The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser, Volume 5 eBook

The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser, Volume 5 by Edmund Spenser

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Page 1

MISCELLANIES.

COMPLAINTS.

Containing sundrie small poemes of the worlds vanitie:

Whereof the next page maketh mention.

By ed. SP.

* * * * *

London:

Imprinted for William PONSONBIE, *dwelling in Paules churchyard at the signe of the Bishops head*.

1591.

* * * * *

A *note of the sundrie poemes contained in this volume*.

1. The Ruines of Time.
2. The Teares of the Muses.
3. Virgils Gnat.
4. Prosopopoia, or Mother Hubberds Tale.
5. The Ruines of Rome: by Bellay.
6. Muiopotmos, or The Tale of the Butterflie.
7. Visions of the Worlds Vanitie.
8. Bellayes Visions.
9. Petrarches Visions.

* * * * *

The Printer to the gentle Reader.

Since my late setting foorth of the Faerie Queene, finding that it hath found a favourable passage amongst you, I have sithence endevoured by all good meanes, (for the better encrease and accomplishment of your delights,) to get into my handes such smale poemes of the same Authors as I heard were disperst abroad in sundrie hands, and not easie to bee come by by himselfe; some of them having bene diverslie imbeziled and purloyned from him, since his departure over sea. Of the which I have by good meanes gathered togeather these fewe parcels present, which I have caused to bee imprinted altogeather, for that they al seeme to containe like matter of argument in them, being all complaints and meditations of the worlds vanitie, verie grave and profitable. To which effect I understand that he besides wrote sundrie others, namelie: *Ecclesiastes* and *Canticum Canticorum* translated, *A Senights Slumber, The Hell of Lovers, his Purgatorie*, being all dedicated to ladies, so as it may seeme he ment them all to one volume: besides some other pamphlets looselie scattered abroad; as *The Dying Pellican, The Howers of the Lord, The Sacrifice of a Sinner, The Seven Psalmes*, &c., which, when I can either by himselfe or otherwise attaine too, I meane likewise for your favour sake to set foorth. In the meane time, praying you gentlie to accept of these, and graciouslie to entertaine the new Poet*, I take leave.

[* Spenser had printed nothing with his name before the Faerie Queene.—Ponsonby's account of the way in which this volume was collected is rather loose. The Ruins of Time and The Tears of the Muses were certainly written shortly before they were published, and there can be equally little doubt that Mother Hubberd's Tale was retouched about the same time. C.]

Page 2

THE RUINES OF TIME.

DEDICATED

To the right noble and beautifull ladie,

The La: *Marie*,

Countesse of PEMEBROOKE.

Most honourable and bountifull Ladie, there bee long sithens deepe sowed in my brest the seede of most entire love and humble affection unto that most brave knight, your noble brother deceased; which, taking roote, began in his life time somewhat to bud forth, and to shew themselves to him, as then in the weakenes of their first spring; and would in their riper strength (had it pleased High God till then to drawe out his daies) spired forth fruit of more perfection. But since God hath disdeigned the world of that most noble spirit which was the hope of all learned men, and the patron of my young Muses, togeather with him both their hope of anie further fruit was cut off, and also the tender delight of those their first blossoms nipped and quite dead. Yet, sithens my late cumming into England, some frends of mine, which might much prevaile with me, and indeede commaund me, knowing with howe straight bandes of duetie I was tied to him, as also bound unto that noble house, of which the chiefs hope then rested in him, have sought to revive them by upbraiding me, for that I have not shewed anie thankefull remembrance towards him or any of them, but suffer their names to sleep in silence and forgetfulnesse. Whome chieflie to satisfie, or els to avoide that fowle blot of unthankefulnesse, I have conceived this small Poeme, intituled by a generall name of *The Worlds Ruines;* yet speciallie intended to the renowming of that noble race from which both you and he sprong, and to the eternizing of some of the chiefe of them late deceased. The which I dedicate unto your La. as whome it most speciallie concerneth, and to whome I acknowledge my selfe bounden by manie singular favours and great graces. I pray for your honourable happinesse, and so humblie kisse your handes.

Your Ladiships ever

humblie at commaund,

E.S.

* * * * *

THE RUINES OF TIME.

It chaunced me on* day beside the shore
Of silver streaming Thamesis to bee,
Nigh where the goodly Verlame stood of yore,
Of which there now remaines no memorie,
Nor anie little moniment to see,
By which the travailer that fares that way
This once was she may warned be to say.
[* *On*, one.]

There, on the other side, I did behold
A Woman sitting sorrowfullie wailing,
Rending her yeolow locks, like wyrie golde
About her shoulders careleslie downe trailing,
And streames of teares from her faire eyes forth railing*:
In her right hand a broken rod she held,
Which towards heaven shee seemd on high to weld,
[* *Railing*, flowing.]

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Whether she were one of that rivers nymphes,
Which did the losse of some dere Love lament,
I doubt; or one of those three fatall impes
Which draw the dayes of men forth in extent;
Or th'auncient genius of that citie brent*;
But, seeing her so piteouslie perplexed,
I, to her calling, askt what her so vexed.
[* *Brent*, burnt.]

"Ah! what delight," quoth she, "in earthlie thing,
Or comfort can I, wretched creature, have?
Whose happines the heavens envying,
From highest staire to lowest step me drave,
And have in mine owne bowels made my grave,
That of all nations now I am forlorne*,
The worlds sad spectacle, and Fortunes scorne."
[* *Forlorne*, forsaken.]

Much was I mooved at her piteous plaint,
And felt my heart nigh riven in my brest
With tender ruth to see her sore constraint;
That, shedding teares, a while I still did rest,
And after did her name of her request.
"Name have I none," quoth she, "nor anie being,
Bereft of both by Fates uniust decreeing.

"I was that citie which the garland wore
Of Britaines pride, delivered unto me
By Romane victors which it wonne of yore;
Though nought at all but ruines now I bee,
And lye in mine owne ashes, as ye see,
Verlame I was; what bootes it that I was,
Sith now I am but weedes and wastfull gras?

"O vaine worlds glorie, and unstedfast state
Of all that lives on face of sinfull earth!
Which, from their first untill their utmost date,
Tast no one hower of happines or merth;
But like as at the ingate* of their berth
They crying creep out of their mothers woomb,
So wailing backe go to their wofull toomb.
[* *Ingate*, entrance, beginning.]

“Why then dooth flesh, a bubble-glas of breath,
Hunt after honour and advauncement vaine,
And reare a trophee for devouring death
With so great labour and long-lasting paine,
As if his daies for ever should remaine?
Sith all that in this world is great or gaie
Doth as a vapour vanish and decaie.

“Looke backe, who list, unto the former ages,
And call to count what is of them become.
Where be those learned wits and antique sages,
Which of all wisedome knew the perfect somme?
Where those great warriors, which did overcome
The world with conquest of their might and maine,
And made one meare* of th’earth and of their raine?
[* *Meare*, boundary.]

“What nowe is of th’Assyrian Lyonesse,
Of whome no footing now on earth appeares?
What of the Persian Beares outragiousnesse,
Whose memorie is quite worne out with yeares?
Who of the Grecian Libbard* now ought heares,
That over-ran the East with greedie powre,
And left his whelps their kingdomes to devoure?
[* *Libbard*, leopard]

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“And where is that same great seven-headded beast,
That made all nations vassals of her pride,
To fall before her feete at her beheast,
And in the necke of all the world did ride?
Where doth she all that wondrous welth nowe hide?
With her own weight downe pressed now shee lies,
And by her heaps her hugenesse testifies.

“O Rome, thy ruine I lament and rue,
And in thy fall my fatall overthrowe,
That whilom was, whilst heavens with equall vewe
Deignd to behold me and their gifts bestowe,
The picture of thy pride in pompous shew:
And of the whole world as thou wast the empresse,
So I of this small Northerne world was princesse.

“To tell the beawtie of my buildings fayre,
Adornd with purest golde and precious stone,
To tell my riches and endowments rare,
That by my foes are now all spent and gone,
To tell my forces, matchable to none,
Were but lost labour that few would beleeve,
And with rehearsing would me more agreeve.

“High towers, faire temples, goodly theaters,
Strong walls, rich porches, princelie pallaces,
Large streetes, brave houses, sacred sepulchers,
Sure gates, sweete gardens, stately galleries
Wrought with faire pillours and fine imageries,—
All those, O pitie! now are turnd to dust,
And overgrowen with blacke oblivions rust.

“Theretoo, for warlike power and peoples store
In Britannie was none to match with mee,
That manie often did abie full sore:
Ne Troynovant*, though elder sister shee,
With my great forces might compared bee;
That stout Pendragon to his perill felt,
Who in a siege seaven yeres about me dwelt.
[* *Troynovant*, London]

“But long ere this, Bunduca, Britonnesse,
Her mightie hoast against my bulwarkes brought;
Bunduca! that victorious conqueresse,

That, lifting up her brave heroick thought
Bove womens weaknes, with the Romanes fought,
Fought, and in field against them thrice prevailed:
Yet was she foyld, when as she me assailed.

“And though at last by force I conquered were
Of hardie Saxons, and became their thrall,
Yet was I with much bloodshed bought full deere,
And prizde with slaughter of their generall,
The moniment of whose sad funerall,
For wonder of the world, long in me lasted,
But now to nought, through spoyle of time, is wasted.

“Wasted it is, as if it never were;
And all the rest that me so honord made,
And of the world admired ev’rie where,
Is turnd to smoake that doth to nothing fade;
And of that brightnes now appeares no shade,
But greislie shades, such as doo haunt in hell
With fearfull fiends that in deep darknes dwell.

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“Where my high steeples whilom usde to stand,
On which the lordly faulcon wont to towre,
There now is but an heap of lyme and sand
For the shriche-owle to build her balefull bowre:
And where the nightingale wont forth to powre
Her restles plaints, to comfort wakefull lovers,
There now haunt yelling mewes and whining plovers.

“And where the christall Thamis wont to slide
In silver channell downe along the lee,
About whose flowrie bankes on either side
A thousand nymphes, with mirthfull iollitee,
Were wont to play, from all annoyance free,
There now no rivers course is to be seene,
But moorish fennes, and marshes ever greene.

“Seemes that that gentle river, for great griefe
Of my mishaps which oft I to him plained,
Or for to shunne the horrible mischiefe
With which he saw my cruell foes me pained,
And his pure streames with guiltles blood oft stained,
From my unhappie neighborhood farre fled,
And his sweete waters away with him led.

“There also where the winged ships were seene
In liquid waves to cut their fomie waie,
And thousand fishers numbred to have been,
In that wide lake looking for plenteous praie
Of fish, which they with baits usde to betraie,
Is now no lake, nor anie fishers store,
Nor ever ship shall saile there anie more.

“They all are gone, and all with them is gone!
Ne ought to me remaines, but to lament
My long decay, which no man els doth mone,
And mourne my fall with dolefull dreriment:
Yet it is comfort in great languishment,
To be bemoned with compassion kinde,
And mitigates the anguish of the minde.

“But me no man bewaileth, but in game
Ne sheddeth teares from lamentable eie;
Nor anie lives that mentioneth my name
To be remembred of posteritie,

Save one, that maugre Fortunes iniurie,
And Times decay, and Envies cruell tort*,
Hath writ my record in true-seeming sort.
[* *Tort*, wrong]

“CAMBDEN! the nourice* of antiquitie,
And lanterne unto late succeding age
To see the light of simple veritie
Buried in ruines, through the great outrage
Of her owne people led with warlike rage,
CAMBDEN! though Time all moniments obscure,
Yet thy iust labours ever shall endure.
[* *Nourice*, nurse]

“But whie, unhappie wight! doo I thus crie,
And grieve that my remembrance quite is raced*
Out of the knowledge of posteritie,
And all my antique moniments defaced?
Sith I doo dailie see things highest placed,
So soone as Fates their vitall thred have shorne,
Forgotten quite as they were never borne
[* *Raced*, razed.]

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“It is not long, since these two eyes beheld
A mightie Prince*, of most renowmed race,
Whom England high in count of honour held,
And greatest ones did sue to game his grace;
Of greatest ones he, greatest in his place,
Sate in the bosom of his Soveraine,
And *Right and Loyall*** did his word maintaine.
[* I. e. the Earl of Leicester.]
[** Leicester’s motto.]

“I saw him die, I saw him die as one
Of the meane people, and brought foorth on beare;
I saw him die, and no man left to mone
His dolefull fate that late him loved deare;
Scarse anie left to close his eylids neare;
Scarse anie left upon his lips to laie
The sacred sod, or requiem to saie.

“O trustlesse state of miserable men,
That builde your blis on hope of earthly thing,
And vainly thinke your selves halfe happie then,
When painted faces with smooth flattering
Doo fawne on you, and your wide praises sing;
And, when the courting masker louteth* lowe,
Him true in heart and trustie to you trow!
[* *Louteth*, boweth.]

“All is but fained, and with oaker* dide,
That everie shower will wash and wipe away;
All things doo change that under heaven abide,
And after death all friendship doth decaie.
Therefore, what ever man bearst worldlie sway,
Living, on God and on thy selfe relie;
For, when thou diest, all shall with thee die.
[* *Oaker*, ochre, paint.]

“He now is dead, and all is with him dead,
Save what in heavens storehouse he uplaid:
His hope is faild, and come to passe his dread,
And evill men (now dead) his deeds upbraid:
Spite bites the dead, that living never baid.
He now is gone, the whiles the foxe is crept
Into the hole the which the badger swept.

“He now is dead, and all his glorie gone,
And all his greatnes vapoured to nought,
That as a glasse upon the water shone,
Which vanisht quite so soone as it was sought.
His name is worne alreadie out of thought,
Ne anie poet seekes him to revive;
Yet manie poets honourd him alive.

“Ne doth his Colin, carelesse Colin Cloute,
Care now his idle bagpipe up to raise,
Ne tell his sorrow to the listning rout
Of shepherd groomes, which wont his songs to praise:
Praise who so list, yet I will him dispraise,
Untill he quite* him of this guiltie blame.
Wake, shepheards boy, at length awake for shame!
[* *Quite*, acquit.]

“And who so els did goodnes by him game,
And who so els his bounteous minde did trie*,
Whether he shepheard be, or shepheards swaine,
(For manie did, which doo it now denie,)
Awake, and to his song a part applie:
And I, the whilest you mourne for his decease,
Will with my mourning plaints your plaint increase.
[* *Trie*, experience.]

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“He dyde, and after him his brother dyde,
His brother prince, his brother noble peere,
That whilste he lived was of none envyde,
And dead is now, as living, counted deare;
Deare unto all that true affection beare,
But unto thee most deare, O dearest Dame,
His noble spouse and paragon of fame.

“He, whilest he lived, happie was through thee,
And, being dead, is happie now much more;
Living, that lincked chaunst with thee to bee,
And dead, because him dead thou dost adore
As living, and thy lost deare love deplore.
So whilst that thou, faire flower of chastitie,
Dost live, by thee thy lord shall never die.

“Thy lord shall never die, the whiles this verse
Shall live, and surely it shall live for ever:
For ever it shall live, and shall rehearse
His worthie praise, and vertues dying never,
Though death his soule doo from his bodie sever:
And thou thy selfe herein shalt also live;
Such grace the heavens doo to my verses give.

“Ne shall his sister, ne thy father, die;
Thy father, that good earle of rare renowne,
And noble patrone of weake povertie;
Whose great good deeds, in countrey and in towne.
Have purchast him in heaven an happie crowne:
Where he now liveth in eternall blis,
And left his sonne t’ensue those steps of his.

“He, noble bud, his grandsires livelie hayre,
Under the shadow of thy countenaunce
Now ginnes to shoote up fast, and flourish fayre
In learned artes, and goodlie governaunce,
That him to highest honour shall advaunce.
Brave impe* of Bedford, grow apace in bountie,
And count of wisedome more than of thy countie!
  [* *Impe*, graft, scion.]

“Ne may I let thy husbands sister die,
That goodly ladie, sith she eke did spring
Out of this stocke and famous familie

Whose praises I to future age doo sing;
And foorth out of her happie womb did bring
The sacred brood of learning and all honour;
In whom the heavens powrde all their gifts upon her.

“Most gentle spirite breathed from above,
Out of the bosome of the Makers blis,
In whom all bountie and all vertuous love
Appeared in their native propertis,
And did enrich that noble breast of his
With treasure passing all this worldes worth,
Worthie of heaven it selfe, which brought it forth:

“His blessed spirite, full of power divine
And influence of all celestiall grace,
Loathing this sinfull earth and earthlie slime,
Fled backe too soonc unto his native place;
Too soone for all that did his love embrace,
Too soone for all this wretched world, whom he
Robd of all right and true nobilitie.

Page 8

“Yet, ere his happie soule to heaven went
Out of this fleshlie goale, he did devise
Unto his heavenlie Maker to present
His bodie, as a spotles sacrifise,
And chose that guiltie hands of enemies
Should powre forth th’offring of his guiltles blood:
So life exchanging for his countries good.

“O noble spirite, live there ever blessed,
The worlds late wonder, and the heavens new ioy;
Live ever there, and leave me here distressed
With mortall cares and cumbrous worlds anoy!
But, where thou dost that happines enioy,
Bid me, O bid me quicklie come to thee,
That happie there I maie thee alwaies see!

“Yet, whilest the Fates affoord me vitall breath,
I will it spend in speaking of thy praise,
And sing to thee, untill that timelie death
By heavens doome doo ende my earthlie daies:
Thereto doo thou my humble spirite raise,
And into me that sacred breath inspire,
Which thou there breathest perfect and entire.

“Then will I sing; but who can better sing
Than thine owne sister, peerles ladie bright,
Which to thee sings with deep harts sorrowing,
Sorrowing tempered with deare delight,
That her to heare I feele my feeble spright
Robbed of sense, and ravished with ioy;
O sad ioy, made of mourning and anoy!

“Yet will I sing; but who can better sing
Than thou thyselfe thine owne selfes valiance,
That, whilest thou livedst, madest the forrests ring,
And fields resownd, and flockes to leap and daunce,
And shepheards leave their lambs unto mischaunce,
To runne thy shrill Arcadian pipe to heare:
O happie were those dayes, thrice happie were!

“But now more happie thou, and wretched wee,
Which want the wonted sweetnes of thy voice,
Whiles thou now in Elisian fields so free,
With Orpheus, and with Linus, and the choice

Of all that ever did in rimes reioyce,
Conversest, and doost heare their heavenlie layes,
And they heare thine, and thine doo better praise.

“So there thou livest, singing evermore,
And here thou livest, being ever song
Of us, which living loved thee afore,
And now thee worship mongst that blessed throng
Of heavenlie poets and heroes strong.
So thou both here and there immortall art,
And everie where through excellent desart.

“But such as neither of themselves can sing,
Nor yet are sung of others for reward,
Die in obscure oblivion, as the thing
Which never was; ne ever with regard
Their names shall of the later age be heard,
But shall in rustic darknes ever lie,
Unles they mentiond be with infamie.

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“What booteth it to have been rich alive?
What to be great? what to be gracious?
When after death no token doth survive
Of former being in this mortall hous,
But sleepes in dust dead and inglorious,
Like beast, whose breath but in his nostrels is,
And hath no hope of happinesse or blis.

“How manie great ones may remembred be,
Which in their daies most famouslie did florish,
Of whome no word we heare, nor signe now see,
But as things wipt out with a sponge to perishe,
Because they living cared not to cherishe
No gentle wits, through pride or covetize,
Which might their names for ever memorize!

“Provide therefore, ye Princes, whilst ye live,
That of the Muses ye may friended bee,
Which unto men eternitie do give;
For they be daughters of Dame Memorie
And love, the father of Eternitie,
And do those men in golden thrones repose,
Whose merits they to glorifie do chose.

“The seven-fold yron gates of grislie Hell,
And horrid house of sad Proserpina,
They able are with power of mightie spell
To breake, and thence the soules to bring awaie
Out of dread darkenesse to eternall day,
And them immortall make which els would die
In foule forgetfulnesse, and nameles lie.

“So whilome raised they the puissant brood
Of golden-girt Alcmena, for great merite,
Out of the dust to which the Oetaean wood
Had him consum’d, and spent his vitall spirite,
To highest heaven, where now he doth inherite
All happinesse in Hebes silver bowre,
Chosen to be her dearest paramoure.

“So raisde they eke faire Ledaes warlick twinnes.
And interchanged life unto them lent,
That, when th’one dies, th’other then beginnes
To shew in heaven his brightnes orient;

And they, for pittie of the sad wayment*, 390
Which Orpheus for Eurydice did make,
Her back againe to life sent for his sake.
[* *Wayment*, lament.]

“So happie are they, and so fortunate,
Whom the Pierian sacred sisters love,
That freed from bands of impacable** fate, 395
And power of death, they live for aye above,
Where mortall wreakes their blis may not remove:
But with the gods, for former verities meede,
On nectar and ambrosia do feede.
[* *Impacable*, unappeasable.]

“For deeds doe die, how ever noblie donne, 400
And thoughts of men do as themselves decay;
But wise wordes taught in numbers for to runne,
Recorded by the Muses, live for ay;
Ne may with storming showers be washt away,
Ne bitter-breathing windes with harmfull blast, 405
Nor age, nor envie, shall them ever wast.

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“In vaine doo earthly princes then, in vaine,
Seeke with pyramides to heaven aspired,
Or huge colosses built with costlie paine,
Or brasen pillours never to be fired,
Or shrines made of the mettall most desired,
To make their memories for ever live:
For how can mortall immortalitie give?

“Such one Mausolus made, the worlds great wonder,
But now no remnant doth thereof remaine:
Such one Marcellus, but was torne with thunder:
Such one Lisippus, but is worne with raine:
Such one King Edmond, but was rent for gaine.
All such vaine moniments of earthlie masse,
Devour’d of Time, in time to nought doo passe.

“But Fame with golden wings aloft doth flie,
Above the reach of ruinous decay,
And with brave plumes doth beate the azure skie,
Admir’d of base-borne men from farre away:
Then who so will with vertuous deeds assay
To mount to heaven, on Pegasus must ride,
And with sweete Poets verse be glorifide.

“For not to have been dipt in Lethe lake,
Could save the sonne of Thetis from to die;
But that blinde bard did him immortall make
With verses dipt in deaw of Castalie:
Which made the Easterne conquerour to crie,
O fortunate yong man! whose vertue found
So brave a trompe thy noble acts to sound.

“Therefore in this halfe happie I doo read*
Good Melibae, that hath a poet got
To sing his living praises being dead,
Deserving never here to be forgot,
In spight of envie, that his deeds would spot:
Since whose decease, learning lies unregarded,
And men of armes doo wander unrewarded.
[* *Read*, consider]

“Those two be those two great calamities,
That long agoe did grieve the noble spright
Of Salomon with great indignities,

Who whilome was alive the wisest wight:
But now his wisedome is disprooved quite,
For he that now welds* all things at his will
Scorns th'one and th'other in his deeper skill.
[* *Welds*, wields]

"O griefe of griefes! O gall of all good heartes!
To see that vertue should dispised bee
Of him that first was raisde for vertuous parts,
And now, broad spreading like an aged tree,
Lets none shoot up that nigh him planted bee.
O let the man of whom the Muse is scorned,
Nor alive nor dead, be of the Muse adorned!

"O vile worlds trust! that with such vaine illusion
Hath so wise men bewitcht and overkest*,
That they see not the way of their confusion:
O vainesse to be added to the rest
That do my soule with inward griefe infest!
Let them behold the piteous fall of mee,
And in my case their owne ensample see.
[* *Overkest*, overcast.]

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“And who so els that sits in highest seate
Of this worlds glorie, worshipped of all,
Ne feareth change of time, nor fortunes threats,
Let him behold the horror of my fall,
And his owne end unto remembrance call;
That of like ruine he may warned bee,
And in himselfe be moov’d to pittie mee.”

Thus having ended all her piteous plaint,
With dolefull shrikes shee vanished away,
That I, through inward sorrowe wexen faint,
And all astonished with deepe dismay
For her departure, had no word to say;
But sate long time in sencelesse sad affright,
Looking still, if I might of her have sight.

Which when I missed, having looked long,
My thought returned greeved home againe,
Renewing her complaint with passion strong,
For ruth of that same womans piteous paine;
Whose wordes recording in my troubled braine,
I felt such anguish wound my feeble heart,
That frosen horror ran through everie part.

So inlie greeving in my groning brest,
And deepelie muzing at her doubtfull speach,
Whose meaning much I labored foorth to wreste,
Being above my slender reasons reach,
At length, by demonstration me to teach,
Before mine eies strange sights presented were,
Like tragicke pageants seeming to appeare.

I.

I saw an Image, all of massie gold,
Placed on high upon an altare faire,
That all which did the same from farre beholde
Might worship it, and fall on lowest staire.
Not that great idoll might with this compaire,
To which th’Assyrian tyrant would have made
The holie brethren falslie to have praid.

But th'altare on the which this image staid
Was (O great pitie!) built of brickle* clay,
That shortly the foundation decaid,
With showres of heaven and tempests worne away;
Then downe it fell, and low in ashes lay,
Scorned of everie one which by it went;
That I, it seing, dearelie did lament.
[* *Brickle*, brittle.]

II.

Next unto this a statelie Towre appeared,
Built all of richest stone that might bee found,
And nigh unto the heavens in height upreared,
But placed on a plot of sandie ground:
Not that great towre which is so much renownd
For tongues confusion in Holie Writ,
King Ninus worke, might be compar'd to it.

But, O vaine labours of terrestriall wit,
That buildes so stronglie on so frayle a soyle,
As with each storme does fall away and flit,
And gives the fruit of all your travailes toyle
To be the pray of Tyme, and Fortunes spoyle,
I saw this towre fall sodainlie to dust,
That nigh with griefe thereof my heart was brust.

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III.

Then did I see a pleasant Paradize,
Full of sweete flowres and daintiest delights,
Such as on earth man could not more devize,
With pleasures choyce to feed his cheereful sprights:
Not that which Merlin by his magicke slights
Made for the gentle Squire, to entertaine
His fayre Belphoebe, could this gardine staine.

But O short pleasure bought with lasting paine!
Why will hereafter anie flesh delight
In earthlie blis, and ioy in pleasures vaine?
Since that I sawe this gardine wasted quite,
That where it was scarce seemed anie sight;
That I, which once that beautie did beholde,
Could not from teares my melting eyes with-holde.

IV.

Soone after this a Giaunt came in place,
Of wondrous power, and of exceeding stature,
That none durst vewe the horror of his face;
Yet was he milde of speach, and meeke of nature.
Not he which in despight of his Creatour
With railing tearmes defied the Iewish hoast,
Might with this mightie one in hugenes boast;

For from the one he could to th'other coast
Stretch his strong thighes, and th'ocean overstride,
And reatch his hand into his enemies hoast.
But see the end of pompe and fleshlie pride!
One of his feete unwares from him did slide,
That downe hee fell into the deepe abisse,
Where drownd with him is all his earthlie blisse.

V.

Then did I see a Bridge, made all of golde,
Over the sea from one to other side,
Withouten prop or pillour it t'upholde,
But like the coloured rainbowe arched wide:

Not that great arche which Traian edifide,
To be a wonder to all age ensuing,
Was matchable to this in equall vewing.

But ah! what bootes it to see earthlie thing
In glorie or in greatnes to excell,
Sith time doth greatest things to ruine bring?
This goodlie bridge, one foote not fastned well,
Gan faile, and all the rest downe shortlie fell,
Ne of so brave a building ought remained,
That griefe thereof my spirite greatly pained.

VI.
I saw two Beares, as white as anie milke,
Lying together in a mightie cave,
Of milde aspect, and haire as soft as silke,
That salvage nature seemed not to have,
Nor after greedie spoyle of blood to crave:
Two fairer beasts might not elswhere be found,
Although the compast* world were sought around.
[* *Compast*, rounded.]

But what can long abide above this ground
In state of blis, or stedfast happinesse?
The cave in which these beares lay sleeping sound
Was but earth, and with her owne weightinesse
Upon them fell, and did unwares oppresse;
That, for great sorrow of their sudden fate,
Henceforth all worlds felicitie I hate.

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Much was I troubled in my heavie spright,
At sight of these sad spectacles forepast,
That all my senses were bereaved quight,
And I in minde remained sore agast,
Distraught twixt feare and pitie; when at last
I heard a voyce which loudly to me called,
That with the suddein shrill I was appalled.

“Behold,” said it, “and by ensample see,
That all is vanitie and griefe of minde,
Ne other comfort in this world can be,
But hope of heaven, and heart to God inclinde;
For all the rest must needs be left behinde.”
With that it bad me to the other side
To cast mine eye, where other sights I spide.

I.

Upon that famous rivers further shore,
There stood a snowie Swan, of heavenly hiew
And gentle kinde as ever fowle afore;
A fairer one in all the goodlie criew
Of white Strimonian brood might no man view:
There he most sweetly sung the prophecie
Of his owne death in dolefull elegie.

At last, when all his mourning melodie
He ended had, that both the shores resounded,
Feeling the fit that him forewarnd to die,
With loftie flight above the earth he bounded,
And out of sight to highest heaven mounted,
Where now he is become an heavenly signe;
There now the ioy is his, here sorrow mine.

II.

Whilest thus I looked, loe! adowne the lee*
I sawe an Harpe, stroong all with silver twyne,
And made of golde and costlie yvorie,
Swimming, that whilome seemed to have been
The harpe on which Dan Orpheus was seene
Wylde beasts and forrests after him to lead,

But was th'harpe of Philisides** now dead.
[* *Lee*, surface of the stream.]
[** *Phili-sid-es*, Sir Philip Sidney]

At length out of the river it was reard,
And borne above the cloudes to be divin'd,
Whilst all the way most heavenly noyse was heard
Of the strings, stirred with the warbling wind,
That wrought both ioy and sorrow in my mind:
So now in heaven a signe it doth appeare,
The Harpe well knowne beside the Northern Beare.

III.

Soone after this I saw on th'other side
A curious Coffer made of heben* wood,
That in it did most precious treasure hide,
Exceeding all this baser worldes good:
Yet through the overflowing of the flood
It almost drowned was and done to nought,
That sight thereof much griev'd my pensive thought.
[* *Heben*, ebony.]

At length, when most in perill it was brought,
Two angels, downe descending with swift flight,
Out of the swelling streame it lightly caught,
And twixt their blessed armes it carried quight
Above the reach of anie living sight:
So now it is transform'd into that starre,
In which all heavenly treasures locked are.

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IV.

Looking aside I saw a stately Bed,
Adorned all with costly cloth of gold,
That might for anie princes couche be red*,
And deckt with daintie flowres, as if it shold
Be for some bride, her ioyous night to hold:
Therein a goodly virgine sleeping lay;
A fairer wight saw never summers day.
[* *Red*, taken.]

I heard a voyce that called farre away,
And her awaking bad her quickly dight,
For lo! her bridegrome was in readie ray
To come to her, and seeke her loves delight:
With that she started up with cherefull sight,
When suddeinly both bed and all was gone,
And I in languor left there all alone.

V.

Still as I gazed, I beheld where stood
A Knight all arm'd, upon a winged steed,
The same that was bred of Medusaes blood,
On which Dan Perseus, borne of heavenly seed,
The faire Andromeda from perill freed:
Full mortally this knight ywounded was,
That streames of blood foorth flowed on the gras.

Yet was he deckt (small ioy to him, alas!)
With manie garlands for his victories,
And with rich spoyles, which late he did purchas
Through brave atcheivements from his enemies:
Fainting at last through long infirmities,
He smote his steed, that straight to heaven him bore,
And left me here his losse for to deplore.

VI.

Lastly, I saw an Arke of purest golde
Upon a brazen pillour standing hie,
Which th'ashes seem'd of some great prince to hold,

Enclosde therein for endles memorie
Of him whom all the world did glorifie:
Seemed the heavens with the earth did disagree,
Whether should of those ashes keeper bee.

At last me seem'd wing-footed Mercurie,
From heaven descending to appease their strife,
The arke did beare with him above the skie,
And to those ashes gave a second life,
To live in heaven, where happines is rife:
At which the earth did grieve exceedingly,
And I for dole was almost like to die.

L'Envoy.

Immortall spirite of Philisides,
Which now art made the heavens ornament,
That whilome wast the worldes chiefst riches.
Give leave to him that lov'de thee to lament
His losse by lacke of thee to heaven hent*,
And with last duties of this broken verse,
Broken with sighes, to decke thy sable herse!
[* *Hent*, taken away.]

And ye, faire Ladie! th'honor of your daies
And glorie of the world, your high thoughts scorne,
Vouchsafe this moniment of his last praise
With some few silver dropping teares t'adorne;
And as ye be of heavenlie off-spring borne,
So unto heaven let your high minde aspire,
And loath this drosse of sinfull worlds desire.

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FOOTNOTES:

Ver. 8.—*Verlame.* Veralam, or Verulamium, was a British and Roman town, near the present city of St. Alban's in Hertfordshire. Some remains of its walls are still perceptible. H.

Ver. 64.—*Th'Assyrian Lyonesse.* These types of nations are taken from the seventh chapter of the book of Daniel. H.

Ver. 190.—*I saw him die*. Leicester died at Cornbury Lodge, in Oxfordshire. Todd suggests that he may have fallen sick at St. Alban's, and that Spenser, hearing the report in Ireland, may havo concluded without inquiry that this was the place of his subsequent death, C.

Ver. 225.—*Colin Cloute.* Spenser himself, who had been befriended by Leicester. H.

Ver. 239.—*His brother.* Ambrose Dudley, Earl of Warwick.

Ver. 245.—*His noble spouse.* Anne, the eldest daughter of Francis Russell, Earl of Bedford.

Ver. 260.—*His sister*. Lady Mary Sidney.

Ver. 261.—*That good earle*, &c. This Earl of Bedford died in 1585.—TODD.

Ver. 267.—*He, noble bud*, &c. Edward Russell, grandson of Francis Earl of Bedford, succeeded in the earldom, his father, Francis, having been slain by the Scots.—OLDYS.

Ver. 275.—*That goodly ladie*, &c. Lady Mary Sidney, mother of Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke.

Ver. 281.—*Most gentle spirite.* Sir Philip Sidney.

Ver. 317.—*Thine owne sister,* &c. The Countess of Pembroke, to whom this poem is dedicated. "The Dolefull Lay of Clorinda" (Vol. IV. p. 426) appears to have been written by her.

Ver. 436.—*Good Melibae*. Sir Francis Walsingham, who died April 6,1590. The *poet* is Thomas Watson.—OLDYS.

Ver. 447-455.—These lines are aimed at Burghley, who was said to have opposed the Queen's intended bounty to the poet. C.

Ver 491.—These allegorical representations of the vanity of exalted position, stately buildings, earthly pleasures, bodily strength, and works of beauty and magnificence, admit of an easy application to the splendid career of the Earl of Leicester,—his favor and influence with the Queen, his enlargement of Kenilworth, his princely style of living, and particularly (IV.) his military command in the Low Countries. The sixth of these "tragick pageants" strongly confirms this interpretation. The two bears are Robert and Ambrose Dudley. While Leicester was lieutenant in the Netherlands, he was in the habit of using the Warwick crest (a bear and ragged staff) instead of his own. Naunton, in his Fragmenta Regalia, calls him *Ursa Major*. C.

Ver. 497.—*The holie brethren*, &c. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Daniel, ch. iii. C.

Ver. 582-586.—A paraphrase of Sir Philip's last words to his brother. "Above all, govern your will and affection by the will and word of your Creator, in me beholding the end of this world with all her vanities." This is pointed out by Zouch, Life of Sidney, p. 263. C.

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Ver 590.—This second series of pageants is applicable exclusively to Sir Philip Sidney. The meaning of the third and fourth is hard to make out; but the third seems to have reference to the collection of the scattered sheets of the Arcadia, and the publication of this work by the Countess of Pembroke, after it had been condemned to destruction by the author. The fourth may indeed signify nothing more than Lady Sidney's bereavement by her husband's death; but this interpretation seems too literal for a professed allegory. The sixth obviously alludes to the splendid obsequies to Sidney, performed at the Queen's expense, and to the competition of the States of Holland for the honor of burying his body. C.

L'ENVOY: *L'Envoy* was a sort of postscript *sent with* poetical compositions, and serving either to recommend them to the attention of some particular person, or to enforce what we call the moral of them.— TYRWHITT.

* * * * *

THE TEARES OF THE MUSES.

BY ED. SP.

LONDON:

IMPRINTED FOR WILLIAM PONSONBIE, DWELLING IN PAULES CHURCHYARD AT THE SIGNE OF THE BISHOPS HEAD.

1591.

* * * * *

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

THE LADIE STRANGE.

Most brave and noble Ladie, the things that make ye so much honored of the world as ye bee are such as (without my simple lines testimonie) are throughlie knowen to all men; namely, your excellent beautie, your vertuous behavior, and your noble match with that most honourable Lord, the verie paterne of right nobilitie. But the causes for which ye have thus deserved of me to be honoured, (if honour it be at all,) are, both your particular bounties, and also some private bands of affinitie*, which it hath pleased your Ladiship to acknowledge. Of which whenas I found my selfe in no part worthie, I devised this last slender meanes, both to intimate my humble affection to your Ladiship, and also to make the same universallie knowen to the world; that by honouring you they

might know me, and by knowing me they might honor you. Vouchsafe, noble Lady, to accept this simple remembrance, though not worthy of your self, yet such as perhaps by good acceptance thereof ye may hereafter cull out a more meet and memorable evidence of your own excellent deserts. So recommending the same to your Ladiships good liking, I humbly take leave.

Your La: humbly ever.

ED. SP.

[Footnote: Lady Strange was Alice Spencer, sixth daughter of Sir John Spencer of Althorpe. C.]

* * * * *

THE TEARES OF THE MUSES.

Rehearse to me, ye sacred Sisters nine,
The golden brood of great Apolloes wit,
Those piteous plaints and sorowfull sad tine
Which late ye powred forth as ye did sit
Beside the silver springs of Helicone, 5
Making your musick of hart-breaking mone!

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For since the time that Phoebus foolish sonne,
Ythundered, through loves avengefull wrath,
For traversing the charret of the Sunne
Beyond the compasse of his pointed path,
Of you, his mournfull sisters, was lamented,
Such mournfull tunes were never since invented.

Nor since that faire Calliope did lose
Her loved twinnes, the dearlings of her ioy,
Her Palici, whom her unkindly foes,
The Fatall Sisters, did for spight destroy,
Whom all the Muses did bewaile long space,
Was ever heard such wayling in this place.

For all their groves, which with the heavenly noyses
Of their sweete instruments were wont to sound,
And th'hollow hills, from which their silver voyces
Were wont redoubled echoes to rebound,
Did now rebound with nought but rufull cries,
And yelling shrieks throwne up into the skies.

The trembling streames which wont in chanels cleare
To romble gently downe with murmur soft,
And were by them right tunefull taught to beare
A bases part amongst their consorts oft;
Now forst to overflowe with brackish teares,
With troublous noyse did dull their daintie eares.

The ioyous Nymphes and lightfoote Faeries
Which thether came to heare their musick sweet,
And to the measure of their melodies
Did learne to move their nimble-shifting feete,
Now hearing them so heavily lament,
Like heavily lamenting from them went.

And all that els was wont to worke delight
Through the divine infusion of their skill,
And all that els seemd faire and fresh in sight,
So made by nature for to serve their will,
Was turned now to dismall heavinesse,
Was turned now to dreadfull uglinesse.

Ay me! what thing on earth, that all thing breeds,
Might be the cause of so impatient plight?

What furie, or what feend, with felon deeds
Hath stirred up so mischievous despight?
Can griefe then enter into heavenly harts,
And pierce immortall breasts with mortall smarts?

Vouchsafe ye then, whom onely it concernes,
To me those secret causes to display;
For none but you, or who of you it learnes,
Can rightfully aread so dolefull lay.
Begin, thou eldest sister of the crew,
And let the rest in order thee ensew.

CLIO.

Heare, thou great Father of the Gods on hie,
That most art dreaded for thy thunder darts;
And thou, our Syre? that raignst in Castalie
And Mount Parnasse, the god of goodly arts:
Heare, and behold the miserable state
Of us thy daughters, dolefull desolate.

Behold the fowle reproach and open shame
The which is day by day unto us wrought
By such as hate the honour of our name,
The foes of learning and each gentle thought;
They, not contented us themselves to scorne,
Doo seeke to make us of the world forlorne*.
[* Forlorne, abandoned]

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Ne onely they that dwell in lowly dust,
The sonnes of darknes and of ignoraunce;
But they whom thou, great love, by doome uniust
Didst to the type of honour earst advaunce;
They now, puft up with sdeignfull insolence,
Despise the brood of blessed Sapience.

The sectaries* of my celestiall skill,
That wont to be the worlds chiefe ornament,
And learned impes that wont to shoote up still,
And grow to hight of kingdomes government,
They underkeep, and with their spredding armes
Doo beat their buds, that perish through their harmes.
[* *Sectaries*, followers.]

It most behoves the honorable race
Of mightie peeres true wisedome to sustaine,
And with their noble countenaunce to grace
The learned forheads, without gifts or game:
Or rather learnd themselves behoves to bee;
That is the girlond of nobilitie.

But ah! all otherwise they doo esteeme
Of th'heavenly gift of wisdomes influence,
And to be learned it a base thing deeme:
Base minded they that want intelligence;
For God himselfe for wisedome most is praised,
And men to God thereby are nighest raised.

But they doo onely strive themselves to raise
Through pompous pride, and foolish vanitie;
In th'eyes of people they put all their praise,
And onely boast of armes and auncestrie:
But vertuous deeds, which did those armes first give
To their grandsyres, they care not to atchive.

So I, that doo all noble feates professe
To register and sound in trump of gold,
Through their bad dooings, or base slothfulnesse,
Finde nothing worthie to be writ, or told:
For better farre it were to hide their names,
Than telling them to blazon out their blames.

So shall succeeding ages have no light
Of things forepast, nor moniments of time;
And all that in this world is worthie hight
Shall die in darknesse, and lie hid in slime!
Therefore I mourne with deep harts sorrowing,
Because I nothing noble have to sing.

With that she raynd such store of streaming teares,
That could have made a stonie heart to weep;
And all her sisters rent* their golden heares,
And their faire faces with salt humour steep.
So ended shee: and then the next anew
Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensew.
  [* *Rent*, rend.]

MELPOMENE.

O, who shall powre into my swollen eyes
A sea of teares that never may be dryde,
A brasen voice that may with shrilling cryes
Pierce the dull heavens and fill the ayer wide,
And yron sides that sighing may endure,
To waile the wretchednes of world impure!

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Ah, wretched world! the den of wickednesse,
Deformd with filth and fowle iniquitie;
Ah, wretched world! the house of heavinesse,
Fild with the wreaks of mortall miserie;
Ah, wretched world, and all that is therein!
The vassals of Gods wrath, and slaves of sin.

Most miserable creature under sky
Man without understanding doth appeare;
For all this worlds affliction he thereby,
And fortunes freakes, is wisely taught to beare:
Of wretched life the onely ioy shee is.
And th'only comfort in calamities.

She armes the brest with constant patience
Against the bitter throwes of dolours darts:
She solaceth with rules of sapience
The gentle minds, in midst of worldlie smarts:
When he is sad, shee seeks to make him merie,
And doth refresh his sprights when they be werie.

But he that is of reasons skill bereft,
And wants the staffe of wisedome him to stay,
Is like a ship in midst of tempest left
Withouten helme or pilot her to sway:
Full sad and dreadfull is that ships event;
So is the man that wants intendiment*.
[* *Intendiment*, understanding.]

Whie then doo foolish men so much despize
The precious store of this celestiall riches?
Why doo they banish us, that patronize
The name of learning? Most unhappie wretches!
The which lie drowned in deep wretchednes,
Yet doo not see their owne unhappines.

My part it is and my professed skill
The stage with tragick buskin to adorne,
And fill the scene with plaint and outcries shrill
Of wretched persons, to misfortune borne:
But none more tragick matter I can finde
Than this, of men depriv'd of sense and minde.

For all mans life me seemes a tragedy,
Full of sad sights and sore catastrophees;
First comming to the world with weeping eye,
Where all his dayes, like dolorous trophees,
Are heapt with spoyles of fortune and of feare,
And he at last laid forth on balefull beare.

So all with rufull spectacles is fild,
Fit for Megera or Persephone;
But I that in true tragedies am skild,
The flowre of wit, finde nought to busie me:
Therefore I mourne, and pitifully mone,
Because that mourning matter I have none.

Then gan she wofully to waile, and wring
Her wretched hands in lamentable wise;
And all her sisters, thereto answering,
Threw forth lowd shrieks and drerie dolefull cries.
So rested she: and then the next in rew
Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensew.

THALIA.

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Where be the sweete delights of learnings treasure,
That wont with comick sock to beautefie
The painted theaters, and fill with pleasure
The listners eyes, and eares with melodie,
In which I late was wont to raine as queene,
And maske in mirth with graces well beseene?

O, all is gone! and all that goodly glee,
Which wont to be the glorie of gay wits,
Is layd abed, and no where now to see;
And in her roome unseemly Sorrow sits,
With hollow browes and greisly countenaunce
Marring my ioyous gentle dalliaunce.

And him beside sits ugly Barbarisme,
And brutish Ignorance, ycrept of late
Out of dredd darknes of the deep abysme,
Where being bredd, he light and heaven does hate:
They in the mindes of men now tyrannize,
And the faire scene with rudenes foule disguize.

All places they with follie have possest,
And with vaine toyes the vulgare entertaine;
But me have banished, with all the rest
That whilome wont to wait upon my traine,
Fine Counterfesaunce*, and unhurtfull Sport,
Delight, and Laughter, deckt in seemly sort.
[* *Counterfesaunce*, mimicry.]

All these, and all that els the comick stage
With seasoned wit and goodly pleasance graced,
By which mans life in his likest image
Was limned forth, are wholly now defaced;
And those sweete wits which wont the like to frame
Are now despizd, and made a laughing game.

And he, the man whom Nature selfe had made
To mock her selfe, and truth to imitate,
With kindly counter* under mimick shade,
Our pleasant Willy, ah! is dead of late:
With whom all ioy and iolly meriment
Is also deaded, and in dolour drent**.
[* *Counter*, counterfeit.]
[** *Drent*, drowned.]

In stead thereof scoffing Scurrilitie,
And scornfull Follie with Contempt is crept,
Rolling in rymes of shameles ribaudrie
Without regard, or due decorum kept;
Each idle wit at will presumes to make*,
And doth the learneds taske upon him take.
[* *Make*, write poetry.]

But that same gentle spirit, from whose pen
Large streames of honnie and sweete nectar flowe,
Scorning the boldnes of such base-borne men,
Which dare their follies forth so rashlie throwe,
Doth rather choose to sit in idle cell,
Than so himselfe to mockerie to sell.

So am I made the servant of the manie,
And laughing stocke of all that list to scorne,
Not honored nor cared for of anie,
But loath'd of losels* as a thing forlorne:
Therefore I mourne and sorrow with the rest,
Untill my cause of sorrow be redrest.
[* *Losels*, worthless fellows.]

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Therewith she lowdly did lament and shrike,
Pouring forth streames of teares abundantly;
And all her sisters, with compassion like,
The breaches of her singulfs* did supply.
So rested shee: and then the next in rew
Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensew.
  [* *I.e*. the pauses of her sighs.]

EUTERPE.

Like as the dearling of the summers pryde,
Faire Philomele, when winters stormie wrath
The goodly fields, that earst so gay were dyde
In colours divers, quite despoyled hath,
All comfortlesse doth hide her chearlesse head
During the time of that her widowhead,

So we, that earst were wont in sweet accord
All places with our pleasant notes to fill,
Whilest favourable times did us afford
Free libertie to chaunt our charmes at will,
All comfortlesse upon the bared bow*,
Like wofull culvers**, doo sit wayling now.
  [* *Bow*, bough.]
  [** *Culvers*, doves.]

For far more bitter storme than winters stowre*
The beautie of the world hath lately wasted,
And those fresh buds, which wont so faire to flowre,
Hath marred quite, and all their blossoms blasted;
And those yong plants, which wont with fruit t'abound,
Now without fruite or leaves are to be found.
  [* *Stowre*, violence.]

A stonie coldnesse hath benumbd the sence
And livelie spirits of each living wight,
And dimd with darknesse their intelligence,
Darknesse more than Cymerians daylie night:
And monstrous Error, flying in the ayre,
Hath mard the face of all that semed fayre.

Image of hellish horrour, Ignorance,
Borne in the bosome of the black abysse,
And fed with Furies milke for sustenaunce

Of his weake infancie, begot amisse
By yawning Sloth on his owne mother Night,—
So hee his sonnes both syre and brother hight,—

He, armd with blindnesse and with boldnes stout,
(For blind is bold,) hath our fayre light defaced;
And, gathering unto him a ragged rout
Of Faunes and Satyres, hath our dwellings raced*,
And our chast bowers, in which all vertue rained,
With brutishnesse and beastlie filth hath stained.
[* *Raced*, razed.]

The sacred springs of horsefoot Helicon,
So oft bedeawed with our learned layes,
And speaking streames of pure Castalion,
The famous witnesse of our wonted praise,
They trampled have with their fowle footings trade*,
And like to troubled puddles have them made.
[* *Trade*, tread.]

Our pleasant groves, which planted were with paines,
That with our musick wont so oft to ring,
And arbors sweet, in which the shepheards swaines
Were wont so oft their pastoralls to sing,
They have cut downe, and all their pleasaunce mard,
That now no pastorall is to bee hard.

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In stead of them, fowle goblins and shriek-owles
With fearfull howling do all places fill,
And feeble eccho now laments and howles,
The dreadfull accents of their outcries shrill.
So all is turned into wildernesse,
Whilest Ignorance the Muses doth oppresse.

And I, whose ioy was earst with spirit full
To teach the warbling pipe to sound aloft,
My spirits now dismayd with sorrow dull,
Doo mone my miserie in silence soft.
Therefore I mourne and waile incessantly,
Till please the heavens affoord me remedy.

Therewith shee wayled with exceeding woe,
And pitious lamentation did make;
And all her sisters, seeing her doo soe,
With equall plaints her sorrowe did partake.
So rested shee: and then the next in rew
Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensew.

TERPSICHORE.

Whoso hath in the lap of soft delight
Beene long time luld, and fed with pleasures sweet,
Feareles through his own fault or Fortunes spight
To tumble into sorrow and regreet,
Yf chaunce him fall into calamitie,
Findes greater burthen of his miserie.

So wee, that earst in ioyance did abound,
And in the bosome of all blis did sit,
Like virgin queenes, with laurell garlands cround,
For vertues meed and ornament of wit,
Sith Ignorance our kingdome did confound,
Bee now become most wretched wightes on ground.

And in our royall thrones, which lately stood
In th'hearts of men to rule them carefully,
He now hath placed his accursed brood,
By him begotten of fowle Infamy;
Blind Error, scornefull Follie, and base Spight,
Who hold by wrong that wee should have by right.

They to the vulgar sort now pipe and sing,
And make them merrie with their fooleries;
They cherelie chaunt, and rymes at randon fling,
The fruitfull spawne of their ranke fantasies;
They feede the eares of fooles with flattery,
And good men blame, and losels* magnify.
[* *Losels*, worthless fellows.]

All places they doo with their toyes possesse,
And raigne in liking of the multitude;
The schooles they till with fond newfanglenesse,
And sway in court with pride and rashnes rude;
Mongst simple shepheards they do boast their skill,
And say their musicke matcheth Phoebus quill.

