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The History Of English Poetry

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

Warton, Thomas

London, 1781

Section XXXIX. Classical drama revived and studied. The Phœnissæ of Euripides translated by Gascoigne. Seneca's Tragedies translated. Account of the translators, and of their respective versions. ...

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S E C T. XXXIX.

THIS appearance of a regular tragedy, with the division of acts and scenes, and the accompaniment of the antient chorus, represented both at the Middle-temple and at Whitehall, and written by the most accomplished nobleman of the court of queen Elisabeth, seems to have directed the attention of our more learned poets to the study of the old classical drama, and in a short time to have produced vernacular versions of the *Jocasta* of Euripides, as it is called, and of the ten Tragedies of Seneca. I do not find that it was speedily followed by any original compositions on the same legitimate model.

The *Jocasta* of Euripides was translated by George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmerth, both students of Grays-inn, and acted in the refectory of that society, in the year 1566. Gascoigne translated the second, third, and fifth acts, and Kinwelmerth the first, and fourth. It was printed in Gascoigne's poems, of which more will be said hereafter, in 1577, under the following title, "*Jocasta*, a Tragedie written in Greeke by Euripides. Translated and digested into Acte, by George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmerthe of Graies inn, and there by them presented, An. 1566." The Epilogue was written in quatrains by Christopher Yelverton, then one of their brother students. So strongly were our audiences still attached to spectacle, that the authors did not venture to present their play, without introducing a *Dumb Shew* at the beginning of every act. For this, however, they had the example and authority of *Gordobuc*. Some of the earliest specimens of Inigo Jones's Grecian architecture are marred by Gothic ornaments.

It

It must, however, be observed, that this is by no means a just or exact translation of the *Jocasta*, that is the *Phoenissæ*, of Euripides. It is partly a paraphrase, and partly an abridgement, of the Greek tragedy. There are many omissions, retrenchments, and transpositions. The chorus, the characters, and the substance of the story, are entirely retained, and the tenor of the dialogue is often preserved through whole scenes. Some of the beautiful odes of the Greek chorus are neglected, and others substituted in their places, newly written by the translators. In the favorite address to Mars*, Gascoigne has totally deserted the rich imagery of Euripides, yet has found means to form an original ode, which is by no means destitute of pathos or imagination.

O fierce and furious Mars! whose harmefull hart
Reioiceth most to shed the giltlesse blood;
Whose headie will doth all the world subvert,
And doth enuie the pleasant merry mood
Of our estate, that erst in quiet stood:
Why dost thou thus our harmlesse towne annoy,
Whych mighty Bacchus gouerned in ioy?

Father of warre and death, that doost remoue,
With wrathfull wrecke, from wofull mothers brest
The trusty pledges of their tender loue!
So graunt the goddes, that for our finall rest
Dame Venus' pleasant lookes may please thee best:
Whereby, when thou shalt all amazed stand,
The sword may fall out of thy trembling hand^b:

And thou mayst proue some other way ful wel
The bloody prowes of thy mighty speare,

* See *PHOENISSÆ*. pag. 140. edit. Barnef.

ὦ πολέμοσθ' Ἄρης,
τί ποδ' ἄριστος
καὶ θυράσῃ κλέϊσθαι, &c.

^b So Tibullus, where he cautions Mars not to gaze on his mistress. Lib. iv. ii. 3.

At tu, violente, caveto,
Ne tibi miranti turpiter arma cadant.

Wherewith

Wherewith thou raisest from the depth of hell
 The wrathful sprites of all the Furies there;
 Who, when they wake, do wander euery where,
 And neuer rest to range about the coastes,
 T' enrich that pit with spoyle of damned ghostes;
 And when thou hast our fields forsaken thus,
 Let cruel DISCORD beare thee company,
 Engirt with snakes and serpents venomous;
 Euen She, that can with red vermilion die
 The gladsome Greene that floristh pleasantly;
 And make the greedy ground a drinking cyp,
 To sup the blood of murdered bodies vp.

Yet thou returne, O Ioie, and pleasant Peace!
 From whence thou didst against our willes depart:
 Ne let thy worthie mind from trauel cease,
 To chase disdayne out of the poysoned heart,
 That raysed warre to all our paynes and smart,
 Euen from the breast of Oedipus his sonne
 Whose swelling pride hath all this iarre begon, &c.

I am of opinion, that our translators thought the many mythological and historical allusions in the Greek chorus, too remote and unintelligible, perhaps too cumbersome, to be exhibited in English. In the ode to CONCORD, which finishes the fourth act, translated by Kinwelmershe, there is great elegance of expression and versification. It is not in Euripides.

O bliffesfull CONCORD, bred in sacred brest
 Of hym that rules the restlesse-rolling skie,
 That to the earth, for mans assured rest,
 From height of heauens vouchsafest downe to flie!

Act ii. Sc. ult.

In

In thee alone the mightie power doth lie,
 With sweet accorde to keepe the frowning starres,
 And euerie planet els, from hurtful warres.

In thee, in thee, such noble vertue bydes,
 As may commaund the mightiest gods to bend :
 From thee alone such sugred frendship flydes
 As mortall wights can scarcely comprehend.
 To greatest strife thou setst deliteful end.
 O holy Peace, by thee are only found
 The passing ioyes that euerie where abound !

Thou only, thou, through thy celestiall might,
 Didst first of all the heauenly pole deuide
 From th' old confused heap, that Chaos hight :
 Thou madste the sunne, the moone, the starres, to glyde
 With ordred course, about this world so wyde :
 Thou hast ordayne Dan Tytans shining light
 By dawne of day to change the darksome night.

