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FLYTING: SOME ASPECTS OF POETIC INVECTIVE DEBATE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

Jean Maloney, M.A.

* * * * * *

The Ohio State University
1964

Approved by

Francis Lee Utley
Adviser
Department of English
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VITA

April 3, 1917

November, 1937

June, 1938

1940 - 1947

1947 - 1954

1954 - 1960

1960 - 1964

Born - Glasgow, Scotland

M. A. University of Glasgow

Teacher's Diploma, Notre Dame College, Glasgow

Teacher in public schools, Scotland

Instructor, Department of English, Morris Harvey College, Charleston, West Virginia

Teaching Assistant, Department of English, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

Assistant Professor, Department of English, California State College at Los Angeles, California

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: English

Studies in Late-Medieval Literature and Linguistics. Professor Francis Lee Utley


Studies in History of Ideas. Professor Roy Harvey Pearce.
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SECTION</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ONE   THE FLYTING OF DUNBAR AND KENNEDEIE</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWO   THE BARDIC TRADITION AND THE DUNBAR-KENNEDEIE FLYTING</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THREE SKELETON: &quot;POEMS AGAINST GARNESCHE&quot;</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOUR  LYNDSEAY: &quot;AN ANSWER TO THE KINGIS FLYTING&quot;</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIVE  BROADSIDE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN GRAY AND SMYTH</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIX   &quot;THE CONTENTION BETWYXTE CHURCHARD AND CAMELL&quot;</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVEN POLWART AND MONTGOMERIE FLYTING</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIGHT CONCLUSION</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPENDIX</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>281</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

In this study, I have attempted to make an analysis of certain contests in poetic invective between authors. My central concern has been those verse controversies which appeared in Scotland and England in the sixteenth century. In these can be seen the interplay of two national traditions and the contrast of two distinct tempers in poetic. I have applied the term "flyting" to this type of verse altercation simply because the Scottish poets referred to their contests as "flytings." It is true, however, that the term may denote any kind of scolding, and perhaps further clarification is necessary at this stage.

The verb "to flyte" is derived from the Old English flítan meaning "to strive." The Bosworth-Toller Anglo-Saxon Dictionary lists the noun flícraeft as the "art of disputing in logic." The New English Dictionary suggests four strands of meaning for the verb "to flyte": to strive, scold, debate, or pray in the language of complaint or remonstrance. As we shall see, some of the verse contentions manage to include all four strands.

1 King James VI used the term as a genre name in The Essays of A Prentise in the Divine Arte of Poesie (1585), discussing the metric conventions of the genre in the essay, "Reulis and Cautelis to be Observit and Eschewed in Scottish Poesy."

The **New English Dictionary** cites, as the earliest use of the term, line 916 of Beowulf:

\[
\text{Hvíllum flítende fealwe stræete mearum mæton.}
\]

(Racing intermittently, they paced their horses on the dust-pale road).

Although the word flítende is used in the poem in the sense of "racing," the act of flyting as interpreted by "scolding match" is usually associated with the Unferth episode. Scholars have debated the significance of this altercation because Unferth's insulting attack on Beowulf is at such variance with the courteous welcome accorded the warrior at Hrothgar's court. Perhaps out of the vast area of Beowulf scholarship we may select a few opinions regarding the role of the flyting which have some relevance:

It was a maxim of the Old Teutonic poetry, as it is of the British Constitution, that the king could do no wrong ... it was the work of an evil counsellor .... Now we have seen that there was mischief brewing at Heorot--and we are introduced to a counsellor Unferth, the thyle or official spokesman and adviser of King Hrothgar. And Unferth is evil. His jealous temper is shown by the hostile and inhospitable reception which he gives to Beowulf.3

Brodeur is less concerned with the character of Unferth than with the incident:

We can hardly regard this interchange as a mere flyting: flytings are either exchanges of rude wit, rough games, or invective preceding a fight. Here no fight can conceivably occur, since Beowulf is the honored guest of the King; and the encounter between Beowulf and Unferth is no game. Both men mean what they say; both men speak in anger .... The function of the debate

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between Unferth and Beowulf is obvious: it is intended to convince the Danes ... that Beowulf has sufficient strength, as well as sufficient courage, to deliver them from Grendel .... Unferth's misrepresentation of the adventure with Breca gave Beowulf a priceless opportunity to establish beyond question his superlative strength and valor.

Norman Eliason differs from Brodeur in regarding the exchange as a flyting in which abuse and boast are not to be taken seriously; he considers the episode as an artistically appropriate example of the "heroic taunt." Although the Scottish and Tudor flytings do not function as narrative devices, like the "Unferth Intermezzo" (Klaeber's phrase), yet all relate to king or court; it will be interesting to see whether any reveal the jealous counsellor or provide a milieu for a display of superlative skill.

Even the realm of the gods did not lack flyters: the "Lokasenna" or "Flyting of Loki" has formed part of the Poetic Edda of Norway since the end of the tenth century. In this poem, some clever "skald" or bard tries to show the less glorious side of the Norse gods. The interlocutor is Loki, god of evil, who appears as the uninvited guest at a banquet of the gods:

In I shall, though, to Aegir's hall--
Fain would I see that feast;
Brawls and bickering I bring the gods,
Their mead I shall mix with evil.

Odin bids the other gods make peace with Loki:

Arise then, Vithar, let the Wolf's father /Loki/
Be benched at our banquet;

---


5 Norman E. Eliason, "The Thyle and Scop in Beowulf," Speculum, XXXVIII, 270.
Lest that Loki fling lewd words at us
In Aegir's ale-hall.

Loki does "fling lewd words" at Bragi, taunting him with cowardice.

When Bragi's wife, Ithun, comes to her husband's defense, Loki turns on her:

Hush thee, Ithun: of all women
Thou are most mad after men,
For thy shining arms on the shoulder lay
Of thy brother's slayer.

Gefion, virgin goddess, begs the gods to ignore Loki's words, and becomes the next victim:

Hush thee, Gefion, I have in mind
Who did lure thee to lust;
The fair-haired swain sold thee the necklace
Ere thou threwest about him thy thighs.

Loki continues with his vilification. He accuses Odin of poor strategy in warfare; he calls Odin's wife, Freya, a whore; he reproaches Niorth with low birth, and with having committed incest with a sister. The gods are able to make but a feeble defense against the assault.

Byggvir, ale-server to the gods, loses patience and asks why the noble guests tolerate this, adding if he were a god he would "crush to marrow this crow of evil and break his every bone." Loki savagely sneers that Byggvir is incapable of doing battle with anyone for he is usually to be found among the straw on the floor, in a drunken stupor. Finally, the altercation ceases with the arrival of Thor:

Hush thee, ill wight, or my hammer of might,
Miolnir, shall shut thy mouth;
I shall shatter thy shoulder-cliff,
No longer then wilt thou live.

The "Lokasenna," while not an example of flyting between poets,
does define the object of attack and indicates a pattern of abuse that we shall come upon in the contentions between poets. Loki, outlining the "genealogy" of his victims, or flinging charges of drunkenness, immoral behavior, cowardice, or incest, is a fitting forerunner to the Scottish flyters.

Contests within poems, such as the Beowulf-Unferth episode, the "Lokasenna," or dialogues of the type of the "Owl and Nightingale," the "Tailyeour and the Soutar," or those verses classified as amoebean, while they are within the general tradition of poetic debate, are beyond the scope of this study.

The verbal duel did not originate with the Teutons nor with the Scottish or Tudor poets; there are analogues in other eras and in other literatures, some of these being contests in rhetoric and all of them ceremonial in nature. Many countries have a tradition of poetic contest preserved in ritual or folklore. For example, in the early Hawaiian saga of Lono-i-ka-makahiki there is an account of a singing contest of a literary nature called a **hoopaapaa** between Lono and Kakuhihewa. The contestants prepared for the fray by learning chants from the female chief of a neighboring island, but, unfortunately, both gentlemen learned the same chants. Chadwick gives other instances of Polynesian singing matches:

**Singing contests... have done much to cultivate poetry in the Pacific. Where no written texts exist, and where extempore composition is widely practised, such contests help to keep effort ever fresh, and the standard high. This is aptly illustrated by the account of two Maori poets, named Makere and**
Tu-raukawa, who are said to have been in the habit of carrying on a poetic war, each trying to outdo the other in their efforts. Poetic contests in the Marquesas took the form of extempore dialogue known as the u'ii, a debate before a judge between tohungas (poets and members of the professional classes), sometimes in substance a legal pleading, sometimes a display of virtuosity; the contestants were tuhuna o'ono, or "masters of myth, legend, and genealogies," and in very early times the outwitted competitor was put to death.

The agonistic element in some cultures took the form of contest between tribes as, for example, among the Tatars of the Altai who, from the seventh century A.D., had performances with professional singers from different tribes, each striving to outwit his rival in the composition of witty and scathing verses, the entire ceremony being conducted in an atmosphere of braggadocio and pomp.

The ceremonial contests of the Bantu of Uganda were conducted in a less agreeable environment for the local bards, who performed to the strains of the nanga or seven-stringed harp; the contestants were blinded before the performance, that they might not be distracted from the matter in hand by the loveliness of the Bantu ladies. Furthermore, the Bantu believed that a blind musician could draw sweeter music from his instrument.

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7. Ibid., p. 463.
8. Chadwick, p. 463.
For people whose festal occasions are few, the poetic altercation offers an outlet for the spirit of play; in some cultures the contest in words may be a substitute for fighting and killing—an effective instrument of social control. Robert C. Elliott describes the drum match of the Greenland Eskimos:

When two men quarrel, a preferred way of resolving the difference is (or was) through an institutionalized contest in ridicule, invective, and satirical abuse known as the drum match or song duel. The two enemies face each other before the assembled tribe, who look on the affair as a festive occasion and are delighted with the lampoons, the obscene scurrilities, the mockery and jibing and flouting which the two contestants hurl at each other, each accompanying himself on a drum. Along with the duel in song may go physical gyrations, such as snorting in the opponent's face, butting him, and tying him to a tent-pole—indignities which the performers try to bear with surface impassivity. The match may continue at intervals over a long time, even years, and the opponents' ingenuity in abuse is likely to be stretched, even though they may recite well-known drum songs (or parts of them) that have been handed down in oral tradition. But finally the tribe makes a decision on the matter at issue.... Loss of the decision is an extremely painful affair; for the loser not only has had publicly to bear the devastating mockery of his enemy, but at the end finds himself alone against all the others, a laughingstock.

In some areas, women were as proficient in diatribe as the men. Indeed, among the Tuareg of Central Sahara the art of poetry and of invective was cultivated at evening meetings, called shal, attended by both men and women and generally presided over by a woman famous for her beauty as well as for her skill in verse. These meetings have been compared to the Provençal courts of medieval times.10

The Tuareg also had slanging-matches as an accompaniment to armed hostilities between tribes, for the exchange of curses or taunts preceding

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10 Chadwick, p. 666.
battle was an element of ritual combat characteristic of the Near East. The non-Islamic desert poets of the seventh century indulged in just such ceremonial bouts of satire as part of their tradition of oral contention; their poems were usually written down by scribes or rawis, for it was beneath the dignity of the Arab poet to write. To the Arab, the poet was a man of wisdom, a sha'ir, and also a man of power; on him devolved the duty of composing satires. The pattern of invective included boasts about one's ancestry, followed by disparagement of the ancestry of one's opponent; this was a concomitant of a caste system in which court poets were expected to reflect a socially-conscious society. Attack was by analogy, metaphor, simile, apostrophe, antithesis, or play on words. One of these duels, a symbolic substitute for bloody combat, took place before Muhammad himself; an account of it is given by Charles James Lyall:

In A.H. 9 (A.D. 630), a tribal chief, Yaghuth, appeared at al-Madinah at the head of a great deputation from the whole tribe of Tamin, when a famous contest in verse took place in the presence of the Prophet between al-Zibrikan, son of Badr, a poet and chief of Tamin, and Hassan, son of Thabit, the poet of al-Madinah. This ended in Tamin accepting al-Islam in a body .... After the death of Muhammad (A.D. 632), he Yaghuth was one of those who revolted.

Another Arab poet, al-Jarir, conducted a poetic battle with his rival, al-Farazdaq, during which Arab tribesmen chose sides and engaged

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in physical combat on behalf of their respective literary champions. The cause of this contention was al-Farazdaq's wife, Newar. The lady had been tricked into marriage, begged in vain for a divorce, and sought refuge from her husband among various tribes. Her protectors had to cast her out because the pursuing al-Farazdaq attacked each tribe in turn with his blistering satires. At last the long-suffering wife found a satirist who was a match for her husband and requested his services. Thus in A.D. 684-686, al-Jarir conducted a dispute with the dangerous al-Farazdaq which finally involved the whole nation, and brought in an older satirist, al-Ahtal, on the side of al-Jarir. This series of satires, called the Naga'id, opens with al-Jarir's denunciatory speech:

0 thou, reckless in petulance, trailing the garment of vanity,
0 thou headstrong in follies, turning aside to idle tales!

The first lines of al-Farazdaq's reply are:

How long wilt thou persevere in thine error, and eat sweetly of the pasture of thy wrong?
And how far wilt thou be extreme in thy pride and not abstain from thy wantonness?

It is sad to relate that the supporter of al-Jarir, the older poet al-Ahtal, allowed himself to be bribed by gifts into transferring his talents to the opposition. Noteworthy in this contest is the fact that the poets wrote in the rhymed prose known to the Arabs as saj; rhymed prose was the vehicle not only of denunciation but also of

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15 Ibid, p. 47.
the curse, and an important function of the early Arab poets was to compose and recite curses.\textsuperscript{16}

While there is no proof of direct Arab influence on the troubadours of Provence, there appears to be an affiliation between the poetic dialogue of the Arabs and the Provençal tenzo. David Jones, author of an interesting study on French flying - the tenson - maintains that, in spite of strong Moorish inroads on Mediterranean Europe, no generic relationship can be traced from the Arabic to the Provençal or French flying.\textsuperscript{17} The matter of derivation of a poetic genre is not of vital importance; in any case, the Provençal tenzo is next in point of time, evolving as it did in medieval times. At first the tenzo was a friendly poetic dialogue in which poets strove to give different viewpoints on subjects such as courtly love, politics, or the relationship of the patron and poet. In the tenzo (Latin tentionem), a poet propounded a theme in the first stanza, his interlocutor replied in a stanza of identical metrical form, and the debate continued until an umpire was called in to decide the issue. In Provençal literature, however, there existed another form of verse called the sirventes, a short satiric poem used for castigation of the foolish and the wicked; it could be an attack on persons, politics, or morals.\textsuperscript{18} According to Jeanroy, a sirventes often provoked a riposte, in which case a dialogue resulted. This kind of poetic exchange could arise spontaneously from an occasion,


\textsuperscript{17}David J. Jones, La Tenson Provençale (Paris, 1934), p. 58.

\textsuperscript{18}Alfred Jeanroy, La Poesie Lyrique des Troubadours (Paris, 1934), II, 247.
or be deliberately undertaken as a kind of game. Jeanroy cites an exchange of *sirventes* between the troubadours, Sordel and Peire Bremon, in which it is difficult to discern a "crescendo," each poet having tried from the beginning to achieve the extreme limits of insult. There are varieties which can be distinguished: two *sirventes* may be juxtaposed in question and answer form, the second reproducing the meter and rhyme scheme of the first; the pieces may be so brief, consisting only of a couplet or two, that they are called *coblas* rather than *sirventes*; the question and answer may be exchanged from couplet to couplet, the couplets being identical in form. Jeanroy defines the *tenson* as a debate in which the discussion develops freely. David Jones considers the *tenzo* or *tenson* the most ancient form of the dialogue satire, stating that it demonstrates rancor and hostility in, for example, the contention of Marcabru and Aldric. Both Jeanroy and Jones maintain that the "thesis" of the controversy is unimportant - the aim is to vanquish one's opponent by a display of fertile imagination and poetic ingenuity.

H. J. Chaytor gives examples of the *sirventes* proper from the work of Peire Cardenal, noted satirist of 1210-1240:

*On the clergy:*

The clergy call themselves shepherds and are murderers under a show of saintliness. When I look upon their dress I remember Isengrin / the wolf in the romance of Reynard the Fox / who wished one day to break into the sheepfold; but for fear of the dogs he dressed himself in a sheepskin and then devoured as many as

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19Tbid. p. 249.

20Jones, p. 53.
he would. Kings and emperors, dukes, counts, and knights used to rule the world; now the priests have the power, which they have gained by robbery and treachery, by hypocrisy, force and preaching...Eagles and vultures smell not the carrion so readily as priests and preachers smell out the rich.

On the laxity of the rich:

Many a man builds walls and palaces with the goods of others, and yet the witless world says he is on the right path because he is clever and prosperous.21

As has been stated, the tenzo was originally a debate such as that between Borneil and Linhaure on "obscurity" in poetry:

I should be glad to know, Guiraut de Borneil, why and from what point of view you condemn the obscure style of poetry? Tell me: do you prize so highly that which all possess alike - the power to speak plainly? Were that the general opinion, all would be equal.

Sir Linhaure, I do not complain if everyone compose after his own taste, but my judgment is that poetry is more loved and prized if it is simple and easily understood; and I'm sure you will not take my opinion ill.

Guiraut, I am not willing that my songs create such confusion that people shall love the bad as much as the good and the small as the great. I am willing to dispense with the praise of fools for they do not understand what is above the ordinary.

Linhaure, when I, to make my songs clear, sit up all night and turn repose into toil, does it look as if I were upsetting the standards and trying to make the bad pass for the good? Why do you compose a song if you do not wish it to be understood? A song wins no prize but that.

Guiraut, if I compose the best thing I do not care whether it is widely understood or not, for commonness has never been a merit. That is why gold is more highly prized than salt, and with poetry it is the same.22

The more spiteful tone of the sirventes can be seen in the tenzo

22Ibid, p. 38.
Which was exchanged between the ungrateful Ugo de Sain Circ and his patron and former benefactor, Count Rodez:

Count, you need not be afraid or anxious on my account. I have not come to ask anything from you; for I have all that I want. But I perceive that money is a scarce article with you; therefore, I have not the heart to demand anything; on the contrary, it would be a great mercy if I made you a present.

Count Rodez: I am sorry for having dismissed wealthy you, who came to me poor, naked, and miserable. You have cost me more than two bowmen or horsemen; if I offered you a horse, however, you would not refuse it.\(^2\)

That the tenzo became indistinguishable from the sirventes as "un débat satirique" is recognized by David Jones in his study of the genre; he states that the reader seems to come upon the poets in the midst of their personal and professional quarrels.\(^2\)

The tenzo-sirventes found its way into the northern French court of Aquitaine and into the English courts where it degenerated into political lampoon; the débat form was lost. The element of debate remained, however, in the development of the tenzo in Italy. We have, for example, a political poem written by the Italian troubadour, Sordello of Mantua, on the death of his patron, Blacatz. In this composition, the troubadour issues a challenge and an invitation to the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II, to the kings of France, England, and Castile, and the French counts: he dares them to deny the courage and nobility of Blacatz, and invites them to eat of the heart of the dead man that they may become partakers of his excellence. Each ruler is invited, in a stanza which contains an account of his faults.


\(^2\)Jones, p. 67.
As concerns the English king Henry III, it pleases me for he is so little courageous, that he should eat well of the heart, then he will be valiant and good and recover the land which the king of France took from him.

And the king of Castile Ferdinand III, it is fitting that he eat of it for two, for he holds two realms and he is not sufficient for one; but if he will eat of it, 'twere well that he eat it in secret; for if his mother were to know it, she would beat him with staves.25

The poetic scolding-matches did not die out with the troubadours of Italy. A bitter three-cornered rivalry arose in the fourteenth century, resulting in Invectivae of Poggio of Florence against Francisco Filelfo and Lorenzo Valla, who replied separately in a number of subsequent poems. A century later, the disputes of Luigi Pulci and Matteo Franco appeared in the Sonetti di Missere Matteo et di Luigi Jocosi et Faceti Cioe da Ridere of 1480. That these Italian flytings were known to the Scots is evident from Gavin Douglas's poem, "Pallice of Honour": "And Poggius stude with mony a girne [scowl] and grone/ On Laurence Valla spittand and cryand fy."

Synchronous with the development of the poetic contention in Provence and Italy was the flowering of the Portuguese cantigas d'escarnho e de maldizer of 1185-1385. These invective poems, in the tradition of the Arab flytings, reflect the turbulent age of a country not yet forged into a nation; unlike the Provencal or Italian poems but like their Scottish counterparts, the cantigas are a 'rich lexical source of the speech of the common man.'26


The speech of the common man was not part of the tradition of the Irish poets, who revelled in their command of poetic diction. The Irish Gaelic anthology called the Book of Leinster contains a debate which is a contest in wisdom rather than a slanging-match. The ceremonial exchange had its setting in the high hall of King Conchobar, the rival poets were Ferceirtne and Neidhe, the debate is dated by Eleanor Hull as a ninth century poem, and known as the "Colloquy of the Two Sages." The colloquy is marked by courtesy instead of malice, each of the poets endeavoring to prove his right to the office of chief ollamh or bard of the Court of Ulster. Ferceirtne, senior bard, has inherited the office on the death of Adnae; Adnae's son, Neidhe, arrives from Scotland and claims the honor by virtue of his father's incumbency and his own training in "science" under the Scottish Eochu. The young man boldly sits in the ollamh's chair and drapes the bardic robe of bright feathers around him. The elder poet enters the king's hall and challenges Neidhe. The young poet proudly boasts of his skill and learning, asserting that "slight is the blemish of a young man." The colloquy continues in a series of reciprocal questions and answers:

Ferceirtne: A question, O instructing lad, whence has thou come?

Neidhe: Not hard to say: from the heel of a sage, from the confluence of wisdom, from brightness of sunrise, from the hazels of poetic art...And thou, my senior, whence hast thou come?

Ferceirtne: Not hard to say: along the columns of age...along

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the land of the sun, along the dwelling of the moon, along the young one's navel-string. A question, O instructing lad, what is thy name?

Neidhe: Not hard to say: Very-small, Very-great, Very-bright, Very-hard. Angriness of fire, fire of speech, noise of knowledge, well of wealth, sword of song...And thou, my senior, what is thy name?

Ferceirtne: Not hard to say: Nearest in omens...Weft of art, casket of poetry, abundance from the sea.

The contest of wisdom continues as each poet responds to the other with a litany respecting the art of poetry:

Ferceirtne: A question, O instructing lad, what art dost thou practice?

Neidhe: Not hard to say: reddening countenance, piercing flesh...fostering poetry, searching for fame, wooing science...abundant teaching, smooth tales the delight of kings.

Eventually Ferceirtne asks what the young man prophesies:

Ferceirtne: A question, O instructing lad, has thou tidings?

Neidhe: There are indeed good tidings: sea fruitful, strand overrun, woods smile...cornfields grow, bee swarms are many...a radiant world, happy peace...And thou, O my senior, has thou tidings?

Ferceirtne: I have indeed, tidings terrible...the cattle of the world will be barren. Men will cast off modesty...Every art will be buffoonery. Every falsehood will be chosen. Everyone will pass out of his proper state through pride or arrogance, so that neither rank nor age, nor honour, nor dignity, nor art, nor instruction will be served...everyone will buy a lampooner to lampoon on his behalf...Everyone will hurt his neighbour: so that every brother will betray another...Everyone will turn his art into false teaching and false intelligence, to seek to surpass his teacher; so that the junior may like to be seated while his senior is standing.

The elder poet predicts the state of the world in terms which cause the brash younger man to bow to the superior gifts of his senior.

The contest ends with mutual blessing in litany form:

Ferceirtne: Mayst thou be a casket of poetry! Mayst thou be
a king's arm! Mayst thou be a rock of ollaves! Mayst thou be the glory of Emain!

Neidhe: Three fathers are read of therein, to wit, a father in age, a fleshly father, a father of teaching. My fleshly father remains not; my father in teaching is not present; 'tis thou art my father in age. I acknowledge thee.28

The Celt's fondness for flyting continued beyond the medieval period and showed a strong sense of tradition together with an esteem for the profession of poet. A late Irish flyting, the Contention of the Bards, arose in the early seventeenth century between the bards of the north and those of the south.29 The controversy was initiated by the publication of a poem in 1604 in which Teig MacBrody MacDaire of the County Clare reviled an ancient fifth-century northern poet, Torna Eigas. Iowy O'Clery of the north retaliated, on Torna's behalf, in a poem of 66 quatrains; Teig replied in 185 equally insulting quatrains. Before long, MacEgan from the north joined O'Clery, and a verbal battle royal ensued between the best-known bards of the north and south: MacArthur, O'Keefe, MacDermott, and O'Donnell. Obviously, the issue of the dead Torna's excellence served only as an excuse for a national poetic pastime.

The Contention of the Bards appears to be a late flowering of a medieval, indeed primitive, ritual; it is also indicative of a national temper, of a delight in ceremonial added to a love of


language for its own sake, of characteristics which are to be found also among the nationally-related Scots. Whether or not the Irish and Scottish flytings have some root in the frustrated aggressiveness of subjugated peoples poses a problem in the psychology of national behavior. In any case, the custom of flying did not become an English pastime although, in this study, we shall be concerned with the closest attempts in England to the flying spirit: the Skelton "Poems Against Garneche," (1513), and the broadside controversies between Thomas Smyth and William Gray, and between Thomas Churchyard and Thomas Camell; these broadside contentions began later in the century, in 1540, and demonstrate the change in literary taste from the pre-Renaissance work of Skelton. Because the broadsides are contentions between poets, they form part of this dissertation; they are not, however, to be compared in poetic power to the flytings of the Scottish poets, Dinbar, Kennedie, Lyndesay, Montgomerie, or Polwart.

Structurally, flying is indebted both to folk custom and to rhetorical tradition; the streams of ritual and literary art merge in this genre. As we have seen, in the case of the Greenland Eskimos flying may also have a judicial function; of course, the practice of law in any country embraces tradition in the form of precedent, ceremonial, and rhetorical display.

The law-suit is, of course, an agon (the term was used by the Greeks for litigation before a judge) and the historian, Jacob Burckhardt, in his studies of the rise of Greece saw civilization as proceeding through a sequence of stages: first, an archaic or heroic period as demonstrated by the ascendancy of Hellas through
war, followed by an "agonal" period of national competitiveness in almost every phase of social life - music, drama, athletics, and law. This life-principle of contest which dominated Greek society, culminating in the great sacred games at Olympia and Delphi, is genetically related to the Socratic-Platonic dialogue. The development is not simply from battle to play but rather a development of culture in play-like contest. Huizinga discusses the agonistic and non-agonistic forms of war:

Fighting, as a cultural function, always presupposes limiting rules and it requires, to a certain extent at least, the recognition of its play quality. We can only speak of war as a cultural function so long as it is waged within a sphere whose members regard each other as equals or antagonists with equal rights....Several forms of combat at once suggest themselves as being non-agonistic: the surprise, the raid, the ambush, the punitive expedition, and wholesale extermination.

The war-making parties contend for something to which they think they have a right. Thus, the Arab poets, substituting a verbal duel for bloody battle, are conducting war in a ludic ritual.

On the other hand, in the progress of civilization as posited by Burckhardt, the primitive, heroic state of war is followed by the agonal period of contest or competition in which the "action begins and ends in itself, and the outcome does not contribute to the life-processes of the group." Contest of this type is purely a matter of play and is devoid of serious purpose; it encompasses

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31 Johan Huizinga, Homo Ludens (Boston, 1950), pp. 89-90.
the Scottish flytings. Competition may be in knowledge as with
the Ferceirtne-Neidhe colloquy:

The ways in which men compete for superiority are as
various as the prizes at stake....There may be contests
in courage and endurance, skilfulness, knowledge,
boasting and cunning....The astonishing similarity that
characterizes agonistic customs in all cultures is
perhaps nowhere more striking than in the domain of the
human mind itself, that is to say, in knowledge and
wisdom. For archaic man, doing and daring are power,
but knowing is magical power. For him all particular
knowledge is sacred knowledge--esoteric and wonder-working
wisdom because any knowing is directly related to the
cosmic order itself....For this reason there must be
competitions in such knowledge at the sacred feasts,
because the spoken word has a direct influence on the
world order.32

The mantic contest, with its riddle or question-and-answer
form, leads to the philosophical and theological disputation,
in the opinion of Huizinga. Closely related is the Socratic
dialogue--not a contest of wisdom but a mode of communicating
information in which the element of play is still present,
and the game becomes a way of knowing, thus performing a
cultural function. The agon, therefore, may be a judicial
duel, actual physical combat or its symbolic verbal surrogate,
a competition performed for sheer fun, a trial of knowledge,
or a way of learning; in each case, contest is a consensually-
validated ritual of play, and generates its own social and
personal tensions.

The Platonic tradition was part of the medieval school
pattern and continued in education as a rationale till the

32Ibid. p. 105.
middle of the seventeenth century. The flyters, in consequence, were trained in the art of disputation and catechism; they were also bred in the folk tradition of competition. In schools, teaching was by dialogue or colloquy—a very necessary method where textbooks were limited or non-existent. In an early survey of London, we have the following account:

In the raigne of King Stephen and of Henry the second, there were in London three principal Churches which had famous schooles....Upon Festival dayes the Maisters made solemne meetings in the Churches, where their Scholers disputed Logickly and demonstratively....I my selfe have yearly seene on the Eve of S. Bartholomew the Apostle, the Scholers of divers Grammer schooles repayre unto the Churchyard of S. Bartholomew, where upon a bank boorded aboute under a tree, some one Scholar hath stepped up, and there hath apposed and answered till he were by some better Scholer overcome and put down.

In the universities, formal training in rhetoric and disputation was supplemented by reading in such areas of classical study as the satires of Persius, Jeveral, and Horace. Perhaps the Tudor and Scottish poets did not, like modern critics, examine the mechanics of verse satire; nevertheless, they were aware of its power as a vehicle for social criticism or personal lampoon.

Knowledge of verse satire is one aspect of flyting; training in disputation is another; a conscious acceptance of the agonistic nature of the universe is a third. There may be also, on the subconscious level, an element of myth. Or is flyting a form of ritual without myth? Theodore Gaster defines ritual as "punctual rather than durative," and real rather than ideal. The function of myth, according to Gaster,

33 Cited by B. V. Crawford, PQ, III (1924), 27.
is to translate the real into the ideal, the punctual into the durative and transcendental. The punctual is momentary in time but may be repeated again and again. Thus, if a ritual of death and rebirth is real and punctual, its constant recurrence may eventually raise it to the plane of the ideal and durative which is myth. Myth, in turn, will be objectified and reproduced in subsequent procedures of ritual. The act of flyting is ritual and dramatic where there is actual confrontation of the contenders in what Huizinga emphasizes as a place set aside for the game—an arena for combat. The act is still a vestigial ritual when the form is epistolary.

As we shall see, in the chapters that follow, the flyters utilized the verse contention in such varying ways that each series of poems represents a different treatment of an ancient agonistic ritual: in some, the ceremonial of a four-part exchange of invective between two poets is observed; in others, the object of attack, whether person or institution, is not precisely pinpointed. As will be seen, the fragmentary flytings of Skelton and Lyndesay indicate a struggle between youth and age, between the old and the new, and might be regarded as mythic. The contentions of Dunbar-Kennedie and Polwart-Montgomerie are similar to each other in humor and vitality and are essentially play; yet each shows a different handling of the flyting tradition. The verse contentions of the Tudor poets show contests between poets in ways characteristic of their times in the form of broadsides.

34 Gaster, p. 24.
Indeed, the very existence of flyting bespeaks a society in which a writer is in touch with his fellow-poets. The modern writer's work derives its sometimes tragic force from a tension of inner reality with external non-reality—with a world which accepts a kind of determinism about the progress of man. The tension is intensified by the modern's sense of aloneness. The flyters, on the other hand, appear to be "pervaded...by the conflict of opposites." As they peacock in front of each other in the ludic ritual of tournament, do they give any indication of an apprehension of reality which is at variance with the surface aspects of their own world? In some of the flyters, such an apprehension, dimly perceived, is apparent. For all of the contenders, however, there would have been comprehension of the dictum of Heraclitus that strife was "the father of all things." 

Flyting, part of the progeny of "strife," is central to folk custom, to the development of law as an institution, and to the literature of conflict. In the next chapter, we shall see how the first flyting match in British literature reveals, under the shadow of ribald play, the substance which is the decay of the medieval profession of bard.

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35 Huizinga, p. 116.
36 Ibid., p. 117.
CHAPTER I

"THE FLYTING OF DUNBAR AND KENNEDIE"

Is i an aon chànan
am beul nam bard's nan eisg,
as fearr gu caineadh
bho linn Bhabail fein.¹

[It is the one speech,
in mouth of the bards and satirists
best for scolding
since the time of Babel itself.]²

When Alexander Macdonald made the above statement he was talking
of the Gaelic tongue: and he was wrong. William Dunbar and Walter
Kennedie have demonstrated that Middle Scots, the vernacular of Lowland
Scotland, is equally effective as a vehicle for flyting. Nevertheless,
the Scottish makars, Dunbar and Kennedie, were well aware of Gaelic
traditions in poetry in a country "where Gaelic was still dominant
in the larger area and spoken by the King, where only two centuries
before, the official languages had been Gaelic and Latin."² Of these
Gaelic traditions we shall have more to say later; meantime, we must
turn our attention to the poets and the poems.

¹The Poems of Alexander Macdonald, ed. A. and A. Macdonald
(Inverness, 1926), p. 6, cited by Kurt Wittig, The Scottish Tradition
²Wittig, p. 61.

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The facts of Dunbar's life have been dealt with at some length by Rachel Annand Taylor and J. W. Baxter. Miss Taylor seems heartily to dislike her subject and one wonders why she chose to write on a poet for whom she has condemnation rather than understanding. She does, however, present a picture of late-medieval Scotland, in somewhat aureate prose.

By the beginning of the thirteenth century Scotland had been forged into a nation, partly by reason of its resistance to the English King Edward I, the Hammer of the Scots. The Scots, however, were not homogeneous nor even monolingual. On the eastern lowlands—the Lothian country—lived the "Inglis"-speaking Scots, linguistically related to their Northumbrian enemies across the Border. To the west and north were the Celts or Gaels, and the "Highland line" was almost across Ayrshire rather than in the north-west. So, although the Scots were united against the enemy Southrons in intermittent warfare for three hundred years from the reign of Edward the Hammer to the accession of James I to the throne of the united kingdoms, yet strong distinctions in language and culture separated the "Inglis" Scot from the Gael. Dunbar from the east Lothians was "Inglis" and Kennedie from the western region of Carrick was Gael.

Dunbar, born probably in 1460, was a well-born but poor relation of the Earl of March. Educated at St. Andrews University, he was associated with the Franciscan Order either as novice or friar for

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some time before becoming court poet to James IV. The court was cosmopolitan, attracting French and Italian men of learning to the company of the erudite king, who spoke five or six languages, including Gaelic. Indeed the king's illegitimate brother, Alexander, Archbishop of St. Andrews, was tutored by Erasmus, and toured Italy with his teacher. Moreover, "a Latin Renaissance was in full swing." This, then, was the court of James IV—a court of medieval pageant and ritual, a court of European traditions. It is the blend of these European traditions with the two native Scottish modes derived from Old English and Celtic which gives such astonishing versatility to Dunbar's work. He can turn from the courtly grace of the "Thrissil and the Rois" to the gross buffoonery of the "Flyting" and display equal skill in both.

Walter Kennedie, Dunbar's adversary, was a brother of Lord Kennedie of Dunure and a descendant of King Robert III. He earned the degrees of Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts at Glasgow University, graduating in 1478, one year before Dunbar graduated as Master of Arts at St. Andrews. The Kennedie family were people of property and rising importance in Ayrshire at the same time that the Dunbars of Lothian were declining in wealth and prestige. Walter Kennedie was not only a young man of good family but a poet of considerable stature who is mentioned by Gavin Douglas in "The Pallice of Honour." Of the two "commissars" referred to in the "Flyting," "Schir Johine the Ros" and Kennedie's "cousing Quintene," nothing is known for certain although J. W. Baxter

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has made conjectures as to identity. Both Ros and Quintene are ritual figures in a literary duel, acting as seconds to the contenders by accepting challenge and transmitting reply.

The "Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie" opens with a poem of three stanzas in ballade form by Dunbar which suggests that Kennedie and Quintene were in some way the aggressors in the contention:

Schir Johine the Ros, ane thing thair is complld
In general be Dennedie and Quinting
Quhilk hes thame self aboif the sternis styld.

The two aggressors who have "styled themselves above the stars" have not actually attacked Dunbar for if they had done so he would have retaliated with greater fury:

Bot had they maid of mannace ony mynting
In speciall, sic stryfe sould rys but stynting.

As it is, the poet warns Kennedie and Quintene that, though their pride were as great as that of Lucifer, yet all hell should be unable to hide them from his wrath, if he were provoked:

The erd sould trymbill, the firmament sould schaik
And all the air in vennaume suddene stinke
And all the divills of hell for redour quaik
to heir quhat I sould wryt with pen and ynk;
For and I flyt, sum sege for schame sould sink
The se sould birm, the mone sould thole eclippis
Rochis sould ryfe...

Yet, he concludes, flyting is a shameful practice which brings only loss of honor and reputation; therefore, he is loath to indulge in it, but will show himself able to "rais the feynd with flytting" if he is constrained to do so by the "bakbytting" of Kennedie and Quintene.

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Kennedie replies in three stanzas of identical form: eight-line units of iambic pentameter with alternating rhyme. He takes Dunbar to task for his boasts and rattles his own literary saber in turn:

Dirtin Dumbar, quhome on blavis thow thy boist?  
Pretendand the to wryte sic skaldit skrowis;  
Ramowd rebald, thow fall doun att the roist,  
My laureat lettres at the and I lowis.

Kennedie proceeds to unleash his "laureat lettres" by calling Dunbar a dirty dwarf, fantastic fool, scalded shitbird, and "wan-fukkit funling." He puts to "silence" this sloven who pretends to be capable of burning satires by requesting him to make amends to the commissar, Quintene; otherwise Dunbar will live to curse the day he was born.

Dunbar returns to the fray with all the earth-trembling fury forecast in the opening stanzas. He begins by railing at Kennedie's Celtic origin, a theme to which he returns frequently throughout the poem. He goes on to describe Kennedie's alleged singularity of appearance, describing him as ugly and dried up as a dead Danish criminal whose corpse has been stretched on a wheel till the hawks have dined off it. Not only is Kennedie physically repulsive, but he has recurring fits of lunacy when he raves in Highland strain in such monstrous fashion that "Ane lawland ers wald mak a bettir noyis."

Dunbar advises his opponent to give up learning, for which he is unsuited, and take up a beggar's staff for his true vocation of blaspheming bard. He asks how dared this blockhead challenge him, and promises to make "all Bretane" resound with the beating he will inflict on Kennedie, yet he will "nowther to the tak knyfe, swerd, nor aix."

