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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, 1778

Section XI. Barklay's Ship of Fools. Its origin Specimens. Barklay Eclogues,
and other pieces. Alcock bishop of Ely. Modern Bucolics.

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S E C T. XXI.

I Place Alexander Barklay within the year 1500, as his *SHIP OF FOOLS* appears to have been projected about that period. He was educated at Oriel college in Oxford^d, accomplished his academical studies by travelling, and was appointed one of the priests, or prebendaries, of the college of saint Mary Ottery in Devonshire^e. Afterwards he became a Benedictine monk of Ely monastery^f; and at length took the habit of the Franciscans at Canterbury^g. He temporised with the changes of religion; for he possessed some church-preferments in the reign of Edward the sixth^h. He died, very old, at Croydon, in Surryⁱ, in the year 1552.

^d He seems to have spent some time at Cambridge, *EGL. i. Signat. A. iii.*

And once in Cambridge I heard a scoller say,
One of the same that go in copès gay.

^e The chief patron of his studies appears to have been Thomas Cornish, provost of Oriel college, and Suffragan bishop of Tyne, in the diocese of Bath and Wells; to whom he dedicates, in a handsome Latin epistle, his *SHIP OF FOOLS*. But in the poem, he mentions *My Maister Kyrkbam*, calling himself "his true servitour, his chap-layne, and bede-man." fol. 152. b. edit. 1570. Some biographers suppose Barklay to have been a native of Scotland. It is certain that he has a long and laboured encomium on James the fourth, king of Scotland; whom he compliments for his bravery, prudence, and other eminent virtues. One of the stanzas of this panegyric is an acrostic on *JACOBUS*. fol. 206. a. He most probably was of Devonshire or Gloucestershire.

^f In the title to his translation from *Mancinus*, called the *MIRROUR OF GOOD MANNERS*.

^g MS. Bale, Sloan. f. 68.

^h He was instituted to Much Badew in Essex, in 1546. *Newcourt, REP. i. 254.* And to Wokey in Somersetshire, the same year. *Registr. Wellens.* He had also the church of All Saints, in Lombard-street, London, on the presentation of the dean and chapter of Canterbury, which was vacant by his death, Aug. 24, 1552. *Newcourt, ut supr.*

ⁱ He frequently mentions Croydon in his *EGL. i.* He was buried in Croydon church. *EGL. i. Signat. A. iii.*

And as in *CROIDON* I heard the Collier preache.

Again, *ibid.*

While I in youth in *CROIDON* towne did dwell.

Again, *ibid.*

He hath no felowe betwene this and *CROIDON*

Save the proude plowman *Gnatbo* of *Chorlington*.

He mentions the collier again, *ibid.*

Such maner riches the collier tell thee can. Also, *ibid.*

As the riche shepheard that woned in *Mortlake*.

Barklay's

Barklay's principal work is the SHIP OF FOOLES, above-mentioned. About the year 1494, Sebastian Brandt, a learned civilian of Basil, and an eminent philologist, published a satire in German with this title¹. The design was to ridicule the reigning vices and follies of every rank and profession, under the allegory of a Ship freighted with Fools of all kinds, but without any variety of incident, or artificiality of fable; yet although the poem is destitute of plot, and the voyage of adventures, a composition of such a nature became extremely popular. It was translated into French²; and, in the year 1497, into tolerable Latin verse, by James Locher, a German, and a scholar of the inventour Brandt³. From the original, and the two translations, Barklay formed a large English poem, in the balade or octave stanza, with considerable additions gleaned from the follies of his countrymen. It was printed by Pinson, in 1509, whose name occurs in the poem.

Howbeit the charge PINSON has on me layde
With many fooles our navy not to charge^a.

It was finished in the year 1508, and in the college of saint Mary Ottery, as appears by this rubric, "The SHYP OF FOLYS, translated in the colege of saynt Mary Otery, in the counte of Devonshyre, oute of Laten, Frenche, and Doch, into Englishe tonge, by Alexander Barclay, preste and chaplen in the sayd colledge, M.CCCC.VIII". Our au-

¹ I presume this is the same Sebastian Brandt, to whom Thomas Acuparius, poet laureate, dedicates a volume of Poggius's works, Argentorat. 1513. fol. He is here styled, "Juris utriusque doctor, et S. P. Q. Argentinensis cancellarius." The dedication is dated 1511. See Hendreich. PANDECT. p. 703.

² By Joce Bade. Paris, 1497.

³ See THE PROLOGUE.

^a Fol. 38. In another place he complains that some of his *woordes* are *amis*, on account of the *printers not perfect in science*. And adds that,

VOL. II.

