WILLIAM WEBBE, GRADUATE.

A DISCOURSE OF

ENGLISH POETRIE.

1586.

CAREFULLY EDITED BY

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E.V.

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NOTES
of
WILLIAM WEBBE.

* Probable or approximate dates.

Very little is known of the Author of this work. The suggestion that he was the William Webbe, M.A., one of the joint Authors of a topographical book, The Vale Royal, 1648, fol., is quite anachronistic.

Messrs. Cooper, in Athena Cantabrigenis, ii. 12. Ed. 1681, state that our Author "was a graduate of this University, but we have no means of determining his college. One of this name, who was of St. John's College, was B.A. 1572-3 (the same year as Spenser), as was another who was of Catharine Hall in 1581-2. His place of residence is unknown, although it may perhaps he inferred that it was in or near the county of Suffolk. We have no information as to his position in life, or the time or place of his death. He was evidently a man of superior intellect and no mean attainments." [Our Author apparently witnessed Tancred and Gismund in 1585, and being evidently acquainted with Gabriel Harvey and Spenser (who left Cambridge in 1579), must be the earlier graduate of the above two Webbes.]

1568. 

Tancred and Gismund, written by five members of the Inner Temple, the first letters of whose names are attached to the several acts, viz., Red. Staff; Hen. No[well]; G. Ali; Ch. Hatton; and R. Wil[liam]: is "curiously acted in view of her Majesty, by whom it was then princely accepted."

Webbe appears to have been present at the representation: see 1591. Mr. J. P. Collier in his edition of 'Dukisly's Old Plays,' 1. 159, prints from a MS. what is apparently a portion of this Tragedy as it was then acted, written in alternate rhymes. He also states in his Hist. of Dram. Poet, that it "is the earliest English play extant, the plot of which is known to be derived from an Italian novel." iii. 13. Ed. 1831.

*1572-3.

Our Author takes his B.A. at Cambridge.


Flemyngs is a large manor house in Essex in the parish of Runwell, in the hundred of Chelmsford; from which town it is ten miles distant, and about twenty-nine miles from London. 'This house commands extensive views of some parts of the county and of Kent, including more than thirty parish churches.'

Edward Sulyard succeeded, on the death of his father Eustace in 1546, to Flemyngs and other possessions. He had two sons, Edward and Thomas, and a daughter named Elizabeth. He was knighted on 23 July 1603 at Whitehall by James I, before his coronation; and died in June 1610. Of his two sons, Edward died without issue; Thomas, b. 1572, was knighted, and d. March 1634; leaving a son Edward, who d. 7 Nov. 1692 without issue, 'the last of the house and family.' See W. Berry, County Gen. Essex, 64. T. Wright, Hist. of Essex, i. 142, 143. Ed. 1831. J. Philibot Knits. Batch. made by James I. 1660.

*1583 or 4.

Webbe appears to have been at this time private tutor to Mr Sulyard's two sons, for he presented his MS. translation (now lost) of the Georgics to Mr. Sulyard: see pp. 55 and 14.

1585. Dec. 2. The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's appoint Robert Wilmott, M.A., to the Vicarage of Horndon on the Hill, twenty-four miles from London, and a few miles from Flemyngs, where his friend Webbe was a private tutor. Newcourt, idem. ii. 343.
NOTES OF WILLIAM WEBBE.

1586. Of 'the pregnant ymps of right excellent hope,' Thomas Sulyard was about thirteen years old, and his brother Edward was older than him. W. Webbe writes the present work in the summer evenings.

SEPT. 4. It is thus registered for publication.

"Robt. Walley
John Charlewood, Rd. of them, for printinge A Discourse of English poetye

1587. Feb. 5. Margaret, the mother of Mr. Sulyard died. She is buried at Runwell.


Our Author—his pupils growing to manhood—then appears to have gone, possibly also in the same capacity of private tutor into the family of Henry Grey, Esquire [created Baron Grey of Groby, 21 July 1603; d. 1614] at Piggo, in the parish of Havering atte Bower, Essex; fifteen miles from London. Dugdale states that the first husband of one of the daughters of this Henry Grey, Esquire, was a William Sulyard, Esquire. Baron. i. 732. Ed. 1675. From this old Palace of the Queens of England Webbe wrote the following letter to Wilmott, which is reprinted in the revised edition of Tancred and Gismund published in 1592: of which there are copies in the Bodleian, and at Bridgewater House, and an imperfect one in the British Museum (C. 34, e. 44).

1591. Aug. 8. To his friend R. W. Master R. VV. looke not now for the tearmes of an intreater, I wil beg no longer, and for your promises, I will refuse them as bad payment: neither can I be satisfied with any thing, but a peremptorie performance of an old intention of yours, the publishing I meane of those wast papers (as it pleaseth you to call them, but as I esteem them, a most exquisite invention) of Gismunds Tragedie. Thinke not to shift me off with longer delays, nor alledge more excuses to get further respite, least I arrest you with my Actum est, and commence such a Sate of yrkindenesse against you, as when the case shall be scand before the Judges of courtesie, the court will crie out of your immorderat modestie. And thus much I tel you before, you shal not be able to wage against me in the charges growing vpun this action, especially, if the worshipful company of the Inner temple gentlemen patronize my cause, as undoubtedly they wil, yes, and rather plead partially for me then let my cause miscary, because themselves are parties. The tragedie was by them most pithecly framed, and no lesse curiously acted in view of her Majeity, by whom it was theo as princely accepted, as of the whole honorable audience notably applauded: yes, and of al men generally desired, as a work, either in statelynes of shew, depth of coceit, or true ornaments of poetical arte, inferior to none of the best in that kinde: as, were the Roman Seneca the censurer. The braue youths that then (to their high praises) so feelingly performed the same in action, did shortly after lay vp the booke vnregarded, or perhaps let it run abroade (as many parents doe their children once past dangling) not respecting so much what hard fortune might befall it being out of their fingers, as bow their heroicall wits might at once be quickly conceived with new inventions of like worthines, wherof they have been ever since wonderfull fertill. But this orphane of theirs (for he wandrith as it were fatherlesse,) hath notwithstanding, by the rare and biewful perfections appearing in him, hitherto nener wanted great
NOTES OF WILLIAM WEBBE.

5

... and loving preservers. Among whom I cannot sufficiently commend your more then charitable scale, and scholerly compassion towards him, that have not only rescued and defended him from the denaturing iawes of oblivion, but vouchsafed also to apparel him in a new suit at your own charges, wherein he may again more boldly come abroad, and by your permission returne to his olde parents, clothed perhaps not in richer or more costly furniture than it went from them, but in handsoms and fashiones as admirable to these times, wherein fashions are so often altered. Let one word suffice for your encouragement herein: namely, your commendable pains in disrobing him of his antike curiositie, and adornning him with the approved guise of our stateliest Englisher terms (not diminishing, but augmenting his artificiell colours of absolute poesie, derived from his first parents) cannot but bee grateful to most mens appetites, who vpon our experience we know highly to esteem such lofty measures of sententiously composed Tragedies.

How much you shal make me, and the rest of your private friends beholding unto you, I list not to discourse: and therefore grounding vpon these alledged reasons, that the suppressing of this Tragedie, so worthy for ye presse, were no other thing then wilfully to defraud your selfe of an universall thank, your frends of their expectations, and sweete G. of a famous eternitie. I will cease to doubt of any other pretence to cloake your bashfulnesse, hoping to read it in print (which lately lay neglected amongst your papers) at our next appointed meeting.

I bid you heartely farewell. From Pyrgo in Essex, August the eight, 1592. Tuns jide et faculata. OUIL. WEBBE.

It may also be noted that Wilmott dedicated this revised tragedy to two Essex ladies: one of whom was Lady Anne Grey, the daughter of Lord Windsor, and the wife of the above-mentioned Henry Grey, Esquire of Pirgo.

That the above R. Wilmott, Clergyman, is the same as the Reviser of the play appears from the following passage in his Preface.

"Hereupon I have induced some conflicts between reason and judgement, whether it were convenient for the commonwealth, and the indecorum of my calling (as some think it) that the memory of Tanserds Tragedy should be again by my means revised, which the ofter I read over, and the more I considered thereon, the sooner I was won to consent thereunto: calling to mind that neither the thrice reverend and learned father, M. Beza, was ashamed in his younger years to send abroad, in his own name, his Tragedy of Abraham, nor that rare Scot (the scholar of our age) Buchanan, his most pathetical Iephitha. " Dodsley's Old Plays," ii. 165. Ed. by J. P. Collier, 1825.

If the identity may be considered as established, Wilmott the Poet lived on till 1619: when he was succeeded on his death by W. Jackson, in the Rectory of North Okendon. Newcourt, idem, ii. 447.

No later information concerning W. Weibe than the above letter, has yet been recovered.

CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH AUTHORS
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R. ASHAM. The Scholemaster, ... 31, 57
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SENeca.

J. Heywood. Troas, 1559; Theseus, 1560; Hercules Furens, 1561.

G. Turberville. Heroical Epistles, 1567.

Ovid.

G. Turberville. Heroical Epistles, 1567.

Virgil.

R. Edwards. Par. of Dainty Devises, 1576; Comedies.

Sir T. Elyot. The Governor, 1538.

G. Gascoigne. Poesies, 1572; The Steele Glas, &c., 1576.


G. Harvey.

Heywood (either John Heywood or Jasper Heywood).


? Hyll.

E. K. [i.e. Edward Kirke].

F. K. (? Fr. Kindlemarthi] Par. of Dainty Devises, 1576, 1578.

J. Lyly. Euphues, 1579-80; Plays.

A. Munday. The Mirror of Mutabilitie, 1579; The Pain of Pleasure, 1580.

T. Norton. Joint Author of Ferrex and Porrex, 1561.

C. OcklanDE. Anglorum Praeia, 1580, 1582.

[E. Spenser. Shepheardes Calender, 1579, 1581, 1586.]


T. Tusser. Five hundred points of Good Husbandrie, 1557-80.

Thomas, Lord Vaux. Sonnets, &c., in Tottel's Misc. 1557; and Par. of Dainty Devises, 1576.


G. Whetstone. The Rocke of Regard, 1576.

R. Wilmott. Tancred and Gynmund, 1568.

S. Y. [? M. Yloop, i.e. M. Folly in Par. of Dainty Devises].

G. Lyly. Euphues, 1579-80; Plays.

T. Lyly. Euphues, 1579-80; Plays.

A. Munday. The Mirror of Mutabilitie, 1579; The Pain of Pleasure, 1580.

T. Norton. Joint Author of Ferrex and Porrex, 1561.

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S. Y. [? M. Yloop, i.e. M. Folly in Par. of Dainty Devises].

G. Turberville. Heroical Epistles, 1567.

Ovid.

G. Turberville. Heroical Epistles, 1567.

A. Golding. Metamorphoses, 1565.

T. Churchyard. Tristia, 1578.

T. Drant. Satires, 1566; Art of Poetrie, 1567.

Virgil.

Henry, Earl of Surrey. Two Books of the 'Aenid,' 1557.

T. Phaier, M.D. 9½rd Books of the 'Aenid,' 1558-1562.

T. Twyne. The remaining 2½rd Books, 1573.

Part from the excessive rarity of this work, two copies of it only being known; it deserves permanent republication as a good example of the best form of Essay Writing of its time; and as one of the series of Poetical Criticisms before the advent of Shakespeare as a writer, the study of which is so essential to a right understanding of our best Verse.

Although Poetry is the most ethereal part of Thought and Expression; though Poets must be born and cannot be made: yet is there an art of Poesy; set forth long ago by Horace but varying with differing languages and countries, and even with different ages in the life of the same country. In our tongue—Milton only excepted—there is nothing approaching, either in the average merit of the Journeymen or the superlative excellence of the few Master-Craftsmen, the Poesy of the Elizabethan age. Hence the value of these early Poetical Criticisms. Their discussion of principles is most helpful to all readers in the discernment of the subtle beauties of the numberless poems of that era: while for those who can, and who will; they will be found singularly suggestive in the training of their own Power of Song, for the instruction and delight of this and future generations.

A Cambridge graduate; the private tutor, for some two or three years past, to Edward and Thomas Sul-
Introduction.

yppe some other of meete abilitie, to beftowe trauell in this matter.' His wish had been anticipated. Already a Master Critic was at work—we know not for certainty whether it was George Puttenham, or who else—who, beginning to write in 1585, published in 1589 The Arte of English Poety: which is the largest and ableft criticifm of English Poety that appeared in print, during the reign of Elizabeth.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Issues in the Author's lifetime.

I.—As a separate publication.

1. 1586. London. 1 vol. 4to. See title on opposite page.

Of the two copies known, the one here reprinted is among the Malone books in the Bodleian. The other passed from hand to hand at the following Sales: always increasing in price.

1773. Apr. 8. Mr. West's sale, No. 1896, 10s. 6d., to Mr. Pearson.

1778. Apr. 22. Mr. Pearson's sale, No. 1889, £3, 5s., to Mr. Stevens.

1800. May 19. Mr. Stevens' sale, No. 1126, £8, 8s., to the Duke of Roxburghe.

1812. June 2. The Roxburghe sale, No. 3168, £64, to the Marquis of Blandford.

Issues since the Author's death.

I.—As a separate publication.


II.—With other works.

A Discourse of English Poetrie.

Together, with the Authors judgment, touching the reformation of our English Verse.

By William Webbe Graduate.

Imprinted at London, by John Charlewood for Robert Valley
1586.
To the right vvorship-
full, learned, and most gentle Gentle-
man, my verie good Master, Ma.
Edward Suliard, Esquire. VV. VV.
wyfheth his harts desire.

Ay it pleafe you Syr, thys once
more to beare with my rudenes, in
prefenting unto your viewe, an other
flender conceite, of my simple capa-
city: wherein although I am not able
to bring you anie thing, which is
meete to detaine you from your more ferior matters:
yet uppon my knowledge of your former courtesey and
your favourable countenaunce towards all enterprifes
of Learning, I dare make bold to craue your accustomed
patience, in turning ouer some of these fewe leaues, which
I shall account a greater recompence, then the wryting
thereof may deferue.
The firme hope of your wonted gentlenes, not any good loving of myne owne labour, made me thus presumptuously to crave your worshipes patronage for my poore booke. A pretty answer is reported by some to be made by Appelles to King Alexander, who (in disport) taking up one of his pencils to drawe a line, and asking the Paynters judgment of his draught, It is done (quoth Apelles) like a King: meaning indeede it was drawn as he pleased, but was nothing leffe then good workmanshipe. My selfe in like fort, taking upon me, to make a draught of English Poetry, and requelling your worshipes censure of the same, you wyll perhaps gyue me thys verdit, It was done like a Scholler, meaning, as I could, but indeede more like to a learner, then one through grounded in Poetical workmanship.

Alexander in drawing his lyne, leaned sometime too hard, otherwhyle too soft, as neuer hauing beene apprentice to the Arte: I in drawing this Poetical discourse, make it some where to straignt (leaving out the cheefe coloures and ornaments of Poetry) in an other place to wyde (stuffer in peeces little pertinent to true Poetry) as one neuer acquainted wyth the learned Muses. What then? as he being a king, myght meddle in what Science him lifted, though therein hee had no skyl: so I being a learner, wyll trye my cunning in some parts of Learning, though neuer so simple.

Nowe, as for my faucie pressing upon your expected favor in craving your judgment, I befeech you let me
make thys excuse: that whereas true Gentilitie did
never withdrawe her louing affeflion from Lady Learn-
ing, so I am perswaded, that your worshippe cannot
chuse, but continue your wonted fauourable benignitie
towards all the indeuourers to learning, of which
corporation I doo indeede professe my selue one fullie
member.

For fith the wryters of all ages, haue fought as an un-
doubted Bulwarke and stedfaft safeguarde the patronage
of Nobilitye, (a shield as sure as can be to learning)
wherin to shrowde and safelye place their feueral inven-
tions: why should not I fecke some harbour for my poore
trauell to reste and staye upon, beeing of it selue unable
to shyft the carping cauilles and byting scornes of Lewde
controllers?

And in trueth, where myght I rather choose a sure
defence and readey refuge for the fame, then where I see
perfecte Gentilitye, and noblenesse of minde, to be faile-
lyncked with excellencie of learning and assable courtesye?
Moreover, add thy to the ende of myne excufe: that I
fende it into your fight, not as anie wyttie pece of worke
that may delight you: but being a sleight somewhat comp-
yled for recreation, in the intermyffions of my daylie
businesse, (even thys Summer Eueninges) as a token of
that earnest and unquenchable defyre I haue to shewe my
selue dutifull and welwylling towards you. Whereunto
I am continually enflamed more and more, when I con-
sider eyther your fauourable freendskype used towards
my selfe, or your gentle countenaunce shewed to my simple travelles. The one I have tryed in that homely translation I present unto you: the other I finde true in your curteous putting to my trust, and doing me so great honestly and credite, with the charge of these toward young Gentlemen your fohnnes.

To which pregnant ympes of right excellent hope, I would I were able, or you myght have occasion to make triall of my louing minde: who shoule well perceyue my selfe to remayne unto them a faythfull and trusdy Achates, euen so farre as my wealth my woe, my power or perrill, my penne or witte, my health or lyfe may ferue to ferche myne ability.

Huge heapes of wordes I myght pyle together to trouble you withall: eyther of my selfe or of my dooinges, (as some doo) or of your worshyppes commendable vertues (as the moste doo) But I purposely chuse rather to let passe the spreading of that worthy fame which you have ever deferued, then to runne in suspicion of fawning flattery which I ever abhorred.

Therefore once againe craving your gentle pardon, and patience in your overlooking thys rude Epistle: and wyshing more happinesse then my penne can expresse to you and your whole retinewe, I rest.

(...)

Your worshippes faithfull

Servaunt. VV. VV.
A Preface to the not Poets of Englande.

