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SCOTTISH POETRY OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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Edited by GEORGE EYRE-TODD

SCOTTISH POETRY OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

SIR DAVID LYNDSAY
JOHN BELLENDEN
KING JAMES THE FIFTH
SIR RICHARD MAITLAND
ALEXANDER SCOT
ALEXANDER MONTGOMERIE

GLASGOW: WILLIAM HODGE & CO

1892

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NOTE.

Many of the best editions of the Scottish poets, even of recent date, increase the difficulties of archaic language by such unnecessary stumbling-blocks as the use of the old straight *s*, and of Anglo-Saxon symbols for certain letters. Some even appear in the added obscurity of Old English type. And when these hindrances are not present, an irritating punctuation too often remains a barrier to all enjoyment. To these obstacles, as much, perhaps, as to the actual scarcity and costliness of the works, is to be attributed the popular neglect of a noble heritage in recent years. In the present volume, as in the previous volumes of this series, an effort has been made, while preserving the text intact in its original form, to improve in these respects upon the readableness of previous editions. A running glossary has, for the same object, been furnished in the margin of each page. For practical perusal of the text, as poetry, it is believed that this arrangement, translating obsolete words, as it does, without a break in the reading, is better than footnotes, or a glossary at the end of the volume. Few now-a-days, it is to be feared, save the most ardent students, can afford the time necessary for the elucidation by means of a dictionary even of so short a poem as “Chrystis Kirk on the Grene.”

While avoiding a burden of distracting comment, all necessary information, it is hoped, has been included in the separate introductions.

All the poems not otherwise indicated are here printed entire; and in particular it may be pointed out that the four pieces attributed to King James the Fifth are now reproduced complete and together for the first time since 1786.

CONTENTS.

SCOTTISH POETRY OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Flodden Field, that long slope looking north-ward by the “deep and dark and sullen Till,” where on a September afternoon in 1513 the flower of Scotland fell round James the Fourth, stands darkly marked on the page of history both of the Scottish nation and of Scottish poetry. It was for the North the burial-place of one era and the birth-place of another. The English billmen who on Flodden closed round the last desperate ring of Scottish spears hewed down with their ghastly weapons not only James himself and his nobles, but the feudal system in church and state, with all that sprang from it, the civilization and poetry of the Middle Ages in Scotland. The national spirit which had burst into leaf at Bannockburn was touched now as by an autumn frost, and a time of storm and darkness must ensue before the country could feel the re-awakening influences of a new spring. The mediæval world, with its charm and its chivalry, its splendour, cruelty, and power, was passing away, while the modern world was in the throes of being born. [2]

Had James IV. lived he would doubtless have continued, firm-handed as he was, to hold in check both churchmen and nobles, and the reforms which were in the air might have taken effect like leaven, and not, as they did, like gunpowder. They might have been grafted upon the existing stem, as in England, instead of overturning it. But during the long minority of James V. the abuses of the feudal system, political and ecclesiastical, attained too rank a growth to be pruned by the hand of that king when he came of age, notwithstanding his energy and good intentions. The system, as Macaulay has pointed out, had served its purpose in the Middle Ages as perhaps no more modern system could have done. In the feudal castles and monasteries had been preserved certain lights of chivalry and learning which, without such shelter, must, amid the storms of these centuries, have flickered and disappeared. These lights were now, however, burning more and more dimly. The corruptions of the clergy and the rapacity of the nobles outran all bounds, and between the two no man’s life was safe and no woman’s honour. Like other human institutions, therefore, which have outlived their usefulness, feudalism was doomed.

Renaissance was to come, not from within, but from without, and in the north the new influence [3] took the form of a militant religious enthusiasm. Already in James the Fourth’s time the war-horns of the Reformation sounded on the Continent had made their echoes heard in Scotland; and during the reign of his successor these were taken up and resounded at home with tremendous effect by the iconoclast trio, Lyndsay, Buchanan, and Knox. The new era was to be one of strife and tempest, in which the root of poesy was little likely to bring to perfection its rarest blossoms.

Goethe has said that the Reformation cost Europe three centuries’ growth of civilization. So far as poetry is concerned the statement must be taken as true in Scotland to a modified extent. No one would be so foolish as to deny the immense advantages, in the purification of morals and the setting up of new perfervid ideals, which the Reformation brought to the north. But it is too frequently forgotten that the era of Scotland’s highest achievement in arms and in poetry was not the era of Knox and Buchanan, but the era of Bishop Lamberton, Archdeacon Barbour,[1] and the preaching friar Dunbar. Against the unquestionable benefits of the Reformation in Scotland must be set the fact that it not only broke the stem of the existing feudal civilization, but itself, intent [4] only upon things of a future life, and modelled overmuch upon Judaic ideals, gave scant encouragement to the carnal arts of this world.

There is strong reason to believe that Scottish character, so far as social qualities go, suffered a certain withering change in the sixteenth century. Under feudalism, with all its faults, the country had been characterized by a generous joyousness which may be read between the lines of its contemporary history and poetry. Bruce, in the intervals of his heroic undertaking, could recite long romances of chivalry. The accomplishments of James I. as musician, poet, and player at all games and sports, are too well known to need repetition. Blind Harry was only one of the wandering minstrels who everywhere earned feast and bed by their entertainments. And the madcap court of James IV. lives in the poems of William Dunbar and the letters of the Spanish ambassador, Pedro de Ayala. All this was changed at the Reformation, and there seems to have been imposed then upon the life of the people a certain ascetic seriousness which has left its traces on the national character to the present day. Mirth and entertainment of all sorts not strictly religious were severely discountenanced by the Reformers, as tending to render this life [5] too attractive, and to withdraw attention from the great object of existence, preparation for the tomb. The attitude of the new rulers towards poetical composition in particular may be judged from two instances. In 1576, in the first book printed in Gaelic—Knox’s *Forms of Prayer and Catechism*—Bishop Carswell, the translator, in his preface condemns with pious severity the Highlanders’ enjoyment of songs and histories “concerning warriors and champions, and Fingal the son of Comhal, with his heroes.” And the title-page of that curious collection, *The Gude and Godlie Ballates*, published in 1578,[2] bears that the contents consist in great part of pious compositions “changed out of prophaine Sangis, for avoyding of sinne and harlotrie.” So strongly, indeed, burned the ardour of the Reformers that for a considerable period nothing was printed in the Scottish press but what was tinged with religion in the strictest sense; and the effect of the condemnation of “profane” literature at that time is to be traced in the prejudice with which [6] novel-reading has been regarded in Scotland almost to the present day.

There was in the air, besides, another depressing influence which must not be overlooked.

Simultaneously with the dawn of the Reformation the Scottish language began to decay. The causes of this decay are sufficiently ascertained.[3] For the first forty years of the Reformation movement there was no translation of the Scriptures into the northern dialect. The copies used

were obtained from England. Carried everywhere by the popular wave, the English book, as it was called, must by itself have done much to change the tongue of the country. Further, as the Catholic party in Scotland naturally looked for support to the ancient alliance with Catholic France, the adherents of Protestantism were forced into intimate relations and constant communication with Protestant England. In the works of Sir David Lyndsay, the earliest poet of the new period, the influence of this connection is seen taking effect, English forms of words, like *go*, *also*, and *one*, constantly taking the place of the mediæval Scottish. John Knox was a greater innovator than Lyndsay in this respect; and the deterioration went steadily on until, shortly after [7] the close of the century, the *coup de grâce* was given to the tongue by the transference of James VI. and his court to England. Upon that event Lowland Scottish went out of favour, and practically ceased to be a literary language.[4]

In face of these adverse influences—the decay of the language, religious disfavour, and the overturn of the ancient social system—a brilliant poetic era was not to be looked for in Scotland in the sixteenth century. The marvel is that so much was produced that had vigour, humour, and tenderness. Justice has hardly yet been done to a period which, opening with the iconoclast thunders of Sir David Lyndsay, included the compositions of the gallant James V., of “the Scottish Anacreon” Alexander Scot, and of the author of “The Cherrie and the Slae.” These Scottish singers have their own place and charm, and it has to be remembered that their work was composed while the strange silence of more than a hundred years which followed the death of Chaucer south of the Tweed was still all but unbroken.

The early period of Scottish poetry, corresponding to the heroic era of the national history, had [8] been one of geste, chronicle, and patriotic epic, and remains illustrious with the names of Thomas the Rhymer, Barbour, Wyntoun, and Henry the Minstrel. The mediæval period, that in which the temper of the nation changed from one of strenuous, single-hearted purpose to one of conscious reflection, individual assertion, and restless personal desire, had been the period in which, lit anew by the torch of Chaucer, and fed by the genius of James I., Henryson, Dunbar, and Douglas, Scottish poetry shot forth its most splendid flame. The sixteenth century, no less clearly marked, was a period of change. With Flodden Field and the Reformation the old order of things passed away. As the feudalism of the Middle Ages passed out of church and state the mediæval spirit passed out of the national poetry, and amid the strife of new ideals the last songs were sung in the national language of Scotland. Before the close of the century a new light had risen in the south, the brilliant Elizabethan constellation was flashing into fire, and under its influence the singers of the north were to make a new departure, and, like their kings who were seated on the English throne, were to adopt the accents of the southern tongue.

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SIR DAVID LYNDSAY.

For more than two hundred years, until the appearance of Robert Burns, the most popular of all the Scottish poets was Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount. During that time more than twenty editions of his works were published; next to the Bible they were perhaps the most familiar reading of the people; and in any question of phraseology, "Ye'll no fin' that in Davie Lyndsay" was a common condemnation against which there was no appeal. Popularity is not always a sign of worth; but in Lyndsay's case its justice must be admitted. The qualities which made him popular also make him great. No more honest, fearless, and admirable figure stands out from the page of Scottish history than that of this clear-sighted and true-hearted poet, who in a corrupt age filled so many parts without question and without stain. If effects are to be considered in judgment, a great place must be accorded the man who began by moulding the mind of a prince and ended by reforming that of a nation.

[12] The Juvenal of Scotland was descended from a younger branch of the Lyndsays of the Byres in Haddingtonshire, and is believed to have been born in 1490 either at The Mount, near Cupar-Fife, or at Garleton, then Garmylton, in East Lothian. From the former small estate the poet's father and himself in succession took their title, but the latter was apparently the chief residence of the family. There were grammar schools then established both in Haddington and in Cupar; and at one of these, it is probable, the poet received his early education. All that is definitely known of his early years, however, has been gathered from the fact that his name appears in 1508 or 1509 among the *Incorporati* or fourth-year students of St. Salvator's College, St. Andrews. He must therefore have matriculated there in 1505, the year of John Knox's birth. Next Lyndsay's name in the register follows that of David Beaton, afterwards archbishop and cardinal, and the most formidable opponent of the Reformation in Scotland. It has been inferred from two references in his poems[5] that upon leaving college Lyndsay visited the Continent and travelled as far as Italy. But information on the subject remains uncertain.

[13] The next definite notice shows him attached to the royal court, and taking part in the amusements which were there in vogue. It is an entry in the treasurer's accounts on 12th October, 1511, of £3 4s. for blue and yellow taffeties "to be a play coat to David Lyndsay for the play playit in the king and queen's presence in the Abbey of Holyrood." In the same year appear the first quarterly payments of an annual salary of £40, which he received henceforth for his duties at court. The exact position which he at first filled is uncertain, but on the birth of Prince James, afterwards James V., on 12th April, 1512, Lyndsay was appointed chief page or usher to the infant. The description of his services in this capacity makes a delightful picture in the "Epistil to the Kingis Grace" prefixed to "The Dreme," and again in the "Complaynt" of 1529. The lines of the latter may be quoted—

I tak the Quenis Grace, thy mother,
My Lord Chancelare, and mony uther,
Thy Nowreis, and thy auld Maistres,
I tak thame all to beir wytnes;
Auld Willie Dillie, wer he on lyve,
My lyfe full weill he could discryve:
Quhow, as ane chapman beris his pak,
I bure thy Grace upon my bak,
And sumtymes, strydlingis on my nek,
Dansand with mony bend and bek.
The first sillabis that thow did mute
Was Pa, Da Lyn,[6] upon the lute;
Than playit I twenty spryngis, perqueir,
Quhilk wes gret piete for to heir.
Fra play thow leit me never rest,
Bot Gynkartoun[7] thow lufit ay best;
And ay, quhen thow come frome the scule
[14] Than I behuffit to play the fule;
As I at lenth, in-to my Dreme
My sindry servyce did expreme.
Thocht it bene better, as sayis the wyse,
Hape to the court nor gude servyce,
I wate thow luffit me better, than,
Nor, now, sum wyfe dois hir gude-man.
Than men tyll uther did recorde,
Said Lyndesay wald be maid ane lord:
Thow hes maid lordis, Schir, be Sanct Geill,
Of sum that hes nocht servit so weill.

Whatever may have been the severity of character which in other matters James sometimes considered it his duty to show, there remains as testimony to the real nature of "the King of the Commons" that he never forgot these early services of his faithful attendant.

When the prince was a year old, that is, in 1513, just before Flodden, Lyndsay was witness to that strange scene in the Church of St. Michael in Linlithgow which is related upon his authority both by Pitscottie and Buchanan, and which is popularly known through Sir Walter Scott's version in *Marmion*. On the eve of setting forth upon his fatal campaign James IV., according to Pitscottie,

was with his nobles attending prayers in the church at Linlithgow when a tall man came in, roughly clad in a blue gown and bare-headed, with a great pikestaff in his hand, “cryand and spearand for the King.” He advanced to James, and with small reverence laid his arm on the royal praying-desk. “Sir King,” he said, “my mother has sent me to you desiring you not to passe, at this time, where thou art purposed; for if thou does thou wilt not fair well in thy journey, nor none that passeth with thee. Further, she bade ye melle with no woman, nor use their counsell, nor let them touch thy body, nor thou theirs; for, and thou do it, thou wilt be confounded and brought to shame.” “Be this man,” proceeds the chronicler, “had spoken thir words unto the King’s Grace, the Even-song was neere doone, and the King paused on thir words, studying to give him an answer; but in the mean time, before the King’s eyes, and in presence of all the Lords that were about him for the time, this man vanished away, and could no wayes be seene nor comprehended, but vanished away as he had beene ane blink of the sunne, or ane whiss of the whirlwind, and could no more be seene.” [15]

It has been suggested that the episode might be an effort of Queen Margaret to dissuade her husband from the campaign by working upon his superstition, and that Lyndsay, through whose hands the apparition “vanished away,” probably knew more of the affair than he cared to confess. The whole matter, however, is wrapped up in mystery.

After the death of James IV. at Flodden, Lyndsay appears to have remained in constant attendance upon the young king, sometimes being styled “the Kingis maister usher,” sometimes “the Kingis maister of houshald.” It was probably in the course of these duties that he made the acquaintance of the lady who became his wife. Whether she was related to the great historic house is unknown, but her name was Janet Douglas, and from numerous entries in the treasurer’s accounts she appears, notwithstanding her marriage, to have held the post of sempstress to the king till the end of his reign. The union took place about the year 1522. [16]

In 1524 affairs in Scotland took a turn which for a time deprived Lyndsay of his office. On 20th May in that year the Regent Albany finally retired to France, and the reins of government were assumed by Queen Margaret, who, to strengthen her position against her divorced husband, the powerful Earl of Angus, withdrew the young prince from his tutors, and placed the sceptre nominally in his hand. Angus, however, prevailed, and getting possession of the person of James, ruled Scotland in the Douglas interest for four years. Lyndsay’s opinion of the effect of this proceeding may be gathered from the lines of his “Complaynt”—

The Kyng was bot twelf yeris of aige
Quhen new rewlaris come, in thair raige,
For Commonweill makand no cair,
Bot for thair proffeit singulair.
Imprudentlie, lyk wytles fuilis,
Thay tuke that young Prince frome the scuilis,
Quhare he, under obedience,
Was lernand vertew and science,
And haistelie platt in his hand
The governance of all Scotland;
As quho wald, in ane stormye blast,
Quhen marinaris bene all agast
Throw dainger of the seis raige,
Wald tak ane chylde of tender aige
Quhilk never had bene on the sey,
And to his biddyng all obey,
Gevyng hym haill the governall [17]
Off schip, marchand, and marinall,
For dreid of rockis and foreland,
To put the ruther in his hand.
Without Goddis grace is no refuge:
Geve thare be dainger ye may juge.
I gyf thame to the Devyll of Hell
Quhilk first devysit that counsell!
I wyll nocht say that it was treassoun,
Bot I dar sweir it was no reassoun.
I pray God, lat me never se ryng,
In-to this realme, so young ane Kyng!

Discharged from his duties, though, at the instance of James, his salary continued to be paid, Lyndsay retired to his estates, and occupied his leisure by casting into verse some of his reflections upon the events and character of his time. These, in the form of a scarcely veiled satire, with a finely poetic setting, he published under the title of “The Dreme,” probably in 1528. In the autumn of the same year, it is believed, he wrote his “Complaynt to the Kingis Grace,” a performance in which, as has been seen, he recounts his early services, and asks some token of royal recognition, declaiming fearlessly the abuses which have been practised by the recent governors of the realm, and ending with congratulations and sound counsel on James’s own sudden assumption of power.

This reminder would hardly appear to have been needed by the young king. On a night in May of that year James had escaped from Falkland, and dashing through the defiles of the Ochils with only a couple of grooms in his train, had established himself in Stirling, successfully defied the Douglas power, and, though no more than sixteen years of age, had in a few hours made himself [18]

absolute master of Scotland. Among the first to benefit by his assumption of power were his old attendants. His chaplain, Sir James Inglis, he made Abbot of Culross; his tutor, Gavin Dunbar, he made Archbishop of Glasgow, and afterwards Lord High Chancellor; while upon Lyndsay he conferred the honour of knighthood and appointed him Lyon King at Arms.

This was in 1529, and the appointment marks Lyndsay's entry into the larger public life of his time. The office of the Chief Herald was then an active one, its holder being employed on frequent state envoys to foreign courts. Thus in 1531 Lyndsay was sent to the Netherlands to renew a commercial treaty of James I. which had just lapsed. Upon that occasion he had an interview at Brussels with the Queen of Hungary, then Regent of the Netherlands, and her brother the Emperor Charles V.; and in a letter still extant[8] he describes the tournaments, of which he was spectator, at the royal court.

Again, in 1536, he was one of the embassy sent to France to conclude a marriage between James and Marie de Bourbon, daughter of the Duc de Vendôme. Negotiations in this case were all but completed when by the personal interference of James the treaty was broken off and espousals arranged instead with Magdalene, the daughter of the French king, Francis I.

[19] The sad sequel of this romantic union is well known. The fate of the fragile young princess formed the subject of Lyndsay's elegy, "The Deploratioun of the Deith of Quene Magdalene."

Strangely enough, the Lyon Herald's next employment was, in the following year, the superintendence of ceremonies at reception of James's new bride, Mary, the daughter of the Duc de Guise. These, like the other events of the time, are fully described by Lindsay of Pitscottie, the contemporary historian. Among other "fersis and playis" they included one curious device. "And first sche was receivit at the New Abbay yet (gate); upon the eist syd thairof thair wes maid to hir ane triumphant arch be Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, knicht, alias Lyon Kyng at Armis, quha caussit ane greyt cloud to cum out of the hevins down abone the yeit; out the quhilk cloude come downe ane fair Lady most lyk ane angell, having the keyis of Scotland in hir hand, and delyverit thayme to the Queinis grace in signe and taikin that all the harts of Scotland wer opin for the receveing of hir Grace; withe certane Oratiouns maid be the said Sir David to the Quein's Grace, desyring hir to feir hir God, and to serve him, and to reverence and obey hir husband, and keip her awin body clein, according to God's will and commandment."[9]

[20] A more momentous piece of work, and one more worthy of the poet's genius, was Lyndsay's next performance. In 1530, in his "Testament and Complaynt of our Soverane Lordis Papyngo," he had already ventured with great boldness to expose the disorders of the time in church affairs. He now went further, and in the guise of a stage-play attacked with fearless and biting satire the corruptions of clergy and nobles. This play, "Ane Pleasant Satyre of the thrie Estaitis," appears to have been first performed at Linlithgow at the feast of Epiphany on 6th January, 1539–40, when, occupying no less than nine hours in representation,[10] it was witnessed by the king, the queen, and ladies of the court, the bishops, nobles, and a great gathering of people.

As Lyon Herald, Lyndsay superintended the preparation of the *Register of Arms* of the Scottish nobility and gentry. This work, now in the Advocates' Library, Mr. Laing commends for its careful execution and proper emblazonment of the arms, as most creditable to the state of heraldic art in Scotland. It was completed in 1542.

On the 14th of December in the same year Lyndsay was one of those who stood by the bedside of the dying king at Falkland, when, overwhelmed by sorrow and disappointment, he "turned his back to his lordis and his face to the wall," and presently passed away. The friendship between the king and the poet, which had begun in the prince's cradle-days, appears to have had not a single break, one of James' last acts being to assign to Lyndsay, "during all the days of his life, two chalders of oats, for horse-corn, out of the King's lands of Dynmure in Fife."

[21] The Lyon Herald survived his master about fifteen years, and lived to see signs that the reforms which he had urged would one day be carried out.

In 1546 occurred the first crisis of the Reformation. In consequence of the cruel burning of George Wishart at St. Andrews in that year, the castle there was stormed by Norman Lesley and fifteen others, and Cardinal Beaton, the prelate most obnoxious to the reforming party, was assassinated. On the 4th of August, Lyndsay, as commissioner for the burgh of Cupar, was in his seat in Parliament when the writ of treason was issued against the assassins; and on the 17th, as Lyon Herald, he appeared with a trumpeter before the castle in the vain effort to bring the garrison to terms. But whatever might be his official duties, his sympathies were clearly on the side of the reformers. Regarding the death of Beaton he wrote, probably sometime in the following year, his satire, the "Tragedie of the Cardinall"; and in May, 1547, he was one of the inner circle of those who, in the parish church of St. Andrews, gave John Knox his unexpected but memorable call to the ministry.

In 1548 Lyndsay was sent to Denmark to negotiate a treaty of free trade in corn, and with the successful issue of this embassy he appears to have closed his career as envoy to foreign courts. Henceforth he seems to have devoted himself to poetical composition. In 1550 appeared what has been esteemed by some critics the most pleasing of all his works, "The Historie and Testament of [22] Squyer Meldrum," a romance somewhat in the style of the ancient heroic narratives, founded on the adventures of an actual personage of his own day. And in 1553 he finished his last and longest work, "The Monarche, Ane Dialog betuix Experience and Ane Courteour on the Miserabyll Estait of the World."

Once more he appears in history in the dignity of his office as Lyon King. On 16th January, 1554–

5, he presided at a chapter of heralds convened at Holyrood for the trial and punishment of William Crawar, a messenger, for abuse of his function. But before the 18th of April in the same year he had passed away. By a letter of that date in the Privy Seal Register it appears that his wife had predeceased him, and that, in the absence of children, his estates were inherited by his younger brother, Alexander Lyndsay.

Four years later the Reformation, of which also he may be said to have been the Lyon Herald, had begun in earnest. John Knox had returned to Scotland, the assassins of Beaton had received pardon, and the leaders of the new church which was to rise out of the ashes of the old had assumed the name of "The Congregation."

Such was the consistent career of the poet who, in the words of Dryden, "lashed vice into reformation" in Scotland. In high position, with everything to lose and nothing to gain by the part he took, he must be adjudged entire disinterestedness in his efforts. Patriotism, the virtue which more than any other has from century to century made the renown of Scotland, must be [23] acknowledged as his chief motive. Of his "Dreme" one writer has said, "We almost doubt if there is to be found anywhere except in the old Hebrew prophets a purer or more earnest breathing of the patriotic spirit." His attack, it is true, was directed, not against the doctrines, but merely against the abuses of the church, a fact which sufficiently accounts for his freedom from persecution. There can be no question, however, that but for the brilliant, burning satire of Lyndsay the later work of the reformers would have proved infinitely more arduous, and might have been indefinitely delayed. Professor Nichol[11] has compared the service rendered by Lyndsay in Scotland to that rendered in Holland by Erasmus. All great movements probably have had some such forerunner, from John the Baptist downwards. At anyrate it is certain that when Lyndsay laid down his pen the time was ripe for Knox to mount the pulpit.

During the early troubles of the Reformation the works of Lyndsay were, it is said, printed by stealth; and Pitscottie states that an Act of Assembly ordered them to be burned. Their popularity, nevertheless, remained undiminished, and edition after edition found its way into the hands of the people. The best editions now available are that by George Chalmers, three volumes, London, 1806, that of the Early English Text Society by various editors, 1865–1871, and the [24] edition by David Laing, LL.D., three volumes, Edinburgh, 1879. The last is taken in the present volume as the standard text.

Of Lyndsay's compositions "The Dreme" has generally been considered the most poetical, and the "Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis" the most important. The former is an allegory in the fashion of Dante and Chaucer, in which, after a prologue which has been much admired for its descriptive charm, a historical lesson is drawn from the abuse of power by rulers of the past, and the political grievances of Scotland are set boldly forth. To the latter belongs the credit of being the earliest specimen of the Scottish drama now in existence, the ground having been previously occupied only by the old mysteries and pageants, the "fairseis and clerk-playis" mentioned by Sir Richard Maitland.[12] Technically it is neither a morality-play nor a regular drama, but what is known as an interlude: it has no regular plot, and upon its stage real men and women move about among allegorical personages. Its author, however, confined the term "interlude" to the burlesque diversions which occupied the intervals of the main action. "Lyndsay's play," says Chalmers, "carried away the palm of dramatic composition from the contemporary moralities of England till the epoch of the first tragedy in *Gorboduc* and the first comedy in *Gammer Gurton's Needle*." The work was more, however, than a dramatic pioneer; it was the greatest blow which [25] Lyndsay struck at the vices and follies of his age, the ignorance and profligacy of the priesthood, and the insolence and unscrupulous ambition of the courtiers; and it is perhaps not too much to say of it that by its performance again and again before multitudes of all classes of the people it prepared the way more than anything else for the great movement of the Reformation in Scotland. For the modern reader, apart from its merits as a *tour de force* of satire, this work remains the most vivid picture we possess of the grievances by which the common people of Scotland were oppressed during the last days of feudalism.

"The Monarche," a still longer poem, possesses nothing like the interest of the "Satyre." In dialogue form, it follows the historic fashion of an earlier time, attempting to give a complete history of the human race from the creation to the day of judgment. Gloom and sadness reign throughout its pages, and notwithstanding one or two fine descriptive passages and the exhibition of much learning and sagacious reflection, it must be ranked among the less vital of its author's works. An English version of "The Monarche," nevertheless, was repeatedly printed in London from 1566 onwards, and a translation into Danish was published at Copenhagen in 1591.

"The Testament and Complaynt of the Kyngis Papyngo" is a composition frequently referred to. It opens with a prologue in praise of the makars, who, from Chaucer to the writer's contemporary Bellenden, are named in order. In form of a fable—the death-bed of the king's parrot, attended by [26] the pye, a canon regular, the raven, a black monk, and the hawk, a holy friar—it satirizes mercilessly the vices of the clergy and the abuses of the church.

Lyndsay's lesser productions are satires on minor subjects, such as court patronage and the absurdities of female fashions, showing their author in a lighter vein. But "Kitteis Confessioun" is another hard hit at the church abuses of the time, and the "Deploratioun of the Deith of Quene Magdalene" possesses interest as a picture of a royal welcome in the sixteenth century.

"The Tragedie of the Cardinall," apart from a suggestion in the prologue, the appearance of Beaton's ghost—

Ane woundit man, aboundantlie bledyng,
With vissage paill and with ane deidlye cheir—

displays no striking poetic power. The poem recounts in detail, as by the mouth of the prelate himself, the damaging part which Beaton had played in the contemporary history of Scotland, and it ends with serious admonitions addressed respectively to prelates and to princes to avoid the abuses which were then rampant in the government of the church.

"The Historie of Squyer Meldrum" is written in a different vein from the rest of Lyndsay's works. As has already been said, it is modelled on the gestes and heroic epics of an earlier century. The narrative is lively, with vivid descriptive passages and great smoothness of versification. "In all Froissart," says Dr. Merry Ross, "there is nothing more delightful in picturesque details than the description of the jousts between Meldrum and the English knight Talbart on the plains of Picardy." [27]

It has been the habit to regard Lyndsay in the character rather of a reformer than of a poet, and it cannot be doubted that his own purpose was to edify rather than to delight. But the merit of a satirist consists, not in his display of the more delicate sort of poetic charm, but in the brilliance and keenness of his satire. No critic can aver that in these qualities Lyndsay was lacking. If evidence of power in other fields be demanded, there are, according to the estimate of Professor Nichol, passages in "The Dreme," "Squyer Meldrum," and "The Monarche," "especially in the descriptions of the morning and evening voices of the birds, which, for harmony of versification and grace of imagery, may be safely laid alongside of any corresponding to them in the works of his predecessors." But it is as a satiric poet that he must chiefly be appraised, and in this character he stands the greatest that Scotland has produced. He remained popular for more than two centuries because he sympathised with the sorrows of the people and satirized the abuse of power by the great. In this respect he was not excelled even by his great successor, Robert Burns. For the reader of the present day the interest of Lyndsay, apart from the broad light which he throws upon the life and manners of his time, lies in his shrewd common-sense, his irresistible humour, vivacity, and dramatic power, with the consciousness that behind these burns a soul of absolute honesty. But the first value of his work, as of the work of every satiric poet, consisted in its wholesome effect upon the spirit of his age. With this fact in view it would be difficult to formulate a better summing-up of Lyndsay's titles to regard than that by Scott in the fourth canto of *Marmion*. There, by a poetic license, he is introduced in the character of Lyon Herald on the eve of Flodden, sixteen years before he obtained that office— [28]

He was a man of middle age;
In aspect manly, grave, and sage,
As on king's errand come;
But in the glances of his eye
A penetrating, keen, and sly
Expression found its home;
The flash of that satiric rage
Which, bursting on the early stage,
Branded the vices of the age,
And broke the keys of Rome.

Still is thy name of high account
And still thy verse has charms,
Sir David Lindesay of the Mount,
Lord Lion King-at-arms!

[29]

THE DREME.

Epistil to the Kingis Grace.

Rycht potent Prince, of hie Imperial blude,
Unto thy Grace I traist it be weill knawin
My servyce done unto your Celsitude,
Quhilk nedis nocht at length for to be schawin;
And thocht[13] my youtheid now be neir ouer-blawin,
Excerst[14] in servyce of thyne Excellence,
Hope hes me hecht[15] ane gudlie recompense.

Quhen thow wes young I bure thee in myne arme
Full tenderlie, tyll thow begouth to gang[16];
And in thy bed oft happit[17] thee full warme,
With lute in hand, syne[18], sweitlie to thee sang:
Sumtyme, in dansing, feiralie[19] I flang;
And sumtyme, playand farsis on the flure;
And sumtyme, on myne office takkand cure:

And sumtyme, lyke ane feind, transfigurate,
And sumtyme, lyke the greislie gaist of Gye[20];
In divers formis oft-tymes disfigurate,
And sumtyme, dissagyist full plesandlye.
So, sen[21] thy birth, I have continewalye
Bene occupyit, and aye to thy plesoure,
And sumtyme, Seware, Coppare, and Carvoure[22];

[30]

Thy purs-maister and secreit Thesaurare[23],
Thy Yschare[24], aye sen thy natyvitie,
And of thy chalmer cheiffe Cubiculare,
Quhilk, to this hour, hes keipit my lawtie[25];
Lovyng[26] be to the blyssit Trynitie
That sic[27] ane wracheit worme hes maid so habyll[28]
Tyll sic ane Prince to be so greabyll!

But now thow arte, be influence naturall,
Hie of ingyne[29], and rycht inquisityve
Of antique storeis, and deidis marciall;
More plesandlie the tyme for tyll ouerdryve,
I have, at length, the storeis done descryve[30]
Of Hectour, Arthour, and gentyll Julyus,
Of Alexander, and worthy Pompeyus;

Of Jasone, and Medea, all at lenth,
Of Hercules the actis honorabyll,
And of Sampsone the supernaturall strenth,
And of leill luffaris[31] storeis amiabyll;
And oft-tymes have I feinyeit mony fabyll,
Of Troylus the sorrow and the joye,
And Seigis all of Tyir, Thebes, and Troye.

The propheceis of Rymour, Beid, and Marlyng,[32]
And of mony uther plesand storye,
Of the Reid Etin, and the Gyir Carlyng,[33]
Confortand thee, quhen that I saw thee sorye.
[31]
Now, with the supporte of the King of Glorye,
I sall thee schaw ane storye of the new,
The quhilk affore I never to thee schew.

But humilie I beseik thyne Excellence,
With ornate termis thocht I can nocht expres
This sempyll mater, for laik of eloquence;
Yit, nochtwithstandyng all my besynes,
With hart and hand my pen I sall addres
As I best can, and most compendious:
Now I begyn: the mater hapnit thus.

Prolog.

In-to the Calendis of Januarie,
Quhen frosche Phebus, be moyyng circulair

Quhen fresche Phebus, be movyng circular,
Frome Capricorne wes enterit in Aquarie,
With blastis that the branchis maid full bair,
The snaw and sleit perturbit all the air,
And flemit[34] Flora frome every bank and bus[35],
Throuch supporte of the austeir Eolus.

Efter that I the lang wynteris nycht
Had lyne walking[36], in-to my bed, allone,
Throuch hevy thocht, that no way sleip I mycht,
Rememberyng of divers thyngis gone:
So up I rose, and clethit me anone.
Be this, fair Tytane, with his lemis[37] lycht,
Ouer all the land had spred his baner brycht.

[32]

With cloke and hude I dressit me belyve[38],
With dowbyll schone, and myttanis on my handis;
Howbeit the air was rycht penetratyve,
Yit fure I furth, lansing ouirthorte[39] the landis
Toward the see, to schorte[40] me on the sandis,
Because unblomit was baith bank and braye[41].
And so, as I was passing be the waye,

I met dame Flora, in dule weid dissagysit[42],
Quhilk in-to May wes dulce and delectabyll;
With stalwart[43] stormis hir sweitnes wes supprisit[44];
Hir hevynlie hewis war turnit in-to sabyll,
Quhilkis umquhile[45] war to luffaris amiabyll.
Fled frome the froste, the tender flouris I saw
Under dame Naturis mantyll lurking law.

The small fowlis in flokkis saw I flee,
To Nature makand greit lamentatioun.
Thay lychtit doun besyde me on ane tree,
Of thair complaynt I had compassioun;
And with ane pieteous exclamatioun
Thay said, “Blyssit be Somer, with his flouris;
And waryit[46] be thow, Wynter, with thy schouris!”

“Allace! Aurora,” the syllie[47] Larke can crye,
“Quhare hes thou left thy balmy liquour sweit
That us rejosit, we mounting in the skye?
Thy sylver droppis ar turnit in-to sleit.
O fair Phebus! quhare is thy hoilsum heit?
Quhy tholis[48] thow thy hevinlie plesand face
With mystie vapouris to be obscurit, allace!

[33]

“Quhar art thow May, with June thy syster schene[49],
Weill bordourit with dasyis of delyte?
And gentyll Julie, with thy mantyll grene,
Enamilit with rosis red and quhyte?
Now auld and cauld Januar, in dispyte,
Reiffis[50] frome us all pastyme and plesour.
Allace! quhat gentyll hart may this indure?

“Ouersylit[51] ar with cloudis odious
The goldin skyis of the Orient,
Changeyng in sorrow our sang melodious,
Quhilk we had wount to sing with gude intent,
Resoundand to the hevinnis firmament:
Bot now our daye is changeit in-to nycht.”
With that thay rais, and flew furth of my sycht.

Pensyve in hart, passing full soberlie
Unto the see, fordward I fure anone.
The see was furth, the sand wes smooth and drye;
Then up and doun I musit myne allone[52],
Till that I spyit ane lyttill cave of stone
Heych[53] in ane craig: upwart I did approche
But tarying[54], and clam up in the roche:

And purposit, for passing of the tyme,
Me to defende from ociositie[55].

With pen and paper to register in ryme
Sum mery mater of antiquitie:
Bot Idelnes, ground of iniquitie,
Scho maid so dull my spreitis, me within,
That I wyste nocht at quhat end to begin,

[34]

But satt styll in that cove, quhare I mycht see
The wolteryng[56] of the wallis, up and doun,
And this fals warldis instabilytie
Unto that see makkand comparisoun,
And of this warldis wracheit variatioun
To thame that fixis all thair hole intent,
Consideryng quho most had suld most repent.

So, with my hude my hede I happit warme,
And in my cloke I fauldit boith my feit;
I thocht my corps with cauld suld tak no harme,
My mittanis held my handis weill in heit;
The skowland[57] craig me coverit frome the sleit.
Thare styll I satt, my bonis for to rest,
Tyll Morpheus with sleip my spreit opprest.

So, throw the bousteous[58] blastis of Eolus,
And throw my walkyng on the nycht before,
And throw the seyis movyng marvellous,
Be Neptunus, with mony route[59] and rore,
Constraint I was to sleip, withouttin more:
And quhat I dremit, in conclusioun
I sall you tell, ane marvellous Visioun.

[In the company of Dame Remembrance the poet visits the centre of the earth, and there amid the torments of hell discovers the "men of Kirk," from cardinals to friars, with historic characters, from Bishop Caiaphas and Mahomet to queens and dukes, whose causes of punishment are described. He visits purgatory and the place of unbaptised babes, then passing upward through the four elements and the spheres of the seven planets, from that of the moon, "Quene of the see and bewtie of the nycht," he reaches the heaven of heavens, and beholds the throne of God, with all its glorious surroundings. Upon leaving heaven Remembrance displays and describes the three parts of the earth to the poet, and after affording him a view of paradise with its four walls of fire, brings him to Scotland. Here he enquires the causes of all the unhappiness which he sees. These are attributed to political turpitude and mismanagement. As Remembrance is speaking a third personage appears on the scene.]

[35]

Complaynt of the Commounweill of Scotland.

And thus as we wer talking, to and fro,
We saw a bousteous berne cum ouir the bent[60],
Bot[61] hors, on fute, als fast as he mycht go,
Quhose rayment wes all raggit, revin, and rent,
With visage leyne, as he had fastit Lent:
And fordwart fast his wayis he did advance,
With ane rycht melancolious countynance,

With scrip on hip, and pyikstaff in his hand,
As he had purposit to passe fra hame.
Quod I, "Gude-man, I wald faine understand,
Geve that ye plesit, to wyt[62] quhat were your name?"
Quod he, "My Sonne, of that I think gret schame,
Bot, sen thow wald of my name have ane feill[63],
Forsuith, thay call me John the Commounweill."

"Schir Commounweill, quho hes yow so disgysit?"
Quod I: "or quhat makis yow so miserabyll?
I have marvell to se yow so supprysit[64],
The quhilk that I have sene so honorabyll.
To all the warld ye have bene profitabyll,
And weill honourit in everilk[65] natioun:
How happinnis now your tribulatioun?"

"Allace!" quod he, "thow seis how it dois stand
With me, and quhow I am disherisit
Of all my grace, and mon[66] pass of Scotland,

And go, afore quhare I was cherisit.
Remane I heir, I am bot perysit[67];
For thare is few to me that takis tent[68],
That garris[69] me go so raggit, rewin, and rent:

[36]

“My tender freindis are all put to the flycht;
For Policye is fled agane in France.[70]
My syster, Justice, almaist haith tynt[71] hir sycht,
That scho can nocht hald evinly the ballance.
Plane wrang is plane capitane of ordinance,
The quhilk debarris laute[72] and reasoun;
And small remeid is found for open treasoun.

“In-to the South, allace! I was neir slane;
Ouer all the land I culd fynd no releif.
Almoist betuix the Mers and Lowmabane
I culde nocht knaw are leill man be ane theif.
To schaw thair reif[73], thift, murthour, and mischeif,
And vicious workis, it wald infect the air,
And als langsum[74] to me for tyll declair.

“In-to the Hieland I could fynd no remeid,
Bot suddantlie I wes put to exile:
Thai sweir swyngeoris[75] thay tuke of me non heid,
Nor amangs thame lat me remane are quhyle.
Als, in the Oute Ylis, and in Argyle,
Unthrift, sweirnes, falset, povertie, and stryfe
Pat Policye in dainger of hir lyfe.

“In the Lawland I come to seik refuge,
And purposit thare to mak my residence;
Bot singulare profeit gart[76] me soune disluge,
And did me gret injuries and offence,
And said to me, ‘Swyith[77], harlote, hy thee hence,
And in this countre see thow tak no curis[78],
So lang as my auctoritie induris.’

[37]

“And now I may mak no langer debait;
Nor I wate[79] nocht quhome to I suld me mene[80];
For I have socht throw all the Spirituall stait,
Quhilkis tuke na compt for to heir me complene.
Thair officiaris, thay held me at disdene;
For Symonie, he rewlis up all that rowte;
And Covatyce, that carle, gart bar me oute.