— The printers in their busynes
Do all their workes speediely and in haste.
fol. 258. b.

^b In folio. A second edition, from which I cite, was printed with his other works, in the year 1570, by Cawood, in folio, with curious wooden cuts, taken from Pinson's impression, viz. "THE SHIP OF FOOLES, wherein is shewed the folly of all states, with divers other works adjoined to the same, &c." This has both Latin and English. But Ames, under Wynkyn de Worde, recites "The Ship of Fools in this World." 4to. 1517. HIST. PRINT. p. 94.

I i

thor's

thor's stanza is verbose, prosaic, and tedious: and for many pages together, his poetry is little better than a trite homily in verse. The title promises much character and pleasantry: but we shall be disappointed, if we expect to find the foibles of the crew of our ship touched by the hand of the author of the CANTERBURY TALES, or exposed in the rough yet strong satire of Pierce Plowman. He sometimes has a stroke of humour: as in the following stanza, where he wishes to take on board the eight secondaries, or minor canons, of his college. "*Alexander Barclay ad FATUOS, ut dent locum octo SECUNDARIIS beatæ Mariæ de Ottery, qui quidem prima bujus ratis transfra merentur* °."

Softe, Foolis, softe, a litle slacke your pace,
Till I have space you to' order by degree;
I have eyght neyghbours, that first shall have a place
Within this my shyp, for they most worthy be:
They may their learning receyve costles and free,
Their walles abutting and joining to the schooles[¶];
Nothing they can[¶], yet nought will they learn nor see,
Therefore shall they guide this one ship of fooles.

The ignorance of the English clergy is one of the chief objects of his animadversion. He says[¶],

For if one can flatter, and beare a hawke on his fist,
He shalbe made parson of Honington or of Clift.

These were rich benefices in the neighbourhood of faint Mary Ottery. He disclaims the profane and petty tales of the times.

° Fol. 68.

¶ To the collegiate church of faint Mary Ottery a school was annexed, by the magnificent founder, Grandison, bishop of

Exeter. This college was founded in the year 1337.

¶ Know,

¶ Fol. 2.

I write

I write no jefte ne tale of Robin Hood[†],
 Nor fowe no sparkles, ne fede of viciousnes;
 Wife men love vertue, wilde people wantonnes,
 It longeth not my science nor cuning,
 For Philip the sparrow the dirige to fing.

The laft line is a ridicule on his cotemporary Skelton, who wrote a *LITTLE BOKE OF PHILIP SPARROW, OR A DIRIGE*,

For the foule of Philip Sparrow
 That was late flaine at Carow, &c[‡].

And in another place, he thus censures the fashionable reading of his age: much in the tone of his predeceffor Hawes.

For goodly fcripture is not worth an hawe,
 But tales are loved ground of ribaudry,
 And many are fo blinded with their foly,
 That no fcriptur thinke they fo true nor gode
 As is a foolifh jefte of Robin hode[§].

As a fpecimen of his general manner, I infer his character of the Student, or Bookworm: whom he fupposes to be the First Fool in the vefsel.

That[¶] in this fhip the chiefe place I governe,
 By this wide fea with foolis wandering,
 The caufe is plaine and eafy to difcerne;
 Still am I bufy bookes afsembling,

[†] Fol. 23.
[‡] See Skelton's *WORKS*, p. 215. edit. 1736. This will be mentioned again, below.

[§] Fol. 23.
[¶] I fubjoin the Latin from which he translates, that the reader may judge how much is our poet's own, fol. 1. a.

Primus in excelfo teneo quod nave rudentes,
 Slutivagosque fequor comites per flumina
 valla,
 Non ratione vacat certa, fenfuque latenti:
 Congellis etenim ftultus confido libellis;
 Spem quoque, nec parvam, congefta volu-
 mina præbent.
 Calleo nec verbum, nec libri fenfio mentem:
 Attamen

For to have plentie it is a pleasaunt thing,
In my conceyt, to have them ay in hand;
But what they meane do I not underftande.

But yet I have them in great reverence
And honour, faving them from filth and ordure;
By often brufhing and much diligence,
Full goodly bounde in pleasaunt coverture
Of damas, fattin, or els of velvet pure^x:
I keepe them sure fearing leaft they should be loft
For in them is the cunning wherein I me boaft.

But if it fortune that any learned man
Within my houfe fall to difputation,
I drawe the curtaynes to shewe my bokes then,
That they of my cunning should make probation:
I love not to fall in alterication:
And while the commen, my bookes I turne and winde,
For all is in them, and nothing in my minde.