The noble hearts to pleasures they allure,
And tell their Prince that learning is but vaine;
Faire ladies loves they spot with thoughts impure,
And gentle mindes with lewd delights distaine;
Clerks* they to loathly idlenes entice,
And fill their bookes with discipline of vice.
[* *Clerks*, scholars.]

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So every where they rule and tyrannize,
For their usurped kingdomes maintenaunce,
The whiles we silly maides, whom they dispize
And with reprochfull scorne discountenaunce,
From our owne native heritage exilde,
Walk through the world of every one revilde.

Nor anie one doth care to call us in,
Or once vouchsafeth us to entertaine,
Unlesse some one perhaps of gentle kin,
For pitties sake, compassion our paine,
And yeeld us some reliefe in this distresse;
Yet to be so reliev'd is wretchednesse.

So wander we all carefull comfortlesse,
Yet none cloth care to comfort us at all;
So seeke we helpe our sorrow to redresse,
Yet none vouchsafes to answere to our call;
Therefore we mourne and pittilesse complaine,
Because none living pittieth our paine.

With that she wept and wofullie waymented,
That naught on earth her griefe might pacifie;
And all the rest her dolefull din augmented
With shrikes, and groanes, and grievous agonie.
So ended shee: and then the next in rew
Began her piteous plaint, as doth ensew.

ERATO.

Ye gentle Spirits breathing from above,
Where ye in Venus silver bowre were bred,
Thoughts halfe devine, full of the fire of love,
With beawtie kindled, and with pleasure fed,
Which ye now in securitie possesse,
Forgetfull of your former heavinesse,—

Now change the tenor of your ioyous layes,
With which ye use your loves to deifie,
And blazon foorth an earthlie beauties praise
Above the compasse of the arched skie:
Now change your praises into piteous cries,
And eulogies turne into elegies.

Such as ye wont, whenas those bitter stounds*
Of raging love first gan you to torment,
And launch your hearts with lamentable wounds
Of secret sorrow and sad languishment,
Before your loves did take you unto grace;
Those now renew, as fitter for this place.
[* *Stounds*, hours.]

For I that rule in measure moderate
The tempest of that stormie passion,
And use to paint in rimes the troublous state
Of lovers life in likest fashion,
Am put from practise of my kindlie** skill,
Banisht by those that love with leawdnes fill.
[* *Kindlie*, natural.]

Love wont to be schoolmaster of my skill,
And the devicefull matter of my song;
Sweete love devoyd of villanie or ill,
But pure and spotles, as at first he sprong
Out of th'Almighties bosome, where he nests;
From thence infused into mortall brests.

Such high conceipt of that celestiall fire,
The base-borne brood of Blindnes cannot gesse,
Ne ever dare their dunghill thoughts aspire
Unto so loftie pitch of perfectnesse,
But rime at riot, and doo rage in love,
Yet little wote what doth thereto behove.

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Faire Cytheree, the mother of delight
And queene of beautie, now thou maist go pack;
For lo! thy kingdoms is defaced quight,
Thy scepter rent, and power put to wrack;
And thy gay sonne, that winged God of Love,
May now goe prune his plumes like ruffed* dove.
[* *Ruffed*, ruffled.]

And ye three twins, to light by Venus brought,
The sweete companions of the Muses late,
From whom whatever thing is goodly thought
Doth borrow grace, the fancie to aggrate*,
Go beg with us, and be companions still,
As heretofore of good, so now of ill.
[* *Aggrate*, please.]

For neither you nor we shall anie more
Finde entertainment or in court or schoole:
For that which was accounted heretofore
The learneds meed is now lent to the foole;
He sings of love and maketh loving layes,
And they him heare, and they him highly prayse.

With that she powred foorth a brackish flood
Of bitter teares, and made exceeding mone;
And all her sisters, seeing her sad mood,
With lowd laments her answered all at one.
So ended she: and then the next in rew
Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensew.

To whom shall I my evill case complaine,
Or tell the anguish of my inward smart,
Sith none is left to remedie my paine,
Or deignes to pitie a perplexed hart;
But rather seekes my sorrow to augment
With fowle reproach, and cruell banishment?

For they to whom I used to applie
The faithfull service of my learned skill,
The goodly off-spring of loves progenie,
That wont the world with famous acts to fill,
Whose living praises in heroick style,
It is my chiefe profession to compyle,—

They, all corrupted through the rust of time,
That doth all fairest things on earth deface,
Or through unnoble sloth, or sinfull crime,
That doth degenerate the noble race,
Have both desire of worthie deeds forlorne,
And name of learning utterly doo scorne.

Ne doo they care to have the auncestrie
Of th'old heroes memorizde anew;
Ne doo they care that late posteritie
Should know their names, or speak their praises dew,
But die, forgot from whence at first they sprong,
As they themselves shalbe forgot ere long.

What bootes it then to come from glorious
Forefathers, or to have been nobly bredd?
What oddes twixt Irus and old Inachus,
Twixt best and worst, when both alike are dedd,
If none of neither mention should make,
Nor out of dust their memories awake?

Or who would ever care to doo brave deed,
Or strive in vertue others to excell,
If none should yeeld him his deserved meed,
Due praise, that is the spur of doing well?
For if good were not praised more than ill,
None would choose goodnes of his owne freewill.

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Therefore the nurse of vertue I am hight,
And golden trompet of eternitie,
That lowly thoughts lift up to heavens hight,
And mortall men have powre to deifie:
Bacchus and Hercules I raisd to heaven,
And Charlemaine amongst the starris seaven.

But now I will my golden clarion rend,
And will henceforth immortalize no more,
Sith I no more finde worthie to commend
For prize of value, or for learned lore:
For noble peeres, whom I was wont to raise,
Now onely seeke for pleasure, nought for praise.

Their great revenues all in sumptuous pride
They spend, that nought to learning they may spare;
And the rich fee which poets wont divide
Now parasites and sycophants doo share:
Therefore I mourne and endlesse sorrow make,
Both for my selfe and for my sisters sake.

With that she lowdly gan to waile and shrike,
And from her eyes a sea of teares did powre;
And all her sisters, with compassion like,
Did more increase the sharpnes of her showre.
So ended she: and then the next in rew
Began her plaint, as doth herein ensew.

URANIA.

What wrath of gods, or wicked influence
Of starres conspiring wretched men t'afflict,
Hath powrd on earth this noyous pestilence,
That mortall mindes doth inwardly infect
With love of blindnesse and of ignorance,
To dwell in darkenesse without sovenance?*
[* *Sovenance*, remembrance.]

What difference twixt man and beast is left,
When th'heavenlie light of knowledge is put out,
And th'ornaments of wisdome are bereft?
Then wandreth he in error and in doubt,
Unweeting* of the danger hee is in,

Through fleshes frailtie and deceipt of sin.
[* *Unweeting*, unknowing.]

In this wide world in which they wretches stray,
It is the onelie comfort which they have,
It is their light, their loadstarre, and their day;
But hell, and darkenesse, and the grislie grave,
Is Ignorance, the enemie of Grace,
That mindes of men borne heavenlie doth debace.

Through knowledge we behold the worlds creation,
How in his cradle first he fostred was;
And iudge of Natures cunning operation,
How things she formed of a formelesse mas:
By knowledge wee do learne our selves to knowe,
And what to man, and what to God, wee owe.

From hence wee mount aloft unto the skie,
And looke into the christall firmament;
There we behold the heavens great hierarchie,
The starres pure light, the spheres swift movement,
The spirites and intelligences fayre,
And angels waighting on th'Almighties chayre.

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And there, with humble minde and high insight,
Th'eternall Makers maiestie wee viewe,
His love, his truth, his glorie, and his might,
And mercie more than mortall men can vew.
O soveraigne Lord, O soveraigne happinesse,
To see thee, and thy mercie measurelesse!

Such happines have they that doo embrace
The precepts of my heavenlie discipline;
But shame and sorrow and accursed case
Have they that scorne the schoole of arts divine,
And banish me, which do professe the skill
To make men heavenly wise through humbled will.

However yet they mee despise and spight,
I feede on sweet contentment of my thought,
And please my selfe with mine owne self-delight,
In contemplation of things heavenlie wrought:
So, loathing earth, I looke up to the sky,
And being driven hence, I thether fly.

Thence I behold the miserie of men,
Which want the blis that wisedom would them breed.
And like brute beasts doo lie in loathsome den
Of ghostly darkenes and of gastlie dreed:
For whom I mourne, and for my selfe complaine,
And for my sisters eake whom they disdaine.

With that shee wept and waild so pityouslie,
As if her eyes had beene two springing wells;
And all the rest, her sorrow to supplie,
Did throw forth shrieks and cries and dreery yells.
So ended shee: and then the next in rew
Began her mournfull plaint, as doth ensew.

POLYHYMNIA.

A dolefull case desires a dolefull song,
Without vaine art or curious complements;
And squallid Fortune, into basenes flong,
Doth scorne the pride of wonted ornaments.
Then fittest are these ragged rimes for mee,
To tell my sorrowes that exceeding bee.

For the sweet numbers and melodious measures
With which I wont the winged words to tie,
And make a tunefull diapase of pleasures,
Now being let to runne at libertie
By those which have no skill to rule them right,
Have now quite lost their naturall delight.

Heapes of huge words uphoorded hideously,
With horrid sound, though having little sence,
They thinke to be chiefe praise of poetry;
And, thereby wanting due intelligence,
Have mard the face of goodly poesie,
And made a monster of their fantasie.

Whilom in ages past none might professe
But princes and high priests that secret skill;
The sacred lawes therein they wont expresse,
And with deepe oracles their verses fill:
Then was shee held in soveraigne dignitie,
And made the noursling of nobilitie.

But now nor prince nor priest doth her maintayne,
But suffer her prophaned for to bee
Of the base vulgar, that with hands uncleane
Dares to pollute her hidden mysterie;
And treadeth under foote hir holie things,
Which was the care of kesars* and of kings.
[* *Kesars*, emperors.]

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One onelie lives, her ages ornament,
And myrrour of her Makers maiestie,
That with rich bountie and deare cherishment
Supports the praise of noble poesie;
Ne onelie favours them which it professe,
But is her selfe a peereles poetresse.

Most peereles Prince, most peereles Poetresse,
The true Pandora of all heavenly graces,
Divine Elisa, sacred Emperesse!
Live she for ever, and her royall p'laces
Be fild with praises of divinest wits,
That her eternize with their heavenlie writs!

Some few beside this sacred skill esteme,
Admirers of her glorious excellence;
Which, being lightned with her beawties beme,
Are thereby fild with happie influence,
And lifted up above the worldes gaze,
To sing with angels her immortall praize.

But all the rest, as borne of salvage brood,
And having beene with acorns alwaies fed,
Can no whit savour this celestiall food,
But with base thoughts are into blindnesse led,
And kept from looking on the lightsome day:
For whome I waile and weepe all that I may.

Eftsoones* such store of teares shee forth did powre,
As if shee all to water would have gone;
And all her sisters, seeing her sad stowre**,
Did weep and waile, and made exceeding mone,
And all their learned instruments did breake:
The rest untold no living tongue can speake.
[* *Eftsoones*, forthwith.]
[** *Stowre*, disturbance, trouble.]

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FOOTNOTES:

Ver 15—*Palici.*. The Palici were children of Jupiter and Thalia, not Calliope. H.

Ver. 205-210.—There are sufficient reasons for believing that these lines refer to Shakespeare. He had probably written The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and Love's Labor's Lost, before the Complaints were published (1591), and no other author had up to this time produced a comedy that would compare with these. For a discussion of this subject, see Collier's Life, Chap. VII., and Knight's Biography, pp. 344-348. C.

* * * * *

VIRGILS GNAT.

LONG SINCE DEDICATED

TO THE MOST NOBLE AND EXCELLENT LORD,

THE EARLE OF LEICESTER,

LATE DECEASED.

Wrong'd, yet not daring to expresse my paine,
To you, great Lord, the causer of my care,
In clowdie teares my case I thus complaine
Unto your selfe, that onely privie are.
But if that any Oedipus unware
Shall chaunce, through power of some divining spright,
To reade the secrete of this riddle rare,
And know the purporte of my evill plight,
Let him rest pleased with his owne insight,
Ne further seeke to glose upon the text:
For griefe enough it is to grieved wight
To feele his fault, and not be further vext.

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But what so by my selfe may not be showen,
May by this Gnatts complaint be easily knowen*.

[* This riddle has never been guessed. Upton conjectures that Leicester's displeasure was incurred for "some kind of officious sedulity in Spenser, who much desired to see his patron married to the Queen." C.]

* * * * *

VIRGILS GNAT.

We now have playde, Augustus, wantonly,
Tuning our song unto a tender Muse,
And, like a cobweb weaving slenderly,
Have onely playde: let thus much then excuse
This Gnats small poeme, that th'whole history
Is but a iest; though envie it abuse:
But who such sports and sweet delights doth blame,
Shall lighter seeme than this Gnats idle name.

Hereafter, when as season more secure
Shall bring forth fruit, this Muse shall speak to thee
In bigger notes, that may thy sense allure,
And for thy worth frame some fit poesie:
The golden ofspring of Latona pure,
And ornament of great Ioves progenie,
Phoebus, shall be the author of my song,
Playing on yvorie harp with silver strong*.
  [* *Strong*, strung.]

He shall inspire my verse with gentle mood,
Of poets prince, whether he woon* beside
Faire Xanthus sprincled with Chimaeras blood,
Or in the woods of Astery abide,
Or whereas Mount Parnasse, the Muses brood,
Doth his broad forhead like two hornes divide,
And the sweete waves of sounding Castaly
With liquid foote doth slide downe easily.
  [* *Woon*, dwell.]

Wherefore ye Sisters, which the glorie bee
Of the Pierian streames, fayre Naiades,
Go too, and dauncing all in companie,

Adorne that god: and thou holie Pales,
To whome the honest care of husbandrie
Returneth by continuall successe,
Have care for to pursue his footing light
Throgh the wide woods and groves with green leaves dight.

Professing thee I lifted am aloft
Betwixt the forrest wide and starrie sky:
And thou, most dread Octavius, which oft
To learned wits givest courage worthily,
O come, thou sacred childe, come sliding soft,
And favour my beginnings graciously:
For not these leaves do sing that dreadfull stound*,
When giants bloud did staine Phlegraean ground;
[* *Stound*, time.]

Nor how th'halfe-horsy people, Centaures hight,
Fought with the bloudie Lapithaes at bord;
Nor how the East with tyranous despight
Burnt th'Attick towres, and people slew with sword;
Nor how Mount Athos through exceeding might
Was digged downe; nor yron bands abord
The Pontick sea by their huge navy cast,
My volume shall renowne, so long since past.

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Nor Hellespont trampled with horses feete,
When flocking Persians did the Greeks affray:
But my soft Muse, as for her power more meete,
Delights (with Phoebus friendly leave) to play
An easie running verse with tender feete.
And thou, dread sacred child, to thee alway
Let everlasting lightsome glory strive,
Through the worlds endles ages to survive.

And let an happie roome remaine for thee
Mongst heavenly ranks, where blessed soules do rest;
And let long lasting life with ioyous glee,
As thy due meede that thou deservest best,
Hereafter many yeares remembred be
Amongst good men, of whom thou oft are blest.
Live thou for ever in all happinesse!
But let us turne to our first businesse.

The fiery Sun was mounted now on Light
Up to the heavenly towers, and shot each where
Out of his golden charet glistering light;
And fayre Aurora, with her rosie heare,
The hatefull darknes now had put to flight;
When as the Shepheard, seeing day appeare,
His little goats gan drive out of their stalls,
To feede abroad, where pasture best befalls.

To an high mountaines top he with them went,
Where thickest grasse did cloath the open hills:
They, now amongst the woods and thickets ment*
Now in the valleies wandring at their wills,
Spread themselves farre abroad through each descent;
Some on the soft greene grasse feeding their fills,
Some, clambring through the hollow cliffes on hy,
Nibble the bushie shrubs which growe thereby.
[* *Ment*, mingled.]

Others the utmost boughs of trees doe crop,
And brouze the woodbine twigges that freshly bud;
This with full bit* doth catch the utmost top
Of some soft willow, or new growen stud**;
This with sharpe teeth the bramble leaves doth lop,
And chaw the tender prickles in her cud;
The whiles another high doth overlooke

Her owne like image in a christall brooke.
[* *Bit*, bite.]
[** *Stud*, stock.]

O the great happines which shepheards have,
Who so loathes not too much the poore estate
With minde that ill use doth before deprave,
Ne measures all things by the costly rate
Of riotise, and semblants outward brave!
No such sad cares, as wont to macerate
And rend the greedie mindes of covetous men,
Do ever creepe into the shepheards den.

Ne cares he if the fleece which him arayes
Be not twice steeped in Assyrian dye;
Ne glistering of golde, which underlayes*
The summer beames, doe blinde his gazing eye;
Ne pictures beautie, nor the glauncing rayes
Of precious stones, whence no good commeth by;
Ne yet his cup embost with imagery
Of Baetus or of Alcons vanity.
[* *Underlayes*, surpasses.]

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Ne ought the whelky* pearles esteemeth hee,
Which are from Indian seas brought far away:
But with pure brest, from carefull sorrow free,
On the soft grasse his limbs doth oft display,
In sweete spring time, when flowres varietie
With sundrie colours paints the sprincled lay**;
There, lying all at ease from guile or spight,
With pype of fennie reedes doth him delight.
[* *Whelky*, shelly (*conchea*).]
[** *lay*, lea.]

There he, lord of himselfe, with palme bedight,
His looser locks doth wrap in wreath of vine:
There his milk-dropping goats be his delight,
And fruitefull Pales, and the forrest greene,
And darkesome caves in pleasaunt vallies pight*,
Wheras continuall shade is to be seene,
And where fresh springing wells, as christall neate,
Do alwayes flow, to quench his thirstie heate.
[* *Pight*, placed.]

O! who can lead then a more happie life
Than he, that with cleane minde and heart sincere,
No greedy riches knowes nor bloudie strife,
No deadly fight of warlick fleete doth feare,
Ne runs in perill of foes cruell knife,
That in the sacred temples he may reare
A trophee of his glittering spoyles and treasure,
Or may abound in riches above measure.

Of him his God is worshipt with his sythe,
And not with skill of craftsman polished:
He ioyes in groves, and makes himselfe full blythe
With sundrie flowers in wilde fieldes gathered,
Ne frankincens he from Panchaea buyth:
Sweete Quiet harbours in his harmeles head,
And perfect Pleasure buildes her ioyous bowre,
Free from sad cares, that rich mens hearts devowre.

This all his care, this all his whole indevour,
To this his minde and senses he doth bend,
How he may flow in quiets matchles treasour,
Content with any food that God doth send;
And how his limbs, resolv'd through idle leisour,

Unto sweete sleepe he may securely lend,
In some coole shadow from the scorching heat,
The whiles his flock their chawed cuds do eate.

O Flocks, O Faunes, and O ye pleasaunt Springs
Of Tempe, where the countrey nymphs are rife,
Through whose not costly care each shepheard sings
As merrie notes upon his rusticke fife
As that Ascraean bard*, whose fame now rings
Through the wide world, and leads as ioyfull life;
Free from all troubles and from worldly toyle,
In which fond men doe all their dayes turmoyle.
[* *I.e*. Hesiod]

In such delights whilst thus his carelesse time
This shepheard drives, upleaning on his batt*,
And on shrill reedes chaunting his rustick rime,
Hyperion, throwing foorth his beames full hott,
Into the highest top of heaven gan clime,
And the world parting by an equall lott,
Did shed his whirling flames on either side,
As the great Ocean doth himselfe divide.
[* *Batt*, stick]

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Then gan the shepheard gather into one
His stragling goates, and drave them to a foord,
Whose caerule streame, rombling in pible stone,
Crept under mosse as greene as any goord.
Now had the sun halfe heaven overgone,
When he his heard back from that water foord
Drave, from the force of Phoebus boyling ray,
Into thick shadowes, there themselves to lay.

Soone as he them plac'd in thy sacred wood,
O Delian goddesse, saw, to which of yore
Came the bad daughter of old Cadmus brood,
Cruell Agave, flying vengeance sore
Of King Nictileus for the guiltie blood
Which she with cursed hands had shed before;
There she halfe frantick, having slaine her sonne,
Did shrowd her selfe like punishment to shonne.

Here also playing on the grassy greene,
Woodgods, and Satyres, and swift Dryades,
With many Fairies oft were dauncing seene.
Not so much did Dan Orpheus represse
The streames of Hebrus with his songs, I weene,
As that faire troupe of woodie goddesses
Staied thee, O Peneus, powring foorth to thee,
From cheereful lookes, great mirth and gladsome glee.

The verie nature of the place, resounding
With gentle murmure of the breathing ayre,
A pleasant bowre with all delight abounding
In the fresh shadowe did for them prepayre,
To rest their limbs with wearines redounding.
For first the high palme-trees, with braunches faire,
Out of the lowly vallies did arise,
And high shoote up their heads into the skyes.

And them amongst the wicked lotos grew,
Wicked, for holding guilefully away
Ulysses men, whom rapt with sweetenes new,
Taking to hoste*, it quite from him did stay;
And eke those trees, in whose transformed hew
The Sunnes sad daughters waylde the rash decay
Of Phaeton, whose limbs with lightening rent

They gathering up, with sweete teares did lament.
[* *Hoste*, entertain.]

And that same tree*, in which Demophoon,
By his disloyalty lamented sore,
Eternall hurte left unto many one:
Whom als accompanied the oke, of yore
Through fatall charmes transferred to such an one:
The oke, whose acornes were our foode before
That Ceres seede of mortall men were knowne,
Which first Triptoleme taught how to be sowne.
[* *I.e*. the almond-tree.]

Here also grew the rougher-rinded pine,
The great Argoan ships brave ornament,
Whom golden fleece did make an heavenly signe;
Which coveting, with his high tops extent,
To make the mountaines touch the starres divine,
Decks all the forrest with embellishment;
And the blacke holme that loves the watrie vale;
And the sweete cypresse, signe of deadly bale.

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Emongst the rest the clambring yvie grew,
Knitting his wanton armes with grasping hold,
Least that the poplar happely should rew
Her brothers strokes, whose boughes she doth enfold
With her lythe twigs, till they the top survew,
And paint with pallid greene her buds of gold.
Next did the myrtle tree to her approach,
Not yet unmindfull of her olde reproach.

But the small birds in their wide boughs embowring
Chaunted their sundrie tunes with sweete consent;
And under them a silver spring, forth powring
His trickling streames, a gentle murmure sent;
Thereto the frogs, bred in the slimie scowring
Of the moist moores, their iarring voyces bent;
And shrill grashoppers chirped them around:
All which the ayrie echo did resound.

In this so pleasant place the shepheards flocke
Lay everie where, their wearie limbs to rest,
On everie bush, and everie hollow rocke,
Where breathe on them the whistling wind mote best;
The whiles the shepheard self, tending his stocke,
Sate by the fountaine side, in shade to rest,
Where gentle slumbring sleep oppressed him
Displaid on ground, and seized everie lim.

Of trecherie or traines nought tooke he keep,
But, looslie on the grassie greene dispredd,
His dearest life did trust to careles sleep;
Which, weighing down his drouping drowsie hedd,
In quiet rest his molten heart did steep,
Devoid of care, and feare of all falshedd:
Had not inconstant Fortune, bent to ill,
Bid strange mischance his quietnes to spill.

For at his wonted time in that same place
An huge great Serpent, all with speckles pide,
To drench himselfe in moorish slime did trace,
There from the boyling heate himselfe to hide:
He, passing by with rolling wreathed pace,
With brandisht tongue the emptie aire did gride*,
And wrapt his scalie boughts** with fell despight,
That all things seem'd appalled at his sight.

[* *Gride*, pierce]
[** *Boughts*, knots]

Now more and more having himselfe enrolde,
His glittering breast he lifteth up on hie,
And with proud vaunt his head aloft doth holde;
His creste above, spotted with purple die,
On everie side did shine like scalie golde;
And his bright eyes, glauncing full dreadfullie,
Did seeme to flame out flakes of flashing fyre,
And with sterne lookes to threaten kindled yre.

Thus wise long time he did himselfe dispace
There round about, when as at last he spide,
Lying along before him in that place,
That flocks grand captaine and most trustie guide:
Eftsoones more fierce in visage and in pace,
Throwing his firie eyes on everie side,
He commeth on, and all things in his way
Full stearnly rends that might his passage stay.

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Much he disdaines that anie one should dare
To come unto his haunt; for which intent
He inly burns, and gins straight to prepare
The weapons which Nature to him hath lent;
Fellie he hisseth, and doth fiercely stare,
And hath his iawes with angrie spirits rent,
That all his tract with bloudie drops is stained,
And all his foldes are now in length outstrained.

Whom, thus at point prepared, to prevent,
A litle noursling of the humid ayre,
A Gnat, unto the sleepie shepheard went,
And marking where his ey-lids twinckling rare
Shewd the two pearles which sight unto him lent,
Through their thin coverings appearing fayre
His little needle there infixing deep,
Warnd him awake, from death himselfe to keep.

Wherewith enrag'd, he fiercely gan upstart,
And with his hand him rashly bruzing slewe
As in avengement of his heedles smart,
That streight the spirite out of his senses flew.
And life out of his members did depart:
When, suddenly casting aside his vew,
He spide his foe with felonous intent,
And fervent eyes to his destruction bent.

All suddenly dismaid, and hartles quight,
He fled abacke, and, catching hastie holde
Of a yong alder hard beside him pight,
It rent, and streight about him gan beholde
What god or fortune would assist his might.
But whether god or fortune made him bold
Its hard to read: yet hardie will he had
To overcome, that made him lesse adrad*.
  [* *Adrad*, terrified]

The scalie backe of that most hideous snake
Enwrapped round, oft faining to retire
And oft him to assaile, he fiercely strake
Whereas his temples did his creast front tyre*;
And, for he was but slowe, did slowth off shake,
And, gazing ghastly on, (for feare and yre
Had blent** so much his sense, that lesse he feard,)—

Yet, when he saw him slaine, himselfe he cheard.
[* *Tyre*, encircle]
[** *Blent*, blinded]

By this the Night forth from the darksome bowre
Of Herebus her teemed* steedes gan call,
And laesie Vesper in his timely howre
From golden Oeta gan proceede withall;
Whenas the shepheard after this sharpe stowre**,
Seing the doubled shadowes low to fall,
Gathering his straying flocke, does homeward fare,
And unto rest his wearie ioynts prepare.
[* *Teemed*, harnessed in a team]
[** *Stowre*, perturbation]

Into whose sense so soone as lighter sleepe
Was entered, and now loosing everie lim,
Sweete slumbring deaw in carelesnesse did steepe,
The image of that Gnat appeard to him,
And in sad tearmes gan sorrowfully weepe,
With grieslie countenaunce and visage grim,
Wailing the wrong which he had done of late,
In steed of good, hastning his cruell fate.

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Said he, “What have I wretch deserv’d, that thus
Into this bitter bale I am outcast,
Whilest that thy life more deare and precious
Was than mine owne, so long as it did last?
I now, in lieu of paines so gracious,
Am tost in th’ayre with everie windie blast:
Thou, safe delivered from sad decay,
Thy careles limbs in loose sleep dost display.

“So livest thou; but my poore wretched ghost
Is forst to ferrie over Lethes river,
And spoyld of Charon too and fro am tost.
Seest thou not how all places quake and quiver,
Lightned with deadly lamps on everie post?
Tisiphone each where doth shake and shiver
Her flaming fire-brond, encountring me,
Whose lockes uncombed cruell adders be.

“And Cerberus, whose many mouthes doo bay,
And barke out flames, as if on fire he fed,
Adowne whose necke, in terrible array,
Ten thousand snakes, cralling about his hed,
Doo hang in heapes, that horribly affray,
And bloodie eyes doo glister firie red,
He oftentimes me dreadfullie doth threaten
With painfull torments to be sorely beaten.

“Ay me! that thankes so much should faile of meed,
For that I thee restor’d to life againe,
Even from the doore of death and deadlie dreed.
Where then is now the guerdon of my paine?
Where the reward of my so piteous deed?
The praise of pitie vanisht is in vaine,
And th’antique faith of iustice long agone
Out of the land is fled away and gone.

“I saw anothers fate approaching fast,
And left mine owne his safetie to tender;
Into the same mishap I now am cast,
And shun’d destruction doth destruction render:
Not unto him that never hath trespast,
But punishment is due to the offender:
Yet let destruction be the punishment,
So long as thankfull will may it relent.

“I carried am into waste wildernesse,
Waste wildernes, amongst Cymerian shades,
Where endles paines and hideous heavinesse
Is round about me heapt in darksome glades.
For there huge Othos sits in sad distresse,
Fast bound with serpents that him oft invades,
Far of beholding Ephialtes tide,
Which once assai’d to burne this world so wide.

“And there is mournfull Tityus, mindefull yet
Of thy displeasure, O Latona faire;
Displeasure too implacable was it,
That made him meat for wild foules of the ayre:
Much do I feare among such fiends to sit;
Much do I feare back to them to repayre,
To the black shadowes of the Stygian shore,
Where wretched ghosts sit wailing evermore.

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“There next the utmost brinck doth he abide
That did the bankets of the gods bewray,
Whose throat through thirst to nought nigh being dride,
His sense to seeke for ease turnes every way:
And he that in avengement of his pride,
For scorning to the sacred gods to pray,
Against a mountaine rolls a mightie stone,
Calling in vaine for rest, and can have none.

“Go ye with them, go, cursed damosells,
Whose bridale torches foule Erynnis tynde*,
And Hymen, at your spousalls sad, foretells
Tydings of death and massacre unkinde**:
With them that cruell Colchid mother dwells,
The which conceiv’d in her revengefull minde
With bitter woundes her owne deere babes to slay,
And murdred troupes upon great heapes to lay.
[* *Tynde*, kindled.]
[** *Unkinde*, unnatural.]

“There also those two Pandionian maides,
Calling on Itis, Itis evermore,
Whom, wretched boy, they slew with guiltie blades;
For whome the Thracian king lamenting sore,
Turn’d to a lapwing, fowlie them upbraydes,
And flattering round about them still does sore;
There now they all eternally complaine
Of others wrong, and suffer endles paine.

“But the two brethren* borne of Cadmus blood,
Whilst each does for the soveraignty contend,
Blinde through ambition, and with vengeance wood**,
Each doth against the others bodie bend
His cursed steele, of neither well withstood,
And with wide wounds their carcases doth rend;
That yet they both doe mortall foes remaine,
Sith each with brothers bloudie hand was slaine.
[* *I.e*. Eteocles and Polynices.]
[** *Wood*, mad.]

“Ah (waladay!) there is no end of paine,
Nor chaunge of labour may intreated bee:
Yet I beyond all these am carried faine,
Where other powers farre different I see,

And must passe over to th'Elisian plaine:
There grim Persephone, encountring mee,
Doth urge her fellow Furies earnestlie
With their bright firebronds me to terrifie.

"There chast Alceste lives inviolate,
Free from all care, for that her husbands daies
She did prolong by changing fate for fate:
Lo! there lives also the immortall praise
Of womankinde, most faithfull to her mate,
Penelope; and from her farre awayes
A rulesse* rout of yongmen which her woo'd,
All slaine with darts, lie wallowed in their blood.
[* *Rulesse*, rule-less.]

"And sad Eurydice thence now no more
Must turne to life, but there detained bee
For looking back, being forbid before:
Yet was the guilt thereof, Orpheus, in thee!
Bold sure he was, and worthie spirite bore,
That durst those lowest shadowes goe to see,
And could beleeve that anie thing could please
Fell Cerberus, or Stygian powres appease.

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“Ne feard the burning waves of Phlegeton,
Nor those same mournfull kingdomes, compassed
With rustle horrour and fowle fashion;
And deep digd vawtes*; and Tartar covered
With bloodie night and darke confusion;
And iudgement seates, whose iudge is deadlie dred,
A iudge that after death doth punish sore
The faults which life hath trespassed before.
[* *Vawtes*, vaults.]

“But valiant fortune made Dan Orpheus bolde:
For the swift running rivers still did stand,
And the wilde beasts their furie did withhold,
To follow Orpheus musicke through the land:
And th’okes, deep grounded in the earthly molde,
Did move, as if they could him understand;
And the shrill woods, which were of sense bereav’d,
Through their hard barke his silver sound receav’d.

“And eke the Moone her hastie steedes did stay,
Drawing in teemes along the starrie skie;
And didst, O monthly Virgin, thou delay
Thy nightly course, to heare his melodie?
The same was able, with like lovely lay,
The Queene of Hell to move as easily
To yeeld Eurydiee unto her fere,
Backe to be borne, though it unlawfull were.

“She, ladie, having well before approoved
The feends to be too cruell and severe,
Observ’d th’appointed way, as her behooved,
Ne ever did her eysight turne arere,
Ne ever spake, ne cause of speaking mooved;
But, cruell Orpheus, thou much crueller,
Seeking to kisse her, brok’st the gods decree,
And thereby mad’st her ever damn’d to be.

“Ah! but sweete love of pardon worthie is,
And doth deserve to have small faults remitted;
If Hell at least things lightly done amis
Knew how to pardon, when ought is omitted:
Yet are ye both received into blis,
And to the seates of happie soules admitted.

And you beside the honourable band
Of great heroes doo in order stand.

“There be the two stout sonnes of AEacus,
Fierce Peleus, and the hardie Telamon,
Both seeming now full glad and ioyeous
Through their syres dreadfull iurisdiction,
Being the iudge of all that horrid hous:
And both of them, by strange occasion,
Renown’d in choyce of happie marriage
Through Venus grace, and vertues cariage.

“For th’one was ravisht of his owne bondmaide,
The faire Ixione captiv’d from Troy:
But th’other was with Thetis love assaid,
Great Nereus his daughter and his ioy.
On this side them there is a yongman layd,
Their match in glorie, mightie, fierce, and coy,
That from th’Argolick ships, with furious yre,
Bett back the furie of the Troian fyre.

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“O! who would not recount the strong divorces
Of that great warre, which Troianes oft behelde,
And oft beheld the warlike Greekish forces,
When Teucrian soyle with bloodie rivers swelde,
And wide Sigraean shores were spred with corses,
And Simois and Xanthus blood outwelde;
Whilst Hector raged, with outragious minde,
Flames, weapons, wounds, in Greeks fleete to have tynde.

“For Ida selfe, in ayde of that fierce fight,
Out of her mountaines ministred supplies;
And like a kindly nourse did yeeld, for spight,
Store of firebronds out of her nourseries
Unto her foster children, that they might
Inflame the navie of their enemies,
And all the Rhetaean shore to ashes turne,
Where lay the ships which they did seeke to burne.

“Gainst which the noble sonne of Telamon
Oppos’d himselfe, and thwarting* his huge shield,
Them battell bad; gainst whom appeard anon
Hector, the glorie of the Troian field:
Both fierce and furious in contention
Encountred, that their mightie strokes so shrild
As the great clap of thunder, which doth ryve
The railing heavens and cloudes asunder dryve.
[* *Thwarting*, interposing.]

“So th’one with fire and weapons did contend
To cut the ships from turning home againe
To Argos; th’other strove for to defend*
The force of Vulcane with his might and maine.
Thus th’one Aeacide did his fame extend:
But th’other ioy’d that, on the Phrygian playne
Having the blood of vanquisht Hector shedd,
He compast Troy thrice with his bodie dedd.
[* *Defend*, keep off.]

“Againe great dole on either partie grewe,
That him to death unfaithfull Paris sent;
And also him that false Ulysses slewe,
Drawne into danger through close ambushment;
Therefore from him Laertes sonne his vewe
Doth turn aside, and boasts his good event

In working of Strymonian Rhaesus fall,
And efte* in Dolons slye surprysall.
[* *Efte*, again.]

“Againe the dreadfull Cycones him dismay,
And blacke Laestrigones, a people stout;
Then greedie Scilla, under whom there bay
Manie great bandogs, which her gird about;
Then doo the AEtnean Cyclops him affray,
And deep Charybdis gulphing in and out;
Lastly the squalid lakes of Tartarie,
And griesly feends of hell him terrifie.

“There also goodly Agamemnon bosts,
The glorie of the stock of Tantalus,
And famous light of all the Greekish hosts;
Under whose conduct most victorious,
The Dorick flames consum’d the Iliack posts.
Ah! but the Greekes themselves, more dolorous,
To thee, O Troy, paid penaunce for thy fall,
In th’Hellespont being nigh drowned all.

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“Well may appeare by proofe of their mischaunce
The chaungfull turning of mens slipperie state,
That none whom fortune freely doth advaunce
Himselfe therefore to heaven should elevate:
For loftie type of honour through the glaunce
Of envies dart is downe in dust prostrate,
And all that vaunts in worldly vanitie
Shall fall through fortunes mutabilitie.

“Th’Argolicke power returning home againe,
Enricht with spoyles of th’Ericthonian towre,
Did happie winde and weather entertaine,
And with good speed the fomie billowes scowre:
No signe of storme, no feare of future paine,
Which soone ensued them with heavie stowre*:
Nereis to the seas a token gave,
The whiles their crooked keeles the surges clave.
[* *Stowre*, turmoil, uproar.]

“Suddenly, whether through the gods decree,
Or haplesse rising of some froward starre,
The heavens on everie side enclowded bee:
Black stormes and fogs are blowen up from farre,
That now the pylote can no loadstarre see,
But skies and seas doo make most dreadfull warre;
The billowes striving to the heavens to reach,
And th’heavens striving them for to impeach*.
[* *Impeach*, hinder.]

“And, in avengement of their bold attempt,
Both sun and starres and all the heavenly powres
Conspire in one to wreake their rash contempt,
And downe on them to fall from highest towres:
The skie, in pieces seeming to be rent,
Throwes lightning forth, and haile, and harmful showres,
That death on everie side to them appeares,
In thousand formes, to worke more ghastly feares.

“Some in the greedie flouds are sunke and drent*;
Some on the rocks of Caphareus are throwne;
Some on th’Euboick cliffs in pieces rent;
Some scattred on the Hercaean** shores unknowne;
And manie lost, of whom no moniment
Remaines, nor memorie is to be showne:

Whilst all the purchase@ of the Phrigian pray,
Tost on salt billowes, round about doth stray.
[* *Drent*, drowned.]
[** *Hercaean* should probably be AEgean.]
[@ *Purchase*, booty.]

“Here manie other like heroes bee,
Equall in honour to the former crue,
Whom ye in goodly seates may placed see,
Descended all from Rome by linage due;
From Rome, that holds the world in sovereigntie,
And doth all nations unto her subdue:
Here Fabii and Decii doo dwell,
Horatii that in vertue did excell.

“And here the antique fame of stout Camill
Doth ever live; and constant Curtius,
Who, stifly bent his vowed life to spill
For countreyes health, a gulph most hideous
Amidst the towne with his owne corps did fill,
T’appease the Powers; and prudent Mutius,
Who in his flesh endur’d the scorching flame,
To daunt his foe by ensample of the same.

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“And here wise Curius, companion
Of noble vertues, lives in endles rest;
And stout Flaminius, whose devotion
Taught him the fires scorn’d furie to detest;
And here the praise of either Scipion
Abides in highest place above the best,
To whom the ruin’d walls of Carthage vow’d,
Trembling their forces, sound their praises lowd.

“Live they for ever through their lasting praise!
But I, poore wretch, am forced to retourne
To the sad lakes that Phoebus sunnie rayes
Doo never see, where soules doo alwaies mourne;
And by the wayling shores to waste my dayes,
Where Phlegeton with quenchles flames doth burne;
By which iust Minos righteous soules doth sever
From wicked ones, to live in blisse for ever.

“Me therefore thus the cruell fiends of hell,
Girt with long snakes and thousand yron chaynes,
Through doome of that their cruell iudge compell,
With bitter torture and impatient paines,
Cause of my death and iust complaint to tell.
For thou art he whom my poore ghost complaines
To be the author of her ill unwares,
That careles hear’st my intollerable cares.

“Them therefore as bequeathing to the winde,
I now depart, returning to thee never,
And leave this lamentable plaint behinde.
But doo thou haunt the soft downe-rolling river,
And wilde greene woods and fruitful pastures minde,
And let the flitting aire my vaine words sever.”
Thus having said, he heavily departed
With piteous crie that anie would have smarted.

Now, when the sloathfull fit of lifes sweete rest
Had left the heavie Shepheard, wondrous cares
His inly grieved minde full sore opprest;
That balefull sorrow he no longer beares
For that Gnats death, which deeply was imprest,
But bends what ever power his aged yeares
Him lent, yet being such as through their might
He lately slue his dreadfull foe in fight.

By that same river lurking under greene,
Eftsoones* he gins to fashion forth a place,
And, squaring it in compasse well beseene**,
There plotteth out a tombe by measured space:
His yron-headed spade tho making cleene,
To dig up sods out of the flowrie grasse,
His worke he shortly to good purpose brought,
Like as he had conceiv'd it in his thought.
[* *Eftsoones*, immediately.]
[** *Well beseene*, seemly.]

An heape of earth he hoorded up on hie,
Enclosing it with banks on everie side,
And thereupon did raise full busily
A little mount, of greene turffs edifide*;
And on the top of all, that passers by
Might it behold, the toomb he did provide
Of smoothest marble stone in order set,
That never might his luckie scape forget.
[* *Edifide*, built.]

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And round about he taught sweete flowres to growe;
The Rose, engrained in pure scarlet die;
The Lilly fresh, and Violet belowe;
The Marigolde, and cherefull Rosemarie;
The Spartan Mirtle, whence sweet gumb does flowe;
The purple Hyacinths, and fresh Costmarie,
And Saffron, sought for in Cilician soyle,
And Lawrell, th'ornament of Phoebus toyle:

Fresh Rhododaphne, and the Sabine flowre*,
Matching the wealth of th'auncient Frankincence;
And pallid Yvie, building his owne bowre;
And Box, yet mindfull of his olde offence;
Red Amaranthus, lucklesse paramour;
Oxeye still greene, and bitter Patience;
Ne wants there pale Narcisse, that, in a well
Seeing his beautie, in love with it fell.
[* *Sabine flowre*, a kind of juniper, the savine.]

And whatsoever other flowre of worth,
And whatso other hearb of lovely hew
The ioyous Spring out of the ground brings forth,
To cloath her selfe in colours fresh and new,
He planted there, and reard a mount of earth,
In whose high front was writ as doth ensue:

To thee, small Gnat, in lieu of his life saved, The Shepheard hath thy deaths record engraved.

* * * * *

FOOTNOTES:

VIRGILS GNAT. This is a very skilful elaboration of the Culex, a poem attributed, without reason, to Virgil. The original, which is crabbed and pedantic, where it is not unintelligible from corruption, is here rendered with sufficient fidelity to the sense, but with such perspicuity, elegance, and sweetness, as to make Spenser's performance too good a poem to be called a translation. C.

* * * * *

PROSOPOPOIA:

OR
MOTHER HUBBERDS TALE.

BY ED. SP.

DEDICATED TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE,

THE LADIE COMPTON AND MOUNTEGLE.

* * * * *

LONDON:

IMPRINTED FOR WILLIAM PONSONBIE, DWELLING IN PAULES CHURCHYARD AT THE SIGNE OF THE BISHOPS HEAD.

1591.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,

THE LADIE COMPTON AND MOUNTEGLE.[*]

Most faire and vertuous Ladie: having often sought opportunitie by some good meanes to make knowen to your Ladiship the humble affection and faithfull duetie which I have alwaies professed, and am bound to beare, to that house from whence yee spring, I have at length found occasion to remember the same by making a simple present to you of these my idle labours; which having long sithens composed in the raw conceipt of my youth, I lately amongst other papers lighted upon, and was

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by others, which liked the same, mooved to set them foorth. Simple is the device, and the composition meane, yet carrieth some delight, even the rather because of the simplicitie and meannesse thus personated. The same I beseech your Ladiship take in good part, as a pledge of that profession which I have made to you, and keepe with you untill with some other more worthie labour redeeme it out of your hands, and discharge my utmost dutie. Till then, wishing your Ladiship all increase of honour and happinesse, I humblie take leave.

Your La: ever
humbly,
ED. SP.

[* “This lady was Anne, the fifth daughter of Sir John Spencer, distinguished also, in the pastoral of *Colin Clouts come Home again*, by the name of *Charillis*. She was married, first to Sir William Stanley, Lord Mountegle; next to Henry Compton, Lord Compton; and lastly to Robert Sackvilie, Lord Buckhurst, afterwards Earl of Dorset.”—TODD.]

* * * * *

PROSOPOPOIA:

OR

MOTHER HUBBERDS TALE.

It was the month in which the righteous Maide
That for disdaine of sinfull worlds upbraide
Fled back to heaven, whence she was first conceived,
Into her silver bowre the Sunne received;
And the hot Syrian Dog on him awayting,
After the chafed Lyons cruell bayting,
Corrupted had th’ayre with his noysome breath.
And powr’d on th’earth plague, pestilence, and death.
Emongst the rest a wicked maladie
Raign’d emongst men, that manie did to die,
Depriv’d of sense and ordinarie reason;
That it to leaches seemed strange and geason.
[*Geason*, rare.]
My fortune was, mongst manie others moe,
To be partaker of their common woe;
And my weake bodie, set on fire with griefe,

Was rob'd of rest and naturall reliefe.
In this ill plight, there came to visite mee
Some friends, who, sorie my sad case to see,
Began to comfort me in chearfull wise,
And meanes of gladsome solace to devise.
But seeing kindly sleep refuse to doe
His office, and my feeble eyes forgoe,
They sought my troubled sense how to deceave
With talke that might unquiet fancies reave;
    [*Reave*, take away.]
And sitting all in seates about me round,
With pleasant tales fit for that idle stound
    [*Stound*, time.]
They cast in course to waste the wearie howres.
Some tolde of ladies, and their paramoures;
Some of brave knights, and their renowned squires;
Some of the faeries and their strange attires;
And some of giaunts hard to be beleeved;
That the delight thereof me much releeved.
Amongst the rest a good old woman was,

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Hight Mother Hubberd, who did farre surpas
The rest in honest mirth, that seem'd her well. 35
She, when her turne was come her tale to tell,
Tolde of a strange adventure that betided
Betwixt the Foxe and th'Ape by him misguided;
The which, for that my sense it greatly pleased,
All were my spirite heavie and diseased, 40
Ile write in termes, as she the same did say,
So well as I her words remember may.
No Muses aide me needes heretoo to call;
Base is the style, and matter meane withall.
[*Base*, humble.]

[Symbol: Paragraph mark to indicate beginning of story.]
Whilome, said she, before the world was civill,
The Foxe and th'Ape, disliking of their evill 46
And hard estate, determined to seeke
Their fortunes farre abroad, lyeke with his lyeke:
For both were craftie and unhappie witted;
[*Unhappie*, mischievous.]
Two fellowes might no where be better fitted. 50
The Foxe, that first this cause of griefe did finde,
Gan first thus plaine his case with words unkinde:
"Neighbour Ape, and my gossip eke beside,
(Both two sure bands in friendship to be tide,)
To whom may I more trustely complaine 55
The evill plight that doth me sore constraine,
And hope thereof to finde due remedie?
Heare then my paine and inward agonie.
Thus manie yeares I now have spent and worne,
In meane regard, and basest fortunes scorne, 60
Dooing my countrey service as I might,
No lesse I dare saie than the prowdest wight;
And still I hoped to be up advaunced
For my good parts; but still it hath mischaunced.
Now therefore that no lenger hope I see, 65
But froward fortune still to follow mee,
And losels lifted up on high, where I did looke,
[*Losels*, worthless fellows.]
I meane to turne the next leafe of the booke.

Yet ere that anie way I doe betake,
I meane my gossip privie first to make.”
“Ah! my deare gossip,” answer’d then the Ape,
“Deeply doo your sad words my wits awhape,
[*Awhape*, astound.]
Both for because your griefe doth great appeare,
And eke because my selfe am touched neare:
For I likewise have wasted much good time,
Still wayting to preferment up to clime,
Whilst others alwayes have before me stept,
And from my beard the fat away have swept;
That now unto despaire I gin to growe,
And meane for better winde about to throwe.
Therefore to me, my trustie friend, aread
[*Aread*, declare.]
Thy councell: two is better than one head.”
“Certes,” said he, “I meane me to disguize
In some straunge habit, after uncouth wize,

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Or like a pilgrime, or a lymiter,
[*Lymiter*, *I.e*. a friar licensed to beg within a certain district.]
Or like a gipsen, or a iuggeler,
[*Gipsen*, gypsy.]
And so to wander to the worlds ende,
To seeke my fortune, where I may it mend:
For worse than that I have I cannot meete.
Wide is the world I wote, and everie streete
Is full of fortunes and adventures straunge,
Continuallie subiect unto chaunge.
Say, my faire brother now, if this device
Doth like you, or may you to like entice."
"Surely," said th'Ape, "it likes me wondrous well;
And would ye not poore fellowship expell,
My selfe would offer you t'accompanie
In this adventures chauncefull ieopardie.
For to wexe olde at home in idlenesse
Is disadventrous, and quite fortunelesse:
Abroad, where change is, good may gotten bee."
The Foxe was glad, and quickly did agree:
So both resolv'd, the morrow next ensuing,
So soone as day appeard to peoples vewing,
On their intended iourney to proceede;
And over night, whatso theretoo did neede
Each did prepare, in readines to bee.
The morrow next, so soone as one might see
Light out of heavens windowes forth to looke,
Both their habiliments unto them tooke,
And put themselves, a Gods name, on their way.
Whenas the Ape, beginning well to wey
This hard adventure, thus began t'advise:
"Now read, Sir Reynold, as ye be right wise,
What course ye weene is best for us to take,
That for our selves we may a living make.
Whether shall we professe some trade or skill?
Or shall we varie our device at will,
Even as new occasion appeares?
Or shall we tie our selves for certaine yeares
To anie service, or to anie place?

For it behoves, ere that into the race
We enter, to resolve first hereupon."
"Now surely, brother," said the Foxe anon,
"Te have this matter motioned in season:
For everie thing that is begun with reason
Will come by readie meanes unto his end;
But things miscounselled must needs miswend.
[*Miswend*, go wrong.]
Thus therefore I advize upon the case:
That not to anie certaine trade or place,
Nor anie man, we should our selves applie.
For why should he that is at libertie
Make himselfe bond? Sith then we are free borne.
Let us all servile base subiection scorne;
And as we bee sonnes of the world so wide,
Let us our fathers heritage divide,
And chalenge to our selves our portions dew
Of all the patrimonie, which a few
Now hold in hugger mugger in their hand,

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[*In hugger mugger*, in secret]
And all the rest doo rob of good and land:
For now a few have all, and all have nought,
Yet all be brethren ylike dearly bought.
There is no right in this partition,
Ne was it so by institution
Ordained first, ne by the law of Nature,
But that she gave like blessing to each creture
As well of worldly livelode as of life,
That there might be no difference nor strife,
Nor ought cald mine or thine: thrice happie then
Was the condition of mortall men.
That was the golden age of Saturne old,
But this might better be the world of gold;
For without golde now nothing wilbe got.
Therefore, if please you, this shalbe our plot:
We will not be of anie occupation;
Let such vile vassalls, borne to base vocation,
Drudge in the world and for their living droyle,
[*Droyle*, moil]
Which have no wit to live withouten toyle.
But we will walke about the world at pleasure,
Like two free men, and make our ease our treasure.
Free men some beggers call; but they be free;
And they which call them so more beggers bee:
For they doo swinke and sweate to feed the other,
[*Swinke*, toil.]
Who live like lords of that which they doo gather,
And yet doo never thanke them for the same,
But as their due by nature doo it clame.
Such will we fashion both our selves to bee,
Lords of the world; and so will wander free
Where so us listeth, uncontrol'd of anie.
Hard is our hap, if we, emongst so manie,
Light not on some that may our state amend;
Sildome but some good commeth ere the end."
Well seemd the Ape to like this ordinaunce:
Yet, well considering of the circumstaunce,
As pausing in great doubt awhile he staid,
And afterwards with grave advizement said:

“I cannot, my lief brother, like but well
    [*Lief*, dear.]
The purpose of the complot which ye tell;
For well I wot (compar’d to all the rest
Of each degree) that beggers life is best,
And they that thinke themselves the best of all
Oft-times to begging are content to fall.
But this I wot withall, that we shall ronne
Into great daunger, like to bee undonne,
Thus wildly to wander in the worlds eye,
Withouten pasport or good warrantye,
For feare least we like rogues should be reputed,
And for eare-marked beasts abroad be bruted.
Therefore I read that we our counsells call
How to prevent this mischiefe ere it fall,
And how we may, with most securitie,
Beg amongst those that beggars doo defie.”

