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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK ROISTER DOISTER ***

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English Reprints.

NICHOLAS UDALL, M.A.

Master, in succession, of Eton College and Westminster School.

Roister Doister.

Written, probably also represented, before 1553.

CAREFULLY EDITED FROM THE UNIQUE COPY,
NOW AT ETON COLLEGE,

BY

EDWARD ARBER,

Associate, King's College, London, F.R.G.S., &c.

LONDON:

5 QUEEN SQUARE, BLOOMSBURY, W.C.

Ent. Stat. Hall.]

24 July, 1869.

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Contents (added by transcriber)

[Dramatis Personæ](#)

[Life of Nicholas Udall](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Bibliography](#)

Ralph Roister Doister

[Songs](#)

[Advertising](#)

[English Reprints](#)

[Life of Nicholas Udall \(simplified format\)](#)

[Bibliography \(simplified format\)](#)

Dramatis Personæ.

Ralph Roister Doister.

Mathew Merygreeke.

Gawyn Goodluck, *affianced to Dame Custance.*

Tristram Trustie, *his friend.*

Dobinet Doughtie, *'boy' to Roister Doister.*

Tom Trupenie, *seruant to Dame Custance.*

Sym Suresby, *seruant to Goodluck.*

Scriuener.

Harpax.

Dame Christian Custance, *a widow.*

Margerie Mumblecrust, *her nurse.*

Tibet Talk apace,
her maidens.

Annot Alyface,

TIME. *About Two days.*

SCENE. *Not indicated: ? London.*

A brief Note of the LIFE, WORKS, and TIMES of

NICHOLAS UDALL, M.A.

Teacher, Dramatist, Translator, Preacher.

In succession Master of Eton College, Rector of Braintree, Prebend of Windsor, Rector of Calborne, and Master of Westminster School.

* Probable or approximate dates.

There are materials extant for a good *Life* of Udall. Meanwhile there is Mr. Cooper's excellent *Memoir* in the *Shakespeare Society's* reprint of *Ralph Roister Doister* [see No. 5 on p. 8]; and Anthony à-Wood's account of him, *Ath. Oxon. i. 211. Ed. 1813.*

1485. Aug. 22. Henry VII. becomes king.

*1504. Nicholas Udall ... was born in Hampshire, and descended from those of his name, living sometimes at Wykeham in the same county.—*Wood.*

1509. April 22. Henry VIII. begins to reign.

1520. June 18. æt. 14. Admitted scholar of Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

1524. May 30. æt. 18. Takes his B.A. [*Wood, Fasti Oxon., i. 65, Ed. 1815.*]

Sept. 3. Elected Probationer Fellow of his College.

1533. May. *Royal MS. 18 A. lxiv. p. 275*, has two titles. (1.) Versis and dities made at the
Whitsun Eve. coronation of queen Anne. (2.) Hereafter ensueth a copie of diuers and sundry verses
æt. 27. aswell in latin as in Englishe deuised and made partely by Iohn Ieland and partely by
Nicholas Vuedale whereof sum were sette vp and sum were spoken and pronounced
vnto the most high and excellente Quene the ladie Anne, wif vnto our sourain lorde
King Henry the eight in many goodly and costely pageauntes exhibited and shewed by

the mayre and citizens of the famous citie of london at first tyme as hir grace rode from the Towre of London through the said citie to hir most glorious coronation at the monasterie of Westminster on Whitson yeue in th xxvth yere of the raigne of our said soueraigne lorde.

The Rev. Dr. Goodford, the present Provost of Eton, has most kindly afforded me interesting information obtained by him from the MS. records of the College; viz., the Audit Rolls and the Bursar's Books, respecting Udall's connection with Eton.

The salary of the Master at Eton was then £10 a year, or fifty shillings for each of the four terms. In addition, he received 20s. for his 'livery,' and other small sums, as for obits (*i.e.* attending masses for the dead) [*e.g.* Udall received for obits, 14s. 8d. in 1535, and the same in 1536]; and for candles and ink for the boys [*e.g.* Udall received for these purposes, 23s. 4d. in 1537, and the same in 1538.] If the assumed multiple of 13 truly express the relatively greater purchasing power of gold and silver more then than now: the salary and emoluments cannot be considered excessive.

1534. June 19. Udall takes his M.A. [*Wood, Fasti., i. 98.*]

1534-1543. Udall's name occurs in the Records spelt indifferently Woddall, Woodall or Udall. His name first appears in 26 Henry VIII., 1534, when his predecessor Dr. Richard Coxe was paid salary for three terms, and Udall received 50s. for the fourth, his first term. The payments continue on regularly so far as the books are extant, up to 1541. The Records for 1542 are missing. It was in March 1543 that occurred the robbery of silver images and other plate by two Eton scholars, J. Hoorde and T. Cheney, connived at by Udall's servant Gregory, which resulted in Udall's losing his place.

'Thomas Tusser, gentleman,' in *The Author's Life* added to his *Fiue hundreth points of good husbandrie*, 1573, 4to, thus writes, but without giving any date, of Udall's use of the rod:

From Powles I went, to Aeton sent,
To learne straight wayes, the Latin phraise,
Where fiftie three stripes giuen to mee,
at once I had:
For faut but small or none at all,
It came to passe, thus beat I was,
See Udall see, the mercy of thee,
to mee poore lad.

**Nicholas Vdal
schole master at
Eton.**

//

1537. Sept. 27. Is made Vicar of Braintree. *Newcourt, Rep. ii. 89.*

1542. Udall publishes a translation of the 3rd and 4th books of Erasmus' *Apophthegms*.

*1543. *Cott. MS. Titus, B. viii. p. 371*, is a long letter, undated and unaddressed, to some one, as to 'my restitution to the roume of Scholemaister in Eton.'

1544. Dec. 14. Resigns the Vicarship of Braintree. *Newcourt, idem.*

1542-1545. He is engaged with the Princess, afterwards Queen Mary and others in translating Erasmus' *Paraphrase of the New Testament* into English.

'1545, Sept. 30, at London,' date of his *Preface to Lake*.

In his *Pref. to John*, partly translated by Princess Mary, partly by Rev. F. Malet, D.D.; Udall gives us the following account of female education in his day: which can only, however, apply to a few women, like Elizabeth, Mary, and Lady Jane Grey. 'But nowe in this gracious and blisseful tyme of knowledge, in whiche it hath pleased almighty God to reuele and shewe abroad the lyght of his moste holye ghospell: what a noubre is there of noble women (especially here in this realme of Englande,) yea and howe many in the yeares of tender vyrginitiee, not only aswel seen and as familiarly trade in the Latine and Greke tounge, as in theyr owne mother language: but also both in all kindes of prophane litterature, and liberall artes, exactly studied and exercised, and in the holy Scriptures and Theologie so ripe, that they are able aptely cunningly, and with much grace eyther to indict or translate into the vulgare tongue, for the publique instruccion and edifying of the vnlearned multitude.... It is nowe no newes in Englande to see young damisels in nobles houses and in the Courtes of Princes, in stede of cardes and other instrumentes of idle trifleyng, to haue continually in her handes, eyther Psalmes, Omelies, and other deuoute meditacions, or elles Paules Epistles, or some booke of holye Scripture matiers: and as familiarlye both to reade or reason thereof in Greke, Latine, Frenche, or Italian, as in Englishe.'

1547. Jan. 28. Edward VI. ascends the throne.

'1552. July 20. At Windsor.' The date of Udall's preface to the translation by himself and others, of T. Gemini's *Anatomy*.

1553. July 6. Mary succeeds to the crown.

1554. Dec. 3. Date of a warrant dormer from the Queen to the Master of her Revels. [Reprinted in *The Loseley MSS.* Ed. by A. J. KEMPE, F.S.A. London. 1836.] The warrant runs thus — 'Whereas our wellbeloued Nicholas Udall hath at soondrie seasons convenient heretofore shewed and myndeth hereafter to shewe his diligence in setting fourth of Dialogues and Enterludes before us fo' ou' regell disporte and recreacion.' ... And then goes on to authorize the loan of apparel for those purposes. Did the popularity of the Dramatist, and her personal acquaintance with him, since they had worked together on Erasmus' *Paraphrase*, lead the Queen to condone the intense Protestantism of the Preacher, even to the continuing of him in favour? Udall and Ascham, two noted Protestants, are both favoured by Mary.

*1555. Udall is appointed Master of Westminster School, and so continues until Mary re-establishes the Monastery at Westminster.

1556. Nov.

ROISTER DOISTER.

INTRODUCTION.



HE author and early date of the present Comedy are ascertained by a quotation in Sir Thomas Wilson's *Rule of Reason* of Roister Doister's letter to Dame Custance.

The first edition of the *Rule of Reason*, 1550-1, is a very scarce work; of which I have been unable to see a copy. The second edition, 1552, 8vo, 'newly corrected by Thomas Wilson,' has *not* the quotation: which apparently first appears in the third edition of 1553, 4to, the title of which runs, "The Rule of Reason, conteinyng the Arte of *Logique*. Sette furthe in Englishe, and newly corrected by Thomas Wilson. *Anno Domini. M.D.LIII.* Mense Ianuarij."

At folio 66 of this edition, Wilson, in treating of *The Ambiguitie*, adds to his previous examples, Roister Doister's letter, with the following heading:

¶ An example of soche doubtful writing, whiche by reason of
pointing maie haue double sense, and contrarie
meaning, taken out of an entrelude
made by Nicolas Vdal.

The present comedy was therefore undoubtedly written before the close of the reign of Edward VI., who died 6 July 1553.

If it was then printed, that entire edition has perished. The prayer for the Queen at *p.* 86, can be for no other than Queen Elizabeth: and therefore, although the title-page is wanting and there is no conclusive allusion in the play, it may confidently be believed that the extant text was printed in Elizabeth's reign: and that it had possibly in some respects been modified.

There now comes the evidence of the Stationers Co.'s Register, as quoted by Mr. Collier, *Extracts, i. 154, Ed. 1848*:

Rd of Thomas Hackett, for hys lycense for pryntinge of a play intituled auf Ruyster Duster, &c.

iiijd

The missing title-page and the absence of any colophon in the Eton copy, here reprinted, preclude demonstrative proof that it is one of Hackett's edition. It is however morally certain that it does represent that text.

On the whole, therefore, though that text was posthumous—Udall having died in Dec. 1556—: and though its authorship rests entirely on the above heading of Wilson's quotation: it may be safely accepted that Udall is the author of this comedy, and that he wrote it before 1553. Conclusions both of them consonant with the known facts of Udall's life.

6

The comedy was probably first written for the Eton boys to act. Mr. W. D. Cooper thus writes:—

Certain, however, it is that it was the custom of Eton, about the feast of St. Andrew, for the Master to choose some Latin stage-play for the boys to act in the following Christmas holidays, and that he might sometimes order smart and witty English plays. "Among the writings of Udall about the year 1540," says Warton, "are recited *Plures Comediæ*, and a tragedy *De Papatu*, on the Papacy, written probably to be acted by his scholars;" and it is equally probable that the English comedy was written with a like object; for it is admirably adapted to be a good acting play, and the author avows in the prologue that his models were Plautus and Terence, with whose writings his scholars were familiar.

Of the few dramatic pieces of that early period that have survived, *Roister Doister* is regarded as the transition-play from the Mysteries and Enterludes of the Middle Ages to the Comedies of modern times. A critical examination of its position in our Literature has been made by Mr. Collier. *Hist. of Dram. Poetry. ii. 445-460 Ed. 1830.* A full consideration of the play would exceed our present limits: we may however call attention to the peculiar rhyme in which Udall wrote it.

In the present reprint, the text appears according to modern usage: but in the original it stands in lines of unvarying length. Where the speech is continuous, these lines rhyme like our ordinary poetry: but when the dialogue is short; one, two, three or more speeches are thrown into one line, and the last syllables of that line—whether they occur in words in the middle or at the end of a sentence, as dictated simply by the length of line of type—are made to rough rhyme in couplets. Thus an irregular assonance jingles through the play.

On the opposite page are a few lines set up as in the original, to illustrate this peculiarity; and also to show the mode used of marking the actor's names. May this peculiar rhyme be accepted as any evidence that Udall composed this play as much for the press as the stage?

There being no description of the representation and the stage directions being scanty: *Roister Doister* should be read a first time to learn the plot; a second time to imagine the action: and a third to combine and enjoy the two.

C. Custance. Trupenie get thee in, thou shalt among them knowe,
How to vse thy selfe, like a propre man I trowe.

Trupeny. I go. *Ex.* **C. C.** Now Tristram Trusty I thank you right much.
For at my first sending to come ye neuer grutch.

T. Trusty. Dame Custance God ye saue, and while my life shall last,
For my friende Goodluckes sake ye shall not sende in wast.

C. Custance. He shal giue you thanks. **T. Trusty.** I wil do much for his sake

C. Custance. But alack, I feare, great displeasure shall be take.

T. Trusty. Wherefore? **C. C.** For a foolish matter. **T. T.** What is your cause

C. Custance. I am yll accombred with a couple of dawes.

Nay

Top of the first, odd-numbered page of folio 25.

Roister Doister.

Nay weepe not woman; but tell me what your cause is **T. Trusty.**
As concerning my friende is any thing amisse?

No not on my part: but here was Sym Suresby. **C. Custance.**

He was with me and tolde me so. **C. C.** And he stooode by **T. Trustie.**
While Ralph Roister Doister with helpe of Merygreeke,
For promise of mariage dyd vnto me seeke.

[page image](#)

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

8

Roister Doister.

The whole of Udall's plays were supposed to have perished [see *Wood. Ath. Oxon. i. 213*, Ed. 1813]. The Rev. T. Briggs, an old Etonian, in 1818, became the possessor of the now famous unique copy: which he presented to the Library of Eton College, in December of that year.

1. [? ? First edition of a revised text. The copy, now at Eton College, consists of 33
1566.] Lond. folios. The title-page is wanting.
1 vol. 4to.
2. 1818. Lond. '*Ralph Royster Doyster*, A Comedy. London. Reprinted in the year 1818.' [Ed.
1 vol. 8vo. and privately printed by Rev. T. BRIGGS. 30 copies only struck off. The printer
was James Compton, Middle St., Cloth Fair, London.] At the beginning is the
following *Advertisement*:—

'It appears from the Biographia Dramatica, that a Play called *Rauf Ruster Duster* was entered on the books of the Stationers' Company in the year 1566, but that it was supposed never to have been printed: this, however, is now proved to be a mistake, a copy having been found contained in a collection of plays which was lately upon sale in London. It is true that the name is spelt somewhat differently, but it is presumed there can be no doubt of its being the piece in question. The book unfortunately wants the title-page, and the author's name is not known. It is now in the Library of Eton College, and is here reprinted for the amusement of the reader.'

3. 1821. Lond. '*Ralph Royster Doyster*, a Comedy, entered on the books of the Stationers'
1 vol. 8vo. Company, 1566. London: Printed by F. Marshall, Kenton St., Brunswick Sq.,
1821.' [Editor not known.]

R. Southey's copy, with his autograph, and dated 1 Feb. 1837, is in the British Museum. Press-mark, 1344-k.

Neither of the above knew that Udall was the author. The editor of 1821 reprint writes, 'The author, whoever he was,' p. iv. It was Mr. Collier who connected Wilson's quotation with *Roister Doister*, and so proved Udall to be its author. Writing on 14th April 1865; he thus begins the *Preface* of his *Bibl. Account of Ear. Eng. Lit.* Ed. 1865.

'During my whole life, now rapidly approaching fourscore, I have been a diligent reader, and, as far as my means would allow, a greedy purchaser of all works connected with early English literature. It is nearly sixty years since I became possessed of my first really valuable old book of this kind—Wilson's "Art of Logic," printed by Richard Grafton 1551—from which I ascertained the not unimportant facts that "Ralph Roister Doister" was an older play than "Gammer Gurton's Needle," and that it had been written by Nicholas Udall, Master of Eton School: I thus learned who was the author of the earliest comedy, properly so called, in our language. This was my first literary discovery, made several years anterior, although I had not

occasion to render it public, until I printed my Notes upon "Dodsley's Old Plays," soon after 1820.*

* See vol. ii. p. 3. Ed. 1825.

4. 1830. Lond. *The Old English Drama*, A series of Plays, at 6d each, printed and published by 3 vols. 18mo. Thomas White. *Ralph Royster Doyster* is the first.
5. 1847. Lond. *Shakespeare Society. Ralph Roister Doister, &c.*, and *The Tragedie of Gorboduc*. Edited, with Introductory Memoirs, by W. D. Cooper, F.S.A. The text collated with the original by J. P. Collier, F.S.A.
6. 24 July 1869. Lond. 1 vol. 8vo. *English Reprints*: see title at p. 1.

∴ All the previous reprints have been and now are unobtainable to most persons. It is to the most courteous and generous kindness of the present Provost and Fellows of Eton College that I am enabled to place what I hope may prove an exact text into the hands of every one. I trust also to keep it perpetually on sale: that the student of the History of our Literature may no longer lack one of the most important illustrations of the growth of English Dramatic Poesy.

The Prologue.

10



That Creature is in health, eyther yong or olde,
But som mirth with modestie wil be glad to vse
As we in thys Enterlude shall now vnfolde,
Wherin all scurilitie we vtterly refuse,
Auoiding such mirth wherin is abuse:
Knowing nothing more comendable for a mans
recreation

Than Mirth which is vsed in an honest fashion:
For Myrth prolongeth lyfe, and causeth health.
Mirth recreates our spirites and voydeth pensiuenesse,
Mirth increaseth amitie, not hindring our wealth,
Mirth is to be vsed both of more and lesse,
Being mixed with vertue in decent comlynesse.
As we trust no good nature can gainsay the same:
Which mirth we intende to vse, auoidyng all blame.
The wyse Poets long time heretofore,
Vnder merrie Comedies secretes did declare,
Wherein was contained very vertuous lore,
With mysteries and forewarnings very rare.
Suche to write neither *Plautus* nor *Terence* dyd spare,
Whiche among the learned at this day beares the bell:
These with such other therein dyd excell.
Our Comedie or Enterlude which we intende to play.
Is named Royster Doyster in deede.
Which against the vayne glorious doth inuey,
Whose humour the roysting sort continually doth feede.
Thus by your pacience we intende to proceede
In this our Enterlude by Gods leaue and grace,
And here I take my leaue for a certaine space.

FINIS.

Roister Doister.

11

Actus. j. Scæna. j.

Mathewe Merygreeke. *He entreth singing.*

S long lyueth the mery man (they say)
As doth the sory man, and longer by a day.
Yet the Grassehopper for all his Sommer pipyng,
Sterueth in Winter wyth hungrie gripyng,
Therefore an other sayd sawe doth men aduise,
That they be together both mery and wise.
Thys Lesson must I practise, or else ere long,
Wyth mee Mathew Merygreeke it will be wrong.



