

English Reprints.

WILLIAM WEBBE, GRADUATE.

A DISCOURSE OF ENGLISH POETRIE. 1586.

CAREFULLY EDITED BY
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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 *Athenæ Cantabrigiensis*, ii. 12. Ed. 1861, 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 be 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 1568, and being evidently acquainted with Gabriel Harvey and Spenser (who left Cambridge in 1578), 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., Rod. Staff; Hen. Nolwell 9; G. All; Ch. Hafton ?; and R. Wilmot: 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 'Dodsley's Old Plays,' i. 153, 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.**

1582. Nov. 28. Gabriel Poyntz presented Robert Wilmott, clerk to the Rector of North Okendon, Essex: 18 miles from London. *Newcourt Repertorium*, ii. 447. Ed. 1710.

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 1563 at Whitehall by James I, before his coronation: and died in June 1610. Of his two sons, Edward died without issue; Thomas, b. 1573, 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. P[hilipot] Knts. *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 16.

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.

1586. Of 'the pregnant ympes 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. Waller

John Charlewood, Rd. of them, for printinge A Discourse oⁿ englishe poetyre

g. P. Collier, Extr. of Stat. Cō's Rēgrs. ii., 215. Ed. 1649.

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

1588. Warton quotes "a small black-lettered tract entitled *The Touch-stone of Wittes*, chiefly compiled, with some slender additions, from William Webbe's *Discourse of English Poetrie*, written by Edward Hake, and printed at London by Edmund Bellifant." p. 804. Ed. 1870.

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 Pirgo, 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. 722. Ed. 1673. 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 intreitor, I wil beg no longer, and for your promises, I wil refuse them as bad paiment: 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 cal them, but as I esteem them, a most exquisite inuention) of *Gismunds Tragedie*. Thinke not to shift me off with longer delayes, nor alledge more excuses to get further respite, least I arrest you with my *Actum est*, and commence such a Suite of vrkindenesse against you, as when the case shall be scand before the Judges of courtesie, the court will crie out of your immoderat modestie. And thus much I tel you before, you shal not be able to wage against me in the charges growing vpon this action, especially, if the worshipful company of the Inner temple gentlemen patronize my cause, as vndoubtedly they wil, yea, and rather plead partially for me then let my cause miscary, because themselves are parties. The tragedie was by them most pitifully framed, and no lesse curiously acted in view of her Maiesty, by whom it was thea as princely accepted, as of the whole honorable audience notably applauded: yea, and of al men generally desired, as a work, either in statelines of shew, depth of coecit, or true ornaments of poeticall arte, inferior to none of the best in that kinde: nn, 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 vnguarded, or perhaps let it run abroade (as many parents doe their children once past dandling) not respecting so much what hard fortune might befall it being out of their fingers, as bow their heroical wits might againe be quickly conceited with new inuentions of like worthines, wherof they haue been euer since wonderfull fertill. But this orphan of theirs (for he wandreth as it were fatherlesse,) hath notwithstanding, by the rare and bewtiful perfections appearing in him, hetherto neuer wanted great

fauourers, and louing preseruers. Among whom I cannot sufficiently commend your more then charitable zeale, and scholericall compassion towards him, that have not only rescued and defended him from the devouring iawes of oblivion, but vouchsafed also to apparrel him in a new suite at your own charges, wherein he may again more boldly come abroad, and by your permission retурне to his olde parents, clothed perhaps not in richer or more costly furniture than it went from them, but in handsonnes and fashion more answerable 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 adorning him with the approued guise of our stateliest Englishe termes (not diminishing, but augmenting his artificiall colours of absolute poesie, derived from his first parents) cannot but bee grateful to most mens appetites, who vpon our experience we know hightly to esteem such lofty measures of sententiously composed Tragedies.

How much you shal make me, and the rest of your priuate frends beholding vnto 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 wilfullly to defraud your selfe of an vniuersall 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 bashfynnesse, hoping to read it in print (which lately lay neglected amongst your papers) at our next appoyned meeting.

I bid you heartely farewell. From Pyrgo in Essex, August the eight, 1591. *Tuus fide et facultate.* GUIL. 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 Pyrgo. 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 indured 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 *Tancred's* Tragedy should be again by my means revised, which the oftnier I read over, and the more I considered thereon, the sooner I was won to consent thereto: calling to mind that neither the thrice reverend and learned father, M. Biza, 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 *Ieptha*." *Dodskes 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. Webbe than the above letter, has yet been recovered.

CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH AUTHORS REFERRED TO IN THE FOLLOWING Discourse.

R. ASCHAM.	<i>The Scholemaster</i> ,	31, 57
G. B.	? <i>The Shipp of Safeguarde</i> , 1569	35
F. C.	?	35
T. CHURCHYARD.	<i>Churchyard's Chippes</i> , 1575; <i>Church-</i> <i>yard's Chance</i> , 1580; <i>Churchyard's Charge</i> , 1580; &c.	33
M. D. [? Maister Dyer, i.e., Sir Edward Dyer]	33	
? DARRELL	?	35

R. EDWARDES. <i>Par. of Dainty Devises</i> , 1576; <i>Comedies</i>	33
Sir T. ELYOT. <i>The Governor</i> , 1538	42, 43
G. GASCOIGNE. <i>Posies</i> , 1572; <i>The Steele Glas</i> , &c., 1576	33
B. GOOGE. <i>Eglogs</i> , <i>Epytaphes</i> , and <i>Sonettes</i> , 1563; translation of <i>Palingenius</i> ' <i>Zodiac of Life</i> , 1560, 1565.	34
Sir J. GRANGE. <i>The Golden Aphroditis</i> , 1577	35
G. HARVEY.	35
HEIWOOD [either JOHN HEYWOOD or JASPER HEYWOOD]	33
W. HUNNIS. <i>Paradise of Dainty Devises</i> , 1576, 1578	33
? HYLL?	33
E. K. [i.e. EDWARD KIRKE]	33, 53
F. K. [? Fr. Kindlemarsh] <i>Par. of Dainty Devises</i> , 1576, 1578	35
J. LYL. <i>Euphues</i> , 1579-80; <i>Plays</i>	46
A. MUNDAY. <i>The Mirour of Mutabilitie</i> , 1579; <i>The Paine of Pleasure</i> , 1580	35
T. NORTON. Joint Author of <i>Ferrex and Porrex</i> , 1561	33
C. OCKLANDE. <i>Anglorum Prælia</i> , 1580, 1582	30
[? DR. E.] SAND[VS]. <i>Par. of Dainty Devises</i> , 1576, &c.	33
E. SPENSER. <i>Shepheards Calender</i> , 1579, 1581, 1586	35, 52, 81
HENRY, Earl of SURREY. <i>Sonnets</i> , &c., in Tottel's <i>Misc.</i> 1557	33
T. TUSSER. <i>Five hundred points of Good Husbandrie</i> , 1557-80	33
THOMAS, Lord VAUX. <i>Sonnates</i> , &c., in Tottel's <i>Misc.</i> 1557; and <i>Par. of Dainty Devises</i> , 1576	33
E. VERE, Earl of OXFORD. Unpublished <i>Sonnets</i> .	33
G. WHETSTONE. <i>The Rocke of Regard</i> , 1576	35
R. WILMOTT. <i>Tancred and Gismond</i> , 1568	35
S. Y. [? M. YLOOP, i.e. M. POOLY in <i>Par. of Dainty Devises</i>]	35

THE TRANSLATORS.

SENECA.

J. HEYWOOD. <i>Troas</i> , 1559; <i>Thyestes</i> , 1560; <i>Hercules Furens</i> , 1561	34
A. NEVILL. <i>Oedipus</i> , 1563	34
J. STUDLEY. <i>Medea</i> , 1566; <i>Agamemnon</i> , 1566	34

OVID.

G. TURBERVILLE. <i>Heroical Epistles</i> , 1567	34
A. GOLDING. <i>Metamorphoses</i> , 1565	34, 51
T. CHURCHYARD. <i>Tristia</i> , 1578	34
T. DRANT. <i>Satires</i> , 1566; <i>Art of Poetrie</i> , 1567	34

VIRGIL.

HENRY, Earl of SURREY. <i>Two Books of the 'Aeneid'</i> , 1557	33
T. PHAER, M.D. <i>9th Books of the 'Aeneid'</i> , 1558-1562	33, 46-51
T. TWYNE. <i>The remaining 2nd Books</i> , 1573	34
A. FLEMING. <i>Bucolicks</i> , 1575, in rhyme. His <i>Georgics</i> referred to at p. 55 appeared in 1589	34, 55

A Discourse of English Poetrie

INTRODUCTION.

APart 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-

vppe some other of meete abilitie, to bestowe 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 Poesie*: which is the largest and ablest criticism of English Poesy that appeared in print, during the reign of Elizabeth.

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. 1856, 10s. 6d.,
to Mr. Pearson.
1778. APR. 22. Mr. Pearson's sale, No. 1888, £3, 5s.,
to Mr. Stevens.
1800. MAY 19. Mr. Stevens' sale, No. 1128, £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.

2. 1870. DEC. 1. London. *English Reprints*: see title at
1 vol. 8vo. p. 1.

II.—With other works.

2. 1815. London. *Ancient Critical Essays*. Ed. by J. Hafle-
wood. *A Discourse of English Poetrie* oc-
cupies Vol. ii., pp. 13-95.

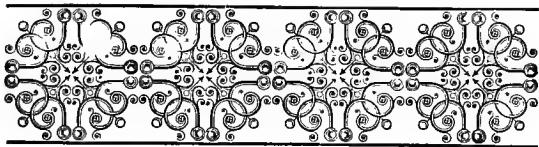
A Discourse of Eng-
lish Poetrie.

Together, with the Authors
judgment, touching the re-
formation of our Eng-
lish Verse.

By *WWilliam VVebbe*
Graduate.



Imprinted at London,
by John Charlewood for
Robert VValley
1586.



To the right vvorship-
full, learned, and most gentle Gentle-
man, my verie good Master, Ma.

Edward Suliard, Esquire. VV. VV.

wysheth his harts desire.

(. . .)



Ay it please you Syr, thys once
more to beare with my rudenes, in
presenting vnto your viewe, an other
slender conceite, of my simple capa-
city: wherin although I am not able
to bring you anie thing, which is
meete to detaine you from your more serious matters:
yet vpon my knowledge of your former courtesy and
your fauourable countenaunce towardes all enterprisces
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 deserue.

The Epistle.

The firme hope of your wonted gentlenes, not any good lyking of myne owne labour, made me thus presumptuously to craue your worships patronage for my poore booke. A pretty aunsware is reported by some to be made by Appelles to King Alexander, who (in disport) taking vp one of his pensilles to drawe a line, and asking the Paynters iudgment of his draught, It is doone (quoth Apelles) like a King: meaning indeede it was drawen as he pleased, but was nothing leſſe then good workmanshipe. My ſelfe in like ſort, taking vpon me, to make a draught of English Poetry, and requeſting your worſhyps censure of the fame, you wyll perhaps gyue me thys verdict, It was doone like a Scholler, meaning, as I could, but indeede more like to a learner, then one through grounded in Poeticall 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 Poeticall diſcourſe, make it ſome where to ſtraight (leauing out the cheſe coloures and ornaments of Poetry) in an other place to wyde (ſtuffing in peeces little pertinent to true Poetry) as one neuer acquainted wyth the learned Mufes. What then? as he being a king, myght meddle in what Scyence him liſted, though therein hee had no ſkyll: ſo I beeing a learner, wyll trye my cunning in ſome parts of Learning, though neuer ſo ſimple.

Nowe, as for my ſaucie preffing vpon your expected ſauor in crauing your iudgment, I beſeech you let me

make thys excuse: that whereas true Gentilitie did never withdrawe her louing affection from Lady Learning, so I am perswaded, that your worshyppe cannot chuse, but continue your wonted fauourable benignitie towardes all the indeuourers to learning, of which corporation I doo indeede professe my selfe one fillie member.

For sith the wryters of all ages, haue sought as an vndoubted Bulwarke and stedfast sauegarde the patronage of Nobilitye, (a Shielde as sure as can be to learning) wherin to shrowde and safelye place their feuerall inuentiones: why should not I feeke fome harbour for my poore trauell to reste and staye vppon, beeing of it selfe vnable to shyft the carping cauilles and byting scornes of lewde controllers?

And in trueth, where myght I rather choose a sure defence and readye refuge for the same, then where I see perfecte Gentilitye, and noblenesse of minde, to be faste lynched with excellencie of learning and affable courtesye? Moreover, adde thys to the ende of myne excuse: that I fende it into your sight, not as anie wytie peece of worke that may delight you: but being a sleight somewhat compyled for recreation, in the intermyssions of my daylie businesse, (euen thys Summer Eueninges) as a token of that earnest and unquenchable desyre I haue to shewe my selfe auetifull and welwylling towardes you. VVhereunto I am continually enflamed more and more, when I consider eyther your fauourable freendshyppe vsed towardes

The Epistle.

*my selfe, or your gentle countenaunce shewed to my simple
trauelles. The one I haue tryed in that homely transla-
tion I prefentedy unto you: the other I finde true in your
curteous putting to my trust, and dooing me so great
honesty and credite, with the charge of these toward
young Gentlemen your sonnes.*

*To which pregnant ympes of right excellent hope, I
would I were able, or you myght haue occasion to make
triall of my louing minde: who shoulde well perceyue my
selfe to remayne vnto them a faythfull and trusty Achates,
euen so farre as my wealth my woe, my power or perrill,
my penne or witte, my health or lyfe may serue to serche
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 haue euer
deserued, then to runne in suspicione of fawning flattery
which I euer abhorred.*

*Therefore once againe crauing your gentle pardon,
and patience in your ouerlooking thys rude
Episyle: and wyshing more happineſſe then
my penne can exprefſe to you and your
whole retinewe, I rest.*

(. . .)

Your worshyppes faithfull

Seruant. VV. VV.

