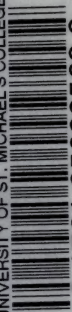


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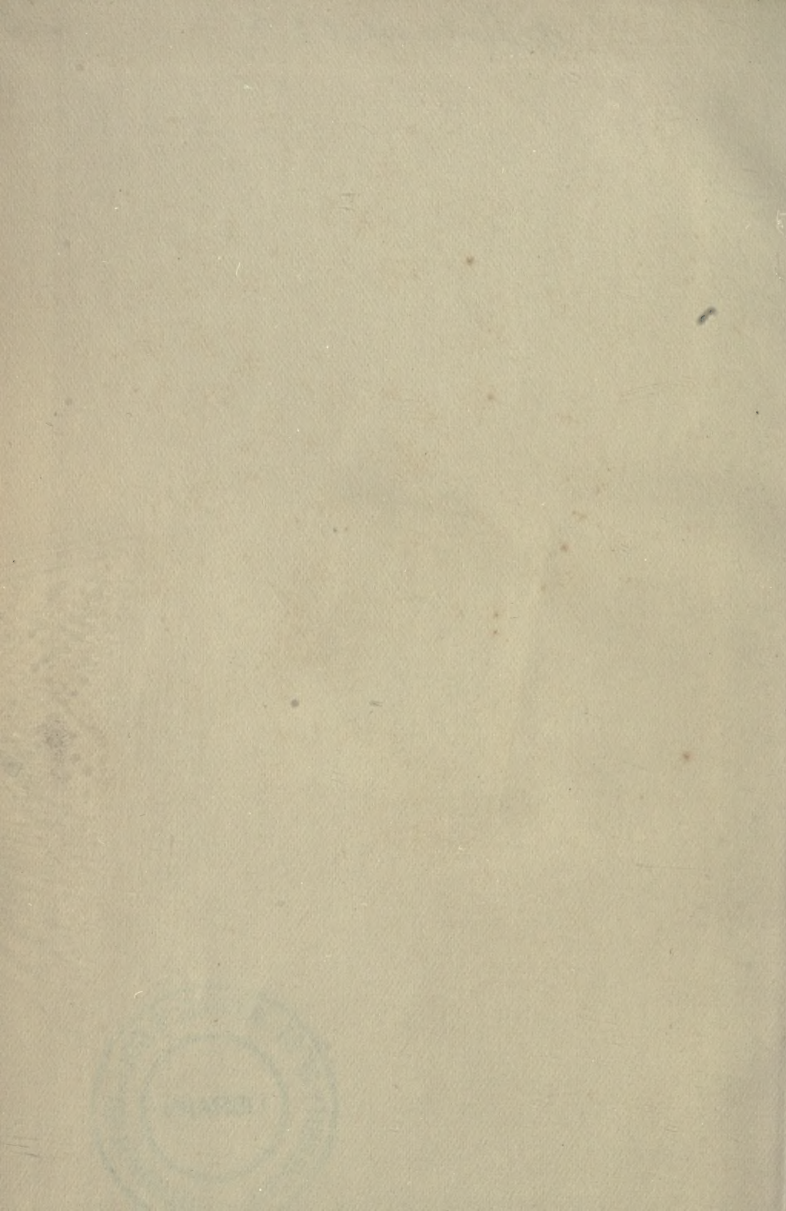
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DRYDEN
ABSALOM & ACHITOPHEL

EDITED BY

W. D. CHRISTIE

FIFTH EDITION

REVISED BY

C. H. FIRTH



OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1911

DRYDEN

ABSALOM & ACHITOPHEL

LONDON

W. D. CHRISTIE

NEW YORK

HENRY FROWDE, M.A.

PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

LONDON, EDINBURGH, NEW YORK

TORONTO AND MELBOURNE



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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE Editor of this volume has published within the last twelvemonth an edition of Dryden's Poems,—one of Messrs. Macmillan's Globe Series,—with a carefully revised text, the result of a labour of some duration. The Globe edition of Dryden's Poems contains more than a hundred corrections of the text as presented in Sir Walter Scott's edition, or that of Mr. Robert Bell in his series of the English Poets. In the portion of Dryden's Poems published in this volume the text is the same as that of the Globe edition; and there are some forty corrections within the compass of these Poems. The Notes to this volume contain a suggestion of one new correction which I have not embodied in the text, not feeling absolutely sure about it; but I think it probable that the words *Caledonian* and *Caledon*, which have come down to us from Dryden in 'The Hind and the Panther' (Part I. line 14, and Part III. line 3), were intended by him to be *Calydonian* and *Calydon*.

The Biography prefixed to this volume is of necessity in much part a repetition of the longer Memoir at the beginning of the *Globe* edition. Since the publication of the latter I have satisfied myself by additional information obtained from Trinity College, Cambridge, that the story of Dryden's continued residence at Cambridge till 1657 is a mistake, and that he ceased to reside there in 1654 or early in 1655.

W. D. C.

32 DORSET SQUARE, LONDON,

February 1871.

In this second edition I have been able to make an interesting addition to the note at p. xvi. as to Dryden at Trinity College.

W. D. C.

October, 1873.

In this fifth edition the notes have been revised, some additional notes added, and some errors corrected. New notes and material alterations in the old notes are marked by an asterisk.

C. H. F.

October, 1892.

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NOTE

This edition of *Absalom and Achitophel* is taken from the fifth edition of the *Selections* edited by W. D. Christie, as revised by C. H. Firth ; the prefaces, introduction, and glossary are here printed in their entirety.

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

THE poetry and authorship of Dryden cover a period of more than half a century. His first poem was written in youth, within a few months after the execution of Charles the First, and his last a few days before death, within not many months of the death of William the Third and the accession of Anne to the throne. 'Glorious John Dryden,' or 'Glorious John,' as Sir Walter Scott christened him, is the great literary figure of the forty years that follow the Restoration. Dryden was born only fifteen years, and his first poem was written only thirty-three years, after the death of Shakespeare. It is strange to find Dryden deliberately writing in 1672 that the English language had been so changed since Shakespeare wrote, that any one then reading his plays, or Fletcher's, or Jonson's, and comparing them with what had been written since the Restoration, would see the change 'almost in every line^a.' There are frequent careless statements and hasty generalizations in Dryden's critical dissertations, which were mostly composed rapidly for particular occasions, and there may be exaggeration in this assertion, but it probably contains more truth than exaggeration. Milton, born eight years before Shakespeare's death, was Dryden's senior by twenty-three

Is this true?

^a Defence of the Epilogue to the Second Part of 'The Conquest of Granada.'

years, and 'Paradise Lost' was published in 1669, the year before that in which Dryden received the appointment of poet laureate, succeeding Davenant, the author of 'Gondibert,' and Dryden's co-operator in a versified abridgment and debasement of 'Paradise Lost.' Milton died in 1674, unhonoured by the multitude, when Dryden was at the height of his dramatic popularity, and is spoken of as 'the good and famous poet' by the cultivated Evelyn^b. A quarter of a century later Dryden had a splendid public funeral. Cowley, who was Dryden's superior in the imaginative faculty, and who, like Dryden after him, had had a fame unjustly superior to Milton's during his life, had died in 1667. The poetry of Cowley had been a favourite reading of Dryden's youth. He speaks of Cowley, in several passages of his prose writings, with the respect due to a master, and says on one occasion that his authority is 'almost sacred' to him^c. Before the end of the seventeenth century, the popularity of Cowley had disappeared^d, and no traces of the influence of his metaphysical style are to be discovered in any of Dryden's poems later than the 'Annus Mirabilis' of 1666. Denham and Waller, two poets of humbler order, had, while Dryden was young, produced smooth and harmonious poems, and contributed to the improvement of verse; and it remained for Dryden to advance this work, and bring metrical harmony to perfection in his own poems, and, during forty years after the Restoration, of various writing in prose and in verse, to give precision and purity and new wealth and capability to the English language.

^b Evelyn's Diary, June 27, 1674.

^c Essay on Heroic Plays, prefixed to the First Part of 'The Conquest of Granada.'

^d In the Preface to the 'Fables,' written in 1699, Dryden wrote of Cowley: 'Though he must always be thought a great poet, he is no longer esteemed a good writer; and for ten impressions which his works have had in so many successive years, yet at present a hundred books are scarcely purchased once a twelvemonth; for, as my last Lord Rochester said, though somewhat profanely, "Not being of God, he could not stand."''

John Dryden was born on the 9th of August, 1631^e, at Aldwinckle, a village in Northamptonshire, which was also the birthplace of the Church historian, Thomas Fuller. Both his parents belonged to Northamptonshire families of distinction. His father, Erasmus Dryden, the third son of Sir Erasmus Dryden, Baronet, of Canons Ashby, was a Justice of the Peace for Northamptonshire. The Drydens were all Puritans and Commonwealthmen. Sir Erasmus Dryden, who died in 1632, the year after the birth of his celebrated grandson, was sent to prison, but a few years before his death in old age, for refusing to pay loan-money to Charles the First. To this event Dryden refers in his Epistle to his cousin John Driden of Chesterton^f, Member for Huntingdonshire, whose public spirit he compares with their common grandfather's:—

‘Such was your generous grandsire, free to grant
In Parliaments that weighed their Prince’s want,
But so tenacious of the common cause
As not to lend the king against his laws;
And in a loathsome dungeon doomed to lie,
In bonds retained his birthright liberty,
And shamed oppression till it set him free.’

The old man was liberated on the eve of the general election for Charles the First’s third Parliament in 1628. Sir John

* The year of Dryden’s birth is incorrectly given as 1632 in the inscription on the monument in Westminster Abbey.

^f Malone and some other biographers have said much about the spelling of Dryden’s name, and represented that he early in life deliberately changed the spelling from *Driden* to *Dryden*; and Malone has made a statement, which appears to be totally without authority, that the poet gave offence to his uncle, Sir John, by this change of spelling. The spelling of names was very variable in Dryden’s time, and I believe there is nothing more than accident in the variations of spelling of his name: *Dryden*, *Driden*, and also *Dreyden* and *Dreydon* occur. Dryden’s name is spelt *Driden* on title-pages of his works after the Restoration, and in one instance (“*Astræa Redux*”) as late as 1688. I follow other biographers and editors in preserving the spelling *Driden* for the name of his cousin John, to whom he addressed the beautiful poetical epistle, on account of convenience of distinction.

Dryden, successor to Sir Erasmus, and Dryden's uncle, inherited the Puritan zeal. Dryden's mother was Mary, daughter of the Reverend Henry Pickering, rector of Aldwinckle All Saints from 1597 till his death in 1637. The Pickerings were near neighbours of the Drydens, and the two families were connected by marriage before the union of the poet's parents, a daughter of Sir Erasmus Dryden having married Sir John Pickering, Knight, the elder brother of the rector of Aldwinckle. Sir Gilbert Pickering, the son and successor of Sir John, was thus doubly related to Dryden. Sir Gilbert, having been made a baronet by Charles the First, became a Cromwellite, and held high office during the Protectorate; he was Chamberlain to Oliver Cromwell, and High Steward of Westminster, and one of the so-called peers of Cromwell's second Chamber of 1658, and afterwards one of Richard Cromwell's chief advisers.

The marriage of Erasmus Dryden and Mary Pickering took place on the 21st of October 1630, in the church of Pilton, a village near Aldwinckle. The poet was their first child, the eldest of a family of fourteen. A room in the parsonage-house at Aldwinckle All Saints is shown as his birthplace. This tradition, which has been maintained uninterruptedly from Dryden's time till now, is unsupported by positive evidence, but as it necessitates only the probable supposition that his mother was on a visit to her parents at the time of the birth of her first child, there is no reason for not accepting it.

Of the early life of Dryden very little is known. His father possessed a small property at Blakesley in the neighbourhood of Canons Ashby, the seat of the Drydens, and of Tichmarch the seat of the Pickerings. A monument erected in Tichmarch church to his memory, by his cousin Mrs. Creed, has an inscription which boasts that 'he was bred and had his first learning here.' But the best part of his education was obtained at Westminster, under Dr. Busby. He entered the school as a King's Scholar, but in what year is not known. He retained through life a pleasant remembrance of his Westminster days, and a great respect for Dr.

Busby, to whom in 1693 he dedicated his translation of the Fifth Satire of Persius. He says in the Dedication that he had received from Dr. Busby 'the first and truest taste of Persius.' Two of his sons were educated at Westminster under the same head-master, Dr. Busby. He remembered to the last, but without resentment, Dr. Busby's floggings. In one of his latest letters, written in 1699 to Charles Montague, Chancellor of the Exchequer, when sending for his inspection some poems before publication, he speaks of having corrected and re-corrected them, and he says, 'I am now in fear that I have purged them out of their spirit, as our Master Busby used to whip a boy so long till he made him a confirmed blockhead.' Charles Montagu had been educated at Westminster, but he was thirty years younger than Dryden, and might have been at the school with Dryden's sons.

In 1650 Dryden left Westminster with a scholarship, for Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1649 he had written his first poem, which gave little promise of the smoothness and harmony of versification to which he afterwards attained. Lord Hastings, the subject of it, the eldest son of the Earl of Huntingdon, had been educated at Westminster, and his rare attainments had raised among his friends high hopes of future eminence. When these hopes were destroyed by his untimely death from small pox, when he was just of age, in 1649, the event was lamented in as many as thirty-three elegies by different authors, which were collected and published in 1650 by Richard Brome, with the title of '*Lacrymæ Musarum, the Tears of the Muses; exprest in Elegies written by divers Persons of nobility and worth upon the death of Henry Lord Hastings, only son of the Right Honourable Ferdinando Earl of Huntingdon, heir-general of the high-born Prince George, Duke of Clarence, brother to King Edward the Fourth &c.*' Among the contributors to this volume were three who were already known as poets, and whose

§ Sir Walter Scott, who had not seen this little volume, erroneously gives ninety-eight as the number of the elegies.

fame has survived them, Denham, Herrick, and Andrew Marvel. Dryden's second known poem, a short complimentary address prefixed to a little volume of sacred poetry by John Hoddesden, a friend and schoolfellow, was probably written at the beginning of Dryden's residence at Cambridge. Hoddesden's little volume bore the title 'Sion and Parnassus,' and was published in 1650.

Dryden was entered at Trinity College, Cambridge, on the 18th of May, 1650; he matriculated July 16, and was elected a scholar of the college on the Westminster foundation, October 2, 1650. He took his degree of Bachelor of Arts in January 1654. Beyond these dates very little is known of his college life. With the exception of a single passage in his life of Plutarch, where he mentions having read that author in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge, and adds that to that foundation he gratefully acknowledges the debt of a great part of his education, there is no mention of his Cambridge days in his writings; and this silence has created an impression that in after life he regarded Cambridge with aversion. Some lines in one of his Oxford Prologues, written in 1681, have seemed further proof of such a feeling—

'Oxford to him a dearer name shall be
Than his own mother university;
Thebes did his green unknowing youth engage,
He chooses Athens in his riper age.'

But these lines prove nothing, being probably prompted by no other motive than the desire of the moment to please an Oxford audience. A passage in a letter from Dryden to Wilmot Earl of Rochester, written in 1675, in which he sends him copies of a Prologue and Epilogue for Oxford, composed on another occasion, shows that all he wrote for Oxford may not be sincere. He tells Rochester that the pieces were approved, 'and by the event your lordship will judge how easy 'tis to pass anything upon an University, and what gross flattery the learned will endure.'

But Dryden's life at Cambridge had not passed always pleasantly. In the second year of his residence at Trinity,

he had incurred the displeasure of the authorities for 'disobedience to the Vice-Master, and his contumacy in taking of his punishment.' What the disobedience was is not known; the ultimate sentence assigned was 'that Dryden be put out of commons for a fortnight at least, and that he go not out of the college during the time aforesaid, excepting to sermons, without express leave from the Master or Vice-Master, and that at the end of a fortnight he read a confession of his crime in the Hall at dinner-time at the three Fellows' tables.' And there may be some truth, with exaggeration also, in a taunt of Shadwell, that he left Cambridge suddenly in consequence of a quarrel.

Dryden's father died in June 1654, a few months after he had taken his B.A. degree. By his father's death he inherited two-thirds of a small estate at Blakesley, which gave him an income of about 40*l.* a year. The remaining third of the property was left to his mother for her life, and she lived till 1676. It is calculated that 40*l.* a year in Dryden's time would have been equal to four times as much now. Dryden's income would therefore have been sufficient to support him decently with economy.

He ceased to be a scholar of Trinity in April 1655, before the natural expiry by time of his scholarship, on account of his having ceased to reside at Cambridge. This appears from the following entry in the college Conclusion Book of April 23, 1655, 'That scholars be elected into the places of Sr. Hooker, Sr. Sawies, Sr. Driden, Sr. Quincey, Sr. Burton; with this proviso, that if the said Bachelors shall return to the College at or before Midsummer next, to continue constantly according to statute, then the scholars chosen into their places respectively shall recede and give place to them, otherwise to stand as proper scholars.' It further appears that a young man named Wilford was elected into Dryden's place on the above-mentioned condition. The Senior Bursar's book shows that neither Dryden nor any of the others for whom as scholars successors were elected at the same time, re-entered into their scholarships. They all received the scholars' stipends up to Michaelmas 1655, and no further

payment is credited to any of them. It may therefore be concluded that the story hitherto told, derived from Malone, of Dryden's having returned to Cambridge after his father's death, and having continued to reside there till the middle of 1657, is not correct. He had ceased to reside before April 1655; and if he returned to Cambridge after his father's death in June 1654, it would have been only for a very short time^h.

Having ceased to be a scholar of the College, he was ineligible for a fellowship, the fellows being chosen exclusively from the scholars. It has been thought surprising that he did not, when the time came in 1657, take the degree of Master of Arts, but the smallness of his means is quite sufficient to explain why he did not do so. By the ancient

^h I am indebted to Mr. W. Aldis Wright, the late librarian of Trinity College, for the information which has enabled me to contradict positively the old story of Dryden's continuing to reside at Cambridge till 1657. The story is Malone's, and on a careful examination of his statements I see that the only authority, if it can be so called, for Dryden's continued residence till 1657 is a description of him by Settle in a polemical pamphlet as 'a man of seven years' standing at Cambridge.' Malone was made aware, after the completion of his *Life of Dryden*, of the entry in the *Conclusion Book of April 23, 1655*; and he mentions this in his *Additions and Emendations (Dryden's Prose Works by Malone, vol. i. part 2, p. 134)*. But he adds 'that there are instances of gownsmen residing at Cambridge after the loss of their scholarships.' In the memoir in the *Globe Edition of Dryden's poems*, I have given the old story of Dryden's continuing to reside till 1657 with doubt, and stated that there is no proof of its correctness. I am now able positively to contradict it. The following interesting account of Dryden by a college contemporary, the Rev. Dr. Crichton, is given in a letter written in 1727 by a Mr. Pain, which is in the Trinity College Library, and has been lately found by Mr. W. A. Wright, who has obligingly furnished it to me. It confirms the fact of Dryden's early departure from Trinity after taking his B.A. degree. 'The Doctor also mentioned something of Dryden the poet, which I tell you because you may have occasion to say something of him. Dryden, he said, was two years above him, and was reckoned a man of good parts and learning while in college: he had to his knowledge read over and very well understood all the Greek and Latin poets: he stayed over to take his Bachelor's degree, but his head was too roving and active, or what else you'll call it, to confine himself to a college life, and so he left it and went to London into gayer company, and set up for a poet, which he was as well qualified for as any man.'

statutes of the University, any one possessed of any estate, annuity, or certain income for life amounting to 2*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* was required to pay 6*l.* 6*s.* 4*d.* in addition to the ordinary fees for any degree; and those for the M.A. degree for one not a fellow would be as much. Dryden, with his small income of forty pounds, might naturally be unwilling to incur this expense. It is possible also that Dryden's premature departure from Cambridge without fellowship or degree may have been caused by a disagreeable incident, such as he is taunted with by Shadwell—

‘At Cambridge first your scurrilous vein began,
Where saucily you traduced a nobleman,
Who for that crime traduced you on the head,
And you had been expelled had you not fled!’

The scurrility of Shadwell is anything but perfect authority, but there must have been some foundation for the taunt of these malicious lines.

A degree of Master of Arts was conferred on Dryden by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1668, on the recommendation of King Charles the Second, when he had made himself known as an author, and had acquired the King's favour by political poems and plays suited to his taste.

There is no information about Dryden's life after his leaving Cambridge till he appeared as an author in London on the occasion of Oliver Cromwell's death. It has always hitherto been said that he began to reside in London about the middle of 1657; but this was probably a part of the story that he continued to reside till 1657 at Cambridge. It is not impossible that he went to London earlier than has been hitherto supposed; and it is quite possible that he may have gone there later. He was probably aided by his relative, Sir Gilbert Pickering, at the beginning of his life in London, and he may have gone thither soon after his father's death to profit by Sir Gilbert's friendship. High in Cromwell's favour, a member of his Privy Council, and Chamberlain of his household, he was in a position to render

¹ ‘The Medal of John Bayes.’

valuable assistance to his clever young cousin. Shadwell, after taunting Dryden with discreditable flight from Cambridge, next holds him up to scorn as clerk to Sir Gilbert—

‘The next step of advancement you began,
Was being clerk to Noll’s Lord Chamberlain,
A sequestrator and Committee man^k.’

It is not improbable that Sir Gilbert employed him as his secretary.

Oliver Cromwell died on the 3rd of September, 1658; and Dryden, now in his twenty-seventh year, wrote a poem in honour of his memory. Since he had written the verses to John Hoddesden in 1650, being then an undergraduate at Cambridge, he had written no poetry that is known, and the ‘Heroic Stanzas’ to the memory of the Protector is his first poem of any importance. This poem was published with two others on the same subject by Waller and Sprat. It is written in quatrain stanzas, and is very superior to Dryden’s two earlier efforts. When the ‘Heroic Stanzas’ appeared, Richard Cromwell seemed to be firmly established as his father’s successor, and Dryden celebrated the peaceful security which the able and vigorous government of the Protector had bequeathed to his country.

‘No civil broils have since his death arose,
But faction now by habit does obey;
And wars have that respect for his repose
As winds for halcyons when they breed at sea.
His ashes in a peaceful urn shall rest;
His name a great example stands to show
How strangely high endeavours may be blessed
Where piety and valour jointly go.’

This tranquillity was of short duration. On the meeting of Parliament in January 1659 it was evident that Richard Cromwell was unable to rule, and in less than eighteen months after the publication of the ‘Heroic Stanzas’ Charles the Second was restored.

^k Malone strangely thinks that the last line may apply to Dryden himself, but it is clearly intended for Sir Gilbert Pickering.

Sir Gilbert Pickering, who had been closely and conspicuously connected with both the Protectors, and who had sat as one of the judges at the trial of Charles the First, though not when sentence was given, was lucky to escape with life and with most of his property. He was made incapable of all office, and became a private and powerless man. Dryden, having lost this serviceable benefactor, and not being disposed to sacrifice all advancement to political consistency, became a warm Royalist, and now endeavoured, by zealously espousing the cause of the restored King, to blot out all recollection of his praises of the Protector. 'Astræa Redux,' a poem written in celebration of the return of the King, was published before the end of the year, and was quickly followed by two other poems in like strain, a 'Panegyric' addressed to the King on his coronation, and an address to the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, on New Year's Day, 1662. These poems doubtless brought presents of money. Some complimentary verses, addressed by Dryden to Sir Robert Howard, were published in 1660, in the beginning of a volume of Howard's poems, the first of which was a panegyric on the restored King, and the last a panegyric on Monk, his chief restorer. Sir Robert Howard was a younger son of the Earl of Berkshire, who had been constant, with all his family, to the cause of royalty, and had impoverished himself in the cause. Henry Herringman was at this time the fashionable publisher, and published both for Howard and Dryden. Shadwell proceeds, in his vituperative biography, to taunt Dryden with drudgery for Herringman, and with living on Howard.

'He turned a journeyman to a bookseller,
 Wrote prefaces to books for meat and drink,
 And, as he paid, he would both write and think;
 Then, by the assistance of a noble knight,
 Thou hadst plenty, ease, and liberty to write:
 First like a gentleman he made thee live,
 And on his bounty thou didst amply thrive¹.'

¹ 'The Medal of John Bayes.'

Theatrical representations, which the austerity of the Puritans had proscribed during the Commonwealth, were now revived, and Dryden immediately turned to play-writing and made it a source of income. After the Restoration, two theatres, and only two, were licensed, one called the King's, which was under the management of Thomas Killigrew, the court wit and a dramatic writer, and the other, the Duke of York's, under the poet laureate, Sir William Davenant. Dryden's first play, 'The Wild Gallant,' was produced at the King's Theatre, in February 1663. It was not successful, and he attributed the failure to his boldness 'in beginning with comedy, which is the most difficult part of dramatic poetry.' A tragi-comedy, 'The Rival Ladies,' brought out in the same year, was better received. Pepys, who had pronounced 'The Wild Gallant' 'so poor a thing as ever he saw in his life,' thought this 'a very innocent and most pretty witty play^m.' The plots of both plays are extravagantly improbable, and coarseness and indecency appear in both. But they pleased the court, perhaps rather on account of than in spite of their demerits; and even the unpopular 'Wild Gallant' was specially favoured by Lady Castlemaine, and her royal lover caused it to be several times performed at court. Dryden next assisted Sir Robert Howard in the composition of a tragedy, 'The Indian Queen,' which was acted with great success at the King's Theatre, in January 1664.