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“Right well, deere gossip, ye advized have,”
Said then the Foxe, “but I this doubt will save:
For ere we farther passe, I will devise
A pasport for us both in fittest wize,
And by the names of souldiers us protect,
That now is thought a civile begging sect.
Be you the souldier, for you likest are
For manly semblance, and small skill in warre:
I will but wayte on you, and, as occasion
Falls out, my selfe fit for the same will fashion.”
The pasport ended, both they forward went;
The Ape clad souldierlike, fit for th’intent,
In a blew iacket with a crosse of redd
And manie slits, as if that he had shedd
Much blood throgh many wounds therein receaved,
Which had the use of his right arme bereaved,
Upon his head an old Scotch cap he wore,
With a plume feather all to peeces tore;
His breeches were made after the new cut,
Al Portugese, loose like an emptie gut,
And his hose broken high above the heeling,
And his shooes beaten out with traveling.
But neither sword nor dagger he did beare;
Seemes that no foes revengement he did feare;
In stead of them a handsome bat he held,
[*Bat*, stick.]
On which he leaned, as one farre in elde.
[*Elde*, age.]
Shame light on him, that through so false illusion
Doth turne the name of souldiers to abusion,
And that which is the noblest mysterie
[*Mysterie*, profession.]
Brings to reproach and common infamie!
Long they thus travailed, yet never met
Adventure which might them a working set:
Yet manie waies they sought, and manie tryed;
Yet for their purposes none fit espyed.
At last they chaunst to meete upon the way
A simple husbandman in garments gray;
Yet, though his vesture were but meane and bace,

[*Bace*, humble.]
A good yeoman he was of honest place,
And more for thrift did care than for gay clothing:
Gay without good is good hearts greatest loathing.
The Foxe, him spying, bad the Ape him dight
[*Dight*, prepare.]
To play his part, for loe! he was in sight
That, if he er'd not, should them entertaine,
And yeeld them timely profite for their paine.
Eftsoones the Ape himselfe gan up to reare,
[*Eftsoones*, straightway.]
And on his shoulders high his bat to beare,
As if good service he were fit to doo,
But little thrift for him he did it too:
And stoutly forward he his steps did straine,
That like a handsome swaine it him became.
When as they nigh approached, that good man,
Seeing them wander loosly, first began
T'enquire, of custome, what and whence they

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were.
To whom the Ape: “I am a souldiere,
That late in warres have spent my deerest blood,
And in long service lost both limbs and good;
And now, constraint that trade to overgive,
I driven am to seeke some meanes to live:
Which might it you in pitie please t’afford,
I would be readie, both in deed and word,
To doo you faithfull service all my dayes.
This yron world” (that same he weeping sayes)
“Brings downe the stowtest hearts to lowest state:
For miserie doth bravest mindes abate,
And make them seeke for that they wont to scorne,
Of fortune and of hope at once forlorne.”
    [*Forlorne*, deserted.]
The honest roan that heard him thus complaine
Was griev’d as he had felt part of his paine;
And, well dispos’d him some reliefe to showe,
Askt if in husbandrie he ought did knowe,—
To plough, to plant, to reap, to rake, to sowe,
To hedge, to ditch, to thrash, to thetch, to mowe;
Or to what labour els he was prepar’d:
For husbands life is labourous and hard.
    [*Husbands*, husbandman’s.]
Whenas the Ape him hard so much to talke
Of labour, that did from his liking balke,
He would have slipt the coller handsomly,
And to him said: “Good Sir, full glad am I
To take what paines may anie living wight:
But my late maymed limbs lack wonted might
To doo their kindly services, as needeth:
    [*Kindly*, natural.]
Scarce this right hand the mouth with diet feedeth;
So that it may no painfull worke endure,
Ne to strong labour can it selfe enure.
But if that anie other place you have,
Which askes small paines, but thriftines to save,
Or care to overlooke, or trust to gather,
Ye may me trust as your owne ghostly father.”
With that the husbandman gan him avize,
That it for him were fittest exercise
Cattell to keep, or grounds to oversee;

And asked him, if he could willing bee
To keep his sheep, or to attend his swyne,
Or watch his mares, or take his charge of kyne.
“Gladly,” said he, “what ever such like paine
Ye put on me, I will the same sustaine:
But gladliest I of your fleecie sheepe
(Might it you please) would take on me the keep.
For ere that unto armes I me betooke,
Unto my fathers sheepe I usde to looke,
That yet the skill thereof I have not loste:
Thereto right well this curdog, by my coste,
(Meaning the Foxe,) will serve my sheepe to gather,
And drive to follow after their belwether.”
The husbandman was meanly well content
[*Meanly*, humbly.]
Triall to make of his endevourment;

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And, home him leading, lent to him the charge
Of all his flocke, with libertie full large,
Giving accompt of th'annuall increce
Both of their lambes, and of their woolly fleece.
Thus is this Ape become a shepheard swaine,
And the false Foxe his dog: God give them paine!
For ere the yeare have halfe his course out-run,
And doo returne from whence he first begun,
They shall him make an ill accompt of thrift.
Now whenas time, flying with winges swift,
Expired had the terme that these two iavels
    [*Iavels,* worthless fellows.]
Should render up a reckning of their travels
Unto their master, which it of them sought,
Exceedingly they troubled were in thought,
Ne wist what answere unto him to frame,
Ne how to scape great punishment, or shame,
For their false treason and vile theeverie:
For not a lambe of all their flockes-supply
Had they to shew; but ever as they bred,
They slue them, and upon their fleshes fed:
For that disguised dog lov'd blood to spill,
And drew the wicked shepheard to his will.
So twixt them both they not a lambkin left;
And when lambes fail'd, the old sheepes lives they reft;
That how t'acquite themselves unto their lord
They were in doubt, and flatly set abord.
    [*Set abord*, set adrift, at a loss.]
The Foxe then counsel'd th'Ape for to require
Respite till morrow t'answere his desire:
For times delay new hope of helpe still breeds.
The good man granted, doubting nought their deeds,
And bad next day that all should readie be.
But they more subtill meaning had than he:
For the next morrowes meed they closely ment,
    [*Closely*, secretly.]
For feare of afterclaps, for to prevent:
    [*Prevent*, anticipate.]
And that same evening, when all shrowded were
In careles sleep, they without care or feare

Cruelly fell upon their flock in folde,
And of them slew at pleasure what they wolde.
Of which whenas they feasted had their fill,
For a full complement of all their ill,
They stole away, and tooke their hastie flight,
Carried in clowdes of all-concealing night.
So was the husbandman left to his losse,
And they unto their fortunes change to tosse.
After which sort they wandered long while,
Abusing manie through their cloaked guile;
That at the last they gan to be descryed
Of everie one, and all their sleights espyed;
So as their begging now them failed quyte,
For none would give, but all men would them wyte.
[*Wyte*, blame.]
Yet would they take no paines to get their living,
But seeke some other way to gaine by giving,

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Much like to begging, but much better named;
For manie beg which are thereof ashamed.
And now the Foxe had gotten him a gowne,
And th'Ape a cassocke sidelong hanging downe;
For they their occupation meant to change,
And now in other state abroad to range:
For since their souldiers pas no better spedd,
They forg'd another, as for clerkes booke-redd.
Who passing foorth, as their adventures fell,
Through manie haps, which needs not here to tell,
At length chaunst with a formall Priest to meete,
    [*Formall*, regular.]
Whom they in civill manner first did greete,
And after askt an almes for Gods deare love.
The man straightway his choler up did move,
And with reproachfull tearmes gan them revile,
For following that trade so base and vile;
And askt what license or what pas they had.
"Ah!" said the Ape, as sighing wondrous sad,
"Its an hard case, when men of good deserving
Must either driven be perforce to sterving,
Or asked for their pas by everie squib,
    [*Squib*, flashy, pretentious fellow]
That list at will them to revile or snib.
    [*Snib*, snub]
And yet (God wote) small oddes I often see
Twixt them that aske, and them that asked bee.
Natheles because you shall not us misdeeme,
But that we are as honest as we seeme,
Yee shall our pasport at your pleasure see,
And then ye will (I hope) well mooved bee."
Which when the Priest beheld, he vew'd it nere,
As if therein some text he studying were,
But little els (God wote) could thereof skill:
    [*Skill*, understand.]
For read he could not evidence nor will,
Ne tell a written word, ne write a letter,
Ne make one title worse, ne make one better.
Of such deep learning little had he neede,
Ne yet of Latine ne of Greeke, that breede
Doubts mongst divines, and difference of texts,

From whence arise diversitie of sects,
And hatefull heresies, of God abhor’d.
But this good Sir did follow the plaine word,
Ne medled with their controversies vaine;
All his care was his service well to saine,
    [*Saine*, say.]
And to read homelies upon holidayes;
When that was done, he might attend his playes:
An easie life, and fit high God to please.
He, having overlookt their pas at ease,
Gan at the length them to rebuke againe,
That no good trade of life did entertaine,
But lost their time in wandring loose abroad;
Seeing the world, in which they bootles boad,
    [*Bootless boad*, dwelt unprofitably.]
Had wayes enough for all therein to live;
Such grace did God unto his creatures give.

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Said then the Foxe: “Who hath the world not tride
From the right way full eath may wander wide.
    [*Eath*, easy.]
We are but novices, new come abroad,
We have not yet the tract of anie troad,
    [I.e. routine of any way of life.]
Nor on us taken anie state of life,
But readie are of anie to make preife.
    [*Preife*, proof.]
Therefore might please you, which the world have proved,
Us to advise, which forth but lately moved,
Of some good course that we might undertake,
Ye shall for ever us your bondmen make.”
The priest gan wexe halfe proud to be so praide,
And thereby willing to affoord them aide,
“It seemes,” said he, “right well that ye be clerks,
Both by your wittie words and by your works.
Is not that name enough to make a living
To him that hath a whit of Natures giving?
How manie honest men see ye arize
Daylie thereby, and grow to goodly prize;
To deanes, to archdeacons, to commissaries,
To lords, to principalls, to prebendaries?
All iolly prelates, worthie rule to beare,
Who ever them envie: yet spite bites neare.
Why should ye doubt, then, but that ye likewise
Might unto some of those in time arise?
In the meane time to live in good estate,
Loving that love, and hating those that hate;
Being some honest curate, or some vicker,
Content with little in condition sicker.”
    [*Sicker*, sure.]
“Ah! but,” said th’Ape, “the charge is wondrous great,
To feed mens soules, and hath an heavie threat.”
“To feede mens soules,” quoth he, “is not in man:
For they must feed themselves, doo what we can.
We are but charg’d to lay the meate before:
Eate they that list, we need to doo no more.
But God it is that feedes them with his grace,
The bread of life powr’d downe from heavenly place.

Therefore said he that with the budding rod
Did rule the Iewes, *All shalbe taught of God.*
That same hath Iesus Christ now to him raught,
    [*Raught*, reached, taken.]
By whom the flock is rightly fed and taught:
He is the shcpheard, and the priest is hee;
We but his shepheard swaines ordain'd to bee.
Therefore herewith doo not your selfe dismay;
Ne is the paines so great, but beare ye may;
For not so great, as it was wont of yore,
It's now a dayes, ne halfe so streight and sore.
They whilome used duly everie day
Their service and their holie things to say,
At morne and even, beside their anthemes sweete,
Their penie masses, and their complynes meete,
    [*Complynes*, even-song; the last service of the day.]
Their diriges, their trentals, and their shrifts,

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[*Trentals*, thirty masses for the dead.]
Their memories, their singings, and their gifts.
[*Memories*, services for the dead.]
Now all those needlesse works are laid away;
Now once a weeke, upon the Sabbath day,
It is enough to doo our small devotion,
And then to follow any merrie motion.
Ne are we tyde to fast, but when we list;
Ne to weare garments base of wollen twist,
But with the finest silkes us to aray,
That before God we may appeare more gay,
Resembling Aarons glorie in his place:
For farre unfit it is, that person bace
Should with vile cloaths approach Gods maiestie,
Whom no uncleannes may approachen nie;
Or that all men, which anie master serve,
Good garments for their service should deserve,
But he that serves the Lord of Hoasts Most High,
And that in highest place, t'approach him nigh,
And all the peoples prayers to present
Before his throne, as on ambassage sent
Both too and fro, should not deserve to weare
A garment better than of wooll or heare.
Beside, we may have lying by our sides
Our lovely lasses, or bright shining brides;
We be not tyde to wilfull chastitie,
But have the gospell of free libertie."
By that he ended had his ghostly sermon,
The Foxe was well induc'd to be a parson;
And of the priest eftsoones gan to enquire
How to a benefice he might aspire.
"Marie, there," said the priest, "is arte indeed:
Much good deep learning one thereout may reed;
For that the ground-worke is, and end of all,
How to obtaine a beneficiall.
First, therefore, when ye have in handsome wise
Your selfe attyred, as you can devise,
Then to some nobleman your selfe applye,
Or other great one in the worldes eye,
That hath a zealous disposition

To God, and so to his religion.
There must thou fashion eke a godly zeale,
Such as no carpers may contrayre reveale:
For each thing fained ought more warie bee.
There thou must walke in sober gravitee,
And seeme as saintlike as Saint Radegund:
Fast much, pray oft, looke lowly on the ground,
And unto everie one doo curtesie meeke:
These lookes (nought saying) doo a benefice seeke,
And be thou sure one not to lacke or long.
    [*Or*, ere.]
But if thee list unto the Court to throng,
And there to hunt after the hoped pray,
Then must thou thee dispose another way
For there thou needs must learne to laugh, to lie,
To face, to forge, to scoffe, to companie,
To crouche, to please, to be a beetle-stock
Of thy great masters will, to scorne, or mock:

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So maist thou chaunce mock out a benefice,
Unlesse thou canst one coniure by device,
Or cast a figure for a bishoprick:
And if one could, it were but a schoole trick.
These be the wayes by which without reward
Livings in court he gotten, though full hard;
For nothing there is done without a fee:
The courtier needes must recompenced bee
With a benevolence, or have in gage
[*Gage*, pledge.]
The primitias of your parsonage:
[*Primitias*, first-fruits.]
Scarse can a bishoprick forpas them by,
But that it must be gelt in privitie.
Doo not thou therefore seeke a living there,
But of more private persons seeke elswhere,
Whereas thou maist compound a better penie,
Ne let thy learning question'd be of anie.
For some good gentleman, that hath the right
Unto his church for to present a wight,
Will cope with thee in reasonable wise,
[*Cope*, bargain.]
That if the living yerely doo arise
To fortie pound, that then his yongest sonne
Shall twentie have, and twentie thou hast wonne:
Thou hast it wonne, for it is of franke gift
And he will care for all the rest to shift;
Both that the bishop may admit of thee,
And that therein thou maist maintained bee.
This is the way for one that is unlern'd
Living to get, and not to be discern'd.
But they that are great clerkes have nearer wayes
For learning sake to living them to raise:
Yet manie eke of them (God wote) are driven
T'accept a benefice in peeces riven.—
How saist thou, friend, have I not well discourst
Upon this common-place, though plaine, not wourst?
Better a short tale than a bad long shriving:
Needes anie more to learne to get a living?"
"Now sure, and by my hallidome," quoth he

“Yea great master are in your degree:
Great thankes I yeeld you for your discipline,
And doo not doubt but duly to encline
My wits theretoo, as ye shall shortly heare.”
The priest him wisht good speed and well to fare:
So parted they, as eithers way them led.
But th’Ape and Foxe ere long so well them sped,
Through the priests holesome counsell lately tought,
And throgh their owne faire handling wisely wroght,
That they a benefice twixt them obtained,
And craftie Reynold was a priest ordained,
And th’Ape his parish clarke procur’d to bee:
Then made they revell route and goodly glee.
But, ere long time had passed, they so ill
Did order their affaires, that th’evill will
Of all their parishners they had constraind;
Who to the ordinarie of them complain’d,

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How fowlie they their offices abusd,
And them of crimes and heresies accusd;
That pursivants he often for them sent.
But they neglected his commaundement;
So long persisted obstinate and bolde,
Till at the length he published to holde
A visitation, and them cyted thether.
Then was high time their wits about to geather;
What did they then, but made a composition
With their next neighbor priest for light condition,
To whom their living they resigned quight
For a few pence, and ran away by night.
So passing through the countrey in disguize,
They fled farre off, where none might them surprize,
And after that long straied here and there,
Through everie field and forrest farre and nere;
Yet never found occasion for their tourne,
But, almost sterv'd, did much lament and mourne.
At last they chaunst to meete upon the way
The Mule, all deckt in goodly rich aray,
With bells and bosses that full lowdly rung,
And costly trappings that to ground downe hung.
Lowly they him saluted in meeke wise;
But he through pride and fatnes gan despise
Their meanesse; scarce vouchsafte them to requite.
Whereat the Foxe deep groning in his sprite,
Said: "Ah! Sir Mule, now blessed be the day
That I see you so goodly and so gay
In your attyres, and eke your silken hyde
Fil'd with round flesh, that everie bone doth hide.
Seemes that in fruitfull pastures ye doo live,
Or fortune doth you secret favour give."
"Foolish Foxe!" said the Mule, "thy wretched need
Praiseth the thing that doth thy sorrow breed.
For well I weene thou canst not but envie
My wealth, compar'd to thine owne miserie,
That art so leane and meagre waxen late
That scarse thy legs uphold thy feeble gate."
"Ay me!" said then the Foxe, "whom evill hap
Unworthy in such wretchednes doth wrap,

And makes the scorne of other beasts to bee.
But read, faire Sir, of grace, from whence come yee;
Or what of tidings you abroad doo heare;
Newes may perhaps some good unweeting beare."
"From royall court I lately came," said he,
"Where all the braverie that eye may see,
And all the happinesse that heart desire,
Is to be found; he nothing can admire,
That hath not seene that heavens portracture.
But tidings there is none, I you assure,
Save that which common is, and knowne to all,
That courtiers as the tide doo rise and fall."
"But tell us," said the Ape, "we doo you pray,
Who now in court doth beare the greatest sway:
That, if such fortune doo to us befall,
We may seeke favour of the best of all."

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“Marie,” said he, “the highest now in grace,
Be the wilde beasts, that swiftest are in chase;
For in their speedie course and nimble flight
The Lyon now doth take the most delight:
But chieflie ioyes on foote them to beholde,
Enchaste with chaine and circulet of golde:
    [*Enchaste*, adorned.]
So wilde a beaste so tame ytaught to bee,
And buxome to his bands, is ioy to see;
    [*Buxome*, obedient.]
So well his golden circlet him beseemeth.
But his late chayne his Liege unmeete esteemeth;
For so brave beasts she loveth best to see
    [She: *I.e*. the queen.]
In the wilde forrest raunging fresh and free.
Therefore if fortune thee in court to live,
In case thou ever there wilt hope to thrive,
To some of these thou must thy selfe apply;
Els as a thistle-downe in th’ayre doth flie,
So vainly shalt thou too and fro be tost,
And loose thy labour and thy fruitles cost.
And yet full few which follow them I see
For vertues bare regard advaunced bee,
But either for some gainfull benefit,
Or that they may for their owne turnes be fit.
Nath’les, perhaps ye things may handle soe,
That ye may better thrive than thousands moe.”
“But,” said the Ape, “how shall we first come in,
That after we may favour seeke to win?”
“How els,” said he, “but with a good bold face,
And with big words, and with a stately pace,
That men may thinke of you in generall
That to be in you which is not at all:
For not by that which is the world now deemeth,
(As it was wont) but by that same that seemeth.
Ne do I doubt but that ye well can fashion
Your selves theretoo, according to occasion.
So fare ye well: good courtiers may ye bee!”
So, proudlie neighing, from them parted hee.
Then gan this craftie couple to devize,

How for the court themselves they might aguize:
[*Aguize*, decorate.]
For thither they themselves meant to addresse,
In hope to finde there happier successe.
So well they shifted, that the Ape anon
Himselfe had cloathed like a gentleman,
And the slie Foxe as like to be his groome;
That to the court in seemly sort they come.
Where the fond Ape, himselfe uprearing by
Upon his tiptoes, stalketh stately by,
As if he were some great magnifico,
And boldlie doth amongst the boldest go;
And his man Reynold, with fine counterfesaunce,
[*Counterfesaunce*, counterfeiting.]
Supports his credite and his countenaunce.
Then gan the courtiers gaze on everie side,
And stare on him with big looks basen wide,

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[*Basen*, swelled.]
Wondring what mister wight he was, and whence;
[*Mister wight*, sort of creature.]
For he was clad in strange accoustrements,
Fashion'd with queint devises never seene
In court before, yet there all fashions beene;
Yet he them in newfanglenesse did pas.
But his behaviour altogether was
Alla Turchesca, much the more admyr'd;
[*Alla Turchesca*, in the Turkish fashion.]
And his lookes loftie, as if he aspyr'd
To dignitie, and sdeign'd the low degree;
That all which did such strangenesse in him see
By secrete meanes gan of his state enquire,
And privily his servant thereto hire:
Who, throughly arm'd against such coverture,
[*Coverture*, underhand dealing.]
Reported unto all that he was sure
A noble gentleman of high regard,
Which through the world had with long travel far'd,
And seene the manners of all beasts on ground,
Now here arriv'd to see if like he found.
Thus did the Ape at first him credit gaine,
Which afterwards he wisely did maintaine
With gallant showe, and daylie more augment
Through his fine feates and courtly complement;
For he could play, and daunce, and vaute, and spring,
And all that els pertaines to reveling.
Onely through kindly aptnes of his ioynts.
[*Kindly*, natural.]
Besides he could doo manie other poynts,
The which in court him served to good stead:
For he mongst ladies could their fortunes read
Out of their hands, and merie leasings tell,
And iuggle finely, that became him well.
But he so light was at legierdemaine,
That what he toucht came not to light againe;
Yet would he laugh it out, and proudly looke,
And tell them that they greatly him mistooke.
So would he scoffe them out with mockcrie,

For he therein had great felicitie;
And with sharp quips ioy'd others to deface,
Thinking that their disgracing did him grace:
So whilst that other like vaine wits he pleased
And made to laugh, his heart was greatly eased.
But the right gentle minde woulde bite his lip,
To heare the iavell so good men to nip:
[*Iavell*, worthless fellow.]
For, though the vulgar yeeld an open eare,
And common courtiers love to gybe and fleare
At everie thing which they heare spoken ill,
And the best speaches with ill meaning spill,
[*Spill*, spoil.]
Yet the brave courtier, in whose beauteous thought
Regard of honour harbours more than ought,
Doth loath such base condition, to backbite
[*Condition*, quality.]
Anies good name for envie or despite.

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He stands on tearmes of honourable minde,
Ne will be carried with the common winde
Of courts inconstant mutabilitie,
Ne after everie tattling fable flie;
But heares and sees the follies of the rest,
And thereof gathers for himselfe the best.
He will not creepe, nor crouche with fained face,
But walkes upright with comely stedfast pace,
And unto all doth yeeld due curtesie;
But not with kissed hand belowe the knee,
As that same apish crue is wont to doo:
For he disdaines himselfe t'embase theretoo.
He hates fowle leasings and vile flatterie,
Two filthie blots in noble gentrie;
And lothefull idlenes he doth detest,
The canker worme of everie gentle brest;
The which to banish with faire exercise
Of knightly feates he daylie doth devise:
Now menaging the mouthes of stubborne steedes,
Now practising the proofe of warlike deedes,
Now his bright armes assaying, now his speare,
Now the nigh aymed ring away to beare:
At other times he casts to sew the chace
    [*Casts*, plans, makes arrangements.]
Of Swift wilde beasts, or runne on foote a race,
T'enlarge his breath, (large breath in armes most needfull,)
Or els by wrestling to wex strong and heedfull,
Or his stiffe armes to stretch with eughen bowe,
    [*Eughen*, made of yew.]
And manly legs, still passing too and fro,
Without a gowned beast him fast beside;
A vaine ensample of the Persian pride,
Who after he had wonne th'Assyrian foe,
Did ever after scorne on foote to goe.
Thus when this courtly gentleman with toyle
Himselfe hath wearied, he doth recoyle
Unto his rest, and there with sweete delight
Of musicks skill revives his toyled spright;
Or els with loves and ladies gentle sports,
The ioy of youth, himselfe he recomforts:
Or lastly, when the bodie list to pause,

His minde unto the Muses he withdrawes,
Sweete Ladie Muses, ladies of delight,
Delights of life, and ornaments of light:
With whom he close confers with wise discourse,
Of Natures workes, of heavens continuall course,
Of forreine lands, of people different,
Of kingdomes change, of divers gouvernment,
Of dreadfull battailes of renowmed knights;
With which he kindleth his ambitious sprights
To like desire and praise of noble fame,
The onely upshot whereto he doth ayme.
For all his minde on honour fixed is,
To which he levels all his purposis,
And in his Princes service spends his dayes,
Not so much for to game, or for to raise
Himselfe to high degree, as for his grace,

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And in his liking to winne worthie place,
Through due deserts and comely carriage,
In whatso please employ his personage,
That may be matter meete to game him praise.
For he is fit to use in all assayes,
Whether for armes and warlike amenaunce,
[*Amenaunce*, conduct.]
Or else for wise and civill governaunce;
For he is practiz'd well in policie,
And thereto doth his courting most applie:
[*Courting*, life at court.]
To learne the enterdeale of princes strange,
[*Enterdeale*, dealing together.]
To marke th'intent of counsells, and the change
Of states, and eke of private men somewhile,
Supplanted by fine falshood and faire guile;
Of all the which he gathereth what is fit
T'enrich the storehouse of his powerfull wit,
Which through wise speaches and grave conference
He daylie eekes, and brings to excellence.
[*Eekes*, increases.]
Such is the rightfull courtier in his kinde:
But unto such the Ape lent not his minde;
Such were for him no fit companions,
Such would descrie his lewd conditions:
But the yong lustie gallants he did chose
To follow, meete to whom he might disclose
His witlesse pleasance and ill pleasing vaine.
A thousand wayes he them could entertaine,
With all the thriftles games that may be found;
With mumming and with masking all around,
With dice, with cards, with balliards farre unfit,
[*Balliards*, billiards.]
With shuttelcocks, misseeming manlie wit,
[*Misseeming*, unbecoming.]
With courtizans, and costly riotize,
Whereof still somewhat to his share did rize:
Ne, them to pleasure, would he sometimes scorne
A pandares coate (so basely was he borne);
Thereto he could fine loving verses frame,

And play the poet oft. But ah! for shame,
Let not sweete poets praise, whose onely pride
Is vertue to advaunce, and vice deride,
Be with the worke of losels wit defamed,
Ne let such verses poetrie be named!
Yet he the name on him would rashly take,
Maugre the sacred Muses, and it make
A servant to the vile affection
Of such as he depended most upon;
And with the sugrie sweete thereof allure
Chast ladies eares to fantasies impure.
To such delights the noble wits he led
Which him reliev'd, and their vaine humours fed
With fruitles folies and unsound delights.
But if perhaps into their noble sprights
Desire of honor or brave thought of armes
Did ever creepe, then with his wicked charmes
And strong conceipts he would it drive away,
Ne suffer it to house there halfe a day.

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And whenso love of letters did inspire
Their gentle wits, and kindly wise desire,
    [Kindly: Qu. *kindle?*]
That chieflie doth each noble minde adorne,
Then he would scoffe at learning, and eke scorne
The sectaries thereof, as people base
    [*Sectaries*, followers.]
And simple men, which never came in place
Of worlds affaires, but, in darke corners mewd,
Muttred of matters as their bookes them shewd,
Ne other knowledge ever did attaine,
But with their gownes their gravitie maintaine.
From them he would his impudent lewde speach
Against Gods holie ministers oft reach,
And mocke divines and their profession.
What else then did he by progression,
But mocke High God himselfe, whom they professe?
But what car'd he for God, or godlinesse?
All his care was himselfe how to advaunce,
And to uphold his courtly countenaunce
By all the cunning meanes he could devise;
"Were it by honest wayes, or otherwise,
He made small choyce: yet sure his honestie
Got him small gaines, but shameles flatterie,
And filthie brocage, and unseemly shifts,
    [*Brocage*, pimping.]
And borowe base, and some good ladies gifts.
    [*Borowe*, pledging.]
But the best helpe, which chiefly him sustain'd,
Was his man Raynolds purchase which he gain'd:
    [*Purchase*, booty.]
For he was school'd by kinde in all the skill
    [*Kinde*, nature.]
Of close conveyance, and each practise ill
Of coosinage and cleanly knaverie,
    [*Cleanly*, neat, skillful.]
Which oft maintain'd his masters braverie.
Besides, he usde another slipprie slight,
In taking on himselfe, in common sight,
False personages fit for everie sted,

With which he thousands cleanly coosined:
Now like a merchant, merchants to deceave,
With whom his credite he did often leave
In gage for his gay masters hopelesse dett:
Now like a lawyer, when he land would lett,
Or sell fee-simples in his masters name,
Which he had never, nor ought like the same;
Then would he be a broker, and draw in
Both wares and money, by exchange to win:
Then would he seeme a farmer, that would sell
Bargaines of woods, which he did lately fell,
Or corne, or cattle, or such other ware,
Thereby to coosin men not well aware:
Of all the which there came a secret fee
To th'Ape, that he his countenaunce might bee.
Besides all this, he us'd oft to beguile
Poore suters that in court did haunt some while:
For he would learne their busines secretly,
And then informe his master hastely,

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That he by meanes might cast them to prevent,
[*Prevent*, anticipate.]
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 soule 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!
For none but such as this bold Ape unblest
Can ever thrive in that unluckie quest;
Or such as hath a Reynold to his man,
That by his shifts his master furnish can.
But yet this Foxe could not so closely hide
His craftie feates, but that they were descride

At length by such as sate in iustice seate,
Who for the same him fowlie did entreate;
And, having worthily him punished,
Out of the court for ever banished.
And now the Ape, wanting his huckster man,
That wont provide his necessaries, gan
To growe into great lacke, ne could upholde
His countenaunce in those his garments olde;
Ne new ones could he easily provide,
Though all men him uncased gan deride,
Like as a puppit placed in a play,
Whose part once past all men bid take away:
So that he driven was to great distresse,
And shortly brought to hopelesse wretchednesse.
Then closely as he might he cast to leave
The court, not asking any passe or leave;

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But ran away in his rent rags by night,
Ne ever stayd in place, ne spake to wight,
Till that the Foxe, his copesmate, he had found;
    [*Copesmate*, partner in trade.]
To whome complayning his unhappie stound,
    [*Stound*, plight, exigency.]
At last againe with him in travell ioynd,
And with him far'd some better chaunee to fynde.
So in the world long time they wandered,
And mickle want and hardnesse suffered;
That them repented much so foolishly
To come so farre to seeke for misery,
And leave the sweetnes of contented home,
Though eating hipps and drinking watry fome.
    [*Hipps*, dog-rose berries.]
Thus as they them complayned too and fro,
Whilst through the forest rechlesse they did goe,
    [*Rechlesse*, reckless.]
Lo! where they spide how in a gloomy glade
The Lyon sleeping lay in secret shade,
His crowne and scepter lying him beside,
And having doft for heate his dreadfull hide:
Which when they saw, the Ape was sore afrayde,
And would have fled with terror all dismayde.
But him the Foxe with hardy words did stay,
And bad him put all cowardize away;
For now was time, if ever they would hope,
To ayme their counsels to the fairest scope,
And them for ever highly to advaunce,
In case the good which their owne happie chaunce
Them freely offred they would wisely take.
Scarse could the Ape yet speake, so did he quake;
Yet, as he could, he askt how good might growe
Where nought but dread and death do seeme in show.
"Now," sayd he, "whiles the Lyon sleepeth sound,
May we his crowne and mace take from the ground,
And eke his skinne, the terror of the wood,
Wherewith we may our selves, if we thinke good,
Make kings of beasts, and lords of forests all
Subiect unto that powre imperiall."

“Ah! but,” sayd the Ape, “who is so bold a wretch,
That dare his hardy hand to those outstretch,
When as he knowes his meede, if he be spide,
To be a thousand deathes, and shame beside?”
“Fond Ape!” sayd then the Foxe, “into whose brest
Never crept thought of honor nor brave gest,
    [*Gest*, deed.]
Who will not venture life a king to be,
And rather rule and raigne in soveraign see,
Than dwell in dust inglorious and bace,
Where none shall name the number of his place?
One ioyous howre in blisfull happines,
I chose before a life of wretchednes.
Be therefore counselled herein by me,
And shake off this vile-harted cowardree.
If he awake, yet is not death the next,
For we may colour it with some pretext
Of this or that, that may excuse the cryme:

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Else we may flye; thou to a tree mayst clyme,
And I creepe under ground; both from his reach:
Therefore be rul'd to doo as I doo teach."
The Ape, that earst did nought but chill and quake,
Now gan some courage unto him to take,
And was content to attempt that enterprise,
Tickled with glorie and rash covetise.
But first gan question, whether should assay
    [*Whether*, which of the two.]
Those royall ornaments to steale away?
"Marie, that shall your selfe," quoth he theretoo,
"For ye be fine and nimble it to doo;
Of all the beasts which in the forrests bee
Is not a fitter for this turne than yee:
Therefore, mine owne deare brother, take good hart,
And ever thinke a kingdome is your part."
Loath was the Ape, though praised, to adventer,
Yet faintly gan into his worke to enter,
Afraid of everie leafe that stir'd him by,
And everie stick that underneath did ly:
Upon his tiptoes nicely he up went,
For making noyse, and still his eare he lent
To everie sound that under heaven blew;
Now went, now stopt, now crept, now backward drew,
That it good sport had been him to have eyde.
Yet at the last, so well he him applyde,
Through his fine handling and cleanly play
He all those royall signes had stolne away,
And with the Foxes helpe them borne aside
Into a secret corner unespide.
Whither whenas they came they fell at words,
Whether of them should be the lords of lords:
For th'Ape was stryfull and ambicious,
And the Foxe guilefull and most covetous;
That neither pleased was to have the rayne
Twixt them divided into even twaine,
But either algates would be lords alone:
    [*Algates*, by all means.]
For love and lordship bide no paragone.
    [*Paragone*, equal, partner.]

“I am most worthie,” said the Ape, “sith I
For it did put my life in ieopardie:
Thereto I am in person and in stature
Most like a man, the lord of everie creature,
So that it seemeth I was made to raigne,
And borne to be a kingly soveraigne.”
“Nay,” said the Foxe, “Sir Ape, you are astray;
For though to steale the diademe away
Were the worke of your nimble hand, yet I
Did first devise the plot by pollicie;
So that it wholly springeth from my wit:
For which also I claime my selfe more fit
Than you to rule: for government of state
Will without wisedome soone be ruinate.
And where ye claime your selfe for outward shape
Most like a man, man is not like an ape
In his chiefe parts, that is, in wit and spirite;
But I therein most like to him doo merite,

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For my slie wyles and subtill craftinesse,
The title of the kingdome to possesse.
Nath'les, my brother, since we passed are
Unto this point, we will appease our iarre;
And I with reason meete will rest content,
That ye shall have both crowne and government,
Upon condition that ye ruled bee
In all affaires, and counselled by mee;
And that ye let none other ever drawe
Your minde from me, but keepe this as a lawe:
And hereupon an oath unto me plight."
The Ape was glad to end the strife so light,
And thereto swore: for who would not oft sweare,
And oft unsweare, a diademe to beare?
Then freely up those royall spoyles he tooke,
Yet at the Lyons skin he inly quooke;
But it dissembled, and upon his head
The crowne, and on his backe the skin, he did,
And the false Foxe him helped to array.
Then when he was all dight he tooke his way
Into the forest, that he might be seene
Of the wilde beasts in his new glory sheene.
There the two first whome he encountred were
The Sheepe and th'Asse, who, striken both with feare
At sight of him, gan fast away to flye;
But unto them the Foxe alowd did cry,
And in the kings name bad them both to stay,
Upon the payne that thereof follow may.
Hardly naythles were they restrayned so,
Till that the Foxe forth toward them did goe,
And there disswaded them from needlease feare,
For that the King did favour to them beare;
And therefore dreadles bad them come to corte;
For no wild beasts should do them any torte
    [*Torte*, wrong.]
There or abroad, ne would his Maiestye
Use them but well, with gracious clemencye,
As whome he knew to him both fast and true.
So he perswaded them with homage due
Themselves to humble to the Ape prostrate,

Who, gently to them bowing in his gate,
[*Gate*, way.]
Receyved them with chearefull entertayne.
Thenceforth proceeding with his princely trayne,
He shortly met the Tygre, and the Bore,
Which with the simple Camell raged sore
In bitter words, seeking to take occasion
Upon his fleshly corpse to make invasion:
But soone as they this mock-king did espy,
Their troublous strife they stinted by and by,
[*Stinted by and by*, stopped at once.]
Thinking indeed that it the Lyon was.
He then, to prove whether his powre would pas
As currant, sent the Foxe to them streight way,
Commaunding them their cause of strife bewray;
And, if that wrong on eyther side there were,
That he should warne the wronger to appeare
The morrow next at court, it to defend;

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In the meane time upon the King t'attend.
The subtile Foxe so well his message sayd,
That the proud beasts him readily obayd:
Whereby the Ape in wondrous stomack woxe,
Strongly encorag'd by the crafty Foxe;
That king indeed himselfe he shortly thought,
And all the beasts him feared as they ought,
And followed unto his palaice hye;
Where taking conge, each one by and by
Departed to his home in dreadfull awe,
Full of the feared sight which late they sawe.
The Ape, thus seized of the regall throne,
Eftsones by counsell of the Foxe alone
Gan to provide for all things in assurance,
That so his rule might lenger have endurance.
First, to his gate be pointed a strong gard,
That none might enter but with issue hard:
Then, for the safegard of his personage,
He did appoint a warlike equipage
Of forreine beasts, not in the forest bred,
But part by land and part by water fed;
For tyrannie is with strange ayde supported.
Then unto him all monstrous beasts resorted
Bred of two kindes, as Griffons, Minotaures,
Crocodiles, Dragons, Beavers, and Centaures:
With those himselfe he strengthned mightelie,
That feare he neede no force of enemie.
Then gan he rule and tyrannize at will,
Like as the Foxe did guide his graceles skill;
And all wylde beasts made vassals of his pleasures,
And with their spoyles enlarg'd his private treasures.
No care of iustice, nor no rule of reason,
No temperance, nor no regard of season,
Did thenceforth ever enter in his minde;
But crueltie, the signe of currish kinde,
And sdeignfull pride, and wilfull arrogaunce;
Such followes those whom fortune doth advaunce.
But the false Foxe most kindly plaid his part:
    [*Kindly*, according to his nature.]
For whatsoever mother-wit or arte

Could worke, he put in proofe: no practise slie,
No counterpoint of cunning policie,
    [*Counterpoint*, counterplot.]
Ne reach, no breach, that might him profit bring,
But he the same did to his purpose wring.
Nought suffered he the Ape to give or graunt,
But through his hand must passe the fiaunt.
    [*Fiaunt*, fiat.]
All offices, all leases by him lept,
And of them all whatso he likte he kept.
Iustice he solde iniustice for to buy,
And for to purchase for his progeny.
    [*Purchase*, collect spoil.]
Ill might it prosper that ill gotten was,
But, so he got it, little did he pas.
    [*Pas*, care.]
He fed his cubs with fat of all the soyle,
And with the sweete of others sweating toyle;

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He crammed them with crumbs of benefices,
And fild their mouthes with meeds of malefices;
[*Malifices*, evil deeds.]
He cloathed them with all colours save white,
And loded them with lordships and with might,
So much as they were able well to beare,
That with the weight their backs nigh broken were.
He chaffred chayres in which churchmen were set,
[*Chaffred*, bartered.]
And breach of lawes to privie ferme did let.
[*Ferme*, farm.]
No statute so established might bee,
Nor ordinaunce so needfull, but that hee
Would violate, though not with violence,
Yet under colour of the confidence
The which the Ape repos'd in him alone,
And reckned him the kingdomes corner stone.
And ever, when he ought would bring to pas,
His long experience the platforme was:
And when he ought not pleasing would put by
The cloke was care of thrift, and husbandry,
For to encrease the common treasures store.
But his owne treasure he encreased more,
And lifted up his loftie towres thereby,
That they began to threat the neighbour sky;
The whiles the princes pallaces fell fast
To ruine; for what thing can ever last?
And whilest the other peeres for povertie
Were forst their auncient houses to let lie,
And their olde castles to the ground to fall,
Which their forefathers famous over-all
[*Over-all*, everywhere.]
Had founded for the kingdomes ornament,
And for their memories long moniment.
But he no count made of nobilitie,
Nor the wilde beasts whom armes did glorifie,
The realmes chiefe strength and girlond of the crowne.
All these through fained crimes he thrust adowne,
Or made them dwell in darknes of disgrace:
For none but whom he list might come in place.

Of men of armes he had but small regard,
But kept them lowe, and streigned verie hard.
For men of learning little he esteemed;
His wisedome he above their learning deemed.
As for the rascall commons, least he cared,
For not so common was his bountie shared:
“Let God,” said he, “if please, care for the manie,
I for my selfe must care before els anie.”
So did he good to none, to manie ill,
So did he all the kingdome rob and pill,
[*Pill*, plunder.]
Yet none durst speake, ne none durst of him plaine;
So great he was in grace, and rich through game.
Ne would he anie let to have accesse
Unto the Prince, but by his owne addresse:
For all that els did come were sure to faile;
Yet would he further none but for availe.
For on a time the Sheepe, to whom of yore

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The Foxe had promised of friendship store,
What time the Ape the kingdome first did gaine,
Came to the court, her case there to complaine;
How that the Wolfe, her mortall enemie,
Had sithence slaine her lambe most cruellie;
[*Sithence*, since.]
And therefore crav'd to come unto the King,
To let him knowe the order of the thing.
"Soft, Gooddie Sheepe!" then said the Foxe, "not soe:
Unto the King so rash ye may not goe;
He is with greater matter busied
Than a lambe, or the lambes owne mothers hed.
Ne certes may I take it well in part,
That ye my cousin Wolfe so fowly thwart,
And seeke with slaunder his good name to blot:
For there was cause, els doo it he would not:
Therefore surcease, good dame, and hence depart."
So went the Sheepe away with heavie hart;
So manie moe, so everie one was used,
That to give largely to the boxe refused.

Now when high Iove, in whose almightie hand
The care of kings and power of empires stand,
Sitting one day within his turret hye,
From whence he vewes with his black-lidded eye
Whatso the heaven in his wide vawte containes,
And all that in the deepest earth remaines,
And troubled kingdome of wilde beasts behelde,
Whom not their kindly sovereigne did welde,
[*Welde*, govern.]
But an usurping Ape, with guile suborn'd,
Had all subverst, he sdeignfully it scorn'd
In his great heart, and hardly did refraine
But that with thunder bolts he had him slaine,
And driven downe to hell, his dewest meed.
But him avizing, he that dreadfull deed
Forbore, and rather chose with scornfull shame
Him to avenge, and blot his brutish name
Unto the world, that never after anie
Should of his race be voyd of infamie;
And his false counsellor, the cause of all,

To damne to death, or dole perpetuall,
From whence he never should be quit nor stal'd.
[*Stal'd*, forestalled (?).]
Forthwith he Mercurie unto him cal'd,
And bad him flie with never-resting speed
Unto the forrest, where wilde beasts doo breed,
And, there enquiring privily, to learne
What did of late chaunce to the Lyon stearne,
That he rul'd not the empire, as he ought;
And whence were all those plaints unto him brought
Of wrongs and spoyles by salvage beasts committed:
Which done, he bad the Lyon be remitted
Into his seate, and those same treachours vile
[*Treachours*, traitors.]
Be punished for their presumptuous guile.
The sonne of Maia, soone as he receiv'd
That word, streight with his azure wings he cleav'd

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The liquid clowdes and lucid firmament,
Ne staid till that he came with steep descent
Unto the place where his prescript did showe.
There stouping, like an arrowe from a bowe,
He soft arrived on the grassie plaine,
And fairly paced forth with easie paine,
Till that unto the pallace nigh he came.
Then gan he to himselfe new shape to frame,
And that faire face, and that ambrosiall hew,
Which wonts to decke the gods immortall crew,
And beautefie the shinie firmament,
He doft, unfit for that rude rabblement.
So, standing by the gates in strange disguize,
He gan enquire of some in secret wize,
Both of the King, and of his government,
And of the Foxe, and his false blandishment:
And evermore he heard each one complaine
Of foule abuses both in realme and raine:
Which yet to prove more true, he meant to see,
And an ey-witnes of each thing to bee.
Tho on his head his dreadfull hat he dight,
Which maketh him invisible in sight,
And mocketh th'eyes of all the lookers on,
Making them thinke it but a vision.
Through power of that he runnes through enemies swerds;
Through power of that he passeth through the herds
Of ravenous wilde beasts, and doth beguile
Their greedie mouthes of the expected spoyle;
Through power of that his cunning theeveries
He wonts to worke, that none the same espies;
And through the power of that he putteth on
What shape he list in apparition.
That on his head he wore, and in his hand
He tooke caduceus, his snakie wand,
With which the damned ghosts he governeth,
And furies rules, and Tartare tempereth.
With that he causeth sleep to seize the eyes,
And feare the harts, of all his enemyes;
And when him list, an universall night
Throughout the world he makes on everie wight;

As when his syre with Alcumena lay.
Thus dight, into the court he tooke his way,
Both through the gard, which never him descride,
And through the watchmen, who him never spide:
Thenceforth he past into each secrete part,
Whereas he saw, that sorely griev'd his hart,
Each place abounding with fowle iniuries,
And fild with treasure rackt with robberies;
Each place defilde with blood of guiltles beasts
Which had been slaine to serve the Apes beheasts;
Gluttonie, malice, pride, and covetize,
And lawlesnes raigning with riotize;
Besides the infinite extortions,
Done through the Foxes great oppressions,
That the complaints thereof could not be tolde.
Which when he did with lothfull eyes beholde,
He would no more endure, but came his way,

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And cast to seeke the Lion, where he may,
[*Cast*, projected.]
That he might worke the avengement for this shame
On those two caytives which had bred him blame
And seeking all the forrest busily,
At last he found where sleeping he did ly.
The wicked weed which there the Foxe did lay
From underneath his head he tooke away,
And then him, waking, forced up to rize.
The Lion, looking up, gan him avize,
[*Avize*, bethink.]
As one late in a traunce, what had of long
Become of him: for fantasie is strong.
“Arise,” said Mercurie, “thou sluggish beast,
That here liest senseles, like the corpse deceast,
The whilste thy kingdome from thy head is rent,
And thy throne royall with dishonour blent:
[*Blent*, stained.]
Arise, and doo thy selfe redeeme from shame,
And be aveng’d on those that breed thy blame.”
Thereat enraged, soone he gan upstart,
Grinding his teeth, and grating his great hart;
And, rouzing up himselfe, for his rough hide
He gan to reach; but no where it espide.
Therewith he gan full terribly to rore,
And chafte at that indignitie right sore.
But when his crowne and scepter both he wanted,
Lord! how he fum’d, and sweld, and rag’d, and panted,
And threatned death and thousand deadly dolours
To them that had purloyn’d his princely honours.
With that in hast, disroabed as he was,
He toward his owne pallace forth did pas;
And all the way he roared as he went,
That all the forrest with astonishment
Thereof did tremble, and the beasts therein
Fled fast away from that so dreadfull din.
At last he came unto his mansion,
Where all the gates he found fast lockt anon
And manie warders round about them stood:
With that he roar’d alowd, as he were wood,
[*Wood*, frantic.]

That all the pallace quaked at the stound,
[*Stound*, (time, scene) tumult.]
As if it quite were riven from the ground,
And all within were dead and hartles left;
And th'Ape himselfe, as one whose wits were reft,
Fled here and there, and everie corner sought.
To hide himselfe from his owne feared thought.
But the false Foxe, when he the Lion heard,
Fled closely forth, streightway of death afeard,
[*Closely*, secretly.]
And to the Lion came, full lowly creeping,
With fained face, and watrie eyne halfe weeping,
T'excuse his former treason and abusion,
And turning all unto the Apes confusion:
Nath'les the royall beast forbore beleeving,
But bad him stay at ease till further preeving.
[*Preeving*, proving.]

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Then when he saw no entrance to him graunted,
Roaring yet lowder that all harts it daunted,
Upon those gates with force he fiercely newe,
And, rending them in pieces, felly slewe 1370
Those warders strange, and all that els he met
But th'Ape still flying he no where might get:
From rowme to rowme, from beame to beame he fled,
All breathles, and for feare now almost ded:
Yet him at last the Lyon spide, and caught, 1375
And forth with shame unto his iudgement brought.
Then all the beasts he causd' assembled bee,
To heare their doome, and sad ensample see:
The Foxe, first author of that treacherie
He did uncase, and then away let flie. 1380
    [*Uncase*, strip of his disguise.]
But th'Apes long taile (which then he had) he quight
Cut off, and both eares pared of their hight;
Since which, all Apes but halfe their eares have left,
And of their tailes are utterlie bereft.

So Mother Hubberd her discourse did end: 1385
Which pardon me if I amisse have pend,
For weake was my remembrance it to hold,
And bad her tongue that it so bluntly tolde.

* * * * *

FOOTNOTES:

MOTHER HUBBERDS TALE. This charming little poem, Spenser's only successful effort at satire, is stated by the author to have been composed in the raw conceit of his youth. There is internal evidence, however, that some of the happiest passages were added at the date of its publication, at which time the whole was probably retouched. Although Mother Hubberds Tale is in its plan an imitation of the satires of Reynard the Fox; the treatment of the subject is quite original. For the combination of elegance with simplicity, this poem will stand a comparison with Goethe's celebrated translation of the Reineke. C.

Ver. I.—*It was the month*, &c. August.

Ver. 453.—*Diriges*, dirges. The office for the dead received this name from the antiphon with which the first nocturne in the mattens commenced, taken from Psalm v. 8, “Dirige, Domine Deus meus, in conspectu tuo viam meam.” Way’s *Promptorium Parvulorum.* C.

Ver. 519.—*Scarse can a bishoprick*, &c. This is probably an allusion to the frequent alienations of the lands and manors of bishoprics in Elizabeth’s time. TODD.

Ver. 562.—*The ordinarie.* An ordinary is a judge having jurisdiction in ecclesiastical matters. In England, it is usually the bishop of the diocese. H.

Ver. 623, 624.—The Queen was so much pleased with the results of the Portugal expedition of 1589, that she honored the commanders, and Sir Walter Raleigh among the rest, with a gold chain. C.

Ver. 717.—*The brave courtier*, &c. This description is perhaps intended for Sir Philip Sidney. C.

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Ver. 893.—Had-ywist. That is, *had I wist! had I known* that it would end so! a proverbial expression for late repentance consequent on disappointment. C.