20 A Preface to the nob
Poets of Englande.



Mong the innumerable fortess
lyshe Bookes, and infinite fai
printed pamphlets, wherewit
Countrey is pestered, all f
fluffed, and euery study fur
the greatest part I thinke
one kinde, are fuch as are
meere Poeticall, or which tende in some respe
either in matter or forme) to Poetry. Of fuch
therfore, fith I haue beene one, that haue
desire to reade not the fewest, and because i
argument, which men of great learning haue
ture to handle, or at leaft hauing to doo with
serious matters doo leaft regarde: If I write som
concerning what I thinke of our English Poets,
uenture to fette downe my simble iudgement of]
Poetrie, I trust the learned Poets will giue me
and vouchsafe my Booke paſſage, as beeing i
rudenesse thereof no preuidice to their noble i
but euen (as my intent is) an *inſtar cotis* to stirr
ſome other of meete abilitie, to beſtowe trauell
matter: whereby I thinke wee may not onelie
meanes which wee yet want, to diſcern between
writers and badde, but perhaſpſe alſo challeg
the rude multitude of rusticall Rymers, who
called Poets, the right practife and orderly co
true Poetry.

manie, that where as all kinde of good learning, haue aspyred 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 errors, and pollished from barbarousnes, by men of great authoritie and iudgement: onelie Poetrie hath founde fewest frends to amende it, those that can, refering theyr skyll to themselues, those that cannot, running headlong vpon it, thinking to garnish it with their deuises, but more corrupting it with fantasticall errors. VVhat shoulde be the cause, that our English speeche in some of the wyllest mens iudgements, hath neuer attained to anie sufficient ripenes, nay not ful auoided the reproch of barbarousnes in Poetry? the rudenes of the Countrey, or basenesse of wytts: or the course *Dialect* of the speeche? experience vtterlie disproueth it to be anie of these: what then? surelie the canckred enmitie of curious custome: which as it neuer was great freend to any good learning, so in this hath it grounded in the most, such a negligent perfwasion of an impossibilitie in matching the best, that the finest witts and most diuine heade, haue contented themselues with a base kinde of fingering: rather debasing theyr faculties, in setting forth theyr skyll in the coursest manner, then for breaking custome, they would labour to adorne their Countrey and aduaunce their style with the highest and most learnedst toppe of true Poetry. The rudenes or vnaptnesse of our Countrey to be either none or no hinderaunce, if reformation were made accordinglie, the exquifite excellency in all kindes of good learning nowe flourishing among vs, inferiour to none other nation, may sufficiently declare.

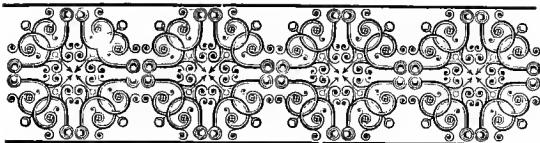
That there be as sharpe and quicke wittes in England as euer were among the peereleffe Grecians, or renommed Romaines, it were a note of no witte at all in me to deny. And is our speeche so course, or our phrase so harshe, that Poetry cannot therein finde a vayne whereby it may appeare like it selfe? why should we think so baselye 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 descent: so no doubt, as Eloquence hath founde such fauoures, in the English tongue, as she frequenteth not any more gladly: so would Poetrye if there were the like welcome and entertainement 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 iudgement, 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 confult one halfe howre with their heauenly Muse, what credite they might winne to theyr native speeche, what enormities they might wipe out of English Poetry, what a fitte vaine they might frequent, wherein to shewe forth their worthie faculties: if English Poetrie were truely reformed, and some perfect platorme or *Profodia* of versifying were by them ratifyed and fette downe: eyther in immitation of Greekes and Latines, or where it would skant abyde the touch of theyr Rules, the like obseruations selected and establisched by the naturall affectation of the speeche. Thus much I say, not to perfwade you that

The Preface.

are the fauourers of Englishe Poetry but to mooue it to you: beeing not the firste that haue thought vpon this matter, but one that by cōsent of others, haue taken vpon me to lay it once again in your wayes, if perhaps you may stumble vpon it, and chance to looke so lowe from your diuine cogitations, when your Mufe mounteth to the starres, and ransacketh the Spheres of heauen: whereby perhaps you may take compasssion of noble Poetry, pittifullie mangled and defaced, by rude fmatterers and barbarous immitatours of your worthy studiess. If the motion bee worthy your regard it is enough to mooue it, if not, my wordes woulde fimply preuaile in perfwading you, and therefore I rest vpon thys onely request, that of your courtesies, you wyll graunt passage, vnder your fauourable corrections, for this my fimple censure 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 whiche I haue fisted out of my
weake brayne concerning thys
reformed verifying.

VV: VV:



A Discourse of English Poetrie.



Intending to write some discourse of English Poetrie, I thinke it not amyssif I speake something 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 sorts of people. Poetrie called in Greeke *ποετρια*, beeing derived 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 vfed of the best of our English Poets, to exprefse ye very faculty of speaking or wryting Poetically, so doth it in deede containe most fitly the whole grace and property of the same, 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 wythin the compasse of Arte) though I neede not stande long to prooue, both the witnes of *Horace*, who wrote *de arte Poetica*, and of *Terence*, who calleth it *Artem Musicanam*, and the very naturall property thereof may sufficently declare: The beginning of it as appeareth by *Plato*, was of a vertuous and most deuout purpose,

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who witneffeth, 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 euery fift yeere, there, they that were most pregnant in wyt, and indued 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 prayse of some noble vertue, or of immortalitie, or of some such thing of greatest estimation: which vnto them seemed; so heauenly and ioyous a thing, that, thinking such men to be inspyrde 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 stroake of some of the pleasankest kind of Musicke, then began there to grow a distinction and great diuersity betweene makers and makers. Whereby (I take it) beganne thys difference: that they which handled in the audience of the people, graue and necessary matters, were called wise men or eloquent men, which they meant by *Vates*: and the rest which sange of loue matters, or other lighter deuises alluring vnto pleasure and delight, were called *Poetæ* 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 pleasant harmonie called *Piθeos*, which is an apt composition of wordes or clauses, drawing as it were by force ye hearers eares euen whether soever it lyfeth: that *Plato* affirmeth therein to be contained *λογτρεῖα* an inchauntment, as it were to perfwade them anie thing whether they would or no. And heerehence is fayde, that men were first withdrawne from a wylde and fauadge kinde of life, to ciuillity and gentlenes, and ye right knowledge of humanity by the force of this measurable or tunable speaking.

This opinion shall you finde confirmed throughout

the whole workes of *Plato* and *Aristotle*. And that such was the estimation of this Poetry at those times, that they supposed all wisedome and knowledge to be included mystically in that diuine instinctiō, wherewith they thought their *Vates* to bee inspyred. Whereupon, throughout the noble workes of those most excellent Philosophers before named, are the authorities of Poets very often alledged. And *Cicerio* in his *Tusculane* queſtions is of that minde, that a Poet cannot exprefſe verfes abundantly, ſufficiently, and fully, neither his eloquence can flowe pleaſantly, or his wordes founde well and plenteouſly, without celeſtiall instinctiō: which Poets themſelues doo very often and gladlie witnes of themſelues, as namely *Ouid* in. 6. *Faſto*: *Est deus in nobis Agitante calleſcimus illo*. etc. Whereunto I doubt not equally to adioyne the authoritye of our late famous English Poet, who wrote the *Shep-heards Calender*, where lamenting the decay of Poetry, at theſe dayes, faith moft sweetely to the fame.

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

Whofe fine poeticall witt, and moft exquifite learning, as he shewed abundantly in that piece of worke, in my judgment inferior to the workes neither of *Theocritus* in Greece, nor *Virgill* in Latine, whom hee narrowly immitateth: fo I nothing doubt, but if his other workes were common abroade, which are as I thinke in ye clofe custodie of certaine his freends, we ſhould haue of our owne Poets, whom wee might matche in all respects with the beſt. And among all other his workes whatſoever, I would wyſh to haue the fight of hys *English Poet*, which his freend *E. K.* did once promife to publifhe, which whether he performed or not, I knowe not, if he did, my happe hath not beene fo good as yet to ſee it.

But to returne to the estimation of Poetry. Befides ye great and profitable fruites contained in Poetry, for

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the instruction of manners and precepts of good life (for that was cheefly respected in the first age of Poetry) this is also added to the eternall commendations of that noble faculty: that Kinges and Princes, great and famous men, did euer 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 employtes and vertuous exercizes, or perpetually infamous for their vicious liues. Wherevpon 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 heauenly verfe of *Homer*. And as *Tully* recordeth to be written of *Alexander*, that with natural teares he wept ouer *Achilles* Tombe, in ioy that he conceiued at the consideration, howe it was his happ to be honoured wyth so diuine a worke, as *Homer's* was. *Aristotle*, a most 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 fuch wonderfull delight in the same when hee came to maturity, that hee would not onely haue it with him in all his iourneyes, but in his bedde also vnder his pyllowe, to delight him and teache him both nights and dayes. The same is reported of noble *Scipio*, who finding the two Bookes of *Homer* in the spoyle of Kyng *Darus*, esteemed them as wonderfull precious Iewelles, making one of them his companion for the night, the other for the day. And not onely was he thus affected to yat one peece or parte of Poetry, but so generally he loued the profefors thereof, that in his most ferious affayres, and hottest warres against *Numantia* and *Carthage* he could no whitte be without that olde Poet *Ennius* in his company. But to speake of all those noble and wyfe Princes, who bare speciall fauour 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 vse of Poetry, and wherin it rightly confisted, and whereof consequently it obteyned such estimation.

To begin therefore with the first that was first worthelye memorable in the excellent gyft of Poetrye, the best wryters agree that it was *Orpheus*, who by the sweete gyft of his heauenly Poetry, withdrew men from raungyng vncertainly, and wandring brutifly about, and made them gather together, and keepe company, made houſes, and kept fellowshippe together, who therefore is reported (as *Horace* sayth) to affwage the fiercenesse of Tygers, and mooue 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 *Tyrtæus*, who began to practise warlike defences, to keepe back enemies, and faine themſelues from iuasion of foes. In thyſ place I thinke were moſt conuenient to rehearſe that auncient Poet *Pyndarus*: but of the certayne time wherein he flouriſhed, I am not very certayne: but of the place where he continued moſte, it ſhoulde feeme to be the City of *Thebes*, by *Plinie* who reporteth, that *Alexander* in facking the ſame Cittie, woulde not ſuffer the houſe wherein he dwelt to be ſpoyle as all the reſt were. After theſe was *Homer*, who as it were in one fumme comprehended all knowledge, wifedome, learning, and pollicie, that was incident to the capacity of man. And who ſo liſte to take viewe of hys two Bookes, one of his *Iliades*, the other his *Odiſſea*, ſhall throughly perceiue what the right vſe of Poetry is: which indeeđe is to mingle profit with pleasure, and ſo to delight the Reader with pleasantnes of hys Arte, as in ye meane time, his mind may be well inſtructed with knowledge and wifedome. For ſo diđ that worthy Poet frame thoſe his two workeſ, that in reading the first, that is his *Iliadis*, by declaring and ſetting forth ſo liuely the Grecians affembly againſt

Troy, together with their proweffe and fortitude against their foes, a Prince shall learne not onely courage, and valiantnesse, but discretion alfo and pollicie to encounter with his enemies, yea a perfect forme of wyfe confultations, 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 practises, and perillous entrappinges of naughty perfons: and not onely this, but in what sort alfo he may deale to knowe and perceiue the affections of those which be neere vnto him, and most familiar with him, the better to put them in trust with his matters of waight and importaunce. Therefore I may boldly sette downe thys to be the truest, auncientest and best kinde of Poetry, to direct ones endeouour always to that marke, that with delight they may euermore adioyne commoditie to theire Readers: which because I grounde vpon *Homer* the Prince of all Poets, therefore haue I alledged the order of his worke, as an authority fufficently proouing this affeition.

Nowe what other Poets which followed him, and beene of greatest fame, haue doone for the moste parte in their feuall workes I wyll briefly, and as my flender ability wyll serue me declare. But by my leauie, I must content my selfe to speake not of all, but of such as my selfe haue seene, and beene best acquainted withall, and those not all nor the moste part of the auncient Grecians, of whom I know not how many there were, but these of the Latinists, which are of greatest fame and most obvios among vs.

Thus much I can say, that *Aristotle* reporteth none to haue greatly flourished in Greece, at least wyfe not left behynd them any notable memorall, 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 cheefest essence of Poetry, dyd always for the most part consist in delighting the readers or hearers wyth pleasure, so as the number of Poets increased, they stylly inclyned thys way rather then the other, so that most of them had speciall regarde, to the pleasantnesse of theyr fine conceytes, whereby they might drawe mens mindes into admiration of theyr inuention, more then they had to the profitte or commoditye that the Readers shoulde reape 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 seriuos matter: but for the same they wold likewise powre foorth as much of some wanton or laciuous inuention. Yet some of the auncientest sort of Grecians, as it feemeth were not so much disposed to vayne delectation: as *Aristotle* saith of *Empedocles*, that in hys iudgment he was onely a naturall Philosopher, no Poet at all, nor that he was like vnto *Homer* in any thing but hys 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 theyr 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 *Ariophernes*, but afterward the order of thys wryting Comedies was reformed and made more planable: then wrytte *Plato*, *Comicus*, *Menander*, and I knowe not who more.

There be many most profitable workes, of like antiquity, or rather before them, of the Tragedy writers: as of *Euripides*, and *Sophocles*, then was there *Phocides* and *Theagines*, with many other: which Tragedies had their inuention by one *Theopis*, and were pollisched and amended by *Aeschilus*. The profitte or discommoditie which aryseth by the vfe of these Comedies and Tragedies, which is most, hath beene long in controuerſie, and is fore vrged among vs at theſe dayes: what

I thinke of the fame, perhaps I shall breefely declare anon.

Nowe concerning the Poets which wrote in homely manner, as they pretended, but indeede, with great pythe and learned iudgment, fuch as were the wryters of Sheepeheards talke and of husbandly precepts, who were among the Grecians that excelled, besides *Theocritus* and *Hesiodus* I know not, of whom the first, what profitable workes he left to posterity, besides hys *Idillia* or contentions of Goteheards, tending most to delight, and pretty iuentiones, 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 Husbandry, but yet so as he myxed much wanton stiffe among the rest.