Among the innumerable forts of lively Bookes, and infinite faire printed pamphlets, wherewith the Countrey is pestered, all stuffed, and every study for the greatest part I thinke one kinde, are such as are meere Poeticall, or which tende in some respect either in matter or forme) to Poetry. Of such therefore, sith I have beene one, that haue desire to reade not the fewest, and because i argument, which men of great learning haue seere to handle, or at least hauing to doo with serious matters doe least regarde: If I write somes concerning what I thinke of our English Poets, vnture to sette downe my simele judgement of Poetrie, I trust the learned Poets will giue me and vouchsafe my Booke passage, as beeing that rudenesse thereof no prejudice to their noble but even (as my intent is) an inslar cotis to sterve some other of mete abilitie, to bestowe trauell matter: whereby I thinke wee may not onelie meanes which wee yet want, to dicerne between writers and badde, but perchappes also challenging the rude multitude of rusticall Rymers, who called Poets, the right practife and orderly contrue true Poetry.
manie, that where as all kinde of good learning, haue a/pyred to royall dignitie and statelie grace in our English tongue, being not onelie founded, defended, maintained, and enlarged, but also purged from faultes, weeded of errours, and pollifhed from barbaroufnes, by men of great authoritie and judgement: onelie Poetrie hath founde fewest frendes to amende it, thofe that can, refuring theyr skyll to themselues, thofe that cannot, running headlong vppon it, thinking to garnilh it with their deuifes, but more corrupting it with fantaficall errours. VVhat shoulde be the cause, that our English speeche in some of the wyfeft mens judgements, hath neuer attained to anie sufficient ripenes, nay not ful avoided the reproch of barbaroufnes in Poetry? the rudenes of the Countrey, or baseneffe of wytts: or the course Dialeft of the speeche? experience ytterlie difproueth it to be anie of thes: what then? surelie the canckred enmitie of curious cuflome: which as it neuer was great freend to any good learning, fo in this hath it grounded: in the moft, such a negligent perfwafion of an impossibilitie in matching the beft, that the finest witts and moft diuine heades, haue contented themselues with a base kinde of fingering: rather debafing theyr faculties, in fettung forth theyr skyll in the courfeft manner, then for breaking cuflome, they would labour to adorne their Countrey and aduance their stytle with the higheft and moft learnedst toppe of true Poetry. The rudenes or vnaptnesse of our Countrey to be either none or no hinderance, if reformation were made accordinglie, the exquisite excellency in all kindes of good learning nowe flourifhing among vs, inferiour to none other nation, may sufficiently declare.
That there be as sharpe and quicke wittes in England as euer were among the peerelesse Grecians, or renowned Romaines, it were a note of no witte at all in me to deny. And is our speech fo courfe, or our phrase fo harfhe, that Poetry cannot therein finde a vayne whereby it may appeare like it selfe? why should we think fo basely of this? rather then of her sister, I meane Rhetoricall Eloquution, which as they were by byrth Twyns, by kinde the same, by originall of one defcent: so no doubt, as Eloquence hath founde such fanoures, in the English tongue, as she frequenteth not any more gladly: so would Poetrye if there were the like welcome and entertainment gyuen her by our English Poets, without question aspyre to wonderfull perfection, and appeare farre more gorgeous and delectable among vs. Thus much I am bolde to say in behalfe of Poetrie, not that I meane to call in question the reuerend and learned workes of Poetrie, written in our tongue by men of rare judgement, and most excellent Poets: but euen as it were by way of supplication to the famous and learned Lawreat Masters of Englande, that they would but consult one halfe howre with their heauenly Muse, what credite they might winne to theyr native speech, what enormities they might wipe out of English Poetry, what a fitte vaine they might frequent, wherein to shewe forth their worthy faculties: if English Poetrie were truely reformed, and some perfect platforme or Profodia of verifying were by them ratifyed and sette downe: eyther in immitation of Greekes and Latines, or where it would skant abyde the touch of theyr Rules, the like obseruations seelcted and establifhcd by the naturall affectation of the speche. Thus much I say, not to perfwade you that
are the favourers of English Poetry but to move it to you: being not the first that have thought upon this matter, but one that by consent of others, have taken upon me to lay it once again in your ways, if perhaps you may stumble upon it, and chance to look into lowe from your divine cogitations, when your Mufe mounteth to the starrs, and rancketh the Spheres of heauen: whereby perhaps you may take compassion of noble Poetry, pittifullie mangled and defaced, by rude matterers and barbarous, immitators of your worthy studies. If the motion bee worthy your regard it is enough to move it, if not, my wordes woulde simply preuaile in perfwading you, and therefore I rest vpon thys onely request, that of your courteous, you wyll graunt passage, vnder your favourable corrections, for this my simple cenfure of English Poetry, wherein if you please to runne it ouer, you shall knowe breefely myne opinion of the most part of your accustomed Poets and particularly, in his place, the lyttle somewhat which I haue sifted out of my weake brayne concerning thys reformed verfifying.

VV:  
VV:
A Discourse of English Poetrie.

Intending to write some discourse of English Poetrie, I thinke it not amysfe if I speake somthing generally of Poetrie, as, what it is, whence it had the beginning, and of what estimation it hath alwayes beene and ought to be among al forts of people. Poetrie called in Greeke ΠΟΕΤΡΙΑ, beeing deriued from the Verbe ποιεω, which signifieth in Latine facere, in English, to make, may properly be defined, the arte of making: which word as it hath alwaies beene especially vsed of the best of our English Poets, to expresse ye very faculty of speaking or wryting Poetically, so doth it in deede containe mosfitly the whole grace and property of the fame, ye more fullye and effectually then any other English Verbe. That Poetry is an Arte, (or rather a more excellent thing then can be contayned within the compasse of Arte) though I neede not stande long to proue, both the witnes of Horace, who wrote de arte Poetica, and of Terence, who calleth it Artem Musicam, and the very naturall property thereof may sufficiently declare: The beginning of it as appeareth by Plato, was of a vertuous and mosfit devout purpose,
who witnesseth, that by occasion of meeting of a great company of young men, to solemnize ye feasts which were called Panegeryca, and were wont to be celebrated every fift yeere, there, they that were most pregnant in wytt, and induced with great gyfts of wyfedome and knowledge in Musicke aboue the rest did vse commonly to make goodly verses, measured according to the sweetest notes of Musicke, containing the prayfe of some noble vertue, or of immortalitie, or of some such thing of greatest estimation; which vnto them seemed; so heauenly and joyous a thing, that, thinking such men to be infpyrde with some diuine instinct from heauen, they called them Vates. So when other among them of the finest wits, and aptest capacities beganne in imitation of these to frame ditties of lighter matters, and tuning them to the ftoake of some of the pleafantest kind of Musicke, then began there to grow a distinction and great diuerfity betweene makers and makers. Whereby (I take it) beganne thyse difference: that they which handled in the audience of the people, grave and necessary matters, were called wise men or eloquent men, which they meant by Vates: and the rest which fange of loue matters, or other lighter deuises alluring vnto pleafure and delight, were called Poetae or makers. Thus it appeareth, both Eloquence and Poetrie to haue had their beginning and originall from these exercises, beeing framed in such sweete measure of sentences and pleafant harmonie called Pithuos, which is an apt composition of wordes or claufes, drawing as it were by force ye hearers eares euin whether fower it lyseth: that Plato affirmeth therein to be contained ἄναπτυχεία an inchauntment, as it were to perfwade them anie thing whether they would or no. And heerehence is syde, that men were firlt withdrawne from a wylde and fauadge kinde of life, to ciullity and gentlenes, and ye right knowledge of humanity by the force of this meaufurable or tunable speaking.

This opinion shall you finde confirmed throughout
Englifi Poetrie.

_the whole workes of Plato and Aristotle_. And that such was the estimation of this Poetry at those times, that they supposed all wisdom and knowledge to be included mystically in that divine inspiration, wherewith they thought their Vates to be inspired. Whereupon, throughout the noble works of those most excellent Philosophers before named, are the authorities of Poets very often alleged. And Cicero in his Tusculane questions is of that minde, that a Poet cannot express verses abundantly, sufficiently, and fully, neither his eloquence can flow pleasantly, or his words found well and plenteously, without celestial inspiration: which Poets themselues doo very often and gladlie witnes of themselues, as namely Ovid in. 6. Fasto: _Est deus in nobis Agitante calleficimus illo. etc._ Wherevnto I doubt not equally to adjoyne the authoriye of our late famous English Poet, who wrote the Sheepheards Calender, where lamenting the decay of Poetry, at these dayes, faith most sweetely to the fame.

Then make thee wings of thine aspyring wytt,
And whence thou camest flye back to heauen apace. etc.

Whose wise poeticall witt, and most exquifite learning, as he shewed abundantly in that piece of worke, in my judgment inferiour to the worke neithers of Theocritus in Greeke, nor Virgill in Latine, whom hee narrowly immitateth: so I nothing doubt, but if his other worke were common abroad, which are as I thinke in ye close custodie of certayne his frends, we shold haue of our owne Poets, whom wee might matche in all respects with the beft. And among all other his worke whatsoever, I would wysh to haue the fight of his English Poet, which his freend E. K. did once promise to publishe, which whether he performed or not, I knowe not, if he did, my happe hath not beene so good as yet to see it.

But to returne to the estimation of Poetry. Besides ye great and profitable fruities contained in Poetry, for
the instruction of manners and precepts of good life
(for that was chiefly respected in the first age of Poetry)
this is also added to the eternall commendations of
that noble faculty: that Kings and Princes, great and
famous men, did ever encourage, mayntaine, and reward
Poets in al ages: because they were thought onely to
haue the whole power in their handes, of making men
either immortally famous for their valiaunt exploytes
and vertuous exercifes, or perpetually infamous for
their vicious lives. Whereupon it is said of Achilles,
that this onely vantage he had of Hector, that it was
his fortune to be extolled and renowned by the hea-
unely verfe of Homer. And as Tully recordeth to be
written of Alexander, that with natural teares he wept
over Achilles Tombe, in joy that he conceived at the
consideration, howe it was his happe to be honoured
vyth fo divine a worke, as Homers was. Aristotle, a
moft prudent and learned Philosopher, beeing appointed
Schoolemaster to the young Prince Alexander, thought
no worke so meete to be reade vnto a King, as the
worke of Homer: wherein the young Prince being by
him instructed throughly, found such wonderfull delight
in the fame when hee came to maturity, that hee would
not onely haue it with him in all his iourneyes, but in
his bedde also under his pyllowe, to delight him and
teache him both nights and dayes. The fame is
reported of noble Scipio, who finding the two Bookes
of Homer in the foyle of Kyng Darius, esteemed them
as wonderfull precious Jewelles, making one of them
his companion for the night, the other for the day.
And not onely was he thus affected to yat one piece
or parte of Poetry, but fo generally he loued the profef-
fors thereof, that in his most serioes affayres, and hot-
test warres against Numantia and Carthage he could
no whitte be without that olde Poet Ennius in his
company. But to speake of all thofe noble and wyfe
Princes, who bare fpeeciall favour and countenaunce to
Poets, were tedious, and would require a rehearfall of
all fuch, in whose time there grewe any to credite and
estimation in that faculty. Thus farre therefore may suffice for the estimation of Poets. Nowe I thinke most meete, to speake somewhat, concerning what hath beene the use of Poetry, and wherin it rightly consisted, and whereof consequently it obtained such estimation.

To begin therefore with the first that was first worthely memorable in the excellent gift of Poetry, the best wryters agree that it was Orpheus, who by the sweete gift of his heauenly Poetry, withdrew men from raungyng uncertainly, and wandring brutishly about, and made them gather together, and keepe company, made houses, and kept fellowshipe together, who therefore is reported (as Horace sayth) to affwage the fierceneffe of Tygers, and moue the harde Flynts. After him was Amphion, who was the first that caused Citties to bee builded, and men therein to liue decently and orderly according to lawe and right. Next, was Tyrtaus, who began to practife warlike defences, to keepe back enemies, and faine themselves from inuasion of foes. In this place I thinke were most convenient to rehearfe that auncient Poet Pyndarus: but of the certaine time wherein he flourished, I am not very certaine: but of the place where he continued moffe, it should seeme to be the City of Thebes, by Plinie who reporteth, that Alexander in taking the fame Cittie, woulde not suffer the house wherein he dwelt to be spoyled as all the rest were. After these was Homer, who as it were in one summe comprehended all knowledge, wisedome, learning, and pollicie, that was incident to the capacity of man. And who so lifte to take viewe of hys two Bookes, one of his Iliades, the other his Odyssea, shal throughly perceiue what the right use of Poetry is: which indeede is to mingle profite with pleasure, and so to delight the Reader with pleasure of hys Arte, as in ye meane time, his mind may be well instructed with knowledge and wisedome. For so did that worthy Poet frame those his two worke, that in reading the first, that is his Iliads, by declaring and setting forth so liuely the Grecians assembly against
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Troy, together with their prowesse and fortitude against their foes, a Prince shall learne not onely courage, and valiantnffe, but discretion also and pollicie to encounter with his enemies, yea a perfect forme of wyse consultations, with his Captaines, and exhortations to the people, with other infinite commodities.

Agayne, in the other part, wherein are described the manifold and daungerous aduentures of *Vliffes*, may a man learne many noble vertues: and also learne to escape and auoyde the subtyll practifes, and perrilous entrappinges of naughty perfons: and not onely this, but in what fort also he may deale to knowe and perceiue the affections of those which be neere vnto him, and moft familiar with him, the better to put them in trust with his matters of waight and importaunce. Therefore I may boldly fette downe thys to be the trueft, auncienteft and beft kinde of Poetry, to direct ones endeuour alwayes to that marke, that with delight they may euermore adioyne commoditie to theyr Readers: which because I grounde vpon *Homer* the Prince of all Poets, therefore haue I alledged the order of his worke, as an authority sufficiently proouing this affertion.

Nowe what other Poets which followed him, and beene of greateft fame, haue doone for the mofte parte in their feuerall workes I wyll briefely, and as my flender ability wyll serue me declare. But by my leaue, I muft content my felfe to speake not of all, but of fuch as my felfe haue feene, and beene beft acquainted withall, and thofe not all nor the mofte part of the auncient Grecians, of whom I know not how many there were, but thofe of the Latinifts, which are of greateft fame and moft obuous among vs.

Thus much I can say, that *Aristotle* reporteth none to haue greatly flourished in Greece, at leaft wyse not left behynd them any notable memoriall, before the time of *Homer*. And *Tully* fayth as much, that there were none wrytt woorth the reading twyce in the Romaine tongue, before ye Poet *Ennius*. And surely
as the very summe or cheefeest essence of Poetry, dyd alwayes for the most part consist in delighting the readers or hearers wyth pleasure, so as the number of Poets increaseth, they still inclined that way rather then the other, so that most of them had speciall regard, to the pleasantnesse of theyr fine conceytes, whereby they might drawe mens minde into admiration of theyr inventions, more then they had to the profitte or commodite that the Readers shoulde reap by their works. And thus as I suppose came it to passe among them, that for the most part of them, they would not write one worke contayning some serios matter: but for the fame they wold likewise powre foorth as much of some wanton or lascivious invention. Yet some of the auncientest sort of Grecians, as it seemeth were not so much disposed to vayne delectation: as Aristotle fayth of Empedocles, that in his judgment he was onely a naturall Philosopher, no Poet at all, nor that he was like vnto Homer in any thing but his meeter, or number of feete, that is, that hee wrote in verse. After the time of Homer, there began the firste Comedy wryters, who compyled their workes in a better stile which continued not long, before it was expelled by penalty, for scoffing too broade at mens manners, and the priuie reuengements which the Poets vfed against their ill wyllers. Among these was Eupolis, Cratinus, and Aristophenes, but afterward the order of thys wryting Comedies was reformed and made more plausible: then wrytte Plato, Comicus, Menander, and I knowe not who more.

There be many most profitable workes, of like antiquitie, or rather before them, of the Tragedy writers: as of Euripides, and Sophocles, then was there Phocides and Theages, with many other: which Tragedies had their inuention by one Thespis, and were polished and amended by Aeschylus. The profitte or discommodity which arysteth by the use of these Comedies and Tragedies, which is most, hath beene long in controversy, and is fore vrged among vs at these dayes: what
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I thinke of the fame, perhaps I shal breffely declare anon.

Nowe concerning the Poets which wrote in homely manner, as they pretended, but indeede, with great pythe and learned judgment, such as were the wryters of Sheepeheards take and of husbandly precepts, who were among the Grecians that excelled, besides Theocritus and Hefiodus I know not, of whom the first, what profitable workes he left to posterity, besides hys Idillia or contentions of Goteheards, tending moft to delight, and pretty inuentions, I can not tell. The other, no doubt for his Argument he tooke in hande, dealt very learnedly and profitably, that is, in precepts of Hufbandry, but yet so as he myxed much wanton fuffe among the ref.

