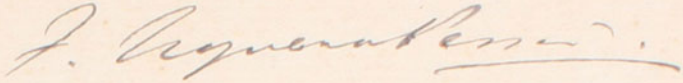
# SELECTIONS FROM THE BRITISH SATIRISTS



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# BRITISH SATIRISTS

With an Introductory Essay

BY

CECIL HEADLAM
Late Demy of Magdalen College, Oxford


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# *PREFACE.*

*I SHARE with many people a holy horror of 'Selections,' but the British satirists are so little known that I am not without hope that specimens from their works may prove both useful and interesting to the ordinary reader.*

*It is, indeed, due to the same causes that the satirists are little read and that they lend themselves to this treatment of selection. In the first place, especially in the case of the earlier authors, their good things are buried in a mass of writing, partly satiric, partly not, which is dreary and obscure, now that its interest has evaporated with the ephemeral occasion of its production. In the second place, the works of these earlier writers are often quite beyond the reach of the man in the street. In some cases they have never been reprinted, in many cases they have only been reprinted in elaborate and expensive editions, intended solely for scholars and connoisseurs. In the third place, the frank filth and savage coarseness which disfigure so much of our satire have rendered it revolting to modern taste. But there are pearls to be found in almost all these dunghills, and I have endeavoured to present to the reader as many jewels of pure wit and sarcasm and irony as space would allow.*

*With the object of selecting, where desirable, more copiously from less available writers, I have denied myself the pleasure of giving extracts from the novelists of this century.*

*Jane Austen, Peacock, Thackeray, Beaconsfield, may, after all, be left to speak for themselves without this adventitious aid of snippets.*

*Again, with a view to saving space for pieces more generally interesting and more genuinely amusing, I have been as sparing as possible in my selections from authors who require to be read dictionary in hand. I have aimed merely at giving extracts representative of the early English school, not of each early English satirist.*

*As to the Introduction, I have tried to give a bird's-eye view rather than an exhaustive account or a dull and confusing systematized classification of our satirists, and, whilst noting what seem to me the distinguishing characteristics of them, I have tried, also, in dealing with so many writers in so short a space, to avoid the perhaps unavoidable dulness of a catalogue.*

*It remains to remind the reader that my criticisms deal almost exclusively with the satirical work—in many cases but a small part of the whole—of the writers reviewed.*

4, *Smith Square,*
*Westminster.*

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## *INTRODUCTION.*

IT is useful, in considering a subject of so large and so vague a character as satiric writing, to attempt a definition of it. A definition is always the best introduction to a discussion. But satire is so elastic a term—it is used to denote a form of literature which at one time includes, and at another excludes, so many different elements—that it is impossible to define it accurately.

Satire may be frankly personal, with no other object than that of private revenge, or professedly general, with the avowed object of improving public morals. For all satire is not moral, any more than all moralizing is satire. Though we are apt to look for an air of moral superiority and of moral intention in the satirists, we do not always find these qualities. Wit, humour, sarcasm, irony, invective, ridicule, burlesque—all these find a place in satiric writing, but it is difficult to determine how far any one of them is necessary to this species of literature; so that it is perhaps best to be content with saying that satirical

writers are the censorious critics of life, literature, and manners—critics, in fact, of everything and of everybody except themselves—and that they use one or more of the above-mentioned weapons. Satire itself, it will then follow, is a matter of critical intelligence. It is founded on intellect and wit rather than on imagination; but when wit and intellect are combined with the creative faculty, there we find the most effective, because the most pleasing, the most ironic, and the most subtle form of satire.

This kind of composition will naturally be most popular, and attract the greatest writers during those periods of literature when men's thoughts turn from the passions to politics, from sentiment to a study of social phenomena; when, in fact, the critical predominates over the imaginative faculty. The triumph of reason and the stir of politics at the time of the Reformation are reflected in the writings of Skelton, and a hundred years later an age of argument and criticism finds expression in such writers as Marvell, Butler, Dryden, Swift, Pope, and Addison.

From the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century all the world wrote satires,[1] whether against satirists, politics, brandy, coffee, or man.

The reaction in favour of the romantic type of literature begun by Thomson and others, encouraged by Bishop Percy, and established by Sir Walter Scott, left little room for cold and clear-cut criticism, as it had been formulated in the classical satires of Pope. But in an advancing civilization the occasion of satire can never wholly be wanting. Byron, Peacock, Beaconsfield, Carlyle, Thackeray, all modulated in different keys on the scale of satire, which criticises or condemns the existing state of literature, society and politics. Till we are all Houyhnhnms,

[1] *Vide* the collections of Poems relating to State Affairs.

till the millennium has arrived, when vice and affectation have vanished off the face of the earth, there will always be scope for the satirist. *Dum civitas erit, judicia fient*,[1] is true in more ways than one. Law cannot deal with the offences of bad taste. Satire was introduced into the world to supply the defects of law. The satirist should be the watch-dog of society.[2] This is the ideal. But we have to admit that the modes of satire are as various as the motives of satirists. The motive may be the pleasure of laughing in a corner, of reforming mankind, of making a hit, or of taking revenge. The mode may be that of denunciation, of irony, or, most useful and least offensive, that which, instead of lashing, laughs men out of their follies and vices.[3] Of all these we shall find in the present review examples that will bear comparison with any that the literature of Greece or Rome or France can afford.

Up to the middle of the fourteenth century the English satirical spirit expressed itself in the form of Latin verse,[4] or of imitation and translation of the prevailing French models.[5] Popular ballads,[6] satirical and political lays there were, dealing with the evils that provoked the Lancastrian Revolution; but as poems these have little but an antiquarian

[1] Cicero, pro Sex. Roscio.

[2] Hor., Sat. II. i. 85: Si quis opprobriis dignum latraverit.

[3] Swift, *Intelligencer*, No. III.

[4] *E.g.*, Apocalypsis Goliæ, and the various poems attributed to Walter Mapes.

[5] *E.g.*, 'The Land of Cockayne.'

[6] This country has always at periods of excitement been prolific in the production of political squibs, 'libels,' lampoons. I must refer the curious reader to Mr. Wright's collections of political poems. Among the chief writers of these ballad-satires in later days may be mentioned Cleveland, Brome, Buckingham, Rochester, Dorset, Congreve, Swift, Gay, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, Wolcot and the writers in the *Anti-Jacobin*, Hook, Moore and Burns.

interest, and as satires they are sufficiently illustrated by the extracts given from them and from Langland.

William Langland, the author of 'The Vision of Piers the Plowman,' may claim to be the first great English satirist, and he has the additional interest of being almost the last writer to compose in that native, unrhymed, alliterative verse which his contemporary Chaucer was sending for ever out of fashion. Chaucer himself, who had learned to handle his weapons by translating the 'Roman de la Rose,' wrote, incidentally, brilliant satire, with that sly but genial humour and keen observation which are his. But he wrote it as a poet and a realist, as a transcriber of life, a teller of tales.

His stories are not written with a didactic purpose, but they occasionally give rise to ironical descriptions. In his 'Sir Thopas' he anticipated that sphere of literary criticism in which so much satire has since been centred; whilst, in his carefully-studied portraits of men and manners, he may be said to have foreshadowed the methods of the poets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[1] The humorous realism with which in the 'Canterbury Tales' he delineates men as he saw them, instead of mere abstract virtues and vices in the allegorical fashion of the day, shows how great a satirist he might have been if he had had any motive for devoting himself to satire; if, in place of a large-hearted interest in men as they were, he had been possessed of a burning zeal to improve them.

Chaucer, however, only grew didactic in his decline. Otherwise, he lacked the moral purpose which we look for in the deliberate satirist. This purpose inspired Langland as truly as it inspired Wycliffe.

[1] Professor Courthope's 'History of English Poetry,' vol. i.

The chief merit of 'Piers Plowman' lies in its being a democratic document, an exact expression, in a homely guise, of the popular sentiment. It gives voice, in the language of the people, to the indignation roused by the corruption it exposes in the nobility, in the Government, and in the Church. Unfortunately, it was necessary for the author to veil his attacks under an allegory, and to resort to the personification of vices and virtues to avoid personalities. To make a long-drawn allegory at all palatable is one of the most difficult of undertakings, and one of the most rarely successful. It says much for Langland's genius that he succeeded in this almost impossible task. For 'Piers Plowman' is still readable, and it is so because the author has known how to relieve the tedium of his allegory by diversions, by sarcastic and ironical wit, by the vigour of his descriptions, and by his minute and vivid drawing of domestic scenes. Langland knew low life as well as Skelton or Crabbe, and he painted it with all the skill of a Dutch master.

But neither this attention to detail nor his allegorical method obscures the earnestness which inspired the humble country priest, who, like Wycliffe, saw in the abuse of wealth by the rich and in the possession of wealth by the Church and Mendicant Friars the root of all the evils he deplored. 'It is in his intense, absorbing moral feeling,' Dean Milman has well observed,[1] 'that he is beyond his age: with him outward observances are but hollow shows, mockeries, hypocrisies without the inward power of religion. It is not so much in his keen cutting satire on all matters of the Church, as his solemn installation of Reason and Conscience as the guides of the self-directed soul, that he is break-

[1] 'History of Latin Christianity,' quoted by Dr. Skeat, to whose admirable edition of Langland I am much indebted.

ing the yoke of sacerdotal domination; in his constant appeal to the plainest, simplest Scriptural truths, as in themselves the whole of religion, he is a stern reformer. The sad, serious satirist, in his contemplation of the world around him, the wealth of the world and the woe, sees no hope but in a new order of things in which, if the hierarchy shall subsist, it shall subsist in a form, with powers, in a spirit totally opposite to that which now rules mankind. The mysterious Piers the Plowman seems to designate from what quarter that Reformer is to arise.'

After Chaucer and Langland a long interval elapses before we come across any English satirist of worth. Lydgate's satirical work is too insignificant to give us pause, and John Gower, to whom Chaucer and Lydgate apply the epithet of 'moral,' is a moralist indeed in whom there is no humour. He has no individuality and no power of creation. Thomas Occleve has a distinct humour of his own, but his verses have hardly any claim to be considered literature. For fifty years after the death of Lydgate (? 1440), England, torn as she was by civil wars, produced neither satirist nor poet. But during this period the lamp of literature was kept burning across the Border. A group of Scottish writers, with James I. of Scotland at their head, kept alive the tradition of Chaucer. Of this group, Henryson, Dunbar and Lyndesay concern us, and chiefly Dunbar. All three were afflicted with the prevailing disease of allegory. Robert Henryson in his 'Moral Fables' adapted the Æsopian 'Fables' to the manners of the day in order to show

> 'How many men in operation
> Are lyke to bestis in condition,'

and is so singularly successful that he may even bear comparison with La Fontaine. For he has the gift

of easy narration and the power of satiric comment to a remarkable degree. But in spite of his wit and humour—and he has both—he is over-prone to moralize and too ready to preach.

William Dunbar, the foremost and most versatile poet of this Scottish school, has two manners of satire. He can be mild or vindictive, subtle or violent in his attacks. At one time he uses the allegorical style to lash with a wild and burlesque humour personified vices, at another he deluges with furious outbursts of abuse his personal enemies at the Court of King James. In 'The Dance of the Deadly Sins' he has come near to equalling Langland in those passages of 'Piers Plowman' which suggested it. In his railing mood he is a Scottish Skelton, and displays in his satirical ballads just that quality of extremely coarse wit which in later times distinguished Burns. No great amount of originality either in matter or in manner can be justly claimed for Dunbar. But in his verse, as in that of Henryson, there is a music which is seldom to be found in that of Skelton or Barclay, their English contemporaries. Sir David Lyndesay, however, though a daring and trenchant satirist, is so unpolished and uncouth that he can hardly rank as a poet at all. His life was one of action. His writings are those of a man who is, above all things, an earnest reformer, a would-be corrector of all abuses. He was sincere in his convictions and courageous in expressing them. The volume of his work is large. 'The Complaint of Papingo' is perhaps his best political satire. The allegorical method of this piece does not blunt its edge. His full-blooded humour and trenchant invective against corrupt priests and vicious Court favourites are best exemplified in his 'Satyre of the Threi Estates'—a Morality or Interlude acted before the Court and

having the additional interest of being the first approach to regular dramatic composition in Scotland. But Lyndesay wrote so much during a life busied with the stormy politics of the time that his work is in execution far below the level of his predecessors. His aim is practical, but he has no mastery over his machinery. Moreover, the very sincerity which inspired him to write at all leads him too readily, for a satirist, into political moralizing and somewhat prosy preaching.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century we can return once more to England, and there, in the comic and satirical part of the 'pithy, pleasaunt and profitable works of John Skelton,' we recognise a writer truly original in his own special line. In him, however, we need look for no refinement of style, and little trace of Chaucer's influence. Gifted with a rude but caustic humour and considerable force of imagination, he added to these qualities a profound knowledge of life both high and low. Even apart from the fascinating originality of his matter and manner, his almost exhaustless vocabulary of popular English renders him well worth reading.

Laureate of both Universities and perhaps Court Poet[1] to Henry VIII., Skelton became Rector of Diss about 1500, and continued to pour forth invectives in the metre which is called after his name.[2] The verses rattle on one rhyme till they can no more.[3] 'The chimes ring in the ear and the thoughts are flung about like coruscations.'[4] There is in these

[1] Certainly he was tutor to Prince Henry.

'Yt cometh the wele me to remorde
That creaunser [tutor] was to thy sofreyne lord,'

he says in a poem against lusty Garnyshe.

[2] Skeltonics.

[3] Cf. the metre of Ingoldsby Legends.

[4] I. D'Israeli.

quick-returning rhymes a stirring spirit which is heightened by the playfulness of the diction. His new words are not 'new words with little or no wit,'[1] but pungent, ludicrous and expressive. He used slang knowingly, in the manner of a scholar. His chief satirical productions are 'The Bowge of Courte,' 'The Boke of Colyn Cloute,' and 'Why Come Ye Nat To Courte.' In the first of these he gives us a gallery of characters painted with a boldness and discrimination unknown since the days of Chaucer, and displayed by none of his contemporaries, save, perhaps, the brilliant Dunbar.[2]

Here, however, there is little of the sincere native ring, none of the virulence and bitterness of the personal note which we find in 'Why Come Ye Nat To Courte.'

Colyn Cloute is a savage satirical philippic against the corruptions of the Church. Skelton attacks the bishops for their laziness, luxury, and ignorance, and does not spare the lower orders of the clergy. Like Langland, he based his attack on popular feeling. When he pronounces of this piece:

> 'For though my rhyme be ragged,
> Tattered and jagged,
> Rudely rayne beaten,
> Rusty and moughte eaten,
> If ye take well therwith
> It hath in it some pith' (ll. 53-58),

he is not over-rating its vigour and fearlessness. Yet good criticism of his own work was hardly to be expected from an author who wrote a poem of 1,600 lines in honour of himself.[3] None the less is he right with regard to the merits of Colyn Cloute. In all these satires, indeed, there is a moral earnestness underlying intemperate and scurrilous

[1] Hudibras. [2] Dyce, Skelton's Works, 1843
[3] 'The Garlande of Laurell.'

buffoonery. His wrath is tremendous. He hits straight from the shoulder, and indulges in none of Juvenal's sly backhanders. He writes in a scurry of rhymes which leaves us breathless with righteous indignation.

In 'Why Come Ye Nat To Courte' the satire is entirely personal, and is aimed at Wolsey. The causes which turned 'Skelton Laureate obsequious and loyall' into the bitter assailant of his former powerful patron are unknown. We only know that he attacked the full-blown pride of Wolsey[1] with a boldness that made it necessary for him to flee to Westminster for sanctuary, and with a fierceness of invective almost unparalleled. In Colyn Cloute he had indulged in a few hits at the Cardinal, but in 'Speke, Parrot,' and in 'Why Come Ye Nat To Courte' he gives free rein to the bitterness of his satiric genius. He wields the weapon of his satire with tremendous force and skill, though perhaps a little more generosity would have made the onslaught more effective. Hardly ever since Catullus attacked Cæsar had a powerful living statesman been so abused. Skelton, indeed, lacks none of the impetuous virulence of Catullus, but he falls short in neatness and finish. There is, however, nothing in this sincere and decent poem to bring the blush to the cheek of 'the young person,' nothing to justify Pope's epithets.[2] These, indeed, are true of the torrents of Billingsgate poured on the head of

[1] Cf. Dyce, Skelton's Works, 1843.

[2] 'Chaucer's worst ribaldry is learned by rote,
And beastly Skelton heads of houses quote.'
Pope, 'Imitations of Horace,' Bk. II., Ep. i. 38.

His note is even more unfair: 'Skelton, poet laureat to Henry VIII., a volume of whose verses has been lately reprinted, consisting almost wholly of ribaldry, obscenity, and Billingsgate language.'

'Gaudy, Gresy, Garnyshe,' who apparently challenged the poet

> 'Thus to contaminate
> And to violate
> The dygnyte laureate,'

but they are most untrue of the bulk of his work.

We have not to consider the justice of this attack on Wolsey;[1] only the quality of the satire. The merit of this is in some ways first-rate. The picture Skelton draws will bear comparison for simplicity and bitterness with the passages in Juvenal which suggested it. It was, he tells us, 'at Juuynal's request' that he was 'forcibly constrayned to wryght of this glorious gest.' But, we feel, he needed no urging. He wrote 'quia difficile est Satiram non scribere,' and his work is stamped with the spirit of a spontaneous outburst. His qualities, in fine, are vivacious fancy and humorous originality tinged by moral earnestness. In this, as in his jubilant freedom, he is truly Rabelaisian before Rabelais.

Alexander Barclay lived and wrote in Skelton's time, but he shared but little in Skelton's views and still less in his originality. Though he also claims to be a follower of Juvenal, he is really the last of the purely mediæval English allegorists.[2] Like Gower, he moralizes incessantly. His 'Ship of Fools' is a translation, though not a slavish one, of Brandt's 'Stultifera Navis,' but he is more original in being the first to adapt Virgil's Eclogues to the English tongue, with the view of satirizing the manners of the Court. In this line he was followed at intervals by Barnabe Googe and Spenser.

[1] *E.g.*, ll. 396 *et seq.*

[2] Cf. Professor Courthope's chapter on the Progress of Allegory, 'History of English Poetry,' vol. i.

1528. 'Rede me and be nott wrothe' is a curious work written by William Roy and Jerome Barlow. It is really a reformation pamphlet, attacking, chiefly in the form of a dialogue between 'two prestes servauntes,' the hierarchy and priesthood of England, especially as represented by Wolsey. It is none too timid, even when tried by the standard of Skelton. The spirit is excellent; the satire is more salt than bitter, and what bitterness there may be is due rather to the facts than to the expression.

1503-1542. Sir Thomas Wyatt may claim the distinction of being our first classical satirist. He gives us the mellowed moralizing of one who has found himself out of place at Courts, and being unable to 'frame his tongue to feign, to cloak the truth,' retires from the world without regret, without bitterness. This feeling at any rate was perfectly genuine; his disdain for the meanness which frequents high places was entirely unaffected. But to express these views, being conscious of the incompleteness of his own language and of the forms of poetry then in use as vehicles of thought, he deliberately imitated foreign and classical models. It is not by this imitation that the vigour and individuality of his thought is impaired, but by the inability of the pioneer to master the technique of these new forms. Still Wyatt's three pieces are terse and smooth in comparison with his contemporary satirists. The first and third of his satires are imitated from Horace and written in the *terza rima* of Alamanni; the second is imitated from that Italian author.

It is hardly within the scope of this essay to point out how Wyatt and Surrey brought about a revolution in English versification by introducing a metrical in place of a rhythmical structure, nor how these two poets, by setting the example of admitting

the influence of the Italian school of the Renaissance, gave a death-blow to the mediævalism which had for so long haunted our literature. In so doing they prepared the way for the freedom and harmony of the Elizabethan writers. However, in satire, Wyatt's example was not immediately followed, nor when, after an interval of over half a century, the Elizabethan classical satirists arose, did they, like Wyatt, imitate the polished irony and witty ridicule of Horace, but rather the vehement denunciations, the coarse and rugged virulence, of Juvenal, Persius and Martial. It is probably in no small degree due to this fact that English satire has almost always been distinguished by two disfigurements—an excessive personal bitterness and an unnecessary coarseness combined with an exaggerated air of moral indignation.

Meantime, Robert Crowley, whose dreary epigrams exhibit him as a 'censor morum,' handed on the flickering torch of native satire to George Gascoigne. This versatile author 'invented,'[1] to quote his own words, 'a morall and godly Satyre called the Steele Glasse, written without rime, but I trust not without reason.' The Steele Glasse, or Mirror, typifies the plain manners of England as opposed to the Crystal Glass—the foreign luxury and corruption of Venice. Though his metres show that he has felt the Italian influence, Gascoigne does not follow Wyatt in imitating classical models, but rather inclines to that allegorical treatment which Spenser frankly adopts. Spenser and Gascoigne, in fact, are, as satirists, nearer to the spirit of Dante and Langland than to that of the era which was now beginning. Spenser, not to mention the incidental satire in the 'Faery Queen,' uses this allegorical method of

1550.

1576.

[1] Epistle Dedicatory, and Dedication of 'Delicate Diet for Daintie Mouthde Drunkards.'

satire in the fifth Eclogue of the 'Shepheard's Calendar' to gird at 'the colourable and fained goodwill of Protestant and Catholic,' and openly attacks the loose living of popish prelates in Eclogue IX. 'Prosopopoia, or Mother Hubberd's Tale,' again, is in the shape of a fable, published in 1591, but composed, as Spenser tells us, in the raw conceit of his youth. It is a satire of some heat and choler, but the point of it is blunted by the allegory. None the less it contains some fine and famous passages. Whilst Spenser wrote this fable in over-fluent heroics, Gascoigne used still less polished blank verse. The latter, a man of the world and a soldier of experience, devoted, as he himself put it, 'tam Marti quam Mercurio,' as much to the God of War as to the God of Learning, is a shrewd critic of man's vices and follies, and he preserves for us a curious picture of the manners and morality of the age. In spite of his imperfect mastery of blank verse rhythm, and his tendency towards the prosaic, he can boast an ease and harmony rare at that date. His style, which is clear and, except in his prose works, unaffected, shows him to be a master of the English language. Without any great fertility of fancy, he has masculine energy and an undoubted gift of satirical description.

The work of Edward Hake[1] has some little recommendation beyond its rarity, and

> 'Intent good living to erect,
> And sin rescinde which rifely raignes abroade.'

He boldly attacked not only bawds, lawyers, and physicians, but also vice in high places, at a time when the Star Chamber was not idle. His hatred of Papists is quite rabid. If his easy black-letter rhymes are not poetry, they deserve, at any rate,

[1] M.P. for Windsor, *circa* 1579.

some mention as a collection of professedly serious satires.

We now find ourselves on the threshold of the Elizabethan era. Robert Greene and Thomas Nashe may be taken as representing the prose satire of that period. They availed themselves of the pamphlet, which at this time supplied the place of journalism, to carry on personal controversies, or to amuse the public by ridiculing the affectations and vices of the age—but always with the object of putting money in their own pockets.

The rollicking humour and fertile genius of the Elizabethans were not favourable to satire. Men were not, in those days, sufficiently out of temper with themselves and the world to be critical. The spirit of romanticism—of emotional imagination, rather than the critical spirit, was abroad. So that in the satiric compositions of the day, wit unpruned, wild burlesque, and exuberant horse-play take the place of that acid intellectual aloofness, that restrained inward revolt, which have marked the greatest satirists.

As it was the direct impulse of classical studies acquired at the Universities which at this time inspired Lodge, Donne, Marston, and Hall to write satiric verse, so Greene and Nashe also were 'University wits.' But their biting pamphlets owe nothing to the classics. They are the outcome of their life in London. They are pasquinades thrown off in a fever heat of personal resentment, or satiric romances, confessions, exposures written under pressure of want. Wild and unrestrained in their lives, these writers were equally wild and unrestrained in their prose. Their touch is uncertain, their style diffuse, their sarcasm often pointless, their satire frequently degenerates into the absurdest buffoonery, but, in spite of all those defects, the wit,

and warmth, and life of the Elizabethans was in them, and these are imperishable qualities.

1560-1592. Robert Greene, as dramatist or euphuistic romancer, lampooner or moralist, lyricist or pamphleteer, blackguard or repentant, offers one of the most interesting character-studies in Elizabethan literature. But we have only to consider him in the one capacity of satirist; we must not even stay to moralize over his unfortunate surfeit of Rhenish and pickled herrings.

Greene spent his life in passing from violent fits of debauchery to equally violent fits of remorse, which found voice in confessions and culminated in the

1591. 'Groat's-worth of Wit,' an autobiography in the form of a novel, written on his death-bed. In the 'Conny-catching' series he uses his unrivalled knowledge of knavery to expose the ways of the London sharpers. It is very probable that, with characteristic irony, he also wrote the 'Defence of Conny-catching,' in which he is himself roundly abused, with the view of advertising his previous pamphlets. Here, and in 'The Life and Death of Mourton and Ned Browne, two notable Conny-catchers,' he shows great skill in wielding the weapon of irony. The latter work is, indeed, a faint foreshadowing of 'Jonathan Wild,' though it lacks the strength and consistent irony of that masterpiece.

Greene's best satiric work, however, is 'A Quip for an Upstart Courtier,' wherein he ridicules the whole race of *parvenus* in the person of Gabriel Harvey, whose brother Richard, an astrologer given to indulging in troublesome prophecies, had caused offence by calling Greene's circle 'piperly make-plaies and make-bates.' The description of the jury, who decide the 'Quaint Dispute' as to the social value of foreign luxuries between Velvet-breeches and Cloth-breeches in favour of the latter, gives occasion

for a whole gallery of contemporary portraits drawn from members of the various professions. Besides the historical interest of these portraits there is much satiric humour to be found in the delineation of them.

In his best satiric work, we may note, there is little trace of that pedantic, affected, euphuistic style which Greene exhibited in his love-stories. The sentences, indeed, are straggling and unframed, but the style becomes simple and natural. The chief fault of his prose, dramatic or other, is that there is no air of repose, but a continual straining after wit, which signifies a lack of art and self-criticism, and results in the tedious quality attending so much Elizabethan wit. The 'Quip for an Upstart Courtier,' however, is comparatively free from this fault. The unity of plan makes this piece a more artistic whole than is usually the case in the pamphlets of the time.

Greene's attack upon Harvey gave rise to a literary warfare, which was carried on for five years by Harvey and Nashe. So virulent and rancorous was this war, and so much did it excite popular feeling, that it became necessary at last for the authorities to interfere and put a stop to it. 1597.

Thomas Nashe, like Greene, was a University man, and, like him, was a dramatist, romancer, pamphleteer—everything by starts and nothing long. His work is marred conspicuously by the lack of form and self-restraint which distinguish all the Elizabethan prose writers; but his brilliant mother-wit, his gift for irony and burlesque, and his power of scathing sarcasm to a large extent redeem these faults. He is not, however, so dexterous in the use of irony as Greene, and he is more boisterous. His share in the Martin-Marprelate controversy[1]— 1567-1601.

[1] For the history of the Martin Marprelate controversy and tracts see Dexter's 'The Congregationalism of the last Three

a controversy in which there was little real humour displayed on either side—and his literary quarrel with Gabriel Harvey, begun in defence of Greene, made him famous. His controversial severity led him to great lengths of caricature and violence, but he is now and again extremely happy, as, for instance, in his criticism of Harvey's craze for English hexameters. 'Have with you to Saffron Walden,' the last and best known of his attacks on Harvey, is full of scornful ridicule wrapped in a whirl of wit, and is written in his most characteristic 'yerking, firking, jerking veine.' There are many good things, too, in the 'Anatomie of Absurditie,' a shapeless collection of shrewd observations.

1596-1601. We must be content with the bare mention of other writers in the native school. The 'Kinde friendly snippinge' and the moral disquisitions of Breton,[1] the truths shadowed forth by strong-phrased Gilpin,[2] and the fantastic verses of silver-tongued Sylvester,[3] do not indeed call for any lengthy notice; but Thomas Lodge, though he cannot compare with Greene and Nashe for vigour, originality, and wit, demands some attention.

1556-1625. He was one of the least boisterous, but by no means the least interesting, of the University wits who came up to London at the end of the sixteenth century. He tried his hand at every sort of com-

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Hundred Years,' and for that of the quarrel with Gabriel Harvey see Nashe's Works, ed. Grosart (Huth Library), pp. liii-lviii.

[1] Nicholas Breton's 'No Whippinge, nor Trippinge, but a kinde friendly Snippinge,' is the last of a trilogy arising out of an attack on Ben Jonson: 'The Whippinge of the Satyre by W. I[ngram?]', and 'The Whipper of the Satyre—his Penance in a White Sheet,' etc., the reply of some friend of Marston's with more zeal than wit.

[2] 'Skialetheia.'

[3] 'Tobacco Battered and Pipes Shattered about their Eares that Idlely Idolize so Base and Barbarous a Weed.'

position, and succeeded in rivalling, if not in surpassing, 'Lilly the famous for facility' in his own line of euphuistic romance. As a satirist he is, it may be, somewhat tame and lacking in force, but his writings have a certain distinction which recommends them. For when Hall boasted in the 'Virgidemiarum' 1597.

> 'Follow me who list,
> And be the second English satirist,'

he did an injustice to Lodge, who had anticipated him in his own particular line of heroic satire; for the rare British Museum copy of 'A Fig for Momus' bears the date of 1595. 'Would God our realme could light upon a Lucilius!' Lodge had exclaimed in his reply to Stephen Gosson's 'School of Abuse.'[1] We now find him coming forward with a modest attempt to supply that deficiency in the realm.

In the preface 'To the Gentlemen Readers whatsoever'—a preface, be it noted, of supreme interest in the history of English satire—the title of the volume 'Fig for Momus' is explained. The explanation is, 'In despight of the detractor who, worthily deserving the name of Momus, shall . . . at my hands have a figge to choake him.' 'The satyres,' he goes on to say, 'included in this volume are by pleasures, rather placed here to prepare and trie the ear then to feede it: because, if they passe well, the whole centon of them, alreadie in my hands, shall sodainly be published.'[2] It does not seem that he met with

[1] The 'School of Abuse' was a foolish invective against the stage. It was afterwards honoured by calling forth Sir Philip Sidney's beautiful reply, 'The Defence of Poesie.'

[2] 'In them, under the name of certaine Romaines, where I reprehend vice I purposely wrong no man, but observe the laws of that kind of poeme. If any repine thereat, I am sure he is guilty, because he bewrayeth himselfe.' He shows that he is not of the compromising sort: 'If any man reprove let him looke to it; I will lip him. As I am ready to satisfy the reasonable, so I have a gird in store for a railer.'

the needed encouragement. There is no trace of that centon. As to the five satires contained in the 'Fig for Momus,' the preface quoted leaves little to be added. The importance of them lies in their form rather than in their matter or intrinsic merit. Lodge takes Juvenal for his model, and in the fifth satire follows the tenth satire of Juvenal closely. But his denunciations are of too general a character to have much interest, and his style is too much steeped in euphuism to redeem that defect.[1]

Of his other works in this line, 'Truth's complaint over England' is a fairly vigorous satirical poem, the exact meaning of which is concealed under an allegory, a course dictated alike by prudence and fashion, but which, it must be admitted, somewhat spoils the satire.

'Catharos—a Nettle for Nice Noses' is a rabid and pedantic prose-dialogue of no merit. It abounds in this sort of stuff, put in the mouth of Diogenes: 'My friend, sayth the shoemaker, your shooe is good on the last, but whoso puts it on shall find small peniworth in the lasting.' The 'Alarum against Usurers' is a tedious moral story of no merit.

Lodge, as we have hinted, dabbled in almost every style of literature, and was too anxious to 'have his oar in every paper boat' to achieve very great success; but we must give him the credit he deserves for being the introducer into English of the satire in heroics, which passed from him, through Hall and Donne, to Dryden, Pope, Churchill, and Byron.

1593. The MSS. of two of Donne's satires are, indeed, dated 1593, earlier, that is, than the publication of Lodge's 'Momus.' Donne is the chief of that meta-

[1] It is worth noting that in the same volume Lodge published some Epistles to various friends in heroic verse—also the first of their kind in English.

physical school which delighted in 'the irregular and eccentric violence of wit.'[1]

His satire is fresh, but too often, like the elegies, extremely coarse. The see-saw style of reading does not suit his lines, which have 'a deep and subtle music of their own.'[2] This, however, is often spoilt by the metrical roughness deliberately affected by classical satirists of this period.[3] The Romans allowed licences in this branch of literature; their object was to preserve the free, open-air character of the satiric muse. But the satires of Horace, Persius, and Juvenal are only harsh when compared, not with the crude vigour of Ennius, but with the correctness of Virgil's Epic and the *curiosa felicitas* of Horace's 'Odes.'[4] Donne and his fellows, on the other hand, are uncouth, even in comparison with the imperfect precisians of their own day. This slavish copying of Roman models—especially of Persius, the most crabbed of them all—is responsible also for the deliberate obscurity of allusion and the air of imitation which mar the poetical satirists of the Elizabethan period. But the gain is greater than the loss; for without these classical models English satiric poetry would not so readily have found the proper form in which to express itself, or a canon by which to test its material.

Donne, however, is not so wilfully obscure as Hall. In his matter he is pungent, but never angry. He knows how to proportion his criticism. Vices he treats not too gently, but he deals lightly with vanities. Sometimes he laughs out joyously, some-

[1] Johnson, 'Life of Cowley.'

[2] Cf. Craik's 'History of English Literature.'

[3] *E.g.*, 'As prone to ill, and of good as forget-
Full, as proud, lustfull, and as much in debt.'
Sat. iv. 13.

[4] Petronius, Satyr. 118: 'Horatii curiosa felicitas.'

times you catch a sob of unutterable sorrow and remorse ;[1] but you will not find in him that extravagant exaggeration and only half-sincere denunciation of contemporary vice and folly which Marston and Hall borrowed from Juvenal.[2] The cry *Omne in præcipiti vitium stetit*[3]—'The world is worse than ever it was'[4]—disfigures many English satirists, and not least the learned and voluminous Bishop Hall.

