



UNIVERSITÄTS-
BIBLIOTHEK
PADERBORN

Universitätsbibliothek Paderborn

The History Of English Poetry

From The Close of the Eleventh To The Commencement of the Eighteenth
Century

Warton, Thomas

London, 1781

Section XXIII. Andrew Borde. Bale. Anslay. Chertsey. Fabyll's ghost a
poem. The Merry Devil of Edmonton. Other minor poets of the reign of
Henry the eighth.

[urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-51323](https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:hbz:466:1-51323)

S E C T. XXIII.

IT will not be supposed, that all the poets of the reign of Henry the eighth were educated in the school of Petrarch. The graces of the Italian muse, which had been taught by Surrey and Wyat, were confined to a few. Nor were the beauties of the classics yet become general objects of imitation. There are many writers of this period who still rhymed on, in the old profaic track of their immediate predecessors, and never ventured to deviate into the modern improvements. The strain of romantic fiction was lost; in the place of which, they did not substitute the elegancies newly introduced.

I shall consider together, yet without an exact observation of chronological order, the poets of the reign of Henry the eighth who form this subordinate class, and who do not bear any mark of the character of the poetry which distinguishes this period. Yet some of these have their degree of merit; and, if they had not necessarily claimed a place in our series, deserve examination.

Andrew Borde, who writes himself *ANDREAS PERFORATUS*, with about as much propriety and as little pedantry as Buchanan calls one Wischart *SOPHOCARDIUS*, was educated at Winchester and Oxford^a; and is said, I believe on very slender proof, to have been physician to king Henry the eighth. His *BREVIARY OF HEALTH*, first printed in 1547^b, is dedicated to the

^a See his *INTRODUCTION TO KNOWLEDGE*, ut *infr.* cap. xxxv.

^b "Compyled by Andrewe Boorde of
"Phyicke Doctoure an Englyshe man."
It was reprinted by William Powell in

1552, and again in 1557. There was an impression by T. East, 1587, 4to. Others also in 1548, and 1575, which I have never seen. The latest is by East in 1598, 4to.

college

college of physicians, into which he had been incorporated. The first book of this treatise is said to have been examined and approved by the University of Oxford in 1546^e. He chiefly practised in Hampshire; and being popishly affected, was censured by Poynt, a Calvinistic bishop of Winchester, for keeping three prostitutes in his house, which he proved to be his patients^d. He appears to have been a man of great superstition, and of a weak and whimsical head: and having been once a Carthusian, continued ever afterwards to profess celibacy, to drink water, and to wear a shirt of hair. His thirst of knowledge, dislike of the reformation, or rather his unsettled disposition, led him abroad into various parts of Europe, which he visited in the medical character. Wood says, that he was "esteemed a noted poet, a witty and ingenious person, and an excellent physician." Hearne, who has plainly discovered the origin of Tom Thumb, is of opinion, that this facetious practitioner in physic gave rise to the name of MERRY ANDREW, the Fool on the mountebank's stage. The reader will not perhaps be displeased to see that antiquary's reasons for this conjecture: which are at the same time a vindication of Borde's character, afford some new anecdotes of his life, and shew that a Merry Andrew may be a scholar and an ingenious man. "It is observable, that the author [Borde] was as fond of the word DOLENTYD, as of many other hard and uncooth words, as any Quack can be. He begins his BREVIARY OF HEALTH, *Egregious doctours and Maysters of the eximious and archane science of Physicke, of your urbanite exasperate not your selve,* &c. But notwithstanding this, will any one from hence infer or assert, that the author was either a pedant or a superficial scholar? I think, upon due consideration, he will judge the contrary. Dr. Borde was an ingenious man, and knew how to humour and please his patients, readers, and auditors. In

^a At the end of which is this Note.
^b Here endeth the first boke Examined

" in Oxforde in the yere of our Lorde

" MCCCCXLVI, &c."

^c See *Against Martin*, &c. p. 48.