The first wryters of Poetry among the Latines, shoulde feeme to be thofe, which excelled in the framing of Commedies, and that they continued a long time without any notable memory of other Poets. Among whom, the cheefefl that we may fee or heare tell of, were thofe. Ennius, Cacilius, Nauius, Licinius, Attius, Turpittius, Trabea, Lufcius, Plautus, and Terens. Of whom thofe two laft named, haue beene euer fince theyr time moft famous, and to thofe dayes are efteeomed, as greate helps and furtheraunces to the obtayning of good Letters. But heere cannot I staye to speake of the moft famous, renowned and excellent, that euer writte among the Latine Poets, P. Virgill, who performed the very fame in that tongue, which Homer had doone in Greeke: or rather better if better might as Sex. Propert. in his Elegies gallantly recordeth in his praife, Nefcio quid magis nafcitur Iliade. Vnder the perfon of Æneas he expreffeth the valoure of a worthy Captaine and valiaunt Gouernour, together with the perrilous adventures of warre, and politick deuifes at all aslayes. And as he immitateth Homer in that worke, so dooth he likewyse followe the very fleps of Theocritus, in his moft pythy inuentions of his Æglogues: and likewyse Hefiodus in his Georgicks or bookes of
Husbandry, but yet more grauely, and in a more decent style. But notwithstanding his sage gravity and wonderfull wisedome, dyd he not altogether restrayne his vayne, but that he would haue a caft at some wanton and skant comely an Argument, ifindeede such trifles as he fathered vpon him were his owne. There followed after him, very many rare and excellent Poets, whereof the moﬆ part writ light matters, as Epigrammes and Elegies, with much pleafant dalliance, among whom may be accounted Propertius, Tibullus, Catullus, with divers whom Ouid speaketh of in divers places of his workes. Then are there two Hystorical Poets, no leffe profitable then delightfome to bee read: Silius and Lucanus: the one declaring the valiant prowesse of two noble Captaines, one enemie to the other, that is, Scipio and Haniball: the other likewise, the fortitude of two expert warriours (yet more lamentably then the other because these warres were ciuill) Pompey and Cafar. The next in tyme (but as moﬆ men doo account, and fo did he himſelfe) the second in dignity, we will adioyne Ouid, a moﬆ learned, and exquifite Poet. The worke of greatest profitte which he wrote, was his Booke of Metamorphoſis, which though it confifted of fayned Fables for the moﬆ part, and poetical inventions, yet beeing moralized according to his meaning, and the trueth of euery tale beeing discouered, it is a worke of exceeding wisedome and founde judgment. If one lyft in like manner, to haue knowledge and perfect intelligence of those rytes and ceremonies which were obferved after the Religion of the Heathen, no more profitable worke for that purpofe, then his bookes De fastis. The reft of his dooinges, though they tende to the vayne delights of loue and dalliance (except his Tristibus wherein he bewayleth his exile) yet surely are mixed with much good counfayle and profitable leffons if they be wisely and narrowly read. After his time I know no worke of any great fame, till the time of Horace, a Poet not of the smootheſt style, but in sharpnesſe of wytt inferiour to none, and one to whom
all the rest both before his time and since, are very much beholding. About the same time Iuuenall and Persius, then Martial, Seneca a most excellent wryter of Tragedies, Boetius, Lucretius, Statius, Val: Flaccus, Manilius, Aufonius, Claudian, and many other, whose in\!it times and feuerall woorkes to speake of in this place, were neither much needefull, nor altogetheer tollerable, becaufe I purpofed an other argument. Onely I will adde two of later times, yet not farre inferiour to the moft of them aforefayde, Pallengenius, and Bat. Mantuanus, and for a singuler gyft in a sweete Heroicall verfe, match with them Chr. Oclan. the Author of our Anglorum Prælia. But nowe leaft I stray too farre from my purpofe, I wyl come to our English Poets, to whom I would I were able to yeelede theyr deferued commendations: and affoorder them that cenfure, which I know many woulde, which can better, if they were nowe to write in my fleede.

I know no memorable worke written by any Poet in our English speeche, vntill twenty yeeres paft: where although Learning was not generally decayde at any time, especially since the Conquest of King William Duke of Normandy, as it may appeare by many famous works and learned bookes (though not of this kinde) wrytten by Byfhoppes and others: yet surelye that Poetry was in smal price among them, it is very manifeft, and no great maruayle, for even that light of Greeke and Latine Poets which they had, they much contemned, as appeareth by theyr rude verfifying, which of long time was vsed (a barbarous vfe it was) wherin they conuerted the naturall property of the sweete Latine verfe, to be a balde kinde of ryming, thinking nothing to be learnedly written in verfe, which fell not out in ryme, that is, in wordes whereof the middle worde of eche verfe shoulde found a like with the laft, or of two verfes, the ende of both shoulde fall in the like letters as thus.

O maie viuentes, versus audite sequentes.
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And thus likewyfe.

\[ Propter hæc et alia dogmata doctorum \]
\[ Reor esse melius et magis decorum: \]
\[ Quisque suam habeat, et non proximorum. \]

This brutifh Poetrie, though it had not the beginning in this Countrey, yet so hath it beene affected heere, that the infection thereof would never (nor I thinke euer will) be rooted vppe againe: I meane this tynkerly verfe which we call ryme: Master Ascham sayth, that it first began to be followed and maintained among the Hunnes and Gothians, and other barbarous Nations, who with the decay of all good learning, brought it into Italy: from thence it came into Fraunce, and so to Germany, atlafl conueyed into England, bymen indeede of great wisedome and learning, but not confiderate nor circumfpect in that behalfe. But of this I muft intreate more heereafter.

Henry the first King of that name in England, is wonderfully extolled, in all auncient Recordes of memory, for hys singuler good learning, in all kinde of noble studies, in so much as he was named by his surname Beaucleark, as much to say, as Fayreclerke (whereof perhappes came ye name of Fayreclowe) what knowledge hee attained in the skyll of Poetry, I am not able to say, I report his name for proofe, that learning in this Country was not little efteemed of at that rude time, and that like it is, among other studies, a King would not neglect the faculty of Poetry. The first of our English Poets that I have heard of, was John Gower, about the time of king Rycharde the seconde, as it shou’d feeme by certayne coniectures bothe a Knight, and queftionleffe a singuler well learned man: whose workes I could wyth they were all whole and perfect among vs, for no doubt they contained very much deepe knowledge and delight: which may be gathered by his freend Chawcer, who speaketh of him oftentimes, in
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diuer[s] places of hys workes. Chawcer, who for that excellent fame which hee obtayned in his Poetry, was always accounted the God of English Poets (such a tyle for honours fake hath beene giuen him) was next after, if not equall in time to Gower, and hath left many workes, both for delight and profitable knowledge, farre exceeding any other that as yet euer since hys time directed theyr studies that way. Though the manner of hys file may seeme blunte and course to many fine English eares at these dayes, yet in trueth, if it be equally pondered, and with good judgment aduised, and confirmed with the time wherein he wrote, a man shall perceive thereby euyn a true picture or perfect shape of a right Poet. He by his delightfome vayne, fo gulled the eares of men with his deuifes, that, although corruption bare such fway in moft matters, that learning and truth might fkont bee admitted to shewe it selfe, yet without controllment, myght hee gyrdre at the vices and abufes of all states, and gawle with very sharpe and eger inuentions, which he did fo learnedly and pleafantly, that none therefore would call him into queftion. For fuch was his bolde fpyrit, that what enormities he faw in any, he would not fpare to pay them home, eyther in playnè words, or els in some prety and pleadant couert, that the simpleft might espy him. Neere in time vnto him was Lydgate a Poet, surely for good proportion of his verfe, and meetely currant fyle, as the time affoorded comparable with Chawcer, yet more occupied in superfluous and odd matters, then was requisite in fo good a wytte: which, though he handled them commendably, yet the matters them- felues beeing not fo commendable, his estimation hath beene the leffe. The next of our auncient Poets, that I can tell of, I suppoze to be Pierce Ploughman, who in hys dooinges is somewhat harshe and obscure, but indeede a very pithy wryter, and (to hys commendation I speake it) was the firt that I haue seene, that obferued ye quantity of our verfe without the curiosity of Ryme. Since these I knowe none other tyll the time of
Skelton, who writ in the time of Kyng Henry the eyght, who as indeede he obtayned the Lawrell Garland, so may I wyth good ryght yeelede him the title of a Poet: hee was doubtles a pleafant conceyted fellowe, and of a very sharpe wytte, exceeding bolde, and would nyppe to the very quicke where he once fette holde. Next hym I thinke I may place mafter George Gajkoyne, as painefull a Souldier in the affayres of hys Prince and Country, as he was a wytty Poet in his wryting: whofe commendations, becaufe I found in one of better iudgment then my selfe, I wyl fette downe hys wordes, and suppreffe myne owne, of hym thus wryteth E. K. vppon the ninth Æglogue of the new Poet.

Mafter George Gajkoyne a wytty Gentleman and the very cheefe of our late rymers, who and if some partes of learning wanted not (albeit is well knowne he altogethwer wanted not learning) no doubt would haue attayned to the excellencye of thofe famous Poets. For gyfts of wytt, and naturall promptnes appeare in him aboundantly. I might next speake of the dyuers workes of the olde Earle of Surrey: of the L. Vaus, of Norton, of Briftow, Edwardes, Tuffer, Churchyard. VVyl: Hunnis: Haiwood: Sand: Hyll: S. Y. M. D. and many others, but to speake of their feuerall gyfts, and abundant skyll shewed forth by them in many pretty and learned workes, would make my discourse much more tedious.

I may not omitte the deferued commendations of many honourable and noble Lordes, and Gentlemen, in her Maiefties Courte, which in the rare denifes of Poetry, haue beene and yet are moft excellent skyllfull, among whom, the right honourable Earle of Oxford may challenge to him felle the tytle of ye moft excellent among the rest. I can no longer forget thofe learned Gentlemen which tooke such profitable paynes in translating the Latine Poets into our English tongue, whose defertes in that behalfe are more then I can vter. Among thefe, I euer efteeemed, and while I lyue, in my conceyt I shal account Mafter D. Phaer: without doubt
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the best: who as indeede hee had the best piece of Poetry whereon to sette a most gallant verse, so performed he it accordingly, and in such fort, as in my conscience I thinke would scarcely be done againe, if it were to doo again. Notwithstanding, I speake it but as myne own fancy, not prejudicial to those that lift to thinke otherwyse. Hys worke whereof I speake, is the englisheing of Æneidos of Virgill, so farre soorth as it pleased God to spare him life, which was to the halfe parte of the tenth Booke, the rest being since with no lesse commendations finisshed, by that worthy scholler and famous Phisition Master Thomas Twyne.

Equally with him may I well adjoyn Master Arthur Golding, for his labour in englisheing Ouids Metamorphosis, for which Gentleman, surely our Country hath for many respects greatly to gyue God thankes: as for him which hath taken infinite paynes without ceasing, trauelleth as yet indefatigably, and is addicted without societie, by his continuall laboure, to profit this nation and speche in all kind of good learning. The next, very well deserveth Master Barnabe Googe to be placed, as a painefull furtherer of learning: his helpe to Poetry befides his owne devices, as the tranlating of Pallene-genius. Lodiac. Abraham Fleming as in many pretie Poesis of his owne, so in tranlating hath doone to his commendations. To whom I would heere adjoyn one of his name, whom I know to haue excelled, as well in all kinde of learning as in Poetry most especiallly, and would appeare so, if the dainty morcelles, and fine poeticall inventions of his, were as common abroad as I knowe they be among some of his freendes. I wyll craue leaue of the laudable Authors of Seneca in English, of the other partes of Ouid, of Horace, of Mantuan, and divers other, because I would haften to ende thythes rehearself, perhappes offensyue to some, whom eyther by forgetfulness, or want of knowledge, I must needes ouer passe.

And once againe, I am humbly to desyre pardon of the learned company of Gentlemen Schollers, and
students of the Universities, and Innes of Courte, ye I omitte theyr feuerall commendations in this place, which I know a great number of them haue worthely deferued, in many rare deuifes, and singuler inuention of Poetrie: for neither hath it beene my good happ, to haue seene all which I haue hearde of, neyther is my abyding in such place, where I can with facility get knowledge of their worke.

One Gentleman notwithstanding among them may I not ouerlyppe, fo farre reacheth his fame, and so worthy is he, if hee haue not already, to weare the Lawrell wreath, Master George Whetstone, a man singularly well fkyld in this faculity of Poetrie: To him I wyl ioyne Anthony Munday, an earneft traueller in this arte, and in whose name I haue seene very excellent worke, among which furely, the moste exquisite vaine of a witty pocticall heade is shewed in the sweete fobs of Sheepeheardes and Nymphes: a worke well worthy to be viewed, and to bee esteemed as very rare Poetrie. With these I may place John Graunge, Kyght, Wylmott, Darrell, F. C. F. K. G. B. and many other, whose names come not nowe to my remembraunce.

This place haue I purpofely referued for one, who if not only, yet in my judgement principally deferueth the tytle of the righteſt English Poet, that euer I read: that is, the Author of the Sheepeheardes Kalender, intituled to the worthy Gentleman Master Phillip Sydney, whether it was Master Sp. or what rare Scholler in Pembrooke Hall feuer, because himſelf and his freendes, for what respect I knowe not, would not reveale it, I force not greatly to fette downe: forry I am that I can not find none other with whom I might couple him in this Catalogue, in his rare gyft of Poetry: although one there is, though nowe long fince, seriouſly occupied in grauer studys, (Master Gabriell Harvey) yet, as he was once his moſt speical freende and fellow Poet, fo because he hath taken such paynes, not onely in his Latin Poetry (for which he enjoyed great commendations of the beſt both in judgment and dignity in
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thys Realme) but also to reforme our English verfe, and to beautify the fame with braue deuifes, of which I thinke the cheefe lye hidde in hatefull obscurity: therefore wyll I aduenture to fette them together, as two of the rareft witts, and learned masters of Poetrie in England. Whole worthy and notable skyl in this faculty, I would wysh if their high dignities and serous busineses would permit, they would flyll graunt to bee a furtheraunce to that reformed kinde of Poetry, which Master Haruey did once beginne to ratify: and surely in mine opinion, if hee had chofen some grauer matter, and handled but with halfe that skyll, which I knowe he could have doone, and not powred it foorth at a venture, as a thinge betweene ieft. and earneft, it had taken greater effect then it did.

As for the other Gentleman, if it would pleafe him or hys freendes to let those excellent Poemes, whereof I know he hath plenty, come abroad, as his Dreames, his Legends, his Court of Cupid, his English Poet with other: he shoulde not onely flay the rude pens of my felfe and others, but also satisfy the thirsty desires of many which desire nothing more, then to fee more of hys rare inuentiones. If I joyne to Master Haruey hys two Brethren, I am affured, though they be both busied with great and waigthy callinges (the one a godly and learned Diuine, the other a famous and skylfull Phifition) yet if they lyfled to fette to their helping handes to Poetry, they would as much beautify and adorne it as any others.

If I let passe the vncountable rabble of ryming Ballet makers and compylers of fencelffe fonets, who be most bufy, to fluffe every flall full of groffe deuifes and vnlearned Pamphlets: I trufl I shall with the beft fort be hold excused. Nor though many such can frame an Alchoufe fong of five of fixe focore verfes, hobbling vpon some tune of a Northen Iyge, or Robyn hoode, or La lubber etc. And perhappes obserue iuft number of fillables, eyght in one line, fixe in an other, and there withall an A to make a iercke in the ende: yet if these
might be accounted Poets (as it is sayde some of them 
make means to be promoted to ye Lawrell) surely we 
shall shortly haue whole swarmines of Poets: and every 
one that can frame a Booke in Ryme, though for want 
of matter, it be but in commendations of Copper nofes 
or Bottle Ale, wyll catch at the Garlande due to Poets: 
whose potticall poeticall (I should say) heads, I would 
wyfhe, at their worshipfull commencements might in 
leede of Lawrell, be gorgioufly garnisht with fayre 
greene Barley, in token of their good affection to our 
Englishe Malt. One speaketh thus homely of them, with 
whose words I wyll content my selfe for thys time, be- 
cauaue I woulde not bee too broade wyth them in myne 
 owne speeche. 

In regarde (he meaneth of the learned framing the 
 newe Poets workes which writt the Sheepheardes Calen-
der.) I scorne and fpue out the rakehelly rout of our 
ragged Rymers, (for fo themselfes vfe to hunt the Let-
ter) which without learning boaflte, without judgment 
riage and fume, as if some instinct of poetically spryte had newlie rauphed them, aboue 
the meanesse of common capacity. And beeing in 
the midst of all their brauery, suddainly for want of 
matter or of Ryme, or hauing forgotten their former 
conceyt, they seeme to be so payned and traulled in 
theyr remembraunce, as it were a woman in Chyldbyrth, 
or as that fame Pythia when the traunce came vpon 
her. Os rabidum fera corda domans etc.
feeme something impertinent to the tytle of my Booke, yet I trufl the courteous Readers wyll pardon me, con
fidering that poetry is not of that grounde and antiquity in our English tongue, but that speaking thereof only as it is English, would feeme like vnto the drawing of ones pycure without a heade.

Nowe therefore by your gentle patience, wyll I wyth like breuity make tryall, what I can fay concerning our English Poetry, firfl in the matter thereof, then in the forme, that is, the manner of our verse: yet fo as I muil euermore haue recourfe to those times and wryters, whereon the English poetry taketh as it were the descent and proprietye.

English Poetry therefore beeing considered according to common cuftome and auncient vfe, is, where any worke is learnedly compiled in meafurable speeche, and framed in worde contayning number or proportion of iufl syllables, delighting the readers or hearers as well by the apt and decent framing of worde in equall resemblance of quantity, commonly called verse, as by the skyllful handling of the matter whereof it is intreated. I fpake somewhat of the beginning of thys meafuring of worde in iufl number, taken out of Plato: and indeede the regarde of true quantity in Letters and syllables, feemeth not to haue been much vrged before the time of Homer in Greece, as Aristotle witneffeth.

The matters whereof verses were firft made, were eyther exhortations to vertue, dehortations from vice, or the prayfes of some laudable thing. From thence they beganne to vfe them in exercifes of immitating some vertuous and wife man at their feasles: where as some one shoulde be appointed to reprefent an other mans perfon of high eftimation, and he fang fine ditties and wittie sentences, tunably to their Mufick notes. Of thys sprang the firft kinde of Comedyes, when they beganne to bring into these exercifes, more perrons then one, whose speeches were deuifed Dyalogue wife, in aunfwering one another. And of fuch like exer-
English Poetrie.

cifes, or as some wyll needes haue it, long before the other, began the first Tragedies, and were so called of τραγείας, because the Actor when he began to play his part, flewe and offered a Goate to their Goddeffe: but Commedies tooke their name of κομικής καὶ ἀθείν
comesaturn ire, to goe a feasting, because they vfed to goe in procession with their spore about the Citties and Villages, mingling much pleasaunt myrth wyth theyr graue Religion, and feasting cheerfully together wyth as great joy as might be deuifed. But not long after (as one delight draweth another) they began to inuent new perfons and newe matters for their Comedies, such as the deuifers thought meetefl to pleafe the peoples vaine: And from thefe, they beganne to pre-
fent in shapes of men, the natures of vertues and vices, and affections and qualitie incident to men, as Inuice, Temperance, Pouerty, Wrathe, Vengeaunce, Sloth, Valiantnes, and such like, as may appeare by the auncient workes of Arislophanes. There grewe at laft to be a greater diuerfiyte betweene Tragedy wryters and Comedy wryters, the one expressing onely sorrow-
full and lamentable Hyftories, bringing in the perfons of Gods and Goddeffes, Kynges and Queenes, and great flates, whose parts were cheefely to expresse moft miserable calamities and dreadfull chaunces, which increafed worfe and worfe, tyll they came to the moft wofull plight that might be deuifed.