Before 'The Indian Queen' was brought out on the stage, Howard and Dryden had become brothers-in-law. Dryden was married to Lady Elizabeth Howard on the 1st of December 1663. This was not a happy marriage. Lady Elizabeth was a woman of violent temper, and had apparently no sympathy with her husband's literary pursuits. Dryden has been taunted by some of the virulent foes of his later life with having been hectored into this marriage by the lady's brothers in order to save her reputation; and there is reason to believe that her conduct before marriage was not

^m Diary, February 23, 1663, and August 4, 1664.

irreproachable. If this were so, happiness could hardly be expected.

The success of 'The Indian Queen' encouraged Dryden to bring out in the following year, 1665, a sequel, under the title of 'The Indian Emperor,' and that play was a great success and much advanced Dryden's fame. 'The Indian Emperor' was published in 1667, with a dedication to the young and beautiful Duchess of Monmouth, the 'charming Annabel' of 'Absalom and Achitophel,' who was an early patroness of Dryden, and whom in his later years he called his 'first and best patronessⁿ.' 'The Rival Ladies' had been published with a dedication to the Earl of Orrery, a dramatic writer. 'The Wild Gallant' was not published till 1669, when the fame otherwise acquired by Dryden helped to recommend it to favour. He revived 'The Wild Gallant' on the stage in 1667.

In the summer of 1665 the Plague broke out in London, and all who could do so fled to the country. Dryden retired to Charlton, in Wiltshire, the seat of his father-in-law, Lord Berkshire, and he remained there for the greater part of eighteen months. During this period of retreat he wrote the 'Annus Mirabilis,' the 'Essay on Dramatic Poesy,' and the comedy of 'Secret Love, or the Maiden Queen.'

The 'Annus Mirabilis,' a poem celebrating the events of the year 1665-6, and describing the war with Holland, the Plague, and the Great Fire of London, was published in 1667, with a dedication to the Metropolis, and a long preface addressed to Sir Robert Howard. This poem is written in the quatrain stanzas in which Dryden had sung the praises of Oliver Cromwell eight years before. In the preface he says, 'I have chosen to write my poem in quatrain stanzas of four alternate rhymes, because I have ever judged them more noble and of greater dignity both for sound and numbers than any other verse in use among us.' The minute knowledge of naval matters displayed in the poem was acquired

ⁿ Dedication of 'King Arthur,' to the Marquis of Halifax, 1691.

it appears, for the occasion and under some difficulties. 'For my own part,' he says, 'if I had little knowledge of the sea, yet I have thought it no shame to learn, and if I have made some mistakes, it is only, as you can bear me witness, because I have wanted opportunity to correct them, the whole poem being first written and now sent you from a place where I have not so much as the converse of any seaman.' In this poem Dryden's skill and force of language is first strikingly remarkable. Some parts of it, and especially the description of the Fire of London, are very fine.

Dryden's next publication was the 'Essay on Dramatic Poesy,' also written during his long residence at Charlton: this was published in 1668. A subject treated of in this essay was the use of rhyme in tragedies, which was now the fashion, and favoured by the King. Dryden had praised rhymed tragedies in his dedication to the Earl of Orrery, of the 'Rival Ladies,' published in 1664. In the following year Sir Robert Howard published a collection of plays, with a preface, in which, though he had himself done tragedy in rhyme, he severely criticised Dryden's doctrine. In the 'Essay on Dramatic Poesy,' Dryden vindicated his views. The essay was in the form of a conversation between four persons, Eugenius, Lisideius, Crites, and Neander; and under these names were respectively veiled Lord Buckhurst (afterwards Earl of Dorset), Sir Charles Sedley, Sir Robert Howard, and Dryden himself. Neander maintained the cause of rhyme in tragedies, and Crites argued on the other side with inferior force. This led to a literary controversy with Howard, which produced for a time some ill-feeling between the brothers-in-law, but the estrangement did not last long.

During the ravages of the Plague and Fire the playhouses had been closed. They were re-opened towards the close of 1666, and in the following March 'Secret Love, or the Maiden Queen,' the play which Dryden had written at Charlton, was brought out at the King's Theatre. It was a great success. Pepys, who was present on the first night, commends 'the regularity of it and the strain of wit,' and is quite enthusiastic in his praises of Nell Gwyn, in the part of

Florimel^o. The play was published in the following year, with a preface, in which Dryden states that Charles had 'graced' the successful comedy 'with the title of his play.' Another comedy, 'Sir Martin Mar-all,' was brought out in the autumn of 1667 at the Duke's House. This was an adaptation of Molière's play, 'L'Étourdi,' which had been translated by the Duke of Newcastle; and when it appeared on the stage, Pepys tells us that the general opinion was that it was a 'play by the Lord Duke of Newcastle, and corrected by Dryden.' Dryden afterwards published himself as author, and we may take for granted that the authorship was really his. 'The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island,' produced at the Duke's Theatre in November, 1667, was an adaptation by Dryden and Davenant of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. The new play was nothing more nor less than a debasement of Shakespeare's, and Dryden doubtless knew well its inferiority. In the prologue he paid a fine tribute to the genius of Shakespeare. These are the opening lines:—

'As when a tree's cut down, the secret root,
Lives underground, and thence new branches shoot,
So from old Shakespeare's honoured dust this day
Springs up and buds a new reviving play:
Shakespeare, who, taught by none, did first impart
To Fletcher wit, to labouring Jonson art;
He, monarch-like, gave these his subjects law,
And is that Nature which they paint and draw.'

And in the same prologue he says—

'But Shakespeare's magic could not copied be;
Within that circle none durst walk but he.'

Again—

'But Shakespeare's power is sacred as a king's.'

Dryden and Davenant's '*Tempest*' was published by Dryden in 1668, Davenant having died in the interval: and in the preface Dryden mentions that Davenant had taught him to venerate Shakespeare.

If Dryden's mutilation of the *Tempest* seems inconsistent with his reverence for Shakespeare, it must be borne in mind that Dryden wrote for money, that to adapt took less time than to create, and that the audiences for which he wrote neglected Shakespeare's plays and applauded Dryden's.

'Those who have best succeeded on the stage

Have still conformed their genius to their age^p.'

The year 1667 had been one of great dramatic success for Dryden. The '*Maiden Queen*,' '*Sir Martin Mar-all*,' and '*The Tempest*' had all been well received, and his first play, '*The Wild Gallant*,' unsuccessful when it first appeared, had been revived with some success.

Until now the profits derived by Dryden from his plays had come from the third night's representation, which custom made the author's benefit, from the prices received from his publisher, from presents in return for dedications, and probably also from a retaining fee from the King's company, to which all his plays were given. A successful 'third night' of a play would probably at this time bring Dryden forty or at most fifty guineas, and the price of the copyright of one of his plays would now be but a trifle. Thus, for '*Cleomenes*,' one of his latest plays, he is known to have received thirty guineas, and no more; and this was probably the highest price he ever got. He is said never to have received, in his days of greatest fame, more than a hundred guineas for third night and copyright together. There had been no dedication to his last three published plays, the '*Maiden Queen*,' '*Sir Martin Mar-all*,' and '*The Tempest*.' But henceforth his plays were always dedicated to some noble patron, who, according to the custom of the time, sent a present of money in return for the compliment. To recount Dryden's noble patrons is a necessary part of his biography. 'What I pretend by this dedication,' he said in 1691, in dedicating '*King Arthur*' to George Savile Lord Halifax, 'is an honour which I do myself to posterity by acquainting them that I have been conversant with the first persons of the age in which I lived.'

^p Dryden's Epilogue to the Second Part of '*The Conquest of Granada*.'

After the production of 'The Tempest' he entered into a contract with the King's company, by which he bound himself to produce three plays a year, in return for a share and a quarter of the profits of the theatre, all which were divided into twelve shares and a quarter. Under this arrangement Dryden received from 1667 to 1672 a yearly income of from 300*l.* to 400*l.* a year. The King's Theatre was burnt down in 1672, and the losses of the company then reduced Dryden's share of profits to about 200*l.* a year. His reciprocal duty, to write three plays a year, was never fulfilled; but the company appear to have behaved always generously to him and not to have mulcted him for his shortcomings.

Under this new contract two comedies, 'An Evening's Love, or the Mock Astrologer,' an adaptation of the younger Corneille's 'Feint Astrologue,' and 'Ladies à la Mode,' were produced in 1668. 'An Evening's Love' was not very successful. Evelyn went to see it, and was 'afflicted to see how the stage was degenerated and polluted by the licentious times^q.' The criticism of Samuel Pepys is very similar, and Herringman, the publisher, told Pepys that Dryden himself considered it but a fifth-rate play^r. Of 'Ladies à la Mode,' Pepys, from whom alone we have knowledge of it, says that it was a translation from the French, and that it was 'so mean a thing as when they came to say it would be acted again, both he that said it, Beeson, and the pit fell a laughing, there being this day not a quarter of the pit full.' It was never acted again, and Dryden never published it^s.

Dryden's mother died in 1670. He was an affectionate son, and there are indeed none but pleasant indications of his relations with members of his family. The first of some little bequests in the will of the mother, who had little to leave, is a silver tankard and her wedding-ring to her son, now so famous. 'I give and bequeath to my beloved son, John Dryden, a silver tankard marked with J. D., and a gold

^q Evelyn's Diary, June 19, 1668.

^r Pepys' Diary, June 20 and 22, 1668.

^s Ibid. September 15, 1668.

ring, which was my wedding-ring. And it is my will that after the decease of my dear son, John Dryden, his eldest son, Charles Dryden, should have the ring as a gift from his grandmother, Mary Dryden.' On the death of his mother, Dryden came into possession of the whole of the little Blakesley estate, and the addition thus made to his income was not more than 20*l.* a year: but his income at this time, derived from various sources, from his estate, his salary and his brain-work, probably amounted to about 700*l.* a year.

Three tragedies in heroic verse, 'Tyrannic Love, or the Royal Martyr,' and 'Almanzor and Almahide, or the Conquest of Granada,' in two parts, each being a separate play, appeared in 1669 and 1670, and added greatly to Dryden's fame. 'Tyrannic Love' was dedicated to the Duke of Monmouth, and 'The Conquest of Granada' to the Duke of York. In August 1670 he received a substantial mark of royal favour. The two appointments of Poet Laureate and Historiographer Royal, which had been vacant, the one since the death of Sir William Davenant in 1668, the other since the death of James Howell in 1666, were conferred upon Dryden, with a salary of 200*l.* a year and arrears from Midsummer 1668; and an annual butt of canary wine from the King's cellars was added to the salary.

In December 1671 'The Rehearsal,' a farce the preparation of which had for some ten years occupied the second George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and in which he is said to have had assistance from the author of 'Hudibras' and others, was brought out at the King's Theatre. The object of this farce was to ridicule the rhymed tragedies of the Restoration. The farce had been begun some time before the death of the former poet laureate, Davenant, and he had been the original hero, but Davenant dying before the farce was finished, Dryden, his successor in the laureateship, was caricatured in his stead as the poet 'Bayes.' It is said that the Duke of Buckingham himself drilled the actor, Lacey, to whom the part of 'Bayes' was allotted, to imitate Dryden's manner †. The piece had a great success, and its fame endures;

† Spence's Anecdotes (Villiers, Duke of Buckingham).

the name of Bayes stuck to Dryden through life. Dryden bore this attack in silence, claiming credit in later years for a forbearance which was probably prompted by prudence, for Buckingham was at the time a leading minister and in great favour with the King^u.

During the year 1671 Dryden produced no play. In January 1672 the King's Theatre in Drury Lane was burnt down, and the company removed to a house in Lincoln's Inn Fields. The impoverished circumstances of the company, which directly affected himself, probably stimulated Dryden to exertion, and in this year he produced two new comedies, 'Marriage à la Mode,' which was very successful, and 'The Assignation, or Love in a Nunnery,' which was condemned. 'Amboyna, or the Cruelties of the Dutch to the English Merchants,' was Dryden's next production. England and France were now jointly engaged in war against Holland, and the tragedy of 'Amboyna' was written for the purpose of inflaming national feeling against the Dutch. This is one of Dryden's worst plays. It was written, he says, 'in haste, but with an English heart.' This eager advocate of the Dutch war of 1672 afterwards reviled and persecuted Shaftesbury for having promoted it. 'Amboyna' was dedicated to Lord Clifford, Shaftesbury's colleague in what is called the Cabal Ministry, who was a private friend and zealous patron of Dryden. 'Marriage à la Mode' had been dedicated to Wilmot Earl of Rochester, who later became Dryden's virulent enemy, but of whom he now said, addressing him, 'You have not only been careful of my reputation, but of my fortune,' and 'I have found the effects of your protection in all my concernments.' 'The Assignation' was dedicated to the witty and dissolute Sir Charles Sedley.

^u There is a severe and vigorous poem on the Duke of Buckingham printed in the collection called 'State Poems,' which some have ascribed to Dryden, but probably wrongly. The slow composition of 'The Rehearsal' is there alluded to:

'I come to his farce, which must needs be well done,
For Troy was not longer before it was won,
Since 'tis more than ten years since this farce was begun.'

'The State of Innocence,' a transformation of 'Paradise Lost' into an opera, and intended for the stage but never acted, was Dryden's literary work of the year 1674. Aubrey relates that Dryden called on Milton to ask permission to versify his poem, and was dryly told by the blind old man that he might 'tag his verses' if he pleased. 'Paradise Lost' had been published five years before, and had not excited enthusiasm. But Dryden had taken a just measure of the poem, and in the preface of his own 'State of Innocence' he declared it to be 'undoubtedly one of the greatest, most noble, and sublime poems which either this age or nation has produced.' Shortly after the publication of 'The State of Innocence' Milton died, on the 8th of November, 1674. Dryden's well-known lines on Milton were written fourteen years later, to be printed under his portrait prefixed to an edition of 'Paradise Lost,' published by subscription in 1695 by Jacob Tonson.

'Three poets in three distant ages born
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,
The next in majesty, in both the last.
The force of nature could no farther go:
To make a third she joined the former two.'

In the prologue of 'Aurengzebe, or the Great Mogul,' a tragedy produced in 1675, Dryden informed his audience that he had grown tired of rhyme in tragedy and generally dissatisfied with play-writing. Having begun by speaking disparagingly of the play, but, as he said, 'out of no feigned modesty,' he proceeds in this prologue:—

'Not that it's worse than what before he writ,
But he has now another taste of wit:
And to confess a truth, though out of time,
Grows weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme.
Passion's too fierce to be in fetters bound,
And Nature flies him like enchanted ground.
What verse can do he has performed in this,
Which he presumes the most correct of his;

But spite of all his pride, a secret shame
 Invades his breast at Shakespeare's sacred name:
 Awed when he hears his godlike Roman rage,
 He in a just despair would quit the stage;
 And to an age less polished, more unskilled
 Does with disdain the foremost honours yield.
 As with the greater dead he dares not strive,
 He would not match his verse with those who live.
 Let him retire betwixt two ages cast,
 The first of this and hindmost of the last.'

Dryden had now for some time wished to apply himself to the composition of an epic poem: but for this leisure was necessary, and play-writing gave him bread. He explains himself on this subject in the dedication of 'Aurengzebe,' to Sheffield Earl of Mulgrave. He had had an opportunity, through Mulgrave's good offices, of speaking both with the King and the Duke of York of his desire to devote himself to the production of a national epic poem, and he now asked Mulgrave to remind the King of his ambition. Several years later, in 1693, in his 'Discourse on Satire,' addressed to the Earl of Dorset, he mentions two subjects which he had thought of; one was the conquest of Spain by Edward the Black Prince, and the other King Arthur conquering the Saxons. Dryden's wishes were not gratified by the King. No office was given him which relieved him from the necessity of writing for subsistence. It is however possible that the King may now have granted him the pension of 100*l.* a year in addition to the salaried offices of Poet Laureate and Historiographer Royal, which it has been lately ascertained that he obtained during the reign of Charles II; but the date of the grant of the pension is not known ^x.

Dryden's next play did not appear for two years after;

^x This pension from Charles was first made known by the publication by Mr. R. Bell in 1854 of a treasury warrant of 1684 for payment of arrears; and Mr. P. Cunningham has since published a treasury warrant for payment of a quarter due January 5, 1679. (Johnson's 'Lives of the Poets,' Cunningham's edition, vol. i. p. 334, note.)

it was 'All for Love, or the World Well Lost,' the story of Antony and Cleopatra, and it was produced at the King's Theatre in the winter of 1677-8. To the preparation of this tragedy Dryden had devoted more time and labour than usual, and he considered it his best play. 'All for Love' had great success, and the company gave Dryden the benefit of the third night, to which the terms of his contract did not entitle him. This act of generosity appears to have been ill requited by Dryden; his next play 'Ædipus,' written in conjunction with Nathaniel Lee, was given to the Duke's company and brought out at the rival theatre. This was regarded by the King's company as a breach of contract, with the aggravation of ingratitude. He had never fulfilled his engagement to write three plays a year, and indeed had produced on an average less than one a year. The King's company now complained to the Earl of Arlington, the Lord Chamberlain, of Dryden's proceeding as a violation of contract; but there is no sign of their having obtained redress^v. Dryden now broke with the King's Theatre, or the King's Theatre with him, and his subsequent plays came out at the rival house. 'The Kind Keeper, or Limberham,' a very coarse comedy, followed 'Ædipus,' and gave such offence that, after it had been three times acted, Dryden withdrew it. In April 1679, he produced with indifferent success 'Troilus and Cressida,' an adaptation of Shakespeare's play. 'All for Love,' on its publication, was dedicated to the Earl of Danby, then the chief Minister; 'Limerham,' to Lord Vaughan, a literary nobleman, and 'Troilus and Cressida,' to the Earl of Sunderland, a rising politician and future leading minister.

As Dryden was returning to his house in Long Acre through Rose Alley, Drury Lane, on the night of the 18th of December, 1679, he was fallen upon and severely beaten by a gang of ruffians. There appears to be little doubt that the

^v Almost all our information as to Dryden's partnership in the King's Theatre is derived from this memorial of complaint addressed to the Lord Chamberlain, which is printed in Malone's *Life of Dryden*, p. 73.

instigator of this cowardly attack was Wilmot Earl of Rochester, who conceived Dryden to be the author of a poem in circulation, an *Essay on Satire*, in which he was severely attacked. Sheffield Earl of Mulgrave, afterwards Marquis of Normanby and Duke of Buckinghamshire, is now known to have been the author of the poem; but at the time a belief seems to have prevailed that Dryden had written it. It is not impossible that Dryden may have seen the poem before it was put in circulation and given it some revision. Yet it is difficult to believe that Dryden, who was dependent on the King's pleasure for 300*l.* a year of his income, would have been so imprudent as to make himself in any way responsible for a poem in which the King also was severely assailed. It is more likely that the great intimacy which existed at this period between Dryden and Mulgrave is the sole origin of the suspicion. Mulgrave positively asserted in a note in a later edition of the poem that Dryden was entirely innocent of the authorship. In a poem of Rochester's, published the year before, Dryden had been freely and unpleasantly criticised, and Rochester may have expected retaliation and been prone to conclude that Mulgrave's attack on him came from Dryden. These are Rochester's lines in his 'Allusion to the Tenth Satire of the First Book of Horace,' published in 1673.

'Well, sir, 'tis granted, I said Dryden's rhymes
 Were stol'n, unequal, nay, dull many times,
 What foolish patron is there found of his
 So blindly partial to deny me this?
 But that his plays, embroidered up and down
 With wit and learning, justly pleased the town,
 In the same paper I as freely own.
 Yet having this allowed, the heavy mass
 That stuffs up his loose volumes must not pass.'

A publicly advertised offer of a reward of fifty pounds for the discovery of the offenders failed to furnish any clue to the author of this dastardly assault. This Rose Alley assault became the theme of many taunts from Dryden's bitter

adversaries after he threw himself into political controversies^z.

One of Dryden's most successful plays was the 'Spanish Friar, or the Double Discovery,' a satire on the Roman Catholic priesthood, produced at the Duke's Theatre in 1681, at a time when popular feeling was strongly excited against the Papists, and when the question of the day was the exclusion of the Duke of York from the succession because he was a Roman Catholic.

Dryden's pecuniary resources about this time had become much crippled. Through the poverty of the Treasury, his salary and pension were not paid, and in May 1684 there was a four years' accumulation of arrears. After the production of the 'Spanish Friar,' Dryden turned from play-writing to political satire. His famous political poem 'Absalom and Achitophel' was published in November 1681. The subject of the poem, Shaftesbury and Monmouth, is said to have been suggested by the King himself. Monmouth, the Absalom of the poem, for whom his father, Charles, had always a tender affection, is treated through the poem with great delicacy, but Shaftesbury, who is Achitophel, is truculently and unscrupulously assailed. Together with Shaftesbury, Buckingham, who was now one of the great Protestant opposition to the court, is described in Dryden's happiest vein, under the name of Zimri.

Shaftesbury had been lying in the Tower under a charge of high treason since July 2, 1681, and Dryden's poem was published a very few days before his trial, probably with the deliberate object of inflaming public opinion against him and helping to obtain a condemnation. The poem was published on November 17; on November 24 the bill of indictment

^z One of these is worth quoting to illustrate the old pronunciation of *aches* as a word of two syllables as late as 1680—

'Thus needy Bayes, his Rose Street aches past.'

'The Protestant Satire.'

Dryden himself pronounced the word in the same manner in his first poem, the 'Elegy on Lord Hastings,' written in 1649. *Aches* rhymes with *catches* in 'Hudibras,' Part II. Canto ii. l. 456; and see also Part III. Canto ii. l. 407 of 'Hudibras.'

against Shaftesbury went before a London grand jury, and was thrown out. The decision was received by the people of London with acclamations, and a medal was struck by his friends in commemoration of his triumph. The sale of 'Absalom and Achitophel' was so rapid that a second edition appeared within a month. The medal celebrating Shaftesbury's escape from his persecutors furnished Dryden with a subject and a name for a new political satire, which was even more fierce against Shaftesbury than its predecessor. 'The Medal' was brought out in March 1682. This poem, as well as 'Absalom and Achitophel,' was published anonymously, but there was no doubt as to the authorship of either poem; and Dryden's opponents were quick to produce answers, all more remarkable for virulence than literary merit. 'The Medal of John Bayes,' by Shadwell, especially roused Dryden's anger. Shadwell and he had formerly been on friendly terms, and Dryden had written in 1678 a prologue to Shadwell's play, 'The True Widow.' They probably now quarrelled only on political grounds. There was now great fury between the partisans of the Duke of York and those of the Duke of Monmouth, and at this period arose the divisions and the names of Whig and Tory. Dryden was with the Tories, and Shadwell with Shaftesbury, Monmouth, and the Whigs. 'The Medal of John Bayes' provoked Dryden to write a new satire, 'Mac Flecknoe,' in which Shadwell is represented as the poetical heir of Flecknoe, an inferior poet and voluminous author, who had died some five years before. 'Mac Flecknoe' was published in October 1682. In the following month a second part of 'Absalom and Achitophel' appeared. Of this poem only a small portion was by Dryden; the bulk of the poem being the production of Nahum Tate, who afterwards translated the Psalms into verse, and became in time poet laureate. Dryden contributed two hundred lines, and he perhaps revised the whole of Tate's work.

Dryden now passed from politics to theology, and produced 'Religio Laici,' a clear and argumentative exposition in harmonious verse, of the Protestant faith. The merits of this poem are happily, and without exaggeration, described

by Dryden's friend and brother-poet, Lord Roscommon, in some lines of commendation which were prefixed to the poem on its publication:—

‘Let free impartial men from Dryden learn
Mysterious secrets of a high concern,
And weighty truths, solid convincing sense,
Explained by unaffected eloquence.’

A drama, the ‘Duke of Guise,’ a joint work of Dryden and Nathaniel Lee, was brought out in December 1682. The two rival theatres had now found it necessary to combine, and this was the first new play brought out by the united company. In the prologue Dryden announced the play to be a parallel:—

‘Our play’s a parallel; the Holy League
Begot our covenant; Guisards got the Whig.’