Ver. 901.—*To have thy Princes grace, yet want her Peeres.* Elizabeth was said to have granted Spenser a pension which Burghley intercepted, and to have ordered him a gratuity which her minister neglected to pay. C.

Ver. 913.—*Himselfe will a daw trie.* So the old copy: the reading should probably be *himselfe a daw will trie*, prove or find himself by experience to be a daw or fool. C.

Ver. 1189.—*Of men of armes,* &c. This passage certainly provokes an application to Lord Burghley, and was probably intended for him. C.

* * * * *

RUINES OF ROME:

BY BELLAY*

[* Joachim du Bellay, a French poet of considerable reputation in his day, died in 1560. These sonnets are translated from *Le Premier Livre des Antiquez de Rome*. Further on we have the Visions of Bellay, translated from the *Songes* of the same author. The best that can be said of these sonnets seems to be, that they are not inferior to the original. C.]

I.

Ye heavenly spirites, whose ashie cinders lie
Under deep ruines, with huge walls opprest,
But not your praise, the which shall never die
Through your faire verses, ne in ashes rest;
If so be shrilling voyce of wight alive
May reach from hence to depth of darkest hell,
Then let those deep abysses open rive,
That ye may understand my shreiking yell!
Thrice having seene under the heavens veale
Your toombs devoted compasse over all,
Thrice unto you with lowd voyce I appeale,
And for your antique furie here doo call,
  The whiles that I with sacred horror sing
  Your glorie, fairest of all earthly thing!

II.

Great Babylon her haughtie walls will praise,
And sharped steeples high shot up in ayre;
Greece will the olde Ephesian buildings blaze,
And Nylus nurslings their Pyramidcs faire;
The same yet vaunting Greece will tell the storie
Of Ioves great image in Olympus placed;
Mausolus worke will be the Carians glorie,
And Crete will boast the Labyrinth, now raced;
The antique Rhodian will likewise set forth
The great Colosse, erect to Memorie;
And what els in the world is of like worth,
Some greater learned wit will magnifie.
  But I will sing above all moniments
  Seven Romane Hils, the worlds seven wonderments.

III.

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Thou stranger, which for Rome in Rome hero seekest,
And nought of Rome in Rome perceiv'st at all,
These same olde walls, olde arches, which thou seest,
Olde palaces, is that which Rome men call.
Beholde what wreake, what mine, and what wast,
And how that she which with her mightie powre
Tam'd all the world hath tam'd herselfe at last;
The pray of Time, which all things doth devowre!
Rome now of Rome is th'onely funerall,
And onely Rome of Rome hath victorie;
Ne ought save Tyber hastning to his fall
Remaines of all: O worlds inconstancie!
  That which is firme doth flit and fall away,
  And that is flitting doth abide and stay.

IV.

She whose high top above the starres did sore,
One foote on Thetis, th'other on the Morning,
One hand on Scythia, th'other on the More,
Both heaven and earth in roundnesse compassing;
Iove fearing, least if she should greater growe,
The old giants should once againe uprise,
Her whelm'd with hills, these seven hils, which be nowe
Tombes of her greatnes which did threate the skies:
Upon her head he heapt Mount Saturnal,
Upon her bellie th'antique Palatine,
Upon her stomacke laid Mount Quirinal,
On her left hand the noysome Esquiline,
  And Caelian on the right; but both her feete
  Mount Viminal and Aventine doo meete.

V.

Who lists to see what ever nature, arte,
And heaven could doo, O Rome, thee let him see,
In case thy greatnes he can gesse in harte
By that which but the picture is of thee!
Rome is no more: but if the shade of Rome
May of the bodie yeeld a seeming sight,
It's like a corse drawne forth out of the tombe
By magicke skill out of eternall night:

The corpes of Rome in ashes is entombed,
And her great spirite, reioyned to the spirite
Of this great masse, is in the same enwombed;
But her brave writings, which, her famous merite
  In spight of Time out of the dust doth reare,
  Doo make her idole* through the world appeare.
[* *Idole*, image, idea.]

VI.

Such as the Berecynthian goddesse bright,
In her swifte charret with high turrets crownde,
Proud that so manie gods she brought to light,
Such was this citie in her good daies fownd:
This citie, more than that great Phrygian mother
Renowm'd for fruite of famous progenie,
Whose greatnes by the greatnes of none other,
But by her selfe, her equall match could see:
Rome onely might to Rome compared bee,
And onely Rome could make great Rome to tremble:
So did the gods by heavenly doome decree,
That other earthlie power should not resemble
  Her that did match the whole earths puissaunce,
  And did her courage to the heavens advaunce.

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VII.

Ye sacred ruines, and ye tragick sights,
Which onely doo the name of Rome retaine,
Olde moniments, which of so famous sprights
The honour yet in ashes doo maintaine,
Triumphant arcks, spyres neighbours to the skie,
That you to see doth th'heaven it selfe appall,
Alas! by little ye to nothing flie,
The peoples fable, and the spoyle of all!
And though your frames do for a time make warre
Gainst Time, yet Time in time shall ruinate
Your workes and names, and your last reliques marre.
My sad desires, rest therefore moderate!
  For if that Time make ende of things so sure,
  It als will end the paine which I endure.

VIII.

Through armes and vassals Rome the world subdu'd,
That one would weene that one sole cities strength
Both land and sea in roundnes had survew'd,
To be the measure of her bredth and length:
This peoples vertue yet so fruitfull was
Of vertuous nephewes*, that posteritie,
Striving in power their grandfathers to passe,
The lowest earth ioin'd to the heaven hie;
To th'end that, having all parts in their power,
Nought from the Romane Empire might be quight**;
And that though Time doth commonwealths devowre,
Yet no time should so low embase their hight,
  That her head, earth'd in her foundations deep,
  Should not her name and endles honour keep.
[* *Nephewes*, descendants.]
[** *Quight*, quit, free.]

IX.

Ye cruell starres, and eke ye gods unkinde,
Heaven envious, and bitter stepdame Nature!
Be it by fortune, or by course of kinde*,

That ye doo weld th'affaires of earthlie creature;
Why have your hands long sithence traveiled
To frame this world, that doth endure so long?
Or why were not these Romane palaces
Made of some matter no lesse firme and strong?
I say not, as the common voyce doth say,
That all things which beneath the moone have being
Are temporall and subiect to decay:
But I say rather, though not all agreeing
  With some that weene the contrarie in thought,
  That all this whole shall one day come to nought.
[* *Kinde*, nature.]

X.

As that brave sonne of Aeson, which by charmes
Atcheiv'd the golden fleece in Colchid land,
Out of the earth engendred men of armes
Of dragons teeth, sowne in the sacred sand,
So this brave towne, that in her youthlie daies
An hydra was of warriours glorious,
Did fill with her renowmed nourslings praise
The firie sunnes both one and other hous:
But they at last, there being then not living
An Hercules so ranke seed to represse,
Emongst themselves with cruell furie striving,
Mow'd downe themselves with slaughter mercilesse;
  Renewing in themselves that rage unkinde,
  Which whilom did those earthborn brethren blinde.

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XI.

Mars, shaming to have given so great head
To his off-spring, that mortall puissaunce,
Puft up with pride of Romane hardiehead,
Seem'd above heavens powre it selfe to advaunce,
Cooling againe his former kindled heate
With which he had those Romane spirits fild.
Did blowe new fire, and with enflamed breath
Into the Gothicke colde hot rage instil'd.
Then gan that nation, th'earths new giant brood,
To dart abroad the thunderbolts of warre,
And, beating downe these walls with furious mood
Into her mothers bosome, all did marre;
  To th'end that none, all were it* love his sire,
  Should boast himselfe of the Romane empire.
[* *All were it*, although it were.]

XII.

Like as whilome the children of the earth
Heapt hils on hils to scale the starrie skie,
And fight against the gods of heavenly berth,
Whiles Iove at them his thunderbolts let flie;
All suddenly with lightning overthrowne,
The furious squadrons downe to ground did fall,
That th'earth under her childrens weight did grone,
And th'heavens in glorie triumpht over all;
So did that haughtie front, which heaped was
On these seven Romane hils, it selfe upreare
Over the world, and lift her loftie face
Against the heaven, that gan her force to feare.
  But now these scorned fields bemone her fall,
  And gods secure feare not her force at all.

XIII.

Nor the swift furie of the flames aspiring,
Nor the deep wounds of victours raging blade,
Nor ruthlesse spoyle of souldiers blood-desiring,
The which so oft thee, Rome, their conquest made,

Ne stroke on stroke of fortune variable,
Ne rust of age hating continuance,
Nor wrath of gods, nor spight of men unstable,
Nor thou oppos'd against thine owne puissance,
Nor th'horrible uprore of windes high blowing,
Nor swelling streames of that god snakie-paced*
Which hath so often with his overflowing
Thee drenched, have thy pride so much abaced,
  But that this nothing, which they have thee left,
  Makes the world wonder what they from thee reft.
[* *Snakie-paced*, winding; or perhaps (like Ovid's *anguipes*) swift.]

XIV.

As men in summer fearles passe the foord
Which is in winter lord of all the plaine,
And with his tumbling streames doth beare aboord*
The ploughmans hope and shepheards labour vaine,
And as the coward beasts use to despise
The noble lion after his lives end,
Whetting their teeth, and with vaine foolhardise
Daring the foe that cannot him defend,
And as at Troy most dastards of the Greekes
Did brave about the corpes of Hector colde,
So those which whilome wont with pallid cheekes
The Romane triumphs glorie to behold,
  Now on these ashie tombes shew boldnesse vaine,
  And, conquer'd, dare the conquerour disdaine.
[*_Aboord_, into the current.]

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XV.

Ye pallid spirits, and ye ashie ghoasts,
Which, ioying in the brightnes of your day,
Brought foorth those signes of your presumptuous boasts
Which now their dusty reliques do bewray,
Tell me, ye spirits! (sith the darksome river
Of Styx, not passable to soules returning,
Enclosing you in thrice three wards for ever,
Doo not restraine your images still mourning,)
Tell me then, (for perhaps some one of you
Yet here above him secretly doth hide,)
Doo ye not feele your torments to accrewe,
When ye sometimes behold the ruin'd pride
  Of these old Romane works, built with your hands,
  To become nought els but heaped sands?

XVI.

Like as ye see the wrathfull sea from farre
In a great mountaine heap't with hideous noyse,
Eftsoones of thousand billowes shouldred narre*,
Against a rocke to breake with dreadfull poyse;
Like as ye see fell Boreas with sharpe blast
Tossing huge tempests through the troubled skie,
Eftsoones having his wide wings spent in wast,
To stop his wearie cariere** suddenly;
And as ye see huge flames spred diverslie,
Gathered in one up to the heavens to spyre,
Eftsoones consum'd to fall downe feebily,
So whilom did this monarchie aspyre
  As waves, as winde, as fire, spred over all,
  Till it by fatall doome adowne did fall.
[* *Narre*, nearer.]
[** *Cariere*, career.]

XVII.

So long as Ioves great bird did make his flight,
Bearing the fire with which heaven doth us fray,
Heaven had not feare of that presumptuous might,

With which the giaunts did the gods assay:
But all so soone as scortching sunne had brent*
His wings which wont the earth to overspredd,
The earth out of her massie wombe forth sent
That antique horror which made heaven adredd.
Then was the Germane raven in disguise
That Romane eagle seene to cleave asunder,
And towards heaven freshly to arise
Out of these mountaines, now consum'd to pouder.
  In which the foule that serves to beare the lightning
  Is now no more seen flying nor alighting.
[* *Brent*, burned.]

XVIII.

These heapes of stones, these old wals which ye see,
Were first enclosures but of salvage soyle;
And these brave pallaces, which maystred bee
Of time, were shepheards cottages somewhile.
Then tooke the shepheards kingly ornaments
And the stout hynde arm'd his right hand with steele:
Eftsoones their rule of yearely presidents
Grew great, and sixe months greater a great deele;
Which, made perpetuall, rose to so great might,
That thence th'imperiall eagle rooting tooke,
Till th'heaven it selfe, opposing gainst her might,
Her power to Peters successor betooke,
  Who, shepheardlike, (as Fates the same foreseeing,)
  Doth shew that all things turne to their first being.
[XVIII. 8.—*Sixe months*, &c. The term of the dictatorship at Rome.]

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XIX.

All that is perfect, which th'heaven beautefies;
All that's imperfect, borne belowe the moone;
All that doth feede our spirits and our eies;
And all that doth consume our pleasures soone;
All the mishap the which our daies outweares;
All the good hap of th'oldest times afore,
Rome, in the time of her great ancesters,
Like a Pandora, locked long in store.
But destinie this huge chaos turmoyling,
In which all good and evill was enclosed,
Their heavenly vertues from these woes assoyling,
Caried to heaven, from sinfull bondage losed:
  But their great sinnes, the causers of their paine,
  Under these antique ruines yet remaine.

XX.

No otherwise than raynie cloud, first fed
With earthly vapours gathered in the ayre,
Eftsoones in compas arch't, to steepe his hed,
Doth plonge himselfe in Tethys bosome faire,
And, mounting up againe from whence he came,
With his great bellie spreds the dimmed world,
Till at the last, dissolving his moist frame,
In raine, or snowe, or haile, he forth is horld,
This citie, which was first but shepheards shade,
Uprising by degrees, grewe to such height
That queene of land and sea her selfe she made.
At last, not able to beare so great weight,
  Her power, disperst, through all the world did vade*;
  To shew that all in th'end to nought shall fade.
[* *Vade*, vanish.]

XXI.

The same which Pyrrhus and the puissaunce
Of Afrike could not tame, that same brave citie
Which, with stout courage arm'd against mischaunce,
Sustein'd the shocke of common enmitie,

Long as her ship, tost with so manie freakes,
Had all the world in armes against her bent,
Was never seene that anie fortunes wreakes
Could breake her course begun with brave intent.
But, when the obiect of her vertue failed,
Her power it selfe against it selfe did arme;
As he that having long in tempest sailed
Faine would arive, but cannot for the storme,
  If too great winde against the port him drive,
  Doth in the port it selfe his vessell rive.

XXII.

When that brave honour of the Latine name,
Which mear'd* her rule with Africa and Byze**,
With Thames inhabitants of noble fame,
And they which see the dawning day arize,
Her nourslings did with mutinous uprore
Harten against her selfe, her conquer'd spoile,
Which she had wonne from all the world afore,
Of all the world was spoyl'd within a while:
So, when the compast course of the universe
In sixe and thirtie thousand yeares is ronne,
The bands of th'elements shall backe reverse
To their first discord, and be quite undonne;
  The seedes of which all things at first were bred
  Shall in great Chaos wombe againe be hid.
[* *Mear'd*, bounded.]
[** *Byze*, Byzantium.]

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XXIII.

O warie wisedome of the man* that would
That Carthage towres from spoile should be forborne,
To th'end that his victorious people should
With cancring laisure not be overworne!
He well foresaw how that the Romane courage,
Impatient of pleasures faint desires,
Through idlenes would turne to civill rage,
And be her selfe the matter of her fires.
For in a people given all to ease,
Ambition is engendred easily;
As, in a vicious bodie, grose disease
Soone growes through humours superfluitie.
  That came to passe, when, swolne with plenties pride,
  Nor prince, nor peere, nor kin, they would abide.
[* *I.e*. Scipio Nasica.]

XXIV.

If the blinde Furie which warres breedeth oft
Wonts not t'enrage the hearts of equall beasts,
Whether they fare on foote, or flie aloft,
Or armed be with clawes, or scalie creasts,
What fell Erynnis, with hot burning tongs,
Did grype your hearts with noysome rage imbew'd,
That, each to other working cruell wrongs,
Your blades in your owne bowels you embrew'd?
Was this, ye Romanes, your hard destinie?
Or some old sinne, whose unappeased guilt
Powr'd vengeance forth on you eternallie?
Or brothers blood, the which at first was spilt
  Upon your walls, that God might not endure
  Upon the same to set foundation sure?

XXV.

O that I had the Thracian poets harpe,
For to awake out of th'infernall shade
Those antique Caesars, sleeping long in darke,
The which this auncient citie whilome made!

Or that I had Amphions instrument,
To quicken with his vitall notes accord
The stonie ioynts of these old walls now rent,
By which th'Ausonian light might be restor'd!
Or that at least I could with pencill fine
Fashion the pourtraicts of these palacis,
By paterne of great Virgils spirit divine!
I would assay with that which in me is
  To builde, with levell of my loftie style,
  That which no hands can evermore compyle.

XXVI.

Who list the Romane greatnes forth to figure,
Him needeth not to seeke for usage right
Of line, or lead, or rule, or squaire, to measure
Her length, her breadth, her deepnes, or her hight;
But him behooves to vew in compasse round
All that the ocean graspes in his long armes;
Be it where the yerely starre doth scortch the ground,
Or where colde Boreas blowes his bitter stormes.
Rome was th'whole world, and al the world was Rome;
And if things nam'd their names doo equalize,
When land and sea ye name, then name ye Rome,
And, naming Rome, ye land and sea comprize:
  For th'auncient plot of Rome, displayed plaine,
  The map of all the wide world doth containe.

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XXVII.

Thou that at Rome astonisht dost behold
The antique pride which menaced the skie,
These haughtie heapes, these palaces of olde,
These wals, these arcks, these baths, these temples his,
Iudge, by these ample ruines vew, the rest
The which iniurious time hath quite outworne,
Since, of all workmen helde in reckning best,
Yet these olde fragments are for paternes borne:
Then also marke how Rome, from day to day,
Repayring her decayed fashion,
Renewes herselfe with buildings rich and gay;
That one would iudge that the Romaine Daemon*
  Doth yet himselfe with fatall hand enforce
  Againe on foot to reare her pouldred** corse.
[* *Romaine Daemon*, Genius of Rome.]
[** *Pouldred*, reduced to dust.]

XXVIII.

He that hath seene a great oke drie and dead,
Yet clad with reliques of some trophees olde,
Lifting to heaven her aged hoarie head,
Whose foote in ground hath left but feeble holde,
But halfe disbowel'd lies above the ground,
Shewing her wreathed rootes, and naked armes,
And on her trunke all rotten and unsound
Onely supports herselfe for meate of wormes,
And, though she owe her fall to the first winde,
Yet of the devout people is ador'd,
And manie yong plants spring out of her rinde;
Who such an oke hath seene, let him record
  That such this cities honour was of yore,
  And mongst all cities florished much more.

XXIX.

All that which Aegypt whilome did devise,
All that which Greece their temples to embrave,
After th'Ionicke, Atticke, Doricke guise,

Or Corinth skil'd in curious workes to grave,
All that Lysippus practike* arte could forme,
Apelles wit, or Phidias his skill,
Was wont this auncient citie to adorne,
And the heaven it selfe with her wide wonders fill.
All that which Athens ever brought forth wise,
All that which Afrike ever brought forth strange,
All that which Asie ever had of prise,
Was here to see. O mervelous great change!
  Rome, living, was the worlds sole ornament;
  And, dead, is now the worlds sole moniment.
[* *Practike*, cunning.]

XXX.

Like as the seeded field greene grasse first showes,
Then from greene grasse into a stalke doth spring,
And from a stalke into an eare forth-growes,
Which eare the frutefull graine doth shortly bring,
And as in season due the husband* mowes
The waving lockes of those faire yeallow heares,
Which, bound in sheaves, and layd in comely rowes,
Upon the naked fields in stalkes he reares,
So grew the Romane empire by degree,
Till that barbarian hands it quite did spill,
And left of it but these olde markes to see,
Of which all passers by doo somewhat pill**,
  As they which gleane, the reliques use to gather
  Which th'husbandman behind him chanst to scater.
[* *Husband*, husbandman.]
[** *Pill*, plunder.]

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XXXI.

That same is now nought but a champian wide,
Where all this worlds pride once was situate.
No blame to thee, whosoever dost abide
By Nyle, or Gange, or Tygre, or Euphrate;
Ne Afrike thereof guiltie is, nor Spaine,
Nor the bolde people by the Thamis brincks,
Nor the brave warlicke brood of Alemaine,
Nor the borne souldier which Rhine running drinks.
Thou onely cause, O Civill Furie, art!
Which, sowing in th'Aemathian fields thy spight,
Didst arme thy hand against thy proper hart;
To th'end that when thou wast in greatest hight
  To greatnes growne, through long prosperitie,
  Thou then adowne might'st fall more horriblie.
[XXXI. 10.—*Aemathian fields*. Thessalian fields; alluding to the
battle fought at Pharsalia, in Thessaly, between Caesar and Pompey. H.]

XXXII.

Hope ye, my Verses, that posteritie
Of age ensuing shall you ever read?
Hope ye that ever immortalitie
So meane harpes worke may chalenge for her meed?
If under heaven anie endurance were,
These moniments, which not in paper writ,
But in porphyre and marble doo appeare,
Might well have hop'd to have obtained it.
Nath'les, my Lute, whom Phoebus deigned to give,
Cease not to sound these olde antiquities:
For if that Time doo let thy glorie live,
Well maist thou boast, how ever base thou bee,
  That thou art first which of thy nation song
  Th'olde honour of the people gowned long.

L'ENVOY.

Bellay, first garland of free poesie
That France brought forth, though fruitfull of brave wits,
Well worthie thou of immortalitie,

That long hast traveld*, by thy learned writs,
Olde Rome out of her ashes to revive,
And give a second life to dead decayes!
Needes must he all eternitie survive,
That can to other give eternall dayes.
Thy dayes therefore are endles, and thy prayse
Excelling all that ever went before:
And, after thee, gins Bartas hie to rayse
His heavenly Muse, th'Almightie to adore.
  Live happie spirits, th'honour of your name,
  And fill the world with never dying fame!
[* *Traveld*, travailed, toiled.]

L'Envoy, 11.—*Bartas*. Guillaume de Salluste du Bartas, a French poet of the time of Henry IV, of extraordinary popularity in his day. His poem on the Creation is said to have been reprinted more than thirty times in six years, and was translated into several languages; among others, into English by Joshua Sylvester. H.

MUIOPOTMOS:

OR

THE FATE OF THE BUTTERFLIE.

BY ED. SP.

DEDICATED TO THE MOST FAIRE AND VERTUOUS LADIE,

BOOKRAGS

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THE LADIE CAREY.

LONDON:

IMPRINTED FOR WILLIAM PONSONBIE, DWELLING IN PAULES

CHURCHYARD AT THE SIGNE OF THE BISHOPS HEAD.

1590*

[* This date seems to be an error for 1591; or, as Mr. Craik suggests, it may have been used designedly with reference to real events, not yet ascertained, which furnished the subject of this very pleasing allegory. The Visions of the Worlds Vanitie, which follow this piece, may be suspected of a similar application. C.]

TO THE RIGHT WORTHY AND VERTUOUS LADIE, THE LA: CAREY.

Most brave and bountifull La: for so excellent favours as I have received at your sweet handes, to offer these fewe leaves as in recompence, should be as to offer flowers to the gods for their divine benefites. Therefore I have determined to give my selfe wholy to you, as quite abandoned from my selfe, and absolutely vowed to your services: which in all right is ever held for full recompence of debt or damage, to have the person yeelded. My person I wot wel how little worth it is. But the faithfull minde and humble zeale which I bear unto your La: may perhaps be more of price, as may please you to account and use the poore service thereof; which taketh glory to advance your excellent partes and noble vertues, and to spend it selfe in honouring you; not so much for your great bounty to my self, which yet may not be unminded; nor for name or kindreds* sake by you vouchsafed, beeing also regardable; as for that honorable name, which yee have by your brave deserts purchast to your self, and spred in the mouths of al men: with which I have also presumed to grace my verses, and, under your name, to commend to the world this smal poeme; the which beseeching your La: to take in worth, and of all things therein according to your wonted graciousnes to make a milde construction, I humbly pray for your happines.

Your La: ever

humbly,

E. S.

[Footnote: “This lady was Elizabeth, one of the six daughters of Sir John Spencer, of Althorpe, in Northamptonshire, and was married to Sir George Carey, who became Lord Hunsdon on the death of his father, in 1596.”—TODD.]

MUIOPOTMOS:

OR

THE FATE OF THE BUTTERFLIE.

* * * * *

I sing of deadly dolorous debate,
Stir’d up through wrathful! Nemesis despight,
Betwixt two mightie ones of great estate,
Drawne into armes and proofe of mortall fight
Through prowd ambition and hart-swelling hate, 5
Whilest neither could the others greater might
And sdeignfull scorne endure; that from small iarre
Their wraths at length broke into open warre.

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The roote whereof and tragicall effect,
Vouchsafe, O thou the mournfulst Muse of nyne,
That wontst the tragick stage for to direct,
In funerall complaints and waylfull tyne*
Reveale to me, and all the meanes detect
Through which sad Clarion did at last declyne
To lowest wretchednes: And is there then
Such rancour in the harts of mightie men?
[* *Tyne*, grief.]

Of all the race of silver-winged flies
Which doo possesse the empire of the aire,
Betwixt the centred earth and azure skies
Was none more favourable nor more faire,
Whilst heaven did favour his felicities,
Then Clarion, the eldest sonne and haire
Of Muscaroll, and in his fathers sight
Of all alive did seeme the fairest wight.

With fruitfull hope his aged breast he fed
Of future good, which his yong toward yeares,
Full of brave courage and bold hardyhed
Above th'ensample of his equall peares,
Did largely promise, and to him fore-red,
(Whilst oft his heart did melt in tender teares,)
That he in time would sure prove such an one,
As should be worthie of his fathers throne.

The fresh yong flie, in whom the kindly fire
Of lustfull yongth* began to kindle fast,
Did much disdaine to subiect his desire
To loathsome sloth, or houres in ease to wast;
But ioy'd to range abroad in fresh attire
Through the wide compas of the ayrie coast,
And with unwearied wings each part t'inquire
Of the wide rule of his renownned sire.
[* *Yongth*, youth.]

For he so swift and nimble was of flight,
That from this lower tract he dar'd to stie*
Up to the clowdes, and thence with pineons light
To mount aloft unto the christall skie,
To vew the workmanship of heavens hight
Whence down descending he along would flie

Upon the streaming rivers, sport to finde,
And oft would dare to tempt the troublous winde.
[* *Stie*, mount.]

So on a summers day, when season milde
With gentle calme the world had quieted,
And high in heaven Hyperions fierie childe
Ascending did his beames abroad dispred,
Whiles all the heavens on lower creatures smilde,
Yong Clarion, with vauntfull lustiehead;
After his guize did cast abroad to fare,
And theretoo gan his furnitures prepare.

His breastplate first, that was of substance pure,
Before his noble heart he firmely bound,
That mought his life from yron death assure,
And ward his gentle corpes from cruell wound:
For it by arte was framed to endure
The bit* of balefull steele and bitter stownd**,
No lesse than that which Vulcane made to sheild
Achilles life from fate of Troyan field.
[* *Bit*, bite.]
[** *Stownd*, hour.]

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And then about his shoulders broad he threw
An hairie hide of some wilde beast, whom hee
In salvage forrest by adventure slew,
And reft the spoyle his ornament to bee;
Which, spredding all his backe with dreadfull vew,
Made all that him so horrible did see
Thinke him Alcides with the lyons skin,
When the Naemean conquest he did win.

Upon his head, his glistering burganet*,
The which was wrought by wonderous device
And curiously engraven, he did set:
The mettall was of rare and passing price;
Not Bilbo** steele, nor brasse from Corinth fet,
Nor costly oricalche from strange Phoenice;
But such as could both Phoebus arrowes ward,
And th'hayling darts of heaven beating hard.
[* *Burganet*, helmet.]
[** *Bilbo*, Bilboa.]

Therein two deadly weapons fixt he bore,
Strongly outlaunced towards either side,
Like two sharpe speares, his enemies to gore:
Like as a warlike brigandine, applyde
To fight, layes forth her threatfull pikes afore,
The engines which in them sad death doo hyde,
So did this flie outstretch his fearefull hornes,
Yet so as him their terrour more adornes.

Lastly his shinie wings, as silver bright,
Painted with thousand colours passing farre
All painters skill, he did about him dight:
Not halfe so manie sundrie colours arre
In Iris bowe; ne heaven doth shine so bright,
Distinguished with manie a twinckling starre;
Nor Iunoes bird, in her ey-spotted traine,
So manie goodly colours doth containe.

Ne (may it be withouten perill spoken)
The Archer-god, the sonne of Cytheree,
That ioyes on wretched lovers to be wroken*,
And heaped spoyles of bleeding harts to see,
Beares in his wings so manie a changefull token.
Ah! my liege Lord, forgive it unto mee,

If ought against thine honour I have tolde;
Yet sure those wings were fairer manifolde.
[* *Wroken*, avenged.]

Full many a ladie faire, in court full oft
Beholding them, him secretly envide,
And wisht that two such fannes, so silken soft
And golden faire, her Love would her provide;
Or that, when them the gorgeous flie had doft,
Some one that would with grace be gratifide
From him would steale them privily away,
And bring to her so precious a pray.

Report is that Dame Venus on a day,
In spring when flowres doo clothe the fruitful ground,
Walking abroad with all her nymphes to play,
Bad her faire damzels flocking her arownd
To gather flowres, her forhead to array.
Emongst the rest a gentle nymph was found,
Hight Astery, excelling all the crewe
In curteous usage and unstained hewe.

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Who, being nimbler ioynted than the rest,
And more industrious, gathered more store
Of the fields honour than the others best;
Which they in secret harts envying sore,
Tolde Venus, when her as the worthiest
She praisd', that Cupide (as they heard before)
Did lend her secret aide in gathering
Into her lap the children of the Spring,

Whereof the goddesse gathering iealous feare,—
Not yet unmindfull how not long agoe
Her sonne to Psyche secrete love did beare,
And long it close conceal'd, till mickle woe
Thereof arose, and manie a rufull teare,—
Reason with sudden rage did overgoe;
And, giving hastie credit to th'accuser,
Was led away of them that did abuse her.

Eftsoones that damzel by her heavenly might
She turn'd into a winged butterflie,
In the wide aire to make her wandring flight;
And all those flowres, with which so plenteouslie
Her lap she filled had, that bred her spight,
She placed in her wings, for memorie
Of her pretended crime, though crime none were:
Since which that flie them in her wings doth beare.

Thus the fresh Clarion, being readie dight,
Unto his iourney did himselfe addresse,
And with good speed began to take his flight:
Over the fields, in his franke* lustinesse;
And all the champion** he soared light;
And all the countrey wide he did possesse,
Feeding upon their pleasures bounteouslie,
That none gainsaid, nor none did him envie.
[* *Franke*, free.]
[** *Champion*, champaign.]

The woods, the rivers, and the medowes green.
With his aire-cutting wings he measured wide,
Ne did he leave the mountaines bare unseene,
Nor the ranke grassie fennes delights untride.
But none of these, how ever sweete they beene,
Mote please his fancie nor him cause t'abide:

His choicefull sense with everie change doth flit;
No common things may please a wavering wit.

To the gay gardins his unstaid desire
Him wholly caried, to refresh his sprights:
There lavish Nature, in her best attire,
Powres forth sweete odors and alluring sights;
And Arte, with her contending, doth aspire
T'excell the naturall with made delights:
And all that faire or pleasant may be found
In riotous excesse doth there abound.
There he arriving round about doth flie,
From bed to bed, from one to other border;
And takes survey, with curious busie eye,
Of every flowre and herbe there set in order;
Now this, now that, he tasteth tenderly,
Yet none of them he rudely doth disorder,
Ne with his feete their silken leaves deface,
But pastures on the pleasures of each place.

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And evermore with most varietie,
And change of sweetnesse, (for all change is sweete,)
He casts his glutton sense to satisfie;
Now sucking of the sap of herbe most meete,
Or of the deaw which yet on them does lie,
Now in the same bathing his tender feete:
And then he pearcheth on some braunch thereby,
To weather him, and his moyst wings to dry.

And then againe he turneth to his play,
To spoyle the pleasures of that paradise;
The wholsome saulge*, and lavender still gray,
Ranke-smelling rue, and cummin good for eyes,
The roses raigning in the pride of May,
Sharpe isope, good for greene wounds remedies,
Faire marigoldes, and bees-alluring thime,
Sweete marioram, and daysies decking prime:
[* *Saulge*, sage.]

Coole violets, and orpine growing still,
Embathed balme, and chearfull galingale,
Fresh costmarie, and breathfull camomill,
Dull poppie, and drink-quickning setuale*,
Veyne-healing verven, and hed-purging dill,
Sound savorie, and bazil hartie-hale,
Fat colworts, and comforting perseline**,
Colde lettuce, and refreshing rosmarine.
[* *Setuale*, valerian.]
[** *Perseline*, purslain.]

And whatso else of vertue good or ill
Grewe in this gardin, fetcht from farre away,
Of everie one he takes and tastes at will,
And on their pleasures greedily doth pray.
Then when he hath both plaid, and fed his fill,
In the warme sunne he doth himselfe embay*,
And there him rests in riotous suffisaunce
Of all his gladfulnes and kingly ioyaunce.
[* *Embay*, bathe.]

What more felicitie can fall to creature
Than to enioy delight with libertie,
And to be lord of all the workes of Nature,
To raine in th’aire from earth to highest skie,

To feed on flowres and weeds of glorious feature,
To take whatever thing doth please the eie?
Who rests not pleased with such happines,
Well worthie he to taste of wretchednes.

But what on earth can long abide in state?
Or who can him assure of happie day?
Sith morning faire may bring fowle evening late,
And least mishap the most blisse alter may!
For thousand perills lie in close awaite
About us daylie, to worke our decay;
That none, except a God, or God him guide,
May them avoyde, or remedie provide.

And whatso heavens in their secret doome
Ordained have, how can fraile fleshly wight
Forecast, but it must needs to issue come?
The sea, the aire, the fire, the day, the night,
And th'armies of their creatures, all and some*,
Do serve to them, and with importune might
Warre against us, the vassals of their will.
Who then can save what they dispose to spill?
[* *All and some*, one and all.]

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Not thou, O Clarion, though fairest thou
Of all thy kinde, unhappie happie flie,
Whose cruell fate is woven even now
Of loves owne hand, to worke thy miserie!
Ne may thee helpe the manie hartie vow,
Which thy olde sire with sacred pietie
Hath powred forth for thee, and th'altars sprent*
Nought may thee save from heavens avengement!
[* *Sprent*, sprinkled.]

It fortuned (as heavens had behight*)
That in this gardin where yong Clarion
Was wont to solace him, a wicked wight,
The foe of faire things, th'author of confusion,
The shame of Nature, the bondslave of spight,
Had lately built his hatefull mansion;
And, lurking closely, in awayte now lay,
How he might anie in his trap betray.
[* *Behight*, ordained.]

But when he spide the ioyous butterflie
In this faire plot dispacing* too and fro,
Fearles of foes and hidden ieopardie,
Lord! how he gan for to bestirre him tho,
And to his wicked worke each part applie!
His heart did earne** against his hated foe,
And bowels so with rankling poyson swelde,
That scarce the skin the strong contagion helde.
[* *Dispacing*, ranging about.]
[** *Earne*, yearn.]

The cause why he this flie so maliced*
Was (as in stories it is written found)
For that his mother which him bore and bred,
The most fine-fingred workwoman on ground,
Arachne, by his meanes was vanquished
Of Pallas, and in her owne skill confound**,
When she with her for excellence contended,
That wrought her shame, and sorrow never ended.
[* *Maliced*, bore ill-will to.]
[** *Confound*, confounded.]

For the Tritonian goddesse, having hard
Her blazed fame, which all the world had fil'd,

Came downe to prove the truth, and due reward
For her prais-worthie workmanship to yeild:
But the presumptuous damzel rashly dar'd
The goddesse selfe to chalenge to the field,
And to compare with her in curious skill
Of workes with loome, with needle, and with quill.

Minerva did the chalenge not refuse,
But deign'd with her the paragon* to make:
So to their worke they sit, and each doth chuse
What storie she will for her tapet** take.
Arachne figur'd how love did abuse
Europa like a bull, and on his backe
Her through the sea did beare; so lively@ seene,
That it true sea and true bull ye would weene.
[* *Paragon*, comparison.]
[** *Tapet*, tapestry.]
[@ *Lively*, life-like.]

Shee seem'd still backe unto the land to looke,
And her play-fellowes aide to call, and feare
The dashing of the waves, that up she tooke
Her daintie feete, and garments gathered neare:
But Lord! how she in everie member shooke,
When as the land she saw no more appeare,
But a wilde wildernes of waters deepe:
Then gan she greatly to lament and weepe.

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Before the bull she pictur'd winged Love,
With his yong brother Sport, light fluttering
Upon the waves, as each had been a dove;
The one his bowe and shafts, the other spring*
A burning teade** about his head did move,
As in their syres new love both triumphing;
And manie Nymphes about them flocking round,
And manie Tritons which their homes did sound.
[* *Spring*, springal, youth.]
[** *Teade*, torch.]

And round about her-worke she did empale*
With a faire border wrought of sundrie flowres,
Enwoven with an yviewinding trayle:
A goodly worke, full fit for kingly bowres,
Such as Dame Pallas, such as Envie pale,
That al good things with venemous tooth devowres,
Could not accuse. Then gan the goddesse bright
Her selfe likewise unto her worke to dight.
[* *Empale*, inclose.]

She made the storie of the olde debate
Which she with Neptune did for Athens trie:
Twelve gods doo sit around in royall state,
And love in midst with awfull maiestie,
To iudge the strife betweene them stirred late:
Each of the gods by his like visnomie*
Eathe** to be knowen; but love above them all,
By his great lookes and power imperiall.
[* *Visnomie*, countenance.]
[** *Eathe*, easy.]

Before them stands the god of seas in place,
Clayming that sea-coast citie as his right,
And strikes the rockes with his three-forked mace;
Whenceforth issues a warlike steed in sight,
The signe by which he chalengeth the place;
That all the gods which saw his wondrous might
Did surely deeme the victorie his due:
But seldom seene, foreiudgement proveth true.

Then to herselfe she gives her Aegide shield,
And steel-hed speare, and morion * on her hedd,
Such as she oft is seene in warlicke field:

Then sets she forth, how with her weapon dredd
She smote the ground, the which streight foorth did yield
A fruitfull olyve tree, with berries spredd,
That all the gods admir'd; then all the storie
She compast with a wreathe of olyves hoarie.
[* *Morion*, steel cap.]

Emongst those leaves she made a butterflie,
With excellent device and wondrous slight,
Fluttring among the olives wantonly,
That seem'd to live, so like it was in sight:
The velvet nap which on his wings doth lie,
The silken downe with which his backe is dight,
His broad outstretched homes, his hayrie thies,
His glorious colours, and his glistering eies.

Which when Arachne saw, as overlaid *
And mastered with workmanship so rare,
She stood astonied long, ne ought gainesaid;
And with fast fixed eyes on her did stare,
And by her silence, signe of one dismaid,
The victorie did yeeld her as her share;
Yet did she inly fret and felly burne,
And all her blood to poysonous rancor turne:
[* *Overlaid*, overcome.]

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That shortly from the shape of womanhed,
Such as she was when Pallas she attempted,
She grew to hideous shape of dryrihed*,
Pined with griefe of follie late repented:
Eftsoones her white streight legs were altered
To crooked crawling shankes, of marrowe empted,
And her faire face to foule and loathsome hewe,
And her fine corpes to a bag of venim grewe.
[* *Dryrihed*, sadness, unsightliness.]

This cursed creature, mindfull of that olde
Enfestred grudge the which his mother felt,
So soone as Clarion he did beholde,
His heart with vengefull malice inly swelt;
And weaving straight a net with mame a folde
About the cave in which he lurking dwelt,
With fine small cords about it stretched wide,
So finely sponne that scarce they could be spide,

Not anie damzell which her vaunteth most
In skilfull knitting of soft silken twyne,
Nor anie weaver, which his worke doth boast
In dieper, in damaske, or in lyne*,
Nor anie skil'd in workmanship embost,
Nor anie skil'd in loupes of fingring fine,
Might in their divers cunning ever dare
With this so curious networks to compare.
[* *Lyne*, linen.]

Ne doo I thinke that that same subtil gin
The which the Lemnian god framde craftilie,
Mars sleeping with his wife to compasse in,
That all the gods with common mockerie
Might laugh at them, and scorne their shamefull sin,
Was like to this. This same he did applie
For to entrap the careles Clarion,
That rang'd each where without suspition.

Suspition of friend, nor feare of foe,
That hazarded his health, had he at all,
But walkt at will, and wandred too and fro,
In the pride of his freedome principall*:
Litle wist he his fatall future woe,
But was secure; the liker he to fall.

He likest is to fall into mischaunce,
That is regardles of his governaunce.
[* *Principall*, princely.]

Yet still Aragnoll (so his foe was hight)
Lay lurking covertly him to surprise;
And all his gins, that him entangle might,
Drest in good order as he could devise.
At length the foolish flie, without foresight,
As he that did all daunger quite despise,
Toward those parts came flying careleslie,
Where hidden was his hatefull enemie.

Who, seeing him, with secret ioy therefore
Did tickle inwardly in everie vaine;
And his false hart, fraught with all treasons store,
Was fil'd with hope his purpose to obtaine:
Himselfe he close upgathered more and more
Into his den, that his deceiptfull traine
By his there being might not be bewraid,
Ne anie noyse, ne anie motion made.

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Like as a wily foxe, that, having spide
Where on a sunnie banke the lambes doo play,
Full closely creeping by the hinder side,
Lyes in ambushment of his hoped pray,
Ne stirreth limbe, till, seeing readie tide*,
He rusheth forth, and snatcheth quite away
One of the litle yonglings unawares;
So to his worke Aragnoll him prepares.
[* *Tide*, time.]

Who now shall give unto my heavie eyes
A well of teares, that all may overflow?
Or where shall I finde lamentable cryes,
And mournfull tunes enough my griefe to show?
Helpe, O thou Tragick Muse, me to devise
Notes sad enough, t'expresse this bitter throw:
For loe, the drerie stownd* is now arrived,
That of all happines hath us deprived.
[* *Stownd*, hour.]

The luckles Clarion, whether cruell Fate
Or wicked Fortune faultles him misled,
Or some ungracious blast out of the gate
Of Aeoles raine* perforce him drove on hed**,
Was (O sad hap and howre unfortunate!)
With violent swift flight forth caried
Into the cursed cobweb, which his foe
Had framed for his finall overthroe.
[* *Raine*, kingdom.]
[** *On hed*, head-foremost.]

There the fond flie, entangled, strugled long,
Himselfe to free thereout; but all in vaine.
For, striving more, the more in laces strong
Himselfe he tide, and wrapt his winges twaine
In lymie snares the subtill loupes among;
That in the ende he breathelesse did remaine,
And, all his yongthly* forces idly spent,
Him to the mercie of th'avenger lent.
[* *Yongthly*, youthful.]

Which when the greisly tyrant did espie,
Like a grimme lyon rushing with fierce might
Out of his den, he seized greedelie

On the resistles pray, and, with fell spight,
Under the left wing stroke his weapon slie
Into his heart, that his deepe-groning spright
In bloodie streames foorth fled into the aire,
His bodie left the spectacle of care. 440

* * * * *

FOOTNOTES

Ver. 365.—*And Arte, with her contendlng.* Compare the description of Aerasia's garden, Faerie Queene, II. xii. 59; and also v. 29. TODD.

Ver. 273.—*Minerva did*, &c. Much of what follows is taken from the fable of Arachne in Ovid. JORTIN.

* * * * *

VISIONS

OF

THE WORLDS VANITIE.

I.

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One day, whiles that my daylie cares did sleepe,
My spirit, shaking off her earthly prison,
Began to enter into meditation deepe
Of things exceeding reach of common reason;
Such as this age, in which all good is geason*,
And all that humble is and meane** debaced,
Hath brought forth in her last declining season,
Griefe of good mindes, to see goodnesse disgraced!
On which when as my thought was throghly@ placed,
Unto my eyes strange showes presented were,
Picturing that which I in minde embraced,
That yet those sights empassion$ me full nere.
  Such as they were, faire Ladie%, take in worth,
  That when time serves may bring things better forth.

[* *Geason*, rare.] [** *Meane*, lowly.] [@ *Throghly*, thoroughly.] [$ *Empassion*, move.] [% *Faire Ladie.* The names of the ladies to whom these Visions and those of Petrarch (see p. 210, VII. 9) were inscribed have not been preserved. C.]

II.

In summers day, when Phoebus fairly shone,
I saw a Bull as white as driven snowe,
With gilden homes embowed like the moone,
In a fresh flowring meadow lying lowe:
Up to his eares the verdant grasse did growe,
And the gay floures did offer to be eaten;
But he with fatnes so did overflows,
That he all wallowed in the weedes downe beaten,
Ne car'd with them his daintie lips to sweeten:
Till that a Brize*, a scorned little creature,
Through his faire hide his angrie sting did threaten,
And vext so sore, that all his goodly feature
  And all his plenteous pasture nought him pleased:
  So by the small the great is oft diseased**.

III.

Beside the fruitfull shore of muddie Nile,
Upon a sunnie banke outstretched lay,
In monstrous length, a mightie Crocodile,
That, cram'd with guiltles blood and greedie pray

Of wretched people travailing that way,
Thought all things lesse than his disdainfull pride.
I saw a little Bird, cal'd Tedula,
The least of thousands which on earth abide,
That forst this hideous beast to open wide
The greisly gates of his devouring hell,
And let him feede, as Nature doth provide,
Upon his iawes, that with blacke venime swell.
  Why then should greatest things the least disdaine,
  Sith that so small so mightie can constraine?

[* *Brize*, a gadfly.] [** *Diseased*, deprived of ease.]

III. 7.—Tedula. Spenser appears to mean the bird Trochilos, which, according to Aristotle, enters the mouth of the crocodile, and picks her meat out of the monster's teeth. C.

IV.

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The kingly bird that beares Ioves thunder-clap
One day did scorne the simple Scarabee*,
Proud of his highest service and good hap,
That made all other foules his thralls to bee.
The silly flie, that no redresse did see,
Spide where the Eagle built his towring nest,
And, kindling fire within the hollow tree,
Burnt up his yong ones, and himselfe distrest;
Ne suffred him in anie place to rest,
But drove in Ioves owne lap his egs to lay;
Where gathering also filth him to infest,
Forst with the filth his egs to fling away:
  For which, when as the foule was wroth, said Iove,
  “Lo! how the least the greatest may reprove.”

V.

Toward the sea turning my troubled eye,
I saw the fish (if fish I may it cleepe**)
That makes the sea before his face to flye,
And with his flaggie finnes doth seeme to sweepe
The fomie waves out of the dreadfull deep;
The huge Leviathan, dame Natures wonder,
Making his sport, that manie makes to weep.
A Sword-fish small him from the rest did sunder
That, in his throat him pricking softly under,
His wide abysse him forced forth to spewe,
That all the sea did roare like heavens thunder,
And all the waves were stain’d with filthie hewe.
  Hereby I learned have not to despise
  Whatever thing seemes small in common eyes.

[* *Scarabee,* beetle.] [** *Cleepe,* call.]

VI.

An hideous Dragon, dreadfull to behold,
Whose backe was arm’d against the dint of speare
With shields of brasse that shone like burnisht golde,
And forkhed sting that death in it did beare,
Strove with a Spider, his unequall peare,
And bad defiance to his enemie.

The subtill vermin, creeping closely* neare,
Did in his drinke shed poyson privilie;
Which, through his entrailes spredding diversly,
Made him to swell, that nigh his bowells brust,
And him enforst to yeeld the victorie,
That did so much in his owne greatnesse trust.
  O, how great vainnesse is it then to scorne
  The weake, that hath the strong so oft forlorne!**

[* *Closely,* secretly.] [** *Forlorne,* ruined.]

VII.

High on a hill a goodly Cedar grewe,
Of wondrous length and straight proportion,
That farre abroad her daintie odours threwe;
Mongst all the daughters of proud Libanon,
Her match in beautie was not anie one.
Shortly within her inmost pith there bred
A litle wicked worme, perceiv'd of none,
That on her sap and vitall moysture fed:
Thenceforth her garland so much honoured
Began to die, O great ruth* for the same!
And her faire lockes fell from her loftie head,
That shortly balde and bared she became.
  I, which this sight beheld, was much dismayed,
  To see so goodly thing so soone decayed.

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[* *Ruth,* pity.]

VIII.

Soone after this I saw an Elephant,
Adorn’d with bells and bosses gorgeouslie,
That on his backe did beare, as batteilant*,
A gilden towre, which shone exceedinglie;
That he himselfe through foolish vanitie,
Both for his rich attire and goodly forme,
Was puffed up with passing surquedrie**,
And shortly gan all other beasts to scorne,
Till that a little Ant, a silly worme,
Into his nosthrils creeping, so him pained,
That, casting downe his towres, he did deforme
Both borrowed pride, and native beautie stained.
  Let therefore nought that great is therein glorie,
  Sith so small thing his happines may varie.

[* *As batteilant,* as if equipped for battle.] [** *Surquedrie,* presumption.]

IX.

Looking far foorth into the ocean wide,
A goodly Ship with banners bravely dight,
And flag in her top-gallant, I espide
Through the maine sea making her merry flight.
Faire blewe the wind into her bosome right,
And th’heavens looked lovely all the while,
That she did seeme to daunce, as in delight,
And at her owne felicitie did smile.
All sodainely there clove unto her keele
A little fish that men call Remora,
Which stopt her course, and held her by the heele,
That winde nor tide could move her thence away.
  Straunge thing me seemeth, that so small a thing
  Should able be so great an one to wring.

X.

A mighty Lyon, lord of all the wood,
Having his hunger throughly satisfide
With pray of beasts and spoyle of living blood,
Safe in his dreadles den him thought to hide:
His sternesse was his prayse, his strength his pride,
And all his glory in his cruell clawes.
I saw a Wasp, that fiercely him defide,
And bad him battaile even to his iawes;
Sore he him stong, that it the blood forth drawes,
And his proude heart is fild with fretting ire:
In vaine he threats his teeth, his tayle, his pawes,
And from his bloodie eyes doth sparkle fire;
  That dead himselfe he wisheth for despight.
  So weakest may anoy the most of might!

XI.

What time the Romaine Empire bore the raine
Of all the world, and florisht most in might,
The nations gan their soveraigntie disdaine,
And cast to quitt them from their bondage quight.
So, when all shrouded were in silent night,
The Galles were, by corrupting of a mayde,
Possest nigh of the Capitol through slight,
Had not a Goose the treachery bewrayde.
If then a goose great Rome from ruine stayde,
And Iove himselfe, the patron of the place,
Preservd from being to his foes betrayde,
Why do vaine men mean things so much deface*,
  And in their might repose their most assurance,
  Sith nought on earth can chalenge long endurance?

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[* *Deface,* disparage, despise.]

XII.

When these sad sights were overpast and gone,
My spright was greatly moved in her rest,
With inward ruth and deare affection,
To see so great things by so small distrest.
Thenceforth I gan in my engrieved brest
To scorne all difference of great and small,
Sith that the greatest often are opprest,
And unawares doe into daunger fall.
And ye, that read these ruines tragicall,
Learne, by their losse, to love the low degree;
And if that Fortune chaunce you up to call
To honours seat, forget not what you be:
  For he that of himselfe is most secure
  Shall finde his state most fickle and unsure.

* * * * *

THE

VISIONS OF BELLAY.*

[* Eleven of these Visions of Bellay (all except the 6th, 8th, 13th, and 14th) differ only by a few changes necessary for rhyme from blank-verse translations found in Van der Noodt's *Theatre of Worldlings*, printed in 1569; and the six first of the Visions of Petrarch (here said to have been "formerly translated") occur almost word for word in the same publication, where the authorship appears to be claimed by one Theodore Roest. The Complaints were collected, not by Spenser, but by Ponsonby, his bookseller, and he may have erred in ascribing these Visions to our poet. C.]

