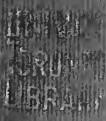




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EARLY

ENGLISH PROSE ROMANCES.



VOLUME I.



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EARLY
English Prose Romances,

WITH

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL INTRODUCTIONS.

EDITED BY

WILLIAM J. THOMS, F.S.A.

SECOND EDITION, ENLARGED.

VOL. I.

ROBERT THE DEUYLL.
THOMAS A READING.
FRIER BACON.
FRIER RUSH.

LONDON:
NATTALI AND BOND, BEDFORD STREET,
COVENT GARDEN.

1858.

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PREFATORY NOTICE

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE thirty years which have passed since the previous Edition was issued, have wrought a great change in the taste of the literary public.

The disappointment I experienced, when on the completion of the third volume, I found I had somewhat misjudged the taste of the reading world has however been mitigated by learning from the Publishers of the present edition, that the work has become so scarce and valuable as to justify its being reprinted. The opinion as to the rarity and intrinsic curiosity of these specimens of our early Popular Literature which I held in 1827 has thus been borne out, which after all is no small satisfaction.

At the request of the Publishers I have now revised the Introductions to the several Romances, corrected some errors, and made such additions as recent discoveries in the history of Popular Fiction rendered desirable.

These Literary notices might have been very considerably extended; but as the reader who is desirous of further investigating the history of any particular Romance will find ample means of doing so by consulting the various authorities to which I have referred, it did not seem expedient to enlarge the volumes by converting these Introductory Sketches into elaborate Histories.

WILLIAM J. THOMS.

December, 1857.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE completion of this Collection of Early English Prose Romances, presents a fitting opportunity for explaining in a more lasting shape, than the Prospectus issued at the commencement of the Work, the motives by which the Editor was actuated, when he determined upon the undertaking; and the most influential of these will be found in the intrinsic curiosity and increasing rarity of these most interesting illustrations of the manners and mode of thinking of our Ancestors.

Of the Romances which assume a metrical form, the Collections of Ellis, Ritson, Weber, Utterson, &c.—afford abundant and curious examples, while with the exception of such as have been introduced into the *Miscellanea Antiqua Anglicana*, no attempt has been made to collect those scattered specimens of popular fiction which exist only in prose. Of these “Waverley Novels” of the olden

time, which afforded as much delight to our forefathers as the writings of Sir Walter to ourselves, and which in their day exercised the same influence over the National Literature which the productions of the Master Spirit of the North have done in ours, many are founded on traditions, which have been handed down to us without the aid of verse, and the Lyfe of Virgilius, the most extraordinary fiction which is contained in these volumes, will be found a forcible illustration of the truth of this assertion.

To remedy therefore the neglect with which these contributions to that most curious and speculative field of literary inquiry—the origin and progress of Romantic Fiction, have been treated, the Editor determined upon laying before the public in a form accessible alike to *the man of letters*, and *the general reader*, a collection of the more rare and interesting of these productions, and so to fill up the hiatus which has so long existed in the History of English Literature.

How far and with what success this object may have been accomplished, it is not for the Editor to determine, but should one or two of the Ro-

mances now reprinted be deemed of less interest than the generality of the collection, the only excuse which can be offered, is, the extreme rarity of works of this description, the consequent difficulty which the Editor had in procuring them, and the necessity which he was under of paying a proper regard to the amusement of the reader and of selecting

“Of all the Tales that ever had been told,

“By homely shepherds, lately or of old:”

a succession of those most likely to please, from the diversity of their style and the varied nature of their incidents.

These narrations have strong and deeply rooted claims upon our affections, for they were the delight of those from whom we spring—alike the study and admiration of “Ladye Faire” and gallant Knight, and the never ending theme of the shepherd and the husbandman: high and low, gentle and simple, found solace in their contemplation; their recital cheered the forsaken damsel in her lonely bower, inspired the warrior with a bright and chivalrous bravery, and gladdened the hearts and roused the drooping spirits of the

peasantry, who when the labours of the day were at a close, gathered into an anxious circle round the narrator, and caught with greedy ears the tales of other days :

“ Come sit we downe under this hawthorne tree,
 The morrowes Light shall lend us day enough,
 And let us tell of Gawen or Sir Guy,
 Of Robin Hood or of Old Clem a Clough.
 Or else some Romant unto us areede,
 By former Shepheards taught thee in thy youth,
 Of noble Lords and Ladies gentle deede,
 Or of thy Love or of thy Lasses truth.”

Claims such as these will not easily be gainsayed, and the less so, that many of these tales have delighted us in our childhood, and are endeared to our hearts by the recollection of those sunny hours, when deeply read in the mysteries of Robin Hood and Friar Bacon—we would, with the eagerness of childish admiration, gladly have forsaken all our hopes and prospects, to dwell with the bold outlaw and his merry men under the greenwood tree—and have exchanged all the Raree Shows of real life for one glance at the Friar’s wonderful perspective glass.

“ Men lyeken Bestis for to here
 And romans rede in divers manere,”

and so do children, and those which mankind receive from the faltering tongue of age, when it would lull them to repose, cling fondly and closely to their hearts till their own tongues faltering from the like cause, soothe the pillows of other generations with their recital, and while

“From hour to hour we ripe and ripe,

“And then from hour to hour we rot and rot,”

these marvellous relations are handed down from year to year and from century to century, till the tale,* which amused the sons of Hengist and of Horsa, exercise the same influence over the sons of their descendants, who looking through the mists of fading ages can scarcely distinguish Hen-

* Tom Thumb, who was originally of Scandinavian descent, being the *Thaumin* or little Thumb of the Northmen. The German *Daumerling*, *i. e.* little Thumb, like our English worthy is swallowed by a cow—and our nursery rhyme, “I had a little husband no bigger than my thumb,” probably commemorates a part of Tom’s History extant in a little Danish work, treating of “Swain Tomling, a man no bigger than a thumb, who would be married to a woman three ells and three quarters long.” Tom was buried at Lincoln, one of the five Danish Towns of England, where a little blue flag stone in the pavement was long shewn as his monument, but which however has been displaced and lost. Many curious speculations on Tom’s connexion with the Brahminical and Druidical Superstitions, will be found in the *Quarterly Review*, vol. 21. p. 100-1.

gist and Horsa, from genuine heroes of romance the creations of the ever-working brain of the fabulist.

“A work of great interest,” says Sir Walter Scott, “might be compiled upon the origin of popular fiction and the transmission of similar tales from age to age, and from country to country; the mythology of one period would then appear to pass into the romance of the next century, and that into the nursery tale of the subsequent ages;” but the research demanded for the completion of such a work would necessarily require the deepest and most constant exertion: the materials, though plenteous, are widely scattered abroad, and the labourer could scarcely hope to meet with an adequate reward for the toil and anxiety which the undertaking would entail upon him. What might be the result of so curious an investigation it is not easy to determine, but in all probability it would be the discovery of some unvarying principles of the human mind, which acting in a similar manner in all ages and climes, upon the more striking occurrences of life, invest them every where with the self-same attributes, and so give to those tales

which bear unequivocal marks of being the children of one mother, though habited in the costume of the various lands in which they chanced to have been born, an appearance of having been transmitted from one age and country to another, while in reality they have only a common origin, in the feelings with which the natural facts on which they are founded have been viewed, and the garb in which they have been clothed, being the result of some unchangeable tendency in the human intellect, whether at Indus or the Pole.

A philosophical spirit of inquiry is however abroad, and much elucidation of this interesting topic may be expected from it; the investigations of Mr. Douce in his *Illustrations of Shakspeare*, the learned and amusing articles of Mr. Palgrave in the *Quarterly Review*; Mr. Dunlop's ingenious *History of Fiction*; the preface to the new edition of Warton's *History of English Poetry*; Mr. Crofton Croker's *Fairy Legends of Ireland*, and the *Fairy Mythology* of Mr. Keightley are valuable contributions towards the History of Ancient Romance: much however remains to be accomplished, and it is hoped that the shafts of ridicule which may occasionally be levelled at the pursuit,

may fall harmless and unheeded, for to use the words of Old Copland, “ Methinke it is better to passe the tyme with such a merry Jeste and laughe there at and doo no Synne than for to wepe and do Synne.”

It now only remains for the Editor to express his thanks to those gentlemen without whose assistance the work would have fallen far short of whatever small claim to approbation it may at present possess.

To Thomas Amyot, Esq., he owes many thanks for the kind manner in which he exerted himself in procuring for him an inspection of many volumes, which would otherwise have been inaccessible to him.

To Edward Vernon Utterson, Esq., he is infinitely indebted for the loan of many of the articles with which this collection is enriched: and to Francis Douce, Esq., he is under considerable obligations for similar favours, and for the great kindness with which he afforded his advice and assistance to a new labourer in that field, which his talents and research have made peculiarly his own.

ROBERT THE DEUYLL.

ROBERT THE DEUYLL.

THE French prose romance entitled, "*La vie du terrible Robert le Diable lequel apres fut nommé Lomme Dieu,*" was published in 4to. at Lyons, by P. Mare-schall, in 1496. It was followed by an edition published at Paris, by Nic. de la Barre, in 1497, likewise in 4to., and which is equally scarce with the preceding; as also by another edition in 4to. published at Paris, by Jehan Herouf about 1520. It was reprinted in the *Bibliothèque Bleue*, published at Liege in 12mo. 1787, previous to which it had been printed at Troyes, 8vo. 1715, with the title of "*La Terrible et merveilleuse Vie de Robert le Diable lequel apres fut Homme de bien,*" a copy of which is in the British Museum, and corresponds with the present version.

There also exists an early French Metrical Version, which was published at Paris for the first time, under the title of "*La Roman de Robert le Diable en vers du XIII^e Siècle, publié pour la première fois d'après les Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque du Roi, par G. S. Trebutien, Membre de la Societé des Antiquaires de Normandie.*"

The Editor, after discussing at some length who is the hero of the romance, inclines to the opinion expressed by the ancient Chronicles of Normandy that he is the son of a grand Signior named Aubest, and was first Duke or Governor of that province in the time of King Pepin, the Father of Charlemagne, in the year 751. This Aubest had a wife named Inde, sister of the Duke of Burgundy, by whom he had a son called Robert the Devil, on account of the enormities committed by him in the Forest of Rouveray, when he retired to the old castle, the ruins of which were visible at the top of Moulineux about three leagues from Rouen, when the worthy Sieur de Bras, Charles de Bourgueville, compiled his *Researches into the Antiquities of Normandy*.

On the other hand M. Achille Deville, one of the most distinguished Norman antiquaries, who published at Rouen, in 1835, an edition of the *Mystere du Robert le Diable* does not hesitate to express his conviction that the Robert the Devil, so celebrated by the romancers and chroniclers of the middle ages, is no other than Robert Courte-Heuse the son of William the Conqueror.

In the 14th century the jongleurs were accustomed to abridge and arrange in a form more easily to be remembered and better adapted for recitation, the longer romances of the preceding century, and to these

abridgments they gave the name of *Dit* or *Dité*, a name applied sometimes to compositions of a very different character. The romance of *Robert le Diable* underwent this process, and in this new form it consists of two hundred and fifty-four strophes, each consisting of four monorhymes.

The words of the old French Poem, edited by M. Trebutien, as well as the allusions it contains to tournaments and the usages of chivalry clearly shew that it cannot be older than the thirteenth century. The following specimen of the language may be of interest to the reader.

“Ichi cōmenche li Romans de Robert le diable ensi cō vous ores el liure.”

Or entendes, grāt et menor,
 Iadis al tans anchienor
 Avoit . i. duc en normandie
 Dont bien est drois q̄ ie vō die.
 Preudome ert et de grāt lignage
 Et si avoit mlt' vasselage
 Asses estoit haus bon et prous,
 De ses armes chevalerous.
 Si baron de sa duchete,
 El point de son millor ae
 Li loerent si chevalier
 Que il preist femme et mollier.
 Li dus bonement leur otroie
 Et chil se missent a la voie.
 Que vous feroie p' lonc cōte

Une puehele fille . i . cōte
 Li ont si barō amene
 Que il a prisse et espousse
 De lignage de grāt afaire
 Bele et gentilz et de boin aire, &c.

There is a French Morality in MS. "*Comment il fut enjoient à Robert le Diable, fils du Duc de Normandie, pour ses Mesfaites de faire le fol, sang parlez et depuis N. S. eut merçi de lui,*"—mentioned by Beauchamps's *Rech. Theat. de France*, p. 109, which doubtless refers to the same Robert.

Of this extraordinary production two translations into English have been printed; one in verse which was republished by Mr. Herbert, (Svo. 1798) from a MS. formerly in the possession of Mr. Ratcliffe, which appears to have been transcribed word for word from an edition by Wynkyn de Worde or Pynson, of which Mr. Herbert had seen a fragment consisting of six leaves.

This English Metrical Version is in eight line stanzas, and commences as follows,

Lysten lordinges that of maruéyles lyke to heare,
 Of acts that were done sometyme in dede
 By oure elders that before vs were
 How some in myschieffe their lyfe dyd leade
 And in this boke may ye se yf that ye will rede
 Of one Robert the deuyll, borne in Normandyc,
 That was as uengeable a man as myht treade
 On goddes grounde for he delyted in all tyranye.

A Duke sometyme in Normandye there was
 Full nertuous and deuoute in all hys lyuyng
 And in almose dedes, he yede in the way of grace,
 Of Knightlye maners, and manfull in iustyng,
 A Lordlye parson, also courtes in euery thyng
 His dwellyng was at Nauerne vpon sayne
 At Chrystmas to honoure that holy tyme,
 Open householde he kept, and to please God was fayne.

A feaste he helde vpon a certayne daye
 Lordes come thither of greate renowne
 And as they sate at dyner a knyght gan saye
 Vnto the Duke, and on hys knees kneled downe
 My Lorde he sayd, ye be owner of many a towne
 Yet have ye no lady, nor none heyre
 After your dayes to reioyce your grounde
 Therefore gett youe a princes that ys yonge and fayre.

The prose version was printed by Wynkyn de Worde, and bears evident marks of being a direct translation from the French, and not, as was frequently the case, a reduction of the Metrical Romance. Of this prose version there is a copy in the Garrick collection in the British Museum, which was presented to Garrick by Mr. Astell, of Yoxall, in Staffordshire. It consists, as does the copy described by Ames, which is also by Wynkyn de Worde, and extant among Bishop More's books in the public library at Cambridge, (D. 5. 2.) of twenty-nine leaves, but differs from it inasmuch as a wood print of the Sun at the top of the page, Wynkyn de Worde at the bottom, and his usual device

in the centre, is substituted in the last leaf for the print of the Virgin with Jesus in her arms, in the Cambridge copy.

An imitation or reprint of this translation was published in 12mo. by James Roberts, and in the same year by Nicholas Ling,—see *Herbert's Ames*, vol. ii. p. 1033—vol. iii. p. 1341: and in *Bibl. Rawlinsoniana*, No. 331, 22d Jan. 1727-8, is “*The famous historical life of Robert II. Duke of Normandy, surnamed for his monstrous birth and behaviour, Robin the Divell.* 4to. London, 1599.”

Whatever may have been the origin of this romance it has obviously enjoyed a very large share of popular favour. Besides the French and English Version to which reference has already been made, this History exists both in Dutch and Spanish. Mone in his *Uebersicht der Niederlandischen Volks-Literatur*, mentions a Dutch book on the subject printed in 1621; and in the library of the British Museum is a Spanish edition in 4to. printed at Madrid about the year 1810 under the title of “*Espantosa y maravillosa Vida de Roberto el Diablo, hijo del Duque de Normandia, el cual despues fué llamado Hombre de Dios.*”

Those who may be inclined to investigate at greater length the history of this Romance, to which additional interest has been given by the fact of its forming the groundwork of Meyerbeer's beautiful opera, are re-

ferred to *La Revue de Paris* of July 1834, which contains an article on the subject of Robert the Devil by M. A. Pichart: and to a criticism on it by M. de Martonne in the sixth volume of the *Memoires de la Société Royale des Antiquaires de France*.

The romance of King Robert of Sicily,* from which copious extracts are to be found in the 2nd vol. of the new edition of Warton's *History of English Poetry*, and the old English Morality of Robert Cicyl, which was represented at the High Cross in Chester, in 1529, are obviously connected with the hero of the present Romance. "Robert of Cicyl and Robert the Devil," says the ingenious editor of Warton, "though not identical are clearly members of the same family, and this poetic embodiment of their lives is evidently the offspring of that tortuous opinion so prevalent in the middle ages, and which time has mellowed into a vulgar adage that 'the greater the sinner the greater the saint.' The subject of the latter was doubtless Robert the first Duke of Normandy, who became an early object of legendary scandal, and the transition to the same line of potentates in Sicily was an easy

* The 59 Chapter of the *Gesta Romanorum*, containing the History of the Emperor Jovinian, which has also been made the subject of a French Moralité, printed at Lyons from an ancient copy in 1581, 8vo. with the title "L'Orgueil et presumption de l'Empereur Jovinian," is nearly identical with this romance.

effort when thus supported. The romantic legend of Sir Gowther, recently published in Mr. Utterson's *Select Pieces of Early Popular Poetry*, is only a different version of Robert the Devil with a change of scene, names, &c."

THE LYFE
OF
ROBERT THE DEUYLL.
A Romance.

FROM AN EDITION BY WYNKYN DE WORDE.

ROBERT THE DEUYLL.

Here begynneth the lyfe of the moost myscheuoust
Robert the Deuyll, which was afterwarde called
the seruant of God.

It befel in tyme past, there was a duke in Normandye
which was called Ouberte, the whiche duke was pas-
synge ryche of goodes, and also vertuous of lyuynges,
and loued and dred God above all thynges, and dyde
grete almesse dedes, and exceeded all other in ryght-
wysnesse and justyce, and moost cheualrouse in dedes
of armes and notable actes doynge. This duke helde
open house upon a Crystmasse daye, in a towne whiche
was called Naverne, upon the Seyne, to the whiche
courte came all the lordes and noble blode of Normandy.
And because this noble duke was not maryed, his lordes
nobles with one assente besought hym to marye and
take a wyfe, to thentente that his lyncage myght be
multyplied thereby, and that they myght have a ryght

heyre to enherite his landes after his dyseeuse. To the whyche request this good duke answered and sayd: "My lordes, what thyng that ye thynke best for me to do shall be done, upon a condycyon, in that ye wyll that I be maryed, that ye puruey me a wyfe accordyng to myn estate, for and yf I shol coueyte ony heyre or noblyer of blode than I am myselfe that myghte not stand with ryght, and yf I take one that is not of so noble an house as I am, that sholde be to me grete shame, and all my lygnage; wherefore me thynke it were better that I kepe me as I am, than to do that thyng that sholde not be myne honeste, and afterwarde repente me." Whan these wordes were spoken, and well conyded by the lordes that stode there present, then there rose up a wyse baron, and sayd to the duke: "My lorde ye speke very wysely, and lyke a noble prynce, but yf it please your hyeness to gyue audyence and here me speke, I shall shewe you of a certayne persone of whome ye shall enjoye yourselfe to here of her, and the whyche ye shall obteyne I knowe well." Than answered the duke, and sayd: "shewe me then who that persone is." "Gracyous lorde," sayd the baron unto the duke, "the duke of Bourgone hath a daughter whyche excedethe al other in beaute, curteyse and deboynayre wysdome and good maneres, the whiche ye may have yf ye wyll desyre her, for I knowe well there wyll no man say naye thereto." To the whiche the good duke answered and said, that lady played hym ryght well, and that the baron had gyven hym good and wyse counsell. And in

shorte tyme after that, this lady was demaunded of her fader, the duke of Bourgone, which gaue hym her wyllyngly. And then they brydale was kepte honourably, which were to longe to write.

Howe the duke of Normandye with grete royalte broughte his wyfe, the doughter of the duke of Burgone, in to Roan in Normandye, after he had maryed her.

AFTER that the forsayd duke had maryed the sayd ladye, he brought her with a grete company of barons, knyghtes, and ladyes, with grete tryumphe and glorie, into the lande of Normandye, and in the cyte of Roan, in the whiche cyte she was honourably receyued, and with grete melodye ; and there was grete amyte betwene the Bourgonyons and the Normans, which I lete passe for to come the soner to my mater. The forsayd duke and duchesse lyued togyder the space of xviii yere without any childe. Whether it were Godde's wyl it sholde be so, or it were thurgh theyr own defaulte, I can not jage, for it were better other whyle that some people had no chylderne, and also it were better for the fader and the moder to gete no chyldren, thenne to lacke of chastysynge, the chyldren and fader and moder sholde al go to the deuyll: yet was this duke and duchesse deuout people, which loved and drede God, and gave grete almesse ; and what tyme this duke wolde meddle with his lady, he euer prayed to God to sende hym a chyld, to honoure and serue God, and to multiply and

fortyfy his lynage; but nother with prayer nor with almesse dedes this good duke and duchesse could gete no chyldren.

How upon a tyme this duke and duchesse walked alone, sore complanyng the one to the other that they coude have no chyldre togyder.

UPON a tyme this duke and duchesse walked, and the duke began to shewe his mynde to his ladye, saynge, "Madame, we be not fortunate in so much that we can gete noo chyldren; and they that made the maryage betwene us bothe they dyde grete synne, for I beleue and yehad been geuen to an other man, ye sholde haue had chyldren, and I also yf I had an other ladye." This lady understood his sayenge: she answered softly, saynge thus: "Good lorde, we must thanke God of that whiche he sendeth us, and take it pacyently of what so euer it be."

How Robert the Deuyll was conceyued, and how his moder gaue hym to the deuyll in his concepcyon.

THIS duke upon a tyme rode oute an hountying in a grete angre and pensyfness, for thought that he coude haue no chyldre, sore complanyng, saynge to hymselfe, I see many women haue many fayre chyldren in whiche they enjoy gretely, by which I se wel that I am hated of God, and meruayle it is that I fall not in dyspare, for it greueth me so sore at my herte that I can gete no chyldren. The deuyll, which is alwaye redy to deceyue man-

kynde, tempted the good duke, and troubled his mynde so that he wyst not what to do nor say. Thus moued, he left his huntynge and wente home to his palayes, where he founde his ladye also vexed and moued. As he came home he toke her in his armes, and kyssed her, and dyde his will with her, sayenge his prayers to our Lorde in this wyse: "O! Lord Jhesu, I besече the that I may get a chylde, at this houre, by the whiche thou mayst be honoured and served." But the ladye being so sore moued, spake thus folyshly, and said: "In the deuyle's name be it, in so muche as God hath not the power that I conceyue; and yf I be conceyued with chylde in this houre, I gyve it to the devyll, body and soule." And this same houre that this duke and duches were thus moued, the sayd lady was conceyued with a man chylde, whiche in his lyf wroughte moche myschefe, as ye shall here after this, but afterwards he was converted, and dyde grete penance, and dyed a holy man, as is shewed here after.

How Robert the Deuyll was borne, and what grete payne his moder suffred in hys byrthe.

THIS duchesse, as we haue herd before, was conceyued with the forsayd chylde, which she bare ix monethes as comonly women goo with chylde; and ye may well perceyue that this lady coude not be delyuered without grete payn, for she traueylled more than a moneth, and yf good prayers had not been, and almesse dedes, good werkes, and grete penance done for her, she

had deyed of chylde, for all the ladyes and gentyl-women that there (were) with her wened, she wold have perysshed and deyed in traunyng. Wherefore they were gretly abasshed and aferde with the merueylouse noise and tokens that they herde and se in the byrth of the said Robert the Deuyll, in that whan this chylde was borne, the sky waxed as darke as though it had been nyghte, as it is shewed in olde cronycles, that it thondreth and lyghtened so sore, that men thought the firmament had been open, and all the worlde sholde haue perysshed. And there blewe soo moche wynde out of the iiii quarters of the worlde, and was such storme and tempest, that al the hous trembled so sore, that it shoke a grete pece of it to the erth, in so moche that all they that were in the hous wened that the worlde had been at an ende, and that they, with the house and all, sholde haue souken. But in shorte tyme it pleased God that all this trouble ceased, and the weder clered up, and the chylde was brought to chyrch to be crystened, whiche was named Robert. This childe was large of stature at his byrthe and he had been a yere old, whereof the people had grete wonder; and as this chylde was a berynge to the chirche to be crystned and home ayenst, it neuer ceased cryenge and houlyng. And in shorte space he had longe teeth wherwith he bote the norshes pappes in such wyse, that there was no woman durst gyue hym souke, for he bote off the hedes of theyr brestes; wherefore they were fayne to gyue hym souke and to brynge hym up with an

horne. And whan he was twelve moneth olde, he coude speke and go alone better than other chyldrne that were thre yere old. And the elder that this chyld Robert waxed, more cursted ; and there was no man that coude rule hym : and whan he founde or coude come by ony chyldrne he smote and bote and cast stones at them, and braketheyr armes and legges and neckes, and scratte out theyr eyen owt of theyr hedes, and therein was all his delyte and pleasure.

How all the chyldren with one assente named this chyld Roberte the Deuyll.

THIS chyld within fewe yeares grewe maruaylously, and more and more encreased of all, and boldness, and shrewdness, and set by no correccyon, but was euer smyttynge and tastynge, and cursed dedes doynge. And some tyme there gadred togyder all the boyes of the strete to fyghte with him, but whan they se hym they durst not abyde hym, but cryed one to another, "Here cometh the wode Robert !" an other many cryed, "Here cometh the cursed madde Robert !" and some cryed, "Here cometh Robert the Deuyll !" and thus cryenge they voyded all the stretes, for they durst not abyde and loke hym in the face, and forthwith the chyldrne that knewe hym with one assente called hym Roberte the Deuyll, whiche name he kepte durynge his lyfe, and shal do as longe as the world standeth. Whan this chyld was seuen yere old or there aboute, the duke his fader seyng and consyderynge his wycked condycyons,

called hym and sayd unto hym thus, " My sone me thyncke it necessary and tyme, for me to gete you a wyse scole mayster, to lerne vertues and doctrine, for ye be of age ynoughe," and whan the duke had thus sayd, he betoke his sone to a good dyscreeet and wyse scole mayster to rule and teche hym all good condycyons and maners.

How Robert kylled his scole mayster.

It fell upon a daye that his scole mayster sholde chastyse Robert and would have made hym to have lefte his cursed codycyons, but Robert gate a murderer or bodkin, and thrast his mayster in the bely that his guttes fell at his fete, and so fell downe deed to the erth, and Robert threw his boke ayenst the walles in despyte of his mayster saynge thus now haue I taughte the that never preste, nor clerke shal correct me, nor be my mayster. And from thens forth there coude no mayster be founde that was so bolde to take in hande to teche and correcte this Roberte, but were glad to let hym alone and have his owne wayes, and he put hymselfe to uyce and myschefe, and to no maner of vertue nor grace, nor wolde he lerne for no man luyng, but mocked both God and holy chyrche. And when he came to the chyrche and founde the prestes, and clarkes syngynge Goddes seruyce, he came preuely behynd them, and caste ashes or duste in theyr mouthes in dyspyte of God. And when he sawe any body in the chyrche besy in theyr prayers he wolde come behynde

them and gyue them a sowse in the necke that theyr hedes kyssed the ground in so moche that euery body cursed hym for his wycked dedes doynge. And the duke his fader seyng his myscheuous dyspocysyon and cursed lyfe of his sone, he was so angry with hymselfe, that he wysshed hymself many tymes dede and out of the worlde. And the duchese in lykewyse was gretly moued and muche sorowefull by cawse of the myscheuous lyfe of her sone, saynge in this wyse, "My lord our sone is nowe of sufficient age and able to bere armes, wherefore me thynke it were best that ye made hym knyght if than he wolde remembre thordre of knyghthode whereby he myght leue his wyckedness." The duke was here withall content. And Robert had at that tyme but eyghtene yere of age.

How Robert the Deuyll was made knyght by the duke
his fader.

THIS duke assembled upon a hye feast of Whitsontyde, all his barons and nobles of his lande, and the next of his kyn and frendes, in the presence of whome he called his sone to hym saynge thus, "Herke my sone Robert, and take hede what I shall tell you, it is so that by thadyuce of my counsell and good frendes, I am now aduysed to make you a knyght, to thentent that ye with other knyghtes to haunte chevalrye and knyghtes condycions, to thentente that ye shall leue and forsake your uyces and moost hatfull lyf." Robert herynge this, answered his fader, "I shall do your comandment

but as for the ordre of knyghthode I set nothyng thereby, for there is no degre shall cause me leve my condycyons nor chaunge my lyfe, for I am not in that mynde to do no better than I have done hetherto, nor to amende for no man lyuyng.” It was the costome of that lande, that on Whitsonyght the chyrche shold be watched, and tended with moche people, and theder cam Robert like a madman, and overthrowng al them that came in his waye feryng nother God nor the Deuyll, and he was never styll of all the nyght, and in the mornynge whan it was day Robert was made knyght. Then this duke comaunded a tournament to be made in the which the said Robert wrought maystyes, and dyde meruaylous dedes of armes, in kyllynge and beryng downe hors and man, no man refusynge nor feryng. Of some he brake armes and some legges, and bare them thorowe and kylled them out of hande; from hym went none unmarked in whiche iustyng Robert kylled x horses: the duke heryng how his sone myscheued and muredred all that came in his handes he went hymself into the tournament and comaunded upon a grete payne to sease and ren no more; then Robert rored for anger as he had ben wode and wolde not obeye his faders comaundement but abode styl in the fylde smytyng some that he kylled of the moste valiauntes that thether were comen to tournaye, than euery man cryed upon Robert to sease, but it auayled not, for he wolde not cease for no man, nor was there no man so bolde to encountre hym, for bycause that he

was so stronge this Robert dyde so moche myschefe that all the people were in a rore, and assembled all with one assent in a grete angre and ranne to the duke complaynyng, saynge thus: "Lorde, ye be gretely to blame that ye suffre your sone to do as he dothe; we beseche yow for goddes sake to fynde some remedye for hym, to cause hym to sease or leue his mysrule."

How Robert the Deuyll rode about the countree of Normandy, robberyng, stelyng, morderynge, and brennyng chyrches, abbayes and other holy places of relygyon, and forsynge of women, and rauyshynge of maydens.

THAN whan Robert se there was no man more lefte in the felde, and that he coude do no more myschef there, than he toke his horse with the spores to seke his adventures, and began to do every day more harm than other one, for he forsed and rauysshed maydens and wyues without nombre, he kyllled murdred so moche people, that it was pyte, also he robbed chyrches abbayes, hermytages, and fermes, there was not an abbaye in all the countrey but he robbed and pyllled them, these wycked dedes of Robert came to the eres of the good duke, and al they that were thus robbed and rebuked came to complayne of the grete outrage and suppressyon done by Robert, and styll was doynge thorowe out all the countree. Onesayd, "Mylorde youre sone hathe forsed my wyfe," another sayd, "he hath rauyshed my doughter," the other sayd, "he hath stolen

my goodes, and robbed my hous ;” and other sayd, “ he hath wounded me to deth,” with many semblable offences. Thus lay they greuously complaynyng before the good duke, that grete pyte it was there for to se the good duke herynge the greuous and lamentable complayntes of the great murdre done by Robert his sone, thoroughout all the lande of Normande. Than his herte was suppressed with so grete sorrowe and thought that the salt teres breste oute of his eyen, and he wepte tenderly and sayd ; “ O ryght wyse God creatoure of heaven and erth, I haue so many tymes prayed ye to sende me a chylde and all my delyte was to haue a sone, to the entente that I myght of hym haue grete joye, and solace. And now haue I one, the whiche doth my herte soo moche payne, sorowe and thought that I wote in no wyse what to begyn, nor doo, nor saye thereto, but good Lorde onely I crye upon the for helpe, and remedye to be a lytel released of my payne and sorowe.”

How the duke sent out men of armes for to take Robert his sone, whiche Roberte toke them all, and put out theyr eyen in dyspyte of his fader, and sente them so home agayne.

THERE was a knyght of the Dukes hous, whiche perceued that this good duke was uery sorowfull and pensyfe, and knewe no remedy ; then this knyght spake and sayd to hym : “ My lorde, I wolde aduyse you to sende for your sone Robert and let hym be brought to

your presence, and there before your nobles, and nexte frendes to rebuke hym, and than commaund hym to leue hys cursed lyfe, and yf he wyll not, ye to do justice upon hym as on a straunge man: hereto the duke consented, and thought the knyght gaue hym good counsell, and incontynent he sente out men to seke Robert, and in ony wyse they to brynge hym to hys presence: this Robert, herynge of the complayntes made of all the people upon hym unto his fader, and that his fader had sent out men to take hym, wherefore all them that he coude gete, he put out theyr eyen, and so he toke the men that his fader sende for hym, and put out theyr eyen in despyte of his fader; and whan he had thus blynded his fader's seruauntes, he sayd to them in mockynge, "Syr, nowe shall ye slepe the better; go now home to my fader, and tell hym that I set lytel by hym, and bycause he sendeth you to brynge me to hym, therefore to hys dyspyte I have put out your eyen." These poore seruauntes whiche the duke had sent for Robert his sone, came home with grete payne and in grete heuynesse saynge thus: "O good lorde se howe youre sone Robert that ye dyde send us for hath arayed us, and blynded us." The good duke seyng his men in this case, he waxed very angry, and full of yre and began to compasse in his mynde how and by what meanes he myght come by to take Robert his sone.

How the duke of Normandy made a proclamation throughout his lande, how men sholde take Robert his sone, with al his company, and brynge them everychone to pryson.

THAN spake a wyse lorde, sayinge thus, "my lorde take noo more thought for ye shall never se the day that Robert your sone wyll come in your presence in so moche, as he hath done so grete and greuouse offences to your comons, and your owne messengers that ye sende for hym; but it were of necessite for you to correct and punysse hym for hys grete offences, that he dayly doth, and hath done, for we fynde it wryten, that the lawe byndeth you therto." The duke wyllynge to accomplyshe the counceyl of his lordes sende out messangers in all the hast, unto all the portes, good townes and barons, throughout all his dukedome commandynge on his behalfe all shryues, baylufes, or other offycers to doo theyr uttermoost dylygence to take Robert his sone prysoner and to holde and kepe hym surely in pryson with all his company and affinyte. Whan Roberte herde of this proclamation, he with all his company were sore aferde of the dukes malyce and whan Robert se this he was almost out of his wyt for wode angre and wheted hys teeth lyke a bore, and sware a grete othe saynge thus, "that he wolde have open war with his fader, and subdewe and spyll all his lordshyppe."

How Robert made hym a strong hous in a darke thycke wyldernes where he wrought myscheff without comparyson and aboue al mesure or natural reason.

THEN whan Robarte herde and knewe of the forsayd thynges, he lete make in a thycke wylde foreste a stronge house, wherein he made his dwellynge place, and this place was wylde and strong, and more meter for wylde beestes; than for any people to abyde in, and there Robert assembled and gadered for his company, all the moost myscheuouste and falsest theues that he coude fynde or heere of in his faders lande, to wete morderers, theues, streterobers, rebelles, brenners of chyrches and houses, forcers of women, robbers of chyrches, and the moost wyckeste and curseste theues that were under the sone. Robert had gadered to doo hym seruyce wherof he was Capytayne, and in the forsayd wyldernesse, Robert wyth his company dyde so moche myschefe, that no tonge can tell, he mordred marchautes, and all that came by the waye, no man durst loke out, nor come abrode for fere of Robert and his company, of whome every man was aferde, for they robbed all the countree, in so moche, that no man durst loke out, but they were kylled of Robert or his men, also poore pelgremes that went on pelgremage were murdered by Robert and his company, in so moche, that euery man fledde from them, lyke as the shepe fledde from the wolfe; for they were as wolues warynge, sleyinge all that they coude come by,

and thus, Robert and his company ledde an ungracious lyfe ; also he was a grete glotten of etynge and drynkyng, and neuer fastynge, though it were neuer so grete a fastynge daye. In Lente, or on Ymber dayes, he ete flesshe, as well on Frydayes as on Sondayes ; but after he had done all this myschefe, he suffred grete payne, an hereafter ye shal here.

How Robert the Deuyll killed vii heremytes.

It befell upon a tyme that Robert, whiche euer imagyned and studyed in his mynde howe and by what meane he might doo moost myschefe and murdre, as he had ben ever accustomed before he rode out of his hous or theuyshe neste to seke his pray, and in the myddel of the wode he sawe vii hooly heremytes, to whome he rode as faste as he coulde with his swerde redy drawen, lyke a man oute of his mynde, and there he slewe this vii heremytes, the whiche were bolde and good men, but they were so vertuous and holy, that they suffred the marterdome for the loue of God. And whan he had slayne these vii devout men, he spake in mockage, and sayd : " I haue founde here a neste of a many pope holy horsons whome I haue shauen them crounes : I trowe they be dronke ; they were wonte to kneke upon theyr knees, and now they lye upon theyr backes." There dyde Robert a cursed dede and blode shedyng, in despyte of God and holy chyrche ; and after that he hadde done this myscheuous dede he rode out of the wode lyke a deuyll out of helle, semyng worse thenne wode,

and his clothes were all dyed rede with the blode of the people that he had murdred and slayne, and thus arayed he rode ouer the feldes, and clothes, handes, face, all were rede of the blode of the holy heremytes, whiche he had so pteously murdred in the wyldernesse.

How Robert the Deuyll rode to his moder the duchesse of Normandye, beyng in the castell of Darques : she was come to a feste.

ROBERT rode so ferre and so longe, that he came to the castell of Darques ; but he mette before with a shyp-herde which had tolde hym that his moder the duchesse sholde come of the sayd castell to dyner, and so he rode theder. But whan Robert came there, and the people se hym come, they ranne awaye frome hym, lyke the hare frome the houndes ; one ranne and shette hym in hys house, an other ranne into the chyrche for fere. Robert seyng this, that all the people fled from hym for fere, he began to sygh in his herte, and sayd to hymself,—O ! Almyghty God, how may this be, that every man thus fleeth from me ! Nowe I perceyue that I am the moost myscheuouste and the moost cursedest wretche of this worlde, for I sente better to be a Jewe or a Sarasyne, than any Crysten man, and I se wel that I am worste of all yll. Alas ! sayd Robert the Deuyll, I may well hate and curse myne ungracyous and cursed lyfe, wherfore I am worthy to be hated of God and the worlde. In this minde and heynesse came Robert to the castell gate, and lyghte downe from his horse, but

there was no man that durste abyde about hym, nor come nyghe hym to holde his horse; and he hadde no seruante to serue hym, but let his horse stande there at the gate, and drewe out of his swerde, whiche was all bloody, and incontynente toke the way unto the halle, where the duchesse his moder was. Whan the duchesse sawe Robert her sonne come in this wyse, with a bloody swerde in his hande, she was sore aferde, and wolde haue flede a way frome hym, for she knewe wel his condycions. Robert, seyng that euery body dyde flee from hym, and that his owne moder wolde haue fledde in lykewyse, he called unto her pyteously afarre, and sayd: "Swete lady moder, be not aferde of me, but stande styl tyl I haue spoken with you, and flee not from me in the worshyp of Crystes passyon." Than Roberte's herte beyng full of thought and repentaunce, wente nygher her, sayng thus: "Dere lady moder, I praye and requyre you tell me how and by what maner or wherby cometh it that I am soo vycyous and curste, for I knowe wel I haue it other by you or of my fader; wherefore incontynent I hertly desyre and praye you that ye shewe me the trouth hereof."

How the Duchesse desyred Robert her sone to smyte of her hede, and than she tolde hym howe she had gyuen hym to the deuyll in his concepyon.

THE duchesse had gretly meruaylyng when she herde her sone speke these wordes; and piteously wepyng, with a sorrowful herte sayng thus to hym: "My dere

sone, I requyre you hertly that ye wyll smyte of my heed." This sayd the lady, for very grete pyte that she had upon hym, for bycause she had gyuen hym to the deuyll in his concepcyon. Robert answerde his moder with an hevy and a pyteous chere, saynge thus: "O! dere moder, why sholde I do so, that so moche myschefe have done, and this sholde be the worste dede that euer I dyde; but I praye you to shewe me that I desyre to wete of you." Then the duchesse, herynge his hertely desyre, tolde unto hym the cause why he was so vicious and full of myschefe, and how she gaue hym to the deuyll in his concepcyon, herselfe myspraysnge, sayd thus unto Roberte: "O! sonne, I am the moost unfortunate woman lyuyng, and I knowledge that it is all my faute that ye be soo cursed and wycked a leuer."

How Robert the Deuyll toke leue of his moder.

ROBERT herynge his moders saynge he fell downe to the erthe into a swone, for very grete sorowe and laye styll a longe whyle, than he remeued agayne and came to hymself and began bytterly to wepe, and complayne, saynge thus. "The fendes of hell be with grete dylygence to applye theym to gete and haue my body and soule, but nowe from this tyme forthe, I forsake theym all theyr werke, and wyll neuer do more harme but good, and amende my lyfe and leue my synes and do penaunce therefore," than after this Robert spake to his moder, the whiche was in grete sorowe, and heuy-

nesse saynge thus : “ O moost reuerente lady moder, I hertely beseche and requyre you that it wilde please you to haue me recommaunded unto my fader ; for I wyll take the waye to Rome to be assoyled of my synnes, whiche are innumerable, and to abhomynable to recounte. Therefore I wyll neuer slepe one nyght there I slepe an other tyll I come at Rome, and god wyll.”

Howe Robert departed from his moder, and rode into the wyldernesse where he founde his companye.

ROBERT in grete haste lyght upon his horse and rode to the wode where he had lefte his companye the whiche he founde. The duchesse made grete lamentacyon for her sone Robert, whiche had taken his leue of her, and sayd many tymes to herselfe, “ Alas what shall I do for it is all my faute that Roberte my sone hath done so moche myschefe :” and in the meane whyle that the duchesse made this sorowe and bewayllynge for her sone Robert, in came the duke into the chambre, and as soone as she sawe hym she began to tell hym of his sone Robert pyteously wepynge ; shewyng hym what he had sayd and done, than the good duke axed whether Robert were disposed to leue his vycyous lyfe, and yf he were sory for his grete offences, “ Ye my lorde” sayd she, “ he is sore repentaunce :” then began the Duke sore to sygh, and sayd, “ Alas it is all in vayne, that Robert thynketh to do, for I here he shall neuer have power to make restytycyon of the hurtes and harmes the whiche he hath doone in his lyfe, but I beseche

Almyghty God to prolonge his lyfe, and sende hym a respyte that he may amende his lyfe, and do penaunce for his synnes."

How Robert the Deuyll tolde his company he wolde goo to Rome for to be assoyled of his synnes.

Now is Robert come agayne to his companye whiche he founde syttyng at dyner, and whan they sawe hym they rose up and dyde hym reuerence; than Robert began to rebuke theym for theyr vycyous lyuyng sayyng thus, "My welbeloued felowes, I requyre you in the reuerence of God, that ye wyll herken, and take hede to this that I shall shewe you, ye knowe well how that we haue ledde hetherto an ungracyous and moost uycyous lyfe, robbed and pyllled chyrches, forced women, rauysshed maydens, robbed and kylled marchauntes. We haue robbed and kylled nonnes, holy aunkers, preestes, clerkes, and many other people without nombre haue we murdred and robbed, wherfore we be in the waye of endles dampnacyon, except that God haue mercy upon us. Wherefore I requyre you everychone for goddes sake that ye wyll chaunge your opynyon, and leue your abhomynable synnes, and do penaunces therefor, for I wyll goo to Rome to be shryuen and to haue penaunce for my synnes." When Robert thus had sayd, one of the theues rose and sayd to his companye in mockage, "Nowe Syrs, take hede the foxe wyll be an aunker for he begynneth to preche, Robert mocketh fast with us, for he is our captayne,

and doth more harme alone than all we do, how thynke ye wyll he be longe thus holy." Yet sayd Robert, "Gentyll felawes I praye you for goddes sake leue your condycyons, and thynke on our soule, and do penaunce for your moost fellest stynkyng synnes, and crye upon oure lorde for mercy and forgeueness, and he wyl forgeue you." Whan Robert had sayd thus, than spake to hym one of the theues and sayd, "I praye you mayster be in pease, for it auayleth not what ye saye, ye do but spende your tyme in wast, for I nor my companye wyll not amende our lyfe for no man luyng." And all his companye commended his saynge, and sayden all with one voyce, "He sayth trewe, for and we sholde dye, we wyll not leue our olde condycyons and cursed lyfe, but and yf we haue done moche hurte hetherto we wyll do moche more hereafter."

How Robert the Deuyll kylled all his companye.

ROBERT herynge the faste and wycked opynyon and myscheuous purpose of his company waxed angry, and thought yf they remayne and abyde styll here, they wyl doo grete myschefe and murdre, but he wente preuely unto the dore and shyte it fast, and gate a grete staffe and layde one of the theues on the hede that he fell downe deed to the erth. And so he serued one after an other, tyll he hadde kylled them everychone, thenne sayd he thus to them, "Syr, I haue rewarded you after your deserte, and by cause ye have done me

good seruyse, I haue gyuen you good wages, for whosouer serueth a good mayster he is lyke to haue good wages." Whan Robert thus had done he wolde have brente the hous, but he consydered the great good that was therin, wherfore he let it stande, shytted faste the doores about and locked them, and brought awaye the keye with hym to his faders.

How Robert the Deuyll sente the keye of his chefe hous or theuysse lodgyng to his faders the duke of Normandy, and how he wente to Rome.