In spite of Dryden's zealous championship of the court, his salary remained unpaid, and his pecuniary distress was great. In a letter to Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, a Commissioner of the Treasury, probably written in the latter part of 1683, he prays for the payment of the arrears of his salary, amounting to about 1300*l.*, and asks also for some small appointment. He says in this letter, ‘I have three sons growing to man's estate; I breed them all up to learning, beyond my fortune; but they are too hopeful to be neglected, though I want.’ Of these sons, Charles, the eldest, born in 1665 or 1666, entered Trinity College, Cambridge, as a Westminster Scholar, in June 1683; the second, John, born 1667 or 1668, was now at Westminster; and the youngest, Erasmus Henry, born in May 1669, had been admitted to the Charterhouse by the nomination of the King in February 1683. It was probably in consequence of Dryden's appeal to Rochester that an Exchequer warrant for the payment of half a year's salary and a quarter's pension was issued on the 6th of May, 1684; and there is reason to believe that in time all arrears were paid to him. He received also in December 1683 the appointment of Collector of Customs in London, which may have been a profitable one.

Various literary labours occupied the poet at this time. In 1683 he contributed a life and a preface to a new translation of Plutarch by various hands, and he translated, by order of the King, Maimbourg's 'History of the League.' In 1684 and 1685 he published successively two volumes of poetical Miscellanies, containing, with some poems by other authors, translations of his own from Virgil, Horace, and Ovid. To the second volume his eldest son was a contributor.

On the 5th of February, 1685, Charles the Second died, and the crown passed to his brother James. Before the King's death Dryden had written an opera, 'Albion and Albanus,' to celebrate the triumph of the court party over the opposition; this had not yet been publicly acted, but it had been several times rehearsed at court with approval. 'Albion and Albanus' was published after James's accession. But before this publication Dryden produced an ode to the memory of Charles under the title of 'Threnodia Augustalis,' in which both Charles and James were extravagantly lauded.

As, on the restoration of Charles the Second, Dryden, to win royal favour, had broken away from all the associations of his youth, and had appeared without delay as the eager champion of monarchy, so now, when a declared Roman Catholic was seated on the throne, and to be a Roman Catholic seemed the best way to advancement, he was soon convinced that it was right to be a Roman Catholic. Before his conversion James had continued him in the posts of Poet Laureate and Historiographer Royal; and shortly after it, in March 1686, the additional pension of 100*l.* a year, which had been granted him by Charles, was renewed by letters patent. Lord Macaulay, who has represented this pension granted by James as the reward of Dryden's conversion, wrote before it was known to be merely a renewal of an old pension granted to Dryden by his predecessor, and he has certainly exaggerated its effects in producing that conversion; but it would be difficult to prove that Lord Macaulay has been unjust in ascribing Dryden's change of religion to interested motives^a.

^a History of England, vol. ii. p. 96.

During the greater part of the year 1686 Dryden was engaged in writing 'The Hind and the Panther,' an elaborate defence in verse of his new religion. This poem is in the form of a dialogue between a milkwhite Hind, representing the Church of Rome, and a Panther, representing the Church of England; and the Hind has of course the best of the discussion. The author of 'Religio Laici' and of 'The Spanish Friar,' could not bring himself to treat the Church to which he so lately belonged with entire disrespect; and the Panther is described as

'sure the noblest next the Hind,
And fairest creature of the spotted kind;
Oh, could her inborn stains be washed away,
She were too good to be a beast of prey!
How can I praise or blame, and not offend,
Or how divide the frailty from the friend?
Her faults and virtues lie so mixed, that she
Nor wholly stands condemned nor wholly free.'

The various dissenting bodies are introduced into the poem under the names of different animals. This, the most imaginative and the longest of Dryden's poems, was published in April 1687.

Dryden's first ode for St. Cecilia's day was written in November 1687, at the request of a musical society formed four years before the celebration of the feast of St. Cecilia, the guardian saint of music ^b.

On June 10, 1688, the Queen gave birth to a son, an event which was hailed with joy by all the friends of the Court, while the Protestant party declared the child an imposture. The birth of the Prince was celebrated by Dryden in a poem entitled 'Britannia Rediviva,' which was very hastily composed, and is one of his least successful efforts.

There was a very short interval between the birth of

^b A perfect text of so celebrated a poem is of much literary importance. The editors have generally substituted *uprooted* for Dryden's better word *unrooted* in the line

'And trees unrooted left their place.'

This is one of very many similar corrections in the Globe edition of Dryden's Poems.

James's unfortunate heir and the Revolution, which drove James into exile, placed William and Mary on the throne, and destroyed Dryden's prospects of advancement. His newly-adopted religion made it impossible for him to take the oaths required of all holders of office, and to recant now would have been at once indecent and unprofitable. His offices of Poet Laureate and Historiographer Royal, his place in the Customs, and his pension of 100*l.* a year, were now all lost by him. It was stated by Prior, and has been often repeated on his authority, that the Earl of Dorset, who was now appointed Lord Chamberlain, made the poet an allowance from his own purse equivalent to the official salary he had lost. This is a mistake; but there is no doubt that Dorset at different times made Dryden handsome presents of money, and the poet, in his 'Discourse on Satire,' dedicated to Dorset in 1693, gratefully acknowledges his generosity. Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, was also bountiful to him in his reduced circumstances.

In his fallen fortunes Dryden turned once more to the drama. In 1690 he produced two plays. The first was a tragedy called 'Don Sebastian.' Though one of his best dramas, it was not very successful, and Dryden attributed the failure of it to its length, or in his own language, to his having exceeded 'the proper compass of a play.' A comedy, 'Amphitryon,' produced in the same year, had better success. At the time of Charles the Second's death Dryden was engaged in writing, as a sequel to 'Albion and Albanus,' an opera, 'King Arthur, or the British Worthy.' This work, much altered to suit the altered times, was now brought out with great success. About the representation of his next play there was some difficulty. The story of 'Cleomenes, King of Sparta,' was of an exiled king seeking protection at a foreign court. King William was absent in Holland, and Mary, the Regent, feeling that the play was disagreeably suggestive of her father's position at St. Germain's, objected to its being acted. Her objections were, however, overcome by Dryden's friends, and 'Cleomenes' was produced in May 1692.

Dryden had been seized with a severe fit of illness while hastening to finish 'Cleomenes,' and he was compelled to call in the aid of a young friend, Southerne, to finish it for him. Southerne, Dryden's junior by twenty-eight years, had acquired sudden celebrity by his first play, 'The Loyal Brother, or the Persian Prince,' produced in 1682, when he was only twenty-three. It had been brought on the stage with a prologue and epilogue by Dryden; and Dryden again had written the prologue for Southerne's second play, 'The Disappointment, or the Mother in Fashion,' which had also been a success. A check came to Southerne's success in 1692, shortly after Dryden had honoured him by seeking his assistance for 'Cleomenes.' His fourth play, the 'Wives' Excuse,' was not well received on the stage, and Dryden now consoled his young friend by some lines of condolence and compliment. He ascribed the want of success to the story and the absence of a favourite actor:—

'Yet those who blame thy tale commend thy wit,
So Terence plotted, but so Terence writ.
Like his, thy thoughts are true, thy language clean,
Even lewdness is made moral in thy scene.
The hearers may for want of Nokes repine,
But rest secure, the readers will be thine.
Nor was thy laboured drama damned or hissed,
But with a kind civility dismissed.'

One more play, 'Love Triumphant, or Nature will Prevail,' was produced by Dryden in the beginning of 1694, and he relinquished play-writing. 'Love Triumphant' was a failure. A letter written by one who was evidently a bitter enemy of Dryden, and who calls him 'huffing Dryden,' says that the play was 'damned by the universal cry of the town.'

'Don Sebastian' was dedicated to the Earl of Leicester, elder brother of Algernon Sydney; 'Amphitryon' to Sir William Leveson Gower of Trentham; 'King Arthur' to George Saville, Marquis of Halifax; 'Cleomenes' to Lawrence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, son of the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, and uncle to Queen Mary; and 'Love Triumphant' to the Earl of Salisbury. These were all friends

of the Revolution, and of William and Mary's government, who, Dryden is careful to say in each of his dedications, had continued kind to him in his adversity. He endeavoured, he says, 'to pitch on such men only as have been pleased to own me in this ruin of my small fortune, who, though they are of a contrary opinion themselves, yet blame me not for adhering to a lost cause and judging for myself, what I cannot choose but judge, so long as I am a patient sufferer and no disturber of the government.' To Lord Leicester, whose mansion was near his own residence in Gerrard Street, Dryden writes that 'his best prospect is on the garden of Leicester House,' and that its owner has more than once offered him his patronage, 'to reconcile him to a world of which his misfortunes have made him weary.' And in the last of these dedications, written in 1694, and addressed to the Earl of Salisbury, to whom he says that his wife was related, he writes, 'You have been pleased to take a particular notice of me even in this lowness of my fortunes, to which I have voluntarily reduced myself, and of which I have no reason to be ashamed.' Dryden held himself proudly in his enforced change of circumstances. King William's government could not favour him, even if there were the disposition to do so. His Toryism and his many gibes at the Dutch might have been, and probably would have been, generously forgiven; but he could not recant his new Roman Catholic religion and conform to the tests required for office. In his poem 'Eleonora,' written in 1691, in honour of the memory of the Countess of Abingdon, for which he received a very handsome pecuniary reward of five hundred guineas from the Earl, he speaks of himself as one

'Who, not by cares or wants of age deprest,
Stems a wild deluge with a dauntless breast.'

Dryden had in 1692 produced, with aid from others, a translation of the Satires of Juvenal and Persius, to which he prefixed a 'Discourse on Satire,' addressed to the Earl of Dorset. Among those who aided him were his two elder sons, John and Charles. Dryden himself translated the first,

third, sixth, tenth, and sixteenth Satires of Juvenal, and the whole of Persius. Dryden also wrote a life of Polybius for a translation by Sir Henry Shere, given to the world in 1692. A third volume of 'Miscellanies' was published, under Dryden's editorship, in 1693, and a fourth in 1694. In the last volume appeared Dryden's translation of the fourth Georgic of Virgil, and his poem addressed to Sir Godfrey Kneller. This poem has been always reprinted in an imperfect state; the omitted passages are restored in the lately-published Globe edition. One of the omitted passages, immediately following an allusion to the first pair in Eden, is of autobiographical interest:—

'Forgive the allusion; 'twas not meant to bite,
But Satire will have room, where'er I write.'

There is in this poem an admirable description of a perfect portrait:—

'Likeness is ever there, but still the best,
Like proper thoughts in lofty language drest.'

Dryden's new friendship with Southerne has been mentioned. Through Southerne he became acquainted with another young dramatist, Congreve, who was also early famous. Congreve's first play, 'The Old Bachelor,' was brought out in 1693; Dryden had seen it in manuscript, and declared that he never saw such a good play, and he aided to adapt it for the stage. Congreve was at this time but twenty-three years old. A second play was produced by him within a twelvemonth, 'The Double Dealer,' which did not attain the brilliant success that had attended Congreve's first effort. Dryden, who the year before had consoled Southerne under a similar disappointment, now addressed to Congreve a poem, which was prefixed to 'The Double Dealer' when published. The poem is headed, 'To my dear friend, Mr. Congreve.' He anticipates in this poem a brilliant future for Congreve, designates him as the fittest of living writers for the laureateship which he himself had lost, and ends in well-known beautiful lines by bequeathing to Congreve the care of his own reputation:—

‘ In him all beauties of this age we see,
 Etherege his courtship, Southern’s purity,
 The satire, wit, and strength of Wycherly.
 All this in blooming youth you have achieved,
 Nor are your foiled contemporaries grieved;
 So much the sweetness of your manners move,
 We cannot envy you, because we love.

Oh that your brows my laurel had sustained!
 Well had I been deposed, if you had reigned.

Yet this I prophesy,—Thou shalt be seen,
 Though with some short parenthesis between,
 High on the throne of wit, and seated there,
 Not mine—that’s little—but thy laurel wear.
 Thy first attempt an early promise made;
 That early promise this has more than paid.

Already I am worn with cares and age,
 And just abandoning the ungrateful stage;
 Unprofitably kept at Heaven’s expense,
 I live a rent-charge on His providence.
 But you, whom every Grace and Muse adorn,
 Whom I foresee to better fortune born,
 Be kind to my remains; and oh, defend,
 Against your judgment, your departed friend.
 Let not the insulting foe my fame pursue,
 But shade those laurels which descend to you:
 And take for tribute what these lines express,
 You merit more, nor could my love do less.’

An air of insincerity is given to the prophecy of the laurel for Congreve by a similar compliment addressed a few years later to another young dramatist, George Granville, who was rich and of noble family, and became afterwards Secretary of State and a peer, with the title of Lord Lansdowne, and who was a beneficent friend of Dryden in his last years. A poem addressed to Mr. Granville in 1690, ‘on his excellent tragedy, called “Heroic Love,”’ contains these lines:—

‘ But since ’tis Nature’s law in love and wit,
 That youth should reign, and withering age submit,

With less regret those laurels I resign,
Which, dying on my brows, revive on thine.

Thine be the laurel then: thy blooming age
Can best, if any can, support the stage*.

Dryden renounced the drama in 1694, in order to devote himself to the translation of Virgil, a work which occupied him almost exclusively for the next three years. The translation was published by subscription in 1697, and it was a success both pecuniarily and in respect of fame. Writing to his sons a few months after the publication, he says, 'My Virgil succeeds in the world beyond its desert or my reputation,' and he goes on to say that the profits might have been more had his conscience allowed him to comply with the wish of his publisher Tonson, and dedicate the work to the King. The publisher had been so bent on gaining his point in this matter that he caused the engraving of Æneas to be altered into some likeness of William, in the hope that Dryden might relent at the last moment. But this wily stratagem failed, and Dryden's Virgil appeared with three separate dedications; of the Pastorals to Lord Clifford, the son of his early patron, the Lord Treasurer; of the Georgics to the Earl of Chesterfield; and of the Æneid, to his old and kind friend Mulgrave, now Marquis of Normanby. The Virgil was published by subscription. There were two sets of subscribers: one of five guineas each, and the other of two guineas. There were 102 of the first class, and 250 of the second. The profit to Dryden was twelve or thirteen hundred pounds. It is extremely difficult to arrive at a definite notion of the exact arrangements between Dryden and Tonson as to profits, and Malone and other biographers have expended much ingenuity

* George Powel, one of the principal actors at Drury Lane Theatre, irritated by taunts at the Drury Lane company in Dryden's poem to Granville, twitted Dryden with his giving to Granville laurels which he had given away before, both to Congreve and Southerne. (Preface to 'The Fatal Discovery, or Love in Ruins,' 1698, quoted by Malone, vol. i. part i. p. 311.)

in discussion and conjecture on this subject^d. The poet's relations with his publisher during the progress of his translation and of the printing of Virgil were anything but pleasant. Several of Dryden's letters of this period which have been preserved abound in complaints and accusations against Tonson. At one time he has thoughts of leaving him, but upon trial he finds that 'all of his trade are sharpers, and he not more than others.' He accuses him of paying him in clipped and in bad money, and on one occasion he sends him by Tonson's messenger three insulting lines of poetry, with a message, 'Tell the dog that he who wrote these lines can write more.' Tonson must have been startled by this beginning of a portrait of him:—

'With leering looks, bull-faced, and freckled fair,
With two left legs, and Judas-coloured hair,
And frowzy pores that taint the ambient air^e.'

Dryden is said to have begun his translation of Virgil at the house of his cousin John Driden of Chesterton, and there

^d From a positive statement made by one of Dryden's biographers, the Rev. John Mitford, in Pickering's Aldine edition of Dryden's Poems, published in 1832, there should be in existence an agreement dated June 15, 1694, between Dryden and Tonson, attested by Congreve as one of the witnesses: but Mr. Mitford does not say where the agreement is to be seen, and he makes his statement without giving any authority. Mr. Mitford says that by this agreement Dryden was to receive for the Virgil 200*l.*, to be paid at stated intervals, and a hundred copies of the work on large paper, Tonson to pay all expenses, and have the proceeds of the sale of the small paper copies. But this statement of the case is not consistent with many passages of Dryden's letters on the subject, of 1695, 1696, and 1697, which are printed by Malone and Scott. Dryden's letters, however, are not sufficient to enable us to arrive at certainty as to his arrangements with his publisher. The subject is discussed in Malone's Life, in the Rev. Mr. Hooper's, prefixed to the recent reprint of the Aldine edition, and in the Memoir of the Globe edition.

^e These three lines are introduced into a poem called 'Faction Displayed,' ascribed to Mr. Shippen, published after Dryden's death, and are there quoted as Dryden's description of Tonson, who figures in this poem as Bibliopolo. Pope called Tonson 'left-legged Jacob' in the Dunciad, and referred in a note to Dryden's 'two left legs.' This story therefore is well authenticated.

to have written the first lines with a diamond on a window-pane. Some part of the work was done at Denham Court in Buckinghamshire, the seat of Sir William Bowyer, an old Cambridge friend; and the Seventh Book of the *Æneid* was translated at Burleigh, the house of the Earl of Exeter, in Northamptonshire. Dr. Knightly Chetwode supplied the Life of Virgil and the Preface to the Pastorals, and Addison wrote the arguments of the books and an Essay on the Georgics. Among those who recommended the work to the public by poetical addresses of compliment printed in the front were George Granville the dramatist, the future Lord Lansdowne, and Henry St. John, the future celebrated Lord Bolingbroke.

Amid general congratulation and eulogy, the publication of Virgil called forth some enemies and detractors. The most elaborate attack on the translation came from a Norfolk clergyman, the Rev. Luke Milbourne, neither whose criticism nor whose name would be remembered but for Dryden's having pilloried him in some of his subsequent writings^f. The most famous of Dryden's detractors was a younger kinsman, the celebrated Jonathan Swift^g, who never forgetting, it is said, a discouraging opinion on some of his early poetry privately given him by Dryden, whose advice he had asked,

^f Dryden on two occasions couples Milbourne with Sir Richard Blackmore, the doctor, who attacked his plays: in the Epistle to John Dryden, where Blackmore is Maurus,—

'Wouldst thou be soon dispatched and perish whole,

Trust Maurus with thy life and Milbourne with thy soul;'

and in the preface to the 'Fables,' where he lashes Milbourne unsparingly, and after replying to Jeremy Collier with some respect, he ends with a general defiance: 'As for the rest of those who have written against me, they are such scoundrels that they deserve not the least notice to be taken of them. Blackmore and Milbourne are only distinguished from the crowd by being remembered to their infamy.'

^g The relationship between Dryden and Swift has not been clearly ascertained; but Malone conjectured, with much probability, that Swift's grandmother, wife of Thomas Swift, vicar of Goodrich in Herefordshire, was daughter to a brother of Sir Erasmus Dryden, John Dryden's grandfather. The lady had a brother, Jonathan Dryden, a clergyman; whence Swift's Christian name.

has sneered at the work and its trio of dedications in his witty 'Battle of the Books.' The story is told that Swift, about the year 1692, sent Dryden several Pindaric odes for perusal, and to obtain his advice as to publication, and that Dryden returned them, saying, 'Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet.'

Swift was always ready to sneer at his cousin Dryden. The translation of Virgil is alluded to disrespectfully in the dedication of 'The Tale of a Tub.' Some lines of Swift's ridicule Will's and his cousin's prefaces:—

' Put on the critic's brow and sit
At Will's, the puny judge of wit.

Read all the prefaces of Dryden,
For these our critics much confide in;
Though merely writ at first for filling
To raise the volume's price a shilling.

While Dryden was engaged in translating Virgil, he published a translation of Du Fresnoy's Latin poem on the Art of Painting, to which he prefixed an essay, entitled 'Parallel of Poetry and Painting.' He wrote also in this period a Life of Lucian for a translation of Lucian's works, which was being prepared by Mr. Moyle, Sir Henry Shere, and other gentlemen, and which was not published till after Dryden's death. Dryden's great ode, Alexander's Feast, his second ode for St. Cecilia's day, was written very soon after the completion of the Virgil, and was sung at the feast of St. Cecilia, November 22, 1697. It is stated by Derrick, on somewhat doubtful authority, that Dryden received forty pounds for the use of this ode on that day. It is likely that he received a gratuity from the Society for which he composed it; but on the other hand, Dryden wrote in September to his sons at Rome, after he had undertaken to produce this ode for November,—'This is troublesome, and no way beneficial; but I could not deny the stewards who came in a body to my house to desire that kindness, one of them being Mr. Bridgman, whose parents are your mother's friends.'

Dryden's three sons were now at Rome; the two elder had gone there in the end of 1692, and the youngest followed them. They were favoured by the Pope, Innocent the Twelfth, who made the eldest his Chamberlain, gave some other office in his household to the second, and made the third an officer of his Guards. A comedy written by Dryden's second son, John, 'The Husband his Own Cuckold,' was brought out at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1696, with a prologue by Congreve and an epilogue by Dryden the father. Dryden wrote also a preface for the play when published, in which he gave his opinion that his son's comedy had been surpassed by only two living writers, his friends Southerne and Congreve, and ended characteristically, 'Farewell, reader; if you are a father, you will forgive me; if not, you will when you are a father.' Sir Robert Howard had taken great interest in his nephew's play, and had helped to adapt it for the stage: the play was dedicated to him, and the father's and uncle's encouragement was happily indicated by a motto from Virgil—

'Et pater Aeneas et avunculus excitat Hector.'

Sir Robert Howard, Dryden's brother-in-law, with whom in earlier life he had had a literary controversy and a quarrel, was now his friend and benefactor, and Dryden mentions in one of his letters to his sons an intention to refashion for the stage a play by Sir Robert, 'The Conquest of China by the Tartars,' with an expectation of receiving a hundred pounds for the work.

The publication of Jeremy Collier's famous work on 'The Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage,' is unfortunately connected with Dryden's biography. Dryden was a prominent offender and deservedly a special object of attack. Collier's work appeared in March 1698. In June Dryden refers to it, in some lines addressed to Motteux on his play 'Beauty in Distress.' Collier was a clergyman, and Dryden, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, had always attacked all clergies. He affected to consider Collier's anger against himself as inspired by his attacks on Collier's brotherhood,

and, while confessing faultiness, suggested that his antagonist exaggerated offence and spread mischief. He does not name Collier, but he replies to 'the Muses' foes,'

'But when to common sense they give the lie
And turn distorted words to blasphemy,
They give the scandal; and the wise discern
Their glosses teach an age too apt to learn.
What I have loosely or profanely writ
Let them to fires, their due desert, commit.
Nor, when accused by me, let them complain—
Their faults and not their function I arraign.'

And then in beautiful lines he claims for the drama participation with the pulpit in moral instruction:

'But let us first reform, and then so live
That we may teach our teachers to forgive;
Our desk be placed below their lofty chairs,
Ours be the practice, as the precept theirs.
The moral part at least we may divide,
Humility reward, and punish pride;
Ambition, interest, avarice accuse:
These are the province of the tragic muse.'

There was moderation in this reply, and if Dryden had stopped here, posterity might have accepted his confession and apology. But in his very last composition, his epilogue for a representation for his own benefit, written within a few weeks before his death, he treats Collier's rebukes in another tone, throws the blame of his immoral writings on the court of Charles the Second, and on the brink of the grave jests on virtue and vice:

'Perhaps the parson stretched a point too far,
When with our theatres he waged a war.
He tells you that this very moral age
Received the first infection from the stage;
But, sure a banished court, with lewdness fraught,
The seeds of open vice returning brought.

The poets, who must live by courts or starve,
Were proud so good a government to serve;

And mixing with buffoons and pimps profane,
Tainted the stage for some small snip of gain.

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The sin was of our native growth, 'tis true;
The scandal of the sin was wholly new,
Misses there were, but modestly concealed;
Whitehall the naked Venus first revealed,
Who standing, as at Cyprus, in her shrine,
The strumpet was adored with rites divine.'

Towards the end of 1698 Dryden began his 'Fables,' or translations from Chaucer and Boccaccio, which were published only a few months before his death, in a folio volume entitled, 'Tales, Ancient and Modern, Translated into Verse from Homer, Ovid, Boccaccio and Chaucer; with Original Poems.' While engaged on this work, Dryden entertained hopes of obtaining some favour from the government, chiefly through the good offices of his friend and connexion Charles Montagu, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He sent to Montagu for perusal some of the poems designed for this last of his publications, and he rather pressingly solicited his patronage. But his hopes were disappointed, and shortly after he writes to his cousin Mrs. Steward despondingly: 'The court rather speaks kindly of me than does anything for me, though they promise largely.' And again, 'I doubt I am in no condition of having a kindness done me, having the Chancellor for my enemy.' The Lord Chancellor whom he suspected of hindering his advancement was the great Lord Somers.

The 'Fables' were published in November 1699, and Dryden had the gratification of seeing this, his last work, well received. The epistle to his cousin John Driden appeared for the first time in this volume, and Dryden thought this poem 'the best of the whole'; and it is an excellent poem.