When tract of time returnes the lusty ver^e,
 By thee alone the buds and blossoms spring,
 The fields with flours be garnisht euerie where ;
 The blooming trees abundant fruite doe bring,
 The chereful byrdes melodiously doe sing :
 Thou doest appoynt the crop of summers seede,
 For mans releefe, to serue the winters neede.

Thou dost inspire the hearts of princely peers,
 By prouidence proceeding from aboue,
 In flowring youth to choose their proper feeres ;
 With whom they liue in league of lasting loue,
 Till fearfull death doth fitting life remoue :

But Spring. Mates. And

And looke howe fast to death man payes his due
So fast agayne doest thou his stock renewe.

By thee the basest thing aduanced is :

Thou euery where doest graffe such golden peace,
As filleth man with more than earthly blisse :

The earth by thee doth yeelde her sweete increase,
At beck of thee al bloody discords cease.

And mightiest realmes in quyet do remayne,
Whereas thy hand doth hold the royall rayne.

But if thou fayle, then all things gone to wrack:

The mother then doth dread her natural childe ;

Then euery towne is subiect to the sack,

Then spotles maydes, then virgins be defilde ;

Then rigour rules, then reason is exile ;

And this, thou woful THEBES ! to ouer greate payne,

With present spoyle art likely to sustayne.

Methink I heare the wayful-weeping cryes

Of wretched dames in euery coast resound !

Methinks I see, howe vp to heauenly skies,

From battred walles the thundring-claps rebound :

Methink I heare, howe al things go to ground :

Methink I see how souldiers wounded lie

With gasping breath, and yet they cannot die, &c.

The constant practice of ending every act with a long ode sung by the chorus, seems to have been adopted from GORDOBU^s.

¹ Act iv. Sc. ult.

² It may be proper to observe here, that the tragedy of TANCRED and GISMUND, acted also before the queen at the Inner-temple, in 1568, has the chorus. The title of this play, not printed till 1592, shews the quick gradations of taste. It is said to be "Newlie revived and polished" according to the decorum of these daies, "by R. W. Lond. printed by T. Scarlet,

"&c. 1592." 4to. R. W. is Robert Wil-mot, mentioned with applause as a poet in Webbe's DISCOURSE, Signat. C 4. The play was the joint-production of five students of the society. Each seems to have taken an act. At the end of the fourth is *Composuit Chr. Hatton*, or sir Christopher Hatton, undoubtedly the same that was afterwards exalted by the queen to the office of lord Keeper for his agility in dancing.

But

But I will give a specimen of this performance as a translation, from that affecting scene, in which Oedipus, blind and exiled from the city, is led on by his daughter Antigone, the rival in filial fidelity of Lear's Cordelia, to touch the dead and murdered bodies of his queen Jocasta, and his sons Eteocles and Polynices. It appears to be the chief fault of the translators, that they have weakened the force of the original, which consists in a pathetic brevity, by needless dilatations, and the affectations of circumlocution. The whole dialogue in the original is carried on in single lines. Such, however, is the pregnant simplicity of the Greek language, that it would have been impossible to have rendered line for line in English.

OEDIPUS.

Daughter, I must commend thy noble heart.

ANTIGONE.

Father, I will not live in company,^a
And you alone wander in wildernes.

OEDIPUS.

O yes, dear daughter, leave thou me alone
Amid my plagues: be merry while thou mayst.

ANTIGONE.

And who shall guide these aged feete of yours,
That banisht beene, in blind necessitie?

OEDIPUS.

I will endure, as fatal lot me driues,
Resting these crooked sory sides of mine

^a I will not marry.

Where so the heauens shall lend me harborough.
 And, in exchange of rich and stately towres,
 The woods, the wildernes, the darkefome dennes,
 Shall be the boure of mine unhappy bones.

ANTIGONE.

O father, now where is your glory gone?

OEDIPUS.

One happy day did rayse me to renowne,
 One haples day hath thrown mine honor downe.

ANTIGONE.

Yet wil I beare a part of your mishaps.

OEDIPUS.

That fitteth not amyd thy pleasant yeres.

ANTIGONE.

Deare father, yes : let youth geue place to age.

OEDIPUS.

Where is thy mother? Let me touch her face :
 That with these hands I may yet feele the harme
 That these blind eyes forbid me to behold.

ANTIGONE.

Here father, here her corps, here put your hand.

OEDIPUS.

O wife, O mother! O, both woful names!
 O woful mother, and O woful wife!

O would

O would to God, alas! O would to God,
 Thou nere had been my mother, nor my wife!
 But where now lie the paled bodies two
 Of mine vnluckie sonnes? O where be they?

ANTIGONE.

Lo, here they lie, one by another dead!

OEDIPUS.

Stretch out this hand, deare daughter, stretch this hand
 Vpon their faces.

ANTIGONE.

Lo father, loe, now you do touch them both.

OEDIPUS.

O bodies deare! O bodies deerely bought
 Vnto your father! Bought with hard mishap!

ANTIGONE.

O louely name of my dear Polynice!
 Why cannot I of cruel Creon crave,
 Ne with my death now purchase thee, a graue?

OEDIPUS.

Now comes Apollo's oracle to passe,
 That I in Athens towne should end my dayes.
 And since thou doest, O daughter mine, desire
 In this exile to be my wofull mate,
 Lend me thy hand, and let vs goe together.

3 B 2

ANTIGONE.

ANTIGONE.