In deede men so call me, for by him that
vs bought,
What euer chaunce betide, I can take no
thought,
Yet wisdom woulde that I did my selfe
bethinke
Where to be prouided this day of meate
and drinke:
For know ye, that for all this merie note

of mine,

He might appose me now that should aske where I dine.
My lyuing lieth heere and there, of Gods grace,
Sometime wyth this good man, sometye in that place,
Sometime Lewis Loytrer biddeth me come neere,
Somewhyles Watkin Waster maketh vs good cheere,
Sometime Dauy Diceplayer when he hath well cast
Keepeth reuell route as long as it will last.
Sometime Tom Titiuile maketh vs a feast,
Sometime with sir Hugh Pye I am a bidden gueast,
Sometime at Nichol Neuerthriues I get a soppe,
Sometime I am feasted with Bryan Blinkinsoppe,
Sometime I hang on Hankin Hoddydodies sleeue,
But thys day on Ralph Royster Doysters by hys leue.
For truely of all men he is my chiefe banker
Both for meate and money, and my chiefe shootanker.
For, sooth Roister Doister in that he doth say,
And require what ye will ye shall haue no nay.
But now of Roister Doister somewhat to expresse,
That ye may esteeme him after hys worthinesse,
In these twentie townes and seke them throughout,
Is not the like stocke, whereon to graffe a loute.
All the day long is he facing and craking
Of his great actes in fighting and fraymaking:
But when Roister Doister is put to his prooffe,
To keepe the Queenes peace is more for his behooffe.
If any woman smyle or cast on hym an eye,
Vp is he to the harde eares in loue by and by,
And in all the hotte haste must she be hys wife.
Else farewell hys good days, and farewell his life,
Maister Raufe Royster Doister is but dead and gon
Excepte she on hym take some compassion,
Then chiefe of counsell, must be Mathew Merygreeke,
What if I for mariage to suche an one seeke?
Then must I sooth it, what euer it is:
For what he sayth or doth can not be amisse,
Holde vp his yea and nay, be his nowne white sonne,
Prayse and rouse him well, and ye haue his heart wonne,
For so well liketh he his owne fonde fashions
That he taketh pride of false commendations.
But such sporte haue I with him as I would not leese,
Though I should be bounde to lyue with bread and cheese.
For exalt hym, and haue hym as ye lust in deede:
Yea to hold his finger in a hole for a neede.
I can with a worde make him fayne or loth,
I can with as much make him pleased or wroth,
I can when I will make him mery and glad,
I can when me lust make him sory and sad,
I can set him in hope and eke in dispaire,
I can make him speake rough, and make him speake faire.
But I maruell I see hym not all thys same day,
I wyll seeke him out: But loe he commeth thys way,
I haue yond espied hym sadly comming,
And in loue for twentie pounce, by hys glommyng.

12

13

Actus. j. Scæna. ij.

Rafe Roister Doister. Mathew Merygreeke.

R. Royster. My death when thou wilt, I am weary of my life.

M. Mery. I tolde you I, we should wowe another wife.

R. Royster. Why did God make me suche a goodly



person?

M. Mery. He is in by the weke, we shall haue sport anon.

R. Royster. And where is my trustie friende Mathew Merygreeke?

M. Mery. I wyll make as I sawe him not, he doth me seeke.

R. Royster. I haue hym espyed me thinketh, yond is hee, Hough Mathew Merygreeke my friend, a worde with thee.

M. Mery. I wyll not heare him, but make as I had haste, Farewell all my good friendes, the tyme away dothe waste, And the tide they say, tarieth for no man.

R. Royster. Thou must with thy good counsell helpe me if thou can.

M. Mery. God keepe thee worshypfull Maister Roister Doister, And fare well the lustie Maister Roister Doister.

R. Royster. I muste needes speake with thee a worde or twaine.

M. Mery. Within a month or two I will be here againe, Negligence in greate affaires ye knowe may marre all.

R. Royster. Attende vpon me now, and well rewarde thee I shall.

M. Mery. I haue take my leaue, and the tide is well spent.

R. Royster. I die except thou helpe, I pray thee be content, Doe thy parte wel nowe, and aske what thou wilt, For without thy aide my matter is all spilt.

M. Mery. Then to serue your turne I will some paines take, And let all myne owne affaires alone for your sake.

R. Royster. My whole hope and trust resteth onely in thee.

M. Mery. Then can ye not doe amisse what euer it bee.

R. Royster. Gramercies Merygreeke, most bounde to thee I am.

M. Mery. But vp with that heart, and speake out like a ramme, Ye speake like a Capon that had the cough now: Bee of good cheere, anon ye shall doe well ynow.

R. Royster. Vpon thy comforte, I will all things well handle.

M. Mery. So loe, that is a breast to blowe out a candle. But what is this great matter I woulde faine knowe, We shall fynde remedie therefore I trowe. Doe ye lacke money? ye knowe myne olde offers, Ye haue always a key to my purse and coffers.

R. Royster. I thanke thee: had euer man suche a frende?

M. Mery. Ye gyue vnto me: I must needes to you lende.

R. Royster. Nay I haue money plentie all things to discharge.

M. Mery. That knewe I ryght well when I made offer so large. But it is no suche matter.

A handwritten note in the margin gives the previous half-line to "R. Royster". This is probably correct.

M. Mery. What is it than? Are ye in daunger of debte to any man? If ye be, take no thought nor be not afraide, Let them hardly take thought how they shall be paide.

R. Royster. Tut I owe nought.

M. Mery. What then? fear ye imprisonment?

R. Royster. No.

M. Mery. No I wist ye offende, not so to be shent.
But if he had, the Toure could not you so holde,
But to breake out at all times ye would be holde.
What is it? hath any man threatned you to beate?

R. Royster. What is he that durst haue put me in that
heate?

He that beateth me by his armes shall well fynde,
That I will not be farre from him nor runne behinde.

M. Mery. That thing knowe all men euer since ye
ouerthrewe,

The fellow of the Lion which *Hercules* slewe.
But what is it than?

R. Royster. Of loue I make my mone.

M. Mery. Ah this foolishe a loue, wilt neare let vs alone?

But bicause ye were refused the last day,
Ye sayd ye woulde nere more be intangled that way.
I woulde medle no more, since I fynde all so vnkinde.

R. Royster. Yea, but I can not so put loue out of my
minde.

Math. Mer. But is your loue tell me first, in any wise,
In the way of Mariage, or of Merchandise?

If it may otherwise than lawfull be founde,
Ye get none of my helpe for an hundred pounce.

R. Royster. No by my trouth I woulde haue hir to my
Wife.

M. Mery. Then are ye a good man, and God saue your
life,

And what or who is she, with whome ye are in loue?

R. Royster. A woman whome I knowe not by what
meanes to moue.

M. Mery. Who is it?

R. Royster. A woman yond.

M. Mery. What is hir name?

R. Royster. Hir yonder.

M. Mery. Whom.

R. Royster. Mistresse ah.

M. Mery. Fy fy for shame
Loue ye, and know not whome? but hir yonde, a Woman,
We shall then get you a Wyfe, I can not tell whan.

R. Royster. The faire Woman, that supped wyth vs
yesternyght,
And I hearde hir name twice or thrice, and had it ryght.

M. Mery. Yea, ye may see ye nere take me to good
cheere with you,
If ye had, I could haue tolde you hir name now.

R. Royster. I was to blame in deede, but the nexte tyme
perchaunce:
And she dwelleth in this house.

M. Mery. What Christian Custance.

R. Royster. Except I haue hir to my Wife, I shall runne
madde.

M. Mery. Nay vnwise perhaps, but I warrant you for
madde.

R. Royster. I am vtterly dead vnlesse I haue my desire.

M. Mery. Where be the bellows that blewe this sodeine
fire?

R. Royster. I heare she is worthe a thousande pounce
and more.

M. Mery. Yea, but learne this one lesson of me afore,
An hundred pounce of Marriage money doubtlesse,
Is euer thirtie pounce sterlyng, or somewhat lesse,

So that hir Thousande pounde yf she be thriftie,
Is muche neere about two hundred and fiftie,
Howbeit wowers and Widowes are neuer poore.

R. Royster. Is she a Widowe? I loue hir better therefore.

M. Mery. But I heare she hath made promise to another.

R. Royster. He shall goe without hir, and he were my
brother.

M. Mery. I haue hearde say, I am right well aduised,
That she hath to Gawyn Goodlucke promised.

R. Royster. What is that Gawyn Goodlucke?

M. Mery. a Merchant man.

R. Royster. Shall he speede afore me? nay sir by sweete
Saint Anne.

Ah sir, Backare quod Mortimer to his sowe,
I wyll haue hir myne owne selfe I make God a vow.
For I tell thee, she is worthe a thousande pounde.

M. Mery. Yet a fitter wife for your maship might be
founde:

Suche a goodly man as you, might get one wyth lande,
Besides poundes of golde a thousande and a thousande,
And a thousande, and a thousande, and a thousande,
And so to the summe of twentie hundred thousande,
Your most goodly personage is worthie of no lesse.

R. Royster. I am sorie God made me so comely
doubtlesse.

For that maketh me eche where so highly faouered,
And all women on me so enamoured.

M. Mery. Enamoured quod you? haue ye spied out that?
Ah sir, mary nowe I see you know what is what.
Enamoured ka? mary sir say that againe,
But I thought not ye had marked it so plaine.

R. Royster. Yes, eche where they gaze all vpon me and
stare.

M. Mery. Yea malkyn, I warrant you as muche as they
dare.

And ye will not beleue what they say in the streete,
When your mashyp passeth by all such as I meete,
That sometimes I can scarce finde what aunswere to
make.

Who is this (sayth one) sir *Launcelot du lake*?

Who is this, greate *Guy* of Warwike, sayth an other?

No (say I) it is the thirteenth *Hercules* brother.

Who is this? noble *Hector* of *Troy*, sayth the thirde?

No, but of the same nest (say I) it is a birde.

Who is this? greate *Goliah*, *Sampson*, or *Colbrande*?

No (say I) but it is a brute of the Alie lande.

Who is this? greate *Alexander*? or *Charle le Maigne*?

No, it is the tenth Worthie, say I to them agayne:

I knowe not if I sayd well.

R. Royster. Yes for so I am.

M. Mery. Yea, for there were but nine worthies before ye
came.

To some others, the thirde *Cato* I doe you call.

And so as well as I can I aunswere them all.

Sir I pray you, what lorde or great gentleman is this?

Maister Ralph Roister Doister dame say I, ywis.

O Lorde (sayth she than) what a goodly man it is,

Woulde Christ I had such a husbände as he is.

O Lorde (say some) that the sight of his face we lacke:

It is inough for you (say I) to see his backe.

His face is for ladies of high and noble parages.

With whome he hardly scapeth great mariages.

With muche more than this, and much otherwise.

R. Royster. I can thee thanke that thou canst suche
answers deuise:

But I perceyue thou doste me throughly knowe.

M. Mery. I marke your maners for myne owne learnyng I
trowe,

But suche is your beautie, and suche are your actes,
Suche is your personage, and suche are your factes,
That all women faire and fowle, more and lesse,
That eye you, they lubbe you, they talke of you doubtlesse,
Your p[le]asant looke maketh them all merie,
Ye passe not by, but they laugh till they be werie,
Yea and money coulde I haue the truthe to tell,
Of many, to bryng you that way where they dwell.

R. Royster. Merygreeke for this thy reporting well of
mee:

M. Mery. What shoulde I else sir, it is my duetie pardee:

R. Royster. I promise thou shalt not lacke, while I haue a
grote.

M. Mery. Faith sir, and I nere had more nede of a newe
cote.

R. Royster. Thou shalte haue one to morowe, and golde
for to spende.

M. Mery. Then I trust to bring the day to a good ende.
For as for mine owne parte hauing money inowe,
I could lyue onely with the remembrance of you.
But nowe to your Widowe whome you loue so hotte.

R. Royster. By cocke thou sayest truthe, I had almost
forgotte.

M. Mery. What if Christian Custance will not haue you
what?

R. Royster. Haue me? yes I warrant you, neuer doubt of
that,
I knowe she loueth me, but she dare not speake.

M. Mery. In deede meete it were some body should it
breake.

R. Royster. She looked on me twentie tymes yesternight,
And laughed so.

M. Mery. That she coulde not sitte vpright,

R. Royster. No faith coulde she not.

M. Mery. No euen such a thing I cast.

R. Royster. But for wowyng thou knowest women are
shamefast.

But and she knewe my minde, I knowe she would be glad,
And thinke it the best chaunce that euer she had.

M. Mery. Too hir then like a man, and be bolde forth to
starte,

Wowers neuer speede well, that haue a false harte.

R. Royster. What may I best doe?

M. Mery. Sir remaine ye a while,
Ere long one or other of hir house will appere.
Ye knowe my minde.

R. Royster. Yea now hardly lette me alone.

M. Mery. In the meane time sir, if you please, I wyll
home,

And call your Musitians, for in this your case
It would sette you forth, and all your wowyng grace,
Ye may not lacke your instrumentes to play and sing.

R. Royster. Thou knowest I can doe that.

M. Mery. As well as any thing.
Shall I go call your folkes, that ye may shewe a cast?

R. Royster. Yea runne I beseeche thee in all possible
haste.

M. Mery. I goe. *Exeat.*

R. Royster. Yea for I loue singyng out of measure,
It comforteth my spirites and doth me great pleasure.
But who commeth forth yond from my swete hearte
Custance?

My matter frameth well, thys is a luckie chaunce.

Actus. j. Scæna. iij.

Mage Mumble crust, *spinning on the distaffe*. **Tibet**
Talk apace, *sowyng*. **Annot Alyface** *knittyng*.
R. Roister.

M. Mumbl.



F thys distaffe were spoonne
Margerie Mumblecrust.

Tib Talk. Where good stale ale
is will drinke no water I trust.

M. Mumbl. Dame Custance
hath promised vs good ale and white bread.

Tib Talk. If she kepe not promise, I will beshrewe her
head:

But it will be starke nyght before I shall haue done.

R. Royster. I will stande here a while, and talke with
them anon,
I heare them speake of Custance, which doth my heart
good,

To heare hir name spoken doth euen comfort my blood.

M. Mumbl. Sit downe to your worke Tibet like a good
girle.

Tib. Talk. Nourse medle you with your spyndle and your
whirle,

No haste but good, Madge Mumblecrust, for whip and
whurre

The olde prouerbe doth say, neuer made good furre.

M. Mumbl. Well, ye wyll sitte downe to your worke
anon, I trust.

Tib. Talk. Soft fire maketh sweete malte, good Madge
Mumblecrust.

M. Mumbl. And sweete malte maketh ioly good ale for
the nones.

Tib. Talk. Whiche will slide downe the lane without any
bones. *Cantet.*

Olde browne bread crustes must haue much good
mumblyng,

But good ale downe your throte hath good easie
tumbling.

R. Royster. The iolyest wenche that ere I hearde, little
mouse,

May I not reioyce that she shall dwell in my house?

Tib. Talk. So sirrha, nowe this geare beginneth for to
frame.

M. Mumbl. Thanks to God, though your work stand stil,
your tong is not lame

Tib. Talk. And though your teeth be gone, both so
sharpe and so fine

Yet your tongue can renne on patins as well as mine.

M. Mumbl. Ye were not for nought named Tyb Talke
apace.

Tib. Talk. Doth my talke grieue you? Alack, God saue
your grace.

M. Mumbl. I holde a grote ye will drinke anon for this
geare.

Tib. Talk. And I wyll pray you the stripes for me to
beare.

M. Mumbl. I holde a penny, ye will drink without a cup.

Tib. Talk. Wherein so ere ye drinke, I wote ye drinke all
vp.

An. Alyface. By Cock and well sowed, my good Tibet
Talke apace.

Tib. Talk. And een as well knitte my nowne Annot
Alyface.

R. Royster. See what a sort she kepeth that must be my wife.

Shall not I when I haue hir, leade a merrie life?

Tib. Talk. Welcome my good wenche, and sitte here by me iust.

An. Alyface. And howe doth our old beldame here, Mage Mumblecrust?

Tib. Talk. Chyde, and finde faultes, and threaten to complaine.

An. Alyface. To make vs poore girles shent to hir is small gaine.

M. Mumbl. I dyd neyther chyde, nor complaine, nor threaten.

R. Royster. It woulde grieue my heart to see one of them beaten.

M. Mumbl. I dyd nothyng but byd hir worke and holde hir peace.

Tib. Talk. So would I, if you coulde your clattering cease:

But the deuill can not make olde trotte holde hir tong.

An. Alyface. Let all these matters passe, and we three sing a song,

So shall we pleasantly bothe the tyme beguile now,
And eke dispatche all our workes ere we can tell how.

Tib. Talk. I shrew them that say nay, and that shall not be I.

M. Mumbl. And I am well content.

Tib. Talk. Sing on then by and by.

R. Royster. And I will not away, but listen to their song,
Yet Merygreeke and my folkes tary very long.

Tib, An, and Margerie, doe singe here.

Pipe mery Annot. etc.

Trilla, Trilla. Trillarie.

Worke Tibet, worke Annot, worke Margerie.

Sewe Tibet, knitte Annot, spinne Margerie.

Let vs see who shall winne the victorie.

Tib. Talk. This sleue is not willyng to be sewed I trowe,
A small thing might make me all in the grounde to throwe.

Then they sing agayne.

Pipe merrie Annot. etc.

Trilla. Trilla. Trillarie.

What Tibet, what Annot, what Margerie.

Ye sleepe, but we doe not, that shall we trie.

Your fingers be nombde, our worke will not lie.

Tib. Talk. If ye doe so againe, well I would aduise you nay.

In good sooth one stoppe more, and I make holy day.

They singe the thirde tyme.

Pipe Mery Annot. etc.

Trilla. Trilla. Trillarie.

Nowe Tibbet, now Annot, nowe Margerie.

Nowe whippet apace for the maystrie,

But it will not be, our mouth is so drie.

Tib. Talk. Ah, eche finger is a thombe to day me thinke,
I care not to let all alone, choose it swimme or sinke.

They sing the fourth tyme.

Pipe Mery Annot. etc.

Trilla. Trilla. Trillarie.

When Tibet, when Annot, when Margerie.

I will not, I can not, no more can I.

Then giue we all ouer, and there let it lye.

Tib. Talk. There it lieth, the worste is but a curried cote,

Tut I am vsed therto, I care not a grote.

*Lette hir
caste
downe hir
vvorke.*

An. Alyface. Hauē we done singyng since? then will I in
againē,
Here I founde you, and here I leaue both twaine. *Exeat.*

M. Mumbl. And I will not be long after: Tib Talke apace.

Tib. Talk. What is ye matter?

M. Mumbl. Yond stode a man al this space
And hath hearde all that euer we spake togyther.

Tib. Talk. Mary the more loute he for his comming
hither.
And the lesse good he can to listen maidens talke.
I care not and I go byd him hence for to walke:
It were well done to knowe what he maketh here away.

R. Royster. Nowe myght I speake to them, if I wist what
to say.

M. Mumbl. Nay we will go both off, and see what he is.

R. Royster. One that hath hearde all your talke and
singyng ywis.

Tib. Talk. The more to blame you, a good thurtie
husbande
Woulde elsewhere haue had some better matters in hande.

R. Royster. I dyd it for no harme, but for good loue I
beare,
To your dame mistresse Custance, I did your talke heare.
And Mistresse nourse I will kisse you for acquaintance.

M. Mumbl. I come anon sir.

Tib. Talk. Faith I would our dame Custance
Sawe this geare.

M. Mumbl. I must first wipe al cleane, yea I must.

Tib. Talk. Ill chieue it dotyng foole, but it must be cust.

M. Mumbl. God yelde you sir, chad not so much ichotte
not whan,
Nere since chwas bore chwine, of such a gay gentleman.

R. Royster. I will kisse you too mayden for the good will
I beare you.

Tib. Talk. No forsooth, by your leaue ye shall not kisse
me.

R. Royster. Yes be not afearde, I doe not disdayne you a
whit.

Tib. Talk. Why shoulde I feare you? I haue not so little
wit,
Ye are but a man I knowe very well.

R. Royster. Why then?

Tib. Talk. Forsooth for I wyll not, I vse not to kisse men.

R. Royster. I would faine kisse you too good maiden, if I
myght.

Tib. Talk. What shold that neede?

R. Royster. But to honor you by this light.
I vse to kisse all them that I loue to God I vowe.

Tib. Talk. Yea sir? I pray you when dyd ye last kisse your
cowe.

R. Royster. Ye might be proude to kisse me, if ye were
wise.

Tib. Talk. What promotion were therein?

R. Royster. Nourse is not so nice.

Tib. Talk. Well I haue not bene taught to kissing and
licking.

R. Royster. Yet I thanke you mistresse Nourse, ye made
no sticking.

M. Mumbl. I will not sticke for a kosse with such a man
as you.

Tib. Talk. They that lust: I will againe to my sewyng

now.