“ his travells and visits, he often appeared and spoke in public :
 “ and would often frequent markets and fairs where a conflux
 “ of people used to get together, to whom he prescribed ; and
 “ to induce them to flock thither the more readily, he would
 “ make *humorous* speeches, couched in such language as *caused*
 “ *mirth*, and *wonderfully* propagated his fame : and 'twas for the
 “ same end that he made use of such expressions in his Books,
 “ as would otherwise (the *circumstances* not considered) be very
 “ justly pronounced *bombast*. As he was *versed in antiquity*, he
 “ had words at command from old writers with which to amuse
 “ his hearers, which could not fail of *pleasing*, provided he
 “ added at the same time some *remarkable explication*. For in-
 “ stance, if he told them that *Δευδάρις* was an old brass medal
 “ among the Greeks, the *oddness* of the word, would, *without*
 “ *doubt*, gain attention ; tho nothing *near so much*, as if *withall* he
 “ *signified*, that 'twas a brass medal a *little bigger* than an Obolus,
 “ that used to be put in the mouths of persons that were dead.
 “ — And withall, 'twould *affect them the more*, if when he
 “ spoke of such a brass medal, he signified to them, that brass
 “ was in old time looked upon as *more honourable than other*
 “ *metals*, which he might *safely enough do*, from *Homer* and his
 “ *scholiast*. *Homer's words* are &c. A passage, which *without*
 “ *doubt* *HIERONYMUS MAGIUS* would have taken notice of in
 “ the fourteenth chapter of his Book *DE TINTINNABULIS*, had
 “ it occurred to his memory when in prison he was writing,
 “ without the help of books before him, that *curious Discourse*.
 “ 'Twas from the Doctor's method of using such speeches at
 “ markets and fairs, that in *aftertimes*, those that imitated the
 “ like *humorous, jocular* language, were stiled *MERRY ANDREWS*,
 “ a term *much in vogue* on our stages.”

He is supposed to have compiled or composed the *MERRY TALES*
of the mad men of Gotham, which, as were told by Wood, “ in the
 “ reign of Henry the eighth, and after, was accounted a book full

* Hearne's *BENEDICT, ABB.* Tom. i. *PREFAT.* p. 50. edit. Oxon. 1735.

“ of wit and mirth by scholars and gentlemen ‘.’” This piece, which probably was not without its temporary ridicule, and which yet maintains a popularity in the nursery, was, I think, first printed by Wynkyn de Worde. Hearne was of opinion, that these idle pranks of the men of Gotham, a town in Lincolnshire, bore a reference to some customary law-tenures belonging to that place or its neighbourhood, now grown obsolete; and that Blount might have enriched his book on ANTIEN TENURES with these ludicrous stories. He is speaking of the political design of REYNARD THE FOX, printed by Caxton. “ It was an admirable Thing. And the design, being political, and to represent a wise government, was equally good. So little reason is there to look upon this as a *poor despicable* book. Nor is there more reason to esteem THE MERRY TALES OF THE MAD MEN OF GOTHAM (which was much *valued and cried up* in Henry the eighth’s time tho now sold at ballad-fingers stalls) as *altogether a romance*: a certain *skillfull* person having told me more than once, that he was *assured by one of Gotham*, that they formerly held lands there, by such Sports and Customs as are touched upon in this book. For which reason, I think particular notice should have been taken of it in Blount’s TENURES, as I do not doubt but there would, had that *otherwise curious* author been apprised of the *matter*. But ‘tis *strange* to see the changes that have been made in the book of REYNARD THE FOX, from the original editions †!”

Borde’s chief poetical work is entitled, “ The first Boke of the INTRODUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE, the which doth teach a man to speake parte of al maner of languages, and to knowe the usage and fashion of al maner of countryes: and for to knowe the most parte of al maner of coynes of money, the

† ATH. OXON. i. 74. There is an edition in duodecimo by Henry Wikes, without date, but about 1568, entitled, *MERIE TALES of the madmen of Gotham, gathered together by A. B. of physicke doctour*. The

oldest I have seen, is London, 1630, 12mo.

* Hearne’s NOT. ET SPICILEG. ad Gul. Neubrig. vol. iii. p. 744. See also BENEDICT. ABB. ut supr. p. 54.