“Pryde haith chaist far frome thame Humilitie;
Devotioun is fled unto the Freris;
Sensuale plesour hes baneist Chaistitie;
Lordis of religioun, thay go lyke seculeris,
Taking more compt in tellyng thair deneris[81]
Nor thai do of thair constitutioun.
Thus are thay blyndit be ambitioun.

“Our gentyll men are all degenerat;
Liberalitie and lawte boith ar lost,
And Cowardyce with lordis is laureat,
And knychtlie Curage turnit in brag and boast.
The civele weir misgydis everilk oist[82];
Thare is nocht ellis bot ilk[83] man for hym-self;
That garris me go, thus baneist lyke ane elf.

“Tharefor, adew: I may no langer tarye.”
“Fair weill,” quod I, “and with sanct Jhone to borrow[84]!”
Bot, wyt ye weill, my hart was wounder sarye[85]
Quhen Comounweill so sopit[86] was in sorrow.
“Yit efter the nycht cumis the glaid morrow;
Quharefor, I pray yow, schaw me in certane
Quhen that ye purpose for to cum agane.”

[38]

“That questioun, it sall be sone decydit,”
Quod he, “thare sall na Scot have confortyng
Of me tyll that I see the countre gydit
Be wysedome of ane gude auld prudent Kyng

Be wyisdome of the gude auld prudent Kyng,
Quhilk sall delyte him maist, abone[87] all thyng,
To put Justice tyll executioun,
And on strang traitouris mak punitioun.

“Als yit to thee I say ane-uther thyng:
I see rycht weill that proverbe is full trew,
‘Wo to the realme that hes ouer young ane King!’”
With that he turnit his bak, and said adew.
Ouer firth and fell[88] rycht fast fra me he flew,
Quhose departyng to me was displesand.[89]
With that, Remembrance tuk me be the hand,

And sone, me-thocht, scho brocht me to the roche
And to the cove quhare I began to sleip.
With that, one schip did spedalye approche,
Full plesandlie saling apone the deip,
And syne[90] did slake hir salis and gan to creip
Towart the land, anent[91] quhare that I lay.
Bot, wyt ye weill, I gat ane fellown fray[92]:

All hir cannounis sche leit craik of at onis:
Down schuke the stremaris frome the topcastell;
Thay sparit nocht the poulder nor the stonis[93];
Thay schot thair boltis, and doun thair ankeris fell;
The marenaris, thay did so youte[94] and yell,
That haistalie I stert out of my dreme,
Half in ane fray, and spedalie past hame.

[39]

And lychtlie dynit, with lyste[95] and appetyte,
Syne efter past in-tyll ane oratore,
And tuke my pen, and thare began to wryte
All the visioun that I have schawin afore.
Schir, of my dreme as now thou gettis no more,
Bot I beseik God for to send thee grace
To rewle thy realme in unitie and peace.

[40]

THE TESTAMENT AND COMPLAYNT OF OUR SOVERANE LORDIS PAPYNGO.

Prolog.

Suppose I had ingyne[96] angelicall,
With sapience more than Salamonicall[97],
I not quhat mater put in memorie;
The poeitis auld, in style heroycall,
In breve[98] subtell termes rethorycall,
Of everlike[99] mater, tragedie and storie,
So ornatlie, to thair heych[100] laude and glorie,
Haith done indyte; quhose supreme sapience
Transcendith far the dull intellygence

Of poeitis now in-tyll our vulgare toung.
For quhy? the bell of rethorick bene roung
Be Chawceir, Goweir, and Lidgate laureate.
Quho dar presume thir poeitis tyll impung
Quhose sweit sentence throuch Albione bene sung?
Or quho can now the workis countrafait
Of Kennedie with termes aureait,
Or of Dunbar, quhilk language had at large,
As may be sene in-tyll his Goldin Targe?

[41]

Quintyn, Merser, Rowle, Henderson, Hay, and Holland,[101]
Thocht thay be deid thair libellis bene levand[102],
Quhilkis to reheirs makeith redaris to rejose.
Allace for one quhilk lampe wes of this land,
Of eloquence the flowand balmy strand[103]
And in our Inglis rethorick the rose!
As of rubeis the charbunckle bene chose,
And as Phebus dois Cynthia precell,
So Gawane Dowglas, Byschope of Dunkell,

Had, quhen he wes in-to this land on lyve[104],
Abufe vulgare poeitis prerogatyve
Both in pratick and speculatioun.
I say no more; gude redaris may descryve[105]
His worthy workis in nowmer more than fyve,
And specallye the trew translatioun
Of Virgill, quhilk bene consolatioun
To cunnyng men, to knaw his gret ingyne,
Als weill in naturall science as devyne.

And in the courte bene present in thir[106] dayis
That ballattis brevis lustellie[107], and layis,
Quhilkis tyll our Prince daylie thay do present.
Quho can say more than Schir James Inglis[108] sayis,
In ballattis, farses, and in plesand playis?
But Culrose hes his pen maid impotent.
[42]
Kyd, in cunnyng and pratick rycht prudent,
And Stewarte,[109] quhilk desyrith ane staitly style,
Full ornate werkis daylie dois compyle.

Stewart of Lorne wyll carpe[110] rycht curiouslie;
Galbraith, Kynlouch, quhen thay lyst tham applie
In-to that art, ar craftie of ingyne.
Bot now of lait is starte up haistelie
Ane cunnyng[111] clerk quhilk wrytith craftelie,
Ane plant of poeitis callit Ballendyne,
Quhose ornat workis my wytt can nocht defyne.
Gett he in-to the courte auctorite
He wyll precell Quintyn and Kennedie.

So, thocht[112] I had ingyne, as I have none,
I watt[113] nocht quhat to wryt, be sweit Sanct Jhone;
For quhy? in all the garth[114] of eloquence
Is no-thyng left bot barrane stok and stone;
The poleit termes are pullit everilk one[115]
Be thir fornamit poeitis of prudence;

Be thir formanit poetis of prudence;
And sen I fynd none uther new sentence
I sall declare, or[116] I depart yow fro,
The complaynt of ane woundit papingo[117].

Quharefor, because myne mater bene so rude
Of sentence, and of rethorike denude,
To rurall folke myne dyting[118] bene directit,
Far flemit[119] frome the sycht of men of gude[120];
For cunnyng men, I knaw, wyll soune conclude
It dowe[121] no-thyng bot for to be dejectit; [43]
And quhen I heir myne mater bene detractit
Than sall I sweir I maid it bot in mowis[122]
To landwart lassis quhilks kepith kye and yowis[123].

[The "Complaynt" begins with a homily on the text "Quho clymmis to hycht, perforce his feit mon faill." To illustrate this apophthegm the story of the king's papyngo is told. The unfortunate bird, climbing to the topmost twig of a tree in the royal garden, is thrown to earth by a gust of wind, and hopelessly injured on a stob of timber. In her last hour she addresses one epistle to the king, deriving lessons to royalty from the chronicles of Scotland, and another to her "brether of the court" upon the text "Quho sittith moist hie sal fynd the sait most slidder." The latter epistle ends with an adieu to Edinburgh, Stirling, and Falkland, and the chief scene of the satire immediately ensues.]

Adew.

Adew, Edinburgh! thou heych tryumphant toun,
Within quhose boundis rycht blythfull have I bene,
Of trew merchandis the rute of this regioun,
Most reddy to resave Court, King, and Quene!
Thy polecye and justice may be sene.
War devotioun, wysedome, and honestie,
And credence, tynt[124], thay mycht be found in thee.

Adew, fair Snawdoun[125]! with thy touris hie,
Thy Chapell Royall, park, and tabyll rounde![126]
May, June, and July walde I dwell in thee,
War I one man, to heir the birdis sounde
Quhilk doith agane thy royall roche redounde.
Adew, Lythquo[127]! quhose Palyce of plesance
Mycht be one patrone[128] in Portingall or France! [44]

Fair-weill, Falkland! the fortrace of Fyfe,
Thy polyte park, under the Lowmound Law!
Sum-tyme in thee I led ane lustye[129] lyfe,
The fallow deir, to see thame raik on raw[130].
Court men to cum to thee, thay stand gret awe,
Sayand thy burgh bene of all burrowis baill[131],
Because in thee thay never gat gude aill.

The Commonyng betuix the Papyngo and hir Holye Executouris.

The Pye persavit the Papyngo in paine,
He lychtit doun, and fenyeit him to greit[132]:
"Sister," said he, "alace! quho hes yow slane?
I pray yow, mak provisione for your spreit,
Dispone your geir[133], and yow confes compleit.
I have power, be your contritioun,
Of all your mys[134] to geve yow full remissioun.

"I am," said he, "one Channoun regulare,
And of my brether Pryour principall:
My quhyte rocket my clene lyfe doith declare;
The blak bene of the deith memoriall:
Quharefor I thynk your gudis naturall
Sulde be submyttit hole into my cure;
Ye know I am ane holye creature."

The Ravin come rolpand[135], quhen he hard the rair;
So did the Gled[136], with mony pieteous pew;

And fenyeitlye thay contrafait gret cair.
“Sister,” said thay, “your raklesnes we rew;
Now best it is our juste counsall ensew,
Sen we pretend to heych promotioun,
Religious men, of gret devotioun.”

[45]

“I am ane blak Monk,” said the rutlande[137] Ravin;
So said the Gled, “I am ane holy freir,
And hes power to bryng yow quyke to hevin.
It is weill knawin my conscience bene full cleir;
The blak Bybill[138] pronunce I sall perqueir[139],
So tyll our brether ye will geve sum gude;
God wat geve we hes[140] neid of lyves fude!”

The Papyngo said, “Father, be the Rude,
Howbeit your rayment be religious lyke,
Your conscience, I suspect, be nocht gude.
I did persave quhen prevelye ye did pyke[141]
Ane chekin from ane hen under ane dyke.”
“I grant,” said he. “That hen was my gude freind,
And I that chekin tuke bot for my teind.

“Ye knaw, the faith be us mon be susteind;
So be the Pope it is preordinate
That spirituall men suld leve upon thair teind:
Bot weill wat I ye bene predestinate
In your extremis to be so fortunate,
To have sic holy consultatioun;
Quharefore we mak yow exhortatioun:

“Sen dame Nature hes grantit yow sic grace,
Layser to mak confessioun generall,
Schaw furth your syn in haist, quhil ye haif space;
Syne of your geir mak one memoriall.
We thre sal mak your feistis funerall,
And with gret blys bury we sall your bonis,
Syne trentalls[142] twenty trattyll[143] all at onis.

[46]

“The roukis sall rair, that men sall on thame rew,
And crye *Commemoratio Animarum*.
We sall gar chehnis cheip[144], and geaslyngis pew,
Suppose the geis and hennis suld crye alarum:
And we sall serve *Secundum usum Sarum*[145],
And mak you saif: we fynd Sanct Blase to borgh[146],
Cryand for yow the cairfull corrynogh[147].

“And we sall syng about your sepulture
Sanct Mongois matynis and the mekle creid[148],
And syne devotely saye, I yow assure,
The auld Placebo bakwart, and the beid;
And we sall weir for yow the murnyng weid
And, thocht your spreit with Pluto war profest,
Devotelie sall your diregie be addrest.”

“Father,” said scho, “your facunde[149] wordis fair,
Full sore I dreid, be contrar to your dedis.
The wyffis of the village cryis with cair
Quhen thai persave your mowe ouirthort thar medis[150].
Your fals consait boith duke and draik sore dreidis
I marvell, suithlie[151], ye be nocht eschamit
For your defaltis, beyng so defamit.

“It dois abhor, my pure perturbit spreit,
Tyll mak to yow ony confessioun.
I heir men saye ye bene one ypocrite
Exemptit frome the Senye[152] and the Sessioun.
To put my geir in your possessioun,
That wyll I nocht, so help me Dame Nature!
Nor of my corps I wyll yow geve no cure[153].

[47]

“Bot, had I heir the nobyll Nychtingall,
The gentyll Ja, the Merle, and Turtur trew,
My obsequeis and feistis funerall

Ordour thay wald, with notis of the new.
The plesand Pown[154], most angellyke of hew,
Wald God I wer this daye with hym confest,
And my devyse[155] dewlie be hym addrest!

“The myrthfull Maveis, with the gay Goldspink,
The lustye[156] Larke, wald God thay war present!
My infortune, forsuith, thay wald forthink[157],
And comforte me that bene so impotent.
The swyft Swallow, in prattick[158] moste prudent,
I wate scho wald my bledyng stem belyve[159]
With hir moste verteous stone restringityve.”

“Compt me the cace, under confessioun,”
The Gled said proudlye to the Papingo,
“And we sall sweir, be our professioun,
Counsall to keip, and schaw it to no mo.
We thee beseik, or[160] thou depart us fro,
Declare to us sum causis reasonabyll
Quhy we bene haldin so abhominabyll.

“Be thy travell thou hes experience,
First, beand bred in-to the Orient,
Syne be thy gude servyce and delygence
To prencis maid heir in the Occident.
Thow knawis the vulgare pepyllis jugement
Quhare thou transcurrit[161] the hote Meridionall,
Syne nyxt the Poill the plaige[162] Septentrionall.

[48]

“So, be thyne heych ingyne[163] superlatyve,
Of all countreis thou knawis the qualiteis;
Quharefore, I thee conjure, be God of lyve,
The veritie declare, withouttin leis[164],
Quhat thou hes hard, be landis or be seis,
Of us kirkmen, boith gude and evyll reporte;
And quhow thay juge, schaw us, we thee exhorte.”

“Father,” said scho, “I catyve creature,
Dar nocht presume with sic mater to mell[165].
Of your caces, ye knaw, I have no cure;
Demand thame quhilk in prudence doith precell.
I maye nocht pew[166], my panes bene so fell[167]:
And als, perchance, ye wyll nocht stand content
To knaw the vulgare pepyllis jugement.

“Yit, wyll the deith alyte[168] withdrawe his darte,
All that lyis in my memoryall
I sall declare with trew unfenyeit hart.
And first I saye to you in generall
The commoun peple sayith ye bene all
Degenerit frome your holy pirmityvis[169],
As testyfeis the proces of your lyvis.

“Of your peirles prudent predecessouris
The beginnyng, I grant, wes verray gude:
Apostolis, martyres, virgines, confessouris,
The sound of thair excellent sanctitude
Was hard ouer all the warld, be land and flude,
Plantyng the faith, be predicatioun[170],
As Christe had maid to thame narratioun.

[49]

“To fortyfie the faith thay tuke no feir
Afore prencis, preching full prudentlie;
Of dolorous deith thay doutit nocht the deir[171],
The veritie declaryng ferventlie;
And martyrdome thay sufferit pacientlie:
Thay tuke no cure of land, ryches, nor rent;
Doctryne and deid war boith equivolent.

“To schaw at lenth thair workis wer gret wunder,
Thair myracklis thay wer so manifest.
In name of Christe thay hailit mony hounder[172],
Rasyng the dede, and purgeing the possest,

With perverst spreitis quhilkis had bene opprest.
The crukit ran, the blynd men gat thair ene,
The deiff men hard, the lypper war maid clene.

“The prelatis spousit wer with povertie,
Those dayis, quhen so thay flurisit in fame,
And with hir generit[173] lady Chaistitie
And dame Devotioun, notabyll of name.
Humyll thay wer, simpyll, and full of schame.
Thus Chaistitie and dame Devotioun
Wer principall cause of thair promotioun.

“Thus thay contynewit in this lyfe devyne
Aye tyll thare rang[174], in Romes gret cietie,
Ane potent prince was namit Constantyne;[175]
Persavit the Kirk had spowsit Povertie,
With gude intent, and movit of pietie,
Cause of divorce he fande betuix thame two, [50]
And partit thame, withouttin wordis mo.

“Syne, schortlie, with ane gret solempnitie,
Withouttin ony dispensatioun,
The Kirk he spowsit with dame Propirtie,
Quhilk haistelye, be proclamatioun,
To Povertie gart[176] mak narratioun,
Under the pane of peirsyng of hir eine[177],
That with the Kirk scho sulde no more be seine.

“Sanct Sylvester that tyme rang Pope in Rome[178],
Quhilk first consentit to the mariage
Of Propirtie, the quhilk began to blome,
Taking on hir the cure with heych corrage.
Devotioun drew hir tyll one heremytage
Quhen scho considerit lady Propirtie
So heych exaltit in-to dignitie.

“O Sylvester, quhare was thy discretioun?
Quhilk Peter did renounce thow did resave.
Androw and Jhone did leif thair possessioun,
Thair schippis, and nettis, lynes, and all the lave[179];
Of temporall substance no-thing wald thay have
Contrarious to thair contemplatioun,
Bot soberlye thair sustentatioun.

“Johne the Baptist went to the wyldernes.
Lazarus, Martha, and Marie Magdalene
Left heretage and guddis, more and les.
Prudent Sanct Paule thocht Propertie prophane;
Frome toun to toun he ran, in wynde and rane,
Upon his feit, techeing the word of grace, [51]
And never was subjectit to ryches.”

The Gled said, “Yit I heir no-thyng bot gude.
Proceid schortlye, and thy mater avance.”
The Papyngo said, “Father, be the Rude,
It wer too lang to schaw the circumstance,
Quhow Propertie, with hir new alyance,
Grew gret with chylde, as trew men to me talde,
And bure two dochteris gudelie to behalde.

“The eldest dochter named was Ryches,
The secunde syster, Sensualytie;
Quhilks did incres, within one schorte proces,
Preplesande[180] to the Spiritualytie.
In gret substance and excellent bewtie
Thir Ladyis two grew so, within few yeiris,
That in the warlde wer non mycht be thair peiris.

“This royall Ryches and lady Sensuall
Frome that tyme furth tuke hole the governance
Of the moste part of the Stait Spirituall:
And thay agane, with humbyll observance,
Amorouslie thair wyttis did avance,
As trew luffaris, thair ladyis for to pleis.
God wate geve than[181] thair hartis war at eis

God wate gove thair thair hartis war at eis.

“Soune thay foryet[182] to study, praye, and preche,
Thay grew so subject to dame Sensuall,
And thocht bot paine pure pepyll for to teche;
Yit thay decretit, in thair gret Counsall,
Thay wald no more to mariage be thrall,
Traistyng surely tyll observe Chaistitie, [52]
And all begylit quod[183] Sensualytie.

“Apperandlye thay did expell thair wyffis
That thay mycht leif at large, without thirlage[184],
At libertie to lede thair lustie lyffis[185],
Thynkand men thrall that bene in mariage.
For new faces provokis new corrage.
Thus Chaistitie thay turne in-to delyte;
Wantyng of wyffis bene cause of appetyte.

“Dame Chaistitie did steill away for schame,
Frome tyme scho did persave thair proviance[186].
Dame Sensuall one letter gart proclame,
And hir exilit Italy and France.
In Inglande couthe scho get none ordinance[187].
Than to the kyng and courte of Scotlande
Scho markit hir[188], withouttin more demande.

“Traistyng in-to that court to get conforte,
Scho maid hir humyll supplycatioun.
Schortlye thay said scho sulde get na supporte,
Bot bostit hir[189], with blasphematioun,
‘To preistis go mak your protestatioun.
It is,’ said thay, ‘mony one houndreth yeir
Sen Chaistitie had ony entres[190] heir.’

“Tyrit for travell, scho to the preistis past,
And to the rewlaris of religioun.
Of hir presens schortlye thay war agast,
Sayand thay thocht it bot abusioun
Hir to resave: so, with conclusion,
With one avyce[191] decretit and gave dome [53]
Thay walde resset no rebell out of Rome.

“‘Sulde we resave that Romanis hes refusit,
And baneist Inglande, Italye, and France,
For your flattrye, than wer we weill abusit[192].
Passe hyne[193],’ said thay, ‘and fast your way avance,
Amang the nonnis go seik your ordinance;
For we have maid aith of fidelytie
To dame Ryches and Sensualytie.’

“Than paciently scho maid progressioun
Towarde the nonnis, with hart syching[194] full sore.
Thay gaif hir presens, with processioun,
Ressavand hir with honour, laud, and glore,
Purposyng to preserve hir ever-more.
Of that novellis[195] come to dame Propertie,
To Ryches, and to Sensualytie;

“Quhilkis sped thame at the post rycht spedalye,
And sett ane seage proudlye about the place.
The sillye[196] nonnis did yeild thame haistelye,
And humyllye of that gylt askit grace,
Syne gave thair bandis of perpetuall peace.
Ressavand thame, thay kest up wykkets wyde[197]:
Than Chaistytie walde no langer abyde.

“So for refuge, fast to the freris scho fled;
Quhilks said thay wald of ladyis tak no cure.”
“Quhare bene scho now?” than said the gredy Gled.
“Nocht amang yow,” said scho, “I yow assure.
I traist scho bene upon the Borrow-mure
Besouth[198] Edinburgh, and that rycht mony menis[199], [54]
Profest amang the Systeris of the Schenis.[200]

“Thare hes scho found hir mother Povertie,
And Devotioun, hir awin syster carnall.
Thare hes scho found Faith, Hope, and Charitie,
Togidder with the Vertues Cardinall.
Thare hes scho found ane convent yit unthrall
To dame Sensuall, nor with riches abusit;
So quietlye those ladyis bene inclusit.”

The Pyote said, “I dreid, be thay assailyeit,
Thay rander thame, as did the holy nonnis.”
“Doute nocht,” said scho, “for thay bene so artalyeit[201],
Thay purpose to defend thame with thair gunnis.
Reddy to schute thay have sax gret cannounnis,
Perseverance, Constancye, and Conscience,
Austerytie, Laubour, and Abstynance.

“To resyste subtell Sensualytie
Strongly, thay bene enarmit, feit and handis,
Be Abstynence, and keipith Povertie,
Contrar Ryches and all hir fals servandis.
Thay have ane boumbard braissit up in bandis[202]
To keip thair porte, in myddis of thair clois,
Quhilk is callit, *Domine custodi nos*;

“Within quhose schote thare dar no enemeis
Approche thair place, for dreid of dyntis doure[203].
Boith nycht and daye thay wyrk, lyke besye beis, [55]
For thair defence reddye to stande in stoure[204],
And hes sic watcheis on thair utter toure
That dame Sensuall with seage dar not assailye,
Nor cum within the schote of thair artailye[205].”

The Pyote said, “Quhareto sulde thay presume
For to resyste sweit Sensualytie,
Or dame Ryches, quhilkis reularis bene in Rome?
Ar thay more constant, in thair qualytie,
Nor the prencis of Spiritualytie,
Quhilkis plesandlye, withouttin obstakle,
Haith thame resavit in their habitakle[206]?

“Quhow long, traist ye, those ladyis sall remane
So solytar, in sic perfectioun?”
The Papingo said, “Brother, in certane[207],
So lang as thay obey correctioun,
Cheisyng[208] thair heddis be electioun,
Unthrall to Ryches or to Povertie,
Bot as requyrith thair necessitie.

“O prudent prelatis, quhare was your presciance,
That tuke on hand tyll observe Chaistitie,
But[209] austeir lyfe, laubour, and abstenance?
Persavit ye nocht the gret prosperitie
Apperandlye to cum of Propertie?
Ye knaw gret cheir, great eais, and ydelnes
To Lychorie was mother and maistres.”

“Thow ravis unrockit[210],” the Ravin said, “be the Rude,
So to reprove Ryches or Propertie.
Abraham, and Ysaac war ryche, and verray gude; [56]
Jacobe and Josephe had prosperitie.”
The Papingo said, “That is verytie.
Ryches, I grant, is nocht to be refusit,
Providyng alwaye it be nocht abusit.”

Than laid the Ravin ane replycatioun,
Syne said, “Thy reasone is nocht worth ane myte,
As I sall prove, with protestatioun
That no man tak my wordis in dispyte.
I saye, the temporall prencis hes the wyte[211],
That in the Kirk sic pastours dois provyde
To governe saulis, that not tham-selfis can gyde.

“Lang tyme efter the Kirk tuke propertie,
The prelatis levit in gret perfectioun

The prelatis levit in gret perfectioun,
Unthrall to ryches or sensualytie,
Under the Holy Spreitis protectioun,
Orderlye chosin be electioun,
As Gregore, Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustyne,
Benedict, Bernard, Clement, Cleit, and Lyne.

"Sic pacient prelatis enterit be the porte[212],
Plesand the peple be predicatioun[213].
Now dyke-lowparis[214] dois in the Kirk resort,
Be symonie, and supplycatioun
Of prencis be thair presentation.
So sillye[215] saulis, that bene Christis scheip,
Ar gevin to hungrye gormande[216] wolfis to keip.

"No marvell is thocht we religious men
Degenerit be, and in our lyfe confusit:
Bot sing, and drynk; none uther craft we ken, [57]
Our spirituall fatheris hes us so abusit.
Agane our wyll those treukouris[217] bene intrusit.
Lawit[218] men hes now religious men in curis;
Profest virgenis in keipyng of strong huris.

"Prencis, prencis, quhar bene your heych prudence
In dispositioun of your beneficeis?
The guerdonyng of your courticience[219]
Is sum cause of thir gret enormyteis.
Thare is one sorte wattand[220], lyke houngre fleis,
For spirituall cure, thocht thay be no-thing abyll,
Quhose gredie thristis[221] bene insaciabyll.

"Prencis, I pray yow, be no more abusit,
To verteous men havyng so small regarde.
Quhy sulde vertew, throuch flattrye, be refusit,
That men for cunnyng[222] can get no rewarde?
Allace! that ever one braggar or ane barde,
Ane hure-maister, or commoun hasarture[223],
Sulde in the Kirk get ony kynde of cure!

"War I one man worthy to weir ane croun,
Aye quhen thare vakit[224] ony beneficeis,
I suld gar call ane congregatioun,
The principall of all the prelaceis,
Moste cunnyng clerkis of universiteis,
Moste famous fatheris of religioun,
With thair advyse mak dispositioun.

"I suld dispone all offices pastorallis
Tyll doctouris of devynitie, or jure[225];
And cause dame Vertew pull up all hir saillis, [58]
Quhen cunnyng men had in the Kirk moist cure;
Gar lordis send thair sonnes, I yow assure,
To seik science, and famous sculis frequent;
Syne thame promove that wer moste sapient.

"Gret plesour wer to heir are byschope preche,
One deane, or doctour in divinitie,
One abbote quhilk could weill his convent teche,
One persoun[226] flowing in phylosophie.
I tyne[227] my tyme to wys[228] quhilk wyll nocht be.
War nocht the preaching of the Begging Freris,
Tynt war the faith amang the seculeris."

"As for thair precheing," quod the Papingo,
"I thame excuse, for quhy, thay bene so thrall
To Propertie, and hir ding[229] dochteris two,
Dame Ryches, and fair lady Sensuall,
That may nocht use no pastyme spirituall;
And in thair habitis thay tak sic delyte
Thay have renuncit russat and raploch quhyte[230],

"Cleikand[231] to thame skarlote and crammosie[232],
With menever, martrik, grice, and ryche armyne[233].

Their lawe hartis exaultit ar so hie,
To see thair papale pompe it is are pyne[234].
More ryche arraye is now, with frenyeis[235] fyne,
Upon the bardyng[236] of ane byscheopis mule,
Nor ever had Paule or Peter agane Yule.

“Syne fair ladyis thair chene may not eschape,
Dame Sensuall so sic seid haith in tham sawin.
Les skaith[237] it war, with lycence of the Pape, [59]
That ilke[238] prelate one wyfe had of his awin,
Nor se thair bastardis ouirthort[239] the countre blawin;
For now, be[240] thay be weill cumin frome the sculis,
Thay fall to work as thay war commoun bullis.”

“Pew,” quod the Gled, “thow prechis all in vaine:
Ye seculare floks hes of our cace no curis.”
“I grant,” said scho; “yit men wyll speik agane,
Quhow ye haif maid a hundreth thousand huris
Quhilkis nevir had bene war not your lychorous luris.
And geve I lee[241], hartlye I me repent;
Was never bird, I watt, more penitent.”

Than scho hir shrave, with devote contynance,
To that fals Gled quhilk fenyeit hym one freir;
And quhen scho had fulfyllit hir pennance,
Full subtellye at hir he gan inqueir:
“Cheis yow,” said he, “quhilk of us brether heir
Sall have of all your naturall geir the curis.
Ye knaw none bene more holye creaturis.”

“I am content,” quod the pure Papingo,
“That ye frier Gled, and Corby[242] monk, your brother,
Have cure of all my guddis, and no mo,
Sen at this tyme freindschip I fynd non uther.”
“We salbe to yow trew, as tyll our mother,”
Quod thay, and sweir tyll fulfyll hir intent.
“Of that,” said scho, “I tak ane instrument.”

The Pyote said, “Quhat sall myne office bee?”
“Ouirman[243],” said scho, “unto the tother two.”
The rowpand Revin said, “Sweit syster, lat see [60]
Your holy intent; for it is tyme to go.”
The gredie Gled said, “Brother, do nocht so;
We wyll remane, and haldin up hir hede,
And never depart from hir till scho be dede.”

The Papingo thame thankit tenderlye,
And said, “Sen ye have tane on yow this cure,
Depart myne naturall guddis equalye,
That ever I had or hes of dame Nature,
First, to the Howlet[244], indigent and pure,
Quhilk on the daye, for schame, dar nocht be sene;
Tyll hir I laif my gaye galbarte[245] of grene.

“My brycht depurit ene[246], as christall cleir,
Unto the Bak[247] ye sall thame boith present;
In Phebus presens quhilk dar nocht appeir,
Of naturall sycht scho bene so impotent.
My birneist[248] beik I laif, with gude entent,
Unto the gentyll, pieteous Pellicane,
To helpe to peirs hir tender hart in twane.

“I laif the Goik[249], quhilk hes no sang bot one,
My musyke, with my voce angelycall;
And to the Guse ye geve, quhen I am gone,
My eloquence and toung rhetoricall.
And tak and drye my bonis, gret and small,
Syne close thame in one cais of ebure[250] fyne,
And thame present onto the Phenix syne,

“To birne with hir quhen scho hir lyfe renewis.
In Arabye ye sall hir fynde but weir[251],
And sall knaw hir be hir moste heyinly hewis

And sall knaw hir be hir moste nevinly newis, [61]
Gold, asure, gowles, purpour, and synopeir[252].
Hir dait is for to leif fyve houndreth yeir.
Mak to that bird my commendatioun.
And als, I mak yow supplycatioun,

"Sen of my corps I have yow gevin the cure,
Ye speid yow to the court, but tareyng,
And tak my hart, of perfyte portrature,
And it present unto my Soverane Kyng:
I wat he wyll it clois in-to one ryng.
Commende me to his Grace, I yow exhorte,
And of my passion mak hym trew reporte.

"Ye thre my trypes sall have, for your travell[253],
With luffer and lowng[254], to part equale amang yow;
Prayand Pluto, the potent prince of hell,
Geve ye failye, that in his feit he fang[255] yow.
Be to me trew, thocht I no-thyng belang yow.
Sore I suspect your conscience be too large."
"Doute nocht," said they, "we tak it with the charge."

"Adew, brether!" quod the pure Papingo;
"To talking more I have no time to tarye;
Bot, sen my spreit mon fra[256] my body go,
I recommend it to the Quene of Farye,
Eternallye in-tyll hir court to carye,
In wyldernes among the holtis hore[257]."
Than scho inclynit hir bed, and spak no more.

Plungit in-tyll hir mortall passioun,
Full grevouslie scho gryppit to the ground.
It war too lang to mak narratioun [62]
Of sychis sore, with mony stang and stound[258].
Out of hir wound the blude did so abound,
One compas round was with hir blude maid reid:
Without remeid, thare wes no-thyng bot dede[259].

And be scho had *In Manus tuas* said,
Extinctit wer hir naturall wyttis fyve;
Hir heid full softlye on hir schulder laid,
Syne yeild the spreit, with panes pungityve[260].
The Ravin began rudely to rug and ryve[261],
Full gormondlyke[262], his emptie throte to feid.
"Eit softlye, brother," said the gredy Gled:

"Quhill scho is hote, depart hir evin amang us.
Tak thow one half, and reik[263] to me ane-uther.
In-tyll our rycht, I wat, no wycht dar wrang us."
The Pyote said, "The feind resave the fouther[264]!
Quhy mak ye me stepbarne, and I your brother?
Ye do me wrang, schir Gled, I schrew[265] your harte."
"Tak thare," said he, "the puddyngis for thy parte."

Than, wyt ye weill, my hart wes wounder sair
For to behalde that dolent departyng[266],
Hir angell fedderis fleying in the air.
Except the hart, was left of hir no-thing.
The Pyote said, "This pertenith to the Kyng,
Quhilk tyll his Grace I purpose to present."
"Thow," quod the Gled, "sall faill of thyne entent."

The Revin said, "God! nor I rax in ane raipe[267],
And thow get this tyll outher kyng or duke!"
The Pyote said, "Plene[268] I nocht to the Pape [63]
Than in ane smedie I be smorit[269] with smuke."
With that the Gled the pece claucht in his cluke[270],
And fled his way: the lave[271], with all thair mycht,
To chace the Gled, flew all out of my sycht.

Now have ye hard this lytill tragedie,
The sore complent, the testament, and myschance
Of this pure bird quhilk did ascend so hie.

Beseikand[272] yow excuse myne ignorance
And rude indyte[273], quhilk is nocht tyll avance[274].
And to the quair[275], I geve commandiment,
Mak no repair quhair poetis bene present.

Because thow bene
But Rethorike, so rude,
Be never sene
Besyde none other buke,
With Kyng, nor Quene,
With lord, nor man of gude[276].
With coit unclene,
Clame kynrent[277] to sum cuke;
Steil in ane nuke
Quhen thay lyste on thee luke.
For smell of smuke
Men wyll abhor to beir thee.
Heir I manesweir[278] thee;
Quhairfor, to lurke go leir[279] thee.

THE JUSTING BETUIX JAMES WATSOUN AND JHONE BARBOUR.[280]

In Sanct Androis on Whitsoun Monnunday
Twa campionis thair manheid did assay,
Past to the barres, enarmit heid and handis.
Was never sene sic justing in no landis.
In presence of the Kingis Grace, and Quene,
Quhare mony lustie lady mycht be sene,
Mony ane knicht, barroun, and banrent[281],
Come for to se that awfull Tornament.
The ane of thame was gentill James Watsoun,
And Jhone Barbour the uther campioun.
Unto the King thay wer familiaris,
And of his chalmer boith cubicularis.
James was ane man of greit intelligence,
Ane medicinar[282] ful of experience; [65]
And Jhone Barbour, he was ane nobill leche[283],
Crukit carlinnis, he wald gar[284] thame get speche.
From tyme thay enterit war into the feild
Full womanlie thay weildit speir and scheild,
And wichtlie waiffit[285] in the wynd thair heillis,
Hobland lyke cadgeris[286] rydand on thair creillis;
But ather ran at uther with sic haist
That they could never thair speir get in the reist.
Quhen gentill James trowit best with Jhone to meit,
His speir did fald among his horsis feit:
I am richt sure gude James had bene undone,
War nocht that Jhone his marke tuke be the mone.
Quod Jhone, "Howbeit thou thinkis my leggis lyke rokkis[287],
My speir is gude; now keip ye fra my knokkis."
"Tary," quod James, "ane quhyle, for be my thrift[288]
The feind ane thing I can se bot the lift[289]."
"No more can I," quod Jhone, "be Goddis breid[290],
I see na-thing except the steipill heid.
Yit, thocht thy braunis be lyk twa barrow-trammis,
Defend thee, man!" Than ran thay to, lyk rammis.
At that rude rink[291] James had bene strykin down
War nocht that Jhone for feirsnes fell in swoun;
And rycht sa James to Jhone had done greit deir[292],
Wer not amangis his hors feit he brak his speir.
Quod James to Jhone, "Yit for our ladyis saikis,
Lat us togidder straik three market straikis[293]."
"I had," quod Jhone, "that sall on thee be wrokin[294]!"
Bot or[295] he spurrit his hors his speir was brokin.
From tyme with speiris nane could his marrow[296] meit
James drew ane swerd with ane richt awfull spreit, [66]
And ran til Jhone, til haif raucht him ane rout[297].
Johnis swerd was roustit, and wald no way cam out.
Than James leit dryfe at Jhone with boith his fistis.
He mist the man, and dang[298] upon the lystis;
And with that straik he trowit that Jhone was slane.
His swerd stak fast, and gat it never agane.
Be this, gude Jhone had gottin furth his sword,
And ran to James with mony awfull word.
"My furiousness, for suith[299], now sall thou find!"
Straikand at James his swerd flew in the wind.
Than gentill James began to crack[300] greit wordis.
"Allace!" quod he, "this day for falt of swordis."
Than ather ran at uther with new raicis,
With gluifis[301] of plait thay dang at utheris facis.
Quha wan this feild na creature culd ken[302],
Till at the last Johne cryit, "Fy! red[303] the men."
"Yea! red," quod James, "for that is my desyre;
It is ane hour sen I began to tyre."
Sone be[304] thay had endit that royall rink,
Into the feild micht no man stand for stink.
Than every man, that stude on far, cryit, Fy!
Sayand adew; for dirt partis company.
Thair hors, harnis, and all geir[305], wes so gude,

Lovyng[1306] to God! that day was sched no blude.

QUOD LYNDESAY, AT COMMAND OF KING JAMES THE FYFT.

KITTEIS CONFESSIOUN.

The Curate, and Kittie.

The Curate Kittie culd confesse,
And scho tald on baith mair and lesse.
  Quhen scho was telland as scho wist[307],
The Curate Kittie wald have kist;
Bot yit ane countenance he bure
Degeist[308], devote, daine[309], and demure;
And syne began hir to exempne[310].
He wes best at the efter game.
Quod he, “Have ye na wrangous geir[311]?”
Quod scho, “I staw[312] ane pek of beir.”
Quod he, “That suld restorit be,
Tharefor delyver it to me.
Tibbie and Peter bad me speir[313];
Be my conscience, thay sall it heir.”
Quod he, “Leve ye in lecherie?”
Quod scho, “Will Leno mowit[314] me.”
Quod he, “His wyfe that sall I tell,
To mak hir acquentance with my-sell.”
Quod he, “Ken[315] ye na heresie?”
“I wait nocht[316] quhat that is,” quod sche.
Quod he, “Hard ye na Inglis bukis?”[317]
Quod scho, “My maister on thame lukis.” [68]
Quod he, “The bischop that sall knaw,
For I am sworne that for to schaw.”
Quod he, “What said he of the King?”
Quod scho, “Of gude he spak na-thing.”
Quod he, “His Grace of that sall wit[318];
And he sall lose his lyfe for it.”
  Quhen scho in mynd did mair revolve,
Quod he, “I can nocht you absolve,
Bot to my chalmer cum at even
Absolvit for to be and schrevin.”
Quod scho, “I wyll pas tyll ane-uther.
And I met with Schir Andro,[319] my brother,
And he full clenely did me schryve.
Bot he wes sumthing talkatyve;
He speirit mony strange case[320],
How that my lufe did me inbrace,
Quhat day, how oft, quhat sort, and quhare?
Quod he, ‘I wald I had bene thare.’
He me absolvit for ane plak[321],
Thocht[322] he na pryce with me wald mak;
And mekil[323] Latyne he did mummill,
I hard na-thing bot hummill bummill.
He schew me nocht of Goddis word,
Quhilk scharper is than ony sword,
And deip intill our hart dois prent
Our syn, quharethrow we do repent.
He pat me na-thing into feir,
Quharethrow I suld my syn forbeir;
He schew me nocht the maledictioun
Of God for syn, nor the afflictioun [69]
And in this lyfe the greit mischeif
Ordanit to punische hure and theif;
Nor schew he me of hellis pane,
That I mycht feir, and vice refraine;
He counsalit me nocht till abstene,
And leid ane holy lyfe, and clene.
Of Christis blude na-thing he knew,
Nor of His promisses full trew,
That saifis all that wyll beleve,
That Sathan sall us never greve.
He teichit me nocht for till traist
The confort of the Haly Ghaist.
He bad me nocht to Christ be kynd[324],
To keip His law with hart and mynd,
And lufe and thank His greit mercie

And lufe and thank His greit mercie,
Fra syn and hell that savit me;
And lufe my nichtbour as my-sell.
Of this na-thing he culd me tell,
Bot gave me pennance, ilk ane day[325]
Ane *Ave Marie* for to say,
And Fridayis fyve na fische to eit,
(Bot butter and eggis ar better meit),
And with ane plak to buy ane messe
Fra drounkin Schir Jhone Latynelesse.
Quod he, 'Ane plak I wyll gar[326] Sandie
Give thee agane, with handie dandie.'
Syne[327] into pilgrimage to pas—
The verray way to wantounes.
Of all his pennance I was glaid,
I had them all perqueir[328], I said.
To mow and steill I ken the pryce, [70]
I sall it set on cincq and syce[329].
Bot he my counsale culd nocht keip;
He maid him be the fyre to sleip,
Syne cryit, 'Colleris[330], beif and coillis[331],
Hois, and schone with dowbill soillis,
Caikis and candill, creische[332] and salt,
Curnis[333] of meill, and luiffillis[334] of malt,
Wollin and linning, werp and woft—
Dame! keip the keis of your woll loft!'
Throw drink and sleip maid him to raif;
And swa with us thay play the knaif."
Freiris sweiris be thair professioun
Nane can be saif but[335] this Confessioun,
And garris all men understand
That it is Goddis awin[336] command.
Yit it is nocht but mennis drame[337].
The pepill to confound and schame.
It is nocht ellis but mennis law,
Maid mennis mindis for to knaw,
Quharethrow thay syle[338] thame as thay will,
And makis thair law conforme tharetill,
Sittand in mennis conscience
Abone Goddis magnificence;
And dois the pepill teche and tyste[339]
To serve the Pape the Antechriste.
To the greit God Omnipotent
Confess thy syn, and sore repent;
And traist in Christ, as wrytis Paule,
Quhilk sched his blude to saif thy saule;
For nane can thee absolve bot He,
Nor tak away thy syn frome thee. [71]
Gif of gude counsall thow hes neid,
Or hes nocht leirnit weill thy Creid,
Or wickit vicis regne in thee,
The quhilk thow can nocht mortifie,
Or be in desperatioun,
And wald have consolatioun,
Than till are preichour trew thow pas,
And schaw thy syn and thy trespas.
Thow neidis nocht to schaw him all,
Nor tell thy syn baith greit and small,
Quhilk is unpossible to be;
Bot schaw the vice that troubillis thee,
And he sall of thy saule have reuth,
And thee instruct in-to the treuth,
And with the Word of Veritie
Sall confort and sall counsall thee,
The sacramentis schaw thee at lenth,
Thy lytle faith to stark and strenth[340],
And how thow suld thame richtlie use,
And all hypocrisie refuse.
Confessioun first wes ordanit fre
In this sort in the Kirk to be.
Swa to confes as I descryve[341],
Wes in the gude Kirk primityve;

Swa wes confessioun ordanit first,
Thocht Codrus[342] kyte[343] suld cleve and birst.

