigmalion*, 1598, we are to understand a coach, where he says,

..... Run as sweet
 As doth a tumbrell through the paved street.

In *Cynthia's Rebels*, 1600, a spendthrift is introduced, who among other polite extravagances, is "able to maintaine a ladie in her two carroches a day." A. iv. S. ii. However, in the old comedy of *Ram-Alley*, or *Merry Tricks*, first printed in 1611, a *coach* and a *caroche* seem different vehicles. A. iv. S. ii.

In horslitters, [in] coaches or caroaches.

Unless the poet means a synonyme for *coach*.

In some old account I have seen of queen Elizabeth's progress to Cambridge, in 1564, it is said, that lord Leicester went in a coach, because he had *hurt his leg*. In a comedy, so late as the reign of Charles the First, among many studied wonders of fictitious and hyperbolical luxury, a lover promises his lady that she shall ride in a coach to the next door. *Cartwright's Love's Convert*, A. ii. S. vi. Lond. 1651. Works, p. 125.

..... Thou shalt
 Take coach to the next door, and as it were
 An expedition not a visit, be
 Bound for an house not ten strides off, still carry'd
 Aloof in indignation of the earth.

Stowe says, "In the yeare 1564, Guylliam Boonen, a Dutchman, became the queene's coachmanne, and was the first that brought the vse of coaches into England. And after a while, diuers great ladies, with as great ieaousie of the queene's displeasure, made them coaches, and rid in them vp and downe the countries to the great admiration of all the behoulders, but then by little and little they grew vsnall among the nobilitie, and others of sort, and within twenty yeares became a great trade of coach-making. And about that time began long wagons to come in vse, such as now come to London, from Caunterbury, Norwich, Ipswich, Glocester, &c. with passengers and commodities. Lastly, euen at this time, 1605, began the ordinary vse of caroaches." Edit. fol. 1615, p. 867, col. 2.

From a comparison of the former and latter part of the context, it will perhaps appear that *coaches* and *caroaches* were the same.





The sturdy ploughman doth the soldier see
 All scarfed with pied colours to the knee,
 Whom Indian pillage hath made fortunate;
 And nowe he gins to loathe his former state:
 Nowe doth he inly scorne his Kendal-greene ¹⁰⁷,
 And his patch'd cockers nowe despised beene:
 Nor list he nowe go whistling to the carre,
 But sells his teeme, and settleth to the warre.
 O warre, to them that neuer try'd thee sweete!
 When his dead mate falls groveling at his feete:
 And angry bullets whistlen at his eare,
 And his dim eyes see nought but death and dreare!

Another, fired with the flattering idea of seeing his name in print, abandons his occupation, and turns poet.

Some drunken rimer thinks his time well spent,
 If he can lue to see his name in print;
 Who when he once is fleshed to the presse,
 And sees his handsell have such faire successe,
 Sung to the wheele, and sung vnto the payle ¹⁰⁸,
 He sends forth thraves ¹⁰⁹ of ballads to the sale ¹¹⁰.

Having traced various scenes of dissatisfaction, and the desultory pursuits of the world, he comes home to himself, and concludes, that real happiness is only to be found in the academic life. This was a natural conclusion from one who had experienced no other situation ¹¹¹.

¹⁰⁷ This sort of stuff is mentioned in a statute of Richard the Second, an. 12. A. D. 1389.

¹⁰⁸ By the knife-grinder and the milk-maid.

¹⁰⁹ A thrave of straw is a bundle of straw, of a certain quantity, in the midland counties.

¹¹⁰ These lines seem to be levelled at William Elderton, a celebrated drunken ballad-writer. Stowe says, that he was an attorney of the sheriff's court in the city of London about the year 1570, and quotes some verses which he wrote about that time, on the erection of the new portico with images, at Guildhall. Surv. Lond. edit. 1599, p. 217, 4to. He has two epitaphs in Camden's Remains, edit. 1674, p. 533, seq. Hervey in his Four Letters, printed in 1592, mentions him with Greene. "If [Spenser's] Mother Hubbard, in the vaine of Chawcer, happen to tell one Canicular tale, father Elderton and his son Greene, in the vaine of Skelton or Skoggin, will counterfeit an hundred dogged fables, libels, &c." p. 7. Nash, in his Apology of Piers Pennilesse, says, that "Tarleton at the theater made jests of him, [Hervey] and W. Elderton consumed his ale-crammed nose to nothing, in bear-baiting him with whole bundles of ballads." Signat. E. edit. 1593, 4to. And Harvey, ubi supr. p. 34. I have seen Elderton's Solace in Time of his Sicknes, containing sundrie Sonnets upon many pithie Parables, entered to R. Jones, Sept. 25, 1578. Registr. Station, B. f. 152. a. Also A Ballad against Marriage, by William Elderton, Ballad-maker. For T. Colwell, 1575, 12mo. A Ballad on the Earthquake by Elderton, beginning *Quake, Quake, Quake*, is entered to R. Jones, April 25, 1579. Registr. Station. B. f. 168. a. In 1561, are entered to H. Syngleton, Elderton's Jestes with his Mery Toyes. Registr. Station. A. f. 74. a. Again, in 1562, Elderton's Parrat answered, Ibid. f. 84. a. Again, a poem as I suppose, in 1570, Elderton's ill Fortune, ibid. f. 204. a. Harvey says, that Elderton and Greene were "the ringleaders of the rhyming and scribbling crew." Lett. ubi supr. p. 6. Many more of his pieces might be recited.

¹¹¹ In this Satire, among the lying narratives of travellers, our author, with Mandeville and others, mentions the Spanish Decads. It is an old black-letter quarto, a translation from the Spanish into English, about 1590. In the old anonymous play of *Lingua*, 1607, Mendacio says, "Sir John Mandeviles trauels, and great part of the Decads, were of my doing." A. ii. S. i.

LIFE OF HALL.

Mongst all these stirs of discontented strife,
 Oh, let me lead an academick life !
 To know much, and to think we nothing knowe,
 Nothing to haue, yet think we haue enowe :
 In skill to want, and wanting seeke for more ;
 In weale nor want, nor wish for greater store ¹¹².

The last of this book, is a Satire on the pageantries of the papal chair, and the superstitious practices of popery, with which it is easy to make sport. But our author has done this, by an uncommon quickness of allusion, poignancy of ridicule, and fertility of burlesque invention. Were Juvenal to appear at Rome, he says,

How his enraged ghost would stamp and stare,
 That Cesar's throne is turn'd to Peter's chaire :
 To see an old shorne lozel perched high,
 Crouching beneath a golden canopie !—
 And, for the lordly fasces borne of old,
 To see two quiet crossed keyes of gold !—
 But that he most would gaze, and wonder at,
 Is, th' horned mitre, and the bloody hat ¹¹³ ;
 The crooked staffe ¹¹⁴, the coule's strange form and store ¹¹⁵,
 Saue that he saw the same in Hell before.

The following ludicrous ideas are annexed to the exclusive appropriation of the eucharistic wine to the priest in the mass.

The whiles the liquorous priest spits every trice,
 With longing for his morning sacrifice :
 Which he reares vp quite perpendiculare,
 That the mid church doth spight the chancel's fare ¹¹⁶.

But this sort of ridicule is improper and dangerous. It has a tendency, even without an entire parity of circumstances, to burlesque the celebration of this awful solemnity in the reformed church. In laughing at false religion, we may sometimes hurt the true. Though the rites of the papistic eucharist are erroneous and absurd, yet great part of the ceremony, and above all the radical idea, belong also to the protestant communion.

The argument of the first Satire of the fifth book, is the oppressive exaction of landlords, the consequence of the growing decrease of the value of money. One of these had perhaps a poor grandsire, who grew rich by availing himself of the general rapine at the dissolution of the monasteries. There is great pleasantry in one of the lines, that he

Begg'd a cast abbey in the church's wayne.

In the mean time, the old patrimonial mansion is desolated; and even the parish-church unroofed and dilapidated, through the poverty of the inhabitants, and neglect or avarice of the patron.

Would it not vex thee, where thy sires did keep ¹¹⁷,
 To see the dunged folds of dag-tayl'd sheep ?

¹¹² B. iv. 6.

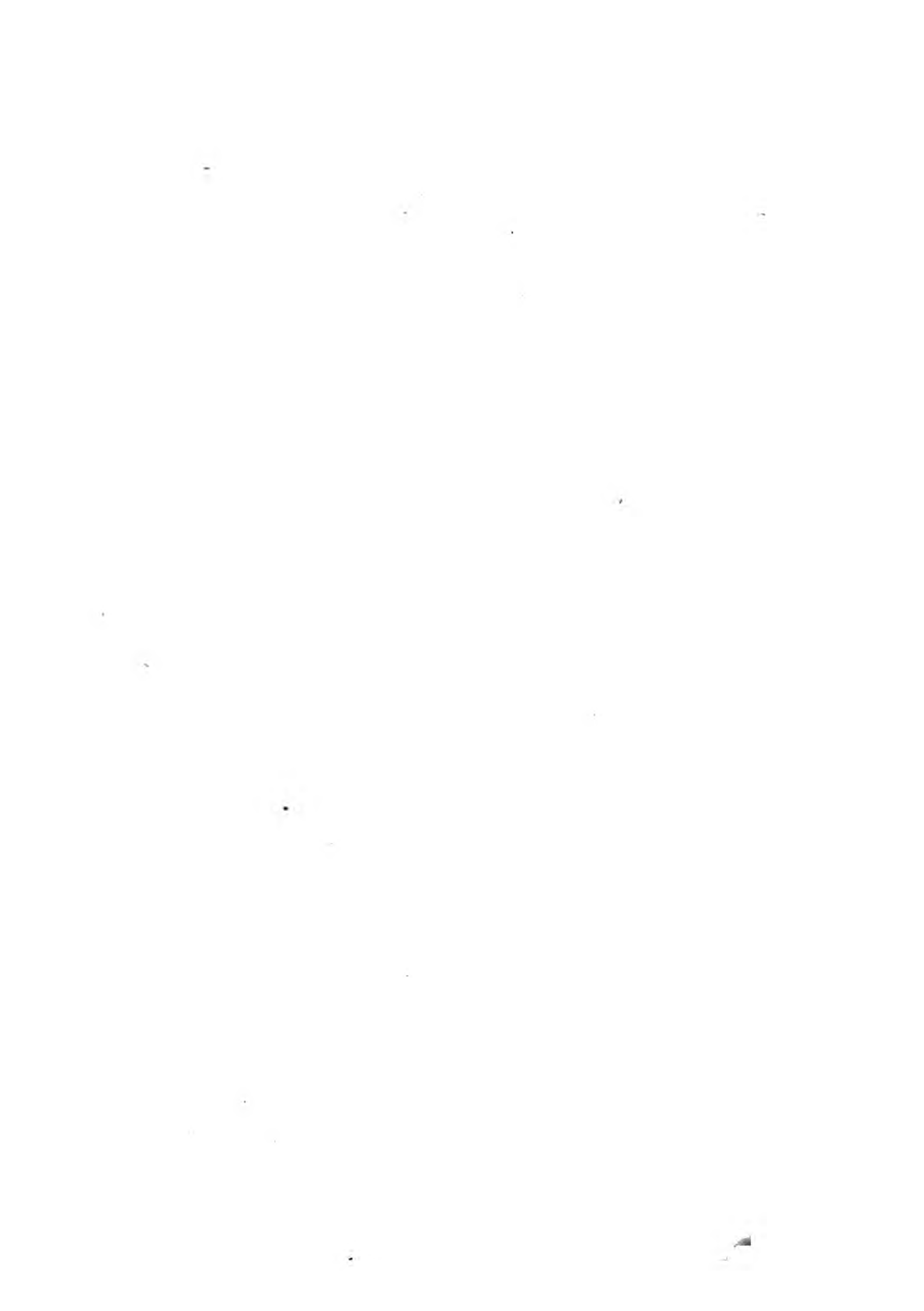
¹¹³ Cardinal's scarlet hat.

¹¹⁴ Bishop's crosier.

¹¹⁵ And multitude of them.

¹¹⁶ B. iv. 7.

¹¹⁷ Live, inhabit.





And ruin'd house where holy things were said,
 Whose free-stone walls the thatched rooffe vpbraid ;
 Whose shrill saints-bell hangs on his lovery,
 While the rest are damned to the plumbery ¹¹⁸;
 Yet pure devotion lets the steeple stand,
 And idle battlements on either hand, &c. ¹¹⁹

By an enumeration of real circumstances, he gives us the following lively draught of the miserable tenement, yet ample services, of a poor copyholder.

Of one bay's breadth, God wot, a silly cote,
 Whose thatched spars are furr'd with sluttish soote
 A whole inch thick, shining like black-moor's brows,
 Through smoke that downe the headlesse barrel blows.
 At his bed's feete feeden his stalled teame,
 His swine beneath, his pullen o'er the beame.
 A starued tenement, such as I guesse
 Stands stragglng on the wastes of Holdernesse :
 Or such as shivers on a Peake hill side, &c.—
 Yet must he haunt his greedy landlord's hall
 With often presents at each festivall :
 With crammed capons euerie new-yeare's morne,
 Or with greene cheeses when his sheepe are shorne :
 Or many maunds-full ¹²⁰ of his mellow fruite, &c.

The lord's acceptance of these presents is touched with much humour.

The smiling landlord shewes a sunshine face,
 Feignng that he will grant him further grace ;
 And leers like Esop's foxe vpon the crane,
 Whose neck he craves for his chirurgian ¹²¹.

In the second ¹²², he reprehends the incongruity of splendid edifices and worthless inhabitants.

¹¹⁸ The bells were all sold, and melted down ; except that for necessary use the saints-bell, or *sanctus-bell*, was only suffered to remain within its *lovery*, that is, louver or turret, usually placed between the chancel and body of the church. Marston has "pitch-black loueries." Sc. Villan, B. ii. 5.

¹¹⁹ Just to keep up the appearance of a church.

¹²⁰ Maund is basket. Hence Maunday-Thursday, the Thursday in Passion-week, when the king with his own hands distributes a large portion of alms, &c. Maunday is *Dies Sportulæ*. Maund occurs again, B. iv. 2 :

With a *maund* charg'd with houshold marchandize.

In The Whippinge of the Satyre, 1601, Signat. C. 4,

Whole *maunds* and *baskets* ful of fine sweet praise.

¹²¹ B. v. 1. f. 58.

¹²² In this Satire there is an allusion to an elegant fiction in Chaucer, v. 5. f. 61 :

Certes if Pity dyed at Chaucer's date.

Chaucer places the sepulchre of Pity in the Court of Love. See Court of Love, v. 700.

..... A tender creature
 Is shrinid there, and Pity is her name :
 She saw an egle wreke him on a flie,
 And plucke his wing, and eke him in his game,
 And tendir harte of that hath made her die.

This thought is borrowed by Fenton, in his *Mariamne*.

LIFE OF HALL.

Like the vaine bubble of Iberian pride,
 That overcroweth all the world beside¹²³;
 Which rear'd to raise the crazy monarch's fame,
 Strives for a court and for a college name:
 Yet nought within but lousy coules doth hold,
 Like a scabb'd cuckow in a cage of gold.—
 When¹²⁴ Maevio's first page of his poesy
 Naif'd to a hundred postes for nouelty,
 With his big title, an Italian mot¹²⁵,
 Lays siege unto the backward buyer's grot, &c.

He then beautifully draws, and with a selection of the most picturesque natural circumstances, the inhospitality, or rather desertion, of an old magnificent rural mansion.

Beat the broad gates, a goodly hollow sound
 With double echoes doth againe rebound;
 But not a dog doth bark to welcome thee,
 Nor churlish porter canst thou chafing see:
 All dumb and silent, like the dead of night,
 Or dwelling of some sleepy Sybarite!
 The marble pavement hid with desert weed,
 With house-leek, thistle, dock, and hemlock-seed.—
 Look to the towered chimnies, which should be
 The wind-pipes of good hospitalitie:—
 Lo, there th' unthankful swallow takes her rest,
 And fills the tunnell with her circled nest¹²⁶!

Afterwards, the figure of Famine is thus imagined.

Grim Famine sits in their fore-pined face,
 All full of angles of vnequal space,
 Like to the plane of many-sided squares
 That wont be drawne out by geometars¹²⁷.

In the third, a satire is compared to the porcupine.

The satire should be like the porcupine,
 That shoots sharp quills out in each angry line¹²⁸.

This ingenious thought, though founded on a vulgar error, has been copied, among other passages, by Oldham. Of a true writer of satire, he says,

He 'd shoot his quills just like a porcupine,
 At view, and make them stab in every line¹²⁹.

In the fourth and last of this book, he enumerates the extravagancies of a married

¹²³ The Escorial in Spain.

¹²⁴ As when.

¹²⁵ In this age, the three modern languages were studied to affectation. In The Return from Parnassus, above quoted, a fashionable fop tells his page, "Sirrah, boy, remember me when I come in Paul's Church-yard, to buy a Ronsard and Durbartas in French, an Aretine in Italian, and our hardest writers in Spanish, &c." A. ii. Sc. iii.

¹²⁶ The motto on the front of the house ΟΥΔΕΙΣ ΕΙΣΙΤΩ, which he calls a fragment of Plato's poetry, is a humorous alteration of Plato's ΟΥΔΕΙΣ ΑΚΑΘΑΡΤΟΣ ΕΙΣΙΤΩ.

¹²⁷ B. v. 2.

¹²⁸ B. v. 5.

¹²⁹ Apology for the foregoing Ode, &c. Works, vol. i. p. 97, edit. 1722, 12mo.



And in high startups walk'd the pastur'd plaines,
To tend her tasked herd that there remains;
And winded still a pipe of oate or breare, &c.

Poems on petty subjects or occasions, on the death of a favourite bird or dog, seem to have been as common in our author's age as at present. He says,

Should Bandell's throstle die without a song,
Or Adamans my dog be laid along
Downe in some ditch, without his excquies¹³⁴,
Or epitaphs or mournful elegies¹³⁵.

In the old comedy, *The Return from Parnassus*, we are told of a coxcomb who could bear no poetry "but fly-blown sonnets of his mistress, and her loving pretty creatures her monkey and her parrot¹³⁶."

The following exquisite couplet exhibits our satirist in another and a more delicate species of poetry.

Her lids like Cupid's bow-case, where he hides
The weapons that do wound the wanton-ey'd¹³⁷.

One is surprised to recollect, that these Satires are the production of a young man of twenty-three. They rather seem the work of an experienced master, of long observation, of study and practice in composition.

¹³⁴ In pursuance of the argument, he adds,

Folly itselfe or boldnesse may be prais'd.

An allusion to Erasmus's *Moriæ Encomium*, and the *Encomium Calvitiei*, written at the restoration of learning. Cardan also wrote an encomium on Nero, the gout, &c.

¹³⁵ In this Satire, Tarleton is praised as a poet, who is most commonly considered only as a comedian. Meres commends him for his facility in extemporaneous versification. *Wits Tr.* f. 286.

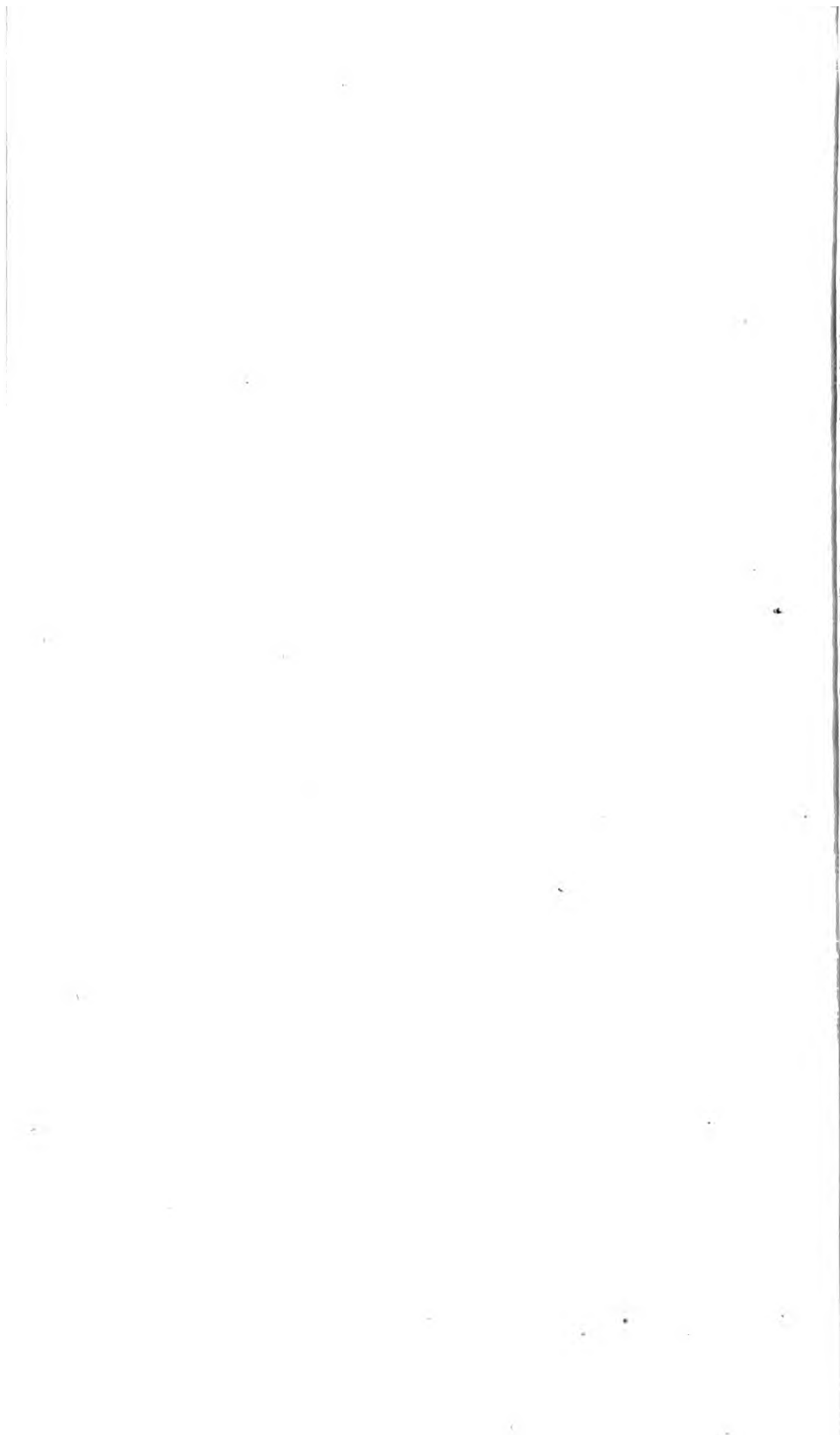
I shall here throw together a few notices of Tarleton's poetry. A new Booke on English Verse, entitled, *Tarleton's Toyes*, was entered Dec. 10, 1576, to R. Jones. Registr. Station. B. f. 136. b. See Heruey's *Four Letters*, 1592. p. 34.—*Tarleton's Devise* upon the unlooked-for great Snowe, is entered in 1578. Ibid. f. 156. b.—A ballad, called *Tarleton's Farewell*, is entered in 1588. Ibid. f. 233. a.—*Tarleton's Repentance* just before his Death, is entered in 1589. Ibid. f. 249. a. The next year, viz. 1590, Aug. 20, A pleasant Dittye dialogue-wise betweene *Tarleton's Ghost* and *Robyn Goodfellowe*, is entered to H. Carre. Ibid. f. 263. a. There is a transferred copy of *Tarleton's Jest*, I suppose *Tarleton's Toyes*, in 1607. Registr. C. f. 179. b. Many other pieces might be recited. [See *supr.* iii. 481.] See more of Tarleton, in *Supplement to Shakespeare*, i. pp. 55, 58, 59. And *Old Plays*, edit. 1778. Preface, p. lxii.

To what is there collected concerning Tarleton as a player, it may be added, that his ghost is one of the speakers, in that character, in *Chettle's Kind-harte's Dreame*, printed about 1593. Without date, quarto. Signat. E. 3. And that in the Preface, he appears to have been also a musician. "Tarleton with his Taber taking two or three leaden frisks, &c." Most of our old comedians professed every part of the histrionic science, and were occasionally fiddlers, dancers, and gesticulators. Dekker says, *Tarleton, Kempe, nor Singer*, "euer plaid the clowne more naturally." *Dekker's Guls Horne Booke*, 1609, p. 3. One or two of *Tarleton's Jest*s are mentioned in *The Discouerie of the Knights of the Poste*, &c. by S. S. Lond. Impr. by G. S. 1597, 4to. Bl. Lett. In *Fitz-Geoffrey's Cenotaphia*, annexed to his *Affaniz*, 1601, there is a panegyric on Tarleton. Signat. N. 2. Tarleton and Greene are often mentioned as associates in *Harvey's Four Letters*, 1592.

¹³⁶ A. 3. Sc. iv.

¹³⁷ B. vi. Ponton here mentioned, I presume, is Jovinianus Pontanus, an elegant Latin amatorial and pastoral poet of Italy, at the revival of learning.





They are recited among the best performances of the kind, and with applause, by Francis Meres, a cotemporary critic, who wrote in 1598¹³⁸. But whatever fame they had acquired, it soon received a check, which was never recovered. They were condemned to the flames, as licentious and immoral, by an order of bishop Bancroft in 1599. And this is obviously the chief reason why they are not named by our author, in the Specialities of his Life, written by himself, after his preferment to a bishopric¹³⁹. They were, however, admired and imitated by Oldham. And Pope, who modernised Donne, is said to have wished he had seen Hall's Satires sooner. But had Pope undertaken to modernise Hall, he must have adopted, because he could not have improved, many of his lines. Hall is too finished and smooth for such an operation. Donne, though he lived so many years later, was susceptible of modern refinement, and his asperities were such as wanted and would bear the chisel.

I was informed by the late learned bishop of Gloucester, that in a copy of Hall's Satires, in Pope's library, the whole first Satire of the sixth book was corrected in the margin, or interlined, in Pope's own hand; and that Pope had written at the head of that Satire, *Optima Satira*.

Milton, who had a controversy with Hall, as I have observed, in a remonstrance called *An Apology for Smectymnuus*, published in 1641, rather unsuitably and disingenuously goes out of his way, to attack these Satires, a juvenile effort of his dignified adversary, and under every consideration alien to the dispute. Milton's strictures are more sarcastic than critical; yet they deserve to be cited, more especially as they present a striking specimen of those awkward attempts at humour and raillery, which disgrace his prose works.

"Lighting upon this title of Toothless Satyrs, I will not conceal ye what I thought, readers, that sure this must be some sucking satyr, who might have done better to have used his coral, and made an end of breeding ere he took upon him to wield a satyr's whip. But when I heard him talk of *scouring the shields of elvish knights*¹⁴⁰, do not blame me if I changed my thought, and concluded him some desperate cutler. But why his *scornful Muse could never abide with tragick shoes her ancles for to hide*¹⁴¹, the pace of the verse told me, that her mawkin knuckles were never shapen to that royal bus-

¹³⁸ Wits Treas. f. 282. It is extraordinary, that they should not have afforded any *choice flowers* to England's Parnassus, printed in 1600.

¹³⁹ *Shaking of the Olive*, or his Remaining Works, 1660, 4to. Nor are they here inserted.

¹⁴⁰ A misquoted line in *The Defiance to Envy*, prefixed to the Satires. I will give the whole passage, which is a compliment to Spenser, and shows how happily Hall would have succeeded in the majestic march of the long stanza.

Or scour the rusted swordes of elvish knights,
Bathed in Pagan blood: or sheathe them new
In mistie moral types: or tell their fights,
Who mighty giants, or who monsters slew:
And by some strange enchanted speare and shield,
Vanquish'd their foe, and won the doubtful field.

May be she might, in stately stanzas, frame
Stories of ladies, and aduenturous knights:
To raise her silent and inglorious name
Vnto a reachlesse pitch of praise's hight:
And somewhat say, as more vnworthy done*,
Worthy of brasse, and hoary marble stone.

¹⁴¹ B. i. 1.

* That is, *have done*.

kin. And turning by chance to the sixth [seventh] Satyr of his second book, I was confirmed: where having begun loftily in *Heaven's universal alphabet*, he falls down to that wretched poorness and frigidity as to talk of *Bridge Street in Heaven*, and the *ostler of Heaven*¹⁴². And there wanting other matter to catch him a heat, (for certain he was on the frozen zone miserably benumbed) with thoughts lower than any beadle's, betakes him to whip the sign-posts of Cambridge alehouses, the ordinary subject of freshmen's tales, and in a strain as pitiful. Which, for him who would be counted the first English satyr, to abase himselfe to, who might have learned better among the Latin and Italian satyrs, and, in our own tongue, from the *Vision and Creede of Pierce Plowman*, besides others before him, manifested a presumptuous undertaking with weak and unexamined shoulders. For a satyr is, as it were, born out of a tragedy, so ought to resemble his parentage, to strike high, and adventure dangerously at the most eminent vices among the greatest persons, and not to creep into every blind taphouse that fears a constable more than a satyr. But that such a poem should be toothless, I still affirm it to be a bull, taking away the essence of that which it calls itself. For if it bite neither the persons nor the vices, how is it a satyr? And if it bite either, how is it toothless? So that toothless satyrs, are as much as if he had said toothless teeth, &c."¹⁴³

With Hall's Satires should be ranked his *Mundus alter et idem*, an ingenious satirical fiction in prose, where, under a pretended description of the *Terra Australis*, he forms a pleasant invective against the characteristic vices of various nations, and is remarkably severe on the church of Rome. This piece was written about the year 1600, before he had quitted the classics for the fathers, and published some years afterwards, against his consent. Under the same class should also be mentioned his *Characterismes of Vertues*, a set of sensible and lively moral essays, which contain traces of the Satires¹⁴⁴.

I take the opportunity of observing here, that among Hall's prose works are some metaphrastic versions in metre of a few of David's Psalms¹⁴⁵, and three anthems, or hymns,

¹⁴² Hall supposes that the twelve signs of the zodiac are twelve inns, in the high-street of Heaven,
With twelve fayre signes
 Euer well tended by our star-divines.

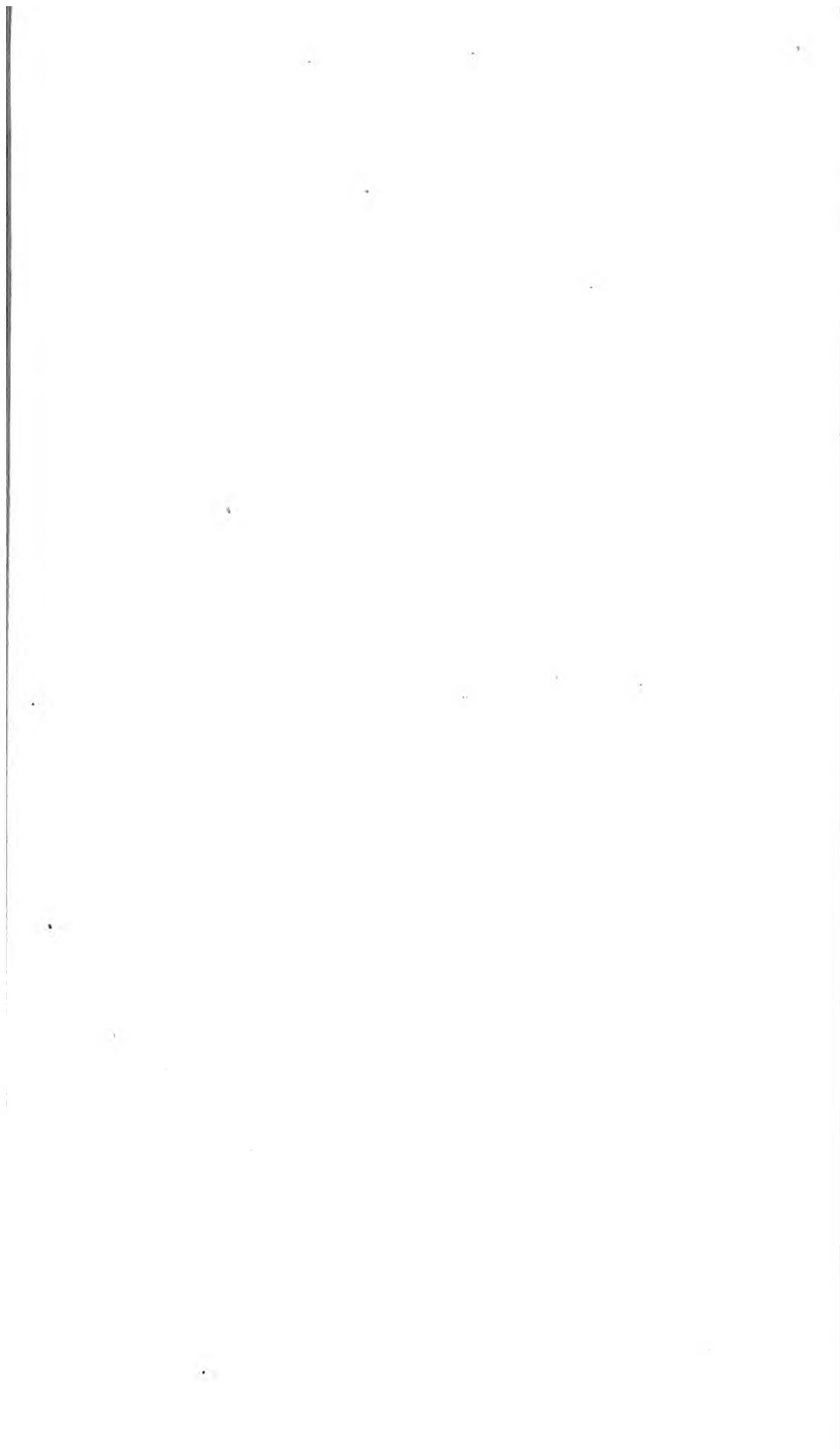
Of the astrologers, who give their attendance, some are ostlers, others chamberlaines, &c. The zodiacal sign Aquarius, he supposes to be in the Bridge Street of Heaven. He alludes to Bridge Street at Cambridge, and the signs are of inns at Cambridge.

¹⁴³ Apology for Smectymnuus, Milton's prose works, vol. i. p. 186; edit. Amst. 1698, fol. See also p. 185. 187. 191.

¹⁴⁴ Works ut supr. p. 171. Under the character of the Hypocrite, he says, "When a rimer reads his poeme to him, he begs a copie, and perswades the presse, &c." p. 187. Of the Vaine-glorious: "He sweares bigge at an ordinary, and talkes of the court with a sharp voice.—He calls for pheasants at a common inne.—If he haue bestowed but a little summe in the glazing, pauing, parieting, of Gods house, you shall find it in the church-window." [See Sat. B. iv. 3.] "His talke is, how many mourners he has furnished with gownes at his father's funerals, what exploits he did at Cales and Newport, &c." p. 194, 195. Of the Busie-bodie: "If he see but two men talke and reade a letter in the streete, he runnes to them and askes if he may not be partner of that secret relation: and if they deny it, he offers to tell, since he cannot heare, wonders: and then falls vpon the report of the Scottish mine, or of the great fish taken vp at Linne, or of the freezing of the Thames, &c." p. 188. Of the Superstitious: "He never goes without an erra pater in his pocket.—Every lanterne is a ghost, and every noise is of chaines, &c." p. 189. These pieces were written after the Gunpowder Plot, for it is mentioned, p. 196.

¹⁴⁵ Works, ut supr. p. 151. In the Dedication he says, "Indeed my poetry was long sithence out of date, and yelded her place to grauer studies, &c." In his Epistles he speaks of this unfinished undertaking. "Many great wits haue vndertaken this task.—Among the rest were those two rare spirits of the Sidnyes; to whom poesie was as natvrall as it is affected of others: and our worthy friend Mr. Sylvester hath shewed me how happily he hath sometimes turned from his *Bartas* to the sweet singer of





written for the use of his Cathedral. Hall, in his Satires, had condemned this sort of poetry.

An able inquirer into the literature of this period has affirmed, that Hall's Epistles, written before the year 1613¹⁴⁶, are the first example of epistolary composition which England had seen. "Bishop Hall," he says, "was not only our first satirist, but was the first who brought epistolary writing to the view of the public: which was common in that age to other parts of Europe, but not practised in England till he published his own Epistles¹⁴⁷." And Hall himself, in the Dedication of his Epistles to Prince Henry, observes, "Your grace shall herein perceiue a new fashion of discourse by epistles, new to our language, vsuall to others: and, as nouelty is neuer without plea of vse, more free, more familiar¹⁴⁸."

The first of our countrymen, however, who published a set of his own letters, though not in English, was Roger Ascham, who flourished about the time of the Reformation; and when that mode of writing had been cultivated by the best scholars in various parts of Europe, was celebrated for the terseness of his epistolary style. I believe the second published correspondence of this kind, and in our own language, at least of any importance after Hall, will be found to be *Epistolæ Hoelianæ*, or the Letters of James Howell, a great traveller, an intimate friend of Jonson, and the first who bore the office of the royal historiographer, which discover a variety of literature, and abound with much entertaining and useful information¹⁴⁹.

Israel.—There is none of all my labours so open to all censures. Perhaps some think the verse harsh, whose nice eare regardeth roundnesse more than sense. I embrace smoothnesse, but affect it not." Dec. ii. Ep. v. p. 302, 303. ut supr.

¹⁴⁶ See Works, ut supr. p. 275.

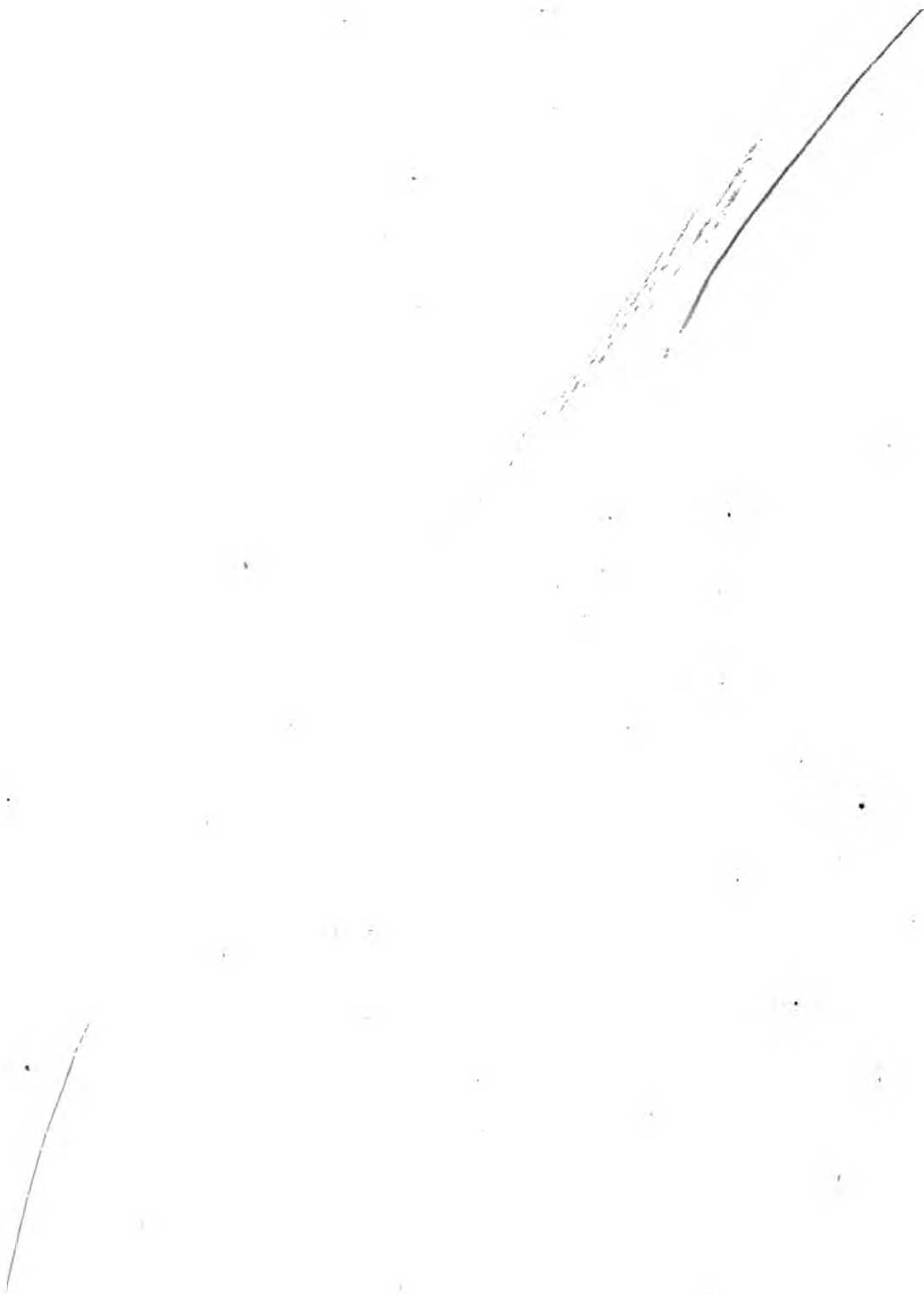
¹⁴⁷ See Whalley's Inquiry into the Learning of Shakspeare, p. 41.

¹⁴⁸ Works, ut supr. p. 172. The reader of Hall's Satires is referred to Dec. vi. Epist. vi. p. 394.

¹⁴⁹ *Epistolæ Hoelianæ*, Familiar Letters, domestic and foreign, divided into sundry Sections, partly historical, political, and philosophical. Lond. 1645, 4to. They had five editions from 1645 to 1673, inclusive. A third and fourth volume was added to the last impression.

I must not dismiss our satirist without observing, that Fuller has preserved a witty encomiastic English Epigram by Hall, written at Cambridge, on Greenham's book of The Sabbath, before the year 1592. Church History, B. ix. Cent. xvi. §. vii. pag. 220, edit. 1655, fol. I find it also prefixed to Greenham's Works, in folio, 1601.

The encomiastic Epigram noticed in Mr. Warton's note is now added to his Satires, with a few smaller pieces from his Remains, and his Elegy on Dr. Whitaker from Mr. Nichols's Collection.