“ whych is currant in every region. Made by Andrew Borde
 “ of phifyk doctör.” It was printed by the Coplands, and is
 dedicated to the king’s daughter the princefs Mary. The dedi-
 cation is dated from Montpelier, in the year 1542. The book,
 containing thirty-nine chapters, is partly in verfe and partly in
 profe; with wooden cuts prefixed to each chapter. The firft is
 a fatire, as it appears, on the fickle nature of an Englifhman:
 the fymbolical print prefixed to this chapter, exhibiting a naked
 man, with a pair of fheers in one hand and a roll of cloth in the
 other, not determined what fort of a coat he fhall order to be
 made, has more humour, than any of the verfes which follow^b.
 Nor is the poetry deftitute of humour only; but of every em-
 bellifhment, both of metrical arrangement and of expreffion.
 Borde has all the baldnefs of allufion, and barbarity of verfifi-
 cation, belonging to Skelton, without his ftrokes of fatire and
 feverity. The following lines, part of the Englifhman’s fpeech,
 will not prejudice the reader in his favour.

What do I care, if all the world me faile?
 I will have a garment reach to my taile.
 Then am I a minion, for I weare the new guife,
 The next yeare after I hope to be wife,
 Not only in wearing my gorgeous aray,
 For I will go to learning a whole fummers day.

In the feventh chapter, he gives a fantaftic account of his tra-
 vels^c, and owns, that his metre deserves no higher appellation
 than *ryme dogrell*. But this delineation of the fickle Englifhman
 is perhaps to be reftriated to the circumftances of the author’s

^b Harrifon, in his DESCRIPTION OF ENGLAND, having mentioned this work by Borde, adds, “ Suche is our mutabi-
 “ litie, that to daie there is none [equal]
 “ to the Spanifh guife, to morrow the
 “ French toies are moft fine and delectable,
 “ yer [ere] long no fuch apparel as that
 “ which is after the *Almaine* fafhion: by
 “ and by the Turkish maner otherwife the

“ *Morifco* gowns, the *Barbarian* fieves, the
 “ mandilion worne to Collie Wefton ward,
 “ and the fhorte *French* breeches, &c.” B.
 ii. ch. 9. p. 172.

^c Prefixed to which, is a wooden cut of
 the author Borde, ftanding in a fort of
 pew or ftall, under a canopy, habited in an
 academical gown, a laurel-crown on his
 head, with a book before him on a defk.

age,

age, without a respect to the national character: and, as Borde was a rigid catholic, there is a probability, notwithstanding in other places he treats of natural dispositions, that a satire is designed on the laxity of principle, and revolutions of opinion, which prevailed at the reformation, and the easy compliance of many of his changeable countrymen with a new religion for lucrative purposes.

I transcribe the character of the Welshman, chiefly because he speaks of his harp.

I am a Welshman, and do dwel in Wales,
 I have loved to serche budgets, and looke in males:
 I love not to labour, to delve, nor to dyg,
 My fyngers be lymed lyke a lyme-twyg.
 And wherby ryches I do not greatly fet,
 Syth all hys [is] fyshe that cometh to the net.
 I am a gentylman, and come of Brutes blood,
 My name is ap Ryce, ap Davy, ap Flood:
 I love our Lady, for I am of hyr kynne,
 He that doth not love her, I beshrewe his chynne.
 My kyndred is ap Hoby, ap Jenkin, ap Goffe.
 Bycause I go barelegged, I do catch the coffe.
 Bycause I do go barelegged it is not for pryde.
 I have a gray cote, my body for to hyde.
 I do love *caruse boby*^x, good rosted cheefe,
 And swyshe metheglyn I loke for my fees.
 And yf I have my HARPE, I care for no more,
 It is my treasure, I kepe it in store.
 For my harpe is made of a good mare's skyn,
 The strynges be of horse heare, it maketh a good dyn.
 My songe, and my voyce, and my harpe doth agree,
 Much lyke the buffing of an homble bee:
 Yet in my country I do make pastyme
 In tellyng of prophyces which be not in ryme¹.