Ptolomeus^y the riche caufed, longe agone,
Over all the worlde good bookes to be fought,

Attamen in magno per me fervantur honore,
Pulveris et cariem plumatis tergo flabellis.
Aft ubi doctrinæ certamen volvitur, inquam,
Ædibus in nostris librorum culta supellex
Eminet, et chartis vivo contentus opertis,
Quas video ignorans, juvat et me copia sola.
Constituit quondam dives Ptolomeus, haberet
Ut libros toto quæfitos undique mundo;
Quos grandes rerum thesauros esse putabat:
Non tamen arcanae legis documenta tenebat,
Queis sine non poterat vitæ disponere cursum.
En pariter teneo numerosa volumina, tar-
dus:
Pauca lego, viridi contentus tegmine libri.
Cur vellem studio sensus turbare frequenti,
Aut tam sollicitis animum confundere rebus?
Qui studet, assiduo motu fit stultus et amens.
Seu studeam, seu non, dominus tamen esse
vocabor;

Et possum studio socium disponere nostro,
Qui pro me sapiat, doctasque examinet artes:
Aut si cum doctis verbor, concedere malo
Omnia, ne cogar fors verba Latina profari.

^x Students and monks were antiently the binders of books. In the first page of a manuscript *Life of Concubranus*, this note occurs, "EX CONJUNCTIONE dompni Wyllelmi Edys monasterii B. Mariæ S. Modwenæ virginis de Burton super Trent monachi, dum esset studens Oxoniæ, A. D. MDCXVII." See MSS. Cotton. CLEOPATR. ii. And MSS. Coll. Oriel. N. vi. 3. et 7. Art. The word *Conjunctio* is *ligatura*. The book is much older than this entry.

^y Ptolomeus Philadelphus, for whom he quotes Josephus, lib. xii.

Done

Done was his commandement, &c.

* * * * *

Lo in likewise of bookès I have store,
 But few I reade, and fewer understande;
 I folowe not their doctrine, nor their lore,
 It is enough to beare a booke in hande:
 It were too much to be in such a lande;
 For to be bounde to loke within the booke
 I am content on the fayre coveryng to looke. —

Eche is not lettred that nowe is made a lorde,
 Nor eche a clerke that hath a benefice;
 They are not all lawyers that plees do recorde,
 All that are promoted are not fully wise;
 On suche chance now fortune throwes her dice:
 That though one knowe but the yrishe game
 Yet would he have a gentlemans name.

So in likewise, I am in such a case,
 Though I nought can², I would be called wise;
 Also I may fet another in my place
 Which may for me my bookès exercise;
 Or els I will ensue the common guise,
 And say *concedo* to every argument
 Left by much speech my Latin should be spent³.

In one part of the poem, Prodicus's apologue, of Hereules meeting VIRTUE and PLEASURE, is introduced. In the speech of PLEASURE, our author changes his metre; and breaks forth into a lyrical strain, not totally void of elegance and delicacy, and in a rhythmical arrangement adopted by Gray.

² Know.

³ Fol. 2.

All

All my vestùre is of golde pure,
 My gay chaplèt with stonès set,
 With couerture of fine asure,
 In silver net my haire upknet,
 Softe silke betwene, lest it might fret;
 My purple pall oercovereth all,
 Cleare as cristall, no thing egall.—
 With harpe in hande, alway I stande,
 Passing eche houre, in fwete pleasour;
 A wanton bande, of every lande,
 Are in my towre, me to honouir,
 Some of valouir, some bare and poore;
 Kinges in their pride fit by my side:
 Every freshe floure, of fwete odouèr,
 To them I provide, that with me bide.—
 Whoer they be, that folowe me,
 And gladly flee to my standarde,
 They shall be free, nor sicke, nor see
 Adverfitie, and paynès harde.
 No poynt of payne shall he sustayne,
 But joy soverayne, while he is here;
 No frost ne rayne there shall distayne
 His face by payne, ne hurt his chere.
 He shall his hede cast to no drede
 To get the mede^b and lawde of warre;
 Nor yet have nede, for to take hede,
 How battayles spede, but stande afarre.
 Nor yet be bounde to care the sounde
 Of man or grounde, or trompet shrill;
 Strokes that redound shall not confounde,
 Nor his minde wounde, but if he will, &c^c.

All antient satirical writings, even those of an inferior cast, have their merit, and deserve attention, as they transf-

^b Meed. Reward.

^c Fol. 241. b.

mit pictures of familiar manners, and preserve popular customs. In this light, at least, Barklay's SHIP OF FOOLS, which is a general satire on the times, will be found entertaining. Nor must it be denied, that his language is more cultivated than that of many of his cotemporaries, and that he contributed his share to the improvement of the English phraseology. His author, Sebastian Brandt, appears to have been a man of universal erudition; and his work, for the most part, is a tissue of citations from the ancient poets and historians.