I.

It was the time when rest, soft sliding downe
From heavens hight into mens heavy eyes,
In the forgetfulnes of sleepe doth drowne
The carefull thoughts of mortall miseries.
Then did a ghost before mine eyes appeare,
On that great rivers banck that runnes by Rome;
Which, calling me by name, bad me to reare

My lookes to heaven whence all good gifts do come,
And crying lowd, “Loe! now beholde,” quoth hee,
“What under this great temple placed is:
Lo, all is nought but flying vanitee!”
So I, that know this worlds inconstancies,
  Sith onely God surmounts all times decay,
  In God alone my confidence do stay.

II.

On high hills top I saw a stately frame,
An hundred cubits high by iust assize*,
With hundreth pillours fronting faire the same,
All wrought with diamond after Dorick wize.
Nor brick nor marble was the wall in view,
But shining christall, which from top to base
Out of her womb a thousand rayons** threw
On hundred steps of Afrike golds enchase.@
Golde was the parget,$ and the seeling bright
Did shine all scaly with great plates of golde;
The floore of iasp and emeraude was dight.%
O worlds vainesse! Whiles thus I did behold,
  An earthquake shooke the hill from lowest seat,
  And overthrew this frame with ruine great.

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[* *Assize*, measure.] [** *Rayons*, beams, rays.] [@ *I.e*. enchased with gold.] [$ *Parget*, varnish, plaster.] [% *Dight*, composed.]

III.

Then did a sharped spyre of diamond bright,
Ten feete each way in square, appeare to mee,
Iustly proportion’d up unto his hight,
So far as archer might his level see.
The top thereof a pot did seeme to beare,
Made of the mettall which we most do honour;
And in this golden vessel couched weare
The ashes of a mightie emperour:
Upon foure corners of the base were pight*,
To beare the frame, foure great lyons of gold;
A worthy tombe for such a worthy wight.
Alas! this world doth nought but grievance hold:
  I saw a tempest from the heaven descend,
  Which this brave monument with flash did rend.
[* *Pight*, placed.]

IV.

I saw raysde up on yvorie pillowes tall,
Whose bases were of richest mettalls warke,
The chapters* alablaster, the fryses christall,
The double front of a triumphall arke.
On each side purtraid was a Victorie,
Clad like a nimph, that wings of silver weares,
And in triumphant chayre was set on hie,
The auncient glory of the Romaine peares.
No worke it seem’d of earthly craftsmans wit,
But rather wrought by his owne industry
That thunder-dartes for Iove his syre doth fit.
Let me no more see faire thing under sky,
  Sith that mine eyes have seene so faire a sight
  With sodain fall to dust consumed quight.
[* *Chapters*, capitals.]

V.

Then was the faire Dodonian tree far seene
Upon seaven hills to spread his gladsome gleame,
And conquerours bedecked with his greene,
Along the bancks of the Ausonian streame.
There many an auncient trophee was addrest*,
And many a spoyle, and many a goodly show,
Which that brave races greatnes did attest,
That whilome from the Troyan blood did flow.
Ravisht I was so rare a thing to vew;
When lo! a barbarous troupe of clownish fone**
The honour of these noble boughs down threw:
Under the wedge I heard the tronck to grone;
  And since, I saw the roote in great disdaine
  A twinne of forked trees send forth againe.

[* *Addrest*, hung on, arranged.] [** *Fone*, foes.]

VI.

I saw a wolfe under a rockie cave
Noursing two whelpes; I saw her litle ones
In wanton dalliance the teate to crave,
While she her neck wreath’d from them for the nones*.
I saw her raunge abroad to seeke her food,
And roming through the field with greedie rage
T’embrew her teeth and clawes with lukewarm blood
Of the small heards, her thirst for to asswage.
I saw a thousand huntsmen, which descended
Downe from the mountaines bordring Lombardie,
That with an hundred speares her flank wide rened:
I saw her on the plaine outstretched lie,
  Throwing out thousand throbs in her owne soyle**:
  Soone on a tree uphang’d I saw her spoyle.

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[* *Nones*, nonce.] [** *I.e*. the mire made by her blood.]

VII.

I saw the bird that can the sun endure
With feeble wings assay to mount on hight;
By more and more she gan her wings t'assure,
Following th'ensample of her mothers sight.
I saw her rise, and with a larger flight
To pierce the cloudes, and with wide pinneons
To measure the most haughtie* mountaines hight,
Untill she raught** the gods owne mansions.
There was she lost; when suddaine I behelde,
Where, tumbling through the ayre in firie fold,
All flaming downe she on the plaine was felde,
And soone her bodie turn'd to ashes colde.
  I saw the foule that doth the light dispise
  Out of her dust like to a worme arise.
[* *Haughtie*, lofty.]
[** *Raught*, reached.]
[VII. 1-14.—
"A falcon, tow'ring in her pride of place,
 Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd." C.]

VIII.

I saw a river swift, whose fomy billowes
Did wash the ground-work of an old great wall;
I saw it cover'd all with griesly shadowes,
That with black horror did the ayre appall:
Thereout a strange beast with seven heads arose,
That townes and castles under her brest did coure*,
And seem'd both milder beasts and fiercer foes
Alike with equall ravine to devoure.
Much was I mazde to see this monsters kinde
In hundred formes to change his fearefull hew;
When as at length I saw the wrathfull winde,
Which blows cold storms, burst out of Scithian mew,
  That sperst these cloudes; and, in so short as thought,
  This dreadfull shape was vanished to nought.
[* *Coure*, cover.]

IX.

Then all astonied with this mighty ghoast,
An hideous bodie, big and strong, I sawe,
With side* long beard, and locks down hanging loast**,
Sterne face, and front full of Saturnlike awe;
Who, leaning on the belly of a pot,
Pourd foorth a water, whose out gushing flood
Ran bathing all the creakie@ shore aflot,
Whereon the Troyan prince spilt Turnus blood;
And at his feete a bitch wolfe suck did yeeld
To two young babes: his left the palme tree stout,
His right hand did the peacefull olive wield.
And head with lawrell garnisht was about.
  Sudden both palme and olive fell away,
  And faire green lawrell branch did quite decay.
[* *Side*, long, trailing.]
[** *Loast*, loosed.]
[@ *Creakie*, indented with creeks.]

X.

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Hard by a rivers side a virgin faire,
Folding her armes to heaven with thousand throbs,
And outraging her cheekes and golden haire,
To falling rivers sound thus tun'd her sobs.
"Where is," quoth she, "this whilom honoured face?
Where the great glorie and the auncient praise,
In which all worlds felicitie had place,
When gods and men my honour up did raise?
Suffisd' it not that civill warres me made
The whole worlds spoile, but that this Hydra new,
Of hundred Hercules to be assaide,
With seven heads, budding monstrous crimes anew,
  So many Neroes and Caligulaes
  Out of these crooked shores must dayly rayse?"

XI.

Upon an hill a bright flame I did see,
Waving aloft with triple point to skie,
Which, like incense of precious cedar tree,
With balmie odours fil'd th'ayre farre and nie.
A bird all white, well feathered on each wing,
Hereout up to the throne of gods did flie,
And all the way most pleasant notes did sing,
Whilst in the smoake she unto heaven did stie*.
Of this faire fire the scattered rayes forth threw
On everie side a thousand shining beames:
When sudden dropping of a silver dew
(O grievous chance!) gan quench those precious flames;
  That it, which earst** so pleasant sent did yeld,
  Of nothing now but noyous sulphure smeld.
[* *Stie*, mount.]
[** *Earst*, at first.]

XII.

I saw a spring out of a rocke forth rayle*,
As cleare as christall gainst the sunnie beames;
The bottome yeallow, like the golden grayle*
That bright Pactolus washeth with his streames.
It seem'd that Art and Nature had assembled
All pleasure there for which mans hart could long;

And there a noyse alluring sleepe soft trembled,
Of manie accords, more sweete than mermaids song,
The seates and benches shone as yvorie,
And hundred nymphes sate side by side about;
When from nigh hills, with hideous outcrie,
A troupe of satyres in the place did rout,@
Which with their villeine feete the streame did ray,$
Threw down the seats, and drove the nymphs away.
[* *Rayle*, flow.]
[** *Grayle*, gravel.]
[@ *Rout*, burst.]
[$ *Ray*, defile.]

XIII.

Much richer then that vessell seem'd to bee
Which did to that sad Florentine appeare,
Casting mine eyes farre off, I chaunst to see
Upon the Latine coast herselfe to reare.
But suddenly arose a tempest great,
Bearing close envie to these riches rare,
Which gan assaile this ship with dreadfull threat,
This ship, to which none other might compare:
And finally the storme impetuous
Sunke up these riches, second unto none,
Within the gulfe of greedie Nereus.
I saw both ship and mariners each one,
  And all that treasure, drowned in the maine:
  But I the ship saw after raisd' againe.
[XIII. 1.—*That vessell*. See the second canto of the Purgatorio. C.]

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XIV.

Long having deeply gron'd these visions sad,
I saw a citie like unto that same
Which saw the messenger of tidings glad,
But that on sand was built the goodly frame:
It seem'd her top the firmament did rayse,
And, no lesse rich than faire, right worthie sure
(If ought here worthie) of immortall dayes,
Or if ought under heaven might firme endure.
Much wondred I to see so faire a wall:
When from the Northerns coast a storme arose,
Which, breathing furie from his inward gall
On all which did against his course oppose,
  Into a clowde of dust sperst in the aire
  The weake foundations of this citie faire.

XV.

At length, even at the time when Morpheus
Most trulie doth unto our eyes appeare,
Wearie to see the heavens still wavering thus,
I saw Typhaeus sister* comming neare;
Whose head, full bravely with a morion** hidd,
Did seeme to match the gods in maiestie.
She, by a rivers bancke that swift downe slidd,
Over all the world did raise a trophee hie;
An hundred vanquisht kings under her lay,
With armes bound at their backs in shamefull wize.
Whilst I thus mazed was with great affray,
I saw the heavens in warre against her rize:
  Then downe she stricken fell with clap of thonder,
  That with great noyse I wakte in sudden wonder.

[* *I.e*. (apparently) Change or Mutability. See the two cantos of the Seventh Book of the Faerie Queene.]

[** *Morion*, steel cap.]

* * * * *

THE VISIONS OF PETRARCH:

FORMERLY TRANSLATED. [Footnote: The first six of these sonnets are translated (not directly, but through the French of Clement Marot) from Petrarch's third Canzone in Morte di Laura. The seventh is by the translator. The circumstance that the version is made from Marot renders it probable that these sonnets are really by Spenser. C.]

I.

Being one day at my window all alone,
So manie strange things happened me to see,
As much it grieveth me to thinke thereon.
At my right hand a hynde appear'd to mee.
So faire as mote the greatest god delite;
Two eager dogs did her pursue in chace,
Of which the one was blacke, the other white.
With deadly force so in their cruell race
They pincht the haunches of that gentle beast,
That at the last, and in short time, I spide,
Under a rocke, where she, alas! opprest,
Fell to the ground, and there untimely dide.
Cruell death vanquishing so noble beautie,
Oft makes me wayle so hard a destenie.

II.

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After, at sea a tall ship did appeare,
Made all of heben* and white yvorie;
The sailes of golde, of silke the tackle were.
Milde was the winde, calme seem'd the sea to bee,
The skie eachwhere did show full bright and faire:
With rich treasures this gay ship fraighted was:
But sudden storme did so turmoyle the aire,
And tumbled up the sea, that she, alas!
Strake on a rock, that under water lay,
And perished past all recoverie.
O! how great ruth, and sorrow-full assay**,
Doth vex my spirite with perplexitie,
  Thus in a moment to see lost and drown'd
  So great riches as like cannot be found.
[* *Heben*, ebony.]
[** *Assay*, trial.]

III.

The heavenly branches did I see arise
Out of the fresh and lustie lawrell tree,
Amidst the yong greene wood: of Paradise
Some noble plant I thought my selfe to see.
Such store of birds therein yshrowded were,
Chaunting in shade their sundrie melodie,
That with their sweetnes I was ravish't nere.
While on this lawrell fixed was mine eie,
The skie gan everie where to overcast,
And darkned was the welkin all about,
When sudden flash of heavens fire out brast*,
And rent this royall tree quite by the roote;
  Which makes me much and ever to complaine,
  For no such shadow shalbe had againe.
[* *Brast*, burst.]

IV.

Within this wood, out of a rocke did rise
A spring of water, mildly rumbling downe,
Whereto approched not in anie wise
The homely shepheard, nor the ruder clowne;
But manie Muses, and the Nymphes withall,

That sweetly in accord did tune their voyce
To the soft sounding of the waters fall;
That my glad hart thereat did much reioyce.
But, while herein I tooke my chiefe delight,
I saw, alas! the gaping earth devoure
The spring, the place, and all cleane out of sight;
Which yet aggreeves my hart even to this houre,
  And wounds my soule with rufull memorie,
  To see such pleasures gon so suddenly.

V.

I saw a Phoenix in the wood alone,
With purple wings and crest of golden hewe;
Strange bird he was, whereby I thought anone
That of some heavenly wight I had the vewe;
Untill he came unto the broken tree,
And to the spring that late devoured was.
What say I more? Each thing at last we see
Doth passe away: the Phoenix there, alas!
Spying the tree destroid, the water dride,
Himselfe smote with his beake, as in disdaine,
And so foorthwith in great despight he dide;
That yet my heart burnes in exceeding paine
  For ruth and pitie of so haples plight.
  O, let mine eyes no more see such a sight!

VI.

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At last, so faire a ladie did I spie,
That thinking yet on her I burne and quake:
On hearbs and flowres she walked pensively;
Milde, but yet love she proudly did forsake:
White seem'd her robes, yet woven so they were
As snow and golde together had been wrought:
Above the wast a darke clowde shrouded her.
A stinging serpent by the heele her caught;
Wherewith she languisht as the gathered floure,
And, well assur'd, she mounted up to ioy.
Alas! on earth so nothing doth endure,
But bitter griefe and sorrowfull annoy:
  Which make this life wretched and miserable.
  Tossed with stormes of fortune variable.

VII.

When I behold this tickle* trustles state
Of vaine worlds glorie, flitting too and fro,
And mortall men tossed by troublous fate
In restles seas of wretchednes and woe,
I wish I might this wearie life forgoe,
And shortly turne unto my happie rest,
Where my free spirite might not anie moe
Be vest with sights that doo her peace molest.
And ye, faire Ladie, in whose bounteous brest
All heavenly grace and vertue shrined is,
When ye these rythmes doo read, and vew the rest,
Loath this base world, and thinke of heavens blis:
  And though ye be the fairest of Gods creatures,
  Yet thinke that death shall spoyle your goodly features.
[* *Tickle*, uncertain.]

* * * * *

DAPHNAIDA:

AN ELEGIE

UPON THE DEATH OF THE NOBLE AND VERTUOUS

DOUGLAS HOWARD,

DAUGHTER AND HEIRE OF HENRY LORD HOWARD, VISCOUNT BYNDON, AND WIFE OF ARTHUR GORGES, ESQUIER.

DEDICATED TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

THE LADIE HELENA,

MARQUESSE OF NORTHAMPTON.

BY ED. SP.

(1591.)

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE AND VERTUOUS LADY,

HELENA,

MARQUESSE OF NORTH HAMPTON.[*]

I have the rather presumed humbly to offer unto your Honour the dedication of this little poeme, for that the noble and vertuous gentlewoman of whom it is written was by match neere alied, and in affection greatly devoted, unto your Ladiship. The occasion why I wrote the same was as well the great good fame which I heard of her deceassed, as the particular goodwill which I bear unto her husband, Master Arthur Gorges, a lover of learning and vertue, whose house, as your Ladiship by marriage hath honoured, so doe I find the name of them, by many notable records, to be of great antiquitie in this realme, and such as have ever borne themselves with honourable reputation to the world, and unspotted loyaltie to their prince and countrey: besides, so lineally are they descended

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from the Howards, as that the Lady Anne Howard; eldest daughter to John Duke of Norfolke, was wife to Sir Edmund, mother to Sir Edward, and grandmother to Sir William and Sir Thomas Gorges, Knightes: and therefore I doe assure my selfe that no due honour done to the White Lyon, but will be most gratefull to your Ladiship, whose husband and children do so neerely participate with the bloud of that noble family. So in all dutie I recommend this pamphlet, and the good acceptance thereof, to your honourable favour and protection. London, this first of Ianuarie, 1591. Your Honours humbly ever.

[* This lady, when widow of William Parr, the only person who was ever Marquis of Northampton, had married Sir Thomas Gorges, uncle of Lady Douglas Howard, the subject of this elegy. Mr. (afterwards Sir) Arthur Gorges was himself a poet, and the author of the English translation of Bacon's tract *De Sapientia Veterum*, published in 1619. See Craik's Spenser and his Poetry, Vol. III. p. 187. C.]

* * * * *

DAPHNAIDA.

Whatever man he be whose heavie mynd,
With griefe of mournefull great mishap opprest,
Fit matter for his cares increase would fynd,
Let reade the rufull plaint herein exprest,
Of one, I weene, the wofulst man alive,
Even sad Alcyon*, whose empierced brest
Sharpe sorrowe did in thousand peeces rive.
[* *I.e*. Sir Arthur Gorges.]

But whoso else in pleasure findeth sense,
Or in this wretched life doeth take delight,
Let him he banisht farre away from hence;
Ne let the Sacred Sisters here be hight*,
Though they of sorrowe heavilie can sing,
For even their heavie song would breede delight;
But here no tunes save sobs and grones shall ring.
[* *Hight*, summoned.]

In stead of them and their sweet harmonie,
Let those three Fatall Sisters, whose sad hands
Doe weave the direfull threeds of destinie,
And in their wrath break off the vitall bands,

Approach hereto; and let the dreadfull Queene
Of Darknes deepe come from the Stygian strands,
And grisly ghosts, to heare this dolefull teene*,
  [* *Teene*, sorrow]

In gloomy evening, when the wearie sun
After his dayes long labour drew to rest,
And sweatie steedes, now having overrun
The compast skie, gan water in the west,
I walkt abroad to breath the freshing ayre
In open fields, whose flowring pride, opprest
With early frosts, had lost their beautie faire.

There came unto my mind a troublous thought,
Which dayly doth my weaker wit possesse,
Ne lets it rest untill it forth have brought
Her long borne infant, fruit of heavinesse,
Which she conceived hath through meditation
Of this worlds vainnesse and life's wretchednesse,
That yet my soule it deepely doth empassion*.
  [* *Empassion*, move]

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So as I muzed on the miserie
In which men live, and I of many most,
Most miserable man, I did espie
Where towards me a sory wight did cost*,
Clad all in black, that mourning did bewray,
And Iacob staffe ** in hand devoutly crost,
Like to some pilgrim come from farre away.
[* *Cost*, approach]
[** *Iacob staffe*, a pilgrim's staff, in the form of a cross]

His carelesse locks, uncombed and unshorne,
Hong long adowne, and bearde all overgrowne,
That well he seemd to be some wight forlorne:
Downe to the earth his heavie eyes were throwne,
As loathing light, and ever as he went
He sighed soft, and inly deepe did grone,
As if his heart in peeces would have rent.

Approaching nigh his face I vewed nere,
And by the semblant of his countenaunce
Me seemd I had his person seene elsewhere,
Most like Alcyon seeming at a glaunce;
Alcyon he, the iollie shepheard swaine,
That wont full merrilie to pipe and daunce,
And fill with pleasance every wood and plaine.

Yet halfe in doubt, because of his disguize,
I softlie sayd, Alcyon! There-withall
He lookt aside as in disdainefull wise,
Yet stayed not, till I againe did call:
Then, turning back, he saide, with hollow sound,
"Who is it that dooth name me, wofull thrall,
The wretchedst man that treads this day on ground?"

"One whom like wofulnesse, impressed deepe,
Hath made fit mate thy wretched case to heare,
And given like cause with thee to waile and wepe;
Griefe finds some ease by him that like does beare.
Then stay, Alcyon, gentle shepheard! stay,"
Quoth I, "till thou have to my trustie eare
Committed what thee dooth so ill apay*." 70
[* *Ill apay* , discontent, distress.]

“Cease, foolish man!” saide he halfe wrothfully,
“To seeke to heare that which cannot be told;
For the huge anguish, which doeth multiply
My dying paines, no tongue can well unfold;
Ne doo I care that any should bemone
My hard mishap, or any weepe that would,
But seeke alone to weepe, and dye alone.”

“Then be it so,” quoth I, “that thou are bent
To die alone, unpitied, unplained;
Yet, ere thou die, it were convenient
To tell the cause which thee thereto constrained,
Least that the world thee dead accuse of guilt,
And say, when thou of none shall be maintained,
That thou for secret crime thy blood hast spilt.”

“Who life does loath, and longs to be unbound
From the strong shackles of fraile flesh,” quoth he,
“Nought cares at all what they that live on ground
Deem the occasion of his death to bee;
Rather desires to be forgotten quight,
Than question made of his calamitie;
For harts deep sorrow hates both life and light.

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“Yet since so much thou seemst to rue my griefe,
And car’st for one that for himselfe cares nought,
(Sign of thy love, though nought for my reliefe,
For my reliefe exceedeth living thought,)
I will to thee this heavie case relate:
Then harken well till it to end be brought,
For never didst thou heare more haplesse fate.

“Whilome I usde (as thou right well doest know)
My little flocke on westerns downes to keep,
Not far from whence Sabrinaes streame doth flow,
And flowrie bancks with silver liquor steepe;
Nought carde I then for worldly change or chaunce,
For all my ioy was on my gentle sheepe,
And to my pype to caroll and to daunce.

“It there befell, as I the fields did range
Fearlesse and free, a faire young Lionesse,
White as the native rose before the chaunge
Which Venus blood did in her leaves impresse,
I spied playing on the grassie plaine
Her youthfull sports and kindlie wantonnesse,
That did all other beasts in beawtie staine.
[Ver. 107.—*A fair young Lionesse,* So called from the white lion in the arms of the Duke of Norfolk, the head of the family to which Lady Douglas Howard belonged. H.]

“Much was I moved at so goodly sight,
Whose like before mine eye had seldome seene,
And gan to cast how I her compasse might,
And bring to hand that yet had never beene:
So well I wrought with mildnes and with paine,
That I her caught disporting on the greene,
And brought away fast bound with silver chaine.

“And afterwardes I handled her so fayre,
That though by kind shee stout and salvage were,
For being borne an auncient lions hayre,
And of the race that all wild beastes do feare,
Yet I her fram’d, and wan so to my bent,
That shee became so meeke and milde of cheare
As the least lamb in all my flock that went.

“For shee in field, where-ever I did wend,
Would wend with me, and waite by me all day;
And all the night that I in watch did spend,
If cause requir’d, or els in sleepe, if nay,
Shee would all night by me or watch or sleepe;
And evermore when I did sleepe or play,
She of my flock would take full warie keepe*.
[* *Keepe*, care.]

“Safe then, and safest, were my sillie sheepe,
Ne fear’d the wolfe, ne fear’d the wildest beast,
All* were I drown’d in carelesse quiet deepe:
My lovely Lionesse without beheast
So careful was for them and for my good,
That when I waked, neither most nor least
I found miscarried, or in plaine or wood.
[* *All*, although.]

“Oft did the shepheards which my hap did heare,
And oft their lasses, which my luck envyde,
Daylie resort to me from farre and neare,
To see my Lyonesse, whose praises wyde
Were spred abroad; and when her worthinesse
Much greater than the rude report they tryde*,
They her did praise, and my good fortune blesse.
[* *Tryde*, proved, found.]

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“Long thus I ioyed in my happinesse,
And well did hope my ioy would have no end;
But oh! fond man! that in worlds ficklenesse
Reposedst hope, or weenedst Her thy frend
That glories most in mortall miseries,
And daylie doth her changefull counsels bend
To make new matter fit for tragedies.

“For whilest I was thus without dread or dout,
A cruel Satyre with his murdrous dart,
Greedie of mischiefe, ranging all about,
Gave her the fatall wound of deadly smart,
And reft from me my sweete companion,
And reft from me my love, my life, my hart:
My Lyonesse, ah woe is me! is gon!

“Out of the world thus was she reft away,
Out of the world, unworthy such a spoyle,
And borne to heaven, for heaven a fitter pray;
Much fitter then the lyon which with toyle
Alcides slew, and fixt in firmament;
Her now I seeke throughout this earthly soyle,
And seeking misse, and missing doe lament.”

Therewith he gan afresh to waile and weepe,
That I for pittie of his heavie plight
Could not abstain mine eyes with teares to steepe;
But when I saw the anguish of his spright
Some deale alaid, I him bespake againe:
“Certes, Alcyon, painfull is thy plight,
That it in me breeds almost equall paine,

“Yet doth not my dull wit well understand
The riddle of thy loved Lionesse;
For rare it seemes in reason to be skand,
That man, who doth the whole worlds rule possesse,
Should to a beast his noble hart embase,
And be the vassall of his vassalesse;
Therefore more plain areade* this doubtfull case.”
[* *Areade*, explain.]

Then sighing sore, “Daphne thou knew’st,” quoth he;
“She now is dead”: no more endur’d to say,
But fell to ground for great extremitie;

That I, beholding it, with deepe dismay
Was much apald, and, lightly him uprearing,
Revoked life, that would have fled away,
All were my selfe through grief in deadly drearing*.
  [* *Drearing*, sorrowing.]

Then gan I him to comfort all my best,
And with milde counsaile strove to mitigate
The stormie passion of his troubled brest;
But he thereby was more empassionate,
As stubborne steed that is with curb restrained
Becomes more fierce and fervent in his gate,
And, breaking foorth at last, thus dearnely* plained:
  [* *Dearnely*, sadly.]

I.

“What man henceforth that breatheth vitall aire
Will honour Heaven, or heavenly powers adore,
Which so uniustly doth their iudgements share
Mongst earthly wights, as to afflict so sore
The innocent as those which do transgresse,
And doe not spare the best or fairest more
Than worst or foulest, but doe both oppresse?

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“If this be right, why did they then create
The world so faire, sith fairenesse is neglected?
Or why be they themselves immaculate,
If purest things be not by them respected?
She faire, she pure, most faire, most pure she was,
Yet was by them as thing impure reiected;
Yet she in purenesse heaven it self did pas.

“In purenesse, and in all celestiall grace
That men admire in goodly womankind,
She did excell, and seem’d of angels race,
Living on earth like angell new divinde*,
Adorn’d with wisedome and with chastitie,
And all the dowries of a noble mind,
Which did her beautie much more beautifie.
[* *Divinde*, deified.]

“No age hath bred (since faire Astraea left
The sinfull world) more vertue in a wight;
And, when she parted hence, with her she reft
Great hope, and robd her race of bounty* quight.
Well may the shepheard lasses now lament;
For doubble losse by her hath on them light,
To loose both her and bounties ornament.
[* *Bounty*, goodness.]

“Ne let Elisa, royall shepheardesse,
The praises of my parted* love envy,
For she hath praises in all plenteousnesse
Powr’d upon her, like showers of Castaly,
By her owne shepheard, Colin, her own shepheard,
That her with heavenly hymnes doth deifie,
Of rusticke Muse full hardly to be betterd.
[* *Parted*, departed.]

“She is the rose, the glory of the day,
And mine the primrose in the lowly shade:
Mine? ah, not mine! amisse I mine did say:
Not mine, but His which mine awhile her made;
Mine to be-his, with him to live for ay.
O that so faire a flowre so soon should fade,
And through untimely tempest fall away!

“She fell away in her first ages spring,
Whilst yet her leafe was greene, and fresh her rinde;
And whilst her braunch faire blossomes foorth did bring,
She fell away against all course of kinde*.
For age to dye is right, but youth is wrong;
She fell away like fruit blowne down with winde.
Weepe, Shepheard! weepe, to make my undersong**.
[* *Kinde*, nature.]
[** *Undersong*, accompaniment.]

II.

“What hart so stonie hard but that would weepe.
And poure forth fountaines of incessant teares?
What Timon but would let compassion creepe
Into his breast, and pierce his frosen eares?
In stead of teares, whose brackish bitter well
I wasted have, my heart bloud dropping weares,
To think to ground how that faire blossome fell.

“Yet fell she not as one enforst to dye,
Ne dyde with dread and grudging discontent,
But as one toyld with travell downe doth lye,
So lay she downe, as if to sleepe she went,
And closde her eyes with carelesse quietriesse;
The whiles soft death away her spirit hent*,
And soule assoyld** from sinfull fleshlinesse.
[* *Hent*, took]
[** *Assoyld*, absolved.]

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“Yet ere that life her lodging did forsake,
She, all resolv’d, and readie to remove,
Calling to me (ay me!) this wise bespake;
’Alcyon! ah, my first and latest love!
Ah! why does my Alcyon weepe and mourne,
And grieve my ghost, that ill mote him behove,
As if to me had chaunst some evill tourne!

“’I, since the messenger is come for mee
That summons soules unto the bridale feast
Of his great Lord, must needs depart from thee,
And straight obay his soveraine beheast;
Why should Alcyon then so sore lament
That I from miserie shall be releast,
And freed from wretched long imprisonment!

“’Our daies are full of dolour and disease.
Our life afflicted with incessant paine,
That nought on earth may lessen or appease;
Why then should I desire here to remaine!
Or why should he that loves me sorrie bee
For my deliverance, or at all complaine
My good to heare, and toward* ioyes to see!
[* *Toward,* preparing, near at hand.]

“’I goe, and long desired have to goe;
I goe with gladnesse to my wished rest,
Whereas* no worlds sad care nor wasting woe
May come, their happie quiet to molest;
But saints and angels in celestiall thrones
Eternally Him praise that hath them blest;
There shall I be amongst those blessed ones.
[* *Whereas,* where.]

“’Yet, ere I goe, a pledge I leave with thee
Of the late love the which betwixt us past;
My young Ambrosia; in lieu of mee,
Love her; so shall our love for ever last.
Thus, deare! adieu, whom I expect ere long.’—
So having said, away she softly past;
Weepe, Shepheard! weepe, to make mine undersong.

III.

“So oft as I record those piercing words,
Which yet are deepe engraven in my brest,
And those last deadly accents, which like swords
Did wound my heart and rend my bleeding chest,
With those sweet sugred speeches doe compare
The which my soul first conquerd and possest,
The first beginners of my endlesse care,

“And when those pallid cheekes and ashe hew,
In which sad Death his pourtraiture had writ,
And when those hollow eyes and deadly view,
On which the cloud of ghastly night did sit,
I match, with that sweete smile and chearful brow,
Which all the world subdued unto it,
How happie was I then, and wretched now!

“How happie was I when I saw her leade
The shepheards daughters dauncing in a rownd!
How trimly would she trace* and softly tread
The tender grasse, with rosye garland crownd!
And when she list advaunce her heavenly voyce,
Both Nymphes and Muses nigh she made astownd,
And flocks and shepheards caused to reioyce.
[* *Trace*, step]

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“But now, ye shepheard lasses! who shall lead
Your wandring troupes, or sing your virelayes*?
Or who shall dight** your bowres, sith she is dead
That was the lady of your holy-dayes?
Let now your blisse be turned into bale,
And into plaints convert your ioyous playes,
And with the same fill every hill and dale.
[* *Virelayes*, roundelays.]
[** *Dight*, deck.]

“Let bagpipe never more be heard to shrill,
That may allure the senses to delight,
Ne ever shepheard sound his oaten quill
Unto the many*, that provoke them might
To idle pleasance; but let ghastlinesse
And drearie horror dim the chearfull light,
To make the image of true heavinesse.
[* *Many*, company.]

“Let birds be silent on the naked spray,
And shady woods resound with dreadfull yells;
Let streaming floods their hastie courses stay,
And parching drouth drie up the cristall wells;
Let th’earth be barren, and bring foorth no flowres,
And th’ayre be fild with noyse of dolefull knells,
And wandring spirits walke untimely howres.

“And Nature, nurse of every living thing,
Let rest her selfe from her long wearinesse,
And cease henceforth things kindly forth to bring,
But hideous monsters full of uglinesse;
For she it is that hath me done this wrong;
No nurse, but stepdame cruell, mercilesse.
Weepe, Shepheard! weepe, to make my undersong.

IV.

“My little flock, whom earst I lov’d so well,
And wont to feed with finest grasse that grew,
Feede ye hencefoorth on bitter astrofell*,
And stinking smallage, and unsaverie rew;
And when your mawes are with those weeds corrupted,
Be ye the pray of wolves; ne will I rew

That with your carkasses wild beasts be glutted.
[* *Astrofell*, (probably) starwort. See *Astrophel*, v. 184-196.]

“Ne worse to you, my sillie sheepe, I pray,
Ne sorer vengeance wish on you to fall
Than to my selfe, for whose confusde decay**
To carelesse heavens I doo daylie call;
But heavens refuse to heare a wretches cry;
And cruell Death doth scorn to come at call,
Or graunt his boone that most desires to dye.
[* *Decay*, destruction.]

“The good and righteous he away doth take,
To plague th’unrighteous which alive remaine;
But the ungodly ones he doth forsake,
By living long to multiplie their paine;
Else surely death should be no punishment,
As the Great Iudge at first did it ordaine,
But rather riddance from long languishment.

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“Therefore, my Daphne they have tane away;
For worthie of a better place was she:
But me unworthie willed here to stay,
That with her lacke I might tormented be.
Sith then they so have ordred, I will pay
Penance to her, according* their decree,
And to her ghost doe service day by day.
[* *According*, according to.]

“For I will walke this wandring pilgrimage,
Throughout the world from one to other end,
And in affliction waste my better age:
My bread shall be the anguish of my mynd,
My drink the teares which fro mine eyes do raine,
My bed the ground that hardest I may fynd;
So will I wilfully increase my paine.

“And she, my love that was, my saint that is,
When she beholds from her celestiall throne
(In which shee ioyeth in eternall blis)
My bitter penance, will my case bemone,
And pittie me that living thus doo die;
For heavenly spirits have compassion
On mortall men, and rue their miserie.

“So when I have with sorrow satisfyde
Th’importune Fates which vengeance on me seeks,
And th’heavens with long languor pacifyde,
She, for pure pitie of my sufferance meeke,
Will send for me; for which I daily long,
And will till then my painfull penance eeke,
Weepe, Shepheard! weepe, to make my undersong.

V.

“Hencefoorth I hate whatever Nature made,
And in her workmanship no pleasure finde,
For they be all but vaine, and quickly fade
So soone as on them blowes the northern winde;
They tarrie not, but flit and fall away,
Leaving behind them nought but griefe of minde,
And mocking such as thinke they long will stay.

“I hate the heaven, because it doth withhould
Me from my love, and eke my love from me;
I hate the earth, because it is the mould
Of fleshly slime and fraile mortalitie;
I hate the fire, because to nought it flyes;
I hate the ayre, because sighes of it be;
I hate the sea, because it teares supplyes.

“I hate the day, because it lendeth light
To see all things, and not my love to see;
I hate the darknesse and the dreary night,
Because they breed sad balefulnesse in mee;
I hate all times, because all times doo fly
So fast away, and may not stayed bee,
But as a speedie post that passeth by.

“I hate to speake, my voyce is spent with crying;
I hate to heare, lowd plaints have duld mine eares;
I hate to tast, for food withholds my dying;
I hate to see, mine eyes are dimd with teares;
I hate to smell, no sweet on earth is left;
I hate to feele, my flesh is numbd with feares:
So all my senses from me are bereft.

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“I hate all men, and shun all womankinde;
The one, because as I they wretched are;
The other, for because I doo not finde
My love with them, that wont to be their starre.
And life I hate, because it will not last;
And death I hate, because it life doth marre;
And all I hate that is to come or past.

“So all the world, and all in it I hate,
Because it changeth ever to and fro,
And never standeth in one certaine state,
But, still unstedfast, round about doth goe
Like a mill-wheele in midst of miserie,
Driven with streames of wretchednesse and woe,
That dying lives, and living still does dye.

“So doo I live, so doo I daylie die,
And pine away in selfe-consuming paine!
Sith she that did my vitall powres supplie,
And feeble spirits in their force maintaine,
Is fetcht fro me, why seeke I to prolong
My wearie daies in dolour and disdalne!
Weepe, Shepheard! weepe, to make my undersong.

IV.

“Why doo I longer live in lifes despight,
And doo not dye then in despight of death!
Why doo I longer see this loathsome light,
And doo in darknesse not abridge my breath,
Sith all my sorrow should have end thereby,
And cares finde quiet! Is it so uneath*
To leave this life, or dolorous to dye?
  [* *Uneath*, difficult.]

“To live I finde it deadly dolorous,
For life drawes care, and care continuall woe;
Therefore to dye must needes be ioyeous,
And wishfull thing this sad life to forgoe.
But I must stay; I may it not amend;
My Daphne hence departing bad me so;
She bad me stay, till she for me did send.

“Yet, whilest I in this wretched vale doo stay,
My wearie feete shall ever wandring be,
That still I may be readie on my way
When, as her messenger doth come for me;
Ne will I rest my feete for feeblenesse,
Ne will I rest my limmes for frailtie,
Ne will I rest mine eyes for heavinesse.

“But, as the mother of the gods, that sought
For faire Euridyce, her daughter dere,
Throughout the world, with wofull heavie thought,
So will I travell whilest I tarrie heere,
Ne will I lodge, ne will I ever lin*,
Ne, when as drouping Titan draweth nere
To loose his teeme, will I take up my inne**.
[* *Lin*, cease.]
[** *Inne*, lodging.]

“Ne sleepe, the harbenger* of wearie wights,
Shall ever lodge upon mine eye-lids more,
Ne shall with rest refresh my fainting sprights,
Nor failing force to former strength restore:
But I will wake and sorrow all the night
With Philumene*, my fortune to deplore;
With Philumene, the partner of my plight.
[* *Harbenger*, one who provides lodging or repose.]
[** *Philumene*, Philomel.]

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“And ever as I see the starre to fall,
And under ground to goe to give them light
Which dwell in darknesse, I to mind will call
How my faire starre, that shind on me so bright,
Fell sodainly and faded under ground;
Since whose departure, day is turnd to night,
And night without a Venus starre is found.

“But soon as day doth shew his deawie face,
And cals foorth men unto their toylsome trade,
I will withdraw me to some darkesome place,
Or some dere* cave, or solitarie shade;
There will I sigh, and sorrow all day long,
And the huge burden of my cares unlade.
Weepe, Shepheard! weepe, to make my undersong.
[* Qu. *derne*, lonely? Or, *drere?*]

VII.

“Henceforth mine eyes shall never more behold
Faire thing on earth, ne feed on false delight
Of ought that framed is of mortall mould,
Sith that my fairest flower is faded quight;
For all I see is vaine and transitorie,
Ne will be held in any stedfast plight,
But in a moment loose their grace and glorie.

“And ye, fond Men! on Fortunes wheele that ride,
Or in ought under heaven repose assurance,
Be it riches, beautie, or honours pride,
Be sure that they shall have no long endurance,
But ere ye be aware will flit away;
For nought of them is yours, but th’only usance
Of a small time, which none ascertains may.

“And ye, true Lovers! whom desastrous chaunce,
Hath farre exiled from your ladies grace,
To mourne in sorrow and sad sufferauncc,
When ye doe heare me in that desert place
Lamenting loud my Daphnes elegie,
Helpe me to waile my miserable case,
And when life parts vouchsafe to close mine eye.

“And ye, more happie Lovers! which enioy
The presence of your dearest loves delight,
“When ye doe heare my sorrowfull annoy,
Yet pittie me in your empassiond spright,
And thinke that such mishap as chaunst to me
May happen unto the most happiest wight;
For all mens states alike unstedfast be.

“And ye, ray fellow Shepheards! which do feed
Tour carelesse flocks on hils and open plaines,
With better fortune than did me succeed,
Remember yet my undeserved paines;
And when ye heare that I am dead or slaine,
Lament my lot, and tell your fellow-swaines
That sad Aleyon dyde in lifes disdaine.

“And ye, faire Damsels! shepheards deare delights,
That with your loves do their rude hearts possesse,
When as my hearse shall happen to your sightes,
Vouchsafe to deck the same with cyparesse;
And ever sprinckle brackish teares among,
In pitie of my undeserv’d distresse,
The which, I, wretch, endured have thus long.

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“And ye, poore Pilgrims! that with restlesse toyle
Wearie your selves in wandring desart wayes,
Till that you come where ye your vowes assoyle*,
When passing by ye reade these wofull layes
On my grave written, rue my Daphnes wrong,
And mourne for me that languish out my dayes.
Cease, Shepheard! cease, and end thy undersong.”
[* *Assoyle*, absolve, pay.]

Thus when he ended had his heavie plaint,
The heaviest plaint that ever I heard sound,
His cheekes wext pale, and sprights began to faint,
As if againe he would have fallen to ground;
Which when I saw, I, stepping to him light,
Amooved* him out of his stonie swound,
And gan him to recomfort as I might.
[* *Amooved*, roused.]

But he no waie recomforted would be,
Nor suffer solace to approach him nie,
But, casting up a sdeinfull eie at me,
That in his traunce I would not let him lie,
Did rend his haire, and beat his blubbred face,
As one disposed wilfullie to die,
That I sore griev’d to see his wretched case.

Tho when the pang was somewhat overpast,
And the outragious passion nigh appeased,
I him desyrde, sith daie was overcast
And darke night fast approched, to be pleased
To turne aside unto my cabinet*,
And staie with me, till he were better eased
Of that strong stownd** which him so sore beset.
[* *Cabinet*, cabin.]
[** *Stownd*, mood, parosysm of grief.]

But by no meanes I could him win thereto,
Ne longer him intreate with me to staie,
But without taking leave he foorth did goe
With staggring pace and dismall looks dismay,
As if that Death he in the face had seene,
Or hellish hags had met upon the way:
But what of him became I cannot weene.

* * * * *

AMORETTI

AND

EPITHALAMION.

WRITTEN NOT LONG SINCE BY

EDMUNDE SPENSER.

* * * * *

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM POSBONBY.

1595.

G. W. SENIOR*,
TO THE AUTHOR.
[* These commendatory Sonnets first appeared in the first folio edition of Spenser’s entire works (1611). G. W., as Todd conjectures, may be George Whetstone. C.]

Darke is the day when Phoebus face is shrowded,
And weaker sights may wander soone astray;
But when they see his glorious raies unclowded,
With steddy steps they keepe the perfect way:
So, while this Muse in forraine land doth stay,
Invention weepes, and pennes are cast aside;
The time, like night, deprivd of chearfull day;
And few doe write, but ah! too soone may slide.
Then his thee home, that art our perfect guide,
And with thy wit illustrate Englands fame,
Daunting therby our neighbors ancient pride,
That do for Poesie challenge chiefest name:

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So we that live, and ages that succeed,
With great applause thy learned works shall reed.

* * * * *

Ah! Colin, whether on the lowly plaine,
Piping to shepheards thy sweet roundelayes,
Or whether singing, in some loftie vaine,
Heroicke deeds of past or present dayes,
Or whether in thy lovely mistresse praise
Thou list to exercise thy learned quill,
Thy Muse hath got such grace and power to please,
With rare invention, beautified by skill,
As who therin can ever ioy their fill!
O, therefore let that happy Muse proceed
To clime the height of Vertues sacred hill,
Where endlesse honour shal be made thy meed:
Because no malice of succeeding dales
Can rase those records of thy lasting praise.

G. W. I[unior].

* * * * *

AMORETTI.[*]

[* These Sonnets furnish us with a circumstantial and very interesting history of Spenser's second courtship, which, after many repulses, was successfully terminated by the marriage celebrated in the *Epithalamion*. As these poems were entered in the Stationers' Registers on the 19th of November, 1594, we may infer that they cover a period of time extending from the end of 1592 to the summer of 1594. It is possible, however, that these last dates may be a year too late, and that Spenser was married in 1593. We cannot be sure of the year, but we know, from the 266th verse of the Epithalamion, that the day was the feast of St. Barnabas, June 11 of the Old Style. In the 74th sonnet we are directly told that the lady's name was Elizabeth. In the 61st, she is said to be of the "Brood of Angels, heavenly born." From this and many similar expressions, interpreted by the laws of Anagram, and taken in conjunction with various circumstances which do not require to be stated here, it may be inferred that her surname was Nagle. C.]

* * * * *

I.

Happy, ye leaves! when as those lilly hands
Which hold my life in their dead-doing might
Shall handle you, and hold in loves soft bands,
Lyke captives trembling at the victors sight.
And happy lines! on which, with starry light.
Those lamping eyes will deigne sometimes to look,
And reade the sorrowes of my dying spright,
And happy rymes! bath'd in the sacred brooke
Of Helicon, whence she derived is.
When ye behold that Angels blessed looke,
My soules long-lacked food, my heavens blis,
  Leaves, lines, and rymes, seeke her to please alone,
  Whom if ye please, I care for other none!

II.

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Unquiet thought! whom at the first I bred
Of th’inward bale of my love-pined hart,
And sithens have with sighes and sorrowes fed,
Till greater then my wombe thou woxen art,
Breake forth at length out of the inner part,
In which thou lurkest lyke to vipers brood,
And seeke some succour both to ease my smart,
And also to sustayne thy selfe with food.
But if in presence of that fayrest Proud
Thou chance to come, fall lowly at her feet;
And with meek humblesse and afflicted mood
Pardon for thee, and grace for me, intreat:
  Which if she graunt, then live, and my love cherish:
  If not, die soone, and I with thee will perish.

III.

The soverayne beauty which I doo admyre,
Witnesse the world how worthy to be prayzed!
The light wherof hath kindled heavenly fyre
In my fraile spirit, by her from basenesse raysed;
That being now with her huge brightnesse dazed,
Base thing I can no more endure to view:
But, looking still on her, I stand amazed
At wondrous sight of so celestiall hew.
So when my toung would speak her praises dew,
It stopped is with thoughts astonishment;
And when my pen would write her titles true,
It ravisht is with fancies wonderment:
  Yet in my hart I then both speak and write
  The wonder that my wit cannot endite.

IV.

New yeare, forth looking out of Ianus gate,
Doth seeme to promise hope of new delight,
And, bidding th’old adieu, his passed date
Bids all old thoughts to die in dumpish* spright;
And calling forth out of sad Winters night
Fresh Love, that long hath slept in cheerlesse bower,
Wils him awake, and soone about him dight
His wanton wings and darts of deadly power.

For lusty Spring now in his timely howre
Is ready to come forth, him to receive;
And warns the Earth with divers colord flowre
To decke hir selfe, and her faire mantle weave.
  Then you, faire flowre! in whom fresh youth doth raine,
  Prepare your selfe new love to entertaine.
[I *Dumpish*, mournful.]

V.

Rudely thou wrongest my deare harts desire,
In finding fault with her too portly pride:
The thing which I doo most in her admire,
Is of the world unworthy most envide.
For in those lofty lookes is close implide
Scorn of base things, and sdeigne of foul dishonor;
Thretning rash eies which gaze on her so wide,
That loosely they ne dare to looke upon her.
Such pride is praise, such portlinesse is honor,
That boldned innocence beares in hir eies,
And her faire countenaunce, like a goodly banner,
Spreds in defiaunce of all enemies.
  Was never in this world ought worthy tride*,
  Without some spark of such self-pleasing pride.
[* *Tride*, found.]

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VI.

Be nought dismayd that her unmoved mind
Doth still persist in her rebellious pride:
Such love, not lyke to lusts of baser kynd,
The harder wonne, the firmer will abide.
The durefull oake whose sap is not yet dride
Is long ere it conceive the kindling fyre;
But when it once doth burne, it doth divide
Great heat, and makes his flames to heaven aspire.
So hard it is to kindle new desire
In gentle brest, that shall endure for ever:
Deepe is the wound that dints the parts entire*
With chaste affects, that naught but death can sever.
  Then thinke not long in taking litle paine
  To knit the knot that ever shall remaine.
[* *Entire*, inward.]

VII.

Fayre eyes! the myrrour of my mazed hart,
What wondrous vertue is contayn'd in you,
The which both lyfe and death forth from you dart
Into the obiect of your mighty view?
For when ye mildly looke with lovely hew,
Then is my soule with life and love inspired:
But when ye lowre, or looke on me askew,
Then do I die, as one with lightning fyred.
But since that lyfe is more then death desyred,
Looke ever lovely, as becomes you best;
That your bright beams, of my weak eies admyred,
May kindle living fire within my brest.
  Such life should be the honor of your light,
  Such death the sad ensample of your might.

VIII

More then most faire, full of the living fire
Kindled above unto the Maker nere,
No eies, but ioyes, in which al powers conspire,
That to the world naught else be counted deare!

Thrugh your bright beams doth not the blinded guest
Shoot out his darts to base affections wound;
But angels come, to lead fraile mindes to rest
In chast desires, on heavenly beauty bound.
You frame my thoughts, and fashion me within;
You stop my toung, and teach my hart to speake;
You calme the storme that passion did begin,
Strong thrugh your cause, but by your vertue weak.
Dark is the world where your light shined never;
Well is he borne that may behold you ever.

IX.

Long-while I sought to what I might compare
Those powrefull eies which lighten my dark spright;
Yet find I nought on earth, to which I dare
Resemble th'ymage of their goodly light.
Not to the sun, for they doo shine by night;
Nor to the moone, for they are changed never;
Nor to the starres, for they have purer sight;
Nor to the fire, for they consume not ever;
Nor to the lightning, for they still persever;
Nor to the diamond, for they are more tender;
Nor unto cristall, for nought may them sever;
Nor unto glasse, such basenesse mought offend her.
Then to the Maker selfe they likest be,
Whose light doth lighten all that here we see.

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X.

Unrighteous Lord of love, what law is this,
That me thou makest thus tormented be,
The whiles she lordeth in licentious blisse
Of her freewill, scorning both thee and me?
See! how the Tyrannesse doth ioy to see
The hugh massacres which her eyes do make,
And humbled harts brings captive unto thee,
That thou of them mayst mightie vengeance take.
But her proud hart doe thou a little shake,
And that high look, with which she doth comptroll
All this worlds pride, bow to a baser make*,
And al her faults in thy black booke enroll:
  That I may laugh at her in equall sort
  As she doth laugh at me, and makes my pain her sport.
[* *Make*, mate.]

XI.

Dayly when I do seeke and sew for peace,
And hostages doe offer for ray truth,
She, cruell warriour, doth her selfe addresse
To battell, and the weary war renew'th;
Ne wilbe moov'd, with reason or with rewth*,
To graunt small respit to my restlesse toile;
But greedily her fell intent poursewth,
Of my poore life to make unpittied spoile.
Yet my poore life, all sorrowes to assoyle,
I would her yield, her wrath to pacify;
But then she seeks, with torment and turmoyle,
To force me live, and will not let me dy.
  All paine hath end, and every war hafh peace;
  But mine, no price nor prayer may surcease.
[* *Rewth*, ruth, pity.]

XII.

One day I sought with her hart-thrilling eies
To make a truce, and termes to entertaine;
All fearlesse then of so false enimies,

Which sought me to entrap in treasons traine.
So, as I then disarmed did remaine,
A wicked ambush, which lay hidden long
In the close covert of her guilful eyen,
Thence breaking forth, did thick about me throng.
Too feeble I t’abide the brunt so strong,
Was forst to yield my selfe into their hands;
Who, me captiving streight with rigorous wrong,
Have ever since kept me in cruell bands.
  So, Ladie, now to you I doo complaine
  Against your eies, that iustice I may gaine.

XIII.

