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THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

EDMUND SPENSER.

WILLIAM WALKER

THE HISTORY OF THE

EDINBURGH :
PRINTED BY BALLANTYNE AND COMPANY,
PAUL'S WORK.

THE HISTORY OF THE
WILLIAM WALKER

THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
EDMUND SPENSER.

With Memoir and Critical Dissertations,

BY THE
REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

EDINBURGH:
JAMES NICHOL, 104 HIGH STREET.
LONDON: JAMES NISBET & CO. DUBLIN: W. ROBERTSON.

M.DCCC.LIX.

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IN the preparation of this edition of Spenser's Works, it has not been deemed desirable to reprint some minor poems, which, though included in other editions, are, from external and internal evidence, acknowledged not to be the productions of Spenser's pen. This edition will, we believe, be found to contain every line extant of the poetry of Spenser.

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THE
RUINS OF TIME.

BY ED. SP.

DEDICATED TO THE RIGHT NOBLE AND BEAUTIFUL LADY,

THE LADY MARY,

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

1591.

DEDICATED TO THE RIGHT NOBLE AND BEAUTIFUL LADY,

THE LADY MARY,

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE.

MOST honourable and bountiful Lady, there be long since deep sowed in my breast the seeds of most entire love and humble affection unto that most brave knight, your noble brother* deceased; which, taking root, began in his lifetime somewhat to bud forth, and to shew themselves to him, as then in the weakness of their first spring; and would in their riper strength (had it pleased High God till then to draw out his days) spired forth† fruit of more perfection. But since God hath disdeigned‡ the world of that most noble spirit, which was the hope of all learned men, and the patron of my young Muses; together with him both their hope of any further fruit was cut off, and also the tender delight of those their first blossoms nipped and quite dead. Yet, since my late coming into England, some friends of mine, (which might much prevail with me, and indeed command me,) knowing with how strait bands of duty I was tied to him, as also bound unto that noble house, (of which the chief hope then rested in him,) have sought to revive them by upbraiding me, for that I have not shewed any thankful remembrance towards him or any of them; but suffer their names to sleep in silence and forgetfulness. Whom chiefly to satisfy, or else to avoid that foul blot of unthankfulness, I have conceived this small poem, intituled by a general name of *The World's Ruins*; yet specially intended to the renowning of that noble race, from which both you and he sprung, and to the eternising of some of the chief of them late deceased. The which I dedicate unto your Ladyship, as whom it most specially concerneth; and to whom I acknowledge myself bounden by many singular favours and great graces. I pray for your honourable happiness: and so humbly kiss your hands.

Your Ladyship's ever humbly at command,

E. S.

* Sir Philip Sidney.

† Produced.

‡ Counted unworthy.

SPENSER'S POETICAL WORKS.

THE RUINS OF TIME.

It chanced me one day beside the shore
Of silver streaming Thamesis to be,
Nigh where the goodly Verlame* stood of yore,
Of which there now remains no memory,
Nor any little monument to see,
By which the traveller, that fares that way,
This once was she, may warned be to say.

There, on the other side, I did behold
A woman sitting sorrowfully wailing,
Rending her yellow locks, like wiry gold 10
About her shoulders carelessly down trailing,
And streams of tears from her fair eyes forth
 railing:¹
In her right hand a broken rod she held,
Which towards heaven she seem'd on high to weld.

¹ Rolling.

* 'Verlame:' Verolanium, or Verulam, was a Roman town, near St Albans, in Hertfordshire, some remains of which are still visible.

<p>¹ Burnt.</p>	<p>Whether she were one of that river's nymphs, 15 Which did the loss of some dear love lament, I doubt ; or one of those three fatal Imps, Which draw the days of men forth in extent ; Or th' ancient Genius of that city brent : ¹ But, seeing her so piteously perplexed, 20 I (to her calling) ask'd what her so vexed.</p>
	<p>' Ah! what delight (quoth she) in earthly thing, Or comfort can I, wretched creature, have? Whose happiness the heavens envying, From highest stair to lowest step me drave, And have in mine own bowels made my grave, That of all nations now I am forlorn, The world's sad spectacle, and fortune's scorn.'</p>
	<p>Much was I moved at her piteous plaint, And felt my heart nigh riven in my breast 30 With tender ruth to see her sore constraint ; That, shedding tears a while, I still did rest, And, after, did her name of her request. ' Name have I none (quoth she) nor any being, Bereft of both by Fate's unjust decreeing.</p>
<p>² Since</p>	<p>' I was that city, which the garland wore Of Britain's pride, delivered unto me By Roman victors, which it won of yore ; Though nought at all but ruins now I be, And lie in mine own ashes, as ye see: 40 Verlame I was; what boots it that I was, Sith² now I am but weeds and wasteful grass ?</p>
	<p>' O vain world's glory, and unsteadfast state Of all that lives on face of sinful earth! Which, from their first until their utmost date,</p>

15 Taste no one hour of happiness or mirth; 46
 But like as at the ingate¹ of their birth
 They crying creep out of their mother's womb,
 So wailing back go to their woful tomb.

¹ Entrance,
begin-
ning.

20 ' Why then doth flesh, a bubble-glass of breath, 50
 Hunt after honour and advancement vain,
 And rear a trophy for devouring death,
 With so great labour and long-lasting pain,
 As if his days for ever should remain?
 Sith² all, that in this world is great or gay,
 Doth as a vapour vanish, and decay.

² Since.

30 ' Look back, who list, unto the former ages,
 And call to count, what is of them become:
 Where be those learned wits and antique sages,
 Which of all wisdom knew the perfect sum? 60
 Where those great warriors, which did overcome
 The world with conquest of their might and main,
 And made one meer³ of th' earth and of their reign?

³ Bound-
ary.

40 ' What now is of th' Assyrian lioness,
 Of whom no footing now on earth appears?
 What of the Persian bear's outrageousness,
 Whose memory is quite worn out with years?
 Who of the Grecian leopard now ought hears,
 That over-ran the East with greedy power,
 And left his whelps their kingdoms to devour? 70

' And where is that same great seven-headed Beast,
 That made all nations vassals of her pride,
 To fall before her feet at her beheast,
 And on the neck of all the world did ride?
 Where doth she all that wondrous wealth now hide?

With her own weight down pressed now she lies, 76
And by her heaps her hugeness testifies.

'O Rome, thy ruin I lament and rue,
And in thy fall my fatal overthrow,
That whilome¹ was, whilst heavens with equal view
Deign'd to behold me and their gifts bestow, 80
The picture of thy pride in pompous show :
And of the whole world as thou wast the empress,
So I of this small northern world was princess.

'To tell the beauty of my buildings fair,
Adorn'd with purest gold and precious stone ;
To tell my riches, and endowments rare,
That by my foes are now all spent and gone ;
To tell my forces, matchable to none ;
Were but lost labour, that few would believe, 90
And, with rehearsing, would me more aggrieve.

'High towers, fair temples, goodly theatres,
Strong walls, rich porches, princely palaces,
Large streets, brave houses, sacred sepulchres,
Sure gates, sweet gardens, stately galleries,
Wrought with fair pillars and fine imageries ;
All those (O pity!) now are turn'd to dust,
And overgrown with black oblivion's rust.

'Thereto for warlike power, and people's store,
In Brittany was none to match with me, 100
That many often did abye full sore :
Ne Troynovant,² though elder sister she,
With my great forces might compared be ;
That stout Pendragon to his peril felt,
Who in a siege seven years about me dwelt.

¹ Formerly.

² London.

'But long ere this, Bunduca,¹ Britoness,
 Her mighty host against my bulwarks brought;
 Bunduca! that victorious conqueress,
 That, lifting up her brave heroic thought
 'Bove women's weakness, with the Romans fought,
 Fought, and in field against them thrice prevailed:
 Yet was she foil'd, when as she me assailed.

106 ¹ Boadicea.

'And though at last by force I conquered were
 Of hardy Saxons, and became their thrall;
 Yet was I with much bloodshed bought full dear,
 And priz'd with slaughter of their General:
 The monument of whose sad funeral,
 For wonder of the world, long in me lasted;
 But now to nought, through spoil of time, is wasted.

'Wasted it is, as if it never were;
 And all the rest, that me so honour'd made,
 And of the world admired ev'rywhere,
 Is turn'd to smoke, that doth to nothing fade;
 And of that brightness now appears no shade,
 But grisly shades, such as do haunt in hell
 With fearful fiends, that in deep darkness dwell.

120

'Where my high steeples whilome² used to stand,
 On which the lordly falcon went to tower,
 There now is but an heap of lime and sand
 For the screech-owl to build her baleful bower: 130
 And where the nightingale went forth to pour
 Her restless plaints, to comfort wakeful lovers,
 There now haunt yelling mews and whining plovers.

² Formerly.

'And where the crystal Thamis went to slide
 In silver channel, down along the lee,

About whose flowry banks on either side 136
 A thousand nymphs, with mirthful jollity,
 Were wont to play, from all annoyance free;
 There now no river's course is to be seen,
 But moorish fens, and marshes ever green. 140

'Seems, that that gentle river for great grief
 Of my mishaps, which oft I to him plained;
 Or for to shun the horrible mischief,
 With which he saw my cruel foes me pained,
 And his pure streams with guiltless blood oft stained;
 From my unhappy neighbourhood far fled,
 And his sweet waters away with him led.

'There also, where the winged ships were seen
 In liquid waves to cut their foamy way,
 And thousand fishers number'd to have been, 150
 In that wide lake looking for plenteous prey
 Of fish, which they with baits used to betray,
 Is now no lake, nor any fisher's store,
 Nor ever ship shall sail there any more.

'They all are gone, and all with them is gone!
 Ne ought to me remains, but to lament
 My long decay, which no man else doth moan,
 And mourn my fall with doleful dreariment.
 Yet it is comfort in great languishment,
 To be bemoaned with compassion kind, 160
 And mitigates the anguish of the mind.

'But me no man bewaileth, but in game,
 Ne sheddeth tears from lamentable eye:
 Nor any lives that mentioneth my name
 To be remember'd of posterity,

Save one, that maugre¹ Fortune's injury,
 And Time's decay, and Envy's cruel tort,²
 Hath writ my record in true-seeming sort.

166

¹ In spite
of.² Wrong.

'Camden!* the nourice³ of antiquity,
 And lantern unto late succeeding age,
 To see the light of simple verity
 Buried in ruins, through the great outráge
 Of her own people led with warlike rage:
 Camden! though time all monuments obscure,
 Yet thy just labours ever shall endure.

170

³ Nurse.

'But why (unhappy wight!) do I thus cry,
 And grieve that my remembrance quite is raced⁴
 Out of the knowledge of posterity,
 And all my antique monuments defaced?
 Sith I do daily see things highest placed,
 So soon as Fates their vital thread have shorn,
 Forgotten quite as they were never born.

180

⁴ Razed.

'It is not long, since these two eyes beheld
 A mighty prince,† of most renowned race,
 Whom England high in count of honour held,
 And greatest ones did sue to gain his grace;
 Of greatest ones he greatest in his place,
 Sat in the bosom of his souveraine,
 And *Right and Loyal* did his word maintain.

190

'I saw him die, I saw him die, as one
 Of the mean people, and brought forth on bier;

* 'Camden:' the antiquarian, cotemporary with Spenser; author of 'Britannia,' &c.

† 'A mighty prince:' the Earl of Leicester, who died at Cambray in 1588, it was surmised, of poison. Spenser's seeing him die at Verulam is a poetical fiction.

I saw him die, and no man left to moan 192
 His doleful fate, that late him loved dear:
 Scarce any left to close his eyelids near;
 Scarce any left upon his lips to lay
 The sacred sod, or requiem to say.

‘O trustless state of miserable men,
 That build your bliss on hope of earthly thing,
 And vainly think yourselves half happy then,
 When painted faces with smooth flattering 200
 Do fawn on you, and your wide praises sing;
 And, when the courting masker louteth¹ low,
 Him true in heart and trusty to you trow!

¹ Boweth.

‘All is but feigned, and with ochre dyed,
 That every shower will wash and wipe away;
 All things do change that under heaven abide,
 And after death all friendship doth decay.
 Therefore, whatever man bear'st worldly sway,
 Living, on God and on thyself rely;
 For, when thou diest, all shall with thee die. 210

‘He now is dead, and all is with him dead,
 Save what in heaven's storehouse he uplaid:
 His hope is fail'd, and come to pass his dread,
 And evil men (now dead) his deeds upbraid:
 Spite bites the dead, that living never bay'd.
 He now is gone, the whiles the fox is crept
 Into the hole, the which the badger swept.

‘He now is dead, and all his glory gone,
 And all his greatness vapoured to nought,
 That as a glass upon the water shone, 220
 Which vanish'd quite, so soon as it was sought:

His name is worn already out of thought, 222
 Ne any poet seeks him to revive;
 Yet many poets honour'd him alive.

'Ne doth his Colin, careless Colin Clout,*
 Care now his idle bagpipe up to raise,
 Ne tell his sorrow to the list'ning rout
 Of shepherd grooms, which wont his songs to praise:
 Praise whoso list, yet I will him dispraise,
 Until he quit him of this guilty blame: 230
 Wake, shepherd's boy, at length awake for shame.

'And whoso else did goodness by him gain,
 And whoso else his bounteous mind did try,¹
 Whether he shepherd be, or shepherd's swain,
 (For many did, which do it now deny,)
 Awake, and to his song a part apply:
 And I, the whilst you mourn for his decease,
 Will with my mourning plaints your plaint increase.

¹ Expe-
 rience.

'He died, and after him his brother† died,
 His brother prince, his brother noble peer, 240
 That whilst he lived was of none envied,
 And dead is now, as living, counted dear,
 Dear unto all that true affection bear:
 But unto thee most dear, O dearest Dame,
 His noble spouse,‡ and paragon of fame.

'He, whilst he lived, happy was through thee,
 And, being dead, is happy now much more;
 Living, that linked chanc'd with thee to be,
 And dead, because him dead thou dost adore

* 'Colin Clout:' Spenser himself.

† 'His brother:': Dudley, Earl of Warwick.

‡ 'Noble spouse:': Anne, eldest daughter of Francis, Earl of Bedford.

As living, and thy lost dear love deplore. 250
 So whilst that thou, fair flower of chastity,
 Dost live, by thee thy lord shall never die.

'Thy lord shall never die, the whiles this verse
 Shall live, and surely it shall live for ever:
 For ever it shall live, and shall rehearse
 His worthy praise, and virtues dying never,
 Though death his soul do from his body sever:
 And thou thyself herein shalt also live;
 Such grace the heavens do to my verses give.

'Ne shall his sister,* ne thy father, die; 260
 Thy father, that good earl of rare renown,
 And noble patron of weak poverty!
 Whose great good deeds in country, and in town,
 Have purchas'd him in heaven an happy crown:
 Where he now liveth in eternal bliss,
 And left his son t' ensue¹ those steps of his.

¹ Follow.

'He, noble bud, his grandsire's lively heir,
 Under the shadow of thy countenance
 Now 'gins to shoot up fast, and flourish fair
 In learned arts, and goodly governance, 270
 That him to highest honour shall advance.
 Brave imp² of Bedford, grow apace in bounty,
 And count of wisdom more than of thy county!

² Shoot,
 graft.

'Ne may I let thy husband's sister die,
 That goodly lady, sith she eke did spring
 Out of his stock and famous family,
 Whose praises I to future age do sing;
 And forth out of her happy womb did bring
 The sacred brood of learning and all honour; 279
 In whom the heavens pour'd all their gifts upon her.

* 'His sister: ' Lady Mary Sidney.

‘Most gentle spirit breathed from above, 281
 Out of the bosom of the Maker’s bliss,
 In whom all bounty and all virtuous love
 Appeared in their native properties,
 And did enrich that noble breast* of his
 With treasure passing all this world’s worth,
 Worthy of heaven itself, which brought it forth.

‘His blessed spirit, full of power divine,
 And influence of all celestial grace,
 Loathing this sinful earth and earthly slime, 290
 Fled back too soon unto his native place;
 Too soon for all that did his love embrace,
 Too soon for all this wretched world, whom he
 Robb’d of all right and true nobility.

‘Yet, ere his happy soul to heaven went
 Out of this fleshly gaol, he did devise
 Unto his heavenly Maker to present
 His body, as a spotless sacrifice;
 And chose, that guilty hands of enemies
 Should pour forth th’ off’ring of his guiltless blood:
 So life exchanging for his country’s good. 301

‘O noble spirit, live there ever blessed,
 The world’s late wonder, and the heavens’ new joy;
 Live ever there, and leave me here distressed
 With mortal cares and cumbrous world’s annoy!
 But, where thou dost that happiness enjoy,
 Bid me, O bid me quickly come to thee,
 That happy there I may thee always see!

‘Yet, whilst the Fates afford me vital breath,
 I will it spend in speaking of thy praise, 310

* ‘Noble breast:’ Sir Philip Sidney.

And sing to thee, until that timely death 311
 By Heaven's doom do end my earthly days:
 Thereto do thou my humble spirit raise,
 And into me that sacred breath inspire,
 Which thou there breathest perfect and entire.

'Then will I sing; but who can better sing
 Than thine own sister,* peerless lady bright,
 Which to thee sings with deep heart's sorrowing,
 Sorrowing tempered with dear delight,
 That her to hear I feel my feeble sprite 320
 Robbed of sense, and ravished with joy;
 O sad joy, made of mourning and annoy!

'Yet will I sing; but who can better sing
 Than thou thyself, thine own self's valiance,
 That, whilst thou livedst, madest the forests ring,
 And fields resound, and flocks to leap and dance,
 And shepherds leave their lambs unto mischance,
 To run thy shrill Arcadian pipe to hear:
 O happy were those days, thrice happy were!

'But now more happy thou, and wretched we, 330
 Which want the wonted sweetness of thy voice,
 Whiles thou now in Elysian fields so free,
 With Orpheus, and with Linus, and the choice
 Of all that ever did in rhymes rejoice,
 Conversest, and dost hear their heavenly lays,
 And they hear thine, and thine do better praise.

'So there thou livest, singing evermore,
 And here thou livest, being ever sung
 Of us, which living loved thee afore,

* 'Thine own sister:' Mary, Countess of Pembroke, who published her brother's 'Arcadia.'

And now thee worship mongst that blessed throng
 Of heavenly poets and heroës strong. 341
 So thou both here and there immortal art,
 And everywhere through excellent desart.

‘But such as neither of themselves can sing,
 Nor yet are sung of others for reward,
 Die in obscure oblivion, as the thing
 Which never was; ne ever with regard
 Their names shall of the later age be heard,
 But shall in rusty darkness ever lie,
 Unless they mentioned be with infamy. 350

‘What booteth it to have been rich alive?
 What to be great? what to be gracious?
 When after death no token doth survive
 Of former being in this mortal house,
 But sleeps in dust, dead and inglorious
 Like beast, whose breath but in his nostrils is,
 And hath no hope of happiness or bliss.

‘How many great ones may remember’d be,
 Which in their days most famously did flourish;
 Of whom no word we hear, nor sign now see, 360
 But as things wip’d out with a sponge do perish,
 Because they living cared not to cherish
 No gentle wits, through pride or covetise,
 Which might their names for ever memorise!

‘Provide therefore (ye princes) whilst ye live,
 That of the Muses ye may friended be,
 Which unto men eternity do give;
 For they be daughters of Dame Memory
 And Jove, the father of Eternity,
 And do those men in golden thrones repose, 370
 Whose merits they to glorify do chose.

'The seven-fold iron gates of grisly Hell, 372
 And horrid house of sad Proserpina,
 They able are with power of mighty spell
 To break, and thence the souls to bring away
 Out of dread darkness to eternal day,
 And them immortal make which else would die
 In foul forgetfulness, and nameless lie.

'So whilome raised they the puissant brood
 Of golden-girt Alcmena, for great merit, 380
 Out of the dust, to which the Oetæan wood
 Had him consum'd, and spent his vital spirit,
 To highest heaven, where now he doth inherit
 All happiness in Hebe's silver bower,
 Chosen to be her dearest paramour.

'So raised they eke fair Leda's warlike twins,
 And interchanged life unto them lent,
 That, when th' one dies, the other then begins
 To shew in heaven his brightness orient;
 And they, for pity of the sad wayment,¹ 390
 Which Orpheus for Eurydice did make,
 Her back again to life sent for his sake.

'So happy are they, and so fortunate,
 Whom the Pierian sacred Sisters love,
 That freed from bands of implacable fate,
 And power of death, they live for aye above,
 Where mortal wrecks their bliss may not remove:
 But with the gods, for former virtue's meed,
 On Nectar and Ambrosia do feed.

'For deeds do die, however nobly done, 400
 And thoughts of men do as themselves decay:
 But wise words taught in numbers for to run,

Recorded by the Muses, live for aye ; 403
 Ne may with storming showers be wash'd away,
 Ne bitter-breathing winds with harmful blast,
 Nor age, nor envy, shall them ever wast.

'In vain do earthly princes then, in vain,
 Seek with pyramides, to heaven aspired ;
 Or huge colosses, built with costly pain ;
 Or brasen pillars, never to be fired ; 410
 Or shrines, made of the metal most desired ;
 To make their memories for ever live :
 For how can mortal immortality give ?

'Such one Mausolus made, the world's great wonder,
 But now no remnant doth thereof remain :
 Such one Marcellus, but was torn with thunder :
 Such one Lisippus, but is worn with rain :
 Such one King Edmond, but was rent for gain.
 All such vain monuments of earthly mass,
 Devour'd of Time, in time to nought do pass. 420

'But Fame with golden wings aloft doth fly,
 Above the reach of ruinous decay,
 And with brave plumes doth beat the azure sky,
 Admir'd of base-born men from far away :
 Then whoso will with virtuous deeds assay
 To mount to heaven, on Pegasus must ride,
 And with sweet poets' verse be glorified.

'For not to have been dipt in Lethe lake,
 Could save the son of Thetis from to die ;
 But that blind Bard did him immortal make 430
 With verses, dipt in dew of Castaly :
 Which made the Eastern conqueror to cry,
 O fortunate young man ! whose virtue found
 So brave a trump, thy noble acts to sound.

¹ Declare,
esteem.

‘Therefore in this half happy I do read¹ 435
 Good Melibæ,* that hath a poet got
 To sing his living praises being dead,
 Deserving never here to be forgot,
 In spite of envy, that his deeds would spot:
 Since whose decease, learning lies unregarded, 440
 And men of arms do wander unrewarded.

‘Those two be those two great calamities,
 That long ago did grieve the noble sprite
 Of Solomon with great indignities;
 Who whilome was alive the wisest wight.
 But now his wisdom is disproved quite;
 For he, that now wields all things at his will,
 Scorns th’ one and th’ other in his deeper skill.

‘O grief of griefs! O gall of all good hearts!
 To see that virtue should despised be 450
 Of him, that first was raised for virtuous parts,
 And now, broad spreading like an aged tree,
 Lets none shoot up that nigh him planted be.
 O let the man, of whom the Muse is scorned,
 Nor alive nor dead be of the Muse adorned!†

‘O vile world’s trust! that with such vain illusion
 Hath so wise men bewitch’d, and overkest,
 That they see not the way of their confusion:
 O vainness! to be added to the rest,
 That do my soul with inward grief infest: 460
 Let them behold the piteous fall of me,
 And in my case their own ensample see.

* ‘Melibæ:’ Sir Francis Walsingham, who died in 1590, is Melibæ;
 the ‘poet,’ is Thomas Watson.

† The two preceding stanzas are thought to refer to Burghley’s neglect
 of our poet.

‘ And whoso else that sits in highest seat 463
 Of this world’s glory, worshipped of all,
 Ne feareth change of time, nor fortune’s threat,
 Let him behold the horror of my fall,
 And his own end unto remembrance call;
 That of like ruin he may warned be,
 And in himself be mov’d to pity me.’—

Thus having ended all her piteous plaint, 470
 With doleful shrieks she vanished away,
 That I through inward sorrow waxen faint,
 And all astonished with deep dismay
 For her departure, had no word to say;
 But sat long time in senseless sad affright,
 Looking still, if I might of her have sight.

Which when I missed, having looked long,
 My thought returned grieved home again,
 Renewing her complaint with passion strong,
 For ruth of that same woman’s piteous pain; 480
 Whose words recording in my troubled brain,
 I felt such anguish wound my feeble heart,
 That frozen horror ran through every part.

So inly grieving in my groaning breast,
 And deeply musing at her doubtful speech,
 Whose meaning much I laboured forth to wrest,
 Being above my slender reason’s reach;
 At length, by demonstration me to teach,
 Before mine eyes strange sights presented were,
 Like tragic pageants seeming to appear. 490

I.

I saw an image, all of massy gold,
 Placed on high upon an altar fair,

That all, which did the same from far behold, 498
 Might worship it, and fall on lowest stair.
 Not that great idol might with this compare,
 To which th' Assyrian tyrant would have made
 The holy brethren falsely to have pray'd.
 But th' altar, on the which this image staid,
 Was (O great pity!) built of brickle¹ clay,
 That shortly the foundation decay'd, 500
 With showers of heaven and tempests worn away;
 Then down it fell, and low in ashes lay,
 Scorned of every one, which by it went;
 That I, it seeing, dearly did lament.

¹ Brittle.

II.

Next unto this a stately tower appeared,
 Built all of richest stone that might be found,
 And nigh unto the Heavens in height upreared,
 But placed on a plot of sandy ground:
 Not that great tower, which is so much renown'd
 For tongues' confusion in Holy Writ, 510
 King Ninus' work, might be compar'd to it.
 But O vain labours of terrestrial wit,
 That builds so strongly on so frail a soil,
 As with each storm does fall away, and flit,
 And gives the fruit of all your travail's toil,
 To be the prey of Time, and Fortune's spoil!
 I saw this tower fall suddenly to dust,
 That nigh with grief thereof my heart was brust.

III.

Then did I see a pleasant Paradise,
 Full of sweet flowers and daintiest delights, 520
 Such as on earth man could not more devise,
 With pleasures choice to feed his cheerful sprites:
 Not that, which Merlin by his magic sleights
 Made for the gentle squire, to entertain

His fair Belpheöbe, could this garden stain. 525
 But O short pleasure bought with lasting pain!
 Why will hereafter any flesh delight
 In earthly bliss, and joy in pleasures vain,
 Since that I saw this garden wasted quite,
 That where it was scarce seemed any sight? 530
 That I, which once that beauty did behold,
 Could not from tears my melting eyes withhold.

IV.

Soon after this a giant came in place,
 Of wondrous power, and of exceeding stature,
 That none durst view the horror of his face,
 Yet was he mild of speech, and meek of nature:
 Not he, which in despite of his Creator
 With railing terms defied the Jewish host,
 Might with this mighty one in hugeness boast;
 For from the one he could to th' other coast 540
 Stretch his strong thighs, and th' ocean overstride,
 And reach his hand into his enemies' host.
 But see the end of pomp and fleshly pride!
 One of his feet unwares from him did slide,
 That down he fell into the deep abyss,
 Where drown'd with him is all his earthly bliss.

V.

Then did I see a bridge, made all of gold,
 Over the sea from one to other side,
 Withouten prop or pillar it t' uphold,
 But like the coloured rainbow arched wide: 550
 Not that great arch,* which Trajan edified,¹
 To be a wonder to all age ensuing,
 Was matchable to this in equal viewing.
 But (ah!) what boots it to see earthly thing
 In glory or in greatness to excel,

¹ Built.

* 'Arch:.' the bridge over the Danube.

Sith time doth greatest things to ruin bring? 556
 This goodly bridge, one foot not fast'ned well,
 Gan fail, and all the rest down shortly fell,
 Ne of so brave a building ought remained,
 That grief thereof my spirit greatly pained. 560

VI.

I saw two bears,* as white as any milk,
 Lying together in a mighty cave,
 Of mild aspect, and hair as soft as silk,
 That savage nature seemed not to have,
 Nor after greedy spoil of blood to crave:
 Two fairer beasts might not elsewhere be found,
 Although the compast¹ world were sought around.
 But what can long abide above this ground
 In state of bliss, or stedfast happiness?
 The cave, in which these bears lay sleeping sound,
 Was but of earth, and with her weightiness 571
 Upon them fell, and did unwares oppress;
 That, for great sorrow of their sudden fate,
 Henceforth all world's felicity I hate.

¹ Round.

¶ Much was I troubled in my heavy sprite,
 At sight of these sad spectacles forepast,
 That all my senses were bereaved quite,
 And I in mind remained sore aghast,
 Distraught² twixt fear and pity; when at last
 I heard a voice, which loudly to me called, 580
 That with the sudden shrill I was appalled.

² Distracted.

Behold (said it) and by ensample see,
 That all is vanity and grief of mind,
 Ne other comfort in this world can be,
 But hope of heaven, and heart to God inclin'd;

* 'Two bears:' Leicester and his brother.

For all the rest must needs be left behind: 586
 With that it bade me, to the other side
 To cast mine eye, where other sights I spied.

I.

Upon that famous river's further shore,
 There stood a snowy swan of heavenly hue, 590
 And gentle kind, as ever fowl afore;
 A fairer one in all the goodly crew
 Of white Strymonian brood might no man view:
 There he most sweetly sung the prophecy
 Of his own death in doleful elegy.
 At last, when all his mourning melody
 He ended had, that both the shores resounded,
 Feeling the fit that him forewarn'd to die,
 With lofty flight above the earth he bounded,
 And out of sight to highest heaven mounted, 600
 Where now he is become an heavenly sign;
 There now the joy is his, here sorrow mine.

II.

Whilst thus I looked, lo! adown the lee¹ 1 Stream.
 I saw an harp strung all with silver twine,
 And made of gold and costly ivory,
 Swimming, that whilome² seemed to have been 2 Formerly.
 The harp on which Dan Orpheus was seen
 Wild beasts and forests after him to lead,
 But was th' harp of Philisides* now dead.
 At length out of the river it was rear'd, 610
 And borne above the clouds to be divin'd,
 Whilst all the way most heavenly noise was heard
 Of the strings, stirred with the warbling wind,
 That wrought both joy and sorrow in my mind:
 So now in heaven a sign it doth appear,
 The Harp well known beside the Northern Bear.

* 'Philisides:' Sir Philip Sidney.

III.

¹ Ebony. Soon after this I saw on th' other side 617
 A curious coffer made of heben¹ wood,
 That in it did most precious treasure hide,
 Exceeding all this baser worldës good:
 Yet through the overflowing of the flood
 It almost drowned was, and done to nought,
 That sight thereof much griev'd my pensive thought.
 At length, when most in peril it was brought,
 Two angels, down descending with swift flight,
 Out of the swelling stream it lightly caught,
 And twixt their blessed arms it carried quite
 Above the reach of any living sight:
 So now it is transform'd into that star,
 In which all heavenly treasures locked are. 630

IV.

² Taken. Looking aside I saw a stately bed,
 Adorned all with costly cloth of gold,
 That might for any prince's couch be red,²
 And deck'd with dainty flowers, as if it shold
 Be for some bride, her joyous night to hold:
 Therein a goodly virgin sleeping lay;
 A fairer wight saw never summer's day.
 I heard a voice that called far away,
 And her awaking bade her quickly dight,
³ Array. For lo! her bridegroom was in ready ray³ 640
 To come to her, and seek her love's delight:
 With that she started up with cheerful sight,
 When suddenly both bed and all was gone,
 And I in languor left there all alone.

V.

Still as I gazed, I beheld where stood
 A knight all arm'd, upon a winged steed,
 The same that was bred of Medusa's blood,

On which Dan Perseus, born of heavenly seed, 648
 The fair Andromeda from peril freed:
 Full mortally this knight ywounded was,
 That streams of blood forth flowed on the grass:
 Yet was he deck'd (small joy to him alas!)
 With many garlands for his victories,
 And with rich spoils, which late he did purchase
 Through brave achievements from his enemies:
 Fainting at last through long infirmities,
 He smote his steed, that straight to heaven him bore,
 And left me here his loss for to deplore.

VI.

Lastly I saw an ark* of purest gold
 Upon a brazen pillar standing high, 660
 Which th' ashes seem'd of some great prince to hold,
 Enclosed therein for endless memory
 Of him, whom all the world did glorify:
 Seemed the heavens with the earth did disagree,
 Whether should of those ashes keeper be.
 At last me seem'd wing-footed Mercury,
 From heaven descending to appease their strife,
 The ark did bear with him above the sky,
 And to those ashes gave a second life,
 To live in heaven, where happiness is rife: 670
 At which the earth did grieve exceedingly,
 And I for dole¹ was almost like to die.

¹ Grief.

L'ENVOY.

Immortal spirit of Philisides,
 Which now art made the heavens' ornament,
 That whilome wast the world's chief'st richés;
 Give leave to him that lov'd thee to lament

* 'Ark' and 'ashes:' referring to the fact of Sir Philip Sidney's corpse being brought home to England.

¹ Taken.

His loss, by lack of thee to heaven hent,¹
And with last duties of this broken verse,
Broken with sighs, to deck thy sable herse !
And ye, fair Lady! th' honour of your days,
And glory of the world, your high thoughts' scorn ;
Vouchsafe this monument of his last praise
With some few silver-dropping tears t' adorn ;
And as ye be of heavenly offspring born,
So unto heaven let your high mind aspire,
And loathe this dross of sinful world's desire !

677

77

5

THE
TEARS OF THE MUSES.

BY ED. SP.

DEDICATED TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE LADY STRANGE.

1591.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE LADY STRANGE.

Most brave and noble Lady, the things, that make ye so much honoured of the world as ye be, are such, as (without my simple lines' testimony) are throughly known to all men; namely, your excellent beauty, your virtuous behaviour, and your noble match with that most honourable Lord, the very pattern of right nobility: But the causes, for which ye have thus deserved of me to be honoured, (if honour it be at all,) are, both your particular bounties, and also some private bands of affinity, which it hath pleased your Ladyship to acknowledge. Of which whenas I found myself in no part worthy, I devised this last slender means, both to intimate my humble affection to your Ladyship, and also to make the same universally known to the world; that by honouring you they might know me, and by knowing me they might honour you. Vouchsafe, noble Lady, to accept this simple remembrance, though not worthy of yourself, yet such, as perhaps by good acceptance thereof ye may hereafter cull out a more meet and memorable evidence of your own excellent deserts. So recommending the same to your Ladyship's good liking, I humbly take leave.

Your Ladyship's humbly ever,
ED. SP.

THE
TEARS OF THE MUSES.

REHEARSE to me, ye sacred Sisters nine,
The golden brood of great Apollo's wit,
Those piteous plaints and sorrowful sad tine,¹
Which late ye poured forth as ye did sit
Beside the silver springs of Helicon,
Making your music of heart-breaking moan!

¹ Grief.

For since the time that Phœbus' foolish son
Ythundered, through Jove's avengeful wrath,
For traversing the chariot of the Sun
Beyond the compass of his 'pointed path,
Of you his mournful sisters was lamented,
Such mournful tunes were never since invented.

10

Nor since that fair Calliope did lose
Her loved Twins, the darlings of her joy,
Her Palici, whom her unkindly foes,
The Fatal Sisters, did for spite destroy,
Whom all the Muses did bewail long space;
Was ever heard such wailing in this place.

For all their groves, which with the heavenly noises
Of their sweet instruments were wont to sound,
And th' hollow hills, from which their silver voices

20

Were wont redoubled echoes to rebound, 22
 Did now rebound with nought but rueful cries,
 And yelling shrieks thrown up into the skies.

The trembling streams which wont in channels clear
 To rumble gently down with murmur soft,
 And were by them right tuneful taught to bear
 A base's part amongst their consorts oft;
 Now, forc'd to overflow with brackish tears,
 With troublous noise did dull their dainty ears. 30

The joyous Nymphs and lightfoot Faeries
 Which thither came to hear their music sweet,
 And to the measure of their melodies
 Did learn to move their nimble-shifting feet;
 Now, hearing them so heavily lament,
 Like heavily lamenting from them went.

And all that else was wont to work delight
 Through the divine infusion of their skill,
 And all that else seem'd fair and fresh in sight,
 So made by nature for to serve their will, 40
 Was turned now to dismal heaviness,
 Was turned now to dreadful ugliness.

Ah me! what thing on earth that all thing breeds,
 Might be the cause of so impatient plight?
 What fury, or what fiend, with felon deeds
 Hath stirred up so mischievous despite?
 Can grief then enter into heavenly hearts,
 And pierce immortal breasts with mortal smarts?

Vouchsafe ye then, whom only it concerns,
 To me those secret causes to display; 50
 For none but you, or who of you it learns,

Can rightfully aread¹ so doleful lay.
 Begin, thou eldest Sister of the crew,
 And let the rest in order thee ensue.²

52 ¹ Declare.² Follow.

CLIO.*

Hear, thou great Father of the gods on high,
 That most art dreaded for thy thunder darts;
 And thou, our Sire, that reignst in Castaly
 And Mount Parnass, the god of goodly arts:
 Hear, and behold the miserable state
 Of us thy daughters, doleful desolate.

60

Behold the foul reproach and open shame,
 The which is day by day unto us wrought
 By such as hate the honour of our name,
 The foes of learning and each gentle thought;
 They, not contented us themselves to scorn,
 Do seek to make us of the world forlorn.

Ne only they that dwell in lowly dust,
 The sons of darkness and of ignorance;
 But they, whom thou, great Jove, by doom unjust
 Didst to the type of honour erst advance;
 They now, puff'd up with sdeignful insolence,
 Despise the brood of blessed Sapience.

70

The sectaries of my celestial skill,
 That wont to be the world's chief ornament,
 And learned imps³ that wont to shoot up still,
 And grow to height of kingdoms' government,
 They underkeep, and with their spreading arms
 Do beat their buds, that perish through their harms.

³ Shoots,
grafts.

* 'Clio:' Muse of History.

It most behoves the honourable race
 Of mighty peers true wisdom to sustain,
 And with their noble countenance to grace
 The learned foreheads, without gifts or gain:
 Or rather learn'd themselves behoves to be;
 That is the garland of nobility.

79

But (ah!) all otherwise they do esteem
 Of th' heavenly gift of wisdom's influence,
 And to be learned it a base thing deem:
 Base minded they that want intelligence;
 For God himself for wisdom most is praised,
 And men to God thereby are nighest raised.

90

But they do only strive themselves to raise
 Through pompous pride, and foolish vanity;
 In th' eyes of people they put all their praise,
 And only boast of arms and ancestry:
 But virtuous deeds, which did those arms first give
 To their grandsires, they care not to achieve.

So I, that do all noble feats profess
 To register, and sound in trump of gold;
 Through their bad doings, or base slothfulness,
 Find nothing worthy to be writ, or told:
 For better far it were to hide their names,
 Than telling them to blazon out their blames.

100

So shall succeeding ages have no light
 Of things forepast, nor monuments of time;
 And all that in this world is worthy hight
 Shall die in darkness, and lie hid in slime!
 Therefore I mourn with deep heart's sorrowing,
 Because I nothing noble have to sing.—

With that she rain'd such store of streaming tears,
 That could have made a stony heart to weep; 110
 And all her sisters rent their golden heares,
 And their fair faces with salt humour steep.
 So ended she : and then the next in rew¹
 Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensue.

¹ Row,
 order.

MELPOMENE.*

O! who shall pour into my swollen eyes
 A sea of tears that never may be dried,
 A brazen voice that may with shrilling cries
 Pierce the dull heavens and fill the aiër wide,
 And iron sides that sighing may endure,
 To wail the wretchedness of world impure? 120

Ah! wretched world, the den of wickedness,
 Deform'd with filth and foul iniquity;
 Ah! wretched world, the house of heaviness,
 Fill'd with the wreaks of mortal misery;
 Ah! wretched world, and all that is therein,
 The vassals of God's wrath, and slaves to sin.

Most miserable creature under sky
 Man without understanding doth appear;
 For all this world's affliction he thereby,
 And Fortune's freaks, is wisely taught to bear: 130
 Of wretched life the only joy she is,
 And th' only comfort in calamities.

She arms the breast with constant patience
 Against the bitter throws of dolour's darts :
 She solaceth with rules of sapience
 The gentle minds, in midst of worldly smarts :

* 'Melpomene:' Muse of Tragedy.

When he is sad, she seeks to make him merry, 137
And doth refresh his sprites when they be weary.

But he that is of reason's skill bereft,
And wants the staff of wisdom him to stay, 140
Is like a ship in midst of tempest left
Withouten helm or pilot her to sway:
Full sad and dreadful is that ship's event;
So is the man that wants intendiment.¹

¹ Under-
standing.

Why then do foolish men so much despise
The precious store of this celestial riches?
Why do they banish us, that patronise
The name of learning? Most unhappy wretches!
The which lie drowned in deep wretchedness,
Yet do not see their own unhappiness. 150

My part it is and my professed skill
The Stage with tragic buskin to adorn,
And fill the scene with plaint and outcries shrill
Of wretched persons, to misfortune born:
But none more tragic matter I can find
Than this, of men depriv'd of sense and mind.

For all man's life me seems a tragedy,
Full of sad sights and sore catastrophes;
First coming to the world with weeping eye,
Where all his days, like dolorous trophees, 160
Are heap'd with spoils of fortune and of fear,
And he at last laid forth on baleful bier.

So all with rueful spectacles is fill'd,
Fit for Megaera or Persephone;
But I that in true tragedies am skill'd,
The flower of wit, find nought to busy me:

Therefore I mourn, and pitifully moan, 167
Because that mourning matter I have none.—

Then gan she wofully to wail, and wring
Her wretched hands in lamentable wise; 170
And all her sisters, thereto answering,
Threw forth loud shrieks and dreary doleful cries.
So rested she: and then the next in rew
Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensue.

THALIA.*

Where be the sweet delights of learning's treasure,
That wont with comic sock to beautify
The painted theatres, and fill with pleasure
The listeners' eyes and ears with melody;
In which I late was wont to reign as queen,
And mask in mirth with Graces well beseen? 180

O! all is gone; and all that goodly glee,
Which wont to be the glory of gay wits,
Is laid abed, and no where now to see;
And in her room unseemly Sorrow sits,
With hollow brows and grisly countenance,
Marring my joyous gentle dalliance.

And him beside sits ugly Barbarism,
And brutish Ignorance, ycrept of late
Out of dread darkness of the deep abysm,
Where being bred, he light and heaven does hate:
They in the minds of men now tyrannise, 191
And the fair scene with rudeness foul disguise.

All places they with folly have possest,
And with vain toys the vulgar entertain;

* 'Thalia:' Muse of Comedy.

¹ Formerly.
² Counterfeiting.

But me have banished, with all the rest 195
 That whilome¹ went to wait upon my train,
 Fine Counterfesance,² and unhurtful Sport,
 Delight, and Laughter, deck'd in seemly sort.

All these, and all that else the comic stage
 With seasoned wit and goodly pleasance graced, 200
 By which man's life in his likest image
 Was limned forth, are wholly now defaced;
 And those sweet wits, which wont the like to
 frame,
 Are now despis'd, and made a laughing game.

³ Encounter, trial of skill.

⁴ Drowned.

And he, the man whom Nature self had made
 To mock herself, and Truth to imitate,
 With kindly counter³ under mimic shade,
 Our pleasant Willy,* ah! is dead of late:
 With whom all joy and jolly merriment
 Is also deaded, and in dolour drent.⁴ 210

Instead thereof scoffing Scurrility,
 And scornful Folly with Contempt is crept,
 Rolling in rhymes of shameless ribaldry
 Without regard, or due decorum kept;
 Each idle wit at will presumes to make,
 And doth the learned's task upon him take.

But that same gentle spirit, from whose pen
 Large streams of honey and sweet nectar flow,
 Scorning the boldness of such base-born men,
 Which dare their follies forth so rashly throw; 220
 Doth rather choose to sit in idle cell,
 Than so himself to mockery to sell.

* 'Our pleasant Willy:' Shakspeare is here alluded to.

So am I made the servant of the many, 223
 And laughingstock of all that list to scorn,
 Not honoured nor cared for of any;
 But loath'd of losels¹ as a thing forlorn:
 Therefore I mourn and sorrow with the rest,
 Until my cause of sorrow be redrest.—

¹ Worth-
less per-
sons.

Therewith she loudly did lament and shriek,
 Pouring forth streams of tears abundantly; 230
 And all her sisters, with compassion like,
 The breaches of her singulfs² did supply.
 So rested she: and then the next in row
 Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensue.

² Sobs.

EUTERPE.*

Like as the darling of the Summer's pride,
 Fair Philomele, when Winter's stormy wrath
 The goodly fields, that erst so gay were dyed
 In colours diverse, quite despoiled hath,
 All comfortless doth hide her cheerless head
 During the time of that her widowhead: 240

So we, that erst were wont in sweet accord
 All places with our pleasant notes to fill,
 Whilst favourable times did us afford
 Free liberty to chant our charms³ at will;
 All comfortless upon the bared bough,
 Like woful culvers,⁴ do sit wailing now.

³ (*Car-*
mina,)
songs.

⁴ Doves.

For far more bitter storm than winter stowre⁵
 The beauty of the world hath lately wasted,
 And those fresh buds, which wont so fair to flower,
 Hath marred quite, and all their blossoms blasted; 250

⁵ Violence.

* 'Euterpe:' Muse of Music.

And those young plants, which wont with fruit t'
 abound, 251
 Now without fruit or leaves are to be found.

A stony coldness hath benumb'd the sense
 And lively spirits of each living wight,
 And dimm'd with darkness their intelligence,
 Darkness more than Cimmerians' daily night:
 And monstrous Error, flying in the air,
 Hath marr'd the face of all that seemed fair.

Image of hellish horror, Ignorance,
 Born in the bosom of the black abyss, 260
 And fed with Furies' milk for sustenance
 Of his weak infancy, begot amiss
 By yawning Sloth on his own mother Night;
 So he his son's both sire and brother hight.¹

¹ Is called.

He, arm'd with blindness and with boldness stout,
 (For blind is bold,) hath our fair light defaced;
 And, gathering unto him a ragged rout
 Of Fauns and Satyrs, hath our dwellings raced;²
 And our chaste bowers, in which all virtue reigned,
 With brutishness and beastly filth hath stained. 270

² Razed.

The sacred springs of horsefoot Helicon,
 So oft bedewed with our learned lays,
 And speaking streams of pure Castalion,
 The famous witness of our wonted praise,
 They trampled have with their foul footings' trade,
 And like to troubled puddles have them made.

Our pleasant groves, which planted were with pains,
 That with our music wont so oft to ring,
 And arbours sweet, in which the shepherds' swains

Were wont so oft their pastorals to sing, 280
 They have cut down, and all their pleasance
 marr'd,
 That now no pastoral is to be heard.

Instead of them, foul goblins and shriek-owls
 With fearful howling do all places fill;
 And feeble Echo now laments, and howls,
 The dreadful accents of their outcries shrill.
 So all is turned into wilderness,
 Whilst Ignorance the Muses doth oppress.

And I, whose joy was erst with spirit full
 To teach the warbling pipe to sound aloft, 290
 (My spirits now dismay'd with sorrow dull,
 Do moan my misery with silence soft.
 Therefore I mourn and wail incessantly,
 Till please the heavens afford me remedy.—

Therewith she wailed with exceeding woe,
 And piteous lamentation did make;
 And all her sisters, seeing her do so,
 With equal plaints her sorrow did partake.
 So rested she: and then the next in rew
 Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensue. 300

TERPSICHORE.*

Whoso hath in the lap of soft Delight
 Been long time lull'd, and fed with pleasures sweet,
 Fearless through his own fault or Fortune's spite
 To tumble into sorrow and regret,
 If chance him fall into calamity,
 Finds greater burthen of his misery.

* 'Terpsichore:' Muse of Dancing.

So we that erst in joyance did abound, 308
 And in the bosom of all bliss did sit,
 Like Virgin Queens, with laurel garlands crown'd,
 For virtue's meed and ornament of wit;
 Sith Ignorance our kingdom did confound,
 Be now become most wretched wights on ground.

And in our royal thrones, which lately stood
 In th' hearts of men to rule them carefully,
 He now hath placed his accursed brood,
 By him begotten of foul Infamy;
 Blind Error, scornful Folly, and base Spite,
 Who hold by wrong that we should have by right.

They to the vulgar sort now pipe and sing,
 And make them merry with their fooleries; 320
 They cheerly chant, and rhymes at random fling,
 The fruitful spawn of their rank fantasies;
 They feed the ears of fools with flattery,
 And good men blame, and losels¹ magnify.

¹ Worth-
less per-
sons.

All places they do with their toys possess
 And reign in liking of the multitude;
 The Schools they fill with fond newfangleness,
 And sway in Court with pride and rashness rude;
 Mongst simple shepherds they do boast their skill,
 And say their music matcheth Phoebus' quill. 330

The noble hearts to pleasures they allure,
 And tell their Prince that learning is but vain;
 Fair ladies' loves they spot with thoughts impure,
 And gentle minds with lewd delights distain;
 Clerks² they to loathly idleness entice,
 And fill their books with discipline of vice.

² Scholars.

So everywhere they rule, and tyrannise, 337
 For their usurped kingdom's maintenance,
 The whiles we silly maids, whom they despise
 And with reproachful scorn discountenance,
 From our own native heritage exiled,
 Walk through the world of every one reviled.

Nor any one doth care to call us in,
 Or once vouchsafeth us to entertain,
 Unless some one perhaps of gentle kin,
 For pity's sake, compassion our pain,
 And yield us some relief in this distress;
 Yet to be so reliev'd is wretchedness.

So wander we all careful comfortless,
 Yet none doth care to comfort us at all; 350
 So seek we help our sorrow to redress,
 Yet none vouchsafes to answer to our call;
 Therefore we mourn and pitiless complain,
 Because none living pitieth our pain.—

With that she wept and woefully waymented,¹
 That naught on earth her grief might pacify;
 And all the rest her doleful din augmented
 With shrieks, and groans, and grievous agony.
 So ended she: and then the next in rew
 Began her piteous plaint, as doth ensue. 360

¹ Lament-
ed.

ERATO.*

Ye gentle spirits! breathing from above,
 Where ye in Venus' silver bower were bred,
 Thoughts half divine, full of the fire of love,
 With beauty kindled, and with pleasure fed,

* 'Erato:' Muse of Lyric and Erotic Poetry.

Which ye now in security possess, 365
Forgetful of your former heaviness;

Now change the tenor of your joyous lays,
With which ye use your loves to deify,
And blazon forth an earthly beauty's praise
Above the compass of the arched sky: 370
Now change your praises into piteous cries,
And eulogies turn into elegies.

¹ Pains.

Such as ye wont, whenas those bitter stounds¹
Of raging love first gan you to torment,
And launch your hearts with lamentable wounds
Of secret sorrow and sad languishment,
Before your loves did take you unto grace;
Those now renew, as fitter for this place.

For I that rule, in measure moderate,
The tempest of that stormy passion, 380
And use to paint in rhymes the troublous state
Of lovers' life in likest fashion,
Am put from practice of my kindly skill,
Banish'd by those that love with lewdness fill.

Love wont to be schoolmaster of my skill,
And the deviceful matter of my song;
Sweet Love devoid of villany or ill,
But pure and spotless, as at first he sprong
Out of th' Almighty's bosom, where he nests;
From thence infused into mortal breasts. 390

Such high conceit of that celestial fire,
The base-born brood of Blindness cannot guess,
Ne ever dare their dunghill thoughts aspire
Unto so lofty pitch of perfectness,

But rhyme at riot, and do rage in love; 395
Yet little wot what doth thereto behove.

Fair Cytheree, the mother of delight,
And queen of beauty, now thou mayst go pack;
For lo! thy kingdom is defaced quite,
Thy sceptre rent, and power put to wrack; 400
And thy gay son, the winged god of Love,
May now go prune¹ his plumes like ruffled² dove.

¹ Trim.
² Ruffled.

And ye three Twins, to light by Venus brought,
The sweet companions of the Muses late,
From whom whatever thing is goodly thought,
Doth borrow grace, the fancy to aggrate;³
Go beg with us, and be companions still, 3 Charm.
As heretofore of good, so now of ill.

For neither you nor we shall any more
Find entertainment or in Court or School: 410
For that, which was accounted heretofore
The learned's meed, is now lent to the fool;
He sings of love, and maketh loving lays,
And they him hear, and they him highly praise.—

With that she poured forth a brackish flood
Of bitter tears, and made exceeding moan;
And all her sisters, seeing her sad mood,
With loud laments her answered all at one.
So ended she: and then the next in rew
Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensue. 420

CALLIOPE.*

To whom shall I my evil case complain,
Or tell the anguish of my inward smart,

* 'Calliope:' Muse of Epic Poetry.

Sith none is left to remedy my pain, 423
 Or deigns to pity a perplexed heart;
 But rather seeks my sorrow to augment
 With foul reproach, and cruel banishment ?

For they, to whom I used to apply
 The faithful service of my learned skill,
 The goodly offspring of Jove's progeny,
 That wont the world with famous acts to fill; 430
 Whose living praises in heroic style,
 It is my chief profession to compile;

They, all corrupted through the rust of time,
 That doth all fairest things on earth deface,
 Or through unnoble sloth, or sinful crime,
 That doth degenerate the noble race;
 Have both desire of worthy deeds forlorn,
 And name of learning utterly do scorn.

Ne do they care to have the ancestry
 Of the old Heroes memoriz'd anew; 440
 Ne do they care that late posterity
 Should know their names, or speak their praises due,
 But die forgot from whence at first they sprong,
 As they themselves shall be forgot ere long.

What boots it then to come from glorious
 Forefathers, or to have been nobly bred?
 What odds twixt Irus and old Inachus,
 Twixt best and worst, when both alike are dead;
 If none of neither mention should make,
 Nor out of dust their memories awake? 450

Or who would ever care to do brave deed,
 Or strive in virtue others to excel;

If none should yield him his deserved meed, 453
 Due praise, that is the spur of doing well?
 For if good were not praised more than ill,
 None would choose goodness of his own free
 will.

Therefore the Nurse of Virtue I am hight,¹ 1 Called.
 And golden Trumpet of Eternity,
 That lowly thoughts lift up to heaven's height,
 And mortal men have power to deify: 460
 Bacchus and Hercules I raised to heaven,
 And Charlemain amongst the starris seven.