THAN whan Robert had done all that said is, he tooke up his hande and blessed hym, and rode through the forest the neere waye to Rome. Robert rode that daye so long tyll that the nyght came on, and was passyng sore and hongred, for he had eten no mete of all that daye, and fortunely to come rydyng by an Abbaye, whyche he had many tymes robbed, and the abbote was his kynnessman, and Robert rode in to this abbaye and sayd neuer a worde, but whan the monkes se Robert come they were aferde, and ranne awaye, sayng one to another, "Here cometh the ungracyous Robert, the Deuyll hath brought him hether." Whan Robert herde this, and se them all renne awaye frome him, than his sorowe begun to renewe, and sayd in himself, in sore syghyng and sorowfull herte: "I may well hate my cursed lyfe, for euery man fleeth from me, and I haue spent my tyme ungracyously, and in euyl and cursed werkes," and there withall he rode streyght

in the chyrche dore and a lyghte done from his horse, deuoutely sayinge his prayers to God in this wyse. "O Lord Jhesu I moost synfull wretche and vessell of all stynkyng synnes. I praye the that thou wylte haue mercy on me and preserue and kepe me from all daungers and peryll." And then he wente and spoke to the abbote and monkes so swetely and so peteously and amyably that they began to go towarde hym, to whom Robertesayd peteously, wepyng knelyng on his knees. "My lorde I knowlege myself that I haue greuously offended you, and haue grete harme and injurye unto your abbay. Wherfore I requyre and praye you in all the honoure of Crystes passyon of forgyuenesse." And than he spake to the Abbote in thys wyse, "My Lorde abbott I praye you hertely haue me recomaunded to my lorde my fader the duke of Normandye, and delyuer hym this keye of the chefe hous where I haue dwelled with my companye, the whiche I haue all slaue to thentent that they sholde do no more harme, and in the hous lyeth all the goodes and tresoure that I haue stolen from you and other men, wherfore I am ryght sorry, and I beseeche you of forgyuenesse, and I pray you that this good may be rendred agene unto such people as they haue belongynge to before." Robert abode that nyght in the abbay, but in the mornynge erly he wente thens and left behinde hym his horse and his swerde where withall he had doone grete myschefe. And so he went alone towards Rome. And on the same daye rode the Abbote to the Duke of Normandye, and

gaue hym the key that Robert had delyuered hym, and told the duke how he was gone to Rome. Than the duke gaue all the poor people theyr goodes agen that they lost befor as ferre as it coude be founde in the hous. We wyll sease of the Duke and the Abbott, and speke of Robert whiche goth to Rome warde alone, with grete devocyon.

How Robert came to Rome for remysson of his synnes.

ROBERT went so longe ouer hylles and dales alone, tyll at last with grete payne and pouerte he came to Rome in to the cyte, upon a shere Thursdaye at nyght, and on the Frydaye after, the pope hymselfe sayd the deuyne seruyce, as the custom was in saynt Peter's chyrche ; and Robert presed fast to have comen to the pope, but the pope's seruantes se that Robert presed so sore to come to the pope, they smote hym, and bad hym goo back ; but the more they smote hym, the more he presed and thronge to gette nygh the pope, and so at last he gate to hym, and fell doune on his knees at the feet of the pope, cryenge with a loud voyce, saynge thus : " O ! holy fader, haue mercy on me !" and thus laye Robert cryenge longe, whyle the people that were by the pope were angry that Robert made suche a noyse, and wolde haue dryuen hym thens, but the pope seyng Robert's grete desyre, had pyte upon hym, sayd to the people, " Late hym alone, for in all that I can se he hath grete deuocyon." Wherefore the pope commaunded

them all to holde their pease, that he myght the better here and understande Robert. Then sayd Robert to the pope in this manner: "O! holy fader, I am the moost and the greteste syner of all the worlde!" The pope toke Robert up by the hande, and sayde to hym: "Good frende, what is your desyre, and what eleth you to make all this noyse?" Than sayd Robert: "O! holy fader, I beseche you to here my confessyon, for I be not by you assoyled, I am dampned worlde withouten ende, for it is meruayle that the deuyll bere me not awaye body and soule, seynge the foule innumerable synne that I am laden and bounden withall more than ony man lyuyng; and in soo moche that ye are he that gyueth helpe and comforte to them that haue nede, therefore I humbly beseche you for the passyon of our Lorde Jhesu Cryst to here and purge me of my abhominable synnes, wherby I am deceued and departed from al the joyes of heuen, and I am wors than a Jewe." The pope herynge this, demed and thought in hymselfe whether this were Robert the Deuyll, and axed hym, "Sone, be ye Robert the whiche I haue herde so moche spekyng of, the whiche is worst of all men." Than Robert answered and sayd, "Ye." Than the pope sayd: "I wyll assoyle you, but I conjure you in the name of God that ye do no man harme." The pope and all that were aboute hym were aferde to loke upon Robert. Robert fell on his knees with great deuocyon and repentaunce of hys synnes, saynge, "Holy fader, nay as longe as I lyue I promyse God and his blessed

moder I wyll neuer hurte Crysten creature." Than incontynent the pope toke Robert aparte, and herde his confessyon, to whome Robert shrowe him deuoutly, shewynge how his moder had gyuen hym to the deuyll in his concepcyon, wherof the pope was sore aferde.

How the pope sente Robert thre myle without Rome to
an holy heremyte.

THE pope this herynge was gretly abasshed, and blessyd hym, and sayd to Robert: "My dere sone, ye muste goo thre myle without the towne, and there ye shall fynde an heremyte whiche is my goostly fader, and to hym ye shall confesse you, and saye that I sende you to hym, and he shall asoyle you." Robert answered the pope: "I wyll go with a good wyll;" and toke his leue of the pope saynge, "God gyue me grace to do that may be to the helth of my soule." Soo that nyght Robert abode in Rome, for it was late, and in the mornynge erly Robert went out of Rome towarde the place where he sholde fynde the heremyte; and so he wente so longe ouer hylles and dales with grete desyre to be shryuen of his synnes, and at last he came where the heremyte dwelled, whereof he was glad, and came to the heremyte and tolde hym how the pope had sent hym theder to be confessed of hym. Than the heremyte sayd he was hertly welcome; and within a whyle Robert began to confesse and shewe his synne, and fyrst he shewed the heremyte how his moder had gyuen hym to the deuyll in his concepcyon; and how he smote

the chyl dren in his youth or he coude goo alone; and how he kylled his scole master; and how many knyghtes he kylled at the iustyng whan his fader made hym knyght; and he rode thorowe his fader's lande, robberyng and stelyng, forsyng of women, rauysynghe of maydens; and how he thrust out the eyen of his fader's* men in despyte of hym; and how he had kylled vii heremytes; and shortly shewed hym all the offence that euer he dyde, sethen the houre of hys byrth tyll that tyme, wherof the heremyte had maruayle, but he was glad that Robert was repentaunt for hys synnes. Whan Robert had thus confessed hym, the heremyte sayd to hym: "Sone, thys nyght ye shall abyde here, and to morrowe I shall gyue good counsell of that ye haue to do." Robert that was so eurst and myscheuous, ferful cruel, and proude as a lyon, is now as gentyll and curteys, and swete of wordes, and wyse in his dedes, as euer was ony duke or prynce lyuynge. Then Robert was soo wery and ouercome with goynge, that he coude nother ete nor drynke, but went aparte and sayd his prayers to Almighty God, prayenge hym thrughe his indeles mercy, that he wolde kepe hym from the fendes temptacyon and deceyte, the heremyte made Robert to lye that nyght in a lytell chapell that stode nye his celle, and the heremyte prayed all the nyght to our lorde for Robert, whiche sawe that he hadde grete repentaunce for his synnes, and thus prayenge the heremyte fell a sleep.

* The original has moder's.

How God sent an aungell to the heremyte to shewe hym the penaunce that he sholde gyue to Robert for his synnes.

THE heremyte being thus a slepe, ther cam to hym an aungell, saynge to hym in this wyse: "Holy fader, here and take hede of the message that God commaundeth the; yf that Robert wyll be shryven of his synnes, he must kepe and counterfete the wayes of a fole, and be as he were dombe; and he may ete no maner of mete, but that he can take it from the dogges; and in this wyse, without spekyng, and counterfetyng the fole, and no thyng etyng but what he can take from the dogges, must he be tyll tyme that it please God to shewe hym that his synne be forgyuen;" and with this vycyon the heremyte awoke out of his slepe, and began to remembre hymselfe of this that sayd is, and thanked our Lorde of his message done to hym. And whan the day began to apere, the heremyte called Robert unto hym, with fare and comfortable wordes saynge to him, "My frende, come hether to me;" and incontynent Robert came to hym with grete deuocyon, hym confessyng. And whan Robert had shryuen him, the heremyte sayd thus unto hym: "Sone, I thought and aduysed me of the penance that ye shall haue, to get remyssyon of your synnes, in whiche ye gretly offended ayenst God, that is to wete ye must counterfayte and playe the fole; and ye may ete no mete but that ye can take it from the dogges whan men gyue them ought;

also you must kepe you dombe without speche, and lye among dogges, for thus hath God thys nyght commaunded me by a aungell to gyue you this for your penaunce, and ye may offende no man the whyle your penaunce be a doynge; and this penaunce ye must doo for your synnes in maner and. forme as I haue tolde you, tyll suche tyme as it shall please your Lorde to sende you worde that your synnes be forgyuen." Robert beyng mery and glad, thankynge our Lorde that he was assoyled of his synnes, and had therefore so lyght penaunce as hym thought that it was. Nowe taketh Robert leue of the heremyte, and goth to do his sharpe penaunce, whiche he helde but lyghte, remembrynge his grete abhomynable stynkyng synnes that he hath done all the dayes of his lyfe; this was a fayre myracle, for he that was so vycyous and so furyous a rebell, and proude a synner, is now so full of uertues and fayre condycyons and tame as a lambe.

How Robert the Deuyll toke leue of the heremyte, and went agayne to Rome to do his penaunce that the heremyte had gyuen hym.

ROBERT had taken leue of the heremyte, and is gone towarde Rome, there for to do his penaunce. And whan he came into the cyte he began to lepe and renne about the stretes, makynge hymselfe as he had ben a fole, and the chyl dren in the stretes se Robert renne in this wyse, and they after hym shoutynge and cryenge and castynge with myre and derte, and all suche fylth

as they founde in the stretes, and the burgeyses of the cyte laye in theyr wyndowes and laughed and mocketh with Robert. Than whan Robert had thus played the fole in Rome a certayne season, he came on a tyme to themperour's courte and se the gate dyde stande open and came streyght into the hall, and there jetted up and downe from the one syde to the other, somtyme he went faste and somtymesoftely and than he hopped and ran and other whyle stode styll, but he stode not longe in one place. The emperour seyng Robert thus playenge the fole, he sayd to one of his seruantes, se yonder is a fayre faoured yonge man, me thynke he is out of his mynde, the whiche is grete damage, for he is fayre and a well made man, go and gyue hym mete. This emperour's seruaunte dyde as he was commaunded, and called Robert to hym and wolde have gyuen hym some mete, but Robert nolde ete nor drynke, and whyle Robert sate thus at the table, the emperour sawe one of his houndes whiche was bytten with an other dogge, wherefore, themperour cast hym a bone, and the dogge caught the bone and began to gnawe there on, and Robert seyng that lept from the table and toke it from hym, but the dogge fought with Roberte for the bone, and helde faste the one ende, and Robert the other ende, but Robert se it wolde be no better, but set him downe on the grounde, and gnewe on the one ende of the bone and the dogge on the other; themperour and they that loked there on laughed at Robert and the dogge, but Robert dyde so moche that

he gate the bone alone, and laye and gnawe it for he was sore enhongred; themperour seyng that Robert was so sore enhongred he caste to an other dogge an hole lufe, but Robert toke it from hym and brake an two peces and gaue the dogge half, for bycause he gate it for the dogges sake, themperour seyng this lough there at and sayd to his seruauntes; "we haue here nowe the moste foolysshē fole, and the verayst nedy that euer I sawe, for he taketh the dogges mete from them, and eteth it himself, ther by a man may perfytely knowe that he is a natural fole;" all that were in the hall gaue the dogges as moche mete as they might ete, to thentent that Robert myght fyll his belye with them, and whan he had fylled his belly whyle he rose up and walked up and downe in the hall with a staffe in his hande, smytyngē upon stoles and benches lyke as and yf he had ben a very innocent fole. And thus walkyngē he loked on euery syde, and sawe a dore where men wente in to a fayre gardyne in the whiche gardyne there stode a fayre fontayne or well, and theder went Robert to drynke, for he was euyl a thurst, and whan nyght came on Robert folowed the forsayd dogge where soo euer he wente, the whiche was accustomed to lye euery nyght under a steyre, and there he wente and layde him downe and Robert followed hym under the steyre and layde hym downe by the dogge, themperour seyng this, had compassyon on Robert and commaunded that men sholde bere hym a bedde, that he myghte lye there upon to slepe;

anone two seruantes brought Robert a bedde to slepe there on, but he poynted to bere it awaye ayene, for he had leuer to lye upon the floure and colde erth, than upon a softe bedde, whereof themperour had grete meruayle, and commaunded that men sholde bere hym clene strawe, whiche they dyde, than Robert whiche was feynte and wery of goynge, layde hym downe to slepe on the strawe. Now haue this in your myndes, he proude hertes and synners, thynke on Roberts grete penaunce and wylfull pouerte, and how he so grete a gentylman borne, forsoke his fader and his moder, and all his frendes, and his countree and lande, and all his dylycate metes and drynkes, and gaue raymentes and wordely pleasure, with all that of suche a state aperteyneth, how wyllingly he hathe all forsaken for the saluacyon of his soule, and is gone out of a duke's bedde to a dogges canell, and with dogges he ete and dranke and slepte and rose whan they rose, and in this penaunce lyued Robert vii yeres or there aboute, and the dogge that he comunly slept with all perceyued that he foure the better, and had more mete for Robert's sake, than he was woute to haue before, and that no man dyde bete hym for his sake, wherfore he began to loue Robert passynge well in so moche men myghte as soone haue kylled hym as dryuen hym from Robert.

How Robert made a Jewe to kysse his dogges arse at
the Emperour's table.

It befell upon a tyme that themperoure helde a grete

feste in his palays in the cyte of Rome, to whiche feste were assembled al the chefe of the lande, amonge whome there was a Jewe whiche was receyuer of the moost part of all themperour's landes, and whan euery man was set at the table Robert walked up and doune in the hall hauynge his dogge in his armes playnge the fole as he was wonte to doo, and thus came to the table behynd the forsayd Jewe, whiche was set at the emperours table, and Robert came behynde his backe and knocked hym on the sholder, the Jewe lefte hym and tourned his face shortely behynde hym, and Robert hadde up his dogges arse redy and sette it upon the Jewe's face. The emperour and his lordes this seyng, laughed and had good game thereat, but the Jewe was wroth, and foule ashamed, but he durst saye nothyng at the tyme. Than Robert sette downe his dogge and incontynente the dogge lepte upon the table, and dyde soo moche with his mouth and fete, that he caste doune all the mete under the table. And in this maner Roberte spente his tyme euen without spekyng, lyke as the heremyte had commaunded hym, and euer he dyde some madde or merry conceyte to cause the emperour to laughte or be mery.

How Robert threwe downe a bryde on a foule dongehyll, and how he put a luyngge catte in an hole sethyng potte with podred befe.

It befel upon a tyme that there was a bryde sholde goo to chyrche to be wedded, whiche was gayly apparelled, as unto a bryde apperteyned; Robert seyng this bryde

thus gayly arayed, toke her by the hande and ledde her thorough a passynge foule donge hyll, and there made her fall and fouled her gaye araye, and than he ranne lyghtly awaye shoutynge and laughynge, and ranne unto the brydes kytchen where her dyner was appereyled and caughte a lyuyng catte and caste her in the potte of pouldred befe. The whiche incontynente was tolde to themperoure, where at he and all his lordes laughed, and had grete game there at, and they loued Robert passynge well, for he made moche myrth without harme.

How the Seneschall had gadred a grete armye of men of warre of Saresyns, and layde syege to Rome, by cause the emperoure wolde not gyue hym his doughter in maryage.

IN the meane season whyle Robert was thus in Rome doynge his penaunce as a forsayd, which dured seuen yeres or there about in the emperoure's courte, the whiche emperour had a fayre doughter, but she was borne domb and neuer spoke, and the emperours senesshal dyuerse tymes had desyred his doughter in maryage of the emperoure, but he wolde neuer graunte hym her, wherfore the senesshall was gretly moued and angry therwith themperoure, for he thoughte he myght haue wonne of hym his empyre by force, and myght, in soo moche the seneschall came upon a tyme with a grete hoost of Sarasyns, and layde syege to the cyte of Rome, wherof the emperour had grete maruayle

and wondred, than the emperour gadred and assembled all the lordes barons askinge of them counsell, saynge thus, "My lordes, gyue me good counseyl that we may withstande this Hethen dogges whiche haue layde syege here to our cyte, wherefore I take grete thought for they kepe all my lande under theyr subieccyon and they wyll brynge us to confusyon yf that God out of his endles mercy helpe us not, wherefore I praye you euerychone to go fyght with them with all our power and myght and dryue them awaye;" than answered the lordes and knyghts all with one assentsaynge, "Souerayne lorde your counseyl is good and wyse, wherefore we be all ready to goo with you and gyue them batayle and defende our ryght bothe lande and cyte." The emperour thanked them of this answeare and was glad therof, and made proclamacyon throughout all his landes and cytees that eury man olde and younge that were able to bere armes sholde make them redy to fyght ayenst theyr moost crnell ennyes the Sarasyns which were come into his lande, and contynent whan this proclamation was done amonge the comyns eury man was wyllynge and redy to go with themperour to fyght and defende theyr ryght, and so they wént forth in a fayre ordynaunce with themperour to fyght upon theyr mortall ennyes the Hethen dogges. And for all that themperour had moche mo people than the seneschall, yet the seneschall had wonne the felde, hadde not God of his grace sente theder Robert to resyste and helpe the Romaines in theyr grete necessyte.

How our Sauyour Jhesu hauynge compassyon on the crysten blode, sent Robert by an aungell a whyte horse and harneys, commaundyng hym to go rescue and helpe the Romayns ayenst the Ethen dogges the Sarasyns:

THE emperour and the Romayns went to the batayle as sayd is ayenst the Sarasyns, and Robert was at home, where he was accostomed to walke in the gardyne to a fountayne or well to drynke, and this was on the same daye that themperour with his hoste sholde gyue batayle ayenst the Sarasyns: than came there, a uoyce oute of Heuen sente from our Lorde, saynge in this maner. "Robert, God commaundeth you, by me, that ye incontynent arme you with this harneys, and lyght upon this horse that God hath sente you, and ryde in all the hast possyble and rescue the emperour and his people." Robert herynge the commaundement of God was abashed in his mynde, and durst not do ayenst goddes commaundement, but in contynent he armed hym and lepte on the hors without tarynge and rode his waye. The emperour's doughter whiche I tolde you of before, stode at a wyndowe and sawe Robert thus armed on horsbacke, than if she coude haue spoken she wolde haue tolde it, but she coude not speke for she was dombe, but she remembred and bare it surely in her mynde. Robert thus horst and harnayst, rode into themperours hoost whiche he sawe sore ouer pressed with theyr enmyes the Turkes, in so moche, that had

not God and Robert rescued them, the crysten had ben all slayne, but whan Robert was come into the hoost he put him in the moost prese of the Turkes and faughte and layde on eche syde on these cursed houndes ; there a man myght haue sene armes, legges, hedes tomble on the grounde, both horse and man that neuer rose after : it was a worlde to se the murdre that Robert dyde amonge the dampned dogges the Sarasyns ; so to make shorte tale, Robert dyde so moche, that the Sarasyns were constrayned to flye awaye and themperour helde the felde and had the vycторыe of them.

How Robert turned agayne to the forsayd fountayne, and there unarmed hym, whan he had thus subdued and vaynquysshed the Sarasyns and put them to flyght.

Now hath the emperour gotten the felde and the honoure, thanked be God, and Robert is torned agayne to the sayd fountayne, and there unarmed hym and layde the harneys on the hors, whiche incontynent was vanysht awaye that no man coude knowe nor perceyue where he become ; and Robert bode styll standynge by the fountayne. Themperour's doughter seyng this had grete meruayll of this, and wolde haue tolde it forth but she was dombe and coude no speke. Robert had a race in his face, whiche he gote in the batayll, but he was none otherwyse hurte ; the emperour was glad, and thanked God of his victory ayenst the false dogges the

Sarasyns ; and thus beyng mery, he came home to his palays ; and whan they were all set to dynen, Robert presented hymselfe before themperour as he was wonte to do, playnge the fole, and makynge hym dombe as afore rehersed is ; the emperour reioysed in hymselfe whan he se Robert, for he loued hym well ; and whan he perceyued Robert's hurte in his face, and thought that some of his seruauntes had hurte hym whyle he was out, wherfore he was angry, and said : " Here in this court be some enuyous men, for whyle we haue ben out at batayle, they haue beten and hurte this poore innocent creature in his face, which is grete synne, for though he be a fole he dooth no man harme." So themperour commaunded them all upon a grete payne that no man sholde doo hym harme, yf they dyde they sholde be punysshed, that all other sholde be ware by them. Than the emperoure began to axe his knyghtes yf there were any of them that coude telle of the knyght with the whyte hors that came preuely in to the felde, and so valyauntely rescued them, themperour's doughter this herynge poynted themperour her fader that it was Robert ; but the emperour understode not what his doughter mente whan she poynted, for she coude not speke, wherfore he called her maystres to hym, and axed her what his doughter mente by her poyntyng, and her maystres answered and said : " Your doughter menes by her poyntyng that this day ye haue gotten the batayll and vycторыe thrughe the helpe of your fole Robert, and the race that is in his face he hath gotten

it in the batayll." The emperour understandyng the mynde and intent of his doughter, he was angry and sayd to her maystres: "Ye sholde teche and lerne my doughter wysdome, and no folye ne peuysnesse wherewithall I am myscontent." The doughter seyng that herfader was angry, pointed no more, notwithstandinge she wyst well that it was trewe that she poynted and mente, for in as moche as she had sene the aungell bryng hym the hors and harneys. This remayned in this wyse a certayne season, and after that the Sarasyns were put to flyght by the Romaynes, as sayd is, yet came the senesshall agayne with moche more company, and layde syege to Rome; and the Romaynes sholde haue lost the felde ayen, had not the knyghte on the whyte horse bene, to whome God sent hors and harnays as he had done before. To make shorte tale, this knyght dyde so moche that the Sarasyns were put to flyght, and the Romaynes won the felde and vycторыe as they dyde before. There were some of the emperour's meyny layde wayte where this knyght became, but as soone as the batayle was done he was gone no man coude tell were he was become, saue only the emperour's doughter whiche se hym at the fountayne agayne unarmyng hym.

How Robert gatte the thyrd batayle as he dyde before
which she kepte secrete.

In a short tyme after this the senesshall tourned agayne
with a moche greter power than he had before, and

layde syege to Rome ; and yet the emperour rode to the batayle, he commaunded his knyghtes and barones to take good hede fro whens that knyght came with the whyte horse, and what he was and where he became, for he had grete desyre to knowe what he was. The knyghtes answered it sholde be done. The day came that they must ryde forth to the batayle, and sertayne of the best knyghtes rode pryuely into a wood that stode a lytell there besyde, and there they wayted whiche waye the knyghte on the whyte horse sholde come to the batayle ; but they loste theyr laboure, for they coude not tell whens he come. But whan they sawe hym in the batayle, they rode towarde hym to helpe hym and receyue hym. This same batayle was sore foughten on bothe partyes, but the Sarasyns lost there courage, for Robert layde on soo grete and myghty strokes, that no man myght stande under his hande ; so that in conclusyon Robert dyde so moche and so valyantly, that the Sarasyns were put to the dyscomfyture wherof themperour was gretly enjoyed ; the senesshall with the Sarasyns were passynge angry and sore moued therwith all.

How one of the Emperour's knyghtes hurte Robert in
his thyghe with a spere.

THAN whan this batayle was done, euery man rode home, and Robert wolde haue touned agayne to the fountayne to unarme hym as he was wonte to do before, but the forsayd knyghtes werẽ touned agayne to the

wood, to awayte for the knyght with the whyte hors ; and whan they sawe hym come, they rode all at ones out of the wood, and cryed with a loud voyce saynge unto hym : “ O noble knyght, tary and speke with us, who that ye be, and whens and out of what lande ye come, to the entent that we may shewe it to the emperour, whiche specyally he desyreth for to knowe.” Robert this herynge was sore ashamed, and smote his whyte hors with his sporres, flyngynge ouer hylles and ouer valleyes, for bycause he wolde not be knowen ; but there followed hym a bolde knyght, well horsed, with a spere wenyng to haue kylled his whyte horse, but he myste, and smote Robert in the thyghe with his spere, and the spere heed brake of and stacke styll in his thyghe, but yet for all this he coude gete no knowlege of the knyght with the whyte horse, for he rode from them all euerychone, whereof they were passynge sory. Robert rode so sore, tyll at the laste he came unto the fountayne and unarmed hym, and layde the harnays on the horse as he hadde done before, whiche in contynente was vanysshed awaye and gone ; and he drewe out the spere hed out of his thyghe, and hyd it bytwene two grete stones by the fountayne ; than he layde grece and mosse upon his wounde, for he durst let no man loke therto, for fere he sholde haue ben knowen. And all this sawe and marked the emperour’s daughter ; for bycause she se that Robert was a fayre and well faouered yonge knyght, she began to cast her loue unto hym. And whan Robert hadde dressed his

wounde, he came in to the halle, to gete hym some mete, and he halted as lytell as he coude, and kept it secretly, that almost no man coude perceyue it, and suffred moore payne a thousande tymes than it semeth by hym. Shortly after this, came home the knyght that had hurte Robert, and began to recounte to themperour how the knyght with the whyte horse had out-ryden hym, and how he had hurte hym sore ayenst his wyll, and sayd to the emperour: "I beseche you, my lorde emperour, here what I shall tell you, and in what maner ye shall knowe who is he that hath holpen you; itis bestye make a proclamaeyon and publyshe thrughe-out your empyre, and yf there be ony knyght in whyte harnays and a whyte horse that he be brought to your presence, and that he brynge with hym the spere-heed where withall he was hurte in his thyghe, shewynge the wounde, and that ye gyve hym youre doughter to wyfe, and halfe youre empyre with her." Themperour this herynge, was of his counseyll very gladde, and incontynentall haste proclamed and publysshed thrughe-out all the empyre, and thought that the knyght had gyuen hym good counseyll.

How the Senesshall thruste a spere-heed in to his thyghe, wenyng to haue begyled the Emperour, and to haue wonne his doughter therby.

It befell in shorte tyme after, that the senesshall had knowlege and understandyng of the emperour's proclamation, and how he myghte wyne themperour's

doughter, whiche he had many tymes bene about, he dyde grete dylygence, and caused to be sought and gotten a whyte horse and white barnays, and thryste a spere heed in his thyghe, wenyng therby to deceyue themperour, and to gete his doughter to wyfe; and whan this was done he commaunded all his men to arme them, and ryde wyth hym to the emperour; and he rode so sore tyll he came to Rome with great royalte and solace, and without ony taryenge he rode streyght to the emperour, saynge to hym in this wyse: "My lorde I am he that you so valyauntly receyued: thre tymes I haue caused you to haue honoure and victorye ayenst the cursed Sarasyns." Themperour thynkyng upon no treason nor deceyte, sayd: "Ye be a valyaunt and a wyse knyght; but I had went the contrarye, for we haue taken you for a vylayne and a forsworne knyght." The senesshall was very angry and sore moned here withall, and answered the emperoure shortly and angerly: "My lorde emperour, meruayll you nothyng here of, for I am not such a cowarde as ye wene that I be:" and thus saynge he toke out the spere-heed and shewed it the emperour, and uncouered the wounde the whiche he had made hymselfe in hys thyghe. The knyghte stode by whiche that hurt Robert before, and began to compasse in his mynde, for he se well that it was not the heed of the spere, but he durst saye nothyng for fere, lest the senesshall wolde haue kylled hym. We wyll leue nowe of the senesshall, and speke of Robert, which is among dogges, sore wounded, as ye have herde before.

How God sent an aungell to the heremyte that he sholde goo to Rome and seke Robert, for he had full doone his penaunce.

THE heremyte whiche ye haue herde of before, that shroue and sette Robert his penaunce, laye on a nyght in his selle and slepte, and thus slepyng there cam to hym a voyce, and bad hym lyghtly aryse and goo to Rome, to the place where Robert was doynge his penaunce ; and the aungell toide the heremyte all the doynge of Robert, shewynge how that his penaunce was fully done, and that God hadde forgyuen hym his synnes, wherof the heremyte was uery gladde, and in the mornynge erly he arose and wente to Rome warde, and in lyke wyse in the same mornynge the senesshall rose be tyme and wente to Rome to the emperoure to desyre and haue his doughter accordynge to the publycacyon and crye, to the whiche the emperoure consented her to hym without any longe aduysement. But whan the doughter understode that she was gyuen to the senesshall she raylled and raged as thoughe she hadde ben wood and madde ; she tare her hare from her heed, and all to tare her clothes, but it myght nothyng auayle her, for she was constrayned, and must be arayed lyke a bryde, and an emperour's doughter which shold be maryed, and the emperour ladde her by the hande hymselfe to the chyrche royally accompanied with lordes and ladyes and gentylwomen, but the doughter made the gretest sorowe of the worlde in so moche that no man coude content her mynde.

How the Emperour's daughter thrughe the grace of God began for to speke the fyrst worde that ever she spake in her lyfe.

THAN as the emperour with all his estate was come in to the chyrche, the emperour's daughter whiche was dumbe, sholde marye the senesshall, there dyde ourlorde a fayre myracle, for the loue of the holy man Robert, to the entente he sholde be exalted, whome euery body helde fer a fole and with hym mocked. Whan the preest sholde begyn the seruyce, and to marye the senesshall and this yonge mayde togyder, the daughter thrughe the grace of God began to speke to the emperoure her fader in this wyse: "Fader I holde you not wyse, but fer ouer sene in that ye byleue that this proude folysshe traytoure telleth you, for all that he telleth you is lyes; but here in this towne is a holy and deuoute persone, for whose sake God hath gyuen me my speche, wherfore I loue hym in my herte, for I haue alway sene and marked his valyance and holynes, but noo man wolde byleue me what poyntyng or sygnes that I made:" then the emperoure this herynge, was almost oute of his mynde for joye, whan he herde his daughter thus speke, the whiche neuer spake before, wherby he knewe well ynough that the senesshall hadde betrayed and deceyued hym: the senesshall this herynge, was wode angry and foule ashamed, and lyghten upon his horse and rode awaye and all his companye. The pope beyng presente axed the mayden who the man was that she spoke of, that the mayde

ladde the pope and the emperour her fader to the fountayne where Robert was wonte to arme and unarme hym, and there she toke out the spere heed from bytwene the two stones where that Robert had hydde it, and than she caused the spere for to be brought forth, where of the heed was broken, whiche was lyghtly brought to her, and that heed and the spere joynde togyder in one as cloes as thoughte they hadde not be broken, than sayd the mayde to the pope, "we have hadde thre tymes vycторыe by his noble valyaunce ayenst the myscredaunte Sarasyns, for I haue thre tymes sene his horse and harnays wherwith he hath thre tymes armed and unarmed hym, but I can not tell who brought hym horse and harnays, nor unto whom he delyuered it, but I knowe well that whan he hadde this done he layde hymselfe downe by the dogges"; and the mayden sayd unto the emperoure her fader in this wyse, "This is he that hathe saued youre landes and youre honoure, and gate you vycторыe of the Hethen houndes the Sarasyns, wherfore ye ought of deute to rewarde hym, and yf it please you we wyll go all to hym and speke with hym;" than wente they for the fole, the emperour and the doughter with all the lordes and ladyes unto Robert, whome they founde lyenge among dogges, they folowed hym and dyde hym reuerence, but Robert answered them not.

How the heremyte found Robert, and commaunded hym to speke, saynge to hym, that his penaunce was fulle done and his synnes forgyuen.

THE emperour spake to Robert and said, "I praye you

swete frende come to me and shewe me your thyghe I wyll nedes se ;” whan Robert herde themperour say these wordes he wyst well ynoughe wherfore he was comen to hym, but he lete hym as thoughe he had not understonden hym, and Robert dyde many madde conceytes to make the pope and themperour to laughe and forgate that they spoke of, but the pope spake to Robert, and coniured hym in the name of God that on the crosse dyed for our redempeyon, that yf it be Goddes wyll that thou haste spoken that thou speke now unto us, and than Robert rose up lyke a fole and gaue the pope his blessynge, and here withall Robert loked behynde hym and sawe the heremyte that set hym his penaunce, and as soone as the heremyte se Robert whiche he had longe sought, he cryed to hym with a loude voyce that every man myght here hym that were there: “ My frende herken unto me, I knowe well that ye be Robert that men calle the deuyll, but now ye be in grace and conceyte with Almyghty God, and for that foule and hydeous name ye shall haue a fayre name, and be called the Seruaunte of God, ye be he that hath saued this lande from the Sarasyns, wherfore I praye you that ye serue and worshyp God as ye haue done hyderto, for oure Lorde sendeth me now to you commaundyng you to speke, and no more to counterfeyte the fole, for it is Goddes wylland commaundement, for he hath forgyuen you all your synnes, for by caus ye haue made satysfacyon and full done your penaunce :” whan Robert herde this he fell lyghtely on his knees and lyfte up his handes towarde Heuen saynge thus,

“ I gyue laude and thankes to God creature of Heuen and erthe, that it hath pleased the to forgyue me myne abhomynable and grete synnes thurgh so lytell and lyght penaunce that I haue done :” therefore, whan the pope, the emperour and the daughter, and all that were there present herde Robert speke thus swetely, they were all heer of gretely enioyed and had grete meruayll of ; themperoure seyng his noble valyaunce vertue and curtesye that in hym was and wolde haue gyuen hym his daughter to wyfe, but the heremyte wolde not it sholde be so wherfore euery man departed and wente home.

How Robert tourned agayne to Rome for to marye the Emperour’s daughter by the commaundement and wyll of God.

Now the storye telleth as after that Robert had remyssyon of his synnes and was gone towarde his countre, than out of Rome God commaunded hym that he sholde tourne agayne to Rome and marye the emperour’s daughter, whiche loued hym passyngly well, and he sholde haue by her a sone wherby the Crysten beleue sholde be encreased and fortifyed and defended. Robert at the commaundement of God turned agayne a Rome and maryed themperour’s daughter with grete tryumphe and solace, for themperour and all the Romayns were therof very glad, this brydale was royally kepte and euery man that se Robert loued hym aboue all other ; and the people sayd one to another,

that they were gretely beholdynge to Robert, that he had redemed them from theyr mortall enmyes the Sarasyns, this feest was grete and notable and dured xiiij dayes, and whan the feest and brydale was done Robert wolde departe with his lady into Normandye to vysyte his fader and mother, and toke leue of themperour whiche gaue hym many royall and grete gyftes, as golde and siluer and preeyous stones of diuerse colours, also themperour gaue hym knyghtes and squyers to ryde and conduyte hym in to his countree.

How Robert and his lady came to Rowane in Normandye
with grete honour and worship.

ROBERT and his lady rode soo ferre they came into Normandye into the noble cyte of Rowane with grete myrth and solace, where they were receyued with grete tryumphe for the comyntees of the countree were sorye and in grete heyness that theyr duke Robert's fader was dyseased, for bycause that he was a wyse and a renommed prynee, A lytell besyde dwelled a cursed knyght, whiche hadde done the duchesse grete wronge and suppressed many knyghtes after her husbandes dysease. But whan Robert was come euery man dradde hym and dyde hym grete reuerence and worshypp, than some sayd we wende he had ben deed, and all the lordes and burgeys of Rowane, gadred them togyder and with grete honoure and reuerence they receyued Robert and helde hym as theyr lorde and souerayne. And whan they hadde receyued hym honourably they

shewed hym of this before sayd knyght; he hadde many tymes suppressed, and done wronge to his moder, sythen the deth of his fader; than whan Robert herde and understode this, he sente lyghtely men of armes to take the sayd knyght the whiche dyde so moche that they toke hym and brought hym to Robert whiche made hym to be hanged, wherfore the duches was ryght glad, but she was moche more gladder that Robert her sone was come home, for she wende he hadde ben deed; and whan Robert and his moder were thus togyder, he recounted unto her how the emperour had gyuen hym his doughter in maryage, and how he had done his penaunce, the duchesse herynge her sones wordes, she began to wepe very sore, for bycause he had suffred so grete pouerte and penaunce thurgh his defaute.

How the Emperour sent a messenger unto the Duke Robert, that he sholde come and rescue hym ayenst the Senesshall.

In the meane season, whyles Robert was thus at Rowane with his moder and his lady in grete joye and solace, there came a messenger fro the emperour unto Robert whiche dyde hym reuerence, and saynge thus unto hym: "My lorde duke, the emperour hathe sente me hyther to you, and he prayeth you for to come and rescue hym ayenst the false traytoure the senesshall with the Sarasyns, which haue layde syege to Rome." Whan Robert herde these wordes, he was sorye in his mynde for the emperour, and shortly assembled as many men of armes as

he coude get in his lande of Normandye, and forth withall rode with them towarde Rome, to helpe and socoure the emperour; but before he coude come thyder the false traytour the senesshall had slayne the emperour, which was grete pyte; but Robert wente streyght into Rome, and lyghtly with all his power and myght went ayenst the senesshall. And whan Robert aspyed the false traytoure, he deseryed hym, saynge thus: "Abyde, thou false traytour, now thou shalte neuer escape my handes yf thou abyde me in the felde, for thou art now nygh thy lyve's ende; thou dydest putte ones a spere-heed in thy thygh for to haue deceyued the Romayns, defende now thy lyue ayenst me, for thou shalte neuer escape myn handes, and thou hast also slayne my lorde themperoure, wherfore thou shalt be well rewarded after that thou hast deserued." And with these wordes Robert, with a grete desyre and myghty courage, rode unto the senesshall and gaue hym suche stroke on the helmette, that he clove helmet and heed unto the teeth, and in contynente the traytour fell downe deed unto the erth, and Robert made hym to be brought in to Rome, to the entente that he sholde there be slayne to reuenge the Romayns, the whiche was done in the presence of all the people that were in Rome; and in this wyse fenysshed that traytour the senesshall his lyfe, and had a shameful death, wherby men may make and take hede that it is grete folye to coveyte or desyre thynges passynge theyr degre; for and the senesshall had not desyred the

emperoure's daughter, the whiche passed and exceeded ferre aboute his degree, he had not dyed this shameful deth, but myght haue lyued and the emperour also, and haue dyed good frendes.

How that the Duke Robert tourned agayne to Rowayne after he had made the Senesshall to be slayne.

ROBERT the duke defended the cyte from theyr enemyes, and than he retourned agayne with all his companye unto Rowane to his wyfe, whiche was passynge sorrowfull and pensyfe; but whan she herde that the traytour the senesshall had slayne her fader, she was almost out of her mynde; but Robert's moder comforted her in the best maner that she coude or myght. And for to make shortely an ende of our mater, and so to fenyshe this boke we wyll lette passe to wryte of the grete dole and sorowe of the yonge duchesse, and speke of the duke Robert, whiche in his youth was about to all myschefe and vyce, and all ungracyousnes, without ony measure or reason, for he was a greter devourer, and a more vengeable, than any lyon, nothyng sparyng, nor on no man hauyng mercy nor pyte. And after this he lyued xii yere in grete penaunce, lyke a wylde man, without ony speche, and lyke a dumbe beest etyng and drynkyng with dogges, and there after was he exalted and honoured of them, whiche before dyde holde hym for a fole or an innocente, and mocked with hym. This Robert lyued longe in vertue and honoure with that noble ladye his wyfe, and he was beloued and dradde of hyghe and lowe degre, for he dyde ryght

and justyee, as well ouer the ryche as ouer the poore, kepyng his lande in reste and in pease, and begote a chyld with her, and whiche he called Rycharde, whiche dyde afterwarde many noble actes and dedes of armes with grete Charlemayne kyng of Fraunce, for he dyde helpe hym for to gere and fortifye the Crysten fayth, and he made alwayes grete warre upon the Sarasyns. And he lyued in his lande in rest and pease, and was beloued of poore and ryche, and all his comente loued hym in lykewyse as Robert his fader was loued, for they lyued bothe deuoutly and in vertue, wherfore I praye God that we may so lyue in this lyfe we may optayne and come to euerlastyng lyfe. To the whiche brynge us he that bought us and al mankynde with his preecyous blode and bytter passyon. Amen.

Thus endeth the lyfe of Robert the Deuyll,
 That was the seruaunt of our Lorde,
 And of his condycyons that was full euyll,
 Emprynted in London by Wynkyn de Worde.

Here endeth the lyfe of the most feerfullest and unmercifullest and myscheuous Robert the Deuyll, whiche was afterwarde called the Seruaunt of our Lorde Jhesu Cryste. Emprynted in Flete-strete in the sygne of the sonne, by WYNKYN DE WORDE.

THOMAS OF READING.

THOMAS OF READING.

“*Thomas of Reading, or the Six Worthie Yeomen of the West,*” is the production of Thomas Deloney, a famous ballad maker in his day, in which latter character he appears to have drawn upon himself the indignation of Kemp, (one of the original actors of Shakspeare). Kemp is celebrated for his miraculous morris-dance, performed in nine days from London to Norwich; but this feat having been misrepresented in the popular ballads, Kemp thus remonstrates against our author.* “I have made a priuie search; what priuate jig-monger of your jolly number had been the author of these abhominable ballets written of me. I was told it was the great ballade-maker, T. D. or Thomas Deloney, chronicler of the memorable Lives of the ‘*Six Yeomen of the West,*’ ‘*Jack of Newberry,*’ ‘*the Gentle Craft,*’ and such like honest men, omitted by Stowe, Hollinshed, Grafton, Hall, Froysart, and the rest of those well-deserving writers.”

* See Kemp’s *Nine Daies Wonder: performed in a Daunce from London to Norwich*, edited by the Rev. Alex. Dyce for the Camden Society.

Kemp's description of Deloney's biographies is fully justified by "Thomas of Reading," which is a mixture of historical fact and fictitious narration, and may be compared to the historical novel of modern times; for Coates, in his *History of Reading*, acknowledges the existence of our hero, even while he speaks slightly of Deloney's history. "The trade of Reading, " with respect to manufactories, is no longer considerable. *Thomas Cole*, in the time of *Edward I.* (query *Henry I.*) was called the *Rich Clothier* of Reading. Though his name and reputation occasioned a fabulous and childish penny history, called "the 'History of Thomas of Reading;' yet we may learn from the circumstance, that Reading was even then famous for its trade of clothing."

Thomas Deloney deserves to be had in remembrance by all lovers of our English Popular Literature, for he has contributed to it very largely, and in some instances with considerable poetical feeling. Mr. Dyce describes him as succeeding Elderton, "as the most popular ballad writer of his time;" and that his productions entitled him to be so considered, will be admitted by those who remember his very pleasing ballad of *Fair Rosamond*, printed by Percy in his *Reliques*, ii. 143, ed. 1794.

Deloney is supposed from the allusion to him made by Nash in his *Have with You to Saffron Walden*, who speaks of him as "the Balletting Silk Weaver," to have been a native of Norwich and a weaver by trade. The time of his birth is however unknown. His earliest production which has come down to us is a ballad, written by him on the execution of the fourteen Traitors who were engaged in Babbington's Conspiracy in 1586. It is entitled "*A proper New Ballad breefely declaring the Death and Execution of 14 most wicked Traitors who suffered Death in Lincolnes Inne Felde neere London; the 20 and 21st of September, 1586. To the Tune of Weep Weep.*" This was reprinted in the Collection of *Old Ballads from Early Printed Copies*, edited by Mr. Collier, which was the first publication of the Percy Society.

In 1596, Deloney was compelled to evade the search of the Mayor of London, and the punishment which, had he been captured, would have awaited him, for writing "a certain Ballad, containing a Complaint of "great Want and Scarcity of Corn within the Realm, ". . . . bringing in the Queen speaking with her people "Dialogue-wise; in very fond and undecent Sort." On which occasion he is described by Stowe, in his *Survey* (b. v. 333, ed. 1720), as "an idle fellow, and "one noted with the like spirit in printing a Book for

“ the Silk Weavers, wherein was found some such like
“ foolish and disorderly matter.”

Deloney did not, however, confine himself to the issuing of single ballads. We have no less than two collections of which he is the author ; and, thanks to the *Percy Society*, these once rare volumes are now accessible to all lovers of old Poetry. The first is *Strange Histories, or Songes and Sonets of Kings, Princes, Dukes, Lords, Ladyes, Knights and Gentlemen, being pleasant either to be read or songe : and a most excellent warning for all estates*, printed in 1607.

The second is, *The Garland of Goodwill. Divided into Three Parts, containing many pleasant Songs and Pretty Poems to sundry New Notes*, which Mr. Dixon, who edited the *Percy Society's* Reprint, supposes to have been printed as early as 1586.

Deloney's prose Histories, are *Thomas of Reading*, *Jack of Newbery*, and *The Gentle Craft*. *Thomas of Reading*, which is here reprinted, must have been published before 1600, in which year Kemp alluded to it in his *Nine Daies Wonder*, but the precise date of the first edition is not known : and such appears to have been its popularity that a fourth edition appeared in 1612, and the sixth, which is the one here reprinted, in 1632.

The Earl of Ellesmere possesses a copy in 4to.

1623, and in the Roxburgh sale "*The pleasant History of Thomas of Reading*," 4to. 1636, produced 5*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.*

The following entry in the Henslowe MSS. shews that it was made the subject of a dramatic performance :

12 Nov. 1601. *The six Clothiers of the West*, by Richard Hathway, Wentworth Smith and Wm. Haughton. The second part of *The Six Clothiers* by the same.