^x That is, *toasted cheese*, next mentioned. Wales he says, there are many beautiful

¹ Ch. ii. In the prose description of and strong castles standing yet. "The
 " castles

I have before mentioned "A ryght pleasant and merry History of the MYLNER OF ABINGTON", with his wife and his faire, daughter and of two poor scholars of Cambridge," a meagre epitome of Chaucer's MILLER'S TALE. In a blank leaf of the Bodleian copy, this tale is said by Thomas Newton of Cheshire, an elegant Latin epigrammatist of the reign of queen Elisabeth, to have been written by Borde^m. He is also supposed to have published a collection of silly stories called SCOGIN'S JESTS, sixty in number. Perhaps Shakespeare took his idea from this jest-book, that Scogan was a mere buffoon, where he says that Falstaffe, as a juvenile exploit, "broke Scogan's head at the court-gateⁿ." Nor have we any better authority, than this publication by Borde, that Scogan was a graduate in the univerfity, and a jester to a king^o. Hearne, at the end of Benedictus Abbas, has printed Borde's ITINERARY, as it may be called; which is little more than a string of names, but is quoted by Norden in his SPECULUM BRITANNIÆ^p. Borde's circulatory peregrinations, in the quality of a quack-doctor, might have furnished more ample materials for an English topo-

"castels and the countre of Wales, and the people of Wales, be much lyke to the castels and the country of the people of Castyle and Biscayn." In describing Gascony, he says, that at Bordeaux, "in the cathedrall church of Saint Andrews, is the fairest and the greatest payre of orgyns [organs] in al Chrystendome, in the which orgins be many instrumentes and vyces [devices] as gians [giants] heads and starres, the which doth move and wagge with their jawes and eis [eyes] as fast as the player playeth." ch. xxiii.

^m A village near Cambridge.

ⁿ See *supr.* vol. i. p. 432.

^o Sec. P. Hen. iv. Act. iii. Sc. ii.

^p It is hard to say whence Jonson got his account of Scogan, MASQUE OF THE FORTUNATE ISLES, vol. iv. p. 192.

Merefool. Skogan? What was he?

Johbbiel. O, a fine gentleman, and a Master of Arts

Of Henry the Fourth's time, that made disguises

For the king's fones, and writ in balad. royal

Daintily well.

Merefool. But wrote he like a gentleman?

Johbbiel. In rhyme, fine tinkling rhyme, and flowand verse,

With now and then some sense; and he was paid for't,

Regarded and rewarded, which few poets Are now adays.—

See Tyrwhitt's CHAUCER, vol. v. AN ACCOUNT, &c. p. xx. And compare what I have said of Scogan, *supr.* vol. ii. p. 135. Drayton, in the Preface to his ELOGUES, says, "the COLIN CLOUT OF SKOGGAN under Henry the seventh is pretty." He must mean Skelton.

^q Pag. 13. MIDDLESEX. i. P.

graphy.

graphy. Beside the BREVARY OF HEALTH, mentioned above, and which was approved by the university of Oxford, Borde has left the DIETARIE OF HEALTH, reprinted in 1576, the PROMPTUARIE OF MEDICINE, the DOCTRINE OF URINES, and the PRINCIPLES OF ASTRONOMICAL PROGNOSTICATIONS: which are proofs of attention to his profession, and shew that he could sometimes be serious*. But Borde's name would not have been now remembered, had he wrote only profound systems in medicine and astronomy. He is known to posterity as a buffoon, not as a philosopher. Yet, I think, some of his astronomical tracts have been epitomised and bound up with Erra Pater's Almanacs.

Of Borde's numerous books, the only one that can afford any degree of entertainment to the modern reader, is the DIETARIE OF HELTHE: where, giving directions as a physician; concerning the choice of houses, diet, and apparel, and not suspecting how little he should instruct, and how much he might amuse, a curious posterity, he has preserved many anecdotes of the private life, customs, and arts, of our ancestors. This work is dedicated to Thomas duke of Norfolk, lord treasurer under Henry the eighth. In the dedication, he speaks of his

* *The Principles of Astronomie the which he diligently persequyt is in a maner a prognostication to the worldes ende.* In thirteen chapters. For R. Copland, without date, 12mo. It is among bishop More's collection at Cambridge, with some other of Borde's books.

* See Ames, HIST. PRINT. p. 152. Pitt. p. 735.