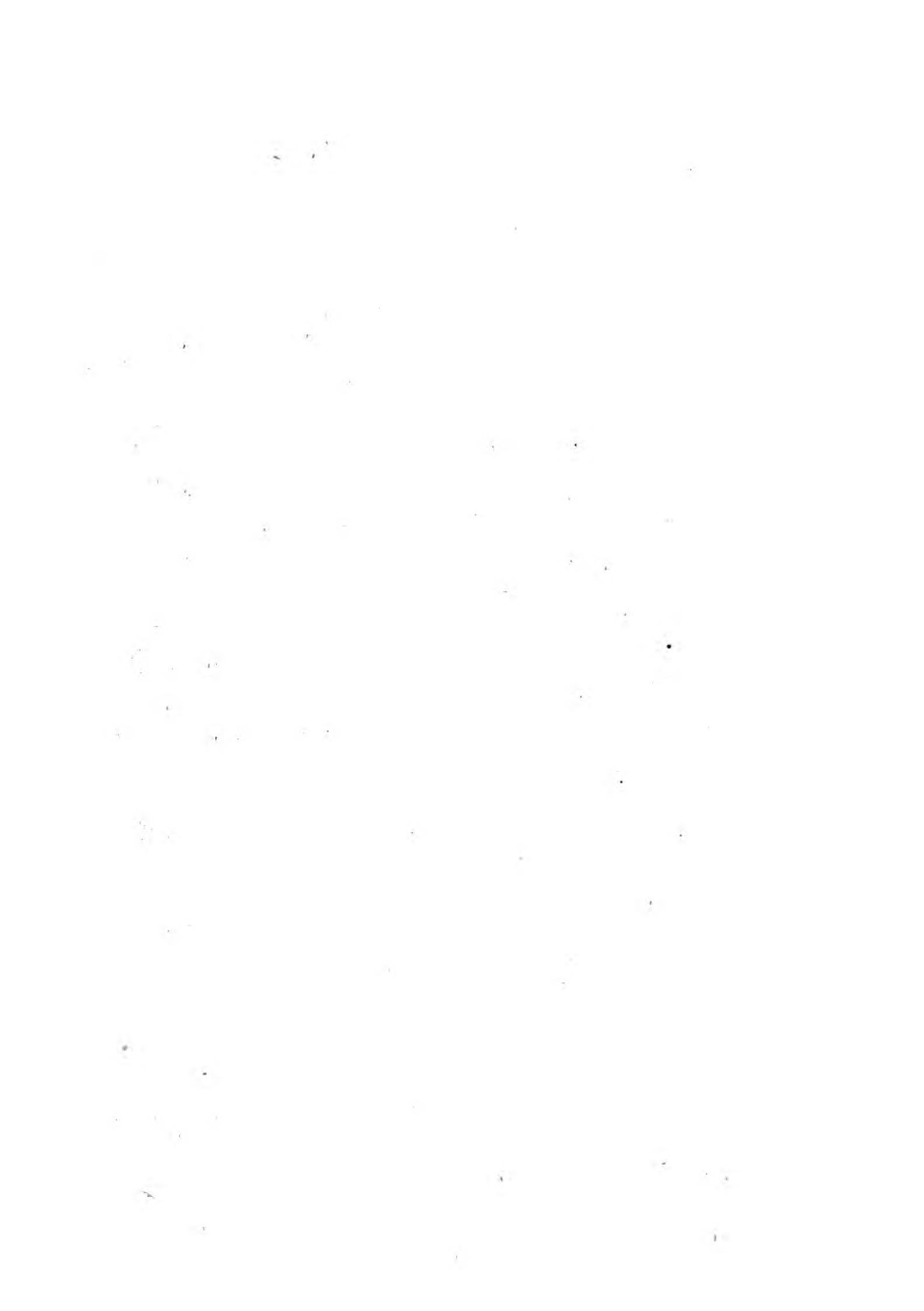


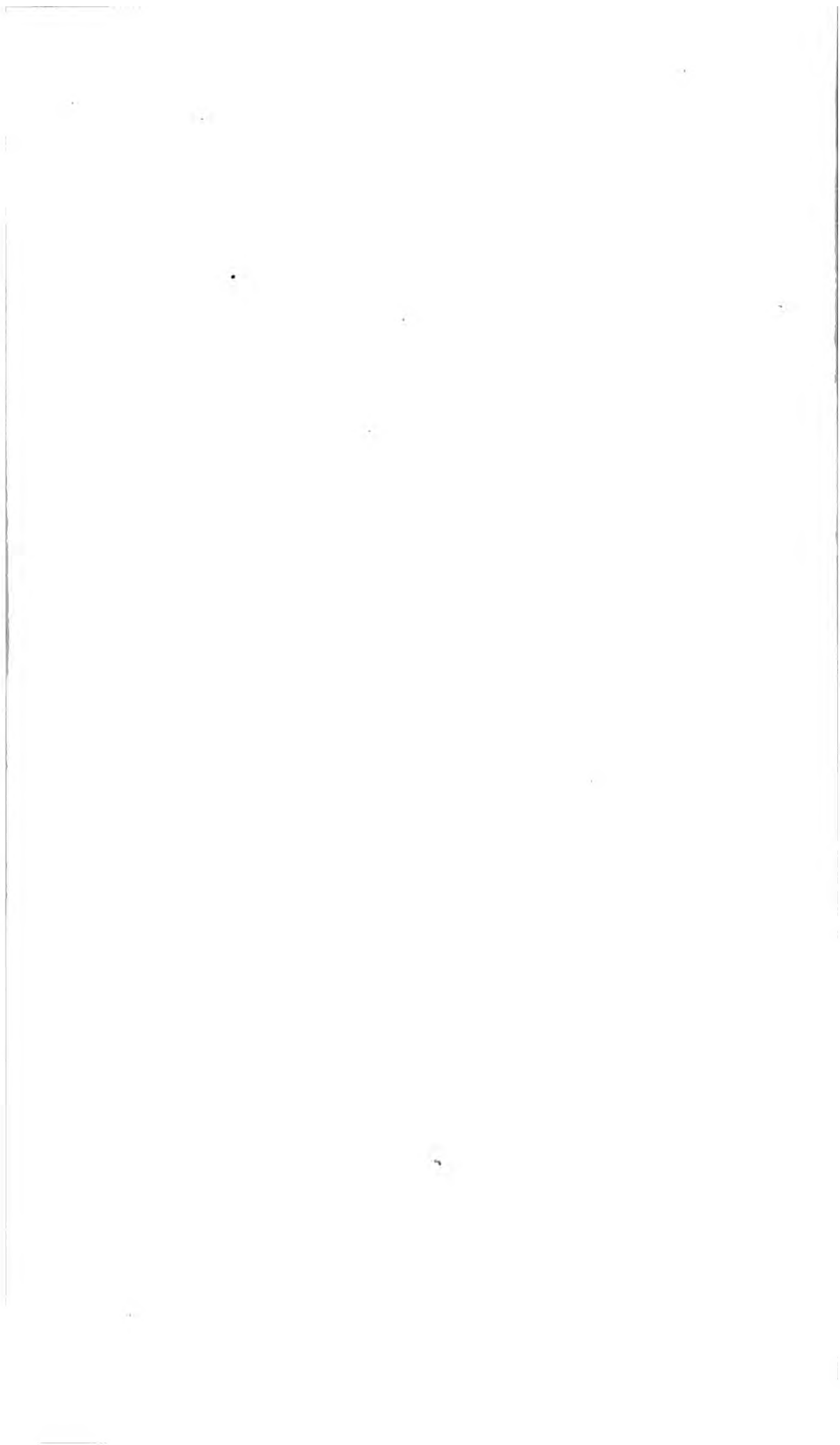
LIFE OF HALL

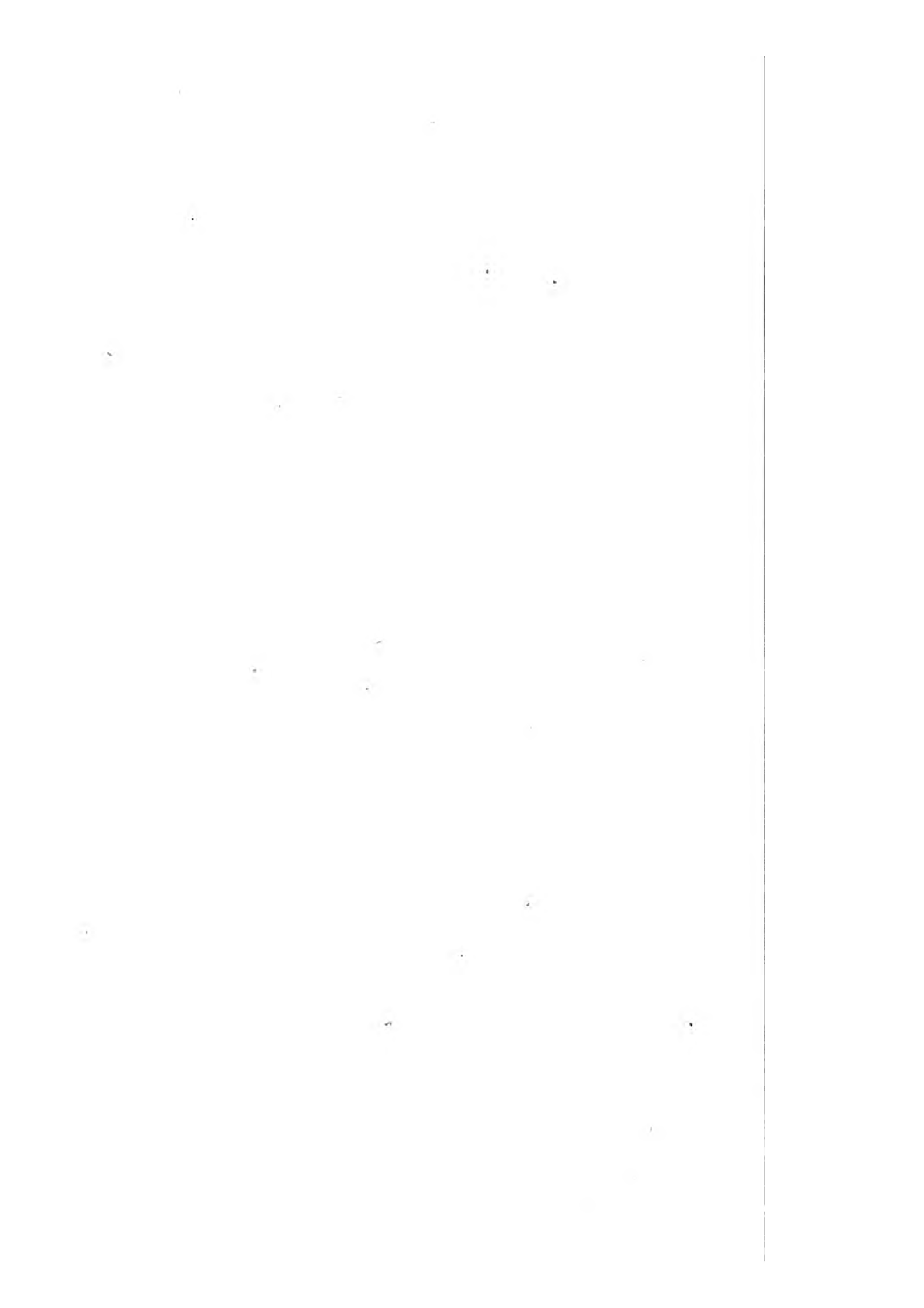
in his Series had contained his sort of

257

... that Hall's Episodes
composition which
had was







THE
LIFE OF WILLIAM ALEXANDER,
EARL OF STIRLING.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER, another of those men of genius who have anticipated the style of a more refined age, is said to have been a descendant of the ancient family of Macdonald. Alexander Macdonald, his ancestor, obtained from one of the earls of Argyle a grant of the lands of Menstrie in the county of Clackmanan; and our author's surname was taken from this ancestor's proper-name. He was born about the year 1580, and from his infancy exhibited proofs of genius, which his friends were desirous of improving by the best instruction which the age afforded. Travelling was at that time an essential branch of education, and Mr. Alexander had the advantage of being appointed tutor, or rather companion, to the earl of Argyle, who was then about to visit the continent.

On his return to Scotland, he betook himself for some time to a retired life, and endeavoured to alleviate the sorrows of ill-requited love by writing those songs and sonnets which he entitled *Aurora*. Who his mistress was, we are not told; but it appears by these poems that he was smitten with her charms when he was only in his fifteenth year, and neither by study or travel could banish her from his affections. When all hope, however, was cut off by her marriage, he had at last recourse to the same remedy, and obtained the hand of Janet the daughter and heiress of sir William Erskine.

Soon after his marriage, he attended the court of king James VI, as a private gentleman, but not without being distinguished as a man of learning and personal accomplishments, and particularly noticed as a poet by his majesty, who, with all his failings, had allowable pretensions to the discernment, as well as the liberality, of a patron of letters. James was fond of flattery, and had no reason to complain that his courtiers stinted him in that article; yet Mr. Alexander chose at this time to employ his pen on subjects that were new in the palaces of kings. Having studied the ancient moralists and philosophers, he descanted on the vanity of grandeur, the value of truth, the abuse of power, and the burthen of riches. Against all that has ever been objected to courts and ministers, to minions and flatterers, he advised and remonstrated

with prolix freedom in those tragedies which he calls *monarchic*; which, however unfit for the stage, seem to have been written for the sole purpose of teaching sovereigns how to rule, if they would render their subjects happy and loyal, and their reigns prosperous and peaceful.

His first production of this kind, the tragedy of Darius, was printed at Edinburgh in 1603, 4to. and reprinted in 1604, with the tragedy of Cræsus, and A Parænesis to the Prince, another piece in which he recommends the choice of patriotic, disinterested, and public-spirited counsellors. The prince intended to be thus instructed was Henry; but it is said to have been afterwards inscribed to Charles I. in what edition I have not been able to discover. The Dedication occurs in the folio edition of 1637, "To Prince Charles;" which, if a republication, may mean Charles I. but if it then appeared for the first time, Charles II. Some of our author's biographers have asserted, that prince Henry died before the publication, which was the reason of its being inscribed to prince Charles; but Henry died in 1612, eight years after the appearance of the Parænesis, and to a prince of his virtues it must have been highly acceptable. In this same volume, Mr. Alexander published his Aurora, containing The First Fancies of his Youth; and in 1607 he reprinted Cræsus and Darius, with The Alexandræan Tragedy, and Julius Cæsar. In 1612, he printed An Elegy on the Death of Prince Henry; a poem of which no copy is known to exist, except one in the University Library of Edinburgh.

With these productions king James is said to have been delighted, and honoured the author with his conversation, calling him his philosophical poet. He began likewise to bestow some more substantial marks of his favour, as soon as Mr. Alexander followed him to the court of England. In the month of July 1613, he appointed him to be one of the gentlemen ushers of the presence to prince Charles; but neither the manners nor the honours of the court made any alteration in the growing propensity of our author's Muse towards serious subjects. From having acquired the title of a philosophical, he endeavoured now to earn that of a divine poet, by publishing, in 1614, his largest work, entitled Domesday, or the Great Day of Judgment, printed at Edinburgh, in quarto, afterwards, in the same size, in London; and again in folio, with his other works. In 1720, the first two books were edited by A. Johnstoun, encouraged by the favourable opinion of Addison: and Addison had probably been induced to read our author's works by one of the correspondents of The Spectator, who recommended the following lines, from the Prologue to Julius Cæsar, as a hint to critics.

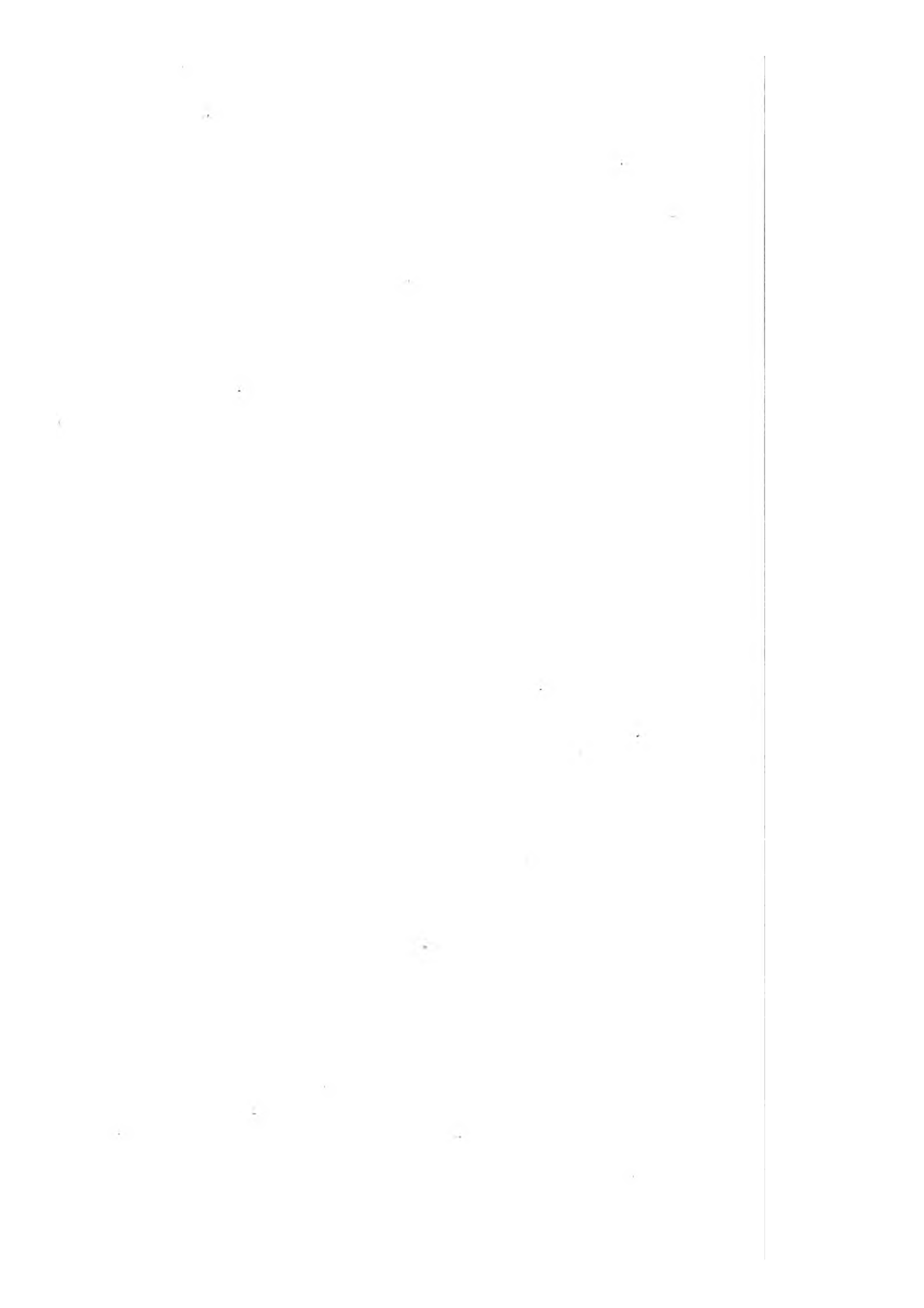
Show your small talent, and let that suffice ye;
But grow not vain upon it, I advise ye.
For every fop can find out faults in plays:
You 'll ne'er arrive at knowing when to praise¹.

Addison, however, did not live to see Johnstoun's edition.

The same year in which this last work appeared, the king appointed him master of the requests, and conferred upon him the order of knighthood. And now, in the opinion of his biographer, his views began to descend from the regions of supposed perfection and contentment to those objects which are more commonly and more successfully accomplished in the sunshine of a court. Having projected the settlement of a colony in Nova Scotia, he laid out a considerable sum of money in that quarter, and joined with a com-

¹ Spect. No. 300.





pany of adventurers who were willing to embark their property in the same concern. His majesty, in whose favour he still stood high, made him a grant of Nova Scotia, on the 21st of September, 1621, and intended to create an order of baronets for the more dignified support of so great a work; but was diverted from this part of his purpose by the disturbed state of public affairs towards the close of his reign. His successor, however, showed every inclination to promote the scheme, and sir William, in 1625, published a pamphlet, entitled *An Encouragement to Colonies*; the object of which was to state the progress already made, to recommend the scheme to the nation, and to invite adventurers. But before this, there is reason to think he had a hand in *A Brief Relation of the Discovery and Plantation of New England, and of Sundry Accidents therein occurring, from the Year of our Lord 1607 to this present, 1622: together with the State thereof as it now standeth; the General Form of Government intended, and the Division of the whole Territorie into Counties, Baronies, &c.*

King Charles appears to have been fully persuaded of the excellence and value of the project, and rewarded sir William Alexander by making him lieutenant of New Scotland, and at the same time founded the order of knights baronet in Scotland. Each of these baronets was to have a liberal portion of land allotted to him in Nova Scotia, and their number was not to exceed one hundred and fifty; their titles to be hereditary, with other privileges of precedence, &c. Sir William had also a peculiar privilege given him of coining small copper money, which occasioned much popular clamour; and, upon the whole, the scheme does not appear to have added greatly to his reputation with the public, although, perhaps, the worst objection that could be made, was his want of success. After many trials, he was induced to sell his share in Nova Scotia, and the lands were ceded to the French, by a treaty between Charles I. and Lewis XIII.

But whatever opposition or censure he encountered from the public in this affair, he still remained in high credit with the king, who, in 1626, appointed him secretary of state for Scotland, and in 1630, created him a peer of that kingdom by the title of viscount Canada, lord Alexander of Menstrie. About three years after, he was advanced to the title of earl of Stirling, at the solemnity of his majesty's coronation in Holyrood House. His lordship appears to have discharged the office of secretary of state for Scotland with universal reputation, and endeavoured to act with moderation during a crisis of peculiar delicacy, when Laud was endeavouring to abolish presbytery in Scotland, and to establish episcopacy.

His last appearance as an author was in the republication of all his poetical works, except *The Aurora*, (but with the addition of *Jonathan*, an unfinished poem) under the title of *Recreations with the Muses*²; the whole revised, corrected, and very much altered, by the author. He died on the 12th of February, 1640, in his sixtieth year. Of his personal character there is nothing upon record; but his *Doomsday* is a monument to his piety.

He left by his lady, 1. William, lord Alexander, viscount Canada, his eldest son, who died in the office of his majesty's resident in Nova Scotia, during his father's lifetime; William, the son of this young nobleman succeeded his grandfather in the earldom, but

² "Oldys and Pinkerton mention an edition of this work in 1727, but this has not been seen by the present editor." Mr. Park, in his edition of Walpole's *Royal and Noble Authors*, article *Stirling*. Oldys wrote our author's life for the *Biog. Britannica*, a very confused narrative, which was copied into Dr. Kippis's edition, without alteration or addition. The life in *Cibber* is rather better. *Langbaine* is very erroneous. C.

died about a month after him. 2. Henry Alexander, afterwards earl of Stirling : 3. John ; and two daughters, lady Margaret and lady Mary. Henry Alexander settled in England, and was succeeded in titles and estate by his grandson Henry, who died in 1739, and was the last male descendant of the first earl. A claimant appeared in 1776, but being unable to prove his descent before the house of peers, was ordered not to assume the title³.

Besides the writings already enumerated, the earl of Stirling published, in 1621, folio, *A Supplement of a Defect in the third Part of Sidney's Arcadia*, printed, according to Mr. Park, at Dublin ; and *A Map and Description of New England, with a Discourse of Plantation and the Colonies, &c.* Lond. 1630, quarto. He has also Sonnets prefixed to Drayton's Heroical Epistles ; to Quin's Elegiac Poem on Bernard Stuart, lord Aubigne ; to Abernethy's Christian and Heavenly Treatise, concerning Physicke for the Soule ; and several are interspersed among the works of Drummond, as are a few of his letters, and *Anacrisis, or a Censure of the Poets*, in the folio edition of Drummond's Works, which last Mr. Park considers as very creditable to his lordship's critical talents. Two pieces in Ramsay's *Evergreen*, entitled *The Comparison and the Solsequium*, are ascribed to him by lord Hailes. Such of these miscellanies as could be procured are now added to his works, with the chorusses of his tragedies, &c.

Our author has been liberally praised by his contemporaries and by some of his successors, by John Dunbar, Arthur Johnstoun, Andrew Ramsay, Daniel, Davis of Hereford, Hayman, Habington, Drayton, and Lithgow. His style is certainly neither pure nor correct, which may perhaps be attributed to his long familiarity with the Scotch language, but his versification is in general very superior to that of his contemporaries, and approaches nearer to the elegance of modern times than could have been expected from one who wrote so much. There are innumerable beauties scattered over the whole of his works, but particularly in his Songs and Sonnets ; the former are a species of irregular odes, in which the sentiment, occasionally partaking of the quaintness of his age, is more frequently new, and forcibly expressed. The powers of mind displayed in his *Doomsday* and *Parænesis* are very considerable, although we are frequently able to trace the allusions and imagery to the language of holy writ ; and he appears to have been less inspired by the sublimity, than by the awful importance of his subject to rational beings. A habit of moralizing pervades all his writings, but in the *Doomsday* he appears deeply impressed with his subject, and more anxious to persuade the heart, than to delight the imagination.

³ *Gent. Mag.* 1776, p. 505. C.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

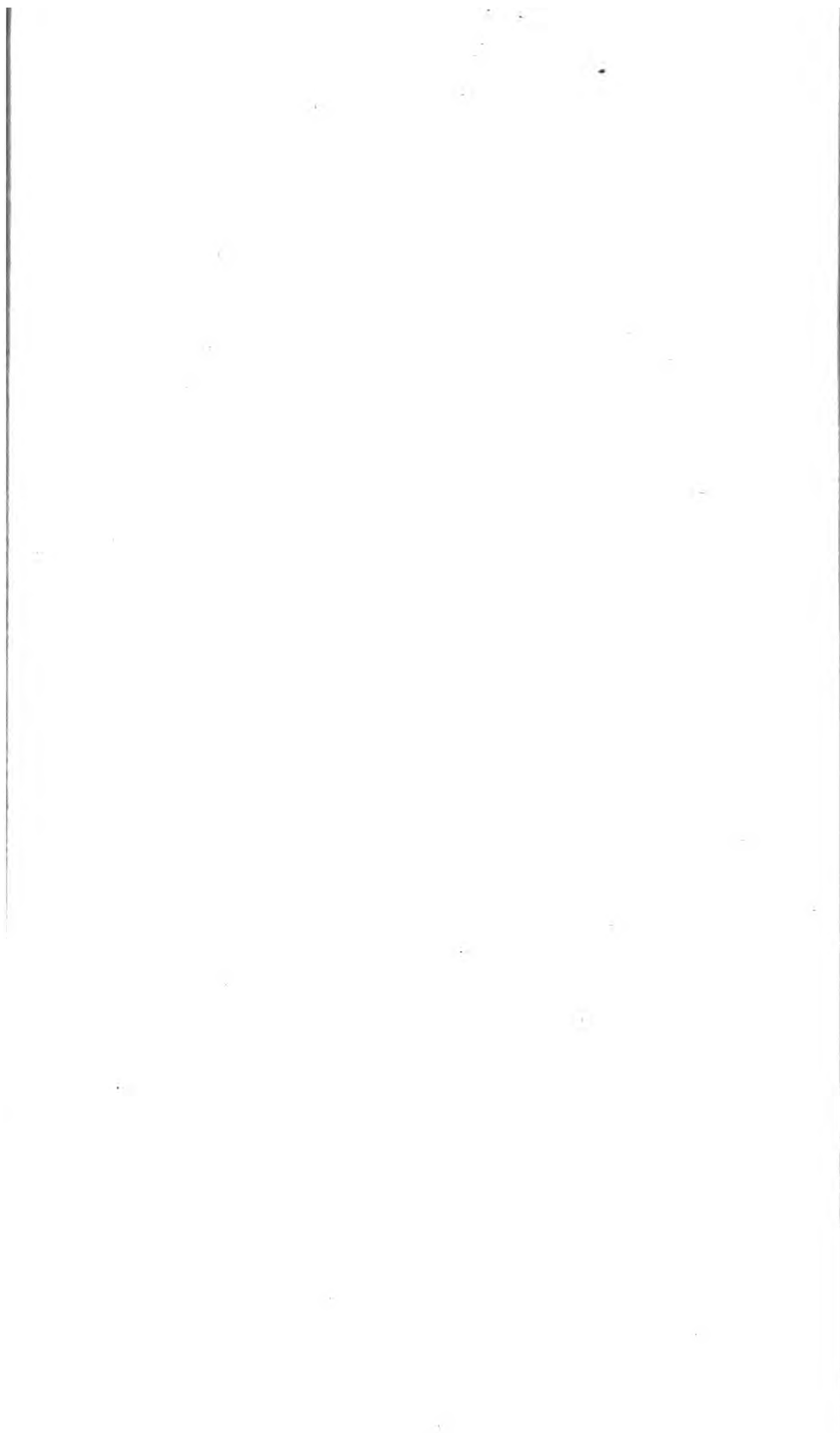
10

11

12

13





THE
LIFE OF JONSON,

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THE circumstances of Jonson's life have been hitherto very inaccurately related. Some particulars may be collected from his works, and from Fuller and Wood who lived at no great distance from his time. Drummond, the celebrated Scotch poet has afforded a few interesting memoirs which, coming from Jonson in the hours of confidence, may be considered as authentic; but these materials have furnished no general narrative that is not inconsistent, and imperfect for want of dates. What follows, therefore, must be read, as it was written, with considerable diffidence.

Ben Jonson, or Johnson, for so he, as well as some of his friends, wrote his name, was born in Hartshorne Lane near Charingcross, Westminster, June 11, 1574, about a month after the death of his father. Dr. Bathurst, whose life was written by Mr. Warton, informed Aubrey that Jonson was born in Warwickshire, but all other accounts fix his birth in Westminster. Fuller says that "with all his industry he could not find him in his cradle, but that he could fetch him from his long coats: when a little child, he lived in Hartshorne Lane near Charing Cross." Mr. Malone examined the register of St. Margaret's Westminster and St. Martin's in the Fields, but without being able to discover the time of his baptism¹.

His family was originally of Annandale in Scotland, whence his grandfather removed to Carlisle in the time of Henry VIII. under whom he held some office. But his son being deprived both of his estate and liberty in the reign of queen Mary, went afterwards in holy orders, and leaving Carlisle, settled in Westminster.

Our poet was first sent to a private school in the church of St. Martin's in the Fields, and was afterwards removed to Westminster school. Here he had for his preceptor the illustrious Camden, for whom he ever preserved the highest respect, and besides dedicating one of his best plays to him, commemorates him in one of his epigrams as the person to whom he owed all he knew. He was making very extraordinary progress at this school, when his mother, who, soon after her husband's death, had married a bricklayer, took him home to learn his step-father's business. How long he continued in

¹ Shakspeare, Ford and Jonson, in Malone's Shakspeare. C.

this degrading occupation is uncertain ; according to Fuller he soon left it and went to Cambridge, but necessity obliged him to return to his father who, among other works, employed him on the new building at Lincoln's Inn, and there he was to be seen with a trowel in one hand and a book in the other. This, Mr. Malone thinks, must have been either in 1588, or 1593, in each of which years, Dugdale informs us, some new buildings were erected by the society. Wood varies the story by stating that he was taken from the trowel to attend sir Walter Raleigh's son abroad and afterwards went to Cambridge, but young Raleigh was not born till 1594, nor ever went abroad except with his father in 1617 to Guiana, where he lost his life. So many of Jonson's contemporaries, however, have mentioned his connection with the Raleigh family that it is probable he was in some shape befriended by them², although not while he worked at his father's business, for from that he ran away, enlisted as a common soldier and served in the English army then engaged against the Spaniards in the Netherlands. "Here," says the author of his life in the *Biographia Britannica*, "he acquired a degree of military glory, which rarely falls to the lot of a common man in that profession. In an encounter with a single man of the enemy, he slew his opponent, and stripping him, carried off the spoils in the view of both armies." As our author's fame does not rest on his military exploits, it can be no detraction to hint that one man killing and stripping another is a degree of military prowess of no very extraordinary kind. His biographer, however, is unwilling to quit the subject until he has informed us that "the glory of this action receives a particular heightening from the reflection, that he thereby stands singularly distinguished above the rest of his brethren of the poetical race, very few of whom have ever acquired any reputation in arms."

On his return, he is said to have resumed his studies, and to have gone to St. John's College, Cambridge. This fact rests chiefly upon a tradition in that college, supported by the gift of several books now in the library with his name in them. As to the question why his name does not appear in any of the lists, it is answered that he was only a sizar, who made a short stay, and his name could not appear among the admissions where no notice was usually taken of any young men that had not scholar-ships; and as to matriculation, there was at that time no register. If he went to St. John's it seems probable enough that the shortness of his stay was occasioned by his necessities, and this would be the case whether he went to Cambridge in 1588, as Mr. Malone conjectures, or after his return from the army, perhaps in 1594. In either case he was poor, and received no encouragement from his family in his education. His persevering love of literature, however, amidst so many difficulties, ought to be mentioned to his honour.

Having failed in these more creditable attempts to gain a subsistence, he began his theatrical career, at first among the strolling companies, and was afterwards admitted into an obscure theatre, called the Green Curtain, in the neighbourhood of Shoreditch, from which the present Curtain Road seems to derive its name. He had not been there long, before he attempted to write for the stage, but was not at first very successful either as an author or actor. Meres enumerates him among the writers of tragedy, but no tragedy of his writing exists, prior to 1598 when his comedy of *Every Man in his Humour* procured him a name. Dexter, in his *Satyromastix*, censures his acting as awkward and mean, and his temper as rough and untractable.

² See Oldys's account hereafter quoted, p. 451. C.



During his early engagements on the stage, he had the misfortune to kill one of the players in a duel, for which he was thrown into prison, "brought near the gallows," but afterwards pardoned. While in confinement, a popish priest prevailed on him to embrace the Roman Catholic faith, in which he continued about twelve years. As soon as he was released, which appears to have been about the year 1595, he married, to use his own expression, "a wife who was a shrew, yet honest to him," and endeavoured to provide for his family by his pen. Having produced a play which was accidentally seen by Shakspeare, he resolved to bring it on the stage of which he was a manager, and acted a part in it himself. What play this was we are not told, but its success encouraged him to produce his excellent comedy of *Every Man in his Humour*, which was performed on the same stage in 1598. Oldys, in his manuscript notes on Langbaine, says that Jonson was himself the master of a playhouse in Barbican, which was at a distant period converted into a dissenting meeting-house. He adds that Ben lived in Bartholomew Close, in the house which was inhabited, in Oldys's time, by Mr. James, a letter founder. Mention is made in his writings of his theatre, of the Sun and Moon tavern in Aldersgate Street, and of the Mermaid. But the want of dates renders much of this information useless.

In the following year he produced the counterpart of his former comedy, entitled *Every Man out of his Humour*, and continued to furnish a new play every year until he was called to assist in the masks and entertainments given in honour of the accession of king James to the throne of England, and afterwards on occasions of particular festivity at the courts of James and Charles I. But from those barbarous productions, he occasionally retired to the cultivation of his comic genius, and on one occasion gave an extraordinary proof of natural and prompt excellence in his *Volpone*, which was finished within the space of five weeks.

His next production indicated somewhat of that rough and independent spirit which neither the smiles nor terrors of a court could repress. It was, indeed, a foolish ebullition for a man in his circumstances to ridicule the Scotch nation in the court of a Scotch king, yet this he attempted in a comedy, entitled *Eastward-Hoe*, which he wrote in conjunction with Chapman and Marston, although, as Mr. Warton has remarked, he was in general "too proud to assist or be assisted." The affront, however, was too gross to be overlooked, and the three authors were sent to prison, and not released without much interest. Camden and Selden are supposed to have supplicated the throne in favour of Jonson on this occasion. At an entertainment which he gave to these and other friends on his release, his mother "more like an antique Roman than a Briton, drank to him, and showed him a paper of poison, which she intended to have given him in his liquor, after having taken a portion of it herself, if sentence upon him (of pillory, &c.) had been carried into execution." The history of the times shows the probable inducement Jonson had to ridicule the Scotch. The court was filled with them, and it became the humour of the English to be jealous of their encroachments. Jonson, however, having obtained a pardon, endeavoured to conciliate his offended sovereign by taxing his genius to produce a double portion of that adulation in which James delighted.

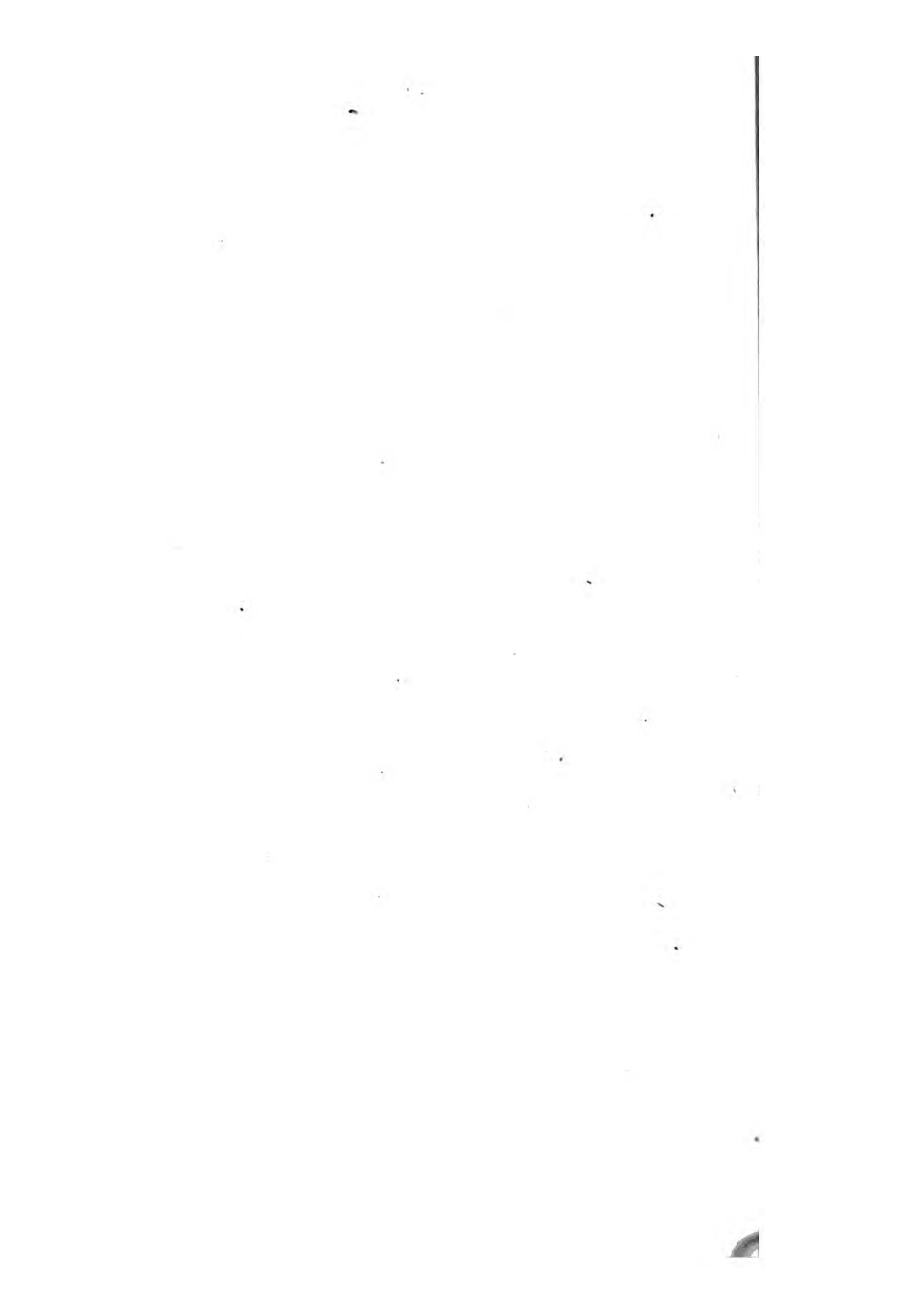
His connection with Shakspeare, noticed above, has lately become the subject of a controversy. Pope, in the preface to his edition of Shakspeare, says, "I cannot help thinking that these two poets were good friends and lived on amicable terms, and in

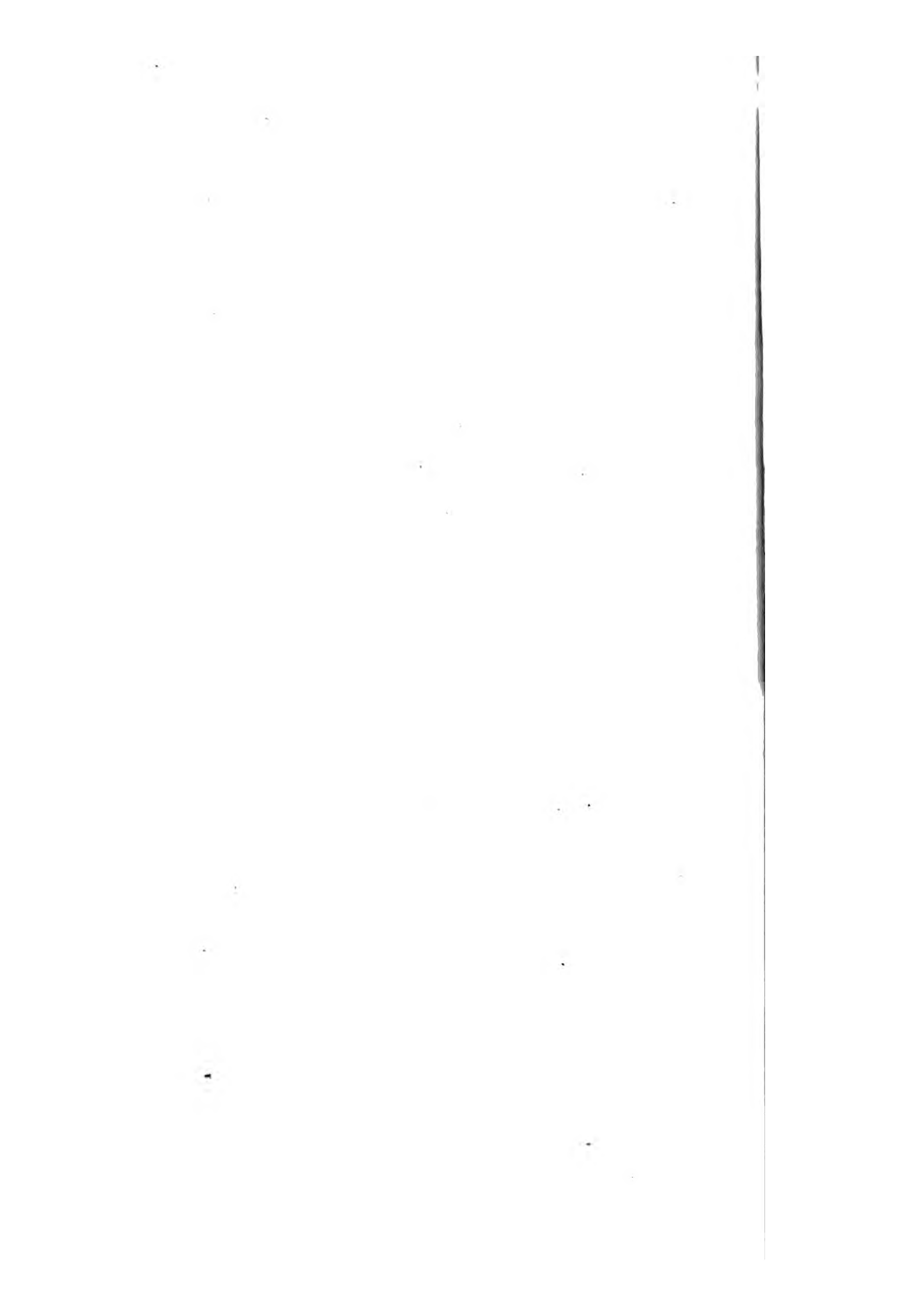
offices of society with each other. It is an acknowledged fact that Ben Jonson was introduced upon the stage, and his first works encouraged by Shakspeare. And after his death, that author writes 'To the Memory of his beloved Mr. William Shakspeare,' which shows as if the friendship had continued through life." Mr. Malone, the accuracy of whose researches are entitled to the highest respect, has produced many proofs of their mutual dislike, amounting, as he thinks, on the part of Jonson, to malignity. Mr. Steevens and Mr. George Chalmers are inclined likewise to blame Jonson, but Dr. Farmer considered the reports of Jonson's pride and malignity as absolutely groundless. Mr. O. Gilchrist, in a pamphlet just published, has vindicated Jonson with much acuteness, although without wholly effacing the impression which Mr. Malone's proofs and extracts are calculated to make. That Jonson was at times the antagonist of Shakspeare, and that they engaged in what Fuller calls "wit-combats," may be allowed; for such occurrences are not uncommon among contemporary poets; but it is inconsistent with all we know of human passions and tempers that a man capable of writing the high encomiastic lines alluded to by Pope, could have at any time harboured *malignity* in his heart against Shakspeare. Malignity rarely dies with its object, and more rarely turns to esteem and veneration.