Like Donne, Hall thought it necessary for a satire to be 'hard of conceit and harsh of style';[5] but, for all that, he lets us see that he is a master of style, and the fabric of the couplets in 'Virgidemiarum' approaches much nearer to the standard of Pope. Unlike Donne, he can raise a laugh without the aid of quibbles and conceits. But, though his felicitous phrases, racy humour, and intrepid invective are pleasing for a while, the author's too obvious delight in laying bare the frailty of mankind soon nauseates the reader. Saturnine is the epithet to be applied to his wit. The real value of his work lies in the realistic portraiture of men and manners. In 'Mundus Alter et Idem' he ventures not unsuccessfully into the domain of satirical fiction. There he proves himself more akin to the author of 'Gulliver' than to the author of 'Rasselas.' Unfortunately, it is written in Latin—the language of More's 'Utopia,' and of Erasmus' 'Encomium Moriæ.' Hall, in his
1608. 'Vertus and Vices,' also set the example of writing character studies, after the manner of Theophrastus —an example quickly followed by Dr. Earle, and later by Sir Thomas Overbury. These 'characters'

[1] See his sermons *passim*.

[2] Their contemporary Regnier could have taught them to avoid this fault in moral preaching.

[3] Juvenal, i. 149.

[4] 'Rede Me and be nott Wroth.'

[5] Postscript to 'Virgidemiarum.'

gave plenty of scope for satire and epigrammatic description.

Hall comes nearest of any at that period to the classical prototypes. The influence of Persius is reflected in occasional crabbed obscurities and ellipses; there are reminiscences also of Horace, but Juvenal is the great master whom he imitates at every turn,[1] both in his view of life and his tricks of style, especially in that artifice of making his illustrations and allusions themselves satirical. Taking pleasure in detecting faults, Hall was indiscriminate in his literary criticism; thus he was led into conflict with Milton[2] on the one hand and Marston on the other.

John Marston's[3] castigation of living characters was but thinly disguised, and brought upon him rebukes from Ben Jonson,[4] who ridiculed his somewhat absurd vocabulary, from Hall, and from anonymous writers. Of these, the author of 'The Whippinge of the Satyre' says truly enough, 1598.

> 'He scourgeth villainies in young and old
> As boys scourge tops for sport on Lenten day.'

Decidedly, the author of the licentious 'Pigmalion's Image' was not likely to prove a sincere satirist. Marston, however, had a considerable power of ridicule and of incisive description. More facile than Hall, he is less pedantic. Hall thinks deeper, and is more obscure; Marston is clear, but less acute and less epigrammatic. Hall is more humorous and forced; Marston more acrimonious, but also more natural.

[1] 'Renowned Aquine, now I follow thee
Farre as I may for feare of jeopardie.'
Lib. v., Sat. i. 8.

[2] Milton, 'Apology for Smectymnus.'

[3] 'Pigmalion's Image and Certain Satyres' and 'Scourge of Villainie.'

[4] Crispinus in the 'Poetaster.'

Marston, indeed, was more of a satirist in his dramatic work than in his avowed satires, where he rails in a harsh and disconnected fashion at the affectations and effeminacies of his time. But his railing is that of a boisterous buffoon, and the 'Scourge of Villainie' proves him the foulest writer of his time.

In the great era of dramatic writing on which we have now entered, criticism of life and manners naturally found its chief expression on the stage.

1610. The 'Histrio-mastix,' the 'Poetaster,' and the 'Satiro-mastix'[1] are examples of this tendency, which needs no further illustration.

1613. In the region of pure satire, the 'Abuses Stript and Whipt' of George Wither earned for its author a long imprisonment in the Marshalsea. It is a vague and somewhat profuse condemnation of the vices of the time, lacking both vigour and wit, and we cannot help sharing Lamb's wonder that these perfectly general denunciations of gluttony, and so forth, should have seemed worthy of such punishment. He meant, no doubt, *Qui capit, ille facit*, but it seems hard to imprison a man for meaning more than he says. With the exception of the 'Canterbury Tale'—too long for insertion in our extracts—there is little that is amusing in these satires, which have, truth to say, a smack of priggishness about them.

From the Marshalsea Wither addressed 'A Satire to the King,' in justification of himself, with the

[1] The 'Satiro-mastix' was a retort to Ben Jonson's 'Poetaster' by Thomas Dekker on behalf of himself, Marston, and others. Dekker wrote, besides his plays, a large quantity of prose, some of it satirical. Another dramatist whose satirical gifts call for notice is John Day. His 'Parliament of Bees' would come under the heading of dramatic satire, a subject too large to enter on here, but I give an extract from the delightful ramblings of his 'Peregrinatio Scholastica.'

characteristic motto, *Quid tu si pereo.* Here he refers to his offence with bold sincerity. 'All my griefe,' he declares, 'is that I was so sparing.' He complains that 'Want of power and friends be my confusion,' and that

> 'My foe unto particulars would tie
> What I intended universally.'

The poem, which shows great command of rhyme and metre, is lacking in polish; but in his satires generally, as in his later poems, we miss the happiness of touch and finished freshness, and above all the melody, of 'Faire Virtue, Mistress of Philarete.' Wither fell a victim to his fatal facility. But, though we may prefer his 'affable Looke to encourage Honesty'[1] to his wearing of the 'sterne Frowne to cast on Villainie,' we cannot but admire the unflinching bravery of his petition for release,[2] and the charm of that other note, almost unsounded hitherto in English poetry:

> 'Here can I live and play with miserie . . .
> Here have I learned to make my greatest wrongs
> Matter for mirth and subjects for my songs.'

Sir John Denham does not owe his position in English literature to his satires. He had at the best but a thin vein of cynical wit, which was soon exhausted. He affects to be a humorous writer, but when he attempts the ludicrous he generally fails. When he tries to be witty, he usually succeeds only in being dull, coarse, or disgusting. His 'Directions to a Painter,' an imitation of Waller's 'Instructions,' is said by Pepys[3] to have 'made my heart ache, being too sharp and so true'; but both this and the 'Petition to the Five Members' 1615-1688.

[1] Preface to 'Epithalamion.'

[2] 'And need I now thus to apologize
Only because I scourged villainies?'

[3] 'Diary,' September 14, 1667.

set the modern reader wondering, between his yawns, at the esteem in which Denham's comic vein was held by his contemporaries. His satires are, in fact, merely coarse squibs and bad lampoons.

1582-1635. Bishop Corbet is a more interesting figure in the history of English satire. He writes in the light Horatian vein, and in his longest piece imitates Horace's 'Journey to Brundusium.' Corbet wrote, without elaboration, for the amusement of the moment. His rough ballads aim at no smoothness of versification. They are obviously trifles thrown off in the intervals of more serious business. In spite of this carelessness, Corbet is of some importance, because in adopting as he does the ballad metres for his light-hearted rebukes of the follies of the age, he stands out as the forerunner of those other writers of witty *vers de société*, in whom satire finds its least serious and its gentlest exponents.

1618-1667. Abraham Cowley gave promise of much satiric power in the play 'Love's Riddle,' written while still a 'King's Scholler in Westminster Schoole'; and from the boy poet who could ask to be preserved

> 'From singing men's religion, who are
> Always at church, just like the crows, cause there
> They build themselves a nest,'[1]

we expect much. But, though we find in his other works a gentle Elian humour and grave-faced fun, in satire proper he loses his delicate felicity. In the 'Puritan and the Papist'—if he is really the author of that piece—he is truculent, heartless, and dull. He discovers all the faults of the fantastic school. He runs an idea to death, and is ingenious to the degree of extravagance. The *motif* of the piece is a comparison between the tenets of Puritans and Priests, with the deduction that 'You [Puritans] into the

[1] Cp. the passage on 'Justification by Works.'

same error deeper slide.' This becomes intensely wearisome when worked out through the whole Roman Catholic Creed. His touch is not sure; but his versification, though often lame, occasionally approaches the perfection of a Popian couplet.[1] Our verdict on him may perhaps be rendered in the Tacitean formula: *Capax saturæ, nisi scripsisset.*

Lord Herbert of Cherbury is one of Donne's earliest disciples, and in his two satires, more than elsewhere, he betrays the influence of his master. Mr. Churton Collins[2] has recently vindicated Lord Herbert's claim to the rank of poet, but of his satiric works he can only find heart to say that 'the second would disgrace Taylor the water-poet; the first, though intolerably harsh and barbarous in style and rhythm, contains some interesting remarks.' There is little more to be said. His versification, distinguished in his other poems for sweetness and originality, in his satires is uncouth in the extreme. The matter is both obscure and trivial. 1581-1648.

John Cleveland shares with Donne the charge of being fanciful and obscure. Like Brome an ardent Royalist,[3] he 'followed the fates of distressed loyalty,' his biographers tell us. His love poems are marked by wearisome conceits and absurd exaggerations. The cynical note is never absent. As a satirist, he carried on a kind of guerilla 1613-1658.

[1] 'Character of an Holy Sister':

> 'She that will sit in shop for five hours' space,
> And register the sins of all that pass,
> Damn at first sight, and proudly dare to say
> That none can possibly be saved but they
> That hang religion in a naked ear,
> And judge men's hearts according to their hair.'

[2] See his edition of the poet.

[3] Alexander Brome fought manfully for the royal cause with his rough but effective political songs throughout the Protectorship.

warfare with the enemies of his king and party. His poems relating to State affairs are coarse and profane, and are only saved from insincerity by his fine loathing of Puritans, Rebels and Scotchmen.

His prose, as, for instance, in the 'Character of a London Diurnal,' is in the style of wit affected by Mercutio, and, like his verse, it is overcrowded with images.[1] Rough and careless though his work is, it yet has many of the qualities of 'Hudibras.' But even when we come across phrases that are final, needles of wit in bundles of failures, these seem to be the offspring of accident, rather than of care. When he exclaims in 'The Rebel Scot':

> 'Lord! what a godly thing is want of shirts!
> How a Scotch stomach and no meat converts!'

we recognise the origin of that manner which was developed by Butler's patience and laborious persistency. But Cleveland, lacking the application which made Butler an artist in raillery, remained merely a witty roysterer, a clever amateur.

1620-1678. Lord Beaconsfield maintained that Lord Shelburne was one of the suppressed characters of history.[2] If we admit that there are suppressed characters in literature, as in politics, Andrew Marvell may be called the Shelburne of English letters. In the days of Charles II. two men, Butler and Marvell, made satiric writing once more a powerful weapon. But the satires of the Puritan writer, though admired and feared in their day, have met with unjust oblivion. 'The liveliest droll of the age,' as Burnet[3] calls him, a man of pleasing and festive wit, Marvell excelled in the use of that

[1] Cleveland was also the author of 'The Rustick Rampant'—a long pamphlet on the Insurrection of Wat Tyler, full of obvious satiric references to the Civil Wars of his own day.

[2] Cf. 'Sybil,' ch. iii.

[3] Burnet's 'History of his Own Time.'

ironical banter in which Swift and Junius were his most apt pupils; but in him, for reasons not altogether unconnected, perhaps, with politics, the lyric poet has survived the satiric writer. He fought on the losing side.

'Fleckno,' his earliest satire, droll if unpolished, is a revolt against the Jesuits; and his later poems are all in the character of the Puritan, attacking, as became the friend and assistant of Milton, tyranny and wickedness in Church and State. The strength and dignity of his position as an incorruptible member of the Opposition in the corrupt and servile Parliament of Charles II. are reflected alike in his fearless poems and in his more perfect pamphlets.

In 1653 was produced 'The Character of Holland' —'that scarce deserves the name of land.' The irresponsible frivolity, the unpremeditated style, the ludicrous exaggerations of this piece remind us of the 'excellent wit' of Butler, of which he himself speaks so generously.[1] But beneath these qualities there is also a feeling of true patriotism, which raises the tone above that of 'Hudibras.' His point of view, we feel, is not that of Cleveland, of Oldham, or, to say truth, of Dryden.

On the fall of Clarendon,[2] Marvell, who, whilst aiming at the King's evil counsellors, always maintained his loyalty to the King, produced a long and weighty impeachment of those who led the King astray. His 'Last Instructions to a Painter' is modelled, indeed, upon the pieces by Denham and Waller, but is vastly superior to them, although the interest it arouses is now mainly historical. If the attack on the Duchess of York[3] be something too fierce, the lines describing the King[4] must be admitted to rise to a great height of solemn poetry, full of im-

[1] 'The Rehearsal Transprosed.'
[2] September, 1667.
[3] 'Last Instructions,' ll. 49 *et seq.*
[4] *Ibid.*, ll. 837-880.

pressive warning. This note is repeated in 'Britannia and Raleigh.' It required no little courage, be it remembered, to write thus of the King, or of Lauderdale as Marvell wrote of him in the 'Historical Poem.'[1]

Passing over 'The Dialogue between Two Horses,' which has been praised beyond its deserts, we come to his prose satires. In these he relies both on argument and ridicule. His play is light, lively, and effective. 'Mr. Smirke' is a very witty and learned piece of argumentative work, but inferior to 'The Rehearsal Transprosed.' Few dramas have given rise to so vast and so unceasing a succession of works, good and bad, as Buckingham's brilliant skit, 'The Rehearsal';[2] and never, one may add, has a popular success been more skilfully turned to the account of an earnest pamphleteer.

It was in a Church controversy that Marvell produced the elaborate essay, 'The Rehearsal Transprosed,' answering in a burlesque strain 'to shame by dint of wit' the extravagant doctrine of Dr. Parker, one of the most detestable of the Restoration Prelates. He would not 'commit such an absurdity as to be grave with a buffoon.' Swift justly praises this book,[3] and Burnet tells us that 'from the King down to the tradesman it was read with great pleasure.' Anthony Wood speaks of the author as 'hugely well vers'd and experienced in the then but newly refined art of Sporting and Jeering Buffoonery.' Wit and raillery had, in fact, long been strangers in the land, and the Court hailed with delight any sign of their return. Nor has the pleasure to be derived therefrom evaporated. If, in

[1] 'Historical Poem,' ll. 114-125.

[2] The forerunner of Fielding's 'Pasquin' and Sheridan's 'Critic' and 'Rehearsal.'

[3] Swift, 'Tale of a Tub.'

this conflict, Marvell had no foeman worthy of his steel, yet was he attacking one in authority at the time; whilst, from a literary point of view, he has preserved from oblivion a lump of religious controversy by the plentiful salt of his light raillery or grave wit, sarcastic humour or brilliant repartee. Here alone perhaps he has, like all great satirists, triumphed over the ephemeral interest of the subject.

His satires have been described as obscene and filthy; but the grossness is of the things, and not of the writer. He was honestly performing the watch-dog function of the satirist. The critic of such a Court could hardly fail to introduce gross expressions; but even where he is most brutal and indiscriminate and merciless—and Marvell can be all of these — you feel that he is impelled by a lofty motive.

It was far otherwise with such poetical courtiers as the Earl of Rochester and the Earl of Dorset. Violence without sincerity, and coarseness with little real wit, are the qualities of their writings. It takes a deal of salt to make scurrility sweet, and though Rochester does now and then show great strength of expression and considerable happiness of thought, yet his verses are too often halting, and his pen is too often dipped in dirt—merely for dirt's sake—for us to admire his work. 1647-1680

His 'History of Insipids,' a lampoon published in 1676, is, indeed, a seemingly fearless, if unpolished, attack on Charles, not devoid of sly hits and crushing blows. But one can hardly credit with sincerity the satirist who tried to cure the King of his weaknesses, either by winning his mistresses from him, or severely lampooning him and them. Rochester imitated Boileau in his 'Satire against Mankind,' and, in 'The Trial of the Poets,' he adapted with

neatness and vigour Horace on Lucilius to a review of the poets of his own time. Considering his unceasing debauchery, however, it is hardly surprising that Rochester's great reputation for colloquial wit is not borne out by his writings.

Dorset's foul and violent lampoons, also, bear the character of the Court. He, too, has a schoolboy delight in using naughty words, which to our modern notions are simply offensive. Praised beyond measure by his contemporaries,[1] by Rochester,[2] by Dryden,[3] and by Pope,[4] he has now sunk into the obscurity he deserves.[5]

1662. While Marvell and Wither stood forth as the critics of the Court, Butler, taking his cue from Cleveland, appeared as the champion of the cavaliers, and the literary persecutor of the Puritans. The first part of 'Hudibras' was published in 1662. The object of this poem is simple and definite—to render the party represented by the lay figure of Hudibras vile and ridiculous. The method is more or less that of the 'Satyre Ménippée,' which, beyond doubt, taught Butler the mystery of his noble trade.[6]

The phrase on his monument in Westminster

[1] 'State Poems,' vol. i., p. 200.

[2] Rochester calls him 'The best good man with the worst-natured Muse.'

[3] Dryden instanced 'Your lordship in satire and Shakespeare in tragedy' as superior to the authors of antiquity.

[4] 'Dorset, the grace of courts, the Muses pride,
Patron of arts, and judge of nature, died.'—Pope.

[5] The lines in 'An Essay upon Satire,' 255-265, though severe, are not too severe a criticism on this school of courtly satirists.

[6] Dryden, 'Essay on the Origin and Progress of Satire': 'How easy it is to call rogue and villain, and that wittily! but how hard to make a man appear a fool, a blockhead or a knave, without using any of those opprobrious terms. . . . This is the mystery of that noble trade.'

Abbey describes the accomplishment of his purpose: 'Perduellium scelera liberrime exagitavit.' It is important to bear this in mind, because we praise him to-day, it will be found, only or almost only in so far as he rises superior to his purpose. Where he achieves that purpose most successfully his satire is most ephemeral in its interest; it loses for us much of its point through lacking even the semblance of truth. To render Hudibras completely contemptible, Butler does not shrink from being trivial and flagrantly unjust. Certainly 'Experience had shown the swords of the Presbyterians were not to be despised,'[1] yet this typical strict Presbyterian is represented as a coward, as a Jack Falstaff in the presence of rogues in buckram. Hypocrisy, however, and pedantry, and the other vices which Butler represents as the monopolies of the hated Puritan, are qualities to be found in every society. There is a Hudibras in every camp, and in every party. Therefore, in spite of his partisanship, Butler's satire is as applicable and salutary to-day as when it was first written, and in spite of the specific aim of his lampoon, the universality of many of his portraitures is established.

'C'est Don Quichotte, c'est notre Satyre Ménippée fondus ensemble,' says M. Voltaire of 'Hudibras'; 'c'est de tous les livres que j'aie jamais lus celui où j'ai trouvé le plus d'esprit.' It is in this quality of pure wit that Butler stands pre-eminent. If as a satirist he lacks the indignation of Juvenal, in wit he excels him. Isaac Barrow's searching list of the different forms that wit may assume is but an enumeration of the varieties to be found in 'Hudibras.'[2]

[1] Johnson's 'Life of Butler.'

[2] 'The pat allusion to a known story, the seasonable application of a trivial saying; the playing in words and phrases, taking

We cannot say of Butler as he says of his hero :

> 'Although he had much wit,
> H' was very shy of using it.'[1]

His very rhymes are often witty, so that some of his couplets are remembered for the humour of their rhyme rather than for the excellence of their matter. The metre, too, is singularly happy, and in this connection fundamentally humorous. In Butler's hands it is almost as rattling as Skeltonics. It gives him ample scope for his power of easy yet fantastic rhyme. As poetry, it is open to Horace's objection : 'Neque enim concludere versum Dixeris esse satis ; neque si qui scribat uti nos, Sermoni propiora, putes hunc esse poetam.'[2]

We are continually struck by Butler's wealth of comic simile, and by his fecundity of witty illustration. Here we have no 'dry desert of a thousand lines' to traverse ere we come upon a solitary shining simile. For the number of lines which begin with adverbs of comparison is remarkable, and the strange analogies thus introduced startle us with their excellence.

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advantage from the ambiguity of their sense, or the affinity of their sound. Sometimes it is wrapt in a dress of humorous expression ; sometimes it lurks under an odd similitude ; sometimes it is lodged in a sly question, in a smart answer, in a quirkish reason, in a shrewd imitation, in cunningly diverting or cleverly retorting an objection ; sometimes it is couched in a bold scheme of speech, in a tart irony, in a lusty hyperbole, in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense ; sometimes an affected simplicity, sometimes a presumptuous bluntness giveth it being ; sometimes it riseth only from a lucky hitting upon what is strange, sometimes from a crafty wresting obvious matter to the purpose.'

[1] Part i., Canto i.

[2] 'Tis not enough to close the flowing line,
And in *eight* syllables your sense confine,
Or write in mere prosaic rhymes like me,
That can deserve the name of poetry.'
Hor., Sat. I., iv. 40 (translated by Francis).

If true wit lies, as has been said, in seeing unexpected, extraordinary analogies, then surely there never was a wittier writer!

There was, we have noted, a unity of purpose in Butler's vast lampoon; but in the wanderings of this caricature of a Quixote, with his burlesque Sancho Panza, there is no unity of interest. This is, indeed, not altogether a disadvantage. The irregular and undecided march of the poem displays the fertility of the author's invention, and, incidentally, discovers opportunities for satirizing almost every side of human frailty. A more carefully constructed plot would not have offered the same free scope. The poem becomes more picaresque as it progresses; and in this way Butler rises more and more above mere partisanship, and finds occasion to aim his shafts of wit at so many of the persistent shams of life.

Of his method we know something. His notebook was filled with gibes jotted down from his observation of life and of people. These notes were worked up and inserted in the body of his rambling poem. The felicity and finality of his descriptions, which form his chief claim to our notice, are the outcome of unwearied observation and learned persistency. But the poem has the defects of the qualities of such a method. Regarded as a whole, 'Hudibras' is both fragmentary and diffuse, failing to hold our attention. The luxuriant wit is straggling and unpruned. The tendency to diffuseness is never checked.

That he took a lesson in the use of his material from the Satyre Ménippée; that he found something of his manner in the rough work of Cleveland, and the idea of his fable in the romance of Cervantes, in no way impairs his originality. His object, let it be repeated, is simply to scourge the Roundheads. No alleviating stroke is allowed to interfere with this

purpose, even though such strokes would add to the effectiveness of the satire, by introducing that element of illusion which is so entirely lacking in his grotesque monsters. Accordingly, we find him sometimes tedious, sometimes over-spiteful. But he is ever redeemed from dulness by the abundance of his wit and by the acuteness of his wide observation.

Not that mere brilliancy of wit is sufficient to prevent a long poem from becoming tedious. The stimulus if too often applied loses its efficacy. 'Though all the parts are forcible, and every line kindles new rapture, the reader, if not relieved by the interposition of something that soothes the fancy, grows weary of admiration, and defers the rest.'[1] This remark applies to 'Hudibras' even more fitly than to 'Absalom and Achitophel.' Uniformity must tire at last, though it be uniformity of excellence; and here there is little to soothe the reader's fancy. Poetical imagery rarely relieves the attention from the strain of surprised admiration. Such a couplet as

> 'True as the dial to the sun,
> Although it be not shined upon,'

is quite exceptional.

We conclude, then, that if Butler had troubled himself to polish and prune 'Hudibras,' and to make it a more perfect whole; if there were more in it of poetry and less of burlesque, it would take an even higher rank among the masterpieces of literature. As it is, in spite of, or even because of, its excellences, the poem palls. It falls off in the continuation; it owes its immortality to the first canto. For the rest, we find the author too voluble, relying, in Swift's phrase, too much on 'the embroidery of sheer wit.' But for happiness of expression, for

[1] Johnson, 'Life of Dryden.'

sound sense and robust English, for acute criticism of life, for satire delivered in lines each vigorous like the crack of a whip and cutting like a sharp razor—for these qualities, too, apart from mere wit, Butler will always be read and justly admired.

John Oldham, once regarded as the 'darling of the Muses,' 'the Marcellus of our tongue,' claims our attention chiefly as the immediate predecessor of Dryden in satire. Dryden, indeed, recognised in him a kindred spirit, and in his generous memorial verses grudges no praise, admitting that he was 'by too much force betrayed,' but maintaining that 'satire needs not smoothness,' and

> 'Wit will shine
> Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line.'

Son of a Nonconformist minister, from whom it is said he drew his 'Character of an ugly old Priest,' Oldham was usher of a school at Croydon when he wrote the 'Satires against the Jesuits.' These were occasioned by the Popish Plot, and inspired by popular fanaticism. The usher was visited, on 1678.
the strength of the reputation of his poems, by Rochester, Dorset, and Sedley,[1] whom he presently followed to town. A fine, manly independence distinguishes his intercourse with these salacious wits, and lends point and dignity to the satire addressed to a friend about to leave the University. He warns him to follow his own example, and refuse to become chaplain to any nobleman, and so lay himself open to unpolite treatment. In his attack on the Jesuits he plied the 'vile brood of Loyola' with 'pointed satire and the sharps of wit.' He meant his stabbing pen to draw blood, and lashed himself into a frenzy of indignation, the violence of which left no room for chastity of rhyme, language, or grammar.

[1] To whom he dedicated his 'Bion.'

Pope, who was not above borrowing a hint from Oldham now and again, considered the fourth satire the best;[1] in the first, his rank envenomed spleen, excited imagination and fluent pen led him into mere vulgar abuse and exaggerated invective, redeemed only by the grim sincerity of his convictions. In the second he is less violent and more successful. The piece contains many legitimate hits, somewhat too carelessly expressed. His imitations of Juvenal, Boileau, and Horace, are by no means lacking in felicity. The adaptation of Juvenal's third satire to the London of his own day is especially interesting in view of Johnson's similar but more noble effort; whilst the fact of his imitating Boileau prepares us for that change in style which the new school of French criticism aided, if it did not inaugurate. But in general the lack of harmony in his numbers is scarcely outweighed by the keenness of his satire and the clearness of his wit.[2] His grossness, too, is beyond all bounds, and intolerable.

1631-1683. We come now to consider the three greatest masters of English satirical writing—Dryden, Pope, and Swift, the first of whom excels in breadth and vigour, the second in point and elegance of phrase, the last in mordant sarcasm and savage irony. Two peculiarities distinguish the literature of this epoch from that which preceded it. When, at the age of fifty, Dryden was led, almost without any wish of his own, to work at that vein of verse, which under his hands was to prove so rich in ore, a change had come over the mechanism of writing. This is not the place to discuss the causes or to describe the history of that change.[3] Suffice it to say that, largely owing to the French influence

[1] It is based on an imitation of Horace's 'Olim truncus eram.'

[2] 'So keen in satire and so clear in wit.'—Waller.

[3] See De Quincey, Works, vol. ix.

introduced by the Court at the Restoration, a lighter and more direct style was coming into fashion. The fantastic conceits, the long-drawn subtleties, the verbal quibbles of the so-called metaphysical school were dropped. Correctness, as Pope puts it, began to be our care.[1]

Signs of the coming change can, indeed, be traced throughout the seventeenth century. Waller and his fellow-poets had long been improving the heroic verse, making correctness, terseness, smoothness their object, and in prose, before the civil wars, Bishop Hall, Sir Thomas Overbury, and John Earle, inspired with the keen interest in men as they are which began to distinguish the prose-writers of that period, prepared the way, by their character studies, for that school whose chief tenet was to be, 'The proper study of mankind is man.' It is as painters, or etchers of portraits, that Pope and Dryden excel.

Spread over a literary career of more than forty years, the various and voluminous works of John Dryden exhibit the growth of that tendency towards literary neatness, towards a nimbler style of wit and a more incisive manner of talk and expression, which culminated in the technical perfection of the Popian couplet. A change had taken place also in the tone of moral sentiment. The revolt against Puritanism, which appears in the Royalist poets, and finally triumphant in Butler, had been accompanied by an intellectual movement 'which was on the whole a downward one, from faith to scepticism, from enthusiasm to cynicism, from the imagination to the understanding.'[2] Such a tendency, it has already been suggested, is eminently favourable to satire.

Although it was not till the publication of the first part of 'Absalom and Achitophel' that Dryden sprang 1681.

[1] Pope, Ep. ii. 271. [2] Lowell, 'My Study Windows.

into fame as a writer of satirical verse, he had already given ample proof of his capacity in this direction. His satirical power had, in fact, been slowly but surely developed. As a boy at Westminster he had translated the third satire of Persius; as a poet he seems to have helped the Earl of Mulgrave in the
1679. composition of 'An Essay upon Satire'; as a writer for the stage his happiest efforts were felt to be those prologues and epilogues in which he used his gift of didactic declamation to deal satirically with the manners and opinions of the day. The fact that the
1673. prologue and epilogue to 'Amboyna' consist almost
1662. entirely of lines transferred from 'The Satire on the Dutch' illustrates the satirical tendency of these 'sallies of badinage occasionally intermixed with a grain of salt satire, or doing duty as acid invectives or patriotic bluster,'[1] wherein we can trace surely enough the same qualities which, in their perfection, distinguished 'Absalom,' 'The Medal,' 'MacFlecknoe,' and still flavour 'The Hind and the Panther,' and the Preface to the 'Fables.'

If satire is the product of the intellect rather than of the imagination, the power of reasoning in verse is akin to it. In his plays Dryden had shown a delight in this exercise, and had been laughed at in the 'Rehearsal' for the habit.[2] In 'Absalom and Achitophel' he gave Buckingham a *Zimri* for his Bayes. Vigour and finish, directness and stinging invective, but, above all, discrimination and self-restraint, render this the greatest, as it was the most effective, of English political satires. Polished in detail and irresistibly fluent, it loses none of its edge through the simple, allegorical form under which the political state of England was represented by the

[1] Ward, 'English Poets.'

[2] 'Reasoning? I' gad I love reasoning in verse.'—Buckingham's 'Rehearsal' (1671).

courtly Laureate. The simplicity of aim makes Absalom effective as Hudibras could never be. Felicity of language and pleasing harmony of numbers heighten the skilful characterization. Almost alone among satirists Dryden is a master of light and shade. Refusing to deal his blows indiscriminately, he increases the severity of his attack. Further, the tone and quality of the satire is excellently adapted to the persons satirized. The manner in which Oates is held up to scorn differs rightly from that in which Shaftesbury is gibbeted. The character of Shimei is drawn after Butler's manner, but that of Absalom is tender and noble. Following the example of Shadwell, Settle, and the other Whig scribblers, Dryden gladly applies 'personal satire to the support of public principles,'[1] and takes ample revenge on Zimri. This character, however, as he himself declares, is 'not bloody, but ridiculous enough,'[2] whilst even Achitophel receives praise where praise is deserved. He tells us that he purposely rebated the satire from carrying too sharp an edge. This moderation, due, no doubt, in some degree to the peculiar political circumstances, is the most remarkable feature of this wonderful poem, which comprised, in Johnson's words, all the excellences of which the subject is capable. It is a feature which is lacking in 'The Medal,' for the situation had changed. The idea of taking as a subject the medal struck by the Whigs to celebrate the liberation of Shaftesbury is said to have originated with Charles himself. The execution is perfect in vehemence and vigour. With overwhelming directness, with poignant and unsparing personality, Dryden ridiculed 'this piece of notorious impudence.'[3] In 'the representation of the Whigs'

[1] Johnson, 'Life of Dryden.'
[2] 'Essay on the Origin and Progress of Satire.'
[3] Preface to the 'Medal.'

own hero,' every point in Shaftesbury's character is damned so exhaustively that the words of 'my Uncle Toby' leap to our lips: 'I declare my heart would not let me curse the devil himself with so much bitterness.'[1] So terrible was the severity of this attack that it probably hastened Shaftesbury's end. But such severity reflects on the author. It lays him open to the charge of profanity and cruelty, and does credit rather to his head than to his heart.

This note is repeated in 'MacFlecknoe,' one of the best as well as one of the severest of our purely literary satires. The occasion of it rose directly out of the publication of 'The Medal'; the object was the castigation of Thomas Shadwell, who, besides being a better dramatist than Dryden, had dared to reply on behalf of the Whigs in a scurrilous skit entitled 'The Medal of John Bayes.' He therefore is the hero of the piece, chosen by Flecknoe to inherit the throne of dulness. Exquisitely satirical, the matter of 'MacFlecknoe' is keen, vigorous, and crushing, the versification finished and skilful. In the qualities of spite and polish it must yield perhaps to its literary offspring, the 'Dunciad'; but 'MacFlecknoe' still excels by virtue of its blistering simplicity. Shadwell was lashed yet again, and with tenfold severity, in the second part of 'Absalom and Achitophel.' Of this, Dryden's 200 lines are as powerful as ever, and the characters of Shadwell and Settle, as Og and Doeg, are 'painted in the liveliest colours that his poignant satire could afford.'[2] Nahum Tate's work is by no means bad; but Tate was nearer to Brady than to Dryden, and his rushlight burns dimly in the brilliant blaze of Dryden's genius.

Once again Dryden broke out against his critics,

[1] 'Tristram Shandy,' Book III., chap. ii.
[2] Hooper.

and handled Sir Richard Blackmore[1] satirically in the Preface to the 'Fables,' and still more severely in the last lines he ever wrote.[2] His translation of Juvenal we may dismiss with Johnson's dictum that it 'preserves the wit, but wants the dignity of the original.'[3]

*Virgilium vidi tantum*, Alexander Pope used to say; but though he was only a precocious lad of twelve years when Dryden died, his work as a satirist may best be gauged by comparing his qualities with those of the older poet, whose versification he had distinguished as the model to be copied.[4]

By this time the influence of the critical school founded by Boileau dominated Europe. Imagination had been well-nigh driven from the land; antithesis and precision, elegance of diction and technical skill reigned supreme. The last flicker of idealism seemed extinguished. The age of criticism and reason was at hand. Good sense expressed in epigrammatic verse took the place of emotional poetry, and found its most successful exponents in those moral poets whose satire was addressed to good society rather than to human nature, chastening manners rather than the source of them in the soul. Pope's position in literature is that in this province he is perfect in execution and pre-eminent in wit. His success was the apotheosis of point and polish. This success he first achieved with the 'Essay on Criticism,' which displays a ripeness of judgment, firmness of touch, and excel-

[1] He had written a 'Satire upon Wit,' suggesting 'a bank for wit,' and in this was very severe upon Dryden.

[2] Prologue to Fletcher's 'Pilgrim,' 1700.

[3] Johnson, 'Life of Dryden.'

[4] Wycherley is worth mentioning here for his friendship with Pope, rather than for the obscene doggerel of which his satires are composed.

lence of craftsmanship little short of marvellous for a boy of twenty-one.

In the 'Rape of the Lock,' the poet of society, the delineator of manners, first declares himself, laughing at the 'little unguarded follies of the female sex.'[1] In this poem, in which the 'heroic style is set in satirical juxtaposition with cares, events, and modes of thought with which it is in comical antipathy,'[2] the satire is of the most pleasing and smiling sort. But, however much we may admire the bright fancy and 'merum sal' of this 'delicious little thing,'[3] we cannot choose but feel that the edge of the satire is somewhat blunted by the essential triviality of the incidents in a triumph of insignificance.

