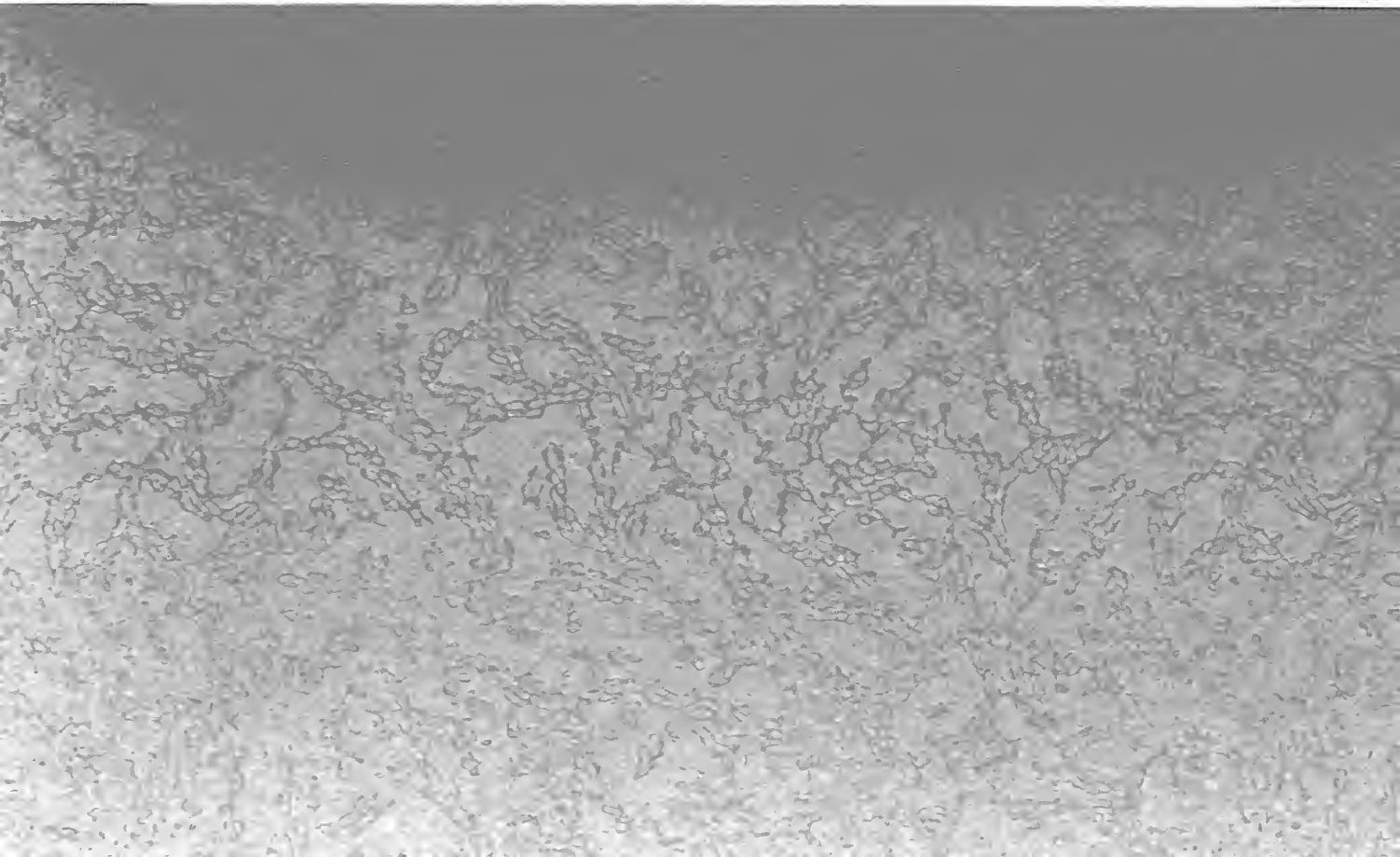

ENGLISH HISTORY IN CONTEMPORARY POETRY

No. III

THE TUDOR MONARCHY

1485 TO 1588

BY

E. L. FRAZER, M.A.

LONDON

PUBLISHED FOR THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION BY

G. BELL AND SONS, LTD.

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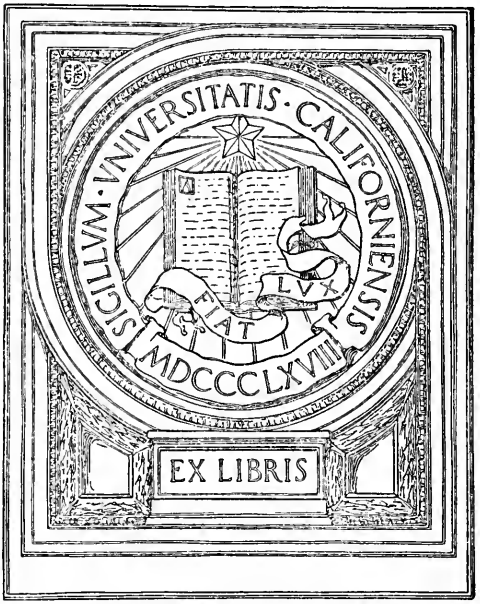

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THE TUDOR MONARCHY

THE accession of the house of Tudor[1] is celebrated with some felicity by Stephen Hawes, the "Spenser before Spenser," who was one of the Grooms of the Chamber of Henry VII. His *Example of Virtue*[2] was written about 1503, and to it is attached an epilogue or dedication to the King. Lady Margaret, the King's mother, was one of the greatest patrons of learning of her time, and the poet gives us a pleasant picture of her interest in her son's career:

"This flower was kept right long in close,
Among the leaves wholesome and soot,
And regally sprang and arose
Out of the noble stock and root
Of the Red Rose tree, to be our boot
After our bale, sent by great grace
On us to reign by right long space.

"O Lord God! what joy was this
Unto his mother so good and gracious,
When that she saw her son iwis
Of his enemies to be so victorious!
It causèd her to be most joyous!
And yet thereof no wonder why;
For he was right long from her truly.

* * * * *

[1] For analysis of ballads bearing on the accession of Henry VII. *cf.* Professor Firth's *Ballad History of the Reigns of Henry VII. and Henry VIII.*, reprinted from Trans. R. Hist. S., 3rd Ser., vol. ii.

[2] Arber: *Dunbar Anthology*, p. 217.

"Thus God, by grace, did well combine
The Red Rose and the White in marriage.
Being oned right clear doth shine
In all clearness and virtuous courage;
Of whose right and loyal lineage,
Prince Henry is sprung, our King to be,
After his father, by right good equity."

Almost at the same moment as Hawes was writing this loyal dedication, another poet, William Dunbar, was celebrating the marriage between the Princess Margaret and James IV. of Scotland, which was eventually to make the Stuarts Kings of Great Britain. Dunbar has been described[1] as "on the whole the most considerable poet of our land between Chaucer and Spenser," and his marriage song, which he called *The Thistle and The Rose*, as "perhaps the happiest political allegory in our language"; so we may well quote enough to show the national enthusiasm which the event evidently inspired in a Scottish politician of some experience.[2] The poet is awakened by "fresh May," and bidden write something in her honour; she leads him into a "lusty garden gent," where Dame Nature brings before them every bird and beast and flower to do reverence to May, "their maker." The beasts and birds pass in review—"heraldry has never been more skilfully handled"—and

"Then called she all flowers that grow on field,
Discerning all their fashions and effeirs [bearings].
Upon the awful Thistle she beheld,
And saw him kept with a bush of spears:
Considering him so able for the wars,
A radiant crown of rubies she him gave,
And said, 'In field go forth, and 'fend the lave!

"'And sen thou art a king, thou be discreet!
Herb without virtue thou hold not of such price
As herb of virtue and of odour sweet!
And let no nettle vile, and full of vice,
Her fellow to the goodly Fleur de Lis!
Nor let no wild weed, full of churlishness,
Compare her till the Lily's nobleness!

[1] J. Nichol in *Ward's English Poets.*
[2] Part of Dunbar's poem on London has been quoted at the end of the preceding leaflet in the present series.

"'Nor hold none other flower in such dainty
As the fresh Rose, of colour red and white!
For if thou dost, hurt is thine honesty!
Consid'ring that no flower is so perfite,
So full of virtue, pleasance and delight!
So full of blissful angelic beauty,
Imperial birth, honour and dignity.'

"Then to the Rose she turned her visage,
And said, 'O lusty Daughter! most benign,
Above the Lily, illustrious of lineage,
From the stock royal rising fresh and ying,
But [*without*] any spot or macule doing spring:
Come, Bloom of Joy! with gems to be crowned;
For, o'er the lave, thy beauty is renowned.'"

* * * * *

Thereupon May crowns the Rose, who is acclaimed by all the flowers; the birds, too, join in the chorus:

"O, blessed be the hour,
That thou wast chosen to be our Principal!"

Curiously little of the politics of Henry VII.'s reign stands recorded in the verse of his time; but John Skelton, the tutor of Prince Henry, and afterwards Laureate, has left us an interesting poem on the death of the Earl of Northumberland, who lost his life in a popular rising in Yorkshire against the taxation levied by the Government for carrying on the war in Brittany (April, 1489):

"The commons refused their taxes to pay,
Of them demanded and asked by the King;
With one voice importune they plainly said nay;
They hied them on a bushment, themselves in baile [trouble] to bring,
Against the King's pleasure to wrestle or to wring;
Bluntly as beasts with boast and with cry
They said they regarded not, nor cared not to die.

"The nobleness of the north, this valiant lord and knight,
As man that was innocent of treachery or train,
Pressed forth boldly to withstand the might,
And, like martial Hector, he fought them again,
Vigorously upon them with might and with main,
Trusting in noble men that were with him there;
But all they fled from him for falsehood or fear."[1]

* * * * *

[1] Dyce's *Skelton*, i. 9; also *Percy Reliques* (Wheatley), i. 117.

The high hopes of the nation at the accession of Henry VIII., and its dissatisfaction with the late reign, found an apt, and perhaps more than conventional, expression in Skelton's *Laud and Praise for our Sovereign Lord the King:*

"In whom doth well accord
Alexis young of age,
Adrastus wise and sage.

* * * * *

"Astraea, Justice hight,
That from the starry sky
Shall now come and do right;
This hundred year scantly
A man could not aspy
That Right dwelt us among,
And that was the more wrong.

"Right shall the foxes chase,
The wolves, the bears also,
That wrought have much care,
And brought England in woe.
They shall worry no more,
Nor root up the Rosary [rose-bush]
By extort treachery.