In the next stanza Dunbar accuses Kennedie of being "crop and rute
of traitoris tressonable," a coward who "purpest for to undo our Lordis chief." He continues with the charge that the attempted "undoing" against King James IV took place in Paisley "with ane poyson that was fell" for which Kennedie must stand trial upon an indictment which Dunbar himself will prove. Some controversy has arisen regarding the meaning of the "poyson" referred to here. The Scottish Text Society editor, Small, believes that the "poyson" is simply alliterative metaphor for the rebellion of Earl Lennox and Lord Lyle in 1489 during which James IV visited Paisley. William Mackay Mackenzie, editor of the 1932 edition of Dunbar's poems, prefers a literal meaning for "poyson," and J. W. Baxter points out that the king was ill during his sojourn in Paisley, but that historians have not yet cleared up the matter of the "poyson." In any case, the implication is clear: Dunbar is accusing Kennedie of some form of treason.

In the next stanza, the poet charges Kennedie with disparaging his (Dunbar's) friends, and calls him "glengoir loun." The use of "glengoir" which is glossed by Small as "grandgore" or venereal disease brings up an interesting point connected with the dating of the poem, which no editor appears to have considered. The poem has been dated by Baxter at 1500, but Matthew P. McDiarmid has built up a strong case for

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7Baxter, p. 67, n. 2. Neither Small's nor Mackenzie's reading of "poyson" seems acceptable, if the "Flyting" is to be regarded as a goodhumored jest between court poets. Even the most tolerant king could hardly have been amused, in those precarious times, by an imputation that one of his nobles had been involved either in a rebellion or in an attempt to poison him.
dating the poem at 1490, basing his claim in part on the interpretation of "poyson" as the rebellion of 1489. But "grandgore" appeared in Europe for the first time in Naples in 1495, and is first mentioned in Scotland in 1497. Dunbar's jeer at the "glengoir loun" would seem to preclude dating the poem 1497, and, added to the information supplied in the stanza immediately following, would suggest a date of 1500:

Or thou durst move thy mind malitius
Thow saw the saill above my head up draw;
But Eolus full woid, and Neptunus,
Mirk and moneless wes met with wind and waw
And mony hundred myle hyne cowd us blaw
By Holland, Seland, Zetland, and Northway coist,
In desert Qhair we famist aw;
Yit come I hame, fals baird, to lay thy boist.

By Dunbar's own account he had been abroad when Kennedie's "boast" reached him: Baxter has fixed the voyage as being one undertaken by Dunbar on the ship "Kathryne" in 1500.

In stanza seven the poet returns to gibing Kennedie for being a black-kneed Highlander with "giltin hippis." Neither Small nor Mackay elucidates the "giltin hippis" phrase but it may be a reference to the

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Poems of William Dunbar, ed. John Small, STS, III, 42. There are two theories regarding the origin of syphilis: first, that it had always been endemic in Europe but had become epidemic at Naples in 1495; second, that it had been brought from the New World in 1493 by the sailors of Columbus. In a work called Tractado Contra el Mal Serpentina, Ruy Diaz de Isla claimed to have treated some of Columbus' men for the disease after their return from Haiti in 1493. The disease is called morbus Gallicus in the Mandate of Maximillian (1495), and was known under a variety of names until the publication of De Syphilide in 1525 by Fracastorius; thereafter, the disease was called "syphilis."
saffron-dyed garment worn in Ireland and kilted above the knee— forerunner to the modern pleated kilt. The mockery of the Gael is continued in the next stanza where the poet accuses his adversary of being adept only in Celtic "eloquence," and knowing nothing of true poetry:

I tak on me ane pair of Lowthiane hippis
Sall fairar Inglis mak, and mair parfyte,
Than thow can blabbar with thy Carrik lippis.

Succeeding stanzas are taken up with taunts of poverty and a physical ugliness so great that it would frighten off a thousand young goats. Then comes a reference to Kennedie's home, a former leper-house (according to Dunbar) in Carrick where Kennedie and the cobbler's wife pollute the entire countryside, stealing geese and poultry. Living this alleged hand-to-mouth existence, Kennedie has become pallid and corpse-like:

Thos Lazarus, thow laithly lene tramort
Thy cheik bane bair, and blaiknit is thy ble:
I conjure thee, thow hungert heland gaist.
Thy skolderit skin, hewd lyk ane saffrone bag
Garris men dispyt thar flesche, thow spreit of Gy.

Not only is Kennedie a gaunt creature returned from the dead but he is the "spirit of Gy" or Guido de Corvo, a favorite medieval ghost who haunted his wife after death by rattling a broomstick on her floor. It is interesting to note that Skelton also referred to Syr Gy. The next two stanzas continue to build up the picture of a scrawny Kennedie whose "rigbane rattilis." Then comes a picture that is gross in the extreme; Kennedie is described as being, in Small's phrase, "suddenly overtaken

10"She called yow Syr Gy of Gaunt" (III, 70).
by too strong calls of nature" as a result of which his distressed bride
has to cleanse his big unwieldy hocks:

And oft beswakkit with ane ourhie tide,
Quhilk brewis meikle barret to thy bryd;
Hir cair is all to clenge thy cabroch howis
Quhair thow lyis sawsy in saphron....

When the uncouth Highland bard comes to Edinburgh, he carries the
Carrick clay on his boots and wisps of straw stick out from the welts as
he hobbles to Edinburgh Cross, pursued by lads who mockingly bleat after
him. If he appears again, the schools will be dismissed so that the
children can stone him up the causeway. The boys of Edinburgh pursue
him like bees as he flees through the streets, the dogs bark at his
heels, and the old women hastily take in their linens from clothes-lines
crying, "I see him want ane sark." The noise and commotion grow greater
as Kennedie runs, pursued by boys and dogs, causing horses to rear and
drag off carts, frightening fish-wives into dropping baskets and basins,
and all the while being pelted with stones.

Dunbar ends his poem with two stanzas, displaying mastery of
metrical skill by triple internal rhyme together with end rhyme as he
calls upon Kennedie to "cry grace" or be forever disgraced:

Loun lyk Mahoun, be boun me till obey,
Theif, or in greif, mischeif sall the betyd;
Cry grace, tykis face, or I the chee and sley;
Oule, rere and zowle, I sall defowl thy pryd;
Peilet gled, baith fed and bred of bichis syd,
And lyk ane tyk, purspyk, quhat man settis by the!
Forflittin, countbittin, beschittin, barkit hyd,
Clym ledder, fyle tedder, foule edder, I defy the.

Mauch muttoun, vyle buttoun, peilit gluttoun, air to Hilhouse;
Rank beggar, ostir dregar, foule fleggar, in the flet;
Chittirlilling, ruch rilling, lik schilling in the milhouse;
Baird rehator, their of natour, fals tratour, feyndis gett;
Filling of tauch, rak sauch, cry crauch, thow art our sett;
Muttoun dryver, giraall ryver, zadswyver, fowll fell the;
Herretyk, lunatyk, purspyk, carlingis pet,
Rottin crok, dirtin dok, cry cok, or I sall quell the.
Kennedie returns Dunbar's fire with a blast in which he concentrates on Dunbar's "rebellion" against himself as superior poet, tracing the rebel's ancestry back to biblical forebears such as Abiron and Dathan.

According to Kennedie, Dunbar is a literary rebel who comes of a long line of political rebels and traitors. The Dunbar family tree goes back to the first "Dewlbeir" or devil-bear—ancestral progeny of a she-bear and devil. This bestial offspring was Corspatrick, Earl of March, a traitor who shamed all Scotland by betraying his country to the enemy English back in the thirteenth century. Furthermore, Corspatrick was responsible for the loss of the town of Berwick and its garrison of seven thousand Scots. Then, as history shows, this traitor caused the Scottish chiefs to be imprisoned in that old "spelunk" of treason, Dunbar Castle, until the English king, Edward Langshanks, had massacred twelve thousand Scots, and the English "tykes" had defiled the Stone of Scone and the Cross of Holyrood. When William Wallace, Scottish champion, summoned Corspatrick to answer the charge of treachery at a council in Perth, the traitor fled into exile at the English court, leaving Dunbar Castle as an abode of vile beasts near which no noble "fowlis" would build their nests; the very stones of the fortress stink like brimstone.

Devilbear's mother, cast in by the sea, ate the cursed apple of the forbidden tree of which Adam had eaten and, vile cockroach that she was, married with the devil.

Nor did the Dunbar treachery end with the Devilbear, for in the reign of James II, Archibald Dunbar betrayed the house of Hailes and had its young lord thrown into a dungeon. Indeed, says Kennedie, "It war againis bayth natur and gud ressoun/ That Dewlbeiris bairns were trewe
to God or man"; begotten, born, and bred with treason, Corspatrick's clan were the grandchildren of Beelzebub.

As for the poet, William Dunbar, he was ordained by Satan to add fresh infamy to the family name. The bones of his ancestors rise and rattle each night as they call down curses upon their descendant because he has provoked Kennedie's anger. Instead of saying prayers for his ancestors, Dunbar has caused Kennedie to recite the tale of their treachery, and thus add new shame to their old sins:

Thy elderis banis ilk nycht rysses and rattilis
Apon thy corsa vengeance, vengeance! thay cry.
Thow art the cause thay may not rest, nor ly;
Thow sayis for thame few psaltris, psalmis or creidis,
Bot geris me tell thair tretalis of misdeidis,
And thair auld sin with new schame certify.

Therefore, says Kennedie, let the false Dunbar fall on his knees before the cross, confess his crimes, acknowledge Kennedie to be the king of poets, and make atonement. Let him "confess" to Kennedie's commissar, renounce his rhymes, burn his poems, and call on Stobo for legal counsel to save his life. If not, he will be burnt, warlock that he is, on Arthur's Seat or on a higher hill with pitch, fire, tar, and gunpowder.

For though Kennedie has ascended Mount Parnassus and drunk of "eloquence the fontayne" when it flowed cool and clear, his adversary has gone "in Marche or Februere," and drunk frog-spawn. Consequently, Dunbar's verse is offensive to the ears of men.

This Dunbar professes to despise the Gaelic which should be the tongue of all true Scots and was the language of a prosperous country
until the traitor Corspatrick brought in the tailed Englishmen.

Descendant of traitors, Dunbar himself is a fool, making reference to Danes "drying" on a wheel after death, when everyone knows that the king's own kin are Danish. His lack of wit annoys even his uncle, the devil:

The wit thou should hast had, was cast in
Evyn at thyne ers, bakwart, with a staf flong.
Therefore, fals harlot, hurson, hald thy tong:
Deulbere! thou devis the devill, thyn eme, wyth dyn.

As for Dunbar's taunt that Kennedie stole hens and lambs, such is the statement of a man who lacks not only culture but the necessities of life, who is glad to gnaw bones behind the backs of dogs, whereas Kennedie is a man of substance and learning. Undoubtedly, Dunbar is heading straight for the gallows on Mountfaucon. But the fine gibbet of Montfaucon will be defiled by such a face; therefore, let Dunbar come home and be hanged in Ayr where the ravens shall tear out his malicious tongue.

Kennedie goes on to discuss the play on the name, "Devilbear:
Dunbar," making it plain that the Earl of Murray, relative of the Dunbars

11Traditionally, Englishmen are supposed to have grown tails as punishment for their torture of St. Augustine with fish-tails. See G. Nelson, Caudatus Anglicus (Edinburgh, 1896), and Louis A. Barbe, "The Story of the Long-Tail Myth," Byways of Scottish History (London, 1912).

12Montfaucon was a frightful stone gibbet, located on the outskirts of Paris, from which the bodies of some fifty common criminals could be suspended at one time. The reference here and in the stanza following has been taken by some editors to indicate that Dunbar was abroad while Kennedie was writing. Cf. Villon's ballad, "The Epitaph," written for himself and his companions as they awaited execution at Montfaucon in 1461:
We swing and creak and rattle overhead
No thimble dented like our bird-pecked face.
of Westfield, "has na thing ado now with the devile," nor with the hateful poet. The Westfield Dunbars have been loyal to king and country always, as have the Kennedie family. Thus, when the poet Dunbar "puttis poysonn" to Kennedie he will have to prove it, says Kennedie, or suffer the consequences. The exact nature of the "poysonn" is not specified by either flyter.

Keneddie next declares that Dunbar's real habitation should be England, where his exiled kinsmen paid homage to King Edward Langshanks. A gallows and halter would be a fitting coat-of-arms for such a clan, with "Hang Dunbar" written above the crest. At this point, Kennedie proudly states that he is of "the kingis blude," constant in allegiance; thus he can look forward with trust to the gift of a benefice.\(^1\)

In the stanzas following, the career of Dunbar as begging friar is described: after stealing and swindling in Scotland, he made his way to France, where he continued his dishonest practices, eventually serving as apprentice to the hangman. As for the ship in which he sailed, the Katryne, he so befouled the vessel, covering her with dirt from stem to stern that it has taken twenty years to clean the foul mess. Indeed, the skipper gave orders for Dunbar to be put ashore at the Bass Rock, for he spewed out dirt faster than the sailors could pump it away:

\[
\text{Thow schot, and was not sekir of thy tayle,} \\
\text{Beschate the stere, the compas, et the glas;} \\
\text{The skipper bad ger land the at the Bas:} \\
\text{Thow spewit and kest out mony a lathly lomp,} \\
\text{Fastar than all the marynaris coud pomp.}
\]

\(^{13}\)The reference to "benefice" has special significance. Dunbar had made frequent pleas for a benefice to James IV, but without success.
Thus, says Kennedie, no ship will receive Dunbar as passenger now, and he must proceed on his travels on foot. Let him walk through England, calling himself a horse marshal and carrying a stick as his rod of office. If he is hanged in Northumbria (and such will surely be his fate), his kin will be well rid of him. May the good Lord grant that such a sot never shame the fair name of Scotland again! Let the loathly loon be carried to some desert where he can foul and infect the air at will, without harming honest folk.

This monstrous dwarf, Dunbar, was conceived in the great eclipse, and is thus destined to be under the baleful influence of Mercury. Now, full of trickery, Master William plays the fool; imperfect in poetry as in prose, he rhymes against Kennedie, the Rose of Rhetoric, who will retaliate by beating him or driving him out of Scotland. Who would give a benefice to such a creature? Rather let cowardly Dunbar put on his patched cloak, take up his bag and his fiddle or flute, and fare on into France, telling his foolish tales, for he has been ordained for naught else; may the fiend go with him.

In the succeeding four stanzas, Kennedie returns to the matter of his interlocutor's "devil-born" ancestry. In allusion—burdened verses he compares William to crafty logicians such as Cain, to traitors like

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14 Editors do not agree on whether "consavit" means "conceived" or "born." The total eclipse of the sun took place on July 18, 1460.
15 Small notes that Cain was known in medieval times as a master of argument, and had a celebrated debate with Luther. Small cites Wierus, "Pseudomonarchia Daemonum," but omits facts of publication: "He /Cain/ is famous for the astuteness of his logical powers, and it was with him Luther had his encounter." If the reference belongs to Johann Wier's De Praestigiis Daemonum it may date from publication of that volume at Frankfurt, 1566. Oliver Emerson makes no mention of this in "Legends of Cain," PMLA (1906), XXI, 839-929.
Judas and Antenor, to the tyrants Nero, Herod, and Pharaoh, to violent-tempered Termagant, to Aeneas, betrayer of women, to heretic Lollards, and to the prince of devils, Beelzebub. The poem concludes with a display of metrical virtuosity which matches Dunbar's poetic pyrotechnic:

Deulbere, thy spere of were, but feir thou yelde
Hangit, mangit, eddir-stangit, striyndie stultorum
To me, maist hie Kenydie, et flee the felde
Pickit, wickit, conwickit, lamp Lollardorum.
Defamyt, blamyt, schamyt, Primas Paganorum.
Out! out! I schout, apon that snout that snevillis.
Tale tellar, rebellare, induellar, wyth the devillis,
Spynk, sink, with stynk ad Tertara Termagorum.

The flyting ends, in the Bannatyne version, with the scribe's comment, "Juge ye now hear quha gat the war." With two poets so well-matched, it is difficult to say which won; in fact, some stanzas of Dunbar's could be substituted for those of Kennedie without the reader's being aware of different authorship.

Some stanzas, but not all. Poetry, because it is living thought, breaks through the confines of the stylized ritual of flyting to make manifest to the reader the relationships which the makar's mind apprehends. Even within the strait-jacket of formal invective, the poetic vision of Dunbar is distinct from that of Kennedie. Dunbar is intoxicated with words and sounds: in the first hundred lines of his flyting, for example, he piles epithet upon epithet, using a total of 170 nouns to 90 verbs. The range of his vocabulary is such that he repeats only a few of his railing terms: pelour (thief), loun (rascal), and baire (bard). Such verbal energy is crucial to Dunbar's consciousness of himself as artist. He is very much aware of the necessity for "the best words in the best order" and, in the flyting, the best words are the concrete, earthy
Middle Scots terms rather than aureate Romance diction; correspondingly, the best order is alliteration. Edwin Morgan makes a statement about Hopkins, which is equally applicable to Dunbar:

A poet with a strong sensuous and linguistic tone to his imagination, can find himself inspired within his own concern with words, with rhythm, with shape, with concatenations that are audible as well as thematic: elements which would normally be a hazard, a mere snare of formalism.16

Thematically, Dunbar's part of the flyting is made up of sheer abuse, mocking threats, and scorn for Kennedie's "hieiland" way of life. Dunbar's method, as we have seen, involves a catalogue of vilifying variants carried along by the swinging rhythm of alliteration; the rhythm increases in tempo as it reaches the climactic gusto of the triple internal rhymes in the concluding stanzas.

Kennedie, on the other hand, concentrates on a series of chronicles: first, he alludes to the devil-born ancestry of his interlocutor; he follows this up with a brief narrative of the shameful part played by the traitorous Dunbar during travels in France and England as a begging friar. The poet concludes his flyting with an outburst of invective, evidently intended to match his adversary's final stanzas. This metrical accomplishment was not confined to the flyting, nor indeed to Kennedie and Dunbar. Gavin Douglas wrote his Pallice of Honour in staid conventional decasyllabic verse until he approached the conclusion when, after introducing first one internal rhyme, than another, he ended with a flamboyant quadruple internal rhyme scheme:

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It is obvious that Kennedie and Dunbar were in good company in their delight in rhythm and in the extrinsic.

Because the Flyting is traditional rather than unique, perhaps some consideration of underlying streams is in order. The poem shows a curious blend of two quite distinct but complementary traditions: the vituperative strain of popular speech, and the reference-laden strain of literary usage. Oddly enough Dunbar, who was no poet of the common man as were Lyndesay or Burns, chose to employ the technique of popular invective. In the next chapter we will consider the relationship of the Dunbar-Kennedie flyting to the bardic tradition.
CHAPTER II

THE BARDIC TRADITION AND THE DUNBAR-KENNEDIE FLYTING

I perish by my art; dig my own grave; I spin my thread of life; my death I weave.\(^1\)

Dunbar apparently despised the Gaelic-speaking inhabitants of Scotland and has made clear, in more than one poem, that he is proud of his "Inglis" speech. Nonetheless, he may have been more influenced by the native Celtic tradition of flyting than by the contemporaneous European practice. For example, in the opening lines of the contest with Kennedie he expresses his reluctance to indulge in what was obviously a traditional pastime: "Bot wonder laith wer I to be ane baird/ Flyting to use, for gritly I eschame." (l. 17-18). He uses "baird" as a term of opprobrium in the lines that follow: "Irscbe brybour baird" (l. 49), "ane baird blasphemar" (l. 63), "fals baird" (l. 96), "baird thow sall go naiket" (l. 120), "baird rehator" (l. 244). Not once does Kennedie use the word "bard" to his opponent. Dunbar, therefore, is contemptuous of the Gaelic bard, who has a shameful habit of flyting, yet he proceeds to indulge in the same practice. Why? Possibly to prove that he can enter a bardic contest and outdo the bard, Kennedie, at his own traditional game. Indeed, he asks Kennedie in effect: "Is it surprising that you should rejoice in flyting, when such eloquence as the Gaels have it devoted

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to flying rather than to true poetry?" He adds a scathing note regarding
the Carrick man's inability to use English:

Forworthin fule, of all the world refuse
Qhbat ferly is thocht thow rejoys to flyte?
Sic eloquence as thay in Erachry use,
In sic is sett thy thraward appetyte;
Thow hes full littyll feill of fair indyte:
I tek on me ane pair of Lowthiane hippis
Sall fairar Inglis mak, and mair parfyte
Than thow can blabbar with thy Carrrik lippis.

In subsequent stanzas Dunbar makes reference to the hypothetical
career of Kennedie as a naked, begging bard. Historically, the picture
drawn was apt for the time. By the sixteenth century the once-proud
Gaelic bards were reduced to penury, and the very name "bard" was a term
of abuse. In an earlier and happier era the bards had been retained
by both king and clan, the court bard holding the position of eighth
officer in a king's household. The bard retained by a clan chief held
his office by hereditary succession. He performed a number of functions:
he entertained the household, harangued the clansmen before battle,
satirized enemy clans, acted as official historian or senachy, and also
performed as judge. His person was inviolable, he was not liable for
combat duty in war, he paid no taxes, and his house was protected by
right of sanctuary. His overlord, whether king or chieftain, was obliged
to furnish the bard with harp, horse, wool apparel, and household linen.

In 1314, Robert Bruce was accompanied by his bard at the Battle of
Bannockburn where he opposed Edward II, who had also provided himself
with a bard in the person of Richard Bastwick, the rhyming monk of
Scarborough. Undoubtedly, these bards were in attendance for the twofold
purpose of inspiring the soldiers and recording the events of battle.
How skilful the bardic harangue could be is evidenced by a curious poem
which has survived from another military encounter, the Battle of Harlaw,
1411. Lachlan MacMuirreach, poet of Donald, Lord of the Isles, spurred
the Clan Donald to victory with a war song of 338 lines, composed almost
wholly of epithets arranged alliteratively in alphabetical order. The
richness of Gaelic vocabulary was such that the poet did not repeat
himself. This poem of 1411 was frequently recited years later, and was
possibly known to Dunbar because James IV did have Gaelic recitals at
court.² Also, Donald, Lord of the Isles, was no ordinary clan chief
but ruled over almost as much territory as the king of Scotland.

Although there were bard retainers at court and among the clans,
there were also itinerant bards, graduates of the bardic schools. In
day times the bardic candidates had to spend twelve years studying all
branches of poetry, history, and law; they graduated through various
orders or degrees, achieving the ability to deliver some sixty thousand
verses from memory, and to extemporize on any occasion. That contests
of bardic skill were common is the opinion of Mackenzie and other writers
on Gaelic poetry. Mackenzie lists two examples of the kinds of contest
which were popular. First, at the great bardic conventions of the Welsh
poets it was customary to select the wittiest satirist, who was then named
Cyff-cler. In this persona, the satirist endured all the jests and
satires of his colleagues without loss of composure. Eventually he was

²There are itemized accounts of payments made to Gaelic bards and
harpers between 1490 and 1496 in reports of the Lord Treasurer of Scotland.
called upon to reply in extemporaneous verses; if deemed successful, he was awarded a gift of money and a doublet. The second type of bardic contest was in the nature of a flyting between bards of rival clan chiefs. Mackenzie notes that a contention of this nature took place as late as 1690 in Lochaber between John Glass and John MacDonald. Christopher Murray Grieve also attests to the popularity of Gaelic flytings:

Verbal contests in prose and verse were common in Gaelic. What I mean by prose here is really only the ordinary language of conversation, but the whole thing was—and still is, in some places—carried on as a game. It was known as gearradh-caimte (word-cutting, literally), among other names. Sometimes the language of insult was used fairly freely, but the spirit of insult was absent.

Although the bard retainers managed to maintain the dignity of their office, the profession of itinerant bard gradually fell into disrepute. Bards proliferated into mere rhymesters or tale-tellers because they were joined by men driven by loss of land and poverty into what appeared to be an easy way of earning a living. Dunbar gives a vivid picture of these shabby, Highland poetasters in his "Daunce of the Sevin Deidly Sins":

Then cryed Mahoun for a hieland padgean
Syn ran a feynd to fetch Makfadzean
Far northwart in a nuke;
Be he the coronach had shout
Earse men so gatherit him about


4 Extract from correspondence from Mr. Grieve /"Hugh McDiarmid"/. I am indebted to Mr. Grieve for much useful information on the Gaelic bards.

5 The MacFadzeans were hereditary bards of the Lord of Argyll.
In hell grit rowm they tuke:
That tarmagants in tag and tatter
Full loud in Earse begoud to clatter,
An rowp lyk ravin rowk;
The deil sae deivit was wi their yell
That in the deipest pot of hell
He smorit thaim wi smouk

To sum up: in the era that produced the "Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie," there were still many highly-respected Celtic bards, some attached to the households of clan chiefs, some invited regularly as performers at the Scottish court, but there were also numerous bare-foot vagrants who recited doggerel for the price of a loaf of bread.

Yet, although the great bardic traditions were decaying, the "Flyting" seems to preserve some of the fleeting traditions. Dunbar, in his love for defamatory variants, demonstrates one aspect of the Celtic bard, the aspect of the satirist, Lachlan Macmuireach, with his 338 lines of massed alliterative epithet. Kennedie performs the function of the senachy with his pseudo-historical account of Dunbar's ancestors. Indeed the disparagement of one's adversary together with the eulogy of one's own family or nation is a trait not unknown even to those bard-historians of the twentieth century--the writers of memoirs. Kennedie's poem bears a resemblance to one written by his contemporary, Bard Ruadh Fionnlagh (Bard Finlay the Red). Finlay's poem, a satire on Allan, son of Chief Roderick of Clan Ranald, is dated approximately 1500-1505, and published in the original Gaelic, with translation, in the Scottish Text Society's edition of Scottish Verse from the Book of the Lean of Lismore. In the Gaelic poem, Finlay opens his attack by stating that Allan is devil-born; therefore, there will be joy in hell at his return there. Next, the
satirist catalogues the "crimes" committed by Allan: he despoiled the holy places; he stirred up trouble and rebellion against lawful authority, behaving as both traitor and coward; he was "gallows-ripe"; finally, his own patron saint cursed him. Kennedie's charges against Dunbar are similar: the "deulbere" comes from a family of traitorous rebels, the Corspatricks; the Dunbars desecrated "the haly stane of Scone," and the "Croce of Halyrudhouse"; the poet is headed for the gallows of Montfaucon or of Ayr; finally, his ancestors' bones rattle as they call down curses on their descendant for shaming them.

There is no question of plagiarism here, merely a remarkable similarity between contemporaneous poems in Gaelic and Middle Scots written by Highland bards, Finlay and Kennedie, who are both what the Gaels call seanachadh (senachies) but what the Scots call "walking chronicles."

Is Kennedie consciously functioning as bard? We cannot be certain, of course; but another statement by Christopher Murray Grieve may serve to illuminate this point: "Often one bard or a witty stranger utters one couplet and the other completes the verse, twisting the words or the idea against the first speaker. That's really the basic principle of all these things in Scottish Gaelic." Dunbar, in his opening stanzas, hurled the epithet "baird" at Kennedie. Is not Kennedie accepting the role thrust upon him, turning it to his adversary's disadvantage?

If we concede that Kennedie is the conscious bard, then some of the lines in his part of the flyting which have been either ignored by editors or dismissed as "obscure" are seen to be susceptible of explication. For example, Kennedie on two occasions puts Dunbar to
"sylence":

Heir I put sylence to the in all partis,
Obey and ceis the play that thow pretendis.
(l. 41-42)

Put I nocht sylence to the, schiphird knaif
And thow of new begynis is ryme and raif.
(l. 254-255)

The bard as brehon or judge had "authority to command peace and denounce its disturbers." 6

Furthermore, the bard, if insulted, could demand a fine from the offender. Kennedie asks for "amendis" from Dunbar.

So sore thow mak my commissar amendis
And lat him lay sax leichis on thy lendis
Meikly in recompassing of the scorne
Or thow sail ban the tyme that thow was borne.
(l. 44-47)

The bard also claimed to have the gift of prophecy: he was vates or, in Gaelic, faid. 7 Kennedie, in the midst of his denunciation of Dunbar's ancestors, says: "Yit of newe tressone I can tell the tailis/
That cumis on nycht in visioun in my sleip." (l. 297-298) The bardic gift of prophecy stemmed from a Celtic belief that the spirits of one's ancestors hovered close at all times to rejoice or sorrow with the descendant. Consequently, a bard's ancestral spirits, concerned with destiny as they had been in life, would appear to him conveying a vision

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6 Alexander Mackenzie, p. xxii. Mackenzie also refers to the shaking of the "Chain of Silence" by the Irish bards to compel peace between "ireful combatants."

7 "Their prophetic character added greatly to their influence; for they professed to foretell the fate of wars and the destiny of individuals." Alexander Mackenzie, p. xxii.
of the future. The ancestral spirits, as we have already seen, could also rise and curse the living man.

Druidic bardism is overlaid with Christianity as Kennedie goes on to say that Dunbar, an ordained friar, should be saying prayers for the dead instead of provoking Kennedie into liturgical recitals of ancient Dunbar-Corspatrick misdeeds:

Tho' says for thame few psaltris, psalms or creidis
But geris me tell their trentalis of misdeidis
And their ald sin with new schame certify.

There is the overlay of the bard's classical schooling in the curious lines,

Pluto thy hede of kyn and protectour
To hell to leid the on lycht day and leme.

That Dunbar should be led into the darkness of Pluto's Kingdom on a bright, shining day may be merely poetic contrast; but the bard is calling down a curse on his opponent. Furthermore, there is irony in malediction that brings death and darkness under the brightness of the sun, ancient symbol of life.

The bards officiated at death, taking part in the actual burial and performing the obsequies; they were unsparing in either praise or blame of the deceased. Alexander Mackenzie gives an example of a bardic eulogium on a chief who had broken his promises: "Manos remembered not his words.... Manos thou were generous, but wrathful and bloody was thy darkened soul" (p. xxix). Kennedie promises to "earth" Dunbar after death:

Cum hame, and hing on our gallowis of Aire
To erd the under it I sail purchas grace
To eit thy fleisch the doggis sail have no space
The ravyns sail ryve na thing bot thy tong rutis.

(l. 371-374)
As stated previously, the bardic profession was declining, partly because too many itinerants claimed the title of bard even when they were mere reciters rather than poets. Poetasters, too, abounded in a vocation that from primitive times had bestowed so many privileges on its adherents. It was necessary, in fact, for laws to be enacted from time to time against reciters or poetasters, but not hereditary bards. One such statute was passed during the reign of James II, in 1449, stating...

...gif ther be onie that makis them fiules, and ar bairdes, that be put in the kingis waird or in his irons for their trespasses...that their ears be nailed to the trone, or till ane uther tree, and their eare cutted aff, and banished the cuntrie.

Other punishments for vagabond minstrels were scourging, or burning through the ear with a hot iron. One stanza by Kennedie which gives difficulty to the editors of the poem is as follows:

Cursit croapand craw, I sail ger crop thy tong,  
And thow sall cry Cor mundum, on thy kneis;  
Duerch, I sail ding the, qhill thow dryte and dong,  
And thow sall lik thy lippis, and suere thow leis:  
I sail degraid the, graceles, of thy greis;  
Scaile the for scorne, and shere the of the scule,  
Ger round the hede transforme the till a fule,  
And syne with tresone trone the on the treis.  

(1. 393-400)

The Scottish Text Society editor, Gregor, thus elucidates the last four lines of the stanza:

I shall degrade thee, thou graceless one, from thy rank /or it may be, clerical order/, drive thee away out of scorne, and cut thee off from the school /i.e. deprive thee of thy academical degree/, cause thy head to be cropped /the badge of the fool/, and transform thee to a fool, and
then enthrone thee along with treason on the hurdle, to be drawn to the gallows.

The editor adds, "The heads of fools were frequently shaved, in imitation or perhaps ridicule of a monk's tonsure."

A later editor, W. Mackay Mackenzie, favors a different interpretation. He believes that "greis" (meaning, literally, "steps" or "degrees") is to be here considered "position." As for "trone," it is a weighing-machine which "was utilized on occasion for a pillory"; for "treis" Mackay Mackenzie substitutes "timbers." The word "trone" occurs in Montgomery's poetry in the sense of "pillory"; therefore, mackay Mackenzie's interpretation appears sound, especially as it is compatible with the wording of the 1449 statute.

Neither editor satisfactorily explains the "degrading" from the "degrees," nor the "shearing" from the "school." It may be argued that the "degrading" refers to stripping from Dunbar his academic degree of Master of Arts. This seems to be the viewpoint of Gregor. But, even if it were in Kennedie's power to have the academic degree rescinded—a prerogative that would belong only to the University of St. Andrews—why would there be any necessity for hair-cropping or "troning" to a tree? Perhaps if we consider Dunbar as being deprived of the degrees of the bardic school by the arch-ollamh or chief bard, Kennedie, the stanza will offer fewer difficulties. There were seven gradations in the bardic order, starting with the neophyte or fochlucan and ending with the Doctor

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or ollamh. If a lesser bard were cut off by the arch-ollamh from the protection of the bardic school, then his transformation, legally, to an itinerant or "fuile" would make him liable to the penalties of hair-cropping and nailing to a pillory, along with "tressone" (traitors). As for the banishment from the "cuntrie" mentioned in the Statute of 1449, Kennedie begs the king to impose this very sentence on Dunbar:

Nye Soeverane Lorde, lat nevir this synfull sot
Do schame, fra hame, unto your nacion!

Fra honest folk devoie this lathly low:
In sum desert quhair thare is na repaire
For fyling and infecking of the aire
Carle this cankerit corrupt carioun.

(1. 481-488)

The burden of Kennedie's accusations is that Dunbar is neither a true poet nor a true Scotsman. Kennedie not only threatens hair-cropping and banishment but, as self-appointed agent of "Alathya" (Truth),\(^{10}\) he calls down retribution on the "false" Dunbar in another fashion: he uses the words "ban" or "curse" in various forms no fewer than seven times throughout the poem.\(^{11}\)

A pattern appears to emerge from the "Flyting" in which both sections, similar diatribes at first sight, become different aspects of the

\(^{10}\) The Highland bard is alluding to a well-known school text, Ecloga Theoduli, according to H. M. Ayres, "Theodulus in Scots," MP XV (Jan., 1918), 539-548. Alithia is the Christian character who conducts a contest of wisdom with the pagan shephert Pseustis in an amoebean pastoral and triumphs. Thus Kennedie assigns the role of pagan and heretic to Dunbar and arrogates truth to himself.

picture as well as characteristic of the poets involved. Dunbar, reluctant (as he says) to stoop to the shaming bardic practice, proceeds to limn Kennedie as the epitome of all that is worst in the wandering Highland bard of the times: a starved, shabby, filthy creature driven out of Edinburgh by jerring boys, women, and even dogs. Dunbar makes use of the heavily substantival style characteristic of Gaelic bards such as Lachlan MacMuireachd. Kennedy, speaking in the persona of the hereditary bard, functions as genealogist, prophet, and brehon in his denunciation of the "Inglis" poetaster, Dunbar.

The "Flyting" has been rejected by some anthologists as grossly indecent, and unworthy of the finer powers of the two poets. To be sure, it gives no romantic, courtly picture of late-medieval Scotland. But there is something to be said for the cloacal approach—even when used in jest. The Scots, Highland or Lowland, had an eye for authentic detail. The poets who could draw similes from the red berry of the mountain ash or the chilling solitude of a bleak, windswept crag could also see a vagabond so starved that he was glad to rub a single handful of grain at an old wife's fireside, or a sickly beggar afflicted with "ane ourhisteryd" of nature. The traditional medieval poet who, meandering in an enchanted garden on a May morning, rhapsodizes over an exquisite rose is far removed from the ungainly country bard who hobbles on broken boots, clay-covered and patched with straw, over the cobblestones of Edinburgh, pursued by screaming women, barking mongrels, and stone-pelting boys.

Poetic sensibility is evident throughout both sections of the flyting; the question of discrimination is what troubles the modern
reader and eludes him, because he is four centuries removed. For example, the humor of the picture of Dunbar aboard the Katryne, fouling the ship from stem to stern faster than fifteen sailors can pump the dirt out, may be too earthy for the twentieth-century reader--but Rabelais would have enjoyed it.

There is no urbane charm to this bardic contest, nor any apocalyptic vision. There is, however, acute observation, oblique pathos, and a wry awareness of man in his less courtly aspects.
CHAPTER III

SKELTON: "POEMS AGAINST GARNESCHE."

"My wordes unpullyshed be, nakid and playne."

John Skelton.

"Behind Skelton there stood the Old World of fixed status and privilege, the conservative nobility, led by the Howards. Behind Garnish were massed all the rising bourgeoisie of the New World, the Comptons, the Brandons—and Wolsey."¹ Thus does Edwards sum up the "mimic combat" between two courtiers, a debate of which we possess only Skelton's share.

Edwards, combining fact and conjecture, supplies an interesting account of the contest and the contestants. He decided that Christopher, son of a respectable but not noble family of East Anglia, "must have been the family joy and pride. His father determined he should have every advantage: he even sent the boy to acquire a society gloss under the widow of Sir Thomas Brews."² Lady Brews, mentioned in the flyting, was Dame Elizabeth of the Paston Letters.

Apparently, young Garnish or Garnesche, after serving as

²Ibid., p. 146.
a page in the Brews' household at Ipswich, entered the king's
service as a gentleman usher in 1509. Later, as an officer, he was
seconded to the garrison town of Guisnes, near Calais. When Henry
VIII invaded France in 1513, he knighted the young officer—not for
valor in the field but for his labors as Sergeant of the King's
Tents. Thereafter, Sir Christopher's fortunes rose and fell with those
of the king's closest advisers. Because he was "one of Wolsey's
choosing," his prosperity coincided with the Cardinal's. As the
powerful Howard family gained ascendancy over the king, the young knight
found himself out of favor. There was more than usual interest, there­
fore, in the poetic battle set up by Henry VIII in the summer of
1514 between the Howard adherent, John Skelton, and Sir Christopher
Garnesche.

Skelton's own career is so well documented that only a brief
sketch is necessary. Born probably in 1460, he was "laureated" at
Oxford by 1490 and at Cambridge in 1493. The title, "Poet Laureate,"
was awarded for an earned degree and was not simply a title of honor.
Skelton was later to refer to himself as "orator regius" to Henry
VIII, and this term implied something of the modern meaning of Poet
Laureate. The young laureate was favorably noticed by King Henry
VII, who engaged him as tutor to the infant Prince Henry sometime be­
fore 1499. In 1502, Skelton was appointed Rector of Diss, and his
movements for the next ten years are not traceable; possibly he divided
his time between rectory and court. Nelson thinks he may have been
close to the battle at Flodden, where King James IV lost his life, in 1513. ³

Skelton had no love for the "rude, rank Scots," but it is worth recording that if he were in the entourage of King Henry VIII in France he almost certainly met Sir David Lyndesay who, as Lyon King of Arms, was entrusted with James IV's ultimatum to King Henry in France in the summer of 1513. Skelton may have met Dunbar during the Scottish poet's visit to London in the winter of 1501-1502, at the time of the English Princess Margaret's betrothal to James IV of Scotland. In any case, Skelton was familiar with the works of Dunbar, as can be seen by the close resemblance of the Skelton flyting to the Dunbar-Kennedy contention; although, according to C. S. Lewis, Skelton would rise and spatter us with new Skeltonics at the mere suggestion that he owed anything to the northern makars. ⁴ Despite the uneasy peace between England and Scotland during the years 1500-1513, there were cultural exchanges between the two nations. Dunbar spoke highly of his "maister Chaucer," and Gavin Douglas was openly Anglophile. James IV, like his brother-in-law, Henry VIII, was something of an intellectual, and was proficient in several languages, including Latin and Gaelic. Both kings had resident court poets. Perhaps Henry VIII had first-hand knowledge of the Scottish flytings; perhaps he was spurred on by his own court poet's talent for invective.