* In his rules for building or planning a House, he supposes a quadrangle. The Gate-house, or Tower, to be exactly opposite to the Portico of the Hall. The Privy Chamber to be annexed to the Chamber of State. A Parlour joining to the Buttery and Pantry at the lower end of the Hall. The Pastry-house and Larder annexed to the Kitchen. Many of the chambers to have a view into the Chapel. In

the outer quadrangle to be a stable, but only for horses of pleasure. The stables, dairy, and slaughter-house, to be a quarter of a mile from the house. The Moat to have a spring falling into it, and to be often scowered. An Orchard of sundry fruits is convenient: but he rather recommends a Garden filled with aromatic herbs. In the Garden a Pool or two, for fish. A Park filled with deer and conies. "A Dove-house also is a necessary thyng about a mannyon-place. And, among other thynges, a *Payre of Buttes* is a decent thyng about a mannyon. And otherwise, for a great man necessary it is for to passe his tyme with bowles in an aly, when at this is finished, and the mannyon replenished with implements." Ch. iv, Sign. C. ii. Dedication dated 1542.

duke

being called in as a physician to sir John Drury, the year when cardinal Wolfey was promoted to York; but that he did not chuse to prescribe without consulting doctor Buttes, the king's physician. He apologises to the duke, for not writing in the *ornate* phraseology now generally affected. He also hopes to be excused, for using in his writings so many *wordes of mirth*: but this, he says, was only to make *your grace merrie*, and because mirth has ever been esteemed the best medicine. Borde must have had no small share of vanity, who could think thus highly of his own pleafantry. And to what a degree of taste and refinement must our antient dukes and lords treasurers have arrived, who could be exhilarated by the witticisms and the lively language of this facetious philosopher?

John Bale, a tolerable Latin classic, and an eminent biographer, before his conversion from popery, and his advancement to the bishoprick of Ossory by king Edward the sixth, composed many scriptural interludes, chiefly from incidents of the New Testament. They are, the Life of Saint John the Baptist, written in 1538. Christ in his twelfth year. Baptism and Temptation. The Resurrection of Lazarus. The Council of the High-priests. Simon the Leper. Our Lord's Supper, and the Washing of the feet of his Disciples. Christ's Burial and Resurrection. The Passion of Christ. The *Comedie* of the three Laws of Nature, Moses, and Christ, corrupted by the Sodomites, Pharisees, and Papists, printed by Nicholas Bamburgh in 1538: and so popular, that it was reprinted by Colwell in 1562^u. God's Promises to Man^w. Our author, in his *Vocacyon to the Bishoprick of Ossory*, informs us, that his COMEDY of John the Baptist, and his TRAGEDY of God's Promises, were acted by the youths upon a Sunday, at the market cross of Kilkenny^x. What shall we think of the state, I will not say of the stage, but of common sense, when these deplorable dramas could be

^u Both in quarto. At the end is *A Song of Benedictus*, compiled by Johan Bale.

^w This was written in 1538. And first

printed under the name of a TRAGEDIE or ENTERLUDE, by Charlewood, 1577. 4to.

^x Fol. 24.

endured?

endured? Of an age, when the Bible was profaned and ridiculed from a principle of piety? But the fashion of acting mysteries appears to have expired with this writer. He is said, by himself, to have written a book of Hymns, and another of jests and tales: and to have translated the tragedy of PAMMACHIUS¹; the same perhaps which was acted at Christ's college in Cambridge in 1544, and afterwards laid before the privy council as a libel on the reformation². A low vein of abusive burlesque, which had more virulence than humour, seems to have been one of Bale's talents: two of his pamphlets against the papists, all whom he considered as monks, are entitled the MASS OF THE GLUTTONS, and the ALCORAN OF THE PRELATES³. Next to exposing the impostures of popery, literary history was his favorite pursuit: and his most celebrated performance is his account of the British writers. But this work, perhaps originally undertaken by Bale as a vehicle of his sentiments in religion, is not only full of misrepresentations and partialities, arising from his religious prejudices, but of general inaccuracies, proceeding from negligence or misinformation. Even those more antient Lives which he transcribes from Leland's commentary on the same subject, are often interpolated with false facts, and impertinently marked with a misapplied zeal for reformation. He is angry with many authors, who flourished before the thirteenth century, for being catholics. He tells us, that lord Cromwell frequently screened him from the fury of the more bigotted bishops, on account of the comedies he had published⁴. But whether plays in particular, or other compositions, are here to be understood by comedies, is uncertain.

Brian Anslay, or Annesley, yeoman of the wine cellar to Henry the eighth about the year 1520, translated a popular French poem into English rhymes, at the exhortation of the

¹ CENT. viii. 100. p. 702. And Verheiden, p. 149.

² See vol. ii. p. 377. Bale says, "Pam-

"machii tragœdias transluli."

