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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 XV. Skelton. His life. Patronised by Henry, fifth earl of Northumberland. His character, and peculiarity of style. Critical examination of his poems. Macaronic poetry. Skelton's Morality ...

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S E C T. XV.

MOST of the poems of John Skelton were written in the reign of king Henry the eighth. But as he was laureated at Oxford about the year 1489^{*}, I consider him as belonging to the fifteenth century.

Skelton, having studied in both our universities, was promoted to the rectory of Dis in Norfolk[†]. But for his buffooneries in the pulpit, and his satirical ballads against the

^{*} See *supr.* p. 130.

[†] At least before the year 1507. For at the end of his *TRENTALE* for old John Clarke, there is this colophon. "Auctore Skelton rectore de Dis. Finis, &c. Apud Trumpinton, script. per Curatum ejusdem quinto die Jan. A. D. 1507." See the PITHY PLEASANT AND PROFITABLE WORKES OF MAISTER SKELTON, reprinted at London, 1736, 12mo. pag. 272. He was ordained both deacon and priest in the year 1498. On the title of the monastery de Gracis near the tower of London. REGISTR. Savage. Episc. Lond. There is a poem by Skelton on the death of king Edward the fourth, who died A. D. 1483. WORKES, *ut supr.* p. 100. This is taken into the *MIRROUR OF MAGISTRATES*.

Skelton's poems were first printed at London, 1512. 8vo. A more complete edition by Thomas Marthe appeared in 1568. 12mo. From which the modern edition, in 1736, was copied. Many pieces of this collection have appeared separately. We have also, *CERTAIN BOKES OF SKELTON*. For W. Bonham, 1547. 12mo. Again, *viz.* Five of his poems, for John Day, 1583. 12mo. Another collection for A. Scollocker, 1582. 12mo. Another of two pieces, without date, for A. Kytson. Another, *viz.* *MERIE TALES*, for T. Colwell, 1575. 12mo. *MAGNIFICENCE, a goodly Interlude and a mery*

devisyd and made by mayster Skelton, poet laureate, late deceasid, was printed by Rastell, in 1533. 4to. This is not in any collection of his poems. He mentions it in his *CROWNE OF LAWRELL*, p. 47. "And of *MAGNIFICENCE*, a notable mater, &c." Pinson also printed a piece of Skelton, not in any collection, "How yong scholars now a days emboldened in the fly blowne blast of the moche vayne glorious, &c." Without date, 4to. There are also, not in his Works, *Epitaph of Jasper duke of Bedford*, Lond. 4to. And, *Miseries of England under Henry seventh*, Lond. 4to. See two of his Epitaphs in Camden's *EPITAPHIA REGUM*, &c. Lond. 1600. 4to. See a distich in Hollinsh. iii. 878. And Stanzas presented to Henry the seventh, in 1488, at Windsor, in *Ashmole's ORD. GART.* chap. xxi. SECT. vii. p. 594. A great number of Skelton's pieces remain unprinted. See MSS. Harl. 367. 36. fol. 101. seq.—2252. 51. fol. 134. seq. MSS. Reg. 18 D. 4. 5. MSS. C. C. C. Cambr. G. ix. MSS. Cotton. VITELL. E. x. 28. And MSS. Cathedr. Linc. In the *CROWNE OF LAWRELL*, Skelton recites many of his own pieces. p. 47. seq. *The severayne Interlude of Virtue. The Rosiar. Prince Arthur's creation. Of Perfidia. Dialogues of Ymagination. The comedy of Achad. mios. Tullis familiars*, that is, a translation of Tully's Familiar Epistles. *Of good Advise ment. The Reule against Gaguine.*

mendicants², he was severely censured, and perhaps suspended by Nykke his diocesan, a rigid bishop of Norwich, from exercising the duties of the sacerdotal function. Wood says, he was also punished by the bishop for "having been guilty of certain crimes, AS MOST POETS ARE³." But these persecutions only served to quicken his ludicrous disposition, and to exasperate the acrimony of his satire. As his sermons could be no longer a vehicle for his abuse, he vented his ridicule in rhyming libels. At length, daring to attack the dignity of cardinal Wolsey, he was closely pursued by the officers of that powerful minister; and, taking shelter in the sanctuary of Westminster abbey, was kindly

Gaguine. See p. 47. 162. *The Pepingay.* A noble pamphlet of sovereignty. *The Play of Magnificence*, abovementioned. *Maters of Myrth to maistres Margery.* *The Peregrination of Maunse Lyse*, from the French, perhaps of Guillaume, prior of Chalis. [See *supr.* p. 120.] But it should be observed, that Pynson printed *Peregrinatio humani generis*, 1508. 4to. *The triumphes of the redde rose*, containing many stories long unremembered. *Speculum principis*, a manual written while he was creancer, or tutor, to Henry the eighth, when a boy. *The Tunnyng of Elinour Rummyng.* See p. 123. *Colin Clout.* See p. 179. *John Twe.* *Josforth Jacke.* *Verbes to maistres Anne.* *Epitaph of one Adam a knave.* See p. 271. *The balade of the mysterde tarte.* *The fate of Philip Sparrowe.* See p. 215. *The grouting of the swayne.* *The mourning of the mapely rote.* *A prayer to Myrth's hornes.* *The pageants* [pageants] *played in joyous garde*, that is, in king Arthur's castle, so called in the romance of *MORTA ARTHUR.* *The fenestrall* [window] *of castell Angel.* *The recule of Rosamundes bowre.* *How dame Minerva first found the olive-tre.* *The myller and his joly mate*, or wife. *Mariane clasian.* *Of the Benches of Astryge* near Berckhamstead, where is the *lange royall of Chriff's biode*, that is, the real blood of Chriff. He professes to have received many favours from this monastery. *The nacion of folés.* *The boke of three scales*

is printed in his works, p. 260. *Apolla that rebirted up his charre.* *The mayden of Kent.* *Of lovers testaments.* *Of Jollas and Phillis.* *The boke of honourous astate: Of royall demenaunce: How to ste lynne: How to speke well.* *How to dye when ye will.* A translation of *Diodorus Siculus*, *cute of fresche Laitin*, that is, of Poggius Florentinus, containing six books. MS. C. C. C. Camb. viii. 5. Poggius's version was first printed at Venice, 1476. Caxton in his Preface to Virgil's *ENEIDOS*, says that Skelton "translated diverse other" "workes out of Latyn into Englysh," beside Tully's Epistles, and Diodorus Siculus. Bale mentions his *Inventiva* on William Lily the grammarian. I know nothing more of this, than that it was answered by Lily in *Apologia ad Job. Skeltonum*. Pr. "Siccine vipereo pergis me, &c." The piece of Skelton most frequently printed was, I believe, his *ELINOUR RUMMYNG*, or *Rumpkin*. The last of the old editions is, in 1624. 4to. In the title page, is the picture of our genial hostess, a deformed old woman, holding a pot of ale, with this inscription.

When Skelton wore the lawrel crown
My ale put all the alewives down.

See DAVIES'S CRITICAL HISTORY OF PAMPHLETS, p. 28. 86.

² See WORKS, p. 200. 202. &c.

³ ATH. OXON. i. 22. seq.

entertained and protected by abbot Islip¹, to the day of his death. He died, and was buried in the neighbouring church of faint Margaret, in the year 1529.

Skelton was patronised by Henry Algernoon Percy, the fifth earl of Northumberland, who deserves particular notice here; as he loved literature at a time when many of the nobility of England could hardly read or write their names, and was the general patron of such genius as his age produced. He encouraged Skelton, almost the only professed poet of the reign of Henry the seventh, to write an elegy on the death of his father, which is yet extant. But still stronger proofs of his literary turn, especially of his singular passion for poetry, may be collected from a very splendid manuscript, which formerly belonged to this very distinguished peer, and is at present preserved in the British Museum². It contains a large collection of English poems, elegantly engrossed on vellum, and superbly illuminated, which had been thus sumptuously transcribed for his use. The pieces are chiefly those of Lydgate, after which follow the aforesaid Elegy of Skelton, and some smaller compositions. Among the latter are a metrical history of the family of Percy, presented to him by one of his own chaplains; and a prolix series of poetical inscriptions, which he caused to be written on the walls and ceilings of the principal apartments of his castles of Leginfield and Wressill³. His

¹ His Latin epitaph or elegy on the Death of Henry the seventh, is addressed to Islip, A. D. 1512. p. 285.

² MSS. Reg. 18 D. 11.

³ See *supr.* p. 126. And MSS. C. C. C. Cant. 168. Three of the apartments in Wressill Castle, now destroyed, were adorned with POETICAL INSCRIPTIONS. These are called in the manuscript above-mentioned, "PROVERBES in the LODGINGS in WRESSILL."

1. "The proverbes in the fydis of the innere chamber at Wressill." This is a poem of twenty-four stanzas, each containing seven lines: beginning thus,

"When it is tyme of coffe and greate expens,

"Beware of waffe and spende by measure:

"Who that outrageously makithe his dispens,

"Caufythe his goodes not long to endure,

&c.