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In any case, he made his royal will known: there was to be a flyting between Skelton and Garnesche. One curious problem arises in connection with Henry's request: why should Garnesche, who appears nowhere as a poet, have been selected as opponent to the experienced court satirist? From the evidence of the flyting, Garnesche had to summon an unknown poet to aid him in the unequal contest. In his study on Skelton, Edwards suggests that the unknown poet was Stephen Hawes whose Pastime of Pleasure had established his reputation at the Tudor court. What seems surprising is that King Henry, a highly literate man, did not choose such an adversary for Skelton in the first place, but preferred to elect the carpet knight, Sir Christopher. We have Skelton's statement that he undertook the contest at Henry's request: "Be the kinges most noble commandement." (l. 43) We have no evidence whatever from Garnesche to prove that the contest actually was unequal, although we know that the knight had the help of a poet, scorned by Skelton as Gorbelyd Godfrey. As in the case of the Lyndesay flyting, we must be content with the fragmentary "Poems Against Garnesche"--written at a king's whim.

In the opening poem of the series Skelton reveals that he is merely defending himself against the charge of "knave," hurled at him by Sir Christopher. Evidently the first thrust in the literary duel had come from Garnesche:

Sithe ye have me chalyngyd, Master Garnesche
Rudely revylling me in the kinges noble hall
Soche an odyr chalynge cowde me no man wysch
But yf it war Syr Tyrmagant that tyrnyd without nall;

Edwards, p. 152.
For Syr Frollo de Franko was never halfe so talle.  
But sey me now, Syr Satrapas, what autoryte ye have  
In your chalenge, Syr Chystyn, to calle me knave?

In the stanzas following, Skelton ridicules Garnesche's newly-acquired knighthood by addressing the young man as "Syr Dugles the dowty," "Syr Terry of Trace," and "Syr Ferumbras"—mythical figures of valor. In the midst of this scornful recapitulation of Christopher's alleged knightly virtues, Skelton gives us a portrait of his opponent: "Ye gryne grymly with your gomys and with your grysly face." Not only does Christopher grin grimly with "contenons oncomly," but he is as dark-skinned as a Saracen, has eyes like burning coals rolling wildly in his head, yellow-stained teeth, and a long snout of a nose. He stands upon crooked, skinny legs, "wynde schakyn shannkes," and his back is as bristled with hair as a boar's. Finally, this misbegotten creature is as garrulous as Sir Thopas himself.

Skelton directs his second poem at Garnesche and his accomplice, "Gresy, Gorbelyd Godfrey." It is possible, as Edwards maintains, that "Gorbelyd Godfrey" is a parody on the name of the dwarf, "Godfred Gobelive," in Pastime of Pleasure. Moreover, Hawes, poet and Groom of the Chamber to the king, was a Suffolk man like Garnesche and may have been a close friend of the young knight, although there is no evidence of this. It is unlikely that a poet of the stature of Hawes would be content to accept the role of supporter in a literary duel when he could have been chief contender. As for the parody, Skelton may simply have used "Gorbelyd Godfrey" as a derogatory term easily recognizable by a court which was well
acquainted with the obscenity of Hawes' dwarf character. In such a case, Skelton would have been paying a 'back-handed' compliment to his brother poet, in addition to ridiculing the pretensions of the unknown who was supporting Garnesche.

For the first four stanzas of the poem the knight is the target for Skelton's alliterative abuse: "Your gronynge, your grontynge, your groinynge lyke a swyne/ Your pride ys alle to peviche, your porte importunate." Each stanza ends with a refrain, likening Sir Christopher to two unloved biblical characters: "Ye cappyd Cayface copious, your paltoke on your pate/ Thow ye prate lyke prowde Pylate, be ware yet of chek mate."

Alexander Dyce, editor of the Skelton canon, suggests in his notes that the references in the refrain may be to characters in morality plays, and that "copious" Caiaphas may have been customarily represented on stage wearing cap and cope. By referring to Caiaphas and Pilate, the poet does suggest that Christopher has been setting himself up as a figure of authority since his knighthood--a strutting braggart pridefully heading for a fall.

In the fifth and sixth stanzas, the poet turns his fire

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6 The French critic, Maurice Pollet, is of the opinion that Godfrey did not exist but was introduced as part of the convention of lampooning. He cites the literary duel of Marot and Sagon with their fictitious aides, Frippelippe and Matthiau. See Maurice Pollet, John Skelton: Contribution a l'Histoire de la Renaissance Anglaise (Paris, 1962), p. 101.

7 The York cycle of forty eight plays has episodes dealing with Pilate, Caiaphas, Barabas, Baltazar, and Lucifer--all of whom are mentioned by Skelton in the flyting.
upon Godfrey with his "grysly gorgons face." Skelton warns both opponents to beware of the ducking stool if they persist in their witless, peevish abuse. The poem ends formally, "Be the kings most noble commandement."

In the third round of the contention the author abandons the rhyme royal of the previous poems for his own characteristic metric pattern, dubbed "Skeltonics." In 209 short lines the poet review Sir Christopher's inglorious career, starting with the knight's humble beginnings as a kitchen slave:

A dyshwasher, a dryvyll,
In the pot your nose did snevyll;

Ye slufferd up sowse
In my lady Brewsys howse

Wherto shulde I wryght
Of soche a gresy knyght?
A bawdy dyshclowte . . .

The satirist then recalls that at Guisnes the young officer Garnesche was so impoverished that he wore his coat inside out to save one side for festive affairs. On one occasion, the young soldier, amorous but indigent, was scornfully rejected by a lady because he was "nosyd lyke an olyfaunt." Furthermore, he is not only repulsive, says the poet, but is a danger to the king:

Your brethe is stronge and quike
Ye ar an elder steke;
Ye wot what I thynke,
At bothe endes ye stynke,
Gret daunger for the kynge,
When hys grace ys fastynge,
Hys presens to aproche.

As for the knight's scribe, Godfrey, he has little wit to dare challenge the king's "lauryate poyete." Skelton suggests
that this unknown "maker" learned his art from a pie baker; better it would have been for him to have gone to school with Skelton the master.

Skelton returns to Garnesche with a vituperative outburst that reminds us of Dunbar's second flyting against Kennedy:

Thou tode, thow scorpyone,
Thow bawdy babione,
Thow bere, thow brystlyd bore,
Thow Moryshe mantycore,
Thow rammysche stynkyng gote
Thou fowle chorlyshe parote
Thou gresly gargon glaymy
Thou swety sloven seymy
Thou false stynkyng serpent
Thow mokkyshe marmoset
I wyll not dy in thy det.
Tyburn thou me assynyd,
Where thou zulddst have bene shryvyd;
the nexte halter ther xall be
I bequeth yt hole to the.

The poet winds up this attack by calling his adversaries "drunken souls," and by uttering some dark threats regarding birds who foul their own nests.

In Skelton's final rejoinder to Garnesche, he says, "I have creyvyd your secunde ryme," although it must have been the fourth poem to issue from Garnesche and his scribe. Possibly the scribe was actually responsible for two poems of the series.

Skelton begins by accusing Garnesche of being able, like the cuckoo to sing only one song:

Wythe knave, syr knave, and knave ageine!
To cal me knave thou takyst gret payne.

The poet suggests that the knight carries off the prize for knavery and (in a line that reminds us of Dunbar) likens the knight
to the arch-knave: "Lothsum as Lucifer lowest in helle." As proof of Sir Christopher's knavery, the poet cites some instances of the young man's treachery to his friends, for example, how Christopher tried to entice the mistress of George Hardyson. Also, the knight was a greater warrior among the trulls of the Flemings in Fenchurch Street than on the battlefield. Yet even here he had little success:

Ye wan nothyng there but a skorne:
Sche wolde nat of yt thow had sworne
Sche seyd yer war coluryd with cole dust
To daly with yow she had no lust.

Furthermore, the knight has but little claim to breeding:

Thow claimist the jentyll, thow art a curre;
Haroldis they know thy cote armur.
Thow thou be a jentyll man borne
Yet Jentylynès in the ys thred bare wonne;
Haroldis from honor may the devors
For harlottes havnte thy thyn hatefull cors
Ye bere out brothells lyke a bawde.

Skelton on the other hand is a man of honor, laureated by Oxford and granted the green and white robe of poet by the king. Better that Christopher should pursue some fitting occupation such as driving a dung-cart than that he should strive to write poems against so eminent an adversary.⁸ King Henry himself was pleased to learn from Skelton:

The honor of England I lernyd to spelle,
In dygnyte roialle that doth excelle:

⁸Dunbar's taunts Kennedie thus: "Bettir thow ganis to laid ane doig to skomer / Pynit pykpurs pelour, than with thy master pingill." Skelton, by consigning his opponent to "tumrelle" or cart is degrading the proud knight to the level of peasant or even criminal. The line recalls Malory's account of Lancelot's hesitation to ride in a lowly cart to rescue Queen Guinevere.
Note and marke wyl thys parcele
I yave hym drynke of the sugryd welle
Of Elyconys waters crystallyne
Aqyentyng hym with the Muses nyne.

Thus it is not becoming for an upstart knight to rail at the royal
tutor. Moreover, while Sir Christopher is now in the full tide of
his pride and prosperity, yet the ebb will come and "Inordynate pride
wyll have a falle." Indeed the knight may consider himself lucky if
he escapes hanging. As for Skelton, he feels his time could be put
to better use than in contention against such a poor popinjay:

Go play the, Garnyshe, garnyshyd gay
I care not what thow wryght or say.

The "Poems Against Garnesche" have been regarded by critics
as rather pointless exercises in invective. L. J. Lloyd, for example,
says, "'Against Garnesche' is Skelton at his worst; the poems are
practically worthless from every point of view." Lloyd adds rather
sourly, "One may hope that if Henry ever saw them he enjoyed the out-
come of his most noble commandment, for posterity has not been
interested." Lloyd, however, does not deal harshly with other poems
of the Skelton canon. He praises the "strength and virility" of the
poet remarking,

Among his own contemporaries he is a Triton
among minnows: he towers head and shoulders
above them, and at his firm touch most of
them vanish into nothing. He speaks across
the ages in a strong and confident voice
but to a limited class of readers.11

10Ibid., p. 140.
11Ibid., p. 140.
One recent work of criticism, A. R. Heiserman's *Skelton and Satire* (1961) discusses the tenzo tradition at some length but dismisses the Garnesche poems in a sentence or two as an entertainment at court. Auden, who might have been expected to manifest special insight into the work of a brother poet, completes the gloomy picture:

To write an essay on a poet who has no biography, no message, philosophical or moral, who has neither created characters nor expressed critical ideas about the literary art, who was comparatively uninfluenced by his predecessors, and who exerted no influence upon his successors, is not easy.¹²

C. S. Lewis calls Skelton a "poet in undress," and perhaps if we examine the flyting with this opinion in mind we shall be able to observe a stage in the poet's development.

A mere paraphrase of the flyting shows it to be a shapeless work; closer study of the ceremonial, structural, and ideational aspects reveals a complex design of imagery and tradition used in the service of invective. Ceremonially, the flyting follows the usual pattern of four rounds but Skelton evokes the atmosphere of the formal tourney not only by the wording of his defence to the "challenge," but by reference to the champions of the past, legendary or real. The catalogue of names is not wholly for ornament; Skelton is demonstrating a laureate's wealth of learning at the same time that he is suggesting the character of Garnesche by a configuration of images. He indicates that Garnesche has the furious temper of a Tyrmagant,

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the fawning quality of a Satrapas, the ox-like stupidity of the Black Douglas, the thievery of Barabas, and the folly of Sir Thopas. The poet's technique here is similar to that discussed by Richard Hamilton Green in connection with Chaucer's Knight:

But the emblem of the Minotaur does more than decorate the text; it increases and defines the reader's awareness of the legendary hero's role in Chaucer's fable by recalling another famous instance of his prowess... The poet could adapt, reshape, rearrange the traditional images; he could not ignore or escape their suggestive power.\(^{13}\)

In the first round of the oratorical joust, Skelton achieves some palpable hits at the knighthood of Christopher by painting an unflattering portrait of his opponent while indicating by implication that the young man's triumph will be short-lived: Sir Ferumbras, violent-tempered giant, met defeat and was subsequently baptised by his vanquisher; the proud Sir Frollo de Franko was overcome by King Arthur. Physically the swarthy Sir Christopher is likened to Malchus the Moor, Black Baltazar, and Lycaon the king of Arcadia who was transformed into a wolf.

The portrait of the young knight acquires depth as the poet moves from historical personages to characters in medieval drama in the second round of the tourney. The keynote figures in this section are Caiaphas and Pilate, proud strutting braggarts like the King's Usher. The anagogical element suggested by the inclusion of Barabas in the first poem is reinforced: Caiaphas and Pilate are not

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only comic braggarts in drama but unjust judges of a meek Christ. Skelton appears to have this in mind in his opening line: "How may I your mokery meekly tollerate."

In recent years, the frenzied search for Christ-figures in the highways and byways of literature has been somewhat unnerving to the ordinary reader who tends to view with dismay the proliferating jungle of dying gods sprouting from the golden bough of Aeneas; nevertheless, the barren abstracting of mythic elements from the essentially immediate and idiosyncratic modern literature ought not to obscure for the modern reader the importance of conventional image and allegory in an earlier literature that drew its strength from a mass communion in tradition. Thus, if Skelton regarded himself as a Christ figure, it was not in the same sense that a Billy Budd or Hemingway's Old Man could be so designated: it was the duty of every man to "imitate" Christ in the way prescribed by Thomas a Kempis in *Imitation of Christ*.

That Skelton visualized his quarrel with Garnesche as being on a grander scale than the purely personal is the opinion of Pollet who states that the poet discredits his personal enemy by making him an enemy of the human race.\(^{14}\) Pollet goes on to say that the poet caricatures his adversary by an ingenious system of attack founded on analogy: It consists of comparing "insidiously" the dark-complexioned young "chevalier Chataigne"--Sir Chystyn--to the most antipathetic persons in history and legend. Beginning with the Saracens, enemies of Christianity, the poet continues through the "villains" of biblical times to the sworn enemies of his country, the French and the Scots.

\(^{14}\) Pollet, p. 102.
Pollet sees the second series of rime royal stanzas as new variations on the same theme with the same methods but in shriller tone. He thinks that, as the poet begins to lose patience, his comparisons become grosser: to birds of prey, chosen for physical resemblance, are added swine and vermin, chosen for "strength of invective." Added also are malign predictions in the same terms that Skelton had prophesied the fall of the Scottish king in another poem, "Against the Scots."

The third and fourth poems mark a new phase in the struggle during which, says Pollet, both opponents dig into the past and throw mud in each other's face. The French critic concludes, in some disappointment, that a great part of the artistic flavor of the first diatribes has disappeared under the torrent of personal abuse.\(^{15}\)

The entire flyting has, indeed a broken-backed appearance with poems one and two, similar in meter and method, framed within the convention of medieval joust: Skelton refers to Gartesche's aide, Godfrey, as his "stondarde," and admonishes both opponents for over-reaching themselves in attempting to "turney" with him. The difference between the first two poems and the last two may lie in the ceremonial of flyting, in the answer to the question of whether the flyting was oral or written. Pollet states flatly that the contest was written. This does not accord with the opening lines of poem one, where Skelton complains that Gartesche challenged him, "rudely reviling me in the kynges noble hall." The poet continues in terms

\(^{15}\)Ibid., p. 104.

\(^{16}\)Ibid., p. 105.
which suggest face-to-face confrontation by asking why the knight has chosen "So currsly to beknave me in the kynges place." The poet accuses the knight of grinning grimly at him with grisly face, and makes recurring references to the young man's uncomely countenance and foul breath, warning him to "guard his gums" in future. In the second poem Skelton asks Garnesche, "Why holde ye on yer cap, syr, then?" He jeers, "Ye hobble very homly before the kynges borde," and remarks on Sir Christopher's "moth etyn mokkysh maneres," and of his yawning and gasping. Each stanza of the second poem ends with a refrain on the arrogant "prating" of the knight.

The third poem in the group is in response to a "lewde letter" received from Garnesche and his scribe. Oddly enough, in this written diatribe, Skelton uses the two-stressed meter characteristic of natural English speech rhythm. Skeltonic rhythm is continued in the fourth poem of the series which opens with a line puzzling to editors: "I have receyved your secunde ryme." It may be, as had been suggested earlier in the chapter, that the fourth round was handled by Garnesche alone, and therefore constituted his second rhyme. On the other hand, the ceremonial pattern of the flyting has changed: the first two rounds could have been recited, if not composed, by the contenders in the king's hall; internal evidence makes this assumption valid. The last two rounds, differing in mode of attack, in ideational content, and in meter, are definitely epistolary.

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Structurally, the flyting not only breaks into two parts but each part also divides to indicate some sense of design in the use of image and tradition to illustrate the basic issues which underlie the contention. In the first two poems the reader is transported into "universes of discourse" where analogy, metaphor, and tradition blend to give a portrait of the satirist's opponent: the traditional language of heraldry is used by the defender together with traditional animal symbolism in poem one; the stock characters in drama serve to introduce the reader to a different universe of discourse in poem two. The effect of both poems is similar: the reader is not only vividly aware of the coarse braggart but realizes that the poet laureate is equally prideful and pretentious; the issue is the trust and favor of the king.

In poem three the traditional satirist's disparagement of his adversary's ancestry and past life blend with the continued animal symbolism of the portrait while a minor theme is picked up apparently from Garnesche's accusations; this theme concerns Skelton's ability as poet, and it rapidly becomes a king of counterpoint to the theme of the upstart knight. Skelton upholds the dignity of the poet's calling as well as the honor due to the king's laureate, and dares the knight to use his blundering blade against the green and white livery of the prime poet in the land.

In poem four the secondary theme is further developed as Skelton contrasts his own massive learning with the ignorance of the knight. He reminds Garnesche (and possibly the king himself) that a royal tutor regards a mere carpet warrior's feeble pretensions to either learning or poetry as beneath serious notice. The major and minor themes are fused as the poet, confident of his own pre-eminence in his art, warns the
soldier that pride will have a fall; presumably old soldiers do not last as long as old poets.

The coalescence of image, structure, and theme within the ceremonial verbal conflict, if fully realized, should have produced a very fine fragment of a flyting; but the *mirabilis concinna mutatio*\(^{18}\) --that complete identification with other worlds of discourse-- is not achieved by the reader, who becomes baffled by inability to penetrate the design and catch the mood of the poem. Perhaps we can better illustrate this by reference to another Tudor poet's work: Macbeth's brief soliloquy, beginning "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow," is too well-known to require quotation in full. In this speech, the reader, or listener, is drawn into several areas of discourse almost simultaneously: he visualizes a whole eternity of tomorrows against which man struts on a stage (most transient of locales), lights himself to a dark, dusty grave with a "brief candle," and mouths the idiot tale of his existence. The images of movement, sight, and sound pile up with terrifying futility against a creeping, inexorable infinity. The reader at once feels the despair of Macbeth at the same time that he sees "into the heart of things"--he has, in fact, undergone a complex transformation in emotion and thought as a result of experiencing the poet's vision.

Skelton's flyting has the unfinished quality of a poem in rough draft, although it does measure up to the superficial standards of its genre: there are challenge and defence, a satiric portrait of

\(^{18}\)The phrase is used by Green.
an adversary, an apologia for entering the lists, a "commissar," and a four-round contest of poetic virtuosity.

The flyting, however, cannot be called a fine work of art. Yet even his bad poems may throw light upon a poet's development. Skelton is working in the medieval tradition of the tenzo, and within the medieval structure he comes to grips with the realities of Tudor times. The poet, born before Edward IV's accession to the throne, grew up during the Wars of the Roses, and died in the year of Cardinal Wolsey's fall. Thus, he saw the destruction of the old baronial families in war, the loss of England's entire empire in France except for Calais, the dissolution of feudal government, the growing corruption of the Church, and the spectacle of wealth and power falling into hands of a new, mercantile class. The prospect was not pleasing. Therefore, there is a kind of artistic fitness in the treatment of what we have called the major and minor themes: the contention opens with the formality of chivalric tournament and draws upon the allegorical figures of medieval drama but ends with a defence-cum-attack of a more personal type.

The unifying element in the poem is a combat almost mythic in significance. The poet, twice the age of the knight, represents crabbed age versus youth and, in the political context, the Winter of the Old Order versus the Spring of the New. There is also the battle of the "estates": Skelton, not only poet but cleric, stands arrayed against a soldier-knight. In this may lie the answer to a question raised earlier in this chapter, "Why did King Henry command a flyting between Skelton and Garnesche rather than between two poets?"
flyting, if it involves actual physical confrontation, is quasi-drama and the contest of cleric and soldier has a long history both in poetry and drama. The débat was a feature of medieval romance, a court of love convention, which had its comic counterpart in folk wooing contests. In Skelton's own day a notable interlude combined debate and drama: Henry Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucres* was performed at court during Christmas festivities held in honor of the ambassadors of Flanders and Spain in 1497. Because the ambassadorial visit concerned the projected marriage of Katherine of Aragon to Henry VII's son, the Medwall play was appropriate. Medwall skilfully abstracted the most dramatic elements of Cicero's *De Vera Nobilitate* and merged them in a double wooing contest. Two clowns, A and B, competing in song and wrestling for the love of a servant, Joan, introduced the more serious contest of their masters, Gaius Flaminius, the student-patriot, and Cornelius Publius, the soldier-hedonist, who were competing for the love of Joan's mistress, Lucres. The burlesque and horseplay of the clowns counterbalanced the dignified debate of the gentlemen on the nature of true nobility. Lucres, acting as judge, delivered the "sentence dyffynytyf" and chose the student.19

Debates were not uncommon in Tudor interludes; they can be found, for example, in Heywood's *Play of Love* or Lydgate's *Gentleness and Nobility*; dramatic impact could be intensified by

19 Charles Read Baskervill has written sidely on the subject of *Fulgens and Lucres*. See, for example, "Conventional Features in Medwall's *Fulgens and Lucres*," *M.P.*, XXIV (May, 1927), 467-512.
rivalry of rank as in the Scottish interlude, Ane Satyre of Thrie Estaitis, by Lyndesay. Essentially, debate concerns issues and belongs in the veridical, the area of objective fact, whereas drama concerns the conflict of good and evil, together with the clash of personalities, and belongs in the realm of the psyche. In practice, the subjective is a concomitant of the objective in debate, flying, and drama.

There is similar encroachment upon each other of the three genres, as in Skelton's "Poems Against Garnesche" where the poet presents himself proudly wearing the green garb bestowed on him by the king, and upholding the cause of poetry against an adversary swaggering in knightly attire but only as credible a figure as "copyous Cayfas"--a mere mime of authority in stage costume.

Skelton is giving us here not only an analogue but perhaps a prefiguring of one of the characters in his interlude, Magnyfycence. If the poems against Garnesche date from 1513-1514, and if Magnyfycence be assigned to 1515-1516, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the character emerging in the flying should eventually be realized as one of the sycophantic courtiers of the interlude. So far as I am aware, no critic has traced any connection between the flying and the play, probably because no critic has given serious consideration to both.

About the play, Daniel C. Boughner makes some interesting points:

Important as are its employment of political allegory and its substitution of types of real persons for allegorical abstractions, more significant for this study is the shift of the satire from the traditional comic stereotype, the boastful soldier (miles gloriosus), to the native English counter-
part, the swaggering courtier (caballarius gloriosus). . . . In Skelton's drama the conflict between virtues and vices is realized in a struggle between good and evil courtiers for dominance over the mind of the worldly prince Magnyfycence. The four courtly knaves, Counterfeit Countenance, Crafty Conveyance, Cloaked Collusion, and Courtly Abusion, are dishonest self-seekers who embody the specific abuses of court life that the author whipped with the lash of his satire. . . . All are unconscionable swearers and noisy quarrelers; all display the combination of insolence and cowardice that is a standard mark of the stage braggart. However, the riotous folly of Courtly Abusion is our particular concern. An upstart. . . . he has come to court to make his fortune in the racket of preferment. A polished villain who charms the prince with his language and manners, with flattery, . . . he is the plausible descendant of the crude and farcical tempter of early moralities. . . . Courtly Abusion is a swaggerer who struts and blusters, but is at heart a coward.\textsuperscript{20}

The portrait of Garnesche that emerges from the flyting is that of the caballarius gloriosus: insolent, he tweaks the beard of the middle-aged laureate by calling him "knave;" boastful, he rattles his "trenchant" blade and threatens to cut the poet's green-and-white robe to pieces; cowardly, he is more skilled in bawdry than in battle, more accustomed to scaling the mons veneris than the Mount Parnassus. This is Garnesche; it is also Courtly Abusion, who in Stage 3, Scene 22, tempts Magnyfycence:

\begin{verbatim}
So as ye be a prince of great might
It is seeming your pleasure ye delight,
And to acquaint you with carnal delectation,
\end{verbatim}

\begin{verbatim}
\end{verbatim}

And quickly your appetites to sharpen and address,
To fasten your fancy upon a faire mistress.

And admits:

Ah, sir, your Grace me doth extol and raise
And far beyond by merits ye me commend and praise.

Granted, Courtly Abusion is only one of the sychophantic courtiers; but then, so is Garnesche. In any age, a disgruntled court poet is apt to consider that his royal overlord is under the influence of favorites and, if he dares, he may even hint at the situation in allegory or satire. There is, however, more than a hint in Magnyfycence.

Skelton was not drawing entirely upon imagination either for the dilemma of the prince Magnificence or for the characters of the sycophants as can be seen from the historical record of May 1519:

The king's council secretly communed together of the king's gentleness and liberality to all persons: by the which they perceived that certain young men in his privy chamber, not regarding his estate nor degree were so familiar and homely with him, and played such light touches with him, that they forgot themselves. . . . Then the king's council caused the lord chamberlain to call before them Carew (and another who yet liveth, and therefore shall not at this time be named), with divers other also of the privy chamber, which had been in the French court, and banished them the court for divers considerations, laying nothing particularly to their charges: and they that had offices were commanded to go to their offices. Which discharge out of the court grieved sore the hearts of these young men, which were called the King's minions.²¹

According to Edwards, Garnesche was not present when the King's Council banished the King's Minions from court. Nevertheless, the knight was sent off in 1520 to "honourable but undoubted exile" at Calais, where he died in 1534 (p. 155). Nowhere does Edwards suggest any relationship between the Garnesche poems and Magnyfycence, nor does Boughner mention the name of Sir Christopher in his study of the Renaissance braggart.

Can we, on the basis of mere similarity of character between Courtly Abusion and Sir Christopher, detect an affiliation? Perhaps not, but on less evidence critics have professed to see different aspects of Cardinal Wolsey in Cloaked Collusion, Courtly Abusion, and Crafty Conveyance. This despite the fact that open opposition to Wolsey was not apparent till after 1521. Certainly resentment against the king's chief minister had been growing for years, but even Skelton was not a conscious artist and did not know the powers and limitations of his own manner. It is doubtful, therefore, that Skelton was able to realize different aspects of Wolsey in the form of dramatic Vices.

On the other hand, the King's Minions were ideal prototypes for a play such as Magnyfycence and, since these gentlemen lacked the power and authority of Wolsey, they could not make effectual protest. Indeed, there is no evidence that Sir Christopher protested against the unflattering portrait drawn in "Poems Against Garnesche."

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22 See R. J. Schoeck's "Satire of Wolsey in Heywood's 'Play of Love'", Notes and Queries, CIXVI (1951) 112-114.

23 Lewis, p. 137.
Skelton may not consciously have made "Syr Christopher" a prefiguration of Courtly Abusion. An interesting sidelight on the workings of a poet's mind is provided by British poet and critic, Elizabeth Sewell, in *The Orphic Voice* (1960). Miss Sewell has appended to her prose study a chapter called "Working Poems for The Orphic Voice." This section consists of thirteen poems preceded by a foreword:

> It has been all along the theme of this work that poetry is a form of thought. Once this is accepted it need not be surprising that, in the course of the thinking, poems presented themselves from time to time as working instruments in the inquiry. Anyone trying this method of research will probably find, as I did, that the mind knows, in poems, a little more than it knows it knows, so that a poem will often tell the thinking mind where to look next. (p. 409).

I believe that "Poems Against Garnesche" are worthy of consideration not only as part of the tradition of flying but also as "working poems" for the interlude, Magnyfycence.
CHAPTER IV

LYNDESAY: "AN ANSWER TO THE KINGIS FLYTING"

"With weill waillit wordis, wyse and familiar
Of queynt convoy, this joyous gem jocound
Intill his bukis to speak he did not spair,
agenis all vyce, ay quhair it did abound." 1

Sir David Lyndesay, like Skelton, enjoyed a familiarity
with his monarch that was possible only to a royal tutor. James V,
son of Margaret Tudor and, therefore, nephew of Henry VIII, was de-
prived of his father's protection at the tender age of seventeen
months when James IV was killed in the disastrous Battle of Flodden,
1513. Queen Margaret, widowed by her own brother, hastily married
Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus, and lived to repent it. Angus
immediately set about obtaining supreme power, for which possession
of the person of the infant king was necessary.

For some time the child was seized by one or other of the
claimants to Regency, and even Henry VIII attempted to have the child
smuggled into England, but eventually a fairly stable Regent, the
Duke of Albany, took over. The boy king, aged four, was now entrust-
ed for formal education to Abbot Inglis, author of "Ballatts, farses
and pleasand playis," John Bellenden, translator of Livy and first

1From the Preface to The Warkis of Schir David Lyndesay by
Henry Charters (Edinburgh, 1568), p. ii.
Scottish prose writer, and Sir David Lyndesay. Fortunate as he was in his tutors, and in the intellectual ferment of his time, the young king remained the pawn of power politics during a troubled Regency. Albany left for France, the Queen Mother took a young lover, and Archibald the Red Douglas imprisoned the boy, substituting prostitutes for poets as the youth's companions.

The young king, however, did not remain a passive tool; he contrived a daring escape from the Douglas stronghold and, eluding capture, rode to Stirling Castle where he immediately proclaimed himself rightful ruler, and outlawed the Douglases. The young king was now sixteen and the year was 1528. Young James brought back to court his tutor, Lyndesay, who, as Lord Lyon King at Arms, fulfilled the roles of laureate, herald, ambassador, and adviser. The young king, vigorous, handsome, and talented, arranged a five years' truce with his English uncle, dealt out summary justice to the brigands of his time such as Johnie Armstrong of ballad fame but continued to face problems for the balance of his short life. The debauchery into which the Red Douglas had initiated him when he was barely fourteen, continued. Thus we find him in his twenty-first year writing a petition to Pope Clement VII:

As I have three illegitimate sons...I am obliged to confess to your Holiness that the fault is my own...and I acknowledge the error of human weakness. Yet that natural fatherly affection...urges every man to have regard for the welfare of his offspring as for himself....We therefore beg your Holiness...to dispense with those our sons...

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2Gavin Douglas completed his Eneados in the summer of 1513, and William Dunbar was still writing.
that, notwithstanding their defect of birth, they may, when their age allows, be duly promoted to holy orders.  

Some time later a fourth son, John, was born to the still unmarried young king. Ironically, James V, like a later Stuart of the united kingdoms, Charles II, was not to see a legitimate son take over his throne—despite, in both cases, a multiplicity of bastard children.

Eventually, when a marriage was arranged between James and Marie de Bourbon, the king, in characteristic fashion, slipped over to France in disguise to have a glimpse of his bride-elect. He did not like what he saw, terminated marriage negotiations, and went on to marry Madeleine, the beautiful but frail daughter of the King of France. The young bride died six months later in July, 1537.

When James looked around for a second wife, he found himself competing with his uncle, Henry VIII for the tall, beautiful widow, Marie de Guise. Apparently Marie laughed at Henry's proposal, saying she preferred to take care of her slender neck; she married James.  

Some four years later, in 1542, the king, although only thirty-one, was a dying man. On his deathbed, news was brought to him of the birth of a daughter, heiress to the throne. Tradition has it that

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4 Agnes Mure Mackenzie, The Scotland of Queen Mary (Edinburgh, 1957), p. 56.
the dying king foretold the end of the Stuart kingship in Scotland, which "cam with a lass" and would "gang with a lass"—Mary Queen of Scots. This was the man to whom Sir David Lyndesay addressed his flyting.

As for Lyndesay, he was born of good family sometime between 1485 and 1490. He was a man of great integrity, trusted alike by nobility and the common people. Sir Walter Scott gives a fine picture of him in Marmion, indicating that he was cultured, brave, handsome, and honorable. Curiously enough, Lyndesay's poetry was still being read by the people as late as 1808 (according to Scott), long after greater poets such as Dunbar had been forgotten. Possibly this was because Lyndesay, creator of Johne The Common Weill, was regarded as the champion of the common man.

Aristocratic, valiant, and learned, Lyndesay could also be gentle. He had a genuine affection for the young king whose blood relatives had provided neither love nor security:

Quhen thow was young, I bure thee in my arme
Full tenderlie till thow begowth to gang
And in thy bed oft happit thee full warme
With lute in hand syne sweitly to thee sang;

Quhow, as ane chapman beris his pak
I bure thy grace upon my bak
And sum tymes strydlingis on my nak
Dansing with mony bend and bek
The first sillabis that thow did mute

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\(^{5}\)David Lyndesay, Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis.
The child who said, "Pa, Da, Lyn," grew up to challenge his tutor in the art of poetry. In 1536, when James was twenty-five and Sir David almost fifty years old, the king either recited or wrote a flyting to his friend. The king's poem is no longer extant, and Sir David's response is brief, a mere 70 lines in length, but from it we can guess that the king had derided his courtier for being no longer zealous in the service of Venus.

In the opening stanzas of his reply, Lyndesay confesses that he is guilty of the charge but complains that the ladies of the court, aware now of the king's "libellis" have banished the poet to the "cumpanie" of the cooks.

Moreover, says the poet, he is unable to compete with the king's "prunyeand pen." Much as he would like to wreak vengeance on his adversary, he is conscious that the king is the "Prince of Poetry," and attempts a reply only because of the royal command:

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Wer I ane Poeit, I suld preis with my pen
To wreik me on your Wennemous wryting:
Bot I man do as dog dois in his den,
Fald baith my feit, or fle fast from your flyting.
The mekle Devil may nocht indure your dyting.
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After this modest disclaimer of ability, Sir David proceeds to a blunt attack on the king's love affairs, suggesting that the day will shortly come when the royal lover will no longer be so active.

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6 From "The Complaynt of Schir David Lyndesay."
Ruefully, the poet admits that he himself is no longer the man he was, and he counsels James to be sparing in matters of venery:

The tyme hes bene, I was better artailyeit
Nor I am now: bot yit full sair I rew
That ever I did Mouth themkles so persew.
Quharefor tak tent, and your fyne powder spair
And waist it nocht, but gyf ye wit weill quhair.

The King, says Lyndesay, is now "lyke ane restles Ram/
Schutand your bolt at mony sildrie schellis," but "quhen that the
well gois dry/ Syne can nocht get agane sic stufe to by." The poet
consigns to "the feynd of hell" the King's Council, for failing to pro­
vide his majesty with a suitable princess, thus encouraging him to live
promiscuously:

Tholand yow rin schutand from schell to schell,
Waistand your corps, lettand the tyme overslyde:
For, lyke ane boisteous Bull, ye rin and ryde
Royatouslie lyke ane rude Rubeatour,
Ay fukkand lyke ane furious fornicatour.

Sir David goes on to recount an embarrassing incident when
the king cast a woman over "ane stinking troch" only to have her re­
taliate by overturning a vat of liquor and dregs about the king's ears.
The king indeed was a sorry sight, relates the poet, as he lay "drawkit
with dreggis," and whimpering and grunting like a pig. The mock
sympathy of the stanza gives way to a serious note as the poet offers
thanks to God for having preserved the king from disease.

In the final stanza Sir David reiterates that he is no match
for the king at flyting, but he admonishes the royal lover to be wary
of laboring his "lance," because there are rumors of a marriage being
planned for the king:

Sum sayis there cummis ane bukler furth from France
Quhilk wyll indure your dintis, thocht thay be dour.
The stanza ends abruptly with a brief salute to the king:

Fareweill, of flowand Rethorik the flour.

The fragmentary flyting is restrained and uneven in tone, never bitter but with serious touches that inhibit the reader from regarding it as a mere lighthearted royal jest. The language is not quite so earthy as that of Dunbar although references to the "thankles mouth," "dowbling of the bellis," and "roistit hoch" testify to the ruggedness of the vernacular used at court. The king is likened to a tiger, elephant, ram, and bull--animals noted for strength and sexual vigor--the implication being that the king's animal nature is more clearly manifest than his spiritual or intellectual powers. The image of royal virility and energy is strengthened by epithets such as rude, strang, restles, royatous, furious, and swetterand; consequently, the final line of the poem in which James is addressed as the "flowand flour of Rethorik" comes almost as a shock to the reader.

The Scottish flower of rhetoric recalls to mind that English "rose of rethory," Henry VIII and the Skelton flyting, also performed at a king's command. There are striking similarities and some differences to be noted between the fragmentary contests of Lyndesay and Skelton. Both men were court poets; both took the role of poet seriously; both were chosen to act as court jesters. As was stated in the Introduction, flyting has its purely ludic aspect and appeals to the sense of the comic in flyter or audience. In the case of poets who are conscious of the traditional honor and dignity of the vates, a royal command to perform as buffoons in poetic combat might find them deficient in the sense of the comic demanded by the role of jester and
the function of flyting. Possibly this accounts for the bipartite nature of both flytings. Skelton dutifully sets out to lampoon Sir Christopher according to the rules of a court game; but the question he reiterates in the first poem has some significance: "By whose authority do you call me knave?" Obviously the knight had the king's authority to cast the joking-derisive challenge which resulted in a satiric portrait of an effete courtier. There are other related consequences underlying the question: first, Skelton picks up the secondary theme of the honor of poet, developing it with great verve and vitality in his own characteristic measure; second, the poet indirectly criticizes a king who could subject his elderly orator regius to competition with a young military parvenu.

Therefore, as critics have noticed, the tone of Skelton's flyting grows more shrill, perhaps because the poet is momentarily Lear's "bitter fool," writing or speaking on one plane of reality--the plane reserved for the court jester--but thinking on the plane of the sha'ir, man of wisdom.