Dryden's health had now been failing for some time. In the preface to the 'Fables,' published in November 1699, he speaks of himself as a cripple in his limbs, and alludes to interruptions in his work from 'various intervals of sickness.' But he congratulates himself on being as vigorous as ever in the faculties of his mind, and says that he intends, if longer life and

moderate health be granted to him, to translate the whole of Homer. This design was not accomplished. During the winter of 1699-1700 his infirmities increased. He had been long a martyr to gout and gravel. In December the appearance of erysipelas in his legs added to his sufferings, and during the months of March and April he was mostly confined to his house by gout. At last mortification set in on one of his legs, and amputation of the limb was recommended as the only possible means of averting death, but this operation Dryden refused to submit to, and on the 1st of May 1700 he expired at his house in Gerrard Street. At the time of his death he was within three months of completing his sixty-ninth year. His body was embalmed, and lay in state for several days at the College of Physicians. Thence it was removed on May 13, and carried with great pomp and with all the honours of a public funeral to Westminster Abbey, to be buried in Poet's Corner beside the graves of Chaucer and Cowley.

There appears to be no doubt that Lord Jefferies, son of the Lord Chancellor Jefferies of bad repute, was principally instrumental in securing for Dryden the honour of a public funeral; and the Earl of Dorset, and Charles Montagu, who is said to have offered in the first instance to pay the expenses of a private interment, doubtless zealously seconded the proposal of Jefferies. Garth, a poet of no mean skill, and President of the College of Physicians, placed the College building at the disposal of Dryden's friends, and he delivered a Latin oration before the body left the College. Thence some fifty carriages, filled with distinguished friends, followed the hearse to Westminster Abbey. Among these would be some who had been friends from early days, and who for the greater part of half a century had watched his literary career—Dorset, Mulgrave (now Marquis of Normanby), Sir Charles Sedley, and Samuel Pepys; and other younger men, distinguished in literature, wit and politics, who had been attracted to him by his fame and by their literary sympathies—Charles Montagu, already a leading statesman, Laurence Hyde Earl of Rochester, son of the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, Southerne, Congreve, Wycherly, Vanbrugh,

Creech, the translator of Lucretius, Walsh, an accomplished man of letters, who was afterwards prominent among Pope's friends, Sir Godfrey Kneller the painter, Betterton the actor, and the young St. John, destined to a fame brilliant but irregular under the title of Lord Bolingbroke.

It was expected that Montagu and Dorset would erect a monument to Dryden in Westminster Abbey, but this expectation was not realized; and it was not till twenty years after his death that a monument was placed over his grave. This was done in 1720 by his old friend Mulgrave, now Duke of Buckinghamshire, who died a few months after he had discharged this duty to friendship and public desert. Two years later another monument to the poet and his family was erected in the church of Tichmarsh, in Northamptonshire, by his cousin, Mrs. Creed, who describes Dryden, in the elaborate inscription, as 'the celebrated poet and laureat of his time,' and proceeds to say that 'his bright parts and learning are best seen in his own excellent writings on various subjects: we boast that he was bred and had his first learning here, where he has often made us happy by his kind visits and most delightful conversation.'

Dryden died without a will. He had little to leave beyond the small estate at Blakesley, which he had received from his father, and probably some small landed property which he had acquired in Wiltshire through his marriage. The expenses of his mode of living and of his family had never, in his most prosperous days, been below his income, and of late years he had had great difficulty, even with kind aid from many friends, in meeting his expenses. Lady Elizabeth Dryden, the widow, survived her husband for several years. Soon after his death she became insane, and she continued so till her death in 1714. The three sons all died before their mother. The eldest, Charles, was drowned in the Thames, near Datchet, in August 1704; John, the second son, had died at Rome, in January 1701; and Erasmus Henry, the youngest, died in December 1710, a few months after he had succeeded to the family baronetcy on the death of his cousin, Sir John Dryden.

In person Dryden was short and stout, with a ruddy face. Pope, who when a boy saw Dryden once in his old age, describes him as plump and fresh-coloured, with a down look. His hair is said by an enemy to have inclined to red^h, but it early became gray, and he wore it long and flowing. He had a large mole on one of his cheeks. His eyes were far apart. In a poem on a portrait of him, written by a friend in 1700, his eye is called 'sleepy.' His expressive face, without being regularly handsome, was winning. He says of himself in one of his early writings, not meaning probably all that is said, 'My conversation is slow and dull, my humour saturnine and reserved; in short, I am none of those who endeavour to break jests in company or make reparteesⁱ.' An adversary took him at his word, and has made him say,—

'Nor wine nor love could ever make me gay,
To writing bred, I knew not what to say.'^k

But if his conversation was not brilliant, it was agreeable among friends of congenial spirits, and he was a favourite companion. We learn from Pope, through Spence, how Dryden's days were generally passed. He lived for many years before his death in Gerrard Street, Soho, where he died. The room in which he sat and wrote was on the ground floor, looking into the street. He spent his mornings in writing, dined early with his family, and after dinner went to Will's coffee-house in Russell Street, where he spent the evening. 'It was Dryden,' says Pope, 'who made Will's coffee-house the great resort for the wits of his time^l.' At Will's Dryden was, during the latter part of his life, a literary monarch, and he was a genial and kind-hearted ruler. There is a story, not quite certain to be true, that he gave the boy Pope a shilling for translating the story of Pyramus and Thisbe. Dean Lockier describes his goodnatured way of taking an interruption and correction

^h Tom Brown, in 'The Reasons for Mr. Bayes changing his Religion.

ⁱ Defence of the Essay on Dramatic Poesy.

^k A Satire to his Muse.

^l Spence's Anecdotes.

from himself, a youth of seventeen, and a stranger to Dryden, while he was discoursing at Will's with authority on his own 'Mac Flecknoe.' 'If anything of mine is good,' said Dryden, 'it is my "Mac Flecknoe," and I shall value myself the more on it, because it is the first piece of ridicule written in heroics.' The boy Lockier said audibly that 'Mac Flecknoe' was a fine poem, but not the first written that way. Dryden turned to him and asked 'how long he had been a dealer in poetry?' and added smilingly, 'pray, sir, what is that you did imagine to have been writ so before?' Lockier named Boileau's 'Lutrin' and Tassoni's 'Secchia Rapita.' 'It is true,' said Dryden, 'I had forgot them': and as Dryden left the coffee-house that evening, he went up to the youth who had corrected him, and asked him to come and visit him. Dryden's kindness to younger authors is one of his distinguishing attributes, and one of several proofs of an amiable nature. It was thus that he attracted and retained the friendship of Southerne, Congreve, and many others, whose respectful attention and genial kindness solaced and softened the sorrows of his latter years.

Congreve, to whom, in lines which have been already quoted, Dryden bequeathed the care of his reputation, has left an account of Dryden's character which is true, if not complete. 'He was of a nature,' says Congreve, 'exceedingly humane and compassionate; easily forgiving injuries, and capable of a prompt and sincere reconciliation with them who had offended him. . . . His friendship, where he professed it, went much beyond his professions, and I have been told of strong and generous instances of it, by the persons themselves who received them; though his hereditary means was little more than a bare competency. . . . He was of very easy, I may say of very pleasing access, but something slow, and as it were diffident in his advances to others. He had something in his nature that abhorred intrusion into any society whatsoever. . . . To the best of my knowledge and observation he was of all the men that ever I knew one of the most modest, and the most easily to be discountenanced in his approaches to his superiors or his equals.'

But Dryden's character was a mixed one, and faults must be mentioned. His indecent writing, his changes in politics and in religion, and his unscrupulousness in praise and blame, are parts of his life and character which cannot be explained away or defended. If on some occasions, after Jeremy Collier's severe rebukes, he has made in his last years some apology for indecencies in his plays, it cannot be said that he has ever expressed himself with becoming contrition. Nor is his gross writing confined to his plays. Lord Macaulay has most truly said that many of his translations, whether from Virgil or Boccaccio, are full of interpolated and exaggerated indecencies. The translations from Lucretius deserve the same reproof. In his very last work, the volume of Fables, his tale from Boccaccio of Sigismunda and Guiscardo, beautifully told in verse the most melodious, is overcharged with licentious sentiments which are not Boccaccio's, but Dryden's: and yet in the preface to these Fables he could write: 'In general, I will only say that I have written nothing which savours of immorality or profaneness, at least, I am not conscious to myself of any such intention. If there happen to be found an immoral expression or a thought too wanton, they all crept into my verses through inadvertency.' Indecent thoughts came to him naturally, and he could not restrain the prurient impulse. There are many passages of contemporary writers, more or less unfriendly, which, after due allowance for spite and exaggeration, render certain what would otherwise be probable, that Dryden's licentious writing was a sign of licentiousness of life. He knew not political consistency, and he did not regard decency in some of his transitions. His sudden change at the Restoration from flattery of the Protectorate to adulation of the Stuarts cannot possibly be explained by honest conviction. To acquiesce as a good subject in the new order of things, and make the best of the monarchy which the national will had restored, would have been becoming; but for the poetical eulogist of the Commonwealth and of Cromwell to devote himself immediately to poetical praises of Charles and Clarendon, and to laments over the Commonwealth, which but a year

before he had lauded and rejoiced in, is discreditable, and must have been an interested change. Almost all his virulent abuse of Shaftesbury, the great leader of opposition in the latter years of the reign of Charles the Second, is in flagrant contradiction to his former praises of the policy of the Cabal Ministry, the war with Holland, and Clifford, Shaftesbury's colleague of the Cabal government. It would be difficult in any case to give Dryden credit for perfect sincerity and disinterestedness in his adoption of the Roman Catholic religion, after James the Second became king; but his antecedents and general character make this altogether impossible. Dryden's temperament was by no means of that sort which engenders sudden conversions. He was not impulsive, and he had no enthusiasm. His clear sharp intellect, and his strong critical faculty, made it easy for him to see faults and flaws, and protected him against all fanaticism. His '*Religio Laici*' is the mature expression of a faith which is more of the head than of the heart: it is the religion of a calm and clear-sighted man, who has reasoned himself into accepting a quantum of theology, and desires as little dogma as possible. How great the leap from this philosophical religion to Romanism, when a Roman Catholic king ascended the throne!

Dryden, in his literary character, is known to the multitude chiefly as a poet, but he is to be regarded and remembered also as a prose writer, as a translator, and as the leading wit in his own age of London literary society. His place among English poets is high, if not the highest, in the second class, the first being that of Chaucer and Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton, in whom genius transcends art, and the '*faculty divine*' is ever apparent above subject and execution, and whose poetry streams from a '*full-welling fountain-head*' of inner imagination. In Dryden, as in Pope, we admire reason, language, argument, wit, and art. Dryden is a great master of language and of verse. He is the most vigorous and polished of satirists, combining subtle refinement with fervour; and he is unequalled as a reasoner in rhyme. '*Ab-salom and Achitophel*,' superior as a poem, yet presents no samples of his satirical invective equal to '*The Medal*,' and

'Mac Flecknoe,' 'Religio Laici,' 'The Hind and the Panther,' and likewise 'Absalom and Achitophel,' display his power of arguing in verse, another fine example of which is to be found in the theological discussion of Maximin, Apollonius, and St. Catherine, in 'Tyrannic Love.' The fierce satirist was an exquisite song-writer; some of the songs interspersed in his plays are gems of art, which have been much hidden from view by the deterring grossness of many of the plays, and of many of the songs themselves, which has prevented them from being separately collected. Dryden as an author would seem to have had two natures. He could be correct and dignified when he chose, and it was easy and seemed pleasant to him to be gross and coarse. The polished style of most of his Prologues and Epilogues for the academical audience of Oxford University is in marked contrast with the prurient indecency of the addresses which he prepared for the loose, dissolute courtiers and vulgar cits of London. Gracefully in one of the Oxford Prologues has he discriminated between the University and the Town.

' Our poet, could he find forgiveness here,
 Would wish it rather than a plaudit there.
 He owns no crown from those Prætorian bands,
 But knows that right is in this Senate's hands.
 Kings make their poets whom themselves think fit,
 But 'tis your suffrage makes authentic wit.'^m

The plays of Dryden, as plays, contribute little to his fame. They were mostly hastily composed, and written as money-making tasks. But there are scattered through them many beautiful passages of pure and noble thought, and many lines which fasten on the memory and are quoted from mouth to mouth, often without its being known whence they come—an unfailling test of poetic power. The following, which has been often quoted, and cannot be quoted too often, is one of many 'beauties' of 'Aurengzebe':—

^m Prologue to the University of Oxford, 1673, p. 420 of Globe edition.

‘When I consider life, ’tis all a cheat,
 Yet fooled with hope, men favour the deceit,
 Trust on, and think to-morrow will repay:
 To-morrow’s falser than the former day,
 Lies worse, and while it says we shall be blest
 With some new joys, cuts off what we possess.
 Strange cozenage! none would live past years again,
 Yet all hope pleasure in what yet remain,
 And from the dregs of life think to receive
 What the first sprightly running could not give.
 I’m tired of waiting for this chymic gold,
 Which fools us young and beggars us when old.’

To one of Dryden’s plays, the Second Part of ‘The Conquest of Granada,’ we owe—

‘Forgiveness to the injured does belong,
 But they ne’er pardon who have done the wrong.’

To another play, ‘All for Love,’ we owe—

‘Men are but children of a larger growth:
 Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
 And full as craving too, and full as vain.’

It is Almanzor in the First Part of ‘The Conquest of Granada’ who exclaims, addressing the King Boabdallin—

‘Obeyed as sovereign by thy subjects be,
 But know that I alone am king of me:
 I am as free as Nature first made man,
 Ere the base laws of servitude began,
 When wild in woods the noble savage ran.’

Candiope, in ‘The Maiden Queen,’ describes the retired courtier longing to return to court—

‘Those who like you have once in courts been great,
 May think they wish, but wish not, to retreat.
 They seldom go but when they cannot stay;
 As losing gamesters throw the dice away.
 E’en in that cell where you repose would find,
 Visions of court will haunt your restless mind;
 And glorious dreams stand ready to restore,
 The pleasing shades of all you had before.’

Maximin says, in 'Tyrannic Love,'—

'Fate's dark recesses we can never find,
But Fortune at some hours is always kind;
The lucky have whole days, which still they choose,
The unlucky have but hours, and these they lose.'

These are a few specimens of many passages of power and beauty in Dryden's little-read and generally inferior plays. His faculty of placing words is wonderful, and conspicuous in prose as well as in poetry. He was specially fitted for a translator. The faults of his translation of Virgil are mostly faults of haste and carelessness. Wanting money, he finished in three years what he rightly told Tonson that it would require seven years to do well.

We learn from Pope, through Dean Lockier, that Dryden made Will's coffee-house, in Russell Street, Covent Garden, the great resort of all the wits in London, and that some years after his death Addison carried the wits away from Will's to another coffee-house in the same street, and on the opposite side of it, Button's^a. Pope, who was but twelve years old when Dryden died, had been taken once to Will's in Dryden's last year to get a sight of the poet. Addison succeeded to Dryden's critical chair, and the mantle of the poet fell in a little time on Pope, who regarded Dryden as his teacher of versification, and whose first poems, the Pastorals, were published nine years after Dryden's death.

Notices of the early editions of the poems comprised in this volume are subjoined, as important in connexion with the history of the text:—

Heroic Stanzas on Oliver Cromwell. The date on the title-page of the first edition is 1659, but it was doubtless published before the end of 1658. There are two editions of 1659. The first was probably published with two other

^a Spence's Anecdotes, p. 113.

poems on the same subject by Waller and Sprat, the volume having the title, 'Three Poems upon the Death of his late Highness, Oliver, Lord Protector of England, Scotland, and Ireland, written by Mr. Edm. Waller, Mr. Jo. Dryden, Mr. Sprat of Oxford: London, Printed by William Wilson, and are to be sold in Well-yard, near Little St. Bartholomew's Hospital: 1659.' Dryden's poem is printed first in this collection, with the separate heading of 'Heroic Stanzas consecrated to the Glorious Memory of his Most Serene and Renowned Highness, Oliver, late Lord Protector of the Commonwealth, &c. Written after the celebration of his Funeral.' In the other edition of 1659 Dryden's poem is printed alone; it has the same publisher. There is considerable difference of spelling and punctuation between the two, but none of words. During the reigns of Charles the Second and James the Second, Dryden did not republish this poem, or include it in any list of his works; but it was reprinted in 1682 by a political foe. In the reign of William, Jacob Tonson, Dryden's publisher and friend, republished the poem in 1695 from the separate edition of 1659. It was afterwards printed in the first volume of the 'State Poems,' with several corruptions of the text; and this corrupt reprint was reproduced in the edition of the 'Miscellany Poems' in 1716. Several later editors followed this corrupt copy. The editions of 1659 contain the correct text.

Astræa Redux. This was originally published in 1660 in folio, by Henry Herringman. Dryden's name is printed *Driden* on the title-page. The poem was republished in 1688, in quarto, by Tonson, together with the Panegyric on Charles the Second at the Coronation, the Address to Lord Chancellor Clarendon on New Year's Day, 1662, and the *Annus Mirabilis*; and then in 1688. The spelling *Driden* was preserved on the title-page of 'Astræa Redux.' The text of the folio edition of 1660 is perfectly to be trusted.

Annus Mirabilis. The first edition of 1667 is a little volume in small octavo, 'printed by Henry Herringman at the Anchor of the Lower Walk of the New Exchange, 1667.'

Dryden, who was not in the habit of careful correction of the press, printed a list of *errata* on this occasion, with the following notice:—

‘ TO THE READERS.

‘ Notwithstanding the diligence which has been used in my absence, some faults have escaped the press; and I have so many of my own to answer for, that I am not willing to be charged with those of the printer. I have only noted the gravest of them, not such as by false stops have confounded the sense, but such as by mistaken words have corrupted it.’

This little volume, which Sir Walter Scott does not appear to have seen, contains the best text. Tonson’s reprint, in quarto, 1688, contains several changes of text, which are generally changes for the worse; a few, however, may be accepted as improvements. The text of 1688 was literally followed in the edition of the ‘Miscellany Poems’ of 1716. The poem is printed in this volume, as also in the Globe edition, with the title-page of the first edition, which has not been generally given by modern editors, and also with Dryden’s own marginal indications, which have been often omitted.

Absalom and Achitophel. The first edition was in folio, published by Jacob Tonson in November 1681. A second edition appeared in quarto before the end of December, with several minor changes, and two considerable additions. This second edition is authoritative for the text. Seven more editions were published in Dryden’s lifetime. That in the folio volume of Dryden’s poems, published by Tonson after Dryden’s death in 1701, is there called the tenth edition.

Religio Laici. The first edition is in quarto, published in November 1682; there was a second edition in the same year, and a third in 1683. The poem was not again reprinted till it appeared in Tonson’s folio edition of Dryden’s poems of 1701.

The Hind and the Panther. This poem was first published in quarto in April 1687, and a second edition was published in the same year. The Revolution of 1688 stopped

the demand for the poem. The reprint in Tonson's folio volume of 1701 is called there the third edition. There are several errors in this last reprint; the correct text is to be sought in either of the two editions of 1687.

A bibliographical notice of the 'Miscellany Poems,' edited by Dryden, is added, much confusion arising out of the continued connexion of his name with volumes of the series and with whole collections published after his death. The first volume of 'Miscellanies' was published by Dryden in 1684; there is a second edition of this volume, 1692, and a third, 1702. There is no important difference between the first and second editions, but the third is considerably different. The second volume of Dryden's 'Miscellanies' was called 'Sylvæ,' and published in 1685. A third edition of this volume was published in 1702. The third volume of Dryden's series of 'Miscellanies' was called 'Examen Poeticum,' and appeared in 1693; there was a second edition in 1706. The fourth and last of Dryden's volumes is called 'Annual Miscellany for the year 1694'; and there is a second edition of 1708.

After Dryden's death a fifth volume was published by Jacob Tonson in 1704, and a sixth in 1709, with neither of which Dryden had anything to do. Pope's Pastorals were first published in the sixth volume.

An edition of 'Miscellany Poems,' in six volumes, was published by Tonson in 1716. This is quite different, both by addition and omission, from the previous sets of six volumes, and has no just title to the name, by which it goes, of Dryden's Miscellany Poems. There are later reprints of these so-called Dryden's Miscellany Poems of 1716.

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

A POEM.

*'Si propius stes
Te capiat magis.'* [HORACE, *Ars Poet.* 361.]



TO THE READER.

'TIS not my intention to make an apology for my poem: some will think it needs no excuse, and others will receive none. The design, I am sure, is honest; but he who draws his pen for one party must expect to make enemies of the other. For wit and fool are consequents of Whig and Tory; 5 and every man is a knave or an ass to the contrary side. There's a treasury of merits in the Fanatic church as well as in the Papist, and a pennyworth to be had of saintship, honesty, and poetry, for the lewd, the factious, and the blockheads; but the longest chapter in Deuteronomy has not 10 curses enough for an Anti-Bromingham. My comfort is, their manifest prejudice to my cause will render their judgment of less authority against me. Yet if a poem have a genius, it will force its own reception in the world; for there is a sweetness in good verse, which tickles even while it hurts; 15 and no man can be heartily angry with him who pleases him against his will. The commendation of adversaries is the greatest triumph of a writer, because it never comes unless extorted. But I can be satisfied on more easy terms: if I happen to please the more moderate sort, I shall be sure 20 of an honest party and, in all probability, of the best judges; for the least concerned are commonly the least corrupt. And I confess I have laid in for those, by rebating the satire, where justice would allow it, from carrying too sharp an edge. They who can criticize so weakly as to imagine I have 25 done my worst, may be convinced at their own cost that I can write severely with more ease than I can gently. I have but laughed at some men's follies, when I could have declaimed against their vices; and other men's virtues I have commended as freely as I have taxed their crimes. And now, 30 if you are a malicious reader, I expect you should return

upon me that I affect to be thought more impartial than I am; but if men are not to be judged by their professions, God forgive you commonwealth's-men for professing so plausibly for the government. You cannot be so unconscionable
5 as to charge me for not subscribing of my name; for that would reflect too grossly upon your own party, who never dare, though they have the advantage of a jury to secure them. If you like not my poem, the fault may possibly be in my writing, though 'tis hard for an author to judge against
10 himself; but more probably 'tis in your morals, which cannot bear the truth of it. The violent on both sides will condemn the character of Absalom, as either too favourably or too hardly drawn; but they are not the violent whom I desire to please. The fault on the right hand is to extenuate, palliate,
15 and indulge; and, to confess freely, I have endeavoured to commit it. Besides the respect which I owe his birth, I have a greater for his heroic virtues; and David himself could not be more tender of the young man's life, than I would be of his reputation. But since the most excellent natures are
20 always the most easy and, as being such, are the soonest perverted by ill counsels, especially when baited with fame and glory, it is no more a wonder that he withstood not the temptations of Achitophel than it was for Adam not to have resisted the two devils, the serpent and the woman. The con-
25 clusion of the story I purposely forbore to prosecute, because I could not obtain from myself to show Absalom unfortunate. The frame of it was cut out but for a picture to the waist; and if the draught be so far true, it is as much as I designed.

Were I the inventor, who am only the historian, I should
30 certainly conclude the piece with the reconcilment of Absalom to David. And who knows but this may come to pass? Things were not brought to an extremity where I left the story: there seems yet to be room left for a composure; hereafter there may only be for pity. I have not so much as
35 an uncharitable wish against Achitophel, but am content to be accused of a good-natured error, and to hope with Origen, that the Devil himself may at last be saved. For which reason, in this poem, he is neither brought to set his house in

order, nor to dispose of his person afterwards as he in wisdom shall think fit. God is infinitely merciful ; and his vicegerent is only not so, because he is not infinite.

The true end of satire is the amendment of vices by correction. And he who writes honestly is no more an enemy to the offender than the physician to the patient, when he prescribes harsh remedies to an inveterate disease ; for those are only in order to prevent the chirurgeon's work of an *Ense rescindendum*, which I wish not to my very enemies. To conclude all ; if the body politic have any analogy to the natural, in my weak judgment, an act of oblivion were as necessary in a hot distempered state as an opiate would be in a raging fever.

Shepherding watched one of herders who

ABSALOM AND ACHITOPHEL.

Monmouth

Shepherding

IN pious times, ere priestcraft did begin,
 Before polygamy was made a sin,
 When man on many multiplied his kind,
 Ere one to one was cursedly confined,
 When nature prompted and no law denied 5
 Promiscuous use of concubine and bride,
 Then Israel's monarch after Heaven's own heart
 His vigorous warmth did variously impart
 To wives and slaves, and, wide as his command,
 Scattered his Maker's image through the land. 10
 Michal, of royal blood, the crown did wear,
 A soil ungrateful to the tiller's care:
 Not so the rest; for several mothers bore
 To god-like David several sons before.
 But since like slaves his bed they did ascend, 15
 No true succession could their seed attend.
 Of all this numerous progeny was none
 So beautiful, so brave, as Absalon:
 Whether, inspired by some diviner lust,
 His father got him with a greater gust, 20
 Or that his conscious destiny made way
 By manly beauty to imperial sway.
 Early in foreign fields he won renown
 With kings and states allied to Israel's crown;
 In peace the thoughts of war he could remove 25
 And seemed as he were only born for love.
 Whate'er he did was done with so much ease,
 In him alone 'twas natural to please;

From a book of...