2. "The counsell of Aristotill, whiche he gayfe to Alexander, kyng of Maffy-dony; whiche are wrytyn in the fyde of the Utter Chamber above the house in the Garden at Wressill." This is in disticha of thirty-eight lines; beginning thus,

Punyshe

cultivation of the arts of external elegance appears, from the stately sepulchral monuments which he erected in the minster, or collegiate church, of Beverly in Yorkshire, to the memory of his father and mother; which are executed in

“ Punishe moderately and discretly correcte,
“ As well to mercy as to justice havynge a
respecte, &c.

3. “ The proverbis in the syde of th' Utter
“ Chamber above of the hous in the gar-
“ dyng at Wresfyll.” A poem of thirty
stanzas, chiefly of four lines, viz.

“ Remorde thyn e inwardly,
“ Fyx not thy mynde on Fortune, that de-
lythe dyverfly, &c.

The following apartments in Lekinsfield had poetical inscriptions: as mentioned in the said manuscript. “ PROVERBS in the
“ LODGINGS at LEKINGFIELD.”

1. “ The proverbis of the garet over
“ the Bayne at Lekyngfelde.” This is a
dialogue in 32 stanzas, of four lines, be-
tween “ the Parte Senfatyve,” and “ the
“ Part Intellectyve;” containing a poetical
comparison between sensual and intellectual
pleasures.

2. “ The proverbis in the garet at the
“ new lodge in the parke of Lekyngfelde.”
This is a poem of 32 stanzas, of four lines,
being a discant on Harmony, as also on the
manner of Singing, and playing on most
of the instruments then used: i. e. the Harps,
Claricordes, Lute, Virgynall, Clarifym-
ballis, Clarion, Shawme, Orgayne, Re-
corder. The following stanza relates to
the SHAWME, and shews it to have been
used for the Bass, as the RECORDER was
for the Meane or Tenor.

“ A SHAWME makithe a sweete sounde
for he tunithe BASSE,

“ It mountithe not to hy, but kepithe rule
and space.

“ Yet yf it be blowne with a too vehement
wynde,

“ It makithe it to misgoverne out of his
kynde.

3. “ The proverbis in the rooffe of the
“ hyst chawmbre in the gardinge at Le-
kingfelde.” If we suppose this to be the

room mentioned by Leland, where the Ge-
nealogy was kept; the following jingling
reflections on the family motto (in thirty
distichs) will not appear quite so misplaced;

“ *Esperauce en Dyeu,*
“ Truste in hym he is most trewe.

“ *En Dieu esperance,*
“ In hym put thyn affiance.

“ *Esperauce in the worlde? nay;*
“ The worlde varieth every day.

“ *Esperauce in riches? nay, not so,*
“ Riches flidithe and sone will go.

“ *Esperauce in exaltacion of honoure?*
“ Nay, it widderrithe . . . lyke a flour.

“ *Esperauce in bloode and highe lynage?*
“ At moste nede, bot esy avauntage.

The concluding distich is,

“ *Esperauce en Dieu,* in hym is all;
“ Be thou contente and thou art above
Fortune's fall.”

4. “ The proverbis in the roufe of my
“ Lorde Percy clofett at Lekyngfelde.” A
poetical dialogue, containing instructions
for youth, in 142 lines.

5. “ The proverbis in the roufe of my
“ Lordis library at Lekyngfelde.” Twenty-
three stanzas of four lines, from which
take the following specimen:

“ To every tale geve thou no credens.

“ Prove the cause, or thou give sentens.

“ Agayn the right make no dyffens.

“ So hast thou a clene consciens.”

6. “ The counsell of Aristotell, whiche
“ he gave to Alexander kinge of Mace-
“ dony; in the syde of the garet of the
“ gardynge in Lekyngfelde.” This con-
sists of nine stanzas, of eight lines: Take
the last stanza but one:

“ Punishe moderately, and discretly correct,
“ As well to mercy, as to justice havynge a
respect;

the richest style of the florid Gothic architecture, and remain to this day, the conspicuous and striking evidences of his taste and magnificence. In the year 1520, he founded an annual stipend of ten marcs for three years, for a preceptor, or professor, to teach grammar and philosophy in the monastery of Alnewick, contiguous to another of his magnificent castles^m. A further instance of his attention to letters and studious employments, occurs in his *HOUSEHOLD-BOOK*, dated 1512, yet remaining; in which the *LIBRARIES* of this earl and of his lady are specifiedⁿ: and in the same curious monument of antient manners it is ordered, that one of his chaplains should be a *MAKER OF INTERLUDES*^o. With so much boldness did this liberal nobleman abandon the example of his brother peers, whose principal occupations were hawking and tilting; and who despised learning, as an ignoble and petty accomplishment, fit only for the purposes of laborious and indigent ecclesiastics. Nor was he totally given up to the pursuits of leisure and peace: he was, in the

“ So shall ye have meryte for the punyfhment,

“ And cause the offender to be sory and penitent.

“ If ye be movede with anger or hastynes,

“ Pause in youre mynde and your yre repress:

“ Defer vengeance unto your anger affwagede be;

“ So shyll ye mynyster justice, and do dewe equitye.”

This castle is also demolished. One of the ornaments of the apartments of the old castles in France, was to write the walls all over with amorous *SONNETS*.

^m From the Receiver's accounts of the earl's estates in Com. Northumb. A. xv. Henr. viii. A. D. 1527. “ *SOLUCIONES DENARIORUM per WARRANTUM DOMINI. Et in denariis per dominum receptorem doctori Makerell Abbati monasterii de Alnewyk solutis, de exitibus hujus anni, pro solucione vadii unius PEDAGOGI, five Magistri, existentis*

“ *infra Abbathiam predictam, et docentis ac legentis GRAMMATICAM et PHILOSOPHIAM canonicis et fratribus monasterii predicti, ad x marcas per annum pro termino iij annorum, virtute unius warrantu, cujus data est apud Wrethill xx^{mo} die Septembris anno xij Regis predicti, signo manuali ipsius Comitis signati, et penes ipsum Abbatem remanentis, ultra vj lib. xiijs. ivd. sibi allocatas anno xiiij Henr. viij^{ti}, et vj lib. xiijs. iiijd. similiter sibi allocatas in anno xiiij ejusdem Regis ut. per ii. acquietancias inde confectas, et penes Auditorem remanentes.” From *EVIDENCES* of the *PERCY FAMILY*, at *Sion-house*. C. iii. Num. 5. 6. Communicated by doctor Percy.*

ⁿ Pag. 44. P. Cop.
^o Pag. 378. I am indebted to the usual kindness of Dr. Percy for all the notices relating to this earl. See his Preface to the *HOUSEHOLD BOOK*, pag. xxi. seq.

year

year 1497, one of the leaders who commanded at the battle of Blackheath against lord Audley and his partisans; and was often engaged, from his early years, in other public services of trust and honour. But Skelton hardly deserved such a patronage^p.

It is in vain to apologise for the coarseness, obscenity, and scurrility of Skelton, by saying that his poetry is tinged with the manners of his age. Skelton would have been a writer without decorum at any period. The manners of Chaucer's age were undoubtedly more rough and unpolished than those of the reign of Henry the seventh. Yet Chaucer, a poet abounding in humour, and often employed in describing the vices and follies of the world, writes with a degree of delicacy, when compared with Skelton. That Skelton's manner is gross and illiberal, was the opinion of his contemporaries; at least of those critics who lived but a few years afterwards, and while his poems yet continued in vogue. Puttenham, the author of the *ARTE OF ENGLISH POESIE*, published in the year 1589, speaking of the species of short metre used in the minstrel-romances, for the convenience of being sung to the harp at feasts, and in *CAROLS* and *ROUNDS*, "and such other light or lascivious poems which are commonly more commodiously uttered by those buffoons or Vices in plays than by any other person," and in which the sudden return of the rhyme fatigues the ear, immediately subjoins: "Such were the rimes of Skelton, being indeed but a rude railing rimer, and all his doings ridiculous; he used both short distances and short measures, pleasing only the popular care." And Meres, in his *PALLADIS*

^p Lib. ii. ch. ix. p. 69.

I am informed by a manuscript note in one of Mr. Oldys's books, that Skelton also wrote a poem called *TITUS AND GESIPPUS*. This I believe to be a mistake: for I suppose he attributes to Skelton, William Walter's poem on this subject, mentioned above, p. 238.

At the same time I take occasion to correct a mistake of my own, concerning that piece; which I have inadvertently called, "a translation from a Latin romance concerning the siege of Jerusalem." *ibid.* Titus and Gesippus were famous for their friendship; and their history forms an interesting novel in Boccaccio, the substance
of

TAMIA, OR WIT'S TREASURY, published in 1598. "Skelton applied his wit to skurilities and ridiculous matters: such among the Greekes were called *pantomimi*, with us buffoons¹."

Skelton's characteristic vein of humour is capricious and grotesque. If his whimsical extravagancies ever move our laughter, at the same time they shock our sensibility. His festive levities are not only vulgar and indelicate, but frequently want truth and propriety. His subjects are often as ridiculous as his metre: but he sometimes debases his matter by his versification. On the whole, his genius seems better suited to low burlesque, than to liberal and manly satire. It is supposed by Caxton, that he improved our language; but he sometimes affects obscurity, and sometimes adopts the most familiar phraseology of the common people.