As has been suggested in Chapter III, it is possible to trace a relationship between the flyting and interlude, Magnyfycence. The poet-playwright, moving from the medium of explicit expression in poetry to dramatic projection in the interlude, appears to bring the shadowy king of the flyting on stage in the character of the prince, still encircling him respectfully with an aura of "magnificence," but also surrounding him with deceptive, self-seeking Christophers under pseudonyma such as Courtly Abusion or Crafty Conveyance.

The bitterness of Skelton is lacking in the Scottish jester
whose tone is sorrowful and paternal. Like his English counterpart, Lyndesay performed at the royal command but with a more prestigious adversary; nevertheless, this was no contest of wisdom between equals but rather a contest of folly between a twenty-five-year-old king who may have enjoyed the game and his middle-aged, scholarly tutor who evidently did not.

The issue round which King James intended to build the flyting was that of prowess in love; to a young man love may be an adventure or a series of conquests, and he may in malice, or in jest, or even in pity twit an older rival who comes to the battlefield of love less equipped. Such must have been the tenor of the king's contribution. Lyndesay, like Skelton, tries to play according to the rules for the first thirty lines of the fragment: he professes to be unable to compete either in poetic skill or in venery with his "redoutit roy," complaining that he is banished from the company of fair ladies since the king made known his shortcomings. The last forty lines are in a contrapuntal relationship to the first thirty. Lyndesay shows the futility of prowess in love by removing the subject of the poem from the fiction of the courts of love to the fact of animalism. Love leaves the rose garden of the "lustie ladies" for the mephitic reality of the "stinking troch" where the king and a low-born trull lie "swetterand lyke twa swyne." The king may regard himself as valiant in "Venus werkis" and eject his poet from "Venus court"; the poet demonstrates in non-euphemistic language the painful consequences attendant upon pursuit of "mouth thankles." In a crushing statement he thanks God that the young man has been thus far free from the maladies of love but replaces the traditional ennui
and melancholy of the frustrated troubadour lover with the gout and syphilis of the over-indulged.

On one plane of reality, Lyndesay as court jester and loyal subject is humoring his king; on another, unsportive level the poet sees the "vanity of human wishes." Both Lyndesay and Skelton present to us a speculum principis, explicit in Lyndesay's flyting but merely inferential in Skelton's "poems Against Garnesche."

Lyndesay's mirror of his sovereign, expressed in blunt terms, is indicative both of the freer atmosphere of the Scottish court and of the sturdy independence of the poet, about whom his early editor recounts a characteristic anecdote:

He Lyndesay cummis to the King and efter gread salutation he makis him as thocht he war to requyre sum wechtie thing of the kingis grace. The King, persavand, demandis quhat he wald have? He answeris: Schir, I have servit your grace lang and lukis to be rewardit as utheris ar. And now yor maister tailyeour at the plesure of God is departit, quhairfoir I wald desyre of your grace to bestow this lytil benefite upon me, as ane part of reward of my lang service to mak me your maister tailyeour. The King, believand in dede his tailyeour to be departit, sayis to him: Qhail to wald thow be my tailyeour? Thow can nouther schaip nor sew. He answeris: Schir, that makis na mater, for ye have geven Bischoprikis and benefices to mony standing heir aboy you: and yit can thay nouther teich nor preich....The King leuch merilie thairat; bot the Bischopis at sic bourding leuch never ane quhit.  

Sir David, like the other Makars, had several traditions of style to draw upon. He could have used the stark simplicity of Barbour's octosyllabic couplets, or the aureate style associated with Dunbar and with the French rhétoriqueurs, or the courtly style of

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7Charteris, Preface, p. vi.
Chaucer. Lyndesay chose to follow his "maister dere" in the matter of structure by using rhyme royal for his flyting; but he recognized that colloquial Scots, strongly alliterated, was proper to a pasquinade. He was, above all, a poet of good sense as well as master of the common speech although, unlike Dunbar, he did not dabble in the dialect for the sheer fun of it. He acknowledged the virtuosity of Dunbar who "language had at large" but was content to use his own word-hoard to communicate.

Lyndesay's flyting differs from the others in several ways: it is a surviving half of a flyting addressed to a king and must sustain a note of subservience even in attack; furthermore, it lacks the traditional second, third, and subsequent rounds of the genre. In fact, Sir David's poem does not match the description of tenzo; rather does it follow the tradition of the sirventes. Alfred Jeanroy has identified the sirventes as a song composed by a sirven (Lat. serviens) for the benefit of his master in which the master might be taken to task for his misdeeds. David Lyndesay did not set out to write a sirventes; he may never even have heard the term. Nevertheless, his single poem, loosely tying up incidents in his monarch's life with a rebuke for loose living, is much closer to the sirventes tradition of Bertrand de Born's attack on King John than to Dunbar's flyting with Kennedy.

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8 Alfred Jeanroy, La Poesie Lyrique des Troubadours (Toulouse, 1943), II, 178.
CHAPTER V

BROADSIDE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN GRAY AND SMYTH

How now? How now? The king did say,
Thomas, how is it with thee?
Hanging and drawing, O King! he said,
You shall never get more from me.1

Of William Gray his biographer, Ernest W. Dormer, says, "in the annals of the town of Reading the historian would be hard put to find among its past citizens one who equalled in glibness, audacity, and opportunism the man who will go down to posterity as Gray of Reading."2

There appears to be no record of Gray's birth or parentage, but Dormer suggests that the poet was the monk William Gray who, in 1535, informed against the Abbot of Abbotsbury "for breaking the King's Injunctions." Whether or not the monk and the monk and the ballad-maker were the same person, 1535 was the year which saw the start of Gray's public career. His ballad, "The hunte is up," met with the approval of that singer of madrigals, Henry VIII, and Gray was accepted into the entourage of the king's minister, Thomas Cromwell.3 Probably he encountered Thomas Smyth, an official of the Queen's Council, in the

2 Ernest W. Dormer, Gray of Reading (Reading, 1923), p. 64.
3 Ibid., p. 17.
course of his service but there is no record of any enmity between these obscure courtiers, nor indeed any record of the activities of Thomas Smyth. Nor is this surprising. The turbulent times with rapid changes in political and religious climate favored the rise of parvenus—and sometimes their precipitous fall. Thomas Cromwell himself, subject of the ballad controversy, was a man of obscure origin who had ridden the crest of the wave of religious reform to become the most powerful courtier in England. Perhaps a brief summary of his public life will illumine the ballads, although it should be emphasized that the ballads concern themselves more with the personal antagonism between Gray and Smyth than with the fall of the king's most hated minister.

Cromwell achieved his unpopularity as agent of Cardinal Wolsey in the dissolution of the smaller monasteries in 1525. His personal religious views are a matter for speculation. He was born, possibly in 1485, to Walter Cromwell of Putney who has been variously described as blacksmith, brewer, and fuller of cloth. The young Cromwell apparently spent some time in the Netherlands and Belgium before entering Cardinal Wolsey's service in 1520. He trained for law at Gray's Inn in the years following 1524, and became Wolsey's legal counselor.

When Wolsey fell in disgrace in 1529 Cromwell shrewdly contrived to stay clear of his patron's downfall, and three years later became Member of Parliament and Master of the Jewels. Other honors followed: he was Principal Secretary, Master of the Rolls, and Lord Privy Seal. Concurrent with the rise of Cromwell was the development of a delicate situation on the part of the king; Henry was in the uncomfortable position of having broken with the Papacy while he still maintained
Catholic doctrine and ritual. Cromwell is credited with suggesting that the king could declare himself supreme head of the Church in England; the result was the Act of Supremacy, 1534. It made good political sense for Cromwell to encourage attacks against Rome at this time. Indeed, John Foxe praises Cromwell for causing "divers excellent ballads and books" to be "contrived and set abroad, concerning the suppression of the pope and all popish idolatry."

The "contriver" was Thomas Gray. Gray's patron inevitably acquired a reputation for being Lutheran; he also acquired some powerful enemies among the adherents of the older faith, chiefly Howard, Earl of Norfolk.

Cromwell incurred further resentment (but added to the king's coffers) by supervising the suppression of the great monasteries in the years following 1535. Thereafter, the Malleus Monachorum, as he was called, was committed to a strongly Protestant rather than Anglo-Catholic religious policy. When Jane Seymour, Henry's third wife, died in 1536, Cromwell proposed a royal marriage with Anne of Cleves in order to strengthen an alliance with the German princes and keep the French at bay. Henry, persuaded of the necessity for this union, was so charmed by the Holbein portrait of Anne that he set out like an impetuous young lover (although he was by this time in his late forties) to meet Anne on her arrival in England. To his dismay the belle of the portrait was realized in the flesh as a scrawny, pock-marked, dark-complexioned spinster of thirty-four, whose guttural Low German speech did nothing to reconcile the king to her absence of beauty. Nevertheless the king, convinced by Cromwell that

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the marriage was fine political strategy, proceeded with the nuptial celebrations. Six months later when it was obvious that the strategy had been unnecessary, Henry found himself trapped in an unwanted alliance with the "Flanders mare" and her German kinfolk. Furthermore, the beauty of Catherine Howard, eighteen-year-old cousin of Cromwell's enemy, Earl of Norfolk, was attracting the aging king. Cromwell was doomed. In June 1540 he was arrested on a charge of heresy and on July 28 was executed without trial. On July 28 Henry was secretly married to Catherine Howard, and the pendulum of religious opinion began to swing from the Lutheran to the Anglo-Catholic tradition. As for Queen Anne, she kept her head, literally and figuratively, by agreeing with the king that their marriage had been technically invalid. Henry gratefully designated her his sister, Dame Anne of Cleves, and established her in residence in a royal manor in Richmond, where she placidly continued with her needlework.

During the six weeks that Anne's sponsor, Cromwell, languished in the Tower of London, there appeared a broadside entitled "A Balade on Thomas Crumwel." Collman maintains that this "was the earliest poetical broadside on record."\(^5\) This unsigned broadside evoked from another anonymous writer a rejoinder called "A Balade agaynst Malcyous Slaundurers." It is impossible at this date to determine authorship of either of these two poems although Dormer inclines to the view that the second poem, in defense of Cromwell, was penned by Gray.\(^6\) In any event, the

\(^6\)Dormer, p. 32.
unsigned exchange of broadsides set off a controversy between William Gray, servitor of Cromwell, and Thomas Smyth, minor court official.

The third poem in the series, "A Lytell Treatyse agaynst Sedycyous Persons," was signed by Thomas Smyth, and purported to make peace between the anonymous disputants. Then followed Smyth's "A Treatyse Declarynge the Despyte of a Secrete Sedycyous Person that Dareth not Shewe Himselfe" which provoked Gray into a rebuttal entitled "An Answere to Maister Smyth." After the appearance of two more ballads by the flyters, a new contender in the person of Dr. Richard Smyth, Reader in Divinity at Oxford, livened up the exchange with a ballad of ribald doggerel. Another unknown, who signed himself "G.L.," wound up the controversial series of nine ballads with a "Paumflet" addressed to "Maister Smyth and Wyllyam G."

The poetic feud brought upon the chief flyters the unwelcome attention of the Privy Council, and on January 3, 1541,

Thomas Smyth Clerke of the Queenes Counsaill and William Graye sometyme servaunt to the late Lord Crumwel wer examined of the cause of their writing invectives on agaynst another and, after long examination of them, they wer comanded to attende upon the Counsaill the next morning at vilj of the clock.7

Both poets together with their printers, Grafton and Banks, were committed to the Fleet Prison for some seven weeks. Later, Gray re-entered the turmoil of public life, was accepted into the king's service, and acquired lands and wealth during his incumbency of various offices. Of Smyth there is no further record.

7Great Britain, Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council, VIII (1541), 103.
The era favored poetasters like Gray and Smyth who used ballads as instruments for political and religious propaganda. The ballads of Gray and Smyth have little to commend them: abusive in tone, prosaic in language, halting in meter. Yet, for the purposes of this study, these dull lampoons which constitute, according to Lemon, a "unique collection of very remarkable productions" warrant consideration.

As for the use of the term "ballad" for these invective poems, Albert B. Friedman has demonstrated that the traditional folk narrative ballad has less claim to the term than the broadside "balade." He draws distinctions between "ballad," "ballade," and "pseudo-ballade," but perhaps it will be simpler to use the term preferred by the Tudor disputants—balade—to describe the non-narrative popular verse. The broadside balades, ephemeral in nature, have nothing in common with the durable folk ballads. Nevertheless, balade-writing (forerunner of modern journalism) became so popular in the sixteenth century that by 1560 there were 796 copies of balades stored at Stationers' Hall. That some of these were attacks on authority is evident. Indeed the Stationers' Company was incorporated in 1557, and "though its charter was ostensibly granted to confer a benefit on those engaged in printing and publishing, and was very successful in this object, yet there can be little doubt that the sovereign [Queen Elizabeth] and her advisers saw

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9 "Late Medieval Ballade and Origin of Medieval Balladry," Medium Aevum, XXVII (1958), 95.
in it a readier means of controlling the press, as well as a machine for the detection and apprehension of any person who might be engaged in the production or distribution of seditious literature . . . . The incorporation of the Company brought about a rapid change in the tone of the ballads."¹⁰ It is time now to consider the earliest balade controversy, composed before the poetic broadside was hedged in by convention.¹¹

A Newe Balade Made of Thomas Crumwel

The poem opens with an address to the reader who is informed that "the false traytour" Cromwell is about to be taught a harsh lesson. The stanza ends with a refrain borrowed from an old folk song:

Trolle on away, trolle on away,
Synge heave and howe rumbelow trolle on away.

Stanzas 2-15, addressed directly to Cromwell, catalogue his crimes: he has filled his private coffers with the wealth, particularly the monastery treasure, which should have gone into the king's treasury; assuming control of every "crust and crumme" in the country, he has presumed on the king's gentle nature to save him when he overstepped the bounds of his office; he has sponsored the "newe tricke" of Lutheranism, and encouraged attacks on the older ritual. Cromwell the heretic is descended from Cain or Ishmael, perhaps even Satan

¹⁰Collmann, p. x.

¹¹Albert Friedman accepts the Gray-Smyth controversy as the earliest in ballad form. See his study, The Ballad Revival (Chicago, 1961), pp. 40-41.
himself. Outcast from society for his ruthless greed, he has committed the most heinous crime of all—he has been "false to the redolent rose," Henry VIII. Far better for the disgraced minister to have remained at his boyhood trade of fulling cloth on a wooden frame than to end his life on the executioner's block. Yet, says the balade writer, there is still time for the false courtier to save his miserable soul by accepting his punishment gladly.

This balade ends with what Dormer calls a "slavish prayer" for King Henry and Prince Edward. Perhaps the "prayer" is in the nature of an envoy, not addressed directly to the king as in the classic French envoi, but obliquely soliciting the king's approval for the poet.

A Balade Agaynst Malycyous Sclaundiers

To the first balade was prefixed the distich, "Trolle on away, trolle on away/ Synge heave and howe rumbelow, trolle on away." The author of the second poem picks up the phrase "trolle on away," making it an index term for misguided action on the part of his brother poet. He suggests that the slanderer of Cromwell "troll in" rather than "away," and retract his shameful accusations against a man who has now paid for his treason on the block. Furthermore, Cromwell has ended his life "full godly" by asking "god mercy and grace of the kynge." As for the slanderer, he has written only to defend his own popish views:

Wherfor thou apperest to be a popysshe lad
For usyng thy popery thou are to blame
Trolle into the ryght way agayne for shame.

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Dormer, p. 30.
The author of the second balade takes issue with the first writer on the question of Cromwell's humble birth, insinuating that any criticism of Cromwell is criticism of the king himself:

Although that he of byrth were but bace
Yet was he set up of the kynges noble grace
Wherby it appereth that thou woldest deface
The kynges royall power . . .

Then follows a threat that the first balade-maker may lose his own head for such criticism: "It were ynoough to cost the thy poll." Not only the writer but the printer is culpable: "Lyke maker, lyke printer, two trolles of the game/ A payre of good papystes, ye be payne of shame."

The second poem ends, like the first, with a prayer for the king and Prince Edward.

The writer of the second balade sustains the meter and stanza form of the first poem—a five-line stanza of iambic tetrameter rhyming aaabb—but omits the "heve and howe rumbelowe" refrain after the prefatory distich. The second poem is more skilfully put together, both metrically and thematically.

A Lytell Treatysse

The third balade of the series, signed by Thomas Smyth, discusses the two poems written by Troll In and Troll Away, suggesting that there is some truth in both. Smyth states that he does not wish to become involved in the trolling contest (although he is unmistakeably on the side of Troll Away), but cannot stand aside while dissension is being stirred up. He points out that accusations of popishness and sedition are all too common in an era when the need is for peace and brotherly love:
And then as true trollers togethier let us remayne
Perfectly fast knyt in one peace unyte and love
With glory unto god evermore glad and fayne
Our noble Prince truly to serve as doth us behove.

Smyth concludes with a prayer for Henry and "Katheren our Quene."

Obviously the king's secret marriage to Catherine Howard is now openly acknowledged by the "Quenes graces counsell," Thomas Smyth.

There are two points worth noting in Smyth's "treatys." First, the author ventures into the realm of metaphor, cautiously and tritely, with the biblical trop of sowing seed when he likens the "heretics" to chaff:

Consyderyng how sedycyously amonges us they besowen
Of late I wel trusted they had ben overblown.

For the charitable and the peacemakers, however, there is a journey of the soul which will terminate in eternal bliss:

A more acceptable pilgrymage surely never was

Our labour or gret burden let us nothyng drede

For at the jorneyes ende Christ will us refresshe.

Such carefully colorless images are apt in the mouth of a man who is essaying the role of peacemaker.

Second, the peacemaker has used the substantival phrases "trolle in" and "trolle away" as names for the anonymous writers of the first two balades. In this he was following the tradition of Tudor writers such as John Heywood, who has characters like "Loved" and Loved Not" in his dramatic interludes.
A Treatyse Declaryng the Despyte of a Secrete Sedegyous Person that Dare not Shewe Himselle

Smyth, despite his explicit reluctance to enter the battle of the trollers, pens his second "treatyse" against an unknown troller. Evidently some balades of the controversy have not come down to us, because Smyth refers to two poems already published:

Of late I wrote two lybelles not thinkeinge to offende
But perceyvynge amonge us thynges to be amyss
Styll styrrynge and procurynge us lewdly to contende
Of such indecent ordre I desyred the ende
For the whych cause onely I toke on me to wryte
Truely for the trueths sake and nothynge for despyte.

He complains that his poems provoked replies from an enemy:

They name me a papyste and say I do not love
None other but Papystes and men of popysche mynde.

He challenges his anonymous accuser to prove the charge of papistry, claiming that the unknown poet is either lying or negligent in his duty to the king by not openly reporting any popish activities:

The parte of every true herte towards his kyngue shuld be
What he knoweth against his grace firthwith to make evydent
Who conceleth others treason as a traytour doth consent.

Smyth goes on self-righteously to say that he believes, with Cato, that if a man lives honorably he need not fear slanderous tongues. The poem refers, in two stanzas, to some dispute between Smyth and his enemy but does not clarify the matter:

Your boke doth open mater not mete I shold here touche
But within shorthe tyme it shall shewe it self more playn
Your doynge well declare howe in herte you styll grouche
And agaynst whom because you can not your wyll obtayne
Your malyce doth so blynd you and byddeth you not refrayne.
The poet ends his "treatyse" with an invocation to the psalmist David:

In Psalmys here with the wille I crye and synge
Judge thou me (O Lorde) that arte judge over alle
Discerne thou my cause and let me to the calle
To be rydde from the wycked which labour daye and nighte
They veryte to vanquysshe by deceitful despyte.

The customary prayer for Henry, Catherine, and Prince Edward concludes the rhyme royal balade.

In this poem Smyth is evidently answering an accusation that he, as a papist, has been embroiled in rebellion against King Henry and his Council, because he threatens to bring his opponent before "higher powers." Stung by what he considers baseless slander, Smyth plunges intrepidly into Scripture, charging his adversary with "serpentyne" and "develysshe despyte." He takes comfort in the fact that "the tree by her fruytes is always chyefely known." He continues his figurative language with another familiar image, likening his unnamed rival to a horse who, rubbed on the gall, is constrained to lash out. Curiously, this picture of horse and rider becomes a key image for the later poems of the series.

An Aunswere to Maister Smyth

In the fifth poem of the series the writer, who signs himself "W.G.," takes up the cause of Troll In, author of the second balade:

For where as trolle away (as ye say) told trouth
Declaryng the offences wherein Crumwel offended
It was not the thyng wherwith troll in was wroth

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13This hackneyed image has a venerable ancestor in Chaucer:
"Ther is noon of us alle
If any wight will clawe us on the galle
That we nel kike for he seith us sooth."
(Wife of Bath's Tale)
For in that poynt Troll in Troll away commended
But this was the metter wherfore they contended
Trolle away under pretence of trollying against treason
Practised proude popery as apperith by reason.

W. G. accuses Smyth of supporting Troll Away in his popery, and of being
hypocritical in his alleged intention to make peace, "Speking with your
mouthe that ye thinke not with your harte."

The author of the "Aunswere" goes on to censure savagely Smyth's
reference to the psalms:

Ye rumble amonge the scryptures as one that were halfe mad
Wrestyng and writhyng them accordyng to your owne purpose
Lyke as the holy Papystes were wont to paynt their popysshe close
Do ye take the holy scryptures to be lyke a shypman's hose?
Nay, nay, although a shypman's hose wyll serve no rotten dregges.

Smyth is derided by the poet for boasting about his position at
court as "clerke of the Quenes graces counsell"; fortunately, adds the
poet, such a braggart cannot abuse his office because he is about as
capable as a bad-tempered cow with short horns (Stanza 12). W. G. winds
up his poem with the customary prayer for the royal household, followed
by a sharp distich:

By me a poore man whose herte if ye knewe
Wolde be the kynges servaunte as fayne as you.

In all, this poem is much more forceful in language and derisive
in tone than any of the previous balades. Ernest Dormer thinks that W. G.
(later revealed as Gray) is the author of the second poem, "A Balade Agaynst
Malycyous Sclaunderers," but the fifth poem far exceeds the second in
vitality and skill, and there is no evidence to show that Gray wrote
the second poem although undobtedly his sympathies were with Cromwell.\footnote{Dormer, p. 32.}
As the pamphleteer of a fallen favorite, he was probably afraid to sign his name; the later poems in the series make reference to the fact that Gray was in hiding.

This balade picks up the image of horse and rider but deals with it more concretely. Gray visualizes himself as a courageous horse, spurred on by an unreasonable rider who is eventually tossed into the mire. As for the scriptural allusions and metaphors, Gray disdains to use them, suggesting that a "smith" knows as much about divinity as a tailor does about writing. Moreover, sneers Gray, the peacemaker Smyth has managed to "spytte" out his "poyson" first, before drawing upon scriptural analogies to pretend that he is motivated by charity. Gray's own figurative language is derived from everyday sources, perhaps because he is attempting to bring the status-conscious courtier to the common man's level by calling him "prymrose perelesse," and strutting rooster. The earthiness of Gray's language provokes the peacemaker into the angry attack which Smyth calls an "envoye."

An Envoye from Thomas Smyth upon the Aunswere of one W. G. Lurkyng in Lorells Denne for Fear Men Shulde Hym See.15

Trolle In and Trolle Away are forgotten as Smyth threatens to "trolle out" W. G. whom he repeatedly refers to as vagabond and "ruffeler."16

15Lorells denne is a thieves' kitchen. See Cock Lorell's Bote (1515), by Wynkyn de Worde.

The implications here are that Gray was both popish monk (and hence a vagabond after the closure of the monasteries) and criminal, because vagabondage, one of the grimmest social problems of the age, had become a crime after the Acts of 1530-36. Smyth, therefore, is not only insisting on his own prestige and court status but is denigrating the low scoundrel who dares take issue with him. Indignantly he maintains that he merely mentioned his own name and office in previous balades so that no other Smyth should have to bear blame for his words:

Any other person gyltlesse therfore shulde not be shente
Consydred (as is wel known) many be of my name
Myne office therfore I added and thought them no shame
Nether braggyng nor bostynge as to my charge you laye
Who is naught hymselfe so judgeth in others alwaye.

Smyth answers Gray's charge concerning "rumblynge in the scriptures" by challenging W. G. to come out in the open and rectify any wrongs of which he (Smyth) may have been guilty. The metaphor of the horse is repeated as Smyth arrogantly suggests he as rider will continue to spur the horse, Gray, with his pen. Yet he warns Gray of the punishment that will befall too restive a steed with the threat, "hereafter cometh not yet."

The Ret'ne of M. Smythes Envoy

Much of the fire has gone out of Gray as he opens his poem with a mere rebuttal of Smyth's statements, and a somewhat craven reference to Smyth's office: "And therfore unto your offfyce I wysshed no manner of shame." He continues the horse image, reminding Smyth that the horse may be goaded into throwing his rider. He defends his own action in remaining in hiding:
Sometyme a thefe shameth not to shewe bothe his name and fate
When the true man hydeth hym selfe and standeth in great doute
Least that this theveshe malyce shuld present itselfe in place
To the destruccion of hym that this thefery wolde trye oute.

Furthermore, he accuses Smyth of conspiring to restore the Pope as
overlord of the kingdom, insinuating that his adversary was in collusion
with the recent rebellion in the north, the Pilgrimage of Grace, crushed
by Henry in 1536:

Your romysh ruffeler to be our head by some maner of shyft
To the which your papisticall flocke not long agoo gave a lyft.

Gray advises his rival to "speke soft" and make no wild boasts
because he merely draws attention to his hypocrisy, his "false feyned
herte." The poet shows his scorn for threats about the "hereafter" by
asserting, "I take tyme as tyme is." The balade ends with a prayerful
stanza beseeching God's blessing on King Henry, Catherine, and "that most
oderiferous thynge," Prince Edward.

An Artificiall Apologie, articulerlye answerynge to the
obstreperous Obgannynge of one W.G. Evometyd to the
vituperacion of the triumphant trollynge Thomas Smyth.
Repercussed by the ryght redoltent & rotounde rethorician R.
Smyth, P. with annotacions of the melliflous and mysticall
Master Mynterne, marked in the mergent for the enucliacion
of certen obscure obelisques, to thende that the imprudent
lector shulde not tytubate or hallucinate in the labyrinthes
of this lucubratiouncle. 17

A new voice is heard in the controversy--the voice of the "rotounde
rethorician, R. Smyth P.," who is considered by Dormer to be Richard Smyth,
Priest and Reader in Divinity at Oxford. He "repercusses" indeed in

17"Misticall Master Mynterne" is unknown. His annotations in the
margin are in Latin and so faint as to be almost illegible.
scabrous phraseology, scattering inkorn terms. Richard's avowed reason for entering the fray is to protect the good name of Smyth, and he traces the pedigree of the Smyth stock back to the blacksmith who shod St. George's horse. In diverting fashion Richard conjures up what would happen to the badger, Gray, if St. George's horse were now alive.

Although this neologistic dialectician claims to defend his namesake, yet he introduces some damning statements regarding the private life of Thomas Smyth, and conveys the idea that Smyth, like Gray, would sing his "Christmas song" in prison if some of his exploits were known. Somewhat ambiguously he treats of Thomas's success with mistresses, thereby introducing the topic of romantic dalliance for the first time in this controversy. He continues to damn Thomas not with faint praise but with a spirited defense against wild charges that have not previously been mentioned. By the time his defense is completed he has built up a more telling indictment than Gray had in mind. The tongue-in-cheek tone of this contribution continues as its author boasts that Thomas's skill is such that he can forge "and fetely fabrycate a myllyon of mentrys \(\overline{\text{lies}}\) in less than halfe a daye."

Also, Thomas Smyth is a travelled cosmopolitan who speaks French "as any Popengay"; indeed, says Richard,

I myselfe, dyd here hym once saye
With so starne a loke, Dieu vous done bon jour.

That Gray should vilify such a fine gentleman by calling him "bedlem and lunaticke" is shocking to Richard who supports Thomas thus:

What thogh he be gogle eyed and tawny as a tanner?
It is but hys compleccyon, swart and collerycke."

Moreover, asks the "rorthorician," does not Thomas belong to that vast
clan of smiths of whom one worthy member was the blacksmith ringleader of the Cornish rebellion—"a man of worthy fame"—who unfortunately was hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn? Richard hastens to add that the blacksmith rebel, like a true Smith, "confessed cleane" and took his "just reward" for offence against the king. The canny "rethorician" ends his poem with prayers for Henry, Catherine, and Prince Edward, "that ye may enjoy emperyall."

A Pamphlet compiled by G. L. To master Smyth and Wyllyam G. Prayenge them both, for the love of our Lorde To growe at last to an honest accord.

The unknown author, "G.L.," avers his intention of bringing to an end the strife between Gray and Smyth whose "wrytynges are confusion myxt/ With bytynge wordes and vylany." The conciliator refers to the anonymous writer of the first balade whose uncharitable poem was foolishly defended by Smyth:

If master Smyth had marked well
The purpose of that foolyshe dawe
Which trolde upon the Lord Crumwell
Wyth ragged ryme not worth a strawe
He myght have founde that wretch rebell
Both ageynst God, and all good lawe
And not have blamed Wyllyan G.
For blamynge his uncharyte.

The poet, taking up the charges of heresy and popery which have been cast back and forth, defines these two evils of Antichrist but concedes that the terms "papyste" and "heretyke" do not justly describe Gray and Smyth. Rather, he thinks, Smyth used bad judgment in supporting the "braynles buz" who initiated the controversy. Moreover, Smyth, in
"wrestyng the scriptures . . . out of frame" defamed "that perfect worde."

As for Gray, his poems have made manifest an impatient mind and cankered heart. The pamphlet writer piously begs both contestants to seek accord in Christian charity as loyal subjects of "Hym that hath power under God."

The pamphlet is a fitting end to a controversy which harps on the pseudo-religious and the pseudo-patriotic. In a sense, the series of poems constitutes a debate rather than a flying because issues are involved; the debaters handle the issues of Cromwell's guilt, Lutheranism, and papistry so unskilfully—shifting ground from poem to poem—that forensic logic is lost in a welter of hackneyed accusations. One poem only, the contribution of R. Smyth, achieves the burlesque quality of the Scottish flytings. Furthermore, under the pen of R. Smyth appears a caricature of Thomas Smyth, not quite as well-delineated as Skelton's Garnesche, but the only portrait in the series. Thomas Smyth, swarthy, "gogle eyed," and choleric, a master in the art of lying but less successful as a whoremaster,

And yet I promise you he doth them lytle harme
But brynge them to his hous e, where they part not asunder
He covereth her, he colleth her and keeps her good and warme,

is in the tradition of Sir Christopher or dwarf Dunbar. Gray remains faceless and shadowy but Thomas is limned satirically by his own self-appointed commissar.

Richard Smyth's delight in words has been mentioned; therefore, when he invokes higher powers he swears not by the psalmist David as does mealy-mouthed Thomas but "by cock" and "by saynt tankard." When Richard calls down a curse on Gray he does so in characteristic fashion: "Vulcan was god and smith, whose curse lyghte on thy coddes." In tone, language,
satiric portrait, and the device of the false genealogy, Richard's "Artificiall Apologie" manifests the vitality of Skelton and the humor of Dunbar and Kennedie.

As for the other poems in the series, they are poems written by minor officials but not by court poets such as Skelton or Lyndesay. Thus, although the issues touched on concern the king, there is no "speculum principis" involved; Gray and Smyth are outside what would now be called the Establishment, and write neither with royal license nor with full knowledge of royal intrigue.

To sum up: as a literary construct this series of poems is without value, but as a social document it has some significance because it demonstrates the uneasiness of an era when a stable form of Protestantism was still being sought, and when the apprehensive court official tried to keep a head on his shoulders by steering a middle course between the "popishness" of Anglo-Catholicism and the "heresy" of Lutheranism. As a literary document the contention is important because it is a blending of traditions, the balade tradition and the flying tradition. The ceremonial of flying is lacking in the diffuseness of attack, but in so far as invective can be considered within the province of satire the contention does belong in the general area of satiric flytings. In addition, this group of poems illustrates what happens when a court entertainment, performed by professional poets, reaches the streets of London in the form of broadsides written by amateurs. The ephemeral nature of this, the earliest balade controversy, needs no further emphasis.
CHAPTER VI

THE CONTENTION BETWIXT CHURCHARD AND CAMELL

"Take away the Law and take away our lives, for nothing maintaineth our wealth, our health, and the saveguard of our bodies but the Law of a Realme whereby the wicked are condemned and the Godly are defended."

Sir Thomas Wilson

One of the most unusual of flytings, that between Churchyard and Camell, has escaped critical attention almost entirely, perhaps because the broadsides that make up the "Contention" have been difficult of access. This flyting more than any other deserves the genre-name of saturaee because it displays no discernible pattern as a mode of satire. Possibly the verses owe their inchoate character to the circumstances surrounding their composition. As we have seen, the Scottish poems and the Skelton-Garnesche combat were "sett flyting matches"; there is no evidence to show that the Churchyard-Camell controversy was a command performance. As far as can be judged, the poets' feud stemmed from

1Harry Morgan Ayres has discussed the language of one of the items in the collection in a brief article, "A Specimen of Vulgar English of the Mid-Sixteenth Century," in Studies in English Philology in Honor of Frederick Klaeber, ed. Kemp Malone and Martin B. Ruud, Minnesota (1929), pp. 397-400.

2For the provenance of the poems which make up the complete flyting see Appendix B.
publication of an innocuous broadside, "David Dicar's Dreme," written by Thomas Churchyard. Of the "Dreme" Robert Lemon, who has catalogued the broadsides preserved in the archives of the Society of Antiquaries, London, says laconically, "A small poem of only fourteen couplets. This is the origin of another poetical controversy."

Although the circumstances surrounding the publication of this item are obscure, we do know it was circulated in broadside form early in 1552 from internal evidence. The poem purports to be a dream of David the "dicar" or "ditch-digger" who, like his counterpart, Piers Plowman, of an earlier era, has a vision of an ideal society. Obliquely, Davy tells us what is wrong with England as he dreams of a country where friends will be faithful, vice will be punished, and justice will prevail:

> When double dark deceit is out of credit wore
> And fauning speche is falsed found and craft is laught to scorne;
> When pride which piks the purs, gapes not for garments gay,
> Nor javels wear no velvet weeds, nor wandring wits bere sway;
> When riches wrongs no ryght, nor power poore put backe,
> Nor covetous crieps not into Courte, nor lerned livinges lacke;

The content of this bill of complaint is that the reign of Edward VI is an era when just precepts are preached but not practised; criticism of the weak rule of the king is implicit in the pious wish that all will be well when "Rex doth raigne and rule the rost." The short piece is "drab age verse," unremarkable in style save for the repetition of initial "when" in each couplet--the deliberate, but not inspired use of the rhetorical figure known as ephaphora.

The "Dreme" evoked a vigorous reply by Thomas Camell, "To David

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3See "Westerne Wyll" and "Steven Steple to Mast Camell."
Dicar's When." The burden of the second poem is that fools such as the Dreamer ought to look to their own faults first before uttering criticism. Moreover, in the divine order the Dreamer is but an ass, who should be content to serve as the humblest of beasts instead of presuming to pronounce judgment on the All-High:

It gree not, it cordes not, nor orderly fyttes
That men should fynd fault wyth Gods and theyr wittes,
Jupiters seate standes somewhat to hye
For us to judge it that come it not nye.

Churchyard's retaliation, "A Replicacion to Camels Objection," moves from the area of social criticism into that of personal abuse as he accuses his opponent of missing the point of his first poem:

You touch not one poynt wherof that I wrate,
You leape ore the hedge and seeith not the gate;
I muse what you mean to discant and preache
Upon a plaine song so farre past your reache.

In the hierarchy of creatures the camel is fitted only to be a beast of burden:

I dout of your shape, some monster you are
Because such a name to me you declare;
Your wordes and your workes ar tokens ryght sure
You ar some brute beast in mans forme and picture.

The slur on his name rouses Camell to reply in like vein in "Camelles Rejoindre to Churchyarde" in which he chides his adversary for being known by five different names: Dreamer, Dicar, David, Churchyard, and Mannering:

But Dreamer or Dicar or as you saye Davy:
Whych shal I now cal you as our Lorde save ye?
Thre names are to many for one man alone
And two mo makes fyve, for faylyng of one;
If you had two other that men myght you seeke,
Then had you a name for eche daye in the week.  

Camell then launches into a tirade in which he likens his opponent to a buzzing bee, and to an ass with a bell at his tail. The poem is lengthy and repetitious, and the reader can be forgiven for finding these accusations tedious. The unusual titles of the pieces, however, suggest that the poems may have had a topical interest which lent point to them and justified repetition as a device consonant with the poets' purposes. For example, among the poems already mentioned there is a "replicacion" and a "rejoinder"; among the pieces that follow are such title-words as "surrejoindre," "judgment," "decree," "supplicacion," and "confutation."

How closely these titles were related to the legal terms of the century can be evidenced by a brief sketch of the procedure of one of the courts of the time--the Court of the Star Chamber.

This Court, which had originated in the Curia Regis shortly after the Norman Conquest, was not known as the Court of the Star Chamber until 1348. Primarily the Court tried to reach offenders who were too powerful or who in some way were beyond the reach of the law courts. Thus it heard all kinds of extra-legal cases, operating usually by petition with an informal interrogation of witnesses. As an instrument of power often despotic in nature, the Court passed through phases of being lauded, despised, or feared.

The procedure of the Camera Stellata is of interest in connection with the flyting: the first step was for the plaintiff to draw up a bill of complaint which ended with a request for the summoning of the defendant. Next came the appearance of the defendant, who was given time to file an
answer to charges made by the plaintiff. Then followed a "replicacion" by the plaintiff in which he reiterated charges made in his earlier bill of complaint, enlarging upon them if necessary but refraining from new charges. A "rejoinder" by the defendant was then in order, which could be rebutted by a "surrejoinder" on the part of the plaintiff. A counter-rebuttal by the defendant was permitted before the examination of witnesses for both parties. Finally, a decree or judgment was entered, a decree representing a verdict in equity or justice, whereas a judgment indicated a verdict in accordance with the law.

In the reign of Henry VII the court was accessible to the humblest litigants—yeomen and husbandmen—when it dealt firmly with bullying, tyranny, or oppression of the weak:

The Somerset magnate who terrorized his neighbours and overawed juries, ruling with the strong hand unjustly, found himself brought to heel by men so highly placed that they were far above corruption or intimidation.5

During the reign of Henry VIII a "pore mans case" was probably handled by the Star Chamber because Wolsey made it his business to absorb the Court of Requests, often called the "Court of Poor Men's Causes," into the cognisance of the Star Chamber. There is evidence, however, that Wolsey grew weary of the task of administering "speedy, free, and effective justice in poor men's causes," transferring such suits to four committees of counsel.6 In the ensuing brief reigns of Mary Tudor and Edward VI,

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the function and jurisdiction of the Star Chamber presumably depended on the will of the monarch.