His motions all accompanied with grace,
 And Paradise was opened in his face. 30
 With secret joy indulgent David viewed
 His youthful image in his son renewed;
 To all his wishes nothing he denied
 And made the charming Annabel his bride.
 What faults he had (for who from faults is free?) 35
 His father could not or he would not see.
 Some warm excesses, which the law forbore,
 Were construed youth that purged by boiling o'er;
 And Amnon's murder by a specious name
 Was called a just revenge for injured fame. 40
 Thus praised and loved, the noble youth remained,
 While David undisturbed in Sion reigned.
 But life can never be sincerely blest;
 Heaven punishes the bad, and proves the best.
 The Jews, a headstrong, moody, murmuring race 45
 As ever tried the extent and stretch of grace;
 God's pampered people, whom, debauched with ease,
 No king could govern nor no God could please;
 Gods they had tried of every shape and size
 That godsmiths could produce or priests devise; 50
 These Adam-wits, too fortunately free,
 Began to dream they wanted liberty;
 And when no rule, no precedent was found
 Of men by laws less circumscribed and bound,
 They led their wild desires to woods and caves 55
 And thought that all but savages were slaves.
 They who, when Saul was dead, without a blow
 Made foolish Ishbosheth the crown forego;
 Who banished David did from Hebron bring,
 And with a general shout proclaimed him King; 60
 Those very Jews who at their very best
 Their humour more than loyalty exprest,
 Now wondered why so long they had obeyed
 An idol monarch which their hands had made;
 Thought they might ruin him they could create 65
 Or melt him to that golden calf, a State.

But these were random bolts; no formed design
 Nor interest made the factious crowd to join :
 The sober part of Israel, free from stain,
 Well knew the value of a peaceful reign; 70
 And looking backward with a wise affright
 Saw seams of wounds dishonest to the sight, *ugly*
 In contemplation of whose ugly scars
 They cursed the memory of civil wars.
 The moderate sort of men, thus qualified, 75
 Inclined the balance to the better side ;
 And David's mildness managed it so well,
 The bad found no occasion to rebel.
 But when to sin our biassed nature leans,
 The careful Devil is still at hand with means 80
 And providently pimps for ill desires ;
 The good old cause, revived, a plot requires.
 Plots true or false are necessary things,
 To raise up commonwealths and ruin kings.

The inhabitants of old Jerusalem *London* 85
 Were Jebusites; the town so called from them,
 And theirs the native right.
 But when the chosen people grew more strong,
 The rightful cause at length became the wrong ;
 And every loss the men of Jebus bore, 90
 They still were thought God's enemies the more.
 Thus worn and weakened, well or ill content,
 Submit they must to David's government :
 Impoverished and deprived of all command,
 Their taxes doubled as they lost their land ; 95
 And, what was harder yet to flesh and blood,
 Their gods disgraced, and burnt like common wood.
 This set the heathen priesthood in a flame,
 For priests of all religions are the same.
 Of whatsoe'er descent their godhead be, 100
 Stock, stone, or other homely pedigree,
 In his defence his servants are as bold,
 As if he had been born of beaten gold.

The Jewish Rabbins, though their enemies, *Doctors of the Law.*
 In this conclude them honest men and wise: 105
 For 'twas their duty, all the learned think,
 To espouse his cause by whom they eat and drink.
 From hence began that Plot, the nation's curse,
 Bad in itself, but represented worse,
 Raised in extremes, and in extremes decried, 110
 With oaths affirmed, with dying vows denied,
 Not weighed or winnowed by the multitude,
 But swallowed in the mass, unchewed and crude.
 Some truth there was, but dashed and brewed with lies
 To please the fools and puzzle all the wise: 115
 Succeeding times did equal folly call
 Believing nothing or believing all.
 The Egyptian rites the Jebusites embraced,
 Where gods were recommended by their taste;
 Such savoury deities must needs be good 120
 As served at once for worship and for food.
 By force they could not introduce these gods,
 For ten to one in former days was odds:
 So fraud was used, the sacrificer's trade;
 Fools are more hard to conquer than persuade. 125
 Their busy teachers mingled with the Jews
 And raked for converts even the court and stews:
 Which Hebrew priests the more unkindly took,
 Because the fleece accompanies the flock.
 Some thought they God's anointed meant to slay 130
 By guns, invented since full many a day:
 Our author swears it not; but who can know
 How far the Devil and Jebusites may go?
 This plot, which failed for want of common sense,
 Had yet a deep and dangerous consequence; 135
 For as, when raging fevers boil the blood,
 The standing lake soon floats into a flood,
 And every hostile humour which before
 Slept quiet in its channels bubbles o'er;
 So several factions from this first ferment 140
 Work up to foam and threat the government.

Some by their friends, more by themselves thought wise,
 Opposed the power to which they could not rise.
 Some had in courts been great and, thrown from thence,
 Like fiends were hardened in impenitence. 145
 Some by their Monarch's fatal mercy grown
 From pardoned rebels kinsmen to the throne
 Were raised in power and public office high;
 Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men could tie.
 Of these the false Achitophel was first, 150
 A name to all succeeding ages curst:
 For close designs and crooked counsels fit,
 Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit,
 Restless, unfixed in principles and place,
 In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace; 155
 A fiery soul, which, working out its way,
 Fretted the pigmy body to decay
 And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.
 A daring pilot in extremity,
 Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high, 160
 He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,
 Would steer too nigh the sands to boast his wit.
 Great wits are sure to madness near allied
 And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
 Else, why should he, with wealth and honour blest, 165
 Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
 Punish a body which he could not please,
 Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
 And all to leave what with his toil he won
 To that unfeathered two-legged thing, a son, 170
 Got, while his soul did huddled notions try,
 And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.
 In friendship false, implacable in hate,
 Resolved to ruin or to rule the state;
 To compass this the triple bond he broke,
 The pillars of the public safety shook,
 And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke;
 Then, seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
 Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name. 175

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So easy still it proves in factious times 180
 With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
 How safe is treason and how sacred ill,
 Where none can sin against the people's will,
 Where crowds can wink and no offence be known,
 Since in another's guilt they find their own! 185
 Yet fame deserved no enemy can grudge;
 The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
 In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abbethdin *Love C Chancellor*
 With more discerning eyes or hands more clean,
 Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress, 190
 Swift of despatch and easy of access.
 Oh! had he been content to serve the crown
 With virtues only proper to the gown,
 Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
 From cockle that oppressed the noble seed, 195
 David for him his tuneful harp had strung
 And Heaven had wanted one immortal song.
 But wild ambition loves to slide, not stand,
 And fortune's ice prefers to virtue's land.
 Achitophel, grown weary to possess 200
 A lawful fame and lazy happiness,
 Disdained the golden fruit to gather free
 And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.
 Now, manifest of crimes contrived long since,
 He stood at bold defiance with his Prince, 205
 Held up the buckler of the people's cause
 Against the crown, and skulked behind the laws.
 The wished occasion of the Plot he takes;
 Some circumstances finds, but more he makes;
 By buzzing emissaries fills the ears 210
 Of listening crowds with jealousies and fears
 Of arbitrary counsels brought to light,
 And proves the King himself a Jebusite.
 Weak arguments! which yet he knew full well
 Were strong with people easy to rebel. 215
 For governed by the moon, the giddy Jews
 Tread the same track when she the prime renews:

And once in twenty years their scribes record,
 By natural instinct they change their lord.
 Achitophel still wants a chief, and none 220
 Was found so fit as warlike Absalon. *Wife of Monmouth*
 Not that he wished his greatness to create,
 For politicians neither love nor hate;
 But, for he knew his title not allowed
 Would keep him still depending on the crowd, 225
 That kingly power, thus ebbing out, might be
 Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.
 Him he attempts with studied arts to please
 And sheds his venom in such words as these:

signified 'Auspicious prince, at whose nativity 230
 Some royal planet ruled the southern sky,
 Thy longing country's darling and desire,
 Their cloudy pillar and their guardian fire,
 Their second Moses, whose extended wand
 Divides the seas and shows the promised land, 235
 Whose dawning day in every distant age
 Has exercised the sacred prophet's rage,
 The people's prayer, the glad diviner's theme,
 The young men's vision and the old men's dream,
 Thee Saviour, thee the nation's vows confess, 240
 And never satisfied with seeing bless:
 Swift unspoken pomps thy steps proclaim,
 And stammering babes are taught to lisp thy name.
 How long wilt thou the general joy detain,
 Starve and defraud the people of thy reign? 245
 Content ingloriously to pass thy days,
 Like one of virtue's fools that feeds on praise;
 Till thy fresh glories, which now shine so bright,
 Grow stale and tarnish with our daily sight.
 Believe me, royal youth, thy fruit must be 250
 Or gathered ripe, or rot upon the tree.
 Heaven has to all allotted, soon or late,
 Some lucky revolution of their fate:
 Whose motions if we watch and guide with skill,

(For human good depends on human will,) 255
 Our fortune rolls as from a smooth descent
 And from the first impression takes the bent;
 But, if unseized, she glides away like wind
 And leaves repenting folly far behind.
 Now, now she meets you with a glorious prize 260
 And spreads her locks before her as she flies.
 Had thus old David, from whose loins you spring,
 Not dared, when fortune called him to be King,
 At Gath an exile he might still remain,
 And Heaven's anointing oil had been in vain. 265
 Let his successful youth your hopes engage,
 But shun the example of declining age.
 Behold him setting in his western skies,
 The shadows lengthening as the vapours rise;
 He is not now, as when, on Jordan's sand, 270
 The joyful people thronged to see him land,
 Covering the beach and blackening all the strand,
 But like the Prince of Angels, from his height
 Comes tumbling downward with diminished light:
 Betrayed by one poor plot to public scorn, 275
 (Our only blessing since his curst return,)
 Those heaps of people, which one sheaf did bind,
 Blown off and scattered by a puff of wind.
 What strength can he to your designs oppose,
 Naked of friends, and round beset with foes? 280
 If Pharaoh's doubtful succour he should use, *how XIV*
 A foreign aid would more incense the Jews;
 Proud Egypt would dissembled friendship bring,
 Foment the war, but not support the King;
 Nor would the royal party e'er unite 285
 With Pharaoh's arms to assist the Jebusite;
 Or, if they should, their interest soon would break
 And with such odious aid make David weak.
 All sorts of men, by my successful arts
 Abhorring kings, estrange their altered hearts 290
 From David's rule: and 'tis the general cry,
 Religion, commonwealth, and liberty.

If you, as champion of the public good,
 Add to their arms a chief of royal blood,
 What may not Israel hope, and what applause 295
 Might such a general gain by such a cause?
 Not barren praise alone, that gaudy flower,
 Fair only to the sight, but solid power;
 And nobler is a limited command,
 Given by the love of all your native land, 300
 Than a successive title, long and dark,
 Drawn from the mouldy rolls of Noah's ark.'

sentimental thought (What cannot praise effect in mighty minds,
 When flattery soothes and when ambition blinds?
 Desire of power, on earth a vicious weed, 305
 Yet sprung from high is of celestial seed;
 In God 'tis glory, and when men aspire,
 'Tis but a spark too much of heavenly fire.
 The ambitious youth, too covetous of fame, *reference to his father*
 Too full of angel's metal in his frame, 310
 Unwarily was led from virtue's ways,
 Made drunk with honour and debauched with praise.
 Half loth and half consenting to the ill,
 For loyal blood within him struggled still,
 He thus replied: 'And what pretence have I 315
 To take up arms for public liberty?
 My father governs with unquestioned right,
 The faith's defender and mankind's delight,
 Good, gracious, just, observant of the laws;
 And Heaven by wonders has espoused his cause. 320
 Whom has he wronged in all his peaceful reign?
 Who sues for justice to his throne in vain?
 What millions has he pardoned of his foes
 Whom just revenge did to his wrath expose?
 Mild, easy, humble, studious of our good, 325
 Inclined to mercy and averse from blood.
 If mildness ill with stubborn Israel suit,
 His crime is God's beloved attribute.
 What could he gain his people to betray

Or change his right for arbitrary sway? 330
 Let haughty Pharaoh curse with such a reign
 His fruitful Nile, and yoke a servile train.
 If David's rule Jerusalem displease,
 The dog-star heats their brains to this disease.
 Why then should I, encouraging the bad, 335
 Turn rebel and run popularly mad?
 Were he a tyrant, who by lawless might
 Oppressed the Jews and raised the Jebusite,
 Well might I mourn; but nature's holy bands
 Would curb my spirits and restrain my hands; 340
 The people might assert their liberty,
 But what was right in them were crime in me.
 His favour leaves me nothing to require,
 Prevents my wishes and outruns desire;
 What more can I expect while David lives? 345
 All but his kingly diadem he gives:
 And that'—But there he paused, then sighing said,
 'Is justly destined for a worthier head;
 For when my father from his toils shall rest
 And late augment the number of the blest, 350
 His lawful issue shall the throne ascend,
 Or the collateral line, where that shall end.
 His brother, though oppressed with vulgar spite,
 Yet dauntless and secure of native right,
 Of every royal virtue stands possest, 355
 Still dear to all the bravest and the best.
 His courage foes, his friends his truth proclaim,
 His loyalty the King, the world his fame.
 His mercy even the offending crowd will find,
 For sure he comes of a forgiving kind. 360
 Why should I then repine at Heaven's decree
 Which gives me no pretence to royalty?
 Yet oh that Fate, propitiously inclined,
 Had raised my birth or had debased my mind,
 To my large soul not all her treasure lent, 365
 And then betrayed it to a mean descent!
 I find, I find my mounting spirits bold,

And David's part disdains my mother's mould.
 Why am I scanted by a niggard birth?
 My soul disclaims the kindred of her earth, 370
 And, made for empire, whispers me within,
 Desire of greatness is a god-like sin.'

Him staggering so when Hell's dire agent found,
 While fainting virtue scarce maintained her ground,
 He pours fresh forces in, and thus replies: 375
 'The eternal God, supremely good and wise,
 Imparts not these prodigious gifts in vain.
 What wonders are reserved to bless your reign!
 Against your will your arguments have shown,
 Such virtue's only given to guide a throne. 380
 Not that your father's mildness I contemn,
 But manly force becomes the diadem.
 'Tis true he grants the people all they crave,
 And more perhaps than subjects ought to have:
 For lavish grants suppose a monarch tame 385
 And more his goodness than his wit proclaim.
 But when should people strive their bonds to break,
 If not when kings are negligent or weak?
 Let him give on till he can give no more,
 The thrifty Sanhedrin shall keep him poor; 390
 And every shekel which he can receive
 Shall cost a limb of his prerogative.
 To ply him with new plots shall be my care,
 Or plunge him deep in some expensive war;
 Which when his treasure can no more supply, 395
 He must with the remains of kingship buy.
 His faithful friends our jealousies and fears
 Call Jebusites and Pharaoh's pensioners,
 Whom when our fury from his aid has torn,
 He shall be naked left to public scorn. 400
 The next successor, whom I fear and hate,
 My arts have made obnoxious to the State,
 Turned all his virtues to his overthrow,
 And gained our elders to pronounce a foe.

His right for sums of necessary gold 405
 Shall first be pawned, and afterwards be sold;
 Till time shall ever-wanting David draw
 To pass your doubtful title into law.
 If not, the people have a right supreme
 To make their kings, for kings are made for them. 410
 All empire is no more than power in trust,
 Which, when resumed, can be no longer just.
 Succession, for the general good designed,
 In its own wrong a nation cannot bind:
 If altering that the people can relieve, 415
 Better one suffer than a nation grieve.
 The Jews well know their power: ere Saul they chose
 God was their King, and God they durst depose.
 Urge now your piety, your filial name,
 A father's right and fear of future fame, 420
 The public good, that universal call,
 To which even Heaven submitted, answers all.
 Nor let his love enchant your generous mind;
 'Tis Nature's trick to propagate her kind.
 Our fond begetters, who would never die, 425
 Love but themselves in their posterity.
 Or let his kindness by the effects be tried,
 Or let him lay his vain pretence aside.
 God said, He loved your father; could He bring
 A better proof than to anoint him King? 430
 It surely showed, He loved the shepherd well
 Who gave so fair a flock as Israel.
 Would David have you thought his darling son?
 What means he then to alienate the crown?
 The name of godly he may blush to bear; 435
 'Tis after God's own heart to cheat his heir.
 He to his brother gives supreme command,
 To you a legacy of barren land,
 Perhaps the old harp on which he thrums his lays
 Or some dull Hebrew ballad in your praise. 440
 Then the next heir, a prince severe and wise,
 Already looks on you with jealous eyes,

Sees through the thin disguises of your arts,
 And marks your progress in the people's hearts;
 Though now his mighty soul its grief contains, 445
 He meditates revenge who least complains;
 And like a lion, slumbering in the way
 Or sleep dissembling, while he waits his prey,
 His fearless foes within his distance draws,
 Constrains his roaring and contracts his paws, 450
 Till at the last, his time for fury found,
 He shoots with sudden vengeance from the ground,
 The prostrate vulgar passes o'er and spares,
 But with a lordly rage his hunters tears;
 Your case no tame expedients will afford, 455
 Resolve on death or conquest by the sword,
 Which for no less a stake than life you draw,
 And self-defence is Nature's eldest law.
 Leave the warm people no considering time,
 For then rebellion may be thought a crime. 460
 Prevail yourself of what occasion gives,
 But try your title while your father lives;
 And, that your arms may have a fair pretence,
 Proclaim you take them in the King's defence;
 Whose sacred life each minute would expose 465
 To plots from seeming friends and secret foes.
 And who can sound the depth of David's soul?
 Perhaps his fear his kindness may control:
 He fears his brother, though he loves his son,
 For plighted vows too late to be undone. 470
 If so, by force he wishes to be gained,
 Like women's lechery to seem constrained.
 Doubt not: but, when he most affects the frown,
 Commit a pleasing rape upon the crown.
 Secure his person to secure your cause: 475
 They who possess the Prince possess the laws.'

He said, and this advice above the rest
 With Absalom's mild nature suited best;
 Unblamed of life (ambition set aside),

Not stained with cruelty nor puffed with pride, 480
 How happy had he been, if Destiny
 Had higher placed his birth or not so high!
 His kingly virtues might have claimed a throne
 And blessed all other countries but his own;
 But charming greatness since so few refuse, 485
 'Tis juster to lament him than accuse.
 Strong were his hopes a rival to remove,
 With blandishments to gain the public love,
 To head the faction while their zeal was hot,
 And popularly prosecute the plot. 490
 To further this, Achitophel unites
 The malcontents of all the Israelites,
 Whose differing parties he could wisely join
 For several ends to serve the same design:
 The best, (and of the princes some were such,) 495
 Who thought the power of monarchy too much,
 Mistaken men and patriots in their hearts,
 Not wicked, but seduced by impious arts;
 By these the springs of property were bent
 And wound so high they cracked the government. 500
 The next for interest sought to embroil the state,
 To sell their duty at a dearer rate,
 And make their Jewish markets of the throne,
 Pretending public good to serve their own.
 Others thought kings an useless heavy load, 505
 Who cost too much and did too little good.
 These were for laying honest David by
 On principles of pure good husbandry.
 With them joined all the haranguers of the throng
 That thought to get preferment by the tongue. 510
 Who follow next a double danger bring,
 Not only hating David, but the King;
 The Solymæan rout, well versed of old *London mob*
 In godly faction and in treason bold,
 Cowering and quaking at a conqueror's sword, 515
 But lofty to a lawful prince restored,
 Saw with disdain an Ethnic plot begun

Gentile plot (Jehonada)

And scorned by Jebusites to be outdone.
 Hot Levites headed these; who pulled before
 From the ark, which in the Judges' days they bore, 520
 Resumed their cant, and with a zealous cry
 Pursued their old beloved theocracy,
 Where Sanhedrin and priest enslaved the nation
 And justified their spoils by inspiration;
 For who so fit for reign as Aaron's race, 525
 If once dominion they could found in grace?
 These led the pack; though not of surest scent,
 Yet deepest mouthed against the government.
 A numerous host of dreaming saints succeed
 Of the true old enthusiastic breed: 530
 'Gainst form and order they their power employ,
 Nothing to build and all things to destroy.
 But far more numerous was the herd of such
 Who think too little and who talk too much.
 These out of mere instinct, they knew not why, 535
 Adored their fathers' God and property,
 And by the same blind benefit of Fate
 The Devil and the Jebusite did hate:
 Born to be saved even in their own despite,
 Because they could not help believing right. 540
 Such were the tools; but a whole Hydra more
 Remains of sprouting heads too long to score.
 Some of their chiefs were princès of the land;
 In the first rank of these did Zimri stand,
 A man so various that he seemed to be 545
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
 Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
 Was everything by starts and nothing long;
 But in the course of one revolving moon
 Was chymist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon; 550
 Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
 Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
 Blest madman, who could every hour employ
 With something new to wish or to enjoy!
 Railing and praising were his usual themes, 555

And both, to show his judgment, in extremes :
 So over violent or over civil
 That every man with him was God or Devil.
 In squandering wealth was his peculiar art ;
 Nothing went unrewarded but desert. 560
 Beggared by fools whom still he found too late,
 He had his jest, and they had his estate.
 He laughed himself from Court ; then sought relief
 By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief :
 For spite of him, the weight of business fell 565
 On Absalom and wise Achitophel ;
 Thus wicked but in will, of means bereft,
 He left not faction, but of that was left.
 Titles and names 'twere tedious to rehearse
 Of lords below the dignity of verse. 570
 Wits, warriors, commonwealth's-men were the best ;
 Kind husbands and mere nobles all the rest.
 And therefore in the name of dulness be
 The well-hung Balaam and cold Caleb free ;
 And canting Nadab let oblivion damn 575
 Who made new porridge for the paschal lamb.
 Let friendship's holy band some names assure,
 Some their own worth, and some let scorn secure.
 Nor shall the rascal rabble here have place
 Whom kings no titles gave, and God no grace : 580
 Not bull-faced Jonas, who could statutes draw
 To mean rebellion and make treason law.
 But he, though bad, is followed by a worse,
 The wretch who Heaven's anointed dared to curse ;
 Shimei, whose youth did early promise bring 585
 Of zeal to God and hatred to his King,
 Did wisely from expensive sins refrain
 And never broke the Sabbath but for gain :
 Nor ever was he known an oath to vent
 Or curse, unless against the government. 590
 Thus heaping wealth by the most ready way
 Among the Jews, which was to cheat and pray,
 The City, to reward his pious hate

Against his master, chose him magistrate.
 His hand a vane of justice did uphold, 595
 His neck was loaded with a chain of gold.
 During his office treason was no crime,
 The sons of Belial had a glorious time;
 For Shimei, though not prodigal of self,
 Yet loved his wicked neighbour as himself. 600
 When two or three were gathered to declaim
 Against the monarch of Jerusalem,
 Shimei was always in the midst of them :
 And, if they cursed the King when he was by,
 Would rather curse than break good company. 605
 If any durst his factious friends accuse,
 He packed a jury of dissenting Jews ;
 Whose fellow-feeling in the godly cause
 Would free the suffering saint from human laws :
 For laws are only made to punish those 610
 Who serve the King, and to protect his foes.
 If any leisure time he had from power,
 Because 'tis sin to misemploy an hour,
 His business was by writing to persuade
 That kings were useless and a clog to trade : 615
 And that his noble stylè he might refine,
 No Rechabite more shunned the fumes of wine.
 Chaste were his cellars, and his shrieval board
 The grossness of a city feast abhorred :
 His cooks with long disuse their trade forgot ; 620
 Cool was his kitchen, though his brains were hot.
 Such frugal virtue malice may accuse ;
 But sure 'twas necessary to the Jews :
 For towns once burnt such magistrates require
 As dare not tempt God's providence by fire. 625
 With spiritual food he fed his servants well,
 But free from flesh that made the Jews rebel :
 And Moses' laws he held in more account
 For forty days of fasting in the mount.
 To speak the rest, who better are forgot, 630
 Would tire a well-breathed witness of the plot.

Yet, Corah, thou shalt from oblivion pass ;
 Erect thyself, thou monumental brass,
 High as the serpent of thy metal made,
 While nations stand secure beneath thy shade. 635
 What though his birth were base, yet comets rise
 From earthy vapours, ere they shine in skies.
 Prodigious actions may as well be done
 By weaver's issue as by prince's son.
 This arch-attester for the public good 640
 By that one deed ennobles all his blood.
 Who ever asked the witnesses' high race
 Whose oath with martyrdom did Stephen grace?
 Ours was a Levite, and as times went then,
 His tribe were God Almighty's gentlemen. 645
 Sunk were his eyes, his voice was harsh and loud,
 Sure signs he neither choleric was nor proud :
 His long chin proved his wit, his saint-like grace
 A church vermilion and a Moses' face.
 His memory, miraculously great, 650
 Could plots exceeding man's belief repeat ;
 Which therefore cannot be accounted lies,
 For human wit could never such devise.
 Some future truths are mingled in his book,
 But where the witness failed, the prophet spoke : 655
 Some things like visionary flights appear ;
 The spirit caught him up, the Lord knows where ;
 And gave him his Rabbinical degree
 Unknown to foreign University.
 His judgment yet his memory did excel, 660
 Which pieced his wondrous evidence so well
 And suited to the temper of the times,
 Then groaning under Jebusitic crimes.
 Let Israel's foes suspect his heavenly call
 And rashly judge his writ apocryphal ; 665
 Our laws for such affronts have forfeits made,
 He takes his life who takes away his trade.
 Were I myself in witness Corah's place,
 The wretch who did me such a dire disgrace

Should whet my memory, though once forgot, 670
 To make him an appendix of my plot.
 His zeal to Heaven made him his Prince despise,
 And load his person with indignities.
 But zeal peculiar privilege affords,
 Indulging latitude to deeds and words: 675
 And Corah might for Agag's murder call,
 In terms as coarse as Samuel used to Saul.
 What others in his evidence did join,
 The best that could be had for love or coin,
 In Corah's own predicament will fall, 680
 For Witness is a common name to all.