Jonson's next play, *Epicæne, or the Silent Woman*, did not appear until 1609, and amply atoned for his seeming neglect of the dramatic Muse. It is perhaps the first regular comedy in the language, and did not lose much of this superiority by the appearance of his *Alchemist* in 1610. His tragedy, however, of *Catiline*, in 1611, as well as his *Sejanus*, of both which he entertained a high opinion, seem only to confirm the maxim that few authors know where their excellence lies. The *Catiline*, says Dr. Hurd, is a specimen of all the errors of tragedy.

In 1613, he went to Paris, where he was admitted to an interview with cardinal Perron, and with his usual frankness told the cardinal that his translation of Virgil was "nought." About this time he commenced a quarrel with Inigo Jones, and made him the subject of his ridicule in a comedy called *Bartholomew Fair*, acted in 1614. Jones was architect or machinist to the masques and entertainments for which Jonson furnished the poetry, but the particular cause of their quarrel does not appear. "Whoever," says lord Orford, "was the aggressor, the turbulent temper of Jonson took care to be most in the wrong. Nothing exceeds the grossness of the language that he poured out, except the badness of the verses that were the vehicle. There he fully exerted all that brutal abuse which his contemporaries were willing to think wit, because they were afraid of it: and which only serves to show the arrogance of the man who presumed to satirize Jones and rival Shakspeare. With the latter, indeed, he had not the smallest pretensions to be compared, except in having sometimes written absolute nonsense. Jonson translated the ancients, Shakspeare transfused their very soul into his writings." If Jonson was the rival of Shakspeare, he deserves all this, but with no other claims than his *Catiline* and *Sejanus*, how could he for a moment fancy himself the rival of Shakspeare?

Bartholomew Fair was succeeded by *The Devil's an Ass*, in 1616, and by an edition of his works in folio, in which his Epigrams were first printed, although they appear to have been written at various times, and some long before this period. He was now in the zenith of his fame and prosperity. Among other marks of respect, he was presented with the honorary degree of master of arts by the university of Oxford; he had





been invited to this place by Dr. Corbet, senior student, and afterwards dean of Christ Church and bishop of Norwich. According to the account he gave of himself to Drummond, he was master of arts of both universities.

Wood informs us that he succeeded Daniel as poet-laureat, in Oct. 1619, as Daniel did Spenser. Mr. Malone, however, has very clearly proved that neither Spenser nor Daniel enjoyed the office now known by that name. King James, by letters patent dated February 3, 1615-16, granted Jonson an annuity or yearly pension of one hundred marks during his life, "in consideration of the good and acceptable service heretofore done, and hereafter to be done by the said B. I." On the 23d of April 1630, king Charles by letters patent, reciting the former grant, and that it had been surrendered, was pleased, "in consideration (says the patent) of the good and acceptable service done unto us, and our father by the said B. I. and especially to encourage him to proceed in those services of his wit and pen, which we have enjoined unto him, and which we expect from him," to augment his annuity of one hundred marks, to one hundred pounds *per annum*, during his life, payable from Christmas, 1629. Charles at the same time granted him a tierce of Canary Spanish wine yearly during his life, out of his majesty's cellars at Whitehall: of which there is no mention in the former grant³.

Soon after the pension was settled on him, he went to Scotland to visit his intimate friend and correspondent, Drummond of Hawthornden, to whom he imparted many particulars of his life and his opinions on the poets of his age. Of these communications some notice will be taken hereafter. After his return from this visit, which appears to have afforded him much pleasure, he wrote a poem on the subject, but this with several more of his productions, was destroyed by an accidental fire, and he commemorated his loss in a poem entitled *An Execration upon Vulcan*.

Although it is not the purpose of this sketch to notice all his dramatic pieces, it is necessary to mention that in 1629, he produced a comedy called the *New Inn*, or the *Light Heart*, which was so roughly handled by the audience that he was provoked to write an *Ode to Himself*, in which he threatened to abandon the stage. Threats of this kind are generally impotent, and Jonson gained nothing but the character of a man who was so far spoiled by public favour as to overrate his talents. Feltham and Suckling reflected on him with some asperity on this occasion, while Randolph endeavoured to reconcile him to his profession. His temper, usually rough, might perhaps at this time have been exasperated by disease, for we find that his health was declining from 1625 to 1629⁴, when his play was condemned. He was also suffering about this time the usual vexations which attend a want of economy; in one case of pecuniary embarrassment, king Charles relieved him by the handsome present of an hundred pounds. This contradicts a story related by Cibber and Smollett, that when the king heard of his illness, he sent him ten pounds, and that Jonson said to the messenger, "His majesty has sent me ten pounds, because I am old and poor and live in an alley: go and tell him that his soul lives in an alley." Jonson's blunt manners and ready wit make the

³ From Mr. Malone's valuable note on "Shakspeare, Ford and Jonson" before quoted. C.

⁴ The fire above mentioned Oldys fixes in this year, and says that it destroyed a history of Henry V. of which Jonson had gone through eight of his nine years, and in which it is said he was assisted by sir George Carew, sir Robert Cotton, and the celebrated Selden. Oldys's MS. Notes to Langbaine, in the British Museum. C.

reply sufficiently credible had the former part of the story been true, but the lines of gratitude which he addressed to his majesty are a satisfactory refutation. Jonson, however, continued to be thoughtlessly lavish and poor, although in addition to the royal bounty he is said to have enjoyed a pension from the city, and received occasional assistance from his friends. The pension from the city appears to have been withdrawn in 1631, if it be to it he alludes in the postscript of a letter in the British Museum, dated that year. "Yesterday the barbarous court of aldermen have withdrawn their chandlerly pension for verjuice and mustard, £33. 6s. 8d."

This letter, which is addressed to the Earl of Newcastle, shows so much of his temper and spirit at this time, that a larger extract may be excused.

"I myself being no substance, am faine to trouble you with shaddowes, or what is less, an apologue, or fable in a dream. I being stricken with a palsy in 1628, had, by sir Thomas Badger, some few months synce, a foxe sent mee, for a present, which creature, by handling, I endeavoured to make tame, as well for the abating of my disease as the delight I took in speculation of his nature. It happened this present year 1631, and this verie weeke being the weeke ushering Christmas, and this Tuesday morning in a dreame (and morning dreames are truest) to have one of my servants come to my bedside, and tell me, Master, master, the fox speaks! whereas mee thought I started and troubled, went down into the yard to witsse the wonder. There I found my reynard in his tenement, the tubb, I had hired for him, cynically expressing his own lott, to be condemn'd to the house of a poett, where nothing was to be seen but the bare walls, and not any thing heard but the noise of a sawe dividing billates all the weeke long, more to keepe the family in exercise than to comfort any person there with fire, save the paralytic master, and went on in this way, as the fox seemed the better fabler of the two. I, his master, began to give him good words, and stroake him: but Reynard, barking, told mee this would not doe, I must give him meat. I angry call'd him stiaking vermine. Hee reply'd, looke into your cellar, which is your larder too, youle find a worse vermin there. When presently calling for a light, mee thought I went downe, and found all the floor turn'd up, as if a colony of moles had been there, or an army of salt-petre vermin. Whereupon I sent presently into Tuttle-street for the king's most excellent mole catcher, to release mee and hunt them: but hee when hee came and viewed the place, and had well marked the earth turned up, took a handfull, smelt to it, and said, master, it is not in my power to destroy this vermin, the K. or some good man of a noble nature must help you: this kind of mole is called a want, which will destroy you and your family, if you prevent not the worsting of it in tyme. And therefore God keepe you and send you health.

"The interpretation both of the fable and dream is, that I, waking, doe find *want* the worst and most working vermin in a house: and therefore my noble lord, and next the king my best patron, I am necessitated to tell it you, I am not so imprudent to borrow any sum of your lordship, for I have no faculty to pay; but my needs are such, and so urging, as I do beg what your bounty can give mee, in the name of good letters and the bond of an evergratefull and acknowledging servant to your honour."—

Sutton, the founder of the Charterhouse is said to have been one of his benefactors, which renders it improbable that Jonson could have intended to ridicule so excellent a character on the stage: yet according to Mr. Oldys, Volpone was intended for Mr. Sutton. But although it is supposed that Jonson sometimes laid the rich under contributions by a dread of his satire, it is not very likely that he would attack such a man as Sutton.

pieces, and bear
in 1634, and we
pears to have been
ff, Aug. 16, 1637,
ed in Westminster
t stone laid over
son," cut at the

About six months
comiastic poems,
y of Ben Jonson
was the editor of
John Beaumont,
ventry, Thomas
ler, J. Vernon,
Rutter, Owen
Rich. West, R.
A subscription
bellion. The
Poet's Corner.
and, as Mr.
e. It should
en was not

necessary in
t no great

Hoskyns,

Mr. Ralph
n. 'Tis
- to Mr.
school-
ly⁶ said
len wall
ro', and
finding
Trinity
yes, and
nay find
Greene
suburbs
a play,

Account of
the Ashmolean

The Tale of a Tub, and The Magnetic Lady, were his last dramatic pieces, and bear very few marks of his original powers. He penned another masque in 1634, and we have a New Year's Ode dated in 1635, but the remainder of his life appears to have been wasted in sickness of the paralytic kind, which at length carried him off, Aug. 16, 1637, in the sixty-third year of his age. Three days afterwards he was interred in Westminster Abbey, at the north-west end near the belfry, with a common pavement stone laid over his grave, with the short and irreverend inscription of "O rare Ben Jonson," cut at the expense of sir John Young, of Great Milton in Oxfordshire.

His death was lamented as a public loss to the poetical world. About six months after this event, his contemporaries joined in a collection of elegies and encomiastic poems, which was published under the title of *Ionsonius Virbius*; or the Memory of Ben Jonson revived by the Friends of the Muses. Dr. Duppa, bishop of Chichester, was the editor of this volume, which contained verses by lords Falkland and Buckhurst, sir John Beaumont, sir Francis Wortley, sir Thomas Hawkins, Messrs. Henry King, Henry Coventry, Thomas May, Dudley Diggs, George Fortescue, William Habington, Edmund Waller, J. Vernon, J. Cl. (probably Cleveland) Jasper Mayne, William Cartwright, John Rutter, Owen Feltham, George Donne, Shakerley Marmion, John Ford, R. Brideoak, Rich. West, R. Meade, H. Ramsay, T. Terrent, Rob. Wasing, Will. Bew, and Sam. Evans. A subscription also was entered into for a monument in the Abbey, but prevented by the rebellion. The second earl of Oxford contributed the bust in bas-relievo which is now in Poet's Corner. Jonson had several children, but survived them all. One of them was a poet, and, as Mr. Malone has reported, the author of a drama written in conjunction with Brome. It should seem that he was not on good terms with his father. Fuller says that "Ben was not pappy in his children."

As many points of his character are obscure or disputed, it may not be unnecessary in his place to exhibit the evidence of his contemporaries, or of those who lived at no great distance of time.

The following particulars Aubrey collected from Dr. Bathurst, sir Bennet Hoskyns, J. J. the player, and others:

"I remember when I was a scholar at Trin. Coll. Oxon. 1646, I heard Mr. Ralph Bathurst (now dean of Welles) say that Ben Johnson was a Warwyckshire man. 'Tis agreed that his father was a minister; and by his epistle D. D. of Every Man — to Mr. W. Camden, that he was a Westminster scholar, and that Mr. W. Camden was his schoolmaster. His mother, after his father's death, married a bricklayer, and 'tis generally said that he wrought for some time with his father-in-law, and particularly on the garden wall of Lincolns inne next to Chancery lane; and that a knight, a bencher, walking thro', and hearing him repeat some Greeke verses out of Homer, discoursing with him, and finding him to have a witt extraordinary, gave him some exhibition to maintain him at Trinity College in Cambridge, where he was —: then he went into the Lowe Countreyes, and spent some time, not very long, in the armie; not to the disgrace of [it], as you may find in his Epigrames. Then he came into England, and acted and wrote at the Greene Theatre, but both ill; a kind of nursery or obscure playhouse somewhere in the suburbs of London, think towards Shoreditch or Clerkenwell). Then he undertook again to write a play,

For the transcription of this article, the reader is indebted to Mr. Malone's Historical Account of the English Stage. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that Aubrey's MSS. are in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

A few contractions in the manuscript are not retained in this copy. C.

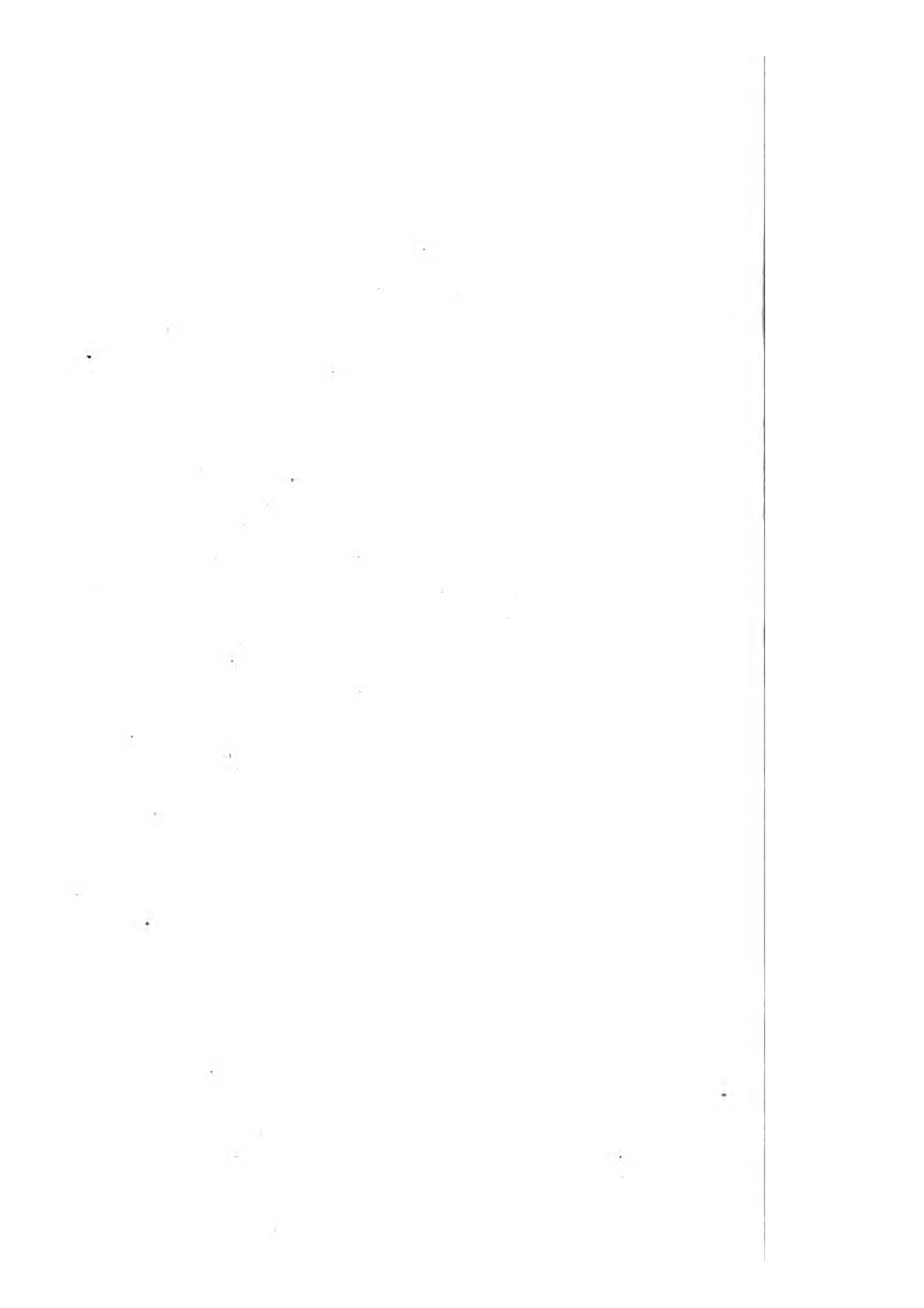
and did hitt it admirably well, viz. *Every Man* — which was his first good one Serjeant Jo. Hoskins of Herefordshire was his *father*. I remember his sonne (sir Bennet Hoskins, baronet, who was something poetical in his youth) told me, that when he desired to be adopted his sonne, No, sayd he, 'tis honour enough for me to be your brother: I am your father's sonne: 'twas he that polished me: I do acknowledge it. He was (or rather had been) of a clear and faire skin. His habit was very plain. I have heard Mr. Lacy the player say, that he was wont to weare a coate like a coachman's coate, with slitts under the arm-pitts. He would many times exceede in drinke: Canarie was his beloved liquor: then he would tumble home to bed: and when he had thoroughly perspired, then to studie. I have seen his studyeing chaire, which was of strawe, such as old women used: and as Aulus Gellius is drawn in. When I was in Oxon: bishop Skinner (Bp. of Oxford) who lay at our college, was wont to say, that he understood an author as well as any man in England. He mentions in his Epigrammes, a son that he had, and his epitaph. Long since in King James time, I have heard my uncle Davers (Danvers) say, who knew him, that he lived without Temple Barre at a combe-maker's shop about the Elephant's Castle. In his later time he lived in Westminster, in the house under which you passe, as you go out of the church-yard into the old palace: where he dyed. He lyes buried in the north aisle, the path square of stones, the rest is lozenge, opposite to the scutcheon of Robert de Ros, with this inscription only on him, in a pavement square of blue marble, fourteen inches square, O RARE BEN: JONSON: which was done at the charge of Jack Young, afterwards knighted, who, walking there when the grave was covering, gave the fellow eighteen pence to cutt it."

Mr. Zouch, in his Life of Walton, has furnished the following information from a MS. of Walton's in the Ashmolean Museum.

"I only knew Ben Johnson: but my lord of Winton (Dr. Morley, bishop of Winchester) knew him very well: and says, he was in the 6^o that is, the upermost fforme in Westminster scole, at which time his father dyed, and his mother married a brickelayer, who made him (much against his will) help him in his trade: but in a short time, his scolemaister, Mr. Camden, got him a better employment, which was to atend or acompny a son of sir Walter Rauley's in his travills. Within a short time after their return, they parted (I think not in cole bloud) and with a loue sutable to what they had in their travilles (not to be commended). And then Ben began to set up for himselfe in the trade by which he got his subsistance and fame, of which I need not give any account. He got in time to have one hundred pound a yeare from the king, also a pension from the citty, and the like from many of the nobilitie and some of the gentry, which was well pay'd, for love or fere of his railing in verse, or prose, or boeth. My lord told me, he told him he was (in his long retyrement and sickness, when he saw him, which was often) much afflickted, that hee had profained the scripture in his playes, and lamented it with horror: yet that, at that time of his long retyrement, his pension (so much as came in) was given to a woman that gouern'd him; (with whome he liv'd and dyed nere the Abie in Westminster) and that nether he nor she tooke much care for next weike: and wood be sure not to want wine; of which he usually took too much before he went to bed, if not oftener and soner. My lord tells me, he knowes not, but thinks he was born in Westminster. The question may be put to Mr. Wood very easily upon what grounds he is positive as to his being born their: he is a friendly man, and will resolve it. So much for brave Ben.—Nov. 22. (16) 80."

Fuller, in addition to what has been already quoted, says that "he was statubly ad-





mitted into Saint John's College in Cambridge, where he continued but few weeks for want of further maintenance, being fain to return to the trade of his father-in-law. And let not them blush that have, but those that have not, a lawful calling. He help'd in the building of the new structure of Lincoln's-Inn, when having a trowell in his hand, he had a book in his pocket. Some gentlemen pitying that his parts should be buried under the rubbish of so mean a calling, did by their bounty manumise him freely to follow his own ingenuous inclinations. Indeed his parts were not so ready to run of themselves as able to answer the spur, so that it may be truly said of him, that he had an elaborate wit wrought out by his own industry. He would sit silent in learned company, and suck in (besides wine) their several humours into his observation. What was ore in others, he was able to refine to himself.—He was paramount in the dramatique part of poetry, and taught the stage an exact conformity to the laws of comedians. His comedies were above the *volge*, (which are only tickled with downright obscenity) and took not so well at the first stroke as at the rebound, when beheld the second time; yea they will endure reading, and that with due commendation, so long as either ingenuity or learning are fashionable in our nation. If his later be not so spritful and vigorous as his first pieces, all that are old will, and all that desire to be old should, excuse him therein.—To his article of Shakspeare, Fuller subjoins—“Many were the wit-combates betwixt (Shakspeare) and Ben Johnson, which two I behold like a Spanish great gallion and an English man of war: master Johnson (like the former) was built far higher in learning: solid, but slow in his performances. Shakspeare, with the English man of war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention.”

The following particulars are transcribed from Oldys' MS. additions to Langbaine. Oldys, like Spence, picked up the traditions of his day, and left them to be examined and authenticated by his readers. Such contributions to biography are no doubt useful, but not to be received with implicit credit.

“Mr. Camden recommended (Jonson) to sir Walter Raleigh, who trusted him with the care and instruction of his eldest son Walter, a gay spark, who could not brook Ben's rigorous treatment, but, perceiving one foible in his disposition, made use of that to throw off the yoke of his government. And this was an unlucky habit Ben had contracted, through his love of jovial company, of being overtaken with liquor, which sir Walter did of all vices most abominate, and hath most exclaimed against. One day, when Ben had taken a plentiful dose, and was fallen into a sound sleep, young Raleigh got a great basket, and a couple of men, who laid Ben in it, and then with a pole carried him between their shoulders to sir Walter, telling him their young master had sent home his tutor.—This I had from a MS. memorandum book written in the time of the civil wars by Mr. Oldisworth, who was secretary, I think, to Philip earl of Pembroke. Yet in the year 1614, when sir Walter published his History of the World, there was a good understanding between him and Ben Jonson; for the verses, which explain the grave frontispiece before that History, were written by Jonson, and are reprinted in his Underwoods, where the poem is called The Mind of the Frontispiece to a Book, but he names not this book.”—

“About the year 1622 some lewd, perjured woman deceived and jilted him; and he writes a sharp poem on the occasion. And in another poem, called his Picture, left in Scotland, he seems to think she slighted him for his mountain belly and his rocky face.” We have already seen, by bishop Morley's account, that he lived with a woman in his latter days who assisted him in spending his money.

“ Ben Jonson” says Oldys, “ was charged in his *Poetastes*, 1601, with having libelled or ridiculed the lawyers, soldiers, and players; so he afterwards joined an apologetical dialogue at the end of it, wherein he says he had been provoked for three years on every stage by slanderers, as to his self-conceit, arrogance, insolence, railing, and plagiarism by translations. As to law, he says he only brought in Ovid chid by his father for preferring poetry to it. As to the soldiers, he swears by his Muse they are friends; he loved the profession, and once proved or exercised it, as I take it, and did not shame it more then with his actions, than he dare now with his writings. And as to the players, he had taxed some sparingly, but they thought each man’s vice belonged to the whole tribe. That he was not moved with what they had done against him, but was sorry for some better natures, who were drawn in by the rest to concur in the exposure or derision of him. And concludes, that since his comic Muse had been so ominous to him, he will try if tragedy has a kinder aspect.

“ A full show of those he has exposed in this play is not now easily discernible. Besides Decker, and some touches on some play that has a Moor in it (perhaps Titus Andronicus; I should hope he did not dare to mean Othello) some speeches of such a character being recited in act iii. scene iv. though not reflected on, he makes *Tucca* call *Histrion* the player, ‘ a lousy slave, proud rascal, you grow rich, do you? and purchase your twopenny tear-mouth: and copper-laced scoundrels,’ &c. which language should not come very natural from him, if he ever had been a player himself; and such it seems he was before or after.”

Howel in one of his letters delineates what the late Mr. Seward considered as the leading feature of Jonson’s character⁷.

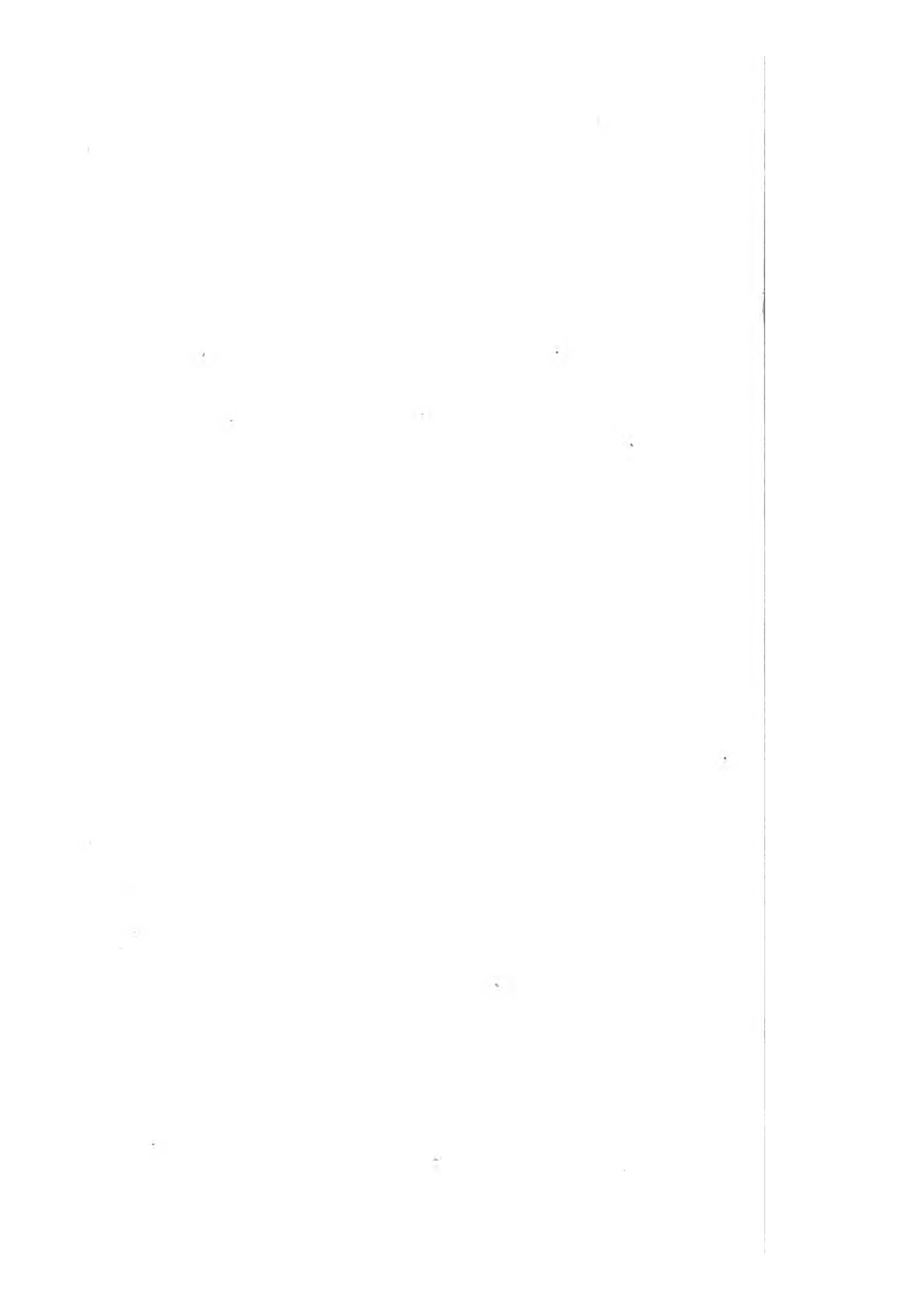
“ I was invited yesterday to a solemn supper by B. J. where you were deeply remembered. There was good company, excellent cheer, choice wines, and jovial welcome. One thing intervened which almost spoiled the relish of the rest, that B. began to engross all the discourse: to vapour extremely of himself; and by vilifying others to magnify his own Muse. T. Ca. buzzed me in the ear, that though Ben had barrelled up a great deal of knowledge, yet it seems he had not read the ethics, which, amongst other precepts of morality, forbid self-commendation, declaring it to be an ill-favoured solecism in good manners.”

As the account Jonson gave of himself to Drummond contains also his opinions of the poets of his age, no apology is necessary for introducing it. It was first published in the folio edition of Drummond’s Works, 1711.

“ He” Ben Jonson, “ said, that his grandfather came from Carlisle, to which he had come from Annandale in Scotland; that he served king Henry VIII. and was a gentleman. His father lost his estate under queen Mary, having been cast in prison and forfeited: and at last he turned minister. He was posthumous, being born a month after his father’s death, and was put to school by a friend. His master was Camden. Afterwards he was taken from it, and put to another craft, viz. to be a bricklayer, which he could not endure, but went into the Low Countries, and returning home he again betook himself to his wonted studies. In his service in the Low Countries he had, in the view of both the armies, killed an enemy and taken the *opima spolia* from him; and since coming to England, being appealed to in a duel, he had killed his adversary, who had hurt him in the arm, and whose sword was ten inches longer than his. For this crime he was im-

⁷ Seward’s *Biographiana*, p. 411. C.





prisoned, and almost at the gallows. Then he took his religion on trust of a priest, who visited him in prison. He was twelve years a papist; but after this he was reconciled to the church of England, and left off to be a recusant. At his first communion, in token of his true reconciliation, he drank out the full cup of wine. He was master of arts in both universities. In the time of his close imprisonment under queen Elizabeth there were spies to catch him, but he was advertised of them by the keeper. He had an epigram on the spies. He married a wife, who was a shrew, yet honest to him. When the king came to England, about the time that the plague was in London, he (Ben Jonson) being in the country at sir Robert Cotton's house, with old Camden, saw in a vision his eldest son, then a young child and at London, appear unto him with the mark of a bloody cross on his forehead, as if it had been cut with a sword; at which, amazed, he prayed unto God, and in the morning he came to Mr. Camden's chamber to tell him, who persuaded him it was but an apprehension, at which he should not be dejected. In the mean time come letters from his wife of the death of that boy in the plague. He appeared to him, he said, of a manly shape, and of that growth he thinks he shall be at the resurrection.

“ He was accused by sir James Murray to the king, for writing something against the Scots in a play called *Eastward Hoe*, and voluntarily imprisoned himself with Chapman and Marston, who had written it amongst them, and it was reported should have their ears and noses cut. After their delivery he entertained all his friends; there were present Camden, Selden, and others. In the middle of the feast his old mother drank to him, and showed him a paper which she designed (if the sentence had past) to have mixed among his drink, and it was strong and lusty poison; and to show that she was no churl, she told that she designed first to have drank of it herself.

“ He said he had spent a whole night in lying looking to his great toe, about which he had seen Tartars and Turks, Romans and Carthaginians fight, in his imagination.

“ He wrote all his verses first in prose, as his master Camden taught him; and said that verses stood by sense, without either colours or accent.

“ He used to say, that many epigrams were ill because they expressed in the end what should have been understood by what was said before, as that of sir John Davies; that he had a pastoral entitled *The May-lord*: his own name is Alkin; Ethra, the countess of Bedford; Mogbel Overberry, the old countess of Suffolk; an enchantress; other names are given to Somerset, his lady, Pembroke, the countess of Rutland, lady Worth. In his first scene Alkin comes in mending his broken pipe. He bringeth in, says our author, clowns making mirth and foolish sports, contrary to all other pastorals. He had also a design to write a fisher or pastoral play, and make the stage of it in the *Lomond Lake*; and also to write his foot-pilgrimage thither, and to call it a discovery. In a poem he calleth *Edinburgh*,

The heart of Scotland, Britain's other eye.

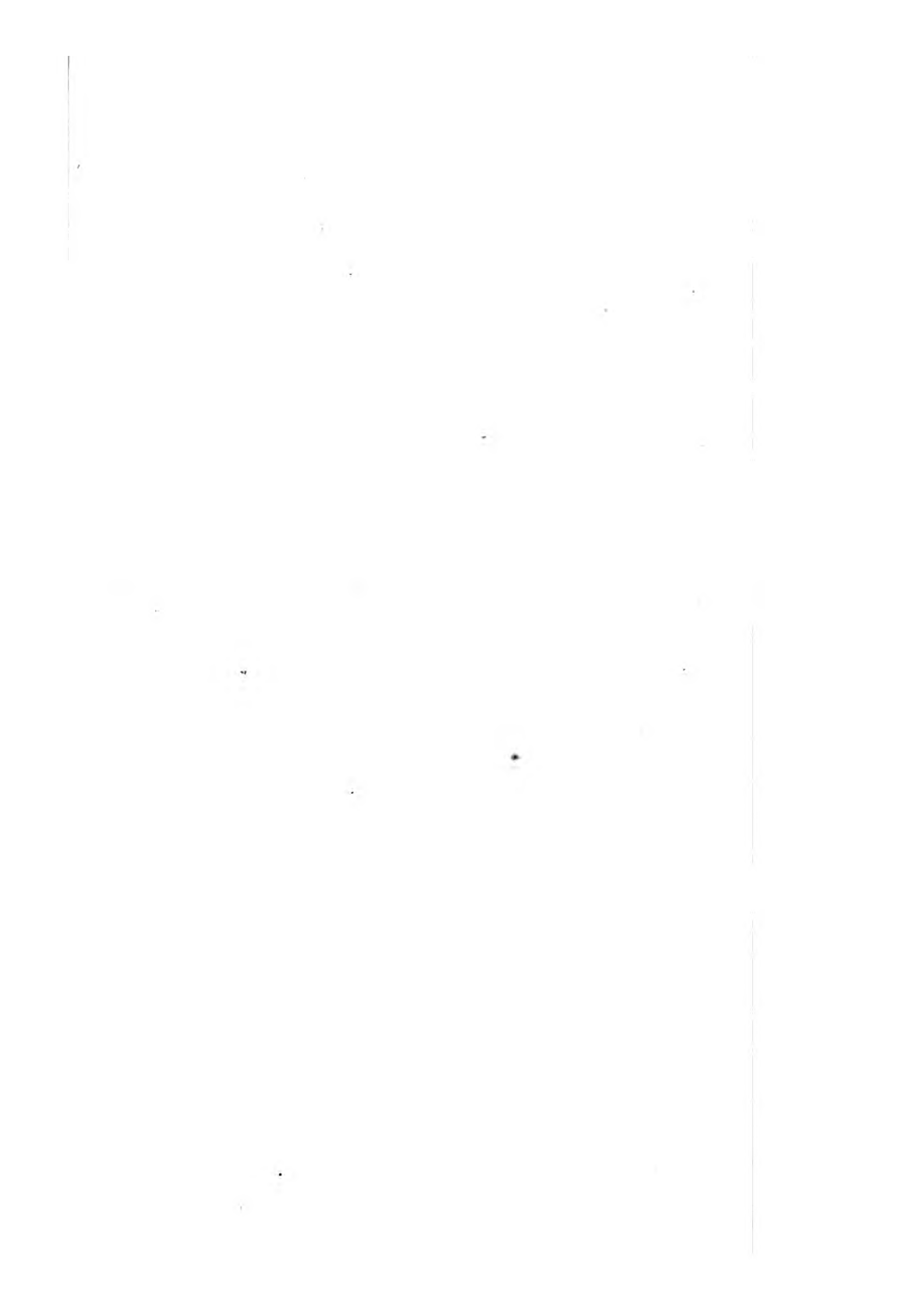
“ That he had an intention to have made a play like Plautus's *Amphytrio*, but left it off: for that he could never find two so like one to the other that he could persuade the spectators that they were one.

“ That he had a design to write an epick poem, and was to call it *Chorologia*, of the worthies of his country raised by fame, and was to dedicate it to his country. It is all in couplets, for he detested all other rhimes. He said he had written a discourse of

poetry both against Campion and Daniel, especially the last, where he proves couplets to be the best sort of verses, especially when they are broke like hexameters, and that cross rhimes and stanzas, because the purpose would lead beyond eight lines, were all forced.

“ His censure of the English poets was this: That Sidney did not keep a decorum in making every one speak as well as himself. Spenser's stanzas pleased him not, nor his matter; the meaning of the allegory of his Fairy Queen, he had delivered in writing to sir Walter Raleigh, which was, that by the bleating beast he understood the Puritans, and by the false Duessa the queen of Scots. He told, that Spenser's goods were robbed by the Irish, and his house and a little child burnt; he and his wife escaped, and after died for want of bread in King Street. He refused twenty pieces sent him by my lord Essex, and said he had no time to spend them. Samuel Daniel was a good honest man, had no children, and was no poet; that he had wrote the Civil Wars, and yet hath not one battle in all his book. That Michael Drayton's Polyolbion, if he had performed what he promised, to write the deeds of all the worthies, had been excellent. That he was challenged for entituling a book, Mortimariades. That sir John Davis played on Drayton in an epigram; who, in his sonnet, concluded his mistress might have been the ninth worthy, and said he used a phrase like Dametas in Arcadia, who said, his mistress, for wit, might be a giant. That Silvester's Translation of Du Bartas was not well done, and that he wrote his verses before he understood to confer: and those of Fairfax were not good. That the translations of Homer and Virgil in long Alexandrines were but prose. That sir John Harrington's Ariosto, under all translators, was the worst. That when sir John Harrington desired him to tell the truth of his Epigrams, he answered him, that he loved not the truth, for they were narrations, not epigrams. He said, Donne was originally a poet: his grandfather on the mother's side was Heywood, the epigrammatist; that Donne, for not being understood, would perish. He esteemed him the first poet in the world for some things: his verses of the lost Ochadine he had by heart; and that passage of the Calm, ‘that dust and feathers did not stir all was so quiet.’ He affirmed that Donne wrote all his best pieces before he was twenty-five years of age. The conceit of Donne's Transformation; or *Μεταμύχως*, was, that he sought the soul of that apple which Eve pulled, and thereafter made it the soul of a bitch, then of a sea-wolf, and so of a woman. His general purpose was to have brought it into all the bodies of the hereticks from the soul of Cain, and at last left it in the body of Calvin. He only wrote one sheet of this, and since he was made doctor, repented hugely, and resolved to destroy all his poems. He told Donne, that his Anniversary was prophane and full of blasphemies: that if it had been written on the Virgin Mary, it had been tolerable. To which Donne answered, ‘That he described the idea of a woman, and not as she was.’ He said, Shakspeare wanted art, and sometimes sense; for in one of his plays he brought in a number of men, saying they had suffered shipwreck in Bohemia, where is no sea near by one hundred miles. That sir Walter Raleigh esteemed more fame than conscience. The best wits in England were employed in making his History. Ben himself had written a piece to him of the Punick war, which he altered, and set in his book. He said there was no such ground for an heroick poem, as King Arthur's Fiction; and that sir Philip Sidney had an intention to have transformed all his Arcadia to the stories of king Arthur. He said Owen was a poor pedantic schoolmaster, sweeping his living from the posteriors of little children, and had nothing good in him, his epigrams being bare narrations. Francis Beaumont died before he was thirty years of age, who he said was a good poet, as were Fletcher and





Chapman, whom he loved. That sir William Alexander was not half kind to him, and neglected him, because a friend to Drayton. That sir R. Ayton loved him dearly. He fought several times with Marston, and says, that Marston wrote his father-in-law's preachings, and his father-in-law his comedies. His judgment of stranger poets was, that he thought not Barts a poet, but a verser, because he wrote not fiction. He cursed Petrarch for redacting verses into sonnets, which he said was like the tyrants' bed, where some who were too short were racked, others too long cut short. That Guarini, in his *Pastor Fido*, kept no decorum in making shepherds speak as well as himself. That he told cardinal du Peron (when he was in France, anno 1613) who showed him his translation of Virgil, that it was nought; that the best pieces of Ronsard were his Odes; but all this was to no purpose, (says our author) for he never understood the French or Italian languages. He said Petronius, Plinius Secundus, and Plautus, spoke best Latin, and that Tacitus wrote the secrets of the council and senate, as Suetonius did those of the cabinet and court. That Lucian, taken in parts, was excellent, but altogether nought. That Quintilian's six, seven, and eight books were not only to be read, but altogether digested. That Juvenal, Horace, and Martial, were to be read for delight, and so was Pindar; but Hippocrates for health. Of the English nation, he said, that Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity* was best for church matters, and Selden's *Titles of Honour* for antiquities. Here our author relates, that the censure of his verses was, that they were all good, especially his Epitaph on Prince Henry, save that they smelled too much of the schools, and were not after the fancy of the times; for a child (says he) may write after the fashion of the Greek and Latin verses in running; yet that he wished to please the king, that Piece of Forth Feasting had been his own."