If we consider the Camell-Churchyard flyting in the light of this information, we can observe a shaping principle informing what is otherwise a collection of meaningless broadsides. I do not wish to suggest that Churchyard and Camell intended from the outset to structure a flyting in which there were overtones of law procedure, but rather that accidental parallels in the first two poems to the contemporary situation caused the flyting to develop in the direction of parody. The poems were aimed at a public that would appreciate topicality more than literary excellence, and Churchyard does claim to have five thousand readers for "David Dicar's Dreme." It may be argued that this claim, appearing in one of the poems, is mere poetic license but there is no gainsaying the fact that the flyting was popular enough to be re-issued in book form eight years after initial publication.

With regard to the relationship of law to literature in the sixteenth century the system of education for sons of gentlemen was such that acquaintance with the processes of law was almost inescapable. Young men of fine family received their higher education either at the universities of Cambridge or Oxford, or at the Inns of Court, London. At the universities the student was instructed in Canon and Civil (Roman) Law, in addition to receiving formal instruction in the disputatio. At the Inns, on the other hand, emphasis was on apprenticeship in Common Law which involved in-service training at law courts together with participation in moots—

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formal pleading exercises between Inner and Utter Barristers of which Sir Thomas Elyot has this to say:

It is to be remembered that in the learnynge of the lawes of this realme, there is at this daye an exercise wherin is a maner, a shadowe, or figure of the auncient rhetorike. I meane the pleadynge used in courtes and Chauncery called motes; where fyrest a case is appoynted to be moted by certayne yonge men, contaynyng some doubtefull controversie which is in stede of the heed of a declamation called thema. The case beinge knowen, they whiche be appoynted to mote do examine the case, and investigate what they therein can espie, whiche may make a contention, whereof may ryse a question to be argued, and that of Tulli is called constitutio, and of Quintilian status causae.8

The case was to contain no more than "two points argumentable." As we shall see, Churchyard's "Dreme," which begins as a general criticism of the conditions of the time, develops into argument on the two points contained in the line, "And Rex doth raigne and rule the rost and weeds out wicked men."

Churchyard eventually does concede that "Rex doth raigne" in giving just laws but asserts that the king is not aware of the "secrete slighes whiche nowe in corners lye" nor of the wickedness of law breakers; also, the poet is unwilling to admit that Rex is doing his duty about weeding out the wicked. The parallel between the progress of the flyting and the process of law is striking: Black's Law Dictionary (1795) says,

The process of pleading is one in which both parties alternately present written statements of their contention, each responsive to that which precedes and each serving to narrow the field of controversy until there evolves a single point, affirmed on one

side and denied on the other, called the "issue" upon which they then go to trial.

Not only do the titles of the poems and the trend of reasoning suggest a provenance in law but the language of the poems does likewise: for example the "when" of "David Dicar's Dreme" is rhetorical—it is also a technical term used in formal pleading. That Churchyard was not unfamiliar with the language of law is stated by C. S. Lewis: "In the Worthines of Wales (1587) he even translates the law-Latin of an Earl's patent into fourteeners." There would seem to be at least the probability that a somewhat sterile exercise in flyting between the two minor poets gradually took shape as a mimesis of the mystique of the Inns of Court or Star Chamber.

What of the unusual poems that make up the rest of the "Contention," some of which are in pseudo-dialect? At this date we can only conjecture as to the reason Camell, for instance, chose to affect a southwestern dialect in "To Goodman Chappels Supplicacion." If the flyting is a parody or mimesis, the poems allegedly written by Goodman Chappel, Steven Steple, Harry Whoball, or W. Watreman may represent the depositions taken from rustics by rural magistrates. After the "Court of Poor Men's Causes" merged with the Star Chamber, it was standard practice for the Court to nominate local commissioners to examine witnesses in rural areas; because the commissioners were not lawyers but "worthy men," the evidence was sometimes of a type inadmissible in a London

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Law court. Actual names of witnesses in Star Chamber cases in Somerset at this time included Habbakuk Curtes, John Wildgoose, Robert Thickpenny, Widoe Rape, and Agnes Puritie. If Churchyard and Camell wished to satirize the activities of the rural commissioners or the illiteracy of the witnesses there was ample material. The contributions of Western Wyll and Steven Steple do not read like legal depositions, but neither do the contributions of actual witnesses examined by commissioners in rural areas.

It is also possible that the fake dialect poems were intended as a criticism of the poor language training given at the Inns of Court. Students of English Common Law had to master a brand of law-French and law-Latin which seemed "barberouse" to university-educated humanists like Sir Thomas Elyot or Erasmus. One example of this language will demonstrate that the epithet was justified. It refers to a prisoner who "puis son condemnation ject un brickbat a le dit justice que narrowly mist." The question of Renaissance education lies beyond the scope of this work, but it is worth noting that research done in the field by D. S. Bland and C. H. Conley shows that "after 1535, the diminished number of degrees conferred at the universities indicates that the sons of the gentry were turning to the law and receiving their higher education at the Inns of Court" leading to overcrowded conditions at the four Inns and to further

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deterioration in the quality of education. In such circumstances, students of average ability had little opportunity to acquire that "more clene and elegant stile" desiderated by Elyot. To Churchyard, Camell, and the readers of broadsides, the language of Steple or Whoball may have been a mockery of "brickbat" French.

To leave conjecture for fact and return to the flyting: what does "The Surrejoindre unto Camels Rejoindre" contribute to the series? Churchyard refuses to answer Camell's taunt that he has five names, retaliating with a charge of plagiarism on the part of Camell. Furthermore, Churchyard, in defense of the "Dreme," challenges his rival to point out where the Dicar is guilty of "A faute agaynst Juppiters seate, or agaynst his counsell." He adds,

You shew your selfe not Juppiters frende if you can truly prove A faute in me and doth it hyde, for feare or yet for love. As for my worke, and thankies paynes, in this and such like case, I shall be redy to defende, when you shall hyde your face. Thinke you I feare what you can do, my ground is just and true, On every worde which I dyd speake I force not what ye brue.

The poet ends by refusing to reply "worde by worde" to Camell's rejoinder "Because I fynd no matter there, nor yet no poynt of wyt."

The next poem, "Westerne Wyll," purports to be a tale of three mariners of Maldon—Watte, Herman, and Wylkyn Watreman—who have arrived in London looking for some novelties to take home. Their quest takes them to a printer's where they are offered a "rolle of rhythmes" containing "David Dicar's Dreme" together with the pieces that follow:

A Replicacion was the next whiche well I understooode, For that I founde no word therin but it was Englyshe good. But lo ye here the fourth quod he that maketh up the messe, I warrant ye a clarkely pece, se howe it is bedeckte, (As sellers are not newe to learne, theyr wares to prayse I gesse) The name therof Rejoynder was, a terme to them suspect,
Because it sounded of the lawe, as though some case it warre
Of joyncture right for waywarde wyves, to pleaden at the barre.

The printer, realizing that the watermen have no learning, volunteers
to read the "Dreme" aloud, filling in the background of the contest as
he goes along:

This Diker semes a thryvynge ladde, brought up in Pierce's scole,
The plowman stout, of whom I thynke ye have ful often harde.

The Dicar, according to the printer, is no "spritelesse blocke" but a
"hende" swain who, in "cockowe tyme" when the green leaves appear, had a
dream which the printer retells in full. Wylkyn, most sceptical of the
three, roundly avers that anything compounded of so much reason is no
"swevyn," as everyone knows that dreams are mere fantasies of devils or
apes. Watte follows this by asking how a dicar ever learned to write
such "queint proverbes." To these expressions of disbelief the printer
replies that Davy has a friend at court who, hearing the dream, shaped
it "into frame." The printer proceeds to explain that, although the
dream is of an ideal commonwealth such as Plato's, its publication
provoked a great "sturre" from Camell. The mariner, Herman, is literal-
minded enough to object that a camel cannot read or write. This statement
draws hearty laughter from the printer as he explains the error, but he
also warns the mariners that they will be sent out of his shop to be cooled
by "fresshe Apryl shows" if they do not listen patiently while he finishes
his tale:

Herman was full wo when he the printer sawe thus wroth
And had but lytle lust to tary out the tale,
And to his felowes gan upbrayde, ye se the daye hence goeth,
And eke ye knowe as wel as I the water gymnus to bale,
And by the vanes I spye the wynde to be by south at west,
That we us haste to Maldon meade I thynke it be the beste.
The mariners pay their "grote" for the poems, and set off for home leaving the unknown narrator of the whole episode to record it in "wordes partly learned of my dame." Westerne Wyll's contribution, though disarmingly impartial on the surface, is a justification of the "Dreme" as an honest citizen's vision of Utopia. The testimony surrounding the alleged creation of the "Dreme" is favorable to David Dicar, thus suggesting that the entire piece is a composition by Churchyard or a Churchyard apologist.

A brief item, "A Supplicacion unto Mast Camell," in what Lemon calls "very uncouth language...as from a peasant" is next in the series. The "peasant," who calls himself Gefferay Chappell, a Belman of Whipstable, ironically professes to be on the side of Camell, a "gemma' of "so hie a peti degree" that he is above railing and reviling. At the same time Chappell apologizes for Churchyard, "I pray you holden scused, twas but for lack of nourter/ For cham sure hathnot ben past vii or viii yer a courter."

The taunting tribute to Camell's forebears, his "aunciall proditours," spurs him to a response couched in similar language, a spurious southwestern dialect which shows voicing of initial f and s together with use of "ych" for "I," and "charde" for "I heard." Camell's poem is entitled "To Goodman Chappels Supplicacion," but opens with remarks addressed to Harry Whoball:

Harry whoball harke, mast Camell hath yzeene
Thy vengeance zory bill and thompes the as I wene
And is by Christe full zad, that thou comest out zo late.

The burden of this short piece is that Camell will, if necessary, sprinkle holy water on Churchyard and all his partisans, forgiving them their
sorry bill of vengeance and their folly. Harry Morgan Ayres thinks Camell assumes he has been addressed by one Harry Whoball, but the term "hoball" or "whoball" meaning "rascal" occurs in Ralph Roister Doister (1553), and is listed in the New English Dictionary. Camell may simply have used the term, evidently known in a generic sense in his day, realizing it was as valid a nomenclature as Gefferay Chappell.

In any case, another "peasant" takes up the fight on behalf of both Chappell and Churchyard in "Steven Steple to Mast Camell." This effort is in more pronounced dialect form with an author who pretends to have sympathy with Camell. Steven, mentioning that he has brought a "bottell of hay" from well-meaning Gefferay, states that Gefferay has fears for Camell's sanity:

Himvraid yer wits wud zore ye wayle, ye gin to rave zo zone,
A dynkte ye wyll bemad, al out, bevore dat be done;
And moch he merveilt da ye wud zo chorsly to um wryte
And dat ye zent um zuch an anser, dat zounded noding right;
To Harry Hoball yyr ye wrot, as peairt in yor letter,
Zwap yer speckles up se nase, and looke aboute ye better
And anser Gefferay Chappell yyr, dat toke ye de supplicacion,
Vor his name is not Harry Hoball, ich zwear by Gods savacion.

Steven ends his account with an admonition to Camell to "be good to maister Churchard."

Another combatant enters the fray in "M. Harry Whobals mon to M. Camel, greetes him wyshing hally bread to fear all ragyng spreetes." The language used in this contribution differs from that of the poems immediately preceding, being "an attempt to reproduce a class-dialect of a vulgar

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13 Ayres, p. 398.
sort."\textsuperscript{14} Whoball's "mon" declares his master is annoyed with Camell for drawing him into a controversy:

\begin{quote}
For sur, my mastur merbles moch whad mad you Braynes to crowe,
That when you badden raylen ynow, we Churchyard and wom mo;
To gyn a yene to rayle on him, that yo ne see ne knew
As won that furst haz dronken alout, and gynnes a yene to brew.
My mastur plize his bussinesse, bout fortye moyle be yend
And when a hard you folysh byll, haz me to London send,
To ash you maship whats to case, that you so braggen and bosten;
As won that yeat an honest nome in all you life neare losten.
\end{quote}

Harry's servant winds up with a twelve-line stanza in which is concealed his name, Richard Beard.

Exasperated by the attacks on him, Camell pens his answer, "Camelles Conclusion." In peevish tone the poet inveighs against his opponents, asserting that all are "agaynst me one alone, a sory symple man." He affirms that the "Dreme" is no humanitarian's vision but an audacious criticism of King Edward's rule. The conditions of strife and injustice, referred to by Churchyard, simply do not exist; in fact, "Rex doth raygne" over a country where "every man there lyvee in tune as subjectes to theyr head" except for rabble-rousers such as Davy Dicar.

Churchyard concludes his part of the flying with "A playn and fynall confutacion of Camells corlyke oblatracion," in which he assails his adversary's "cur-like" conclusion, point by point, in reasoning that is remarkable for its contradictory nature. First he maintains that

\textsuperscript{14}Ayres, p. 399. Ayres points out that forms like "wodder" and "wooder" for other," "whorne" and "vhot" for "hot" show the circumstances that gave rise to modern pronunciation of "one," and to modern spelling of "wholly." He also suggests that "lost" for "last," "blome" for "blame," and "nome" for "name" may represent a survival of an unfronted Middle English "a" in the language of the lower classes.
Camell has deliberately misinterpreted the intent of the "dreme":

What thinkes this man he hathe more witte and learning in his head
Than hathe fyve thousand other men that Dycar's dreame hath read.

Not only has Camell written against a mere dream, one of the "fancies of
the hed," he has also foolishly impugned Churchyard's loyalty to the
Crown. The poet goes on to complain that in the contention he has stood
alone, whereas Camell is "moe than one." Then follow some accusations that
Camell has been badly taught at school and thus "wresteth ryght to wrong."

A curious couplet appears:

You have sought councell fourteen daies, it seemes that you dyd dreame:
Or els ye thought to run awaie into som other other realme.

Whether the flyting lasted fourteen days with Camell receiving sage
"councell" from his adversary, or Camell actually had legal business pendi-
ging cannot be gauged from the poem, nor is any information available
regarding Camell's private life.

Churchyard, despite his earlier statement that the "Dreme" is to
be regarded as mere fantasy, now proceeds to justify what he had to say
about the rule of "Rex":

Though justice doeth belonge to Rex, whose sworde puts that in ure,
Yet every justice under him is not so just and pure.
Because there be knightes of the post whiche will them selves forswere,
And fained troeth will forge a tale sometymes in justice eare
And worke suche wiles, justice to blynde, and make him credit lies
Suche crafty mistes these men can cast before true justice eies.
Though justice of him selfe is pure and clean devoide of crime,
Yet false witness may alter him and chaunce his minde somtime.
The faut therof is not in hym, he woulde fayn joyn to truthe:
But flatteryng faith may hym corrupt, alas the more is ruthe.
Whan truth is forman of the quest, and right shall vardyty gyve,
Than justice shall hoyn stille to truthe and so together live.
Thus is it when made manifest, truely as I it ment,
And yet it was full plaine before to every entent.
Here have I waide what justice is, to whom it dothe pertain,
Who swayes the sworde, who doth decree, here have I set out plain.
There is a further indictment of the law as now administered:

Now Rex doeth rayne whom god preserve in long life on us here,
And sende him rule the rost him selfe, as prince withouten pere.
That he may fynde those secrete slighes whiche now in corners lye:
And suche as do abuse his lawes and live so wickedlie.
It semes they live as they delight and leane not to his lore:
Bycause he dothe commend them lawes and they passe not therfore.
Howe doth the master of the schole his schollers rule and tame,
Whan he dothe geve preceptes and rules and none doth keep the same.
How doeth the kyng his people rule, let this be better wayde,
Whan he doeth geve them lawes and actes, and none of them obeyde.

Lest it be thought that Rex is weak or negligent, Churchyard hastily adds
that the king "for mercy greete" does not weed out the wicked because
he is following the example of a merciful God. The poem ends with the
poet maintaining two sides of an argument at the same time: he avers that
all is well "in this bryttaine land"; he also declares that Camell must
be living in some paradise if his home town, Lyn, is free from strife.
Harry Whoball's "mon," Richard Beard, enters the lists with another short
poem, "Camelles Crosse Rowe," which is of less interest as part of the
flyting than as a sample of a kind of verse which has a long history,
dating back in English to the Anglo-Saxon runes.\[15\] Beard's crosse rowe,
addressed to Camell, is didactic and repetitive. For some fifty-six
couplets, each headed by a letter of the alphabet, Beard harps on the
wickedness of slander and the corresponding virtues of truth, closing
with pious admonitions to Camell to seek wisdom.

The final poem in the broadside series is signed by T. Hedley: "of

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\[15\] The crosse rows were sometimes "shaped verses," appearing on the
page in the form of wings, crosses, or altars, sometimes as "Christ's
cross rowe" from which the word "criss-cross" is derived, and they were
utilized both as poetic convention and as devices for teaching the
alphabet. Beards collection of sententiae, therefore, was appropriate
to the form.
such as on fantesye decree and discuss; on other men's works lo Ovid's tale thus." Hedley tells the story of the musical contest between Pan and Apollo at which the adjudicator, Midas, wrongly chooses the rough woodland melody of Pan; for his error in judgment Midas is cursed with ass's ears by Apollo. Hedley warns each potential Midas:

    Syns such there are that lyve at thys day yet
    Whych have hys skyl, hys judgment and hys wit
    And take upon them both to judge and know
    To them I wyshe even thus and to no mo
    That as they have hys judgment and hys yeares
    Even so I woulde they had hys fayre long eares.

Two items, "A Decree betwene Churchyarde and Camell," and "The Judgement of the Authour," both by Churchyard and both long and repetitive, are to be found in the Huntington Library volume but are not listed as extant in broadside form. They add nothing new to the charges levelled by the contestants but do indicate that Churchyard believed himself victor in the contest. Also, they continue the parallel with legal procedure in the use of the terms "decree" and "judgement." It is worth noting that the word "conclusion" is a technical term in English law to denote a defendant's last speech before he rests his case.

Of the outcome of the flyting, either on "Rex" or on the contestants, there is no record, although the Dictionary of National Biography includes an interesting note in its life of Churchyard:

    In "The Fortunate Farewell" Churchyard expresses his gratitude to the old Duke of Somerset for a favour rendered in the time of Edward VI when the poet, for publishing some verses that had given offence, was arrested and brought before the privy council.

    While the Churchyard-Camell flyting may not appeal to the modern reader, presumably it achieved some degree of popularity in the mid-
sixteenth century. Perhaps it is pertinent for us to inquire if this flyting can be considered successful as a vehicle for satire. There are, of course, many definitions and many modes of satire, and it is obvious this obscure work never reached the heights possible to the satiric spirit. If, however, we examine the "Contention" on its own terms several points emerge. First, the poets did not, like the Scottish flyters, engage in verbal combat for the sheer fun of entertaining their readers by displays of virtuosity in verse. Second, Churchyard apparently had the Juvenalian aim of arousing indignation in the "Dreme"; to some extent he was successful in pursuing the traditional satirist's line of preaching an unpopular cause as he presented a bipartite structure in which the face of virtue was shown together with its opposite aspect of vice. Third, the failure of the "Contention" resulted from an imperfect fusion of the fictional and the didactic. The introduction of a dream device, an ideal commonwealth, and a Davy Dicar all served to start the work off on a fictional level. The entry of Steven Steple, Harry Whoball, and other fictitious characters should have helped sustain the flyting on the fictional level; unfortunately, the prosy didacticism of both Churchyard and Camell intervened. Thus, where Swift was able to carry his readers off on imaginary trips with Gulliver at the same time that he was revealing some ugly facts about Britain, the Tudor flyters were unable to retain the identity of their fictional selves. If, as I have suggested, the intent of the "Contention" was to parody the courts or legal processes of the time, then this intent was only partially realized. Davy Dicar and his friends were characters in search of an author.
This contention invites comparison with the Gray-Smyth controversy because both are works of social criticism under the guise of poetic exchange; Gray and Smyth are concerned with a specific religious issue, whereas Churchyard is satirizing the general state of England with particular criticism of the law and of unpunished law breakers. Also, the Gray-Smyth exchange shows no preconceived pattern nor does it develop any specific structure, but the Churchyard-Camell altercation begins with the frame of a digger’s dream, a frame that the later bound edition of the broadsides attempts to preserve. The Preface to the bound poems invites the reader to form his own interpretation of the dream: "To scanne what he dreameth eche man hath a will."

The "Dreme" also invites comparison with More's Utopia, published in English translation in 1551, a year earlier than Churchyards's poem:

Therefore, when I consider and weigh in my mind all these commonwealths which nowadays anywhere do flourish, so God help me, I can perceive nothing but a certain conspiracy of rich men procuring their own commodities under the name and title of the commonwealth. They invent and devis all means and crafts, first how to keep safely, without fear of losing, what they have unjustly gathered together, and next how to hire and abuse the work and labour of the poor for as little money as may be. These devices, when the rich men have decreed to be kept and observed under colour of the commonalty, that is to say, also of the poor people, then they be made laws.... Another counsellor puttheth the kind in remembrance of certain old and moth-eaten laws that of long time have not been put in execution, which because no man can remember that they were made, every man hath transgressed. The fines of these laws he counselleth the king to require, for there is no way so profitable nor more honourable than the which hath shew and colour of justice.16

The "Dreme" may not have been intended as the initial challenge to a poetic controversy; certainly it was not shaped as a four-part flyting lore's Utopia, ed. John Warrington (London, 1951), p. 134.
with two commissars in the mode of Skelton or the Scots. It is more in the
nature of a torneymen, a contest in which many contenders take turns.\footnote{Jeanroy, p. 346.}
The age favored "mirrors" of the time and the real or fictional multiple
authorship. The Mirour for Magistrates is in no sense a flyting but
demonstrates a trend toward anthology in the mid-sixteenth century. The
Epistolae Obscurorum Virorum, published in English in 1515, is a
Continental model manifesting similarity to the Churchyard-Camell contention
in its tendency to satirize under fictitious names; indeed, the Tudor poets
were probably acquainted with this collection which went into many editions.
Political commentaries or satires of this nature may merit consideration
as flytings if they take the form of exchange of poetic invective between
rival poets such as Churchyard and Camell, but do they have any value as
poetry? Strictly, no. Before we condemn them as some form of rhymed
prose, we might give some thought to whether or not they represent Tudor
awareness of a problem which is absent in the more medieval flytings of
Dunbar and Skelton: the poet's relation to his culture. During the past
century, the theme of the lonely, alienated artist has been central to
literature and literary criticism; but before the theme there was the
dilemma--a dilemma that had being long before the nineteenth century.
Roy Harvey Pearce defines the dilemma thus:

It is the problem of constructing a society in which men can
remain individuals and at the same time share values, ideas,
and beliefs, in which they can realize themselves as somehow
at once different and alike, separate and together, democratic
and en masse....We participate in society doubly, so to speak,
as individuated and as socialized selves, and the struggle to
survive as whole men is the struggle to make one kind of
participation co-ordinate with the other....our poetry, being the intensest kind of 'imaginative participation' in the life around us, must also tend to express, on the one hand, our sense of personality and, on the other, our sense of culture. 18

The bardic poets could visualize themselves as treasurers of tradition or senachies; Skelton, in the early Renaissance, perceived his role as poet as deriving from the vates, prophet and counsellor. The minor Tudor flyters are like the echo of a Greek chorus, commenting on the action but outside it. They are aware of the appearance of reality but not of its texture; the "eternal problem of community, of finding a moral and social order which men can accept"19 is theirs although they are unable to participate imaginatively in it. The poems are attempts to define social experience rather than, in Pearce's words, "maximally indviduated experience." This is not to say that the Tudor versifiers were the first "culture" poets; however, within the general tradition of flyting they were self-conscious members of a society instead of conscious artists—they gave "primary devotion to culture."20

Churchyard himself has a statement in the dedicatory epistle to a volume of his poems which may well serve as a final comment on the "Contention Betwyxt Churchard and Camell":

And that from my head, hand, and penne can floe no farre fatched eloquence nor sweet aprinkling speaches (seasoned with spiced termes), I call my workes Churchyarde Chips.

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19 Ibid., p. 370.

20 Pearce, p. 372.
Fedella: What wouldst thou do with the devil?
Rodomant: Only exercise my body; take the air now and then over steeples, and sail once a month to Scotland in a sieve, to see my friends. I have a grannam there, if I had been ruled would not have seen me want a devil all these years.¹

What distinguishes the Polwart-Montgomerie flyting from others is its emphasis on witch ritual—its comic treatment of a theme which was later to deepen the gloom of Shakespeare's most somber tragedy, Macbeth.

If every culture is a conversation made up of many voices, then one of the most strident voices of Scottish culture between 1550 and 1650 was the voice of the witch cult with its attendant trials and tortures. Witchcraft was nothing new, of course, in the British Isles; as early as 1324 Dame Alice Kytler, Ireland's only witch, had been tried and burned. The reappearance of the cult in sixteenth-century Scotland can be attributed in part to the religious upheavals of the time. The Scottish historian, Agnes Mure Mackenzie, states that witchcraft was an unpredictable offshoot of Calvinism, that peasants who felt they were not predestined for

heaven, or who were social outcasts in their communities made a religion of satanism:

Besides the various forms of Christian profession, there was also in Scotland another religious body which may be mentioned here to complete the picture. It is seldom more than casually referred to, although all social historians agree on its effect on the mental atmosphere...This was the Kirk of Satan, whose dark shadow lies thick on the seventeenth century though it was black enough on the sixteenth...

A form of loosely-organized Satanism did exist and in fact was widely prevalent. Its origin was no doubt a survival through the Middle Ages and were given a wider, more general appeal by the Calvinism of official teaching. If one were ineluctably predestinate to salvation, the extra power cheated out of the Devil was welcome: while the greater the sinner, the greater the glory of God in his justification. If one were damned whatever one should do, it was only a matter of mere common sense to make terms with the authorities of Hell and win as much power and pleasure as might be possible in one's passage to the certain eternal flame. And apart from all these more or less rational reasons, the orgiastic practices of the cult gave an escape from the ferocious repressions of a purely negative theory of ethic shackled about a race of hot-blooded vigour. Also, the God of Calvin's full creed was such that one is not surprised that many witches showed a sincere devotion to their master and went to their death with the joy of willing martyrs. The whole ugly cult, and its psychological background of causes and consequences emit a sort of miasmatic vapour that hangs round the hard shapes of the age's conflict—a vapour at once gross and unsubstantial, lit with the gleam of over three thousand fires that have each a living human body at his heart.²

Literary treatment of witchcraft reflects contemporary attitudes. In the early phase of the revived cult, from 1580 to 1600, the literature of both England and Scotland reveals disbelief or amused tolerance of magic and of satanism. Thus Reginald Scot's A Discoverie of Witchcraft (1582), Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay (1597), and Shakespeare's

King Henry IV, Part 1 (1597) reflect the sardonic incredulity of the hard-headed Englishman. For example, Harry Hotspur scorns the claims of the Welshman, Glendower:

Glendower: Where is he living, clipped in with the sea That chides the banks of England, Scotland, Wales, Which calls me pupil, or hath read to me? And bring him out that is but woman's son Can trace me in the tedious ways of art And hold me pace in deep experiments.

Hotspur: I think there's no man speaks better Welsh. I'll to dinner.

Mortimer: Peace, Cousin Percy! You will make him mad.

Glendower: I can call spirits from the vast deep.

Hotspur: Why, so can I or so can any man. But will they come when you do call for them?

Glendower: Why, I can teach thee, cousin, to command the devil.

Hotspur: And I can teach thee, coz, to shame the devil
By telling truth: tell truth and shame the devil.
If you have power to raise him, bring him hither, And I'll be sworn I have power to shame him hence. (III, ii, 44-61)

Whether Glendower claimed to be a magus who controlled devils or a witch who was controlled by them was irrelevant to Hotspur who denigrated the power of magic. Hotspur's attitude was probably typical of the average Englishman in the reign of Elizabeth.

North of the Tweed, however, the era of witchcraft had already entered its more horrifying phase. King James VI became personally involved in the development of the cult when thirty-nine witches, members of three covens, were indicted for causing storms which almost wrecked the
ship of the king's bride, Anne of Denmark, on its way to Scotland in 1589.³

The king's interest in witchcraft impelled him to rebut Reginald Scot's scepticism by publishing an affirmation of belief in the power of witches and the existence of satanism; his Daemonologie was printed in 1597.

As the seventeenth century got under way the frightfulness of both cult and witch hunt grew, particularly in Scotland: witches testified to orgies of sexuality, bestiality, and blood sacrifices of infants; legal practitioners of torture applied burning pincers to suspected witches, or needle pricks on sensitive parts of the body. Undoubtedly death, even at the stake, was a release for many wretched suspects.

The prevalence of the witch cult in Scotland explains in some measure the strong element of the supernatural in many Scottish ballads, and also what Kurt Wittig calls "the curious part played by the De'il in Scots literature."⁴ The cycle which began with a comic witch baptism in the Montgomerie-Polwart flyting of 1582 took on the tragic overtones of the seventeenth-century ballads, and ended with the rollicking witches' sabbat of Burns' "Tam O'Shanter" in 1791.

In one sense the Polwart-Montgomerie flyting also marked the close of an era: the poet-contenders were the last of the Makars--those courtly poets whose work had strong popular appeal. Alexander Montgomerie (1545-

³An account of the affair is given in Newes from Scotland (1591), ed. G. B. Harrison (London, 1924), and bound in the same volume with James VI's Daemonologie.

⁴Wittig, p. 141.
1615, friend and third cousin of James VI, had a mastery of poetic styles and modes in the tradition of Dunbar; but he had no successors.

Though born of a noble Scottish family, he spent many years in Europe as a soldier of fortune. For some time he was in the service of the king's French cousin, Esme Stuart, Seigneur D'Aubigny and Duke of Lennox, whom he accompanied to the court of James VI in 1579. As "kingis poyet laureat" Captain Montgomerie popularized French and Italian modes, particularly the sonnet, of which he became so skillful an exponent that he composed no less than ninety examples. He adapted the French verse forms of the grands rhétoriqueurs using, as we shall see, such rhyme schemes as rime batelee, rime brisée, and rime reforcée in the "Flyting."^5

Of Montgomerie's opponent, Sir Patrick Hume of Polwart, very little is known. Apparently he was in personal attendance on the king as Master of the Household and Gentleman of the Bedchamber. Only one poem of his, other than the "Flyting", is extant: "The Promine, conteyning the maner, place and tyme of the maist Illuster King James the Sext his first passing to the feildis: directit to his hieness: Be P. H. Familiar servitour to his majestie."^6

King James evidently arranged the flyting match between his "belovit Sandirs" and "Elfegett" Polwart.^7 Although Polwart was

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^6First published in Edinburgh in 1580, this poem has been reprinted in Pinkerton's Ancient Popular Poetry (Edinburgh, 1822). I have not seen the poem, but Allan Westcott (see below) describes it as "a piece of conventional extravagance."

^7The epithet resulted from the Flyting and can be found in Poem L 1 of New Poems by James I of England, ed. Allan F. Westcott (New York, 1911).
was responsible for some 473 lines of the flying as against Montgomerie's 354 lines, yet Montgomerie believed himself to be victor in the contest, boasting later in his own sonnet XXVII:

"Whose Highnes lauched som tym for to luik
Hou I chaist Polwart from the chimney nuik.

The contest to win the king's "chimney nook" begins with a 20-line salvo from Montgomerie in which he uses, with staccato effect, a combination of the French rhyme forms alluded to previously: rime renforcée in which the caesura rhymes with the end of the line, and rime brisée where the caesura rhymes with caesura:

Polwart ye peip lyk a mous amongest thornes
Na cuning ye keip; Polwart ye peip;
Ye luik lyk a sheipe and ye had two hornes;
Polwart ye peip lyk a mous amongest thornes.

Montgomerie's forceful opening contains the flyter's conventional challenge: he dares his opponent to match skill with him.

Unabashed, Polwart replies in alliterative octaves charging Montgomerie with writing while under the influence of wine, and threatening in turn to silence his adversary. Some curious lines in this reply are left unannotated by the Scottish Text Society editors, James Cranstoun (1887 edition) and George Stevenson (1910 edition). For example, in the first stanza of the reply Polwart says: "Thou sail be blasit of one beild." (You will be publicly denounced or banned from any shelter). Public proclamation of the "dittay" or indictment for witchcraft was standard practice.

In Polwart's third stanza there is a reference to "pricking" which may allude simply to the hurt imposed by one satirist on another, but may carry the additional association with the witch hunter's practice of
pricking a suspect to locate a devil's mark. All accredited witches were believed to have one spot on the body which was insensitive because Satan had nipped it during initiation rites.

In the next stanza Polwart follows the pricking reference with

Evil sprit I will no langer spair the Blaid, Blek the to bring in ane gwyse. (Rascal, blacken thyself to lead in a masked dance)

The blackening and the masks were features of the sabbat ceremonial as was the counter-clockwise dance against the sun—the "withershins" movement.

The motif continues in stanza five:

First fair, threid bair, with fundrit feit, Recanting thy unseamelie sawis, In pilgramage to allareit; Suin be content to quyt the caus And in thy teith bring in the tawis, With bekis my bidding to abyd, Quhidder thow wilt let belt thy bawis Or kiss all cloffis that standis besyde.

In this section Polwart is advising his adversary to proceed to the chapel at Loretto and recant his "unseemly saws." The Loretto chapel was, according to Cranstoun, the scene of some strange orgies; churchyards were, of course, favorite meeting places for covens. Montgomerie's "pilgrimage" is to be made on broken feet; is this an allusion to the bone-crushing torture of the "boot" which so often forced a confession out of a recalcitrant witch suspect? The last lines continue the theme: Montgomerie must "recant" by admitting Polwart as his master or suffer

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8Anna-Jean Mill suggests that masked dances were remnants of some kind of folk rite in her *Mediaeval Plays in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1927), pp. 11-16.
further punishment. Polwart puts himself in the situation of the Satanic Master by insisting on what writers on witchcraft delicately refer to as the osculum infame.\(^9\)

The final stanza of Polwart's reply reinforces his claim to power when he threatens to "conjure" his adversary. Thus far, the flyters appear to be about to indulge in a comic contest of magic rather like that between the rival magicians in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay.

Montgomerie enters the fray once more by hurling defiance at "mandrake" Polwart and daring him to try out his "science." He counters Polwart's charge of drinking with one of sheep stealing, recounting a fanciful episode when Polwart was indicted for stealing and perjury, but escaped the clutches of Bourreau the hangman by paying a pound fine and undergoing the penalty of scourging.

In the five stanzas that follow, Montgomerie appears to be making, on one level, a further extension of the crime of stealing. He accuses Polwart not only of sheep stealing but of stealing cows (a more gentlemanly occupation at that time), and finally of plagiarizing from Lyndsey and Chaucer. On another level the terms used are all associative: the scab on the shoulders connotes the devil's mark;\(^{10}\) the brand made by the point of the key suggests that early handbook on magic called The Key

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\(^9\)The kiss under the tail as token of submission to Satan is found in Guazzo's Compendium Maleficarum and also in Discoverie of Witchcraft, as well as in folklore.

\(^{10}\)Margaret A. Murray The Witch-Cult in Western Europe (Oxford, 1921). Dr. Murray states that the witches of eastern France were marked by Satan on the left shoulder. She also notes that two Scottish witches, Isobel Gowdie and Janet Breadheid, were nipped by Satan on the shoulder in a blood-sucking baptism. (pp. 84-85).
of Solomon. The line, "now god seu kowis quhairfra come ye," may be simply a pious wish against thievery but may also be a prayer against a witch who could render the cows milkless or barren, especially since the next line, "For all your Bombee, ye warred a little wie" contains the name of the Elizabethan witch, Mother Bombee. In the last stanza of the section, Montgomerie consigns his adversary to the fiends of hell, expelling him from the society of all "christened" men.

In his counter-attack, Polwart once more asserts his mastery over Montgomerie and commands him to

Cum and compeir upon thy knie
And kiss my fair fundatioun.

He sneers at Montgomerie's doggerel and disdains to descend to such "rowstie ratryme." He admits to being "Chaucer's man" but concludes that he is still superior to a drunken jester such as his opponent.

He then launches into the "just genologie" of Montgomerie whom he alleges to have been begotten of the Devil and a dun cow on a night when the fiend had been carousing at a beer banquet. The offspring of this union was nourished by a sow and lived for many years in pigstyes. When he grew up, in the poverty-stricken Highland county of Argyll, he learned to steal sheep and even to eat the cooked flesh of dogs. Such a miserable beggar must surely ask mercy of his opponent. Polwart next proceeds to suggest a "medecine" for his sick rival. Addressing Montgomerie as "Sir Scoundrel" he prescribes olive oil mixed with melancholy for the fever

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11 The Irish bards claimed the magical power of rhyming rats to death. See Elliott, pp. 35-37.
of folly. Other items of the prescription are bitter rhubarb, sweet syrup and, finally, a neck-halter.

Montgomerie replies to Polwart that it's a good blow that earns two in return. He goes on to reveal how, when, where and who begot the half-elf, half-ape Polwart. On an Allhallow Eve when fairies, elves, and other strange beings were abroad, a she-ape and an elf conceived the monstrous progeny, Polwart, who was born in a peat bog near Powmathorne.12 As the howling infant lay wrapped in sooty swine skin at the root of a rowan tree, ravens tugges at the bundle thereby drawing the attention of the wandering Weird Sisters who thought a mandrake was being uprooted. The Fates speculated on the parentage of the misshapen creature and called down frightful curses on the child. The subsequent lines, 290-345, form a catalogue of diseases ranging from gout to syphilis which were to befall the hapless creature. The Weirs continued their imprecations, cursing both child and progenitors and even those who would feed, clothe, or take care of the monstrous infant:

Both schame and sorrow on hir snowt that sufferis the to sowk;
Or acho that cairis for thy creidill, cauld be hir cast;
Or brinis ony bedding for thy blae bowk;
Or lowsis of thy ludyeotis so long as they lest;
Or offeris the ony thing all the lang oulk.

As for the child, he was to be deaf and dumb for seven years, lunatic at each full moon and, associating with cats and werewolves, he was to shun heaven and seek hell. Each Weird then cast her own spell on the mismade creature: the first deemed his polecat face fit only for

12Powmathorne is not known but the name suggests a place of thorns; thorn bushes are traditionally evil; for example, on a thorn "Mungo's mither hanged hersel." (Burns)
flying: the second decided that Nikniven should nurse him; the third devised that he should "drive dogs to dirt." His earthly end would be by shooting, strangling, or hanging. Many of the curses recall the imprecations hurled by satirists from time immemorial but it is also possible that Montgomerie and Polwart had recourse to prototypes such as Ovid's Ibis:

Mayst thou have limbs maimed and parts mutilated by the savage sword....May thy flesh be exposed by stripping off the skin ....Mayst thou be crushed small in a deep mortar and thy pounded bones sound like the wonted grain....As the gore ran diffused through th limbs of Hercules, so may pestilent poison devour thy frame....And as with the Syracusan bard whose throat was strangled, so may a noose stop the way of thy breath.\(^{13}\)

The resemblance is the more marked by mention of the Fate, Clotho, in both Ibis and the flying, as predictor of the dire future.\(^{14}\)

The Weird Sisters left the child in a ditch and departed. Soon Nikniven, mother of all witches, arrived with her coven, saw the "matchless monster" begotten of ape and incubus, and elected to baptize the bairn in the name of three-headed Hecate:

Thir venerabill virginis quhome ye wald call wiches
On tyme of their triumph thay tirlt me that taid;
Sum bakward on broad swis, and sum on blak bichis,
Sum in steid of ane staig, over ane stark munk straid.