³ Ibid.

⁴ "Ob editas COMÆDIAS." Ubi supr.

gentle earl of Kent, called the *CITIE OF DAMES*, in three books. It was printed in 1521, by Henry Pepwell, whose prologue prefixed begins with these unpromising lines,

So now of late came into my custode
This forseyde book, by Brian Anslay,
Yeoman of the feller with the eight king Henry.

Another translator of French into English, much about the same time, is Andrew Chertsey. In the year 1520, Wynkyn de Worde printed a book with this title, partly in prose and partly in verse, *Here foloweth the passion of our lord Jesu Crist translated out of French into Englysch by Andrew Chertsey gentleman the yere of our lord MDXX*^c. I will give two stanzas of Robert Copland's prologue, as it records the diligence, and some other performances, of this very obscure writer.

The godly use of prudent-wytted men
Cannot absteyn theyr aunyent exercise.
Recorde of late how befiley with his pen
The translator of the sayd treatyse
Hath him indevered, in most godly wyse,
Bokes to translate, in volumes large and fayre,
From French in prose, of goostly exemplaire.
As is, the *floure of Gods commaundements*,
A treatyse also called *Lucydarye*,
With two other of the *sevyn sacraments*,
One of *cristen men the ordinary*,
The seconde *the craft to lyve well and to dye*.
With dyvers other to mannes lyfe profytable,
A vertuose use and ryght commendable.

The *Floure of God's Commaundements* was printed by Wynkyn de Worde, in folio, in 1521. A print of the author's arms, with

^c In quarto.

the name **CHERTSEY**, is added. The *Lucydayre* is translated from a favorite old French poem called *Li Lusidaire*. This is a translation of the **ELUCIDARIUM**, a large work in dialogue, containing the sum of christian theology, by some attributed to Anselm archbishop of Canterbury in the twelfth century^d. Chertsey's other versions, mentioned in Copland's prologue, are from old French manuals of devotion, now equally forgotten, Such has been the fate of volumes *fayre and large!* Some of these versions have been given to George Ashby, clerk of the signet to Margaret queen of Henry the sixth, who wrote a moral poem for the use of their son prince Edward, on the *Active policy of a prince*, finished in the author's eightieth year. The prologue begins with a compliment to "Maisters Gower, Chaucer, and "Lydgate," a proof of the estimation which that celebrated triumvirate still continued to maintain. I believe it was never printed. But a copy, with a small mutilation at the end, remains among bishop More's manuscripts at Cambridge^e.

In the dispersed library of the late Mr. William Collins, I saw a thin folio of two sheets in black letter, containing a poem in the octave stanza, entitled, **FABYL'S GHOSTE**, printed by John Rastell in the year 1533. The piece is of no merit; and I should not perhaps have mentioned it, but as the subject serves to throw light on our early drama. Peter Fabell, whose apparition speaks in this poem, was called *The Merrie Devil of Edmonton*, near London. He lived in the reign of Henry the seventh, and was buried in the church of Edmonton. Weever, in his **ANTIENNT FUNERAL MONUMENTS**, published in 1631, says under Edmonton, that in the church "lieth interred under "a seemlie tombe without inscription, the body of Peter Fabell, as the report goes, upon whom this fable was fathered, "that he by his wittie devises beguiled the devill. Belike he "was some ingenious-conceited gentleman, who did use some

^d Wynkyn de Worde printed, *Here begynneb a lytell treatyse called the Lucydayre.* With wooden cuts. No date. In quarto.

^e MSS. MORE, 492. It begins, "Right "and myghty prince and my ryght good "lorde."

“fleighte trickes for his own disportes. He lived and died in
 “the raigne of Henry the seventh, faith the booke of his merry
 “Pranks’.” The book of Fabell’s *Merry Pranks* I have never
 seen. But there is an old anonymous comedy, written in the
 reign of James the first, which took its rise from this merry
 magician. It was printed in 1617, and is called the MERRY
 DEVIL OF EDMONTON, as it hath been sundry times acted by his
 majesties servants at the Globe on the Banke-side*. In the Pro-
 logue, Fabell is introduced, reciting his own history.