Loe here all prest¹, my deare beloued father!
A feeble guyde, and eke a simple scout,
To passe the perils in² a doubtful way¹.

OEDIPUS.

Vnto the wretched be a wretche guyde.

ANTIGONE.

In this alonly equall to my father.

OEDIPUS.

And where shal I fet foorth my trembling feete?
O reach me yet some surer staffe^m, to stay
My staggering pace amynd these wayes vnknownen.

ANTIGONE.

Here, father, here, and here, fet foorth your feete.

OEDIPUS.

Nowe can I blame none other for my harmes
But secret spite of fore-decreed fate.
Thou art the cause, that crooked, old, and blind,
I am exilde farre from my cuntry soyle, &cⁿ.

That it may be seen in some measure, how far these two poets, who deserve much praise for even an attempt to introduce the Grecian drama to the notice of our ancestors, have

¹ Ready.¹ Read, of.² Read. Path.^m "She giueth him a staffe and stayeth
him herselfe also." Stage-direction.ⁿ Act v. Sc. ult.

succeeded

succeeded in translating this scene of the tenderest expostulation, I will place it before the reader in a plain literal version.

“ OED. My daughter, I praise your filial piety. But yet —
 “ ANT. But if I was to marry Creon’s son, and you, my fa-
 “ ther, be left alone in banishment? OED. Stay at home, and
 “ be happy. I will bear my own misfortunes patiently. ANT.
 “ But who will attend you, thus blind and helpless, my father?
 “ OED. I shall fall down, and be found lying in some field on
 “ the ground, as it may chance to happen”. ANT. Where is
 “ now that Oedipus, and his famous riddle of the Sphinx?
 “ OED. He is lost! one day made me happy, and one day
 “ destroyed me! ANT. Ought I not, therefore, to share your
 “ miseries? OED. It will be but a base banishment of a prin-
 “ cess with her blind father! ANT. To one that is haughty:
 “ not to one that is humble, and loves her father. OED. Lead
 “ me on then, and let me touch the dead body of your mother.
 “ ANT. Lo, now your hand is upon her”. OED. O my mo-
 “ ther! O my most wretched wife! ANT. She lies a wretched
 “ corpse, covered with every woe. OED. But where are the
 “ dead bodies of my sons Eteocles and Polynices? ANT. They
 “ lie just by you, stretched out close to one another. OED.
 “ Put my blind hand upon their miserable faces! ANT. Lo
 “ now, you touch your dead children with your hand. OED.
 “ O, dear, wretched, carcases of a wretched father! ANT.
 “ O, to me the most dear name of my brother Polynices^a!
 “ OED. Now, my daughter, the oracle of Apollo proves true.
 “ ANT. What? Can you tell any more evils than those which
 “ have happened? OED. That I should die an exile at Athens.
 “ ANT. What city of Attica will take you in? OED. The
 “ sacred Colonus, the house of equestrian Neptune. Come,
 “ then, lend your assistance to this blind father, since you mean

^a It is impossible to represent the Greek,
 v. 1681.

Πολύνη, ὅταν καὶ μοῖρα, κείνομαι πίδα.

^o “ The dear old woman,” in the
 Greek.

^p Creon had refused Polynices the rites
 of sepulture. This was a great aggrava-
 tion of the distress.

“ to

“ to be a companion of my flight. ANT. Go then into miser-
 “ able banishment! O my antient father, stretch out your dear
 “ hand! I will accompany you, like a favourable wind to a
 “ ship. OED. Behold, I go! Daughter, be you my unfortu-
 “ nate guide! ANT. Thus, am I, am I, the most unhappy of
 “ all the Theban virgins! OED. Where shall I fix my old
 “ feeble foot? Daughter, reach to me my staff. ANT. Here,
 “ go here, after me. Place your foot here, my father, you
 “ that have the strength only of a dream. OED. O most un-
 “ happy banishment! Creon drives me in my old age from my
 “ country. Alas! alas! wretched, wretched things have I
 “ suffered, &c.”

So sudden were the changes or the refinements of our lan-
 guage, that in the second edition of this play, printed again
 with Gascoigne's poems in 1587, it was thought necessary to
 affix marginal explanations of many words, not long before in
 common use, but now become obsolete and unintelligible.
 Among others, are *behest* and *quell*. This, however, as our au-
 thor says, was done at the request of a lady, who did not un-
 derstand *poetical words or termes*.

Seneca's ten Tragedies were translated at different times and
 by different poets. These were all printed together in 1581,
 under this title, “ SENECA HIS TENNE TRAGEDIES, TRANS-
 “ LATED INTO ENGLISH. *Mercurii Nutrices boreæ*. IM-
 “ PRINTED AT LONDON IN FLEETSTREETE neare unto
 “ saincte Dunstons church by Thomas Marthe, 1581.” The book
 is dedicated, from Butley in Cheshire, to sir Thomas Henneage,

⁹ PHOENISS. v. 1677. seq. pag. 170.
 edit. BARNES.

^{*} *Command. Kill*. By the way, this is
 done throughout this edition of Gascoigne's
 Poems. So we have *Will not*, &c.

^{*} Pag. 128. Among others, words not
 of the obsolete kind are explained, such as
Monarchie, Diademe, &c. Gascoigne is ce-
 lebrated by Gabriel Harvey, as one of the
 English poets who have written in praise
 of women. GRATULAT. VALIDENS. edit.

Binneman, 1578. 4to. Lib. iv. p. 22.

CHAUCERUSQUE adfit, SURREIUS et in-
 clytus adfit,
 GASCOIGNOQUE aliquis fit, mea Corda,
 locus.