Sum be force and effect the four winds fichis;
And nyne tymes withershines about the thorne raid;
And glowrand to the ground grivouslie gaipis,
By craft conjurand feyndis by force,


\(^{14}\) Throughout the flying Polwart charges Montgomerie with plagiarism, a charge later substantiated.
Furth of ane cairne, bysyde ane croce
Thir ladyis licht fra thair hors
And band thaim with raipis.
Syne bairfute and bairlegd, to bapteis that bairne.

To ane well went they west, by ane wood syde;
They saw the schit all-beschyttin and soipit in charne.
On ane thre headit Heeate in haist thair they cryit:
'As we have fund in this field this fundlin forfarne

First, his faith he forsaikis, in the feynd to confyde
Be vertew of thir wordis and of this raw yarn
And thryse thre and threttis knottis on ane blew threed
And of deid menis memberis, weill schewit in ane schoe,

Quilk we have band from top and taw,
Evin of ane hundred men and mae;
Now grant us, devillis, ere we gae
Our dewtie to doe.

The witches continued the ceremony by dedicating the child to
Mahoun by the moon, by the seven stars, by the floods, and by all the elements. They endowed the child with all the gifts of evil that he might help them in their work. As they spoke thunder rolled, lightening flashed, and winds blew; and the witches knew "Thair asking was grantit."

Nikniven then took the child in hand to teach him how to sail the sea in a sieve,\(^1\) and how to milk a hair rope.\(^2\) By the power of magic the cows from which the hair rope was made would cease to give milk, and thereby cause hardship to housewives and babies.

The baptismal ceremony was concluded by the witches as they clipped

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\(^1\)Only Scottish witches laid claim to this skill. See *Macbeth* I, i, 9.

\(^2\)Dr. Cranstoun in his "Notes to the Flyting" cites the common folk-lore belief that a rope made of the hair of several cows could be made to yield milk by a witch's hands if an incantation were recited.
the infant's hair, dedicating it to Mahoun, and named him "peeled Polwart." Because the hour was past midnight the hags could tarry no longer and set off to ride backward on bitches and brood-swine. The shaven infant they carried to Kate of Crieff, who for seven years nourished the young monster on the vilest of fairy food:

Bot wes no dayntie dische;
Ane foul phegmatik fowsum fiche:
Instead of sawthe, on it they piche.
Sike fude feid sike a foster! (L. 498-501).

The infant Polwart was bedded in an elder tree (associated in folklore with Satan) and, as the child squealed, the witches took up the cry. Their screaming caused panic among animals so that cattle bellowed unceasingly, geese craked, ducks quacked and dogs howled. The hags danced wild reels, conjuring up devils in their mad abandon; the devils conferred on their god-child, Polwart, the gifts of stealing and corrupting.

To this account of his early life Polwart retaliates with an invocation to the Furies for help against the frenzied outbursts of the

17Cf., Ibis:

So soon as, fallen from an impure mother's womb
his unclean body lay on the Cinyphian soil, a
nocturnal owl sat over against him in a tree-top
and uttered dismal sounds with death-foretelling
mouth. Forthwith the Furies washed him in the waters
of the mere, where flowed a channel from the Stygian
stream, and anointed his breast with poison of a snake
of Erebus, and thrice smote their blood-stained hands
together.

Mozley, p. 267.

18 Cranstoun gives an account of the activities and burning of a witch called Kate McNiven in the town of Crieff in 1715.

19 Margaret Murray refers to a taboo on salt in witch feasts.
lunatic Montgomerie who, he claims, is in the grip of moon-madness. He calls down fearful torments on his rival but asks that the raven desist from tearing apart the rascal poet until he has been compelled to retract his words.

Polwart then describes the physical appearance of his opponent: a louse-infested creature covered with ulcers, wrinkled from licentious living, red-nosed from drinking, bearing the scars of whippings on his shoulders, cankerous and loathsome beyond description.

Apparently this flying was not completed at one session because the section following is titled "The Second Part of Polwarts Third Flying." Polwart apologizes for altering his "style" as he takes a different approach in this segment:

Returning directlie agane to Argyle
Quhair last that I left him baith hairfute and bair
Quhair richtlie I raknit his race verie vyld
Discendit of a devil, as I did declair;

(1. 599-602)

The poet has exchanged the nine-line iambic stanza for the rouncefallis verse admired by King James—a thirteen-line dactylic unit ending in a four-line bob-and-wheel. In the rouncefallis measure he recalls the past career of Montgomerie who, in the wild glens of Argyle, had lived among goats, stolen poultry and, most shameful of all, had been addicted to the satanic vice of gambling. The worthless wretch, publicly proclaimed schismatic, had committed all seven deadly sins. Indeed this "caterpillar," babbling of witches, is defined in Arcandam's Astrologie as a blind fool

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20 Cranstoun explains that this work, published in 1578, was a "Booke to find the fatall Destiny, Constellation, Complexion and naturall Inclination of every Man and Childe by his Birth."
and fraudulent rascal whose mottled complexion and ass's ears signify
his attachment to strong liquor and senseless prattle. As for Montgomerie's
name, it is derived from Mount Gomora where the depraved rascal's sodomite
ancestors were smothered in smoke.

Polwart opens his fourth flyting against Montgomerie by forbidding
his opponent to match words with him again. He speaks disparagingly of
Montgomery's mad ravings regarding witches, warlocks and wraiths, calling
his antagonist a mere court jester, a Rob Stene.\(^{21}\) He advises Montgomerie
to cease playing the fool with dangerous talk about bogles, brownies, and
ghosts, suggesting that his rival has sat so long near the chimney nook
that his words reek of soot rather than sense. Polwart continues by
denying a charge of plagiarism:

\[\text{Thow said I borrowit blaidis } \left[\text{long passages}\right], \text{ quhilk is not trew:}
\text{The clene contrarie, smachart, salbe sene.}
\text{I never haid of that making ye mene}
\text{Ane vers in wreit, in print, or yet perquere}
\text{Quilk I can prive and clenge me wonder clene}
\text{Thocht singill wordes no wreiter can forbeir.}
\]

\[(1. 691-696)\]

He outlines the plan of his invective against Montgomerie—an
assault against his rival's forebears followed by an attack on the weak-
witted poet who has been unable to answer the charges. Polwart goes on to
accuse Montgomerie of lack of knowledge and judgment, maintaining that
Montgomerie stole his verses from Robert Semple or Porterfield:

\[\text{Farder thow flies with uther foulis wingis}
\text{Over-clade with cleerere collours then thy awin}
\]

\[(1. 729-730)\]

\(^{21}\)A marginal note in the Tullibardine MS states "Rob Stene the
kingis fuile."
Montgomery's poems, says his opponent, lack art or rhetoric but are patched together with fragments from despised Italian poems pretentious in style and full of repetition.

Polwart concludes with twelve short Stanzas of triple internal rhymes which are entitled in the Tullibardine MS "Pollart Guid Nicht."

This outburst of sheer virtuosity in invective is in the style of Dunbar's flyting:

Fond flytter, scheit schytter, bacoun bytter, befyld!
Blunt bleitter, paddok speitter, pudding eitter, perverse!
Hen pluker, closet muker, hous cuker, vere vyld!
Tanny cheikis, I think thow speikis with thy breiks, foul ers!

As we have seen, this contest is structured like its predecessor, the Dunbar-Kennedie flyting. The ritual of combat is observed when Montgomerie issues his formal challenge, a challenge which is met by Polwart's threat to silence his opponent forever. In addition, Polwart accuses his rival of drunkenness thereby provoking Montgomerie's counter charge that Polwart has stolen not only sheep and cows but also some lines from Chaucer. Thereafter the pattern of abuse is predictable: both poets discuss each other's "genologie," both draw unflattering portraits of each other's physical appearance, both fling accusations of licentious living. The flyting like the Dunbar-Kennedie model, becomes a thesaurian exercise and a display of metrical skill.

The charge of plagiarism is of interest because it suggests rivalry between medieval and Renaissance schools of poetry. As has been noted earlier, Montgomerie was the proponent of the modern French School of Ronsard while Polwart acknowledged being Chaucer's man, although he did
not admit to borrowing from Lyndesay. The issue of the old versus the new, the home-grown versus the exotic "Irish Italian," lent pungency to the pasquinade especially for a young poet-king who was later to publish his own poetics in the *Essays of a Prentise in the Divine Art of Poesie* (1586).

The bardic contest itself, however, drew upon classical and native tradition and folklore. To the traditional acerbity of the satirist, associated with an Archilochus or an Ovid, Montgomerie and Polwart added the bacchanalian and the burlesque. The "mirthles musick" and din of devils at the Polwart baptism would have been appreciated by that heroine of the fourteenth-century poem, "The Gyre-Carling." The gyre-carling, mother-witch of all Scotland, was a fitting ancestor of the Polwart-Montgomerie weirds. When her would-be suitor, Blasour, tried to abduct her by having her tower undermined by a multitude of moles, she requited him with so savage a blow that he "bled a quart of milk pottage inwart." Then, besieged by the "King of Pharie" and his elves, she changed herself into a sow, went "gruntlyng our the Greek sie" into Asia where she married "Mahomyte." Her departure left Scotland disconsolate because from that day the cocks would not crow and the hens would not lay.

Another shape-shifter in the native tradition of fabliau was King Berdok, also celebrated in an anonymous fourteenth-century poem of that name. Like Blasour, he discovered that wooing has its hazards. For seven years he courted Mayola, the cuckoo of Faeryland,

*Ane bony burd, and had bot ane e'e;*
*Nевirtheless king Berdok luvit hir weill*
*For hir forfute wes langer than hir heill.*
He saw Mayola milking her mother's cows, cast her into a basket on his back and set off for home, pursued by her father. All the forces of Faeryland, together with the kings of Portugal, Spain, and all Europe, attacked Berdok with bullets made of raw dough. The king, seeking refuge in the airhole of a lime-kiln, besought the aid of the gods; the gracious god Mercury turned the king into a fern bush which wagged to and fro, frightening off the king's enemies who "trowd it wes ane gaist."

The supernatural and the comic blend in Dunbar's "Kynd Kyttok," the tale of the poet's drunken grandame who, duly transported to heaven after a gay life, wearied of the poor quality of the celestial ale and quietly crept out of heaven to the nearest alehouse. On her return she was met by an infuriated St. Peter, who refused to permit her to resume her heavenly career as Our Lady's hen-wife. Unabashed, she went back to the tavern and became a dispenser of ale to thirsty, heaven-bound pilgrims.

Ghostly ale-wives and gyre-carlings with a macabre sense of humor were part of the Scottish picture; so were such poems as Robert Henryson's "Sum Practysis of Medecyne," probably written in the late fifteenth century. This cryptic and baffling piece did not necessarily beget the unusual section in the flyting called "Polwart's medecine," but there are similarities. Henryson's poem is in seven stanzas, each with a sub-heading such as "Dia Culcakit" (Prescribed for Colic), and each suggesting the preparation of impossible ingredients as cures for sleeplessness, cough, or other ills. Polwart, expelled from the society of christened men and bidden try his "science," appears to take the role of witch doctor literally when he prescribes for Montgomerie's ailments in a pattern
similar to that of the Henryson poem; he even uses terms such as "diadregma" and "diagducolicum" which resemble Henryson's "dia glaconicon," "dia custrum," and "dia glecolicon."

Perhaps the popularity of this flyting, both in Court circles and among the common people, arose in part from the conscious parody of Henryson, or even of Dunbar and Kennedie. Possibly flyting, quasi-dramatic in form, appealed to a people whose literature was notably lacking in great drama. Virginia Woolf has pointed out that the essential difference between a novel and a drama is that the novel deals with the particular but the drama deals with the general. In the same fashion a satiric poem may deal with the particular but a flyting as a mock agon is a social experience. The fascination with language prevails with spectators as well as flyters. Thus, in a stylized combat like the Polwart-Montgomerie contest, words are not used to communicate but to evoke; they have properties of sound and suggestion that are almost physical. The contestants fling language back and forth as one tries to chase the other from the king's chimney nook with the sheer force of sportive virulence. Furthermore, in the "word-killing," each combatant is exercising his ancient bardic right to be a "whipper, a scourger, a barber surgeon, an executioner, a 'doctour of physik."

Although the days of the incantational satirist with his cursing stones belong in the dim past, the "folk-fear" has finally "become focused and concentrated,

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22 Mary Claire Randolph, "The Medical Concept in English Renaissance Satire Theory: Its Possible Relationships and Implications," Studies in Philology, XXXVIII (April, 1941), 125.
either consciously or subconsciously, on the words themselves."  

For the Scots, therefore, the language of the flytings represents levels not of meaning but of emotional experience. The spectacle of two rival enchanters, Polwart and Montgomerie, flaying each other with words must have engendered pleasurable fear in an atmosphere of social excitement. Essentially then, the Scottish flyters, culling every enrichment in folk belief, custom, and story that derives from a sense of the past, differ from such Tudor poets as Gray, Smyth, or Churchyard in emotional urgency—an urgency which does not retreat from subjects like witchcraft or the decay of the Gaeltacht despite comic treatment. The Tudors may use devices of verse like "Heave and how rumbelow," or "Troll away," or fictitious adversaries such as Steven Steple or Western Wyll, but these remain artifice—extrinsic and ephemeral. The cold debate of the Gray-Smyth broadsides deals with an issue but fails to flesh in the characters of Gray, Smyth, or Thomas Cromwell; and the contestants have no joy in words.

The Gray-Smyth controversy shows us a political transition as seen by minor versifiers; the Polwart-Montgomerie flyting reveals a folk-literature in process: primitive incantatory invective descriptive of ripping, tearing, and blistering may no longer terrorize by its power to cut or kill, but it can still induce a shiver even in comic mimesis. Other elements in the complex which forms the social ambiance of this flytings are magic and folklore. The ancient agonistic rite of rival

\[\text{23Tbd., p. 131.}\]

\[\text{24Some of the folk superstitions have already been mentioned but the richness and range of the motifs are indicated by the classification in Appendix C.}\]
magicians finds sympathetic setting in a Scotland of satanic practices.
CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

Writers on satire usually dismiss the flyters as practitioners of an ancient tradition in which exchange of scurrility is the only sin of the poets concerned. As we have seen, flyting is not so monolithic. True, there is a tradition, extending from the hoopasaapaa of Hawaii to the nanga contests of the African Bantu, arguing a kind of free, floating aggressiveness which gives rise to the matching of wits in singing matches or extempore dialogue. In the case of the sixteenth century combats in England and Scotland, there is even a definite ritual: each poet at some point in the controversy makes the formal apologia of the satirist, regretting the necessity of stripping bare his opponent in public; the opponent, as made manifest in each round of the contest, is turned around and examined in the many facets of his physical appearance and personality with the gross exaggeration of caricature. The ceremonial pattern in some of the flytings is made up of four rounds or exchanges in which the rivals provoke each other to fresh outbursts of spleen and resort to all possible devices of technique in an effort to confound each other. Somewhere in the controversy there is an appeal to an impartial judge, although there is no proof that decisions concerning the merits of the contestants were
actually made. The contests were carried on in demotic language rather than the obscure poetic diction favored by the Provencal poets in the tenzo. These were the compositional principles in this ceremonial verse.

Such a genre is structurally and essentially static; herein lies one of the differences between flyting and formal verse satire as described by Mary Claire Randolph. In formal verse satire, vice is aired and examined in a bipartite structure which permits the opposing virtue to be shown in relief; the aim of the satirist, however, is to correct folly and vice by persuasion to rational behavior in the "sophisticated exegetical process." In the flyters, with the possible exception of Churchyard and Camell, no reform is intended, nor is anything dynamic nor developmental observed. Thus the flyters present a world-view which is essentially static; indeed their presentation, in the case of the Scottish flyters, is incidental, almost inadvertent, rather than central to the core of the work which is to draw a caricature of an opponent. Churchyard may, in "David Dicar's Dreme," intend to move his readers to thought and perhaps action but he is obviously so inhibited by censorship that he is compelled to retract much of his social criticism.

Yet the flyter, by the very fact that he portrays a witch-vexed Scotland or a religion-riven England consciously or unconsciously, proves that he is the Aristotelian zoon politikon writing from the very

heart of his culture. From the time that Donne made his statement that "no man is an iland," writers have been heading in the direction of the opposite ontological view. The alienation of the artist and indeed the essential solitariness of man have been central problems in literature. The situations whereby man is compelled to roll the rock of Sisyphus up his isolated mountain or is trapped within the cell of his individual hell, seeing no ultimate reason for living, have become commonplaces of what we call the human condition. To the modern writer there is no reality for man beyond his own self, and man "thus conceived, is an ahistorical being." The flyte, however, is a social animal, very much a part of the world of his time. In this framework of historicism the flyte is an observer, a unit in a hierarchy that embraces kings and subjects, politicians and Davy Dicars, bards and witches. In the poems we can examine objectively the reality of a world in motion; we cannot subjectively apprehend any human dilemma within the poets because we see our poets in stasis. The flyters are not Hamlets living in psychological conflict with environment, nor are they Kafkaesque or Joycean centers of consciousness creating their own "ghostly reality"; they are escaping neither from their world nor to any inward abyss of self. They are part of the sixteenth century "diurnal round," and they realize that world, its politics, its prejudices, and its vested interests, in a kind of pageantry of verbal aggressiveness.

The aggressiveness raises the whole question of the Adversarius.

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Freud posited a tyrant-father in primitive culture, but the tyrant was also the protector on occasion. Could the primitive situation be approached differently? Was there not also a sibling-enemy co-existing with the Father-Tyrant-Savior? The concept of conscious brotherly love as fostered by all religions indicates a prior condition of brotherly hate. Are the Fescennine verses, the Bionate diatribes, and the flytings to be regarded as the manifest projection of the individual's latent psychic aggressiveness on an Adversarius? The satirist sets up his straw man and the flyter chooses his opponent; both claim to let other human beings know, sometimes in jest, what their shortcomings are.

Insofar as humor is concerned, the Juvenalian indignation of the Tudor contentions is in contrast to the rollicking, irreverent tone of the Scottish poems. Other differences between English and Scottish treatment may be noted. The first concerns form: Scottish flytings are more highly stylized, utilizing intricate verse patterns and meter in the manner of French rhetoriqueurs; the English poets, except for Skelton who was imitating Dunbar, prefer the loosely-meshed broadside, and no attempt is made by one contestant to copy and outdo his opponent in an unusual pattern of meter and rhyme. The second difference is in language: Dunbar and the other Scots flyters were accustomed to using standard English, often of aureate variety, yet they show a more than Wordsworthian devotion to the language of the common man in contests of invective; the railing of the Tudor poets is pale and ineffectual beside the earthy richness of the Scottish speech. Finally, the Scottish poets are more interested in personalities; the English poets, even Skelton, are more concerned with issues. In this respect the Scottish
poets are more medieval than their English contemporaries. We can re­
call Dunbar's picture of a gaunt, ragged, kilted Kennedy just as we
recall Chaucer's Miller, whereas Davy Dicar is a nonentity; Dunbar's
technique is to portray a type, the itinerant Highland bard, by means
of focus on the man, Kennedie. In the same way, the Tudor poets show
more concern regarding the duties and responsibilities of constitutional
monarchy, while a Scot like Lyndesay gives more thought to the behavior
of his king as a man.

To sum up: poetic flyting has a tradition linked up with many
cultures, with the genus satire, and with rhetoric. Unlike the academic
disputation, however, the popular flyting shows adaptation of the tradi­
tion into bardic contest or broadside controversy. The adaptations are
important because the flytings, unimpressive as works of the creative
imaginative, are expressive of the poets' encounters with a sixteenth-
century world of many facets—law, religion, folklore, despotic rule,
and decay of medieval institutions such as bardic schools. The treatment
of the flyting tradition also indicates some differences between Scottish
and English literature of the time. It is significant that the sixteenth
century opens with the Dunbar-Kennedie flyting in a mode which is both
possible and popular almost a century later, in the hands of Polwart and
Montgomery. In England, however, Skelton's flyting has become outmoded,
supplanted by the journalistic broadside. Skelton scholars are in some
doubt as to whether to consider him a late medievalist or an early
Renaissance figure. His "Poems Against Garnesche" place him with the
Scots in a medieval milieu not too unlike the Teutonic court of Hrothgar:
the element of comitatus still binds king and courtier, the king's hall
is the setting for a mock tourney, and the king's courtier, whether warrior, buffoon, or poet, has license to jest or lampoon within limits—a kind of parliamentary privilege or congressional immunity that is not possible for Gray or Churchyard, but which becomes a cherished right of later democratic institutions. The Tudor flytings point up an England in transition, an England that has already become conscious of the decay of the medieval trust in a divine order and, in apprehension, seeks escape in meek complaint or in dreams of Utopia. The barbarians north of the Tweed can still enjoy their world-view despite social problems; for them there is the humor of the fabliau in even a grim situation, rather than angst. In each poet's apprehension of the contemporary scene lies the achievement of historic ambiance for the genre as a whole.
APPENDIX A

BROADSIDE CONTROVERSY BETWEEN GRAY AND SMYTH


The poems have been printed by Ernest W. Dormer in his biography of William Gray, entitled Gray of Reading (Reading, 1923).
A NEWE BALLADE MADE OF THOMAS CRUMWEL, CALLED
"TROLLE ON AWAY"

Both man and chylde is glad here to tell
Of that false traytoure Thomas Crumwell,
Now that he is set to learne to spell.

Synge troll on away, trolle on away
Synge heave and howe rombelowe trolle on away.

When fortune lokyd the in the face,
Thou haddyst fayre tyme, but thou lackydyst grace;
Thy cofers with golde thou fyllydst a pace.

Both plate and chalys came to thy fyst,
Thou lockydst them vp where no man wyst,
Tyll in the kynges treasure such things were myst.

Both crust and crumme came thorowe thy handes,
Thy marchaundyse sayled over the sandes,
therefore nowe thou art layde fast in bandes.

Fyrste when Kynge Henry, God saue his grace!
Perceyud myschefe kyndlyd in thy face,
Then it was tyme to purchase the a place,
Hys grace was euer of gentyll nature,
Mouyd with petye, and made the hys seruyture;
But thou, as a wretche, suche thinges dyd procure.

Thou dyd not remembre, false heretyke,
One God, one fayth, and ony kynge catholyke,
For thou hast bene so long a scysmatyke.

Thou woldyst not learne to knowe these thre;
But euer was full of iniquitie:
Wherefore all this lande hathe ben troubled with the.

All they, that were of the new tyrcke,
Agaynst the churche thou baddest them stycke;
Wherefore nowe thou haste touchyd the quycke.

Bothe sacramentes and sacramentalles
Thou woldyst not suffre within thy walles;
Nor let vs praye for all chrysten soules.

Of what generacyon thou were no tonge can tell,
Whyther of Chayme or Syschemell,
Or else sent vs frome the deuyll of hell.

Thou woldest neuer to vertue applye,
But couetyd euer to clymme to hys,
And nowe haste thou trodden thy shoo awrye,
Who-so-euer dyd winne thou wolde not lose;
Wherfore all Englande doth hate the, as I suppose,
Bycause thou wast false to the redolent rose.

Thou myghtest have learned thy cloth to flocke
Upon thy gresy fullers stocke;
Wherfore lay downe thy heade vpon this blocke.

Yet saue that soule, that God hath bought,
And for thy carcas care thou nought,
Let it suffre payne, as it hath wrought.

God saue King Henry with all his power,
And Prynce Edwarde that goodly flowre,
With al hys lordes of great honoure.

   Synge troll on awaye, synge trolle on away,
   Hevye and how rombelowe trolle on awaye.
A BALADE AGAINST MALICYOUS SCLAUNDERERS

Heue and how rumbelow thou arte to blame
Trolle into the right way agayne for shame.

Trolle into the way, trolle in and retrolle
Small charyte and lesse wytte is in thy nolle
Thus for to rayle vpon a christen soule
Wherfore men thynke the worthy blame
Trolle into the way agayne for shame.

Thou makest a trollyng hyther and thyther
Somtyme thou trollest thou canst not tell whyther
Butt if all thy trollynges were gathered togyther
Thy trollynge myght trym the and tourne the to blame
Wherfore trolle thou nowe into the way for shame.

Although Lord Crumwell a traytour was
Yet dare I saye that the kinge of his grace
Hath forguyen him that gret trespas
To rayle than on dead men, thou art to blame
Trolle now into the way agayne for shame.
In that that he the law hat offended
By the lawe he is iustly condempened
This mortall lyfe, full godly he ended
Wherfore to rayle thus, thou art to blame
Trolle into the way agayne for shame.

For all his offences in euery thyng
He asked god mercy and grace of the kynge
And of all the wyde world, for his transgressyng
Thou nor no man can say nay to the same
Trolle into the way then agayne for shame.

For bysshops haue now as they haue had
If preestes wold complayne, they were to mad
Wherfore thou apperest to be a popyshe lad
For usyng thy popery, thou art to blame
Trolle into the way agayne for shame.

For here thou upholdest both monkes and fryers
Nunnes and noughty packes, and lewd lowsy lyers
The bysshop of Rome, with all his rotten s quyers
To buylde such a church, thou art moche to blame
Trolle now into the way agayne for shame.
May not men thynke now in the meane ceason
That thou hast deserued by ryght and by reason
Is moch as he hath done for clokyng thy treason
For he was a traytour, and thou art the same
Trolle away papyst, god gyue the shame.

The sacrament of the aulter, that is most hyest
Crumwell belieued it to be the very body of Chriest
Wherfore in thy wryting, on him thou lyest
For the kynge and his counsell wyll wytnesse the same
Trolle into the waye, than agayne for shame.

Although that he of fyrth were but bace
Yet was he set vp of the kinges noble grace
Wherby it appereth that thou woldest deface
The kynges royall power, dispysyng the same
Trolle away traytour, god gyue the shame.

Is it thy facion thus craftely to saye?
Let vs for the kynge, and his lordes praye
And than at the last, to trolle them away
With heue and how rumbelow, thy wordes be the same
Both wrytten and printed, to thy great shame.
Hast thou no man els, thou dronken soll
But the kynge and his nobles, away for to troll
It were ynough for to cost the thy poll
Both thyne and all other, that wold do the same
Trolle away traytoure, god gyue the shame.

A prety wyse printer belyke he was
Which of his printyng, so lytell doth pas
To print such pylde poetry, as this same was
Lyke maker, lyke printer, two trolles of the game
A payre of good papystes, ye be Payne of shame.

God send all traytoures their hole desartes
God send small ioye, to all popyshe hartes
And euyll hap to as many as do take their partes
God send their purpose neuer to frame
But trolle them away with sorow and shame.

I pray God thou be not fownde one of those
That peruarteth the people, as I suppose
from redyng of gods worde, that goodly rose
Where the counsell commaundeth to occupy the same
Thou traytour allurest them this fayre floure to defame.
God preserue and kepe the kynges noble grace
With prince Edwarde his sonne, to succede in his place
God kepe them amonge us, longe tyme and space
Let all his true subiectes, say Amen to the same
And they that wold otherwise, God send them shame

FINIS

Prentyd at London in Lombard strete nere vnto the Stockes market at the
sygne of the Mermayde by John Gough.

Cum preuilegio Ad imprimendum solum. O domine in uirtute tua letabitur
Rex &c.
A LYTELL TREATYSE AGAINST SEDICYOUS PERSONS

To trolle awaye or trolle in let not trolle spare
If trolle truly trolle trolle nedeth not to care.
Of late I perused two purposes seuerall
In their kyndes clerkely handeled the truth for to tell
Trolle awaye and Trolle in men do them call
Treatyng vpon mater concernyng the late Crumwell
The one vtterly myndyng the other to repell
Trolle away (the trouth is) moche touched the quycke
And Troll in (somwhat galled) began for to kycke.

Yet Troll away tolde trouth it can not be denied
Declaryng the offence wherin Crumwell offended
Trolle in beyng troubled whan he it espyed
With trollynges to couer it full subtelly contended
Some trollers there be I wolde were amended
For who that craftely couereth any others offence
Of lykelyhode in his own herte hath the same pretence.

Truly to trolle it is no maner of shame
And trollyng vntrue is not to be mayntayned
As every thyng is so to gyue it propre name
Amonges all true honest men shulde not be disdayned
The scripture so techeth vs it can not be fayned
Agaynst scripture who stryueth he is none other lyke
Than a traytoure to his prince and to god and heretyke.

I entende not to trolle to take any parte
Divisyon to encrease it nedeth nothyng
But sorrowfully syghyng I trolle in my harte
With my selfe in mynde many times reuoluyng
How God to vs hath ordayned the most noble kyng
Who vniformly to knyt vs hath traueyled full sore
Yet many trifelyng trollers care lytell therfore.

But as trollers troubelous and full of enuy
At the lawes of God and of our good kyng
In their trollynges do trust yet that their olde heresy
All good ordrys set a partes shall florishe and sprynge
Their prechers no less conforte in their sermons do brynge
Euen lately exhortyng them auoydyng all drede
And persecution not regardyng throughly to procede.

With many wordes more troubious than now I wyll reherce
Not doutyng at all but at length they shalbe known
Suche trollyng trecherous my herte doth sore perce
Consyderyng howe sedicyously amonges us they besowen
Of late I well trusted they had ben overblown.
But now I well perceyve that neither favour nor smerte
From the body can expell that is rooted in the herte.

A trewe trollyng hert wolde be loth to pretend
Any purpose to mayntayne agaynst god or his kyng
The confessyon of an heretyke that lately dyd offende
And amonges others suffred for his deservyng
Secretly they embrace as a most precyous thyng
And yet playnly wyll I prove by good lawe and reason
Contayned therin both heresy and teason.

In any wyse imprynted they wyll not it shall be
The daungers therof in them salves mystrustyng
Wherfore every man may well perceyve and se
What hertes they do beare to god and our good kynge
Every of them secretly must have it in wrytyng
But Chryst sayeth verely there is nothynge conceled
But at length shalbe knowne and openly reveled.

Who agaynst them trolleth a Papyst they him name
They have no other thyng themselves for to defende
I wolde that all Papystes had an open shame
And that all heretykes themselves wolde amende
Than shulde we have no cause further to contende
But uniformly to lyve the one with the other
And joyfuly to enhabit as brother with brother.
Such shuld be our trollynges Christ us so teacheth
Communding ever peace amonges us for to be
Untruly he trolleth that otherwyse preacheth
Styreng to any sedicion malyce or envye
Where banisshed is discorse and raygneth all charite
That realm in god resteth and god is in it
Being charite himselfe as sayth the holy writ.

Then to wardes that charite trolle we on a pace
Avauncyng our selves with all convenyent spede
Amore acceptable pilgrimage surely never was
For which god gave to man any meryte or mede
That labour or gret burden let us nothing drede
Nor regardyng the wylfulness of our body or flesshe
For at the iorneyes ende Christ wyll us refresshe.

And as true trollers togither let us remayne
Perfectly fast knyt in one peace unyte and love
With glory unto god evermore glad and fayne
Our noble Prince truly to serve as doth us behove
And all others to tendre as duty doth us move
Usyng styll amonge us the selfe same love and concorde
Which is to us commaunded by Christ the eternall lorde.
And nowe in that love let us all with one voyce pray
For the preservacion of Henry our most noble kyng
And Katheren our Quene that they togither may
Prosperously contynue to their hertes desyring
And Edward our Prince that most angelyke thing
That they all togither may long lyve and rest
And after with him to raygne qui in celis est.

God save the kyng!

To Trolle away or Trolle in let not Trolle spare
If Trolle truly Trolle Trolle nedeth not to care.

Composed by Thomas Smyth, servaunt to the kynges royall maiestye
And clerke of the Quenes graces counsell though most unworthy.

Finis.
A TREATYSE DECLARYNGE THE DESPYTE OF A SECRETE SEDICYOUS PERSON

THAT DARETH NOT SHEWE HIM SELFE

His doynge amonget trewe men shuld not be had in place
That feareth to tell his name & shameth to shewe his face.

Why I thus do wryte is greatlye to be mused
But before I departe It shall appere more playne
Besechynge all honest men to haue me excused
Though (as no lasse bounden) I do seme very fayne
By veryte to waynquysshe malyuole dysdayne
Force me so forceth and wylleth me to wryte
Truely for the truths sake and nothynge for despyte.

And nowe briefly to my purpose the effecte is thys
Of late I wrote two lybelles not thynkynge to offende
But perceyuynge amonge vs thynges to be amyss
Styll styrrynge and procurynge vs lewdly to contende
Of such indecent ordre I desyred the ende
For the whych cause only I toke on me to wryte
Truely for the trueaths sake and nothynge for despyte.
But nowe I well perceave I rubbed some on the gall
Which causeth them to grunte and earnestly to grone
Wel, (be as be maye) I can not do with all
It wyll not from the flesshe that is rooted in the bone
For my true maenynge some shewe theym selfe full prone
By sclaunder to deface me withall theyr power & myght
Nothynge for the trueths sake but all for mad despyte.

They name me a papyste and saye I do not love
None other but Papystes and men of popysshe mynde
The trewe tryall wherof I referre to God above
And consequently to others what they can prove & fynde
O man mal cyous that woldest to fayne blynde
The good intentes of others which truely do and wryte
Labourynge theyr destruccion through serpetyne despyte.

If iustely you can prove as you declare in wrytynge
That I love none but papistes tha may you wel maytain
Me to be a traytour both to God and our good kyng
To the iustt tryall of the whiche I woll dryve you playne
For you it is to late to call in your wordes agayne
Though as a lurkyng lorrel your name you woll not wryte
Both you shalbe knownen and your develysshe despyte
If you have knowen any such treason to be in me
Then you in your dewtye have bene very neglygent
The parte of every true hert towards his kynge shuld be
What he knoweth agaist his grace furthw to make evydet
Who conceleth others treason as a traytour doth consent
Wherfore this your doyng may appere to ech mas syght
Nothyng for the truethes sake but all for lewde despyte

You declare furthermore that lately I rebelled
Agaynst the kynges msiestye and his counsell all
For the whiche sclaunder I am greatly compelled
Before the hygher powers this matter for to call
As surely I woll do doubtte you it not at all
At whose handes I woll asks but iustye and ryght
Specyally for the truethes sake & nothyng for despyte.

Yet Catho ye wyse doth teach me & byddeth me not to care
So as my lyfe be honest let the wycked saye theyr mynde
We can not forbyd mens speche wherfore let them not spare
Nature in everythyng e woll shewe her proper kynde
Whiche to be proued true is easy ynough to fynde
In that that you haue done sparynges not to write
Nothyng for the truthes sake but all for mad despyte.
That wherewt you be grued is alwayes forth comyng
My name playnely thereunto I woll it not denye
And I redy to be punysshed for suche my doynge
If I haue so deserued and can be found cause why
Wherfore you be moche to blame so to rayle and crye
Openly detractynge me agaynst all lawe and ryght
As I am I woll be knowne so shalbe your despyte.

I could say some what more, but I mynde not to contende
As the tree by her fruytes is alwayes chyefely knownen
So I doubt not by your workes before this matter ende
You shalbe well perceaued & what blastes you haue blowen
And what kyndes of sede euery other man hath sowen
Wherfore I do aduyse you be sure you stande upryght
I doubt not to ouerthrowe you in your own despyte.

Your boke doth open mater not mete I shold her tocche
But within shorte tyme it shall shewe it self more plyne
Your doynges well declare how in herte you styll grouche
And agaynst whom because you can not your wyll obtayne
Your malice doth so blynd you & byddeth you not refrayne
But throughly to procede blusteryng with force & myght
Forgettynge clean your dewtye and all for mad despyte.
And now to conclude O Dauid holy prophet & kyng
Vnto god omnipotent most hyghe and eternall
In Psalmys here with the will I crye and synge
Judge thou me (o Lorde) that arte judge ouer all
Discerne thou my cause and let me to the call
To be rydde from the wycked which labour day & nyght
Thy veryte to vanquysshe by deeytfull despyte.

And as thou art Lorde of lorde & kyng of kynges
Preserue our noble kyng our most precyous treasure
With Katherine our Quene & graunt yt theyr procedynges
In longe lyfe maybe prospere vnto thy will and pleaure
And to Edward our Prynce that most redolent floure
Infuse in theym they grace and helpe we maye be quyte
Of these sectes sedicyous so swellinge in despyte.

God Saue the Kynge.
His doynges among trew men shuld not be had in place
That feareth to tell his name and shameth to shewe his face.

By Thomas Smythe, seruante to the Kynges Royall Maiestye
And clerke of the Quenes Graces councele (thoughhe mooste unworthy).

Imprinted at London in Pater noster rowe, at ye sygne of our lady pytye by John Redman ad imprimendum solum.
AN ANSWERE TO MAISTER SMYTH, SERVAUNT TO THE KYNGES MOST ROYALL MAIESTYE
AND CLERKE OF THE QUENES GRACES COUNSELL THOUGH MOST UNWORTHY

Whether ye trolle in or els trolle out
Ye trolle vntruly loke better about.

Where as of late two thinges ye parused
Concerning the treason of Thomas Crumwell
Undoubtedly both your wyt and your syght were confused
Lackynge a medecyne blynnesse to expell
Put on your spectacles and marke it well
Than shall you se and say maugre your hart
That trolle in hath played a true subjectes part.

For where as trolle a way (as ye say) told trouth
Declaring the offences wherein Crumwell offended
It was not the thyng wherwith trolle in was wroth
For in that poynt Troll in Troll away commended
But this was the mater wherfore they contended
Trolle away vnder pretence of trollyng against treason
Practised proude popery as apperith by reason.
And ye supporting the same your pen runneth at large
Boldly as blynde bayerd ye write in his defence
And in your myscheuous maner ye lay falsely to my charge
Sayeng who that craftely coloureth any others offence
Of lykelyhode in his owne hert hath the same pretence
But here ye speke of lykelyhode and so blyndly go by gesse
Your fondnesse is the folyssher and my faute is the lesse.

An horse beyng nothing galled of force ye may make to kycke
With spurryng and with prickinge more than reson would requyre
But if the horse were lustye coragious and also quycke
Ye might be the fyrst perchaunce that might lye in the myre
As wyse as ye haue ben drowned in their owne desyre
Many a man anothers mischefe of malyce wyll prepare
And yet him selfe the fyrst that is caught in the snare.