Tis Peter Fabell a renowned scholler,
 Whose fame hath still beene hitherto forgot
 By all the writers of this latter age.
 In Middle-sex his birth, and his aboade,
 Not full seauen mile from this great famous city:
 That, for his fame in flights and magicke won,
 Was cald the Merry Fiend of Edmonton.
 If any heere make doubt of such a name,
 In Edmonton yet fresh vnto this day,
 Fixt in the wall of that old ancient church
 His monument remaineth to be seene:
 His memory yet in the mouths of men,
 That whilst he liu’d he could deceiue the deuill.
 Imagine now, that whilst he is retirde,
 From Cambridge backe vnto his natieue home,
 Suppose the silent sable vifage night,
 Casts her blacke curtaine ouer all the world,
 And whilst he sleepes within his silent bed,
 Toyl’d with the studies of the passed day:
 The very time and howre wherein that spirite
 That many yeares attended his command;
 And oftentimes ’twixt Cambridge and that towne,
 Had in a minute borne him through the ayre,

* Pag. 534.

* In quarto, Lond.

By

By composition 'twixt the fiend and him,
 Comes now to claime the scholler for his due.
 Behold him here laid on his restlesse couch,
 His fatall chime prepared at his head,
 His chamber guarded with these fable flights,
 And by him stands that necromanticke chaire,
 In which he makes his direfull inuocations,
 And binds the fiends that shall obey his will.
 Sit with a pleased eye vntill you know
 The commicke end of our sad tragique show.

The play is without absurdities, and the author was evidently an attentive reader of Shakespeare. It has nothing, except the machine of the chime, in common with FABYLL'S GHOSTE. Fabell is mentioned in our chronicle-histories, and from his dealings with the devil, was commonly supposed to be a friar^h.

In the year 1537, Wilfrid Holme, a gentleman of Huntington in Yorkshire, wrote a poem called *The Fall and evil Success of Rebellion*. It is a dialogue between England and the author, on the commotions raised in the northern counties on account of the reformation in 1537, under Cromwell's administration. It was printed at London in 1573. Alliteration is here carried to the most ridiculous excess: and from the constraint of adhering inviolably to an identity of initials, from an affectation of coining prolix words from the Latin, and from a total ignorance of prosodical harmony, the author has produced one of the most obscure, rough, and unpleasing pieces of versification in our language. He seems to have been a disciple of Skelton. The poem, probably from its political reference, is mentioned by Hollinshedⁱ. Bale, who overlooks the author's poetry in his piety, thinks that he has learnedly and perspicuously discussed the absurdities of popery^k.

^h See also Norden's SPECULUM BRITANNIÆ, written in 1596. MIDDLESEX, p. 18.
 And Fuller's WORTHIES, MIDDLESEX,

p. 186. edit. fol. 166z.

ⁱ Chron. iii. p. 978.

^k ix. 22.

One Charles Bansley, about the year 1540, wrote a rhyming satire on the pride and vices of women *now a days*. I know not if the first line will tempt the reader to see more.

“ Bo peep, what have we spied !”

It was printed in quarto by Thomas Rainolde ; but I do not find it among Ames's books of that printer, whose last piece is dated 1555. Of equal reputation is Christopher Goodwin, who wrote the *MAYDEN'S DREME*, a vision without imagination, printed in 1542^l, and *THE CHANCE OF THE DOLORUS LOVER*, a lamentable story without pathos, printed in 1520^m. With these two may be ranked, Richard Feylde, or Field, author of a poem printed in quarto by Wynkyn de Worde, called *THE TREATISE OF THE LOVER AND JAYE*. The prologue begins.

Though laureate poetes in old antiquite.

I must not forget to observe here, that Edward Haliwell, admitted a fellow of King's college Cambridge in 1532, wrote the Tragedy of Dido, which was acted at saint Paul's school in London, under the conduct of the very learned master John Rightwise, before cardinal Wolseyⁿ. But it may be doubted, whether this drama was in English. Wood says, that it was written by Rightwise^o. One John Hooker, fellow of Magdalene college Oxford in 1535, wrote a comedy called by Wood *PISCATOR*, or *The Fisher caught*^p. But as latinity seems to have been his object, I suspect this comedy to have been in Latin, and to have been acted by the youth of his college.

The fanaticisms of chemistry seem to have remained at least till the dissolution of the monasteries. William Blomefield, otherwise Rattelsden, born at Bury in Suffolk, bachelor in

^l In 4to. Pr. “ Behold you young ladies
“ of high parentage.”