[†] Coloph. “ IMPRINTED AT LONDON
 “ IN FLEETSTREETE Near unto Sainct Dun-
 “ ston's church by Thomas Marthe, 1581.”
 Containing 217 leaves.

treasurer

treasurer of the queen's chamber. I shall speak of each man's translation distinctly".

The *HYPPOLITUS*, *MEDEA*, *HERCULES OETEUS*, and *AGAMEMNON*, were translated by John Studley, educated at Westminster school, and afterwards a scholar of Trinity college in Cambridge. The *HYPPOLITUS*, which he calls the fourth and *most ruthfull tragedy*, the *MEDEA*, in which are some alterations of the chorus^u, and the *HERCULES OETEUS*, were all first printed in Thomas Newton's collection of 1581, just mentioned^v. The *AGAMEMNON* was first and separately published in 1566, and entitled, "The eyght Tragedie of Seneca entitled *AGAMEMNON*, translated out of Latin into English by John Studley student in Trinitie college in Cambridge. Imprinted at London in Flete streete beneath the Conduit at the signe of S. John Euangelyst by Thomas Colwell A. D. M.D.LXVI^w." This little book is exceedingly scarce, and hardly to be found in the choicest libraries of those who collect our poetry in black letter^x. Recommendatory verses are prefixed, in praise of our translator's performance^y. It is dedicated to secretary Cecil. To the end of the fifth act our translator has added a whole scene: for the purpose of relating the death of Cassandra, the imprisonment of Electra, and the flight of Orestes. Yet these circumstances were all known and told before. The narrator is Euribates, who in the commencement of the third act had informed Clitemnestra of Agamemnon's return. These efforts, however imperfect or improper, to improve the plot of a drama by a new conduct or contrivance, deserve particular

^u I know not the purport of a book licensed to E. Matts, "Discourses on Seneca the tragedian," Jun. 22, 1601. REGISTR. STATION. C. fol. 71. b.

^v See NEWT. edit. fol. 121. a.

^w But I must except the *MEDEA*, which is entered as translated by John Studley of Trinity college in Cambridge, in 1565-6, with T. Colwell. REGISTR. STATION. A. fol. 140. b. I have never seen this separate edition. Also the *HYPPOLITUS*, is en-

tered to Jones and Charlewood, in 1579. REGISTR. B. In 1566-7, I find an entry to Henry Denham, which I do not well understand, "for printing the fourth part of Seneca's workes." REGISTR. A. fol. 152. b. *HYPPOLITUS* is the fourth Tragedy.

^x Bl. Lett. 12mo.

^y Entered in 1565-6. REGISTR. STATION. A. fol. 136. b.

^z See supr. p. 290.

notice

notice at this infancy of our theatrical taste and knowledge. They shew that authors now began to think for themselves, and that they were not always implicitly enslaved to the prescribed letter of their models. Studley, who appears to have been qualified for better studies, misapplied his time and talents in translating Bale's Acts of the Popes. That translation, dedicated to Thomas lord Essex, was printed in 1574^b. He has left twenty Latin distichs on the death of the learned Nicholas Carr, Cheke's successor in the Greek professorship at Cambridge^c.

The OCTAVIA is translated by T. N. or Thomas Nuce, or Newce, a fellow of Pembroke-hall in 1562, afterwards rector of Oxburgh in Norfolk, Beccles, Weston-Market, and vicar of Gaysley, in Suffolk^d; and at length prebendary of Ely cathedral in 1586^e. This version is for the most part executed in the heroic rhyming couplet. All the rest of the translators have used, except in the chorus, the Alexandrine measure, in which Sternhold and Hopkins rendered the psalms, perhaps the most unsuitable species of English versification that could have been applied to this purpose. Nuce's OCTAVIA was first printed in 1566^f. He has two very long copies of verses, one in English and the other in Latin, prefixed to the first edition of Studley's AGAMEMNON in 1566, just mentioned.

Alexander Nevyle, translated, or rather paraphrased, the OEDIPUS, in the sixteenth year of his age, and in the year 1560, not printed till the year 1581^g. It is dedicated to doctor Wootton, a privy counsellor, and his godfather. Notwithstand-

^b In quarto. Bl. Lett. "The pageant of POPES, &c. &c. Englished with sundry additions, by J. S." For Thomas Marthe, 1574.

^c At the end of Bartholomew Dodington's EPISTLE of Carr's Life and Death, addressed to sir Walter Mildmay, and subjoined to Carr's Latin Translation of seven Orations of Demosthenes. Lond. 1571. 4to. Dodington, a fellow of Trinity college, succeeded Carr in the Greek chair, 1560. See Camden's MONUM. Eccles. Coll. Westmon. edit. 1600. 4to. Signat. K 2.

^d Where he died in 1617, and is buried with an epitaph in English rhyme. See Bentham's ELY. p. 251.

^e Feb. 21.

^f For in that year, there is a receipt for licence to Henry Denham to print it. REGISTR. STATION. A. fol. 148. b.

^g But in 1563, is a receipt for Thomas Colwell's licence to print "a booke entituled the Lamentable History of the prynce Oedypus." REGISTR. STATION. A. fol. 89. a.

ing

ing the translator's youth, it is by far the most spirited and elegant version in the whole collection, and it is to be regretted that he did not undertake all the rest. He seems to have been persuaded by his friends, who were of the graver sort, that poetry was only one of the lighter accomplishments of a young man, and that it should soon give way to the more weighty pursuits of literature. The first act of his OEDIPUS begins with these lines, spoken by Oedipus.