But now I will my golden clarion rend,
 And will henceforth immortalize no more;
 Sith I no more find worthy to commend
 For prize of value, or for learned lore:
 For noble peers, whom I was wont to raise,
 Now only seek for pleasure, nought for praise.

Their great revenues all in sumptuous pride
 They spend, that nought to learning they may
 spare;
 And the rich fee, which poets wont divide, 470
 Now parasites and sycophants do share:
 Therefore I mourn and endless sorrow make,
 Both for myself and for my sisters' sake.—

With that she loudly gan to wail and shriek,
 And from her eyes a sea of tears did pour;
 And all her sisters, with compassion like,
 Did more increase the sharpness of her shower.
 So ended she: and then the next in rew
 Began her plaint, as doth herein ensue. 480

URANIA.*

What wrath of gods, or wicked influence 481
 Of stars conspiring wretched men t' afflict,
 Hath pour'd on earth this noyous pestilence,
 That mortal minds doth inwardly infect
 With love of blindness and of ignorance,
 To dwell in darkness without sovenance?¹

¹ Remem-
brance.

What difference twixt man and beast is left,
 When th' heavenly light of Knowledge is put out,
 And th' ornaments of Wisdom are bereft?
 Then wand'reth he in error and in doubt, 490
 Unweeting² of the danger he is in,
 Through flesh's frailty, and deceit of sin.

² Unknow-
ing.

In this wide world in which they wretches stray,
 It is the only comfort which they have,
 It is their light, their loadstar, and their day;
 But hell, and darkness, and the grisly grave,
 Is Ignorance, the enemy of Grace,
 That minds of men born heavenly doth debase.

Through Knowledge we behold the world's creation,
 How in his cradle first he foster'd was; 500
 And judge of Nature's cunning operation,
 How things she formed of a formless mass:
 By Knowledge we do learn ourselves to know,
 And what to man, and what to God, we owe.

From hence we mount aloft unto the sky,
 And look into the crystal firmament;
 There we behold the heavens' great hierarchy,

* 'Urania:' Muse of Astronomy, or of the Heavens generally.

The stars' pure light, the spheres' swift movëment,
 The spirits and intelligences fair, 509
 And angels waiting on th' Almighty's chaire.¹

¹ Chariot.

And there, with humble mind and high insight,
 Th' Eternal Maker's majesty we view,
 His love, his truth, his glory, and his might,
 And mercy more than mortal men can view.
 O sovereign Lord, O sovereign happiness,
 To see thee, and thy mercy measureless!

Such happiness have they, that do embrace
 The precepts of my heavenly discipline;
 But shame and sorrow and accursed case
 Have they, that scorn the school of Arts divine, 520
 And banish me, which do profess the skill
 To make men heavenly wise through humbled will.

However yet they me despise and spite,
 I feed on sweet contentment of my thought,
 And please myself with mine own self delight,
 In contemplation of things heavenly wrought:
 So, loathing earth, I look up to the sky,
 And, being driven hence, I thither fly.

Thence I behold the misery of men,
 Which want the bliss that wisdom would them breed,
 And like brute beasts do lie in loathsome den 531
 Of ghostly darkness, and of ghostly dreed:
 For whom I mourn, and for myself complain,
 And for my sisters eke whom they disdain.—

With that she wept and wail'd so piteously,
 As if her eyes had been two springing wells;

And all the rest, her sorrow to supply, 537
 Did throw forth shrieks and cries and dreary yells.
 So ended she: and then the next in rew
 Began her mournful plaint, as doth ensue.

POLYHYMNIA.*

A doleful case desires a doleful song,
 Without vain art or curious complements;
 And squalid Fortune, into baseness flong,
 Doth scorn the pride of wonted ornaments.
 Then fittest are these ragged rhymes for me,
 To tell my sorrows that exceeding be.

For the sweet numbers and melodious measures,
 With which I wont the winged words to tie,
 And make a tuneful diapase of pleasures,
 Now being let to run at liberty 550
 By those which have no skill to rule them right,
 Have now quite lost their natural delight.

Heaps of huge words uphoarded hideously,
 With horrid sound though having little sense,
 They think to be chief praise of poëtry;
 And, thereby wanting due intelligence,
 Have marr'd the face of goodly poësy,
 And made a monster of their fantasy.

¹ Formerly.

Whilome¹ in ages past none might profess
 But princes and high priests that secret skill; 560
 The sacred laws therein they wont express,
 And with deep oracles their verses fill:
 Then was she held in sovereign dignity,
 And made the nursling of nobility.

* 'Polyhymnia:' Muse of Eloquence and Mimicry.

But now nor prince nor priest doth her maintain, 565
 But suffer her profaned for to be
 Of the base vulgar, that with hands unclean
 Dares to pollute her hidden mystery;
 And treadeth under foot her holy things,
 Which was the care of kaisars and of kings. 570

One only lives, her age's ornament,
 And mirror of her Maker's majesty,
 That with rich bounty, and dear cherishment,
 Supports the praise of noble poësy;
 Ne only favours them which it profess,
 But is herself a peerless poëtess.

Most peerless Prince, most peerless poëtess,
 The true Pandora of all heavenly graces,
 Divine Elisa, sacred Emperess!
 Live she for ever, and her royal p'laces 580
 Be fill'd with praises of divinest wits,
 That her eternize with their heavenly writs!

Some few beside this sacred skill esteem,
 Admirers of her glorious excellence;
 Which, being lighten'd with her beauty's beam,
 Are thereby fill'd with happy influence,
 And lifted up above the worldës gaze,
 To sing with angels her immortal praise.

But all the rest, as born of savage brood,
 And having been with acorns always fed, 590
 Can no whit savour this celestial food,
 But with base thoughts are into blindness led,
 And kept from looking on the lightsome day:
 For whom I wail and weep all that I may.—

¹ Immediately.

² Affliction.

Eftsoons¹ such store of tears she forth did pour, 595
 As if she all to water would have gone ;
 And all her sisters, seeing her sad stowre,²
 Did weep and wail, and made exceeding moan,
 And all their learned instruments did break :
 The rest untold no living tongue can speak. 600

VIRGIL'S GNAT.

LONG SINCE DEDICATED

TO THE MOST NOBLE AND EXCELLENT LORD,

THE EARL OF LEICESTER,

LATE DECEASED.

1591.

LONG SINCE DEDICATED
TO THE MOST NOBLE AND EXCELLENT LORD,
THE EARL OF LEICESTER,

LATE DECEASED.

WRONG'D,* yet not daring to express my pain,
To you (great lord) the causer of my care,
In cloudy tears my case I thus complain
Unto yourself, that only privy are.

But if that any Ædipus unaware
Shall chance, through power of some divining sprite,
To read the secret of this riddle rare,
And know the purport of my evil plight;
Let him rest pleased with his own insight,
Ne further seek to glose upon the text:
For grief enough it is to grieved wight
To feel his fault, and not be further vext.

But what so by myself may not be shown,
May by this Gnat's complaint be easily known.

* Nothing is known with certainty respecting the wrong of which Spenser here complains. Upton conjectures, that the wrong of which the poet means to complain, may have been the Earl's displeasure owing to some officious sedulity in Spenser, who much desired to see his patron married to the Queen of England.

VIRGIL'S GNAT.*

I.

WE now have play'd, Augustus, wantonly,
 Tuning our song unto a tender Muse,
 And, like a cobweb weaving slenderly,
 Have only play'd: let thus much then excuse
 This Gnat's small poëm, that th' whole history
 Is but a jest, though envy it abuse:
 But who such sports and sweet delights doth blame,
 Shall lighter seem than this Gnat's idle name.

II.

Hereafter, when as season more secure
 Shall bring forth fruit, this Muse shall speak to thee
 In bigger notes, that may thy sense allure,
 And for thy worth frame some fit poesy:
 The golden offspring of Latona pure,
 And ornament of great Jove's progeny,
 Phœbus, shall be the author of my song,
 Playing on ivory harp with silver strong.¹

¹ Strung.

III.

He shall inspire my verse with gentle mood,
 Of poets prince, whether he woon² beside
 Fair Xanthus sprinkled with Chimæra's blood;
 Or in the woods of Astery abide;
 Or whereas mount Parnass, the Muses' brood,
 Doth his broad forehead like two horns divide,

² Dwell

* This is a translation of a poem called 'Culex,' attributed to Virgil.

And the sweet waves of sounding Castaly
With liquid foot doth slide down easily.

IV.

Wherefore, ye Sisters, which the glory be
Of the Pierian streams, fair Naiades,
Go too; and, dancing all in company,
Adorn that god: and thou holy Pales,
To whom the honest care of husbandry
Returneth by continual success,
Have care for to pursue his footing light [dight.
Through the wide woods, and groves, with green leaves

V.

Professing thee I lifted am aloft
Betwixt the forest wide and starry sky:
And thou, most dread Octavius, which oft
To learned wits giv'st courage worthily,
O come, thou sacred child, come sliding soft,
And favour my beginnings graciously:
For not these leaves do sing that dreadful stound,¹
When Giants' blood did stain Phlegrean ground.

¹ Assault.

VI.

Nor how th' half horsy people, Centaurs hight,
Fought with the bloody Lapithaes at board;
Nor how the East with tyrannous despite
Burnt th' Attic towers, and people slew with sword;
Nor how mount Athos through exceeding might
Was digged down; nor iron bands aboard
The Pontic sea by their huge navy cast;
My volume shall renown, so long since past.

VII.

Nor Hellespont trampled with horses' feet,
When flocking Persians did the Greeks affray:
But my soft Muse, as for her power more meet,
Delights (with Phœbus' friendly leave) to play

An easy running verse with tender feet.
 And thou, dread sacred child, to thee alway
 Let everlasting lightsome glory strive,
 Through the world's endless ages to survive.

VIII.

And let an happy room remain for thee
 'Mongst heavenly ranks, where blessed souls do rest;
 And let long lasting life with joyous glee,
 As thy due meed that thou deservest best,
 Hereafter many years remember'd be
 Amongst good men, of whom thou oft art blest;
 Live thou for ever in all happiness!
 But let us turn to our first business.

IX.

The fiery Sun was mounted now on height
 Up to the heavenly towers, and shot each where
 Out of his golden chariot glistening light;
 And fair Aurora, with her rosy hair,
 The hateful darkness now had put to flight;
 When as the shepherd, seeing day appear,
 His little goats 'gan drive out of their stalls,
 To feed abroad, where pasture best befalls.

X.

To an high mountain's top he with them went,
 Where thickest grass did clothe the open hills:
 They now amongst the woods and thickets ment,¹
 Now in the valleys wand'ring at their wills,
 Spread themselves far abroad through each descent;
 Some on the soft green grass feeding their fills;
 Some, clamb'ring through the hollow cliffs on high,
 Nibble the bushy shrubs which grow thereby.

¹ Mingled.

XI.

Others the utmost boughs of trees do crop,
 And brouse the woodbine twigs that freshly bud;

¹ Shrub.

This with full bit doth catch the utmost top
 Of some soft willow, or new grown stud;¹
 This with sharp teeth the bramble leaves doth lop,
 And chew the tender prickles in her cud;
 The whiles another high doth overlook
 Her own like image in a crystal brook.

XII.

² Tear.

O the great happiness, which shepherds have,
 Whoso loathes not too much the poor estate,
 With mind that ill use doth before deprave,
 Ne measures all things by the costly rate
 Of riotise, and semblants outward brave!
 No such sad cares, as wont to macerate²
 And rend the greedy minds of covetous men,
 Do ever creep into the shepherd's den.

XIII.

Ne cares he if the fleece, which him arrays,
 Be not twice steeped in Assyrian dye;
 Ne glistening of gold, which underlays
 The summer beams, do blind his gazing eye;
 Ne pictures' beauty, nor the glancing rays
 Of precious stones, whence no good cometh by;
 Ne yet his cup embost with imagery
 Of Bœtus' or of Alcon's vanity.

XIV.

³ Round-
ed.

Ne ought the whelky³ pearls esteemeth he,
 Which are from Indian seas brought far away;
 But with pure breast from careful sorrow free,
 On the soft grass his limbs doth oft display,
 In sweet spring time, when flowers' variety
 With sundry colours paints the sprinkled lay;
 There, lying all at ease from guile or spite,
 With pipe of fenny reeds doth him delight.

XV.

There he, lord of himself, with palm bedight,¹
 His looser locks doth wrap in wreath of vine:
 There his milk-dropping goats be his delight,
 And fruitful Pales, and the forest green,
 And darksome caves in pleasant valleys pight,²
 Whereas continual shade is to be seen,
 And where fresh springing wells, as crystal neat,
 Do always flow, to quench his thirsty heat.

¹ Adorn-
ed.² Placed.

XVI.

O! who can lead then a more happy life
 Than he, that with clean mind, and heart sincere,
 No greedy riches knows nor bloody strife,
 No deadly fight of warlike fleet doth fear;
 Ne runs in peril of foes' cruel knife,
 That in the sacred temples he may rear
 A trophy of his glittering spoils and treasure,
 Or may abound in riches above measure.

XVII.

Of him his God is worshipp'd with his scythe,
 And not with skill of craftsman polished:
 He joys in groves, and makes himself full blithe
 With sundry flowers in wild fields gathered;
 Ne frankincense he from Panchæa buy'th:
 Sweet Quiet harbours in his harmless head,
 And perfect Pleasure builds her joyous bower,
 Free from sad cares, that rich men's hearts devour.

XVIII.

This all his care, this all his whole endeavour,
 To this his mind and senses he doth bend,
 How he may flow in quiet's matchless treasure,
 Content with any food that God doth send;
 And how his limbs, resolv'd through idle leisure,
 Unto sweet sleep he may securely lend,

In some cool shadow from the scorching heat,
The whiles his flock their chewed cuds do eat.

XIX.

O Flocks, O Fauns, and O ye pleasant Springs
Of Tempe, where the country Nymphs are rife,
Through whose not costly care each shepherd sings
As merry notes upon his rustic fife,

¹ Hesiod.

As that Ascræan bard,¹ whose fame now rings
Through the wide world, and leads as joyful life;
Free from all troubles and from worldly toil,
In which fond men do all their days turmoil.

XX.

In such delights whilst thus his careless time
This shepherd drives, upleaning on his bat,²
And on shrill reeds chanting his rustic rhyme;
Hyperion, throwing forth his beams full hot,
Into the highest top of heaven 'gan climb,
And, the world parting by an equal lot,
Did shed his whirling flames on either side,
As the great Ocean doth himself divide.

² Stick.

XXI.

Then 'gan the shepherd gather into one
His straggling goats, and drave them to a ford,
Whose cærule³ stream, rumbling in pebble stone,
Crept under moss as green as any gourd.
Now had the Sun half heaven overgone,
When he his herd back from that water ford
Drave, from the force of Phœbus' boiling ray,
Into thick shadows, there themselves to lay.

³ Azure.

XXII.

Soon as he them plac'd in thy sacred wood
(O Delian Goddess) saw, to which of yore
Came the bad daughter of old Cadmus' brood,
Cruel Agavè, flying vengeance sore

Of king Nictileus for the guilty blood,
Which she with cursed hands had shed before;
There she half frantic, having slain her son,
Did shroud herself like punishment to shun.

XXIII.

Here also playing on the grassy green,
Woodgods, and Satyrs, and swift Dryades,
With many Fairies oft were dancing seen.
Not so much did Dan Orpheus repress
The streams of Hebrus with his songs, I ween,
As that fair troop of woody goddesses
Stayed thee, O Peneus, pouring forth to thee,
From cheerful looks, great mirth and gladsome glee.

XXIV.

The very nature of the place, resounding
With gentle murmur of the breathing air,
A pleasant bower with all delight abounding
In the fresh shadow did for them prepare,
To rest their limbs with weariness redounding.
For first the high palm-trees, with branches fair,
Out of the lowly valleys did arise,
And high shoot up their heads into the skies.

XXV.

And them amongst the wicked lotus grew,
Wicked, for holding guilefully away
Ulysses' men, whom rapt with sweetness new,
Taking to host,¹ it quite from him did stay;
And eke those trees, in whose transformed hue
The Sun's sad daughters wail'd the rash decay
Of Phaëton, whose limbs with lightning rent
They gathering up, with sweet tears did lament.

XXVI.

And that same tree,² in which Demophon,
By his disloyalty lamented sore,

¹ Entertain.

² The almond tree.

Eternal hurt left unto many one :
 Whom als accompanied the oak, of yore
 Through fatal charms transform'd to such an one :
 The oak, whose acorns were our food, before
 That Ceres' seed of mortal men were known,
 Which first Triptoleme taught how to be sown.

XXVII.

Here also grew the rougher-rinded pine,
 The great Argoan ship's brave ornament,
 Whom golden Fleece did make an heavenly sign ;
 Which coveting, with his high top's extent,
 To make the mountains touch the stars divine,
 Decks all the forest with embellishment ;
 And the black holm that loves the watry vale ;
 And the sweet cypress, sign of deadly bale.

XXVIII.

Amongst the rest the clamb'ring ivy grew,
 Knitting his wanton arms with grasping hold,
 Lest that the poplar happily should rue
 Her brother's strokes, whose boughs she doth enfold
 With her lithe twigs, till they the top survey,
 And paint with pallid green her buds of gold.
 Next did the myrtle tree to her approach,
 Nor yet unmindful of her old reproach.

XXIX.

But the small birds, in their wide boughs embow'ring,
 Chanted their sundry tunes with sweet consent ;¹
 And under them a silver spring, forth pouring
 His trickling streams, a gentle murmur sent ;
 Thereto the frogs, bred in the slimy scouring
 Of the moist moors, their jarring voices bent ;
 And shrill grasshoppers chirped them around :
 All which the airy Echo did resound.

¹ Har-
mony.

XXX.

In this so pleasant place the shepherd's flock
 Lay everywhere, their weary limbs to rest,
 On every bush, and every hollow rock, [best;
 Where breathe on them the whistling wind might
 The whiles the shepherd self, tending his stock,
 Sat by the fountain side, in shade to rest,
 Where gentle slumb'ring sleep oppressed him
 Display'd on ground, and seized every limb.

XXXI.

Of treachery or trains nought took he keep,
 But, loosely on the grassy green dispread,
 His dearest life did trust to careless sleep;
 Which, weighing down his drooping drowsy head,
 In quiet rest his molten heart did steep,
 Devoid of care, and fear of all falsehood:
 Had not inconstant fortune, bent to ill,
 Bid strange mischance his quietness to spill.

XXXII.

For at his wonted time in that same place
 An huge great serpent, all with speckles pied,
 To drench himself in moorish slime did trace,
 There from the boiling heat himself to hide:
 He, passing by with rolling wreathed pace,
 With brandish'd tongue the empty air did gride,¹
 And wrapt his scaly boughts² with fell despite,
 That all things seem'd appalled at his sight.

¹ Pierce.² Folds.

XXXIII.

Now, more and more having himself enroll'd,
 His glittering breast he lifteth up on high,
 And with proud vaunt his head aloft doth hold;
 His crest above, spotted with purple dye,
 On every side did shine like scaly gold;
 And his bright eyes, glancing full dreadfully,

Did seem to flame out flakes of flashing fire,
And with stern looks to threaten kindled ire.

XXXIV.

Thus wise long time he did himself dispace
There round about, when as at last he spied,
Lying along before him in that place,
That flock's grand captain and most trusty guide:
Eftsoons¹ more fierce in visage, and in pace,
Throwing his fiery eyes on every side,
He cometh on, and all things in his way
Full sternly rends, that might his passage stay.

¹ Immediately.

XXXV.

Much he disdains, that any one should dare
To come unto his haunt; for which intent
He inly burns, and 'gins straight to prepare
The weapons, which Nature to him hath lent;
Felly he hisseth, and doth fiercely stare,
And hath his jaws with angry spirits rent,
That all his track with bloody drops is stained,
And all his folds are now in length outstrained.

XXXVI.

Whom, thus at point prepared, to prevent,
A little nursling of the humid air,
A Gnat, unto the sleepy shepherd went;
And, marking where his eye-lids twinkling rare
Shew'd the two pearls, which sight unto him lent,
Through their thin coverings appearing fair,
His little needle there infixing deep,
Warn'd him awake, from death himself to keep.

XXXVII.

Wherewith enrag'd, he fiercely 'gan upstart,
And with his hand him rashly bruising slew
As in avengement of his heedless smart,
That straight the spirit out of his senses flew,

And life out of his members did depart:
 When, suddenly casting aside his view,
 He spied his foe with felonous intent,
 And fervent eyes to his destruction bent.

XXXVIII.

All suddenly dismay'd, and heartless quite,
 He fled aback, and, catching hasty hold
 Of a young alder hard beside him pight,¹
 It rent, and straight about him 'gan behold
 What God or Fortune would assist his might.
 But whether God or Fortune made him bold
 It's hard to read: yet hardy will he had
 To overcome, that made him less adrad.²

¹ Placed.² Fearful.

XXXIX.

The scaly back of that most hideous snake
 Enwrapped round, oft faining³ to retire,
 And oft him to assail, he fiercely strake
 Whereas his temples did his crest-front tire;⁴
 And, for he was but slow, did sloth off shake
 And gazing ghastly on; (for fear and ire
 Had blent⁵ so much his sense, that less he fear'd;)
 Yet, when he saw him slain, himself he cheer'd.

³ Desiring.⁴ Adorn.⁵ Blinded.

XL.

By this the Night forth from the darksome bower
 Of Herebus her teamed steeds 'gan call,
 And lazy Vesper in his timely hour
 From golden Oeta 'gan proceed withal,
 Whenas the shepherd after this sharp stowre,⁶
 Seeing the doubled shadows low to fall,
 Gathering his straying flock, does homeward fare,
 And unto rest his weary joints prepare.

⁶ Assault.

XLI.

Into whose sense so soon as lighter sleep
 Was entered, and, now loosing every limb,

Sweet slumb'ring dew in carelessness did steep;
 The image of that Gnat appear'd to him,
 And in sad terms 'gan sorrowfully weep,
 With grisly countenance and visage grim,
 Wailing the wrong which he had done of late,
 Instead of good hast'ning his cruel fate.

XLII.

Said he, 'What have I wretch deserv'd, that thus
 Into this bitter bale I am outcast,
 Whilst that thy life more dear and precious
 Was than mine own, so long as it did last?
 I now, in lieu of pains so gracious,
 Am tost in th' air with every windy blast:
 Thou, safe delivered from sad decay,
 Thy careless limbs in loose sleep dost display.

XLIII.

'So livest thou; but my poor wretched ghost
 Is forc'd to ferry over Lethe's river,
 And spoil'd of Charon to and fro am tost.
 Seest thou not how all places quake and quiver,
 Lighten'd with deadly lamps on every post?
 Tisiphone each where doth shake and shiver
 Her flaming fiër-brand, encount'ring me,
 Whose locks uncombed cruel adders be.

XLIV.

'And Cerberus, whose many mouths do bay
 And bark out flames, as if on fire he fed;
 Adown whose neck, in terrible array,
 Ten thousand snakes crawling about his head
 Do hang in heaps, that horribly affray,
 And bloody eyes do glisten fiery red;
 He oftentimes me dreadfully doth threaten
 With painful torments to be sorely beaten.

XLV.

' Ah me! that thanks so much should fail of meed;
 For that I thee restor'd to life again,
 Even from the door of death and deadly dread.
 Where then is now the guerdon of my pain?
 Where the reward of my so piteous deed?
 The praise of Pity vanish'd is in vain,
 And th' antique faith of Justice long ago
 Out of the land is fled away and gone.

XLVI.

' I saw another's fate approaching fast,
 And left mine own his safety to tender;
 Into the same mishap I now am cast,
 And shunn'd destruction doth destruction render:
 Not unto him that never hath trespass't,
 But punishment is due to the offender.
 Yet let destruction be the punishment,
 So long as thankful will may it relent.

XLVII.

' I carried him into waste wilderness,
 Waste wilderness, amongst Cimmerian shades,
 Where endless pains and hideous heaviness
 Is round about me heap'd in darksome glades.
 For there huge Othus sits in sad distress,
 Fast bound with serpents that him oft invades;
 Far off beholding Ephialtes tied,
 Which once assay'd to burn this world so wide.

XLVIII.

' And there is mournful Tityus, mindful yet
 Of thy displeasure, O Latona fair;
 Displeasure too implacable was it,
 That made him meat for wild fowls of the air:
 Much do I fear among such fiends to sit;
 Much do I fear back to them to repair,

To the black shadows of the Stygian shore,
Where wretched ghosts sit wailing evermore.

XLIX.

'There next the utmost brink doth he abide,
That did the banquets of the gods bewray, [dried,
Whose throat through thirst to nought nigh being
His sense to seek for ease turns every way:
And he, that in avengement of his pride
For scorning to the sacred gods to pray,
Against a mountain rolls a mighty stone,
Calling in vain for rest, and can have none.

L.

¹ Kindled.

'Go ye with them, go, cursed damosels,
Whose bridal torches foul Erynnis tynd;¹
And Hymen, at your spousals sad, foretells
Tidings of death and massacre unkind:
With them that cruel Colchid mother dwells,
The which conceiv'd in her revengeful mind
With bitter wounds her own dear babes to slay,
And murder'd troops upon great heaps to lay.

LI.

'There also those two Pandionian maids,
Calling on Itis, Itis evermore,
Whom, wretched boy, they slew with guilty blades;
For whom the Thracian king lamenting sore,
Turn'd to a lapwing, foully them upbraids,
And fluttering round about them still does soar;
There now they all eternally complain
Of others' wrong, and suffer endless pain.

LII.

² Mad.

'But the two brethren born of Cadmus' blood,
Whilst each does for the sovereignty contend,
Blind through ambition, and with vengeance wood,²
Each doth against the other's body bend

His cursed steel, of neither well withstood,
 And with wide wounds their carcasses doth rend;
 That yet they both do mortal foes remain,
 Sith each with brother's bloody hand was slain.

LIII.

'Ah (well-a-day!) there is no end of pain,
 Nor change of labour may entreated be:
 Yet I beyond all these am carried fain,
 Where other powers far different I see,
 And must pass over to th' Elysian plain:
 There grim Persephone, encount'ring me,
 Doth urge her fellow Furies earnestly
 With their bright firebrands me to terrify.

LIV.

'There chaste Alceste lives inviolate,
 Free from all care, for that her husband's days
 She did prolong by changing fate for fate:
 Lo! there lives also the immortal praise
 Of womankind, most faithful to her mate,
 Penelope; and from her far away
 A rules¹ route of young men, which her woo'd,
 All slain with darts, lie wallowed in their blood.

¹ Lawless.

LV.

'And sad Eurydice thence now no more
 Must turn to life, but there detained be
 For looking back, being forbid before:
 Yet was the guilt thereof, Orpheus, in thee!
 Bold sure he was, and worthy spirit bore,
 That durst those lowest shadows go to see,
 And could believe that any thing could please
 Fell Cerberus, or Stygian powers appease.

LVI.

'Ne fear'd the burning waves of Phlegethon,
 Nor those same mournful kingdoms, compassed

With rusty horror and foul fashion;
 And deep digg'd vaults; and Tartar covered
 With bloody night, and dark confusion;
 And judgment seats, whose judge is deadly dread,
 A judge, that after death doth punish sore
 The faults, which life hath trespassed before.

LVII.

'But valiant fortune made Dan Orpheus bold:
 For the swift running rivers still did stand,
 And the wild beasts their fury did withhold,
 To follow Orpheus' music through the land:
 And th' oaks, deep grounded in the earthly mold,
 Did move, as if they could him understand;
 And the shrill woods, which were of sense bereav'd,
 Through their hard bark his silver sound receiv'd.

LVIII.

'And eke the Moon her hasty steeds did stay,
 Drawing in teams along the starry sky;
 And didst, O monthly Virgin, thou delay
 Thy nightly course, to hear his melody?
 The same was able with like lovely lay
 The Queen of hell to move as easily,
 To yield Eurydice unto her fere¹
 Back to be borne, though it unlawful were.

¹ Hus-
band.

LIX.

'She, (Lady) having well before approved
 The fiends to be too cruel and severe,
 Observ'd th' appointed way, as her behoved,
 Ne ever did her eyesight turn arear,
 Ne ever spake, ne cause of speaking moved;
 But, cruel Orpheus, thou much crueller,
 Seeking to kiss her, brok'st the gods' decree,
 And thereby mad'st her ever damn'd to be.

LX.

' Ah ! but sweet love of pardon worthy is,
 And doth deserve to have small faults remitted ;
 If Hell at least things lightly done amiss
 Knew how to pardon, when ought is omitted ;
 Yet are ye both received into bliss,
 And to the seats of happy souls admitted :
 And you, beside the honourable band
 Of great heroës, do in order stand.

LXI.

' There be the two stout sons of Æacus,
 Fierce Peleus, and the hardy Telamon,
 Both seeming now full glad and joyous
 Through their sire's dreadful jurisdiction,
 Being the judge of all that horrid house :
 And both of them, by strange occasion,
 Renown'd in choice of happy marriage
 Through Venus' grace, and virtue's carriage.

LXII.

' For th' one was ravish'd of his own bondmaid,
 The fair Ixione captiv'd from Troy :
 But th' other was with Thetis' love assay'd,
 Great Nereus his daughter and his joy.
 On this side them there is a young man laid,
 Their match in glory, mighty, fierce, and coy ;
 That from th' Argolic ships, with furious ire,
 Beat back the fury of the Trojan fire.

LXIII.

' O ! who would not recount the strong divorces
 Of that great war, which Trojans oft beheld,
 And oft beheld the warlike Greekish forces,
 When Teucrian soil with bloody rivers swell'd,
 And wide Sigæan shores were spread with corpses,
 And Simois and Xanthus blood outwell'd ;

Whilst Hector raged, with outrageous mind,
Flames, weapons, wounds, in Greeks' fleet to have
tin'd.¹

¹ Kindled,
excited.

LXIV.

'For Ida self, in aid of that fierce fight,
Out of her mountains minister'd supplies;
And, like a kindly nurse, did yield (for spite)
Store of firebrands out of her nurseries
Unto her foster children, that they might
Inflame the navy of their enemies,
And all the Rhétæan shore to ashes turn,
Where lay the ships, which they did seek to burn.

LXV.

'Gainst which the noble son of Telamon
Oppos'd himself, and thwarting his huge shield,
Them battle bade, 'gainst whom appear'd anon
Hector, the glory of the Trojan field:
Both fierce and furious in contention
Encounter'd, that their mighty strokes so² shrill'd,
As the great clap of thunder, which doth rive
The rattling heavens, and clouds asunder drive.

² Sounded.

LXVI.

'So th' one with fire and weapons did contend
To cut the ships from turning home again
To Argos; th' other strove for to defend³
The force of Vulcan with his might and main.
Thus th' one Æacid did his fame extend:
But th' other joy'd that, on the Phrygian plain
Having the blood of vanquish'd Hector shed,
He compass'd Troy thrice with his body dead.

³ Repel.

LXVII.

'Again great dole on either party grew,
That him to death unfaithful Paris sent;

And also him that false Ulysses slew,
 Drawn into danger through close ambushment;
 Therefore from him Laërtes' son his view
 Doth turn aside, and boasts his good event
 In working of Strymonian Rhæsus' fall,
 And eft¹ in Dolon's subtle súrprisal.

¹ Soon.

LXVIII.

' Again the dreadful Cycones him dismay,
 And black Læstrigones, a people stout:
 Then greedy Scylla, under whom there bay
 Many great bandogs, which her gird about:
 Then do the Ætnean Cyclops him affray,
 And deep Charybdis gulphing in and out:
 Lastly the squalid lakes of Tartary,
 And grisly fiends of hell him terrify.

LXIX.

' There also goodly Agamemnon boasts,
 The glory of the stock of Tantalus,
 And famous light of all the Greekish hosts;
 Under whose conduct most victorious,
 The Doric flames consum'd the Iliac posts.
 Ah! but the Greeks themselves, more dolorous,
 To thee, O Troy, paid penance for thy fall;
 In th' Hellespont being nigh drowned all.

LXX.

' Well may appear by proof of their mischance
 The changeful turning of men's slippery state,
 That none, whom fortune freely doth advance,
 Himself therefore to heaven should elevate:
 For lofty type of honour, through the glance
 Of Envy's dart, is down in dust prostrate;
 And all, that vaunts in worldly vanity,
 Shall fall through fortune's mutability.

LXXI.

'Th' Argolic power returning home again,
 Enrich'd with spoils of th' Ericthonian tower,
 Did happy wind and weather entertain,
 And with good speed the foamy billows scour:
 No sign of storm, no fear of future pain,
 Which soon ensued them with heavy stowre.¹
 Nereïs to the seas a token gave,
 The whiles their crooked keels the surges clave.

¹ Assault.

LXXII.

'Suddenly, whether through the gods' decree,
 Or hapless rising of some froward star,
 The heavens on every side enclouded be:
 Black storms and fogs are blowen up from far,
 That now the pilot can no loadstar see,
 But skies and seas do make most dreadful war;
 The billows striving to the heavens to reach,
 And th' heavens striving them for to impeach.²

² Hinder.

LXXIII.

'And, in avengement of their bold attempt,
 Both sun and stars and all the heavenly powers
 Conspire in one to wreak their rash contempt,
 And down on them to fall from highest towers:
 The sky, in pieces seeming to be rent,
 Throws lightning forth, and hail, and harmful showers,
 That death on every side to them appears,
 In thousand forms, to work more ghastly fears.

LXXIV.

'Some in the greedy floods are sunk and drent;³
 Some on the rocks of Caphareus are thrown;
 Some on th' Euboic cliffs in pieces rent;
 Some scatter'd on the Hercæan shores unknown;
 And many lost, of whom no monument
 Remains, nor memory is to be shown:

³ Drown-
ed.

Whilst all the purchase of the Phrygian prey,
Toss'd on salt billows, round about doth stray.

LXXV.

'Here many other like heroës be,
Equal in honour to the former crew,
Whom ye in goodly seats may placed see,
Descended all from Rome by lineage due;
From Rome, that holds the world in sovereignty,
And doth all nations unto her subdue:
Here Fabii and Decii do dwell,
Horatii that in virtue did excel.

LXXVI.

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

LXXVII.

'And here wise Curius, companion
Of noble virtues, lives in endless rest;
And stout Flaminius, whose devotion
Taught him the fire's scorn'd fury to detest;
And here the praise of either Scipion
Abides in highest place above the best,
To whom the ruin'd walls of Carthage vow'd;
Trembling, their forces sound their praises loud.

LXXVIII.

'Live they for ever through their lasting praise!
But I, poor wretch, am forced to return
To the sad lakes that Phœbus' sunny rays
Do never see, where souls do always mourn;

And by the wailing shores to waste my days,
 Where Phlegeton with quenchless flames doth burn;
 By which just Minos righteous souls doth sever
 From wicked ones, to live in bliss for ever.

LXXIX.

'Me therefore thus the cruel fiends of hell
 Girt with long snakes, and thousand iron chains,
 Through doom of that their cruel judge, compel
 With bitter torture, and impatient pains,
 Cause of my death and just complaint to tell.
 For thou art he, whom my poor ghost complains
 To be the author of her ill unwares,
 That careless hear'st my intolerable cares.

LXXX.

'Them therefore as bequeathing to the wind,
 I now depart, returning to thee never,
 And leave this lamentable plaint behind.
 But do thou haunt the soft down-rolling river,
 And wild green woods and fruitful pastures mind;
 And let the fitting air my vain words sever.'—
 Thus having said, he heavily departed
 With piteous cry, that any would have smarted.

LXXXI.

Now, when the slothful fit of life's sweet rest
 Had left the heavy shepherd, wondrous cares
 His inly grieved mind full sore opprest;
 That baleful sorrow he no longer bears
 For that Gnat's death, which deeply was imprest;
 But bends whatever power his aged years
 Him lent, yet being such, as through their might
 He lately slew his dreadful foe in fight.

LXXXII.

By that same river lurking under green,
 Eftsoons¹ he 'gins to fashion forth a place;

¹ Immediately.

And, squaring it in compass well beseen,
 There plotteth out a tomb by measured space:
 His iron-headed spade then making clean,
 To dig up sods out of the flow'ry grass,
 His work he shortly to good purpose brought,
 Like as he had conceiv'd it in his thought.

LXXXIII.

An heap of earth he hoarded up on high,
 Enclosing it with banks on every side,
 And thereupon did raise full busily
 A little mount, of green turfs edified;¹
 And on the top of all, that passers by
 Might it behold, the tomb he did provide
 Of smoothest marble stone in order set,
 That never might his lucky 'scape forget.

¹ Built.

LXXXIV.

And round about he taught sweet flowers to grow;
 The Rose engrained in pure scarlet dye;
 The Lily fresh; and Violet below;
 The Marigold; and cheerful Rosemary;
 The Spartan Myrtle, whence sweet gum does flow;
 The purple Hyacinth; and fresh Costmary;
 And Saffron, sought for in Cilician soil;
 And Laurel, th' ornament of Phœbus' toil.

LXXXV.

Fresh Rhododaphne; and the Sabine flower,
 Matching the wealth of th' ancient Frankincense;
 And pallid Ivy, building his own bower;
 And Box, yet mindful of his old offence;
 Red Amaranthus, luckless paramour;
 Oxeye still green; and bitter Patience;
 Ne wants there pale Narciss, that, in a well
 Seeing his beauty, in love with it fell.

LXXXVI.

And whatsoever other flower of worth,
And whatso other herb of lovely hue,
The joyous Spring out of the ground brings forth,
To clothe herself in colours fresh and new;
He planted there, and rear'd a mount of earth,
In whose high front was writ as doth ensue:¹

¹ Follow.

*To thee, small Gnat, in lieu of his life saved,
The Shepherd hath thy death's record engraved.*

PROSOPOPOIA;

OR,

MOTHER HUBBERD'S TALE.

BY ED. SP.

DEDICATED TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,

THE LADY COMPTON AND MOUNTEAGLE.

1591.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE,
THE LADY COMPTON AND MOUNTEAGLE.*

Most fair and virtuous lady, having often sought opportunity by some good means to make known to your Ladyship the humble affection and faithful duty which I have always professed, and am bound to bear to that House, from whence ye spring, I have at length found occasion to remember the same, by making a simple present to you of these my idle labours; which having long since composed in the raw conceit of my youth, I lately amongst other papers lighted upon, and was by others, which liked the same, moved to set them forth. Simple is the device, and the composition mean, yet carrieth some delight, even the rather because of the simplicity and meanness thus personated. The same I beseech your Ladyship take in good part, as a pledge of that profession which I have made to you; and keep with you until, with some other more worthy labour, I do redeem it out of your hands, and discharge my utmost duty. Till then wishing your Ladyship all increase of honour and happiness, I humbly take leave.

Your Ladyship's ever humbly,
ED. SP.

* Anne, fifth daughter of Sir John Spenser.

PROSOPOPOIA;

OR,

MOTHER HUBBERD'S TALE.

It was the month,¹ in which the righteous Maid,²
 That for disdain of sinful world's upbraid
 Fled back to heaven, whence she was first conceived,
 Into her silver bower the sun received;
 And the hot Syrian Dog on him awaiting,
 After the chafed Lion's cruel baiting,
 Corrupted had th' air with his noisome breath,
 And pour'd on th' earth plague, pestilence, and death.
 Amongst the rest a wicked malady
 Reign'd amongst men, that many did to die, 10
 Depriv'd of sense and ordinary reason;
 That it to leaches seemed strange and geason.³
 My fortune was, mongst many others moe,⁴
 To be partaker of their common woe;
 And my weak body, set on fire with grief,
 Was robb'd of rest and natural relief.
 In this ill plight, there came to visit me
 Some friends, who, sorry my sad case to see,
 Began to comfort me in cheerful wise,
 And means of gladsome solace to devise. 20
 But seeing kindly sleep refuse to do
 His office, and my feeble eyes forego,

¹ August.² Astræa.³ Rare.⁴ More.

¹ Take away.	They sought my troubled sense how to deceive With talk, that might unquiet fancies reave; ¹ And, sitting all in seats about me round,	23
² Occasion.	With pleasant tales (fit for that idle stound) ² They cast in course to waste the weary hours: Some told of ladies, and their paramours; Some of brave knights, and their renowned squires; Some of the faeries and their strange attires; And some of giants, hard to be believed; That the delight thereof me much relieved.	30
³ Happen- ed.	Amongst the rest a good old woman was, Hight Mother Hubberd, who did far surpass The rest in honest mirth, that seem'd her well. She, when her turn was come her tale to tell, Told of a strange adventure, that betided ³ Betwixt the Fox and th' Ape by him misguided; The which for that my sense is greatly pleased, All were my spirit heavy and diseased, I'll write in terms, as she the same did say, So well as I her words remember may. No Muse's aid me needs hereto to call;	40
⁴ Humble.	Base ⁴ is the style, and matter mean withal.	
⁵ Former- ly.	Whilome ⁵ (said she) before the world was civil, The Fox and th' Ape, disliking of their evil And hard estate, determined to seek Their fortunes far abroad, like with his like: For both were crafty and unhappy witted; Two fellows might nowhere be better fitted. The Fox, that first this cause of grief did find, 'Gan first thus plain his case with words unkind 'Neighbour Ape, and my gossip eke beside, (Both two sure bands in friendship to be tied,) To whom may I more trustily complain The evil plight, that doth me sore constrain,	50

And hope thereof to find due remedy? 57
 Hear then my pain and inward agony.
 Thus many years I now have spent and worn,
 In mean regard, and basest fortune's scorn,
 Doing my country service as I might,
 No less I dare say than the proudest wight;
 And still I hoped to be up advanced,
 For my good parts; but still it hath mischanced.
 Now therefore that no longer hope I see,
 But froward fortune still to follow me,
 And losels¹ lifted high, where I did look,
 I mean to turn the next leaf of the book.
 Yet, ere that any way I do betake,
 I mean my gossip privy first to make.' 70
 'Ah! my dear gossip, (answer'd then the Ape,)
 Deeply do your sad words my wits awhape,²
 Both for because your grief doth great appear,
 And eke because myself am touched near:
 For I likewise have wasted much good time,
 Still waiting to preferment up to climb,
 Whilst others always have before me stept,
 And from my beard the fat away have swept;
 That now unto despair I 'gin to grow,
 And mean for better wind about to throw. 80
 Therefore to me, my trusty friend, aread³
 Thy counsel; two is better than one head.'
 'Certes (said he) I mean me to disguise
 In some strange habit, after uncouth wise,
 Or like a pilgrim, or a limiter,*
 Or like a gipsy, or a juggeler,
 And so to wander to the world's end,
 To seek my fortune, where I may it mend:

¹ Base persons.

² Terrify.

³ Explain.

* 'A limiter:' a friar licensed to beg within a certain district.

	For worse than that I have I cannot meet.	89
¹ Know.	<p>Wide is the world I wote,¹ and every street Is full of fortunes, and adventures strange, Continually subject unto change. Say, my fair brother now, if this device Doth like you, or may you to like entice.' 'Surely (said th' Ape) it likes me wondrous well; And, would ye not poor fellowship expel, Myself would offer you t' accompany In this adventure's chanceful jeopardy: For, to wax old at home in idleness, Is disadvantageous, and quite fortuneless; Abroad where change is, good may gotten be.' The Fox was glad, and quickly did agree: So both resolv'd, the morrow next ensuing, So soon as day appear'd to people's viewing, On their intended journey to proceed; And over night, whatso thereto did need, Each did prepare, in readiness to be. The morrow next, so soon as one might see Light out of heaven's windows forth to look, Both their habiliments unto them took,</p>	100
² Tell.	<p>And put themselves (a God's name) on their way; Whenas the Ape, beginning well to weigh This hard adventure, thus began t' advise: 'Now read,² Sir Reynold, as ye be right wise, What course ye ween is best for us to take, That for ourselves we may a living make. Whether shall we profess some trade or skill? Or shall we vary our device at will, Even as new occasion appears?</p>	110
	<p>Or shall we tie ourselves for certain years To any service, or to any place? For it behoves, ere that into the race</p>	120

We enter, to resolve first hereupon.' 123

'Now surely, brother, (said the Fox anon)

Ye have this matter motioned in season :

For every thing that is begun with reason

Will come by ready means unto his end ;

But things miscounselled must needs miswend.¹

¹ Go
wrong.

Thus therefore I advise upon the case,

That not to any certain trade or place, 130

Nor any man, we should ourselves apply ;

For why should he that is at liberty

Make himself bond? sith then we are free born,

Let us all servile base subjection scorn ;

And, as we be sons of the world so wide,

Let us our father's heritage divide,

And challenge to ourselves our portions due

Of all the patrimony, which a few

Now hold in hugger mugger² in their hand,

² In secret.

And all the rest do rob of good and land. 140

For now a few have all, and all have nought,

Yet all be brethren alike dearly bought :

There is no right in this partition,

Ne was it so by institution

Ordained first, ne by the law of Nature,

But that she gave like blessing to each creature

As well of worldly livelod as of life,

That there might be no difference nor strife,

Nor ought call'd mine or thine: thrice happy then

Was the condition of mortal men. 150

That was the golden age of Saturn old,

But this might better be the world of gold :

For without gold now nothing will be got,

Therefore (if please you) this shall be our plot ;

We will not be of any occupation,

Let such vile vassals born to base vocation

¹ Work
slavishly.

Drudge in the world, and for their living droil,¹ 157
Which have no wit to live withouten toil.

But we will walk about the world at pleasure
Like two free men, and make our ease a treasure.
Free men some beggars call, but they be free;
And they which call them so more beggars be:

² Toil.

For they do swink² and sweat to feed the other,
Who live like lords of that which they do gather,
And yet do never thank them for the same,
But as their due by Nature do it claim.

Such will we fashion both ourselves to be,
Lords of the world; and so will wander free,
Where so us listeth, uncontroll'd of any:

Hard is our hap, if we (amongst so many) 170

Light not on some that may our state amend;
Seldom but some good cometh ere the end.'

Well seem'd the Ape to like this ordinance:

Yet, well considering of the circumstance,
As pausing in great doubt awhile he staid,
And afterwards with grave advisement said;

³ Dear.

'I cannot, my lief³ brother, like but well
The purpose of the complot which ye tell:

For well I wot (compar'd to all the rest
Of each degree) that beggars' life is best: 180

And they, that think themselves the best of all,
Oft-times to begging are content to fall.

But this I wot withal, that we shall run
Into great danger like to be undone,

Wildly to wander thus in the world's eye,

Withouten passport or good warranty,

For fear lest we like rogues should be reputed,

⁴ Rumour-
ed.

And for ear-marked beasts abroad be bruted;⁴

Therefore I read, that we our counsels call,

How to prevent this mischief ere it fall, 190

And how we may, with most security, 191
 Beg amongst those that beggars do defy.
 'Right well, dear gossip, ye advised have,
 (Said then the Fox,) but I this doubt will save:
 For, ere we further pass, I will devise
 A passport for us both in fittest wise,
 And by the names of soldiers us protect;
 That now is thought a civil begging sect.
 Be you the soldier, for you likest are
 For manly semblance, and small skill in war: 200
 I will but wait on you, and, as occasion
 Falls out, myself fit for the same will fashion.
 The passport ended, both they forward went;
 The Ape clad soldierlike, fit for th' intent,
 In a blue jacket with a cross of red
 And many slits, as if that he had shed
 Much blood through many wounds therein received,
 Which had the use of his right arm bereaved;
 Upon his head an old Scotch cap he wore,
 With a plume feather all to pieces tore: 210
 His breeches were made after the new cut,
 All Portuguese, loose like an empty gut;
 And his hose broken high above the heeling,
 And his shoes beaten out with travelling.
 But neither sword nor dagger he did bear;
 Seems that no foe's revengement he did fear;
 Instead of them a handsome bat¹ he held,
 On which he leaned, as one far in eld.²
 Shame light on him, that through so false illusion
 Doth turn the name of soldiers to abusion, 220
 And that, which is the noblest mystery,³
 Brings to reproach and common infamy!
 Long they thus travelled, yet never met
 Adventure, which might them a working set:

¹ Stick.² Age.³ Profes-
sion.

Yet many ways they sought, and many tried; 225
 Yet for their purposes none fit espied.

At last they chanc'd to meet upon the way
 A simple husbandman in garments gray;

¹ Humble. Yet, though his vesture were but mean and base,¹
 A good yeoman he was of honest place, 230

And more for thrift did care than for gay clothing:
 Gay without good, is good heart's greatest loathing.

² Prepare. The Fox, him spying, bade the Ape him dight²
 To play his part, for lo! he was in sight,

That (if he err'd not) should them entertain,
 And yield them timely profit for their pain.

³ Immediately. Eftsoons³ the Ape himself 'gan up to rear,
 And on his shoulders high his bat to bear,
 As if good service he were fit to do;
 But little thrift for him he did it to: 240

And stoutly forward he his steps did strain,
 That like a handsome swain it him became:
 When as they nigh approached, that good man,
 Seeing them wander loosely, first began
 T' enquire, of custom, what and whence they were?
 To whom the Ape; 'I am a soldier,

That late in wars have spent my dearest blood,
 And in long service lost both limbs and good;

And now, constrain'd that trade to overgive,
 I driven am to seek some means to live: 250

Which might it you in pity please t' afford,
 I would be ready, both in deed and word,

To do you faithful service all my days.

This iron world (that same he weeping says)

Brings down the stoutest hearts to lowest state:

For misery doth bravest minds abate,

And make them seek for that they wont to scorn,

Of fortune and of hope at once forlorn.'

The honest man, that heard him thus complain, 259
 Was griev'd, as he had felt part of his pain;
 And, well dispos'd him some relief to show,
 Ask'd if in husbandry he ought did know,
 To plough, to plant, to reap, to rake, to sow,
 To hedge, to ditch, to thrash, to thatch, to mow;
 Or to what labour else he was prepar'd?
 For husband's¹ life is laborous and hard.
 Whenas the Ape him heard so much to talk
 Of labour, that did from his liking balk,
 He would have slipt the collar handsomely,
 And to him said; 'Good Sir, full glad am I, 270
 To take what pains may any living wight:
 But my late maimed limbs lack wonted might
 To do their kindly services, as needeth:
 Scarce this right hand the mouth with diet feedeth,
 So that it may no painful work endure,
 Ne to strong labour can itself inure.
 But if that any other place you have,
 Which asks small pains, but thriftiness, to save,
 Or care to overlook, or trust to gather,
 Ye may me trust as your own ghostly father.' 280
 With that the husbandman 'gan him advise,
 That it for him were fittest exercise
 Cattle to keep, or grounds to oversee;
 And asked him, if he could willing be
 To keep his sheep, or to attend his swine,
 Or watch his mares, or take his charge of kine?
 'Gladly (said he) whatever such like pain
 Ye put on me, I will the same sustain:
 But gladliest I of your fleecy sheep
 (Might it you please) would take on me the keep.²
 For, ere that unto arms I me betook, 291
 Unto my father's sheep I used to look,

¹ Husband-
man's.

² Charge.

That yet the skill thereof I have not lost: 293

Thereto right well this curdog, by my cost,
(Meaning the Fox) will serve my sheep to gather,
And drive to follow after their bellwether.'

¹ Mean-
while.

The husbandman was meanly¹ well content

Trial to make of his endeavourment;

And, home him leading, lent to him the charge

Of all his flock, with liberty full large, 300

Giving account of th' annual increase

Both of their lambs, and of their woolly fleece.

Thus is this Ape become a shepherd swain,

And the false Fox his dog: (God give them pain!)

For ere the year have half his course out-run,

And do return from whence he first begun,

They shall him make an ill account of thrift.

Now whenas Time, flying with winges swift,

Expired had the term, that these two javels²

² Worth-
less fel-
lows.

Should render up a reck'ning of their travails 310

Unto their master, which it of them sought,

Exceedingly they troubled were in thought,

Ne wist what answer unto him to frame,

Ne how to scape great punishment, or shame,

For their false treason and vile thievery:

For not a lamb of all their flock's supply

Had they to shew; but, ever as they bred,

They slew them, and upon their fleshs fed:

For that disguised dog lov'd blood to spill,

And drew the wicked shepherd to his will. 320

So twixt them both they not a lambkin left;

And, when lambs fail'd, the old sheep's lives they

That how t' acquit themselves unto their lord [reft;

³ Aground.

They were in doubt, and flatly set aboard.³

The Fox then counsell'd th' Ape for to require

Respite till morrow t' answer his desire:

For time's delay new hope of help still breeds. 327
 The good man granted, doubting nought their deeds,
 And bade next day that all should ready be.
 But they more subtle meaning had than he:
 For the next morrow's meed they closely¹ meant,
 For fear of afterclaps,² for to prevent:
 And that same evening, when all shrouded were
 In careless sleep, they without care or fear
 Cruelly fell upon their flock in fold,
 And of them slew at pleasure what they wold:
 Of which whenas they feasted had their fill,
 For a full complement of all their ill,
 They stole away, and took their hasty flight,
 Carried in clouds of all-concealing night. 340
 So was the husbandman left to his loss,
 And they unto their fortune's change to toss.
 After which sort they wandered long while,
 Abusing many through their cloaked guile;
 That at the last they gan to be descried
 Of every one, and all their sleights espied.
 So as their begging now them failed quite,
 For none would give, but all men would them wite;³
 Yet would they take no pains to get their living,
 But seek some other way to gain by giving, 350
 Much like to begging but much better named;
 For many beg, which are thereof ashamed.
 And now the Fox had gotten him a gown,
 And th' Ape a cassock sidelong hanging down;
 For they their occupation meant to change,
 And now in other state abroad to range:
 For, since their soldier's pass no better sped,
 They forg'd another, as for clerks book read.
 Who passing forth, as their adventures fell,
 Through many haps, which needs not here to tell;

¹ Secretly.² Future mishaps.³ Blame.