Thomas of Reading had, however, been preceded by two works of similar character. The earliest, "*The pleasant Historie of John Winchcomb, in his younger yeares called Jack of Newbery, the famous and worthy Clothier of England ; declaring his life and love, together with his charitable deeds and great Hospitality,*" &c., entered in the Stationers' Hall as early as 7th May, 1596, and of which the eighth edition appeared in 1619, 4to.

The third work of this character, for which we are indebted to Deloney, is *The Gentle Craft, a most merry and pleasant History, not altogether unprofitable nor any hurtfull ; very fitte to passe away the tediousness of the long winters evenings* : entered in the Stationers' Books on the 15th October, 1597, and of which an

edition bearing date 1598, and presumed to be the first, is extant.

All three of these books became popular favourites and eventually—which is the best proof of their popularity—Penny Chap Books.

Deloney did not long survive the publication of these Histories; for Kemp clearly speaks of him as dead in 1600,—“but I was given since to understand your late generale Tho. dyed poorely, as ye all must do, and was honestly buried, which is much to be doubted of some of you.”

With an epigram on our author, from *Skialetheia, or the Shadowe of Truth*, printed in 1598, we may bring our short biography of him to a close.

“ Like to the fatall ominous Raven, which tolls
The sick man’s dirge within his hollow beak,
So every paper-clothed post in Poules
To thee, Deloney, mourningly doth speke,
And tells thee of thy hempen tragedie:
The wracks of hungry Tyburne, nought to thync,
Such massacres made of thy balladry,
And thou in grieffe, for woe thereof must pine.
At every sheet’s end Fuscus’ rimes are read,
And thine in silence must be buried.”*

* Collier’s Dramatic Poetry, iii. 136. For the materials of this notice of Deloney, I am indebted in a great measure to the works of Mr. Collier, and to the Rev. A. Dyce’s edition of *The Nine Daies Wonder*.

Thomas of Reading contains many curious allusions to manners and customs now obsolete; and, though grounds of origin for several circumstances are stated which are not strictly borne out by historical research, much curious information may be gleaned from it. It would be tedious to illustrate every point to which our attention might be drawn; but the allusion to the *Gibbet Law of Halifax*, which was in full force at the time our author wrote, seems to justify some notice. The custom is supposed to have originated when the manor of Wakefield (of which Halifax was part) was bestowed on Earl Warren; for in the reign of King Edward I. at the pleas of assizes and jurats at the borough of Scarborough, John Earl of Warren and Surry, answering to a writ of *quo warranto*, said, That he claimed Gallows at Coningsburgh and Wakefield, and the power of doing what belonged to a gallows in all his lands and fees, and that he and all his ancestors had used the same from time immemorial, &c. The law or custom as regards Halifax appears to have been to the effect that,

1st. The thief was to be taken within the liberty, and if he escaped out of the liberty he could not be brought back to be executed; but if ever he returned again, and was taken, he was sure to suffer, as was

the case with one Lacy, who after his escape lived seven years out of the Liberty, but venturing back was beheaded on his former verdict in the year 1623. This man was not so wise as one Dinnis, who having been condemned to die, escaped out of the Liberty on the day intended for his execution (which might be done by running about five hundred yards), and never returned thither again; meeting several people, they asked him "if Dinnis was not to be beheaded that day?" his answer was, "I trow not," which having some humour in it, became a proverbial saying amongst the inhabitants, who to this day use the expression "I trow not, quoth Dinnis."

2d. The fact was to be proved in the clearest manner, the offender was to be taken either *handhabend* or *backberand*, having the stolen goods either in his hand, or bearing them on his back; or lastly, *confess and*, confessing that he took them.

3d. The value of the goods stolen must amount to thirteen pence halfpenny, or more.

4th. The accused was to be executed on the first Saturday after his condemnation, and

5th. When brought to the gibbet he was to have his head cut off from his body, &c.

Forty-nine persons appear to have been executed since a list was kept, of which five were in the six

last years of Henry VIII. ; twenty-five in the reign of Elizabeth ; seven in that of James I. ; ten in that of Charles I. ; and two during the interregnum.

The proceedings at the trials of the last malefactors, viz. Abraham Wilkinson and Andrew Mitchel, who suffered at Halifax gibbet on the 30th of April, 1650, are preserved in an account of Halifax, published by William Bentley, London, 1708 ; and in the Rev. Mr. Watson's History of Halifax, from which this account is taken, and where much curious matter is to be found, illustrative not only of the gibbet law of Halifax, but of the first gibbets and guillotines used in this country.



T H O M A S

OF

READING :

OR,

THE SIXE WORTHIE YEOMEN

OF THE WEST.

NOW THE SIXTH TIME CORRECTED AND ENLARGED

By T. D.

Thov shalt labovr till thov retvrne to dvste.

L O N D O N,

PRINTED BY ELIZ. ALLDE FOR

ROBERT BIRD.

1632.

THE PLEASANT HISTORIE OF THE
SIXE WORTHY YEOMEN
OF THE WEST.

IN the dayes of King Henry the first, who was the first king that instituted the high Court of Parliament, there liued nine men, which for the trade of Clothing, were famous throughout all England. Which Art in those dayes was held in high reputation, both in respect of the great riches that thereby was gotten, as also of the benefit it brought to the whole Common-wealth: the yonger sons of knights and Gentlemen, to whom their Fathers would leaue no lands, were most commonly preferred to learne this trade, to the end, that thereby they might liue in good estate, and driue forth their days in prosperity.

Among all Crafts this was the onely chiefe, for that it was the greatest merchandize, by the which our Country became famous thorowout all Nations. And it was verily thought, that the one halfe of the people in the land liued in those dayes therby, and in such good sort,

that in the Common-wealth there were few or no beggers at all: poore people, whom God lightly blessed with most children, did by meanes of this occupation so order them, that by the time that they were come to be sixe or seuen yeeres of age, they were able to get their owne bread: Idlenesse was then banished our coast, so that it was a rare thing to heare of a thiefe in those dayes. Therefore it was not without cause that Clothiers were then both honoured and loued, among whom these nine persons in this kings dayes were of great credit, viz. Tho. Cole of Reading, Gray of Glocester, Sutton of Salisburie, Fitzallen of Worcester, (commonly called William of Worcester) Tom Doue of Excester, and Simon of South-hampton, alias Supbroth: who were by the King called, The sixe worthy Husbands of the West. Then were there three liuing in the North, that is to say, Cutbert of Kendall, Hodgekins of Hallifax, and Martin Byram of Manchester. Euery one of these kept a great number of seruants at worke, spinners, carders, weauers, fullers, dyers, sheerement, and rowers, to the great admiration of all those that came into their houses to behold them.

Now you shall vnderstand, these gallant Clothiers, by reason of their dwelling places, separated themselues in three seuerall companies: Gray of Glocester, William of Worcester, and Thomas of Reading, because their iourney to London was all one way, they conuersed commonly together: And Doue of Excester, Sutton of Salisburie, and Simon of South-hampton, they in like sort kept

company the one with the other, meeting euer all together at Bazingstoke: and the three Northerne Clothiers did the like, who commonly did not meet till they came to Bosomes Inne in London.

Moreover, for the loue and delight that these Western men had each in others companie, they did so provide, that their Waines and themselues would euer meet upon one day in London at Iarrats Hall, surnamed the Gyant, for that hee surpassed all other men of that age, both in stature and strength: whose merriments and memorable deeds I will set downe vnto you in this following discourse.

How King Henry sought the fauour of all his subjects especially of the Clothiers. Chap. 1.

This King Henry, who for his great learning and wisdom was called Beauclerke, beeing the third Son to the renowned Conquerour: after the death of his brother William Ruffus, tooke vpon him the gouernment of this Land, in the absence of his second brother Robert Duke of Normandie, who at this time was at wars amongst the Infidels, and was chosen King of Jerusalem, the which he, for the loue he bare to his owne country, refused, and with great honour returned from the holy Land; of whose coming when King Henry vnderstood, knowing hee would make claime to the Crowne, sought by all meanes possible to winne the good will of his Nobility, and to get the fauor of the Commons by courtesie: for the obtaining whereof hee did them many fauours,

thereby the better to strengthen himselfe against his brother.

It chanced on a time, as he, with one of his sonnes, and diuers of his Nobilitie, rode from London towards Wales, to appease the fury of the Welshmen, which then began to raise themselves in armes against his authority, that he met with a great number of Waines loaden with cloth, comming to London, and seeing them still driue one after another so many together, demanded whose they were : the Waine-men answered in this sort : Coles of Reading (quoth they.) Then by and by the King asked another saying : Whose cloth is all this ? Old Coles, quoth hee : and againe anon after he asked the same questions to others, and still they answered, Old Coles. And it is to be remembred, that the king met them in such a place so narrow and streight, that hee with the rest of his traine, were faine to stand as close to the hedge, whilst the carts passed by, the which at that time being in number aboue two hundred, was neere hand an hour ere the King could get roome to be gone : so that by his long stay, he began to be displeased, although the admiration of that sight did much qualifie his furie ; but breaking out in discontent, by reason of his stay, he said, I thought Old Cole had got a Commission for all the carts in the Country to cary his cloth. And how if he haue (quoth one of the Wainmen) doth that grieue you good sir ? Yes, good sir, said our King, what say you to that ? The fellow seeing the King (in asking the question) to bend his

browes, though he knew not what he was, yet being abasht, he answered thus: Why sir, if you be angry, no body can hinder you; for possible sir, you haue anger at commandement. The king seeing him in vttering of his words to quiuer and quake, laughed heartily at him, as well in respect of his simple answere, as at his feare: and so soone after the last Wain went by, which gaue present passage vnto him and his Nobles: and thereupon entring into communication of the commoditie of cloathing, the king gaue order at his home returne, to have Old Cole brought before his Maiestie, to the intent he might haue conference with him, noting him to be a subiect of great abilitie: but by that time he came within a mile of Staines, he met another company of waines, in like sort laden with cloth, whereby the king was driven into a further admiration: and demanding whose they were, answere was made in this sort: They be good-man Suttons of Salisbury, good sir; and by that time a score of them were past, he asked againe, saying; whose are these; Suttons of Salisbury, qd. they, and so still, as often as the king asked that question, they answered, Suttons of Salisbury. God send me many such Suttons, said the king. And thus the farther he tranelled Westward, more Waines and more he met continually: vpon which occasion he said to his Nobles, That it would neuer grieue a king to die for the defence of a fertile Countrie and faithful subiects. I alwayes thought (quoth he) that Englands valor was more than her wealth, yet now I see her wealth

sufficient to maintaine her valour, which I will seeke to cherish in all I may, and with my sword keepe my selfe in possession of that I haue, Kings and Louers can brooke no partners: and therefore let my Brother Robert thinke, that although hee was Heir to England by birth, yet I am King by possession. All his fauourers I must account my foes, and will serue them as I did the vngratefull Earle of Shrewsbury, whose lands I haue seized, and banisht his body. But now we will leaue the king to his iourney into Wales, and waiting his home returne, in the meane time tell you the meeting of these iolly Clothiers at London.

How William of Worcester, Gray of Gloucester, and old Cole of Reading, met altogether at Reading, and of their communication by the way as they rode to London. Chap. 2.

WHEN Gray of Gloucester, and William of Worcester were come to Reading, according to their custome, they alwayes called old Cole to haue his companie to London, who also duely attended their comming, hauing provided a good breakefast for them: and when they had well refreshed themselues, they tooke their horses and rode on towards the Citie: and in their iourney William of Worcester asked them if they had not heard of the Earle of Moraigne his escape out of the Land? What is he fled qd. Gray? I muse much at this matter, being in such great regard with the King as he was: but I pray you, doe you not know the cause of his going,

qd. Cole? The common report, quoth Gray, is this, that the couetous Earle, who through a greedy desire, neuer left begging of the King for one thing or other, and his request being now denied him, of meere obstinēy and wilfull frowardnesse, hath banished himselfe out of the Land, and quite forsaken the Country of Cornwall, hauing made a vow neuer to set foote within England againe, and as report goeth, he with the late banisht Earl of Shrewsbury, haue ioyned themselues with Robert Duke of Normandy, against the King, the which actions of theirs hath inflamed the Kings wrath, that their Ladies with their children are quite turned out of doores succourlesse and friendlesse, so that it is told me, they wander vp and downe the Country like forlorne people, and although many doe pitie them, yet few doe releue them.

A lamentable hearing, qd. William of Worcester, and with that casting their eyes aside, they espyed Tom Doue with the rest of his companions come riding to meete them, who as soone as they were come thither, fell into such pleasant discourses, as did shorten the long way they had to Colebroke, where alwayes at their comming towards London they dined: and being once entred into their Inne, according to olde custome, good cheere was prouided for them: for these Clothiers were the chiefest guests that trauailed along the way: and this was as sure as an act of Parliament, that Tom Doue could not digest his meat without musicke, nor drinke wine without women, so that his hostesse being a merry wench, would

oftentimes call in two or three of her neighbours wiues to keepe him company, where, ere they parted, they were made as pleasant as Pies. And this being a continuall custome amongst them when they came thither, at length the womens husbands beganne to take exceptions at their wiues going thither: whereupon great controuersie grew betweene them, in such sort, that when they were most restrained, then they had most desire to worke their wills: now gip (quoth they) must we be so tyed to our taske, that wee may not drinke with our friends? fie, fie, vpon these yellow hose; will no other die serue your turne? haue wee thus long bin your wiues, and doe you now mistrust vs? verily you eate too much salt, and that makes you grow cholericke, badde liners iudge all others the like, but in faith you shall not bridle vs so like asses, but wee will goe to our friends, when we are sent for, and doe you what you can. Well, quoth their husbands, if you be so head-strong, we will tame you: it is the duty of honest women to obey their husbands sayings. And of honest men (quoth they) to thinke well of their wiues; but who doe sooner empeach their credit, then their husbands, charging them, if they doe but smile, that they are subtill; and if they doe but winke, they account them wily: if sad of countenance, then sullen: if they be froward, then they are counted shrewes: and sheepish if they bee gentle: if a woman keepe her house, then you will say shee is melancholy, if shee walke abroad, then you call her a gadder; a Puritane, if she be precise; and a wanton, if shee be

pleasant: so there is no woman in the world that knowes how to please you: that we thinke our selues accurst to be married wiues, liuing with so many woes. These men, of whose company you forewarne vs, are (for ought that euer we saw) both honest and courteous, and in wealth farre beyond your selues: then what reason is there, why we should restraine to visit them? is their good will so much to be requited with scorne, that their cost may not be counteruailed with our company? if a woman be disposed to play light of loue, alas, alas doe you thinke that you can preuent her? Nay, wee will abide by it, that the restraint of liberty inforceth women to be lewd: for where a woman cannot be trusted, she cannot thinke her selfe beloued, and if not beloued, what cause hath she to care for such a one? therefore husbands, reforme your opinions, and doe not worke your owne woes, with our discredit. The Clothiers, we tell you, are iolly fellowes, and but in respect to our courtesie, they would scorne our company.

The men hearing their wiues so well to plead for themselves, knew not how to answere, but said, they would put the burden on their consciences, if they deale vniustly with them, and so left them to their owne wills. The women hauing thus conquered their husbands conceits, would not leaue the fauour of their friends for frownes, and as aboute the rest Tom Doue was the most pleasantest, so was he had in most reputation with the women, who for his sake made this Song:

Welcome to Towne, Tom Doue, Tom Doue,
The merriest man aliue,

Thy company still we loue, we loue,
God grant thee well to thrine,
And neuer will (we) depart from thee,
For better or worse, my ioy,
For thou shalt still haue our good will,
Gods blessing on my sweet Boy.

This song went vp and downe through the whole Country, and at length became a dance among the common sort, so that Tom Doue, for his mirth and good fellowship, was famous in euery place. Now when they came to London, they were welcome to the Oast Iarrat the Gyant, and as soone as they were alighted, they were saluted by the Merchants, who waited their coming thither, and alwayes prepared for them a costly supper, where they commonly made their bargaine, and vpon euery bargaine made, they still vsed to send some tokens to the Clothiers wiues. The next morning they went to the hall, where they met the Northerne Clothiers, who greeted one another in this sort. What, my Masters of the West, well met: what cheere? what cheere? Euen the best cheere our Merchants could make vs: (quoth Gray.) Then you could not chuse but fare well, quoth Hodgekins: and you be weary of our company, adieu, quoth Sutton: Not so, said Martin, but shall wee not haue a game ere wee goe? Yes faith for an hundred pounds. Well said, old Cole, said they: and with that Cole and Gray went to the Dice with Martin and Hodgekins, and the Dice running on Hodgekins side, Coles money began to waste. Now by the masse, quoth Cole, my money shrinkes as bad as Northerne cloth. When they

had played long, Gray stept to it, and recouered againe the money that Cole had lost. But while they were thus playing, the rest being delighted in contrary matters euery man satisfied his owne humour.

Tom Doue called for musicke, William of Worcester for wine, Sutton set his delight in hearing merry tales, Simon of South-hampton got him into the kitchin, and to the pottage pot he goes, for he esteemed more a messe of pottage, then of a venizon pasty. Now sir, Cutbert of Kendall was of another mind, for no meate pleased him so well as mutton, such as was laced in a red petticoate. And you shall vnderstand, that alwayes when they went to dice, they got into Bosomes Inne; which was so called of his name that kept it, who being a foule slouen, went alwayes with his nose in his bosome, and one hand in his pocket, the other on his staffe, figuring forth a description of cold Winter, for he alwayes wore two coates, two caps, two or three paire of stockings, and a high paire of shooes, ouer the which he drew on a great paire of lined slippers, and yet would oft complaine of cold wherefore of all men generally he was called Old Bosome, and his house Bosomes Inne.

This lump of cold ice had lately married a young wife, who was as wily as she was wanton, and in her company did Cutbert onely delight, and the better to make passage to his loue, he would often thus commune with her: I muse, good wife, quoth he. Good wife, quoth she: Verily sir, in mine opinion, there is none good but God, and therefore call me Mistresse. Then said Cut-

bert, Faire Mistris, I haue often mused, that you being a proper woman, could find in your heart for to match with such a greazie Carle as this, an euill mannered mate, a foule lump of kitchin-stuffe, and such a one as is indeede, a scorne of men ; how can you like him that all women mislikes ? or loue such a loathsome creature ? me thinks verily it should grieue you to lend him a kisse, much more to lie with him. Indeed sir, quoth she, I had but hard fortune in this respect, but my friends would haue it so, and truly my liking and my loue toward him are alike, he neuer had the one, nor neuer shall get the other : yet I may say to you before I married him, there were diuers proper young men that were sutors vnto me, who loued mee as their liues, and glad was he that could get my company, those were my golden dayes, wherein my pleasure abounded, but these yeeres of care and grieffe, wherin my sorrowes exceede. Now no man regards mee, no man cares for me, and albeit in secret they might beare mee good-will, yet who dares shew it ? and this is a double grieffe, he carries ouer me so iealous a minde, that I cannot looke at a man, but presently he accuseth me of inconstancy, although (I protest) without cause.

And in troth, qd. Cutbert, he should haue cause to complaine for somewhat, were I as you. As sure as I liue, and so he shall, quoth she, if he doe not change his byas. Cutbert hearing her say so, began to grow further in requesting her fauour, wishing he might be her seruant and secret friend, and the better to obtaine

his desire, he gaue her diuers gifts, insomuch that she began something to lissen vnto him : and albeit she liked well of his speeches, yet would she blame him, and take him vp very short sometimes for the same, till in the end, Cutbert shewed himselfe to be desperate, saying hee would drowne himselfe rather than liue in her disdain. O my sweet heart not so, quoth shee, God forbid I should be the death of any man : Comfort thy selfe, kind Cutbert, and take this kisse in token of further kindnesse, and if thou wilt haue my fauour, thou must be wise and circumspect, and in my husbands sight I would alwayes haue thee to find fault with my doings, blame my bad huswifries, dispraise my person, and take exceptions at euery thing, whereby he will be as well pleased, as Simon of South-hampton with a messe of pottage.

Deare Mistresse, quoth he, I will fulfill your charge to the vttermost, so that you will not take my iest in earnest. Shee answered, Thy foulest speeches I will esteeme the fairest, and take euery dispraise to be a praise from thee, turning each word to the contrary : and so for this time adieu, good Cutb. for supper time drawes neere, and it is meet for me to looke for my meat. With that down comes old Bosome, calling his wife, saying, Ho Winifred, is supper ready ? they haue done playing aboute : therefore let the Chamberlaine couer the Table. By and by, qd. she, it shall be done straight-way. How now my Masters who wins, qd. Cutbert ? Our money walkes to the West, qd. Martin :

Cole hath woone 40 pounds of me, and Gray hath gotten well : the best is qd. Hodgekins, they will pay for our supper : then let vs haue good store of Sacke, qd. Sutton. Content said Cole, for I promise you, I striue not to grow rich by Dice-playing, therefore call for what you will, I will pay for all. Yea said Simon ! Chamberlaine, I pray thee bring a whole bottle of pottage for me. Now Tom Doue had all the fidders at a becke of his finger, which follow him vp and down the City, as diligent as little chickens after a hen, and made a vow, that there should want no Musicke. And at that time there liued in London a Musician of great reputation, named Reior, who kept his seruants in such costly garments, that they might seeme to come before any Prince. Their coates were all of one colour ; and it is said, that afterward the Nobility of this Land, noting it for a seemely sight, vsed in like manner to keepe their men all in one liuery. This Reior was the most skilfullest Musician that liued at that time, whose wealth was very great, so that all the Instruments whereon his seruants plaid, were richly garnished with studdes of siluer, and some gold : the bowes belonging to their Violines were all likewise of pure siluer. Hee was also for his wisdom called to great Office in the City, who also builded (at his owne cost) the Priory and Hospital of S. Bartholomew in Smithfield. His seruants being the best consorts in the City, were by Tom Doue appointed to play before the young Princes. Then supper being brought to the boord, they all sat down, and by and by

after comes vp their Oast, who tooke his place among them: and anon after, the good wife in a red peticote and a waistcoate, comes among them as white as a Lilly, saying, My Masters, you are welcome, I pray you be merry. Thus falling close to their meate, when they had well fed, they found leysure to talke one with another: at what time Cutb. began thus to finde fault, Ywis, my Oast, quoth he, you haue a wise huswife to your wife, heere is meate drest of a new fashion? God sends meate, and the deuil sends cooks. Why what ailes the meate, quoth she, serues it not your turnes? better men then your selfe are content withall, but a paultry companion is euer worst to please. Away, you sluttish thing, qd. Cutbert, your husband hath a sweet Jewell of you: I maruell such a graue ancient man would match himselfe with such a young giglot that hath as much handsomenes in her, as good huswifry, which is iust nothing at all. Well sir, said shee, in regard of my husbands presence, I am loth to aggrauate anger, otherwise I would tell thee thy owne. Goe to, what needs all this, quoth the company? in good faith, Cutbert, you are to blame, you find fault where none is. Tush, I must speake my mind, quoth Cutbert, I cannot dissemble, I trust the good man thinkes neuer the worse of me: so I haue his good will, what the foule euill care I for his wifes. Enough, quoth Tom Doue, let vs with Musicke remoue these brabbles, we meane to be merry, and not melancholy. Then said old Cole, Now trust me, Cutbert, we will have your Oastesse and you

friends ere we part : here woman I drinke to you, and regard not his words, for he is babbling wheresoeuer he comes. Quoth the woman, Nothing grieues me so much, as that hee should thus openly checke mee : if he had found any thing amisse, he might haue spied a better time to tell mee of it then nowe, ywis he need not thrust my bad huswifrie into my husbands head, I liue not so quietly with him, God wot : and with that she wept. Come Cutbert, quoth they, drinke to her, and shake hands and be friends. Come on, you puling baggage, quoth he, I drinke to you, here will you pledge mee and shake hands ? No, (quoth shee) I will see thee choackt first, shake hands with thee ? I will shake hands with the deuill as soone. Goe to, said her husband, you shall shake hands with him then : If you will not shake hands, Ile shake you : what, you young huswife ? Well, husband, said she, it becomes a woman to obey her husband, in regard whereof, I drink to him. Thats well said, quoth the company : and so she tooke her leave and went downe. And within a while after they paid the shot, and departed thence to Iarrats Hall, where they went to their lodging ; and the next day they tooke their way homeward alltogether : and comming to Colebrooke, they tooke vp their lodging : and it was Coles custome to deliuer his money to the good wife of the house to keepe it till morning, which in the end turned to his vtter destruction, as hereafter shall be shewed.

How Grays wife of Gloucester, with one or two more of her neighbours went to the Faire, where seruants came to be hired, and how she tooke the Earle of Shrewesburies Daughter into her seruice, Chap. 3.

It was wont to be an old custome in Glocestershire, that at a certaine time in the yeere, all such young men and Maidens as were out of seruice, resorted to a faire that was kept neere Gloucester, there to be ready for any that would come to hire them, the young men stood all on a row on the one side, and the maidens on the other. It came to pass, that the Earle of Shrewsburies daughter, whose father was lately banished, being driven into great distresse, and weary with trauell, as one whose delicate life was neuer vsed to such toyle, sate her downe vpon the high-way side, making this lamentation:

O false and deceitfull world, quoth she! who is in thee that wishes not to be rid of thee, for thy extremities are great? Thou art deceitfull to all, and trusty to none. Fortuner is thy treasurer, who is like thy selfe, wauering and vnconstant, she setteth vp tyrants, beateth downe Kings: giueth shame to some, and renowne to others: Fortune giueth these euils, and we see it not: with her hands she toucheth vs, and we feele it not; she treades vs vnder foot, and we know it not; she speakes in our eares, and we heare her not; she cries aloud, and we vnderstand her not: And why? because we know her not, vntil misery doth make her manifest.

Ah my deare father, well maist thou doe. Of all

misfortunes it is most vnhappy to be fortunate: and by this misfortune came my fall. Was euer good Lady brought to this extremity? What is become of my rare Jewels, my rich aray, my sumptuous fare, my waiting seruants, my many friends, and all my vaine pleasures? my pleasure is banisht by displeasure, my friends fled like foes, my seruants gone, my feasting turned to fasting, my rich array consumed to ragges, and my iewels decke out my chiefest enemies: therefore of all things the meanest state is best, pouerty with surety, is better than honour mixed with feare: seeing God hath allotted me to this misery of life, I will frame my heart to embrace humility, and carry a mind answerable to my misfortunes, fie on this vaine title of Ladiship, how little doth it auaille the distressed? No, no, I must therefore forget my birth and parentage, and think no more on my fathers house, where I was wont to bee serued, now will I learne to serue, and plaine Meg shall be my name, good Lord grant I may get a good seruice, nay any seruice shall serue, where I may haue meat, drinke, and apparell. She had no sooner spoken these words, but she spied a couple of maidens more comming towards her; who were going to the faire: and bidding her good morrow, asked her if she went to the faire. Yea mary qd. she I am a poor mans child that is out of seruice, and I heare that at the Statute, folkes doe come of purpose to hire seruants. True it is, said the Maidens, and thither goe we for the same purpose, and would be glad of your company. With a good will, and I am right

glad of yours, said she, beseeching you good Maidens, you will doe me the fauour, to tell me what seruice were best for me : for the more too blame my parents, they would neuer put me forth to know any thing. Why what can you doe (quoth the Maidens?) can you brew and bake, make butter and cheese, and reape corne well : No verily, said Margaret, but I would be right glad to learne to doe any thing whatsoever it be. If you could spin or card, said another, you might do excellent well with a Clother, for they are the best seruices that I know, there you shall be sure to fare well, and so liue merrily.

Then Margaret wept, saying, alas, what shall I doe ? I was neuer brought vp to these things. What, can you doe nothing, quoth they ? No truly (quoth she) that is good for any thing, but I can read and write, and sowe, some skill I have in my needle, and a little on my Lute : but this, I see will profit me nothing. Good Lord, quoth they, are you bookish ? wee did neuer heare of a Maide before that could reade and write. And although you can doe no other thing, yet possible you may get a seruice, if you can behaue your selfe manerly. I pray you qd. another, seeing you are bookish, will you doe so much as to reade a loue-letter that is sent me ? for I was at a friends of mine with it, and he was not at home, and so I know not what is in it. I pray you let me see it, quoth Margaret, and I will shew you. Whereupon she readeth as followeth.

O Ienny my ioy, I die for thy loue,
 And now I heare say that thou dost remoue :
 And therefore, Ienny, I pray thee recite,
 Where shall I meeete thee soone at night.

For why, with my Master no more will I stay,
 But for thy loue I will runne away :
 O Ienny, Ienny, thou putttest me to paine,
 That thou no longer wilt here remaine.

I will weare out my shooes of Neats-leather,
 But thou and I will meeete together,
 And in spight of Fortune, Rat, or Mouse,
 We will dwell together in one house.

For who doth not esteeme of thee,
 Shall haue no seruice done of me :
 Therefore good Ienny haue a care,
 To meeete poore Fragment at the faire.

Now alas, good soule (quoth Ienny) I thinke he be the kindest young man in the world. The rest answered, that he seemed no lesse, and surely it appeareth that he is a pretty witty fellow, quoth one of them, how finely hee hath written his letter in rime, trust me, I will giue you a good thing, and let me haue a copy of it to send to my sweet-heart : that you shall with all my heart : and so comming to the faire, they tooke vp their standing.

Within a while after, goodwife Gray of Glocester came thither to store her selfe of diuers commodities ;

and when shee had bought what she would, she told her neighbour she had great need of a maid-seruant or twaine ; therefore, qd. she, good neighbour goe with me, and let me haue your opinion. With a good will, said her neighbour, and together they went, and looking and viewing the maidens ouer, she tooke speciall notice of Margaret. Beleeue me, quoth shee, there stands a very proper maiden, and one of a modest and comely countenance. Verily, said her neighbour, so she is, as euer I looked vpon.

The maiden seeing them to view her so well, was so abashed, that a scarlet colour overspred her lilly cheekes, which the woman perceiuing, came vnto her, and asked if she were willing to serue. The maid with a low curtesie, and a most gentle speech, answered, it was the onely cause of her comming. Can you spinne or card, said good-wife Gray? Truly Dame, said she, though my cunning therein be but small, my good will to learne is great, and I trust, my diligence shall content you. What wages will you take, quoth good-wife Gray? I will referre that, said Margaret, to your conscience and courtesie, desiring no more then what I shall deserue. Then asking what Country-woman she was, the maiden wept, saying: Ah good Dame, I was vntimely borne in Shropshire, of poore parents, and yet not so needy as vnfortunate, but death hauing ended their sorrowes, hath left me to the cruelty of these enuious times, to finish my Parents Tragedy with my troubles. What? maiden qd. her dame, haue you a care to doe

your busines, and to liue in Gods feare, and you shall haue no care to regard fortunes frownes, and so they went home together.

Now, so soone as the good-man saw her, hee asked his wife where she had that maiden? She said, at the Faire. Why then quoth he, thou hast brought all the faire away, and I doubt it were better for vs, to send the faire to another Towne, then to keepe the faire here. Whyman, quoth she, what meane you by that? Woman, I meane this, that she will proue a Loadstone, to draw the hearts of all my men after her, and so we shall haue wise service done of all sides. Then said his wife, I hope, husband, Margaret will have a better care both to her owne credit, and our commodity then so, and so let her alone to looke to such matters. Is thy name Margaret, quoth her Master? proper is thy name to thy person, for thou art a pearle indeed, orient, and rich in beauty.

His wife hearing him say so, began to change her opinion: What husband (quoth she) is the wind at that doore? Begin you to like your maid so well? I doubt I had most need to looke to your selfe: before God, I had rather then an augell I had chosen some other: but heare you maid, you shall packe hence, I will not nourish a Snake in my bosome, and therefore get you gone, I will none of you, prouide a seruice where you may.

The maiden hearing her say so, fell downe on her knees, and besought her, saying, O sweet dame, be not

so cruell to me, to turne me out of doores, now : alas, I know not where to goe, or what to doe, if you forsake me. O let not the fading beauty of my face dispoile me of your fauour : for rather then that shall hinder my seruice, this my knife shall soone disfigure my face, and I will banish beauty as my greatest enemy. And with that, her aboundant teares stopped her speech, that shee could not vtter one word more.

The woman seeing this, could not harbour any longer, nor could her Master stay in the roome for weeping. Well, Margaret, said her dame (little knowing that a Lady kneeled before her) vsing thy selfe well I will keepe thee, and thou shalt haue my good will, if thou gouerne thyselfe with wisdom; and so she sent her about her businesse. Her husband comming to supper, said, How now wife, art thou so doubtfull of me, that thou hast put away thy maiden? I wis (qd. she) you are a wise man, to stand praising of a maidens beauty before her face : and you a wise woman, qd. he, to grow iealous without a cause. So to supper they went, and because Margaret shewed her seife of finest behauiour about the rest, she was appointed to waite on the table. And it is to be vnderstood, that Gray did neuer eate his meat alone, but still had some of his neighbours with him, before whom he called his maid, saying, Margaret, come hither. Now because there was another of the same name in the house, she made answer. I call not you, maiden, quoth he, but Margaret with the lilly-white hand. After which time she was euer called so.

How the Kings Maiestie sent for the Clothiers, and of the sundry fauours which he did them. Chap. 4.

KING Henry prouiding for his voyage into France, against King Lewis and Robert Duke of Normandie his owne brother, committed the Gouvernement of the Realme in his absence, to the Bishop of Salisbury, a man of great wisdom and learning, whom the king esteemed highly, and afterward he thought good to send for the chiefe Clothiers of England, who according to the kings appointment came to the Court, and hauing licence to come before his Maiestie, he spake to this effect.

The strength of a King is the loue and friendship of his people, and he gouernes ouer his Realme most surely, that ruleth iustice with mercy: for he ought to feare many, whom many doe feare: therefore the Gouvernors of the Common-wealth ought to obserue two speciall precepts: the one is, that they so maintaine the profit of the Commons, that whatsoeuer in their calling they doe, they referre it thereunto: the other, that they be alwayes as well carefull ouer the whole Common-wealth, as ouer any part thereof; lest, while they vphold the one, the other be brought to vtter decay.

And forasmuch as I doe vnderstand, and haue partly seene, that you the Clothiers of England are no small benefit to the wealth publike, I thought it good to know from your owne mouthes, if there be any thing not yet granted that may benefit you, or any other thing to be remoued that doth hurt you.

The great desire I haue to maintaine you in your trades, hath moued me hereunto. Therefore boldly say what you would haue in the one thing or the other, and I will grant it you.

With that, they all fell downe vpon their knees, and desired God to saue his Maiestie, and withall, requested three dayes respit to put in their answeare: which was graunted. And thereupon they departed.

When the Clothiers had well considered of these matters, at length they thought meete to request of his Maiestie for their first benefit, that all the Cloth-measures thorow the Land might be of one length, whereas to their great disaduantage before, euery good towne had a seuerall measure, the difficulty thereof was such, that they could not keepe them in memory, nor know how to keepe their reckonings. The second thing whereof they found themselues grieued, was this, that the people would not take crackt money, though it were neuer so good siluer? whereupon it came to passe, that the Clothiers and diners others, receiuing great summes of money, doe take among it much crackt money, it serued them to no vse, because it would not goe currant, but lay vpon their hands without profit or benefit, whereof they prayed reformation. The third was a grieffe, whereof Hodgekins of Halifax complained, and that was, That whereas the Towne of Halifax liued altogether vpon Cloathing, and by the reason of false borderers, and other euill minded persons, they were oft robbed, and had their clothes carried out of their fieldes,

where they were drying : That it would please his Ma-iestie to graunt the Towne this priuilege, That whatsoever he was that was taken stealing their Cloth, might presently without any further tryall be hanged up. When the day of their appearance approached, the Clothiers came before the King, and deliuered vp their petition in writing, which his Maiestie most graciously perusing, said, hee was ready to fulfill their request : and therefore for the first point of their Petition, he called for a staffe to be brought him, and measuring thereupon the iust length of his owne arme, deliuered it to the Clothiers, saying, This measure shall be called a yard, and no other measure thorowout all the Realme of England shall be vsed for the same, and by this shall men buy and sell, and we will so prouide, that whoso-uer he be that abuseth our subiects by any false measure, that he shall not onely pay a fine for the same to the King, but also haue his body punished by imprisonment. And as concerning the second point of your Petition, because of my sudden departure out of the Land, I know not better how to ease you of this grieffe (of crackt money) this Decree I make, because they account crackt money not currant, I say, none shall be currant but crackt money. And therefore I will giue present charge, that all the money thorow the Land shall be slit, and so you shall suffer no losse.

But now for your last request for the Towne of Halifax ; where by theeues your Clothes are so often stolne from you, seeing the Lawes already prouided in

that case, are not sufficient to keepe men in awe, it is indeed high time to haue sharper punishment for them.

With that Hodgekins vnmanerly interrupted the King, saying in broad Northerne speech, Yea gude faith, mai Liedg, the faule eule of mai saule, gift any thing will keepe them whiat, till the karles be hanged by the cragge. What the dule care they for boaring their eyne, sea lang as they may gae groping vp and downe the Country like fause lizar lownes, begging and craking?

The King smiling to heare this rough-hewne fellow make this reply: Content thee Hodgekins, for we will haue redresse for all: and albeit that hanging of men was never seene in England, yet seeing the corrupt world is growne more bold in all wickednesse, I thinke it not amisse to ordain this death for such malefactors: and peculiarly to the towne of Halifax I giue this priuilege, That whosoever they finde stealing their Cloth, being taken with the goods, that without further iudgement, they shall be hanged vp.

Thus (said our King) I haue granted what you request, and if hereafter you find any other thing that may be good for you, it shall be granted; for no longer would I desire to liue among you, then I haue care for the good of the Common-wealth: at which words ended, the king rose from his Royall Throne, while the Clothiers on their knees prayed for both his health, and happy successe, and shewed themselves most thankfull for his Highnesses fauour. His Maiestie bending his body

towards them, that at his home returne, hee would (by the grace of God) visit them.

How the Clothiers had provided a sumptuous feast for the Kings sonnes, Prince William and Prince Robert, at Gerards Hall; shewing also what chance befell Cutbert of Kendall at that same instant. Chap. 5.

THE Clothiers departing from the Court in a merry mind, ioyfull of their good successe, each one to other praised and magnified the Kings great wisdom and vertue, commending also his affability and gentle disposition, so that Hodgekins affirmed on his faith, that hee had rather speake to his Kings Maiestie, then to many Justices of peace. Indeed (said Cole) he is a most mild and mercifull Prince, and I pray God he may long raigne over vs. Amen said the rest.

Then said Cole, My Masters, shall we forget the great courtesie of the Kings sonnes, those sweet and gentle Princes, that still showed us fauour in our suite? in my opinion, it were reason to gratifie them in some sort, that we may not vtterly bee condemned of ingratitude, wherefore (if you thinke good) we will prepare a banquet for them at our Oast Garrats, who as you know, hath a faire house, and goodly roomes: Besides, the man himselfe is a most courageous mind and good behauour, sufficient to entertain a Prince: his wife also is a dainty fine Cooke: all which considered, I know not a fitter place in London. Tis true, quoth Sutton, and if the rest be content, I am pleased it shall be so. At

this they all answered, Yea, for quoth they, it will not be passing forty shillings a piece, and that we shall recouer in our crackt money.

Being thus agreed, the feast was prepared. Tom Doue, quoth they, we will commit the prouiding of musicke to thee; and I, said Cole, will inuite diuers of our Merchants and their wiues to the same. That is well remembred, said Gray. Upon this they called to the Oast and Oastesse, shewing their determination, who most willingly said, all things should be made ready, but I would haue two dayes liberty, said the goodwife, to prepare my house and other things. Content, said the Clothiers, in the meane space we will bid our guests, and dispatch our other affaires. But Simon of Southampton charged his Oastesse, that in any case she should not forget to make good store of pottage. It shall be done, quoth she.

It is to be remembred, that while this preparation was in hand, that Cutb. of Kendall had not forgot his kindnes to his Oastesse of Bosomes Inne. Therefore finding time couenient when her husband was ouerseeing his hay-makers, hee greeted her in this sort, Sweet Oastesse, though I were the last time I was in towne, ouer-bold with you, yet I hope it was not so offensiue to you, as you made shew for. Bold, my Cutbert? quoth she, thou hast vowed thy selfe my seruant: and so being, you are not to bee blamed for doing what I wuld you. By my honesty, I could not chuse but smile to my selfe, so soone as I was out of their sight, to thinke how

prettily you began to brabble. But now, quoth he, we will change our chidings to kissings, and it vexeth me that these cherry lipps should be subiect to such a Lob-cocke as thy husband.

Subiect to him, quoth she: In faith sir, no, I will haue my lips at as much liberty as my tongue, the one to say what I list, and the other to touch whom I like: In troth, shall I tell thee, Cutbert, the churles breath smels so strong, that I care as much for kissing of him, as for looking on him: it is such a mis-shapen mizer, and such a bundle of beastlinesse, that I can neuer thinke on him without spitting. Fie vpon him, I would my friends had carried me to my graue, when they went with me to the Church, to make him my husband. And so shedding a few dissembling teares, she stopt. What, my sweet Mistresse (quoth he) weepe you? Nay sit downe by my side, and I will sing thee one of my Countrey Iigges to make thee merry. Wilt thou in faith (quoth shee)? Yes verily, said Cutbert: and in troth, quoth she, if you fall a-singing I will sing with you. That is well you can so suddenly change your notes, quoth Cuthbert, then haue at it.

MAN. Long haue I lou'd this bonny Lasse,
Yet durst not shew the same.

WOM. Therein you proue your selfe an Asse,

MAN. I was the more to blame.

Yet still will I remaine to thee,

Trang dilly do, trang dilly:

Thy friend and louer secretly,

WOM. Thou art my owne sweet bully.

MAN. But when shall I enjoy thee,
delight of thy faire loue?

WOM. Euen when thou seest that fortune doth
all manner lets remoue.

MAN. O, I will fold thee in my armes,
Trang dilly do, trang dilly,
And keepe thee so from sudden harmes.

WOM. Thou art my owne sweet bully.

WOM. My husband he is gone from home,
you know it very well.

MAN. But when will he returne againe?

WOM. In truth I cannot tell.
If long he keepe him out of sight,
Trang dilly do, trang dilly.
Be sure thou shalt haue thy delight.

MAN. Thou art my bonny lassie.

While they were singing this song, her husband being on a sudden come home, stood secretly in a corner and heard all, and blessing himselfe with both his hands, said, O abominable dissimulation, monstrous hypocrisie, and are you in this humour? can you brawle together and sing together? Well, qd. hee, I will let them alone, to see a little more of their knauery. Neuer did Cat watch Mouse so narrowly, as I will watch them: And so going into the kitchin, he asked his wife if it were not dinner time. Euen by and by, husband (quoth she) the meat will be ready. Presently after comes in Hodgekins and Martin, who straight asked for Cutbert of

Kendall. Answer was made, that he was in his chamber. So when they had called him, they went to dinner: then they requested that their Oast and Oastesse would sit with them.

Husband, said she, you may goe if you please: but as for me, I will desire pardon. Nay, good-wife, goe vp, said her husband. What woman, you must beare with your guests. Why husband, qd. she, doe you thinke that any can beare the flirts and fromps, which that Northerne tike gaue me the last time he was in towne; now God forgiue me, I had as lief see the diuell as to see him: therefore good husband goe vp your selfe, and let me alone, for in faith, I shall neuer abide that Jacke while I liue. Upon these words away went her husband, and though he said little, he thought the more. Now when he came vp, his guests bade him welcome. I pray you sit downe, good mine Oast, quoth they, where is your wife? What will she sit with vs? No verily, said he, the foolish woman hath taken such a displeasure against Cutbert, that she swears she will neuer come in his company. Is it so, said the other? then trust me we are well agreed: and I swear by my fathers sale, qd. hee, that were it not meete for good will to you, then loue to her, I would neuer come to your house meere. I beleue it well, said old Bosome. And so with other communication they droue out the time, till dinner was ended.

After they were risen, Martin and Hodgekins got them forth about their affaires, but Cutb. tooke his Oast

by the hand, saying, My Oast, Ile goe talke with your wife; for my part I thought we had bin friends: but seeing her stomacke is so big, and her heart so great, I will see what she will say to me; and with that he stept into the kitchin, saying, God speed you Oastis. It must be when you are away then, said she. What is your reason, said the other? Because God neuer comes where knaues are present. Gip goodly draggletaile, qd. he, had I such a wife, I would present her tallow-face to the deuill for a candle. With that she bent her browes, and like a Fury of hell began to flie at him, saying, Why you gag-tooth Jacke, you blinking companion, get thee out of my kitchin quickly, or with my powdred beefebroth, I will make your pate as bald as a Fryers.

Get me gone, quoth he? thou shalt not bid me twice: out you durty heeles, you will make your husbandshaire growe thorow his hood I doubt: and with that he got him into the Hall, and sat him downe on the bench by his Oast, to whom he said: 'Tis pittie, my Oast, that your aged yeeres that loues quietnesse, should be troubled with such a scolding queane. I, God helpe me, God helpe me, quoth the old man, and so went towards the stable: which his wife watching, suddenly stept out and gaue Cutbert a kisse.