SQUYER MELDRUMIS JUSTYNG.[344]

Hary the Aucht, King of Ingland,
That tyme at Caleis wes lyand,[345]
With his triumphand ordinance[346],
Makand weir[347] on the realme of France.
The King of France his greit armie
Lay neir hand by in Picardie,
Quhair aither uther did assaill.
Howbeit thair was na sic battaill,
Bot thair wes daylie skirmishing,
Quhare men of armis brak monie sting[348].
Quhen to the Squyer Meldrum
Wer tauld thir novellis[349] all and sum,
He thocht he wald vesie[350] the weiris;
And waillit[351] furth ane hundreth speiris,
And futemen quhilk wer bauld and stout,
The maist worthie of all his rout.
  Quhen he come to the King of France
He wes sone put in ordinance: [73]
Richt so was all his companie
That on him waitit continuallie.
  Thair was into the Inglis oist[352]
Ane campioun[353] that blew greit boist.
He was ane stout man and ane strang,
Quhilk oist wald with his conduct gang[354]
Outthrow[355] the greit armie of France
His valiantnes for to avance;
And Maister Talbart was his name,[356]
Of Scottis and Frenche quhilk spak disdane,
And on his bonnet usit to beir,
Of silver fine, takinnis of weir[357];
And proclamatiounis he gart mak[358]
That he wald, for his ladies saik,
With any gentilman of France
To fecht[359] with him with speir or lance.
Bot no Frenche-man in all that land
With him durst battell hand for hand.
Than lyke ane weriour vailyeand[360]
He enterit in the Scottis band:
And quhen the Squyer Meldrum
Hard tell this campioun wes cum,
Richt haistelie he past him till,
Demanding him quhat was his will.
“Forsuith I can find none,” quod he,
“On hors nor fute dar fecht with me.”
Than said he, “It wer greit schame [74]
Without battell ye suld pass hame;
Thairfoir to God I mak ane vow,
The morne[361] my-self sall fecht with yow
Outher on horsback or on fute.
Your crakkis[362] I count thame not ane cute[363].
I sall be fund into the feild
Armit on hors with speir and schield.”
Maister Talbart said, “My gude chyld,
It wer maist lyk that thow wer wyld[364].
Thow art too young, and hes no micht
To fecht with me that is so wicht[365].
To speik to me thow suld have feir,
For I have sik practik[366] in weir
That I wald not effeirit[367] be
To mak debait aganis sic three;
For I have stand in monie stour[368],
And ay defendit my honour.
Thairfoir, my barne, I counsell thee
Sic interprysis to let be.”
  Than said this Squyer to the Knicht,
“I grant ye ar baith greit and wicht.
Young David was far les than I
Ouhen with Golias manfullie,

Withouttin outher speir or scheild,
He faucht, and slew him in the feild.
I traist that God sal be my gyde,
And give me grace to stanche thy pryde.
Thocht thow be greit like Gowmakmorne,[369]
Traist weill I sall yow meit the morne. [75]
Beside Montruill upon the grene
Befoir ten houris I sal be sene.
And gif ye wyn me in the feild
Baith hors and geir[370] I sall yow yeild,
Sa that siclyke[371] ye do to me."
"That I sall do, be God!" quod he,
"And thairto I give thee my hand."
And swa betwene thame maid ane band[372]
That thay suld meit upon the morne.
Bot Talbart maid at him bot scorne,
Lychtlyand[373] him with wordis of pryde,
Syne hamewart to his oist culd ryde,
And shew the brethren of his land
How ane young Scot had tane[374] on hand,
To fecht with him beside Montruill;
"Bot I traist he sall prufe the fuill."
Quod thay, "The morne that sall we ken[375];
The Scottis are haldin hardie men."
Quod he, "I compt thame not ane cute.
He sall returne upon his fute,
And leif with me his armour bricht;
For weill I wait[376] he has no micht,
On hors nor fute, to fecht with me."
Quod thay, "The morne that sall we se."
Quhan to Monsieour De Obenie[377]
Reportit was the veritie,
How that the Squyer had tane on hand [76]
To fecht with Talbart hand for hand,
His greit courage he did commend,
Syne haistelie did for him send.
And quhen he come befoir the lord
The veritie he did record,
How for the honour of Scotland
That battell he had tane on hand;
"And sen it givis me in my hart,
Get I ane hors to tak my part,
My traist is sa, in Goddis grace,
To leif hym lyand in the place.
Howbeit he stalwart be and stout,
My lord, of him I have no dout."
Than send the Lord out throw the land,
And gat ane hundreth hors fra hand.
To his presence he brocht in haist,
And bad the Squyer cheis[378] him the best.
Of that the Squyer was rejoisit,
And cheisit the best as he suppoisit,
And lap on hym delyverlie[379].
Was never hors ran mair plesantlie
With speir and sword at his command,
And was the best of all the land.
He tuik his leif and went to rest,
Syne airlie in the morne him drest
Wantonlie in his weirlyke weid[380],
All weill enarmit, saif the heid.
He lap upon his cursour wicht,
And straucht[381] him in his stirroppis richt.
His speir and scheild and helme wes borne
With squyeris that raid him beforne[382]. [77]
Ane velvot cap on heid he bair,
Ane quaif[383] of gold to heild[384] his hair.
This Lord of him tuik sa greit joy
That he himself wald hym convoy,
With him ane hundreth men of armes,
That thair suld no man do hym harmes.
The Squyer buir into his scheild
Ane otter in ane silver feild.

His hors was bairdit[385] full richelie,
Coverit with satyne cramesie[386].
Than fordward raid this campioun
With sound of trumpet and clarioun,
And spedilie spurrit ouir the bent[387],
Lyke Mars the God armipotent.
  Thus leif we rydand our Squyar,
And speik of Maister Talbart mair:
Quhilk gat up airlie in the morrow[388],
And no manner of geir to borrow,
Hors, harnes, speir, nor scheild,
Bot was ay reddie for the feild;
And had sic practik into weir,
Of our Squyer he tuik na feir,
And said unto his companyeoun,
Or he come furth of his pavilyeoun,
"This nicht I saw into my dreame,
Quhilk to reheirs I think greit schame,
Me-thocht I saw cum fra the see
Ane greit otter rydand to me,
The quhilk was blak, with ane lang taill,
And cruellie did me assail,
And bait[389] me till he gart[390] me bleid, [78]
And drew me backwart fra my steid.
Quhat this suld mene I cannot say,
Bot I was never in sic ane fray[391]."
His fellow said, "Think ye not schame
For to gif credence till ane dreame?
Ye knaw it is aganis our faith,
Thairfoir go dres yow in your graith[392],
And think weill throw your hie courage
This day ye sall wyn vassalage."
  Then drest he him into his geir
Wantounlie like ane man of weir
Quhilk had baith hardines and fors,
And lichtlie lap upon his hors.
His hors was bairdit full bravelie,
And coverit was richt courtfullie
With browderit[393] wark and velvot grene.
Sanct George's croce thare micht be sene
On hors, harnes, and all his geir.
Than raid he furth withouttin weir[394],
Convoyit with his capitane
And with monie ane Inglisman
Arrayit all with armes bricht;
Micht no man see ane fairer sicht.
  Than clariounis and trumpettis blew;
And weriouris monie hither drew.
On everie side come monie man
To behald quha the battell wan.
The feild wes in the medow grene,
Quhair everie man micht weill be sene.
The heraldis put thame sa in ordour
That no man passit within the bordour [79]
Nor preissit to cum within the grene
Bot heraldis and the campiounis kene.
The ordour and the circumstance
Wer lang to put in remembrance.
Quhen thir twa nobilmen of weir
Wer weill accowterit in their geir
And in their handis strang burdounis[395],
Than trumpettis blew and clariounis,
And heraldis cryit hie on hicht,
"Now let tham go! God shaw the richt!"
  Than spedilie thay spurrit thair hors,
And ran to uther with sic fors
That baith thair speiris in sindrie flaw.
Than said thay all that stude on raw,
Ane better cours than they twa ran
Wes not sene sen the warld began.
  Than baith the parties wer rejoisit.
The campiounis ane quhyle repoisit
Till they had gottin speiris new

Yit they had gottin speiris new.
Than with triumph the trumpettis blew,
And they with all the force thay can
Wounder[396] rudelie at aither ran,
And straik at uther with sa greit ire
That fra thair harnes flew the fyre.
Thair speiris wer sa teuch[397] and strang
That aither uther to eirth doun dang[398].
Baith hors and man, with speir and scheild,
Than flatlingis[399] lay into the feild.
Than Maister Talbart was eschamit.
“Forsuith for ever I am defamit!”
And said this, “I had rather die [80]
Without that I revengit be.”
Our young Squyer, sic was his hap,
Was first on fute; and on he lap
Upon his hors, without support.
Of that the Scottis tuke gude comfort,
Quhen thay saw him sa feirelie[400]
Loup on his hors sa galyeardlie[401].
The Squyer liftit his visair
Ane lytill space to take the air.
Thay bad hym wyne, and he it drank,
And humillie he did thame thank.
Be that Talbart on hors wes mountit,
And of our Squyer lytill countit.
And cryit gif he durst undertak
To run anis[402] for his ladies saik?
The Squyer answerit hie on hicht,
“That sall I do, be Marie bricht!
I am content all day to ryn,
Tyll ane of us the honour wyn.”
Of that Talbart was weill content,
And ane greit speir in hand he hent[403].
The Squyer in his hand he thrang[404]
His speir, quhilk was baith greit and lang,
With ane sharp heid of grundin steill,
Of quhilk he wes appleisit weill[405].
That plesand feild was lang and braid,
Quhair gay ordour and rowme was maid,
And everie man micht have gude sicht,
And thair was mony weirlyke knicht.
Sum man of everie natioun
Was in that congregatioun.
Than trumpettis blew triumphantlie, [81]
And thai[406] twa campiounis egeirlie
Thai spurrit thair hors, with speir on breist
Pertlie to preif thair pith thay preist[407].
That round, rink roume wes at utterance[408];
Bot Talbartis hors with ane mischance,
He outterit[409], and to ryn was laith;
Quhairof Talbart was wonder wraith.
The Squyer furth his rink[410] he ran,
Commendit weill with everie man;
And him dischargeit of his speir
Honestlie lyke ane man of weir.
Becaus that rink thay ran in vane
Than Talbart wald not ryn agane
Till he had gottin ane better steid;
Quhilk was brocht to him with gude speid.
Quhairon he lap, and tuik his speir,
As brym[411] as he had bene ane beir.
And bowtit[412] fordward with ane bend[413],
And ran on to the rinkis end,
And saw his hors was at command.
Than wes he blyith, I understand,
Traistand na mair to ryn in vane.
Than all the trumpettis blew agane.
Be that with all the force thay can
Thay rycht rudelie at uther ran.
Of that meiting ilk[414] man thocht wounder,
Quhilk soundit lyke ane crak of thunder.

And nane of thame thair marrow[415] mist:
Sir Talbartis speir in sunder brist,
Bot the Squyer with his burdoun[416]
Sir Talbart to the eirth dang doun. [82]
That straik was with sic micht and fors
That on the ground lay man and hors;
And throw the brydell-hand him bair,
And in the breist ane span and mair.
Throw curras[417] and throw gluifis of plait,
That Talbart micht mak na debait,
The trencheour of the Squyeris speir.
Stak still into Sir Talbartis geir.
Than everie man into that steid[418]
Did all beleve that he was deid.
The Squyer lap rycht haistelie
From his cursour deliverlie,
And to Sir Talbart maid support,
And humillie did him comfort.
Quhen Talbart saw into his scheild
Ane otter in ane silver feild,
"This race," said he, "I may sair rew,
For I see weill my dreme wes trew.
Me-thocht yone otter gart me bleid,
And buir me backwart from my steid.
Bot heir I vow to God soverane
That I sall never just[419] agane."
And sweitlie to the Squyer said,
"Thow knawis the cunning[420] that we maid,
Quhilk of us twa suld tyne[421] the feild
He suld baith hors and armour yield
Till him that wan: quhairfoir I will
My hors and harnes geve thee till."
Then said the Squyer courteouslie,
"Brother, I thank yow hartfullie.
Of yow forsuith nathing I crave, [83]
For I have gottin that I wald have."
With everie man he was commendit,
Sa vailyeandlie he him defendit.
The Capitane of the Inglis band
Tuke the young Squyer be the hand,
And led him to the pailyeoun[422],
And gart him mak collatioun.
Quhen Talbartis woundis wes bund up fast
The Inglis capitane to him past,
And prudentlie did him comfort,
Syne said, "Brother, I yow exhort
To tak the Squyer be the hand."
And sa he did at his command;
And said, "This bene but chance of armes."
With that he braisit[423] him in his armes,
Sayand, "Hartlie I yow forgeve."
And then the Squyer tuik his leve,
Commendit weill with everie man.
Than wichtlie[424] on his hors he wan,
With monie ane nobyll man convoyit.
Leve we thair Talbart sair annoyit.
Some sayis of that discomfitour
He thocht sic schame and dishonour
That he departit of that land,
And never wes sene into Ingland.
[84]

THE SQUYERIS ADEW.[425]

Fair weill, ye lemant[426] lampis of lustines[427]
  Of fair Scotland, adew my Ladies all!
During my youth with ardent besines,
  Ye knaw how I was in your service thrall.
  Ten thowsand times adew above thame all
Sterne[428] of Stratherne, my Ladie Soverane!
For quhome I sched my blud with mekill[429] pane.

Yit wald my Ladie luke at evin and morrow[430]
  On my legend, at length scho wald not mis
How for hir saik I sufferit mekill sorrow.
  Yit give[431] I micht at this time get my wis[432],
  Of hir sweit mouth, deir God, I had ane kis.
I wis in vane, allace we will dissever,
I say na mair, Sweit hart, adew for ever!

ANE PLEASANT SATYRE OF THE THRIE ESTAITIS.

Prologue.

Spoken by DILIGENCE.

The Father and founder of faith and felicitie,
That your fassioun[433] formed to his similitude,
And his Sone, our Saviour, scheild in necessitie,
That bocht yow from baillis[434], ransonit on the Rude,
Repleadgeand[435] his presonaris with his hart blude;
The Halie Gaist, governour and grounder of grace,
Of wisdome and weilfair baith fontane and flude,
Saif yow all that I sie seisit[436] in this place,
And scheild yow from sinne,
And with his spreit yow inspyre,
Till I have schawin my desyre!
Silence, Soveraine, I requyre,
For now I begin.

Prudent Peopill I pray yow all
Tak na man greif in speciall,
For wee sall speik in generall,
For pastyme and for play:
Thairfoir till all our rymis be rung
And our mistoinit[437] sangis be sung
Let everie man keip weill ane toung
And everie woman tway.

[86]

An Interlude of the Puir Man and the Pardoner.

[*Heir sall entir Pauper the puir man.*

PAUPER.

Of your almis, gude folks, for God's luife[438] of heavin,
For I have motherles bairns either sax or seavin.
Gif ye'ill gif me na gude[439], for the luife of Jesus
Wische[440] me the richt way till Sanct-Androes.

DILIGENCE.

Quhair haif wee gottin this gudly companzeoun?
Swyith[441]! out of the feild, [thow] fals raggit loun.
God wait[442] gif heir be ane weill-keipit place,
Quhen sic ane vilde[443] begger carle may get entres[444].
Fy on yow officiars, that mends nocht thir failyies[445]!
I gif yow all till the Devill, baith Provost and Bailzies!
Without ye cum and chase this carle away,
The devill a word ye'is get mair of our play.
Fals huirsun, raggit carle, quhat Devil is that thou rugs[446]?

PAUPER.

Quha Devill, maid thee ane gentill man, that wald cut not thy lugs[447]?

DILIGENCE.

Quhat now! me-thinks the carle begins to crack[448].
Swyith, carle, away, or be this day I'se break thy back.

[*Heir sall the Carle clim up and sit in the King's tchyre.*

Cum doun, or be God's croun, fals loun, I sall slay thee.

[87]

PAUPER.

Now sweir be thy brunt[449] schinnis, the Devill ding[450] thame fra thee.
Quhat say ye till thir court dastards? be[451] thay get hail clais[452],
Sa sune as thay leir[453] to sweir and trip on thair tais.

DILIGENCE.

Me-thocht the carle callit me knave, evin in my face.
Be Sanct Fillane! thou sal be slane bot gif[454] thou ask grace.
Loup[455] doun, or, be the gude Lord, thow sall lose thy heid.

PAUPER.

I sall anis drink or I ga, thocht[456] thou had sworne my deid[457].

[*Heir Diligence castis away the ledder.*

DILIGENCE.

Loup now, gif thou list, for thou hes lost the ledder.
It is full weill thy kind to loup, and licht in a tedder[458].

PAUPER.

Thou sall be faine to fetch agane the ledder, or I loup.
I sall sit heir into this tcheir till I have tumde[459] the stoup[460].

[*Heir sall the Carle loup aff the scaffald.*

DILIGENCE.

Swyith[461]! beggar, bogill[462], haist thé away;
Thow art over pert to spill our Play.

[88]

PAUPER.

I will not gif, for al your Play, worth an sowis fart:
For thair is richt lytill play at my hungrie hart.

DILIGENCE.

Quhat devill ails this cruckit carle?

PAUPER.

Marie! meikill[463] sorrow.
I can not get, thocht I gasp, to beg nor to borrow.

DILIGENCE.

Quhair, devill, is this thou dwels? or quhat's thy intent?

PAUPER.

I dwell into Lawthiane, ane myle fra Tranent.

DILIGENCE.

Quhair wald thou be, carle? the suth[464] to me schaw.

PAUPER.

Sir, evin to Sanct-Androes, for to seik law.

DILIGENCE.

For to seik law, in Edinburgh was the neirest way.

PAUPER.

Sir, I socht law thair this monie deir day,
Bot I culd get nane at Sessioun nor Seinzie;[465]

Thairfor the meikill din Devill droun all the meinzie[466].

[89]

DILIGENCE.

Schaw me thy mater, man, with all the circumstances,
How that thou hes happinit on thir unhappie chances.

PAUPER.

Gude man, will ye gif me of your charitie,
And I sall declair yow the black veritie.
My father was ane auld man and ane hoir[467],
And was of age fourscoir of yeirs and moir.
And Mald, my mother, was fourscoir and fyfteine,
And with my labour I did thame baith susteine.
Wee had ane meir that caryit salt and coill[468],
And everie ilk[469] yeir scho brocht us hame ane foill.
Wee had thrie ky[470] that was baith fat and fair,
Nane tydier into the toun of Air.[471]
My father was sa waik of blude and bane
That he deit[472], quhairfoir my mother maid great maine.
Then scho deit, within ane day or two;
And thair began my povertie and wo.
Our gude gray meir was baittand[473] on the feild,
And our land's laird tuik hir for his hyreild.[474]
The vickar tuik the best cow be the heid,
Incontinent, quhen my father was deid.
And quhen the vickar hard tel how that my mother
Was deid, fra hand he tuk to him ane-uther.
Then Meg, my wife, did murne baith evin and morrow,
Till at the last scho deit for verie sorrow.

[90]

And quhen the vickar hard tell my wyfe was dead
The thrid cow he cleikit[475] be the heid.
Thair umest clayis[476], that was of rapploch[477] gray,
The vickar gart his clark bear them away.[478]
Quhen all was gane I micht mak na debeat,
Bot with my bairns past for till beg my meat.
Now haif I tald yow the blak veritie
How I am brocht into this miserie.

DILIGENCE.

How did the person[479]? was he not thy gude freind?

PAUPER.

The Devil stick him! he curst me for my teind,
And halds me yit under that same proces
That gart me want the Sacrament at Pasche.
In gude faith, Sir, thocht he wald cut my throt,
I have na geir except ane Inglis grot[480],
Quhilk I purpois to gif ane man of law.

DILIGENCE.

Thou art the daftest fuill that ever I saw.
Trows[481] thou, man, be the law to get remeid
Of men of Kirk! Na, nocht till thou be deid.

PAUPER.

Sir, be quhat law, tell me, quhairfoir or quhy
That ane vickar suld tak fra me thrie ky?

[91]

DILIGENCE.

Thay have na law exceptand consuetude,
Quhilk law, to them, is sufficient and gude.

PAUPER.

Ane consuetude against the common weill
Suld be na law, I think, be sweit Sanct Geill.
Quhair will ye find that law, tell gif ye can,
To tak thrie ky fra ane pure husband man?

To tak thrie ky fra ane puir husband-man?
Ane for my father, and for my wyfe ane-uther,
And the third cow he tuke fra Mald my mother.

DILIGENCE.

It is thair law, all that thay have in use,
Thocht it be cow, sow, ganer[482], gryse[483], or guse.

PAUPER.

Sir, I wald speir[484] at yow ane questioun.
Behauld sum prelats of this regioun—

[Here the Puir Man recites further legalised oppressions by the priesthood, but is interrupted.]

DILIGENCE.

Hald thy toung, man, it seims that thou war mangit.[485]
Speik thou of preists but[486] doubt thou will be hangit.

PAUPER.

Be Him that buir the cruell croun of thorne,
I cair nocht to be hangit, evin the morne.

DILIGENCE.

Be sure of preistis thou will get na support.

PAUPER.

Gif that be trew the Feind resave the sort[487]!
Sa sen I se I get na uther grace
I will ly down and rest mee in this place.

[*Heir sall the Puirman ly doun in the feild, and the Pardoner sall cum in and say.*

PARDONER.

Bona dies! Bona dies!
Devoit Pepill, gude day I say yow.
Now tarie ane lytill quhyll, I pray yow,
Till I be with yow knawin.
Wat ye weill how I am namit?
Ane nobill man and undefamit,
Gif that all the suith war schawin.
I am Sir Robert Rome-raker,
Ane perfyte publike pardoner[488]
Admittit be the Paip.
Sirs, I sall schaw yow, for my wage,
My pardons and my pilgramage,
Quhilk ye sall se, and graip[489].
I give to the Devill, with gude intent,
This unsell[490] wickit New Testament,
With thame that it translaitit.
Sen layik[491] men knew the veritie
Pardoners get no charitie
Without that thay debait it.
Amang the wives with wrinks[492] and wyles, [93]
As all my marrowis[493], men begyles
With our fair fals flattrie.
Yea, all the crafts I ken perqueir[494]
As I was teichit be ane freir
Callit Hypocrisie.
Bot now, allace! our greit abusioun
Is cleirlie knawin till our confusioun,
That we may sair repent.
Of all credence now I am quyte,
For ilk man halds me at dispyte
That reids the New Test'ment.
Duill fell[495] the braine that hes it wrocht!
Sa fall them that the Buik hame brocht!
Als I pray to the Rude
That Martin Luther, that fals loun[496],
Black Bullinger, and Melancthoun,
Had bene smorde in thair cude[497].
Be him that buir the crowne of thorne
I wald Sanct Paull had never bene borne;
And als I wald his buiks
War never red in the kirk,
Bot amangs freirs, into the mirk[498],
Or riven amang ruiks!

[*Heir sall he lay doun his geir upon ane buird, and say,*

My patent pardouns ye may se,
Cum fra the Cane[499] of Tartarie,
Weill seald with oster-schellis.
Thocht ye have na contritioun
Ye sall have full remissioun [94]
With help of buiks and bellis.
Heir is ane relict lang and braid,
Of Fin Macoull the richt chaft blaid[500],
With teith and al togidder.
Of Colling's cow heir is ane horne,
For eating of Makconnal's corne
Was slaine into Baquhidder.
Heir is ane coird baith great and lang
Quhilk hangit Johne the Armistrang,[501]
Of gude hemp, soft and sound.
Gude halie peopill, I stand for'd,
Quha-ever beis hangit with this cord
Neids never to be dround.
The culum[502] of Sanct Bryd's kow;
The gruntill[503] of Sanct Antonis sow,
Quhilk buir his haly bell.
Quha-ever he be heiris this bell clinck
Gif me ane ducat for till drink;
He sall never gang[504] to hell,
Without he be of Baliell[505] borne.
Maisters, trow ye that this be scorne[506].
Cum win this pardoun, cum.
Quha luifis thair wyfis nocht with thair hart,
I have power thame for till part.
Me-think yow deif and dum:
Hes nane of yow curst wickit wyfis
That haldis yow intill sturt[507] and stryfis,
Cum tak my dispensatioun;
Of that cummer[508] I sall mak yow quyte,
Howbeit your-selfis be in the wyte[509], [95]
And mak ane fals narratioun.
Cum win the pardoun, now let se,
For meill, for malt, or for monie,
For cok, hen, guse, or gryse.
Of relicts heir I haif ane hunder;
Quhy cum ye nocht? this is ane wounder:
I trow ye be nocht wyse.

[A grotesque episode is here introduced in which the Pardoner, for the price of "ane cuppill of sarks" (shirts), divorces a malcontent sowtar, or shoemaker, and his wife. Upon their despatch, east and west, the Pardoner's boy cries from the hill.]

WILKIN.

Hoaw! Maister, hoaw! quhair ar ye now?

PARDONER.

I am heir, Wilkin widdiefow[510].

WILKIN.

Sir, I have done your bidding,
For I have fund ane greit hors bane,
Ane fairer saw ye never nane,
Upon dame Flescher's midding.
Sir, ye may gar the wyfis trow
It is ane bane of Sanct Bryd's cow,
Gude for the fever quartane[511].
Sir, will ye reull this relict weill,
All the wyfis will baith kiss and kneill
Betuixt this and Dumbartane.

PARDONER.

Quhat say thay of me in the Toun?

[96]

WILKIN.

Some sayis ye are ane verie loun,
Sum sayis *Legatus Natus*;
Sum sayis ye ar ane fals Saracene,
And sum sayis ye ar for certaine
Diabolus Incarnatus.
Bot keip yow fra subjectioun
Of the curst King Correctioun;
For, be ye with him fangit[512],
Becaus ye ar ane Rome-raker,
Ane common publick cawsay-paker[513],
But doubt ye will be hangit.

PARDONER.

Quhair sall I ludge into the toun?

WILKIN.

With gude kynde Cristiane Anderson,
Quhair ye will be weill treatit.
Gif ony limmer[514] yow demands,
Scho will defend yow with hir hands,
And womanlie debait it.
Bawburdie sayis be the Trinitie
That scho sall beir yow cumpanie
Howbeit ye byde ane yeir[515].

PARDONER.

Thou hes done weill, be God's mother;
Tak ye the taine[516] and I the tother,
Sa sall we mak greit cheir.

WILKIN.

I reid[517] yow, speid yow heir,
And mak na langer tarie;
Byde ye lang thair, but weir[518],
I dreid your weird yow warie[519].

[97]

[*Heir sall Pauper rise, and rax him.*

PAUPER.

Quhat thing was yon that I heard crak[520] and cry?
I have bene dreamand, and dreveland[521] of my ky.
With my richt hand my haill bodie I saine[522];
Sanct Bryd, Sanct Bryd, send me my ky againe!
I se standand yonder ane halie man,
To mak me help let me se gif he can.
Halie Maister, God speid yow, and gude morne!

PARDONER.

Welcum to me, thocht thou war at the horne![523]
Cum win the pardoun, and syne I sall thé saine[524].

PAUPER.

Will that pardon get me my ky againe?

PARDONER.

Carle, of thy ky I have nathing ado:
Cum win my pardon, and kis my relicts to.

[*Heir sall he saine him with his relictis.*

Now lowse thy pursse and lay doun thy offrand,
And thou sall have my pardoun evin fra hand.
With raipis[525] and relicts I sall thé saine againe;
Of gut[526] or gravell thou sall never have paine.
Now win the pardoun, limmer, or thou art lost.

[98]

PAUPER.

My haly Father, quhat wil that pardon cost?

PARDONER.

Let se quhat mony thou bearest in thy bag.

PAUPER.

I haif ane grot heir, bund into ane rag.

PARDONER.

Hes thou na uther silver bot ane groat?

PAUPER.

Gif I have mair, Sir, cum and rype[527] my coat.

PARDONER.

Gif me that groat, man, gif thou hest na mair.

PAUPER.

With all my hart, Maister, lo tak it thair.
Now let me se your pardon, with your leif.

PARDONER.

Ane thousand yeir of pardons I thee geif.

PAUPER.

Ane thousand yeir! I will nocht live sa lang.
Delyver me it, Maister, and let me gang[528].

PARDONER.

Ane thousand year I lay upon thy head,
With *totiens quotiens*: now, mak me na mair plead:
Thou hast resaifit thy pardon now already.

[99]

PAUPER.

Bot, I can se na-thing, Sir, be Our Lady.
Forsuith, Maister, I trow I be nocht wyse
To pay ere I have sene my marchandryse.
That ye have gottin my groat full sair I rew.
Sir, quhidder is your pardon black or blew?
Maister, sen ye have tain fra me my cunzie[529],
My marchandryse schaw me, withouttin sunzie[530];
Or to the bischop I sall pas and pleinzie[531]
In Sanct-Androis, and summond yow to the Seinzie[532].

PARDONER.

Quhat craifis[533] the carle? me-thinks thou art not wise.

PAUPER.

I craif my groat, or ellis my marchandrise.

PARDONER.

I gaif thé pardon for ane thowsand yeir.

PAUPER.

How sall I get that pardon, let me heir.

PARDONER.

Stand still and I sall tell the haill[534] storie.
Quhen thow art deid, and gais to Purgatorie,
Being condempnit to paine a thowsand yeir,
Then sall thy pardoun thee releif, but weir.
Now be content, ye ar ane mervelous man.

PAUPER.

Sall I get nathing for my groat quhill than[535]?

PARDONER.

That sall thou not, I mak it to yow plaine.

[100]

PAUPER.

Na than, gossop, gif me my groat againe.
Quhat say ye, Maisters? call ye this gude resoun,
That he suld promeis me ane gay pardoun,
And he resave my mony, in his stead[536],
Syne mak me na payment till I be dead?
Quhen I am deid I wait full sikkerlie[537]
My sillie[538] saull will pas to Purgatorie.
Declair me this, now God nor Baliell bind thé,
Quhen I am thair, curst carle, quhair sall I find thé?
Not in heavin, but rather into hell.
Quhen thow art thair thou cannot help thy-sell.
Quhen will thou cum my dolours till abait?
Or[539] I thee find my hippis will get ane hait[540].
Trowis thou, butchour, that I will buy blind lambis?
Gif me my groat, the Devill dryte[541] in thy gambis[542]!

PARDONER.

Swyith! stand abak! I trow this man be mangit[543].
Thou gets not this, carle, thocht thou suld be hangit.

PAUPER.

Gif me my groat, weill bund into ane clout[544],
Or, be Goddis breid[545], Robin sall beir ane rout[546].

[*Heir sall thay fecht with silence; and Pauper sal cast down the buird, and cast the relicts in the water.*

DILIGENCE.

Quhat kind of daffing[547] is this al day?
Swyith, smaiks[548]! out of the feild, away!
Intill ane presoun put them sone,
Syne hang them, quhen the PLAY is done.

[101]

THE POOR MAN'S MARE.

PAUPER.

Marie! I lent my gossop my mear, to fetch hame coills,
And he hir drounit into the querrell hollis:[549]
And I ran to the Consistorie, for to pleinze,
And thair I happinit amang are greidie meinze[550].
Thay gave me first ane thing thay call *Citandum*,
Within aucht[551] dayis I gat bot *Lybellandum*,
Within ane moneth I gat *ad Opponendum*,
In half ane yeir I gat *Interloquendum*,
And syne I gat, how call ye it? *ad Replicandum*:
Bot I could never ane word yit understand him.
And than thay gart me cast out many plackis[552],
And gart me pay for four and twentie actis.
Bot or thay came half gait[553] to *Concludendum*
The Feind ane plack was left for to defend him.
Thus thay postponit me twa yeir with thair traine[554],
Syne, *Hodie ad octo*, bad me cum againe;
And than, thir ruiks, thay roupit[555] wonder fast,
For sentence silver thay cryit at the last.
Of *Pronunciandum* thay maid me wonder faine;
Bot I got never my gude gray meir againe.

[102]

DAYBREAK IN MAY.

From the Prologue to "The Monarche."

Musing and marvelling on the miserie
Frome day to day in erth quhilk dois incres,
And of ilk[556] stait the instabilitie
Proceding of the restless besynes
Quhare-on the most part doith thair mynd addres
Inordinatlie, on houngrye covatyce,
Vaine glore, dissait, and uther sensuall vyce:

Bot tumlyng in my bed I mycht nocht lye;
Quharefore I fuir[557] furth in ane Maye mornyng,
Conforte to gett of my malancolye,
Sumquhat affore fresche Phebus uprysing,
Quhare I mycht heir the birdis sweitlye syng.
In-tyll ane park I past, for my plesure
Decorit weill be craft of dame Nature.

Quhow I resavit confort naturall
For tyll discryve[558] at lenth it war too lang;
Smelling the holsum herbis medicinall,
Quhare-on the dulce and balmy dew down dang[559],
Lyke aurient peirles on the twistis[560] hang;
Or quhow that the aromatic odouris
Did proceid frome the tender fragrant flouris;

Or quhow Phebus, that king etheriall,
Swyftlie sprang up in-to the Orient,
Ascending in his throne imperiall,
Quhose bricht and beriall[561] bemes resplendent [103]
Illumynit all on-to the Occident,
Confortand everye corporall creature
Quhilk formit war in erth be dame Nature;

Quhose donke impurpurit[562] vestiment nocturnall,
With his imbroudit[563] mantyll matutyne,
He lefte in-tyll his regioun aurorall,
Quhilk on hym waitit quhen he did declyne
Towarte his Occident palyce vespertyne,
And rose in habyte gaye and glorious,
Brychtar nor gold or stonis precious.

Bot Synthea, the hornit nychtis quene,
Scho loste hir lychte and lede ane lawar saill,
Frome tyme hir soverane lorde that scho had sene,
And in his presens waxit dirk[564] and paill,
And ouer hir visage kest are mistye vaill;
So did Venus, the goddès amorous,
With Jupiter, Mars, and Mercurius.

Rycht so the auld intoxicat Saturne,
Persaving Phebus powir, his beymes brycht,
Abufe the erth than maid he no sudgeourne[565],
Bot suddandlye did lose his borrowit lycht,
Quhilk he durst never schaw bot on the nycht.
The Pole Artick, Ursis, and Sterris all
Quhilk situate ar in the Septentrionall,

Tyll errand[566] schyppis quhilks ar the souer gyde[567],
Convoyand thame upone the stormye nycht,
Within thare frostie circle did thame hyde.
Howbeit that sterris have none uthir lycht
Bot the reflex of Phebus bemes brycht.
That day durst none in-to the hevin appeir [104]
Till he had circuit all our Hemispheir.

Me-thocht it was ane sycht celestiall
To sene Phebus so angellyke ascend
In-tyll his fyrie chariot triumphall,
Quhose bewtie brychte I culd nocht comprehend.
All warldlie cure[568] anone did fro me wend
Quhen fresche Flora spred furth hir tapestrie,

Wrocht be dame Nature, quent and curiouslie

Depaynt with mony hundreth hevinlie hewis;
Glaid of the rysing of thair royall Roye,
With blomes breckand[569] on the tender bewis[570],
Quhilk did provoke myne hart tyl natural joye.
Neptune that day, and Eoll[571], held thame coye,
That men on far mycht heir the birdis sounde,
Quhose noyis did to the sterrye hevin redounde.

The plesand powne prunyeand his feddrem fair[572],
The myrthfull maves[573] maid gret melodie,
The lustye[574] lark ascending in the air,
Numerand his naturall notis craftelye,
The gay goldspink, the merll rycht myrralye,
The noyis of the nobyll nychtingalis
Redoundit throuch the montans, meids, and valis.

Contempling this melodious armonye,
Quhow everilke bird drest thame for tyl advance,
To saluss[575] Nature with thare melodye,
That I stude gasing, halfingis[576] in ane trance,
To heir thame mak thare naturall observance
So royallie that all the roches[577] rang
Throuch repurcussioun of thair suggurit sang.

[105]

[106]

[107]

JOHN BELLENDEN.[578]

Last in the list of makars enumerated by Lyndsay in the prologue to his "Complaynt of the Papyngo" is mentioned "ane plant of poeitis, callit Ballendyne," who seems to have excited both respect and anticipation among his early contemporaries. The prophecy of Lyndsay's lines appears to have been more than fulfilled. The new makar of 1530, having gained the ear of the court, not only wrote poems which, whether they excelled those of his rivals or not, have at least outlived most of them, but produced works in prose regarding which a critic of the first rank has said, "No better specimen of the middle period (of the Scottish language) in its classical purity exists."[579]

Some obscurity has been cast upon the life of this scholar and poet by confusing him with an eminent contemporary of the same name, Sir John Bellenden of Auchinoul. The latter was secretary to the Earl of Angus at the time of that nobleman's downfall in 1528, appearing twice [108] before parliament as agent for the Douglases on the 4th of September. Some time afterwards he became Justice-Clerk.[580] These functions of Bellenden the lawyer have been attributed, however incongruously, to Bellenden the churchman, and have again and again led to a hopeless confusion of parentage and other details. As a matter of fact the Justice-Clerk seems to have survived the poet by more than twenty-seven years.[581]

Of the poet's life few facts are known with certainty. Born towards the close of the fifteenth century, he is believed to have been a native of Haddingtonshire, and to have entered St. Andrew's University in 1508. At least the matriculation of one John Ballentyn of the Lothian nation is recorded in that year. He completed his education at the University of Paris, where he took the degree of Doctor of Divinity. From the fourth stanza of his proheme to the Cosmographé, and from the prose epistle to James V. at the close of his translation of Boece's *History*, it is gathered that, returning to this country, he was employed at court during that monarch's youth as Clerk of Accounts, but was presently cast from his post by certain court intrigues. His loss of place probably coincided with that of Sir David Lyndsay, and was probably owed to the same cause, the seizure of power by the Douglases in 1524. It seems clear, moreover, that it was upon the downfall of that house that he returned to court favour; and circumstances would lead to the [109] belief that he was among those for whom James, mindful of early services, made provision shortly after his accession to power in 1528. At anyrate, in 1530 and the three following years Bellenden was engaged by express command of James in translating the histories of his contemporary Boece and of Livy. The Treasurer's accounts from October 30th, 1530, to November 30th, 1533, contain notes of payment for this work. In all, he received during that time the sum of £114; £78 being for the translation of Boece, and £36 for that of Livy.

A year or two later, during the vacancy of the bishopric of Moray, the archdeaconry of that see also became vacant, and its gift in consequence fell to the crown. Two clergymen, however, John Duncan, parson of Glasgow, and Alexander Harvey, solicited the Pope to confer the benefice upon James Douglas. For this they were brought to trial, and, by the statutes under which Gavin Douglas had suffered, were declared rebels, and had their property escheated to the king. The emoluments of this property for the years 1536 and 1537 were conferred successively upon Bellenden, who for the two years' income paid compositions respectively of 350 marks and £300 Scots. About the same time, it is believed, occurred his promotion to the archdeaconry itself, and his appointment as a canon of Ross.