The first wryters of Poetry among the Latines, shoulde feeme to be thofe, which excelled in the framming of Commedies, and that they continued a long time without any notable memory of other Poëts. Among whom, the cheefest that we may fee or heare tell of, were these. *Ennius*, *Cæcilius*, *Næuius*, *Licinius*, *Attilius*, *Turpitius*, *Trabea*, *Luscius*, *Plautus*, and *Terens*. Of whom these two last named, haue beeene euer fince theyr time most famous, and to these dayes are esteemed, as greate helpes and furtherauances to the obtayning of good Letters. But heere cannot I staye to speake of the most 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 praiife, *Nescio quid magis nascitur Iliade*. Vnder the person of *Æneas* he expreffeth the valoure of a worthy Captaine and valiaunt Gouernour, together with the perillous aduentures of warre, and polliticke deuifes at all assayes. And as he immitateth *Homer* in that worke, so dooth he likewyse followe the very steps of *Theocritus*, in his most pythy iuentiones of his *Æglogues*: and likewyse *Hesiodus* in his *Georgicks* or bookees of

Husbandry, but yet more grauely, and in a more decent style. But notwithstanding hys sage grauity and wonderfull wisedome, dyd he not altogether restrayne his vayne, but that he would haue a cast at some wanton and skant comely an Argument, if indeede such trifles as be fathered vpon him were his owne. There followed after him, very many rare and excellent Poets, whereof the most part wrt light matters, as *Epigrammes* and *Elegies*, with much pleafant dalliance, among whom may be accounted *Propertius*, *Tibullus*, *Catullus*, with diuers whom *Ouid* speaketh of in diuers places of his workes. Then are there two Hystorical Poets, no lesse profitable then delightsome to bee read: *Silius* and *Lucanus*: the one declaring the valiant proweffe 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 *Cæsar*. The next in tyme (but as most men doo account, and so did he himselfe) the seconf in dignity, we will ad ioyne *Ouid*, a most learned, and exquisite Poet. The worke of greatest profitte which he wrote, was his Booke of *Metamorphosis*, which though it consisted of fayned Fables for the most part, and poeticall inuentions, yet beeing moralized according to his meaning, and the trueth of euery tale beeing discouered, it is a worke of exceeding wyfedome and sounde iudgment. If one lyft in like manner, to haue knowledge and perfect intelligence of those rytes and ceremonies which were obserued after the Religion of the Heathen, no more profitable worke for that purpofe, then his bookes *De fastis*. The rest of his dooinges, though they tende to the vayne delights of loue and dalliaunce (except his *Tristibus* wherein he bewayleth hys exile) yet furely are mixed with much good counfayle and profitable lessons 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 inferior to none, and one to whom

all the reft both before his time and since, are very much beholding. About the same time *Iuuenall* and *Perfius*, then *Martial*, *Seneca* a most excellent wryter of Tragedies, *Boetius*, *Lucretius*, *Statius*, *Val: Flaccus*, *Manilius*, *Aufonius*, *Claudian*, and many other, whose iust times and feuerall woorkes to speake of in this place, were neither much needefull, nor altogeather tollerable, because I purposed an other argument. Onely I will adde two of later times, yet not farre inferiour to the most of them aforefayde, *Pallengenius*, and *Bap. Mantuanus*, and for a singuler gyft in a sweete Heroicall verse, match with them *Chr. Odan.* the Authour of our *Anglorum Prælia*. But nowe leaſt I stray too farre from my purpoſe, I wyl come to our English Poets, to whom I would I were able to yelde theyr deserued commendations: and afforde them that censure, which I know many woulde, which can better, if they were nowe to write in my ſeede.

I know no memorable worke written by any Poet in our English ſpeeche, vntill twenty yeeres paſt: 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 Byſhoppes and others: yet ſurelye that Poetry was in ſmall price among them, it is very maniſt, and no great maruayle, for euen that light of Greeke and Latine Poets which they had, they much contemned, as appeareth by theyr rude verſifying, which of long time was vſed (a barbarous vſe it was) wherin they conuerter the naturall property of the sweete Latine verſe, to be a balde kinde of ryming, thinking nothing to belearnedly written in verſe, which fell not out in ryme, that is, in wordes whereof the middle worde of eche verſe ſhould ſound a like with the laſt, or of two verſes, the ende of both ſhould fall in the like letters as thus.

O male viuentes, verſus audite ſequentes.

And thus likewyse.

*Propter haec et alia dogmata doctorum
Reor esse melius et magis decorum:
Quisque suam habeat, et non proximorum.*

This brutish Poetrie, though it had not the beginning in this Countrey, yet so hath it beene affected heere, that the infection thereof would neuer (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*, at laſt conueyed into *England*, by men indeede of great wisedome and learning, but not confiderate nor circumſpect in that behalfe. But of this I must 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 fo much as he was named by his furname *Beaucleark*, as much to ſay, as *Fayreclerke* (whereof perhaſpſe came ye name of *Fayredlowe*) 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 eſteemed 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 haue heard of, was *John Gower*, about the time of king *Rychard* the ſeconde, as it ſhould ſeeme by certayne coniectures bothe a Knight, and queſtioneleſſe a singuler well learned man: whofe workeſ I could wyſh 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 *Chaucer*, who ſpeaketh of him oftentimes, in

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dauer[s] places of hys workes. *Chawcer*, who for that excellent fame which hee obtayned in his Poetry, was alwayes accounted the God of English Poets (such a tylte for honours sake 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 stile may seeme blunte and course to many fine English eares at thefe dayes, yet in trueth, if it be equally pondered, and with good iudgment aduised, and confirmed with the time wherein he wrote, a man shall perceiue thereby euen a true picture or perfect shape of a right Poet. He by his delightsome vayne, so gulled the eares of men with his deuises, that, although corruption bare such fway in most matters, that learning and truth might skant bee admitted to shewe it selfe, yet without controllment, myght hee gyrdre at the vices and abuies of all states, and gawle with very sharpe and eger inuentions, which he did so learnedly and pleasantly, that none therefore would call him into question. For such was his bolde spyrit, that what enormities he saw in any, he would not spare to pay them home, eyther in playnē words, or els in some prety and pleafant couert, that the simplest might espy him.

Neere in time vnto him was *Lydgate* a Poet, surely for good proportion of his verse, and meetely currant stile, as the time affoorded comparable with *Chawcer*, yet more occupied in superstitious and odde matters, then was requeite in so good a wytte: which, though he handled them commendably, yet the matters them selues beeing not so commendable, hys estimation hath beene the leffe. The next of our auncient Poets, that I can tell of, I suppose 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 first that I haue seene, that obserued ye quantity of our verse without the curiositie 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 yelde him the title of a Poet: hee was doubtles a pleafant conceyted fellowe, and of a very sharpe wytte, exceeding bolde, and would nyppre to the very quicke where he once fette holde. Next hym I thynke I may place master *George Gafkoyne*, as painefull a Souldier in the affayres of hys Prince and Country, as he was a wytty Poet in his wryting: whose commendations, becaufe I found in one of better iudgment then my selfe, I wyl fette downe hys wordes, and suppresse myne owne, of hym thus wryteth *E. K.* vpon the ninth *Æglogue* of the new Poet.

Master *George Gafkoyne* 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 altogether wanted not learning) no doubt would haue attayned to the excellencye of thos famous Poets. For gyfts of wytt, and naturall promptnes appeare in him aboundingantly. I might next speake of the dyuers workes of the olde Earle of *Surrey*: of the L. *Vaus*, of *Norton*, of *Bristow*, *Edwardes*, *Tusser*, *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 discouerfe much more tedious.

I may not omitte the deserued commendations of many honourable and noble Lordes, and Gentlemen, in her Maiesties Courte, which in the rare deuises of Poetry, haue beene and yet are most excellent skylfull, among whom, the right honourable Earle of *Oxford* may challenge to him selfe the tytle of ye most excellent among the rest. I can no longer forget thos learned Gentlemen which tooke such profitable paynes in translating the Latine Poets into our English tongue, whose desertes in that behalfe are more then I can vtter. Among these, I euer esteemed, and while I lyue, in my conceytf I shall account Master *D. Phaer*: without doubt

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the best: who as indeede hee had the best peece of Poetry whereon to sette a most gallant verfe, so performed he it accordingly, and in such fort, as in my conscience I thinke would scarcely be doone againe, if it were to doo again. Notwithstanding, I speake it but as myne own fancy, not preuidicall to thos that list to thinke otherwyse. Hys worke whereof I speake, is the englisingh of *Æneidos* of *Virgill*, so farre foorth as it pleased God to spare him life, which was to the halfe parte of the tenth Booke, the rest beeing since wyth no lesse commendations finished, by that worthy scholler and famous Phisition Master *Thomas Twyne*.

Equally with him may I well adioyne Master *Arthur Golding*, for hys labour in englisingh *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 society, by his continuall laboure, to profit this nation and speeche in all kind of good learning. The next, very well deserueth Master *Barnabe Googe* to be placed, as a painfull furtherer of learning: hys helpe to Poetry besides hys owne deuises, as the translating of *Pallene-genius*. *Lodiac*. *Abraham Flemming* as in many pretty Poefis of hys owne, so in translating hath doone to hys commendations. To whom I would heere adioyne one of hys name, whom I know to haue excelled, as well in all kinde of learning as in Poetry most especially, and would appeare so, if the dainty morselles, and fine poeticall inuentions of hys, were as common abroade as I knowe they be among some of hys freendes. I wyl craue leaue of the laudable Authors of *Seneca* in English, of the other partes of *Ouid*, of *Horace*, of *Mantuan*, and diuers other, because I would haften to ende thys rehearfall, perhappes offendyue to some, whom eyther by forgetfulnes, or want of knowledge, I must needes ouer passe.

And once againe, I am humbly to desire pardon of the learned company of Gentlemen Schollers, and

acc. to Arber, reffing George
p. 6, George justl. 1568 a trans.
of 3 booke of Marcellus Pala-
genius, the Zodiacke of Life

students of the Vniuersties, and Innes of Courte, yf I omitte theyr feuerall commendations in this place, which I knowe a great number of them haue worthely deferued, in many rare deuifes, and singuler inuentions of Poetrie: for neither hath it beene my good happy, to haue feene all which I haue hearde of, neyther is my abyding in fuch place, where I can with facility get knowledge of their workes.

One Gentleman notwithstanding among them may I not ouerlyppre, so farre reacheth his fame, and so worthy is he, if hee haue not already, to weare the Lawrell wreathe, Master *George VVhetstone*, a man singularly well skyld in this faculty of Poetrie: To him I wyl ioyne *Anthony Munday*, an earnest traueller in this arte, and in whose name I haue feene very excellent workes, among which surely, the most exquisite vaine of a witty poeticall heade is shewed in the sweete sobs 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, Knyght, VVylmott, Darrell, F. C. F. K. G. B.* and many other, whose names come not nowe to my remembraunce.

This place haue I purposely referued for one, who if not only, yet in my iudgement 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 Pembroke Hall foever, becaufe himself and his freendes, for what respect I knowe not, would not reueale it, I force not greatly to sette downe: sorry 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 sincke, seriouly occupied in grauer studies, (Master *Gabriell Haruey*) yet, as he was once his most spaciall freende and fellow Poet, so because he hath taken fuch paynes, not onely in his Latin Poetry (for which he enjoyed great commendations of the best both in iudgment and dignity in

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thys Realme) but also to reforme our English verse, and to beautify the same with braue deuises, of which I thinke the cheefe lye hidde in hatefull obscurity: therefore wyll I aduenture to sette them together, as two of the rarest witts, and learnedest masters of Poetrie in England. Whose worthy and notable skyl in this faculty, I would wysh if their high dignities and serious busynesses would permit, they would styll 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 chosen some grauer matter, and handled but with halfe that skyll, which I knowe he could haue doone, and not powred it foorth at a venture, as a thinge betweene iest and earnest, it had taken greater effect then it did.

As for the other Gentleman, if it would please 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 stlay the rude pens of my selfe and others, but also satifysse the thirsty desires of many which desire nothing more, then to see more of hys rare inuentiones. If I ioyne to Master *Haruey* hys two Brethren, I am assured, though they be both busied with great and waughty callinges (the one a godly and learned *Diuine*, the other a famous and *skylfull Phisition*) yet if they lyfted to sette 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 fencelesse sonets, who be most busy, to stufte euery stall full of grosse deuises and vnlerned Pamphlets: I trust I shall with the best sort be held excused. Nor though many such can frame an Alehouse song of fwe of fixe score verses, hobbling yppon some tune of a Northen lygge, 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 meanes to be promoted to ye Lawrell) furely we shall shortly haue whole swarmes of Poets: and euer one that can frame a Booke in Ryme, though for want of matter, it be but in commendations of Copper noses or Bottle Ale, wyl catch at the Garlante due to Poets: whose potticall poeticall (I shold say) heades, I would wyfhe, at their worshipfull comencements might in fleede of Lawrell, be gorgiouly garnished with fayre greene Barley, in token of their good affection to our Englishe Malt. One speakest thus homely of them, with whose words I wyl content my selfe for thyt time, because I woulde not bee too broade wyt them in myne owne speeche.

In regarde (he meaneth of the learned framing the newe Poets workes which writh the Sheepheardes Calender.) I scorne and spue out the rakehelly rout of our ragged Rymers, (for fo themselues vse to hunt the Letter) which without learning boaste, without judgment iangle, without reason rage and fume, as if some instinct of poeticall spyrite had newlie rauished them, aboue the meanesse of common capacity. And beeing in the midst of all their brauery, fuddainly for want of matter or of Ryme, or hauing forgotten their former conceyt, they feeme to be so payned and trauelled 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.*



Hus farre foorth haue I aduentured to fette downe parte of my fimple iudgement concerning thos Poets, with whom for the most part I hane beene acquainted through myne owne reading: which though it may

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feeme something impertinent to the tytle of my Booke, yet I trusl the courteous Readers wyll pardon me, confidering 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 pyciture without a heade.

Nowe therefore by your gentle patience, wyll I wyth like breuity make tryall, what I can say concerning our English Poetry, first in the matter thereof, then in the forme, that is, the manner of our verfe: yet so as I must euermore haue recourse to thofe times and wryters, whereon the English poetry taketh as it were the difcent and propriete.

English Poetry therefore beeing confidered according to common custome and auncient vfe, is, where any worke is learnedly compiled in measurable speeche, and framed in wordes contayning number or proportion of iuft syllables, delighting the readers or hearers as well by the apt and decent framing of wordes in equall refemblance of quantity, commonly called verfe, as by the skyllfull handling of the matter whereof it is intreated. I speake somewhat of the beginning of thys measuring of wordes in iuft 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* witnesseth.

The matters whereof verfes were first made, were eyther exhortations to vertue, dehortations from vice, or the prayses of fome laudable thing. From thence they beganne to vfe them in exercizes of immitating fome vertuous and wise man at their feastes: where as fome one shoulde be appointed to represent an other mans person of high estimation, and he fang fine ditties and wittie sentences, tunably to their Musick notes. Of thys sprang the first kinde of Comedyes, when they beganne to bring into these exercizes, more persons then one, whose speeches were deuised Dyalogue wise, in aunswering one another. And of such like exer-

cifes, or as some wyl needes haue it, long before the other, began the first Tragedies, and were so called of *τραγος*, because the Actor when he began to play his part, flewe and offered a Goate to their Goddesse: but Commedies tooke their name of *κωμικειν και ἀδειν κωμεσσατον ire*, to goe a feasting, because they vfed to goe in procession with their spore about the Citties and Villages, mingling much plefaunt myrth wyth thei graue Religion, and feasting cheerfully together wyth as great ioy as might be deuised. 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 meetest to please the peoples vaine: And from these, they beganne to present in shapnes of men, the natures of vertues and vices, and affections and qualitie incident to men, as Iustice, Temperance, Pouerty, Wrathe, Vengeaunce, Sloth, Valiantnes, and such like, as may appeare by the auncient workes of *Aristophanes*. There grewe at last to be a greater diuersitie betweene Tragedy wryters and Comedy wryters, the one exprefsing onely forrowfull and lamentable Hystories, bringing in the perfons of Gods and Goddesses, Kynges and Queenes, and great states, whose parts were cheefely to exprefse most miserable calamities and dreadfull chaunces, which increased worse and worse, till they came to the most wofull pligth that might be deuised.