Within an houre after, the old man craftily called for his Nag to ride to field: but as soone as he was gone, Cutbert and his Oastesse were such good friends, that they got into one of Ware-houses, and lockt the doore to them: but her husband hauing set a spie forthe purpose,

suddenly turned backe, and called for a capcase which lay in the Warehouse. The seruant could not find the key by any meanes. Whereupon hee called to haue the locke broke open. Which they within hearing, opened the doore of their owne accord. So soone as her husband espied her in that place, with admiration he said: O passion of my heart, what doe you here? what, you two that cannot abide one another? what make you so close together? is your chiding and rayling, brabbling, and brauling, come to this? O what dissemblers are these! Why, my Oast, qd. Cutbert, what need you take the matter so hot? I gaue a Cheese to my Country-man Hodgekins, to lay vp, and deliuered it to your wife to be kept; and then is it not reason, that she should come and seeke me my Cheese? O, quoth the old man, belike the dore was lockt, because the Cheese should not run away. The doore said his wife vnknowne to vs clapt to it selfe, and hauing a spring locke, was presently fast. Well, huswife, qd. he, I will giue you as much credit as a Crocodile, but as for your companion, I will teach him to come hither to looke Cheeses.

And with that he caused his men to take him presently, and to bind him hand and foot. Which being done, they drew him vp in a basket into the smoky louer of the hall, and there they did let him hang all that night, euen till the next day dinner time, when he should haue beene at the banquet with the Princes: for neither Hodgekins nor Martin could intreat their inflamed Oast to let him downe.

And in such a heate was hee driuen with drawing him vp, that he was faine to cast off his gownes, his coates, and two paire of his stockings, to coole himselfe, making a vow he should hang there seuen yeeres, except the Kings sons came in person to beg his pardon, which most of all grieued Cutb. When Cole and the rest of the Westerne-Yeomen heard hereof, they could not chuse but laugh, to thinke that le was so taken tardy.

The young Princes hauing giuen promise to be with the clothiers, kept their houre, but when all the rest went to giue them entertainment, Simon was so busie in supping his pottage, that he could not spare so much time. Which when the Princes saw, with a smiling countenance they said, Sup Simon, theres good broth : or else beshrew our Oastesse, quoth he, neuer looking behind him to see who spake, till the Prince clapt him on the shoulder. But good Lord, how blanke he was when hee spied them, knowing not how to excuse the matter.

Well, the Princes hauing ended their banquet, Garrat comes and with one of his hands tooke the table of sixteene foote long quite from the ground ouer their heads, from before the Princes, and set it on the other side of the hall, to the great admiration of all them that beheld it.

The Princes being then ready to depart, the Clothiers moued them in pleasant maner, to be good to one of their company, that did neither sit, lie, nor stand. Then hee must needs hang, qd. the Princes. And so he doth,

most excellent Princes, qd. they ; and therewithall told them the whole matter. When they heard the storie, downe to Bosomes Inne they goe, where looking vp into the roofe, spied poore Cutbert pinned vp in a basket, and almost smoaked to death, who although hee were greatly ashamed, yet most pitifully desired that they would get him release.

What is his trespasse, said the Prince ? Nothing if it shall like your Grace, qd. he, but for looking for a cheese : But hee could not find it without my wife, said the good-man: the villaine had lately dined with mutton, and could not digest his meate without cheese, for which cause I haue made him to fast these twenty houres, to the end he may haue a better stomacke to eate his dinner, then to vse dalliance.

Let me intreate you, quoth the Prince, to release him : and if euer hereafter you catch him in the corne, clappe him in the pould. Your Grace shall request or command any thing at my hand, said the old man : and so Cutbert was let downe vnbound, but when he was loose, he vowed neuer to come within that house more. And it is said, the old man Bosome ordained, that in remembrance of this deed, euery yeere once all such as came thither to aske for cheeses, should be so serued : which thing is to this day kept.

How Simons wife of Southampton, being wholly bent to pride and pleasure, requested her husband to see London, which being granted, how she got good-wife Sutton of Salisbury to goe with her, who tooke Crab to go along with them, and how he prophecied of many things. Chap. 6.

THE Clothiers being all come from London, Suttons* wife of South-hampton, who was with her husband very mery and pleasant, brake her mind vnto him in this sort :

Good Lord, husband, will you neuer be so kind as let me goe to London with you ? shall I be pend vp in South-hampton, like a Parrat in a cage, or a Capon in a coope ? I would request no more of you in lieu of all my paines, carke and care, but to haue one weeks time to see that faire City : what is this life, if it be not mixt with some delight ? and what delight is more pleasing then to see the fashions and maners of vnknowne places ? Therefore good husband, if thou louest me deny not this simple request. You know I am no common gadder, nor haue oft troubled you with trauell. God knowes, this may be the last thing that euer I shall request at your hands.

Woman, quoth he, I would willingly satisfie your desire, but you know it is not conuenient for both of vs to be abroad, our charge is so great, and therefore our care ought not not be small. If you will goe your selfe, one of my men shall goe with you, and money enough

* Qu. Simon's.

† Qu. to.

you shall haue in your purse : but to goe with you my selfe, you see my businesse will not permit me.

Husband, said she, I accept your gentle offer, and it may be I shall intreat my gossip Sutton to goe along with me. I shall be glad qd. her husband, prepare your selfe when you will.

When she had obtained this licence, she sent her man Welsell to Salisbury, to know of good-wife Sutton if shee would keepe her company to London. Suttons wife being as willing to goe, as she was to request, neuer rested till she had gotten leaue of her husband ; the which when she had obtained, casting in her mind their pleasure would bee small, being but they twaine : thereupon the wily woman sent letters by collericke Crabbe her man, both to Grayes wife, and Fitzallens wife, that they would meet them at Reading, who liking well of the match, consented, and did so prouide, that they met according to promise at Reading, and from thence with Coles wife they went all together, with each of them a man to London, each one taking vp their lodging with a seuerall friend.

When the Merchants of London vnderstood they were in towne, they inuited them euery day home to their owne houses, where they had delicate good cheere : and when they went abroad to see the commodities of the City, the Merchants wiues euer bore them company, being attired most dainty and fine : which when the Clothiers wiues did see, it grieved their hearts they had not the like.

Now, when they were brought into Cheap-side, there with great wonder they beheld the shops of the Goldsmiths; and on the other side, the wealthy Mercers whose shops shined with all sorts of coloured silkes: in Watling-street they viewed the great number of Drapers: in Saint Martins, Shoemakers: at Saint Nicholas Church, the flesh shambles; at the end of the old Change, the Fish-mongers: in Candleweek-street, the Weauers: then came into the Iewes-street, where all the Iewes did inhabite: then came they to Blackwel-hall, where the Country Clothiers did vse to meete.

Afterwards they proceeded, and came to S. Pauls Church, whose steeple was so hie, that it seemed to pierce the clowdes, on the top whereof, was a great and mighty Weather-cocke, of cleane siluer, the which notwithstanding seemed as small as a sparrow to mens eyes, it stood so exceeding high, the which goodly Weather-cocke was afterwards stolne away, by a cunning Cripple, who found meanes one night to clime vp to the top of the steeple, and tooke it downe: with the which, and a great summe of money which he had got together by begging in his life time, he builded a gate on the North side of the City, which to this day is called Cripple-gate.

From thence they went to the Tower of London, which was builded by Iulius Cæsar, who was Emperour of Rome. And there they beheld salt and wine, which had lyen there euersince the Romanes inuaded this Land, which was many yceres before our Sauour Christ was

borne, the wine was growne so thicke, that it might haue bene cut like a lelly. And in that place also they saw the money that was made of leather, which in ancient time went currant amongst the people.

When they had to their great contentation beheld all this, they repaired to their lodgings, hauing also a sumptuous supper ordained for them, with all delight that might be. And you shall vnderstand, that when the Country Weauers, which came up with their dames, saw the Weauers of Candlewike-street, they had great desire presently to haue some conference with them; and thus one began to challenge the other for workmanship: quoth Weasell, Ile worke with any of you all for a crowne, take if you dare, and he that makes his yard of cloth soonest, shall haue it. You shall be wrought withall, said the other, and if it were for ten crownes: but we will make this bargaine, that each of vs shall winde their owne quilles. Content, quoth Weasell: and so to worke they went, but Weasell lost. Whereupon another of them tooke the matter in hand, who lost likewise: so that the London Weauers triumphed against the Country, casting forth diuers frumps.

Alas poore fellowes, quoth they, your hearts are good, but your hands are ill. Tush the fault was in their legs, quoth another, pray you friend, were you not borne at home? Why doe you aske, quoth Weasell? Because, said hee, the biggest place of your legge is next to your shooe.

Crab hearing this, being Cholericke of nature, chafed

like a man of Law at the Barre, and he wagers with them four crownes to twaine: the others agreed, to worke they go: but Crab conquered them all. Whereupon the London Weauers were nipt in the head like birds, and had not a word to say.

Now, saith Crab, as we haue lost nothing, so you haue wonne nothing, and because I know you cannot be right Weauers, except you be good-fellowes, therefore if you will goe with vs, we will bestow the Ale vpon you. That is spoken like a good-fellow and like a Weauer, quoth the other. So along they went as it were to the signe of the red Crosse.

When they were set downe, and had drunke well, they began merrily to prattle, and to extoll Crab to the skies. Whereupon Crab protested, that hee would come and dwell among them. Nay, that must not be, said a London Weauer: the King hath giuen vs priuiledge, that none should liue among us, but such as serue seuen yeeres in London. With that Crab, according to his old maner of prophesying, said thus:

The day is very neere at hand,
When as the King of this faire Land,
Shal priuiledge you more then so:
Then Weauers shall in skarlet goe.

And to one brotherhood be brought,
The first is in London wrought,
When other Trades-men by your fame,
Shall couet all to doe the same.

Then shall you all liue wondrous well,
But this one thing I shall you tell:
The day will come before the doome,
In Candleweeke-street shall stand no loome.

Nor any Weauer dwelling there,
But men that shall more credit beare:
For Clothing shall be sore decayde,
And men vndone that vse that trade.

And yet the day some men shall see,
This trade againe shall raised be.
When as Bayliffe of Sarum towne;
Shall buy and purchase Bishops downe.

When there neuer man did sow,
Great store of goodly corne shall grow;
And Woad, that makes all colours sound,
Shall spring vpon that barren ground.

At that same day I tell you plaine,
Who so aline doth then remaine,
A proper Maiden they shall see,
Within the towne of Salisburie.

Of fauour sweet, and nature kind,
With goodly eyes, and yet starke blind,
This poore blind Maiden I do say,
In age shall goe in rich aray.

And he that takes her to his wife,
Shall lead a ioyfull happy life,
The wealthiest Clothier shall he be,
That euer was in that Country.

But clothing kept as it hath beene,
 In London neuer shall be scene:
 For Weauers then the most shall win,
 That worke for clothing next the skin.

Till pride the Common-wealth doth peelee,
 And causeth huswvues leaue their wheele,
 Then pouerty vpon each side,
 Vnto those workemer shall betide.

At that time, from Eagles nest,
 That proudly builded in the West,
 A sorte shall come with cunning hand,
 To bring strange weaning in this Land,

And by their gaines that great will fall,
 They shall maintaine the Weauers Hall:
 But long they shall not flourish so,
 But folly will them ouerthrow.

And men shall count it mickle shame,
 To beare that kind of Weaners name,
 And this as sure shall come to passe,
 As here is Alc within this glasse.

When the silly soules that sate about him heard him speake in this sort, they admired, and honoured Crabbe for the same. Why my masters, said Weasell, doe you wonder at these words? he will tell you twenty of these tales, for which cause we call him our canuas Prophet: his attire fits his title, said they, and we neuer heard the like in our liues: and if this should be true, it would be strange. Doubt not but it will be true, qd. Weasell;

for Ile tell you what, he did but once see our Nicke kisse Nel, and presently he powred out this rime :

That kisse, O Nell, God giue thee ioy,
Will nine months hence breed thee a boy.

And Ile tell you what, you shall heare : we kept reekoning, and it fell out iust as Iones buttockes on a close stoole, for which cause our maids durst neuer kisse a man in his sight ; vpon this they broke company, and went euery one about his business, the London Weauers to their frames, and the Country fellowes to their Dames, who after their great banqueting and merriment, went euery one home to their owne houses, though with lesse money than they brought out, yet with more pride.

Especially Simons wife of South-hampton, who told the rest of her gossips, that she saw no reason, but that their husbands should maintaine them, as well as the Merchants did their wiues : for I tell you what, quoth she, we are as proper women (in my conceit,) as the proudest of them all, as handsome of body, as faire of face, our legs as well made, and our feet as fine : then what reason is there (seeing our husbands are of as good wealth,) but we should be as well maintained.

You say true gossip, said Suttons wife : trust me, it made me blush, to see them braue it out so gallantly, and wee to goe so homely : but before God said the other, I will haue my husband to buy me a London gowne, or in faith he shall haue little quiet : so shall mine said another : and mine too, qd. the third : and all of them

sing the same note: so that when they came home, their husbands had little to doe: Especially Simon, whose wife daily lay at him for London appareil, to whome he said, Good woman, be content, let us goe according to our place and ability: what will the Bailiffes thinke, if I should prancke thee up like a peacocke, and thou in thy attire surpasse their wiues? they would either thinke I were mad, or else that I had more money then I could well vse, consider, I pray thee good wife, that such as are in their youth masters, doe proue in their age starke beggars.

Besides that, it is enough to raise me vp in the kings booke, for many times, mens coffers are iudged by their garments: why, we are Country folks, and must keepe our selues in good compasse: gray russet, and good hempe-spun cloth doth best become vs; I tell thee wife, it were as vndecent for vs to goe like Londoners as it is for Londoners to goe like courtiers.

What a coyle keepe you, quoth she? are we not Gods creatures as well as Londoners? and the kings subiects, as well as they? then finding our wealth to be as good as theirs, why should we not goe as gay as Londoners? No, husband, no, here is the fault, wee are kept without it, onely because our husband be not so kind as Londoners: why man, a cobbler there keepe his wife better then the best Clothier in this Countrey: nay, I will affirme it, that the London Oyster-wiues, and the very kitchin-stuffe cryers, doe exceed vs in their Sundaies attire: nay, more then that, I did see the Water-bearers

wife which belongs to one of our Merchants, come in with a Tankerd of Water on her shoulder, and yet halfe a dozen gold rings on her fingers. You may then thinke, wife (quoth he) she got them not with idlenesse.

But wife, you must consider what London is, the chiefe and capitall City of all the Land, a place on the which all strangers cast their eyes, it is (wife) the Kings Chamber and his Maiesties royall seate : to that City repaires all Nations vnder heauen. Therefore it is most meete and conuenient, that the Citizens of such a City should not goe in their apparell like peasants, but for the credit of our Country, weare such seemely habits, as doe carry grauity and comelinesse in the eyes of all beholders. But if wee of the Country went so (quoth she) were it not as great credit for the Land as the other? Woman, qd. her husband, it is altogether needlesse, and in diuers respects it may not be. Why then, I pray you, quoth she, let us go dwell at London. A word soone spoken, said her husband, but not so easie to be performed : therefore wife, I pray thee hold thy prating, for thy talk is foolish : yea, yea husband, your old churlish conditions will neuer be left, you keepe me heere like a drudge and a droile, and so you may keepe your money in your purse, you care not for your credit, but before I will goe so like a shepheardesse, I will first goe naked : and I tell you plaine, I scorne it greatly, that you should clap a gray gowne on my backe, as if I had not brought you two pence : before I was married, you swore I should haue any thing that I requested, but

now all is forgotten. And in saying this, she went in, and soone after she was so sicke, that needes she must goe to bed: and when she was laid, she draue out that night with many grieuous groanes, sighing and sobbing, and no rest she could take God wot. And in the morning when shee should rise, the good soule fell downe in a swowne, which put her maidens in a great flight, who running downe to their master, cryed out; Alas, alas, our Dame is dead, our Dame is dead. The good-man hearing this, ran vp in all hast and there fell to rubbing and chafing of her temples, sending for aqua vitæ, and saying, Ah my sweet-heart, speake to me, good-wife, alacke, alacke: call in the neighbours, you queanes, quoth he. With that she left vp her head, fetching a great groane, and presently swoune againe, and much a doe ywis, he had to keepe life in her: but when she was come to her selfe, How dost thou wife, qd. he? What wilt thou haue? for Gods sake tell me if thou hast a mind to any thing, thou shalt haue it. Away dissembler (qd. she) how can I beleeeve thee? thou hast said to me as much a hundred times, and deceiued me, it is thy churlishnesse that hath killed my heart, neuer was woman matcht to so vnkind a man.

Nay, good-wife, blame me not without cause; God knoweth how heartily I loue thee. Loue me? no, no, thou didst neuer carry my loue but on the tip of thy tongue, quoth she, I dare sweare thou desirest nothing so much as my death, and for my part, I would to God thou hadst thy desire; but be content, I shall not trouble

thee long ; and with that fetching a sigh, shee swounded and gaue a great groane. The man seeing her in this case, was woundrous woe : but so soone as they had recovered her, he said, O my deare wife, if any bad conceit hath ingendered this sicknesse, let me know it ; or if thou knowst any thing that may procure thy health, let me vnderstand thereof, and I protest thou shalt haue it, if it cost me all that euer I haue.

O husband, quoth she, how may I credit your words, when for a paltry sute of apparell you denyed me ? Well, wife, quoth he, thou shalt haue apparell or any thing else thou wilt request, if God send thee once health. O husband, if I may find you so kind, I shall thinke my selfe the happiest woman in the world, thy words haue greatly comforted my heart, mee thinketh if I had it, I could drinke a good draught of Renish wine. Well, wine was sent for : O Lord, said she, that I had a piece of chicken, I feele my stomache desirous of some meate : -Glad am I of that, said her husband, and so the woman within a few dayes after was very well.

But you shall vnderstand, that her husband was faine to dresse her London-like, ere he could get her quiet, neither would it please her except the stuffe was bought in Cheapside : for out of Cheapside nothing would content her, were it neuer so good : insomuch, that if she thought a Taylor of Cheapside made not her gowne, she would swear it were quite spoiled.

And hauing thus wonne her husband to her will,

when the rest of the Clothiers wiues heard thereof, they would be suted in the like sort too ; so that euer since, the wiues of South-hampton, Salisbury, of Gloucester, Worcester, and Reading, went all as gallant and as braue as any Londoners wiues.

How the Clothiers sent the King aide into France, and how he ouercame his brother Robert, and brought him into England, and how the Clothiers feasted his Maiesty and his sonne at Reading. Chap. 7.

THE Kings Maiestie being at the warres in France, against Lewis the French King, and Duke Robert of Normandy, sending for diuers supplies of Souldiers out of England, the Clothiers at their owne proper cost set out a great number, and sent them ouer to the King.

Which Roger Bishop of Salisbury, who gouerned the Realme in the Kings absence, did certifie the King thereof, with his letters written in their commendations.

And afterwards it came to passe, that God sent his Highnes victory ouer his enemies, and hauing taken his brother prisoner, brought him most ioyfully with him into England, and appointed him to be kept in Cardife Castle prisoner, yet with this fauour, that he might hunt and hawke where he would, vp and downe the Country, and in this sorte hee liued a good while, of whom we will speake more at large hereafter.

The King being thus come home, after his Winters rest, he made his Summers progresse into the West-countrie, to take a view of all the chiefe Townes :

whereof the Clothiers being aduertised, they made great preparation against his comming, because he had promised to visit them all.

And when his Grace came to Reading, he was entertained and receiued with great ioy and triumph: Thomas Cole being the chiefe man of regard in all the Towne, the King honored his house with his Princely presence, where during the Kings abode, he, and his sonne, and Nobles were highly feasted.

There the King beheld the great number of people, that was by that one man maintained in worke, whose hearty affection and loue toward his Maiestie did well appeare, as well by their outward countenances, as their gifts presented vnto him. But of Cole himselfe the King was so well perswaded, that he committed such trust in him, and put him in great authority in the Towne. Furthermore the King said, That for the loue which those people bore him liuing, that hee would lay his bones among them when he was dead. For I know not, said he, where they may be better bestowed, till the blessed day of resurrection, then among these my friends which are like to be happy partakers of the same.

Whereupon his Maiestie caused there to be builded a most goodly and famous Abbey: in which he might shew his deuotion to God, by increasing his seruice, and leaue example to other his successors to doe the like. Likewise within the towne he after builded a faire and goodly Castle, in the which he often kept his Court,

which was a place of his chiefe residence during his life, saying to the Clothiers, that seeing he found them such faithfull subiects, he would be their neighbour, and dwell among them.

After his Maiesties Royall feasting at Reading, he proceeded in progresse, till he had visited the whole West-countries, being wondrously delighted, to see those people so diligent to apply their businesse: and coming to Salisbury, the Bishop receiued his Maiesty with great ioy, and with triumph attended on his Grace to his Palace, where his Highnesse lodged.

There Sutton the Clothier presented his Highnesse with a broad cloth, of so fine a thread, and exceeding good workmanship, and therewithall of so faire a colour, as his Grace gaue commendation thereof, and as it is said, he held it in such high estimation, that thereof he made his Parliament robes, and the first Parliament that was euer in England, was graced with the Kings person in those robes, in requitall whereof his Highness afterward yeelded Sutton many princely fauours.

And it is to be remembred, that Simon of Southampton (seeing the King had ouerpast the place where he dwelt) came with his wife and seruants to Salisbury, and against the K. going forth of that City, hee caused a most pleasant arbour to be made vpon the toppe of the hill leading to Salisburie, beset all with red and white roses, in such sort, that not any part of the timber could be seene, within the which sat a maiden attired like a Queen, attended on by a faire traine of

maidens, who at the Kings approach presented him with a garland of sweet flowres, yeelding him such honour as the Ladies of Rome were wont to doe to their Princes after their victories: which the King tooke in gracious part, and for his farewell from that Country, they bore him company ouer part of the Plaine, with the sound of diuers sweet instruments of musicke. All which when his Grace vnderstood was done at the cost of a Clothier, he said he was the most honoured by those men, about all the meane subiects in his Land: and so his Highness past on to Exeter, hauing giuen great rewards to these maidens.

Tomas Doue and the residue of the Clothiers, against his Graces comming thither, had ordained diuers sumptuous shews; first, there was one that presented the person of Augustus Cesar the Emperour, who commanded after the Romane inuasion, that their City should be called Augustus, after his owne name, which before time was called Isca, and of later yeeres, Exeter.

There his Maiesty was royally feasted seuen dayes together, at the onely cost of Clothiers, but the diuers delightes and sundry pastimes which they made there before the King, and his Nobles, is too long here to be rehearsed, and therefore I will ouerpasse them to auoid tediousnesse.

His Grace then coasting along the Country, at last came to Glocester, an ancient City, which was builded by Glone, a Brittish King, who named it after his owne name, Glocester. Here was his Maiesty entertained by

Gray the Clothier, who profest himselfe to be of that ancient family of Grayes, whose first originall issued out of that ancient and Honorable Castle and Towne of Rithin.

Here was the King most bountifully feasted, hauing in his company his brother Robert (although his prisoner the same time.) And his Grace being desirous to see the Maidens card and spinne, they were of purpose set to their worke: among whom was faire Margaret with her white hand, whose excellent beauty hauing pierc't the eyes of the amorous Duke, it made such an impression in his heart, that afterward he could neuer forget her: and so vehemently was his affection kindled, that he could take no rest, till by writing he had bewrayed his mind: but of this we will speake more in another place: and the King at his departure said, that to gratifie them, hee would make his sonne Robert their Earle, who was the first Earle that euer was in Glocester.

Now when his Grace was come from thence, he went to Worcester, where William Fitz-allen made preparation in all honourable sort to receiue him, which man being borne of great parentage, was not to learne how to entertaine his Maiestie, being descended of that famous Family, whose patrimony lay about the Towne of Oswestrie, which Towne his predecessors had inclosed with stately walls of stone.

Although aduerse fortune had so grievously frowned on some of them, that their children were faine to be-

come Tradesmen, whose hands were to them in stead of lands, notwithstanding God raised againe the fame of this man, both by his great wealth, and also in his posterity, whose eldest son Henry, the Kings god-son, became afterward the Maior of London, who was the first Maior that euer was in that City, who gouerned the same 23 yeeres: and then his son Roger Fitz-allen was the second Maior.

The princely pleasures that in Worcester were shewn the King, were many and maruelous, and in no place had his Maiesty receiued more delight then here: for the which at his departure he did shew himselfe very thankefull. Now when his Grace had thus taken view of all his good townes Westward, and in that progresse had visited these Clothiers, he returned to London, with great ioy of his Commons.

How Hodgekins of Halifax came to the Court, and complained to the King, that his priuiledge was nothing worth, because when they found any offender, they could not get a hangman to execute him: and how by a Fryer a gin was deuised to chop off mens heads of it selfe. Chap. 8.

AFTER that Hodgkins had got the priuiledge for the towne of Halifax, to hang vp such theeues as stole their cloth in the night, presently without any further iudgement, all the Clothiers of the towne were exceeding glad, and perswaded themselues, that now their goods would be safe all night, without watching them at all,

so that whereas before, the town maintained certaine watchmen to keepe their cloth by night, they were hereupon dismissed as a thing needlesse to be done, supposing with themselues, that seeing they should be straight hanged that were found faulty in this point, that no man would be so desperate to enterprise any such act. And indeed the matter being noysed through the whole Country, that they were straight to be hanged that vse such theeury, it made many lewd liuers to restraine such theeury.

Neuertheles, there was at that same time liuing, a notable Theefe named Wallis, whom in the north they called Mighty Wallis, in regard of his valour and manhood: This man being most subtile in such kind of knauery, hauing heard of this late priuiledge, and therewithall of the Townes security, said that once he would venture his necke for a packe of Northerne cloth: and therefore comming to one or two of his companions, he asked if they would be partners in his adventure, and if (quoth he) you will herein hazard your bodies, you shall be sharers in all our booties.

At length by many perswasions the men consented: whereupon late in the night, they got them all into a Farriours shop, and called vp the folkes of the house. What the foule ill wald you haue (quoth they) at this time of the night? Wallis answered, saying, Good-fellowes, we would haue you to remoue the shooes of our horses feete, and set them on againe, and for your paines you shall be well pleased. The Smith at length

was perswaded, and when he had pluckt off all the shooes from their horses feete, they would needes haue them all set on againe, quite contrary with the cakins forward, that should stand backward. How? fay, fay man, qd. the Smith, are ye like fules? what the deelee doe you meane to breake your crags? gud faith I tro the men be wood. Not so, Smith, qd. they, do thou as we bid thee, and thou shalt haue thy mony: for it is an old prouerbe,

Be it better, or be it worse,

Please you the man that beares the purse.

Gudd faith and see I sall, qd. the Smith, and so did as hee was willed. When Wallis had thus caused their horses to be shod, to Hallifax they went, where they without any let, laded their horses with cloth, and so departed contrary way.

In the morning, so soone as the Clothiers came to the field, they found that they were robd, whereupon one ranne to another to tell these things. Now when Hodgekins heard thereof, rising vp in haste, he wild his neighbors to mark and to see, if they could not descry either the foot-steppes of men or Horses. Which being done, they perceiued that horses had been there, and seeking to pursue them by their foot-steppes, they went a cleane contrary way, by reason that the horses were shodde backward: and when in vaine they had long pursued them, they returned, being neuer the neere. Now Wallis vsed his feate so long, that at length he was

taken, and two more with him : whereupon according to the priuilege of the Towne, they put Halters about the theeues neckes presently to hang them vp.

When they were come to the place appointed, Wallis and the rest being out of hope to escape death, prepared themselues patiently to suffer the rigor of the Law. And therewith the rest laying open the lewdnesse of his life, grieuously lamenting for his sinnes, at length commending their soules to God, they yeelded their bodies to the graue, with which sight the people were greatly mouued with pity, because they had neuer seene men come to hanging before : but when they should haue bene tyed vp, Hodgekins willed one of his neighbours to play the Hang-mans part, who would not by any meanes doe it, although he was a very poore man, who for his paines should haue bene possest of all their apparell. When he would not yeeld to the office, one of those which had his cloth stolen, was commanded to doe the deed ; but he in like manner would not, saying : When I haue the skill to make a man, I will hang a man, if it chance my workmanship doe not like me.

And thus from one to another, the office of the Hang-man was posted off. At last a Rogue came by, whom they would haue compelled to haue done that deed. Nay, my masters, qd. he, not so : but as you haue got a priuledge for the Towne, so you were best to procure a Commission to make a hang-man, or else you are like to be without one for me. Neighbor

Hodgkins quoth one, I pray you doe this office your selfe, you haue had most losse, and therefore you should be the most ready to hang them your selfe. No, not I (quoth Hodgkins,) though my losse were ten times greater then it is, notwithstanding look which of these Theenes will take vpon him to hang the other, shall haue his life saued, otherwise they shall all to prison till I can prouide a hangman.

When Wallis saw the matter brought to this passe, he began stoutly to reply, saying, My masters of the Towne of Halifax, though your priuiledge stretch to hang men vp presently that are found stealing of your goods, yet it giues you no warrant to imprison them till you provide them a hang-man, my selfe, with these my fellowes, haue here yeelded our selues to satisfie the Law, and if it be not performed, the fault is yours, and not ours, and therefore we humbly take our leaue : from the gallows the xviii of August. And with that he leapt from the ladder, and hurl'd the halter at Hodgkins face.

When the Clothiers saw this, they knew not what to say, but taking them by the sleeues, entreated to haue their owne againe. Not so, qd. Wallis, you get not the value of a packe or a bawby : wee haue stolne your cloth, then why doe you not hang vs ? here we haue made our selues ready, and if you will not hang vs, chuse. A plague vpon you, quoth he, you haue hindred me God knowes what, I made account to dine this day in heauen, and you keepe me here on earth where there

is not a quarter of that good cheare. The foule euill take you all, I was fully prouided to giue the gallowes a boxe on the eare, and now God knowes when I shall be in so good a minde againe : and so he with the rest of his companions departed.

When Hodgekins saw, that notwithstanding their theeuery, how they flowted at their lenity, he was much mouued in minde ; and as he stood in his dumps chewing his cud, making his dinner with a dish of melancholy, a gray Fryar reuerently saluted him in this sort : All haile, good-man Hodgekins, happinesse and health be euer with you, and to all suppressors of lewd liuers, God send euerlasting ioyes.

I am sorry good-man Hodgekins, that the great priuiledge which our King gaue to this towne, comes to no greater purpose ; better farre had it bene that it had neuer bene granted, then so lightly regarded ; the towne hath suffered through their owne peeuishnesse, an euerlasting reproch this day, onely because foolish pittie hath hindred Justice.

Consider, that compassion is not to be had vpon theeues and robbers ; pity onely appertaineth to the vertuous sort, who are ouerwhelmed with the waues of misery and mischance. What great cause of boldnesse haue you giuen to bad liuers, by letting these fellowes thus to escape, and how shall you now keepe your goods in safety, seeing you fulfill not the Law which should be your defence ? neuer thinke that theeues will make any conscience to carry away your goods, when

they find them selues in no danger of death, who haue more cause to praise your pity, then commend your wisdom: wherefore in time seeke to preuent the ensuing euill.

For my owne part, I haue that care of your good, that I would worke all good meanes for your benefit, and yet not so much in respect of your profit, as for the desire I haue to vphold Justice, and seeing I find you and the rest so womanish, that you could not find in your hearts to hang a Theefe, I haue deuised how to make a gin, that shall cut off their heads without mans helpe, and if the King will allow thereof.

When Hodgekins heard this, he was somewhat comforted in mind, and said to the Fryer, that if by his cunning he would performe it, he would once againe make sute to the King to haue his grant for the same. The Fryer willed him to haue no doubt in him; and so when he had deuised it, he got a Carpenter to frame it out of hand.

Hodgekins in the meane time posted it vp to the Court, and told his Maiesty that the priuiledge of Hal-lifax was not worth a pudding. Why so, said the King? Because, quoth Hodgekins, we can get neuer a hangman to trusse our theeues: but if it shall like your good Grace, (quoth he) there is a feate Fryer, that will make vs a deuise, which shall without the hand of man cut off the craggés of all such earles, if your Maiesty will please to allow thereof.

The King vnderstanding the full effect of the matter,

at length granted his petition : whereupon till this day, it is obserued in Hallifax, that such as are taken stealing of their cloth, haue their heads chopt off with the same gin.

How the Bailiffes of London could get no man to bee a Catchpole, and how certaine Flemings tooke that office vpon them, whereof many of them were fledde into this Realme, by reason of certaine waters that had drowned a great part of their Country. Chap. 9.

THE City of London being at that time gouerned by Bailiffes, it came to passe, that in a certaine fray two of their Catch-poles were killed, for at that time they had not the name of Sergeants : and you shall vnderstand, that their office was then so much hated and detested of Englishmen, that none of them would take it vpon him : so that the Bailiffes were glad to get any man whatsoever, and to giue him certaiu wages to performe that office.

It came to passe, as I said before, that two of their Officers by arresting of a man, were at one instant slaine, by meanes whereof the Bailiffes were enforced to seeke others to put in their roomes ; but by no meanes could they get any, wherefore according to their wonted manner, they made proclamation, that if there were any man that would present himselfe before them, he should not onely be settled in that office during their lines, but also should haue such maintenance and allowance, as for such men was by the City prouided : and notwithstanding

that it was an office most necessary in the Commonwealth, yet did the poorest wretch despise it, that liued in any estimation among his neighbours.

At last, a couple of Flemings, which were fled into this Land, by reason that their Country was drowned with the sea, hearing the Proclamation, offered themselves vnto the Bayliffes, to serue in this place, who were presently receiued and accepted and according to order had garments giuen them, which were of 2. colors, blue and red their coates, breeches and stockings, whereby they were knowne and discerned from other men.

Within halfe a yeere after, it came to passe, that Thomas Doue of Exeter came vp to London, who hauing by his iollity and goodfellowship, brought himselfe greatly behind hand, was in danger to diuers men of the Cite, among the rest, one of his Creditors feed an Officer to arrest him. The Dutch-man that had not beene long experienced in such matters, and hearing how many of his fellowes had beene killed for attempting to arrest men, stood quiuering and quaking in a corner of the street to watch for Thomas Doue, and hauing long waited, at length he espied him: whereupon he prepared his mace ready, and with a pale countenance proceeded to his Office; at what time comming behind the man, suddenly with his mace he knockt him on the pate, saying, I arrest you, giuing him such a blow, that he fell him to the ground.

The Catchpole thinking he had killed the man, he left his mace behind him and ranne away: the Creditor

he ran after him, calling and crying that he should turne againe: But the Fleming would not by any meanes turne backe, but got him quite out of the City, and tooke Sanctuary at Westminster.

Doue being come to himselfe, arose and went to his Inne, no man hindring his passage, being not a little glad he so escaped the danger. Yet neuerthesse, at his next coming to London, another Catchpole met with him, and arrested him in the Kings name.

Doue being dismayed at this mischieuous mischance, knew not what to doe: at last hee requested the Catchpole that hee would not violently cast him in prison, but stay till such time as he could send for a friend to be his surety; and although kindnesse in a Catchpole be rare, yet was he won with faire words to doe him this fauour: whereupon Doue desired one to goe to his Oast Iarrat, who immediately came with him, and offered himselfe to be Doues surety.

The Officer, who neuer saw this man before, was much amazed at his sight: for Iarrat was a great and mighty man of body, of countenance grim, and exceeding high of stature, so that the Catchpole was wonderfully afraid, asking if he could find neuer a surety but the deuill, most fearfully intreating him to coniure him away, and he would doe Doue any fauour. What, will you not take my word, qd. Iarrat? sir, qd. the Catchpole, if it were for any matter in hell, I would take your word as soone as any diuels in that place, but seeing it is for a matter on earth, I would gladly haue a surety.

Why, thou whorson cricket, (quoth Iarrat,) thou maggat-apie, thou spinner, thou paulty spider, dost thou take me for a deuill? Sirra, take my word, I charge thee, for this man, or else goodman butter-fly, Ile make thee repent it. The Officer, while he was in the house, said, he was cōtent, but as soon as he came into the street, he cryed, saying: Helpe, helpe, good neighbors, or else the deuill will carry away my prisoner: notwithstanding, there was not one man would stirre to be the Catchpoles aide. Which when he saw, he tooke fast hold on Thomas Doue, and would not by any meanes let him goe.

Iarrat seeing this, made no more adoe, but comning to the Officer, gaue him such a fillop on the forehead with his finger, that he fell the poore Fleming to the ground: and while he lay in the street stretching his heeles, Iarrat tooke Doue vnder his arme and carried him home, where he thought himselfe as safe, as King Charlemaine in Mount-albion.

The next morning Iarrat conueyed Doue out of Towne, who afterward kept him in the Country, and came no more in the Catchpoles clawes.

How Duke Robert came a wooing to Margaret with the white hand, and how he appointed to come and steale her away from her Masters. Chap. 10.

THE beautiful Margaret, who had now dwelt with her Dame the space of foure yeeres, was highly regarded and secretly beloued of many gallant and worthy Gen-

lemen of the Country, but of two most especially, Duke Robert, and Sir William Ferris. It chanced on a time, that faire Margaret with many others of her Masters folkes, went a hay-making, attired in a red stammell peticoate, and a broad strawne hat vpon her head, she had also a hay-forke, and in her lappe shee did carry her breake-fast. As she went along, Duke Robert, with one or two of his keepers, met with her, whose amiable sight did now anew re-inkindle the secret fire of loue, which long lay smothering in his heart. Wherefore meeting her so happily, he saluted her thus friendly.

Faire maid, good morow, are you walking so diligently to your labour? Needes must the weather be faire, when the Sun shines so cleare, and the hay wholesome that is dryed with such splendent rayes. Renowned and most notable Duke (qd. she) poore haruest folkes pray for faire weather, and it is the laborers comfort to see his worke prosper, and the more happy may we count the day, that is blessed with your princely presence: but more happy, said the Duke, are they which are conuersant in thy company. But let me intreat thee to turne backe to thy Masters with me, and commit thy forke to some that are fitter for such toyle: trust me, me thinkes thy dame is too much ill aduised, in setting thee to such homely busines. I muse thou canst indure this vile beseeming seruitude, whose delicate lims were neuer framed to proue such painefull experiments.

Albeit, quoth she, it becommeth not me to controule your iudiciall thoughts, yet were you not the Duke, I

would say, your opinion deceiued you: though your faire eyes seeme cleare, yet I deemed them vnperfect, if they cast before your mind any shadow or sparke of beauty in me: But I rather thinke, because it hath beene an old saying, that women are proud to heare themselues praised, that you either speake this, to driue away the time, or to wring me from my too apparent imperfections. But I humbly intreate pardon, too longe haue I fore-slowed my businesse, and shewne my selfe ouer-bold in your presence; and therewith, with a courtly grace, bending her knees to the courteous Duke, shee went forward to the field, and the Duke to the Towne of Gloucester.

When he came thither, he made his Keeper great cheare, intreating them they would giue him respite to be awhile with old Gray; for we twaine must haue a game or two, quoth he: and for my safe returne, I gage to you my princely word, that as I am a true Knight and a Gentleman, I will returne safe to your charge againe.

The Keepers being content, the Duke departed, and with old Gray goes to the field, to peruse the Worke-folkes, where while Gray found himselfe busie in many matters, he tooke opportunity to talke with Margaret; shee who by his letters before was priuie to his purpose; guest beforehand the cause of his comming: to whom he spake to this effect:

Faire Maid, I did long since manifest my loue to thee by my letter; tell me therefore, were it not better to be a Duches then drudge! a Lady of high reputation,

then a seruant of simple degree ? with me thou mightest liue in pleasure, where here thou drawest thy dayes forth in paine ; by my loue thou shouldst be made a Lady of great treasures ; where now thou art poore and beggerly : all manner of delights should then attend on thee, and whatsoever thy heart desireth, thou shouldst haue : wherefore seeing it lyes in thy owne choice, make thy selfe happy, by consenting to my suite.

Sir, (quoth she) I confesse your loue deserues a Ladies fauour, your affection a faithful friend, such a one as could make but one heart and mind of two hearts and bodyes ; but farre vnfit it is that the Turtle should match with the Eagle, though her loue be neuer so pure, her wings are vnfit to mount so high. While Thales gazed on the starres, he stumbled in a pit. And they that clime vnadvisedly, catch a fall suddenly : what auaieth high dignity in time of aduersity ? it neither helpeth the sorrow of the heart, nor remoues the bodies misery : as for wealth and treasure, what are they, but fortunes baits to bring men in danger ? good for nothing but to make people forget themselues : and whereas you alleadge pouerty to be a hinderer of the hearts comfort, I find it my selfe contrary, knowing more surety to rest vnder a simple habit, then a royall Robe : and verily there is none in the world poore, but they that think themselues poore : for such as are indued with content, are rich, hauing nothing else, but he that is possessed with riches, without content, is most wretched and mise-

rable. Wherefore most Noble Duke, albeit I account my life vnworthy of your least fauour, yet I would desire you to match your loue to your like, and let me rest to my rake, and vse my forke for my liuing.

Consider, faire Margaret, (quoth he) that it lyes not in mans power to place his loue where he list, being the worke of an high deity. A bird was neuer seene in Pontus, nor true loue in a fleeting mind : neuer shall remoue the affection of my heart which in nature resembleth the stoue Abiston, whose fire can neuer be cooled: wherefore sweet Maiden giue not obstinate deniall, where gentle acceptance ought to be receiued.

Faire sir, (quoth she) consider what high displeasure may rise by a rash match, what danger a Kings frownes may breed, my worthlesse matching with your Royalty, may perhaps regaine your liberty, and hazard my life ; then call to mind how little you should enjoy your lou^e or I my wedded Lord.

The Duke at these words made this reply, that if she consented, she should not dread any danger. The thunder (quoth he) is driuen away by ringing of belles, the Lions wrath qualified by a yeelding body: howmuch more a Brothers anger with a Brothers intreaty ? By me he hath receiued many fauors, and neuer yet did he requite any one of them : and who is ignorant that the Princely Crown which adorneth his head, is my right ? all which I am content he shall still enioy, so he requite my kindnesse. But if he should not, then would I be like those men (that eating of the tree Lutes) forget

the Country where they were borne, and neuer more should this clime couer my head, but with thee would I liue in a strange Land, being better content with an egge in thy company, then with all the delicates in England.

The Maiden hearing this, who with many other words was long wooed, at last consented; where yeelding to him her heart with her hand, hee departed, appointing to certifie her from Cardiffe Castle, what determination he would follow : so taking his leaue of Gray he went to his brothers, and with them posted to Cardiffe.

Now it is to be remembred, that sir William Ferrers within a day or two after came vnto Grayes house, as it was his ordinary custome, but not so much ywis for Grayes company, as for the minde he had to Margaret his Maide, who although he were a married man, and had a faire Lady to his wife, yet he laid hard siege to the fort of this Maidens chastity, hauing with many faire words sought to allure her, and by the offer of sundry rich gifts to tempt her. But whē she saw, that by a hundred denials she could not be rid of him, she now chanced on a sudden to giue him such an answer, as droue him from a deceit into such a conceit, as neuer after that time he troubled her.

Sir William Ferrers being very importunate to haue her grant his desire, and when after sundry assaults she gaue him still the repulse, hee would needes know the reason why shee would not loue him, quoth he, If thou didst but consider who he is that seeketh thy fauour,

what pleasure he may doe thee by his purse, and what credit by his countenance, thou wouldst neuer stand on such nice points. If I be thy friend, who dareth be thy foe? and what is he that will once call thy name in question for any thing? therefore sweet girle, be better aduised, and refuse not my offer being so large.

Truly sir William (quoth she) though there be many reasons to make me deny your suite, yet is there one about the rest that causes me I cannot loue you. Now, I pray thee, my wench let me know that, quoth he, and I will amend it whatsoever it be. Pardon me sir, said Margaret, if I should speake my mind, it would possibly offend you, and doe me no pleasure because it is a defect in nature, which no phisicke can cure. Sir William hearing on her so, being abashed at her speech, said, Faire Margaret, let me (if I may obtaine no more at thy hands) yet intreat thee to know what this defect should be; I am not wry-neckt, crook-legd, stub-footed, lame-handed, nor bleare-eyed: what can make this mislike? I neuer knew any body that tooke exceptions at my person before.

And the more sorry am I, quoth she, that I was so malapert to speake it, but pardon me my presumption, good sir William, I would I had beene like the Storke tonguelesse, then should I neuer haue caused your disquiet. Nay sweet Margaret, quoth he, tell me deare loue, I commend thy singlenesse of heart, good Margaret speake. Good sir William let it rest, quoth shee, I know you will not beleue it when I haue reuealed it,

neither is it a thing that you can helpe : and yet such is my foolishnesse, had it not beene for that, I thinke verily I had granted your suite ere now. But seeing you vrge me so much to know what it is, I will tell you : it is sir, your ill-fauoured great nose, that hangs sagging so lothsomely to your lips, that I cannot finde in my heart so much as to kisse you.

What, my nose, quoth he ? is my nose so great and I neuer knew it ? certainly I thought my nose to be as comely as any mans : but this it is we are all apt to think well of our selues, and a great deale better then we ought : but let me see ? my nose ! by the masse tis true, I doe now feele it my selfe : Good Lord, how was I blinded before ? Hereupon it is certaine, that the Knight was driuen into such a conceit, as none could perswade him but his nose was so great indeed ; his Lady, or any other that spake to the contrarie, he would say they were flatterers, and that they lied, insomuch that he would be ready to strike some of them that commended and spake well of his nose. If they were men of worship, or any other that contraried him in his opinion, he would swear they flowted him, and be ready to challenge them the field. He became so ashamed of himselfe, that after that day he would neuer goe abroad, whereby Margaret was well rid of his company.

On a time, a wise and graue Gentleman seeing him grounded in his conceit so strongly, gaue his Lady counsell, not to contrary him therein, but rather say that she would seeke out some cunning Physician to cure

him: for, said he, as sir William hath taken this conceit of himselfe, so is he like neuer to heare other opinion, till his owne conceit doth remoue it, the which must be wisely wrought to bring it to passe.