Ben Jonson, continues Drummond, "was a great lover and praiser of himself, a contemner and scorner of others, given rather to lose a friend than a jest; jealous of every word and action of those about him, especially after drink, which is one of the elements in which he lived; a dissembler of the parts which reign in him; a bragger of some good that he wanted, thinking nothing well done, but what either he himself or some of his friends have said or done. He is passionately kind and angry, careless either to gain or keep; vindictive, but if he be well answered at himself, interprets best sayings and deeds often to the worst. He was for any religion, as being versed in both; oppressed with fancy, which hath overmastered his reason, a general disease in many poets. His inventions are smooth and easy, but above all he excelleth in a translation. When his play of *The Silent Woman* was first acted, there were found verses after on the stage against him, concluding, that that play was well named *The Silent Woman*, because there was never one man to say *plaudite* to it." Drummond adds, "In short, he was in his personal character the very reverse of Shakspeare, as surly, ill-natured, proud, and disagreeable, as Shakspeare, with ten times his merit, was gentle, good-natured, easy, and amiable."

Lord Clarendon's character of our author is more favourable, and from so accurate a judge of human nature, perhaps more valuable. "His name," lord Clarendon says, "can never be forgotten, having by his very good learning, and the severity of his nature and manners, very much reformed the stage; and indeed the English poetry itself. His natural advantages were, judgment to order and govern fancy, rather than excess of fancy, his productions being slow and upon deliberation, yet then abounding with great wit and fancy, and will live accordingly; and surely as he did exceedingly exalt the English language in eloquence, propriety, and masculine expressions, so he was the best

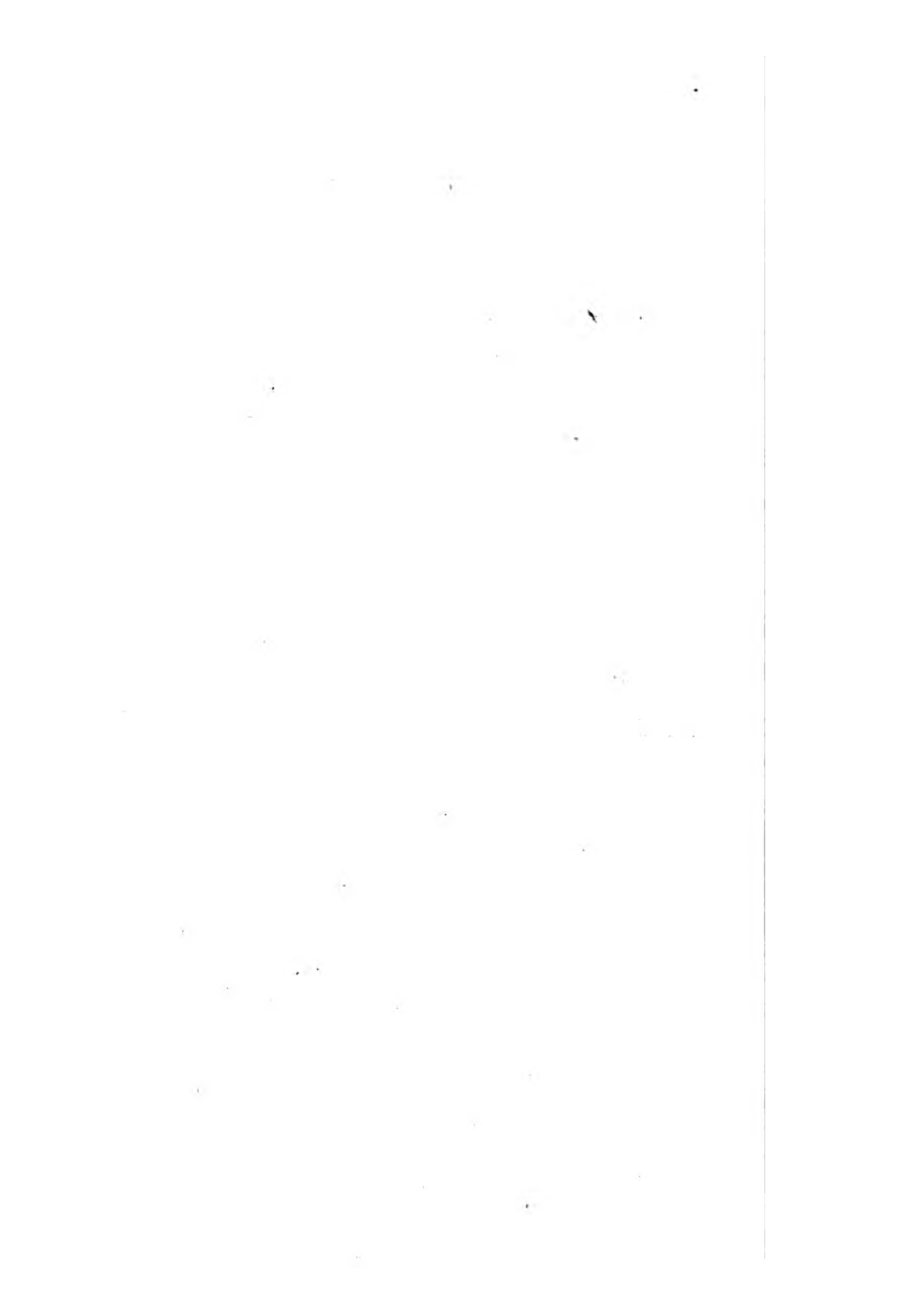
judge of, and fittest to prescribe rules to poetry and poets, of any man who had lived with, or before him, or since: if Mr. Cowley had not made a flight beyond all men, with that modesty yet, as to ascribe much of this to the example and learning of Ben Jonson. His conversation was very good, and with the men of most note; and he had for many years an extraordinary kindness for Mr. Hyde, (lord Clarendon) till he found he betook himself to business, which he believed ought never to be preferred before his company. He lived to be very old, and till the palsy made a deep impression upon his body and his mind⁸."

From these accounts it may surely be inferred that Jonson in his lifetime occupied a high station in the literary world. So many memorials of character, and so many eulogiums on his talents, have fallen to the lot of few writers of that age. His failings, however, appear to have been so conspicuous as to obscure his virtues. Addicted to intemperance, with the unequal temper which habitual intemperance creates, and disappointed in the hopes of wealth and independence which his high opinion of his talents led him to form, he degenerated even to the resources of a libeller who extorts from fear what is denied to genius, and became arrogant, and careless of pleasing those with whom he associated. Of the coarseness of his manners there can be no doubt; but it appears at the same time that his talents were such as made his temper be tolerated for the sake of his conversation. As to his high opinion of himself, he did not probably differ from his contemporaries, who hailed him as the reformer of the stage, and as the most learned of critics, and it is no great diminution of his merit that an age of more refinement cannot find enough to justify the superior light in which he was then contemplated. It is sufficient that he did what had not been done before, that he displayed a judgment to which the stage had been a stranger, and furnished it with examples of regular comedy which have not been surpassed. His memory was uncommonly tenacious, and his learning certainly superior to that of most of his contemporaries. Pope gives him the praise of having "brought critical learning into vogue," and having instructed both the actors and spectators in what was the proper province of the dramatic Muse. His *English Grammar*, and his *Discoveries*, both written in his advanced years, discover an attachment to the interests of literature, and a habit of reflection, which place his character as a scholar in a very favourable point of view. The editor of a recent edition of his *Discoveries*, justly attributes to them "a closeness and precision of style, weight of sentiment, and accuracy of classical learning."

Yet whatever may be thought of his learning, it is greatly over-rated, when opposed or preferred to the genius of his contemporary Shakspeare. Jonson's learning contributed very little to his reputation as a dramatic poet. Where he seems to have employed it most, as in his *Cataline*, it only enables him to encumber the tragedy with servile versifications of Sallust, when he should have been studying nature and the passions. Dryden, whose opinions are often inconsistent, considers Jonson as the greatest man of his age, and observes that "if we look upon him when he was himself (for his last plays were but his dotages) he was the most learned and judicious writer any theatre ever had." In another place (preface to the *Mock Astrologer*) he says, "that almost all Jonson's pieces were but *crambe bis cocta*, the same humours a little varied, and written worse."

It is certain that his high character as a dramatic writer has not descended to us undiminished. Of his fifty dramas, there are not above three which preserve his name on the

⁸ Life of Lord Clarendon. C.

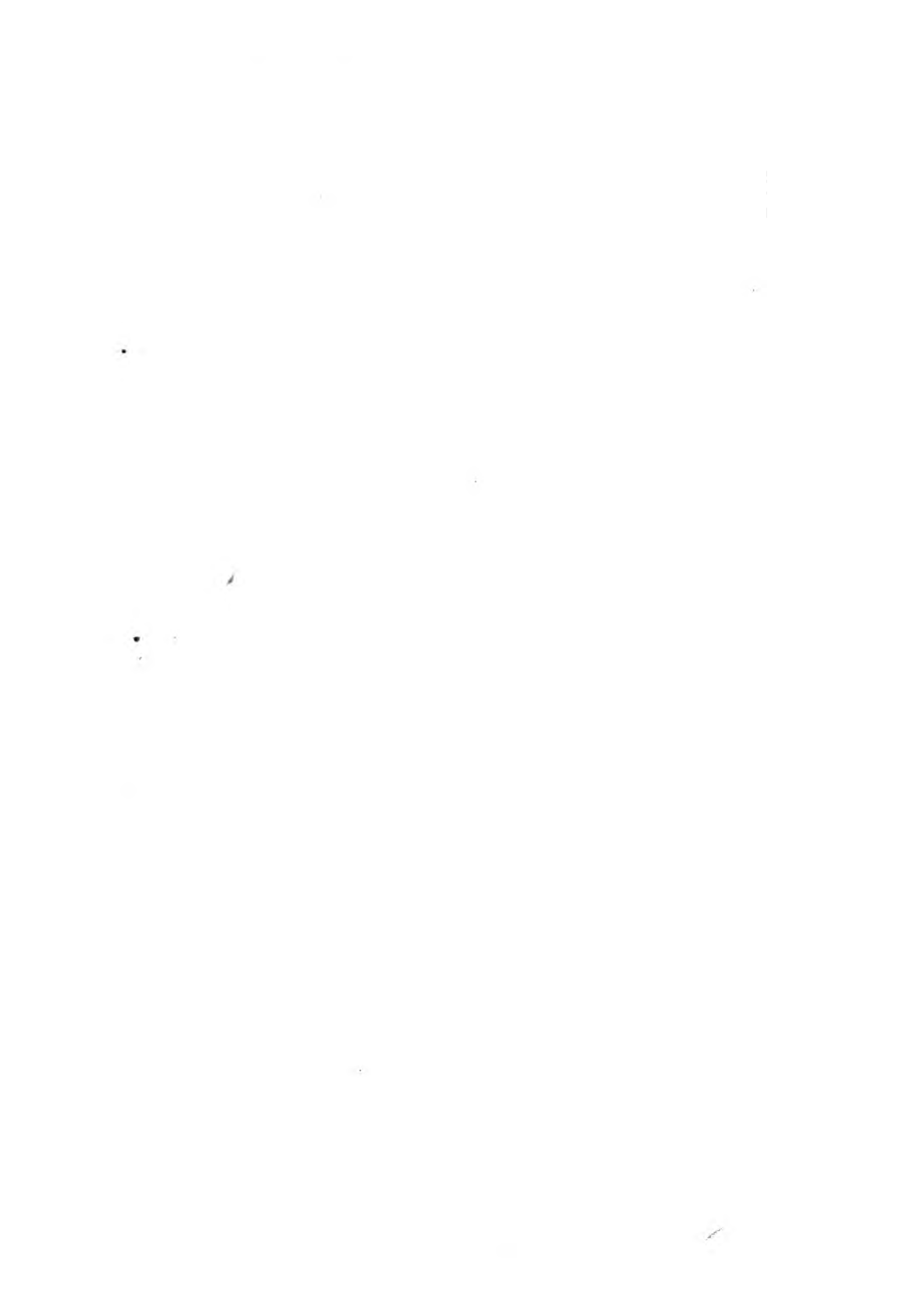


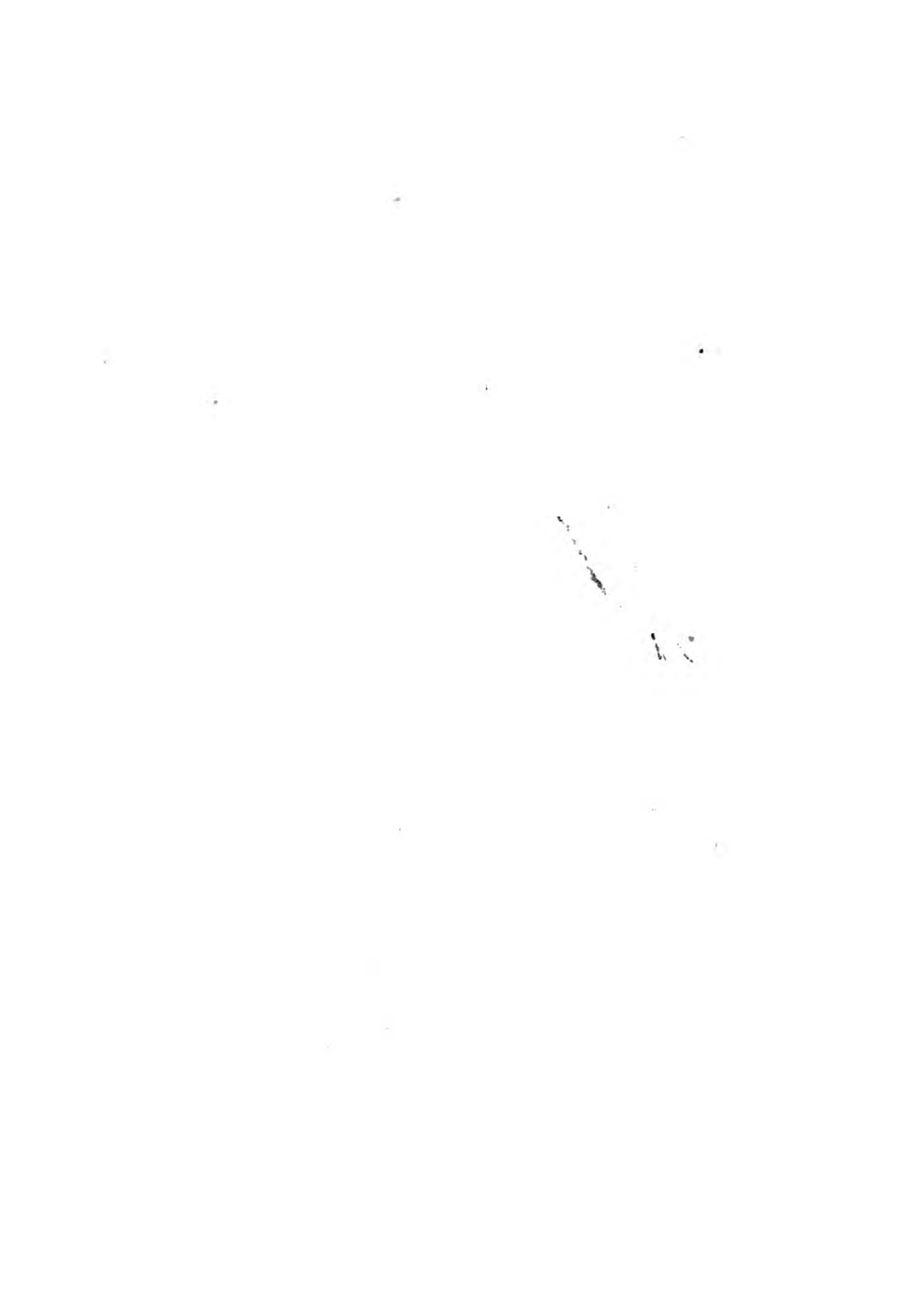
stage, but those indeed are excellent. It was his misfortune to be obliged to dissipate on court masks and pageants those talents which concentrated might have furnished dramas equal to his *Volpone*, *Alchemist*, and *The Silent Woman*. Contrasted with the boundless and commanding genius of *Shakspeare*, *Dr. Johnson* has hit his character with success in his celebrated prologue.

“ Then Jonson came, instructed from the school
To please by method, and invent by rule.
His studious patience, and laborious art,
With regular approach essay'd the heart ;
Cold approbation gave the ling'ring bays,
For they who durst not censure, scarce could praise.”

Among the poems which are now presented to the reader, there are few which can be specified as models of excellence. The Hymn from *Cynthia's Revels*, the Ode to the Memory of *Sir Lucius Cary*, and *Sir H. Morison*, one of the first examples of the Pindaric or irregular ode, and some of his Songs, and *Underwoods*, are brightened by occasional rays of genius, and dignified simplicity; but in general he was led into glittering and fanciful thoughts, and is so frequently captivated with these as to neglect his versification. Although he had long studied poetry, it does not appear that he could pursue a train of poetical sentiment or imagery so far as to produce any great work. His best efforts were such as he could execute almost in the moment of conception, and frequently with an epigrammatic turn which is very striking. He once meditated an epic poem, but his habitual irregularities and love of company denied the necessary perseverance.

His works were printed thrice in folio, in the seventeenth century, and twice in the eighteenth. The last edition, in seven volumes, octavo, with notes and additions by *Mr. Whalley*, appeared in 1756, and is esteemed the most valuable, but will probably be superseded by an edition now under the care of the acute editor of *Massinger*.





THE
LIFE OF RICHARD CORBET, D. D.

BISHOP OF OXFORD AND NORWICH.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

RICHARD, the son of Vincent Corbet, was born at Ewell in Surrey, in the year 1582. His father, who attained the age of eighty, appears to have been a man of excellent character, and is celebrated in one of his son's poems with filial ardour. For some reason, his biographers inform us, he assumed the name of Pointer, or perhaps relinquished that for Corbet, which seems more probable. His usual residence was at Whitton in the county of Middlesex, where he was noted for his skill in horticulture, and amassed considerable property in houses and land, which he bequeathed to his son at his death in 1619.

Our poet was educated at Westminster-school, and in lent-term 1597-8 entered in Broadgate-Hall, (afterwards Pembroke College) and the year following was admitted a student of Christ-Church, Oxford, where he soon became noted among men of wit and vivacity. In 1605, he took his master's degree, and entered into holy orders. In 1612, he pronounced a funeral oration, in Saint Mary's church Oxford, on the death of Henry, prince of Wales, and the following year, another on the interment of that eminent benefactor to learning, sir Thomas Bodley. In 1618 he took a journey to France, from which he wrote the epistle to sir Thomas Aylesbury. His Journey to France, one of his most humorous poems, is remarkable for giving some *traits* of the French character that are visible in the present day.

King James, who showed no weakness in the choice of his literary favourites, made him one of his chaplains in ordinary, and in 1627 advanced him to the dignity of dean of Christ Church. At this time he was doctor of divinity, vicar of Cassington near Woodstock in Oxfordshire, and prebendary of Bedminster Secunda in the church of Sarum.

In 1617, Barton Holliday's play of Technogamia was performed before the king at Woodstock, and being received with indifferent success, various verses were written in excuse of his majesty's entertainment. Among others were some from Corbet who, as Anthony Wood informs us, "had that day preached before the king, *with his band starched clean*, for which he was reproved by the graver sort, but those who knew him well took no notice of it, for they have several times said, that *he loved to the last boys*

play very well." This is not the only occasion which the Oxford biographer takes to advert to a levity in Corbet's character which was thought unbecoming his profession.

On the 30th of July 1629, he was promoted to the see of Oxford, and on the 7th of April 1632 was translated to that of Norwich. He married, probably before this time, Alice the daughter of Dr. Leonard Hutton, vicar of Flower, or Flore in Northamptonshire, who had been his contemporary at the university, and with whom he appears to have renewed his acquaintance during his *Iter Boreale*. By this wife he had a son, named after his grandfather Vincent, to whom he addresses some lines of parental advice and good wishes. Of the rest of his life, little can be now recovered. We have already seen that he invited Ben Jonson to Oxford and procured him a master's degree. He died July 28, 1635, and was buried at the upper end of the choir of the cathedral church of Norwich, with the following inscription on a brass-plate.

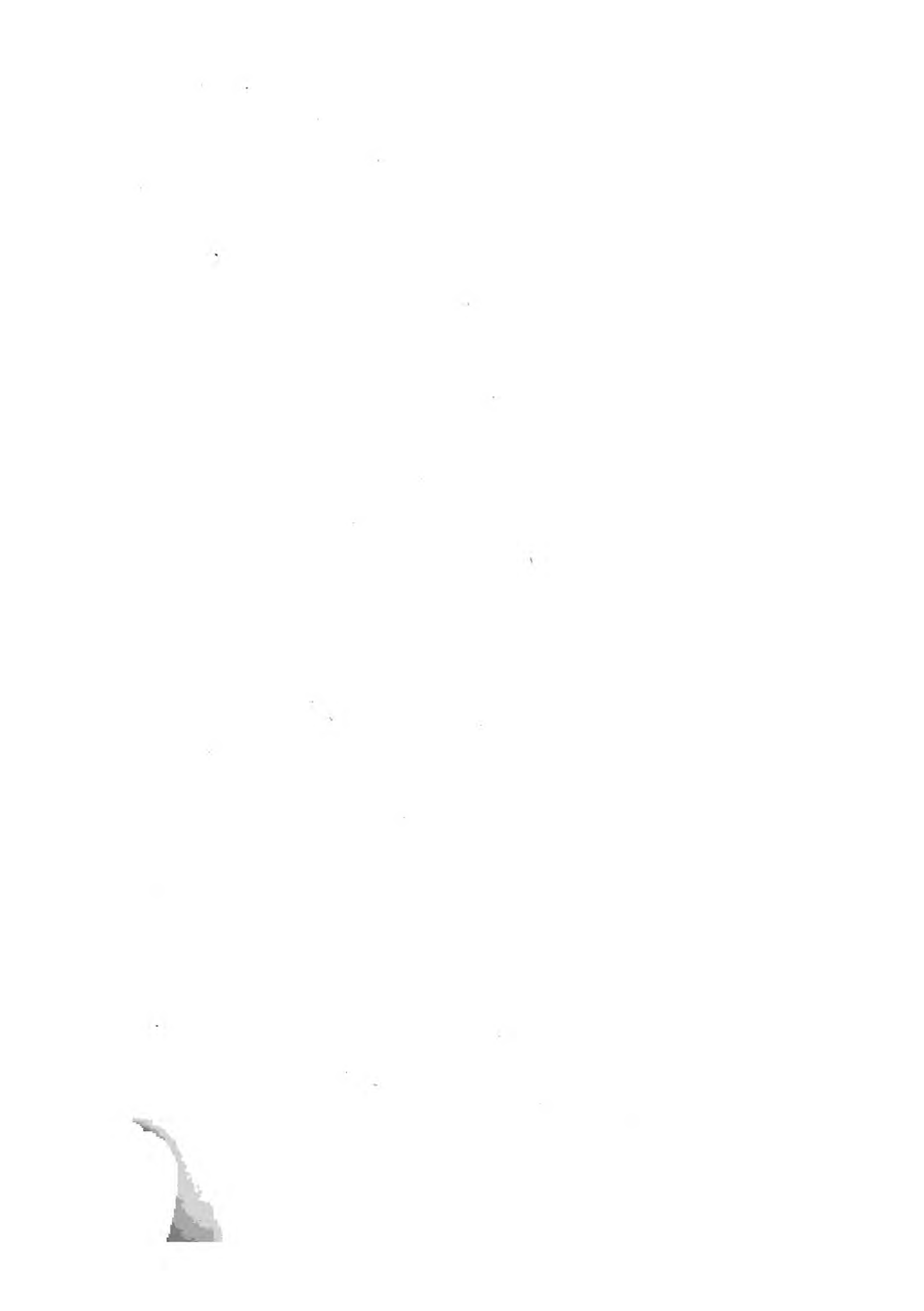
Ricardus Corbet, Theologiæ Doctor,
Ecclesiæ Cathedralis Christi Oxoniensis
Primum Alumnus, deinde Decanus, exinde
Episcopus, illinc huc translatus, et
Hinc in cælum Jul. 28, 1635.

Besides his son Vincent, he had a daughter, named Alice. They were both living in 1642, when their grandmother Anne Hutton made her will, and the son administered to it in 1648, but no memorial can be found of their future history. It would appear that his wife died before him, as in his will he committed his children to the care of their grandmother.

His most accurate biographer, Mr. Gilchrist, to whom this sketch is greatly indebted, has collected many particulars illustrative of his character, which are, upon the whole, favourable. Living in turbulent times, when the church was assailed from every quarter, he conducted himself with great moderation towards the recusants, or puritans; and although he could not disobey, yet contrived to soften by a gracious pleasantry of manner, the harsher orders received from the metropolitan Laud. In his principles he inclined to the Arminianism of Laud, in opposition to the Calvinism of Laud's predecessor archbishop Abbot, and it is evident from his poems, entertained a hearty contempt for the puritans, who, however, could not reproach him for persecution. As he published no theological works we are unable to judge of his talents in his proper profession, but his munificence in matters which regarded the church has been justly extolled. When St. Paul's cathedral stood in need of repairs, he not only contributed four hundred pounds from his own purse, but dispersed an epistle to the clergy of his diocese soliciting their assistance. This epistle, which Mr. Gilchrist has published, is highly characteristic of his propensity to humour, as well as of the quaint and quibbling style of his age. The following short specimen comes nearer to our own times, and will be easily understood by the dealers in fashionable chapels.

"I am verily persuaded, were it not for the pulpit and the pews (I do not now mean the altar and the font for the two sacraments, but for the pulpit and the stools as you call them) many churches had been down that stand. Stately pews are now become tabernacles, with rings and curtains to them. There wants nothing but beds to bear the word of God on; we have casements, locks and keys, and cushions: I had almost said, bolsters and pillows: and for those we love the church, I will not guess what is done within them, who sits, stands, or lies asleep, at prayers, communion, &c. but this I dare





say, they are either to hide some vice, or to proclaim one : to hide disorder, or proclaim pride."

Wood has insinuated that he was unworthy to be made a bishop, and it must be owned he often betrayed a carelessness and indifference to the dignity of his public character. Of this we have abundant proof, if credit be due to Aubrey's MSS. in the Ashmolean Museum, from which Mr. Headley made the following extract.

"After he was doctor of divinity, he sang ballads at the Crosse at Abingdon; on a market-day he and some of his comrades were at the tavern by the Crosse, (which, by the way, was then the finest of England: I remember it when I was a freshman: it was admirable curious Gothicque architecture, and fine figures in the nitches; 'twas one of those built by king for his queen.) The ballad-singer complained he had no custome—he could not put off his ballads. The jolly doctor puts off his gowne, and puts on the ballad-singer's leathern jacket, and being a handsome man, and a rare full voice, he presently vended a great many, and had a great audience.

"After the death of Dr. Goodwin, he was made deane of Christ-Church. He had a good interest with great men, as you may finde in his poems; and that with the then great favourite the duke of Bucks, his excellent wit ever 't was of recommendation to him. I have forgot the story; but at the same time Dr. Fell thought to have carried it, Dr. Corbet put a pretty trick on him to let him take a journey to London for it, when he had already the graunt of it.

"His conversation was extreme pleasant. Dr. Stubbins was one of his cronies; he was a jolly fat doctor, and a very good house-keeper. As Dr. Corbet and he were riding in Lob Lane in wet weather, ('t is an extraordinary deepe dirty lane,) the coach fell, and Corbet said, that Dr. S. was up to the elbows in mud, and he was up to the elbows in Stubbins.

"A. D. 1628, he was made bishop of Oxford; and I have heard that he had an admirable grave and venerable aspect.

"One time as he was confirming, the country people pressing in to see the ceremonie, said he, 'Beare off there! or I'll confirm ye with my staffe.'—Another time, being to lay his hand on the head of a man very bald, he turns to his chaplaine, and said, 'Some dust, Lushington,' to keepe his hand from slipping. There was a man with a venerable beard: said the bishop, 'You, behind the beard!'

"His chaplaine, Dr. Lushington, was a very learned and ingenious man, and they loved one another. The bishop would sometimes take the key of the wine-cellar, and he and his chaplaine would go and lock themselves in and be merry: then first he layes down his episcopal hood, 'There layes the doctor;' then he putts off his gowne, 'There layes the bishop;' then 't' was, 'Here's to thee, Corbet;'—'Here's to thee, Lushington.'

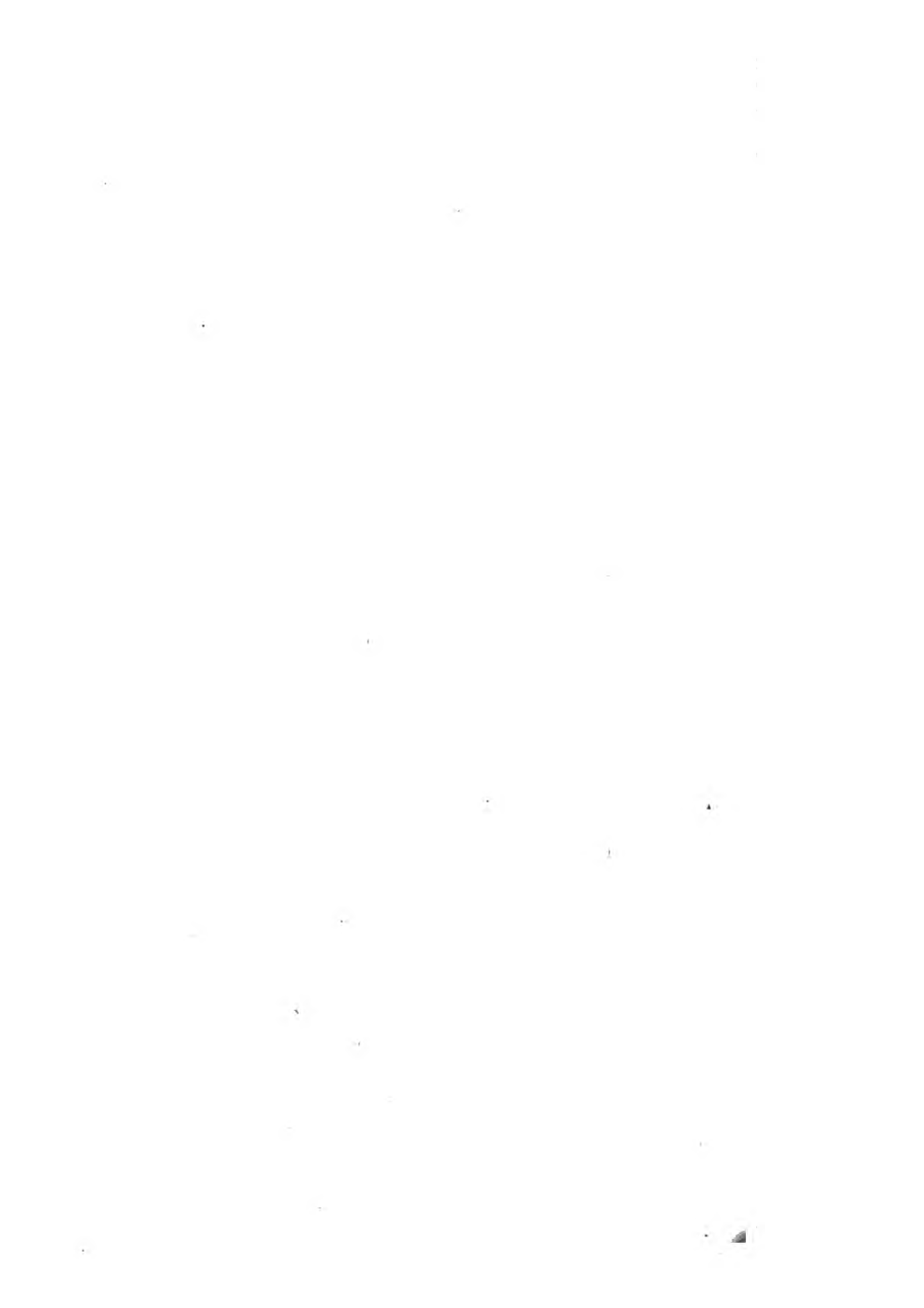
The following early specimen of his humour was copied by Mr. Gilchrist from a collection of "Mery Passages and Jeastes," Harl. MS. No. 6395: "Ben Jonson was at a tavern, and in comes bishop Corbet (but not so then) into the next room. Ben Jonson calls for a quart of *raw* wine, and gives it to the tapster. 'Sirrah!' says he, 'carry this to the gentleman in the next chamber, and tell him I sacrifice my service to him.' The fellow did, and in those terms. 'Friend!' says bishop Corbet, 'I thank him for his love; but pr'ythee tell him from me that he is mistaken, for sacrifices are always burnt.'"

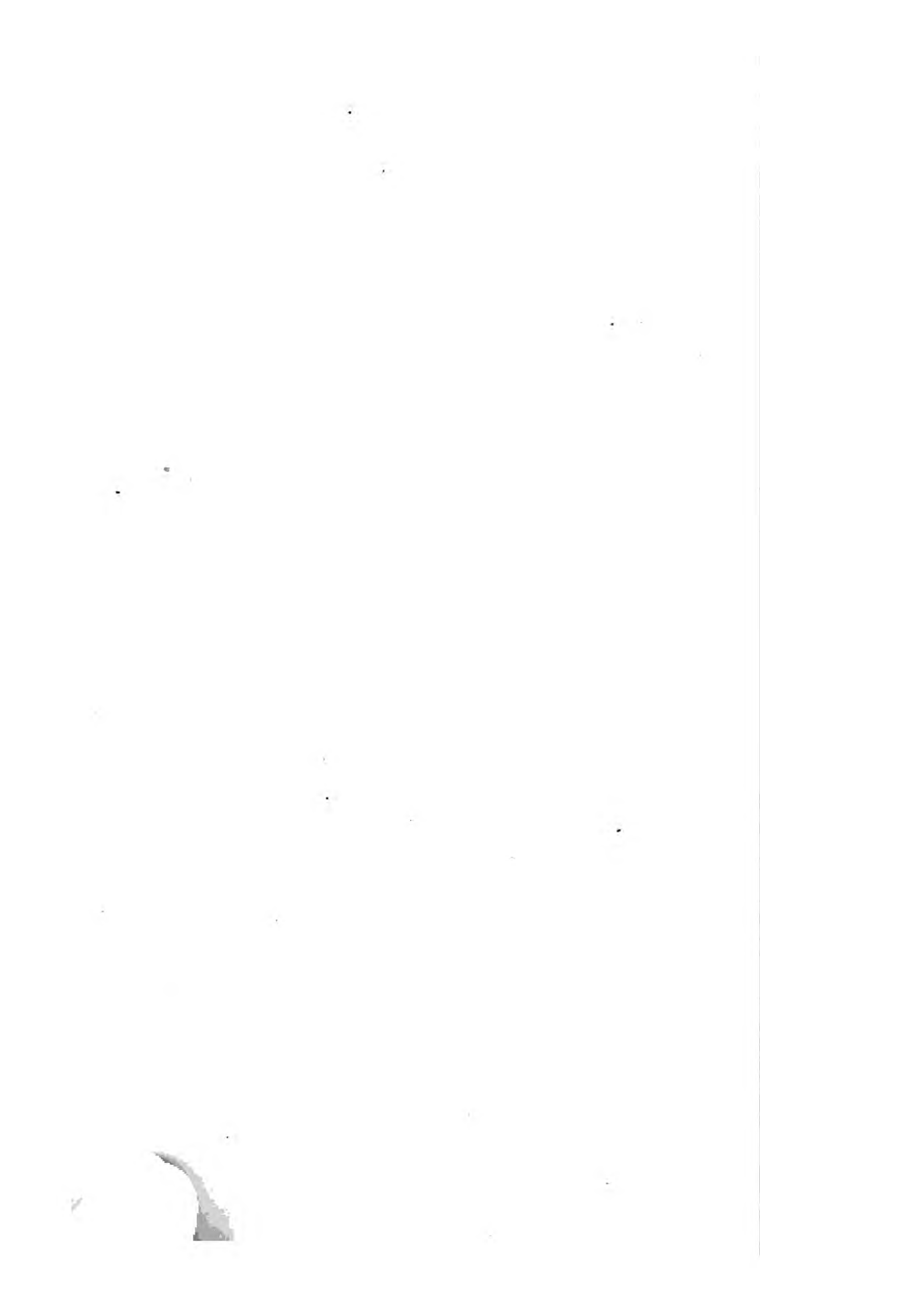
Fuller says of him that he was "of a courteous courage, and no destructive na-

ture to any who offended him, counting himself plentifully repaired with a jest upon him."

His poems after passing through three editions, were lately very carefully revised and published by Mr. Gilchrist, with the addition of an excellent life, notes and illustrations. The liberality of Messrs Longman, the proprietors of this edition, has enabled me to avail myself of Mr. Gilchrist's text, and a part of his notes, which are distinguished by his initial.

As a poet, it will not be found that Corbet stands eminently distinguished. His thoughts, however, are often striking and original, although delivered in the uncouth language of his times, and seldom indebted to correctness of versification. His faults are in general those of the age in which he wrote, and if he fills no conspicuous place in poetical history, it ought not to be forgot that he wrote for the amusement of the moment, and made no pretensions to the veneration of posterity. His principal objects were gaiety and merriment at the expense of the more glaring follies of his day; of his serious efforts, it may be justly said that his feeling was without affectation and his panegyric without servility.





THE
LIFE OF THOMAS CAREW,

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS elegant poet was the younger brother of sir Matthew Carew, a zealous adherent to the fortunes of Charles I. and of the family of the Carews in Gloucestershire, but descended from the more ancient family of that name in Devonshire. He is supposed to have been born in 1589¹. According to Anthony Wood, he received his academical education at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, but was neither matriculated, nor took any degree.

After leaving college, he improved himself by travelling, according to the custom of the age, and associating with men of learning and talents both at home and abroad: and being distinguished for superior elegance of manners and taste, he was received into the court of Charles I. as gentleman of the privy chamber, and sewer in ordinary. His wit had recommended him to his sovereign, who, however, Clarendon informs us, incurred the displeasure of the Scotch nation by bestowing upon him the place of sewer, in preference to a gentleman recommended upon the interest of the courtiers of that nation.

He appears after this appointment to have passed his days in affluence and gaiety. His talents were highly valued by his contemporaries, particularly Ben Jonson and sir William Davenant. Sir John Suckling, only, in his *Session of the Poets*, insinuates that his poems cost him more labour than is consistent with the fertility of real genius. But of this there are not many marks visible in his works, and what sir John mistakes for the labour of costiveness may have been only the laudable care he employed in bringing his verses to a higher degree of refinement than any of his contemporaries.

His death is said to have taken place in 1639, which agrees with the information we have in Clarendon's life. "He was a person of a pleasant and facetious wit, and made many poems (especially in the amorous way) which for the sharpness of the fancy, and the elegance of the language, in which that fancy was spread, were at least equal, if not superior to any of that time: but his glory was, that after *fifty years* of his life spent with less severity or exactness than it ought to have been, he died with great remorse for that licence, and with the greatest manifestation of christianity, that his best friends could desire." It is pleasing to record such ample atonement for the licentiousness of some of his poems, which, however, his editors have hitherto persisted in handing down to posterity.

It does not appear that any of his poems were published during his life-time, except such as were set to music. The first collection was printed in 12mo. 1640, the second in 1642, the third (not in 1654 as Cibber asserts, but) in 1651, and a fourth in 1670. In 1772 Mr. Thomas Davies published an edition, with a few notes, and a short character, in which the

¹ MS. note in my copy of the edition 1651, probably on the authority of Clarendon hereafter given.

writer has taken for granted some particulars for which no authority can be found. This edition, with some necessary omissions and corrections, has been principally used on the present occasion. A dialogue, in irregular measure, is printed in Mr. Ellis's Specimens, from a manuscript in the possession of Mr. Malone.

Carew's *Cælum Britannicum*, at one time erroneously attributed to Davenant, was printed with the first editions of his poems, and afterwards separately in 1651. Langbaine, and Cibber after him, says that our author placed the Latin notes on the front, when printed, but no edition printed in his life-time, is now known. The distich, however, might have been prefixed to the music of the Masque.

Oldys, in his MSS. notes on Langbaine, informs us, that "Carew's Sonnets were more in request than any poet's of his time, that is between 1630 and 1640. They were many of them set to music by the two famous composers, Henry and William Lawes, and other eminent masters, and sung at court in their masques." It may be added that Carew was one of the old poets whom Pope studied, and from whom he borrowed. Dr. Percy honours him with the compliment of being an "elegant, and almost forgotten writer, whose poems deserve to be revised." But no modern critic appears to have estimated his merit with more liberality than Mr. Headley; his opinion however, is here copied, not without suspicion that his enthusiasm may be thought to have carried him too far.

"The consummate elegance of this gentleman entitles him to very considerable attention. Sprightly, polished, and perspicuous, *every part* of his works displays the man of sense, gallantry, and breeding; indeed many of his productions have a certain happy finish, and betray a dexterity both of thought and expression much superior to any thing of his contemporaries, and on similar subjects, rarely surpassed by his successors. Carew has the ease without the pedantry of Waller, and perhaps less conceit. He reminds us of the best manner of lord Lyttelton. Waller is too exclusively considered as the first man who brought versification to any thing like its present standard. Carew's pretensions to the same merit are seldom sufficiently either considered, or allowed. Though love had long before softened us into civility, yet it was of a formal, ostentatious, and romantic cast; and, with a very few exceptions, its effects upon composition were similar to those on manners. Something more light, unaffected, and alluring, was still wanting; in every thing but sincerity of intention it was deficient. Panegyric, declamatory and nauseous, was rated by those to whom addressed, on the principle of Ruben's taste for beauty, by its quantity, not its elegance. Satire, dealing in rancour rather than reproof, was more inclined to lash than to laugh us out of our vices; and nearly counteracted her intentions by her want of good manners. Carew and Waller jointly began to remedy those defects. In them, gallantry, for the first time, was accompanied by the Graces, the fulsomness of panegyric forgot its gentility, and the edge of satire rendered keener in proportion to its smoothness. Suckling says of our author in his Session of the Poets, that

..... the issue of his brain
Was seldome brought forth but with trouble and pain.

"In Lloyd's Worthies, Carew is likewise called '*elaborate and accurate.*' However the fact might be, the internal evidence of his poems says no such thing. Hume has properly remarked, that Waller's pieces, '*aspire not to the sublime, still less to the pathetic.*' Carew, in his beautiful Masque, has given us instances of the former; and, in his Epitaph on lady Mary Villers, eminently of the latter."