The 'Dunciad'[4] suffers from something of the same defect; where Pope rages against contemptible persons his vehemence is superfluous, where he attacks great men the libel reflects chiefly on himself. It was in 1728 that Pope, following Atterbury's advice,[5] showed his satirical power in the 'Dunciad.' The object of this mock heroic poem, 'styled heroic as being doubly so,'[6] was, under the pretence of deifying dulness, to 'manifest the dulness of those who have only malice to recommend them.' Every vile scribbler of dull and dead scurrilities finds a niche in this temple of infamy; all the 'momentary monsters' and 'industrious bugs,'[7] all the Dunces of the day are preserved like flies in the amber of this fierce and brilliant work. Satire 'spreads its

[1] Introduction to the 'Rape of the Lock.'
[2] Lowell.
[3] Addison.
[4] Pope in his dedication to Lord Middlesex gives a history of the 'Dunciad' from its rise in the 'Treatise on Bathos.'
[5] Advice founded on the first sketch of his satire on Addison.
[6] Note to Preface.
[7] 'Dunciad.'

broad wing and souses on all'[1] the knaves and fools who displease the author. There is something fine in Pope's scorn of folly, except when it leads him into too bitter a hatred of fools. His belief, as Mr. Leslie Stephen has observed, that stupidity could be cured by satire is splendid if over-sanguine. We cannot indeed defend the 'grossness of the images,'[2] nor clear the poem of the charge of nastiness, yet, though it breathes all the savageness of Swift and reeks of the filth in which he delighted, it recalls some of the imagination displayed in the 'Rape of the Lock.' Pope was not so ungenerous as he is painted. Most of the good writers of the day[3] are praised freely and fully. On the other hand, if we confess that Pope has suffered, in accordance with Swift's prophecy, from the insignificance of his enemies, we must also admit that he was justified by the correctness of his judgment. Satirical criticism serves a useful and legitimate end when it improves public taste, saving it from admiration of bad models, and ridiculing the dulness that boasts itself to be somewhat. So far as it performs this duty it is saved from the fate of dying with the writers it destroys. Public taste is ever in need of a corrective, and the types that Curll and Theobald represent in the Dunciad are still with us.

The 'Essay on Man' might almost stand for a satire on man, 'the glory, jest and riddle of the world.'[4] It is, really, a commentary on 'Gulliver's Travels,' obscured by an alien philosophy, an unhistorical account of society and an optimism at once intellectually false and morally callous. It is a farrago of inconsistent doctrines relieved by

[1] 'Epilogue to the Satires,' Dialogue ii. 15.

[2] Johnson.

[3] Dryden, Congreve, Addison, Locke. Bentley was attacked as the editor and mutilator of Milton, not as a classical scholar.

[4] 'Essay on Man,' ii. 18.

epigrammatic pungency and true wit as the author defined it.[1]

The classical strain which was never long absent from the 'Dunciad,' suggesting Juvenal, Horace, and Persius, recurs again in the 'Moral Essays,' the 'grave epistles bringing vice to light,' and in the 'Imitations of Horace.' Here Pope is at his best. As in the 'Rape of the Lock,' so here, he has once more in describing 'the one thing which he knew, the Court and Town of his time, the proper material on which to lay out his elaborate workmanship.'[2] Wit and epigrams sparkle on every page. Most of all, in these half-satirical, half-familiar epistles, where 'satire heals with morals what it hurts with wit,'[3] has he deserved the praise he desired.[4] In the 'Characters of Women,' for instance, his powers of terse and finished portraiture, of brilliant wit and epigram, of exquisite flattery, are admirably displayed. Sweeping denunciation, ruthless vivisection of many types in the persons of Flavia, Narcissa and Atossa, only serve to heighten the effect of the delicate compliment and courtly exception.

The 'Imitations of Horace' are written in accordance with the dictum previously expressed in the preface to the edition of his works published in 1716: 'All that is left us is to recommend our productions by imitation of the Ancients.' No man's spirit was ever less Horatian than that of

[1] 'Essay on Criticism':

'True wit is Nature to advantage dressed;
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed.'

[2] Mark Pattison.

[3] Ep. II., i. 261.

[4] 'Happily to steer
From grave to gay, from lively to severe,
Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
Intent to reason or polite to please.'

this jealous, waspish rhymer. None the less, Pope shows marvellous cleverness and admirable pungency when he adapts the satires of Horace. He improves, indeed, on the point and wit of individual lines, though he loses the flavour and inner unity of thought. Nothing can exceed the skill with which, by bitter and pointed sarcasms, he turned the courtly flattery of Horace to Augustus into a stinging satire on George II.[1] In these Imitations, the pleasure of unexpected analogies compensates for the violence done to history and for the extreme artificiality of the method.

Dryden observes in his essay that 'fineness of raillery, the best manner of satire, is not offensive; a witty man is tickled while he is hurt: a fool feels it not.'[2] If, despite his delicate theory, he is sometimes rough, he is always straightforward. He deals a knock-down blow, but does not stab in the dark. If he is coarse, it is usually in reply to a coarse and scurrilous attack. He does not descend to the nastiness of Pope. Not so sly as Chaucer, nor so insinuating as Addison, he is without malice. The consciousness of easy superiority which never left him saves him from mere pettiness and spite. The underhand malice of Pope is alien to his manly character. Though he was not one of the 'gentle bosoms,' he was not venomous. 'Spiteful he is not, though he wrote a satire.'[3] Quick to anger, he was also quick to forgive and forget. But of Pope, Bentley said with good reason, 'The portentous cub never forgives.'

Where Pope's satire is most stinging, his motives

[1] Ep. II. i.

[2] 'On the Origin and Progress of Satire,' prefixed to his translation of Juvenal. Cf. 'No creature smarts so little as a fool.'—Pope, 'Prologue to the Satires,' 84.

[3] 'Abs. and Ach.,' Part II.

are frequently mean. His laurels are entwined with the thorns of hatred. There is as much gall and wormwood in his composition as in that of Archilochus himself, the father of satire. As with the Greek, his motives are mainly personal. His virulent prose satire, 'The Frenzy of John Dennis,' was written to please Addison, though it failed in its object. His attacks on Theobald were dictated by literary jealousy, on Addison by wounded self-love, on Lady Mary by the savage vindictiveness of rejected admiration. His treatment of women, even his praise of women, is degrading. He had, in fact, like Boileau, a bad heart, and cannot be acquitted of the charge, *Lædere gaudes . . . et hoc studio pravus facis.*[1] Partisan poetry had been severe enough in Dryden's hands, but in the hands of Pope, it became still more personal and bitter. In Dryden we find strong sense, command of the happy word, and wit marked by a certain breadth; in Pope sense as strong, if narrower, a more 'curious felicity,' wit unrivalled in keenness and point. A certain colloquial familiarity lends an air of easy strength to Dryden's satire. His comparisons are usually happy. His work abounds with knowledge, and sparkles with pithy sentences which drop from his pen as if unawares. Pope's art is always peeping out; his comparisons lack grandeur, and often truth also, whilst his expressions are sometimes less accurate than he supposes.

As a delineator of character, as a describer of personal weaknesses, Pope stands unrivalled. Although he boasts that he 'praises a courtier where he can, and even in a bishop can spy desert,'[2] he lacks as a rule the discrimination of Dryden.[3] Hence

[1] Hor., Sat. I., iv., 78, 79. 'You delight to hurt, and do so with zeal by reason of your bad heart.'

[2] Dialogue ii., 63, 70.

[3] An exception to this is the portrait of Addison.

his detached passages are superior to the complete poems.

Unequalled as a satirist of individuals, and as an observer within a limited compass, he is invaluable as a critic of the social life of his own day. His particular portraits are as excellent as his philosophy and his theories are ridiculous. He has no gift for general moralizing. When he declares that the proper study of mankind is man, man means with him Bolingbroke, Walpole, Swift, Curll, and Theobald.[1] Dryden is pre-eminent in the reflective vein of satire. Pope, without Dryden's gift of reasoning in verse, displays more than his love of it.[2] He has no consecutive power of argument. His precision of thought is not able to cope with the fascination of a brilliant phrase, and is sacrificed to his method of composition. His epigrams are the quintessence of a volume of reflection; his couplets are the product of incredible toil. To make verses was his first labour; to mend them was his last. He suffered the tumult of imagination to subside, and was never tired of polishing his mosaics until they were finally inserted, too often without due regard to the consistency of the whole.

Dryden, on the other hand, wrote, he says, with very little consideration, to please others, and to make a living. Pope, being independent of money, wrote, without haste, to please himself. Whilst Pope's satire deals only with externals, Dryden's goes to the root of the matter. When Dryden is describing a character satirically, every line adds to or modifies it, but Pope's verses amplify and spin upon the same idea. Dryden excels in comprehension, Pope in minuteness; Dryden in breadth, Pope in compression; Dryden in rugged strength and

[1] Leslie Stephen, 'Hours in a Library.'
[2] *E.g.*, 'Essay on Man.'

nervous majesty, Pope in smooth uniformity and pungent epigram. We quote, it will be found, the phrases of Pope, and we apply the satire of Dryden. It is possible to love Dryden through his works, but Pope can only compel our admiration. Both alike found the 'life of a wit a warfare upon earth,'[1] and both might justly feel with Horace—*sunt quibus in satura videar nimis acer*. But while much may be forgiven to the poet whose 'life was one long disease,' we respect the greater self-restraint of him who, 'being naturally vindictive, often suffered in silence, and possessed his soul in quiet.'[2]

1667-1745. 'Cousin Swift,' said Dryden, 'you will never be a poet'—a verdict which gained him the dislike of that furious and gifted man. The prophecy was correct. But the verses of so striking and original a genius could not be dull or insignificant. Swift had a gift of fluent rhyme: his poems are distinguished by their ease, if not by their elegance; often harsh and uncouth, they are never laboured. Some of his poetical lampoons show an extreme virulence of invective. 'The Legion Club,' in which every line has the sting of a hornet, will serve as an example. 'The Rhapsody on Poetry,' though it suffers from the inevitable comparison with the 'Dunciad,' yet displays in a high degree that quality of irony in which Swift is pre-eminent. The trenchant bitterness of the 'Beasts' Confession' likewise betrays the hand of the author of 'Gulliver's Travels.'

Whatever the merit or interest of his poetry, it is as the prince of prose satirists that Swift claims our attention. He ranks with Lucian and Voltaire, rivalling the former in irony, and surpassing the latter in originality. His power was tremendous.

[1] Pope, Preface.

[2] 'Essay on Origin and Progress of Satire,' Dryden's Works, vol. iii., p. 171 (Malone's edition).

Even to-day his writings affect us as, sometimes, his presence affected Vanessa.[1] No satirist ever scored such exquisite triumphs. Concerning 'Gulliver's Travels,' we have it on his own authority—whatever that is worth—that 'a bishop here said that book was full of improbable lies, and for his part he hardly believed a word of it; and so much for Gulliver.'[2] Mr. Isaac Bickerstaff's 'Predictions' were burnt in all seriousness by the Inquisition in Portugal. In the 'Rhapsody on Poetry' the irony of his censure is so perfect and so admirably sustained that he received, at the hands of the Royal Family he had satirized, thanks for the passages of praise. No political writer ever had such power. Each pamphlet was worth hundreds of votes to the Tories, and the author of the 'Drapier Letters' could boast that he had but to raise his hand to bring about an Irish rebellion. His political and personal satire has much of the freedom and point of Junius;[3] but he is not a mere carper. Since he lived in an epoch of party literature and unbridled slander, when all the best writers were retained for the purpose of exalting or defaming the Whig or Tory leaders, his writings are necessarily to a certain extent bound up with the politics of his time, but they touch none the less the wider human interests of all ages. His suggestions are often eminently practical, and much in advance of his day.[4]

[1] 'There is something in your look so awful that it strikes me dumb.' 'You strike me with that prodigious awe I tremble with fear.'—Letters of Miss Vanhomrigh to Swift.

Cf. the story of the barber who besought him on his knees not to put him into print, for that he was a poor barber, and had a large family to maintain (vol. i., p. 415).

[2] Letter to Pope, November 17, 1726, written from Ireland.

[3] *E.g.*, 'A short character of Thomas, Earl of Wharton.'

[4] Cf. the very remarkable passage on the early closing of public-houses and the serving of intoxicated persons: 'Project

It was in the Bentley-Boyle quarrel—a quarrel which was soon developed into a violent dispute as to the relative superiority of the Ancients or Moderns —that Swift, with his 'Battle of the Books,' made his reputation as the wittiest of controversialists,
1704. a reputation he confirmed in the following year by the 'Tale of a Tub,' a sort of 'Hudibras' in prose, in which he shows the happy gift of satirical allegory, which was brought to perfection in 'Gulliver's Travels.' The 'Tale of a Tub' ridicules, 'with all the rash dexterity of wit,'[1] superstition and fanaticism, but not the essentials of religion. Though pleading for charity in argument, Swift's own strong feeling for 'Martin' renders him somewhat uncharitable to 'Peter' and 'Jack.'[2] Voltaire recommended this work as a masterly satire against religion in general, and Thackeray denies Swift's belief in that Christian religion which he had defended with such perfect irony in his 'Argument against abolishing Christianity.' But neither in the 'Tale' nor in the politico-religious pamphlets is any reason to be found for a charge which reduces Swift to the level of the hypocrites he satirized. His hatred of cant and his dread of the imputation of cant have caused his attitude to be misconstrued into that of mere irreligion. His loathing of hypocrisy was so intense that he ran into the opposite extreme, and exhibited the vice which Bolingbroke termed hypocrisy reversed. Like Plato, he has often fallen a victim to his own irony.

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for the Advancement of Religion,' vol. iii., pp. 297, 298. Cf. also his views on the education of women, which he put into practice with Stella. 'G. T.,' IV., chap. viii., 'My master thought it monstrous in us to give the females a different kind of education from the males.'

[1] Pope, 'Essay on Man,' ii. 83.

[2] Church of England, Church of Rome, Dissenters.

'The Tale of a Tub,' it is said, cost Swift a bishopric. Twenty years later, when, like some world-weary Timon, embittered by the fall of his party and the failure of his own ambitions, he had 'commenced Irishman for ever,' he produced 'Gulliver's Travels,' in which he satirized the politics, manners, and philosophy of Europe, and analyzed the corruptions of human nature. This 'formal grave lie'[1] is so simple in the narration, so apparently artless and sincere, that it imposed upon many people at the time, and still delights the child who does not penetrate the satire.[2] Swift is more realistic, if less exuberant, than Rabelais. The story of Gulliver's preposterous adventures is more completely a satirical allegory than is that of the wanderings of Gargantua. The satire itself is the most bitter and overwhelming Swift ever wrote. Its province is the mortification of human pride.[3] Light and amusing at first, it becomes more severe as it progresses, till in the description of the Yahoos it reaches a pitch of savage intensity. The author strips the rags from shivering humanity. Beneath the resolvent acid of his satire our miserable covering of shams crumbles and disappears. Sometimes he gazes on the naked imposture with that cold, hard grin which still lingers on the marble lips of Voltaire, but often with the kindly firmness of a reformer. He wishes to prevent people from winking at their own faults, as Gulliver winked at his own littleness. 1726.

Critics have been too ready to assume that Swift really regarded all his fellow-creatures as Yahoos, and to charge him with misanthropy. The description

[1] Journal to Stella.

[2] 'From the highest to the lowest it is universally read, from the Cabinet Council to the nursery.'—Gay, letter to Swift, Nov. 17, 1726.

[3] 'Gulliver's Travels,' Part IV., pp. 392, 393.

of the Yahoos is not a mere libel on the human race. It teaches a very definite and moral lesson—that the greatness of humanity lies in mind, mind that is set on righteousness. Without it we are as the beasts that perish ; with it, even horses are more excellent than we. Man is not man by virtue of his form, but by virtue of his right reason.[1] St. Paul—or are we to say Apollos ?—teaches that each time a man does wrong he sins against the divine nature within him, and crucifies Christ afresh. Swift, using the point of his pen and not the feather, puts it, that so man becomes more of a Yahoo and less of a Houyhnhnm. The more odious and vile the Yahoo is represented, the more effective therefore is the lesson. The only proof of Swift's misanthropy is his desire to reform mankind by displaying their vices in the most hateful light.

Against this charge we have the evidence of his journal, of his charities, of his sermons, of his humanitarian suggestions, of his legacies, of those tracts relating to Ireland, which do honour, in Burke's phrase, to his heart as well as to his head. His friends[2] also—they were many and distinguished —speak of him as really good-natured and tender-hearted, though from his excessive hatred of cant he strove to conceal the fact. When he boasts in a letter to Pope, ' I hate and detest that animal called man,' he has to add, ' although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas, and so forth.' We need not, indeed, go so far as this to seek to disprove this charge. His humour is too deep and genuine to admit of his being a misanthrope.

[1] ' Gulliver's Travels,' Part IV., chap. iii.

[2] *E.g.*, Addison, who wrote in a copy of his ' Travels ' presented to Swift, ' To Dr. Jonathan Swift, the most agreeable companion, the truest friend, and the greatest genius of the day.'

Swift's style consists of 'proper words in proper places.'[1] Clearness was his chief aim, and his very simplicity, combined with his inventive genius, made the sarcasm and irony keener. Johnson says, 'He always understands himself, and his readers always understand him.' This is true enough of his style, but so successfully does the artist conceal his art that it is not, as we have seen, equally true of his intention. For complete and consistent irony is the chief characteristic of his work. His best and most constant method is to take some absurd proposition, to adopt some paradoxical idea, and to pursue and develop it with inimitable gravity and relentless logic. His grammar is often faulty, but his diction is always clear. He rivals Voltaire in lucidity of thought and style. The satire of Voltaire is seldom veiled; but that of Swift frequently lurks beneath much excellent fooling.[2] His attacks are often coarse, sometimes disguised by subtle irony, sometimes breaking out into furious volleys of abuse; but they are sincere. He has command alike of vituperation and of sarcasm. His gross wit and grotesque invention can always present his opponents in an ignominious or contemptible light. Never commonplace, he ridicules what is trite, even at the risk of being dirty, and then he seems to sit like one of his own Yahoos, squirting filth on all mankind. In his 'Polite Conversation and Directions to Servants' he discovers great power of minute observation; and in his 'Journal to Stella,' a child-like tenderness, which his sardonic humour and wounding satire have elsewhere obscured. At the back of all his work there lurks the hidden tragedy of that horrid fear of approaching madness, which embittered his life, and

[1] 'Proper words in proper places make the true definition of a style.'—Letter to a Young Clergyman.

[2] Cf. 'Candide' with the introduction to the 'Tale of a Tub.'

proved in the end only too well founded. We cannot 'take his book and laugh our spleen away,'[1] for that *sæva indignatio*,[2] that cruel indignation with life, vexed him even as a thing that is raw. But we can say of him, in the words of Pope, 'One there is who charms us with his spleen,' and, charming us, we may add, fills us with the profoundest pity by the outpourings of his troubled heart, and the tragic silence of his miserable end.

1717. It is a relief to turn from the malice and personal bitterness, 'the spleen and sour disdain'[3] which lie at the heart of so much English satirical writing, to the hinting, gentlemanly satire of Joseph Addison. His was the criticism that only half says what it means, but is none the less effective. The most graceful of our social satirists does not sit in the seat of the scornful. *Hic tibi comis et urbanus liberque videtur.*[4] This line, written by Horace, equally with that line written of Horace—*admissus circum præcordia ludit*[5]—applies to Addison. It is in these gentle prose satires that the truest representation of the Horatian spirit is to be found. These essays correspond, far more really than Pope's 'Imitations,' to Horace's Causeries,[6] his talks on the art of living, his sketches of life as he saw it. As with Horace, the purpose of his satire is general. The aim is not to gibbet individuals. He assails the follies, not the fools of the age. He tries to go to the

[1] Dryden, Ep. ix.

[2] Cf. his epitaph, written by himself: 'Ubi sæva indignatio ulterius cor lacerare nequit'—'Where fierce indignation can no longer lacerate his heart.'

[3] 'Essay on Criticism,' l. 530.

[4] Horace, Sat. I., iv. 90: 'He seems to you a courteous, well-bred gentleman.'

[5] Persius, i. 118: 'He finds his way to our inmost feelings and plays round them.'

[6] 'Sermones.'

root of the matter. He will not, he says, be 'very satirical upon the little muff that is now in fashion,'[1] but he applies his remedies to the seeds of every social evil. When he attacks the vicious, he sets upon them in a body, and will not make an example of any particular criminal. He passes over a single foe to charge whole armies, and lashes not Lais or Silenus, but the harlot and the drunkard. Gifted with observation that is acute but not profound, and with a peculiar humour blended with wit, he depicts, without offence, by playful and subtle strokes of irony, the manners and habits, the faults and foibles of various classes of men. He never descends to mere caricature; as a critic he is tolerant, and never wounds by severity of sarcasm. Judging with coolness, he is, we feel, 'not dully prepossessed nor blindly right';[2] rather he shows himself 'modestly bold, and humanly severe.'

His delicate humour, the urbanity of his manner, and the gentleness of his rebuke lead almost unawares those whom he criticises to condemn what is ridiculous or unworthy. A more tolerant censor, a more genial and useful satirist never wrote. He is an exception to the rule one is too ready to frame, that the lash of the satirist only serves to please him who cracks it; for he and his colleague Steele made the *Spectator* an instrument of education and social reform. Steele, however, had none of the sly malice and satirical bent of Addison.

Of the latter's inimitable prose style it is impossible to treat adequately in this place. It is impossible here to show forth all its praise. This style, to the sober grace of which we owe our love of Addison, is full of varied cadence and subtle charm. The

[1] Cf. *Spectator*, No. 16.
[2] Pope, 'Essay on Criticism,' 634, 658.

influence of Dryden's prose and the influence of the best French models are indeed plain, but here also are reflected the ease of Cowley, the purity of Tillotson, the melody and naïveté of Temple.

1738. The 'London' of Samuel Johnson was published on the same morning as Pope's '1738,'[1] and surpassed it in popularity. It is an adaptation of the third satire of Juvenal to the neglect of letters in London, and to those humiliations of the honest native which Johnson the dinnerless[2] knew only too well. London, that London which he was to love so fondly, he calls 'the needy villains' gen'ral home,' which 'sucks in the dregs of each corrupted state.' We trace here something of the vehemence and contemptuous indignation of Juvenal. *Facit indignatio versum.* Like Pope, the author was not without the inspiration of personal motives. The bitter experience of poverty prompted that majestic line, 'Slow rises worth by poverty depressed.' There is in 'London' much of the liveliness of manner and allusion, much, too, of the personal satire of Pope. But in 'Rasselas' and 'The Vanity of Human Wishes' Johnson represents the didactic school when freed from those qualities. With advancing years he becomes grave and sonorous; bitterness softens into composed moralizing, and satire deteriorates into learned dulness of declamation. Mention should also be made of that most galling offspring of his 'defensive pride,' his letter to Lord Chesterfield.

Of the members of the famous Scriblerus Club, which included Pope, Swift, Gay, Prior, Parnell, and Arbuthnot, and produced the volume of 'Mis-

[1] Pope said at once, 'Whoever be the author, he will soon be *déterré*.'

[2] He signed himself on one occasion, 'Yours impransus, S. JOHNSON.'

cellanies' edited by Swift and Pope, John Arbuthnot is, of the minor lights, the most important. His 'History of John Bull' is perhaps responsible for that national character which we enjoy abroad, and on which we pride ourselves at home. The History otherwise loses interest from being a mere burlesque of the politics of the time. But the 'Art of Political Lying,' by the same author, a 'pretty discourse,' as Swift called it, deals wittily enough with an expedient which has not yet gone out of fashion.

Matthew Prior used more than one manner of satire. In the appalling, didactic piece 'Solomon on the Vanity of the World,' and in the pleasant skit on Boileau's abject ode *Sur la Prise de Namur*, it is hard to recognise the same hand. The wit and whimsical nature of 'Alma'[1] are entirely in the manner of Butler. In conjunction with the Earl of Halifax Prior also caricatured Dryden's 'Hind and the Panther'—transversed it to the story of the 'Country Mouse and the City Mouse'; but his most characteristic work is to be found in those minor pieces and satiric epigrams on which his fame chiefly rests. Here he is, as a satirist, working essentially the same vein as the Elizabethan epigrammatists and Corbet, as Rochester and his fellows, as Swift and Pope, in the 'Rape of the Lock,' had worked before him. Prior has much both of the careful ease of Horace and of the point of Martial. The light ridicule of Anstey's 'New Bath Guide,' the polished, well-bred wit of William Praed, and the neatly humorous political lyrics or *vers de société* of a host of other writers, have down to the present day continued the tradition of this light form of laughing satire.

The work of John Gay also takes various 1688-1722.

[1] A discursive dialogue on the seat of the mind.

forms. Less witty than Prior, he is less cynical. He follows Horace rather than Martial in spirit. His criticisms are usually amiable, his burlesques not bitter except when he remembers how he has been disappointed of Court favour and public office. In his mock-didactic 'Trivia,' in his epistolary verses, and in his 'Shepherd's Week'—written to ridicule the sham pastorals of Philips—he shows that 'native humour tempering virtuous rage' with which Pope credits him in his epitaph. He is, however, perhaps at his best as a satirist, as he is certainly at his best as a poet of original merit, and as a tuneful singer, in the 'What d'ye Call,' a farcical burlesque after the manner of the 'Rehearsal,' and in the 'Beggar's Opera,' and its continuation, 'Polly.' The 'Beggar's Opera' originated from Swift's suggestion that 'a Newgate pastoral might be an odd, pretty sort of thing.' It was the first English light opera, and one of the most successful. In addition to side-glances of burlesque on the newly-imported and popular Italian opera, it contained many general satirical allusions. In 'Polly' there was more personal satire, for Sir Robert Walpole was severely ridiculed in the piece, and had it prohibited for that reason.

Gay is, however, chiefly remembered for his 'Moral Fables.' He is distinguished here by the good-humoured sense which is essentially his, and by an easy fluency of narration in the familiar, colloquial style which we know was the product of much toil. Prior, too, had written Tales, and imitated the *Contes* of La Fontaine. But these tales, like the *Contes*, are disfigured by immorality both of subject and of treatment. Gay, in his 'Fables,' shows himself less witty than Prior and far below the standard of La Fontaine, but he is at any rate free from any imputation of modesty. As a mode

of satire the Fable is open to the objection that the morals must often be far-fetched, and hang like tails on the body of the narrative. In the adoption of the lighter form of satire, and the use of the short fable to convey it, Swift, Prior, and Gay, and, later, Smart and Wilkie, may be regarded as representing the reaction against classical models, in matter and style, which already, even in the days of Pope's supremacy, was beginning to set in.

There is some feeble satire buried in Blair's dull 'Grave.' The interest of Garth's 'Dispensary' has faded with the dispute which gave rise to it, but Matthew Green's little poem on the 'Spleen' deals with a more enduring subject in a vein of pleasing originality. It is spiced with touches of humorous ridicule which are, however, not too splenetic. 1699. 1696-1737.

The other contemporaries and imitators of Pope produced much satiric and abusive verse, of which the enumeration would be tedious, and criticism of which is unnecessary. The mere Goodes and Ralphs of the 'Dunciad' have achieved, by being mentioned there, an immortality they did not deserve. Pope, however, had little right to speak of Bernard Mandeville so contemptuously as he does in that poem, except in so far as execution is concerned. For he has embodied much of the philosophy of the 'Fable of the Bees' in his third 'Moral Essay.' In this fable and the accompanying remarks Mandeville maintains with considerable ingenuity, in prose and in verse, which is not poetry, the half-truth of the paradox that private vices are public benefits—that the interests of society are served by the play of human passions, or, as Pope puts it, 'Extremes in man concur to general use.'

As for 'The Author to Let' of Savage and Whitehead's 'State Dunces,' Armstrong's 'Taste,'

Christopher Smart's dull lampoon the 'Hilliad,' Owen Cambridge's feeble 'Scribleriad,' and the solemn and fatuous expositions of Akenside, they hardly deserve to be mentioned.

The satires of Edward Young have not that epigrammatic felicity which sometimes illumined his 'Night Thoughts.' The author of the 'Love of
1725. Fame' and 'Epistles' is content, as a rule, to keep on a dull level of commonplace epigram. It is interesting to observe that he professes to follow Horace and Boileau, but he lacks the humour of the one and the style of the other, and without these qualities even didactic moralizing, unrelieved by personalities, is apt to pall. Swift's criticism of these satires, that they should either have been more angry or more merry, holds good. Young is most successful where he is least didactic—in his two
1728. 'Satires on Women.' These suggest a comparison with Pope's 'Characters of Women,' and they do not suffer in the process so much as might have been expected. Defoe's 'Short Way with the Dissenters' is an amazingly clever burlesque. Tobias
1721-1771. Smollett began his literary career with two satires in verse—'Advice' and 'Reproof.' They are acrimonious attacks on well-known individuals, and as vigorous as we should expect from his genius, temper, and command of language. We find in them the same propensity to personal satire and rank indecency which he indulged to a less extent as a novelist.

In prose, Fielding, through the medium of the novel,[1] of the essay, of witty parody and dramatic satire,[2] shows a power of mischievous wit and pure irony second only to that of Swift and Lucian. Fielding declared war on affectation and hypocrisy. His massive common-sense shines through every line,

[1] 'Joseph Andrews.' [2] 'Pasquin.'

and nowhere more brightly than in 'Jonathan Wild,' of which the peculiar and excellent irony is but faintly reflected in Thackeray's 'Barry Lyndon.' Goldsmith, as an artist, was the pupil of Fielding, though he knew it not, but, as a satirist, he was akin to Addison. 'The Haunch of Venison' is indeed 'a miniature farce,' but 'The Retaliation' is an exquisite *jeu d'esprit*, as playful and witty as it is free from gall, whilst in the 'Citizen of the World' Goldsmith comments, after the manner of Addison, on Georgian England and the Republic of Letters. In these papers and in 'The Bee,' he anticipates much of the matter of the 'Traveller' and 'Deserted Village,' poems in which the didactic school may be said to have culminated. Here, as in all his work, kindly satire, softened by the witching simplicity of his style, lurks beneath gentle humour and genuine pathos. It was not for him to follow in the footsteps of that boisterous literary bully, Churchill.

The success of Lloyd's 'Actor' induced Churchill to try his powers in the same line, though on a more personal plan. The result was the 'Rosciad,' wherein he ridiculed with absurd violence the actors of his day. It was the most successful, as it was the most finished, of his coarse and impudent lampoons. In heroics his versification represents an unsuccessful reaction against the smoothness of the school of Pope. His octosyllabics, when he adopts that metre, have neither the wit of Butler nor the keenness of Swift. As a moralist his impudent assumption of superiority harmonizes but poorly with the facts of his life. As a political satirist he was a friend of Wilkes, and indulged in an indiscriminate use of the bludgeon. Though he invariably writes at the top of his voice, he is always fighting for mean causes, scourging small fools and

1761.

unimportant villains. Nor does his style atone for the lack of sympathy aroused by his subjects. When taste was almost at its lowest in England, a certain gift of observation and imitation, a thin vein of humour eked out by rough vehemence, and occasionally an undeniable force and felicity of expression, gained Churchill an unmerited reputation, the glow of which still tinges the judgments of those who do not read him.

1769-1772. We may pass over the pointless invectives of the inexperienced Chatterton, but some of the letters of Junius, that shadow of a name, give the author a clear title to be noticed, for although they are on the whole to be classed as mere political invectives, they contain many passages of bitter and powerful satire, salted with the irony which redeems vituperation.

1786-1795. We may pause also to give a word of praise to Cowper's satirical sketches, and to the whimsical and sarcastic mock-heroic 'Lousiad' of Wolcot,[1] who was also responsible for a mock pastoral 'Bozzy and Piozzi,' in which he ridiculed those recorders of every trifling incident in Johnson's life. The perennial freshness of this subject gives him a distinct advantage over Churchill, who dealt with ephemeral incidents and conditions. Cowper, when he is serious, too often proses and rants. But in his lighter moments, when he is just sketching in a character, he shows much humour and happiness of touch. But at the end of the century two greater satirists than these appeared. Both as a translator of Juvenal,[2] and as the author of the 'Baviad' and 'Mæviad,' Gifford is entitled to distinction. The latter poems are very bitter and

[1] Peter Pindar. The 'Lousiad' is unfortunately, like the rough political poems of the author, very coarse.

[2] Of which the preface is perhaps the most valuable part.

very powerful literary satires, cast in the classic mould. Gifford, it must be confessed, is somewhat heavy-handed and deficient in humour, but his fine command of language and admirable sincerity atone to a certain extent for any faults of taste and style.

The satire of Crabbe, on the other hand, was sad rather than savage. Surgeon and priest, he was also the poet of the poor. He was the first to give the lie to the false ideals of rustic happiness and virtue that had hitherto pervaded poetry. 'I paint the cot,' he says, 'as Truth will paint it and as bards will not.' Byron calls him 'Nature's sternest painter, yet the best';[1] but if we pass that, we must at least take exception to his description of Crabbe as the saviour of the school of Pope. For Crabbe was a realist; it was about the truth of his pictures that he cared. Like most realists, he is lacking in the sense of beauty. He often errs, therefore, in giving us vulgar details unrefined by selection. His studies are like Hogarth's in minuteness, but he has not Hogarth's gift of finding matter for comedy in the sin and sorrow he has observed. For he is less of a satirist and more of a humanitarian than Hogarth. His pathos is deep and unaffected, his style, except in accidental points, decidedly his own. His feeling is too sincere to allow him to waste time over polish; he relies on the general human interest of his characters rather than on epigrammatic felicity of language. He paints the pride of the rich and the misery of the poor with unrelenting acuteness, and possesses to a remarkable extent the quick intuitive power of exposing us to ourselves, and tearing the veil which human self-love draws over human frailty. We cannot resist the searching keenness of his satire; 1754-1832.

[1] 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.'

it penetrates into what Rochefoucauld[1] has called 'the unknown land of self-love.'

1759-1796. As a poet Burns did for Scotland the same work as Blake and Crabbe and Cowper were doing for England. He, too, sings the song of the manhood of man, whether rich or poor. But his coarse

1786. epigrams and political songs cannot be said to have placed him among the great satirical writers. His fun as a rule is boisterous, his wit of the broadest. He has too much joy in living, and too much compassion for the sorrow and sin of life to be other than a gentle critic of vices. But he was a satirist with something to say, a moralist after the manner of Fielding, when he revolted against the hypocrisy and worship of appearances marking the 'unco guid' who condemned the open excesses into which his own strong passions had led him against his will. This note recurs continually in his poems. It is struck most firmly in 'The Holy Fair,' and most bitterly in 'Holy Willie's Prayer.' It will be sufficiently exemplified by the address to the Rigidly Righteous. Of his epistles and other satires, it is enough to add that the form and spirit are those of Alan Ramsay and Robert Fergusson, but the genius that inspires them is the fitfully burning genius of Robert Burns.