The Comedies on the other syde, were directed to a contrary ende, which beginning doubtfully, drewe to some trouble or turmoyle, and by some lucky chaunce alwayes ended to the ioy and appeasement of all parties. Thys distinction grewe as some holde opinion, by immitation of the workes of *Homer*: for out of his *Iliads*, the Tragedy wryters founde dreadfull euent, whereon to frame their matters, and the other out of hys *Odyssaea* tooke arguments of delight, and pleafant ending after dangerous and troublefome doubtes. So that, though there be many sortes of poeticall 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 breefer method of thys diſcourse, I may comprehend the ſame in three forteſ, which are Comicall, Tragicall, Historiſcall. Vnder the firſt, may be contained all ſuſh *Epigrammes*, *Elegies* and delectable ditties, which Poets haue deuified reſpecting onely the delight thereof: in the feconde, all dolefull complaintys, lamentable chaunces, and what ſoeuer is poetically expreſſed in ſorrow and heauines. In the third, we may comprise, the reſte of all ſuſh matters, which is indifferent beſtweene the other two, doo commonly occupy the penneſ of Poets: ſuſh, are the poeticallyal compylyng of Chroniſles, the frendly greetingſ beſtweene 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, leaſt my diſcourse runne too farre awry, wyll I buckle my ſelfe more neerer to English Poetry: the vſe wherof, because it is nothing diſtinct from any other, I thinke beſt to conſirme by the teſtimony of *Horace*, a man worthy to beare authority in this matter: whose very opinion is this, that the perfect perfection of poetricie is this, to mingle delight with profit in ſuſh wyſe, 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 conſirmatiōn thereof ſome of hys owne wordes. In his treatiſe *de arte Poetica*, thus hee ſayth.

*Aut prodeſſe volunt aut delectare poetæ,
Aut ſimil et iucunda et idonea dicere vita.*

As much to faie: All Poets deſire either by their works to profit or delight men, or els to ioyne both profitabile and pleauant leſſons together for the iuſtruction of life.

And again

*Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci,
Lectorum delectando pariterque mouendo.*

That is, He misseth nothing of his marke which ioyneth 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 vpon this, that whether the argument which the Poet handleth, be of thinges doone, or fained inuentions, yet that they should beare such an Image of trueth, that as they delight they may likewise profit. For these are his wordes. *Ficta voluptatis causa sint proxima veris.* Let things that are faigned for pleasures sake, haue a neere refemblance of ye truth. This precept may you perceiue to bee most duelie obserued of *Chawcer*: for who could with more delight, prescribe fuch wholsome counsaile and sage aduise, where he feemeth onelie to respect the profitte of his leffons and instructions? or who coulde with greater wisedome, or more pithie skill, vnfold fuch 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 poetrie, to giue profitable counfaile, yet so as it must be mingled with delight. For among all the auncient works of poetrie, though the most of them incline much to that part of delighting men with pleafant matters of small importaunce, yet euen in the vainest trifles among them, there is not forgotten some profitable counfaile, which a man may learne, either by flatte precepts which therein are preſcribed, or by loathing fuch vile vices, the enormities whereof they largelie discouer. For furelie, I am of this opinion, that the wantonest Poets of all, in their most laciuious workes wherein they busied themſelues, fought rather by that meanes to withdraw mens mindes (especiallie the best natures) from fuch foule vices, then to allure them to imbrace fuch beastly follies as they detected.

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Horace speaking of the generall dueties of Poets, sayth, *Os tenerum pueri balbumque poeta fugitat*, and manie more wordes concerning the profitte to be hadde out of Poets, which because I haue some of them comprefid into an English translation of that learned and famous knight, Sir *Thomas Elyot*, I wyll set downe his wordes.

The Poet fashioneth by some pleasant meane,
 The speeche of children stable and vnture:
 Gulling their eares from wordes and thinges vncleane,
 Giuing to them precepts that are pure:
 Rebuking envy and wrath if it dure:
 Thinges well donne he can by example commend,
 To needy and fiske he doth also his cure
 To recomfort 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 vaprofitable to the liues and studiis 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 prouocations, whereof some vnbridled witts take occasion by the reading of lasciuious Poemes, bee objected: such as are *Ouids loue Bookes*, and *Elegies*, *Tibullus*, *Catullus*, and *Martials* workes, with the Comedies for the most part of *Plautus* and *Terence*: I thinke it easilly aunswered. For though it may not iustlie be denied, that these workes are indeede very Poetrie, yet that Poetrie in them is not the effessiall or formall matter or cause of the hurt therein might be affirmed, and although that reason should come short, yet this might be sufficient, that the workes themselues doo not corrupt, but the abuse of the vfers, who yndamaging their

owne dispositions, by reading the discoueries of vices, resemble foolish folke, who comming into a Garden without anie choife or circumfpection tread downe the fairest flowers, and wilfullie thrust their fingers among the nettles.

And furelie to speake what I verelie thinke, this is mine opinion: that one haning sufficient skyll, to reade and vnderstand those workes, and yet no stacie of him selfe to auoyde inconueniences, which the remembrance of vnlawfull things may stirre vppe in his minde, he, in my iudgement, is wholy to bee reputed a laciuous disposed personne, whom the recitall of firs whether it be in a good worke or a badde, or vppon what occasion soeuer, wyll not stacie him but prouoke him further vnto them. Contrariwise, what good lessons the warie and skylful Readers shall picke out of the very worl of them, if they list to take anie heede, and reade them not of an intent to bee made the worse by them, you may see by these fewe sentences, which the foresayd Sir *Thomas Elyott* gathered as he sayth at all aduentures, intreating of the like argument. First *Plautus* in commendations of vertue, hath fuch like wordes.

Verely vertue doth all thinges excell,
For if liberty, health liuing or substaunce,
Our Country our parents, and children doo well,
It hapneth by vertue: he doth all aduaunce,
Vertue hath all thinges 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 speeche, in blasing foorth the fashions of harlots, before the eyes of young men. Thus sayth *Parmeno*.

In thyt 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 so much as they

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Out of their owne houses be fresh and delicate,
Feeding curiouly: at home all day
Lyuing beggerlie 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
sentences, which a heedefull Reader may marke, and chofe
out from ye other stuppe. This is one.

Tyme is a medicine of it shall profit,
VVine gyuen out of tyme may be annoaunce.
And man shall irritat vice if he prohibitt,
VVhen time is not meete vnto his vtteraunce.
Therfore if thou yet by eounsayle art recuperable,
Fly thou from idlenes and euer be stable.

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

If thou wylt eschewe bitter aduenture,
And auoyde the annoyance of a pensifull hart,
Set in no one perfon all wholly thy pleasure,
The leffe maist thou ioy, but the leffe shalt thou smart.

These are but fewe gathered out by happe, yet suffi-
cient to shewe that the wife and circumspect Readers
may finde very many profitable lessons, dispersed 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 so tollerable, as that there neede no
respect to be had in making choyse of readers or
hearers: for if they be prohibited from the tender and
vnconstant wits of children and young mindes, I thinke

it not without great reaſon: neyther am I of that deuillish opinion, of which ſome there are, and haue beene in England, who hauing charge of youth to inſtruct them in learning, haue eſpecially made choyfe of ſuch vnciſhliſh ſtuffe, to reade vnto young Schollers, as it ſhoulde feeme of ſome filthy purpoſe, wylfully to corrupt theyr tender mindes, and prepare them the more ready for theyr loathfome dyetts.

For as it is ſayd of that impudent worke of *Luciane*, a man were better to reade none of it then all of it, ſo thinke I that theſe workeſ are rather to be kept altogether from children, then they ſhould haue free liberty to reade them, before they be meete either of their owne diſcretion or by heedfull inſtruction, to make choyfe of the good from the badde. As for our Engliſhe Poetrie, I know no ſuch perilous peeces (except a fewe balde ditties made ouer the Beere potts, which are nothing leſſe then Poetry) which anie man may vſe and reade without damage or daunger: which indeede is leſſe to be meruailed at among vs, then among the olde Latines and Greekes, conſidering that Christianity may be a ſtaie to ſuch illecibrouſ workeſ and inuentiones, as among them (for their Arte fake) myght obtaine paſſage.

Nowe will I ſpeakē ſomewhaſt, of that princelie part of Poetrie, wherein are diſplaied the noble actes and valiant exploits of puiffaunt Captaines, expert ſouldiers, wife men, with the famous reportes of auncient times, ſuch as are the Heroycall workeſ of *Homer* in Greeke, and the heaueny verſe of *Virgil's Aeneidos* in Latine: which workeſ, comprehending as it were the fumme and ground of all Poetrie, are verelie and incomparably the beſt of all other. To theſe, though wee haue no English worke aunsweſable, in reſpect of the glorioūſ ornaments of gallant handling: yet our auncient Chroniſclers and reporterſ of our Countrey affayres, come moſt neere them: and no doubt, if ſuch regarde of our English ſpeeche, and curiuſe handling of our verſe, had beene long ſince thought vpon, and from time to

time beene pollished and bettered by men of learning, iudgement, and authority, it would ere this, haue matched them in all respects. A manifest example thereof, may bee the great good grace and fweete wayne, 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 adde some amendment to the fame. Among whom I thinke there is none that will gainsay, but Master *John Lilly* hath deferued moiste high commendations, as he which hath stept one steppe further therein then any either before or since he first began the wyttie discourse 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 phrases, in pithy sentences, in gallant tropes, in flowing speeche, in plaine fence, and surely in my iudgment, I thinke he wyll yelde him that verdict, which *Quintilian* 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 assertion 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 selfe, who soeuer please with courteous iudgement but a little to compare and marke them both together: and weigh with himfelfe, whether the English tongue might by little and little be brought to the verye maiestie of a ryght Heroicall verfe. First you may marke, how *Virgill* alwayes fitteth his matter in hande with wordes agreeable vnto the same affection, which he expreffeth, as in hys Tragicall exclamations, what pathe[ti]call speeches he frameth? in his comfortable consolations, howe smoothesly hys verfe runnes? in his dreadfull battayles, and dreery byckernments of warres, howe bygge and boystrous his wordes found? and the like notes in all partes of his worke may be obserued. Which excellent

grace and comely kind of choyse, if the translatour hath not hitte very neere in our course English phrase iudge vprightly: wee wyll conferre some of the places, not picked out for the purpose, but such as I tooke turning ouer the Booke at randon. When the Troyans were so tost about in tempestious wether, caufed by *Aeolus* at *Iunoes* request, and driuen vpon the coaste of *Affrick* with a very neere scape of their liues: *Aeneas* 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. *En. Lib. i.*

et dictis marentia pectora mulcet
O socii (neque ignari sumus ante malorum)
O paxsi grauiora: dabit deus his quoque finem
Vos et scyllaeam rabiem, penitusque sonantes,
Accestis scopulos: vos et cyclopea faxa
Experti, reuocate animos, mæstumque timorem
Mittite, forsan et haec olim meminisse iuuabit.
Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum
Tendimus in Latium: fides ubi sata quietas
Ostendunt, illic fas regna resurgere troiæ.
Durate, et vos met rebus feruate secundis.
Talia voce resert, curisque ingentibus æger
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,
Worke haue we seene, and this also shall end when Gods
wyll is.

Through *Sylla* rage (ye wott) and through the roaring
rocks we past,
Though *Cyclops* shore was full of feare, yet came we
through at last.

Plucke vppe your harts, and drive from thence both
fear and care away.
To thinke on this may pleasure be perhapps another day.
By paynes and many a daunger fore, by fundry chaunce
we wend,
To come to *Italy*, where we trust to find our resting ende:
And where the destynes haue decreed *Troyes* Kingdome
eft to ryse
Be bold and harden now your harts, take easie while easie
applies
Thus spake he tho, but in his hart huge cares had him
opprest,
Diffemblyng hope with outward eyes full heauy was his
breft.

Againe, marke the wounding of *Dido* in loue with
Aeneas, with howe choyse wordes it is pithily described,
both by the Poet and the translator in the beginning
of the fourth booke.

At Regina graui iam dudum saucia cura
Volnus alii venis, et cæco carpitur igni, etc.

By this time perced satte the Queene so sore 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 reuolve, and from her thought his face cannot
vntwyne.
His countraunce deepe she drawes and fixed fast she
beares in breft,
His words also, nor to her careful hart can come no rest.

And in many places of the fourth booke is the same mat-
ter fo gallantly prosecuted in sweete wordes, as in mine
opinion the copy it selfe goeth no whit beyond it.

Compare them likewife in the woefull and lamentable

cryes of the Queene for the departure of *Aeneas*, towards the ende of that Booke.

*Terque quaterque manu pectus percussa decorum
Flauentisque abscissa comas, proh Iupiter, ibit ?
Hic ait, et nostris inluserit aduena Regnis ? etc.*

Three times her hands she bet, and three times strake her comely brest,
Her golden hayre she tare and frantiklike with moode opprest,
She cryde, O *Iupiter*, O God, quoth she, and shall a goe?
Indeede? and shall a flowte me thus within my kingdome fo?
Shall not mine Armies out, and all my people them purfue?
Shall they not spoyle their shyps and burne them vp with vengeance due?
Out people, out vpon 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 destnyes fell thy head dooth haunt.

And a little after preparing to kyll her owne selfe.

But *Dydo* quaking fierce with frantike moode and griesly 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 vpon *Aeneas* fworde.

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

Nowe likewife for the braue warlike phrase and bygge
sounding kynd of thundring speeche, in the hotte skyr-
myshes of battels, you may confer them in any of the
last ffe Bookees: for examples sake, thys is one about
the ninth Booke.

*Et clamor totis per propugnacula muris,
Intendunt acries arcus, amentaque torquent.
Sternitur omne solum telis, tum scutæ caueque
Dant sonitum flicitu galeæ: pugna asper surgit? etc.*

A clamorous noyse vpmounts on fortrefse tops and
bulwarks towres,
They strike, they bend their bowes, they whirle from
strings sharp shottng showres.
All streetes with tooles are strowed, than helmets,
skulles, with battlings marrd.
And shieldes dishyuering cracke, vprifeth roughnesse
byckring hard.
Looke how the tempest storne when wind out wraſt-
ling blowes at fouth,
Raine rattling beates the grownde, or clowdes of haile
from Winters mouth,
Downe dashyng headlong driues, when God from skyes
with griesly fteuen,
His watry showres outwrings, and whirlwind clowdes
downe breakes from heauen.

And foorth much more of the like effect.

Onely one comparisoun more will I desire you to marke at your leysures, which may serue for all the rest, that is, the description of Fame, as it is in the 4. booke, towarde the end, of which it followeth thus.

*Monstrum horrendum ingens cui quot sunt corpore plumæ
Tot vigilos oculi etc.*

Monster gasta great, for euery plume her carkasse 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
sound dooth squeake.
All night she wakes, nor slumber sweete doth take nor
neuer sleepes.
By dayes on houfes tops shee fits or gates of Townes
she keepes.
On watching Towres she clymbes, and Citties great
she makes agast,
Both trueth and falsehood forth she telles, and lyes
abroade doth cast.