* * * * *

"Therefore no more they shall
The commons overbace,
That wont were over all
Both lord and knight to face [out-face];
For now the years of grace
And wealth are come again,
That maketh England fain."[1]

As a companion picture to the well-known description of the young King penned by the Venetian Ambassador, the following poem of Henry on himself has more than usual interest:

"Pastime with good company
I love, and shall until I die!
Grudge who lust; but none deny!
So God be pleased, thus live will I!
For my pastance,
Hunt, sing and dance!
My heart is set.
All good sport
For my comfort,
Who shall me let?

[1] Dyce's *Skelton*, i. ix.

"Youth must have some dalliance!
Of good, or ill, some pastance!
Company, methinks, then best,
All thoughts and fancies to digest!
For idleness
Is chief mistress
Of vices all
Then who can say,
But mirth and play
Is best for all!

"Company with honesty
Is virtue, vice to flee!
Company is good and ill;
But every man hath his free will!
The best ensue!
The worst eschew!
My mind shall be
Virtue to use,
Vice to refuse!
Thus shall I use me!"[1]

Early in the new reign came the war with Scotland,[2] and here the Poet Laureate found a congenial subject for his virulent pen. He has several poems on the Scottish defeats, and his invective revolted even some of his own countrymen. We quote here from his *Ballad of the Scottish King*,[3] which was evidently written before authentic details, such as the death of James IV., came to hand, and had to be altered in a later poem:

"King Jamy, Jomy your joy is all go;
Ye summoned our King. Why did ye so?
To you nothing it did accord
To summon our King your sovereign lord.
* * * * *
For to the castle of Norham
I understand too soon ye came.
For a prisoner there now ye be
Either to the devil or the Trinity.
* * * * *
Of the King of Navarre ye may take heed,
How unfortunately he doth now speed,
In double walls now he doth dreme.

[1] Arber: *Surrey and Wyatt Anthology*, p. 108.
[2] For the ballad history of Flodden, *cf.* Firth, *op. cit.*, p. 27. *Vide ibid.*, for discussion on the ballad of *Andrew Barton*, and its value as an illustration of naval tactics and the use of archery.
[3] Published in facsimile by J. Ashton, 1882.

That is a King without a realm;
Of him example ye would none take.
Experience hath brought you in the same brake.

* * * * *

It is not fitting in tower nor town,
A summoner to wear a king's crown.
That noble earl the White Lion [1]
Your pomp and pride hath laid adown;
His son the lord admiral is full good;
His sword hath bathed in the Scottes blood.
God save King Henry and his lordes all
And send the French King such another fall!"

As was to be expected, by far the greater part of the contemporary poetry of this time—so far as it is political at all—is concerned with the Reformation movement. The stage especially, notably through the morality play, gave the Reformers a splendid opportunity for spreading their views among the populace, although the school plays, then so frequent, and written usually in Latin, would not at first be on the side of the new ideas. At the end of Henry VIII.'s reign the Government forbad reference to ecclesiastical controversy on the stage; but the respite was brief, for under Edward VI. the Protestant party made the most of their supremacy. Elizabeth ollowed her father's example of prohibiting stage reference to ecclesiastical or political controversy.[2]

Apart from the drama, we have a great body of contemporary poetry bearing upon the events and personages of the Reformation.[3] In the opening years Wolsey is the central figure, and it is astonishing to read the scarcely veiled attacks made upon him.[4] The ball is opened by the Laureate himself in his *Colin Clout*. After some three hundred lines of denunciation of the evils rife among the clergy, the poet proceeds:

[1] Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey.

[2] For the bearing of the drama upon the Reformation movement, *cf. Cambridge History of English Literature*, v. 58, 59.

[3] For the connection between the ballad singers and the Reformers, *cf.* Firth, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

[4] However, towards the end of *Colin Clout*, Skelton refers to obstacles put in the way of publishing the poem, and the Cardinal bought up all the copies of *Rede Me and be not Wrothe* that he could find. For references to Wolsey by the ballad-makers as opposed to the professional satirists, *cf.* Firth, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

"Thus I, Colin Clout,
As I go about,
And wandering as I walk,
I hear the people talk.
Men say, for silver and gold
Mitres are bought and sold;
There shall no learning procure
A mitre nor a crosier,
But a full purse.
A straw for God's curse!
What are they the worse?
* * * *
And no more ye make
Of simony, men say,
But a child's play."

The people say, too, that the Pope may make a Bishop of an anchorite, who immediately blossoms out into every kind of luxury and extravagance:

"Their mules gold do eat,
Their neighbours die for meat,
What care they though Gill sweat,
Or Jack of the Nook?
The poor people they yoke
With sermons and citations
And excommunications,
About churches and market,
The bishop on his carpet
At home full soft doth sit."

The inevitable results of this are told at some length; heresy for example, flourishes:

"And some have a smack
Of Luther's sack,
And a burning spark
Of Luther's work,
And are somewhat suspect
In Luther's sect;
And some of them bark,
Clatter and carp
Of that heresy art
Called Wiclevista,
The devilish dogmatista;
And some be Hussians,
And some be Arians,
And some be Pelegians."

And as a consequence the poet can only exclaim, evidently with Wolsey in mind:

" . . . where the prelates be
Come of low degree,
And set in majesty
And spirituall dignity,
Farewell simplicity
Farewell humility,
Farewell good charity!"

The personal application is still more strongly marked in what follows:

"Ye are so puffed with pride,
That no man may abide
Your high and lordly looks:
Ye throw up then your books
And virtue is forgotten;
For then ye will be wroken
Of every light quarrel,
And call a lord a javel;
A knight, a knave ye make;
And upon you ye take
To rule both King and Kaiser,
And if ye may have leisure,
Ye will bring all to nought,
And that is all your thought:
For the lords temporal,
Their rule is very small,
Almost nothing at all.
Men say how ye appall [make pale]
The noble blood royal:
In earnest and in game,
Ye are the less to blame;
For lords of noble blood,
If they well understood
How knowledge might them advance,
They would pipe you another dance;
But noblemen born
To learn they have scorn,
But hunt and blow an horn,
Leap over lakes and dykes,
Setting nothing by politics.
Therefore ye keep them base,
And mock them to their face."

But when men see great lords scraping in this way, they remember that fortune is a fickle jade, after all, and that sometimes "honour hath a great fall."

Skelton then indulges in some biting sarcasms on the friars and their cadging ways; but towards the end of his poem he returns to Wolsey and the fickleness of fortune:

"It is a busy thing
For one man to rule a King
Alone and make reckoning,
To govern over all
And rule a realm royal
By one man's very wit;
Fortune may chance to flit,
And when he thinketh to sit,
Yet may he miss the cushion!" [1]

But the denunciation of *Colin Clout* is mild compared with the scathing satire of *Why Come Ye Not to Court*, written by Skelton about the end of 1522, but not published till after the deaths of both Skelton and Wolsey. After a hundred lines of lamentation over the general shortcomings of the time, and especially the disregard of thrift—

"For truly to express,
There hath been much excess,
With banqueting brainless,
With rioting reckless . . .
Treating of truce restless,
Prating for peace peaceless;
The countering at Calais
Wrang us on the males" [wallet]—

the poet proceeds to point out that

"There is no man but one
That hath the strokes alone;
Be it black or white,
All that he doth is right,
As right as a crooked stick.
* * * *
Twit, Andrew, twit, Scot,
Go home, go scour thy pot;
For we have spent our shot:
We shall have a *tot quot*
From the Pope of Rome;
To weave all in one loom
A webb of *linsey-woolsey*,
Opus male dulce:

[1] Dyce's *Skelton*, i. 311 *et seq.*

Our army waxeth dull,
With, 'Turn all home again,'
And never a Scot slain.
Yet the good Earl of Surrey,
The Frenchmen he doth fray
And vexeth them day by day
With all the power he may.[1]

* * * *

But yet they overshoot us
With crowns or with scutis [écus];
With scutis and crowns of gold
I dread we are bought and sold;
They shoot all at one mark,
At the Cardinal's hat;
They shoot all at that;
Out of their strong towns
They shoot at him with crowns;
With crowns of gold emblazed
They make him so amazed,
And his eyes so dazed
That he ne see can
To know God nor man.
He is set so high . . .
That in the Chamber of Stars
All matters there he mars;
Clapping his rod on the board,
No man dare speak a word,
For he hath all the saying
Without any renaying;
He rolleth in his records,
He saith, 'How say ye, my lords,
Is not my reason good?'
Good even, good Robin Hood![1]
Some say yes, and some
Sit still as they were dumb.
Thus thwarting over them,
He ruleth all the roost
With bragging and with boast."

Meanwhile the country is going from bad to worse, and is exposed to foreign attack:

"What hear ye of Lancashire?
They were not paid their hire;

[1] Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk, commanded the English Army in France in 1522.
[2] "Proverb for civility extorted by fear" (Dyce).

They are fierce as any fire.
What hear ye of Cheshire?
They have laid all in the mire;
They grudged, and said
Their wages were not paid;
Some said they were afraid
Of the Scottish host,
For all their crack and boast.

* * * *

What hear ye of the Scots?
They make us all sots,
Blabbing foolish daws;
They make us to feel straws;
They play us their old pranks,
After Huntly banks.

* * * *

What hear ye of the Lord Dacres?[1]
He maketh us Jack Rakers; . . .
For the Scots and he
Too well they do agree,
With, 'Do thou for me,
And I shall do for thee.'
While the Red Hat doth endure,
He maketh himself cocksure."

* * * *

To make his point, Skelton goes on to slander Lord Roos, afterwards Earl of Rutland, Warden of the East Marches, and the Earl of Northumberland, who was for a time Warden of the Whole Marches. It is all Wolsey's fault, for he rails at all classes:

"Thus royally he doth deal
Under the King's broad seal;
And in the 'Checker he then checks;
In the Star Chamber he nods and becks,
And beareth him there so stout,
That no man dare rout,
Duke, earl, baron, nor lord,
But to his sentence must accord."

Abroad it is the same tale: Burgundy, Spain, and France all show the same feeble policy as that pursued towards Scotland. So

"Once yet again
Of you I would frayne [ask],
Why come ye not to Court?
To which Court?
To the King's Court

[1] Warden of the West Marches.