Surrounded thus with friends of every sort,
 Deluded Absalom forsakes the court;
 Impatient of high hopes, urged with renown,
 And fired with near possession of a crown. 685
 The admiring crowd are dazzled with surprise
 And on his goodly person feed their eyes.
 His joy concealed, he sets himself to show,
 On each side bowing popularly low,
 His looks, his gestures, and his words he frames 690
 And with familiar ease repeats their names.
 Thus formed by nature, furnished out with arts,
 He glides unfelt into their secret hearts.
 Then with a kind compassionating look,
 And sighs, bespeaking pity ere he spoke, 695
 Few words he said, but easy those and fit,
 More slow than Hybla-drops and far more sweet.

'I mourn, my countrymen, your lost estate,
 Though far unable to prevent your fate:
 Behold a banished man, for your dear cause 700
 Exposed a prey to arbitrary laws!
 Yet oh that I alone could be undone,
 Cut off from empire, and no more a son!
 Now all your liberties a spoil are made,
 Egypt and Tyrus intercept your trade, 705
 And Jebusites your sacred rites invade.

My father, whom with reverence yet I name,
 Charmed into ease, is careless of his fame,
 And, bribed with petty sums of foreign gold,
 Is grown in Bathsheba's embraces old; 710
 Exalts his enemies, his friends destroys,
 And all his power against himself employs.
 He gives, and let him give, my right away;
 But why should he his own and yours betray?
 He, only he can make the nation bleed, 715
 And he alone from my revenge is freed.
 Take then my tears (with that he wiped his eyes),
 'Tis all the aid my present power supplies:
 No court-informer can these arms accuse;
 These arms may sons against their fathers use. 720
 And 'tis my wish, the next successor's reign
 May make no other Israelite complain.'

Youth, beauty, graceful action seldom fail,
 But common interest always will prevail;
 And pity never ceases to be shown 725
 To him who makes the people's wrongs his own.
 The crowd that still believe their kings oppress
 With lifted hands their young Messiah bless:
 Who now begins his progress to ordain
 With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous train; 730
 From east to west his glories he displays
 And, like the sun, the promised land surveys.
 Fame runs before him as the morning star,
 And shouts of joy salute him from afar;
 Each house receives him as a guardian god 735
 And consecrates the place of his abode.
 But hospitable treats did most commend
 Wise Issachar, his wealthy western friend.
 This moving court that caught the people's eyes,
 And seemed but pomp, did other ends disguise; 740
 Achitophel had formed it, with intent
 To sound the depths and fathom, where it went,
 The people's hearts, distinguish friends from foes,

And try their strength before they came to blows.
 Yet all was coloured with a smooth pretence 745
 Of specious love and duty to their prince.
 Religion and redress of grievances,
 Two names that always cheat and always please,
 Are often urged ; and good king David's life
 Endangered by a brother and a wife. 750
 Thus in a pageant show a plot is made,
 And peace itself is war in masquerade.
 Oh foolish Israel! never warned by ill!
 Still the same bait, and circumvented still!
 Did ever men forsake their present ease, 755
 In midst of health imagine a disease,
 Take pains contingent mischiefs to foresee,
 Make heirs for monarchs, and for God decree?
 What shall we think? Can people give away
 Both for themselves and sons their native sway? 760
 Then they are left defenceless to the sword
 Of each unbounded, arbitrary lord;
 And laws are vain by which we right enjoy,
 If kings unquestioned can those laws destroy.
 Yet if the crowd be judge of fit and just, 765
 And kings are only officers in trust,
 Then this resuming covenant was declared
 When kings were made, or is for ever barred.
 If those who gave the sceptre could not tie
 By their own deed their own posterity, 770
 How then could Adam bind his future race?
 How could his forfeit on mankind take place?
 Or how could heavenly justice damn us all
 Who ne'er consented to our father's fall?
 Then kings are slaves to those whom they command 775
 And tenants to their people's pleasure stand.
 Add that the power, for property allowed,
 Is mischievously seated in the crowd;
 For who can be secure of private right,
 If sovereign sway may be dissolved by might? 780
 Nor is the people's judgment always true :

The most may err as grossly as the few,
 And faultless kings run down by common cry
 For vice, oppression, and for tyranny.
 What standard is there in a fickle rout, 785
 Which, flowing to the mark, runs faster out?
 Nor only crowds but Sanhedrins may be
 Infected with this public lunacy,
 And share the madness of rebellious times,
 To murder monarchs for imagined crimes. 790
 If they may give and take whene'er they please,
 Not kings alone, the Godhead's images,
 But government itself at length must fall
 To nature's state, where all have right to all.
 Yet grant our lords, the people, kings can make, 795
 What prudent men a settled throne would shake?
 For whatsoever their sufferings were before,
 That change they covet makes them suffer more.
 All other errors but disturb a state,
 But innovation is the blow of fate. 800
 If ancient fabrics nod and threat to fall,
 To patch the flaws and buttress up the wall,
 Thus far 'tis duty: but here fix the mark;
 For all beyond it is to touch our ark.
 To change foundations, cast the frame anew, 805
 Is work for rebels who base ends pursue,
 At once divine and human laws control,
 And mend the parts by ruin of the whole.
 The tampering world is subject to this curse,
 To physic their disease into a worse. 810

Now what relief can righteous David bring?
 How fatal 'tis to be too good a king!
 Friends he has few, so high the madness grows;
 Who dare be such must be the people's foes.
 Yet some there were even in the worst of days; 815
 Some let me name, and naming is to praise.

In this short file Barzillai first appears,
 Barzillai, crowned with honour and with years.

Long since the rising rebels he withstood
 In regions waste beyond the Jordan's flood: 820
 Unfortunately brave to buoy the state,
 But sinking underneath his master's fate.
 In exile with his godlike prince he mourned,
 For him he suffered, and with him returned.
 The court he practised, not the courtier's art: 825
 Large was his wealth, but larger was his heart,
 Which well the noblest objects knew to chuse,
 The fighting warrior, and recording Muse.
 His bed could once a fruitful issue boast ;
 Now more than half a father's name is lost. 830
 His eldest hope, with every grace adorned,
 By me, so Heaven will have it, always mourned
 And always honoured, snatched in manhood's prime
 By unequal fates and Providence's crime :
 Yet not before the goal of honour won, 835
 All parts fulfilled of subject and of son ;
 Swift was the race, but short the time to run.
 Oh narrow circle, but of power divine,
 Scanted in space, but perfect in thy line !
 By sea, by land, thy matchless worth was known, 840
 Arms thy delight, and war was all thy own :
 Thy force infused the fainting Tyrians propped,
 And haughty Pharaoh found his fortune stopped.
 Oh ancient honour ! oh unconquered hand,
 Whom foes unpunished never could withstand ! 845
 But Israel was unworthy of thy name :
 Short is the date of all immoderate fame.
 It looks as Heaven our ruin had designed,
 And durst not trust thy fortune and thy mind.
 Now, free from earth, thy disencumbered soul 850
 Mounts up, and leaves behind the clouds and starry
 pole :
 From thence thy kindred legions mayest thou bring
 To aid the guardian angel of thy King.
 Here stop, my Muse, here cease thy painful flight ;
 No pinions can pursue immortal height : 855

Tell good Barzillai thou canst sing no more,
 And tell thy soul she should have fled before :
 Or fled she with his life, and left this verse
 To hang on her departed patron's hearse ?
 Now take thy steepy flight from heaven, and see 860
 If thou canst find on earth another he :
 Another he would be too hard to find ;
 See then whom thou canst see not far behind.
 Zadoc the priest, whom, shunning power and place,
 His lowly mind advanced to David's grace. 865
 With him the Sagan of Jerusalem,
 Of hospitable soul and noble stem ;
 Him of the western dome, whose weighty sense
 Flows in fit words and heavenly eloquence.
 The Prophets' sons, by such example led, 870
 To learning and to loyalty were bred :
 For colleges on bounteous kings depend,
 And never rebel was to arts a friend.
 To these succeed the pillars of the laws,
 Who best could plead, and best can judge a cause. 875
 Next them a train of loyal peers ascend ;
 Sharp-judging Adriel, the Muses' friend,
 Himself a Muse : in Sanhedrin's debate
 True to his Prince, but not a slave of state ;
 Whom David's love with honours did adorn 880
 That from his disobedient son were torn.
 Jotham of piercing wit and pregnant thought,
 Endued by nature and by learning taught
 To move assemblies, who but only tried
 The worse a while, then chose the better side, 885
 Nor chose alone, but turned the balance too,
 So much the weight of one brave man can do.
 Hushai, the friend of David in distress,
 In public storms of manly stedfastness ;
 By foreign treaties he informed his youth 890
 And joined experience to his native truth.
 His frugal care supplied the wanting throne,
 Frugal for that, but bounteous of his own :

'Tis easy conduct when exchequers flow,
 But hard the task to manage well the low. 895
 For sovereign power is too depressed or high,
 When kings are forced to sell or crowds to buy.
 Indulge one labour more, my weary Muse,
 For Amiel: who can Amiel's praise refuse?
 Of ancient race by birth, but nobler yet 900
 In his own worth and without title great:
 The Sanhedrin long time as chief he ruled,
 Their reason guided and their passion cooled:
 So dexterous was he in the Crown's defence,
 So formed to speak a loyal nation's sense, 905
 That, as their band was Israel's tribes in small,
 So fit was he to represent them all.
 Now rasher charioteers the seat ascend,
 Whose loose careers his steady skill commend:
 They, like the unequal ruler of the day, 910
 Misguide the seasons and mistake the way,
 While he, withdrawn, at their mad labour smiles
 And safe enjoys the sabbath of his toils.

These were the chief, a small but faithful band
 Of worthies in the breach who dared to stand 915
 And tempt the united fury of the land.
 With grief they viewed such powerful engines bent
 To batter down the lawful government.
 A numerous faction, with pretended frights,
 In Sanhedrins to plume the regal rights; 920
 The true successor from the Court removed;
 The plot by hireling witnesses improved.
 These ills they saw, and, as their duty bound,
 They showed the King the danger of the wound;
 That no concessions from the throne would please, 925
 But lenitives fomented the disease;
 That Absalom, ambitious of the crown,
 Was made the lure to draw the people down;
 That false Achitophel's pernicious hate
 Had turned the plot to ruin Church and State; 930

The council violent, the rabble worse;
That Shimei taught Jerusalem to curse.

With all these loads of injuries opprest,
And long revolving in his careful breast
The event of things, at last his patience tired, 935
Thus from his royal throne, by Heaven inspired,
The godlike David spoke; with awful fear
His train their Maker in their master hear.

*Charles says nothing
intended of Manward*

'Thus long have I, by native mercy swayed,
My wrongs dissembled, my revenge delayed; 940
So willing to forgive the offending age;
So much the father did the king assuage.
But now so far my clemency they slight,
The offenders question my forgiving right.
That one was made for many, they contend; 945
But 'tis to rule, for that's a monarch's end.
They call my tenderness of blood my fear,
Though manly tempers can the longest bear.
Yet since they will divert my native course,
'Tis time to show I am not good by force. 950
Those heaped affronts that haughty subjects bring
Are burdens for a camel, not a king.
Kings are the public pillars of the State,
Born to sustain and prop the nation's weight:
If my young Samson will pretend a call 955
To shake the column, let him share the fall;
But oh that yet he would repent and live!
How easy 'tis for parents to forgive!
With how few tears a pardon might be won
From nature, pleading for a darling son! 960
Poor pitied youth, by my paternal care
Raised up to all the height his frame could bear!
Had God ordained his fate for empire born,
He would have given his soul another turn:
Gulled with a patriot's name, whose modern sense 965
Is one that would by law supplant his prince;

The people's brave, the politician's tool;
 Never was patriot yet but was a foe.
 Whence comes it that religion and the laws
 Should more be Absalom's than David's cause? 970
 His old instructor, ere he lost his place,
 Was never thought endued with so much grace.
 Good heavens, how faction can a patriot paint!
 My rebel ever proves my people's saint.
 Would they impose an heir upon the throne? 975
 Let Sanhedrins be taught to give their own.
 A king's at least a part of government,
 And mine as requisite as their consent:
 Without my leave a future king to choose
 Infers a right the present to depose. 980
 True, they petition me to approve their choice:
 But Esau's hands suit ill with Jacob's voice.
 My pious subjects for my safety pray,
 Which to secure, they take my power away.
 From plots and treasons Heaven preserve my years, 985
 But save me most from my petitioners.
 Unsatiated as the barren womb or grave,
 God cannot grant so much as they can crave.
 What then is left but with a jealous eye
 To guard the small remains of royalty? 990
 The law shall still direct my peaceful sway,
 And the same law teach rebels to obey:
 Votes shall no more established power control,
 Such votes as make a part exceed the whole.
 No groundless clamours shall my friends remove 995
 Nor crowds have power to punish ere they prove;
 For gods and godlike kings their care express
 Still to defend their servants in distress.
 Oh that my power to saving were confined!
 Why am I forced, like Heaven, against my mind 1000
 To make examples of another kind?
 Must I at length the sword of justice draw?
 Oh curst effects of necessary law!
 How ill my fear they by my mercy scan!

Beware the fury of a patient man. 1005
 Law they require, let Law then show her face;
 They could not be content to look on Grace,
 Her hinder parts, but with a daring eye
 To tempt the terror of her front and die.
 By their own arts, 'tis righteously decreed, 1010
 Those dire artificers of death shall bleed.
 Against themselves their witnesses will swear
 Till, viper-like, their mother-plot they tear,
 And suck for nutriment that bloody gore
 Which was their principle of life before. 1015
 Their Belial with their Beelzebub will fight;
 Thus on my foes my foes shall do me right.
 Nor doubt the event; for factious crowds engage
 In their first onset all their brutal rage.
 Then let them take an unresisted course; 1020
 Retire and traverse, and delude their force:
 But when they stand all breathless, urge the fight
 And rise upon them with redoubled might:
 For lawful power is still superior found, 1024
 When long driven back at length it stands the ground.'

He said. The Almighty, nodding, gave consent;
 And peals of thunder shook the firmament.
 Henceforth a series of new time began,
 The mighty years in long procession ran;
 Once more the godlike David was restored, 1030
 And willing nations knew their lawful lord.

NOTES

Preface.

P. 85, l. 5. *Whig and Tory.* These two names, so familiar to us, were new when Absalom and Achitophel was written. They were first applied in 1679 in the famous controversy about the Exclusion Bill. *Whig* is a word of Scotch origin, *Tory* of Irish. *Whig* is explained

in two ways: Roger North says that it meant corrupt and sour whey (Examen, p. 321); Bishop Burnet derives it from *whiggamor*, a driver, from *whiggam*, an exclamation in use in driving horses (Hist. of Own Time, l. 43). Anyhow, the name of Whigs came to be given to the Scottish Covenanters. It was first applied in 1648 in Scotland. Tories, according to Roger North, were 'the most despicable savages among the wild Irish.' Irishmen, as Roman Catholics, were generally favourable to the Duke of York; thus his friends were called Tories. The opponents of the Court were Whigs.

P. 85. l. 8. When Dryden wrote *Papist*, his editors, from Broughton downward, have printed *Popish*.

l. 11. *Anti-Bromingham*. 'Bromingham' was a cant term of the time for a Whig. Birmingham was famous for base and counterfeit coinage; a 'Birmingham groat' was a current phrase for base coin. Roger North says that the Tories nicknamed their adversaries 'Birmingham Protestants, alluding to the false groats struck at that place.'

l. 13. *a genius*. Most editors, including Scott, have omitted the *a*, spoiling the sentence.

l. 23. *rebating the satire*. *Rebate*, an obsolete word, means to blunt. 'The keener edge of battle to rebate.'

Palamon and Arcite, Bk. ii. l. 502.

'One who never feels

The wanton stings and motions of the sense,
But doth rebate and blunt his natural edge
With profits of the mind, steady and just.'

Shakespeare, Measure for Measure, Act i. Sc. 4.

'Let no defeat

Your sprightly courage and attempts rebate.'

Oldham, Satire iii.

P. 86. l. 3. *Commonwealthsmen*, i. e. republicans.

l. 14. *The fault on the right hand*. Compare 'an error of the better hand,' in Cymon and Iphigenia, 237.

l. 33. *composure* here means 'arrangement,' 'reconciliation.' Dryden uses *composure* for 'composition' in his poem to Sir Robert Howard:

'So in your verse a native sweetness dwells
Which shames composure and its art excels.'

P. 87. l. 9. *Ense rescindendum*. Ovid has 'ense recidendum' (Metam. i. 191).

The Poem.

It will be most convenient for the reader to preface the notes to the poem with an alphabetical key to the names in the allegory. This key is part of the one published by Tonson, Dryden's publisher, as key to

this poem and to the Second Part, the most of which was written by Nahum Tate in the Miscellany Poems, vol. ii. ed. 1716.

- Abbethdin, Lord Chancellor.
- f Absalom, Duke of Monmouth.
- f Achitophel, Earl of Shaftesbury.
- Adriel, Earl of Mulgrave.
- Agag, Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey.
- Amiel, Mr. (afterwards Sir Edward) Seymour.
- Annabel, Duchess of Monmouth.
- Balaam, Earl of Huntingdon.
- Barzillai, Duke of Ormond.
- Bathsheba, Duchess of Portsmouth.
- Caleb, Lord Grey of Wark.
- Corah, Titus Oates.
- f David, King Charles II.
- Egypt, France.
- Ethnic Plot, Popish Plot.
- Hebrew Priests, Church of England clergymen.
- Hebron, Scotland.
- Ishbosheth, Richard Cromwell.
- Israel, England.
- Issachar, Thomas Thynne of Longleat.
- Jebusites, Papists.
- Jerusalem, London.
- Jewish Rabbins, Doctors of the Church of England.
- Jonas, Sir William Jones.
- Jotham, Marquis of Halifax.
- Michal, Queen Catharine.
- Nadab, Lord Howard of Escrick.
- Pharaoh, Louis XIV, King of France.
- Sagan of Jerusalem, Bishop of London.
- Sanhedrin, Parliament.
- Saul, Oliver Cromwell.
- Shimei, Slingsby Bethel.
- Sion, London.
- Solymean rout, the London rabble.
- Tyre, Holland.
- Uzza, John Hall, commonly called Jack Hall.
- Western Dome, Westminster Abbey.
- Zadoc, Sancroft, Archbishop of Canterbury.
- Zaken, member of parliament.
- Ziloah, Sir John Moore.
- f Zimri, Duke of Buckingham.

l. 7. Charles II, who is David in this poem, is described as 'Israel's monarch after Heaven's own heart,' as David is in Scripture. 'The Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart.' (1 Sam. xiii. 14.) 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil my will.' (Acts xiii. 22.) Charles had already been compared to David in *Astræa Redux*. ll. 79, 80.

l. 17. *this*, changed to *the* by Broughton, and the error copied by following editors, including Scott.

l. 18. *Absalon*. So spelt here and in line 221 for the rhyme, in the early editions; elsewhere always *Absalom*. The Duke of Monmouth, here called Absalom, was the son of Charles by Lucy Walters, and born at Rotterdam, April 9, 1649.

l. 19. *inspired by*. In the first edition it was *with*.

l. 30. Compare with this line Pope's

'And Paradise was opened in the wild.' *Eloisa to Abelard*, 133.

l. 34. *Annabel*, Duchess of Monmouth, was Countess of Buccleuch in her own right, and was married to Monmouth in 1665. The name of Scott was afterwards given to Monmouth, and he was created Duke of Buccleuch. The Duchess of Monmouth was an early patron and constant friend of Dryden. He dedicated to her the play of *The Indian Emperor*, published in 1667. In the *Vindication of the Duke of Guise* (1683) Dryden calls her 'the patroness of my unworthy poetry'; and in his *Dedication of King Arthur to Lord Halifax*, in 1691, he says that the Duchess of Monmouth had read the play in manuscript and recommended it to Queen Mary; and he calls the Duchess 'my first and best patroness.'

l. 39. *Amnon's murder*. This is probably a reference to an attack, which Monmouth was believed to have instigated, on Sir John Coventry in 1670, by some officers and men of Monmouth's troop of horseguards, in revenge for a sarcasm uttered in the House of Commons about the King's amours. Coventry's nose was slit with a penknife. The House of Commons took up the affair very warmly, and a new act was passed, making it a capital felony to wound with intention to maim or disfigure, which went by the name of the Coventry Act. There was indeed no murder in this case, but Dryden probably desired to avoid precise identification.

l. 43. *sincerely blest*. See note on *Annus Mirabilis*, stanza 209, on this use of *sincerely*, meaning 'without alloy.'

*ll. 52-56. An allusion to the 'state of nature' which Hobbes and other political writers of the period supposed to have existed before states and commonwealths were founded. In this state of nature all men were equal, and there was no government, but a war of every one against every one else. 'There are many places,' says Hobbes, 'where

they live so now. For the savage people in many places of America . . . live at this day in that brutish manner.'

* l. 59. Hebron means Scotland. Charles II was crowned king in Scotland, Jan. 1, 1651; in England not till April, 1661. So David reigned first seven years and six months in Hebron, and then thirty-three years in Jerusalem. (2 Sam. v. 5.)

l. 65. State means here a republic.

l. 92. *worn and weakened.* and changed by Derrick to *or*; the error copied by following editors, including Scott.

l. 112. *Not weighed or winnowed.* Derrick substituted *nor* for *or*, which has been followed by most editors, including Scott.

l. 117. Compare the lines on the Popish Plot in *The Hind and Panther*, iii. 719-722.

l. 118. *Egyptian rites.* Egypt, in this poem, stands for France, and the Egyptian rites are the Roman Catholic rites prevailing in France.

l. 121. *And* in first edition, instead of *As*.

l. 150. *Achitophel*, Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury. Dryden's subsequent poem of *The Medal*, not included in this volume, should be read, for a longer and more elaborate and severe attack on Shaftesbury. He had been Lord Chancellor in 1672-73. Dismissed from the chancellorship in November 1673, he was made President of the Privy Council in April 1679, on the reorganization of that body by the King to conciliate the parliamentary opposition. He was, however, removed from that office a few months after. Shaftesbury was now in the Tower, on a charge of high treason: he was apprehended at his house in London, July 2, 1681. After many delays, his trial came on in November, a few days after the publication of this poem, and the grand jury threw out the bill.

* ll. 150-200. Coleridge in his *Table Talk* makes the following remarks on Dryden's method of drawing characters, 'You will find this a good gauge or criterion of genius,—whether it progresses and evolves, or only spins upon itself. Take Dryden's *Achitophel* and *Zimri*; every line adds to or modifies the character, which is, as it were, abuilding up to the very last verse; whereas in Pope's *Timon*, &c. the first two or three couplets contain all the pith of the character, and the twenty or thirty lines that follow are so much evidence or proof of overt acts of jealousy, or pride, or whatever it may be that is satirised.'

l. 152. *counsel* in first edition, instead of *counsels*.

l. 154. *principle* in first edition, instead of *principles*.

ll. 155-157. A correspondent of *Notes and Queries*, December 7, 1850 (vol. i, p. 468), has supplied the two following quotations in illustration of this triplet on Shaftesbury's fiery soul fretting his pigmy body

and o'er-informing the tenement of clay. 'He (the Duke of Alva) was one of a lean body and visage, as if his eager soul, biting for anger at the clay of his body, desired to fret a passage through it.' (Fuller's *Profane State*.)

'The purest soul that e'er was sent
Into a clayey tenement.' Carew.

l. 163. *Great wits, &c.* 'Nullum fit magnum ingenium sine mixtura dementiæ.' (Seneca, *De Tranq. Anim.* c. xv. s. 77.)

l. 167. The same idea of ill-usage of Shaftesbury's little body by his active mind appears in a sketch of him in Mulgrave's *Essay on Satire*, which was erroneously ascribed to Dryden :

'As by our little Machiavel we find
That nimblest creature of the busy kind:
His legs are crippled, and his body shakes,
Yet his bold mind that all this bustle makes
No pity of its poor companion takes.
What gravity can hold from laughing out
To see that lug his feeble limbs about?
Like hounds ill-coupled, Jowler is so strong
He jades poor Trip and drags him all along.
'Tis such a cruelty as ne'er was known
To use a body thus, though 'tis one's own.'