At length chanc'd with a formal priest to meet, 361
 Whom they in civil manner first did greet,
 And after ask'd an alms for God's dear love.
 The man straightway his choler up did move,
 And with reproachful terms 'gan them revile,
 For following that trade so base and vile ;
 And ask'd what license, or what pass they had ?
 ' Ah ! (said the Ape as sighing wondrous sad)
 It's an hard case, when men of good deserving
 Must either driven be perforce to sterving,¹ 370
 Or asked for their pass by every squib,²
 That list at will them to revile or snib :³
 And yet (God wote⁴) small odds I often see
 Twixt them that ask, and them that asked be.
 Natheless because you shall not us misdeem,
 But that we are as honest as we seem,
 Ye shall our passport at your pleasure see,
 And then ye will (I hope) well moved be.'
 Which when the priest beheld, he view'd it near,
 As if therein some text he studying were, 380
 But little else (God wote) could thereof skill :
 For read he could not evidence, nor will,
 Ne tell a written word, ne write a letter,
 Ne make one title worse, ne make one better :
 Of such deep learning little had he need,
 Ne yet of Latin, ne of Greek, that breed
 Doubts mongst Divines, and difference of texts,
 From whence arise diversity of sects,
 And hateful heresies, of God abhorr'd :
 But this good Sir did follow the plain word, 390
 Ne meddled with their controversies vain ;
 All his care was, his service well to sayn,⁵
 And to read homilies upon holidays :
 When that was done, he might attend his plays ;

¹ Starving.² Petty fellow.³ Snub.⁴ Knows.⁵ Say.

An easy life, and fit High God to please.	395	
He, having overlook'd their pass at ease, Gan at the length them to rebuke again, That no good trade of life did entertain, But lost their time in wand'ring loose abroad ; Seeing the world, in which they bootless bode, ¹	400	¹ Dwelt unprofitably.
Had ways enough for all therein to live ; Such grace did God unto his creatures give. Said then the Fox ; ' Who hath the world not tried, From the right way full eath ² may wander wide.		² Easy.
We are but novices, new come abroad, We have not yet the track of any troad, ³		³ Path.
Nor on us taken any state of life, But ready are of any to make preif. ⁴		⁴ Proof.
[proved, Therefore might please you, which the world have Us to advise, which forth but lately moved,	410	
Of some good course, that we might undertake ; Ye shall for ever us your bondmen make.' The priest gan wax half proud to be so pray'd, And thereby willing to afford them aid ; It seems (said he) right well that ye be clerks, Both by your witty words, and by your werks. Is not that name enough to make a living To him that hath a whit of Nature's giving ? How many honest men see ye arise Daily thereby, and grow to goodly prize ;	420	
To Deans, to Archdeacons, to Commissaries, To Lords, to Principals, to Prebendaries ? All jolly Prelates, worthy rule to bear, Whoever them envy : yet spite bites near. Why should ye doubt then, but that ye likewise Might unto some of those in time arise ? In the meantime to live in good estate, Loving that love, and hating those that hate ;		

- ¹ Sure. Being some honest curate, or some vicar, 429
 Content with little in condition sicker.¹
 ' Ah! but (said th' Ape) the charge is wondrous great,
 To feed men's souls, and hath an heavy threat.'
 ' To feed men's souls (quoth he) is not in man:
 For they must feed themselves, do what we can.
 We are but charg'd to lay the meat before:
 Eat they that list, we need to do no more.
 But God it is that feeds them with His grace,
 The bread of life pour'd down from heavenly place.
 Therefore said he, that with the budding rod
 Did rule the Jews, *All shall be taught of God.* 440
- ² Reached, taken. That same hath Jesus Christ now to him raught,²
 By whom the flock is rightly fed, and taught:
 He is the Shepherd, and the Priest is he;
 We but his shepherd swains ordain'd to be.
 Therefore herewith do not yourself dismay;
 Ne is the pains so great, but bear ye may;
 For not so great, as it was wont of yore,
 It's now-a-days, ne half so strait and sore:
- ³ Formerly. They whilome³ used duly every day
 Their service and their holy things to say, 450
 At morn and even, besides their Anthems sweet,
 Their penny Masses, and their Complines meet,
⁴ Confes- Their Diriges, their Trentals, and their Shrifts,⁴
 sions. Their memories,⁵ their singings, and their gifts.
⁵ Services for the dead. Now all those needless works are laid away;
 Now once a week, upon the Sabbath day,
 It is enough to do our small devotion,
 And then to follow any merry motion.
 Ne are we tied to fast, but when we list;
 Ne to wear garments base of woollen twist, 460
 But with the finest silks us to array,
 That before God we may appear more gay,

Resembling Aaron's glory in his place: 463
 For far unfit it is, that person base
 Should with vile clothes approach God's majesty,
 Whom no uncleanness may approachen nigh;
 Or that all men, which any master serve,
 Good garments for their service should deserve;
 But he that serves the Lord of Hosts Most High,
 And that in highest place t' approach him nigh, 470
 And all the people's prayers to present
 Before his throne, as on ambassage sent
 Both to and fro, should not deserve to wear
 A garment better, than of wool or hair.
 Beside, we may have lying by our sides
 Our lovely lasses, or bright shining brides;
 We be not tied to wilful chastity,
 But have the Gospel of free liberty.
 By that he ended had his ghostly sermon,
 The Fox was well induc'd to be a parson; 480
 And of the priest eftsoons¹ 'gan to enquire,
 How to a benefice he might aspire.
 'Marry, there (said the priest) is art indeed:
 Much good deep learning one thereout may read;
 For that the ground-work is, and end of all,
 How to obtain a beneficial.
 First therefore, when ye have in handsome wise
 Yourself attired, as you can devise,
 Then to some nobleman yourself apply,
 Or other great one in the world's eye, 490
 That hath a zealous disposition
 To God, and so to his religion:
 There must thou fashion eke a godly zeal,
 Such as no carpers may contrair reveal:
 For each thing feigned ought more wary be.
 There thou must walk in sober gravity,

¹ Immediately.

And seem as saintlike as Saint Radegund: 497
 Fast much, pray oft, look lowly on the ground,
 And unto every one do courtesy meek:
 These looks (nought saying) do a benefice seek,
 And be thou sure one not to lack ere long.
 But if thee list unto the Court to throng,
 And there to hunt after the hoped prey,
 Then must thou thee dispose another way:
 For there thou needs must learn to laugh, to lie,
 To face, to forge, to scoff, to company,
 To crouch, to please, to be a beetle stock
 Of thy great master's will, to scorn, or mock:
 So mayst thou chance mock out a benefice,
 Unless thou canst one conjure by device, 510
 Or cast a figure for a bishopric;
 And if one could, it were but a school trick.
 These be the ways, by which without reward
 Livings in Court be gotten, though full hard;
 For nothing there is done without a fee:
 The courtier needs must recompensed be
 With a benevolence, or have in gage¹
 The primitias² of your parsonage:
 Scarce can a bishopric forpass them by,
 But that it must be gilt in privy. 520
 Do not thou therefore seek a living there,
 But of more private persons seek elsewhere,
 Whereas thou mayst compound a better penny,
 Ne let thy learning question'd be of any.
 For some good gentleman, that hath the right
 Unto his church for to present a wight,
 Will cope³ with thee in reasonable wise;
 That if the living yearly do arise
 To forty pound, that then his youngest son
 Shall twenty have, and twenty thou hast won: 530

¹ Pledge.

² First
fruits.

³ Make a
bargain.

Thou hast it won, for it is of frank gift, 531
 And he will care for all the rest to shift;
 Both that the Bishop may admit of thee,
 And that therein thou mayst maintained be.
 This is the way for one that is unlearn'd
 Living to get, and not to be discern'd.
 But they, that are great clerks, have nearer ways,
 For learning sake to living them to raise:
 Yet many eke of them (God wote) are driven
 T' accept a benefice in pieces riven. 540
 How sayst thou (friend) have I not well discourst
 Upon this common-place, though plain, not worst?
 Better a short tale than a bad long shriving:¹
 Needs any more to learn to get a living?¹
 'Now sure, and by my halidome, (quoth he)
 Ye a great master are in your degree:
 Great thanks I yield you for your discipline,
 And do not doubt but duly to incline
 My wits thereto, as ye shall shortly hear.'
 The priest him wish'd good speed, and well to fare:
 So parted they, as either's way them led. 551
 But th' Ape and Fox ere long so well them sped,
 Through the priest's wholesome counsel lately tought,²
 And through their own fair handling wisely wrought,
 That they a benefice twixt them obtained;
 And crafty Reynold³ was a priest ordained;
 And th' Ape his Parish Clark procur'd to be:
 Then made they revel rout and goodly glee.
 But, ere long time had passed, they so ill
 Did order their affairs, that th' evil will 560
 Of all their parish'ners they had constrain'd;
 Who to the Ordinary of them complain'd,
 How foully they their offices abus'd,
 And them of crimes and heresies accus'd;

¹ Confession.

² Taught.

³ Reynard.

That pursuivants he often for them sent: 565
 But they neglecting his commandement,
 So long persisted obstinate and bold,
 Till at the length he published to hold
 A visitation, and them cited thither:
 Then was high time their wits about to gather; 570
 What did they then, but made a composition
 With their next neighbour priest for light condition,
 To whom their living they resigned quite
 For a few pence, and run away by night.
 So passing through the country in disguise,
 They fled far off, where none might them surprise,
 And after that long strayed here and there,
 Through every field and forest far and near;
 Yet never found occasion for their turn,
 But, almost starv'd, did much lament and mourn. 580
 At last they chanc'd to meet upon the way
 The Mule all deck'd in goodly rich array,
 With bells and bosses that full loudly rung,
 And costly trappings that to ground down hung.
 Lowly they him saluted in meek wise;
 But he through pride and fatness gan despise
 Their meanness; scarce vouchsaf'd them to requite.
 Whereat the Fox deep groaning in his sprite,
 Said; ' Ah! sir Mule, now blessed be the day,
 That I see you so goodly and so gay 590
 In your attires, and eke your silken hide
 Fill'd with round flesh, that every bone doth hide.
 Seems that in fruitful pastures ye do live,
 Or fortune doth you secret favour give.'
 ' Foolish Fox! (said the Mule) thy wretched need
 Praiseth the thing that doth thy sorrow breed.
 For well I ween, thou canst not but envy
 My wealth, compar'd to thine own misery,

<p>That art so lean and meagre waxen late, That scarce thy legs uphold thy feeble gait.' 'Ah me! (said then the Fox) whom evil hap Unworthy in such wretchedness doth wrap, And makes the scorn of other beasts to be: But read,¹ fair Sir, of grace, from whence come ye; Or what of tidings you abroad do hear; News may perhaps some good unweeting² bear.' 'From royal Court I lately came (said he) Where all the bravery that eye may see, And all the happiness that heart desire, Is to be found; he nothing can admire, That hath not seen that heaven's portraiture: But tidings there is none I you assure, Save that which common is, and known to all, That courtiers as the tide, do rise and fall.' 'But tell us (said the Ape) we do you pray, Who now in Court doth bear the greatest sway: That, if such fortune do to us befall, We may seek favour of the best of all.' 'Marry (said he) the highest now in grace, Be the wild beasts, that swiftest are in chase; For in their speedy course and nimble flight The Lion now doth take the most delight; But chiefly joys on foot them to behold, Enchas'd³ with chain and circulet of gold: So wild a beast so tame ytaught to be, And buxom⁴ to his bands, is joy to see; So well his golden circlet him beseemeth: But his late chain his liege unmeet esteemeth; For so brave beasts she⁵ loveth best to see In the wild forest ranging fresh and free. Therefore, if fortune thee in Court to live, In case thou ever there wilt hope to thrive,</p>	<p>599</p> <p>610</p> <p>620</p> <p>630</p>	<p>¹ Explain.</p> <p>² Un- knowing.</p> <p>³ Adorned.</p> <p>⁴ Obedient.</p> <p>⁵ <i>i. e.</i>, the Queen.</p>
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To some of these thou must thyself apply; 633
 Else as a thistle-down in th' air doth fly,
 So vainly shalt thou to and fro be tost,
 And lose thy labour and thy fruitless cost.
 And yet full few, which follow them I see,
 For virtue's bare regard advanced be,
 But either for some gainful benefit,
 Or that they may for their own turns be fit. 640
 Nath'less perhaps ye things may handle so,
 That ye may better thrive than thousands moe.¹
 'But (said the Ape) how shall we first come in,
 That after we may favour seek to win?'
 'How else (said he) but with a good bold face,
 And with big words, and with a stately pace,
 That men may think of you in general,
 That to be in you, which is not at all:
 For not by that which is, the world now deemeth,
 (As it was wont) but by that same that seemeth. 650
 Ne do I doubt but that ye well can fashion
 Yourselves thereto, according to occasion:
 So fare ye well, good courtiers may ye be!
 So, proudly neighing, from them parted he.
 Then 'gan this crafty couple to devise,
 How for the Court themselves they might aguize:²
 For thither they themselves meant to address,
 In hope to find their nappier success.
 So well they shifted, that the Ape anon
 Himself had clothed like a gentleman, 660
 And the sly Fox, as like to be his groom,
 That to the Court in seemly sort they come;
 Where the fond Ape, himself uprearing high
 Upon his tiptoes, stalketh stately by,
 As if he were some great Magnifico,
 And boldly doth amongst the boldest go;

¹ More.² Decorate.

And his man Reynold, with fine counterfesance,¹ 667
Supports his credit and his countenance.

¹ Counterfeiting.

Then 'gan the courtiers gaze on every side,
And stare on him, with big looks basen-wide,²
Wond'ring what mister wight³ he was, and whence:

² Widely extended.

³ Manner of person.

For he was clad in strange accoutrements,
Fashion'd with quaint devices never seen
In Court before, yet there all fashions been;
Yet he them in new-fangleness did pass:
But his behaviour altogether was

Alla Turchesca,⁴ much the more admir'd;

⁴ Turkish fashion.

And his looks lofty, as if he aspir'd

To dignity, and sdeign'd⁵ the low degree;

⁵ Disdain-ed.

That all, which did such strangeness in him see, 680

By secret means 'gan of his state enquire,

And privily his servant thereto hire:

Who, throughly arm'd against such coverture,

Reported unto all, that he was sure

A noble gentleman of high regard,

Which through the world had with long travel far'd,

And seen the manners of all beasts on ground;

Now here arriv'd, to see if like he found.

Thus did the Ape at first him credit gain,

Which afterwards he wisely did maintain 690

With gallant show, and daily more augment

Through his fine feats and courtly complement;

For he could play, and dance, and vault, and spring,

And all that else pertains to revelling,

Only through kindly aptness of his joints.

Besides he could do many other points,

The which in Court him served to good stead:

For he mongst ladies could their fortunes read

Out of their hands, and merry leasings⁶ tell,

⁶ Falsehoods.

And juggle finely, that became him well: 700

¹ Sleight
of hand.

But he so light was at legiêrdemain,¹
That what he touch'd, came not to light again;
Yet would he laugh it out, and proudly look,
And tell them, that they greatly him mistook.
So would he scoff them out with mockery,
For he therein had great felicity;

701

² Jests,
taunts.

And with sharp quips² joy'd others to deface,
Thinking that their disgracing did him grace:
So whilst that other like vain wits he pleased,
And made to laugh, his heart was greatly eased. 710
But the right gentle mind would bite his lip,

³ Worth-
less fel-
low.

To hear the javel³ so good men to nip:

⁴ Mock,
flout.

For, though the vulgar yield an open ear,
And common courtiers love to gibe and flier⁴
At everything, which they hear spoken ill,

⁵ Spoil.

And the best speeches with ill meaning spill;⁵
Yet the brave courtier,* in whose beauteous
thought

Regard of honour harbours more than ought,
Doth loathe such base condition, to backbite
Any's good name for envy or despise:

720

He stands on terms of honourable mind,
Ne will be carried with the common wind
Of Court's inconstant mutability,
Ne after every tattling fable fly;

But hears, and sees the follies of the rest,
And thereof gathers for himself the best:
He will not creep, nor crouch with feigned face,
But walks upright with comely steadfast pace,
And unto all doth yield due courtesy;

But not with kissed hand below the knee,
As that same apish crew is wont to do:
For he disdains himself t' embase thereto.

730

* 'Brave courtier:' Sir Philip Sidney.

<p>He hates foul leasings,¹ and vile flattery, Two filthy blots in noble gentry; And slothful idleness he doth detest, The canker worm of every gentle breast; The which to banish with fair exercise Of knightly feats, he daily doth devise:</p>	733	¹ Falsehoods.
<p>Now menaging² the mouths of stubborn steeds, Now practising the proof of warlike deeds, Now his bright arms assaying, now his spear, Now the nigh aimed ring away to bear:</p>	740	² Curbing.
<p>At other times he casts to sue³ the chase Of swift wild beasts, or run on foot a race, [needful] T' enlarge his breath, (large breath in arms most Or else by wrestling to wax strong and heedful,</p>		³ Follow.
<p>Or his stiff arms to stretch with eughen⁴ bow, And manly legs still passing to and fro, Without a gowned beast him fast beside, A vain ensample of the Persian pride;</p>	750	⁴ Made of yew.
<p>Who, after he had won th' Assyrian foe, Did ever after scorn on foot to go. Thus when this courtly gentleman with toil Himself hath wearied, he doth recoil⁵</p>		⁵ Retire.
<p>Unto his rest, and there with sweet delight Of music's skill revives his toiled sprite; Or else with love's, and ladies' gentle sports, The joy of youth, himself he recomforts:</p>		
<p>Or lastly, when the body list to pause, His mind unto the Muses he withdraws; Sweet Lady Muses, Ladies of delight, Delights of life, and ornaments of light!</p>	760	
<p>With whom he close confers with wise discourse, Of Nature's works, of heaven's continual course, Of foreign lands, of people different, Of kingdoms' change, of diverse government,</p>		

Of dreadful battles of renowned knights; 767
 With which he kindleth his ambitious sprites
 To like desire and praise of noble fame,
 The only upshot whereto he doth aim:
 For all his mind on honour fixed is,
 To which he levels all his purposes,
 And in his prince's service spends his days,
 Not so much for to gain, or for to raise
 Himself to high degree, as for his grace,
 And in his liking to win worthy place;
 Through due deserts and comely carriage,
 In whatso please employ his personage,
 That may be matter meet to gain him praise;
 For he is fit to use in all assays, 780

¹ Carriage. Whether for arms and warlike amenance,¹
 Or else for wise and civil governance,
 For he is practis'd well in policy,
 And thereto doth his courting² most apply:
 To learn the enterdeal³ of princes strange,
 To mark th' intent of counsels, and the change
 Of states, and eke of private men somewhile,
 Supplanted by fine falsehood and fair guile;
 Of all the which he gathereth what is fit
 T' enrich the storehouse of his powerful wit, 790

² Attendance at court.
³ Negotiation.
 Which through wise speeches and grave conference
 He daily ekes,⁴ and brings to excellence.
 Such is the rightful courtier in his kind:
 But unto such the Ape lent not his mind;
 Such were for him no fit companions,
 Such would descry his lewd conditions:
 But the young lusty gallants he did chose
 To follow, meet to whom he might disclose
 His witless pleasance, and ill pleasing vain.
 A thousand ways he them could entertain, 800

With all the thriftless games that may be found; 801
 With mumming and with masking all around,
 With dice, with cards, with billiards far unfit,
 With shuttlecocks, misseeming¹ manly wit,
 With courtesans, and costly riotise,
 Whereof still somewhat to his share did rise:
 Ne, them to pleasure, would be sometimes scorn
 A pandar's coat (so basely was he born);
 Thereto he could fine loving verses frame,
 And play the poet oft. But ah, for shame, 810
 Let not sweet poets' praise, whose only pride
 Is virtue to advance, and vice deride,
 Be with the work of losels'² wit defamed,
 Ne let such verses poetry be named!
 Yet he the name on him would rashly take,
 Maugre³ the sacred Muses, and it make
 A servant to the vile affection
 Of such, as he depended most upon;
 And with the sug'ry sweet thereof allure
 Chaste ladies' ears to fantasies impure. 820
 To such delights the noble wits he led
 Which him reliev'd, and their vain humours fed
 With fruitless follies and unsound delights.
 But if perhaps into their noble sprites
 Desire of honour or brave thought of arms
 Did ever creep, then with his wicked charms
 And strong conceits he would it drive away,
 Ne suffer it to house there half a day.
 And whenso love of letters did inspire
 Their gentle wits, and kindle wise desire, 830
 That chiefly doth each noble mind adorn,
 Then he would scoff at learning, and eke scorn
 The sectaries⁴ thereof, as people base
 And simple men, which never came in place

¹ Unbecoming.

² Worthless fellows.

³ In spite of.

⁴ Followers.

Of world's affairs, but, in dark corners mew'd, 835
 Mutter'd of matters as their books them shew'd,
 Ne other knowledge ever did attain,
 But with their gowns their gravity maintain.
 From them he would his impudent lewd speech
 Against God's holy ministers oft reach, 840
 And mock Divines and their profession:
 What else then did he by progression,
 But mock high God himself, whom they profess?
 But what car'd he for God, or godliness?
 All his care was himself how to advance,
 And to uphold his courtly countenance
 By all the cunning means he could devise;
 Were it by honest ways, or otherwise,
 He made small choice: yet sure his honesty
 Got him small gains, but shameless flattery, 850
 And filthy brocade,¹ and unseemly shifts,
 And borrow² base, and some good ladies' gifts:
 But the best help, which chiefly him sustain'd
 Was his man Reynold's purchase which he gain'd,
 For he was school'd by kind in all the skill
 Of close conveyance, and each practise ill
 Of cozenage and cleanly³ knavery,
 Which oft maintain'd his master's bravery.⁴
 Besides he used another slipp'ry sleight,
 In taking on himself, in common sight, 860
 False personages fit for every sted,⁵
 With which he thousands cleanly cozened:
 Now like a merchant, merchants to deceive,
 With whom his credit he did often leave
 In gage for his gay master's hopeless debt:
 Now like a lawyer, when he land would let,
 Or sell fee-simples in his master's name,
 Which he had never, nor ought⁶ like the same;

¹ Pimping.² Pledges,
or usury.³ Skilful.⁴ Show.⁵ Situa-
tion.⁶ Owned.

35 Then would he be a broker, and draw in 869
 Both wares and money, by exchange to win:
 Then would he seem a farmer, that would sell
 Bargains of woods, which he did lately fell,
 Or corn, or cattle, or such other ware,
 40 Thereby to cozen men not well aware:
 Of all the which there came a secret fee
 To th' Ape, that he his countenance might be.
 Besides all this, he us'd oft to beguile
 Poor suitors, that in Court did haunt some while:
 For he would learn their business secretly,
 And then inform his master hastily, 880
 That he by means might cast them to prevent,
 And beg the suit, the which the other meant.
 Or otherwise false Reynold would abuse
 The simple suitor, and wish him to choose
 His master, being one of great regard
 In Court, to compass any suit not hard,
 In case his pains were recompens'd with reason:
 So would he work the silly man by treason
 To buy his master's frivolous good will,
 That had not power to do him good or ill. 890
 So pitiful a thing is suitor's state!
 Most miserable man, whom wicked fate
 Hath brought to court, to sue for had ywist,*
 That few have found, and many one hath mist!
 Full little knowest thou, that hast not tried,
 What hell it is, in suing long to bide:
 To lose good days, that might be better spent;
 To waste long nights in pensive discontent;

* 'To sue for had ywist:' Spenser is here supposed to allude to an old English proverb, 'Beware of had I wist,' (or known). The meaning may be, to sue and get nothing but professions and apologies,—'If I had but known in time, I could have done something,' &c.

To speed to day, to be put back to morrow; 899
 To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow;
 To have thy Prince's grace, yet want her peer's;
 To have thy asking, yet wait many years;
 To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares;
 To eat thy heart through comfortless despairs:
 To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,
 To spend, to give, to want, to be undone.
 Unhappy wight, born to disastrous end,
 That doth his life in so long tendance spend!
 Who ever leaves sweet home, where mean
 estate

In safe assurance, without strife or hate, 910
 Finds all things needful for contentment meek;
 And will to Court for shadows vain to seek,
 Or hope to gain, himself will a daw try:*
 That curse God send unto mine enemy!
 For none but such, as this bold Ape unblest,
 Can ever thrive in that unlucky quest;
 Or such as hath a Reynold to his man,
 That by his shifts his master furnish can.
 But yet this Fox could not so closely hide
 His crafty feats, but that they were descried 920
 At length by such as sat in justice seat,
 Who for the same him foully did entreat;
 And, having worthily him punished,
 Out of the Court for ever banished.
 And now the Ape wanting his huckster man,
 That wont provide his necessaries, gan
 To grow into great lack, ne could uphold
 His countenance in those his garments old;
 Ne new ones could he easily provide,
 Though all men him uncased 'gan deride, 930

* 'Himself will a daw try:' will prove himself a daw, a fool.

<p>Like as a puppet placed in a play, Whose part once past all men bid take away: So that he driven was to great distress, And shortly brought to hopeless wretchedness. Then closely as he might he cast to leave The Court, not asking any pass or leave; But ran away in his rent rags by night, Ne ever staid in place, ne spake to wight, Till that the Fox his copesmate¹ he had found, To whom complaining his unhappy stound,² At last again with him in travel join'd, And with him fared some better chance to find. So in the world long time they wandered, And mickle³ want and hardness suffered; That them repented much so foolishly To come so far to seek for misery, And leave the sweetness of contented home, Though eating hips,⁴ and drinking wat'ry foam. Thus as they them complained to and fro, Whilst through the forest reckless they did go, Lo! where they spied, how, in a gloomy glade, The Lion sleeping lay in secret shade, His crown and sceptre lying him beside, And having doft⁵ for heat his dreadful hide: Which when they saw, the Ape was sore afraid, And would have fled with terror all dismay'd. But him the Fox with hardy words did stay, And bade him put all cowardice away; For now was time (if ever they should hope) To aim their counsels to the fairest scope, And them for ever highly to advance, In case the good, which their own happy chance Them freely offer'd, they would wisely take. Scarce could the Ape yet speak, so did he quake;</p>	<p>931</p> <p>940</p> <p>950</p> <p>960</p>	<p>¹ Com-panion. ² Misfor-tune.</p> <p>³ Much.</p> <p>⁴ The dog berry.</p> <p>⁵ Taken off.</p>
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Yet, as he could, he ask'd how good might grow 965
 Where nought but dread and death do seem in show.
 'Now, (said he,) whiles the Lion sleepeth sound,
 May we his crown and mace take from the ground,
 And eke his skin, the terror of the wood,
 Wherewith we may ourselves, (if we think good) 970
 Make kings of beasts, and lords of forests all,
 Subject unto that power imperial.'

'Ah! but (said th' Ape) who is so bold a wretch,
 That dare his hardy hand to those outstretch;
 When as he knows his meed, if he be spied,
 To be a thousand deaths, and shame beside?'

¹ Foolish.

'Fond¹ Ape! (said then the Fox) into whose breast

² Deed.

Never crept thought of honour, nor brave gest,²

Who will not venture life a king to be,

³ Seat.

And rather rule and reign in sovereign see,³ 980

Than dwell in dust inglorious and base,

Where none shall name the number of his place?

One joyous hour in blissful happiness,

I choose before a life of wretchedness.

Be therefore counselled herein by me,

⁴ Coward-
ice.

And shake off this vile-hearted cowardree.⁴

If he awake, yet is not death the next,

For we may colour it with some pretext

Of this, or that, that may excuse the crime:

Else we may fly; thou to a tree mayst climb, 990

And I creep under ground; both from his reach:

Therefore be rul'd to do as I do teach.'

⁵ Before.

The Ape, that erst⁵ did nought but chill and quake,

Now 'gan some courage unto him to take,

And was content to attempt that enterprise,

Tickled with glory and rash covetise.

⁶ Which of
them.

But first 'gan question, whether⁶ should assay

Those royal ornaments to steal away?

965
970
d,
970
980
990
1000
1010
1020
1030

‘Marry, that shall yourself, (quoth he thereto,) 999

For ye be fine and nimble it to do;

Of all the beasts, which in the forests be,

Is not a fitter for this turn than ye:

Therefore, mine own dear brother, take good heart,

And ever think a kingdom is your part.’

Loath was the Ape, though praised, to adventurer,

Yet faintly ’gan into his work to enter,

Afraid of every leaf that stirr’d him by,

And every stick that underneath did lie:

Upon his tiptoes nicely he up went,

For making noise, and still his ear he lent 1010

To every sound that under heaven blew;

Now went, now stept, now crept, now backward drew,

That it good sport had been him to have eyed:

Yet at the last, (so well he him applied,)

Through his fine handling, and cleanly play,

He all those royal signs had stoln away,

And with the Fox’s help them borne aside

Into a secret corner unespied.

Whither whenas they came they fell at words,

Whether of them should be the lord of lords: 1020

For th’Ape was strifull,¹ and ambitious;

And the Fox guileful, and most covetous;

That neither pleased was, to have the reign

Twixt them divided into even twain,

But either (algates²) would be lord alone:

For love and lordship bide no paragone.³

‘I am most worthy, (said the Ape,) sith I

For it did put my life in jeopardy:

Thereto I am in person and in stature

Most like a man, the lord of every creature, 1030

So that it seemeth I was made to reign,

And born to be a kingly sovereign.’

¹ Given to
strife.

² At all
events.

³ Equal.

'Nay, (said the Fox,) Sir Ape, you are astray; 1033
 For though to steal the diadem away
 Were the work of your nimble hand, yet I
 Did first devise the plot by policy;
 So that it wholly springeth from my wit:
 For which also I claim myself more fit,
 Than you, to rule: for government of state
 Will without wisdom soon be ruinate. 1040
 And where ye claim yourself for outward shape
 Most like a man, man is not like an Ape
 In his chief parts, that is, in wit and spirit;
 But I therein most like to him do merit,
 For my sly wiles and subtle craftiness,
 The title of the kingdom to possess.
 Nath'less (my brother) since we passed are
 Unto this point, we will appease our jar;
 And I with reason meet will rest content,
 That ye shall have both crown and government 1050
 Upon condition that ye ruled be
 In all affairs, and counselled by me;
 And that ye let none other ever draw
 Your mind from me, but keep this as a law:
 And hereupon an oath unto me plight.
 The Ape was glad to end the strife so light,
 And thereto swore: for who would not oft swear,
 And oft unswear, a diadem to bear?
 Then freely up those royal spoils he took,
 Yet at the Lion's skin he inly quook; 1060
 But it dissembled, and upon his head
 The crown, and on his back the skin, he did,
 And the false Fox him helped to array.
 Then when he was all dight¹ he took his way
 Into the forest, that he might be seen
 Of the wild beasts in his new glory sheen.²

¹ Equip-
ped.

² Bright.

There the two first, whom he encounter'd, were 1067
 The Sheep and th' Ass, who, stricken both with fear
 At sight of him, 'gan fast away to fly;
 But unto them the Fox aloud did cry,
 And in the king's name bade them both to stay,
 Upon the pain that thereof follow may.
 Hardly nathless were they restrained so,
 Till that the Fox forth toward them did go,
 And there dissuaded them from needless fear,
 For that the king did favour to them bear;
 And therefore dreadless bade them come to Court:
 For no wild beasts should do them any tort¹
 There or abroad, ne would his Majesty
 Use them but well, with gracious clemency, 1080
 As whom he knew to him both fast and true:
 So he persuaded them, with homage due
 Themselves to humble to the Ape prostraté,
 Who, gently to them bowing in his gate,²
 Received them with cheerful entertain.³
 Thenceforth proceeding with his princely train,
 He shortly met the Tiger, and the Boar,
 Which with the simple Camel raged sore
 In bitter words, seeking to take occasion
 Upon his fleshly corpse to make invasion: 1090
 But, soon as they this mock-king did espy,
 Their troublous strife they stinted⁴ by and by,
 Thinking indeed that it the Lion was:
 He then, to prove whether his power would pass
 As current, sent the Fox to them straightway,
 Commanding them their cause of strife bewray;
 And, if that wrong on either side there were,
 That he should warn the wronger to appear
 The morrow next at Court, it to defend;
 In the mean time upon the King t' attend. 1100

¹ Wrong.² Walk.³ Enter-
tainment.⁴ Stopped.

The subtle Fox so well his message said, 1101
 That the proud beasts him readily obey'd:
 Whereby the Ape in wondrous stomach wox,
 Strongly encourag'd by the crafty Fox;
 That King indeed himself he shortly thought,
 And all the beasts him feared as they ought,
 And followed unto his palace high;
 Where taking congé, each one by and by
 Departed to his home in dreadful awe,
 Full of the feared sight, which late they saw. 1110
 The Ape thus seized of the regal throne,
 Eftsoons,¹ by counsel of the Fox alone,
 Gan to provide for all things in assurance,
 That so his rule might longer have endurance.
 First to his gate he pointed a strong guard,
 That none might enter but with issue hard:
 Then, for the safeguard of his personage,
 He did appoint a warlike equipage
 Of foreign beasts, not in the forest bred,
 But part by land and part by water fed; 1120
 For tyranny is with strange aid supported.
 Then unto him all monstrous beasts resorted
 Bred of two kinds, as Griffons, Minotaurs,
 Crocodiles, Dragons, Beavers, and Centaurs:
 With those himself he strengthen'd mightily,
 That fear he need no force of enemy.
 Then 'gan he rule and tyrannise at will,
 Like as the Fox did guide his graceless skill;
 And all wild beasts made vassals of his pleasures,
 And with their spoils enlarg'd his private treasures.
 No care of justice, nor no rule of reason, 1131
 No temperance, nor no regard of season,
 Did thenceforth ever enter in his mind;
 But cruelty, the sign of currish kind,

¹ Immediately.

And sdeignful pride, and wilful arrogance; 1135

Such follows those whom fortune doth advance.

But the false Fox most kindly¹ play'd his part:

For, whatsoever mother-wit or art

Could work, he put in proof: no practice sly,

No counterpoint of cunning policy, 1140

No reach, no breach, that might him profit bring,

But he the same did to his purpose wring.

Nought suffered he the Ape to give or grant,

But through his hand alone must pass the fiant.²

All offices, all leases by him lept,

And of them all, whatso he liked, he kept.

Justice he sold injustice for to buy,

And for to purchase for his progeny.

Ill might it prosper, that ill gotten was;

But, so he got it, little did he pass. 1150

He fed his cubs with fat of all the soil,

And with the sweet of others' sweating toil;

He crammed them with crumbs of benefices,

And fill'd their mouths with meeds of malefices;³

He clothed them with all colours save white,

And loaded them with lordships and with might,

So much as they were able well to bear,

That with the weight their backs nigh broken were;

He chaffer'd⁴ chairs in which churchmen were set, ⁴ Sold.

And breach of laws to privy farm did let: 1160

No statute so established might be,

Nor ordinance so needful, but that he

Would violate, though not with violence,

Yet under colour of the confidence

The which the Ape repos'd in him alone,

And reckon'd him the kingdom's corner stone.

And ever, when he ought would bring to pass,

His long experience the platform was:

¹ Natural-ly.

² Commis-sion, war-rant.

³ Evil deeds.

⁴ Sold.

And, when he ought not pleasing would put by,
 The cloak was care of thrift, and husbandry, 1170
 For to increase the common treasure's store;
 But his own treasure he increased more,
 And lifted up his lofty towers thereby,
 That they began to threat the neighbour sky;
 The whiles the prince's palaces fell fast
 To ruin: (for what thing can ever last?)
 And whilst the other peers, for poverty,
 Were forc'd their ancient houses to let lie,
 And their old castles to the ground to fall,
 Which their forefathers famous over all 1180
 Had founded for the kingdom's ornament,
 And for their memories' long monument.
 But he no count made of nobility,
 Nor the wild beasts whom arms did glorify,
 The realm's chief strength and garland of the crown.
 All these through feigned crimes he thrust adown,
 Or made them dwell in darkness of disgrace:
 For none, but whom he list, might come in place.
 Of men of arms he had but small regard,
 But kept them low, and strained very hard. 1190
 For men of learning little he esteemed;
 His wisdom he above their learning deemed.
 As for the rascal commons least he cared;
 For not so common was his bounty shared;
 Let God (said he) if please, care for the many,
 I for myself must care before else any:
 So did he good to none, to many ill,
 So did he all the kingdom rob and pill,¹
 Yet none durst speak, ne none durst of him plain;
 So great he was in grace, and rich through gain.
 Ne would he any let to have access 1200
 Unto the prince, but by his own address:

¹ Plunder.

For all that else did come, were sure to fail; 1202

Yet would he further none but for avail.

For on a time the Sheep, to whom of yore
The Fox had promised of friendship store,
What time the Ape the kingdom first did gain,
Came to the Court, her case there to complain;
How that the Wolf, her mortal enemy,

Had sithence¹ slain her lamb most cruelly; 1210

And therefore crav'd to come unto the king,
To let him know the order of the thing.

'Soft, Goody Sheep! (then said the Fox) not so:

Unto the king so rash ye may not go;

He is with greater matter busied

Than a Lamb, or the Lamb's own mother's head.

Ne certes may I take it well in part,

That ye my cousin Wolf so foully thwart,

And seek with slander his good name to blot:

For there was cause, else do it he would not: 1220

Therefore surcease,² good dame, and hence depart.'

So went the Sheep away with heavy heart:

So many moe, so every one was used,

That to give largely to the box refused.

Now when high Jove, in whose almighty hand

The care of kings and power of empires stand,

Sitting one day within his turret high,

From whence he views, with his black-lidded eye,

Whatso the heaven in his wide vault contains,

And all that in the deepest earth remains; 1230

And troubled kingdom of wild beasts beheld,

Whom not their kindly sovereign did weld,³

But an usurping Ape, with guile suborn'd,

Had all subvers'd; he sdeignfully it scorn'd

In his great heart, and hardly did refrain,

But that with thunderbolts he had him slain,

¹ Since that time.

² Cease altogether.

³ Weld.

And driven down to hell, his duest meed: 1237
 But, him avising, he that dreadful deed
 Forbore, and rather chose with scornful shame
 Him to avenge, and blot his brutish name
 Unto the world, that never after any
 Should of his race be void of infamy;
 And his false counsellor, the cause of all,
 To damn to death, or dole¹ perpetual,
 From whence he never should be quit, nor stal'd.²
 Forthwith he Mercury unto him call'd,
 And bade him fly with never-resting speed
 Unto the forest, where wild beasts do breed,
 And there enquiring privily, to learn
 What did of late chance to the Lion stern, 1250
 That he rul'd not the empire, as he ought;
 And whence were all those plaints unto him brought
 Of wrongs, and spoils, by savage beasts committed:
 Which done, he bade the Lion be remitted
 Into his seat, and those same treachours³ vile
 Be punished for their presumptuous guile.
 The son of Maia, soon as he receiv'd
 That word, straight with his azure wings he cleav'd
 The liquid clouds, and lucid firmament;
 Ne staid, till that he came with steep descent 1260
 Unto the place, where his prescript did show.
 There stooping, like an arrow from a bow,
 He soft arrived on the grassy plain,
 And fairly paced forth with easy pain,
 Till that unto the palace nigh he came.
 Then 'gan he to himself new shape to frame;
 And that fair face, and that ambrosial hue,
 Which wons to deck the gods' immortal crew,
 And beautify the shiny firmament,
 He doft,⁴ unfit for that rude rabblement. 1270

¹ Grief.² Stolen,
taken.³ Traitors.⁴ Took off.

So, standing by the gates in strange disguise, 1271

He 'gan enquire of some in secret wise,

Both of the king, and of his government,

And of the Fox, and his false blandishment:

And evermore he heard each one complain

Of foul abuses both in realm and reign:

Which yet to prove more true, he meant to see,

And an eye-witness of each thing to be.

Then on his head his dreadful hat he dight,¹

Which maketh him invisible in sight, 1280

And mocketh th' eyes of all the lookers on,

Making them think it but a vision. [swords;

Through power of that, he runs through enemies'

Through power of that, he passeth through the herds

Of ravenous wild beasts, and doth beguile

Their greedy mouths of the expected spoil;

Through power of that, his cunning thieveries

He wents to work, that none the same espies;

And, through the power of that, he putteth on

What shape he list in apparition. 1290

That on his head he wore, and in his hand

He took Caduceus his snaky wand,

With which the damned ghosts he governeth,

And furies rules, and Tartare tempereth.²

With that he causeth sleep to seize the eyes,

And fear the hearts, of all his enemies;

And, when him list, an universal night

Throughout the world he makes on every wight;

As when his sire with Alcumena lay.

Thus dight,³ into the Court he took his way, 1300

Both through the guard, which never him descried,

And through the watchmen, who him never spied:

Thenceforth he pass'd into each secret part,

Whereas he saw, that sorely griev'd his heart,

¹ Put on.

² Governs.

³ Dressed.

Each place abounding with foul injuries, 1305
 And fill'd with treasure rack'd with robberies;
 Each place defiled with blood of guiltless beasts,
 Which had been slain to serve the Ape's beheasts;
 Gluttony, malice, pride, and covetise,
 And lawlessness reigning with riotise; 1310
 Besides the infinite extortions,
 Done through the Fox's great oppressions,
 That the complaints thereof could not be told.
 Which when he did with lothful eyes behold,
 He would no more endure, but came his way,
 And cast to seek the Lion, where he may,
 That he might work the avengement for this shame
 On those two caitiffs, which had bred him blame:
 And, seeking all the forest busily,
 At last he found, where sleeping he did lie. 1320
 The wicked weed, which there the Fox did lay,
 From underneath his head he took away,
 And then him waking, forced up to rise.
 The Lion looking up 'gan him avise,
 As one late in a trance, what had of long
 Become of him: for fantasy is strong.
 'Arise, (said Mercury,) thou sluggish beast,
 That here liest senseless, like the corpse deceast,
 The whilst thy kingdom from thy head is rent,
 And thy throne royal with dishonour blent:¹ 1330
 Arise, and do thyself redeem from shame,
 And be aveng'd on those that breed thy blame.'
 Thereat enraged, soon he 'gan upstart,
 Grinding his teeth, and grating² his great heart;
 And, rousing up himself, for his rough hide
 He 'gan to reach; but nowhere it espied:
 Therewith he 'gan full terribly to roar,
 And chafed at that indignity right sore.

¹ Blemish-
ed.

² Chafing.

But when his crown and sceptre both he wanted,
 Lord! how he fum'd, and swell'd, and rag'd, and
 panted; 1340

And threaten'd death, and thousand deadly dolours,
 To them that had purloin'd his princely honours.

With that in haste, disrobed as he was,
 He toward his own palace forth did pass;

And all the way he roared as he went,

That all the forest with astonishment

Thereof did tremble, and the beasts therein

Fled fast away from that so dreadful din.

At last he came unto his mansion,

Where all the gates he found fast lock'd anon, 1350

And many warders round about them stood:

With that he roar'd aloud, as he were wood,¹

That all the palace quaked at the stound,²

As if it quite were riven from the ground,

And all within were dead and heartless left;

And th' Ape himself, as one whose wits were reft,

Fled here and there, and every corner sought,

To hide himself from his own feared thought.

But the false Fox, when he the Lion heard,

Fled closely forth, straightway of death afeard, 1360

And to the Lion came, full lowly creeping,

With feigned face, and wat'ry eyne half weeping,

T' excuse his former treason and abusion,

And turning all unto the Ape's confusion:

Nath'less the Royal Beast forbore believing,

But bade him stay at ease till further preeving.³

Then when he saw no entrance to him granted,

Roaring yet louder that all hearts it daunted,

Upon those gates with force he fiercely flew,

And, rending them in pieces, felly slew 1370

Those warders strange, and all that else he met.

¹ Frantic.

² Terrible
noise.

³ Proving.

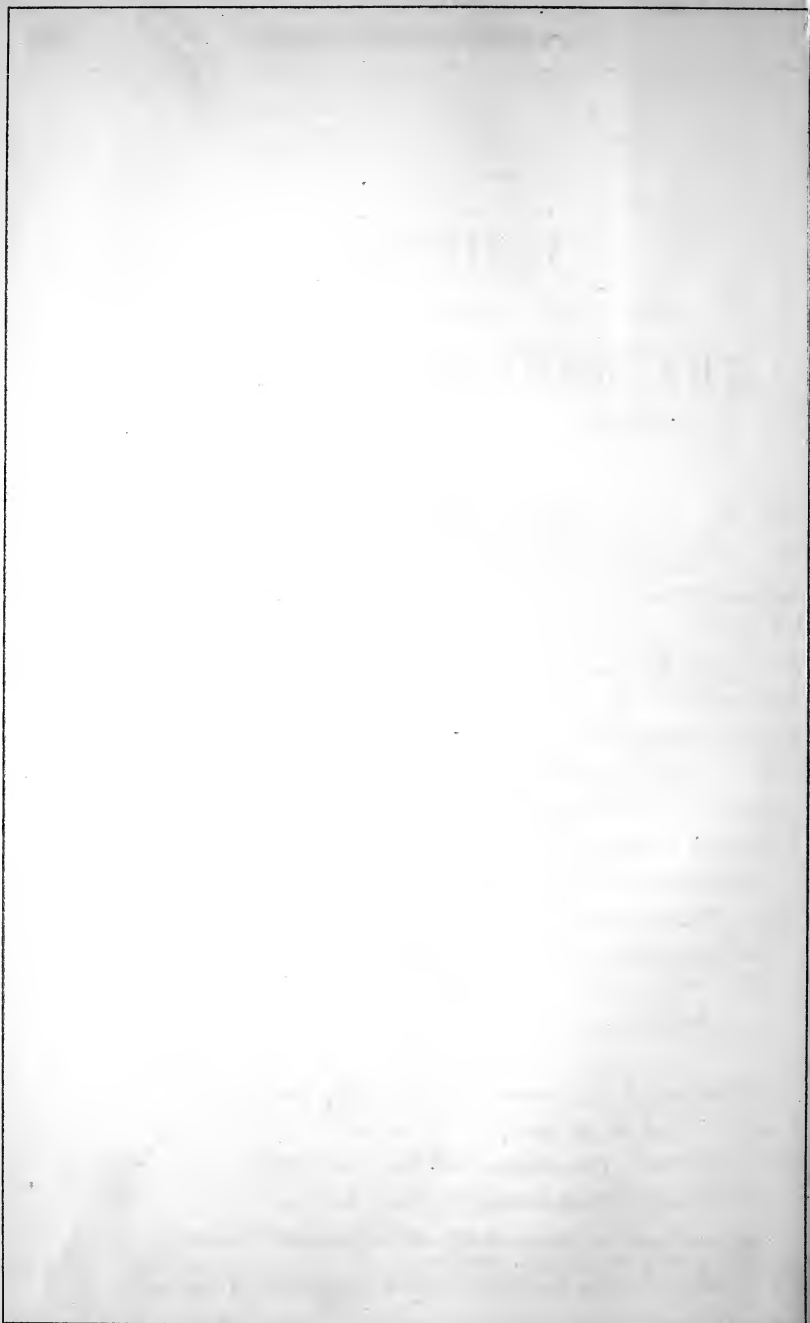
But th' Ape still flying he nowhere might get: 1372
From room to room, from beam to beam he fled
All breathless, and for fear now almost dead:
Yet him at last the Lion spied, and caught,
And forth with shame unto his judgment brought.
Then all the beasts he caus'd assembled be,
To hear their doom, and sad ensample see:
The Fox, first author of that treachery,
He did uncase, and then away let fly. 1380
But th' Ape's long tail (which then he had) he quite
Cut off, and both ears pared of their height;
Since which, all apes but half their ears have left,
And of their tails are utterly bereft.

So Mother Hubberd her discourse did end:
Which pardon me, if I amiss have penn'd;
For weak was my remembrance it to hold,
And bad her tongue that it so bluntly told.

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39
e

THREE VISIONS.

1591.



VISIONS

OF

THE WORLD'S VANITY.*

I.

ONE day, whiles that my daily cares did sleep,
 My spirit, shaking off her earthly prison,
 Began to enter into meditation deep
 Of things exceeding reach of common reason ;
 Such as this age, in which all good is geason,¹
 And all that humble is, and mean debased,
 Hath brought forth in her last declining season,
 Grief of good minds, to see goodness disgraced !
 On which when as my thought was throughly² placed,
 Unto my eyes strange shows presented were,
 Picturing that, which I in mind embraced,
 That yet those sights empassion³ me full near.
 Such as they were (fair Lady†) take in worth,⁴
 That when time serves may bring things better
 forth.

¹ Rare.² Tho-
roughly.³ Move.⁴ Patient-
ly.

II.

In summer's day, when Phœbus fairly shone,
 I saw a Bull as white as driven snow,
 With gilden horns embowed⁵ like the moon,
 In a fresh flow'ring meadow lying low :

⁵ Bent.

* The object of this poem is to shew the ruin brought on great and powerful, by small and insignificant things.

† ' Fair lady : ' perhaps Lady Carey, to whom ' Muiopotmos ' is inscribed.

Up to his ears the verdant grass did grow,
 And the gay flowers did offer to be eaten;
 But he with fatness so did overflow,
 That he all wallowed in the weeds down beaten,
 Ne car'd with them his dainty lips to sweeten:
 Till that a brize,¹ a scorned little creature,
 Through his fair hide his angry sting did threaten,
 And vex'd so sore, that all his goodly feature
 And all his plenteous pasture nought him pleased:
 So by the small the great is oft diseas'd.²

¹ A gadfly.

² Disquiet-
ed.

III.

Beside the fruitful shore of muddy Nile,
 Upon a sunny bank outstretched lay,
 In monstrous length, a mighty Crocodile,
 That, cramm'd with guiltless blood and greedy prey
 Of wretched people travelling that way,
 Thought all things less than his disdainful pride.
 I saw a little bird, call'd *Tedula*,*
 The least of thousands which on earth abide,
 That forc'd this hideous beast to open wide
 The grisly gates of his devouring hell,
 And let him feed, as Nature did provide,
 Upon his jaws, that with black venom swell.
 Why then should greatest things the least disdain,
 Sith that so small so mighty can constrain?

IV.

The kingly bird, that bears Jove's thunder-clap,
 One day did scorn the simple scarabee,³
 Proud of his highest service, and good hap,
 That made all other fowls his thralls to be:
 The silly fly, that no redress did see,
 Spied where the eagle built his tow'ring nest,

³ Beetle.

* '*Tedula*:' Herodotus speaks of a bird which, as he says, enters the mouth of the crocodile, and eats the leeches which are found clinging to its jaws.

And, kindling fire within the hollow tree,
 Burnt up his young ones, and himself distrest;
 Ne suffer'd him in any place to rest,
 But drove in Jove's own lap his eggs to lay;
 Where gathering also filth him to infest,
 Forc'd with the filth his eggs to fling away:
 For which when as the fowl was wroth, said Jove,
 'Lo! how the least the greatest may reprove.'

v.

Toward the sea turning my troubled eye,
 I saw the fish (if fish I may it clepe)¹
 That makes the sea before his face to fly,
 And with his flaggy fins doth seem to sweep
 The foamy waves out of the dreadful deep,
 The huge leviathan, dame Nature's wonder,
 Making his sport, that many makes to weep:
 A sword-fish small him from the rest did sunder,
 That, in his throat him pricking softly under,
 His wide abyss him forced forth to spew,
 That all the sea did roar like heaven's thunder,
 And all the waves were stain'd with filthy hue.
 Hereby I learned have not to despise
 Whatever thing seems small in common eyes.

¹ Call.

vi.

An hideous dragon, dreadful to behold,
 Whose back was arm'd against the dint of spear
 With shields of brass that shone like burnish'd gold,
 And fork-head sting that death in it did bear,
 Strove with a spider his unequal peer;
 And bade defiance to his enemy.
 The subtle vermin, creeping closely near,
 Did in his drink shed poison privily;
 Which, through his entrails spreading diversly,
 Made him to swell, that nigh his bowels burst,

And him enforc'd to yield the victory,
That did so much in his own greatness trust.

O, how great vainness is it then to scorn
The weak, that hath the strong so oft forlorn!

VII.

High on a hill a goodly cedar grew,
Of wondrous length, and straight proportion,
That far abroad her dainty odours threw;
Mongst all the daughters of proud Lebanon,
Her match in beauty was not any one.
Shortly within her inmost pith there bred
A little wicked worm, perceiv'd of none,
That on her sap and vital moisture fed:
Thenceforth her garland so much honoured
Began to die, (O great ruth for the same!)
And her fair locks fell from her lofty head,
That shortly bald and bared she became.

I, which this sight beheld, was much dismayed,
To see so goodly thing so soon decayed.

VIII.

Soon after this I saw an elephant,
Adorn'd with bells and bosses gorgeously,
That on his back did bear (as batteillant)¹
A gilden tower, which shone exceedingly;
That he himself through foolish vanity,
Both for his rich attire, and goodly form,
Was puffed up with passing surquedrie,²
And shortly 'gan all other beasts to scorn.
Till that a little ant, a silly worm,
Into his nostrils creeping, so him pained,
That, casting down his tower, he did deform
Both borrowed pride, and native beauty stained.

Let therefore nought, that great is, therein glory,
Sith so small thing his happiness may vary.

¹ Equipped
for bat-
tle.

² Pride.

IX.

Looking far forth into the ocean wide,
 A goodly ship with banners bravely dight,¹
 And flag in her top-gallant, I espied
 Through the main sea making her merry flight:
 Fair blew the wind into her bosom right;
 And th' heavens looked lovely all the while;
 That she did seem to dance, as in delight,
 And at her own felicity did smile.
 All suddenly there clove unto her keel
 A little fish, that men call remora,
 Which stopp'd her course, and held her by the heel,
 That wind nor tide could move her thence away.
 Strange thing, me seemeth, that so small a thing
 Should able be, so great an one to wring.

¹ Adorned.

X.

A mighty lion, lord of all the wood,
 Having his hunger throughly satisfied
 With prey of beasts and spoil of living blood,
 Safe in his dreadless den him thought to hide:
 His sternness was his praise, his strength his pride,
 And all his glory in his cruel claws.
 I saw a wasp, that fiercely him defied,
 And bade him battle even to his jaws;
 Sore he him stung, that it the blood forth draws,
 And his proud heart is fill'd with fretting ire:
 In vain he threats his teeth, his tail, his paws,
 And from his bloody eyes doth sparkle fire;
 That dead himself he wisheth for despite.
 So weakest may annoy the most of might!

XI.