Or to Hampton Court?
Nay, to the King's Court.
The King's Court
Should have the excellence;
But Hampton Court
Hath the pre-eminence,
And York's Place [Whitehall]
With my lord's grace."[1]

His lowly birth would matter less if he remembered it, for he had nothing to recommend him in the way of learning, being merely "a poore maister of arte"; it is the old proverb of "set a beggar on horseback." After another six hundred lines of invective, public and private, Skelton goes on to denounce Wolsey's violation of sanctuary and his self-appointment as Abbot of St. Albans—all of which high-handed tyranny he carries through by his legatine authority.

It may serve to put our quotations from Skelton in their proper perspective if we quote from the estimate given by Dr. Köbling in the *Cambridge History of Literature:* "All Skelton's poems against Wolsey are full of exaggerations and unjust imputations. Wolsey's statesmanship, his learning, the services he rendered to his country, are grossly underrated; but here again Skelton expresses not only his personal opinion, but that of a large portion of the nation, which hated the omnipotent minister and held him responsible for many things, not all of which could be laid to his charge."[2] And if our quotations here from other writers seem to emphasise quite disproportionately the Protestant side of the Reformation, it is because the Catholics after Skelton's death were represented by writers of less distinction—at any rate, in this poetical direction. Even Barclay in his *Ship of Fools* has sorrowfully to admit, "with wet cheeks by tears thick as hail,"[3] that the evil lives of the clergy were largely to blame for the decay of his "beloved faith."[4]

If Skelton's poem was an attack on Wolsey from the secular side, as Professor Arber points out, *Rede Me and be not Wrothe* was an attack on him from the religious side, and is at the

[1] Dyce's *Skelton*, i. 159 *et seq.*
[2] *Loc. cit.*, iii. 77.
[3] *Ship of Fools*, ii. 193.
[4] For ballads on the Catholic side, *cf.* Firth, *op. cit.*, p. 38, and the references there given to Furnivall's *Ballads from MSS.*

same time one of the most interesting satires on the English clergy and the Cardinal's policy. Its authors were two converted Franciscan friars—William Roy and Jerome Barlow—who had fled from England, and the satire is noteworthy as one of the earliest books printed in English on the Continent (1528). It takes the form of a dialogue between two priests' servants named Watkin and Jeffrey. As in so much other controversial literature of the time, the King is portrayed as an estimable Prince who is misled by his counsellors. The episode of the divorce is commented upon in the most outspoken manner:[1]

WATKIN. Have they not in England a King?
JEFFREY. Alas! man! speak not of that thing!
For it goeth to my very heart.
And I shall shew thee a cause Why?
There is no Prince, under the sky,
That to compare with him is able!
A goodly person he is of stature,
Endued with all gifts of Nature,
And of gentleness incomparable!
In sundry sciences he is seen;
Having a Lady to his Queen,
Example of womanly behaviour.
Notwithstanding, for all this,
By the Cardinal ruled he is,
To the distaining of his honour!
WATKIN. Doth he follow the Cardinal's intent?
JEFFREY. Yea! and that the Commons repent,
With many a weeping tear!
WATKIN. The Cardinal vexeth them then?
JEFFREY. Alas! since England first began,
Was never such a tyrant there! . . .
Insomuch that, for lack of food,
Creatures bought with Christ's blood,
Were fain to die in piteous case!
Also a right noble Prince of fame,
Edward, the Duke of Buckingham,
He caused to die, alas! alas!
The goods that he thus gatherèd,
Wretchedly he hath scatterèd
In causes nothing expedient!
To make windows, walls and doors . . .
A great part thereof is spent!

[1] There are two scurrilous ballads on Wolsey in Furnivall's *Ballads from MSS.*, i. 333 and 340.

WATKIN. Let all this pass! I pray thee heartily;
And shew me somewhat seriously
Of his Spiritual magnificence.
JEFFREY. First he hath a title of Saint Cecile;
And is a Legate *de latere*,
A dignity of high pre-eminence.
He hath Bishoprics two or three,
With the Pope's full authority
In cases of dispensation.

* * * * *

WATKIN. Hath he so large faculty,
Of the Pope's benignity,
As is spoken abroad?
JEFFREY. He standeth in the Pope's room;
Having of his *Bulls* a great sum,
I trow, a whole cartload!
Wherewith, men's purses to discharge,
He extendeth his power more large
Than the power of Almighty God!

* * * * *

He turneth all things topsy-turvy;
Not sparing, for any Simony,
To sell Spiritual gifts!
In grants of consanguinity,
To marry within near[er] degree,
He getteth away men's thrifts!
Of Secular folk, he can make Regular;
And again of Regular, Secular!
Making, as he list, black of white!
Open whoredom and advoutry,
He alloweth to be matrimony!
Though it be never so unright.
Lawful wedlock to divorce,
He giveth very little force;
Knowing no cause wherefore.
He playeth the Devil and his Dame!
All people, reporting the same,
Curse the time that ever he was bore!
WATKIN. It cannot sink in my mind,
That the Cardinal is so blind
To make any such divorcement.
JEFFREY. Though it be not in thy belief,
I tell thee (to put it in preef),
He doth all that he can invent!
WATKIN. Betwixt whom, dost thou ween?
JEFFREY. Betwixt the King and the Queen,
Which have been long of one assent.

WATKIN. Some cause then he hath espied
Which asunder them to divide
Is necessary and urgent.
JEFFREY. Nothing, but the Butcher doth feign
That the good Lady is barren,
Like to be past child-bearing.
WATKIN. Had the King never child by her?
JEFFREY. No man ever saw goodlier
Than those which she forth did bring!
WATKIN. Is there any of them alive!
JEFFREY. Yea! a Princess! whom to descrive,
It were hard for an Orator!
She is but a child of age;
And yet is she both wise and sage,
Of very beautiful favour.
Perfectly she doth represent
The singular graces excellent
Both of father and mother.
Howbeit, all this not regarding,
The Carter of York is meddling
For to divorce them asunder!
WATKIN. Are not the Nobles herewith offended?
JEFFREY. Yes! but it cannot be amended
As long as he is the ruler!
WATKIN. I think the Queen is not faulty;
But had done enough of her party,
If it had pleased God's beneficence.
JEFFREY. None is faulty but the Butcher!
Whom Almighty God doth suffer
To scourge the people's offence.

* * * * *

WATKIN. In these parts it is verified,
That he hath a College edified
Of marvellous foundation. . . .
JEFFREY. Thou mayst perceive, by reason,
That virtue shall be very geason [scarce]
Among a sort of idle losels,
Which have riches infinite!
In wealth and worldly delight,
Given to pleasure, and nothing else!
WATKIN. They read there both Greek and Hebrew!
JEFFREY. I will not say, but it is true
That there, be men of great science:
Howbeit, where pride is the beginning,
The Devil is commonly the ending!
As we see by experience.
And, if thou consider well,
Even as the Tower of Babel

Began of a presumption,
So this College, I dare undertake!
Which the Cardinal doth make,
Shall confound the region!
What is it to see dogs and cats,
Gargoyle heads and Cardinals' hats,
Painted on walls, with much cost;
Which ought, of duty, to be spent
Upon poor people indigent,
For lack of food utterly lost!

The dialogue goes on to state plainly that Wolsey invents wars to get rid of the poor people; besides, he makes a fortune out of war, first by bribes to secure the English alliance, and then by bribes to secure peace. In fact he is a proved traitor. If it were not that "devils with curses are inured," they would be glad to let him out of hell. And then his pomp is intolerable; the account reads like a versified form of Cavendish's well-known description:

JEFFREY. Before him ride two Priests strong,
And they bear two Crosses right long,
Gaping in every man's face.
And then follow two Laymen secular;
And each of them holding a Pillar
In their hands, 'stead of a mace.
Then followeth my Lord, on his mule,
Trapped with gold under her cule,
In every point most curiously.
On each side, a Poleaxe is borne,
Which in none other use is worn;
Pretending some hid mystery.
Then hath he servants five, or six, score;
Some behind, and some before,
A marvellous great company!
Of which are Lords and Gentlemen,
With many grooms and yeomen,
And also knaves among.
Thus, daily he proceedeth forth;
And men must take it at worth,
Whether he do right, or wrong!
A great carl he is, and a fat;
Wearing on his head a Red Hat,
Procured with angels' subsidy:
And (as they say) in time of rain,
Four of his Gentlemen are fain
To hold over it a canopy.

Besides this, to tell thee more news,
He hath a pair of costly shoes;
Which seldom touch any ground,
They are so goodly and curious!
All of gold and stones precious,
Costing many a thousand pound!

WATKIN. And who did for these shoes pay?

JEFFREY. Truly, many a rich Abbey,
To be eased of his Visitation.

WATKIN. Doth he, in his own person, visit?

JEFFREY. No! Another for him doth it,
That can skill of the occupation.
A fellow neither wise nor sad;
But he was never yet full mad,
Though he be frantic and more.
Doctor *Allen*, he is named:
One that to lie is not ashamed,
If he spy advantage therefor.

WATKIN. Are such with him in any price?

JEFFREY. Yea! for they do all his advice,
Whether it be wrong, or right!

WATKIN. Hath the Cardinal any gay mansion?

JEFFREY. Great Palaces without comparison!
Most glorious of outward sight.
And, within, decked *point device;*
More like unto a Paradise
Than an earthly habitation!

WATKIN. He cometh then of some noble stock?

JEFFREY. His father could snatch a bullock!
A Butcher by his occupation.

WATKIN. How came he unto his glory?

JEFFREY. Plainly by the Devil's policy!
As is everywhere said.

WATKIN. Are the States herewithal content?

JEFFREY. If they speak aught, they are shent! [put to shame]
Wherefore, I tell thee, they are afraid.

WATKIN. What abstinence useth he to take?

JEFFREY. In Lent, all fish he doth forsake;
Fed with partridges and plovers.[1] . . .

* * * * *

Such a rising as the Pilgrimage of Grace would be sure to strike the popular imagination, and would naturally find expression in the popular ballad. Such a ballad has been pre-

[1] The quotations in the text are taken from Arber, *Surrey and Wyatt Anthology*, p. 252. The poem is given in full in the Harley *Miscellany*, ix. 1, and Arber's *English Reprints*, No. 28 (1871).

served in the *Treasury of Receipt*, and we quote here the last four stanzas:[1]

"God that rights all
Redress now shall,
And that is thrall,
Again make free,
By this viage
And pilgrimage
Of young and sage
In this country.

"Whom God grant grace!
And for this space,
Of this their trace
Send them good speed,
With wealth, health and speed
Of sin's release
And joy endless
When they be dead.