11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
37
38
39
40
41
42
43
44
45
46
47
48
49
50
51
52
53
54
55
56
57
58
59
60
61
62
63
64
65
66
67
68
69
70
71
72
73
74
75
76
77
78
79
80
81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100

T
of
Ha
per
the
to
a
w
mi
r



THE
LIFE OF WILLIAM DRUMMOND,

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS elegant and ingenious poet, a descendant of the ancient family of the Drummonds of Carnock, and the son of sir John Drummond of Hawthornden, was born, probably at Hawthornden, his father's seat in Scotland, on the thirteenth of December, 1585. He received his school education at Edinburgh, and afterwards studied at the university of that city, where he took the degree of master of arts. At the age of twenty-one he went to France, in compliance with his father's views, and attended lectures on the civil law, a subject on which he left sufficient documents to prove that his judgment and proficiency were uncommon. The president Lockhart, to whom these manuscripts were communicated, declared, that if Mr. Drummond had followed the practice of the law, "he might have made the best figure of any lawyer in his time."

After a residence abroad of nearly four years, he returned to Scotland in 1610, in which year his father died. Instead, however, of prosecuting the study of the law as was expected, he thought himself sufficiently rich in the possession of his paternal estate, and devoted his time to the perusal of the ancient classics, and the cultivation of his poetical genius. Whether he had composed or communicated any pieces to his friends before this period, is uncertain. It was after a recovery from a dangerous illness that he wrote a prose rhapsody, entitled *Cypress Grove*, and about the same time his *Flowers of Zion*, or *Spiritual Poems*, which with the *Cypress Grove* were printed at Edinburgh in 1623, 4to. A part of his *Sonnets*, it is said, were published as early as 1616.

During his residence at Hawthornden, he courted a young lady of the name of *Cunningham*, with whom he was about to have been united when she was snatched from him by a violent fever. To dissipate his grief, which every object and every thought in this retirement contributed to revive, he travelled on the continent for about eight years, visiting Germany, France and Italy, which at that time comprised all that was interesting in polished society and study to a man of curiosity and taste. During this time he invigorated his memory and imagination, by studying the various models of original poetry, and collected a valuable set of Greek and Latin authors, with some of which he enriched the college library of Edinburgh, and others were repositated at Hawthornden. The books and manuscripts which he gave to Edinburgh were arranged in a catalogue printed in 1627.

and introduced by a Latin preface from his pen, on the advantage and honour of libraries, which at that time were considered rather as accidental collections than necessary institutions.

On his return to Scotland he found the nation distracted by political and religious disputes which combined with the same causes in England to bring on a civil war. But why these should oblige him, immediately on his return, to quit his paternal seat, we know not. The author of his life, prefixed to the folio edition of his works in 1711, merely informs us, that having found his native country in a state of anarchy and confusion, he retired to the seat of his brother-in-law, sir John Scot of Scotstarvet, a man of letters, and probably of congenial sentiments on public affairs. During his stay with this gentleman he wrote his History of the Five James's, Kings of Scotland, a work so inconsistent with liberal notions of civil policy as to have added very little to his reputation, although when first published, a few years after his death, and when political opinions ran in extremes, it was probably not without its admirers.

It is uncertain at what time he was enabled to enjoy his retirement at Hawthornden, but it appears that he was there in his forty-fifth year when he married Elizabeth Logan, (grand-daughter of sir Robert Logan, of the house of Restelrig,) in whom he fancied a resemblance to his first mistress. About two years before this event, he repaired his house, and placed the following inscription on it, *Divino munere Gulielmus Drummondus ab Hawthornden, Ioannis Equiti aurati filius, ut honesto otio quiesceret, sibi et successoribus instauravit.* 1638.

During the civil war his attachment to the king and church induced him to write many pieces in support of the establishment, which involved him with the revolutionary party, who not only called him to a severe account, but compelled him to furnish his quota of men and arms to fight against the cause which he espoused. It is said that "his estate lying in three different counties, he had not occasion to send one whole man, but halves and quarters and such-like fractions; upon which he wrote *extempore* the following verses to his majesty;

Of all these forces raised against the king,
'T is my strange hap not one whole man to bring,
From divers parishes, yet divers men,
But all in halves and quarters; great king, then,
In halves and quarters if they come 'gainst thee,
In halves and quarters send them back to me,

Or,

In legs and arms, send thou them back to me.

His grief for the murder of his royal master is said to have been so great as to shorten his days. He died on the 4th of December 1649, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and was interred in his own aisle, in the church of Lesswade, near to his house of Hawthornden. He left two sons and a daughter, William who was knighted in Charles II's reign; Robert; and Elizabeth, who was married to Dr. Henderson, a physician of Edinburgh.

His character has descended to us without blemish. Unambitious of riches or honours, he appears to have projected the life of a retired scholar, from which he was diverted only by the commotions that robbed his country of its tranquillity. He was highly accomplished in ancient and modern languages, and in the amusements which became a man of his rank. Among his intimate friends, and learned contemporaries, he seems to have

been mostly connected with the earl of Stirling, and the celebrated English poets, Drayton and Ben Jonson. The latter, as already noticed in his life, paid him a visit at Hawthornden, and communicated to him without reserve, many particulars of his life and opinions, which Drummond committed to writing, with a sketch of Jonson's character and habits which has not been thought very liberal. This charge of illiberality, however, is considerably lessened when we reflect that Drummond appears to have had no intention of publishing what he had collected from Jonson, and that the manuscript did not appear until many years after he was beyond all censure or praise.

An edition of Drummond's poems was printed at London, 1656 octavo, with a preface by Phillips, which is here retained. The Edinburgh edition in folio, 1711, includes the whole of his works both in verse and prose, his poetical papers, familiar letters and the History of the Jameses; with an account of his life which, however unsatisfactory, is all that can now be relied on'. A recent edition of his poems was printed at London in 1791, but somewhat differently arranged from that of 1656. A more correct arrangement is still wanting, if his numerous admirers shall succeed in procuring that attention of which he has been hitherto deprived.

As a poet he ranks among the first reformers of versification, and in elegance, harmony, and delicacy of feeling is so superior to his contemporaries that the neglect with which he has been treated would appear unaccountable, if we did not consider that it is but of late the public attention has been drawn to the more ancient English poets. Mr. Headly, however, Mr. Neve the ingenious author of *Cursory Remarks on some of the ancient English poets*, Dr. Warton, Mr. Pinkerton, Mr. Park and other critics of unquestionable taste have lately expatiated on his merit with so much zeal and ability, that he is no longer in danger of being overlooked, unless by those superficial readers who are content with what is new and fashionable, and profess to be amateurs of an art of which they know neither the history nor the principles.

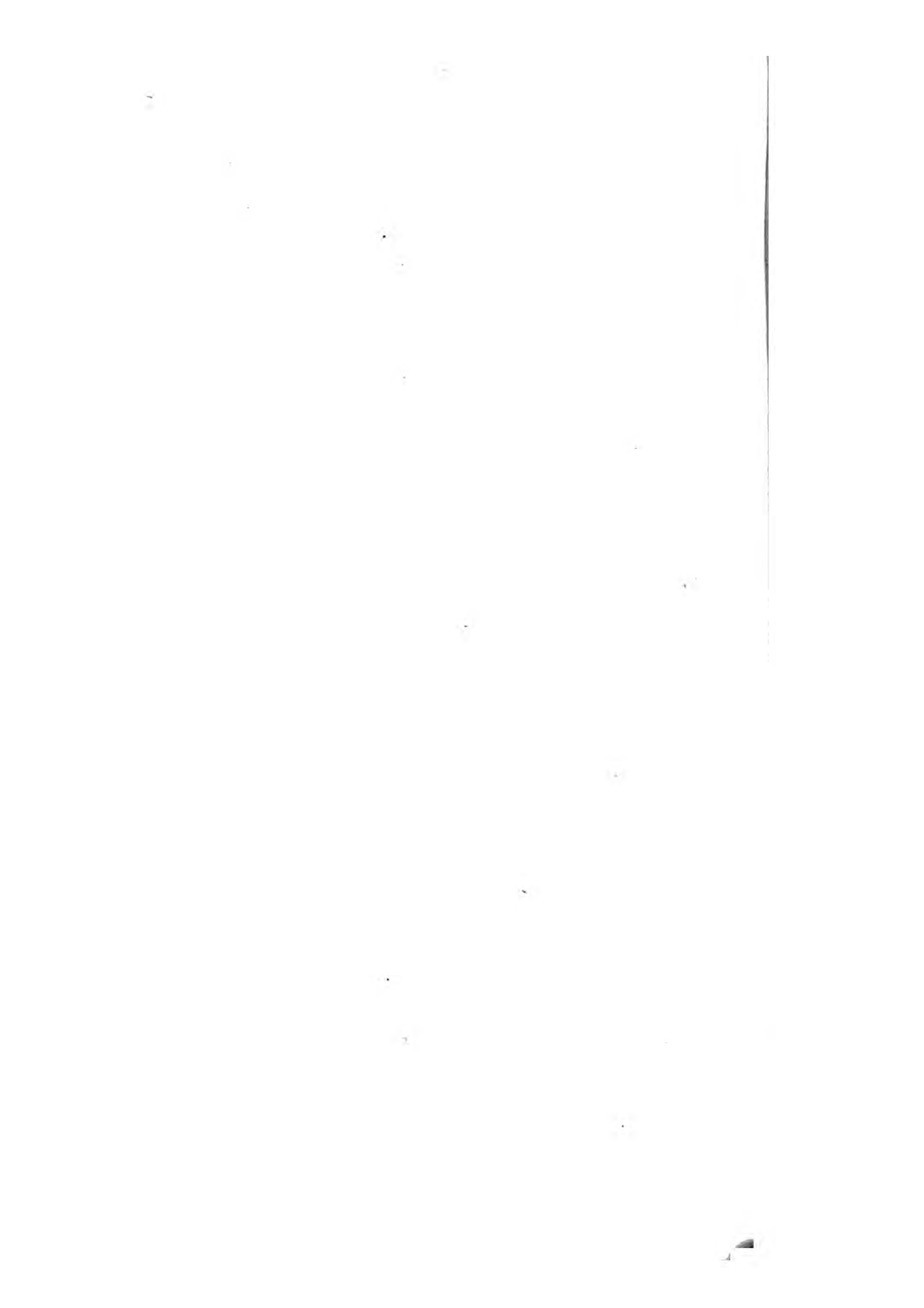
"He inherited," says his last encomiast, "a native poetic genius, but vitiated by the false taste which prevailed in his age,—a fondness for the conceits of the Italian poets, Petrarch and Marino, and their imitators among the French, Ronsard, Bellai, and Du Bartas. Yet many of his sonnets contain simple and natural thoughts clothed in great beauty of expression. His poem entitled *Forth Feasting*, which attracted the envy as well as the praise of Ben Jonson, is superior, in harmony of numbers, to any of the compositions of the contemporary poets of England; and is, in its subject, one of the most elegant panegyrics that ever were addressed by a poet to a prince. In prose writing, the merits of Drummond are as unequal as they are in poetry. When an imitator, he is harsh, turgid, affected and unnatural; as in his *History of the Five Jameses*, which, though judicious in the arrangement of the matter, and abounding in excellent political and moral sentiments, is barbarous and uncouth in its style, from an affectation of imitating partly the manner of Livy, and partly that of Tacitus. Thus, there is a perpetual departure from ordinary construction, and frequently a violation of the English idiom. In others of his prose compositions, where he followed his own taste, as in the *Irene* and *Cypress Grove*, and particularly in the former, there is a remarkable purity and ease of expression, and often a very high tone of eloquence. The *Irene*, written in 1638, is a persuasive to civil union, and the accommodation of those fatal differences between the king

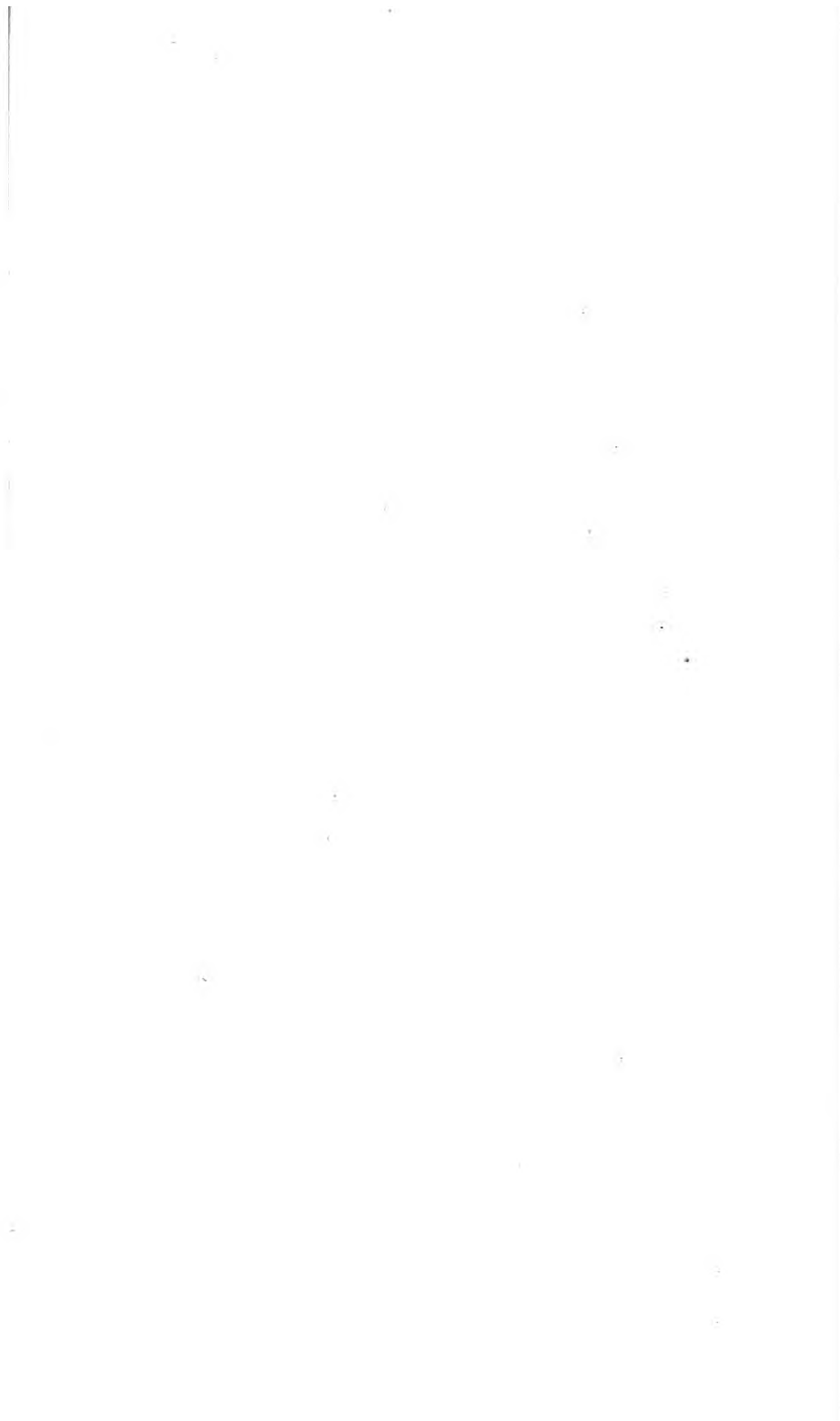
¹ Mr. G. Chalmers is of opinion that the learned Ruddiman assisted in preparing this edition. Chalmers's *Life of Ruddiman*, p. 53. C.

and the people, then verging to a crisis: it is a model of a popular address; and allowing for its pushing too far the doctrine of passive obedience, bears equal evidence of the political sagacity, copious historical information, and great moral worth and benevolence of its author." As the neglect of one age is sometimes repaid by the extravagant commendations of another, perhaps this temperate, judicious and elegant character of Drummond copied from Lord Woodhouselee's *Life of Kaimes*, will be found more consistent with the spirit of true criticism than some of those empassioned sketches in which judgment has less share.

There is one poem, now added to his other works, of a very different kind. It is entitled *Polemo-Middinia*, or the *Battle of the Dunghill*, a rare example of burlesque, and the first macaronic poem by a native of Great Britain. A copy of it was published by bishop Gibson, when a young man, at Oxford in 1691, 4to. with Latin notes²; but the text, probably from Mr. Gibson's being unacquainted with the Scotch language, is less correct than that of any copy that has fallen in the way of the present editor, who has therefore preferred the elegant edition printed by Messrs. Foulis of Glasgow in 1768. The humour of this piece is so remote from the characteristics of his polished mind and serious muse, that it may be regarded as a very singular curiosity. It appears to me to be the fragment of a larger poem which the author wrote for the amusement of his friends, but was not anxious to preserve. Mr. Gilchrist conjectures that it was written when Drummond was on a visit to his brother-in-law at Scotstarvet, and that it alludes to some rustic dispute well known at the time.

² See a curious paper on this edition, by Mr. Gilchrist, in the *Censura Literaria*, vol. iii. p. 359. C.





THE
LIFE OF SIR JOHN BEAUMONT.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

OF this author we have only a very short notice in the last edition of the *Biographia Britannica*, augmented, however, by the successful researches of Mr. Nichols in his history of Leicestershire, a work to which we shall have occasion to acknowledge yet more substantial obligations, in the life of the dramatic poet of this family.

Sir John Beaumont was the son of Francis Beaumont, one of the judges of the Common Pleas in the reign of queen Elizabeth, and brother of Francis, the dramatic colleague of Fletcher. He was born in 1582 at Grace-dieu, the family seat, in Leicestershire, and admitted a gentleman commoner of Broadgate's Hall (now Pembroke College) Oxford, the beginning of Lent Term, 1596. After three years' study here, during which he seems to have attached himself most to the poetical classics, he became a member of one of the inns of court, but soon quitted that situation, and returned to Leicestershire, where he married Elizabeth, daughter of John Fortescue, esq.

In 1626, king Charles conferred on him the dignity of a baronet, which sir John survived only two years, dying in the winter of 1628. He is said by Anthony Wood to have been buried at Grace-dieu: but this is a mistake for Belton, as the priory church was not then existing. The cause of his death is obscurely hinted at in the following lines by Drayton:

Thy care for that, which was not worth thy breath,
Brought on too soon thy much lamented death.
But Heav'n was kind, and would not let thee see
The plagues that must upon this nation be,
By whom the Muses have neglected been,
Which shall add weight and measure to their sin.

What these lines imply it is not easy to conjecture. Sir John died at the age of forty-six, almost in the prime of life, and his poetical attempts were the amusement of his young days, which he had relinquished for more serious studies.

He had seven sons and four daughters. Of his sons the most noticeable were John, his successor, the editor of his father's poems, and himself a minor poet: Francis, the author of some verses on his father's poems, who became afterwards a Jesuit: Gervase, who died at seven years old, and was lamented by his father in some very pathetic

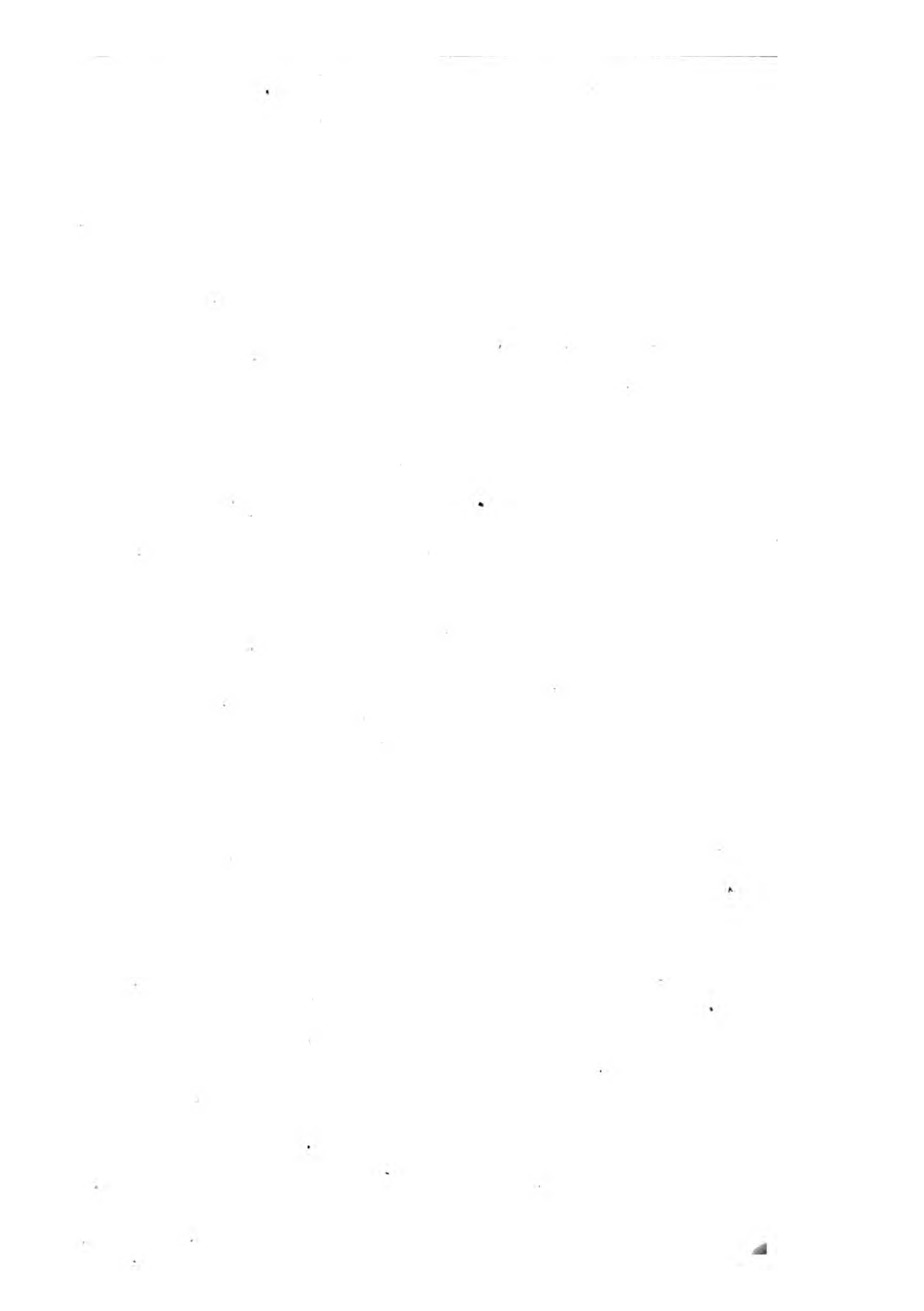
verses in the present collection: and Thomas, the third baronet. Sir John, who succeeded his father, is recorded as a man of prodigious bodily strength. He was killed in 1644, at the siege of Gloucester, and dying unmarried, was succeeded in title by his brother Thomas, who, like him, was plundered by the republicans.

Besides the present collection, Wood ascribes to our author a poem in eight books, entitled *The Crown of Thorns*, and a work under this title is alluded to in Hawkins's commendatory verses, but it has escaped the researches of the poetical collectors.

His other poems were published in 1629, under the title of "*Bosworth-field: with a Taste of the Variety of other Poems, left by Sir John Beaumont, Baronet, deceased: set forth by his Sonne, Sir Iohn Beavmont, Baronet; and dedicated to the King's most Excellent Maiestie.*" They are prefixed by a loyal dedication to the king, and commendatory verses by Thomas Hawkins, the author's sons John and Francis, George Fortescue, the brother of his lady, Ben Jonson, Drayton, &c¹.

Bosworth Field is the most considerable of this collection, and in Mr. Headley's opinion "merits republication for the easy flow of its numbers, and the spirit with which it is written." It certainly contains many original specimens of the heroic style, not exceeded by any of his contemporaries, and the imagery is frequently just and striking. The lines describing the death of the tyrant may be submitted with confidence to the admirers of Shakspeare. Among his lesser poems, a few sparklings of invention may now and then be discovered, and his translations are in general spirited and correct. His verses on the true form of English poetry, addressed to king James I. entitle him to a place among the most judicious critics of his time, and the chaste complexion of the whole shows that to genius he added virtue and delicacy.

¹ The copy used on the present occasion was that which belonged to the late Mr. Isaac Reed, who in a MS. note makes the following remark: "All the copies of this book which I have seen (and I have seen many) want the leaf p. 181." Mr. Nichols, who has likewise had an opportunity to examine some copies, confirms this singularity. A few illustrative notes are now added to the poems, for which the editor is obliged to the historian of Leicestershire. C.



The Father's life, drawn up by Mr Cole of Milton for
Dr Bucerell.

Giles Fletcher was born in Kent Kings brother to Richard F.
Bp. of London. In 1565 he was admitted scholar of King's
College in Cambridge. In 1571 he wrote an Eulogy, & other
verses in Latin upon the death of St Nicholas Carre, which
were published with other poetry on the same occasion by the
most ingenious scholars of the University at that time. In
1576, when his College was in a ferment, occasioned by the
disputes between Provost Gouge and his Fellows, he was one
of the Provost's opposers: but was forced to submit by the inter-
position of the Lord Treasurer Burghley, to whom the case was
referred, and to whom he had written: "That in College, prefer-
ments went only by favour, without merit, and according
as they stood affected to a party, no regard being had, either
to industry or learning." In 1576 was reprinted Dr Walter
Haddon's Poemata, with his Life prefixed & verses on his death
by Giles Fletcher; and in 1579 he composed some verses, which
were printed by Simon Laker, who published Dr Baro's Pre-
lections. On 3 July 1580, being then B. M. he acted as Com-
missary to Dr Bridgewater Chancellor of this Diocese (Ely)
In 1591 was printed at London in 8^{vo}, his book called "The His-
tory of Russia, or the Government of the Emperour of Mus-
covia, with the manner & fashions of the people of that coun-
try." This book was quickly suppressed, lest it should give offence
to a Prince in amity with England. However it was afterwards
reprinted in 12^{mo} 1643, and again at London in 1657 in the
same size. On 20 June 1597 he was presented by Queen
Elizabeth to the Treasurership of St Pauls; who also employed him as
her ambassador to Theodore Ivanovitch Duke of Moscow, a
tyrannical Prince, whose will was his law; with whom, however,
he settled very good terms for our merchants trading into that
country. The famous Samuel Purchasse, Author of the Pilgrims,
in some part of his works, which I don't at present recollect, says,
that Sir Jerome Horsey's Papers concerning his employments in
Russia from Queen Elizabeth, furnished Dr Fletcher with the best
pieces of his intelligence. He was & author of a small Latin poem,
called "De literis antiqua Britannia Regibus praesertim
qui doctrina claruerunt, quique Collegia Cantabrigia funda-
verunt." This poem was printed at Cambridge by his eldest son
Phineas Fletcher, fellow of King's College. He had another son of both
his names M. F.

THE

LIVES OF GILES AND PHINEAS FLETCHER.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

As a few dates are all that are now recoverable of the personal character of these two poets, and as there is a strong resemblance in the genius of their poetry, it seems unnecessary to make a separate article of each.

Their father, Giles Fletcher, L.L.D. was a native of Kent, educated at Eton, and in 1565 elected scholar of King's College, Cambridge, where in 1569 he took the degree of bachelor of arts, master of arts in 1573, and doctor of laws in 1581. According to Anthony Wood he became an excellent poet; but he is better known for his skill in political negotiation, which induced queen Elizabeth to employ him as her commissioner into Scotland, Germany, and the Low Countries. In 1588, the memorable year of the Armada, he was sent to Muscovy on affairs respecting the English trade with Russia, and after overcoming the difficulties started by a barbarous court and a capricious Czar, he concluded a treaty of commerce highly advantageous to the interests of his countrymen.

Soon after his return, he was made secretary to the city of London, and one of the masters of the Court of Requests. In 1597 he was constituted treasurer of St. Paul's, London. Before this he had drawn up the result of his observations, when in Russia, respecting the government, laws, and manners of that country. But as this work contained facts too plain and disreputable to a power with which a friendly treaty had just been concluded, the publication was suppressed for the present. It was, however, reprinted at a considerably distant period (1643), and afterwards incorporated in Hakluyt's voyages. He wrote also a Discourse concerning the Tartars, the object of which was to prove that they are the Israelites, or Ten Tribes, which being captivated by Salmanasser, were transplanted into Media. This opinion was afterwards adopted by Whiston, who printed the discourse in the first volume of his curious Memoirs.

Dr. Fletcher died in the parish of St. Catherine Colman, Fenchurch-street, and was probably buried in that church¹.

¹ Biog. Brit. Vol. VI. Part I. unpublished and almost *unique*, the impression having been destroyed at the fire which lately consumed the valuable literary stock of Messrs. Nichols and Son. C.

He left two sons, Giles and Phineas. The eldest, Giles, born, according to Mr. Ellis's conjecture, in 1588, was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge², where he took the degree of bachelor of divinity, and died at his living of Alderton, in Suffolk, in 1623. His widow married afterwards the rev. — Ramsay, minister of Rougham, in Norfolk³. Winstanley and Jacob, who in this case have robbed one another, instead of better authorities, divide the two brothers into three, and assign Giles's poem of Christ's Victory to two authors.

Phineas was educated at Eton, and admitted a scholar of King's college, Cambridge, in 1600, where, in 1604, he took his bachelor's degree and his master's in 1608. After going into the church, he was presented, in 1621, to the living of Hilgay, in Norfolk, by Sir Henry Willoughby, bart. and according to Blomefield, the historian of Norfolk, he held this living twenty-nine years. Mr. Ellis conjectures that he was born in 1584, and died about 1650.

Besides the poems now reprinted, he was the author of a dramatic piece, entitled *Sicelides*, which was performed at King's College, Cambridge, and printed in 1631. A manuscript copy is in the British Museum. The editor of the *Biographia Dramatica* informs us that "it was intended originally to be performed before king James the First, on the thirteenth of March, 1614; but his majesty leaving the university sooner, it was not then represented. The serious parts of it are mostly written in rhyme, with choruses between the acts. Some of the incidents are borrowed from Ovid, and some from the *Orlando Furioso*."

He published also, at Cambridge, in 1632, some account of the lives of the founders and other learned men of that university, under the title of *De Literatis antiquæ Britanniæ, præsertim qui doctrina claruerunt, quique collegia Cantabrigiæ fundarunt*.

Such are the very scanty notices which we have been able to collect respecting these learned, ingenious, and amiable brothers; but we are now arrived at that period of national confusion which left neither leisure nor inclination to study polite literature, or reward the sons of genius.

The only production we have of Giles Fletcher is entitled *Christ's Victory and Triumph in Heaven and Earth over and after Death*, Cambridge 4to. 1610, in four parts, and written in stanzas of eight lines. It was reprinted in 1632, again in 1640, and in 1783, along with Phineas Fletcher's *Purple Island*: but many unwarrantable liberties have been taken in modernizing the language of this last edition. Mr. Headley, who has bestowed more attention than any modern critic on the works of the Fletchers, pronounces the *Christ's Victory* to be a rich and picturesque poem, and on a much happier subject than the *Purple Island*, yet unenlivened by personification.

² In the dedication of his poem to Dr. Neville, master of Trinity College, speaking of that college, he says, "In which, being placed by your favour only, most freely, without either any means from other, or any desert in myself, being not able to do more, I could do no less than acknowledge that debt which I shall never be able to pay." C.

³ Lloyd's *State Worthies*, Vol. I. P. 552. Whitworth's edit. C.

London in a parish of St Catherine Coleman street in Feb. 1610, where
= it is supposed he lies buried.

Sam. Lee of Oxford in his book titled "Israel Redux", printed a
small treatise of Dr Fletcher, in which he attempts to prove, that
the Tartars are the posterity of the ten tribes of Israel: of which
treatise Mr Whiston makes very honourable mention, and agrees
with him entirely in his supposal: he also published the Treatise
in a Memoir of his own life, and supposes it to be very little known
by the learned hitherto: having found it in MS. as he says, in
Sir Francis Matthews's Study, so that I imagine he knew
nothing of its having been already published by Mr Lee.

Hatcher's MS. Account of the members of King's College gives
him this Character: "He was Doctor of Laws, and a learned man,
& an excellent poet;" and adds that "he was sometimes Com-
missioner into Poland, Germany, & Low Countries: ambassa-
dor into Russia for Queen Elizabeth, Secretary to & City of Lon-
don & swolled Master of the Court of Requests."



He has also very ingeniously pointed out some resemblances which prove that Milton owed considerable obligations to the Fletchers⁴.

The works of Phineas Fletcher, including the *Purple Island*, or the *Isle of Man*, the *Piscatory Eclogues* and *Miscellanies*, were published at Cambridge in 1633, 4to. The only part that has been correctly reprinted is the *Piscatory Eclogues*, published at Edinburgh in 1771, by an anonymous editor, the most of whose judicious notes, preface &c. are here retained.

There are few of the old poets whom Mr. Headley seems more anxious to revive than Phineas Fletcher and he has examined his claims to lasting fame with much acuteness, yet perhaps not without somewhat of that peculiar prejudice which seems to pervade many of the critical essays of this truly ingenious and amiable young man. Having at a very early period of life commenced the perusal of the ancient English poets, his enthusiasm carried him back to their times, their habits and their language. From pardoning their quaintnesses, he proceeded to admire them, and has in some instances placed among the most striking proofs of invention, many of those antitheses and conceits which modern refinement does not easily tolerate. Still his taste and judgment are so generally predominant, that it would be presumption in the present editor, or perhaps in one of superior authority, to substitute any remarks of his own in room of the following animated and elegant character of Fletcher's poetry.

"Were the celebrated Mr. Pott compelled to read a lecture upon the anatomy of the human frame at large, in a regular set of stanzas, it is much to be questioned whether he could make himself understood, by the most apprehensive author, without the advantage of professional knowledge. Fletcher seems to have undertaken a nearly similar task, as the five first cantos of the *Purple Island*, are almost entirely taken up with an explanation of the title; in the course of which, the reader forgets the poet, and is sickened with the anatomist. Such minute attention to this part of the subject was a material error in judgment: for which, however, ample amends is made in what follows. Nor is Fletcher wholly undeserving of praise for the intelligibility with which he has struggled through his difficulties, for his uncommon command of words, and facility of metre. After describing the body, he proceeds to personify the passions and intellectual faculties. Here fatigued attention is not merely relieved, but fascinated and enraptured: and notwithstanding his figures, in many instances, are too arbitrary and fantastic in their habiliments, often disproportioned and overdone, sometimes lost in a superfluity of glaring colours, and the several characters, in general, by no means sufficiently kept apart; yet, amid such a profusion of images, many are distinguished by a boldness of outline, a majesty of manner, a brilliancy of colouring, a distinctness and propriety of attribute, and an air of life, that we look for in vain in modern productions, and that rival, if not surpass, what we meet with of the kind even in Spenser, from whom our author caught his inspiration. After exerting his creative powers on this department of his subject, the virtues and better qualities of the heart, under their leader *Eclecta*, or *Intellect*, are attacked by the the vices: a battle ensues, and the latter are vanquished, after a vigorous opposition, through the interference of an angel, who appears at the prayers of *Eclecta*. The poet here abruptly takes an opportunity of paying a fulsome and unpardonable com-

⁴ Supplement, vol. II. p. 182, &c. C.

pliment to James the first (stanza 55. canto 12) on that account perhaps the most unpalatable passage in the book. From Fletcher's dedication of this his poem, with the Piscatory Eclogues and Miscellanies to his friend Edmund Benlowes, it seems that they were written very early, as he calls them 'raw essays of my very unripe years, and almost childhood.' It is to his honour that Milton read and imitated him, as every attentive reader of both poets must soon discover. He is eminently entitled to a very high rank among our old English classics.—Quarles in his verses prefixed to the Purple Island hints that he had a poem on a similar subject in agitation, but was prevented from pursuing it by finding it had got into other hands. In a map to one of his Emblems are these names of places, London, Finchfield, Roxwell and *Higay*: edit. 1669."

That Mr. Headley is not blind to the defects of his favourite will farther appear from his remarks on Orpheus and Euridice in the Purple Island.

"These lines of Fletcher are a paraphrase, or rather translation from Boethius. The whole description is forcible: some of the circumstances perhaps are heightened too much: but it is the fault of this writer to indulge himself in every aggravation that poetry allows, and to stretch his prerogative of 'quidlibet audendi' to the utmost."

In the supplement to his second volume, Mr. Headley has demonstrated at considerable length how much Fletcher owed to Spenser, and Milton to Fletcher. For this he has offered the apology due to the high characters of those poets, and although we have been accustomed to see such researches carried too far, yet it must be owned that there is a certain degree to which they must be carried before the praise of invention can be justly bestowed. How far poets may borrow from one another without injury to their fame, is a question yet undetermined.

After, however, every deduction of this kind that can be made, the Fletchers will still remain in possession of a degree of invention, imagination, spirit and sublimity, which we seldom meet with among the poets of the seventeenth century before we arrive at Milton.



FRANCIS BEAUMONT, THE POET.



W. Baur, pinx.

PL. LXXI

THE

LIFE OF FRANCIS BEAUMONT.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THE reader is indebted for the most valuable part of this life to the historian of Leicestershire, who in many other instances has shown how much information may be recovered of the remotest times by intelligent research, and even when the chain of events seems to be irrecoverably broken.

Francis Beaumont, third son of Francis the judge¹, was born at Grace-Dieu, Leicestershire, in 1586, and in the beginning of Lent Term, 1596, was admitted (with his two brothers, Henry and John) a gentleman commoner of Broadgate-hall, now Pembroke College, Oxford. Anthony Wood, who refers his education to Cambridge, mistakes him for his cousin Francis, master of the Charter-house, who died in 1624. It is remarkable, that there were four Francis Beaumonts of this family, all living in 1615, and of these at least three were poetical; the master of the Charter-house, the dramatic writer, and Francis Beaumont, a Jesuit².

Our poet studied for some time in the Inner Temple, and his *Mask of the Inner Temple and Grays Inn*, was acted and printed in 1612-13, when he was in his twenty-sixth year. His application to the law was probably not very intense, nor indeed is it possible to conceive that he could have been preparing for the practice of the bar, and producing his poems and plays within the limits of a life not exceeding thirty years. He appears to have devoted himself to the dramatic Muse from a very early period; but at what time he commenced a partnership with Fletcher, who was ten years older, is not known. The date of their first play is 1607, when Beaumont was in his twenty-first year; and it was probably acted some time before. He brought however, into this firm a genius uncommonly fertile and commanding. In all the editions of their plays, and in every notice of their joint-productions, notwithstanding Fletcher's seniority, the name of Beaumont always stands first.

Their connection, from similarity of taste and studies, was very intimate, and it would appear, at one time, very economical. Aubrey informs us, that "there was a wonderful consimilarity of fancy between Mr. Francis Beaumont and Mr. John Fletcher, which caused that dearness of friendship between them. I have heard Dr.

¹ See the *Life of Sir John Beaumont*, p. 1 of the present volume. C.

² See a letter on this subject, *Gent. Mag.* vol. LXXIII. p. 105. C.

John Earl, since bishop of Sarum, say, who knew them, that his (Beaumont's) main business was to correct the super-overflowings of Mr. Fletcher's wit. They lived together on the Bank-side, not far from the play-house, both bachelors; had one bench in the house between them, which they did so admire; the same cloaths, cloak, &c. between them."

As Beaumont is not admitted into this collection on account of his being a dramatic poet, it will not be expected that we should enter into a discussion on what specific share he had in the plays which have been published as the joint production of Beaumont and Fletcher. The reader may find much information, and perhaps all that can now be ascertained on this subject, in the preliminary matter of the edition published in 1778, 10 volumes 8vo. or more briefly in a note in Mr. Malone's life of Dryden, vol. II. p. 100-101.

Mr. Egerton Brydges, whose judgment is of sterling value in matters of literary antiquity, suspects that great injustice has been generally done to Beaumont, by the supposition of Langbaine and others that his merit was principally confined to lopping the redundancies of Fletcher. He acquits, however, the editors of the *Biographia Dramatica* of this blame. They say, "It is probable that the forming of the plan, and contriving the conduct of the fable, the writing of the *more serious and pathetic parts*, and lopping the redundant branches of Fletcher's wit, whose luxuri-ances we are told frequently stood in need of castigation, might be in general Beaumont's portion of the work. "This," adds Mr. Brydges, "is to afford him very high praise," and the authorities of sir John Birkenhead, Jasper Mayne, sir George Lisle, and others, amount to strong proof that he was considered by his contemporaries in a superior light, (and by none more than by Jonson,) and that this estimation of his talents was common in the life-time of his colleague, who, from candour or friendship, appears to have acquiesced in every respect paid to the memory of Beaumont.

How his life was spent his works show. The production of so many plays, and the interest he took in their success, were sufficient to occupy his mind during his short span, which cannot be supposed to have been diversified by any other events than those that are incident to candidates for theatrical fame and profit. Although his ambition was confined to one object, his life probably abounded in those little varieties of hope and fear, perplexity and satisfaction, jealousy and rivalry, friendship and caprice, which are to be experienced within the walls of a theatre, and compose the history of a dramatic writer.