What time the Roman Empire bore the reign
 Of all the world, and flourish'd most in might,

The nations 'gan their sovereignty disdain,
 And cast to quit them from their bondage quite:
 So, when all shrouded were in silent night,
 The Gauls were, by corrupting of a maid,
 Possess'd nigh of the Capitol through sleight,
 Had not a goose the treachery bewray'd:
 If then a goose great Rome from ruin stay'd,
 And Jove himself, the patron of the place,
 Preserv'd from being to his foes betray'd;
 Why do vain men mean things so much deface,
 And in their might repose their most assurance,
 Sith nought on earth can challenge long endurance?

XII.

When these sad sights were overpast and gone,
 My sprite was greatly moved in her rest,
 With inward ruth and dear affection,
 To see so great things by so small distrest:
 Thenceforth I 'gan in my engrieved breast
 To scorn all difference of great and small,
 Sith that the greatest often are opprest,
 And unawares do into danger fall.
 And ye, that read these ruins tragical,
 Learn, by their loss, to love the low degree;
 And, if that Fortune chance you up to call
 To Honour's seat, forget not what you be:
 For he, that of himself is most secure,
 Shall find his state most fickle and unsure.

THE
VISIONS OF BELLAY.*

I.

It was the time, when Rest, soft sliding down
 From heaven's height into men's heavy eyes,
 In the forgetfulness of sleep doth drown
 The careful thoughts of mortal miseries;
 Then did a Ghost before mine eyes appear,
 On that great river's bank, that runs by Rome;
 Which, calling me by name, bade me to rear
 My looks to heaven whence all good gifts do come,
 And crying loud, Lo! now behold (quoth he)
 What under this great temple placed is:
 Lo, all is nought but flying vanity!
 So I, that know this world's inconstancies,
 Sith only God surmounts all time's decay,
 In God alone my confidence do stay.

II.

On high hill's top I saw a stately frame,
 An hundred cubits high by just assize,¹
 With hundred pillars fronting fair the same,
 All wrought with diamond after Doric wise:
 Nor brick nor marble was the wall in view,
 But shining crystal, which from top to base

¹ Measure.

* Du Bellay, a French poet, once highly celebrated. He, along with Jodelle, Rousard, &c., belonged to what was called 'The School of the Pleiades,' whose aim was seriousness and simplicity.

¹ Beams.

Out of her womb a thousand rayons¹ threw,
One hundred steps of Afric gold's enchase :

² Plaster.

Gold was the parget;² and the ceiling bright
Did shine all scaly with great plates of gold ;

³ Jasper.

The floor of jasp³ and emerald was dight.⁴

⁴ Adorned.

O world's vainness! Whiles thus I did behold,
An earthquake shook the hill from lowest seat,
And overthrew this frame with ruin great.

III.

Then did a sharped spire of diamond bright,
Ten feet each way in square, appear to me,
Justly proportion'd up unto his height,
So far as archer might his level see :
The top thereof a pot did seem to bear,
Made of the metal, which we most do honour ;
And in this golden vessel couched were
The ashes of a mighty Emperor :

⁵ Placed.

Upon four corners of the base were pight,⁵
To bear the frame, four great lions of gold ;
A worthy tomb for such a worthy wight.
Alas, this world doth nought but grievance hold!
I saw a tempest from the heaven descend,
Which this brave monument with flash did rend.

IV.

I saw rais'd up on ivory pillars tall,
Whose bases were of richest metals wark,
The chapters alabaster, the friezes crystal,
The double front of a triumphal arc :
On each side pourtray'd was a Victory,
Clad like a Nymph, that wings of silver wears,
And in triumphant chair was set on high,
The ancient glory of the Roman Peers.
No work it seem'd of earthly craftsman's wit,
But rather wrought by his own industry,

That thunder-darts for Jove his sire doth fit.
 Let me no more see fair thing under sky,
 Sith that mine eyes have seen so fair a sight
 With sudden fall to dust consumed quite.

v.

Then was the fair Dodonian tree far seen,
 Upon seven hills to spread his gladsome gleam,
 And conquerors bedecked with his green,
 Along the banks of the Ausonian stream:
 There many an ancient trophy was addrest,
 And many a spoil, and many a goodly show,
 Which that brave race's greatness did attest,
 That whilome¹ from the Trojan blood did flow.
 Ravish'd I was so rare a thing to view;
 When lo! a barbarous troop of clownish fone²
 The honour of these noble boughs down threw:
 Under the wedge I heard the trunk to groan;
 And, since, I saw the root in great disdain
 A twin of forked trees send forth again.

¹ Formerly.² Foes.

vi.

I saw a Wolf under a rocky cave
 Nursing two whelps; I saw her little ones
 In wanton dalliance the teat to crave, [nonces:³
 While she her neck wreath'd from them for the
 I saw her range abroad to seek her food,
 And roaming through the field with greedy rage
 T' embroe her teeth and claws with lukewarm blood
 Of the small herds, her thirst for to assuage.
 I saw a thousand huntsmen, which descended
 Down from the mountains bord'ring Lombardy,
 That with an hundred spears her flank wide rended;
 I saw her on the plain outstretched lie,
 Throwing out thousand throbs in her own soil;
 Soon on a tree uphang'd I saw her spoil.

³ Nonce, occasion.

VII.

I saw the Bird, that can the Sun endure,
 With feeble wings assay to mount on height;
 By more and more she gan her wings t' assure,
 Following th' ensample of her mother's sight:
 I saw her rise, and with a larger flight
 To pierce the clouds, and with wide pinions
 To measure the most haughty¹ mountain's height,
 Until she raught² the gods' own mansions:
 There was she lost; when sudden I beheld,
 Where, tumbling through the air in fiery fold,
 All flaming down she on the plain was fell'd,³
 And soon her body turn'd to ashes cold.

¹ High.² Reached.³ Fallen.

I saw the fowl, that doth the light despise,
 Out of her dust like to a worm arise.

VIII.

I saw a river swift, whose foamy billows
 Did wash the ground-work of an old great wall;
 I saw it cover'd all with grisly shadows,
 That with black horror did the air appal:
 Thereout a strange Beast with seven heads arose,
 That towns and castles under her breast did coure,⁴
 And seem'd both milder beasts and fiercer foes
 Alike with equal ravin to devour.
 Much was I 'maz'd, to see this monster's kind
 In hundred forms to change his fearful hue;
 When as at length I saw the wrathful wind,
 Which blows cold storms, burst out of Scythian mew,
 That 'spers'd these clouds; and, in so short as
 thought,
 This dreadful shape was vanished to nought.

⁴ Cover.

IX.

Then all astonied with this mighty ghost,
 An hideous body big and strong I saw,

With side-long beard, and locks down hanging loast,¹ ¹ Loose.
 Stern face, and front full of Satúrnlike awe;
 Who, leaning on the belly of a pot,
 Pour'd forth a water, whose out-gushing flood
 Ran bathing all the creeky shore afloat,
 Whereon the Trojan prince spilt Turnus' blood;
 And at his feet a bitch wolf suck did yield
 To two young babes: his left the palm tree stout,
 His right hand did the peaceful olive wield;
 And head with laurel garnish'd was about.
 Sudden both palm and olive fell away,
 And fair green laurel branch did quite decay.

X.

Hard by a river's side a Virgin fair,
 Folding her arms to heaven with thousand throbs,
 And outraging her cheeks and golden hair,
 To falling river's sound thus tun'd her sobs.
 'Where is (quoth she) this whilome² honoured face? ² Formerly.
 Where the great glory and the ancient praise,
 In which all world's felicity had place,
 When gods and men my honour up did raise?
 Suffic'd it not that civil wars me made
 The whole world's spoil, but that this Hydra new,
 Of hundred Hercules to be assay'd,
 With seven heads, budding monstrous crimes anew,
 So many Neros and Caligulas
 Out of these crooked shores must daily raise?'

XI.

Upon an hill a bright flame I did see
 Waving aloft with triple point to sky,
 Which, like incense of precious cedar tree,
 With balmy odours fill'd th' air far and nigh.
 A bird all white, well feathered on each wing,
 Hereout up to the throne of gods did fly,

¹ Mount.

And all the way most pleasant notes did sing,
 Whilst in the smoke she unto heaven did stie.¹
 Of this fair fire the scattered rays forth threw
 On every side a thousand shining beams:
 When sudden dropping of a silver dew [flames;
 (O grievous chance!) gan quench those precious
² Before. That it, which erst² so pleasant scent did yeld,
³ Noxious. Of nothing now but noyous³ sulphur smell'd.

XII.

⁴ Flow.⁵ Gravel.

I saw a spring out of a rock forth rayle,⁴
 As clear as crystal gainst the sunny beams,
 The bottom yellow, like the golden grayle⁵
 That bright Pactolus washeth with his streams;
 It seem'd that Art and Nature had assembled
 All pleasure there, for which man's heart could long;
 And there a noise alluring sleep soft trembled,
 Of many accords more sweet than mermaid's song:
 The seats and benches shone as ivory,
 And hundred Nymphs sat side by side about;
 When from nigh hills, with hideous outcry,
 A troop of Satyrs in the place did rout,
⁶ Stain. Which with their villain feet the stream did ray,⁶
 Threw down the seats, and drove the Nymphs away.

XIII.

Much richer than that vessel seem'd to be,
 Which did to that sad Florentine appear,
 Casting mine eyes far off, I chanc'd to see
 Upon the Latin coast herself to rear:
 But suddenly arose a tempest great,
 Bearing close envy to these riches rare,
 Which gan assail this ship with dreadful threat,
 This ship, to which none other might compare:
 And finally the storm impetuous
 Sunk up these riches, second unto none,

Within the gulf of greedy Nereus.
 I saw both ship and mariners each one,
 And all that treasure, drowned in the main:
 But I the ship saw after rais'd again.

XIV.

Long having deeply groan'd these Visions sad,
 I saw a city like unto that same,
 Which saw the messenger of tidings glad;
 But that on sand was built the goodly frame:
 It seem'd her top the firmament did raise,
 And, no less rich than fair, right worthy sure
 (If ought here worthy) of immortal days,
 Or if ought under heaven might firm endure.
 Much wonder'd I to see so fair a wall:
 When from the Northern coast a storm arose,
 Which, breathing fury from his inward gall
 On all which did against his course oppose,
 Into a cloud of dust spers'd in the air
 The weak foundations of this city fair.

XV.

At length, even at the time, when Morpheus
 Most truly doth unto our eyes appear,
 Weary to see the heavens still wavering thus,
 I saw Typhœus' sister coming near;
 Whose head, full bravely with a morion¹ hid,
 Did seem to match the gods in majesty.
 She, by a river's bank that swift down slid,
 Over all the world did raise a trophy high;
 An hundred vanquish'd kings under her lay,
 With arms bound at their backs in shameful wise;
 Whilst I thus mazed was with great affray,
 I saw the heavens in war against her rise:
 Then down she stricken fell with clap of thunder,
 That with great noise I wak'd in sudden wonder.

¹ Head-
piece.

THE
VISIONS OF PETRARCH.

I.

BEING one day at my window all alone,
 So many strange things happened me to see,
 As much it grieveth me to think thereon.
 At my right hand a hind appear'd to me,
 So fair as might the greatest god delight;
 Two eager dogs did her pursue in chase,
 Of which the one was black, the other white:
 With deadly force so in their cruel race
 They pinch'd the haunches of that gentle beast,
 That at the last, and in short time, I spied,
 Under a rock, where she alas, opprest,
 Fell to the ground, and there untimely died.
 Cruel death vanquishing so noble beauty,
 Oft makes me wail so hard a destiny.

II.

After, at sea a tall ship did appear,
 Made all of heben¹ and white ivory;
 The sails of gold, of silk the tackle were:
 Mild was the wind, calm seem'd the sea to be,
 The sky eachwhere did show full bright and fair:
 With rich treasures this gay ship freighted was:

¹ Ebony.

But sudden storm did so turmoil the air,
 And tumbled up the sea, that she (alas)
 Strake on a rock, that under water lay,
 And perished past all recovery.

O! how great ruth, and sorrowful assay,
 Doth vex my spirit with perplexity,

Thus in a moment to see lost, and drown'd,
 So great riches, as like cannot be found.

III.

The heavenly branches did I see arise
 Out of the fresh and lusty laurel tree,
 Amidst the young green wood of Paradise;
 Some noble plant I thought myself to see:
 Such store of birds therein yshrouded were,
 Chanting in shade their sundry melody,
 That with their sweetness I was ravish'd near.

While on this laurel fixed was mine eye,
 The sky gan every where to overcast,
 And dark'ned was the welkin all about,
 When sudden flash of heaven's fire out brast,¹
 And rent this royal tree quite by the root;

Which makes me much and ever to complain;
 For no such shadow shall be had again.

IV.

Within this wood, out of a rock did rise
 A spring of water, mildly rumbling down,
 Whereto approached not in any wise
 The homely shepherd, nor the ruder clown;
 But many Muses, and the Nymphs withal,
 That sweetly in accord did tune their voice
 To the soft sounding of the water's fall;
 That my glad heart thereat did much rejoice.
 But, while herein I took my chief delight,
 I saw (alas) the gaping earth devour

¹ Burst.

The spring, the place, and all clean out of sight;
 Which yet aggrieves my heart even to this hour,
 And wounds my soul with rueful memory,
 To see such pleasures gone so suddenly.

v.

I saw a phoenix in the wood alone,
 With purple wings, and crest of golden hue;
 Strange bird he was, whereby I thought anone,
 That of some heavenly wight I had the view;
 Until he came unto the broken tree,
 And to the spring, that late devoured was.
 What say I more? each thing at last we see
 Doth pass away: the phoenix there alas,
 Spying the tree destroy'd, the water dried,
 Himself smote with his beak, as in disdain,
 And so forthwith in great despite he died,
 That yet my heart burns, in exceeding pain,
 For ruth and pity of so hapless plight:
 O! let mine eyes no more see such a sight.

vi.

At last so fair a lady did I spy,
 That thinking yet on her I burn and quake;
 On herbs and flowers she walked pensively,
 Mild, but yet love she proudly did forsake:
 White seem'd her robes, yet woven so they were,
 As snow and gold together had been wrought:
 Above the waist a dark cloud shrouded her,
 A stinging serpent by the heel her caught;
 Wherewith she languish'd as the gathered flower;
 And, well assur'd, she mounted up to joy.
 Alas, on earth so nothing doth endure,
 But bitter grief and sorrowful annoy:
 Which make this life wretched and miserable,
 Tossed with storms of fortune variable.

VII.

When I beheld this tickle¹ trustless state
 Of vain world's glory, flitting to and fro,
 And mortal men tossed by troublous fate
 In restless seas of wretchedness and woe;
 I wish I might this weary life forego,
 And shortly turn unto my happy rest,
 Where my free spirit might not any moe²
 Be vex'd with sights, that do her peace molest.
 And ye, fair Lady, in whose bounteous breast
 All heavenly grace and virtue shrined is,
 When ye these rythms do read, and view the rest,
 Loathe this base world, and think of heaven's bliss:
 And though ye be the fairest of God's creatures,
 Yet think, that Death shall spoil your goodly
 features.

¹ Un-
certain.

² More.



DAPHNAÏDA:

AN ELEGY

UPON THE DEATH OF THE NOBLE AND VIRTUOUS

DOUGLAS HOWARD,

DAUGHTER AND HEIR OF HENRY LORD HOWARD, VISCOUNT BYNDON, AND WIFE OF
ARTHUR GORGES, ESQUIRE.

DEDICATED TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE LADY HELENA,

MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON,

BY ED. SP.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE AND VIRTUOUS LADY,

HELENA,

MARQUESS OF NORTHAMPTON.*

I HAVE the rather presumed humbly to offer unto your Honour the dedication of this little poem, for that the noble and virtuous gentlewoman of whom it is written, was by match near allied, and in affection greatly devoted, unto your Ladyship. The occasion why I wrote the same, was as well the great good fame which I heard of her deceased, as the particular goodwill which I bear unto her husband, Master Arthur Gorges, a lover of learning and virtue, whose house, as your Ladyship by marriage hath honoured, so do I find the name of them, by many notable records, to be of great antiquity in this realm, and such as have ever borne themselves with honourable reputation to the world, and unspotted loyalty to their prince and country: besides, so lineally are they descended from the Howards, as that the Lady Ann Howard, eldest daughter to John Duke of Norfolk, was wife to Sir Edmund, mother to Sir Edward, and grandmother to Sir William and Sir Thomas Gorges, Knights: and therefore I do assure myself that no due honour done to the White Lion, but will be most grateful to your Ladyship, whose husband and children do so nearly participate with the blood of that noble family. So in all duty I recommend this pamphlet, and the good acceptance thereof, to your honourable favour and protection. London, this first of January, 1591.
—Your Honour's humbly ever,

ED. SP.

* This lady was aunt to her whose death is lamented in the poem.

DAPHNAIDA.

WHATEVER man he be whose heavy mind,
 With grief of mournful great mishap opprest,
 Fit matter for his care's increase would find,
 Let read the rueful plaint herein exprest,
 Of one, I ween, the woful'st man alive,
 Even sad Alcyon,* whose empierced breast
 Sharp sorrow did in thousand pieces rive.

But whoso else in pleasure findeth sense,
 Or in this wretched life doth take delight,
 Let him be banish'd far away from hence; 10
 Ne let the sacred Sisters here be hight,¹
 Though they of sorrow heavily can sing;
 For even their heavy song would breed delight;
 But here no tunes, save sobs and groans, shall ring.

¹ Called,
address-
ed.

Instead of them, and their sweet harmony,
 Let those three Fatal Sisters, whose sad hands
 Do weave the direful threads of Destiny,
 And in their wrath break off the vital bands,
 Approach hereto; and let the dreadful Queen
 Of Darkness deep come from the Stygian strands, 20
 And grisly ghosts, to hear this doleful teen.²

² Sorrow.

* 'Alcyon:' Sir Arthur Gorges; he was a poet, and translated Bacon's 'Wisdom of the Ancients' into excellent English.

In gloomy evening, when the weary sun, 22
 After his day's long labour drew to rest,
 And sweaty steeds, now having overrun
¹ Round. The compast¹ sky, gan water in the west,
 I walk'd abroad to breathe the freshing air
 In open fields, whose flow'ring pride, opprest
 With early frosts, had lost their beauty fair.

There came unto my mind a troublous thought,
 Which daily doth my weaker wit possess, 30
 Ne lets it rest until it forth have brought
 Her long borne infant, fruit of heaviness,
 Which she conceived hath through meditation
 Of this world's vainness and life's wretchedness,
² Move. That yet my soul it deeply doth empassion.²

So as I mused on the misery
 In which men live, and I of many most,
 Most miserable man; I did espy
³ Ap- Where towards me a sorry wight did cost,³
 proach. Clad all in black, that mourning did bewray, 40
⁴ Pilgrim's And Jacob staff⁴ in hand devoutly crost,
 staff. Like to some pilgrim come from far away.

His careless locks, uncombed and unshorn,
 Hung long adown, and beard all overgrown,
 That well he seem'd to be some wight forlorn:
 Down to the earth his heavy eyes were thrown,
 As loathing light; and ever as he went
 He sighed soft, and inly deep did groan,
 As if his heart in pieces would have rent.

Approaching nigh his face I viewed near, 50
 And by the semblant of his countenance

Me seem'd I had his person seen elsewhere, 52
 Most like Alcyon seeming at a glance;
 Alcyon he, the jolly shepherd swain,
 That wont full merrily to pipe and dance,
 And fill with pleasance every wood and plain.

Yet half in doubt, because of his disguise,
 I softly said, Alcyon! There-withal
 He look'd aside as in disdainful wise,
 Yet stayed not, till I again did call: 60
 Then, turning back, he said, with hollow sound,
 'Who is it that doth name me, woful thrall,
 The wretchedst man that treads this day on
 ground?'—

'One, whom like wofulness, impressed deep,
 Hath made fit mate thy wretched case to hear,
 And given like cause with thee to wail and weep;
 Grief finds some ease by him that like does bear.
 Then stay, Alcyon, gentle shepherd! stay,
 (Quoth I) till thou have to my trusty ear
 Committed what thee doth so ill apay.'¹ 70 ¹ Distress.

'Cease, foolish man!' (said he, half wrothfully)
 'To seek to hear that which cannot be told,
 For the huge anguish, which doth multiply
 My dying pains, no tongue can well unfold;
 Ne do I care that any should bemoan
 My hard mishap, or any weep that would,
 But seek alone to weep, and die alone.'

'Then be it so,' quoth I, 'that thou art bent
 To die alone, unpitied, unplained;
 Yet, ere thou die, it were convenient 80

To tell the cause which thee thereto constrained, 81
 Lest that the world thee dead accuse of guilt,
 And say, when thou of none shalt be maintained,
 That thou for secret crime thy blood hast spilt.'

'Who life does loathe, and longs to be unbound
 From the strong shackles of frail flesh,' quoth he,
 'Nought cares at all what they, that live on ground,
 Deem the occasion of his death to be;
 Rather desires to be forgotten quite,
 Than question made of his calamity; 90
 For heart's deep sorrow hates both life and light.

'Yet since so much thou seem'st to rue my grief,
 And car'st for one that for himself cares nought,
 (Sign of thy love, though nought for my relief,
 For my relief exceedeth living thought;)
 I will to thee this heavy case relate:
 Then hearken well till it to end be brought,
 For never didst thou hear more hapless fate.

¹ Formerly.

'Whilom¹ I us'd (as thou right well dost know)
 My little flock on western downs to keep, 100
 Not far from whence Sabrina's stream doth flow,
 And flow'ry banks with silver liquor steep;
 Nought cared I then for worldly change or chance,
 For all my joy was on my gentle sheep,
 And to my pipe to carol and to dance.

'It there befell, as I the fields did range
 Fearless and free, a fair young Lioness,*
 White as the native rose before the change
 Which Venus' blood did in her leaves impress,

* 'Young Lioness:' so called from the *White Lion*, the crest of the Howards.

I spied playing on the grassy plain 110
 Her youthful sports and kindly¹ wantonness,
 That did all other beasts in beauty stain.²

¹ Natural.
² Dis-
 parage.

‘Much was I moved at so goodly sight,
 Whose like before mine eye had seldom seen,
 And gan to cast how I her compass might,
 And bring to hand that yet had never been:
 So well I wrought with mildness and with pain,
 That I her caught disporting on the green,
 And brought away fast bound with silver chain.

‘And afterwards I handled her so fair, 120
 That though by kind she stout and savage were,
 For being born an ancient Lion’s heir,
 And of the race that all wild beasts do fear,
 Yet I her fram’d, and wan so to my bent,
 That she became so meek and mild of cheer,
 As the least lamb in all my flock that went:

‘For she in field, wherever I did wend,
 Would wend with me, and wait by me all day;
 And all the night that I in watch did spend,
 If cause requir’d, or else in sleep, if nay, 130
 She would all night by me or watch or sleep;
 And evermore when I did sleep or play,
 She of my flock would take full wary keep.³

³ Care.

‘Safe then, and safest were my silly sheep,
 Ne fear’d the wolf, ne fear’d the wildest beast,
 All were I drown’d in careless quiet deep:
 My lovely lioness without beheast
 So careful was for them, and for my good,
 That when I waked, neither most nor least
 I found miscarried or in plain or wood. 140

¹ Expe-
rienced.

'Oft did the shepherds, which my hap did hear, 141
And oft their lasses, which my luck envied,
Daily resort to me from far and near,
To see my lioness, whose praises wide
Were spread abroad; and when her worthiness
Much greater than the rude report they tried,¹
They her did praise, and my good fortune bless.

'Long thus I joyed in my happiness,
And well did hope my joy would have no end;
But oh! fond man! that in world's fickleness 150
Reposedst hope, or weenedst her thy friend
That glories most in mortal miseries,
And daily doth her changeful counsels bend
To make new matter fit for tragedies;

'For whilst I was thus without dread or doubt,
A cruel Satyr with his murd'rous dart,
Greedy of mischief, ranging all about,
Gave her the fatal wound of deadly smart,
And reft from me my sweet companion,
And reft from me my love, my life, my heart: 160
My lioness (ah, woe is me!) is gone!

'Out of the world thus was she reft away,
Out of the world, unworthy such a spoil,
And borne to heaven, for heaven a fitter prey;
Much fitter than the lion, which with toil
Alcides slew, and fix'd in firmament;
Her now I seek throughout this earthly soil,
And seeking miss, and missing do lament.'

Therewith he gan afresh to wail and weep,
That I for pity of his heavy plight 170

Could not abstain mine eyes with tears to steep; 171
 But, when I saw the anguish of his sprite
 Some deal alaid, I him bespake again;
 'Certes, Alcyon, painful is thy plight,
 That it in me breeds almost equal pain.

'Yet doth not my dull wit well understand
 The riddle of thy loved lioness;
 For rare it seems in reason to be scann'd,
 That man, who doth the whole world's rule possess,
 Should to a beast his noble heart embase, 180
 And be the vassal of his vassaless;
 Therefore more plain arede¹ this doubtful case.'

¹ Explain.

Then sighing sore, 'Daphne thou knew'st,' quoth he,
 'She now is dead;' ne more endur'd to say,
 But fell to ground for great extremity;
 That I, beholding it, with deep dismay
 Was much appall'd; and, lightly him uprearing,
 Revoked life, that would have fled away,
 All were myself, through grief, in deadly drearing.

Then gan I him to comfort all my best, 190
 And with mild counsel strove to mitigate
 The stormy passion of his troubled breast,
 But he thereby was more empassionate;
 As stubborn steed, that is with curb restrained,
 Becomes more fierce and fervent in his gait;
 And, breaking forth at last, thus dearnly² plained:

² Earnestly.

I.

'What man henceforth that breatheth vital air
 Will honour Heaven, or heavenly powers adore,
 Which so unjustly doth their judgments share
 Mongst earthly wights, as to afflict so sore 200

The innocent, as those which do transgress, 201
 And do not spare the best or fairest, more
 Than worst or foulest, but do both oppress?

' If this be right, why did they then create
 The world so fair, sith fairness is neglected?
 Or why be they themselves immaculate,
 If purest things be not by them respected?
 She fair, she pure, most fair, most pure she was,
 Yet was by them as thing impure rejected;
 Yet she in pureness heaven itself did pass. 210

¹ Deified.

' In pureness and in all celestial grace,
 That men admire in goodly womankind,
 She did excel, and seem'd of angels' race,
 Living on earth like angel new divined,¹
 Adorn'd with wisdom and with chastity,
 And all the dowries of a noble mind,
 Which did her beauty much more beautify.

' No age hath bred (since fair Astræa left
 The sinful world) more virtue in a wight;
 And, when she parted hence, with her she reft 220
 Great hope, and robb'd her race of bounty quite.
 Well may the shepherd lasses now lament;
 For double loss by her hath on them light,
 To lose both her and bounty's ornament.

' Ne let Elisa, royal shepherdess,
 The praises of my parted love envy,
 For she hath praises in all plenteousness
 Pour'd upon her, like showers of Castaly,
 By her own shepherd, Colin, her own shepherd,
 That her with heavenly hymns doth deify, 230
 Of rustic Muse full hardly to be better'd.

'She is the rose, the glory of the day, 232
 And mine the primrose in the lowly shade:
 Mine, ah! not mine; amiss I mine did say:
 Not mine, but his, which mine awhile her made;
 Mine to be his, with him to live for aye.
 O that so fair a flower so soon should fade,
 And through untimely tempest fall away!

'She fell away in her first age's spring,
 Whilst yet her leaf was green, and fresh her rind,
 And whilst her branch fair blossoms forth did bring,
 She fell away against all course of kind. 242
 For age to die is right, but youth is wrong;
 She fell away like fruit blown down with wind.
 Weep, shepherd! weep, to make my undersong.

II.

'What heart so stony hard but that would weep,
 And pour forth fountains of incessant tears?
 What Timon but would let compassion creep
 Into his breast, and pierce his frozen ears?
 Instead of tears, whose brackish bitter well 250
 I wasted have, my heart-blood dropping wears,
 To think to ground how that fair blossom fell.

'Yet fell she not as one enforc'd to die,
 Ne died with dread and grudging discontent,
 But as one toil'd with travel down doth lie,
 So lay she down, as if to sleep she went,
 And closed her eyes with careless quietness;
 The whiles soft Death away her spirit hent,¹
 And soul assoil'd² from sinful fleshliness.

¹ Took.² Deliver-
ed.

'Yet ere that life her lodging did forsake, 260
 She, all resolv'd, and ready to remove,

Calling to me (ah me!) this wise bespake; 262
 "Alcyon! ah, my first and latest love!
 Ah! why does my Alcyon weep and mourn,
 And grieve my ghost, that ill might him behove,
 As if to me had chanc'd some evil turn!

' "I, since the messenger is come for me,
 That summons souls unto the bridal feast
 Of his great Lord, must needs depart from thee,
 And straight obey his sovereign behest; 270
 Why should Alcyon then so sore lament
 That I from misery shall be releast,
 And freed from wretched long imprisonment!

¹ Uneasi-
ness.

" "Our days are full of dolour and disease,¹
 Our life afflicted with incessant pain,
 That nought on earth may lessen or appease;
 Why then should I desire here to remain!
 Or why should he, that loves me, sorry be
 For my deliverance, or at all complain
 My good to hear, and toward joys to see! 280

" "I go, and long desired have to go;
 I go with gladness to my wished rest,
 Whereas no world's sad care nor wasting woe
 May come, their happy quiet to molest;
 But saints and angels in celestial thrones
 Eternally Him praise that hath them blest;
 There shall I be amongst those blessed ones.

" "Yet, ere I go, a pledge I leave with thee
 Of the late love the which betwixt us past,
 My young Ambrosia; in lieu of me, 290
 Love her; so shall our love for ever last.

Thus, Dear! adieu, whom I expect ere long."— 292
 So having said, away she softly past:
 Weep, shepherd! weep, to make mine undersong.

III.

'So oft as I record those piercing words,
 Which yet are deep engraven in my breast,
 And those last deadly accents, which like swords
 Did wound my heart, and rend my bleeding chest,
 With those sweet sugar'd speeches do compare,
 The which my soul first conquer'd and possess, 300
 The first beginners of my endless care:

'And when those pallid cheeks and ashy hue,
 In which sad Death his portraiture had writ,
 And when those hollow eyes and deadly view,
 On which the cloud of ghastly Night did sit,
 I match with that sweet smile and cheerful brow,
 Which all the world subdued unto it,
 How happy was I then, and wretched now!

'How happy was I when I saw her lead
 The shepherds' daughters dancing in a round! 310
 How trimly would she trace and softly tread
 The tender grass, with rosy garland crown'd!
 And, when she list advance her heavenly voice,
 Both Nymphs and Muses nigh she made astound,
 And flocks and shepherds caused to rejoice.

'But now, ye shepherd lasses! who shall lead
 Your wand'ring troops, or sing your virelays?¹
 Or who shall dight² your bowers, sith she is
 dead

That was the lady of your holy-days?
 Let now your bliss be turned into bale, 320

¹ A kind
 of song.
² Adorn.

And into plaints convert your joyous plays, 321
 And with the same fill every hill and dale.

'Let bagpipe never more be heard to shrill,
 That may allure the senses to delight,
 Ne ever shepherd sound his oaten quill
 Unto the many that provoke them might
 To idle pleasance; but let ghastliness
 And dreary horror dim the cheerful light,
 To make the image of true heaviness:

'Let birds be silent on the naked spray, 330
 And shady woods resound with dreadful yells;
 Let streaming floods their hasty courses stay,
 And parching drouth dry up the crystal wells;
 Let th' earth be barren, and bring forth no flowers,
 And th' air be fill'd with noise of doleful knells,
 And wand'ring spirits walk untimely hours.

'And Nature, nurse of every living thing,
 Let rest herself from her long weariness,
 And cease henceforth things kindly forth to bring,
 But hideous monsters full of ugliness; 340
 For she it is that hath me done this wrong,
 No nurse, but stepdame, cruel, merciless.
 Weep, shepherd! weep, to make my undersong.

IV.

'My little flock, whom erst I lov'd so well,
 And wont to feed with finest grass that grew,
 Feed ye henceforth on bitter astofell,
 And stinking smallage, and unsavoury rue;
 And, when your maws are with those weeds
 Be ye the prey of wolves; ne will I rue [corrupted,
 That with your carcasses wild beasts be glutted. 350

'Ne worse to you, my silly sheep! I pray, 351
 Ne sorer vengeance wish on you to fall
 Than to myself, for whose confus'd decay
 To careless Heavens I do daily call;
 But Heavens refuse to hear a wretch's cry;
 And cruel Death doth scorn to come at call,
 Or grant his boon that most desires to die.

'The good and righteous he away doth take,
 To plague th' unrighteous which alive remain;
 But the ungodly ones he doth forsake, 360
 By living long to multiply their pain;
 Else surely death should be no punishment,
 As the Great Judge at first did it ordain,
 But rather riddance from long languishment.

'Therefore, my Daphne they have ta'en away;
 For worthy of a better place was she:
 But me unworthy willed here to stay,
 That with her lack I might tormented be.
 Sith then they so have order'd, I will pay
 Penance to her, according their decree, 370
 And to her ghost do service day by day.

'For I will walk this wand'ring pilgrimage,
 Throughout the world from one to other end,
 And in affliction waste my better age:
 My bread shall be the anguish of my mind,
 My drink the tears which fro mine eyes do rain,
 My bed the ground that hardest I may find;
 So will I wilfully increase my pain.

'And she, my love that was, my saint that is,
 When she beholds from her celestial throne 380

(In which she joyeth in eternal bliss) 381
 My bitter penance, will my case bemoan,
 And pity me that living thus do die;
 For heavenly spirits have compassion
 On mortal men, and rue their misery.

'So when I have with sorrow satisfied
 Th' importune Fates, which vengeance on me seek,
 And th' Heavens with long languor pacified,
 She, for pure pity of my sufferance meek,
 Will send for me; for which I daily long; 390
 And will till then my painful penance eke.
 Weep, shepherd! weep, to make my undersong.

v.

'Henceforth I hate whatever Nature made,
 And in her workmanship no pleasure find,
 For they be all but vain, and quickly fade;
 So soon as on them blows the northern wind,
 They tarry not, but flit and fall away,
 Leaving behind them nought but grief of mind,
 And mocking such as think they long will stay.

'I hate the Heaven, because it doth withhold 400
 Me from my love, and eke my love from me;
 I hate the earth, because it is the mould
 Of fleshly slime and frail mortality;
 I hate the fire, because to nought it flies;
 I hate the air, because sighs of it be;
 I hate the sea, because it tears supplies.

'I hate the day, because it lendeth light
 To see all things, and not my love to see;
 I hate the darkness and the dreary night,
 Because they breed sad balefulness in me; 410

I hate all times, because all times do fly 411
 So fast away, and may not stayed be,
 But as a speedy post that passeth by.

‘I hate to speak, my voice is spent with crying;
 I hate to hear, loud complaints have dull’d mine
 ears;
 I hate to taste, for food withholds my dying;
 I hate to see, mine eyes are dimm’d with tears;
 I hate to smell, no sweet on earth is left;
 I hate to feel, my flesh is numb’d with fears:
 So all my senses from me are bereft. 420

‘I hate all men, and shun all womankind;
 The one, because as I they wretched are;
 The other, for because I do not find
 My love with them, that wont to be their star:
 And life I hate, because it will not last;
 And death I hate, because it life doth mar;
 And all I hate that is to come or past.

‘So all the world, and all in it I hate,
 Because it changeth ever to and fro,
 And never standeth in one certain state, 430
 But, still unstedfast, round about doth go
 Like a mill-wheel in midst of misery,
 Driven with streams of wretchedness and woe,
 That dying lives, and living still does die.

‘So do I live, so do I daily die,
 And pine away in self-consuming pain!
 Sith she that did my vital powers supply,
 And feeble spirits in their force maintain,
 Is fetch’d fro me, why seek I to prolong 439

My weary days in dolour and disdain! 440
Weep, shepherd! weep, to make my undersong.

VI.

¹ Difficult.

'Why do I longer live in life's despite,
And do not die then in despite of death;
Why do I longer see this loathsome light,
And do in darkness not abridge my breath,
Sith all my sorrow should have end thereby,
And cares find quiet! Is it so uneach¹
To leave this life, or dolorous to die?

'To live I find it deadly dolorous,
For life draws care, and care continual woe; 450
Therefore to die must needs be joyous,
And wishful thing this sad life to forego:
But I must stay; I may it not amend,
My Daphne hence departing bade me so;
She bade me stay, till she for me did send.

'Yet, whilst I in this wretched vale do stay,
My weary feet shall ever wand'ring be,
That still I may be ready on my way
When as her messenger doth come for me;
Ne will I rest my feet for febleness, 460
Ne will I rest my limbs for frailty,
Ne will I rest mine eyes for heaviness.

² Stop,
rest.

'But, as the mother of the gods, that sought
For fair Eurydice, her daughter dear,
Throughout the world, with woful heavy thought;
So will I travel whilst I tarry here,
Ne will I lodge, ne will I ever lin,²
Ne, when as drooping Titan draweth near

³ Abode.

To loose his team, will I take up my inn.³ 469

'Ne sleep (the harbinger of weary wights) 470
 Shall ever lodge upon mine eyelids more;
 Ne shall with rest refresh my fainting sprites,
 Nor failing force to former strength restore:
 But I will wake and sorrow all the night
 With Philumene, my fortune to deplore;
 With Philumene, the partner of my plight.

'And ever as I see the star to fall,
 And under ground to go to give them light
 Which dwell in darkness, I to mind will call
 How my fair star (that shined on me so bright) 480
 Fell suddenly and faded under ground;
 Since whose departure, day is turn'd to night,
 And Night without a Venus star is found.

'But soon as Day doth shew his dewy face,
 And calls forth men unto their toilsome trade,
 I will withdraw me to some darksome place,
 Or some dear cave, or solitary shade;
 There will I sigh, and sorrow all day long,
 And the huge burden of my cares unlade.
 Weep, shepherd! weep, to make my undersong. 490

VII.

'Henceforth mine eyes shall never more behold
 Fair thing on earth, ne feed on false delight
 Of ought that framed is of mortal mould,
 Sith that my fairest flower is faded quite;
 For all I see is vain and transitory,
 Ne will be held in any stedfast plight,
 But in a moment lose their grace and glory.

'And ye, fond men! on Fortune's wheel that ride,
 Or in ought under heaven repose assurance,
 Be it riches, beauty, or honour's pride, 500

Be sure that they shall have no long endurance, 501
 But ere ye be aware will flit away ;
 For nought of them is yours, but th' only usance
 Of a small time, which none ascertainment may.

' And ye, true lovers! whom disastrous chance
 Hath far exiled from your ladies' grace,
 To mourn in sorrow and sad sufferance,
 When ye do hear me in that desert place
 Lamenting loud my Daphne's elegy,
 Help me to wail my miserable case, 510
 And when life parts vouchsafe to close mine eye.

' And ye, more happy lovers! which enjoy
 The presence of your dearest loves' delight,
 When ye do hear my sorrowful annoy,
 Yet pity me in your empation'd sprite,
 And think that such mishap, as chanc'd to me,
 May happen unto the most happiest wight ;
 For all men's states alike unstedfast be.

' And ye, my fellow shepherds! which do feed
 Your careless flocks on hills and open plains, 520
 With better fortune than did me succeed,
 Remember yet my undeserved pains ;
 And, when ye hear that I am dead or slain,
 Lament my lot, and tell your fellow-swains
 That sad Alcyon died in life's disdain.

' And ye, fair damsels! shepherds' dear delights,
 That with your loves do their rude hearts possess,
 When as my hearse shall happen to your sights,
 Vouchsafe to deck the same with cypares ;
 And ever sprinkle brackish tears among, 530

In pity of my undeserv'd distress, 531
The which, I, wretch, endured have thus long.

'And ye, poor pilgrims! that with restless toil
Weary yourselves in wand'ring desert ways,
Till that you come where ye your vows assoil,¹
When passing by ye read these woful lays
On my grave written, rue my Daphne's wrong,
And mourn for me that languish out my days.
Cease, shepherd! cease, and end thy undersong.'— 1 Pay.

Thus when he ended had his heavy plaint, 540
The heaviest plaint that ever I heard sound,
His cheeks wax'd pale, and sprites began to faint,
As if again he would have fallen to ground;
Which when I saw, I stepping to him light,
Amoved him out of his stony swound,
And gan him to recomfort as I might.

But he no way recomforted would be,
Nor suffer solace to approach him nigh,
But casting up a 'sdeignful eye at me,
That in his trance I would not let him lie, 550
Did rend his hair, and beat his blubber'd face,
As one disposed wilfully to die,
That I sore griev'd to see his wretched case.

Then when the pang was somewhat overpast,
And the outrageous passion nigh appeased,
I him desir'd sith day was overcast,
And dark night fast approached, to be pleased
To turn aside unto my cabinet,²
And stay with me, till he were better eased
Of that strong stownd³ which him so sore beset. 560 2 Cottage.
3 Attack.

But by no means I could him win thereto,
Ne longer him entreat with me to stay,
But without taking leave he forth did go
With stagg'ring pace and dismal looks dismay,
As if that Death he in the face had seen,
Or hellish hags had met upon the way ;
But what of him became I cannot ween.

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COLIN CLOUT'S
COME HOME AGAIN.

BY ED. SP.

1595.

TO THE RIGHT WORTHY AND NOBLE KNIGHT

SIR WALTER RALEIGH,

CAPTAIN OF HER MAJESTY'S GUARD, LORD WARDEN OF THE STANNERIES, AND
LIEUTENANT OF THE COUNTY OF CORNWALL.

SIR,

That you may see that I am not always idle as ye think, though not greatly well occupied, nor altogether undutiful, though not precisely officious, I make you present of this simple Pastoral, unworthy of your higher conceit for the meanness of the style, but agreeing with the truth in circumstance and matter. The which I humbly beseech you to accept in part of payment of the infinite debt, in which I acknowledge myself bounden unto you for your singular favours, and sundry good turns, shewed to me at my late being in England; and with your good countenance protect against the malice of evil mouths, which are always wide open to carp at and misconstrue my simple meaning. I pray continually for your happiness. From my house of Kilcolman, the 27th of December.

1591. [rather perhaps 1595.]

Yours ever humbly,

ED. SP.

COLIN CLOUT'S COME HOME AGAIN.

THE shepherd's boy (best known by that name)
 That after Tityrus* first sung his lay,
 Lays of sweet love, without rebuke or blame,
 Sat (as his custom was) upon a day,
 Charming¹ his oaten pipe unto his peres,²
 The shepherd swains that did about him play:
 Who all the while, with greedy listful ears,
 Did stand astonish'd at his curious skill,
 Like heartless deer, dismay'd with thunder's sound.
 At last, when as he piped had his fill, 10
 He rested him: and, sitting then around,
 One of those grooms (a jolly groom was he,
 As ever piped on an oaten reed,
 And lov'd this shepherd dearest in degree,
 Hight³ Hobbinol;†) 'gan thus to him areed.⁴
 'Colin, my lief,⁵ my life, how great a loss
 Had all the shepherds' nation by thy lack!
 And I, poor swain, of many, greatest cross!
 That, sith thy Muse first since thy turning back
 Was heard to sound as she was wont on high, 20
 Hast made us all so blessed and so blithe.
 Whilst thou wast hence, all dead in dole⁶ did lie:
 The woods were heard to wail full many a sithe,⁷
 And all their birds with silence to complain:

¹ Tuning.
² Companions.

³ Called.
⁴ Speak.
⁵ Dear.

⁶ Grief.
⁷ Time.

* 'Tityrus:' Chaucer. † 'Hobbinol:' Spenser's friend, Gabriel Harvey.

The fields with faded flowers did seem to mourn, 25
 And all their flocks from feeding to refrain:
 The running waters wept for thy return,
 And all their fish with languor did lament:
 But now both woods and fields and floods revive,
 Sith thou art come, their cause of merriment, 30
 That us, late dead, hast made again alive:
 But were it not too painful to repeat
 The passed fortunes, which to thee befell
 In thy late voyage, we thee would entreat,
 Now at thy leisure them to us to tell.'

To whom the shepherd gently answered thus;
 'Hobbin, thou temptest me to that I covet:
 For of good passed newly to discuss,
 By double usury doth twice renew it.
 And since I saw that angel's blessed eye, 40
 Her world's bright sun, her heaven's fairest light,
 My mind, full of my thoughts' satiety,
 Doth feed on sweet contentment of that sight:
 Since that same day in nought I take delight,
 Ne feeling have in any earthly pleasure,
 But in remembrance of that glory bright,
 My life's sole bliss, my heart's eternal treasure.
 Wake then, my pipe; my sleepy Muse, awake;
 Till I have told her praises lasting long:
 Hobbin desires, thou mayst it not forsake;— 50
 Hark then, ye jolly shepherds, to my song.'

With that they all 'gan throng about him near,
 With hungry ears to hear his harmony:
 The whiles their flocks, devoid of danger's fear,
 Did round about them feed at liberty.

'One day (quoth he) I sat (as was my trade)
 Under the foot of Mole,* that mountain hoar,

* 'Mole:' the Ballyhoura mountains.

Keeping my sheep amongst the cooly shade 58
 Of the green alders by the Mulla's * shore:
 There a strange shepherd chanc'd to find me
 out,

Whether allured with my pipe's delight,
 Whose pleasing sound yshrilled¹ far about,
 Or thither led by chance, I know not right:
 Whom when I asked from what place he came,
 And how he hight,² himself he did yclepe³
 The Shepherd of the Ocean† by name,
 And said he came far from the main-sea deep.

¹ Sounded
shrill.

² Was
called.

³ Call.

He, sitting me beside in that same shade,
 Provoked me to play some pleasant fit;⁴
 And, when he heard the music which I made, 70
 He found himself full greatly pleas'd at it:

⁴ Strain.

Yet, æmuling⁵ my pipe, he took in hond
 My pipe, before that æmuled of many,
 And play'd thereon; (for well that skill he cond;⁶)
 Himself as skilful in that art as any.

⁵ Rival-
ling.

⁶ Knew.

He pip'd, I sung; and, when he sung, I piped;
 By change of turns, each making other merry;
 Neither envying other, nor envied,
 So piped we, until we both were weary.'

There interrupting him, a bonny swain, 80
 That Cuddy‡ hight, him thus atween bespake:
 'And, should it not thy ready course restrain,
 I would request thee, Colin, for my sake,
 To tell what thou didst sing, when he did play;
 For well I ween it worth recounting was,

* 'Mulla:' the river Awbeg. *

† 'Shepherd of the Ocean:': Sir Walter Raleigh, whom Spenser accompanied into England, and by whom he was introduced to Queen Elizabeth. See 'Life' in vol. ii.

‡ 'Cuddy:': a name borrowed from 'Shepherd's Calender'—October; not Spenser himself.

Whether it were some hymn, or moral lay, 86
Or carol made to praise thy loved lass.'

'Nor of my love, nor of my lass, (quoth he,)
I then did sing, as then occasion fell:

For love had me forlorn, forlorn of me, 90
That made me in that desert choose to dwell.

But of my river Bregog's love I sung,
Which to the shiny Mulla he did bear,
And yet doth bear, and ever will, so long
As water doth within his banks appear.'

'Of fellowship (said then that bonny boy)
Record to us that lovely lay again:
The stay whereof shall nought these ears annoy,
Who all that Colin makes do covet fain.'

'Hear then (quoth he) the tenor of my tale, 100
In sort as I it to that shepherd told:

¹ False-
hood. No leasing¹ new, nor grandam's fable stale,
But ancient truth confirm'd with credence old.

² Called. 'Old father Mole, (Mole hight² that mountain
That walls the northside of Armulla dale;) [gray
He had a daughter fresh as flower of May,
Which gave that name unto that pleasant vale;
Mulla, the daughter of old Mole, so hight
The Nymph, which of that water course has charge,
That, springing out of Mole, doth run down right 110
To Buttevant, where, spreading forth at large,

It giveth name unto that ancient city,
³ Named. Which Kilnemullah cleped³ is of old;
Whose ragged ruins breed great ruth and pity
To travellers, which it from far behold.

Full fain she lov'd, and was belov'd full fain
Of her own brother river, Bregog* hight,

* 'Bregog:' this word is said to mean *false*. It loses itself under ground on its way to the Mulla.

So hight because of this deceitful train, 118
 Which he with Mulla wrought to win delight.
 But her old sire more careful of her good,
 And meaning her much better to prefer,
 Did think to match her with the neighbour flood,
 Which Allo* hight,¹ Broad-water called far; 120
 And wrought so well with his continual pain,
 That he that river for his daughter won:
 The dower agreed, the day assigned plain,
 The place appointed where it should be done.
 Nath'less the Nymph her former liking held;
 For love will not be drawn, but must be led;
 And Bregog did so well her fancy weld,² 130
 That her good will he got her first to wed.
 But for her father, sitting still on high,
 Did warily still watch which way she went,
 And eke from far observ'd, with jealous eye,
 Which way his course the wanton Bregog bent;
 Him to deceive, for all his watchful ward,
 The wily lover did devise this sleight:
 First into many parts his stream he shar'd,
 That, whilst the one was watch'd, the other might
 Pass unespied to meet her by the way; 140
 And then, besides, those little streams so broken
 He under ground so closely³ did convey,
 That of their passage doth appear no token,
 Till they into the Mulla's water slide.
 So secretly did he his love enjoy:
 Yet not so secret, but it was descried,
 And told her father by a shepherd's boy.
 Who, wondrous wroth for that so foul despite,
 In great avenge did roll down from his hill
 Huge mighty stones, the which encumber might 150

¹ Called.² Weld,
sway.³ Secretly.

* 'Allo:' an Irish river.

¹ Spoil.

His passage, and his water courses spill.¹ 151
 So of a river, which he was of old,
 He none was made, but scatter'd all to nought;
 And, lost among those rocks into him roll'd,
 Did lose his name: so dear his love he bought.'

Which having said, him Thestylis bespake;
 'Now by my life this was a merry lay,
 Worthy of Colin self, that did it make.
 But read now eke, of friendship I thee pray,
 What ditty did that other shepherd sing: 160
 For I do covet most the same to hear,
 As men use most to covet foreign thing.'

'That shall I eke (quoth he) to you declare:
 His song was all a lamentable lay
 Of great unkindness, and of usage hard,
 Of Cynthia,* the Lady of the Sea,
 Which from her presence faultless him debarr'd.

² Frequent
sobs.

And ever and anon, with singulfs rife,²
 He cried out, to make his undersong;
 Ah! my love's queen, and goddess of my life, 170
 Who shall me pity, when thou doest me wrong?'

Then 'gan a gentle bonylass to speak,
 That Marin hight; 'Right well he sure did plain,
 That could great Cynthia's sore displeasure break,
 And move to take him to her grace again.

But tell on further, Colin, as befell
 Twixt him and thee, that thee did hence dissuade.'

'When thus our pipes we both had wearied well,
 (Quoth he,) and each an end of singing made,
 He 'gan to cast great liking to my lore, 180
 And great disliking to my luckless lot,

³ Forlorn.

That banish'd had myself, like wight forlore,³
 Into that waste, where I was quite forgot.

* 'Cynthia:' Queen Elizabeth.

The which to leave, thenceforth he counsell'd me, 184
 Unmeet for man, in whom was ought regardful,
 And wend¹ with him, his Cynthia to see;
 Whose grace was great, and bounty most rewardful.
 Besides her peerless skill in making² well,
 And all the ornaments of wondrous wit,
 Such as all womankind did far excel; 190
 Such as the world admir'd, and praised it:
 So what with hope of good, and hate of ill,
 He me persuaded forth with him to fare.
 Nought took I with me, but mine oaten quill:
 Small needments else need shepherd to prepare.
 So to the sea we came; the sea, that is
 A world of waters heaped up on high,
 Rolling like mountains in wide wilderness,
 Horrible, hideous, roaring with hoarse cry.'

'And is the sea (quoth Coridon) so fearful?' 200

'Fearful much more (quoth he) than heart can fear:
 Thousand wild beasts with deep mouths gaping dire-
 Therein still wait poor passengers to tear. [ful
 Who life doth loathe, and longs death to behold,
 Before he die, already dead with fear,
 And yet would live with heart half stony cold,
 Let him to sea, and he shall see it there.
 And yet as ghastly dreadful as it seems,
 Bold men, presuming life for gain to sell,
 Dare tempt that gulf, and in those wand'ring streams
 Seek ways unknown, ways leading down to hell. 211
 For, as we stood there waiting on the strand,
 Behold, an huge great vessel to us came,
 Dancing upon the waters back to land,
 As if it scorn'd the danger of the same;
 Yet was it but a wooden frame and frail,
 Glued together with some subtile matter.

¹ Go.

² Versify-
ing.

Yet had it arms and wings, and head and tail, 218
And life to move itself upon the water.

Strange thing! how bold and swift the monster was,
That neither car'd for wind, nor hail, nor rain,
Nor swelling waves, but thorough them did pass
So proudly, that she made them roar again.

The same aboard us gently did receive,
And without harm us far away did bear,
So far that land, our mother, us did leave,
And nought but sea and heaven to us appear.

Then heartless quite, and full of inward fear,
That shepherd I besought to me to tell,
Under what sky, or in what world we were, 230
In which I saw no living people dwell.

Who, me recomforting all that he might,
Told me that that same was the regiment¹
Of a great shepherdess, that Cynthia hight,
His liege, his lady, and his life's regent.—

‘If then (quoth I) a shepherdess she be,
Where be the flocks and herds, which she doth keep?
And where may I the hills and pastures see,
On which she useth for to feed her sheep?’

‘These be the hills, (quoth he,) the surges high,
On which fair Cynthia her herds doth feed: 241
Her herds be thousand fishes with their fry,
Which in the bosom of the billows breed.

Of them the shepherd which hath charge in chief,
Is Triton,* blowing loud his wreathed horn:
At sound whereof, they all for their relief
Wend to and fro at evening and at morn.

And Proteus eke with him does drive his herd
Of stinking seals and porcpisces² together,
With hoary head and dewy dropping beard, 250

* ‘Triton:’ Lord Howard, Lord High Admiral.

¹ King-
dom.

² Por-
poises.