The night is gon, and dreadfull day begins at length t' appeere,
And Phœbus, all bedimde with clowdes, himselfe aloft doth reere:
And gliding forth with deadly hue, a dolefull blase in skies
Doth beare: great terror and dismay to the beholders eyes!
Now shall the houses voyde be seene, with Plague deuoured
quight,

And slaughter which the night hath made, shall day bring forth
to light.

Doth any man in princely throne reioyce? O brittle ioy!
How many ills, how fayre a face, and yet how much annoy,
In thee doth lurk, and hidden lies? What heapes of endles
strife?

They iudge amisse, that deeme the Prince to haue the happie
life^h.

Nevyl was born in Kent, in 1544^l, and occurs taking a master's degree at Cambridge, with Robert earl of Essex, on the sixth day of July, 1581^k. He was one of the learned men whom archbishop Parker retained in his family^l: and at the time of the archbishop's death, in 1575, was his secretary^m. He wrote a Latin narrative of the Norfolk insurrection under Kett, which is dedicated to archbishop Parker, and was printed

^h Fol. 78. a.

^l Lambarde, PERAMB. KENT. p. 72.

^k MS. Catal. Grad. Univ. Cant.

^l Strype's GRINDAL, p. 196.

^m Strype, LIFE OF PARKER, p. 497.
He is styled ARMIGER. See also the De-
dication to his KETTUS.

in 1575". To this he added a Latin account of Norwich, printed the same year, called *NORVICUS*, the plates of which were executed by Lyne and Hogenberg, archbishop Parker's domestic engravers, in 1574°. He published the Cambridge verses on the death of sir Philip Sydney, which he dedicated to lord Leiceſter, in 1587°. He projected, but I ſuſpect never completed, an English tranſlation of Livy, in 1577°. He died in 1614'.

The *HERCULES FURENS*, *THYESTES*, and *TROAS*, were tranſlated into English by Jasper Heywood. The *HERCULES FURENS* was firſt printed at London in 1561', and dedicated to William Herbert lord Pembroke, with the following pedantic Latin title. "Lucii Annaei Senecae tragoedia prima, quæ inſcribitur *HERCULES FURENS*, nuper recognita, et ab omni-

° Lond. 4to. The title is, "KETTUS, "five de furoribus Norfolciensium Ketto "duce." Again at London, 1582, by Henry Binneman, 8vo. And in English, 1615, and 1623. The diſturbance was occaſioned by an incloſure in 1549, and began at an annual play, or ſpectacle, at Wymondham, which laſted two days and two nights, according to antient cuſtom, p. 6. edit. 1582. He cites part of a ballad ſung by the rebels, which had a moſt powerful effect in ſpreading the commotion, p. 88. Prefixed is a copy of Latin verſes on the death of his patron archbiſhop Parker. And a recommendatory Latin copy by Thomas Drant, the firſt tranſlator of Horace. See alſo Strype's *PARKER*, p. 499. Nevile has another Latin work, *APOLOGIA AD WALLIÆ PROCERES*, Lond. for Binneman, 1576. 4to. He is mentioned in that part of G. Gaſcoigne's poems called *DEVISES*. His name, and the date 1565, are inſcribed on the *CARTULARIUM S. GREGORII CANTUARIE*, among biſhop More's books, with two Latin lines which I hope he did not intend for hexameters.

' It is ſometimes accompanied with an engraved map of the Saxon and Britiſh kings. See Hollinſh. *CHRON.* i. 139.

† Lond. 4to. viz. "Academiae Canta-

"brigienſis Lacrymæ tumulo D. Philippi "Sidneii ſacrate."

° See Note in the Register of the Stationers Company, dated May 3, 1577. Regiſtr. B. fol. 139. b. It was not finiſhed in 1597.

† Octob. 4. Batteley's *CANTERB.* App. 7. Where ſee his Epitaph. He is buried in a chapel in Canterbury cathedral with his brother Thomas, dean of that church. The publication of Seneca's *OEDIPUS* in English by Studley, or rather Gaſcoigne's *JOCASTA*, produced a metrical tale of *ETROCLAS* and *POLYNICES*, in "THE "FORREST OF FANCY, wherein is contained very pretty *APOTHEGMES*, and "PLEASANT HISTORIES, both in meter "and prose, *SONGES*, *SONETS*, *EPIGRAMS*, "and *EPISTLES*, &c. Imprinted at London by Thomas Purfoote, &c. 1579." 4to. See *SIGNAT.* B ij. Perhaps Henry Chettle, or Henry Conſtable, is the writer or compiler. [See ſupr. p. 292.] At leaſt the colophon is, "Finis, H. C." By the way, it appears, that Chettle was the publiſher of Greene's *GROATSWORTH OF WIT* in 1592. It is entered to W. Wrighte, Sept. 20. *REGISTR. STATION.* B. fol. 292. b.

° In 12mo.

" bus

“ bus mendis quibus scatebat sedulo purgata, et in studiosae juven-
 “ ventutis utilitatem in Anglicum tanta fide conversa, ut carmen
 “ pro carmine, quoad Anglica lingua patiat, pene redditum
 “ videas, per Jasperum Heywodum Oxoniensem.” The THYESTES,
 said to be *faithfully Englished by Jasper Heywood fellow of
 Alsolne colledge in Oxenforde*, was also first separately printed by
 Berthelette at London, in 1560'. He has added a scene to the
 fourth act, a soliloquy by Thyestes, who bewails his own mis-
 fortunes, and implores vengeance on Atreus. In this scene, the
 speaker's application of all the torments of hell, to Atreus's un-
 paralleled guilt of feasting on the bowels of his children, fur-
 nishes a sort of nauseous bombast, which not only violates the
 laws of criticism, but provokes the abhorrence of our common
 sensibilities. A few of the first lines are tolerable.