He thus describes, in the BOKE OF COLIN CLOUTE, the pompous houses of the clergy.

of which is this. Gesippus, falling into poverty, thought himself despised by Titus; and thence growing weary of life, gave out that he was guilty of a murder just committed. But Titus knowing the true state of the case, and desiring to save the life of his friend by losing his own, charged himself with the murder: at which the real murderer, who stood among the croud at the trial, was so struck, that he confessed the fact. All three are saved; and Titus, to repair the broken fortunes of Gesippus, gives him his sister in marriage, with an ample dower. BOCC. DECAM. Nov. viii. GIOHN. x. This is a frequent example of consummate friendship in our old poets. In the FAERIE QUEENE, they are placed in the temple of Venus among the celebrated Platonic friends of antiquity, B. iv. c. x. st. 27.

Myld Titus and Gesippus without pryde.

See also SONGES and SONNETTS written by E. G. At the end of lord Surrey's Works, fol. 114.

O frendship flour of flours, O lively sprite
of life,
O sacred bond of blisful peace, the stal-
worth staunch of life!
Scipio with Lelius didst thou conjoin in
care:—
GESIPPUS eke with TITUS, Damon with
Pythias;
And with Menethus sonne Achill by thee
combyned was:
Euryalus and Nifus, &c. &c.

There is a manuscript of some of Skelton's poems in the Cotton library: but the volume is so much damaged by fire, that they are almost illegible. [Brit. Mus.] VITELL. E. x. 28.

¹ "Being the second part of Wit's COMMONWELTH. By Francis Meres, maister of artes of both uniuersities. London, printed by P. Short, &c. 1598." 12mo. fol. 279. b. The first part is, "POLITEUPHONIA, Wit's Common-wealth, for Nicholas Ling, 1598," 12mo.

Building

Building royally
 Their mancyons, curiously
 With turrettes, and with toures,
 With halles, and with boures,
 Streching to the starres;
 With glasse windowes and barres:
 Hangyng about the walles
 Clothes of golde and palles;
 Arras of ryche arraye,
 Freshe as floures in Maye:
 With dame Dyana naked;
 Howe lystye Venus quaked,
 And howe Cupide shaked
 His darte, and bente his bowe,
 For to shote a crowe
 At her tyrly tyrlowe:
 And how Paris of Troye
 Daunced a *lege de moy*,
 Made lustye sporte and toye
 With dame Helyn the queene:
 With suche storyes by deen^a,
 Their chambres wel be seene.
 With triumphes of Cesar, &c.—
 Now^b all the world stares
 How they ryde in goodly chares,
 Conveyed by olyphantes
 With lauriat garlantes;
 And by unycornes
 With their semely hornes;
 Upon these beastes riding
 Naked boyes striding,
 With wanton wenches winkyng.—

^a By the dozen.^b This is still a description of tapestry.

For

For prelates of estate
 Their courage to abate;
 From wordly wantonnes,
 Their chambers thus to dres
 With such parfytnefs,
 And all such holynes,
 How beit they lett down fall
 Their churches cathedrall'.

These lines are in the best manner of his petty measure: which is made still more disgusting by the repetition of the rhymes. We should observe, that the satire is here pointed at the subject of these tapestries. The graver ecclesiastics, who did not follow the levities of the world, were contented with religious subjects, or such as were merely historical. Rosse of Warwick, who wrote about the year 1460, relates, that he saw in the abbat's hall at saint Alban's abbey a suite of arras, containing a long train of incidents belonging to a most romantic and pathetic story in the life of the Saxon king Offa, which that historian recites at large".

¹ *The Boke of Colin Cloute*, p. 203. seq.
 " J. Ross. WARWIC. HIST. REG. ANGL. edit. Hearne, p. 64. Hugh de Foliot, a caanon regular of Picardy, so early as the year 1140, censures] the magnificent houses of the bishops, with the sumptuous paintings, or tapestry, of their chambers, chiefly on the Trojan story. " *Episcopi domos non impares ecclesiis magnitudine construunt. Pictos delectantur habere thalamos: vestiuntur ibi imagines pretiosis colorum indumentis. — Trojanorum gestis paries, purpura atque auro vestitur. — Græcorum exercitui dantur arma. Hæctori clypeus datur auro splendens, &c.*" Bibl. Bodl. MSS. JAMES. ii. p. 203. But I believe the tract is published in the Works of a cotemporary writer, Hugo de Sancto-Victore. Among the manuscript EPISTLES of Gilbert de Stone, a canon of Wells, and who flourished about the year 1360, there is a curious passage

concerning the spirit for fox-hunting which anciently prevailed among our bishops. Reginald Bryan, bishop of Worcester, in 1352, thus writes to the bishop of saint David's. " Reverende in Christo pater et domine, premissa recommendatione debita tanto patri. Illos optimos canes venaticos, duodecim ad minus, quibus non vidimus meliores, quos nuper, scitis, vestra REVERENDA PATERNITAS repromisit, quotidie expectamus. *Languet namque cor nostrum, donec realiter ad manus nostras venerit repromissum.*" He then owns his eagerness of expectation on this occasion to be sinful; but observes, that it is the fatal consequence of that deplorable frailty which we all inherit from our mother Eve. He adds, that the foxes, in his manor of Alnechurch, and elsewhere, had killed most of his rabbits, many of his capons, and had destroyed six of his swans in one night. " Veniant ergo, PATER

In the poem, WHY COME YE NOT TO THE COURT, he thus satirises cardinal Wolfsey, not without some tincture of humour.

He is fet so hye
 In his ierarchie^v,
 Of frantike frenesy,
 And folish fantasy,
 That in chambre of stars^{*}
 Al maters ther he mars,
 Clapping his rod on the borde,
 No man dare speake a worde;
 For he hath al the faying
 Without any renying,
 He rolleth in his Recordes:
 He faith, "how fay ye my lordes?"

"PATER REVERENDE, illæ sex Canonicorum cepulae, et non tardent, &c." He then describes the very exquisite pleasure he shall receive, in hearing his woods echo with the cry of the hounds, and the music of the horns; and in seeing the trophies of the chase affixed to the walls of his palace. MSS. Bibl. Bodl. SUPER. D. I. ART. 123. —MSS. Cotton. VITELL. E. X. 17. [See MSS. JAMES, XIX. p. 139.]

From a want of the notions of common propriety and decorum, it is amazing to see the strange absurdities committed by the clergy of the middle ages, in adopting the laical character. Du Cange says, that the deans of many cathedrals in France entered on the dignities habited in a surplice, girt with a sword, in boots and gilt spurs, and a hawk on the fist. LATIN. GLOSS. V. DECANUS, tom. i. p. 1326. See also *ibid.* p. 79. And tom. ii. p. 179. seq. Carpentier adds, that the treasurers of some churches, particularly that of Nivernois, claimed the privilege of assisting at masques, on whatever festival they pleased, without the canonical vestments, and carrying a hawk. And the lord of Saffay held some of his lands, by placing a hawk on the

high altar of the church of Evreux, while his parish priest celebrated the service, booted and spurred, to the beat of drum, instead of the organ. SUPPL. tom. i. p. 32. Although their ideas of the dignity of the church were so high, yet we find them sometimes conferring the rank and title of secular nobility even on the Saints. Saint James was actually created a BARON at Paris. Thus Froissart, tom. iii. c. 30. "Or eurent ils affection et devotion d'aller en pelerinage au BARON Saint Jaques." And in Fabl. (tom. ii. p. 182.) cited by Carpentier, *ubi sup.* p. 469.

Dame, dist il, et je me veu,
 A dieu, et au BARON Saint Leu,
 Et s' irai au BARON Saint Jaques.

Among the many contradictions of this kind, which entered into the system of these ages, the institution of the Knights templars is not the least extraordinary. It was an establishment of armed monks, who made a vow of living at the same time both as anchorets and soldiers.

^v Hierarchy.

^{*} The star-chamber. So below, p. 151.

In the *star-chamber* he nods and backs.

" Is not my reason good?
 " Good! — even good — *Robin-hood!* —
 Borne up on every syde
 With pompe and with pryde,
 With trump up alleluya',
 For dame Philargyria *
 Hath so his hart in hold, &c.—
 Adew Philosophia!
 Adew Theologia!
 Welcome dame Simonia †,
 With dame Castimergia ‡,
 To drynke and for to eate
 Swete ipocras, and fwete meate °:

† The pomp in which he celebrates divine service.

‡ Love of money.

° Simony.

‡ The true reading is *CASTRIMARGIA*, or *Gula concupiscentia*, Gluttony. From the Greek, *τασσημαργια*, *Ingluvies, helluatio*. Not an uncommon word in the monkish latinity. Du Cange cites an old Litany of the tenth century, "A Spiritu CASTRIMARGIÆ *Libera nos domine!*" *LAT. GLOSS.* i. p. 398. Carpentier adds, among other examples, from the statutes of the Cistercian order, 1375, "Item, cum propter detestabile CASTRIMARGIÆ vitium in labyrinthum vitiorum descen- datur, &c." *SUPPL.* tom. i. p. 862.