1798. A new era of journalism was begun when the political satires of George Canning were published in the *Anti-Jacobin*. Under the title of the 'New Morality,' he poured forth, with a fine air of moral indignation and elegant fluency of verse, a general denunciation of the prevailing tendency to push every principle in politics and morals to excess. The piece has much vigour and point, and contains

[1] 'Maximes du Duc de la Rochefoucauld,' No. 111 : 'Quelque découverte que l'on ait faite dans le pays de l'amour-propre il y reste encore bien des terres inconnues.'

at least one line which has passed into the common stock of quotations. 'The Needy Knife-Grinder,' in another style, is a brilliant little piece of condensed sarcasm.

The influence of Gifford can be clearly traced in Byron, who at the beginning and the end of his career dealt in satire. 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers'[1] was the product of mere rage at that critique of 'Hours in Idleness' which he described as 'a masterpiece of low wit and a tissue of scurrilous abuse.' This reply teems with powerful and indiscriminate invective. It differs in two important respects from the 'Dunciad.' On the one hand, most of Byron's heroes were on a level with their satirist, but on the other, Byron is not justified by the correctness of his judgment as Pope may claim to be. Though worthless as literary criticism, 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers' is remarkable as the most powerful expression of that spleen which is always breaking out in Byron's poems. The 'Vision of Judgment' is another ebullition of spite, wherein humour and common-sense are aided by imaginative invention. 1808.

But Byron's best satire is to be found in his best and most original work, 'Don Juan.' This wonderful record of passing fancies and fleeting humours is regaining, there is reason to hope, some of its former popularity. The same fervour and elastic strength, the same lack of critical insight, are to be found here as in 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,' but there is also a melancholy undertone which, in company with perpetual contrasts of sarcasm, flippancy, and warm feeling, improve the effect of the sudden outbursts of spleen.

Shelley's satirical poems form about one-twelfth 1820.

[1] With this piece satire in heroic verse would seem to have died.

of the bulk of his work; but they are not important. There was not in him the stuff of which satirists are made. With him imagination preponderated over judgment and reason. 'Peter Bell' is inspired by a Byronic contempt for one side of Wordsworth and part of his works; whilst 'Swellfoot the Tyrant' strikes us rather as an amusing extravaganza than as a serious or convincing satire. Though it contains some excellent strokes, it does not at all persuade us that Shelley's genius lay in that direction.

1831. 'Sartor Resartus' is one of the few great purely satiric prose works of our century. In describing the clothes-philosophy of Teufelsdröckh, to whom 'the Upholsterer is no Pontiff, neither is any drawing-room a temple,'[1] Carlyle displays a style and sincerity all his own, and an ironic humour akin to that of Swift, to whom he owes many a hint. Essentially Swiftian indeed is Carlyle's deep hatred of shams, his paradoxical choice of subject, and much of his method.

Thomas Moore is the last of the considerable poets who wrote much satire.[2] The levity of his Irish wit rendered his brisk pasquinades highly popular at the time, but they have since fallen into oblivion, due partly to their occasional character, and partly to the waves of a literary revolution which have passed over all Moore's works.

The age of the novel had now arrived. The fashion set by Fielding was at length adopted. In the novels of Miss Burney, Miss Ferrier, and Theodore Hook we find satire of a crude and inferior sort. But Miss Austen stands alone and supreme in the art of delicate and humorous satiric writing in fiction of this kind.

[1] 'Sartor Resartus,' ch. iv.

[2] 'Fudge Family in Paris,' 'Twopenny Post-Bag,' 'Fables for the Holy Alliance.'

The qualities of Thomas Love Peacock betray themselves in the caustic irony of his songs, as well as in the genial extravagance of his 'little publications.'[1] In all his novels the wine is the same, but improved by keeping.[2] Plot he ignores, his characters are types, and dialogue is the essence of his books, which, in their sprightly humour and satiric fancy have not a little of the salt of Aristophanes, of Rabelais, and of Petronius.

Dickens, in his social and political satire, is vulgar and overstrained, but 'Ixion in Heaven,' 'Popanilla,' and 'The Infernal Marriage,' proved that a portion of the mantle of Lucian had fallen on Lord Beaconsfield, who, a few years later, in a trilogy of political novels, with a brilliant, good-humoured wit all his own, laughed at 'the fussy and impotent intrigues of great ladies, the agitation of hungry office-seekers, the manœuvres of political wire-pullers, and the disappointment of pompous grandees.'[3]

No writer of this century has indulged the satiric vein more frequently than Thackeray. Before all things he is a novelist—a novelist who possesses the rare art of endowing his characters with life. It is in the portrayal of men, especially of bad men, that he excels. His women, when they are not insipid, are impossible, but they are never incredible; for we can believe in the impossible, but in the improbable never. But there are in his books both men and women who live in the mind as types or examples of folly, weakness, or vice. Barnes Newcombe, Becky Sharp, Lord Steyne, Sir Pitt Crawley, and the rest, have more substance in them than Achitophel or Lord Fanny. The George IV. of Thackeray is almost as famous a portrait as Juvenal's Domitian. Thackeray, in fact, could create. Imagination, even

[1] Preface to 'Headlong Hall,' 1837.
[2] Dr. Richard Garnett.
[3] H. D. Traill.

more than indignation, guided his pen. The strange diffuseness of his style is an index of the author's mind, and of his limitations as a satirist. The 'Book of Snobs' is an instance: it is far too discursive. The author is attacking a noted failing of his countrymen. He does so wittily, forcibly, happily; but he pursues his theme along devious paths, pausing to illustrate or to moralize. He is apt to go that other stage[1] which makes a journey of a progress, and turns delight into fatigue. When satire attacks, every line should go home with the full strength of the striker behind it. If the writer lengthens his pages, he should also broaden his charity. Thackeray is more long-winded than Horace, and bitterer than Juvenal. His manner would be admirable if he wished us to smile, to be tolerant and good-humoured with the personages of his work. It is ill-fitted either to rouse or to sustain the detestation which he evidently wishes to excite.

It is not in complete narratives, but in the portraiture of individuals that Thackeray proves himself a great satirist; but in satire, it may be said, this is a great part of the whole.

Thackeray's example has been followed. We live in the era of the novel, and it is among the novelists that we look nowadays for the censorious critics of life. Satire, however, has not been altogether engrossed by novels. For on the stage, too, criticism of life has of late years been attempted by the dramatists, and, in a lighter and more successful manner, W. S. Gilbert, the successor of Gay,[2] on the one hand, and Molière on the other, with his paradoxical wit, gift of rhyme, and lyrical ability, has

[1] Cf. Dryden's Essay.

[2] It would be entertaining to work out a comparison between 'Patience,' 'The Beggar's Opera,' and 'Les Précieuses Ridicules.'

ridiculed with exquisite humour the follies and excesses of society. The temptation to discuss the qualities of living satirical writers is almost irresistible; but we must be content to glance at the tendencies of the present age.

As civilization has grown more complex, there has been a corresponding growth in the complexity of character. A more delicate method of analysis is required, and the psychological studies of Browning have taken the place of the satirical portraits of Pope.

Though the thunder of Carlyle still rolls in our ears, general denunciation of shams has gone out of fashion. Humanity has learnt to pity rather than to condemn itself. We live in an age of excuses, when righteous indignation is felt to be a little out of place. We need not look nowadays for a Juvenal, in whose constant and ruthless declamation there are no lights and shades and no uncertainties. Indignation no longer makes verses. The school of Keats and Swinburne, which has nothing in common with satire, prevails in the poetry of the nineteenth century;[1] whilst the analyzing and dissecting school of Browning finds the soul less simple and less black than did the followers of Juvenal. In these more charitable days denunciatory satire is a bruised reed, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce him.

In prose, since the time of Canning, political spleen, deserting the pamphlet, has vented itself more and more in speeches and weekly reviews. Criticism of the sins of society has found a home in the pulpit or the novel. For when the novel, with all its opportunities of contrast and subtle characterization, came to be the prevailing form of litera-

[1] Mr. Alfred Austin, however, has written satires in heroic verse, *e.g.*, 'The Golden Age' and 'The Season.'

ture, the satiric spirit found a ready means of expressing itself with even greater effect than in verse. The great novelists present us with men, not with personified epigrams. From the nature of the case, in so doing they diffuse their satire and call in humour to take the place of bitterness. Now, the humour necessary for the best manner of satire is that peculiar humour which means, at bottom, the power of seeing things as they really are, undisguised by conventional trappings—the power of appreciating the ironical unfitness of things in this world. The best and finest form of satire, in the opinion both of Dryden and of Swift,[1] is the sharp, well-mannered way of laughing a folly out of countenance. Of this we have much—we cannot have too much—in the novels of the day.

The world will always need to be reminded, and we may rest assured that in one form or another it will not fail to be reminded, that in every path of life there is a limit set, beyond which it is not good to go. Satire will doubtless continue to concern itself with its traditional duty—the duty of enforcing by whatsoever means the ancient precept

> 'Est inter Tanain quiddam socerumque Viselli
> Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines
> Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum.'[2]

---

[1] Swift, 'Intelligencer,' No. 111. Dryden, 'Origin and Progress of Satire.'

[2] 'Sure some difference lies
Between the very fool and very wise;
Some certain mean in all things may be found
To mark our virtues and our vices bound.'
Hor., Sat. I., i. 105.

## SONG AGAINST THE FRIARS [1375?].

PRESTE, ne monke, ne yit chanoun,
Ne no man of religioun,
Gyven hem so to devocioun,
As done these holy frers.
For some gyven hem to chyvalry,
Somme to riote and ribauderey,
Bot frers gyven hem to grete study,
And to grete prayers,
Who so kepes thair reule al,
Bothe in worde and dede;
I am ful siker[1] that he shal
Have heaven bliss to mede.

Men may see by thair contynaunce
That thai are men of grete penaunce,
And also that thair sustynaunce
Simple is and wayke.
I have lyved now fourty years,
And fatter men about the neres
Yit sawe I never then are these frers,
In contreys ther thai rayke.
Meatless so meagre are thai made,
And penaunce so puttes hem doun,
That each one is an horse-lade,
When he shall trusse[2] of toun.

[1] Sure. [2] Pack up and depart.

Alas! that ever it shuld be so,
Suche clerkes as thai about shuld go,
Fro toun to toun by two and two,
To seke thair sustynaunce.
By God that al this world wan,[1]
He that that ordre first bygan,
Me thynk certes it was a man
Of simple ordynaunce.
For thai have noght to lyve by,
Thai wandren here and there
And dele with divers marcerye,
Right as thai pedlers were.

Thai dele with purses, pynnes, and knyves,
With gyrdles, gloves, for wenches and wyves,
Bot ever bacward the husband thryves
Ther thai are haunted tille.
For when the gode man is fro hame
And the frere comes to oure dame,
He spares nauther for synne ne shame,
That he ne dos his wille.
If thai no helpe of housewyves had,
When husbands are not inne,
The freres welfare were ful bad,
For thai shuld brewe ful thynne. . . .

Trantes thai can[2] and many a jape,
For somme can with a pound of sape[3]
Gete him a kyrtelle and a cape,
And somwhat else therto.
Wherto shuld I othes swere?
Ther is no pedler that pak can bere,
That half so dere can selle his gere,
Then a frer can do.

[1] Redeemed. [2] Know tricks. [3] Soap.

For if he gife a wyfe a knyfe
That cost but penys two,
Worthe ten knyves, so mot I thryfe,
He wyl have ere he go. . . .

Thai say that thai distroye synne,
And thai mayntene men moste therinne;
For had a man slayn all his kynne,
Go shryve him at a frere,
And for lesse then a payre of shone
He wyl assoil him clene and sone,
And say the synne that he has done
His saule shall never dere[1] . . .
Alle wyckednes that men can telle
Reynes hem among;
Ther shal no saule have rowme in helle,
Of frers ther is suche throng. . . .

Ful wisely can thai preche and say;
Bot as thai preche no thing do thai.
I was a frere ful many a day,
Therfor the sothe I wate.[2]
But when I sawe that thair lyvyng
Acordyd not to thair prechyng,
Of I cast my frer clothing,
And wyghtly went my gate.
Other leve ne toke I none,
Fro ham when I went,
Bot toke ham to the devel eachone,
The priour and the covent.

[1] Injure. [2] Truth I know.

## GEOFFREY CHAUCER [1340-1400].

*From the Prologue to 'The Canterbury Tales.'*

A FRERE[1] there was, a wantown and a merye,
A limitour,[2] a ful solempne[3] man.
In alle the ordres foure is noon that can[4]
So muche of daliaunce and fair langage.
He hadde maad ful many a mariage
Of yonge wommen, at his owne cost.
Un-to his ordre he was a noble post.[5]
Ful wel biloved and famulier was he
With frankeleyns[6] over-al in his contree,
And eek with worthy wommen of the toun:
For he had power of confessioun,
As seyde him-self, more than a curat,
For of his ordre he was a licentiat.
Ful swetely herde he confessioun,
And plesaunt was his absolucioun;
He was an esy man to yeve[7] penaunce
Ther[8] as he wiste to han a good pitaunce:
For unto a povre ordre for to yive
Is signe that a man is wel y-shrive.
For if he yaf, he dorste make avaunt,
He wiste that a man was repentaunt.
For many a man so hard is of his herte,
He may nat[9] wepe al-thogh him sore smerte.
Therefore, in stede of weping and preyeres,
Men moot[10] yeve silver to the povre[11] freres.
His tipet was ay farsed ful of knyves
And pinnes, for to yeven faire wyves.
And certeinly he hadde a mery note;
Wel coude he singe and pleyen on a rote.[12]

[1] Friar. [2] Beggar. [3] Cheerful. [4] Knows.
[5] Support. [6] Freeholders. [7] Give.
[8] Wherever he knew he would have a good pittance.
[9] Not. [10] Ought. [11] Poor. [12] Fiddle (kind of).

Of yeddinges[1] he bar[2] utterly the prys.
His nekke whyt was as the flour-de-lys.
Ther-to[3] he strong was as a champioun.
He knew the tavernes wel in every toun,
And everich hostiler and tappestere
Bet[4] than a lazar or a beggestere;
For unto swich[5] a worthy man as he
Acorded nat, as by his facultee,
To have with seke[6] lazars aqueyntaunce.
It is nat honest, it may nat avaunce
For to delen with no swich poraille,[7]
But al with riche and sellers of vitaille.
And over-al, ther as profit sholde aryse,
Curteys he was, and lowly of servyse.
Ther nas no man no-wher so vertuous.
He was the beste beggere in his hous:
For thogh a widwe hadde noght a sho,[8]
So plesaunt was his 'In principio,'[9]
Yet wolde he have a ferthing, er he wente.
His purchas was wel bettre than his rente.
And rage he coude, as it were right a whelpe.
In love-dayes[10] ther coude he muchel helpe.
For there he was nat lyk a cloisterer,
With a thredbar cope, as is a povre scoler.
But he was lyk a maister or a pope.
Of double worsted was his semi-cope,
That rounded as a belle out of the presse.
Somwhat he lipsed, for his wantownesse,
To make his English swete up-on his tonge;
And in his harping, whan that he had songe,
His eyen twinkled in his heed aright,
As doon the sterres in the frosty night.

[1] Songs. [2] Carried. [3] Moreover. [4] Better.
[5] Such. [6] Sick. [7] Poor people.
[8] Though a widow had not any shoes.
[9] The ordinary greeting of a friar.
[10] Days for settling disputes by arbitration.

*From 'The Prologue to the Pardoner's Tale.'*

'LORDINGS,' quod he, 'in chirches whan I preche,
I peyne me to han an hauteyn[1] speche,
And ringe it out as round as gooth a belle,
For I can al by rote that I telle.
My theme is alwey oon, and ever was—
"Radix malorum est Cupiditas."[2]
First I pronounce whennes that I come,
And than my bulles[3] shewe I, alle and somme.
Our lige lordes seel on my patente,
That shewe I first, my body to warente,
That no man be so bold, ne preest ne clerk,
Me to destourbe of Cristes holy werk;
And after that than telle I forth my tales,
Bulles of popes and of cardinales,
Of patriarkes, and bishoppes I shewe;
And in Latyn I speke a wordes fewe,
To saffron[4] with my predicacioun,[5]
And for to stire men to devocioun.
Than shewe I forth my longe cristal stones,
Y-crammed ful of cloutes and of bones;
Reliks been they, as wenen[6] they echoon.
Than have I in latoun[7] a sholder-boon
Which that was of an holy Jewes shepe.
"Good men," seye I, "tak of my wordes kepe;
If that this boon be wasshe in any welle,
If cow, or calf, or sheep, or oxe swelle
That any worm hath ete, or worm y-stonge,
Tak water of that welle, and wash his tonge,
And it is hool[8] anon; and forthermore,
Of pokkes and of scabbe, and every sore

[1] Loud.
[2] Avarice is the root of evil.
[3] Papal Bulls.
[4] Colour.
[5] Sermon.
[6] As they all suppose.
[7] Metal.
[8] Whole.

Shal every sheep be hool, that of this welle
Drinketh a draughte; tak kepe eek what I telle.

* * * * *

Good men and wommen, o thing[1] warne I yow,
If any wight be in this chirche now,
That hath doon sinne horrible, that he
Dar nat, for shame, of it y-shriven be,
Or any womman, be she yong or old,
That hath y-maad hir housbond cokewold,
Swich folk shul have no power ne no grace
To offren to my reliks in this place.
And who-so findeth him out of swich blame,
He wol com up and offre in goddes name,
And I assoille[2] him by the auctoritee
Which that by bulle y-graunted was to me."
By this gaude have I wonne, yeer by yeer,
An hundred mark sith I was Pardoner.
I stonde lyk a clerk in my pulpet,
And whan the lewed[3] peple is douny-set,
I preche, so as ye han herd bifore,
And telle an hundred false japes[4] more.
Than peyne I me to strecche forth the nekke,
And est and west upon the peple I bekke,
As doth a dowve sitting on a berne.[5]
Myn hondes and my tonge goon so yerne,[6]
That it is joye to see my bisinesse.
Of avaryce and of swich cursednesse
Is al my preching, for to make hem free
To yeve her pens, and namely un-to me.[7]
For my entente is nat but for to winne,
And no-thing for correccioun of sinne.
I rekke never, whan that they ben beried,
Though that her soules goon a-blake-beried![8]

[1] One thing. [2] Absolve. [3] Common.
[4] Tricks, jests. [5] Barn. [6] Briskly.
[7] To give their money, and especially to me.
[8] Blackberrying = astray.

For certes, many a predicacioun
Comth ofte tyme of yvel entencioun;
Som for plesaunce of folk and flaterye,
To been avaunced by ipocrisye,
And som for veyne glorie, and som for hate.
For, whan I dar non other weyes debate,
Than wol I stinge him with my tonge smerte
In preching, so that he shal nat asterte[1]
To been defamed falsly, if that he
Hath trespased to my brethren or to me.
For, though I telle noght his propre name,
Men shal wel knowe that it is the same
By signes and by othere circumstances.
Thus quyte I folk that doon us displesances:
Thus spitte I out my venim under hewe
Of holynesse, to seme holy and trewe.
But shortly myn entente I wol devyse:
I preche of no-thing but for coveityse.
Therfor my theme is yet, and ever was—
'Radix malorum est Cupiditas.'
Thus can I preche agayn that same vyce
Which that I use, and that is avaryce.
But, though my-self be gilty in that sinne,
Yet can I maken other folk to twinne[2]
From avaryce, and sore to repente.
But that is nat my principal entente.
I preche no-thing but for coveityse;
Of this matere it oughte y-nogh suffyse.
Than telle I hem ensamples many oon
Of olde stories, long tyme agoon:
For lewed peple loven tales olde;
Swich thinges can they wel reporte and holde.
What? trowe ye, the whyles I may preche,
And winne gold and silver for I teche,
That I wol live in povert wilfully?
Nay, nay, I thoghte it never trewely!

[1] Escape. [2] To depart from.

For I wol preche and begge in sondry londes;
I wol not do no labour with myn hondes,[1]
Ne make baskettes, and live therby,
Because I wol nat beggen ydelly.
I wol non of the apostles counterfete;
I wol have money, wolle, chese, and whete,
Al were it yeven of the povrest page,[2]
Or of the povrest widwe in a village,
Al sholde hir children sterve for famine.
Nay! I wol drinke licour of the vyne,
And have a joly wenche in every toun.

## WILLIAM LANGLAND [1340-1400?].

*From 'The Vision of William concerning Piers the Plowman.'*

In a somere seyson whan softe was the sonne,
Y shap me in-to shrobbis as y a shepherde were,
In abit as an ermite unholy of werkes;
Ich wente forth in the world wonders to hure,
And saw meny cellis and selcouthe thynges.
Ac on a may morwenyng on Malverne hulles
Me byfel for to slepe for werynesse of wandryng;
And in a launde as ich lay lenede ich and slepte,
And merveylously me mette as ich may yow telle;
Al the welthe of this worlde and the woo bothe,

In a summer season, when the sun was warm, I betook me to the shrubs (*i.e.*, to an out-of-door life) as if I were a shepherd, dressed like a hermit of unholy works; I went forth in the world to hear wonders, and saw many cells (in religious houses) and strange things. But on a May morning on Malvern hills I happened to sleep, through weariness of wandering; and as I lay in a meadow I reclined and slept, and marvellously I dreamed, as I may tell you. All the wealth of the world and the woe,

[1] Hands. [2] Although it were given by.

Wynkyng as it were wyterly ich saw hyt,
Of tryuthe and of tricherye of tresoun and of gyle,
Al ich saw slepynge as ich shal yow telle.

* * * * *

Somme putte hem to plow and pleiden ful seylde,
In settyng and in sowyng swonken ful harde,
And wonne that thuse wasters with glotenye destroyeth.

* * * * *

And somme chosen cheffare they cheude the betere,
As hit semeth to oure syght that souche men thryveth.
And somme murthes to make as mynstrals conneth,
That wollen neyther swynke ne swete bote swery grete othes,
And fynde up foule fantesyes and foles hem maken,
And haven witte at wylle to worche yf they wolde.
That Paul prechith of hem proven hit ich myghte,
Qui turpiloquium loquitur ys Lucyfers knave.
Bydders and beggers faste a-boute yoden,
Tyl hure bagge and hure belly were bretful ycrammyd,
Faytynge for hure fode and fouhten atten ale,

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sleeping as it were, I certainly saw it. Of truth and of treachery, of treason and of guile, I saw all, sleeping, as I shall tell you. . . . Some set themselves to plough, and amused themselves very seldom; with planting and sowing they worked very hard and gained what these spendthrifts destroy with gluttony. . . . And some chose merchandise; they prospered better, as it seems to our sight that such men thrive. And some are skilled to make mirth as minstrels, that will neither toil nor sweat, but swear great oaths, and invent foul fancies, and make fools of themselves, and (yet) have their wit at their will, (being able) to work if they wished. What Paul preaches about them I might adduce here (2 Thess. iii. 10), (but will not, for) he who speaks slander is Lucifer's servant. Beggars went about quickly till their wallet and belly were crammed brimful, telling lies for their food, and quarrelling at the ale-

In glotenye, god wot, goth they to bedde,
And aryseth with ribaudrie tho Roberdes knaves;
Slep and synful sleuthe seweth suche evere.
Pylgrimis and palmeres plyghten hem to-gederes,
To seche seint Iame and seyntys of rome,
Wenten forthe in hure way with meny un-wyse tales,
And haven leve to lye al hure lyf-time.
Eremytes on an hep with hokede staves,
Wenten to Walsyngham, and hure wenches after;
Grete lobies and longe that lothe were to swynke,
Clothede hem in copis to be knowe fro othere,
And made hem-selve eremytes hure eise to have.
Ich fond ther frerus alle the foure ordres,
Prechynge the peple for profit of the wombe,
And glosynge the godspel as hem good lykede;
For covetise of copes contrariede some doctors.
Meny of this maistres of mendinant freres,
Hure monye and marchaundise marchen to-gederes;
Ac sutth charite hath be chapman and chef to shryve lordes,
Many ferlies han fallen in a fewe yeres;
Bote holy churche and charite choppe a-down swich shryvers,

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house. In gluttony, God knows, they go to bed and arise with ribaldry, those lawless vagabonds. Sleep and sinful sloth ever pursue such men. Pilgrims and palmers agreed together to visit the shrine of Saint James and of the saints of Rome. They went forth in their way, with many unwise tales, and have leave to lie all the rest of their lives. Hermits in a crowd, with hooked staffs, went to (the shrine of our Lady of) Walsingham, and their mistresses followed; great tall lubbers that were unwilling to work clothed themselves in copes so as to be known from others, and made themselves hermits in order to have their ease. I found there friars—all the four orders—preaching to the people for their stomachs' sake, and interpreting the gospel as it pleased them from desire of copes. Many of these masters of mendicant friars may clothe them as they will, for their money and merchandise go together; but since Love (*i.e.*, the friars) has turned pedlar, and chief confessor of lords, many miracles have

The moste myschif on molde mounteth up faste.
Ther preched a pardoner as he a prest were,
And brougte forth a bulle with bisshopis seles,
And seide that hym-selve mygte asoilie hem alle
Of falsnesse of fastinges, of vowes to-broke.
Lewede men lyvede hym wel, and likeden hus wordes,
Comen and kneleden to kyssen his bulles;
He blessede hem with hus brevet, and blerede hure eyen;
And raghte with hus rageman rynges and broches,
Thus ye geveth youre golde glotones to helpe,
And leneth it to loreles that lecherie haunten.
Were the bisshop blessid other worthe bothe hus eren,
Hus sele sholde nogt be sent in deceit of the puple.
Ac it is nogt by the bisshop that the loye precheth,
The parsheprest and the pardoner parten the selver,
That poore puple in parshes sholde have yf thei ne were.
Persones and parsheprestes pleynede to the bisshop,
That hure parshens ben poore sitthe the pestelence tyme,

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happened in a few years; but unless Holy Church and Love strike down such shrivers the greatest mischief on earth will quickly arise. There preached a pardoner as if he were a priest and brought forth a Bull with bishop's seals, and said that he himself could pardon them all for breaking their fast and vows. The common people entirely believed him and liked his words and came and kneeled to kiss his Bulls; he blessed them with his letter of indulgence and dimmed their eyes, and seized with his Papal Bull rings and brooches. Thus ye give your gold to help gluttons, and bestow it on the lawless. Were the bishop truly righteous or fit to have both his ears, his seal would not be sent to deceive the people with. But it is not against the bishop that the young fellow preaches; for often the parish priest and the pardoner divide the silver, which poor people in the parishes would have, if it were not for them. Parsons and parish priests complained to the bishop that their parishes are poor since the

To have licence and leve, in Londone to dwelle,
And synge ther for symonye for selver ys swete.
Bisshopes and bachilers bothe maisters and doctors,
That han cure under cryst and crownynge in tokne,
Ben chargid with holy churche charyte to tulie,
That is, leel love and lif among lered and lewed;
Thei lyen in londone in lentene and elles.
Somme serven the kynge, and hus selver tellen
In the chekkere and the chauncelrie chalengeynge hus dettes,
Of wardes and of wardemotes wayves and strayues,
Somme aren as seneschals and sarven othere lordes,
And ben in stede of stywardes and sitten and demen.

* * * * *

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time of the pestilence, in order to have license and leave to dwell in London and sing there (as Chantry priests) for simony, for silver is sweet. Bishops and bachelors, both masters and doctors, that have a cure under Christ, and tonsure in token, are charged with Holy Church to cultivate charity, that is, honest love and way of life among the learned and unlearned. They dwell in London in Lent and at other times. Some serve the King and count his silver in the exchequer and the chancellor's court, claiming his debts from wards and ward meetings, waifs and strays. Some are as seneschals, and serve other lords, and are instead of stewards and sit and pronounce judgment.

### The Alehouse.

Now by-gynneth Gloton for to go to shryfte,
And kayres hym to-kirke-ward hus coupe to shewe.
Fastyng on a Fryday forth gan he wende
By Betone hous the brewstere that bad him good morwe,
And whederwarde he wolde the brew-wif hym asked.
'To holy churche,' quath he, 'for to hure masse,

And sitthen sitte and be yshriven and synwe namore.'
'Ich have good ale, godsyb Gloton, wolt thow assaye?'
'What havest thow,' quath he, 'eny hote spices?'
'Ich have piper and pionys and a pound of garlik,
A ferthyng-worth of fynkelsede for fastinge-daies.'
Thenne goth Gloton yn and grete othes after.
Sesse the sywestere sat on the benche,
Watte the warynere and hus wif dronke,
Thomme the tynkere and tweye of hus knaves,
Hicke the hakeneyman and Houwe the neldere,
Claryce of Cockeslane the clerk of the churche,
Syre Peeres of Prydie and Purnel of Flaundres,
An haywarde and an heremyte the hangeman of Tyborne,
Dauwe the dykere with a dosen harlotes
Of portours and of pykeporses and pylede toth-drawers,
A rybibour and a ratoner a rakere and hus knave,
A ropere and a redyngkynge and Rose the disshere,

Now Glutton begins to go to shrift, and betakes him churchward to confess his sins. Fasting on a Friday, he began to go forth by the house of Beton the brewster, who bade him 'Good-morrow,' and the ale-wife asked whither he meant to go. 'To holy church,' quoth he, 'to hear mass, and then sit and be shriven and sin no more.' 'I have good ale, gossip Glutton; will you try it?' 'What have you?' quoth he, 'any hot spices?' 'I have pepper and pæony seeds and a pound of garlic, a farthing's worth of fennel-seed for fasting-days.' Then Glutton goes in, and great oaths after. Cis the sempstress sat on the bench, Wat the gamekeeper and his drunken wife, Thomas the tinker and two of his prentices, Hick the horse-jobber, and Hugh the needle-seller, Clarice of Cock's Lane, the clerk of the church, Sir Piers of Prie-dieu (a priest), and Purnel of Flanders, a cattle-keeper and a hermit, the hangman of Tyburn, David the ditcher, with a dozen rascally porters and pick-pockets and bald drawers of teeth, a fiddler and a ratcatcher, a scavenger and his prentice, a ropemaker and a lacquey, and Rose the dish-seller,

Godefray the garlek-mongere and Griffyn the
Walish;
And of up-holders an hep erly by the morwe
Geven Gloton with glad chere good ale to hansele.
Clemment the cobelere cast of hus cloke,
And to the newe fayre nempned hit to selle.
Hicke the hakeneyman hitte hus hod after,
And bad Bette the bouchere to be on hus syde.
Ther were chapmen y-chose the chaffare to preise;
That he that hadde the hod sholde nat habbe the
cloke;
The betere thyng, by arbytours sholde bote the
werse.
Two rysen rapliche and rounede to-geders,
And preysed the penyworthes apart by hem-selve,
And ther were othes an hepe for other sholde have
the werse.
Thei couthe nouht by here conscience a-corde for
treuthe,
Tyl Robyn the ropere aryse thei bysouhte,
And nempned hym a nompeyr that no debate were.
Hicke the hakeneyman hadde the cloke
In covenaunt that Clemment sholde the coppe fylle,

---

Godfrey the garlick-seller, and Griffyn the Welshman, and a heap of furniture-dealers, early in the morning gave Glutton, with good cheer, good ale to propitiate him. Clement the cobbler cast off his cloak and named it for sale at the new fair (an old method of barter). Hick threw down his hood and bade Bette the butcher be on his side. There were tradesmen chosen to value the merchandise, that he that had the hood should not have the cloak; the better thing by arbitration should give up something so as to equal the worse. Two rose hastily and whispered together, and appraised the pennyworths apart by themselves, and there was a lot of swearing, for one or other had to have the worse. They could not by their conscience agree till they besought Robin the ropemaker to arise, and named him umpire, whose decision was to be final.

Hick got the cloak on the agreement that Clement should fill his cup at the other's expense and have the horse-iobber's

And have the hakeneymannes hod and hold hym y-served;
And who repentyde rathest shold aryse after,
And grete syre Gloton with a galon of ale.
Ther was lauhyng and lakeryng and 'let go the coppe!'
Bargeynes and bevereges by-gunne to aryse,
And setyn so til evesong rang and songe umbwhyle,
Til Gloton hadde yglobbed a galon and a gylle.

* * * * *

With al the wo of the worlde hus wif and hus wenche
Bere hym to hus bedde and brouhte hym ther-ynne;
And after al this excesse he hadde an accidie,
He slep Saterday and Sonday tyl sonne yede to reste.
Thenne awakyde he wel wan and wolde have ydronke;
The ferst word that he spak was 'ho halt the bolle?'

* * * * *

---

hood. The first to repent of the bargain was to arise and pledge Sir Glutton with a gallon of ale. There was laughing and chiding, and cries of 'Let go the cup!' Bargains and drinking began to arise, and they sat so till evensong and sang occasionally till Glutton had swallowed a gallon and a gill. . . . With all the sorrow in the world his wife and his daughter carried him to his bed and put him therein. And after all this excess he had a fit of sloth. He slept Saturday and Sunday, till sundown. Then he awoke very pale, and wanted to drink. The first word that he spoke was, 'Who detains the bowl?'

## Sloth.

Tho cam Sleuthe al by-slobered with two slymed eyen.
'Ich most sitte to be shryven,' quath he, 'or elles shal ich nappe.
Ich may nouht stonde ne stoupe ne with-oute stoule knele.
*Benedicite*' he by-gan with a bolke and hus brest knokede,
Rascled and remed and routte at the laste.
'What a-wake, renk,' quath Repentaunce, 'rape the to shryfte!'
'Sholde ich deye,' quath he, 'by this daye ich drede me sore,
Ich can nouht parfytliche my *pater-noster* as the prest hit seggeth.
Ich can rymes of Robin Hode and of Randolf, erl of Chestre,
Ac of oure lord ne of oure lady the lest that evere was maked.
Ich have a-vowed vowes fourty and for-got hem a morwe;
Ich parfourned nevere penaunce that the preest me hihte,
Ne right sory for my synnes ich sey nevere the tyme.