Barklay's other pieces are the MIRROR OF GOOD MANNERS, and five ELOGES^d.

The MIRROR is a translation from a Latin elegiac poem, written in the year 1516, by Dominic Mancini DE QUATUOR VIRTUTIBUS. It is in the ballad-stanza^e. Our translator,

^d He also wrote, *The figure of our mother holy church oppressed by the French king*, printed for Pinson, 4to.—*Answer to John Skelton the Poet*.—*The Lives of S. Catharine, S. Margaret, and St. Etheldred*.—*The Life of S. George*, from Mantuan: dedicated to N. West bishop of Ely, and written while our author was a monk of Ely.—*De Pronuntiatione Gallica*. John Palfgrave, a polite scholar, and an eminent preceptor of the French language about the reign of Henry the eighth, and one of the first who published in English a grammar or system of rules for teaching that language, says in his *L'Esclaircissement de la language Francois*, addressed to Henry the eighth, and printed (fol. Lond.) in 1530, that our author Barklay wrote a tract on this subject at the command of Thomas duke of Norfolk.—*The famous Cronycle of the Warre which the Romans had agaynst Jugurth usurper of the kyngdom of Numidy: which cronycle is compyled in Latyn by the renowned Romayn Sallust*. And translated into Englyshe by SYR ALEXANDER BARCLAY, preest, at the commaundment of the hye and mighty prince Thomas duke of Norfolk. In two editions, by Pinson, of this work, both in folio, and in

the public library at Cambridge, the Latin and English are printed together. The Latin is dedicated to Vesey bishop of Exeter, and dated "ex Cellula Hatfeld regis [i. e. Kings Hatfield, Hertfordshire] iii. id. Novemb." A new edition, without the Latin and the two dedications, was printed by J. Waley, 1557, 4to.—*Orationes variae*.—*De fide Orthodoxa*.—To these I add, what does not deserve mention in the text, a poem translated from the French, called *The CASTEL OF LABOURE, wherein is riches, vertue, and honor*. It is of some length, and an allegory; in which Lady REASON conquers Despair, Poverty, and other evils, which attend a poor man lately married. The Prologue begins, "Ye mortal people that desire to obtayne." The poem begins, "In musyng an evenyng with me was none." Printed for Wynken de Worde, 1506, 4to. And again by Pinson, without date, 4to. In seven-lined stanzas. By mistake I have mentioned this piece as anonymous, *supr.* p. 200.

^e Printed as above, 1570, fol. And by Pinson, at the command of Richard earl of Kent. Without date, 4to. The Latin elegiacs are printed in the margin, which have been frequently printed. At Basil,

as appears by the address prefixed, had been requested by sir Giles Alyngton to abridge, or modernise, Gower's *CONFESSIO AMANTIS*. But the poet declined this undertaking, as unsuitable to his age, infirmities, and profession; and chose rather to oblige his patron with a grave system of ethics. It is certain that he made a prudent choice. The performance shews how little qualified he was to correct Gower.

Our author's *EGLOGES*, I believe, are the first that appeared in the English language^f. They are, like Petrarch's and Mantuan's^g, of the moral and satirical kind; and contain but few touches of rural description and bucolic imagery. They seem to have been written about the year 1514^h. The three first are paraphrased, with very large additions, from the *MISERIE CURIALIUM* of Eneas Sylviusⁱ, and treat of the *Miseries of Courtiers and Courtes of all Princes in general*. The fourth, in which is introduced a long poem in stanzas, called the *Tower of Vertue and Honour*^k, of the behaviour of *riche men agaynst poetes*. The fifth, of the *disputation of citizens and men of the country*. These pastorals, if they deserve the name, contain many allusions to the times. The poet is

1543. At Antwerp, 1559. With the epigram of Peter Carmelian annexed. And often before. Lastly, at the end of *MARTINI Braccarenfis Formula honestæ Vitæ*, Helmstad. 1691. 8vo. They are dedicated "Frederico Severinati episcopo Mallea-censi." They first appeared at Leipzig, 1516. See Trithemius, concerning another of his poems, Mancini's, *De passione domini*, cap. 995.

^f Printed as above, 1570, fol. First, I believe, by Humphry Powell. 4to. Without date. Perhaps about 1550.

^g Whom he mentions, speaking of *EGLOGES. EGLOG. I. PROL.*

And in like maner, nowe lately in our dayes,
Hath other poetes attempted the same wayes,
As the most famous Baptist Mantuan
The best of that sort since poets first began,
And Frauncis Petrарke also in Italy, &c.