The Comedies on the other fide, were directed to a contrary ende, which beginning doubtfullly, drewe to fome trouble or turmoyle, and by fome lucky chaunce alwayes ended to the joy and appeafement of all parties. Thys distinction grewe as some holde opinion, by immitation of the workes of Homer: for out of his Ἰλιάδες, the Tragedy wryters founde dreadfull euents, whereon to frame their matters, and the other out of hys Οδυσσεία tooke arguments of delight, and pleaftant ending after dangerous and troublefome doubts. So that, though there be many fortes of poetical wrytings, and Poetry is not debarred from any matter, which
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may be expressed by penne or speeche, yet for the better vnderstanding, and breeuer method of thys difcourfe, I may compreheunde the same in three fortes, which are Comical, Tragical, Histor[i]call. Vnder the first, may be contained all such Epigrammes, Elegies and delectable ditties, which Poets haue deuised respecting onely the delight thereof: in the seconde, all dolefull complaynts, lamentable chaunces, and what foeuer is poetically expressed in sorrow and heauines. In the third, we may comprise, the refte of all such matters, which is indifferent betweene the other two, doo commonly occupy the pennes of Poets: fuch, are the poetical complying of Chronicles, the frendly greetings betweene frendes, and very many fortes besides, which for the better distinction may be referred to one of these three kindes of Poetry. But once againe, leaft my discourse runne too farre awry, wyll I buckle my felfe more neerer to English Poetry: the vfe wherof, because it is nothing different from any other, I thinke best to confirme by the testimony of Horace, a man worthy to beare authority in this matter: whose very opinion is this, that the perfect perfection of poertrie is this, to mingle delight with profitt in fuch wyfe, that a Reader might by his reading be pertaker of bothe, which though I touched in the beginning, yet I thought good to alledge in this place for more confirmation thereof some of his owne wordes. In his treatise de arte Poetica, thus hee sayth.

*Aut prodeffe volunt aut deletare poeta,*

*Aut simul et iucunda et idonea dicere vitæ.*

As much to faie: All Poets defire either by their works to profitt or delight men, or els to ioyne both profitable and pleasant leffons together for the instruction of life.

And again
That is, He misseth nothing of his marke which joyneth profit with delight, as well delighting his Readers, as profiting them with counsell. And that whole Epistle which hee wryt of his Arte of Poetrie, among all the parts thereof, runneth cheefelie vppon this, that whether the argument which the Poet handleth, be of things done, or fained inventions, yet that they shoulde beare such an Image of trueth, that as they delight they may likewise profit. For these are his wordes. Filia voluptatis causa sunt proxima veris. Let thinges that are faigned for pleasures fake, haue a neere resemblance of ye truth. This precept may you perceiue to bee moft dueli obserued of Chawcer: for who could with more delight, precrire such wholsome counfaile and fage aduise, where hee seemeth onelie to respect the profitte of his leffons and instructions? or who coulde with greater wisedome, or more pithie skill, vnfold such pleafant and delightfome matters of mirth, as though they respected nothing, but the telling of a merry tale? so that this is the very grounde of right poetríe, to giue profitable counfaile, yet so as it must be mingled with delight. For among all the auncient works of poetrie, though the moft of them incline much to that part of delighting men with pleafant matters of small importaunce, yet euene in the vaineft trifes among them, there is not forgotten some profitable counfaile, which a man may learne, either by flatte precepts which therein are precribed, or by loathing such vile vices, the enormities whereof they largelie discouer. For surelie, I am of this opinion, that the wantoneft Poets of all, in their most laciuious workes wherein they busied themselves, sought rather by that meanes to withdraw mens mindes (eispeciallie the beft natures) from such foule vices, then to allure them to imbrace such beastly follies as they detected.
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Horace speaking of the generall dueties of Poets, sayth, Os tenerum pueri balbumque poeta fugit, and manie more wordes concerning the profitte to be hadde out of Poets, which because I haue some of them comprifed into an English translation of that learned and famous knight, Sir Thomas Elyot, I wyll set downe his wordes.

The Poet fashioneth by some plesant meane,
The speche of children ftable and vnfure:
Gulling their eares from wordes and thinges vncreane,
Giuing to them precepts that are pure:
Rebuking enuy and wrath if it dure:
Thinges well donne he can by example commend,
To needy and ficke he doth alfo his cure
To recomfert if ought he can amende.

And manie other like wordes are in that place of Horace to like effect. Therefore poetrie, as it is of it selfe, without abufe is not onely not vnprofitable to the liues and studys of menne, but wonderfull commendable and of great excellencie. For nothing can be more acceptable to men, or rather to be wished, then sweete allurements to vertues, and commodious caueates from vices? of which Poetrie is exceeding plentifull, powring into gentle witts, not roughly and tirannicallie, but it is were with a louing authoritie. Nowe if the ill and vndecent provocations, whereof some vnbridled witts take occasion by the reading of laciusous Poemes, bee objected: such as are Ouid's love Booke, and Elegies, Tibullus, Catullus, and Maritails workes, with the Comedies for the moft part of Plautus and Terence: I thinke it easily aunswered. For though it may not inuftie be denied, that these workes are indeede very Poetrie, yet that Poetrie in them is not the essentiaall or formall matter or caufe of the hurt therein might be affirmed, and although that reafon should come short, yet this might be sufficient, that the workes themselues doo not corrupt, but the abufe of the vsers, who vndamaging their
owne dispositions, by reading the discoueries of vices, resemable foolish folke, who comming into a Garden without anie choife or circumfpection tread downe the fairest flowers, and wilfullie thront their fingers among the nettles.

And furieely to speake what I verie thynke, this is mine opinion: that one hauing sufficient skyll, to reade and vnderland those workes, and yet no flae of him selue to anoyde inconueniences, which the remembrance of vnlawfull things may stirre vppe in his minde, he, in my judgement, is wholy to bee reputed a laciuious disposed perfonne, whom the recitall of fins whether it be in a good worke or a badde, or vppon what occaion focuer, wyll not flae him but prouoke him further vnto them. Contrariwise, what good leffons the warie and skylful Readers shall picke out of the very worst of them, if they lift to take anie heede, and reade them not of an intent to bee made the worfe by them, you may fee by these fewe sentences, which the forefasyd Sir Thomas Elyott gathered as he fayth at all aduentures, intreating of the like argument. Firft Plautus in commendations of vertue, hath such like wordes.

Verely vertue doth all things excell,
For if liberty, health living or subfiance,
Our Country our parents, and children doo well,
It hapneth by vertue: the doth all aduaunce,
Vertue hath all things vnder gouernaunce:
And in whom of vertue is founde great plenty,
Any thing that is good may neuer be dainty.

Terence, in Eunucho hath a profitable speache, in blajing foorth the fashions of harlots, before the eyes of young men. Thus fayth Parmeno.

In thy thing I tryumphe in myne owne conceite,
That I haue found for all young men the way,
Howe they of Harlots shall know the deceite,
Their witts and manners: that thereby they may
Them perpetuallie hate, for fo much as they
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Out of their owne houses be fresh and delicate,
Feeding curiously: at home all day
Lying beggarlie in most wretched estate.

And many more wordes of the same matter, but
which may be gathered by these fewe.

Ouid, in his most wanton Bookes of loue, and the
remedies thereof, hath very many pithie and wise sen-
tences, which a heedfull Reader may marke, and choe
out from ye other stufte. This is one.

Tyme is a medicine of it shall profitt,
VVine gyuen out of tyme may be annoyance.
And man shall irritat vice if he prohibit,
VVhen time is not meete vnto his ytteraunce.
Therfore if thou yet by counsayle art recuperable,
Fly thou from idlenes and euer be fiable.

Martiall, a most dissolute wryter among all other,
yet not without many graue and prudent speches, as
this is one worthy to be marked of these fond youthes
which intangle theyr wytts in raging loue, who stepping
once ouer shoes in theyr fancyes, neuer reft plunging
till they be ouer head and eares in their follie.

If thou wylt eschewe bitter aduenture,
And auoyde the annoyance of a penfifull hart,
Set in no one perfon all wholly thy pleafure,
The leffe maift thou ioy, but the leffe shalt thou fmart.

These are but fewe gathered out by happe, yet sufficient to shewe that the wife and circumptect Readers
may finde very many profitable leffons, dispersd in
these workes, neither take any harme by reading such
Poemes, but good, if they wil themselues. Neuerthe-
les, I would not be thought to hold opinion, that the
reading of them is fo tollerable, as that there neede no
respect to be had in making choyfe of readers or
hearers: for if they be prohibited from the tender and
vnconstant wits of children and young mindes, I thinke
Englifh Poetrie.

it not without great reafon: neyther am I of that deuiliifh opinion, of which fome there are, and haue beene in England, who hauing charge of youth to in-struct them in learning, haue efpecially made choyfe of fuch vnchildifh fluffe, to reade vnfo young Schollers, as it shoulde feeme of fome filthy purpofe, wylfully to corrupt theyr tender mindes, and prepare them the more ready for theyr loathfome dyetts.

For as it is fayd of that impudent worke of Luciane, a man were better to reade none of it then all of it, fo thinke I that thefe workes are rather to be kept altogether from children, then they should haue free liberty to reade them, before they be meeet either of their owne diuertion or by heedefull inſtruction, to make choyfe of the good from the badde. As for our Englifhe Poetrie, I know no fuch perilous pieces (except a fewe balde ditties made over the Beere potts, which are nothing leffe then Poetry) which anie man may vfe and reade without damage or daunger: which indeede is leffe to be meruailed at among vs, then among the olde Latines and Grekes, confidering that Chriflianity may be a flaie to fuch illecibrous workes and inventions, as among them (for their Arte fake) myght obtaine paffage.

Nowe will I speake somewhat, of that princelie part of Poetrie, wherein are diſplayed the noble actes and valiant exploits of puiffaunt Captaines, expert fouldiers, wife men, with the famous reportes of auncient times, fuch as are the Heroycall worke of Homer in Greeke, and the heaveny verfe of Virgils Æneidos in Latine: which worke, comprehending as it were the fimme and ground of all Poetrie, are verelie and incomparably the beft of all other. To thefe, though we haue no English worke aunftwerable, in reſpect of the glorious ornaments of gallant handling: yet our auncient Chroni-clers and reporters of our Countrey affayres, come moft neere them: and no doubt, if fuch garde of our English speeche, and curious handling of our verfe, had beene long since thought vpon, and from time to
time been polliished and bettered by men of learning, judgement, and authority, it would ere this, have matched them in all respects. A manifest example thereof, may bee the great good grace and sweete vayne, which Eloquence hath attained in our speeche, because it hath had the helpe of such rare and singuler wits, as from time to time myght still add some amendment to the same. Among whom I thinke there is none that will gainsay, but Master John Lilly hath defered moste high commendations, as he which hath slept one sleep further therein then any either before or since he first began the wyttie discouerfe of his Euphues. Whose workes, surely in respecte of his singuler eloquence and braue composition of apt words and sentences, let the learned examine and make tryall thereof thorough all the partes of Rethoricke, in fitte phraases, in pithy sentences, in gallant tropes, in flowing speeche, in plaine fence, and surely in my judgment, I thinke he wyll yeelde him that verdict, which Quentilian giueth of bothe the best Orators Demosthenes and Tully, that from the one, nothing may be taken away, to the other, nothing may be added. But a more neerer example to prooue my former afferntion true (I meane ye meetneffe of our speeche to receiue the best forme of Poetry) may bee taken by conference of that famous translation of Master D. Phaer with the coppie it selve, who foeuer pleaze with courteous judgement but a little to compare and marke them both together: and weigh with himselfe, whether the English tongue might by little and little be brought to the verye maiestie of a ryght Heroicall verse. Fyrst you may marke, how Virgill alwayes fitteth his matter in hande with wordes agreeable vnto the same affection, which he expresseth, as in hyis Tragicall exclamations, what pathe[t]call speeches he frameth? in his comfortable confolations, howe smoothely hyis verfe runnes? in his dreadfull battayles, and dreery byckerments of warres, howe bygge and boyꝍrous his wordes found? and the like notes in all partes of his worke may be obserued. Which excellent
grace and comely kind of choyfe, if the translatour hath not hitte very neere in our course English phrase judge vprightly: wee wyll conferre some of the places, not picked out for the purpose, but such as I tooke turning over the Booke at randon. When the Troyans were fo tost about in tempestious wether, caused by Æolus at Iunos request, and druven vpon the coaste of Affrick with a very neere scape of their liues: Æneas after hee had gone a land and kylled plenty of victuals for his company of Souldiours, hee deuided the fame among them, and thus louinglie and sweetely he comforted them. Æn. Lib. i.

et dictis mærentia pectora mulæet
O socii (nque ignari fumus ante malorum)
O pæsì grauiora: dabit deus his quoque finem
Vos et scyllæam rabiem, penitusque fonoantes,
Accetis scopulos: vos et cyclopæa faxa
Exerti, reuocate animos, maestate timorem
Mittite, forfan et haec olim meminisse iuuabit.
Per varios casus, per tot dizerimina rerum
Tendimus in Latium: fedes vbi fata quietas
Ostendunt, illic fas regna refurgere troie.
Durate, et vos met rebus feraute secundis.
Talia voce refert, curisque ingenti αν aeger
Spem vulta simulat, premit altum corde dolorem.

Translated thus.

And then to cheere their heauy harts with these words he him bent.
O Mates (quoth he) that many a woe haue bidden and borne ere thys,
Worfe haue we feene, and this alfo shall end when Gods wyll is.
Through Sylla rage (ye wott) and through the roaring rocks we paft,
Though Cyclops shore was full of feare, yet came we through at laft.
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Plucke vppe your harts, and drieue from thence both feare and care away.
To thinke on this may pleafure be perhapps another day.
By paynes and many a daunger fore, by fundry chaunce we wend,
Lo come to Italy, where we truft to find our refting ende:
And where the deftnyes haue decreed Troyes Kingdome eft to ryfe
Be bold and harden now your harts, take eafe while eafe applies
Thus fpake he tho, but in his hart huge cares had him oppreft,
Disembling hope with outward eyes full heauy was his breft.

Againe, marke the wounding of Dido in loue with Aeneas, with howe choyle wordes it is pithily defcribed, both by the Poet and the tranflator in the beginning of the fourth booke.

\textit{At Regina graui iam dudum faucia cura}
\textit{Volnus alii venis, et caco carpitur igni, etc.}

By this time perced fatte the Queene fo fore with loues desire,
Her wound in euery vayne she feedes, she fryes in secrete fire.
The manhood of the man full oft, full oft his famous lyne
She doth revolue, and from her thought his face cannot vntwynè.
His countnaunce deepe she drawes and fixed faft the beares in breft,
His words also, nor to her carefuil hart can come no reft.

And in many places of the fourth booke is the fame matter fo gallantly prosecuted in sweete wordes, as in mine opinion the copy it felfe goeth no whit beyond it.
Compare them likewise in the woefull and lamentable
cryes of the Queene for the departure of Æneas, towards the ende of that Booke.

Ternque quaterque manu pectus percussa decorum
Fluentisque absceissa comas, proh Jupiter, ibit?
Hic ait, et nostris inluserit aduena Regnis? etc.

Three times her hands the bet, and three times strake her comely brefl,
Her golden hayre the tare and frantiklike with moode opprefl,
She cryde, O Jupiter, O God, quoth she, and shall a goe?
Indeede? and shall a flowte me thus within my king-dome fo?
Shall not mine Armies out, and all my people them pursue?
Shall they not spoyle their shyps and burne them vp with vengance due?
Out people, out upon them, follow fast with fires and flames,
Set fayles aloft, make out with oares, in ships, in boates, in frames.
What speake I? or where am I? what furies me doo thus inchaunt?
O Dydo, wofull wretch, now deftnyes fell thy head dooth haunt.

And a little after preparing to kyll her owne selfe.

But Dydo quaking fierce with frantike moode and grievly hewe.
With trembling spotted cheekes, her huge attempting to perfue.
Befides her selfe for rage, and towards death with visage wanne,
Her eyes about she rolde, as redde as blood they looked than.
A Discourse of

At last ready to fall uppon Æneas sworde.

O happy (welaway) and ouer happy had I beene,
If neuer Troian thyrs (ahlas) my Countryshore had feene.
Thus sayd she wyde her head, and vnreuenged must we die?
But let vs boldly die (quoth shee) thus, thus to death I ply.

Nowe like wise for the braue warlike phrase and bygge
founding kynd of thundring speeche, in the hotte skyr-
mythes of battels, you may confer them in any of the
laft five Booke: for examples fake, thys is one about
the ninth Booke.

Et clamor totis per propugnaeula muris,
Intendunt acries arcus, amentaque torquent.
Sternitur omne folum telis, tum scuta caueaque
Dant sonitum fluctu galeae: pugna asper furgit? etc.

A clamarous noyfe vpmounts on fortresse tops and
bulwarks towres,
They strike, they bend their bowes, they whirle from
strings sharpe shoting showres.
All streetes with tooles are strowed, than helmets,
skalles, with battrings marrd.
And shieldes dishyuering cracke, vpriseth roughnesse
byckring hard
Looke how the tempeft storme when wind out wrat-
ling blowes at southe,
Raine ratling beates the grownde, or clowdes of haile
from Winters mouth,
Downe daishying headlong dries, when God from skyes
with griefly steuen,
His watry showres outwrings, and whirlwind clowdes
downe breakes from heauen.

And so foorth much more of the like effect.
English Poetrie.

Only one comparison more will I desire you to mark at your leysures, which may serve for all the rest, that is, the description of Fame, as it is in the 4. booke, towards the end, of which it followeth thus.