An. Alyfac[e]. Tidings hough, tidings, dame Custance greeteth you well.

R. Royster. Whome me?

An. Alyface. You sir? no sir? I do no suche tale tell.

R. Royster. But and she knewe me here.

An. Alyface. Tybet Talke apace,
Your mistresse Custance and mine, must speake with your grace.

Tib. Talk. With me?

An. Alyface. Ye muste come in to hir out of all doutes.

Tib. Talk. And my work not half done? A mischief on all loutes. *Ex. am.*

R. Royster. Ah good sweet nourse.

M. Mumb. A good sweete gentleman.

R. Royster. What?

M. Mumb. Nay I can not tel sir, but what thing would you?

R. Royster. Howe dothe sweete Custance, my heart of gold, tell me how?

M. Mumb. She dothe very well sir, and commaunde me to you.

R. Royster. To me?

M. Mumb. Yea to you sir.

R. Royster. To me? nurse tel me plain
To me?

M. Mumb. Ye.

R. Royster. That word maketh me aliue again.

M. Mumb. She commaunde me to one last day who ere it was.

R. Royster. That was een to me and none other by the Masse.

M. Mumb. I can not tell you surely, but one it was.

R. Royster. It was I and none other: this commeth to good passe.

I promise thee nourse I fauour hir.

M. Mumb. Een so sir.

R. Royster. Bid hir sue to me for mariage.

M. Mumb. Een so sir.

R. Royster. And surely for thy sake she shall speede.

M. Mumb. Een so sir.

R. Royster. I shall be contented to take hir.

M. Mumb. Een so sir.

R. Royster. But at thy request and for thy sake.

M. Mumb. Een so sir.

R. Royster. And come hearke in thine eare what to say.

M. Mumb. Een so sir.

*Here lette
him tell hir
a great long
tale in hir
eare.*

25

Actus. j. Scæna. iiij.

Mathew Merygreeke. Dobinet Doughtie.

Harpax. Ralph Royster. Margerie Mumblecrust.

M. Mumb. Come on sirs apace, and quite your selues like men,
Your pains shalbe rewarded.

D. Dou. But I wot not when.

26



M. Mery. Do your maister worship as ye haue done in time past.

D. Dough. Speake to them: of mine office he shall haue a cast.

M. Mery. *Harpax*, looke that thou doe well too, and thy fellow.

Harpax. I warrant, if he will myne example folowe.

M. Mery. Curtsie whooresons, douke you and crouche at euery worde,

D. Dough. Yes whether our maister speake earnest or borde.

M. Mery. For this lieth vpon his preferment in deede.

D. Dough. Oft is hee a wower, but neuer doth he speede.

M. Mery. But with whome is he nowe so sadly roundyng yond?

D. Dough. With *Nobs nicebecetur miserere* sonde.

[M.] Mery. God be at your wedding, be ye spedde alredie?

I did not suppose that your loue was so greedie,
I perceiue nowe ye haue chose of deuotion,
And ioy haue ye ladie of your promotion.

R. Royster. Tushe foole, thou art deceiued, this is not she.

M. Mery. Well mocke muche of hir, and keepe hir well I vise ye.

I will take no charge of such a faire piece keeping.

M. Mumb. What ayleth thys fellowe? he driueth me to weeping.

M. Mery. What weepe on the weddyng day? be merrie woman,

Though I say it, ye haue chose a good gentleman.

R. Royster. Kocks nownes what meanest thou man, tut a whistle.

[M. Mery.] Ah sir, be good to hir, she is but a gristle,
Ah sweete lambe and coney.

R. Royster. Tut thou art deceiued.

M. Mery. Weepe no more lady, ye shall be well receiued.
Vp wyth some mery noyse sirs, to bring home the bride.

R. Royster. Gogs armes knaue, art thou madde?
I tel thee thou art wide.

M. Mery. Then ye entende by nyght to haue hir home brought.

R. Royster. I tel thee no.

M. Mery. How then?

R. Royster. Tis neither ment ne thought.

M. Mery. What shall we then doe with hir?

R. Royster. Ah foolish harebraine,
This is not she.

M. Mery. No is? why then vnsayde againe,
And what yong girle is this with your mashyp so bolde?

R. Royster. A girle?

M. Mery. Yea. I dare say, scarce yet three score yere old.

R. Royster. This same is the faire widowes nurse of whome ye wotte.

M. Mery. Is she but a nurse of a house? hence home olde trotte,
Hence at once.

R. Royster. No, no.

M. Mery. What an please your maship
A nurse talke so homely with one of your worship?

R. Royster. I will haue it so: it is my pleasure and will.

M. Mery. Then I am content. Nourse come againe, tarry still.

R. Royster. What, she will helpe forward this my sute for hir part.

M. Mery. Then ist mine owne pygs nie, and blessing on my hart.

R. Royster. This is our best friend man.

M. Mery. Then teach hir what to say

M. Mumbl. I am taught alreadie.

M. Mery. Then go, make no delay.

R. Royster. Yet hark one word in thine eare.

M. Mery. Back sirs from his taile.

R. Royster. Backe vilaynes, will ye be priuie of my counsaile?

M. Mery. Backe sirs, so: I tolde you afore ye woulde be shent.

R. Royster. She shall haue the first day a whole pecke of argent.

M. Mumbl. A pecke? *Nomine patris*, haue ye so much spare?

R. Royster. Yea and a carte lode therto, or else were it bare,
Besides other mouables, housholde stuffe and lande.

M. Mumbl. Haue ye lands too.

R. Royster. An hundred marks.

M. Mery. Yea a thousand

M. Mumbl. And haue ye cattell too? and sheepe too?

R. Royster. Yea a fewe.

M. Mery. He is ashamed the numbre of them to shewe.
Een rounde about him, as many thousande sheepe goes,
As he and thou and I too, haue fingers and toes.

M. Mumbl. And how many yeares olde be you?

R. Royster. Fortie at lest.

M. Mery. Yea and thrice fortie to them.

R. Royster. Nay now thou dost iest.
I am not so olde, thou misreckonest my yeares.

M. Mery. I know that: but my minde was on bullockes and steeres.

M. Mumbl. And what shall I shewe hir your masterships name is?

R. Royster. Nay she shall make sute ere she know that ywis.

M. Mumbl. Yet let me somewhat knowe.

M. Mery. This is hee vnderstand,
That killed the blewe Spider in Blanchepouder lande.

M. Mumbl. Yea *Jesus*, William zee law, dyd he zo law?

M. Mery. Yea and the last Elephant that euer he sawe,
As the beast passed by, he start out of a buske,
And een with pure strength of armes pluckt out his great tuske.

M. Mumbl. *Jesus, nomine patris*, what a thing was that?

R. Royster. Yea but Merygreke one thing thou hast forgot.

M. Mery. What?

R. Royster. Of thother Elephant.

M. Mery. Oh hym that fledde away.

R. Royster. Yea.

M. Mery. Yea he knew that his match was in place that day

Tut, he bet the king of Crickets on Christmase day,
That he crept in a hole, and not a worde to say.

M. Mumb. A sore man by zembletee.

M. Mery. Why, he wrong a club
Once in a fray out of the hande of Belzebub.

R. Roister. And how when Mumfision?

M. Mery. Oh your coustrelyng
Bore the lanterne a fielde so before the gozelyng.
Nay that is to long a matter now to be tolde:
Neuer aske his name Nurse, I warrant thee, be bolde,
He conquered in one day from *Rome*, to *Naples*,
And woonne Townes nurse as fast as thou canst make
Apples.

M. Mumb. O Lorde, my heart quaketh for feare: he is to
sore.

R. Roister. Thou makest hir to much afearde,
Merygreeke no more.
This tale woulde feare my sweete heart Custance right
euill.

M. Mery. Nay let hir take him Nurse, and feare not the
deuill.
But thus is our song dasht. Sirs ye may home againe.

R. Roister. No shall they not. I charge you all here to
remaine:
The villaine slaues a whole day ere they can be founde.

M. Mery. Couche on your marybones whooresons, down
to the ground.
Was it meete he should tarie so long in one place
Without harmonie of Musike, or some solace?
Who so hath suche bees as your maister in hys head,
Had neede to haue his spirites with Musike to be fed.
By your maisterships licence.

R. Roister. What is that? a moate?

M. Mery. No it was a fooles feather had light on your
coate.

R. Roister. I was nigh no feathers since I came from my
bed.

M. Mery. No sir, it was a haire that was fall from your
hed.

R. Roister. My men com when it plese them.

M. Mery. By your leue.

R. Roister. What is that?

M. Mery. Your gown was foule spotted with the foot of a
gnat.

R. Roister. Their maister to offende they are nothing
afearde.
What now?

M. Mery. A lousy haire from your masterships beard.
Omnes famulæ. And sir for Nurses sake pardon this one
offence.
We shall not after this shew the like negligence.

R. Royster. I pardon you this once, and come sing nere
the wurse.

M. Mery. How like you the goodnesse of this gentleman
nurse?

M. Mumb. God saue his maistership that so can his men
forgeue,
And I wyll heare them sing ere I go, by his leaue.

R. Royster. Mary and thou shalt wenche, come we two
will daunce.

M. Mumb. Nay I will by myne owne selfe foote the song
perchance.

R. Royster. Go to it sir, lustily.

M. Mumbl. Pipe vp a mery note,
Let me heare it playde, I will foote it for a grote.

Cantent.

R. Royster. Now nurse take thys same letter here to thy
mistresse.

And as my trust is in thee plie my businesse.

M. Mumbl. It shalbe done?

M. Mery. Who made it?

R. Royster. I wrote it ech whit.

M. Mery. Then nedes it no mending.

R. Royster. No, no.

M. Mery. No I know your wit.
I warrant it wel.

M. Mumbl. It shal be deliuered.
But if ye speede, shall I be considered?

M. Mery. Whough, dost thou doubt of that?

Madge. What shal I haue?

M. Mery. An hundred times more than thou canst deuise
to craue.

M. Mumbl. Shall I haue some newe geare? for my olde is
all spent.

M. Mery. The worst kitchen wench shall goe in ladies
rayment.

M. Mumbl. Yea?

M. Mery. And the worst drudge in the house shal go
better
Than your mistresse doth now.

Mar. Then I trudge with your letter.

R. Royster. Now may I repose me: Custance is mine
owne.
Let vs sing and play homeward that it may be knowne.

M. Mery. But are you sure, that your letter is well
enough?

R. Royster. I wrote it my selfe.

M. Mery. Then sing we to dinner.

Here they sing, and go out singing.

Actus. j. Scæna. v.

Christian Custance. Margerie Mumblecrust.

C. Custance.  Ho tooke thee thys letter
Margerie Mumblecrust?

M. Mumbl. A lustie gay
bachelor tooke it me of
trust,
And if ye seeke to him he will

lowe your doing.

C. Custance. Yea, but where learned he that manner of
wowing?

M. Mumbl. If to sue to hym, you will any paines take,
He will haue you to his wife (he sayth) for my sake.

C. Custance. Some wise gentleman belike. I am
bespoken:

And I thought verily thys had bene some token
From my dere spouse Gawin Goodluck, whom when him
please
God luckily sende home to both our heartes ease.

M. Mumbl. A ioyly man it is I wote well by report,
And would haue you to him for marriage resort:

Best open the writing, and see what it doth speake.

C. Custance. At thys time nourse I will neither reade ne breake.

M. Mumbl. He promised to giue you a whole pecke of golde.

C. Custance. Perchaunce lacke of a pynte when it shall be all tolde.

M. Mumbl. I would take a gay riche husbande, and I were you.

C. Custance. In good sooth Madge, een so would I, if I were thou.

But no more of this fond talke now, let vs go in,
And see thou no more moue me folly to begin.
Nor bring mee no mo letters for no mans pleasure,
But thou know from whom.

M. Mumbl. I warrant ye shall be sure.

32

Actus. ij. Scæna. j.

Dobinet Doughtie.

D. Dough.



Here is the house I goe to,
before or behinde?
I know not where nor when
nor how I shal it finde.
If I had ten mens bodies and
legs and strength,
This trotting that I haue must
needes lame me
at length.

And nowe that my maister is new set on wowyng,
I trust there shall none of vs finde lacke of doying:
Two paire of shoes a day will nowe be too litle
To serue me, I must trotte to and fro so mickle.
Go beare me thys token, carrie me this letter,
Nowe this is the best way, nowe that way is better.
Vp before day sirs, I charge you, an houre or twaine,
Trudge, do me thys message, and bring worde quicke
agaïne,
If one misse but a minute, then his armes and woundes,
I woulde not haue slacked for ten thousand poundes.
Nay see I befeeche you, if my most trustie page,
Goe not nowe aboute to hinder my mariage,
So feruent hotte wowyng, and so farre from wiuing,
I trowe neuer was any creature liuyng,
With euery woman is he in some loues pang,
Then vp to our lute at midnight, twangledome twang,
Then twang with our sonets, and twang with our dumps,
And heyhough from our heart, as heauie as lead lumpess:
Then to our recorder with toodleoodle poope
As the howlet out of an yuie bushe should hoope.
Anon to our gitterne, thrumpledum, thrumpledum thrum,
Thrumpledum, thrumpledum, thrumpledum, thrumpledum
thrum.


Of Songs and Balades also he is a maker,
And that can he as finely doe as Iacke Raker,
Yea and *extempore* will he ditie compose,
Foolishe *Marsias* nere made the like I suppose,
Yet must we sing them, as good stuffe I vndertake,
As for such a pen man is well fityng to make.
Ah for these long nights, heyhow, when will it be day?
I feare ere I come she will be wowed away.
Then when aunswere is made that it may not bee,
O death why comdest thou not? by and by (sayth he)
But then, from his heart to put away sorowe,
He is as farre in with some newe loue next morowe.
But in the meane season we trudge and we trot,
From dayspring to midnyght, I sit not, nor rest not.
And now am I sent to dame Christian Custance:

33

But I feare it will ende with a mocke for pastance.
I bring hir a ring, with a token in a cloute,
And by all gesse, this same is hir house out of doute.
I knowe it nowe perfect, I am in my right way.
And loe yond the olde nurse that was wyth vs last day.

Actus. ij. Scæna. ij.

Mage Mumblecrust. Dobinet Doughtie.

M. Mumb.  I was nere so shoke vp afore since
I was borne,
That our mistresse coule not
haue chid I wold haue sworne:
And I pray God I die if I ment any
harne,

But for my life time this shall be to me a charme.

D. Dough. God you saue and see nurse, and howe is it
with you?

M. Mumb. Mary a great deale the worse it is for suche
as thou.

D. Dough. For me? Why so?

M. Mumb. Why wer not thou one of them, say,
That song and playde here with the gentleman last day?

D. Dough. Yes, and he would know if you haue for him
spoken.

And prayes you to deliuer this ring and token.

M. Mumb. Nowe by the token that God tokened
brother,

I will deliuer no token one nor other.

I haue once ben so shent for your maisters pleasure,
As I will not be agayne for all hys treasure.

D. Dough. He will thank you woman.

M. Mumb. I will none of his thanke. *Ex.*

D. Dough. I weene I am a prophete, this geare will proue
blanke:

But what should I home againe without answeere go?

It were better go to *Rome* on my head than so.

I will tary here this moneth, but some of the house

Shall take it of me, and then I care not a louse.


But yonder commeth forth a wenche or a ladde,

If he haue not one Lumbardes touche, my lucke is bad.

34

Actus. ij. Scæna. iij.

Truepenie. D. Dough. Tibet T. Anot Al.

Trupeny.  I am cleane lost for lacke of mery
companie,
We gree not halfe well within, our
wenches and I,
They will commaunde like
mistresses, they will forbyd,

If they be not serued, Trupeny must be chyd.

Let them be as mery nowe as ye can desire,

With turnyng of a hande, our mirth lieth in the mire,

I can not skill of such chaungeable mettle,

There is nothing with them but in docke out nettle.

D. Dough. Whether is it better that speake to him furst,

Or he first to me, it is good to cast the wurst.

If I beginne first, he will smell all my purpose,

Otherwise I shall not neede any thing to disclose.

Trupeny. What boy haue we yonder? I will see what he
is.

D. Dough. He commeth to me. It is hereabout ywis.

Trupeny. Wouldest thou ought friende, that thou lookest so about?

D. Dough. Yea, but whether ye can helpe me or no, I dout.

I seeke to one mistresse Custance house here dwellyng.

Trupenie. It is my mistresse ye seeke too by your telling.

D. Dough. Is there any of that name heere but shee?

Trupenie. Not one in all the whole towne that I knowe pardee.

D. Dough. A Widowe she is I trow.

Trupenie. And what and she be?

D. Dough. But ensured to an husbände.

Trupenie. Yea, so thinke we.

D. Dough. And I dwell with hir husbände that trusteth to be.

Trupenie. In faith then, must thou needes be welcome to me,
Let vs for acquaintance shake handes together,
And what ere thou be, heartily welcome hither.

Tib. Talk. Well Trupenie neuer but flinging.

An. Alyface. And frisking?

Trupenie. Well Tibet and Annot, still swingyng and whiskyng?

Tib. Talk. But ye roile abroad.

An. Alyface. In the streete euere where.

Trupenie. Where are ye twaine, in chambers when ye mete me there?
But come hither fooles, I haue one nowe by the hande,
Seruant to hym that must be our mistresse husbände,
Byd him welcome.

An. Alyface. To me truly is he welcome.

Tib. Talk. Forsooth and as I may say, heartily welcome.

D. Dough. I thank you mistresse maides

An. Alyface. I hope we shal better know

Tib. Talk. And when wil our new master come.

D. Dough. Shortly I trow.

Tib. Talk. I would it were to morow: for till he resorte
Our mistresse being a Widow hath small comferte,
And I hearde our nourse speake of an husbände to day
Ready for our mistresse, a riche man and a gay,
And we shall go in our frenche hoodes euery day,
In our silke cassocks (I warrant you) freshe and gay,
In our tricke serdegews and billiments of golde,
Braue in our sutes of chaunge seuen double folde,
Then shall ye see Tibet sirs, treade the mosse so trimme,
Nay, why sayd I treade? ye shall see hir glide and swimme,
Not lumperdee clumperdee like our spaniell Rig.

Trupeny. Mary then prickmedaintie come taste me a fig,
Who shall then know our Tib Talke apace trow ye?

An. Alyface. And why not Annot Alyface as fyne as she?

Trupeny. And what had Tom Trupeny, a father or none?

An. Alyface. Then our prety newe come man will looke to be one.

Trupeny. We foure I trust shall be a ioily mery knot.
Shall we sing a fitte to welcome our friende, Annot?

An. Alyface. Perchaunce he can not sing.

D. Dough. I am at all assayes.

Tib. Talk. By cocke and the better welcome to vs alwayes.

<p>A thing very fitte For them that haue witte, And are felowes knitte Seruants in one house to bee, Is fast fast for to sitte, And not oft to flitte, Nor varie a whitte, But louingly to agree.</p> <p>No man complainyng, Nor other disdayning, For losse or for gainyng, But felowes or friends to bee. No grudge remainyng, No worke refrainyng, Nor helpe restrainyng, But louingly to agree.</p>	<p>No man for despite, By worde or by write His felowe to twite, But further in honestie, No good turnes entwite, Nor olde sores recite, But let all goe quite, And louingly to agree.</p> <p>After drudgerie, When they be werie, Then to be merie, To laugh and sing they be free With chip and cherie Heigh derie derie, Trill on the berie, And louingly to agree.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Finis.</i></p>
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Tib. Talk. Wyll you now in with vs vnto our mistresse go?

D. Dough. I haue first for my maister an errand or two.
But I haue here from him a token and a ring,
They shall haue moste thanke of hir that first doth it bring.

Tib. Talk. Mary that will I.

Trupeny. See and Tibet snatch not now.