But what neede I to repeate any more places? there is not one Booke among the twelue, which wyl not yelde you most excellent pleasure in conferring the translation with the Coppie, and marking the gallant grace which our Englishe speeche affoordeth. And in trueth the like comparisouns, may you choose out through the whole translations of the *Metamorphosis* by Master *Golding* who (considering both their Copyes) hath equally deserued commendations for the beautifying of the English speeche. It would be tedious to stay to rehearse any places out of him nowe: let the other suffice to prooue, that the English tongue lacketh neyther variety nor currantnesse of phraze for any matter.



Tyll nowe speake a little of an other kinde of poetical writing, which might notwithstanding for the variablenesse of the argument therein vthely handled, bee comprehended in those kindes before declared: that is, the compylyng *Eglogues*, as much to say as Goteheardes tales, becaufe they bee commonly Dialogues or speeches framed or suppoſed betweene Sheepeheardes, Neteheardes, Goteheardes, or fuch 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 Greeke, next him, and almost the very fame, is *Virgyl* in Latin. After *Virgyl* in like ſort 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 vſuall talke of fimple clownes: yet doo they indeede vtter in the fame much pleafant and profitable delight. For vnder theſe perfonnes, as it were in a cloake of fimplicitie, they would eyther fette foorth the prayfes of theyr freendes, without the note of flattery, or enueigh grieououly against abufes, without any token of bytterneſſe.

Somewhat like vnto theſe works, are many peeces of *Chawcer*, but yet not altogether ſo poetical. But nowe yet at ye laſt hath England hatched vppe one Poet of this forte, in my conſcience comparable with the beſt in any reſpect: euen Maſter *Sþ*: Author of the *Sheepeheardes Calender*, whose trauell in that peece of English Poetrie, I thinke verely is ſo commendable, as none of equall iudgment can yelde him leſſe prayfe

for hys excellent skyll, and skyfull excellency shewed foorth in the same, then they would to eyther *Theocritus* or *Virgill*, whom in mine opinion, if the coursenes of our speeche (I meane the courfe of custome which he woulde not infringe) had beene no more let vnto him, then theyr pure natuie tongues were vnto them, he would haue (if it might be) furpassed 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 iudge as ye shall fee cause.

Virgill hath a gallant report of *Augustus* couertly comþryfed in the first *Eglogue*: the like is in him, of her Maiestie, vnder the name of *Eliza*. *Virgill* maketh a braue coloured complaint of vnstedfaſt freendshyppe in the person of *Corydon*: the lyke is him in his 5 *Eglogue*. Agayne behold the pretty Pastorall contentions of *Virgill* in the third *Eglogue*: of him in ye eight *Eglogue*. Finally, either in comparifon with them, or respect of hys owne great learning, he may well were the Garlante, and steppe before ye best of all English Poets that I haue feene or hearde: for I thinke no leſſe deserueth (thus sayth *E*, *K* in hys commendations) hys wittineſſe in deuifing, his pithi neſſe in vttering, his complaints of loue so louely, his diſcourses of pleasure so pleafantly, his Paſtrall rude neſſe, his Morall wylfeneſſe, his due obſeruing of *decorum* euery where, in perfonages, in ſeaſon, in matter, in ſpeeche, and generally in all ſeemely ſimplicity, 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 leарne to looke to themſelues in time, and to auoyde inconueniences which may breedē if they be not in time preuented. Many good Morall leſſons are therein contained, as the reuerence which young men owe to the aged in the ſecond *Eglogue*: the caueate or warning to beware a ſubtill professor of

freendshippe in the fift *Eglogue*: the commendation of good Pastors, and shame and dispraye of idle and ambitious Goteheardeis in the feauenth, the loofe and retchleffe lyuing of Popish Prelates in the ninth. The learned and sweete complaint of the contempt of learning vnder the name of Poetry in the tenth. There is also much matter vttered somewhat couerly, espeially ye abusis of some whom he would not be too playne withall: in which, though it be not apparent to euery one, what hys speciall meaning was, yet so skilfullly is it handled, as any man may take much delight at hys learned conueyance, and picke out much good fence in the most obscurest of it. Hys notable prayse deserued in every parcell of that worke, because I cannot expresse as I woulde and as it should: I wyll cease 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: *viz.* the motion of some vnsauery loue, such as in the fixt *Eglogue* he seemeth to deale withall (which say they) is skant allowable to English eares, and might well haue beene left for the Italian defenders of loathsome beastlines, of whom perhaps he learned it: to thys obiection I haue often aunswerved and (I thinke truely) that theyr nyce opinion ouer shooteth the Poets meaning, who though hee in that as in other thinges, immitateth the auncient Poets, yet doth not meane, no more did they before hym, any disordered loue, or the filthy lust of the devillish *Pederacie* taken in the worse fence, but rather to shewe howe the diffolute life of young men intangled in loue of women, doo neglect the freendshyp and league with their olde freendes and familiers. Why (say they) yet he shold gyue no occasion of suspition, nor offer to the viewe of Christians, any token of such filthineffe, howe good soever hys meaning were: wherevnto I oppose the simple conceyte they haue of matters which concerne learning or wytt, wylling them to gyue

Poets leave to vse theyr vayne as they see good: it is their foolysh construction, not hys wryting that is blameable. Wee must prescrybe to no wryters, (much lesse to Poets) in what forte they should vtter theyr conceyts. But thys wyll be better discuffed by some I hope of better abillity.

One other forte of Poeticall wryters remayneth yet to bee remembred, that is, The precepts of Husbandry, learnedly compiled in Heroycall verse. Such were the workes of *Hesodus in Greeke*, and *Virgils Georgickes* in Latine. What memorable worke hath beene handled in immitation of these by any English Poet, I know not, (faue onely one worke of M. *Tiuffer*, a peece surely of great wytt and experiance, and wythal very prettilye handled) And I thinke the cause why our Poets haue not trauayled in that behalfe, is especially, for that there haue beene alwayes plenty of other wryters that haue handled the same argument very largely. Among whom Master *Barnabe Googe*, in translating and enlarging the most profitable worke of *Heresbachius*, hath deferued much commendation, as well for hys faythfull compylyng and learned increaing the noble worke, as for hys wytty translation of a good part of the *Georgickes* of *Virgill* into English verse.

Among all the translations, which hath beene my fortune to see, I could neuer yet finde that worke of the *Georgickes* wholly performed. I remember once Abraham Flemming in his conuercion of the *Eglogues*, promised to translate and publise it: whether he dyd or not I knowe not, but as yet I heard not of it. I my selfe wott well I bestowed some time in it two or three yeeres fince, turning it to that same English verse, which other such workes were in, though it were rudely: howebeit, I did it onely for mine owne vfe, and vpon certayne respectes towardes a Gentleman mine especiaill freende, to whom I was desirous to shewe some token of duetifull good wyll, and not minding it should goe farre abroade, considering howe slenderly I ranne it

ouer, yet since then, hath one gott it in keeping, who as it is told me, eyther hath or wyll vnauidedly publishe it: which iniury though he meanes to doo me in myrth, yet I hope he wyll make me forme suffycient recompence, or els I shall goe neere to watch hym the like or a worse turne.

But concerning the matter of our Englysh wryters, lett thys suffice: nowe shall ye heare my simple skyl in what I am able to say concerning the forme and manner of our Englyshe verfe.

The most vfull and frequented kind of our English Poetry hath alwayes runne vpon, and to this day is obserued in such equall number of syllables, and likeenes of wordes, that in all places one verfe either immediatly, or by mutuall interposition, may be aunswerable to an other both in proportion of length, and ending of lynes in the same Letters. Which rude kinde of verfe, though (as I touched before) it rather discredith our speeche, as borrowed from the *Barbarians*, then furnisheth the same with any comely ornament: yet beeing so ingraffed by custome, and frequented by the most parte, I may not vterly disfalowe it, least I should 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 wysh it were by men of learning and ability bettered, and made more artificiall, according to the woorthines of our speeche.

The falling out of verses together in one like founde, is commonly called in English, Ryme, taken from the Greeke worde *Pvθ/pos*, which surely in my iudgment is verye abusuelye applyed to such a fence: and by thys, the vnworthiness of the thing may well appeare, in that wanting a proper name, wherby to be called, it borroweth a word farre exceeding the dignite of it,

and not appropriate to fo rude or base a thing. For Ryme is properly, the iust proportion of a clause or sentence, whether it be in prose or meeter, aptly comprefid 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 first begynning of Ryme (as we nowe terme it) though it be fomewhat auncient, yet nothing famous. In Greece (they say) one *Symias Rhodias*, because he would be singuler in somthing, wryt poetically of the Fable, contayning howe *Jupiter* beeing in shape of a Swanne, begatthe the Egge on Leda, wherof came Castor, Pollux, and Helena, whereof euery verfe ended in thys Ryme, and was called therefore *wo*: but thys foolythe attempt was fo contemned and dispyfed, 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 howsoeuer or wheresoever it beganne, certayne it is, that in our English tongue it beareth as good grace, or rather better, then in any other: and is a faculty whereby many may and doo deserue great prayfe and commendation, though our speeche be capable of a farre more learned manner of versifying, as I wyl partly declare heereafter.

There be three speciaill notes necessary to be obserued in the framing of our accustomed English Ryme: the first is, that one meeter or verfe be aunswerable to an other, in equall number of feete or syllables, or proportionable to the tune whereby it is to be reade or measured. The feconde, to place the words in such forte, as none of them be wreted contrary to the naturall inclination or affection of the same, 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 sake, nor the fence hindered. These be the most pryncipall obseruations, 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 haue occasion to speake heereafter.

Of the kyndes of English verfes 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 most frequented I wyll rehearfe fome. The longest verfe in length, which I haue feene vfed in English confisteth of fixteene syllables, eache two verfes 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 shal containe eyght syllables, and ryme croffe wyse, the first to the thyrd, and the fecond to the fourth, in this manner.

Great wealth is but a bayted hooke.
VVhere vertue wants, and vice aboundes :
VVwhich 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 syllables, which is the most accustomed of all other, and espeially vfed of all the translatours of the Latine Poets for the most part thus.

My mind with furye fierce inflande of late I know not howe,
Doth burne Parnassus hyll to fee, adornd wyth Lawrell bowe.

Which may likewyse and so it often is deuyded, eche

verse into two, to [the?] first hauing eyght fillables, the seconde fixe, wheroft 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 see,
Adornd wyth Lawrell bowe.

There are nowe wythin this compasse, as many sortes of veres as may be deuised differences of numbers: wheroft some consist of equall proportions, some of long and short together, some of many rymes in one staffe (as they call it) some of crosse ryme, some of counter ryme, some ryming wyth one worde farre distant from another, some ryming euery thyrd or fourth word, and so likewyse all manner of dytties applyable to euery tune that may be fung or sayd, distinct from prose or continued speeche. To auoyde therefore tedioufnesse and confusyon, I wyll repeate onely the different sortes of veres out of the *Sheepeheardes Calender*, which may well serue to beare authoritie in thyss matter.

There are in that worke twelue or thirteene fundry sortes of veres, which differ eyther in length, or ryme, or distinction of the flaues: but of them which differ in length or number of fillables not past fixe or feauen. The first of them is of tenne fillables, or rather fve feete in one verse, thus,

A Sheepeheardes boy no better doo him call,
When Winters wastfull spight was almost spent.

This verse he vseth commonly in hys sweete complayntes, and mornefull ditties, as very agreeable to such affections.

The second sort hath naturally but nyne syllables, and is a more rough or clownish manner of verse, vsed most commonly of him if you mark him in hys

satyrical reprehenfions, and his Sheepeheardes home-
lyest talke, such as the second *Æglogue* is.

Ah for pitty wyll rancke Winters rage,
Thēſe bytter blasts neuer gynne to affwage.

The number of nine fillables in thyſe verſe is very often altered, and ſo it may without any diſgrace to the fame, eſpecially where the ſpeeche ſhould be moſt clowniſh and ſimple, which is muſt obſerued of hym.

The third kynd is a pretty rounde verſe, running currantly together, commonly ſeauen fillables or ſome time eigh in one verſe, as many in the next, both ryming together: euer two hauing one the like verſe after them, but of rounder wordes, and two of them likewiſe ryming muſtually. That verſe exprefſeth notably, light and youthfull talke, ſuch as is the thyrde *Æglogue*. betweene two Sheepeheardes boys concerning loue.

Thomalin why fitten we ſo
As weren ouerwent with woe
Vpon ſo fayre a morrowe?
The ioyous time now nigheth fast
That wyll allay this bitter blaſt
And flake the Winter forrow.

The fourth ſort containeth in eche ſtaffe manie vnequall verſes, but moſt ſweetelie falling together: which the Poet calleth the tune of the waters fall. Therein is his ſong In prayſe of *Eliza*.

Ye daintie Nymphes which in this bleſſed brooke
doo bathe your breſt,
Forſake your watrie bowres and hether looke,
at my requeſt.
And eke yee Virgins that on *Parnass* dwell,
Whence floweth *Helicon* the learned Well,
hele me to blaze
her woorthy praife
That in her ſex doth all excell. etc.

The fift, is a deuided verse of twelue fillables into two veres, whereof I spake before, and seemeth most meete for ye handling of a Morrall matter, such as is the prafe of good Pastors, and the dispraise of ill in the feauenth *Eglogue*.

The fixt kinde, is called a round, beeing mutuallie fung betweene two: one singeth one verse, the other the next, eche rythem with himselfe.

Per. It fell vpon a holie eue

Wyl. Hey ho holliday

Per. Whan holie fathers wont to shrieue,

Wyl. Thus ginneth our Rondelay. etc.

The feauenth forte is a verie tragicall mournefull measure, wherein he bewayleth the death of some freend vnder the person of *Dydo*.

Vp then *Melpomene* the mournfulst Muse of nyne,
such cause of mourning neuer hadst afore:

Vp griesly 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 store
O carefull yearfe.

These fortes of veres for breuities sake haue I chosen foorth of him, whereby I shall auoide the tedious re-hearsall of all the kindes which are vsed: which I thinke would haue beene vnpossible, seeing they may be altered to as manie formes as the Poets please: neither is there anie tune or stroke which may be fung or plaide on instruments, which hath not some poetical ditties framed according to the numbers thereof: some to Rogero, some to Trenchmore, to downe right Squire, to Galliardes, to Pauines, to Iygges, to Brawles, to all manner of tunes which euerie Fidler knowes better then my selfe, and therefore I will let them passe.

Againe, the diuersties of the staues (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 staffe containeth but two verses, or (if they bee deuided) foure: the first or the first couple hauing twelue fillables, the other fourteene, which versifyers call Powlters measure, because so they tall[i]e their wares by dozens. Alfo, 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 fortess, whereof to shewe feuerall examples, would bee too troublesome: nowe for the seconde point.

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

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

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

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

— — — — — — — — — — — —
Of shapes transformde to bodies strange I purpose to intreate.
Make the first fillable long, or the third, or the fift and foorth: or contrariwise make the other fillables to admitt the shorthenesse of one of them places, and see

what a wonderfull defacing it wil be to the wordes, as thus.