Compelling them which way he list, and whither. 251
 And I, among the rest, of many least,
 Have in the Ocean charge to me assign'd;
 Where I will live or die at her behest,
 And serve and honour her with faithful mind.
 Besides an hundred Nymphs all heavenly born,
 And of immortal race, do still attend
 To wash fair Cynthia's sheep, when they be shorn,
 And fold them up, when they have made an end.
 Those be the shepherds which my Cynthia serve 260
 At sea, beside a thousand more at land:
 For land and sea my Cynthia doth deserve
 To have in her commandement at hand.'

Thereat I wonder'd much, till, wond'ring more
 And more, at length we land far off descried:
 Which sight much gladdened me; for much afore
 I fear'd, lest land we never should have ey'd:
 Thereto our ship her course directly bent,
 As if the way she perfectly had known.
 We Lunday pass; by that same name is meant 270
 An island, which the first to west was shown.
 From thence another world of land we kend,¹
 Floating amid the sea in jeopardy,
 And round about with mighty white rocks hemm'd,
 Against the sea's encroaching cruelty.
 Those same, the shepherd told me, were the fields
 In which dame Cynthia her landherds fed;
 Fair goodly fields, than which Armulla yields
 None fairer, nor more fruitful to be red.²
 The first, to which we nigh approached, was 280
 An high headland* thrust far into the sea,
 Like to an horn, whereof the name it has,
 Yet seem'd to be a goodly pleasant lea:

¹ Discern-
ed.

² Per-
ceived.

* 'An high headland:' Cornwall.

There did a lofty mount at first us greet, 284

Which did a stately heap of stones uprear,

¹ Float.

That seem'd amid the surges for to fleet,¹

Much greater than that frame, which us did bear:

There did our ship her fruitful womb unlade,

And put us all ashore on Cynthia's land.

'What land is that thou mean'st, (then Cuddy said,)

And is there other than whereon we stand?' 291

² Thou art
a fool.

'Ah! Cuddy, (then quoth Colin,) thou's a fon,²

Thou hast not seen least part of nature's work:

³ Un-
known.

Much more there is unkend³ than thou dost kon,⁴

⁴ Know.

And much more that does from men's knowledge

For that same land much larger is than this, [lurk.

And other men and beasts and birds doth feed:

There fruitful corn, fair trees, fresh herbage is,

And all things else that living creatures need.

Besides most goodly rivers there appear, 300

No whit inferior to thy Fanchin's praise,

Or unto Allo, or to Mulla clear:

Nought hast thou, foolish boy, seen in thy days.'

'But if that land be there (quoth he) as here,

And is their heaven likewise there all one?

And, if like heaven, be heavenly graces there,

⁵ Dwell.

Like as in this same world where we do wone?⁵

'Both heaven and heavenly graces do much more

(Quoth he) abound in that same land than this.

For there all happy peace and plenteous store 310

Conspire in one to make contented bliss:

No wailing there nor wretchedness is heard,

No bloody issues nor no leprosy,

⁶ Sword.

No grisly famine, nor no raging swerd,⁶

⁷ Border
ravaging.

No nightly bodrags,⁷ nor no hue and cries;

The shepherds there abroad may safely lie,

On hills and downs, withouten dread or danger:

No ravenous wolves the good man's hope destroy, 318
 Nor outlaws fell affray the forest ranger.
 There learned arts do flourish in great honour,
 And poets' wits are had in peerless price:
 Religion hath lay power to rest upon her,
 Advancing virtue and suppressing vice.
 For end, all good, all grace there freely grows,
 Had people grace it gratefully to use:
 For God his gifts there plenteously bestows,
 But graceless men them greatly do abuse.'

'But say on further (then said Corylas)
 The rest of thine adventures, that betided.'

'Forth on our voyage we by land did pass, 330
 (Quoth he,) as that same shepherd still us guided,

Until that we to Cynthia's presence came:
 Whose glory greater than my simple thought,
 I found much greater than the former fame;
 Such greatness I cannot compare to ought:
 But if I her like ought on earth might read,¹

¹ Perceive.

I would her liken to a crown of lilies,
 Upon a virgin bride's adorned head,
 With roses dight² and goolds³ and daffadillies;

² Adorned.

Or like the circlet of a turtle true,
 In which all colours of the rainbow be;
 Or like fair Phebe's garland shining new,
 In which all pure perfection one may see.

340 ³ Mari-golds.

But vain it is to think, by paragone⁴
 Of earthly things, to judge of things divine:

⁴ Comparison.

Her power, her mercy, and her wisdom, none
 Can deem, but who the Godhead can define.
 Why then do I, base shepherd, bold and blind,
 Presume the things so sacred to profane?
 More fit it is t'adore, with humble mind,
 The image of the heavens in shape humane.' 350

With that Alexis broke his tale asunder, 352
 Saying; 'By wond'ring at thy Cynthia's praise,
 Colin, thyself thou mak'st us more to wonder,
 And her upraising doest thyself upraise.

But let us hear what grace she shewed thee,
 And how that shepherd strange thy cause advanced.'

'The Shepherd of the Ocean (quoth he)
 Unto that Goddess' grace me first enhanced,
 And to mine oaten pipe inclin'd her ear, 360
 That she thenceforth therein 'gan take delight,
 And it desir'd at timely hours to hear,

All were my notes but rude and roughly dight;
 For not by measure of her own great mind,
 And wondrous worth, she mott¹ my simple song,
 But joy'd that country shepherd ought could find
 Worth harkening to, amongst the learned throng.'

'Why? (said Alexis then,) what needeth she
 That is so great a shepherdess herself,
 And hath so many shepherds in her fee,² 370
 To hear thee sing, a simple silly elf?

Or be the shepherds which do serve her lazy,
 That they list not their merry pipes apply?
 Or be their pipes untunable and crazy,
 That they cannot her honour worthily?'

'Ah! nay (said Colin) neither so, nor so:
 For better shepherds be not under sky,
 Nor better able, when they list to blow
 Their pipes aloud, her name to glorify.

There is good Harpalus,* now waxen aged 380
 In faithful service of fair Cynthia:
 And there is Corydon† though meanly waged,
 Yet ablest wit of most I know this day.

* 'Harpalus:' Barnaby Googe, a retainer of Cecil's.

† 'Corydon:' Abraham Fraunce, a poet and friend of Sir P. Sidney.

¹ Meted,
 measur-
 ed.

² At her
 com-
 mand.

And there is sad Alcyon* bent to mourn, 384
 Though fit to frame an everlasting ditty,
 Whose gentle sprite for Daphne's death doth turn
 Sweet lays of love to endless plaints of pity.
 Ah! pensive boy, pursue that brave conceit,
 In thy sweet Eglantine of Meriflure; †
 Lift up thy notes unto their wonted height, 390
 That may thy Muse and mates to mirth allure.
 There eke is Palin‡ worthy of great praise,
 Albe¹ he envy at my rustic quill: 400
 And there is pleasing Alcon,§ could he raise
 His tunes from lays to matter of more skill.
 And there is old Palemon|| free from spite,
 Whose careful pipe may make the hearer rue:
 Yet he himself may rued be more right,
 That sung so long until quite hoarse he grew.
 And there is Alabaster¶ throughly taught 400
 In all this skill, though knowen yet to few;
 Yet, were he known to Cynthia as he ought,
 His Elisëis would be read anew.
 Who lives that can match that heroic song,
 Which he hath of that mighty Princess made?
 O dreaded Dread, do not thyself that wrong,
 To let thy fame lie so in hidden shade:
 But call it forth, O call him forth to thee,
 To end thy glory which he hath begun:
 That, when he finish'd hath as it should be, 410
 No braver poem can be under sun.
 Nor Po nor Tyber's swans so much renowned,

¹ Although.

* 'Alcyon:' Sir Arthur Gorges, formerly characterised.

† 'Eglantine of Meriflure,' is an unpublished poem of Gorges'.

‡ 'Palin:' one Thomas Chaloner, a poet of the day.

§ 'Alcon:' Thomas Watson, author of a volume of sonnets.

|| 'Palemon:' Thomas Churchyard, also a poet of very prolific powers.

¶ 'Alabaster:' William Alabaster, a scholar and poet of Spenser's time.

Nor all the brood of Greece so highly praised, 413
 Can match that Muse when it with bays is
 crowned,

And to the pitch of her perfection raised.
 And there is a new shepherd late up sprong,
 The which doth all afore him far surpass;
 Appearing well in that well tuned song,
 Which late he sung unto a scornful lass.
 Yet doth his trembling Muse but lowly fly, 420

As daring not too rashly mount on height,
 And doth her tender plumes as yet but try
 In love's soft lays and looser thoughts' delight.
 Then rouse thy feathers quickly, Daniell,*

And to what course thou please thyself advance:
 But most, me seems, thy accent will excel
 In tragic plaints and passionate mischance.
 And there that Shepherd of the Ocean is,
 That spends his wit in love's consuming smart;
 Full sweetly temper'd is that Muse of his, 430
 That can empierce a Prince's mighty heart.

There also is (ah no, he is not now!)
 But since I said he is, he quite is gone,
 Amyntas† quite is gone and lies full low,
 Having his Amaryllis left to moan.

Help, O ye shepherds, help ye all in this,
 Help Amaryllis this her loss to mourn:
 Her loss is yours, your loss Amyntas is,
 Amyntas, flower of shepherds' pride forlorn:
 He whilst he lived was the noblest swain, 440
 That ever piped in an oaten quill:

Both did he other, which could pipe, maintain,
 And eke could pipe himself with passing skill.

* 'Daniell:' Samuel Daniell, a well-known English poet.

† 'Amyntas:' the Earl of Derby, who died in 1594.

And there, though last not least, is Aetion;* 444

A gentler shepherd may nowhere be found:
Whose Muse, full of high thoughts' invention,
Doth like himself heroically sound.

All these, and many others more remain,

Now, after Astrofell† is dead and gone:

But, while as Astrofell did live and reign, 450

Amongst all these was none his paragone.

All these do flourish in their sundry kind,

And do their Cynthia immortal make:

Yet found I liking in her royal mind,

Not for my skill, but for that shepherd's sake.'

Then spake a lovely lass, hight Lucida;

'Shepherd, enough of shepherds thou hast told,

Which favour thee, and honour Cynthia:

But of so many nymphs, which she doth hold

In her retinue, thou hast nothing said; 460

That seems, with none of them thou favour foundest,

Or art ingrateful to each gentle maid,

That none of all their due deserts resoundest.'

'Ah, far be it (quoth Colin Clout) fro me,

That I of gentle maids should ill deserve:

For that myself I do profess to be

Vassal to one, whom all my days I serve;

The beam of beauty sparkled from above,

The flower of virtue and pure chastity,

The blossom of sweet joy and perfect love, 470

The pearl of peerless grace and modesty:

To her my thoughts I daily dedicate,

To her my heart I nightly martyrize:

To her my love I lowly do prostrate,

* 'Aetion:' either the well-known Michael Drayton, or more probably Shakspeare.

† 'Astrofell:' Sir Philip Sidney.

To her my life I wholly sacrifice: 475

My thought, my heart, my love, my life is she,
And I hers ever only, ever one:

One ever I all vowed hers to be,

One ever I, and other's never none.'

Then thus Melissa said; 'Thrice happy maid, 480

Whom thou dost so enforce to deify:

That woods, and hills, and valleys thou hast made
Her name to echo unto heaven high.

But say, who else vouchsafed thee of grace?'

'They all (quoth he) me graced goodly well,

That all I praise; but, in the highest place,

Urania,* sister unto Astrofell,

In whose brave mind, as in a golden coffer,

All heavenly gifts and riches locked are;

More rich than pearls of Ind, or gold of Ophir, 490

And in her sex more wonderful and rare.

Ne less praiseworthy I Theana† read,

Whose goodly beams though they be over-dight¹

With mourning stole of careful widowhead,

Yet through that darksome vale do glisten bright;

She is the well of bounty and brave mind,

Excelling most in glory and great light:

She is the ornament of womankind,

And Court's chief garland with all virtues dight.

Therefore great Cynthia her in chiefest grace 500

Doth hold, and next unto herself advance,

Well worthy of so honourable place,

For her great worth and noble governance.

Ne less praiseworthy is her sister dear,

Fair Marian,‡ the Muses' only darling:

* 'Urania:' Mary, Countess of Pembroke, sister of Sir Philip Sidney.

† 'Theana:' Anne, third wife of the Earl of Warwick. See 'Ruins of Time,' line 250.

‡ 'Marian:' the Countess of Cumberland.

¹ Covered
over.

Whose beauty shineth as the morning clear, 506
 With silver dew upon the roses pearling.
 Ne less praiseworthy is Mansilia,*
 Best known by bearing up great Cynthia's train:
 That same is she to whom Daphnaida 510
 Upon her niece's death I did complain:
 She is the pattern of true womanhead,
 And only mirror of feminity:
 Worthy next after Cynthia to tread,
 As she is next her in nobility.
 Ne less praiseworthy Galathea† seems,
 Then best of all that honourable crew,
 Fair Galathea with bright shining beams,
 Inflaming feeble eyes that her do view.
 She there then waited upon Cynthia, 520
 Yet there is not her won;¹ but here with us
 About the borders of our rich Coshma,
 Now made of Maa, the nymph delicious.
 Ne less praiseworthy fair Neæra is,
 Neæra ours, not theirs, though there she be;
 For of the famous Shure, the nymph she is,
 For high desert, advanc'd to that degree.
 She is the blossom of grace and courtesy,
 Adorned with all honourable parts:
 She is the branch of true nobility, 530
 Belov'd of high and low with faithful hearts.
 Ne less praiseworthy Stella‡ do I read,
 Though nought my praises of her needed are,
 Whom verse of noblest shepherd lately dead

¹ Dwelling.

* 'Mansilia:' the Marchioness of Northampton.

† 'Galathea:' name of an Irish lady, but, like Neæra, Candida, and Flavia, as well as Coshma and Maa, unknown.

‡ 'Stella:' Lady Penelope Devereux, daughter of the Earl of Essex, whom Sir Philip Sidney celebrated in his *Arcadia* under the name of Philoclea, and under that of Stella in his poems of *Astrophell*.

Hath prais'd and rais'd above each other star. 535
 Ne less praiseworthy are the sisters three,
 The honour of the noble family:
 Of which I meanest boast myself to be,
 And most that unto them I am so nigh:
 Phyllis, Charillis, and sweet Amaryllis.* 540
 Phyllis, the fair, is eldest of the three:
 The next to her is bountiful Charillis:
 But th' youngest is the highest in degree.
 Phyllis, the flower of rare perfection,
 Fair spreading forth her leaves with fresh delight,
 That, with their beauty's amorous reflexion,
 Bereave of sense each rash beholder's sight.
 But sweet Charillis is the paragon
 Of peerless price, and ornament of praise, 550
 Admir'd of all, yet envied of none,
 Through the mild temperance of her goodly rays.
 Thrice happy do I hold thee, noble swain,
 The which art of so rich a spoil possesst,
 And, it embracing dear without disdain,
 Hast sole possession in so chaste a breast:
 Of all the shepherds' daughters which there be,
 And yet there be the fairest under sky,
 Or that elsewhere I ever yet did see,
 A fairer nymph yet never saw mine eye;
 She is the pride and primrose of the rest, 560
 Made by the Maker self to be admired;
 And like a goodly beacon high addrest,
 That is with sparks of heavenly beauty fired.
 But Amaryllis, whether fortunate
 Or else unfortunate may I aread,

* 'Phyllis,' 'Charillis,' and 'Amaryllis:' the three daughters of Sir John Spenser, to whom our poet inscribed respectively, 'Mother Hubbard's Tale,' the 'Tears of the Muses,' and 'Muiopotmos.'

That freed is from Cupid's yoke by fate, 566
 Since which she doth new bands' adventure dread;
 Shepherd, whatever thou hast heard to be
 In this or that prais'd diversly apart,
 In her thou mayst them all assembled see, 570
 And seal'd up in the treasure of her heart.
 Ne thee less worthy, gentle Flavia,
 For thy chaste life and virtue I esteem:
 Ne thee less worthy, courteous Candida,
 For thy true love and loyalty I deem.
 Besides yet many more that Cynthia serve,
 Right noble nymphs, and high to be commended:
 But, if I all should praise as they deserve,
 This sun would fail me ere I half had ended.
 Therefore, in closure of a thankful mind, 580
 I deem it best to hold eternally
 Their bounteous deeds and noble favours shrin'd,
 Than by discourse them to indignify.'

So having said, Aglaura him bespake:
 'Colin, well worthy were those goodly favours
 Bestow'd on thee, that so of them dost make,
 And them requitest with thy thankful labours.
 But of great Cynthia's goodness, and high grace,
 Finish the story which thou hast begun.'

'More eath¹ (quoth he) it is in such a case 590
 How to begin, than know how to have done.
 For every gift, and every goodly meed,
 Which she on me bestow'd, demands a day;
 And every day, in which she did a deed,
 Demands a year it duly to display.
 Her words were like a stream of honey fleeting,
 The which doth softly trickle from the hive:
 Able to melt the hearer's heart unweeting,²
 And eke to make the dead again alive.

¹ Easy.² Uncon-
sciously.

Her deeds were like great clusters of ripe grapes,
 Which load the bunches of the fruitful vine; 601
 Off'ring to fall into each mouth that gapes,
 And fill the same with store of timely wine.
 Her looks were like beams of the morning sun,
 Forth looking through the windows of the east,
 When first the fleecy cattle have begun
 Upon the pearled grass to make their feast.
 Her thoughts are like the fume of frankincense,
 Which from a golden censer forth doth rise,
 And throwing forth sweet odours mounts from thence
 In rolling globes up to the vaulted skies. 611

There she beholds, with high aspiring thought,
 The cradle of her own creation,
 Amongst the seats of angels heavenly wrought,
 Much like an angel in all form and fashion.'

'Colin, (said Cuddy then,) thou hast forgot
 Thyself, me seems, too much, to mount so high:
 Such lofty flight base¹ shepherd seemeth not,
 From flocks and fields, to angels and to sky.'

'True, (answered he,) but her great excellence 620
 Lifts me above the measure of my might:

That, being fill'd with furious insolence,²

I feel myself like one yrap't in sprite.

For when I think of her, as oft I ought,

Then want I words to speak it fitly forth:

And, when I speak of her what I have thought,

I cannot think according to her worth.

Yet will I think of her, yet will I speak,

So long as life my limbs doth hold together;

And, when as death these vital bands shall break, 630

Her name recorded I will leave for ever.

Her name in every tree I will endorse,

That, as the trees do grow, her name may grow:

¹ Humble.

² ecstasy

And in the ground each where will it engross, 634
 And fill with stones, that all men may it know.
 The speaking woods, and murmuring waters' fall,
 Her name I'll teach in known terms to frame:
 And eke my lambs, when for their dams they call,
 I'll teach to call for Cynthia by name.

And, long while after I am dead and rotten, 640
 Amongst the shepherds' daughters dancing round,
 My lays made of her shall not be forgotten,
 But sung by them with flow'ry garlands crown'd.
 And ye, whoso ye be, that shall survive,
 When as ye hear her memory renewed,
 Be witness of her bounty here alive,
 Which she to Colin her poor shepherd shewed.'

Much was the whole assembly of those herds
 Mov'd at his speech, so feelingly he spake:
 And stood awhile astonish'd at his words, 650
 Till Thestylis at last their silence brake,
 Saying; 'Why, Colin, since thou foundst such grace
 With Cynthia and all her noble crew;
 Why didst thou ever leave that happy place,
 In which such wealth might unto thee accrue;
 And back returnedst to this barren soil,
 Where cold and care and penury do dwell,
 Here to keep sheep, with hunger and with toil?
 Most wretched he, that is and cannot tell.'

'Happy indeed (said Colin) I him hold, 660
 That may that blessed presence still enjoy,
 Of fortune and of envy uncontroll'd,
 Which still are wont most happy states t' annoy:
 But I, by that which little while I proved,
 Some part of those enormities did see,
 The which in court continually hove^d,¹
 And follow'd those which happy seem'd to be.

¹ Hovered.

Therefore I, silly man, whose former days 668
 Had in rude fields been altogether spent,
 Durst not adventure such unknowen ways,
 Nor trust the guile of fortune's blandishment;
 But rather chose back to my sheep to turn,
 Whose utmost hardness I before had tried,
 Than, having learn'd repentance late, to mourn
 Amongst those wretches which I there descried.'

'Shepherd, (said Thestylis,) it seems of spite,
 Thou speakest thus gainst their felicity,
 Which thou enviest, rather than of right
 That ought in them blameworthy thou dost spy.'

'Cause have I none (quoth he) of canker'd will 680
 To quite¹ them ill, that me demean'd² so well:

¹ Requite.

² Treated.

But self-regard of private good or ill
 Moves me of each, so as I found, to tell
 And eke to warn young shepherds' wand'ring wit,
 Which, through report of that life's painted bliss,
 Abandon quiet home, to seek for it,
 And leave their lambs to loss misled amiss.
 For, sooth to say, it is no sort of life,
 For shepherd fit to lead in that same place,
 Where each one seeks with malice, and with strife,
 To thrust down other into foul disgrace, 691

³ Wicked
false-
hoods.

Himself to raise: and he doth soonest rise
 That best can handle his deceitful wit
 In subtle shifts, and finest sleights devise,
 Either by sland'ring his well deemed name,
 Through leasings lewd,³ and feigned forgery;
 Or else by breeding him some blot of blame,
 By creeping close into his secrecy;
 To which him needs a guileful hollow heart,
 Masked with fair dissembling courtesy, 700
 A filed⁴ tongue furnish'd with terms of art,

⁴ Smooth,
artful.

No art of school, but courtier's schoolery. 702

For arts of school have there small countenance,

Counted but toys to busy idle brains;

And there professors find small maintenance,

But to be instruments of others' gains.

Ne is there place for any gentle wit,

Unless, to please, itself it can apply;

But shoulder'd is, or out of door quite shit,

As base, or blunt, unmeet for melody. 710

For each man's worth is measured by his weed,¹

As harts by horns, or asses by their ears :

Yet asses be not all whose ears exceed,

Nor yet all harts that horns the highest bears.

For highest looks have not the highest mind,

Nor haughty words most full of highest thoughts :

But are like bladders blowen up with wind,

That being prick'd do vanish into noughts.

Even such is all their vaunted vanity,

Nought else but smoke, that fumeth soon away: 720

Such is their glory that in simple eye

Seem greatest, when their garments are most gay.

So they themselves for praise of fools do sell,

And all their wealth for painting on a wall;

With price whereof they buy a golden bell,

And purchase highest rooms in bower and hall:

Whiles single Truth and simple Honesty

Do wander up and down despis'd of all;

Their plain attire such glorious gallantry

Disdains so much, that none them in doth call.' 730

'Ah! Colin, (then said Hobbinol,) the blame

Which thou imputest is too general,

As if not any gentle wit of name

Nor honest mind might there be found at all.

For well I wot, sith I myself was there,

¹ Dress.

To wait on Lobbin,* (Lobbin well thou knewest,)
 Full many worthy ones then waiting were, 737
 As ever else in prince's court thou viewest.
 Of which, among you many yet remain,
 Whose names I cannot readily now guess :
 Those that poor suitors' papers do retain,
 And those that skill of medicine profess,
 And those that do to Cynthia expound
 The ledden¹ of strange languages in charge :
 For Cynthia doth in sciences abound,
 And gives to their professors stipends large.
 Therefore unjustly thou dost wite² them all,
 For that which thou mislikedst in a few.'

¹ Dialect.² Blame.

'Blame is (quoth he) more blameless general,
 Than that which private errors doth pursue; 750
 For well I wot, that there amongst them be
 Full many persons of right worthy parts,
 Both for report of spotless honesty,
 And for profession of all learned arts,
 Whose praise hereby no whit impaired is,
 Though blame do light on those that faulty be;
 For all the rest do most-what³ far amiss,
 And yet their own misfaring⁴ will not see :
 For either they be puffed up with pride,
 Or fraught with envy that their galls do swell, 760
 Or they their days to idleness divide,
 Or drowned die in pleasure's wasteful well,
 In which like moldwarps⁵ nousling⁶ still they lurk,
 Unmindful of chief parts of manliness;
 And do themselves, for want of other work,
 Vain votaries of lazy Love profess,
 Whose service high so basely they ensue,⁷
 That Cupid self of them ashamed is,

³ General-ly.⁴ Evil-doing.⁵ Moles.⁶ Burrowing.⁷ Follow.

* 'Lobbin : ' the Earl of Leicester.

And, must'ring all his men in Venus' view, 779
Denies them quite for servitors of his.'

'And is love then (said Corylas) once known
In Court, and his sweet lore professed there?
I weened sure he was our god alone,
And only wonn'd¹ in fields and forests here.'

¹ Dwelt.

'Not so, (quoth he,) Love most aboundeth there;
For all the walls and windows there are writ,
All full of love, and love, and love my dear,
And all their talk and study is of it.

Ne any there doth brave or valiant seem,
Unless that some gay mistress' badge he bears: 780
Ne any one himself doth ought esteem,
Unless he swim in love up to the ears.

But they of Love, and of his sacred lere,²
(As it should be,) all otherwise devise,

² Lore.

Than we poor shepherds are accustom'd here,
And him do sue and serve all otherwise.

For with lewd³ speeches, and licentious deeds,
His mighty mysteries they do profane,
And use his idle name to other needs,
But as a compliment for courting vain. 790

³ Evil.

So him they do not serve as they profess,
But make him serve to them for sordid uses:
Ah! my dread Lord, that dost liege hearts possess,
Avenge thyself on them for their abuses.

But we poor shepherds whether rightly so,
Or through our rudeness into error led,
Do make religion how we rashly go
To serve that god, that is so greatly dred;⁴

⁴ Dreaded.

For him the greatest of the gods we deem,
Born without sire or couples of one kind; 800
For Venus self doth solely couples seem,
Both male and female through commixture join'd:

So pure and spotless Cupid forth she brought, 803
 And in the Gardens of Adonis nurst:

Where growing he his own perfection wrought,
 And shortly was of all the gods the first.

Then got he bow and shafts of gold and lead,
 In which so fell and puissant he grew,

That Jove himself his power began to dread,
 And, taking up to heaven, him godded¹ new. 810

From thence he shoots his arrows everywhere
 Into the world, at random as he will,

On us frail men, his wretched vassals here,
 Like as himself us pleaseth save or spill.²

So we him worship, so we him adore
 With humble hearts to heaven uplifted high,

That to true loves he may us evermore
 Prefer, and of their grace us dignify:

Ne is there shepherd, ne yet shepherd's swain,
 What ever feeds in forest or in field, 820

That dare with evil deed or leasing³ vain
 Blaspheme his power, or terms unworthy yield.'

'Shepherd, it seems that some celestial rage
 Of love (quoth Cuddy) is breath'd into thy breast,

That poureth forth these oracles so sage
 Of that high power, wherewith thou art possest.

But never wist I till this present day,
 Albe⁴ of Love I always humbly deemed,

That he was such an one, as thou dost say,
 And so religiously to be esteemed. 830

Well may it seem, by this thy deep insight,
 That of that god the priest thou shouldest be:

So well thou wot'st the mystery of his might,
 As if his godhead thou didst present see.'

'Of Love's perfection perfectly to speak,
 Or of his nature rightly to define,

¹ Deified.

² Spoil.

³ False-
hood.

⁴ Al-
though.

Indeed (said Colin) passeth reason's reach, 837
 And needs his priest t' express his power divine.

For long before the world he was ybore,¹ ¹ Born.
 And bred above in Venus' bosom dear:

For by his power the world was made of yore,
 And all that therein wondrous doth appear.

For how should else things so far from attone,² ² In harmony.
 And so great enemies as of them be,

Be ever drawn together into one,
 And taught in such accordance to agree?

Through him the cold began to covet heat,
 And water fire; the light to mount on high,

And th' heavy down to pieze;³ the hungry t' eat, ³ Poise, weigh.
 And voidness to seek full satiety. 850

So, being former foes, they waxed friends,
 And 'gan by little learn to love each other:

So, being knit, they brought forth other kinds
 Out of the fruitful womb of their great mother.

Then first 'gan heaven out of darkness dread
 For to appear, and brought forth cheerful day:

Next 'gan the earth to shew her naked head,
 Out of deep waters which her drown'd alway:

And, shortly after, every living wight
 Crept forth like worms out of her slimy nature. 860

Soon as on them the sun's life-giving light
 Had poured kindly heat and formal feature,

Thenceforth they 'gan each one his like to love,
 And like himself desire for to beget:

The lion chose his mate, the turtle dove
 Her dear, the dolphin his own dolphinet;

But man, that had the spark of reason's might
 More than the rest to rule his passion,

Chose for his love the fairest in his sight,
 Like as himself was fairest by creation: 870

For Beauty is the bait which with delight 871
 Doth man allure for to enlarge his kind;
 Beauty, the burning lamp of heaven's light,
 Darting her beams into each feeble mind:
 Against whose power, nor God nor man can find
 Defence, ne ward the danger of the wound;
 But, being hurt, seek to be medicin'd

¹ Attack.

Of her that first did stir that mortal stound.¹
 Then do they cry and call to Love apace,
 With prayers loud importuning the sky, 880
 Whence he them hears; and, when he list shew
 grace,

Does grant them grace that otherwise would die.
 So Love is lord of all the world by right,
 And rules their creatures by his powerful saw:²
 All being made the vassals of his might,
 Through secret sense which thereto doth them
 draw.

² Sentence,
decree.

Thus ought all lovers of their lord to deem;
 And with chaste heart to honour him alway:
 But whoso else doth otherwise esteem,
 Are outlaws, and his lore do disobey. 890
 For their desire is base, and doth not merit
 The name of love, but of disloyal lust:
 Ne mongst true lovers they shall place inherit,
 But as exiles out of his court be thrust.'

So having said, Melissa spake at will;
 'Colin, thou now full deeply hast divin'd
 Of Love and Beauty; and, with wondrous skill,
 Hast Cupid self depainted in his kind.
 To thee are all true lovers greatly bound,
 That dost their cause so mightily defend: 900
 But most, all women are thy debtors found,
 That dost their bounty still so much commend.'

‘That ill (said Hobbinol) they him requite, 903
 For having loved ever one most dear:
 He is repaid with scorn and foul despite,
 That irks each gentle heart which it doth hear.’

‘Indeed (said Lucid) I have often heard
 Fair Rosalind of divers foully blamed
 For being to that swain too cruel hard;
 That her bright glory else hath much defamed. 910

But who can tell what cause had that fair maid
 To use him so that used her so well;

Or who with blame can justly her upbraid,
 For loving not? for who can love compel?

And, sooth to say, it is foolhardy thing,

Rashly to witen¹ creatures so divine;

¹ Blame.

For demigods they be, and first did spring
 From heaven, though graff’d in frailness feminine.

And well I wot, that oft I heard it spoken,

How one, that fairest Helen did revile, 920

Through judgment of the gods to be ywroken,²

² Avenged,
punish-
ed.

Lost both his eyes, and so remain’d long while,

Till he recanted had his wicked rhymes,

And made amends to her with treble praise.

Beware therefore, ye grooms, I read³ betimes,

³ Advise.

How rashly blame of Rosalind ye raise.’

‘Ah! shepherds, (then said Colin,) ye ne weet⁴

⁴ Know.

How great a guilt upon your heads ye draw,

To make so bold a doom, with words unmeet,

Of thing celestial which ye never saw. 930

For she is not like as the other crew

Of shepherds’ daughters which amongst you be,

But of divine regard and heavenly hue,

Excelling all that ever ye did see.

Not then to her that scorned thing so base,

But to myself the blame that look’d so high:

So high her thoughts as she herself have place, 937

And loathe each lowly thing with lofty eye.

Yet so much grace let her vouchsafe to grant

To simple swain, sith her I may not love:

¹ Publicly. Yet that I may her honour paravant,¹

And praise her worth, though far my wit above.

Such grace shall be some guerdon for the grief,

And long affliction which I have endured:

Such grace sometimes shall give me some relief,

And ease of pain which cannot be recured.

And ye, my fellow shepherds, which do see

And hear the languors of my too long dying,

Unto the world for ever witness be,

That hers I die, nought to the world denying 950

This simple trophy of her great conquest.'—

So, having ended, he from ground did rise;

And after him uprose eke all the rest:

All loath to part, but that the glooming skies

Warn'd them to draw their bleating flocks to rest.

ASTROPHEL.

A PASTORAL ELEGY

UPON THE DEATH OF THE MOST NOBLE AND VALOROUS KNIGHT

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

DEDICATED TO THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AND VIRTUOUS LADY,

THE COUNTESS OF ESSEX.*

* Widow of Sir Philip Sidney, and now married to the Earl of Essex.

SHEPHERDS, that wont, on pipes of oaten reed,
Oft times to plain your love's concealed smart;
And with your piteous lays have learn'd to breed
Compassion in a country lass's heart :
Hearken, ye gentle shepherds, to my song,
And place my doleful plaint your plaints among.

To you alone I sing this mournful verse,
The mournfulst verse that ever man heard tell :
To you whose softened hearts it may empierce
With dolour's dart for death of Astrophel.
To you I sing and to none other wight,
For well I wot my rhymes be rudely dight.*

Yet as they be, if any nicer wit
Shall hap to hear, or covet them to read :
Think he, that such are for such ones most fit,
Made not to please the living but the dead.
And if in him found pity ever place,
Let him be mov'd to pity such a case.

* Fashioned.

ASTROPHEL.*

A GENTLE Shepherd born in Arcady,
Of gentlest race that ever shepherd bore,
About the grassy banks of Hæmony
Did keep his sheep, his little stock and store.
Full carefully he kept them day and night,
In fairest fields; and Astrophel he hight.

Young Astrophel, the pride of shepherds' praise,
Young Astrophel, the rustic lasses' love:
Far passing all the pastors of his days,
In all that seemly shepherd might behave. 10
In one thing only failing of the best,
That he was not so happy as the rest.

For from the time that first the nymph his mother
Him forth did bring, and taught her lambs to feed;
A slender swain, excelling far each other,
In comely shape, like her that did him breed,
He grew up fast in goodness and in grace,
And doubly fair wox both in mind and face.

* It will be remembered that Sir P. Sidney, when assisting the Dutch against the Spaniards, met, on the 22d of September 1586, a convoy of the enemy near Zutphen. The English gained the victory, but their gallant commander had his thigh shattered by a shot, and being removed to Arnheim, died on the 17th of October.

Which daily more and more he did augment, 19
 With gentle usage and demeanour mild:
 That all men's hearts with secret ravishment
 He stole away, and weetingly¹ beguil'd.
 Ne Spite itself, that all good things doth spill,
 Found ought in him, that she could say was ill.

¹ Know-
ingly.

His sports were fair, his joyance innocent,
 Sweet without sour, and honey without gall:
 And he himself seem'd made for merriment,
 Merrily masking both in bower and hall.
 There was no pleasure nor delightful play,
 When Astrophel so ever was away. 30

For he could pipe, and dance, and carol sweet,
 Amongst the shepherds in their shearing feast;
 As summer's lark that with her song doth greet
 The dawning day forth coming from the East.
 And lays of love he also could compose:
 Thrice happy she, whom he to praise did chose.

Full many maidens often did him woo,
 Them to vouchsafe amongst his rhymes to name,
 Or make² for them, as he was wont to do
 For her that did his heart with love inflame. 40
 For which they promised to dight for him
 Gay chaplets of flowers and garlands trim.

² Versify.

And many a nymph both of the wood and brook,
 Soon as his oaten pipe began to shrill,
 Both crystal wells and shady groves forsook,
 To hear the charms of his enchanting skill;
 And brought him presents, flowers if it were prime,³
 Or mellow fruit if it were harvest time.

³ Spring.

But he for none of them did care a whit, 49
 Yet Woodgods for them often sighed sore:
 Ne for their gifts unworthy of his wit,
 Yet not unworthy of the country's store.
 For one alone he cared, for one he sigh't,
 His life's desire, and his dear love's delight.

Stella* the fair, the fairest star in sky,
 As fair as Venus or the fairest fair,
 (A fairer star saw never living eye,
 Shot her sharp pointed beams through purest air.
 Her he did love, her he alone did honour,
 His thoughts, his rhymes, his songs were all upon her.

To her he vow'd the service of his days, 61
 On her he spent the riches of his wit:
 For her he made hymns of immortal praise,
 Of only her he sung, he thought, he writ.
 Her, and but her, of love he worthy deemed;
 For all the rest but little he esteemed.

Ne her with idle words alone he wowed,
 And verses vain, (yet verses are not vain,)
 But with brave deeds to her sole service vowed,
 And bold achievements her did entertain. 70
 For both in deeds and words he nurtured was,
 Both wise and hardy, (too hardy alas!)

In wrestling nimble, and in running swift,
 In shooting steady, and in swimming strong:

* 'Stella:' Lady Penelope Devereux, Sidney's first love, in honour of whom he wrote the collection of poems called 'Astrophel and Stella.' She was, when Spenser wrote, the wife of Lord Rich, and after his death married Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, who was subsequently created Earl of Devonshire.

Well made to strike, to throw, to leap, to lift, 75
 And all the sports that shepherds are among.
 In every one he vanquish'd every one,
 He vanquish'd all, and vanquish'd was of none.

Besides, in hunting such felicity
 Or rather infelicity he found, 80
 That every field and forest far away
 He sought, where savage beasts do most abound.
 No beast so savage but he could it kill;
 No chase so hard, but he therein had skill.

¹ Afraid.

Such skill, match'd with such courage as he had,
 Did prick him forth with proud desire of praise
 To seek abroad, of danger nought ydrad,¹
 His mistress' name, and his own fame, to raise.
 What needeth peril to be sought abroad,
 Since, round about us, it doth make abode! 90

It fortun'd, as he that perilous game
 In foreign soil pursued far away,
 Into a forest wide and waste he came,
 Where store he heard to be of savage prey.
 So wide a forest and so waste as this,
 Nor famous Arden, nor foul Arlo, is.

There his well woven toils, and subtle trains,
 He laid the brutish nation to enwrap:
 So well he wrought with practice and with pains,
 That he of them great troops did soon entrap. 100
 Full happy man (misweening much) was he,
 So rich a spoil within his power to see.

² Immediately.
³ Welfare.

Eftsoons,² all heedless of his dearest hale,³
 Full greedily into the herd he thrust,

To slaughter them, and work their final bale, 105
 Lest that his toil¹ should of their troops be Brust.
 Wide wounds amongst them many one he made,
 Now with his sharp boar-spear, now with his blade.

¹ Net.

His care was all how he them all might kill,
 That none might 'scape, (so partial unto none:) 110
 Ill mind so much to mind another's ill,
 As to become unmindful of his own.
 But pardon that unto the cruel skies,
 That from himself to them withdrew his eyes.

So as he rag'd amongst that beastly rout,
 A cruel beast of most accursed brood
 Upon him turn'd, (despair makes cowards stout,)
 And, with fell tooth accustomed to blood,
 Launched his thigh with so mischievous might,
 That it both bone and muscles rived quite. 120

So deadly was the dint and deep the wound,
 And so huge streams of blood thereout did flow,
 That he endured not the direful stound,²
 But on the cold dear earth himself did throw;
 The whiles the captive herd his nets did rend,
 And, having none to let,³ to wood did wend.

² Pain.³ Hinder.

Ah! where were ye this while his shepherd peers,
 To whom alive was nought so dear as he:
 And ye fair maids, the matches of his years,
 Which in his grace did boast you most to be! 130
 Ah! where were ye, when he of you had need,
 To stop his wound that wondrously did bleed!

Ah! wretched boy, the shape of drearihead,
 And sad ensample of man's sudden end:

Full little faileth but thou shalt be dead, 135
 Unpitied, unplain'd, of foe or friend!
 Whilst none is nigh, thine eyelids up to close,
 And kiss thy lips like faded leaves of rose.

¹ Com-
 pany.
² Follow-
 ing.

A sort¹ of shepherds suing² of the chase,
 As they the forest ranged on a day, 140
 By fate or fortune came unto the place,
 Where as the luckless boy yet bleeding lay;
 Yet bleeding lay, and yet would still have bled,
 Had not good hap those shepherds thither led.

They stopt his wound, (too late to stop it was!)
 And in their arms then softly did him rear:
 Then (as he will'd) unto his loved lass,
 His dearest love, him dolefully did bear.
 The dolefullest bier that ever man did see,
 Was Astrophel, but dearest unto me! 150

She, when she saw her love in such a plight,
 With curdled blood and filthy gore deformed,
 That wont to be with flowers and garlands dight,
 And her dear favours dearly well adorned;
 Her face, the fairest face that eye might see,
 She likewise did deform like him to be.

Her yellow locks that shone so bright and long,
 As sunny beams in fairest summer's day,
 She fiercely tore, and with outrageous wrong
 From her red cheeks the roses rent away: 160
 And her fair breast, the treasury of joy,
 She spoil'd thereof, and filled with annoy.

His pallid face, impictured with death,
 She bathed oft with tears and dried oft:

And with sweet kisses suck'd the wasting breath 166
 Out of his lips like lilies pale and soft.
 And oft she call'd to him, who answered nought,
 But only by his looks did tell his thought.

The rest of her impatient regret,
 And piteous moan the which she for him made, 170
 No tongue can tell, nor any forth can set,
 But he whose heart like sorrow did invade.
 At last, when pain his vital powers had spent,
 His wasted life her weary lodge forwent.¹

¹ Forsook.

Which when she saw, she stayed not a whit,
 But after him did make untimely haste:
 Forthwith her ghost out of her corps did flit,
 And followed her make² like turtle chaste:
 To prove that death their hearts cannot divide,
 Which living were in love so firmly tied. 180

² Mate.

The gods, which all things see, this same beheld,
 And, pitying this pair of lovers true,
 Transformed them there lying on the field
 Into one flower that is both red and blue:
 It first grows red, and then to blue doth fade,
 Like Astrophel, which thereinto was made.

And in the midst thereof a star appears,
 As fairly form'd as any star in skies;
 Resembling Stella in her freshest years,
 Forth darting beams of beauty from her eyes: 190
 And all the day it standeth full of dew,
 Which is the tears, that from her eyes did flow.

That herb of some Starlight is call'd by name,
 Of others Penthia, though not so well:

But thou, wherever thou dost find the same, 195
 From this day forth do call it Astrophel:
 And, whensoever thou it up dost take,
 Do pluck it softly for that shepherd's sake.

Hereof when tidings far abroad did pass,
 The shepherds all which loved him full dear, 200
 And sure full dear of all he loved was,
 Did thither flock to see what they did hear.
 And when that piteous spectacle they viewed,
 The same with bitter tears they all bedewed.

And every one did make exceeding moan,
 With inward anguish and great grief opprest:
 And every one did weep, and wail, and moan,
 And means devis'd to shew his sorrow best;
 That from that hour, since first on grassy green
 Shepherds kept sheep, was not like mourning seen.

But first his sister that Clorinda * hight, 211
 The gentlest shepherdess that lives this day,
 And most resembling both in shape and sprite
 Her brother dear, began this doleful lay.
 Which, lest I mar the sweetness of the verse,
 In sort as she it sung I will rehearse.†

* 'Clorinda:' Mary, Countess of Pembroke, Sidney's sister.

† Left a fragment.

PROTHALAMION:

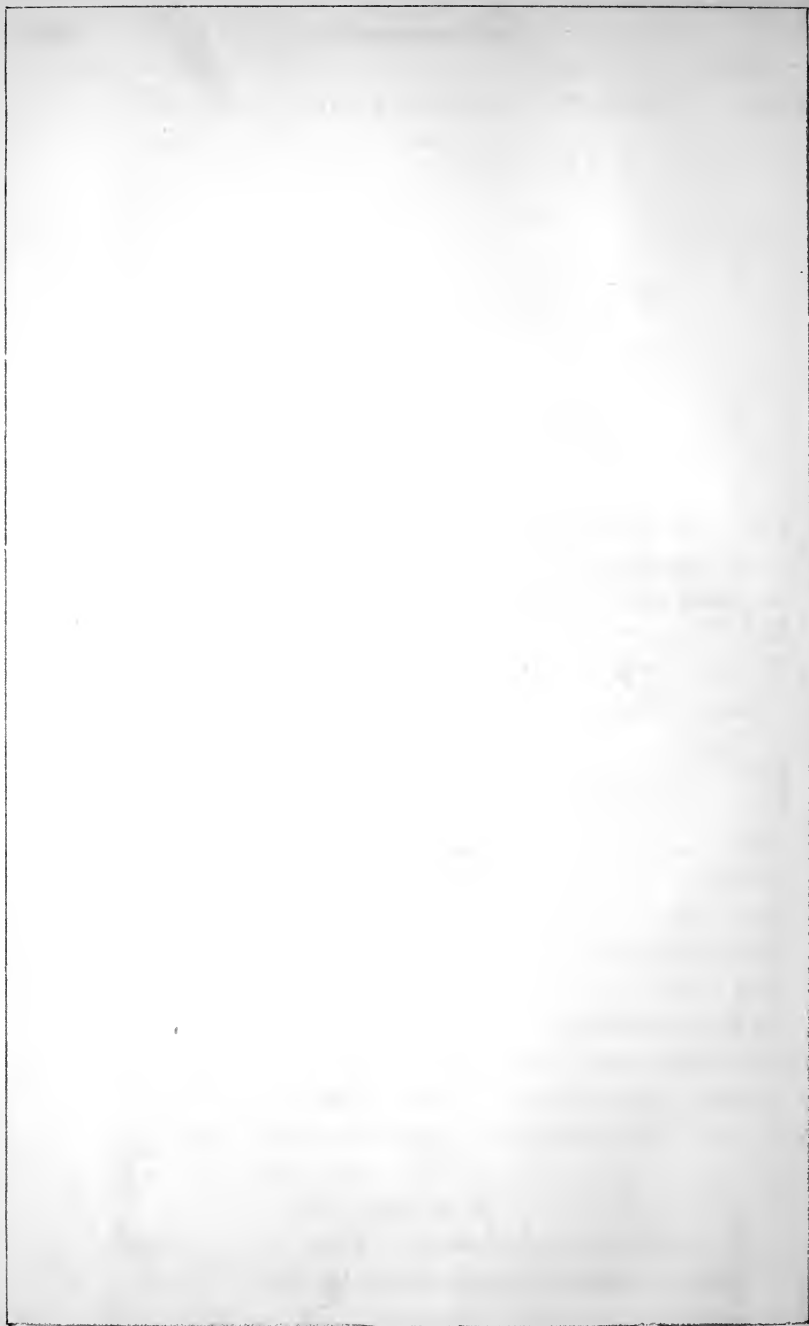
OR,

A SPOUSAL VERSE,

MADE BY

EDM. SPENSER,

IN HONOUR OF THE DOUBLE MARRIAGE OF THE TWO HONOURABLE AND VIRTUOUS
LADIES, THE LADY ELIZABETH, AND THE LADY KATHERINE SOMERSET,
DAUGHTERS TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF WORCESTER,
AND ESPOUSED TO THE TWO WORTHY GENTLEMEN, M. HENRY
GILFORD AND M. WILLIAM PETER, ESQUIRES.



PROTHALAMION:

OR,

A SPOUSAL VERSE.

CALM was the day, and through the trembling air
 Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play
 A gentle spirit,¹ that lightly did delay²
 Hot Titan's beams, which then did glister fair;
 When I, (whom [whose] sullen care,
 Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
 In prince's court, and expectation vain
 Of idle hopes, which still do fly away,
 Like empty shadows, did afflict my brain,)
 Walk'd forth to ease my pain
 Along the shore of silver streaming Thames;
 Whose ruddy³ bank, the which his river hems,
 Was painted all with variable flowers,
 And all the meads adorn'd with dainty gems,
 Fit to deck maidens' bowers,
 And crown their paramours
 Against the bridal day, which is not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

¹ Breath.
² Temper,
 mitigate.

10

³ Ruddy.

There, in a meadow, by the river's side,
 A flock of Nymphs I chanced to espy,
 All lovely daughters of the Flood thereby,

20

With goodly greenish locks, all loose untied, 22
 As each had been a bride;
 And each one had a little wicker basket,
 Made of fine twigs, entrail'd¹ curiously,
 In which they gathered flowers to fill their flasket,²
 And with fine fingers cropt full feateously³
 The tender stalks on high.
 Of every sort, which in that meadow grew,
 They gathered some; the violet, pallid blue, 30
 The little daisy, that at evening closes,
 The virgin lily, and the primrose true,
 With store of vermeil roses,
 To deck their bridegrooms' posies
 Against the bridal day, which was not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

¹ Inter-
woven.
² Vessel,
basket.
³ Dexter-
ously.

With that I saw two Swans of goodly hue
 Come softly swimming down along the lee;⁴
 Two fairer birds I yet did never see;
 The snow, which doth the top of Pindus strew, 40
 Did never whiter shew;
 Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be
 For love of Leda, whiter did appear;
 Yet Leda was (they say) as white as he,
 Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near;
 So purely white they were,
 That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,
 Seem'd foul to them, and bade his billows spare
 To wet their silken feathers, lest they might
 Soil their fair plumes with water not so fair, 50
 And mar their beauties bright,
 That shone as heaven's light,
 Against their bridal day, which was not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

⁴ Stream.

Eftsoons,¹ the Nymphs, which now had flowers their
 Ran all in haste to see that silver brood, [fill,
 As they came floating on the crystal flood; 57
 Whom when they saw, they stood amazed still,
 Their wond'ring eyes to fill;
 Them seem'd they never saw a sight so fair,
 Of fowls, so lovely, that they sure did deem
 Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair
 Which through the sky draw Venus' silver team;
 For sure they did not seem
 To be begot of any earthly seed,
 But rather angels, or of angels' breed;
 Yet were they bred of Somers-heat,* they say,
 In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
 The earth did fresh array;
 So fresh they seem'd as day, 70
 Even as their bridal day, which was not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

¹ Immediately.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
 Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,
 That to the sense did fragrant odours yield,
 All which upon those goodly birds they threw,
 And all the waves did strew,
 That like old Peneus' waters they did seem,
 When down along by pleasant Tempe's shore,
 Scatter'd with flowers, through Thessaly they stream,
 That they appear, through lilies' plenteous store, 81
 Like a bride's chamber floor. [bound
 Two of those Nymphs, meanwhile, two garlands
 Of freshest flowers which in that mead they found,
 The which presenting all in trim array,

* 'Somers-heat:' a punning allusion to the surname of the ladies whose marriages this spousal verse celebrates.

Their snowy foreheads therewithal they crown'd, 86
 Whilst one did sing this lay,
 Prepar'd against that day,
 Against their bridal day, which was not long :
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song. 90

'Ye gentle Birds! the world's fair ornament,
 And heaven's glory, whom this happy hour
 Doth lead unto your lovers' blissful bower,
 Joy may you have, and gentle hearts' content
 Of your love's couplement ;
 And let fair Venus, that is Queen of Love,
 With her heart-quelling son upon you smile,
 Whose smile, they say, hath virtue to remove
 All love's dislike, and friendship's faulty guile
 For ever to assoil.¹ 100

¹ Remove.

Let endless peace your steadfast hearts accord,
 And blessed plenty wait upon your board ;
 And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
 That fruitful issue may to you afford,
 Which may your foes confound,
 And make your joys redound
 Upon your bridal day, which is not long :
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.'

So ended she ; and all the rest around
 To her redoubled that her undersong, 110
 Which said, their bridal day should not be long :
 And gentle Echo from the neighbour ground
 Their accents did resound.
 So forth those joyous Birds did pass along
 Adown the lee, that to them murmur'd low,
 As he would speak, but that he lack'd a tongue,
 Yet did by signs his glad affection show,

Making his stream run slow. 118

And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell

Gan flock about these twain, that did excel

The rest, so far as Cynthia doth shend¹

The lesser stars. So they, enranged well,

Did on those two attend,

And their best service lend

Against their wedding day, which was not long :

Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

¹ Put to
shame.

At length they all to merry London came,

To merry London, my most kindly nurse,

That to me gave this life's first native source,

Though from another place I take my name,* 130

An house of ancient fame :

There when they came, whereas those bricky towers

The which on Thames' broad aged back do ride,

Where now the studious lawyers have their bowers,

There whilome² wont the Templar Knights to bide,

Till they decay'd through pride;

Next whereunto there stands a stately place,

Where oft I gained gifts and goodly grace

Of that great lord, which therein went to dwell,

Whose want too well now feels my friendless case ;

But ah! here fits not well 141

Old woes, but joys, to tell

Against the bridal day, which is not long :

Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

² Former-
ly.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer,†

Great England's glory, and the world's wide wonder,

Whose dreadful name late through all Spain did

And Hercules' two pillars standing near [thunder,

* 'Take my name:' see 'Life,' vol ii.

† 'Noble peer:' the Earl of Essex.

Did make to quake and fear: 149
 Fair branch of honour, flower of chivalry!
 That fillest England with thy triumph's fame,
 Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
 And endless happiness of thine own name
 That promiseth the same;
 That through thy prowess, and victorious arms,
 Thy country may be freed from foreign harms,
 And great Elisa's glorious name may ring
 Through all the world, fill'd with thy wide alarms,
 Which some brave Muse may sing
 To ages following, 160
 Upon the bridal day, which is not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issuing,
 Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hair
 In th' ocean billows he hath bathed fair,
 Descended to the river's open viewing,
 With a great train ensuing.
 Above the rest were goodly to be seen
 Two gentle Knights of lovely face and feature,
 Beseeming well the bower of any queen, 170
 With gifts of wit, and ornaments of nature,
 Fit for so goodly stature,
 That like the Twins of Jove* they seem'd in sight,
 Which deck the baldric¹ of the heavens bright;
 They two, forth pacing to the river's side,
 Receiv'd those two fair Brides, their love's delight;
 Which, at th' appointed tide,
 Each one did make his Bride
 Against their bridal day, which is not long:
 Sweet Thames! run softly, till I end my song.

¹ Girdle.