^h Because he praises "noble Henry "which now departed late." Afterwards he falls into a long panegyric on his successor Henry the eighth. *EGLOG. I.* As he does in the *SHIP OF FOOLLES*, fol. 205. a. where he says,

This noble prince beginneth vertuoussly
By justice and pitie his realme to mayntayne.

He then wishes he may retake Jerusalem from the Turks; and compares him to Hercules, Achilles, &c.

ⁱ That is pope Pius the second, who died in 1464. This piece is among his *EPISTLES*, some of which are called *TRACTS. EPIST. CLVI.*

^k It is properly an elegy on the death of the duke of Norfolk, lord high admiral.

prolix

prolix in his praises of Alcock bishop of Ely, and founder of Jesus college in Cambridge^k.

Yes since his dayes a cocke was in the fen^l,
 I knowe his voyce among a thousand men :
 He laught, he preached, he mended every wrong ;
 But, Coridon, alas no good thing bideth long !
 He All was a Cock^m, he wakened us from slepe,
 And while we slumbered, he did our foldes kepe.
 No cur, no foxes, nor butchers dogges wood,
 Could hurte our fouldes, his watching was so good.
 The hungry wolves, which that time did abounde,
 What time he crowedⁿ, abashed at the founde.
 This cocke was no more abashed of the foxe,
 Than is a lion abashed of an oxe.

^k This very learned and munificent prelate deservedly possessed some of the highest dignities in church and state. He was appointed bishop of Ely in 1486. He died at Wilbich, 1501. See Whart. ANGL. SACR. i. 675. 801. 381. Rosse says, that he was tutor to prince Edward, afterwards Edward the fifth, but removed by the king's uncle Richard. Rosse, I think, is the only historian who records this anecdote. HIST. REG. ANGL. p. 212. edit. Hearn.

^l The isle of Ely.

^m Alcock.

ⁿ Among Wren's manuscript Collections, (Registr. parv. Confessorii Eliensis, called the BLACK BOOK.) the following curious memorial, concerning a long sermon preached by Alcock at saint Mary's in Cambridge, occurs. "I. Alcock, divina gratia episcopus Eliensis prima die dominica, 1488, bonum et blandum sermonem prædicavit in ecclesia B. Mariæ Cantabrig. qui incepit in hora prima post meridiem et duravit in horam tertiam et ultra." He sometimes, and even in the episcopal character, condescended to sport with his own name. He published an address to the clergy assembled at Barnwell, under the title of *GALLICANTVS ad confra-*

tres suos curatos in synodo apud Barnwell, 23 Sept. 1498. To which is annexed his CONSTITUTION for celebrating certain feasts in his diocese. Printed for Pinson, 1498. 4to. In the beginning is the figure of the bishop preaching to his clergy, with two cocks on each side. And there is a cock in the first page. By the way, Alcock wrote many other pieces. THE HILL OF PERFECTI-ON, from the Latin. For Pinson, 1497. 4to. For Wynkyn de Worde, 1497. 4to. Again, for the same, 1501. 4to. THE ABBY OF THE HOLY GHOST that shall be foumed and grounded in a clear conscience, in which abbey shall dwell twenty and nine ladies ghostly. For the same, 1531. 4to. Again, for the same, without date, but before 1500. 4to. At the end, "Thus endeth without boſt, The Abby of the holi goſt." [See MSS. Harl. 5272. 3. 1—1704. 9. fol. 32. b. And MSS. C. C. C. Oxon. 155. And MSS. MORE, 191.] SPOUSAGE OF A VIRGIN TO CHRIST, 1486. 4to. HOMELIE VULGARES. MEDITATIONES PIÆ. A fragment of a comment upon the SEVEN PENITENTIAL PSALMS, in English verse, is supposed to be by bishop Alcock, MSS. Harl. 1704. 4. fol. 13.

When he went, faded the floure of al the fen ;
I boldly sweare this cocke trode never hen !

Alcock, while living, erected a beautiful sepulchral chapel in his cathedral, still remaining, but miserably defaced. To which the shepherd alludes in the lines that follow :

This was the father of thinges pastorall,
And that well sheweth his cathedrall.
There was I lately, aboute the midft of May :
Coridon, his church is twenty fith more gay
Then all the churches between the same and Kent ;
There sawe I his tombe and chapel excellent.—
Our parishe church is but a dongeon
To that gay church in comparifon.—
When I sawe his figure lye in the chapel side, &c°.

In another place he thus represents the general lamentation for the death of this worthy prelate: and he rises above himself in describing the sympathy of the towers, arches, vaults, and images, of Ely monastery.