Then came Sloth all slobbered over, with two dirty eyes. 'I must sit to be shrived,' quoth he, 'or else I shall sleep. I may not stand or stoop, or kneel without a stool. Benedicite,' he began, with a belch, and beat his breast, stretched and groaned, and snored at last. 'What! awake, man!' quoth Repentance; 'haste thee to shrift.' 'If I die to-day,' quoth he, 'I fear I know not perfectly my *Pater-noster* as the priest says it. I know ballads of Robin Hood and of Randolph, Earl of Chester, but of our Lord and of our Lady not the least rime ever made. I have vowed forty vows, and forgot them on the morrow. I never did penance ordered me by the priest, nor was I ever right sorry for my sins. If I say

And ich bidde eny bedis bote hit be in wratthe,
That ich telle with my tunge ys ten myle fro my herte.
Ich am ocupied eche day, haly day and other,
With ydel tales atte nale and other-whyle in churches;
Godes pyne and hus passion is pure selde in my thouhte.
Ich visited nevere feble man ne feterid man in prisone;
Ich hadde levere huyre of harlotrye other of a lesyng to lauhen of,
Other lacke men, and lykne hem in unlykynge manere,
Than al that evere Marc made Matheu, Iohan, other Lucas.
Vigilies and fastyngdayes ich can for-gete hem alle.
Ich ligge a bedde in Lente my lemman in myn armes,
Tyl matyns and messe be don then have ich a memorie atte freres.
Ich am nought shryven som tyme bote syknesse hit make,
Nouht twyes in ten yer yut tel ich nauht the halvendele.
Ich have be prest and person passyng therty wintere,

---

any prayers, unless it be in anger, what I say with my tongue is ten miles from my heart. I am occupied every day with idle tales at the alehouse; and at other times in church; God's suffering and His passion are very seldom in my thoughts. I never visited the feeble, nor the fettered man in prison. I had rather hear a scurrilous tale or a lying story to laugh at, or blame men, and liken them in a scandalous manner, than all that ever Mark wrote, Matthew, John, or Luke. Vigils or fasting-days I can forget them all. I lie abed in Lent till matins and mass are done, and then I am mentioned at the convent. I am not shriven for a long time, unless sickness frightens me to it, not twice in ten years, yet I tell not the half of my sins. I have been

Yut can ich nother solfye ne synge ne a seyntes lyf rede.
Ac ich can fynde in a felde and in a forlang an hare,
And holden a knyghtes court and a-counte with the reyve;
Ac ich can nouht constrye Catoun ne clergialliche reden.
Yf ich bygge and borwe ouht bote hit be y-tayled,
Ich forgete hit as gerne and yf eny man hit asketh,
Sixe sithe other sevene ich for-sake hit with othes;
Thus have ich tened trewe men ten hondred tymes.
And som tyme my servauns here salarye is by-hynde;
Reuthe ys to huyre the rekenyng whenne we shulleth rede acountes,
That with so wicked wil my werkmen ich paye.
If eny man doth me a byn-fet other helpeth me at nede,
Ich am unkynde ageyns courtesye ich can nat understonde hit.
For ich have and have had somdel haukes maneres,
Ich am nat lured with love bote ouht lygge under thombe.

---

priest and parson passing thirty years, yet I can neither sing my notes nor read the life of a saint. But I can find a hare in a field and in a furrow, and hold a knight's court and go through accounts with the steward; but I cannot construe Cato or read like a scholar. If I buy and give a pledge for anything, unless it be scored on a tally I forget it as soon, and if any man asks for it, six or seven times I deny it with oaths. Thus have I vexed true men a thousand times. And sometimes my servant's wages are behindhand. 'Tis pity to hear the reckoning when we must make up accounts, with so bad a will do I pay my workmen. If any man does me a kindness or helps me at need, I am unkind towards his courtesy, I cannot understand it, for I have and have had in some measure the manners of a hawk; I am not lured with love unless something lie beneath the thumb. The

The kyndenesse that myn emcristene kydde me
fern yere,
Syxty sithe ich sleuthe have for-gute hit sitthe.
In speche and in sparyng of speche yspilt many
tymes
Both fleshe and eke fish and vitaile ich kepte so
longe,
Til eche lyf hit lothede to lokye ther-on, other smylle
hit;
Bothe bred and ale, botere, melke, and chese
For-sleuthed in my service and sette hous a fuyre,
And gede a-bowte in my youthe and gaf me to no
thedom,
And sitthe a beggere have y-be for my foule sleuthe;
*Heu michi, quod sterilem duxi uitam iuuenilem!*

---

kindness that my fellow-Christians showed me long ago, sixty times I, Sloth, have forgotten it since. By speech and by sparing speech I have wasted many a time both flesh and fish. And victuals I kept till every one loathed to look on it or smell it; both bread and ale, butter, milk, and cheese I wasted by idle carelessness in my service, and I set the house on fire, and I went about in my youth and devoted myself to no thrifty pursuit, and have been a beggar since through my foul sloth. Alas that I have passed my youth unprofitably!

*From 'Richard the Redeless.'*

THE PARLIAMENT.

AND whanne it drowe to the day of the dede-doynge,
That sovereynes were semblid and the schire-
knyghtis,
Than, as her fforme is, ffrist they beginne to declare
The cause of her comynge and than the kyngis will.

And when it came to the day of the deed, when lords and shire knights were assembled, then, as their custom is, they begin to declare the cause of their coming and then the King's will.

Comliche a clerk than comsid the wordis,
And pronouncid the poyntis aparte to hem alle,
And meved ffor money more than ffor out ellis,
In glosinge of grette lest greyves arise.
And whanne the tale was tolde anon to the ende,
A-morwe thei must, affore mete, mete to-gedir,
The knyghtis of the communete and carpe of the maters,
With citiseyns of shiris y-sent ffor the same,
To reherse the articlis and graunte all her askynge.
But yit ffor the manere to make men blynde,
Somme argued agein rith then a good while
And said, 'We beth servantis and sallere ffongen,
And y-sent ffro the shiris to shewe what hem greveth,
And to parle ffor her prophete and passe no fferthere,
And to graunte of her gold to the grett wattis
By no manere wronge way but if werre were;
And if we ben ffalls to tho us here ffyndeth,
Evyll be we worthy to welden oure hire."
Than satte summe as siphre doth in awgrym,
That noteth a place and no-thing availith;
And some had ysoupid with Symond overe even,

---

Eloquently a clerk then commenced the words, and pronounced the points separately to them all, and moved for money more than for anything else, deceiving the great lest grievances arise; and when the tale was told presently to the end, to-morrow they must, before meat, meet together, the knights of the community, and talk of the matters, with citizens of shires sent for the same purpose, to rehearse the articles and grant all they ask. But yet, as a blind, some argued against the king's right of taxation a good while, and said, 'We are servants and receive salaries, and are sent from the shires to show their grievances and to speak for their advantage and go no farther, and grant their gold to the great men in no wrong manner, but if there were war. And if we are false to those who provide for us here, evil are we worthy to receive as our hire.' Then some sat like a cipher in arithmetic that marks a place, though of no value. And some had supped with Simon overnight, and

And schewed ffor the schire and here schew lost ;
And somme were tituleris and to the kyng wente,
And fformed him of foos that good ffrendis weren,
That bablid ffor the best and no blame served
Of kynge ne conceyll ne of the comunes nother,
Ho so toke good kepe to the *culorum.*
And somme slombrid and slepte and said but a lite :
And somme mafflid with the mouth and nyst what they mente ;
And somme had hire and helde ther-with evere,
And wolde no fforther affoot ffor ffer of her maistris ;
And some were so soleyne and sad of her wittis,
That er they come to the clos acombrid they were,
That thei the conclucioun than constrewe ne couthe.

showed for the shire and lost their show ; and some were tale-bearers, and went to the King and informed him of foes that were really good friends, who spoke for the best, and deserved no blame from the King or Council or Commons either, whoever took good heed to the conclusion. And some slumbered and slept and said but a little, and some mumbled and knew not what they meant, and some were hired and would go no farther for fear of their masters, and some were so sullen and grave in their understandings that ere they came to the close they were so encumbered that they could not explain the conclusion.

## WILLIAM DUNBAR [1459?-1513?].

*From 'The Dance of the Sevin Deidly Synnis.*

And first of all in Dance was Pryd,
With hair wyld bak, and bonet on syd,
Lyk to mak vaistie[1] wanis ;[2]
And round abowt him, as a wheill,[3]
Hang all in rumpillis[4] to the heill[5]

[1] Waste. [2] Abodes. [3] Wheel.
[4] Disorderly folds. [5] Heel.

His kethat[1] for the nanis :
Mony prowd trumpour[2] with him trippit,
Throw skaldand[3] fyre, ay as they skippit
Thay gyrnd[4] with hyddouss granis,[5]
Than Yre come in with sturt[6] and stryfe ;
His hand wes ay upoun his knyfe,
He brandeist lyk a beir :
Bostaris,[7] braggaris, and barganeris,
Eftir him passit into pairis,
All[8] bodin in feir of weir ;
In jakkis and scryppis and bonettis of steill,
Thair leggis wer chenyeit to the heill,
Frawart wes thair affeir :
Sum upoun uder with brandis beft,[9]
Sum jagit utheris to the heft,
With knyvis that scherp cowd scheir.[10]
Nixt in the Dance followit Invy,
Fild full of feid[11] and fellony,
Hid malyce and dispyte :
For pryvie hatrent that traitour trymlit ;
Him followit mony freik[12] dissymlit,
With fenyeit wordis quhyte :
And flattereris into menis facis ;
And bak-byttaris in secreit placis,
To ley[13] that had delyte ;
And rownaris of fals lesingis,[14]
Allace ! that courtis of noble kingis
Of thame can never be quyte.
Nixt him in Dans came Cuvatyce,
Rute of all evill, and grund of vyce,

[1] Robe. [2] Deceiver. [3] Scalding. [4] Grinned.
[5] Hideous groans. [6] Disturbance.
[7] Boasters, braggers, quarrellers.
[8] All arrayed in feature of war.
[9] Struck. [10] Could cut sharply. [11] Feud.
[12] Petulant fellow. [13] Lie.
[14] Whisperers of falsehoods.

That nevir cowd be content:
Catyvis, wrechis, and ockeraris,
Hud-pykis, hurdaris, and gadderaris,[1]
All with that warlo[2] went;
Out of thair throttis they schot on udder
Hett moltin gold, me thocht, a fudder[3]
As fyre-flawcht[4] maist fervent;
Ay as they tumit[5] thame of schot
Feyndis fild thame new up to the thrott
With gold of allkin prent.[6]
Syne Sweirnes,[7] at the secound bidding,
Come lyk a sow out of a midding,
Full slepy was his grunyie.[8]
Mony sweir bumbard belly huddroun,[9]
Mony slute daw and slepy duddroun,[10]
Him servit ay with sounyie![11]
He drew thame farth in till a chenyie[12]
And Belliall with a brydill renyie,[13]
Evir lascht thame on the lunyie:[14]
In Dance they war so slaw of feit,
They gaif thame in the fyre a heit,
And made them quicker of counyie.[15]
Than Lichery, that lathly corse,
Came berand[16] lyk a bagit horse,
And Ydilness did him leid;
Thair wes with him ane ugly sort,
And mony stynkand fowll tramort,[17]
That had in syn bene deid:
When thay wer enterit in the Dance,
Thay wer full strenge of countenance,

[1] Usurers, misers, hoarders, gatherers.
[2] Sorcerer.
[3] Load.
[4] Lightning.
[5] Emptied.
[6] All kinds of stamps.
[7] Sloth.
[8] Grunt.
[9] Many a lazy, tun-bellied sloven.
[10] Slovenly drab and sleepy slut.
[11] Care.
[12] Into a chain.
[13] With a bridle-rein.
[14] Loins.
[15] Apprehension.
[16] Snorting.
[17] Dead body.

Lyke tortchis byrnand reid. . . .
Than the fowll monster Gluttony,
Off wame[1] unsasiable and gredy,
To Dance he did him dress.
Him followit mony fowll drunckart,
With can and collep,[2] cop and quart,
In surffet and excess;
Full mony a waistless wally-drag,[3]
With wamis unweildable, did further wag,
In creische[4] that did increase.
Drynk! ay they cryit, with mony a gaip,
The feyndis gaif thame hait leid to laip,[5]
Thair leveray[6] wes na less.

## SIR DAVID LYNDESAY [1490-1553?].

*From 'The Complaint and Testament of the Papingo'*[7] (1530). *The Raven ('ane blak monk') explains the degeneracy of the clergy.*

Lang time efter the Kirk tuke property,
The prelatis leirt in greit perfectioun,
Unthral to riches or sensuality,
Under the halie Spreitis protectioun,
Ordourly chosin be electioun,
As Gregore, Jerome, Ambrose, and Augustyne,
Benedict, Bernard, Clement, Cleit, and Lyne.

Sic pacient prelatis enterit be the port,
Plesand the pepill by predicatioun;
Now dyke-lowparis[8] dois in the Kirk resort,

[1] Belly. [2] Drinking-cup. [3] Spendthrift outcast.
[4] Fat. [5] Hot lead to lap. [6] Reward.
[7] Parrot. [8] Thieves, interlopers.

Be symonie and supplicatioun
Of princes, be thair presentatioun;
Sa sillie saulis that bin the Christis sheip
Ar gevin to hungrie gormand wolfis to keip.

Na marvel is thoch we religious men
Degenrit be, and in our life confusit,
Bot sing and drink, nane uther craft we ken,
Our spiritual fatheris hes us sa abusit.
Aganis our will these trukouris[1] bene intrusit.
Lawit men hes now religious men in curis,
Profest virginis in keiping of strang huris.

Princes, princes, whair bin your heich prudence,
In dispositioun of your benefices?
The guerdouning of your courticiens,
Is sum caus of thir greit enormiteis;
Thair is ane sort waitand like hungry fleis
For spiritual cure, thoch thay be nathing abill,
Whose gredie thirstis bene insatiabill.

Princes, I pray yow, be na mair abusit,
To verteous men having sa small regaird;
Why suld vertew throw flattery be refusit,
That men for cunning can get na rewaird?
Allace! that ane bragger or ane baird,
A hure-maister or common hazardure,
Suld in the Kirk get ony kinde of cure.

War I a man worthy to weir ane crown,
Ay when thair vaikit ony benefices,
I suld gar call ane congregatioun,
The principal of all the prelaceis;
Maik cunning clarkis of universiteis,
Maist famous fatheris of religioun,
With thair avise mak dispositioun.

[1] Rogues.

I suld dispone all offices pastorallis
To doctouris of divinity or jure;
And caus dame Vertew pull up all the saillis,
When cunning men had in the Kirk maist cure,
Gar lords send their sonnis, I yow assure,
To seik science and famous sculis frequent,
Syne thame promove that war maist sapient.

Gret plesour war to heir ane bischop preiche
Ane dean or doctour of divinitie,
An abbot which culd weil the convent teiche,
Ane parsone flowing in philosophie.
I tyne my time to wis what will not be.
War not the preiching of the begging freiris
Tynt (extinct) war the faith amang the seculeiris.

## JOHN SKELTON [1460—1528?].

*From 'The Bowge of Courte.'*

DISSIMULATION.

THAN in his hode[1] I sawe there faces tweyne;
That one was lene and lyke a pyned goost,
That other loked as he wolde me have slayne;
And to me warde as he gan for to coost,
Whan that he was even at me almoost,
I sawe a knyfe hyd in his one sleve,
Wheron was wryten this worde, Myscheve.

And in his other sleve, me thought, I sawe
A spone of golde, full of hony swete,
To fede a fole, and for to preve a dawe;[2]
And on that sleve these wordes were wrete,
A false abstracte cometh from a fals concrete;
His hode was syde,[3] his cope was roset graye;
Thyse were the wordes that he to me dyde saye.

[1] Hood. [2] Try a simpleton. [3] Long.

*Dyssymulation.*

How do ye, mayster? ye loke so soberly;
As I be saved at the dredefull daye,
It is a perylous vyce, this envy;
Alas! a connynge[1] man ne dwelle maye
In no place well, but foles with hym fraye!
But as for that, connynge hath no foo
Save hym that nought[2] can, Scrypture sayth soo.

I knowe your vertu and your lytterature
By that lytel connynge that I have;
Ye be malygned sore, I you ensure;
But ye have crafte yourselfe alwaye to save:
It is grete scorne to se a mysproude knave
With a clerke[3] that connynge is to prate;
Lete theym go lowse theym, in the devylles date!

For all be it that this longe not to me,
Yet on my backe I bere suche lewde delynge:
Ryghte now I spake with one, I trowe, I see;
But, what, a strawe! I maye not tell all thynge.
By God, I saye there is grete herte brennynge
Betwene the persone ye wote of, you;
Alas, I coude not dele so with a Jew!

I wolde eche man were as playne as I;
It is a worlde, I saye, to here of some:
I hate this faynynge, fye vpon it, fye!
A man can not wote where to be-come;
I wys I coude tell,—but humlery, home;[4]
I dare not speke, we be so layde awayte,
For all our courte is full of dysceyte.

[1] A wise man may not dwell.
[2] Knows nothing.
[3] Scholar.
[4] Hum.

Now, by Saynte Fraunceys, that holy man and frere,
I hate these wayes agayne you that they take:
Were I as you, I wolde ryde them full nere;
And, by my trouthe, but yf an ende they make,
Yet wyll I saye some wordes for your sake,
That shall them angre, I holde thereon a throte.

I have a stoppynge oyster in my poke,
Truste me, and yf it come to a nede:
But I am lothe for to reyse a smoke,
Yf ye coude be otherwyse agrede;
And so I wolde it were, so God me spede,
For this maye brede to a confusyon,
Withoute God make a good conclusyon.

Naye, see where yonder stondeth the teder[1] man!
A flaterynge knave and false he is, God wote;
The drevyll[2] stondeth to herken, and he can:
It were more thryft, he boughte him a newe cote;
It will not be, his purse is not on flote:[3]
All that he wereth, it is borowed ware;
His wytte is thynne, his hode is threde-bare.

More coude I saye, but what this is ynowe:[4]
Adewe tyll soone, we shall speke more of this:
Ye muste be ruled as I shall tell you howe;
Amendis maye be of that is now amys;
And I am your, syr; so have I blys,
In every poynte that I can do or saye:
Gyve me your honde, farewell, and have good daye.

[1] The other.
[2] Low fellow.
[3] Flowing.
[4] But that this is enough.

*From 'Colyn Cloute.'*

AND if ye stande in doute
Who brought this ryme aboute,
My name is Colyn Cloute.
I purpose to shake oute
All my connyng bagge,
Lyke a clerkely hagge;
For though my ryme be ragged,
Tattered and jagged,
Rudely rayne beaten,
Rusty and moughte eaten,
If ye take well therwith,
It hath in it some pyth.
For, as farre as I can se,
It is wronge with eche degre:
For the temporalte
Accuseth the spiritualte;
The spirituall agayne
Dothe grudge and complayne
Upon the temporall men:
Thus eche of other blother
The tone agayng the tother:
Alas, they make me shoder!
For in hoder moder
The Churche is put in faute;
The prelates ben so haut,
They say, and loke so hy,
As though they wolde fly
Above the sterry skye.
Laye men say indede
How they take no hede
Theyr sely shepe to fede,
But plucke away and pull
The fleces of theyr wull,
Unethes[1] they leve a locke

[1] Scarcely.

Of wull amonges theyr flocke;
And as for theyr connynge,
A glommynge and a mummynge,
And make thereof a jape;
They gaspe and they gape
All to have promocyon,
There is theyr hole devocyon,
With money, if it wyll hap,
To catch the forked cap:[1]
Forsothe they are to lewd
To say so, all beshrewd![2]

* * * *

And whyles the heedes do this,
The remenaunt is amys
Of the clergy all,
Bothe great and small.
I wot never how they warke,
But thus the people barke;
And surely thus they say,
Bysshoppes, if they may,
Small houses wolde kepe,
But slumbre forth and slepe,
And assay to crepe
Within the noble walles
Of the kynges halles,
To fat theyr bodyes full,
Theyr soules lene and dull,
And have full lytell care
How evyll theyr shepe fare.
The temporalyte say playne,
Howe bysshoppes dysdayne
Sermons for to make,
Or suche laboure to take;
And for to say trouth,
A great parte is for slouth,

[1] Mitre. [2] Altogether accursed.

But the greattest parte
Is for they have but small arte
And ryght sklender connyng
Within theyr heedes wonnyng. . . .[1]

* * * * *

Thus I, Colyn Cloute,
As I go aboute,
And wandrynge as I walke,
I here the people talke.
Men say, for sylver and golde
Myters are bought and solde ;
There shall no clergy appose
A myter nor a crose,
But a full purse ;
A strawe for Goddes curse !
What are they the worse ?
For a symonyake
Is but a hermoniake ;[2]
And no more ye make
Of symony, men say,
But a chyldes play.
Over this, the foresayd laye[3]
Reporte howe the Pope may
An holy anker[4] call
Out of the stony wall,
And hym a bysshopp make,
If he on hym dare take
To kepe so harde a rule,
To ryde upon a mule
With golde all betrapped,
In purple and paule belapped ;
Some hatted and some capped,
Rychely and warme bewrapped,

[1] Dwelling.
[2] Promoter of harmony (?) (Skeat).
[3] Aforesaid laity.
[4] Anchorite.

God wot to theyr great paynes,
In rotchetts of fyne Raynes,
Whyte as morowes mylke;
Theyr tabertes of fyne silke,
Theyr styrops of myxt gold begared;[1]
There may no cost be spared;
Theyr moyles[2] golde dothe eate,
Theyr neyghbours dye for meate.

*From 'Speke, Parrot.'*

So lytyll dyscressyon, and so myche reasonyng;
So myche hardy dardy, and so lytell manlynes;
So prodigall expence, and so shamfull reconyng;
So gorgyous garmentes, and so myche wrechydnese;
So myche portlye pride, with pursys penyles;
So myche spent before, and so myche unpayd behynde;
Syns Dewcalyons flodde there can no clerkes fynde.

So myche forcastyng, and so farre an after dele;
So myche poletyke pratyng; and lytell stondythe in stede;
So lytell secretnese, and so myche grete councell;
So manye bolde barons, there hertes as dull as lede;
So many nobyll bodyes undyr on dawys hedd;
So royall a Kyng as reynythe uppon us all;
Syns Dewcalions flodde was nevyr sene nor shall.

So many complayntes, and so smalle redresse;
So myche callyng on, and so smalle takyng hede;
So myche losse of merchaundyse, and so remedyles;
So lytell care for the comyn weall, and so myche nede;

[1] Adorned. [2] Mules.

So myche dowgtfull[1] daunger, and so lytell drede ;
So myche pride of prelattes, so cruell and so kene ;
Syns Dewcalyons flodde, I trow, no man can tell.

So braynles calvys hedes, so many shepis taylys ;
So bolde a braggyng bocher,[2] and flesshe sold so dere ;
So many plucte partryches, and so fatte quaylles;
So mangye a mastyfe[3] curre, the grete greyhoundes[4] pere
So bygge a bulke of brow auntlers cabagyd[5] that yere ;
So many swannes dede, and so small revell ;
Syns Dewcalyons flodde, I trow no man can tell.

*From ' Why come ye nat to Courte.'*

WOLSEY.

HE is set so hye
In his ierarchy
Of frantycke frenesy
And folysshe fantasy,
That in the Chambre of Starres
All maters that he marres ;
Clapping his rod on the borde,
No man dare speke a worde ;
For he hathe all the sayenge,
Without any renayenge
He rolleth in his recordes,
He sayth, How saye ye, my lordes ?
Is nat my reason good ?

[1] Doubtful.
[2] Wolsey—said to be the son of a butcher. *Vide* p. 108.
[3] Wolsey. [4] Henry VIII. [5] Grown to a head.

Good evyn, good Robin Hood!
Some say yes, and some
Syt styll as they were dom:
Thus thwartyng over thom,
He ruleth all the roste
With braggyne and with bost;
Borne up on every syde
With pompe and with pryde. . . .
Ones yet agayne
Of you I wolde frayne,
Why come ye nat to court?
To whyche court?
To the Kynges courte,
Or to Hampton Court?
Nay, to the Kynges court:
The Kynges courte
Shulde have the excellence;
But Hampton Court
Hath the preemynence,
And Yorkes Place,
With my lordes grace,
To whose magnifycence
Is all the conflewence,
Sutys and supplycacyons,
Embassades of all nacyons.
Strawe for lawe canon,
Or for the lawe common,
Or for lawe cyvyll!
It shall be as he wyll. . . .
But this medde Amalecke,
Lyke to a Mamelek,
He regardeth lordes
No more than potshordes;
He is in suche elacyon
Of his exaltacyon,
And the supportacyon
Of our soverayne lorde,

That, God to recorde,
He ruleth all at wyll,
Without reason or skyll:
How be it the primordyall
Of his wretched originall,
And his base progeny,
And his gresy genealogy,
He came of the sank royall,
That was cast out of a bochers stall. . . .
No man dere come to the speche
Of this gentell Jacke breche,
Of what estate he be,
Of spirituall dygnyte,
Nor duke of hye degre,
Nor marques, erle, nor lorde;
Whiche shrewdly doth accorde,
Thus he borne so base
All noble men shulde out face,
His countynaunce lyke a kayser.
My lorde is not at layser;
Syr, ye must tary a stounde,
Tyll better layser be founde;
And, syr, ye must daunce attendaunce,
And take pacient sufferaunce,
For my lordes grace
Hath nowe no tyme nor space
To speke with you as yet
And thus they shall syt,
Chuse them syt or flyt,
Stande, walke, or ryde,
And his layser abide
Perchaunce halfe a yere,
And yet never the nere.

## ALEXANDER BARCLAY [DIED 1552].

### *From 'Eclogue I.'* [1517 ?].

WHAT is more foolish or liker to madnes
Then to spende the life for glory and riches ?
What thing is glory, laude, praysing or fame,
What honour, reporte, or what is noble name ?
Forsooth nought but voyce of artlesse commontie,
And vague opinion subject to vanitie,
Processe of yeares, revolving of reason,
Bringeth all these soone in oblivion.
When life is faded, all these be out of sight,
Like as with the Sun departeth the day-light ;
They all be fooles which meddle with the sea,
And otherwise might live in their owne country.
He is but a foole which runneth to tempest,
And might live on lande in suertie and in rest.
He is but a foole which hath of good plentie,
And it disdayneth to use and occupy.
And he which liveth in care and wretchednes
His heyre to promote to landes and riches
Is moste foole of all, to spare in misery,
With goodes and landes his heyre to magnify.
And he which leaveth that thing for to be done
Unto his daughter, executour or sonne
Which he himself might in his life fulfill,
He is but a foole, and hath but little skill.

## WILLIAM ROY AND JEROME BARLOW, 1526, *circ.*

*From* '*Rede me, and be nott wrothe*
*For I saye no thynge but trothe.*'

### The Confessional and Cardinal Wolsey.

*Wat.* Dare they confessions to bewraye?
*Jeff.* Confessions, catha? Ye, by my faye,
They kepe no secretnes att all.
Though noble men have doctours
To be their private confessours,
Yet they have one that is generall.
*Wat.* Besyde those which are particuler?
*Jeff.* Ye, and that hath brought some to care
Of whom I coulde make rehearceall.
*Wat.* His name wolde I very fayne here.
*Jeff.* It is the Englisshe Lucifer,
Wotherwyse called—the Cardinall!
In all the londe there is no wyght,
Nether lorde, baron, nor knyght,
To whom he hath eny hatred;
But ether by sower speche, or swete,
Of their confessours he will wete [know]
Howe they have themselves behaved.
What they saye, it is accepted,
In no poynte to be objected,
Though they be as falce as Judas.
*Wat.* What authoritè do they allege?
*Jeff.* It is their churches previlege,
Falcely to fayne that never was.
*Wat.* Soche confessours are unjust,
*Jeff.* Yet nedes do it they must,
Yf they will to honour ascende.
*Wat.* Promocions are of the Kyngis gift?

*Jeff.* For all that, he maketh soche shyft,
That in his pleasure they dependé.
Though they have the Kyngis patent,
Except they have also his assent,
It tourneth to none avauntage;
His power he doth so extende,
That the Kyngis letters to rende
He will not forbeare in his rage.
*Wat.* This is a grett presumpcion,
For a villayne bocher's sonne,
His authorité so to avaunce;
But it is more to be marveyled,
That noble-men wilbe confessed
To these kaytives of miscreaunce.

## SIR THOMAS WYATT [1503—1542].

### '*Of the Courtier's Life.*'

My Poins, I cannot frame my tungue to faine,
To cloke the truth, for praise without desert
Of them that list all vice for to retaine.
I cannot honour them, that set their part
With Venus and Bacchus all theyr life long.
Nor hold my peace of them, although I smart.
I cannot crouche nor knele to such a wronge;
To worship them like God on earth alone,
That are as wolves these sely lambes among.
I cannot with my wordes complayne and mone,
And suffer nought; nor smart without complaint:
Nor turne the word that from my mouth is gone.
I cannot speak and loke like as a saint;
Use wyles for wit, and make desceit a pleasure,
Call craft counsaile, for lucre still to paint.
I cannot wrest the law to fill the coffer;

With innocent bloud to fede myself fatte,
And do most hurt, where that most helpe I offer.
I am not he, that can allow the state
Of hie Ceaser, and damne Cato to dye,
That with his death did scape out of the gate
From Ceasers hands, if Livy doth not lie,
And would not live where liberty was lost;
So did his hart the common wealth apply.
I am not he, such eloquence to bost,
To make the crow in singing, as the swanne;
Nor call the lion of coward beastes the most;
That can not take a mouse, as the cat can;
And he that dyeth for honger of the golde,
Call him Alexander, and say that Pan
Passeth Apollo in musike manifolde,
Praise syr Topas for a noble tale,
And scorne the story that the knight tolde,
Praise him for counsell, that is dronke of ale;
Grinne when he laughes, that beareth all the sway,
Frowne when he frownes, and grone when he is pale;
On others lust to hang both night and day.
None of these pointes would ever frame in me:
My wit is nought, I can not learne the way.
And much the lesse of things that greater be,
That asken helpe of colours to devise,
To ioyne the meane with eche extremitie,
With nerest virtue ay to cloke the vice:
And, as to purpose likewise it shall fall,
To presse the vertue that it may not rise:
As dronkenness good felowship to call;
The friendly foe with his faire double face,
Say he is gentle, and curties therewithall,
Affirme that Favel hath a goodly grace
In eloquence; and cruelty to name,
Zeale of justice, and change in time and place:
And he that suffereth offence without blame,

Call him pitifull, and him true and plaine,
That rayleth rechless unto eche mans shame.
Say he is rude, that can not lye and fayne;
The lecher a lover; and tyranny
To be right of a princes raigne:
I can not I, no no, it wyll not be. . . .
I am not now in Fraunce, to judge the wine,
With savery sauce those delicates to fele,
Nor yet in Spaine, where one must him incline,
Rather then to be, outwardly to seme. . . .
But I am here in Kent and Christendome,
Among the Muses, where I reade and rime,
Where if thou list, mine own John Poins, to come,
Thou shalt be judge, how I do spende my time.

## GEORGE GASCOIGNE [1525-1577].

*From 'The Steele Glasse'* [1576].

O Knights, O Squires, O Gentle blouds yborne,
You were not borne al onely for your selves:
Your countrie claymes some part of al your paines.
There should you live, and therein should you toyle,
To hold upright, and banish cruel wrong,
To helpe the pore, to bridle backe the riche,
To punish vice, and vertue to advance,
To see God servde, and Belzebub supprest.
You should not trust lieftenaunts in your rome,
And let them sway the sceptre of your charge,
Whiles you (meane while) know scarcely what is don,
Nor yet can yeld accompt if you were callde.

The stately lord, which woonted was to kepe
A courte at home, is now come up to courte,

And leaves the country for a common prey,
To pilling, polling, brybing, and deceit:
(Al which his presence might have pacified,
Or else have made offenders smel the smoke).
And now the youth which might have served him,
In comely wise, with countrey clothes yclad,
And yet thereby bin able to preferre
Unto the prince, and there to seek advance:
Is faine to sell his landes for courtly cloutes,
Or else sits still, and liveth like a loute. . . .
Lo these (my Lord) be my good praying priests,
Descended from Melchysedec by line
Cosens to Paule, to Peter, James, and John,
These be my priests, the seasning of the earth
Which wil not leese their savrinesse, I trowe,
Not one of these will reade the holy write
Which doth forbid all greedy usurie,
And yet receive a shilling for a pounde.
Not one of these wil preach of patience,
And yet be found as angry as a waspe.
Not one of these can be content to sit
In Taverns, Innes, or Alehouses all day,
But spends his time devoutly at his booke.
Not one of these wil rayle at rulers wrongs,
And yet be blotted with extortion.
Not one of these wil paint out worldly pride,
And he himselfe as gallaunt as he dare.
Not one of these rebuketh avarice,
And yet procureth ploude pluralities,
Not one of these reproveth vanitie
Whiles he himselfe, with hauke upon his fist
And houndes at heele, doth quite forget his text.
Not one of these corrects contentions,
For trifling things: and yet wil sue for tythes.
Not one of these (not one of these my Lord)
Wil be ashamde to do even as he teacheth. . . .
I tell thee (priest) when shoomakers make shoes,

That are wel sowed, with never a stitch amisse,
And use no crafte, in uttring of the same:
When Taylours steale no stuffe from gentlemen,
When Tanners are with Corriers wel agreede,
And both so dresse their hydes that we go dry:
When Cutlers leave to sel old rustie blades,
And hide no crackes with soder nor deceit:
When tinkers make no more holes than they founde,
When thatchers thinke their wages worth their worke,
When colliers put no dust into their sacks,
When maltemen make us drink no fermentie,
When Davie Diker diggs, and dallies not,
When smithes shoo horses as they would be shod,
When millers toll not with a golden thumbe,
When bakers make not barme beare price of wheat,
When brewers put no bagage in their beere,
When butchers blowe not over al their fleshe,
When horsecorsers beguile no friendes with Jades,
When weavers weight is found in huswives web.
(But why dwel I so long among these lowts?)

When mercers make more bones to swere and lye,
When vintners mix no water with their wine,
When printers passe none errours in their bookes,
When hatters use to bye none olde cast robes,
When goldsmithes get no gains by sodred crownes,
When upholsters sel fethers without dust,
When pewterers infect no tin with leade,
When drapers draw no gaines by giving day,
When perchmentiers put in no ferret silke,
When Surgeons heale al wounds without delay.
Tush, these are toys, but yet my glas sheweth al. . . .
When al these things are ordred as they ought,
And see themselves within my glasse of steele,
Even then (my priests) may you make holyday

And pray no more but ordinarie prayers. . . .
Behold (my lord) what monsters muster here,
With Angels face and harmefull helish harts,
With smyling lookes and depe deceitfull thoughts,
With tender skinnes and stony cruel mindes,
With stealing steppes, yet forward feete to fraude.
Behold, behold, they never stand content,
With God, with kinde, with any help of Arte,
But curle their locks with bodkins and with braids,
But dye their heare with sundry subtill sleights,
But paint and slicke, til fayrest face be foule,
But bumbast, bolster, frisle, and perfume :
They marre with muske the balm which nature made,
And dig for death in delicatest dishes.
The yonger sorte come pyping on apace,
In whistles made of fine enticing wood,
Til they have caught the birds for whom they bryded.
The elder sorte go stately stalking on,
And on their backs they beare both land and fee,
Castles and towres, revenewes and receits,
Lordships, and manours, fines, yea farmes and al.
What should these be ? (Speake you, my lovely lord)
They be not men : for why ? they have no beards.
They be no boyes, which weare such side long gowns.
They be no Gods, for al their gallant glosse.
They be no divels (I trow) which seeme so saintish.
What be they ? women ? masking in mens weedes ?
With dutchkin dublets, and with jerkins jaggde ?
With Spanish spangs, and ruffles fet out of France,
With high copt hattes, and fethers flaunt a flaunt ?
They be so sure even Wo to Men in dede.