— ♫ — ♫ — ♫ — ♫ — ♫ — ♫ —
Of strange bodies transformd 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 displacing no worde bee wrefled against his naturall propriety, wherevnto you shal perceyue eche worde to be affected, and may easilie discerne 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 sentence, 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 vrge. For though it be tollerable in a verse to fette wordes so extraordinarily as other speeche will not admitt, yet heede is to be taken, least by too much affecting that manner, we make both the verse vnpleasant and the fence obscure. And sure it is a wonder to see the folly of manie in this respect, that vse not only too much of thys ouerthwart placing, or rather displacing of wordes, in theyr Poemes and verfes, but also in theyr prose or continued writings: where they thinke to role most smoothe, and flow most eloquently, there by this means, come foorth theyr sentences dragging at one Authors tayle as they were tyde together with poynts, where often you shall tarrie (scratching your heade) a good space before you shall heare hys principall verbe or speciall word, leaste hys singing grace, which in his sentence is contained should be leffe, and his speeche feeme nothing poeticall.

The thyrd obseruation is, the Ryme or like ending of verfes: which though it is of least importance, yet hath won fuch credite among vs, that of all other it is most regarded of the greatest part of Readers. And surely as I am perfwaded, the regarde of wryters to this, hath beene the greatest decay of that good order of verfifying, which might ere this haue beene established

in our speeche. In my iudgment, if there be any orna-
ment in the same, it is rather to be attributed to the
plentifull fulnesse of our speeche, which can afforde
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 colours then ryming is. Notwithstanding I
cannot but yeede vnto it (as custome requireth) the
deserued prayses, especially where it is with good iudge-
ment 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,
vpon some vnacquainted matter.

The ready skyll of framing anie thing in verse, besidies
the naturall promptnesse which many haue therevnto,
is much helped by Arte, and exercise of the memory:
for as I remember, I reade once among *Gaskoynes*
workes, a little instruction to verisifying, where is pre-
scribed as I thinke thys course of learning to verisifie
in Ryme.

When ye haue one verse well setled, and decently
ordered which you may dispose at your pleasure, to
ende it with what word you wyll: then what soeuer the
word is, you may speedilie runne ouer the other wordes
which are aunswerable therevnto, (for more readines
through all the letters Alphabetically) whereof you may
chooche that which wyll best fitte the fence of your matter
in that place: as for example: if your last worde ende
in Booke, you may straightwayes 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 alwayes one of these shall
iumpre with your former worde and matter in good
fence. If not, then alter the first.

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 *Monasillables*, and place them Alphabetically in some note, and either haue them meetely perfectly by hart (which is no verye laboursome matter) or but looke them diligently 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 circumstaunces of Ryming are, as what wordes may tollerably be placed in Ryme, and what not: what words doo best become a Ryme, and what not, how many sortes of Ryme there is: and fuch like I wyll not stay nowe to intreate. There be many more obseruations and notes to be prescribed, to the exacte knowledge of verisifying, which I trust wilbe better and larger laide forth by others, to whom I deferre manie considerations in this treatise: hoping that some of greater skill will shorltie handle this matter in better sorte.

Nowe the fundry kindes of rare deuises, and pretty inuentions which come from ye fine poeticall vaine of manie in strange and vnacustomed manner, if I could report them, it were worthie my trauell: fuch are the turning of verses: the infolding of wordes: the fine repititions: the clarklie conueying of contraries, and manie fuch like. Whereof though I coulde sette downe manie: yet because I want bothe manie and the best kindes of them, I will ouerpasse: onelic pointing you to one or two which may suffice for example.

Looke vpon the rufull song of *Colin fung by Cuddie* in the *Shephearde's Calender*, where you shal see a singuler rare deuise of a dittie framed vpon these fixe wordes *VVoe, sounde, cryes, patt, sleep, augment*, which are most prettilie turned and wounde vppone mutually together, expressing wonderfully the dolefulnesse of the song. A deuise not much vnlike vnto the same, is vsed by some, who taking the last wordes of a certaine number of verses, as it were by the rebound

of an *Echo*; shall make them fall out in some prettie fence.

Of this sorte there are some deuised by *John Graunge*, which because they be not long I wyll rehearse one.

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

Here if you take the last worde of euerie verfe, and place them orderlie together, you shall haue this sentence: *Shielde well thyne hart with hope*. But of these *Echoes* I knowe indeede verie daintie peeces of worke, among some of the finest Poets this day in London: who for the rarenesse of them keepe them priuelie to themselfes, and wil not let them come abroad.

A like inuention to the last rehearfed, or rather a better, haue I feene often practisched 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 shorthenes I rather chufde then some yat are better.

If thou desire to liue in quiet rest,
 Gyue eare and see, but say the best.

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.

<i>If thou</i>	{ delight in quietnes of life,
<i>Desire</i>	{ to shunne from brawles, debate and strife:
<i>To liue</i>	{ in loue with G O D, with freend and foe,
<i>In rest</i>	{ shalft sleepe when other cannot so.

<i>Gyue eare</i>	{ to all, yet doo not all beleuee,
<i>And see</i>	{ the end and then thy sentence gyue:
<i>But say</i>	{ For trueth of happy liues affignde
<i>The best</i>	{ 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 versifyers, as well in composition of their verse, as the wittines of their matter: which all I will referre to the consideration of euerie pleasant headed Poet in their proper gifts: onelie I fett downe these fewe fortes of their formes of versifying, which may stand in stede to declare what manie others may be deuised in like forte.

But nowe to proceede to the reformed kind of English verse which manie haue before this, attempted to put in practise, and to establish for an accustomed right among English Poets, you shall heare in like manner my simple iudgment concerning the same.

I am fully and certainlie perwaded, that if the true kind of versifying in immitation of Greekes and Latines, had beene practisched in the English tongue, and put in vre from time to tyme by our Poets, who might haue continually beene mending and pollyshing the same, euery one according to their feuerall giftes: it would long ere this haue aifyred to as full perfection, as in anie other tongue whatsoeuer. For why may I not thinke so of our English, seeing that among the Romaines a long time, yea enen till the dayes of *Tully*, they esteemed not the Latine Poetrie almost worth any thing, in respecte of the Greeke, as appeareth in the Oration *pro Archia Poeta*: yet afterwardeis it increased in credite more and more, and that in short space: so that in *Virgilles* time, wherein were they not comparable with the Greekes? So likewise, now it feemeth not currant for an English verse to runne vpon true quantity, and those feete which the Latines vfe, becausse it is straunge, and the other barbarous custome, beeing within compasse of euery base witt, hath worne it out of credite or estimation. But if our wryters, beeing of learning and iudgment, would rather infringe thys curios custome, then omitte the occasion of inlarging the credite of their natvie speeche, and theyr owne prayfes, by practisching that commendable

kind of wryting in true verfe: then no doubt, as in other partes of learning, so in Poetry, shoulde not stoupe to the best of them all in all maner of ornamant and comlinesse. But some obiect that our wordes are nothing resenblaunt in nature to theirs, and therefore not possible 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 establish a rule of our owne to be directed by? Likewise, for ye tenor of the verse might we not (as *Horace* dyd in the Latine) alter their proportions to what fortess we listed, and to what we sawe wold best 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 iudgment and learning, shoulde putt foorth some famous worke, contayning dyuers formes of true verfes, fitting the meaures, according to the matter: it woulde of it selfe be a sufficient authority without any prescription of rules, to the most part of Poets, for them to follow and by custome to ratify. For sure it is, that the rules and principles of Poetry, were not precisely followed and obserued of the first beginners and wryters of Poetry, but were selected and gathered feuerally out of theyr workes, for the direction and behoofe of their followers. And indeede, he that shall with heedfull iudgment make tryall of the English wordes, shall not finde them so groffe or vnapt, but that they wyll become any one of ye most accustomed fortess of Latine or Greeke verfes meetely, and run thereon somewhat currantly.

I my selfe, with simple skyll I confesse, and farre vnable iudgment, haue ventured on a fewe, which notwithstanding the rudenes of them may serue to shewe what better might bee brought into our speeche, if those which are of meete abilitye woulde bestowe some trauell und endeavour thereupon. But before I sette them lowne, I wyll speake somewhat of such obseruations as

I could gather necessary to the knowledge of these kinde of verses, least I should feeme to runne vpon them rashly, without regarde either of example or authority.

The speciall poyntes of a true verfe, are the due obseruacions of the feete, and place of the feete.

The foote of a verfe, is a measure of two fillables, or of three, distinguisched 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 *Spondæus*, as -- *goodnesse*, or of two short called *Pyrrichius* as u u *hyther*. A myxt foote of 2. fillables, is eyther of one short and one long called *Iambus* as u - *dying*: or of one long and one short, called *Choreus* as - u *gladly*. A foote of 3. fillables in like forte is either simple or myxt. The simple is eyther *Moloffus*, that is of three long, as -- - *forgiuenes*: or *Trochæus*, that is of 3. short, as u u u *merylie*. The mixt is of 6. diuers fortes, 1. *Dactylus*, of one long, and two short, as - u u *happily*. 2. *Anapætus*, of two shorte, and one long, as u u - t[r]auelers. 3. *Bacchius*, of one short, and two long, as u - - *remembrys*. 4. *Palimbachius*, of two long and one short, as -- u *accorded*. 5. *Creticus* of a long, a short, and a long, - u - *daungerous*. 6. *Amphibrachus*, of a short, a long, and a short, as u - u *reivoyced*.

Many more deuisions of feete are vsed by some, but these doo more artificially comprehend all quantities necessary to the skanning of any verfe, according to *Fallæus* in hys *Rethorique*. The place of the feete is the disposing of them in theyr proper 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 cheefest matter in this faculty. For in truth there being such diuerſity betwixt our words and the Latine, it cannot stande indeede with great reason that they shoulde frame, wee beeing onelie directed by such rules

as serue for onely Latine words, yet notwithstanding one may well perceiue by thefe fewe, that thefe kinde of verfes would well become the speeche, if fo bee there were fuch Rules prescribed, as woulde admitt the placing of your aptest and fullest wordes together. For indeede excepting a fewe, of our *Monafyllables*, which naturally shoulde most of them be long, we haue almost none, that wyll stande fitle in a short foote: and therfore if some exception were made against the precise obseruation of *Position*, and certaine other of the rules, then might we haue as great plenty and choyse of good woordes to furnish and fette foorth a verfe, as in any other tongue.

Likewise if there were some deretion in fuch wordes, as fall not within the compasse of Greeke 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 must needes confesse) many faultes escaped me in these fewe, yet tooke I as good heede as I coulde, and in trueth did rather alwaies omitt the best wordes and fuch as would naturally become the speech best, then I wolde committe any thing, which shoulde notoriously impugne the Latine rules, which herein I had onely for my direction. Indeede most of our *Monafyllables* I am forced to make short, to supply the want of many short wordes requisite in these verfes. The Participle *A*, being but the English article adioyned to Nownes, I alwayes 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 shoulde needes be alwayes long because we pronounce continually *VVe*. *I*, beeing alone standing for the Pronowne *Ego*, in my iudgment might well be vsed common: but because I neuer fawe it vsed but short I so obserued it. Words ending in *y*

I make short without doubt, sauing that I haue marked in others one difference which they vse in the same, that is to make it short in the ende \cup of an Aduerb, as *gladly*, and long in the ende $-$ of an Adiectiue as *goodly*: but the reson is as I take it, because the Adiectiue is or shoule 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 first of *Pollisyllables* I directed according to the nature of the worde, as I thought most auniwerable to Latine examples, sauing that somewhere I am constrainyd to straine curtefy with the preposition of a worde compounded or such like, which breaketh no great square: as in *defence* or *depart*, etc. The myddle fillables which are not very many, come for the most part vnder the precinct of *Position*, whereof some of them will not possiblly abide the touch, and therfore must needes be a little wrested: such are commonly ye Aduerbs of three fillables, as *mournfully*, *spyghtfully* and such like words, deriuied of this Adiectiue, *full*: and therfore if there be great occasion to vse them, they must be reformed by detracting onely $(/)$ and then they stand meetely currant, as *mournfuly*. The last fillables I wholly directed so neere as I could to the touch of common rules.

The most famous verfe of all the rest, is called *Hexametrum Epicum*, which consisteth of fixe feete, wheroft the first foure are indifferently either *Spondei* or *Dactyli*, the fift is euermore a *dactyl*, and the fixt a *Sponde*, as thus.

— o — — o o — — — — o — —
Tyterus happily thou liest tumbling under a beechtree.

Thys kinde of verfe I haue onely seene to be practised in our English speeche: and indeede wyll stand somewhat more orderlye therein then any of the other kindes, vntill we haue some tolleration of wordes made by speciall rule. The first that attempted to practise thys verfe in English, should seeme to be the Earle of *Surry*, who translated some part of *Virgill* into verfe

A Discourse of

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 *VVatsion*, fellowe of S. *Johns* Colledge in Cambrydge about 40. yeeres past, which for the sweetnes and gallantries therof in all respects doth mat[c]h and surpasse the Latine copy of *Horace*, which he made out of *Homers* wordes, *qui mores hominum etc.*

— ♦ ♦ — — — ♦ ♦ — — — ♦ ♦ —
All trauellers doo gladlie report great praiſe to *Ulises*

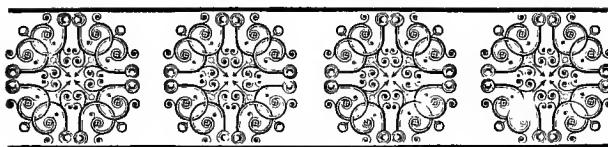
— ♦ ♦ — ♦ ♦ — — — — — ♦ ♦ —
For that he knewe manie mens maners, and farr many citties.

Which two verſes if they be examined throughout all the rules and obſeruations of the beſt verſifying, shall bee founde to attaine the very perfection of them all. There be two other not much inferiour to theſe, which I found in ye Glosſe of *E. K.* vpon the fift *Æglogue* of the newe Poet: which Tully tranſlated out of Greeke into Latine, *Hæc habui quæ edi etc.*

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

— — — ♦ ♦ — — — — — ♦ ♦ —
As for thoſe manie goodlie matters left I for others.

Which though they wyll not abide the touch of *Synalæpha* in one or two places, yet perhaſpſe ſome English rule which night wyth good reaſon be eſtabliſhed, would make them currant enough, and auoyde that inconuenience which is very obuious in our wordes. The great company of famous verſes of thys ſort, which Maſter *Haruey* made, is not vnuſtownde to any and are to be viewed at all times. I for my part, ſo farre as thoſe examples would leade me, and mine owne ſmall ſkyll afforde me, haue blundered vpon theſe fewe, whereinto I haue tranſlated the two firſt *Æglogues* of Virgill: because I thought no matter of mine owne inuenſion, nor any other of antiquitye more fitte for tryal of thys thynge, before there were ſome more ſpeciall direcſion, which might leade to a leſſe troublous manner of wryting.



The Argument of the first
Æglogue.