"Churchmen for ever
So you remember
Both first and later
In your memento
These pilgrims poor,
That take such cure
To stablish sure,
Which did undo

"Crim, cram and rich[2]
With three ell[3] and the liche
As some men teach.
God them amend!
And that ask may
Without delay
Here make a stay
And well to end."

The Pilgrimage of Grace is also the subject of *An Exhortation to the Nobles and Commons of the North*:[4]

"O faithful people of the boreal region,
Chief bellicose champions, by divine providence
Of God the elect, to make Reformation
Of great mischiefs and horrible offence,
Go ye forward valiantly in your peregrination!
It is Christ's pleasure, and to your salvation.

* * * * *

"For us it is better in battle for to die,
And of our mortal life to make a conclusion,
Than heresies extremely to reign with tyranny,
The nobility of the realm brought to confusion;
Christ's Church very like is spoiled to be,
And all abbeys suppressed: it is more pity.

* * * * *

"The authors of all ill to rehearse by name,
Methinks there's no need; many doth them know,
For their cursed counsel God send them much shame,

[1] Communicated to the *English Historical Review*, 1890, p. 344, by Miss Bateson.

[2] Gairdner's note in Calendar State Papers, H. VIII., vol. xi., is "Cromwell, Cranmer, and Rich."

[3] Gairdner suggests Legh, Leighton, and Latimer.

[4] Furnivall, *Ballads from MSS.*, i. 301, who thinks that it was written by a Northerner to Northerners in the autumn of 1536, just before Henry named Commissioners to take over the suppressed monasteries.

Both haughty Cromwell and the chancellors two.[1]
The heretical bishops causeth our desolation,
Christ's curse on them light, small having devotion.

* * * * *

"This cursed Cromwell by his great policy
In this realm hath caused great exaction,
Them highly promoting that set out heresy;
By the aid of the chancellors using exhortation.
Against them all for to fight, I think it convenient,
And not to cease till their lives be spent."

The writer is careful to protest that the pilgrimage is untainted by disloyalty, and concludes by insisting:

"In all our distress, let us not refrain
Diligently for to pray, our King for to save,
And his undoubted wife, Queen Lady Jane.—
And we do offend, pardon we do crave.
God send him long time to reign with equity,
That virtue may abound with gracious plenty."

It is among the ballads, too, that we find other contemporary references to Cromwell.[2] Here is a rather savage song of triumph composed between his arrest and execution, which resulted in an interesting ballad controversy:

"Both man and child are glad to hear tell
Of that false traitor Thomas Cromwell,
Now that he is set to learn to spell.
Sing, troll on away.

"When Fortune looked thee in thy face,
Thou hadst fair time, but thou lack'dst grace;
Thy coffers with gold thou filledst apace.

"Both plate and chalice came to thy fist,
Thou lock'dst them up where no man wist,
Till in the King's treasure such things were missed.

* * * * *

"Thou didst not remember, false heretic,
One God, one Faith, and one King Catholic,
For thou hast been so long a schismatic.

* * * * *

[1] Lord Chancellor Audley and Sir Richard Rich, Chancellor of the Augmentations.

[2] *Cf.* Firth, *op. cit.*, p. 39 *et seq.*, where also there are quotations from ballads of Elizabeth's reign giving the different popular views on the destruction of the monasteries.

"All they that were of the new trick,
Against the Church thou had'st them stick;
Wherefore now thou hast touched the quick.

* * * * *

"Of what generation thou wert no tongue can tell,
Whether of Cain or Ishmael,
Or else sent us from the devil of hell.

* * * * *

"Whosoever did win, thou wouldst not lose;
Wherefore all England doth hate thee, as I suppose,
Because thou wast false to the redolent rose.

"Thou mightest have learned thy cloth to flock
Upon thy greasy fuller's stock;
Wherefore lay down thy head upon this block."[1]

Nor did Sir Thomas More escape the satirist's lash. The author of the *Image of Hypocrisy* devotes the third section of his poem to him and his defence of the clergy:

"But this dawcock doctor
And purgatory proctor
Waketh now for wages,
And, as a man that rages,
Or overcome with age is,
Disputeth *per ambages*,
To help these parasites
And naughty hypocrites,
With legends of lies. . . ."[2]

But, of course, it was not probable that More's fall would make the same sort of popular impression as Cromwell's. However, we have two most characteristic ballads written by More himself while a prisoner in the Tower. One of them, called *David, the Dicer*, we quote here:

"Long was I, Lady Luck! your Serving Man;
And now have lost again all that I got!
Wherefore when I think on you now and then,
And, in my mind, remember this or that;
Ye may not blame me, though I beshrew your call!
But, in faith! I bless you again a thousand times!
For lending me now some leisure to make rhymes."[3]

[1] Percy: *Reliques* (Wheatley), ii. 71. The seven controversial broadsides which this poem occasioned are printed in Hugh's *Fugitive Tracts*, First Series.

[2] Dyce's *Skelton*, ii. 436. Dyce points to this passage as being conclusive proof that Skelton was not the author.

[3] Arber: *Surrey and Wyatt Anthology*, p. 125.

The social evils attendant upon enclosures against which More and Latimer indignantly directed their satire and invective are forcibly illustrated in the *Pleasant Poesye of Princelie Practise*, "composed of late [1548] in metre royal by the simple and unlearned Sir William Forrest, priest."[1] The author reminds kings that private advantage must not operate against the public weal, either in enclosing of commons or in trade:

"In time of plenty the rich too much up mucker [heap]
Corn, grain or chaffer, hoping upon dearth:
For their private wealth they daily too much hucker [higgle].
This cries for vengeance too heavy from the earth.

* * * * *

Tenants should have security of tenure:

"A poor man who hath both children and wife,
Who (with his parents) upon a poor cot
Hath there laboured many a man's life,
And truly paid both rent, scot and lot,
A covetous lord who Conscience hath not,
By rent enhancing or for more large fine,
Such a one casts out; it goeth out of line" [of the family].

Idleness is the ruin of the State, so the young must be taught some handicraft. Children should be put to school at four years of age. The schools are to be free to any who cannot pay the fees. Children, after leaving school, are not to be allowed to idle, on pain of being placed in the stocks. An "after-care" officer is to be appointed to look after young persons:

"And the said officer to have by fee
Out of the town coffer three or four pound;
That for such stipend the rather may he
To th' execution thereof be bound.
If in the office he negligent be found,
To be deprived with reproach and shame:
And never again to enter on the same."

The Government must make new laws as occasion requires, and as may best suit the condition of the people. For instance, at present foreigners reap all the profit from wool, while Englishmen have to buy it back at a sixfold price. The sight of so many beggars and vagrants ought to induce the rich to try to improve the condition of the poor. How can a poor

[1] Printed as an Appendix to *Starkey's Life and Letters*, being part i. of *England in the Reign of King Henry the Eighth*, in E.E.T.S., 1878.

man keep his family and pay his rent on twopence a day? And now prices have risen fourfold, and landlords demand fourfold rents and fines, so that the farmer has to raise his prices in proportion. Beef and mutton are so dear that a poor man cannot afford a morsel. The smallest bit of beef or mutton now cost fourpence. Englishmen require animal food:

> "Our English nature cannot live by roots,
> By water, herbs, or such beggarly baggage,
> That may well serve for vile outlandish coasts;
> Give Englishmen meat after their old usage,
> Beef, mutton, veal, to cheer their courage;
> And then I dare to this bill set my hand:
> 'They shall defend this our noble England.'"

Wool is the chief support of Englishmen; it should not be allowed to be exported raw, but worked up in England:

> "Weaving, fulling, with dyeing (if they list)
> And what sort else to clothing doth belong:
> By such true handling that nothing be missed,
> Which might challenge their working to be wrong;
> That wheresoever they shall come among,
> Thro' Christendom or heathen ground,
> No fault there be in the workmanship found.
>
> * * * * *
>
> "No town in England, village or borough,
> But thus with clothing to be occupied:
> Tho' not in each place clothing clean through—
> But as the town is, their part so applied;
> Here spinners, here weavers, there clothes to be dyed,
> With fullers and shearers as be thought best,
> As the clothier may have his cloth dressed."

The cloth thus made is to be sold to English dealers, with a fair duty on exports; but rents must be lowered and fixed at what they were forty years before. Commissioners should be appointed to value all farms and fix rents; especially the English yeomanry must be supported, as being the country's chief stay. Exactions of fines for leases must be stopped. Oppressive landlords will all go to the devil, because for lucre's sake they force the poor farmer to go begging and take from him his little plot of ground. While the rich hold farms and abbey lands worth thousands of pounds, the poor man has not

even a plot on which to graze a horse. What the landlord once gets into his clutches,

> "The poor man thereof no piece shall come by,—
> Cow lease, horse grass, or one load of hay . . .
> His charges, he saith, are so passing high
> That for himself all is little enough;
> Yet on his whole ground he keepeth not one plough."

The labourer is worthy of a decent minimum, otherwise he will become a lazy wastrel. Rather illogically, after his remarks on woollen manufacture, Forrest insists that sheep-farms should be abolished and built on; then there would be enough for all:

> "And towns let down to graze sheep upon,
> With dwelling houses, as farms and abbeys,
> Reduced again to habitation; . . .
> Thousands there be that right gladly would wed,
> If they had holdings to cover their head."

Following the course of the Reformation as reflected in contemporary poetry, we have a witty little skit in ballad form called *Little John Nobody*, written about 1550. Fun is poked at Cranmer's order for the "service to be said in our seignour's tongue," and it is slily hinted that there is as much sin in the world as there ever was—"the fashion of these new fellows it is so vile and fell!"

> "In December, when the dayes draw to be short,
> After November, when the nights wax noisome and long;
> As I past by a place privily at a port,
> I saw one sit by himself making a song:
> His last[1] talk of trifles, who told with his tongue
> That few were fast in th' faith. I freyned that freak,[2]
> Whether he wanted wit, or some had done him wrong.
> He said, he was little John Nobody, that durst not speak.
> John Nobody, quoth I, what news? thou soon note and tell
> What manner men thou mean, thou art so mad.
> He said, These gay gallants, that will construe the Gospel,
> As Solomon the sage, with semblance full sad;
> To discuss divinity they nought adread;
> More meet it were for them to milk kye at a fleyke.[3]
> Thou liest, quoth I, thou losel, like a lewd lad.
> He said, he was little John Nobody, that durst not speak."[4]

[1] Perhaps = He left talk.
[2] = asked that man.
[3] Cows at a hurdle.
[4] Percy: *Reliques* (Wheatley), ii. 133.