*Monstrum horrendum ingens cui quot funt corpore plumae
Tot vigilos oculi etc.*

Monster gasly great, for every plume her carkaffe beares,
Like number learing eyes she hath, like number harkning eares,
Like number tongues, and mouthes she wagges, a wondrous thing to speake,
At midnight foorth shee flyes, and vnder shade her found dooth squeake.
All night she wakes, nor slumber sweete doth take nor neuer sleepe.
By dayes on houfes tops shee fits or gates of Townes she keeps.
On watching Towres shee clymbes, and Citties great she makes agaft,
Both trueth and falles forth she telles, and lyes abroade doth caft.

But what neede I to repcate any more places? there is not one Booke among the twelue, which wyll not yeelde you most excellent pleasure in conferring the transflation with the Coppie, and marking the gallant grace which our Englishe speeche affoordeth. And in trueth the like comparisons, may you choose out through the whole transflations of the *Metamorphosis* by Master Golding who (considering both their Coppyes) hath equally deferred commendations for the beautifying of the English speeche. It would be tedious to stay to rehearfe any places out of him nowe: let the other suffice to prooue, that the English tongue lacketh neyther variety nor currantnesse of phrafe for any matter.
Wyll nowe speake a little of an other kinde of poetical writing, which might notwithstanding for the variableneffe of the argument therein usuallly handled, bee comprehended in those kindes before declared: that is, the compyling *Elogues*, as much to say as Goteheardes tales, becaufe they bee commonly Dialogues or speeches framed or supposeth betweene Sheepeheardes, Netheheardes, Goteheardes, or such like fimple men: in which kind of writing, many haue obtained as immortall prayfe and commendation, as in any other.

The cheefest of these is Theocritus in Grecke, next him, and almost the very fame, is Virgill in Latin. After Virgil in like fort writ Titus Calphurnius and Baptista Mantuan, wyth many other both in Latine and other languages very learnedlye. Although the matter they take in hand seemeth commonlie in appearaunce rude and homely, as the usuall talke of fimple clownes: yet doo they indeede vutter in the fame much pleasaunt and profitable delight. For vnder these personnes, as it were in a cloake of simplicitie, they would eyther fette foorth the prayses of theyr frendes, without the note of flattery, or eneigh grievously against abuses, without any token of byternesse.

Somwhat like vnto these works, are many piecees of Chawcer, but yet not altogether so poeticall. But nowe yet at ye laft hath England hatched vppe one Poet of this forte, in my conscience comparable with the best in any respect: euem Master Sp: Author of the *Sheepeheardes Calender*, whose trauell in that piece of English Poetrice, I thinke verely is so commendable, as none of equall iudgment can yeelde him leffe prayfe.
for hys excellent skyll, and skylfull excellency shewed foorth in the same, then they would to eyther Theocritus or Virgil, whom in mine opinion, if the courtesies of our speche (I meane the course of custome which he woulde not infringe) had bee no more let vnto hys, then theyr pure natuer tongues were vnto them, he would haue (if it might be) surpassed them.

What one thing is there in them so worthy admiration, whereunto we may not adioyne some thing of his, of equall desert? Take Virgil and make some little comparifon betweene them, and judge as ye shall see cause.

Virgil hath a gallant report of Augustus couerly compryfed in the first Æglogue: the like is in him, of her Maiestie, vnder the name of Eliza. Virgil maketh a braue coloured complaint of vnstedfast freends hypppe in the person of Corydon: the lyke is in hys 5 Æglogue. Agayne behold the pretty Pastoral contents of Virgil in the third Æglogue: of him in ye eight Æglogue. Finally, either in comparifon with them, or respect of hys owne great learning, he may well were the Garlande, and steppe before ye best of all English Poets that I haue scene or hearde: for I thinke no leffe deffrueth (thus fayth E, K in hys commendations) hys wittynesse in deuifmg, hys pithy neffe in uttering, his complaints of loue so louelie, his discourses of pleasure so pleafantly, his Pastoral rude nes, his Morrall wyfeneffe, his due obseruing of decorum euery where, in personages, in seafon, in matter, in speche, and generally in all seemely simplicicy, of handling hys matter and framing hys wordes. The occasion of his worke is a warning to other young men, who being intangled in loue and youthful vanities, may learne to looke to themselues in time, and to auoyde inconueniences which may breede if they be not in time preuented. Many good Morrall leffons are therein contained, as the reuerence which young men owe to the aged in the second Æglogue: the caueate or warning to beware a subtill professior of
freendshippe in the fift Eglogue: the commendation of good Pastors, and shame and dispraye of idle and ambitious Goteheardes in the feauenth, the loose and retchleffe lyuing of Popish Prelates in the ninth. The learned and sweete complaynt of the contempt of learning vnder the name of Poetry in the tenth. There is alfo much matter yttered somewhat couertly, especially ye abuſes of some whom he would not be too playne withall: in which, though it be not apparent to euerie one, what hys speciall meaning was, yet fo skilfullie is it handled, as any man may take much delight at hys learned conueyance, and picke out much good fence in the moſt obscure of it. Hys notable prayſe defuered in euerie parcell of that worke, becauf[e] I cannot expreff[e] as I woulde and as it shoulde: I wyll ceafe to speake any more of, the rather because I neuer hearde as yet any that hath reade it, which hath not with much admiration commended it. One only thing therein haue I hearde some curious heades call in queſtion: vis: the motion of some vnfauery loue, fuch as in the fixt Eglogue he feemeth to deale withall (which fay they) is fkarne allowable to English eares, and might well haue beene left for the Italian defenders of loathfome beastlines, of whom perhappes he learned it: to thyſ obiection I haue often aunswered and (I thinke truely) that theyr nyce opinion ouer ſhooteth the Poets meaning, who thouſh hee in that as in other thinges, immitateth the auncient Poets, yet doth not meane, no more did they before hym, any difordered loue, or the filthy luſt of the deuillifh Pedraſtice taken in the worſe fence, but rather to ſhowe howe the diſolute life of young men intangled in loue of women, doo neglect the freendiſp and league with their olde freendes and familiers. Why (fay they) yet he ſhold gyue no occaſion of fuspition, nor offer to the viewe of Christianes, any token of fuch filthineſſe, howe good foeuer hys meaning were: whereto I oppoſe the fimple conceyte they haue of matters which concerning learning or wytt, wylling them to gyue
Poets leaue to vfe theyr vayne as they fee good: it is their fooliish construction, not hys wryting that is blameable. Wee muft prefcrybe to no wryters, (much leffe to Poets) in what forte they shoule vtter theyr conceyts. But thys wyll be better difcuffed by fome I hope of better abillity.

One other forte of Poeticall wryters remayneth yet to bee remembred, that is, The precepts of Hufbandry, learnedly compiled in Heroycall verfe. Such were the workes of Hefiodus in Greeke, and Virgils Georgickes in Latine. What memorable worke hath bee hand-lead in imitation of these by any English Poet, I know not, (faue onely one worke of M. Tuffer, a peece furly of great wytt and experience, and wythal very prettilye handled) And I thinke the caufe why our Poets haue not trauayled in that behalfe, is efpecially, for that there haue bee always plenty of other wryters that haue handled the fame argument very largely. Among whom Master Barnabe Googe, in tranflying and enlarging the moft profitable worke of Heresbachius, hath deferued much commendation, as well for hys faythfull compyling and learned increaing the noble worke, as for hys wytty tranflation of a good part of the Georgickes of Virgill into English verfe.

Among all the translations, which hath bee my fortune to fee, I could neuer yet finde that worke of the Georgicks wholly performed. I remember once Abraham Flemming in his converfion of the Eglogues, promifed to tranflate and publifhe it: whether he dyd or not I knowe not, but as yet I heard not of it. I my felfe wott well I beftowed fome time in it two or three yeeres fince, turning it to that fame English verfe, which other fuch workes were in, though it were rudely: howebeit, I did it onely for mine owne vfe, and vpon certayne refpectes towards a Gentleman mine efpeciall freende, to whom I was defirous to shewe fome token of duetifull good wyll, and not minding it shoule goe farre abroade, considering howe flanderly I ranne it
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ouer, yet since then, hath one gott it in keeping, who as it is told me, eyther hath or wyll vnaduifedly publishe it: which injury though he means to doo me in myrth, yet I hope he wyll make me some suffycient recompenсе, or els I shal goe neere to watch hym the like or a worse turne.

But concerning the matter of our Englysh wryters, lett thyse suffiсe: nowe shal ye heare my simple skyll in what I am able to say concerning the forme and manner of our Englyshe verse.

The moſt vſuall and frequented kind of our English Poetry hath alwayes runne vpon, and to this day is obserued in suche equall number of syllables, and like-nes of wordes, that in all places one verfe either immediately, or by mutuall interposition, may be answerable to an other both in proportion of length, and ending of lynes in the fame Letters. Which rude kinde of verfe, though (as I touched before) it rather difcrediteth our speche, as borrowed from the Barbarians, then furnishe the fame with any comely ornament: yet beeing so ingraffed by custome, and frequented by the moſt parte, I may not vterly diffalowe it, leaſt I shalbe feeme to call in queſtion the iudgement of all our famous wryters, which haue wonne eternall prayſe by theyr memorable workes compyled in that verfe.

For my part therefore, I can be content to eſteeme it as a thing, the perfection whereof is very commendable, yet so as wyth others I could wyth it were by men of learning and ability bettered, and made more artificiall, according to the woorthines of our speche.

The falling out of verfes together in one like founde, is commonly called in English, Ryme, taken from the Grecke worde Ρυθμος, which furry in my iudgment is verye abufuelye applyed to ſuch a fencе: and by thys, the vnworthinesse of the thing may well appeare, in that wanting a proper name, wherby to be called, it borroweth a word farre exceeding the dignitye of it,
and not appropriate to fo rude or base a thing. For Ryme is properly, the iuft proportion of a clauſe or sentence, whether it be in profe or meeter, aptly comprifed together: wherof there is both an naturall and an artificiall composition, in any manner or kynde of speeche, eyther French, Italian, Spanish or English: and is proper not onely to Poets, but also to Readers, Oratours, Pleaders, or any which are to pronounce or speake any thing in publike audience.

The firft beginning of Ryme (as we nowe terme it) though it be somewhat auncient, yet nothing famous. In Greece (they fay) one Symias Rhodias, because he would be fmguler in somthing, wryt poetically of the Fable, contayning howe Jupiter beeing in shape of a Swanne, begatte the Egge on Leda, wherof came Caflor, Pollux, and Helena, whereof euery verse ended in thys Ryme, and was called therefore ὧν ὅντα but thys foolyfhe attempt was fo contemned and difpyfed, that the people would neither admitte the Author nor Booke any place in memory of learning. Since that it was not hearde of, till ye time ye Hunnes and Gothians renued it agayne, and brought it into Italie. But howfoeuer or wherefoeuer it beganne, certayne it is, that in our Englifh tongue it beareth as good grace, or rather better, then in any other: and is a faculty whereby many may and doo deferue great prayfe and commendation, though our speeche be capable of a farre more learned manner of verfifying, as I wyl partly declare heereafter.

There be three fpeciall notes necufary to be obſerved in the framing of our accustomed Englifh Ryme: the firſt is, that one meeter or verse be anſwerable to an other, in equall number of feete or syllables, or proportionable to the tune whereby it is to be reade or meafured. The feconde, to place the words in fuch forte, as none of them be wryfted contrary to the naturall inclination or affection of the fame, or more truely ye true quantity thereof. The thyrd, to make them fall together mutually in Ryme, that is, in wordes
of like founde, but so as the wordes be not disordered for the Rymes fake, nor the fence hindered. These be the most principall observationes, which I thinke requisite in an English verfe: for as for the other ornaments which belong thereto, they be more properly belonging to the feuerall gyfts of skylfull Poets, then common notes to be prescribed by me: but somewhat perhaps I shall have occasion to speake heereafter.

Of the kyndes of English verses which differ in number of syllables, there are almost infinite: which euery way alter according to hys fancy, or to the meafure of that meeter, wherein it pleafeth hym to frame hys ditty. Of the best and moft frequented I wyll reheare fome. The longest verfe in length, which I have feene vfed in English confifteth of fixteen fyllables, eache two verses ryming together, thus.

Wher vertue wants and vice abounds, there wealth is but a bayted hooke, To make men swallow down their bane, before on danger deepe they looke.

Thys kynde is not very much vfed at length thus, but is commonly deuided, eche verfe into two, whereof eche fhal containe eyght fyllables, and ryme croffe wyfe, the firt to the thyrd, and the second to the fourth, in this manner.

Great wealth is but a bayted hooke.  
Where vertue wants, and vice abounds:  
Which men deuoure before they looke;  
So them in daungers deepe it drownes.

An other kynd next in length to thys, is, where eche verfe hath fourteene fyllables, which is the moft accustomed of all other, and epecially vfed of all the translators of the Latine Poets for the moft part thus.

My mind with furry fierce inflamde of late I know not howe,  
Doth burne Parnaffus hyll to fee, adorn'd wyth Lawrell bowe.

Which may likewyfe and fo it often is deuyded, eche
Englifh Poetrie.

verfe into two, to [the?] firfl hauing eyght fillables, the
second fixe, wherof the two fixes shall alwayes ryme,
and sometimes the eyghtes, sometimes not, according
to the wyll of the maker.

My minde with furye fierce inflamde,
Of late I knowe not howe:
Doth burne Pernaffus hyll to fee,
Adornd wyth Lawrell bowe.

There are nowe wythin this compaffe, as many fortes
of verfes as may be devisef differences of numbers:
wherof some confift of equall proportions, some of long
and short together, some of many rymes in one staffe
(as they call it) some of croffe ryme, some of counter
ryme, some ryming wyth one worde farre diuent from
another, some ryming euery thryd or fourth word, and
so likewyfe all manner of dytties applyable to euery
tune that may be fung or sayd, distinct from profe or
continued speeche. To auoyde therefore tediousnesse
and confusion, I wyll repeate onely the different fortes
of verfes out of the Sheepeheards Calender, which
may well serue to beare authoritie in thys matter.

There are in that worke twelue or thirteene sundry
forts of verfes, which differ eyther in length, or ryme,
of deslinction of the flaves: but of them which differ
in length or number of fillables not past fixe or feauen.
The firft of them is of tenne fillables, or rather fiue
feete in one verfe, thus,

A Sheepheards boy no better doo him call,
When Winters waftfull spight was almoft spent.

This verfe he vfeth commonly in hys sweete com-
playnty, and mornefull ditties, as very agreeable to
such affections.
The second fort hath naturally but nyne syllables,
and is a more rough or clownifh manner of verfe, vfed
moft commonly of him if you mark him in hys
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fatyricall reprehensions, and his Sheepeheardes home-
lyeft talke, sych as the second Æglogue is.

Ah for pity wyll rancke Winters rage,
Thése bytter blasts neuer gynne to affwage.
The number of nine fillables in thys verse is very often
altered, and so it may without any digrace to the
fame, especially where the speche should be most
clownifh and simple, which is much obserued of hym.
The third kynd is a pretty rounde verse, running
currantly together, commonly feauen fillables or some-
tyme eyght in one verse, as many in the next, both
ryming together: euery two hauing one the like verse
after them, but of rounder wordes, and two of them
likewise ryming mutually. That verse expresseth
notably, light and youthfull talke, sych as is the
thyrde Æglogue betweene two Sheepeheardes boys
concerning loute.

Thomalyn why sitten we so
As weren ouerwent with woe
Upon so fayre a morrowe?
The ioyous time now nigheth faft
That wyll allay this bitter blast
And flake the Winter forrow.

The fourth fort containeth in eche slaffe manie
vnequall verfes, but most sweetelie falling together:
which the Poet calleth the tune of the waters fall.
Therein is his fong ln prayfe of Eliza.

Ye daintie Nymphes which in this blest brooke
doo bathe your breft,
Forfake your watrie bowres and hether looke,
at my request.
And eke yee Virgins that on Parnafs dwell,
Whence floweth Helicon the learned Well,
helpe me to blaze
her woorthy praise
That in her sex doth all excell. etc.
The fift, is a deuided verse of twelue syllables into two verses, whereof I spake before, and seemeth most meete for ye handling of a Morall matter, such as is the praise of good Pafiors, and the dispraise of ill in the seauenth Aeglogue.

The fixt kinde, is called a round, being mutuallie fung betweene two: one fingeth one verfe, the other the next, eche rymeth with himselfe.

Per. It fell vppon a holie eue
Wyl. Hey ho holliday
Per. When holie fathers wont to shrieue,
Wyl. Thus ginneth our Rondelay. etc.

The seauenth forte is a verie tragicall mournefull meafure, wherein he bewayleth the death of some freend vnder the perfon of Dydo.

Vp then Melpomene the mournfult Muse of nyne,
    such cause of mourning neuer hadst afore:
Vp grievedly ghostes, and vp my mournfull ryme:
    matter of myrth now shalt thou haue no more.
    Dydo my deere alas is dead,
    Dead and lyeth wrapt in leade:
    O heauie hearfe
Let streaming teares be powred out in flore
    O carefull vearfe.

Thefe fortés of verfes for breuities fake haue I chosen foorth of him, whereby I shall auoide the tedious re-heareiall of all the kindes which are vfed: which I thinkke would haue beene vnpossible, seeing they may be altered to as manie formes as the Poets pleafe: neither is there anie tune or stroke which may be fung or plaide on instuments, which hath not some poetical ditties framed according to the numbers thereof: some to Rogero, some to Trenchmore, to downe right Squire, to Galliards, to Pauines, to Iyggges, to Brawles, to all manner of tunes which euerie Fidler knowes better then my felfe, and therefore I will let them passe.
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Againe, the diuerities of the staves (which are the number of verses contained with the diuisions or partitions of a ditty) doo often times make great differences in these verses. As when one stave containeth but two verses, or (if they bee deuided) foure: the first or the first couple hauing twelve fillables, the other fourteen, which verifierys call Powlers measure, because so they talle their wares by dozens. Also, when one staffe hath manie verses, whereof eche one rimeth to the next, or mutuallie croffe, or distant by three, or by foure, or ended contrarye to the beginning, and a hundred fortes, whereof to shewe seuerall examples, would bee too troublesome: nowe for the second point.