° I have before spoken of Hypo- cras, or spiced wine. I add here, that the spice, for this mixture, was served, often separately, in what they called a spice-plate. So Froissart, describing a dinner in the castle of Thoulouse, at which the king of France was present. "After dyner, they toke other pastymes in a great chambre, and hereyng of instru- ments, wherein the erle of Foiz greatly delyted. Than WINE and SPYCES was brought. The erle of Harcourt served the kyng of his SPYCE-PLATE. And

"sir Gerard de la Pyen served the duke of Burbone. And sir Monaunt of No- ailles served the erle of Foiz, &c." This was about the year 1360. *CHRON.* tom. ii. cap. 164. f. 184. a. Again, *ibid.* cap. 100. f. 114. a. "The kyng alyght- ed at his palis [of Westminster] whiche was redie apperelled for him. There the kyng DRANKE and TOKE SPYCES, and his uncles also: and other prelates, lordes, and knyghtes." Lord Berners's *TRANSL.* In the *Computus of Maxtoke priory* [*MS. supr. citat.*] an. 1447, we have this entry, "Item pro vino cretico cum speciebus et confectis datis diversis generosis in die sancti Dionysii quando *Le sole domini Monfordes erat hic, et faceret jocositates suas in camera orioli.*" Here, I believe, *vinum creticum* is raisin- wine, or wine made of dried grapes; and the meaning of the whole seems to be this. "Paid for raisin wine with comfits and spices, when sir S. Montford's FOOL was here, and exhibited his merriments in the oriel-chamber." With regard to one part of the entry, we have again, "Item, extra cameram vocatam *le gestis chamber*, erat una lintheamina furata in die sancti Georgii Martiris quando *le sole de Monfordes erat hic.*"

To

To kepe his fleshe chaste,
 In Lente, for his repaste
 He eateth capons stewed,
 Fesaunt and partriche mewed:—
 Spareth neyther mayd ne wife,
 This is a postel's life^d!

The poem called the *BOUGE OF COURT*, or the *Rewards of a Court*, is in the manner of a pageaunt, consisting of seven personifications. Here our author, in adopting the more grave and stately movement of the seven lined stanza^e, has shewn himself not always incapable of exhibiting allegorical imagery with spirit and dignity. But his comic vein predominates.

^d An apostle's. p. 147. He afterwards insinuates, that the Cardinal had lost an eye by the French disease: and that *Baltasar*, who had cured of the same disorder *Domingo Lomelyn*, one who had won much money of the king at cards and *basarding*, was employed to recover the cardinal's eye. p. 175. In the *Boke of Colin Clout*, he mentions the cardinal's mule, "Wyth golde all be trapped." p. 188. [See *supr.* p. 329.]

^e But in this stanza he sometimes relapses into the absurdities of his favorite style of composition. For instance, in *SPEAKE PARROT*, p. 97.

Albertus de modo significandi,
 And Donatus, be dryven out of schole;
 Prifians hed broken now handy dandy,
 And *Interdidascalos* is returned for a sole:
 Alexander a gander of Menander's pole,
 With *da Canfales* is cast out of the gate,
 And *da Racionales* dare not shew his pate.

Here, by *da Canfales*, he perhaps means *Concilia*, or the canon law. By *da Racionales* he seems to intend *Logic*. Albertus is the author of the *MARGARITA PORTICA*, a collection of Flores from the classics and other writers, printed at Nuremberg, 1472. fol. For Donatus, see vol. i. p. 231.

To which add, that Ingulphus says, in Croyland abbey library, there were many *Caton*es and *DONATI*, in the year 1091. *HIST. CROYL.* Ingulph. Script. Vet. i. p. 104. And that no person was admitted into the college of Boilly at Paris, founded in 1358, "nisi *DONATUM* aut *Catonem* didicerit." *BUL. HIST. UNIV. PARIS.* tom. iv. p. 355. *INTERDIDASCALOS* is the name of an old grammar. Alexander was a schoolmaster at Paris about the year 1290, author of the *DOCTRINALE PUE-RORUM*, which for some centuries continued to be the most favorite manual of grammar used in schools, and was first printed at Venice in the year 1473. It is compiled from Priscian and in Leonine verse. See *Henr. Gandav. SCRIPTOR.* *ECCLES.* cap. lix. This admired system has been loaded with glosses and lucubrations: but, on the authority of an ecclesiastical synod, it was superseded by the *COMMENTARIUM GRAMMATICI* of Des-pauterius, in 1512. It was printed in England as early as the year 1503, by W. de Worde. [See *supr.* p. 168.] *Barklay*, in the *SHIP OF FOOL*s, mentions Alexander's book, which he calls "The *olde DOCTRINALL* with his diffuse and un-perfite brevitie." fol. 53. b.

RYOTTE is thus forcibly and humourously pictured.

With that came RYOTTE rushing al at ones,
A rustie galande^f, to ragged and to rente^g;
And on the borde he whirled a paire of bones^h,
Quater treye dewes he clattered as he went:
Nowe have at all by faint Thomas of Kenteⁱ,
And ever he threwe, and kyft^k I wote nere what:
His here was growen thorowe out of his hat.

Than I behylde how he dysgyfled was;
His hedd was heavy for watchinge over night,
His eyen blered, his face shone like a glas;
His gowne so shorte, that it ne cover myght
His rompe, he went so all for somer light;
His hofe was gardyd with a lyste of grene^l,
Yet at the knee they broken were I ween.

His cote was checkerd with patches rede and blewe,
Of Kyrkbye Kendall^m was his short demyeⁿ;
And aye he fange *in fayth decon thou crewe*:
His elbowe bare, he ware his gere so nye^o:
His nose droppinge, his lippes were full drye:
And by his fyde his whynarde, and his pouche,
The devyll myght dance therin for any crouche^p.

^f Galant.

^g All over tatters and rags.

^h Dice.

ⁱ Saint Thomas Becket.

^k Cast. He threw I know not what.

^l There was an affectation of smartness in the trimming of his hofe, Yet, &c.

^m See KENDALL-GREEN, in the Glossary to Shakespeare. edit. 1771.

ⁿ Doublet. Jacket.

^o His coat-sleeve was so short.

^p Pag. 70. The devil might dance in his purse without meeting with a single fixpence. CROUCHE is *Croisi*, a piece of

money so called, from being marked with the cross. Hence the old phrase, *to croisi the hand*, for, *to give money*. In Chaucer's *MARSHAUNT'S TALE*, when January and May are married, it is said the priest "*Crouchid* them, and bad god shoud "them blest." v. 1223. Urr. That is, "*He crossed* the new-married couple, &c." In the poem before us, RYOTTE says, "I have no coyne nor *croffe*." p. 72. *Carpentier* mentions a coin, called in Latin *CROSATUS*, and in old French *CROSAT*, from being marked with the Cross. Hence *CROISAGE*, Fr. for *TRIBUTE*. V. *CRO-*
SATUS.

There is also merit in the delineation of DISSIMULATION, in the same poem⁹: and it is not unlike Ariosto's manner in imagining these allegorical personages.

Than in his hode I sawe there faces tweyne;
That one was lene and lyke a pyned ghost,
That other loked as he wolde me have slayne:
And to me ward as he gan for to coost,
Whan that he was even at me almoost,
I sawe a knyfe hid in his one sleve,
Whereon was wryten this worde MISCHEVE.

And in his other sleve methought I sawe
A spone of goldè, full of hony swete,
To feed a sole, and for to prey a dawè,¹⁰ &c.

The same may be observed of the figure of DISDAYNE.

He looked hawtie, he sette eche man at nought;
His gawdy garment with scornes was al wrought,
With indignacyon lyned was his hode;
He frowned as he wolde swere by cockes blode¹¹.

He bote¹² the lyppe, he loked passynge coye;
His face was belymmed, as bees had hym stounge:
It was no tyme with hym to jape nor toye,
Envye hath wasted his lyver and his lounge;
Hatred by the herte so had hym wrounge,

⁹ SATUS. SUPPL. Du Cange, LAT. GLOSS. tom. i. p. 1208. In Shakespeare's TIMON OF ATHENS, Flavius says,

More jewels yet! There is no CROSSING him in's humour,
Eke I should tell him—well—if aith I should,
When all's spent he'd be cross'd then if he could.—

Act i. Sc. iv. That is, not thwarting him in his humour, but giving him money.

Yet a jingle is intended. So in AS YOU LIKE IT, ii. iv. "Yet I should bear no CROSS if I did bear you; for I think you have no money in your purse." A CRUZADOE, a Portuguese coin, occurs in Shakespeare.

¹⁰ P. 73.

¹¹ To catch a filly bird.

¹² The Host's oath in Lydgate. See *supr.*

p. 73.
¹ Bitt.