Tib. Talk. And why may not I sir, get thanks as well as
you? *Exeat.*

An. Alyface. Yet get ye not all, we will go with you both.
And haue part of your thanks be ye neuer so loth.

D. Dough. So my handes are ridde of *[Exeant omnes.*
it: I care for no more.
I may now return home: so durst I not afore. *Exeat.*

Actus. ij. Scæna. iiij.

C. Custance. Tibet. Annot Alyface. Trupeny.

C. Custance.  Ay come forth all three: and
come hither pretie mayde:
Will not so many forewarnings
make you afrayde?

Tib. Talk. Yes forsoth.

C. Custance. But stil be a runner vp and downe
Still be a bringer of tidings and tokens to towne.

Tib. Talk. No forsoth mistresse.

C. Custance. Is all your delite and ioy
In whiskyng and ramping abroad like a Tom boy.

Tib. Talk. Forsoth these were there too, Annot and
Trupenie.

Trupenie. Yea but ye alone tooke it, ye can not denie.

Annot Aly. Yea that ye did.

Tibet. But if I had not, ye twaine would.

C. Custance. You great calfe ye should haue more witte,
so ye should:
But why shoulde any of you take such things in hande?

Tibet. Because it came from him that must be your
husbande.

C. Custance. How do ye know that?

Tibet. Forsoth the boy did say so.

C. Custance. What was his name?

An. Alyface. We asked not.

C. Custance. No did?

An. Aliface. He is not farre gone of likelyhod.

Trupeny. I will see.

C. Custance. If thou canst finde him in the streete bring
him to me.

Trupenie. Yes. *Exeat.*

C. Custance. Well ye naughty girles, if euer I perceiue
That henceforth you do letters or tokens receiue,
To bring vnto me from any person or place,
Except ye first shewe me the partie face to face,
Eyther thou or thou, full truly abyee thou shalt.

Tibet. Pardon this, and the next tyme pouder me in falt.

C. Custance. I shall make all girles by you twaine to
beware.

Tibet. If euer I offende againe do not me spare.
But if euer I see that false boy any more
By your mistreshyps licence I tell you afore
I will rather haue my cote twentie times swinged,
Than on the naughtie wag not to be auenged.

C. Custance. Good wenches would not so rampe abroad
ydelly,
But keepe within doores, and plie their work earnestly,
If one would speake with me that is a man likely,
Ye shall haue right good thanke to bring me worde
quickly.
But otherwyse with messages to come in post
From henceforth I promise you, shall be to your cost.
Get you in to your work.

Tib. An. Yes forsoth.

C. Custance. Hence both twaine.
And let me see you play me such a part againe.

Trupeny. Maistresse, I haue runne past the farre ende of
the streete,
Yet can I not yonder craftie boy see nor meete.

C. Custance. No?

Trupeny. Yet I looked as farre beyonde the people.....
As one may see out of the toppe of Paules steeple.

C. Custance. Hence in at doores, and let me no more be
vext.

Trupeny. Forgeue me this one fault, and lay on for the
next.

C. Custance. Now will I in too, for I thinke so God
me mende,
This will proue some foolishe matter in the ende.

Exeat.

Actus. [i]ij. Scæna. j.

Mathewe Merygreeke.

M. Mery.



Owe say thys againe: he hath
somewhat to dooing
Which followeth the trace of
one that is wowing,
Specially that hath no more
wit in his hedde,
Than my cousin Roister
Doister withall is ledde.
I am sent in all haste to espie


and to marke

How our letters and tokens are likely to warke.
Maister Roister Doister must haue aunswere in haste
For he loueth not to spende much labour in waste.
Nowe as for Christian Custance by this light,

Though she had not hir trowth to Gawin Goodluck plight,
Yet rather than with such a loutishe dolte to marie,
I dare say woulde lyue a poore lyfe solitarie,
But fayne would I speake with Custance if I wist how
To laugh at the matter, yond commeth one forth now.

Actus. iij. Scæna. ij.

Tibet. M. Merygreeke. Christian Custance.

Tib. Talk.  H that I might but once in my life
haue a sight
Of him that made vs all so yll shent
by this light,
He should neuer escape if I had him
by the eare,

But euen from his head, I would it bite or teare.
Yea and if one of them were not inowe,
I would bite them both off, I make God auow.

M. Mery. What is he, whome this little mouse doth so
threaten?

Tib. Talk. I woulde teache him I trow, to make girles
shent or beaten.

M. Mery. I will call hir: Maide with whome are ye so
hastie?

Tib. Talk. Not with you sir, but with a little wag-pastie,
A deceiuer of folkes, by subtill craft and guile.

M. Mery. I knowe where she is: Dobinet hath wrought
some wile.

Tib. Talk. He brought a ring and token which he sayd
was sent

From our dames husbände, but I wot well I was shent:
For it liked hir as well to tell you no lies,
As water in hir shyppe, or salt cast in hir eies:
And yet whence it came neyther we nor she can tell.

M. Mery. We shall haue sport anone: I like this very well.
And dwell ye here with mistresse Custance faire maide?

Tib. Talk. Yea mary doe I sir: what would ye haue sayd?

M. Mery. A little message vnto hir by worde of mouth.

Tib. Talk. No messages by your leaue, nor tokens
forsoth.

M. Mery. Then help me to speke with hir.

Tibet. With a good wil that.
Here she commeth forth. Now speake ye know best what.

C. Custance. None other life with you maide, but abrode
to skip?

Tib. Talk. Forsoth here is one would speake with your
mistresship.

C. Custance. Ah, haue ye ben learning of mo messages
now?

Tib. Talk. I would not heare his minde, but bad him
shewe it to you.

C. Custance. In at dores.

Tib. Talk. I am gon. *Ex.*

M. Mery. Dame Custance god ye saue.

C. Custance. Welcome friend Merygreeke: and
what thing wold ye haue?

M. Mery. I am come to you a little matter to breake.

C. Custance. But see it be honest, else better not to
speake.

M. Mery. Howe feele ye your selfe affected here of late?

C. Custance. I feele no maner chaunge but after the olde
rate.

But wherby do ye meane?

M. Mery. Concerning mariage.
Doth not loue lade you?

C. Custance. I feele no such cariage.

M. Mery. Doe ye feele no pangues of dotage?
aunswere me right.

C. Custance. I dote so, that I make but one sleepe all the
night

But what neede all these wordes?

M. Mery. Oh Iesus, will ye see
What dissemblyng creatures these same women be?
The gentleman ye wote of, whome ye doe so loue,
That ye woulde fayne marrie him, yf ye durst it moue,
Among other riche widowes, which are of him glad,
Lest ye for lesing of him perchaunce might runne mad,
Is nowe contented that vpon your sute making,
Ye be as one in election of taking.

C. Custance. What a tale is this? that I wote of?
whome I loue?

M. Mery. Yea and he is as louing a worme againe as a
doue.

Een of very pitie he is willyng you to take,
Bicause ye shall not destroy your selfe for his sake.

C. Custance. Mary God yelde his mashyp what euer he
be,

It is gentmanly spoken.

M. Mery. Is it not trowe ye?
If ye haue the grace now to offer your self, ye speede.

C. Custance. As mucche as though I did, this time it shall
not neede,

But what gentman is it, I pray you tell me plaine, That
woweth so finely?

M. Mery. Lo where ye be againe,
As though ye knewe him not.

C. Custance. Tush ye speake in iest.

M. Mery. Nay sure, the partie is in good knacking
earnest,
And haue you he will (he sayth) and haue you he must.

C. Custance. I am promised duryng my life, that is iust.

M. Mery. Mary so thinketh he, vnto him alone.

C. Custance. No creature hath my faith and trouth but
one,

That is Gawin Goodlucke: and if it be not hee,
He hath no title this way what euer he be,
Nor I know none to whome I haue such worde spoken.

M. Mery. Ye knowe him not you by his letter and token.

C. Custance. In dede true it is, that a letter I haue,
But I neuer reade it yet as God me saue.

M. Mery. Ye a woman? and your letter so long vnredde.

C. Custance. Ye may therby know what hast I haue to
wedde.

But now who it is, for my hande I knowe by gesse.

M. Mery. Ah well I say.

C. Custance. It is Roister Doister doubtlesse.

M. Mery. Will ye neuer leaue this dissimulation?
Ye know hym not.

C. Custance. But by imagination,
For no man there is but a very dolt and loute
That to wowe a Widowe woulde so go about.
He shall neuer haue me hys wife while he doe liue.

M. Mery. Then will he haue you if he may, so mote I
thriue,

And he biddeth you sende him worde by me,
That ye humbly beseech him, ye may his wife be,
And that there shall be no let in you nor mistrust,
But to be wedded on sunday next if he lust,
And biddeth you to looke for him.

C. Custance. Doth he byd so?

M. Mery. When he commeth, aske hym whether he did
or no?

C. Custance. Goe say, that I bid him keepe him warme
at home

For if he come abroade, he shall cough me a mome.
My mynde was vexed, I shrew his head sottish dolt.

M. Mery. He hath in his head.

C. Custance. As much braine as a burbolt.

M. Mery. Well dame Custance, if he heare you thus play
choploge.

C. Custance. What will he?

M. Mery. Play the deuill in the horologe.

C. Custance. I defye him loute.

M. Mery. Shall I tell hym what ye say?

C. Custance. Yea and adde what so euer thou canst, I
thee pray,

And I will auouche it what so euer it bee.

M. Mery. Then let me alone we will laugh well ye shall
see,

It will not be long ere he will hither resorte.

C. Custance. Let hym come when hym lust, I wishe no
better sport.


Fare ye well, I will in, and read my great letter.

I shall to my wower make answeere the better. *Exeat.*

43

Actus. iij. Scæna. iij.

Mathew Merygreeke. Roister Doister.

M. Mery.  Owe that the whole answeere in my
deuise doth rest,
I shall paint out our wower in
colours of the best.
And all that I say shall be on
Custances mouth,

She is author of all that I shall speake forsoth.

But yond commeth Roister Doister nowe in a traunce.

R. Royster. Iuno sende me this day good lucke and good
chaunce.

I can not but come see how Merygreeke doth speede.

M. Mery. I will not see him, but giue him a iutte in
deede.

I crie your mastershyps mercie.

R. Royster. And whither now?

M. Mery. As fast as I could runne sir in poste against
you.

But why speake ye so faintly, or why are ye so sad?

R. Royster. Thou knowest the prouerbe, bycause I can
not be had.

Hast thou spoken with this woman?

M. Mery. Yea that I haue.

R. Royster. And what will this geare be?

M. Mery. No so God me saue.

R. Royster. Hast thou a flat answer?

M. Mery. Nay a sharp answer.

44

R. Royster. What

M. Mery. Ye shall not (she sayth) by hir will marry hir
cat.

Ye are such a calfe, such an asse, such a blocke,
Such a lilburne, such a hoball, such a lobcocke,
And bicause ye shoulde come to hir at no season,
She despised your maship out of all reason.
Bawawe what ye say (ko I) of such a ientman,
Nay I feare him not (ko she) doe the best he can.
He vaunteth him selfe for a man of prowesse greate,
Where as a good gander I dare say may him beate.
And where he is louted and laughed to skorne,
For the veriest dolte that euer was borne,
And veriest lubber, slouen and beast,
Liuing in this worlde from the west to the east:
Yet of himselfe hath he suche opinion,
That in all the worlde is not the like minion.
He thinketh eche woman to be brought in dotage
With the onely sight of his goodly personage:
Yet none that will haue hym: we do hym loute and flocke,
And make him among vs, our common sporting stocke,
And so would I now (ko she) saue onely bicause,
Better nay (ko I) I lust not medle with dawes.
Ye are happy (ko I) that ye are a woman,
This would cost you your life in case ye were a man.

R. Royster. Yea an hundred thousand pound should not
saue hir life.

M. Mery. No but that ye wowe hir to haue hir to your
wife,
But I coulde not stoppe hir mouth.

R. Royster. Heigh how alas,

M. Mery. Be of good cheere man, and let the worlde
passe.

R. Royster. What shall I doe or say nowe that it will not
bee.

M. Mery. Ye shall haue choise of a thousande as good as
shee,
And ye must pardon hir, it is for lacke of witte.

R. Royster. Yea, for were not I an husbände for hir fitte?
Well what should I now doe?

M. Mery. In faith I can not tell.

R. Royster. I will go home and die.

M. Mery. Then shall I bidde toll the bell?

R. Royster. No.

M. Mery. God haue mercie on your soule, ah good
gentleman,
That er ye shuld th[u]s dye for an vnkinde woman.
Will ye drinke once ere ye goe.

R. Royster. No, no, I will none.

M. Mery. How feele your soule to God.

R. Royster. I am nigh gone.

M. Mery. And shall we hence streight?

R. Royster. Yea.

M. Mery. *Placebo dilexi.* *vt infra.* *
Maister Doister Doister will streight go home and die.

R. Royster. Heigh how, alas, the pangs of death my
hearte do breake.

M. Mery. Holde your peace for shame sir, a dead man
may not speake.

Nequando: What mourners and what torches shall we
haue?

R. Royster. None.

M. Mery. *Dirige.* He will go darklyng to his graue,
Neque lux, neque crux, neque mourners, *neque* clinke,
He will steale to heauen, vnknowing to God I thinke.

A porta inferi, who shall your goodes possesse?

R. Royster. Thou shalt be my sectour, and haue all more
and lesse.

M. Mery. *Requiem æternam.* Now God reward your
mastershpy.

And I will crie halfepenie doale for your worshyp.

Come forth sirs, heare the dolefull newes I
shall you tell.

*Euocat
seruos
militis.*

Our good maister here will no longer with
vs dwell,

But in spite of Custance, which hath hym weries,
Let vs see his mashyp solemnely buried.

46

And while some piece of his soule is yet hym within,
Some part of his funeralls let vs here begin.

Audiu vocem, All men take heede by this one gentleman,

Howe you sette your loue vpon an vnkinde woman.

For these women be all such madde pieuishe elues,
They will not be wonne except it please them selues.

But in fayth Custance if euer ye come in hell,

Maister Roister Doister shall serue you as well.

And will ye needes go from vs thus in very deede?

R. Royster. Yea in good sadnesse?

M. Mery. Now Iesus Christ be your speede.

Good night Roger olde knaue, farewell Roger olde knaue,

Good night Roger olde knaue, knaue knap. *vt infra. ***

Pray for the late maister Roister Doisters soule,

And come forth parish Clarke, let the passing bell toll.

Pray for your mayster sirs, and for hym ring a peale.

He was your right good maister while he
was in heale.

*Ad seruos
militis.*

Qui Lazarum.

R. Royster. Heigh how.

M. Mery. Dead men go not so fast In Paradisum.

R. Royster. Heihow.

M. Mery. Soft, heare what I haue cast

R. Royster. I will heare nothing, I am past.

M. Mery. Whough, wellaway.

Ye may tarie one houre, and heare what I shall say,

Ye were best sir for a while to reuiue againe,

And quite them er ye go.

R. Royster. Trowest thou so?

M. Mery. Ye plain.

R. Royster. How may I reuiue being nowe so farre past?

M. Mery. I will rubbe your temples, and fette you againe
at last.

R. Royster. It will not be possible.

M. Mery. Yes for twentie pounce.

47

R. Royster. Armes what dost thou?

M. Mery. Fet you again out of your sound

By this crosse ye were nigh gone in deede, I might feele

Your soule departing within an inche of your heele.

Now folow my counsell.

R. Royster. What is it?

M. Mery. If I wer you,

Custance should eft seeke to me, ere I woulde bowe.

R. Royster. Well, as thou wilt haue me, euen so will I
doe.

M. Mery. Then shall ye reuiue againe for an houre or
two.

R. Royster. As thou wilt I am content for a little space.

M. Mery. Good happe is not hastie: yet in space com[e]th
grace,

To speake with Custance your selfe shoulde be very well,
What good therof may come, nor I, nor you can tell.

But now the matter standeth vpon your mariage,
Ye must now take vnto you a lustie courage.
Ye may not speake with a faint heart to Custance,
But with a lusty breast and countenance,
That she may knowe she hath to answere to a man.

R. Royster. Yes I can do that as well as any can.

M. Mery. Then bicause ye must Custance face to face
wowe,

Let vs see how to behaue your selfe ye can doe.
Ye must haue a portely bragge after your estate.

R. Royster. Tushe, I can handle that after the best rate.

M. Mery. Well done, so loe, vp man with your head and
chin,

Vp with that snoute man: so loe, nowe ye begin,
So, that is somewhat like, but prankie cote, nay whan,
That is a lustie brute, handes vnder your side man:
So loe, now is it euen as it should bee,
That is somewhat like, for a man of your degree.
Then must ye stately goe, ietting vp and downe,
Tut, can ye no better shake the taile of your gowne?
There loe, suche a lustie bragge it is ye must make.

R. Royster. To come behind, and make curtsie, thou
must som pains take.

M. Mery. Else were I much to blame, I thanke your
mastershyps.

The lorde one day all to begrime you with worshyp,
Backe sir sauce, let gentlefolkes haue elbowe roome,
Voyde sirs, see ye not maister Roister Doister come?
Make place my maisters.

R. Royster. Thou iustlest nowe to nigh.

M. Mery. Back al rude loutes.

R. Royster. Tush.

M. Mery. I crie your maship mercy
Hoighdagh, if faire fine mistresse Custance sawe you now,
Ralph Royster Doister were hir owne I warrant you.

R. Royster. Neare an M by your girdle?

M. Mery. Your good mastershyps
Maistershyps, were hir owne Mistreshyps mistreshyps,
Ye were take vp for haukes, ye were gone, ye were gone,
But now one other thing more yet I thinke vpon.

R. Royster. Shewe what it is.

M. Mery. A wower be he neuer so poore
Must play and sing before his bestbeloues doore,
How much more than you?

R. Royster. Thou speakest wel out of dout.

M. Mery. And perchaunce that woulde make hir the
sooner come out.

R. Royster. Goe call my Musitians, bydde them high
apace.

M. Mery. I wyll be here with them ere ye can say trey
ace. *Exeat.*

R. Royster. This was well sayde of Merygreeke, I lowe
hys wit,

Before my sweete hearts dore we will haue a fit,
That if my loue come forth, that I may with hir talke,
I doubt not but this geare shall on my side walke.
But lo, how well Merygreeke is returned sence.

M. Mery. There hath grown no grasse on my heele since
I went hence,

Lo here haue I brought that shall make you pastance.

R. Royster. Come sirs let vs sing to winne my deare loue
Custance.

Cantent.

M. Mery. Lo where she commeth, some countenance to
hir make


And ye shall heare me be plaine with hir for your sake.

* See pp. 87, 88.

** See p. 88.

Actus. iij. Scæna. iiij.

Custance. Merygreeke. Roister Doister.

C. Custance.  Hat gaudyng and foolyng is this
afore my doore?

M. Mery. May not folks be
honest, pray you, though
they be pore?

C. Custance. As that thing may be true, so rich folks
may be fooles,

R. Royster. Hir talke is as fine as she had learned in
schooles.

M. Mery. Looke partly towarde hir, and drawe a little
nere.

C. Custance. Get ye home idle folkes.

M. Mery. Why may not we be here?
Nay and ye will haze, haze: otherwise I tell you plaine,
And ye will not haze, then giue vs our geare againe.

C. Custance. In deede I haue of yours much gay things
God saue all.

R. Royster. Speake gently vnto hir, and let hir take all.

M. Mery. Ye are to tender hearted: shall she make vs
dawes?

Nay dame, I will be plaine with you in my friends cause.

R. Royster. Let all this passe sweete heart and accept
my seruice.

C. Custance. I will not be serued with a foole in no wise,
When I choose an husbände I hope to take a man.

M. Mery. And where will ye finde one which can doe that
he can?

Now thys man towarde you being so kinde,
You not to make him an answeere somewhat to his minde.