The *Essay on Satire* is said to have been written in 1675: it was first circulated in manuscript in 1679. Duke, a friend and imitator of Dryden, has described Shaftesbury in his poem called 'The Review,' and some of his lines bear traces of Dryden's descriptions here and in *The Medal* :

'Antonius, early in rebellious race
Swiftly set out, nor slackening in his pace;
The same ambition that his youthful heat
Urged to all ills, the little daring brat,
With unabated ardour does engage
The loathsome dregs of his decrepit age.

The working ferment of his active mind,
In his weak body's cask with pain confined,
Would burst the rotten vessel where 'tis pent,
But that 'tis tapt to give the treason vent.'

The last line is an unseemly allusion to an abscess from which Shaftesbury suffered, originally caused by a fall from a carriage, when he went out to meet King Charles at Breda on the eve of the Restoration. The abscess, which was internal, at one time endangered his life. A severe

operation restored him to health, which was afterwards preserved by means of a silver pipe which kept the wound always open.

l. 170. *unfeathered two-legged thing.* Dryden has here appropriated for ribaldry Plato's humorous definition of man, a two-footed animal without wings, *ζῶον δίπονον ἄπτερον*. Shaftesbury's son was a man of no ability, but was the father of an able man, the third Earl, the metaphysician, author of the *Characteristics*. Shaftesbury was three times married, but had only two children, sons, by his second wife, Lady Frances Cecil, who died in 1653: one of the two died in infancy.

l. 175. *the triple bond.* The triple alliance of England, Holland, and Sweden of 1667, directed against France. In June 1670, a second treaty, of which Shaftesbury, though at the time a prominent minister, knew nothing, was made with France for war against Holland and the establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in England. The English commissioners who signed this treaty were Arlington, Clifford, Lord Arundel of Wardour, and Sir Richard Bellings; the last two were not ministers. Another treaty was afterwards concluded on December 31, in appearance solely for alliance with France and war against Holland, and this was signed by Buckingham, Shaftesbury (then Lord Ashley), and Lauderdale, together with Arlington and Clifford. But Charles's engagement about the Roman Catholic religion in the treaty of June remained binding; and that treaty was a secret from Buckingham, Shaftesbury, and Lauderdale. Shaftesbury has his share of responsibility for a treaty of alliance with France for a war against Holland. But no one was louder at the time for this war and for the French alliance than Dryden, who wrote in 1673 a bad play, *Amboyna*, for the express purpose of inflaming the English public against the Dutch. He there proclaimed the alliance of the two kings of England and France to be necessary to destroy the pride of Holland:

'Yet is their empire no true growth, but humour,

And only two kings' touch can cure the tumour.'

These two lines are from Dryden's Epilogue to *Amboyna*, and the Epilogue concludes with a reference to Cato's 'Delenda est Carthago,' quoted by Shaftesbury in his speech for the King as Chancellor to Parliament in February 1673. Dryden perhaps derived the idea from Shaftesbury's famous speech,

'All loyal English will like him conclude,

Let Cæsar live, and Carthage be subdued.'

The play of *Amboyna* was dedicated to Lord Clifford, a friend and patron of Dryden, with fulsome praises of Clifford as a statesman. Yet Dryden in 1681 could revile Shaftesbury for 'breaking the triple bond' and 'fitting Israel for a foreign yoke.' He repeats the accusation a few months after in *The Medal*:

‘Thus framed for ill, he loosed our triple hold—
 Advice unsafe, precipitous, and bold.
 From hence those tears, that Ilium of our woe:
 Who helps a powerful friend forearms a foe.
 What wonder if the waves prevail so far,
 When he cut down the banks that made the bar?
 Seas follow but their nature to invade,
 But he by art our native strength betrayed.’

This is a flagrant example of Dryden’s reckless inconsistency and unscrupulousness in attack.

1. 179. *Assumed* in first edition instead of *Usurped*.

all-atoning, all-reconciling. The verb *atone* was used differently in Dryden’s time from its present use. It meant to ‘harmonize,’ ‘unite,’ and was used transitively. Thus in Dryden’s Poem on the Coronation, 57:

‘He that brought peace and discord could atone,
 His name is music of itself alone.’

‘To atone her anger’ (Love Triumphant, Act iv. Sc. 1), ‘To atone the people’ (Vindication of Duke of Guise). *Atone* was sometimes wrongly spelt *attone*, the origin of the word being *at one*, ‘to make at one’ (see New English Dictionary). *Atone* is used similarly in Shakespeare: ‘I would do much to atone them for the love I bear to Cassio’ (Othello, Act iv. Sc. 1).

‘Since we cannot atone you, we shall see
 Justice design the victor’s chivalry.’

King Richard II, Act i. Sc. 1.

Elsewhere in Shakespeare *atone* is used intransitively, meaning ‘to agree,’ as in Coriolanus, Act iv. Sc. 6:

‘He and Aufidius can no more atone
 Than violentest contrariety.’

11. 180–191. These twelve lines were added in the second edition of the poem. A very absurd story has been told, that these lines, containing high praise of Shaftesbury as a Judge, were added by Dryden in gratitude for the gift of a nomination to the Charterhouse School for his third son, Erasmus, by Shaftesbury, after the publication of Absalom and Achitophel. The story was first published in Kippis’s edition of the Biographia Britannica, published in 1779. Malone took great pains to refute this very improbable story. Dryden’s son Erasmus was admitted to the Charterhouse in February 1683, on a nomination from the King. The first edition of this poem appeared in November, and the second in December, 1681. The story is simply impossible. Immediately after the publication of Absalom and Achitophel, Shaftesbury could not have abased himself by offering a favour to Dryden, even if Dryden

were likely to accept it; and then in a few months, in March, 1682, Dryden published *The Medal*, a yet more savage attack on his supposed forgiving benefactor. After all, the idea of praising Shaftesbury as a Judge is in the lines 192-7, which were in the first edition. Why so much praise was added in the second edition may be variously explained. Dryden may have thought that further explanation was necessary for connecting the passage beginning in line 192,

‘Oh! had he been content to serve the crown,’

with the preceding denunciation of Shaftesbury as a politician. Or he may have thought that higher praise of him as a Judge might increase by contrast the effect of his abuse of the statesman. Or, as Shaftesbury had in the interval been acquitted of the charge of high treason and had triumphed over his enemies, Dryden may have wished to say something conciliatory for one whom he had so fiercely attacked, and who might now again become formidable.

1. 188. *Abbethdin*, the president of the Jewish judicature. The word is compounded of *ab*, ‘father,’ and *beth-din*, ‘house of judgment,’ and means literally ‘father of the house of judgment.’

1. 196. What is meant by David’s tuning his harp for Achitophel if he had been other than he was, and its then resulting that ‘Heaven had wanted one immortal song,’ probably is this, that David would then have addressed a song to Achitophel instead of a lament to Heaven. I have otherwise interpreted the passage in a note in the *Globe Edition*, there representing the line, ‘And Heaven had wanted one immortal song,’ as meaning that Dryden’s own poem would then have been lost to Heaven; which would be a very arrogant boast. But I believe now that this was a wrong interpretation. David as usual means Charles II; the harp is introduced again in ll. 439, 440.

1. 197. *wanted*. *want* is here used in a simple sense no longer current, except provincially, ‘to be without.’ It occurs in the same sense in Pope:

‘Friend of my life, which did not you prolong,
The world had wanted many an idle song.’

Prologue to *Satires*, 27.

1. 198. Lord Macaulay, in his *Essay on Sir William Temple*, pointed out the probable origin of this couplet, in some verses in Knolles’s *History of the Turks*:

‘Greatness on goodness loves to slide, not stand,
And leaves for Fortune’s ice Virtue’s firm land.’

1. 204. *manifest of crimes*, an imitation of Sallust’s ‘*Manifestus tanti sceleris*’ (*Jugurtha*, 39). Dryden uses the same idiom in *Palamon and Arcite*, Bk. i. 623:

‘Calisto there stood manifest of shame.’

l. 209. The charge against Shaftesbury of 'making circumstances' of the alleged Popish Plot is totally without proof, and against all probability. Shaftesbury entirely believed in the Plot, as did many others of calmer temperament and high character: one of these was the virtuous Lord Russell. Shaftesbury and Russell were entirely at one in the prosecution of the plot. Bishop Burnet, who disliked Shaftesbury, and blamed him for his vehemence, acquits him of invention. (Hist. of Own Time, ii. 168.)

l. 213. To prove 'the King a Jebusite' was no calumnious attempt of Shaftesbury. Charles is suspected to have been a Roman Catholic before the Restoration, and in indiscreet private talk he frequently betrayed the sentiments of his heart. Burnet and Lord Halifax (in his 'Character of Charles the Second') both assume that he was a Roman Catholic.

l. 219. The accent is on the second syllable of *instinct*, according to the pronunciation of the time. So again in line 535.

l. 227. This line is reproduced by Dryden in *The Hind and the Panther*, Part i. 211. In one of the poems in *Lacrymæ Musarum*, occasioned by the death of Lord Hastings in 1649, to which collection Dryden contributed his first known poem, the following couplet occurs:

'It is decreed we must be drained, I see,
Down to the dregs of a democracy.'

The phrase was probably early impressed on Dryden from this poem.

l. 235. *Shuts up* in first edition, instead of *Divides*.

l. 247. *Like one of virtue's fools that feeds on praise*. Scott and most editors wrongly print *feed*.

* l. 252. Compare Shakespeare, *Julius Cæsar*, Act iv. Sc. 3:

'There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.'

ll. 270-273. Compare *Astræa Redux*, l. 276.

l. 280. *Naked of* is a Gallicism. Dryden uses *dry* in the same way. 'Dry of pleasure' (*Love Triumphant*, Act iii. Sc. 1), 'Dry of those embraces' (*Amphitryon*, Act iii. Sc. 1).

l. 291. *the general cry*. Scott and most editors wrongly print *royal* for *loyal*.

l. 318. *mankind's delight*. 'Amor atque deliciae generis humani,' said by Suetonius of the Emperor Titus.

* l. 328. Compare Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*, Act iv. Sc. 1, on 'the quality of mercy . . .' 'It is an attribute to God himself.'

ll. 353-360. This elaborate eulogy on Charles's brother, James Duke of York, may be compared with Dryden's characters of James in the play *The Duke of Guise*, produced in 1682, and in the *Threnodia Au-*

gustalis, the elegy on Charles II's death. James's truthfulness is dwelt on in both characters; his merciful and forgiving disposition in the sketch of him in The Duke of Guise, where the King of France praises to the Archbishop of Lyons his 'brother of Navarre':

King. 'I know my brother's nature; 'tis sincere,
Above deceit, no crookedness of thought;
Says what he means, and what he says performs;
Brave but not rash; successful but not proud;
So much acknowledging, that he's uneasy
Till every petty service be o'erpaid.

Archbp. Some say revengeful.

King. Some then libel him:

But that's what both of us have learnt to bear;
He can forgive, but you disdain forgiveness.'

Duke of Guise, Act v. Sc. 1.

'For all the changes of his doubtful state
His truth, like Heaven's, was kept inviolate;
For him to promise is to make it fate.
His valour can triumph o'er land and main;
With broken oaths his fame he will not stain,
With conquest basely bought and with inglorious gain.'

Threnodia Augustalis, 485-490.

Compare also Dryden's character of James in The Hind and the Panther, Part iii. beginning at line 906: 'A plain good man,' &c.

l. 416. *million* in first edition, instead of *nation*.

ll. 417, 418. Dryden here describes the government of the Commonwealth before Cromwell's Protectorate as a theocracy. In line 522 he speaks of an 'old beloved theocracy.'

l. 436. This line was changed by Derrick so as to make a question:

'Is't after God's own heart to cheat his heir?'

and Derrick's change has been adopted by succeeding editors, including Scott. Dryden makes Achitophel assert it to be 'after God's own heart to cheat his heir,' i.e. to deprive the Duke of York of his succession. This is intended for the assertion of a wicked counsellor. Derrick's change spoils the sense.

l. 447. This simile of the lion is again used by Dryden in Sigismunda and Guiscardo, 241:

'For malice and revenge had put him on his guard,
So, like a lion that unheeded lay,
Dissembling sleep and watchful to betray,
With inward rage he meditates his prey?'

See also The Hind and the Panther, iii. 267-272.

l. 461. *Prevail yourself.* *Avail* was substituted by Derrick for *prevail*,

and the editors have followed Derrick. The same has happened where Dryden uses the same verb *prevail* reflectively, as in the preface to *Annus Mirabilis*.

l. 519. *Levites*, priests; the Presbyterian ministers displaced by the Act of Uniformity.

* ll. 524-568. See Dryden's own criticism on this character in the Essay on Satire, prefixed to his translation of Juvenal (Works, ed. Scott, xiii. 95). He concludes: 'The character of "Zimri" is, in my opinion, worth the whole poem. It is not bloody, but it is ridiculous enough, and he for whom it was intended was too witty to resent it as an injury. . . . I avoided the mention of great crimes, and applied myself to the representing of blind sides and little extravagances, to which, the wittier a man is, he is generally the more obnoxious.'

l. 525. *Aaron's race*, the clergy. *For* in this line has been carelessly changed into *To* in most editions, including Scott's.

l. 544. *Zimri*, George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham, a poet as well as a politician, who united great talents with extreme profligacy. There is a well-known brilliant sketch of this Buckingham in Pope's Moral Essays. He ran through a very large fortune.

'Alas! how changed for him

That life of pleasure and that soul of whim!
Gallant and gay in Cleveden's proud alcove,
The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love;
Or just as gay at council in a ring
Of mimicked statesmen and their merry king.
No wit to flatter left of all his store!
No fool to laugh at, which he valued more.
There victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends.'

Moral Essays, iii. 309.

Buckingham, in *The Rehearsal*, had unsparingly ridiculed Dryden's plays, and given Dryden the nickname of Bayes. *The Rehearsal* was first acted in 1671. Dryden took his revenge on Buckingham now. Buckingham wrote a reply to this poem, under the title, 'Poetic Reflections on a late Poem, entitled *Absalom and Achitophel*, by a Person of Honour.' This reply was a very poor production, unworthy of the author of *The Rehearsal*.

l. 574. *Balaam*, the Earl of Huntingdon, younger brother of the Lord Hastings, whose premature death in youth was lamented by Dryden in his first known poem. Lord Huntingdon was now a very zealous member of Shaftesbury's party, bent on the exclusion of James Duke of York from succession to the throne; but he afterwards changed his politics and became a warm adherent of James.

*1. 574. *Well-hung*, voluble, fluent,—

‘Flippant of talk and voluble of tongue
With words at will, no lawyer better hung.’

Oldham, Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal.

Caleb, Ford, Lord Grey of Wark.

1. 575. *Nadab*, Lord Howard of Escrick, the third peer of that title. He had been lately a prisoner in the Tower on account of accusations made by Fitzharris, and he is accused of having taken the Sacrament when in prison, to assert his innocence, in a mixture of ale and apples called ‘lamb’s wool.’ Lord Howard afterwards became infamous by betraying Lord Russell and Algernon Sydney.

1. 581. *Jonas*, Sir William Jones, the Attorney-General who conducted the prosecutions of the Popish Plot. Mr. Luttrell, in a manuscript note on this poem, says that Sir William Jones drew the Habeas Corpus Act.

1. 585. This line stood in the first edition,

‘Shimei, whose early youth did promise bring.’

Shimei is Slingsby Bethel, who had been elected one of the sheriffs of London in 1680. He had been conspicuous as a republican before the Restoration, and was a member of Richard Cromwell’s parliament. His stinginess was a by-word :

‘And though you more than Buckingham has spent
Or Cuddon got, like stingy Bethel save,
And grudge yourself the charges of a grave.’

Oldham, Imitation of Eighth Satire of Boileau.

11. 585–681. ‘Most satirists are usually prone to the error of attacking either mere types, or else individuals too definitely marked as individuals. The first is the fault of Regnier and all the minor French satirists, the second is the fault of Pope. In the first case the point and zest of the thing are apt to be lost, and the satire becomes a declamation against vice and folly in the abstract. In the second case a suspicion of personal pique comes in, and it is felt that the requirement of art, the disengagement of the general law from the individual instance, is not sufficiently attended to.’ Dryden avoids both these faults. ‘His figures are always at once types and individuals. Zimri is at once Buckingham and the idle grand seigneur who plays at politics and learning, Achitophel at once Shaftesbury and the abstract intriguer, Shimei at once Bethel and the sectarian politician of all days.’ Saintsbury, Dryden, p. 77.

1. 595. *vare*, a wand, from the Spanish *vara*. The word occurs in Howel’s Letters (p. 161, ed. 1728): ‘The proudest don of Spain, when he is prancing upon his ginet in the street, if an alguazil show him his vare, that is, a little white staff he carrieth as a badge of his office, my don will presently off his horse and yield himself his prisoner.’ The word *vase* has been substituted for *vare* in some editions, including Scott’s.

1. 634. An allusion to the serpent of brass made by Moses, and 'set upon a pole' by God's command, to save the Israelites from the fiery serpents which God had sent for punishment. 'And it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived.' (Numbers xxi. 6, 9.)

1. 637. *earthly*: incorrectly printed *earthly* in some editions.

1. 644. *Ours was a Levite*. Titus Oates had taken orders in the Church of England, and his father was a Church of England clergyman, having been before an Anabaptist minister.

1. 649. *A church vermilion and a Moses' face*. The rubicund look of a jolly churchman, and a shining face supposed to be like that of Moses, when he came down from the Mount (Exod. xxxiv. 29-35).

1. 658. *Rabbinical degree*. Oates represented that he had received the degree of Doctor of Divinity at Salamanca.

1. 665. *wit* in first edition, instead of *writ*.

1. 676. *Agag's murder*. The murder of Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey, the magistrate before whom Oates had deposed on oath his story of the Popish Plot, and who was soon after found dead near Primrose Hill. The believers in the Popish Plot charged the Roman Catholics with having murdered Godfrey in revenge. It was urged on the opposite side that Oates and his witnesses instigated the murder in order to impute it to the Roman Catholics. Sir Edmund Bury Godfrey was reputed friendly to the Roman Catholics, and was said to be unwilling to take the depositions. Dryden's meaning seems to be that Godfrey was murdered at the call of Oates, for being friendly to the Roman Catholics. See 1 Samuel xv. for Samuel's reproaches to Saul for disobeying the Lord's command and sparing Agag.

1. 688. *Dissembling joy* in first edition, instead of *His joy concealed*.

1. 700. *Behold a banished man*. Monmouth had been sent out of England by the King in September 1679, and in November he returned without permission. The King then ordered him again to quit England, and he disobeyed, whereupon he was deprived of all his offices and banished from court.

* 1. 738. *Wise Issachar, his wealthy western friend*. Thomas Thynne of Longleat, who on account of his wealth went by the name of Tom of Ten Thousand. *Wise* is ironical. 'Issachar is a strong ass' (Genesis xlv. 14), and Tom Thynne's reputation is hinted at in a satire which refers to the assault on Dryden mentioned in p. xxx of the preface:

'What drudge would be in Dryden's cudgelled skin,
Or who'd be safe and senseless like Tom Thynne?'

State Poems, vol. i. pt. 2. p. 33.

Thynne was murdered in February 1682, a few months after the publication of this poem, by assassins employed by Count Königsmark, who

desired to marry Lady Ogle, a young heiress to whom Thynne was betrothed.

l. 742. *depth* in first edition, instead of *depths*.

*ll. 759-768. According to Hobbes the State was based on a contract or covenant. Men, weary of the perpetual warfare and insecurity of the state of nature, covenanted together to surrender their right of governing themselves to a sovereign, or to a sovereign assembly. This covenant or contract was irrevocable, and the power thus transferred could not be resumed by those who gave it. Dryden and the Tories in general accepted this view. The Whigs held that the transfer of power was only conditional, not absolute.

l. 777. In the first edition this line stood,

‘That power which is for property allowed.’

*l. 794. In the state of nature, according to Hobbes, there can be ‘no property, no mine and thine distinct; but only that to be every man’s that he can get, and for so long as he can keep it.’

l. 802. This line has been generally printed after Derrick,

‘To patch their flaws and buttress up the wall.’

But the change of *the* to *their* before *flaws* is not necessary, nor is it an improvement.

l. 804. Broughton changed *our ark* into *the ark*, and has been generally followed by succeeding editors. But there is no reason for the change.

l. 817. *Barzillai*, the Duke of Ormond, an old Cavalier, who was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland for Charles I at the beginning of the Civil War, and was re-appointed by Charles II to the same post after the Restoration. He was removed in 1669, but re-appointed a few years after; and he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland at the time of the publication of this poem. The duke was one of Dryden’s patrons: Carte, in his life of Ormond, mentions Dryden as one of his periodical dinner-guests. Dryden dedicated, in 1683, to the Duke of Ormond the translation of Plutarch’s Lives, to which was prefixed a Life of Plutarch, by Dryden. Ormond died 1688, before the Revolution. Dryden dedicated his Fables, published in 1699, to the duke’s grandson and successor, son of the Earl of Ossory, who died in July 1680, and who is eulogised in the lines which soon follow.

l. 825. *The court he practised*. *To practise the court* is a Gallicism.

l. 827. *chuse* is the spelling here to rhyme with *Muse*. Later, in line 979, it is printed *choose*, where the rhyme is with *depose*. In *The Hind and the Panther*, Part i. line 40, *chuse* rhymes with *use*. See note on *Astræa* and *Redux*, 119, for similar variety of spelling, *strow* and *strew* to suit rhyme: and it is the same with *show* and *shew* in Dryden.

- l. 834. *By unequal fates and Providence's crime.* Compare
'Fortunae, Ptolemaee, pudor crimenque Deorum.'

Lucan, *Phars.* v. 59.

Unequal fates is probably Dryden's translation of Virgil's 'fata iniqua' (*Aen.* ii. 257, and x. 380).

l. 858.

*And left this verse,
To hang on her departed patron's hearse.*

Compare Pope :

'Or teach the melancholy Muse to mourn,
Hang the sad verse on Carolina's urn.'

Epilogue to the *Satires*, 79.

It was an old custom to hang funeral poems on the hearse. See Shakespeare, *Much Ado*, Act v. Sc. iii. Claudio hangs verses on Hero's monument :

'Hang thou there upon the tomb,
Praising her when I am dumb.'

l. 875. *Who best could plead and best can judge a cause.* Here Dryden, who never uses a word at random, speaks of judges who had been barristers, and who formerly were the best pleaders as now the best judges. Broughton, not seeing this, changed *who best could plead* into *who best can plead*: and succeeding editors followed him. In the Preface to *The State of Innocence*, Dryden had written, 'He must be a lawyer before he mounts the tribunal.'

l. 877. *Adriel*, John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, who was afterwards made Marquis of Normanby by King William, and Duke of Buckinghamshire by Queen Anne. Mulgrave was a poet, and a great friend of Dryden. He was the author of the *Essay on Satire*, which was wrongly ascribed to Dryden, and for which Dryden was cudgelled in Rose Alley, in December, 1679. Mulgrave was bountiful to Dryden after the Revolution of 1688, when he had lost the poet-laureateship. Dryden dedicated to him the Translation of the *Aeneid*. Mulgrave, then Duke of Buckinghamshire, erected a monument to Dryden in Westminster Abbey, in 1720, twenty years after the poet's death. Dryden in writing 'The Muses' friend' may have had Horace's 'Mysis amicus,' applied to *Lamia* (*Od.* i. 26), in his mind.

ll. 880, 881. Charles deprived Monmouth of all his offices and honours in 1679; and of these he gave the Lord Lieutenancy of the East Riding of Yorkshire and the government of Hull to Mulgrave.

l. 882. *Jotham*, George Savile, who inherited a baronetcy and was created by Charles II successively Viscount, Earl, and Marquis of Halifax, was a statesman of great ability and accomplishments. He held the office of Lord Privy Seal, and was one of Charles's chief advisers during the last four years of his reign. He was a 'Trimmer,'

the name given to the party of moderation in the violent disputes between Charles and the opposition, headed by Shaftesbury and Russell. He wrote the 'Character of a Trimmer.' Dryden dedicated to him his play of King Arthur, produced and published in 1691; and in this dedication he says that Halifax had 'held a principal place in King Charles's esteem, and perhaps the first in his affection during his latter troubles.' Halifax took a prominent part in bringing about the Revolution of 1688.

ready stands instead of *piercing* in the first edition in line 882.

1. 888. *Hushai*, Laurence Hyde, second son of the Lord Chancellor Clarendon, created in 1680 Viscount Hyde, and in 1682 Earl of Rochester. He was appointed one of the Commissioners of the Treasury in 1679, and soon became first Commissioner and a leading minister. On the accession of James he was made Lord Treasurer. Hyde befriended Dryden. Dryden's and Lee's Duke of Guise was dedicated to Rochester 1682, and Dryden dedicated to him in 1692 his Cleomenes. In the latter dedication Dryden refers to Rochester's kindness to him when he was powerful at the Treasury in the reigns of Charles II and James II: 'Your goodness has not been wanting to me during the reign of my two masters, and even from a bare Treasury my success has been contrary to that of Mr. Cowley, and Gideon's fleece has there been moistened, when all the ground has been dry about it.'