Whereupon the Lady hauing conferred with a Physician that beare a great name in the countrey, hee vnder-tooke to remoue this fond conceit by his skill. The day being appointed when the Phisician should come, and the Knight beeing told thereof, for very ioy he would goe forth to meete him, when a woman of the Towne saw the Knight, hauing heard what rumor went because of his nose, shee looked very stedfastly vpon him: the Knight casting his eye vpon her, seeing her to gaze so wistly in his face, with an angry countenance said thus to her, Why, how now good huswife, cannot you get you about your business? The woman being a shrewish queane, answered him cuttedly, No mary can I not, qd. she. No, you drab, What is the cause, said the Knight? Because, quoth she, your nose stands in my way: wherewith the Knight being very angry, and abashed, went backe againe to his house.

The Physician being come, he had filled a certaine bladder with sheepes blood, and conueyed it into his sleeue, where at the issue of the bladder he had put in a piece of a swans quill, through the which the blood should runne out of the bladder so close by his hand, that hee holding the Knight by the nose, it might not be perceiued, but that it issued thence. All things being prepared, he told the Knight, that by a foule corrupt

blood wherewith the veines of his nose were ouercharged, his impediment did grow, therefore, quoth he, to haue redresse for this disease, you must haue a veine opened in your nose, whence this foule corruption must be taken : whereupon it will follow, that your nose will fall againe to his naturall proportion, and neuer shall you be troubled with this grieffe any more, and thereupon will I gage my life.

I pray you master Doctor, said the Knight, is my nose so big as you make it? With reuerence I may speake it, said the Physician, to tell the truth, and auoid flattery, I neuer saw a more misshapen nose so foule to sight. Lo you now Madam, quoth the Knight, this is you that said my nose was as well, as handsome, and as comely a nose as any mans.

Alas sir, qd. she, I spake it (God wot) because you should not grieue at it, nor take my words in ill part, neither did it indeed become me to mislike of your nose.

All this we will quickly remedy, said the Physician, haue no doubt : and with that, he very orderly prickt him in the nose, but not in a veine whereby he might bleed : and presently hauing a tricke finely to vnstop the quill, the blood ranne into a bason in great abundance : and when the bladder was empty, and the bason almost full, the Physician seemed to close the veine, and asked him how he felt his nose, shewing the great quantite of filthy blood which from thence he had taken.

The Knight beholding it with great wonder, said, he thought that no man in the world had beene troubled

with such abundance of corrupt blood in his whole body, as lay in his mis-shapen nose, and therewithail he began to touch and handle his nose, saying, that he felt it mightily asswaged. Immediately a glasse was brought wherein he might behold himselfe. Yea mary, qd. he now I praise God, I see my nose is come into some reasonable proportion, and I feele my selfe very well eased of the burthen thereof; but if it continue thus, thats all. I will warrant your worship, said the Physician, for euer being troubled with the like againe. Whereupon the Knight receiued great ioy, and the Doctor a high reward.

How Thomas of Reading was murdered at his Oasts house of Colebrooke, who also had murdred many before him, and how their wickednesse was at length reuealed. Chap. 11.

THOMAS of Reading hauing many occasions to come to London, as well about his own affaires, as also the Kings businesse, being in a great office vnder his Maiestie, it chanced on a time, that his Oast and Oastesse of Colebrooke, who through couetousnesse had murdered many of the guests, and hauing every time he came thither great store of his money to lay vp, appointed him to be the next fat pig that should be killed: For it is to be vnderstood, that when they plotted the murder of any man, this was alwaies their terme, the man to his wife, and the woman to her hus-

band : wife, there is now a fat pig to be had if you want one. Whereupon she would answer thus, I pray you put him in the hogstie till to-morrow. This was, when any man came thither alone without others in his company, and they saw he had great store of money.

This man should be then laid in the chamber right ouer the kitchen, which was a faire chamber, and the better set out then any other in the house : the best bedstead therein, though it were little and low, yet was it most cunningly carued, and faire to the eye, the feet whereof were fast naild to the chamber floore, in such sort, that it could not in any wise fall, the bed that lay therein was fast sowed to the sides of the bedstead : Moreouer, that part of the chamber whereupon this bed and bedstead stood, was made in such sort, that by the pulling out of two yron pinnes below in the kitchen, it was to be let downe and taken vp by a draw-bridge, or in manner of a trap-doore : moreouer in the kitchin, directly vnder the place where this should fall, was a mighty great caldron, wherein they vsed to seethe their liquor when they went to brewing. Now, the men appointed for the slaughter, were laid into this bed, and in the dead time of the night, when they were sound asleepe, by plucking out the foresaid yron pinnes, downe will the man fall out of his bed into the boyling caldron, and all the cloaths that were vpon him : where being suddenly scalded and drowned, he was neuer able to cry or speake one word.

Then had they a little ladder euer standing ready in

the kitchen, by the which they presently mounted into the said chamber, and there closely take away the mans apparell, as also his money, in his male or cap-case: and then lifting vp the said falling floore which hung by hinges, they made it fast as before.

The dead body would they take presently out of the caldron and throw it downe the riuer, which ran neere vnto their house, whereby they escaped all danger.

Now if in the morning any of the rest of the guests that had talkt with the murdered man ore eue, chanst to aske for him, as hauing occasion to ride the same way that he should haue done, the good-man would answere, that he tooke horse a good while before day, and that he himselfe did set him forward: the horse the good-man would also take out of the stable, and conuay him by a hay-barne of his, that stood from his house a mile or two, whereof himselfe did alwaies keepe the keies full charily, and when any hay was to be brought from thence, with his owne hands he would deliuer it; then before the horse should goe from thence, he would dismarke him: as if he ware a long taile, he would make him curtall; or else crop his eares, or cut his mane, or put out one of his eies; and by this meanes hee kept himselfe vnknowne.

Now Thomas of Reading, as I said before, being markt and kept for a fat pig, he was laid in the same chamber of death, but by reason Gray of Glocester chanced also to come that night, he escaped scalding.

The next time he came, he was laid there againe,

but before he fell asleepe, or was warme in his bed, one came riding thorow the Towne and cryed piteously, that London was all on a fire, and that it had burned downe Thomas Beekets house in West-cheape, and a great number, more in the same street, and yet (quoth he) the fire is not quencht.

Which tidings when Thomas of Reading heard, he was very sorrowfull, for of the same Becket that day he had receiued a great peece of money, and had left in his house many of his writings, and some that appertained to the King also: therefore there was no nay but he would ride backe againe to London presently, to see how the matter stood; thereupon making himselfe ready, departed. This crosse fortune caused his Oast to frowne, neuertheless the next time (qd. he) will pay for all.

Notwithstanding God so wrought, that they were preuented the likewise, by reason of a great fray that hapned in the house betwixt a couple that fell out at dice, insomuch as the murderers themselues were enforced to call him vp being a man in great authority, that he might set the house in quietnesse, out of the which by meanes of this quarrell, they doubted to lose many things.

Another time when hee should haue beene laid in the same place, he fell so sicke, that he requested to haue some body to watch with him, whereby also they could not bring their vile purpose to passe. But hard it is to escape the ill fortunes whereunto a man is allotted:

for albeit that the next time that he came to London, his horse stumbled and broke one of his legs as he should ride homeward, yet hired he another to hasten his owne death; for there is no remedy but he should goe to Colebrooke that night: but by the way he was heauy asleepe, that he could scant keepe himselfe in the saddle; and when he came neere vnto the Towne, his nose burst out suddenly a bleeding.

Well, to his Inne he came, and so heauy was his heart that he could eate no meat: his Oast and Oastesse hearing he was so melancholy, came vp to cheare him, saying, Jesus Master Cole, what ayles you to night? neuer did we see you thus sad before: will it please you to haue a quart of burnt sacke? With a good will (quoth he) and would to God Tom Doue were here, he would surely make me merry, and we should lacke no musicke: but I am sorry for the man with all my heart, that he is come so farre behind hand: but alas, so much can euery man say, but what good doth it him? No, no, it is not words can helpe a man in this case, the man had need of other reliefe then so. Let me see: I haue but one child in the world, and that is my daughter, and halfe that I haue is hers, the other halfe my wifes. What then? shall I be good to no body but them? In conscience, my wealth is too much for a couple to possesse, and what is our Religion without charity? And to whom is charity more to be shewne, then to decaid house-holders?

Good my Oast lend me a pen and inke, and some

paper, for I will write a letter vnto the poore man straight ; and something I will giue him : That almes which a man bestowes with his owne hands, he shall be sure to haue deliuered, and God knowes how long I shall liue.

With that, his Oastesse dissemblingly answered, saying, Doubt not, Master Cole, you are like enough by the course of nature to liue many yeeres. God knowes (quoth he) I neuer found my heart so heavy before. By this time pen, inke, and paper was brought, setting himselfe in writing as followeth.

In the name of God, Amen. I bequeath my soule to God, and my body to the ground, my goods equally betweene my wife Elenor, and Isabel my daughter. Item I giue to Thomas Doue of Exeter one hundred pounds, nay that is too little, I giue to Thomas Doue two hundred pounds in money, to be paid vnto him presently vpon his demand thereof by my said wife and daughter.

Ha, how say you Oast (qd. he) is not this well ? I pray you reade it. His Oast looking thereon, said, why Master Cole, what haue you written here ? you said you would write a letter, but me thinks you haue made a Will, what neede haue you to doe thus ? thanks be to God, you may liue many faire yeeres. Tis true (quoth Cole) if it please God, and I trust this writing cannot shorten my daies, but let me see, haue I made a Will ? Now, I promise you, I did verily purpose to write a

letter : notwithstanding, I have written that that God put into my mind : but looke once againe my Oast, is it not written there, that Doue shall haue two hundred pounds, to be paid when he comes to demand it ? yes indeed said his Oaste. Well then, all is well, said Cole, and it shall goe as it is for me. I will not bestow the new writing thereof any more.

Then folding it vp, he sealed it, desiring that his Oast would send it to Exeter : he promised that he would, notwithstanding Cole was not satisfied : but after some pause, he woulds needs hire one to carry it. And so sitting downe sadly in his chaire againe, vpon a sudden he burst forth a weeping ; they demanding the cause thereof, he spake as followeth :

No cause of these feares I know : but it comes now into my minde (said Cole) when I set toward this my last iourney to London, how my daughter tooke on, what a coyle she kept to haue me stay, and I could not be rid of the little baggage a long time, she did so hang about me, when her mother by violence tooke her away, she eryed out most mainly, O my father, my father, I shall neuer see him againe.

Alas, pretty soule, said his Oastesse, this was but meere kindnesse in the girle, and it seemeth she is very fond of you. But alas, why should you grieue at this ? you must consider that it was but childishnesse. I, it is indeed, said Cole, and with that he began to nod. Then they asked him if he would goe to bed. No, said he, although I am heauy, I haue no mind to goe to bed

at all. With that certaine musicians of the towne came to the chamber, and knowing Master Cole was there, drue out their instruments, and very solemnly began to play.

This musicke comes very well (said Cole) and when he had listned a while thereunto, he said, Me thinks these instrumēt's sound like the ring of St. Mary Oueries bells, but the Base drowns all the rest : and in my eare it goes like a bell that rings a forenoon's knell, for Gods sake let them leaue off, and beare them this simple reward. The Musicians being gone, his Oast asked if now it would please him to goe to bed ; for (quoth he) it is welneere eleuen of the clocke.

With that Cole beholding his Oast and Oastesse earnestly, began to start backe, saying, what aile you to looke so like pale death ? good Lord, what haue you done, that your hands are thus bloody ? What my hands, said his Oast ? Why, you may see they are neither bloody nor foule : either your eyes doe greatly dazell, or else fancies of a troubled minde doe delude you.

Alas, my Oast, you may see, said hee, how weake my wits are, I neuer had my head so idle before. Come, let me drinke once more, and then I will to bed, and trouble you no longer. With that hee made himselfe vnready, and his Oastesse was very diligent to warme a kerchiffe, and put it about his head. Good Lord, said he, I am not sicke, I praise God, but such an alteration I finde in my selfe as I neuer did before.

With that the scritch-owle cried pitiously, and anon

after the night-rauen sate croaking hard by his window. Iesu haue mercy vpon me, quoth hee, what an ill-fauoured cry doe yonder carrion birds make, and therewithall he laid him downe in his bed, from whence he neuer rose againe.

His Oast and Oastesse, that all this while noted his troubled mind, began to commune betwixt themselues thereof. And the man said, he knew not what were best to be done. By my consent (quoth he) the matter should passe, for I thinke it is not best to meddle on him. What man (quoth she) faint you now? haue you done so many and do you shrink at this? Then shewing him a great deale of gold which Cole had left with her, she said, Would it not grieue a bodys heart to lose this? hang the old churle, what should he doe liuing any longer? he hath too much, and we haue too little: tut husband, let the thing be done, and then this is our owne.

Her wicked counsell was followed, and when they had listned at his chamber doore, they heard the man sound asleepe: All is safe, quoth they, and downe into the kitchin they goe, their seruants being all in bed, and pulling out the yron pins, downe fell the bed, and the man dropt out into the boyling caldron. He being dead, they betwixt them cast his body into the riuer, his clothes they made away, and made all things as it should be: but when hee came to the stable to conuey thence Coles horse, the stable doore being open, the horse had got loose, and with a part of the halter about

his necke, and straw trussed vnder his belly, as the Ostlers had dressed him ore eue, he was gone out at the back-side, which led into a great field ioyning to the house, and so leaping diuers hedges, being a lustie stout horse, had got into a ground where a mare was grasing, with whom he kept such a coile, that they got into the high-way, where one of the Towne meeting them, knew the mare, and brought her and the horse to the man that owd her.

In the meane space, the Musicians had beene at the Inne, and in requitall of their euenings gift, they intended to giue Cole some musicke in the morning. The good-man told them he tooke horse before day: likewise there was a guest in the house that would haue bore him company to Reading, vnto whom the Oast also answered, that he himselfe set him vpon horsebacke, and that he went long agoe. Anon came the man that owed the mare, inquiring vp and downe, to know and if none of them missed a horse, who said no. At the last hee came to the signe of the Crane where Cole lay: and calling the Oastlers, he demanded of them if they lackt none, they said no: Why then said the man, I perceiue my mare is good for something, for if I send her to field single, she will come home double: thus it passed on all that day and the night following. But the next day after, Coles wife musing that her husband came not home, sent one of her men on horsebacke, to see if he could meete him: and if (quoth she) you meet him not betwixt this and Colebrooke, aske for him at the Craue, but if you find him not there, then

ride to London; for I doubt he is either sicke or else some mischance hath fallen vnto him.

The fellow did so, and asking for him at Colebrooke, they answered, hee went homeward from thence such a day. The seruant musing what should be become of his Master, and making much inquiry in the Towne for him: at length one told him of a horse that was found on the high-way, and no man knew whence he came. He going to see the horse, knew him presently, and to the Crane he goes with him. The Oast of the house perceiuing this, was blanke, and that night fled secretly away. The fellow going vnto the Justice desired his helpe: presently after word was brought that Iarman of the Crane was gone, then all the men said, he had sure made Cole away: and the Musicians told what Iarman said to them, when they would haue giuen Cole musicke. Then the woman being apprehended and examined, confessed the truth. Iarman soone after was taken in Windsor Forest, he and his wife were both hangd, after they had laid open al these things before expressed. Also he confessed, that he being a Carpenter made that false falling floore, and how his wife deuised it. And how they had murdered by that means lx. persons. And yet notwithstanding all the money which they had gotten thereby, they prospered not, but at their death were found very farre in debt.

When the King heard of this murder, he was for the space of vii dayes so sorrowfull and heauie, as he would not heare any suite, giuing also commandement, that

the house should quite be consumed with fire, wherein Cole was murdered, and that no man should euer build vpon that cursed ground.

Coles substance at his death was exceeding great, hee had daily in his house an hundred men seruants and xl. maides; hee maintained beside aboute two or three hundred people, spinners and carders, and a great many other house-holders. His wife neuer after married, and at her death shee bestowed a mightie summe of money toward the maintaining of the new builded Monastery. Her daughter was most richly married to a Gentleman of great worship, by whom she had many children. And some say, that the riuer whereinto Cole was cast, did euer since carrie the name of Cole being called The riuer of Cole, and the Towne of Colebrooke.

How diuers of the Clothiers wiues went to the Churching of Sutttons wife of Salisbury, and of their merriment. Chap. 12.

SUTTONS wife of Salisbury which had lately bin deliuered of a sonne, against her going to Church, prepared great cheare: at what time Simons wife of Southampton came thither, and so did diuers others of the Clothiers wiues, onely to make merry at this Churching feast: and whilest these Dames sate at the Table, Crab, Weasell, and Wren, waited on the boord, and as the old Prouerbe speaketh, Many women many words, so fell it out at that time: for there was such prattling that it passed: some talkt of their husbands frowardnes, some shewed

their maids sluttishnes, othersome deciphered the costlines of their garments, some told many tales of their neighbours : and to be briefe, there was none of them but would haue talke for a whole day.

But when Crab, Weasell, and Wren saw this, they concluded betwixt themselues, that as oft as any of the women had a good bit of meate on their trenchers, they offering a cleane one, should catch that commodity, and so they did : but the women being busie in talke, marked it not, till at the last one found leisure to misse her meat : whereupon she said, that their boldness exceeded their diligence. Not so, forsooth, said Weasell, there is an hundred bolder then we. Name me one, said the woman, if you can. A flea is bolder, quoth Crabbe. How will you proue that, said the woman ? Because, quoth he, they will creepe vnder your coates, where we dare not come, and now and then bite you by the buttocks as if they were brawne. But what becomes of them, qd. the woman ? their sweet meat hath sowre sauce, and their lustines doth often cost them their liues, therefore take heed. A good warning of a faire woman, said Wren, but I had not thought so fine a wit in a fat belly.

The women seeing their men so merry, said it was a signe there was good ale in the house. Thats as fit for a Churching quoth Weasell, as a cudgell for a curst queane. Thus with pleasant communication and merry quips they droue out the time, till the fruit and spicecakes were set on the boord : At what time one of them

began to aske the other, if they heard not of the cruell murder of Thomas of Reading? What, said the rest, is old Cole murdered? when, I pray you was the deell done? The other answered, on Friday last. O good Lord, said the women, how was it done, can you tell?

As report goes, said the other, he was roasted aliue. O pitifull! was hee roasted? Indeed I heard one say, a man was murdred at London, and that he was sodden at an Inholders house, and serued it to the guests in stead of porke.

No neighbour, it was not at London, said another; I heare say twas coming from London, at a place called Colebrook, and it is reported for truth, that the Inholder made pies of him, and penny pasties, yea, and made his owne seruant eate a piece of him. But I pray you good neighbour, can you tell how it was knowne: some say, that a horse reuealed it.

Now by the masse (quoth Grayes wife) it was told one of my neighbours, that a certaine horse did speake, and told great things. That sounds like a lie, said one of them. Why, said another, may not a horse speake, as well as Balaam asse? It may be, but it is vnlikely, said the third. But where was the horse when he spake? As some say, qd. she, he was in the field, and had broke out of the stable, where he stood fast locked in mighty strong yron fetters, which hee burst in peeces as they had beene straws, and broke downe the stable doore, and so got away. The good-man comming in at these speeches, asked what that was they talkt of.

Marry, said his wife wee heare that Cole of Reading is murdred: I pray you is it true? I, said Sutton, it is true, that vile villaine his Oast murdered him, in whose house the man had spent many a pound. But did they make pies of him, said his wife; No, no, quoth her husband: he was scalded to death in a boyling caldron, and afterward throwne into a running riuer that is hard by. But good husband, how was it knowne? By his horse, quoth hee. What, did hee tell his master was murdered? could the horse speake English? Jesus what a foolish woman are you, quoth he, to aske such a question? But to end this, you are all heartily welcome, good neighbours, and I am sorry you had no better cheere. So with thanks the women departed. Thus haue yee heard the diuers tales that will be spred abroad of an euil deed.

How Duke Robert deceiued his keepers, and got from them: how he met faire Margaret, and in carrying her away was taken, for the which he had his eyes put out. Chap. 13.

DUKE Robert, hauing, as you heard, obtained the loue of faire Margaret, did now cast in his mind, how hee might delude his Keepers, and carry her quite away. In the end he being absolutely resolued what to doe, sent this letter vnto her, wherein he requested, that she would be readie to meet him in the Forrest, betwixt Cardiffe and Gloucester.

The young Lady hauing secretly receiued his mes-

sage, vnknowne to her master or dame, in a morning betime made her ready and got forth, walking to the appointed place, where her Loue should meet her.

During her aboade there, and thinking long ere her Loue came, she entred into diners passions, which indeed presaged some disaster fortune to follow. O my deare Loue, said shee, how slacke art thou in performing thy promise ! why doe not thy deeds agree with thy indicting ? see these are thy words, Come, my deare Margaret, and with Cupids swift wings flie to thy friend, be now as nimble in thy footing, as the Camels of Bactria, that runne an hundred miles a day, I will waite and stay for thee, so I stay not too long. There is no Country like Austria for ambling horses, and to carry thee I haue got one.

O my Loue (quoth she) here am I, but where art thou ? O why doest thou play the trewant with time, who like the wind slides away vnscene ? An ambling gennet of Spaine is too slow to serue our turnes. A flying horse, for flying Louers were most meete. And thus casting many lookes thorow the Siluane shades, vp and downe to espie him, she thought euery minute an houre, till she might see him, sometimes she would wish her self a bird, that she might flie through the ayre to meet him, or a pretty squirill to clime the highest tree to descry his coming : but finding her wishes vaine, she began thus to excuse him and perswaded her selfe, saying ;

How much to blame am I, to finde fault with my

friend? Alas, men that lacke their liberty, must come when they can, not when they would, poore prisoners cannot doe what they desire, and then why should I be so hastie? Therefore if safely I may lay me down I will beguile vnquiet thoughts with quiet sleepe: it is said that Galino breeds no Serpents, nor doth Englands forrests nourish Beares or Lyons, therefore without hurt I hope I may rest awile. Thus leauing faire Margaret in a sweet slumber, we will returne to Duke Robert, who had thus plotted his escape from his keepers.

Having liberty of the King to hawke and hunt, hee determined on a day, as he should follow the chase, to leaue the hounds to the Hart, and the hunters to their hornes, and being busie in their sport, himselfe would flie, which hee performed at that time when hee appointed Margaret to meete him, and so comming to the place, his horse all on a water, and himself in a sweat, finding his Loue asleepe, he awaked her with a kisse, saying, Arise faire Margaret, now comes the time wherein thou shalt be made a Queene: and presently setting her on horsebacke, he posted away.

Now, when the Keepers saw they had lost his company, and that at the killing of the game, hee was not present, they were among themselues in such a mutiny, that they were ready one to stabbe another. It was thy fault, said one, that hee thus escapt from vs, that hadst more mind of thy pleasure, then of thy prisoner, and by this meanes we are all vndone. The other said as much

to him, that he had thought he had followed him in the chase: but leauing at last this contention, the one posted vp to the King, while the others coasted vp and downe the Country to search for the Duke, who hauing kild his horse in traouelling, was most vnhappily mette on foot with faire Margaret, ere he could come to any towne, where he might for money haue another. But when he espyed his Keepers come to take him, he desired Margaret to make shift for herselfe, and to seeke to escape them. But she being of a contrary mind, said, she would liue and die with him.

The Duke seeing himselfe ready to be surprized, drew out his sword, and said, he would buy his liberty with his life, before he would yeeld to be any more a prisoner; and thereupon began a great fight betwixt them, inso-much that the Duke had killed two of them: but himselfe being sore wounded, and faint withouermuch bleeding, at length fell downe, being not able any longer to stand: and by this meanes the good Duke was taken with his faire loue, and both of them committed to prison.

But in the meane space, when Grayes wife had missed her maide, and saw she was quite gone, she made great lamentation for her among her neighbours, for she loued her as dearly as any child that euer she bore of her owne body. O Margaret, (quoth she) what cause hadst thou thus to leaue me? if thou didst mislike of any thing, why didst thou not tell me? If thy wages

were too little, I would haue mended it: If thy apparell had been too simple, thou shouldst haue had better: If thy worke had bin too great, I would haue had helpe for thee.

Farewell my sweet Meg, the best seruant that euer came in any mans house, many may I haue of thy name, but neuer any of thy nature, thy diligence is much, in thy hands I laid the whole gouernment of my house, and thereby eased myselfe of that care, which now will cumber me.

Heere shee hath left me my keyes vnto my chests, but my comfort is gone with her presence, euery gentle word that she was wont to speake, comes now into my mind, her courteous behauiour shall I neuer forget: with how sweet and modest a countenance would she qualifie my ouer-hastie nature? It repents my heart that euer I spoke foule word vnto her. O Meg, wert thou here againe, I would neuer chide thee more: but I was an vnworthy Dame for such a seruant: what will become of me now, if I should chance to be sicke, seeing she is gone, that was wont to be both my Apotieary and Physician?

Well, quoth her neighbours, there is no remedy now, but to rest content, you shall one day heare of her, doubt you not, and thinke this, that she was not so good, but you may get another as good, and therefore doe not take it so heauily. O neighbour, blame me not to grieue, seeing I haue lost so great a iewell, and sure I am per-

swaded, that scant in a bodies life time, they shall meet with the like.

I protest, I would circuit England roundabout on my bare feet to meet with her againe. O, my Meg was surely stole away from me, else would she not haue gone in such sort. Her husband on the other side grieved as much, and rested not night nor day riding vp and downe to seeke her; but shee poore soule, is fast lockt vp in prison, and therefore cannot be met withall.

But when the King vnderstood of his brothers escape, hee was maruelous wroth, giuing great charge and commandement when he was taken, that both his eyes should be put out and be kept in prison till his dying day; appointing also that the Maid should lose her life for presumption of louing him.

This matter being rumoured ouer all England, it came to the eares of Gray and his wife, who hearing that Margaret also was there in prison appointed to die, the good aged woman neuer rested till she came to the Court, where kneeling before the King with many teares she besought his Maiestie to spare the Maidens life, saying, Most royall King consider, I humbly beseech you, that the Duke your brother was able to entice any woman to his loue: much more a silly Maiden, especially promising her marriage, to make her a Lady, a Dutchesse, or a Queene, who would refuse such an offer, when at the instant they might get both a princely husband and a high dignity: if death be a Louers guerdon,

then what is due to hatred? I am in my heart perswaded, that had my poore Margaret thought it would haue bred your Highnes displeasure, she would neuer haue bought his loue so deare. Had your Grace made it known to your Commons, that it was vnlawful for any to marry the Duke your brother, who would haue attempted such an action: if she had wilfully disobeyed your Graces commandement, she might haue been thought worthy of death; but seeing ignorantly she offended, I beseech your Grace to recall the sentence, and let me still enioy my seruant, for neuer will I rise, till your Maiestie haue granted my petition.

His Highnes, who was of nature mercifull, beholding the womans abundant teares, tooke pitie on her, and granted her suite: which being obtained, shee went home in all haste possible. And from thence, shee with her husband taking their iourney to Cardiffe castle, they came at that very instant when the Maiden was led toward her death, who went in most ioyfull sort to the same, saying, that they were not worthy to be accounted true louers, that were not willing to die for loue: and so with a smiling countenance she passed on, as if she had eaten *Apium Risus*, which causeth a man to die laughing: but her Dame Gray seeing her, fell about her necke, and with many kisses imbraced her, saying, Thou shalt not die my wench, but goe home with me; and for thy deliery, behold here the Kings letters; and with that she deliuered them vp to the governour of the Castle: who reading them found these words written:

Wee pardon the maids life, and grant her liberty, but let her not passe, till she see her louers eyes put out, which we will haue you doe in such sort that not onely the sight may perish, but the eye continue faire, for which cause I haue sent downe Doctor Piero, that he may execute the same.

The Gouvernour of the Castle hauing read the Kings letter, said thus to the Maiden: The Kings Maiesty hath pardoned thy life, and allowed thy liberty: but you must not passe before you see your Louers eyes put out. O sir, said the Maiden, mistake not your selfe, they are my eyes that must be put out, and not the Dukes: as his offence grew by my meanes, so I being guilty, ought to receiue the punishment.

The Kings commandement must be fulfilled, said the Gouvernour: and therewithall Duke Robert was brought forth, who hearing that he must lose his eyes, said thus: The Noble mind is neuer conquered by grieffe, nor ouercome by mischance: but as the Hart reneweth his age by eating the Serpent, so doth a man lengthen his life with deuouring sorrow: my eyes haue offended the King, and they must be punished, my heart is in as great fault, why is not that killed?

The Kings Maiesty, said the Gouvernour, spares your life of meere loue, and onely is content to satisfie the Law with the losse of your eyes, wherefore take in good part this punishment, and thinke you haue deserued greater then is granted.

With this Margaret cryed out, saying, O my deare

Loue, most gentle Prince, well may you wish that I had neuer bin borne, who by seeing of mee must lose your sight; but happie should I count my selfe, if it so please the King, that I might redeeme thy eyes with my life: or else, that being an equall offender, I might receiue equall punishment: hadst thou sustained this smart for some Queene or Princesse of high blood, it might with the more ease be borne, but to indure it for such a one as I, it must needs cause a treble grieffe to be increased.

Content thee faire Margaret said the Duke: for honour ought to be ginen to vertue, and not riches: for Glory, Honor, Nobility and riches without vertue, are but clokes of maliciousnes. And now let me take my leaue of thy beauty, for neuer must I behold thy face: notwithstanding I account my eyes well lost, in that, I doe forgoe them for so peereles a paragon. Now faire heauens farewell, the Sunne, Moone, and Starres shall I in this world neuer behold againe, and farewell also the fruitfull earth; well may I feele thee, but those poore windowes of my body are now denyed to view thee any more: and though the world hath euer bin my foe, yet will I bid thee farewell too, and farewell all my friends, whiles I live here in this world, I must suppose to sleepe, and wake when I come in heauen, where I hope to see you all againe. Yet had it pleased the King, I had rather haue lost my life then my eyes. Life, why, what is it but a flowre, a bubble in the water, a spanne long, and full of miserie: of such small account is life, that

euery Soldier will sell it for sixpence. And trust me, I doe now detest life, worse then a goat doth hate Basill.

With that the Doctor prepared his instrument, and being ready to set to the Dukes eyes, he said, O stay Master Doctor, till I haue conueyed my Loues countenance downe into my heart: Come hither my sweet, and let me giue thee my last kisse, while mine eyes may direct me to thy cherry lips. Then imbracing her in his armes, he said, O that I might giue thee a kisse of xx yeeres long, and to satisfie my greedy eyes with thy sight: yet it doth somewhat content me, because thou art present at my punishment, that I may hold thee by the hand, to comfort my heart, at the sudden pricke of my eye.

This being said, the Doctor performed his duty, and so put out the christall sight: at what time D. Robert started vp and with a most manly courage said, I must thanke his Maiestie, that though hee depriueth me of my sight, yet he leaueth me eyes to weepe for my sinnes. But so soone as Margaret beheld the deed, she fell downe in a swoone; and much a doe her dame had to recouer her life: which when the Duke vnderstood, hee was wondrous woe, groaping for her with his bleeding eyes, saying O where is my Loue? for Gods sake haue regard to her. And I pray you most heartily, good good-wife Gray, let her haue this fauour for my sake, that she may be vsed kindly. And with that the Keepers led him into the Castle, and Margaret was carried away

wondrous sicke and ill : but her dame was most tender ouer her ; and would suffer her to lacke nothing. When she was somewhat well recouered, her Dame Gray set her on horsebacke : and at her comming to Glocester, there was no small ioy.

How Thomas Doue being fallen to decay, was forsaken of his friends, and despised of his seruants : and how in the end he was raised againe through the liberality of the Clothiers. Chap. 14.

SUCH as seeke the pleasure of the world, follow a shadow wherein is no substance: and as the adder *Aspis* tickleth a man to death, so doth vaine pleasure flatter vs, till it makes vs forget God, and consume our substance, as by Tom Doue it is apparent, who had through a free heart, and a liberall minde wasted his wealth ; and looke how his goods consumed, so his friends fled from him : And albeit he had beene of great ability, and thereby done good vnto many, yet no man regarded him in his pouerty, but casting a scornefull countenance vpon him, they passed by him with slender salutation : neither would any of his former acquaintance do him good, or pleasure him the value of a farthing ; his former friendship done to them was quite forgot, and he made of as much account, as Iob when he sate on the dunghill.

Now, when his wicked seruants saw him in this disgrace with the world, they on the other side began to disdain him. Notwithstanding that hee (to his great

cost) had long time brought them vp, yet did they nothing regard it, but behind his backe in most scornefull sort derided him, and both in their words and actions greatly abuse him, reuerence they would doe none vnto him, but when they spake, it was in such malapert sort, as would grieue an honest minde to heare it.

At last it came to passe, that breaking out into meere contempt, they said they would stay no longer with him, and that it was a great discredit for them, to serue a person so beggerly : whereupon they thought it conuenient to seeke for their benefits elsewhere. When the distressed man found the matter so plaine being in great grieffe, he spake thus vnto them : Now do I find, to my sorrow, the small trust that is in this false world. Why, my Masters (quoth he) haue you so much forgotten my former prosperity, that you nothing regard my present necessity ? In your wants I forsooke you not, in your sicknesse I left you not, nor despised you in your great pouerty : it is not vnknowne, though you doe not consider it, that I tooke some of you vp in the high-way, othersome from your needy parents, and brought the rest from meere beggery to a house of bounty ; where from paltrie boyes, I brought you vp to mans state, and haue, to my great cost, taught you a trade, whereby you may liue like men. And in requitall of all my courtesie, cost and good will, will you now on a sudden forsake me ? Is this the best recompence that you can find your hearts to yeeld mee ?

This is farre from the minds of honest seruants. The fierce Lion is kind to those that doe him good: plucke but one thorne out of his foot, and for the same he will shew manifold fauors. The wilde Bull will not ouerthrow his dam: and the very Dragons are dutifull to their nourishers. Bee better aduised and call to mind, I beseech you, that I haue not pluckt a thorne out of your feet, but drawne your whole bodies out of perils, and when you had no meanes to helpe your selues, I onely was your support, and he, that when all other forsooke you, did comfort you in all your extremities.

And what of all this, quoth one of them? because you tooke vs vp poore, doth it therefore follow, that we must be your slaues? We are young men, and for our part, we are no further to regard your profit, then it may stand with our preferment: Why should we lose our benefit to pleasure you? if you taught vs our trade, and brought vs vp from boies to men, you had our seruice for it, whereby you made no small benefit, if you had as well vsed it as we got it. But if you be poore, you may thanke your selfe, being a iust scourge for your prodigalitie, and is my opinion plaine, that to stay with you, is the next way to make vs like you, neither able to helpe our selues, nor our friends: therefore in briefe; come pay me my wages, for I will not stay; let the rest doe as they will, for I am resolued.

Well said his Master, if needs thou wilt be gone, here is part of thy wages in hand, and the rest as soone

as God sends it, thou shalt haue it : and with that, turning to the rest, he said, Let me yet intreat you to stay, and leaue me not altogether destitute of helpe : by your labours must I liue, and without you I know not what to doe. Consider therefore my need, and regard my great charge. And if for my sake you will doe nothing, take compassion of my poore children ; stay my sliding foot, and let me not vtterly fall, through your flying from me.

Tush (quoth they) what do you talke to vs? We can haue better wages, and serue a man of credit, where our fare shall be farre better, and our gaines greater : therefore the world might count vs right coxcomes, if we should forsake our profit, to pleasure you : therefore adieu, God send you more money, for you are like to haue no more men: and thus they departed.

When they were gone, within a while after they met one with another, saying, What cheare? are you all come away : in faith I, what should we doe else, quoth they: but hear'st thou sirra, hast thou got thy wages? Not yet saith the other, but I shall haue it, and that is as good, tis but x shillings. Saist thou so (said he) now I see thou art one of God Almightyes idiots: Why so, said the other? Because (quoth he) thou wilt be fed with shales: but Ile tell thee one thing, twere better for thee quickly to arrest him, lest some other doing it before, and there be nothing left to pay thy debt: hold thy peace, faire words make fooles faire, and it is an old

saying, One bird in hand is worth two in bush: if thou dost not arrest him presently, I will not giue thee two pence for thy x. shillings. How shall I come by him, quoth the other? giue me but two pots of ale, and Ile betray him, said he. So they being agreed, this smooth-faced Iudas comes to his latemaster, and told him that a friend of his at the doore would speake with him. The vnmistrusting man thinking no euill, went to the doore where presently an Officer arrested him at his mans suite.

The poore man seeing this, being stricken into a sudden sorrow, in the grieffe of his heart spake to this effect: Ah thou lewd fellow, art thou the first man that seekes to augment my miserie? Haue I thus long giuen thee bread, to breed my ouerthrow? and nourisht thee in thy neede, to worke my destruction? Full little did I thinke, when thou so often diddest dip thy false fingers in my dish, that I gaue food to my chiefest foe: but what boote complaints in these extremes? Goe wife, quoth he, vnto my neighbours, and see if thou canst get any of them to be my baile. But in vaine was her paines spent. Then he sent to his kinsfolkes, and they denied him: to his brother, and he would not come at him, so that there was no shift, but to prison he must: but as he was going, a Messenger met him with a letter from Master Cole, wherein as you heard, hee had promised him two hundred pounds: which when the poore man read, hee greatly reioyced, and shewing the same to the

Officer, hee was content to take his owne worde. Whereupon Tom Doue went presently to Reading, where at his comming, he found all the rest of the Clothiers, lamenting Coles vntimely death; where the wofull widdow paid him the money, by which deed all the rest of the Clothiers were induced to doe something for Doue. And thereupon one gaue him ten pounds, another twenty, another thirtie pounds, to begin the world anew: and by this meanes (together with the blessing of God) he grew into greater credit then euer hee was before. And riches being thus come vpon him, his former friends came fawning vnto him and when he had no neede of them, then euerie one was readie to proffer him kindnesse. His wicked seruants also that disdained him in his distresse, were after glad to come creeping vnto him, intreating with cap and knee for his fauour and friendship. And albeit hee seemed to forgiue their trespasses done against him, yet hee would often say, he would neuer trust them for a straw. And thus he euer after liued in great wealth and prosperitie, doing much good to the poore, and at his death, left to his children great lands.

How faire Margaret made her estate and high birth knowne to her Master and Dame: and for the intire loue she bore to Duke Robert, made a vow neuer to marry, but became a Nun in the Abbey at Glocester. Chap. 15.

AFTER faire Margaret was come againe to Glocester neuer did she behold the cleare day, but with a weeping eye: and so great was the scrow which she conceined, for the losse of Duke Robert her faithfull Louer, that she vtterly despised all the pleasures of this life, and at last bewrayed her selfe in this sort vnto her Dame:

O my good Master and Dame, too long haue I dissembled my parentage from you, whom the froward destinies doe pursue to deserued punishment. The wofull daughter am I of the vnhappy Earle of Shrewsburie, who euer since his banishment, haue done nothing but drawne mischance after mee: wherefore let me intreat you (dear Master and Dame) to haue your good wills, to spend the remnant of my life in some blessed Monasterie.

When Gray and his wife heard this, they wondred greatly, as well at her birth, as at her strange demaund. Whereupon her dame knew not how to call her, whether Maiden or Madam, but said, O good Lord, are you a Ladie, and I know it not? I am sorrie that I knew it not before. But when the folkes of the house heard that Margaret was a Lady, there was no small alteration: and moreouer her Dame said, that she had

thought to haue had a match between her and her son : and by many perswasions did seeke to withdraw her from being a Nun, saying in this manner : What Margaret, thou art young and faire, the world (no doubt) hath better fortune for thee whereby thou maist leaue an honourable issue behind thee, in whom thou mayst liue after death.

These and many other reasons did they alledge vnto her, but all in vaine : she making this reply, Who knowes not that this world giueth the pleasure of an houre, but the sorrow of many daies ? for it paieth euer that which it promiseth, which is nothing else but continuall trouble and vexation of the minde. Do you think, if I had the offer and choice of the mightiest Princes of Christendom, that I could match my selfe better then to my Lord Jesus ? No, no, hee is my husband, to whom I yeeld my selfe both body and soule, giuing to him my heart, my loue and my most firme affections : I haue ouerlong loued this vile world : therefore I beseech you farther dissuade me not.

When her friends by no meanes could alter her opinion, the matter was made knowne to his Maiestie, who against the time that she should be receiued into the Monasterie, came to Gloucester with most part of his Nobilitie, to honour her action with his princely presence.

All things being therefore prepared, the young Lady was in most princely-wise attired in a gowne of pure white sattin, her kirtle of the same, embroidered with gold about the skirts in most curious sort, her head was

garnished with gold, pearles, and precious stones, hauing her haire like thrids of burnisht gold, hanging downe behind in manner of a princely bride : about her yuory necke iewels of inestimable price were hung, and her handwrests were compassed about with bracelets of bright-shining Diamonds.

The streets thorow the which she should passe, were pleasantly deckt with greene oaken boughs. Then came the young Lady most like an heauenly Angell out of her masters house, at what time all the bells in Gloucester were solemnly rung : she being led betwixt the Kings Maiestie, hauing on his Royal Robes, and Imperiall Crowne, and the chiefe Bishop wearing his Mitre, in a Cope of cloth of gold, ouer her head a Canopy of white silke, fringed about in princely manner : before her went an hundred Priests singing, and after her all the chiefe Ladies of the Land : then all the wiues and Maidens of Gloucester followed, with an innumerable sort of people on euery side standing to behold her. In this sort she passed on to the Cathedrall Church, where she was brought to the Nunry gate.

The Lady Abbesse receiued her : where the beautiful Maiden kneeling downe, made her prayer in sight of all the people : then with her owne hands she vndid her virgins faire gowne, and tooke it off, and gaue it away to the poore : after that, her kirtle, then her iewels, bracelets and rings, saying, Farewell the pride and vanitie of this world. The ornaments of her head were the next shee gaue away : and then was shee led on one

side, where she was stripped, and in stead of her smocke of soft silke had a smocke of rough haire put vpon her.

Then came one with a paire of sheares, and cut off her golden-coloured lockes, and with dust and ashes all bestrewed her head and face. Which being done, she was brought againe into the peoples sight bare foot and bare leg'd, to whom she said: Now farewell the world, farewell the pleasures of this life, farewell my Lord the King, and to the Dukes sweet loue farewell, now shall my eyes weepe for my former transgressions, and no more shall my tongue talke of vanity; farewell my good Master and Dame, and farewell all good people.

With which words she was taken away, and neuer after seene abroad. When Duke Robert heard thereof, he desired that at his death, his body might be buried in Glocester: in that Towne, quoth he, where first my cleare eyes beheld the heauenly beauty of my Loue, and where for my sake shee forsooke the world: which was performed accordingly.

The King also at his death requested to be buried at Reading, for the great loue hee bare to that place, among those Clothiers, who liuing were his hearts comfort. Gray dying wondrous wealthy, gaue land to the Monasterie whereinto Margaret was taken. William Fitzallen also dyed a most rich man, hauing builded many houses for the poore, whose sonne Henry after was the first Maior that was cuer in London.

Sutton of Salisbury did also at his death much good, and gaue an hundred li. to be yeerely lent to poore

weauers of the Towne, to the worlds end. Simon of South-hampton gaue a most bounteous gift towards the building of a Monastery at Winchester. Hodgkins of Hallifax did also great good, and so did Cutbert of Kendall, who had married xxiii. couples out of his owne house, giuing each of them x. li. to beginne the world withall. Martin Briam of Manchester gaue toward the building of a free-schoole in Manchester, a great masse of money. And thus (gentle reader) haue I finished my storie of these worthy men, desiring thee to take my paines in good part, which will ingage me to greater matters, perceiuing this curteously accepted.

FINIS.

FRYER BACON.

FRYER BACON.

WHEN we observe the tendency which has been shown by the generality of mankind in all ages and countries, to estimate the capabilities of the human mind by the limited powers which have been allotted to themselves, we cannot be surprized that they should endeavour to reduce the master-spirits of Genius and Philosophy to their own level, by attributing the superior acquirements of such master-spirits to the influence of demoniacal agency. Such has ever been the solution which the vulgar have given to the apparently mysterious power which superior intellect possessed over them, while the few whose better knowledge should have led them to check so delusive and dangerous an opinion were too often induced by feelings of envy, if not openly to encourage, at least tacitly to sanction it. Among the many who have been thus treated, none have been so more unjustly than Roger Bacon, who in the three first chapters of his Epistle on the Power of Art and Nature, expressly declares against magic, unlawful

books, characters and spells; but is in the following tale transformed from the greatest philosopher of his age into a beneficent and powerful conjuror.

The history of Fryer Bacon as related in these pages, was probably written towards the close of the sixteenth century, and is we may suppose a collection of the various traditions respecting him which were current among all classes of the community when the narrative was compiled. Many of the incidents contained in it are widely diffused in other shapes, and the name of our hero has doubtless often been connected with them merely from their being mutual subjects of popular fable: but the Brazen Head and the wonderful Perspective Glass, which he is reported to have made, seem deserving of particular notice, though any credit which may be given to him for his exertions in constructing such a head, "by the which hee would have walled England round with brass," he will I fear have to share with so many who are said to have possessed similar skill in the construction of magical images that it will be considerably diminished. Virgil is reported to have constructed certain images called *Salvacio Romæ*, which are fully described in that extraordinary production the *Lyfe of Virgilius* which will be found in the second volume of this collection. Robert Greathead

or Grostete, commonly called Robert of Lincoln, is coupled with our hero by Butler, who speaks of "Old Hodge Bacon and Bob Grostead," and is reported by Gower to have constructed a brazen head which could speak—

For of the grete Clerk Grostest,
 I rede how busy that he was
 Upon the clergie, an head of bras
 To forge and make it for to telle
 Of suche thinges as befelle.
 And seven yeres besinesse
 He laid, but for the lachesse
 Of half a minute of an houre
 Fro firste he began laboure
 He loste all that he hadde do.
 And other while it fareth so
 In loves cause, who is slowe
 That he without under the wowe
 By night stant full oft a eolde,
 Which mighte, if that he had wolde
 His time kept, have be withinne.