That

That he loked pale as afshes to my syghte:
DISDAYNE, I wene, this comberous crab is hyghte.—

Forthwith he made on me a proude affawte,
With scornfull lokè movyd all in mode^w;
He wente about to take me in a fawte,
He fround, he stared, he stamped where he stoode:
I loked on hym, I wende^x he had be woode^x:
He set the arme proudly under the fyde,
And in this wyse he gan with me chyde^y.

In the CROWNE OF LAWRELL our author attempts the higher poetry: but he cannot long support the tone of solemn description. These are some of the most ornamented and poetical stanzas. He is describing a garden belonging to the superb palace of FAME.

In an herber^z I fawe brought where I was;
The byrdes on the brere fange on every fyde,
With aleys ensandyd about in compas,
The bankes enturfed with singlar folas^z,
Enrailed with rosers^b, and vines engraped;
It was a new comfort of sorowes escaped.

In the middes a cundite, that curiously was cast
With pypes of golde, engushing out streames
Of cristall, the clerenes these waters far past,
Enswimminge with roches, barbilles, and breames,
Whose skales enfilvred again the son beames
Englisterd

^w In anger.
^w Weened. Thought:
^x Mad.
^y P. 60.
^z See *supr.* p. 231.

^a It was surrounded with sand-walks.
^b Rose-trees. See Chaucer's *ROM. R.*
v. 1651. *seq.* And our author, *infr.* p. 40.
The ruddy *rosary*,
The pretty *rosemary*, &c.

Where

Where I sawe growyng a goodly laurell tre,
 Enverdured with leave, continually grene;
 Above in the top a byrde of Araby,
 Men call a Phenix: her wynges bytwene
 She bet up a fyre with the sparkes full kene,
 With braunches and bowes of the swete olyve,
 Whose fragraunt flower was chefe preservative

Ageynst all infections with rancour enflamed:

* * * * *

It passed all baumes that ever were named,
 Or gummes of Saby, so derely that be solde:
 There blewe in that garden a soft piplynge colde,
 Enbrething of Zephirus, with his pleasaunt wynde;
 Al frutes and flowers grew there in their kynde.

Dryades there daunsed upon that goodly soile,
 With the nyne Muses, Pierides by name;
 Phillis and Testelis, there tresses with oyle
 Were newly enbibed: And, round about the same
 Grene tre of laurell, moche solacious game
 They made, with chapettes and garlandes grene;
 And formost of al dame Flora the quene;

Of somer so formally she foted the daunce:
 There Cinthius sat, twinklyng upon his harpestrings:
 And Jopas his instrument dyd avaunce,
 The poemes and stories aunycient in bringes
 Of Atlas astrology, &c.— —

Our author supposes, that in the wall surrounding the
 palace of FAME were a thousand gates, new and old, for
 the entrance and egress of all nations. One of the gates is

^c P. 30. seq.

called

called ANGLIA, on which stood a leopard^d. There is some boldness and animation in the figure and attitude of this ferocious animal.

The buyldyng thereof was passing commendable;
Wheron stode a lybbard crowned with gold and stones,
Terrible of countinaunce and passing formidable,
As quickly^e touched as it were fleshe and bones,
As gastly that glaris^f, as grimly that grones,
As fierfly frowning as he had ben fyghtyng,
And with firme fote he shoke forthe his writyng.

Skelton, in the course of his allegory, supposes that the poets laureate, or learned men, of all nations, were assembled before Pallas. This groupe shews the authors, both antient and modern, then in vogue. Some of them are quaintly characterised. They are, first,—*Olde Quintilian*, not with his Institutes of eloquence, but with his Declamations: *Theocritus*, with his *bucolicall relations*: *Hesiod*, the *Icononucar*^g: *Homer*, the *freshe historiari*: *The prince of eloquence*, *Cicero*: *Sallust*, who wrote both the *history* of *Catiline* and *Jugurth*: *Ovid*, *enscryned with the Musys nyne*: *Lucan*^h: *Stattius*, writer

^d P. 28.

^e With as much life.

^f Glares.

^g I cannot decypher this appellation.

^h Of the popularity of Lucan in the dark ages, I have given proofs in the SECOND DISSERTATION, vol. i. To which I will here add others. The following passage occurs in Lydgate's PROLOGUE to the LYFF AND PASSIOUN of the blessed Martyr seynt Albeon [Alban] and seynt Amphiballus, written in 1439. MSS. Coll. Trin. Oxon. Num. xxxviii. fol. 1. a. [Never printed.]

I not acqeyntyd with Muses of Mars,
Nor with metris of LUCAN nor Virgile;
Nor with sugred diteys of Cichero,
Nor of Omere to folowe the fresch style.

And again, speaking of Julius Caesar, Lydgate refers to Lucan's PHARSALIA, which he calls the "Records of Lucan." *ibid.* fol. 2. b. Peter de Blois, in writing to a professor at Paris, about the year 1170, says, "Priscianus, et Tullius, Lucanus, et Persius, isti sunt dii vestri." *EPISTOL.* iv. fol. 3. edit. 1517. fol. Eberhardus Bethuniensis, called GRÆCISTA, a philologist who wrote about the year 1130, in a poem on VERSIFICATION, says of Philip Gualtier, author of a popular epic poem called ALEXANDREIS, that he *shines with the light of LUCAN*. "Lucet Alexander Lucani luce." And of Lucan he observes, "Metro lucidiore canit." [See *supr.* p. 167. 168.] It is easy to conceive why Lucan should have been a favorite in the dark ages.

of

of *Achilleidos*: Perſius, with *problems diſſuſe*: Virgil, Juvenal, Livy: Ennius, who wrote of *marciſall warre*: Aulus Gellius, that *noble hiſtoriar*: Horace, with his *New Poetry*¹: *Maifter Terence, the famous comicar*, with Plautus: Seneca, the tragedian: Boethius: Maximian, with his *madde ditics beaw dotyng age wolde jape with young ſoly*²: Boccacio, with his *volumes grete*: Quintus Curtius: Macrobius, who treated of *Scipion's dreame*: Poggius Florentinus, with many a *mad tale*³: a friar of France *ſyr Gaguine*, who frowned on me *full angrily*⁴: Plutarch and Petrarch, two *famous clarkes*: Lucilius, Valerius Maximus, Propertius, Piſander⁵, and Vincentius Bellovaceniſis, who wrote the *SPECULUM HISTORIALE*. The catalogue is cloſed by Gower, Chaucer, and Lydgate, who firſt adorned the Engliſh language⁶: in alluſion to which part of their characters, their apparel is ſaid to ſhine

¹ That is, Horace's ART OF POETRY. Vincſauf wrote DE NOVA POETRIA. Horace's ART is frequently mentioned under this title.

² His fix Elegies *De incommodis ſenectutis*. See ſupr. p. 168. Reineſius thinks that Maximian was the biſhop of Syracuſe, in the ſeventh century: a moſt intimate friend, and the ſecretary, of pope Gregory the Great. EPIST. ad Daum. p. 207. Theſe Elegies contain many things ſuperior to the taſte of that period.

³ Poggius flouriſhed about the year 1450. By his *mad tales*, Skelton means his *FACETIÆ*, a ſet of comic ſtoories, very licentious and very popular. See Poggius's WORKS by Thomas Aucuparius, fol. Argentorat. 1513. f. 157.—184. The obſcenity contained in theſe compositions gave great offence, and fell under the particular cenſure of the learned Laurentius Valla. The objections of Valla, Poggius attempts to obviate; by ſaying, that Valla was a clown, a cynic, and a pedant, without any ideas of wit or elegance: and that the *FACETIÆ* were univerſally eſteemed in Italy, France, Spain, Germany, England, and all countries that cultivated pure La-

tinity. Poggius's *INVECTIVA*. Inveſt. in Laurent. Vallam, f. 82. b. edit. ut ſupr.

⁴ Robert, or Rupert, Gaguin, a German, miniſter general of the Maturines, who died at Paris 1502. His moſt famous work is *COMPENDIUM SUPER FRANCORUM GESTIS*, from Pharamond to the author's age. He has written, among many other pieces, Latin orations and poems, printed at Paris in 1498. The hiſtory of Skelton's quarrel with him is not known. But he was in England, as ambaffador from the king of France, in 1490. He was a particular friend of dean Colet.

⁵ Our author got the name of Piſander, a Greek poet, from Macrobius, who cites a few of his verſes.

⁶ In the *broke of Philip Sparow*, he ſays, *Gower's Englyſhe is old*, but that Chaucer's *Englyſhe is wel allowed*: he adds, that Lydgate writes *after an hyer rate*, and that he has been cenſured for his elevation of phraſe; but acknowledges, "No man can amend thoſe matters that he hath pend." p. 237. In Raiſall's *TERENS*, in *ENGLISH*, printed in the reign of Henry the eighth, theſe three are mentioned in the Prologue, which is in *Itanzas*, as the only Engliſh poets. Without date. 4to.

beyond the power of description, and their tabards to be studded with diamonds and rubies^p. That only these three English poets are here mentioned, may be considered as a proof, that only these three were yet thought to deserve the name.

No writer is more unequal than Skelton. In the midst of a page of the most wretched ribaldry, we sometimes are surprized with three or four nervous and manly lines, like these.