To the reign of Edward VI. also must be referred *A Ballad of Luther, the Pope, a Cardinal, and a Husbandman*, which has certainly the merit of letting each party say what it can for itself:

THE HUSBANDMAN.

"Let us lift up our hearts all,
And praise the Lord's magnificence,
Who hath given the wolves a fall,
And is become our strong defence:
For they through a false pretence
From Christ's blood did all us lead,[1]
Getting from every man his pence,
As satisfactors for the dead.

"For what we with our flails could get,
To keep our houses and servants;
That did the Friars from us fet,
And with our souls played the merchants:
And thus they with their false warrants
Of our sweat have easily lived,
That for fatness their belly pants,
So greatly have they us deceived."

DOCTOR MARTIN LUTHER.

"Thou anti-Christ, with thy three crowns,
Hast usurped king's powers,
As having power over realms and towns,
Whom thou oughtest to serve all hours;
Thou thinkest by thy juggling colours
Thou mayst likewise God's word oppress;
As do deceitful fowlers,
When they their nets craftily dress."

THE POPE.

"As for scripture, I am above it;
Am not I God's high vicar?
Should I be bound to follow it,
As the carpenter his rule?
Nay, nay, heretics ye are,
That will not obey my authority.
With this sword I will declare,
That ye shall all accursed be."

[1] *i.e.*, They denied us the Cup.

THE CARDINAL.

"I am a Cardinal of Rome,
Sent from Christ's high vicary,
To grant pardon to more and some,
Who will Luther resist strongly:
Here is a great heretic truly,
And regardeth too much the scripture;
For he thinketh only thereby
To subdue the Pope's high honour."[1]

In its more social aspects the Reformation in Scotland had much the same abuses to pillory as the Reformation in England. A peculiarly gifted satirist was forthcoming in the experienced statesman Sir David Lyndsay (1490-1558), whose *Satyre of the Thrie Estates* "is a well-sustained invective against the follies and vices of the time." His description of the Pardoner recalls a few of Chaucer's famous details:

"My patent pardons, ye may see,
Come from the Khan of Tartary,
Well sealed with oyster shells;
Though ye have no contrition,
Ye shall have full remission,
With help of books and bells.
Here is a relic, long and broad,
Of Finn Maccoll the right jaw-bone,
With teeth and all together:
Of Colling's cow, here is a horn,
For eating of Mackonnal's corn
Was slain into Baquhidder.
Here is a cord, both great and long,
Which hanged John the Armistrong:
Of good hemp soft and sound:
Good, holy people, I stand for it,
Who ever is hanged with this cord
Needs never to be drowned.
The tail of Saint Bride's cow,
The snout of Saint Anthony's sow,
Which bore his holy bell;
Who ever he be hears this bell clink,
Give me a ducat for to drink
He shall never gang to hell."[2]

The confiscation of the abbey lands had the most important effects upon English social life, as we shall see later; but it

[1] Percy: *Reliques* (Wheatley), ii. 125. [2] *Ward's English Poets*, p. 199.

would be difficult to find a more succinct or impartial judgment upon its relation to the Reformation than that expressed by the author of the ballad *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*, published about 1550:

> "We have banished superstition,
> But still we keep ambition;
> We have shut away all cloisters,
> But still we keep extortioners;
> We have taken their lands for their abuse,
> But we have converted them to a worse use."

But it is time to pass on to other movements and events, which found an expression in contemporary poetry. We pass to the reign of Mary, and quote the verses composed by her sister Elizabeth, "with Charcoal on a Shutter," while a prisoner at Woodstock:

> "Oh, Fortune! how thy restless wavering state
> Hath fraught with cares my troubled wit!
> Witness this present prison, whither fate
> Could bear me, and the joys I quit.
> Thou causedst the guilty to be loosed
> From bands, wherein are innocents inclosed:
> Causing the guiltless to be strait reserved,
> And freeing those that death have well deserved.
> But by her envy can be nothing wrought,
> So God send to my foes all they have thought."[1]

It is curious that the loss of Calais, which must have greatly hurt the national pride, seems to have left no poetical memorial; indeed, "a ballad in defence of Lord Wentworth, the English Commander who was put on his trial for the loss of the French town, is the sole poetic record in English of the disaster, and that unique declaration is no longer extant."[2]

We pass on to Elizabeth's reign, and find an interesting side-light on the ever-burning marriage question in some verses written by the Queen herself:[3]

> "When I was fair and young, and favour gracèd me,
> Of many was I sought, their Mistress for to be:

[1] Percy: *Reliques* (Wheatley), ii. 137.

[2] Sir S. Lee: *The French Renaissance in England*, p. 35. The ballad was called *The Purgacion of Lord Wentworth*.

[3] It may first be as well to quote here Professor Pollard's opinion on the general relations of literature and politics in Elizabeth's reign: "No period of English Literature has less to do with politics than that during which English letters reached their zenith" (*Political History of England*, vi. 440).

But I did scorn them all, and answered them therefore
'Go, go, go, seek some otherwhere!
Importune me no more!'

"How many weeping eyes I made to pine with woe,
How many sighing hearts, I have no skill to show:
Yet I the prouder grew, and answered them therefore,
'Go, go, go, seek some otherwhere!
Importune me no more!'

"Then spake fair *Venus*' son, that proud, victorious Boy,
And said, 'Fine Dame! since that you be so coy:
I will so pluck your plumes, that you shall say no more,
"Go, go, go, seek some otherwhere!
Importune me no more!"'

"When he had spoke these words, such change grew in my breast,
That neither night nor day since that, I could take any rest.
Then, lo! I did repent that I had said before,
'Go, go, go, seek some otherwhere!
Importune me no more!'"[1]

Another poem from the Queen's pen has usually been thought to refer to Anjou's wooing:

"I grieve; and dare not show my discontent!
I love; and yet am forced to seem to hate!
I do; yet dare not say, I ever meant!
I seem stark mute; but inwardly do prate!
I am, and not; I freeze, and yet am burned;
Since from myself, my other self I turned!

"My care is like my shadow in the sun;
Follows me, flying! flies, when I pursue it!
Stands and lies by me! do'th what I have done!
This too familiar Care doth make me rue it!
Nor means I find, to rid him from my breast,
Till by the end of things, it be supprest.

"Some gentler Passions slide into my mind;
For I am soft, and made of melting snow.
Or be more cruel, Love! and so be kind:
Let me, or float, or sink! be high, or low!
Or let me live with some more sweet content;
Or die! and so forget what Love e'er meant."[2]

[1] Arber: *Spenser Anthology*, p. 156.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 157, and in Furnivall's *Ballads from MSS.*, ii. 68. Furnivall refers the poem to Anjou's visit in 1581, but notes that it is also found among the Tanner MSS., where it is stated to have been written by the Queen on Essex.

The political side of Elizabeth's love affairs is treated in pretty plain language by Sackville in Act V. of *Gorboduc*, where, as has been pointed out,[1] there is an obvious reference to the political situation of the day:

"Such one (my lords) let be your chosen king,
Such one so born within your native land,
Such one prefer, and in no wise admit
The heavy yoke of foreign governance:
Let foreign titles yield to public weal."

* * * * *

The concluding speech is still more pointed:

"This, this ensues, when noble men do fail
In loyal truth, and subjects will be kings.
And this doth grow, when lo unto the prince,
Whom death or sudden hap of life bereaves,
No certain heir remains, such certain heir,
As not all only is the rightful heir
But to the realm is so made known to be,
And truth thereby vested in subjects' hearts
To owe faith there where right is known to rest.
Alas, in Parliament, what hope can be,
When is of Parliament no hope at all?
Which though it be assembled by consent,
Yet is not likely with consent to end,
While each one for himself, or for his friend,
Against his foe, shall travail what he may.
While now the state left open to the man,
That shall with greatest force invade the same,
Shall fill ambitious minds with gaping hope;
When will they once with yielding hearts agree?
Or in the while, how shall the realm be used?
No, no: then Parliament should have been holden,
And certain heirs appointed to the crown,
To stay the title of established right,
And in the people plant obedience
While yet the prince did live, whose name and power
By lawful summons and authority
Might make a Parliament to be of force,
And might have set the state in quiet stay."

The precedence due to the Queen's poems and courtships has rather upset chronological order. To go back to the early years of her reign, we have a good deal of illustration of the ever troublesome affairs with Scotland. At the Siege of Leith

[1] *Cambridge History of Literature*, v. 67.

(1560) Thomas Churchyard, the poet, was serving in the English army, and has left us some passable verse on the campaign. After some stubborn fighting,

"A bishop[1] came from France to treat a peace
Much talk there was, which time consumed still,
But all this while the wars did nothing cease;
To hurt our foes we never wanted will:
At length upon a rock, a craggy hill,
We placed a piece, and in a trench below
Was other store of smaller shot also.

"Forget not here the weather on the seas
Would not permit the canons for to land,
The longer here we lay to our disease,
For lack thereof which few do understand:
I would demand how we should take in hand
To lay a siege, or else our camp remove
When most things lacked, that was for our behoof.

* * * * *

"The mounting lark no sooner in the sky
Than we were forth: the Frenchmen were so brave,
Nor night nor day they would not let us lie
In rest, for still they did the skirmish crave;
And they in holes themselves could finely save
To cause great shot to play upon the walls
As though that we were made unto their calls."

* * * * *

After more skirmishes, in which now one side and now the other was victorious, peace was concluded. Cecil must have the credit, who,

"As a man might say, maugre their teeth,
Drew forth the French out of the town of Leith.

* * * * *

"By this we have that many kings did seek—
A perfect peace, with Scotland sure for aye;
By this the French, that nestled near our cheek
Full many years, are now dispatched away.
By this small broil, did cease a greater fray;
By this our realm was rid from further care,
Our foes sent home, and we in quiet are."[2]

The earlier attitude of Englishmen to Mary Stuart—but hardly that of the Scottish nobility—may be reflected in a

[1] Bishop of Valence.

[2] Churchyard's *Chips*, p. 88. *Ibid.*, p. 143, will be found Churchyard's account of the Siege of Edinburgh Castle in 1571.

ballad on *The Murder of the King of Scots*, written soon after Mary's escape into England in 1568. Rizzio—"Lord David"—had begun to presume upon the favour shown him by the Queen, whereupon

"Some lords in Scotland waxed wroth
And quarrelled with him for the nonce;
I shall you tell how it befell,
Twelve daggers were in him at once.

* * * * *

"When the Queen saw her chamberlain was slain,
For him her fair cheeks she did wet,
And made a vow for a year and a day
The King and she would not come in one sheet.