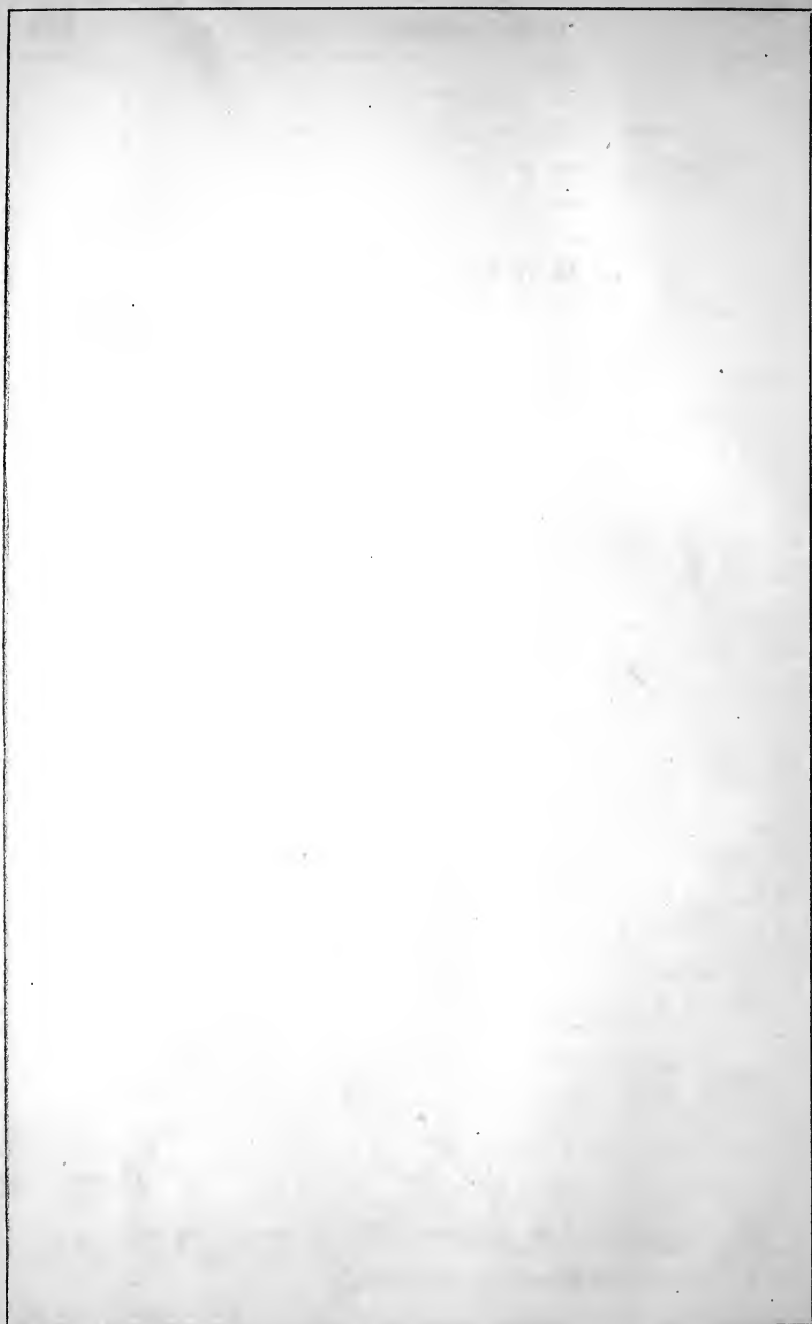
* 'Twins of Jove: ' Castor and Pollux.

AMORETTI,

OR

SONNETS.

BY EDM. SPENSER.



A M O R E T T I ,

OR

SONNETS.*

I.

HAPPY, ye leaves! when as those lily hands,
 Which hold my life in their dead-doing might,
 Shall handle you, and hold in love's soft bands,
 Like captives trembling at the victor's sight.
 And happy lines! on which, with starry light,
 Those laming eyes will deign sometimes to look,
 And read the sorrows of my dying sprite,
 Written with tears in heart's close-bleeding book.
 And happy rhymes! bath'd in the sacred brook
 Of Helicon, whence she derived is;
 When ye behold that angel's blessed look,
 My soul's long-lacked food, my heaven's bliss;
 Leaves, lines, and rhymes, seek her to please alone,
 Whom if ye please, I care for other none!

II.

Unquiet thought! whom at the first I bred
 Of th' inward bale of my love-pined heart;
 And sithens¹ have with sighs and sorrows fed,
 Till greater than my womb thou waxen art:

* Addressed to his wife, and containing a chronological account of his courtship, which lasted for nearly two years, amidst many discouragements. See 'Life,' vol. ii.

¹ Since
that
time.

Break forth at length out of th' inner part,
 In which thou lurkest like to viper's brood;
 And seek some succour both to ease my smart,
 And also to sustain thyself with food.
 But, if in presence of that fairest Proud
 Thou chance to come, fall lowly at her feet;
 And, with meek humblesse and afflicted mood,
 Pardon for thee, and grace for me, entreat:
 Which if she grant, then live, and my love cherish:
 If not, die soon; and I with thee will perish.

III.

The sovereign beauty which I do admire,
 Witness the world how worthy to be praised!
 The light whereof hath kindled heavenly fire
 In my frail spirit, by her from baseness raised;
¹ Dazzled. That being now with her huge brightness dazed,¹
 Base thing I can no more endure to view:
 But, looking still on her, I stand amazed
 At wondrous sight of so celestial hue.
 So when my tongue would speak her praises due,
 It stopped is with thought's astonishment;
 And, when my pen would write her titles true,
 It ravish'd is with fancy's wonderment:
 Yet in my heart I then both speak and write
 The wonder that my wit cannot indite.

IV.

New year, forth looking out of Janus' gate,*
 Doth seem to promise hope of new delight:
 And, bidding th' old adieu, his passed date
 Bids all old thoughts to die in dumpish² sprite:
² Mourn-ful. And, calling forth out of sad Winter's night
 Fresh Love, that long hath slept in cheerless bower,
 Wills him awake, and soon about him dight

* 'Janus' gate:' for January.

His wanton wings and darts of deadly power.
 For lusty Spring now in his timely hour
 Is ready to come forth, him to receive;
 And warns the Earth with divers-colour'd flower
 To deck herself, and her fair mantle weave.

Then you, fair flower! in whom fresh youth doth
 reign,

Prepare yourself new love to entertain.

v.

Rudely thou wrongest my dear heart's desire,
 In finding fault with her too portly pride:
 The thing which I do most in her admire,
 Is of the world unworthy most envied:
 For in those lofty looks is close implied,
 Scorn of base things, and sdeign of foul dishonour;
 Threat'ning rash eyes which gaze on her so wide,
 That loosely they ne dare to look upon her.
 Such pride is praise; such portliness is honour;
 That bold'ned innocence bears in her eyes;
 And her fair countenance, like a goodly banner,
 Spreads in defiance of all enemies.

Was never in this world ought worthy tried,
 Without some spark of such self-pleasing pride.

vi.

Be nought dismay'd that her unmoved mind
 Doth still persist in her rebellious pride:
 Such love, not like to lusts of baser kind,
 The harder won, the firmer will abide.
 The dureful oak, whose sap is not yet dried,
 Is long ere it conceive the kindling fire;
 But, when it once doth burn, it doth divide
 Great heat, and makes his flames to heaven aspire.
 So hard it is to kindle new desire
 In gentle breast, that shall endure for ever:

*see Caroline
 fire
 of love*

¹ Internal.

Deep is the wound, that dints the parts entire ¹
 With chaste affects, that naught but death can sever.
 Then think not long in taking little pain
 To knit the knot, that ever shall remain.

VII.

Fair eyes! the mirror of my mazed heart,
 What wondrous virtue is contain'd in you,
 The which both life and death forth from you dart
 Into the object of your mighty view?
 For, when ye mildly look with lovely hue,
 Then is my soul with life and love inspired:
 But when ye lour, or look on me askew,
 Then do I die, as one with lightning fired.
 But, since that life is more than death desired,
 Look ever lovely, as becomes you best;
 That your bright beams, of my weak eyes admired,
 May kindle living fire within my breast.
 Such life should be the honour of your light,
 Such death the sad ensample of your might.

VIII.

More than most fair, full of the living fire,
 Kindled above unto the Maker near;
 No eyes but joys, in which all powers conspire,
 That to the world naught else be counted dear:
 Through your bright beams doth not the blinded
 Shoot out his darts to base affection's wound; [guest
 But angels come to lead frail minds to rest
 In chaste desires, on heavenly beauty bound.
 You frame my thoughts, and fashion me within;
 You stop my tongue, and teach my heart to speak;
 You calm the storm that passion did begin,
 Strong through your cause, but by your virtue weak.
 Dark is the world, where your light shined never;
 Well is he born, that may behold you ever.

IX.

Long-while I sought to what I might compare
 Those powerful eyes, which lighten my dark sprite:
 Yet find I nought on earth, to which I dare
 Resemble th' image of their goodly light.
 Not to the sun; for they do shine by night;
 Nor to the moon; for they are changed never;
 Nor to the stars; for they have purer sight;
 Nor to the fire; for they consume not ever;
 Nor to the lightning; for they still persevere;
 Nor to the diamond; for they are more tender;
 Nor unto crystal; for nought may them sever;
 Nor unto glass; such baseness might offend her.
 Then to the Maker self they likest be,
 Whose light doth lighten all that here we see.

*her eyes
heavenly*

X.

Unrighteous Lord of love, what law is this,
 That me thou makest thus tormented be,
 The whiles she lordeth in licentious bliss
 Of her freewill, scorning both thee and me?
 See! how the tyranness doth joy to see
 The huge massáces which her eyes do make;
 And humbled hearts brings captive unto thee,
 That thou of them mayst mighty vengeance take.
 But her proud heart do thou a little shake,
 And that high look, with which she doth control
 All this world's pride, bow to a baser make,¹
 And all her faults in thy black book enrol:

*the cause
complaint
the mistress
cruelty*

¹ Mate.

That I may laugh at her in equal sort, [sport.
 As she doth laugh at me, and makes my pain her

XI.

Daily when I do seek and sue for peace,
 And hostages do offer for my truth;
 She, cruel warrior, doth herself address

*lover's
negotiation
treaty*

To battle, and the weary war renew'th;
 Ne will be mov'd with reason, or with ruth,
 To grant small respite to my restless toil;
 But greedily her fell intent pursu'th,
 Of my poor life to make unpitied spoil.

¹ Remove.

Yet my poor life, all sorrows to assoil,¹
 I would her yield, her wrath to pacify:
 But then she seeks, with torment and turmoil,
 To force me live, and will not let me die.
 All pain hath end, and every war hath peace;
 But mine, no price nor prayer may surcease.

XII.

One day I sought with her heart-thrilling eyes
 To make a truce, and terms to entertain;
 All fearless then of so false enemies,
 Which sought me to entrap in treason's train.
 So, as I then disarmed did remain,
 A wicked ambush which lay hidden long,
 In the close covert of her guileful eye,
 Thence breaking forth, did thick about me throng.
 Too feeble I t' abide the brunt so strong,
 Was fore'd to yield myself into their hands;
 Who, me captiving straight with rigorous wrong,
 Have ever since kept me in cruel bands.

So, Lady, now to you I do complain,
 Against your eyes, that justice I may gain.

XIII.

In that proud port, which her so goodly graceth,
 Whiles her fair face she rears up to the sky,
 And to the ground her eyelids low embaseth,
 Most goodly temperature ye may descry;
 Mild humblesse, mix'd with awful majesty.
 For, looking on the earth whence she was born,
 Her mind rememb'reth her mortality,

Whatso is fairest shall to earth return.
 But that same lofty countenance seems to scorn
 Base thing, and think how she to heaven may climb;
 Treading down earth as loathsome and forlorn,
 That hinders heavenly thoughts with drossy slime.
 Yet lowly still vouchsafe to look on me;
 Such lowliness shall make you lofty be.

XIV.

Return again, my forces late dismay'd,
 Unto the siege by you abandon'd quite.
 Great shame it is to leave, like one afraid,
 So fair a piece,¹ for one repulse so light.
 'Gainst such strong castles needeth greater might
 Than those small forts which ye were wont belay:²
 Such haughty minds, inured to hardy fight,
 Disdain to yield unto the first assay.
 Bring therefore all the forces that ye may,
 And lay incessant battery to her heart;
 Plaints, prayers, vows, ruth, sorrow, and dismay;
 Those engines can the proudest love convert:
 And, if those fail, fall down and die before her;
 So dying live, and living do adore her.

XV.

Ye tradeful merchants, that, with weary toil,
 Do seek most precious things to make your gain;
 And both the Indias of their treasure spoil;
 What needeth you to seek so far in vain?
 For lo, my Love doth in herself contain
 All this world's riches that may far be found:
 If sapphires, lo, her eyes be sapphires plain;
 If rubies, lo, her lips be rubies sound;
 If pearls, her teeth be pearls, both pure and
 round;
 If ivory, her forehead ivory ween;

*the lover's siege
(of Rome) de la
Rose*

¹ Castle.

² Besiege.

*The lady of
Stokeham
treasure*

¹ Bright.

If gold, her locks are finest gold on ground;
 If silver, her fair hands are silver sheen:¹
 But that which fairest is, but few behold,
 Her mind adorn'd with virtues manifold.

XVI.

One day as I unwarily did gaze
 On those fair eyes, my love's immortal light;
 The whilst my 'stonish'd heart stood in amaze,
 Through sweet illusion of her looks' delight;
 I might perceive how, in her glancing sight,
 Legions of Loves with little wings did fly;
 Darting their deadly arrows, fiery bright,
 At every rash beholder passing by.
 One of those archers closely I did spy,
 Aiming his arrow at my very heart:
 When suddenly, with twinkle of her eye,
 The damsel broke his misintended dart.
 Had she not so done, sure I had been slain;
 Yet as it was, I hardly scap'd with pain.

XVII.

² Spoil.

The glorious portrait of that angel's face,
 Made to amaze weak men's confused skill,
 And this world's worthless glory to embase,
 What pen, what pencil, can express her fill?
 For though he colours could devise at will,
 And eke his learned hand at pleasure guide,
 Lest, trembling, it his workmanship should spill;²
 Yet many wondrous things there are beside:
 The sweet eye-glances, that like arrows glide;
 The charming smiles, that rob sense from the heart;
 The lovely pleasance; and the lofty pride;
 Cannot expressed be by any art.
 A greater craftsman's hand thereto doth need,
 That can express the life of things indeed.

Like sacred priests that never think amiss :
 There I to her, as th' author of my bliss,
 Will build an altar to appease her ire ;
 And on the same my heart will sacrifice,
 Burning in flames of pure and chaste desire :
 The which vouchsafe, O Goddess, to accept,
 Amongst thy dearest relics to be kept.

XXIII.

Penelope, for her Ulysses' sake,
 Devis'd a web her wooers to deceive ;
 In which the work that she all day did make,
 The same at night she did again unreave :
 Such subtle craft my damsel doth conceive,
 Th' importune suit of my desire to shun :
 For all that I in many days do weave,
 In one short hour I find by her undone.
 So, when I think to end that I begun,
 I must begin and never bring to end :
 For, with one look, she spills¹ that long I spun ;
 And, with one word, my whole year's work doth
 rend.

¹ Spoils.

Such labour like the spider's web I find,
 Whose fruitless work is broken with least wind.

XXIV.

When I behold that beauty's wonderment,
 And rare perfection of each goodly part ;
 Of Nature's skill the only complement ;
 I honour and admire the Maker's art.
 But when I feel the bitter baleful smart,
 Which her fair eyes unwares do work in me,
 That death out of their shiny beams do dart ;
 I think that I a new Pandora see,
 Whom all the gods in council did agree
 Into this sinful world from heaven to send ;

That she to wicked men a scourge should be,
For all their faults with which they did offend.

But, since ye are my scourge, I will intreat,
That for my faults ye will me gently beat.

XXV.

How long shall this like dying life endure,
And know no end of her own misery,
But waste and wear away in terms unsure,
'Twixt fear and hope depending doubtfully!
Yet better were at once to let me die,
And shew the last ensample of your pride;
Than to torment me thus with cruelty,
To prove your power, which I too well have tried.
But yet if in your harden'd breast ye hide
A close intent at last to shew me grace;
Then all the woes and wrecks, which I abide,
As means of bliss I gladly will embrace;
And wish that more and greater they might be,
That greater meed at last may turn to me.

XXVI.

Sweet is the rose, but grows upon a brere;
Sweet is the juniper, but sharp his bough;
Sweet is the eglantine, but pricketh near;
Sweet is the firbloom, but his branches rough;
Sweet is the cypress, but his rind is tough;
Sweet is the nut, but bitter is his pill;
Sweet is the broom-flower, but yet sour enough;
And sweet is moly, but his root is ill.
So every sweet with sour is temper'd still,
That maketh it be coveted the more:
For easy things, that may be got at will,
Most sorts of men do set but little store.
Why then should I account of little pain,
That endless pleasure shall unto me gain!

XXVII.

Fair Proud! now tell me, why should fair be proud,
 Sith all world's glory is but dross unclean,
 And in the shade of death itself shall shroud,
 However now thereof ye little ween!
 That goodly idol, now so gay beseen,
 Shall doff her flesh's borrow'd fair attire;
 And be forgot as it had never been;
 That many now much worship and admire!
 Ne any then shall after it inquire,
 Ne any mention shall thereof remain,
 But what this verse, that never shall expire,
 Shall to you purchase with her thankless pain!
 Fair! be no longer proud of that shall perish;
 But that, which shall you make immortal, cherish.

XXVIII.

The laurel-leaf,* which you this day do wear,
 Gives me great hope of your relenting mind:
 For since it is the badge which I do bear,
 Ye, bearing it, do seem to me inclin'd:
 The power thereof, which oft in me I find,
 Let it likewise your gentle breast inspire
 With sweet infusion, and put you in mind
 Of that proud maid, whom now those leaves attire:
 Proud Daphne, scorning Phœbus' lovely fire,
 On the Thessalian shore from him did fly:
 For which the gods, in their revengeful ire,
 Did her transform into a laurel-tree.

Then fly no more, fair Love, from Phœbus' chase,
 But in your breast his leaf and love embrace.

XXIX.

See! how the stubborn damsel doth deprave
 My simple meaning with disdainful scorn;

* 'Laurel-leaf:' alluding to his being poet-laureate.

And by the bay, which I unto her gave,
 Accounts myself her captive quite forlorn;
 The bay, quoth she, is of the victors borne,
 Yielded them by the vanquish'd as their meeds,
 And they therewith do Poets' heads adorn,
 To sing the glory of their famous deeds.
 But sith she will the conquest challenge needs,
 Let her accept me as her faithful thrall;
 That her great triumph, which my skill exceeds,
 I may in trump of fame blaze over all.

Then would I deck her head with glorious bays,
 And fill the world with her victorious praise.

XXX.

My Love is like to ice, and I to fire;
 How comes it then that this her cold so great
 Is not dissolv'd through my so hot desire,
 But harder grows the more I her intreat!
 Or how comes it that my exceeding heat
 Is not delay'd¹ by her heart-frozen cold;
 But that I burn much more in boiling sweat,
 And feel my flames augmented manifold!
 What more miraculous thing may be told,
 That fire, which all things melts, should harden ice;
 And ice, which is congeal'd with senseless cold,
 Should kindle fire by wonderful device!

Such is the power of love in gentle mind,
 That it can alter all the course of kind.

XXXI.

Ah! why hath Nature to so hard a heart
 Given so goodly gifts of beauty's grace!
 Whose pride depraves each other better part,
 And all those precious ornaments deface.
 Sith to all other beasts, of bloody race,
 A dreadful countenance she given hath;

¹ Temper-
 ed.

That with their terror all the rest may chase,
 And warn to shun the danger of their wrath.
 But my proud one doth work the greater scath,¹
 Through sweet allurements of her lovely hue;
 That she the better may, in bloody bath
 Of such poor thralls, her cruel hands imbrue.
 But, did she know how ill these two accord,
 Such cruelty she would have soon abhorr'd.

XXXII.

The painful smith, with force of fervent heat,
 The hardest iron soon doth mollify;
 That with his heavy sledge he can it beat,
 And fashion to what he it list apply.
 Yet cannot all these flames, in which I fry,
 Her heart more hard than iron soft a whit;
 Ne all the plaints and prayers, with which I
 Do beat on th' anvil of her stubborn wit;
 But still, the more she fervent sees my fit,
 The more she freezeth in her wilful pride;
 And harder grows, the harder she is smit
 With all the plaints which to her be applied.
 What then remains but I to ashes burn,
 And she to stones at length all frozen turn!

XXXIII.

Great wrong I do, I can it not deny,
 To that most sacred empress, my dear dread,²
 Not finishing her Queen of Faëry,
 That might enlarge her living praises, dead:
 But Lodwick,* this of grace to me aread;³
 Do ye not think th' accomplishment of it,
 Sufficient work for one man's simple head,
 All were it, as the rest, but rudely writ?
 How then should I, without another wit,

* 'Lodwick': Lodowick Bryskett, a poet, and friend of Spenser.

¹ Injury.

*Cruelty
behind
beauty*

her hard heart

² Object of reverence.

³ Explain.

Think ever to endure so tedious toil!
 Sith that this one is toss'd with troublous fit
 Of a proud Love, that doth my spirit spoil.
 Cease then, till she vouchsafe to grant me rest;
 Or lend you me another living breast.

XXXIV.

Like as a ship, that through the ocean wide,
 By conduct of some star, doth make her way;
 Whenas a storm hath dimm'd her trusty guide,
 Out of her course doth wander far astray!
 So I, whose star, that wont with her bright ray
 Me to direct, with clouds is overcast,
 Do wander now, in darkness and dismay,
 Through hidden perils round about me plac'd;
 Yet hope I well that, when this storm is past,
 My Helice,* the lodestar of my life,
 Will shine again, and look on me at last,
 With lovely light to clear my cloudy grief.
 Till then I wander careful, comfortless,
 In secret sorrow, and sad pensiveness.

XXXV.

My hungry eyes, through greedy covetise
 Still to behold the object of their pain,
 With no contentment can themselves suffice;
 But, having, pine; and, having not, complain.
 For, lacking it, they cannot life sustain;
 And, having it, they gaze on it the more;
 In their amazement like Narcissus vain,
 Whose eyes him starv'd: so plenty makes me
 poor.
 Yet are mine eyes so filled with the store
 Of that fair sight, that nothing else they brook,
 But loathe the things which they did like before,

* 'Helice:' the Grecian lodestar.

And can no more endure on them to look.
 All this world's glory seemeth vain to me,
 And all their shows but shadows, saving she.

XXXVI.

Tell me, when shall these weary woes have end,
 Or shall their ruthless torment never cease;
 But all my days in pining languor spend,
 Without hope of assuagement or release?
 Is there no means for me to purchase peace,
 Or make agreement with her thrilling eyes;
 But that their cruelty doth still increase,
 And daily more augment my miseries?
 But, when ye have shew'd all extremities,
 Then think how little glory ye have gained
 By slaying him, whose life, though ye despise,
 Might have your life in honour long maintained.
 But by his death, which some perhaps will
 moan,
 Ye shall condemned be of many a one.

XXXVII.

What guile is this, that those her golden tresses
 She doth attire under a net of gold;
 And with sly skill so cunningly them dresses,
 That which is gold, or hair, may scarce be told?
 Is it that men's frail eyes, which gaze too bold,
 She may entangle in that golden snare;
 And, being caught, may craftily enfold
 Their weaker hearts, which are not well aware?
 Take heed, therefore, mine eyes, how ye do stare
 Henceforth too rashly on that guileful net,
 In which if ever ye entrapped are,
 Out of her bands ye by no means shall get.
 Fondness¹ it were for any, being free,
 To covet fetters though they golden be!

*the "golden
 snare" is
 her hair*

¹ Folly.

XXXVIII.

Arion, when, through tempest's cruel wrack,
 He forth was thrown into the greedy seas;
 Through the sweet music, which his harp did make,
 Allur'd a dolphin him from death to ease.
 But my rude music, which was wont to please
 Some dainty ears, cannot, with any skill,
 The dreadful tempest of her wrath appease,
 Nor move the dolphin from her stubborn will;
 But in her pride she doth persever still,
 All careless how my life for her decays:
 Yet with one word she can it save or spill.
 To spill were pity, but to save were praise!
 Choose rather to be prais'd for doing good,
 Than to be blam'd for spilling guiltless blood.

XXXIX.

Sweet smile! the daughter of the Queen of Love,
 Expressing all thy mother's powerful art,
 With which she wons to temper angry Jove,
 When all the gods he threats with thund'ring dart:
 Sweet is thy virtue, as thyself sweet art.
 For, when on me thou shinedst late in sadness,
 A melting pleasance ran through every part,
 And me revived with heart-robbing gladness.
 Whilst rapt with joy resembling heavenly madness,
 My soul was ravish'd quite as in a trance;
 And, feeling thence no more her sorrow's sadness,
 Fed on the fulness of that cheerful glance.
 More sweet than nectar, or ambrosial meat,
 Seem'd every bit which thenceforth I did eat.

XL.

Mark when she smiles with amiable cheer,
 And tell me whereto can ye liken it;
 When on each eyelid sweetly do appear

An hundred Graces as in shade to sit.
 Likest it seemeth, in my simple wit,
 Unto the fair sunshine in summer's day ;
 That, when a dreadful storm away is flit, [ray ;
 Through the broad world doth spread his goodly
 At sight whereof, each bird that sits on spray,
 And every beast that to his den was fled,
 Comes forth afresh out of their late dismay,
 And to the light lift up their drooping head.

So my storm-beaten heart likewise is cheered
 With that sunshine, when cloudy looks are cleared.

XLI.

Is it her nature, or is it her will,
 To be so cruel to an humbled foe?
 If nature; then she may it mend with skill:
 If will; then she at will may will forgo.
 But if her nature and her will be so,
 That she will plague the man that loves her most,
 And take delight t' increase a wretch's woe;
 Then all her nature's goodly gifts are lost:
 And that same glorious beauty's idle boast
 Is but a bait such wretches to beguile,
 As, being long in her love's tempest tost,
 She means at last to make her piteous spoil.

O fairest fair! let never it be named,
 That so fair beauty was so foully shamed.

XLII.

The love, which me so cruelly tormenteth,
 So pleasing is in my extremest pain,
 That, all the more my sorrow it augmenteth,
 The more I love and do embrace my bane.
 Ne do I wish (for wishing were but vain)
 To be acquit from my continual smart;
 But joy, her thrall for ever to remain,

*the
before
lover*

And yield for pledge my poor and captived heart;
The which, that it from her may never start,
Let her, if please her, bind with adamant chain;
And from all wand'ring loves, which might pervart
His safe assurance, strongly it restrain.

Only let her abstain from cruelty,
And do me not before my time to die.

XLIII.

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

XLIV.

*Love as a
lover*

When those renowned noble peres¹ of Greece,
Through stubborn pride, among themselves did jar,
Forgetful of the famous golden fleece:
Then Orpheus with his harp their strife did bar.
By this continual, cruel, civil war,
The which myself against myself do make;
Whilst my weak powers of passions warrey'd are;
No skill can stint, nor reason can aslake.
But, when in hand my tuneless harp I take,
Then do I more augment my foe's despite;
And grief renew, and passions do awake

¹ Com-
panions.

To battle, fresh against myself to fight.
 Mongst whom the more I seek to settle peace,
 The more I find their malice to increase.

XLV.

Leave, Lady! in your glass of crystal clean,
 Your goodly self for evermore to view:
 And in myself, my inward self, I mean,
 Most lively like behold your semblant true.
 Within my heart, though hardly it can shew
 Thing so divine to view of earthly eye,
 The fair idea of your celestial hue
 And every part remains immortally:
 And were it not that, through your cruelty,
 With sorrow dimmed and deform'd it were,
 The goodly image of your visnomy,¹
 Clearer than crystal, would therein appear.

But, if yourself in me ye plain will see,
 Remove the cause by which your fair beams
 dark'ned be.

XLVI.

When my abode's prefixed time is spent,
 My cruel fair straight bids me wend my way:
 But then from heaven most hideous storms are sent,
 As willing me against her will to stay.
 Whom then shall I, or heaven or her, obey?
 The heavens know best what is the best for me:
 But as she will, whose will my life doth sway,
 My lower heaven, so it perforce must be.
 But ye high heavens, that all this sorrow see,
 Sith all your tempests cannot hold me back,
 Assuage your storms; or else both you, and she,
 Will both together me too sorely wrack.

Enough it is for one man to sustain
 The storms, which she alone on me doth rain.

*Image of the
 Lady*

¹ Physiog-
 nomy.

*storm/
 temper
 image*

XLVII.

Trust not the treason of those smiling looks,
 Until ye have their guileful trains well tried:
 For they are like but unto golden hooks,
 That from the foolish fish their baits do hide:
 So she with flatt'ring smiles weak hearts doth guide
 Unto her love, and tempt to their decay;
 Whom, being caught, she kills with cruel pride,
 And feeds at pleasure on the wretched prey:
 Yet, even whilst her bloody hands them slay,
 Her eyes look lovely, and upon them smile;
 That they take pleasure in their cruel play,
 And, dying, do themselves of pain beguile.

O mighty charm! which makes men love their bane,
 And think they die with pleasure, live with pain.

XLVIII.

Innocent paper! whom too cruel hand
 Did make the matter to avenge her ire;
 And, ere she could thy cause well understand,
 Did sacrifice unto the greedy fire.
 Well worthy thou to have found better hire,
 Than so bad end for heretics ordained;
 Yet heresy nor treason didst conspire,
 But plead thy master's cause, unjustly pained.
 Whom she, all careless of his grief, constrained
 To utter forth the anguish of his heart:
 And would not hear, when he to her complained
 The piteous passion of his dying smart.

Yet live for ever, though against her will,
 And speak her good, though she requite it ill.

XLIX.

Fair Cruel! why are ye so fierce and cruel?
 Is it because your eyes have power to kill?
 Then know that mercy is the Mighty's jewel;

And greater glory think to save than spill.
 But if it be your pleasure, and proud will,
 To shew the power of your imperious eyes;
 Then not on him that never thought you ill,
 But bend your force against your enemies:
 Let them feel the utmost of your cruelties;
 And kill with looks, as cockatrices do:
 But him, that at your footstool humbled lies,
 With merciful regard give mercy to.

Such mercy shall you make admir'd to be;
 So shall you live, by giving life to me.

(L)

Long languishing in double malady
 Of my heart's wound, and of my body's grief;
 There came to me a leach, that would apply
 Fit med'cines for my body's best relief.

Vain man, quoth I, that hast but little prief¹
 In deep discovery of the mind's disease;
 Is not the heart of all the body chief,

And rules the members as itself doth please?
 Then, with some cordials, seek for to appease
 The inward languor of my wounded heart;
 And then my body shall have shortly ease:
 But such sweet cordials pass physician's art.

Then, my life's leach! do you your skill reveal;
 And, with one salve, both heart and body heal.

LI.

Do I not see that fairest images
 Of hardest marble are of purpose made,
 For that they should endure through many ages,
 Ne let their famous monuments to fade?
 Why then do I, untrain'd in lovers' trade,
 Her hardness blame, which I should more commend?
 Sith never ought was excellent assay'd

*eyes that
kill!*

*illness
imagery*

¹ Proof,
skill.

The poet's love

Which was not hard t' achieve and bring to end.
 Ne ought so hard, but he, that would attend,
 Might soften it and to his will allure :

So do I hope her stubborn heart to bend,
 And that it then more steadfast will endure.

Only my pains will be the more to get her;
 But, having her, my joy will be the greater.

LII.

So oft as homeward I from her depart,
 I go like one that, having lost the field,
 Is prisoner led away with heavy heart,
 Despoil'd of warlike arms and knowen shield.

So do I now myself a prisoner yield

To sorrow and to solitary pain ;

From presence of my dearest dear exil'd,

Long-while alone in languor to remain.

There let no thought of joy, or pleasure vain,

Dare to approach, that may my solace breed ;

But sudden dumps,¹ and dreary sad disdain

Of all world's gladness, more my torment feed.

So I her absence will my penance make,

That of her presence I my meed may take.

LIII.

The panther, knowing that his spotted hide

Doth please all beasts, but that his looks them

fray ;²

Within a bush his dreadful head doth hide,

To let them gaze, whilst he on them may prey :

Right so my cruel fair with me doth play ;

For, with the goodly semblance of her hue,

She doth allure me to mine own decay,

And then no mercy will unto me shew.

Great shame it is, thing so divine in view,

Made for to be the world's most ornament,

¹ Lamentations.

² Terrify.

*the lover
presence
will*

*as a
creature
of prey
(panther)*

To make the bait her gazers to embrue:
 Good shames to be to ill an instrument!
 | But mercy doth with beauty best agree,
 | As in their Maker ye them best may see.

LIV.

Of this world's theatre in which we stay,
 My Love, like the spectator, idly sits;
 Beholding me, that all the pageants play,
 Disguising diversly my troubled wits.
 Sometimes I joy when glad occasion fits,
 And mask in mirth like to a comedy:
 Soon after, when my joy to sorrow flits,
 I wail, and make my woes a tragedy.
 Yet she, beholding me with constant eye,
 Delights not in my mirth, nor rues my smart:
 But, when I laugh, she mocks; and, when I cry,
 She laughs, and hardens evermore her heart.
 | | What then can move her? if nor mirth, nor moan,
 | | She is no woman, but a senseless stone.

LV.

So oft as I her beauty do behold,
 And therewith do her cruelty compare,
 I marvel of what substance was the mould,
 The which her made at once so cruel fair.
 Not earth; for her high thoughts more heavenly are:
 Not water; for her love doth burn like fire:
 Not air; for she is not so light or rare:
 Not fire; for she doth freeze with faint desire.
 Then needs another element inquire
 Whereof she might be made; that is, the sky.
 For, to the heaven her haughty looks aspire;
 And eke her love is pure immortal high.
 Then, sith to heaven ye likened are the best,
 Be like in mercy as in all the rest.

theatre / stage theme
lover as actor

LVI.

Fair ye be sure, but cruel and unkind,
 As is a tiger, that with greediness
 Hunts after blood; when he by chance doth find
 A feeble beast, doth felly him oppress.
 Fair be ye sure, but proud and pitiless,
 As is a storm, that all things doth prostrate;
 Finding a tree alone all comfortless,
 Beats on it strongly, it to ruinate.
 Fair be ye sure, but hard and obstinate,
 As is a rock amidst the raging floods;
 Gainst which, a ship, of succour desolate,
 Doth suffer wreck both of herself and goods.
 That ship, that tree, and that same beast, am I,
 Whom ye do wreck, do ruin, and destroy.

LVII.

Sweet warrior! when shall I have peace with you?
 High time it is this war now ended were;
 Which I no longer can endure to sue,
 Ne your incessant batt'ry more to bear:
 So weak my powers, so sore my wounds, appear,
 That wonder is how I should live a jot,
 Seeing my heart through-lanced every where
 With thousand arrows, which your eyes have shot:
 Yet shoot ye sharply still, and spare me not,
 But glory think to make these cruel stoures.¹
 Ye cruel one! what glory can be got,
 In slaying him that would live gladly yours!
 Make peace, therefore, and grant me timely grace,
 That all my wounds will heal in little space.

¹ Assaults.

LVIII.

By her that is most assured to herself.
 Weak is th' assurance that weak flesh repositeth
 In her own power, and scorneth others' aid;

That soonest falls, when as she most supposeth
 Herself assur'd, and is of nought afraid.
 All flesh is frail, and all her strength unstay'd,
 Like a vain bubble blown up with air:
 Devouring time and changeful chance have prey'd,
 Her glorious pride that none may it repair.
 Ne none so rich or wise, so strong or fair,
 But faileth, trusting on his own assurance:
 And he, that standeth on the highest stair,
 Falls lowest: for on earth nought hath endurance.

Why then do ye, proud fair, misdeem so far,
 That to yourself ye most assured are!

LIX.

Thrice happy she! that is so well assured
 Unto herself, and settled so in heart,
 That neither will for better be allured,
 Ne fear'd with worse to any chance to start;
 But, like a steady ship, doth strongly part
 The raging waves, and keeps her course aright;
 Ne ought for tempest doth from it depart,
 Ne ought for fairer weather's false delight.
 Such self-assurance need not fear the spite
 Of grudging foes, ne favour seek of friends:
 But, in the stay of her own steadfast might
 Neither to one herself nor other bends.

Most happy she, that most assur'd doth rest;
 But he most happy, who such one loves best.

LX.

They, that in course of heavenly spheres are skill'd,
 To every planet point his sundry year:
 In which her circle's voyage is fulfill'd,
 As Mars in threescore years doth run his sphere.
 So, since the winged god his planet clear
 Began in me to move, one year is spent:

The which doth longer unto me appear,
 Than all those forty which my life out-went.
 Then by that count, which lovers' books invent,
 The sphere of Cupid forty years* contains:
 Which I have wasted in long languishment,
 That seem'd the longer for my greater pains.

But let my Love's fair planet short her ways,
 This year ensuing, or else short my days.

LXI.

The glorious image of the Maker's beauty,
 My sovereign saint, the idol of my thought,
 Dare not henceforth, above the bounds of duty,
 T' accuse of pride, or rashly blame for ought.

For being, as she is, divinely wrought,
 And of the brood of angels heavenly born;
 And with the crew of blessed saints upbrought,
 Each of which did her with their gifts adorn;
 The bud of joy, the blossom of the morn,
 The beam of light, whom mortal eyes admire;
 What reason is it then but she should scorn
 Base things, that to her love too bold aspire!

Such heavenly forms ought rather worshipp'd be,
 Than dare be lov'd by men of mean degree.

LXII.

The weary year his race now having run,
 The new begins his compast¹ course anew:
 With show of morning mild he hath begun,
 Betokening peace and plenty to ensue.
 So let us, which this change of weather view,
 Change eke our minds, and former lives amend;
 The old year's sins forepast let us eschew,
 And fly the faults with which we did offend.
 Then shall the new year's joy forth freshly send,

¹ Round.

* 'Forty years:' see 'Life.'

Into the glooming world, his gladsome ray:
 And all these storms, which now his beauty blend,¹
 Shall turn to calms, and timely clear away.
 So, likewise, Love! cheer you your heavy sprite,
 And change old year's annoy to new delight.

¹ Blemish.

LXIII.

After long storms and tempests' sad assay,
 Which hardly I endured heretofore,
 In dread of death, and dangerous dismay,
 With which my silly bark was tossed sore;
 I do at length descry the happy shore,
 In which I hope ere long for to arrive:
 Fair soil it seems from far, and fraught with store
 Of all that dear and dainty is alive.
 Most happy he! that can at last achieve
 The joyous safety of so sweet a rest;
 Whose least delight sufficeth to deprive
 Remembrance of all pains which him opprest.
 All pains are nothing in respect of this;
 All sorrows short that gain eternal bliss.

*the lower
 survives
 the storm*

LXIV.

Coming to kiss her lips, (such grace I found,)
 Me seem'd, I smelt a garden of sweet flowers,
 That dainty odours from them threw around,
 For damsels fit to deck their lover's bowers.
 Her lips did smell like unto gilliflowers;
 Her ruddy cheeks, like unto roses red;
 Her snowy brows, like budded bellamours;*
 Her lovely eyes, like pinks but newly spread;
 Her goodly bosom, like a strawberry bed;
 Her neck, like to a bunch of columbines;
 Her breast, like lilies, ere their leaves be shed;

* 'Bellamours:' literally, lovers; perhaps, a name for a kind of lilies.

Her nipples, like young blossom'd jessamines :
 Such fragrant flowers do give most odorous
 smell ;
 But her sweet odour did them all excel.

LXV.

The doubt which ye misdeem, fair Love, is vain,
 That fondly fear to lose your liberty ;
 When, losing one, two liberties ye gain,
 And make him bond that bondage erst¹ did fly.
 Sweet be the bands, the which true love doth tie
 Without constraint, or dread of any ill :
 The gentle bird feels no captivity
 Within her cage ; but sings, and feeds her fill.
 There pride dare not approach, nor discord spill
 The league 'twixt them, that loyal love hath bound :
 But simple Truth, and mutual Good-will,
 Seeks, with sweet peace, to salve each other's wound :
 There Faith doth fearless dwell in brazen tower,
 And spotless Pleasure builds her sacred bower.

LXVI.

To all those happy blessings, which ye have
 With plenteous hand by heaven upon you thrown ;
 This one disparagement they to you gave,
 That ye your love lent to so mean a one.
 Ye, whose high worth's surpassing paragon
 Could not on earth have found one fit for mate,
 Ne but in heaven matchable to none,
 Why did ye stoop unto so lowly state ?
 But ye thereby much greater glory gate,²
 Than had ye sorted with a Prince's peer :
 For, now your light doth more itself dilate,
 And, in my darkness, greater doth appear.
 Yet, since your light hath once enlumin'd me,
 With my reflex yours shall increased be.

¹ Before.

*The
sweet
bondage
of love*

² Got.

LXVII.

Like as a huntsman after weary chase,
 Seeing the game from him escap'd away,
 Sits down to rest him in some shady place,
 With panting hounds beguiled of their prey:
 So, after long pursuit and vain assay,
 When I all weary had the chase forsook,
 The gentle deer return'd the self-same way,
 Thinking to quench her thirst at the next brook:
 There she, beholding me with milder look,
 Sought not to fly, but fearless still did bide;
 Till I in hand her yet half trembling took,
 And with her own good-will her firmly tied.

*the hunt
imager*

Strange thing, me seem'd, to see a beast so wild,
 So goodly won, with her own will beguil'd.

LXVIII.

Most glorious Lord of life! that, on this day,
 Didst make thy triumph over death and sin;
 And, having harrow'd¹ hell, didst bring away
 Captivity thence captive, us to win:
 This joyous day, dear Lord, with joy begin;
 And grant that we, for whom thou didst die,
 Being with thy dear blood clean wash'd from sin,
 May live for ever in felicity!
 And that thy love we weighing worthily,
 May likewise love thee for the same again;
 And for thy sake, that all like dear didst buy,
 With love may one another entertain!

¹ Subdued.

So let us love, dear Love, like as we ought:
 Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

LXIX.

The famous warriors of the antique world
 Us'd trophies to erect in stately wise;
 In which they would the records have enroll'd

Of their great deeds and valorous emprise.
 What trophy then shall I most fit devise,
 In which I may record the memory
 Of my love's conquest, peerless beauty's prize,
 Adorn'd with honour, love, and chastity!
 Even this verse, vow'd to eternity,
 Shall be thereof immortal monument;
 And tell her praise to all posterity,
 That may admire such world's rare wonderment;
 The happy purchase of my glorious spoil,
 Gotten at last with labour and long toil.

LXX.

Fresh Spring, the herald of love's mighty king,
 In whose coat-armour richly are display'd
 All sorts of flowers, the which on earth do spring,
 In goodly colours gloriously array'd;
 Go to my love, where she is careless laid,
 Yet in her winter's bower not well awake;
 Tell her the joyous time will not be staid,
 Unless she do him by the forelock take;
 Bid her therefore herself soon ready make,
 To wait on Love amongst his lovely crew;
 Where every one, that misseth then her make,¹
 Shall be by him amerç'd with penance due.

Make haste therefore, sweet love, while it is prime;
 For none can call again the passed time.

LXXI.

I joy to see how, in your drawn work,
 Yourself unto the bee ye do compare;
 And me unto the spider, that doth lurk
 In close await, to catch her unaware:
 Right so yourself were caught in cunning snare
 Of a dear foe, and thrall'd to his love;
 In whose strait bands ye now captived are

¹ Mate.

*Copy
 done
 see spider
 (must have
 peer)*

So firmly, that ye never may remove.
 But as your work is woven all about
 With woodbine flowers and fragrant eglantine;
 So sweet your prison you in time shall prove,
 With many dear delights bedecked fine.
 And all thenceforth eternal peace shall see
 Between the spider and the gentle bee.

LXXII.

Oft, when my spirit doth spread her bolder wings,
 In mind to mount up to the purest sky;
 It down is weigh'd with thought of earthly things,
 And clogg'd with burden of mortality;
 Where, when that sovereign beauty it doth spy,
 Resembling heaven's glory in her light,
 Drawn with sweet pleasure's bait, it back doth fly,
 And unto heaven forgets her former flight.
 There my frail fancy, fed with full delight,
 Doth bathe in bliss, and mantleth most at ease;
 Ne thinks of other heaven, but how it might
 Her heart's desire with most contentment please.
 Heart need not wish none other happiness,
 But here on earth to have such heaven's bliss.

LXXIII.

Being myself captived here in care,
 My heart, (whom none with servile bands can tie,
 But the fair tresses of your golden hair,)
 Breaking his prison, forth to you doth fly.
 Like as a bird, that in one's hand doth spy
 Desired food, to it doth make his flight:
 Even so my heart, that wont on your fair eye
 To feed his fill, flies back unto your sight.
 Do you him take, and in your bosom bright
 Gently encage, that he may be your thrall:
 Perhaps he there may learn, with rare delight,

*the
 jailer
 himself
 captive!*

To sing your name and praises over all:
 That it hereafter may you not repent,
 Him lodging in your bosom to have lent.

LXXIV.

Most happy letters! fram'd by skilful trade,
 With which that happy name was first design'd,
 The which three times thrice happy hath me made,
 With gifts of body, fortune, and of mind.
 The first my being to me gave by kind,
 From mother's womb deriv'd by due descent:
 The second is my sovereign Queen most kind,
 That honour and large riches to me lent:
 The third, my love, my life's last ornament,
 By whom my spirit out of dust was raised:
 To speak her praise and glory excellent,
 Of all alive most worthy to be praised.

Ye three Elizabeths! for ever live,
 That three such graces did unto me give.

* LXXV.

One day I wrote her name upon the strand;
 But came the waves, and washed it away:
 Again, I wrote it with a second hand;
 But came the tide, and made my pains his prey.
 Vain man, said she, that dost in vain assay
 A mortal thing so to immortalise;
 For I myself shall like to this decay,
 And eke my name be wiped out likewise.
 Not so, quoth I; let baser things devise
 To die in dust, but you shall live by fame:
 My verse your virtues rare shall éternize,
 And in the heavens write your glorious name.

Where, when as death shall all the world
 subdue,

Our love shall live, and later life renew.

LXXVI.

Fair bosom! fraught with virtue's richest treasure,
 The nest of love, the lodging of delight,
 The bower of bliss, the paradise of pleasure,
 The sacred harbour of that heavenly sprite;
 How was I ravish'd with your lovely sight,
 And my frail thoughts too rashly led astray!
 Whiles diving deep through amorous insight,
 On the sweet spoil of beauty they did prey;
 And twixt her paps, (like early fruit in May,
 Whose harvest seem'd to hasten now apace,)
 They loosely did their wanton wings display,
 And there to rest themselves did boldly place.

Sweet thoughts! I envy your so happy rest,
 Which oft I wish'd, yet never was so blest.

LXXVII.

Was it a dream, or did I see it plain;
 A goodly table of pure ivory,
 All spread with junkets, fit to entertain
 The greatest prince with pompous royalty:
 Mongst which, there in a silver dish did lie
 Two golden apples of unvalued price;
 Far passing those which Hercules came by,
 Or those which Atalanta did entice;
 Exceeding sweet, yet void of sinful vice;
 That many sought, yet none could ever taste;
 Sweet fruit of pleasure, brought from Paradise
 By Love himself, and in his garden plac'd.

Her breast that table was, so richly spread;
 My thoughts the guests, which would thereon
 have fed.

LXXVIII.

Lacking my love, I go from place to place,
 Like a young fawn, that late hath lost the hind;

And seek each where, where last I saw her face,
 Whose image yet I carry fresh in mind.
 I seek the fields with her late footing sign'd;
 I seek her bower with her late presence deck'd;
 Yet nor in field nor bower I can her find;
 Yet field and bower are full of her aspect:
 But, when mine eyes I thereunto direct,
 They idly back return to me again:
 And, when I hope to see their true object,
 I find myself but fed with fancies vain.
 Cease then, mine eyes, to seek herself to see;
 And let my thoughts behold herself in me.

LXXIX.

Men call you fair, and you do credit it,
 For that yourself ye daily such do see:
 But the true fair, that is the gentle wit,
 And virtuous mind, is much more prais'd of me:
 For all the rest, however fair it be,
 Shall turn to nought and lose that glorious hue;
 But only that is permanent and free
 From frail corruption, that doth flesh ensue.¹
 That is true beauty: that doth argue you
 To be divine, and born of heavenly seed;
 Deriv'd from that fair Spirit, from whom all true
 And perfect beauty did at first proceed:
 He only fair, and what he fair hath made;
 All other fair, like flowers, untimely fade.

LXXX.

After so long a race as I have run *
 Through Faery land, which those six books compile,
 Give leave to rest me being half foredone,
 And gather to myself new breath awhile.
 Then, as a steed refreshed after toil,

* This must refer to the spring of 1594.

¹ Follow.

*ref. to
the
Queen*

Out of my prison I will break anew;
 And stoutly will that second work assoil,¹
 With strong endeavour and attention due.
 Till then give leave to me, in pleasant mew²
 To sport my Muse, and sing my love's sweet praise;
 The contemplation of whose heavenly hue,
 My spirit to an higher pitch will raise.
 But let her praises yet be low and mean,
 Fit for the handmaid of the Faery Queen.

¹ Absolve,
dis-
charge.

² Prison.

LXXXI.

Fair is my love, when her fair golden hairs
 With the loose wind ye waving chance to mark;
 Fair, when the rose in her red cheeks appears;
 Or in her eyes the fire of love does spark.
 Fair, when her breast, like a rich laden bark
 With precious merchandise she forth doth lay;
 Fair, when that cloud of pride, which oft doth dark
 Her goodly light, with smiles she drives away.
 But fairest she, when so she doth display
 The gate with pearls and rubies richly dight;
 Through which her words so wise do make their way
 To bear the message of her gentle sprite.
 The rest be works of Nature's wonderment;
 But this the work of heart's astonishment.

LXXXII.

Joy of my life! full oft for loving you
 I bless my lot, that was so lucky plac'd:
 But then the more your own mishap I rue,
 That are so much by so mean love embased.
 For, had the equal heavens so much you graced
 In this as in the rest, ye might invent
 Some heavenly wit, whose verse could have enchased
 Your glorious name in golden monument.
 But since ye deign'd so goodly to relent

To me your thrall, in whom is little worth;
 That little, that I am, shall all be spent
 In setting your immortal praises forth:
 Whose lofty argument, uplifting me,
 Shall lift you up unto an high degree.

LXXXIII.

Let not one spark of filthy lustful fire
 Break out, that may her sacred peace molest;
 Ne one light glance of sensual desire
 Attempt to work her gentle mind's unrest:
 But pure affections bred in spotless breast,
 And modest thoughts breath'd from well-temper'd
 spirits
 Go visit her, in her chaste bower of rest,
 Accompanied with ángelic delights.
 There fill yourself with those most joyous sights,
 The which myself could never yet attain:
 But speak no word to her of these sad plights,
 Which her too constant stiffness doth constrain.
 Only behold her rare perfection,
 And bless your fortune's fair election.

LXXXIV.

The world that cannot deem of worthy things,
 When I do praise her, say I do but flatter:
 So does the cuckoo, when the mavis sings,
 Begin his witless note apace to clatter.
 But they that skill not of so heavenly matter,
 All that they know not, envy or admire;
 Rather than envy, let them wonder at her,
 But not to deem of her desert aspire.
 Deep, in the closet of my parts entire,¹
 Her worth is written with a golden quill,
 That me with heavenly fury doth inspire,
 And my glad mouth with her sweet praises fill.

¹ Inward.

Which when as Fame in her shrill trump shall
thunder,
Let the world choose to envy or to wonder.

LXXXV.

Venomous tongue, tipt with vile adder's sting,
Of that self kind with which the Furies fell
Their snaky heads do comb, from which a spring
Of poisoned words and spiteful speeches well ;
Let all the plagues, and horrid pains of hell
Upon thee fall for thine accursed hire ;
That with false forged lies, which thou didst tell,
In my true love did stir up coals of ire ;
The sparks whereof let kindle thine own fire,
And, catching hold on thine own wicked head,
Consume thee quite, that didst with guile conspire
In my sweet peace such breaches to have bred !
Shame be thy meed, and mischief thy reward,
Due to thyself, that it for me prepar'd !

LXXXVI.

Since I did leave the presence of my love,
Many long weary days I have outworn ;
And many nights, that slowly seem'd to move
Their sad protract from evening until morn.
For, when as day the heaven doth adorn,
I wish that night the noyous day would end :
And, when as night hath us of light forlorn,
I wish that day would shortly reascend.
Thus I the time with expectation spend,
And fain my grief with changes to beguile,
That further seems his term still to extend,
And maketh every minute seem a mile.
So sorrow still doth seem too long to last ;
But joyous hours do fly away too fast.

*the Loves
Pact*

LXXXVII.

*The lover
in darkness*

Since I have lack'd the comfort of that light,
 The which was wont to lead my thoughts astray;
 I wander as in darkness of the night,
 Afraid of every danger's least dismay.
 Ne ought I see, though in the clearest day,
 When others gaze upon their shadows vain,
 But th' only image of that heavenly ray,
 Whereof some glance doth in mine eye remain.
 Of which beholding the idea plain,
 Through contemplation of my purest part,
 With light thereof I do myself sustain,
 And thereon feed my love-affamish'd heart.

But, with such brightness whilst I fill my mind,
 I starve my body, and mine eyes do blind.

LXXXVIII.

¹ Dove.

Like as the culver,¹ on the bared bough,
 Sits mourning for the absence of her mate;
 And, in her songs, sends many a wishful vow
 For his return that seems to linger late:
 So I alone, now left disconsolate,
 Mourn to myself the absence of my love;
 And, wand'ring here and there all desolate,
 Seek with my plaints to match that mournful dove:
 Ne joy of ought, that under heaven doth hove,
 Can comfort me, but her own joyous sight:
 Whose sweet aspect both God and man can move,
 In her unspotted pleasance to delight.

Dark is my day, whiles her fair light I miss,
 And dead my life that wants such lively bliss.

SONNETS

WRITTEN BY SPENSER,

COLLECTED FROM THE ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS IN
WHICH THEY APPEARED.

I.