Little more is known of the poet's life. A strenuous opponent of the new heresy, as the movement of the Reformation was called, he appears to have done all in his power to resist its progress, and [110] at last, finding his utmost efforts in this direction vain, to have betaken himself to the headquarters of counsel at Rome, where he died in 1550.[582]

The catalogue of Bellenden's works, though important in more than one detail, is not of great length. He is said to have written a treatise, *De Litera Pythagoræ*—the letter *upsilon*, in the form of which Pythagoras had chosen to see certain emblematical properties. Of this treatise nothing is now known. It is to his translations of Boece and Livy that the Archdeacon of Moray owes his chief fame. The first edition of the Latin *History of Scotland* by Hector Boece, consisting of seventeen books, had been printed at Paris in 1526, and dedicated to James V.[583] That king's knowledge of Latin must have been strictly limited, as we know from Lyndsay he was withdrawn from school at twelve years of age. His desire, therefore, for a translation into the vernacular may be understood. Bellenden's translation, with Boece's "cosmographé," or description of Scotland, [111] prefixed, was published at Edinburgh in 1541,[584] and has the credit of being the earliest existing prose work in the Scottish language. The translator divided Boece's books into chapters, and, from a reference in his proheme, apparently meant to bring the history down to his own time. As a translation the work is somewhat free, Bellenden having taken the liberty of correcting errors and supplying omissions where he thought right. Nevertheless it soon became the standard translation of the historian, and was the version which, with interpolations from the histories of Major, Lesley, and Buchanan, was used by Hollinshed, being the direct channel, therefore, through which Shakespeare derived the story of Macbeth. As a contribution to literature it remains the earliest and the most ample specimen we possess of Scottish prose. "Rich," as its latest editor has said, "in barbaric pearl and gold," while "the rust of age has not obscured the fancy and imagery with which the work abounds," it affords an admirable illustration of the force and variety of the language in which it was written.

At the end of his translation Bellenden appended an epistle to the king—one of these sound, if

somewhat plain, admonitions which his courtiers apparently did not scruple to address to James the Fifth. It deals boldly with the distinction between a king and a tyrant, and does not hesitate to hold up by way of example the fate which has constantly overtaken the wickedness of princes. [112]

The best edition of Bellenden's Boece is that edited, with a biographical introduction by Thomas Maitland, Lord Dundrennan, and published at Edinburgh in two volumes, quarto, in 1821. The only edition of the Livy is one by the same editor, printed in 1822 from a manuscript in the Advocates' Library. The translation extends only to the first five books of the original, though it was Bellenden's intention to furnish a complete version of his author. The work actually done is characterised, like the translation of Boece, by great fluency and vividness, and a natural happiness of style.

But it is to Bellenden's work as a poet that the chief consideration is here due. To each of his three translations he prefixed a poetical proheme, or preface, of some length; before the title-page of his Boece appears a quaint "Excusation of the Prentar" which must be attributed to him; and a separate poem of twenty-two stanzas by him, entitled "The Benner of Pietie, concerning the Incarnatioun of our Saluiour Chryst," forms one of the duplicate articles in the Bannatyne MS., printed by the Hunterian Club, 1878–86.[585] These five compositions represent his entire poetical achievement so far as is known. Though printed each in its due place, as above indicated, they have never been collected in a single volume.[586] [113]

Bellenden's chief poem is the proheme to the cosmographé prefixed to his translation of Boece. It bears no real relation to the work which it precedes, and is believed to have been written before 1530. Modelled upon the classical allegory of the "Choice of Hercules," it is addressed to James V., and with great tact seeks to convey a somewhat pertinent moral lesson to that youthful monarch. The original title of the composition is understood to have been "Virtew and Vyce"; and after the poetic fashion of its time the allegory is cast in form of a dream. It describes the wooing of a handsome young prince, whose personality can hardly be mistaken, by two lovely and splendidly attired ladies, Delight and Virtue. With quaint shrewdness the poet contrives to awaken at the proper moment, saving himself the invidious task of describing the prince's choice.

The proheme to the history is a graver and less poetical production, though bearing a closer relation to the work which follows. The chief object of history, it declares in effect, is to set forth the noble deeds of the past as an example to the present—a task performed with great array of classic information. The most striking passage of the poem is the descant on nobility, which occupies nine out of the twenty-nine stanzas. Some of the lines in this have all the incisiveness of the clearest-cut aphorism. [114]

Somewhat the same theory of history forms the burden of the prologue to Livy. The chief interest of this piece consists, perhaps, as Lord Dundrennan pointed out, in its representation of James V. as a patron of literature. The opening stanzas, however, are not without a certain warlike resonance suited to a prelude of Roman deeds of arms.

Altogether, though not of the era-making order, and though comparatively limited in quantity, the poetry of Bellenden is worthy of more attention than it has hitherto received. In allegoric method and in form of verse it follows the fashion of its day, and it shares that fashion's faults; but, these drawbacks apart, it is marked by great skill and smoothness of versification, by no small descriptive charm, and by a certain happy vividness of imagery which again and again surprises and delights the reader. One can almost feel the breath of

Notus brim, the wind meridiane,
With wingis donk, and pennis full of rane;

and a seascape rises instantly before the eye at mention of the

Carvell ticht, fast tending throw the se.

Beyond this, Bellenden shows himself a careful student of human nature, with more than one significant word to say upon the subject.

[115]

VIRTEW AND VYCE.

The Proheme of the Cosmographé prefixed to Boece's History.

Quhen silvir Diane, ful of bemis bricht,
Fra dirk[587] eclips wes past, this othir nicht,
And in the Crab, hir propir mansion, gane;
Artophilax contending at his micht
In the gret eist to set his visage richt,
I mene the ledar of the Charle-wane,
Abone[588] our heid wes the Ursis twane;
Quhen sterris small obscuris in our sicht
And Lucifer left twinkland him allane;

The frosty nicht with hir prolixit houris
Hir mantill quhit spred on the tender flouris;
Quhen ardent lauboure hes addressit me
Translait the story of our progenitouris,
Thair gret manheid, hie wisdome, and honouris;
Quhen we may cleir as in ane mirroure se
The furius end, sum-time, of tirannie,
Sum-time the glore of prudent governouris
Ilk stait apprisit[589] in thair faculte;

My wery spreit desiring to repres
My emptive pen of frutles besines,
Awalkit furth to tak the recent aire;
Quhen Priapus, with stormy weid oppres,
Raqueistit me in his maist tendernes [116]
To rest ane quhile amid his gardingis bare.
Bot I no maner couth[590] my mind prepare
To set aside unplesand hevines,
On this and that contempling solitare.

And first occurrit to my remembring
How that I wes in service with the King,
Put to his Grace in yeris tenderest,
Clerk of his Comptis, thoucht I wes inding[591],
With hart and hand and every othir thing
That micht him pleis in ony maner best;
Quhill[592] hie invy me from his service kest
Be thaim that had the Court in governing,
As bird but plumes heryit[593] of the nest.

Our life, our giding, and our aventuris
Dependis from thir hevinlie creaturis
Apperandlie be sum necessite.
For thoucht[594] ane man wald set his besy curis[595],
So far as laboure and his wisdome furis,
To fle hard chance of infortunite;
Thoucht he eschew it with difficulte,
The cursit weird yit ithandlie enduris[596],
Gevin to him first in his nativitie.

Of erdlie[597] stait bewaling thus the chance,
Of fortoun gud I had na esperance.
So lang I swomit[598] in hir seis deip
That sad avising[599] with hir thochtful lance
Couth find na port to ankir hir firmance; [117]
Quhill Morpheus, the drery god of sleip,
For very reuth did on my curis weip,
And set his sleuth[600] and deidly contenance
With snorand vanis throw my body creip.

Me-thocht I was in-to ane plesand meid,
Quhare Flora maid the tender blewmis spreid
Throw kindlie dew and humouris nutrative,
Quhen goldin Titan, with his flammis reid,
Abone the seis rasit up his heid,
Diffounding[601] down his heit restorative
To every frute that nature maid on live,
Quhilk wes afore in-to the winter deid,
For stormis cald and frostis penitrive[602].

Ane silver fontane sprang of watter cleir
In-to that place quhare I approchit neir,
Quhare I did sone espy ane fellown reird[603]
Of courtly gallandis in thair best maneir
Rejosing thaim in season of the yeir,
As it had bene of Mayis day the feird[604].
Thair gudlie havingis maid me nocht affeird;
With thaim I saw are crownit King appeir,
With tender downis rising on his beird.

Thir courtlie gallandis settand thair intentis
To sing, and play on divers instrumentis,
According to this Princis appetit;
Two plesand ladyis come pransand ouir the bentis[605];
Thair costlie clethin schew thair michty rentis[606]. [118]
Quhat hart micht wis, thay wantit nocht ane mit;
The rubeis schone apone thair fingaris quhit;
And finalie I knew, be thair consentis,
This ane Virtew, that other hecht[607] Delite.

Thir goddesses arrayit in this wise,
As reverence and honoure list devise,
Afore this Prince fell down apon thair kneis,
Syne dressit thaim in-to thair best avise[608],
So far as wisdome in thair power lyis,
To do the thing that micht him best appleis,
Quhare he rejosit in his hevinly gleis[609];
And him desirit, for his hie empryis[610],
Ane of thaim two unto his lady cheis[611].

And first Delite unto this Prince said thus,
“Maist vailyeant knicht, in dedis amorus,
And lustiest[612] that evir nature wrocht,
Quhilk[613] in the floure of youth mellifluus,
With notis sweit and sang melodius
Awalkis heir amang the flouris soft,
Thow hes no game bot in thy mery thocht.
My hevinly blis is so delicius,
All welth in erd[614], bot it, avalis nocht.

“Thoucht thow had France, and Italie also,
Spane, Inglande, Pole, with othir realmes mo,
Thoucht thow micht regne in stait maist glorius,
Thy pissant[615] kingdome is nocht worth ane stro
Gif it unto thy pleseir be ane fo, [119]
Or trubill thy mind with curis dolorus.
Thair is na-thing may be so odius
To man, as leif[616] in miserie and wo,
Defraudand God of nature genius.

“Dres thé thairfore with all thy besy cure,
That thow in joy and pleseir may indure,
Be sicht of thir[617] four bodyis elementar;
Two hevy and grosse, and two ar licht and pure.
Thir elementis, be wirking of nature,
Douth change in othir; and thocht thay be richt far
Fra othir severit, with qualiteis contrar,
Of thaim ar maid all levand creature,
And finalie in thaim resolvit ar.

“The fire in air, the air in watter cleir,
In erd the watter turnis without weir[618],
The erd in watter turnis ouir agane,
So furth in ordour; na-thing consumis heir.
Ane man new borne beginnis to appeir
In othir figure than afore wes tane[619];
Quhen he is deid the mater dois remane,
Thoucht it resolve in-to sum new maneir;
No-thing new, nocht bot the forme is gane.

“Thus is no-thing in erd bot fugitive,
Passand and cumand be spreiding successive.

And as ane beist, so is ane man consave
Of seid infuse in membris genitive,
And furth his time in pleseir dois ouir-drive, [120]
As chance him ledis, quhill he be laid in grave.
Thairfore thy hevin and pleseir now ressave
Quhill thow art heir in-to this present live;
For eftir deith thow sall na pleseir have.

"The rose, the lillyis, and the violet,
Unpullit, sone ar with the wind ouirset,
And fallis doun but[620] ony frut, I wis:
Thairfore I say, sen that no-thing may let[621],
Bot thy bricht hew mon[622] be with yeris fret[623],
(For every-thing bot for ane season is,)
Thow may nocht have ane more excellent blis
Than ly all nicht in-to min armis plet[624],
To hals and brais[625] with mony lusty kis,

"And have my tender body be thy side,
So propir, fet, quhilk nature hes provide
With every pleseir that thow may devine,
Ay quhill my tender yeris be ouir-slide.
Than gif it pleis that I thy bridill gide
Thow mon alway fra agit men decline;
Sine dres thy hart, thy curage, and ingine[626]
To suffir nane into thy hous abide
Bot gif thay will unto thy lust[627] incline.

"Gif thow desiris in the seis fleit[628]
Of hevinly blis, than me thy lady treit;
For it is said be clerkis of renoun
Thair is na pleseir in this eird so gret
As quhen ane luffar dois his lady meit, [121]
To quikin his life of mony deidly swon.
As hiest pleseir but comparison
I sall thé geif, into thy yeris swete,
Ane lusty halk with mony plumis broun,

"Quhilk sal be found so joyus and plesant,
Gif thow unto hir mery flichtis hant[629],
Of every blis that may in erd appeir,
As hart will think, thow sall no plente want,
Quhill yeris swift, with quhelis properant[630],
Consume thy strenth and all thy bewte cleir."
And quhen Delite had said on this maneir,
As rage of youtheid thocht maist relevant
Than Virtew said as ye sall eftir heir.

"My landis braid, with mony plentuus schire[631],
Sall gif thy Hienes, gif thou list desire,
Triumphant glore, hie honoure, fame devine,
With sic pissance that thaim na furius ire,
Nor werand[632] age, nor flame of birnand fire,
Nor bitter deith, may bring unto rewine.
Bot thow mon first insuffer mekill pine[633],
Abone thy-self that thow may have empire;
Than sall thy fame and honoure have na fine[634].

"My realme is set among my fois all;
Quhilkis hes with me ane weir[635] continewall,
And evir still dois on my bordour ly;
And, thoucht thay may no wayis me ouirthrall[636],
Thay ly in wait, gif ony chance may fall [122]
Of me sum-time to get the victory.
Thus is my life ane ithand chevalry[637]:
Laubour me haldis strang as ony wall
And no-thing brekis[638] me bot slogardy.

"Na fortoun may aganis me availl
Thoucht scho with cludy stormis me assaill.
I brek the streme of scharp adversite.
In weddir louin[639], and maist tempestius haill,

But ony dreid, I beir ane equall saill,
My schip so strang that I may nevir de.
Wit, reason, manheid, governis me so hie,
No influence nor sterris may prevaill
To regne on me with infortunite.

“The rage of youtheid may nocht dantit be[640]
But gret distres and scharp adversite;
As be this reason is experience—
The finest gold or silver that we se
May nocht be wrocht to our utilite
But flammis kene and bitter violence.
The more distres the more intelligence.
Quhay salis lang in hie prosperitie
Ar sone ouirset be stormy violence.

“This fragill life, as moment induring,
But dout sall thé and every pepill bring
To sickir[641] blis or than eternal wo.
Gif thow be honest lauboure dois ane thing,
Thy panefull laubour sall vanes but tarying[642], [123]
Howbeit thy honest werkis do nocht so.
Gif thow be lust dois ony thing also,
The schamefull deid, without dissevering,
Remanis ay, quhen pleseir is ago[643].

“As carvell ticht, fast tending throw the se,
Levis na prent amang the wallis hie;
As birdis swift, with mony besy plume,
Peirsis the aire, and wait[644] nocht quhare thay fle;
Siclik[645] our life, without activite,
Giffis na frut, howbeit ane schado blume.
Quhay dois thair life into this erd consume
Without virtew, thair fame and memorie
Sall vanis soner than the reky[646] fume.

“As watter purgis and makis bodyis fair,
As fire be nature ascendis in the aire
And purifyis with heitis vehement,
As floure dois smell, as frute is nurisare,
As precius balme revertis thingis sare[647]
And makis thaim of rot impacient,
As spice maist swete, as ros maist redolent,
As stern of day[648], be moving circulare,
Chasis the nicht with bemis resplendent;

“Siclik my werk perfitis[649] every wicht
In fervent luf of maist excellent licht,
And makis man into this erd but peir[650],
And dois the saule fra all corruptioun dicht[651]
With odoure dulce, and makis it more bricht [124]
Than Diane full, or yit Appollo cleir,
Sine rasis it unto the hiest speir[652],
Immortaly to schine in Goddis sicht,
As chosin spous and creature most deir.

“This othir wenche, that clepit[653] is Delite,
Involvis man, be sensuall appetite,
In every kind of vice and miserie;
Becaus na wit nor reason is perfite
Quhan scho is gide, bot skaithis[654] infinite,
With doloure, schame, and urgent poverte.
For sche wes get of frothis of the see,
Quhilk signifies, hir pleseir vennomit
Is midlit[655] ay with scharp adversite.

“Duke Hanniball, as mony authouris wrait,
Throw Spanye come, be mony passage strait,
To Italy in furour bellicall[656];
Brak doun the wallis, and the montanis slait[657],
And to his army maid ane oppin gait,
And victoryis had on the Romanis all.
At Capua, be pleseir sensuall

At Capua, be pleseir sensuall,
This Duk wes maid so soft and diligait[658]
That with his fois he wes sone ouirthrall.

“Of feirs Achill the weirlie[659] dedis sprang
In Troy and Grece quhill he in virtew rang[660];
How lust him slew it is bot reuth to heir.
Siclik the Trojanis, with thair knichtis strang
The vailyeant Grekis fra thair roumes dang[661], [125]
Victoriuslie exercit mony yeir;
That nicht thay went to thair lust and pleseir
The fatall hors did throw thair wallis fang[662],
Quhais prignant sidis wer full of men of weir.

“Sardanapall, the prince effeminat,
Fra knichtlie dedis wes degenerat;
Twinand the thredis of the purpur lint
With fingaris soft, amang the ladyis sat,
And with his lust couth nocht be saciat,
Quhill of his fois come the bitter dint.
Quhat nobill men and ladyis hes bene tint[663]
Quhen thay with lustis wer intoxicat,
To schaw at lenth, my toung suld nevir stint[664].

“Thairfore Camil, the vailyeant chevaleir,
Quhen he the Gallis had dantit be his weir[665],
Of heritable landis wald have na recompence;
For, gif his barnis[666] and his freindis deir
Wer virtewis, thay couth nocht fail ilk yeir
To have ineuch be Romane providence;
Gif thay wer gevin to vice and insolence
It wes nocht neidfull for to conques geir[667]
To be occasioun of thair incontinence.

“Sum nobill men, as poetis list declare,
Wer deifeit[668], sum goddis of the aire,
Sum of the hevin, as Eolus, Vulcan,
Saturn, Mercury, Appollo, Jupitare,
Mars, Hercules, and othir men preclare[669], [126]
That glore immortall in thair livis wan.
Quhy wer thir peple callit goddis than?
Becaus thay had ane virtew singulare,
Excellent, hie abone ingine[670] of man.

“And otheris ar in reik sulphurius;
As Ixion, and wery Sisiphus,
Eumenides the Furyis richt odibill,
The proud giandis, and thristy Tantalus;
With huglie[671] drink and fude most vennomus,
Quhare flammis bald and mirknes[672] ar sensibill.
Quhy ar thir folk in panis so terribill?
Becaus thay wer bot schrewis vicius
Into thair life, with dedis most horribill.

“And thoucht na frute wer eftir consequent
Of mortall life, bot for this warld present
Ilk man to have allanerlie[673] respect,
Yit virtew suld fra vice be different
As quik fra deid, as rich fra indigent.
That ane to glore and honour ay direct,
This othir, saule and body, to neclect;
That ane of reason most intelligent,
This othir of beistis following the affect.

“For he that nold[674] aganis his lustis strive,
Bot leiffis as beist of knawlege sensitive[675],
Eildis[676] richt fast, and deith him sone ouir-halis[677].
Thairfore the mule is of ane langar live
Than stonit hors; also the barant wive[678] [127]
Apperis young quhen that the brudie falis[679].
We se also, quhen nature nocht prevalis,
The pane and dolour ar sa pungitive

No medicine the pacient avalis.

“Sen thow hes hard baith our intentis thus,
Cheis of us two the maist delitius;
First, to sustene ane scharp adversite,
Danting the rage of youtheid furius,
And sine posseid[680] triumphe innumerus,
With lang empire and hie felicite;
Or haif, ane moment, sensualite
Of fuliche youth, in life voluptuous,
And all thy dayis full of miserie.”

Be than, Phebus his firy cart did wry
Fra south to west, declinand besaly
To dip his steidis in the occeane,
Quhen he began ouirsile[681] his visage dry
With vapouris thik, and cloudis full of sky,
And Notus brim[682], the wind meridiane
With wingis donk and pennis full of rane,
Awalkenit me, that I micht nocht aspy
Quhilk of thaim two was to his lady tane.

Bot sone I knew thay war the goddesses
That come in sleip to vailyeant Hercules
Quhen he was young and fre of every lore
To lust or honour, poverte or riches,
Quhen he contempnit lust and idilnes [128]
That he in virtew micht his life decore[683],
And werkis did of maist excellent glore.
The more incressit his panefull besines,
His hie triumphe and loving[684] was the more.

Thair, throw this morall eruditioun
Quhilk come, as said is, in my visioun,
I tuke purpos, or I forthir went,
To write the story of this regioun,
With dedis of mony illuster campioun[685].
And, thoucht the pane apperis vehement,
To mak the story to the redaris more patent
I will begin at the discriptioun
Of Albion, in maner subsequent.

[129]

NOBILNES.

From the Proheme to the Translation of Boece's History.

For nobilnes sum-time the loving is[686],
That cumis be meritis of our eldaris gone.
As Aristotill writis in his Rethorikis,
Amang nobillis, quhay castin thaim repone[687]
Mon[688] dres thair life and dedis one be one
To mak thaim worthy to have memore
For honour to thair prince or nation,
To be in glore to thair posterite.

Ane-othir kind thair is of nobilnes
That cumis be infusion naturall,
And makis ane man sa full of gentilnes,
Sa curtes, plesand, and sa liberall,
That every man dois him ane nobill call.
The lion is sa nobill, as men tellis,
He cannot rage aganis the bestis small,
Bot on thaim quhilkis[689] his majeste rebellis.

The awfull[690] churle is of ane-othir strind[691].
Thoucht he be borne to vilest servitude
Thair may na gentrice[692] sink into his mind,
To help his friend or nichtbour with his gud.
The bludy wolf is of the samin stude[693]; [130]
He feris gret beistis and ragis on the small,
And leiffis in slauchter, tyranny, and blud,
But ony mercy, quhare he may ouirthrall[694].

This man is born ane nobill, thow will say,
And gevin to sleuth and lust immoderat:
All that his eldaris wan, he puttis away,
And fra thair virtew is degenerat;
The more his eldaris fame is elevat
The more thair life to honour to approche;
Thair fame and loving ay interminat,
The more is ay unto his vice reproche.

Amang the oist[695] of Grekis, as we hard,
Two knichtis war, Achilles and Tersete;
That ane maist vailyeand, this othir maist coward.
Better is to be, sayis Juvinall the poete,
Tersetis son, havand Achilles sprete,
With manly force his purpos to fulfill,
Than to be lord of every land and strete,
And syne maist cowart, cumin[696] of Achill.

Man, callit ay maist nobill creature,
Becaus his life maist reason dois assay,
Ay sekand honour with his besy cure[697],
And is na noble quhen honour is away.
Thairfore he is maist nobill man, thow say,
Of all estatis, under reverence,
That vailyeantly doith close the latter day,
Of native cuntre deand[698] in defence. [131]

The glore of armis and of forcy dedis,[699]
Quhen thay ar worthy to be memoriall,
Na les be wit than manheid ay procedis.
As Plinius wrait in Story Naturall,
Ane herd of hertis is more strong at all,
Havand ane lion aganis the houndis foure,
Than herd of lionis arrayit in battall,
Havand ane hert to be thair governoure.

Quhen fers Achilles was be Paris slane,
Amang the Grekis began ane subtell plede,
Quhay was maist nobill and prudent capitane
Into his place and armour to succede;
Quhay couth[700] thaim best in every dangeir lede,
And sauf[701] thair honour as he did afore.
The vailyeant Ajax wan not for his manheds

The valyeant Ajax wan not for his manhede
Quhen wise Ulysses bure away the glore.

Manhede but prudence is ane fury blind,
And bringis ane man to schame and indegence.
Prudence but manhede cumis oft behind,
Howbeit it have na les intelligence
Of thingis to cum than gone, be sapience.
Thairfore quhen wit and manhede doith concurre
Hie honour risis with magnificence:
For glore to noblis is ane groundin spurre.

ADDRESS TO BELLONA AND KING JAMES V.

From the "Proloug apoun the Traduction of Titus Livius."[702]

Armipotent lady, Bellona serene,
  Goddes of wisdome and jeoperdyis of were[703],
Sister of Mars, and ledare of his rene.
  And of his batallis awfull messingere!
  Thy werelyke trumpett thounder in mine ere—
The horribill battellis and the bludy harmes—
To write of Romanis, the nobil men of armes.

And bricht Appollo with thy cours eterne,
  That makis the frutis spring on every ground,
And with thy mychty influence dois governe
  The twynkland sternes about the mappamound[704]!
  Thy fyry visage on my vers diffound[705],
And quikin the spretis of my dull ingine[706]
With rutiland[707] beme of thy low[708] divine.

And ye my soverane be line continewall,
  Ay cum of kingis your progenitouris,
And writis in ornate stile poeticall
  Quik-flowand vers of rethorik cullouris,
  Sa freschlie springand in youre lusty flouris [133]
To the grete comforte of all trew Scottismen,
Be now my muse and ledare of my pen!

That be youre helpe and favoure gracius
  I may be abill, as ye commandit me,
To follow the prince of storie, Livius,
  Quhais curious ressouns tonit ar so hie.
  And every sens sa full of majeste
That so he passes uther stories all,
As silver Diane dois the sternis[709] small.

For I intend of this difficill werk
  To mak ane end or I my lauboure stint[710],
War not the passage and stremes ar sa stark[711],
  Quhare I have salit, full of crag and clynt[712],
  That ruddir and takillis of my schip ar tynt[713];
And thus my schip, without ye mak support
Wil peris lang or[714] it cum to the port.

[134]

THE EXCUSATION OF THE PRENTAR.

Prefixed to the Translation of Boece's History.

Ingyne[715] of man be inclinatioun
In sindry wyse is geuin, as we se.
Sum men ar geuin to detractioun,
Inuy, displeseir, or malancolie,
And to thair nychbouris hes no cherite.
Sum ar so nobill and full of gentilnes,
Thay luf no-thing bot joy and merynes.

Sum ar at vndir[716], and sum maid vp of nocht:
Sum men luffis peace, and sum desiris weir[717].
Sum is so blyth in-to his mery thocht
He curis[718] nocht, so he may perseueir
In grace and fauour of his lady deir.
Sum boldin[719] at othir in maist cruell feid[720],
With lance and dagar rynnis to the deid[721].

Ane hes that mycht ane hundreth weil sustene,
And leiffis[722] in wo and pennance at his table,
And of gud fallois comptis nocht ane bene[723];
His wrechit mynd is so insaciable;
As heuin and hell wer no-thing bot ane fable
He birnis ay, but sycht[724] to gud or euil,
And rynnis with all his baggis to the deuil.

[135]

And I the prentar, that dois considir weil
Thir sindry myndis of men in thair leuing[725],
Desiris nocht bot on my laubour leil[726]
That I mycht leif, and of my just wynnyng
Mycht first pleis God, and syne our noble Kyng,
And that ye reders bousum and attent[727]
Wer of my laubour and besynes content.

And in this wark, that I haue heir assailyeit
To bring to lycht, maist humely I exhort
Yow nobill reders, quhare that I haue failyeit
In letter, sillabe, poyntis lang or schort,
That ye will of your gentrice it support[728],
And tak the sentence[729] the best wyse ye may;
I sall do better, will God, ane-othir day.

[136]

ANNO DOMINI.

The opening stanzas of “The Benner of Pietie.”

Quhen goldin Phebus movit fra the Ram
Into the Bull to mak his mansioun,
And hornit Dean in the Virgin cam
With visage paill in hir assentioun,
Approcheand to hir oppositioun;
Quhen donk Awrora with hir mistie schowris,
Fleand of skyis the bricht reflexioun,
Hir siluer teiris skalit[730] on the flouris;

The sesoun quhen the greit Octauian
Baith erd[731] and seis had in his gouernance
With diademe as roy Cesarian
In maist excellent honor and plesance,
With every gloir that micht his fame advance;
Quhen he the croun of hie triumphe had worne,
Be quhais peax and royell ordinance
The furious Mars wes blawin to the horne[732];

The samyne[733] tyme quhen God omnipotent
Beheld of man the greit callamitie,
And thocht the tyme wes than expedient
Man to redeme fra thrald captiuite,
And to reduce him to felicitie [137]
With body and sawle to be glorificat
Quhilk wes condempnit in the lymb[734] to bie
Fra[735] he wes first in syn prevaricat;

Before the Fader, Mercye than appeiris
With flude of teris rainnand fra hir ene,
Said, “Man hes bene in hell fyve thowsand yeiris,
Sen he wes maid in feild of Damascene,
And cruwall tormentis dayly dois sustene
But ony confort, cryand for mercie.
How may thy grace nocht with thy pietie mene[736]
Off thy awin[737] werk the greit infirmitie?”

“And be the contrare,” then said Veretie,
“Thy word eterne but end is permanent,
Vnalterat, but mvtabilitie,
Withowttin slicht of ony argument;
Quhen Adame wes fund inobedient
In Paradice thruche his ambitioun,
Perpetualy, be richtous jugement,
Off thy blist visage tynt[738] fruisioun.”

Than Pece said, “Lord haif in thy memorie
That man, thy wark, was creat to that fyne[739],
That he micht haif perfyte felicitie
With thé aboif the hevynis cristellyne—
Quhilk Lucifer did thrwch his foly tyne—
Sumtyme maid to thy image worthiest:
It wes said than be prophecie devyne
That thow sowld sleip and in my bosom rest.” [138]

And Justice said, “His odius offence
Contrare thy hie excellent dignitie,
His oppin syn and wilfull negligence,
Befoir thy sicht sowld mair aggregit[740] bie,
Sen thow art Alpha, O, and Veretie:
Be richtous dome, Adame and all his seid,
For tressone done agane thy maiestie,
Condempnit is to thoill[741] the bitter deid[742].”

Thir ladeis foure, contending beselie
With argumentis and mony strong repplyis,
Beffoir the blissit Fader equalie,
Sum for justice, and sum for mercie cryis.
The Fader wret ane sentence in this wyiss,
“For tressone done aganis oure maiestie,
The bittir deid salbe are sacrifyiss
The grit offence of man to satisfie.”

[139]

[140]

[141]

KING JAMES THE FIFTH.

More romance is associated in the popular mind of Scotland with the career of James the Fifth than with that of any other of the romantic race of Stuart, except perhaps the last of the line, the hero of the ’45. For three centuries stories of the amours and escapades of “the Gudeman of Ballengeich” have formed the familiar tradition of the countryside; his exploits have been the subject of innumerable songs, ballads, and minstrel lays, from “The Jolly Beggar” itself, to “The Lady of the Lake”; and even at the present day the eye of a Scotsman kindles with lively reminiscence; at mention of the kindly “King of the Commons.”

Son of that gallant James who fell at Flodden, and of Margaret, the hot-blooded sister of Henry VIII., he might have been predicted to make for himself a life more eventful than that of most men. His time, besides, fell at a crisis in Scottish history—the meeting of the counter currents of the old order and the new in the Reformation. Whatever the causes, the fact remains that from his birth at Linlithgow on 10th April, 1512, till his death at Falkland on 14th December, 1542, the [142] career of James V. presents a continuous series of personal episodes as dramatic as anything on the historic stage. Dating his reign from the most tragic disaster in Scottish history, he was crowned King of Scotland before he could speak, a month after his father’s death on the battlefield. Smiled on by the Muses in his cradle, his childish gambols have been made a sunny picture for all time by the verses of his childhood’s companion, one of the greatest of the national poets. Invested with the sceptre at twelve years of age, at sixteen he suddenly astonished his enemies by proving that he could wield it, making himself at one stroke and in a few hours absolute master of Scotland.

Nothing, perhaps, shows one side of the character of James—his decision, daring, and resolute energy—better than the transaction of the night in May, 1528, when, slipping the Douglas leash at Falkland, he galloped through the defiles of the Ochils with Jockie Hart, and appeared at once as unquestioned king among his nobles at Stirling. As energetic, however, and almost as dramatic were the young monarch’s measures for restoring order in his disordered realm. Under the Douglas usurpation every abuse had been rampant, might had everywhere overridden right, and outrage had everywhere scorched the land with sorrow and fire. Such a state of things was only to be righted by an iron hand, and if the acts of James have sometimes appeared severe to modern eyes, there can be no doubt that severity was needed. In particular, the young king’s descent upon the Border has been remembered in story and song.[743] [143] Shutting up the Border lords beforehand in Edinburgh, he swept suddenly through Ettrick Forest, Eskdale, and Teviotdale, surprising freebooters like Cockburn of Henderland, Scott of Tushielaw, and Johnnie Armstrong, in their own fastnesses, and by the execution of swift, sharp justice reduced these lawless regions forthwith to tranquillity. Rebellions in the Orkneys and the Western Isles were quelled with tact and promptitude; the attempts of the Douglases upon the marches were met and defeated by superior force, and the insidious approaches of Henry VIII. were checkmated by sending a force of seven thousand Highlanders over seas to assist O’Donnel, the Irish chief, in his efforts to shake off the English yoke.

One incident in the life of James illustrates vividly the spirit of extravagant devotion which the character of the Stuarts from first to last seems to have been capable of exciting in their followers. During a royal progress through his dominions the young king was entertained by the Earl of Athole in a sumptuous palace of wood erected for the occasion on a meadow at the foot of Ben y Gloe. Hung with tapestries of silk and gold, and lit by windows of stained glass, this palace, surrounded by a moat and by towers of defence in the manner of a feudal castle, lodged the king more luxuriously than any of his own residences. Yet on the departure of the royal cavalcade the Earl, declaring that the palace which had lodged the sovereign should never be profaned by [144] accommodating a subject, to the astonishment of the Papal legate who was present, ordered the whole fabric, with all that it contained, to be given to the flames.

It was at this period of his life that James engaged in most of those romantic adventures by which, under his assumed name of “the Gudeman of Ballengeich,” he is popularly remembered. He was as fearless as he was energetic, and upon tidings of misdeeds, however remote, he made no hesitation in getting instantly on horseback and spurring at the head of his small personal retinue to attack and punish the evil-doers. In these excursions he constantly shared extreme perils and privations with his followers. These and the perils of his too frequent intrigues with the fair daughters of his subjects form the burden of most of the traditions current regarding him. One of the most characteristic of these traditions is preserved by Scott in his *Tales of a Grandfather*, was used by the great romancist for the plot of “The Lady of the Lake,” and forms the subject of the favourite drama of “Cramond Brig.” Another, hardly less dramatic and amusing, also preserved by Scott, is that of James’s turning the tables upon Buchanan of Arnpryor, the bold “King of Kippen.”

None of his adventures, however, surpasses in romantic incident the weightier matter of the king’s own marriage. In the hope of withdrawing Scotland from the support of France in the great continental rivalry then going on, the Emperor Charles V. had in turn offered James alliance with his sister, the Queen of Hungary, his niece the daughter of the King of Denmark, [145] and with a second niece the Princess Mary of Portugal; while Henry VIII. had offered his own daughter Mary to the young monarch. In one case the whole of Norway was offered by way of dowry. But James had a mind of his own on the subject, and was not to be tempted from the ancient policy of the country. Sir David Lyndsay was accordingly despatched to arrange a marriage with the daughter of the Duc de Vendôme, the head of the princely house of Bourbon. The treaty was all but concluded, when suddenly, among the attendants of some nobles freshly

arrived from Scotland, the princess recognised James himself. Irking at his envoy's delay he had hit upon this device for forming personal acquaintance with his bride, but his identity was betrayed by a portrait which he had previously sent her. For eight days he was sumptuously entertained by the Bourbons, but, dissatisfied in some way with the choice which had been made for him, he formed an excuse to visit the court of Francis I. There he fell in love with the king's eldest daughter, the fragile Princess Magdalene. She, it appears, became also passionately attached to him, and, notwithstanding all obstacles—the warnings of the physicians and the reluctance of Francis to expose his daughter to an inhospitable climate, the two were married on 1st January, 1537, and after four months of rejoicings and utmost happiness sailed for Scotland. The gallant fleet of fifty ships sailed up the Firth of Forth on the 28th of May, and it is narrated that as she landed to pass to Holyrood the fair young queen stooped down and kissed the soil of [146] her husband's country.

This romantic method of royal match-making, however, must be considered to have cost James dear. His continued absence from the country had left room for the machinations of his enemies; his previous good fortune seemed, upon his return, to fail him; and worst of all, amid the increasing troubles of the time he seems to have been oppressed by a certain foreboding.

Forty days after landing, and while preparations were being made for her triumphal progress through the country, the seventeen-year-old queen died. "And," says Lindsay of Pitscottie, "the king's heavy moan that he made for her was greater than all the rest." A second marriage, it is true, was, for political reasons, and with the approval of Francis, forthwith arranged for James, and in the summer of 1538 Marie, daughter of the Duc de Guise, was received with gallant display by her royal consort at St. Andrews. But three months later, news arrived from France that the daughter of the Duc de Vendôme had sickened of her disappointment, and was dead. "Quhairat," to quote Pitscottie again, "when the King of Scotland got wit, he was highlie displeased (distressed), thinkand that he was the occasion of that gentlewoman's death also."

Meanwhile the intrigues of Henry VIII. and the banished Douglases had succeeded in corrupting a great part of the Scottish nobility. Twice was the life of James attempted; first by the Master of Forbes, a brother-in-law of the Earl of Angus, and next by Angus's sister, Janet Douglas, Lady [147] Glammis. With envious eyes and diminishing loyalty the Scottish nobles saw the English peers enriched by Henry's distribution of the confiscated church lands, while James consistently refused to carry out the same plan of spoliation in Scotland. The climax of the young king's troubles was reached in 1542. Hitherto Henry VIII., in his designs upon the independence of the northern kingdom, had confined himself to the arts of policy and bribery, suborning the trusted servants of the crown, and embroiling James between the rights of the church and the ambition of the nobles. Now, however, the time seemed ripe, and he sent the English forces openly across the Border. These were met and routed with courage and promptitude; and, overjoyed at his success, the Scottish king had made full preparations for retaliating, and was marching south at the head of his army, when at Fala his nobles suddenly refused to carry war into England, and forced him to abandon the campaign. This dishonour before his people, followed immediately by the disgraceful rout of a Scottish army at Solway Moss, broke the gallant young monarch's heart. To add to his sorrows his two infant sons had died within a short time of each other. Upon hearing of the destruction of his troops he shut himself up in the palace of Falkland, where, overwhelmed with grief and despair, he sank under a burning fever. One hope still sustained him: the birth of an heir to the throne was hourly expected. On the 7th of December news arrived that the queen had been safely delivered. To the king's eager question the messenger replied that the [148] infant was "ane fair dochter." "Is it so?" said James; "Fairweill! The crown cam with a lass, and it will gang with a lass." Whereupon, in the quaint words of Pitscottie, "he commendit himselff to the Almightie God, and spak litle from thensforth, bot turned his back to his lords and his face to the wall." On the 14th of December he passed away.

There exists an interesting description of James from the pen of Ronsard, who accompanied the queen from France and was a servant at the Scottish court.

Ce Roy d'Escosse etoit en la fleur de ses ans;
Ses cheveux non tondues, comme fin or luisans,
Cordonnez et crespez, flottans dessus sa face,
Et, sur son cou de lait, luy donnoit bon grace.
Son port etoit royal, son regard vigoureux,
De vertus et d'honneur et de guerre amoureux;
La douceur et la force illustroit son visage,
Si que Venus et Mars en avoient fait partage.

Not yet thirty-one years of age at his death, and notwithstanding the corrupting influences to which in early youth he had been purposely exposed by the Douglases, James had shown himself a noble and active prince. Had he gone with the tide and consented to gratify his courtiers with the plunder of the monasteries, like Henry VIII., his reign might have been less troubled and his memory less maligned by interested historians. He has been chiefly accused of an unrelenting severity towards members of the house of Douglas, and of cruelty in assenting to the death of Lady Glammis. Buchanan's assertion, however, of the innocence of this lady, though followed by [149] many historians, has been sufficiently answered by Tytler;[744] and James's consistent refusal to show favour to the Douglases can be blamed by no one who takes into consideration the king's early treatment by that house, the insult and ravage with which they met his assumption of power, their persistent attempts to undermine his authority and take his life, and the final success which, by his death in the prime of manhood, finally crowned their efforts. Like his ancestor, the first of his name, James succeeded for a time in making "the bush keep the cow" in

Scotland, and had he only been moderately supported by those who should have been his lieutenants, there can be no doubt that he would presently have made his realm a model of just administration. As it is, his reign must be honourably remembered for what he accomplished in this direction, and for the wise laws which he made for the restraint of feudal violence. A monument of his administrative power exists in the establishment of the College of Justice, which, under the name of the Court of Session, remains the supreme tribunal of Scotland to the present day.