C. Custance. I sent him a full answeere by you dyd I not?

M. Mery. And I reported it.

C. Custance. Nay I must speake it againe.

R. Royster. No no, he tolde it all.

M. Mery. Was I not metely plaine?

R. Royster. Yes.

M. Mery. But I would not tell all, for faith if I had
With you dame Custance ere this houre it had been bad,
And not without cause: for this goodly personage,
Ment no lesse than to ioyne with you in mariage.

C. Custance. Let him wast no more labour nor sute
about me.

M. Mery. Ye know not where your preferment lieth I see,
He sending you such a token, ring and letter.

C. Custance. Mary here it is, ye neuer sawe a better.

M. Mery. Let vs see your letter.

C. Custance. Holde, reade it if ye can.
And see what letter it is to winne a woman.

M. Mery. To mine owne deare coney birde, swete heart,
and pigsny

Good Mistresse Custance present these by and by,
Of this superscription do ye blame the stile?

C. Custance. With the rest as good stuffe as ye redde a
great while.

M. Mery. Sweete mistresse where as I loue you nothing
at all,

Regarding your substance and riches chiefe of all,
For your personage, beautie, demeanour and wit,
I commende me vnto you neuer a whit.

Sorie to heare report of your good welfare.
For (as I heare say) suche your conditions are,
That ye be worthie fauour of no liuing man,
To be abhorred of euery honest man.

To be taken for a woman enclined to vice.
Nothing at all to Vertue gyuing hir due price.

Whersore concerning mariage, ye are thought
Suche a fine Paragon, as nere honest man bought.

And nowe by these presentes I do you aduertise
That I am minded to marrie you in no wise.

For your goodes and substance, I coulde bee content
To take you as ye are. If ye mynde to bee my wyfe,
Ye shall be assured for the tyme of my lyfe,
I will keepe ye ryght well, from good rayment and fare,
Ye shall not be kepte but in sorowe and care.

Ye shall in no wyse lyue at your owne libertie,
Doe and say what ye lust, ye shall neuer please me,
But when ye are mery, I will be all sadde,
When ye are sory, I will be very gladde.

When ye seeke your heartes ease, I will be vnkinde,
At no tyme, in me shall ye muche gentleness finde.

But all things contrary to your will and minde,
Shall be done: otherwise I wyll not be behinde
To speake. And as for all them that woulde do you wrong
I will so helpe and mainteyne, ye shall not lyue long.
Nor any foolishe dolte, shall cumbre you but I.

Thus good mistresse Custance, the lorde you saue and
kepe,

From me Royster Doyster, whether I wake or slepe.
Who fauoureth you no lesse, (ye may be bolde)
Than this letter purporteth, which ye haue vnfolde.

C. Custance. Howe by this letter of loue? is it not fine?

R. Royster. By the armes of Caleys it is none of myne.

M. Mery. Fie you are fowle to blame this is your owne
hand.

C. Custance. Might not a woman be proude of such an
husbande?

M. Mery. Ah that ye would in a letter shew such despite.

R. Royster. Oh I would I had hym here, the which did it
endite.

M. Mery. Why ye made it your selfe ye tolde me by this
light.

R. Royster. Yea I ment I wrote it myne owne selfe
yesternight.

C. Custance. Ywis sir, I would not haue sent you such a
mocke.

R. Royster. Ye may so take it, but I ment it not so by
cocke.

M. Mery. Who can blame this woman to fume and frette
and rage?

Tut, tut, your selfe nowe haue marde your owne marriage.
Well, yet mistresse Custance, if ye can this remitte,
This gentleman other wise may your loue requitte.

C. Custance. No God be with you both, and seeke no
more to me. *Exeat.*

R. Royster. Wough, she is gone for euer, I shall hir no
more see.

M. Mery. What weepe? fye for shame, and blubber? for
manhods sake,

Neuer lette your foe so muche pleasure of you take.
Rather play the mans parte, and doe loue refraine.

If she despise you een despise ye hir againe.

R. Royster. By gosse and for thy sake I defye hir in deede.

M. Mery. Yea and perchaunce that way ye shall much sooner speede,

For one madde propretie these women haue in fey,
When ye will, they will not: Will not ye, then will they.

Ah foolishe woman, ah moste vnluckie Custance,

Ah vnfortunate woman, ah pieuishe Custance,

Art thou to thine harmes so obstinately bent,

That thou canst not see where lieth thine high preferment?

Canst thou not lub dis man, which coulde lub dee so well?

Art thou so much thine own foe.

R. Royster. Thou dost the truth tell.

M. Mery. Wel I lament.

R. Royster. So do I.

M. Mery. Wherfor?

R. Royster. For this thing

Bicause she is gone.

M. Mery. I mourne for an other thing.

R. Royster. What is it Merygreeke, wherfore thou dost grieffe take?

M. Mery. That I am not a woman myselfe for your sake,

I would haue you my selfe, and a strawe for yond Gill,

And mocke much of you though it were against my will.

I would not I warrant you, fall in such a rage,

As so to refuse suche a goodly personage.

R. Royster. In faith I heartily thanke thee Merygreeke.

M. Mery. And I were a woman.

R. Royster. Thou wouldest to me seeke.

M. Mery. For though I say it, a goodly person ye bee.

R. Royster. No, no.

M. Mery. Yes a goodly man as ere I dyd see.

R. Royster. No, I am a poore homely man as God made mee.

M. Mery. By the faith that I owe to God sir, but ye bee.

Woulde I might for your sake, spende a thousande pound land.

R. Royster. I dare say thou wouldest haue me to thy husbände.

M. Mery. Yea: And I were the fairest lady in the shiere,

And knewe you as I know you, and see you nowe here.

Well I say no more.

R. Royster. Gramercies with all my hart.

M. Mery. But since that can not be, will ye play a wise parte?

R. Royster. How should I?

M. Mery. Refraine from Custance a while now.

And I warrant hir soone right glad to seeke to you,

Ye shall see hir anon come on hir knees creeping,

And pray you to be good to hir salte teares weeping.

R. Royster. But what and she come not?

M. Mery. In faith then farewell she.

Or else if ye be wroth, ye may auenged be.

R. Royster. By cocks precious potsticke, and een so I shall.

I wyll vtterly destroy hir, and house and all,

But I woulde be auenged in the meane space,

On that vile scribler, that did my wowyng disgrace.

M. Mery. Scribler (ko you) in deede he is worthy no lesse.

I will call hym to you, and ye bidde me doubtlesse.

R. Royster. Yes, for although he had as many liues,
As a thousande widowes, and a thousande wiues,
As a thousande lyons, and a thousand rattes,
A thousande wolues, and a thousande cattes,
A thousande bulles, and a thousande calues,
And a thousande legions diuided in halues,
He shall neuer scape death on my swordes point,
Though I shoulde be torne therfore ioynt by ioynt.

M. Mery. Nay, if ye will kyll him, I will not fette him,
I will not in so muche extremitie sette him,
He may yet amende sir, and be an honest man,
Therefore pardon him good soule, as muche as ye can.

R. Royster. Well, for thy sake, this once with his lyfe he
shall passe,
But I wyll hewe hym all to pieces by the Masse.

M. Mery. Nay fayth ye shall promise that he shall no
harme haue,
Else I will not fet him.

R. Royster. I shall so God me saue.
But I may chide him a good.

M. Mery. Yea that do hardely.

R. Royster. Go then.


M. Mery. I returne, and bring him to you by and by.

Ex.

55

Actus. iij. Scæna. v.

**Roister Doister. Mathewe Merygreeke.
Scriuener.**

R. Royster.  Hat is a gentleman but his worde
and his promise?
I must nowe saue this vilaines lyfe
in any wise,
And yet at hym already my
handes doe tickle,

I shall vneth holde them, they wyll be so fickle.
But lo and Merygreeke haue not brought him sens?

M. Mery. Nay I woulde I had of my purse payde fortie
pens.

Scriuener. So woulde I too: but it needed not that
stounde,

M. Mery. But the ientman had rather spent fiue
thousande pounde,
For it disgraced him at least fiue tymes so muche.

Scriuener. He disgraced hym selfe, his loutishnesse is
suche.

R. Royster. Howe long they stande prating? Why comst
thou not away?

M. Mery. Come nowe to hymselfe, and hearke what he
will say.

Scriuener. I am not afrayde in his presence to appeere.

R. Royster. Arte thou come fellow?

Scriuener. How thinke you? am I not here?

R. Royster. What hindrance hast thou done me, and
what villanie?

Scriuener. It hath come of thy selfe, if thou hast had
any.

R. Royster. All the stocke thou comest of later or rather,
From thy fyrst fathers grandfathers fathers father,
Nor all that shall come of thee to the worldes ende,
Though to three score generations they descende,
Can be able to make me a iust recompense,
For this trespasse of thine and this one offense.

56

Scriuener. Wherin?

R. Royster. Did not you make me a letter brother?

Scriuener. Pay the like hire, I will make you suche an other.

R. Royster. Nay see and these whooreson Phariseys and Scribes

Doe not get their liuyng by polling and bribes.
If it were not for shame.

Scriuener. Nay holde thy hands still.

M. Mery. Why did ye not promise that ye would not him spill?

Scriuener. Let him not spare me.

R. Royster. Why wilt thou strike me again?

Scriuener. Ye shall haue as good as ye bring of me that is plaine.

M. Mery. I can not blame him sir, though your blowes wold him greue.

For he knoweth present death to ensue of all ye geue.

R. Royster. Well, this man for once hath purchased thy pardon.

Scriuener. And what say ye to me? or else I will be gon.

R. Royster. I say the letter thou madest me was not good.

Scriuener. Then did ye wrong copy it of likelyhood.

R. Royster. Yes, out of thy copy worde for worde I wrote.

Scriuener. Then was it as ye prayed to haue it I wote,
But in reading and pointyng there was made some faulte.

R. Royster. I wote not, but it made all my matter to haulte.

Scriuener. Howe say you, is this mine originall or no?

R. Royster. The selfe same that I wrote out of, so mote I go.

Scriuener. Loke you on your owne fist, and I will looke on this,

And let this man be iudge whether I reade amisse.

To myne owne dere coney birde, sweete heart, and

Good mistresse Custance, present these by and by.

How now? doth not this superscription agree?

R. Royster. Reade that is within, and there ye shall the fault see.

Scriuener. Sweete mistresse, where as I loue you,
nothing at all

Regarding your riches and substance: chiefe of all

For your personage, beautie, demeanour and witte

I commende me vnto you: Neuer a whitte

Sory to heare reporte of your good welfare.

For (as I heare say) suche your conditions are,

That ye be worthie fauour: Of no liuing man

To be abhorred: of euery honest man

To be taken for a woman enclined to vice

Nothing at all: to vertue giuing hir due price.

Wherefore concerning mariage, ye are thought

Suche a fine Paragon, as nere honest man bought.

And nowe by these presents I doe you aduertise,

That I am minded to marrie you: In no wyse

For your goodes and substance: I can be content

To take you as you are: yf ye will be my wife,

Ye shall be assured for the time of my life,

I wyll keepe you right well: from good raiment and fare,

Ye shall not be kept: but in sorowe and care

Ye shall in no wyse lyue: at your owne libertie,

Doe and say what ye lust: ye shall neuer please me

But when ye are merrie: I will bee all sadde

When ye are sorie: I wyll be very gladde

When ye seeke your heartes ease: I will be vnkinde

At no time: in me shall ye mucche gentlenesse finde.

But all things contrary to your will and minde
Shall be done otherwise: I wyll not be behynde
To speake: And as for all they that woulde do you wrong,
(I wyll so helpe and maintayne ye) shall not lyue long.
Nor any foolishe dolte shall cumber you, but I,
I, who ere say nay, wyll sticke by you tyll I die.
Thus good mistresse Custance, the lorde you saue and
kepe.

From me Roister Doister, whether I wake or slepe,
Who fauoureth you no lesse, (ye may be bolde)
Than this letter purporteth, which ye haue vnfolde.
Now sir, what default can ye finde in this letter?

R. Royster. Of truth in my mynde there can not be a
better.

Scriuener. Then was the fault in readyng, and not in
wrytyng,
No nor I dare say in the fourme of endityng,
But who read this letter, that it sounded so nought?

M. Mery. I redde it in deede.

Scriuener. Ye red it not as ye ought.

R. Royster. Why thou wretched villaine was all this same
fault in thee?

M. Mery. I knocke your costarde if ye offer to strike me.

R. Royster. Strikest thou in deede? and I offer but in
iest?

M. Mery. Yea and rappe you againe except ye can sit in
rest.

And I will no longer tarie here me beleue.

R. Royster. What wilt thou be angry, and I do thee
forgeue?

Fare thou well scribler, I crie thee mercie in deede.

Scriuener. Fare ye well bibbler, and worthily may ye
speede.

R. Royster. If it were an other but thou, it were a knaue.

M. Mery. Ye are an other your selfe sir, the lorde vs both
saue,

Albeit in this matter I must your pardon craue,
Alas woulde ye wyshe in me the witte that ye haue?
But as for my fault I can quickly amende,
I will shewe Custance it was I that did offende.

R. Royster. By so doing hir anger may be reformed.

M. Mery. But if by no entreatie she will be turned,
Then sette lyght by hir and bee as testie as shee,
And doe your force vpon hir with extremitie.

R. Royster. Come on therefore lette vs go home in
sadnesse.

M. Mery. That if force shall neede all may be in a
readinesse,

And as for thys letter hardely let all go,
We wyll know where she refuse you for that or no.

[*Exeant am.*]

Actus. iiij. Scæna. j.

Sym Suresby.

Sim Sure.



S there any man but I Sym
Suresby alone,
That woulde haue taken such an
enterprise him vpon,
In suche an outragious
tempest as as this was.
Suche a daungerous gulfe of
the sea to passe.
I thinke verily *Neptunes*


mightie godshyp,

Was angry with some that was in our shyp,
 And but for the honestie which in me he founde,
 I thinke for the others sake we had bene drownde.
 But fye on that seruante which for his maisters wealth
 Will sticke for to hazarde both his lyfe and his health.
 My maister Gawyn Goodlucke after me a day
 Bicause of the weather, thought best hys shyppe to stay,
 And now that I haue the rough sourges so well past,
 God graunt I may finde all things safe here at last.
 Then will I thinke all my trauaile well spent.
 Nowe the first poynt wherfore my maister hath me sent
 Is to salute dame Christian Custance his wife,
 Espoused: whome he tendreth no lesse than his life,
 I must see how it is with hir well or wrong,
 And whether for him she doth not now thinke long:
 Then to other friendes I haue a message or tway,
 And then so to returne and mete him on the way.
 Now wyll I goe knocke that I may dispatche with speede,
 But loe forth commeth hir selfe happily in deede.

60


Actus. iiij. Scæna. ij.

Christian Custance. Sim. Suresby.

- C. Custance.**  I come to see if any more
 stirryng be here,
 But what straunger is this,
 which doth to me appere?
Sym Surs. I will speake to hir:
 Dame the lorde you saue
 and see.
- C. Custance.** What friende Sym Suresby? Forsoth right
 welcome ye be,
 Howe doth mine owne Gawyn Goodlucke, I pray the tell?
- S. Suresby.** When he knoweth of your health he will be
 perfect well.
- C. Custance.** If he haue perfect helth, I am as I would
 be.
- Sim. Sure.** Suche newes will please him well, this is as it
 should be.
- C. Custance.** I thinke now long for him.
- Sym Sure.** And he as long for you.
- C. Custance.** When wil he be at home?
- Sym Sure.** His heart is here een now
 His body commeth after.
- C. Custance.** I woulde see that faine.
- Sim Sure.** As fast as wynde and sayle can cary it a
 maine.
 But what two men are yonde comming hitherwarde?
- C. Custance.** Now I shrew their best Christmasse chekes
 both togetherward.

Actus. iiij. Scæna. iij.

**Christian Custance. Sym Suresby. Ralph
 Roister. Mathew Merygreke. Trupeny.**

- C. Custance.**  Hat meane these lewde felowes
 thus to trouble me stil?
 Sym Suresby here perchance
 shal therof deme som yll,
 And shall suspect in me some
 point of naughtinesse,

61

And they come hitherward.

Sym Sure. What is their businesse?

C. Custance. I haue nought to them, nor they to me in sadnesse.

Sim Sure. Let vs hearken them, somewhat there is I feare it.

R. Royster. I will speake out aloud best, that she may heare it.

M. Mery. Nay alas, ye may so feare hir out of hir wit.

R. Royster. By the crosse of my sworde, I will hurt hir no whit.

M. Mery. Will ye doe no harme in deede, shall I trust your worde?

R. Royster. By Roister Doisters fayth I will speake but in borde.

Sim Sure. Let vs hearken them, somewhat there is I feare it.

R. Royster. I will speake out aloud, I care not who heare it:

Sirs, see that my harnesse, my tergat, and my shield,
Be made as bright now, as when I was last in felde,
As white as I shoulde to warre againe to morrowe:
For sicke shall I be, but I worke some folke sorow.
Therefore see that all shine as bright as saint George,
Or as doth a key newly come from the Smiths forge.
I woulde haue my sworde and harnesse to shine so bright,
That I might therewith dimme mine enimies sight,
I would haue it cast beames as fast I tell you playne,
As doth the glittryng grasse after a showre of raine.
And see that in case I shoulde neede to come to arming,
All things may be ready at a minutes warning,
For such chaunce may chaunce in an houre, do ye heare?

M. Mery. As perchance shall not chaunce againe in seuen yeare.

R. Royster. Now draw we neare to hir, and here what shall be sayde.

M. Mery. But I woulde not haue you make hir too muche afrayde.

R. Royster. Well founde sweete wife (I trust) for al this your soure looke.

C. Custance. Wife, why cal ye me wife?

Sim Sure. Wife? this gear goth acrook.

M. Mery. Nay mistresse Custance, I warrant you, our letter

Is not as we redde een nowe, but much better,
And where ye halfe stomaked this gentleman afore,
For this same letter, ye wyll loue hym now therefore,
Nor it is not this letter, though ye were a queene,
That shoulde breake marriage betweene you twaine I weene.

C. Custance. I did not refuse hym for the letters sake.

R. Royster. Then ye are content me for your husbände to take.

C. Custance. You for my husbände to take? nothing lesse truely.

R. Royster. Yea say so, sweete spouse, afore straungers hardly.

M. Mery. And though I haue here his letter of loue with me,

Yet his ryng and tokens he sent, keepe safe with ye.

C. Custance. A mischiefe take his tokens, and him and thee too.

But what prate I with fooles? haue I nought else to doo?
Come in with me Sym Suresby to take some repast.

Sim Sure. I must ere I drinke by your leaue, goe in all
hast,
To a place or two, with earnest letters of his.

C. Custance. Then come drink here with me.

Sim Sure. I thank you.

C. Custance. Do not misse
You shall haue a token to your maister with you.

Sym Sure. No tokens this time gramercies, God be with
you. *Exeat.*

C. Custance. Surely this fellowe misdeemeth some yll in
me.
Which thing but God helpe, will go neere to spill me.

R. Royster. Yea farewell fellow, and tell thy maister
Goodlucke
That he commeth to late of thys blossome to plucke.
Let him keepe him there still, or at least wise make no
hast,
As for his labour hither he shall spende in wast.
His betters be in place nowe.

M. Mery. As long as it will hold.

C. Custance. I will be euen with thee thou beast, thou
mayst be bolde.

R. Royster. Will ye haue vs then?

C. Custance. I will neuer haue thee.

R. Royster. Then will I haue you?

C. Custance. No, the deuill shal haue thee.
I haue gotten this houre more shame and harme by thee,
Then all thy life days thou canst do me honestie.

M. Mery. Why nowe may ye see what it comth too in the
ende,
To make a deadly foe of your most louing frende:
And ywis this letter if ye woulde heare it now.