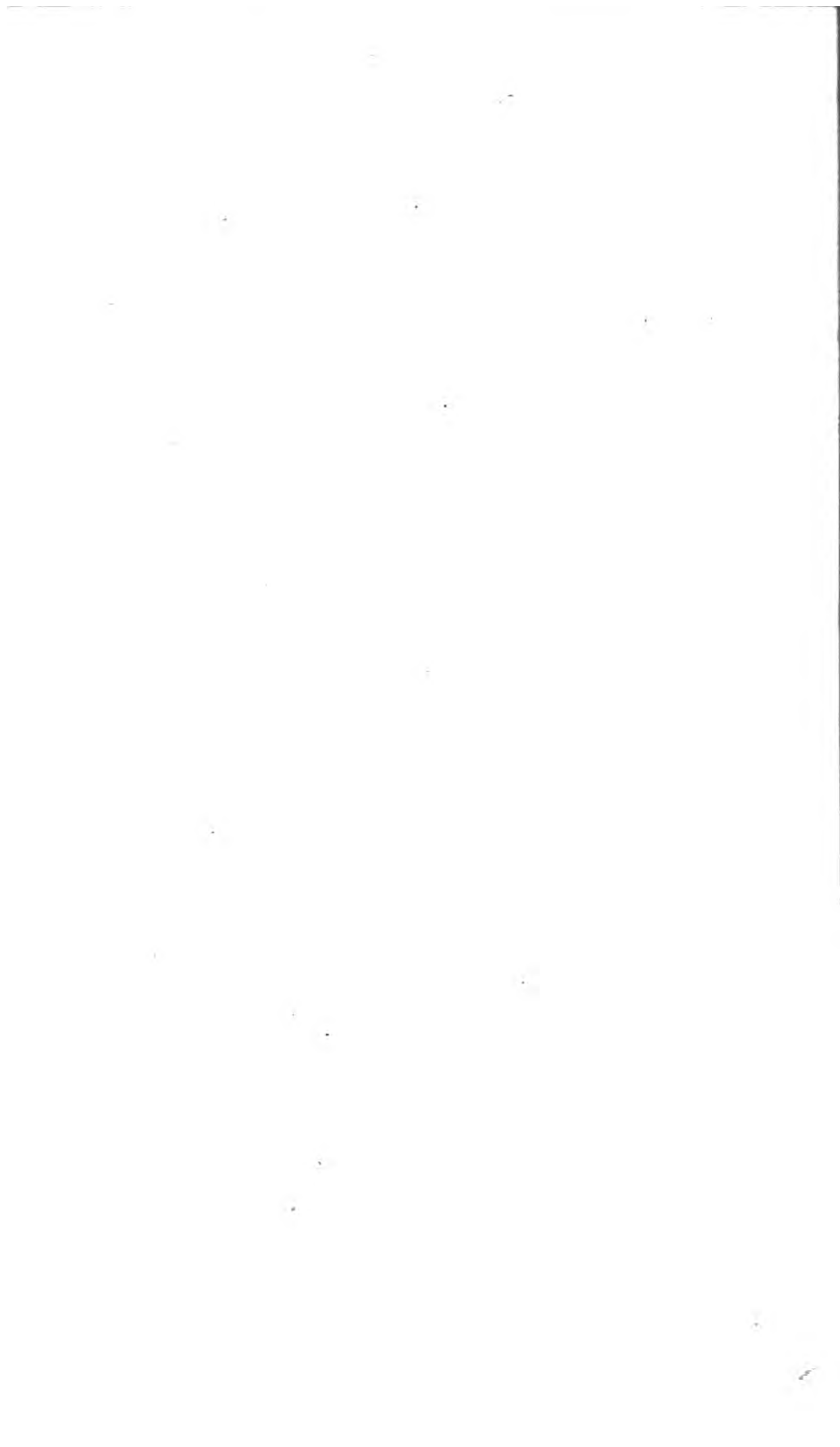
He appears a satirist on women in some of his poems, but he was more influenced by wit than disappointment, and probably only versified the common place raillery of the times. He married Ursula, daughter and co-heir of Henry Isley of Sundridge in Kent, by whom he had two daughters. One of these, Frances, was living at a great age in Leicestershire, in the year 1700, and at that time enjoyed a pension of 100l. a year from the duke of Ormond, in whose family she had resided for some time as a domestic. She had once in her possession several poems of her father's writing, which were lost at sea during her voyage from Ireland.

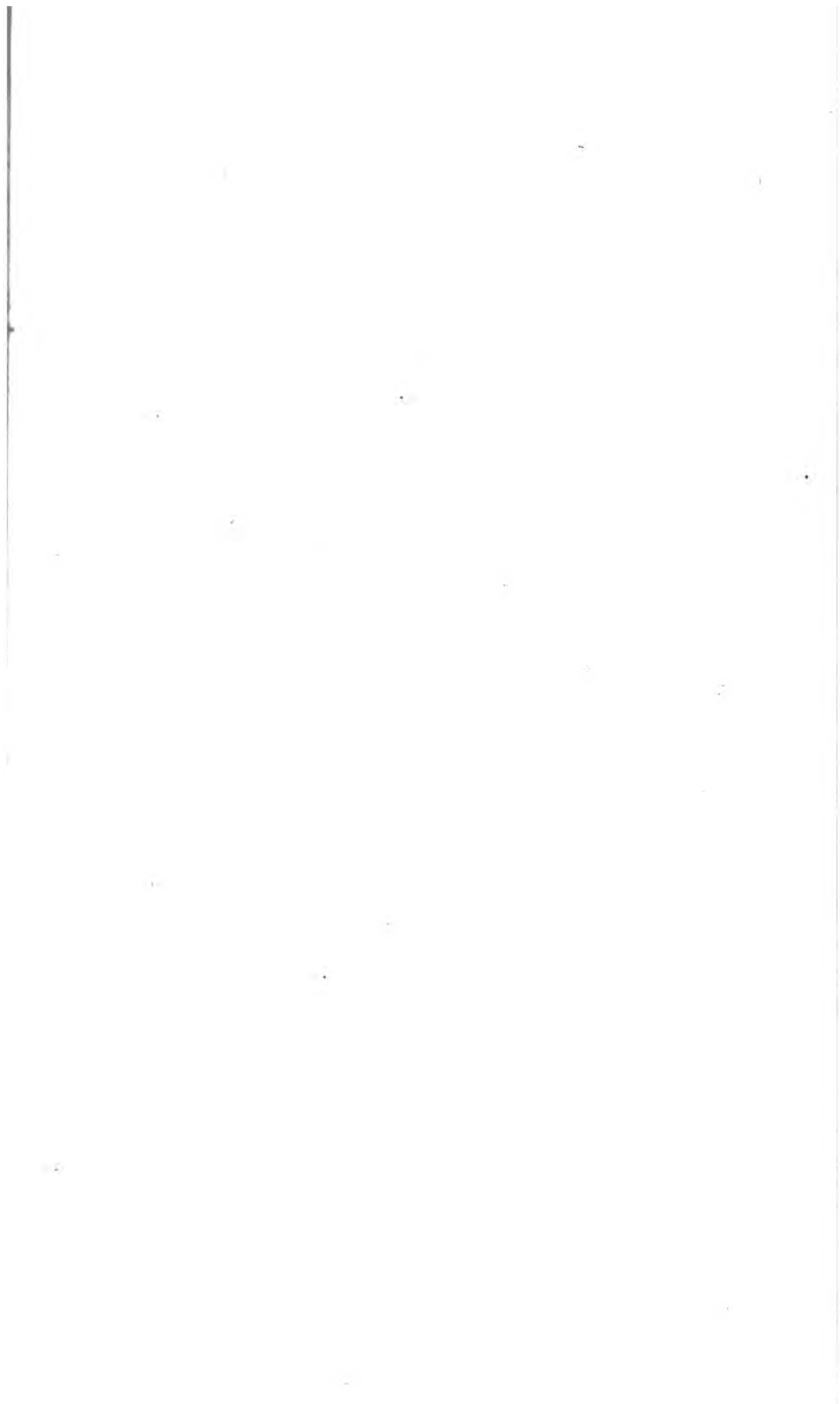
Mr. Beaumont died early in March 1615-16, and was buried on the 9th, at the

entrance of St. Benedict's chapel near the earl of Middlesex's monument, in the collegiate church of St. Peter Westminster, without any inscription.

The first edition of his poems appeared in 1640, quarto, and the second in 1653, but neither so correct as could be wished. The editor of both was the bookseller Lawrence Blaiklock, whom Antony Wood characterises as a "presbyterian book-binder near Temple Bar, afterwards an informer to the Committee of Sequestration at Haberdashers' and Goldsmiths' Hall, and a beggar defunct in prison." Whoever he was, he put together what he could find in circulation, without much discernment or inquiry, and has mixed, with Beaumont's, several pieces that belong to other authors. Some of these are pointed out in the present edition. The only poem printed in Beaumont's life time was Salmacis and Hermaphroditus from Ovid, which he published in 1602, when he was only sixteen years of age, a circumstance not necessary to prove it the production of a very young man.

His original poems give him very superior claims to a place in this collection. Although we find some of the metaphysical conceits so common in his day, particularly in the elegy on lady Markham, he is in general more free from them than his contemporaries. His sentiments are elegant and refined and his versification is unusually harmonious. Where have we more lively imagery or in such profusion, as in the sonnet, "Like a ring without a finger?" His amatory poems are sprightly and original, and some of his lyrics rise to the empasioned spirit of Shakspeare and Milton. Mr. Brydges is of opinion that the third song in the play of Nice Valour afforded the first hint of the *Il Penseroso*.





BROWNE, (WILLIAM), p. 624.

Though the fact has hitherto, I believe, been unnoticed, it appears from the list of George Wither's productions, drawn up by himself, at the end of his *Fides Anglicana*, Ed. 1661, that he had a share in writing "The Shepherd's Pipe;" for, he expressly says, it was "composed by *him* and Mr. William Brown." This divided claim has farther presumptive confirmation from the testimony of their friend and contemporary, Richard Brathwaite. See his "Strappado," ed. 1615, (the very year after which Browne's Poem (a) appeared—) p. 23. After severely censuring some

(a) It was re-printed along with the works of Geo. Wither, in 1620.

"Poets in this time
Who write of swains, might write as well of swine,"

he proceeds to vindicate his favourites from the general obloquy,

- " Yet ranke I not (as some men do suppose)
" These worthless swaines amongst the laies of those
" Time-honour'd Shepherds (for they still shall be
" (As well they merit) honoured of mee,
" *Who beare a part*, like honest faithfull swaines,
" On witty Wither's never-with'ring plaines,
" For these (though seeming Shepherds) have deseru'd
" To have their names in lasting marble carv'd;
" Yea, this I know, I may be bold to say,
" Thames ne'er had swans that sung more sweet than they.
" Its true, I may avow't, that ne'er was song
" Chanted in any age, by swains so young (b),
" With more delight than was perform'd by them,
" Prettily shadow'd in a *barrow'd name*.
" And long may England's Theban dringes be knowne.

(b) Wither was 26, and Browne 28, when this poem was published.

F A R T H E R

A D D E N D A

T O T H E

Second, Third, and Fourth Volumes

O F T H E

BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA.

[Communicated by Mr. PARK.]

THE
LIFE OF WILLIAM BROWNE.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS ingenious poet was the son of Thomas Browne, of Tavistock, in Devonshire, gent. who, according to Prince, in his *Worthies of Devon*, was most probably a descendant from the knightly family of Browne, of Brownes-Illash, in the parish of Langtree, near Great Torrington, in Devonshire¹. His son was born in the year 1590, and became a student of Exeter College, Oxford, about the beginning of the reign of James I. After making a great progress in classical and polite literature, he removed to the Inner Temple, where his attention to the study of the law was frequently interrupted by his devotion to the Muses. In his twenty-third year (1613) he published, in folio, the first part of his *Britannia's Pastorals*, which, according to the custom of the time, was ushered into the world with so many poetical eulogies, that he appears to have secured, at a very early age, the friendship and favour of the most celebrated of his contemporaries, among whom we find the names of Selden and Drayton. To these he afterwards added Davies, of Hereford, Ben Jonson, and others. That he wrote some of these pastorals before he had attained his twentieth year, has been conjectured from a passage in Book I. Song V. but there is sufficient internal evidence, independent of these lines, that much of them was the offspring of a juvenile fancy. In the following year he published, in octavo, *The Shepherd's Pipe*, in seven eclogues. In the fourth of these he laments the death of his friend, Mr. Thomas Manwood, under the name of Philarete, the precursor, as some critics assert, of Milton's *Lycidas*.

In 1616, he published the second part of his *Britannia's Pastorals*, recommended as before by his poetical friends, whose praises he repaid with liberality in the body of the work. The two parts were reprinted, in octavo, in 1625, and procured him, as is too frequently the case, more fame than profit. About a year before this, he appears to have taken leave of the Muses, and returned to Exeter College, in the capacity of tutor to Robert Dormer, earl of Caernarvon, a nobleman who fell in the battle of

¹ The facts in this short sketch are taken from Prince's *Worthies*, the *General Dictionary*, *Biog. Britannica*, and Wood's *Athenæ*. C.

Newbury in 1643, while fighting gallantly for his king, at the head of a regiment of horse, and of whom lord Clarendon has given us a character drawn with his usual discrimination and fidelity. While guiding the studies of this nobleman, Browne was created Master of Arts, with this honourable notice in the public register: *Vir omni humana literatura et bonarum artium cognitione instructus.*

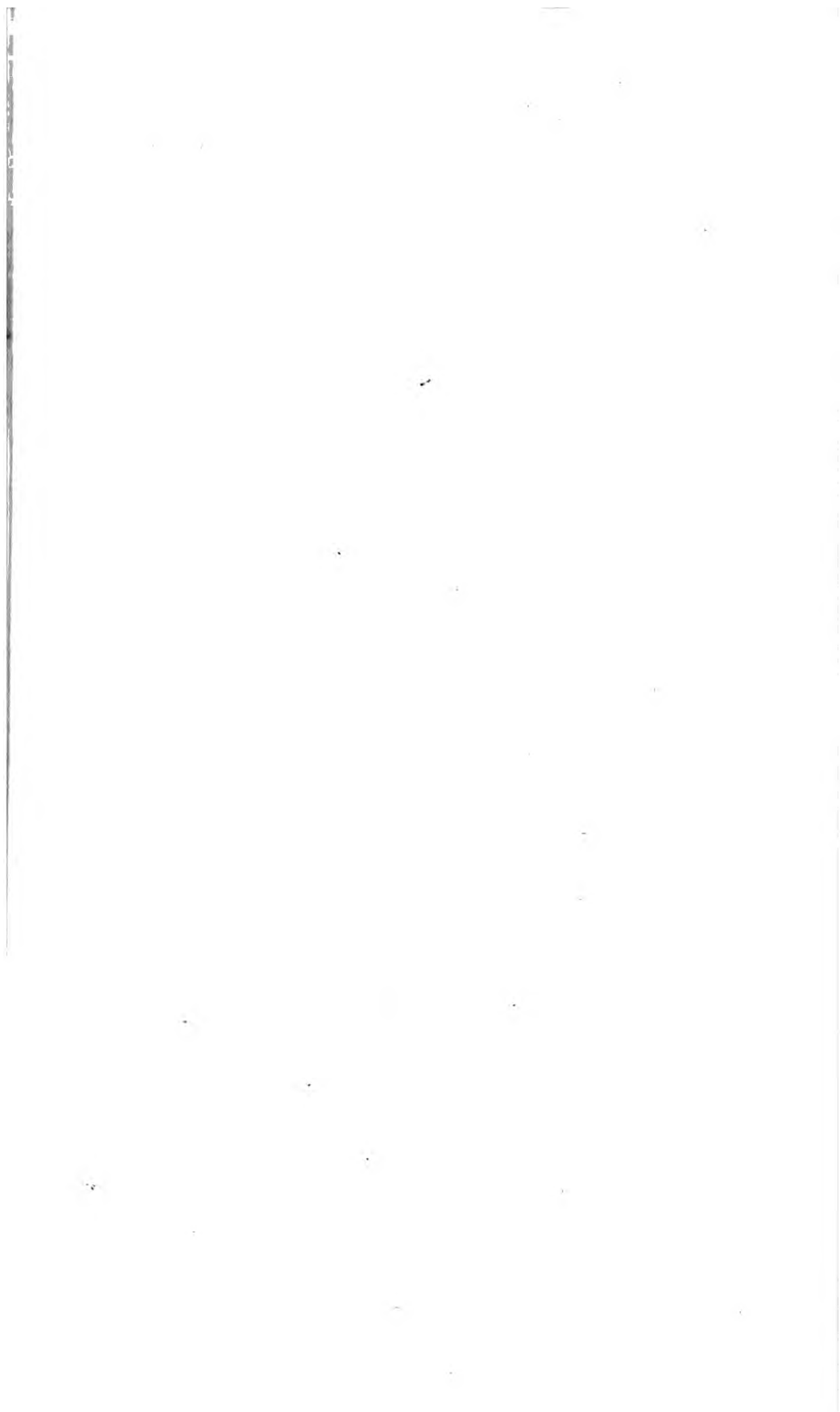
After leaving the university with lord Caernarvon, he found a liberal patron in William earl of Pembroke, of whom likewise we have a most elaborate character in Clarendon, some part of which may be supposed to reflect honour on our poet. "He was a great lover of his country, and of the religion and justice, which he believed could only support it: and his friendships were *only with men of those principles.* And as his conversation was most with men of the *most pregnant parts and understanding,* so, towards any such who needed support or encouragement, though unknown, if fairly recommended to him, he was very liberal."

This nobleman, who had a respect for Browne probably founded on the circumstances intimated in the above character, took him into his family, and employed him in such a manner, according to Wood, that he was enabled to purchase an estate. Little more, however, is known of his history, nor is the exact time of his death ascertained. Wood finds that one of both his names, of Ottery St. Mary, in Devonshire, died in the winter of 1645, but knows not whether this be the same. He hints at his person in these words: "As he had a little body, so a great mind;" a high character from this biographer, who had no indulgence for poetical failings.

Browne has experienced the fate of many of his contemporaries, whose fame died with them, and whose writings have been left to be revived, under many disadvantages, by an age of refined taste and curiosity. The civil wars, which raged about the time of his death, and whose consequences continued to operate for many years after, diverted the public mind from the concerns of poetry. The lives of the poets were forgotten, and their works perished through neglect or wantonness. We have no edition of Browne's poems from 1625 to 1772, when Mr. Thomas Davies, the bookseller, was assisted by some of his learned friends in publishing them, in three small volumes. The advertisement, prefixed to the first volume, informs us that the gentlemen of the king's library procured the use of the first edition of *Britannia's Pastorals*, which had several manuscript notes on the margin, written by the rev. William Thomson, one of the few scholars of his time who studied the antiquities of English poetry². Mr. Thomas Warton contributed his copy of the *Shepherd's Pipe*, which was at that time so scarce that no other could be procured. Mr. Price, the librarian of the Bodleian library, sent a correct copy of the *Elegy upon the death of Henry, prince of Wales*, from a manuscript in that repository: and Dr. Farmer furnished a transcript of the *Inner Temple Mask* from the library of Emanuel College, which had never before been printed. With such helps, a correct edition might have been expected; but the truth is, that the few editions of ancient poets (Suckling, Marvell, Carew, &c.) which Davies undertook to print, are extremely deficient in correctness. Of this assertion, which the comparison of a few pages with any of the originals will amply

² See his *Life and Works*, vol. xv. of the present collection. C.





confirm, we have a very striking instance in the present work, in which two entire pages of Book I. of *Britannia's Pastorals* were omitted³.

Few poets, however, of his age, have a better claim to be added to a collection like the present, than Browne. His works exhibit abundant specimens of true inspiration, and had his judgment been equal to his powers of invention, or had he yielded less to the bad taste of his age, or occasionally met with a critic instead of a flatterer, he would have been entitled to a much higher rank in the class of genuine poets. His *Pastorals* form a vast store-house of rural imagery and description, and in personifying the passions and affections, he exhibits pictures that are not only faithful but striking, just to nature and to feeling, and frequently heightened by original touches of the pathetic and sublime, and by many of those wild graces which true genius only can exhibit. It is not improbable that he studied Spenser, as well as the Italian poets. To the latter he owes something of elegance and something of extravagance. From the former he appears to have caught the idea of a story like the *Faery Queene*, although it wants regularity of plan; and he follows his great model in a profusion of allegorical description and romantic landscape⁴.

His versification, which is so generally harmonious that where he fails, it may be imputed to carelessness, is at the same time so various as to relax the imagination with specimens of every kind, and he seems to pass from the one to the other with an ease that we do not often find among the writers of lengthened poems. Those, however, who are in search of faulty rhimes, of foolish conceits, of vulgar ideas and of degrading imagery, will not lose their pains. He was, among other qualities, a man of humour, and his humour is often exceedingly extravagant. So mixed, indeed, is his style, and so whimsical his flights, that we are sometimes reminded of Swift in all his grossness, and sometimes of Milton in the plenitude of his inspiration.

The obligations Milton owes to this poet might alone justify his admission into a more fastidious collection than the present can pretend to be. Mr. Warton has remarked⁵ that the morning landscape of the *L'Allegro* is an assemblage of the same objects which Browne had before collected in his *Britannia's Pastorals*, B. IV. Song IV. beginning,

“ By this had chanticlere,” &c.

It has already been noticed that *Philarete* was the precursor of *Lycidas*, but what Mr. Warton asserts of *Comus* deserves some consideration. After copying the exquisite Ode which *Circe*, in the *Inner Temple Mask*, sings as a charm to drive away sleep from *Ulysses*, Mr. Warton adds,—“ In praise of this song it will be sufficient to say, that it reminds us of some favourite touches in Milton's *Comus*, to which it perhaps gave birth. Indeed one cannot help observing here in general, although the observation more properly belongs to another place, that a masque thus recently

³ The first notice of this egregious blunder was reserved for Mr. Waldron, in his *Miscellanies on the English Stage*, p. 49. C.

⁴ He studied also our earliest poets, having incorporated in his *Shepherd's Pipe* a poem written by Hoccleve, translated from *Gesta Romanorum*, and entitled the story of *Ionathas*. See Mr. George Mason's splenetic republication of some of the poems of that very indifferent writer. Preface, p. 2. C.

⁵ Warton's *Milton*, p. 46, 47.

exhibited on the story of Circe, which there is reason to think had acquired some popularity, suggested to Milton the hint of a masque on the story of Comus. It would be superfluous to point out minutely the absolute similiarity of the two characters: they both deal in incantations conducted by the same mode of operation, and producing effects exactly parallel."

Without offering any objection to these remarks, it may still be necessary to remind the reader of a circumstance to which this excellent critic has not adverted—namely, that the Inner Temple Mask appears to have been exhibited about the year 1620, when Milton was a boy of only twelve years old, and remained in manuscript until Dr. Farmer procured a copy for the edition of 1772; and that Milton produced his Comus at the age of twenty-six. It remains, therefore, for some future conjecture to determine on the probability of Milton's having seen Browne's manuscript in the *interim* ⁶.

Prince informs us, that "as he had honoured his country with his sweet and elegant Pastorals, so it was expected, and he also entreated a little farther to grace it by his drawing out the line of his poetic ancestors, beginning in Joseph Iscanus, and ending in himself. A noble design if it had been effected." Josephus Iscanus was Joseph of Exeter, who flourished in the thirteenth century, and wrote two epic poems in Latin heroics. Had Browne begun much later he would have conferred a very high obligation on posterity. Collections of poetry are of very ancient date, but very little is known with certainty of the lives of English poets, and that little must now be recovered with great difficulty.

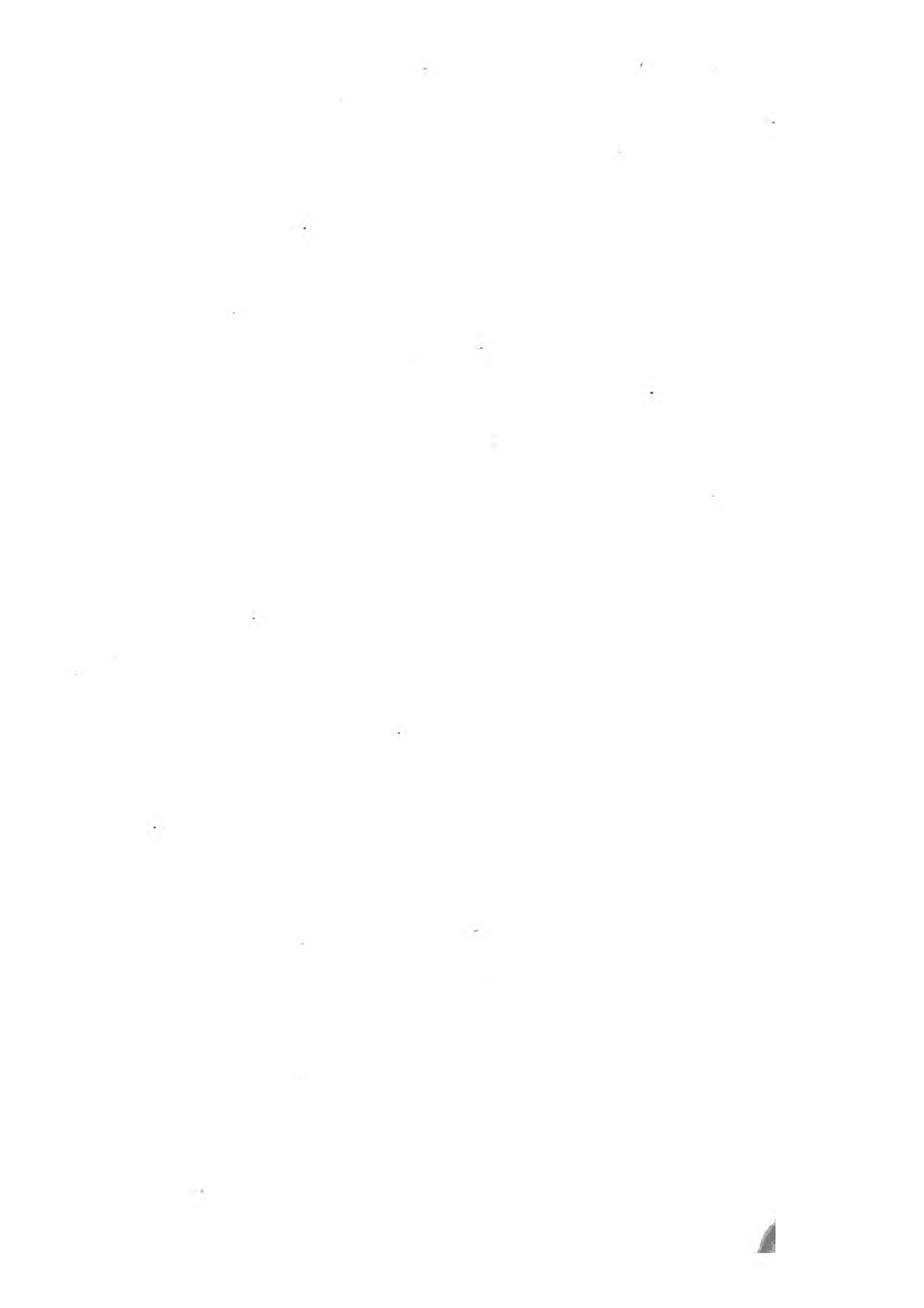
It yet remains to be noticed, that some poems of Browne are supposed to exist in manuscript. Mr. Nichols ⁷ thinks that Warburton the herald had some which were sold with the rest of his library about the year 1759 or 1760.

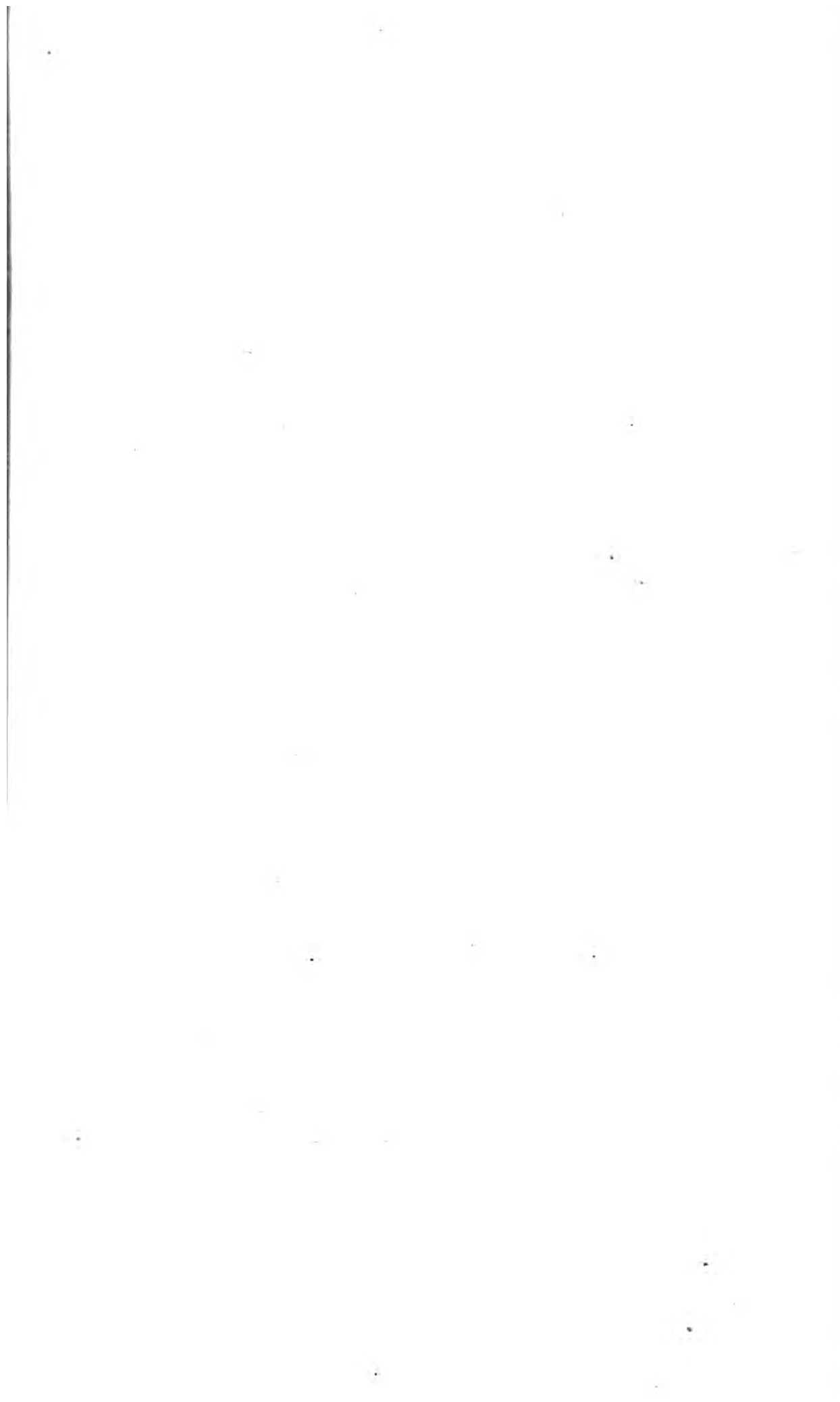
⁶ Those who are fond of coincidences may be probably amused by comparing the account of a concert among the birds in Britannia's Pastorals, Book I. Song 3. beginning,

"Two nights thus past: the lilly-handed morne, &c."

with some ingenious poems lately written for the use of children, under the titles of the *Butterfly's Ball*, the *Peacock at home*, &c. C.

⁷ Nichols's Miscellany Poems, vol. i. p. 262. C.





THE

LIFE OF SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT,

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THE father of our poet was John Davenant, who kept the Crown Tavern or Inn at Oxford, but owing to an obscure insinuation in Wood's account of his birth, it has been supposed that he was the natural son of Shakspeare; and to render this story probable, Mrs. Davenant is represented as a woman of beauty and gaiety, and a particular favourite of Shakspeare, who was accustomed to lodge at the Crown on his journies between Warwickshire and London. Modern inquirers, particularly Mr. Steevens, are inclined to discredit this story, which indeed seems to rest upon no very sound foundation¹.

Young Davenant, who was born Feb. 1605, very early betrayed a poetical bias, and one of his first attempts, when he was only ten years old, was an Ode in remembrance of Master William Shakspeare. This is a remarkable production for one so young, and one who lived, not only to see Shakspeare forgotten, but to contribute with some degree of activity to that instance of depraved taste. Davenant was educated at the grammar school of All Saints, in his native city, under Mr. Edward Sylvester, a teacher of high reputation. In 1621, the year in which his father served the office of mayor, he entered of Lincoln College, but being encouraged to try his success at court, he appeared there as page to Frances dutchess of Richmond, a lady of great influence and fashion. He afterwards resided in the family of the celebrated sir Fulke Greville, lord Brooke, who was himself a poet and a patron of poets. The murder of this nobleman in 1628, depriving him of what assistance he might expect from his friendship, Davenant had recourse to the stage, on which he produced his first dramatic piece, the Tragedy of Albovine, King of the Lombards.

¹ What Mr. Malone has advanced in support of it, may be seen in his *Historical Account of the English Stage*, Vol. 2. of Johnson and Steevens' *Shakspeare*, p. 309, and 427, edit. 1793. Mr. War-
ton seems to incline to the same opinion. Vol. 1. p. 68. note. C.

This play had success enough to procure him the recommendation, if nothing more substantial, of many persons of distinction, and of the wits of the times, and with such encouragement he renewed his attendance at court, adding to its pleasure by his dramatic efforts, and not sparingly to the mirth of his brethren, the satirists, by the unfortunate issue of some of his licentious gallantries. For several years his plays and masks were acted with the greatest applause, and his character as a poet was raised very high by all who pretended to be judges. On the death of Ben Jonson in 1638, the queen procured for him the vacant laurel, which is said to have given such offence to Thomas May, his rival, as to induce him to join the disaffected party, and to become the advocate and historian of the republican parliament. In 1639, Davenant was appointed "Governor of the King and Queen's Company acting at the Cockpit in Drury-lane, during the lease which Mrs. Elizabeth Beeston, alias Hutcheson, hath or doth hold in the said house²."

When the civil commotions had for some time subsisted, the peculiar nature of them required that public amusements should be the decided objects of popular resentment, and Davenant, who had administered so copiously to the pleasures of the court, was very soon brought under suspicions of a more serious kind. In May 1641, he was accused before the parliament of being a partner with many of the king's friends in the design of bringing the army to London for his majesty's protection. His accomplices effected their escape, but Davenant was apprehended at Feversham, and sent up to London. In July following he was bailed, but on a second attempt to withdraw to France, was taken in Kent. At last, however, he contrived to make his escape without farther impediment, and remained abroad for some time.

The motive of his flight appears not to have been cowardice, but an unwillingness to sacrifice his life to popular fury, while there was any prospect of his being able to devote it to the service of his royal master. Accordingly when the queen sent over a considerable quantity of military stores for the use of the earl of Newcastle's army, Davenant resolutely ventured to return to England, and volunteered his services under that nobleman who had been one of his patrons. The earl made him lieutenant general of his ordnance, a post for which if he was not previously prepared, he qualified himself with so much skill and success that in September 1643, he was rewarded with the honour of knighthood for the service he rendered to the royal cause at the siege of Gloucester. Of his military prowess, however, we have no farther account, nor at what time he found it necessary, on the decline of the king's affairs, to retire again into France. Here he was received into the confidence of the queen, who in 1646 employed him in one of her importunate and ill-advised negotiations with the king, who was then at Newcastle. About the same time Davenant had embraced the popish religion, a step which probably recommended him to the queen, but which, when known, could only tend to increase the animosity of the republicans against the court already too closely suspected of an

² Malone's Hist. Account of the Stage, *ubi supra*, p. 389. C.



attachment to that persuasion. The object of his negociation was to persuade the king to save his crown by sacrificing the church, a proposition which his majesty rejected with becoming dignity, and this as lord Clarendon observes, "evinced an honest and conscientious principle in his majesty's mind, which elevated him above all his advisers." The queen's advisers in the measure were, his majesty knew, men of no religious principle, and he seems to have resented their sending an ambassador of no more consequence than the manager of a play-house.

During our poet's residence at Paris, where he took up his habitation in the Louvre, with his old friend lord Jermyn, he wrote the first two books of his *Gondibert*, which were published in England, but without exciting much interest. Soon after he commenced projector, and hearing that vast improvements might be made in the loyal colony of Virginia, by transporting good artificers, whom France could at that time spare, he embarked with a number of them, at one of the ports in Normandy. This humane and apparently wise scheme ended almost immediately in the capture of his vessel on the French coast by one of the parliamentary ships of war, which carried him to the Isle of Wight, where he was imprisoned at Cowes Castle. After endeavouring to reconcile himself to this unfortunate and perilous situation, he resumed his pen, and proceeded with his *Gondibert*; but being in continual dread of his life, he made but slow progress. His fears, indeed, were not without foundation. In 1650, when the parliament had triumphed over all opposition, he was ordered to be tried by a high commission court, and for this purpose was removed to the Tower of London. His biographers are not agreed as to the means by which he was saved. Some impute it to the solicitations of two aldermen of York, to whom he had been hospitable when they were his prisoners, and whom he suffered to escape. Others inform us that Milton interposed. Both accounts, it is hoped, are true; and it is certain, that after the Restoration he repaid Milton's interference in kind, by preserving him from the resentment of the court. He remained, however, in prison for two years, and was treated with some indulgence, by the favour of the lord keeper Whitlocke, whom he thanked in a letter written with peculiar elegance of style and compliment.

By degrees he obtained complete enlargement, and had nothing to regret but the wreck of his fortune. In this dilemma, he adopted a measure which, like a great part of his conduct throughout life, shows him to have been a man of an undaunted and unaccommodating spirit, fertile in expedients, and possessed of no common resources of mind. Indeed, of all schemes, this seemed the most unlikely to succeed, and even the most dangerous to propose. Yet, in the very teeth of national prejudices or principles, and at a time when all dramatic entertainments were suspended, discouraged by the protectoral court, and anathematised by the people, he conceived that, if he could contrive to open a theatre, it would be sure to be well filled. Viewing his difficulties with great precaution, he proceeded by slow steps, and an apparent reluctance, to revive what was so generally obnoxious. Having, however, obtained the countenance of lord Whitlocke, sir John Maynard, and other persons of rank,

he opened a theatre in Rutland-house, Charter-house-yard, on the 21st of May, 1656, and performed a kind of non-descript *entertainments*, as they were called, which were dramatic in every thing but the names and form, and some of them were called operas. When he found these relished and tolerated, he proceeded to more regular pieces, and with such advantages in style and manner, as, in the judgment of the historians of the stage, entitle him to the honour of being not only the reviver, but the improver, of the legitimate drama. These pieces he afterwards revised, and published in a more perfect state, and they now form the principal part of his printed works, although modern taste has long excluded them from the stage.

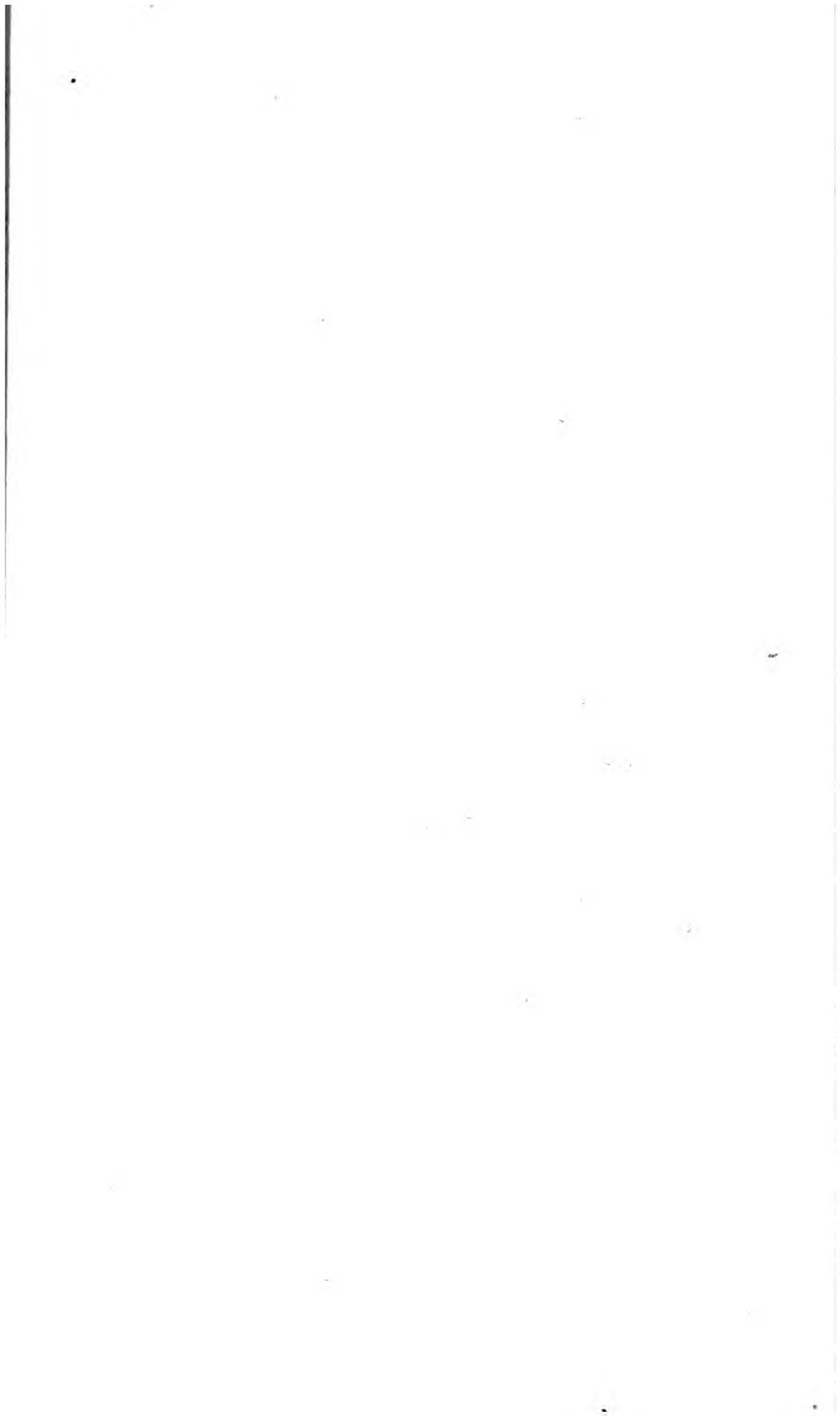
On the Restoration, he received the patent of a playhouse, under the title of the Duke's Company, who first performed in the theatre in Portugal-row, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and afterwards in that in Dorset Gardens³. Here he acted his former plays, and such new ones as he wrote after this period, and enjoyed the public favour until his death, April 7, 1668, in his sixty-third year. He was interred with considerable ceremony, two days after, in Westminster Abbey, near the place where the remains of May, his once rival, had been pompously buried by the parliament, but were ordered to be removed. On his gravestone is inscribed, in imitation of Ben Jonson's short epitaph, "O rare sir William Davenant!" His son, Dr. Charles Davenant, was afterwards a well-known civilian and political writer.

The life of Sir William Davenant occupies an important space in the history of the stage, to which he was in many respects a judicious benefactor, by introducing changes of scenery and decorations; but he assisted in banishing Shakspeare, to make way for dramas that are now intolerable. He appears to have been, in his capacity of manager, as in every part of life, a man of sound and original sense, firm in his enterprises, and intent to gratify the taste of the public, with little advantage to himself, as he died insolvent. The greater part of his works was published in his lifetime in quarto; but they were collected in 1673 into one large folio volume, dedicated by his widow to the duke of York.

As a poet, his fame rests chiefly on his *Gondibert*; but the critics have never been agreed in the share he derives from it. The reader, who declines to judge for himself, may have ample satisfaction in the opinions of the late bishop Hurd, and of Dr. Aikin, as detailed in the conclusion of his life in the *Biographia Britannica*. It will probably be found, on an unprejudiced perusal of this original and very singular poem, that the opinions of Dr. Aikin and Mr. Headley are founded on those principles of taste and feeling which cannot be easily opposed: yet, in considering the objections of Dr. Hurd, allowance is to be made for one who is so powerful and elegant an advocate for the authorised qualities of the epic species, and for arguments which, if they do not attach closely to this poem, may yet be worthy of the consideration of those whose inventive fancy leads them principally to novelty of manner,

³ The reader, who is curious in such matters, may be referred to Davenant's life in the *Biographia Britannica*, and to Mr. Malone's *History of the Stage*, where he will find a minute detail of Davenant's various grants, licences, and disputes with his rival managers. C.





and who are apt to confound the arbitrary caprices with the genuine powers of a poet.