"Then some of the lords they waxed wroth,
And made their vow all vehemently;
For the death of the Queen's chamberlain,
The King himself, how he shall die.

"With gun-powder they strewed his room,
And laid green rushes in his way:
For the traitors thought that very night
This worthy King for to betray.

"To bed the King he made him bowne,[1]
To take his rest was his desire;
He was no sooner cast on sleep,
But his chamber was on a blazing fire.

"Up he lope, and the window brake,
And he had thirty foot to fall;
Lord Bodwell kept a privy watch,
Underneath his castle wall.

"'Who have we here?' Lord Bodwell said:
'Now answer me, that I may know.'
'King Henry the Eighth my uncle was;
For his sweet sake some pity show.'

"'Who have we here?' Lord Bodwell said,
'Now answer me when I do speak.'
'Ah, Lord Bodwell, I know thee well,
Some pity on me, I pray thee, take.'

"'I'll pity thee as much,' he said,
'And as much favor show to thee,
As thou didst to the Queen's chamberlain,
That day thou doomedst him to die.'

[1] Ready.

"Through halls and towers the king they led,
Through towers and castles that were nigh,
Through an arbor into an orchard,
There on a pear-tree hanged him high.

"When the Governor of Scotland heard
How that the worthy King was slain;
He pursued the Queen so bitterly,
That in Scotland she dare not remain.

"But she is fled into merry England,
And here her residence hath ta'en;
And through the Queen of England's grace,
In England now she doth remain."[1]

The difficulties which Mary's presence in England brought to the Government are treated very candidly by Elizabeth herself in a "dittie most sweet and sententious," written about 1584, the time of the discovery of Throgmorton's plot:[2]

"The doubt of future foes exiles my present joy;
And wit me warns to shun such snares, as threaten mine annoy.

"For falsehood now doth flow, and subjects' faith doth ebb:
Which would not be, if reason rul'd, or wisdom wove the web.

"But clouds of joys untried do cloak aspiring minds;
Which turn to rain of late repent, by course of changed winds.

"The top of hope supposed, the root of ruth will be;
And fruitless all their graffed guiles, as shortly all shall see.

"Then dazzled eyes with pride, which great ambition blinds,
Shall be unseald by worthy wights, whose foresight falsehood finds.

"The daughter of debate,[3] that discord aye doth sow
Shall reap no gain where former rule hath taught still peace to grow.

"No foreign banished wight shall anchor in this port;
Our realm it brooks no strangers' force; let them elsewhere resort.

"Our rusty sword with rest shall first his edge employ,
To poll the tops, that seek such change, or gape for such like joy."[4]

[1] Percy: *Reliques* (Wheatley), ii. 213.
[2] Percy, *ibid.*, p. 282.
[3] Mary Queen of Scots.
[4] Percy: *Reliques* (Wheatley), ii. 218. For an elaborate attempt to give Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* a political motif, *cf.* J. J. Higginson's *Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar in Relation to Contemporary Affairs.* New York, 1912.

The Rising of the North, which broke out in 1569, is recalled by a long ballad preserved by Percy,[1] but it has little political interest, except the attempt of the ballad singer to reconcile his own loyalty with sympathy for a noble family:[2]

"Earl Percy is into his garden gone,
And after him walks his fair lady;
I heard a bird sing in mine ear
That I must either fight or flee.

"'Now heaven forfend, my dearest lord,
That ever such harm should hap to thee;
But go to London to the court,
And fair fall truth and honesty.'

"'Now nay, now nay, my lady gay,
Alas! thy counsel suits not me;
Mine enemies prevail so fast,
That at the court I may not be.'

"'O go to the court yet, good my lord,
And take thy gallant men with thee:
If any dare to do you wrong
Then your warrant they may be.'

"'Now nay, now nay, thou lady fair,
The court is full of subtiltie;
And if I go to the court, lady,
Never more I may thee see.'

"'Yet go to the court, my lord,' she says,
'And I myself will ride wi' thee:
At court, then, for my dearest lord,
His faithful borrow[3] I will be.'"[4]

* * * * *

Elizabeth's foreign policy is not left unrecorded in contemporary verse. George Gascoigne, soldier of fortune and poet, has left a long account of his adventures in the Low Countries. In his *Dulce Bellum Inexpertis* we have some very frank views expressed about the relations existing between the English and

[1] *Reliques* (Wheatley), i. 266. For betrayal of Northumberland, *cf. ibid.*, p. 279.

[2] Huth prints two metrical broadsides against the rebels in *Fugitive Tracts*, First Series.

[3] Surety.

[4] For broadsides and ballad literature on Babington's conspiracy, *cf.* Huth's *Fugitive Tracts*, First Series; and on the life and death of Campion, *cf.* Furnivall, *loc. cit.*, where there are thirty pages of ballads on the latter.

their allies.[1] His remarks on the English at one of the sieges are largely true of the whole expedition:

"Yet surely this withouten brag or boast,
Our English bloods did there full many a deed,
Which may be chronicled in every coast
For bold attempts; and well it was agreed,
That had their heads been ruled by wary heed,
Some other feat had been attempted then
To show their force like worthy English men.

* * * * *

"And by my troth to speak even as it is
Such pranks were played by soldiers daily there,
And though myself did not therein amiss
(As God He knows and men can witness bear),
Yet since I had a charge, I am not clear,
For seldom climbs that Captain to renown
Whose soldiers' faults so pluck his honour down."

After varied services and adventures, Gascoigne threw up his commission in disgust, and after serving for a while as a private soldier, went to Delf to ask permission from the Prince of Orange to return to England. He stayed at Delf for the winter, and then joined the Prince in the Siege of Middleburgh. Afterwards he was ordered to Valkenburgh, where the garrison was surprised by the Spaniards before it was in a position to defend itself:

"Yea *Robyn Hoode*, our foes came down apace,
And first they charg'd another Fort likewise,
Alphen I mean, which was a stronger place,
And yet too weak to keep in warlike wise:
Five other bands of English *Fanteries*,[2]
Were therein set for to defend the same,
And them they charg'd for to begin the game.

"This fort from ours was distant ten good miles,
I mean such miles as English measure makes,
Between us both stood *Leyden* town therewhiles,
Which every day with fair words undertakes,
To feed us fat and cram us up with cakes:
It made us hope it would supply our need,
For we (to it) two Bulwarks were in deed.

"But when it came unto the very pinch,
Leyden farewell, we might for *Leyden* starve,

[1] Warner, too, devotes the last chapter of book x. of his *Albion's England* to Elizabeth's share in the Netherland revolt.
[2] Footmen.

I like him well that promiseth an inch,
And pays an ell, but what may he deserve
That flatters much and can no faith observe?
[An] old said saw, that fair words make fools fain,
Which proverb true we proved to our pain.

"A conference among our selves we called,
Of Officers and Captains all afeard,
For truth (to tell) the Soldiers were appalled,
And when we asked now mates what merry cheer?
Their answer was: *it is no biding here.*
So that perforce we must from thence begone,
Unless we mean to keep the place alone.

* * * * *

"While thus we talk, a messenger behold,
From *Alphen* came, and told us heavy news,
Captains (quoth he) hereof you may be bold,
Not one poor soul of all your fellows' crews,
Can 'scape alive, they have no choice to choose:
They sent me thus to bid you shift in time,
Else look (like them) to stick in Spanish lime."

With great difficulty the leaders got their men to Leyden:

"Thus came we late at last to *Leyden* walls,
Too late, too soon, and so may we well say,
For notwithstanding all our cries and calls,
They shut their gates and turned their ears away:
In fine they did forsake us every way,
And bade us shift to save ourselves apace,
For unto them were fond to trust for grace."

In this plight the English were soon surrounded by the Spanish, and had to yield on honourable terms. Gascoigne and some others were "in pryson pent" for four months, while the rest were sent home at once. Gascoigne confesses that the prisoners' treatment was all that could be desired, and gives an interesting reason for it:

"All this and more I must confess we had,
God save (say I) our noble Queen therefore,
Hinc illæ lachrimæ, there lay the pad,
Which made the straw suspected be the more,
For trust me true, they coveted full sore,
To keep our Queen and country fast their friends,
Till all their wars might grow to lucky ends.

"But were that once to happy end ybrought,
And all stray sheep come home again to fold,

Then look to door: and think the cat is nought,
Although she let the mouse from out her hold:
Believe me now, methinks I dare be bold,
To think that if they once were friends again,
We might soon sell all friendship found in Spain."
* * * * *

We get later another interesting sidelight upon the attitude of the Dutch:

"But what I said, I say and swear again,
For first we were in Holland sore suspect,
The States did think, that with some filthy gain
The Spanish peers us Captains had infect,
They thought we meant our ensigns to erect
In King's behalf: and eke the common sort,
Thought privy pay had made us leave our fort."
* * * * *

It is only fair to add that this, too, was the English soldier's own opinion about their officers. To complete the picture we have Gascoigne's frank opinion of the men:

"And God he knows, the English soldier's gut,
Must have his fill of victuals once a day,
Or else he will but homely earn his pay."[1]

The death of Sir Philip Sidney at Zutphen is lamented in a generous elegy by Sir Walter Raleigh:

"To praise thy life, or wail thy worthy death,
And want thy wit (thy wit high, pure, divine),
Is far beyond the power of mortal line;
Nor anyone hath worth that draweth breath.
* * * * *

"Drawn was thy race aright from Princely line;
Nor less than such, by gifts that Nature gave
(The common mother that all creatures have),
Doth virtue show and Princely lineage shine.

"A King gave thee thy name. A kingly mind,
That GOD thee gave! Who found it now too dear
For this base world; and hath resumed it near,
To sit in skies, and sort with Powers divine.

"Kent, thy birthdays; and Oxford held thy youth.
The heavens made haste; and stayed nor years nor time!
The fruits of age grew ripe in thy first prime.
Thy will, thy words; thy words, the seals of truth.

[1] George Gascoigne's works, edited by J. W. Cunliffe, i. 160 *et seq.*

"Great gifts, and wisdom rare, employed thee thence,
To treat from Kings, with those more great than Kings:
Such hope men had to lay the highest things
On thy wise youth, to be transported thence.

"Whence to sharp wars, sweet Honour did thee call!
Thy country's love, religion, and thy friends!
Of worthy men, the marks, the lives, and ends;
And her defence, for whom we labour all.

* * * * *

"Back to the Camp, by thee, that day, were brought.
First, thine own death; and after, thy long fame;
Tears to the soldiers; the proud Castilians' shame;
Virtue expressed; and Honour truly taught.