But there is reason for believing that James the Fifth left evidence of genius in another field. Drummond of Hawthornden in his *History* (p. 346) states that "James V. was naturally given to poesie, as many of his works yet extant testifie." Bellenden in his prologue to Livy thus addresses the king: [150]

> And ye, my soverane, be line continewall
> Ay cum of kingis youre progenitouris,
> And writis in ornate stile poeticall
> Quik-flowand vers of rethorik cullouris,
> Sa freschlie springand in youre lusty flouris
> To the gret comfort of all trew Scottismen,
> Be now my Muse and ledare of my pen.

And one of Lyndsay's poems, the "Answer maid to the Kingis Flyting" leaves no doubt on the subject. The writer begins by stating that he has read the monarch's "ragment," and he ends with a compliment on the royal verse:

> Now, Schir, fairweill, because I can nocht flyte;
> And thocht I could I wer nocht till avance,
> Aganis your ornate meter to indyte.

The fame of James V.'s poetical talents is even understood to have spread as far as Italy, and to have led to his mention by Ariosto.[745]

Four separate poems attributed to James are extant at the present day—"Peblis to the Play," "Christis Kirk on the Grene," "The Gaberlunzieman," and "The Jolly Beggar." The authorship of the last two of these has at no time been seriously questioned. The authenticity of "Peblis to the Play" and "Christis Kirk," however, has been the subject of considerable debate, some critics assigning these two poems to James the First. The evidence on both sides may be briefly stated.

John Mair, who wrote his history *De Gestis Scotorum* in 1518, states that James I., among his other compositions, wrote a pleasant and skilful song, "At Beltayn," which, since the original was [151] inaccessible, certain persons had sought to counterfeit. It happens that the opening stanza of "Peblis to the Play" begins with "At Beltane." This, with the fact of the poem's mention in "Christis Kirk," forms the chief plea for attributing "Peblis to the Play" to James I. Next, the earliest known copy of "Christis Kirk," that in the Bannatyne MS. (1568), is subscribed "Quod K. James the First." This is the only external evidence for ascribing the poem to that monarch. On the other hand, by those who dispute the authorship of James I., the slightness of Mair's evidence regarding "Peblis to the Play," and the presumption of Bannatyne's blundering regarding "Christis Kirk," have been dwelt upon. "At Beltayn," it is remarked, was in the sixteenth century, by Mair's own statement, a hackneyed opening to a poem; while, as for Bannatyne's colophon, it is pointed out that in the title of the next poem but one in his collection he writes "James the Fyift," or as some read it, "the Fyrst," in mistake for James the Fourth, and he may have made a similar error in regard to "Christis Kirk." In support of this view it is asserted[746] that by common tradition, previous to the discovery of the Bannatyne MS., these poems were invariably attributed to James V.; and this assertion is supported by the usage of the early writers, Dempster in the beginning of the seventeenth century, Bishop Gibson in 1691, and James Watson in 1706. The authority of these writers, however, no less than that of common tradition, has in [152] turn been questioned by the supporters of the claim of James I.,[747] and it has been pointed out that in Maitland's MS. (1585) no name is appended to "Peblis to the Play," an omission which, it is suggested, could hardly have occurred had Maitland known James V. to be the author. But again, in support of James V. it may reasonably be urged that the important poem of "Christis Kirk" is mentioned in their histories neither by Mair nor by Bellenden when dealing with James I.; that that king is not even mentioned among the makars by Dunbar in his famous "Lament"; that none of the four poems is to be found in the MS. of John Asloan, written before James V.'s time, in 1515; and that while Lyndsay in his earlier composition, the prologue to the "Papyngo," in 1530, [748] makes no mention of James I. as a reputed author, in 1538, in his "Justyng betuix Watsoun and Barbour," he pays "Christis Kirk" the compliment of copying several conspicuous expressions,[749] the natural inference being that "Christis Kirk" was not composed before the [153] former year. On the whole, therefore, the external evidence may be considered almost evenly balanced. The internal evidence is somewhat more delicate.

The familiarity with peasant manners and character which both poems display had been made much of as an argument. This, however, can be held to prove nothing, since both James I. and James V. are said to have had the habit of wandering among their subjects in disguise. Neither can the language of the compositions be taken as of much account. The more antique words, as in the expressions, "Ye sall pay *at* ye aucht," "He hydis *tyt*," and "On thame *swyth*," are paralleled by James V.'s contemporaries, Douglas and Lyndsay, and probably lingered late in the use of the common people whom the poems describe; while, on the other hand, more modern words, like "ane," "quha" (in the sense of "who"),[750] "began," and "happenis" (halfpence),

which might be used to support the claims of James V., may be accounted for by changes introduced in transcription. An ingenious argument has been adduced from the use, or rather misuse of archery in "Christis Kirk."[751] James I., it appears, upon his return from captivity, made a law compelling the constant practice of the bow; and it has been suggested that that king, wishing to fortify the statutes of law by the aid of ridicule, wrote the poem as a satire upon the clumsiness of the Scottish peasantry in the use of the weapon. The same critics aver further [154] that archery had become obsolete in the time of James V., hagbut and arquebus having taken its place. The argument, however, appears somewhat conjectural. According to Barbour's *Bruce* the bow was one of the chief Scottish weapons of war from the earliest times, and an island in Loch Lomond still bears the yew-trees said to have been planted by King Robert for its supply; while so late as the time of Queen Mary the bow remained a favourite weapon in the field of sport, if not in the field of battle.[752] A serious obstacle in the way of attributing these poems to James I. has been pointed out by Professor Skeat in the lateness of their style and metre. He remarks, as an instance, that in stanza 19 of "Peblis to the Play" we find *stokks* rhymed with *ox*, whereas in the time of James I. the plural of *stok* was *stokkis*.[753] Further, he remarks, "It will be found by no means easy to point out any undoubted example of the use of the rollicking metre (of these poems) anterior to the year 1450; whereas James I. died in 1437." Another point might be made of the fact that poems of this burlesque description seem to have been greatly in vogue about James V.'s time. It is enough to cite "The Tournament of Tottenham" printed by Percy, Dunbar's "Justis betuix the Tailyour and the Sowtar," Lyndsay's "Justing betuix James Watsoun and Jhone [155] Barbour," and Scot's "Justing at the Drum." The most cogent argument, however, should naturally be one derived from the general tone of the poems. On this point one writer, Guest, in his *English Rhythms*, has said, "One can hardly suppose those critics serious who attribute this song ('Christis Kirk') to the moral and sententious James I."; and Professor Skeat has added that "while there is no resemblance to 'The Kingis Quair' discoverable (in these poems), there is a marked dissimilarity in the tone, in the vocabulary, and in the metre." On the other hand, it is to be observed that the style and strain of humour, both of "Peblis to the Play" and of "Christis Kirk," resemble as closely as possible those of "The Gaberlunzieman" and "The Jolly Beggar," which have always been attributed to James V., while they are also in entire keeping with what is known of the actual humour and temper of that king.

Absolute proof of the authorship, it must be admitted, is wanting, but upon the whole the available evidence appears to favour James V.; the majority of the critics, from Warton and Ritson to Stopford Brooke, have favoured this view; and, to quote Sibbald, "it appears safer in this instance to trust to vulgar tradition than to the *ipse dixit* of Bannatyne, who seems to have had but an indistinct notion of our different kings of the name of James."

The earliest and best copy of "Christis Kirk on the Grene" is that contained in Bannatyne's MS., now made available by the Hunterian Club. The poem is also contained in the Maitland MS., from [156] which it was printed by Pinkerton in his *Ancient Scottish Poems* (Appendix II., 444). "Peblis to the Play" is also contained in the Maitland folio, and was printed from it by Pinkerton in his *Select Scottish Ballads* in 1783. Of both poems there have been many other editions. Most of these, however, contain texts very much corrupted, and none of the editors except Pinkerton appears to have seen the Maitland MS. "The Gaberlunzieman" and "The Jolly Beggar" have shared the haphazard fortune of their sister compositions, and in their case it is more difficult to ascertain a standard text. All four pieces are printed in the Perth edition of "The Works of James I.", 1786, though the editor mentions that "The Gaberlunzieman" and "The Jolly Beggar" are commonly ascribed to James V. In the present volume "The Gaberlunzieman" follows the text given in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, while "The Jolly Beggar" follows that in Ritson's *Scottish Songs*.

"Christis Kirk" has for several hundred years been one of the most popular of Scottish poems. Dr. Irving cites as a proof of its fame and popularity in the eighteenth century the lines of Pope:

> One likes no language but the Faery Queen;
> A Scot will fight for Christ's Kirk o' the Green.

As an illustration of ancient rustic humour and a description of low manners in its time it remains perhaps the best thing in the language. The only composition which competes with it for the first place in its class is the "Jolly Beggars" of Robert Burns. The two additional cantos which Allan [157] Ramsay wrote for it in no way approach the spontaneity and boisterous energy of the original poem.

"Peblis to the Play" deals with a similar subject in similar manner, and has generally been considered to possess less merit than "Christis Kirk." It certainly falls short of the riotous uproar of its companion piece, and beats the air throughout with a gentler wing; but its touches describing traits of rustic character are not less deft, the humour is here and there of a tenderer sort, and the subject displays more variety. The poem presents an admirable picture of the day's enjoyment of rustic lads and lasses at a country fair, and is not the less artistic for its touch of rustic pathos near the end.

"The Gaberlunzieman" and "The Jolly Beggar" are said by tradition to celebrate two of James V.'s own adventures with country girls. It must be acknowledged that they are quite in keeping with the legends current regarding the too gallant monarch. One such tradition, recorded by Percy, narrates how the king used to visit a smith's daughter at Niddry, near Edinburgh; but it is not known whether the intrigue with her had any connection with either of the poems. Whatever the facts of the case, the two compositions remain unsurpassed examples of a certain typical, pawky vein of Scottish humour. "The Jolly Beggar," besides, contains in burlesque miniature all the

essentials of a romantic drama.

Upon the strength of these four compositions a place may be claimed for James V. in the first rank of the writers of humorous pastoral poetry—poetry which finds its inspiration in the actual common life of the people. In this department the king has been rivalled, though hardly surpassed, only by the inspired peasant, Burns himself. Regarding the vitality of his work a trenchant remark has recently been made by one of the foremost critics of the day.[754] “While much of the contemporary and earlier poetry of Scotland,” he says, “is now read only as an historical illustration of the development of literature, that of James V., if he really wrote the gay pieces attributed to him, is read for its native merit.”

[158]

[159]

PEBLIS TO THE PLAY.

At Beltane,[755] quhen ilk bodie bownis[756]
To Peblis to the play,
To heir the singin' and the soundis,
The solace, suth to say;
Be firth[757] and forrest furth they found[758],
Thay graythit[759] tham full gay;
God wait that wald thay do that stound[760],
For it was thair feist day,
Thay said,
Of Peblis to the play.

All the wenchis of the west
War up or the cok crew;
For reiling[761] thair micht na man rest,
For garray and for glew[762].
Ane said "My curches[763] ar nocht prest!"
Than answerit Meg full blew[764],
"To get an hude I hald it best."
"Be Goddis saull that is true!"
Quod scho[765],
Of Peblis to the play.

[160]

She tuik the tippet[766] be the end;
To lat it hing scho leit not[767].
Quod he, "Thy bak sall beir ane bend[768];"
"In faith," quod she, "we meit not!"
Scho was so guckit and so gend[769]
That day ane byt scho eit nocht.
Than spak hir fallowis that hir kend[770],
"Be still, my joy, and greit not[771],
Now,
Of Peblis to the play!"

"Evir, allace!" than said scho,
"Am I nocht cleirlie tynt[772]?
I dar nocht cum yon mercat[773] to,
I am so evvil sone-brint[774].
Amang you merchands my dudds do[775],
Marie; I sall anis mynt[776]
Stand of far and keik[777] thaim to,
As I at hame was wont,"
Quod scho,
Of Peblis to the play.

Hop, calye, and cardronow[778]
Gaderit out thik-fald[779];
With "hey and how rohumbelow"
The young folk were full bald.
The bagpipe blew, and thai out-threw[780]
Out of the townis untald[781].
Lord, sic ane schout was thame amang
Quhen thai were ower the wald[782],
Thair west,
Of Peblis to the play!

[161]

Ane young man stert in-to that steid[783]
Als cant[784] as ony colt,
Ane birken hat upon his heid,
With ane bow and ane bolt;
Said "Mirrie madinis, think not lang[785],
The wedder is fair and smolt[786]:"
He cleikit up ane hie ruf sang[787];
"Thair fure[788] ane man to the holt[789],"
Quod he,
Of Peblis to the play.

Thay had nocht gane half of the gait[790]

Quhen the madinis come upon thame;
Ilk ane man gaif his consait[791]
How at[792] thai wald dispone[793] thame.
Ane said, “The fairest fallis me;
Tak ye the laif[794] and fone[795] thame.”
Ane-uther said “Wys lat me be!
On, Twedell syd, and on thame
Swyth[796]!
Of Peblis to the play.”

Than he to-ga and scho to-ga[797],
And never ane bad abyd you.
Ane winklot[798] fell, and her taill up,
“Wow,” quod Malkin[799], “hyd yow!
Quhat neidis you to maik it sua[800]?
Yon man will not ourryd[801] you.”
“Ar ye owr gude[802],” quod scho, “I say,
To lat thame gang[803] besyd yow,
Yonder,
Of Peblis to the play?”

[162]

Than thai come to the townis end
Withouttin more delai,
He befoir, and scho befoir,
To see quha was maist gay.
All that luikit thame upon
Leuche[804] fast at thair array:
Sum said that thai were merkat folk,
Sum said the Quene of May
Was cumit[805]
Of Peblis to the play.

Than thai to the taverne hous
With meikle oly[806] prance;
Ane spak wi’ wourdis wonder crous[807]
“A done[808] with ane mischance!”
“Braid up the burde,” he hydis tyt[809],
“We ar all in ane trance[810].
Se that our napre be quhyt[811],
For we will dyn and daunce
Thair out,
Of Peblis to the play.”

Ay as the gudwyf[812] brocht in,
Ane scorit upon the wauch[813].
Ane bad pay, ane-ither said “Nay,
Byd quhill we rakin our lauch[814].”
The gud-wyf said, “Have ye na dreid;
Ye sall pay at ye aucht[815].”
Ane young man start upon his feit,
And he began to lauche[816],
For heydin[817]
Of Peblis to the play.

[163]

He gat ane trincheour in his hand
And he began to compt;
“Ilk man twa and are happenie[818]!
To pay thus we war wount.”
Ane-uther stert upon his feit,
And said “Thow art our blunt[819]
To tak sic office upoun hand!
Be God thow servite ane dunt[820]
Of me,
Of Peblis to the play.”

“Ane dunt,” quod he, “quhat dewil is that?
Be God, yow dar not du’d!”
He stert till ane broggit stauf[821],
Wincheand as he war woode[822].
All that [823]

All that nous was in an reirde[823]:
Ane cryit, “The halie rude!
Help us, Lord, upon this erde[824],
That thair be spilt na blude
Heirin,
Of Peblis to the play!”

Thay thrang out at the dure at anis,
Withouttin ony reddin[825].
Gilbert in ane gutter glayde[826]—
He gat na better beddin.
Thair wes not ane of thame that day
Wald do ane-utheris biddin:
Thairby lay thre and threttie-sum[827]
Thrunland[828] in ane midding
Off draff[829],
Of Peblis to the play.

[164]

Ane cadgear on the mercat gait[830]
Hard thame bargane[831] begin;
He gaiff ane schout, his wyff came out;
Scantlie scho micht ourhye[832] him.[833]

He held, scho drew, for dust that day
Micht na man se ane styme[834]
To red[835] thame
Of Peblis to the play.

He stert to his greit gray meir,
And of he tumblit the creilis.
“Alace!” quod scho, “hald our gude-man!”
And on hir knees scho kneilis.
“Abyd,” quod scho; “Why, nay,” quod he;
In-till his stirrapis he lap[836];
The girding[837] brak, and he flew of,
And upstart bayth his heilis
At anis[838],
Of Peblis to the play.

His wyf came out, and gaif ane schout
And be the fute scho gat him;
All bedirtin[839] drew him out;
“Lord God, richt weil that sat[840] him!”
He said, “Quhare is yon cubroun[841] knaif?”
Quod scho, “I reid[842] ye, lat him
Gang hame his gaites[843].” “Be God,” quod he,
“I sall anis have at him
Yit,
Of Peblis to the play.”

[165]

“Ye fylit[844] me, fy for schame!” quod scho;
“Se as[845] ye have drest[846] me!
How feil ye, schir?” “As my girdin brak,
Quhat meikle[847] devil may lest[848] me.
I wait[849] weil quhat; it wes
My awin gray meir that kest me,
Or gif I wes forfochtin[850] faynt,
And syn[851] lay doun to rest me
Yonder,
Of Peblis to the play.”

Be that[852] the bargane was all playit;
The stringis stert out of thair nokks[853];
Sevin-sum that the tulye[854] maid
Lay gruffling[855] in the stokks.
John Jacksoun of the nether warde
Had lever have giffin[856] an ox
Or[857] he had cuming in that cumpanie,

He sware be Goddis lockkis
And mannis bayth,
Of Peblis to the play.

With that Will Swane come sueitand out,
Ane meikle miller man;
“Gif I sall dance have donn[858], lat se,
Blaw up the bagpyp than!
The schamou’s dance[859] I mon begin
I trow it sall not pane.”
So hevelie he hockit[860] about,
To see him, Lord, as[861] thai ran
That tyd,
Of Peblis to the play!

[166]

Thay gadderit out of the toun[862],
And neirar him thai dreuche;
Ane bade gif the daunsaris rowme;
Will Swane makis wounder teuche[863].
Than all the wenschis Te he! thai playit;
But, Lord, as Will Young leuche[864]!
“Gude gossip, come hyn your gaitis[865],
For we have daunsit aneuche[866]
At anis
At Peblis at the play.”

Sa ferslie fyr-heit[867] wes the day
His face began to frekill.
Than Tisbe[868] tuik him by the hand,
Wes new cuming fra the Seckill.
“Allace!” quod scho, “quhat sall I do?
And our doure hes na stekill[869]!”
And scho to-ga[870] as hir taill brynt,
And all the cairlis to kekill[871]
At hir,
Of Peblis to the play.

The pyper said, “Now I begin
To tyre for playing to,
Bot yit I have gottin naething
For all my pyping to you.
Thre happenis for half ane day,
And that will not undo you;
And gif ye will gif me richt nocht[872]
The meikill devill gang wi’ you!”
Quod he,
Of Peblis to the play.

[167]

Be that the daunsing wes all done,
Thair leif tuik les and mair;
Quhen the winklottis and the wawarris twynit[873]
To se it was hart sair.
Wat Atkin said to fair Ales[874],
“My bird[875], now I will fayr.”
The dewil a wourde that scho might speik,
Bot swownit that sweit of swair[876]
For kyndnes,
Of Peblis to the play.

He sippilit[877] lyk ane faderles fole;
“And be still, my sweit thing!”
“Be the halyrud of Peblis
I may nocht rest for greting[878].”
He quhissillit and he pypit bayth
To mak hir blyth that meiting:
“My hony part, how sayis the sang,
‘Thair sall be mirth at our meting
Yit,’
Of Peblis to the play.”

Be that the sone was settand schaftis,
And neir done wes the dav.

Thair men micht heir schriken of chaftis[879]
Quhen that thai went thair way.
Had thair bein mair made of this sang
Mair suld I to yow say.
At Beltane ilka bodie bownd
To Peblis to the play.

CHRYSTIS KIRK ON THE GRENE.[880]

Was nevir in Scotland hard nor sene
Sic dansing nor deray[881],
Nowthir at Falkland on the grene
Nor Peblis at the play,
As wes of wowaris[882], as I wene[883],
At Chryst kirk on ane day.
Thair come our kitteis[884] weschin clene
In thair new kirtillis of gray,
Full gay,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

To dans thir damysellis thame dicht[885],
Thir lassis licht of laitis[886],
Thair gluvis wes of the raffell[887] rycht,
Thair schone wes of the straitis[888];
Thair kirtillis wer of lynkome[889] licht,
Weill prest with mony plaitis.
Thay wer so nyss[890] quhen men thame nicht[891]
Thay squeilit lyk ony gaitis[892],
So lowd,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene that day.

[169]

Of all thir madynis myld as meid
Wes nane so gympt[893] as Gillie;
As ony ross hir rude[894] wes reid,
Hir lyre[895] wes lyk the lillie;
Fow[896] yellow yellow wes hir heid,
Bot scho of lufe wes sillie[897];
Thocht all hir kin had sworn hir deid[898]
Scho wald haif bot sweit Willie
Allone,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

Scho skornit Jok and skraipit[899] at him,
And mvrionit him with mokkis[900];
He wald haif luvit, scho wald nocht lat him,
For all his yallow loikkis:
He chereist hir, scho bad ga chat him[901];
Scho compt[902] him nocht twa clokkis[903];
So schamefully his schort goun set him,
His lymmis wes lyk twa rokkis[904],
Scho said,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

Thome Lular wes thair menstrall meit;
O Lord! as he cowd lanss[905];
He playit so schill[906], and sang so sweit
Quhill Towsy tuke a transs[907].
Auld Lychtfute thair he did forleit[908],
And counterfutit Franss;
He vse[909] him-self as man discreit
And vp tuke moreiss danss,
Full lowd,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

[170]

Than Stevin come stoppand in with stendis[910];
No rynk[911] mycht him arreist.
Platfute[912] he bobbit vp with bendis[913];
For Maid he maid requeist.
His lap quhill he lay on his lendis[914];
Bot rysand he wes preist[915]
Quhill that he oistit[916] at bath the endis
For honour of the feist,
That day,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

Syne Robene Roy begowth[917] to revell

Syne Robene Roy begowth to reveil,
And Dwny till him druggit[918];
"Lat be," quo Jok; and cawd him javell[919]
And be the taill him tuggit.
The kensy cleikit to the cavell[920],
Bot Lord! than gif thay luggit[921],
Thay pairtit hir manly with a nevell[922],
God wait gif hair wes ruggit[923]
Betuix thame,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

Ane bent a bow, sic sturt cowd steir him[924];
Grit skayth wesd to haif skard[925] him;
He chesit a flane[926] as did affeir[927] him,
The toder[928] said "Dirdum Dardum."
Throwch baith the cheikis he thocht to cheir[929] him,
Or throw the erss haif chard[930] him;
Bot be ane akerbraid[931] it come nocht neir him,
I can nocht tell quhat mard him,
Thair,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

[171]

With that a freynd of his cryd "Fy!"
And vp ane arrow drew;
He forgit[932] so fowriously
The bow in flenders[933] flew;
Sa wes the will of God, trow I,
For had the tre bene trew
Men said that kend[934] his archery
That he had slane anew[935],
That day,
At Chrystis kirk on the grene.

Ane hasty hensure[936] callit Hary,
Quha wes ane archer heynd[937],
Tilt[938] vp a taikle withowttin tary[939],
That torment so him teynd[940].
I wait nocht quhidder his hand cowd wary[941],
Or the man wes his freynd,
For he eschaipit[942] throw michtis of Mary
As man that no ill meynd[943],
Bot gud,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

Than Lowry as ane lyon lap,
And sone a flane cowd fedder[944];
He hecht[945] to perss him at the pap,
Thair-on to wed a weddir[946].
He hit him on the wame a wap[947],
It buft[948] lyk ony bledder;
Bot swa his fortoun wes and hap
His dowblet wes maid of ledder,
And saift him,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

[172]

A yaip[949] yung man that stude him neist
Lowsd[950] of a schot with yre;
He ettlit the bern[951] in at the breist,
The bolt flew our the byre[952].
Ane cryit Fy! he had slane a preist
A myll beyond ane myre;
Than bow and bag[953] fra him he keist
And fled as ferss as fyre
Of flynt,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

With forkis and flailis thay lait[954] grit flappis,
And flang[955] togiddir lyk friggis[956];
With bowgaris[957] of barnis thay beft[958] blew kappis

Quhill thay of bernis maid briggis[959].
The reird[960] raiss rudly with the rappis,
Quhen rungis[961] wes layd on riggis[962];
The wyffis come furth with cryis and clappis,
"Lo quhair my lyking liggis[963]!"
Quo thay
At Chryst kirk of the grene.

Thay girnit and lait gird with granis[964]
Ilk gossep vder grevit[965];
Sum straik with stingis[966], sum gadderit stanis,
Sum fled and evill mischevit;
The menstrall wan within twa wanis[967],
That day full weill he previt[968],
For he come hame with vnbirsed banis[969]
Quhair fechtaris wer mischevit[970]
For evir,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

[173]

Heich[971] Hucheoun, with a hissill ryss[972],
To red[973] can throw thame rummill[974];
He mudlet[975] thame doun lyk ony myss[976],
He wes no barty-bummill[977].
Thocht he wes wicht[978] he wes nocht wyss
With sic jangleris to jummill[979],
For fra his thowme thay dang a sklyss[980],
Quhill he cryd "Barla-fummyll[981]!
I am slane,"
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

Quhen that he saw his blude so reid,
To fle micht no man lat[982] him;
He wend[983] it bene for auld done feid[984],
The far sarar it set[985] him.
He gart his feit defend his heid,
He thocht ane cryd haif at him,
Quhill he wes past out of all pleid[986]
He suld bene swift that gat him
Throw speid,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

The toun sowtar[987] in greif wes bowdin[988],
His wyfe hang in his waist;
His body wes with blud all browdin[989],
He granit lyk ony gaist.
Hir glitterand hair that wes full goldin
So hard in lufe him lest[990]
That for hir saik he wes nocht yoldin,
Sevin myll quhill he wes chest[991],
And mair,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

[174]

The millar wes of manly mak;
To meit him wes na mowis[992];
Thair durst nocht ten cum him to tak,
So nowit he thair nowis[993].
The buschment haill[994] about him brak
And bikkerit[995] him with bowis[996],
Syne tratourly behind his bak
Thay hewit him on the howiss[997]
Behind,
At Chrystis kirk of the grene.

Twa that wes heidmen of the heird
Ran vpoun vtheris lyk rammis;
Than followit feymen[998] rycht on affeird[999],
Bet on with barrow trammis.
Bot quhair thair gobbis wes vngeird[1000]
Thay gat vpoun the gammis[1001]

Thay gat vpoun the gammis[1001],
Quhill bludy berkit[1002] wes thair beird;
As thay had wirreit[1003] lammis,
Maist lyk,
At Chryst kirk of the grene.

The wyvis kest vp ane hiddouss yell
Quhen all thir yunkeris yokkit[1004];
Als ferss as ony fyr-flaught[1005] fell
Freikis[1006] to the feild thay flokkit:
Tha cairlis[1007] with clubbis cowd vder quell[1008],
Quhill blud at breistis out bokkit[1009].
So rudly rang the commoun bell,
Quhill all the stepill rokkit
For reird,
At Christis kirk of the grene.

[175]

Quhen thay had berit[1010] lyk baitit bulis,
And branewod brynt in bailis[1011],
Thay wer als meik as ony mvlis
That mangit wer with mailis[1012].
For fantness tha forfochin fulis[1013]
Fell doun lyk flawchtir-failis[1014],
And freschmen come in and held thair dulis[1015],
And dang[1016] thame doun in dailis[1017]
Be-dene[1018],
At Chryst kirk on the grene.

Quhen all wes done, Dik with ane aix
Come furth to fell a fidder[1019].
Quod he, “Quhair ar yone hangit smaix[1020]
Rycht now wald slane my bruder?”
His wyfe bade him ga hame gub-glaikis[1021],
And sa did Meg his muder.
He turnd and gaif thaim bayth thair paikis[1022],
For he durst ding nane vdir[1023],
For feir,
At Chryst kirk of the grene that day.

[176]

THE GABERLUNZIEMAN.[1024]

The pauky[1025] auld carle came ovir the lee,
Wi' mony good-e'ens and days to mee,
Saying, "Goodwife, for zour courtesie,
  Will ze lodge a silly[1026] poor man?"
The night was cauld, the carle was wat,
And down azont[1027] the ingle he sat;
My dochter's shoulders he gan to clap,
  And cadgily[1028] ranted and sang.

"O wow!" quo he, "were I as free
As first when I saw this countrie,
How blyth and merry wad I bee!
  And I wad nevir think lang[1029]."
He grew canty[1030] and she grew fain,
But little did her auld minny ken[1031]
What thir slee twa togither were sayn
  When wooing they were sa thrang[1032].

[177]

"And O!" quo he, "ann[1033] ze were as black
As evir the crown o' your dadye's hat
'Tis I wad lay thee by my back,
  And awa wi' me thou sould gang[1034]!"
"And O!" quoth she, "ann I were as whyte
As evir the snaw lay on the dike
Ild clead me braw[1035] and lady-like,
  And awa wi' thee Ild gang!"

Between the twa was made a plot,
They raise a wee[1036] before the cock,
And wyliely they shot the lock,
  And fast to the bent[1037] are they gane.
Up the morn the auld wife raise,
And at her leisure put on her claiths,
Syne to the servants' bed she gaes
  To speir[1038] for the silly poor man.

She gaed[1039] to the bed whair the beggar lay;
The strae was cauld, he was away;
Scho clapt her hands, cry'd "Dulefu' day!
  For some of our geir[1040] will be gane."
Some ran to coffer and some to kist[1041],
But nought was stown[1042] that could be mist.
She danced her lane[1043], cry'd "Praise be blest!
  I have lodg'd a leal[1044] poor man."

"Since naithing's awa, as we can learn,
The kirn's to kirn[1045] and milk to earn;
Gae butt[1046] the house, lass, and waken my bairn,
  And bid her come quickly ben[1047]."
The servant gaed where the dochter lay—
The sheets was cauld, she was away;
And fast to her goodwife can say[1048],
  "She's aff with the gaberlunzieman."

"O fy gar ride[1049], and fy gar rin,
And haste ze, find these traiters agen!
For shee's be burnt, and hee's be slein,
  The wearifou[1050] gaberlunzieman!"
Some rade upo' horse, some ran a-fit[1051];
The wife was wood[1052], and out o' her wit;
She could na gang, not yet could she sit
  But ay did curse and did ban.

Mean-time far hind, out owre[1053] the lee,
Fu' snug in a glen where nane could see,
The twa, with kindlie sport and glee,
  Cut frae a new cheese a whang[1054].

The prieving[1055] was gude, it pleas'd them baith;
To lo'e her for ay he gae her his aith.
Quo she, "To leave thee I will be laith,
My winsome gaberlunzieman.

"O kend my minny I were wi' zou,
Ill-fardly[1056] wald she crook her mou'.
Sic a poor man sheld nevir trow[1057]
Aftir the gaberlunzieman."
"My dear," quo he, "zee're zet owre zonge,
And hae na learnt the beggar's tonge,
To follow me frae toun to toun,
And carrie the gaberlunzie on:

[179]

"Wi' kauk and keel[1058] I'll win zour bread,
And spindles and whorles[1059] for them wha need—
Whilk is a gentil trade indeed,
The gaberlunzie to carrie O!
I'll bow[1060] my leg and crook my knee,
And draw a black clout[1061] owre my e'e;
A criple or blind they will cau me,
While we sall sing and be merry O!"

[180]

THE JOLLY BEGGAR.

There was a jolly beggar, and a-begging he was boun[1062],
And he took up his quarters in-to a land'art town[1063],
And we'll gang nae mair a roving
Sae late in-to the night;
And we'll gang nae mair a roving, boys,
Let the moon shine ne'er so bright.

He wad neither ly in barn, nor yet wad he in byre;
But in ahint[1064] the ha' door, or else afore the fire.
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

The beggar's bed was made at e'en wi' good clean straw and hay,
And in ahint the ha' door, and there the beggar lay.
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

Up raise the goodman's dochter and for to bar the door,
And there she saw the beggar standin' i' the floor.
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

He took the lassie in his arms, and to the bed he ran,
O hooly[1065], hooly wi' me, sir, ye'll waken our goodman.
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

[181]

The beggar was a cunnin' loon, and ne'er a word he spake
Until he got his turn done, syne he began to crack[1066].
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

"Is there ony dogs into this toun? maiden, tell me true."
"And what wad ye do wi' them, my hinny and my dow[1067]?"
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

"They'll rive a' my meal pocks, and do me meikle wrang."[1068]
"O dool[1069] for the doing o't! are ye the poor man?"
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

Then she took up the meal pocks, and flang them o'er the wa';
"The deil gae wi' the meal pocks, my maidenhead, and a'!"
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

"I took ye for some gentleman, at least the laird of Brodie;
O dool for the doing o't! are ye the poor bodie?"
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

[182]

He took the lassie in his arms, and gae her kisses three,
And four and twenty hunder merk[1070] to pay the nurice-fee[1071].
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

He took a horn frae his side, and blew baith loud and shrill,
And four and twenty belted knights came skipping o'er the hill.
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

And he took out his little knife, loot a' his duddies[1072] fa';
And he was the brawest gentleman that was amang them a'.
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

The beggar was a cliver loon, and he lap shoulder height:
"O, ay for sicken[1073] quarters as I gat yesternight!"
And we'll gang nae mair, &c.

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[185]

SIR RICHARD MAITLAND.

Many of the finest flowers of Scottish poetry previous to the middle of the sixteenth century owe their preservation to the taste and patience of two curiously contrasted collectors. One of the quaintest stories of Scottish literature is that narrating how, during time of pestilence in 1568, George Bannatyne, a young man of twenty-three, occupied the leisure of his enforced retirement with transcribing, page after page, the best works of the national makars. Little further is known of the transcriber except that he became a burgess of some substance in Edinburgh; but the work of those three months, a neatly written folio of eight hundred pages, now in the Advocates' Library in Edinburgh, has made his name immortal.[1074] The companion picture belongs to a slightly later date. It is that of Sir Richard Maitland, the blind old judge of the Court of Session, in [186] the last year of his life, directing the transcription by his daughter Mary of the collection which was to hand his name to posterity.

No necessity exists for comparing the merits of the two manuscripts which have been the means of preserving so much of the legacy of northern genius. To a large extent they deal with different work; in each case the task of transcription and preservation has been performed with the utmost patience and care; and in each the good taste and good faith of the collector has established his transcript as a classic authority. But while gratitude is due to Bannatyne for his services as preserver of many priceless poems, as an original poet, upon the strength of the few compositions of his own which he included in his manuscript, he remains of but small account. In this respect his contemporary, on the other hand, has a definite claim to regard. Sir Richard Maitland was not only a diligent and careful collector of the works of others; he was himself also a makar of respectable merit, and several, at least, of the original compositions which he added to his collection are entitled to a place on the page of Scottish poesy.

The son of William Maitland of Lethington in Haddingtonshire, who fell at Flodden, and of Martha, daughter of George, second Lord Seton, the poet was the representative of an ancient family. The well-known ballad of "Auld Maitland" celebrates a gallant defence of the castle of Lauder or Thirlstane against the English by an ancestor of Sir Richard about the year 1250.[1075] [187] Again and again during the succeeding centuries the family name appears in history;[1076] in due course Thirlstane was inherited by the poet from his grandfather; and from that time, till the climax of the family fortunes in the person of the poet's great-grandson, the Duke of Lauderdale, in Charles II.'s time, the house may be said to have been continuously in a foremost place. Born in 1496, and studying law, it is said, first at St. Andrews, and afterwards, upon his father's death, in France, Maitland appears presently to have entered the service of James V.[1077] Nothing certain, however, is known of his early life except that, about the year 1530, he married Mary, a daughter of Sir Thomas Cranston of Corsby. By this lady he had a family of at least three sons and four daughters, of whom the former were destined to play some of the most conspicuous parts in the history of their time.

The poet himself appears throughout to have cultivated a life of retirement and study. All the references of contemporary writers, except one, mention him with great respect, and his life would appear to have been mostly that of the quiet country gentleman. The single exception [188] occurs in John Knox's *History*, where he is accused of having taken bribes to allow Cardinal Beaton to escape from Seton House in 1543. Knox, however, was somewhat ready to attribute such misdemeanours to persons whom he thought inimical to the reformed faith, and in the present case there exists no evidence whatever to support the charge, except that Maitland was a relative of Lord Seton, and may have been visiting Seton House at the time of the occurrence. There exists, on the other hand, direct evidence to show that the Cardinal was set at liberty by order of the Regent Arran.[1078]

In 1552 Maitland was one of the commissioners appointed to settle the differences with England on the subject of the Debateable Land on the Borders, and it is believed that the successful issue of this undertaking was the occasion of his receiving the honour of knighthood. At anyrate, two years later, upon his appointment as an Extraordinary Lord of Session he is called Sir Richard Maitland.

Again, in 1559, he was employed as one of the commissioners to England in a conference upon the state of the Borders; Sir Ralph Sadler, one of the delegates on the other side, mentioning him then as "the olde Larde of Lethington, the wisest man of them." The sudden termination of his stay in England at this time, and the substitution of his eldest son William in his place, has been attributed to the rapid approach of the affliction which was to darken the remainder of his life. It [189] is at least certain that he had completely lost his sight before the arrival of Queen Mary in Scotland in 1561, as in his poem of welcome he mentions the piteous fact.

Under this terrible privation, which, with the circumstance of advancing years, most men would have considered sufficient reason for retirement from active life, Maitland seems in no way to have let his heart sink or his energies abate, and nowhere in his work does there appear a peevish or despondent note on the subject. The affliction which added his name to the honourable roll of blind Homers did not prevent his continuing to fulfil the duties of his position; and he remains one of those examples, in which the history of the blind is peculiarly rich, of men who have encountered extraordinary difficulties only to surmount them. In November, 1561, he was admitted an Ordinary Lord of Session under the title of Lethington, his son being permitted the privilege, by a special regulation, of accompanying him within the bar. In 1562 Queen Mary appointed him Keeper of the Privy Seal for life; and in the following year he and his second son,

John, were “conjunctlie and severally made Factouris, Yconomuss, and Chalmirlans of hir hienes Abbacie of Haddingtoun.” The former office he resigned in 1567 in favour of this son, who by that time had obtained the Priory of Coldingham *in commendam*; but for seventeen years longer he retained his seat on the bench, where he appears to have performed his duties to the last without fear and without reproach.

[190] The troubles which assailed Maitland’s later years came, not from his own acts, but mostly from the restless and ambitious character of his eldest son, the too famous Secretary Maitland of Mary’s reign and the succeeding regencies. The constantly changing part played by this politician in the highest events of his time has been recorded in literature by Buchanan’s biting satire, *The Camæleon*, written in 1571. Made Secretary of State by that Catholic of Catholics, James the Fifth’s widow, Mary of Guise, he nevertheless presently became one of the Protestant “Lords of Congregation”; and after taking part in the negotiations with Elizabeth as to the terms upon which she would aid the Reformers, he again, with characteristic paradox, turned round in the General Assembly of 1564 to accuse Knox of teaching sedition. Made a Lord of Session by Mary Stuart, he was, notwithstanding, implicated in the murders both of Rizzio and of Darnley; and after signing the document accusing the queen of the latter crime, and after fighting against her at Langside, he strangely enough saw fit to take her part to some extent in the conference at York, and presently united with Kirkaldy of Grange in holding Edinburgh Castle in her interest against the Regents. Finally, upon the surrender of that stronghold in May, 1573, he was taken prisoner, with his brother John and other refugees of the Queen’s party, and being conveyed to Leith, died there, not without suspicion of having poisoned himself.

[191] This erratic policy of the son naturally brought trouble upon his father. The hardest blow which the latter received was from an act of parliament obtained by the Regent Morton as head of the king’s party in 1571. This act declared the secretary and his two brothers rebels, and forfeited their lands and property. Upon the strength of it the house and estate of Lethington, then occupied by the Secretary, were seized, spoiled, and withheld from the poet for a number of years, and his second son was left at liberty only under heavy penalties. These proceedings seem to have roused the old knight to all the indignation of which he was capable. He made earnest appeals to law and to the interest of Queen Elizabeth with the Regent. Nevertheless justice was not accorded him until the year 1581. Upon the downfall of Morton in that year his house and lands were restored to him, and under the patronage of James VI. his son John was appointed an Ordinary Lord of Session. He himself further, in 1584, was allowed the unique privilege of resigning the duties of the Bench in favour of a nominee, retaining at the same time the emoluments of the office; and presently, under the government of the young king, he obtained an act of parliament indemnifying all his losses.

This satisfaction did not, indeed, arrive too soon, for his death occurred on 20th March, 1586, when he was in his ninetieth year. His wife, the partner of his joys and sorrows for sixty years, is said to have died on his funeral day.