O kyng of Dytis dungeon darke, and gryfly ghost of hell,
 That in the deepe and dreadfull denne of blackest Tartare dwell,
 Where leane and pale Diseases lye, where Feare and Famyne are,
 Where Discord standes with bleeding browes, where euery kinde
 of care ;

* In 12mo. It is dedicated in verse to
 sir John Mason. Then follows in verse
 also, “ The translatour to the booke.”
 From the metrical Preface which next fol-
 lows, I have cited many stanzas. See supr.
 p. 273. This is a Vision of the poet Se-
 neca, containing 27 pages. In the course
 of this PREFACE, he laments a promising
 youth just dead, whom he means to com-
 pliment by saying, that he now “ lyues
 “ with Joue, another Ganymede.” But
 he is happy that the father survives, who
 seems to be sir John Mason. Among the old
 Roman poets he mentions Palingenius.
 After Seneca has delivered him the THYESTES
 to translate, he feels an unusual agi-
 tation, and implores Megaera to inspire
 him with tragic rage.

“ O thou Megaera, then I sayd,
 “ If might of thyne it bee
 “ (Wherewith thou Tantal drouste from
 hell)
 “ That thus dysterbeth mee,
 “ Enspyre my pen!” —
 This sayde, I felt the Furies force
 Enflame me more and more:
 And ten tymes more now chaste I was
 Than euer yet before.
 My haire stode vp, I waxed wood*,
 My synewes all dyd shake:
 And, as the Furye had me vext,
 My teethe began to quake.
 And thus enflamede, &c.

He then enters on his translation. Nothing
 is here wanting but a better stanza.

* Mad.

3 C 2

Where

Where Furies fight on beds of Steele, and heares of crawling
snakes,

Where Gorgon gremme, where Harpies are, and lothfom limbo
lakes,

Where most prodigious * vgly things the hollow hell doth hyde,
If yet a monster more mishapt, &c.

In the *TROAS*, which was first faultily printed in or before 1560^o, afterwards reprinted in 1581 by Newton, he has taken greater liberties. At the end of the chorus after the first act, he has added about sixty verses of his own invention. In the beginning of the second act, he has added a new scene, in which he introduces the spectre of Achilles raised from hell, and demanding the sacrifice of Polyxena. This scene, which is in the octave stanza, has much of the air of one of the legends in the *MIRROUR OF MAGISTRATES*. To the chorus of this act, he has subjoined three stanzas. Instead of translating the chorus of the third act, which abounds with the hard names of the antient geography, and which would both have puzzled the translator and tired the English reader, he has substituted a new ode. In his preface to the reader, from which he appears to be yet a fellow of All Souls college, he modestly apologises for these licentious innovations, and hopes to be pardoned for his seeming arrogance, in attempting “to set forth in English this present
“piece of the flowre of all writers Seneca, among so many fine
“wittes, and towardly youth, with which England this day
“florisheth*.” Our translator Jasper Heywood has several poems extant in the *Paradise of Daintie Deuises*, published in 1573. He was the son of John Heywood, commonly called the epigrammatist, and born in London. In 1547, at twelve

* So Milton, on the same subject, and in the true sense of the word, *PAR. L. ii.* 625.

— All monstrous, all *PRODIGIOUS* things.

* I have never seen this edition of 1560 or before, but he speaks of it him-

self in the *METRICAL PREFACE* to the *THYESTES* just mentioned, and says it was most carelessly printed at the sign of the hand and star. This must have been at the shop of Richard Tottel within Temple Bar.

* *Fol. 95. a.*

years

years of age, he was sent to Oxford, and in 1553 elected fellow of Merton college. But inheriting too large a share of his father's facetious and free disposition, he sometimes in the early part of life indulged his festive vein in extravagancies and indiscretions, for which being threatened with expulsion, he resigned his fellowship⁷. He exercised the office of Christmas-prince, or lord of misrule, to the college: and seems to have given offence, by suffering the levities and jocularities of that character to mix with his life and general conversation⁸. In the year 1558, he was recommended by cardinal Pole, as a polite scholar, an able disputant, and a steady catholic, to sir Thomas Pope founder of Trinity college in the same university, to be put in nomination for a fellowship of that college, then just founded. But this scheme did not take place⁹. He was, however, appointed fellow of All Souls college the same year. Dissatisfied with the change of the national religion, within four years he left England, and became a catholic priest and a Jesuit at Rome, in 1562. Soon afterwards he was placed in the theological chair at Dilling in Switzerland, which he held for seventeen years. At length returning to England, in the capacity of a popish missionary, he was imprisoned, but released by the interest of the earl of Warwick. For the deliverance from so perilous a situation, he complimented the earl in a copy of English verses, two of which, containing a most miserable paronomasy on his own name, almost bad enough to have condemned the writer to another imprisonment, are recorded in Harrington's Epigrams¹⁰. At length he retired to Naples, where he died in 1597¹¹. He is said to have been an accurate critic in the Hebrew language¹². His translation of the TROAS, not of Virgil as it

⁷ See Harrington's Epigrams, "Of old Haywood's tonnes." B. ii. 102.