"What hath he lost? that such great grace hath won!
Young years, for endless years! and hope unsure
Of Fortune's gifts, for wealth that still shall dure!
O, happy race! with so great praises run!

"England doth hold thy limbs, that bred the same;
Flanders, thy valour, where it last was tried;
The Camp, thy sorrow, where thy body died;
Thy friends, thy want: the World, thy virtue's fame;

"Nations, thy wit; our minds lay up thy love;
Letters, thy learning; thy loss, years long to come.
In worthy hearts, sorrow hath made thy tomb;
Thy soul and sp'rit enrich the Heavens above.

* * * * *

"That day their *Hannibal* died, our *Scipio* fell!
Scipio, *Cicero*, and *Petrarch* of our Time!
Whose virtues, wounded by my worthless rhyme,
Let Angels speak! and Heaven thy praises tell."[1]

* * * * *

We have already seen, rather incidentally to the general Reformation movement, the sad condition of husbandry at the end of the reign of Henry VIII. Some fifty years earlier (about 1500) an extremely interesting poem was written called *God Spede the Plough*,[2] which gives a very sympathetic account of the difficulties of the farmers of that time, and insists that the land is the economic basis of all classes in the State, who should pray to God to "speed well the plough":

[1] Arber: *Spenser Anthology*.
[2] Edited by W. W. Skeat as an appendix to *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede* for E.E.T.S., 1867.

"And so should of right the parson pray,
Who hath the tithe-sheaf of the land.
For our servants we may needs pay,
Or else full still the plough must stand;
Then cometh the clerk anon at hand,
To have a sheaf of corn where it groweth;
And the sexton somewhat in his hand;
I pray to God, speed well the plough.

"The King's purveyors also they come,
To have wheat and oats at the King's need;
And, over that, beef and mutton,
And butter and pullets, so God me speed!
And to the King's court we must it lead,
And our payment shall be a stick of a bough;
And yet we must speak fair for dread—
I pray to God, speed well the plough.

"To pay the Fifteenth against our ease,
Besides the lord's rent of our land;
Thus be we sheep shorn, we may not choose,
And yet it is full little understood.
Then baillifs and beadles, will put out their hand
In inquests to do us sorrow enough,
Unless we quit[1] right well the land.
I pray to God, speed well the plough.

* * * * *

"Then come the Grey Friars and make their moan,
And call for money their souls to save;
Then come the White Friars and begin to groan;
Wheat or barley they will fain have;
Then come the Friars Augustinian and begin to crave
Corn or cheese, for they have not enough;
Then come the Black Friars which would fain have—
I pray to God, speed well the plough.

* * * * *

"And yet, amongst other, we may not forget
The poor observants that been so holy;
They must among us have corn or meat,
They teach us alway to flee from folly,
And leave in virtue full devoutly,
Treaching daily sermons enough
With good examples full graciously—
I pray to God, speed well the plough.

"Then comes the Summoner to have some rent,
And else he will teach us a new lore,
Saying, we have left behind, unproved, some testament,

[1] *I.e.*, pay rent in full, so as to be *quit*.

And so he will make us lose much more.
Then comes the greenwax,[1] which grieves us sore,
With running in arrears it doth us sorrow enough,
And after, we know neither why nor wherefore—
I pray to God, speed well the plough.

"Then come priests that go to Rome,
For to have silver to sing at *Scala Cœli*;[2]
Then come clerks of Oxford and make their moan,
For their school hire they must have money.
Then come the tipped-staves for the Marshalsea,
And say they have prisoners more than enough;
Then come the minstrels to make us glee—
I pray to God, speed well the plough.

"At London also if we will plead
We shall not be spared, good chepe nor dear;
Our man of law may not be forgotten,
But he must have money every quarter.
And some come begging with the King's charter,
And say, bishops have granted thereto pardon enough;
And women come weeping in the same manner—
I pray to God, speed well the plough."

Of a more general bearing upon social life is the ballad called *Now A Dayes*,[3] which dates from about 1520. After a lament for the good old times, when

"The King set good price
By noble men and wise,"

the author refers to the present scandals in the Church caused by grasping ecclesiastics; the temporal peerage, too, has decayed; besides,

"The great men now take no heed
How ill so e'er the Commons speed;
The poor dare not speak for dread,
For nought they can recover.
Some gracious man set his hand

[1] "Greenwax was used for estreats delivered to the sheriffs out of the King's exchequer. These estreats were under the seal of that court, made in green wax."

[2] In the chapel of that name.

[3] For the social evils referred to, *cf.* Firth, *op. cit.*, p. 34, and the introduction in Furnivall's volume. See also another ballad, printed in Dyce's *Skelton*, i. 148, called *The Manner of the World Nowadays*, which in Dyce's opinion is only a "refacimento" of a ballad found in the Sloane MS. It is largely concerned with extravagance in costume and the general decadence of social life.

That good provision may be found!
Or else farewell the wealth of this land,
Clean undone for ever!"

* * * * *

"Envy waxeth wondrous strong,
The rich men do the poor wrong:
God of His mercy suffereth long
The devil his works to work.
The towns go down, the land decays;
Of cornfields, plain lays;
Great men maketh nowadays
A sheepcot in the church.

"The places that we right holy call,
Ordained for Christian burial,—
Of them to make an ox stall
These men be wondrous wise.
Commons to close and keep;
Poor folk for bread to cry and weep;
Towns pulled down to pasture sheep:
This is the new guise!

"Aliens here have their way,
And Englishmen clean decay;
The one half must needs play;
This is a Commonwealth!
Other lands advanced be,
And buy and sell among us free;
And thus our own commodity,
Doth clean undo ourself."

The whole realm seems upside down; especially the writer remarks on the

"Many gamers[1] and few archers,
Gay courtiers and ill warriors,
Many craftsman and half beggars,
Both in towns and city:
French ware hither is brought,
And English handcraft goeth to nought.
Half this realm, it is unwrought!
Alas, for pure pity!"[2]

* * * * *

Similar in tone, but dating from the time of Protector Somerset (1547-48), is another ballad called *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*.[3]

[1] *I.e.*, gamblers, and not players at athletic games.

[2] Furnivall: *Ballads from MSS.*, i. 93.

[3] Furnivall: *Ballads from MSS.*, i. 108, who gives as an appendix to his transcription a list of the grievances of the Norfolk rebels in 1549—so well are they illustrated in the ballad.

"As everyone understands,
Both lordships and lands
Are now in few men's hands;
Both substance and bands
Of all the whole realm,
As most men esteem,
Are now consumed clean
From the farmer and the poor
To the town and the tower;
Which maketh them to lower,
To see that in their flower
Is neither malt nor meal,
Bacon, beef nor veal,
Crock milk nor kele,
But ready for to steal
For very pure need.
Your commons say, indeed,
They be not able to feed
In their stable scant a steed,
To bring up nor to breed;
Yea, scant able to bring
To the market anything
Towards their housekeeping;
And scant have a cow,
Nor to keep a poor sow:
This the world is now. . . ."

The poor men complain piteously,

"Saying that such and such
That of late are made rich,
Have, too, too, too much
By grazing and regrating, . . .
With customs and tallyings,
Forfeits and forestallings. . . .
For graziers and regraters,
With too many sheepmasters
That of arable land make pastures,
Are they that be these wasters
That will undo your land
If they continue to stand. . . .
And yet not long ago
Were preachers one or two,
That spake it plain enow
To you, to you and to you. . . .
That from pillar unto post
The poor man was tossed.
I mean the labouring man,
I mean the husbandman,

I mean the ploughman,
I mean the plain true man,
I mean the handcraft-man,
I mean the victualling man,
Also the good yeoman,
That sometime in this realm
Had plenty of kyne and cream,
But now, alack, alack,
All these men go to wrack
That are the body and the stay
Of your grace's realm alway. . . .
Which is a great enormity
Unto your grace's commonalty;
For they that of late did sup
Out of an ashen cup
Are wonderfully sprung up;
He that nought was worth of late,
Hath now a cupboard of plate,
His table furnished too
With plate beset enow
Persell gilt and sound,
Well worth two thousand pound.
With casting counters and their pen,
These are the upstart gentlemen!"

After an appeal to the King to correct these abuses, we have an enumeration of the few in whose hands all the wealth of the realm is concentrated and wasted; the list includes purveyors and other officials:

"With three or four great clothiers,
And the whole libel of lawyers. . . .
O worthiest Protector
Be herein corrector."[1]

Rascally lawyers and grasping landlords are also the burden of a ballad of the following reign. The first six stanzas are devoted to the lawyers, and then the writer turns upon the landlords:

"Some take in commons, thus all men may see;
And some bring in bondage that ever has been free;
So that all is the lord's; how doth this agree
With God's testament,

[1] For a special study of the social life of the period, *cf. Social Changes in England in the Sixteenth Century as reflected in Contemporary Literature*, by E. P. Cheyney (University of Pennsylvania Publications), 1895.

Which doth not appoint such order for to be?
And though I say but little, let all men repent."[1]

Passing to the reign of Elizabeth, we have the same sympathy with the hardworking husbandman shown in a quarter from which we should hardly expect it—George Gascoigne, the soldier-poet from whom we have already quoted; but as a matter of fact it was a marked characteristic of Gascoigne's writings. The quotation which follows is from *The Steel Glass*.[1]

"Behold him, priests, and though he stink of sweat,
Disdain him not: for shall I tell you what?
Such climb to heaven before the shaven crowns:
But how? forsooth with true humility.
Not that they hoard their grain when it is cheap,
Nor that they kill the calf to have the milk,
Nor that they set debate between their lords,
By earing up the balks that part their bounds:
Nor for because they can both crouch and creep
(The guilful'st men that ever God yet made)
Whenas they mean most mischief and deceit,
Nor that they can cry out on landlords loud,
And say they rack their rents an ace too high,
When they themselves do sell their landlord's lamb
For greater price than ewe was wont be worth.
(I see yon Piers, my glass was lately scoured.)
But for they feed with fruits of their great pains
Both King and Knight and Priests in cloister pent.
Therefore I say that sooner some of them
Shall scale the walls which lead us up to heaven,
Than cornfed beasts, whose belly is their God,
Although they preach of more perfection."