C. Custance. I will heare none of it.

M. Mery. In faith would rauishe you.

C. Custance. He hath stained my name for euer this is
cleare.

R. Royster. I can make all as well in an houre.

M. Mery. As ten yeare.
How say ye, wil ye haue him?

C. Custance. No.

M. Mery. Wil ye take him?

C. Custance. I defie him.

M. Mery. At my word?

C. Custance. A shame take him.
Waste no more wynde, for it will neuer bee.

M. Mery. This one faulte with twaine shall be mended,
ye shall see.
Gentle mistresse Custance now, good mistresse Custance,
Honey mistresse Custance now, sweete mistresse
Custance,
Golden mistresse Custance now, white mistresse
Custance,
Silken mistresse Custance now, faire mistresse Custance.

C. Custance. Faith rather than to mary with suche a
doltishe loute,
I woulde matche my selfe with a begger out of doute.

M. Mery. Then I can say no more, to speede we are not
like,
Except ye rappe out a ragge of your Rhetorike.

C. Custance. Speake not of winnyng me: for it shall
neuer be so.

R. Royster. Yes dame, I will haue you whether ye will or
no,

I commaunde you to loue me, wherfore shoulde ye not?
Is not my loue to you chafing and burning hot?

M. Mery. Too hir, that is well sayd.

R. Royster. Shall I so breake my braine
To dote vpon you, and ye not loue vs againe?

M. Mery. Wel sayd yet.

C. Custance. Go to you goose.

R. Royster. I say Kit Custance,
In case ye will not haze, well, better yes perchaunce.

C. Custance. Auaunt lozell, picke thee hence.

M. Mery. Wel sir, ye perceiue,
For all your kinde offer, she will not you receiue.

R. Royster. Then a strawe for hir, and a strawe for hir
again,
She shall not be my wife, woulde she neuer so faine,
No and though she would be at ten thousand pounce cost.

M. Mery. Lo dame, ye may see what an husbände ye
haue lost.

C. Custance. Yea, no force, a ieuell muche better lost
than founde.

M. Mery. Ah, ye will not beleue how this doth my heart
wounde.

How shoulde a mariage betwene you be towarde,
If both parties drawe backe, and become so frowarde.

R. Royster. Nay dame, I will fire thee out of thy house,
And destroy thee and all thine, and that by and by.

M. Mery. Nay for the passion of God sir, do not so.

R. Royster. Yes, except she will say yea to that she sayde
no.

C. Custance. And what, be there no officers trow we, in
towne

To checke idle loytrers, braggyng vp and downe?
Where be they, by whome vacabunds shoulde be repress?
That poore sillie Widowes might liue in peace and rest.
Shall I neuer ridde thee out of my companie?
I will call for helpe, what hough, come forth Trupenie.

Trupenie. Anon. What is your will mistresse? dyd ye call
me?

C. Custance. Yea, go runne apace, and as fast as may
be,

Pray Tristram Trusty, my moste assured frende,
To be here by and by, that he may me defende.

Trupenie. That message so quickly shall be done by
Gods grace,
That at my returne ye shall say, I went apace. *Exeat.*

C. Custance. Then shall we see I trowe, whether ye shall
do me harme,

R. Royster. Yes in faith Kitte, I shall thee and thine so
charme,

That all women incarnate by thee may beware.

C. Custance. Nay, as for charming me, come hither if
thou dare,

I shall cloute thee tyll thou stinke, both thee and thy
traine,
And coyle thee mine owne handes, and sende thee home
again.

R. Royster. Yea sayst thou me that dame? dost thou me
threaten?

Goe we, I still see whether I shall be beaten.

M. Mery. Nay for the paishe of God, let me now treate
peace,

For bloudshed will there be in case this strife increace.
Ah good dame Custance, take better way with you.

R. Royster. Let him do his worst.


M. Mery. Yeld in time.

R. Royster. Come hence thou.

Exeant Roister et Mery.

Actus. iij. Scæna. iij.

**Christian Custance. Anot Alyface. Tibet T.
M. Mumblecrust.**

C. Custance.  O sirra, if I should not with hym
take this way,
I should not be ridde of him I
thinke till doomes day,
I will call forth my folkes, that
without any mockes

If he come agayne we may giue him rappes and knockes.
Mage Mumblecrust, come forth, and Tibet Talke apace.
Yea and come forth too, mistresse Annot Alyface.

Annot Aly. I come.

Tibet. And I am here.

M. Mumb. And I am here too at length.

C. Custance. Like warriers if nede bee, ye must shew
your strength
The man that this day hath thus begiled you,
Is Ralph Roister Doister, whome ye know well mowe,
The moste loute and dastarde that euer on grounde trode.

Tib. Talk. I see all folke mocke hym when he goth
abrode.

C. Custance. What pretie maide? will ye talke when I
speake?

Tib. Talk. No forsooth good mistresse.

C. Custance. Will ye my tale breake?
He threatneth to come hither with all his force to fight,
I charge you if he come, on him with all your might.

M. Mumb. I with my distaffe will reache hym one rappe,

Tib. Talk. And I with my newe broome will sweepe hym
one swappe,
And then with our greate clubbe I will reache hym one
rappe.

An. Aliface. And I with our skimmer will fling him one
flappe.

Tib. Talk. Then Trupenies firesorke will him shrewdly
fray,
And you with the spitte may driue him quite away.


C. Custance. Go make all ready, that it may be een so.

Tib. Talk. For my parte I shrewe them that last about it
go. *Exeant.*

66

Actus. iij. Scæna. v.

Christian Custance. Trupenie. Tristram Trusty.

C. Custance.  Rupenie dyd promise me to
runne a great pace,
My friend Tristram Trusty to fet
into this place.
In deede he dwelleth hence a
good stert I confesse:

But yet a quicke messenger might twice since as I gesse,
Haue gone and come agayne. Ah yond I spie him now.

Trupeny. Ye are a slow goer sir, I make God auow.

67

My mistresse Custance will in me put all the blame,
Your leggs be longer than myne: come apace for shame.

C. Custance. I can thee thanke Trupenie, thou hast done
right wele.

Trupeny. Maistresse since I went no grasse hath growne
on my hele,
But maister Tristram Trustie here maketh no speede.

C. Custance. That he came at all I thanke him in very
deede,
For now haue I neede of the helpe of some wise man.

T. Trusty. Then may I be gone againe, for none such I
[a]m.

Trupenie. Ye may bee by your going: for no Alderman
Can goe I dare say, a sadder pace than ye can.

C. Custance. Trupenie get thee in, thou shalt among
them knowe,
How to vse thy selfe, like a propre man I trowe.

Trupeny. I go. *Ex.*

C. Custance. Now Tristram Trusty I thank you right
much.

For at my first sending to come ye neuer grutch.

T. Trusty. Dame Custance God ye saue, and while my life
shall last,

For my friende Goodlucks sake ye shall not sende in wast.

C. Custance. He shal giue you thanks.

T. Trusty. I will do much for his sake ...

C. Custance. But alack, I feare, great displeasure shall
be take.

T. Trusty. Wherfore?

C. Custance. For a foolish matter.

T. Trusty. What is your cause ...

C. Custance. I am yll accombred with a couple of dawes.

T. Trusty. Nay weepe not woman: but tell me what your
cause is

As concerning my friende is any thing amisse?

C. Custance. No not on my part: but here was Sym
Suresby.

T. Trustie. He was with me and told me so.

C. Custance. And he stode by
While Ralph Roister Doister with helpe of Merygreeke,
For promise of mariage dyd vnto me seeke.

T. Trusty. And had ye made any promise before them
twaine, ...

C. Custance. No I had rather be torne in pieces and
slaine,

No man hath my faith and trowth, but Gawyn Goodlucke,
And that before Suresby dyd I say, and there stucke,
But of certaine letters there were suche words spoken.

T. Trustie. He tolde me that too.

C. Custance. And of a ring and token.
That Suresby I spied, dyd more than halfe suspect,
That I my faith to Gawyn Goodlucke dyd reiect.

T. Trusty. But there was no such matter dame Custance
in deede?

C. Custance. If euer my head thought it, God sende me
yll speede.

Wherfore I beseech you, with me to be a witnesse,
That in all my lyfe I neuer intended thing lesse,
And what a brainsicke foole Ralph Roister Doister is,
Your selfe know well enough.

T. Trusty. Ye say full true ywis.

C. Custance. Bicause to bee his wife I ne graunt nor
apply,

Hither will he com he sweareth by and by,
To kill both me and myne, and beate downe my house flat.
Therefore I pray your aide.

T. Trustie. I warrant you that.

C. Custance. Haue I so many yeres liued a sobre life,
And shewed my selfe honest, mayde, widowe, and wyfe
And nowe to be abused in such a vile sorte,
Ye see howe poore Widowes lyue all voyde of comfort.

69

T. Trusty. I warrant hym do you no harme nor wrong at
all.


C. Custance. No, but Mathew Merygreeke doth me most
appall,
That he woulde ioyn hym selfe with suche a wretched
loute.

T. Trusty. He doth it for a iest I knowe hym out of
doubte,
And here cometh Merygreke.

C. Custance. Then shal we here his mind.

Actus. iiij. Scæna. vj.

Merygreke. Christian Custance. Trist. Trusty.

M. Mery.  Ustance and Trustie both, I doe you
here well finde.

C. Custance. Ah Mathew
Merygreeke, ye haue vsed me
well.

M. Mery. Nowe for altogether ye must your answeare tell.
Will ye haue this man, woman? or else will ye not?
Else will he come neuer bore so brymme nor tost so hot.

Tris. and Cu. But why ioyn ye with him.

T. Trusty. For mirth.

C. Custance. Or else in sadnesse

M. Mery. The more fond of you both hardly yat mater
gesse.

Tristram. Lo how say ye dame?

M. Mery. Why do ye thinke dame Custance
That in this wowyng I haue ment ought but pastance?

C. Custance. Much things ye spake, I wote, to maintaine
his dotage.

M. Mery. But well might ye iudge I spake it all in
mockage?

For why? Is Roister Doister a fitte husband for you?

T. Trusty. I dare say ye neuer thought it.

M. Mery. No to God I vow.
And dyd not I knowe afore of the insurance
Betweene Gawyn Goodlucke, and Christian Custance?
And dyd not I for the nonce, by my conueyance,
Reade his letter in a wrong sense for daliance?
That if you coulde haue take it vp at the first bounde,
We should therat such a sporte and pastime haue founde,
That all the whole towne should haue ben the merier.

C. Custance. Ill ake your heades both, I was neuer
werier,
Nor neuer more vexte since the first day I was borne.

T. Trusty. But very well I wist he here did all in scorne.

C. Custance. But I feared therof to take dishonestie.

M. Mery. This should both haue made sport, and shewed
your honestie
And Goodlucke I dare sweare, your witte therin would low.

T. Trusty. Yea, being no worse than we know it to be

70

now.

M. Mery. And nothing yet to late, for when I come to him,

Hither will he repaire with a sheepes looke full grim,
By plaine force and violence to driue you to yelde.

C. Custance. If ye two bidde me, we will with him pitche a fielde,

I and my maides together.

M. Mery. Let vs see, be bolde.

C. Custance. Ye shall see womens warre.

T. Trusty. That fight wil I behold.

M. Mery. If occasion serue, takyng his parte full brim,
I will strike at you, but the rappe shall light on him.
When we first appeare.

C. Custance. Then will I runne away
As though I were afeard.

T. Trusty. Do you that part wel play
And I will sue for peace.

M. Mery. And I wil set him on.
Then will he looke as fierce as a Cotssold lyon.

T. Trusty. But when gost thou for him?

M. Mery. That do I very nowe.

C. Custance. Ye shal find vs here.

M. Mery. Wel god haue mercy on you. *Ex.*

T. Trusty. There is no cause of feare, the least boy in the streete:

C. Custance. Nay, the least girle I haue, will make him take his feete.

But hearke, me thinke they make preparation.

T. Trusty. No force, it will be a good recreation.

C. Custance. I will stand within, and steppe forth speedily,
And so make as though I ranne away dreadfully.

71

Actus. iiij. Scæna. vij.

**R. Royster. M. Merygreeke. C. Custance.
D. Doughtie. Harpax. Tristram Trusty.**

R. Royster.



Owe sirs, keepe your ray, and
see your heartes be stoute,
But where be these caitifes, me
think they dare not route,
How sayst thou Merygreeke?
What doth Kit Custance say?

M. Mery. I am loth to tell you.

R. Royster. Tushe speake man, yea or nay?

M. Mery. Forsooth sir, I haue spoken for you all that I can.

But if ye winne hir, ye must een play the man,
Een to fight it out, ye must a mans heart take.

R. Royster. Yes, they shall know, and thou knowest I haue a stomacke.

[M. Mery.] A stomacke (quod you) yea, as good as ere man had.

R. Royster. I trowe they shall finde and feele that I am a lad.

M. Mery. By this crosse I haue seene you eate your meate as well,

As any that ere I haue seene of or heard tell,
A stomacke quod you? he that will that denie

I know was neuer at dynner in your companie.

R. Royster. Nay, the stomacke of a man it is that I meane.

M. Mery. Nay the stomacke of a horse or a dogge I weene.

R. Royster. Nay a mans stomacke with a weapon meane I.

M. Mery. Ten men can scarce match you with a spoone in a pie.

R. Royster. Nay the stomake of a man to trie in strife.

M. Mery. I neuer sawe your stomacke cloyed yet in my lyfe.

R. Royster. Tushe I meane in strife or fighting to trie.

M. Mery. We shall see how ye will strike nowe being angry.

R. Royster. Haue at thy pate then, and saue thy head if thou may.

M. Mery. Nay then haue at your pate agayne by this day,

R. Royster. Nay thou mayst not strike at me againe in no wise.

M. Mery. I can not in fight make to you suche warrantise:

But as for your foes here let them the bargaine bie.

R. Royster. Nay as for they, shall euery mothers childe die.

And in this my fume a little thing might make me,
To beate downe house and all, and else the deuill take me.

M. Mery. If I were as ye be, by gogs deare mother,
I woulde not leaue one stone vpon an other.
Though she woulde redeeme it with twentie thousand poundes.

R. Royster. It shall be euen so, by his lily woundes.

M. Mery. Bee not at one with hir vpon any amendes.

R. Royster. No though she make to me neuer so many frendes.

Nor if all the worlde for hir woulde vndertake,
No not God hymselfe neither, shal not hir peace make,
On therfore, marche forwarde, soft, stay a whyle yet.

M. Mery. On.

R. Royster. Tary.

M. Mery. Forth.

R. Royster. Back.

M. Mery. On.

R. Royster. Soft. Now forward set.

C. Custance. What businesse haue we here? out alas,
alas.

R. Royster. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.
Dydst thou see that Merygreeke? how afrayde she was?
Dydst thou see how she fledde apace out of my sight?
Ah good sweete Custance I pitie hir by this light.

M. Mery. That tender heart of yours wyll marre altogether,
Thus will ye be turned with waggyng of a fether.

R. Royster. On sirs, keepe your ray.

M. Mery. On forth, while this geare is hot

R. Royster. Soft, the Armes of Caleys, I haue one thing forgot.

M. Mery. What lacke we now?

R. Royster. Retire, or else we be all slain.

M. Mery. Backe for the pashe of God, backe sirs, backe

again.
What is the great mater?

R. Royster. This hastie forth goyng
Had almost brought vs all to vtter vndoing,
It made me forget a thing most necessarie.

M. Mery. Well remembred of a captaine by saint Marie.

R. Royster. It is a thing must be had.

M. Mery. Let vs haue it then.

R. Royster. But I wote not where nor how.

M. Mery. Then wote not I when.
But what is it?

R. Royster. Of a chiefe thing I am to seeke.

M. Mery. Tut so will ye be, when ye haue studied a
weke.

But tell me what it is?

R. Royster. I lacke yet an hedpiece.

M. Mery. The kitchen collocaut, the best hennes to
grece,
Runne, fet it Dobinet, and come at once withall,
And bryng with thee my potgunne, hangyng by the wall,
I haue seene your head with it full many a tyme,
Couered as safe as it had bene with a skrine:
And I warrant it saue your head from any stroke,
Except perchaunce to be amased with the smoke:
I warrant your head therwith, except for the mist,
As safe as if it were fast locked vp in a chist:
And loe here our Dobinet commeth with it nowe.

D. Dough. It will couer me to the shoulders well inow.

M. Mery. Let me see it on.

R. Royster. In fayth it doth metely well.

M. Mery. There can be no fitter thing. Now ye must vs
tell
What to do.

R. Royster. Now forth in ray sirs, and stoppe no more.

M. Mery. Now saint George to borow, Drum dubbe a
dubbe afore.

T. Trusty. What meane you to do sir, committe
manslaughter.

R. Royster. To kyll fortie such, is a matter of laughter.

T. Trusty. And who is it sir, whome ye intende thus to
spill?

R. Royster. Foolishe Custance here forceth me against
my will.

T. Trusty. And is there no meane your extreme wrath to
slake,
She shall some amendes vnto your good mashyp make.

R. Royster. I will none amendes.

T. Trusty. Is hir offence so sore?

M. Mery. And he were a loute she coulde haue done no
more.

She hath calde him foole, and dressed him like a foole.
Mocked him lyke a foole, vsed him like a foole.

T. Trusty. Well yet the Sheriffe, the Iustice, or
Constable,
Hir misdemeanour to punishe might be able.

R. Royster. No sir, I mine owne selfe will in this present
cause,
Be Sheriffe, and Iustice, and whole Iudge of the lawes,
This matter to amende, all officers be I shall,
Constable, Bailiffe, Sergeant.

M. Mery. And hangman and all.

T. Trusty. Yet a noble courage, and the hearte of a man.

Should more honour winne by bearyng with a woman.
Therefore take the lawe, and lette hir aunswere therto.

R. Royster. Merygreeke, the best way were euen so to do.

What honour should it be with a woman to fight?

M. Mery. And what then, will ye thus forgo and lese your right?

R. Royster. Nay, I will take the lawe on hir withouten grace.

T. Trusty. Or yf your mashyp coulde pardon this one trespase.

I pray you forgiue hir.

R. Royster. Hoh?

M. Mery. Tushe tushe sir do not.
Be good maister to hir.

R. Royster. Hoh?

M. Mery. Tush I say do not.
And what shall your people here returne streight home?

T. Trustie. Yea, leuie the campe sirs, and hence againe eche one,

R. Royster. But be still in readinesse if I happe to call,
I can not tell what sodaine chaunce may befall.

M. Mery. Do not off your harnesse sirs I you aduise,
At the least for this fortnight in no maner wise,
Perchaunce in an houre when all ye thinke least,
Our maisters appetite to fight will be best.
But soft, ere ye go, haue once at Custance house.

R. Royster. Soft, what wilt thou do?

M. Mery. Once discharge my harquebouse
And for my heartes ease, haue once more with my
potgoon.

R. Royster. Holde thy handes else is all our purpose
cleane fordoone.

M. Mery. And it cost me my life.

R. Royster. I say thou shalt not.

M. Mery. By the matte but I will. Haue once more with
haile shot.

I will haue some penyworth, I will not leese all.

Actus. iij. Scæna. viij.

M. Merygreeke. C. Custance. R. Roister.

Tib. T. An. Alyface. M. Mumblecrust.

**Trupenie. Dobinet Doughtie. Harpax. Two
drummes with their Ensignes.**

C. Custance.  Hat caitifes are those that so
shake my house wall?

M. Mery. Ah sirrha now
Custance if ye had so muche
wit

I woulde see you aske pardon,
and your selues submit.

C. Custance. Haue I still this adoe with a couple of
fooles?

M. Mery. Here ye what she saith?

C. Custance. Maidens come forth with your tooles.

R. Royster. In a ray.

M. Mery. Dubba dub sirrha.

R. Royster. In a ray.
They come sodainly on vs.

M. Mery. Dubbadub.

R. Royster. In a ray.
That euer I was borne, we are taken tardie.

M. Mery. Now sirs, quite our selues like tall men and
hardie.

C. Custance. On afore Truepenie, holde thyne owne
Annot,
On towarde them Tibet, for scape vs they can not.
Come forth Madge Mumblecrust, so stande fast together.