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

Melibaeus. *Tityrus.*

*T*ityrus, *happilie thou lyste tumbling under a beech tree,
 All in a fine oate pipe these fweete songs lustilie chaunting:
 VVe, poore soules goe to wracke, and from these coastes beremooued,
 And fro our pastures fweete: thou Tityr, at ease in a shade plott
 Makst thicke groues to resound vwith songes of braue Amarillis.*

Tityrus.

*O Melibæus, he vvas no man but a God vvhoso releuude me:
 Euer he shalbe my God: from this fame Sheepcot his alters
 Neuer, a tender Lambe shall vwant, with blood to bedevv them.
 This good gift did he giue, to my steerers thus freelie to wander,
 And to my selfe (thou feest) on pipe to resound vwhat I listed.*

A Discourse of

Meliaeaus.

*Grutch thee fure I doo not, but this thing makes me to vronder,
 VVhence comes all this adoo: vwith grieuous paine not a little
 Can I remoue my Goates: here, Tityre shant get I forwvard
 Poore olde crone, two twyns at a clappe ith baysterous haſſiles
 Left ſhe behind, best hope i' my flock laid hard on a bare ſtone.
 Had not a luckleſſe lotte poſſeſſ our mindes, I remember
 VVarnings oft fro the blaſt burnt oake vve ſavv to be ſent vs.
 Oft did a left hand crovv foretell theſe thinges in her hull tree,
 But this God let vs heare what he vwas, good Tityre tell me.*

Tityrus.

*That fame Cittie ſo braue vwhich Rome vwas vront to be called,
 Foole did I thinke, to be like this of ours, where vve to the paſtures
 VVonted were to remoue from dammes our young prettie Cattell.
 Thus did I thinke young vvhelpeſ, and Kids to be like to the
 mothers,
 Thus did I vront compare manie great thinges vwith many little.
 But this aboue all tovvnes as loftily mounteth her high head,
 As by the lovvve base ſhrubbes tall Cyprefſe ſhooteth aboue them.*

Meliaeaus.

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

Tityrus.

*Freedome: vwhich though late, yet once looکt backe to my pore
 ſtate,
 After time vwhen haires from my beard did ginne to be vwhitish:
 Yet looکt back at laſt and found me out after a long time.
 VVhen Amarill vvas once obtainide, Galatea departed:
 For (for I vwill confeſſe) vwhilst 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 afordeſ*

*And manie cheeses good fro my preffe vvere sent to the Cittie:
Seldome times did I bring anie store of pence fro the markett.*

Melibaeus.

*O Amarill, vvhherefore, to thy Gods (very much did I meruaile)
Heauilie thou didſt prae: ripe fruities vngathered all still:
Tityrus is not at home: theſe Pyne trees Tityre miſt thee.
Fountaines longd for thee: theſe hedgrovves vvisht thy return
home*

Tityrus.

*VVhat vvas then to be done? from bondage could not F vwind out:
Neither I could haue found ſuch gentle Gods any vvhile els.
There did I ſee (Melibae) that youth vvhose hestes I by course
ſtill.
Fortnights whole to obſerue on the Alters ſure will I not faile.
Thus did he gentlie graunt to my fute when firſt I demaunded.
Keēpe 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 ſelfe, others nought but ſtonie grauell:
And foule ſlymie rush wherewith their lees be beſprinkled.
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 ſhadowy bankes and coole prettie places,
Heere by the quainted floodes and ſprings moſt holie remaining.
Here, theſe quickſets fresh which lands feuſt out fro thy
neighbors
And greene willow rowes which Hiblæ bees doo reioice in,
Oft fine whiſtring noife, ſhall bring ſweete ſleepe to thy fences.
Vnder a Rock ſide here will proyner chaunt merrie ditties.
Neither on highe Elme trees, thy beloude Doues loftlie ſitting,
Nor prettie Turtles trim, vwill ceafe to crooke with a good cheere.*

Tityrus.

*First, therefore swift buckes shall flie for foode to the skies ward,
And from fish with drawn broade seas themselues shal auoid
hence:*

*First, (both borders broke) Araris shal run to the Parthanes,
And likewise Tygris shall againe runne bâcke to the Germanes:
Ere his countnaunce sweete shall slippé once out from my hartroote.*

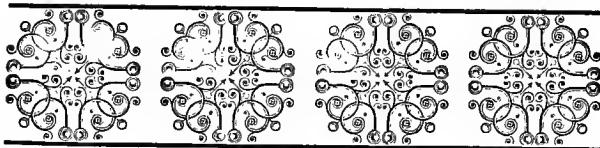
Meliaeus.

*UⁿVe poore soules, must some to the land cald Africke packe hence.
Some to the farre Scythia, and some must to the swift flood Oaxis.
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 rechlesse souldier haue them?
And shall a Barbarian haue this cropp?
see what a mischiefe
Dijcord vile hath ariaid?
for whom was our labour all tooke?
Nowv Melibæe ingraft pearie stocks, sette vines in an order.
Now goe (my braue flocke once that were) O now goe my
kidlings.*

*Neuer againe shall I now in a greene bowre sweetelie reposed
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 tunkets.
Shall ye my Goates, cropping sweete floweres and leaues fit
about me.*

Tityrus.

*Yet thou maist tarrie heere, and keepe me companie this night,
All on a leauie couch: good Aples ripe I doo not lacke,
Chestnuttis sweete good store, and plentie of curddes will I set thee.
Marke i the Towne how chimnie 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 personne of *Corydon* as some thinke, complayneth that he is not so gratiouse with Augustus as he would bee: or els it is to be referred to a youth *Alexander*, which was giuen him of *Asinius Pollio*, whom he blameth for the vnstedfastnes of his witt and wandering appetite, in refusynge the frendly counsayle which he vsed to giue him.

THAT Sheepheard Corydon did burne in loue with Alexis,
All his maisters deare: and nought had he whereby to hope
Onely in beechen groues, and doleosome shaddowy places. [for.
Dailie resorted he: there these rude disordered outcryes,
Hylles and desert woodes throughout thus mournfully tuned.
O hard harted Alex, haft thou no regard to my sweete song?
Pyttiest me not a whitt: yea makst me now that I shall dye.
Yet doo the beastes find out fine shades and trim pretty
coole plottes,
And fro the fun beames safe lie lyzardes vnder a bushtufe:
And for workmen toughe with boyling heate so beparched,
Garlick fauerye and coole hearbes plenty be dressid.
But, by the scorcht banke sydes i' thy foote steppes stil I goe
plodding.

Hedgerowes hott doo refound with Grashops mournfully squeak-
 O had I not ben better abyd Amarillis her anger? [ing,
 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 trust not t' much to thy beauty,
 Black violets are tooke when dayfes white be refused.
 Me thou doft despise vnknowne to thy selfe yet Alexis:
 What be my riches greate in neate, in milke what abundance.
 In Sicill hylles be my Lambes of which therewander a thousand.
 All times, colde and hote yet fresh milke neuer I wanted.
 Such be my Musicke notes, as (when his flockes he recalling)
 Amphion of Dirce did vfe on shore Aracynthus.
 Much mishapt I am not, for late in a bancke I behelde me,
 VVhen still 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 small, and helpe me proppes to put vnder,
 And trym kydling flocke with me to drine to the greene fieldes:
 Pan in singing sweete with me shouldest brauely ressemble:
 Pan, was first the inuenter, pypes to adioyne in an order:
 Pan, poore flockes and Sheepheardes to most duly regardeth.
 Thoſefine lips thou needſt not feare to brufe with a sweete pype:
 VVhat dyd Amynt forſake i'this excercise to be cunning?
 One pype with ſeauene ſundry ſtops matcht sweetly together.
 Haue I my ſelfe, Damaetas which ats death he bequeathd me,
 And ſayd, heere, thou art now the ſecond which euer hath ought
 So ſayd Damaetas: but Amyntas ſpightfully ſcornde it. [it.
 Also, two pretty ſmall wyld kyddes, moft goodlie beſpotted
 Haue I, that heere i' the dales doo runne ſkant ſafe I doo
 feare me.

Twyce in a day two teates they ſuck: for thee will I keepe them:
 Wondrouſ faine to haue had them both was Theſtyleſ of late.
 And ſo the ſhall: for I ſee thou ſcornſt whatſo-euer I giue thee.
 Come hyther O thou ſweete face boy: ſee ſee, to thy ſelfe heere
 How faire Nymphes in baskets full doo bring manie Lillies:
 White violets ſweete Nais plucks and bloomes fro the Poppies,
 Naryſ, and dyll flowres moft ſweete that ſauoureth alſo.

Cafia, broade mary Goldes, with pancyes, and Hyacinthus.
And I my felfe rype peaches soft as filke will I gather.
And such Chesnutts 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 myrtle thy
felfe next.
For ye be wont, (bound both in a bunch) most sweetely to
fauour.
Thou art but a Clowne Corydon: these gifts esteemes not Alexis:
Nor by thy gifts to obtaine art meete to incounter Iolas.
VVretch (ahlas) whaths this that I wish? south blasts to the
yong flowers
Orcleere crystall streames with loathfome fwyne to be troublead
Ah mad boy from whom doost runne? why Gods ithe woods
dwelt:
And Paris erft of Troy: Pallas most gladly reioyfeth,
In these bowres: and in trym groues we all chiefely delight
vs.
Grym Lyoneffe doth course curst woolues, so wolues doo
the kydliges.
And these wanton Kyddes likewise these faire Cytifus
flowers.
Thee Corydon (O Alex) some pleasure euery 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 busy thy felfe well,
Either on Ofyers tuffe or bulrush weaue pretty basketts.
And if Alexis scorne thee still, mayst hope for another.

F I N I S.

I durst not enterpryse to goe any further with this rude translation: beeing for the respects aforesayd a troublesome and vnplesant peece of labour: And therefore these shall suffice till further occasion shall serue to employ some profitable paynes in this behalfe.

The next verse in dignity to the *Hexameters*, is ye *Carmen Elegiacum* which consisteth of foure feete and two od fillables: viz: the two first feete, eyther *Dactyli* or *Spondei* indifferent, the one long fillable: next two *Dactyli* and an other long fillable - - - o o - - o - o o - some doo measure it in this forte (and more truely yet not so readily to all) accounting first two indifferently either *Dactyli* or *Spondei*, then one *Spondei*, and two *Anapæstii*. But it commeth all to one reckoning. Thys verse is alwayes vnseperably adioyned vnto the Hexameter, and serueth especially to the handling of loue and dalliances, whereof it taketh the name. It will not frame altogether so currantlye in our English as the other, because the shorthesse of the seconde *Penthimimer* will hardly be framed to fall together in good fence, after the Latine rules. I haue not seene very many of them made by any, and therefore one or two for example sake shall be sufficient.

This *Dijstichon* 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 sunt hominum tenui pendentia filo:
Et subito casu quæ valuere ruunt.*

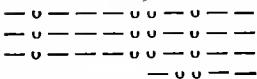
Tis but a slender thread, which all mens states do depend on:

And most goodly thinges quickly doo fall to decay.

As for the verses *Phalocium* and *Iambicum*, I haue not as yet made any tryall in them: but the *Sapphic* I assure you, in my iudgment wyl doo very pretty, if ye wants which I speake were once supplied. For tryall of which I haue turned the new Poets sweete song of *Eliza* into fuch homely *Sapphick* as I coulde.

Thys verse confisteth of thefe fие feete, one *Chore*, one *sponda*, one *dactyl*, and two *Choreis*, with this addition, that after euery third verfe be sette one *Adonium* verfe, which confisteth of a *dactyl* and a *sponda*. It is more troublesome and tedious to frame in our speeche by reasōn they runne without difference, euery verfe being a like in quantity throughout, yet in my iudgement standeth meetely well in the fame. I pray looke the Copy which I haue translatd in the fourth *Eglogue* of the *Shepheardes Calender*: ye song of *Colins* making which *Hobbinoll* singeth in prayfe of the Queenes maiesty, vnder the name of *Eliza*.

YE dainty Nymphes that in this blessed brooke,
doo bathe your breft:
Forsake your watry bowres and hether looke,
at my request:
And onely you Virgins that on *Parnass* dwell.
Whence floweth *Helicon* the learned well,
 helpe me to blase
 her worthy praise
That in her sex doth all excell.
Of fayne *Eliza* be your filuer song
 that blessed wight:
The flowre of Virgins, may she flourish long,
 in princely plignt.
For she is *Syrinx* daughter without spott,
Which *Pan* the Shepheards God on her begot:
 so sprang her grace,
 of heauenly race,
No mortall blemish may her blott.
See where the fittes, etc.

The *Saphick* verfe.

○ ye Nymphes most fine who resort to this l rooke,
 For to bathe there your pretty breasts at all times :
 Leave the watrish bowres, hyther and to me come
 at my request nowe.

And ye Virgins trymme who resort to *Parnas*,
 Whence the learned well *Helicon* beginneth :
 Helpe to blasfe her worthy deserts, that all els
 mounteth aboue farre.

Nowe the siluer songes of *Eliza* sing yee,
 Princely wight whose peere 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 arysfeth,
 All her exlent race : any mortall harde happe
 cannot aproche her.

See, she fittes most seemely in a graffy greene plott,
 Clothed in weedes meete for a princely mayden,
 Boste with Ermines white, in a goodly scarleett
 brauely beseeming.

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

Say, behold did ye euer her Angelike face,
 Like to *Phæbe* fayre ? or her heauenly hauour
 And the princelike grace that in her remaineth ?
 haue yee the like feene ?
 Medled ist red rose with a white together
 Whiche in either cheeke do depeinct a trymme cheere,
 Her maiestie and eye to behold so comely, her
 like who remembreth ?

Phœbus once peeped forth with a goodly guilt hewe,
 For to gaze: but when he fawfe the bright beames
 Spread abroade fro' her face with a glorious grace,
 it did amaze him.

When another funne he behelde belowe heere,
 Blusht he red for shame, nor againe he durst looke:
 Would he durst bright beames of his owne with hers match,
 for to be vanquisht.

Shew thy selfe now *Cynthia* with thy cleere rayes,
 And behold her: neuer abafht be thou fo: [beauty, how
 When the spreades those beames of her heauenly
 thou art in a dump dasht?

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

Pan he may well boaste that he did begit her
 Such a noble wight, to *Syrinx* is it ioy,
 That she found fuch lott with a bellibone trym
 for to be loaden.

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

Vnto that place *Caliope* dooth high her,
 Where my Goddesse shines: to the same the Mufer
 After her with sweete Violines about them
 chearefully tracing

Is not it Bay braunche that aloft in handes they haue,
 Eune to giue them fure to my Lady *Eliza*:
 O so sweete they play—and to the same doo sing too
 heauonly to heare ist.

See, the Graces trym to the stroake doo foote it,
 Deftly dauncing, and meriment doo make them,
 Sing to the instruments to reioyce the more, but
 wants not a fourth grace?