In that proud port which her so goodly graceth,
Whiles her faire face she reares up to the skie,
And to the ground her eie-lids low embaseth,
Most goodly temperature ye may descry;
Myld humblesse mixt with awful! maiestie.
For, looking on the earth whence she was borne,
Her minde remembreth her mortalitie,
Whatso is fayrest shall to earth returne.
But that same lofty countenance seemes to scorne
Base thing, and thinke how she to heaven may clime;
Treading downe earth as lothsome and forlorne,
That hinders heavenly thoughts with drossy slime.
  Yet lowly still vouchsafe to looke on me;
  Such lowlinesse shall make you lofty be.

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XIV.

Retourne agayne, my forces late dismayd,
Unto the siege by you abandon’d quite.
Great shame it is to leave, like one afrayd,
So fayre a peece* for one repulse so light.
’Gaynst such strong castles needeth greater might
Then those small forts which ye were wont belay**:
Such haughty mynds, enur’d to hardy fight,
Disdayne to yield unto the first assay.
Bring therefore all the forces that ye may,
And lay incessant battery to her heart;
Playnts, prayers, vowes, ruth, sorrow, and dismay;
Those engins can the proudest love convert:
And, if those fayle, fall down and dy before her;
So dying live, and living do adore her.
[l *Peece*, fortress.]
[** *Belay*, beleaguer.]

XV.

Ye tradefull Merchants, that, with weary toyle,
Do seeke most pretious things to make your gain,
And both the Indias of their treasure spoile,
What needeth you to seeke so farre in vaine?
For loe, my Love doth in her selfe containe
All this worlds riches that may farre be found:
If saphyres, loe, her eies be saphyres plaine;
If rubies, loe, hir lips be rubies sound;
If pearles, hir teeth be pearles, both pure and round;
If yvorie, her forhead yvory weene;
If gold, her locks are finest gold on ground;
If silver, her faire hands are silver sheene:
But that which fairest is but few behold:—
Her mind adornd with vertues manifold.

XVI.

One day as I unwarily did gaze
On those fayre eyes, my loves immortall light,
The whiles my stonisht hart stood in amaze,

Through sweet illusion of her lookes delight,
I mote perceive how, in her glauncing sight,
Legions of Loves with little wings did fly,
Darting their deadly arrows, fyry bright,
At every rash beholder passing by.
One of those archers closely I did spy,
Ayming his arrow at my very hart:
When suddenly, with twincle of her eye,
The damzell broke his misintended dart.
  Had she not so doon, sure I had bene slayne;
  Yet as it was, I hardly scap't with paine.

XVII.

The glorious pourtraict of that angels face,
Made to amaze weake mens confused skil,
And this worlds worthlesse glory to embase,
What pen, what pencil!, can expresse her fill?
For though he colours could devize at will,
And eke his learned hand at pleasure guide,
Least, trembling, it his workmanship should spill*,
Yet many wondrous things there are beside:
The sweet eye-glaunces, that like arrowes glide,
The charming smiles, that rob sence from the hart,
The lovely pleasance, and the lofty pride,
Cannot expressed be by any art.
  A greater craftesmans hand thereto doth neede,
  That can expresse the life of things indeed.
[I *Spill*, spoil.]

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XVIII.

The rolling wheele that runneth often round,
The hardest steele, in tract of time doth teare:
And drizling drops, that often doe redound*,
The firmest flint doth in continuance weare:
Yet cannot I, with many a drooping teare
And long intreaty, soften her hard hart,
That she will once vouchsafe my plaint to heare,
Or looke with pitty on my payneful smart.
But when I pleade, she bids me play my part;
And when I weep, she sayes, teares are but water;
And when I sigh, she sayes, I know the art;
And when I waile, she turnes hir selfe to laughter.
  So do I weepe, and wayle, and pleade in vaine,
  Whiles she as steele and flint doth still remayne.
[* *Redound*, overflow.]

XIX.

The merry cuckow, messenger of Spring,
His trompet shrill hath thrise already sounded.
That warnes al lovers wayte upon their king,
Who now is coming forth with girland crouned.
With noyse whereof the quyre of byrds resounded
Their anthemes sweet, devized of loves prayse,
That all the woods theyr ecchoes back rebounded,
As if they knew the meaning of their layes.
But mongst them all which did Loves honor rayse,
No word was heard of her that most it ought;
But she his precept proudly disobayes,
And doth his ydle message set at nought.
  Therefore, O Love, unlesse she turne to thee
  Ere cuckow end, let her a rebell be!

XX.

In vaine I seeke and sew to her for grace,
And doe myne humbled hart before her poure,
The whiles her foot she in my necke doth place,
And tread my life downe in the lowly floure*.

And yet the lyon, that is lord of power,
And reigneth over every beast in field,
In his most pride disdeigneth to devoure
The silly lambe that to his might doth yield.
But she, more cruell and more salvage wylde
Than either lyon or the lyonesse,
Shames not to be with guiltlesse bloud defylde,
But taketh glory in her cruelnesse.
  Fayrer then fayrest! let none ever say
  That ye were blooded in a yeelded pray.
[* *Floure*, floor, ground.]

XXI.

Was it the worke of Nature or of Art,
Which tempred so the feature of her face,
That pride and meeknesse, mist by equall part,
Doe both appeare t'adorne her beauties grace?
For with mild pleasance, which doth pride displace,
She to her love doth lookers eyes allure;
And with stern countenance back again doth chace
Their looser lookes that stir up lustes impure.
With such strange termes* her eyes she doth inure,
That with one looke she doth my life dismay,
And with another doth it streight recure:
Her smile me drawes; her frowne me drives away.
  Thus doth she traine and teach me with her lookes;
  Such art of eyes I never read in bookes!
[* *Termes*, extremes (?).]

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XXII.

This holy season*, fit to fast and pray,
Men to devotion ought to be inclynd:
Therefore, I lykewise, on so holy day,
For my sweet saynt some service fit will find.
Her temple fayre is built within my mind,
In which her glorious ymage placed is;
On which my thoughts doo day and night attend,
Lyke sacred priests that never thinke amisse.
There I to her, as th'author of my blisse,
Will builde an altar to appease her yre;
And on the same my hart will sacrifise,
Burning in flames of pure and chaste desyre:
  The which vouchsafe, O Goddesse, to accept,
  Amongst thy deerest relicks to be kept.
[* *I.e*. Easter.]

XXIII.

Penelope, for her Ulisses sake,
Deviz'd a web her wooers to deceave;
In which the worke that she all day did make,
The same at night she did againe unreave.
Such subtile craft my damzell doth conceave,
Th'importune suit of my desire to shonne:
For all that I in many dayes do weave,
In one short houre I find by her undonne.
So when I thinke to end that I begonne,
I must begin and never bring to end:
For with one looke she spils that long I sponne,
And with one word my whole years work doth rend.
  Such labour like the spyders web I fynd,
  Whose fruitlesse worke is broken with least wynd.

XXIV.

When I behold that beauties wonderment,
And rare perfection of each goodly part,
Of Natures skill the onely complement,
I honor and admire the Makers art.

But when I feele the bitter balefull smart
Which her fayre eyes unwares doe worke in mee,
That death out of theyr shiny beames doe dart,
I thinke that I a new Pandora see,
Whom all the gods in councell did agree
Into this sinfull world from heaven to send,
That she to wicked men a scourge should bee,
For all their faults with which they did offend.
  But since ye are my scourge, I will intreat
  That for my faults ye will me gently beat.

XXV.

How long shall this lyke-dying lyfe endure,
And know no end of her owne mysery,
But wast and weare away in termes unsure,
'Twixt feare and hope depending doubtfully!
Yet better were attonce to let me die,
And shew the last ensample of your pride,
Then to torment me thus with cruelty,
To prove your powre, which I too wel have tride.
But yet if in your hardned brest ye bide
A close intent at last to shew me grace,
Then all the woes and wrecks which I abide,
As meanes of blisse I gladly wil embrace;
  And wish that more and greater they might be,
  That greater meede at last may turne to mee.

XXVI.

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Sweet is the rose, but growes upon a brere;
Sweet is the iunipeer; but sharpe his bough;
Sweet is the eglantine, but pricketh nere;
Sweet is the firbloome, but his braunches rough*;
Sweet is the cypresse, but his rynd is rough;
Sweet is the nut, but bitter is his pill**;
Sweet is the broome-flowre, but yet sowre enough;
And sweet is moly, but his root is ill.
So every sweet with soure is tempred still,
That maketh it be coveted the more:
For easie things, that may be got at will,
Most sorts of men doe set but little store.
  Why then should I accompt of little paine,
  That endlesse pleasure shall unto me gaine!
[* *I.e*. raw, crude.]
[** *Pill*, peel.]

XXVII.

Faire Proud! now tell me, why should faire be proud,
Sith all worlds glorie is but drosse uncleane,
And in the shade of death it selfe shall shroud,
However now thereof ye little weene!
That goodly idoll, now so gay beseene*,
Shall doffe her fleshes borrowd fayre attyre,
And be forgot as it had never beene,
That many now much worship and admire!
Ne any then shall after it inquire,
Ne any mention shall thereof remaine,
But what this verse, that never shall expyre,
Shall to you purchas with her thankles pain!
  Faire! be no lenger proud of that shall perish,
  But that which shall you make immortall cherish.
[* *Beseene*, appearing.]

XVIII.

The laurel-leafe which you this day doe weare
Gives me great hope of your relenting mynd:
For since it is the badge which I doe beare*,
Ye, bearing it, doe seeme to me inclind.
The powre thereof, which ofte in me I find,

Let it likewise your gentle brest inspire
With sweet infusion, and put you in mind
Of that proud mayd whom now those leaves attyre:
Proud Daphne, scorning Phrebus lovely** fyre,
On the Thessalian shore from him did flie;
For which the gods, in theyr revengefull yre,
Did her transforme into a laurell-tree.
  Then fly no more, fayre Love, from Phebus chace,
  But in your brest his leafe and love embrace.
[* I. e. as poet-laureate.]
[** *Lovely*, loving.]

XXIX.

See! how the stubborne damzell doth deprave
My simple meaning with disdaynfull scorne,
And by the bay which I unto her gave
Accoumpts my self her captive quite forlorne.
The bay, quoth she, is of the victours born,
Yielded them by the vanquisht as theyr meeds,
And they therewith doe poetes heads adorne,
To sing the glory of their famous deeds.
But sith she will the conquest challeng needs,
Let her accept me as her faithfull thrall;
That her great triumph, which my skill exceeds,
I may in trump of fame blaze over all.
  Then would I decke her head with glorious bayes,
  And fill the world with her victorious prayse.

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XXX.

My Love is lyke to yse, and I to fyre:
How comes it then that this her cold so great
Is not dissolv'd through my so hot desyre,
But harder growes the more I her intreat?
Or how comes it that my exceeding heat
Is not delayd* by her hart-frosen cold,
But that I burne much more in boyling sweat,
And feele my flames augmented manifold?
What more miraculous thing may be told,
That fire, which all things melts, should harden yse,
And yse, which is congeald with sencelesse cold,
Should kindle fyre by wonderful devyse?
  Such is the powre of love in gentle mind,
  That it can alter all the course of kynd.
[* *Delayd*, tempered.]

XXXI.

Ah! why hath Nature to so hard a hart
Given so goodly giftes of beauties grace,
Whose pryde depraves each other better part,
And all those pretious ornaments deface?
Sith to all other beastes of bloody race
A dreadfull countenance she given hath,
That with theyr terrour all the rest may chace,
And warne to shun the daunger of theyr wrath.
But my proud one doth worke the greater scath*,
Through sweet allurement of her lovely hew,
That she the better may in bloody bath
Of such poore thralls her cruell hands embrew.
  But did she know how ill these two accord,
  Such cruelty she would have soone abhord.
[* *Scath*, injury.]

XXXII.

The paynefull smith with force of fervent heat
The hardest yron soone doth mollify,
That with his heavy sledge he can it beat,

And fashion to what he it list apply.
Yet cannot all these flames in which I fry
Her hart, more hard then yron, soft a whit,
Ne all the playnts and prayers with which I
Doe beat on th'andvile of her stubberne wit:
But still, the more she fervent sees my fit,
The more she frieseth in her wilfull pryde,
And harder growes, the harder she is smit
With all the playnts which to her be applyde.
  What then remaines but I to ashes burne,
  And she to stones at length all frosen turne!

XXXIII.

Great wrong I doe, I can it not deny,
To that most sacred empresse, my dear dred,
Not finishing her Queene of Faery,
That mote enlarge her living prayses, dead.
But Lodwick*, this of grace to me aread:
Do ye not thinck th'accomplishment of it
Sufficient worke for one mans simple head,
All were it, as the rest, but rudely writ?
How then should I, without another wit,
Thinck ever to endure so tedious toyle,
Sith that this one is tost with troublous fit
Of a proud Love, that doth my spirite spoyle?
  Cease, then, till she vouchsafe to grawnt me rest,
  Or lend you me another living brest.
[* *I.e*. Lodowick Bryskett.]

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XXXIV.

Lyke as a ship, that through the ocean wyde
By conduct of some star doth make her way,
Whenas a storm hath dimd her trusty guyde,
Out of her course doth wander far astray,
So I, whose star, that wont with her bright ray
Me to direct, with cloudes is over-cast,
Doe wander now in darknesse and dismay,
Through hidden perils round about me plast.
Yet hope I well that, when this storme is past,
My Helice*, the lodestar of ray lyfe,
Will shine again, and looke on me at last,
With lovely light to cleare my cloudy grief.
  Till then I wander carefull, comfortlesse,
  In secret sorrow and sad pensivenesse.
[* I. e. Cynosure.]

XXXV.

My hungry eyes, through greedy covetize
Still to behold the obiect of their paine,
With no contentment can themselves suffize;
But having, pine, and having not, complaine.
For lacking it, they cannot lyfe sustayne;
And having it, they gaze on it the more,
In their amazement lyke Narcissus vaine,
Whose eyes him starv'd: so plenty makes me poore.
Yet are mine eyes so filled with the store
Of that faire sight, that nothing else they brooke,
But lothe the things which they did like before,
And can no more endure on them to looke.
  All this worlds glory seemeth vayne to me,
  And all their showes but shadowes, saving she.

XXXVI.

Tell me, when shall these wearie woes have end;
Or shall their ruthlesse torment never cease,
But al my days in pining languor spend,
Without hope of asswagement or release?

Is there no meanes for me to purchace peace,
Or make agreement with her thrilling eyes;
But that their cruelty doth still increace,
And dayly more augment my miseryes?
But when ye have shew'd all extremityes,
Then think how little glory ye have gayned
By slaying him, whose lyfe, though ye despyse,
Mote have your life in honor long maintayned.
  But by his death, which some perhaps will mone,
  Ye shall condemned be of many a one.

XXXVII.

What guyle is this, that those her golden tresses
She doth attyre under a net of gold,
And with sly skill so cunningly them dresses,
That which is gold or haire may scarse be told?
Is it that mens frayle eyes, which gaze too bold,
She may entangle in that golden snare;
And, being caught, may craftily enfold
Their weaker harts, which are not wel aware?
Take heed therefore, myne eyes, how ye doe stare
Henceforth too rashly on that guilefull net,
In which if ever ye entrapped are,
Out of her bands ye by no meanes shall get.
  Fondnesse it were for any, being free,
  To covet fetters, though they golden bee!

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XXXVIII.

Arion, when, through tempests cruel wracke,
He forth was thrown into the greedy seas,
Through the sweet musick which his harp did make
Allur’d a dolphin him from death to ease.
But my rude musick, which was wont to please
Some dainty eares, cannot, with any skill,
The dreadfull tempest of her wrath appease,
Nor move the dolphin from her stubborn will.
But in her pride she dooth persever still,
All carelesse how my life for her decayes:
Yet with one word she can it save or spill.
To spill were pitty, but to save were prayse!
  Chuse rather to be praysd for doing good,
  Then to be blam’d for spilling guiltlesse blood.

XXXIX.

Sweet smile! the daughter of the Queene of Love,
Expressing all thy mothers powrefull art,
With which she wonts to temper angry Iove,
When all the gods he threats with thundring dart,
Sweet is thy vertue, as thy selfe sweet art.
For when on me thou shinedst late in sadnesse,
A melting pleasance ran through every part,
And me revived with hart-robbing gladnesse;
Whylest rapt with ioy resembling heavenly madness,
My soule was ravisht quite as in a traunce,
And, feeling thence no more her sorrowes sadnesse,
Fed on the fulnesse of that chearfull glaunce.
  More sweet than nectar, or ambrosiall meat,
  Seem’d every bit which thenceforth I did eat.

XL.

Mark when she smiles with amiable cheare,
And tell me whereto can ye lyken it;
When on each eyelid sweetly doe appeare
An hundred Graces as in shade to sit.
Lykest it seemeth, in my simple wit,

Unto the fayre sunshine in somers day,
That, when a dreadfull storme away is flit,
Thrugh the broad world doth spred his goodly ray
At sight whereof, each bird that sits on spray.
And every beast that to his den was fled,
Comes forth afresh out of their late dismay,
And to the light lift up their drouping hed.
  So my storme-beaten hart likewise is cheared
  With that sunshine, when cloudy looks are cleared.
[Footnote: XL. 4.—*An hundred Graces.* E.K., in his commentary on the Shepheards Calender, quotes a line closely resembling this from Spenser's Pageants:

"An hundred Graces on her eyelids sat."

The same fancy occurs in the Faerie Queene, and in the Hymn to Beauty. It is copied from a poem ascribed to Musaeus. C.]

XLI.

Is it her nature, or is it her will,
To be so cruell to an humbled foe?
If nature, then she may it mend with skill;
If will, then she at will may will forgoe.
But if her nature and her will be so,
That she will plague the man that loves her most,
And take delight t'encrease a wretches woe,
Then all her natures goodly guifts are lost;
And that same glorious beauties ydle boast
Is but a bayt such wretches to beguile,
As, being long in her loves tempest tost,
She meanes at last to make her pitious spoyle.
  O fayrest fayre! let never it be named,
  That so fayre beauty was so fowly shamed.

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XLII.

The love which me so cruelly tormenteth
So pleasing is in my extreamest paine,
That, all the more my sorrow it augmenteth,
The more I love and doe embrace my bane.
Ne do I wish (for wishing were but vaine)
To be acquit fro my continual smart,
But ioy her thrall for ever to remayne,
And yield for pledge my poor and captyved hart,
The which, that it from her may never start,
Let her, yf please her, bynd with adamant chayne,
And from all wandring loves, which mote pervart
His safe assurance, strongly it restrayne.
  Onely let her abstaine from cruelty,
  And doe me not before my time to dy.

XLIII.

Shall I then silent be, or shall I speake?
And if I speake, her wrath renew I shall;
And if I silent be, my hart will breake,
Or choked be with overflowing gall.
What tyranny is this, both my hart to thrall,
And eke my toung with proud restraint to tie,
That neither I may speake nor thinke at all,
But like a stupid stock in silence die!
Yet I my hart with silence secretly
Will teach to speak and my just cause to plead,
And eke mine eies, with meek humility,
Love-learned letters to her eyes to read;
Which her deep wit, that true harts thought can spel,
  Wil soon conceive, and learne to construe well.

XLIV.

When those renoumed noble peres of Greece
Through stubborn pride among themselves did iar,
Forgetfull of the famous golden fleece,
Then Orpheus with his harp theyr strife did bar.
But this continuall, cruell, civill warre

The which my selfe against my selfe doe make,
Whilest my weak powres of passions warreid arre,
No skill can stint, nor reason can aslake.
But when in hand my tunelesse harp I take,
Then doe I more augment my foes despight,
And griefe renew, and passions doe awake
To battaile, fresh against my selfe to fight.
  Mongst whome the more I seeke to settle peace,
  The more I fynd their malice to increace.

XLV.

Leave, Lady! in your glasse of cristall clene
Your goodly selfe for evermore to vew,
And in my selfe, (my inward selfe I meane,)
Most lively lyke behold your semblant trew.
Within my hart, though hardly it can shew
Thing so divine to vew of earthly eye,
The fayre idea of your celestiall hew
And every part remaines immortally:
And were it not that through your cruelty
With sorrow dimmed and deform'd it were,
The goodly ymage of your visnomy*,
Clearer than cristall, would therein appere.
  But if your selfe in me ye playne will see,
  Remove the cause by which your fayre beames darkned be.
[* *Visnomy*, countenance.]

XLVI.

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When my abodes prefixed time is spent,
My cruell fayre streight bids me wend my way:
But then from heaven most hideous stormes are sent,
As willing me against her will to stay.
Whom then shall I—or heaven, or her—obay?
The heavens know best what is the best for me:
But as she will, whose will my life doth sway,
My lower heaven, so it perforce must be.
But ye high hevens, that all this sorowe see,
Sith all your tempests cannot hold me backe,
Aswage your storms, or else both you and she
Will both together me too sorely wrack.
  Enough it is for one man to sustaine
  The stormes which she alone on me doth raine.

XLVII.

Trust not the treason of those smyling lookes,
Untill ye have their guylefull traynes well tryde;
For they are lyke but unto golden hookes,
That from the foolish fish theyr bayts do hyde:
So she with flattring smyles weake harts doth guyde
Unto her love, and tempte to theyr decay;
Whome, being caught, she kills with cruell pryde,
And feeds at pleasure on the wretched pray.
Yet even whylst her bloody hands them slay,
Her eyes looke lovely, and upon them smyle,
That they take pleasure in their cruell play,
And, dying, doe themselves of payne beguyle.
  O mighty charm! which makes men love theyr bane,
  And thinck they dy with pleasure, live with payne.

XLVIII.

Innocent paper! whom too cruell hand
Did make the matter to avenge her yre,
And ere she could thy cause well understand,
Did sacrifize unto the greedy fyre,
Well worthy thou to have found better hyre
Then so bad end, for hereticks ordayned;
Yet heresy nor treason didst conspire,
But plead thy maisters cause, unjustly payned:

Whom she, all carelesse of his grief, constrayned
To utter forth the anguish of his hart,
And would not heare, when he to her complayned
The piteous passion of his dying smart.
  Yet live for ever, though against her will,
  And speake her good, though she requite it ill.

XLIX.

Fayre Cruell! why are ye so fierce and cruell?
Is it because your eyes have powre to kill?
Then know that mercy is the Mighties iewell,
And greater glory think to save then spill.
But if it be your pleasure and proud will
To shew the powre of your imperious eyes,
Then not on him that never thought you ill,
But bend your force against your enemyes.
Let them feel the utmost of your crueltyes,
And kill with looks, as cockatrices do:
But him that at your footstoole humbled lies,
With mercifull regard give mercy to.
  Such mercy shall you make admyr’d to be;
  So shall you live, by giving life to me.

L.

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Long languishing in double malady
Of my harts wound and of my bodies griefe,
There came to me a leach, that would apply
Fit medcines for my bodies best reliefe.
Vayne man, quoth I, that hast but little priefe*
In deep discovery of the mynds disease;
Is not the hart of all the body chiefe,
And rules the members as it selfe doth please?
Then with some cordialls seeke for to appease
The inward languor of my wounded hart,
And then my body shall have shortly ease.
But such sweet cordialls passe physicians art:
  Then, my lyfes leach! doe you your skill reveale,
  And with one salve both hart and body heale.
[* *Priefe*, proof, experience.]

LI.

Doe I not see that fayrest ymages
Of hardest marble are of purpose made,
For that they should endure through many ages,
Ne let theyr famous moniments to fade?
Why then doe I, untrainde in lovers trade,
Her hardnes blame, which I should more commend?
Sith never ought was excellent assayde
Which was not hard t'atchive and bring to end;
Ne ought so hard, but he that would attend
Mote soften it and to his will allure.
So do I hope her stubborne hart to bend,
And that it then more stedfast will endure:
  Only my paines wil be the more to get her;
  But, having her, my ioy wil be the greater.

LII.

So oft as homeward I from her depart,
I go lyke one that, having lost the field,
Is prisoner led away with heavy hart,
Despoyld of warlike armes and knowen shield.
So doe I now my self a prisoner yield
To sorrow and to solitary paine,
From presence of my dearest deare exylde,

Long-while alone in languor to remaine.
There let no thought of ioy, or pleasure vaine,
Dare to approch, that may my solace breed;
Bet sudden* dumps**, and drery sad disdayne
Of all worlds gladnesse, more my torment feed.
  So I her absens will my penaunce make,
  That of her presens I my meed may take.
[* *Sudden*, Qu. sullen?]
[** *Dumps*, lamentations.]

LIII.

The panther, knowing that his spotted hyde
Doth please all beasts, but that his looks them fray*,
Within a bush his dreadful head doth hide,
To let them gaze, whylst he on them may pray.
Right so my cruell fayre with me doth play;
For with the goodly semblance of her hew
She doth allure me to mine owne decay,
And then no mercy will unto me shew.
Great shame it is, thing so divine in view,
Made for to be the worlds most ornament,
To make the bayte her gazers to embrew:
Good shames to be to ill an instrument!
  But mercy doth with beautie best agree,
  As in theyr Maker ye them best may see.
[* *Fray*, frighten.]

LIV.

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Of this worlds theatre in which we stay,
My Love, like the spectator, ydly sits,
Beholding me, that all the pageants play,
Disguysing diversly my troubled wits.
Sometimes I ioy when glad occasion fits,
And mask in myrth lyke to a comedy:
Soone after, when my ioy to sorrow flits,
I waile, and make my woes a tragedy.
Yet she, beholding me with constant eye,
Delights not in my merth, nor rues my smart:
But when I laugh, she mocks; and when I cry,
She laughs, and hardens evermore her hart.
  What then can move her? If nor merth, nor mone,
  She is no woman, but a sencelesse stone.

LV.

So oft as I her beauty doe behold,
And therewith doe her cruelty compare,
I marvaile of what substance was the mould
The which her made attonce so cruell faire.
Not earth; for her high thoughts more heavenly are:
Not water; for her love doth burne like fyre:
Not ayre; for she is not so light or rare;
Not fyre; for she doth friese with faint desire.
Then needs another element inquire,
Whereof she mote be made; that is, the skye.
For to the heaven her haughty looks aspire,
And eke her love is pure immortall hye.
  Then sith to heaven ye lykened are the best,
  Be lyke in mercy as in all the rest.

LVI.

Fayre ye be sure, but cruell and unkind,
As is a tygre, that with greedinesse
Hunts after bloud; when he by chance doth find
A feeble beast, doth felly him oppresse.
Fayre be ye sure, but proud and pitilesse,
As is a storme, that all things doth prostrate;
Finding a tree alone all comfortlesse,
Beats on it strongly, it to ruinate.

Fayre be ye sure, but hard and obstinate,
As is a rocke amidst the raging floods;
Gaynst which a ship, of succour desolate,
Doth suffer wreck both of her selfe and goods.
  That ship, that tree, and that same beast, am I,
  Whom ye doe wreck, doe ruine, and destroy.

LVII.

Sweet warriour! when shall I have peace with you?
High time it is this warre now ended were,
Which I no lenger can endure to sue,
Ne your incessant battry more to beare.
So weake my powres, so sore my wounds, appear,
That wonder is how I should live a iot,
Seeing my hart through-launced every where
With thousand arrowes which your eies have shot.
Yet shoot ye sharpely still, and spare me not,
But glory thinke to make these cruel stoures*.
Ye cruell one! what glory can be got,
In slaying him that would live gladly yours?
  Make peace therefore, and graunt me timely grace,
  That al my wounds will heale in little space.
[* *Stoures*, agitations.]

LVIII.

By her that is most assured to her selfe.

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Weake is th'assurance that weake flesh reposeth
In her own powre, and scorneth others ayde;
That soonest fals, when as she most supposeth
Her selfe assur'd, and is of nought affrayd,
All flesh is frayle, and all her strength unstayd,
Like a vaine bubble blowen up with ayre:
Devouring tyme and changeful chance have prayd*
Her glorious pride, that none may it repayre.
Ne none so rich or wise, so strong or fayre,
But fayletb, trusting on his owne assurance:
And he that standeth on the hyghest stayre
Fals lowest; for on earth nought hath endurance.
  Why then doe ye, proud fayre, misdeeme so farre,
  That to your selfe ye most assured arre!

[Footnote: LVIII.—*By her*, &c. *By* is perhaps a misprint for *to*; or this title may belong to Sonnet LIX. H.] [* *Prayd*, preyed upon.]

LIX.

Thrise happie she that is so well assured
Unto her selfe, and setled so in hart,
That neither will for better be allured,
Ne feard with worse to any chaunce to start:
But, like a steddy ship, doth strongly part
The raging waves, and kcepes her course aright,
Ne ought for tempest doth from it depart,
Ne ought for fayrer weathers false delight.
Such selfe-assurance need not feare the spight
Of grudging foes, ne favour seek of friends:
But in the stay of her owne stedfast might,
Neither to one her selfe nor other bends.
  Most happy she that most assur'd doth rest;
  But he most happy who such one loves best.

LX.

They that in course of heavenly spheares are skild
To every planet point his sundry yeare,
In which her circles voyage is fulfild:
As Mars in threescore yeares doth run his spheare.
So, since the winged god his planet cleare

Began in me to move, one yeare is spent;
The which doth longer unto me appeare,
Then al those fourty which my life out-went.
Then, by that count which lovers books invent,
The spheare of Cupid fourty yeares containes,
Which I have wasted in long languishment,
That seem'd the longer for my greater paines.
  But let my Loves fayre planet short her wayes
  This yeare ensuing, or else short my dayes.

[Footnote: LX. 4.—*As Mars in three score yeares*. I do not understand Spenser's astronomy. C.]

LXI.

The glorious image of the Makers beautie,
My soverayne saynt, the idoll of my thought,
Dare not henceforth, above the bounds of dewtie,
T'accuse of pride, or rashly blame for ought.
For being, as she is, divinely wrought,
And of the brood of angels heavenly born,
And with the crew of blessed saynts upbrought,
Each of which did her with theyr guifts adorne,
The bud of ioy, the blossome of the morne,
The beame of light, whom mortal eyes admyre,
What reason is it then but she should scorne
Base things, that to her love too bold aspire!
  Such heavenly formes ought rather worshipt be,
  Then dare be lov'd by men of meane degree.

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LXII.

The weary yeare his race now having run,
The new begins his compast course anew:
With shew of morning mylde he bath begun,
Betokening peace and plenty to ensew.
So let us, which this chaunge of weather vew,
Chaunge eke our mynds, and former lives amend;
The old yeares sinnes forepast let us eschew,
And fly the faults with which we did offend.
Then shall the new yeares ioy forth freshly send
Into the glooming world his gladsome ray,
And all these stormes, which now his beauty blend*,
Shall turne to calmes, and tymely cleare away.
  So, likewise, Love! cheare you your heavy spright,
  And chaunge old yeares annoy to new delight.

[* *Blend*, blemish.]

LXIII.

After long stormes and tempests sad assay,
Which hardly I endured heretofore,
In dread of death, and daungerous dismay,
With which my silly bark was tossed sore,
I doe at length descry the happy shore,
In which I hope ere long for to arryve:
Fayre soyle it seemes from far, and fraught with store
Of all that deare and daynty is alyve.
Most happy he that can at last atchyve
The ioyous safety of so sweet a rest;
Whose least delight sufficeth to deprive
Remembrance of all paines which him opprest.
  All paines are nothing in respect of this;
  All sorrowes short that gaine eternall blisse.

LXIV.

Comming to kisse her lyps, (such grace I found,)
Me seemd I smelt a gardin of sweet flowres,
That dainty odours from them threw around,
For damzels fit to decke their lovers bowres.

Her lips did smell lyke unto gillyflowers;
Her ruddy cheekes lyke unto roses red;
Her snowy browes lyke budded bellamoures;
Her lovely eyes lyke pincks but newly spred;
Her goodly bosome lyke a strawberry bed;
Her neck lyke to a bounch of cullambynes;
Her brest lyke lillyes, ere their leaves be shed;
Her nipples lyke young blossomd jessemynes.
  Such fragrant flowres doe give most odorous smell;
  But her sweet odour did them all excell.

[Footnote: LXIV. 7.—*Bellamoures*. I have not discovered what flower is here meant. C.]

LXV.

The doubt which ye misdeeme, fayre Love, is vaine,
That fondly feare to lose your liberty,
When, losing one, two liberties ye gayne,
And make him bond that bondage earst did fly.
Sweet be the bands the which true love doth tye,
Without constraynt or dread of any ill:
The gentle birde feeles no captivity
Within her cage, but sings, and feeds her fill.
There pride dare not approch, nor discord spill
The league twixt them that loyal love hath bound,
But simple Truth and mutual Good-will
Seeks with sweet peace to salve each others wound:
  There Fayth doth fearless dwell in brasen towre,
  And spotlesse Pleasure builds her sacred bowre.

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LXVI.

To all those happy blessings which ye have
With plenteous hand by heaven upon you thrown,
This one disparagement they to you gave,
That ye your love lent to so meane a one.
Ye, whose high worths surpassing paragon
Could not on earth have found one fit for mate,
Ne but in heaven matchable to none,
Why did ye stoup unto so lowly state?
But ye thereby much greater glory gate,
Then had ye sorted with a princes pere:
For now your light doth more it selfe dilate,
And, in my darknesse, greater doth appeare.
  Yet, since your light hath once enlumind me,
  With my reflex yours shall encreased be.

LXVII.

Lyke as a huntsman, after weary chace,
Seeing the game from him escapt away,
Sits downe to rest him in some shady place,
With panting hounds, beguiled of their pray,
So, after long pursuit and vaine assay,
When I all weary had the chace forsooke,
The gentle deer returnd the selfe-same way,
Thinking to quench her thirst at the next brooke.
There she, beholding me with mylder looke,
Sought not to fly, but fearlesse still did bide,
Till I in hand her yet halfe trembling tooke,
And with her own goodwill her fyrmely tyde.
  Strange thing, me seemd, to see a beast so wyld
  So goodly wonne, with her owne will beguyld.

LXVIII

Most glorious Lord of lyfe! that on this day
Didst make thy triumph over death and sin,
And, having harrowd* hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win,
This ioyous day, dear Lord, with ioy begin;

And grant that we, for whom thou diddest dy,
Being with thy deare blood clene washt from sin,
May live for ever in felicity;
And that thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love thee for the same againe,
And for thy sake, that all lyke deare didst buy.
With love may one another entertayne!
  So let us love, deare Love, lyke as we ought:
  Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.
[* *Harrowd*, despoiled.]

LXIX.

The famous warriors of the anticke world
Us'd trophees to erect in stately wize,
In which they would the records have enrold
Of theyr great deeds and valorous emprize.
What trophee then shall I most fit devize,
In which I may record the memory
Of my loves conquest, peerlesse beauties prise,
Adorn'd with honour, love, and chastity!
Even this verse, vowd to eternity,
Shall be thereof immortall moniment,
And tell her praise to all posterity,
That may admire such worlds rare wonderment;
  The happy purchase of my glorious spoile,
  Gotten at last with labour and long toyle.

LXX.

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Fresh Spring, the herald of loves mighty king,
In whose cote-armour richly are displayd
All sorts of flowres the which on earth do spring,
In goodly colours gloriously arrayd,
Goe to my Love, where she is carelesse layd,
Yet in her winters bowre not well awake:
Tell her the ioyous time wil not be staid,
Unlesse she doe him by the forelock take;
Bid her therefore her selfe soone ready make,
To wayt on Love amongst his lovely crew,
Where every one that misseth then her make*
Shall be by him amearst with penance dew.
  Make haste therefore, sweet Love, while it is prime**;
  For none can call againe the passed time.
[* *Make*, mate.]
[** *Prime*, spring.]

LXXI.

I ioy to see how, in your drawen work,
Your selfe unto the Bee ye doe compare,
And me unto the Spyder, that doth lurke
In close awayt, to catch her unaware.
Right so your selfe were caught in cunning snare
Of a deare foe, and thralled to his love;
In whose streight bands ye now captived are
So firmely, that ye never may remove.
But as your worke is woven all about
With woodbynd flowers and fragrant eglantine,
So sweet your prison you in time shall prove,
With many deare delights bedecked fyne:
  And all thensforth eternall peace shall see
  Betweene the Spyder and the gentle Bee.

LXXII.

Oft when my spirit doth spred her bolder winges,
In mind to mount up to the purest sky,
It down is weighd with thought of earthly things,
And clogd with burden of mortality:
Where, when that soverayne beauty it doth spy,
Resembling heavens glory in her light,

Drawn with sweet pleasures bayt it back doth fly,
And unto heaven forgets her former flight.
There my fraile fancy, fed with full delight,
Doth bathe in blisse, and mantlcth most at ease;
Ne thinks of other heaven, but how it might
Her harts desire with most contentment please.
  Hart need not wish none other happinesse,
  But here on earth to have such hevens blisse.

LXXIII

Being my self captyved here in care,
My hart, (whom none with servile bands can tye,
But the fayre tresses of your golden hayre,)
Breaking his prison, forth to you doth fly.
Like as a byrd, that in ones hand doth spy
Desired food, to it doth make his flight,
Even so my hart, that wont on your fayre eye
To feed his fill, flyes backe unto your sight.
Doe you him take, and in your bosome bright
Gently encage, that he may be your thrall:
Perhaps he there may learne, with rare delight,
To sing your name and prayses over all:
  That it hereafter may you not repent,
  Him lodging in your bosome to have lent.

LXXIV

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Most happy letters! fram’d by skilfull trade,
With which that happy name was first desynd
The which three times thrise happy hath me made,
With guifts of body, fortune, and of mind.
The first ray being to me gave by kind,
From mothers womb deriv’d by dew descent:
The second is my sovereigne Queene most kind,
That honour and large richesse to me lent:
The third my Love, my lives last ornament,
By whom my spirit out of dust was raysed,
To speake her prayse and glory excellent,
Of all alive most worthy to be praysed.
  Ye three Elizabeths! for ever live,
  That three such graces did unto me give.

LXXV.

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,
But came the waves and washed it away:
Agayne I wrote it with a second hand;
But came the tyde, and made my paynes his pray.
“Vayne man,” sayd she, “that doest in vaine assay
A mortall thing so to immortalize;
For I my selve shall lyke to this decay,
And eke my name bee wyped out lykewize.”
“Not so,” quod I; “let baser things devize
To dy in dust, but you shall live by fame:
My verse your vertues rare shall eternize,
And in the hevens wryte your glorious name.
  Where, when as death shall all the world subdew,
  Our love shall live, and later life renew.”

LXXVI

Fayre bosome! fraught with vertues richest tresure,
The neast of love, the lodging of delight,
The bowre of blisse, the paradice of pleasure,
The sacred harbour of that hevenly spright,
How was I ravisht with your lovely sight,
And my frayle thoughts too rashly led astray,
Whiles diving deepe through amorous insight,
On the sweet spoyle of beautie they did pray,

And twixt her paps, like early fruit in May,
Whose harvest seemd to hasten now apace,
They loosely did theyr wanton winges display,
And there to rest themselves did boldly place.
  Sweet thoughts! I envy your so happy rest,
  Which oft I wisht, yet never was so blest.

LXXVII.

Was it a dreame, or did I see it playne?
A goodly table of pure yvory,
All spred with juncats fit to entertayne
The greatest prince with pompous roialty:
Mongst which, there in a silver dish did ly
Two golden apples of unvalewd* price,
Far passing those which Hercules came by,
Or those which Atalanta did entice;
Exceeding sweet, yet voyd of sinfull vice;
That many sought, yet none could ever taste;
Sweet fruit of pleasure, brought from Paradice
By Love himselfe, and in his garden plaste.
  Her brest that table was, so richly spredd;
  My thoughts the guests, which would thereon have fedd.
[* *Unvalewd*, invaluable]

LXXVIII

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Lackyng my Love, I go from place to place,
Lyke a young fawne that late hath lost the hynd,
And seeke each where where last I sawe her face,
Whose ymage yet I carry fresh in mynd.
I seeke the fields with her late footing synd;
I seeke her bowre with her late presence deckt;
Yet nor in field nor bowre I can her fynd,
Yet field and bowre are full of her aspect.
But when myne eyes I therunto direct,
They ydly back return to me agayne;
And when I hope to see theyr trew obiect,
I fynd my self but fed with fancies vayne.
  Cease then, myne eyes, to seeke her selfe to see,
  And let my thoughts behold her selfe in mee.

LXXIX

Men call you fayre, and you doe credit it,
For that your selfe ye daily such doe see:
But the trew fayre, that is the gentle wit
And vertuous mind, is much more praysd of me.
For all the rest, how ever fayre it be,
Shall turne to nought and lose that glorious hew;
But onely that is permanent, and free
From frayle corruption that doth flesh ensew.
That is true beautie: that doth argue you
To be divine, and born of heavenly seed,
Deriv'd from that fayre Spirit from whom all true
And perfect beauty did at first proceed.
  He only fayre, and what he fayre hath made;
  All other fayre, lyke flowres, untymely fade.

LXXXX

After so long a race as I have run
Through Faery land, which those six books compile,
Give leave to rest me being half foredonne,
And gather to my selfe new breath awhile.
Then, as a steed refreshed after toyle,
Out of my prison I will break anew,
And stoutly will that second work assoyle*,
With strong endevour and attention dew.

Till then give leave to me in pleasant mew**
To sport my Muse, and sing my Loves sweet praise,
The contemplation of whose heavenly hew
My spirit to an higher pitch will rayse.
  But let her prayses yet be low and meane,
  Fit for the handmayd of the Faery Queene.
[* *Assoyle*, discharge.]
[** *Mew*, prison, retreat.]

LXXXI.

Fayre is my Love, when her fayre golden haires
With the loose wynd ye waving chance to marke;
Fayre, when the rose in her red cheekes appeares,
Or in her eyes the fyre of love does sparke;
Fayre, when her brest, lyke a rich laden barke,
With pretious merchandize she forth doth lay;
Fayre, when that cloud of pryde, which oft doth dark
Her goodly light, with smiles she drives away.
But fayrest she, when so she doth display
The gate with pearles and rubyes richly dight,
Throgh which her words so wise do make their way,
To beare the message of her gentle spright.
  The rest be works of Natures wonderment;
  But this the worke of harts astonishment.

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LXXXII.

Ioy of my life! full oft for loving you
I blesse my lot, that was so lucky placed:
But then the more your owne mishap I rew,
That are so much by so meane love embased.
For had the equall hevens so much you graced
In this as in the rest, ye mote invent*
Some hevenly wit, whose verse could have enchased
Your glorious name in golden moniment.
But since ye deignd so goodly to relent
To me your thrall, in whom is little worth,
That little that I am shall all be spent
In setting your immortal prayses forth:
  Whose lofty argument, uplifting me,
  Shall lift you up unto an high degree.
[* *Invent*, light upon, find.]

LXXXIII

Let not one sparke of filthy lustfull fyre
Breake out, that may her sacred peace molest;
Ne one light glance of sensuall desyre
Attempt to work her gentle mindes unrest:
But pure affections bred in spotlesse brest,
And modest thoughts breathd from well-tempred spirits,
Goe visit her in her chaste bowre of rest,
Accompanyde with angelick delightes.
There fill your selfe with those most ioyous sights,
The which my selfe could never yet attayne:
But speake no word to her of these sad plights,
Which her too constant stiffnesse doth constrayn.
  Onely behold her rare perfection,
  And blesse your fortunes fayre election.

LXXXIV.

The world, that cannot deeme of worthy things,
When I doe praise her, say I doe but flatter:
So does the cuckow, when the mavis* sings,
Begin his witlesse note apace to clatter.

But they, that skill not of so heavenly matter,
All that they know not, envy or admyre;
Rather then envy, let them wonder at her,
But not to deeme of her desert aspyre.
Deepe in the closet of my parts entyre**,
Her worth is written with a golden quill,
That me with heavenly fury doth inspire,
And my glad mouth with her sweet prayses fill:
  Which when as Fame in her shril trump shall thunder,
  Let the world chuse to envy or to wonder.
[* *Mavis*, song-thrush.]
[** *Entyre,* inward.]

LXXXV.

Venemous tongue, tipt with vile adders sting,
Of that self kynd with which the Furies fell,
Their snaky heads doe combe, from which a spring
Of poysoned words and spightfull speeches well,
Let all the plagues and horrid paines of hell
Upon thee fall for thine accursed hyre,
That with false forged lyes, which thou didst tell.
In my true Love did stirre up coles of yre:
The sparkes whereof let kindle thine own fyre,
And, catching hold on thine own wicked bed,
Consume thee quite, that didst with guile conspire
In my sweet peace such breaches to have bred!
  Shame be thy meed, and mischiefe thy reward,
  Due to thy selfe, that it for me prepard!

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LXXXVI.

Since I did leave the presence of my Love,
Many long weary dayes I have outworne,
And many nights, that slowly seemd to move
Theyr sad protract from evening untill morn.
For, when as day the heaven doth adorne,
I wish that night the noyous day would end:
And when as night hath us of light forlorne,
I wish that day would shortly reascend.
Thus I the time with expectation spend,
And faine my griefe with chaunges to beguile,
That further seemes his terme still to extend,
And maketh every minute seem a myle.
  So sorrowe still doth seem too long to last;
  But ioyous houres do fly away too fast.

LXXXVII.

Since I have lackt the comfort of that light
The which was wont to lead my thoughts astray,
I wander as in darknesse of the night,
Affrayd of every dangers least dismay.
Ne ought I see, though in the clearest day,
When others gaze upon theyr shadowes vayne,
But th'only image of that heavenly ray
Whereof some glance doth in mine eie remayne.
Of which beholding the idaea playne,
Through contemplation of my purest part,
With light thereof I doe my self sustayne,
And thereon feed my love-affamisht hart.
  But with such brightnesse whylest I fill my mind,
  I starve my body, and mine eyes doe blynd.

LXXXVIII.

Lyke as the culver* on the bared bough
Sits mourning for the absence of her mate,
And in her songs sends many a wishful vow
For his returns, that seemes to linger late,
So I alone, how left disconsolate,

Mourne to my selfe the absence of my Love;
And wandring here and there all desolate,
Seek with my playnts to match that mournful dove
Ne ioy of ought that under heaven doth hove**,
Can comfort me, but her owne ioyous sight,
Whose sweet aspect both God and man can move,
In her unspotted pleasauns to delight.
  Dark is my day, whyles her fayre light I mis,
  And dead my life that wants such lively blis.
[* *Culver*, dove.]
[** *Hove*, hover, exist.]

* * * * *

EPITHALAMION.

Ye learned Sisters, which have oftentimes
Beene to me ayding, others to adorne
Whom ye thought worthy of your gracefull rymes,
That even the greatest did not greatly scorne
To heare theyr names sung in your simple layes,
But ioyed in theyr praise,
And when ye list your own mishaps to mourne,
Which death, or love, or fortunes wreck did rayse,
Your string could soone to sadder tenor turne,
And teach the woods and waters to lament
Your dolefull dreriment,
Now lay those sorrowfull complaints aside,
And having all your heads with girlands crownd,
Helpe me mine owne Loves prayses to resound:
Ne let the same of any be envide:
So Orpheus did for his owne bride;
So I unto my selfe alone will sing;
The woods shall to me answer, and my eccho ring.

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Early, before the worlds light-giving lampe
His golden beame upon the hils doth spred,
Having disperst the nights unchearfull dampe,
Doe ye awake, and, with fresh lustyhed,
Go to the bowre of my beloved Love,
My truest turtle dove.
Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,
And long since ready forth his maske to move,
With his bright tead* that flames with many a flake,
And many a bachelor to waite on him,
In theyr fresh garments trim.
Bid her awake therefore, and soone her dight**,
For loe! the wished day is come at last,
That shall for all the paynes and sorrowes past
Pay to her usury of long delight:
And whylest she doth her dight,
Doe ye to her of ioy and solace sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.
[* *Tead,* torch.]
[** *Dight,* deck.]

Bring with you all the nymphes that you can heare,
Both of the rivers and the forrests greene,
And of the sea that neighbours to her neare,
All with gay girlands goodly wel beseene*.
And let them also with them bring in hand
Another gay girland,
For my fayre Love, of lillyes and of roses,
Bound truelove wize with a blew silke riband.
And let them make great store of bridale poses,
And let them eke bring store of other flowers,
To deck the bridale bowers:
And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
For feare the stones her tender foot should wrong,
Be strewd with fragrant flowers all along,
And diapred** lyke the discolored mead.
Which done, doe at her chamber dore awayt,
For she will waken strayt;
The whiles do ye this song unto her sing,
The woods shall to you answer, and your eccho ring;.
[* *Beseene,* adorned.]
[** *Diapred,* variegated.]

Ye Nymphes of Mulla, which with carefull heed
The silver scaly trouts do tend full well,
And greedy pikes which use therein to feed,
(Those trouts and pikes all others doe excell,)
And ye likewise which keepe the rushy lake,
Where none doo fishes take,
Bynd up the locks the which hang scatterd light,
And in his waters, which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the christall bright,
That when you come whereas my Love doth lie,
No blemish she may spie.
And eke, ye lightfoot mayds which keepe the dere
That on the hoary mountayne use to towre,
And the wylde wolves, which seeke them to devoure,
With your steele darts doe chace from coming neer,
Be also present heere,
To helpe to decke her, and to help to sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

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Wake now, my Love, awake! for it is time:
The rosy Morne long since left Tithons bed,
All ready to her silver coche to clyme,
And Phoebus gins to shew his glorious hed.
Hark! how the cheerefull birds do chaunt theyr laies,
And carroll of Loves praise:
The merry larke hir mattins sings aloft;
The thrush replyes; the mavis* descant** playes;
The ouzell@ shrills; the ruddock$ warbles soft;
So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this dayes meriment.
Ah! my deere Love, why doe ye sleepe thus long,
When meeter were that ye should now awake,
T'awayt the comming of your ioyous make,%
And hearken to the birds love-learned song,
The deawy leaves among!
For they of ioy and pleasance to you sing,
That all the woods them answer, and theyr eccho ring.
[* *Mavis*, song-thrush.]
[** *Descant*, variation.]
[@ *Ouzell*, blackbird.]
[$ *Ruddock*, redbreast.]
[% *Make*, mate.]

My love is now awake out of her dreame,
And her fayre eyes, like stars that dimmed were
With darksome cloud, now shew theyr goodly beams
More bright then Hesperus his head doth rere.
Come now, ye damzels, daughters of delight,
Helpe quickly her to dight.
But first come, ye fayre Houres, which were begot,
In Ioves sweet paradice, of Day and Night,
Which doe the seasons of the year allot,
And all that ever in this world is fayre
Do make and still repayre:
And ye three handmayds of the Cyprian Queene,
The which doe still adorn her beauties pride,
Helpe to adorne my beautifullest bride:
And, as ye her array, still throw betweene
Some graces to be scene;
And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing,
The whiles the woods shal answer, and your eccho ring.

Now is my Love all ready forth to come:
Let all the virgins therefore well awayt,
And ye fresh boyes, that tend upon her groome,
Prepare your selves, for he is comming strayt.
Set all your things in seemely good aray,
Fit for so ioyfull day,
The ioyfulst day that ever sunne did see.
Fair Sun! shew forth thy favourable ray,
And let thy lifull* heat not fervent be,
For feare of burning her sunshyny face,
Her beauty to disgrace.
O fayrest Phoebus! Father of the Muse!
If ever I did honour thee aright,
Or sing the thing that mote thy mind delight,
Doe not thy servants simple boone refuse,
But let this day, let this one day, be mine;
Let all the rest be thine.
Then I thy soverayne prayses loud wil sing,
That all the woods shal answer, and theyr eccho ring.

[* *Lifull*, life-full.]