His miscellaneous pieces, of which we have been obliged to confine ourselves to a selection, are of very unequal merit. Most of them were probably written in youth, and but few can be reprinted with the hope of satisfying a polished taste. Complimentary poetry, so much the fashion in his times, is now perused with indifference, if not disgust; and although the gratitude which inspired it may have been sincere, it is not highly relished by the honest independence which belongs to the sons of the Muses.



Isaac Reed
1798.

Castara

By Will: Habington Esq

These Poems deserve
to be better known

THE
LIFE OF WILLIAM HABINGTON.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THE admission of Habington's poems into this collection has been suggested by many modern critics, and will unquestionably be sanctioned by every man of taste and feeling. He was, beyond most of his contemporaries, an honour to the fraternity of poets. It is easier, however, to revive the memory of his poems, than of his personal history. Wood's account of his family is not unsatisfactory, but he says little of our poet, although that little is commendatory. A few particulars are now added from Nash's History of Worcestershire and other authorities, but not enough to gratify our curiosity respecting one who was not only an excellent poet, but a virtuous and amiable man.

His family were Roman catholics. His *great-grand-father* was Richard Habington, or Abington, of Brockhampton, in Herefordshire. His *grand-father*, John, second son of this Richard Habington, and cofferer to queen Elizabeth, was born in 1515, and died in 1581. He bought the manor of Hindlip, in Worcestershire, and rebuilt the mansion about the year 1572. His *father*, Thomas Habington, was born at Thorpe, in Surrey, 1560, studied at Oxford, and afterwards travelled to Rheims and Paris. On his return he involved himself with the party who laboured to release Mary queen of Scots, and was afterwards imprisoned on a suspicion of being concerned in Babington's conspiracy. During this imprisonment, which lasted six years, he employed his time in study. Having been at length released, and his life saved, as is supposed, on account of his being queen Elizabeth's godson, he retired to Hindlip, and married Mary, eldest daughter of Edward Parker, lord Morley, by Elizabeth, daughter and sole heir of sir William Stanley, lord Monteagle.

On the detection of the gun-powder plot, he again fell under the displeasure of government, by concealing some of the agents in that affair in his house¹, and was condemned to die, but pardoned by the intercession of his brother-in law, lord Morley,

¹Of this he appears to have been unjustly accused. According to Nash's description of the house, it was, however, well adapted for the concealment of suspected persons. See *Archæologia*, vol. XV. p. 137, and Nash's *Worcestershire*. Ç.

who discovered the plot by the famous letter of warning, which Mrs. Habington is reported to have written². The condition of his pardon was, that he should never stir out of Worcestershire. With this he appears to have complied, and devoted his time, among other pursuits, to the history and antiquities of that county, of which he left three folio volumes of parochial antiquities, two of miscellaneous collections, and one relating to the cathedral. These received additions from his son and from Dr. Thomas, of whom bishop Lyttelton purchased them, and presented them to the Society of Antiquaries. They have since formed the foundation of Dr. Nash's elaborate history³. Wood says he had a hand in the history of Edward IV. published afterwards under the name of his son, the poet, whom he survived, dying in 1647, at the advanced age of eighty-seven.

William Habington, his eldest son, was born at Hindlip, November 5, 1605⁴, and was educated in the Jesuits' College at St. Omer's, and afterwards at Paris, with a view to induce him to take the habit of the order, which he declined. On his return from the continent, he resided principally with his father, who became his preceptor, and evidently sent him into the world a man of elegant accomplishments and virtues. Although allied to some noble families, and occasionally mixing in the gaieties of high life, his natural disposition inclined him to the purer pleasures of rural life. He was probably very early a poet and a lover, and in both successful. He married Lucy, daughter of William Herbert, first lord Powis, by Eleanor, daughter of Henry Percy, eighth earl of Northumberland by Katherine, daughter and co-heir of John Neville, lord Latimer. It is to this lady that we are indebted for his poems, most of which were written in allusion to his courtship and marriage. She was the Castara who animated his imagination with tenderness and elegance, and purified it from the grosser *opprobria* of the amatory poets. His poems, as was not unusual in that age, were written occasionally, and dispersed confidentially. In 1635, they appear to have been first collected into a volume, which Oldys calls the second edition⁵, under the title of Castara. Another edition was published in 1640, which is by far the most perfect and correct. The reader to whom an analysis may be necessary, will find a very judicious one in the last volume of the *Censura Literaria*.

His other works are, the *Queen of Arragon*, a Tragi-comedy, which was acted at Court and at Blackfriars, and printed in 1640. It has since been reprinted among Dodsley's *Old Plays*. The author having communicated the manuscript to Philip, earl of Pembroke, lord chamberlain of the household to king Charles I, he caused it to be acted, and afterwards published, against the author's consent. It was revived, with the revival of the stage, at the Restoration, about the year 1666, when a new prologue and epilogue were furnished by the author of *Hudibras*⁶.

Our author wrote also *Observations upon History*, Lond. 1641. 8vo. consisting of

² Gen. Mag. vol. LXXVII. p. 30. *Archæologia, ubi supra.* C.

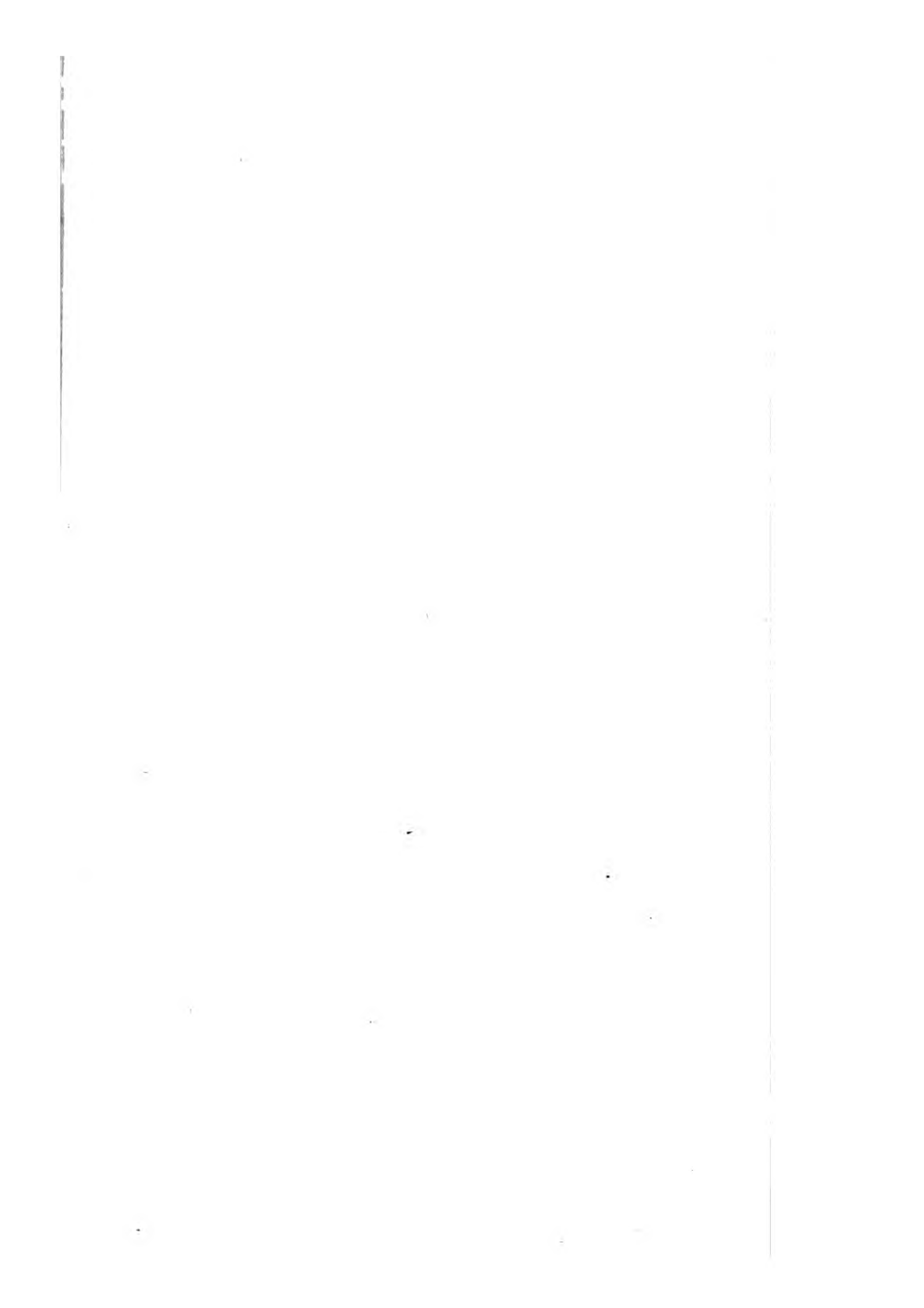
³ Gough's *Topography*, vol. II. p. 385, who has erroneously represented his daughter as "married to lord Monteagle." C.

⁴ Either on the fourth or fifth of November. *Dodd's Catholic Church Hist.* vol. II. p. 422. C.

⁵ MSS. notes on Langbaine in *Brit. Mus. art. Babington.* C.

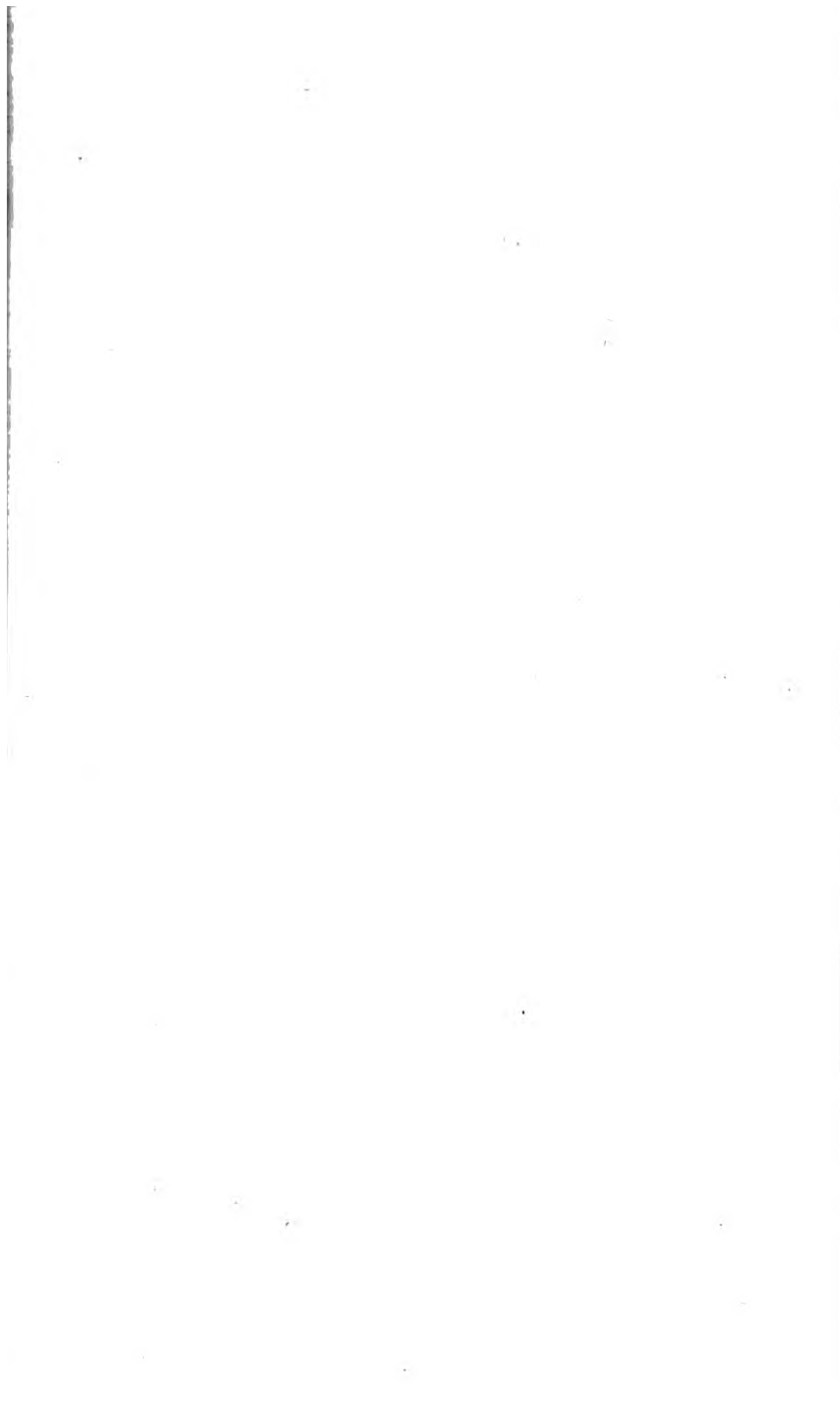
⁶ The author of the *Lives of the poets*, under the name of Cibber, has printed the original and very poor prologue to this play, as a specimen of Habington's poetry. C.





some particular pieces of history in the reigns of Henry II. Richard I, &c. interspersed with political and moral reflections, similar to what he had introduced in his larger history. This was entitled *The History of Edward IV.* fol. 1640, which, as Wood asserts was both written and published at the desire of Charles I. He also insinuates that Habington "did run with the times, and was not unknown to Oliver the Usurper," but we have no evidence of any compliance with a system of political measures so diametrically opposite to those which, we may suppose, belonged to the education and principles of a Roman Catholic family. It is, indeed, grossly improbable that he should have complied with Cromwell who was as yet no usurper, and during the life of his royal master whose cause was not yet desperate. Of his latter days we have no farther account than that he died Nov. 13, 1645, and was buried at Hindlip in the family vault. He left a son, Thomas, who, dying without issue, bequeathed his estate to sir William Compton.

His poems are distinguished from those of most of his contemporaries, by delicacy of sentiment, tenderness, and a natural strain of pathetic reflection. His favourite subjects, virtuous love and conjugal attachment, are agreeably varied by strokes of fancy and energies of affection. Somewhat of the extravagance of the metaphysical poets is occasionally discernible, but with very little affectation of learning, and very little effort to draw his imagery from sources with which the Muses are not familiar. The virtuous tendency and chaste language of his poems form no inconsiderable part of their merit, and his preface assures us that his judgment was not inferior to his imagination.







THE
LIFE OF SIR JOHN SUCKLING.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS elegant poet, and accomplished courtier and scholar was the son of sir John Suckling, a native of Norwich (the son of Robert Suckling, Esq. alderman and mayor of that city); who was of Gray's Inn, and afterwards settled at Whitton in Middlesex, was made one of the principal secretaries of state, March 1622; and comptroller of the household to James I. and Charles I, and a privy counsellor. ¹ The poet was born at Whitton in the year 1609. His biographers have hitherto fixed the time of his birth in 1612, but according to some extracts from the parish register of Twickenham², it appears that he was baptised Feb. 10, 1608-9.

Lloyd, from whom we have the first account of this poet, mentions a circumstance relating to his birth from which more was presaged than followed. He was born, according to his mother's computation, in the eleventh month, and long life and health were expected from so extraordinary an occurrence. During his infancy he certainly displayed an uncommon facility of acquiring every branch of education. He spoke Latin at five years of age, and could write in that language at the age of nine. It is probable that he was taught more languages than one at the same time, and by practising frequently with men of education who kept company with his father, soon acquired an ease and elegance of address which qualified him for the court as well as for foreign travel. His father is represented as a man of a serious turn and grave manners, the son volatile, good tempered and thoughtless, characteristics which he seems to have preserved throughout life. His tutors found him particularly submissive, docile, easy to be taught, and quick in learning. It does not appear that he was sent to either university, yet a perusal of his prose works can leave

¹ Blomefield's Hist. of Norwich. He died in 1627, when his son was nineteen years old. C.

² Lyson's Environs, vol. 3. p. 588. At the same place were baptised his brother Lionel in 1610, and his sister Elizabeth in 1612. C.

no doubt that he laid a very solid and extensive foundation for various learning, and studied not only such authors as were suitable to the vivacity of his disposition, but made himself acquainted with those political and religious controversies which were about to involve his country in all the miseries of civil war.

After continuing for some years under his father's tutorage, he travelled over the kingdom, and then went to the continent, where, his biographer informs us, "he made an honourable collection of the virtues of each nation, without any tincture of theirs³, unless it were a little too much of the French air, which was indeed the fault of his complexion, rather than his person." It was about this time probably, in his twentieth year⁴, that he joined the standard of the illustrious Gustavus Adolphus, and was present at three battles and five sieges, besides lesser engagements, within the space of six months.

On his return he employed his time and expended his fortune among the wits of his age, to whom he was recommended not only by generous and social habits, but by a solid sense in argument and conversation far beyond what might be expected from his years, and apparent lightness of disposition. Among his principal associates, we find the names of lord Falkland, Davenant, Ben Jonson, Digby, Carew, sir Toby Matthews, and the "ever memorable" Hales of Eton, to whom he addresses a lively invitation to come to town. His plays, *Aglaura*, *Brennoralt*, *The Goblins*, and an unfinished piece entitled, *The Sad One*, added considerably to his fame, although they have not been able to perpetuate it. The first only was printed in his life-time. All his plays, we are told, were acted with applause, and he spared no expense in costly dresses and decorations.

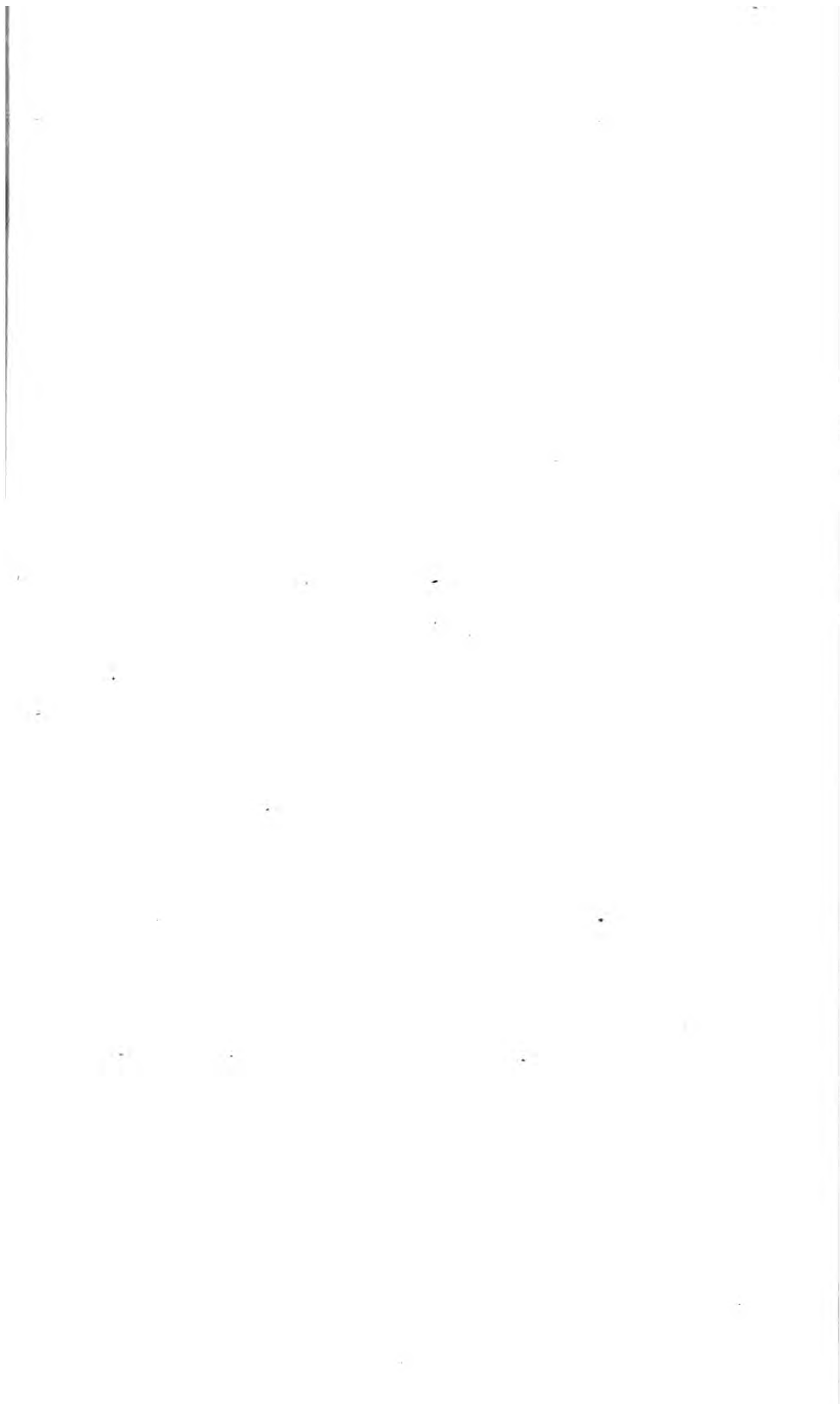
While thus seemingly devoted to pleasure only, the unfortunate aspect of public affairs roused him to a sense of duty, and induced him to offer his services, and devote his life and fortune to the cause of royalty. How justly he could contemplate the unfortunate dispute between the court and nation, appears in his letter to Mr. Germain, (afterwards lord Albemarle) a composition almost unrivalled in that age for elegance of style and depth of observation. It was, however, too much the practice with those who made voluntary offers of soldiers, to equip them in an expensive and useless manner. Suckling, who was magnificent in all his expenses, was not to be outdone in an article which he had studied more than became a soldier, and which he might suppose would afford unquestionable proof of his attachment to the royal cause, and having been permitted to raise a troop of horse, consisting of an hundred, he equipped them so richly, that they are said to have cost him the sum of twelve thousand pounds.

This exposed him to some degree of ridicule, a weapon which the republicans often wielded with successful dexterity, and which in this instance was sharpened by the misconduct of his gaudy soldiers. The particulars of this affair are not recorded, but it appears that in 1639, the royal army, of which his troop formed a part, was

³ Probably "their vices, or follies." C.

⁴ In the *Gent. Mag.* vol. 66. p. 16, is a letter from him dated Leyden, Nov. 18, 1629, giving an humorous but not very favourable character of the Dutch. C.

[Faint, illegible text scattered across the page, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.]



defeated by the Scotch, and that sir John's men behaved remarkably ill. All this is possible, without any imputation on the courage of their commander, but it afforded his enemies an opportunity of turning the expedition into ridicule with an effect that is yet remembered. The lines from Dr. Percy's collection, at the end of these memoirs, are not the only specimen of the wit of the times at our author's expense.

This unhappy affair is said by Lloyd to have contributed to shorten his days, but Oldys, in his MSS. notes on Langbaine, attributes his death to another cause. Lord Oxford informed Oldys, on the authority of dean Chetwood, who said he had it from lord Roscommon, that sir John Suckling, in his way to France, was robbed of a casket of gold and jewels, by his valet, who gave him poison, and besides stuck the blade of a penknife into his boot in such a manner, that sir John was disabled from pursuing the villain, and was wounded incurably in the heel. Dr. Warton, in a note to his Essay on Pope, relates the story somewhat differently. "Sir John Suckling was robbed by his valet-de-chambre: the moment he discovered it, he clapped on his boots in a passionate hurry, and perceived not a large rusty nail that was concealed at the bottom, which pierced his heel, and brought on a mortification." He died May 7, 1641, in the thirty-second year of his age.—That he was on his way to France, when he met with the occasion of his death, seems to be confirmed by a ludicrous poem, lately reprinted in the *Censura Literaria*, entitled, "A Letter sent by sir John Suckling from France, deploring his sad estate and flight: with a discoverie of the plot and conspiracie, intended by him and his adherents against England. Imprinted at London, 1641." This poem is dated Paris, June 16, 1641, at which time the author probably had not learned that the object of his satire was beyond his reach.

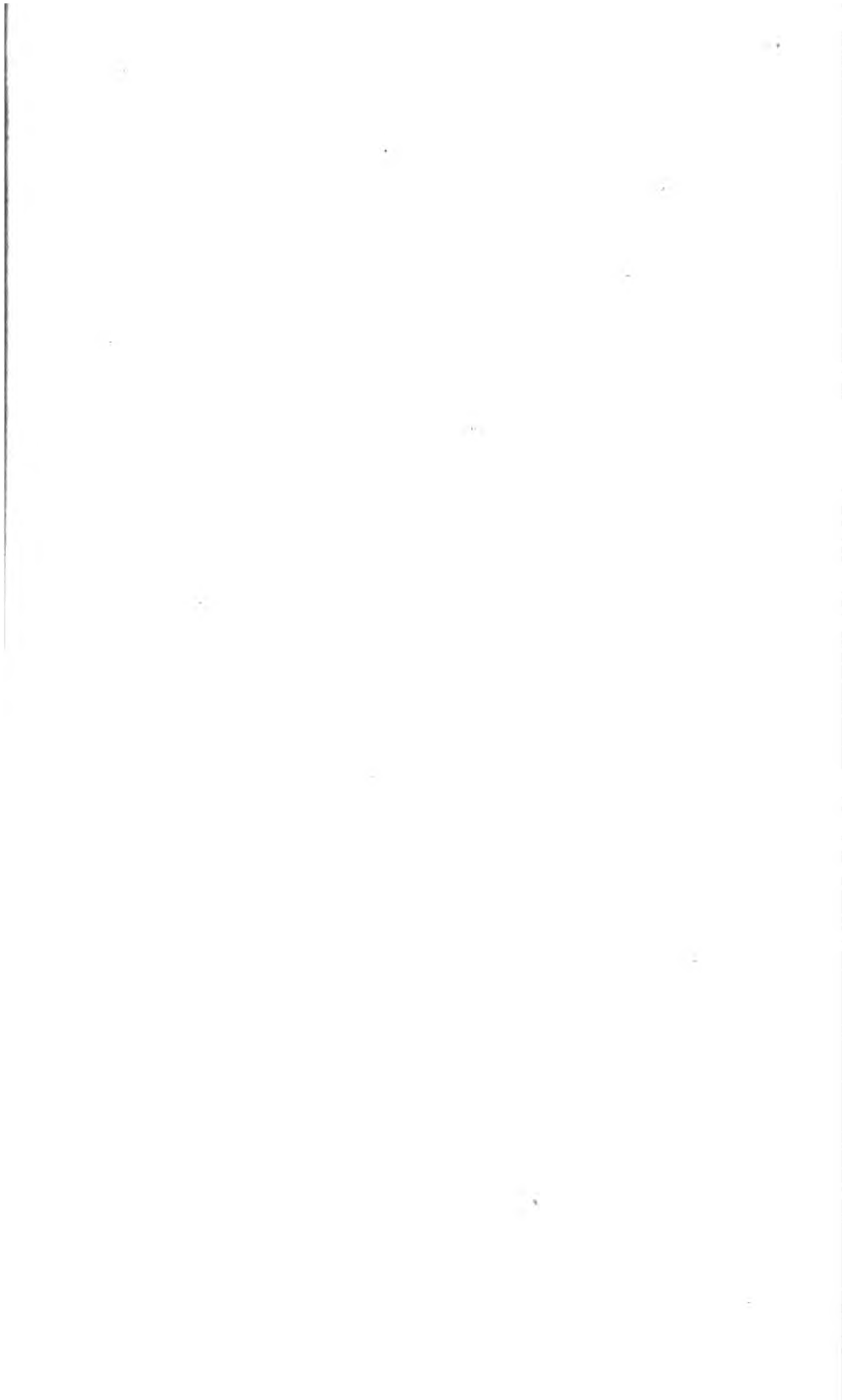
As a poet, he was one of those who wrote for amusement, and was not stimulated by ambition, or anxious for fame. His pieces were sent loose about the world, and not having been collected until after his death, they are probably less correct than he left them. Many of his verses are as rugged and unharmonious as those of Donne, but his songs and ballads are elegant and graceful. He was particularly happy and original in expressing the feelings of artificial love, disdain, or disappointment. The *Session of the Poets*, the lines to a Rival, the *Honest Lover*, and the ballad upon a wedding, are sufficient to entitle him to the honours of poetry, which the author of the lives published under the name of Cibber is extremely anxious to wrest from him.

His works have been often reprinted; first in 1646, octavo; again in 1659 and 1676; very correctly by Tonson in 1719, and elegantly but incorrectly by Davies in 1770. The edition of Tonson has been followed in the present collection, with the omission of such pieces as were thought degrading to his memory, and insulting to public decency^s.

^s There is a manuscript poem from his pen, in the British Museum, replete with bumour, but the subject is of that gross kind, which delicacy will not now tolerate. C.

But whatever opinion may be entertained of Suckling as a poet, it may be doubted whether his prose writings are not calculated to raise a yet higher opinion of his talents. His letters, with a dash of gallantry more free than modern times will admit, are shrewd in observation and often elegant in style. That addressed to Mr. Germain has already been noticed, and his *Account of Religion by Reason*, is remarkable for soundness of argument, and purity of expression, far exceeding the controversial writings of that age. This piece affords a presumption that he was even now no stranger to those reflections which elevate the human character, and that if his life had been spared, it would have been probably devoted to more honourable objects than those in which he had employed his youthful days.





THE

LIFE OF WILLIAM CARTWRIGHT.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS poet was born at Northway, near Tewkesbury, in Gloucestershire, September, 1611. His father, after spending a good estate, was reduced to keep an inn at Cirencester, at the free school of which town his son was educated under Mr. William Topp. Being chosen a king's scholar, he was removed to Westminster school, under Dr. Osbaldiston, and thence elected a student of Christ-church, Oxford, in 1628. After pursuing his studies, with the reputation of an extraordinary scholar and genius, he took his master's degree in 1635; and in 1638 went into holy orders, becoming "a most florid and seraphical preacher in the university." One sermon only of his is in print, from which we are not able to form a very high notion of his eloquence: but when Mr. Abraham Wright, of St. John's, Oxford, compiled that scarce little book, entitled *Five Sermons in Five several Styles, or Ways of Preaching*, it appears that Dr. Maine and Mr. Cartwright were of consequence enough to be admitted as specimens of university preaching. The others are bishop Andrews', bishop Hall's, and the presbyterian and independent "ways of preaching."

In 1642, bishop Duppa, with whom he lived in the strictest intimacy, bestowed on him the place of succentor of the church of Salisbury. In the same year he was one of the council of war, or delegacy, appointed by the university of Oxford, for providing for the troops sent by the king to protect the colleges. His zeal in this office occasioned his being imprisoned by the parliamentary forces when they arrived at Oxford; but he was bailed soon after¹. In 1643, he was chosen junior proctor of the university, and was also reader in metaphysics. "The exposition of them," says Wood, "was never better performed than by him and his predecessor Thomas Barlow, of Queen's College." Lloyd asserts, that he studied at the rate of sixteen hours a day. From such diligence and talents much might have been expected; but

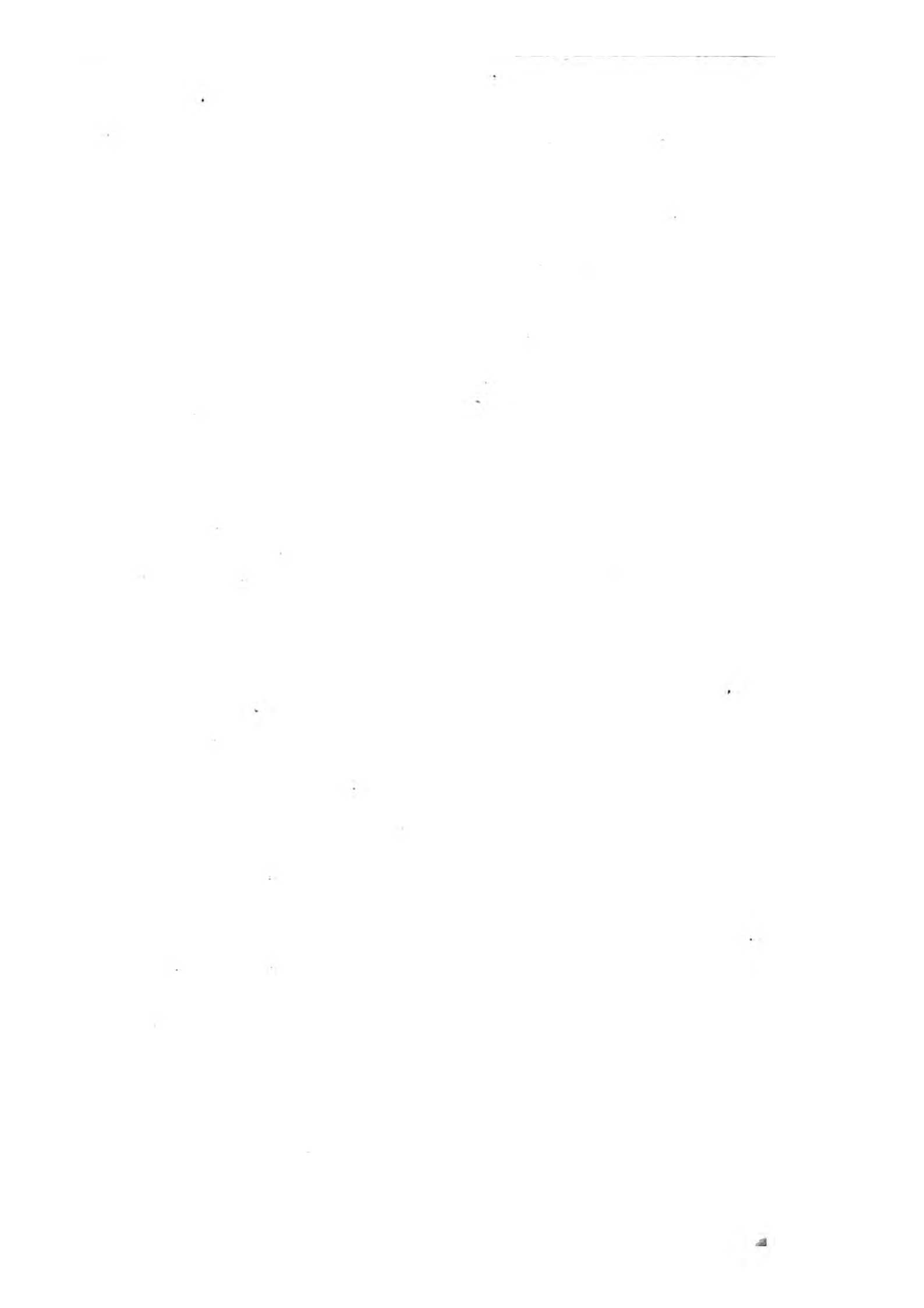
¹ Wood's Annals, vol. II. 447. C

he survived the last mentioned appointment a very short time, dying December 23, 1643, in the thirty-second year of his age, of a malignant fever, called the camp disease, which then prevailed at Oxford. He was honourably interred towards the upper end of the south isle of the cathedral of Christ-church.

Few men have ever been so praised and regretted by their contemporaries, who have left so little to perpetuate their fame. During his sickness, the king and queen, who were then at Oxford, made anxious inquiries about the progress of his disorder. His majesty wore black on the day of his funeral, and being asked the reason, answered that since the Muses had so much mourned for the loss of such a son, it had been a shame that he should not appear in mourning for the loss of such a subject². His poems and plays which were published in 1651, are preceded by fifty copies of verses by all the wits of the time, and all in a most laboured style of panegyric. His other encomiasts inform us that his person was as handsome as his mind, and that he not only understood Greek and Latin, but French and Italian as perfectly as his mother tongue. Dr. Fell, bishop of Oxford, said of him, "Cartwright is the utmost man can come to," and Ben Jonson used to say, "My son Cartwright writes all like a man."

Although it must be confessed that his works, particularly his dramas, afford little justification of this high character, his poems may perhaps deserve a place among those of his contemporaries. Many of them exhibit tenderness and harmony, a copious, but sometimes, fanciful imagery, and a familiar easy humour which, connected with his amiable disposition as a man, probably led to those encomiums which, without this consideration, we should find it difficult to allow. "That," says Wood, "which is most remarkable is, that these his high parts and abilities were accompanied with so much sweetness and candour, that they made him equally beloved and admired by all persons, especially those of the gown and court; who esteemed also his life a fair copy of practic piety, a rare example of heroic worth, and in whom arts, learning and language, made up the true complement of perfection." The same biographer informs us that he wrote *Poemata Græca & Latina*.

² Oldys' MSS. notes on Langbaine. C.



THE
LIFE OF RICHARD CRASHAW.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

RICHARD CRASHAW was the son of the rev. William Crashaw, a divine of some note in his day, and preacher at the Temple church, London. He published several volumes on points controverted between the Roman catholics and protestants, either original or translated; and in 1608. a translation of the Life of Galeacius Caracciolos, marquis of Vico, an Italian nobleman who was converted by the celebrated reformer, Peter Martyr, and forsook all that rank, family and wealth could yield, for the quiet enjoyment of the reformed religion. Mr. Crashaw also translated a supposed poem of St. Bernard's, entitled "The Complaint, or Dialogue between the Soule and the Bodie of a damned man, 1616," and in the same year published a "Manual for true Catholics, or a handfull, or rather a heartfull of holy Meditations and Prayers¹". All these show him to have been a zealous protestant, but, like his son, somewhat tinctured with a love of mystic poetry and personification.

Our poet was born in London, but in what year is uncertain. In his infancy, sir Henry Yelverton and sir Randolph Crew undertook the charge of his education, and afterwards procured him to be placed in the Charterhouse on the foundation, where he improved in an extraordinary degree under Brooks, a very celebrated master. He was thence admitted of Pembroke Hall, March, 1632, and took his bachelor's degree in the same college, in 1634. He then removed to Peterhouse, of which he was a fellow in 1637, and took his master's degree in 1638². In 1634, he published a volume of Latin poems, mostly of the devotional kind, dedicated to Benjamin Lany, master of Pembroke Hall. This contained the well-known line, which has sometimes been ascribed to Dryden and others, on the miracle of turning water into wine:

Nympha pudica Deum vidit et erubuit.

The modest water saw its God, and blushed.

¹ Cens. Lit. vol. 10, p. 105.

² Cole's MSS. Athenæ in Brit. Mus. and Mr. Reed's MSS. notes to his copy of Crashaw, which I purchased at his sale. Some of Reed's dates appear to have been communicated by his friend Dr. Farmer. C.

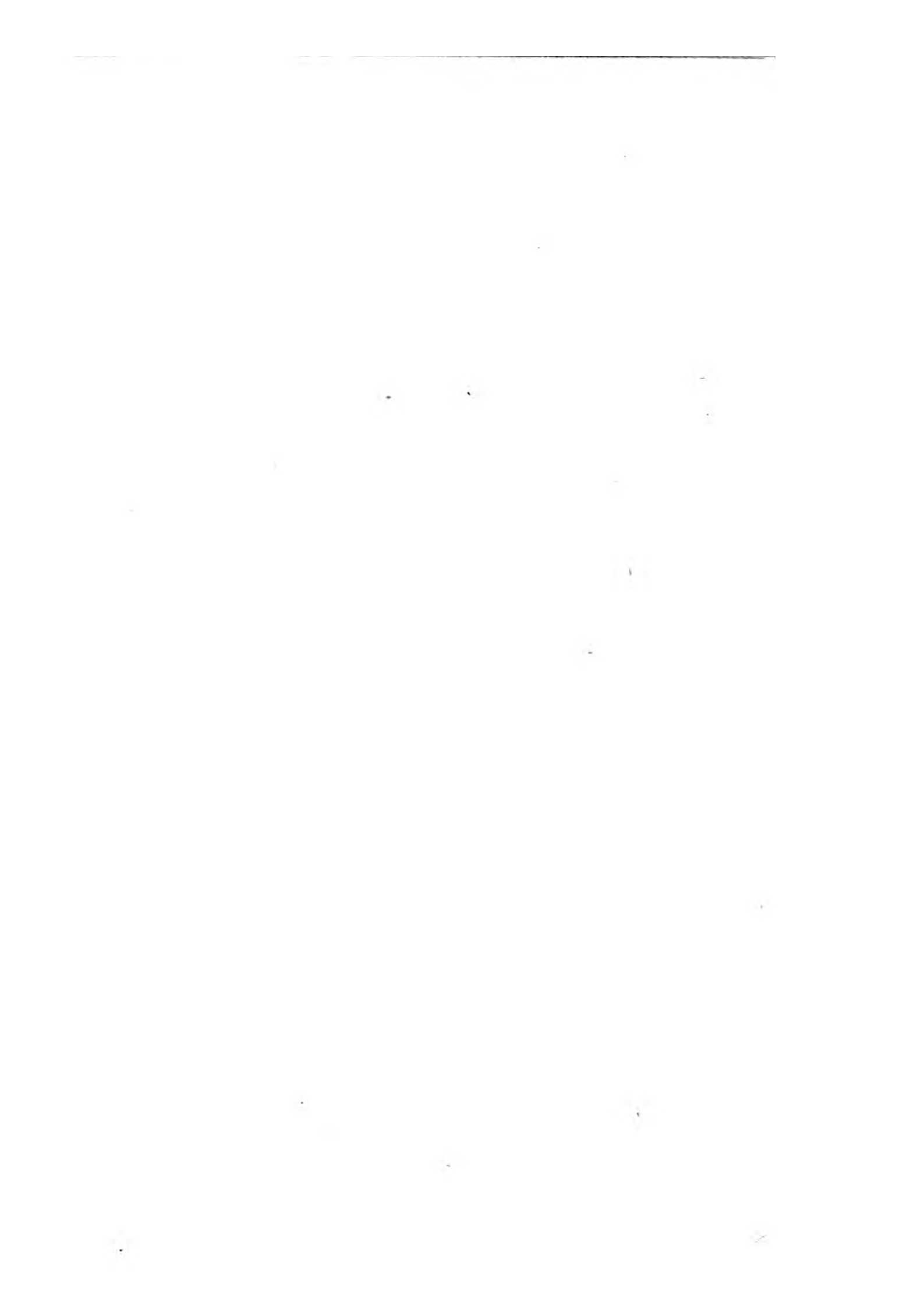
In 1641, Mr. Wood informs us, he took degrees at Oxford. At what time he was admitted into holy orders is uncertain, but he soon became a popular preacher, full of energy and enthusiasm. In 1644, when the parliamentary army expelled those members of the university who refused to take the covenant, Crashaw was among the number; and being unable to contemplate, with resignation or indifference, the ruins of the church-establishment, went over to France, where his sufferings and their peculiar influence on his mind prepared him to embrace the Roman catholic religion. Before he left England, he appears to have practised many of the austerities of a mistaken piety, and the poems entitled *Steps to the Temple* were so called in allusion to his passing his time almost constantly in St. Mary's church, Cambridge. "There," says the author of the preface to his poems, "he lodged under Tertullian's roof of angels: there he made his nest more gladly than David's swallow near the house of God; where like a primitive saint, he offered more prayers in the night, than others usually offer in the day; there he penned these poems, *Steps for happy Souls to climb Heaven by*." The same writer informs us that he understood Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian and Spanish, and was skilled in poetry, music, drawing, painting and engraving, which last he represents as "recreations for vacant hours, not the grand business of his soul."