^m In 4to. Pr. “ Upon a certain tyme as
“ it befell.”

ⁿ See *supr.* Vol. ii. 434.

^o Compare Tanner, *BIBL.* pag. 632.
372. *ATH. OXON.* i. 17.

^p *ATH. OXON.* i. 60. [See *supr.* Vol. ii.
p. 387.]

physic,

phyfic, and a monk of Bury-abbey, was an adventurer in quest of the philosopher's stone. While a monk of Bury, as I presume, he wrote a metrical chemical tract, entitled, *BLOMEFIELD'S BLOSSOMS, OR THE CAMPE OF PHILOSOPHY*. It is a vision, and in the octave stanza. It was originally written in the year 1530, according to a manuscript that I have seen: but in the copy printed by Ashmole⁹, which has some few improvements and additional stanzas, our author says he began to dream in 1557¹. He is admitted into the camp of philosophy by *TIME*, through a superb gate which has twelve locks. Just within the entrance were assembled all the true philosophers from *Hermes* and *Aristotle*, down to *Roger Bacon*, and the canon of *Bridlington*. Detached at some distance, appear those unskilful but specious pretenders to the transmutation of metals, lame, blind, and emaciated, by their own pernicious drugs and injudicious experiments, who defrauded king *Henry the fourth* of immense treasures by a counterfeit elixir. Among other wonders of this mysterious region, he sees the tree of philosophy, which has fifteen different buds, bearing fifteen different fruits. Afterwards *Blomfield* turning protestant, did not renounce his chemistry with his religion, for he appears to have dedicated to queen *Elisabeth* another system of occult science, entitled, *THE RULE OF LIFE, OR THE FIFTH ESSENCE*, with which her majesty must have been highly edified².

Although lord *Surrey* and some others so far deviated from the dullness of the times, as to copy the Italian poets, the same taste does not seem to have uniformly influenced all the nobility of the court of king *Henry the eighth* who were fond of writing verses. *Henry Parker*, lord *Morley*, who died an old man in the latter end of that reign, was educated in the best literature which our universities afforded. *Bale* mentions his *TRAGEDIES* and *COMEDIES*, which I suspect to be nothing more

⁹ See Stanz. 5.

¹ See Ashmole's *THEATRUM CHEMICUM*, p. 305. 478.

² MSS. *MORE*, autograph. 430. Pr.

"Although, most redoubted, suffer la-
"dy." See Fox, *MARTYR*. edit. i. p. 479.

than

than grave mysteries and moralities, and which probably would not now have been lost, had they deserved to live. He mentions also his RHYMES, which I will not suppose to have been imitations of Petrarch¹. Wood says, that “his younger years were adorned with all kinds of *superficial* learning, especially with dramatic poetry, and his elder with that which was “divine.” It is a stronger proof of his piety than his taste, that he sent, as a new year’s gift to the princess Mary, HAMPOLE’S COMMENTARY UPON SEVEN OF THE FIRST PENITENTIAL PSALMS. The manuscript, with his epistle prefixed, is in the royal manuscripts of the British Museum². Many of Morley’s translations, being dedicated either to king Henry the eighth, or to the princess Mary, are preserved in manuscript in the same royal repository³. They are chiefly from Solomon, Seneca, Erasmus, Athanasius, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, and Paulus Jovius. The authors he translated shew his track of reading. But we should not forget his attention to the classics, and that he translated also Tully’s DREAM OF SCIPIO, and three or four lives of Plutarch, although not immediately from the Greek⁴. He seems to have been a rigid catholic, retired and studious. His declaration, or paraphrase, on the ninety-fourth Psalm, was printed by Berthelette in 1539. A theological commentary by a lord, was too curious and important a production to be neglected by our first printers.

¹ SCRIPT. BRIT. par. p. ff. 103.

² ATH. OXON. i. 52.

³ MSS. 18 B. xxi.

⁴ But see MSS. GRESHAM. 8.

⁵ See MSS. (Bibl. Bodl.) LAUD. H. 17. MSS. Bibl. REG. 17 D. 2. — 17 D. xi. — 18 A. lx. And Walpole, ROY. and NOB. AUTH. i. p. 92. seq.

S E C T.