[192] Maitland’s life, apart from its literary interest, possesses value for the example which it affords of private family history of the time. He was founder of the first of those great Scottish houses, the Maitlands, Dalrymples, and Dundases, which have risen one after another to the highest rank and influence by the profession of the law. His two sons and his grandson in succession occupied seats upon the bench, and in 1624 the last-named was raised to the peerage by the title of Earl of Lauderdale. John, the son of this earl, and great-grandson of the poet, was from 1663 virtually ruler of Scotland, and in 1672 was created Duke of Lauderdale by Charles II. Maitland’s third son, Thomas, was the author of several Latin poems,[1079] but is best remembered as one of the interlocutors in Buchanan’s famous treatise *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*.

The manuscript collection of ancient Scottish poems which forms Maitland’s best-known claim to regard, and upon which he is understood to have been engaged from 1555 onwards, is contained in two volumes, a folio and a quarto. Of the folio, believed to have been written by Sir Richard himself, “a very few parts,” says Pinkerton, “are in a small hand; the remainder is in a strong Roman hand.” The quarto consists chiefly of transcripts of Sir Richard’s own original pieces from the folio, and is in the handwriting of Miss Mary Maitland, third daughter of the collector, the first page bearing her name and the date 1585. It appears therefore to have been transcribed in the last year of Maitland’s life. After descending in the family for three generations, these [193] manuscripts were bought, at the sale of the Duke of Lauderdale’s library, by Samuel Pepys, Secretary of the Admiralty to Charles II. and James II., and he in 1703 bequeathed them to Magdalen College, Cambridge. The value of the collection was first discovered by Bishop Percy, who printed a specimen in his *Reliques*; one also appeared in Allan Ramsay’s *Evergreen*; and a selection, including twenty-six of Sir Richard Maitland’s original compositions, was published by Pinkerton in 1786 under the title of *Ancient Scottish Poems*. Another quarto MS., bearing the title *The Selected Poemes of Sir Richard Metellan of Lydington*, was presented to the library of Edinburgh University by Drummond of Hawthornden; and from this, with the addition of the single composition which it omits, the Maitland Club printed Sir Richard’s poems complete in 1830.

Besides his original poems and his poetical collections, Maitland is known to have written a *History of the House of Seytoun* and a volume of *Decisions* collected by him from 1550 till 1565. The former was printed by the Maitland Club in 1829, and the MSS. of both are preserved in the Advocates’ Library, Edinburgh.

As an original poet Sir Richard Maitland cannot be placed in the foremost rank. He is understood to have produced none of his existing verse until after the age of sixty-one, and naturally his

compositions possess little of the fire, brilliancy, and warmth of youthful work. For this lack, however, they atone to some extent by other qualities. Full of sage observation and shrewd worldly wisdom, they throw a light, in nearly every line, upon the life and manners of that day. [194] Mourning the rampant oppression and strife of the nobles, and the sorrows and follies of the nation, his verse breathes the inner sadness of Queen Mary's time. It was his fate to live through the intestine dissensions of three successive minorities, as well as through the great struggle of the Reformation in Scotland, and it is no marvel therefore that he again and again repeats the prayer, "God give the lordis grace till aggrie!" Much of his work is of a religious cast, and exhibits him in a grave and venerable light. This, however, is not his happiest strain, and his longest composition, "Ane Ballat of the Creation of the Warld," is little more than a bald paraphrase of the Bible narrative in Genesis. It is in his satiric and moral pieces that Maitland appears at his best. These, as in the case of Lyndsay, deal with a wide range of subjects, from the vanities of ladies' dress to the venality of courtiers and the corruptions of church and state. Much of his satire, it is true, owes it chief interest to connection with events of his own age; but elsewhere he proves himself a not unworthy inheritor of the mantle of the Lyon King, his best pieces containing touches closely applicable to the human nature of all time.

[195]

SATIRE ON THE AGE.

Quhair is the blythness that hes bein
Bayth in brugh and landwart sein[1080]
Amang lordis, and ladeis schein[1081],
  Dansing, singing, game, and play?
Bot weill I wat nocht quhat thay mein;
  All merriness is worne away.

For now I heir na worde of Yule
In kirk, on cassay[1082], nor in skuill:
Lordis lettis thair kitchingis cule,
  And drawis thame to the Abbay,[1083]
And skant hes ane to keip thair mule;
  All houshalding is worne away.

I saw no gysaris[1084] all this yeir,
Bot kirkmen cled lyk men of weir,[1085]
That never cummis in the queir[1086];
  Lyk ruffianis is thair array; [196]
To teitche and preitche that will not leir[1087];
  The kirk gudis thai waste away.

Kirkmen affoir[1088] wer gud of lyfe,
Preitchit, teichit, and staunchit stryfe;
Thay feirit nather sword nor knyf,
  For luif of God the faith to say;
All honorit thame, baith man and wyf,
  Devotion wes nocht away.

Our fatheris wyse were, and discreit;
Thai had bayth honour, men, and meit;
With luif[1089] thai did thair tennentis treit,
  And had aneuch in press to lay;
Thay wantit nather malt nor quheit,
  And mirrines wes nocht away.

And we hald nather Yule nor Pace[1090],
Bot seik our meit from place to place;
And we haive nather luk nor grace.
  We gar[1091] our landis dowbill pay;
Our tennentis cry Alace! Alace!
  That routh[1092] and pittie is away.

Now we haive mair, it is weill kend[1093],
Nor our forbearis[1094] had to spend;
Bot far les at the yeiris end;
  And never hes ane mirrie day:
God will na ryches to us send
  Sua lang as honour is away. [197]

We waist far mair now, lyk vaine fuillis,
We and our paige, to turs[1095] our muillis,
Nor thai did than, that haid grit Yuillis,
  Of meit and drink said never nay;
Thay had lang furmes[1096] quhair we haive stuillis,
  And mirrines wes nocht away.

Of our wanthrift sum wyttis playes[1097],
And sum thair wantoune vaine arrayis;
Sum the wyt on thair wyfes layes
  That in the court wald gang[1098] sa gay
And care nocht quha the merchand payis,
  Quhill[1099] part of land be put away.

The kirkmen keipis na professioune;
The temporall men commitis oppressioune,
Puttand the puire from thair possessioune;
  Na kynd of feir of God haive thay:
Thay cummar[1100] baith the kirk and sessioune,
  And chasis charitie away.

Quhen ane of thaime susteinis wrang
We cry for justice, heid and hang;
Bot when our neichbouris we our-gang[1101]
We laubour justice to delay:
Affectioune blindis us sa lang,
All equitie is put away.

To mak actis we haive sum feill[1102];
God watt gif that we keip tham weill!
We cum to bar with jak of steill[1103]
As we wald bost the judge and fray[1104]. [198]
Of sic justice I have na skeill[1105],
Quhair reull and ordour is away.

Our lawis ar lichtleit for abusioune[1106];
Sumtyme is clokit with collusioune;
Quhilk causis of bluid the great effusioune,
For na man spairis now to slay.
Quhat bringis cuntreis to confusioune,
Bot quhair that justice is away?

Quha is the wyte[1107], quha can schew us?
Quha bot our nobillis, that sould know us,
And till honorabill deidis draw us!
Let never comouneweill decay,
Or els sum mischief will befaw us,
And nobillnes we put away.

Put our awin lawis to executioune;
Upon transgressouris mak punitioune;
To cruell folk seik na remissioune;
For peace and justice let us pray,
In dreid sum strange new institutioune
Cum, and our custome put away.

Amend your lyfis, ane and all,
And be war of ane suddan fall,
And pray to God, that maid us all,
To send us joy that lesteis ay;
And let us nocht to sin be thrall,
Bot put all vyce and wrang away.

[199]

SATIRE ON THE TOUN LADYES.

Sum wyfis of the burrows-toun
Sa wondir[1108] vane ar, and wantoun,
  In warld thay watt[1109] not quhat to weir.
On claythis thay wair[1110] mony a croun;
  And all for newfangilnes[1111] of geir.

Thair bodyes bravelie thay atyir,
Of carnall lust to eik[1112] the fyir;
  I fairlie[1113] quhy thai have na feir
To gar men deime quhat thay desyre;
  And all for newfangilnes of geir.

Thair gouns ar coistlie, and trimlie traillis,
Barrit with velvous, sleif, nek, and taillis;
  And thair foirskirt of silkis seir[1114]
Of fynest camroche thair fuksaillis;[1115]
  And all for newfangilnes of geir.

And of fyne silk thair furrit cloikis,
With hingand[1116] sleivis, lyk geill poikis[1117];
  Na preiching will gar thame forbeir
To weir all thing that sinne provoikis;
  And all for newfangilnes of geir.

[200]

Thair wylecots man[1118] weill be hewit,
Broudirit[1119] richt braid, with pasmentis sewit[1120]:
  I trow, quha wald the matter speir[1121],
That thair gudmen had caus to rew it
  That evir thair wyfis weir sic geir.

Thair wovin hois of silk ar schawin,
Barrit abone with tasteis drawin[1122];
  With gartens of ane new maneir,
To gar thair courtlines be knawin;
  And all for newfangilnes of geir.

Sumtyme thay will beir up thair gown
To schaw thair wylecot hingeand down,
  And sumtyme bayth thay will upbeir
To schaw thair hois of blak or broun;
  And all for newfangilnes of geir.

Thair collars, carcats, and hals beidis[1123],
With velvet hats heicht[1124] on thair heidis,
  Coirdit with gold lyik ane younkeir[1125],
Brouderit about with goldin threidis;
  And all for newfangilnes of geir.

Thair schone of velvot, and thair muillis[1126];
In kirk ar not content of stuillis,
  The sermon quhen thay sit to heir;
Bot caryis cuschingis lyik vaine fuillis;
  And all for newfangilnes of geir.

[201]

I mein[1127] of thame thair honour dreidis;
Quhy sould thay nocht have honest weidis,
  To thair estait doand effeir[1128]?
I mein of thame thair stait exceidis;
  And all for newfangilnes of geir.

For sumtymes wyfis sa grave hes bein,
Lyik giglets cled wald nocht be sein.
  Of burgess wyfis thoch I speak heir
Think weill[1129] of all wemen I mein,
  On vaniteis that waistis geir.

Thay say wyfis ar so delicat
In feiding, feisting, and bankat,
  Sum not content ar with sic cheir
As weill may suffice thair estait,
  For newfangilnes of cheir and geir.

For newfangilnes of cheir and geir.

And sum will spend mair, I heir say,
In spyce and droggis on ane day
Than wald thair mothers in ane yeir;
Quhilk will gar monye pak[1130] decay,
Quhen thay sa vainlie waist thair geir.

Thairfoir, young wyfis speciallie,
Of all sic faultis hald yow frie,
And moderatly to leif now leir[1131]
In meit, and clayth[1132] accordinglie;
And nocht sa vainlie waist your geir.

[202]

Use not to skift athort the gait[1133],
Nor na mum chairtis, air nor lait[1134];
Be na dainser, nor this daingeir
Of yow be tane an ill consait
That ye ar habill[1135] to waist geir.

Hant[1136] ay in honest cumpanie,
And all suspicious places flie;
Lat never harlot cum yow neir,
That wald yow leid to leicherie,
In houp to get thairfoir sum geir.

My counsall I geve generallie
To all wemen, quhat-evir thay be,
This lesson for to quin per queir[1137],
Syne keip it weill continuallie
Better nor onye warldlie geir.

Leif[1138], burgess men, or all be loist,
On your wyfis to mak sic cost,
Quhilk may gar all your bairnis bleir[1139]:
Scho that may not want wyne and roist
Is abill for to waist sum geir.

Betwene thame and nobillis of blude
Na difference bot ane velvous huid!
Thair camroche curcheis[1140] ar als deir;
Thair uther claythis ar als guid;
And thai als costlie in uther geir.

[203]

Bot, wald grit ladyis tak gud heid
To thair honour, and find remeid,
Thai suld thole[1141] na sic wyfis to weir,
Lyk lordis wyfis, ladyis weid,
As dames of honour in thair geir.

I speik for na despyt trewlie,
(My-self am nocht of faultis frie),
Bot that ye sould nocht perseveir
Into sic folische vanitie
For na newfangilnes of geir.

Of burgess wyfis thoch I speik plaine,
Sum landwart[1142] ladyis ar als vain,
As be thair cleithing may appeir;
Werand[1143] gayer nor thame may gain—
On ouir[1144] vaine claythis waistand geir.

[204]

NA KYNDNES AT COURT WITHOUT SILLER.

Sumtyme to court I did repair,
Thairin sum errandis for to dress[1145],
Thinkand I had sum freindis thair
To help fordwart my buseness:
Bot, nocht the les,
I fand nathing bot doubilness;
Auld kyndnes helpis nocht ane hair.

To ane grit court-man I did speir[1146],
That I trowit my friend had bene
Becaus we war of kyn sa neir;
To him my mater I did mene[1147];
Bot, with disdene,
He fled as I had done him tene[1148],
And wald nocht byd my taill to heir.

I wend[1149] that he in word and deid
For me, his kynsman, sould have wrocht;
Bot to my speiche he tuke na heid;
Neirnes of blude he sett at nocht.
Than weill I thocht
Quhan I for sibnes[1150] to him socht[1151]
It wes the wrang way that I geid[1152].

[205]

My hand I put into my sleif,
And furthe of it ane purs I drew,
And said I brocht it him to geif[1153].
Bayth gold and silver I him schew;
Than he did rew
That he unkindlie me misknew;
And hint[1154] the purs fest in his neif.[1155]

Fra tyme he gat the purs in hand
He kyndlie ‘Cousin’ callit me,
And baid me gar him understand
My buseness all haillalie,
And swair that he
My trew and faythfull friend sould be
In courte as I pleis him command.

For quhilk, better it is, I trow;
Into the courte to get supplé[1156],
To have ane purs of fyne gold fow[1157],
Nor to the hiest of degre
Of kyn to be.
Sa alteris our nobilitie:
Grit kynrent[1158] helpis lytill now.

Thairfoir, my freindis, gif ye will mak
All courte men youris as ye wald,
Gude gold and silver with you tak;
Than to get help ye may be bald;
For it is tauld
Kyndness of courte is coft and sald[1159];
Neirnes of kyn na-thing thai rak[1160].

[206]

ON THE FOLYE OF ANE AULD MANIS MARYAND ANE YOUNG WOMAN.

Amang all folleis ane great folye I find,
Quhen that ane man past fyftie yeir of aige
That in his vaine consait he growes sa blind
As for to join him-selffe in maryage
With ane young lass quhais bluid is yet in raige,
Thinkand that he may serve hir appetyte;
Quhilk and he faill than[1161] will scho him dispyte.

Still ageit men sould jois[1162] in morall taillis,
And nocht in taillis: for folye is to mary
Fra tyme that baith thair strenthe and nature faillis,
And tak ane wyf to bring him-selffe in tarye[1163];
For fresche Maii and cauld Januarij
Agreeis nocht upon ane sang in tune,
The tribbill wantis that sould be sang abune[1164].

Men sould tak voyage at the larkis sang,
And nocht at evin quhen passit is the day.
Efter mid-age the luifar[1165] lyes full lang,
Quhen that his hair is turnit lyart[1166] gray.
Ane auld beird till ane quhyte mouth to lay
In-to ane bed, it is ane piteous sycht:
The ane cryes help! the uther hes no mycht.

[207]

Till haive bene merchand bygaine monie ane yeir
In Antwerp, Burges, and in town of Berrie,
Syne in-to Deip for to tyne[1167] all his geir
With vane conseat to puir[1168] himselffe, and herrie[1169].
Grit perell is for to pas our the ferrie
In-to ane laikand boit[1170] nocht naillit fast,
To beir the saill nocht havand ane steife mast.

To tak ane mellein[1171] that grit lawbour requyris,
Syne wantis grayth[1172] for to manure the land;
Quhair seid wantis then men of teilling tyris;
Than cumis ane, findis it waist lyand,
Yokis his pleuch, teilleis[1173] at his awin hand.
Better had bene the first had never kend it[1174]
Nor thoill[1175] that schame. And sa my tale is endit.

[208]

AGANIS THE THEIVIS OF LIDDISDAILL.

Of Liddisdaill the commoun theifis
Sa pertlie[1176] steillis now and reiffis[1177],
That nane may keip
Hors, nolt, nor scheip,
Nor yit dar sleip
For thair mischeifis.

Thay plainlie throw the countrie rydis;
I trow the meikill[1178] devill thame gydis:
Quhair thay onsett
Ay in thair gait[1179]
Thair is na yett[1180]
Nor dure thame bydis[1181].

Thay leif richt nocht[1182]; quhairever thay ga
Thair can na-thing be hid thame fra;
For, gif men wald
Thair housis hald,
Than waxe they bald
To burn and slay.

[209]

Thay theifis have neirhand herreit haill[1183]
Ettrick forest and Lauderdaill;
Now ar they gane
In Lothiane,
And spairis nane
That thay will waill[1184].

Thai landis ar with stouth sa socht[1185]
To extreme povertie ar brocht;
Thai wicked schrowis[1186]
Has laid[1187] the plowis,
That nane or few is
That are left ocht[1188].

Bot commoun taking of blak-maill,[1189]
Thay that had flesche and breid and aill
Now ar sa wraikit[1190],
Maid puir and naikit,
Fane to be staikit[1191]
With watter-caill[1192].

Thai theifis that steillis and tursis[1193] hame,
Ilk ane of thame hes ane to-name—
Will of the Lawis,
Hab of the Schawis.
To mak bair wawis[1194]
Thay think na schame.

[210]

Thay spuilye[1195] puir men of thair pakis[1196];
Thay leif thame nocht, on bed nor bakis;
Bayth hen and cok,
With reill and rok[1197],
The Landis Jok
All with him takis.

Thay leif not spendill, spoone, nor speit,
Bed, bowster, blanket, sark, nor scheit;
Johne of the Parke
Rypis kist[1198] and ark;
For all sic wark
He is richt meit.

He is weill kend, Johne of the Syde;
A gretar theif did never ryde:
He nevir tyris
For to brek byris;
Our muir and myris
Our gude ane gyide[1199].

Thair is ane, callit Clements Hob,
Fra ilk puir wyfe reiffis hir wob[1200],
And all the laif[1201],
Quhatever thay haif:
The deuil resave
Thairfoir his gob[1202]!

[211]

To sic grit stouth quha-eir wald trow it
But gif sum greit man it allowit?
Rycht sair I rew,
Thocht it be trew,
Thair is sa few
That dar avow it.

Of sum grit men they have sic gait[1203]
That redy ar thame to debait[1204],
And will up weir[1205]
Thair stolin geir,
That nane dar steir[1206]
Thame, air nor lait.

Quhat causis theifis us our-gang[1207]
Bot want of justice us amang?
Nane takis cair
Thocht all forfair[1208]:
Na man will spair
Now to do wrang.

Of stouth thocht now thay cum gud speid
That nather of men nor God hes dreid,
Yit, or I die,
Sum sall thame sie
Hing on a trie
Quhill[1209] thay be deid.

[212]

ADVYCE TO LESOM MIRRINESS.

Quhen I haive done considder
This warldis vanitie,
So brukill and sa slidder[1210],
Sa full of miserie;
Then I remember me
That heir thair is no rest;
Thairfoir appeirantlie
To be mirrie is best.

Let us be blyth and glaid,
My freindis all, I pray.
To be pensive and sad
Na-thing it help us may.
Thairfoir put quyt away
All heviness of thocht:
Thocht we murne nicht and day
It will availl us nocht.

It will not be our sorrow
That will stoip Godis hand,
To strik baith evin and morrow
Baith on the sie and land.
Sen nane may it gainestand[1211] [213]
Let us be all content
To underly the wand
Of Godis punischment.

Quhat God pleasis to do
Accept it thankfullie;
Quhat paine he puttis us to
Receive it pacientlie.
And give[1212] that we wald be
Releveit of our paine,
For sin ask God mercie,
Offend Him nocht againe.

Give we will mak murning,
Sould be for our offence,
And not that God dois bring
On us for violence,
For ane dyveris pretence;
For some He will puneis
To proive thair patience,
And som for thair great miss[1213].

Sen first the warld began
Thair hes bein trubill ay
For punischment of men,
And sall quhill domisday.
And sen we may not stay
Quhat God pleis do us till,
Quhat He will on us lay
Receive it with guid will. [214]

For God will lay som scurge
Quhill that the warld tak end;
Fra sin the warld to purge
Will ay som plaigis send.
Bot quha will lyfe amend,
And preis[1214] to sin no moir,
Then God will him defend
Fra everlasting cair.

Yet plainelie I concluide,
Into all wardlieness
Nathing for man sa guide
As lesome[1215] mirrines;
For thair is na riches
Sa lang his lyfe can lenthe,
Conserve him fra seiknes,
And keip him in his strenthe.

Thairfoir with trew intent

Let us at God ask grace
Our sines to repent
Quhill we haive tyme and space;
Syne bring us to that place
Quhair joy is evermoir,
And sie God face to face
In His eternall gloir.

[215]

[216]

[217]

ALEXANDER SCOT.

Of several poets who owe the preservation of their works and memory entirely to the writer of the Bannatyne Manuscript, the chief is Alexander Scot. Pinkerton termed him the Anacreon of old Scottish poetry, and placed him at the head of the ancient minor poets of his country—a judgment in which succeeding critics have uniformly agreed.

As with many other of these ancient singers, almost nothing is certainly known of the facts of Scot's life, the little information we possess consisting almost wholly of deduction from the poet's works themselves. Dr. Laing was inclined to set his birth about the year 1520, and quoted a precept of legitimation from the Privy Seal Register of 1549 as possibly concerning him. This precept, if proved to refer to the poet, would declare him a natural son of Alexander Scot, prebendary of the Chapel Royal of Stirling. The presumption, however, is somewhat slight. From the refrain of "The Justing at the Drum" it has been inferred that he resided in the neighbourhood of Dalkeith, near Edinburgh. One of his pieces, in the opinion of Lord Hailes, expresses the "Lament of the Maister of Erskyn," who was killed at Pinkie-cleugh in 1547, and [218] from this and other allusions it is gathered that Scot began writing at least so early as 1545, while, of course, none of his extant verse can be of later date than 1568, the year in which Bannatyne compiled his MS. The general strain of the poems declares Scot to have been a layman; from the occurrence of several legal terms in his work it has been suggested that he was a jurist; and from expressions such as that in "Ane New Yeir Gift to the Quene Mary," in which he prays God to give the young ruler grace "to punisch papistis and reproche oppressouris," it seems clear that he favoured the principles of the Reforming party. On only one point of his personal history, however, entire certainty exists. The colophon of his poem "To luve vnluvit" expressly states that the piece was written "quhen his wyfe left him." From two of his compositions, "Luve preysis," and "Vp, helsum hairt," it might be gathered that his lady was of higher rank than himself, a fact which, if true, might account for his wedded unhappiness. Perhaps he was one of those whose love, too complete and obvious, fails to exact adequate return. This possibility, indeed, he seems to have discovered, as in more than one of his later poems he sorrowfully counsels something of reserve and self-restraint as the best policy of the lover. His experience had also the effect of opening his eyes to the shortcomings of the other sex, and induced him to allude to these in lines of biting satire. A passage in a poem of his contemporary Montgomerie informs us that Scot lived to advanced years. In a sonnet to Robert [219] Hudson, written about the year 1584, the author of "The Cherrie and the Slae" refers to "old Scot" as still alive.

With a few exceptions, the poems of Scot[1216] are all of the amatory kind, and, taken together, form a fairly complete comment on the pains, the pleasures, and the arts of love. His longest composition, the "New Yeir Gift to Quene Mary" sheds much curious light upon the social conditions of 1562; and in "The Justing at the Drum," an imitation of "Chrystis Kirk on the Grene," he has followed the initiative of Dunbar and Lyndsay, and in a quaint strain of humour has burlesqued the practice of the tourney. Of the general tenor of his work the lines of Allan Ramsay may be taken as a fair description.

> Licht-skirtit lasses, and the girnand wyfe,
> Fleming and Scot haif painted to the lyfe.
> Scot, sweit-tungd Scot, quha sings the Welcum hame
> To Mary, our maist bony Soverane Dame.
> How lyflie he and amorous Stuart sing
> Quhen lufe and bewtie bid them spred the wing![1217]

Exhibiting mastery of a surprising variety of stanza forms, his verse possesses an ease and finish unsurpassed in his time. Here and there he flashes out in a terse aphoristic style, as when he [220] gives his views on womankind—

> Thay wald be rewit, and hes no rewth;
> Thay wald be menit, and no man menis;
> Thay wald be trowit, and hes no trewth;
> Thay wiss thair will that skant weill wenys.

Not less is he at home in paradox:

> For nobillis hes nocht ay renown,
> Nor gentillis ay the gayest goun;
> Thay cary victuallis to the toun
> That werst dois dyne.
> Sa bissely to busk I boun,
> Ane-vthir eitis the berry doun
> That suld be myne.

And for expression of downright democratic sentiment, the author of "A man's a man for a' that" might have written the lines—

> For quhy? as bricht bene birneist brass
> As siluer wrocht at all dewiss,
> And als gud drinking out of glass
> As gold, thocht gold of grittar pryss.

But, apart from its poetic fascination, a peculiar interest attaches to the work of the man who

struck the first distinctly modern note in Scottish poetry. Breaking away from the conventional forms of the old makars, Alexander Scot wrote in a direct, natural fashion, and but for their rich quaintness of expression and their antique language, many of his pieces might almost be the work of a poet of the nineteenth century. The form of his work, its aptness to turn upon some single thought or situation, and its general tendency to direct expression of personal feeling and experience, entitle him to be considered the earliest of the more distinctly lyrical poets of Scotland.

THE JUSTING AND DEBAIT VP AT THE DRUM BETUIX WILLIAM ADAMSONE AND JOHINE SYM.

The grit debait and turnament
Off trewth no toung can tell,
Wes for a lusty lady gent[1218],
Betuix twa freikis[1219] fell.
For Mars the god armipotent
Wes nocht sa ferss him-sell,
Nor Hercules, that aikkis vprent,
And dang[1220] the devill of hell,
With hornis;
Vp at the Drum[1221] that day.

Doutles wes nocht so duchty deidis
Amangis the dowsy peiris[1222],
Nor yit no clerk in story reidis
Off sa tryvmphand weiris[1223];
To se so stowtly on thair steidis
Tha stalwart knychtis steiris[1224],
Quhill bellyis bair for brodding[1225] bleidis
With spurris als scherp as breiris[1226],
And kene,
Vp at the Drum that day.

[222]

Vp at the Drum the day wes sett,
And fixit wes the feild
Quhair baith thir noble chiftanis mett
Enarmit vndir scheild.
Thay wer sa haisty and sa hett[1227]
That nane of thame wald yeild,
Bot to debait or be doun bett
And in the quarrell keild
Or slane,
Vp at the Drum that day.

Thair wes ane bettir and ane worss,
I wald that it wer wittin[1228];
For William wichttar wes of corss[1229]
Nor Sym, and bettir knittin.
Sym said he sett nocht by his forss,
Bot hecht[1230] he sowld be hittin,
And[1231] he micht counter Will on horss;
For Sym wes bettir sittin
Nor Will,
Vp at the Drum that day.

To se the stryfe come yunkeirs[1232] stowt,
And mony galyart[1233] man;
All denteis deir wes thair but dowt,
The wyne on broich[1234] it ran.
Trumpettis and schalmis[1235] with a schowt
Playid or the rink[1236] began,
And eikwall juges satt abowt
To se quha tynt or wan[1237]
The feild,
Vp at the Drum that day.

[223]

With twa blunt trincher speiris squair
It wes thair interpryiss,
To fecht with baith thair facis bair
For lufe, as is the gyiss[1238].
Ane freynd of thairis throw hap come thair,
And hard the rumor ryiss,
Quha stall away thair styngis[1239] baith clair,
And hid in secreit wayiss,
For skaith[1240],
Vp at the Drum that day.

Strang men of armes and of micht
Wer sett thame for to sidder.

The harraldis cryd “God schaw the rycht!”
Syne bad thame go togidder.
“Quhair is my speir?” sayis Sym the knycht;
“Sum man go bring it hidder.”
Bot wald thay tary thair all nycht,
Thair lanciss come to lidder[1241]
And slaw,
Vp at the Drum that day.

Syme flew als fery as a fowne[1242];
Doun fra the horss he slaid,
Sayis, “He sall rew my staff hes stowin[1243],
For I sal be his deid[1244].”
William his vow plicht to the powin[1245],
For favour or for feid[1246];
“Als gude the tre had nevir growin,
Quhairof my speir wes maid,
To just!”
Vp at the Drum that day.

[224]

Thir vowis maid to syn and mone[1247],
Thay raikit[1248] baith to rest,
Thame to refress with thair disione[1249]
And of thair armour kest.
Nocht knawing of the deid wes done,
Quhen thay suld haif fairin best,
The fyre wes pischt out lang or none[1250]
Thair dennaris suld haif drest
And dicht[1251],
Vp at the Drum that day.

Than wer thay movit owt of mynd
Far mair than of beforne.
Thay wist nocht how to get him pynd[1252]
That thame had drevin to skorne.
Thair wes no deth mycht be devynd,
Bot ethis[1253] haif thay sworne,
He suld deir by be[1254] thay had dynd,
And ban that he wes borne
Or bred;
Vp at the Drum that day.

Than to Dalkeith thai maid thame boun,
Reidwod[1255] of this reproche.
Thair wes baith wyne and vennisoun,
And barrellis ran on broche.
Thay band vp kyndness in that toun,
Nane fra his feir to foche[1256];
For thair wes nowdir lad nor loun[1257]
Micht eit are baikin loche[1258],
For fowness[1259],
Vp at Dalkeith that day.

[225]

Syne eftir denner raiss the din,
And all the toun on steir[1260].
William wes wyiss, and held him in,
For he wes in a feir[1261].
Sym to haif bargan cowld nocht blin[1262],
But bukkit Will on weir[1263];
Sayis, “Gife thow wald this lady win,
Cum furth and brek a speir
With me!”
Vp at Dalkeyth that day.

This still for bargan Sym abyddis,
And schowttit Will to schame.
Will saw his fais on bath the syddis;
Full sair he dred[1264] for blame.
Will schortly to his horss he slydis,
And sayis to Sym be name,
“Bettir we bath wer bvand hyddis[1265]

Bettir we bath wer byand hyddis[1265]
And weddir[1266] skynnis at hame,
Nor heir;”
Vp at Dalkeyth that day.

Now is the growme[1267] that wes so grym
Rycht glaid to leif in lie[1268].
“Fy, theif, for schame!” sayis littill Sym,
“Will thow nocht fecht with me?
Thow art moir lerge of lyth[1269] and lym
Nor I am, be sic thre[1270].”
And all the feild cryd fy on him,
Sa cowartly tuk the fle[1271]
For feir,
Vp at Dalkeyth that day.

[226]

Than every man gaif Will a mok[1272],
And said he wes our meik[1273].
Sayis Sym, “Send for thy broder Jok;
I sall nocht be to seik.
For wer ye foursum[1274] in a flok,
I compt yow nocht a leik,
Thocht I had rycht nocht bot a rok[1275],
To gar your rumpill reik[1276]
Behynd!”
Vp at Dalkeith that day.

Thair wes rycht nocht[1277] bot haif and ga;
With lawchter lowd thay lewche[1278]
Quhen thay saw Sym sic curage ta[1279],
And Will mak it sa twche[1280].
Sym lap on horsbak lyk a ra[1281],
And ran him till a huche[1282],
Sayis “William, cum ryd doun this bra[1283],
Thocht ye suld brek ane bwche[1284],
Fo lufe!”
Vp at Dalkeith that day.

Sone doun the bra Sym braid[1285] lyk thunder,
And bad Will fallow fast.
To grund for fersness he did funder
Be he midhill had past.
William saw Sym in sic a blunder,
To ga he wes agast;
For he affeird[1286] it wes na winder
His cursour suld him cast
And hurt him,
Vp at Dalkeith that day.

[227]

Than all the yunkerris bad Will yeild
Or doun the glen to gang[1287].
Sum cryd the koward suld be keild;
Sum doun the hewche he thrang[1288].
Sum ruscht, sum rummyld[1289], sum reild[1290];
Sum be the bewche[1291] he hang.
Thair avairis[1292] fyld vp all the feild,
Thay wer so fow and pang[1293]
With drafe[1294],
Vp at Dalkeith that day.

Than gelly[1295] Johine come in a jak[1296]
To feild quhair he wes feidit[1297],
Abone[1298] his brand ane bucklar blak,
Baill fell the bern that bedit[1299].
He slippit swiftly to the slak[1300],
And rudly doun he raid it.
Befoir his curpall[1301] wes a crak
Culd na man tell quha maid it,
For lawchter,

vp at Dalkeith that day.

Be than the bowgill gan to blaw;
For nycht had thame ourtane.
“Allaiss!” said Sym, “for falt of law,
That bargan get I nane.”
Thuss hame with mony crak and flaw[1302]
Thay passid every ane;
Syne pairtit at the Potter raw,
And sindry gaitis[1303] ar gane,
To rest thame,
Within the toun that nicht.

[228]

L’ENVOY.

This Will wes he begyld the may,
And did hir marriage spill.
He promeist hir to lat him play,
Hir purposs to fulfill.
Fra[1304] scho fell fow[1305] he fled away,
And come na mair hir till:
Quhairfoir he tynt[1306] the feild that day,
And tuk him to ane mill,
To hyd him,
As coward fals of fey[1307].

[229]

HENCE, HAIRT.

Hence, hairt, with hir that most depairte,
  And hald thé with thy souerane;
For I had lever want ane harte
  Nor haif the hairt that dois me pane.
  Thairfoir go, with thy lufe remane,
And lat me leif thus vnmolest;
  And se that thou cum nocht agane,
Bot byd with hir thow luvis best.

Sen scho that I haif scheruit lang[1308]
  Is to depairt so suddanly,
Address[1309] thé now, for thow sall gang
  And beir thy lady cumpany.
  Fra scho be gon, hairtles am I;
For quhy? thow art with hir possest;
  Thairfoir, my hairt, go hence in hy[1310],
And byd with hir thow luvis best.

Thocht this belappit[1311] body heir
  Be bound to scheruitude and thrall,
My fathfull hairt is fre inteir,
  And mynd to serf my lady at all[1312].
  Wald God that I wer perigall[1313], [230]
Vnder that redolent ross to rest;
  Yit at the leist, my hairt, thow sall
Abyd with hir thow lufis best.

Sen in your garth[1314] the lilly quhyte
  May nocht remane amang the laif[1315],
Adew the flour of haill[1316] delyte,
  Adew the succour that ma me saif!
  Adew the fragrant balmé suaif[1317],
And lamp of ladeis lustiest!
  My faythfull hairt scho sall it haif,
To byd with hir it luvis best.

Deploir, ye ladeis cleir of hew,
  Hir abscence, sen scho most depairte;
And specialy ye luvaris trew
  That woundit bene with luvis darte.
  For sum of yow sall want ane parte
Als weill as I; thairfoir at last
  Do go with myn, with mynd inwart,
And byd with hir thow luvis best.

[231]

OPPRESSIT HAIRT INDURE.

Oppressit hairt indure
In dolour and distress,
Wappit without recure[1318]
In wo remidiless.
Sen scho is merciless,
And caussis all thy smert,
Quhilk suld thy dolour dress[1319],
Indure, oppressit hairt.

Perforss tak paciens,
And dre[1320] thy destany.
To lufe but recompens
Is grit perplexitie.
Of thyne aduersitie
Wyt[1321] thy-self and no mo,
For quhen that thow wes fre
Thow wald nocht hald thé so.

Thow langit ay to prufe
The strenth of luvis lair[1322],
And quhat kin[1323] thing wes lufe,
Quhilk now settis[1324] thé so sair.
Off all thy wo and cair [232]
It mendis thé nocht to mene[1325]:
Howbeid thow suld forfair[1326],
Thy-self the causs hes bene.

Quhen thow wes weill at eiss,
And subiect to no wicht,
Thow hir for lufe did cheiss[1327]
Quhilk settis thy lufe at licht;
And thocht thow knew hir slicht[1328]
Yit wald thow [nocht] refrane,
Thairfoir it is bot rycht
That thow indure the pane.

Bot yit my corpss, allace,
Is wrangusly opprest
Be thé in-to this cace,
And brocht to grit wanrest[1329].
Quhy suld it so be drest[1330]
Be thé, and daly pynd[1331],
Quhilk still it ay detest?
Thy wantoun folich mynd.

The blenkyne[1332] of ane e
Ay gart thé goif and glaik[1333];
My body bad lat be,
And of thy siching slaik[1334].
Thow wald nocht rest, bot raik[1335],
And lair[1336] thé in the myre;
Yit felyeit thow to faik[1337]
That thow did maist desyre. [233]

Thocht thow do murn and weip,
With inwart spreit opprest,
Quhen vthir men takis sleip
Thow wantis the nychtis rest.
Scho quhome thow luvis best
Off thé takis littill thocht,
Thy wo and grit wanrest
And cair scho countis nocht.

Thairfoir go hens in haist,
My langour to lament,
Do nocht my body waist,
Quhilk nevir did consent.
And thocht thow wald repent
That thow hir hes persewit.
Yit man[1338] thow stand content

Yit man thow stand content,
And drynk that thow hes brewit.

TO LUVE VNLUVIT.

To luve vnluvit it is ane pane;
For scho that is my souerane,
  Sum wantoun man so he[1339] hes set hir
That I can get no lufe agane,
  Bot brekis my hairt, and nocht the bettir.

Quhen that I went with that sweit may
To dance, to sing, to sport and pley,
  And oft-tymes in my armis plet[1340] hir,
I do now mvrne both nycht and day,
  And brekis my hart, and nocht the bettir.

Quhair I wes wont to se hir go
Rycht trymly passand to and fro
  With cumly smylis quhen I met hir;
And now I leif in pane and wo,
  And brekis my hart, and nocht the bettir.

Quhattane ane glaikit fule[1341] am I,
To slay my-self with malancoly,
  Sen weill I ken[1342] I may nocht get hir?
Or quhat suld be the caus, and quhy,
  To brek my hart, and nocht the bettir?

[235]

My hairt, sen thow may nocht hir pleiss,
Adew! As gud lufe cumis as gaiss[1343].
  Go chuse ane-vdir and foryet hir.
God gif him dolour and diseiss[1344]
  That brekis thair hairt, and nocht the bettir.

Quod Scott quhen his Wyfe left him.

[236]

LO, QUHAT IT IS TO LUFE.

Lo, quhat it is to lufe,
Lerne, ye that list to prufe,
Be me, I say, that no ways may
The grund of greif remvfe,
Bot still decay, both nycht and day;
Lo, quhat it is to lufe.

Lufe is ane fervent fyre
Kendillit without desyre,
Schort plesour, lang displesour,
Repentence is the hyre.
Ane pure[1345] tressour, without mesour,
Lufe is ane fervent fyre.

To lufe and to be wyiss,
To rege[1346] with gud adwyiss.
Now thus, now than, so gois the game,
Incertane is the dyiss.
Thair is no man, I say, that can
Both lufe and to be wyiss.

Fle alwayis frome the snair;
Lerne at me to be ware.
It is ane pane, and dowbill trane
Of endles wo and cair.
For to refrane that denger plane
Fle alwayis from the snair.

[237]

[238]

[239]

ALEXANDER MONTGOMERIE.

Towards the close of the sixteenth century, while the pages of English poetry were receiving their richest contributions from the pens of Spenser, Shakespeare, and their comrade Elizabethans, the most famous, almost the sole singer left in the north was the author of “The Cherrie and the Slae.” Amid the moroseness and ecclesiastic strife which shadowed those closing years while James the Sixth still ruled at Holyrood, this voice still sang sweetly of love and laughter, of dewy nights and the lark’s morning song.

Alexander Montgomerie was a younger son of Montgomerie of Hazelhead, in Ayrshire, a scion of the noble house of Eglinton. The date of his birth remains uncertain; beyond that it was, as he himself says, “on Eister day at morne;” but he is believed to have first seen the light at Hazelhead Castle about 1545. According to references in his works, it appears that he was educated somewhere in Argyleshire. In any case it is certain that he was a man of culture and refined tastes. Of good social position, related by intermarriage with the Mures of Rowallan and the Semples of Castle Semple, he was the professed admirer of Lady Margaret Montgomerie, eldest [240] daughter of Hugh, third Earl of Eglinton, to whom he addressed several compositions in the “despairing lover” tone fashionable in his time. He is recorded to have held some place at Court, first under the Regent Morton, and afterwards under James VI., from which, and not from military or naval rank, he appears to have derived the title of Captain. For a time he stood high in favour with the king, for whose *Essayes of a Prentise in the Divine Art of Poesie*, he wrote a commendatory sonnet by way of preface. James, moreover, in his *Rewlis and Cautelis of Poesie*, quotes several of Montgomerie’s verses as patterns, and is recorded to have been greatly diverted by the recitation of the “Flyting betwixt Montgomerie and Polwart.” Later, however, the poet shared the fate of other courtiers, and for some unknown reason fell into disgrace. Nor does any authority exist for the supposition that he regained the royal favour and accompanied the king to England. More probability attends the belief that he settled at Compton Castle, near Kirkcudbright, in Galloway, close by which, at the junction of the Dee and the Tarffe, tradition points out the scene of his chief poem, “The Cherrie and the Slae.”