M. Mery. God sende vs a faire day.

R. Royster. See they marche on hither.

Tib. Talk. But mistresse.

C. Custance. What sayst you?

Tib. Shall I go fet our goose?

C. Custance. What to do?

Tib. To yonder Captain I will turne hir loose
And she gape and hisse at him, as she doth at me,
I durst ieoparde my hande she wyll make him flee.

C. Custance. On forward.

R. Royster. They com.

M. Mery. Stand.

R. Royster. Hold.

M. Mery. Kepe.

R. Royster. There.

M. Mery. Strike.

R. Royster. Take heede.

C. Custance. Wel sayd Truepeny.

Trupeny. Ah whooresons.

C. Custance. Wel don in deede

M. Mery. Hold thine owne *Harpax*, downe with them
Dobinet.

C. Custance. Now Madge, there Annot: now sticke them
Tibet.

Tib. Talk. All my chiefe quarell is to this same little
knaue,
That begyled me last day, nothyng shall him saue.

D. Dough. Downe with this litle queane, that hath at me
such spite,
Saue you from hir maister, it is a very sprite.

C. Custance. I my selfe will mounsire graunde captaine
vndertake,

R. Royster. They win grounde.

M. Mery. Saue your selfe sir, for gods sake.

R. Royster. Out, alas, I am slaine, helpe.

M. Mery. Saue your self.

R. Royster. Alas.

M. Mery. Nay then, haue at you mistresse.

R. Royster. Thou hittest me, alas.

M. Mery. I wil strike at Custance here.

R. Royster. Thou hittest me.

M. Mery. So I wil.
Nay mistresse Custance.

R. Royster. Alas, thou hittest me still.
Hold.

M. Mery. Saue your self sir.

R. Royster. Help, out alas I am slain

M. Mery. Truce, hold your hands, truce for a pissing
while or twaine:

Nay how say you Custance, for sauing of your life,
Will ye yelde and graunt to be this gentmans wife?

C. Custance. Ye tolde me he loued me, call ye this loue?

M. Mery. He loued a while euen like a turtle doue.

C. Custance. Gay loue God saue it, so soone hotte, so
soone colde,

M. Mery. I am sorry for you: he could loue you yet so he
coulde.

R. Royster. Nay by cocks precious she shall be none of
mine.

M. Mery. Why so?

R. Royster. Come away, by the matte she is man-kine.
I durst aduerture the losse of my right hande,
If shee dyd not slee hir other husbände:
And see if she prepare not againe to fight.

M. Mery. What then? saint George to borow, our Ladies
knight.

R. Royster. Slee else whom she will, by gog she shall not
slee mee.

M. Mery. How then?

R. Royster. Rather than to be slaine, I will flee.

C. Custance. Too it againe, my knightesses, downe with
them all.

R. Royster. Away, away, away, she will else kyll vs all.

M. Mery. Nay sticke to it, like an hardie man and a tall.

R. Royster. Oh bones, thou hittest me. Away, or else die
we shall.

M. Mery. Away for the pashe of our sweete Lord Iesus
Christ.

C. Custance. Away loute and lubber, or I shall be thy
priest. *Exeant om.*
So this fielde is ours we haue driuen them all away.

Tib Talk. Thanks to God mistresse, ye haue had a faire
day.

C. Custance. Well nowe goe ye in, and make your selfe
some good cheere.

Omnes pariter. We goe.

T. Trust. Ah sir, what a field we haue had heere.

C. Custance. Friend Tristram, I pray you be a witesse
with me.

T. Trusty. Dame Custance, I shall depose for your
honestie,
And nowe fare ye well, except some thing else ye wolde.

C. Custance. Not now, but when I nede to sende I will
be bolde. *Exeat.*

I thanke you for these paines. And now I wyll get me in,
Now Roister Doister will no more wowyng begin. *Ex.*

78

79

Actus. v. Scæna. j.

Gawyn Goodlucke. Sym Suresby.



Ym Suresby my trustie man, nowe aduise
thee well,
And see that no false surmises thou me
tell,
Was there such adoe about Custance of a
truth?

Sim. Sure. To reporte that I hearde and
sawe, to me is ruth,
But both my duetie and name and propretie,

Warneth me to you to shewe fidelitie,
It may be well enough, and I wyshe it so to be,
She may hir selfe discharge and trie hir honestie,
Yet their clayme to hir me thought was very large,
For with letters rings and tokens, they dyd hir charge.
Which when I hearde and sawe I would none to you bring.

G. Goodl. No, by saint Marie, I allowe thee in that
thing.

Ah sirra, nowe I see truthe in the prouerbe olde,
All things that shineth is not by and by pure golde,
If any doe lyue a woman of honestie,
I would haue sworne Christian Custance had bene shee.

Sim. Sure. Sir, though I to you be a seruant true and
iust.


Yet doe not ye therefore your faithfull spouse mystrust.
But examine the matter, and if ye shall it finde,
To be all well, be not ye for my wordes vnkinde.

G. Goodl. I shall do that is right, and as I see cause why.
But here commeth Custance forth, we shal know by and
by.

80

Actus. v. Scæna. ij.

C. Custance. Gawyn Goodlucke. Sym Suresby.

C. Custance.  I come forth to see and hearken
for newes good,
For about this houre is the tyme
of likelyhood,
That Gawyn Goodlucke by the
sayings of Suresby,

Would be at home, and lo yond I see hym I.
What Gawyn Goodlucke, the onely hope of my life,
Welcome home, and kysse me your true espoused wife.

Ga. Good. Nay soft dame Custance, I must first by your
licence,
See whether all things be cleere in your conscience,
I heare of your doings to me very straunge.

C. Custance. What feare ye? that my faith towards you
should change?

Ga. Good. I must needes mistrust ye be elsewhere
entangled.

For I heare that certaine men with you haue wrangled
About the promise of mariage by you to them made.

C. Custance. Could any mans reporte your minde
therein persuade?

Ga. Good. Well, ye must therin declare your selfe to
stande cleere,
Else I and you dame Custance may not ioyne this yere.

C. Custance. Then woulde I were dead, and faire layd in
my graue,

Ah Suresby, is this the honestie that ye haue?
To hurt me with your report, not knowyng the thing.

Sim Sure. If ye be honest my wordes can hurte you
nothing.

But what I hearde and sawe, I might not but report.

C. Custance. Ah Lorde, helpe poore widowes, destitute
of comfort.

Truly most deare spouse, nought was done but for
pastance.

G. Good. But such kynde of sporting is homely daliance.

C. Custance. If ye knewe the truthe, ye would take all in
good parte.

Ga. Good. By your leaue I am not halfe well skilled in
that arte.

81

C. Custance. It was none but Roister Doister that
foolishe mome.

Ga. Good. Yea Custance, better (they say) a badde scuse
than none.


C. Custance. Why Tristram Trustie sir, your true and
faithfull frende,
Was priuie bothe to the beginning and the ende.
Let him be the Iudge, and for me testifie.

Ga. Good. I will the more credite that he shall verifie,
And bicause I will the truthe know een as it is,
I will to him my selfe, and know all without misse.
Come on Sym Suresby, that before my friend thou may
Auouch the same wordes, which thou dydst to me say.

Exeant.

Actus. v. Scæna. iij.

Christian Custance.

C. Custance.  O Lorde, howe necessarie it is
nowe of dayes,
That eche bodie liue vprightly
all maner wayes,
For lette neuer so little a gappe
be open,

And be sure of this, the worst shall be spoken
Howe innocent stande I in this for deede or thought?
And yet see what mistrust towardes me it hath wrought
But thou Lorde knowest all folkes thoughts and eke
intents

And thou arte the deliuerer of all innocentes.

Thou didst helpe the aduoutresse that she might be
amended,

Much more then helpe Lorde, that neuer yll intended.

Thou didst helpe *Susanna*, wrongfully accused,

And no lesse dost thou see Lorde, how I am now abused,

Thou didst helpe *Hester*, when she should haue died,

Helpe also good Lorde, that my truth may be tried.

Yet if Gawin Goodlucke with Tristram Trusty speake.....

I trust of yll report the force shall be but weake,

And loe yond they come sadly talking together,


I wyll abyde, and not shrinke for their comming hither.

82

Actus. v. Scæna. iiij.

Gawyn Goodlucke. Tristram Trustie.

C. Custance. Sym Suresby.

Ga. Good.  Nd was it none other than ye to me
reporte?

Tristram. No, and here were ye
wished to haue seene the
sporte.

Ga. Good. Woulde I had, rather than halfe of that in my
purse.

Sim Sure. And I doe mucche reioyce the matter was no
wurse,

And like as to open it, I was to you faithfull,

So of dame Custance honest truth I am ioyfull.

For God forfende that I shoulde hurt hir by false reporte.

Ga. Good. Well, I will no longer holde hir in discomforte.

C. Custance. Nowe come they hitherwarde, I trust all
shall be well.

Ga. Good. Sweete Custance neither heart can thinke nor
tongue tell,

Howe much I ioy in your constant fidelitie,

Come nowe kisse me the pearle of perfect honestie.

C. Custance. God lette me no longer to continue in lyfe,
Than I shall towardes you continue a true wyfe.

Ga. Good. Well now to make you for this some parte of
amendes,

I shall desire first you, and then suche of our frendes,
As shall to you seeme best, to suppe at home with me,
Where at your fought fielde we shall laugh and mery be.

Sim Sure. And mistresse I beseech you, take with me no
greefe,

I did a true mans part, not wishyng you repreefe.

C. Custance. Though hastie reportes through surmises
growyng,

May of poore innocentes be vtter ouerthrowyng,
Yet bicause to thy maister thou hast a true hart,
And I know mine owne truth, I forgiue thee for my part.

Ga. Goodl. Go we all to my house, and of this geare no
more.

Goe prepare all things Sym Suresby, hence, runne afore.

Sim Sure. I goe. *Ex.*

G. Good. But who commeth yond, M. Merygreeke?

C. Custance. Roister Doisters champion, I shrewe his
best cheeke.


T. Trusty. Roister Doister selfe your wower is with hym
too.

Surely some thing there is with vs they haue to doe.

83

Actus. v. Scæna. v.

**M. Merygreeke. Ralph Roister. Gawyn
Goodlucke. Tristram Trustie. C. Custance.**

M. Mery.  Ond I see Gawyn Goodlucke, to
whome lyeth my message,
I will first salute him after his long
voyage,
And then make all thing well
concerning your behalfe.

R. Royster. Yea for the pashe of God.

M. Mery. Hence out of sight ye calfe,
Till I haue spoke with them, and then I will you fet,

R. Royster. In Gods name.

M. Mery. What master Gawin Goodluck wel met
And from your long voyage I bid you right welcome home.

Ga. Good. I thanke you.

M. Mery. I come to you from an honest mome.

Ga. Good. Who is that?

M. Mery. Roister Doister that doughtie kite.

C. Custance. Fye, I can scarce abide ye shoulde his
name recite.

M. Mery. Ye must take him to fauour, and pardon all
past,
He heareth of your returne, and is full yll agast.

Ga. Good. I am ryght well content he haue with vs some
chere.

C. Custance. Fye vpon him beast, then wyll not I be
there.

Ga. Good. Why Custance do ye hate hym more than ye
loue me?


C. Custance. But for your mynde sir, where he were
would I not be?

84

T. Trusty. He wolde make vs al laugh.
M. Mery. Ye nere had better sport.
Ga. Good. I pray you sweete Custance, let him to vs resort.
C. Custance. To your will I assent.
M. Mery. Why, suche a foole it is,
 As no man for good pastime would forgoe or misse.
Ga. Good. Fet him to go wyth vs.
M. Mery. He will be a glad man. *Ex.*
T. Trusty. We must to make vs mirth, maintaine hym all we can.
 And loe yond he commeth and Merygreeke with him.
C. Custance. At his first entrance ye shall see I wyll him trim.
 But first let vs hearken the gentlemans wise talke.
T. Trusty. I pray you marke if euer ye sawe crane so stalke.

Actus. v. Scæna. vj.

R. Roister. M. Merygreeke. C. Custance.
G. Goodlucke. T. Trustie. D. Doughtie. Harpax.

R. Royster.  Ay I then be bolde?
M. Mery. I warrant you on my worde,
 They say they shall be sicke, but ye be at theyr borde.

R. Royster. Thei wer not angry then.
M. Mery. Yes at first, and made strange
 But when I sayd your anger to fauour shoulde change,
 And therewith had commended you accordingly,
 They were all in loue with your mashyp by and by.
 And cried you mercy that they had done you wrong.
R. Royster. For why, no man, woman, nor childe can hate me long.
M. Mery. We feare (quod they) he will be auenged one day,
 Then for a peny giue all our liues we may.
R. Royster. Sayd they so in deede.
M. Mery. Did they? yea, euen with one voice
 He will forgiue all (quod I) Oh how they did reioyce.
R. Royster. Ha, ha, ha.
M. Mery. Goe fette hym (say they) while he is in good moode,
 For haue his anger who lust, we will not by the Roode.
R. Royster. I pray God that it be all true, that thou hast me tolde,
 And that she fight no more.
M. Mery. I warrant you, be bolde
 Too them, and salute them.
R. Royster. Sirs, I greeete you all well.
Omnes. Your maistership is welcom.
C. Custance. Sauyng my quarell.
 For sure I will put you vp into the Eschequer.
M. Mery. Why so? better nay: Wherfore?
C. Custance. For an vsurer.
R. Royster. I am no vsurer good mistresse by his armes.
M. Mery. When tooke he gaine of money to any mans harmes?

C. Custance. Yes, a fowle vsurer he is, ye shall see els.

R. Royster. Didst not thou promise she would picke no mo quarels?

C. Custance. He will lende no blowes, but he haue in recompence
Fiftene for one, whiche is to mucche of conscience.

R. Royster. Ah dame, by the auncient lawe of armes, a man
Hath no honour to foile his handes on a woman.

C. Custance. And where other vsurers take their gaines yerely,
This man is angry but he haue his by and by.

Ga. Goodl. Sir, doe not for hir sake beare me your displeasure.

M. Mery. Well, he shall with you talke therof more at leasure.
Vpon your good vsage, he will now shake your hande.

R. Royster. And much heartily welcome from a straunge lande.

M. Mery. Be not afearde Gawyn to let him shake your fyst.

Ga. Goodl. Oh the moste honeste gentleman that ere I wist.
I beseeche your mashyp to take payne to suppe with vs.

M. Mery. He shall not say you nay and I too, by Iesus.
Bicause ye shall be friends, and let all quarels passe.

R. Royster. I wyll be as good friends with them as ere I was.

M. Mery. Then let me fet your quier that we may haue a song.

R. Royster. Goe.

G. Goodluck. I haue hearde no melodie all this yeare long.

M. Mery. Come on sirs quickly.

R. Royster. Sing on sirs, for my frends sake.

D. Dough. Cal ye these your frends?

R. Royster. Sing on, and no mo words make.

Here they sing.

Ga. Good. The Lord preserue our most noble Queene of renowne,
And hir virtues rewarde with the heauenly crowne.

C. Custance. The Lorde strengthen hir most excellent Maiestie,
Long to reigne ouer vs in all prosperitie.

T. Trusty. That hir godly proceedings the faith to defende,
He may stablishe and maintaine through to the ende.

M. Mery. God graunt hir as she doth, the Gospell to protect,
Learning and vertue to aduaunce, and vice to correct.

R. Royster. God graunt hir louyng subiects both the minde and grace,
Hir most godly procedyngs worthily to imbrace.

Harpax. Hir highnesse most worthy counsellers God prosper,
With honour and loue of all men to minister.

Omnes. God graunt the nobilitie hir to serue and loue,
With all the whole commontie as doth them behoue.

AMEN.

The Seconde Song.

W Ho so to marry a minion Wyfe,
Hath hadde good chaunce and happe,
Must loue hir and cherishe hir all his life,
And dandle hir in his lappe.

If she will fare well, yf she wyll go gay,
A good husbände euer styll,
What euer she lust to doe, or to say,
Must lette hir haue hir owne will.

About what affaires so euer he goe,
He must shewe hir all his mynde,
None of hys counsell she may be kept free,
Else is he a man vnkynde.

The fourth Song.

I mun be maried a Sunday
I mun be maried a Sunday,
Who soeuer shall come that way,
I mun be maried a Sunday.

Royster Doyster is my name,
Royster Doyster is my name,
A lustie brute I am the same,
I mun be maried a Sunday.

Christian Custance haue I founde,
Christian Custance haue I founde,
A Wydowe worthe a thousande pounce,
I mun be maried a sunday.

Custance is as sweete as honey,
Custance is as sweete as honey,
I hir lambe and she my coney,
I mun be maried a Sunday.

When we shall make our weddyng feast,
When we shall make oure weddyng feast,
There shall bee cheere for man and beast,
I mun be maried a Sunday.

I mun be maried a Sunday, etc.

The Psalmodie

P *Lacebo dilexi,*
Maister Roister Doister wil streight go home and die,
Our Lorde Iesus Christ his soule haue mercie vpon:
Thus you see to day a man, to morrow Iohn.

Yet sauing for a womans extreeme crueltie,
He might haue lyued yet a moneth or two or three,
But in spite of Custance which hath him weried,
His mashyp shall be worshipfully buried.
And while some piece of his soule is yet hym within,
Some parte of his funeralls let vs here beginne.

Dirige. He will go darklyng to his graue.
Neque lux, neque crux, nisi solum clinke,
Neuer gentman so went toward heauen I thinke.

Yet sirs as ye wyll the blisse of heauen win,
When he commeth to the graue lay hym softly in,
And all men take heede by this one Gentleman,
How you sette your loue vpon an vnkinde woman:
For these women be all suche madde pieuish elues,
They wyll not be woonne except it please them selues.
But in faith Custance if euer ye come in hell,
Maister Roister Doister shall serue you as well.
Good night Roger olde knaue, Farewel Roger olde knaue.
Good night Roger olde knaue, knaue, knap.
Nequando. Audiui vocem. Requiem æternam.

**The Peale of belles rong by the parish
Clerk,**

and Roister Doisters foure men.

The first Bell a Triple.

When dyed he? When dyed he?

The seconde.

We haue hym, We haue hym.

The thirde.....

Royster Doyster, Royster Doyster.

The fourth Bell.

He commeth, He commeth.

The greate Bell.

Our owne, Our owne.

FINIS.

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[1]

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(1) A decree of the Starre-Chamber, concerning Printing, made the eleuenth day of July last past. London, 1637.

(2) An Order of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament for the regulating of Printing, &c. London, 14 June, 1643.

(3) AREOPAGITICA; A speech of Mr. John Milton for the liberty of Vnlicenc'd Printing, to the Parlament of England. London. [24 November]. 1644. **Sixpence, L. P. 1s. 6d.**

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[3]

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(2) Certayne notes of Instruction concerning the making of verse or rime in English, vvritten at the request of Master *Edouardi Donati*. 1575.

(3) THE STEELE GLAS. A Satyre compiled by George Gasscoigne Esquire [Written between April 1575 and April 1576]. Together with

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12. *JOHN EARLE, M.A. : afterwards in succession Bishop of Worcester, and of Salisbury.*

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(2) The seconde [to seventh] Sermon of Master Hughe Latemer, whych he preached before the Kynges maiestie, withyn hys graces Palayce at Westminster ye. xv. day of March. M.ccccc.xlix.

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[4]

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[Title-page and preface only.]

(2) A frutefull pleasaunt, and wittie worke, of the best state of a publyque weale, and of the new yle, called Utopia: written in Latine, by the right worthie and famous Sir Thomas More knyght, and translated into Englishe by RAPHE ROBYNSON, sometime fellowe of Corpus Christi Colledge in Oxford, and nowe by him at this seconde edition newlie perused and corrected, and also with diuers notes in the margent augmented. London. [1556].