*Confessio Amantis, Liber Quartus.**

William of Malmsbury mentions a similar one constructed by Pope Sylvester the Second. "I have inserted this narrative of the Aquitanian," says Malmsbury in Dr. Giles translation,† "to the intent

* Vol. 2. p. 9. of New Edition of Gower, edited by Dr. Pauli.

† Bohn's Antiq. Lib. p. 181.

that what is reported of Gerbert should not seem wonderful to any person, which is, that he cast, for his own purposes, the head of a statue, by a certain inspection of the stars when the planets were about to begin their courses, which spake not unless spoken to, but then pronounced the truth, either in the affirmative or negative. For instance when Gerbert would say, 'Shall I be pope?' the statue would reply 'Yes?' 'Am I to die ere I sing mass at Jerusalem?' 'No.' They relate that he was so much deceived by this ambiguity that he thought nothing of repentance, for when would he think of going to Jerusalem to accelerate his own death." The Chronieler then tells that there is a Church at Rome called Jerusalem where the Pope sings mass on Three Sundays which are called The Station at Jerusalem, and then proceeds, "wherefore upon one of these days Gerbert preparing himself for mass was suddenly struck with sickness, which increased so that he took to his bed and consulting his statue he became convinced of his delusion and of his approaching death."

Yepes also affirms that Henry de Villeine made such a one at Madrid, which was afterwards broken to pieces by order of John the Second, King of Castile; and upon numerous authorities, the same thing has been

asserted of Albertus Magnus.* And here let me extract what Sir Thomas Browne says upon this subject in his *Vulgar Errors*. Book 7. Cap. 17.

“Every ear is filled with the story of Friar Bacon, that made a Brazen Head to speak these words *Time is*, which though they want not the like relation, is surely too literally received, and was but a mystical fable concerning the philosopher’s great work, wherein he eminently laboured; implying no more by the copper head than the vessel where it was wrought; and by the words it spake, than the opportunity to be watched about the *tempus ortus*, or birth of the mystical child, or philosophical king of Lullius, the rising of the *terra foliata* of Arnoldus; when the earth, sufficiently impregnated with the water, ascendeth white and splendent; which not observed the work is irrecoverably lost, according to that of Petrus Bonus ‘*Ibi est operis perfectio, aut annihilatio, quoniam ipse die orientur elementa simplicia, deparata, quæ egent statim compositione, antequam volent ab igne.*’ Now letting slip this critical opportunity, he missed the intended treasure: which had

* Stow mentions a head of earth made at Oxford by the art of necromancy, in the reign of Edward the Second, that at a time appointed spake these words, *Caput decidetur*, the head shall be cut off: *Caput elevabitur*, the head shall be lift up. *Pedes elevabuntur supra caput*, the feet shall be lifted above the head.

he obtained, he might have made out the tradition of making a brazen wall about England, that is, the most powerful defence or strongest fortification which gold could have effected."

The fable of his wonderful perspective glass evidently derives its origin from his well-known skill in optics, to the improvement of which science he greatly contributed. The Camera Obscura and Burning Glass, both of which are obviously alluded to in the Romance, are mentioned by Bacon in his *Opus Magus*, and the supposition which has arisen from a passage in that work, that he was the Inventor of the Telescope, derives additional confirmation from the evidence thus afforded by tradition.

His stratagem to save the lives of three brethren is borrowed from the *Gesta Romanorum*, and is the 45th Story, fol. 38, of the edition printed at Paris, by Jehan Petit, Svo. 1506: while Miles conjuring for meat, resembles in its incidents *The Friars of Berwick*, a tale supposed to be written by Dunbar, who died about 1525, which is printed in Pinkerton's *Scotch Poems*, vol. i. p. 65. The contention between Bacon, Bungay and Vandermast, though productive of many wonderful feats of art, will hardly bear comparison in that respect with the following contest, recorded by Dubravius, *Hist. Bohem.* and repeated by

Flogel in his *Geschichte der Hofnarren*, s. 214. When Charles 4th celebrated his nuptials with the Bavarian Princess Sophia, the bride's father brought a waggon load of magicians with him to enliven the City of Prague. Two of the chief artists were selected by the court to contend with each other in diablerie ; when the great Bohemian Sorcerer Zytho, after a desperate trial of skill, seized the Bavarian master Gouin, and opening his jaws from ear to ear, gobbled him up from top to toe, hide and all, until he came to his shoes. Not liking the flavour of these he spat them out, declaring they must first be cleaned. Next he restored his rival to life with the same facility as he had eaten him.

As might be expected from its popularity, there are innumerable editions of the *History of Friar Bacon*, which differ very slightly from each other. The earliest probably is that which bears the same title as the one now reprinted ; it is without date, but is stated to be "printed at London by E. A. for Francis Grove"—E. A. being doubtless Elizabeth Alde, for whom the edition of Greene's Play was printed in 1630. It has continued to be printed in a popular form up to the present century.

"The honorable HISTORY OF FRIER BACON AND FRIER BONGAY, as it was plaid by her Majesties

servants. Made by Robert Greene, Maister of Arts. London, printed for Edward White, and are to be sold at his shop, at the little north dore of Poules at the signe of the Gun, 1594," 4to. is a play similar in its incidents to the present narrative, upon which it is probably founded, as it was the custom with the Dramatists of that day to adopt some popular tale as the foundation of their work. There were also editions of this play printed in 1599, 1630 and 1655.

There is one tradition connected with the history of Friar Bacon which is not mentioned either in the Play or the Romance, namely, that he acquired his skill in magic by promising himself to the devil, after his death, provided he died either in the church or out of it; and the fulfilment of which contract he evaded, when he felt his end approaching, by causing a cell to be formed neither in nor out of, but in the wall of the church, wherein he both died and was buried.

We cannot bring these scanty notes to a close without expressing our hope that the learned Biographer of Jerome Cardan and Cornelius Agrippa, may employ his able pen on the production of a life of ROGER BACON; not Friar Bacon—but Roger Bacon the old English Philosopher.

THE
FAMOUS HISTORIE

OF

Fryer Bacon.

CONTAINING

THE WONDERFULL THINGS THAT HE DID IN HIS
LIFE: ALSO THE MANNER OF HIS DEATH;

WITH THE LIVES AND DEATHS OF THE TWO CONIURERS,
BUNGYE AND VANDERMAST.

VERY PLEASANT AND DELIGHTFULL TO BE READ.

PRINTED AT LONDON BY E. A. FOR FRANCIS GROUPE, AND
ARE TO BE SOLD AT HIS SHOP, AT THE UPPER-END
OF SNOW-HILL, AGAINST THE SARAZENS HEAD.

THE FAMOUS HISTORIE OF FRYER
BACON.

Of the Parents and Birth of Fryer Bacon, and how he
addicted himselfe to Learning.

IN most men's opinions he was borne in the west part of England and was sonne to a wealthy farmer, who put him to schoole to the parson of the towne where hee was borne: not with intent that he should turne fryer (as he did,) but to get so much understanding, that he might manage the better that wealth hee was to leave him. But young Bacon tooke his learning so fast, that the priest could not teach him any more, which made him desire his master that he would speake to his father to put him to Oxford, that he might not lose that little learning that hee had gained: his master was very willing so to doe: and one day meeting his father, told him, that he had received a great blessing of God, in that he had given him so wise and hopefull a child, as his sonne Roger Bacon was (for so was he named) and wished him withall to doe his duty, and to bring up so his child, that hee might shew his thankfulnessse to God, which could not better be done then in making of him a

scholler ; for he found by his sodaine talking of his learning, that hee was a childe likely to prove a very great clerke : hereat old Bacon was not well pleased (for he desired to bring him up to plough and to the cart, as hee himselfe was brought) yet he for reverence sake to the priest, shewed not his anger, but kindly thanked him for his paines and counsell, yet desired him not to speake any more concerning that matter ; for hee knew best what best pleased himselfe, and that he would doe : so broke they off their talke, and parted.

So soone as the old man came home, he called to his sonne for his bookes, which when he had, he lock'd them up, and gave the boy a cart whip in the place of them, saying to him : Boy, I will have you no priest, you shall not be better learned than I, you can tell now by the almanack when it is best sowing wheat, when barley, pease, and beane : and when the best libbing is, when to sell graine and cattell I will teach thee ; for I have all faires and markets as perfit in my memory, as Sir John our priest has masse without booke : take mee this whip, I will teach thee the use of it, it will be more profitable to thee then this harsh Latin : make no reply, but follow my counsell, or else by the masse thou shalt feele the smart hand of my anger. Young Bacon thought this but hard dealing, yet would he not reply, but within sixe or eight dayes he gave his father the slip, and went to a cloyster some twenty miles off, where he was entertained, and so continued his learning,

and in small time came to be so famous, that he was sent for to the University of Oxford, where he long time studied, and grew so excellent in the secrets of art and nature, that not England onely, but all Christendome admired him.

How the king sent for Fryer Bacon, and of the wonderful things he shewed the king and queene.

THE king being in Oxfordshire, at a Noblemans house, was very desirous to see this famous fryer, for he had heard many times of his wondrous things that he had done by his art : therefore hee sent one for him to desire him to come to the court. Fryer Bacon kindly thanked the king by the messenger, and said, that he was at the kings service, and would suddenly attend him : but sir, saith, he (to the gentleman) I pray make you haste, or else I shall be two houres before you at the court. For all your learning (answered the gentleman) I can hardly beleve this, for schollers, old-men and travellers, may lye by authority. To strengthen your beliefe (said Fryer Bacon) I could presently shew you the last wench that you lay withall, but I will not at this time. One is as true as the other (said the gentleman) and I would laugh to see either. You shall see them both within these foure houres, quoth the fryer, and therefore make what haste you can. I will prevent that by my speed (said the gentleman) and with that rid his way : but he rode out of his way, as it should seem ; for he had but

five miles to ride, and yet was he better than three houres a riding them ; so that Fryer Bacon by his art was with the king before he came.

The king kindly welcommed him, and said that hee long time had desired to see him ; for he had as yet not heard of his life. Fryer Bacon answered him that fame had belide him, and given him that report that his poore studies had never deserved, for hee beleevved that art had many sonnes more excellent then himselfe was. The king commended him for his modesty, and told him, that nothing could become a wise man lesse than boasting : but yet withall he requested him now to be noniggard of his knowledge, but to shew his queene and him some of his skill. I were worthy of neither art or knowledge (quod Fryer Bacon), should I deny your maiestie this small request : I pray seat yourselves, and you shall see presently what my poore skill can performe : the king, queene, and nobles sate them all down. They having so done, the fryer waved his wand, and presently was heard such excellent musicke that they were all amazed, for they all said they had never heard the like. This is, said the fryer, to delight the sense of hearing, I will delight all your other sences ere you depart hence : so waving his wand againe, there was lowder musicke heard, and presently five dancers entred, the first like a court-laundresse, the second like a footman, the third like an usurer, the fourth like a prodigall, the fift like a foole : these did divers excellent changes, so that they gave content to all the beholders, and having done their

dance, they all vanished away in their order as they came in. Thus feasted he two of their sences ; then waved he his wand againe, and there was another kind of musicke heard, and whilst it was playing, there was sodainly before them a table richly covered with all sorts of delicates : then desired he the king and queene to taste of some certaine rare fruits that were on the table, which they and the nobles there present did, and were very highly pleased with the taste ; they being satisfied, all vanished away on the sodaine. Then waved he his wand againe, and sodainly there was such a smell, as if all the rich perfumes in the whole world had bin there prepared in the best manner that art could set them out : whilst hee feasted thus their smelling, he waved his wand againe, and their came divers nations in sundry habits (as Russians, Polauders, Indians, Armenians) all bringing sundry kinds of fures, such as their countries yeilded : all which they presented to the king and queene : these fures were so soft in the touch, that they highly pleased all those that handled them, then after some odde fantasticke dances (after their countrey manner) they vanished away : then asked Fryer Bacon the king's majesty, if that hee desired any more of his skill ? the king answered that hee was fully satisfied for that time, and that hee onely now thought of something that hee might bestow on him, that might partly satisfie the kindnesse that hee had received. Fryer Bacon said, that hee desired nothing so much as his maiesties love, and if that he might be assured of that, hee would thinke himselfe happy in it : for that (said the king) be thou

ever sure of it, in token of which receive this jewell, and withall gave him a costly jewell from his necke. The fryer did with great reverence thanke his maiestie, and said: as your maiesties vassall you shall ever finde me ready to do you serviee, your time of neede shall finde it both beneficiall and delightfull. But amongst all these gentlemen, I see not the man that your grace did send for me by, sure he hath lost his way, or else met with some sport that detaines him so long. I promised to be here before him, and all this noble assembly can witness I am as good as my word: I heare him comming: with that entered the gentleman all bedurted (for he had rid through ditches, quagmires, plashes, and waters, that hee was in a most pittifull case) he seeing the fryer there looked full angerly, and bid a poxe on all his devils, for they had led him out of his way, and almost drowned him. Be not angry sir (said Fryer Bacon) here is an old friend of yours that hath more cause: for she hath tarried these three houres for you (with that hee pulled up the hangings, and behinde them stood a kitchen-mayde with a basting-ladle in her hand) now am I as good as my word with you: for I promised to helpe you to your sweetheart, how do you like this? So ill, answered the gentleman, that I will be revenged of you. Threaten not (said Fryer Bacon) least I do you more shame, and doe you take heed how you give schollers the lye againe: but because I know not how well you are stored with money at this time, I will bear your wenchs charges home: with that she vanished away:

the king, queene, and all the company laughed to see with what shame this gentlemau indured the sight of his greasie sweetheart : but the gentleman went away discontented. This done Fryer Bacon tooke his leave of the King and Queene, and received from them divers gifts (as well as thankes) for his art he shewed them.

How Fryer Bacon deceived his Man, that would fast for his conscience sake.

FRYER BACON had one onely man to attend on him and he too was none of the wisest, for he kept him in charity, more then for any service he had of him. This man of his (named Miles) never could indure to fast as other religious persons did, for alwayes hee had in one corner, or another, flesh which hee would eat when his maister eat bread only, or else did fast and abstaine from all things. Fryer Bacon seeing this, thought at one time or other to be even with him, which he did one Fryday in this manner, Miles on the Thursday night had provided a great blacke-pudding for his Frydayes fast : this pudding put he in his pocket (thinking belike to heate it so, for his maister had no fire on those dayes) on the next day, who was so demure as Miles, hee looked as though hee would not have eat any thing : when his maister offerd him some bread, hee refused it, saying his sinnes deserved a greater penance then one dayes fast in a whole weeke : his maister commended him for it, and bid him take heed that he did not dissemble : for if he did, it would at last be knowne ; then were I worse

then a Turke said Miles: so went he forth as if he would have gone to pray privately, but it was for nothing but to prey upon his blacke pudding; that pulled he out, (for it was halfe roasted with the heate) and fell to it lustily; but he was deceived, for having put one end in his mouth, he could neither get it out againe nor bite it off, so that hee stamped out for helpe: his maister hearing him, came; and finding him in that manner, tooke hold of the other end of the pudding, and led him to the hall, and shewed him to all the schollers, saying: see here my good friends and fellow students what a devout man my servant Miles is, he loveth not to break a fast day, witnesse this pudding that his conscience will not let him swallow: I will have him to be an example for you all, then tyed hee him to a window by the end of the pudding, where poore Miles stood like a beare tyed by the nose to a stake, and indured many floutes and mockes: at night his maister released him from his penance; Miles was glad of it, and did vow never to breake more fast dayes whilst that he lived.

How Fryer Bacon saved a Gentleman that had given
himselſe to the Devill.

IN Oxfordshire there lived a gentleman, that had through his riotous expences wasted a faire inheritance that was left him by his father: after which hee grew so poore, that he had not wherwith to buy himselſe so much bread as would mainteine his miserable life: the memory of his former state that hee had lived in, and the

present want that he now sustained, made him to grow desperate and regardlesse both of his soule and bodies estate : which gave the devill occasion to worke upon his weaknesse in this maner following.

On a time, hee being alone full of grieffe and care, (grieffe for his folies past, and care how to get a poore living for the remainder of his dayes) the Devill came to him and asked him what hee wanted (hee came not in a shape terrible, but like an old penny-father.) This gentleman was amazed at his sodaine presence, but hearing him demand of his wants, hee tooke to him courage and said : I want all things, I want money to buy my apparell, money to buy mee meat, money to redeeme my land and money to pay my debts : can or will you helpe mee in this misery ? I will answered the Devill, on some conditions helpe you to money for to supply all these wants and that sodainly. On any condition, said the Gentleman, helpe mee, and I sweare for to performe them : I take no oathes (answered the Devill) I must have bonds, if you will doe so, meet mee by the woods side to morrow morning, and there I will have the moneys ready : I will said the gentleman (for hee poore man was glad of it on any conditions, as he said before.) The next day hee went to the wood where the Devill had promised to meet him : long had he not been there, but he beheld the Devil comming, and after him two other like servingmen with bagges of money : this reioyced the poore gentlemans heart to thinke that hee should once again live like a man. The Devill comming

to him said: sonne I will performe my promise unto you if that you will seale to the conditions that I have here already drawne: willingly said the gentleman, I will, I pray read them. The Devill read them to this effect: that he lent him so much money as he should have need of, to be employed to these uses following: First, to redeeme his mortgaged land: next to pay his debts: lastly, to buy him such necessaries as hee wanted: this to be lent on this condition, that so soone as he had paid all debts, that he should be at the lenders disposing, and his without any delay, freely to yeeld himselfe to him upon the first demand of the aforesaid lender. To this the gentleman sealed, and had the money carried to his chamber, with which money hee in short time redeemed his land, and bought such things as he needed, and likewise payed all his debts, so that there was not any man that could aske him one penny.

Thus lived this gentleman once againe in great credit, and grew so great a husband that he increased his estate, and was richer then ever his father before him was: but long did this joy of his not continue, for one day hee being in his studie the Devil appeared unto him, and did tell him that now his land was redeemed, and his debts paid, and therefore the time was come that hee must yeeld himselfe to his mercy, as hee was bound by bond. This troubled the gentleman to heare, but more to thinke how that he must become a slave to a stranger that hee did not know (for hee knew not as yet that he was the Devill) but being urged to answer for

himselfe (by the devill) hee said that hee had not as yet paid all his debts, and therefore as yet hee was not liable to the bonds strait conditions. At this the Devill seemed angry and with a fearefull noyse transformed himselfe to an ugly shape, saying, alas poore wretch, these are poore excuses that thou framest, I know them all to be false, and so will prove them to thy face to morrow morning, till when I leave thee to despaire: So with great noyse he went his way, leaving the gentleman halfe dead with feare.

When he was gone, the gentleman reviving be-thought himselfe in what a miserable state he was now in, then wished he that he had lived and died poorely, then cursed he all his ambitious thoughts, that led him first to desire againe that wealth which he had so vainly by his riot lost: then would hee curse his prodigall expences that were the originall of all his misery: thus was he tormented a long time in his minde, at last he fully resolved to end his wretched life by some violent death, and to that end he went forth thinking to kill himselfe, which he had done, had it not beene for the Fryer: for as he was falling upon his sword, Fryer Bacon came by and called to him to hold, which he did. Fryer Bacon demanded of him the cause why he was so desperate that he would run headlong to hell? O sir, said he, the cause is great, and the relation is so terrible to me, that I would intreat you not to trouble me any more, but to leave me to my owne will: his answer filled the Fryer with amazement and pittie both at once,

which made him to urge him in this manner. Sir, should I leave you to this wilfull damnation, I were unfit ever hereafter to weare or touch any robe that belongeth unto the holy order, whereof I am a brother : you know (I doubt not) that there is given power to the church to absolve penitent sinners, let not your wilfulness take away from you that benefit which you may receive by it : freely confesse your selfe (I pray you) unto me, and doubt not but I shall give your troubled conscience ease : Father (said this Gentleman) I know all that you have spoken is truth, and I have many times received comfort from the mother church, (I dare not say our, for I feare that shee will never receive me for a childe) I have no part in her benediction, yet since you request so earnestly the cause, I will tell you, heare it and tremble. Know then that I have given my selfe to the Devill for a little wealth, and he to morrow in this wood must have me : now have you my grieffe, but I know not how to get comfort. This is strange (quoth Fryer Bacon,) yet be of good comfort, penitentiall teares may doe much, which see you doe not spare ; soone I will visit you at your house, and give you that comfort (I hope) that will beget you againe to goodnesse : the Gentleman with these words was somewhat comforted and returned home. At night Fryer Bacon came to him, and found him full of teares for his haynous offences, for these teares he gave him hope of pardon, demanded further what conditions hee had made with the Devill ; the gentleman told him, how that he had

promised himselfe to him so soone as hee had paid all his debts : which he now had done, for he owed not one peny to any man living. Well said Fryer Bacon, continue thy sorrow for thy sinnes, and to morrow meete him without feare, and be thou content to stand to the next mans iudgement that shall come that way, whether thou doest belong to the Devill or no : feare not, but do so, and be thou assured that I will be he that shall come by, and will give such iudgement on thy side, that thou shalt bee free from him : with that Fryer Bacon went home, and the gentleman went to his prayers.

In the morning the gentleman (after that hee had blessed himselfe) went to the wood where he found the Devill ready for him, so soone as he came neere, the Devill said, now deceiver are you come, now shall thou see that I can and will prove that thou hast paid all thy debts, and therefore thy soule belongeth to me. Thou art a deceiver (said the gentleman) and gavest me money to cheat me of my soule, for else why wilt thou be thy own judge : let me have some other to iudge between us. Content said the Devill, take whom thou wilt : then I will have (said the gentleman) the next man that cometh this way : hereto the Devill agreed. No sooner were these words ended, but Fryer Bacon came by, to whom this gentleman speake, and requested, that he would be iudge in a waighty matter betweene them two: the Fryer said, he was content, so both parties were agreed : the Devill said they were, and told Fryer Bacon how the case stood between them in this manner.

Know Fryer, that I seeing this prodigall like to starve for want of food, lent him money, not onely to buy him victuals, but also to redeeme his lands and pay his debts, conditionarily that so soone as his debts were paid, that hee should give himselfe freely to mee, to this, here is his hand (shewing him the bond) now my time is expired, for all his debts are paid, which hee cannot denie. This case is plaine, if it be so that his debts are paid: his silence confirms it said the Divell, therefore give him a iust sentence. I will said Fryer Bacon: but first tell me (speaking to the gentleman) didst thou never yet give the Dev many of his mony backe, nor requite him any wayes: never had hee any thing of me as yet (answered the gentleman): then never let him have any thing of thee and thou art free; deceiver of mankind, said he (speaking to the Devill) it was thy bargaine, never to meddle with him so long as hee was indebted to any, now how canst thou demand of him any thing, when he is indebted for all that hee hath to thee, when hee payeth thee thy money, then take him as thy due; till then thou hast nothing to doe with him: and so I charge thee to be gone. At this, the Devill vanished with great horror, but Fryer Bacon comforted the gentleman, and sent him home with a quiet conscience bidding him never to pay the Devils money backe as he tendred his owne safety: which he promised for to observe.

How Fryer Bacon made a Brasen head to speake, by the which hee would have walled England about with Brasse.

FRYER BACON reading one day of the many conquests of England, bethought himselfe how he might keepe it hereafter from the like conquests, and so make himselfe famous hereafter to all posterities. This (after great study) hee found could be no way so well done as one; which was to make a head of brasse, and if he could make this head to speake (and heare it when it speakes) then might hee be able to wall all England about with brasse. To this purpose hee got one Fryer Bungey to assist him, who was a great scholler and a magician, (but not to bee compared to Fryer Bacon) these two with great study and paines so framed a head of brasse, that in the inward parts thereof there was all things like as in a naturall mans head: this being done, they were as farre from perfection of the worke as they were before, for they knew not how to give those parts that they had made motion, without which it was impossible that it should speake: many bookes they read, but yet could not finde out any hope of what they sought, that at the last they concluded to raise a spirit, and to know of him that which they could not attaine to by their owne studies. To do this they prepared all things ready and went one evening to a wood thereby, and after many ceremonies used, they spake the words of coniuration, which the Devill straight obeyed and appeared

unto them, asking what they would know, said Fryer Bacon that wee have made an artificiall head of brasse, which we would have to speake, to the furtherance of which wee have raised thee, and being raised, we will here keepe thee, unlesse thou tell to us the way and manner how to make this head to speake. The Devill told him that he had not that power of himselfe: beginner of lyes (said Fryer Bacon) I know that thou dost dissemble, and therefore tell it us quickly, or else wee will here bind the to remaine during our pleasures. At these threatnings the Devill consented to doe it, and told them, that with a continuel fume of the six hottest simples it should have motion, and in one month space speak, the Time of the moneth or day hee knew not: also hee told them, that if they heard it not before it had done speaking, all their labour should be lost: they being satisfied, licensed the spirit for to depart.

Then went these two learned fryers home againe, and prepared the simples ready, and made the fume, and with continuall watching attended when this Brasen head would speake: thus watched they for three weekes without any rest, so that they were so weary and sleepy, that they could not any longer refraine from rest: then called Fryer Bacon his man Miles, and told him, that it was not unknown to him what paines Fryer Bungy and himselfe had taken for three weekes space, onely to make, and to heare the Brasen-head speake, which if they did not, then had they lost all their labour, and all England had a great losse thereby: therefore hee in-

treated Miles that he would watch whilst that they slept, and call them if the head speake. Feare not, good master (said Miles) I will not sleepe, but harken and attend upon the head, and if it doe chance to speake, I will call you : therefore I pray take you both your rests and let mee alone for watching this head. After Fryer Bacon had given him a great charge the second time : Fryer Bungy and he went to sleepe, and Miles, alone to watch the brasen head : Miles, to keepe him from sleeping, got a tabor and pipe, and being merry disposed, sung this song to a Northren tune :

OF CAN'ST THOU NOT FROM NEW-CASTLE.

To couple is a custome,
 all things thereto agree:
 Why should not I then love?
 since love to all is free.

But Ile have one that's pretty,
 her checkes of scarlet die,
 For to breed my delight,
 when that I ligge her by.

Though vertue be a dowry,
 yet Ile chuse money store:
 If my love prove untrue,
 with that I can get more.

The faire is oft unconstant,
 the blacke is often proud.
 Ile chuse a lovely browne,
 come fidler scrape thy crowd.

Come fidler scrape thy crowd,
 for Peggie the browne is she.
 Must be my Bride, God guide
 that Peggie and I agree.

With his owne musicke and such songs as these spent he his time, and kept from sleeping at last. After some noyse the head spake these two words, TIME IS. Miles hearing it to speake no more, thought his master would be angry if hee waked him for that, and therefore he let them both sleepe, and began to mocke the head in this manner: Thou brazen-faced head, hath mymaster tooke all this paines about thee, and now dost thou requite him with two words, TIME IS: had hee watched with a lawyer as long as he hath watched with thee, he would have given him more, and better words then thou hast yet, if thou canst speake no wiser, they shal sleepe till doomes day for me: TIME IS: I know TIME IS, and that you shall heare good man Brazen face.

TO THE TUNE OF DAINTIE COME THOU TO ME.

Time is for some to plant,
 Time is for some to sowe;
 Time is for some to graft
 The horne as some doe know.

Time is for some to eate,
 Time is for some to sleepe,
 Time is for some to laugh,
 Time is for some to weepe.

Time is for some to sing,
 Time is for some to pray,
 Time is for some to crecpe,
 That have drunke all the day.

Time is to cart a bawd,
 Time is to whip a whore,
 Time is to hang a theefe,
 And time is for much more.

Do you tell us copper-nose, when TIME IS, I hope we Schollers know our times, when to drinke drunke, when to kisse our hostes, when to goe on her score, and when to pay it, that time comes seldome. After halfe an houre had passèd, the head did speake againe, two words, which were these: TIME WAS. Miles respected these words as little as he did the former, and would not wake them, but still scoffed at the brazen head, that it had learned no better words, and have such a tutor as his master: and in scorne of it sung this song.

TO THE TUNE OF A RICH MERCHANT MAN.

Time was when thou a kettle
 wert fill'd with better matter :
 But Fryer Bacon did thee spoyle,
 when he thy sides did batter.

Time was when conscience dwelled
 with men of occupation :
 Time was when Lawyers did not thrive,
 so well by mens vexation.

Time was when kings and beggers
of one poore stufte had being:
Time was when office kept no knaves:
that time it was worth seeing.

Time was a bowle of water,
did give the face reflection,
Time was when women knew no paint:
which now they call complexion.

TIME WAS: I KNOW that brazen-face, without your telling, I know Time was, and I know what things there was when Time was, and if you speake no wiser, no master shall be waked for mee. Thus Miles talked and sung till another halfe houre was gone, then the brazen head spake again these words; TIME IS PAST: and there with fell downe, and presently followed a terrible noyse, with strange flashes of fire, so that Miles was halfe dead with feare: at this noyse the two Fryers awaked, and wondred to see the whole roome so full of smoake, but that being vanished they might perceive the brazen head broken and lying on the ground: at this sight they grieved, and called Miles to know how this came. Miles halfe dead with feare, said that it fell downe of itselfe, and that with the noyse and fire that followed he was almost frighted out of his wits: Fryer Bacon asked him if hee did not speake? yes (quoth Miles) it spake, but to no purpose, Ile have a parret speake better in that time that you have been teaching this brazen head. Out on thee villaine (said Fryer Bacon) thou hast un-

done us both, hadst thou but called us when it did speake, all England had been walled round about with brasse, to its glory, and our eternal fames : what were the wordes it spake: very few (said Miles) and those were none of the wisest that I have heard neither: first he said, *TIME IS*. Hadst thou call'd us then (said Fryer Bacon) we had been made for ever : then (said Miles) half an hour after it spake againe and said, *TIME WAS*. And wouldst thou not call us then (said Bungey ?) Alas (said Miles) I thought he would have told me some long tale, and then I purposed to have called you : then half an houre after he cried, *TIME IS PAST*, and made such a noyse, that hee hath waked you himselve mee thinkes. At this Fryer Bacon was in such a rage that hee would have beaten his man, but he was restrained by Bungey : but neverthelesse for his punishment, he with his art struck him dumbe for one whole months space. Thus the greate worke of these learned Fryers was overthrown (to their great griefes) by this simple fellow.

How Fryer Bacon by his art took a towne, when the King had lyen before it three months, without doing to it any hurt.

In those times when Fryer Bacon did all his strange trickes, the Kings of England had a great part of France, which they held a long time, till civill warres at home in this land made them to lose it : it did chance that the King of England (for some cause best knowne to himselfe) went into France with a great armie, where after

many victories, he did beseige a strong towne and lay before it full three moneths, without doing to the towne any great damage, but rather received the hurt himselfe. This did so vexe the King, that he sought to take it in any way, either by policy or strength: to this intent hee made proclamation, that whosoever could deliver this towne into his hand, hee should have for his paines ten thousand crownes truely paid. This was proclaimed, but there was none found that would undertake it. At length the newes did come into England of this great reward that was promised. Fryer Bacon hearing of it, went into France, and being admitted to the kings presence, hee thus spake unto him: Your maiestie I am sure hath not quite forgot your poore subject Bacon, the love that you shewed to mee being last in your presence, hath drawn mee for to leave my country, and my studies, to doe your maiestis service: I beseech your grace, to command mee so farre as my poore art or life may doe you pleasure. The king thanked him for his love, but told him, that hee had now more need of armes than art, and wanted brave souldiers more than learned schollers. Fryer Bacon answered, Your grace saith well; but let mee (under correction) tell you, that art oftentimes doth those things that are impossible to armes, which I will make good in some few examples. I will speak onely of things performed by art and nature, wherein shall be nothing magical: and first by the figuration of art, there may be made instruments of navigation without

men to rowe in them, as great ships to brooke the sea, only with one man to steere them, and they shall sayle far more swiftly than if they were full of men : also chariots that shall move with an unspeakable force, without any living creature to stirre them. Likewise, an instrument may be made to fly withall, if one sit in the midst of the instrument, and doe turne an engine, by which the wings being artificially composed, may beat ayre after the manner of a flying bird. By an instrument of three fingers high, and three fingers broad, a man may rid himself and others from all imprisonment : yea, such an instrument may easily be made, whereby a man may violently draw unto him a thousand men, will they, nill they, or any other thing. By art also an instrument may bee made, where with men may walke in the bottome of the sea or rivers without bodily danger : this Alexander the Great used (as the ethnick philosopher reporteth) to the end he might behold the secrets of the seas. But physicall figurations are farre more strange : for by that may be framed perspects and looking-glasses, that one thing shall appeare to be many, as one man shall appeare to be a whole army, and one sunne or moone shall seem divers. Also perspects may be so framed, that things farre off shall seem most nigh unto us : with one of these did Iulius Cæsar from the sea coasts in France marke and observe the situation of the castles in England. Bodies may also be so framed that the greatest things shall appeare to be the least, the highest lowest, the most secret to bee the most manifest, and in such like sort the contrary. Thus

did Socrates perceive, that the dragon which did destroy the citie and countrey adioyning, with his noisome breath, and contagious influence, did lurkein the dennes between the mountaines : and thus may all things that are done in cities or armies be discovered by the enemies. Againe, in such wise may bodies be framed, that venemous and infectious influences may be brought whither a man will : in this did Aristotle instruct Alexander; through which instruction the poyson of a basiliske, being lift up upon the wall of a citie, the poison was convayd into the citie, to the destruction thereof: also perspectes may be made to deceive the sight, as to make a man beleve that hee seeth great store of riches, when that there is not any. But it appertaineth to a higher power of figuration, that beams should be brought and assembled by divers flexions and reflexions in any distance that we will, to burne any thing that is opposite unto it, as it is witnessed by those perspectes or glasses that burne before and behinde ; but the greatest and chiefest of all figurations and things figured, is to describe the heavenly bodies, according to their length and breadth in a corporall figure, wherein they may corporally move with a daily motion. These things are worth a kingdom to a wise man. These may suffise, my royall lord, to shew what art can doe : and these, with many things more, as strange, I am able by art to performe. Then take no thought for winning this towne, for by my art you shall (ere many dayes be past) have your desire.

The king all this while heard him with admiration : but hearing him now, that hee would undertake to wiu the towne, hee burst out in these speeches: mostlearned Bacon, doe but what thou hast said, and I will give thee what thou most desirest, either wealth, or honour, choose which thou wilt, and I will be as ready to per-forme, as I have been to promise.

Your maiesties love is all that I seeke (said the fryer) let mee have that, and I have honour enough, for wealth, I have content, the wise should seek no more : but to the purpose. Let your pioniers raise up a mount so high, (or rather higher) than the wall, and then shall you see some probability of that which I have promised.

This mount in two days was raised : then Fryer Bacon went with the king to the top of it, and did with a perspect shew to him the towne, as plainly as if hee had beene in it : at this the king did wonder, but Fryer Bacon told him, that he should wonder more, ere next day noone: against which time, he desired him to have his whole army in readinesse, for to scale the wall upon a signal given by him, from the mount. This the king promised to doe, and so returned to his tent full of joy, that he should gain this strong towne. In the moruing Fryer Bacon went up to the mount and set his glasses, and other instruments up : in the meane time the king ordered his army, and stood in a readinesse for to give the assaults : when the signal was given, which was the waving of a flagge : ere nine of the clocke Fryer Bacon had burnt the state-house of the towne, with other

houses only by his mathematicall glasses, which made the whole towne in an uprore, for none did know how it came: whilst that they were quenching of the same Fryer Bacon did wave his flagge: upon which signall given, the king set upon the towne, and tooke it with little or no resistance. Thus through the art of this learned man the king got this strong towne, which hee could not doe with all his men without Fryer Bacons helpe.

How Fryer Bacon over-came the German coniurer Vandermast, and made a spirit of his owne carry him into Germany.

THE king of England after hee had taken the town shewed great mercy to the inhabitants, giving some of them their lives freely, and others he set at liberty for their gold: the towne hee kept at his owne, and swore the chiefe citizens to be his true subiects. Presently after the king of France sent an ambassadour to the king of England for to intreat a peace betweene them. This ambassadour being come to the king, he feasted him (as it is the manner of princes to doe) and with the best sports as he had then, welcomed him. The ambassadour seeing the king of England so free in his love, desired likewise to give him some taste of his good liking, and to that intent sent for one of his fellowes (being a Germane, and named Vandermast) a famous coniurer, who being come, hee told the king, that since his grace had been so bountiful in his love to him, he

would shew him (by a servant of his) such wonderfull things that his grace had never seene the like before. The king demanded of him of what nature those things were that hee would doe : the ambassadour answered that they were things done by the art of magicke. The king hearing of this, sent straight for Fryer Bacon, who presently came, and brought Fryer Bungey with him.

When the banquet was done, Vandermast did aske the king, if he desired to see the spirit of any man deceased : and if that hee did, hee would raise him in such manner and fashion as he was in when that he lived. The king told him, that above all men he desired to see Pompey the Great, who could abide no equall. Vandermast by his art raised him, armed in such manner as hee was when he was slaine at the battell of Pharsalia ; at this they were all highly contented. Fryer Bacon presently raised the ghost of Iulius Cæsar, who could abide no superiour, and had slaine this Pompey at the battell of Pharsalia : at the sight of him they were all amazed, but the king who sent for Bacon : and Vandermast said that there was some man of art in that presence, whom he desired to see. Fryer Bacon then shewed himselfe, saying ; it was I Vandermast, that raised Cæsar, partly to give content to this royall presence, but chiefly for to conquer thy Pompey, as he did once before, at that great battell of Pharsalia, which he now againe shall doe. Then presently began a fight between Cæsar and Pompey, which continued a good space, to the content of all, except Vandermast. At last Pompey was over-

come and slaine by Cæsar : then vanished they both away.

My lord ambassadour (said the king) me thinks that my Englishman has put down your German : hath he no better cunning than this ? Yes, answered Vandermast, your grace shall see me put downe your Englishman ere that you goe from hence ; and therefore Fryer prepare thy selfe with thy best of art to withstand me. Alas, said Fryer Bacon, it is a little thing will serve to resist thee in this kind. I have here one that is my inferior (shewing him Fryer Bungey) try thy art with him ; and if thou doe put him to the worst, then will I deale with thee, and not till then.

Fryer Bungey then began to shew his art : and after some turning and looking in his booke, he brought up among them the Hysperian Tree, which did beare golden apples : these apples were kept by a waking dragon, that lay under the tree : He having done this, bid Vandermast finde one that durst gather the fruit. Then Vandermast did raise the ghost of Hercules in his habit that he wore when that he was living, and with his club on his shoulder : Here is one, said Vandermast, that shall gather fruit from this tree : this is Hercules, that in his life time gathered of this fruit, and made the dragon crouch : and now againe shall hee gather it in spight of all opposition. As Hercules was going to plucke the fruit, Fryer Bacon held up his wand, at which Hercules stayed and seemed fearful. Vandermast bid him for to gather of the fruit, or else he would torment

him. Hercules was more fearfull, and said, I cannot, nor I dare not: for great Bacon stands, whose charms are farre more powerfull than thine, I must obey him Vandermast. Hereat Vandermast curst Hercules, and threatned him: But Fryer Bacon laughed, and bid not to chafe himself ere that his journey was ended: for seeing (said he) that Hercules will doe nothing at your command, I will have him doe you some service at mine: with that he bid Hercules carry him home into Germany. The Devill obeyed him, and tooke Vandermast on his backe, and went away with him in all their sights. Hold Fryer, cried the ambassadour, I will not loose Vandermast for half my land. Content yourself my lord, answered Fryer Bacon, I have but sent him home to see his wife, and ere long he may returne. The king of England thanked Fryer Bacon, and forced some gifts on him for his service that he had done for him: for Fryer Bacon did so little respect money, that he never would take any of the king.

How Fryer Bacon through his wisdom saved the endangered lives of three Brethren.

THE peace being concluded betweene the King of England and the King of France, the King of England came againe into his country of England, where he was received very ioyfully of all his subjects: But in his absence had happened a discord betweene three brethren, the like hath not beene often heard. This it was: A rich gentleman of England dyed, and left behind him

three sonnes. Now for some reason (which was best known to himselfe) he appointed none of them by name to be his heyre, but spake to them all after this manner: You are all my sonnes, and I love you all as a father should doe, all alike, not one better than the other: and cause I would alwayes doe rightly so neere as I can, I leave all my lands and goods to him that loves me best: These were his last words that he spake concerning any worldly affaires.

After he was dead and buried, there arose a great controversie betwixt them, who should inherit their fathers goods and lands, every one pleading for himselfe, how that he loved his father best. All the cunning lawyers of the kingdome could say nothing to the purpose, concerning this case, so that they were inforced to begge of the king a grant for a combat: for they would not share the lands and goods among them, but every one desired all or else nothing. The king seeing no other way to end this controversie, granted a combat: the two eldest being to fight first, and the conquerour to fight with the youngest, and the survivor of them was to have the land.

The day being come that was set for these combatants, they all came in armed for the fight. Friar Bacon being there present, and seeing such three lustie young men like to perish, and that by their owne flesh and bloode, grieved very much, and went to the king desiring his maiestie that he would stay the fight, and he would finde a meanes without any bloodshed to end

the matter : the king was very glad hereof, and caused the combatants to be brought before him, to whom he said : gentlemen, to save the blood of you all, I have found a way, and yet the controversie shall be ended that is now amongst you : Are you contented to stand to his judgment that I shall appoint : they all answered, that they were. Then were they bid to returne three days after. In that time Fryer Bacon had caused the body of their deceased father to be taken out of the ground, and brought to the court : the body hee did cause to be bound to a stake, naked to the middle upwards and likewise prepared three bowes and shafts for the three brethren : all these kept hee secretly.

The third day being come, came these three brethren, to whom Fryer Bacon in the presence of the king gave the three bowes and shafts, saying, be not offended at what I have done, there is no other way but this to judge your cause : See here is the body of your dead father, shoot at him, for he that cometh nearest to his heart, shall have all the lands and goods.

The two eldest prepared themselves, and shot at him, and stucke their arrowes in his breast. Then bid they the youngest to shoot : but he refused it, saying, I will rather loose all, then wound that body that I so loved living : Had you ever had but halfe that love (in you) to him that I have, you would rather have had your own bodies mangled, than to suffer his lifelesse corps thus to be used ; nay, you doe not onely suffer it, but you are the actors of this act of shame : and speaking this, he wept.

Fryer Bacon seeing this, did give the iudgement on his side, for he loved his father best, and therefore had all his lands and goods : the other two brothers went away with shame for what they had done. This deed of Fryer Bacons was highly commended of all men : for he did not onely give true iudgement, but also saved much blood that would have beene shed, had they beene suffered to have fought.

How Fryer Bacon served the Theeves that robbed him, and of the sport that his man Miles had with them.

It was reported about the countrey how that the king had given Fryer Bacon great store of treasure. The report of this wealth made three theeves plot to rob Fryer Bacons house, which they put in practise one evening in this fashion. They knockt at the doore and were let in by Miles : No sooner were they in, but they took hold of him, and led him into the house, and finding Fryer Bacon there, they told him that they came for some money, which they must and would have ere they departed from thence. He told them, that he was but ill stored with money at that time, and therefore desired them to forbear him till some other time. They answered him againe, that they knew that hee had enough, and therefore it was but folly to delay them, but straight let them have it by faire means, or else they would use that extremitie to him that hee would bee loth to suffer. Hee seeing them so resolute, told them that they should have all that hee had, and gave to them one hundred pounds a man. Herewith they seemed content, and

would have gone their wayes. Nay, said Fryer Bacon, I pray gentlemen at my request tarry a little, and heare some of my mans musicke: you are byred reasonable well already, I hope in courtesie you will not deny mee so small a request. That will wee not, (said they all.)

Miles thought now to have some sport with them, which hee had, and therefore plaid lustily on his tabor and pipe: so soone as they heard him play (against their wills) they fell a dauncing, and that after such a laborious manner, that they quickly wearied themselves (for they had all that while the bagges of money in their hands.) Yet had Fryer Bacon not revenge enough of them, but bid his man Miles leave them some larger measure as hee thought fitting, which Miles did. Miles straight ledde them out of the house into the fields, they followed him, dauncing after a wilde anticke manner: then led hee them over a broad dike full of water, and they followed him still, but not so good a way as he went (for he went over the bridge, but they by reason of their dauncing, could not keepe the bridge, but fell off, and dauncing through the water) then led hee them through a way where a horse might very well have been up to the belly: they followed him, and were so durtie, as though they had wallowed in the myre like swine: sometime gave hee them rest onely to laugh at them: then were they so sleepe when hee did not play, that they fell to the ground. Then on a sudden would hee play againe, and make them start up and follow him. Thus kept hee them the better part of the night. At

last hee in pittie left playing, and let them rest. They being asleepe on the bare ground he tooke their money from them, and gave them this song for their farewell, to the tune of, "Oh doe me no harme good man."

You roaring boyes, and sturdy theeves,
 you pimpes, and aples squires :
 Lament the ease of these poor knaves,
 and warme them by your fires.

They snorting lye like hogs in stie,
 but hardly are so warme :
 If all that cheat, such hap should meet,
 to true men 'twere no harme.

They money had, which made them glad,
 their ioy did not indure :
 Were all theeves serv'd as these have beene,
 I thinke there would bee fewer.