Ryot and Revell be in your court roules,
Mayntenaunce and Mischeffe these be men of myght,
Extorcyon is counted with you for a knyght^q.

Skelton's modulation in the octave stanza is rough and inharmonious. The following are the smoothest lines in the poem before us; which yet do not equal the liquid melody of Lydgate, whom he here manifestly attempts to imitate^r.

Lyke as the larke upon the somers daye,
When Titan radiant burnisheth his bemes bright,
Mounteth on hye, with her melodious laye,
Of the son shyne engladed with the light.

The following little ode deserves notice; at least as a specimen of the structure and phraseology of a love-sonnet about the close of the fifteenth century.

TO MAISTRESS MARGARY WENTWORTH,

With margerain^s gentill,
The flowre of goodly hede^t,
Enbrowdered the mantill
Is of your maydenhede^u.

^p P. 19. seq.

^q Ibid. p. 15.

^r P. 26.

^s *Margelain*, the herb Marjoram. Chau-

cer. Ass. LAD. 56.

And upon that a potte of MARGELAIN.

^t Goodlihed. Goodness.

^u Virginity.

Plainly

Plainly I can not gloſe^w;
 Ye be, as I devine^x;
 The praty primèroſe,
 The goodly columbyne.
With margerain gentill, &c.

Benyne, courteis, and meke,
 With wordès well deviſed;
 In you, who lyft to feke,
 Be^y vertues well compryſed^z.
*With margerain gentill,
 The flowre of goodly bede,
 Enbrowdered the mantill
 Is of your maydenbede.*

For the ſame reaſon this ſtanza in a ſonnet to *Maiſtreſſe Margaret Huſſey* deſerves notice.

Mirry Margaret
 As Midſomer flowre,
 Gentyll as faucon,
 Or hawke of the towre^z.

As do the following flowery lyrics, in a ſonnet addreſſed to *Maiſtreſſe Iſabell Pennel*.

— — Your colowre
 Is lyke the daiſy flowre,
 After the April ſhowre,

^w In truth, I cannot flatter or deceive.
 Or, *gloſe* may be, ſimply to *write*.
^x As I imagine. So Chaucer, *NON*.
 P. R. T. 1381.

I can noon harme of no woman *devine*.

^y Are.

^z F. 39.

^z F. 41. In the king's mews in the tower.

Sterre of the morowe graye!
 The blossome on the spraye,
 The freshest flowre of Maye!
 Madenly demure,
 Of womanhede the lure! &c.^b.

But Skelton most commonly appears to have mistaken his genius, and to write in a forced character, except when he is indulging his native vein of satire and jocularly, in the short minstrel-metre abovementioned: which he mars by a multiplied repetition of rhymes, arbitrary abbreviations of the verse, cant expressions, hard and sounding words newly-coined, and patches of Latin and French. This anomalous and motley mode of versification is, I believe, supposed to be peculiar to our author^c. I am not, however, quite certain that it originated with Skelton.

About the year 1512, Martin Coccaie of Mantua, whose true name was Theophilo Folengio, a Benedictine monk of Casino in Italy, wrote a poem entitled PHANTASIE MACARONICÆ, divided into twenty-five parts. This is a burlesque Latin poem, in heroic metre, checquered with Italian and Tuscan words, and those of the plebeian character, yet not destitute of profodical harmony. It is totally satirical, and has some degree of drollery; but the ridicule is too frequently founded on obscene or vulgar ideas. Prefixed is a similar burlesque poem called ZANITONELLA, or the Amours of Tonellus and Zanina^c: and a piece is subjoined, with the title of MOSCHEA, or the War with the Flies and the Ants. The author died in 1544^d, but these poems, with

^b P. 41.

^c Perhaps formed from Zanni, or Giovanni, a foolish character on the Italian stage. See Riccoboni, THEATR. ITAL. ch. ii. p. 14. seq.

^d See his Life, Jac. Phil. Thomasin's Elog. Patav. 1644. 4to. p. 71.

^e I have given specimens. But the following passage in the *Boke of Colin Clout* affords an apposite example at one view. p. 186.

Of siche vagabundus
 Speaketh *totus mundus*.
 How some syng let abundus, &c.

Cum

the addition of some epistles and epigrams, in the same style, did not, I believe, appear in print before the year 1554^a. Coccaie is often cited by Rabelais, a writer of a cogential cast^c. The three last books, containing a description of hell, are a parody on part of Dante's *INFERNO*. In the preface, or *APOLOGETICA*, our author gives an account of this new species of poetry, since called the *MACARONIC*, which I must give in his own words. "Ars ista poetica nuncupatur
" *ARS MACARONICA*, a *Macaronibus* derivata: qui *Macarones*
" sunt quoddam pulmentum, farina, caseo, butyro compa-
" ginatum, grossum, rude, et rusticanum. Ideo *MACA-*
" *RONICA* nil nisi grossedinem, ruditatem, et *VOCABULAZZOS*,
" debet in se continere^b." Vavassor observes, that Coccaie in Italy, and Antonius de Arena in France, were the two first, at least the chief, authors of the semi-latin burlesque poetry^b. As to Antonius de Arena, he was a civilian of Avignon; and wrote, in the year 1519, a Latin poem in elegiac verses, ridiculously interlarded with French words and phrases. It is addressed to his fellow-students, or, in his own words, "*Ad suos compagnones studiantes, qui sunt de*
" *persona friantes, bassas dansas, in galanti stilo bisognatas, cum*
" *guerra Romana, totum ad longum sine require, et cum guerra*
" *Neapolitana, et cum revoluta Genuensi, et guerra Avenionensi,*
" *et epistola ad salotissimam garsam pro passando lo tempos*^d." I have gone out of my way, to mention these two obscure writers^e with so much particularity, in order to observe,

*Cum ipsi et illis
Qui manent in villis,
Est uxor vel ancilla,
Welcome Jacke and Gilla,
My pretty Petronilla,
And you wil be stilla
You shall have your willa:
Of such pater noster pokes
All the worlde spekes.*

^a At Venice, 8vo. Again, 1564. And, 1613. 8vo.

^c See Liv. iv. c. 13. ii. 1. xi. 3.

^b See Menag. *DICTION. ETYMOLOG.* ORIG. Lang. Franc. edit, 1694. p. 462. V. *MACARONS*. And Oët. Ferrarius, *ORIG. ITALIC.*

^d *DICTION. LUDR.* p. 453.

^e Hewrote also *DE BELLO MASSILTENSI.*

^f Erythraeus mentions Bernardinus Stephonius as writing in this way. *PINACOTH.* i. p. 160. See also some poems in Baudius, which have a mixture of the Greek and Latin languages; and which others have imitated, in German and Latin.

that

that Skelton, their cotemporary, probably copied their manner: at least to shew, that this singular mode of versification was at this time fashionable, not only in England, but also in France and Italy. Nor did it cease to be remembered in England, and as a species of poetry thought to be founded by Skelton, till even so late as the close of queen Elizabeth's reign. As appears from the following poem on the SPANISH ARMADA, which is filled with Latin words.

A SKELTONICALL salutation,
Or condigne gratulation,
And just vexation,
Of the Spanish nation;
That in a bravado
Spent many a crusado,
In setting forth the armado
England to envado, &c¹.

But I must not here forget, that Dunbar, a Scotch poet of Skelton's own age, already mentioned, wrote in this way. His TESTAMENT OF MAISTER ANDRO KENNEDY, which represents the character of an idle dissolute scholar, and ridicules the funeral ceremonies of the Romish communion, has

¹ Printed at Oxford by Joseph Barnes, 1789. 4to. See also a doggerel piece of this kind, in imitation of Skelton, introduced into Browne's SHEPHERD'S PIPE, Lond. 1614. 8vo. Perhaps this way of writing is ridiculed by Shakespeare, MERRY W. OF WINDS. A. ii. Sc. 1. Where Falstaffe says, "I will not say, Pity me, 'tis not a soldier's phrase, but I say love me: by me
"Thine own true knight, by day or night,
"Or any kind of light, with all his might
"With thee to fight.—"

See also the Interlude of *Pyramus and Thisbe*, in the MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM. Often printed separately in quarto, as a droll for Bartholomew fair, under the

title of BOTTOM THE WEAVER. Skelton, however, seems to have retained his popularity till late. For the first part of T. Heywood's twofold play on the earl of Huntingdon, entitled, "Robert earl of Huntingdon's downfall, afterwards called Robin Hood of merry Sherwoode, with his love to chaste Matilda the lord Fitzwater's daughter, afterwards his fair maid Marian," acted by lord Nottingham's players, and printed in quarto, at London, in 1601, is introduced by JOHN SKELTON, poet laureat to king Henry the eighth. The second part, printed with the former, is introduced by FRYAR TUCK, with whom I am less acquainted.

almost

almost every alternate line composed of the formularies of a Latin Will, and shreds of the breviary, mixed with what the French call *Latin de cuisine*¹. There is some humour, arising from these burlesque applications, in the following stanzas^m.

In die meæ sepulturæ,
I will have nane but our awin gangⁿ,
Et duos rusticos de rure,
Berand ane barrell on a stang^o;
Drinkand and playand cap out, even
Sicut egomet solebam,
Singand and greitand with the stevin^p,
Potum meum cum fletu miscebam.