The naturall course of most English verses seemeth to run vppon the olde Iambicke stroake, and I may well thinke by all likelihoode, it had the beginning thereof. For if you marke the right quantitie of our vsual verses, ye shall perceiue them to containe in found ye very propertie of Iambick feete, as thus.

$\text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u}$

I that my slender oaten pipe in verse was wont to founde:

For transpone anie of those feete in pronouncing, and make shortheither the two, foure, fixe, eight, tenne, twelue fillable, and it will (doo what you can) fall out very abfurdly.

Againe, though our wordes can not well bee forced to abyde the touch of Position and other rules of Profodia, yet is there such a naturall force or quantity in eche worde, that it will not abide anie place but one, without some soule disgrace: as for example try anie verse, as thys,

$\text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u} - \text{u}$

Of shapes transformed to bodies strange I purpose to intreate. Make the first fillable long, or the third, or the fift and fo foorth: or contrariwise make the other fillables to admitte the shortnesse of one of them places, and see
what a wonderfull defacing it wil be to the wordes, as thus.

Of strange bodies tranfformd to shapes purpofe I to intreat.

So that this is one especiall thing to be taken heede of in making a good English verse, that by displaceing no worde bee wrested against his naturall propriety, wherevnto you fhall perceyue eche worde to be affected, and may easlie diferne it in wordes of two fillables or aboue, though some there be of indifferencie, that wyll stand in any place. Againe, in chouching the whole fentence, the like regarde is to be had, that wee exceede not too boldly in placing the verbe out of his order, and too farre behinde the nowne: which the necessitie of Ryme may oftentimes urge. For though it be tolerable in a verfe to fette wordes fo extraordinarily as other speeche will not admitt, yet heede is to be taken, leaft by too much affecting that manner, we make both the verfe vnpleafant and the fentence obfcure. And sure it is a wonder to see the folly of manie in this respect, that vfe not onely too much of this ouerthwart placing, or rather displaceing of wordes, in theyr Poemes and verses, but alfo in theyr profe or continued writings: where they thinke to rolle moft smoothlie, and flow moft eloquently, there by this means, come forth theyr fentences dragging at one Authors tayle as they were tyde together with poynnts, where often you fhall tarrie (scratcning your heade) a good space before you fhall heare hys principall verbe or speciall word, leaft hys finging grace, which in his fentence is contained should be leffe, and his speeche feeme nothing poetical.

The thyrd obseruation is, the Ryme or like ending of verfes: which though it is of leaft importance, yet hath won fuch credite among vs, that of all other it is moft regarded of the greatefl part of Readers. And surely as I am perfwaded, the regarde of wryters to this, hath beene the greatefl decay of that good order of verfifying, which might ere this haue beene established
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in our speeche. In my judgment, if there be any ornament in the same, it is rather to be attributed to the plentiful fulness of our speeche, which can affoorde ryming words sufficient for the handling of any matter, then to the thing it selfe for any beautifying it bringeth to a worke: which might bee adorned with farre more excellent collours then ryming is. Notwithstanding I cannot but yeelde vnto it (as cuflome requireth) the deferred prayes, especially where it is with good judgement ordered. And I thinke them right worthy of admiration, for their readines and plenty of wytt and capacity, who can with facility intreate at large, and as we call it extempore, in good and fencible ryme, vppon some unacquainted matter.

The ready skyll of framing anie thing in verse, besides the naturall promptnesse which many haue therevnto, is much helped by Arte, and exercife of the memory: for as I remember, I reade once among Gaskoynes workes, a little instruction to verifying, where is prescribed as I thinke thys course of learning to verifye in Ryme.

When ye haue one verse well setled, and decently ordered which you may dispoe at your pleafure, to ende it with what word you wyll: then what foever the word is, you may speedilie runne ouer the other wordes which are aunfwerable therevnto, (for more readines through all the letters Alphabetically) whereof you may choofe that which wyll beft fitte the fence of your matter in that place: as for example: if your last worde ende in Booke, you may straightways in your minde runne them ouer thus. Brooke, Cooke, crooke, hooke, looke, nooke, pooke, rooke, forsooke, tooke, awooke etc. Nowe it is twenty to one, but awayes one of these shall jumpe with your former worde and matter in good fence. If not, then alter the firft.

And indeede I thinke, that next to the Arte of memory, thys is the readyest way to attaine to the faculty of ryming well Extempore, especially if it be helped with thus much paynes. Gather together all
manner of wordes especially Monafillables, and place
them Alphabetically in some note, and either haue
them meetely perfectly by hart (which is no verie
laboursome matter) or but looke them dilligently ouer
at some time, practising to ryme indifferent often,
whereby I am perfwaded it wil soone be learned, so as
the party haue withall any reasonable gyft of knowledge
and learning, whereby hee want not bothe matter and
wordes altogether.

What the other circumftaunces of Ryming are, as
what wordes may tollerably be placed in Ryme, and
what not: what words doo beft become a Ryme, and
what not, how many forties of Ryme there is: and fuch
like I will not flay nowe to intreate. There be many
more obferuations and notes to be prescribed, to the
exacte knowledge of verfifying, which I truf trust wil
be better and larger laide forth by others, to whom I de-
ferre manie considerations in this treatife: hoping that
some of greater skill will shorlie handle this matter in
better forte.

Nowe the fundry kindes of rare deuifes, and pretty
inuentions which come from ye fine poeticall vaine of
manie in frange and vnacuflomed manner, if I could
report them, it were worthie my trauell: fuch are the
turning of verfes: the infolding of wordes: the fine
repititions: the clarklie conueying of contraries, and
manie fuch like. Whereof though I coulde fette downe
manie: yet because I want bothe manie and the beft
kindes of them, I will ouerpaie: onelie pointing you
to one or two which may suffice for example.

Looke vppon the rufull song of Colin sung by
Cuddie in the Sheepheardes Calender, where you shall
fee a singuler rare deuife of a dittie framed vpon thefe
fixe wordes VVoe, founde, cryes, pale, sleepe, augment,
which are moft prettilie turned and wounde vppe
mutually together, expressinge wonderfully the doleful-
nesse of the fong. A deuife not much unlike vnto the
fame, is vfed by some, who taking the laft wordes of a
certaine number of verfes, as it were by the rebound
of an *Echo*, shall make them fall out in some prettie fence.

Of this forte there are some devised by *John Graunge*, which becaufe they be not long I wyll rehearse one.

If feare oppresse howe then may hope me shielde?
Denyall fayes,ayne hope hath pleased well,
But as such hope thou wouldeft not be thine,
So would I not the like to rule my hart.
For if thou louefl it bidds thee graunt forthwith
Which is the ioy whereof I liue in hope.

Here if you take the lafl worde of euery verfe, and place them orderlie together, you shall haue this ten-

tence: *Shielde well thyne hart with hope.* But of thefe *Echoes* I knowe indeede verie daintie peeces of worke, among some of the finest Poets this day in Lon-
don: who for the rarenesse of them keepe them priuelie to themselfes, and wil not let them come abroad.

A like inuention to the laft rehearsed, or rather a better, haue I feene often practised in framing a whole dittie to the Letters of ones name, or to the wordes of some two or three verfes which is very witty, as for example this is one of *W. Hunnis*, which for the shortnes I rather chufde then some yat are better.

If thou defire to liue in quiet ref,
Gyue eare and fee, but fay the bef.

These two verfes are nowe as it were resolued into dyuers other, euery two wordes or fillables being the beginning of an other like verfe, in this fort.

If thou (delight in quietnes of life,
Desire (to shunne from brawles, debate and strife:
To liue (in loue with G O D, with freend and foe,
In rest (shalt sleepe when other cannot fo.

Gyne eare (to all, yet doo not all beleue,
And fsee (the end and then thy fentence gyue:
But fay (For trueth of happy liues affignde
The best (hath he that quiet is in minde.
Thus are there infinite fortes of fine conueiances (as they may be termed) to be vsed, and are much frequented by verfifyers, as well in composition of their verfe, as the wittines of their matter: which all I will referre to the consideration of euery pleafant headded Poet in their proper gifts: onelie I fett downe these fewe fortes of their formes of verfifying, which may stand in fleede to declare what manie others may be dewifed in like forte.

But nowe to proceede to the reformed kind of English verfe which manie have before this, attempted to put in practife, and to eftablifh for an accustomed right among English Poets, you fhall heare in like manner my simple judgment concerning the fame.

I am fully and certainlie perfwaded, that if the true kind of verfifying in immitation of Greekes and Latines, had beene practifed in the English tongue, and put in vre from time to tyme by our Poets, who might haue continually beene mending and pollyfing the fame, euery one according to their feuerall gifts: it would long ere this haue afpyred to as full perfection, as in anie other tongue whatfoeuer. For why may I not thinke fo of our English, feeing that among the Romaines a long time, yea even till the dayes of Tully, they efteeemed not the Latine Poetrie almost worth any thing, in respecte of the Greeke, as appearareth in the Oration pro Archia Poeta: yet afterwaerdes it increafed in credite more and more, and that in fhort space: fo that in Virgilles time, wherein were they not comparable with the Greekes? So likewif, now it feemeth not currant for an English verfe to runne vpon true quantity, and thofe feete which the Latines vfe, becaufe it is ftraunge, and the other barbarous cuftome, beeing within compaffe of euery base witt, hath worne it out of credite or eftimation. But if our wryters, beeing of learning and judgment, would rather infringe thys curious cuftome, then omitte the occaion of inlarging the credite of their natie speeche, and theyr owne prayfes, by practifing that commendable
kind of wryting in true verfe: then no doubt, as in other partes of learning, so in Poetry, shoulde not ftoupe to the beft of them all in all maner of ornam-
ment and comlinesse. But some obiect that our wordes are nothing refemblaunt in nature to theirs, and therefore not poiffible to bee framed with any good grace after their vfe: but cannot we then as well as the Latines did, alter the cannon of the rule according to the quality of our worde, and where our wordes and theyrs wyll agree, there to iumpe with them, where they will not agree, there to eflablishe a rule of our owne to be directed by? Likewise, for ye tenor of the verfe might we not (as Horace dyd in the Latine) alter their proportions to what fortes we lifted, and to what we fawe wold beft become the nature of the thing handled, or the quallity of the words? Surely it is to be thought that if any one, of found judgment and learning, shoulde putt forth some famous worke, contayning dyuers formes of true verfes, fitting the meaures, according to the matter: it would of it felfe be a fufficient authority without any precription of rules, to the moft part of Poets, for them to follow and by cuftome to ratify. For sure it is, that the rules and principles of Poetry, were not precifely followed and obferued of the firft beginners and wryters of Poetry, but were felected and gathered feuerally out of theyr workes, for the direction and behoofe of their followers. And indeede, he that shall with heedfull judgment make tryall of the English wordes, shal not finde them fo groffe or vnapt, but that they wyll become any one of ye moft accustomed fortes of Latine- or Grecce verfes meetely, and run thereon somewhat currantly.

I my felfe, with simple skyll I confesse, and farre vnable judgment, haue ventured on a fewe, which notwithstanding the rudenes of them may serue to shewe what better might bee brought into our fpeeche, if thofe which are of meete abiyltye woulde beftowe fome tranell und endeavour thereupon. But before I fette them fowne, I wyll speake somewhat of fuch obseruations as
I could gather necessary to the knowledge of these kindes of verses, lest I should seeme to runne vpon them rashly, without regarde either of example or authority.

The speciall poyntes of a true verse, are the due obseruations of the feete, and place of the feete.

The foote of a verse, is a measure of two fillables, or of three, distingushed by time which is eyther long or short. A foote of two fillables, is eyther simple or mixt, that is, of like time or of diuers. A simple foote of two fillables is likewise twofolde, eyther of two long fillables called Spondeus, as **goodnesse**, or of two short called Pyrrichius as **hyther**. A myxt foote of 2. fillables, is eyther of one short and one long called Iambus as **dying**; or of one long and one short, called Choreus as **gladly**. A foote of 3. fillables in like forte is either simple or myxt. The simple is eyther Molofus, that is of three long, as **forgiveness**; or Trochaeus, that is of 3. short, as **merylie**.

The mixt is of 6. diuers forties, 1. Dactylus, of one long, and two short, as **happily**. 2. Anapetus, of two shorte, and one long, as **t[au]lers**. 3. Bacchius, of one short, and two long, as **remembers**. 4. Palimbachius, of two long and one short, as **accorded**. 5. Creticus of a long, a short, and a long, **dangerous**. 6. Amphibrachus, of a short, a long, and a short, as **rejoyced**.

Many more defitions of feete are vfed by some, but these doo more artificially comprehend all quantities necessary to the skanning of any verse, according to Tallaeus in his Rethorique. The place of the feete is the disposiing of them in theyr propper roomes, whereby may be discerned the difference of eche verfe which is the right numbring of the same. Now as for the quantity of our wordes, therein lyeth great difficultye, and the cheefeest matter in this faculty. For in truth there being such diuerfitie betwixt our wordes and the Latine, it cannot stande indeede with great reason that they shoulde frame, wee being onelie directed by such rules.
A Discourse of

as sere for onely Latine words, yet notwithstanding one may well perceiue by these fewe, that these kinde of verses would well become the speeche, if so bee there were such Rules prescribed, as woulde admitt the plac-ing of your aptest and full est wordes together. For indeede excepting a fewe, of our Monasyllables, which naturally shoulde moft of them be long, we haue almost none, that wyll stande fitle in a short foote: and there-fore if some exception ware made against the precise obseruation of Position, and certaine other of the rules, then might we haue as great plenty and choyfe of good wordes to furnifh and fette foorth a verse, as in any other tongue.

Likewise if there were some direction in such wordes, as fall not within the compass of Greek or Latine rules, it were a great helpe, and therefore I had great misse in these few which I made. Such as is the last fillable in these wordes, able, noble, or possible and such like: againe for the nature and force of our W. of our th, of our oo, and ee, of our wordes which admytte an e in the ende after one or two Consonantes, and many other. I for my part, though (I muft needes confesse) many faultes escaped me in these fewe, yet tooke I as good heede as I coulde, and in trueth did rather alwaies omit the beft wordes and such as would naturally become the speecha best, then I wolde committe any thing, which shoulde notoriously impugne the Latine rules, which herein I had onely for my direction. Indeede moft of our Monasyllables I am forced to make short, to supply the want of many short wordes requisite in these verses. The Participle A, being but the English article adioyned to Nownes, I alwaies make short, both alone and in composition, and likewise the wordes of one fillable ending in E, as the, when it is an article, he, she, ye, etc. we I thinke should needes be alwayes long because we pronounce continually VV. I, beeing alone standing for the Pronowne Ego, in my judgment might well be vied common: but because I neuer sawe it vied but short I fo obserued it. Words ending in y
I make short without doubt, fauing that I haue marked in others one difference which they vfe in the fame, that is to make it short in the ende of an Aduerb, as gladly, and long in the ende of an Adiectiue as goodly: but the reaon is as I take it, because the Adiectiue is or should be most commonly written thus goodlie. O, beeing an Aduerbe is naturally long: in the ende of wordes both Monasyllables and other I thinke it may be vfed common. The firft of Polysyllables I directed according to the nature of the worde, as I thought most auniwerable to Latine examples, fauing that somewhere I am confrayned to straine courtefy with the prepoftition of a worde compouded or fuch like, which breaketh no great fquare: as in defence or depart, etc. The myddle fillables which are not very many, come for the moft part vnder the precinct of Position, whereof fome of them will not poiffibly abide the touch, and therfore muft needes be a little wrested: fuch are commonly ye Aduerbs of three fillables, as mournfully, fpyghtfully and fuch like words, deriued of this Adiectiue, full: and therfore if there be great occation to vfe them, they muft be reformed by detracting onely (l) and then they fland meetely currant, as mournfully. The laft fillables I wholly directed fo neere as I could to the touch of common rules.

The moft famous verfe of all the reft, is called Hexametrum Epicum, which confifteth of fixe feete, wherof the firft foure are indifferently either Spondei or Dactyli, the fift is euermore a dactyl, and the fixt a Sponda, as thus.

Tyterus happily thou liest tumbling vnder a beetchtree.

Thys kinde of verfe I haue onely feene to be practised in our English fpeeche: and indeede wyll stand some-what more orderlye therein then any of the other kindes, vntill we haue fome tolleration of worde made by specciall rule. The firft that attempted to practife thys verfe in English, should feeme to be the Earle of Surry, who tranflated some part of Virgill into verfe
indeede, but without regard of true quantity of fillables. There is one famous *Distichon*, which is common in the mouthes of all men, that was made by one Master *Vatfon*, fellowe of S. *Johns* Colledge in Cambrdyge about 40. yeeres past, which for the sweetnes and gallantnes therof in all respects doth mat[c]h and surpasse the Latine coppy of *Horace*, which he made out of *Homers* wordes, *qui mores hominum* etc.

All travellers doo gladlie report great praise to *Ulysses*

For that he knewe many men's maners, and saw many citties.

Which two verfes if they be examined throughout all the rules and obseruations of the best verfifying, shall bee founde to attaine the very perfection of them all. There be two other not much inferiour to thefe, which I found in ye Gloffe of *E. K.* vppon the fift *Æglogue* of the newe Poet: which Tully translated out of Greece into Latine, *Hec habui que adi* etc.

All that I eate did I joy and all that I greedilie gorged.

As for thofe manie goodlie matters left for others.

Which though they wyll not abide the touch of *Synalepha* in one or two places, yet perhappes some English rule which might wyth good reafon be established, would make them currant enough, and auoyde that inconuenience which is very obouious in our wordes. The great company of famous verfes of thys fort, which Master *Haruey* made, is not vnknowne to any and are to be viewed at all times. I for my part, fo farre as thofe examples would leade me, and mine owne small skyll affoord me, haue blundered vppon these fewe, whereinto I haue translated the two first *Ælogues* of *Virgill*: becaufe I thought no matter of mine owne inuention, nor any other of antiquitye more fitte for tryal of thys thyng, before there were some more specciall direction, which might leade to a leffe troublesome manner of wryting.
The Argument of the first
Æglogue.