Bycause of making stryfe (ye say) ye wyll take neither parte
But here ye breke promyse for agaynst all reason and right
Speking with your mouth that you think not with your harte
Agaynst trolle in ye take trolle awayes parte with all your myght
Tush all things lyghtely that ye make amonge them selues do fyght
Wherfore whatsoeuer ye write or saye gretly it shall not skyll
For if ye speke any thing wysely I think it be agaynst your wyll.
But blyndly haue ye sclaundered me good maister Thomas Smyth
Scraping together scriptures your madnesse to mayntayne
Truly your rude rowsty reason being so farre from the pyth
Had nede of suche a cloke to kepe it from the rayne
For all the worlde may perceyue how falsely ye forge and fayne
Yet styll you affyrme your falshed so though ye knew thinges presysely
Christes blessyng on your hert forsoth ye haue done full wysely.

Ye rumble amonge the scryptures as one that were halfe mad
Wrestyng and writhyng them accordyng to your owne purpose
Facyonynge and framyng them to your sayenges good and bad
Lyke as the holy Papystes were wont to paynt their popyshe glose
Do ye take the holy scripture to be lyke a shypmans hose?
Nay nay although a shypmans hose wyll serue all sortes of legges
Yet Christes holy scrypture wyll serue no rotten dregges.

Counsell with some tayler whan that ye wryte nexte
Take measure of diuinyte before ye cut the facyon
So shall ye square your scryptures and the better trym your texte
And than shall men of lernyng commend ye operacyon
But howe shulde he be connyng that knoweth not his occupacyon
Howe shulde a cobler cut a cote or a smyth tast good wyne
Or how shulde you scarcely a clerke be now a good deuyne?
What lyuyng man (excepte it were you) beynge in his right wyttes
Wolde write as ye haue written and all not worth a myte
I think it be some peuysshe pange that cometh ouer your hert by fyttes
Under the coloure of charyte to worke your cruell spyte
If men wolde marke your madnesse and beholde your deuelyssh delyte
Shuld se how ye wrest ye scripture to your sayeng not worth ii. chippes
And ioyne them all togither as just as Germans lyppes.

Whan ye haue spytte your poysson and sayde euyn the worst ye can
Than come ye in with charite wylyng all stryfe to ceaze
But surely good maister Smyth ye speke lyke a mery man
Moche lyke a comen pyke quarell that stryfe wolde encrease
Continually cryeng in frayes holde kepe the kynges pease
Butthose be pretty pretty peace makers in dede for euery daye
That styll bestowe mo strokes than they that began the fraye.

What wyse man wolde not laugh for to here you bragge and boste
Of your name your seruyce of your offyce and all this gere
As though ye were prymrose perelesse and a ruler of the roste
By the declaryng wherof ye thinke to put pore men in fere
But your braggyng and your bostyng shall neyther be here or there
As long as I may indifferently be suffred to vse my pen
Ye shall never be able to face me out with a carde of ten.
A wyse man wolde haue prayed god and than prayed for the kyng
The which of their gret goodnesse to your office dyd you call
And not to haue bragged therof and than put it out in printyng
For ye stande not so sure but it is possible ye may fall
And though your office be great I truste your power be but small
Or els parchaunce ye wold quickly thrust a poore man among the thornes
But god almyghty prouydeth well to sende a shrewde cow short hornes.

Christ preserue the kynges most noble grace & sned him long lyfe
Euen Henry the eight (next vnder god) of this church the hed supreme
Christ preserue & kepe quene Katheryn his most lawfull wyfe
Christ preserue Prince Edwarde the very right heyre of this realme
Christ stylly ensence their noble counsell with the influence of heauen
Christ for his tendre mercy amende all thing that is a mys
Christe sende maister Smyth more charite whan his good pleasure is.

Amen

By me a poore man whose herte if ye knewe
Wolde be the kynges seruaunte as fayne as you. W.G.

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solum. And to be solde in Paternoster rowe by John Turke at the sygne of the Rose.
AN ENVOY FROM THOMAS SMYTH UPON THE ANSWER OF ONE

W.G. LURKING IN LORRELLS DENNE FOR FEARE MEN SHULDE BYM SEE

Whether I troll here, or troll ther, I will so troll aboute
That in my trolling, I do trust, as you are, to troll you oute.

Nowe with no lesse salutacyon, that to such doth pertayne
Unto you I do present, this lytell poore treatyse
Wyllynge you to understande, and also to knowe playne
I haue receyued, your lewde lybell, when you enterpryse
Both me and my doynges, full proudely to despyte
But bable what you lyst it skylleth not a whyt
Remember well this worde, hereafter cometh not yet.

You ruffle, and you rayle, for malyce and despyte
And as a ragynge ruffyen your selfe you do shewe playne
For as moche as you be greued, with that, that I dyd wryte
Which I wyll neuer denye, but throughlye mayntayne
Yet (as you wryte) in one poynthe, you haue cause to complayne
For that I spake but of lykelyhod and wente but by gesse
Of the treson in your herte you knowynge there no lesse.
If with the poynte of my penne, I do you so spurre and prycke
That therby you be greued and greatly styrrred to yre
Yet doubte I not to syt sure all though you wynche and kycke
Fast closed in my dewty to saue me from the myre
But in your flynges take hede, beware I saye the fyre
Or some other galtrope take thys prouethe for a token
The pot so often goeth forth at last it commeth home broken.

You are angry that I my selfe so openly declare
My name playnly dyscryuynge, and of my seruyce the pyth
All honest men thynk, I shulde no lesse, wherfore I ne care
Though mad malyce moue you to he despyted thervith
Hit haue plesed you, to compare, the cobbler with the smyth
Your proude skorne wherin is easye ynough to be founde
Yet better is a cobbler than an ydell vagabounde.

In openynge my name and seruyce this was myne entente
In case that for my doynges I were thought worthy blame
Any other person gyltles therfore shuld not be shente
Consydred (as is well knowne) many be of my name
Myne office therfore I added and thought therin no shame
Nether braggyng, not bostynge as to my charge you laye
Who is naught hymselfe so judgeth in others alwaye.
A true man shameth neuer, to shewe his name and face
A thefe hym selfe mystrusteth and is euermore in doubte
Lest that his leudef lyuynges shulde present itself in place
As commenly it is sene at lengte trouth is tryed ouete
So in lykewyse you do seke all cornors rounde a boute
But it woll not helpe you, though a whyle there be delaye
Tyme shall trye your colour, be it russet, blacke or graye.

Of rumblynges in scryptures you do me much reproue
Well yf your wyttes do serue you my doynges to amende
Come forth and shew your face as to honestye doth behoue
And lay vnto my charge what you can reprehende
May May I am sure, you do it lest intende
In raylynges is your russe, in your spelunke whan ye syt
But remember well this worde hereafter commeth not yet.

Full wysely you counsell me to some taylour to resorte
For shapynge out of scryptury my texte the better to frame
You can not hyde your secte nor yet your brotherly sorte
(A clergy for the deuyll) you shewe your selfe the same
As Taylours Cobblers and Tylers doctous of worthy fame
Vagaboundes Ruffyens and others amongst whom you rynge your bell
And euen lyke as you be so set you forth your counsell.
Blusterynge in your boldnes you wolde your selfe a traytour proue
Upon the only pretens of my most desyred fall
The mayntenans of popery you say I do most loue
Which yf you knowe trewe than a traytour I maye you call
For suche your concelement but I wold dryue you to the tryall
Both our doynges shall appere thoughhe deferred for a space
I am no W.G. I dare well shewe my face.'

The rest of your raylynges I woll as nowe omyte
Upon suche purpose peuysshe my tyme I woll not spende
They do naught but declare the lewde vse of your wyte
And what malyce of herte to-wardes other you pretende
You haue no nother buckler wherwith your selfe to defende
Who rebuketh your secte or wolde reforrne your heresye
Amonge you strayte he is a mayntaynour of popery.

Thus though you wolde hyde your selfe yet man may easely knowe
What fayned hertes you do beare to God and our good kyng
His grace hath ordeyned lawes which cleane to ouerthrowe
What trauayll is dayle taken to euydent is the thynge
We should beware your secte for surely you wolde fayne brynge
Some other to rayne ouer vs yf you wylte by what shyfte
Example we haue hereof Reade of Kyng Henry the fyte.
There maye we playnly fynde what a detestable sorte
Of false fayned hertes agaynst thyr kynge dyd ryse
Myddyngge to chose another kynge that wolde them supporte
In theyr naughtye errours and mayntaynaunce of heresyes
But god who os his grace euer proudeth for his
Gaue suche knowledge therof that they had not theyr entente
Some fled some taken some were hanged on the gallows and brent.
THE RET(UR)NE OF M. SMYTHES ENUOY SERUANT TO THE KINDES ROYALL MAESTYE
AND CLERKE OF THE QUENES GRACES COUNCELL (THOUGH MOST UNWORTHY).

Trolle here, trolle there, trolle out, trolle in
ye trolle away & trolle aboute lyke a blynde sym.

Euen with the same commendacion that to you dothe pertayne
I sende you here myne answer, which is no great treatyse
Desyrynge you to marke, and to vnderstande playne
That I haue receyued your enuyous and proude enterpryse
The mater wherof, I trust, all honest men dothe despyse
But bragge and face what you can, I care not a whyt
I take tyme as tyme is, though hereafter commeth not yet.

You ruffle and you rayle, for malyce and despyte
And as a loftye lurden, you shewe your selfe full playne
For asmoche as you are greued with the good that I dyd wryte
Which I wyll neuer denye, but earnestlye mayntayne
Hauynge causes ynowe, on your malyce to complayne
For your manasynges and threatnynges, wherin I am sure ye do but gesse
For layenge popery to your charge, your herte grauntynge there no lesse.
Though with the poynt of my penne I dyd you so apurre and pryck
That therby you were greued, and greutlye styrred to yre
Yet I counsell you to syt sure and that you nother wynche or kyck
For and yf you do, I wyll surely laye you in the myer
Take no more vpon you then is mete, lest your selve ye do tyer
Or some other myschefe chaunce you, take this prouerbe for a token
That a sycke man is sone beaten, and a skalde hed sone broken.

I was nothynge greued that your selve so openly ye dyd declare
Nether with the descrbyynge of your name, nor of your seruyce the pyth
Nor yet wyll any honest man so iudge, and therfore I nothynge care
Though mad malyce moued you, to be despyted therwith
Bagynge because I compared a cobler with the smyth
Your folyshe dysplesure wherwith, is easye ynough to be founde
Namynge me as ye arre, an vpright vagabonde.

Of the openynge of your name and seruyce I knew not your entent
But yet for your doynges, I thought ye worthy blame
Not countynge you gyltlesse, and therfore I dyd you shent
Consydrynge I regarded your dede, more than I dyd your name
And therfore vnto your offyce, I wysshed no maner of shame
But entendynge my purpose I wryte as in my mynde it lay
Howbe yt, you beynge naught your selve, turne it another waye.
Sometyme a thefe shameth not to shewe bothe his name and face
Where the true man hydeth hym selfe, and standeth it great doute
Least that this theuyshe malyce shuld present it selfe in place
To the destrucyson of him that this thefery wolde trye oute
So in lykewyse you, do seke all cornors rounde aboute
But it will not helpe you, though awhyle there by delaye
Tyme maye brynge you forthe, as well as it doth poure Graye.

For romblynge in the scryptures in dede I dyd you reproue
Wysshynge with all my herte that your doynges ye wold amende
Descrybynge your faute playnly, as honestye dyd me behoue
You myght gentely haue spoken with me if you could me reprehende
But I am sure ye mynded it not, but dyd it least intende
For all your bragges and krackes, on your ale benche when ye syt
Let tyme be as tyme is, though herafter commeth not yet.

To a taylour in dede I abusyd you that ye dyd resorte
For the shapynge out of scrypтуре your text the better to frame
A secte I am sure more catholyck then are your popyshe sorte
Beynge the membres of chryst and him selfe the hed of the same
Neyther heretyckes nor papistes but men of honest fame
That alwayes are obedyent and vse not for to rebelle
Though you and soche other wolde help therto with your counsel.
I nother bluster nor blowe any false mater to proue
Though you do desyer of euery honest man the fall
Nother layed I popery to your charge but thought ye dyd it loue
For yf by you popery I coulde proue, than a traytour I wolde you call
And wolde it not concele but bryng you to your tryall
Our doynges wyll appare though ye defer them for a space
And I wyll be forth commynge before your betters to shewe my face

The rest of your raylynges I wyll as now omytte
Upon soche braynles braggery my tyme I wyll not spende
They do nothyng elles but manyfest the lawde use of your wyt
And the myschefe of your herte which to other ye do pretende
You haue no nother buckler your selfe for to defende
Who rebuketh your secte or wolde reforme your popery
Amonge you strayte he is a mayntayner of heresy.

Thus though ye wolde be hydden yet men may easely know
What trayterous hertes ye beare to god and oure good kynge
His grace haue geuen iniunctyons which cleane to ouerthrowe
What counsellles do ye holde to euydent is the thynge
We shulde be ware of your treason for surely I feare ye wolde brynge
Your romyshe ruffeler to be our heed by some maner of shyft
To the whiche your papisticall flocke not longe agoo gaue a lyft.
There sawe we playnly a myscheuous and detestabell sorte
Of false fayned hertes that agaynst our good Kyng dyd aryse
Sekynge his destruccyon and all theyrs that him dyd supporte
Beynge armed with customes and soche fayned lyes
But god (who of his grace euer prouydeth for his)
Gaue soche knowledge therof that they had not theyr entent
Some fledde som taken some were hanged on the galowes and brent.

Which thynge I desyre all true subiectes to regarde
And to god and our good kynge to beare a due obeydyanse
And to all false fayned hertes I wyshe the same rewarde
Euen lyke as the others had worthely for their offence
And nowe Master T. S. Marke well this sentence
Consyder that as you be so haue you usd your wyt
And I take tyme as tyme is though hereafter come not yet.

Parauentaure Syr T. S. you wyll yet bragge and bost
As ye do here in that ye wyll dryue me out of the way
But be not to busye I aduyse you lest you come to your cost
Though in myne owne cause I wyll but lytell say.
For and yf you worke moche ye shall perceyue I wyll not playe
Nether holdynge downe my hed nor yet beare it to moche aloft
For all your braggyngge countenance it wyl become you to speke soft.
Nowe for an ende (Eternall God) I beseche you graunt long lyfe
With prosperous contynuans, to Henry our most noble kynge
And to Katherynge our Quene also, his most Laufull Wyfe
And graunte betwene theym bothe, lyke other braunches to spryngge
(As is Edwarde our Prynce that most oderiferous thynge)
Preserue theym longe togither Lorde and graunt theym all the blysse
Where angels incessantly, synge (Gloria in excelsis) Amen.

Fod Saue the kynge

Trolle here, Trolle there, Trolle out, Trolle in

Ye trolle away and trolle about, lyke a blynde Sym.

Imprynted at London by Rychard bankes cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum.

And be to sell in Lombard strete nere vnto the stockes by Rycharde Kels.
AN ARTIFICIAL APOLOGIE, ARTICULERYE ANSWERYNGE TO THE OBSTREPEROUS
OBSEANNYNGES OF ONE W. S. EUOMETYD TO THE VITUPERACION OF THE
TRYUMPHANT TROLLYNGE THOMAS SMITH. REPERCUSSSED BY THE RYCHT REDOLENT &
ROTCOUNDE RETHORICIAN R. SMYTH P. WITH ANNOTACIO(N)S OF THE MELLIFLIOUS
AND MISTICALL MASTER MYNTERNE, MARKED IN THE MERGENT FOR THE ENUCLIACION
OF CERTEN OBSCURE OBELISQUES, TO THENDE THAT THE IMPRUDENT LECTOR
SHULDE NOT TITUBATE OR HALLUCINATE IN THE LABYRINTHES OF THIS
LUCUBRATTUNCLE.

Moued wyth mercy, by pytyle prouoked
Of duty I am dryuen, somwhat for to wryte
In defence of one, whome I se sore boked
And fore assauted, to be beaten from the ryght
But yf I lyue, some of them shalbe smoked
His part wyl I take w(i)t(h) al my power & myght.

My harte doth blede, to se my frende thus dreast
So that my penne wyll wryte, though I saye naye
Agaynst this brockyshe graye, this bytter bytyng beast
That seketh nothynge elles, but for to pull awaye
The good name and fame, of one that is honest
And ful of lytterature, as all the loue hym saye.
Master Thomas smyth, his name nede not be hyd
Whome to se so handled, I haue great remorse
For the stockes sake, of which he is descended
He commeth of the smyth, that shod saynt Georges horsse
By ryght dessent, it maye not be denied
But yf any wolde, it shall not greatly force.

Who made this bayarde so bolde, this gresely graye
Or what heart hath he, that he thus assayles
Our smyths, yf S. Georges horsse were alyue I saye
He dorst euen as well haue eaten both his nayles
But though he be gone, all beastes be not awaye
I coulde saye more, but he doth nought that rayles.

Betwyxt the smythes and grayes, no doute ther is great oddes
Loke in vitas patrum, I saye thou wylfull wagge
Howe smyths haue bene byshoppes, saynts & almost goddes
Recorde of swete saynt Loye, that holp a cloyed nagge
Vulcane was god & smith, whose curse lyghte on thy coddes
Why then with vs smythes, art thou so bolde to bragge.
Marke this malicious, and fore bytynge brock
Because master smyth, called him these in sporte
Speakynge it but merely, I dare say in mock
Howe lewdely of him, he hath made reporte
But saye what thou canst, he dyd it not by cock
For by saynt tankarde, he is none of that sorte.

The money & the woman, wherwith thou doest him charge
He may full well aduoyde, it is no great thynge
God saue the kynge, a pardon doth dyscharge
Mo thynges then that, which elles myght hap to brynge
Both him and you, but skant to walke at large
Within an yron grate, your Christmas songe to synge.

As for the woman, alas it was no wonder
She was a whore and he hath such a charme
If she be arrant, to brynge her shortly under
And yet I promyse you, he doth them lytle harme
But bryngs them to this house, where they parte not asonder
He couereth her, he colleth her & keeps her good and warme.
And forsoth ful well, towarde his olde dayes
Ye poynted him a place, to be in the stable
But he neuer dressed horsse, as he him selfe sayes
Wherfore for that rome, he is nothynge able
His lyuynge he must seke, by some other wayes
Well ynough I warrant you, without hode or bable.

If he had no master, ner none wolde him take
Skant into the stable, yet ere it were longe
He hath so many frendes, thou sayest wolde shyft make
To promote him ti the skourynge, of some good mans gonge
Thou art to spytefull, and I for anger shake
To se howe thou doest, this poore man so much wronge.

Ye call him papist, because ye se him worcke
In all he doth or sayth, by doctours and decrees
Of our olde auncyent mother holy churche
And forbycause, he doth defende theyr dygntyes
Lyke a sorte of lorrelles, you wold him geue a lurche
His credyte and his fame, to cause hym for to lese.
Our smyth can forge, and fetely fabrycate
A myllyon of mentyres, in lesse then halfe a daye
Loke in all his workes, which are consolydate
Lyke a wytye man, dawe canst thou saye naye?
In such an honest forge, lo he was educate
And such his bryngynge vp, his craft cannot decaye.

And yet this bytyng brocke, sayes he is vnworthy
To be a paryshe clercke, God geue the wo and care
But yer he come therto, we trust to se the lye
Askynge for gods sake, in pauertie full bare
Wylt thou pare with our smyth, ah pylde pratynge pye
Well do not so I aduyse you, I councell you beware.

It wylbe a good whyle or you master Graye
Haue such qualytes as master Smyth hath
He speketh euen as good frenche, I dare well saye
As any Popengay, betwene this and bathe
Cracke me that nut, maye fye I praye you awaye
Medle not withall, least that it doth you skathe.
Syr he hath bene in Parys, farre beyonde the see
Where thou durst neuer, yet pepe out of they dore
And I my selfe, dyd here him once saye
With so starne a loke, Dieu vous done bon iour
That euer sence, I thought hym ryght well worthy
To haue the lytle roume, within the kynges toure.

Hercules was stronger, then any of the grayes
Yet was he not hable to mache with two at once
Beware I saye thou brocke and shortly walke thy wayes
For we be many smythes, and yf we catche the once
We wyll finde the meanes, to shorten thy good dayes
And in our flammyng forge, we wil burne the fleshe & bones.

Recant therfore betyme, least we the momorde
And bateteth with oure handes, as yron the styth
Causynge the for euer, to be a good recorde
Howe any man herafter doth rayle vpon a smyth
Thy fame we shall pollute, for sowenge soch discord
Maugre all theyr heartes, that be displeased therwith.
I warrant you thys graye, hath lytel good maner
To call master smyth, bedlem and lunatycke
What though he be gogle eyed, and tawny as a tanner
It is but hys compleccyon, swarte and collerycke
But sythen that he doth fyght, vnder holy churches baner
His lybels are allowed, for good and catholycke.

And though he be a smyth, by face and eke of name
Yet to God an the Kyng, the man maye be wellwilled
For was not there a smyth that propre feates dyd frame
The chronycles make mencyon, whoso them well behylde
Reporte me to the blacke smyth, a man of worthy fame
Howe many at his commaundement, had he at blackheth felde.

Nowe for that smyth, & all smythes yt mean as he dyd mean
Or that agaynst God and our Kyng, ought conspire or saye
That such of there offenses, maye be confessed cleane
And just rewarde to take, this prayer wyll I praye
And also that all other, that to theyr sectes do leane
Maye trudge w(i)t(h) them for company, to angre Wyllyam Graye.
Thus forced by frendshyp, and lykeness of name
I haue compyled this bref apologye
Propungnyng therin smythes, and theyr honest fame
And their vylependers, to shame and turpesye
Implorynge, that Lord, that forged the frame
Of fire and water, of earth and of skye,

To preserve Kynge Henry that prynce potencyall
And Katheryne oure quene of curtesye the floure
Wyth Edward oure prince, that ympe emperyall
In helth, in welth, in riches, in honour,
And to conserue the counsell heroicall
To pauyse the people by prudencyall power.

God saue the Kynge.

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And be to sell in Pater noster rowe at the synge of the Rose.
The fynest wyt that is alyue
Cannot deuyse by tunge nor pen
The spytefull malyce to descryue
That reygneth now in dyuerse men
We maye perceyue by them that stryue
For castynge out a carde of ten
That charyte is set at nought
So reygneth malyce in mannes thought.

Whych thynge doth force me thus to wryte
Concernynge the vncharyte
Of two that nowe with hatefull spyte
Do blame eche other openly
To none of both I owe despyte
Ner this is none Apology
For nether parte: but stryfe to stent
Is grounde of all myne argument.
The stryfe I speake of, is betwixt
One master Smyth and Wylyam G.
They wrytynges are confusely myxt
With bytynge wordes, and vylany
In eche of them, a wyll is fyxt
To maynteyne styll his vanyte
Which hath a very feble grounde
Wherwith his enemy to confounde.

All this began, fyrst by a knaue
I vote not who, that wrote a troll
Wherin he dyd but rage and raue
He knewe full lytle of Saynt Poule
Which wrytte the loue that men shuld haue
And for one dyd thys trolle controlle
So master Smyth a boke hath pende
This tryflynge troller to defende.

Some saye, it was for flatterye
And some do saye, it was for mede
For to aduaunce him selfe therby
Such men (they saye) do soonest spede
That least can skyl of modesty
But what he meant, therby in dede
If I shall iudge, as I do take it
Naught but malyce, made him make it.
For thow out his raylynge booke
Of charyte no worde is spoken
Tyll all his maylce purpose tooke
For malyce, forthwith wylbe wroken
And whoso lyst therin to looke
Maye iudge him well, by his owne token
a raylynge knaue, for to defende
Is, in no wyse man to commende.

If master Smyth had marked well
The purpose of that foolyshe dawe
Which trolde vpon the Lorde Crumwell
Wyth ragged ryme, not worth a strawe
He myght haue founde that wretch rebell
Both ageynst God, and all good lawe
And not haue blamed Wyllyam G.
For blamynge his vncharyte.

But when W. G. dyd fele the prycke
So threattyng and malycious
I wonder not though he dyd kycke
For why, it was to sclaunderous.
And for the kycke, was som what quicke
Lo, he agayne as enuyous
A testy aunswere strayte dyd wryte
With checke for checke, & spyte for spyte.
But of this stryfe, the chefe effect
That maynteyned is so knappysly
Is ryven by the great suspect
Of popyshnes and heresy
One sayth the other is infecte
With such a spyce of knauery
I wyll not iudge which it shulde be
But bothe theyr wrytynges are to se.

These sortes are both to dyscommende
In anyman, where they be founde
For papistes do nought els pretend
But christes glory to confounde
And Heretykes, God them amend
Haue but a very feble grounde
If that they preache, that is forbod
Or dyffer from the worde of God.

For heresy is nothynge elles
But swaruyng from the true belefe
As holy wrytte expressly telles
And he is worse then any thefe
That there agaynst in ought rebelles
Or be that seketh his relese
Of false goddes, and not of Christ
Is no less than an Antechrist.
But he that hathe a popyshe harte
And wyll not vnto Christ be wonne
He seekyth not, but to subuert
All that the kynge hathe well begonne
No reason may hys wyll conuert
But he wyll do, as he hathe done
Wyth tothe and mayle, for to vpholde
Hys blynde belefe, and errors olde.

I wryte not thys, meanyng therbye
That master Smyth is of that sorte
Ner I iudge not that willyam G.
Is soche as Smyth dothe hym reporte
But wryte my mynde with charyte
The partyes bothe for to exhorte
That he that findes hym in the cryme
May fyrst recante, his raylynge ryme.

But thys is for to dyscommende
In master Smyth aboue althynge
That he so rashlye wolde defende
A braynles buz, in hys wrytynge
And afterwyrde styll forth contende
Wyth malyce, and wyth threatenyng
Agaynst that poore man wylliam G.
Farre from all godlye charyte.
Wrestyng the scriptures as hym lyst
For his owne purpose out of frame
But he that stryfe doth so resyst
That perfect worde, he doth defame
Wherin our helth doth whole consyst
For that is it, the very same
That teacheth vs theloue and drede
To God and to the Kynge our hede.

Perchaunce ye Smyth wyll take it yll
That I iudge him so openly
No force for that, it shall not skyll
For he is knownen suffayciently
kBut I protest, that in my wyll
I meane nothynge malycyously
But yet men must, for all his heate
Repute him hotte, that see him sweate.

Lykewyse the other dyd offende
With wrytyng so impacientlye
For that is no waye to amende
An harte that cankers inwardlye
But he his cause, shulde styll defende
With mekeness and with charyte
And no wyth malyce nor despyght
But suffer mekely wronge and ryght.
Euen as the Gospell doth vs teache,
Whych is oure chefe profession
For Paule hymselfe dyd alsaye preache
That for the chefe confession
Of christen heartes, to make them stretche
Theyr fayth vnto Christs passyon
The only entry into healthe
All other entryes are but stealth.

Lo, thus I fynde them both to blame
Wyshynge to eche with all myne heart
An honest mendement, wythout shame
And praye to Christ that he convert
Oure iudgements all into such frame
That they and we, in every parte
Wythouten grudge, debate or grefe
Maye fyrmyly stande in one belefe.

Whych teacheth vs to loue and dread
Hym that hathe power vnder God
I mean the kynge that is our head
That here in earth doth beare the rod
Of true iustyce in Chrystes stead
By precyse wordes we bo forbod
Hym to wythstande, or to wythsaye
In every cause we must obaye.
For whom, as for our only guyde
Our greatest helpe and chepest staye
That daylye both for vs prouyde
To saue vs sounde wythout decaye
In warre and peace on euery syde
Wyth one accorde let vs all praye
To sende hys grace, vs here amonge
Honour, encrease, good lyfe and longe.

God saue the kyng.

Imprinted at London by Rycharde Bankes. Cum privilegio ad imprimendum solum. And to be sell in Pater noster rowe, at the sygne of the Roose.
APPENDIX B

THE CONTENTION BETWYXTE CHURCHARD AND CAMELL

This series of poems forms part of the collection of Tudor broadsides held by the Society of Antiquarie, London, and is indexed in Lemon's Catalogue. The broadsides were evidently issued, with a Preface, in a bound volume entitled The Contention Betwyxte Churchard and Camell (London, 1560). The unique copy of the bound series is in the Huntington Library, San Marino, California, and is listed in the Rare Book Catalogue as Item 13068.

The Broadsides in the London collection are not identical with those of the bound volume; for example, the poem, "Westerne Wyll" differs in both collections. I have included both forms in the Appendix.

I am indebted to the Huntington Library and the Society of Antiquaries for permission to reproduce this material.
THE PREFACE

Drawe nere gentill reader and barken to mee
Her stondes David Dicar, dreymyng as you see.
He sleepeythe, and wakes not, but dreymeth on still.
To scanne what he dreymeth eche man hath a will.
Some dothe him blame for his restles mynde.
Whiche sleepe causeth him dreyme by naturall kynde
And some doth praise his labouringe reste,
Though dreaminge in sleeapinge be not the best.
And some saithe that sleeaping nedes no dreames at all
Which yet never hath the ben, nor to come never shall.
And some wolde correct Davids Dreme to amende,
Before he hath dreamed his dreyme to the ende
And some do interpret what his dreame ment.
Declaringe the secrettes of Davids intent
And some do immagynge David Dicar to lye
In doges sleeape this dreameynge, eche man for to trye.
But David dreames on and thinkes no man ill.
And sufferthe eche man to worke on his will
And some men dothe whisper such nappes in his eare,
Whiche efte now and then David dicar dothe heare,
Then answeringe sleeapinge his momblethe this out,
And cawlethe them fomblers that stondes his aboute.
As the whetstone beinge dul good edges dothe sette.
So David dreamynge still, sharpe wits he dothe whette
And causethe the wakinge to worke all ther will
From sleaping his dreuming to fetch out the skill
Yet some will not cease to shake him by the slyve
Withe taunting poor David from dreaminge to drive
And some in this dreaminge dothe ponder so depe
That in stoddinge of dreaminge they fall asliepe.
And some are so weried that they may no more
Answer David dicar as they dide to fore
And some cannot scarclie answer a whene
Till time dothe determyne to shewe forthe a thene
Sithe certaine of uncertain no stronger take the holde
Let him blowe the cole, that is moste a coulde
Sure this is the beste waye for wisemen to take.
To let sleepers and dreamers alone tell they wake,
As plainlye apperethe by this fine witted men.
In tossinge and tomblynge of David Dicers when.
Thus beating thair brains in vain they do toyle.
And clokethe thair wittes for feare of the fcyle.
The one dothe affirme the other dothe defende.
Yet neither of either canons make anende.

The ende of the preface.
Davy Dycars Dreame

When faith in frendes beare fruit, and folysh fancies fade

And crafty catchers cum to nought, and hate gret love hath made

When fraud flieth far from towne, and loyterers leave the field

And rude shall runne a rightfull face, and all men be well wilde

When gropers after gayne shall carpe for comen welth

And wyly workers shall disdayne to fygge and live by stelth

When wisdome walks aloft and folly syts full low

And vertue vanquish pampered vice, and grace begins to grow

When Justice ioynes to truth, and law lookes not to meede

And bribes help not to build fair bowres, nor gifts gret glotons fede

When hongre hides his head and plenty please the poore

And niggerdes to the medy men shall never shut their doore

When double darke deceit is out of credit worn

And fauning speche is falsed found and craft is laught to skorne

When pride which picks the purs gapes not for garments gay

No iavelz weare no velvet weedes nor wandring wits beare sway

When riches wrongs no right nor power poore put backe

Nor covetous creepes not into courte, nor lerned livings lacke

When slipper sleights are seene and fat fatchers be founde

And private proffit and selfe love shall both be put in pounde

When dette no sergeunt dreeds and cowrtiers credit keepe

And might mels not with merchandise nor lordes shall sell no sheepe

When lucere lasts not long, and hurde gret heaps doth hate

And every wight is well contente to walke in his estate
When truth doth tread the stretes and lyers lurke in den
And Rex doth raigne and rule the rost and weeds out wicked men
Then baelfull barnes be blythe that here in England wonne
Your strife shal stynt, I undertake, your dreedful daies ar done

Quod T. Churcharde

Imprinted at London in Aldersgate Strete by Rycharde Lant.
To Dauid Dicars when.

To him that doth dreame, Dauid Dicars when,
And euen so from hym, to such other men.

From when vnto when, to come to this when.
When fooles of your folly, wyl worke lyke wyse men
And know theyr owne fautes & leаue faulting other
And fyrst mende them selves, & then warne theyr brother,
Enuiyng none, for that theyr sorte is not
Such as they would be, lyke others I wot.
Goddes of degree, to rule and beare swaye,
Whose maners mete not, to stand in such stay,
And yet wold haue mouthes, to rоre lyke the Lyon
Beyng but Asses, brute of condicion.
Forgettynge that order doth thus aske and craue,
That eche should hym selfe in order behaue.
As beastes of low sorte, to be meke of theyr mynde,
To those that be hygher, and greater of kynde.
The Bore not to bragge, to stryve wyth the Lyon.
The Hart not to stand, wyth the Bull in contencion,
The Oxe that doth draw, to thyncke hym selfe able,
To runne for a wager, wyth the Horse of the stable.
It grees not, it cordes not, nor oderly fytes
That men should fynd fault, with Gods and theyre wyтtes,
Iupiters seate stαndes somewhat to hye
For vs to judge it, that come it not nye.
And judgementes of gesse, in any such sorte,
May serve to the Gods, for a laughter and sporte
To se how Iudas, would fayne become Iuda,
To iuste at the life, of Iuli apostata.
Let Beastes that be meete, for carte and caryage,
Leane to theyr laboure, as manne to hys maryage.
And synce we be members of one common wealth,
Let vs ioyne aptly, as fyttys for our health.
The eye as the eye, let hym stare and looke,
And let the leg learne, to bowe and to crokke.
Let the hand answere, to helpe and to dooe,
As the wyl of the hert, shall wyll hym vnto.
And let not the foote, make murmure and cry,
To ask why our head is placed so hye.
Our instrument iarres, it makes no ryght melody,
If we thus tune not to order our armony.
Then mayster when, when bothe you and I,
And euery man els wyl learne to applye,
To our ryght metyarde, and kepeoure iust compasse,
And looke not so deepe in an other mannes glasse.
And leaue dreaming dreames of dead Dauid Dicar,
And send such whens home, to our person or vycar.
And therwyth remember, thys verse of Cato,
Whose wysdom doth warne vs, with these wordes I trowe
Que soles culpare, ea tu ipse:
ne feceris, when wee marke this nipse,
And leau drawyng dialles, on other mens dooyng
And learne for to looke to our owne woorkes and brewynge,
Then I say then, when you agayn when:
wyll say well your selfe, and suche other men,
And all folke wyll doo well. Lo thus I unde then,
All thynges shall be well, whiche god graunt. Amen.

Domine saluum fac Regem
& da pacem in diebus nostris.

Quod T. Camel.

Imprinted at London by Hary Sutton, dwellyng in Poules
Churchyarde, at the sygne of the blacke boye.
If right or reason, might move you to speak,
I would not you blame, your malice to wreak:
Or if your judgement, were upright and clean,
You would not so rudely construe what I mean.
How should your folly, so plainly be known,
If that your wisdom, abroad were not blown.
You bid me amende, whose life you know not,
As though that in you, there were not a spot.
A tale of a tubbe, you brag and you brail,
Wherin you do rubbe your selfe on the gall.
You touch not one point, whereof that I wrote.
You leap over the hedge, and seest not the gate,
I muse what you mean to discant and preach,
Upon a plain song, so far past your reach.
Why Camell I say, why you needs be fine,
What will ye be known for a duteous divine.
It seemes you are learned, past reason or wyt,
Or else you could not, the mark so well hit.
You have so good laten, you can want no pewter,
Though ye are no fool, yet you are a newter.
You write like a clerk, or seen well in Cato,
Forgettig your name, which Theres calls Gnato.
I can do no lesse, but shew what you are,
Sence you ar a Daniell, darke dreams to declare
Your knowledge is great, your judgement is good,
The most of your study, hath ben of Robyn hood
And Beuys of Hampton, and syr Launcelet de lake,
Hath tought you full oft, your verses to make:
By sweet saint Benet, I swere by no foole,
You are not to learne, you plyde well your scole.
Your wyts are not breched, who list you to preeue,
You flocke and you flout, and smils in your sleve,
I prayse you no more, lest you thinke I flatter,
I must now retourne, to the pith of my matter,
How can you well proue, that I do enuye,
At any estate, be they low or hye,
Or that I spye fauts, in Iuppiters seate,
Why are you so mad, on me thus to bleate,
It grees not, it cords not, it fyts not you say,
That men shuld find faut, with gods that bere sway,
If plaine Dauy Dicar, with wise men be skande,
He speaketh vprightly, I dare take in hande.
I write not so rashly, but I rule my pen,
In faith you mistake, Dauy Dicars, when,
You take chauke for chese, and day for darke night,
Of like you are spurblinde, or ye loke not a right:
Your purpose I know, you were in such care,
Against this good tyme, your purs was ful bare.
You thought to optaine, some garment or gift,
Then dyd you inuent, to make a foule shift,
To flatter the Gods, & get a new cote,
That made you to syng, so mery a note.
You faine me like Judas, you thinke me not so,
For if I were he, then you wold me know,
I beare not the bagge, that mai you rewarde,
But yet my good wyll, I pray you regarde,
You say that order, would haue eche degree,
To walke in his calling: then how may this be,
That you out of frame, do blother and barke,
So like a curre dogge, at euery good warke,
Is this the order, that Camels doo use?
Bicause you are a beast, I must you excusse:
A Camell, a Capon, a Curry sure by kynde,
I may you well call, synce so I you fynde:
Bicause you haue ratled and railed to mytche,
Now giue me good leue, to claw you wher ye ytch
And if that you thinke, I rubbe you to sore,
Then giue me no cause, to scratch you no more.
Holde this for certayn, and for a sure thing,
The ofter you styrre me, the more I wyll styng.
Syns that you wyll needes awaken my wytte,
I wyll seeke for you, both snaffuls and bittes.
To holde in your head, and make you to rayne,
And byte on the bridle, for angre and payne.
Then will I devise you such a burthen,
As long as you liue, you shall beare a lurden:
A Camell by kinde, wyll beare more at once,
Then .iii. great horses, pickt out for the nonce.
More meeter for you, to be in some stable,
To beare heauy burthens, I thinke you more able
Then being as you are, walking abrode,
Your limmes ar well made, to carye a great lode:
All beastes that be made for carte and cariage.
Shuld leane to their labour, as man to his mariage
With horses and Asses, you are well acquainted,
Their maners in ordre, right well you haue painted
I dout of your shape, some monster you are,
Because such a name, to me you declare.
Your wordes and your workes, ar tokens right sure
You ar some brute beast, in mans forme & picture.
Right happy he were, that had you in charge,
He shuld gaine moch money, to shew you at large
What cause, or what toye, dyd trouble your mynde,
To make you seeke fauts, wher mom you can finde:
Your instrument iarres, your myrth is not sweete,
You play on false strings, which thing is vnmeete
Your eare is not good, you know no sweete sounde,
You can not espie, where faut may be founde.
So farre out of tune, I neuer hearde none,
Nor so much past shame, nor yet so farre gone,
As you in this case, God sende you to amende,
Which seekes to learne me, to bow and to bende:
Direct well your steppes, by order and lyne,  
And sclaunder me not, nor no workes of myne.  
In all my writtinges, right honestly I ment.  
If thei be taken, to my true entent:  
Thei shall breede no strife, nor no error sowe.  
When truth shalbe tryde, and vertue shall flow.  
Thus yet once to, when, againe I returne,  
Bicause that you seeme, against it to spurne,  
Vntill this long, when, do well come to passe,  
This world shalbe nought, & you shalbe an Asse:  
Since you doo inuey, alle vice to maintaine,  
You shew that you haue, a folish light braine:  
God send you more wit, now kepe your head warme  
Or els the next winter, mai doo you some harme.  
Thus here I do ende, and rest for this time,  
Excepte you procure me, to make a new rime.  