*To the right worshipful, my singular good friend,
M. Gabriel Harvey, Doctor of the Laws.*

HARVEY, the happy above happiest men,
I read; that, sitting like a looker-on
Of this world's stage, dost note with critic pen
The sharp dislikes of each condition:
And, as one careless of suspicion,
Ne fawnest for the favour of the great;
Ne fearest foolish reprehension
Of faulty men, which danger to thee threat:
But freely dost, of what thee list, entreat,
Like a great lord of peerless liberty;
Lifting the good up to high honour's seat,
And the evil damning evermore to die:
For life, and death, is in thy doomful writing!
So thy renown lives ever by enditing.

Dublin, this xvij. of July 1586.

Your devoted friend, during life,

EDMUND SPENSER.

II.*

WHOSO will seek, by right deserts, t' attain
 Unto the type of true nobility;
 And not by painted shows, and titles vain,
 Derived far from famous ancestry:
 Behold them both in their right visnomy¹
 Here truly pourtray'd, as they ought to be,
 And striving both for terms of dignity,
 To be advanced highest in degree.
 And, when thou dost with equal insight see
 The odds twixt both, of both then deem aright,
 And choose the better of them both to thee;
 But thanks to him, that it deserves, behight;
 To Nenna first, that first this work created,
 And next to Jones, that truly it translated.

ED. SPENSER.

III.

Upon the History of George Castriot, alias Scanderbeg, king of the Epirots, translated into English.†

WHEREFORE doth vain Antiquity so vaunt
 Her ancient monuments of mighty peers,
 And old herôes, which their world did daunt
 With their great deeds and fill'd their children's ears?
 Who, rapt with wonder of their famous praise,
 Admire their statues, their colossoes great:
 Their rich triumphal arcs which they did raise,
 Their huge pyrámids, which do heaven threat.
 Lo! one, whom later age hath brought to light,
 Matchable to the greatest of those great;
 Great both by name, and great in power and might,

* Prefixed to 'Nennio; or, A Treatise of Nobility,' translated from the Italian by one Jones, 1595.

† By Z. J. Gentleman, 1596.

And meriting a mere¹ triumphant seat.
 The scourge of Turks, and plague of infidels,
 Thy acts, O Scanderbeg, this volume tells.

ED. SPENSER.

¹ Absolute,
entire.

IV.*

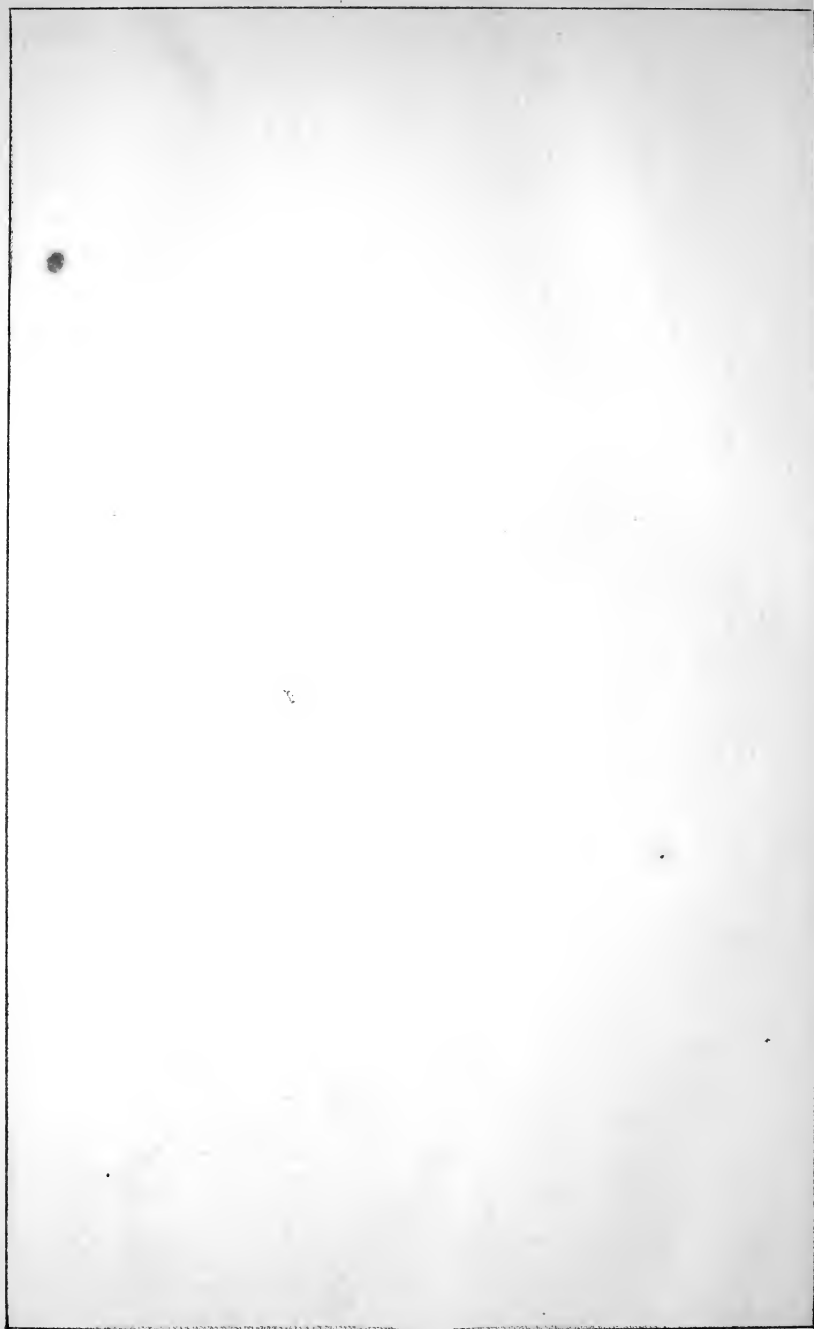
THE antique Babel, empress of the East,
 Uprear'd her buildings to the threaten'd sky:
 And second Babel, tyrant of the West,
 Her airy towers upraised much more high.
 But, with the weight of their own surquedry,²
 They both are fallen, that all the earth did fear,
 And buried now in their own ashes lie;
 Yet shewing, by their heaps, how great they were.
 But in their place doth now a third appear,
 Fair Venice, flower of the last world's delight;
 And next to them in beauty draweth near,
 But far exceeds in policy of right.

Yet not so fair her buildings to behold
 As Lewknor's style that hath her beauty told.

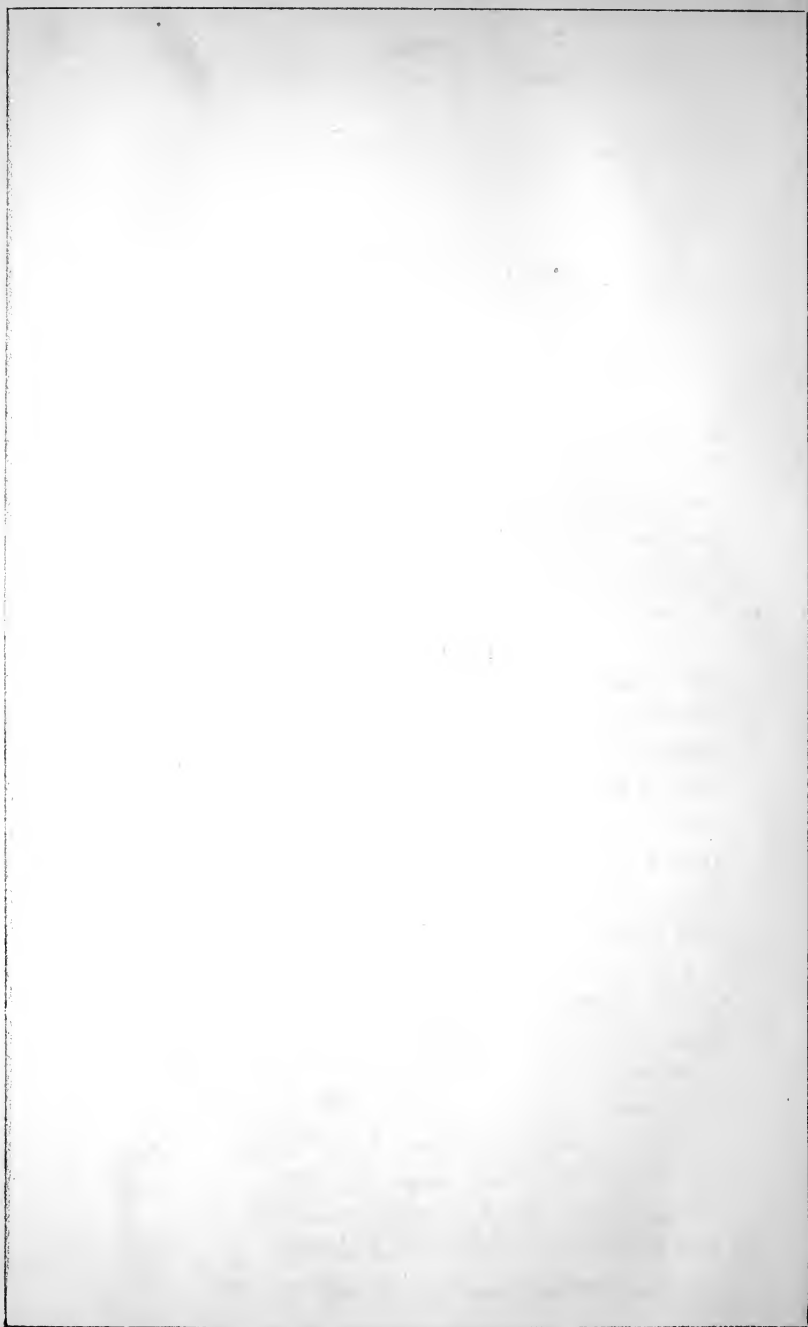
EDM. SPENSER.

² In-
solence.

* Prefixed to 'The Commonwealth and Government of Venice,' written by Cardinal Contareno, and translated by Lewes Lewknor, Esq., 1599.



POEMS.



P O E M S . *

I.

IN youth, before I waxed old,
 The blind boy, Venus' baby,
 For want of cunning made me bold,
 In bitter hive to grope for honey:
 But, when he saw me stung and cry,
 He took his wings and away did fly.

II.

As Dian hunted on a day,
 She chanc'd to come where Cupid lay,
 His quiver by his head:
 One of his shafts she stole away,
 And one of hers did close¹ convey
 Into the other's stead:
 With that Love wounded my love's heart,
 But Dian beasts with Cupid's dart.

¹ Secretly.

III.

I SAW, in secret to my dame
 How little Cupid humbly came,
 And said to her; 'All hail, my mother!'
 But, when he saw me laugh, for shame
 His face with bashful blood did flame,
 Not knowing Venus from the other.
 'Then, never blush, Cupid, (quoth I),
 For many have err'd in this beauty.'

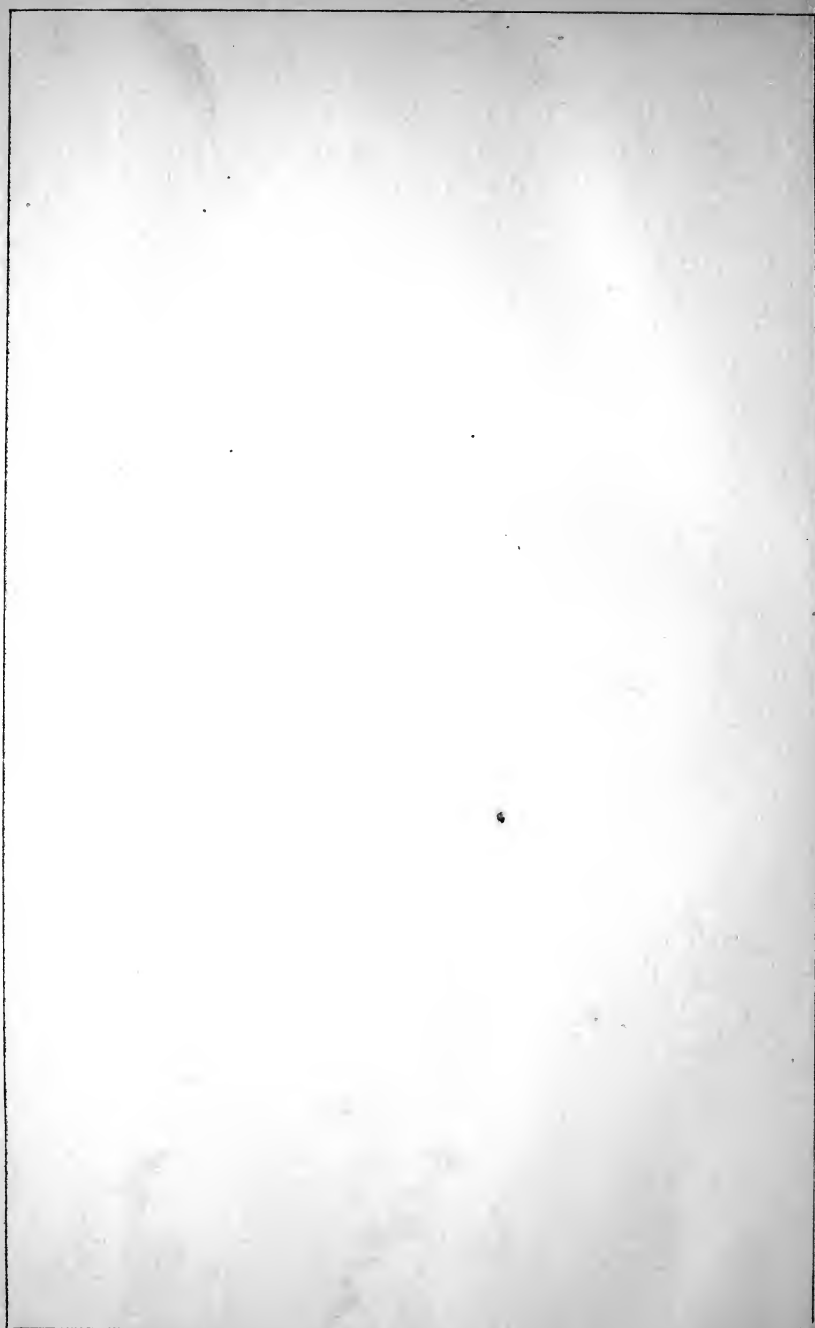
* First published in his collected works, 1611, in folio.

IV.

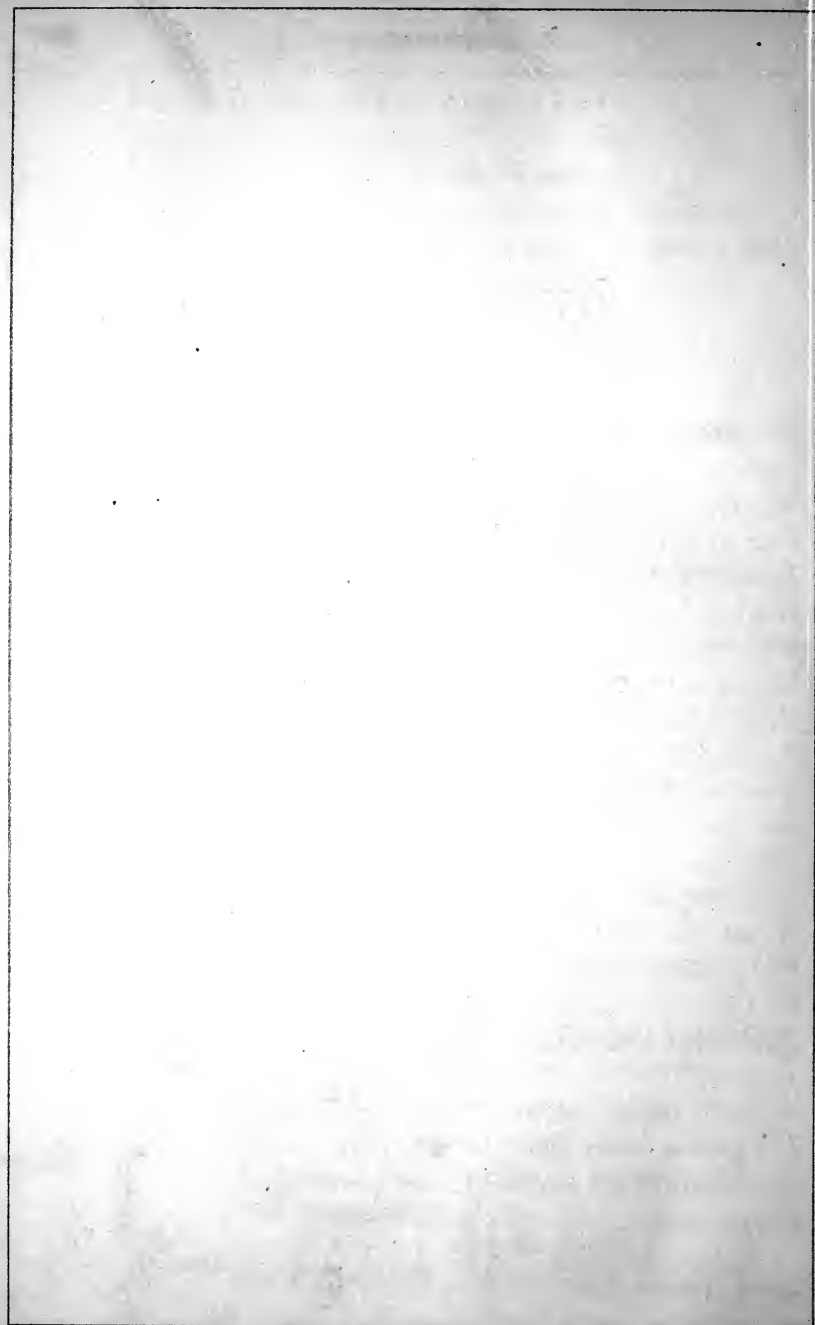
UPON a day, as Love lay sweetly slumb'ring
 All in his mother's lap;
 A gentle Bee, with his loud trumpet murm'ring,
 About him flew by hap.
 Whereof when he was wakened with the noise,
 And saw the beast so small;
 'What's this (quoth he) that gives so great a voice,
 That wakens men withal?
 In angry wise he flies about,
 And threatens all with courage stout.' 10
 To whom his mother closely smiling said,
 'Twixt earnest and 'twixt game:
 'See! thou thyself likewise art little made,
 If thou regard the same.
 And yet thou suff'rest neither gods in sky,
 Nor men in earth, to rest:
 But, when thou art disposed cruelly,
 Their sleep thou dost molest.
 Then either change thy cruelty,
 Or give like leave unto the fly.' 20
 Nathless, the cruel boy, not so content,
 Would needs the fly pursue;
 And in his hand, with heedless hardiment,
 Him caught for to subdue.
 But, when on it he hasty hand did lay,
 The Bee him stung therefore:
 'Now out alas, (he cried), and welaway,
 I wounded am full sore:
 The fly, that I so much did scorn,
 Hath hurt me with his little horn.' 30
 Unto his mother straight he weeping came,
 And of his grief complained:
 Who could not choose but laugh at his fond game,

Though sad to see him pained. [smart
 'Think now, (quoth she,) my son, how great the
 Of those whom thou dost wound:
 Full many thou hast pricked to the heart,
 That pity never found:
 Therefore, henceforth some pity take,
 When thou dost spoil of lovers make.' 40
 She took him straight full piteously lamenting,
 And wrapt him in her smock:
 She wrapt him softly, all the while repenting
 That he the fly did mock.
 She dress'd his wound, and it embalmed well
 With salve of sovereign might:
 And then she bath'd him in a dainty well,
 The well of dear delight.
 Who would not oft be stung as this,
 To be so bath'd in Venus' bliss? 50
 The wanton boy was shortly well recured
 Of that his malady:
 But he, soon after, fresh again enured¹
 His former cruelty.
 And since that time he wounded hath myself
 With his sharp dart of love:
 And now forgets the cruel careless elf
 His mother's hest to prove.
 So now I languish, till he please
 My pining anguish to appease. 60

¹ Practised.



EPITHALAMION.



EPITHALAMION.*

YE learned Sisters, which have oftentimes ^a
 Been to me aiding, others to adorn, ^b
 Whom ye thought worthy of your graceful rhymes, ^c
 That even the greatest did not greatly scorn ^b
 To hear their names sung in your simple lays, ^c
 But joyed in their praise; ^c
 And when ye list your own mishaps to mourn, ^d
 Which death, or love, or fortune's wreck did raise,
 Your string could soon to sadder tenor turn,
 And teach the woods and waters to lament 10
 Your doleful dreariment:
 Now lay those sorrowful complaints aside;
 And, having all your heads with garlands crown'd,
 Help me mine own love's praises to resound;
 Ne let the same of any be envied:
 So Orpheus did for his own bride!
 So I unto myself alone will sing;
 The woods shall to me answer, and my echo ring.

2
 Early, before the world's light-giving lamp
 His golden beam upon the hills doth spread, 20
 Having dispers'd the night's uncheerful damp,
 Do ye awake; and, with fresh lustihed,

* Written in honour of the poet's own marriage, which is conjectured to have taken place in 1594.

- Go to the bower of my beloved love, 23
 My truest turtle dove;
 Bid her awake; for Hymen is awake,
 And long since ready forth his masque to move,
¹ Torch. With his bright tead¹ that flames with many a flake,
 And many a bachelor to wait on him,
 In their fresh garments trim.
- ² Dress. Bid her awake therefore, and soon her dight,² 30
 For lo! the wished day is come at last,
 That shall, for all the pains and sorrows past,
 Pay to her usury of long delight:
 And, whilst she doth her dight,
 Do ye to her of joy and solace sing,
 That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.
- 3
- Bring with you all the Nymphs that you can hear
 Both of the Rivers and the Forests green,
 And of the Sea that neighbours to her near;
 All with gay garlands goodly well beseen. 40
 And let them also with them bring in hand
 Another gay garland,
 For my fair love, of lilies and of roses,
 Bound true-love wise, with a blue silk ribband.
 And let them make great store of bridal poses,
 And let them eke bring store of other flowers,
 To deck the bridal bowers.
 And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
 For fear the stones her tender foot should wrong,
 Be strew'd with fragrant flowers all along, 50
 And diaper'd³ like the discoloured mead.
³ Diver- Which done, do at her chamber door await,
 sified. For she will waken strait;
 The whiles do ye this song unto her sing,
 The woods shall to you answer, and your echo ring.

4

Ye Nymphs of Mulla, which with careful heed 56
 The silver scaly trouts do tend full well,
 And greedy pikes which use therein to feed;
 (Those trouts and pikes all others do excel;)
 And ye likewise, which keep the rushy lake, 60
 Where none do fishes take;
 Bind up the locks the which hang scatter'd light,
 And in his waters, which your mirror make,
 Behold your faces as the crystal bright,
 That when you come whereas my love doth lie,
 No blemish she may spy.
 And eke, ye lightfoot maids, which keep the door,
 That on the hoary mountain use to tower;
 And the wild wolves, which seek them to devour,
 With your steel darts do chase from coming near;
 Be also present here, 71
 To help to deck her, and to help to sing,
 That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

5

Wake now, my love, awake; for it is time;
 The rosy Morn long since left Tithon's bed,
 All ready to her silver coach to climb;
 And Phœbus 'gins to shew his glorious head.
 Hark! how the cheerful birds do chaunt their lays,
 And carol of love's praise.
 The merry lark her matins sings aloft; 80
 The thrush replies; the mavis descant plays;
 The ouzel shrills; the ruddock¹ warbles soft;
 So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
 To this day's merriment.
 Ah! my dear love, why do ye sleep thus long,
 When meeter were that ye should now awake,
 T' await the coming of your joyous make,²
 And hearken to the birds' love-learned song,

¹ Red-breast.² Mate.

The dewy leaves among! . . . 89
 For they of joy and pleasure to you sing,
 That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

6

My love is now awake out of her dream,
 And her fair eyes, like stars that dimmed were
 With darksome cloud, now shew their goodly beams
 More bright than Hesperus his head doth rear.
 Come now, ye damsels, daughters of delight,
 Help quickly her to dight:¹

¹ Dress.

But first come, ye fair Hours, which were begot,
 In Jove's sweet paradise, of Day and Night;
 Which do the seasons of the year allot, 100
 And all, that ever in this world is fair,
 Do make and still repair:

And ye three handmaids of the Cyprian Queen,
 The which do still adorn her beauty's pride,
 Help to adorn my beautifullest bride:
 And, as ye her array, still throw between
 Some graces to be seen;
 And, as ye use to Venus, to her sing, [ring.
 The whiles the woods shall answer, and your echo

7

Now is my love all ready forth to come: 110
 Let all the virgins therefore well await;
 And ye fresh boys, that tend upon her groom,
 Prepare yourselves; for he is coming strait.
 Set all your things in seemly good array,
 Fit for so joyful day:
 The joyful'st day that ever sun did see.
 Fair Sun! shew forth thy favourable ray,
 And let thy life-full heat not fervent be,
 For fear of burning her sunshiny face,
 Her beauty to disgrace. 120

O fairest Phœbus! Father of the Muse! 121
 If ever I did honour thee aright,
 Or sing the thing that might thy mind delight,
 Do not thy servant's simple boon refuse;
 But let this day, let this one day, be mine;
 Let all the rest be thine.
 Then I thy sovereign praises loud will sing,
 That all the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.

8

Hark! how the minstrels 'gin to shrill aloud
 Their merry music that resounds from far, 130
 The pipe, the tabor, and the trembling croud,¹
 That well agree withouten breach or jar. 1 Violin.
 But, most of all, the damsels do delight,
 When they their timbrels smite,
 And thereunto do dance and carol sweet,
 That all the senses they do ravish quite;
 The whiles the boys run up and down the street,
 Crying aloud with strong confused noise,
 As if it were one voice,
 Hymen, lö Hymen, Hymen, they do shout; 140
 That even to the heavens their shouting shrill
 Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill;
 To which the people standing all about,
 As in approvance, do thereto applaud,
 And loud advance her laud;
 And evermore they Hymen, Hymen, sing,
 That all the woods them answer, and their echo ring.

9

Lo! where she comes along with portly pace,
 Like Phœbe, from her chamber of the East,
 Arising forth to run her mighty race, 150
 Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best.
 So well it her beseems, that ye would ween

Some angel she had been. 153
 Her long loose yellow locks like golden wire,
 Sprinkled with pearl, and pearling flowers atween,
 Do like a golden mantle her attire;
 And, being crowned with a garland green,
 Seem like some maiden queen.
 Her modest eyes, abashed to behold
 So many gazers as on her do stare, 160
 Upon the lowly ground affixed are;
 Ne dare lift up her countenance too bold,
 But blush to hear her praises sung so loud,
 So far from being proud.
 Nathless do ye still loud her praises sing,
 That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

10

Tell me, ye merchants' daughters, did ye see
 So fair a creature in your town before;
 So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she,
 Adorn'd with beauty's grace and virtue's store? 170
 Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,
 Her forehead ivory white,
 Her cheeks like apples which the sun hath rudded,
 Her lips like cherries charming men to bite,
 Her breast like to a bowl of cream uncurdled,¹
 Her paps like lilies budded,
 Her snowy neck like to a marble tower;
 And all her body like a palace fair,
 Ascending up, with many a stately stair,
 To honour's seat and chastity's sweet bower. 180
 Why stand ye still, ye virgins, in amaze,
 Upon her so to gaze,
 Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
 To which the woods did answer, and your echo
 ring?

¹ Un-
curdled.

But if ye saw that which no eyes can see, 185
 The inward beauty of her lively sprite,
 Garnish'd with heavenly gifts of high degree,
 Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
 And stand astonish'd like to those which red¹
 Medusa's mazelful head.

¹ Saw.

There dwells sweet Love, and constant Chastity, 190
 Unspotted Faith, and comely Womanhood,
 Regard of Honour, and mild Modesty;
 There Virtue reigns as queen in royal throne,
 And giveth laws alone,
 The which the base affections do obey,
 And yield their services unto her will;
 Ne thought of things uncomely ever may
 Thereto approach to tempt her mind to ill.
 Had ye once seen these her celestial treasures, 200
 And unrevealed pleasures,
 Then would ye wonder, and her praises sing,
 That all the woods should answer, and your echo ring.

Open the temple gates unto my love,
 Open them wide that she may enter in,
 And all the posts adorn as doth behove,
 And all the pillars deck with garlands trim,
 For to receive this saint with honour due,
 That cometh in to you.
 With trembling steps, and humble reverence, 210
 She cometh in, before th' Almighty's view:
 Of her ye virgins learn obedience,
 When so ye come into those holy places,
 To humble your proud faces:
 Bring her up to th' high altar, that she may
 The sacred ceremonies there partake,
 The which do endless matrimony make;

And let the roaring organs loudly play 218
 The praises of the Lord in lively notes;
 The whiles, with hollow throats,
 The choristers the joyous anthem sing,
 That all the woods may answer, and their echo ring.

13

Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
 Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
 And blesseth her with his two happy hands,
 How the red roses flush up in her cheeks,
 And the pure snow, with goodly vermeil stain,
 Like crimson dyed in grain:
 That even the angels, which continually
 About the sacred altar do remain, 230
 Forget their service and about her fly,
 Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair,
 The more they on it stare.
 But her sad eyes, still fastened on the ground,
 Are governed with goodly modesty,
 That suffers not one look to glance awry,
 Which may let in a little thought unsound.
 Why blush ye, love, to give to me your hand,
 The pledge of all our band!
 Sing, ye sweet angels, Alleluia sing, 240
 That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

14

Now all is done: bring home the bride again;
 Bring home the triumph of our victory;
 Bring home with you the glory of her gain,
 With joyance bring her and with jollity.
 Never had man more joyful day than this,
 Whom heaven would heap with bliss.
 Make feast therefore now all this live-long day;
 This day for ever to me holy is.

Pour out the wine without restraint or stay, 250
 Pour not by cups, but by the belly full,
 Pour out to all that wull,¹
 And sprinkle all the posts and walls with wine,
 That they may sweat, and drunken be withal.
 Crown ye god Bacchus with a coronal,
 And Hymen also crown with wreaths of vine;
 And let the Graces dance unto the rest,
 For they can do it best:
 The whiles the maidens do their carol sing,
 To which the woods shall answer, and their echo ring.

¹ Will.

15

Ring ye the bells, ye young men of the town, 261
 And leave your wonted labours for this day:
 This day is holy; do ye write it down,
 That ye for ever it remember may.
 This day the sun is in his chiefest height,
 With Barnaby the bright,*
 From whence declining daily by degrees,
 He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
 When once the Crab behind his back he sees.
 But for this time it ill ordained was, 270
 To choose the longest day in all the year,
 And shortest night, when longest fitter were:
 Yet never day so long, but late would pass.
 Ring ye the bells, to make it wear away,
 And bonfires make all day;
 And dance about them, and about them sing,
 That all the woods may answer, and your echo ring.

16

Ah! when will this long weary day have end,
 And lend me leave to come unto my love?
 How slowly do the hours their numbers spend? 280

* 'Barnaby the bright:': St Barnabas's day is the eleventh of June.

How slowly does sad Time his feathers move? 281
 Haste thee, O fairest planet, to thy home,
 Within the western foam:
 Thy tired steeds long since have need of rest.
 Long though it be, at last I see it gloom,
 And the bright Evening-star with golden crest
 Appear out of the East.
 Fair child of beauty! glorious lamp of love!
 That all the host of heaven in ranks dost lead,
 And guidest lovers through the night's sad dread, 290
 How cheerfully thou lookest from above,
 And seemst to laugh atween thy twinkling light,
 As joying in the sight
 Of these glad many, which for joy do sing,
 That all the woods them answer, and their echo
 ring!

12

Now cease, ye damsels, your delights fore-past;
 Enough it is that all the day was yours:
 Now day is done, and night is nighing fast,
 Now bring the bride into the bridal bowers.
 The night is come, now soon her disarray, 300
 And in her bed her lay;
 Lay her in lilies and in violets,
 And silken curtains over her display,
 And odour'd sheets, and Arras coverlets.
 Behold how goodly my fair love does lie,
 In proud humility!
 Like unto Maia, when as Jove her took
 In Tempe, lying on the flow'ry grass,
 Twixt sleep and wake, after she weary was,
 With bathing in the Acidalian brook. 310
 Now it is night, ye damsels may be gone,
 And leave my love alone,

And leave likewise your former lay to sing: 313
 The woods no more shall answer, nor your echo ring.

18

Now welcome, Night! thou night so long expected,
 That long day's labour dost at last defray,
 And all my cares, which cruel Love collected,
 Hast summ'd in one, and cancelled for aye:
 Spread thy broad wing over my love and me,
 That no man may us see; 320
 And in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
 From fear of peril and foul horror free.
 Let no false treason seek us to entrap,
 Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
 The safety of our joy;
 But let the night be calm, and quiet some,
 Without tempestuous storms or sad affray:
 Like as when Jove with fair Alcmena lay,
 When he begot the great Tirynthian groom:*
 Or like as when he with thysel self did lie, 330
 And begot Majesty.
 And let the maids and youngmen cease to sing;
 Ne let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

19

Let no lamenting cries, nor doleful tears,
 Be heard all night within, nor yet without:
 Ne let false whispers, breeding hidden fears,
 Break gentle sleep with misconceived doubt.
 Let no deluding dreams, nor dreadful sights,
 Make sudden sad affrights;
 Ne let house-fires, nor lightning's helpless harms, 340
 Ne let the ponke,¹ nor other evil sprites,
 Ne let mischievous witches with their charms,
 Ne let hobgoblins, names whose sense we see not,

¹ Pouk, or
 Puck.

* 'Tirynthian groom:' see Classical Glossary.

Fray us with things that be not: 344
 Let not the screech-owl nor the stork be heard,
 Nor the night-raven, that still deadly yells;
 Nor damned ghosts, call'd up with mighty spells,
 Nor grisly vultures, make us once affeard:
 Ne let th' unpleasant choir of frogs still croaking
 Make us to wish their choking. 350
 Let none of these their dreary accents sing;
 Ne let the woods them answer, nor their echo ring.

20

But let still Silence true night-watches keep,
 That sacred Peace may in assurance reign,
 And timely Sleep, when it is time to sleep,
 May pour his limbs forth on your pleasant plain;
 The whiles an hundred little winged Loves,
 Like divers-feathered doves,
 Shall fly and flutter round about the bed,
 And in the secret dark, that none reproves, 360
 Their pretty stealths shall work, and snares shall
 spread

To filch away sweet snatches of delight,
 Conceal'd through covert night.
 Ye Sons of Venus, play your sports at will!
 For greedy Pleasure, careless of your toys,
 Thinks more upon her Paradise of joys,
 Than what ye do, albe it good or ill.
 All night therefore attend your merry play,
 For it will soon be day:
 Now none doth hinder you, that say or sing; 370
 Ne will the woods now answer, nor your echo ring.

21

Who is the same, which at my window peeps?
 Or whose is that fair face that shines so bright?
 Is it not Cynthia, she that never sleeps,

But walks about high heaven all the night? 375
 Oh! fairest goddess, do thou not envy
 My love with me to spy:
 For thou likewise didst love, though now unthought,
 And for a fleece of wool, which privily
 The Latmian shepherd* once unto thee brought, 380
 His pleasures with thee wrought.
 Therefore to us be favourable now;
 And sith of women's labours thou hast charge,
 And generation goodly dost enlarge,
 Incline thy will t' effect our wishful vow,
 And the chaste womb inform with timely seed,
 That may our comfort breed:
 Till which we cease our hopeful hap to sing;
 Ne let the woods us answer, nor our echo ring.

22

And thou, great Juno! which with awful might
 The laws of wedlock still dost patronise; 391
 And the religion of the faith first plight
 With sacred rites hast taught to solemnise;
 And eke for comfort often called art
 Of women in their smart;
 Eternally bind thou this lovely band,
 And all thy blessings unto us impart.
 And thou, glad Genius! in whose gentle hand
 The bridal bower and genial bed remain,
 Without blemish or stain; 400
 And the sweet pleasures of their love's delight
 With secret aid dost succour and supply,
 Till they bring forth the fruitful progeny;
 Send us the timely fruit of this same night.
 And thou, fair Hebe! and thou, Hymen free!
 Grant that it may so be.

* 'Latmian shepherd : ' see Classical Glossary.

Till which we cease your further praise to sing; 407
 Ne any woods shall answer, nor your echo ring.

23

And ye high heavens, the temple of the gods,
 In which a thousand torches flaming bright
 Do burn, that to us wretched earthly clods
 In dreadful darkness lend desired light;
 And all ye powers which in the same remain,
 More than we men can feign;
 Pour out your blessing on us plenteously
 And happy influence upon us rain,
 That we may raise a large posterity,
 Which from the earth, which they may long possess
 With lasting happiness.

Up to your haughty palaces may mount; 420
 And, for the guerdon of their glorious merit,
 May heavenly tabernacles there inherit,
 Of blessed saints for to increase the count.
 So let us rest, sweet love, in hope of this,
 And cease till then our timely joys to sing:
 The woods no more us answer, nor our echo ring!

*Song! made in lieu of many ornaments,
 With which my love should duly have been deck'd,
 Which cutting off through hasty accidents,
 Ye would not stay your due time to expect, 430
 But promis'd both to recompense;
 Be unto her a goodly ornament,
 And for short time an endless monument!*

FOUR HYMNS,

MADE BY

EDM. SPENSER.

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND MOST VIRTUOUS LADIES,

THE LADY MARGARET,
COUNTESS OF CUMBERLAND;

AND

THE LADY MARY,
COUNTESS OF WARWICK.

HAVING, in the greener times of my youth, composed these former two hymns in the praise of love and beauty, and finding that the same too much pleased those of like age and disposition, which, being too vehemently carried with that kind of affection, do rather suck out poison to their strong passion, than honey to their honest delight, I was moved, by the one of you two most excellent Ladies, to call in the same; but, being unable so to do, by reason that many copies thereof were formerly scattered abroad, I resolved at least to amend, and, by way of retraction, to reform them, making (instead of those two hymns of earthly or natural love and beauty) two others of heavenly and celestial; the which I do dedicate jointly unto you two honourable sisters, as to the most excellent and rare ornaments of all true love and beauty, both in the one and the other kind; humbly beseeching you to vouchsafe the patronage of them, and to accept this my humble service, in lieu of the great graces and honourable favours which ye daily shew unto me, until such time as I may, by better means, yield you some more notable testimony of my thankful mind and dutiful devotion. And even so I pray for your happiness. Greenwich, this first of September 1596. Your Honours' most bounden ever,

In all humble service,
ED. SP.

AN HYMN IN HONOUR OF LOVE.

LOVE, that long since hast to thy mighty power
 Perforce subdued my poor captived heart,
 And, raging now therein with restless stowre,¹
 Dost tyrannize in every weaker part,
 Fain would I seek to ease my bitter smart
 By any service I might do to thee,
 Or ought that else might to thee pleasing be.

¹ Violence.

And now t' assuage the force of this new flame,
 And make thee more propitious in my need,
 I mean to sing the praises of thy name, 10
 And thy victorious conquests to areed,²
 By which thou madest many hearts to bleed
 Of mighty victors, with wide wounds embrued,
 And by thy cruel darts to thee subdued.

² Declare.

Only I fear my wits enfeebled late,
 Through the sharp sorrows which thou hast me bred,
 Should faint, and words should fail me to relate
 The wondrous triumphs of thy great god-head:
 But, if thou wouldst vouchsafe to overspread
 Me with the shadow of thy gentle wing, 20
 I should enabled be thy acts to sing.

Come, then, O come, thou mighty God of Love! 22
 Out of thy silver bowers and secret bliss,
 Where thou dost sit in Venus' lap above,
 Bathing thy wings in her ambrosial kiss,
 That sweeter far than any nectar is;
 Come softly, and my feeble breast inspire
 With gentle fury, kindled of thy fire.

And ye, sweet Muses! which have often proved
 The piercing points of his avengeful darts; 30
 And ye, fair Nymphs! which oftentimes have loved
 The cruel worker of your kindly smarts,
 Prepare yourselves, and open wide your hearts
 For to receive the triumph of your glory,
 That made you merry oft when ye were sorry.

And ye, fair blossoms of youth's wanton breed!
 Which in the conquests of your beauty boast,
 Wherewith your lovers' feeble eyes you feed,
 But starve their hearts that needeth nurture most,
 Prepare yourselves to march amongst his host, 40
 And all the way this sacred hymn do sing,
 Made in the honour of your sovereign king.

GREAT GOD OF MIGHT, that reignest in the mind,
 And all the body to thy hest dost frame,
 Victor of gods, subduer of mankind,
 That dost the lions and fell tigers tame,
 Making their cruel rage thy scornful game,
 And in their roaring taking great delight;
 Who can express the glory of thy might?

Or who alive can perfectly declare 50
 The wondrous cradle of thine infancy,

When thy great mother Venus first thee bare, 52
 Begot of Plenty and of Penury,
 Though elder than thine own nativity,
 And yet a child, renewing still thy years,
 And yet the eldest of the heavenly peers?

For ere this world's still moving mighty mass
 Out of great Chaos' ugly prison crept,
 In which his goodly face long hidden was
 From heaven's view, and in deep darkness kept, 60
 Love, that had now long time securely slept
 In Venus' lap, unarmed then and naked,
 Gan rear his head, by Clotho being waked:

And taking to him wings of his own heat,
 Kindled at first from heaven's life-giving fire,
 He gan to move out of his idle seat;
 Weakly at first, but after with desire
 Lifted aloft, he gan to mount up higher,
 And, like fresh eagle, made his hardy flight
 Through all that great wide waste, yet wanting light.

Yet wanting light to guide his wand'ring way, 71
 His own fair mother, for all creatures' sake,
 Did lend him light from her own goodly ray;
 Then through the world his way he gan to take,
 The world, that was not till he did it make,
 Whose sundry parts he from themselves did sever,
 The which before had lain confused ever.

The earth, the air, the water, and the fire,
 Then gan to range themselves in huge array,
 And with contráry forces to conspire 80
 Each against other by all means they may,

Threat'ning their own confusion and decay: 82
 Air hated earth, and water hated fire,
 Till Love relented their rebellious ire.

He then them took, and, tempering goodly well
 Their contrary dislikes with loved means,
 Did place them all in order, and compel
 To keep themselves within their sundry reigns,
 Together link'd with adamantine chains;
 Yet so, as that in every living wight 90
 They mix themselves, and shew their kindly might.

So ever since they firmly have remained,
 And duly well observed his behest;
 Through which now all these things that are contained
 Within this goodly cope, both most and least,
 Their being have, and daily are increast
 Through secret sparks of his infused fire,
 Which in the barren cold he doth inspire.

Thereby they all do live, and moved are
 To multiply the likeness of their kind, 100
 Whilst they seek only, without further care,
 To quench the flame which they in burning find;
 But man that breathes a more immortal mind,
 Not for lust's sake, but for eternity,
 Seeks to enlarge his lasting progeny;

¹ Derived.

For, having yet in his deducted¹ sprite
 Some sparks remaining of that heavenly fire,
 He is enlumin'd with that goodly light,

² Appearance.

Unto like goodly semblant² to aspire;
 Therefore in choice of love he doth desire 110
 That seems on earth most heavenly to embrace,
 That same is Beauty, born of heavenly race.

For sure of all that in this mortal frame 113
 Contained is, nought more divine doth seem,
 Or that resembleth more th' immortal flame
 Of heavenly light, than Beauty's glorious beam.
 What wonder then, if with such rage extreme
 Frail men, whose eyes seek heavenly things to see,
 At sight thereof so much enravish'd be?

Which well perceiving, that imperious boy 120
 Doth therewith tip his sharp empois'ned darts, [coy
 Which glancing through the eyes with countenance
 Rest not till they have pierc'd the trembling hearts,
 And kindled flame in all their inner parts,
 Which sucks the blood, and drinketh up the life,
 Of careful wretches with consuming grief.

Thenceforth they plain, and make full piteous moan
 Unto the author of their baleful bane: [groan,
 The days they waste, the nights they grieve and
 Their lives they loathe, and heaven's light disdain; 130
 No light but that, whose lamp doth yet remain
 Fresh burning in the image of their eye,
 They deign to see, and seeing it still die.

The whilst thou tyrant Love dost laugh and scorn
 At their complaints, making their pain thy play,
 Whilst they lie languishing like thralls forlorn,
 The whiles thou dost triumph in their decay;
 And otherwhiles, their dying to delay,
 Thou dost emmarble the proud heart of her
 Whose love before their life they do prefer. 140

So hast thou often done (ah me, the more!)
 To me thy vassal, whose yet bleeding heart

With thousand wounds thou mangled hast so sore,
 That whole remains scarce any little part; 144
 Yet, to augment the anguish of my smart,
 Thou hast enfrozen her disdainful breast,
 That no one drop of pity there doth rest.

Why then do I this honour unto thee,
 Thus to ennoble thy victorious name,
 Sith thou dost shew no favour unto me, 150
 Ne once move ruth in that rebellious dame,
 Somewhat to slack the rigour of my flame?
 Certes small glory dost thou win hereby,
 To let her live thus free, and me to die.

But if thou be indeed, as men thee call,
 The world's great parent, the most kind preserver
 Of living wights, the sovereign lord of all,
 How falls it then that with thy furious fervour
 Thou dost afflict as well the not-deserver,
 As him that doth thy lovely hests despise, 160
 And on thy subjects most doth tyrannise?

Yet herein eke thy glory seemeth more,
 By so hard handling those which best thee serve,
 That, ere thou dost them unto grace restore,
 Thou mayest well try if thou wilt ever swerve,
 And mayest them make it better to deserve,
 And, having got it, may it more esteem;
 For things hard gotten men more dearly deem.

So hard those heavenly beauties he enfired
 As things divine, least passions do impress, 170
 The more of steadfast minds to be admired,
 The more they stayed be on steadfastness;

But baseborn minds such lamps regard the less, 173
 Which at first blowing take not hasty fire ;
 Such fancies feel no love, but loose desire.

For Love is lord of Truth and Loyalty,
 Lifting himself out of the lowly dust
 On golden plumes up to the purest sky,
 Above the reach of loathly sinful lust,
 Whose base affect¹ through cowardly distrust 180
 Of his weak wings dare not to heaven fly,
 But like a moldwarp² in the earth doth lie.

¹ Imitation.

² Mole.

His dunghill thoughts, which do themselves inure
 To dirty dross, no higher dare aspire,
 Ne can his feeble earthly eyes endure
 The flaming light of that celestial fire
 Which kindleth love in generous desire,
 And makes him mount above the native might
 Of heavy earth, up to the heaven's height.

Such is the power of that sweet passion, 190
 That it all sordid baseness doth expel,
 And the refined mind doth newly fashion
 Unto a fairer form, which now doth dwell
 In his high thought, that would itself excel,
 Which he beholding still with constant sight,
 Admires the mirror of so heavenly light.

Whose image printing in his deepest wit,
 He thereon feeds his hungry fantasy,
 Still full, yet never satisfied with it ;
 Like Tantale, that in store doth starved lie, 200
 So doth he pine in most satiety ;
 For nought may quench his infinite desire,
 Once kindled through that first conceived fire.

Thereon his mind affixed wholly is, 204
 Ne thinks on ought but how it to attain;
 His care, his joy, his hope, is all on this,
 That seems in it all blisses to contain,
 In sight whereof all other bliss seems vain:
 Thrice happy man! might he the same possess,
 He feigns himself, and doth his fortune bless. 210

And though he do not win his wish to end,
 Yet thus far happy he himself doth ween,
 That heavens such happy grace did to him lend,
 As thing on earth so heavenly to have seen
 His heart's enshrined saint, his heaven's queen,
 Fairer than fairest, in his feigning eye,
 Whose sole aspect he counts felicity.

Then forth he casts in his unquiet thought,
 What he may do, her favour to obtain;
 What brave exploit, what peril hardly wrought, 220
 What puissant conquest, what adventurous pain.
 May please her best, and grace unto him gain;
 He dreads no danger, nor misfortune fears,
 His faith, his fortune, in his breast he bears.

Thou art his god, thou art his mighty guide,
 Thou, being blind, letst him not see his fears,
 But carriest him to that which he had eyed,
 Through seas, through flames, through thousand
 swords and spears;
 Ne ought so strong that may his force withstand,
 With which thou armetst his resistless hand. 230

Witness Leander in the Euxine waves,
 And stout Æneas in the Trojan fire,

Achilles pressing through the Phrygian glaives, 233
 And Orpheus, daring to provoke the ire
 Of damned fiends, to get his love retire;
 For both through heaven and hell thou makest way,
 To win them worship which to thee obey.

And if by all these perils, and these pains,
 He may but purchase liking in her eye,
 What heavens of joy then to himself he feigns! 240
 Eftsoons he wipes quite out of memory
 Whatever ill before he did abyē:¹
 Had it been death, yet would he die again,
 To live thus happy as her grace to gain.

¹ Abide.

Yet, when he hath found favour to his will,
 He nathëmore can so contented rest,
 But forceth further on, and striveth still
 T' approach more near, till in her inmost breast
 He may embosom'd be and loved best;
 And yet not best, but to be lov'd alone; 250
 For love cannot endure a paragone.

The fear whereof, O how doth it torment
 His troubled mind with more than hellish pain!
 And to his feigning fancy represent
 Sights never seen, and thousand shadows vain,
 To break his sleep, and waste his idle brain:
 Thou that hast never lov'd canst not believe
 Least part of th' evils which poor lovers grieve.

The gnawing envy, the heart-fretting fear,
 The vain surmises, the distrustful shows, 260
 The false reports that flying tales do bear,
 The doubts, the dangers, the delays, the woes,

The feigned friends, the unassured foes, 263
 With thousands more than any tongue can tell,
 Do make a lover's life a wretch's hell.

Yet is there one more cursed than they all,
 That canker-worm, that monster, Jealousy,
 Which eats the heart and feeds upon the gall,
 Turning all love's delight to misery,
 Through fear of losing his felicity. 270
 Ah, Gods! that ever ye that monster placed
 In gentle Love, that all his joys defaced!

By these, O Love! thou dost thy entrance make
 Unto thy heaven, and dost the more endear
 Thy pleasures unto those which them partake,
 As after storms, when clouds begin to clear,
 The sun more bright and glorious doth appear;
 So thou thy folk, through pains of Purgatory,
 Dost bear unto thy bliss, and heaven's glory.

There thou them placest in a paradise 280
 Of all delight and joyous happy rest,
 Where they do feed on nectar heavenly-wise,
 With Hercules and Hebe, and the rest
 Of Venus' darlings, through her bounty blest;
 And lie like gods in ivory beds array'd,
 With rose and lilies over them display'd.

There with thy daughter Pleasure they do play
 Their hurtless sports, without rebuke or blame,
 And in her snowy bosom boldly lay
 Their quiet heads, devoid of guilty shame, 290
 After full joyance of their gentle game;
 Then her they crown their goddess and their queen,
 And deck with flowers thy altars well beseen.

<p>Ah me! dear Lord! that ever I might hope, For all the pains and woes that I endure, To come at length unto the wished scope Of my desire, or might myself assure That happy port for ever to recure! Then would I think these pains no pains at all, And all my woes to be but penance small.</p>	<p>294 300</p>
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Then would I sing of thine immortal praise
 An heavenly hymn, such as the angels sing,
 And thy triumphant name then would I raise
 'Bove all the gods, thee only honouring;
 My guide, my god, my victor, and my king:
 Till then, dread Lord! vouchsafe to take of me
 This simple song, thus fram'd in praise of thee.

AN HYMN IN HONOUR OF BEAUTY.

AH! whither, Love! wilt thou now carry me?
 What wontless fury dost thou now inspire
 Into my feeble breast, too full of thee?
 Whilst seeking to aslake thy raging fire,
 Thou in me kindlest much more great desire,
 And up aloft above my strength doth raise
 The wondrous matter of my fire to praise.

¹ Before.

That as I erst,¹ in praise of thine own name,
 So now in honour of thy mother dear,
 An honourable hymn I eke should frame, 10
 And, with the brightness of her beauty clear,
 The ravish'd hearts of gazeful men might rear
 To admiration of that heavenly light,
 From whence proceeds such soul-enchancing might.

Thereto do thou, great Goddess! Queen of beauty,
 Mother of Love, and of all world's delight,
 Without whose sovereign grace and kindly duty
 Nothing on earth seems fair to fleshly sight,
 Do thou vouchsafe with thy love-kindling light
 T' illuminate my dim and dulled eyne, 20
 And beautify this sacred hymn of thine:

That both to thee, to whom I mean it most, 22
 And eke to her, whose fair immortal beam
 Hath darted fire into my feeble ghost,
 That now it wasted is with woes extreme,
 It may so please, that she at length will stream
 Some dew of grace into my withered heart,
 After long sorrow and consuming smart.

WHAT TIME THIS WORLD'S GREAT WORKMASTER did
 cast

To make all things such as we now behold, 30
 It seems that he before his eyes had plac'd
 A goodly pattern, to whose perfect mould
 He fashion'd them as comely as he could,
 That now so fair and seemly they appear,
 As nought may be amended anywhere.

That wondrous pattern, wheresoe'er it be,
 Whether in earth laid up in secret store,
 Or else in heaven, that no man may it see
 With sinful eyes, for fear it to deflore,¹
 Is perfect Beauty, which all men adore; 40
 Whose face and feature doth so much excel
 All mortal sense, that none the same may tell.

¹ Deflower.

Thereof as every earthly thing partakes
 Or more or less, by influence divine,
 So it more fair accordingly it makes,
 And the gross matter of this earthly mine
 Which closeth it thereafter doth refine,
 Doing away the dross which dims the light
 Of that fair beam which therein is empight.²

² Placed.

For, through infusion of celestial power, 50
 The duller earth it quick'neth with delight,

And life-ful spirits privily doth pour 52
 Through all the parts, that to the looker's sight
 They seem to please; that is thy sovereign might,
 O Cyprian queen! which flowing from the beam
 Of thy bright star, thou into them dost stream.

That is the thing which giveth pleasant grace
 To all things fair, that kindleth lively fire,
 Light of thy lamp; which, shining in the face,
 Thence to the soul darts amorous desire, 60
 And robs the hearts of those which it admire;
 Therewith thou pointest thy son's poison'd arrow,
 That wounds the life, and wastes the inmost marrow.