Vnder the personne of Titryrus Vyrgill beeing figured himselfe, declareth to Melibeus an nother Neateheard, the great benefittes he receyued at Augustus hand, who in the spoyle of Mantua gaue him hys goods and substaunce againe.

Melibæus. Titryrus.

Titryrus, happilie thou lyste tumbling vnder a beech tree,
All in a fine oate pipe these sweete songs lustilie chaunting:
VVe, poore foules goe to wracke, and from these coastes beremooued,
And fro our pastures suweete: thou Tityr, at eafe in a shade piott
Makst thicke groues to refound vvith sorges of braue Amarillis.

Titryrus.

O Melibæus, he vvas no man but a God vvo who releuude me:
Euer he shalbe my God: from this same Sheepcot his alters
Neuer, a tender Lambe shalbe vvvant, with blood to bedevu them.
This good gift did he giue, to my steeres thus freelie to vvander,
And to my selfe (thou feest) on pipe to refound vvhat F lifted.
A Discourse of

Melibæus.

Gruthe thee sure I doo not, but this thing makes me to wunder,
VWhence comes all this adoo: vvith grievuous paine not a little
Can I remoue my Goates: here, Tityre skant get I forwârd
Poore olde crone, two twyns at a clappe ith boysterous hajfîles
Left she behind, best hope i my flock laid hard on a bare stone.
Had not a luckeffe lotte poffest our mindes, I remember
VWarnings oft fro the blast burnt oake vve favv to be sent vs.
Oft did a left hand crow foretell these things in her hull tree,
But this God let us heare what he vvâs, good Tityre tell me.

Tityrus.

That fame Cittie fo braue vvîch Rome vvâs vvont to be called,
Foole did I thynke, to be like this of ours, vvhere vvâs to the pastures
VVonted were to remoue from dammes our young prettie Cattell.
Thus did I thynke young vvhelpes, and Kids to be like to the mothers,
Thus did I vvont compare manie great things vvith many little.
But this above all townes as loftily mouteth her high head,
As by the lowe bafe shrubbes tall Cypresse shooteth aboue them.

Melibæus.

And vvhat did thee mooue that needes thou must goe to see Rome?

Tityrus.

Freedome: vvîch though late, yet once lookt backe to my pore state,
After time vvhen hairkes from my beard did ginne to be vvhitish:
Yet lookt back at laſt and found me out after a long time.
VWhen Amarill vvâs once obtainde, Galatea departed:
For (for I vvill confesse) vvîhile as Galatea did hold mee,
Hope did I not for freedome, and care had I none to my cattell.
Though manie faire young beastes our folde for the aulters afوردed
And manie cheefes good fro my prefle vvere fent to the Cittie:
Seldome times did I bring anie store of pence fro the markeit.

Melibaeus.

O Amarill, vwherefore, to thy Gods (very much did I meruaile)
Heauilie thou didf praie: ripe fruits ungathered all still:
Tityrus is not at home: thefe Pyne trees Tityre mift thee.
Fountaines longd for thee: thefe hedgroves vwisht thy return home

Tityrus.

What was then toledoone? from bondage could not J vvind out:
Neither I could have found such gentle Gods any vwhere els.
There did I fee (Melibae) that youth vwhafe hestes I by courfe still.
Fortnights whole to obferue on the Alters fure will I not faile.
Thus did he gentlie graunt to myfute when first I demaunded.
Keepe your heardes poore flaues as erst, let bulles to the makes still.

Melibaeus.

Happy olde man, then thou shalt haue thy farme to remaine still,
Large and large to thy felfe, others nought but stonie grauell.
And foule fymie rush wherewith their lees be beoprinkled.
Here no vnwoonted foode shall grieue young theaues who be laded,
Nor the infections foule of neighbours flocke shall annoie them.
Happie olde man. In shaddowy bankes and coole prettie places,
Heere by the quainted fwoodes and fprings most holie remaining.
Here, thefe quickfets frefh which lands feuer out fro thy neighbors
And greene willow rowses which Hibla bees doo reioice in,
Oft fine whistring noife, shall bring sweete sleepe to thy fences.
Vnder a Rock fide here will proyner chaunt merrie ditties.
Neither on highe Elme trees, thy beloude Doues loftifie fitting,
Nor prettie Turtles trim, vvill ceafe to crooke with a good cheere.
A Discourse of

Titurus.

First, therefore swift buckes shall flye for foode to the skies ward,
And from fish with drawn broade feas themselues shall avoid
hence:
First, (both borders broke) Araris shall run to the Parthanes,
And likewife Tyris shall againe runne backe to the Germanes:
Ere his countnaunce sweete shall flippe once out from my hartroole.

Melibaeus.

Ye poore foules, must some to the land cald Affrica packe hence.
Some to the farre Scythia, and some must to the swift flood Oasis.
Some to Britannia coastes quite parted farre fro the whole world.
Oh these pastures pure shall I nere more chance to behold yee?
And our cottage poore with warme turues couerd about trim.
Oh these trim tilde landes, shall a recheffe fouldier haue them?
And shall a Barbarian have this croppe? fee what a mischiefere
Difcord vile hath araifde? for whom was our labour all tooke?
Novv Melibae ingraft pearie stocks, fette vines in an order.
Novv goe (my braue flocke once that were) O now goe my
kildings.
Neuer againe shall I now in a greene bowre sweeteleie repose.
See ye in queachie briers farre a loofe clambring on a high hill.
Now shall I sing no Lygges, nor whilst I doo fall to my iunkets.
Shall ye my Goates, cropping sweete flowres and leaues fit
about me.

Titurus.

Yet thou maist tarrie heere, and keepe me companie this night;
All on a leavie couch: good Appes ripe I doo not lacke,
Chestnuts sweete good store, and plentie of curdles will I set thee.
Marke the Towne how chimney tops doo beginne to be smoaking,
And fro the Mountaines high how shaddowes grow to be larger.
The seconde Æglogue called
Alexis.

The Argument.

Virgill in the perfonne of Corydon as some thinke, com-
playneth that he is not fo gratious with Augustus as he
would bee: or els it is to be referred to a youth Alexander,
which was giuen him of Afinius Pollio, whom he blameth
for the vnstediastnes of his Witt and wandering appetite, in
refusing the freendly counfayle which he vsed to giue him.

That Sheepheard Corydon did burne in loue with Alexis,
All his masters deare: and nought had he whereby to hope
Onely in beechen groues, and dolesome shaddowy places. [for.
Dailie reforted he: there these rude disordered outcryes,
Hylles and defert woodes throughout thus mournfully tuned.
O hard harted Alex, haft thou no regard to my sweete song?
Pyttieft me not a whitt: yea makft me now that I shall dye.
Yet doo the beasts find out fine shades and trim pretty
cool에 plots,
And fro the sun beames safe lie lyzardes vnder a bushtuflte:
And for workmen touge with boyling heate so be parched,
Garlick fauery sweete and coole hearbes plenty be dressed.
But, by the scorcht banke fydes i’ thy foote steppes stil I goe
plodding.
Hedgerowes h putt doo refound with Grasshops mournfully squeak. 
O had I not ben better abyd Amarillis her anger? 
And her proude disdaine? yea better abyde my Menalcas? 
What though brown did he seeme? yea what though thou be 
fo gallant 
O thou fine chery cheeckt child truft not t' much to thy beauty, 
Black violets are tooke when dayfes white be refused. 
Me thou doft despife vknowne to thy felfe yet Alexis: 
What be my riches great in neate, in milke what abundance. 
In Sicill hyles be my Lambs of which there wander a thoufand. 
All times, colde and hote yet fresh milke nener I wanted. 
Such be my Musicke notes, as (when his fockes he recalling) 
Amphion of Dirce did vfe on thore Aracynt-hus. 
Much misliapt I am not, for late in a bancke I behelde me, 
When ftil feas were calme, to thy Daphnis neede not I giue 
place 
No, though thou be the judge, if pictures haue any credite. 
O were thou content to remaine with me by the downes heere, 
In these lodgings smmall, and helpe me proppes to put vnder, 
And trym kydling flocke with me to drine to the greene fieldes: 
Pan in finging sweete with me shouldft bruely refemble: 
Pan, was firt the inuenter, pypes to adioyne in an order: 
Pan, poore flockes and Sheepheardes to moft duly regardeth. 
Thofe fine lips thou needft not feare to bruie with a sweete pype: 
VVhat dyd Amynt forfake i'this exercife to be cunning? 
One pype with feauene fundry flops matcht sweeley together. 
Hau I my felfe, Damætas which ats death he bequeathd me, 
And fayd, heere, thou art now the second which euer hath ought 
So fayd Damætas: but Amyntas fpightfully fcornde it. 
[it.
Alfo, two pretty smmall wyld kyddes, moft goodlie befpolett 
Hau I, that heere i' the dales doo runne skant fafe I doo 
feare me. 
Twyce in a day two teates theyfick: for thee will I keepe them: 
Wondrous faine to haue had them both was Theftylis of late. 
And fo the hall: for I see thou fcomnt whatfo-euer I giue thee. 
Come hyther O thou sweete face boy: fee fee, to thy felfe heere 
How fayre Nymphes in baskets full doo bring maanie Lillies: 
White violets sweete Nais plucks and bloomes fro the Poppies, 
Narcyfs, and dyll flowres moft sweete that fauoureth alfo.
Cafla, broade mary Goldes, with pancyes, and Hyacinthus.
And I my felfe rype peaches soft as filke will I gather.
And such Chephinuts as Amarill was wont to reioyce at.
Ploms wyll I bring likewise: that fruite shall be honored also.
And ye O Lawrell twygges that I croppe, and myrte thy felfe next.
For ye be wont, (bound both in a bunch) moost sweetely to fauour.
Thou art but a Clowne Corydon: these gifts esteeemes not Alexis:
Nor by thy gifts to obtaine art meete to incounter Iolas.
VWretch (ahlas) whatts this that I wish? south blasts to the yong flowers
Orcleere crystall streames with loathsome swyne to be troubled?
Ah mad boy from whom dooft runne? why Gods ithe woods dwelt:
And Paris erft of Troy: Pallas moft gladly reioyfeth,
In these bowres: and in trym groues we all chiefly delight vs.
Grym Lyonelfe doth course curft woolues, so wolues doo the kydlinges.
And these wanton Kyddes likewise these faire Cytifus flowers.
Thee Corydon (O Alex) some pleasure euerie wight pulles.
See these yoked fleeres fro the plough nowe feeme to be lett loose.
And these shadowes large doo declare thys fun to depart hence
Styll I doo burne in loue. What meane in loue to be lookt for?
Ah Corydon Corydon, what raging fury dooth haunt thee,
Halfe cropt downe be thy vynes and broade brauncht elmes ouerhang them.
Rather about some needefull worke now bufy thy felfe well,
Either on Ofyers tuffe or bulrufh weane pretty basketts.
And if Alexis scorne thee stil, mayft hope for another.

FINIS.
I durst not enterprye to goe any further with this rude translation: beeing for the respects aforesayd a troublesome and vnpleafant peece of labour: And therefore thefe shall suffice till further occasion shall ferue to imploie some profitable paynes in this behalfe.

The next verfe in dignity to the Hexameters, is ye Carmen Elegiacum which confifteth of foure feete and two od fillables: viz: the two firft feete, eyther Dactyli or Spondaei indifferente, the one long fillable: next two Dactyli and an other long fillable --- o o --- o o --- o o --- some doo measure it in this forte (and more truely yet not fo readily to all) accounting firft two indifferently either Dactyli or Spondaei, then one Spondaei, and two Anapafii. But it commeth all to one reckoning. Thys verfe is always vnfeperably adioyned vnto the Hexameter, and ferueth especially to the handling of loue and dalliances, whereof it taketh the name. It will not frame altogether fo currantlye in our English as the other, because the shortnesse of the seconde Penthimimer will hardly be framed to fall together in good fence, after the Latine rules. I haue not feene very many of them made by any, and therefore one or two for example fake shall be sufficient.

This Diijichon out of Ouid.

Ingenium quondam fuerat pretiosius auro,
At nunc barbaries grandis habere nihil.

May thus be translated.

Learning once was thought to be better then any gold was,
Now he that hath not wealth is but a barbarian.

And thys

Omnia funt hominum tenui pendentia filo:
Et subito cafu quae valueret ruunt.

Tis but a flender thread, which all mens flates do de-
pend on:
And moft goodly thingse quickly doo fall to decay.
As for the verses Phalocium and Iambicum, I have not as yet made any tryall in them: but the Sapphic I assure you, in my judgment wyl doo very pretty, if ye wants which I speake were once supplied. For tryall of which I have turned the new Poets sweete song of Eliza into such homely Sapphick as I coulde.

Thys verse consisteth of these fiue feete, one Chore, one sponda, one daedyl, and two Choreis, with this addition, that after every third verse be fette one Adonium verse, which consisteth of a daedyl and a spondae. It is more troublesome and tedious to frame in our speeche by reason they runne without difference, euery verse being a like in quantity throughout, yet in my judgement flandeth meetely well in the same. I pray looke the Coppy which I have translated in the fourth Aeglogue of the Shepheardes Calender: ye song of Colins making which Hobbinoll siggeth in prayle of the Queenes maiesty, vnder the name of Eliza.

YE dainty Nymphes that in this blessed brooke,
   doo bathe your brest:
Forfake your watry bowres and hether looke,
   at my request:
And onely you Virgins that on Parnafs dwell.
Whence floweth Helicon the learned well,
   helpe me to blase
   her worthy praife
That in her sex doth all excell.

Of fayre Eliza be your sluer song
   that blessed wight:
The flowre of Virgins, may she flourish long,
   in princely plight.
For she is Syrinx daughter without fpott,
Which Pan the Shepheards God on her begot:
   fo sprang her grace,
   of heauenly race,
No mortall blemish may her blott.

See where she fittes, etc.
O ye Nymphes most fine who resort to this brooke,
For to bathe there your pretty breasts at all times:
Leave the watry bowres, hyther and to me come
at my request nowe.

And ye Virgins trymme who resort to Parnafs,
Whence the learned well Helicon beginneth:
Help to blaxe her worthy deserts, that all els
mounteth aboue farre.

Nowe the siluer fonges of Eliza sing yee,
Princely wight whose peer not among the virgins
Can be found: that long she may remaine among vs.
now let vs all pray.

For Syrinx daughter she is, of her begotten
Of the great God Pan, thus of heauen arysteth,
All her exlent race: any mortall harde happe
cannot approche her.

See, she fittes most seemely in a graxy green plott,
Clothed in weedes meete for a princely mayden,
Bofte with Ermines white, in a gooody scarlett
brauely beseeming.

Decked is that crowne that vpon her head standes
With the red Rose and many Daffadillies,
Bayes, the Primrose and violetts, be fette by: how
ioyfull a fight ift.

Say, behold did ye euer her Angelike face,
Like to Phoeb Fayre? or her heauenly hauour
And the princelike grace that in her remaineth?
haue yee the like seene?

Medled ift red rofe with a white togethe
Which in either cheeke do depeinct a trymme cheere,
Her majestie and eye to behold so comely, her
like who remembreth?
Phæbus once peeped forth with a goodly guilt newe,
For to gaze: but when he saw the bright beams
Spread abroad from her face with a glorious grace,
it did amaze him.

When another funne he beheld belowe here,
Blush he red for shame, nor againe he durst look:
Would he durst bright beams of his owne with hers match,
for to be vanquished.

Shew thy selfe now Cynthia with thy cleere rays,
And behold her: neuer abaft be thou so: [beauty, how
When she spreades those beams of her heauenly
thou art in a dump daft?

But I will take heed that I match not her grace,
With the Laton feede, Niobe that once did,
Nowe she doth therefore in a stone repent: to all
other a warning.

Pan he may well boafte that he did begit her
Such a noble wight, to Syrinx is it joy,
That she found such lott with a bellibone trym
for to be laden.

When my younglinges first to the dammes doo bleat out,
Shall a milke white Lamb to my Lady be offered: [grome.
For my Goddeffe shee is yea I my selfe her Heard-
though but a rude Clowne.

Unto that place Caliope dooth high her,
Where my Goddeffe shines: to the fame the Muter
After her with sweete Violines about them
cheerfully tracing

Is not it Bay braunche that aloft in handes they haue,
Eune to giue them sure to my Lady Eliza:
O so sweete they play—and to the fame doo sing too
heanly to heare ift.

See, the Graces trym to the ftroke doo foote it,
Deftly dauncing, and meriment doo make them,
Sing to the instruments to reioyce the more, but
wants not a fourth grace?
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Then the daunce wyll be eune, to my Lady therefore
Shalbe geune that place, for a grace she shall be
For to fill that place that among them in heaune, she
may be receiued.

Thys beuy of bright Nymphes, whether ift goe they nowi
Raunged all thus fine in a Rowe together?
They be Ladies all i' the Lake behight foe?
they thether all goe.

One that is there chiefe that among the rest goes,
Called is Chores of Olyues she beares a
Goodly Crownett, meeete for a Prince that in peace
euer abideth

All ye Sheepheardes maides that about the greenedwell
Speede ye there to her grace, but among ye take heed:
All be Virgins pure that aproche to deck her,
duetie requireth

When ye shall present ye before her in place,
See ye not your felues doo demeane too rudely:
Bynd the fillets: and to be fine the wafte gyrt
faft with a tawdryni

Bring the Pinckes therewith many Gelliflowres sweete
And the Cullambynes: let vs haue the Wynesops,
With the Cornation that among the loue laddes
wontes to be worn much

Daffadowndillies all a long the ground strowe,
And the Cowflyppe with a pretie paunce let heere lye
Kyngcuppe and Lillies fo beloude of all men
And the deluce flowre

One verfe there remaineth vntranslatd as yet, wit
some other of this forte, which I meant to have finishec
but by reasone of some let which I had, I am con
strained to defer to some other time, when I hope t
gratify the Readers with more and better verses of thi
forte: for in trueth I am perfwaded a little paine takin
might furnishe our speeche with as much pleafau
delight in this kinde of verfe, as any other whatfoeue:
Heere followe the Cannons or gene-
rall cautions of Poetry, prescribed by Horace,
first gathered by Georgius Fabricius Cremni-
cenfis: which I thought good to annex to
thys Treatife, as very necessary observations
to be marked of all Poets.