The pratie palace by him made in the fen^p,
The maidès, widowes, the wives, and the men,
With deadly dolour were pearfed to the hearte,
When death conftroynd this shepherd to departe.
Corne, grasse, and fieldes, mourned for wo and payne,
For oft his prayer for them obtayned rayne.
The pleasaunt floures for him faded eche one.—
The okès, elmès : every forte of dere^q
Shrunke under shadowes, abating all their chere.

* ELOG. i. Signat. A. iii.

^p He rebuilt, or greatly improved, the episcopal palace at Ely.

^q Beasts, quadrupeds of all kinds. So in the romance of SYR BEVIS, Signat. F. iii.

Rattes and myfe and such smal dere
Was his meate that seven yere.

Whence Shakespeare took, as Dr. Percy has observed, the well-known distich of the madman in KING LEAR, ACT iii. Sc. 4.

Mice

The mightie walles of Ely monastery,
 The stonès, rockes, and towrès semblably,
 The marble pillours, and images eche one,
 Swete all for forrowe, when this cocke was gone, &c'.

It should be remembered, that these pastorals were probably written while our poet was a monk of Ely: and although Alcock was then dead, yet the memory of his munificence and piety was recent in the monastery*.

Speaking of the dignity and antiquity of shepherds, and particularly of Christ at his birth being first seen by shepherds, he seems to describe some large and splendid picture of the Nativity painted on the walls of Ely cathedral.

I sawe them myselfe well paynted on the wall,
 Late gasing upon our churche cathedrall:
 I saw great wethers, in picture, and small lambes,
 Daunfing, some sleping, some sucking of their dams;
 And some on the grounde, mesemed, lying still:
 Then sawe I horsemen appendant of an hill;
 And the three kings, with all their company,
 Their crownes glistering bright and oriently,
 With their presents and giftès misticall:
 All this behelde I in picture on the wall'.

Mice and rats and such small *deere*
 Have been Tom's food for seven long yeere.

It cannot now be doubted, that Shakespeare in this passage wrote *deer*, instead of *geer* or *cheer*, which have been conjecturally substituted by his commentators.

* EGL. iii.

* He also compliments Alcock's predecessor Moreton, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury: not without an allusion to his troubles, and restoration to favour, under Richard the third and Henry the seventh. EGL. iii.

And shepherd MORETON, when he durst
 not appeare,

Howe his olde servauntes were carefull of
 his chere;

In payne and pleafour they kept fidelitie,
 Till grace agayne gave him authoritie, &c.

And again, EGL. iiiii.

Micene [Mecenas] and MORETON be deade
 and gone certaine.

The *Dean of Poicles*, I suppose dean Colet, is celebrated as a preacher, *ibid.* As is, "The olde friar that wonned in
 "Greenwich," EGL. v.

† EGL. v.

Virgil's poems are thus characterised, in some of the best turned lines we find in these pastorals :

He sungen of fieldes, and tilling of the grounde,
Of shepe and oxen, and battayle did he founde ;
So shrille he sounded in termes eloquent
I trowe his tunes went to the firmament ^a.

He gives us the following idea of the sports, spectacles, and pleasures, of his age.

Some men deliteth beholding men to fight,
Or goodly knightes in pleasaunt apparayle,
Or sturdie souldiers in bright harnes and male ^x.—
Some glad is to see these ladies beauteous,
Goodly appoynted in clothing sumptuous :
A number of people appoynted in like wise ^y
In costly clothing, after the newest gife ;
Sportes, disgifing ^z, fayre courfers mount and prounce,
Or goodly ladies and knightes sing and daunce :
To see fayre houses, and curious picture,
Or pleasaunt hanging ^a, or sumptuous vesture,
Of silke, of purple, or golde moste orient,
And other clothing divers and excellent :
Hye curious buildinges, or palaces royall,
Or chapels, temples fayre and substantiall,
Images graven, or vaultes curious ^b ;
Gardeyns, and meadowes, or places ^c delicious,
Forests and parkes well furnished with dere,
Cold pleaufant streames, or wellès fayre and clere,
Curious cundytes, &c ^d.

^a Ecl. iv.

^x Armour and coats of mail.

^y Apparelled in uniform.

^z Masques, &c.

^a Tapestry.

^b Roofs, curiously vaulted.

^c Houses, Seats.

^d Ecl. ii. I shall here throw together in the Notes, some traits in these Eclogues of the common customs and manners of the

We have before seen, that our author and Skelton were rivals. He alludes to Skelton, who had been laureated at Oxford, in the following lines.

the times. A shepherd, after mentioning his skill in shooting birds with a bow, says, *EGL. i.*

No shephearde throweth the *axletres* so farre.