A Discourse of

Then the daunce wyl 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 ist goe they now i
 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 the beares a
 Goodly Crownett, meete for a Prince that in peace
 euer abideth

All ye Sheephearde maides that about the greene dwell
 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 waste gyrt
 fast with a tawdryn

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

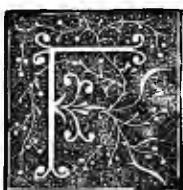
Daffadowndillies all a long the ground strowe,
 And the Cowlyppe with a pretie paunce let heere lye
 Kyngcuppe and Lillies so beloude of all men
 And the deluce flowre

One verse there remaineth vntranslated as yet, wit
 some other of this forte, which I meant to haue finishec
 but by reason of some let which I had, I am cor
 strained to defer to some other time, when I hope t
 gratify the Readers with more and better verfes of thi
 fort: for in trueth I am perfwaded a little paine takin
 might furnish our speeche with as much pleasaun
 delight in this kinde of verse, as any other whatsoeuer



Heere followe the Cannons or gene-
rall cautions of Poetry, prescribed by Horace,
first gathered by *Georgius Fabricius Cremni-
ensis*: which I thought good to annex to
thys Treatise, as very necessary obseruations
to be marked of all Poets.

*In his Epistle ad Pisones
de arte Poetica.*



1. Irlst let the inuention be meete for the matter, not differing, or straunge, or monstros. For a womans head, a horse necke, the bodie of a dyuers coloured Byrd, and many members of fundry creatures compact together, whose legges ending like a Fyshes tayle: this in a picture is a wonderful deformitie: but if there be such diuersitye in the frame of a speeche, what can be more vncomely or ilfauoured?

2. The ornaments or colours must not bee too many, nor rashly aduentured on, neither must they be vsed euery where and thrust into euery 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 comelinesse and nature of a matter: that

A Discourse of

in big matters there be lykewise vsed boyfsterous wordes.

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

5. The dispoing of the worke must be such, that there be no offence committed, as it were by too exquisite dilligence: for many thinges may be oft committed, and some thing by too curious handling be made offendicue. 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 exprefsed 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 beaufitfull, and yet bee deformed in the crooked noſe: for all the members in a well ſhappen bodie muſt be aunſwerable, ſound, 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 vnwarie fooles through their rafhnes are ouertooke with great want of ability

7. The ornament of a worke confiſteth in wordes, and in the manner of the wordes, are either ſimple or mixt, newe or olde, proper or tranſlated. In them all good iudgment muſt be vsed 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 vsed and tried are beſt eſteemed.

8. The kinde of verſe is to be confidered and aptly applied to the argument, in what meaſure is moſt meeſe for every fort. The moſt vnuall kindeſ are foure, the *Heroic*, *Elegiac*, *Iambick*, and *Lyric*.

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

10. Regarde is to be had of affections: one thing

becommeth pleasant persones, an other fadde, an other wrathfull, an other gentle, which must all be heedfully respected. Three things therefore are requisite in verfes, beauty, sweetnes, and the affection. *Theophrastus* sayth that this beauty or delectablenesse is a deceyt, and Aristotle calleth it *τυραννία ολγοκρονίον*, a momentany tyrany. Sweetnesse retayneth a Reader, affection moueth him.

11. Euyer person must be fitted accordingly, and the speeche well ordered: wherein are to be confidered the dignity, age, sex, fortune, condition, place, Country, etc. of eche person.

12. The personnes are eyther to be fayned by the Poets them felues, or borrowed of others, if he borrow them, then must hee obserue *το δμωιν*, that is, that he folow that Author exactly whom he purposeth to immitate, and whereout he bringeth his examples. But if he fayne newe personnes, then must hee keepe his *το δμαλόν*, that is equallie: so bringing them in eche place, that it be alwayes agreeable, and the last like vnto the first, and not make one person nowe a bolde boaster, and the same straightwaiers a wise warie man, for that is passing absurd. Againe, euyer one must obserue *το δρμοστον*, which is interpreted *conuenientiam*, fitnessse: as it is meete and agreeable every where, a man to be stoute, a woman fearefull, a seruant 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 themfelues are open to be intreated of by any man: but if a thing be handled of some one in such fort, as he thereby obtaine great prayse, 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 thinges are to be taken out of auncienter tonges, as the Latines tooke much out of the Greekes, the wordes are not so precifelie to be followed, but that they bee altered according to the iudg-

ment and will of the Immitator, 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 propofition or narration let it not be far fetched or vnlikely, and in the fame forget not the differences of ages and perfons.

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

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

It fytteth not to bring in the personnes of Gods, but in verie great matters. *Cicerio* fayth, when the Tragedy wryters cannot bring theyr matters to good passe, they runne to God. Let not more personnes speake together then foure for auoyding confusion.

The *Chori* must be well garnished and fette foorth: wherein eyther menne are admonished, or reprehended, or counsayled vnto vertue. Such matter must bee chosen for the *Chorus*, as may bee meete and agreeable to that which is in hand. As for instruments and finging, they are Reliques of olde simplicite. For the Musickie commonlye vfed at Theaters and the licentiousnesse of theyr fonges, whiche together wyth theyr wealth increased among the Romaines, is hurtfull to discipline and good manners.

19. In a *Satyr* the clownish company and rurall Gods, are brought in to temperate the Heauinefesse of Tragedies, wyth fome myrth and paftyme. In iesting it must be obferued that it bee not lacyuous or Rybaldlike, or flaunderous, which precept holdeth generallie in all sortes of wrytynges.

In a *Satyr* greate heede is to be taken, of the place, of the day, and of the personnes: as of *Bacchus*, *Silenus*, or the *Satyres*. Againe of the vnmeetnesse or inconuenience of the matter, and of the wordes that they be

fitted according to the persons: of *Decorum*, that he which represented some noble personage in the Tragedie, bee not some busy foole in the *Satyr*: finallie of the hearers, least they bee offended by myxing filthy matters with iestes, wanton toyes wthy vnhonest, or noysome with merry things.

20. The feete are to be applied proper to euery kinde of verfe, and therin a Poet must not vfe too much licence or boldnes. The auncient writers in *Iambick* verfes vfed at first pure *Iambicks*: Afterwards *Spondæus* was admitted into *Locos impares*, but at last fuch was the licentious custome, that they woulde both *Spondæus* where they listed, and other feete without regarde.

21. In compyling of verfes great care and circumpection must be vfed.

Thoſe verfes which be made Extempore, are of no great estimation: thoſe which are vnaſtificiall, are vtterly repelled as too foolish. Though many doo lightlie regard our verfes, yet ought the Carelefneſſe of the hearers to bee no caufe in vs of errour and negligence. Who desireth to make any thing worthy to be heard of learned eares, let hym reade Greeke Authors heedfullie and continually.

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

23. Some Artes doo increaſe, ſome doo decay by a certayne naturall courſe. The olde manner of Comedies decayde, by reaſon of flaundering which therein they vfed againſt many, for which there was a penaltie appointed, leaſt their bitternes ſhould proceede 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*

Comicus, of the last kinde *Menander*, which continued and was accounted the most famous.¹

24. A Poet shoulde not content himselfe onely with others inuentiones, but himselfe also by ye example of old wryters sholde bring someting of his owne industry, which may bee laudable. So did they which writte among the Latines the Comedies called *Togatae*, whose arguments were taken from ye Greeks, and the other which wrytt the *Pretextatae*, 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 thinges, is lesse plausible, hath fewer ornaments, and is not so profitable.

27. A Poet to the knowledge of Philosophie shoulde also adde greater experiance, that he may know the fashions of men and dispositions of people. Thys profit is gott by trauellung, that whatsoeuer he wryteth he may so expresse and order it, that hys narration may be formable.

28. The ende of Poetry is to wryte pleafant thinges, and profitable. Pleasant 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 styrreth vppe the mindes to learning and wisedome.

29. Certaine escapes are to be pardoned in some Poets, specially in great workes. A faulte may bee committed either in respect of hys propper Arte, or in some other Arte: that a Poet shoulde erre in precepts of hys owne arte, is a shamefull thing, to committe a faulte in another Arte is to be borne withal: as in *Virgil*, who sayneth that *Aeneas* comming into *Affrica* flew with hys darte certaine Stagges, whereas

indeede *Affrica* hath in it none of those beastes. Such errors doo happen eyther by vnheedefulnes, 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 error is not to be stucke vpon.

30. A good Poet should haue 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 smoochly is odious: which is proued by a *simile* of the two fenses, hearing and tasting, as in sweete and pleasaunt meates. And the Poem must bee of that forte, that for the sweetenesse of it may bee acceptable and continue like it selfe vnto the ende, least it wearye or drue away a Reader.

33. He that would wryte any thing worthy the posterite, let him not enterprife any thing wherevnto his nature is not agreeable. *Mercury* is not made of wood (as they say) neyther doth *Minerua* fauour all studies in euery one. In all Artes nature is the best helpe, and learned men vse commonly to say that *A Poet is as well borne as made a Poet.*

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

35. The profitte of Poetry sprang thus, for that the auncient wyse men set downe the best things that pertained to mans life, manners, or felicity, and examining and prouing the same by long experiance of time, when they are aged they published them in wrytinges. The vse of Poetry what it was at the first, is manifest by the examples of the mooste learned men: as of *Orpheus* who firtt builded houes: of *Amphion* who

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made Citties, of *Tyrtæus* who first made warre: of *Homer*, who wryt most wyfely.

36. In an artificiall Poet three thinges are requisite, nature, Arte, and diligencie.

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

The confession of an error betoken a noble and a gentle minde. *Celsus* and *Quintillian* doo report of *Hippocrates*, that least he should deceiue his posterity, he confesseth certayne errors, as it well became an excellent minded man, and one of great credite. For (as sayth *Celsus*) light witts because they haue nothing, wyll haue nothing taken from them.

38. In making choise of such freendes as should tell vs the trueth, and correct our wrytinges, heedfull judgment must bee vsed: least eyther we choose vnskylfull folke, or flatterers, or dissemblers. The vnskilfull know not how to iudge, flatterers feare to offend, dissemblers in not praysing doo feeme to commende.

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

40. He which will not flatter and is of ability to iudge, let him endeour to nothing so much, as to the correction of that which is wrytten, and that let be doone with earnest and exquisite iudgment. He which dooth not thus, but offendeth wilfully in breaking his credite too rashly, may be counted for a madde, furious, and frantick foole.

41. The faultes commonly in verses are feauen, as either they be destitute of Arte, of facility, or ornament: or els, they be superfluous, obscure, ambitious, or needeflesse.



*Out of the Epistles ad Mecænatem,
Augustum, et Florum.*

42. An immitation should not be too seruile or superstitious, as though one durst not varry one iotte from the example: neyther should it be so fenceleffe or vnskilfull, as to immitate things which are abfurde, and not to be followed.

43. One should not altogether treade in the steppes of others, but sometime he may enter into such wayes as haue not beene haunted or vfed of others. *Horace* borrowed ye *Iambick* verse of *Archilocus*, expressing fully his numbers and elegant[ly], but his vnfeemely wordes and pratling tauntes hee mostewyshlye shunned.

44. In our verses we should not gape after the phrases of the simpler forte, but striue to haue our writings allowable in the judgments of learned menne.

45. The common peoples judgments of Poets is feldome true, and therefore not to be sought after. The vulgar sort in *Rome* iudged *Pacuvius* to be very learned, *Accius* to bee a graue wryter, that *Afranius* followed *Menander*, *Plautus*, *Epicharmus*: that *Terence* excelled in Arte *Cæcilius* 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, *Næuius* obscure, *Hortenius* vncomely, *Cynna* vnpleasant, 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 styl to others to

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attaine to as great matters. Full well fayd *Sidoriuſ* to *Eucheriuſ*, I reuerence the olde wryters, yet not so as though I leſſe esteemeſ 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 increased 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 burſteth out all at once, and commeth to light all wholly together.

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

49. A Poet ſhould be no leſſe ſkylfull in dealing with the affeſtſ of the mynde, then a tumbler or a Iuggler ſhoulde bee ready in his Arte. And with ſuſh pyth ſhoulde he ſette foorth hys matters, that a Reader ſhoulde ſeeme not onely to heare the thing, but to ſee and be present at the dooing thereof. Which faculty *Fabius* calleth $\hat{\nu}\pi\sigma\alpha\sigma\omega$ and *Ariſtote* $\pi\rho\sigma\alpha\mu\alpha\tau\omega\theta\epsilon\sigma\omega$ $\tau\pi\pi\eta\sigma\omega$.

50. Poets are either ſuſh as diſire to be liked of on ſtages, as Commedie and Tragedie wryters: or ſuſh as woulde bee regefſred in Libraries. Thoſe on ſtages haue ſpeciall reſpect to the motions of the minde, that they may ſtirre bothe the eyes and eares of their beholders. But the other which ſeeke to pleafe priuately with[in] the walles, take good aduifement in their workeſ, that they may ſatisfy the exact iudgments of learned men in their ſtudieſ.

51. A Poet ſhoulde not bee too importunate, as to offende in vnfeafonable ſpeeches: or vngentle, as to contemne the admonitiones of others: or ambicioſ, as

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

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

53. Let a Poet first take vpon 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 so pollish his works, but that euery one for the baseneffe thereof, may think to make as good. Hee may likewyse exercise the part of gesturer, as though he seemed to meddle in rude and common matters, and yet not so deale in them, as it were for variety sake, nor as though he had laboured them throughly but tryfled with them, nor as though he had sweat for them, but practised a little. For so to hyde ones cunning, that nothing shoulde feeme to bee laborsome or exquisite, when notwithstanding, euery part is pollished with care and studie, is a speciaill gyft which *Aristotle* calleth *κρῆψις*.

54. It is onely a poynt of wysedome, to vse many and choyse elegant words, but to vnderstand also and to set foorth thinges which pertaine to the happy ende of mans life. Wherewpon the Poet *Horace*, calleth the Arte poeticall, without the knowledge of learning and philosophy, a *prating vanity*. Therfore a good and allowable Poet, must be adorned with wordes, plentious in sentences, and if not equall to an Orator, yet very neere him, and a special louer of learned men.

F I N I S.



Epilogus.



His small trauell (courteous Reader) I desire thee take in good worth: which I haue compyled, not as an exquisite censure concerning this matter, but (as thou mayst well perceue, and) in trueth to that onely ende that it might be an occasion, to haue the same throughly and with greater discretion, taken in hande and laboured by some other of greater abilitie: of whom I knowe there be manie among the famous Poets in London, who bothe for learning and leysure, may handle this Argument far more pythiilie then my selfe. Which if any of them wyll vouchsafe to doo, I trust wee shall haue Englishe Poetry at a higher price in short space: and the rabble of balde Rymes shall be turned to famous workes, comparable (I suppose) with the best workes of Poetry in other tongues. In the meane time, if my poore skill, can fette the same any thing forwarde, I wyll not cease to practise the same towardes the framing of some apt English *Profodia*:

stylly hoping, and hartelie wishing to enioy first
the benefitte of some others iudgment,
whose authority may beare greater
credite, and whose learn-
ing can better per-
forme it.

(. . .)