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Harke! how the minstrils gin to shrill aloud
Their merry musick that resounds from far,
The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling croud*,
That well agree withouten breach or iar.
But most of all the damzels doe delite,
When they their tymbrels smyte,
And thereunto doe daunce and carrol sweet,
That all the sences they doe ravish quite;
The whyles the boyes run up and downe the street,
Crying aloud with strong confused noyce,
As if it were one voyce,
“Hymen, Ioe Hymen, Hymen,” they do shout;
That even to the heavens theyr shouting shrill
Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill;
To which the people, standing all about,
As in approvance, doe thereto applaud,
And loud advaunce her laud;
And evermore they “Hymen, Hymen,” sing,
That all the woods them answer, and theyr eccho ring.
[* *Croud*, violin]

Loe! where she comes along with portly pace,
Lyke Phoebe, from her chamber of the East,
Arysing forth to run her mighty race,
Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best.
So well it her beseems, that ye would weene
Some angell she had beene.
Her long loose yellow locks lyke golden wyre,
Sprinckled with perle, and perling flowres atweene,
Doe lyke a golden mantle her attyre,
And, being crowned with a girland greene,
Seem lyke some mayden queene.
Her modest eyes, abashed to behold
So many gazers as on her do stare,
Upon the lowly ground affixed are,
Ne dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to heare her prayses sung so loud,—
So farre from being proud.
Nathlesse doe ye still loud her prayses sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Tell me, ye merchants daughters, did ye see
So fayre a creature in your towne before;
So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,

Adornd with beautyes grace and vertues store?
Her goodly eyes lyke saphyres shining bright,
Her forehead yvory white,
Her cheekes lyke apples which the sun hath rudded,
Her lips lyke cherries, charming men to byte,
Her brest like to a bowl of creame uncrudded*,
Her paps lyke lyllies budded,
Her snowie necke lyke to a marble towre,
And all her body like a pallace fayre,
Ascending up, with many a stately stayre,
To honors seat and chastities sweet bowre.
Why stand ye still, ye virgins, in amaze,
Upon her so to gaze,
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer, and your eccho ring?

[* *Uncrudded*, uncurdled.]

[Ver. 168.—*In your towne*. The marriage seems to have taken place in Cork, and we might infer from this passage that the heroine of the song was a merchant's daughter. C.]

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But if ye saw that which no eyes can see,
The inward beauty of her lively spright,
Garnisht with heavenly guifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonisht lyke to those which red*
Medusaes mazeful bed.
There dwells sweet Love, and constant Chastity,
Unspotted Fayth, and comely Womanhood,
Regard of Honour, and mild Modesty;
There Vertue raynes as quecne in royal throne,
And giveth lawes alone,
The which the base affections doe obay,
And yeeld theyr services unto her will;
Be thought of tilings uncomely ever may
Thereto approch to tempt her mind to ill.
Had ye once seene these her celestial threasures,
And unrevealed pleasures,
Then would ye wonder, and her prayses sing,
That all the woods should answer, and your eccho ring.
[* *Red*, saw.]

Open the temple gates unto my Love,
Open them wide that she may enter in,
And all the postes adorne as doth behove,
And all the pillours deck with girlands trim,
For to receyve this saynt with honour dew,
That commeth in to you.
With trembling steps and humble reverence,
She commeth in before th'Almighties view:
Of her, ye virgins, learne obedience,
When so ye come into those holy places,
To humble your proud faces.
Bring her up to th'high altar, that she may
The sacred ceremonies there partake,
The which do endlesse matrimony make;
And let the roring organs loudly play
The praises of the Loi'd in lively notes;
The whiles, with hollow throates,
The choristers the ioyous antheme sing,
That all the woods may answer, and their eccho ring.

Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speakes
And blesseth her with his two happy hands,

How the red roses flush up in her cheekes,
And the pure snow with goodly vermill stayne,
Like crimsin dyde in grayne:
That even the angels, which continually
About the sacred altar doe remaine,
Forget their service and about her fly,
Ofte peeping in her face, that seems more fayre
The more they on it stare.
But her sad* eyes, still fastened on the ground,
Are governed with goodly modesty,
That suffers not one look to glaunce awry,
Which may let in a little thought unsownd.
Why blush ye, Love, to give to me your hand,
The pledge of all our band?
Sing, ye sweet angels, Alleluya sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.
[* *Sad*, serious]

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Now al is done; bring home the bride againe;
Bring home the triumph of our victory;
Bring home with you the glory of her game,
With ioyance bring her and with iollity.
Never had man more ioyfull day than this,
Whom heaven would heape with blis.
Make feast therefore now all this live-long day;
This day for ever to me holy is.
Poure out the wine without restraint or stay,
Poure not by cups, but by the belly full,
Poure out to all that wull*,
And sprinkle all the posts and wals with wine,
That they may sweat, and drunken be withall.
Crowne ye god Bacchus with a coronall,
And Hymen also crowne with wreaths of vine;
And let the Graces daunce unto the rest,
For they can doo it best:
The whiles the maydens doe theyr carroll sing,
To which the woods shall answer, and theyr eccho ring.
[* *Wull*, will.]

Ring ye the bels, ye yong men of the towne,
And leave your wonted labors for this day:
This day is holy; doe ye write it downe,
That ye for ever it remember may.
This day the sunne is in his chiefest hight,
With Barnaby the bright*,
From whence declining daily by degrees,
He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
When once the Crab behind his back he sees.
But for this time it ill ordained was,
To choose the longest day in all the yeare,
And shortest night, when longest fitter weare:
Yet never day so long, but late would passe.
Ring ye the bels to make it weare away,
And bonefiers make all day;
And daunce about them, and about them sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.
[* Ver. 266.—*Barnaby the bright*. The difference between the old and new style at the time this poem was written was ten days. The summer solstice therefore fell on St. Barnabas's day, the 11th of June. C.]

Ah! when will this long weary day have end,
And lende me leave to come unto my Love?
How slowly do the houres theyr numbers spend?
How slowly does sad Time his feathers move?
Hast thee, O fayrest planet, to thy home,
Within the Westerne fome:
Thy tyred steedes long since have need of rest.
Long though it be, at last I see it gloome,
And the bright evening-star with golden creast
Appeare out of the East.
Fayre childe of beauty! glorious lampe of love!
That all the host of heaven in rankes doost lead,
And guidest lovers through the nights sad dread,
How chearefully thou lookest from above,
And seemst to laugh atweene thy twinkling light,
As ioying in the sight
Of these glad many, which for ioy do sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their eccho ring!

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Now ceasse, ye damsels, your delights fore-past;
Enough it is that all the day was youres:
Now day is doen, and night is nighing fast;
Now bring the bryde into the brydall bowres.
The night is come; now soon her disaray,
And in her bed her lay;
Lay her in lillies and in violets,
And silken curteins over her display,
And odourd sheets, and Arras coverlets.
Behold how goodly my faire Love does ly,
In proud humility!
Like unto Maia, when as Iove her took
In Tempe, lying on the flowry gras,
Twixt sleepe and wake, after she weary was
With bathing in the Acidalian brooke.
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gone,
And leave my Love alone,
And leave likewise your former lay to sing:
The woods no more shall answer, nor your eccho ring.

Now welcome, Night! thou night so long expected,
That long daies labour doest at last defray,
And all my cares, which cruell Love collected,
Hast sumd in one, and cancelled for aye.
Spread thy broad wing over my Love and me,
That no man may us see;
And in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
From feare of perrill and foule horror free.
Let no false treason seeke us to entrap,
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
The safety of our ioy;
But let the night be calme and quietsome,
Without tempestuous storms or sad afray;
Lyke as when Iove with fayre Alemena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groome;
Or lyke as when he with thy selfe did lie,
And begot Maiesty:
And let the mayds and yongmen cease to sing;
Ne let the woods them answer, nor theyr eccho ring.

Let no lamenting cryes, nor dolefull teares,
Be heard all night within, nor yet without:
Ne let false whispers, breeding hidden feares,
Breake gentle sleepe with misconceived dout.

Let no deluding dreames, nor dreadful sights,
Make sudden sad affrights:
No let house-fyres, nor lightnings helpless harmes,
Ne let the Pouke, nor other evill sprights,
Ne let mischievous witches with theyr charmes,
Ne let hob-goblins, names whose sence we see not,
Fray us with things that be not:
Let not the shriech-owle, nor the storke, be heard,
Nor the night-raven, that still deadly yels,
Nor damned ghosts, cald up with mighty spels,
Nor griesly vultures, make us once affeard:
Ne let th'unpleasant quyre of frogs still croking
Make us to wish theyr choking.
Let none of these theyr drery accents sing;
Ne let the woods them answer, nor theyr eccho ring.

[Ver. 341.—The *Pouke* (Puck is a generic term, signifying fiend, or mischievous imp) is Robin Goodfellow. C.]

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But let stil Silence trew night-watches keepe,
That sacred Peace may in assurance rayne,
And tymely Sleep, when it is tyme to sleepe,
May poure his limbs forth on your pleasant playne.
The whiles an hundred little winged Loves,
Like divers-fethered doves,
Shall fly and flutter round about the bed,
And in the secret darke, that none reproves,
Their prety stealthes shall worke, and snares shall spread
To filch away sweet snatches of delight,
Concealed through covert night.
Ye sonnes of Venus, play your sports at will!
For greedy Pleasure, carelesse of your toyes,
Thinks more upon her paradise of ioyes,
Then what ye do, albe it good or ill.
All night, therefore, attend your merry play,
For it will soone be day:
Now none doth hinder you, that say or sing;
Ne will the woods now answer, nor your eccho ring.

Who is the same which at my window peepes?
Or whose is that faire face that shines so bright?
Is it not Cinthia, she that never sleepes,
But walkes about high heaven al the night?
O fayrest goddesse! do thou not envy
My Love with me to spy:
For thou likewise didst love, though now unthought,
And for a fleece of wooll, which privily
The Latmian Shepherd* once unto thee brought,
His pleasures with thee wrought.
Therefore to us be favorable now;
And sith of wemens labours thou hast charge,
And generation goodly dost enlarge,
Encline thy will t'effect our wishfull vow,
And the chast womb informe with timely seed,
That may our comfort breed:
Till which we cease our hopefull hap to sing,
Ne let the woods us answer, nor our eccho ring.
[* *I.e.* Endymion.]

And thou, great Iuno! which with awful might
The lawes of wedlock still dost patronize,
And the religion of the faith first plight
With sacred rites hast taught to solemnize,

And eke for comfort often called art
Of women in their smart,
Eternally bind thou this lovely band,
And all thy blessings unto us impart.
And thou, glad Genius! in whose gentle hand
The bridale bowre and geniall bed remaine,
Without blemish or staine,
And the sweet pleasures of theyr loves delight
With secret ayde doost succour and supply,
Till they bring forth the fruitfull progeny,
Send us the timely fruit of this same night,
And thou, fayre Hebe! and thou, Hymen free!
Grant that it may so be.
Till which we cease your further prayse to sing,
Ne any woods shall answer, nor your eccho ring.

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And ye high heavens, the temple of the gods,
In which a thousand torches flaming bright 410
Doe burne, that to us wretched earthly clods
In dreadful darknesse lend desired light,
And all ye powers which in the same remayne,
More than we men can fayne,
Poure out your blessing on us plentiously, 415
And happy influence upon us raine,
That we may raise a large posterity,
Which from the earth, which they may long possesse
With lasting happinesse,
Up to your haughty pallaces may mount, 420
And for the guerdon of theyr glorious merit,
May heavenly tabernacles there inherit,
Of blessed saints for to increase the count.
So let us rest, sweet Love, in hope of this,
And cease till then our tymely ioyes to sing: 425
The woods no more us answer, nor our eccho ring!

Song, made in lieu of many ornaments
With which my Love should duly have been dect,
Which cutting off through hasty accidents,
Ye would not stay your dew time to expect, 430
But promist both to recompens,
Be unto her a goodly ornament,
And for short time an endlesse moniment!

* * * * *

PROTHALAMION:

OR,

A SPOUSALL VERSE,

MADE BY

EDM. SPENSER.

IN HONOUR OF THE DOUBLE MARRIAGE OF THE TWO HONORABLE
AND VERTUOUS LADIES, THE LADIE ELIZABETH,
AND THE LADIE KATHERINE SOMERSET, DAUGHTERS

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE EARLE
OF WORCESTER, AND ESPOUSED TO THE
TWO WORTHIE GENTLEMEN, M. HENRY
GILFORD AND M. WILLIAM PETER,
ESQUYERS.

(1596)

PROTHALAMION:

OR,

A SPOUSALL VERSE.

Calme was the day, and through the trembling ayre
Sweete-breathing Zephyrus did softly play
A gentle spirit, that lightly did delay*
Hot Titans beames, which then did glyster fayre;
When I (whom sullein care,
Through discontent of my long fruitlesse stay
In princes court, and expectation vayne
Of idle hopes, which still doe fly away
Like empty shadows, did afflict my brayne,)
Walkt forth to ease my payne 10
Along the shoare of silver streaming Themmes;
Whose rutty** bank, the which his river hemmes,
Was paynted all with variable flowers,
And all the meades adornd with dainty gemmes,
Fit to decke maydens bowres, 15
And crowne their paramours
Against the brydale day, which is not long@:
  Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.
[* *Delay*, allay.]
[** *Rutty*, rooty.]
[@ *Long*, distant.]

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There, in a meadow by the rivers side,
A flocke of Nymphes I chaunced to espy,
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks, all loose untyde,
As each had bene a bryde;
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs, entrayled* curiously,
In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket**,
And with fine fingers cropt full feateously@
The tender stalkes on hye.
Of every sort which in that meadow grew
They gathered some; the violet, pallid blew,
The little dazie, that at evening closes,
The virgin lillie, and the primrose trew,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegroomes posies
Against the brydale day, which was not long:
  Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.
[* *Entrayled*, interwoven.]
[** *Flasket*, a long, shallow basket.]
[@ *Feateously*, dexterously.]

With that I saw two Swannes of goodly hewe
Come softly swimming downe along the lee*:
Two fairer birds I yet did never see;
The snow which doth the top of Pindus strew
Did never whiter shew,
Nor Jove himselfe, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
Yet Leda was, they say, as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near:
So purely white they were,
That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,
Seem'd foule to them, and bad his billowes spare
To wet their silken feathers, least they might
Soyle their fayre plumes with water not so fayre,
And marre their beauties bright,
That shone as heavens light,
Against their brydale day, which was not long:
  Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.
[* *Lee*, stream.]

Eftsoones, the Nymphes, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood,

As they came floating on the cristal flood;
Whom when they sawe, they stood amazed still,
Their wondring eyes to fill.
Them seem'd they never saw a sight so fayre
Of fowles, so lovely, that they sure did deeme
Them heavenly borne, or to be that same payre
Which through the skie draw Venus stiver teeme;
For sure they did not seeme
To be begot of any earthly seede,
But rather angels, or of angels breede;
Yet were they bred of Somers-heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weede
The earth did fresh aray;
So fresh they seem'd as day,
Even as their brydale day, which was not long:
  Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

[Ver. 67—*Somers-heat*. A pun on the name of the Ladies Somerset. C.]

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Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
That to the sense did fragrant odours yeild,
All which upon those goodly birds they threw,
And all the waves did strew,
That like old Peneus waters they did seeme,
When downe along by pleasant Tempes shore,
Scattred with flowres, through Thessaly they streeme,
That they appeare, through lillies plenteous store,
Like a brydes chamber flore.
Two of those Nymphes, meane while, two garlands bound
Of freshest flowres which in that mead they found,
The which presenting all in trim array,
Their snowie foreheads therewithall they crownd,
Whilst one did sing this lay,
Prepar'd against that day,
Against their brydale day, which was not long:
  Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

"Ye gentle Birdes! the worlds faire ornament,
And heavens glorie, whom this happie hower
Doth leade unto your lovers blissfull bower,
Ioy may you have, and gentle hearts content
Of your loves couplement;
And let faire Venus, that is Queene of Love,
With her heart-quelling sonne upon you smile,
Whose smile, they say, hath vertue to remove
All loves dislike, and friendships faultie guile
For ever to assoile*.
Let endlesse peace your steadfast hearts accord,
And blessed plentie wait upon your bord;
And let your bed with pleasures chast abound.
That fruitfull issue may to you afford,
Which may your foes confound,
And make your ioyes redound
Upon your brydale day, which is not long:
  Sweet Themmes! runne softlie, till I end my song."
[* *Assoile*, do away with.]

So ended she; and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong*,
Which said, their brydale daye should not be long:
And gentle Eccho from the neighbour ground
Their accents did resound.

So forth those ioyous birdes did passe along
Adowne the lee, that to them murmurde low,
As he would speake, but that he lackt a tong,
Yet did by signes his glad affection show,
Making his streame run slow.
And all the foule which in his flood did dwell
Gan flock about these twaine, that did excell
The rest so far as Cynthia doth shend**
The lesser stars. So they, enranged well,
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding day, which was not long:
  Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.
[* *Undersong*, burden.]
[** *Shend*, put to shame.]

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At length they all to mery London came,
To mery London, my most kyndly nurse,
That to me gave this lifes first native sourse,
Though from another place I take my name,
An house of auncient fame.
There when they came whereas those bricky towres
The which on Themmes brode aged backe doe ryde,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers.—
There whylome wont the Templer Knights to byde,
Till they decayd through pride,—
Next whereunto there standes a stately place,
Where oft I gayned giftes and goodly grace
Of that great lord which therein wont to dwell,
Whose want too well now feels my freendles case:
But ah! here fits not well
Olde woes, but ioyes, to tell,
Against the bridale daye, which is not long:
  Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

[Ver. 137.—*A stately place* Exeter House, the residence first of the Earl of Leicester, and afterwards of Essex. C.]

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,
Great Englands glory and the worlds wide wonder,
Whose dreadfull name late through all Spaine did thunder,
And Hercules two pillors standing neere
Did make to quake and feare.
Faire branch of honor, flower of chevalrie!
That fillest England with thy triumphs fame,
Ioy have thou of thy noble victorie,
And endlesse happinesse of thine owne name,
That promiseth the same;
That through thy prowesse and victorious armes
Thy country may be freed from forraine harmes,
And great Elisaes glorious name may ring
Through al the world, fil'd with thy wide alarmes.
Which some brave Muse may sing
To ages following,
Upon the brydale day, which is not long:
  Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

[Ver. 147.—*Whose dreadfull name, &c*. The allusion here is to the expedition against Cadiz, from which Essex returned in August, 1596. C.]

From those high towers this noble lord issuing,
Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hayre

In th’ocean billowes he hath bathed fayre,
Descended to the rivers open vewing,
With a great traine ensuing.
Above the rest were goodly to bee scene
Two gentle Knights of lovely face and feature,
Beseeming well the bower of any queene,
With gifts of wit and ornaments of nature
Fit for so goodly stature,
That like the twins of Iove they seem’d in sight,
Which decke the bauldricke of the heavens bright.
They two, forth pacing to the rivers side,
Receiv’d those two faire brides, their loves delight;
Which, at th’appointed tyde,
Each one did make his bryde
Against their brydale day, which is not long:
Sweet Themmes! runne softly, till I end my song.

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* * * * *

FOWRE HYMNES

MADE BY

EDM. SPENSER.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE AND MOST VERTUOUS LADIES,

THE LADIE MARGARET,

COUNTESSE OF CUMBERLAND;

AND THE LADIE MARIE*,

COUNTESSE OF WARWICK.

Having, in the greener times of my youth, composed these former two Hymnes in the praise of love and beautie, and finding that the same too much pleased those of like age and disposition, which, being too vehemently carried with that kind of affection, do rather sucke out poyson to their strong passion, then honey to their honest delight, I was moved, by the one of you two most excellent Ladies, to call in the same; but being unable so to do, by reason that many copies thereof were formerly scattered abroad, I resolved at least to amend, and, by way of retraction, to reforme them, making (instead of those two Hymnes of earthly or naturall love and beautie) two others of heavenly and celestiall; the which I doe dedicate ioyntly unto you two honorable sisters, as to the most excellent and rare ornaments of all true love and beautie, both in the one and the other kind; humbly beseeching you to vouchsafe the patronage of them, and to accept this my humble service, in lieu of the great graces and honourable favours which ye dayly shew unto me, until such time as I may, by better meanes, yeeld you some more notable testimonie of my thankfull mind and dutifull devotion. And even so I pray for your happinesse. Greenwich, this first of September, 1596. Your Honors most bounden ever,

In all humble service,

ED. SP.

[* The Countess of Warwick’s name was Anne, not Mary. TODD.]

* * * * *

AN HYMNE

IN HONOUR OF LOVE.

Love, that long since hast to thy mighty powre
Perforce subdude my poor captived hart,
And raging now therein with restlesse stowre*,
Doest tyrannize in everie weaker part,
Faine would I seeke to ease my bitter smart
By any service I might do to thee,
Or ought that else might to thee pleasing bee.
  [* *Stowre*, commotion.]

And now t’asswage the force of this new flame,
And make thee more propitious in my need,
I meane to sing the praises of thy name,
And thy victorious conquests to areed*,
By which thou madest many harts to bleed
Of mighty victors, with wide wounds embrewed,
And by thy cruell darts to thee subdewed.
  [* *Areed*, set forth.]

Onely I fear my wits, enfeebled late
Through the sharp sorrowes which thou hast me bred,
Should faint, and words should faile me to relate
The wondrous triumphs of thy great god-hed:
But, if thou wouldst vouchsafe to overspred
Me with the shadow of thy gentle wing,
I should enabled be thy actes to sing.

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Come, then, O come, thou mightie God of Love!
Out of thy silver bowres and secret blisse,
Where thou dost sit in Venus lap above,
Bathing thy wings in her ambrosial kisse,
That sweeter farre than any nectar is,
Come softly, and my feeble breast inspire
With gentle furie, kindled of thy fire.

And ye, sweet Muses! which have often proved
The piercing points of his avengefull darts,
And ye, fair Nimphs! which oftentimes have loved
The cruel worker of your kindly smarts,
Prepare yourselves, and open wide your harts
For to receive the triumph of your glorie,
That made you merie oft when ye were sorrie.

And ye, faire blossoms of youths wanton breed!
Which in the conquests of your beautie bost,
Wherewith your lovers feeble eyes you feed,
But sterve their harts, that needeth nourture most,
Prepare your selves to march amongst his host,
And all the way this sacred hymne do sing,
Made in the honor of your soveraigne king.

Great God of Might, that reignest in the mynd,
And all the bodie to thy hest doest frame,
Victor of gods, subduer of mankynd,
That doest the lions and fell tigers tame,
Making their cruell rage thy scornfull game,
And in their roring taking great delight,
Who can expresse the glorie of thy might?

Or who alive can perfectly declare
The wondrous cradle of thine infancie,
When thy great mother Venus first thee bare,
Begot of Plenty and of Penurie,
Though elder then thine own nativitie,
And yet a chyld, renewing still thy yeares,
And yet the eldest of the heavenly peares?

For ere this worlds still moving mightie masse
Out of great Chaos ugly prison crept,
In which his goodly face long hidden was
From heavens view, and in deep darknesse kept,

Love, that had now long time securely slept
In Venus lap, unarmed then and naked,
Gan reare his head, by Clotho being waked:

And taking to him wings of his own heat,
Kindled at first from heavens life-giving fyre,
He gan to move out of his idle seat;
Weakly at first, but after with desyre
Lifted aloft, he gan to mount up hyre*,
And, like fresh eagle, made his hardy flight
Thro all that great wide wast, yet wanting light.
[* *Hyre*, higher.]

Yet wanting light to guide his wandring way,
His own faire mother, for all creatures sake,
Did lend him light from her owne goodly ray;
Then through the world his way he gan to take,
The world, that was not till he did it make,
Whose sundrie parts he from themselves did sever.
The which before had lyen confused ever.

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The earth, the ayre, the water, and the fyre,
Then gan to raunge themselves in huge array,
And with contrary forces to conspyre
Each against other by all meanes they may,
Threatning their owne confusion and decay:
Ayre hated earth, and water hated fyre,
Till Love relented their rebellious yre.

He then them tooke, and, tempering goodly well
Their contrary dislikes with loved meanes,
Did place them all in order, and compell
To keepe themselves within their sundrie raines*,
Together linkt with adamantine chaines;
Yet so as that in every living wight
They mix themselves, and shew their kindly might.
[* *Raines*, kingdoms.]

So ever since they firmely have remained,
And duly well observed his beheast;
Through which now all these things that are contained
Within this goodly cope, both most and least,
Their being have, and daily are increast
Through secret sparks of his infused fyre,
Which in the barraine cold he doth inspyre.

Thereby they all do live, and moved are
To multiply the likenesse of their kynd,
Whilest they seeke onely, without further care,
To quench the flame which they in burning fynd;
But man, that breathes a more immortall mynd,
Not for lusts sake, but for eternitie,
Seekes to enlarge his lasting progenie.

For having yet in his deducted spright
Some sparks remaining of that heavenly fyre,
He is enlumind with that goodly light,
Unto like goodly semblant to aspyre;
Therefore in choice of love he doth desyre
That seemes on earth most heavenly to embrace,
That same is Beautie, borne of heavenly race.

For sure, of all that in this mortall frame
Contained is, nought more divine doth seeme,
Or that resembleth more th'immortall flame

Of heavenly light, than Beauties glorious beam.
What wonder then, if with such rage extreme
Frail men, whose eyes seek heavenly things to see,
At sight thereof so much enravisht bee?

Which well perceiving, that imperious boy
Doth therewith tip his sharp empoisned darts,
Which glancing thro the eyes with* countenance coy
Kest not till they have pierst the trembling harts,
And kindled flame in all their inner parts,
Which suckes the blood, and drinketh up the lyfe,
Of carefull wretches with consuming griefe.
[* Qu. from? WARTON.]

Thenceforth they playne, and make full piteous mone
Unto the author of their balefull bane:
The daies they waste, the nights they grieve and grone,
Their lives they loath, and heavens light disdaine;
No light but that whose lampe doth yet remaine
Fresh burning in the image of their eye,
They deigne to see, and seeing it still dye.

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The whylst thou, tyrant Love, doest laugh and scorne
At their complaints, making their paine thy play;
Whylest they lye languishing like thrals forlorne,
The whyles thou doest triumph in their decay;
And otherwhyles, their dying to delay,
Thou doest emmarble the proud hart of her
Whose love before their life they doe prefer.

So hast thou often done (ay me the more!)
To me thy vassall, whose yet bleeding hart
With thousand wounds thou mangled hast so sore,
That whole remaines scarse any little part;
Yet to augment the anguish of my smart,
Thou hast enfrosen her disdainefull brest,
That no one drop of pitie there doth rest.

Why then do I this honor unto thee,
Thus to ennoble thy victorious name,
Sith thou doest shew no favour unto mee,
Ne once move ruth in that rebellious dame,

Somewhat to slacke the rigour of my flame?
Certes small glory doest thou winne hereby,
To let her live thus free, and me to dy.

But if thou be indeede, as men thee call,
The worlds great parent, the most kind preserver
Of living wights, the soveraine lord of all,
How falles it then that with thy furious fervour
Thou doest afflict as well the not-deserver,
As him that doeth thy lovely heasts despize,
And on thy subiects most doth tyrannize?

Yet herein eke thy glory seemeth more,
By so hard handling those which best thee serve,
That, ere thou doest them unto grace restore,
Thou mayest well trie if they will ever swerve,
And mayest them make it better to deserve,
And, having got it, may it more esteeme;
For things hard gotten men more dearely deeme.

So hard those heavenly beauties be enfyred,
As things divine least passions doe impresse;
The more of stedfast mynds to be admyred,

The more they stayed be on stedfastnesse;
But baseborne minds such lamps regard the lesse,
Which at first blowing take not hastie fyre;
Such fancies feele no love, but loose desyre.

For Love is lord of truth and loialtie,
Lifting himself out of the lowly dust
On golden plumes up to the purest skie,
Above the reach of loathly sinfull lust,
Whose base affect*, through cowardly distrust
Of his weake wings, dare not to heaven fly,
But like a moldwarpe** in the earth doth ly.
[* *Affect*, affection, passion.]
[** *Moldwarpe*, mole.]

His dunghill thoughts, which do themselves enure
To dirtie drosse, no higher dare aspyre;
Ne can his feeble earthly eyes endure
The flaming light of that celestiall fyre
Which kindleth love in generous desyre,
And makes him mount above the native might
Of heavie earth, up to the heavens hight.

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Such is the powre of that sweet passion,
That it all sordid basenesse doth expell,
And the refyned mynd doth newly fashion
Unto a fairer forme, which now doth dwell
In his high thought, that would it selfe excell;
Which he beholding still with constant sight,
Admires the mirrour of so heavenly light.

Whose image printing in his deepest wit,
He thereon feeds his hungrie fantasy,
Still full, yet never satisfyde with it;
Like Tantale, that in store doth sterved ly,
So doth he pine in most satiety;
For nought may quench his infinite desyre,
Once kindled through that first conceived fyre.

Thereon his mynd affixed wholly is,
Ne thinks on ought but how it to attaine;
His care, his ioy, his hope, is all on this,
That seemes in it all blisses to containe,
In sight whereof all other blisse seemes vaine:
Thrice happie man, might he the same possesse,
He faines himselfe, and doth his fortune blesse.

And though he do not win his wish to end,
Yet thus farre happie he himselfe doth weene,
That heavens such happie grace did to him lend
As thing on earth so heavenly to have seene,
His harts enshrined saint, his heavens queene,
Fairer then fairest in his fayning eye,
Whose sole aspect he counts felicitye.

Then forth he casts in his unquiet thought,
What he may do her favour to obtaine;
What brave exploit, what perill hardly wrought,
What puissant conquest, what adventurous paine,
May please her best, and grace unto him gaine;
He dreads no danger, nor misfortune feares,
His faith, his fortune, in his breast he beares.

Thou art his god, thou art his mightie guyde,
Thou, being blind, letst him not see his feares,
But carriest him to that which he had eyde,
Through seas, through flames, through thousand swords and speares; *

Ne ought so strong that may his force withstand,
With which thou armest his resistlesse hand.
[* The fifth verse of this stanza appears to have dropped out. C.]

Witnesse Leander in the Euxine waves,
And stout Aeneas in the Troiane fyre,
Achilles preassing through the Phrygian glaives*,
And Orpheus, daring to provoke the yre
Of damned fiends, to get his love retyre;
For both through heaven and hell thou makest way,
To win them worship which to thee obay.
[* *Glaives*, swords.]

And if by all these perils and these paynes
He may but purchase lyking in her eye,
What heavens of ioy then to himselfe he faynes!
Eftsoones he wypes quite out of memory
Whatever ill before he did aby*:
Had it beene death, yet would he die againe,
To live thus happie as her grace to gaine.
[* *Aby*, abide.]

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Yet when he hath found favour to his will,
He nathemore can so contented rest,
But forceth further on, and striveth still
T'approch more neare, till in her inmost brest
He may embosomd bee and loved best;
And yet not best, but to be lov'd alone;
For love cannot endure a paragone*.
[* *Paragone*, competitor.]

The fear whereof, O how doth it torment
His troubled mynd with more then hellish paine!
And to his fayning fansie represent
Sights never seene, and thousand shadowes vaine,
To breake his sleepe and waste his ydle braine:
Thou that hast never lov'd canst not beleeve
Least part of th'evils which poore lovers greeve.

The gnawing envie, the hart-fretting feare,
The vaine surmizes, the distrustfull showes,
The false reports that flying tales doe beare,
The doubts, the daungers, the delayes, the woes,
The fayned friends, the unassured foes,
With thousands more then any tongue can tell,
Doe make a lovers life a wretches hell.

Yet is there one more cursed then they all,
That cancker-worme, that monster, Gelosie,
Which eates the heart and feedes upon the gall,
Turning all Loves delight to miserie,
Through feare of losing his felicitie.
Ah, gods! that ever ye that monster placed
In gentle Love, that all his ioyes defaced!

By these, O Love! thou doest thy entrance make
Unto thy heaven, and doest the more endeere
Thy pleasures unto those which them partake,
As after stormes, when clouds begin to cleare,
The sunne more bright and glorious doth appeare;
So thou thy folke, through paines of Purgatorie,
Dost beare unto thy blisse, and heavens glorie.

There thou them placest in a paradize
Of all delight and ioyous happy rest,
Where they doe feede on nectar heavenly-wize,

With Hercules and Hebe, and the rest
Of Venus dearlings, through her bountie blest;
And lie like gods in yvory beds arayd,
With rose and lillies over them displayd.

There with thy daughter Pleasure they doe play
Their hurtlesse sports, without rebuke or blame,
And in her snowy bosome boldly lay
Their quiet heads, devoyd of guilty shame,
After full ioyance of their gentle game;
Then her they crowne their goddesse and their queene,
And decke with floures thy altars well beseene.

Ay me! deare Lord, that ever I might hope,
For all the paines and woes that I endure,
To come at length unto the wished scope
Of my desire, or might myselfe assure
That happie port for ever to recure*!
Then would I thinke these paines no paines at all,
And all my woes to be but penance small.
[* *Recure*, recover, gain.]

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Then would I sing of thine immortal praise
An heavenly hymne such as the angels sing,
And thy triumphant name then would I raise
Bove all the gods, thee only honoring;
My guide, my god, my victor, and my king:
Till then, drad Lord! vouchsafe to take of me
This simple song, thus fram'd in praise of thee.

AN HYMNE

IN HONOUR OF BEAUTIE.

Ah! whither, Love! wilt thou now carry mee?
What wontlesse fury dost thou now inspire
Into my feeble breast, too full of thee?
Whylest seeking to aslake thy raging fyre,
Thou in me kindlest much more great desyre,
And up aloft above my strength doth rayse
The wondrous matter of my fire to praise.

That as I earst in praise of thine owne name,
So now in honour of thy mother deare
An honourable hymne I eke should frame,
And, with the brightnesse of her beautie cleare,
The ravisht hearts of gazefull men might reare
To admiration of that heavenly light,
From whence proceeds such soule-enchanting might.

Therto do thou, great Goddesse! Queene of Beauty,
Mother of Love and of all worlds delight,
Without whose soverayne grace and kindly dewty
Nothing on earth seems fayre to fleshly sight,
Doe thou vouchsafe with thy love-kindling light
T'illuminate my dim and dulled eyne,
And beautifie this sacred hymne of thyne:

That both to thee, to whom I meane it most,
And eke to her whose faire immortall beame
Hath darted fyre into my feeble ghost,
That now it wasted is with woes extreame,
It may so please, that she at length will streame
Some deaw of grace into my withered hart,
After long sorrow and consuming smart.

WHAT TIME THIS WORLDS GREAT WORKMAISTER did cast
To make al things such as we now behold,
It seems that he before his eyes had plast
A goodly paterne, to whose perfect mould
He fashiond them as comely as he could,
That now so faire and seemely they appeare
As nought may be amended any wheare.

That wondrous paterne, wheresoere it bee,
Whether in earth layd up in secret store,
Or else in heaven, that no man may it see
With sinfull eyes, for feare it do deflore,
Is perfect Beautie, which all men adore;
Whose face and feature doth so much excell
All mortal sence, that none the same may tell.

Thereof as every earthly thing partakes
Or more or lesse, by influence divine,
So it more faire accordingly it makes,
And the grosse matter of this earthly myne
Which closeth it thereafter doth refyne,
Doing away the drosse which dims the light
Of that faire beame which therein is empight*.
[* *Empight*, placed.]

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For, through infusion of celestiall powre,
The duller earth it quickneth with delight,
And life-full spirits privily doth powre
Through all the parts, that to the lookers sight
They seeme to please; that is thy soveraine might,
O Cyprian queene! which, flowing from the beame
Of thy bright starre, thou into them doest streame.

That is the thing which giveth pleasant grace
To all things faire, that kindleth lively fyre;
Light of thy lampe; which, shyning in the face,
Thence to the soule darts amorous desyre,
And robs the harts of those which it admyre;
Therewith thou pointest thy sons poysned arrow,
That wounds the life and wastes the inmost marrow.

How vainely then do ydle wits invent
That Beautie is nought else but mixture made
Of colours faire, and goodly temp'rament
Of pure complexions, that shall quickly fade
And passe away, like to a sommers shade;
Or that it is but comely composition
Of parts well measurd, with meet disposition!

Hath white and red in it such wondrous powre,
That it can pierce through th'eyes unto the hart,
And therein stirre such rage and restlesse stowre*,
As nought but death can stint his dolours smart?
Or can proportion of the outward part
Move such affection in the inward mynd,
That it can rob both sense, and reason blynd?
[* *Stowre*, commotion.]

Why doe not then the blossomes of the field,
Which are arayd with much more orient hew,
And to the sense most daintie odours yield,
Worke like impression in the lookers vew?
Or why doe not faire pictures like powre shew,
In which oft-times we Nature see of Art
Exceld, in perfect limming every part?

But ah! beleeve me there is more then so,
That workes such wonders in the minds of men;
I, that have often prov'd, too well it know,

And who so list the like assayes to ken
Shall find by trial, and confesse it then,
That Beautie is not, as fond men misdeeme,
An outward shew of things that onely seeme.

For that same goodly hew of white and red
With which the cheekes are sprinckled, shall decay,
And those sweete rosy leaves, so fairly spred
Upon the lips, shall fade and fall away
To that they were, even to corrupted clay:
That golden wyre, those sparckling stars so bright,
Shall turne to dust, and lose their goodly light.

But that faire lampe, from whose celestiall ray
That light proceedes which kindleth lovers fire,
Shall never be extinguisht nor decay;
But, when the vitall spirits doe espyre,
Unto her native planet shall retyre;
For it is heavenly borne, and cannot die,
Being a parcell of the purest skie.

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For when the soule, the which derived was,
At first, out of that great immortall Spright,
By whom all live to love, whilome did pas
Down from the top of purest heavens hight
To be embodied here, it then tooke light
And lively spirits from that fayrest starre
Which lights the world forth from his firie carre.

Which powre retayning still, or more or lesse,
When she in fleshly seede is eft* enraced**,
Through every part she doth the same impresse,
According as the heavens have her graced,
And frames her house, in which she will be placed,
Fit for her selfe, adorning it with spoyle
Of th'heavenly riches which she robd erewhyle.
[* *Eft*, afterwards.]
[** *Enraced*, implanted.]

Thereof it comes that these faire soules which have
The most resemblance of that heavenly light
Frame to themselves most beautifull and brave
Their fleshly bowre, most fit for their delight,
And the grosse matter by a soveraine might
Temper so trim, that it may well be seene
A pallace fit for such a virgin queene.

So every spirit, as it is most pure,
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
So it the fairer bodie doth procure
To habit in, and it more fairely dight* 130
With chearfull grace and amiable sight:
For of the soule the bodie forme doth take;
For soule is forme, and doth the bodie make.
[* *Dight*, adorn.]

Therefore, where-ever that thou doest behold
A comely corpse*, with beautie faire endewed,
Know this for certaine, that the same doth hold
A beauteous soule with fair conditions thewed**,
Fit to receive the seede of vertue strewed;
For all that faire is, is by nature good;
That is a sign to know the gentle blood.
[* *Corpse*, body.]
[** *i.e.* endowed with fair qualities.]

Yet oft it falles that many a gentle mynd
Dwels in deformed tabernacle drownd,
Either by chaunce, against the course of kynd*,
Or through unaptnesse in the substance fownd,
Which it assumed of some stubborne grownd,
That will not yield unto her formes direction,
But is deform'd with some foule imperfection.
[* *Kynd*, nature.]

And oft it falles, (ay me, the more to rew!)
That goodly Beautie, albe heavenly borne,
Is foule abusd, and that celestiall hew,
Which doth the world with her delight adorne,
Made but the bait of sinne, and sinners scorne,
Whilest every one doth seeke and sew to have it,
But every one doth seeke but to deprave it.

Yet nathemore is that faire Beauties blame,
But theirs that do abuse it unto ill:
Nothing so good, but that through guilty shame
May be corrupt*, and wrested unto will.
Nathelesse the soule is faire and beauteous still,
However fleshes fault it filthy make;
For things immortall no corruption take.
[* *Corrupt*, corrupted.]

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But ye, faire Dames! the worlds deare ornaments,
And lively images of heavens light,
Let not your beames with such disparagements
Be dimd, and your bright glorie darkned quight;
But mindfull still of your first countries sight,
Doe still preserve your first informed grace,
Whose shadow yet shynes in your beauteous face.

Loath that foule blot, that hellish fierbrand,
Disloiall lust, fair Beauties foulest blame,
That base affections, which your eares would bland*,
Commend to you by loves abused name,
But is indeede the bondslave of defame;
Which will the garland of your glorie marre,
And quench the light of your brightshyning starre.
[* *Bland*, blandish.]

But gentle Love, that loiall is and trew,
Wil more illumine your resplendent ray,
And add more brightnesse to your goodly hew
From light of his pure fire; which, by like way
Kindled of yours, your likenesse doth display;
Like as two mirrours, by opposd reflection,
Doe both expresse the faces first impression.

Therefore, to make your beautie more appeare,
It you behoves to love, and forth to lay
That heavenly riches which in you ye beare,
That men the more admyre their fountaine may;
For else what booteth that celestiall ray,
If it in darknesse be enshrined ever,
That it of loving eyes be vewed never?

But, in your choice of loves, this well advize,
That likest to your selves ye them select,
The which your forms first sourse may sympathize,
And with like beauties parts be inly deckt;
For if you loosely love without respect,
It is not love, but a discordant warre,
Whose unlike parts amongst themselves do iarre.

For love is a celestiall harmonie
Of likely* harts composd of** starres concent,
Which ioyne together in sweete sympathie,

To work each others ioy and true content,
Which they have harbourd since their first descent
Out of their heavenly bowres, where they did see
And know ech other here belov'd to bee.
[* *Likely*, similar.]
[** *Composd of*, combined by.]

Then wrong it were that any other twaine
Should in Loves gentle band combyned bee,
But those whom Heaven did at first ordaine,
And made out of one mould the more t'agree;
For all that like the beautie which they see
Straight do not love; for Love is not so light
As straight to burne at first beholders sight.

But they which love indeede looke otherwise,
With pure regard and spotlesse true intent,
Drawing out of the obiect of their eyes
A more refyned form, which they present
Unto their mind, voide of all blemishment;
Which it reducing to her first perfection,
Beholdeth free from fleshes frayle infection.

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And then conforming it unto the light
Which in it selfe it hath remaining still,
Of that first sunne, yet sparckling in his sight,
Thereof he fashions in his higher skill
An heavenly beautie to his fancies will;
And it embracing in his mind entyre,
The mirrour of his owne thought doth admyre.

Which seeing now so inly faire to be,
As outward it appeareth to the eye,
And with his spirits proportion to agree,
He thereon fixeth all his fantasie,
And fully setteth his felicitie;
Counting it fairer then it is indeede,
And yet indeede her fairnesse doth exeede.

For lovers eyes more sharply sighted bee
Then other mens, and in deare loves delight
See more then any other eyes can see,
Through mutuall receipt of beames bright,
Which carrie privie message to the spright,
And to their eyes that inmost faire display,
As plaine as light discovers dawning day.

Therein they see, through amorous eye-glaunces,
Annies of Loves still flying too and fro,
Which dart at them their litle fierie launces;
Whom having wounded, back againe they go,
Carrying compassion to their lovely foe;
Who, seeing her faire eyes so sharp effect,
Cures all their sorrowes with one sweete aspect.

In which how many wonders doe they reede
To their conceipt, that others never see!
Now of her smiles, with which their soules they feede,
Like gods with nectar in their bankets free;
Now of her lookes, which like to cordials bee;
But when her words embassade* forth she sends,
Lord, how sweete musicke that unto them lends!
[* *Embassade*, embassy.]

Sometimes upon her forhead they behold
A thousand graces masking in delight;
Sometimes within her eye-lids they unfold

Ten thousand sweet belgards*, which to their sight
Doe seeme like twinckling starres in frostie night;
But on her lips, like rosy buds in May,
So many millions of chaste pleasures play.
  [* *Belgards*, fair looks.]

All those, O Cytherea! and thousands more,
Thy handmaides be, which do on thee attend,
To decke thy beautie with their dainties store,
That may it more to mortall eyes commend,
And make it more admyr'd of foe and frend;
That in mans harts thou mayst thy throne enstall,
And spred thy lovely kingdome over all.

Then Ioe, tryumph! O great Beauties Queene,
Advance the banner of thy conquest hie,
That all this world, the which thy vassels beene,
May draw to thee, and with dew fealtie
Adore the powre of thy great maiestie,
Singing this hymne in honour of thy name,
Compyld by me, which thy poor liegeman am!

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In lieu whereof graunt, O great soveraine!
That she whose conquering beauty doth captive
My trembling hart in her eternall chaine,
One drop of grace at length will to me give,
That I her bounden thrall by her may live,
And this same life, which first fro me she reaved,
May owe to her, of whom I it receaved.

And you, faire Venus dearling, my dear dread!
Fresh flowre of grace, great goddesse of my life,
When your faire eyes these fearfull lines shall read,
Deigne to let fall one drop of dew reliefe,
That may recure my harts long pyning griefe,
And shew what wondrous powre your beauty hath,
That can restore a damned wight from death.

AN HYMNE

OF HEAVENLY LOVE*.

[* See the sixth canto of the third book of the Faerie Queene, especially the second and the thirty-second stanzas; which, with his Hymnes of Heavenly Love and Heavenly Beauty, are evident proofs of Spenser’s attachment to the Platonic school. WARTON.]

Love, lift me up upon thy golden wings
From this base world unto thy heavens hight,
Where I may see those admirable things
Which there thou workest by thy soveraine might,
Farre above feeble reach of earthly sight,
That I thereof an heavenly hymne may sing
Unto the God of Love, high heavens king.

Many lewd layes (ah! woe is me the more!)
In praise of that mad fit which fooles call Love,
I have in th’heat of youth made heretofore,
That in light wits did loose affection move;
But all those follies now I do reprove,
And turned have the tenor of my string,
The heavenly prayses of true Love to sing.

And ye that wont with greedy vaine desire
To reade my fault, and, wondring at my flame,
To warme your selves at my wide sparckling fire,

Sith now that heat is quenched, quench my blame,
And in her ashes shrowd my dying shame;
For who my passed follies now pursewes,
Beginnes his owne, and my old fault renewes.

BEFORE THIS WORLDS GREAT FRAME, in which al things
Are now containd, found any being-place,
Ere flitting Time could wag* his eyas** wings
About that mightie bound which doth embrace
The rolling spheres, and parts their houres by space,
That high eternall Powre, which now doth move
In all these things, mov'd in it selfe by love.
[* *Wag*, move.]
[** *Eyas*, unfledged.]

It lovd it selfe, because it selfe was faire;
(For fair is lov'd;) and of it self begot
Like to it selfe his eldest Sonne and Heire,
Eternall, pure, and voide of sinfull blot,
The firstling of his ioy, in whom no iot
Of loves dislike or pride was to be found,
Whom he therefore with equall honour crownd.

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With him he raignd, before all time prescribed,
In endlesse glorie and immortall might,
Together with that Third from them derived,
Most wise, most holy, most almightie Spright!
Whose kingdomes throne no thoughts of earthly wight
Can comprehend, much lesse my trembling verse
With equall words can hope it to reherse.

Yet, O most blessed Spirit! pure lampe of light,
Eternall spring of grace and wisedom trew,
Vouchsafe to shed into my barren spright
Some little drop of thy celestiall dew,
That may my rymes with sweet infuse* embrew,
And give me words equall unto my thought,
To tell the marveiles by thy mercie wrought.
[* *Infuse*, infusion]

Yet being pregnant still with powrefull grace,
And full of fruitfull Love, that loves to get
Things like himselfe and to enlarge his race,
His second brood, though not of powre so great,
Yet full of beautie, next he did beget,
An infinite increase of angels bright,
All glistring glorious in their Makers light.

To them the heavens illimitable hight
(Not this round heaven which we from hence behold,
Adornd with thousand lamps of burning light,
And with ten thousand gemmes of shyning gold)
He gave as their inheritance to hold,
That they might serve him in eternall blis,
And be partakers of those ioyes of his.

There they in their trinall triplicities
About him wait, and on his will depend,
Either with nimble wings to cut the skies,
When he them on his messages doth send,
Or on his owne dread presence to attend,
Where they behold the glorie of his light,
And caroll hymnes of love both day and night.
[Ver. 64.—*Trinall triplicities*. See the Faerie Queene, Book I. Canto XII. 39. H.]

Both day and night is unto them all one;
For he his beames doth unto them extend,
That darknesse there appeareth never none;
Ne hath their day, ne hath their blisse, an end,
But there their termelesse time in pleasure spend;
Ne ever should their happinesse decay,
Had not they dar'd their Lord to disobay.

But pride, impatient of long resting peace,
Did puffe them up with greedy bold ambition,
That they gan cast their state how to increase
Above the fortune of their first condition,
And sit in Gods own seat without commission:
The brightest angel, even the Child of Light*,
Drew millions more against their God to fight.
[* *I.e.* Lucifer.]

Th'Almighty, seeing their so bold assay,
Kindled the flame of his consuming yre,
And with his onely breath them blew away
From heavens hight, to which they did aspyre,
To deepest hell, and lake of damned fyre,
Where they in darknesse and dread horror dwell,
Hating the happie light from which they fell.

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So that next off-spring of the Makers love,
Next to himselfe in glorious degree,
Degendering* to hate, fell from above
Through pride; (for pride and love may ill agree;)
And now of sinne to all ensample bee:
How then can sinfull flesh it selfe assure,
Sith purest angels fell to be impure?
[* *Degendering*, degenerating.]

But that Eternall Fount of love and grace,
Still flowing forth his goodnesse unto all,
Now seeing left a waste and emptie place
In his wyde pallace through those angels fall,
Cast to supply the same, and to enstall
A new unknowen colony therein,
Whose root from earths base groundworke should begin.

Therefore of clay, base, vile, and nest to nought,
Yet form'd by wondrous skill, and by his might
According to an heavenly patterne wrought,
Which he had fashiond in his wise foresight,
He man did make, and breathd a living spright
Into his face, most beautifull and fayre,
Endewd with wisedomes riches, heavenly, rare.

Such he him made, that he resemble might
Himselfe, as mortall thing immortall could;
Him to be lord of every living wight
He made by love out of his owne like mould,
In whom he might his mightie selfe behould;
For Love doth love the thing belov'd to see,
That like it selfe in lovely shape may bee.

But man, forgetfull of his Makers grace
No lesse than angels, whom he did ensew,
Fell from the hope of promist heavenly place,
Into the mouth of Death, to sinners dew,
And all his off-spring into thraldome threw,
Where they for ever should in bonds remaine
Of never-dead, yet ever-dying paine;

Till that great Lord of Love, which him at first
Made of meere love, and after liked well,
Seeing him lie like creature long accurst

In that deep horor of despeyred hell,
Him, wretch, in doole* would let no lenger dwell,
But cast** out of that bondage to redeeme,
And pay the price, all@ were his debt extreeme.
[* *Doole*, pain.]
[** *Cast*, devised.]
[@ *All*, although.]

Out of the bosome of eternall blisse,
In which he reigned with his glorious Syre,
He downe descended, like a most demisse*
And abiect thrall, in fleshes fraile attyre,
That he for him might pay sinnes deadly hyre,
And him restore unto that happie state
In which he stood before his haplesse fate.
[* *Demisse*, humble.]

In flesh at first the guilt committed was,
Therefore in flesh it must be satisfyde;
Nor spirit, nor angel, though they man surpas,
Could make amends to God for mans misguyde,
But onely man himselfe, who selfe did slyde:
So, taking flesh of sacred virgins wombe,
For mans deare sake he did a man become.

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And that most blessed bodie, which was borne
Without all blemish or reprochfull blame,
He freely gave to be both rent and torne
Of cruell hands, who with despightfull shame
Revyling him, (that them most vile became,)
At length him nayled on a gallow-tree,
And slew the iust by most uniust decree.