A gallant is thus described, *EGL. ii.*

For women use to love them most of all,
Which boldly boasteth, or that can sing and
jet;

Whiche hath the maistry oftimes in tourna-
ment,

Or that can gambauld, or dance feat and
gent.

The following sorts of wine are recited,
EGL. ii.

As muscadell, caprike, romney, and mal-
mefy,
From Genoe brought, from Greece, or
Hungary.

As are the dainties of the table, *ibid.*
A shepherd at court must not think to eat,

— Swanne, nor heron,

Curlewe, nor crane. —

Again, *ibid.*

What fishe is of favour swete and delicious,—
Roasted or sodden in swete herbes or wine;
Or fried in oyle, most saporous and fine.—

— — — The passies of a hart.—
The crane, the sefaunt, the pecocke, and
curlewe,

The partriche, plover, bittern, and heron-
sewe: —

Seasoned so well in licour redolent,
That the hall is full of pleasant smell and
sent.

At a feast at court, *ibid.*

Slowe be the sewers in serving in alway,
But swift be they after, taking the meate
away:

A speciall custom is used them amonge,
No good dishe to suffer on borde to be long:
If the dishe be pleasaunt, eyther fleshe or
fishe,

Ten handes at once swarme in the dishe:

And if it be fleshe ten knives shall thou see
Mangling the fleshe, and in the platter see:
To put there thy handes is perill without
fayle,

Without a gauntlet or els a glove of mayle.

The two last lines remind us of a say-
ing of *Quin*, who declared it was not safe
to sit down to a turtle-feast in one of the
city-halls, without a basket-hilted knife
and fork. Not that I suppose *Quin* bor-
rowed his bon mots from black letter books.

The following lines point out some of
the festive tales of our ancestors. *EGL. iv.*

Yet would I gladly heare some mery *FIT*
Of Mayde Marian, or els of Robin Hood;
Or Bentley's Ale which chafeth well the
blood,

Of Perte of Norwich, or sauce of Wilberton,
Or buckish Toby well-stuffed as a ton.

He mentions *Bentley's Ale*, which *maketh*
me to winke, *EGL. ii.*

Some of our antient domestic pastimes
and amusements are recorded, *EGL. iv.*

Then is it pleasure the yonge maydens
amonge

To wathe by the fire the winter-nightes
long: —

And in the ashes some playes for to marke,
To cover wardens [pears] for faulte of other
warke:

To tosse white shevers, and to make pro-
phitroles;

And, after talking, oftimes to fill the bowles,
&c.

He mentions some musical instruments,
EGL. ii.

— — — Methinkes no mirth is scant,
Where no rejoyfing of minstrelsie doth want:
The bagpipe or fiddle to us is delectable, &c.

And the mercantile commodities of dif-
ferent countries and cities, *EGL. iv.*

England hath cloth, Bordeus hath store of
wine,
Cornwalle hath tinne, and Lymster woolles
fine.

London

Then is he decked as *poete laureate*,
 When stinking Thais made him her *graduate*:—
 If they have smelled the *artes triviall*,
 They count them poets *bye and heroicall*°.

The TOWRE OF VERTUE AND HONOUR, introduced as a song of one of the shepherds into these pastorals, exhibits no very masterly strokes of a sublime and inventive fancy. It has much of the trite imagery usually applied in the fabrication of these ideal edifices. It, however, shews our author in a new walk of poetry. This magnificent tower, or castle, is built on inaccessible cliffs of flint: the walls are of gold, bright as the sun, and decorated with *olde historyes and pictures manyfolde*: the turrets are beautifully shaped. Among its heroic inhabitants are king Henry the eighth, Howard duke of Norfolk, and the earl of Shrewsbury. LABOUR is the porter at the gate, and VIRTUE governs the house. LABOUR is thus pictured, with some degree of spirit.

Fearfull is LABOUR, without favour at all,
 Dreadfull of visage, a monster intractable;
 Like Cerberus lying at gates infernall;
 To some men his looke is halfe intollerable,
 His shoulders large for burden strong and able,
 His bodie bristled, his necke mightie and stiffe;
 By sturdie sinewes his joynts strong and stable,
 Like marble stones his handès be as stiffe.

London hath scarlet, and Bristowe pleasaunt
 red, &c.

Of songs at feasts, EGL. iv.

When your fat dishes smoke hot upon your
 table,

Then laude ye songes and balades magnifie,
 If they be merry, or written craftely,

Ye clappe your handes and to the making
 harke,
 And one say to another, lo here a proper
 warke.