⁸ Among Wood's papers, there is an oration DE LIGNO ET FOENO, spoken by Heywood's cotemporary and fellow-collegian, David de la Hyde, in commendation of his execution of this office.

⁹ MS. Collectan. Fr. Wise. See LIFE OF SIR T. POPE.

¹⁰ EPIGR. lib. iii. Epigr. i.

¹¹ ATH. OXON. i. 290.

¹² H. MORUS, HIST. PROVINC. ANGL. Soc. JES. Lib. iv. num. 11. sub ann. 1585.

seems,

seems, is mentioned in a copy of verses by T. B.^e. prefixed to the first edition, abovementioned, of Studley's *AGAMEMNON*. He was intimately connected abroad with the biographer Pitts, who has given him rather too partial a panegyric.

Thomas Newton, the publisher of all the ten tragedies of Seneca in English, in one volume, as I have already remarked, in 1581^f, himself added only one to these versions of Studley, Nevile, Nuce, and Jasper Heywood. This is the *THEBAIS*, probably not written by Seneca, as it so essentially differs in the catastrophe from his *OEDIPUS*. Nor is it likely the same poet should have composed two tragedies on the same subject, even with a variation of incidents. It is without the chorus and a fifth act. Newton appears to have made his translation in 1581, and perhaps with a view only of completing the collection. He is more prosaic than most of his fellow-labourers, and seems to have paid the chief attention to perspicuity and fidelity. In the general *EPISTLE DEDICATORY* to sir Thomas Henneage, prefixed to the volume, he says, "I durst not haue geuen the aduenture to approach your presence, vpon trust of any singularity, that in this Booke hath vnskillfully dropped out of myne owne penne, but that I hoped the perfection of others artificiall workmanship that haue trauayled herein, as well as myselfe, should somewhat couer my nakednesse, and purchase my pardon.—Theirs I knowe to be deliuered with singular dexterity: myne, I confesse to be an vnflidge [unfledged] nestling, vnable to flye; an vnnatural abortion, and an vnperfect embryon: neyther throughlye laboured at Aristophanes and Cleanthes candle, neither yet exactly waighed in Critolaus his precise ballaunce. Yet this I dare saye, I haue deliuered myne authors meaning with as much perspicuity as fo

^e With these initials, there is a piece prefixed to Gascoigne's poems, 1579.

^f There is a receipt from Marsh for "Seneca's Tragedies in English." Jul. 2. 1581. REGISTR. STATION. B. fol. 181.

b. The English version seems to have produced an edition of the original for Man and Brome, Sept. 6. 1585. Ibid. fol. 205. b.

" meane

“meane a scholar, out of so meane a stoare, in so final a time,
“and vpon so short a warning, was well able to performe, &c.”

Of Thomas Newton, a slender contributor to this volume, yet perhaps the chief instrument of bringing about a general translation of Seneca, and otherwise deserving well of the literature of this period, some notices seem necessary. The first letter of his English *THEBAIS* is a large capital D. Within it is a shield exhibiting a sable Lion rampant, crossed in argent on the shoulder, and a half moon argent in the dexter corner, I suppose his armorial bearing. In a copartment, towards the head, and under the semicircle, of the letter, are his initials, T. N. He was descended from a respectable family in Cheshire, and was sent while very young, about thirteen years of age, to Trinity college in Oxford^h. Soon afterwards he went to Queen's college in Cambridge; but returned within a very few years to Oxford, where he was readmitted into Trinity collegeⁱ. He quickly became famous for the pure elegance of his Latin poetry. Of this he has left a specimen in his *ILLUSTRIA ALIQUOT AN-*

* Dated. “From Butley in Cheshyre
“the 24. of Aprill. 1581.”

I am informed by a manuscript note of Oldys, that Richard Robynson translated the *THEBAIS*. Of this I know no more, but R. Robynson was a large writer both in verse and prose. Some of his pieces I have already mentioned. He wrote also “CHRISTMAS RECREATIONS of histories
“and moralizations aplied for our solace
“and consolacions,” licenced to T. East, Dec. 5. 1576. *REGISTR. STATION. B.* fol. 136. b. And, in 1569, is entered to Binneman, “The ruefull tragedy of He-
“midos, &c. by Richard Robynson.” *REGISTR. A.* fol. 190. a. And, to T. Dawson in 1579, Aug. 26, “The Vineyard
“of Vertue a booke gathered by R. Ro-
“binson.” *REGISTR. B.* fol. 163. a. He was a citizen of London. The reader recollects his English *GESTA ROMANO-*

RUM, in 1577. He wrote also “The
“avnient order, societie, and vnitie lau-
“dable, of PRINCE ARTHURE, and his
“knightly armory of the ROUND TA-
“BLE. With a threefold assertion, &c.
“Translated and collected by R. R.”
Lond. for J. Wolfe, 1583. Bl. Lett. 4to.
This work is in metre, and the armorial
bearings of the knights are in verse. Pre-
fixed is a poem by Churchyard, in praise
of the Bow. His translation of Leland's
ASSERTIO ARTHURI (Bl. Lett. 4to.) is en-
tered to J. Wolfe, Jun. 6, 1582. *REGISTR.*
STATION. B. fol. 189. b. I find, licenced
to R. James in 1565, “A boke intituled
“of very pleasaunte sonnettes and itories
“in myter [metre] by Clement Robynson.”
REGISTR. B. fol. 141. a.