## EDMUND SPENSER [1552-1599?].

*From 'Mother Hubberd's Tale.'*

BESIDES all this, he us'd oft to beguile
Poore suters, that in Court did haunt some while:
For he would learne their business secretly,
And then informe his Master hastely,
That he by meanes might cast them to prevent,
And beg the sute, the which the other ment.
Or otherwise false Reynold would abuse
The simple suter, and wish him to chuse
His Master, being one of great regard
In Court, to compas anie sute not hard,
In case his paines were recompenst with reason:
So would he worke the silly man by treason
To buy his Masters frivolous good will,
That had not power to doo him good or ill.
So pitifull a thing is suters state!
Most miserable man, whom wicked fate
Hath brought to Court, to sue for had-ywist,
That few have found, and manie one hath mist!
Full little knowest thou, that hast not tride,
What hell it is, in suing long to bide:
To loose good dayes, that might be better spent;
To wast long nights in pensive discontent;
To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow;
To feed on hope, to pine with feare and sorrow;
To have thy Princes grace, yet want her Peeres;
To have thy asking, yet waite manie yeeres;
To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares;
To eate thy heart through comfortlesse dispaires;
To fawne, to crowche, to waite, to ride, to ronne,
To spend, to give, to want, to be undonne.
Unhappie wight, borne to desastrous end,
That doth his life in so long tendance spend!

Who ever leaves sweete home, where meane estate
In safe assurance, without strife or hate,
Findes all things needfull for contentment meeke;
And will to Court for shadowes vaine to seeke,
Or hope to gaine, himselfe will a daw trie:
That curse god send unto mine enemie!

## EDWARD HAKE.

*From 'News out of Powles Churchyarde,' Satire III.* (1579).

ONCE hapt it (through a fowle mischance)
That great debate did ryse
Betweene a Doctor in the Law
(For so th' example lyes)
And Doctor (eke) of Phisick, who
Should have the upper hande
In each assembly where they met
To walk, to syt or stande.
The Lawyer layed for himselfe
And sayde well to the case,
Physition did full wisely to
And with a goodly grace:
Alledging well (even both of them)
Lyke handsome learned men.
But nought could be agreed upon.
So fell the matter then,
That they unto the Pretor would
For to decyde the same.
They made relation of the case
And finely gan it frame.
The Pretor when he heard the dolts
Contend about a straw
Was soone content to judge the same,
And askte the man of Law

Who went unto the Gallowes first,
The Hangman or the Thiefe?
Who formost was of both them too
And which was there the chiefe?
The Hangman, quoth the Lawyer tho,
For he doth kyll the man:
The Hangman he must go before,
The Theefe must follow. Than
Quoth Pretor harke: This is my minde
And judgement in the case.
Phisition he must go before,
And Lawyer give him place.
Why then (quoth Bertulph) by your tale
Phisitions men do kyll,
And Lawyers live by robbing men,
And so their coffers fyll.

## ROBERT GREENE [? 1560-1592].

*From 'A Quippe for an Vpstart Courtier.'*

I QUESTIONED them what they were, and the one sayd hée was a barber, the other a surgion, and the third an Apoticary. How like you of these (qd. I) shall they be of your iury? Of the iury, quoth Cloth-breeches never a one by my consent, for I challenge them all: your reason qd. I, and then you shall have my verdict. Mary (qd. Cloth-breeches) first to the barber he cannot but be a partiall man on Velvet-bréeches side, sith he gets more by one time dressinge of him, than by ten times dressing of me: I come plaine to be polde, and to have my beard cut, and pay him two pence, Velvett-bréeches he sittes downe in the chaire wrapt in fine cloathes, as though the barber were about to make him a foot

cloth for the vicar of saint fooles: then begins he to take his sissars in his hand and his combe, and so to snap with them as if he meant to give a warning to all the lice in his nittye lockes for to prepare themselves, for the day of their destruction was at hande, then comes he out with his fustian eloquence, and making a low conge, saith, Sir will you have your wor haire cut after the Italian maner, shorte and round, and then frounst with the curling yrons, to make it looke like a halfe moone in a mist? or like a Spanyard long at the eares, and curled like to the two endes of an olde cast perriwig? or will you bée Frenchefied with a love locke down to your shoulders, wherein you may weare your mistresse favour? The English cut is base, and gentlemen scorne it, novelty is daintye. Speake the woord sir, and my sissars are ready to execute your worships wil. His head being once drest, which requires in combing and rubbing some two howers, hée comes to the bason: then béeing curiously washt with no woorse than a camphire bal, he descends as low as his berd and asketh whether he please to be shaven or no, whether he will have his peak cut short and sharpe, amiable like an *inamorato* or broad pendant like a spade, to be terrible like a warrior and a Soldado, whether he wil have his crates cut low like a Iuniperbush, or his suberches taken away with a rasor, if it be his pleasure to have his appendices primd, or his mustachios fostered to turn about his eares like the branches of a vine, or cut down to the lip with the Italian lash, to make him look like a halfe faced bauby in bras? These quaint tearmes, Barber, you greet maister Velvetbreeches withall, and at every word a snap with your sissors, and a cring with your knee, whereas when you come to poore Cloth-breeches you either cutte his beard at your owne pleasure, or else in disdaine aske him if he wil be trimd with Christs cut, round

like the halfe of a holland cheese, mocking both Christ and vs: for this your knauerie my wil is you shall be none of the iurie.

VELVET-BREECHES OBJECTS TO AN HONEST KNIGHT.

WHY you may gesse the inwarde minde by the outward apparell, and see how he is adicted by the homely robes he is suted in. Why this knight is mortall enimy to pride and so to me, he regardeth hospitality and aimeth at honor with releeving the poore: you may see although his landes and reuenewes be great, and he able to maintain himself in great bravery, yet he is content with home spun cloth, and scorneth the pride that is now adaies used amongst young upstarts: he holdeth not the worth of his Gentry to be and consist in velvet breeches, but valeweth true fame by the report of the common sort, who praise him for his vertue, Iustice, liberality, housekeeping and almesdeeds: *Vox populi vox Dei*, his tenants and farmers would, if it might bee possible, make him immortall with their praiers and praises. He raiseth no rent, racketh no lands, taketh no incombs, imposeth no mercilesse fines, envies not another, buyeth no house over his neighbours head, but respecteth his country and the commodity thereof, as deere as his life. Hee regardeth more to have the needy fed, to have his boord garnished with full platters, then to famous himself with excessive furniture in apparel. Since then he scorneth pride, he must of force proclaime himselfe mine enimy, and therfore he shal be none of my iury: and such as himselfe I gesse the Squire and the Gentleman, and therefore I challeng them all three. Why, quoth I, this is strange, that a man should be drawne from a quest for his goodnesse.

*From 'A Groats-worth of Wit bought with a Million of Repentance.'*[1]

AND thou[2] no lesse deserving than the other two,[3] in some things rarer, in nothing inferiour; driven (as my selfe) to extreame shifts, a little have I to say to thee: and were it not an idolatrous oth, I would sweare by sweet *S. George*, thou art unworthie better hap, sith thou dependest on so meane a stay. Base minded men al three of you, if by my miserie ye be not warned: for unto none of you (like me) sought those burres to cleave: those Puppits (I meane) that speake from our mouths, those Anticks garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whom they al have beene beholding; is it not like that you, to whome they all have beene beholding, shall (were ye in that case that I am now) be both at once of them forsaken? Yes, trust them not: for there is an upstart Crow,[4] beautified with our feathers, that with his *Tygers heart wrapt in a Players hide*,[5] supposes he is as well able to bumbast out a blanke verse as the best of you: and being an absolute *Iohannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shake-scene in a countrie. O that I might intreate your rare wits to be imployed in more profitable courses: and let those Apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired inventions.

[1] Greene exhorts his fellow-dramatists to give up writing plays, and reflects on Shakespeare for borrowing without acknowledgment. (See Grosart's edition of Greene's works.)
[2] Peele. [3] Marlowe and Nashe. [4] Shakespeare.
[5] Parody of 'Henry III.,' Part III., Act I., Sc. 4:
'O tiger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide!'

## THOMAS NASHE [1567-1601].

*From 'The Anatomie of Absurditie'* (1589).

It fareth nowe a daies with unlearned Idiots as it doth with she Asses, who bring foorth all their life long: even so these brainlesse Buzzards are every quarter bigge wyth one pamphlet or other. But as an Egge that is full, beeing put into water sinketh to the bottome, whereas that which is emptie floateth above, so those that are more exquisitely furnished with learning shroude themselves in obscuritie, whereas they that are voide of all knowledge endevour continually to publish theyr follie.

Such and the very same are they that obtrude themselves unto us, as the Authors of eloquence, and fountains of our finer phrases, whenas they sette before us nought but a confused masse of wordes without matter, a Chaos of sentences without any profitable sence, resembling drummes, which beeing emptie within, sound big without. Were it that any Morall of greater moment might be fished out of their fabulous follie, leaving theyr words, we would cleave to their meaning, pretermitting theyr painted shewe, we would pry into their propounded sence, but when as lust is the tractate of so many leaves, and love passions the lavish dispense of so much paper, I must needes sende such idle wits to shrift to the vicar of S. Fooles, who in steede of a worser may be such a Gothamists ghostly father. Might *Ovids* exile admonish such Idlebies to betake them to a new trade, the Presse should be farre better employed, Histories of antiquitie not half so much belyed, minerals, stones and herbes should not have such cogged natures and names ascribed to them without cause, Englishmen shoulde not be

halfe so much Italinated as they are, finallie, love woulde obtaine the name of lust, and vice no longer maske under the visard of vertue.

* * * * *

One requiring *Diogenes* judgment when it was best time to take a wife, he answered, for the young man not yet, and the olde man never. *Pythagoras* sayd, that there were three evils not to be suffered, fire, water, and a woman. And the fore named *Cinick* deemed them the wisest lyers in the world, which tell folke they will be married, and yet remaine single, accounting it the lesse inconvenience of two extremities to choose the lesse. . . . What shall I say of him that being askt, from what women a man should keepe himselfe, answered, from the quick and from the deade, adding moreover, that one evill ioynes with another when a woman is sicke. *Demosthenes* saide, that it was the greatest torment that a man could invent to his enemies vexation, to give him his daughter in marriage, as a domesticall Furie to disquiet him night and day. *Democritus* accounted a faire chaste woman a miracle of miracles, a degree of immortality, a crowne of tryumph, because shee is so harde to be founde. Another being asked, who was he that coulde not at any time be without a wife, answered, hee that was accurst: and what dooth thys common proverbe, he that marrieth late marrieth evill, insinuate to us, but that if a man meane to marry, he were as good begin betimes as tarry long, and beeing about to make a vertue of necessitie, and an arte of patience, they are to begin in theyr young and tender age. . . . There be two especiall troubles in this world, saith Seneca, a wife and ignorance. . . . For my part I meane to suspende my sentence and to let an Author of late memorie be my speaker, who affyrmeth that they carrie Angels in their faces to entangle men and devils in their devices. . . . I

omit to tell with what phrases of disgrace the ancient fathers have defaced them, whereof one of them saith *Quid aliud est mulier nisi amicitiæ*, etc. What is a woman but an enemie to friendshippe, an unevitable paine, a necessary evill, a naturall temptation, a desired calamitie, a domesticall danger, a delectable detriment the nature of which is evill shadowed with the coloure of goodnes. . . . But what I spend my yncke, waste my paper, stub my penne, in painting forth theyr ugly imperfections, and perverse peevishnesse, when as how many hayres they have on theyr heads, so many snares they will finde for a neede to snarle men in, how many voices all of them have, so many vices each one of them hath, how many tongues, so many tales, how many eyes, so many allurements. . . . In *Rome* the bride was wont to come in with her spyndle and her distaffe at her side, at the day of her marriage, and her husband crouned and compassed the Gates with her yarne, but now a daies Towe is either too deere or too daintie, so that if hee will maintaine the custome, hee must crowne his Gates with their Scarfes, Periwigs, Bracelets, and Ouches, which imports thus much unto us, that Maydes and Matrons now adaies be more charie of their store, so that they will be sure they will not spend too much spittle with spynning, yea theyr needles are nettles, for they lay them aside as needlesse, for feare of pricking their fingers when they are painting theyr faces, nay, they will abandon that trifling which may stay them at home, but if the temperature of the wether will not permitte them to pop into the open ayre, a payre of cards better pleaseth her then a peece of cloth, her beades then her booke, a bowle full of wine then a hand full of wooll, delighting more in a daunce then in *Davids Psalmes*, to play with her dogge then to pray to her God: setting more by a love Letter, then

ye lawe of the Lord, by one Pearle then twenty *Pater Nosters*. Shée had rather view her face a whole morning in a looking Glasse, then worke by the howre Glasse, shee is more sparing of her Spanish needle then her Spanish gloves, occupies oftner her setting sticke then sheeres, and ioyes more in her Jewels then in her Jesus.

## A Prognostication [1591].

(*A Satire on the Astrology and Astronomy of Richard Harvey.*)

Winter being finished with the last grade of the watery signe Pisces, at the Suns joyful progresse into the first degree of Aries. The second quarter of our usuall yere commonly called the spring cometh next, which beginneth when grasse begins to sproute, and trees to bud. But to treat of this present season, forasmuch as I find the planets to be contradictorily disposed, in signs and mansions of diverse and repugnant qualities, I gather that this spring will be very il for schollers, for they shal studie much and gain litle, they shall have more wit in their heads then money in their purses, dunces shall prove more welthie than divers docters, insomuch that sundrie unlettered fooles should creep into the ministerie, if the provident care of good Bishops did not prevent them. And by the opinion of Proclus, women are like to grow wilful, and so variable, that they shall laugh and weepe and all with a winde: Butchers shall sell their meate as deare as they can, and if they be not carefull, horne beastes shall bee hurtfull unto them, and some shall

bee so wedded to swines flesh, that they shall never be without a sowe in their house as long as they live. This spring, or vernall resolution, being naturally hot and moist, is like to be verie forwarde for sprouting fieldes and blooming trees; and because Saturne is in his proper mansion, olde men are like to bee froward, and craftie knaves shall neede no Brokers, usurie shalbe called good husbandrie, and men shalbe counted honest by their wealth, not by their virtues.

And because Aquarius has something to do with this quarter, it is to be doubted that divers springs of water will rise up in vintners sellers, to the great weakning of their Gascon wine, and the utter ruine of the ancient order of the redde noses. March Beere shalbe more esteemed than small Ale.

Cancer is busie in this spring-tide, and therefore it is like that florishing bloomes of yong gentlemens youth shalbe greatly anoide with caterpillers, who shall intangle them in such statutes and recognances, that they shall crie out against brokers, as Jeremy did against false prophets. Besides, thogh this last winter nipt up divers masterless men and cut purses, yet this spring is like to afford one every tearme this ten yere in Westminster hall: Barbers if they have no worke are like to grow poore, and for that Mercury is combust and many quarelles like to growe amongst men, lawyers shall prove rich and weare side gowns and large consciences, having theyr mouths open to call for fees, and theyr purses shut when they shoulde bestowe almes.

But take heed, O you generation of wicked ostlers, that steale haie in the night from gentlemens horses, and rub their teth with tallow that they may eate little when they stand at livery, this I prognosticate against you, that this spring, which so ever of you

dies, shall leave a knaves carcasse in the grave behind him. . . .

Diseases incident to this quarter, as by astrologicall and philosophicall conjectures I can gather, are these following: Prentices that have been sore beaten shall be troubled with ach in their armes, and it shall be ill for such as have sore eies to looke against the sun. The plague shall raigne mortally amongst poore men, that diverse of them shal not be able to change a man a groate. Olde women that have taken great colde may perhaps be trobled with the cough, and such as have paine in their teeth shall bee grievouslie troubled with the tooth ach. Beside, sicke folke shall have worse stomaches then they which be whole, and men that cannot sleepe shall take verie little rest: with other accidentall infirmities, which I doe overpasse.

*From 'Pierce Pennilesse his supplication to the Diuell'* [1592].

THE COMPLAYNT OF PRIDE.

O BUT a far greater enormite raigneth in the heart of the Court: Pride, perverter of all Vertue, sitteth appareled in the Merchants spoils, and ruine of yoong Citizens, and scorneth Learning, that gave their up-start Fathers titles of Gentry.

THE NATURE OF AN UPSTART.

All malcontent fits the greasie sonne of a Cloathier, and complaines (like a decaied Earle) of the ruine of ancient houses: whereas, the Weavers loomes first framed the web of his honour, and the locks of wool, that bushes and brambles have tooke for

toule of insolent sheepe, that would needs strive for the wall of a fir-bush, have made him of the tenths of their tarre, a Squier of low degree: and of the collections of the scatterings, a Justice, *Tam Marti quam Mercurio*, of Peace and of Coram. Hee will bee humorous, forsoth, and have a broode of fashions by himselfe.

Sometimes (because Love commonly weares the liverey of Witte) hee will be an *Inamorato Poeta*, and sonnet a whole quire of paper in praise of Lady Swin-snout, his yeolow-fac'd Mistres, and weare a feather of her rain-beaten fanne for a favor, like a fore-horse.

Al *Italionato* is his talke, and his spade peake is as sharpe as if he had been a Pioner before the walles of *Roan*. Hee will despise the barbarisme of his owne Countrey, and tell a whole Legend of lyes of his travailes unto *Constantinople*. If he be challenged to fight, for his delaterye excuse, hee ob-jects that it is not the custome of the Spaniard, or the Germaine, to looke backe to every dog that barkes.

You shall see a dapper Jacke, that hath beene but over at *Deepe*, wring his face round about, as a man would stirre up a mustard pot, and talke English through the teeth, like *Jaques Scabd-Hams*, or *Monsieur Mingo de Moustrap*: when (poore slave) he hath but dipt his bread in wilde Boares grease and come home againe: or beene bitten by the shinnes by a Wolfe: and saith, he hath adventured upon the Barricadoes of *Gurney*, or *Guingan*, and fought with the yoong Guise hand to hand.

*From 'Christ's Teares over Jerusalem'* [1593].

USURERS.

IF the stealing of one Apple in Paradise brought such a universal plague to the worlde, what a plague to one soul will the robbing of a hundred Orphans of theyr possessions and fruite-yards bring? In the Country the Gentleman takes in the Commons, racketh his Tennaunts, undoeth the Farmer. In *London* the Usurer snatcheth up the Gentleman, gyves him Rattles and Babies for his over-rackt rent, and the Commons he tooke in, he makes him take out in Commodities. None but the Usurer is ordained for a scourge to Pride and Ambition. Therefore it is that Bees hate Sheepe more then anie thing, for that when they are once in theyr wooll, they are so intangled that they can never get out. Therfore it is that Courtiers hate Merchants more then any men, for that being once in their bookes, they can never get out. Many of them carry the countenaunces of Sheep, looke simple, goe plain, weare their haire short; but they are no Sheepe, but Sheep-byters: their wooll or their wealth they make no other use of but to snarle and enwrappe men with. The law (which was instituted to redresse wrongs and oppressions) they wrest contrarily, to oppresse and to wrong with. And yet thats not so much wonder, for Law, Logique, and the Swizers, may be hir'd to fight for any body; and so may an Usurer (for a halfepeny gaine) be hyred to bite any body. For as the Beare cannot drinke but he must byte the water, so cannot hee coole his avaritious thirst, but he must plucke and bite out hys Neighbors throate.

*From 'The Martin Marprelate Tractates'* [1589].

MARTINS MONTHS MINDE.[1]

AND therewithal, lifting up himselfe on his pillowe, [Olde Martin][2] commanded the elder *Martin* to go into his studie, and to fetch his Will, that lay sealed in his deske, and bound fast with an hempen string: which when he had brought, he commanded to be broken up, and to be read in their hearing; which was as followeth.

After he had begun with the usual stile; next touching his bodie (for it should seeme he had forgotten his soule: for the partie that heard it told me, he heard no word of it), he would, should not be buried in any *Church* (especiallie *Cathedrall*, which ever he detested), *Chappell*, nor *Churchyard*, for that they had been prophaned with superstition: but in some barne, outhowse or field (yea, rather then faile, dunghill), where their prime prophecyings had been used; without bell, pompe, or any solemnitie; save that his friends should mourne for him in gownes, and whoods, of a bright yellowe: the whoods made of a strawnge fashion, for no ordinarie thing contented him (belike with a crest after *Hoydens cut*), and Minstrells going before him; wherein hee would have a Hornpipe at any hand, because he loved that instrument above measure: the rest he referred to their discretion; but a *Rebuke, and a Shame*, in my opinion, were the fittest fiddles for him.

Minister he would have none to burie him, but his sonne, or some one of his lay brethren, to tumble him into the pit. He would not be laid East and West (for hee ever went against the haire), but North, and South: I think because *ab aquilone*

[1] Longing. [2] Martin = the Puritans.

*omne malum;* and the South wind ever brings corruption with it: tombe he would have none (for feare belike that his disciples finding the monument, would commit some Idolatrie to it), nor *Epitaph* upon his grave, but on some post, or tree, not farre from it, he would have onelie engraven: M. M. M.

Whereby his sonnes say, he meant; *Memoriæ Martini magni.*

But I thinke rather this: *Monstrum Mundi Martinus.*

*From 'Have with you to Saffron Walden'* [1596].

DR. GABRIEL HARVEY'S HEXAMETERS.

WERE he as he hath been (I can assure thee) he would clothe and adorne thee with manie gracious gallant complements, and not a rotten tooth that hangs out at thy shop window, but should cost him an indefinite Turkish armie of English Hexameters. O, he hath been olde dogge at that drunken, staggering kinde of verse, which is all up hill and downe hill, like the way betwixt Stamford and Beechfield, and goes like a horse plunging through the myre in the deep of winter, now soust up to the saddle, and straight aloft on his tiptoes. Indeed in old King Harrie sinceritie, a kind of verse it is hee hath been enfeoft in from his minoritie, for as I have bin faithfully informed, hee first cryde in that verse in the verie moment of his birth, and when he was but yet a fresh-man in Cambridge he set up *Siquisses*[1] and sent his accounts to his father in those joulting Heroicks. . . . But though he be in none of your Courts Licentiate, and a Courtier otherwise hee is never like to be; one of the Emperour

[1] Bills for anything lost.

*Justinians* Courtiers (the civill Lawes chiefe Founder) *malgre* he will name himselfe: and a quarter of a yeare since, I was advertised, that aswell his workes, as the whole body of that Law compleat (having no other employment in his Facultie), hee was in hand to tourne into English Hexameters; and if he might have had his will, whiles he was yet resident in *Cambridge*, it should have been severely enacted throghout the Universitie, that none should speake or ordinarily converse, but in that cue. For himselfe, hee verie religiously observ'd it, never meeting anie Doctor or frend of his, but he would salute him, or give him the time of the day in it most heroically, even as hee saluted a Phisition of speciall account in these tearmes,

> '*Nere can I meet you, sir, but needs must I veile my bonnetto.*'

Which he (loth to be behinde with him in curtesie) thus turned upon him againe,

> '*Nere can I meet you, sir, but needs must I call ye knavetto.*'

Once hee had made an Hexameter verse of seaven feete, whereas it would lawfully beare but sixe; which fault a pleasant Gentleman having found him with, wrapt the said verse in a peece of paper, and sent a lowse with it, inserting vnderneath, *This verse hath more feet than a lowse.* But to so Dictionarie a custome it was grown with him, that after supper if he chaunst to play at Cards, and had but one Queen of Harts light in his hand, he would *extempore*, in that kinde of verse, runne uppon mens hearts and womens hearts all the night long, as,

> '*Stout heart and sweet hart, yet stoutest hart to be stooped.*'

No may-pole in the streete, no wether-cocke on anie Church steeple, no garden, no arbour, no lawrell, no ewe tree, that he would overslip without haylsing after the same methode. His braynes, his time, all hys maintenance and exhibition vpon it he hath consumed, and never intermitted, till such time as he beganne to Epistle it against mee, since which I have kept him a work indifferently.



## THOMAS LODGE [1558-1625].

*From 'A Fig for Momus'* [1595], *Satire I.*

TELL pursie Rollus lusking in his bed
That humors by excessive ease are bred,
That sloth corrupts, and choakes the vital sprights,
And kils the memorie, and hurts the lights;
He will not sticke (after a cup of sacke)
To flout his counsellor behind his backe,
For with a world of mischiefes and offence
Unbridled will rebelles against the sence,
And thinketh it no little prejudice,
To be reproov'd though by good advice:
For wicked men repine their sinnes to heare,
And folly flings, if counsaile tuch him neare. . . .
Find me a niggard that doth want the shift
To call his cursed avarice good thrift?
A rakehell, sworne to prodigalitie,
That dares not terme it liberalitie?
A letcher, that hath lost both flesh and fame,
That holds not letcherie a pleasant game?
And why? because they cloake their shame by this,
And will not see the horror what it is.
And cunning sinne being clad in Vertues shape

Flies much reproofe, and many scornes doth
scape. . . .
Thus with the world, the world dissembles still,
And to their own confusions follow will;
Holding it true felicitie to flie
Not from the sinne, but from the seeing eie,
Then in this world who winks at each estate
Hath found the means to make him fortunate;
To colour hate with kindness, to defraud
In private, those in publique we applaud;
To keep this rule, kaw me and I kaw thee;
To play the Saints, whereas we divels bee.
Whate'er men doe, let them not reprehend;
For cunning knaves will cunning knaves defend.

*From Satire IV.*

THE MISER.

MARKE me a miserable mysing wretch,
That lives by others losse, and subtle fetch,
He is not onely plagu'd with heavines,
For that which other happie men possesse,
But takes no tast of that himselfe partakes,
And sooner life, then miserie forsakes;
And what in most aboundance he retaines
In seeming little doth augment his paines;
His travailes are suspitions backt by feare,
His thoughts distraught incessant troubles leare,
He doubts the raine, for feare it raise a floud
And beare away his houses, and his good,
He dreads his neighbours cattle as they pass,
For feare they stay and feed upon his grasse,
He hides his treasures under locke and kay,

Lest theeves break in, and beare his bags away;
Onely unto himselfe, for whom he spares,
His eie disdaines his hungrie bellie meate,
Himselfe repines, at that himselfe doth eate,
Though rents increase, he lets his body lacke,
And neither spares his bellie nor his backe:
What on himselfe he laies, he houlds it lost,
What on his wife, he deemes unthriftie cost,
What on his heires, his miserie and misse;
What on his servantes, ryotting it is. . . .
So lives he to the wretched world alone,
Lothsome to all that long to see him gone.

## JOHN DONNE, D.D. [1573-1631].

### *From Satire I.* [1593].

Away, thou changeling motley humourist,
Leave me, and in this standing wooden chest,
Consorted with these few books, let me lie
In prison, and here be coffin'd when I die.
Here are God's conduits, grave divines, and here
Nature's secretary, the philosopher,
And wily statesmen, which teach how to tie
The sinews of a city's mystic body;
Here gathering chroniclers, and by them stand
Giddy fantastic poets of each land.
Shall I leave all this constant company,
And follow headlong wild, uncertain thee?
First, swear by thy best love, here, in earnest
—If thou, which lovest all, canst love any best—
Thou wilt not leave me in the middle street,
Though some more spruce companion thou dost meet,
Not though a captain do come in thy way

Bright parcel-gilt, with forty dead men's pay;
Not though a brisk perfumid pert courtier
Deign with a nod thy courtesy to answer;
Nor come a velvet justice with a long
Great train of blue coats, twelve or fourteen strong,
Wilt thou grin, or fawn on him, or prepare
A speech to court his beauteous son and heir?
For better or worse take me, or leave me;
To take and leave me is adultery.
O monstrous, superstitious puritan,
Of refined manners, yet ceremonial man,
That when thou meet'st one, with enquiring eyes
Doth search, and, like a needy broker, prize
The silk and gold he wears, and to that rate,
So high or low, dost raise thy formal hat;
That wilt consort none, until thou have known
What lands he hath in hope, or of his own,
As though all thy companions should make thee
Jointures, and marry thy dear company.

*From Satire II.*

Sir, though—I thank God for it—I do hate
Perfectly all this town, yet there's one state
In all ill things so excellently best,
That hate toward them breeds pity towards the rest.
Though poetry indeed be such a sin
As I think that brings dearth and Spaniards in;
Though like the pestilence and old-fashion'd love
Riddlingly it catch men, and doth remove
Never, till it be starved out, yet their state
Is poor, disarm'd, like Papists, not worth hate.
One—like a wretch, which at bar judged as dead

Yet prompts him which stands next and cannot read,
And saves his life—gives idiot actors means,
Starving himself, to live by his labour'd scenes.
As in some organ, puppets dance above
And bellows pant below, which them do move,
One would move love by rhythms; but witchcraft's charms
Bring not now their old fears, nor their old harms.
Rams and slings now are silly battery;
Pistolets are the best artillery.
And they who write to lords, rewards to get,
Are they not like singers at doors for meat?
And they who write, because all write, have still
That excuse for writing, and for writing ill.

* * * * *

But these do me no harm, nor they which use
To out-do ——, and out-usure Jews,
To out-drink the sea, to out-swear the ——;
Who with sins of all kinds as familiar be
As confessors, and for whose sinful sake
School-men new tenements in hell must make;
Whose strange sins canonists could hardly tell
In which commandment's large receipt they dwell;
But these punish themselves.

*From Satire III.*

KIND pity chokes my spleen; brave scorn forbids
Those tears to issue, which swell my eyelids.
I must not laugh, nor weep sins, but be wise.
Can railing, then, cure these worn maladies?
Is not our mistress, fair Religion,
As worthy of all our soul's devotion,

As virtue was in the first blinded age?
Are not heaven's joys as valiant to assuage
Lusts, as earth's honour was to them? Alas,
As we do them in means, shall they surpass
Us in the end? and shall thy father's spirit
Meet blind philosophers in heaven, whose merit
Of strict life may be imputed faith, and hear
Thee, whom he taught so easy ways, and near
To follow, damn'd? Oh! if thou darest, fear this;
This fear great courage and high valour is.

*From Satire IV.*

WELL; I may now receive and die. My sin
Indeed is great, but yet I have been in
A purgatory, such as fear'd hell is
A recreation and scant map of this.
My mind, nor with pride's itch, nor yet hath been
Poison'd with love to see, or to be seen.
I had no suit there, nor new suit to show,
Yet went to court; but as Glaze which did go
To mass in jest, catch'd, was fain to disburse
The hundred marks, which is the statute's curse;
Before he 'scaped; so 't pleased my destiny—
Guilty of my sin in going—to think me
As prone to all ill, and of good as forget—
Full, as proud, lustful, and as much in debt,
As vain, as witless, and as false as they
Which dwell in court, for once going that way.
Therefore I suffer'd this; towards me did run
A thing more strange than on Nile's slime the sun
E'er bred, or all which into Noah's ark came;
A thing which would have posed Adam to name;
Stranger than seven antiquaries' studies;

Than Afric's monsters, Guiana's rarities;
Stranger than strangers; one, who for a Dane
In the Danes' massacre had sure been slain,
If he had lived then; and without help dies,
When next the 'prentices 'gainst strangers rise;
One, whom the watch, at noon, let scarce go by;
One to whom th' examining justice sure would cry,
'Sir, by your priesthood, tell me what you are.'
His clothes were strange, though coarse, and black, though bare,
Sleeveless his jerkin was, and it had been
Velvet, but 'twas now—so much ground was seen—
Become tufftaffaty; and our children shall
See it plain rash awhile, then nought at all.
The thing hath travell'd, and, faith, speaks all tongues,
And only knoweth what to all states belongs.
Made of th' accents and best phrase of all these,
He speaks one language. If strange meats displease,
Art can deceive, or hunger force my taste,
But pedant's motley tongue, soldier's bombast,
Mountebanks' drug-tongue, nor terms of law
Are strong enough preparatives to draw
Me to bear this, yet I must be content
With his tongue, in his tongue called compliment.

* * * * *

He names me, and comes to me; I whisper, 'God!
How have I sinn'd, that Thy wrath's furious rod,
This fellow, chooseth me?' He saith, 'Sir,
I love your judgment; whom do you prefer,
For the best linguist?' And I sillily
Said, that I thought Calepine's dictionary.
'Nay, but of men, most sweet Sir?' Beza then,
Some Jesuits, and two reverend men
Of our two Academies I named. Here

He stopped me, and said: 'Nay, your apostles were
Good pretty linguists, and so Panurge was;
Yet a poor gentleman all these may pass
By travel.' Then, as if he would have sold
His tongue, he praised it, and such wonders told,
That I was fain to say, 'If you'd lived, sir,
Time enough to have been interpreter
To Babel's bricklayers, sure the tower had stood.'
He adds, 'If of court life you knew the good,
You would leave loneness.' I said, 'Not alone
My loneness is; but Spartan's fashion,
To teach by painting drunkards, doth not last
Now; Aretine's pictures have made few chaste;
No more can princes' court—though there be few
Better pictures of vice—teach me virtue.'
He, like a high-stretch'd lute-string, squeak'd, 'O sir,
'Tis sweet to talk of kings.' 'At Westminster,'
Said I, 'the man that keeps the abbey tombs,
And for his price doth with whoever comes
Of all our Harrys and our Edwards talk,
From king to king, and all their kin can walk.
Your ears shall hear nought but kings; your eyes meet
Kings only; the way to it is King's Street.'
He smack'd and cried, 'He's base, mechanic, coarse,
So are all your Englishmen in their discourse.
Are not your Frenchmen neat?' . . .

*From Satire V.*

O AGE of rusty iron!—some better wit
Call it some worse name, if aught equal it—

Th' iron age that was, when justice was sold—now
Injustice is sold dearer—did allow
All claimed fees and duties. Gamesters, anon,
The money which you sweat and swear for is gone
Into other hands. So controverted lands
'Scape, like Angelica, the striver's hands.
If law be in the judge's heart, and he
Have no heart to resist letter, or fee,
Where wilt thou appeal? Power of the courts below
Flows from the first main head, and these can throw
Thee, if they suck thee in, to misery,
To fetters, halters. But if the injury
Steel thee to dare complain; alas, thou goest
Against the stream, upwards, when thou art most
Heavy and most faint; and in these labours they,
'Gainst whom thou shouldst complain, will in thy way
Become great seas, o'er which, when thou shalt be
Forced to make golden bridges, thou shalt see
That all thy gold was drown'd in them before.
All things follow their like; only who have, may have more.