In Montgomerie there appears a curious reflection, though in fainter colours, of the fate and character of Dunbar. Like the great makar of James the Fourth’s time, he was the scion of a noble house. In his verse appear the same eager efforts to secure favour at Court, the same bitterness at disappointment, and the same succeeding rancour against rivals and enemies. Here is the [241] same oppression under insufficient means, and the same eager and thirsty heart continually mocked by “wicked weirds” and “thrauard fates.” Even his pension of 500 marks a year, chargeable on certain rents of the archbishopric of Glasgow, was withheld for a time, and only regained, by writ of privy seal, in 1588, after a vexatious law-suit. And on undertaking a foreign tour, for which he received royal leave of absence in 1586, he found himself for a time, upon what charge is unknown, thrown into prison. In one of his sonnets he records his sorrows—

If lose of guids, if gritest grudge or grief,
  If povertie, imprisonment, or pane,
  If for guid-will ingratitude agane,
If languishing in langour but relief,
If det, if dolour, and to become deif,
  If travell tint and labour lost in vane,
  Do properly to poets appertane,
Of all that craft my chance is to be chief.

Like Dunbar, Montgomerie appears to have become serious in his later years, “the productions of which,” to quote his latest editor, “breathe a tender melancholy and unaffected piety, inspired with hopes of a fairer future, in strange contrast to some of his earlier work.” To the spirit of these years must also be attributed a metrical version of Psalms, fifteen in number, apparently part of a complete metrical paraphrase which he, in conjunction with some other writers, offered to execute for the public free of charge.

It is gathered from the anonymous publication of this collection of Psalms, entitled “The Mindes Melodie,” and from his series of epitaphs, that the poet was still alive in the year 1605; but he [242] was dead before 1615, according to the title-page of a new edition of “The Cherrie and the Slae,” printed by Andro Hart in that year.

According to his own poetic statement, he was small of stature, fairly good-looking, and afflicted with the painful disease of gravel.

Most of Montgomerie’s poems have been preserved respectively in the Drummond, the Maitland, and the Bannatyne MSS. After many separate editions of the chief pieces, the whole of the poems were for the first time collected into one volume (Edinburgh, 1821) by David Laing, with a biographical notice by Dr. Irving, the historian of Scottish poetry. The only other complete edition is that by Dr. James Cranstoun (Scottish Text Society, 1885–87). The latter, in the present volume, is regarded as the standard text.

“The Cherrie and the Slae,” Montgomerie’s chief effort, has ever since its composition been one of the most popular of Scottish poems, no fewer than twenty-three editions of it having been printed since 1597. The intention of the allegory, according to Pinkerton, was to show that moderate pleasures are better than high ones. But Dempster, who translated it into Latin, considered it to be, first, a love allegory, picturing a young man’s choice between a humble and a high-born mistress, and afterwards the pourtrayal of a struggle between virtue and vice. Most readers are likely to agree with Dr. Cranstoun in considering Dempster’s solution correct,

believing with him that “what the poet began as an amatory lay he ended as a moral poem; what he meant for a song turned out a sermon.” Thus, probably, it comes about that the allegory is of small account, the chief value and charm of the poem lying in its passages of description, its freshness of imagery, and its mother-wit. The opening stanzas present by far the best part of the composition. The remainder possesses but secondary interest, notwithstanding the many pithy sayings introduced; and no climax is reached even when the cherry is attained at the end of the piece. [243]

Of the poet’s other works the longest extant is “The Flyting betwixt Montgomerie and Polwart,” a tournament of Rabelaisian humour in the style of the famous “Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie.” Its chief interest, for poetic qualities it has none, is as a specimen of a class of composition—the mock duel of vituperation between good friends—which was in those times considered an amusing literary performance. His sonnets, “characterised by great poetic skill and singular felicity of diction,” furnish no mean contribution to the stores of a verse-form then greatly cultivated, while his miscellaneous poems, nearly all amatory, exhibit mastery of a great variety of measures. Sometimes, however, the tone of these appears affected to a modern ear, and their imagery apt to descend into conceits.

There remains, preserved by the Maitland MS., another poem, “The Bankis of Helicon,” a love lyric of great charm, which long enjoyed the reputation of being the earliest piece written in the stanza of “The Cherrie and the Slae.” Laing thought it possible that Montgomerie might be the author of this, and Dr. Cranstoun establishes the opinion with a fair amount of certainty, considering it one of the series of compositions addressed by the poet to his kinswoman, Lady Margaret Montgomerie, and pointing out the frequency with which sets of expressions and even whole lines from the other pieces of the series are repeated in it. Even if ascertained beyond doubt, however, the authorship of “The Bankis of Helicon” would add nothing to Montgomerie’s reputation, which is likely to live and die with the reputation of his greatest work, the lyrical allegory of “The Cherrie and the Slae.” [244]

Greater in manner than in matter, Montgomerie’s verse owes its charm to finish and grace rather than to vigour and imagination, affording rather a late reflection of the early glories of the century than the glow of a new inspiration; nevertheless it has remained constantly popular, a surprising number of its lines having become household words in the shape of proverbs; it claims the credit, along with Dunbar’s work, of furnishing models both to Allan Ramsay and to Burns; and, beyond all its Scottish contemporaries, it possesses intrinsic qualities which assure it an enduring fame.

[245]

THE CHERRIE AND THE SLAE.

About ane bank, quhair birdis on bewis[1347]
Ten thusand tymis thair notis renewis
  Ilke[1348] houre into the day,
The merle and maueis[1349] micht be sene,
The progne and the phelomene[1350],
  Quhilk caussit me to stay.
I lay and leynit me to ane bus
  To heir the birdis beir[1351];
Thair mirth was sa melodius
  Throw nature of the yeir:
    Sum singing, sum springing
      With wingis into the sky;
    So trimlie and nimlie
      Thir birdis they flew me by.

I saw the hurcheon[1352] and the hair,
Quha fed amangis the flowris fair,
  Wer happing to and fro.
I saw the cunning[1353] and the cat,
Quhais downis with the dew was wat,
  With mony beisties mo.
The hart, the hynd, the dae, the rae, [246]
  The fowmart[1354], and the foxe
War skowping[1355] all fra brae to brae,
  Amang the water broxe;
    Sum feiding, sum dreiding
      In cais of suddain snairis:
    With skipping and tripping
      Thay hantit[1356] all in pairis.

The air was sa attemperate,
But ony myst immaculate,
  Bot purefeit and cleir;
The flowris fair wer flurischit,
As Nature had them nurischit
  Baith delicate and deir[1357];
And euery blome on branche and bewch[1358]
  So prettily wer spred,
And hang their heidis out-ouir the hewch[1359]
  In Mayis colour cled;
    Sum knopping[1360], sum dropping
      Of balmie liquor sweit,
    Distelling and smelling
      Throw Phœbus hailsum heit.

The cukkow and the cuschet[1361] cryde,
The turtle, on the vther syde,
  Na plesure had to play;
So schil[1362] in sorrow was her sang
That, throw hyr voice, the roches rang;
  For Eccho answerit ay,
Lamenting sair Narcissus' cace, [247]
  Quha staruit[1363] at the well;
Quha with the schaddow of his face
  For lufe did slay himsell.[1364]
    Quhylis weiping and creiping
      About the well he baid;
    Quhylis lying, quhylis crying,
      Bot it na answere maid.

The dew as diamondis did hing
Vpon the tender twistis[1365] and ying,
  Owir-twinkling all the treis;
And ay quhair flowris flourischit faire
Thair suddainly I saw repaire
  In swarmes the sounding beis.
Sum sweitly hes the hony socht,
  Quhil[1366] they war cloggit soir:
Sum willingly the waxe hes wrocht,

To help it vp in stoir.
So heiping with keiping,
Into thair hyuis they hyde it,
Precyselie and wyselie
For winter they prouyde it.

To pen the pleasures of that park,
How euery blossome, branche, and bark,
Agaynst the sun did schyne,
I leif to poetis to compyle [248]
In staitlie verse and lofty style:
It passis my ingyne.
Bot as I mussit myne allane,
I saw an river rin
Out-ouir ane craggie rok of stane,
Syne lichtit in ane lin[1367],
With tumbling and rumbling
Amang the rochis round,
Dewalling[1368] and falling
Into that pit profound.

To heir thae startling stremis cleir
Me-thocht it musique to the eir,
Quhat deskant did abound
With trible sweit, an tenor iust,
And ay the echo repercust
Hir diapason sound,
Set with the Ci-sol-fa-uth cleife,[1369]
Thairby to knaw the note;
Thair soundit a michtie semibreif
Out of the elphis throte[1370].
Discreitlie, mair sweetlie
Nor craftie Amphion,
Or Musis that vsis[1371]
At fountaine Helicon.

[249]

Quha wald haue tyrit to heir that tune,
Quhilk birdis corroborate ay abune[1372],
Throw schowting of the larkis?
Sum flies sa high into the skies,
Quhill Cupid walkinnes[1373] with the cryis
Of Nature's chappell clarkis,
Quha, leving all the hevins aboue
Alighted in the eird[1374].
Lo, how that little God of Loue
Befoir me thair apperid!
So myld-lyke and chyld-lyke,
With bow thrie quarteris scant,
So moylie and coylie[1375],
He lukit like ane sant.

Ane cleinlie crisp[1376] hang ouir his eyis
His quauer by his naked thyis
Hang in ane siluer lace.
Of gold, betwix his schoulders, grew
Twa pretty wingis quhairwith he flew;
On his left arme ane brace[1377].
This god aff all his geir he schuik
And laid it on the grund.
I ran als busie for to luik
Quhair ferleis[1378] micht be fund.
Amasit I gasit
To see that geir sa gay
Persawing my hawing[1379]
He countit me his pray.

[250]

His youth and stature made me stout;
Of doubleness I had na doubt,
Bot bourded[1380] with my boy.
Quod I, "How call they thee, my chyld?"
"Cupido, Sir," quod he, and smyld:
"Please you me to imploy;
For I can serve you in your suite,

If you please to impyre[1381],
With wingis to flie, and schafts to schute,
Or flamis to set on fyre.
Mak choice then out of those then,
Or of a thousand things;
Bot craue them, and haue them."
With that I wowed[1382] his wings.

"Quhat wald thou giue, my friend," quod he,
"To haf thae prettie wingis to flie,
To sport thee for a quhyle?
Or quhat, gif I suld len thee heir
My bow and all my shuting geir,
Sum bodie to begyle?"
"That geir," quod I, "can not be bocht,
Yet I wald haif it faine[1383]."
"Quhat gif," quod he, "it coist thee nocht
Bot randring it againe?"
His wingis than he bringis than,
And band them on my back:
"Go flie now," quod he now,
"And so my leif I tak."

[251]

I sprang vp on Cupidoes wingis,
Quha bow and quauir baith resingis[1384]
To lend me for ane day.
As Icarus with borrowit flicht
I mountit hichar nor[1385] I micht;
Ouir perrelous ane play.
Than furth I drew that deadlie dairt
Quhilk sumtyme schot his mother,
Quhair-with I hurt my wanton heart,
In hope to hurt ane-vther.
It hurt me, it burt[1386] me,
The ofter I it handill.
Cum se now, in me now,
The butter-flie and candill.

As scho delytis into the low[1387],
Sa was I browdin in[1388] my bow,
Als ignorant as scho;
And als scho flies quhill sche be fyrit,
Sa, with the dart that I desyrit,
My hand hes hurt me to.
As fulisch Phaëton, be sute[1389],
His fatheris cart obteind,
I langt in Luiffis bow to shute,
Bot weist not what it meind.
Mair wilfull than skilfull
To flie I was so fond,
Desyring, impyring,
And sa was sene vpond[1390].

[252]

To late I knaw, quha hewis to hie[1391],
The spail[1392] sall fall into his eie;
To late I went to scuillis.
To late I heard the swallow preiche,[1393]
To late Experience dois teiche—
The skuill-maister of fuillis.
To late to fynde the nest I seik,
Quhen all the birdis are flowin;
To late the stabill dore I steik[1394],
Quhen all the steids are stowin[1395].
To lait ay their stait ay
All fulische folke espye;
Behynd so, they fynd so
Remeid, and so do I.

Gif I had rypelie bene aduysit
I had not rashlie enterprysit
To soir with borrowit pennis,
Nor yit had saied the archer craft,
Nor schot myself with sik a schaft

As resoun quite miskennis[1396].
Fra[1397] wilfulnes gaue me my wound
I had na force to flie,
Then came I granand[1398] to the ground:
"Freind, welcome hame!" quod he.
"Quhair flew ye, quhome slew ye, [253]
Or quha bringis hame the buiting[1399]?
I sie now," quod he now,
"Ye haif bene at the schuting."

As skorne cummis commonlie with skaith[1400]
Sa I behuifit to byde them baith:
O quhat an stakkering stait[1401]!
For vnder cure I gat sik chek[1402]
Quhilk I micht nocht remuif nor nek[1403],
Bot eyther stail or mait[1404].
My agonie was sa extreme
I swelt and soundt[1405] for feir;
Bot, or I walkynnit of[1406] my dreme
He spulyied[1407] me of my geir.
With flicht than on hicht than
Sprang Cupid in the skyis,
Foryetting and setting
At nocht my cairfull cryis.

Sa lang with sicht I followit him
Quhill baith my feiblit eyis grew dim
With staruing on the starnis[1408];
Quhilk flew sa thick befoir my ein,
Sum reid, sum yellow, blew, and grein,
Sa trublit all my harnis[1409];
Quhill euery-thing apperit two
To my barbuilyiet[1410] braine,
Bot lang micht I lye luiking so [254]
Or Cupid come againe;
Quhais thundring, with wondring
I hard vp throw the air;
Throw cluddis so he thuddis so
And flew I wist not quhair.

Fra that I saw that god was gane,
And I in langour left allane,
And sair tormentit, to,
Sum-tyme I sicht quhill[1411] I was sad,
Sum-tyme I musit and maist gane mad,
I wist not quhat to do.
Sum-tyme I ravit, halfe in a rage,
As ane into dispaire;
To be opprest with sic ane page[1412]
Lord! gif my heart was saire!
Like Dido, Cupido
I widill and [I] warye[1413],
Quha reft me, and left me
In sik a feirie-farye[1414].

Then felt I Curage and Desyre
Inflame my heart with vncouth[1415] fyre,
To me befoir vnknawin;
Bot now na blud in me remaines
Vnbrunt and boyld[1416] within my vaines,
By luffis bellies blawin[1417].
To quench it, or I was deuorit, [255]
With siches I went about;
Bot ay the mair I schape to smor it[1418]
The baulder it brak out:
Ay preising but ceising[1419]
Quhill it may breik the boundis.
My hew so furth schew so
The dolour of my woundis.

With deidlie visage, paill and wan

With deidlie visage, pall and wan,
Mair like ane atomie[1420] nor man,
I widderit[1421] cleine away.
As wax befoir the fyre, I felt
My hart within my bosome melt
And pece and pece decay.
My vaines with brangling[1422] like to brek—
My punsis lap[1423] with pith—
Sa feruently did me infek
That I was vext thairwith.
My hart ay did start ay
The fyrie flamis to flie,
Ay houping, throu louping,
To win[1424] to liberty.

Bot O! alace! byde it behuissit[1425],
Within my cairfull corpis incluissit[1426],
In presoun of my breist;
With sichis sa sowpit and ouirset[1427],
Like to an fische fast in the net, [256]
In deid-thraw vndeceist[1428],
Quha, thocht[1429] in vaine, dois striue for strenth
For to pull out hir heid,
Quhilk profitis nathing at the lenth
Bot haistes hir to hir deid[1430].
With wristing and thristing[1431]
The faster still is scho;
Thair I so did lye so,
My death advancing to.

The mair I wrestlit with the wynd
The faschter[1432] still myself I fynd;
Na mirth my mynd micht mease[1433].
Mair noy[1434], nor I, had neuer nane,
I was sa alterit and ouirgane[1435]
Throw drowth[1436] of my disease.
Than weakly, as I micht, I rayis;
My sicht grewe dim and dark;
I stakkerit at the windilstrayis[1437],
Na takin[1438] I was stark.
Baith sichtles and michtles,
I grew almaist at ainis[1439];
In angwische I langwische
With mony grievous grainis[1440].

With sober pace I did approche
Hard to the riuer and the roche
Quhairof I spak befoir;
Quhais running sic a murmure maid,
That to the sey it softlie slaid; [257]
The craig was high and schoir[1441].
Than pleasur did me so prouok
Perforce thair to repaire,
Betuix the riuer and the rok,
Quhair Hope grew with Dispaire.
A trie than I sie than
Of Cherries in the braes.
Belaw, to, I saw, to,
Ane buss of bitter Slaes[1442].

The Cherries hang abune my heid,
Like twinkland rubies round and reid,
So hich vp in the hewch[1443],
Quhais schaddowis in the riuer schew,
Als graithlie[1444] glansing, as they grewe,
On trimbling twistis tewch[1445],
Quhilk bowed throu burding of thair birth[1446],
Inclining downe thair toppis,
Reflex of Phœbus of the firth[1447]
Newe colourit all thair knoppis[1448],

With dansing and glansing
In tirles dornik champ[1449],
Ay streimand and gleimand
Throw brichtnes of that lamp.

With earnest eye quhil I espye
The fruit betuixt me and the skye,
Halfe-gaite[1450], almaist, to hevin,
The craig sa cumbersume to clim,
The trie sa hich of growth, and trim [258]
As ony arrowe evin,
I cald to mind how Daphne did
Within the laurell schrink,
Quhen from Apollo scho hir hid.[1451]
A thousand times I think
That trie then to me then,
As he his laurell thocht;
Aspyring but tyring[1452]
To get that fruit I socht.

To clime the craige it was na buit[1453]
Lat be to presse[1454] to pull the fruit
In top of all the trie.
I saw na way quhairby to cum
Be ony craft to get it clum,
Appeirandly to me.
The craige was vgly, stay, and dreich[1455],
The trie heich, lang, and smal[1456];
I was affrayd to mount sa hich
For feir to get ane fall.
Affrayit to say it[1457],
I luikit vp on loft;
Quhiles minting, quhiles stinting[1458],
My purpose changit oft.

Then Dreid, with Danger and Dispaire,
Forbad my minting anie mair
To raxe aboue my reiche[1459].
“Quhat, tusche!” quod Curage, “man, go to,
He is bot daft that hes ado[1460], [259]
And spairis for euery speiche.
For I haue oft hard wise men say,
And we may see our-sellis,
That fortune helps the hardie ay,
And pultrones plaine repellis.
Than feir not, nor heir not
Dreid, Danger, or Dispaire;
To fazarts hard hazarts[1461]
Is deid or[1462] they cum thair.

“Quha speidis bot sic as heich aspyris?
Quha triumphis nocht bot sic as tyris
To win a nobill name?
Of schrinking quhat bot schame succeidis?
Than do as thou wald haif thy deidis
In register of fame.
I put the cais, thou nocht preuaild,
Sa thou with honour die,
Thy life, bot not thy courage, faild,
Sall poetis pen of thee.
Thy name than from Fame than
Sall neuir be cut aff:
Thy graif ay sall haif ay
That honest epitaff.

“Quhat can thou loose, quhen honour lyuis?
Renowne thy vertew ay reuyuis
Gif valiauntlie thou end.”
Quod Danger, “Hulie[1463], friend, tak heid!
Vntymous spurring spillis the steid. [260]
Tak tent[1464] quhat ye pretend.
Thocht Courage counsell thee to clim,
Bowar thou kop na skaith[1465]

Bewar thou kep na skaith[1465].
Haif thou na help bot Hope and him,
They may beguyle thé baith.
Thy-sell now can tell now
The counsell of thae clarkis,
Quhairthrow yit, I trow yit,
Thy breist dois beir the markis.

"Brunt bairn with fyre the danger dreidis;
Sa I beleif thy bosome bleidis
Sen last that fyre thou felt.
Besydis this, seindell tymis thé seis[1466]
That euer Curage keipis the keyis
Of knawledge at his belt.
Thocht he bid fordwart with the gunnis,
Small powder he prouydis.
Be nocht ane novice of the nunnis
That saw nocht baith the sydis.
Fuil-haist[1467] ay almaist ay
Ouirsylis[1468] the sicht of sum
Quha huikis not[1469], nor luikis not
Quhat eftirward may cum.

"Yit Wisdome wischis thé to wey
This figour of philosophey—
A lessoun worth to leir[1470]—
Quhilk is, in tyme for to tak tent,
And not, when tyme is past, repent, [261]
And buy repentance deir.
Is thair na honoure efter lyfe
Except them slay thy-sell?
Quhairfoir hes Attropus[1471] that knyfe?
I trow thou cannot tell,
That, but it, wald cut it
That Clotho[1472] skairse hes spun,
Distroying thy joying
Befoire it be begun.

"All ouirs are repuit to be vyce[1473]—
Ore hich, ore law, ore rasche, ore nyce,
Ore heit, or yit ore cauld.
Thou seemes vnconstant be thy sings[1474];
Thy thocht is on ane thousand things;
Thou wattis[1475] not quhat thou wald.
Let Fame hir pittie on thé powre
Quhan all thy banis ar brokin:
Yone Slae, suppose[1476] you think it soure,
May satisfie to slokkin[1477]
Thy drouth[1478] now, O youth now,
Quhilk drownis thee with desyre.
Aswage than thy rage, man,
Foull water quenches fyre.

[262]

"Quhat fule art thou to die of thirst,
And now may quench it, gif thou list,
So easily, but paine!
Maire honor is to vanquisch ane
Nor feicht with tensum[1479] and be tane,
And outhir hurt or slane.
The prattick[1480] is, to bring to passe,
And not to enterprise;
And als guid drinking out of glas
As gold, in ony wise.
I leuir[1481] haue euer
Ane foule in hand, or tway,
Nor seand ten fleand
About me all the day."

[The argument is taken up by Hope, Will, Reason, Experience, and other allegorical qualities, who each urge their view of the enterprise. Finally, by all in company, the ascent is essayed, and the Cherrie secured.]

[263]

THE NIGHT IS NEIR GONE.[1482]

Hay! nou the day dauis[1483];
The jolie Cok crauis;
Nou shroudis the shauis[1484]
  Throu Natur anone.
The thissell-cok[1485] cryis
On louers vha lyis:
Nou skaillis[1486] the skyis:
  The nicht is neir gone.

The feildis ouerflouis
With gouans[1487] that grouis,
Quhair lilies lyk lou[1488] is,
  Als rid as the rone[1489].
The turtill that treu is
With nots that reneuis
Hir pairtie[1490] perseuis;
  The night is neir gone.

[264]

Nou hairtis with hyndis
Conforme to thair kyndis
Hie tursis thair tyndis[1491]
  On grund vhair they grone.
Nou hurchonis[1492] with hairis
Ay passis in pairis;
Quhilk deuly declairis
  The night is neir gone.

The sesone excellis
Thrugh sueetnes that smellis;
Nou Cupid compellis
  Our hairtis echone[1493]
On Venus vha vaikis[1494],
To muse on our maikis[1495],
Syn sing for thair saikis—
  The night is neir gone.

All curageous knichtis
Aganis the day dichtis[1496]
The breist-plate that bright is
  To feght with thair fone[1497].
The stoned steed[1498] stampis
Throu curage, and crampis[1499],
Syn on the land lampis[1500].
  The night is neir gone.

The freikis[1501] on feildis,
That wight wapins[1502] weildis,
With shyning bright sheildis,
  [As] Titan in trone[1503];
Stiff speiris in reistis
Ouer cursoris cristis
Ar brok on thair breistis:
  The night is neir gone.

[265]

So hard ar thair hittis,
Some sueyis, some sittis,
And some perforce flittis[1504]
  On grund vhill they grone.
Syn groomis[1505] that gay is
On blonkis that brayis[1506]
With suordis assayis:
  The night is neir gone.

[266]

AN ADMONITIOUN TO YOUNG LASSIS.

A bony “No,” with smyling looks agane,
I wald ye leirnd, sen they so comely ar.
As touching “Yes,” if ye suld speik so plane,
I might reprove you to haif said so far.
Noght that your grant in ony wayis micht gar[1507]
Me loth the fruit that curage ocht to chuse;
Bot I wald only haif you seme to skar[1508],
And let me tak it, fenzeing[1509] to refuse;

And warsill[1510], as it war against your will,
Appeiring angrie, thoght ye haif no yre:
For haif[1511], ye heir, is haldin half a fill.
I speik not this as trouing for to tyre;
Bot as the forger[1512], vhen he feeds his fyre,
With sparks of water maks it burne more bald[1513];
So sueet denyall doubillis bot desyr,
And quickins curage fra becomming cald.

Wald ye be made of, ye man[1514] mak it nyce;
For dainties heir ar delicat and deir,
Bot plentie[1515] things ar prysde to litill pryce.
Then, thoght ye hearken, let no wit ye heir,
Bot look auay, and len thame ay your eir.
For, folou love, they say, and it will flie.
Wald ye be lovd, this lessone mon ye leir[1516];
Flie vhylome[1517] love, and it will folou thee.

TO HIS MAISTRES.

Bright amorous ee vhare Love in ambush [lyes]—
  Cleir cristall tear distilde at our depairt[1518]
  Sueet secreit sigh more peircing nor a dairt—
Inchanting voce, beuitcher of the wyse—
Quhyt ivory hand vhilk thrust my finger[s pryse]—
  I challenge you, the causers of my smarte,
  As homiceids and murtherers of my harte,
In Resone's court to suffer ane assyse.
  Bot oh! I fear, yea rather wot I weill,
  To be repledgt ye plainly will appeill
To Love, whom Resone never culd comm[and].
  Bot, since I can not better myn estate,
Yit, vhill I live, at leist I sall regrate
  Ane ee, a teir, a sigh, a voce, a hand.

TO HIS MAISTRES.

So suete a kis yistrene fra thee I reft
In bouing doun thy body on the bed,
That evin my lyfe within thy lippis I left.
Sensyne[1519] from thee my spirit wald neuer shed[1520].
To folou thee it from my body fled,
And left my corps als cold as ony kie[1521].
Bot vhen the danger of my death I dred[1522],
To seik my spreit I sent my harte to thee;
Bot it wes so inamored with thyn ee,
With thee it myndit lykuyse to remane.
So thou hes keepit captive all the thrie,
More glaid to byde then to returne agane.
Except thy breath thare places had suppleit,
Euen in thyn armes thair doutles had I deit.

TO THÉ FOR ME.

Suete Nichtingale in holene[1523] grene that han[ts]
To sport thy-self, and speciall in the spring,
Thy chivring chirlis[1524], vhilks changinglie thou [chants,]
Maks all the roches round about thé ring;
Vhilk slaiks my sorou, so to heir thé sing,
And lights my louing langour at the leist;
Yit, thoght[1525] thou sees not, sillie, saikles[1526] thing!
The piercing pykis brods[1527] at thy bony breist[1528].
Euin so am I, by plesur lykuyis preist[1529],
In gritest danger vhair I most delyte.
Bot since thy song for shoring[1530] hes not ceist
Suld feble I for feir my conqueis quyt[1531]?
Na, na,—I love thé, freshest Phœnix fair!
In beuty, birth, in bounty but compair[1532].

William Hodge & Co., Printers, Glasgow

PRESS OPINIONS.

EARLY SCOTTISH POETRY.

A good service is being done to Scottish literature by Mr. Eyre-Todd in his “Abbotsford Series” of reprints. His introductory essays show learning, insight, and critical ability, while the discrimination exercised in his treatment of the text is excellent.—A valuable acquisition to the student’s library.—*Daily Chronicle.*

Should possess great interest for all lovers of poetry. The volume fills what appears to be a gap in the ranks of our published books of to-day.—*Graphic.*

The first instalment of the Abbotsford Series is full of promise.—*Athenæum.*

What Mr. Eyre-Todd has undertaken has been carried out in a manner deserving of the highest praise. Such a beginning promises well for this “Abbotsford Series,” which, when the volumes already announced have appeared, will have gone a long way towards supplying a “comprehensive library of the Poetry of Scotland.”—*Glasgow Herald.*

This first volume will be welcomed as a praiseworthy effort to open up what is to all but scholars a new field of literary interest.—*British Weekly.*

It is a gratifying sign of the interest still taken in our early poetry that an attempt is made in so praiseworthy a form as this to attract a wider circle of readers to their study.... Everyone who has the best interests of literature at heart will wish them success.—*Scotsman.*

Everyone must give a hearty welcome to this new venture to bring the best portions of Scottish Poetry within the reach of all. We hope not a few teachers will have the courage to introduce one of the volumes into their higher classes alongside of Chaucer, who has hitherto been dominant, much to the loss of our home literature.—*Aberdeen Journal.*

MEDIÆVAL SCOTTISH POETRY.

We trust that Mr. Eyre-Todd may be encouraged to proceed with this Abbotsford Series of the Scottish Poets, for the two volumes which he has already published make it abundantly clear that he possesses the requisite knowledge, taste, insight, and critical skill necessary to the successful accomplishment of so difficult a task.—*The Speaker.*

We can strongly recommend Mr. Eyre-Todd’s “Mediæval Scottish Poetry” as a work creditable alike to himself and to his publisher.—*Literary Opinion.*

“Mediæval Scottish Poetry” is a meritorious and a welcome popularisation of some of the best examples of our fifteenth century verse.—*Scottish Leader.*

This volume more than fulfils the promise of the first.—*Modern Church.*

The second volume of Mr. Eyre-Todd’s “Abbotsford Series” amply fulfils the promise of the earlier instalment, as regards all that the editor himself could be responsible for.—*Glasgow Herald.*

The editor has done his work wonderfully well, and, considering the aim of the series, with perfect thoroughness.—*Freeman’s Journal.*

A useful little volume of selections from the Mediæval Poetry of Scotland.—*Daily News.*

This series is a most excellent one, and its production deserves every encouragement. It promises to be a permanent addition to the very few works we have which deal with Scottish poetical literature as a literature; and one speciality in it worthy of all praise is the concise and scholarly way in which the editing has been done.—*Aberdeen Daily Free Press.*

The editor’s work is well and conscientiously done.—*British Weekly.*

GLASGOW: WILLIAM HODGE & CO.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Respectively the friend and the historian of the Bruce.

[2] Included in Dalzell's *Scotish Poems of the XVIth Century*, Edin. 1801, and reprinted in 1868. The following opening lines afford a specimen of the adaptation of a "prophaine sang":—

> Quho is at my windo? who? who?
> Goe from my windo; goe, goe:
> Quha calles there, so like ane stranger?
> Goe from my windo, goe.
>
> Lord, I am heir, ane wratched mortall
> That for thy mercie dois crie and call
> Vnto thee, my Lord Celestiall.
> See who is at my window, who.

[3] The influences which went to fashion and to disintegrate the speech of the North are very clearly and systematically traced in Dr. J. A. H. Murray's introduction to his *Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland*, London, 1873.

[4] Dr. Murray in a note (p. 71) upon the dialect of Scottish poets of the modern period remarks, "'Scots wha hae' is *fancy* Scotch—that is, it is merely the English 'Scots who have,' spelled as Scotch. Barbour would have written 'Scottis at hes'; Dunbar or Douglas, 'Scottis quhilkis hes'; and even Henry Charteris, in the end of the sixteenth century, 'Scottis quha hes.'"

[5] From an eye-witnesslike allusion to the walking-length of Italian ladies' dresses in his "Contemptioun of Syde Taillis," and from the Courteour's speech in "The Monarche" (line 5417) alluding apparently to the Pope's presence at the siege of Mirandola in 1511.

> "I saw Pape Julius manfullye
> Passe to the feild tryumphantlye
> With ane rycht aufull ordinance
> Contrar Lowis, the kyng of France."

[6] Play, Davie Lyndsay.

[7] An old Scottish tune.

[8] Given in facsimile by Mr. Laing in his introduction to Lyndsay's works, p. xxiv.

[9] Pitscottie's *History*, Edin. 1728, p. 160.

[10] Charteris's Preface to Lyndsay's works, Edin. 1582.

[11] General introduction to Lyndsay's works, Early English Text Society's edition.

[12] In his poem on the marriage of Queen Mary with the Dauphin.

[13] though.

[14] Exercised.

[15] promised.

[16] began to go.

[17] wrapped.

[18] afterwards.

[19] nimbly.

[20] Perhaps the Sir Guy of romance.

[21] since.

[22] Butler, Cup-bearer, and Carver.

[23] treasurer.

[24] usher.

[25] loyalty.

[26] Praise.

[27] such.

[28] able.

[29] high of spirit.

[30] describe.

[31] true lovers.

[32] Many of the prophecies of The Rhymer, Bede, and Merlin were printed in a small volume by Andro Hart at Edinburgh in 1615.

[33] The Red Etin, a giant with three heads, was the subject of a popular story mentioned in the *Complaynt of Scotland*. William Motherwell has a poem "The Etin of Sillarwood." The Gyre Carlin, or huge old woman, was the gruesome Hecate, or mother-witch, of many peasant stories.

[34] banished.

[35] bush.

[36] lain waking.

[37] beams.

[38] quickly.

[39] Yet fared I forth, speeding athwart.

[40] divert, *lit.* shorten time.

[41] hillside.

[42] disguised in sad attire.

[43] violent.

[44] oppressed.

[45] formerly.

[46] cursed.

[47] frail.

[48] sufferest.

[49] fair, *lit.* shining.

[50] Robs.

[51] Concealed.

[52] by myself.

[53] High.

[54] Without delay.

[55] idleness.

[56] rolling.

[57] scowling.

[58] rude, boisterous.

[59] bellow.

[60] over the open field.

[61] without.

[62] know.

[63] knowledge.

[64] oppressed.

[65] every.

[66] must.

[67] wasted, laid waste.

[68] regard.

[69] causes.

[70] An allusion to the departure of the Regent Albany.

[71] lost.

[72] loyalty.

[73] robbery.

[74] tedious.

[75] These lazy sluggards.

[76] *i.e.* personal interest caused.

[77] Quickly.

[78] cares, business.

[79] know.

[80] complain.

[81] money. *Fr.* dénier.

[82] every host.

[83] each.

[84] St. John be your surety.

[85] sorrowful.

[86] steeped.

[87] above.

[88] Over outland and mountain.

[89] From John the Commonweill, says Sibbald, it has been suggested that Arbuthnot caught the first hint of his celebrated John Bull.

[90] presently.

[91] opposite.

[92] a cruel fright.

[93] Stones were the bullets of that age.

[94] shout.

[95] pleasure.

[96] intellect.

[97] Solomon-like.

[98] writing.

[99] every.

[100] high.

[101] Sir Gilbert Hay, Merser, and two Rowles, one of Aberdeen and one of Corstorphine, are mentioned in Dunbar's "Lament for the Makaris." Henryson and Sir Richard Holland, the author of "The Houlate," are well known. Sir John Rowle's "Cursing vpon the Steilaris of his fowlis" is preserved in the Bannatyne MS.

[102] their books live.

[103] stream.

[104] alive.

[105] describe.

[106] these.

[107] write pleasantly.

[108] A chaplain at court, and reputed author of the "Complaynt of Scotland," Inglis was made abbot of Culross by James V. He was murdered by the baron of Tullialan a few months after this mention of him.

[109] A considerable number of poems bearing the colophon "quod Stewart" are preserved by Bannatyne, but nothing is known of their separate authorship.

[110] speak, narrate.

[111] skilful.

[112] though.

[113] know.

[114] garden.

[115] every one.

[116] ere.

[117] popinjay, parrot.

[118] writing.

[119] banished.

[120] worth.

[121] deserves.

[122] jest.

[123] country lasses who keep kine and ewes.

[124] lost.

[125] The ancient name for *Stirling*.

[126] The curious earthworks about which the sports of the Knights of the Round Table took place are still to be seen under the Castle-hill at Stirling.

[127] Linlithgow.

[128] pattern.

[129] pleasant.

[130] range in row.

[131] wretched.

[132] feigned to weep.

[133] Dispose of your goods.

[134] faults.

[135] croaking.

[136] a hawk.

[137] croaking.

[138] prayer for the dead.

[139] *par cœur.*

[140] God knows if we have.

[141] pilfer.

[142] services of thirty masses each.

[143] prattle, rattle off.

[144] make chickens squeak.

[145] The old Scottish liturgy was according to the usage of Sarum.

[146] as surety.

[147] funeral cry.

[148] the great creed.

[149] graceful.

[150] your mouth across their meadows.

[151] truly.

[152] consistory court.

[153] charge.

[154] peacock.

[155] testament.

[156] pleasant.

[157] regret.

[158] practice.

[159] quickly.

[160] ere.

[161] passed to and fro.

[162] region. *Lat.* plaga.

[163] by thy high intelligence.

[164] without lies.

[165] mix, deal.

[166] utter note.

[167] severe.

[168] a little.

[169] primitives.

[170] preaching.

[171] feared not the hurt.

[172] healed many hundreds.

[173] begat.

[174] reigned.

[175] Already in “The Dreme,” Laing remarks, Lyndsay had mentioned the fatal effects of the Emperor’s liberality to Pope Sylvester in conferring riches on the Church of Rome.

[176] caused.

[177] eyes.

[178] A.D. 314–335.

[179] rest.

[180] Very pleasing.

[181] God knows if then.

[182] forgot.

[183] by the word of.

[184] bondage.

[185] pleasant lives.

[186] purveyance, management.

[187] she could get no settlement.

[188] She marched.

[189] overbearingly ordered her.

[190] entrance.

[191] With one counsel, unanimously.

[192] greatly abused.

[193] hence.

[194] sighing.

[195] news.

[196] weak.

[197] cast wide their doors.

[198] South of.

[199] lament.

[200] A convent founded on the Burgh-muir by the Countess of Caithness for Dominican nuns of the reformed order of St. Catherine of Sienna, from whom the place got its name of Siennes or Sheens.

[201] armed.

[202] a cannon braced up in hoops.

[203] hard blows.

[204] storm.

[205] artillery.

[206] dwelling.

[207] assuredly.

[208] choosing.

[209] Without.

[210] reckless.

[211] blame.

[212] door.

[213] preaching.

[214] leapers over wall.

[215] innocent.

[216] gourmand.

[217] trucksters.

[218] Lay, unlearned.

[219] court-following.

[220] waiting.

[221] thirst.

[222] skill.

[223] gamester.

[224] fell vacant.

[225] law.

[226] parson.

[227] lose.

[228] wish.

[229] worthy.

[230] coarse white woollen.

[231] Laying hold.

[232] crimson cloth.

[233] meniver, marten, grey, and rich ermine furs.

[234] pain.

[235] fringes.

[236] trappings.

[237] hurt.

[238] each.

[239] athwart.

[240] by the time that.

[241] if I lie.

[242] Raven. *Fr.* corbeau.

[243] Overman.

[244] Owl.

[245] mantle.

[246] pure eyes.

[247] Bat.

[248] burnished.

[249] Cuckoo.

[250] ivory.

[251] without doubt.

[252] rose-red, purple, and cinnabar.

[253] labour.

[254] liver and lung.

[255] seize.

[256] must from.

[257] the woods hoar.

[258] sting and shock.

[259] death.

[260] pungent.

[261] to pull and tear.

[262] gluttonlike.

[263] reach.

[264] the lot, *lit.* 128 lb. weight.

[265] beshrew, curse.

[266] that sad dividing.

[267] let me stretch a rope, *i.e.* let me hang for it.

[268] Complain.

[269] smothered.

[270] clutched in his claw.

[271] the rest.

[272] Beseeching.

[273] composition.

[274] to be put forward.

[275] quire, book.

[276] worth.

[277] kindred.

[278] forswear.

[279] learn.

[280] This burlesque is said to have been written for the entertainment of the court upon occasion of the home-coming of Mary of Loraine in 1538. As the "Dreme" had been a political satire, and the "Testament of the Papyngo" a satire upon church abuses, this, like the "Contemptioun of Syde Taillis," was a satire on a social fashion. Chalmers mentions an anterior English poem, "The

Turnament of Tottenham, or the wooing, winning, and wedding of Tibbe, the Reeve's daughter," printed in Percy's *Reliques*, as a similar burlesque upon the custom of the tourney; but an example nearer home is to found in Dunbar's "Justis betuix the Tailyour and the Sowtar." Watsoun and Barbour were, according to the Treasurer's Accounts, actual personages in the royal household.

[281] banneret, a knight made in the field.

[282] physician.

[283] surgeon.

[284] Bent old women he would cause.

[285] gallantly waved.

[286] hawkers.

[287] distaffs.

[288] by my livelihood.

[289] the heavens.

[290] by the altar.

[291] running, course.

[292] hurt.

[293] three aimed strokes.

[294] wreaked.

[295] ere.

[296] match.

[297] reached him a blow.

[298] struck.

[299] in truth.

[300] speak.

[301] gloves.

[302] know.