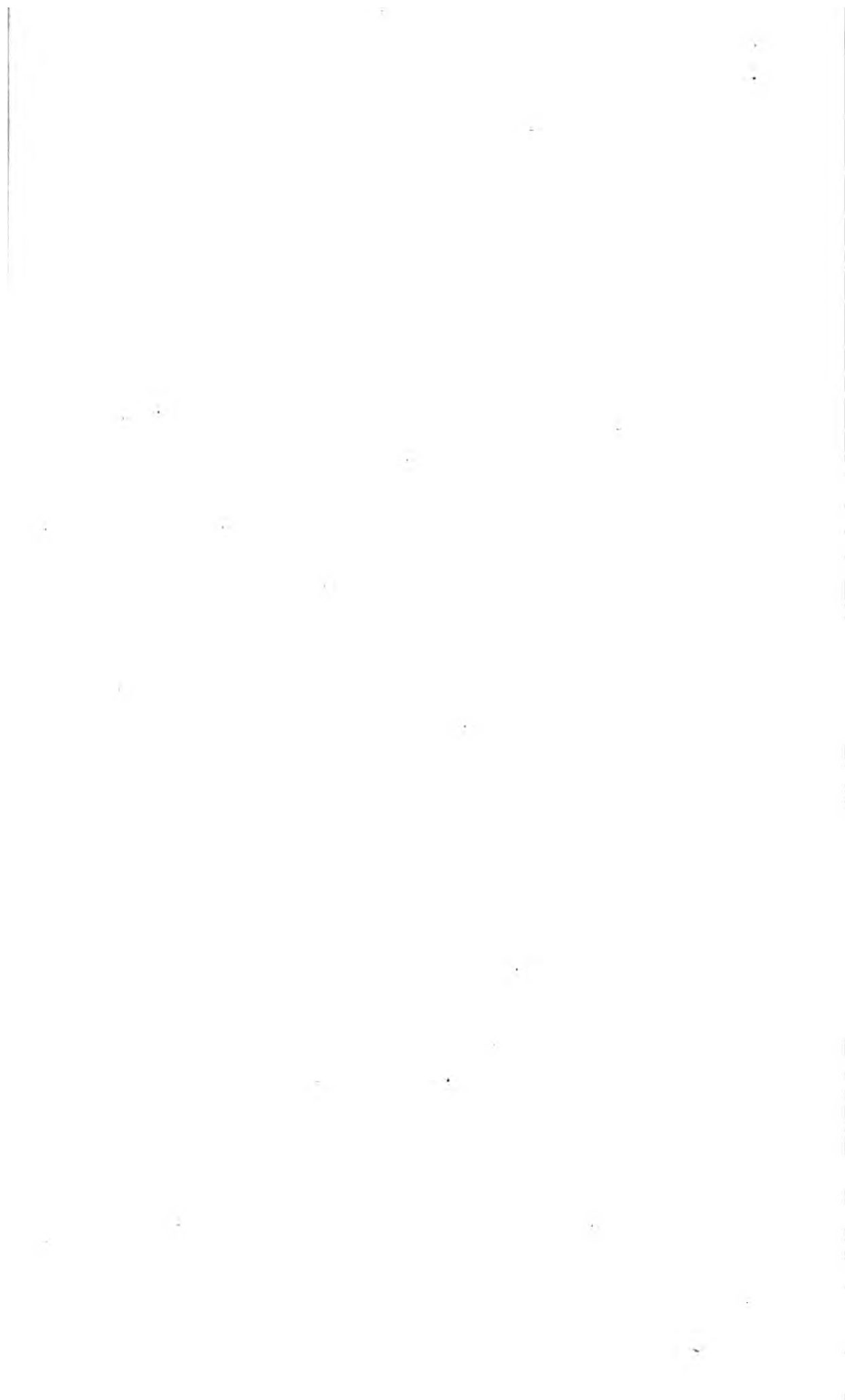
It is certain, however, that soon after his arrival in France, he embraced the religion of the country with a sincerity, which may be respected while it is pitied, but which has rather uncharitably been imputed to motives of interest. He seems to have thought, with Dr. Johnson, that "to be of no church was dangerous," and the church of England he had witnessed in ruins. If in this Crashaw did what was wrong, he did what was not uncommon in his time, and what perhaps may account for the otherwise extraordinary leaning of some eminent and pious men to the catholic religion of the continent, when that, and our own church, seemed in equal danger a few years ago.

In 1646, the poet Cowley found Crashaw in France in great distress, and introduced him to the patronage of Charles the First's queen, who gave him letters of recommendation to Italy. There he became secretary to one of the cardinals at Rome, and was made canon in the church of Loretto, where he died of a fever, soon after this last promotion, about the year 1650. Cowley's very elegant and affectionate lines may be seen in the works of that poet. Mr. Hayley remarks, that "fine as they are, Cowley has sometimes fallen into the principal defect of the poet whom he is praising. He now and then speaks of sacred things with a vulgar and ludicrous familiarity of language, by which (to use a happy expression of Dr. Johnson's), 'readers far short of sanctity, may be offended in the present age, when devotion, perhaps not more fervent, is more delicate.' Let us add, that if the poetical character of Crashaw seem not to answer this glowing panegyrick; yet in his higher character of *saint*, he appears to have had the purest title to this affectionate eulogy³."

It appears by a passage in Selden's *Table Talk*, that Crashaw had at one time an intention of writing against the stage, and that Selden succeeded in diverting him

³ Life of Crashaw, in the *Biog. Britannica*, contributed by Mr. Hayley. C.





from his purpose. He had not, however, to regret that the stage outlived the church.

Crashaw's poems were first published in 1646, under the title of, 1. Steps to the Temple. 2. The Delights of the Muses. 3. Sacred Poems presented to the Countess of Denbigh. But Mr. Hayley is of opinion that this third class only was published at that time, and that the two others were added to the subsequent editions of 1648-1649, that printed at Paris in 1652⁴, and another in 1670. So many republications within a short period, and that period not very favourable to poetry, sufficiently mark the estimation in which this devotional enthusiast was held, notwithstanding his having relinquished the church in which he had been educated.

His poems prove him to have been of the school which produced Herbert and Quarles. Herbert was his model, and Granger attributes the anonymous poems, at the end of Herbert's volume, to Crashaw, but however partial Crashaw might be to Herbert, it is impossible he could have been the author of these anonymous poems, which did not appear until after his death, and were written by a clergyman of the church of England known to Walton, who subjoins some commendatory lines dated 1654⁵.

In 1785, the late Mr. Peregrine Phillips published a selection from Crashaw's poems, with an address, in which he attacks Pope, for having availed himself of the beauties of Crashaw, while he endeavoured to injure his fame. Against this accusation, Mr. Hayley has amply vindicated Pope. That he has borrowed from him is undeniable, and not unacknowledged by himself, but that it should be his intention to injure the fame of a writer whose writings were unknown unless to poetical antiquaries, and that in a confidential letter to a friend whom he advised to read the poems as well as his opinion of them, is an absurdity scarcely worthy of refutation.

A part of Pope's observations on Crashaw's poetry deserves a place here, not as being in all respects applicable to that writer, but as forming an excellent character of a class of minor poets of the seventeenth century, some of which have preceded, and many will follow in the present collection. It was written by Pope in a letter to his friend Cromwell; and more just notions of poetical distinctions than he now entertained in his twenty-second year, will probably not be found expressed or realized in any of his subsequent performances.

" I take this poet (Crashaw) to have writ like a gentleman, that is, at leisure hours, and more to keep out of idleness, than to establish a reputation: so that nothing regular or just can be expected of him. All that regards design, form, fable (which is the soul of poetry) all that concerns exactness, or consent of parts (which is the body)

⁴ This, I find, is not strictly true. By a letter from Mr. Park, in the Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 63. p. 1166, it appears that this is a volume of religious poems, with vignettes executed by Crashaw himself: Mr. Park thinks they are included in the edition of 1670. But it must be remarked that the date of this book is two years beyond the death of the author. C.

⁵ See more on this subject in Zouch's excellent edition of Walton's Lives, Art. Herbert. C.

will probably be wanting: only pretty conceptions, fine metaphors, glittering expressions, and something of a neat cast of verse (which are properly the dress, gems, or loose ornaments of poetry) may be found in these verses. This is indeed the case of most other poetical writers of miscellanies: nor can it well be otherwise, since no man can be a true poet, who writes for diversion only. These authors should be considered as versifiers and witty men, rather than as poets: and under this head only will fall the thoughts, the expression, and the numbers. These are only the pleasing part of poetry, which may be judged of at a view, and comprehended all at once. And (to express myself like a painter) their colouring entertains the sight, but the lines and life of the picture are not to be inspected too narrowly."

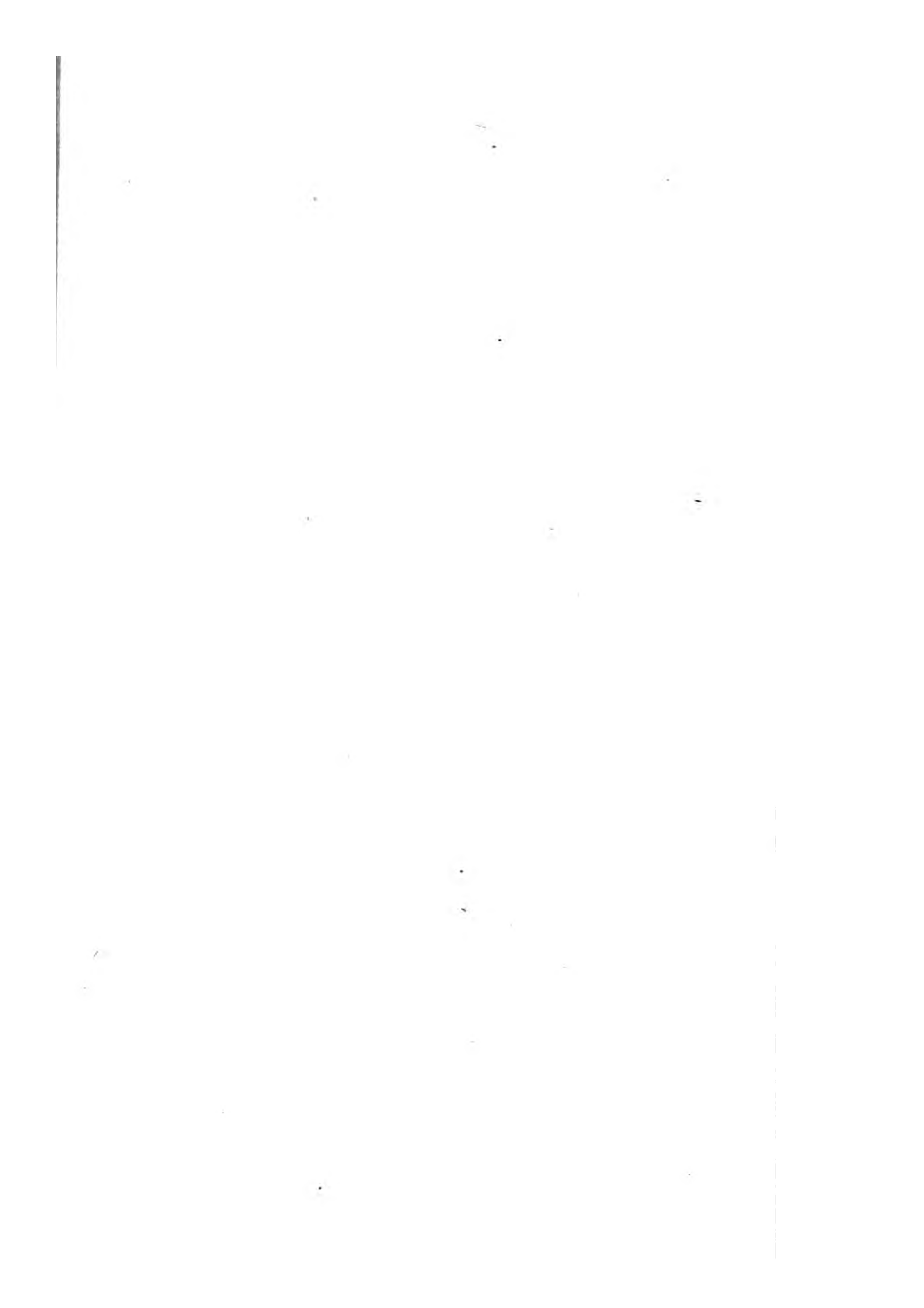
Pope enumerates among Crashaw's best pieces, the paraphrase on Psalm XXIII, the verses on Lessius, Epitaph on Mr. Ashton, Wishes to his supposed Mistress, and the Dies Iræ. Dr. Warton recommends the translation from Moschus and another from Catullus, and amply acknowledges the obligations of Pope and Roscommon to Crashaw. Mr. Hayley, after specifying some of Pope's imitations of our author, conjectures that the Elegies on St. Alexis suggested to him the idea of his *Eloisa*, but, adds this excellent Biographer, "if Pope borrowed any thing from Crashaw in this article, it was only as the Sun borrows from the Earth, when drawing from thence a mere vapour, he makes it the delight of every eye, by giving it all the tender and gorgeous colouring of Heaven."

Some of Crashaw's translations are esteemed superior to his original poetry, and that of the *Sospetto d'Herode*, from Marino, is executed with Miltonic grace and spirit. It has been regretted that he translated only the first book of a poem by which Milton condescended to profit in his immortal Epic. The whole was, however, afterwards translated and published in 1675, by a writer whose initials only are known, T. R.⁶

Of modern critics, Mr. Headley and Mr. Ellis have selected recommendatory specimens from Crashaw. In Mr. Headley's opinion, "he has originality in many parts, and as a translator is entitled to the highest applause." Mr. Ellis, with his accustomed judgment and moderation, pronounces that, "his translations have considerable merit, but that his original poetry is full of conceit. His Latin poems were first printed in 1634, and have been much admired, though liable to the same objections as his English."—Some of these are included in the present collection, but a fuller account, with specimens, was given some years ago by Mr. Nichols, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*⁷.

⁶ An anonymous correspondent sent an account of this translation, with specimens, to Mr. Maty's *Review*, vol. 7. 251. C.

⁷ Vol. 63. p. 1001. C.



THE
LIFE OF SIR EDWARD SHERBURNE.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS poet descended from an ancient family of the same name at Stanyhurst in Lancashire. His grandfather, Henry, appears to have belonged, but in what capacity is not known, to Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and settled in that city, where Edward the father of our poet was born. This Edward went afterwards to London, and became secretary to the first East India company, that established by queen Elizabeth's charter, and in 1613 obtained a reversionary grant of the office of clerk of the ordnance. He was afterwards knighted by Charles I¹. He married Frances, the second daughter of John Stanley, of Roydon Hall, in Essex, esq. and resided in Goldsmiths' Rents, near Redcross-street, Cripplegate. His son, the poet, was born here September 18, 1618, and educated by the celebrated Thomas Farnaby, who then taught a school in Goldsmiths' Rents. On his removal to Sevenoaks, in Kent, in 1636, young Sherburne was educated privately under the care of Mr. Charles Aleyn, the poetical historian of the battles of Cressy and Poitiers, who had been one of Farnaby's ushers. On the death of Aleyn in 1640, his pupil being intended for the army, was sent to complete his education abroad, and had travelled in France and part of Italy, when his father's illness obliged him to return. After his father's death in 1641, he succeeded to the clerkship of his majesty's ordnance, the reversion of which had been procured for him in 1638; but the rebellion prevented his retaining it long. Being a Roman catholic, and firmly attached to the king, he was ejected by a warrant of the house of lords in April or May, 1642, and harassed by a long and expensive confinement in the custody of the usher of the black rod.

On his release, he determined to follow the fortunes of his royal master, who made him commissary general of the artillery, in which post he witnessed the battle of Edge-hill, and afterwards attended the king at Oxford, where he was created Master of Arts, December 20, 1642. Here he took such opportunities as his office permitted of pursuing his studies, and did not leave Oxford until June, 1646, when it was surrendered to the parliamentary forces. He then went to London, and was entertained by a near relation, John Povey, esq. at his chambers in the Middle Temple. Being

¹ Gent. Mag. LXVI. p. 462. C.

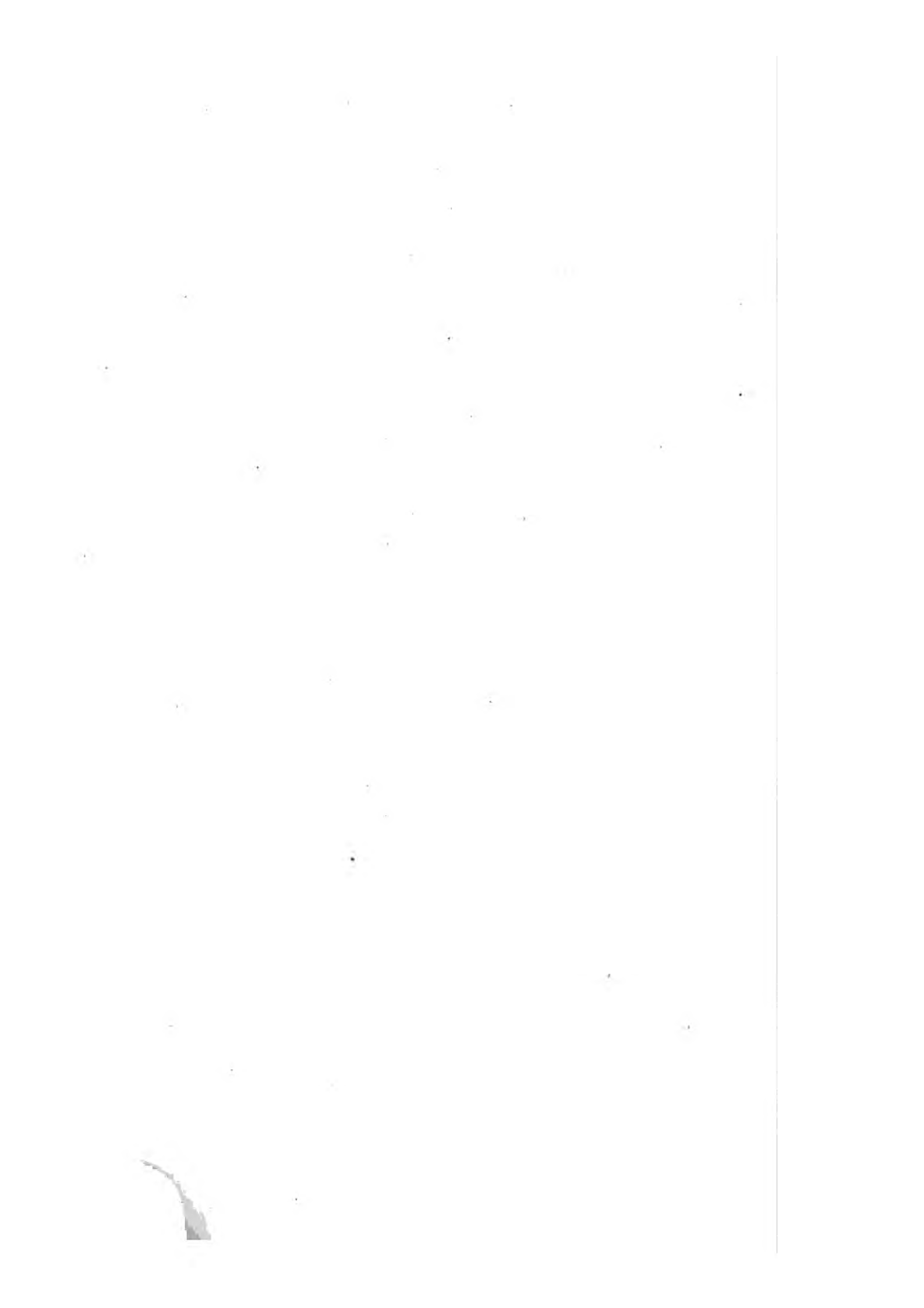
plundered of all his property, and what is ever most dear to a man of learning, his ample library, he would probably have sunk under his accumulated sufferings, had he not met with his kinsman, Thomas Stanley, esq.² who was a sufferer in the same cause, and secreted near the same place. But some degree of toleration must have been extended to him soon after, as in 1648 he published his translation of Seneca's *Medea*, and in the same year Seneca's answer to Lucilius' question, "Why good men suffer misfortunes, seeing there is a Divine Providence?" In 1651, he published his *Poems and Translations*, with a Latin dedication to Mr. Stanley; and when sir George Savile, afterwards marquis of Halifax, returned from his travels about that time, he appointed Mr. Sherburne superintendant of his affairs, and by the recommendation of his mother, lady Savile, he was afterwards made travelling tutor to her nephew, sir John Coventry. With this gentleman he visited various parts of the continent, from March, 1654, to October, 1659. On the Restoration, sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, afterwards lord Shaftesbury, put another into his place in the ordnance; but on Mr. Sherburne's application to the house of peers, it was restored to him, although its emoluments were soon greatly retrenched.

The peace of the country being now re-established, he appears to have applied himself to a studious life, and replenished his library, which, according to Wood, was esteemed one of the most considerable belonging to any gentleman in or near London. In 1675, he published "The Sphere of Marcus Manilius, made an English poem, with Annotations, and an Astronomical Index," which was honoured by the very particular and liberal approbation of the royal society: and in 1679, he published a translation of Seneca's *Troades*; or the *Royal Captives*, and he left in manuscript a translation of *Hippolitus*, which two, with the *Medea* before mentioned, he endeavoured to prove were all that Seneca wrote.

During the commotions excited by the popish plot, attempts were made to remove him from his place in the ordnance, as a suspected papist, but these were ineffectual, and his majesty, who appears to have been satisfied with his character and conduct, conferred on him the honour of knighthood, Jan. 6, 1682. As, however, he could not take the oaths on the Revolution, he quitted his public employment, and by this step sacrificed his property to his principles. For some time he lived a retired and probably a comfortable life, but poverty at length induced him to seek relief. In 1696, he presented a supplicatory memorial to the earl of Romney, then master general of the ordnance, and another to the king. In both, he represented in very earnest, but modest language, his long and faithful services: his total loss of fortune in the cause of royalty; his extreme indigence; and his advanced age (he being then upwards of eighty-two years old) and concluded with an humble request that an annual stipend for his support might be granted upon the quarter books of the office. The writer to whom we are indebted for this account³ has not been able to discover that this request was ever complied with. He adds, that sir Edward was well acquainted with the duties of his station, to the discharge of which he dedicated a long life, and

² Father of the learned Thomas Stanley, esq. Phillips dedicated his *Theatrum Poetarum* to Stanley and Sherburne. C.

³ *Gent. Mag.* ubi supra. p. 462-3. C.



was the principal person concerned in drawing up the "Rules, Orders and Instructions" given to the office of ordnance in 1683, which with very few alterations, have been confirmed at the beginning of every reign since, and are those by which the office is now governed.

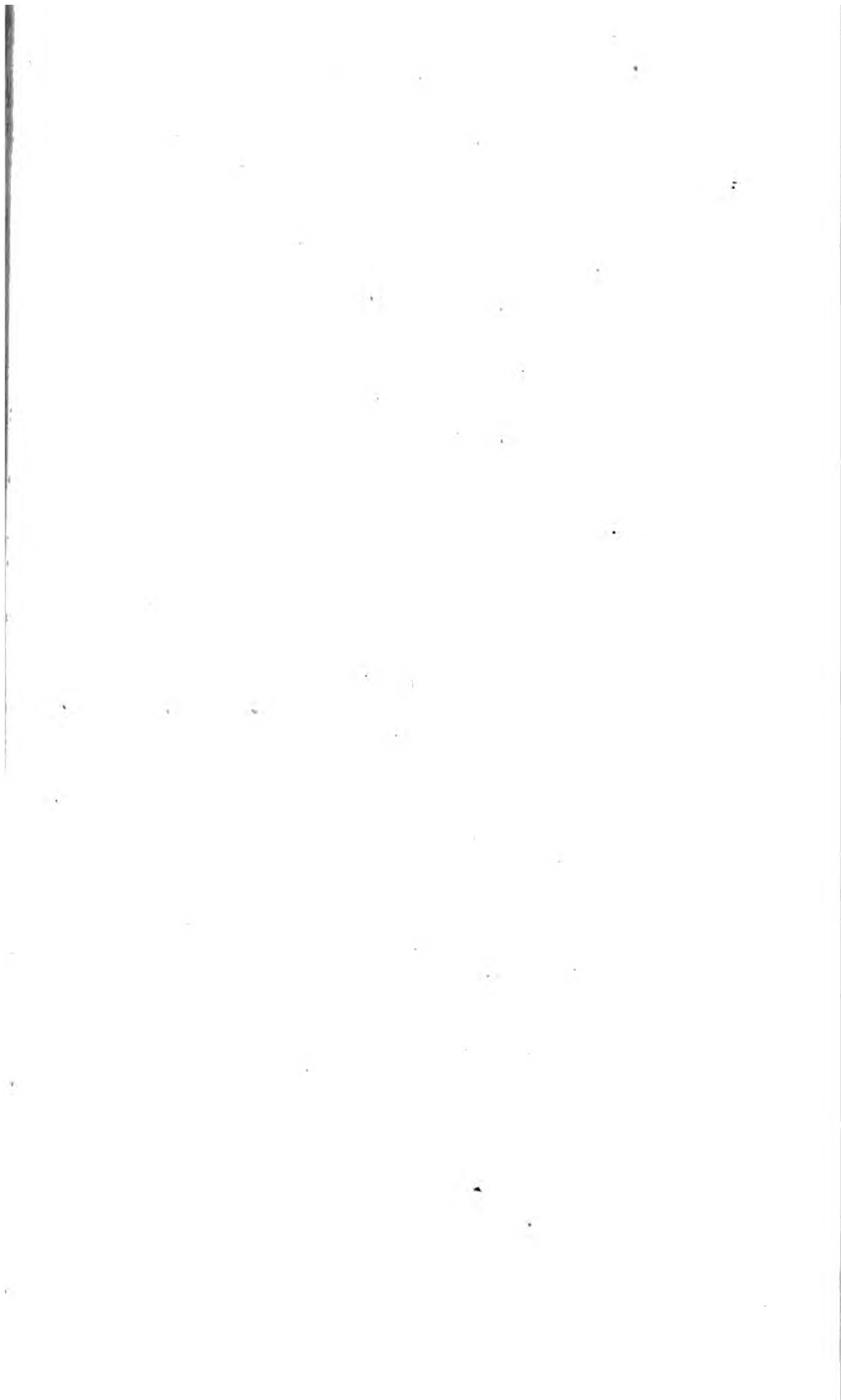
To these scanty notices, may be added his acquaintance with Dr. Bentley, which was occasioned by that learned critic's announcing an intention of publishing a new edition of Manilius. Sir Edward, who had formerly translated the first book of that poet into English verse, took this opportunity of sending to Bentley his collection of editions and papers belonging to Gaspar Gevartius who had also intended an edition of Manilius, but was prevented by death⁴.

The writer of his life in the *Biographia Britannica*, concludes it with lamenting the misfortune of Anthony Wood's carrying on his history no longer than the year 1700, and thus leaving it doubtful when Sir Edward Sherburne died: but this is one of the many instances of carelessness which occur in those latter volumes of the *Biographia* that were principally intrusted to Dr. Nichols. Collier, whose dictionary is in less reputation than it deserves, and which contains many curious facts not easily to be found elsewhere, ascertains Sherburne's death from an epitaph which he wrote for himself. He died in Nov. 4, 1702, and was interred on the 8th in the chapel belonging to the Tower of London.

In Sherburne's poems considerable genius may be discovered, but impeded by the prevailing taste of his age for strained metaphors and allusions. Poetical lovers then thought no compliments too extravagant, and ransacked the remotest and apparently most barren sources for what were considered as striking thoughts, but which appear to us unnatural, if not ridiculous. He appears to have derived most of his reputation from his translations. He was a man of classical learning and a critic, and frequently conveys the sense of his author with considerable spirit, although his versification is in general flat and inharmonious⁵. In his sacred poems he seems to rise to a fervency and elegance which indicate a superior inspiration.

⁴ *Biog. Brit.* old edit. vol. ii. p. 744. note S. C.

⁵ Some of them are omitted in the present edition, as are his learned notes on Coluthus. C.





THE
LIFE OF ALEXANDER BROME.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THE turbulent reign of Charles I. was less unfavourable to poetry than might have been expected. In his happier days, the monarch was a friend to learning and the arts, and it is seldom that the natural bias of wits is interrupted by the calamities of their country. Amidst civil convulsions and sanguinary contests, the Muses lent their aid to the hostile parties; and poetical ridicule, though the most harmless, was not the least commonly employed of those means by which they sought to exasperate each other. In this species of warfare, if the loyalists did not exhibit the highest abilities, they were enabled to take the wider range: they were men of gaiety approaching to licentiousness, and opposed psalms and hymns by anacreontics and satires.

Brome, the writer now before us, has the reputation of ably assisting the royal cause by his poetry, and of even having no inconsiderable hand in promoting the Restoration. Of his personal history, we have only a few notices in the *Biographia Dramatica*. He was born in 1620 and died June 30, 1666. He was an attorney in the Lord Mayor's Court, and through the whole of the protectorship, maintained his loyalty, and cheered his party by the songs and poems in this collection, most of which must have been sung, if not composed at much personal risk. How far they are calculated to excite resentment, or to promote the cause which the author espoused, the reader is now enabled to judge. His songs are in measures varied with considerable ease and harmony, and have many sprightly turns, and satirical strokes, which the round-heads must have felt. Baker informs us that he was the author of much the greater part of those songs and epigrams which were published against the Rump. Philips styles him the "English Anacreon." Walton has drawn a very favourable character of him in the Eclogue prefixed, the only one of the commendatory poems which seems worthy of a republication. His translations, and a few of his inferior pieces are also omitted in the present edition, and perhaps it may be thought that some which are retained might have shared the same fate without injury to the reader.

Mr. Ellis enumerates three editions of these poems, the first in 1660, the second in 1664, and the third in 1668. That, however, from which we print, is dated 1661. In 1660 he published, A Congratulatory Poem on the miraculous and glorious Return of Charles II. which we have not seen¹.

Besides these poems, he published a translation of Horace, by himself and Fanshaw, Holliday, Hawkins, Cowley, Ben Johnson, &c. and had once an intention to translate Lucretius. In 1654 he published a comedy entitled The Cunning Lovers, which was acted in 1651 at the private house in Drury-lane. He was also editor of the plays of Richard Brome, who, however, is not mentioned as being related to him.

¹ Kennet's Register. p. 216.

THE
LIFE OF CHARLES COTTON.

BY MR. CHALMERS.

THIS poet was the son of Charles Cotton, esq.¹ of Beresford, in Staffordshire, a man of considerable fortune and high accomplishments. Lord Clarendon says, he “had all those qualities which in youth raise men to the reputation of being fine gentlemen: such a pleasantness and gaiety of humour, such a sweetness and gentleness of nature, and such a civility and delightfulness in conversation, that no man in the court, or out of it, appeared a more accomplished person: all these extraordinary qualifications being supported by as extraordinary a clearness of courage, and fearlessness of spirit, of which he gave too often manifestation. Some unhappy suits in law, and waste of his fortune in those suits, made some impression upon his mind; which being improved by domestic afflictions, and those indulgencies to himself which naturally attend those afflictions, rendered his age less revered than his youth had been; and gave his best friends cause to have wished that he had not lived so long².”

His son, who inherited many of these characteristics, was born on the 28th of April, 1630, and educated at the university of Cambridge, where he had for his tutor Mr. Ralph Rawson, whom he celebrates in the translation of an ode of Johannes Secundus. At the university he is said to have studied the Greek and Roman classics with distinguished success, and to have become a perfect master of the French and Italian languages. It does not appear, however, that he took any degree, or studied with a view to any learned profession; but after his residence at Cambridge, travelled into France and other parts of the continent. On his return, he resided during the greater part of his life at the family seat at Beresford.

In 1656, when he was in his twenty-sixth year, he married Isabella, daughter of sir Thomas Hutchinson, knight, of Owthorp, in the county of Nottingham, a distant relation, and took her home to his father's house, as he had no other establishment. On his father's death, in 1658, he succeeded to the family estate, encumbered by those imprudencies noticed by lord Clarendon, from which it does not appear that he was ever able to relieve it.

¹ Who was the son of sir George Cotton, of Hampshire, and married the only child of sir John Stanhope, of Elvaston, by his first wife, Olive, heiress of Edward Beresford, esq. of Beresford.—*Topographer*, vol. III. Suppl. 25. C.

² Continuation of the Life of Lord Clarendon. The other particulars of Cotton's life are taken from the *Biog. Brit.* and from sir John Hawkins' account of him prefixed to the Second Part of the *Complete Angler*. C.

From this time, almost all we have of his life is comprized in a list of his various publications, which were chiefly translations from the French, or imitations of the writers of that nation. In 1663, he published Mons. de Vaix's Moral Philosophy of the Stoics, in compliance, sir John Hawkins thinks, with the will of his father, who was accustomed to give him themes and authors for the exercise of his judgment and learning. In 1665, he translated the Horace of Corneille for the amusement of his sister, who, in 1670, consented that it should be printed. In this attempt he suffered little by being preceded by sir William Lower, and followed by Mrs. Catherine Phillips. In 1670, he published a translation of the Life of the Duke of d'Espernon; and about the same time, his affairs being much embarrassed, he obtained a captain's commission in the army, and went over to Ireland. Some adventures he met with on this occasion gave rise to his first burlesque poem, entitled *A Voyage to Ireland*, in three cantos. Of his more serious progress in the army, or when, or why he left it, we have no account.

In 1674, he published the translation of the *Fair One of Tunis*, a French novel; and of the *Commentaries of Blaise de Montluc*, marshal of France: and in 1675, *The Planter's Manual*, being instructions for cultivating all sorts of fruit trees. In 1678 appeared his most celebrated burlesque performance, entitled "*Scarronides, or Virgil Travestie: a Mock Poem, on the First and Fourth Books of Virgil's Æneis, in English Burlesque.*" To this was afterwards added, "*Burlesque upon Burlesque, or the Scoffer scoffed: being some of Lucian's Dialogues newly put into English fustian.*"

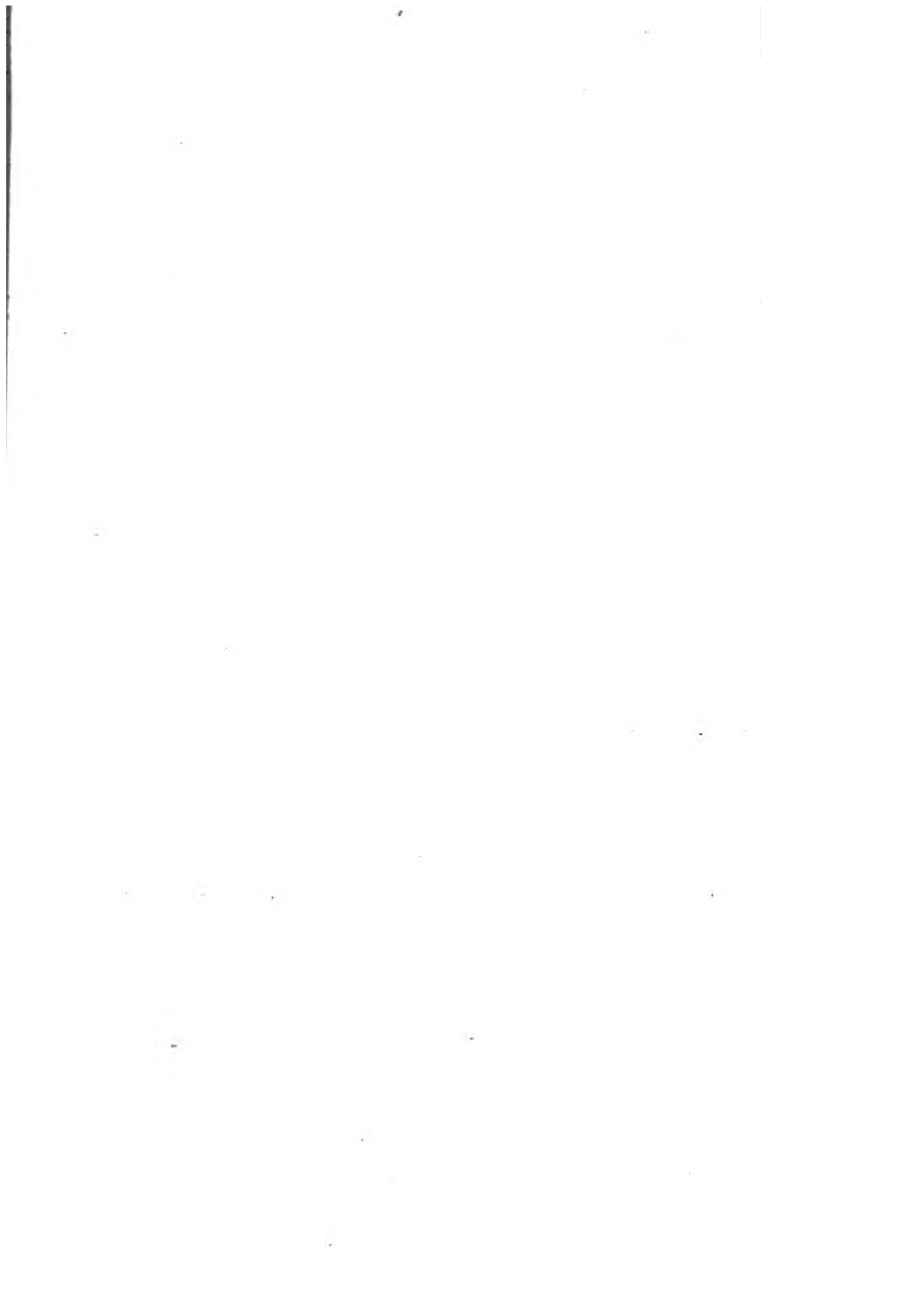
In 1681, he published *The Wonders of the Peak*, an original poem; which, however, proved that he had not much talent for the descriptive branch of poetry. His next employment was a translation of *Montaigne's Essays*, which was highly praised by the marquis of Halifax, and has often been reprinted, as conveying the spirit and sense of the original with great felicity. His style certainly approaches very closely to the antiquated gossip of that "*old prater.*"

The only remaining production of our author is connected with his private history. One of his favourite recreations was angling, which led to an intimacy between him and honest Isaac Walton, whom he called his father. His house was situated on the banks of the Dove, a fine trout stream, which divides the counties of Derby and Stafford. Here he built a little fishing house dedicated to anglers, *piscatoribus sacrum*, over the door of which the initials of the names of Cotton and Walton were united in a cypher. The interior of this house was a cube of about fifteen feet, paved with black and white marble; the walls wainscoted, with painted pannels representing scenes of fishing; and on the doors of the beaufet were the portraits of Cotton and Walton. His partnership with Walton in this amusement induced him to write *Instructions how to angle for a Trout or Grayling, in a clear Stream*, which have since been published as a second part, or Supplement to *Walton's Complete Angler*.

At what time his first wife died, is not recorded. His second was Mary, countess dowager of Ardglass, widow of Wingfield, lord Cromwell, second earl of Ardglass¹, who died in 1649. She must therefore have been considerably older than our poet, but she had a jointure of 1500*l.* a year, which, although it afforded him

¹ The Topographer, vol. iii. Suppl. 24. C.





many comforts, was secured from his imprudent management. He died in the parish of St. James's, Westminster, in 1687, and, it would appear, in a state of insolvency, as Elizabeth Bludworth, his principal creditor, administered to his effects, his widow and children having previously renounced the administration. These children were by the first wife. One of them, Mr. Beresford Cotton, published in 1694 the *Memoirs of the Sieur de Pontis*, translated by his father; and perhaps assisted in the collection of his poems which appeared in 1689⁴. This gentleman had a company given him in a regiment of foot raised by the earl of Derby, for the service of king William: and one of his sisters was married to the celebrated Dr. George Stanhope, dean of Canterbury.

The leading features of Mr. Cotton's character may be gathered from the few circumstances we have of his life, and from the general tendency of his works. Like his father, he was regardless of pecuniary concerns, a lively and agreeable companion, a man of wit and pleasure, and frequently involved in difficulties from which he did not always escape without some loss of character. It has been reported that on one occasion he offended an aunt or grandmother, by introducing, in his *Virgil Travestie*, the mention of a singular ruff which she wore, and that this provoked the lady to revoke a clause in her will by which she had bequeathed an estate to him. The lines are supposed to be these.

And then there is a fair great ruff,
Made of a pure and costly stuff,
To wear about her highness' neck,
Like Mrs. Cockney's in the Peak.

But the story is probably not authentic. In his poems, we find a most affectionate epitaph on his aunt Mrs. Ann Stanhope.

His fate as a poet has been very singular. The *Virgil Travestie* and his other burlesque performances have been perpetuated by at least fifteen editions, while his poems, published in 1689, in which he displays true taste and elegance, have never been reprinted until now. The present, indeed, is but a selection, as many of his smaller pieces abound in those indelicacies which were the reproach of the reign of Charles II. In what remain, we find a strange mixture of broad humour and drollery with delicacy and tenderness of sentiment, and even with devotional poetry of a superior cast. His Pindarics will probably not be thought unworthy of a comparison with those of Cowley. His verses are often equally harmonious, while his thoughts are less encumbered with amplification. In his burlesque poems, Butler appears to have been his model, but we have the Hudibrastic measure only: nothing can be more vulgar, disgusting or licentious than his parodies on Virgil and Lucian. That they should have been so often reprinted, marks the slow progress of the refinement of public taste during the greater part of the eighteenth century: but within the last thirty years it has advanced with rapidity, and Cotton is no longer tolerated. The *Travestie*, indeed, even when executed with a more chaste humour than in Cotton's *Virgil*, or Bridges' *Homer*, is an extravagance pernicious to true taste, and ought never to be encouraged unless where the original is a legitimate object of ridicule.

⁴ This collection was made in a very slovenly manner, several of the pieces being repeated in different parts of the volume. C.