In his Epifle ad Piones

de arte Poetica.

Irift let the inuention be meete for the
matter, not differing, or straunge,
or monftrous. For a womans head,
.a horfe necke, the bodie of a
dyuers coloured Byrd, and many
members of fundry creatures com-
 pact together, whose legges ending
like a Fyshes tayle: this in a picture
is a wonderful deformitie: but if there be such
diuerfitye in the frame of a speeche, what can be
more vncomely or ilfavoured?

2. The ornaments or colours must not bee too many,
nor rafhly adventured on, neither must they be vfed
every where and thruft into every place.

3. The proprietie of speeche must bee duely obserued
that wayghty and great matters be not spoken slenderly,
or matters of length too briefly: for it belongeth much
both to the comlineffe and nature of a matter: that
in big matters there be lykewise used boysterous wordes.

4. In Poeticall descriptions, the speeche must not exceede all credite, nor any thing sainedlie brought in, against all course of nature.

5. The dispoings of the worke must be such, that there be no offence committed, as it were by too exquifite dilligence: for many thinges may be oft committed, and some thing by too curious handling be made offencive. Neyther is it in one part to be well furnished, and in another to be neglected. Which is prooued by example of a Caruer, who expreffed very artificially the heade and vpper part of a body, but the rest hee could not make an ende of. Againe, it is prooued thus, that a body should not be in other partes beautifull, and yet bee deformed in the crooked nose: for all the members in a well shapen bodie must be aunswerable, found, and well proportioned.

6. He that taketh in hande to write any thing must first take heede that he be sufficient for the same: for often vnwary fooles through their rashnes are ouertooke with great want of ability.

7. The ornament of a worke consisteth in wordes, and in the manner of the wordes, are either simple or mixt, newe or olde, propper or translated. In them all good judgment must be vfed and ready wytt. The chiefest grace is in the most frequented wordes, for the same reason holdeth in wordes, as doth in coynes, that the most vfed and tried are best esteemned.

8. The kinde of verfe is to be considered and aptly applied to the argument, in what measure is most meete for every fort. The most usuall kindes are foure, the Heroic, Elegiac, Iambick, and Lyric.

9. One must vse one kynde of speeche alike in all wrytings. Sometime the Lyric ryfeth aloft, sometime the comicall. To the Tragicall wryters belong properly the bygge and boysterous wordes. Examples must be interplaced according fitly to the time and place.

10. Regarde is to be had of affections: one thing
becometh pleasant persons, an other fadde, an other wrathfull, an other gentle, which muft all be heedefully respected. Three things therefore are requisite in verses, beauty, sweetnes, and the affection. Theo-

phrastus fayth that this beauty or delectablenesse is a deceit, and Ariflotle calleth it τραννία ὀλυγοκρονίον, a momentany tyranny. Sweetnesse retayneth a Reader, affection moueth him.

11. Euery perfon muft be fitted accordingly, and the speeche well ordered: wherein are to be considered the dignity, age, sex, fortune, condition, place, Country, etc. of eche perfon.

12. The perfonnes are eyther to be fayned by the Poets them selues, or borrowed of others, if he borrow them, then muft hee obserue το ὃμοιον, that is, that he folow that Author exactly whom he purposeth to imitate, and whereout he bringeth his examples. But if he fayne newe perfonnes, then muft he kepe his το ἀναλον, that is equallie: so bringing them in eche place, that it be alwayes agreeable, and the laft like vnto the first, and not make one perfon nowe a bolde boafler, and the same straightwaies a wife warie man, for that is paffing absurd. Againe, euery one muft obserue το ἀρμοιστον, which is interpreted convenientiam, fitness: as it is meete and agreeable euery where, a man to be stoute, a woman fearefull, a servuant crafty, a young man gentle.

13. Matters which are common may be handled by a Poet as they may be thought propper to himselfe alone. All matters of themselues are open to be intreated of by any man: but if a thing be handled of some one in such sort, as he thereby obtaigne great prayfe, he maketh it his owne or propper to himselfe, as many did write of the Troiane war, but yet Homer made matter which was common to all, propper to himselfe.

14. Where many things are to be taken out of auncientef tongues, as the Latines tooke much out of the Greekes, the wordes are not fo precifelie to be followed, but that they bee altered according to the iudg-
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ment and will of the Imitator, which precept is borrowed of Tully, *Non verbum verbo necesse est reddere.*

15. The beginning must not be foolishly handled, that is, straungly or too long.

16. The proposition or narration let it not be far fetched or unlikely, and in the same forget not the differences of ages and persons.

17. In a Comedie it is needfull to exhibite all the actions openlie, as such as are cruell, vnhoneft, or ougly, but such things may better bee declared by some meete and handfome wordes, after what forte they are supposed to bee doone.

18. If a Commedye haue more Actes then fiue, it is tedious, if fewer, it is not sufficient.

It fytte not to bring in the perfonne of Gods, but in verie great matters. Cicero fayth, when the Tragedy wryters cannot bring theyr matters to good paffe, they runne to God. Let not more perfonne speake together then foure for auoyding confusion.

The Chori must be well garnished and fette foorth: wherein eyther menne are admoniflied, or reprehended, or counfayled vnto vertue. Such matter must bee chofen for the Chorus, as may bee meete and agreeable to that which is in hand. As for instrumnts and finging, they are Reliques of olde simplicitye. For the Muficke commonly vfed at Theaters and the licenciousness of theyr fonges, which together wyth theyr wealth increafed among the Romaines, is hurtfull to diicipline and good manners.

19. In a Satyr the clownifh company and rurall Gods, are brought in to temperate the Heauinesse of Tragedies, wyth fome myrth and paftyme. In iefting it must be obierued that it bee not lacyuous or Rybaldlike, or flaunderous, which precept holdeth generallie in all fortes of wrytynges.

In a Satyr greate heede is to be taken, of the place, of the day, and of the perfonne: as of Bacchus, Silenus, or the Satyres. Againe of the vnmeetness or inconuenience of the matter, and of the wordes that they be
fitted according to the persons: of Decurum, that he which represented some noble personage in the Tragedie, bee not some busy foole in the Satyr: finallie of the hearers, leaff they bee offended by myxing filthy matters with jestes, wanton toyes wyth vnhonest, or noyfome with merry things.

20. The feete are to be applied proper to euerie kinde of verfe, and therin a Poet muft not use too much licence or boldnes. The auncient writers in Iambick verses vfed at firste pure Iambicks: Afterwards Spondeus was admitted into Locos impares, but at laft such was the licentious cuftome, that they woulde both Spondeus where they lifted, and other feete without regarde.

21. In compilling of verses great care and circumfeption muft be vfed.

Those verses which be made Extempore, are of no great estimation: those which are vnartificiall, are utterly repelled as too foolifh. Though many doo lightlie regard our verses, yet ought the Carelessness of the hearers to bee no caufe in vs of error and negligence. Who defireth to make any thing worthy to be heard of learned eares, let hym reade Greeke Authors heedefullie and continually.

22. Artes haue their increasinges euen as other things, beeing naturall, so haue Tragedies which were first rudely inuented by Thespis, at laft were much adorned by Æschylus: at the first they were practised in Villages of the Countrey, afterwardes brought to stages in great Citties.

23. Some Artes doo increafe, some doo decay by a certayne naturall course. The olde manner of Comedies decayde, by reafon of flaundering which therein they vfed againft many, for which there was a penaltie appointed, leaft their bitternes should procede too farre: In place of which among the Latines came the Satyres.

The auncient Authors of Comedies, were Eupolis, Cratinus, and Aristophanes, of the middle forte Plato
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Comicus, of the last kinde Menander, which continued and was accounted the most famous.

24. A Poet shoulde not content himselfe onely with others inventions, but himselfe also by ye example of old wryters sholde bring something of his owne industry, which may bee laudable. So did they which writte among the Latines the Comedies called Togate, whose arguments were taken from ye Greekes, and the other which wrytt the Prætextate, whereof the arguments were Latine.

25. Heedefulnesse and good composition maketh a perfecte verfe, and that which is not so may be reprehended. The faculty of a goode witte exceedeth Arte.

26. A Poet that he may be perfect, hath neede to haue knowledge of that part of Philofophy which informeth ye life to good manners. The other which pertaineth to naturall things, is leffe plausible, hath fewer ornaments, and is not so profitable.

27. A Poet to the knowledge of Philoſophie shoulde alfo add greater experience, that he may know the fashions of men and dispositions of people. Thys profit is gott by travelling, that whatsoeuer he wryteth he may fo exprefse and order it, that hys narration may be formable.

28. The ende of Poetry is to wryte pleafant things, and profitable. Pleafant it is which delighteth by beeing not too long, or vneafy to be kept in memory, and which is somewhat likelie, and not altogether forged. Profitable it is, which flyrreth vppe the mindes to learning and wifedome.

29. Certaine escapes are to be pardoned in some Poets, fpecially in great workes. A faulte may bee committed either in reſpect of hys proper Arte, or in some other Arte: that a Poet shoulde erre in precepts of hys owne arte, is a shamefull thing, to comitte a faulte in another Arte is to be borne withal: as in Virgil, who fayneth that Aeneas comming into Affrica flew with hys darte certaine Stagges, whereas
indeede Affrica hath in it none of those beastes. Such errors do happen eyther by vnheedfulness, when one escapeth them by negligence: or by the common fragility of man, because none there is which can know all thinges. Therefore this last kinde of errour is not to be flucke vppon.

30. A good Poet should have respect to thys, how to retaine hys Reader or hearer. In a picture some thing delighteth beeing sette farre of, something nearer, but a Poet should delight in all places as well in funne as shaddowe.

31. In a Poet is no meane to be admitted, which if hee bee not he of all is the worst of all.

32. A Poeme if it runne not sweetely and smoothenly is odious: which is proued by a simile of the two fenfes, hearing and taiting, as in sweete and pleauant meates. And the Poem must bee of that forte, that for the sweetenesse of it may bee acceptable and contiune like it felde vnto the ende, leafl it wearye or drue away a Reader.

33. He that would wryte any thing worthy the potteritye, let him not enterprisfe any thing wherevnto his nature is not agreeable. Mercury is not made of wood (as they say) neyther doth Minerva favoure all studies in every one. In all Artes nature is the best helpe, and learned men vfe commonly to say that A Poet is as well borne as made a Poet.

34. Let no man esteeme himselfe fo learned, but that he may submytte hys wrytynge to the iudgments of others, and correct and throughly amend the same himself.

35. The profitte of Poetry sprang thus, for that the auncient wyfe men set downe the best thinges that pertained to mans life, manners, or felicity, and examining and proouing the same by long experience of time, when they are aged they published them in wrytynge. The vse of Poetry what it was at the first, is manifest by the examples of the moste learned men: as of Orpheus who first builded houses: of Amphion who
made Citties, of Tyrtaeus who firft made warre: of Homer, who wryt moft wyfely.

36. In an artificiall Poet three things are requisite, nature, Arte, and dilligence.

37. A wryter muft learne of the learned, and he muft not flicke to confesse when he erreth: that the worfe he may learne to auoyde, and knowe howe to follow the better.

The confeflion of an errour betoken a noble and a gentle minde. Celfus and Quintillian doo report of Hippocrates, that leaft he fliould deceiue his posterity, he confessed certayne errours, as it well became an excellent minded man, and one of great credite. For (as fayth Celfus) light witts because they haue nothing, wyll haue nothing taken from them.

38. In making choife of fuch freendes as should tell vs the trueth,' and correct our wrytinges, heedefull judgment muft bee vfed: leaft eyther we choose vn-\*skylfull folke, or flatterers, or diftemblers. The vn\*skilfull know not how to iudge, flatterers feare to offende, diftemblers in not praying doo feeme to commende.

39. Let no man deceiue himfelfe, or suffer himfelfe to be deceiued, but take fome graue learned man to be iudge of his dooing, and let him according to hys counfayle change and put out what hee thinketh good.

40. He which will not flatter and is of ability to iudge, let him endeuour to nothing fo much, as to the correction of that which is wrytten, and that let be doone with earneft and exquifite judgment. He which dooth not thus, but offendeth wilfully in breaking his credite too rathly, may be counted for a madde, furious, and franticke foole.

41. The faultes commonly in verfes are feauen, as either they be deftitute of Arte, of facility, or ornament: or els, they be superfluous, obscure, ambicious, or needeleffe.
Out of the Epistles ad Mecænatem, Augustum, et Florum.

42. An imitation should not be too sanguine or superfluous, as though one durst not vary one jotte from the example: neyther should it be so sencelesse or vnskilfull, as to imitate things which are absurde, and not to be followed.

43. One should not altogether tred in the steppes of others, but sometime he may enter into such wayes as have not beene haunted or vfed of others. Horace borrowed ye Iambick verse of Archilocus, expressing fully his numbers and elegant[y], but his vnseemely wordes and pratling tauntes hee moste wyshlye shunned.

44. In our verfes we should not gape after the phrafes of the simpler forte, but streue to have our writings allowable in the jugments of learned menne.

45. The common peoples jugments of Poets is seldome true, and therefore not to be sought after. The vulgar fort in Rome judged Pacuious to be very learned, Accius to bee a graue wryter, that Affranius followed Menander, Plautus, Epicharmus: that Terence excelled in Arte Ceælius in grauity: but the learned forte were not of this opinion. There is extant in Macrobius (I knowe not whether Angellius) the like verdite concerning them which wryt Epigrammes. That Catullus and Caluus wrytt fewe things that were good, Nœnius obscure, Hortensius vncomely, Cynna vnpleafant, and Memmius rough.

46. The olde wryters are so farre to be commended, as nothing be taken from the newe: neyther may we thinke but that the way lyeth open styll to others to
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attaine to as great matters. Full well sayd Sidonius to Eucherius, I reuerence the olde wryters, yet not so as though I leffe esteemed the vertues and defertes of the wryters in this age.

47. Newnes is gratefull if it be learned: for certaine it is, Artes are not bothe begunne and perfected at once, but are increasde by time and studie. which notwithstanding when they are at the full perfection, doo debate and decrease againe.

Cic. de orat. There is nothing in the world which burfteth out all at once, and commeth to light all wholly together.

48. No man shoulde dare to practife an Arte that is daungerous, espeçially before he haue learned the fame perfectly: fo doo guyders of Shyppes: fo doo Phifitions: but fo did not manie Romaine Poets (yea fo doo not too many English wryters) who in a certaine corragious heate gaped after glory by wryting verfes, but fewe of them obtayned it.

49. A Poet shoulde be no leffe skylfull in dealing with the affectes of the mynde, then a tumbler or a Luggler shoulde bee ready in his Arte. And with such pyth shoulde he sette foorth hys matters, that a Reader shoulde feeme not onely to heare the thing, but to fee and be preuent at the dooing thereof. Which faculty Fabius calleth ἵποτασία and Ariftole πρὸ ομματόν θεσιν ἰ' ποίησις.

50. Poets are either such as desiere to be liked of on flages, as Commedie and Tragedie wryters: or such as woulde bee regestr'd in Libraries. Tho se on flages haue spesiall respect to the motions of the minde, that they may flirre bothe the eyes and eares of their beholders. But the other which seeke to pleafe priuately with[in] the walles, take good aduisment in their workes, that they may safify the exact iudgments of learned men in their studie.

51. A Poet shoulde not bee too importunate, as to offende in vnseasonable speeches: or vngentle, as to contemne the admonitions of others: or ambicious, as
English Poetrie.

to thinke too well of his owne dooinges: or too wayward, as to thinke, reward enough cannot be gyuen him for his deferte, or finally too proude, as to deifyre to be honoured above measure.

52. The emendations of Poemes be very necessary, that in the obscure poyntes many thinges may be enlightened, in the bafer partes many thinges may be throughly garnished. Hee may take away and put out all vnpropper and vnfeemely words, he may with discretion immitate the auncient wryters, he may abridge thinges that are too lofty, mitigate thynges that are too rough, and may vfe all remedies of speeche throughout the whole worke. The thinges which are scarce feemely, he may amende by Arte and methode.

53. Let a Poet firft take vppon him, as though he were to play but an Actors part, as he may bee esteemed like one which wryteth without regarde, neyther let him to pollifh his works, but that every one for the baenesse thereof, may think to make as good. Hee may likewyfe exercife the part of geflurer, as though he seemed to meddle in rude and common matters, and yet not so deale in them, as ift were for variety fake, nor as though he had laboured them thoroughly but tryfled with them, nor as though he had sweat for them, but practifed a little. For fo to hyde ones cunning, that nothing should seeme to bee laborfome or exquifite, when notwithstanding, euery part is pollifhed with care and fludie, is a speicall gyft which Aristotle calleth χρηστης.

54. It is onely a poyn of wyfedome, to vfe many and choyfe elegant words, but to vnderstand also and to set foorth thinges which pertaine to the happy ende of mans life. Wherevppon the Poet Horace, calleth the Arte poetical, without the knowledge of learning and philosophy, a prating vanity. Therfore a good and allowable Poet, must be adourned with wordes, plentious in sentences, and if not equall to an Orator, yet very neere him, and a speical louver of learned men.

FINIS.
Epilogus.

His small trauell (courteous Reader),
I defire thee take in good worth: which I haue compiled, not as an exquisit e cenfure concerning this matter, but (as thou mayft well perceiue, and) in trueth to that onely ende that it might be an occasion, to haue the fame throughly and with greater discretion, taken in hande and laboured by some other of greater ability: of whom I knowe there be many among the famous Poets in London, who bothe for learning and leyfure, may handle this Argument far more pythilie then my selfe. Which if any of them wyll vouchsafe to doo, I trufl wee shal haue English Poetry at a higher price in short space: and the rabble of balde Rymes shall be turned to famous workes, comparable (I fuppofe) with the beft workes of Poetry in other tongues. In the meane time, if my poore fkill, can fette the fame any thing forward, I wyll not ceafe to pradlife the fame towards the framing of some apt English Prosodia: fluell hoping, and hartelie wishing to enioy first the benefitte of some others judgment, whose authority may beare greater credite, and whose learning can better perforne it.

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