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17. The earliest known English comedy.

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ROISTER DOISTER, [from the unique copy at Eton Colledge]. 1566.

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18. THE REVELATION TO THE MONK OF EVESHAM. He begynnyth a mervelous revelacion that was schewyd of almighty god by sent Nycholas to a monke of Euyshamme yn the days of Kynge Richard the fyrst. And the yere of our lord. M.C.Lxxxxvi. [From the unique copy, printed about 1491, in the British Museum].

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[5]

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(3) THE ESSAIES OF S^r FRANCIS BACON Knight, the Kings Solliciter Generall. London. 1612.

(38 Essays.)

(4) The Essayes or Counsels, Ciuill and Morall, of FRANCIS LO. VERULAM Viscount St. ALBANS. Newly Written. 1625. (58 Essays.)

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Three Shillings & Sixpence.

21. *Sir ROBERT NAUNTON, Master of the Court of Wards.*

FRAGMENTA REGALIA: or, Observations on the late Queen Elizabeth, her Times, and Favourites. [Second Edition. London] 1642.

Sixpence. [Sept.

22. *THOMAS WATSON, Student at law.*

(1) THE Εκατομπαθία or Passionate Centurie of Loue. *Divided into two parts: whereof, the first expresseth the Authors sufferance in Loue: the latter, his long farewell to Loue and all his tyrannie.* Composed by *Thomas Watson* Gentleman; and published at the request of certaine Gentlemen his very frendes. London [1582.]

(2) MELIBŒUS T. Watsoni, sive, Ecloga in obitum F. Walsinghami, &c. Londini, 1590.

(3) AN EGLOGUE, &c., Written first in latine [the above Melibœus] by *Thomas Watson*

Gentleman and now by himselfe translated into English. London, 1590.

(4) *THE TEARS OF FANCY*, or Loue disdained. [From the unique copy, wanting Sonnets ix.-xvi., in the possession of S. Christie-Miller, Esq.] London, 1593. **Eighteen Pence.** [Oct.]

Vol. X.—Containing Nos. 21 and 22, in green cloth, red edges. Half a Crown.

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THE SCHOLEMASTER, Or plaine and perfite way of teachyng children, to vnderstand, write, and speake, the Latin tong, but specially purposed for the priuate brynging vp of youth in Ientlemen and Noble mens houses, and commodious also for all such, as haue forgot the Latin tonge, and would, by themselues, without a Scholemaster, in short tyme, and with small paines, recouer a sufficient habilitie, to vnderstand, write, and speake Latin. London. 1570. **One Shilling.** [Oct.]

[6]

24. *WILLIAM HABINGTON.*

CASTARA. The third Edition. Corrected and augmented. London. 1640. With the variations of the two previous editions. **One Shilling.** [Nov.]

Vol. XI.—Containing Nos. 23 and 24; in green cloth, red edges. Half a Crown.

25. *JOHN HALL.*

HORÆ VACIVÆ, or Essays. Some occasionall considerations. London. 1646. **Sixpence.** [Nov.]

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Collated with the surreptitious edition 'The Tragedie of Gorboduc,' of 1565.

(2) *SACKVILLES'S THE INDUCTION to The Complaynt of Henrye duke of Buckingham*, from the second edition of *A Myrrovr for Magistrates*. London. 1563. **One Shilling.** [Dec.]

27. *Sir RICHARD GRENVILLE.*

FIGHT IN THE 'REVENGE.' (1) A report [written by Sir WALTER RALEIGH] of the Truth of the fight about the Isles of Acores, this last Sommer. Betvixt the Reuenge, one of her Maiesties Shippes, And an Armada of the King of Spaine. London. 1591. [From the Grenville copy.]

(2) The most Honorable Tragedie of Sir Richarde Grinuille, Knight (.) *Bramo assai, poco spero, nulla chieggio*. [By GERVASE MARKHAM] London. 1595. [Two copies only are known, Mr. Grenville's cost £40.] **Sixpence.** [Dec.]

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5 Queen Square, Bloomsbury, London, W.C.

[7]

June 1869.

THE publication of the 'English Reprints' passed into the Editor's hands on the 1st of May last. An inevitable cessation in the issue of new works ensued: but with the appearance of Howell's *Instructions, &c.*, the Series resumes its growth.

A few changes have been made as to works in immediate preparation. (1) *Roister Doister* can be published for Sixpence. (2) An early printed rarity, *The Revelation to the Monk of Evesham*, has therefore been interpolated. (3) ELYOT'S *Governor* has been postponed to next year. (4) In its stead NAUNTON'S *Fragmenta Regalia*, and WATSON'S *ἑκατομπαθία, &c.* have been inserted.

It is a great gratification to bring back from oblivion the works of so elegant a poet as THOMAS WATSON, of whose renown in his own age Francis Meres thus testifies in his *Palladis Tamia*, 1598.

'As Italy had *Dante, Boccace, Petrarch, Tasso, Celiano*, and *Ariosto*: so England had *Mathew Roydon, Thomas Atchelow, Thomas Watson, Thomas Kid, Robert Greene* and *George Peele*.' —p. 282, b.

'As *Theocritus* in Greeke, *Virgil* and *Mantuan* in Latine, *Sanazar* in Italian, and the Authour of *Amyntæ Gaudia* and *Walsinghams Melibæus* are the best for pastorall....' —p. 284, a.

There is, however, further gratulation in that S. Christie-Miller, Esq. has generously consented to the printing of Watson's *The Tears of Fancy*, the unique copy of which forms one of the gems of his remarkable collection at Britwell. Altogether, therefore, the Reprint will include above 150 Sonnets, besides the Latin-English elegy *Melibæus*.

The temporary loan of original editions greatly facilitates the work. Gentlemen who may be willing so to trust the Editor are requested to communicate with him a considerable time in advance of date of publication.

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not therefore be presumption to bespeak unceasing co-operation on the part of all readers of English.

The Large Paper edition will be continued in the autumn.

All communications should be addressed to the undersigned.

EDWARD ARBER.

[8]

English Reprints.

Abbreviations

Stiff Stiff Covers, either *cut* or *uncut* edges.

Cloth Bevelled green Cloth, red edges.

Paper Large paper Edition. Stiff Covers.

Summary of Issues, &c.		Fcap. 8vo.		Fcap. 4to.
Authors.	Works.	Stiff	Cloth	Paper
		READY.	READY.	READY.
1.	MILTON. <i>Areopagitica</i> . 1644.	0 6	} 2 0	1 6
2.	LATIMER. <i>The Ploughers</i> . 1549.	0 6		1 6
3.	GOSSON. <i>The Schoole of Abuse</i> . 1579.	0 6		1 6
4.	SIDNEY. <i>An Apologie for Poetrie</i> . 1595.	0 6	} 2 6	1 6
5.	WEBBE. <i>His Wonderful Trauailes</i> . 1590.	0 6		1 6
6.	SELDEN. <i>Table-Talk</i> . 1689.	1 0		2 6
				PREPARING.
7.	ASCHAM. <i>Toxophilus</i> . 1545.	1 0	} 2 6	2 6
8.	ADDISON. <i>Criticism on Paradise Lost</i> . 1712.	1 0		2 6
9.	LYLY. <i>Euphues</i> . 1579.	4 0	5 0	9 0
10.	VILLIERS. <i>The Rehearsal</i> . 1672.	1 0	} 3 6	2 6
11.	GASCOIGNE. <i>The Steele Glas, &c.</i> 1576.	1 0		2 6
12.	EARLE. <i>Micro-Cosmographie</i> . 1628.	1 0		2 6
13.	LATIMER. <i>Sermons before Ed. VI</i> . 1549.	1 6	} 3 0	4 0
14.	MORE. <i>Utopia</i> . 1556.	1 0		2 6
15.	PUTTENHAM. <i>Arte of English Poesie</i> . 1589.	2 0	2 6	5 0
IN PREPARATION.				
16.	HOWELL. <i>Instructions for Forreigne Travell</i> . 1640.	0 6	} 2 6	1 6
17.	UDALL. <i>Roister Doister</i> . 1566.	0 6		1 6
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19.	JAMES I. <i>Essayes, &c. in Poesie</i> . 1585.	} 0 6		1 6
	Counterblaste to Tobacco. 1604.			
20.	BACON. <i>A Harmony of the Essayes, &c.</i>	3 0	3 6	7 0
21.	NAUNTON. <i>Fragmenta Regalia</i> . 1642.	0 6	} 2 6	1 6
22.	WATSON. <i>The ἑκατομπαθία, &c.</i> 1582.	1 6		4 0
23.	ASCHAM. <i>The Scholemaster</i> . 1570.	1 0	} 2 6	2 6
24.	HABINGTON. <i>Castara</i> . 1640.	1 0		2 6
25.	HALL. <i>Horæ Vacivæ</i> . 1646.	0 6		1 6
26.	SACKVILLE. <i>Ferrex & Porrex</i> . 1561.	1 0	2 6	2 6
27.	GRENVILLE. <i>Fight in the 'Revenge'</i> . 1590.	0 6		1 6

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5, QUEEN SQUARE, BLOOMSBURY, LONDON, W.C.

Life of Nicholas Udall, omitting formatting complexities

A brief Note of the LIFE, WORKS, and TIMES
of

NICHOLAS UDALL, M.A.

Teacher, Dramatist, Translator, Preacher.

In succession Master of Eton College, Rector of Braintree, Prebend of Windsor, Rector of Calborne, and Master of Westminster School.

* Probable or approximate dates.

There are materials extant for a good *Life* of Udall. Meanwhile there is Mr. Cooper's excellent *Memoir* in the *Shakespeare Society's* reprint of *Ralph Roister Doister* [see No. 5 on p. 8]; and Anthony à-Wood's

account of him, *Ath. Oxon. i. 211. Ed. 1813.*

1485. Aug. 22. Henry VII. becomes king.

*1504. Nicholas Udall ... was born in Hampshire, and descended from those of his name, living sometimes at Wykeham in the same county.—*Wood.*

1509. April 22. Henry VIII. begins to reign.

1520. June 18. æt. 14. Admitted scholar of Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

1524. May 30. æt. 18. Takes his B.A. [*Wood, Fasti Oxon., i. 65, Ed. 1815.*]

— Sept. 3. Elected Probationer Fellow of his College.

1533. May. Whitsun Eve. æt. 27. *Royal MS. 18 A. lxiv. p. 275*, has two titles. (1.) Versis and dities made at the coronation of queen Anne. (2.) Hereafter ensueth a copie of diuers and sundry verses aswell in latin as in Englishe deuised and made partely by Iohn leland and partely by Nicholas Vuedale whereof sum were sette vp and sum were spoken and pronounced vnto the most high and excellent Quene the ladie Anne, wif vnto our sourain lorde King Henry the eight in many goodly and costely pageauntes exhibited and shewed by the mayre and citizens of the famous citie of london at first tyme as hir grace rode from the Towre of London through the said citie to hir most glorious coronation at the monasterie of Westminster on Whitson yeue in th xxvth yere of the raigne of our said soueraigne lorde.

The Rev. Dr. Goodford, the present Provost of Eton, has most kindly afforded me interesting information obtained by him from the MS. records of the College; viz., the Audit Rolls and the Bursar's Books, respecting Udall's connection with Eton.

The salary of the Master at Eton was then £10 a year, or fifty shillings for each of the four terms. In addition, he received 20s. for his 'livery,' and other small sums, as for obits (*i.e.* attending masses for the dead) [*e.g.* Udall received for obits, 14s. 8d. in 1535, and the same in 1536]; and for candles and ink for the boys [*e.g.* Udall received for these purposes, 23s. 4d. in 1537, and the same in 1538.] If the assumed multiple of 13 truly express the relatively greater purchasing power of gold and silver more then than now: the salary and emoluments cannot be considered excessive.

1534. June 19. Udall takes his M.A. [*Wood, Fasti., i. 98.*]

1534-1543. æt. Udall's name occurs in the Records spelt indifferently Woddall, Woodall or Udall. His name first appears in 26 Henry VIII., 1534, when his predecessor Dr. Richard Coxe was paid salary for three terms, and Udall received 50s. for the fourth, his first term. The payments continue on regularly so far as the books are extant, up to 1541. The Records for 1542 are missing. It was in March 1543 that occurred the robbery of silver images and other plate by two Eton scholars, J. Hoorde and T. Cheney, connived at by Udall's servant Gregory, which resulted in Udall's losing his place.

'Thomas Tusser, gentleman,' in *The Author's Life* added to his *Fiue hundred points of good husbandrie*, 1573, 4to, thus writes, but without giving any date, of Udall's use of the rod:

Nicholas Vdal schole master at Eton.

From Powles I went, to Aeton sent,
To learne straight wayes, the Latin phraise,
Where fiftie three stripes giuen to mee,
at once I had:
For faut but small or none at all,
It came to passe, thus beat I was,
See Udall see, the mercy of thee,
to mee poore lad.

1537. Sept. 27. Is made Vicar of Braintree. *Newcourt, Rep. ii. 89.*

1542. Udall publishes a translation of the 3rd and 4th books of Erasmus' *Apophthegms*.

*1543. *Cott. MS. Titus, B. viii. p. 371*, is a long letter, undated and unaddressed, to some one, as to 'my restitution to the roume of Scholemaister in Eton.'

1544. Dec. 14. Resigns the Vicarship of Braintree. *Newcourt, idem.*

1542-1545. He is engaged with the Princess, afterwards Queen Mary and others in translating Erasmus' *Paraphrase of the New Testament* into English.

'1545, Sept. 30, at London,' date of his *Preface to Lake*.

In his *Pref. to John*, partly translated by Princess Mary, partly by Rev. F. Malet, D.D.; Udall gives us the following account of female education in his day: which can only, however, apply to a few women, like Elizabeth, Mary, and Lady Jane Grey. 'But nowe in this gracious and blisseful tyme of knowledge, in whiche it hath pleased almightye God to reuele and shewe abroad the lyght of his moste holye ghospell: what a noubre is there of noble women (especially here in this realme of Englande,) yea and howe many in the yeares of tender vyrginitiee, not only aswel seen and as familiarly trade in the Latine and Greke tounge, as in theyr owne mother language: but also both in all kindes of prophane litterature, and liberall artes, exactely studied and exercised, and in the holy Scriptures and Theologie so ripe, that they are able aptely cunnyngly, and with much grace eyther to indictate or translate into the vulgare tongue, for the publique instruccion and edifying of the vnlearned multitude.... It is nowe no newes in Englande to see young damisels in nobles houses and in the Courtes of Princes, in stede of cardes and other instrumentes of idle trifleyng, to haue continually in her handes, eyther Psalmes, Omelies, and other deuoute meditacions, or elles Paules Epistles, or some booke of holye Scripture matiers: and as familiarlye both to reade or reason thereof in Greke, Latine, Frenche, or Italian, as in Englishe.'

1547. Jan. 28. Edward VI. ascends the throne.

'1552. July 20. At Windsor.' The date of Udall's preface to the translation by himself and others, of T. Gemini's *Anatomy*.

1553. July 6. Mary succeeds to the crown.

1554. Dec. 3. Date of a warrant dornier from the Queen to the Master of her Revels. [Reprinted in *The Loseley MSS*. Ed. by A. J. KEMPE, F.S.A. London. 1836.] The warrant runs thus—'Whereas our wellbeloued Nicholas Udall hath at soondrie seasons convenient heretofore shewed and myndeth hereafter to shewe his diligence in setting foorth of Dialogues and Enterludes before us fo' ou' regell disporte and recreacion.' ... And then goes on to authorize the loan of apparel for those purposes. Did the popularity of the Dramatist, and her personal acquaintance with him, since they had worked together on Erasmus' *Paraphrase*, lead the Queen to condone the intense Protestantism of the Preacher, even to the continuing of him in favour? Udall and Ascham, two noted Protestants, are both favoured by Mary.

*1555-1556. Nov. Udall is appointed Master of Westminster School, and so continues until Mary re-establishes the Monastery at Westminster.

1556. Dec. Udall dies.

— 23. He is buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster. *Cooper, as above.*

Bibliography, omitting formatting complexities

Roister Doister.

8

The whole of Udall's plays were supposed to have perished [see *Wood. Ath. Oxon. i. 213*, Ed. 1813]. The Rev. T. Briggs, an old Etonian, in 1818, became the possessor of the now famous unique copy: which he presented to the Library of Eton College, in December of that year.

1. [?1566.] Lond. 1 vol. 4to.

? First edition of a revised text. The copy, now at Eton College, consists of 33 folios. The title-page is wanting.

2. 1818. Lond. 1 vol. 8vo.

'*Ralph Royster Doyster*, A Comedy. London. Reprinted in the year 1818.' [Ed. and privately printed by Rev. T. BRIGGS. 30 copies only struck off. The printer was James Compton, Middle St., Cloth Fair, London.] At the beginning is the following *Advertisement*:—

'It appears from the *Biographia Dramatica*, that a Play called *Rauf Ruster Duster* was entered on the books of the Stationers' Company in the year 1566, but that it was supposed never to have been printed: this, however, is now proved to be a mistake, a copy having been found contained in a collection of plays which was lately upon sale in London. It is true that the name is spelt somewhat differently, but it is presumed there can be no doubt of its being the piece in question. The book unfortunately wants the title-page, and the author's name is not known. It is now in the Library of Eton College, and is here reprinted for the amusement of the reader.'

3. 1821. Lond. 1 vol. 8vo.

'*Ralph Royster Doyster*, a Comedy, entered on the books of the Stationers' Company, 1566. London: Printed by F. Marshall, Kenton St., Brunswick Sq., 1821.' [Editor not known.]

R. Southey's copy, with his autograph, and dated 1 Feb. 1837, is in the British Museum. Press-mark, 1344-k.

Neither of the above knew that Udall was the author. The editor of 1821 reprint writes, 'The author, whoever he was,' p. iv. It was Mr. Collier who connected Wilson's quotation with *Roister Doister*, and so proved Udall to be its author. Writing on 14th April 1865; he thus begins the *Preface* of his *Bibl. Account of Ear. Eng. Lit.* Ed. 1865.

'During my whole life, now rapidly approaching fourscore, I have been a diligent reader, and, as far as my means would allow, a greedy purchaser of all works connected with early English literature. It is nearly sixty years since I became possessed of my first really valuable old book of this kind—Wilson's "Art of Logic," printed by Richard Grafton 1551—from which I ascertained the not unimportant facts that "Ralph Roister Doister" was an older play than "Gammer Gurton's Needle," and that it had been written by Nicholas Udall, Master of Eton School: I thus learned who was the author of the earliest comedy, properly so called, in our language. This was my first literary discovery, made several years anterior, although I had not occasion to render it public, until I printed my Notes upon "Dodsley's Old Plays," soon after 1820.*'

* See vol. ii. p. 3. Ed. 1825.

4. 1830. Lond. 3 vols. 18mo.

The Old English Drama, A series of Plays, at 6d each, printed and published by Thomas White. *Ralph Royster Doyster* is the first.

5. 1847. Lond. 1 vol. 8vo.

Shakespeare Society. Ralph Roister Doister, &c., and The Tragedie of Gorboduc. Edited, with Introductory Memoirs, by W. D. Cooper, F.S.A. The text collated with the original by J. P. Collier, F.S.A.

6. 24 July 1869. Lond. 1 vol. 8vo.

English Reprints: see title at p. 1.

∴ All the previous reprints have been and now are unobtainable to most persons. It is to the most courteous and generous kindness of the present Provost and Fellows of Eton College that I am enabled to place what I hope may prove an exact text into the hands of every one. I trust also to keep it perpetually on sale: that the student of the History of our Literature may no longer lack one of the most important illustrations of the growth of English Dramatic Poesy.

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