I will no priestis for me sing,
Dies ille, dies iræ^q;
Nar yet no bellis for me ring
Sicut semper solet fieri;
But a bag-pyp to play a spring,
Et unum ale-wisp ante me,
Instead of torchis, for to bring;
Quatuor lagenas cervisæ
Within the graif to sett, fit thing,
In modum crucis juxta me,
To fle the feyndis^r, then hardly sing;
De terra plasmasi me^s.

¹ See ANT. SCOTTISH POEMS, Edinb. 1770. p. 35. And the Notes of the learned and ingenious editor; who says, that Dunbar's *DERGE* is a most profane parody on the popish litanies. p. 243.

^m ST. xiii. xiv.

ⁿ My own merry companions.

^o A stake.

^p With that verse, or stanza, in the Psalms, "I have mingled my drink with weeping."

^q A hymn on the resurrection in the missal, sung at funerals.

^r Instead of a cross on my grave to keep off the devil.

^s A verse in the Psalms. See other instances in Dunbar, *ibid.* p. 73. In George Bannatyne's manuscript collection of old Scotch poetry are many examples of this mixture: the impropriety of which was not perhaps perceived by our ancestors. *Ibid.* p. 268. See a very ludicrous specimen.

men.

We must, however, acknowledge, that Skelton, notwithstanding his scurrility, was a classical scholar; and in that capacity, he was tutor to prince Henry, afterwards king Henry the eighth: at whose accession to the throne, he was appointed the royal orator. He is styled by Erasmus, "Britannicarum literarum decus et lumen". His Latin elegiacs are pure, and often unmixed with the monastic phraseology; and they prove, that if his natural propensity to the ridiculous had not more frequently seduced him to follow the whimsies of Walter Mapes and Goliath, than to copy the elegancies of Ovid, he would have appeared among the first writers of Latin poetry in England at the general restoration of literature. Skelton could not avoid acting as a buffoon in any language, or any character.

I cannot quit Skelton, of whom I yet fear too much has been already said, without restoring to the public notice a play, or MORALITY, written by him, not recited in any catalogue of his works, or annals of English typography; and, I believe, at present totally unknown to the antiquarians in this sort of literature. It is, *The NIGRAMANSIR, a morall ENTERLUDE and a pitie written by Maijster SKELTON*

men in Harfenet's DETECTION, p. 156. Where he mentions a witch who has learned
 "of an old wife in a chimnies end Pax,
 "max, fax, for a spell; or can say fir
 "John of Grantam's curse for the miller's
 "celes that were stolne.

"All you that stolen the miller's celes,
 "Laudate dominum de caelis,
 "And all they that have consented thereto,
 "Benedicamus domino."

See a poem on Becker's martyrdom, in Wasse's BIBL. LITER. Num. i. p. 39. Lond. 1722. 4to. Hither we must refer the old Caroll on the BOAR'S HEAD, Hearne's SPICILEG. ad Gul. Neubrig. HIST. vol. iii. p. 740. [See also supr. vol. i. p. 86.] Some of the metrical hymns in the French FETE DE ANE are in Latin

and French. See MERCURE DE FRANCE, Avril. 1725. p. 724. suiv.

^u See OP. p. 1019. 1021.

^w These two writers are often confounded. See the Second DISSERTATION. James says, that Goliath was not a name adopted by Mapes: but that there was a real writer of that name, a collection of whose works he had seen. See MSS. [Bibl. Bodl.] JAMES, i. p. 320. Goliath and Mapes appear to have been cotemporaries, and of a similar genius. The curious reader will find many extracts from their poetry, which has very great merit in its way, among James's manuscript collections. The facility of these old Latin rhymers is amazing: and they have a degree of humour and elegance far exceeding their age.

laureate

laureate and plaid before the king and other estatys at Woodstoke on Palme Sunday. It was printed by Wynkin de Worde in a thin quarto, in the year 1504*. It must have been presented before king Henry the seventh, at the royal manor or palacc, at Woodstock in Oxfordshire, now destroyed. The characters are a Necromancer, or conjurer, the devil, a notary public, Simonie^y, and Philargyria^z, or Avarice. It is partly a satire on some abuses in the church; yet not without a due regard to decency, and an apparent respect for the dignity of the audience. The story, or plot, is the tryal of SIMONY and AVARICE: the devil is the judge, and the notary public acts as an assessor or scribe. The prisoners, as we may suppose, are found guilty, and ordered into hell immediately. There is no sort of propriety in calling this play the Necro-

* My lamented friend Mr. William Collins, whose ODES will be remembered while any taste for true poetry remains, shewed me this piece at Chichester, not many months before his death: and he pointed it out as a very rare and valuable curiosity. He intended to write the HISTORY OF THE RESTORATION OF LEARNING UNDER LEO THE TENTH, and with a view to that design, had collected many scarce books. Some few of these fell into my hands at his death. The rest, among which, I suppose, was this INTERLUDE, were dispersed.

In the Myttery of MARIÉ MAGDALENE, written in 1512, a Heathen is introduced celebrating the service of Mahound, who is called *Saracenorum fortissimus*; in the midst of which, he reads a Lesson from the Alcoran, consisting of gibberish, much in the metre and manner of Skelton. MSS. Digb. 133.

^y Simonie is introduced as a person in SIR PENNY, an old Scotch poem, written in 1527, by Stewart of Lorne. See ANTI-SCOTTISH POEMS. Edinb. 1770. 8vo. p. 154.

So wily can syr Peter wink,
And als syr SYMONY his servand,
That now is gydar of the kyrk.

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And again, in an antient anonymous Scotch poem, *ibid.* p. 253. At a feast, to which many disorderly persons are invited, among the rest are,

And twa leir men thairby,
Schir Ochir and schir SIMONY.

That is, sir Usury and sir Simony. SIMONY is also a character in Pierce Plowman's VISIONS. Pass. sec. fol. viii. b. edit. 1550. Wicliffe, who flourished about the year 1350, thus describes the state of Simony in his time. "Some lords, to colouren their Symony, wole not take for themselves but keverchiefs for the lady, or a palfrey, or a tun of wine. And when some lords wolde present a good man and able, for love of god and cristen souls, then some ladies been means to have a dancer, a tripper on tapits, or hunter or hawker, or a wild player of summers gamestes, &c." MSS. C. C. C. Cant. O. 161. 148. There is an old poem on this subject, MSS. Bodl. 48.

^z Robert Crowley, a great reformer, of whom more hereafter, wrote "The Fable of PHILARGYRIA, the great giant of Great Britain, what houses were builded, and lands appointed, for his provision, &c." 1551. 4to.

A a a

mancer †

mancer: for the only business and use of this character, is to open the subject in a long prologue, to evoke the devil, and summon the court. The devil kicks the necromancer, for waking him so soon in the morning: a proof, that this drama was performed in the morning, perhaps in the chapel of the palace. A variety of measures, with shreds of Latin and French, is used: but the devil speaks in the octave stanza. One of the stage-directions is, *Enter Balsebub with a Berde*. To make him both frightful and ridiculous, the devil was most commonly introduced on the stage, wearing a visard with an immense beard^a. Philargyria quotes Seneca and faint

^a Thus in Turpin's HISTORY OF CHARLEMAGNE, the Saracens appear, "HABENTES LARVAS BARBATUS, cornutas, DEMONIBUS CONFIMILES." c. xviii. And in LEWIS THE EIGHTH, an old French romance of Philip Moufkes.

Jot apries lui une barboire,
Com diable cornu et noire.

There was a species of masquerade celebrated by the ecclesiastics in France, called the SHEW OF BEARDS, entirely consisting of an exhibition of the most formidable beards. Gregory of Tours says, that the abbes of Poictou was accused for suffering one of these shews, called a BARBATORIA, to be performed in her monastery. HIST. lib. x. c. vi. In the EPISTLES of Peter de Blois we have the following passage. "Regis curiam sequuntur assidue histriones, candidatrices, aleatores, dulcorarii, caupones, nebulatores, mimi, BARBATORES, balatrones, et hoc genus omne." EPIST. xiv. Where, by *Barbatores*, we are not to understand *Barbers*, but mimics, or buffoons, disguised in huge bearded masks. In Don Quixote, the barber who personates the squire of the princefs Micomicona, wears one of these masks, "una gran barba, &c." Part. prim. c. xxvi. l. 3. And the countess of Trifaldi's squire has "la mas larga, la mas horrida, &c." Part. sec. c. xxxvi. l. 8. See OBSERVAT. ON SPENSER, vol. i. p. 24. SECT. II.