When that they wake, their hearts will ake,
 to thinke upon their losse .
 And though the gallows they escape,
 they goe by weeping crosse.

Your trulls expect your comming home
 with full and heavy purse :
 When that they see tis nothing so,
 oh how they'le rayle and curse.

For hee that loves to keepe a whore,
must have a giving hand.
Which makes a many knaves be choakt,
for bidding true men stand.

They were scarce any thing the better for this song, for they slept all the while: so Miles left them at their rest: but they had small cause to sleepe so soundly as they did, for they were more wett than ere was scold with cucking. Miles gave his master his money againe, and told the story of their merry pilgrimage: he laughed at it, and wisht all men had the like power to serve all such knaves in the like kind. The theeves waking in the morning and missing their money, and seeing themselves in that plight, thought that they had been served so by some divine power, for robbing a church-man, and therefore they swore one to the other, never to meddle with any churchman againe.

How Vandermast, for the disgrace that he had received by Fryer Bacon sent a souldier to kill him; and how Fryer Bacon escaped killing, and turned the souldier from an Atheist to be a good Christian.

FRYER BACON sitting one day in his study, looked over all the dangers that were to happen to him that moneth, there found he, that in the second week of the moneth between sunne rising and setting, there was a great danger to fall on him, which would without great care of prevention take away his life. This danger which he

did foresee, was caused by the Germane coniurer Vandermast, for he vowed a revenge for the disgrace that he had received. To execute the same, hee hyred a Walloon souldier, and gave him one hundred crownes to do the same, fifty beforchand, and fifty when hee had killed him.

Fryer Bacon, to save himselfe from this danger that was like to happen to him would alwayes when that he read, hold a ball of brasse in his hand, and under that ball would hee set a bason of brasse, that if hee did chance to sleepe in his reading, the fall of the ball out of his hand into the bason, might wake him. Being one day in his study in this manner, and asleepe, the Walloon souldier was got in to him, and had drawne his sword to kill him : but as hee was ready for to strike, downe fell the ball out of Fryer Bacon's hand, and waked him. Hee seeing the souldier stand therewith a sword drawne, asked him what hee was ? and wherefore hee came there in that manner ? The souldier boldly answered him thus : I am a Walloon, and a souldier, and more then this, a villaine : I am come hither, because I was sent ; I was sent, because I was hyred : I was hyred, because I durst do it : the thing I should doe, is not done : the thing to be done, is to kill thee : thus have you heard what I am and why I came. Fryer Bacon wondered at this man's resolution ; then asked hee of him, who set him on worke to bee a murderer ? Hee boldly told him, Vandermast the Germane coniurer : Fryer Bacon then asked him what religion he was of ? He answered, of

that which many doe professe, the chief principles of which were these: to goe to an ale-house, and to a church with one devotion, to absteine from evil for want of action, and to doe good against their wills. It is a good profession for a devil (said Fryer Bacon.) Doest thou believe hell? I believe no such thing, answered the souldier. Then will I shew thee the contrary, said the Fryer: and presently raised the ghost of Iulian the Apostate, who came up with his body burning, and so full of wounds, that it almost did affright the souldier out of his wits. Then Bacon did command this spirit to speake, and to shew what hee was, and wherefore hee was thus tormented? Then spake hee to it in this manner: I sometimes was a Roman Emperour: some count greatnesse a happinesse: I had happinesse beyond my empire, had I kept that, I had bene a happy man: would I had lost my empire when I lost that. I was a Christian, that was my happiness; but my selfe love and pride made me to fall from it; for which I now am punished with never ceasing torments, which I must still endure: the like which I enioy is now prepared for unbelieving wretches like myself, so vanished he away.

All this while the souldier stood quaking, and sweat as he had felt the torments himselfe; and falling downe on his knees desired Fryer Bacon to instruct him in a better course of life, then he had yet gone in. Fryer Bacon told him, that he should not want his helpe in any thing, which he performed, instructing him better: then gave he him money, and sent him to the warres of the holy land, where he was slain.

How Fryer Bacon deceived an old Usurer.

NOT farre from Fryer Bacon, dwelt an olde man that had great store of money which hee let out to use, and would never doe any good with it to the poore, though Fryer Bacon had often put him in minde of it, and wished him to do some good whilest he lived. Fryer Bacon seeing this, by his art made an iron pot, which seemed full of gold, this being done, he went to this rich usurer, and told him, that he had some gold which he had gathered in his time that he had lived ; but it being much in quantity, hee feared that if it were knowne, it would be taken from him, because it was unfitting a man of his coat should have so much : now he desired him that hee would let him have some hundred pounds, which was not the sixth part of his gold, and he should kepe it for him. The usurer was glad to heare of this, and told him that he should have it, and that he would keep his gold as safe as he himself would : Fryer Bacon was glad to heare of this, and presently fetcht the pot : at the sight of which the usurer laughed, and thought to himself, how all that gold was his owne, for hee had a determination to gull the fryer, but he gulled himselfe. See here is the gold (said Fryer Bacon) now let me have of you one hundred pounds, and keep you this gold till I pay it backe again. Very willingly (said the usurer) and told him one hundred pounds out, which Fryer Bacon tooke and delivered him the note, and so went his way. This mony did Fryer Bacon give to divers poore schollers, and other people and bid them pray for

old Good-gatherers soules health (so was this usurer call'd) which these poor people did, and would give him thankes and prayers when they met him, which he did wonder at, for he never deserved the praïres of any man. At last this old Good-gatherer went to looke on this pot of gold, but instead of gold he found nothing but earth, at which sight he would have died, had not his other gold hindred him, which hee was to leave behind him : so gathering up his spirits, hee went to Fryer Bacon, and told him he was abused and cheated ; for which he would have the law of him, unlesse he made him restitution. Fryer Bacon told him, that he had not cheated him, but bin his faithful steward to the poore, which he could not chuse but know, either by their prayers, or their thanks ; and as for the law he feared it not, but bid him doe his worst. The old man seeing Fryer Bacons resolution, went his way, and said, that hereafter hee would be his owne steward.

How Miles, Fryer Bacons man did coniure for meat, and got meate for himselfe and his hoast.

MILES chanced one day upon some businesse, to goe some six miles from home, and being loth to part with some company that he had, he was be-lated, and could get but halfe way home that night ; to save his purse hee went to ones house that was his masters acquaintance : but when he came, the good man of the house was not at home, and the woman would not let him have lodging. Miles seeing such cold entertainment wished he had not

troubled her, but being now there, he was loth to goe any further and therefore with good words he perswaded her for to give him lodging that night. She told him that she would willingly doe it, if her husband were at home, but he being now out of towne, it would be to her discredit to lodge any man. You neede not mistrust me, (said Miles) for I have no thought to attempt your chastitie : locke me in any place where there is a bed, and I will not trouble you till to morrow that I rise. She thinking her husband would be angry if she should deny any of his friends so small a request, consented that he should lye there, if that he would be locked up : Miles was contented and presently went to bed, and she locked him into the chamber where he lay.

Long had not he beene a bed, but he heard the doore open ; with that he rose and peeped through a chinke of the partition, and saw an old man come in : this man set down his basket that he had on his arme, and gave the woman of the house three or four sweet kisses, which made Miles his mouth runne with water to see it : then did hee nndoe his basket, and pulled out of it a fat eapon ready roasted, and bread, with a bottle of good olde sacke ; this gave hee unto her, saying ; sweetheart, hearing thy husband was out of towne, I thought good to visite thee, I am not come emptie handed, but have brought some thing to be merrie withal : lay the clothe sweete hony, and let us first to banquet, and then to bed. She kindly thanked him, and presently did as he bad her : they were not scarce set at

the table, but her husband returning backe, knockt at the doore. The woman hearing this was amazed, and knew not what to doe with her old lover : but looking on her apron strings, she straight found (as women use to doe) a trick to put herself free from this feare ; for shee put her lover under the bed, the capon and bread she put under a tub, the bottle of wine shee put behinde the chest, and then she did open the doore, and with a dissembling kisse welcomed her husband home, asking him the reason why that he returned so quickly. He told her, that hee had forgot the money that he should have carried with him, but on the morrow betimes hee would be gone. Miles saw and heard all this : and having a desire to taste of the capon and the wine, called the goodman. He asked his wife who that was ? She told him, an acquaintance of his, that intreated lodging there that night. He bid her open the door, which she did, and let Miles out. Hee seeing Miles there, bid him welcome, and bade his wife to set them some meate on the table : she told him that there was not any ready, but prayed him to kepe his stomacke till morrow, and then she would provide them a good breakefast. Since it is so Miles (said the goodman) wee must rest contented, and sleepe out our hunger. Nay stay said Miles, if that you can eate, I can find you good meat ; I am a scholler, and have some art. I would faine see it (said the goodman) You shall quoth Miles, and that presently. With that Miles pulled forth a booke out of his bosome, and began his coniuration in this fashion :

From the fearefull lake below,
 From whence spirits come and goe:
 Straightway come one and attend
 Fryer Bacons man, and friend.

Comes there none yet, quoth Miles? then I must use
 some other charme.

Now the owle is flowne abroad,
 For I heare the croaking toade,
 And the bat that shuns the day,
 Through the darke doth make her way.
 Now the ghosts of men doe rise,
 And with fearful hideous cryes,
 Seeke revengement (from the good)
 On their heads that spilt their blood,
 Come some spirit, quicke I say,
 Night's the Devils holy-day:
 Where ere you be, in demmes, or lake,
 In the ivy, ewe, or brake:
 Quickly come and me attend,
 That am Bacons man and friend.
 But I will have you take no shape
 Of a bear a horse, or ape:
 Nor will I have you terrible,
 And therefore come invisible.

Now is he come, (quoth Miles) and therefore tell me
 what meat you will have mine hoast? Any thing Miles,
 (said the goodeman) what thou wilt. Why then (said
 Miles) what say you to a capou? I love it above all

meat (said the goodman.) Why then a capon you shall have, and that a good one too. Bemo my spirit that I have raised to doe mee service, I charge thee, seeke and search about the earth, and bring me hither straight the best of capons ready roasted. Then stood hee still a little, as though he had attended the comming of his spirit, and on the sudden said: It is well done, my Bemo, hee hath brought me (mine hoast,) a fat capon from the King of Tripolis owne table, and bread with it. A ye but where is it Miles (said the hoast) I see neither spirit nor capon. Looke under the tub (quoth Miles) and there you shall finde it. He presently did, and brought (to his wives griefe) the capon and bread out. Stay (quoth Miles) we do yet want some drinke that is comfortable and good; I think mine hoast a bottle of Maliga sacke were not amisse, I will have it: Bemo, haste thee to Maliga, and fetch me from the governours a bottle of his best sacke. The poore woman thought that hee would have betrayed her and her lover, and therefore wished that he had beene hanged, when that hee came first into her house. Hee having stood a little while, as before, saide, Well done, Bemo, looke behinde the great chest (mine hoast) Hee did so, and brought out the bottle of sacke. Now (quoth hee) Miles sit downe, and welcome to thine owne cheere: You may see wife (quoth he) what a man of art can doe, get a fatte capon, and a bottle of good sacke in a quarter of an houre, and for nothing, which is best of all: Come (good wife) sit downe, and bee merry; for all this is paid for, I thanke Miles.

Shee sate, but could not eat a bit for anger, but wished that every bit they did eate might choake them : Her old lover too that lay under the bed all this while was ready to bepisse himselfe for feare, for hee still looked when that Miles would discover him. When they had eaten and drunke well, the good man desired Miles that hee would let him see the spirit that fetched them this good cheere : Miles seemed unwilling, telling him that it was against the laws of art, to let an illiterate man see a spirit, but yet, for once hee would let him see it : and told him withall, that hee must open the door, and soundly beat the spirit, or else hee should bee troubled hereafter with it : and because he should not feare it, hee would put it in the shape of some one of his neighbours. The good man told him, that hee neede not to doubt his valour, he would beat him soundly, and to that purpose hee took a good cudgell in his hand, and did stande ready for him. Miles then went to the bed side, under which the old man lay, and began to coniure him with these words,

Bemo quickly come, appeare,
 Like an old man that dwells neere;
 Quickly rise, and in his shape,
 From this house make thy escape;
 Quickly rise, or else I swear,
 He put thee in a worser feare.

The old man seeing no remedy, but that hee must needes come forth, put a good face on it, and rose from under the bed : behold my spirit (quoth Miles) that

brought me all that you have had ; now bee as good as your word and swaddle him soundly. I protest (said the goodman) your Devill is as like Goodman Stumpe the tooth-drawer, as a pomewater is like an apple : is it possible that your spirits can take other mens shapes : He teach this to keepe his owne shape ; with that hee beat the old man soundly, so that Miles was faine to take him off, and put the old man out of doore, so after some laughing, to bed they all went : but the woman could not sleepe for grieffe, that her old lover had had such bad usage for her sake.

How Fryer Bacon did helpe a young man to his Sweet-heart, which Fryer Bungye would have married to another ; and of the mirth that was at the wedding.

AN Oxfordshire gentleman had long time loved a faire mayde, called Millisant ; this love of his was as kindly received of her, as it was freely given of him, so that there wanted nothing to the finishing of their ioyes, but the consent of her father, who would not grant that she should bee his wife (though formerly he had been a meanes to further the match) by reason there was a knight that was a suitor to her, and did desire that hee might have her to his wife : but this knight could never get from her the least token of good wil : so surely was her love fixed upon the gentleman. This knight seeing himselfe thus despised, went to Fryer Bungye, and told him his mind, and did promise him a good piece of

money if he could get her for him, either by his art, or counsell.

Bungye (being covetous) told him, that there was no better way in his mind, than to get her with her father to go take the air in a coach : and if hee could doe so, he would by his art so direct the horses, that they should come to an old chappell, where hee would attend, and there they might secretly be married. The knight rewarded him for his counsell, and told him, that if it tooke effect, he would be more bountifull unto him, and presently went to her father, and told him of this. Hee liked well of it, and forced the poore maid to ride with them. So soone as they were in the coach, the horses ran presently to the chappell, where they found Fryer Bungye attending for them : at the sight of the church and the priest, the poore maid knew that she was betraid, so that for grieffe shee fell in a swoond : to see which her father and the knight, were very much grieved, and used their best skill for her recovery.

In this time, her best beloved, the gentleman, did come to her fathers to visit her, but finding her not there, and hearing that shee was gone with her father and the knight, he mistrusted some foul play : and in all hast went to Fryer Bacon, and desired of him some help to recover his love againe, whom he feared was utterly lost.

Fryer Bacon (knowing him for a vertuous gentleman) pittied him; and to give his griefes some release, shewed him a glasse, wherein any one might see any thing done

(within fifty miles space) that they desired : so soone as he looked in the glasse, hee saw his love Millisant with her father, and the knight, ready to be married by Fryer Bungye : at the sight of this hee cryed out that he was undone, for now should he lose his life in losing of his love. Fryer Bacon bids him take comfort, for he would prevent the marriage ; so taking this gentleman in his armes, he set himselfe downe in an enchanted chaire, and suddenly they were carried through the ayre to the chappell. Just as they came in, Fryer Bungye was ioyning their hands to marry them : but Fryer Bacon spoyled his speech, for he strucke him dumbe, so that he could not speake a worde. Then raised he a myst in the chappell, so that neither the father could see his daughter, nor the daughter her father, nor the knight either of them. Then tooke he Millisant by the hand, and led her to the man she most desired: they both wept for ioy, that they so happily once more had met, and kindly thanked Fryer Bacon.

It greatly pleased Fryer Bacon to see the passion of these two lovers, and seeing them both contented, he marryed them at the chappell doore, whilst her father, the knight, and Fryer Bungye went groping within, and could not find the way out. Now when he had married them, he bid them get lodging at the next village, and he would send his man with money : (for the gentleman was not stored, and he had a great way to his house) they did as he bad them. That night hee sent his man Miles with money to them ; but he kept her father, the

knight, and Fryer Bungey till the next day at noon in the chappell, ere he released them.

The gentleman and his new married wife made that night a great supper for ioy of their marriage, and bid to it most of the village: they wanted nothing but musicke, for which they made great moane. This want, Fryer Bacon (though he was absent) supplied: for after supper there came such a maske, that the like was never scene in that village: for first, there was heard most sweet still musicke, then wind musicke: then came three apes, and three monkeys, each of them carrying a torch: after them followed sixe apes and monkeys more, all dressed in anticke coats: these last sixe fell a dancing in such an edde manner, that they moved all the beholders to much laughter: so after divers anticke changes, they did reverence to the bridegroome and bride, and so departed in order as they came in. They all did marvell from whence these should come: but the bridegroome knew that it was Fryer Bacons art that gave them this grace to their wedding. When all was done, to bed they went, and enioyed their wishes. The next daye he went home to his owne house with his bride: and for the cost he had bestowed on them, most part of the townes-folke brought them on their way.

Miles made one amongst them too; he for his masters sake was so plyed with cups, that he in three dayes was scarce sober: for his welcome, at his departure he gave them this song: to the tune of, "I have been a fiddler," &c.

And did not you heare of a mirth that befell,
the morrow after a wedding day:
At carrying a bride at home to dwell,
and away to Twiver, away, away!

The Quintin was set, and the garlands were made,
'tis a pity old custome should ever decay:
And woe be to him that was horst on a iade,
for he carried no credit away, away.

We met a consort of fiddle-de-dees,
we set them a cock-horse, and made them to play,
The winning of Bullen, and Upsie-frees,
and away to Twiver, away, away.

There was ne'er a lad in all the parish,
that would goe to the plow that day:
But on his fore-horse his wench he carries,
and away to Twiver, away, away.

The butler was quicke, and the ale he did tap,
the maidens did make the chamber full gay:
The serving-men gave me a fuddling cap,
and I did carye it away, away.

The smithe of the towne his liquor so tooke,
that he was perswaded the ground look'd blue,
And I dare boldly to sweare on a booke,
such smiths as he there are but a few.

A posset was made, and the women did sip,
and simpering said they could eate no more:
Full many a maid was laid on the lip:
He say no more, but so give o're.

They kindly thanked Miles for his song, and so sent him home with a foxe at his tayle. His master asked him, where he had beene so long? He told him at the wedding. I know it, (said Fryer Bacon) that thou hast beene there, and I know also (thou beast) that thou hast beene every day drunke. That is the worst that you can say by me, master, for still poore men must be drunke, if that they take a cup more than ordinary; but it is not so with the rich. Why how is it with the rich then? I will tell you (said Miles) in few words,

Lawyers they are sicke,
And Fryers are ill at ease;
But poore men they are drunke,
And all is one disease.

Well sirrah (said Fryer Bacon) let me not heare that you are infected any more with this disease, lest I give you sowre sawce to your sweet meat. Thus did Fryer Bacon helpe these poore lovers, who in short time got the love of the old man, and lived in great ioy: Fryer Bungey's tongue was againe let loose, and all were friends.

How Vandermast and Fryer Bungey met, and how they strived who should excel one another in their coniurations; and of their deaths.

VANDERMAST thinking that Fryer Bacon had beene dead, came into England, and in Kent met with Fryer Bungey:

he owing him no good will for Fryer Bacons sake, took his horse out of the stable, and instead of it, left a spirit like unto it. Fryer Bungye in the morning rose, and mounting this spirit, (which he thought had beene his horse) rode on his iourney: but he riding through a water, was left in the midst of it by this spirit; and being thus wet, hee returned to his inne. At the inne doore, Vandermast met him, and asked him, if that were swimming time of the year? Bungye told him, if that he had been so well horsed as he was, when Fryer Bacon sent him into Germany, he might have escaped that washing. At this Vandermast bit his lip, and said no more, but went in. Bungye thought that he would be even with him, which was in this manner. Vandermast loved a wench well, which was in the house, and sought many times to winne her for gold, love, or promises. Bungye knowing this, did shape a spirit like this wench, which he sent to Vandermast. Vandermast appointed the spirit (thinking it had been the wench) to come to his chamber that night, and was very ioyful that he should enjoy her now at the last: but his ioy turned into sorrow, and his wanton hopes into a bad nights lodging: for Fryer Bungye had by his art spread such a sheet on his bed, that no sooner was he laid with the spirit on it, but it was carryed through the ayre, and let fall into a deepe pond, where Vandermast had been drowned, if he had not had the art of swimming: He got quickly out of the pond, and shook himselfe like a rough water-spaniel; but being out, he was as much

vexed as before, for he could not tell the way home, but was glad to keepe himselfe in heat that night with walking. Next day he coming to his inne, Fryer Bungye asked him how he did like his wench? he said, so well, that he wished him such another. Bungye told him, that his order did forbid him the use of any, and therefore he might keepe them for his friends: Thus did they continually vexe each other, both in words, and ill actions. Vandermast desiring to do Fryer Bungye a mischief, did challenge him to the field (not to fight at sword and dagger, single rapier, or case of poinyards, but at worsers weapons farre, it was at that diabolical art of magicke) there to shew which of them was most cunning, or had most power over the Devill: Bungye accepted of his challenge, and both provided themselves of things belonging to the art, and to the field they went.

There they both spred their circles some hundred foot from one another: and after some other ceremonies did Vandermast begin: hee by his charmes did raise up a fiery dragon, which did runne about Fryer Bungyes circle, and did scorch him with his heat so that he was almost ready to melt. Fryer Bungye tormented Vandermast in another element: for he raised up the sea-monster that Perseus killed, when he did redeem the faire Andromeda. This sea-monster did run about Vandermast, and such flouds of water did he send out of his wide mouth, that Vandermast was almost drowned. Then did Fryer Bungye raise a spirit up like saint

George, who fought with the dragon, and killed it : Vandermast (following his example) rayseed up Perseus, who fought also with his sea-monster, and killed it, so were they both released from their danger.

They being not contented with this tryall of their skill, went further in their coniurations, and raised up two spirits, each of them one. Bungye charged his spirit for to assist him with the greatest power hee had, that by it he might be able to overcome Vandermast. The Devill told him he would, if that he from his left arme would give him but three drops of blood ; but if that he did deny him that, then should Vandermast have power over him to doe what he would : the like told Vandermasts Devill to him : to this demand of the spirits, they both agreed, thinking for to overcome each other ; but the Devill overthrew them both.

They having given the Devill this bloud, as is before spoken of, they both fell againe to their coniurations : first, Bungye did rayse Achilles with his Greekes, who marched about Vandermast and threatned him. Then Vandermast raised Hector with his Troians, who defended him from Achilles and the Greekes. Then began there a great battell between the Greekes and Troians, which continued a good space : at last Hector was slaine, and the Troians fled. Then did follow a great tempest, with thundring and lightning, so that the two coniurers wished that they had been away. But wishes were in vaine : for now the time was come, that the Devill would be paid for the knowledge that he had

lent them, he would not tarry any longer, but then tooke them in the height of their wickednesse, and bereft them of their lives.

When the tempest was ended, (which did greatly affright the townes there by) the townesmen found the bodies of these two men, (Vandermast and Bungey) breathlesse, and strangely burnt with fire. The one had Christian buriall, because of his order sake: the other, because he was a stranger. Thus was the end of these two famous coniurers.

How Miles would coniure for money, and how he broke his legge for feare.

MILES one day finding his Masters study open, stole out of it one of his coniuring-bookes: with this booke would Miles needes coniure for some money: (for he saw that his master had money enough, and he desired the like, which did make him bold to trouble one of his masters devils :) in a private place he thought it best to doe it: therefore he went up to the top of the house, and there began to reade: long had he not read, but a devill came to him in an ugly shape, and asked him what he would have? Miles being affrighted, could not speake, but stood quaking there like an aspin leafe: the devill seeing him so, (to increase his feare) raised a tempest, and hurled fire about, which made Miles leape from off the leades, and with his fall broke his legge.

Fryer Bacon hearing this noyse, ranne forth, and found his man Miles on the ground, and the Devill hurling fire on the house top. First laid he the Devill againe: then went he to his man and asked how hee got that broken legg? Hee told him his Devill did it: for he had frighted him, and made him leape off from the house top. What didst thou there, (said his Master?) I went to coniure, Sir (said Miles) for money; but I have got nothing but a broken legge; and I now must beg for money to cure that, if you be not the more pittifull to me. I have oftentimes given you warning not to meddle with my bookes (said his Master) and yet you will still be doing: take heed, you had best, how you deale with the Devill againe: for he that had power to breake your legge will breake your necke, if you againe doe meddle with him: for this I doe forgive you: for your legge breaking hath paid for your sawcinesse: and though I gave you not a broken head, I will give you a plaister: and so sent him to the chirurgions.

How two young Gentlemen that came to Fryer Bacon, to know how their fathers did, killed one another; and how Fryer Bacon for grieffe, did breake his rare Glasse, wherein he could see any thing that was done within fifty miles about him.

It is spoken of before now, that Fryer Bacon had a glasse, which was of that excellent nature, that any man

might behold any thing that he desired to see within the compasse of fifty miles round about him : with this glasse he had pleased divers kinds of people : for fathers did oftentimes desire to see (thereby) how their children did, and children how their parents did ; one friend how another did ; and one enemy (sometimes) how his enemy did : so that from far they would come to see this wonderfull glasse. It happened one day, that there came to him two young gentlemen, (that were countrey men, and neighbors children) for to know of him by his glasse, how their fathers did : Hee being no niggard of his cunning, let them see his glasse, wherein they straight beheld their wishes, which they (through their owne follies) bought at their lives losse, as you shall heare.

The fathers of these two gentlemen, (in their sonnes absence) were become great foes : this hatred betweene them was growne to that height, that wheresoever they met, they had not onely wordes, but blowes. Just at that time, as it should seeme, that their sonnes were looking to see how they were in health, they were met, and had drawne, and were together by the cares. Their sonnes seeing this, and having been alwayes great friends, knew not what to say to one another, but beheld each other with angry lookes. At last, one of their fathers, as they might perceive in the glasse, had a fall, and the other taking advantage, stood over him ready to strike him. The sonne of him that was downe, could then containe himselfe no longer, but

told the other young man, this his father had received wrong. He answered againe, that it was faire. At last there grew such foule words betweene them, and their bloods were so heated, that they presently stabbed one the other with their daggers, and so fell downe dead.

Fryer Bacon seeing them fall, ranne to them, but it was too late, for they were breathlesse ere he came. This made him to grieve exceedingly: he iudging that they had received the cause of their deaths by this glasse, tooke the glasse in his hand, and uttered words to this effect:

Wretched Bacon, wretched in thy knowledge, in thy understanding wretched; for thy art hath beene the ruine of these two gentlemen. Had I been busied in those holy things, the which mine order tyes me to, I had not had that time that made this wicked glasse: wicked I well may call it, that is the causer of so vile an act: would it were sensible, then should it feele my wrath; but being as it is, Ile ruin it for ruining of them: and with that he broke his rare and wonderfull glasse, whose like the whole world had not. In this grief of his, came there newes to him of the deaths of Vandermast and Fryer Bungey: This did increase his grieffe, and made him sorrowfull, that in three days he would not eate any thing but kept his chamber.

How Fryer Bacon burnt his books of Magick, and gave himselfe to the study of Divinity only ; and how he turned Anchorite.

IN the time that Fryer Bacon kept his chamber, hee fell into divers meditations : sometimes into the vanity of arts and sciences : then would hee condemne himselfe for studying of those things that were so contrary to his order and soules health ; and would say, that magicke made a man a Devill : sometimes would hee meditate on divinity ; then would he cry out upon himselfe, for neglecting the study of it, and for studying magicke : sometime would he meditate on the shortnesse of mans life, then would he condemne himselfe for spending a time so short, so ill as he had done his : so would he goe from one thing to another and in all condemne his former studies.

And that the world should know how truly he did repent his wicked life, he caused to be made a great fire ; and sending for many of his friends, schollers, and others, he spake to them after this manner : My good friends and fellow students, it is not unknowne unto you, how that through my art I have attained to that credit, that few men living ever had : of the wonders that I have done, all England can speak, both king and commons : I have unlocked the secret of art and nature, and let the world see those things, that have layen hid since the death of Hermes, that rare and profound philosopher :

my studies have found the secrets of the starres ; the bookes that I have made of them, doe serve for presidents to our greatest doctors, so excellent hath my judgment beene therein. I likewise have found out the secrets of trees, plants and stones, with their several uses ; yet all this knowledge of mine I esteeme so lightly, that I wish that I were ignorant, and knew nothing : for the knowledge of these things, (as I have truly found) serveth not to better a man in goodnesse, but onely to make him proud and thinke too well of himselfe. What hath all my knowledge of natures secrets gained me ? Onely this, the losse of a better knowledge, the losse of divine studies, which makes the immortall part of man (his soule) blessed. I have found, that my knowledge has beene a heavy burden, and has kept downe my good thoughts : but I will remove the cause, which are these bookes : which I doe purpose here before you all to burne. They all intreated him to spare the bookes, because in them there were those things that after-ages might receive great benefit by. He would not hearken unto them, but threw them all into the fire, and in that flame burnt the greatest learning in the world. Then did he dispose of all his goods ; some part he gave to poor schollers, and some he gave to other poore folkes : nothing left he for himselfe : then caused he to be made in the church-wall a cell, where he locked himselfe in, and there remained till his death. His time hee spent in prayer, meditation, and such divine exercises, and did seeke by all

means to perswade men from the study of magicke. Thus lived he some two yeeres space in that cell, never comming forth : his meat and drink he received in at a window, and at that window he did discourse with those that came to him ; his grave he digged with his owne nayles, and was laid there when he dyed.

Thus was the Life and Death of this famous Fryer, who lived most part of his life a Magician, and dyed a true Penitent Sinner, and an Anchorite.

FRIER RUSH.



FRIER RUSH.

The Pleasant History of Frier Rush is a book of great rarity, and was by Ritson ranked as a desideratum in the illustration of English Romance ; two copies of it were, however, known to exist, when this Collection was printed in 1828 ; one in the possession of the Marquis of Stafford, and a second the property of Mr. Heber, from which latter a limited reprint was made in 1810.

Although the earliest English version of Frier Rush, which is at present known, bears date only in 1620, it was most probably printed at a much earlier period, and a translation from the German, possibly from the low German version presently to be described. The story of Frier Rush is to be found in a metrical form in German at a very early date. In 1515 it was printed at Strasburgh. It was afterwards published at Nurenburg by Valentin Newber, whose edition however bears no date, but was probably printed between 1550 and 1560, a period during which other works were issued from the same press. There is also a third German edition, printed at Magdēburg

in 1587, a copy of which is now before me. The Strasburgh edition was reprinted some years since, under the editorship of those accomplished scholars Ferdinand Wolf and Stephen Endlicher, who, in their introduction and valuable illustrative notes, have pretty well exhausted the history of this once popular Story Book.

The following is a specimen of the old German metrical version—

Ein kloster vor ein walde lag
 Dar in man vil der wunder flag
 Do waren munch ein michel theil,
 Sie waren iung und dar zuo geil,
 Und schwarze kuttten truogen sie dar
 Sie dienten gott gar wenig zwar.
 Ein yetlicher wolt haben ein eigen weib;
 Des ward under yuen mancher streyt.
 Der teufel ir leben bald innen wardt;
 Er macht sich zuo yn uff die fart,
 Zuom kloster er gar balde ging
 In der gestalt eins iungeling.
 Fur das kloster der abt kam gegangen;
 Ransch ward von im gar schon empfangen.
 Der abt sprach: "iunger knecht wo her?
 Was ist dein meinung und beger,
 Das du so kumpst in schneller frist
 Ob dir etwas an uns befohlen ist?"
 Rausch sprach: "herr, ich sag neh recht,
 Ich bin ein armer kuechen knecht.
 Auch kan ich wol schweigen und verhehlen,
 Was mir die gueten lent befehlen."

There is, however, a yet earlier German version. It is in the low German dialect, and although the copy of it in the library of Herr von Meusebach of Berlin bears no date, it is described by Haupt as being obviously of the close of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century. It concludes with the following lines—in which the reader will observe that the subject of the poem bears a name far more like that in the English version than that in the German—

De wyle dat hemmel unde erde stadt
 Broder *russche* heuet hyr ein ende
 He was in alle schalckheit behende
 Oek wyl ick alle moneken leren
 Dat se syk nicht mir broder *russche* beweren
 Want alle synz werken hadden ein quadt ende
 God vam hemmele uns syn gnade sende.

Amen.

The origin of the Romance is, however, unquestionably Danish, for not only does the German version refer distinctly to Denmark as the scene of the story—

In *Denmark* bey *Helsingbore* genant
 Do ym das Kloster was wol bekant,

and again—

— das kloster sey *Essron* in *Denmark* genant
 Bey *Helsingbore* in *Seclant* wol bekant,
 Und under dem bistum *Rosschilde* gelegen
 Und des Ordens Bernhardini pflügen,—

but Thiele in his *Danske Folksagn* gives us, moreover,

specimens of a Danish Poem on the subject, and also the following popular tradition.

BROTHER RUSH.

It is related that when the Devil once upon a time saw how piously and virtuously the Monks lived in the Monastery of Esrom, he took upon himself the shape of a man, and went to the gate and knocked at it, for to be let in, saying that his name was Rush. Then he gave himself out that he was a Cooks-boy and was received as such by the Abbot. But when he was once by himself with the Master Cook he set himself up against him and got himself therefore punishment; at this he was sore displeased, and as he had previously a cauldron with water over the fire, and he now perceived that it boiled, he took with all his might the Master Cook and placing him head downwards in it, began thereupon to run about and to cry, lamenting the misfortune as if it had happened to his master in cooking. Thus he cheated in this manner with falsehood all the brothers in the cloister, that they thought him altogether free, and he was now appointed by them the Master Cook. But it was what he had strived after, in order that he might afterwards deprave them altogether; for now he cooked the meat so unctuously and lickerishly, that the monks neglected fasts and prayers, and gave themselves to feasting. Nay it is said also, that he brought women into the Monastery, and came thereby much in the Abbot's favor, so that he at last caused him to become a Brother, because he well desired constantly to have such a cook at hand. From that time strife and malice prevailed so severely in the Monastery, that it had surely come in the power of the Evil One, if none of the Brethren had repented in time. For instance—Once Brother Rush was in the wood, and having there seen a beautiful fat cow—he slew it and took himself one quarter with him to the Monastery, but hung up the rest on a tree in the forest. Then presently came by

the countryman who owned the cow; and when he perceived how the three quarters hung in the tree, he hid himself in the other trees to watch until the thief fetched away the remainder. Then he saw, as he sat there, how the Devils had their sport in the forest, and heard much talking about Rush, how he would invite the Abbot and Monks to the banquet with him in Hell. This caused the countryman great alarm, and the next day he went to the Abbot, and related to him all that he had seen and heard in the forest.

When the Abbot heard this he caused all the monks to come to him in the church, and they began there to pray and to sing, so that Rush, as he could not abide the like, was desirous to sneak away. But the Abbot grasped him by the cloak and exorcised him into a red horse—and gave him into the power of Hell. For many years after these events they showed in the Monastery of Esrom Rush's Iron Cauldron and Gridiron.

While to remove all doubt upon the subject, Pontoppidan, in his *Theatrum Daniæ*, p. 91, tells us that before the Monastery of Esserum was converted into a dwelling, Friar Rush's effigy was to be seen there, with the following epitaph, half Latin and half Danish :

Hic jacet John *Præst*
 Qui dedet suum *graa Hæst*,
 Nec non de siligine *tue Læst*
 Semper comedebat *det bæst*
 Requiescit in pulvere *sud væst*.

Frier Rush, who was however known to Reginald Scott before the History of his Pranks was published, was very properly classed by him with Robin Good-

fellow, and in Harsenet's *Declaration*, chap. xx. p. 134, we find them again noticed together. "And if that the "bowle of curds and cream were not duly set out "for Robin Goodfellow, *the Frier*, and Sisse the "dairy-maide, why then either the pottage was "burnt, or the cheese would not curdle, or the butter "would not come, or the ale in the fat never would "have good head." The old song of *The Mad Pranks of Robin Goodfellow*, proves their identity still more clearly by its allusion to a transmutation which we see exercised in the course of the following tale:—

Sometimes I meete them like a man,
 Sometimes an ox, sometimes a hound,
And to a horse turn me I can,
 To trip and trot about them round.

In fact, whether he is called Robin Goodfellow, Puck, or Rush, his actions and attributes every where identify the hero of the present Romance "as the personification of the principle of evil."* He is the Scottish *Red Cap*, and the Saxon spirit *Hudken*, or *Hodeken*, so called from the hoodiken, or little hood or hat, which he wore, and which also covers his head when he appears in the shape of the Nisse of Sweden. In that amusing and interesting work

* Quarterly Review, vol. 22. p. 353, &c.

the *Fairy Mythology*, vol. 2, p. 68, we are told that Hoodeken took up his abode in the palace of the Bishop of Hildesheim. One of the scullions in the Bishop's kitchen having flung dirt on him, and splashed him with foul water, Hoodeken complained to the head cook, who only laughed at him, and said "Are you a spirit, and afraid of a little boy?" "Since you won't punish the boy," said Hoodeken, "I will in a few days let you see how much afraid of him I am," and went off in high dudgeon; but very soon after he got the boy asleep at the fire-side, and he strangled him, cut him up, and *put him into the pot on the fire*. In Swedeland Puck assumes the name of *Nissegoddreng*, or Nisse the good knave, and consorts with the *Tomtegubbe*, or the old man of the house toft, who is of the same genus. From "Gubbe" the old man employed as the name of a demon, the Normans seem to have formed *Goblin* or *Gobelin* (quasi *Gubbelein*,) and the Spanish *Duende*, a demon particularly noted for his powers of transformation, appears to correspond in every respect to the Tomte Gubbe; and the name according to Cobaruvias, is contracted from *Dueno de Casa*, the master of the house.

Before bringing to a close our notice of the form under which "The Merry Wanderer" now presents

himself to our notice, we may refer to the testimony of Bruno Seidelius

Quis non legit, quid Frater Rauschius egit ?*

for further evidence that it is one in which he enjoyed an extensive popularity; while the *Kinder und Haus Marchen* of the Brothers Grimm likewise contains two tales, † *Des Teufels russiger Bruder*, and *Der Teufel Grunrock*, which probably take their origin from the same source.

* *Parceniae Ethicæ*, Francof. 1589.

† Vol. 2. pp. 84 and 89.

THE HISTORIE
OF
FRIER RUSH:

HOW HE CAME TO
A HOUSE OF RELIGION TO SEEKE SERVICE, AND
BEING ENTERTAINED BY THE PRIOUR, WAS
FIRST MADE UNDER COOKE.

BEING FULL OF
PLEASANT MIRTH AND DELIGHT
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

IMPRINTED AT LONDON BY EDW. ALL-DE, DWELLING
NEERE CHRIST-CHURCH.

1620.



A PLEASANT HISTORY, HOW A DEVILL (NAMED
RUSH) CAME TO A RELIGIOUS HOUSE, TO
SEEKE A SERVICE.

THERE was sometime beyond the sea edified and founded a certaine house and cloister of religious men, which house was founded at a great forrests side, for to maintaine the service of almighty God, and daily to pray for their benefactors and founders, and for the salvation of their owne soules : which place by reason of their founders and well disposed people (which gave unto it largely of their goods and possessions) increased in riches, and every man had gold and silver at their will, and also of meate and drinke they had great plenty : in so much that they were so well at ease and had so much, that they wist not what to doe they were so full of wantonnesse, whereby the service of Almighty God was not well maintained among them : for oftentimes they said neither Mattins nor Evensong : and through their great negligence they forgat cleane the charge that they were bound to when they entred into their religion, and they lived more like beasts without reason, then like men of good and holy conversation : for they haunted harlots and lived viciously, and the goods that was given them by

good and well disposed people, they spent in unthriftnesse and rybaldry. And when the great prince of devils which are the patrones of all vices understood of the great misrule and vile living of these religious men: consulted to keepe them still in that state, and worse if it might be. And these be the names of the devils.

Belphegor who was Prince of Gluttony, Asmodeus Prince of Lechery, and Belzebub Prince of Envie, with many other divels assembled together, which reioyced for the disorder of these religious men. And as they were all assembled together with one accord: they chose a divell to goe and dwell among these religious men, for to maintaine them the longer in their ungracious living, which divell was put in rayment like an earthly creature, and went to a religious house, and there he stood at the gate a certaine space all alone with an heavie countenance. Then within a while after the Priour came unto the gate and espied Rush the young man standing there all alone. Anon he said unto him, what dost thou here, and what wouldest thou have. The young man with great reverence answered and said: Sir, I am a poore young man, and am out of service, and faine would have a maister. And sir if it please you to have me, I shall doe you diligent service, and shall doe so well that you and all your brethren and covent shall be glad of me, for I shall keepe so well your secrets, that I trust to obtaine at all times your good love and favour, and all theirs also.

And when the Priour had heard his words, he was

mooved with pittie, and said : Goe into the kitchen to the Cooke, and shew him that I have sent thee thither, and bid him shew thee what thou shalt doe : for thou shalt be with him a certaine season, till that some other better thing fall. Then the young man made his reverence to the Priour, and thanked him, and fourth he went to the kitchin, where hee found the maister Cooke. Anon he made reverence unto him, and said : Sir, my maister the Priour hath sent me hither unto you, and he commaundeth you to shew me what I shall doe, for I must be here and helpe you. The maister Cooke answered and said, you be welcome. And anon hee set him to such businesse as he had to doe. And thus the devill became under-Cooke in the place that he was assigned unto, by the Prince of Devils. And then hee said (laughing to himselfe) as followeth.

These being the words of the Devill.

I am right glad that my purpose is come so well to passe, for now all mine intent is fulfilled, and I doubt not but all shall be ours : for I shall make such debate and strife among the Friers, that they shall never be at concord and peace. And I shall make them good staves wherewith the one shall beate well the other: and often times they shal lye together by the eares, inso much that there was never seen nor heard tell of such a rumour and discord in no Cloyster in the world. And I shall use myselfe so, that I shall be in great love and favour among them.

Then within foure or five dayes after, it fortun'd

that the Priour came into the kitchen, and there he found the young man, to whom he said, where wast thou borne, and what is thy name? The young man answered and said, sir, I was borne very farre hence, and Rush is my name. Then said the Priour unto him, Rush canst thou couple hounds together? Yea sir (said Rush) that I can do right well, and more then that, for I can couple men and women together, which is a more mastrie, and also sir (if neede be) I can convey a faire woman into your chamber, and convey her home againe in the morning so secretly, that no man shall spye it. And also I shall keepe your counsaile so secretly, that it shall never be knowne. And when the Priour heard Rush speake so, he was right glad of him, and said: Rush, if thou canst doe as thou hast said? I shall reward thee well for thy labour, and thou shalt be my most well-beloved servant: wherefore make an end of thy businesse, for soone thou shalt goe a little way on a message for me, and so he departed and went to supper. And when every man had supped, and Rush had done all his businesse in the kitchen, hee came unto his maister the Priour, and said, sir, what is your will with me? the Priour answered and said: here a little beside dwelleth a faire gentlewoman, the which I love very well, but I dare not discover my minde unto her myselfe: and if thou canst finde the meanes to bring her secretly unto me, I shall reward thee right well for thy labour and paine. And when Rush had heard the words of his maister, and knew all his minde, he answered and said: Sir, be of

good cheere, and let mee alone with that matter: for I shall goe unto the gentlewoman's house, and I shall say your message so well, that this night she shall come to you: and so departed Rush from his maister, and went straight unto this gentlewoman's house. And when he was thither come, hee found the gentlewoman sitting all alone. And when Rush was espied of her, he made unto her great courtesie, and with many reverences these words he said.

How a Devill named Rush came into a Gentlewomans house, and how he brought her privily unto his Maisters chamber.

REST you merry faire mistresse, the most fairest creature in the world. My Maister greeteth you by me, desiring you to come and speake with him. Then said the Gentlewoman to Rush, who is your Maister, and what is his will with me? faire Mistresse, said Rush, I will shew you, my Maister is the Priour in a house of religion here beside, and he loveth you so well except that you come unto him this night, I know he will be dead for sorrow.

Here followeth the answer of the Gentlewoman.

AND when the Gentlewoman had heard the words of Rush, shee answered and said, Faire Sir, it were great pittie that the gentleman should die for my sake, and rather then he should so doe for me, I will come to him, and shew him all the courtesie that I can. Rush

was very glad of those comfortable words, and thought that his enterprise was well brought to passe, and he said unto her: Faire Mistresse, may it please you to take the labour and go with me, and I shall bring you to my master, and as I suppose, hee will make you good cheare, and gold and silver you shall lacke none, for hee hath great plenty thereof. Then said the Gentlewoman, Sir, I pray you let us depart hence: for as I suppose the gentleman looketh long for us. So forth they went both together, till they came to the Priours chamber. And when the Priour sawe that she was come: he was the gladdest man in the world, and thanked Rush much for his labour and paine: and so the Priour received her into his chamber, and there he made her good cheere, and they had good meate and wine great plenty. And when they had well refreshed themselves, Rush departed, and went to the kitchin, and left the Priour and the Gentlewoman alone, and there she saved the Priours life. And when Rush was in the kitchin, hee said unto himselfe: I am right glad that I have brought this matter so well to passe: and I doubt not but they will agree well enough together, for they be both of one accord. And when the other friers perceived that Rush was such a privie fellow, and so well could keepe counsaile: they desired him to helpe them also, and so he did: for he brought to every man, the woman that they most desired, whereof they had great mervaile. But they were so blinded with ignorance. that they never perceived that he was a very Devill, but every man had him in love and favour.

How Frier Rush threw the maister Cooke into a kettell of water seething upon the fire, wherein he died.