[303] separate.

[304] by the time that.

[305] belongings.

[306] Praise.

[307] wished.

[308] grave.

[309] modest.

[310] examine.

[311] goods.

[312] stole.

[313] enquire.

[314] played with.

[315] know.

[316] I know not.

[317] The writings of the Reformers were, before 1560, printed in England and on the Continent. The Bible, in particular, was for this reason known as "the English Book."

[318] know.

[319] "Sir" was by courtesy the ordinary title of churchmen.

[320] hap, event.

[321] the third of a penny.

[322] Though.

[323] much.

[324] kindred.

[325] each day.

[326] cause.

[327] Afterwards.

[328] by heart.

[329] “five and six,” terms in dice play.

[330] Collars.

[331] coals.

[332] lard.

[333] grains.

[334] handfuls.

[335] without.

[336] own.

[337] dream.

[338] deceive.

[339] entice.

[340] to make stout and strong.

[341] describe.

[342] Perhaps the ill-natured rhetorician mentioned by Virgil, *Eclogues*, v. and vii.

[343] belly.

[344] The hero of the romance of which this forms the most important episode, was an actual contemporary of Lyndsay, some of whose romantic adventures are referred to by Pitscottie in his *History*, p. 129. Upon the conclusion of his youthful adventures Meldrum settled in Kinross, where he owned the estate of Cleish and Binns; and being appointed deputy of Patrick, Lord Lyndsay, Sheriff of Fife, is said to have administered physic as well as law to his neighbours.

[345] Henry VIII. lay at Calais in July, 1513.

[346] array.

[347] Making war.

[348] pikes.

[349] this news.

[350] view, visit.

[351] chose.

[352] host.

[353] champion.

[354] go.

[355] Throughout.

[356] Readers of Wyntoun’s *Cronykil* will remember that in the description of the great tournament at Berwick in 1338 it is a knight of the same name, Sir Richard Talbot, who is defeated in somewhat similar fashion by Sir Patrick Græme. See *Early Scottish Poetry*, p. 173.

[357] tokens of war.

[358] caused be made.

[359] fight.

[360] a valiant warrior.

[361] To-morrow.

[362] words, boasts.

[363] a small piece of straw.

[364] gone astray.

[365] strong.

[366] such practice.

[367] afraid.

[368] storm.

[369] Gaul, son of Morni, first the enemy and afterwards the ally of Fingal, is one of the chief heroes of the Ossianic poems.

[370] belongings.

[371] in such fashion.

[372] covenant.

[373] Making light of.

[374] taken.

[375] know.

[376] well I know.

[377] Robert Stewart, Lord D'Aubigny and Mareschal of France, descended from the Darnley and Lennox family, was Captain of the Scots Guards of the King of France in the beginning of the sixteenth century. Readers of *Quentin Durward* will remember Scott's description of the post as held by Lord Crawford.

[378] choose.

[379] nimbly.

[380] in warlike garb.

[381] stretched.

[382] before.

[383] coif, band.

[384] hold.

[385] caparisoned.

[386] crimson cloth.

[387] over the rough grassy ground.

[388] morning.

[389] beat.

[390] made.

[391] such a fright.

[392] covering.

[393] embroidered.

[394] doubt.

[395] staves, spears.

[396] Wonderfully.

[397] tough.

[398] dashed.

[399] flatwise.

[400] nimbly.

[401] gallantly.

[402] once.

[403] seized.

[404] grasped.

[405] well pleased.

[406] these.

[407] Boldly to prove their strength they pressed.

[408] coursing room was from the extremity, *à l'outrance*.

[409] swerved.

[410] course.

[411] violent.

[412] bolted.

[413] bound.

[414] each.

[415] match.

[416] pike, spear.

[417] cuirasse.

[418] place.

[419] joust.

[420] compact.

[421] lose.

[422] pavilion.

[423] embraced.

[424] gallantly.

[425] These are two of the last stanzas of “The Testament of Squyer Meldrum,” a composition chiefly occupied with the doughty squire’s directions for a sumptuous funeral. The lady to whom they are addressed was Marion Lawson, the young widow of John Haldane of Gleneagles, slain at Flodden, for whom the Squyer upon his return to Scotland in 1515 had formed a strong attachment, and by whom he had become the father of two children. In August, 1517, according to Pitscottie, Meldrum had, in gallantly defending his possession of this lady, been crippled and left for dead on the road to Leith by his rival Luke Stirling, brother of the laird of Keir, who followed him from Edinburgh and attacked him with fifty men.

[426] shining.

[427] beauty.

[428] Star.

[429] much.

[430] evening and morning.

[431] if.

[432] wish.

[433] fashion.

[434] bought you from woes.

[435] Redeeming.

[436] seated.

[437] mistuned.

[438] love.

[439] goods.

[440] make me know.

[441] Quick.

[442] God knows.

[443] vile.

[444] entry.

[445] these failings.

[446] what the devil is that thou tearest?

[447] ears.

[448] talk.

[449] burnt.

[450] dash.

[451] by the time that.

[452] whole clothes.

[453] learn.

[454] but if, unless.

[455] Leap.

[456] though.

[457] death.

[458] tether, halter.

[459] emptied.

[460] pitcher.

[461] Haste.

[462] hobgoblin.

[463] much.

[464] truth.

[465] The Court of Session had been established by James V. in May, 1532. The Seinzie was the older ecclesiastical consistory, or bishops’ court.

[466] company.

[467] hoar.

[468] *i.e.* in panniers, the ancient means of carriage.

[469] separate.

[470] kine.

[471] Ayrshire cattle were, to judge from this reference, as much esteemed in the sixteenth century as they are in the nineteenth.

[472] died.

[473] pasturing.

[474] Formerly the fine paid the feudal superior for relief from armed service; afterwards a fine of the best chattel, exacted by the landlord on the death of a tenant.

[475] clutched.

[476] uppermost clothes.

[477] coarse woollen.

[478] The reference here, says Laing, is to the *cors present*, or funeral gift to the clerk, the exaction of which had become a heavy grievance to the poor.

[479] parson.

[480] fourpence.

[481] Trowest.

[482] gander.

[483] pig.

[484] ask.

[485] stupefied.

[486] without.

[487] lot.

[488] The retailing of papal indulgences, here satirized by Lyndsay, was one of the chief abuses against which Luther had raised the indignation of Germany.

[489] grope, grip.

[490] naughty.

[491] lay.

[492] tricks.

[493] fellows.

[494] I know by heart.

[495] Sorrow destroy.

[496] knave.

[497] smothered in their baptism-cloth.

[498] dark.

[499] Khan.

[500] The real jawbone of Fingal.

[501] See introduction to King James the Fifth, p. 143.

[502] tail.

[503] snout.

[504] go.

[505] Belial.

[506] jest.

[507] vexation.

[508] cumber.

[509] blame.

[510] rascal, *lit.* gallowsful.

[511] fourth-day or intermittent fever.

[512] laid hold of.

[513] street-walker.

[514] scoundrel.

[515] Though you stay a year.

[516] one.

[517] counsel.

[518] without doubt.

[519] your fate you curse.

[520] speak.

[521] drivelling.

[522] my whole body I cross.

[523] *At the horne,* proclaimed rebel. Outlawry was proclaimed with three blasts of a horn. In 1512 Gavin Douglas was one of a great assize which passed an Act anent "the resset of Rebellis, and Personis being at our souerane Lordis horne."

[524] bless.

[525] ropes.

[526] gout.

[527] search.

[528] go.

[529] coin.

[530] excuse.

[531] complain.

[532] Consistory.

[533] craves.

[534] whole.

[535] till then.

[536] place.

[537] I know full surely.

[538] frail.

[539] Ere.

[540] heat.

[541] evacuate fæces.

[542] gums.

[543] confounded.

[544] rag.

[545] by the altar.

[546] blow.

[547] sport.

[548] Quick, fellows!

[549] Laing quotes from the chartulary of Newbattle a grant by Seyer de Quency, lord of the manor of Tranent, of a coal-pit and quarry on the lands of Preston; which shows mining and quarrying to have been industries there as early as 1202.

[550] company.

[551] eight.

[552] a Scots plack equalled the third of a penny.

[553] halfway.

[554] device.

[555] croaked.

[556] each.

[557] fared.

[558] describe.

[559] fell.

[560] twigs.

[561] beryl.

[562] moist empurpled.

[563] embroidered.

[564] dark.

[565] sojourn.

[566] wandering.

[567] sure guide.

[568] care.

[569] breaking forth.

[570] boughs.

[571] Æolus.

[572] peacock pruning his feathers fair.

[573] thrush.

[574] pleasant.

[575] salute.

[576] partly.

[577] rocks.

[578] The name is spelt variously, Ballantyne, Ballenden, Bellendyne, &c.

[579] Murray's *Dialects of the Southern Counties of Scotland*, p. 61.

[580] According to Hume's *History of the Houses of Douglas and Angus*, p. 258.

[581] In the appendix to Scotstarvet's *History* Sir John Bellenden is stated to have been Justice-Clerk from 1547 till 1578.

[582] Dr. Irving quotes the statements of Conn, Bale, and Dempster respectively for these three facts. But both the date and place remain, as he remarks, uncertain; and by some, as by Sibbald in his *Chronicle of Scottish Poetry*, Bellenden is stated to have died at Paris.

[583] Hector Boece, born 1465–66, was Principal of King's College, Aberdeen, then newly founded by Bishop Elphinstone; and he died Rector of Tyrie in Buchan, in 1536. The second edition of his *History* was not published till 1574. It included the eighteenth and part of the nineteenth book by Boece, and a continuation to the end of the reign of James III. by the celebrated scholar Ferrerius.

[584] On the title page the translator is styled "Archdene of Murray and Chanon of Rosse," and, as Irving points out, he was not in possession of these titles at the time of purchasing escheat in 1538. The date of 1536 sometimes assigned to this edition is probably therefore a mistake. Only two copies of the edition are now known to exist.

[585] This MS., by the older writers on Bellenden, is called sometimes the "Carmichael Collection," from the name of the owner who lent it to Allan Ramsay, sometimes the "Hyndford MS.," from John, third Earl of Hyndford, who presented it to the Advocates' Library. This difference of appellation has not lessened the confusion hitherto involving the poet and his work.

[586] The prohemes from the translation of Boece, after being copied in part by Bannatyne in his MS., were included in Ramsay's *Evergreen* and in Sibbald's *Chronicle of Scottish Poetry*. The prologue to Livy was printed first by Dr. Leyden in the dissertation prefixed to his edition of *The Complaynt of Scotland*.

[587] From dark.

[588] Above.

[589] valued.

[590] could.

[591] unworthy.

[592] Till.

[593] harried.

[594] though.

[595] cares.

[596] doom yet constantly endures.

[597] earthly.

[598] swam.

[599] That grave deliberation.

[600] slothful.

[601] Diffusing.

[602] penetrative.
[603] loud noise.
[604] fourth.
[605] over the grasslands.
[606] revenues.
[607] was named.
[608] as they deemed best.
[609] splendour.
[610] enterprise.
[611] choose.
[612] most agreeable.
[613] Who.
[614] earth.
[615] powerful.
[616] live.
[617] By sight of these.
[618] doubt.
[619] was taken.
[620] without.
[621] prevent.
[622] must.
[623] devoured.
[624] folded.
[625] To caress and embrace.
[626] wit.
[627] pleasure.
[628] float.
[629] give practice.
[630] with forward-moving wheels.
[631] shires, *lit.* districts sheared off.
[632] vexing.
[633] much pain.
[634] end.
[635] war.
[636] overcome.
[637] constant warfare.
[638] makes breach in.
[639] serene.
[640] not be daunted.
[641] certain.
[642] shall vanish without delay.
[643] gone.
[644] know.
[645] In such fashion.
[646] smoky.
[647] converts sores.
[648] the day star, *i.e.* the sun.
[649] perfects.
[650] without peer.
[651] wipe, cleanse.
[652] sphere.
[653] called.

[654] hurts.
[655] mingled.
[656] warlike rage.
[657] slit.
[658] delicate.
[659] warlike.
[660] reigned.
[661] drove from their realms.
[662] bite.
[663] lost.
[664] stop.
[665] daunted by his war.
[666] children.
[667] acquire substance.
[668] deified.
[669] illustrious.
[670] high above genius.
[671] repulsive.
[672] darkness.
[673] solely.
[674] would not.
[675] lives as beast conscious of knowledge.
[676] ages.
[677] overhauls.
[678] barren wife.
[679] the prolific fails.
[680] And then possess.
[681] cover over.
[682] strong, raging.
[683] adorn.
[684] praise.
[685] champion.
[686] the praise is.
[687] those who propose to take place.
[688] must.
[689] which.
[690] fearful.
[691] strain, race.
[692] courtesy.
[693] same stock.
[694] overcome.
[695] host.
[696] come, begotten.
[697] care.
[698] dying.
[699] powerful deeds.
[700] who could.
[701] save, preserve.
[702] The prologue consists of twenty stanzas, of which the first four and the last are here printed.
[703] hazards of war.
[704] map of the world.
[705] diffuse.

[706] the spirits of my dull intelligence.

[707] glittering.

[708] flame.

[709] stars.

[710] stop.

[711] strong, hard to encounter.

[712] hard rock.

[713] lost.

[714] perish long ere.

[715] Spirit.

[716] Some are deep-thinking.

[717] war.

[718] cares.

[719] rage.

[720] feud.

[721] death.

[722] lives.

[723] of good fellows counts not a bean.

[724] He burns, without regard.

[725] living.

[726] loyal.

[727] compliant and attentive.

[728] of your courtesy forbear with it.

[729] composition.

[730] scattered.

[731] earth.

[732] declared rebel. See note, p. 97.

[733] same.

[734] limbo.

[735] From the time when.

[736] lament.

[737] own.

[738] lost.

[739] end.

[740] aggravated.

[741] suffer.

[742] death.

[743] The dramatic incidents of the raid have been immortalized in famous ballads like “Johnnie Armstrong,” “The Sang of the Outlaw Murray,” and “The Border Widow’s Lament.”

[744] *History of Scotland*, vol. ii., p. 361, and note z. The historian shows that the attempt to poison the king was by no means the first capital offence of which Lady Glammis had been convicted, though her youth and beauty were used by the reforming party to excite popular feeling against James.

[745] *Orlando Furioso*, canto xiii., stanzas 8 and 9.

[746] Sibbald’s *Chronicle of Scottish Poetry*.

[747] Irving’s *History of Scottish Poetry*, p. 145.

[748] The failure of Dunbar, Asloan, and Lyndsay to mention James I. upon the strength of “The Kingis Quair” may be accounted for by the situation of that poem, the only copy now known to exist being that contained in the Selden MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. No such argument can account for the overlooking of popular pieces like “Christis Kirk” and “Peblis to the Play” had they been then in existence.

[749] In “Christis Kirk” occur the expressions—

"His lymmis wes lyk twa rokkis; ...
Ran vpoun vtheris lyk rammis; ...
Bet on with barrow trammis;"

and in "The Justyng" we find—

"Quod Jhone, 'Howbeit thou thinkis my leggis lyke rokkis ...
Yit, thocht thy braunis be lyk twa barrow-trammis,
Defend thee, man!' Than ran thay to, lyk rammis."

[750] See Murray's *Dialect of the Southern Counties of Scotland*, pp. 56 and 69.

[751] Rogers' *Poetical Remains of King James I.*, 1873.

[752] In 1526–27, according to the Treasurer's Accounts, £13 6s. 8d. was paid "to Johne Murray the Kingis barbour, for corsbowis, windaiss, and ganzies" (crossbows, pulleys, and arrows). And Alexander Scot in his poem "Of May," *circa* 1550, describes the merry gathering of archers "To schute at buttis, at bankis, and brais."

[753] Introduction to *The Kingis Quair*, Scottish Text Society, 1883–84.

[754] In *The Daily News*, March 19, 1892.

[755] Beltane, believed to be from the Gaelic Beal-tein, or Baal fire, was the great Druid festival of the first of May. The sports of Beltane, it appears, were celebrated at Peebles till a recent date, when a market was established, known as the Beltane Fair.

[756] when each person sets forth.

[757] By outland.

[758] went.

[759] clad.

[760] time, occasion.

[761] turmoil.

[762] For preparation and sport.

[763] kerchiefs.

[764] gloomy.

[765] Said she.

[766] collarette.

[767] permitted not.

[768] band, ribbon.

[769] so foolish and playful.

[770] knew.

[771] weep not.

[772] lost.

[773] market.

[774] so badly sunburnt.

[775] carry my rags, *i.e.* woven cloth.

[776] shall once venture.

[777] look by stealth.

[778] Man, woman, and prentice-lad (Hob, caile, curdower).

[779] Gathered out thick-fold.

[780] thronged out.

[781] steadings unnumbered.

[782] over the plain.

[783] started in that place.

[784] lively.

[785] become not weary.

[786] clear, mild.

[787] raised a high rough song.

[788] fared.

[789] wood.

[790] way.

[791] conceit, opinion.
[792] that.
[793] dispose of.
[794] remainder.
[795] play the fool with.
[796] Swiftly.
[797] encountered.
[798] young woman.
[799] maukin, a little maid.
[800] to play the mate so.
[801] override.
[802] too good.
[803] go.
[804] Laughed.
[805] Was come.
[806] jollity.
[807] words wondrous brave.
[808] Have done (?).
[809] “Set up the board,” he calls soon.
[810] dance, party.
[811] napery be white.
[812] good woman, hostess.
[813] wall.
[814] Wait till we reckon our lawing (bill).
[815] that ye owe.
[816] laugh.
[817] scorn.
[818] twopence half-penny.
[819] over stupid.
[820] deserved a blow.
[821] pointed staff.
[822] Wincing as he were mad.
[823] uproar.
[824] earth.
[825] clearance, settlement.
[826] slid.
[827] Thirty-three lay there.
[828] Tumbling about.
[829] distiller’s waste.
[830] A hawker on the market street.
[831] debate, battle.
[832] overtake.
[833] Two lines of the stanza have here apparently been lost.
[834] glimpse.
[835] separate.
[836] leaped.
[837] girthing.
[838] At once.
[839] dirtied.
[840] became.
[841] low-born.
[842] counsel.

[843] Go home his ways.

[844] defiled.

[845] See how.

[846] treated.

[847] great.

[848] hinder.

[849] know.

[850] fatigued.

[851] then.

[852] By the time that.

[853] notches (of bows).

[854] broil.

[855] grovelling.

[856] Had rather given.

[857] Ere.

[858] favourite.

[859] a dance now unknown.

[860] jerked, rocked.

[861] how.

[862] dwelling.

[863] performs wondrous long.

[864] laughed.

[865] hence your ways.

[866] enough.

[867] So fiercely fire-hot.

[868] Tibbie, Isabella.

[869] latch.

[870] encountered.

[871] all the men to cackle.

[872] quite nothing.

[873] the wenches and wooers parted.

[874] Alison.

[875] damsel.

[876] swooned that sweet one of the glen foot.

[877] sipped, uttered a sipping sound.

[878] weeping.

[879] shock of lips, *i.e.* osculation.

[880] The Christ's Kirk of the poem, in Tytler's opinion, was that near Dunideer in Aberdeenshire. About the burial ground of the ancient kirk was a green where, so late as the end of last century, a yearly fair was still held on the 1st of May. "In former times," says Tytler, "this fair was continued during the night, from which circumstance it was called by the country people Sleepy Market. On such occasions it was natural that such disorders as are so humorously described by the royal author should have taken place."

[881] merriment, disorder.

[882] wooers.

[883] think.

[884] Kittie, now the common abbreviation of Catherine, was in James's time the general name for a playful girl.

[885] prepared.

[886] gay of manners.

[887] doeskin.

[888] coarse woollen.

[889] Lincoln-green.

[890] simple, foolish.
[891] approached.
[892] goats, kids.
[893] slim, dainty.
[894] the ruddy part of the face.
[895] skin.
[896] Full.
[897] frail, *i.e.*, she was love-sick.
[898] death.
[899] girded.
[900] mocked him by making mouths.
[901] go hang himself.
[902] counted.
[903] clucks.
[904] distaffs.
[905] how he did launch (the fiddle bow).
[906] shrill.
[907] an ancient dance.
[908] forsake.
[909] behaved.
[910] stepping in with long strides.
[911] course.
[912] Flat-footed.
[913] bounds.
[914] He leaped till he lay on his buttocks.
[915] exerted.
[916] coughed.
[917] began.
[918] dragged.
[919] drove him side-wise (gable-wards).
[920] The angry man clutched the stave.
[921] did not they have by the ears.
[922] blow of the fist.
[923] pulled.
[924] such wrath did move him.
[925] Great hurt was it to have frightened.
[926] chose an arrow.
[927] become.
[928] other.
[929] pierce.
[930] pierced.
[931] acre’s breadth.
[932] let fly.
[933] splinters.
[934] knew.
[935] enough.
[936] giddy fellow.
[937] skilful.
[938] Snatched.
[939] delay.
[940] enraged.
[941] did vary.

[942] escaped.
[943] designed.
[944] arrow did feather.
[945] offered, promised.
[946] to wager a wether.
[947] on the belly a knock.
[948] sounded.
[949] conceited.
[950] Loosed.
[951] aimed at the man.
[952] cowhouse.
[953] quiver.
[954] let (drive).
[955] kicked.
[956] stout fellows.
[957] roof beams.
[958] buffeted.
[959] Till they of men made bridges.
[960] uproar.
[961] spars.
[962] ridges, backs.
[963] my love lies.
[964] snarled and let drive with groans.
[965] vexed the other.
[966] pikes.
[967] dwellings.
[968] proved.
[969] unbruised bones.
[970] Where fighters were hurt.
[971] Tall.
[972] a hazel twig.
[973] separate.
[974] rumble.
[975] mowed.
[976] mice.
[977] inactive fellow.
[978] stout.
[979] With such wranglers to jumble.
[980] struck a slice.
[981] “A truce.”
[982] prevent.
[983] deemed.
[984] feud.
[985] distressed.
[986] debate, broil.
[987] shoemaker.
[988] swollen with rage.
[989] clotted, *lit.* broidered.
[990] delayed.
[991] till he was chased.
[992] jest.
[993] knocked he their crowns.

[994] The whole ambush.

[995] fought, rattled upon.

[996] ox-collars of bent willow.

[997] hams.

[998] crofters, country men.

[999] in warlike array.

[1000] their mouths were unclad, *i.e.* unguarded.

[1001] gums.

[1002] barked, clotted.

[1003] worried.

[1004] youngsters (perhaps Dutch *jonker*) engaged.

[1005] lightning.

[1006] stout fellows.

[1007] carls, men.

[1008] did each other quell.

[1009] belched.

[1010] bellowed.

[1011] firewood burnt in flames.

[1012] overpowered were with burdens.

[1013] these fatigued fools.

[1014] turfs cut for burning.

[1015] goals, stations.

[1016] struck.

[1017] numbers.

[1018] forthwith.

[1019] multitude, *lit.* waggon-load.

[1020] mean fellows, sneaks.

[1021] folly-mouth.

[1022] drubbing.

[1023] strike no other.

[1024] An ancient Scots name for a hawker, from gaber, a wallet, and lunyie, the loin. Literally, “The man who carries a wallet on the loin.” Throughout this poem, it will be observed, the consonant sound of “y” is represented by the letter “z.” This peculiarity is preserved to the present day in several Scottish proper names, such as Dalziel, Zair, Culzean.

[1025] sly, artful.

[1026] frail.

[1027] beyond.

[1028] cheerfully.

[1029] become weary.

[1030] lively.

[1031] her old mother know.

[1032] busy.

[1033] if.

[1034] go.

[1035] I’d clothe me gay.

[1036] a little.

[1037] open field.

[1038] enquire.

[1039] went.

[1040] goods.

[1041] chest.

[1042] stolen.

[1043] alone.

[1044] loyal, true.

[1045] churn.

[1046] Go to the outer apartment.

[1047] to the inner apartment.

[1048] did say.

[1049] O haste, cause to ride.

[1050] troublesome.

[1051] afoot.

[1052] mad, furious.

[1053] far hence, out over.

[1054] slice.

[1055] proving, tasting.

[1056] Ill-favouredly.

[1057] she'd never trust.

[1058] chalk and ruddle (for marking sheep).

[1059] small perforated stones used in spinning.

[1060] bend.

[1061] cloth, rag.

[1062] set forth.

[1063] country farm-steading.

[1064] behind.

[1065] cautiously.

[1066] talk.

[1067] my honey and my dove.

[1068] "They'll tear all my meal bags, and do me great harm." In rural districts of Scotland as late as a century ago beggars carried under each arm a wallet in which they collected the doles of the farmers' wives. The expected gratuity, which was rarely withheld, was a "gowpen," or double handful of oatmeal.

[1069] sorrow.

[1070] a silver coin worth 13⅓ d. Stg.

[1071] wet-nurse wage.

[1072] rags.

[1073] such.

[1074] The Bannatyne MS. furnished the greater part of the contents of that effective but unreliable publication, Ramsay's *Evergreen*, in 1724, and a further selection from its pages, under the title of *Ancient Scottish Poems*, was printed by Lord Hailes in 1770. In 1829 the Bannatyne Club published the *Memorials of George Bannatyne*, by Sir Walter Scott, containing all the ascertained facts of the collector's life; and this and the complete contents of the famous MS. were finally printed together by the Hunterian Club, 1878–1886.

[1075] An entry in the Chartulary of Dryburgh bears that this ancestor, also a Sir Richard Maitland, disponed certain of his lands to that abbey in 1249.

[1076] During the reign of Robert III., in the year 1400, according to Wyntoun, Sir Robert Maitland took the castle of Dunbar by strategy from his mother's brother, the Earl of March.

[1077] The letter of James VI. dated 1st July, 1584, respecting Maitland's retirement from the bench, states that the latter had served the king's "grandsire, goodsire, goodame, mother, and himself."

[1078] Sadler's *State Papers*, vol. i., p. 70.

[1079] Printed in the appendix to the Maitland Club volume of Sir Richard's works.

[1080] Seen both in town and country.

[1081] fair.

[1082] causeway.

[1083] The hospitality of the religious houses was from time to time greatly abused by the nobles. Upon one occasion an Earl of Douglas compelled the Abbot of Aberbrothock to entertain him and a thousand of his followers for a considerable time.

[1084] The performance of these mediæval masquerades, containing traces of the ancient miracle-plays and allusions to the exploits of the Knights Templar, is still a favourite pastime in rural districts on Hallowe'en.

[1085] Churchmen made no scruple of appearing armed, like lay barons, on the battlefield. Thus two bishops and two abbots fell among the Scottish nobles at Flodden.

[1086] choir.

[1087] learn.

[1088] formerly.

[1089] love.

[1090] Easter.

[1091] cause.

[1092] plenty.

[1093] known.

[1094] ancestors.

[1095] truss, caparison. *Fr.* trousse.

[1096] long forms, settles.

[1097] For our prodigality some blame plays.

[1098] go.

[1099] Till.

[1100] cumber.

[1101] trespass upon.

[1102] knowledge.

[1103] This was a common abuse of the time. The Earl of Bothwell, when called to answer for the murder of Darnley, appeared in Edinburgh with a following of five thousand men.

[1104] overbear and intimidate the judge.

[1105] approval.

[1106] slighted because of abuse.

[1107] blame.

[1108] wondrous.

[1109] know.

[1110] spend.

[1111] novelty.

[1112] to add to.

[1113] marvel.

[1114] many.

[1115] "Of finest cambric their foc'sles," an allusion to the actual turret which formed the forecastle of ancient ships of war, to which the high breast-trimming of ladies' dresses probably presented some likeness.

[1116] hanging.

[1117] jelly bags.

[1118] Their under-petticoats must.

[1119] Broidered.

[1120] sewed with stripes of lace or silk.

[1121] enquire.

[1122] Barred above with drawn head-pieces. *O. Fr.* teste, tête.

[1123] necklaces and throat beads.

[1124] set high.

[1125] young person. Perhaps Dutch *jonker*.

[1126] sandals anciently worn by persons of rank.

[1127] lament.

[1128] doing what is becoming.

[1129] Be assured.

[1130] many a parcel, fortune.

[1131] learn.
[1132] clothe.
[1133] to glide across the street.
[1134] no mumming cards (playing cards with figures) early or late.
[1135] able.
[1136] Frequent.
[1137] to con by heart.
[1138] Leave off.
[1139] aspersion.
[1140] cambric kerchiefs.
[1141] suffer.
[1142] country.
[1143] Wearing.
[1144] over.
[1145] attend to.
[1146] inquire.
[1147] complain.
[1148] made him angry.
[1149] deemed.
[1150] kinship.
[1151] made my way.
[1152] went.
[1153] give.
[1154] seized.
[1155] fist.
[1156] help.
[1157] full.
[1158] kindred.
[1159] bought and sold.
[1160] reck.
[1161] Of which if he fail then.
[1162] joy.
[1163] vexation.
[1164] above.
[1165] lover.
[1166] partly, *lit.* greyish.
[1167] lose.
[1168] impoverish.
[1169] harry, ruin.
[1170] leaking boat.
[1171] farm.
[1172] substance.
[1173] tills.
[1174] known it.
[1175] suffer.
[1176] boldly.
[1177] rob.
[1178] great.
[1179] path.
[1180] gate.
[1181] abides, withstands.
[1182] They leave quite nothing.

[1183] almost wholly harried.

[1184] choose.

[1185] with theft so wasted.

[1186] Those wicked villains.

[1187] rendered inactive.

[1188] aught.

[1189] Blackmail was the yearly sum paid by farmers on the Highland and English borders to some powerful chieftain like Rob Roy or Johnnie Armstrong, who in return undertook to make good any losses by depredation.

[1190] wrecked.

[1191] accommodated.

[1192] broth made without meat.

[1193] carry off.

[1194] walls.

[1195] despoil.

[1196] stores.

[1197] reel and distaff.

[1198] Searches chest.

[1199] Too good a guide.

[1200] robs her web.

[1201] rest.

[1202] stomach.

[1203] such access.

[1204] to make contention for.

[1205] herd, protect.

[1206] stir.

[1207] oppress.

[1208] Though all perish.

[1209] Till.

[1210] So brittle and slippery.

[1211] withstand.

[1212] if.

[1213] fault.

[1214] strive.

[1215] lawful.

[1216] As already stated, the preservation of all the extant compositions attributed to Scot is owed to Bannatyne's MS. From this several pieces were printed by Ramsay, Hailes, Pinkerton, and Sibbald, in their several collections. The poems were first gathered into one volume by Laing, who printed an octavo edition of one hundred copies for private circulation at Edinburgh in 1821. Another edition, of seventy copies, by Alexander Smith, was printed at Glasgow in 1882. And in 1887 a modernised version of considerable merit by William M'Kean, "based mainly on Laing's collection," and not containing all the author's work, was printed at Paisley.

[1217] *Memorials of George Bannatyne*, Edin. 1829, p. 47.

[1218] a lady comely and neat.

[1219] stout fellows.

[1220] beat.

[1221] The Drum was a house belonging to Lord Somerville, situated between Dalkeith and Edinburgh.

[1222] *douze pairs*, the twelve peers of Charlemagne.

[1223] wars.

[1224] stir, move.

[1225] pricking, spurring.

[1226] briers.

[1227] hot.

[1228] known.
[1229] was stronger of body.
[1230] promised.
[1231] If.
[1232] youngsters. (Perhaps Dutch *jonker*, young nobleman.)
[1233] sprightly.
[1234] foam.
[1235] cornets.
[1236] course.
[1237] lost or won.
[1238] fashion.
[1239] pikes.
[1240] hurt.
[1241] too sluggishly.
[1242] as active as a fawn.
[1243] stolen.
[1244] death.
[1245] pledged to the peacock.
[1246] feud.
[1247] sun and moon.
[1248] ranged.
[1249] breakfast. O. Fr. *desjune*.
[1250] ere noon.
[1251] prepared.
[1252] pained, punished.
[1253] oaths.
[1254] by the time that.
[1255] Anger-mad, furious.
[1256] from his companion to fetch.
[1257] neither lad nor knave.
[1258] a baked loach.
[1259] fullness, drunkenness.
[1260] astir.
[1261] in company.
[1262] from having combat could not desist.
[1263] incited Will to war.
[1264] dreaded.
[1265] buying hides.
[1266] wether.
[1267] the groom, the gallant.
[1268] to live in peace.
[1269] joint.
[1270] by three such.
[1271] flight.
[1272] jibe.
[1273] over meek.
[1274] four together.
[1275] distaff.
[1276] to make your rump smoke.
[1277] nothing at all.
[1278] laughed.
[1279] take.

[1280] do it so reluctantly.
[1281] roe.
[1282] steep bank.
[1283] declivity.
[1284] limb.
[1285] rushed.
[1286] feared.
[1287] go.
[1288] thrust.
[1289] rumbled.
[1290] rolled.
[1291] limb, bough.
[1292] belongings.
[1293] full and crammed.
[1294] malt liquor, *lit.* grains.
[1295] worthy.
[1296] jacket of mail.
[1297] held at feud.
[1298] Above.
[1299] Woe befell the man that awaited it.
[1300] gap, opening between hills.
[1301] crupper.
[1302] with many a boast and fib.
[1303] ways.
[1304] From the time when.
[1305] full.
[1306] lost.
[1307] faith.
[1308] served long.
[1309] Prepare.
[1310] haste.
[1311] beleaguered.
[1312] wholly.
[1313] per-equal, *i.e.* quite worthy.
[1314] garden.
[1315] rest.
[1316] whole.
[1317] kiss.
[1318] Enwrapped without recovery.
[1319] aid.
[1320] endure.
[1321] blame.
[1322] lore.
[1323] kind of.
[1324] besets.
[1325] lament.
[1326] Though thou shouldst perish.
[1327] choose.
[1328] worthless.
[1329] unrest.
[1330] treated.
[1331] daily pained.

[1332] glancing.

[1333] made thee stare and idle.

[1334] slacken, abate thy sighing.

[1335] range.

[1336] earth.

[1337] failedst thou to grasp.

[1338] must.

[1339] high.

[1340] folded.

[1341] What a stupid fool.

[1342] Since well I know.

[1343] goes.

[1344] want of ease.

[1345] poor.

[1346] quarrel.

[1347] boughs.

[1348] each.

[1349] thrush.

[1350] swallow and nightingale.

[1351] sound.

[1352] hedgehog.

[1353] rabbit.

[1354] polecat.

[1355] skipping.

[1356] kept their haunts.

[1357] wild.

[1358] bough.

[1359] cliff.

[1360] budding.

[1361] ringdove.

[1362] shrill.

[1363] stared.

[1364] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, iii. 407, and on. The legend is alluded to by Shelley in "The Sensitive Plant," when he describes the narcissus flowers,

> "Who gaze on thine eyes in the stream's recess
> Till they die of their own dear loveliness."

[1365] twigs.

[1366] Till.

[1367] pool under a cataract.

[1368] descending.

[1369] The syllables, *ut*, *re*, *mi*, *fa*, *so*, *la*, are said, says Dr. Cranstoun, "to have been first used in the teaching of singing by Guido of Arezzo in the eleventh century. Le Maire, a French musician of the seventeenth century, added *si* for the seventh of the scale."

[1370] *i.e.* the throat of Echo, one of the cavern elves.

[1371] are accustomed to be.

[1372] above.

[1373] Till Cupid wakens.

[1374] earth.

[1375] mildly and quietly.

[1376] veil of cobweb lawn.

[1377] arm-covering.

[1378] marvels.

[1379] Perceiving my behaviour.

[1380] jested.

[1381] to hold sway.

[1382] wooed, made sign for.

[1383] have it gladly.

[1384] resigns.

[1385] higher than.

[1386] burned.

[1387] flame.

[1388] foolishly fond of.

[1389] by suit.

[1390] upon it.

[1391] hews (a tree) too high.

[1392] splinter.

[1393] An allusion to the fable of Æsop, versified by Henryson. The swallow, seeing a farmer sowing flax, begged the other birds to help her to pick up the seed, as the thread produced from it should compose the fowler's snare. Being twice refused and ridiculed, she resolved to quit the society of her thoughtless fellows, and has ever since frequented the dwellings of men.

[1394] shut.

[1395] stolen.

[1396] is ignorant of, refuses to acknowledge.

[1397] From the time when.

[1398] groaning.

[1399] booty.

[1400] hurt.

[1401] staggering state.

[1402] under (beyond) cure I got such check.

[1403] prevent (receiving check).

[1404] either be stale or checkmated.

[1405] fainted and swooned.

[1406] ere I wakened from.

[1407] spoiled.

[1408] staring at the stars.

[1409] brains.

[1410] disordered.

[1411] sighed till.

[1412] by such a boy.

[1413] shake fist at and curse.

[1414] disorder, consternation.

[1415] strange.

[1416] Unburnt and unboiled.

[1417] By love's bellows blown.

[1418] to smother it.

[1419] endeavouring without ceasing.

[1420] skeleton.

[1421] withered.

[1422] throbbing.

[1423] My pulses leaped.

[1424] get.

[1425] it behoved to abide.

[1426] enclosed.

[1427] overcome and upset.

[1428] In death-agony still living.

[1429] though.

[1430] death.

[1431] straining and thrusting.

[1432] more troubled.

[1433] ease.

[1434] annoyance.

[1435] oppressed.

[1436] drought.

[1437] dry grass stalks.

[1438] No token.

[1439] at once.

[1440] groans.

[1441] sheer.

[1442] A bush of sloes.

[1443] crag.

[1444] perfectly.

[1445] tough twigs.

[1446] through burden of their produce.

[1447] sheltered place.

[1448] knobs.

[1449] In ripples like diaper figuring.

[1450] Half-way.

[1451] Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, i. 452, and on.

[1452] without tiring.

[1453] use.

[1454] endeavour.

[1455] steep and wearisome.

[1456] far up, tall, and slender.

[1457] to essay it.

[1458] At times trying, at times stopping.

[1459] To stretch above my reach.

[1460] but foolish that has aught to do.

[1461] To dastards hard hazards.

[1462] Is death ere.

[1463] Softly.

[1464] Take care.

[1465] thou catch no hurt.

[1466] few times thou seest.

[1467] Foolish haste.

[1468] Beguiles.

[1469] considers not.

[1470] learn.

[1471] Atropos, eldest of the Fates, presiding over death.

[1472] youngest of the Fates, presiding over birth.

[1473] “Extremes are vicious.” The poet here advocates Horace’s “golden mean,” the counsel of the Greek proverb Μηδὲν ἄγαν, said to have been one of the inscriptions on the tripod of the oracle at Delphi.

[1474] signs.

[1475] knowest.

[1476] although.

[1477] slake.

[1478] drought.

[1479] Than fight with ten at once.

[1480] practice.

[1481] liefer, rather.

[1482] “This lovely poem is one of the happiest efforts of Montgomerie’s muse, and shows his lyric genius at its best. It is perhaps the oldest set of words extant to the air ‘Hey tuttie, taittie’—the war-note sounded for the Bruce on the field of Bannockburn, and familiarized to everyone by Burns’ ‘Scots wha hae.’ The song was one of those chosen for adaptation by the Wedderburns in their ‘Compendious Buik of godly and spirituall Sangis.’”—(Cranstoun, *Notes*, p. 371.)

[1483] dawns.

[1484] the coverts attire themselves.

[1485] throstle-cock.

[1486] scatter.

[1487] daisies.

[1488] flame.

[1489] As red as the rowan, mountain ash.

[1490] partner.

[1491] Toss high their tines, antlers.

[1492] hedgehogs.

[1493] each one.

[1494] attends.

[1495] mates.

[1496] prepare.

[1497] foes.

[1498] *i.e.* The stallion.

[1499] rears (?)

[1500] gallops.

[1501] men, stout fellows.

[1502] strong weapons.

[1503] throne.

[1504] change quarters.

[1505] Then gallants.

[1506] On white steeds that neigh.

[1507] cause.

[1508] scare.

[1509] feigning.

[1510] wrestle.

[1511] have; *i.e.* possession already half satisfies.

[1512] smith.

[1513] boldly.

[1514] must.

[1515] plentiful.

[1516] learn.

[1517] for a time.

[1518] parting.

[1519] Since then.

[1520] separate.

[1521] key.

[1522] feared.

[1523] holly.

[1524] quivering trills.

[1525] though.

[1526] frail, innocent.

[1527] thorns prick.

[1528] bonnie breast.

[1529] likewise tried.

[1530] threatening.

[1531] my conquest (or object of conquest) quit.

[1532] without peer.

Transcriber's Note

The printed book included marginal glosses and footnotes; these have been combined into one series of footnotes. Duplicate headings have been removed from this eBook.

The following apparent errors have been corrected:

- p. viii "223" changed to "221"
- p. 172 "I sall" changed to "“I sall"
- p. 178 (note 1054) The text included a note anchor, but no corresponding gloss. The latter has been added.

Glosses with missing full stops have been corrected.

Variant spelling and inconsistent punctuation have otherwise been kept as printed.

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