^h *REGISTR. ibid.*

ⁱ *Ibid.*

GLORUM

GLORUM ENCOMIA, published at London in 1589^k. He is perhaps the first Englishman that wrote Latin elegiacs with a classical clearness and terseness after Leland, the plan of whose ENCOMIA and ΤΡΟΦÆΑ he seems to have followed in this little work^l. Most of the learned and ingenious men of that age, appear to have courted the favours of this polite and popular encomiast. His chief patron was the unfortunate Robert earl of Essex. I have often incidentally mentioned some of Newton's commendatory verses, both in English and Latin, prefixed to cotemporary books, according to the mode of that age. One of his earliest philological publications is a NOTABLE HISTORIE OF THE SARACENS, digested from Curio, in three books, printed at London in 1575^m. I unavoidably anticipate in remarking here, that he wrote a poem on the death of queen Elizabeth, called "ATROPOION DELION," or, "the Death of Delia with the Tears of her funeral. A poetical excusive discourse of our late Eliza. By T. N. G. Lond. 1603ⁿ." The next year he published a flowery romance, "A pleasant new history, or a fragrant posie made of three flowers Rosa, Rosalynd, and Rosemary, London, 1604^o." Philips, in his THEATRUM POETARUM, attributes to Newton, a tragedy in two parts, called TAMBURLAIN THE GREAT, OR THE SCYTHIAN SHEPHERD. But this play, printed at London in 1593, was written by Christopher Marloe^p. He seems to have been a partisan of the puritans, from his pamphlet of CHRISTIAN FRIENDSHIP, *with an Inveective against dice-play and other profane games*, printed at London, 1586^q. For some time our author practised physic, and, in

^k His master John Brunswerd, at Macclesfield school, in Cheshire, was no bad Latin poet. See his PROGYMNASMATA ALIQUOT POEMATA, Lond. 1590. 4to. See Newton's ENCOM. p. 128 131. Brunswerd died in 1589, and his epitaph, made by his scholar Newton, yet remains in the chancel of the church of Macclesfield.

Alpha poetarum, coryphæus grammaticorum,
Flos *αἰσίου γένους*, hac sepelitur humo.

^l Lond. 1589. 4to. Reprinted by Hearne, Oxon. 1715. 8vo.

^m In quarto. With a SUMMARY annexed on the same subject.

ⁿ In quarto. For W. Johnes.

^o In quarto.

^p See Heywood's Prologue to Marlow's JEW OF MALTA, 1633.

^q In octavo. From the Latin of Lamb. Danæus.

the

the character of that profession, wrote or translated many medical tracts. The first of these, on a curious subject, *A direction for the health of magistrates and students*, from Gratarolus, appeared in 1574. At length taking orders, he first taught school at Macclesfield in Cheshire, and afterwards at Little Ilford in Essex, where he was beneficed. In this department, and in 1596, he published a correct edition of Stanbridge's Latin Pro-fody*. In the general character of an author, he was a voluminous and a laborious writer. He died at Little Ilford, and was interred in his church, in 1607. From a long and habitual course of studious and industrious pursuits he had acquired a considerable fortune, a portion of which he bequeathed in charitable legacies.

It is remarkable, that Shakespeare has borrowed nothing from the English Seneca. Perhaps a copy might not fall in his way. Shakespeare was only a reader by accident. Hollinshed and translated Italian novels supplied most of his plots or stories. His storehouse of learned history was North's Plutarch. The only poetical fable of antiquity, which he has worked into a play, is *TROILUS*. But this he borrowed from the romance of Troy. Modern fiction and English history were his principal resources. These perhaps were more suitable to his taste: at least he found that they produced the most popular subjects. Shakespeare was above the bondage of the classics.

I must not forget to remark here, that, according to Ames, among the copies of Henry Denham recited in the register of the Company of Stationers', that printer, is said, on the eighth of January, in 1583, among other books, to have yielded into the bands and dispositions of the master, wardens, and assistants, of

* "Vocabula magistri Stanbrigii ab infinitis quibus scatebant mendis repurgata, observata interim (quoad ejus fieri potuit) carminis ratione, et meliuscule etiam correctâ, studio et industria Thomae Newtoni Ceitresthyrii, Edinb. ex-

"cud. R. Waldegrave." I know not if this edition, which is in octavo, is the first. See our author's *ENCOM.* p. 128. Our author published one or two translations on theological subjects.

* I find nothing of this in REGISTER. B.

that fraternity, "Two or three of Seneca his tragedies." These, if printed after 1581, cannot be new impressions of any single plays of Seneca, of those published in Newton's edition of all the ten tragedies.

Among Hatton's manuscripts in the Bodleian library at Oxford, there is a long translation from the *HERCULES OETAEUS* of Seneca, by queen Elisabeth. It is remarkable that it is blank verse, a measure which her majesty perhaps adopted from *GORDON*; and which therefore proves it to have been done after the year 1561. It has, however, no other recommendation but its royalty.

† They are mentioned by Ames, with these pieces, viz. "Pasquin in a trauuce. The hoppe gardein. Ovid's metamorphosis. The courtier. Cesar's commentaries in English. Ovid's epistles. Image of idleneffe. Flower of frendship. Schole of vertue. Gardener's laborynth. Demosthene's orations." I take this opportunity of acknowledging my great obligations to that very respectable society, who in the most liberal manner have in-

dulged me with a free and unreserved examination of their original records; particularly to the kind assistance and attention of one of its members, Mr. Lockyer Davies, Bookfeller in Holbourn.

* MSS. Mus. Bodl. 55. 12. [Olim Hyper. Bodl.] It begins,

"What harminge hurle of Fortune's arme,
&c."

S E C T.