O huge and most unspeakeable impression
Of Loves deep wound, that pierst the piteous hart
Of that deare Lord with so entyre affection,
And, sharply launcing every inner part,
Dolours of death into his soule did dart,
Doing him die that never it deserved,
To free his foes, that from his heast* had swerved!
[* *Heast*, command.]

What hart can feel least touch of so sore launch,
Or thought can think the depth of so deare wound?
Whose bleeding sourse their streames yet never staunch,
But stil do flow, and freshly still redownd*,
To heale the sores of sinfull soules unsound,
And clense the guilt of that infected cryme,
Which was enrooted in all fleshly slyme.
[* *Redownd*, overflow.]

O blessed Well of Love! O Floure of Grace!
O glorious Morning-Starre! O Lampe of Light!
Most lively image of thy Fathers face,
Eternal King of Glorie, Lord of Might,
Meeke Lambe of God, before all worlds behight*,
How can we thee requite for all this good?
Or what can prize** that thy most precious blood?
[* *Behight*, named.]
[** *Prize*, price.]

Yet nought thou ask'st in lieu of all this love
But love of us, for guerdon of thy paine:
Ay me! what can us lesse than that behove?
Had he required life for us againe,
Had it beene wrong to ask his owne with game?
He gave us life, he it restored lost;
Then life were least, that us so little cost.

But he our life hath left unto us free,
Free that was thrall, and blessed that was band*;
Ne ought demaunds but that we loving bee,
As he himselfe hath lov'd us afore-hand,
And bound therto with an eternall band;
Him first to love that was so dearely bought,
And next our brethren, to his image wrought.
[* *Band*, cursed.]

Him first to love great right and reason is,
Who first to us our life and being gave,
And after, when we fared* had amisse,
Us wretches from the second death did save;
And last, the food of life, which now we have,
Even he himselfe, in his dear sacrament,
To feede our hungry soules, unto us lent.
[* *Fared*, gone.]

Then next, to love our brethren, that were made
Of that selfe* mould and that self Maker's hand
That we, and to the same againe shall fade,
Where they shall have like heritage of land,
However here on higher steps we stand,
Which also were with selfe-same price redeemed
That we, however of us light esteemed.
[* *Selfe*, same.]

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And were they not, yet since that loving Lord
Commaunded us to love them for his sake,
Even for his sake, and for his sacred word
Which in his last bequest he to us spake,
We should them love, and with their needs partake;
Knowing that whatsoere to them we give
We give to him by whom we all doe live.

Such mercy he by his most holy reede*
Unto us taught, and, to approve it trew,
Ensampled it by his most righteous deede,
Shewing us mercie, miserable crew!
That we the like should to the wretches shew,
And love our brethren; thereby to approve
How much himselfe that loved us we love.
[* *Reede*, precept.]

Then rouze thy selfe, O Earth! out of thy soyle*,
In which thou wallowest like to filthy swyne,
And doest thy mynd in durty pleasures moyle**,
Unmindfull of that dearest Lord of thyne;
Lift up to him thy heavie clouded eyne,
That thou this soveraine bountie mayst behold,
And read, through love, his mercies manifold.
[* *Soyle*, mire.]
[** *Moyle*, defile.]

Beginne from first, where he encradled was
In simple cratch*, wrapt in a wad of hay,
Betweene the toylfull oxe and humble asse,
And in what rags, and in how base aray,
The glory of our heavenly riches lay,
When him the silly shepheards came to see,
Whom greatest princes sought on lowest knee.
[* *Cratch*, manger.]

From thence reade on the storie of his life,
His humble carriage, his unfaulty wayes,
His cancred foes, his fights, his toyle, his strife,
His paines, his povertie, his sharpe assayes,
Through which he past his miserable dayes,
Offending none, and doing good to all,
Yet being malist* both by great and small.
[* *Malist*, regarded with ill-will.]

And look at last, how of most wretched wights
He taken was, betrayd, and false accused;
How with most scornfull taunts and fell despights,
He was revyld, disgrast, and foule abused;
How scourgd, how crownd, how buffeted, how brused;
And, lastly, how twixt robbers crucifyde,
With bitter wounds through hands, through feet, and syde!

Then let thy flinty hart, that feeles no paine,
Empierced he with pittifull remorse,
And let thy bowels bleede in every vaine,
At sight of his most sacred heavenly corse,
So torne and mangled with malicious forse;
And let thy soule, whose sins his sorrows wrought,
Melt into teares, and grone in grieved thought.

With sence whereof whilest so thy softened spirit
Is inly toucht, and humbled with meeke zeale
Through meditation of his endlesse merit,
Lift up thy mind to th’author of thy weale,
And to his soveraine mercie doe appeale;
Learne him to love that loved thee so deare,
And in thy brest his blessed image beare.

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With all thy hart, with all thy soule and mind,
Thou must him love, and his beheasts embrace;
All other loves, with which the world doth blind
Weake fancies, and stirre up affections base,
Thou must renounce and utterly displace,
And give thy self unto him full and free,
That full and freely gave himselfe to thee.

Then shalt thou feele thy spirit so possest,
And ravisht with devouring great desire
Of his dear selfe, that shall thy feeble brest
Inflame with love, and set thee all on fire
With burning zeale, through every part entire*,
That in no earthly thing thou shalt delight,
But in his sweet and amiable sight.
[* *Entire*, inward.]

Thenceforth all worlds desire will in thee dye,
And all earthes glorie, on which men do gaze,
Seeme durt and drosse in thy pure-sighted eye,
Compar'd to that celestiall beauties blaze,
Whose glorious beames all fleshly sense doth daze
With admiration of their passing light,
Blinding the eyes, and lumining the spright.

Then shall thy ravisht soul inspired bee
With heavenly thoughts, farre above humane skil,
And thy bright radiant eyes shall plainely see
Th'idee of his pure glorie present still
Before thy face, that all thy spirits shall fill
With sweete enragement of celestiall love,
Kindled through sight of those faire things above.

AN HYMNE

OF HEAVENLY BEAUTIE.

Rapt with the rage of mine own ravisht thought,
Through contemplation of those goodly sights
And glorious images in heaven wrought,
Whose wondrous beauty, breathing sweet delights,
Do kindle love in high conceipted sprights,
I faine* to tell the things that I behold,

But feele my wits to faile and tongue to fold.
[* *Faine*, long.]

Vouchsafe then, O Thou most Almightie Spright!
From whom all guifts of wit and knowledge flow,
To shed into my breast some sparkling light
Of thine eternall truth, that I may show
Some little beames to mortall eyes below
Of that immortall Beautie there with Thee,
Which in my weake distraughted mynd I see;

That with the glorie of so goodly sight
The hearts of men, which fondly here admyre
Faire seeming shewes, and feed on vaine delight,
Transported with celestiall desyre
Of those faire formes, may lift themselves up hyer,
And learne to love, with zealous humble dewty,
Th'Eternall Fountaine of that heavenly Beauty.

Beginning then below, with th'easie vew
Of this base world, subiect to fleshly eye,
From thence to mount aloft, by order dew,
To contemplation of th'immortall sky;
Of the soare faulcon* so I learne to flye.
That flags a while her fluttering wings beneath,
Till she her selfe for stronger flight can breath.
[* *Soare faulcon*, a young falcon; a hawk that has not shed its first feathers, which are *sorrel*.]

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Then looke, who list thy gazefull eyes to feed
With sight of that is faire, looke on the frame
Of this wyde universe, and therein reed
The endlesse kinds of creatures which by name
Thou canst not count, much less their natures aime;
All which are made with wondrous wise respect,
And all with admirable beautie deckt.

First, th'Earth, on adamantine pillers founded
Amid the Sea, engirt with brasen bands;
Then th'Aire, still flitting, but yet firmely bounded
On everie side with pyles of flaming brands,
Never consum'd, nor quencht with mortall hands;
And last, that mightie shining cristall wall,
Wherewith he hath encompassed this all.

By view whereof it plainly may appeare,
That still as every thing doth upward tend
And further is from earth, so still more cleare
And faire it growes, till to his perfect end
Of purest Beautie it at last ascend;
Ayre more then water, fire much more then ayre,
And heaven then fire, appeares more pure and fayre.

Looke thou no further, but affixe thine eye
On that bright shynie round still moving masse,
The house of blessed God, which men call Skye,
All sowd with glistring stars more thicke then grasse,
Whereof each other doth in brightnesse passe,
But those two most, which, ruling night and day,
As king and queene the heavens empire sway;

And tell me then, what hast thou ever seene
That to their beautie may compared bee?
Or can the sight that is most sharpe and keene
Endure their captains flaming head to see?
How much lesse those, much higher in degree,
And so much fairer, and much more then these,
As these are fairer then the land and seas?

For farre above these heavens which here we see,
Be others farre exceeding these in light,
Not bounded, not corrupt, as these same bee,
But infinite in largenesse and in hight,

Unmoving, uncorrupt, and spotlesse bright,
That need no sunne t'illuminate their spheres,
But their owne native light farre passing theirs.

And as these heavens still by degrees arize,
Until they come to their first movers* bound,
That in his mightie compasse doth comprize
And came all the rest with him around,
So those likewise doe by degrees redound**,
And rise more faire, till they at last arive
To the most faire, whereto they all do strive.
[* *I.e*. the *primum mobile*.]
[** *I.e*. exceed the one the other.]

Faire is the heaven where happy soules have place,
In full enioyment of felicitie,
Whence they doe still behold the glorious face
Of the Divine Eternall Maiestie;
More faire is that where those Idees on hie
Enraunged be, which Plato so admyred,
And pure Intelligences from God inspyred.

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Yet fairer is that heaven in which do raine
The soveraigne Powres and mightie Potentates,
Which in their high protections doe containe
All mortall princes and imperiall states;
And fayrer yet whereas the royall Seates
And heavenly Dominations are set,
From whom all earthly governance is fet*.
[* *Fet*, fetched, derived.]

Yet farre more faire be those bright Cherubins,
Which all with golden wings are overdight,
And those eternall burning Seraphins,
Which from their faces dart out fierie light;
Yet fairer then they both, and much more bright,
Be th'Angels and Archangels, which attend
On Gods owne person, without rest or end.

These thus in faire each other farre excelling,
As to the Highest they approach more near,
Yet is that Highest farre beyond all telling,
Fairer then all the rest which there appeare,
Though all their beauties ioyn'd together were;
How then can mortall tongue hope to expresse
The image of such endlesse perfectnesse?

Cease then, my tongue! and lend unto my mynd
Leave to bethinke how great that Beautie is,
Whose utmost* parts so beautifull I fynd;
How much more those essentiall parts of His,
His truth, his love, his wisedome, and his blis,
His grace, his doome**, his mercy, and his might,
By which he lends us of himselfe a sight!
[* *Utmost*, outmost.]
[** *Doome*, judgment.]

Those unto all he daily doth display,
And shew himselfe in th'image of his grace,
As in a looking-glasse, through which he may
Be seene of all his creatures vile and base,
That are unable else to see his face;
His glorious face! which glistereth else so bright,
That th'angels selves can not endure his sight.

But we, fraile wights! whose sight cannot sustaine
The suns bright beames when he on us doth shyne,
But* that their points rebutted** backe againe
Are duld, how can we see with feeble eyne
The glorie of that Maiestie Divine,
In sight of whom both sun and moone are darke,
Compared to his least resplendent sparke?
[* *But*, unless.]
[** *Rebutted*, reflected.]

The meanes, therefore, which unto us is lent
Him to behold, is on his workes to looke.
Which he hath made in beauty excellent,
And in the same, as in a brasen booke,
To read enregistred in every nooke
His goodnesse, which his beautie doth declare;
For all thats good is beautifull and faire.

Thence gathering plumes of perfect speculation
To impe* the wings of thy high flying mynd,
Mount up aloft through heavenly contemplation
From this darke world, whose damps the soule do blynd,
And, like the native brood of eagles kynd,
On that bright Sunne of Glorie fixe thine eyes,
Clear'd from grosse mists of fraile infirmities.
[* *Impe*, mend, strengthen.]

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Humbled with feare and awfull reverence,
Before the footestoole of his Maiestie
Throw thy selfe downe, with trembling innocence,
Ne dare looke up with corruptible eye
On the dred face of that great Deity,
For feare lest, if he chaunce to look on thee,
Thou turne to nought, and quite confounded be.

But lowly fall before his mercie seate,
Close covered with the Lambes integrity
From the iust wrath of His avengefull threate
That sits upon the righteous throne on hy;
His throne is built upon Eternity,
More firme and durable then steele or brasse,
Or the hard diamond, which them both doth passe.

His scepter is the rod of Righteousnesse,
With which he bruseth all his foes to dust,
And the great Dragon strongly doth represse
Under the rigour of his iudgment iust;
His seate is Truth, to which the faithfull trust,
From whence proceed her beames so pure and bright,
That all about him sheddeth glorious light:

Light farre exceeding that bright blazing sparke
Which darted is from Titans flaming head,
That with his beames enlumineth the darke
And dampish air, wherby al things are red*;
Whose nature yet so much is marvelled
Of mortall wits, that it doth much amaze
The greatest wisards** which thereon do gaze.
[* *Red*, perceived.]
[** *Wisards*, wise men, *savants*.]

But that immortall light which there doth shine
Is many thousand times more bright, more cleare,
More excellent, more glorious, more divine;
Through which to God all mortall actions here,
And even the thoughts of men, do plaine appeare;
For from th'Eternall Truth it doth proceed,
Through heavenly vertue which her beames doe breed.

With the great glorie of that wondrous light
His throne is all encompassed around,

And hid in his owne brightnesse from the sight
Of all that looke thereon with eyes unsound;
And underneath his feet are to be found
Thunder, and lightning, and tempestuous fyre,
The instruments of his avenging yre.

There in his bosome Sapience doth sit,
The soveraine dearling of the Deity,
Clad like a queene in royall robes, most fit
For so great powre and peerelesse maiesty,
And all with gemmes and iewels gorgeously
Adornd, that brighter then the starres appeare,
And make her native brightnes seem more cleare.

And on her head a crown of purest gold
Is set, in signe of highest soverainty;
And in her hand a scepter she doth hold,
With which she rules the house of God on hy,
And menageth the ever-moving sky,
And in the same these lower creatures all
Subiected to her powre imperiall.

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Both heaven and earth obey unto her will,
And all the creatures which they both containe;
For of her fulnesse, which the world doth fill,
They all partake, and do in state remaine
As their great Maker did at first ordaine,
Through observation of her high beheast,
By which they first were made, and still increast.

The fairnesse of her face no tongue can tell;
For she the daughters of all wemens race,
And angels eke, in beautie doth excell,
Sparkled on her from Gods owne glorious face,
And more increast by her owne goodly grace,
That it doth farre exceed all humane thought,
Ne can on earth compared be to ought.

Ne could that painter (had he lived yet)
Which pictured Venus with so curious quill
That all posteritie admyred it,
Have purtray'd this, for all his maistring* skill;
Ne she her selfe, had she remained still,
And were as faire as fabling wits do fayne,
Could once come neare this Beauty soverayne.
[* *Maistring*, superior.]

But had those wits, the wonders of their dayes,
Or that sweete Teian poet*, which did spend
His plenteous vaine in setting forth her praise,
Seen but a glims of this which I pretend**,
How wondrously would he her face commend,
Above that idole of his fayning thought,
That all the world should with his rimes be fraught!
[* *I.e*. Anacreon.]
[** *Pretend*, set forth, (or, simply) intend.]

How then dare I, the novice of his art,
Presume to picture so divine a wight,
Or hope t'expresse her least perfections part,
Whose beautie filles the heavens with her light,
And darkes the earth with shadow of her sight?
Ah, gentle Muse! thou art too weake and faint
The pourtraict of so heavenly hew to paint.

Let angels, which her goodly face behold,
And see at will, her soveraigne praises sing,
And those most sacred mysteries unfold
Of that faire love of mightie Heavens King;
Enough is me t'admyre so heavenly thing,
And being thus with her huge love possest,
In th'only wonder of her selfe to rest.

But whoso may, thrise happie man him hold
Of all on earth, whom God so much doth grace,
And lets his owne Beloved to behold;
For in the view of her celestiall face
All ioy, all blisse, all happinesse, have place;
Ne ought on earth can want unto the wight
Who of her selfe can win the wishfull sight.

For she out of her secret threasury
Plentie of riches forth on him will powre,
Even heavenly riches, which there hidden ly
Within the closet of her chastest bowre,
Th'eternall portion of her precious dowre,
Which Mighty God hath given to her free,
And to all those which thereof worthy bee.

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None thereof worthy be, but those whom shee
Vouchsafeth to her presence to receave,
And letteth them her lovely face to see,
Wherof such wondrous pleasures they conceave,
And sweete contentment, that it doth bereave
Their soul of sense, through infinite delight,
And them transport from flesh into the spright.

In which they see such admirable things,
As carries them into an extasy;
And heare such heavenly notes and carolings
Of Gods high praise, that filles the brasen sky;
And feele such ioy and pleasure inwardly,
That maketh them all worldly cares forget,
And onely thinke on that before them set.

Ne from thenceforth doth any fleshly sense,
Or idle thought of earthly things, remaine;
But all that earst seemd sweet seemes now offence,
And all that pleased earst now seemes to paine:
Their ioy, their comfort, their desire, their game,
Is fixed all on that which now they see;
All other sights but fayned shadowes bee.

And that faire lampe which useth to enflame
The hearts of men with selfe-consuming fyre,
Thenceforth seemes fowle, and full of sinfull blame
And all that pompe to which proud minds aspyre
By name of Honor, and so much desyre,
Seemes to them basenesse, and all riches drosse,
And all mirth sadnesse, and all lucre losse.

So full their eyes are of that glorious sight,
And senses fraught with such satietie.
That in nought else on earth they can delight,
But in th'aspect of that felicitie
Which they have written in theyr inward ey;
On which they feed, and in theyr fastened mynd
All happie ioy and full contentment fynd.

Ah, then, my hungry soule! which long hast fed
On idle fancies of thy foolish thought,
And, with false Beauties flattring bait misled,
Hast after vaine deceiptfull shadowes sought,

Which all are fled, and now have left thee nought
But late repentance, through thy follies prief,
Ah! ceasse to gaze on matter of thy grief:

And looke at last up to that Soveraine Light,
From whose pure beams al perfect Beauty springs,
That kindleth love in every godly spright,
Even the love of God; which loathing brings
Of this vile world and these gay-seeming things;
With whose sweet pleasures being so possest,
Thy straying thoughts henceforth for ever rest.

* * * * *

EPIGRAMS AND SONNETS.

EPIGRAMS.

I*. [* In the folio of 1611, these four short pieces are appended to the Sonnets. The second and third are translated from Marot's Epigrams, Liv. III. No. 5, *De Diane*, and No. 24, *De Cupido et de sa Dame*. C.]

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In youth, before I waxed old,
The blynd boy, Venus baby,
For want of cunning, made me bold
In bitter hyve to grope for honny:
  But when he saw me stung and cry,
  He tooke his wings and away did fly.

II.

As Diane hunted on a day,
She chaunst to come where Cupid lay,
  His quiver by his head:
One of his shafts she stole away,
And one of hers did close convay,
  Into the others stead:
With that Love wounded my Loves hart,
But Diane, beasts with Cupids dart.

III.

I saw, in secret to my dame
How little Cupid humbly came,
  And said to her, “All hayle, my mother!”
But when he saw me laugh, for shame
His face with bashfull blood did flame,
  Not knowing Venus from the other.
“Then, never blush, Cupid,” quoth I,
“For many have err’d in this beauty.”

IV.

Upon a day, as Love lay sweetly slumbring
  All in his mothers lap,
A gentle Bee, with his loud trumpet murm’ring,
  About him flew by hap.
Whereof when he was wakened with the noyse,
  And saw the beast so small,
“Whats this,” quoth he, “that gives so great a voyce,
  That wakens men withall?”
    In angry wize he flies about,
    And threatens all with corage stout. 10

To whom his mother, closely* smiling, sayd,
  ’Twixt earnest and ’twixt game:
“See! thou thy selfe likewise art lyttle made,
  If thou regard the same.
And yet thou suffrest neyther gods in sky,
  Nor men in earth, to rest:
But when thou art disposed cruelly,
  Theyr sleepe thou doost molest.
    Then eyther change thy cruelty,
    Or give lyke leave unto the fly.”
[* *Closely*, secretly.]

Nathelesse, the cruell boy, not so content,
  Would needs the fly pursue,
And in his hand, with heedlesse hardiment,
  Him caught for to subdue.
But when on it he hasty hand did lay,
  The Bee him stung therefore.
“Now out, alas,” he cryde, “and welaway!
  I wounded am full sore.
    The fly, that I so much did scorne,
    Hath hurt me with his little horne.”

Unto his mother straight he weeping came,
  And of his griefe complayned;
Who could not chuse but laugh at his fond game,
  Though sad to see him pained.
“Think now,” quoth she, “my son, how great the smart
  Of those whom thou dost wound:
Full many thou hast pricked to the hart,
  That pitty never found.
    Therefore, henceforth some pitty take,
    When thou doest spoyle of lovers make.”

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She tooke him streight full pitiously lamenting,
She wrapt him softly, all the while repenting
  That he the fly did mock.
She drest his wound, and it embaulmed well 45
  With salve of soveraigne might;
And then she bath'd him in a dainty well,
  The well of deare delight.
    Who would not oft be stung as this,
    To be so bath'd in Venus blis? 50

The wanton boy was shortly wel recured
  Of that his malady;
But he soone after fresh again enured*
  His former cruelty.
And since that time he wounded hath my selfe 55
  With his sharpe dart of love,
And now forgets the cruell carelesse elfe
  His mothers heast** to prove.
    So now I languish, till he please
    My pining anguish to appease. 60
[* *Enured*, practised.]
[** *Heast*, command.]

SONNETS

WRITTEN BY SPENSER,

COLLECTED FKOM THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS IN
WHICH THEY APPEARED.

I*.

To the right worshipfull, my singular good frend, M. Gabriell Harvey, Doctor of the Lawes.

Harvey, the happy above happiest men
I read**; that, sitting like a looker-on
Of this worldes stage, doest note with critique pen
The sharpe dislikes of each condition:
And, as one carelesse of suspition,
Ne fawnest for the favour of the great,
Ne fearest foolish reprehension

Of faulty men, which daunger to thee threat:
But freely doest of what thee list entreat,@
Like a great lord of peerelesse liberty,
Lifting the good up to high Honours seat,
And the evill damning evermore to dy:
For life and death is in thy doomeful writing;
So thy renowme lives ever by endighting.

Dublin, this xviij. of July, 1586.

Your devoted friend, during life,

EDMUND SPENCER.

[* From “Foure Letters and certaine Sonnets especially touching Robert Greene, and other parties by him abused,” &c. London, 1592. TODD.] [** *Read*, consider.] [@ *Entreat*, treat.]

II*.

Whoso wil seeke, by right deserts, t’attaine
Unto the type of true nobility,
And not by painted shewes, and titles vaine,
Derived farre from famous auncestrie,
Behold them both in their right visnomy**
Here truly pourtray’d as they ought to be,
And striving both for termes of dignitie,
To be advanced highest in degree.
And when thou doost with equall insight see
The ods twist both, of both then deem aright,
And chuse the better of them both to thee;
But thanks to him that it deserves behight@:
  To Nenna first, that first this worke created,
  And next to Iones, that truely it translated.

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ED. SPENSER.

[* Prefixed to “Nennio, or A Treatise of Nobility, &c. Written in Italian by that famous Doctor and worthy Knight, Sir John Baptista Nenna of Bari. Done into English by William Iones, Gent.” 1595. TODD.] [** *Visnomy*, features.] [@ *Behight*, accord.]

III*.

Upon the Historie of George Castriot, alias Scanderbeg, King of the Epirots, translated into English.

Wherefore doth vaine Antiquitie so vaunt
Her ancient monuments of mightie peeres,
And old heroees, which their world did daunt
With their great deedes and fild their childrens eares?
Who, rapt with wonder of their famous praise,
Admire their statues, their colossoes great,
Their rich triumphall arcks which they did raise,
Their huge pyramids, which do heaven threat.
Lo! one, whom later age hath brought to light,
Matchable to the greatest of those great;
Great both by name, and great in power and might,
And meriting a meere** triumphant seate.
The scourge of Turkes, and plague of infidels,
Thy acts, O Scanderbeg, this volume tels.

ED. SPENSER.

[* Prefixed to the “Historie of George Castriot, alias Scanderbeg, King of Albanie: Containing his famous actes, &c. Newly translated out of French into English by Z.I. Gentleman.” 1596. TODD.] [** *Meere*, absolute, decided.]

IV*.

The antique Babel, empresse of the East,
Upreard her buildinges to the threatned skie:
And second Babell, tyrant of the West,
Her ayry towers upraised much more high.
But with the weight of their own surquedry**
They both are fallen, that all the earth did feare,
And buried now in their own ashes ly,

Yet shewing, by their heapes, how great they were.
But in their place doth now a third appeare,
Fayre Venice, flower of the last worlds delight;
And next to them in beauty draweth neare,
But farre exceedes in policie of right.
  Yet not so fayre her buildinges to behold
  As Lewkenors stile that hath her beautie told.

EDM. SPENCER.

[* Prefixed to “The Commonwealth and Government of Venice, Written by the Cardinall Gaspar Contareno, and translated out of Italian into English by Lewes Lewkenor, Esquire.” London, 1599. TODD.] [** *Surquedry*, presumption.]

* * * * *

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX I.

VARIATIONS FROM THE ORIGINAL EDITIONS.

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The Ruines of Time v. 353, covetize, Q. covertize.
The Ruines of Time v. 541, ocean, Q. Occaean.
The Ruines of Time v. 551, which (ed. 1611), Q. with.
The Ruines of Time v. 574, worlds (ed. 1611), Q. words.
The Ruines of Time v. 675, worldes, Q. worlds.
The Teares of the Muses v. 600, living (ed. 1611), Q. loving.
Virgils Gnat v. 149, Ascraean, Q. Astraean.
Virgils Gnat v. 340, seest thou not (ed. 1611), Q. seest thou.
Virgils Gnat v. 387, throat (ed. 1611), Q. threat.
Virgils Gnat v. 575, billowes, Q. billowe.
Prosopopoia v. 53, gossip, Q. goship.
Prosopopoia v. 453, diriges, Q. dirges.
Prosopopoia v. 648, at all, Q. all.
Prosopopoia v. 997, whether, Q. whither.
Prosopopoia v. 1012, stopt, Q. stept.
Prosopopoia v. 1019, whither, Q. whether.
Ruines of Rome xviii. 5, ornaments, Q. ornament.
Muiopotmos v. 250, dispacing, Q. displacing.
Muiopotmos v. 431, yongthly, Q. yougthly.
The Visions of Bellay ii. 8, one, Q. on.
The Visions of Bellay ix. 1, astonied, Q. astoined.
The Visions of Petrarche vii. 1, behold, Q. beheld.
Amoretti lxxxii. 2, placed, Orig ed*. plac'd. [* According to Todd.]
Epithalmion v. 67, dere, orig. ed. dore.
Epithalmion v. 190, mazeful (ed. 1611), orig. ed. amazeful.
Epithalmion v. 290, sad dread (ed. 1611), orig. ed. dread.
Epithalmion v. 341, Pouke, orig. ed. ponke.
An Hymne in Honour of Love v. 165, they will (ed. 1611), orig. ed. thou wilt.
An Hymne in Honour of Love v. 169, be enfyred (ed. 1611), orig. ed. he enfyred.
An Hymne in Honour of Love v. 302, an (ed. 1611), orig. ed. and.
An Hymne in Honour of Beautie v. 147, deform'd, orig. ed. perform'd.
An Hymne in Honour of Beautie v. 171, affections (ed. 1611), orig. ed. affection.

APPENDIX II.

To the Worshipfull, his very singular good friend, Maister G. H., Fellow of Trinitie Hall in Cambridge. * [* Reprinted from "Ancient Critical Essays upon English Poets and Poesy. Edited by Joseph Haslewood". Vol II]

GOOD MAISTER G.:—

I perceiue, by your most curteous and frendly letters, your good will to be no lesse in deed than I alwayes esteemed. In recompence wherof, think, I beseech you, that I wil spare neither speech, nor wryting, nor aught else, whensoeuer and wheresoeuer occasion shal be offred me; yea, I will not stay till it be offred, but will seeke it in al that possibly I may. And that you may perceiue how much your counsel in al things preuaileth with me, and how altogither I am ruled and ouer-ruled thereby, I am now determined to alter mine owne former purpose, and to subscribe to your advizement; being, notwithstanding, resolued stil to abide your farther resolution. My principal doubts are these. First, I was minded for a while to haue intermitted the vttering of my writings; leaste by ouer-much cloying their noble eares, I should gather

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a contempt of myself, or else seeme rather for game and commoditie to doe it, for some sweetnesse that I haue already tasted. Then also me seemeth the work too base for his excellent lordship, being made in honour of a priuate personage vnknowne, which of some ylwillers might be vpbraided, not to be so worthie as you knowe she is; or the matter not so weightie that it should be offred to so weightie a personage, or the like. The selfe former title still liketh me well ynough, and your fine addition no lesse. If these and the like doubtes maye be of importaunce, in your seeming, to frustrate any parte of your aduice, I beeseeche you without the leaste selfe loue of your own purpose, councell me for the beste: and the rather doe it faithfullye and carefully, for that, in all things, I attribute so muche to your iudgement, that I am euermore content to adnihilate mine owne determinations in respecte thereof. And, indeede, for your selfe to, it sitteth with you now to call your wits & senses togither (which are alwaies at call) when occasion is so fairely offered of estimation and preferment, For whiles the yron is hote it is good striking, and minds of nobles varie, as their estates. *Verum ne quid durius.*

I pray you bethinks you well hereof, good Maister G., and forth with write me those two or three special points and caueats for the nonce; *De quibus in superioribus illis mellitissimus longissimisque litteris tuis.* Your desire to heare of my late beeing with hir Maiestie muste dye in it selfe. As for the twoo worthy gentle men, Master Sidney and Master Dyer, they haue me, I thanke them, in some vse of familiarity; of whom and to whome what speache passeth for youre credite and estimation I leaue your selfe to conceiue, hauing alwayes so well conceiued of my vnfained affection and zeale towardes you. And nowe they haue proclaimed in their [Greek: hareiophaga] a generall surceasing and silence of balde rymers, and also of the verie beste to; in steade whereof they haue, by authoritie of their whole senate, prescribed certaine lawes and rules of quantities of English sillables for English verse; hauing had thereof already greate practise, and drawen mee to their faction. Newe bookes I heare of none, but only of one* [* Stephen Gosson.], that writing a certaine booke called *The Schoole of Abuse*, and dedicating it to Maister Sidney, was for hys labor scorned; if, at leaste, it be in the goodnesse of that nature to scorne. Such follie is it not to regard aforehande the inclination and qualitie of him to whome wee dedicate oure bookes. Suche mighte I happily incurre, entituling *My Slomber*, and the other pamphlets, vnto his honor. I meant them rather to Maister Dyer. But I am of late more in loue wyth my Englishe versifying than with ryming: whyche I should haue done long since, if I would then haue followed your councell. *Sed te solum iam tum suspicabar cum Aschamo sapere; nunc aulam video egregios alere poetas Anglicos*. Maister E.K. hartily desireth to be commended vnto your worshippe: of whome what accompte he maketh youre selfe shall hereafter perceiue by hys paynefull and dutifull verses of your selfe.

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Thus muche was written at Westminster yesternight; but comming this morning, beeyng the sixteenth of October [1579], to Mystresse Kerkes, to haue it deliuered to the carrier, I receyued youre letter, sente me the laste weeke; whereby I perceiue you otherwhiles continue your old exercise of versifying in English,—whych glorie I had now thought whoulde haue bene onely ours heere at London and the court.

Truste me, your verses I like passingly well, and enuye your hidden paines in this kinde, or rather maligne and grudge at your selfe, that woulde not once imparte so muche to me. But once or twice you make a breache in Maister Drants rules: *quod tamen condonabimus tanto poetae, tuaeque ipsius maximae in his rebus autoritati.* You shall see, when we meete in London, (whiche when it shall be, certifye vs,) howe fast I haue followed after you in that course: beware, leaste in time I ouertake you. *Veruntamen te solum sequar, (vt saepenumero sum professus,) nunquam sane assequar dum viuam.* And nowe requite I you with the like, not with the verye beste, but with the verye shortest, namely, with a few *Iambickes*. I dare warrant, they be precisely perfect for the feete, (as you can easily iudge,) and varie not one inch from the rule. I will imparte yours to Maister Sidney and Maister Dyer, at my nexte going to the courte. I praye you keepe mine close to your selfe, or your verie entire friendes, Maister Preston, Maister Still, and the reste.

Iambicum Trimetrum

Vnhappie Verse, the witnesse of my vnhappie state,
Make thy selfe fluttring wings of thy fast flying
Thought, and fly forth vnto my love whersoeuer she be:

Whether lying reastlesse in heauy bedde, or else
Sitting so cheerelesse at the cheerfull boorde, or else
Playing alone carelesse on hir heauenlie virginals.

If in bed, tell hir, that my eyes can take no reste;
If at boorde, tell hir, that my mouth can eate no meate;
If at hir virginals, tel hir, I can heare no mirth.

Asked why? say, Waking loue suffereth no sleepe;
Say, that raging loue dothe appall the weake stomacke;
Say, that lamenting loue marreth the musicall.

Tell hir, that hir pleasures were wonte to lull me asleepe;
Tell hir, that hir beautie was wonte to feede mine eyes;
Tell hir, that hir sweete tongue was wonte to make me mirth.

Nowe doe I nightly waste, wanting my kindely reste;
Nowe doe I dayly starue, wanting my liuely foode;
Nowe doe I alwayes dye, wanting thy timely mirth.

And if I waste, who will bewaile my heauy chaunce?
And if I starue, who will record my cursed end?
And if I dye, who will saye, *This was Immerito?*

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I thought once agayne here to haue made an ende, with heartie *Vale*, of the best fashion; but loe, an ylfavoured mys chaunce. My last farewell, whereof I made great accompt, and muche maruelled you shoulde make no mention thereof, I am nowe tolde, (in the diuel's name,) was thorough one mans negligence quite forgotten, but shoulde nowe vndoubtedly haue beene sent, whether I hadde come or no. Seing it can now be no otherwise, I pray you take all togither, wyth all their faults: and nowe I hope you will vouchsafe mee an answeare of the largest size, or else I tell you true, you shall bee verye deepe in my debte; notwythstandyng thys other sweete but shorte letter, and fine, but fewe verses. But I woulde rather I might yet see youre owne good selfe, and receiue a reciprocall farewell from your owne sweete mouth.

Ad ornatissimum virum, multis iam diu nominibus clarissimum, G. H., Immerito sui, mox in Gallias nauigaturi, [Greek: Eutuchein]

Sic malus egregium, sic non inimicus amicum,
Sicque nouus veterem iubet ipse poeta poetam
Saluere, ac caelo, post secula multa, secundo,
Iam reducem, (caelo mage quam nunc ipse sccundo)
Vtier. Ecce deus, (modo sit deus ille, renixum
Qui vocet in scelus, et iuratos perdat amores)
Ecce deus mihi clara dedit modo signa marinus,
Et sua veligero lenis parat aequora ligno
Mox sulcanda; suas etiam pater AEolus iras
Ponit, et ingentes animos Aquilonis.
Cuncta vijs sic apta meis: ego solus ineptus.
Nam mihi nescio quo mens saucia vulnere, dudum
Fluctuat ancipiti pelago, dum navita proram
Inualidam validus rapit huc Amor, et rapit illuc
Consilijs Ratio melioribus vsa, Decusque
Immortale leui diffissa Cupidinis arcu*:
[* This line appears to be corrupt.]
Angimur hoc dubio, et portu vexamur in ipso.
Magne pharetrati nunc tu contemptor Amoris,
(Id tibi Dij nomen precor haud impune remittant)
Hos nodos exsolue, et eris mihi magnus Apollo!
Spiritus ad summos, scio, te generosus honores
Exstimulat, majusque docet spirare poetam.
Quam leuis est Amor, et tamen haud leuis est Amor omnis.
Ergo nihil laudi reputas aequale perenni,
Praeque sacrosancta splendoris imagine tanti,
Caetera, quae vecors, vti numina, vulgus adorat,
Praedia, amicitias, vrbana peculia, nummos,
Quaeque placent oculis, formas, spectacula, amores,
Conculcare soles, vt humum, et ludibria sensus:

Digna meo certe Haruejo sententia, digna
Oratore amplo, et generoso pectore, quam non
Stoica formidet veterum sapientia vinclis
Sancire aeternis: sapor haud tamen omnibus idem.
Dicitur effoeti proles facunda Laertae,
Quamlibet ignoti iactata per aequora caeli,
Inque procelloso longum exsul gurgite ponto,
Prae tamen amplexu lachrymosae conjugis, ortus
Caelestes, Diuumque thoros spreuisse beatos.
Tantum amor, et mulier, vel amore potetitior. Ilium
Tu tamen illudis; tua magnificentia tanta est:

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Praeque subumbrata splendoris imagine tanti,
Praeque illo meritis famosis nomine parto,
Caetera, quae vecors, vti numina, vulgus adorat,
Praedia, amicitias, armenta, peculia, nummos,
Quaeque placent oculis, formas, spectacula, amores,
Quaeque placent ori, quaeque auribus, omnia temnis.
Nae tu grande sapis! sapor et sapientia non est:
Omnis et in paruis bene qui scit desipuisse,
Saepe supercilijs palmam sapientibus aufert.
Ludit Aristippum modo tetrica turba sophorum,
Mitia purpureo moderantem verba tyranno;
Ludit Aristippus dictamina vana sophorum,
Quos leuis emensi male torquet Culicis vmbra:
Et quisquis placuisse studet heroibus altis,
Desipuisse studet; sic gratia crescit ineptis.
Denique laurigeris quisquis sua tempora vittis
Insignire volet, populoque placere fauenti,
Desipere insanus discit, turpemque pudendae
Stultitiae laudem quaerit. Pater Ennuis vnus
Dictus in innumeris sapiens: laudatur at ipse
Carmina vesano fudisse liquentia vino.
Nec tu, pace tua, nostri Cato Maxime saecli,
Nomen honorati sacrum mereare poetae,
Quantumvis illustre canas, et nobile carmen,
Ni *stultire* velis; sic stultorum omnia plena.
Tuta sed in medio superest via gurgite; nam qui
Nec reliquis nimium vult desipuisse videri,
Nec sapuisse nimis, sapientem dixeris vnum:
Hinc te merserit vnda, illine combusserit ignis.
Nec tu delicias nimis aspernare fluentes,
Nec sero dominam venientem in vota, nec aurum,
Si sapis, oblatum: (Curijs ea, Fabricijsque
Grande sui decus ij, nostri sed dedecus aeui;)
Nec sectare nimis: res vtraque crimine plena.
Hoc bene qui callet, (si quis tamen hoc bene callet,)
Scribe vel invito sapientem hunc Socrate solum.
Vis facit vna pios, iustos facit altera, et alt'ra
Egregie cordata ac fortia pectora: verum
Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit vtile dulci.
Dij mihi dulce diu dederant, verum vtile nunquam:

Vtile nunc etiam, o vtinam quoque dulce dedissent.
Dij mihi, (quippe Dijs aequalia maxima paruis,)
Ni nimis inuideant mortalibus esse beatis,
Dulce simul tribuisse queant, simul vtile: tanta
Sed fortuna tua est: pariter quaeque vtile, quaeque
Dulce dat ad placitum: sseuo nos sydere nati
Quaesitum imus eam per inhospita Caucasa longe,
Perque Pyrenaeos montes, Babilonaque turpem.
Quod si quaesitum nec ibi invenerimus, ingens
AEquor inexhaustis permensi erroribus vltra
Fluctibus in medijs socij quaeremus Vlyssis:
Passibus inde deam fessis comitabimur aegram,
Nobile cui furtum quaerenti defuit orbis.
Namque sinu pudet in patrio tenebrisque pudendis,
Non nimis ingenio iuuenem infoelice virentes
Officijs frustra deperdere vilibus annos,
Frugibus et vacuas speratis cernere spicas.
Ibimus ergo statim, (quis eutiti fausta precetur?)
Et pede clivosas fesso calcabimus Alpes.
Quis dabit interea, conditas rore Britanno,

BOOKRAGS

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Quis tibi litterulas, quis carmen amore petulcum!
Musa sub Oebalij desueta cacumine mentis,
Flebit inexhausto tarn longa silentia planctu,
Lugebitque sacrum lacrymis Helicona tacentem.
Harueiusque bonus, (charus licet omnibus idem,)
Idque suo merito prope suauior omnibus, vnus
Angelus et Gabriel, quamuis comitatus araicis
Innumeris, geniumque choro stipatus amaeno,
Immerito tamen vnum absentem saepe requiret;
Optabitque, Utinam meus hic *Edmundus* adesset,
Qui noua scripsisset, nee amores conticuisset,
Ipse suos; et saepe animo verbisque benignis
Fausta precaretur, *Deus illum aliqaundo reducat*. &c.

Plura vellem per Charites, sed non licet per Musas.
Vale, Vale plurimum, Mi amabilissime Harueie, meo cordi, meorum omnium longe charissime.

I was minded also to haue sent you some English verses, or rymes, for a farewell; but, by my troth, I haue no spare time in the world to thinke on such toyes, that, you knowe, will demaund a freer head than mine is presently. I beseeche you by all your curtesies and graces, let me be answered ere I goe; which will be (I hope, I feare, I thinke) the next weeke, if I can be dispatched of my Lorde. I goe thither, as sent by him, and maintained most what of him; and there am to employ my time, my body, my minde, to his Honours seruice. Thus, with many superhartie commendations and recommendations to your selfe, and all my friendes with you, I ende my last farewell, not thinking any more to write vnto you before I goe; and withall committing to your faithfull credence the eternall memorie of our euerlasting friendship; the inuiolable memorie of our ynspotted friendshippe, the sacred memorie of our vowed friendship; which I beseech you continue with vsuall writings, as you may, and of all things let me hears some newes from you: as gentle M. Sidney, I thanke his good worship, hath required of me, and so promised to doe againe. *Qui monet, vt facias, quod iam facis*, you knowe the rest. You may alwayes send them most safely to me by Mistresse Kerke, and by none other. So once againe, and yet once more, farewell most hardly, mine owne good Master H., and loue me, as I loue you, and thinke vpon poore Immerito, as he thinketh vppon you.

Leyc'ester House, this 5 [16*] of October, 1579. [*: See Appendix II, para. 3:2.]

Per mare, per terras, Viuus mortuusque, Tuus Immerito.

* * * * *

To my long approoued and singular good frende, Master G. H.

GOOD MASTER H.:—

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I doubt not but you haue some great important matter in hande, which al this while restraineth your penne, and wonted readinesse in prouoking me vnto that wherein yourselfe nowe faulte. If there bee any such thing in hatching, I pray you hartily lette vs knowe, before al the worlds see it. But if happly you dwell altogither in Iustinians Courte, and giue your selfe to be devoured of secreate studies, as of all likelyhood you doe, yet at least imparte some your olde or newe, Latine or Englishe, eloquent and gallant poesies to vs, from whose eves, you saye, you keepe in a manner nothing hidden. Little newes is here stirred, but that olde greate matter still depending. His Honoure neuer better. I thinke the earthquake wyth you (which I would gladly learne), as it was here with vs; ouerthrowing diuers old buildings and peeces of churches. Sure verye straunge to be hearde of in these countries, and yet I heare some saye (I knowe not howe truely) that they haue knowne the like before in their dayes. *Sed quid vobis videtur magnis philosophis?* I like your late Englishe hexameters so exceedingly well, that I also enure my penne sometime in that kinde: whyche I fynd, indeede, as I haue heard you often defende in worde, neither so harde nor so harshe, that it will easily and fairely yeelde it selfe to oure moother tongue. For the onely or chiefest hardnesse whych seemeth is in the accente, whyche sometime gapeth, and as it were yawneth ilfauouredly, comming shorte of that it should, and sometime exceeding the measure of the number; as in *carpenter*, the middle sillable being vsed shorte in speache, when it shall be read long in verse, seemeth like a lame gosling, that draweth one legge after hir: and *heauen*, beeing vsed shorte as one sillable, when it is in verse, stretched out with a *diastole*, is like a lame dogge that holdes vp one legge. But it is to be wonne with custome, and rough words must be subdued with vse. For why, a God's name, may not we, as else the Greekes, haue the kingdome of oure owne language, and measure our accents by the sounde, reseruing the quantitie to the verse? Loe, here I let you see my olde vse of toying in rymes, turned into your artificiall straightnesse of verse by this *tetrasticon*. I beseech you tell me your fancie, without parcialitie.

See yee the blindefolded pretie god, that feathered archer,
Of louers miseries which maketh his bloodie game?
Wote ye why his moother with a veale hath coouered his face?
Trust me, least he my looue happely chaunce to beholde.

Seeme they comparable to those two which I translated you *ex tempore* in bed, the last time we lay togither in Westminster?

That which I eate, did I ioy, and that which I greedily gorged;
As for those many goodly matters leaft I for others.

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I would hartily wish you would either send me the rules and precepts of arte which you obscrue in quantities, or else followe mine, that M. Philip Sidney gave me, being the very same which M. Drant deuised, but enlarged with M. Sidneys own iudgement, and augmented with my obseruations, that we might both accorde and agree in one; leaste we ouerthrowe one an other, and be ouerthrown of the rest. Truste me, you will hardly beleeue what greate good liking and estimation Maister Dyer had of your *Satyricall Verses*, and I, since the viewe thereof, hauing before of my selfe had speciall liking of Englishe versifying, am euen nowe aboute to giue you some token what and howe well therein I am able to doe: for, to tell you trueth, I minde shortely, at conuenient leysure, to sette forth a booke in this kinde, whyche I entitle, *Epithalamion Thamesis*, whyche booke I dare vndertake wil be very profitable for the knowledge, and rare for the inuention and manner of handling. For in setting forth the marriage of the Thames, I shewe his first beginning, and offspring, and all the countrey that he passeth thorough, and also describe all the riuers throughout Englande, whyche came to this wedding, and their righte names and right passage, &c.; a worke, beleeue me, of much labour, wherein notwithstanding Master Holinshed hath muche furthered and aduantaged me, who therein hath bestowed singular paines in searching oute their firste heades and sourses, and also in tracing and dogging onto all their course, til they fall into the sea.

O Tite, siquid ego, Ecquid erit pretij?

But of that more hereafter. Nowe, my *Dreames* and *Dying Pellicane* being fully finished (as I partelye signified in my laste letters) and presentlye to bee imprinted, I wil in hande forthwith with my *Faery Queene*, whyche I praye you hartily send me with al expedition: and your frendly letters, and long expected judgement wythal, whyche let not be shorte, but in all pointes suche as you ordinarilye vse and I extraordinarily desire. *Multum vale. Westminster. Quarto Nonas Aprilis, 1580. Sed, amabo te, meum Corculum tibi se ex animo commendat plurimum: iamdiu mirata, te nihil ad literas suas responsi dedisse. Vide quaeso, ne id tibi capitale sit: mihi certe quidem erit, neque tibi hercle impune, vt opinor. Iterum vale, et quam voles soepe.* Yours alwayes, to commaunde, IMMERITO.

Postcripte.

I take best my *Dreames* shoulde come forth alone, being growen, by meanes of the Glosse (running continually in maner of a paraphrase), full as great as my *Calendar* Therin be some things excellently, and many things wittily, discoursed of E. K., and the pictures so singularly set forth and purtrayed, as if Michael Angelo were there, he could (I think) nor amende the beste, nor reprehende the worst. I knowe you woulde lyke them passing wel. Of my *Stemmata Dudleiana*, and especially of the sundry apostrophes therein, addressed you knowe to whome, muste more aduisement be had, than so lightly to sende them abroade: howbeit, trust me, (though I doe never very well,) yet, in my owne fancie, I neuer dyd better: *Veruntamen te sequor solum; nunquam vero assequar.*

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* * * * *

Extract from Harvey's Reply.

But Master Collin Cloute is not euery body, and albeit his olde companions, Master Cuddy & Master Hobbinoll, be as little be holding to their Mistresse Poetrie as euer you wist, yet he peraduenture, by the meanes of hir speciall fauour, and some personall priuiledge, may happely line by Dying Pellicanes, and purchase great landes and lordshippes with the money which his Calendar and Dreames haue and will affourde him. *Extra iocum*, I like your Dreames passingly well; and the rather, bicause they sauour of that singular extraordinarie veine and inuention whiche I euer fancied moste, and in a manner admired onelye in Lucian, Petrarche, Aretine, Pasquill, and all the most delicate and fine conceited Grecians and Italians, (for the Romanes to speake of are but verye ciphars in this kinde,) whose chiefest endeuour and drifte was to haue nothing vulgare, but, in some respecte or other, and especially in liuely hyperbolicall amplifications, rare, queint, and odde in euery pointe, and, as a man woulde saye, a degree or two, at the leaste, aboue the reache and compasse of a common scholars capacitie. In whiche respecte notwithstanding, as well for the singularitie of the manner as the diuinitie of the matter, I hearde once a diuine preferre Saint Iohns Reuelation before al the veriest metaphysicall visions and iolliest conceited dreames or extasies that euer were deuised by one or other, howe admirable or super excellent soeuer they seemed otherwise to the worlde. And truely I am so confirmed in this opinion, that when I bethinke me of the verie notablest and moste wonderful propheticall or poeticall vision that euer I read, or hearde, meseemeth the proportion is so vnequall, that there hardly appeareth anye semblaunce of comparison: no more in a manner (specially for poets) than doth betweene the incomprehensible wisedome of God and the sensible wit of man. But what needeth this digression betweene you and me? I dare saye you wyll holde your selfe reasonably wel satisfied, if youre Dreames be but as well esteemed of in Englande as Petrarches Visions be in Italy; whiche, I assure you, is the very worst I wish you. But see how I haue the arte memoratiue at commaundement. In good faith, I had once again nigh forgotten your Faerie Queene: howbeit, by good chaunce, I haue nowe sent hir home at the laste, neither in better nor worse case than I founde hir. And must you of necessitie haue my iudgement of hir indeede? To be plaine, I am voyde of al iudgement, if your nine Comoedies, whervnto, in imitation of Herodotus, you giue the names of the nine Muses, (and in one mans fansie not vnworthily), come not neerer Ariostoes comoedies, eyther for the finesse of plausible elocution or the rarenesse of poetical inuention, than that Eluish Queene doth to his Orlando Furioso; which, notwithstanding, you wil needes seeme to emulate, and hope to ouergo, as you flatly professed yourself in

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one of your last letters. Besides that, you know, it hath bene the vsual practise of the most exquisite and odde wittes in all nations, and specially in Italie, rather to shewe and aduaunce themselues that way than any other; as, namely, those three notorious dyscoursing heads, Bibiena, Machiauel, and Aretine, did, (to let Bembo and Ariosto passe,) with the great admiration and wonderment of the whole countrey: being, in deede, reputed matchable in all points, both for conceyt of witte and eloquent decyphering of matters, either with Aristophanes and Menander in Greek, or with Plautus and Terence in Latin, or with any other in any other tong. But I wil not stand greatly with you in your owne matters. If so be the Faerye Queeue be fairer in your eie than the nine Muses, and Hobgoblin runne away with the garland from Apollo, marke what I saye: and yet I will not say that I thought, but there an end for this once, and fare you well, till God or some good aungell putte you in a better minde.

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