About the eleventh century, and long

before, beards were looked upon by the clergy as a secular vanity; and accordingly were worn by the laity only. Yet in England this distinction seems to have been more rigidly observed than in France. Malmesbury says, that king Harold, at the Norman invasion, sent spies into Duke William's camp; who reported, that most of the French army were priests, because their faces were shaved. HIST. lib. iii. p. 56. b. edit. Savil. 1596. The regulation remained among the English clergy at least till the reign of Henry the eighth: for Longland bishop of Lincoln, at a Visitation of Oriel college, Oxford, in 1531, orders one of the fellows, a priest, to abstain, under pain of expulsion, from wearing a beard, and pinked shoes, like a laic; and not to take the liberty, for the future, of insulting and ridiculing the governor and fellows of the society. ORDINAT. Coll. Oriel. OXON. APPEND. ad Joh. TROKELowe, p. 359. See Edicts of king John, in Prynne, LIBERTAT. ECCLES. ANGL. tom. iii. p. 23. But among the religious, the Templars were permitted to wear long beards. In the year 1311, king Edward the second granted letters of safe conduct to his valet Peter Auger, who had made a vow not to shave his beard; and who having resolved to visit some of the holy places abroad as a pilgrim, feared, on account of the length of his beard, that he might be mistaken for a knight-templar, and insulted. Pat. iv. Edw. ii. In Dugdale's

Austin: and Simony offers the devil a bribe. The devil rejects her offer with much indignation: and swears by the *foule Eumenides*, and the hoary beard of Charon, that she shall be well fried and roasted in the unfathomable sulphur of Cocytus, together with Mahomet, Pontius Pilate, the traitor Judas, and king Herod. The last scene is closed with a view of hell, and a dance between the devil and the necromancer. The dance ended, the devil trips up the necromancer's heels, and disappears in fire and smoke^b. Great must have been the edification and entertainment which king Henry the seventh and his court derived from the exhibition of so elegant and rational a drama! The royal taste for dramatic representation seems to have suffered a very rapid transition: for in the year 1520, *a goodlie comedie of Plautus* was played before king Henry the eighth at Greenwich^c. I have before mentioned Skelton's play of *MAGNIFICENCE*^d.

dale's *WARWICKSHIRE*, p. 704. Many orders about Beards occur in the registers of Lincoln's-inn, cited by Dugdale. In the year 1542, it was ordered, that no member, *wearing a BEARD*, should presume to dine in the hall. In 1553, says Dugdale, "such as had beards should pay twelve pence for every meal they continued them; and every man to be shaven, upon pain of being put out of commons."

ORIG. JURID. cap. 64. p. 244. In 1559, no member is permitted to wear *any* beard above a fortnight's growth; under pain of expulsion for the third transgression. But the fashion of wearing beards beginning to spread, in 1560 it was agreed at a council, that "all orders before that time made, touching BEARDS, should be void and repealed." Dugd. *ibid.* p. 245.

^b In the *Mystery of MARY MAGDALENE*, just mentioned, one of the stage-directions is, "Here enters the prynde of the devylls in a stage, with hell underneath the stage." MSS. DLGB. 133.

^c Hollinsh. iii. 850.

^d It is in Mr. Garrick's valuable collection. No date. 4to. Hawkins, in the

HISTORY OF MUSIC, has first printed a Song written by Skelton, alluded to in the *CROWNE OF LAWRELL*, and set to music by William Cornishe, a musician of the chapel royal under Henry the seventh. B. i. ch. i. vol. iii. p. 3. Lond. 1776. It begins,

Ah, beshrew you, by my fay,
These wanton clarkes are nice alway, &c.

The same diligent and ingenious inquirer has happily illustrated a passage in Skelton's description of *RIOU*. *Ibid.* B. iii. ch. ix. vol. ii. p. 354.

Counter he coulde O Lux upon a potte.

That is, this drunken disorderly fellow could play the beginning of the hymn, *O Lux beata Trinitas*, a very popular melody, and on which many fugues and canons were anciently composed, on a quartop at the tavern. See also, *ibid.* B. i. ch. vii. p. 90. ii. 1. p. 130.

By the way, the abovementioned William Cornishe has a poem printed at the end of Skelton's Works, called a *Treatise between Treatise and Information*, containing some

MORALITIES seem have arrived at their heighth about the close of the seventh Henry's reign*. This sort of spectacle was now so fashionable, that John Rastall, a learned typographer, brother in law to sir Thomas More, extended its province, which had hitherto been confined, either to moral allegory, or to religion blended with buffoonery, and conceived a design of making it the vehicle of science and philosophy. With this view he published, *A new INTERLUDE and a mery, of the nature of the iiii Elements, declaringe many proper points of philosophy naturall and dyvers straunge landys, &c.*¹ In the cosmographical part of the play, in which the poet professes to treat of *dyvers straunge regyons, and of the new founde landys*, the tracts of America recently discovered, and the manners of the natives, are described. The characters are, a Messenger who speaks the prologue, Nature, Humanity, Studious Desire, Sensual Appetite, a Taverner, Experience, and Ignorance².

some anecdotes of the state of antient music, written while the author was in the Fleet, in the year 1504. MSS. REG. 18 D. ii. 4. See Thoresby's *LEEDES*, for *Old musical compositions by severall masters, among them by WILLIAM CORNISH*. p. 517. Morley has assigned Cornish a place in his Catalogue of English musicians.

* See *supr.* p. 206.

¹ Among Mr. Garrick's *OLD PLAYS*. [Imperf.] i. vol. 3. It was written about 1510, or rather later. One of the characters is *NATURE naturate*: under which title Bale inaccurately mentions this piece. viii. 75. See Percy, *Ess. ENG. STAGE*, p. 8. edit. 1767. Who supposes this play to have been written about 1510, from the following lines,

— — Within this xx yere
Westwarde be founde new landes,
That we never harde tell of before this.

The West-Indies were discovered by Columbus in 1492.

² For the sake of connection I will here mention some more of Rastall's pieces. He

was a great writer of INTERLUDES. He has written, "Of GENTYLGNESS AND NOBYLYTE. A dyaloge between the marchant, the knyght, and the plowman, disputyng who is a veray gentylman, and how men shuld come to auctoryte, compiled in maner of an INTERLUDE. With dyvers TOYES and GESTIS addyd thereto, to make mery pastyme and disport. *J. Rastall me fieri fecit.*" Printed by himself in quarto, without date. PR. "O what a gret welth and." Also, "A new Commoditye in Englysh in maner of an ENTERLUDE ryght elygant and full of craft of rhetoryck: wherein is shewed and dyscrybyd, as well the beute of good properes of women, as theyr vyces and evyll condicions, with a morall conclusion and exhortation to vertew. *J. Rastall me imprimi fecit.*" In folio, without date. This is in English verse, and contains twelve leaves. PR. "*Melebea, &c.*" He reduced a dialogue of Lucian into English verse, much after the manner of an interlude, viz. "NECROMANTIA. A Dialogue of Lucyan for his

I have before observed, that the frequent and public exhibition of personifications in the PAGEAUNTS, which antiently accompanied every high festivity, greatly contributed to cherish the spirit of allegorical poetry, and even to enrich the imagination of Spenser^b. The MORALITIES, which now began to acquire new celebrity, and in which the same groupes of the impersonated vices and virtues appeared, must have concurred in producing this effect. And hence, at the same time, we are led to account for the national relish for allegorical poetry, which so long prevailed among our ancestors. By means of these spectacles, ideal beings became common and popular objects: and emblematic imagery, which at present is only contemplated by a few retired readers in the obsolete pages of our elder poets, grew familiar to the general eye.

^a his fantasy fayned for a mery pastyme, &c.—*J. Rastall me fieri fecit.* It is translated from the Latin, and has Latin notes in the margin. It may be doubted, whether Rastall was not the printer only of these pieces. If the printer only, they might come from the festive genius of his brother sir Thomas More. But Rastall appears to have been a scholar. He was educated at Oxford; and took up the employment of printing as a profession at that time esteemed liberal, and not unsuitable to the character of a learned and ingenious man. An English translation of Terence, called *TERENS* in ENGLISH, with a prologue in stanzas, beginning "The famous renown through the worlde is spronge," is believed, at least from similarity of type, to be by Rastall. In quarto, without date. He published, in 1525, *THE MERY GESTYS of one callyd EDYTH the byeng wydow.* This is a description, in English rhymes, of the frauds practised by a female sharper in the neighbourhood of London: the scene of one of her impostures is laid in sir Thomas More's house at Chelsea. The author, one of her dupes, is Walter Smyth. *Emprynted at London at the signe of the Mermayde at*

Pollis gate next to Chepesyde by J. Rastall. fol. It will be sufficient to have given this short incidental notice of a piece which hardly deserves to be named. Rastall wrote and printed many other pieces, which I do not mention, as unconnected with the history of our poetry. I shall only observe further, in general, that he was eminently skilled in mathematics, cosmography, history, our municipal law, and theology. He died 1536.

^b And of Shakespeare. There is a passage in *ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA*, where the metaphor is exceedingly beautiful; but where the beauty both of the expression and the allusion is lost, unless we recollect the frequency and the nature of these shews in Shakespeare's age. *ACT IV. SC. XI.* I must cite the whole of the context, for the sake of the last hemistich.

Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish,
A vapour sometime, like a bear or lion;
A towred citadel, a pendant rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon't, that nod unto the world
And mock our eyes with air. Thou'lt seene
these signs,

They are *BLACK VESPER'S PAGEANTS.*—

S E C T.