He says that minstrels and singers are
 highly favoured at court, especially those
 of the *French gise*. EGL. ii. Also jugglers
 and pipers, EGL. iv.
 ° EGL. iv.

Here

Here must man vanquish the dragon of Cadmus,
Gainst the Chimere here stoutly must he fight;
Here must he vanquish the fearfull Pegasus,
For the golden flece here must he shewe his might:
If LABOUR gainsay, he can nothing be right:
This monster LABOUR oft changeth his figure,
Sometime an oxe, a bore, or lion wight,
Playnely he seemeth thus changeth his nature.

Like as Protheus ofte changeth his stature.

* * * * *

Under his browes he dreadfully doth lowre
With glistering eyes, and side-dependant beard,
For thirst and hunger alway his chere is soure,
His horned forehead doth make faynt hearts afeard.

Alway he drinketh, and yet alway is drye,
The sweate distilling with droppes abundant, &c.

The poet adds, that when the noble Howard had long boldly contended with this hideous monster, had broken the bars and doors of the castle, had bound the porter, and was now preparing to ascend the tower of Virtue and Honour, FORTUNE and DEATH appeared, and interrupted his progress^f.

The first modern Latin Bucolics are those of Petrarch, in number twelve, written about the year 1350^e. The Eclogues of Mantuan, our author's model, appeared about the year 1400, and were followed by many others. Their number multiplied so soon, that a collection of thirty-eight modern bucolic poets in Latin was printed at Basil, in the year 1546^h. These writers judged this indirect and disguised mode of dialogue, consisting of simple characters which spoke freely and plainly, the most safe and convenient vehicle for abusing

^e EGL. iv.

^f Ibid.

^h BUCOLICORUM ECLOGÆ XII.

^h Viz. xxxviii. AVTHORES BUCOLICI,
Basil. 1546. 8vo.

the

the corruptions of the church. Mantuan became so popular, as to acquire the estimation of a classic, and to be taught in schools. Nothing better proves the reputation in which this writer was held, than a speech of Shakespeare's pedant, the pedagogue Holofernes. "*Fausse, precor, gelida quando pecus omne sub ulmo*", and so forth. Ah, good old MANTUAN! "I may speak of thee, as the traveller doth of Venice, *Vinegia, Vinegia, chi non te vedi, ei non te pregi*. Old MANTUAN! Old MANTUAN! Who understandeth thee not, "loveth thee not". But although Barklay copies Mantuan, the recent and separate publication in England of Virgil's bucolics, by Wynkyn de Worde¹, might partly suggest the new idea of this kind of poetry.

With what avidity the Italian and French poets, in their respective languages, entered into this species of composition, when the rage of Latin versification had subsided, and for the purposes above-mentioned, is an inquiry reserved for a future period. I shall only add here, that before the close of the fifteenth century, Virgil's bucolics were translated into Italian^m, by Bernardo Pulci, Fossa de Cremona, Benivieni, and Fiorini Buoninsegni.

¹ One of Mantuan's lines. Farnaby in his Preface to Martial says, that *Fausse precor gelida*, was too often preferred to *Arma virumque cano*. I think there is an old black letter translation of Mantuan into English. Another translation appeared by one Thomas Harvey, 1656. Mantuan was three times printed in England before the year 1600. Viz. B. Mantuani Carmelitæ theologi ADOLESCENTIA seu BUCOLICA. With the commentary of Jodocus Badius. Excud. G. Dewes and H. Marthe, 1584. 12mo. Again, for the same, the same year, 12mo. Again, for Robert Dexter, 1598. 12mo. With Arguments to the Eclogues, and Notes by John Murmelius, &c.

^k LOVE'S LAB. L. ACT iv. SC. 3.

^l BUCOLICA VIRGILII cum commento familiari. At the end, *Ad juvenes hujus*

Maroniani operis commendatio. Die vero viii Aprilis. 4to. And they were reprinted by the same, 1514, and 1516.

^m Viz. LA BUCOLICA DI VIRGILIO per Fratrem Evangelistam FOSSA de Cremona ord. fervorum. In Venezia, 1494. 4to. But thirteen years earlier we find, Bernardo PULCI nella BUCOLICA di Virgilio: di Jeronimo BENIVIENI, Jacopo FIORINO Buoninsegni de Sienna: Epistole di Luca Pulci. In Firenze, per Bartolomeo Miscomini, 1484. A dedication is prefixed, by which it appears, that Buoninsegni wrote a PISCATORY ECLOGUE, the first ever written in Italy, in the year 1468. There was a second edition of Pulci's version, LA BUCOLICA di VIRGILIO tradotta per Bernardo PULCI con l'Elegie. In Fiorenza, 1494.