## JOSEPH HALL, D.D., BISHOP OF EXETER AND NORWICH [1574-1656].

*From Book I., Satire III.* [1597-1598].

With some pot-fury, ravish'd from their wit,
They sit and muse on some no-vulgar writ:
As frozen dung-hills in a winter's morn,
That void of vapours seemed all beforn,
Soon as the sun sends out his piercing beams,
Exhale out filthy smoke and stinking steams.
So doth the base, and the fore-barren brain,

Soon as the raging wine begins to reign.
One higher pitched doth set his soaring thought
On crowned kings, that fortune hath low brought:
Or some upreared high-aspiring swain,
As it might be the Turkish Tamberlain;[1]
Then weeneth he his base drink-drowned spright,
Rapt to the threefold loft of heaven hight,
When he conceives upon his feigned stage
The stalking steps of his great personage,
Graced with huff-cap terms and thund'ring threats,
That his poor hearers' hair quite upright sets.
Such soon as some brave-minded hungry youth
Sees fitly frame to his wide-strained mouth,
He vaunts his voice upon an hired stage,
With high-set steps and princely carriage;
Now swooping in side-robes of royalty,
That erst did scrub in lowsy brokery,
There if he can with terms Italianate,
Big-sounding sentences and words of state,
Fair patch me up his pure iambic verse,
He ravishes the gazing scaffolders:[2]
Then certes was the famous Corduban,[3]
Never but half so high tragedian.
Now, lest such frightful shows of Fortune's fall,
And bloody tyrants' rage, should chance appall
The dead-struck audience, midst the silent rout,
Comes leaping in a self-misformed lout,
And laughs, and grins, and frames his mimic face,
And justles straight into the prince's place;
Then doth the theatre echo all aloud,
With gladsome noise of that applauding crowd.
A goodly hotch-potch! when vile russetings[4]
Are match'd with monarchs, and with mighty kings.
A goodly grace to sober tragic muse,
When each base clown his clumsy fist doth bruise,[5]

[1] This is an attack upon Marlowe.
[2] The gallery.
[3] Seneca.
[4] Clowns.
[5] With applause.

And show his teeth in double rotten row,
For laughter at his self-resembled show.

*From Book II., Satire II.*

HAVE not I lands of fair inheritance,
Deriv'd by right of long continuance,
To firstborn males, so list the law to grace,
Nature's first fruits in an eternal race?
Let second brothers, and poor nestlings,
Whom more injurious nature later brings
Into the naked world; let them assaine
To get hard pennyworths with so bootless pain.
Tush! what care I to be Arcesilas,
Or some sad Solon, whose deed-furrowed face,
And sullen head, and yellow-clouded sight,
Still on the steadfast earth are musing pight;[1]
Mutt'ring what censures their destracted mind
Of brainsick paradoxes deeply hath defin'd:
Or of Parmenides, or of dark Heraclite,
Whether all be one, or ought be infinite?
Long would it be ere thou hast purchase[2] bought,
Or wealthier wexen by such idle thought.
Fond fool! six feet shall serve for all thy store;
And he that cares for most shall find no more.
We scorn that wealth should be the final end,
Whereto the heavenly Muse her course doth bend;
And rather had be pale with learned cares,
Than paunched[3] with thy choice of changed fares.
Or doth thy glory stand in outward glee?
A lave-ear'd[4] ass with gold may trapped be.

[1] Fixed.
[2] Profit.
[3] Stuffed.
[4] *I.e.*, long-eared.

Or if in pleasure? live we as we may,
Let swinish Grill delight in dunghill clay.

*From Book II., Satire III.*

THE crouching client, with low-bended knee,
And many worships, and fair flattery,
Tells on his tale as smoothly as him list,
But still the lawyer's eye squints on his fist;
If that seem lined with a larger fee,
Doubt not the suit, the law is plain for thee.
Tho must he buy his vainer hope with price,
Disclout his crowns, and thank him for advice.
So have I seen in a tempestuous stowre
Some brier-brush showing shelter from the show'r
Unto the hopeful sheep, that fain would hide
His fleecy coat from that same angry tide:
The ruthless brier, regardless of his plight,
Lays hold upon the fleece he would acquite,
And takes advantage of the careless prey,
That thought she in securer shelter lay.
The day is fair, the sheep would far to feed,
The tyrant brier holds fast his shelter's meed,
And claims it for the fee of his defence:
So robs the sheep, in favour's fair pretence.

*Book II., Satire VI.*

A GENTLE squire would gladly entertain
Into his house some trencher-chappelain;
Some willing man that might instruct his sons,
And that would stand to good conditions.
First, that he lie upon the truckle-bed,
Whiles his young master lieth o'er his head.

Second, that he do, on no default,
Ever presume to sit above the salt.
Third that he never change his trencher twice.
Fourth, that he use all common courtesies,
Sit bare at meals, and one half rise and wait.
Last, that he never his young master beat,
But he must ask his mother to define
How many jerks she would his breech should line.
All these observed, he could contented be,
To give five marks and winter livery.

*From Book III., Satire I.*

TIME was, and that was term'd the time of gold,
When world and time were young that now are old.
(When quiet Saturn swayed the mace of lead,
And pride was yet unborn, and yet unbred).
Time was, that whiles the autumn-fall did last,
Our hungry sires gap'd for the falling mast
Of the Dodonian oaks.
Could no unhusked acorn leave the tree,
But there was challenge made whose it might be.
And if some nice and licorous appetite
Desir'd more dainty dish of rare delight,
They scal'd the stored crab with clasped knee,
Till they had sated their delicious eye;
Or search'd the hopeful thicks of hedgy rows,
For briery berries, or haws or sourer sloes:
Or when they meant to fare the fin'st of all,
They lick'd oak-leaves besprent with honey-fall.
As for the thrice three-angled beech nut-shell,
Or chesnuts armed husk and hid kernell,
No squire durst touch, the law would not afford,
Kept for the court, and for the king's own board.

Their royal plate was clay, or wood, or stone,
The vulgar, save his hand, else he had none.
Their only cellar was the neighbour brook:
None did for better care, for better look.
Was then no plaining of the brewer's scape,[1]
Nor greedy vintner mix'd the strained grape,
The king's pavilion was the grassy green,
Under safe shelter of the shady treen.
Under each bank men laid their limbs along,
Not wishing any ease, not fearing wrong;
Clad with their own, as they were made of old,
Not fearing shame, not feeling any cold.
But when by Ceres' huswifery and pain,
Men learn'd to bury the reviving grain,
And father Janus taught the new-found vine
Rise on the elm, with many a friendly twine:
And bare desire bade men to delven low,
For needless metals, then gan mischief grow.
Then farewell, fairest age, the world's best days:
Thriving in ill as it in age decays.

*From Book III., Satire V.*

Late travelling along in London way,
We met, as seem'd by his disguised array,
A lusty courtier, whose curled head
With abron locks was fairly furnished.
I him saluted in our lavish wise:
He answers my untimely courtesies.
His bonnet vail'd, ere ever he could think,
The unruly wind blows off his periwinke.
He lights and runs, and quickly hath him sped,
To overtake his overrunning head.

[1] Tricks.

The sportful wind, to mock the headless man,
Tosses apace his pitch'd Rogerian:
And straight it to a deeper ditch hath blown;
There must my yonker fetch his waxen crown.
I look'd and laugh'd, whiles in his raging mind
He curs'd all court'sy and unruly wind.

I look'd and laugh'd and much I marvelled,
To see so large a causeway in his head,
And me bethought, that when it first begon,
'Twas some shrewd autumn that so bar'd the bone.
Is't not sweet pride, when men their crowns must shade,
With that which jerks the hams of every jade,
Or floor-strew'd locks from off the barber's shears?
But waxen crowns well 'gree with borrow'd hairs.

*From Book V., Satire III.*

THE satire should be like the porcupine,
That shoots sharp quilles out in each angry line,
And wounds the blushing cheek and fiery eye
Of him that hears, and readeth guiltily.
Ye antique satires, how I bless your days,
That brook'd your bolder style, their own dispraise,
And well near wish, yet joy[1] my wish is vain,
I had been then, or they were now again!
For now our ears been of more brittle mould,
Than those dull earthen ears that were of old:
Sith[2] theirs, like anvils, bore the hammer's head,
Our glass can never touch unshivered.
But from the ashes of my quiet style
Henceforth may rise some raging rough Lucille,

[1] Rejoice. [2] Since.

That may with Æschylus both find and leese[1]
The snaky tresses of th' Eumenides:
Meanwhile, sufficeth me, the world may say
That I these vices loath'd another day.

## JOHN MARSTON [1575-1634].

### *From Satire I.*

But see—who's yonder? True Humility,
The perfect image of faire Curtisie;
See—he doth daine to be in servitude
Where he hath no promotions livelihood!
Marke, he doth curtsie, and salutes a block,
Will seeme to wonder at a weathercock;
Trenchmore with apes, play musicke to an owle,
Blesse his sweet honours running brasell bowle;
Cries 'Brauly broake' when that his lordship mist,
And is of all the thrunged scaffold hist;
O is not this a curteous-minded man!
No foole, no, a damn'd Machevelian.
Holds candle to the devill for a while,
That he the better may the world beguile
Thats fed with shows. He hopes, thogh som repine,
When sunne is set the lesser starres will shine;
He is within a haughty malecontent,
Though he doe use such humble blandishment.
But, bold-fac'd Satyre, straine not over hie,
But laugh and chuck at meaner gullery.

[1] Lose.

*From Satire III.*

BEDLAME, Frenzie, Madnes, Lunacie,
I challenge all your moody empery
Once to produce a more distracted man
Than is inamorato Lucian!
For when my eares receav'd a fearfull sound
That he was sicke, I went, and there I found
Him layde of love, and newly brought to bed
Of monstrous folly and a franticke head.
His chamber hang'd about with elegies,
With sad complaints of his loves miseries;
His windows strow'd with sonnets, and the glasse
Drawne full of love-knots. I approacht the asse,
And straight he weepes, and signes some sonnet out
To his faire love! And then he goes about
For to perfume her rare perfection
With some sweet-smelling pinck epitheton;
Then with a melting looke he writhes his head,
And straight in passion riseth in his bed;
And having kist his hand, stroke up his haire,
Made a French conge, cryes, 'O cruell feare'
To the antique bed-post. I laught a maine,
That down my cheeks the mirthfull drops did raine.
Well, he's no Janus, but substantiall,
In show and essence a good naturall;
When as thou hear'st me aske spruce Duceus
From whence he comes; and he straight answers us,
From Lady Lilla; and is going straight
To the Countess of (  ), for she doth waite
His comming, and will surely send her coach,
Unlesse he make the speedier approach.
Art not thou ready for to break thy spleen
At laughing at the fondness thou hast seene
In this vain-glorious foole, when thou dost know
He never durst unto these ladies show
His pippin face?

*From Satire V.*

FIE, fie! I am deceived all thys while,
A mist of errors doth my sense beguile;
I have beene long of all my wits bereaven
Heaven for hell taking, taking hell for heaven;
Vertue for vice, and vice for vertue still;
Sower for sweet, and good for passing ill.
If not, would vice and odious villanie
Be still rewarded with high dignity?
Would damned Jovians be of all men praised,
And with high honors unto heaven raised?
Tis so, tis so; riot and luxurie
Are vertuous, meritorious chastitie:
That which I thought to be damn'd hel-borne pride,
Is humble modestie, and nought beside;
That which I deemed Bacchus surquedry,
Is grave and staied, civill sobrietie.
O then, thrice holy age, thrice sacred men,
Mong whom no vice a Satyre can discerne,
Since lust is turned into chastitie,
And riot into sad sobrietie,
Nothing but goodness raigneth in our age,
And vertues all are joyn'd in marriage!
Heere is no dwelling for impiety,
No habitation for vile villanie;
Heere are no subject for Reproofes sharpe vaine;
Then hence, rude Satyre, make away amaine,
And seeke a seate where more impuritie
Doth lye and lurke in still securitie!

### To Everlasting Oblivion.

*Epilogue to 'The Scourge of Villainie.'*

Thou mightie gulfe, insatiat cormorant!
Deride me not, though I seeme petulant
To fall into thy chops. Let others pray
For ever their faire poem flourish may;
But as for mee, hungry Oblivion
Devour me quick, accept my orizon:
My earnest prayers, which doe importune thee
With gloomy shade of thy still emperie,
To vaile both me and my rude poesie,
Farre worthier lines, in silence of thy state,
Doe sleep securely, free from love or hate;
From which this living nere can be exempt,
But whilst it breathes will hate and furie tempt,
Then close his eyes with thy all-dimming hand,
Which not right glorious actions can with-stand;
Peace hatefull tongues, I now in silence pace,
Unlesse some hownde doe wake me from my place.
I with this sharpe, yet well-meant poesie,
Will sleep secure, right free from injurie
Of cancred hate, or rankest villanie.

## JOHN DAY.

*From 'Peregrinatio Scholastica'* [1607 ?].

Philosophos, glad to be out of the reach of the sworde of Justice, presentlie inquires for this honest Vicker (and here by the way let me tell you, this new Vicker was made out of an olde ffrier that had beene twice turnd at a Religion-dressers); and him he fownde with two or thre of the best men in his

parish goeing to take in fresh water at the Barlie-Island (Alehouse). Who (Philosophos having saluted him and told him his busines) tooke him into the harbour with him and, while their vessels were a fillinge, returnd him this short, but nothing sweete answere: Sir, you are very wellcome and, could my poore livinge afford it, I would make you better wellcome. I love and honour schollers, haveinge a full prentishipp to the trade myselfe: but, as my honest neighbours here knowe, I have but a poore vicoridge which one Mr. Symon-Monye, or more familiarlie sym-monie, helpt me to. And though I have noe great store of Lerneinge lieing by me (for, as you know, *omnia mea mecum porto* is the old worde amongst schollers), yet I have enough to read a marriadge and buriall, and, if neede be, to saye a homelie of a hollidaie. And thats as much as my honest parishioners desire, more a great deale then manie of them deserve; for these honnest men, know they are a companie of turbulent mechanickes, and yet so prowd in their owne conceits I have much adoe to please them; for, but for readeing one Latin worde in an homely (and that was out afore I was aware to), some of them call me papist and shonn me as a puritan would doe a crosse, and never dronke above twice or thrice in my companie since. And therefore haveing neither occasion to use lerneinge nor meanes to maintaine it if I had it, heares the tother halfe cann and so I take my leave of you.

## GEORGE WITHER [1588-1677].

*From 'Abuses Stript and Whipt'* [1613].

HATE many times from wrongs receiv'd hath grown:
Envy is seen where injuries are none.
Her malice also is more general;
For hate to some extends, and she to all.
Yet envious men do least spite such as he
Of ill-report, or of a low degree.
But rather they do take aim at such
Who either well-beloved are or rich;
And therefore some do fitly liken these
Unto those flies we call cantharides;
Since for the most part they alight on none
But on the flowers that are fairest blown;
Or to the boisterous wind, which sooner grubs
The stately cedar than the humble shrubs.
Yet I have known it shake the bush below,
And move the leaf that's wither'd long ago;
As if it had not shown sufficient spite
Unless it also could o'erwhelm it quite,
Or bury it in earth. Yea, I have found
The blast of envy fly as low's the ground.
And when it hath already brought a man
Even to the very meanest state it can,
Yet 'tis not satisfi'd, but still devising
Which way it also may disturb his rising.

### REVENGE.

ROOM for Revenge, he's no comedian
That acts for pleasure, but a grim tragedian:
A foul, stern monster, which if we displease him,
Death, wounds, and blood, or nothing, can appease him.

This most inhuman passion, now and then,
With violence and fury hurries man
So far from that sweet mildness, wherewith he,
Being himself, should ever temper'd be;
That man nor devil can we term him well,
For part he hath of earth, and part of hell,
Yet this (so much of all good men disdain'd)
Many there are have rashly entertain'd,
And hugg'd as a sweet contenting passion,
Though in a various and unlikely fashion.

Some are so staid they can their purpose keep
Long time conceal'd, to make the wound more deep;
And these it is not heat of blood that blind,
But rather the fell canker of the mind.
Some by respect to time and place are staid,
And some again by nothing are allay'd;
But them mad rage oft furiously will carry,
Without respect of friends or sanctuary.
Then some of them are fearful, some are bolder,
Some are too hot, and some again are colder.
O, I have seen and laugh'd at heart to see 't,
Some of our hot spurs drawing in the street,
As though they could not passion's rage withstand,
But must betake them to it out of hand.
But why i' th' street? Oh, comp'ny doth heart them,
And men may see their valorous acts, and part them.

### JEALOUSY.

SOMETIMES this passion, as it may appear,
Proceeds out of a too much love, with fear;

It is sent
Of God, as a peculiar punishment
To those who do the creature so affect,
As thereby their Creator they neglect.
Love is the highest and the noblest bliss
That for mankind on earth ordained is;
But when true measure it exceeds, and gets
Beyond the decent bounds that reason sets,
God turns it to a plague, whereby He will
Show them their folly, and correct the ill.
He adds a fear of losing of their joy
In that they love, which quickly doth destroy
All their delight, and strewing good with ill,
Makes things seem lost though they are with them still.

ADDRESS TO THE KING (WRITTEN IN PRISON, 1614?).

IN this poore state I can as well content me,
As if that I had Wealth and Honours lent me;
Nor for my owne sake doe I seeke to shunne
This thraldome, wherein now I seeme undone:
For though I prize my freedome more then golde
And use the meanes to free myself from hold,
Yet with a minde (I hope) unchang'd and free,
Here can I live and play with miserie,
Yea in despight of want and slavery,
Laugh at the world in all her bravery,
Here have I learn'd to make my greatest wrongs
Matter for mirth, and subjects but for songs.
Here can I smile to see my selfe neglected,
And how the meane man's sute is disrespected,
Whilst those that are more rich and better friended,
Can have twice greater faults thrice sooner ended.

## RICHARD CORBET, BISHOP OF OXFORD AND NORWICH [1582-1635].

*From the 'Journey into France.'*

I WENT from England into France
Nor yet to learn to cringe nor dance,
Nor yet to ride or fence;
Nor did I go like one of those
That do returne with half a nose
They carried from hence.

But I to Paris rode along
Much like John Dory in the song,
Upon a holy tide.
I on an ambling nag did jet,
I trust he is not paid for yet,
And spur'd him on each side.

And to St. Dennis fast we came,
To see the sights of Nostre Dame,
The man that shows them snaffles;
Where who is apt for to beleeve
May see our Ladie's right-arm sleeve,
And eke her old pantofles;

Her breast, her milk, her very gown
That she did wear in Bethlehem town
When in the inn she lay.
Yet all the world knows that's a fable,
For so good clothes ne'er lay in stable
Upon a lock of hay.

No carpenter could by his trade
Gain so much coyn as to have made
A gown of so rich stuff.
Yet they, poor fools, think, for their credit,
They may believe old Joseph did it,
'Cause he deserv'd enough.

There is one of the crosse's nails,
Which whoso sees his bonnet vails,
And, if he will, may kneel.
Some say 'twas false, 'twas never so,
Yet, feeling it, thus much I know,
It is as true as steel.

There is a lanthorn which the Jews,
When Judas led them forth, did use,
It weighs my weight downright:
But to believe it, you must think
The Jews did put a candle in't,
And then 'twas very light.

There's one saint there has lost his nose:
Another's head, but not his toes,
His elbow and his thumb.
But when that we had seen the rags
We went to th' inn and took our nags,
And so away did come.

We came to Paris on the Seine,
'Tis wondrous fair, 'tis nothing clean,
'Tis Europe's greatest town.
How strong it is I need not tell it,
For all the world may easily smell it,
That walk it up and down.

There many strange things are to see,
The palace and great gallery,
The Place Royal doth excel:
The new bridge and the statues there,
At Nostre Dame, Saint Q. Peter,
The steeple bears the bell.

The Bastile and Saint Dennis-Street,
The Shafflenist, like London-Fleet,

The Arsenal, no toy.
But if you'll see the prettiest thing,
Go to the court and see the king,
O 'tis a hopeful boy.

He is of all his dukes and peers
Reverenc'd for much wit at 's years,
Nor must you think it much ;
For he with little switch doth play,
And make fine dirty pyes of clay,
O never king made such !

## JOHN CLEVELAND [1613-1658].

*From 'The Rebel Scot.'*

He that saw Hell in's melancholy Dream,
And in the Twy-light of his Phancie's Theme
Scar'd from his Sins, repented in a fright,
Had he view'd *Scotland* had turn'd Proselite,
A Land where one may pray with curst intent,
O may they never suffer Banishment !
Had *Cain* been *Scot*, God would have chang'd his Doom,
Not forc'd him wander, but confin'd him home ;
Like *Jews* they spread, and as Infection fly,
As if the Devil had Ubiquity.
Hence 'tis they live as Rovers and defie
This, or that place, Rags of Geography.
They're Citizens o' th' World, they'r all in all,
*Scotland's* a Nation Epidemical.

* * * * *

Lord ! what a godly thing is want of Shirts !
How a Scotch Stomach and no Meat converts !

They wanted Food and Rayment; so they took
Religion for their Seamstress, and their Cook.
Unmask them well, their Honours and Estate
As well as Conscience are Sophisticate.
Shrive but their Title and their Moneys poize,
A Laird and twenty pence pronounc'd with noise,
When constru'd but for a plain Yeoman go,
And a good sober two pence, and well so.
Hence then you proud Impostors, get you gone,
You *Picts* in Gentry and Devotion.
You Scandal to the Stock of Verse, a Race
Able to bring the Gibbet in disgrace.
*Hyperbolus* by suffering did traduce
The Ostracism, and sham'd it out of use.
The *Indian* that Heaven did forswear,
Because he heard some *Spaniards* were there;
Had he but known what *Scots* in Hell had been,
He would *Erasmus*-like have hung between.

*From 'The Puritan.'*

With Face and Fashion to be known,
For one of sure Election,
With Eyes all white, and many a Groan,
With Neck aside to draw in Tone,
With Harp in 's Nose, or he is none.
See a new Teacher of the Town,
O the Town, O the Town's new Teacher.

With Pate cut shorter than the Brow,
With little Ruff starch'd you know how,
With Cloak like *Paul* no Cape I trow,
With Surplice none; but lately now,
With Hands to thump, no Knees to bow.
See a new Teacher, etc.

With coz'ning Cough, and hollow Cheek,
To get new Gatherings every Week,
With Paltry Change of *and* to *eke*,
With some small Hebrew, and no Greek,
To find out Words, when stuff's to seek,
See a new Teacher, etc.

With Speech unthought, quick Revelation,
With boldness in Predestination,
With threats of absolute Damnation,
For *Yea* and *Nay* hath some Salvation
For his own Tribe, not every Nation,
See a new Teacher, etc.

## ANDREW MARVELL [1621-1678].

*From 'The Rehearsal Transprosed'* [1672].

But is it not a great pity to see a man in the flower of his age and the vigor of his studies, to fall into such a distraction, that his head runs upon nothing but 'Roman Empire' and 'Ecclesiastical Policy'? This happens by his growing too early acquainted with Don Quixot, and reading the Bible too late; so that the first impressions being most strong, and mixing with the last, as more novel, have made such a medley in his brain-pan that he is become a mad priest, which of all the sorts is the most incurable. Hence it is that you shall hear him anon instructing princes, like Sancho, how to govern his island: as he is busied at present in vanquishing the Calvinists of Germany and Geneva. Had he no friends to have given him good counsel before his understanding were quite unsettled? or if there was none near, why did not men call in the neighbours,

and send for the parson of the parish, to perswade with him in time, but let it run on thus till he is fit for nothing but Bedlam or Hogsdon? However, though it be a particular damage, it may tend to a general advantage; and young students will, I hope, by this example learn to beware henceforward of overweening presumption and preposterous ambition. For this gentleman, as I have heard, after he had read Don Quixot and the Bible, besides such school-books as were necessary for his age, was sent early to the University; and there studied hard, and in a short time became a competent rhetorician, and no ill disputant. He had learnt how to erect a thesis, and to defend it pro or con with a serviceable distinction; while the truth (as his camarade Mr. Bayes hath it on another occasion),

> 'Before a full pot of ale you can swallow,
> Was here with a whoop and gone with a holla.'

And so thinking himself so ripe and qualified for the greatest undertakings and highest fortune, he therefore exchanged the narrowness of the university for the town; but coming out of the confinement of the square-cap and the quadrangle into the open air, the world began to turn round with him, which he imagined, though it were his own giddiness, to be nothing less than the quadrature of the circle. This accident concurring so happily to increase the good opinion which he naturally had of himself, he thenceforward applied to gain a like reputation with others. He follow'd the town life, haunted the best companies, and, to polish himself from any pedantick roughness, he read and saw the Plaies, with much care and more proficiency than most auditory. But all this while he forgot not the main chance, but hearing of a vacancy with a nobleman, he clap'd in, and easily obtain'd to be his chaplain. From that

day you may take the date of his preferments and his ruine. For having soon wrought himself dexteriously into his patron's favour, by short graces and sermons, and a mimical way of drolling upon the Puritans, which he knew take both at chappel and table; he gained great authority likewise among all the domesticks. They all listened to him as an oracle; and they allowed him by common consent to have not onely all the divinity, but more wit too than all the rest of the family put together. This alone elevated him exceedingly in his own conceit, and raised him hypochondria into the region of the brain, that his head swell'd like any bladder with wind and vapour. But after he was stretch'd to such an height in his own fancy, that he could not look down from top to toe but his eyes dazzled at the precipice of his stature, there fell out, or in, another natural chance which push'd him headlong; for being of an amorous complexion, and finding himself (as I told you) the cock-divine and the cock-wit of the family, he took the privilege to walk among the hens: and thought it was not impolitick to establish his new acquired reputation upon the gentlewomen's side. And they that perceived he was a rising man, and of pleasant conversation, dividing his day among them into canonical hours, of reading now the Common Prayer, and now the Romances, were very much taken with him. The sympathy of silk began to stir and attract the tippet to the pettycoat, and the pettycoat toward the tippet. The innocent ladies found a strange unquietness in their minds, and could not distinguish whether it were love and devotion. Neither was he wanting on his part to carry on the work; but shifted himself every day with a clean surplice, and, as oft as he had occasion to bow, he directed his reverence towards the gentlewomen's pew. Till, having before had

enough of the libertine, and undertaken his calling only for preferment, he was transported now with the sanctity of his office, even to extasy: and like the Bishop over Maudlin College altar, or like Maudlin de la Croix, he was seen in his prayers to be lifted up sometimes in the air, and once particularly so high that he cracked his skull against the chappel ceiling. I do not hear, for all this, that he had ever practised upon the honour of the ladies, but that he preserved always the civility of a Platonick knight-errant. For all this courtship had no other operation than to make him still more in love with himself; and if he frequented their company, it was only to speculate his own baby in their eyes. But being thus, without competitor or rival, the darling of both sexes in the family, and his own minion, he grew beyond all measure elated, and that crack of his skull, as in broken looking-glasses, multiplied him in self-conceit and imagination. Having fixed his center in this nobleman's house, he thought he could now move and govern the whole earth with the same facility. Nothing now would serve him but he must be a madman in print, and write a book of Ecclesiastical Policy. There he distributes all the 'territories of Conscience' into the Prince's province, and makes the Hierarchy to be but Bishops of the air: and talks at such an extravagant rate in things of higher concernment, that the Reader will avow that in the whole discourse he had not one lucid interval. This book he was so bent upon that he sate up late at nights, and wanting sleep, and drinking sometimes wine to animate his fancy, it increas'd his distemper. Beside that, too, he had the misfortune to have two friends, who being both also out of their wits, and of the same, though something a calmer, phrensy, spurr'd him on perpetually with commendation.

And when his Book was once come out, and he saw himself an Author; that some of the gallants of the town layd by the new tune, and the 'tay, tay, tarree,' to quote some of his impertinencies; that his title-page was posted and pasted up at every avenue next under the Play for that afternoon at the King's or the Duke's house: the vain-glory of this totally confounded him. He lost all the little remains of his understanding, and his *cerebellum* was so dryed up that there was more brains in a walnut, and both their shells were alike thin and brittle.

*From 'The Character of Holland'* [1672].

HOLLAND,[1] that scarce deserves the name of land,
As but th' off-scouring of the British sand,
And so much earth as was contributed
By British pilots when they heav'd the lead,
Or what by the ocean's slow alluvion fell
Of shipwrackt cockle and the music-shell:
This indigested vomit of the sea
Fell to the Dutch by just propriety.
Glad then, as miners who have found the oar,
They, with mad labour, fish'd the land to shoar;
And div'd as desperately for each piece
Of earth, as if't had been of ambergreece;
Collecting anxiously small loads of clay,
Less than what building swallows bear away;
Or than those pills which sordid beetles roul,
Transfusing into them their dunghill soul.
How did they rivet with gigantick piles,
Thorough the centre their new-catchèd miles;
And to the stake a struggling country bound,
Where barking waves still bait the forcèd ground;

[1] Cf. Butler's poem on the same subject.

Building their wat'ry Babel far more high
To reach the sea, then those to scale the sky!
  Yet still his claim the injur'd ocean laid,
And oft at leap-frog ore their steeples plaid;
As if on purpose it on land had come
To show them what's their mare liberum.
A daily deluge over them does boyl;
The earth and water play at level-coyl.
The fish ofttimes the burger dispossest,
And sat, not as a meat, but as a guest,
And oft the Tritons and the sea-nymphs saw
Whole sholes of Dutch serv'd up for Cabillau;
Or, as they over the new level rang'd
For pickled herring, pickled heeren chang'd.
Nature, it seem'd, asham'd of her mistake,
Would throw their land away at duck and drake.
  Therefore Necessity, that first made kings,
Something like government among them brings;
For, as with pygmies, who best kills the crane,
Among the hungry, he that treasures grain,
Among the blind, the one-ey'd blinkard reigns,
So rules among the drowned he that draines;
Not who first see the rising sun commands,
But who could first discern the rising lands;
Who best could know to pump an earth so leak,
Him they their Lord, and Country's Father, speak;
To make a bank, was a great Plot of State;
Invent a shov'l and be a magistrate.
Hence some small dyke-grave, unperceiv'd, invades
The pow'r, and grows as 'twere a King of Spades,
But, for less envy, some joynt States endures,
Who look like a commission of the Sewers:
For these Half-anders, half wet, and half dry,
Nor bear strict service, nor pure liberty.

*From 'The Last Instructions to a Painter about the Dutch Wars'* [1667].

PAINT last the King, and a dead shade of night,
Only disperst by a weak taper's light,
And those bright gleams that dart along and glare
From his clear eyes (yet those too dart with care);
There, as in the calm horror all alone,
He wakes and muses of th' uneasy throne;
Raise up a sudden shape with virgin's face,
Tho' ill agree her posture, hour or place;
Naked as born, and her round arms behind,
With her own tresses interwove and twined;
Her mouth lockt up, a blind before her eyes,
Yet from beneath her veil her blushes rise,
And silent tears her secret anguish speak,
Her heart throbs, and with very shame would break.
The object strange in him no terror mov'd,
He wondred first, then pitied, then he lov'd;
And with kind hand does the coy vision press,
Whose beauty greater seem'd by her distress;
But soon shrunk back, chill'd with a touch so cold,
And the airy picture vanisht from his hold.
In his deep thoughts the wonder did increase,
And he divin'd 'twas England, or the Peace.
  Express him startling next, with list'ning ear,
As one that some unusual noise doth hear;
With cannons, trumpets, drums, his door surround,
But let some other Painter draw the sound.
Thrice he did rise, thrice the vain tumult fled,
But again thunders when he lies in bed.
His mind secure does the vain stroke repeat,
And finds the drums Lewis's march did beat.
  Shake then the room, and all his curtains tear,
And with blue streaks infect the taper clear,

While the pale ghost his eyes doth fixed admire
Of grandsire Harry, and of Charles his sire.
Harry sits down and in his open side
The grisly wound reveals of which he dy'd;
And ghastly Charles, turning his coller low,
The purple thred about his neck does show;
Then whisp'ring to his son in words unheard,
Through the lock't door both of them disappear'd.
The wondrous night the pensive King revolves,
And rising straight on Hyde's disgrace resolves.

*From 'Advice to a Painter.'*

NEXT, Painter, draw the rabble of the plot:
German, FitzGerald, Loftus, Porter, Scot:
These are fit heads indeed to turn a State,
And change the order of a nation's fate;
Ten thousand such as these shall ne'er control
The smallest atom of an English soul.
Old England on its strong foundation stands
Defying all their heads and all their hands;
Its steady basis never could be shook
When wiser men her ruin undertook;
And can her guardian angel let her stoop
At last to madmen, fools, and to the Pope?
No, Painter, no! close up the piece and see
This crowd of traytors hang'd in effigie.

*From 'Britannia and Raleigh.'*

RAWLEIGH, no more! for long in vain I've try'd
The Stewart from the tyrant to divide.
As easily learn'd virtuosos may
With the dog's blood his gentle kind convey

Into the wolf, and make him guardian turn
To th' bleating flock, by him so lately torn.
If this imperial juice once taint his blood,
'Tis by no potent antidote withstood.
Tyrants, like lep'rous kings, for public weal
Should be immur'd, lest the contagion steal
Over the whole. Th' elect of the Jessean line
To this firm law their sceptre did resign;
And shall this base tyrannick brood invade
Eternal laws, by God for mankind made?

*From 'An Historical Poem.'*

PRIESTS were the first deluders of mankind,
Who with vain Faith made all their Reason blind;
Not Lucifer himself more proud than they,
And yet persuade the world they must obey,
'Gainst avarice and luxury complain,
And practise all the vices they arraign.
Riches and honour they from laymen reap,
And with dull crambo feed the silly sheep.
As Killigrew buffoons his master, they
Droll on their God, but a much duller way.
With hocus-pocus and their heavenly slight,
They gain on tender consciences at night.
Whoever hath an over-zealous wife
Becomes the priest's Amphitrio during life.
Who would such men heaven's messengers believe,
Who from the sacred pulpit dare deceive?
Baal's wretched curates legerdemain'd it so,
And never durst their tricks above-board show.

My Muse presum'd a little to digress,
And touch their holy function with my verse.

Now to the State again she tends direct,
And does on giant Lauderdale reflect.
This haughty monster, with his ugly claws,
First temper'd poison to destroy our laws;
Declares the Council's Edicts are beyond
The most authentick statutes of the Land;
Sets up in Scotland *à la mode de France*—
Taxes, Excise, and Armies does advance.
This Saracen his Country's freedom broke,
To bring upon their necks the heavier yoke.
This is the savage pimp, without dispute,
First brought his mother for a prostitute.
Of all the miscreants e'er went to hell,
This villain rampant bears away the bell.