* * * * *

It is somewhat remarkable that the earlier great discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth century explorers have left hardly any trace in contemporary English poetry.[3] We find, indeed, one instance of patriotic regret at the small share taken in them by Englishmen in John Rastell's *Interlude of the Nature of the Four Elements*. Rastell was More's brother-in-law, and it is interesting to recall the fact in view of the literary setting of

[1] *Songs and Ballads of William and Mary*. Edited by T. Wright for Roxburgh Club, 1860.

[2] Quoted in *Ward's English Poets*.

[3] The later discoveries of Willoughly and Chancellor are celebrated by Warner in his *Albion's England*, Book XI., and a list of English discoverers is given in Book XII.

Utopia. In the *Interlude*, Experience is pointing out on a map the position of the different countries to Studious Desire:

"This sea is called the Great Ocean,
So great it is that never man
Could tell it, since the world began,
Till now, within this twenty years,
Westward be found new lands,
That we never heard tell of before this
By writing nor other means.
Yet many now have been there;
And that country is so large of room,
Much larger than all Christendom,
Without fable or guile;
For divers mariners had it tried,
And sailed straight by the coast side
About five thousand mile!
But what commodities be within,
No man can tell nor well imagine;
Nor yet not long ago
Some men of this country went,
By the King's noble consent,
It for to search for that intent,
And could not be brought thereto;
But they that were th' adventurers
Have cause to curse their mariners,
False of promise and dissemblers,
That falsely them betrayed,
Which would take no pains to sail farther
Than their own list and pleasure;
Wherefore that voyage and divers other
Such caitiffs have destroyed.
Oh, what a thing had been then
If that they that be Englishmen
Might have been the first of all,
That there should have taken possession
And made first building and habitation!
O memory perpetual!
And also what an honourable thing
Both to the realm and to the King,
To have had his dominion extending
There into so far a ground,
Which the noble King of late memory,
The most wise Prince the seventh Henry,
Caused first for to be found.
And what a great meritorious deed
It were to have the people instructed
To live more virtuously,

And to learn to know of men the manner,
And also to know God their maker,
Which as yet live all beastly;
For they neither know God nor the devil,
Nor never heard tell of heaven nor hell,
Writing nor other scripture."

After descanting on the general ignorance of the natives, Rastell continues:

"Fish they have so great plenty
That in havens taken and slain they be
With staves, withouten fail.
Now Frenchmen and other have found the trade,
That yearly of fish there they lade
Above a hundred sail; . . ."[1]

Spenser, too, in his introduction to the second book of the *Faerie Queene*, points a moral when he says to the unimaginative man who does not know "where is that happy land of Faery":

"But let that man with better sense advise,
That of the world least part to us is read;
And daily how through hardy enterprise
Many great regions are discovered,
Which to late age were never mentioned.
Who ever heard of th' Indian Peru?
Or who in venturous vessel measured
The Amazon huge river, now found true?
Or fruitfullest Virginia who did ever view?"

Of more political interest is the poem entitled *Neptune to England*, where the country is urged along the path of colonisation. The last of the three stanzas runs:

"Go on, great state, and make it known,
Thou never wilt forsake thine own,
Nor from thy purpose start;
But that thou wilt thy power dilate,
Since narrow seas are found too straight
For thy capacious heart.
So shall thy rule, and mine, have large extent:
Yet not so large, as just and permanent."[2]

The spirit of the sea-dogs breathes in the ballad *In Praise of Sea-faring Men in Hope of Good Fortune*, written on Sir Richard Grenville's departure on his voyage of 1585:

[1] Dodsley, *Old English Plays*. Edited by W. C. Hazlitt, p. 28. Also edited by J. O. Halliwell for Percy Society, 1848.
[2] Halliwell's *Early Naval Ballads*, p. 68.

"To pass the seas some think a toil,
Some think it strange abroad to roam,
Some think it a grief to leave their soil,
Their parents, kinsfolk and their home.
Think so who list, I like it not;
I must abroad to try my lot."[1]

There is a swinging ballad, too, upon Drake's return from the voyage round the world (1577-1580), which is evidently not quite contemporary, as it refers to the loss of Sir Humphrey Gilbert, 1584.[2]

"Sir Francis, Sir Francis, Sir Francis is come;
Sir Robert[3] and eke Sir William his son,
And eke the good Earl of Huntingdon
March'd gallantly on the Road.

"Then came the Lord Chamberlain with his white staff,
And all the people began to laugh;
And then the Queen began to speak,
'You're welcome home, Sir Francis Drake.

"'You gallants all o' the British blood,
Why don't you sail o' th' ocean flood?
I protest you're not all worth a filbert,
If once compared to Sir Humphrey Gilbert.'

"For he went out on a rainy day,
And to the new found land found out his way,
With many a gallant both fresh and green,
And he ne'er came home agen. God bless the Queen!"[4]

In his *Welcome Home to Master Martin Frobisher, and all those Gentlemen and Soldiers that have been with him this Last Journey, in the Country called 'Meta Incognita,'* Thomas Churchyard pays a great tribute to the explorers, and says:

"And of late days, so great a stock
Of these are in this land,
That I have scarce good leisure left
To write their names aright,
And yield the praise and lively laud
Is due to every wight. . . .

[1] There are six stanzas in all. Halliwell, *Early Naval Ballads*, (Percy Society), p. 14. *Cf. ibid.*, p. 45, for a *Commendation of Martin Frobisher.*

[2] Halliwell takes his copy from *Wit and Drollery*, 1656. Thomas Churchyard has a poem of some 500 lines on Sir Humphrey Gilbert's expedition, and gives the names of his fellow-adventurers.

[3] Cecil.

[4] Furnivall: *Ballads from MSS.*, ii. 100. *Cf. ibid.*, ii. 282 and 284 for two rather otiose ballads on Martin Frobisher.

"O Frobisher thy bruit and name
Shall be enroll'd in books,
That whosoever after comes,
And on thy labour looks,
Shall muse and marvel at thine acts
And greatness of thy mind."

* * * * *

In a sense the youth of Henry VIII. saw the belated close of chivalry, and it is not without interest to catch a glimpse of the education and pastimes of a companion of Henry's son, the Duke of Richmond. The companion was Henry Howard, afterwards Earl of Surrey, and the poem we quote was written in reminiscent vein when its author was in prison at Windsor towards the end of the King's reign:

"So cruel prison, how could betide, alas,
As proud Windsor? Where I, in lust and joy,
With a King's son, my childish years did pass,
In greater feast than Priam's sons of Troy.
Where each sweet place returns a taste full sour.
The large green courts, where we were wont to hover,
With eyes cast up into the Maiden's tower,
And easy sighs, such as folk draw in love.
The stately seats, the ladies bright of hue.
The dances short, long tales of great delight;
With words and looks that tigers could but rue;
Where each of us did plead the other's right.
The palme-play,[1] where, despoiled for the game,
With dazzled eyes oft we by gleams of love
Have miss'd the ball, and got sight of our dame,
To bait her eyes, which kept the leads above.
The gravel'd ground, with sleeves tied on the helm,
On foaming horse, with swords and friendly hearts;
With cheer, as though one should another whelm,
Where we have fought, and chased oft with darts.
With silver drops the mead yet spread for ruth,
In active games of nimbleness and strength,
Where we did strain, trained with swarms of youth,
Our tender limbs, that yet shot up in length.
The secret groves, which oft we made resound
Of pleasant plaint, and of our ladies' praise;
Recording oft what grace each one had found,
What hope of speed, what dread of long delays.
The wild forest, the clothed holts with green;
With reins availed, and swift-y-breathed horse,

[1] Tennis-court.

With cry of hounds, and merry blasts between,
Where we did chase the fearful hart of force."[1]

Another aspect of English fashionable society in Henry VIII.'s reign is given by Sir Thomas More, which we venture to give, not in the original Latin, but in Marsden's translation.[1] The English gallant, says More,

"Struts about,
In cloaks of fashion French. His girdle, purse,
And sword are French. His hat is French.
His nether limbs are cased in French costume,
His shoes are French. In short, from top to toe
He stands the Frenchman. . . .
If he speak
Though but three little words in French, he swells
And plumes himself on his proficiency,
And, his French failing, then he utters words
Coined by himself, with widely gaping mouth,
And sound acute, thinking to make at least
The accent French. . . .
With accent French he speaks the Latin tongue,
With accent French the tongue of Lombardy,
To Spanish words he gives an accent French,
German he speaks with the same accent French;
In truth he seems to speak with accent French
All but the French itself. The French he speaks
With accent British."

How the fashion changed by the time of Elizabeth is shown from the well-known references to the Italianate Englishman. Alexander Barclay, a contemporary of More, to whom reference has already been made, denounces foreign travel as a part of a young Englishman's education in his *Ship of Fools*, published in 1509. Barclay's *Eclogues* give many interesting pictures of the social life of the time and some memorable personal touches.

We may close this brief anthology with a quotation from Skelton's *Philip Sparrow*, where we have a list of the books which a well-educated girl in 1509 was supposed to have read. Romance is represented by the Arthurian legend, and other medieval tales; Roman and Jewish and ancient history have their place; the Trojan war is referred to at length; literature includes the classical authors of Rome, Greece, and Italy,

[1] *Poems of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey* (Aldine Edition), p. 19. Also in Collier's reprint of Tottell's *Miscellany*, p. 16.

[2] *Philomorus: Notes on Latin Poems of Thomas More*, Second Edition, 1878, p. 223, quoted in Lee, *ut supra*, p. 48.

although she confesses that of these last she has "but little skill":

"These poets of ancienty,
They are too diffuse for me!"

The poem ends with a review of English literature and style:

"Our natural tongue is rude
And hard to be ennewed
With polished terms lusty.
Our language is so rusty,
So cankered, and so full
Of frowards, and so dull;
That if I would apply
To write ornately,
I wot not, where to find
Termis to serve my mind!
Gower's English is old,
And of no value is told;
His matter is worth gold,
And worthy to be enrolled.
In *Chaucer* I am sped.
His *Tales* I have read;
His matter is delectable,
Solacious, and commendable.
His English well allowed,
So as it is enprowed;
For as it is employed
There is no English void,
At those days much commended:
And now men would have amended
His English; whereat they bark,
And mar all they work.
Chaucer, that famous Clerk,
His terms were not dark;
But pleasant, easy and plain.
No word he wrote in vain.
Also *John Lydgate*
Writeth after a higher rate.
It is diffuse to find
The sentence of his mind;
No man that can amend
Those matters that he hath penned.
Yet some men find a fault;
And say, He writeth too haut![1]

[1] Skelton's *Philip Sparrow*. Quoted by Arber, *Surrey and Wyatt Anthology*, p. 151.

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