IT befell upon a day that Rush went forth to sport him, and it was very late ere he came home againe, and the maister Cooke was very angry with him that hee was so long absent. And as soone as Rush was entred into the kitchin: the Cooke began to chide, and said unto him, thou horson knave where hast thou beene so long: and with a great staffe hee laid upon Rush and beat him sore. And when Rush saw that the Cooke was angry, and so farre out of reason, and that he had beaten him sore: anon he began to waxe very angry with the maister Cooke, and said unto him: thou horson villaine, why hast thou beaten me thus: I will be revenged on thee: and suddainly he caught him in his armes, and threw him into a great kettell which was full of water seething upon the fire, and said, lye thou there in the Divels name: for now thou shalt neither fight nor chide no more with me: and so Rush slew the maister Cooke. Then when hee had so done, hee departed out of the kitchin, and went to the next towne to fetch the faire woman againe for his maister: and in his absence certaine of the friers came into the kitchin to speake with Rush, but they found no body stirring therein, and some of them went to stand by the fires side, to tarie till Rush came in: for they thought he would not tarie long. And as they stood talking by the fires side, they spied a man in the kettell seething upon the fire. And

anon they perceived that it was the maister Cooke, whereof they were greatly abashed. And with that (crying out) they went unto the Priour and shewed him that the maister Cooke had drowne^d himselfe in a kettell seething upon the fire in the kitchin: for which tydings the Priour was right sorrie. And in the meane season Rush came home, and had conveyed the woman into his maisters chamber. And anon the friers shewed Rush of the great misfortune that was fallen on the maister Cooke in the kitchin, and he made as he had beene sorrie therefore, and had knowne nothing thereof, and he was in great love and favour with the Priour and all the friers, that they mistrusted him nothing for that deede, and so there was no more mention of the maister Cooke. Then the Priour commanded that Rush should be made Cooke, and all the covent was right glad of that, and so he was himselfe also, for he thought his enterprises came well to passe after his minde, and as he would have it. Thus Rush became maister Cooke - in the kitchin, and dressed their meate mervailous well: for in the Lent, and in the Advent, both Fridayes and also other dayes, he put bacon into their pottage pot, the which made the pottage to savour well, and he dressed their meate so deliciously, that the Priour and all the friers had great mervaile that he did it so well: in so much that they said he did much better then their other maister Cooke did, and that he was a more cunninger man in his occupation, and could doe much better in his office. Thus Rush continued in that office

the space of seaven yeares, and did right well, and every man had him in love and favour. Then it fortun'd upon a day the Priour and his brethren were assembled together in a generall counsaile, and as they stood talking together, the Priour remembered Rush, and anon he said unto his brethren: Friends we have here Rush which is our maister Cooke in our kitchin, and he is an olde servant, and much diligent and true service he hath done to us, and he hath continued among us longer then any servant that ever wee had: wherefore me thinke it reason, that hee were promoted into some other office, and made a brother among us. Then all the whole Covent with one voice said they were content it should so be. So the Priour sent for Rush, and when he was come before him and all his brethren, the Priour said, Rush it is so, thou hast beene here a long season, and we have found thee hitherto a true and diligent servant, wherefore wee will that thou be promoted, and take upon thee an habite as we have, and to become a brother among us. Rush answered and said: my Maisters I thanke you all, and then the Priour gave Rush an habite, and put it on his backe, and so Rush became a brother in the place, neverthelesse he kept his office still.

How Frier Rush made Truncheons for the Friers to
fight withall.

WHEN Rush had on the habite of a Frier, and was a brother in the place, he had more vacation dayes

then he had before. And as a king or a great prince prepareth ordinances against their warres, in likewise did Frier Rush : for when all his businesse was done in the kitchin, and that he had leysure, he went and sate in the port of the utter gate, and there he was making of good bigge Truncheons of oke. And he made them with hilts over the hand for slipping, of the which the other Friers had great mervaile, and demanded of him wherefore he made those Truncheons. Rush answered and said : Faire Sirs, I make them for this intent : that if there come any theeves hither for to rob us, and to spoile our place, yet shall we have weapons to defend us withall. And therefore I make them. And moreover, when any neede shall be, come to mee and every man shall have one, and they shall be ready at your commandement, and then the Friers thanked him and so departed. Then it fortun'd upon a day, that the Priour and Subpriour fell at discord, and were greevously angry, the one with the other, and would have fought together, but onely for shame : neverthelesse, the anger abode still in their hearts, and all was for an harlot : within a while after the noyse spread abroad among the Friers, that the Priour and the Subpriour were fallen at discord, for the which they were angry in their mindes. And they that loved the Priour, tooke his part, and they that loved the Subpriour, tooke his part, and so they murmured among themselves. Then they appointed in their mindes to revenge their quarrels at one time or other, and so to make a more surer way in ful-

filling their malicious mindes and angry hearts, every man after other went privately to Frier Rush to lend them staves, in so much that there was not a Frier in the place but he had one, and they never went without their staves under their habite, and the one knew not that the other had any, they kept them so secretly. And when Frier Rush had delivered all his staves, he was right glad in his heart, for he knew right well there should be a great fray among them, either one time or other. So it fortun'd afterward, as it is a common custome among religious people at an high feast, to keepe solemne service, and every man to be at Mattens at midnight, and so upon a good night, all the whole Covent assembled together in the Quier, and were ready to begin Mattens, they taried for nothing but for the comming of the Priour. Then anon the Priour came into the Quier, and sate him downe in his place, and as he looked about him, he espied that the Subpriour was there present, and with that his heart began to grudge of the olde anger that was fallen betweene them two, and he thought in his minde that he could never be revenged in a better time, and sodainly he rose out of his place, and went to the Subpriour, and with his fist he gave him a good buffet, and the Subpriour which was moved with the stroke, started unto the Priour and gave him another buffet, and with that they went freshly together by the eares, and when the other Friers saw that, every man rose out of their places, and drew out their Truncheons, and together they went: who

had been there should have scene good buffets given on both parties. And when Frier Rush saw that they were fighting together, anon he blew out all the candles and lamps that were burning in the church, and left no manner of light therein whereby the one might see the other; and when he had so done, he tooke his truncheon in his hand, and went into the Quier among the thickest of the Friers the which were fighting freshly without light, and there he laid so lustily about, that many of them he felled to the ground, and left them there for dead, and when he had so done, he stole his way from them, and as hee went, he found standing in the portall of the Quier, a great olde deske, and anon hee tooke the deske betweene both his hands, and threw it over the portall into the Quier among all the Friers, and hurt many sore, in so much that some had an arme broken, and some a legge, and other some had their noses, cleane pared from their faces, that the blond ranne in their mouthes, and as for broken heads to the hard scalpe were no dainty, for every man had one, there scaped none free away, who had been there, should have had a goodly pastime to see the Friers creepe about the Quier, and in steede of (Domine labia) they cried out alas and well away. Then when the fray was done, and all the noyse seased, Rush came in among them with a candell light in his hand, and made as he had knowne nothing thereof, and said to them : Fie for shame sirs, how fortun'd this discord to fall among your selves ? I see well now you regard not your honour, nor the good

name of your place. All the people shall say ye be not honest, nor good religious men, the which words I would be loath to heare, and I may not suffer our place so to fall in an evill name: wherefore good masters I require you to set your hearts at rest, and put the matter into my hands, and I shall doe so much that all shall be well, and you shal be good friends againe, and no words shall be spoken thereof; then every man complained to him of their great hurt, and he made semblance as he had been sorie therefore and then they that could goe, went up to their sels, and they that could not goe, did creepe up as well as they could, and laid them downe in their beds, and there they lay till they were whole againe, and in the space of three weekes and more, God was evill served, for in all that space they sung neither Mattins nor Evensong, nor never entred into the church for it was suspended, and for shame they durst never let it be knowne. And when they were all whole, and every man upon his feete againe, and might goe about the house, they brought againe their staves to Frier Rush, and thanked him much, and then Frier Rush said unto them: Sirs when ye have neede of them againe, ye shall finde them here ready at your commandement, for which they gave him thankes, and departed. When Frier Rush saw that that they were gone, and that he had all his staves againe, he laughed unto himself and said: I am right joyfull that mine enterprises be come so well to passe, for I have done many mischievous deeds since I came first, and yet I will doe more before I depart

hence, for I shall cause them to be damned, and I shall bring their bodies and soules into the burning fire of hell, there to remaine world without end, and of me shall be spoken a thousand yeeres hereafter.

How Frier Rush grymed the Waggon with Tarre, and what cheare he made in the country.

ANOTHER time it fortun'd that the Priour had a journey to ride into the country about a little businesse that hee had there to doe, and anon he called Rush his servant unto him and said, Rush goe thy way into the court, and take with thee a dish full of greace. and greace well the wheelles and axeltrees of the waggon, and make all things ready against to-morrow in the morning, for I must ride forth to-morrow betimes, then Rush departed from his maister, and went about his businesse, and instead of greace, hee tooke a great vessell full of tarre, and auointed the waggon all over with it, both within and without, and especially in the place where the Priour should sit: and when he had done, he returned to his maister's chamber, then the Priour demanded of Rush, if he had done as he commaunded him: yea sir said Rush, ye may ride when please you, and so they went to their beds. Then on the morrow after, the Priour and Rush his servant with his other company, rose up very early in the morning for to accomplish their journey, and forth they went unto their waggon, and when the Priour was entred therein, hee perceiv'd himselfe all to betrayed and sneyred, and all his clothes were filed therewith: and

then he said to Rush, thou lewd fellow, what hast thou done to this waggon that I am thus arayed therein? Rush answered and said: sir, I have done nothing but as you commanded me. That is not, said the Priour, for I commaunded thee to take greace and grease but the wheeles and the axeltrees, and thou hast taken tarre and annointed it all over, both within and without. Why hast thou done so? Sir said Rush, I understoode you bad me doe so. And when the Priour sawe there was no other remedie, he commanded his servants to make ready another waggon, and in the meane season, the Priour went into his chamber, and put on another habite, and came againe and mounted into the waggon and went their way, and so long they rode, that they came to their iourneyes end. And when they were alighted at their lodging, the Priour called for his supper, and anon every thing was made ready, and the good man of the house and the Priour sate downe to supper together, and made good cheere and then the Priour called for wine of the best, and anon he had his commandement. And when the good man of the house and the Priour had supped, Rush and his fellowes sate downe to the reverensions that their maisters had left, but they had no wine: wherefore Rush was very sad, and ever he mused by what policie he might get some wine. And anon he called the wife of the house and said: Mistresse, I pray you fill a pottle of wine for me and my fellowes, and so shee did: and when that was gone, they called for another: and then they called for the third, and so ended their

supper. Then on the morrow when the Priour had done all his businesse, and was ready to returne home againe: he called for a reckoning. And anon, the good wife came in and gave him a reckoning of all things, both horse meate and man's meate; and at last, she reckoned three pottels of wine that Rush and his fellowes had. And when the Priour heard that his servants had drunke so much wine: Anon he began to waxe very angry, and asked her, who commanded her to fill in so much wine? the wife answered and said: Sir, Rush your servant commaunded me to fill it in, and he said that you should pay therefore. Then anon the Priour called for Rush, and said unto him: Thou lewd knave, why hast thou drunke so much wine? Might no lesse then pottels serve thee and thy fellowes? Sir, said Rush, we have not drunke so much, for your horses hath had two of the potels. My horses, said the Priour: what should they do with wine? Yes sir, said Rush, your horses laboured sorer than we did, and were very weary, and they had nothing but hay and oates: wherefore, me thought it needefull to give them some good drinke to their course meate to comfort their hearts withall, and to cause them to be the lustier, and to have the better courage to bring you homeward. And when the Priour had heard that answeere of Rush, and saw there was no remedy but patience, he paid for the wine, and all things that he had taken there, and so rode home in his waggon, and Frier Rush never went forth againe with his master.

How the Priour made Frier Rush Sexton among the Friers, and how he charged him to give him knowledge how many Friers were absent from Mattins at midnight, and what they were.

WHEN the Prior was come home, hee made Frier Rush sexton of the church, and his office was to ring the bell and to light the candles, and to cal the Friers to Mattins at mid-night, and also the Prior commaunded Rush and charged him, that he should take good heede that there were none of the Friers absent from Mattins, and if there were to give him knowledge thereof, then saide Rush to his master: Sir all your commaundement shal be fulfilled, and so they departed. And within three or foure nights after, Rush espied certaine of the Friers that were absent, and he marked them well, and on the morrow after he presented them to the Prior, and anon the Prior caused them to come before him, and gave them a check, for their being absent; in a little time, Rush had presented them all which caused the Prior to be greatly offended with them: when they perceiued that Rush had made such complaints against them, they had him in much disdain, but they could not amend it: for hee had them in such great feare, that never after they durst be absent, but well was hee that might be first in the Quier. When Rush perceiued the Fryers had him in so great feare, he devised to doe some mischievous thing among them: and upon a night, a little before he should ring to Mattins, he went and brake downe the staires of the Dorter, and when he had

so done, he went and rung to Mattins, and lighted the lamps and candles in the church, and went into the Dorter, and called up the Fryers, and so came and sate at the staires foote as he was wont to doe; he had sitten there but a while, but anon there came one, who thought no hurt but to goe soberly into the Quier as he was wont to doe, and when he came to the staires downe he fell, and had a mervailous great fal: then said Rush, thou art one. Presently there came another, and likewise downe he fell, and had a sore fall, thou art two, said Rush. Anon came the third Frier, which had a mightie great bellie, and was a grosse man, and he made great hast, for he feared that he should have been last, and when he came to the staires, downe he fell on his fellowes necks, and he was go great and so heavic, that almost he had mischieved his fellowes that lay under him: thou makest three said Rush. And with that there came seaven or eight together, and downe they fell all at once. Softly masters for shame, said Rush, ye come too many at once, ye were not wont to be so hastie, but now I percieve well ye would deceive me, and one would excuse the other, and therefore ye come so thicke to blind me in my tale: How should I now give account to the Prior of them that be absent? Surely, I cannot tell, but now I see well, ye be too subtil for me, I would some other man had mine office, and made as though he had beene verie angrie with them. Then the Fryers, such as could goe, though it were to their paines, rose up againe, and limping went into the Quier, and they that fell first and lay

under, were sore hurt and could not goe and specially the Frier with the great belly : yet neverthelesse, they crept into the Quier, as well as they could. And when they were all assembled together in the Quier, each of them complained to other of their great hurts, and so they began Mattins : who had beene there, should have heard a heavie song and a sad, for they were not merrie in their hearts, their paines were so great. When Mattins was done, they that could goe, went up againe into their lodgings, and they that could not goe, lay still in the Quier all night : On the morrow, word was brought to the Prior of the great misfortune that was fallen among the Friers at midnight : for the which misfortune the Prior was greatly displeased and angry in his minde, and thought verily it was Rushes deede, for hee had done divers evill turnes before. Then the Prior sent for Rush to come speake with him, and when he was come, the Prior said unto Rush, how fell this misfortune to night among the Friers, that they be so sore hurt ? Sir said Rush, I will shew you, it is not unknowne unto you, that when you put me first into this office, ye commaunded me to give you knowledge when any of my brethren were absent from Mattins, and so have I done divers times, whereby many of them have beene shent and chidden by you, and for that cause, they owe me evill will, and faine would have me out of this office, if they wist how. And for to accomplish their desire, and to cause you to be displeased with mee : I shall shew you what they have done this night. Sir it is so, that

when the time was come, I rung to Mattins and lighted candles, and made all things readie, and when I had so done I went into the Dorter to every man's sell and called them up, then I went and stoode at the staire foote, for to tell them as they came downe, as I was accustomed to doe, and to knowe who came to Mattins, and who did not, and for spite that I should not reckon them, they came all on a cluster, and for hast the one thrust the other downe the staires, and he that had the greatest belly, had the hardest fall; now if they hurt themselves, what might I doe with all? And when the Prior had heard the words of Rush, he wist not what to say, but for to voyde all tribulations and misfortunes that might fall in time to come, he put Rush out of his office and set him in the kitchin againe, and when he was there all alone, he laughed to himselfe and said: this enterprise is well brought to passe, and I have made a good sence thereof to the Prior, yea will I doe more ere I depart out of this place.

How Rush went forth a sporting, and was late forth, and how in his way comming home, he found a cowe, which cowe he devided into two parts, the one halfe hee tooke on his necke and carried it with him, and the other halfe he left still: and how soone he had made it ready for the Friers suppers.

It befell upon a time that Rush when all his businesse was done in the kitchin, he would goe forth into the countrey to sport him and to passe the time with good

company : as hee walked on his way, his chaunce was to come into a village, which was two or three mile from the place where hee did dwell, and when hee was entred into the village, hee looked round about him in every corner to finde out some company to make merrie withall : and at the last, espied an alehouse, and in he entred, and there hee found good fellowes playing at cardes, and drinking, and made cheare : then Rush made obeysance to them, and sate downe among them, and dranke with the players, and afterward he fell to play, and was as merrie as any man in the company : and so long he played and passed the time, that cleane hee had forgotten what he had to doe at home, and the day went fast away, and the night approached. Anon Rush looked up and perceived that it was almost night, remembered himselfe that there was nothing readie at home for the priors supper and covent, and it was almost supper time, wherefore he thought it was time to depart thence, so he payed for his drinke and tooke his leave, and homeward he went, and in his way he found a fat cowe grasing in the field, and sodainly he devided her into two parts, and the one halfe he left lying there still, and the other halfe he tooke on his necke and carried it home, and quickly hee made it ready ; some he put in the pot, and some upon the spit, and he made a great fire and set on the pot, and layd to the spit : and he made mervailous good pottage, and rosted the meate very well, and he made such speede, that every thing was ready by the houre accustomed to

goe to supper, whereof the Prior and all the Friers had great mervaile, that he had made every thing readie so soone, and was so well done; for they knew that it was late ere he came home: for some of the Friers had beene in the kitchin a little before, and saw neither cooke nor fire, nor any thing prepared toward supper, wherefore they gave great praise to Rush, and said he was very quicke in his office.

How a Farmer of the Priors sought his Cowe, and how he was desolated by the way homeward, and was faine to lye in a hollow tree: and of the vision that he had.

THERE was a poore husbanduan, dwelling there beside, which was a farmer of the priors: the which poore man had a cowe abroad in the fields, that was accustomed every night to come home at a certaine houre, and never failed. And at the last a mischaunce fell unto her, for Frier Rush had slaine her as she stode in the field, and so shee failed of her comming home at her houre as shee was wont to doe. And when the poore man sawe that his cowe came not home, he thought in his minde it was not well with her, so foorth he went in an evening for to seeke his cowe, and so long he travailed about in the fields, that at the last hee found the one halfe of his cowe lying there: but the other halfe was cleane gone, and shee was so cleanly divided in two parts, that hee imagined in his minde that it was not possible to be done (but) by man's hands, for if any wilde beasts had done

it they would have spoyled the flesh : so hee returned homeward againe, and ere hee came at the halfe way, the night was so darke that he could not see which way he went, and so hee went out of his way, and house could he finde none : and at the last he came to an hollow tree wherein he sate him downe, thinking there to take his rest all night, and he had not sitten there but a while, but anon there assembled a company of Devils, and among them they had a great principall maister whose name was Lucifer, and he was the first that spake : and the first that was called was a Devill, named Belzabub, and with a loud voyce, he said unto him, Belzabub what hast thou done for us? Belzabub answered and said, Sir I have caused debate and strife to fall betweene brother and brother, insomuch the one hath slaine the other : that is well done said the maister Devill, thou shalt be well rewarded for thy labour. Then fourth he called another Devill, named Incubus, and demaunded of him what he had done? Sir, said Incubus, I have caused great debate and strife to fall between two lords, through the which they have had great warres, and many men have beene slaine : then said the maister Devill, thou art a true servant to us, thou shalt be well rewarded for thy great labour and paine. Then said the great maister unto another Devill named Norpell, what hast thou done for us? Sir, said Norpell, I have beene among players at the dice and cardes, and I have caused them to sweare many great oathes, and the one to flea the other : and also I have

caused debate and strife to fall betweene man and wife, and caused the wife to cut her husband's throat: that was well done said the master, thou shalt be well rewarded for thy labour. Then fourth came another Devill named Downesnest, and said, Sir, I have caused two olde women to fight so sore together, and to beat each other about the head, that their eyes flew out: that was well done said the master Devill, with much thanke thou shalt be well rewarded for thy labour. Then fourth went Frier Rush freshly, and with a good courage, and said: Sir, I am in a religious place, and I governe the priour and his covent as I will myselfe, and they have me in great love and favour; for I doe them many great pleasures, and I have brought them faire wenches every man one when they lust, and divers times I have caused debate and strife to fall among them, and I have made them staves, and caused them to fight stiffly together, and to breake each others heads, and their armes and legges, and yet will I doe more among them ere I depart out of the place, for I shall make so great debate and strife among them, and the one shall flea the other, then they shall come and dwell with us in hell, and burne in perpetuall fire without end. Then said the maister Devill to Rush, if thou have done as thou hast said, thou hast done well thy part, and I pray thee be diligent thy selfe about thy businesse, and stirre them to sin, and specially to these three, that is to say, wrath, gluttony, and lechery, and briefly to make an end of thy enterprise, and slip it not: and

when thou hast done, come home, and thou shalt be highly exalted and well rewarded for thy great labour and paine. When Rush had tolde his tale, the great maister Devill commanded every Devill to goe his way and doe the best he could, and thus they departed, some went one way and some another, and thus they were scattered abroad in the world, to finish and make an end of their enterprises that they had taken in hand. And when the poore husbandman which sate in the tree, sawe that all the Devills were departed and gone, he reioyced in his heart and was right glad thereof, for as long as they were there, hee was ever in great feare and dread, and hee was afraid that they should have seene him there, and ever he prayed unto almighty God to be his guard, and save him from that foule and evill favoured company of Devils, and to send him the light of the day that he were gone out of that place, for hee was weary that hee aboade there so long, and oftentimes he looked up, to see if hee could perceive any light of the day whereby he might see to depart thence, for till then he durst not once stirre out of that place, for he feared that they had beene there still. Then within a while after, the day began to appeare, and when hee perceived that, anon he started up and looked round about him abroade in the fields, and when he perceived that there was nobody stirring he thanked almighty God, that he was so preserved out of that great icopardy, and so departed.

How the Farmer which lay in the Tree came unto the Priour on the morowe after, and tolde him the wordes that hee had heard, and the words of Frier Rush, and that he was a very Devill.

As soone as the day began to appeare the poore Farmer arose out of the tree, and tooke his way streight to the Priour, and he would never rest till he had spoken with him; and when he was come to his speech, anon he saide: Sir, this night hath fortun'd to me a great adventure: how so saide the Priour? sir, yesternight late in the evening, I walked forth in the fieldes to seeke a cowe which I have missed this foure or five dayes, and so long I wandered abroad, till at the last I founde the one halfe of my cowe, but the other halfe was gone; and as I woulde have returned home againe, I was benighted, so sore that I lost my waye: then I wist not whether to goe, but spying a hollowe tree, I sate me downe, thinking there to take my rest till the day appered againe: and I had not sitten there but a while, but instantly there was assembled a great company of Devills, which made a marvailous great noise, whereof I was sore afrayd. They had among them a great master named Lucifer, who called all the rest to make a reckoning of all their service they had done since they departed out of hell: there I heard many marveilous tales. At the last, fourth came Frier Rush, then saide the great master Lucifer unto him, Rush, what hast thou done since thou departed out of hell? and he answered, that

he had ruled you, and all your covent, and caused you, to chide and fight, and were never in unitie and peace among your selves: and he said he had caused you to live viciously, and yet he saide he would doe more ere he departed out of this place, for he will cause you to kill each other, and then you should be damned in hell, both bodie and soule. And so everie Devill departed and went about their busines. Wherefore take heede, for he is a verie Devill. And when the Priour had heard the wordes of the Farmer, he thanked him for his labor and so they departed, the Farmer went home to his house, but the Priour was marveilously abashed at the words of the Farmer, and went into his chamber and was much grieved in his harte that he had so leudly misordered himselfe against his Lord God, and with great contrition he kneeled downe upon his knees, and asked almighty God mercie, and forgiveness for the great and greevous offences that he had committed and done against him, and that he had so vildly misused the order of his religion. And when he had thus done, he departed out of his chamber and went into the cloister, and caused all his brethren to come together, and when they were all assembled, the Priour told them cverie worde as the husbandman had told him, and that Rush was a verie Devill, and no earthly creature; at the which they were sore astonished, and were right sorry in their hartes, that they had followed him so much in his minde, and done after his counsaile, and were heavy in their heartes for their great and abhominable sinnes that

they had committed and done, and with great contrition they kneeled downe upon their knees, and desired almighty God for grace and pardon. Then the Priour caused every man to fall to contemplation and praier. Then fourth they went and did the Priours commaundement, and briefly made them ready, and went to prayer all at once. And when they were come to the middest of their service, the Priour departed out of the church and went to the kitchin, wherin he found Rush who was there verie busy ; then the Priour commaunded him to stand still, and by vertue of almightie God and of all the companie of heaven, he coniured Rush into the likenes of a horse, and commaunded him to goe and stand at the gate in the same place that he stood in when he came thether first, and to stand there till service was done : so fourth went Rush in the likenes of a horse, and stood at the gate as the Priour had commaunded him. And when service was done, the Priour and his brethren went to the gate to see what case Rush was in ; and when they were come thether they found him standing in the likenes of a horse. Then they demaunded him to what entent he came into their place, and why he taried there so long ? Syrs said Rush, I came hither to cause you to do all mischife as is afore-said, and yet I would have done more ere I had gone hence ; for I would have caused you to slaye other, and to be damned both bodie and soule. And when they had heard the words of Rush, every man held up his hands and thanked almighty God, that they had so well

escaped that great misfortune. Then Rush desired the Priour licence to depart thence, and promised that he would never more come there, nor doe any man more hurt; upon that condition the Priour gave him leave to depart. Thus Rush departed from the place, and the Friers went to their cloyster, and lived there solitarie and chast ever after, and served almightie God better than ever they did before.

The Lamentation that Rush made when hee was departed out of the house of Religion.

WHEN Rush was banished out of the house of Religion, and was turned into the same likenesse that he was, then he wandred abroad in the worlde with an heaue heart, and these words he said: Alas, alas, what shall I doe, I wote not now whether to goe, for all my seven yeres labour is lost. And as he wandred about, by fortune he met with his master Lucifer, but he would not have seene him by his will: nevertheles his maister espied him quickly, and said to him Rush what tydings with thee? Sir said Rush, I have lost all my labour that I have gone about this vii. years. How so, saide his Maister? Sir, I shall shew you said Rush. The last time that we were assembled together, there was a poore man lay in an old tree hard beside us, and he heard all that we said: and when we were departed, he arose and went unto the Priour and shewed him all that we saide, and specially the wordes that I had spoken, and so all my labour is lost, and I am banished that place.

Well, said the master Divell to Rush, thou shalt goe some other way abrode, and looke if thou canst finde any thing to doe: Then Rush walked about in the country, and long it was ere he could get any service: At last he fortun'd to come unto a husbandmans house which lacked a servant, where he was entertained, but sore against the wifes consent. For this husbandmans wife was a very faire woman, and she loved well the parish Priest, and he loved her againe, in so much that often times they made good cheere and banketted together, and so continued and kept company together a long time. Their meeting was so privie and so secrete, that it was never knowen, and they sure enough of the good man, for he was accustomed everie morning to rise early and to goe farre into the field, and because his wife would prevent his comming home to dinner, she would alwaies give him his victailes in a bagg with him, and a bottell full of drinke, to the intent he should tarie in the feeldes from morning to night: she would not suffer him to keepe a servant or to have any manner of helpe: for she was afraide that if they should have a servant, her secretes should be knowen, and the goodman also feared that if he should take a servant, that he would have but little lust to tarrie there: for the Devill himselfe could not endure the chiding and brawling of that woman: by which meanes she kept her husband without a servant a long time: for she knew well, that as long as her husband was in the feeld, the Priest and she might have their meeting, but at length she was deceived.

How Rush came to a Husbandman (labouring in the Field) and desired to bee entertained into his service.

RUSH travailing up and down, came to a Husbandman who was labouring in the field, being all alone, and spake these wordes unto him ; Rest you merie sir, me thinks you take great paines to worke so sore your selfe: will it please you to entertaine a servant ? I am a poore young man and am out of service, and I am very willing to serve you if you please : and I trust to doo you such service, as shall be to your good content ; The husbandman answered him, and saide ; young man, I would gladly give you entertainment, but my wife will never be pleased with any servant that shall come into my house: Sir said Rush let me alone, for I shall so worke the matter, that my dame shall be well pleased with me : well said the husbandman, tarry with me till I have done my busines, and thou shalt goe home with me: when he had finished his dayes worke, Rush went home with him, they were no sooner come into the house, but the wife espying Rush, she began to gloome and to looke mervailous angerly at him : which the good man perceiving, he said unto her, dame, I pray thee to be contented, thou knowest well inough that I have more labour to doe, then I am able to make an end of alone, and therefore I have hyred this young man to help me : when his wife heard those wordes, she was more angry then before, and began to braule and scolde as if the Devill had bene in her, and said unto him :

what a vengeance needest thou to take a servaut? thou art able inough thy selfe to doe all the busines that we have to doe, and why should we take more charge upon us then we are able to beare? but I now perceiue thou art given to lazines, and hast little minde to work thy selfe: when the good man heard her so highly displeased, he said, dame, I pray thee be contented, the young man is honest, and he hath promised me to be a good seruant; yet for all these speeches she would not be pacified, but brawled still: when Rush perceived her great impaciencie, he said unto her, dame I pray you be contented, and be not angry with me, for you shall have no cause, my master hath hyred me but for a while, upon a tryall, and I trust, in that time, so to behave myselfe, as to give you both content; and when my time commeth out, if you like my service you shall have it before any other whatsoever; if not, I will be very well content to depart. When the wife heard Rush speake so resonably, she pacified her selfe, and said no more; which caused the good man to be very glad, and so she set them to supper, and as they sate at meate, Rush demanded of his master what he should doe the next day? his master answered, thou must rise early and goe to the field, and make an end of that which I was about this day; (which was a great dayes worke) so when they had supt they went to bed. Early in the morning Rush arose and went to the field, and wrought so lustily, that he had done his worke betimes; for when his master came to bring him his breakfast, all his worke was finished,

whereat his master had great marvaile ; then they sate downe to breakfast, which being ended they went home, and did such thinges as were there to bee done ; when his dame sawe that he had so soone ended his busines, she thought that he was a profitable servant, and said little but let him alone. In the evening Rush demaunded of his master what hee should doe the next morrow ? his master appointed him twice so much as hee did the day before, which Rush refused not. but got up earely in the morning, and went to the field, and about his worke ; so soone as his master was ready, he tooke his man's breakfast and came to the field, thinking to helpe Rush ; (but he was no sooner come from his house but the Priest came to see his wife, and presently shee made ready some good meate for them to be merry withall, and whyle it was a dressing, they sate sporting together, who had beene there should have seene many loving touches.) And when the goodman came to the field, he found that Rush had done all that which he appointed, whereof he had great marvaile ; then they sate downe to breakfast, and as they sate together, Rush beheld his master's shoone, and perceived that for fault of greasing they were very hard : then said Rush to his master, why are not your shooes better greased ? I marvaile that you can goe in them, they be so hard, have you no more at home ? Yes, said his master, I have another payre lying under a great chest at home in my chamber. Then said Rush I will goe home and grease them that you may put them on to-morrow ; and

so he walked homeward merrily and sung by the way. And when he approached neare the house he sang out very loude; with that his dame looked out at the window, and perceived that it was her servant, shee said unto the Priest, alas, what shall we doe? our servant is come home, and my husband will not be long after, and with that she thrust the meate into the oven, and all that was upon the table. Where shall I hyde me said the Priest? . Goe into the chamber, and creepe under the great chest among the olde shoone, and I shall cover you, and so he did. And when Rush was come into the house his dame asked him why he came home so soone? Rush answered and said, I have done all my busines, and my master commaunded me to come home and grease his shoone. Then he went into the chamber and looked under the chest, and there hee found the Priest, and he tooke him by the heeles and drew him out, and said, thou whoreson Priest, what doost thou heere? With that, the Priest held up his hands and cryed him mercy, and desired him to save his honesty; and hee would never more come there; and so Rush let him goe for that once.

How Rush came home to make cleane the stable, and how hee found the Priest under the maunger covered with straw.

WITHIN a while after this foresaid Priest began to wax warme, and thought once againe to adventure himselfe and goe to the husbandman's house. When he

perceived that the goodman and Rush his servant was in the field a labouring, hee went with all speed to the house, and when he was entered, the wife said he was welcome, and made ready a good dish of meate, and set it on the table before the Priest, then shee drew drinke and sate downe beside him ; who had beene there should have seene many wanton toyes between them two, and they had not sitten there long, but anon Rush came singing homeward, and when she espyed him she was abashed and wist not what to doe but thrust the meate into the oven as she did before. Then said the Priest where shall I hyde me ? come with me, said the wife, into the stable, and creepe under the maunger, and I shall cover you with straw, and tary there till he be gone againe, and then she turned againe into the house where she found Rush her servant, and anon she demaunded of him why he came home so soone ? Rush answered, that he had done all his busines, and he was come to make cleane the stable, and when the wife heard that, shee was sorry in her heart, for she doubted that he would finde the Priest againe. Then fourth went Rush into the stable, and tooke a great forke in his hand and began to shake up the straw : and when he came to the heape that the Priest lay in, the which seemed to him very great, yet neverthesse with his forke he took all up at once and bare it out of the doore, and laide it on a great heape of mucke that lay there, and with his forke he shaked the straw abroad, and when hee had shaken out a little, anon he was aware of

the Priest's gowne : then hee said, what a devill art thou ? and with his forke he turned the heape, and then hee perceived that the Priest was come againe : then with his forke he gave him three or foure good dry stripes and said, whoreson Priest, what dost thou heere ? thou promised me the last day never more to come heere, and now I see thou art a false Priest, but now I shall make an end of thee, and then shalt thou never deceive me more. And when the Priest heard him say so, he fell upon his knees and held up his hands, and prayed Rush to save his honour once againe and he would never come there more, and if he did then to doe with him what he would.

Thus Rush let the Priest goe the second time.

How Rush came home and found the Priest in the cheese-basket, and how hee trayled him about the towne.

THEN within a fortnight or three weekes after the Priest thought he was long absent from the husbandman's wife. And though it should cost him his life yet would he goe thither once again : and on a day he perceiving the goodman was gone to the field, he tooke his waye unto the house, and was so hasty, that as soone as he was entred into the house, hee caught the wife and would have imbraced her, but shee quickly got from him againe, and went and prepared good cheare for him, as shee was wont to doe ; for they thought themselves sure enough for the time, but yet they were deceived :

For when the goodman was come to the field, Rush had done all his business, then they sate downe, and brake their fast with bread and cheese: and as they sate eating, Rush spyed a hayre in the cheese, and then he said to his master, I trow my dame would poyson us, or else she washeth not the basket that the cheese lyeth in, behold it is all full of haire, I will goe home and wash the basket and make it clean: so leaving his master in the field and walking homeward, he sung merrily all the way. And when he approached neare the house, the wife knew his voyce and perceived that he was comming. Then wringing her hands she said unto the Priest, goe hyde you, or else you be but dead. Where shall I hyde me said the priest? Goe up into the chamber and leape into the basket that hangeth out at the window, and I shall call you when he is gone againe. Then anon in came Rush and she asked him why he came home so soone? then said Rush, I have done all my busines in the field, and my master hath sent me home to wash your cheese-basket, for it is full of haire, and so he went into the chamber, and with his knife he cut the rope that the basket hung by, and downe fell Priest and all into a great poole of water that was under the window: then went he into the stable for a horse and rode into the poole, and tooke the rope that hung at the basket, and tying it to the horses tayle, rode through the poole three or four times. Then he rode through the towne to cause the people to wonder at him, and so came home againe. And all this while he made as though he had

knowne nothing, but looking behinde him, espyed the Priest. Then he alighted downe, and said unto him : Thou shalt never more escape me, thy life is lost. With that, the Priest held up his hands and said, heere is a hundred peeces of gold, take them and let me goe. So Rush tooke the golde and let the Priest goe. And when his master came home, he gave him the halfe of his money, and bad him farewell, for he would goe see the world.

How Rush became servant to a Gentleman, and how the Devill was coniured out of the body of the Gentleman's daughter.

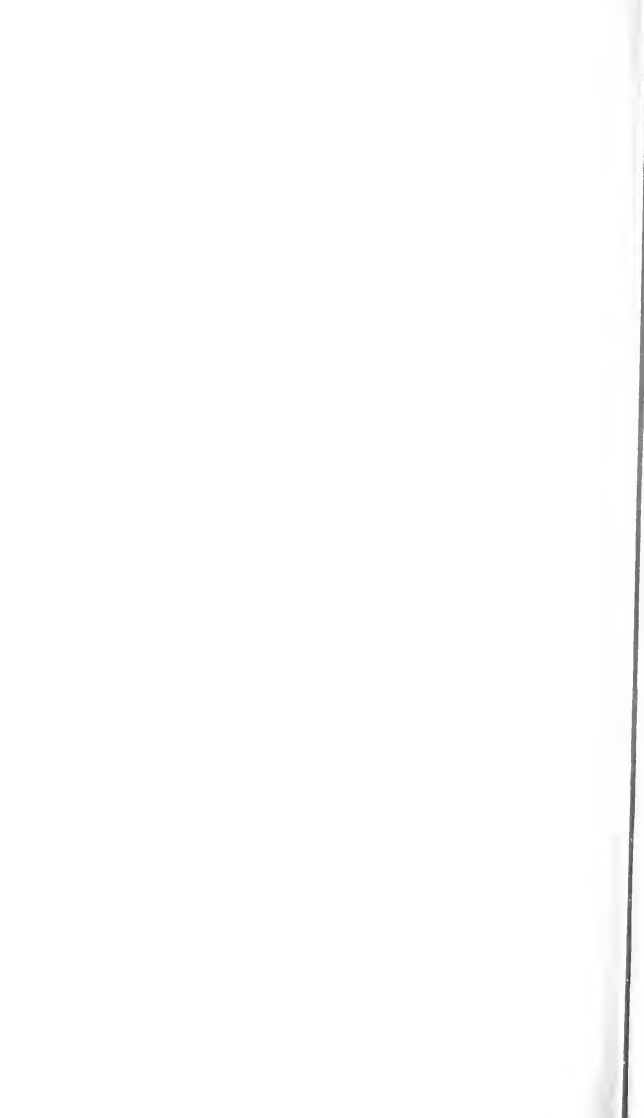
WHEN Rush was departed from the husbandman, he went abroad in the countrey, to looke if he could find any more adventures : and so long he travailed about, that at last he espyed a Gentleman's place, unto the which he tooke his way. And when he was come thither, as chance was, he found the gentleman walking up and down before his gate. And when Rush was approached neare unto him, he put off his bonet and saluted him saying : Rest you merry good Gentleman : Welcome said he : Sir, said Rush, I am a poore young man and am out of service, and faine would I have a good master. What countryman art thou said the Gentleman and from whence comest thou ? Sir, said Rush, I was borne farre hence and many a myle have I gone to seeke a good service, but none can I find. What canst thou doe said the Gentleman, and what is thy name ? Sir said Rush, I can doe any manner of thing that shall please

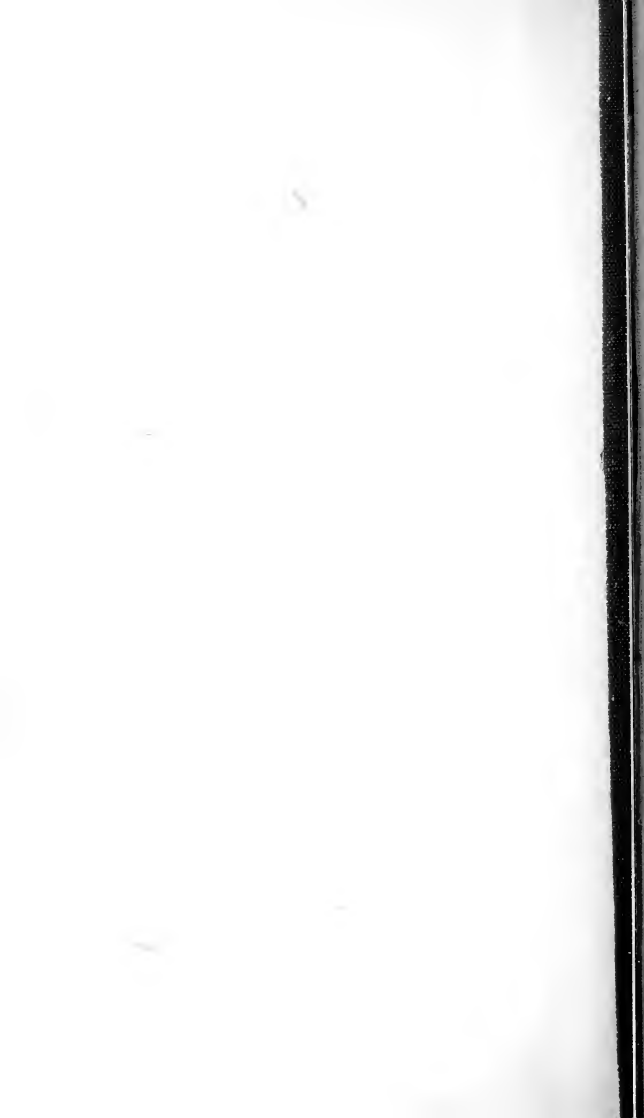
you to set me unto, and Rush is my name. Then said the Gentleman unto him: Rush tarry heere with me, and I will retaine thee into my service. When Rush heard the Gentleman speake so, hee thanked him much and tarryed there. Then as the Gentleman and Rush went talking together, the Gentleman said unto him: Rush thou hast travailed farre and gone through many strange countries: canst thou shew me where to finde any man, can coniure a spirit out of a woman's body? Sir, said Rush, why aske you me that question? I shall shew thee, said the Gentleman, I have a daughter which is a faire young woman, but she is sore troubled in her minde, and as I suppose shee hath some Divell within her body. Sir, said Rush, I pray you let me see her, and I trust speedily to finde remedy for her. Then the Gentleman brought Rush into the place and shewed him his daughter. And when he saw her he knew what she had within her body: Anon he said unto the Gentleman, sir there is remedy enough for this. Well said the Gentleman, if thou canst finde me any that can helpe her thereof, I will reward him well for his labour, and thee also. Sir, I will shew you what is to be done, there is a place of religion a forty or fifty miles hence, wherein I was a servant a long time, and the Priour is a cunning man in that science: and I doubt not, but if he were heere even now she should be holpen within this houre. When the Gentleman heard the words of Rush, he rejoyced in his heart and was full glad of that good tydings. And on the morrow after, the Gentleman sent his servant

with his letters unto that house of religion, desiring the Priour to come and speake with him. When the Priour had read the Gentleman's letters, and knew for what cause he was sent for, he made him ready to ride with the messenger. Then forth they rode, and the next day they arrived at the Gentleman's place. When the Gentleman understood that the Priour was come, he was glad and went to the gate, and with great reverence he received the Priour, and brought him into his place. Then the Gentleman commanded his servant to fill a cup of Wine, that the Priour and he might drinke together. And when they had drunke and refreshed themselves well, they walked forth into a faire garden, and then they commoned together of many things, and when they had finished all their communications, the Gentleman said unto the Priour: Sir, the cause that you be come hither is this. It is so, that I have a young Gentlewoman to my daughter which is grievously vexed and troubled in her minde, and as I suppose she hath some wicked spirit in her body, and sir, it was shewed me by a servant of mine which was long servant in your place, that you could helpe her. Sir said the Priour what is his name? The Gentleman said his name is Rush. And when the Priour heard his name hee knew him well enough, and said unto the Gentleman, sir cause the gentlewoman to come before me and I trust in Almighty God, shortly to finde a remedy for her, and when the Gentleman heard the Priour speake so, he was glad in his heart, and commanded in all hast to bring forth

his daughter before the Priour : and when she was come into his presence, he commanded her to kneele downe upon her knees, and also he commanded her father and her mother, and all the company that were there present, in likewise to kneele upon their knees, and pray unto almighty God for the young Gentlewoman. And then he himselfe said certaine prayers over her : then he lifted up his hand and blessed her, and incontinent there flew a great Devill out of her mouth. And the Priour bound the Devill so, that never after he came there. Thus was the young Gentlewoman restored to her right minde and health againe. Then the Gentleman would have given to the Priour a great summe of money for his labour, but he would take none, but said unto the Gentleman : Sir, I have a new church in building, and I lacke lead to cover the rooffe : and as it is informed me, this is a plentifull countrey thereof. Wherefore sir, if it will please you to give me asmuch as shall serve me : I and my brethern shall bee your dayly beadsmen, and you shall be prayed for as long as the world endureth. Yee shall have as much as shall serve you, said the Gentleman : But how will you doe for the carriage? Well inough said the Priour. Then the Gentleman brought him to a great heape of lead, and bad him take asmuch as would serve him. Presently the Priour called foorth Rush and commanded him to take on his necke so much lead as would cover his church, and bear it home, and come againe quickly. So Rush tooke the lead on his necke at once and carryed it home, and he was there

again within halfe an houre. Then the Priour tooke his leave of the Gentleman and departed, commaunding Rush to bring him home also. Then Rush tooke him on his necke, and within one quarter of an houre he was at home. Then the Priour coniured Rush again into his owne likenesse, and commaunded him to goe into an olde castle that stood farre within the forrest, and never more to come out, but to remaine there for ever. From which Devill and all other Devills, defend us good Lord.
Amen.





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T53 2d ed., enl.
1858
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