How vainly then do idle wits invent,
 That Beauty is nought else but mixture made
 Of colours fair, and goodly temperment
 Of pure complexions, that shall quickly fade
 And pass away, like to a summer's shade;
 Or that it is but comely composition
 Of parts well measur'd, with meet disposition! 70

Hath white and red in it such wondrous power,
 That it can pierce through th' eyes unto the heart,
¹ Violence. And therein stir such rage and restless stowre,¹
 As nought but death can stint his dolour's smart?
 Or can proportion of the outward part
 Move such affection in the inward mind,
 That it can rob both sense, and reason blind?

Why do not then the blossoms of the field,
 Which are array'd with much more orient hue,
 And to the sense most dainty odours yield, 80
 Work like impression in the looker's view?

Or why do not fair pictures like power shew, 82
 In which ofttimes we Nature see of Art
 Excell'd, in perfect limning every part?

But ah! believe me there is more than so,
 That works such wonders in the minds of men;
 I, that have often prov'd, too well it know,
 And whoso list the like assays to ken,¹ 1 Know.
 Shall find by trial, and confess it then,
 That Beauty is not, as fond² men misdeem, 90 2 Foolish.
 An outward show of things that only seem.

For that same goodly hue of white and red,
 With which the cheeks are sprinkled, shall decay,
 And those sweet rosy leaves, so fairly spread
 Upon the lips, shall fade and fall away
 To that they were, even to corrupted clay:
 That golden wire, those sparkling stars so bright,
 Shall turn to dust, and lose their goodly light.

But that fair lamp, from whose celestial ray
 That light proceeds, which kindleth lovers' fire, 100
 Shall never be extinguish'd nor decay;
 But, when the vital spirits do expire,
 Unto her native planet shall retire;
 For it is heavenly born and cannot die,
 Being a parcel of the purest sky.

For when the soul, the which derived was,
 At first, out of that great immortal Sprite,
 By whom all live to love, whilome³ did pass 3 Former-
 Down from the top of purest heaven's height ly.
 To be embodied here, it then took light 110
 And lively spirits from that fairest star
 Which lights the world forth from his fiery car.

Which power retaining still or more or less, 113
 When she in fleshly seed is eft¹ enraced,²
 Through every part she doth the same impress,
 According as the heavens have her graced,
 And frames her house, in which she will be placed,
 Fit for herself, adorning it with spoil
 Of th' heavenly riches which she robb'd erewhile.

¹ Quickly.
² Im-
 planted.

Thereof it comes that these fair souls, which have 120
 The most resemblance of that heavenly light,
 Frame to themselves most beautiful and brave
 Their fleshly bower, most fit for their delight,
 And the gross matter by a sovereign might
 Temper so trim, that it may well be seen
 A palace fit for such a virgin queen.

So every spirit, as it is most pure,
 And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
 So it the fairer body doth procure
 To habit in, and it more fairly dight³ 130
 With cheerful grace and amiable sight;
 For of the soul the body form doth take;
 For soul is form, and doth the body make.

³ Adorn.

Therefore wherever that thou dost behold
 A comely corpse,⁴ with beauty fair endued,
 Know this for certain, that the same doth hold
 A beauteous soul, with fair conditions thewed,⁵
 Fit to receive the seed of virtue strewed;
 For all that fair is, is by nature good;
 That is a sign to know the gentle blood. 140

⁴ Body.

⁵ Endow-
 ed.

Yet oft it falls that many a gentle mind
 Dwells in deformed tabernacle drown'd,

Either by chance, against the course of kind,¹ 143 ¹ Nature.
 Or through unaptness in the substance found,
 Which it assumed of some stubborn ground,
 That will not yield unto her form's direction,
 But is perform'd with some foul imperfection.

And oft it falls, (ah me, the more to rue!)
 That goodly Beauty, albe² heavenly born, ² Al-
 Is foul abus'd, and that celestial hue, 150 though.
 Which doth the world with her delight adorn,
 Made but the bait of sin, and sinners' scorn,
 Whilst every one doth seek and sue to have it,
 But every one doth seek but to deprave it.

Yet nathemore is that fair Beauty's blame,
 But theirs that do abuse it unto ill:
 Nothing so good, but that through guilty shame
 May be corrupt, and wrested unto will:
 Nathless the soul is fair and beauteous still,
 However flesh's fault it filthy make; 160
 For things immortal no corruption take.

But ye, fair dames! the world's dear ornaments,
 And lively images of heaven's light,
 Let not your beams with such disparagements
 Be dimm'd, and your bright glory dark'ned quite;
 But, mindful still of your first country's sight,
 Do still preserve your first informed grace,
 Whose shadow yet shines in your beauteous face.

Loathe that foul blot, that hellish fierbrand,
 Disloyal lust, fair Beauty's foulest blame, 170
 That base affection, which your ears would bland
 Commend to you by Love's abused name,

But is indeed the bondslave of Defame; 173
 Which will the garland of your glory mar,
 And quench the light of your bright shining star.

But gentle Love, that loyal is and true,
 Will more illumine your resplendent ray,
 And add more brightness to your goodly hue,
 From light of his pure fire; which, by like way
 Kindled of yours, your likeness doth display; 180
 Like as two mirrors, by oppos'd reflection,
 Do both express the face's first impression.

Therefore, to make your beauty more appear,
 It you behoves to love, and forth to lay
 That heavenly riches which in you ye bear,
 That men the more admire their fountain may;
 For else what booteth that celestial ray,
 If it in darkness be enshrined ever,
 That it of loving eyes be viewed never?

But, in your choice of loves, this well advise, 190
 That likest to yourselves ye them select,
 The which your form's first source may sympathise,
 And with like beauty's parts be inly deck'd;
 For if you loosely love without respect,
 It is not love, but a discordant war,
 Whose unlike parts amongst themselves do jar.

For love is a celestial harmony
 Of likely¹ hearts compos'd of stars' concent,²
 Which join together in sweet sympathy,
 To work each other's joy and true content, 200
 Which they have harbour'd since their first descent
 Out of their heavenly bowers, where they did see
 And know each other here below'd to be.

¹ Similar.

² Harmony.

See more than any other eyes can see, 234
 Through mutual receipt of beamës bright,
 Which carry privy message to the sprite,
 And to their eyes that inmost fair display,
 As plain as light discovers dawning day.

Therein they see, through amorous eye-glances,
 Armies of Loves still flying to and fro, 240
 Which dart at them their little fiery lances;
 Whom having wounded, back again they go,
 Carrying compassion to their lovely foe;
 Who, seeing her fair eyes' so sharp affect,
 Cures all their sorrows with one sweet aspect.

¹ Perceive. In which how many wonders do they reede¹
 To their conceit, that others never see!
 Now of her smiles, with which their souls they feed,
 Like gods with nectar in their banquets free;
 Now of her looks, which like to cordials be; 250
 But when her words embæssade² forth she sends,
 Lord, how sweet music that unto them lends!

Sometimes upon her forehead they behold
 A thousand graces masking in delight;
 Sometimes within her eyelids they unfold
³ Beautiful Ten thousand sweet belgards,³ which to their sight
 looks. Do seem like twinkling stars in frosty night;
 But on her lips, like rosy buds in May,
 So many millions of chaste Pleasures play.

All those, O Cytherea! and thousands more 260
 Thy handmaids be, which do on thee attend,
 To deck thy beauty with their dainties' store,
 That may it more to mortal eyes commend,

And make it more admir'd of foe and friend; 264
 That in men's hearts thou mayst thy throne install,
 And spread thy lovely kingdom over all.

Then Iö, triumph! O great Beauty's Queen,
 Advance the banner of thy conquest high,
 That all this world, the which thy vassals been,
 May draw to thee, and with due feälty 270
 Adore the power of thy great majesty,
 Singing this hymn in honour of thy name,
 Compil'd by me, which thy poor liegeman am!

In lieu whereof grant, O great Soverain!
 That she, whose conquering beauty doth captive
 My trembling heart in her eternal chain,
 One drop of grace at length will to me give,
 That I her bounden thrall by her may live,
 And this same life, which first from me she reaved,
 May owe to her, of whom I it received. 280

And you, fair Venus' darling, my dear dread!¹
 Fresh flower of grace, great goddess of my life,
 When your fair eyes these fearful lines shall read,
 Deign to let fall one drop of due relief,
 That may recure my heart's long pining grief,
 And shew what wondrous power your beauty hath,
 That can restore a damned wight from death.

¹ Object of
 rever-
 ence.

AN HYMN OF HEAVENLY LOVE.

LOVE, lift me up upon thy golden wings
 From this base world unto thy heaven's height,
 Where I may see those admirable things
 Which there thou workest by thy sovereign might,
 Far above feeble reach of earthly sight,
 That I thereof an heavenly hymn may sing
 Unto the God of Love, high heaven's king.

Many lewd lays (ah! woe is me the more!)
 In praise of that mad fit which fools call Love,
 I have in th' heat of youth made heretofore, 10
 That in light wits did loose affection move;
 But all those follies now I do reprove,
 And turned have the tenor of my string,
 The heavenly praises of true Love to sing.

And ye that wont with greedy vain desire
 To read my fault, and, wond'ring at my flame,
 To warm yourselves at my wide sparkling fire,
 Sith now that heat is quenched, quench my blame,
 And in her ashes shroud my dying shame;
 For who my passed follies now pursues, 20
 Begins his own, and my old fault renews.

BEFORE THIS WORLD'S GREAT FRAME, in which all things
 Are now contain'd, found any being-place, 23
 Ere fitting Time could wag his eyes¹ wings
 About that mighty bound which doth embrace
 The rolling spheres, and parts their hours by space,
 That High Eternal Power, which now doth move
 In all these things, mov'd in itself by love.

¹ Un-
fledged.

It lov'd itself, because itself was fair;
 (For fair is lov'd;) and of itself begot 30
 Like to itself his eldest Son and Heir,
 Eternal, pure, and void of sinful blot,
 The firstling of His joy, in whom no jot
 Of love's dislike or pride was to be found,
 Whom He therefore with equal honour crown'd.

With Him He reign'd, before all time prescribed,
 In endless glory and immortal might,
 Together with that Third from them derived,
 Most wise, most holy, most almighty Sprite!
 Whose kingdom's throne no thoughts of earthly wight
 Can comprehend, much less my trembling verse 41
 With equal words can hope it to rehearse.

Yet, O most blessed Spirit! pure lamp of light,
 Eternal spring of grace and wisdom true,
 Vouchsafe to shed into my barren sprite
 Some little drop of thy celestial dew,
 That may my rhymes with sweet infuse² embrue,
 And give me words equal unto my thought,
 To tell the marvels by thy mercy wrought.

² Infusion.

Yet being pregnant still with powerful grace, 50
 And full of fruitful love, that loves to get

Things like himself, and to enlarge his race, 52
 His second brood, though not of power so great,
 Yet full of beauty, next He did beget,
 An infinite increase of angels bright,
 All glist'ring glorious in their Maker's light.

To them the heaven's illimitable height
 (Not this round heaven, which we from hence behold,
 Adorn'd with thousand lamps of burning light,
 And with ten thousand gems of shining gold,) 60
 He gave as their inheritance to hold,
 That they might serve Him in eternal bliss,
 And be partakers of those joys of His.

There they in their trinal triplicities*
 About Him wait, and on His will depend,
 Either with nimble wings to cut the skies,
 When He them on His messages doth send,
 Or on His own dread presence to attend,
 Where they behold the glory of His light,
 And carol hymns of love both day and night. 70

Both day, and night, is unto them all one;
 For He His beams doth unto them extend,
 That darkness there appeareth never none;
 Ne hath their day, ne hath their bliss, an end,
 But there their termless time in pleasure spend;
 Ne ever should their happiness decay,
 Had not they dared their Lord to disobey.

But pride, impatient of long resting peace,
 Did puff them up with greedy bold ambition,
 That they 'gan cast their state how to increase 80
 Above the fortune of their first condition,

* 'Trinal triplicities : ' see ' Faerie Queene,' Book I., canto xii., stanza 30.

And sit in God's own seat without commission : 82
 The brightest angel, even the child of light,
 Drew millions more against their God to fight.

Th' Almighty, seeing their so bold assay,
 Kindled the flame of His consuming ire,
 And with His only breath them blew away
 From heaven's height, to which they did aspire,
 To deepest hell, and lake of damned fire,
 Where they in darkness and dread horror dwell, 90
 Hating the happy light from which they fell.

So that next offspring of the Maker's love,
 Next to Himself in glorious degree,
 Degendering to hate, fell from above
 Through pride; (for pride and love may ill agree;)
 And now of sin to all ensample be:
 How then can sinful flesh itself assure,
 Sith purest angels fell to be impure?

But that Eternal Fount of love and grace,
 Still flowing forth His goodness unto all, 100
 Now seeing left a waste and empty place
 In His wide palace, through those angels' fall,
 Cast to supply the same, and to install
 A new unknown colony therein, [begin.
 Whose root from earth's base groundwork should

Therefore of clay, base, vile, and next to nought,
 Yet form'd by wondrous skill, and by His might,
 According to an heavenly pattern wrought,
 Which He had fashion'd in His wise foresight,
 He man did make, and breath'd a living sprite 110
 Into his face, most beautiful and fair,
 Endued with wisdom's riches, heavenly, rare.

Such He him made, that he resemble might 113
 Himself, as mortal thing immortal could;
 Him to be lord of every living wight
 He made by love out of His own like mould,
 In whom He might His mighty self behold;
 For Love doth love the thing belov'd to see,
 That like itself in lovely shape may be.

But man, forgetful of his Maker's grace 120
¹ Follow. No less than angels, whom he did ensue,¹
 Fell from the hope of promis'd heavenly place,
 Into the mouth of Death, to sinners due,
 And all his offspring into thralldom threw,
 Where they for ever should in bonds remain
 Of never-dead yet ever-dying pain;

Till that great Lord of Love, which him at first
 Made of mere love, and after liked well,
 Seeing him lie like creature long accurst
 In that deep horror of despaired hell, 130
² Suffer- Him, wretch, in dool² would let no longer dwell,
 ing. But cast out of that bondage to redeem,
³ Al- And pay the price, all³ were his debt extreme.
 though.

Out of the bosom of eternal bliss,
 In which He reigned with His glorious Sire,
⁴ Humble. He down descended, like a most demiss⁴
 And abject thrall, in flesh's frail attire,
 That He for him might pay sin's deadly hire,
 And him restore unto that happy state
 In which he stood before his hapless fate. 140

In flesh at first the guilt committed was,
 Therefore in flesh it must be satisfied;

Nor spirit, nor angel, though they man surpass, 143
 Could make amends to God for man's misguide,¹
 But only man himself, who self did slide:
 So, taking flesh of sacred virgin's womb,
 For man's dear sake He did a man become.

¹ Evil
 courses.

And that most blessed body, which was born
 Without all blemish or reproachful blame,
 He freely gave to be both rent and torn 150
 Of cruel hands, who with despiteful shame
 Reviling Him, that them most vile became,
 At length Him nailed on a gallow-tree,
 And slew the just by most unjust decree.

Oh huge and most unspeakeable impression
 Of Love's deep wound, that pierc'd the piteous heart
 Of that dear Lord with so entire affection,
 And, sharply lancing every inner part,
 Dolours of death into His soul did dart,
 Doing Him die that never it deserved, 160
 To free His foes, that from His hest had swerved!

What heart can feel least touch of so sore launch,²
 Or thought can think the depth of so dear wound?
 Whose bleeding source their streams yet never
 staunch,
 But still do flow, and freshly still redound,
 To heal the sores of sinful souls unsound,
 And cleanse the guilt of that infected crime,
 Which was enrooted in all fleshly slime.

² Wound.

O blessed Well of Love! O Flower of Grace!
 O glorious Morning-Star! O Lamp of Light! 170
 Most lively image of thy Father's face,
 Eternal King of Glory, Lord of Might,

¹ Named,
called.

Meek Lamb of God, before all worlds behight,¹ 171
How can we Thee requite for all this good?
Or what can prize that Thy most precious blood?

Yet nought Thou ask'st in lieu of all this love,
But love of us, for guerdon of thy pain:
Ah me! what can us less than that behove?
Had He required life for us again,
Had it been wrong to ask His own with gain? 180
He gave us life, He it restored lost;
Then life were least, that us so little cost.

² Cursed.

But He our life hath left unto us free,
Free that was thrall, and blessed that was bann'd;²
Ne ought demands but that we loving be,
As He himself hath lov'd us afore-hand,
And bound thereto with an eternal band,
Him first to love that was so dearly bought,
And next our brethren, to his image wrought.

Him first to love great right and reason is, 190
Who first to us our life and being gave,
And after, when we fared had amiss,
Us wretches from the second death did save;
And last, the food of life, which now we have,
Even He himself, in his dear sacrament,
To feed our hungry souls, unto us lent.

Then next, to love our brethren, that were made
Of that self mould, and that self Maker's hand,
That we, and to the same again shall fade,
Where they shall have like heritage of land, 200
However here on higher steps we stand,
Which also were with self-same price redeemed
That we, however of us light esteemed.

And were they not, yet since that loving Lord 204
 Commanded us to love them for His sake,
 Even for His sake, and for His sacred word,
 Which in His last bequest He to us spake,
 We should them love, and with their needs partake;
 Knowing that, whatsoe'er to them we give,
 We give to Him by whom we all do live. 210

Such mercy He by His most holy rede¹ 1 Precepts.
 Unto us taught, and to approve it true,
 Ensampled it by His most righteous deed,
 Shewing us mercy (miserable crew!)
 That we the like should to the wretches shew,
 And love our brethren; thereby to approve
 How much, Himself that loved us, we love.

Then rouse thyself, O Earth! out of thy soil,
 In which thou wallowest like to filthy swine,
 And dost thy mind in dirty pleasures moil;² 220 2 Defile.
 Unmindful of that dearest Lord of thine;
 Lift up to Him thy heavy clouded eyne,
 That thou this sovereign bounty mayst behold,
 And read, through love, His mercies manifold.

Begin from first, where He encradled was
 In simple cratch,³ wrapt in a wad of hay, 3 Rack,
 Between the toilful ox and humble ass, crib.
 And in what rags, and in how base array,
 The glory of our heavenly riches lay,
 When Him the silly shepherds came to see, 230
 Whom greatest princes sought on lowest knee.

From thence read on the story of His life,
 His humble carriage, His unfaulty ways,

His canker'd foes, His fights, His toil, His strife, 234
 His pains, His poverty, His sharp assays,
 Through which He past His miserable days,
 Offending none, and doing good to all,
 Yet being malic'd¹ both by great and small.

¹ Malign-
ed.

And look at last, how of most wretched wights
 He taken was, betray'd, and false accused; 240
 How with most scornful taunts, and fell despites,
 He was revil'd, disgrac'd, and foul abused; [bruised;
 How scourg'd, how crown'd, how buffeted, how
 And, lastly, how twixt robbers crucified, [side!
 With bitter wounds through hands, through feet, and

Then let thy flinty heart, that feels no pain,
 Empierced be with pitiful remorse,
 And let thy bowels bleed in every vein,
 At sight of His most sacred, heavenly corse,
 So torn and mangled with malicious force; 250
 And let thy soul, whose sins His sorrows wrought,
 Melt into tears, and groan in grieved thought.

With sense whereof, whilst so thy soften'd spirit
 Is inly touch'd and humbled with meek zeal
 Through meditation of His endless merit,
 Lift up thy mind to th' Author of thy weal,
 And to His sovereign mercy do appeal;
 Learn Him to love that loved thee so dear,
 And in thy breast His blessed image bear.

With all thy heart, with all thy soul and mind, 260
 Thou must Him love, and His behests embrace;
 All other loves, with which the world doth blind
 Weak fancies, and stir up affections base,

Thou must renounce and utterly displace, 264
 And give thyself unto Him full and free,
 That full and freely gave Himself to thee.

Then shalt thou feel thy spirit so possést,
 And ravish'd with devouring great desire
 Of His dear self, that shall thy feeble breast
 In flame with love, and set thee all on fire 270
 With burning zeal, through every part entire,
 That in no earthly thing thou shalt delight,
 But in His sweet and amiable sight.

Thenceforth all world's desire will in thee die,
 And all earth's glory, on which men do gaze,
 Seem dirt and dross in thy pure-sighted eye,
 Compar'd to that celestial beauty's blaze,
 Whose glorious beams all fleshly sense doth daze
 With admiration of their passing light,
 Blinding the eyes, and lumining the sprite. 280

Then shall thy ravish'd soul inspired be
 With heavenly thoughts, far above human skill,
 And thy bright radiant eyes shall see
 Th' idea of His pure glory present still
 Before thy face, that all thy spirits shall fill
 With sweet enragement¹ of celestial love,
 Kindled through sight of those fair things above.

¹ Fervent
 admiration.

AN HYMN OF HEAVENLY BEAUTY.

RAPT with the rage of mine own ravish'd thought,
Through contemplation of those goodly sights,
And glorious images in heaven wrought,
Whose wondrous beauty, breathing sweet delights,
Do kindle love in high conceited sprites;
I fain to tell the things that I behold,
But feel my wits to fail, and tongue to fold.

Vouchsafe then, O Thou most Almighty Sprite!
From whom all gifts of wit and knowledge flow,
To shed into my breast some sparkling light 10
Of thine eternal truth, that I may show
Some little beams to mortal eyes below
Of that immortal Beauty, there with Thee,
Which in my weak distraughted mind I see;

That with the glory of so goodly sight
The hearts of men, which fondly here admire
Fair seeming shows, and feed on vain delight,
Transported with celestial desire
Of those fair forms, may lift themselves up higher,
And learn to love, with zealous humble duty, 20
Th' Eternal Fountain of that heavenly Beauty.

Beginning then below, with th' easy view 22
 Of this base world, subject to fleshly eye,
 From thence to mount aloft, by order due,
 To contemplation of th' immortal sky;
 Of the soar falcon¹ so I learn to fly,
 That flags a while her fluttering wings beneath,
 Till she herself for stronger flight can breathe.

¹ A falcon
 of the
 first year.

Then look, who list thy gazeful eyes to feed
 With sight of that is fair, look on the frame 30
 Of this wide universe, and therein reed²
 The endless kinds of creatures which by name
 Thou canst not count, much less their nature's aim;
 All which are made with wondrous wise respect,
 And all with admirable beauty deck'd.

² Consider,
 or per-
 ceive.

First, th' Earth, on adamantine pillars founded
 Amid the Sea, engirt with brasen bands;
 Then th' Air still fitting, but yet firmly bounded
 On every side, with piles of flaming brands,
 Never consum'd, nor quench'd with mortal hands; 40
 And, last, that mighty shining crystal wall,
 Wherewith he hath encompassed this all.

By view whereof it plainly may appear,
 That still as every thing doth upward tend,
 And further is from earth, so still more clear
 And fair it grows, till to his perfect end
 Of purest Beauty it at last ascend;
 Air more than water, fire much more than air,
 And heaven than fire, appears more pure and fair.

Look thou no further, but affix thine eye 50
 On that bright shiny round still moving mass,

The house of blessed God, which men call Sky, 52
 All sow'd with glist'ring stars more thick than grass,
 Whereof each other doth in brightness pass,
 But those two most, which, ruling night and day,
 As king and queen, the heavens' empire sway;

And tell me then, what hast thou ever seen
 That to their beauty may compared be,
 Or can the sight that is most sharp and keen
 Endure their captain's flaming head to see? 60
 How much less those, much higher in degree,
 And so much fairer, and much more than these,
 As these are fairer than the land and seas?

For far above these heavens, which here we see,
 Be others far exceeding these in light,
 Not bounded, not corrupt, as these same be,
 But infinite in largeness and in height,
 Unmoving, uncorrupt, and spotless bright,
 That need no sun t' illuminate their spheres,
 But their own native light far passing theirs. 70

And as these heavens still by degrees arise,
 Until they come to their first mover's bound,
 That in his mighty compass doth comprise,
 And carry all the rest with him around;
 So those likewise do by degrees redound,
 And rise more fair, till they at last arrive
 To the most fair, whereto they all do strive.

Fair is the heaven where happy souls have place,
 In full enjoyment of felicity,
 Whence they do still behold the glorious face 80
 Of the Divine Eternal Majesty;

More fair is that, where those Idees on high 82
 Enranged be, which Plato so admired,
 And pure Intelligences from God inspired.

Yet fairer is that heaven, in which do reign
 The sovereign Powers and mighty Potentates,
 Which in their high protections do contain
 All mortal princes and imperial states ;
 And fairer yet, whereas the royal Seats
 And heavenly Dominations are set, 90
 From whom all earthly governance is fet.¹

¹ Fetched.

Yet far more fair be those bright Cherubins,
 Which all with golden wings are overdight,
 And those eternal burning Seraphins,
 Which from their faces dart out fiery light ;
 Yet fairer than they both, and much more bright,
 Be th' Angels and Archangels, which attend
 On God's own person, without rest or end.

These thus in fair each other far excelling,
 As to the Highest they approach more near, 100
 Yet is that Highest far beyond all telling,
 Fairer than all the rest which there appear,
 Though all their beauties join'd together were ;
 How then can mortal tongue hope to express
 The image of such endless perfectness ?

Cease then, my tongue! and lend unto my mind
 Leave to bethink how great that Beauty is,
 Whose outmost parts so beautiful I find ;
 How much more those essential parts of His,
 His truth, His love, His wisdom, and His bliss, 110
 His grace, His doom, His mercy, and His might,
 By which He lends us of himself a sight!

Those unto all He daily doth display, 113
 And shew himself in th' image of His grace,
 As in a looking-glass, through which He may
 Be seen of all His creatures vile and base,
 That are unable else to see His face,
 His glorious face! which glistereth else so bright,
 That th' angels' selves cannot endure His sight.

But we, frail wights! whose sight cannot sustain 120
 The sun's bright beams when he on us doth shine,
 But that their points rebutted back again
 Are dull'd, how can we see with feeble eyne
 The glory of that Majesty Divine,
 In sight of whom both sun and moon are dark,
 Compared to His least resplendent spark?

The means, therefore, which unto us is lent
 Him to behold, is on His works to look,
 Which He hath made in beauty excellent,
 And in the same, as in a brazen book, 130
 To read enregister'd in every nook
 His goodness, which His Beauty doth declare;
 For all that's good is beautiful and fair.

¹ Plume.

Thence gathering plumes of perfect speculation,
 To imp¹ the wings of thy high flying mind,
 Mount up aloft through heavenly contemplation,
 From this dark world, whose damps the soul do blind,
 And, like the native brood of eagle's kind,
 On that bright Sun of Glory fix thine eyes,
 Clear'd from gross mists of frail infirmities. 140

Humbled with fear and awful reverence,
 Before the footstool of His Majesty

Throw thyself down, with trembling innocence, 143
 Ne dare look up with corruptible eye
 On the dread face of that Great Deity,
 For fear, lest if He chance to look on thee,
 Thou turn to nought, and quite confounded be.

But lowly fall before His mercy seat,
 Close covered with the Lamb's integrity
 From the just wrath of His avengeful threat 150
 That sits upon the righteous throne on high;
 His throne is built upon Eternity,
 More firm and durable than steel or brass,
 Or the hard diamond, which them both doth pass.

His sceptre is the rod of Righteousness,
 With which He bruiseeth all His foes to dust,
 And the great Dragon strongly doth repress,
 Under the rigour of His judgment just;
 His seat is Truth, to which the faithful trust,
 From whence proceed her beams so pure and bright,
 That all about Him sheddeth glorious light: 161

Light, far exceeding that bright blazing spark
 Which darted is from Titan's flaming head,
 That with his beams enlumineth the dark
 And dampish air, whereby all things are red;¹
 Whose nature yet so much is marvelled
 Of mortal wits, that it doth much amaze
 The greatest wisards² which thereon do gaze.

¹ Per-
ceived.

² Wise
men.

But that immortal light, which there doth shine,
 Is many thousand times more bright, more clear, 170
 More excellent, more glorious, more divine,
 Through which to God all mortal actions here,

And even the thoughts of men, do plain appear; 173
 For from th' Eternal Truth it doth proceed,
 Through heavenly virtue which her beams do breed.

With the great glory of that wondrous light
 His throne is all encompassed around,
 And hid in His own brightness from the sight
 Of all that look thereon with eyes unsound;
 And underneath His feet are to be found 180
 Thunder, and lightning, and tempestuous fire,
 The instruments of His avenging ire.

There in His bosom Sapience doth sit,
 The sovereign darling of the Deity,
 Clad like a queen in royal robes, most fit
 For so great power and peerless majesty,
 And all with gems and jewels gorgeously
 Adorn'd, that brighter than the stars appear,
 And make her native brightness seem more clear.

And on her head a crown of purest gold 190
 Is set, in sign of highest sovereignty;
 And in her hand a sceptre she doth hold,
 With which she rules the house of God on high,
 And manageth the ever-moving sky,
 And in the same these lower creatures all
 Subjected to her power imperial.

Both heaven and earth obey unto her will,
 And all the creatures which they both contain;
 For of her fulness which the world doth fill
 They all partake, and do in state remain 200
 As their great Maker did at first ordain,
 Through observation of her high behest,
 By which they first were made, and still increast.

The fairness of her face no tongue can tell; 204
 For she the daughters of all women's race,
 And angels eke, in beauty doth excel,
 Sparkled on her from God's own glorious face,
 And more increas'd by her own goodly grace,
 That it doth far exceed all human thought,
 Ne can on earth compared be to ought. 210

Ne could that painter (had he lived yet)
 Which pictured Venus with so curious quill,
 That all posterity admired it,
 Have pourtray'd this, for all his mast'ring skill;
 Ne she herself, had she remained still,
 And were as fair as fabling wits do feign,
 Could once come near this Beauty sovereign.

But had those wits, the wonders of their days,
 Or that sweet Teian poet,¹ which did spend 220
 His plenteous vein in setting forth her praise,
 Seen but a glimpse of this which I pretend,
 How wondrously would he her face commend;
 Above that idol of his feigning thought,
 That all the world should with his rhymes be fraught!

¹ Ana-
creon.

How then dare I, the novice of his art,
 Presume to picture so divine a wight,
 Or hope t' express her least perfection's part,
 Whose beauty fills the heavens with her light,
 And darks the earth with shadow of her sight?
 Ah, gentle Muse! thou art too weak and faint 230
 The portrait of so heavenly hue to paint.

Let angels, which her goodly face behold
 And see at will, her sovereign praises sing,

And those most sacred mysteries unfold 234
 Of that fair love of Mighty Heaven's King;
 Enough is me t' admire so heavenly thing,
 And, being thus with her huge love possest,
 In th' only wonder of herself to rest.

But whoso may, thrice happy man him hold,
 Of all on earth whom God so much doth grace, 240
 And lets his own Beloved to behold;
 For in the view of her celestial face
 All joy, all bliss, all happiness have place;
 Ne ought on earth can want unto the wight
 Who of herself can win the wishful sight.

For she, out of her secret treasury,
 Plenty of riches forth on him will pour,
 Even heavenly riches, which there hidden lie
 Within the closet of her chastest bower,
 Th' eternal portion of her precious dower, 250
 Which Mighty God hath given to her free,
 And to all those which thereof worthy be.

None thereof worthy be, but those whom she
 Vouchsafeth to her presence to receive,
 And letteth them her lovely face to see,
 Whereof such wondrous pleasures they conceive,
 And sweet contentment, that it doth bereave
 Their soul of sense, through infinite delight,
 And then transport from flesh into the sprite.

In which they see such admirable things, 260
 As carries them into an extasy,
 And hear such heavenly notes and carollings
 Of God's high praise, that fills the brazen sky;

And feel such joy and pleasure inwardly, 264
 That maketh them all worldly cares forget,
 And only think on that before them set.

Ne from thenceforth doth any fleshly sense,
 Or idle thought of earthly things, remain;
 But all that erst¹ seem'd sweet seems now offence, ¹ Before.
 And all that pleased erst now seems to pain: 270
 Their joy, their comfort, their desire, their gain,
 Is fixed all on that which now they see;
 All other sights but feigned shadows be.

And that fair lamp which useth to inflame
 The hearts of men with self-consuming fire,
 Thenceforth seems foul, and full of sinful blame;
 And all that pomp to which proud minds aspire
 By name of Honour, and so much desire,
 Seems to them baseness, and all riches dross,
 And all mirth sadness, and all lucre loss. 280

So full their eyes are of that glorious sight,
 And senses fraught with such satiety,
 That in nought else on earth they can delight,
 But in th' aspect of that felicity,
 Which they have written in their inward eye;
 On which they feed, and in their fast'ned mind
 All happy joy and full contentment find.

Ah, then, my hungry soul! which long hast fed
 On idle fancies of thy foolish thought,
 And, with false Beauty's flatt'ring bait misled, 290
 Hast after vain deceitful shadows sought,
 Which all are fled, and now have left thee nought
 But late repentance through thy folly's prief;²
 Ah! cease to gaze on matter of thy grief:

² Proof.

And look at last up to that Sovereign Light, 295
From whose pure beams all perfect Beauty springs,
That kindleth love in every godly sprite,
Even the love of God; which loathing brings
Of this vile world and these gay-seeming things;
With whose sweet pleasures being so possest, 300
Thy straying thoughts henceforth for ever rest.

THE END.

EXPLANATION OF CLASSICAL ALLUSIONS IN THIS VOLUME.

Achilles—The celebrated Grecian hero ; son of Peleus and Thetis.

Acidalian brook—In Bœotia, sacred to Venus.

Adonis—Son of Cinyras, and favourite of Venus.

Æacus—Son of Jupiter and the nymph Ægina.

Æneas—A Trojan prince, son of Anchises and the goddess Venus ; one of the heroes of the Trojan War.

Ætnean Cyclops—A race of men of gigantic structure who inhabited a portion of Sicily near Mount Ætna.

Agamemnon—King of Mycenæ, and one of the heroes of the Trojan war.

Agave—Daughter of Cadmus, who is said to have killed her husband in celebrating the orgies of Bacchus.

Alceste—Daughter of Pelius, married Admetus.

Alcides—Hercules.

Alcmena—Daughter of Electryon, king of Argos, and wife of Amphitryon.

Alcon—A silversmith.

Amaranthus—A flower which preserves its bloom when plucked

and dried ; emblem of immortality.

Andromeda—Daughter of Cepheus, king of Ethiopia, who was condemned by Neptune to be devoured by a sea-monster, but who was saved by Perseus.

Apollo—God of music, poetry, &c.

Argoan ship—The famous ship Argo, which bore the Argonauts in search of the Golden Fleece.

Argolic—Grecian.

Arion—The man who charmed the dolphins with music.

Assyrian lioness—The Assyrian and Chaldæan Empire. See Dan. vii. 4.

Astræa—A goddess who left the world when man fell.

Atalanta—A daughter of Schœnus, king of Cyrus, who determined to live in celibacy, but being much courted, resolved to race with her lovers, the winner to marry her.

Athos—A mountain of Macedonia.

Aurora—The goddess of the morning.

Ausonia—One of the ancient names of Italy.

Bacchus—The god of wine.

Bætus—A foolish poet of Tarsus.

Cadmus—Son of Agenor, king of Phœnicia, who was the first to introduce the use of letters in Greece.

Caduceus—A rod entwined at one end by two serpents; the attribute of Mercury.

Calliope—One of the Muses, who presided over eloquence and heroic poetry.

Camillus—A celebrated Roman, called a second Romulus, from having restored his country after the invasion of the Gauls.

Caphareus—A lofty mountain and promontory of Eubœa.

Castaly—A fountain of Parnassus, sacred to the Muses.

*Centaur*s—A people of Thessaly, half-man and half-horse.

Cerberus—A dog, or monster, with three heads, which guarded the gates of hell.

Ceres—The goddess of Agriculture.

Charlemain—Charlemagne, deified in the constellation of Ursa Major.

Charon—A god of hell, son of Erebus and Nox, who ferried across souls.

Charybdis—A dangerous whirlpool on the coast of Sicily, which proved fatal to part of the fleet of Ulysses: over against Scylla.

Chimæra—A celebrated monster, who had three heads—that of a lion, a goat, and a dragon.

Cimmerii—A people inhabiting a country on the western coast of Italy, which was so gloomy that, when indicating a great obscurity, the expression of *Cimmerian darkness* has proverbially been used.

Cloto—One of the Fates.

Colchid mother—Medea, the wife of Jason.

Cupid—The god of love.

Curius—Dentatus, an illustrious Roman who vanquished the Samnites, Sabines, and Pyrrhus.

Curtius—A Roman youth who sacrificed his life by throwing himself into a gap in the earth, which had suddenly opened under the Forum, in order that it might close, according to the dictum of the oracle.

Cyclops—The one-eyed giants of Sicily.

Cycones—A fierce people in Sicily, who affrighted Ulysses on his return from Troy.

Cynthia—The moon.

Cytheræa—A surname of Venus.

Daphne—A daughter of the river Peneus, by the goddess Terra, of whom Phœbus became enamoured.

Decii—Celebrated Romans, father, son, and grandson, who devoted themselves to the infernal deities for the good of their country.

Demophoon—Son of Theseus and Phædra, and king of Athens.

Diana—The goddess of hunting.

Dodonian tree—An old oak tree in Dodona, which the people frequently consulted, and from which they pretended to receive oracles.

Dolon—A Trojan, famous for his swiftness.

Dryades—Nymphs that presided over the woods.

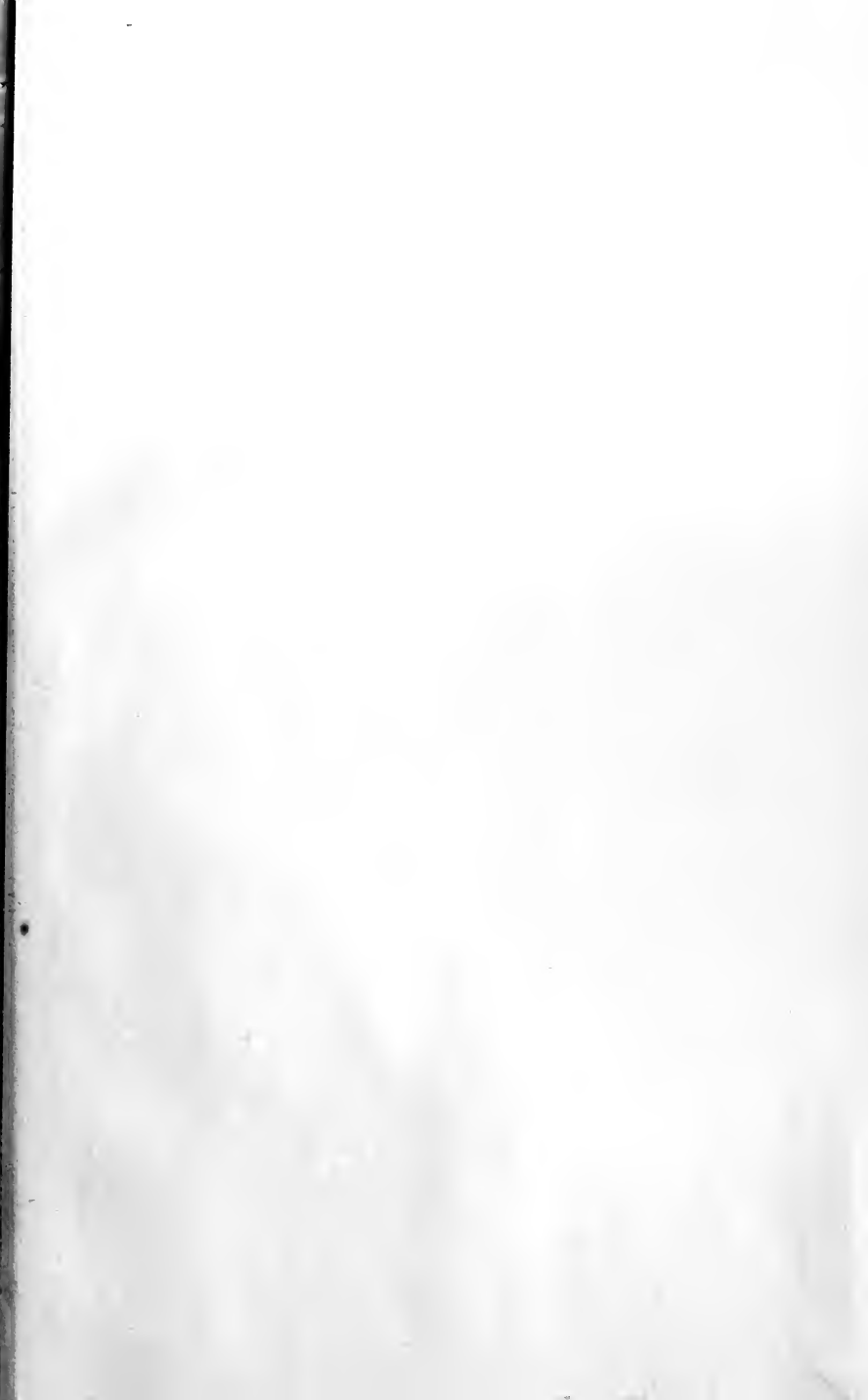
Elysian fields—An island in the future world of the ancients,

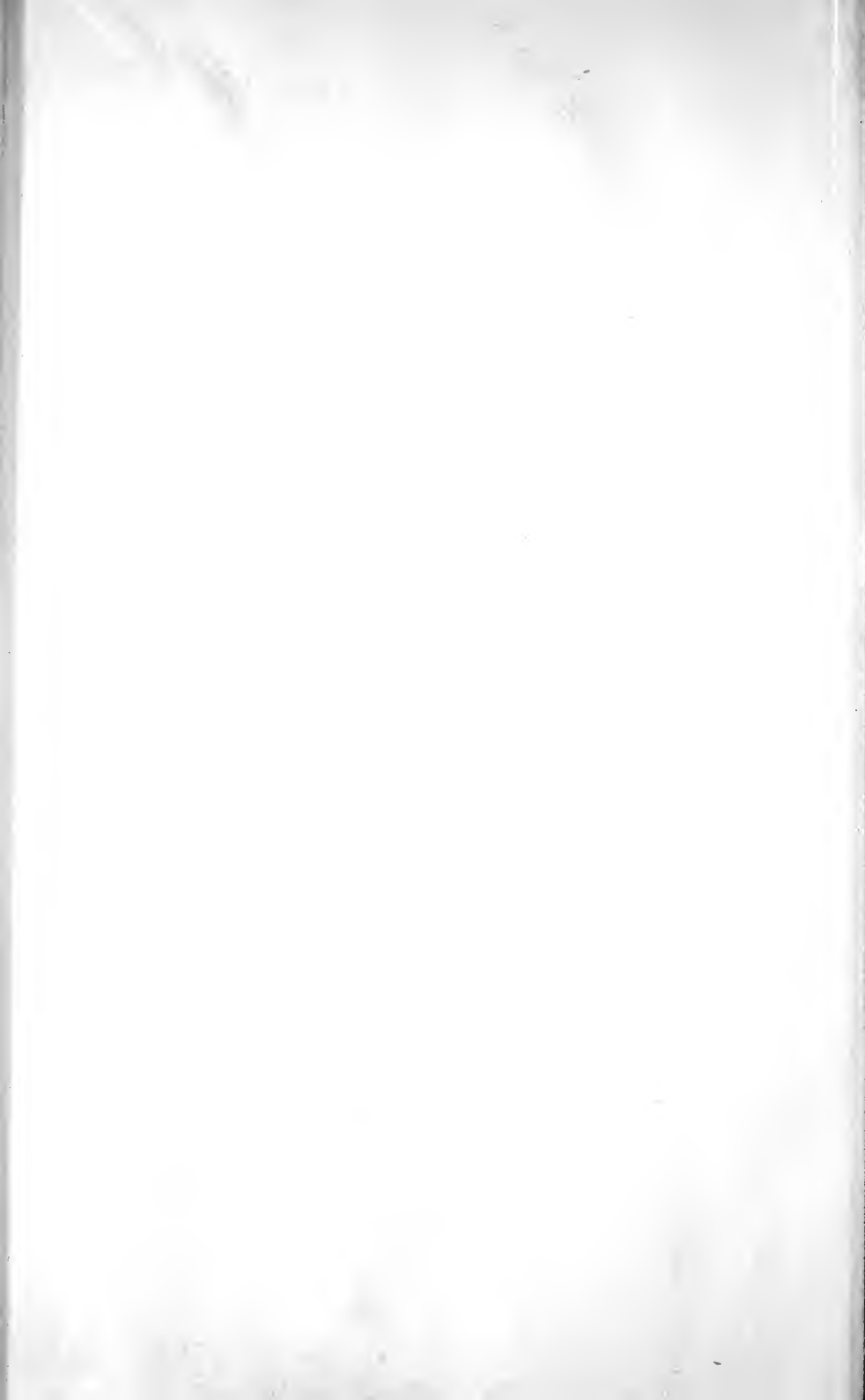
- where, according to the mythology of the ancients, the souls of the virtuous were placed after death.
- Ephialtes*—A giant, who grew nine inches every month. He was one of twins—Othus being his brother. They were called Aloceides, from their supposed father, Aloeus, (although some call Ephialtes a son of Neptune), killed by Apollo.
- Erebus*—An infernal deity, son of Chaos and Nox; also a river of hell.
- Erichthonian tower*—Troy.
- Erynneis*—One of the Eumenides, the furies of the ancients.
- Euboic cliffs*—In Eubœa, a large island in the Ægean Sea.
- Eurydice*—Wife of the poet Orpheus.
- Fabii*—The various distinguished Romans of the name of Fabius.
- Fatal imps*—The Fates.
- Fatal sisters*—Fates: Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos.
- Flaminius*—A celebrated Roman, who was trained in the art of war against Hannibal.
- Grecian leopard*—Alexander the Great, see Dan. vii.
- Hæmony*—A river of Arcadia; the same name with that precious plant which Mercury gave to Ulysses to protect him from enchantment. See 'Comus' (in our Edition), p. 149.
- Hebe*—A daughter of Jupiter and Juno; the goddess of youth.
- Hebrus*—A river of Thrace, into which the head of Orpheus was thrown.
- Hector*—Son of Priam, bulwark of Troy.
- Helicon*—A mountain of Bœotia, sacred to the Muses.
- Hellespont*—A narrow strait between Asia and Europe, which received its name from Helle, who was drowned there.
- Hercæan shores*—A fictitious place. 'No such shores are in *rerum natura*.'—*Jortin*.
- Hercules*—Son of Jupiter and Alcmena, famous for his strength and twelve labours.
- Herebus*—See Erebus.
- Hesperus*—The evening star.
- Horatii*—Three brave Romans, born at the same birth, who fought and conquered the three Curiatii, B.C. 667 years.
- Hymen*—The god of marriage among the Greeks.
- Hyperion*—A son of Cœlus and Terra; a name of the sun.
- Ida*—A celebrated mountain in the neighbourhood of Troy.
- Inachus*—Son of Oceanus and Tethys; founder of the royal race of Argolis; father of Io.
- Irus*—A beggar of Ithaca, who executed the foul commissions of Penelope's suitors.
- Itis*—Son of Tereus, by Prœne, daughter of Pandion, who was killed by his mother when he was about six years old, and served up before his father.
- Ixion*—The son of Phlegyas, who was fastened to a wheel perpetually turning round, for boasting that he had lain with Juno.
- Janus*—The famous two-faced god of Rome; the god of passages and doors.

- Jove*—Son of Saturn; father of gods and men.
- Juno*—Goddess of heaven.
- Lastrygonēs*—The most ancient inhabitants of Sicily, who sunk the ships of Ulysses and devoured his companions.
- Lapithees*—The grandchildren of Lapithus, who quarrelled with the Centaurs at a festival.
- Latmian shepherd*—Endymion.
- Ladona*—A daughter of Cœus, the Titan, who granted favours to Jupiter.
- Leander*—A youth of Abydos, famous for his amours with Hero, and for swimming across the Hellespont.
- Leda*—Wife of Tyndarus, king of Sparta, who was deceived by Jupiter coming to her embrace in the form of a swan.
- Lethe*—One of the rivers of hell.
- Linus*—The third son of Ismenius, taught music to Hercules, who, in a fit of anger, struck him with his lyre, and killed him.
- Lisippus*—A famous statuary, contemporary of Alexander.
- Maia*—A daughter of Atlas and Pleione; one of the Pleiades.
- Marcellus*—A famous Roman general, who fought against Hannibal.
- Mausolus*—A king of Caira, whose wife Artemisia was so disconsolate at his death, that she drank up his ashes, and resolved to erect to his memory one of the grandest monuments of antiquity; hence the word *Mausoleum*.
- Medusa*—One of the three Gorgons, remarkable for the beauty of her locks, which Minerva turned into serpents. The other two were Stheno and Euryale.
- Megæra*—One of the furies, daughter of Nox and Acheron.
- Mercury*—The messenger of the gods.
- Minos*—A king of Crete, who was rewarded after death with the office of supreme and absolute judge of the infernal regions.
- Minotaurs*—Monsters, half-man and half-horse.
- Mutius*—A young Roman, who laid his hand on an altar of burning coal, to prove to Porsenna, king of Etruria, the fortitude of himself and countrymen.
- Naiades*—Water nymphs.
- Narcissus*—A youth who, gazing at himself in a fountain, was turned into a yellow flower, which still bears his name.
- Nereus*—A sea-deity, father of the Nereides.
- Nictileus*—Husband of Agave, the daughter of Cadmus.
- Ninus*—The warlike son of Belos, who founded the Assyrian monarchy.
- Octavius*—A poet in the Augustan age, intimate with Horace.
- Edipus*—A son of Laius, king of Thebes, and of Jocasta.
- Elæan wood*—In Ætolia, a country supposed to be about the centre of Greece.
- Oeta*—A celebrated mountain between Thessaly and Macedonia, upon which Hercules burnt himself.
- Othus*—Brother of Ephialtes.
- Orpheus*—The god of music.
- Pactolus*—A river in Lydia, in which Midas washed himself when he turned into gold whatever he touched.

- Pales*—The goddess of sheep-folds and of pastures among the Romans.
- Palici*—Two deities, sons of Jupiter by Thalia.
- Panchæa*—A part of Arabia Felix, celebrated for the myrrh, frankincense, and perfumes, which it produced.
- Pandora*—A celebrated woman, the first mortal female that ever lived. According to the poet Hesiod, she opened a certain box, whence all evils rushed out.
- Parnassus*—A mountain in Phocis, famous for a temple of Apollo, and for being a favourite residence of the Muses.
- Pegasus*—A winged horse, belonging to Apollo and the Muses.
- Peleus*—A king of Thessaly, who married Thetis, one of the Nereids, and was the only one among mortals who married an immortal. He was father of Achilles.
- Penelope*—The wife of Ulysses.
- Peneus*—A river of Thessaly.
- Persephone*—A daughter of Ceres, called also Proserpine.
- Perseus*—A son of Philip, king of Macedonia.
- Persian bear*—The Persian empire under Cyrus. See Dan. vii.
- Phæton*—The son of Apollo, who was hurled from the chariot of the sun.
- Philomele*—A daughter of Pandion, king of Athens, who was ravished by Tereus, king of Thrace, and afterwards changed into a nightingale.
- Philumene*—The nightingale.
- Phlegethon*—A boiling river of hell.
- Phlegræan ground*—In Macedonia, where Jove overthrew the giants.
- Phœbus*—See Apollo.
- Pierian*—From Pierus in Thessaly, sacred to the Muses; hence ‘Pierian springs.’
- Pierian sisters*—The Muses.
- Pluto and Proserpine*—King and queen of hell.
- Proteus*—God of the sea, remarkable for versatility of form.
- Rhæsus*—A king of Thrace, destroyed by Ulysses.
- Sacred sisters*—The Muses.
- Satryi*—Demigods of the country, represented as part man and part goat, and extremely wanton; attendants of Bacchus.
- Saturn*—Son of Cœlus by Terra, and father of Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto.
- Scipio*—A celebrated family at Rome, who obtained the greatest honours in the republic.
- Scylla*—A sea-deity, who was changed by Circe into a monster, and who, on perceiving her deformity, threw herself into the sea on the coast of Sicily, and was turned into the dangerous rocks which still bear her name.
- Simois*—A river of Troas, celebrated by Homer.
- Sisyphus*—A god in hell, compelled for ever to roll a large stone up a mountain.
- Strymonian*—From Strymon, a district in Thrace.
- Tantalus*—King of Lydia, and son of Jupiter; represented by the poets as punished in hell with an insatiate thirst, and placed up to the chin in a pool of water, which, however, flows away on his attempting to taste it.

- Tartar*—Tartarus or hell.
- Tartarus*—One of the regions of hell, where the most impious and guilty of mankind were punished.
- Telamon*—A king of the island of Salonnis; son of Æacus.
- Tempe*—A valley in Thessaly, described by the poets as being the most delightful spot on the earth.
- Thetis*—One of the sea-deities, daughter of Nereus and Dores.
- Timon*—A native of Athens, called Misanthrope, from his unconquerable aversion to mankind. See Shakspeare's celebrated play.
- Tirynthian groom*—Hercules.
- Tisiphone*—One of the Furies.
- Titan*—The sun.
- Tithonis*—The god of the dawn.
- Tityus*—Or Tityon, a monstrous giant, who, attempting to violate Diana, was cast down into hell, where two vultures fastened on his liver.
- Tityus*—A celebrated giant, son of Terra, who, on attempting to offer violence to Latona, was killed by her children.
- Triptolemus*—A son of Oceanus and Terra, who was taught agriculture by the goddess Ceres.
- Triton*—God of the sea.
- Turnus*—A king of the Rutuli, killed in single combat by Æneas.
- Typhæus*—A famous giant, son of Tartarus and Terra, who had a hundred heads like that of a serpent or a dragon.
- Venus*—Daughter of Jove, wedded to Vulcan; goddess of love, beauty, &c.
- Vesper*—The evening star.
- Vulcan*—The god of fire, and the patron of all artists who worked in iron and metals.
- Ulysses*—A king of the islands of Ithaca and Dulichium, and the hero of the Odyssey.
- Xanthus*—A river of Troas, in Asia Minor.
- Zephyrus*—Son of Æolus and Aurora; the west wind.









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Spenser, Edmund
Poetical works

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