## JOHN WILMOT, EARL OF ROCHESTER [1647-1680].

*From 'The History of Insipids'* [1676].

CHAST, pious, prudent, Charles the Second,
The Miracle of thy Restoration,
May like to that of Quails be reckon'd
Rain'd on the *Israelitish* Nation;
The wish'd for Blessing from Heav'n sent,
Became their Curse and Punishment.

His Father's Foes he doth reward,
Preserving those that cut off 's Head;
Old Cavaliers, the Crown's best Guard,
He lets them starve for want of Bread.
Never was any King endow'd
With so much Grace and Gratitude.

A Parliament of Knaves and Sots,
  Members by name you must not mention,
He keeps in Pay, and buys their Votes ;
  Here with a Place, there with a Pension.
When to give Money he can't cologue 'um,
He doth with Scorn prorogue, prorogue 'um.

But they long since, by too much giving,
  Undid, betray'd and sold the Nation ;
Making their Memberships a Living,
  Better than e'er was Sequestration.
God give thee, Charles, a Resolution
To damn the Knaves by Dissolution.

Fame is not grounded on Success,
  Tho' Victories were *Cæsar's* Glory ;
Lost Battels make not *Pompey* less,
  But left them stiled great in Story.
Malicious Fate doth oft devise
To beat the Brave, and Fool the Wise.

*Charles* in the first *Dutch* War stood fair
  To have been Sovereign of the Deep,
When *Opdam* blew up in the Air,
  Had not his Highness gone to sleep ;
Our Fleet slack'd Sails, fearing his waking,
The *Dutch* else had been in sad taking.

Mists, Storms, short Victuals, adverse Winds,
  And once the Natives wise Division,
Defeated *Charles* his best designs,
  Till he became his Foes Derision.
But he had swing'd the *Dutch* at *Chatham*,
Had he had Ships but to come at 'em. . . .

If of all Christian Blood the guilt
  Cry loud for Vengeance unto Heaven,
That Sea by treacherous *Lewis* spilt
  Can never be by God forgiven.

Worse Scourge unto his Subjects, Lord,
Than Pest'lence, Famine, Fire or Sword.

That false rapacious Wolf of *France*,
The Scourge of *Europe*, and its Curse,
Who at his Subject's cry does dance,
And studies how to make them worse.
To say such Kings, Lord, rule by thee,
Were most prodigious Blasphemy.'

Such know no Laws but their own Lust,
Their Subjects Substance, and their Blood,
They count it Tribute due and just,
Still spent and spilt for Subjects good.
If such Kings are by God appointed,
The Devil may be the Lord's Anointed.

*Epigram on Charles II.*

HERE lies our Sovereign Lord the King,
Whose word no man relies on,
Who never said a foolish thing,
Nor ever did a wise one.

## SAMUEL BUTLER [1612-1680].

*From 'Hudibras'* [1662-1678]. *Part I., Canto I.*

WHEN civil fury first grew high,
And men fell out, they knew not why;
When hard words, jealousies, and fears,
Set folks together by the ears,

And made them fight, like mad or drunk,
For Dame Religion, as for punk;
Whose honesty they all durst swear for,
Though not a man of them knew wherefore:
When Gospel-Trumpeter, surrounded
With long-eared rout, to battle sounded
And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic
Was beat with fist instead of a stick;
Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling,
And out he rode a colonelling.

* * * * *

He was in logic a great critic,
Profoundly skilled in analytic;
He could distinguish, and divide
A hair 'twixt south, and south-west side;
On either which he would dispute,
Confute, change hands, and still confute;
He'd undertake to prove, by force
Of argument, a man's no horse;
He'd prove a buzzard is no fowl,
And that a lord may be an owl,
A calf an alderman, a goose a justice,
And rooks Committee-men and Trustees.
He'd run in debt by disputation,
And pay with ratiocination.
All this by syllogism, true
In mood and figure, he would do.
For rhetoric, he could not ope
His mouth, but out there flew a trope;
And when he happened to break off
I' th' middle of his speech, or cough,
H' had hard words ready to show why,
And tell what rules he did it by;
Else, when with greatest art he spoke,
You'd think he talked like other folk.
For all a rhetorician's rules
Teach nothing but to name his tools. . . .

In mathematics he was greater
Than Tycho Brahe, or Erra Pater:
For he, by geometric scale,
Could take the size of pots of ale;
Resolve, by sines and tangents straight,
If bread or butter wanted weight;
And wisely tell, what hour o' th' day
The clock does strike, by algebra.
Beside, he was a shrewd philosopher,
And had read every text and gloss over;
Whate'er the crabbed'st author hath,
He understood b' implicit faith:
Whatever sceptic could inquire for,
For ev'ry why he had a wherefore;
Knew more than forty of them do,
As far as words and terms could go.
All which he understood by rote,
And, as occasion served, would quote;
No matter whether right or wrong,
They might be either said or sung.
His notions fitted things so well,
That which was which he could not tell;
But oftentimes mistook the one
For th' other, as great clerks have done. . . .
He could raise scruples dark and nice,
And after solve 'em in a trice;
As if Divinity had catched
The itch on purpose to be scratched;
Or, like a mountebank, did wound
And stab herself with doubts profound,
Only to show with how small pain
The sores of Faith are cured again;
Although by woful proof we find
They always leave a scar behind. . . .
For his Religion, it was fit
To match his learning and his wit;
'Twas Presbyterian, true blue;

For he was of that stubborn crew
Of errant saints, whom all men grant
To be the true Church Militant;
Such as do build their faith upon
The holy text of pike and gun;
Decide all controversies by
Infallible artillery;
And prove their doctrine orthodox
By apostolic blows and knocks;
Call fire, and sword, and desolation,
A godly, thorough Reformation,
Which always must be carried on,
And, still be doing, never done;
As if Religion were intended
For nothing else but to be mended.
A sect, whose chief devotion lies
In odd perverse antipathies;
In falling out with that or this,
And finding somewhat still amiss;
More peevish, cross, or splenetic,
Than dog distract or monkey sick.
That with more care keep holy-day
The wrong, than others the right way;
Compound for sins they are inclined to,
By damning those they have no mind to;
Still so perverse and opposite,
As if they worshipped God for spite.
The self-same thing they will abhor
One way, and long another for.
Free-will they one way disavow,
Another, nothing else allow.
All piety consists therein
In them, in other men all sin.
Rather than fail, they will defy
That which they love most tenderly;
Quarrel with minced-pies, and disparage
Their best and dearest friend—plum-porridge;

Fat pig and goose itself oppose,
And blaspheme custard through the nose. . . .
  Thus clad and fortified, Sir Knight,
From peaceful home set forth to fight.
But first, with nimble, active force,
He got on th' outside of his horse:
For having but one stirrup tied
T' his saddle on the further side,
It was so short, h' had much ado
To reach it with his desperate toe.
But after many strains and heaves,
He got up to the saddle-eaves,
From whence he vaulted into th' seat,
With so much vigour, strength, and heat,
That he had almost tumbled over
With his own weight, but did recover,
By laying hold on tail and mane,
Which oft he used instead of rein. . . .
  A Squire he had, whose name was Ralph,
That in th' adventure went his half,
Though writers, for more stately tone,
Do call him Ralpho, 'tis all one;
And when we can, with metre safe,
We'll call him so, if not, plain Ralph;
For rhyme the rudder is of verses,
With which, like ships, they steer their courses.
An equal stock of wit and valour
He had laid in; by birth a tailor. . . .
His knowledge was not far behind
The knight's, but of another kind,
And he another way came by 't;
Some call it Gifts, and some New-light;
A liberal art that costs no pains
Of study, industry, or brains.
His wits were sent him for a token,
But in the carriage cracked and broken;

Like commendation nine-pence crooked
With—To and from my love—it looked.
He ne'er considered it, as loth
To look a gift-horse in the mouth;
And very wisely would lay forth
No more upon it than 'twas worth;
But as he got it freely, so
He spent it frank and freely too:
For saints themselves will sometimes be,
Of gifts that cost them nothing, free.
By means of this, with hem and cough,
Prolongers to enlighten snuff,
He could deep mysteries unriddle,
As easily as thread a needle:
For as of vagabonds we say,
That they are ne'er beside their way:
Whate'er men speak by this new light,
Still they are sure to be i' th' right.
'Tis a dark-lantern of the spirit,
Which none can see but those that bear it;
A light that falls down from on high,
For spiritual trades to cozen by;
An *ignis fatuus*, that bewitches,
And leads men into pools and ditches,
To make them dip themselves, and sound
For Christendom in dirty pond;
To dive, like wild-fowl, for salvation,
And fish to catch regeneration.
This light inspires, and plays upon
The nose of saint, like bag-pipe drone,
And speaks, through hollow empty soul,
As through a trunk, or whispering hole,
Such language as no mortal ear
But spirit'al eaves-droppers can hear.
So Phœbus, or some friendly muse,
Into small poets song infuse;

Which they at second-hand rehearse,
Through reed or bagpipe, verse for verse.

* * * * *

Thou that with ale or viler liquors
Didst inspire Withers, Prynne, and Vickars,
And force them, though it was in spite
Of Nature, and their stars, to write;
Who, as we find in sullen writs
And cross-grained works of modern wits,
With vanity, opinion, want,
The wonder of the ignorant,
The praises of the author, penned
By himself, or wit-insuring friend;
The itch of picture in the front,
With bays, and wicked rhyme upon 't,
All that is left o' th' forked hill
To make men scribble without skill;
Canst make a poet, spite of fate,
And teach all people to translate,
Though out of languages, in which
They understand no part of speech;
Assist me but this once, I'mplore,
And I shall trouble thee no more.

*From Canto II.*

For if bear-baiting we allow,
What good can reformation do?
The blood and treasure that's laid out
Is thrown away, and goes for nought.
Are these the fruits o' th' protestation,
The prototype of reformation,
Which all the saints, and some, since martyrs,
Wore in their hats like wedding garters,
When 'twas resolvèd by their house

Six members' quarrel to espouse?
Did they for this draw down the rabble,
With zeal, and noises formidable;
And make all cries about the town
Join throats to cry the bishops down?
Who having round begirt the palace,
As once a month they do the gallows,
As members gave the sign about,
Set up their throats with hideous shout.
When tinkers bawled aloud to settle
Church-discipline, for patching kettle,
No sow-gelder did blow his horn
To geld a cat, but cried Reform;
The oyster-women locked their fish up,
And trudged away to cry, No Bishop;
The mouse-trap men laid save-alls by
And 'gainst ev'l counsellors did cry;
Botchers left old clothes in the lurch,
And fell to turn and patch the church;
Some cried The Covenant, instead
Of pudding-pies and ginger-bread;
And some for brooms, old boots, and shoes,
Bawled out to purge the Commons house;
Instead of kitchen-stuff, some cry
A gospel-preaching ministry;
And some for old suits, coats, or cloak,
No Surplices nor Service-book;
A strange harmonious inclination
Of all degrees to reformation.
And is this all? Is this the end
To which these carr'ings on did tend? . . .
So say the wicked—and will you
Make that sarcasmus scandal true,
By running after dogs and bears,
Beasts more unclean than calves or steers?
Have powerful preachers plied their tongues,
And laid themselves out, and their lungs;

Used all means, both direct and sin'ster,
I' th' pow'r of gospel-preaching min'ster?
Have they invented tones, to win
The women, and make them draw in
The men, as Indians with a female
Tame elephant inveigle the male?
Have they told Prov'dence what it must do,
Whom to avoid, and whom to trust to;
Discovered th' Enemy's design,
And which way best to countermine;
Prescribed what ways he hath to work,
Or it will ne'er advance the kirk?
Told it the news o' th' last express,
And after good or bad success
Made prayers, not so like petitions,
As overtures and propositions,
Such as the army did present
To their creator, the parliament;
In which they freely will confess,
They will not, cannot acquiesce,
Unless the work be carried on
In the same way they have begun,
By setting church and common-weal
All on a flame, bright as their zeal,
On which the saints were all a-gog,
And all this for a bear and dog?

*From Part II., Canto I.*

'I GRANT,' quoth he, 'wealth is a great
Provocative to amorous heat:
It is all philtres and high diet
That makes love rampant, and to fly out:
'Tis beauty always in the flower,
That buds and blossoms at fourscore:

'Tis that by which the sun and moon,
At their own weapons, are out-done:
That makes knights-errant fall in trances,
And lay about 'em in romances.
'Tis virtue, wit, and worth, and all
That men divine and sacred call:
For what is worth in any thing,
But so much money as 'twill bring?'

*From Part II., Canto II.*

'Tis strange how some men's tempers suit,
Like bet and brandy, with dispute,
That for their own opinions stand fast,
Only to have them clawed and canvast;
That keep their consciences in cases,
As fiddlers do their crowds and bases,
Ne'er to be used, but when they're bent
To play a fit for argument;
Make true and false, unjust and just,
Of no use but to be discussed;
Dispute and set a paradox,
Like a strait boot, upon the stocks,
And stretch it more unmercifully
Than Helmont, Montaigne, White, or Tully.
So th' ancient Stoics, in their porch,
With fierce dispute maintained their church,
Beat out their brains in fight and study,
To prove that virtue is a body:
That *bonum* is an animal,
Made good with stout polemic brawl;
In which some hundreds on the place
Were slain outright, and many a face
Retrenched of nose, and eyes, and beard,
To maintain what their sect averred. . . .

'Why should not conscience have vacation
As well as other courts o' th' nation?
Have equal power to adjourn,
Appoint appearance and return?
And make as nice distinctions serve
To split a case, as those that carve,
Invoking cuckolds' names, hit joints?
Why should not tricks as slight, do points?
Is not th' high-court of justice sworn
To judge that law that serves their turn?
Make their own jealousies high-treason,
And fix them whomso'er they please on?
Cannot the learned counsel there
Make laws in any shape appear?
Mould 'em as witches do their clay,
When they make pictures to destroy?
And vex them into any form
That fits their purpose to do harm?
Rack 'em until they do confess,
Impeach of treason whom they please,
And most perfidiously condemn
Those that engaged their lives for them?
And yet do nothing in their own sense,
But what they ought by oath and conscience.
Can they not juggle, and with slight
Conveyance play with wrong and right;
And sell their blasts of wind as dear,
As Lapland witches bottled air?
Will not fear, favour, bribe, and grudge,
The same case several ways adjudge?
As seamen with the self-same gale
Will several different courses sail;
As when the sea breaks o'er its bounds,
And overflows the level grounds,
Those banks and dams, that, like a screen,
Did keep it out, now keep it in;
So when tyrannical usurpation

Invades the freedom of a nation,
The laws o' th' land, that were intended
To keep it out, are made defend it.
Does not in chancery every man swear
What makes best for him in his answer?
Is not the winding up of witnesses
And nicking more than half the business?
For witnesses, like watches, go
Just as they're set, too fast or slow;
And where in conscience they're strait-laced,
'Tis ten to one that side is cast.
Do not your juries give their verdict
As if they felt the cause, not heard it?
And as they please, make matter o' fact
Run all on one side, as they're packed?
Nature has made man's breast no windores,
To publish what he does within doors;
Nor what dark secrets there inhabit,
Unless his own rash folly blab it.
If oaths can do a man no good
In his own business, why they should
In other matters do him hurt
I think there's little reason for 't.
He that imposes an oath makes it,
Not he that for convenience takes it:
Then how can any man be said
To break an oath he never made?
These reasons may perhaps look oddly
To th' wicked, though they evince the godly;
But if they will not serve to clear
My honour, I am ne'er the near.
Honour is like that glassy bubble
That finds philosophers such trouble;
Whose least part cracked, the whole does fly,
And wits are cracked to find out why!'
  Quoth Ralpho, 'Honour's but a word
To swear by only, in a lord:

In other men 'tis but a huff
To vapour with, instead of proof:
That, like a wen, looks big and swells,
Insenseless, and just nothing else.'

*From Part III., Canto I.*

WHILE thus the lady talked, the knight
Turned th' outside of his eyes to white,
As men of inward light are wont
To turn their optics in upon 't. . . .
Quoth she, 'There are no bargains driven,
Nor marriages clapped up in heaven;
And that's the reason, as some guess,
There is no heaven in marriages—
Two things that naturally press
Too narrowly, to be at ease.
Their business there is only love,
Which marriage is not like t' improve.
Love, that's too gen'rous t'abide
To be against its nature tied:
For where 'tis of itself inclined,
It breaks loose when it is confined,
And, like the soul, its harbourer,
Debarred the freedom of the air,
Disdains against its will to stay,
But struggles out, and flies away,
And therefore never can comply
T' endure the matrimonial tie,
That binds the female and the male,
Where the one is but the other's bail—
Like Roman gaolers, when they slept
Chained to the prisoners they kept;
Of which the true and faithfull'st lover
Gives best security to suffer.

Marriage is but a beast, some say,
That carries double in foul way,
And therefore 'tis not to b' admired,
It should so suddenly be tired;
A bargain at a venture made
Between two partners in a trade,
For what's inferred by t'have and t'hold,
But something past away, and sold?
That, as it makes but one of two,
Reduces all things else as low,
And at the best is but a mart
Between the one and th' other part,
That on the marriage-day is paid,
Or hour of death, the bet is laid.

*From the 'Satire Upon the Weakness and Misery of Man.'*

Our pains are real things, and all
Our pleasures but fantastical;
Diseases of their own accord,
But cures come difficult and hard.
Our noblest piles and stateliest rooms
Are but outhouses to our tombs;
Cities, though e'er so great and brave,
But mere warehouses to the grave.
Our bravery's but a vain disguise
To hide us from the world's dull eyes,
The remedy of a defect
With which our nakedness is deckt;
Yet makes us swell with pride, and boast
As if we'd gain'd by being lost.

## JOHN OLDHAM [1653-1683].

### *From Satire II. upon the Jesuits* [1679].

THESE are the Janizaries of the Cause,
The Life-Guard of the Roman Sultan, chose
To break the Force of Huguenots and Foes.
The Churche's Hawkers in Divinity,
Who, 'stead of Lace and Ribbons, Doctrine cry:
Rome's Strollers, who survey each Continent,
Its Trinkets and Commodities do vent,
Export the Gospel, like mere Ware for Sale,
And truck'd for Indigo and Cochineal,
As the known Factors here, the Brethren, once
Swopt Christ about for Bodkins, Rings, and Spoons.

* * * * *

It pitied holy Mother Church to see
A world so drown'd in gross Idolatry;
It griev'd to see such goodly Nations hold
Bad Errors and unpardonable gold.
Strange, what a fervent Zeal can Coin infuse—
What Charity Pieces of Eight[1] produce!
So you were chosen the fittest to reclaim
The Pagan World, and giv't a Christian Name,
And great was the Success; whole Myriads stood
At Font, and were baptiz'd in their own Blood.
Millions of Souls were hurl'd from hence to burn
Before their Time, be damn'd before their Turn.
Yet these were in Compassion sent to Hell,
The rest reserv'd in Spite, and worse to feel,
Compell'd, instead of Fiends, to worship you,
The more inhuman Devils of the two.
Rare way, and Method of Conversion this,
To make your Votaries your Sacrifice.
If to destroy be Reformation thought,

[1] Dollars.

A Plague as well might the good Work have wrought.
Now see we why your Founder, weary grown,
Would lay his former trade of Killing down;
He found 'twas dull, he found a Crown would be
A fitter Case and Badge of Cruelty.
Each snivling Hero Seas of Blood can spill,
When Wrongs provoke, and Honour bids him Kill.
Give me your through-pac'd Rogue, who scorns to be
Prompted by poor Revenge, or Injury,
But does it of true inbred Cruelty;
Your cool and sober Murderer, who prays
And stabs at the same time, who one hand has
Stretch'd up to Heaven, t'other to make the pass.
So the late Saints of blessed Memory,
Cut Throats in godly pure Sincerity,
And with uplifted Hands and Eyes devout,
Said Grace and carv'd a slaughter'd Monarch out.

*From Satire III. upon the Jesuits.*

NEXT for Religion, learn what's fit to take,
How small a Dram does the just Compound make,
As much as is by the crafty Statesmen worn
For Fashion only, or to serve a Turn:
To bigot Fools its idle Practice leave,
Think it enough the empty Form to have;
The outward Show is seemly, cheap, and light,
The Substance cumbersome, of Cost, and Weight:
The Rabble judge by what appears to th' Eye,
None, or but few, the Thoughts within descry,
Make't you an Engine to ambitious Pow'r
To stalk behind, and hit your Mark more sure.
A Cloak to cover well-hid Knavery,
Like it, when us'd, to be with Ease thrown by.

A shifting Card, by which your Course to steer,
And taught with every changing Wind to veer,
Let no nice, holy, conscientious Ass
Amongst your better Company find Place,
Me, and your whole Foundation to disgrace;
Let Truth be banish'd, ragged Virtue fly,
And poor, unprofitable Honesty;
Weak Idols, who their wretched Slaves betray:
To every Rook and every Knave a Prey.



*From Satire IV. upon the Jesuits.*

One undertakes by Scale of miles to tell
The Bounds, Dimensions, and Extent of Hell;
How far and wide th' Infernal Monarch reigns,
How many German Leagues his Realm contains;
Who are his Ministers, pretends to know,
And all their several Offices below;
How many Chaldrons he each Year expends
In Coals for roasting Huguenots and Fiends,
And with as much Exactness states the Case,
As if he 'ad been Surveyor of the Place.



*From 'A Satire addressed to a Friend that is about to leave the University.'*

Some think themselves exalted to the Sky,
If they light in some noble Family:
Diet, an Horse, and thirty Pounds a Year,
Besides th' Advantage of his Lordship's Ear,
The Credit of the Business and the State,
Are things, that in a Youngster's Sense, sound great.

Little th' unexperienc'd Wretch does know,
What Slavery he oft must undergo:
Who, tho' in silken Scarf and Cassock drest,
Wears but a gayer Livery at best;
When Dinner calls, the Implement must wait
With holy Words, to consecrate the Meat:
But hold it for a Favour seldom known,
If he be deign'd the Honour to sit down.
Soon as the Tarts appear, Sir Crape withdraw!
Those Dainties are not for a spiritual Maw:
Observe your Distance, and be sure to stand
Hard by the Cistern, with your Cap in Hand;
There for Diversion you may pick your Teeth,
Till the kind Voider[1] comes for your Relief:
For meer Board-wages, such their Freedom sell
Slaves to an Hour, and Vassals to a Bell:
And if th' Enjoyment of one Day be stole,
They are but Pris'ners out upon Parole:
Always the Marks of Slavery remain,
And they, tho' loose, still drag about their Chain.
And where's the mighty Prospect, after all,
A Chaplainship serv'd up, and seven Years Thrall?
The menial Thing, perhaps, for a Reward,
Is to some slender Benefice preferr'd,
With this Proviso bound, that he must wed
My Lady's antiquated Waiting-maid,
In Dressing only skill'd, and Marmalade.
Let others who such Meannesses can brook,
Strike Countenance to ev'ry great Man's Look:
Let those that have a Mind, turn Slaves to eat,
And live contented by another's Plate:
I rate my Freedom higher, nor will I
For Food and Rayment truck my Liberty.
But if I must to my last Shifts be put,
To fill a Bladder, and twelve Yards of Gut;
Rather with counterfeited wooden Leg,

[1] Basket.

And my right Arm ty'd up, I'll chuse to beg:
I'll rather chuse to starve at large, than be
The gawdiest Vassal to Dependency.
'T has ever been the Top of my Desires,
The utmost Height to which my Wish aspires,
That Heav'n would bless me with a small Estate,
Where I might find a close obscure Retreat;
There, free from Noise and all ambitious Ends,
Enjoy a few choice Books, and fewer Friends.
Lord of myself, accountable to none,
But to my Conscience, and my God alone:
There live unthought of, and unheard of die,
And grudge Mankind my very Memory.
And since the Blessing is (I find) too great
For me to wish for, and expect of Fate:
Yet maugre all the Spite of Destiny,
My Thoughts and Actions are, and shall be free.

## JOHN DRYDEN [1631-1700].

### *From the 'Satire on the Dutch'* [1662].

As needy gallants, in the scrivener's hands,
Court the rich knaves that gripe their mortgag'd lands;
The first fat buck of all the season's sent,
And keeper takes no fee in compliment;
The dotage of some Englishmen is such,
To fawn on those who ruin them, the Dutch.
They shall have all, rather than make a war
With those, who of the same religion are.
The Straits, the Guiney-trade, the herrings too;
Nay, to keep friendship, they shall pickle you.
Some are resolved not to find out the cheat,
But, cuckold-like, love them that do the feat.

What injuries soe'er upon us fall,
Yet still the same religion answers all.
Religion wheedled us to civil war,
Drew English blood, and Dutchmen's now would spare.
Be gull'd no longer; for you'll find it true,
They have no more religion, faith! than you.
Interest's the god they worship in their state,
And we, I take it, have not much of that.
Well monarchies may own religion's name,
But states are atheists in their very frame.
They share a sin; and such proportions fall,
That, like a stink, 'tis nothing to them all.
Think on their rapine, falsehood, cruelty,
And that what once they were, they still would be.
To one well born th' affront is worse and more,
When he's abus'd and baffled by a boor.
With an ill grace the Dutch their mischiefs do;
They've both ill nature and ill manners too.
Well may they boast themselves an ancient nation;
For they were bred ere manners were in fashion:
And their new commonwealth has set them free
Only from honour and civility.

*From 'An Essay on Satire'* [1669].

ROCHESTER I despise for want of wit,
Though thought to have a tail and cloven feet;
For while he mischief means to all mankind,
Himself alone the ill effects does find:
And so like witches justly suffers shame,
Whose harmless malice is so much the same.
False are his words, affected is his wit;
So often he does aim, so seldom hit;

To every face he cringes while he speaks,
But when the back is turn'd the head he breaks;
Mean in each action, lewd in every limb,
Manners themselves are mischievous in him:
A proof that chance alone makes every creature
A very Killigrew without good nature.
For what a Bessus has he always liv'd,
And his own kickings notably contriv'd?
For there's the folly that's still mix'd with fear,
Cowards more blows than any hero bear;
Of fighting sparks some may their pleasures say,
But 'tis a bolder thing to run away:
The world may well forgive him all his ill,
For every fault does prove his penance still:
Falsely he falls into some dangerous noose,
And then as meanly labours to get loose;
A life so infamous is better quitting,
Spent in base injury and low submitting.
I'd like to have left out his poetry;
Forgot by all almost as well as me.
Sometimes he has some humour, never wit,
And if it rarely, very rarely, hit,
'Tis under so much nasty rubbish laid,
To find it out's the cinder woman's trade;
Who for the wretched remnants of a fire
Must toil all day in ashes and in mire.
So lewdly dull his idle works appear,
The wretched texts deserve no comment here;
Where one poor thought sometimes left all alone,
For a whole page of dulness must atone.[1]

[1] The publication of this satire probably occasioned the beating of Dryden in Rose Street, Covent Garden, by ruffians hired by Rochester. Mulgrave says that Dryden 'was praised and beaten for another's rhymes.'

*From 'Absalom and Achitophel'* [1681],[1] *Part I.*

So several factions from this first ferment
Work up to foam, and threat the government.[2]
Some by their friends, more by themselves thought wise,
Oppos'd the power to which they could not rise.
Some had in courts been great, and thrown from thence,
Like fiends were harden'd in impenitence.
Some by their monarch's fatal mercy, grown
From pardon'd rebels kinsmen to the throne,
Were raised in power and public office high;
Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men could tie.
Of these the false Achitophel was first;
A name to all succeeding ages curst:
For close designs, and crooked councils fit;
Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;
Restless, unfix'd in principles and place;
In power unpleas'd, impatient of disgrace;
A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
Fretted the pigmy-body to decay,
And o'er-inform'd the tenement of clay.
A daring pilot in extremity;
Pleas'd with the danger, when the waves went high
He sought the storms: but for a calm unfit,
Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.
Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
Else why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?

[1] A satire, under Biblical names, upon the intrigues of Shaftesbury (Achitophel) and Monmouth (Absalom) against the Catholic and Court interest.

[2] The Popish Plot, as disclosed by the infamous Titus Oates.

Punish a body which he could not please;
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
And all to leave what with his toil he won,
To that unfeather'd two-legg'd thing, a son;
Got, while his soul did huddled notions try;
And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.
In friendship false, implacable in hate;
Resolv'd to ruin or to rule the State.
To compass this the triple bond he broke;[1]
The pillars of the public safety shook;
And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke:
Then seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
Usurp'd a patriot's all-atoning name.
So easy still it proves in factious times,
With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
Where none can sin against the people's will,
Where crowds can wink, and no offence be known,
Since in another's guilt they find their own!
Yet fame deserv'd no enemy can grudge;
The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
In Israel's court ne'er sat an Abethdin
With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean,
Unbrib'd, unsought, the wretched to redress.
Swift of dispatch, and easy of access,
Oh! had he been content to serve the crown,
With virtues only proper to the gown;
Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
From cockle, that oppress'd the noble seed;
David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
And heaven had wanted one immortal song.

* * * * *

To further this,[2] Achitophel unites
The malcontents of all the Israelites:
Whose differing parties he could wisely join,
For several ends, to serve the same design.

[1] Triple Alliance of 1667. [2] The plot.

The best, and of the princes some were such,
Who thought the power of monarchy too much;
Mistaken men, and patriots in their hearts;
Not wicked, but seduc'd by impious arts.
By these the springs of property were bent,
And wound so high, they cracked the government.
The next for interest sought to embroil the state,
To sell their duty at a dearer rate;
And make their Jewish markets of the throne;
Pretending public good to serve their own.
Others thought kings a useless heavy load,
Who cost too much, and did too little good.
These were for laying honest David by,
On principles of pure good husbandry.
With them join'd all the haranguers of the throng,
That thought to get preferment by the tongue.
Who follow next a double danger bring,
Not only hating David,[1] but the king;
The Solymæan rout,[2] well vers'd of old,
In godly faction, and in treason bold;
Cowering and quaking at a conqueror's sword;
But lofty to a lawful prince restored;
Saw with disdain an Ethnic[3] plot begun,
And scorn'd the Jebusites[4] to be outdone.
Hot Levites headed these; who pull'd before
From the ark, which in the Judges' day they bore,
Resum'd their cant, and with a zealous cry
Pursued their old beloved Theocracy:
Where Sanhedrin and priest enslav'd the nation,
And justified their spoils by inspiration:
For who so fit to reign as Aaron's race,
If once dominion they could found in grace!
These led the pack; though not of surest scent,
Yet deepest mouth'd against the government.
A numerous host of dreaming saints succeed,

[1] Charles II.
[2] London rebels.
[3] Popish plot.
[4] Papists.

Of the true old enthusiastic breed:
'Gainst form and order they their power employ,
Nothing to build, and all things to destroy.
But far more numerous was the herd of such,
Who think too little, and who talk too much.
These out of mere instinct, they knew not why,
Ador'd their fathers' God and property;
And by the same blind benefit of fate
The devil and the Jebusite did hate:
Born to be sav'd, even in their own despite,
Because they could not help believing right.
Such were the tools: but a whole Hydra more
Remains of sprouting heads too long to score.
Some of their chiefs were princes of the land;
In the first rank of these did Zimri[1] stand;
A man so various, that he seem'd to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
Was every thing by starts, and nothing long;
But, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon;
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ,
With something new to wish, or to enjoy!
Railing and praising were his usual themes;
And both, to show his judgment, in extremes:
So over violent, or over civil,
That every man with him was God or Devil.
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art;
Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
Beggar'd by fools, whom still he found too late;
He had his jest, and they had his estate.
He laugh'd himself from court; then sought relief
By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief:
For, spite of him, the weight of business fell

[1] Buckingham.

On Absalom and wise Achitophel;
Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,
He left not faction, but of that was left.

* * * * *

Shimei,[1] whose youth did early promise bring
Of zeal to God, and hatred to his king,
Did wisely from expensive sins refrain,
And never broke the sabbath, but for gain;
Nor was he ever known an oath to vent,
Or curse, unless against the government.
Thus reaping wealth, by the most ready way
Among the Jews,[2] which was to cheat and pray;
The city, to reward his pious hate
Against his master, chose him magistrate.
His hand a vare of justice did uphold;
His neck was loaded with a chain of gold.
During his office treason was no crime;
The sons of Belial had a glorious time:
For Shimei, though not prodigal of pelf,
Yet lov'd his wicked neighbour as himself.
When two or three were gather'd to declaim
Against the monarch of Jerusalem,
Shimei was always in the midst of them:
And if they curs'd the king when he was by,
Would rather curse than break good company.
If any durst his factious friends accuse,
He pack'd a jury of dissenting Jews;
Whose fellow-feeling in the godly cause
Would free the suffering saint from human laws.
For laws are only made to punish those
Who serve the king, and to protect his foes.
If any leisure time he had from power,
(Because 'tis sin to misemploy an hour),
His business was, by writing to persuade,
That kings were useless, and a clog to trade;

[1] Slingsby Bethel, a Sheriff of the City of London.
[2] English.

And that his noble style he might refine,
No Rechabite more shunn'd the fumes of wine.
Chaste were his cellars, and his shrival board
The grossness of a city feast abhorr'd:
His cooks with long disuse their trade forgot;
Cool was his kitchen, though his brains were hot.
Such frugal virtue malice may accuse;
But sure 'twas necessary to the Jews:
For towns, once burnt, such magistrates require
As dare not tempt God's providence by fire.
With spiritual food he fed his servants well,
But free from flesh that made the Jews rebel:
And Moses' Laws he held in more account,
For forty days of fasting in the mount.
To speak the rest who better are forgot
Would tire a well-breath'd witness of the plot.
Yet, Corah,[1] thou shalt from oblivion pass;
Erect thyself, thou monumental brass,
High as the serpent of thy metal made,
While nations stand secure beneath thy shade.
What, though his birth was base, yet comets rise
From earthly vapours, ere they shine in skies.
Prodigious actions may as well be done
By weavers' issue, as by prince's son.
This arch-attestor for the public good
By that one deed ennobles all his blood.
Who ever ask'd the witness's high race,
Whose oath with martyrdom did Stephen grace?
Ours was a Levite, and as times went then,
His tribe were God Almighty's gentlemen.
Sunk were his eyes, his voice was harsh and loud,
Sure signs he neither choleric was nor proud:
His long chin prov'd his wit; his saint-like grace
A church vermilion, and a Moses' face.
His memory, miraculously great,
Could plots, exceeding man's belief, repeat;

[1] Dr. Oates.