1. 899. *Amiel*, Edward Seymour, who had been Speaker of the House of Commons from 1673 to 1679. He succeeded to a baronetcy in 1688, and is best known as Sir Edward Seymour. He was the head of the house of Seymour, the then Duke of Somerset being of a younger branch of the family. He opposed the Bill of Exclusion; he was afterwards an eager promoter of the Revolution.

1. 910. *the unequal ruler of the day*, Phaeton. *unequal*, incompetent.

1. 920. *plume*, pluck. The regal rights are to be plucked like a bird's feathers. Elsewhere Dryden uses the word *plume* in the sense of strip or rob by plucking: 'He has left the faction as bare of arguments as Æsop's bird of feathers, and plumed them of all those fallacies and evasions which they borrowed from Jesuits and Presbyterians.' (Vindication of the Duke of Guise.)

'One whom, instead of banishing a day,
You should have plumed of all his borrowed honours.'

Maiden Queen, Act iii. Sc. 1.

'Not with more ease the falcon from above
Trusses in middle air the trembling dove,
Then plumes the prey.' Translation of Aeneid, xi. 1045.

1. 939. With reference to David's speech, which begins at this line, Spence says that he was told by Pope that 'King Charles obliged

Dryden to put his Oxford speech into verse, and to insert it towards the close of his *Absalom and Achitophel*.' (Anecdotes of Men and Books, p. 112.) The Oxford speech is the speech made by Charles at the opening of the parliament at Oxford, March 21, 1681. There are some points of resemblance in the two speeches, but David's speech is certainly far from being a paraphrase of King Charles's.

ll. 957-960. These four lines about Monmouth were added in the second edition.

l. 966. *destroy* in first edition, instead of *supplant*.

l. 971. *His old instructor*, Shaftesbury, who lost his place as Chancellor in Nov. 1673.

*ll. 1006-1009 may be thus paraphrased: 'They, i.e. the factious party, demand law and shall have law. They are not content with my clemency, with grace or mercy—which is as it were the hinder parts of law and may be seen with safety—but rashly demand to see the very face of law.' 'Grace' is explained by lines 939-944; 'Law' by lines 991-1003.

ll. 1007, 8. *Grace Her hinder parts*. There is a reference here, as in *Astræa Redux* (262-265), to the appearance of God to Moses: 'And he (the Lord) said, Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, Behold, there is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock, and it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a clift of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand, while I pass by; and I will take away mine hand and thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen' (Exodus xxxiii. 20-23). See *The Hind and the Panther*, Part iii. line 1040,

'Vice, though frontless and of hardened face,
Is daunted at the sight of awful grace.'

l. 1009. From Ovid; *Ars Amat*. i. 655,

'Neque enim lex aequior ulla est
Quam necis artifices arte perire sua.'

l. 1030. 'Magnus ab integro saeculorum nascitur ordo.'

Virg. *Ecl.* iv. 5.

'Incipient magni procedere menses.' *Id.* 12.

And compare in *Annus Mirabilis*, stanza 18,

'And now, a round of greater years begun.'

Also *Astræa Redux*, l. 292.

GLOSSARY.

O. C. refers to the Stanzas on the death of Oliver Cromwell; A. R. to *Astræa Redux*; A. M. to *Annus Mirabilis*; A. A. to *Absalom and Achitophel*; R. L. to *Religio Laici*; and H. P. to *The Hind and the Panther*.

The numbers after O. C. and A. M. refer to the stanzas; in the other cases to lines of the poems.

A.

- Abate**, *v. i.* lessen, 'abate of virulence.' Preface to R. L.
Abbethdin, *sb.* chief judge among the Jews. A. A. 188.
Admire, *v. i.* wonder. H. P. iii. 388.
Affect, *v. t.* seek, desire. A. M. 273; A. A. 177.
Affright, *sb.* fear. A. A. 71.
Alga, *sb.* sea-weed. A. R. 119.
Allay, *sb.* alloy. H. P. i. 320.
Allude, *v. i.* compare. H. P. iii. 366.
Amain, *adv.* vehemently. H. P. iii. 620.
Antique, *adj.* strange, grotesque. H. P. iii. 488.
Armado, *sb.* army. A. M. 14.
Arose, *p. p.* arisen. O. C. 36.
Assay, *v. t.* try, essay. O. C. 12; H. P. iii. 796.
Atone, *v. t.* reconcile, harmonise, A. A. 179; used intransitively, R. L. 89.
Aucterity, *sb.* authority. H. P. i. 453, ii. 276. Elsewhere *authority*.
Auspice, *sb.* patronage. A. M. 288.
Authentic, *adj.* authoritative, authorised. O. C. 2; H. P. iii. 838; Pref. to R. L.

B.

- Bad**, *v.* perfect of *bid*, ordered. H. P. i. 531.
Benting, *adj.* 'benting times,' times when pigeons feed on bent, a coarse grass. H. P. iii. 1283.
Big-corned, *adj.* big-grained, 'big-corned powder.' A. M. 149.
Bilander, *sb.* coasting vessel. H. P. i. 128.
Blatant, *adj.* howling, barking. H. P. iii. 230.
Bleaky, *adj.* bleak. H. P. iii. 612.

- Botch, *sb.* sore spot, eruption. H. P. ii. 542.
 Brave, *sb.* bravo. A. A. 967.
 Breathe, *v. t.* to open, lance; applied to opening a vein. O. C. 12.
 Brew, *v. t.* mix, make. O. C. 25; A. R. 296.
 Broke, *p. p.* broken. A. M. 239, 255.
 Build (spelt *built* in original edition), shape. A. M. 60.

C.

- Castor, *sb.* beaver. A. M. 25.
 Cates, *sb.* food. H. P. ii. 721.
 Cense, *v. i.* scatter incense. H. P. iii. 753.
 Cham, *sb.* Ham, son of Noah. Pref. to R. L.
 Check, *sb.* 'fly at check,' fly at random. A. M. 86.
 Cheer, *sb.* countenance. H. P. iii. 437.
 Chirurgeon, *sb.* surgeon. Pref. to A. A.
 Chose, *p. p.* chosen. A. M. 75.
 Circular, *adj.* complete, perfect, 'circular fame.' O. C. 5.
 Circularly, *adv.* all round, in circles. A. M. 2.
 Clip, *v. i.* fly fast, 'clips it.' A. M. 86.
 Cockle, *sb.* weed in corn. A. A. 195.
 Commonweal, *sb.* commonwealth. H. P. i. 234.
 Complexion, *sb.* physical disposition. O. C. 25.
 Composure, *sb.* reconciliation. Pref. to A. A.
 Concernment, *sb.* care, concern. Pref. to A. M.
 Confident, *sb.* a person confided in. O. C. 25.
 Connatural, *adj.* of same nature, 'connatural to.' Pref. to A. M.
 Consequent, *sb.* consequence. Pref. to A. A.
 Corps, *sb.* corpse, body, used for plural as well as singular; plural, H. P. i. 23.
 Couch, *v. t.* lay down. H. P. i. 722.
 Couchee, *sb.* evening reception. H. P. i. 516.
 Courage, *sb.* used in the plural, 'courage.' A. M. 76, 93.
 Cozenage, *sb.* deception. H. P. ii. 258.
 Crack, *sb.* noise of falling, crash. A. M. 238.
 Cross, *adv.* across. A. M. 156, 233.
 Curtana, *sb.* the sword of mercy. H. P. ii. 419.

D.

- Dared, *p. p.* frightened, bewildered; applied to larks. A. M. 195.
 Dauby, *adj.* sticky. A. M. 148.
 Decease, *v. i.* die. O. C. 34.
 Deducement, *sb.* deduction. Pref. to R. L.

- Designment, *sb.* design. O. C. 24.
 Despite, *sb.* spite. H. P. iii. 70.
 Detort, *v. t.* twist. Pref. to R. L.
 Divest, *v. t.* divest. H. P. i. 187.
 Digestive, *adj.* digesting. A. R. 89.
 Dint, *sb.* force. H. P. iii. 200.
 Disembogue, *v. i.* empty out. H. P. ii. 562.
 Disheir, *v. t.* deprive of an heir. H. P. iii. 705.
 Disinterested, *adj.* disinterested. R. L. 335.
 Dismission, *sb.* dismissal. H. P. i. 346.
 Doom, *v. t.* destine, used familiarly, 'doom wool into France.' A. M. 207.
 Dorp, *sb.* village. H. P. iii. 611.
 Doted, *adj.* doting, foolish. H. P. iii. 152.

E.

- Earthy, *adj.* of the earth. A. A. 637.
 Eiry, *sb.* nest. A. M. 107.
 Epoche, *sb.* epoch. A. R. 108.
 Essay, *sb.* first effort, trial. A. M. 140; H. P. i. 200.
 Evince, *v. t.* prove. H. P. ii. 190, 233.
 Expire, *v. i.* applied to a ball coming out of a cannon. A. M. 188.

F.

- Face, *v. t.* put on a facing. H. P. iii. 199.
 Factor, *sb.* agent. A. R. 78.
 Firmamental, *adj.* of the firmament. A. M. 281.
 Flix, *sb.* fur of the hare. A. M. 132.
 Fogue, *sb.* fury. A. R. 203.
 Forbear, *v. t.* forbear from, spare. A. A. 37.
 Forgot, *p. p.* forgotten. H. P. ii. 333.
 Fowl, *sb.* bird, birds, used in plural sense. A. M. 85; H. P. i. 1243.
Fowls occurs, H. P. iii. 585.
 Frequent, *adj.* crowded. H. P. iii. 25.
 Fright, *v. t.* frighten. A. M. 50, 109; H. P. i. 79.
 Frontless, *adj.* shameless. Pref. to R. L., and H. P. iii. 1040, 1187.
 Froze, *p. p.* frozen. A. M. 285.

G.

- Gage, *sb.* pledge. A. M. 20.
 Galled (spelt *gauled* in original editions), *p. p.* rubbed. A. M. 148; R. L.

- Gaud, *sb.* ornament. A. M. 206.
 Genius, *sb.* 'a genius,' a character of genius. Pref. to A. A.
 Give on, *v. i.* proceed violently. A. M. 280.
 Godsmith, *sb.* God-maker. A. A. 50.
 Graff, *v. t.* graft. Pref. to R. L.
 Grave, *v. t.* engrave. H. P. ii. 321.
 Gross, *sb.* size, A. M. 152, 233: 'in gross,' in the general, R. L. 322.

H.

- Haggared or haggared, *adj.* haggard, wild. H. P. i. 166: iii. 1116.
 Hard-head, H. P. ii. 443.
 Hatch, *v. t.* build. A. M. 198, 288.
 Hattered out, *p. p.* wearied. H. P. i. 371.
 He, *pron.* used as substantive, 'another he,' A. A. 861: 'that universal He,' R. L. 15.
 Heir, *v. t.* inherit. H. P. iii. 714.
 Her, *pron.* in lieu of 's for genitive. A. A. 1008.
 His, *pron.* in lieu of 's for genitive. A. R. 19, 49, 111, 231; H. P. ii. 655.
 Hobby, *sb.* hawk. A. M. 195.
 Holland, *sb.* cloth from Holland. A. M. 206.

I.

- Imp, *v. t.* repair; applied to wings. A. M. 143.
 Impassible, *adj.* incapable of suffering. H. P. i. 95.
 Industrious, *adj.* 'industrious of.' H. P. ii. 571.
 Innocency, *sb.* innocence. Pref. to R. L.
 Innovate, *v. t.* introduce for the first time. Pref. to A. M.
 Instop, *v. t.* fill up. A. M. 147.
 Interested, *p. p.* interested. Pref. to R. L.

J.

- Joy, *v. t.* make joyful, A. M. 110: *v. i.* rejoice, A. M. 117, 181.

K.

- Ken, *sb.* sight. A. M. 111, 159.
 Kern, *sb.* Irish peasant. A. M. 157.
 Key, *sb.* quay. A. M. 231.

L.

- Lade, *v. t.* load. A. M. 252.
 Lag, *v. i.* loiter behind. A. M. 85; H. P. iii. 1284.
 Laveer, *v. i.* tack about. A. R. 65.
 Lazar, *sb.* a filthy deformed person. Pref. to A. M.
 Leech, *sb.* doctor. A. R. 175.
 Left, *sb.* 'left of,' left by. A. A. 568.
 Legator, *sb.* testator. H. P. ii. 375.
 Letted, *p. p.* 'letted of,' hindered from. A. M. 222.
 Levee, *sb.* morning reception. H. P. i. 516.
 Like, *v. t.* please. H. P. iii. 477.
 Limbec (spelt *limbeck* in original editions), *sb.* alembic. A. M. 13, 166.
 Linstock, *sb.* a match-holder for firing cannon. A. M. 188.
 Loll, *v. t.* stretch out. A. M. 132.

M.

- Mackrel, *adj.* mackerel, 'a mackrel gale.' H. P. iii. 456.
 Manifest, *adj.* 'manifest of crimes.' A. A. 204.
 Mannerly, *adj.* well-mannered. H. P. i. 556.
 Marling, *sb.* a small tarred line for winding round ropes. A. M. 148.
 Martlet, *sb.* a species of swallow. A. M. 110; and note on H. P. iii. 547.
 Miss, *v. i.* 'miss of.' H. P. iii. 1189.
 Missioner, *sb.* missionary. H. P. ii. 565.
 Mould, *sb.* form, shape, make, A. M. 72, 293; A. A. 368: material, H. P. i. 247.
 Moulded, *p. p.* afflicted by moulting. A. M. 143.
 Muck, *sb.* 'an Indian muck,' H. P. iii. 1118: 'amuck,' from *amocca*, a Malay word for 'kill.'
 Musquet, *sb.* a small hawk. H. P. iii. 1119.

N.

- Naked, *adj.* 'naked of friends.' A. A. 280.
 Name, *sb.* used as if it were the person or thing named. H. P. i. 156.
 Need, *v. i.* be needed. R. L. 126; H. P. iii. 321, 1428.
 Noblesse, *sb.* nobility. Pref. to A. M.
 Noiseful, *adj.* noisy. A. M. 40.

O.

- Obligement, *sb.* obligation. H. P. i. 437.
 Obscene, *adj.* loathsome, ugly. H. P. ii. 595, 652; iii. 726.

Officious, *adj.* obliging, serviceable. O. C. 1; A. M. 184.
Out, *v. t.*oust. Pref. to R. L.

P.

Pain, *sb.* labour. A. M. 32.
Palliard, *sb.* a lewd person, a rascal. H. P. ii. 563.
Pardalis, *sb.* panther. H. P. iii. 667.
Paronomasia, *sb.* pun. Pref. to A. M.
Pay o'er, *v. t.* spread over. A. M. 147.
Pile, *sb.* troop. H. P. ii. 161.
Plagiary, *sb.* plagiarist. Pref. to A. M.
Plume, *v. t.* pluck. A. A. 920.
Poll, *v. t.* cut down. H. P. iii. 631.
Poppet, *sb.* puppet. H. P. iii. 780.
Practice, *v. t.* frequent. A. A. 825.
Presume, *v. i.* 'presume of.' H. P. i. 388; iii. 511.
Prevail, *v.* avail, 'prevail oneself of.' Pref. to A. M.; A. A. 461.
Prevaricated, *p. p.* made a disingenuous use of. Pref. to R. L.
Prevent, *v. t.* anticipate, go before. O. C. 41, 33; A. R. 282; A. A. 344;
H. P. ii. 641.
Prime, *sb.* spring. H. P. iii. 536.
Procedure, *sb.* proceeding. A. R. 88.
Profer, *v. t.* proffer. H. P. iii. 766. Elsewhere spelt *proffer* in original editions.
Proponent, *sb.* a person propounding. H. P. i. 121.
Protractive, *adj.* protracting. H. P. iii. 1103.
Purchase, *sb.* acquisition. A. R. 86.

Q.

Quarry, *sb.* anything aimed at, A. M. Pref., 86, 281; H. P. i. 104: game as distinguished from vermin, H. P. ii. 21.
Quatrain, *sb.* stanza of four lines which rhyme alternately. Pref. to A. M.

R.

Rabbin, *sb.* rabbi, doctor among the Jews. A. A. 104.
Rabbinical, *adj.* of a doctor. A. A. 658.
Raise, *v. a.* extol. A. A. 110.
Raven, *v. i.* hunger. H. P. iii. 964.
Rebate, *v. t.* blunt. Pref. to A. A.
Reflective, *adj.* reflected. A. M. 253.
Remainders, *sb.* plural of remainder, used as if singular. H. P. iii. 602.

- Remnants, *sb.* used in the plural like *remainders*. A. M. 102, 258; H. P. i. 510; iii. 276.
- Renounce, *v. i.* 'renounce to.' H. P. iii. 143.
- Renown, *v. t.* make renowned. R. L. 75.
- Renunciation, *sb.* used with *to* after, as the verb *renounce*. H. P. ii. 648 (marginal note).
- Repair, *sb.* resort. A. M. 220.
- Repeat, *v. t.* reseek. A. M. 257.
- Repose, *v. t.* place as a trust, with *upon* after. Pref. to A. M.
- Reprise, *sb.* reprisal. H. P. iii. 862.
- Republic, *adj.* republican. H. P. iii. 1251.
- Require, *v. t.* seek again. A. M. 256.
- Resolve, *v. i.* melt, dissolve, H. P. i. 446.
- Rest, *sb.* remainder. H. P. iii. 85.
- Restiff, *adj.* restive. H. P. 1026.
- Retire, *v. t.* draw back. A. M. 249.
- Rid, *v.* perfect of 'ride.' Pref. to R. L.

S.

- Scanted, *pp.* curtailed, circumscribed. A. A. 369, 839.
- Scape, *v. i.* escape. A. R. 180; A. M. 220; H. P. i. 172; ii. 7.
- Seal, *v. t.* used figuratively 'sealed our new-born king.' A. M. 18.
- Sear-cloth, *v. t.* cover with sear-cloth (cere or wax cloth). A. M. 148.
- Shard, *sb.* dung, ordure. H. P. i. 321.
- Sheer, *v. t.* cut. A. M. 78.
- Shipwrack, *sb.* shipwreck. A. M. 35.
- Shipwrecked, *p. p.* A. R. 125; A. M. 2, 71, 251.
- Shore, *sb.* sewer. H. P. ii. 558.
- Show, *v. i.* appear. A. M. 66, 121, 126, 296.
- Sincere, *adj.* pure. H. P. ii. 250.
- Sincerely, *adv.* purely, without alloy. A. A. 43.
- Sort, *sb.* number, collection. H. P. iii. 946.
- Sovereign, *adj.* all-powerful. O. C. 19.
- Spoom, *v. i.* sail before the wind. H. P. iii. 96.
- Sprite, *sb.* spirit. H. P. ii. 653.
- Squander, *v. t.* disperse. A. M. 67.
- Steepy, *adv.* steep. A. A. 860.
- Sterve, *v. i.* starve. H. P. iii. 749.
- Stickler, *sb.* sidesman or second in a fight. O. C. 11.
- Strook, *v.* (*perfect*) struck. A. R. 171.
- Submit, *v. t.* lower. A. R. 249.
- Succeed, *v. t.* make to follow or succeed. A. M. 175, 292.
- Successive, *adj.* of or by succession. A. A. 301.

- Suffice, *v. t.* suffice. H. P. i. 554.
 Swift, *adj.* 'swift of despatch.' A. A. 191.
 Swisses, *sb.* plural of Swiss. H. P. iii. 177.

T.

- Tarnish, *v. i.* become stained. A. A. 249.
 Tax, *v. t.* accuse, 'tax of.' H. P. iii. 227.
 Tell, *v. t.* count. A. M. 34, 76.
 Theologue, *sb.* Theologian. H. P. iii. 1147.
 Thick, *adv.* quickly following. A. M. 120.
 Thick, *adj.* 'thick of.' O. C. 14.
 Threat, *v. t.* threaten. A. M. 61; A. A. 141.
 Timely, *adv.* in time. A. R. 190.
 Tire, *sb.* row of guns. H. P. iii. 317.
 Too too, *adv.* excessively. A. R. 111.
 Took, *p. p.* taken. A. R. 144.
 Traditive, *adj.* traditional. H. P. ii. 196.
 Transact, *v. i.* act. H. P. iii. 14.
 Travellour, *sb.* traveller. A. R. 148.
 Treasonous, *adj.* treasonable. H. P. iii. 633.
 Trine, *sb.* conjunction of three planets making a triangle. A. M. 292.
 Trust, *v. i.* followed by *on*. A. M. 295.
 Turbulent, *adj.* 'turbulent of evil.' A. A. 153.

U.

- Unblamed, *adj.* 'unblamed of life.' A. A. 479.
 Ungodded, *p. p.* having no gods. H. P. iii. 742.
 Unhoped, *adj.* unexpected. A. R. 140.
 Unknowing, *adj.* not knowing. A. M. 96.
 Unlade, *v. t.* empty, unload. A. M. 300.
 Unsatiated, *adj.* insatiable. A. A. 987.
 Unsincere, *adj.* mixed, alloyed. A. M. 209.
 Unthrif, *sb.* prodigal. H. P. iii. 296.

V.

- Vare, *sb.* wand. A. A. 595.

W.

- Wait, *v. t.* attend, accompany. H. P. i. 557.
 Want, *v. t.* be without. A. A. 197.

- Wanting, *adj.* needy, poor. A. M. 274; A. A. 407, 892.
Well-breathed, *adj.* with good lungs. A. A. 630.
Wex, *v. i.* wax, grow. A. M. 4.
Wilder, *v. t.* bewilder. H. P. ii. 682.
Witness, *sb.* evidence. H. P. i. 62.
Worser, *adj.* worse. A. R. 3.

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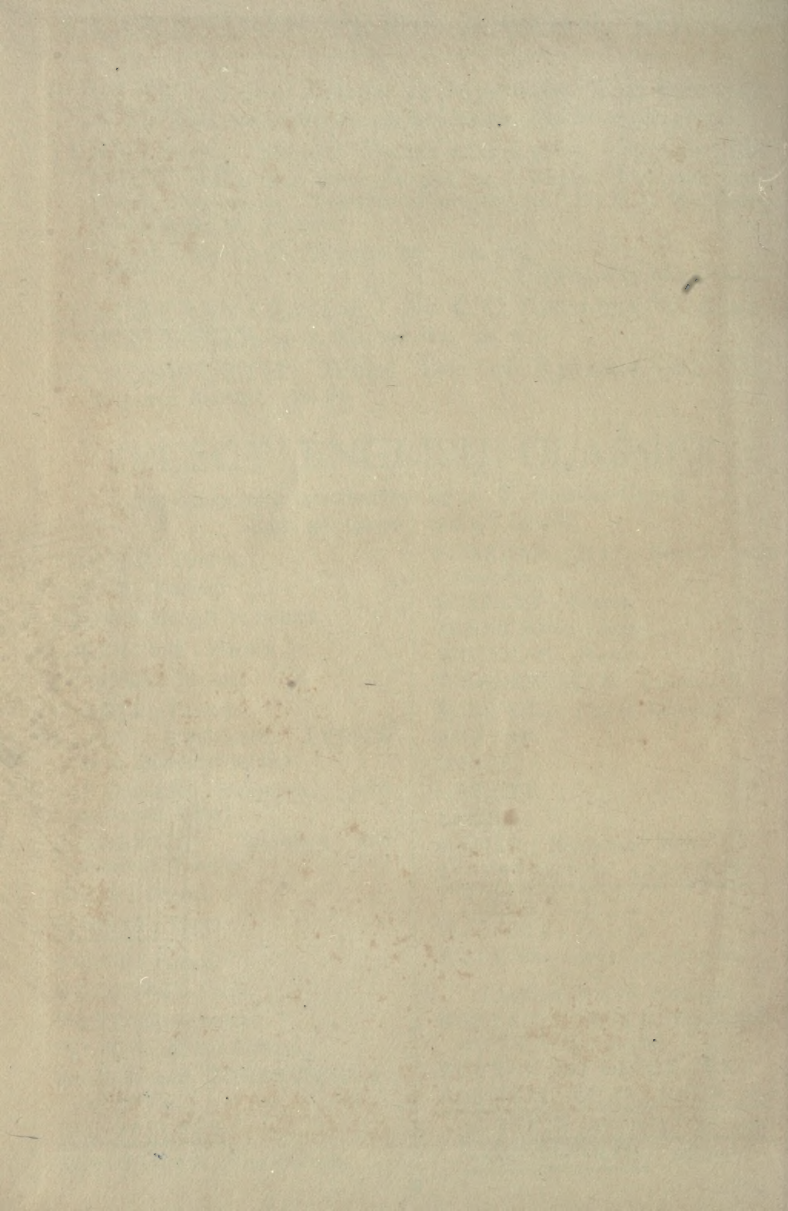
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