Camelles Rejoindre to Churchyarde

To Churchyarde, or Mannaring, or for lak of a name,

To Dicar the dreamer if you know the same.

Maye a man be sol bolde an order to kepe
To bid you good morow, now after your slepe;
If I may be so saucy and make no mistaking,
God spede master Dreamer, ye you be wakyng;
But Dreamer, or Dicar, or as you say Davy:

Whych shal I now cal you as our Lorde save ye?
Three names are to many for one man alone,
And two mo make fyve for faylyng of one;
If you had two other, that men myght you seeke
Then had you a name for eche daye in the week.

But no mem doth doubte that so sundrye names
Shuld have other loomyng then out of good frames
And therfor I thincke they come everychone
Out of some olde house tho the postes be gone;
Or els kept in memory for that they were founde
In some olde stocke, in some noble mans grounde;
And so do ramayne for mynde of your auncestry:
As Syb to Sybbel sibbes very properly.

So Jermaines lyps joynde and so M. Churchyarde,
And Mannaryng met, both in an Orcharde,
And Davy the Dicar came in wyth hys spade
And dolve up the Dreamer tyl the line was made;
And thus perconsequence, sins your wryting doth gre it
Your name for my parte: David Dreamer be it.
And good M. Dreamer, your reason long sought for
Hath combred your capar, I se very sore;
Snap of the case and yong and whot bloude
Have al to be fumed you, and moved your moode;
That daunger it were, in you of a veever
If heate and coller should cupple together.
But thankes be God, a vomet hath rydde
A culpin of collops farre inwardly hydde;
And now that your reason hath faire it brought fourth,
It is a fayre reason, and a reason wel wourth.
And fyrst you reply to myne objeccion:
Wyth wordes of pleasure, as a man of correccion,
Wherby you would seems a learned man of arte,
And yet Master Mome, you are out of your parte.
For as your aunswer doth but tatele and tomble;
So you aunswer not me, but rayle out and romble.
And yet had you markt my then to your when,
I no more falted you then i dyd other men.
I mean mad raungers that raunge so at large
To medle with matters, not joyned to their charge
And such men I bad, as then I bad you,
To send such whens home, theyr vycars unto,
And leave dreaming dreams to busi mens braines;
Wyth needles matters and as thankeles paynes.
And thys lytle neded to have netled your noddye
If you were (as you wold be) som pretty wise body.
But you wyl chologycke and be Bee to busse,
But good master Busserd, be good yet to us.
And tel me in truth, and lye no whyt then:
Have not I touched no parte of your when every whyt.
I nede not to byd you turne my text againe;
But take your owne text to aunswer your brayne.
I touche not one poynte that you wrote you saye:
And yet you cal me a Daniell stragyhtway.
Lo how these two now agree in them selves,
They both shame their master these ii elvish elves.
If you gyve me a name wythout an effect
Your mastershyps brayne is madly infect;
And foule overshot to brynge two for wytnesse:
Whych are in them selves cleane contraries I gesse.
But yf my fyrst aunswer doo seeme such a mistery
That you se not your when ther aunswered alredye,
Then to awake you, and rayse you from slepe
Good Master Dreamer, marke thys and take kepe:
Your when hath in it a meaning of who say
Whych ryghtly to meane is thus ment I saye
Than when those thynges be which these dais be not
Then knit you your then upp in such sort as you wot,
But whome you accuse in whenning so large
I meane not to open nor put to your charge.
But way wyth you self and sober your braines
And defende not a when mighte put you to paines;
I coulde perchaunce make your when larger
And serve it before you as brode as a charger,
And poynt you your when, by lyne and by level,
Againstste Jupiters seate, and Jupiters Counsell
But I list not so narow, to loke to your whanning
You byd me not slaunder you, I slaunder you not,
If your selfe hurte you, your owne is the spot.
You ascribe to me the manners of Gnato
Full clerkely applyed good master Thraso;
A tytle as meete they saye that doo knowe me
As your tytle of dreamer, to the matter of Davye.
But vices in stage plaies, when theyr matter is gon
They laugh out the reste, to the lookers on.
And so wantynge matter you brynge in my coate,
In faythe master dreamer, I borowed it not.
Tho I have hearde that good fellowes and so
Not you (goddes forbod) in borowed geare go.
But when every fould hath puld home his fether
The foule and the body maye then dwel together
And make a ryght sommer man to let in the heate
For clothes in whot wether doo make me sweate
Whiche you sir perchance er sommer come out,
Wyl use for a medicine, in travellinge aboute;
And coloure the matter wyth a tytle of season
As doubtles your mastership hath very good reason.
By which all that knowe you wil thincke you wel hable
To thrust a poor Camel to lurke in some stable.
And doubtles yf dreaming may enythyng spede
I knowe David dreamer wyl do it in dede.
But tho I have hearde a Lion oft rore,
I never hearde asse so rore out before
With bityngs and bridellings and raining of necks
O fyn master asse, howe sharp be your checkes.
You threaten to bitte me. to trim me and trick me,
With master asses, what wyl you niedes kick me?
Camelles ans asses be both meete for burden,
Then gip, fellow asse, then jost fellowe lurden;
No nerer my buttocke, jost jade, are you winsyng?
It is mery to see, master asse, fal to minskyng.
Did ye never hear telle of the asse trapt in golde?
Lo master assenoll. lo do as ye sholde.
Ye saye I knowe ye not, and yet as I trowe,
You caste your olde coate a great whyle ago.
But if I mistake you, for that a newe springe
Hath wrought as a Workman, to gyve you a new skin;
And that I may not now knowe you by eare mark
Then for a more knowledge, to knowe you in the dark,
Tye a Bel at your tayle to make some tinginge,
And ther goes the asse (I shal saye) by the ringinge.
But whether I knowe you or els do not knowe,
Thus much I knowe, and am certaine I trowe:
An asse bindes no camels tho he bray nere so loude
Robin hoode so shewed me out of a cloude.
And when asses forget to know what they are
Sir Lancelot then bides to nip them more nar,
And Beavis of Hampton whose cleargy I knowe
Biddes me serve you with the same sede you sowe
And not to contende with the asses shadowe
Whose shadowe I leave you and bodye also.
And thus, M. dreamer, your folli hath broughte me
To followe you further then fyrst I bethoughte me
Beinge much sorye my pen so to spende
To aunswere your follyes; and thus so I ende.

Domine saluum fac Regem and da pacem in diebus nostris.
Thomas Camell

Imprinted at London by Hary Sutton, dwellyng in Poules Churchyare.
The Surrejoindre unto Camels Rejoindre

What lyfe may lyve, long undefamed, what works may be so pure
What vertuous thing may florish so, that faultes may no endure;
What things be past or yet to come that freelt may rejoyce,
Or who can say he is so just, he feares not sclaundryous voyce.
This sclaundryous peales doth ryng so loud he soundes in every eare,
Whose craft can fayne such pleaunt tunes as truth weare present there.
But it is falsed fraught with fraude and syngs a note to high
Though that he bring some pleaunt poynts for to mayntayn alye.
The symple wyts ar soone begylde through sclaunders sweet deceayt
But those that knowes such fishing hokes that some perceyve the bayt.
Unto whose eares and judgments eke, I do commende my workes,
To save me from the Serpents styngge which under flowers lorkes.
With helpe of truth, I hope to flee the venom of this Beast
Orels I trust, in his owne turne, to cast him at the least.
Although he whet his teeth at me and styngs me with his tonge,
Yet with the just I am content to learn to suffre wrong.
Synce princes, peares, & kynges themselves, their Actes & godly lawes
Are sclaundryd oft through evyl tongses and blamed withoute cause
Looke what is doone and truly ment to put things in good stay
Are wrested and perverted oft by evyl tongses I saye.
The prechers voyce which thretneth wrath the synfull to reduce
Doth purchase hate for telling truth: lo this is mans abuse.
The chylde doth blame the byrchen rod whose strypes may not be spared
Bicause his wyts unto his welth hath very small regarde.
The wycked sort, whose vyce is known, by those which writes their lyves,
Can not abyde to heare their fauts but styll against them stryves.
The horse cannot abyde the whyp because it mends his pace,
Thus eche thing hates his punishment, we see before our face.
Therfore I blame this man the lesse which sclaundreth me so mouch
And casteth venom lyke the Tode because his fauts I touch;
What cause in me, what hate in him, what matter hath he sought
Within this davy Dicars Dreame, which for the beast was wrought.
Unto the good it is not yll nor hurtfull unto none,
Nor unto those that love the lyght it is no stumblyng stone
But those that stands to watch a tyme the innocent to spyll,
May wrest the truth clean oute of frame, & turn good things to yll.
Oute of the sweet e and fayrest floure the spyder poyson takes
And yet the Bee doth feede theron and therwith hony makes;
The Caterpillar spyls the fruit which god made for mans foode
The fly lyke wyse, wher he doth blowe, doth styl more harme than good
Thus may you see as men doth take the things wheron they looke;
Ther may it turn to good or bad as they applye the booke.
But every man to hos owne worke an honest meanyng hath,
Orels those hast sclaunders tonges might do good men moch scath.
He feels moch ease that suffre can all thynges as they do hap,
Who makes a pyt for other men may fall in his owne trap.
Who flynges a stone at every dogge which barketh in the strete,
Shall never have a just revenge nor have a pacient sprete.
Therfore I suffre al your wordes whiche is myne enemy knowne,
I could you serve with taunting termes and feed you with your owne.
But I mynde not to chocke your tale before the worst be tolde,
Then may I have free choyce and leave to shew you wher you scolde.
Good syr if I shulde you salute as you saluteth me,
Then shuld I call you Davy too and so perchaunce you be.
Ye multiplye fyve names of one, a progeny ye make
As your desent dyd come from thence wherof you lately spake.
Though such as you have nycknamed me in gest and halfe in scorne
Churchyard I am, in Shrewbury towne, thei saye wher I was borne.
You put your name to others workes the weaklings to begilde,
Methinke you are somewhat to yonge to father such a childe.
The truth therof is eeth to know a blynde man may discus,
Ye are in nombre mo than one, ye saye bee good to us.
You say I dyd bot answer you: I could no matttier fynde,
Nor yet can see, excepte I shulde at folly wast my wynde.
The greatest shame and most reproch that any man may have,
Is for to write or scolde with fooles whose nature is to rave;
Synce railing ryms ore coms your wits, talk on and bable styl
I not entende about such chat my pen npr speche to spyll.
I neither fume nor chaunche my moode at ought that you have sayde,
The world may judge your railyng tong full lyke a beast hath brayd.
And wher you say you can poynt out by lyne and levell both,
Of all the whens of Dicars dreame you say you know the troth.
It is a wilfull ognorance to hyde I know ful well
A faute agaynst Jupiters seate or agaynst his counsell;
You shew your selfe not Jupiters frende if you can truly prove,
A faute in me and doth it hyde, for feare or yet for love.
As for my workes and thankles paynes in this and such lyke case
I shall be redy to defende when you shal hide your face.
Thinke you I feare what you can do, my grounde is just and true,
On every worde which I dyd speake, I force not what ye brue.
Fyll all your chargers as you list, and dishes every chone
When they be full and runneth ore, I will cast you a bone
Whiche shal be harde for you to pyke, though that your wits be fyne
I can sone put you out of square from your levell and lyne;
I wyll not answere worde for worde to your rejondre yet,
Because I fynde no matter ther, nor yet no poyn of wyt,
But brabling blasts and frantyke fyts and chyding in the ayre,
Why doo you fret thus with your selfe, fye man do not dispayre,
Though that your wyts be troubled sore if you in Bedlam weare,
I thinke you shuld be right wel kept if you be frended theare;
If you were scourged once a day, and fed with some warm meate,
You wolde come to your selfe againe after this rage of heate.
This may be said without offence, if that your wits you had
But as it is a true proverbe: the threatned man lyves long,
Your wordes can neither hang nor draw, I feare not your yll tongue.
The world is such it doth contempne all those that vertue have,
An evell tonge hath no respect whose name he doth deprave;
What is the cause of mortall feud which doth in frendes aryse
But comenly these sclaudre tongues which styll delyts in lyes,
Who maketh war, who soweth stryfe, who bringeth Realmes to ruine
But plenty pride and evell tongues whose voyce in nere in tune.
The roote and braunche and cheefest grounde of mischeefs all and some
Is evyl tonges whose sugred wordes hath wyse men overcome,
The proowe wherof you put in ise, your wordes you frame and set
To creep into some noble hertes a credit for to get.
The eatyng worme within the nut the sweetest curnell seeke
So doo you drawe wher gayne is got, and ther you looke ful meeke;
But under those fayre angels lokes is hyd a develish mynde,
I durst lay odds who trust you long ful false he shall you fynde.
Now to retuen unto the cause, whiche made you fyrst to write,
You shewe your selfe to be a foole, to answer me in spite.
The first and last that I have seene of all your nipping geare
Is not well worth when fruite is cheape, the pating of a peare.
Your sodayn stormes and thundre claps, your boastes and bragges so loude,
Hath done no harme thogh Robyn Hood spake with you in a cloude.
Go learne againe of littell Jhon, to shute in Robyns bowe,
Or Dicars Dream shalbe unhit and all his whens I trowe.
Thus heare I leave, I lyst not write to answere wher you rayle,
He is onwyse that strives with fooles wher wordes can not prevayle.

Domine saluum fac Regem; da pacem in diebus nostris.

Thomas Churcharde.
Westerm Wyll,
Upon the debate betwyxte
Churchyarde and Camell.¹

Rowe thy bote thou joly joly maryner, and wynd wel up thy sayle
For thou mightst never wind it up better thine own self forto avayle.

There ware thre mery maryners, that dwelt in Maldon meade
That could skyl of wynde and tyde, of chanel and of streame
And eke theyr compasse well dyrecte, from every shore and steade
And were acquainted with the rockes and sandes that myght them queame,
From Maldon haven to Billingsgat, aswel I undertake
As any there of many yeres suche course that used to make.

A Crayer had they prest to sayle, and all theyr take yare
And all theyr fraughtte ybrought a borde, to wend to Maldon town
But for the wynde was not the best, before they forth wold fare
They thought the citie for to rowme and view it up and downe
If thyng uncouthe they ther myght fynde, wherwith to move som glee
When they cam home to Maldon meade amonge theyr companye.

To Powles they hyed as place most fytte for newes in theyr devyce
Amonge the prynters gan they search and busily enquyre
For thinges that myght for Noveltie at home be had in price
The prynter sayd he thought he had to pleasan theyr desyre
And drewe them nere into theyr shoppe and gan unfolde them lyght,
A rolle of rythmes, wherof the fyrst the dickers dreme it hyght.

¹This poem is from the copy held by Society of Antiquaries.
Then folowed answere to this dreame, to Davie dicars when
A solempne processe at a blusshe, be quoted here and there
With matter in the margent set, wheron to gase they gan
But they ne wist for ought I knewe, but hebrue that it were
A Replicacion was the next, whiche well I understoode
For that I founde no worde thern but it was Englyshe good.

But lo ye here the fourth quod he, that maketh up the messe
I warrant you a clarkely pece, se howe it is bedeckte
(As sellers are not nowe to learne theyr wares to prayse I gesse)
The name therof Rejoyndre was, a terme to them suspecte
Because it sounded of the lawe, as though some case ot warre,
Of joynture right for waywarde wyves to pleaden at the barre.

But ay the prynter pressed on and take them all quod he
I notte your names but brethren myne, I you assure can
They be as good as in this towne in any shoppe there be
Our names quod he, and one stepped forth, a wighte yonge watre man
Wylkyn is my name, and this is Wat, and Herman hight the third
As trusty and sure at tackle knotte as ever with corde was gyrd.

Well, Wylkyn, Watte, and Herman gent, by al your names I sweare
Ye shall not nede upon my worde to stande in any doubt
A meryer jest ye cannot fynde, a boord with you to beare
So wyll ye saye your selves I knowe when ye have red it out
But yf ye be unlearned to reade as maryners lyghtly be
Then yf ye lyst to harke a whyle, ye shal it heare of me.
For Gods swete bones quod Watkyn tho, for bokyshe be we not
We knowe to halfe and stryke and vyere and up the anchor waye
And cables folde and clymbe to toppe and then go toss the potte
But uf thou wylt of curtesy, of this us somewhat say
By god my peny shalbe twayne and theyrs shal make a grote
Though we therfore shulde go to bed at nyght with thyrsty throte.

Nay then quod he Saynt George to borowe the day is ours all
Ye shall it heare eche lyne at length but fyrst and wote ye what
The partyes twayne betwene the which this stryfe is nowe befall
It me behiveth fyrst to tell, good order asketh that
Wherfore a whyle give eare I pray, tyll I those twayne set out
And then ye may your fansye say, be turne eche one about.

This Diker semes a thryvynge ladde, brought up in Pierces scole
The plowman stoute of whom T thynke ye have ful often harde
A swynckyng swaine, that handleth well his spade and othet toole
Ful loth he ware for lacke of hede, they shulde be reckly marde
For why in them and in his hande his lyvynge chefely standes
He bragges not of his rentes no fees, ne of entayled landes.
And yet he semeth a curtouse hind, and comen of good stocke
For Dikers feawe in my contrey só wel ythewed bene
I warrant you who lyst him preve he is no spritelesse blocke
But to my tale: In cockowe tyme when eche thyng gan to grene
All weryed from his worke, returns this Davi Diker hende
And for to ease hym selfe the bet, ful softly gan he wende
Unto his house within a grove, a lytle ther besyde  
His bottle and his bagge he hente, he left them not behynde  
Wherin remayned but small surplus of viande at that tyde  
And downe he sate him on the benche, of meate had lytle mynde  
But gan complaine his werynesse and on his hande his hedde  
He dyd arrest and clepeed wyse as though he wolde to bedde.

Lo dame he sayd I wotest I trowe that candle is to diere  
To sytt up late and praten out our thryft tyll farther nyght  
And eke I nyll no supper have, lette be put out the fiere  
And hast we all to bed I saye, that ryse betimes we myght  
And in he stepete and sone he was uncased in his couche  
And at his heade as was his wonte, he layed up his pouche.

To wery labouring men, full swete doth seme such rest  
He had not lyen longe but loude he gan to route  
And softly by his syde his wyfe her selfe to bed adrest  
The dogge the cat and Syb the mayde eche couchen them aboute  
Inyo theyr hernes where they were wont and al was hyst and styl  
And Davy gan to dreame his dreame, as we devysen wyll.

Then Wylkyn gan at once upbrayde and sware by gods dyne harte  
A rushe for bookes, me lever ware that I could tel this tale  
Then of your scrablynges for to have, a loade by wayne or carte  
Strawe for such peltry, it is good to stuffe an empty male  
I durst it take upon my soule, in all this lyther thyng  
Is not a tale that may be founde so muche to my lykynge.
Yea Yea quod Wat my selfe I gisse in youth might this have learned
If I so wyse or happye had ben to folowe my fathers wyll
Who wolde have spent upon my scoole so much as he had earned;
But I was bent another waye, me thought it very yll
All daye to rucken on my tayle and poren on a booke
It was nothyng unto my paye, full soone I it forsooke.

But Herman here our other mate, it was a wytty elfe,
Ado, Ado, quod Herman then and prynter yet go forth
What was the dreme that Davy mette as he it tolde him selfe
For yet me thynketh by thy face that dreme is somwhat worth.
Content quod he gyve heare agayne, and heare me what I sayne
I shall you reade this dreame aryght, as here I fynde it playne.

Note: The re-telling of Davy Dicar's Dream follows.
A Supplicacion unto Mast Camell

Please it your maship, good mast Camell
To heare a poore man his tale for to telle
And though you bee a man of great debilitie
Denye not to heare a man of low abilitie
And I syre you to take it for no presmountacion
For yche ha bee brought up after unrude facion
Syr, now chyll showe ye the mater and the case
Whycham com to speake you, and like your faire face
There is one churcharde that hath you spleasar done
And ych am com to syre ye to be good maister tone
But twas unleudly done and after an honly sort
So faire a beast as you ben to tyen up so short
I pray you holden scused, twas but for lacke of nourter
For cham sure hannot ben past vii or viii year a courter
Twas but blockyshly ydon, of one so unbase as he
To spout with such a geman of so hi a peti degree
Yer of a strudy stock for your fader nere raisd his farmes
Nor nere solde his landes: for ych herd an hasard of armes
Blase all the aunciall prodictours of your olde axeltrie
Which com from olde housen of mocch impossibilitie
And many upstaunciall man wer brouded in that nest
But your moder in her armes (he said) bare a byg best;
Besech ye, good mast Camell, geve ore and leve your fume
And chil be bound that Churchard shan no more so parsune
But if he be so sedgious to writen another whan
Bum say chil treate no more, do withen what ye can.

Your daily Belman, at your manndement,
Good man Gefferay Chappell of Whipstable.
To Goodman Chappels Supplicacion

Harry Whbal harke, maste Camell hath yseeene
Thy vengeance zory byll, and tompes the as I were
And is by Christe full zad, that thou comest out zo late
Thou myghtest have had a place vor Dekehorn at his gate.
But vortune frended not chote it verye well,
The more hard happe thou hadst, ich doo thee plainly tell
Vor zure.charde hym swear by goges dygne dayntie bones
Thou shoodes be newe yshod to tramp these olde stones
And westwardes shodeste have zit for blearing of thin eis
Vor somer nowe a trowes wil hurt the zore with flies,
But he no nyggon is, a wyll vorde the a flappe
Thou shalt have a voxtayle man, to put upon thy cappe.
And goddes benison to, tho churchard tye hym shorte
Churchard wers a bel atstaill to make his frendes sporte.
And Camell choppes holy water for Churcharde and for the.
Vor he wyll to you bothe a holy chaplain be.
And if a witten not, er twaie daies be agoe,
He wyll you aprinkle bothe as varre as I doo knowe.
Tis a vengeance beast, and bygge to beare you all
And if you zit not vast, bum fay man to vall.

Thomas Camell
Steven Steple to mast Camell

Rest ye mery vayre zyr.
I trowe ye be waste Camell
Icham on message to you zent
vrom goodman Geffray Chapel
A hate ye zent a bottell a hay
and bad commaunde nia tie ye
And worde dyng hee spake ye to
a preyd ye dat ye wood hy ye
And zuch kynd dintrels as a bad
zun draf he hate ye zent
A zyed ye wor to grab deron
vor der is no be' terin kent
This good and zoote an alzo new
to mende your zyckish brayne
Vor wele a zete ye ha great stud
A zet your self to paine
Hym wraid yer wites wud zoro
ye vayle, ye gin to rave zo zone
A dynkte ye wyll be mad, all
out bevore dat may be done:
And moche be merveilt dat ye qud
zo chorlishly to um wryghte
And dat ye zent um such an anser
dat zounded noding right
To Harry Hoball, zyr ye wrot, as pearit in your letter
Zwap yer speckles up se nase
and looke about ye better
And anser Geffray Chappell zyr
dat toke ye de zupplication
Vor his name is not Harry Whoball
ich swear by gods savacion,
How zay ye now your speckles be on
can ye vorstande hys wyl,
Yet ween a trete ye (zereverence a you) to do Churchard non il
And her cha brought you byl ayen
corrupt it ir ich go
Vor vende godes worked--man I zedge, to let it go worth zo:
But wel ich zee yer braine is dicke
your wits be curstly vext
Prey God ye be not zyde your zyelf
er be to morow next:
Devore go couch and sleap a now
and dan come to yor parte
And dyte a wyser dyng dan dat
or all is not wort a vart.
Now ych ha myne arnede a do Chud ha ye yor head to be--ade a
And be good maister Churchard to And zo God be yor aprede a
M. Harry Whoballs Mon to M. Camel greetes,
  Him wyshing hally bread, to fear all ragyng spreetes.

Hoe bin nod you mast Camell sur, by gys I trow ye byn
For Steven Steple twode yer marks, that you han broght from Lyn,
Sur, an yo woden herken me, Ile tell yo al the troth,
My mastur, Harry Whoball sur, is to to shamefull wrothe
Woth yo hye maship, for a byll that yo han ryten late:
For int ye rayle apon ym sore, as he wor nod yer mate
Yo wost nod whad yo wenten aboute, for heez a gentman borne:
And yeery day doz hunt te deare, an yomen weare is whorne.
He kylles grey gooses mony tymes, an yo theyr tayles shon weare:
For heele non had yor voxteile sur, its meete for yo to beare.
An yor none selfe shon neede yor flap to fray the bussing flyes,
Vrom blowing maggots: but a trows, yo wonnod bleare yore eyes
Woth ryting any godly thing, ne weele yor bucke to plye:
For hit dooz seeme, yo set yor minde apont but naughty lye.
But lest yo drinken out yer eyen, when zommer waxes whot
Whyle wodder ryten in yor nome, yor nose is in the pot.
Bynnod yo dronken quite alout: yo han tane Jacke for gyll,
Ye slaunnderne fery mony sur, that woden yo none yll.
Sur, mastur Churchard haz no bels, but yo don neede a lacky,
Some Morryon boye to holde ye up, for drink is to to nappye.
My mastur cowde not weele televe that yo sur worne a mon:
For case yo sen yo ben a Beaste, and lyke a fengeance won.
Hyt peeres that yo han naught, he says, but fengeance in yor braines:
For case yo lien, an han no thonke, an putten men to pains.
Mast Choploche, chop yo hally watur an why nod hally breade?
Wod ye hod chopt the sonny caks that yo in Lyn had leade.
For sur, my mastur mervles moch whad mad yor braines to crowe,
That when yo hadden raylen ynow, wo Churchyard and wom mo,
To gyn a yene to rayle on hym, that yo ne see ne knew,
As won that furst haz dronken alout, an gynnes a yene to brew.
My mastur plize his bussinesse, bout forty moyle ne yend,
An when a hard yor folysh byll haz me to London send,
To ask yor maship whats to case, that yo so braggen an bosten;
As won that yeat an honest nome in all yor life neare losten:
To sclaudre won that gnawes ye nod, nor scant of yo haz harde
Soffe lately when a mon in Lyn yor qualistries declarde;
And lost of all to preine ye sur, a wisement butter take:
(Bew are ye last a lone? in deede, yor storme will soone aslake;
An ten my mastur woll forgie yor rashnesse, I yo shone,
And yo won stynt by this: and let all honest thinges alone.
Fare weel mast Camell thus, for I a done my narnde,
The which my mastur Whoball haz me streytly warnde.
I syre yo bin nod spleasde, for I sed non ill
But whad my mastur dyd me charge, to sen yo tyll.
By yor none
At yor maunding.
Ar yo desyring for to lurne my nome, tough hit be rude?
I wood hit shone, an yo wood sweare, yo wodden nod me delude.
See ore my riting yeery whyt, an note an marke ye that
A childe dooz furste the letters lurne, an then takes words therat.
A mon of wisedome as yo bin, may knowe that children alle
Ar brought from spealing for to reade, an wooder thinges wothalle:
Deny nod this to be the best and rudest swort, and than
Bee like them, beginning furst as weele as yere ye can;
Ye then shon yo pike out my nome, an yor none selfe parceaven
A pratty thing the which is int, and now hearof we leaven.
Arrogant foke won nod do this but yo I won nod blome,
Desiring yo to rede tees last twelve rowes, an lurne my nome.
Camelles Conclusion

Camelles Conclusion and last farewell then
To Churcharde and those that defende his when.

A man that hath no thyges then two, to put hym into paynes,
Hath even so many cares the mo to worke hym wery braynes.
So I that late hath laboured harde and plucked at my plowe,
Am come to towne where nowe I fynde mo matters then ynowe.
Mo then I looked for my muche, mo matters to then needes
Mo makeynge and mo medlynges far, than I have herbes or wedes.
And all agaynst me one alone, a sory symple man,
That toyles and travayles for my foode, to earn it as I can.
And gladly would in quiet be to swinke and live in reste,
But dreamers wyl not suffer me, they nettle so my neste.
A surrejoinder, dreamer bringes, the seconde a decree,
A mariner bringes in his bote and he the third wyl be.
And so yhey joyne and turne in deade, god graunt them well to runne
For I shal shewe them if I can, a course er I have done.
The dreamer first full wel I know, I shoke hym by the sleve,
Wherat the other ii I trowe are angrye and do greve.
But that no force be as be may, here gothe the beast abroade,
Dreamer awake, mariner rowe, decree man looke abroade.
The beast wil turne I laie a grote and give you all a tryp,
Why nowe syrs nowe, nowe foote it wel, this beaste begys to skyp;
And fyrst to master dreamer turnes and his surrejoyndre to
Wherin all thyngs be wel he sayth, that he dooth dream and doo.
He dreames he saies and truly means to put thyngs in good stay
Shorte syr dreamer a bady ho that ball must nedes away.
If that your dreame have suche entente then hath it an effecte
And that effect your Westerne Wyll would not have men suspect.
But take it as a dreame saies he and fantasies of the head,
A fyner freke by Roode then you, I have his workes well read.
Altho he chop in chorles terms and carpes in uncouth speche
Yet knowe I wyth a fynger wet where wyse men myghte hym reche.
That if he whyp his whirry so, he may chance licke a clowne
To whyp it under water quite, and craire and cariage drowne
But sens he is become my judge and judgeth me amysse,
In notyng me quite oute of rule, as his wide wysdome is,
He shall wel knowe and so shall you and the decreer too
That for my rule when I was younge this was I taughte to doo:
My father put me fyrst to schoole where I a maister hadde:
Of whom I had preceptes and strypes as fitted for a ladde.
He taught me there to feare my god and love hym wyth my might
To serve the kyng and pray for hym and all his counsell ryght.
Then next to honour those my frendes, that kept me so at schoole
And this whyle I a scholar was, was every day my rule.
And syns that tyme my vycar hath lyke a full christen man,
Taught me to tred in goddes hygh waie and kepe it as I can.
To be obedient to the Kyng and to the lawe also,
And doo my dutie to the powers and lette their matters go.
Que nostra sunt curare lo. he titled at my doore,
And bade me printe it on my postes and spread it on my floore.
And leele love and labout eke he bade me learne to knowe,
And kepe my plow for profit sake and thanke god to, I trowe.
And told me how ther hanges a bell within our paryshe churche
Whyche doth twange eche mornynge rathe before we go to wurche,
That tales to me and others mo, our neighbours there aboute
This term whiche I shall tell you nowe, as I can bringe it out.
Que supra nos ad nihil nos, thys bell tynges us to kenne,
And this he sayd the bell warnde me as it dyd other men.
And when I sawe this Dicars when, I was so bolde to tell
That Dicar in his draffyshe dreame had not herde this bell well.
And then for thy, forsooth and god, my horne and scrape I tooke:
And scratched in a fewe fret lynes for dreamers on to looke:
And so sir thus I ment no more but mynded hym to knowe
His duetie as I ment myne owne and farther not to goe;
Tyll in his toyes he tickled me as lofty ladde on lowde,
And shope me shares to sharpe me with, to carpe out of a clowde.
And if you rolle thus out of tune for raynyng hym this way
To kepe hym slefe in order suche as he shoulde doo I saie:
And take the judgement to your hande and terme me out of rule,
Then trowe me well, you turne me wide from Camell to a mule.
Whiche camell cannot crouche withall nor cary with hym home,
But shape and shake it to your selves lyke lumps of you owne lome.
But welaway, I wander wide for Churchyarde ment it well
And so he saies and so say you, and so your writynge tell;
So sometymes houses fyred are by meanyng well in lyghtes,
And then the meanyng is but marde, and they mad meanyng wightes.
But sens you will needes have me seeke the meanyng of this whan,
Meane it to those whom it doth touche and scusse it as you can,
And then let wyse men deme and judge atween Dicar and me,
Whiche of us two is out of rule, I meane or I or hee.
And fyrst let me nowe are you all, what signifies this whan?
That caries with hym at his tayle so great a jarryng than:
Howe is it in hande a present tyme or future tyme to come?
Or is it admirantis woorde as schoole men call it some.
It must needes meane a matter madde as farre as I can see,
But on go to, your wittes are fyne, meane you it out for me,
Dreamer doth freame and when us out, a wondre of these whens,
Wherof some whens are wonders well and meete for whens mens
But some from grammuth gront and grone above ela a note:
And those wilde whens are whend to large, I dare you gage my cote,
What when is this what he whens out, when justice joynes to truthe?
Whose seate is that? howe joynes justice? dreamer saie on in sooth.
And nodde your noddles nowe in one, and make a trinitie;
Full workmanly to worke this when, if that it will so be.
And fyrst waie well what justice is, to whom it dooth pertayne,
Who swaies the swoorde, who doth decree, looke to the matter playn
From whens he comes, what branche he beares, & who & which hym use
And answere justice to the wronge, wherwith you hym accuse.
And meane your meanyng as you meane, and dreame not in your slepe
And shewe that joly ordre nowe in this your when you kepe.
But shorte to make of all your whens, to take the principall,
This is among the rst the worst, and standes the last of all.
When Rex doth reigne and rule the roste, lo thus you raunge at last
A mervallous when that suche a when should out in print be paste.
Dot not Rex raign syr dreamer nowe? what whennyng term is this?
If Rex reigne not, who then doth reign? a saucy when is this;
And whend at length and large in deede, beyond a subjectes wit,
That god defend that I should dreame or that or like of it.
And yet I trowe I have a byll for cattal that I folde;
That saies that Rex hath raigned vi yeare almost I dare be bolde.
And eyther is your when full false, or my byll is not true,
And which is truet of them bothe, let me nowe aske of you.
As for my selfe I make no doubtes but what your when is wronge
And that Rex raignes as he hath doon, and shall I trust raigne long.
Which as in schoole I fyrst was taughte to praie that he may doo
So every subject let hym seeke to have that prayer too.
Thus could I touch some other whens, wherin you when at large,
A greag deale paste your compasse to, and as muche paste your charge.
But those I leave by lyght of this, for to be scande and sene,
To those that better judgements have then you or I, I wene,
And nowe wyl take your then in hande wherwyth you knit your when
In publyshyng it thus to me, and to all other menne.
Then balefull barnes be blithe you say, that here in England wonne
Our stryfe that stynt you undertake, our dredfull daies are donne.
An assuraunce here you make that balefull barnes we be
And that in stryfe we are also, and dreadful daiesdoo se.
But God defend it should be true whych your ful frantycke hadde
Hath publysht to so open eyes, for to be seene and redde.
For once for me I make no doughtes, nor good subject elles:
But we a noble soveraygne have, as all our statutes tells,
And as al orders els besydes do wyll us for to know,
Who governs us and is our head, and rules us al also.
And under hym have other powers to see that lawe be donne,
To gree andtune us in accorde if we be oute of tune.
Under those rule and order eke, al we that subjectes be,
Do lyve and joyne as fytte th th us, in one for to agree.
And in the town wher I do dwell I know no stryfe or dread
But every man ther lyves in tune as subjectes to theyr head.
And meddels not but wyth theyr plows & som tyme wyth their bow
And prate wyth Peter and wyth Paule, theyr dutyes for to knowe
And learne so for to kepe them styll in ordre as they can
Except such wrangles wrangle them wyth such large whan and than
And so I truste they doo els wher, whiche for my parte I praye
That longe we maye to joyne in one, what so your when dothe saye.
And yet suche dreadfull whens and thens which doth the matter marre
Were better quight, pulled out of fyght then shewed as they are.
And so shewe Westernne Will from me and Wat and Herman too.
And wyll them wynde their takle well not as they wont to doo.
For it they leane to learne such whens, it will be longe I feare
Ere they will channell well their craire that shulde them safely beare.

Domine saluum fac Regem et da pacem in diebus nostris.
T. Camell.
The harteburne I owe you is, yf you come to Lynne,
I praie you to take my poore howse for your ynne.
A Playn and Fynal Confutacion
Of Camells Corlyke oblatracion

Ye upright men whiche loves the lyght, whose hartes be voyd of gyle
Condemn no cause tyll truth be tryed, gyve eare and lyst a whyle.
And marke my tale from poynct to poynct, let no worde skyp unskande
And heare them with indiffrent eares, and way them as they stande.
Fyrst lay asyde affeccion blynd for truth my cause must pleade
Let nether foe nor fayned frend this matter judge nor reade.
And then I trust to cleare my selfe and Camell cleane confounde
That blowes the trompet of defame that geves uncertayn sounde.
The tune wherof semes yet full straunge so boystous is the blast
But quiet calmes setts forth styll wyndes when stormes be gon and past.
Whiche quyet tyme I wish to have, that I may be well harde
And then I hope this vypars byrde shall have his just rewarde.
That forgeth fautes and seeketh holes to creepe and steele therin
And flatterereth for no other cause but fame or gayne to winne.
What thinkes this man he hath more witte and learning in his head
Than hath fyve thousand other men that Dycars dreme hath read.
Or thinkes he that I am so rashe to run so farre from square
Or that I make such obscure thinges that I dare not declare.
Then is he blynd and very fond and scarce hym self doe knowe,
Let him loke on his booke agayne, his rule is nothyng so.
To you I speak frend Camell nowe, that wresteth ryght to wronge
You saye you have ben kept at schole, in sooth I thinke not long.
Your master dyd but stroke your heade, he dyd forbeare the rodde
I dout he dyd not teache you wel, how you should fear your God.
For if he had you would have stayed to wryte agaynst this dreme
To spye a mote within my eye, synce in yours is a beme.
If you might sitte and judge my cause, I should soone feele your worst,
But God forbyd ther were long hornes on beastes that would be corst.
I call you beaste because you sayd there hoe the beaste abrode
The beast wyll turae you gage a grote, yf he be prickt with gode.
Now turae, sir beast, and come aloft, fling not for fear of whyp,
In deede it is a monstrous thyng to see a camell skyppe.
You say you shoke me by the sleve, then rubde I your gall backe
Yf I knowe how to doe you good, my help you should not lacke.
We jompe inleasse, ye gab syr beast, I am but one alone
But I can prove (0 beaw Camew) that you are moe than one.
My surrejoynder doth declare this dreame was for the best
And yet you crye a bandye ho at tenues thus you jest.
What can you lay unto my charge of malyce or of hate,
Synce I do wish that every wyght should walk in his estate.
This verse you hyppe, and yet it standes, next that when rex doth raygn,
Bothe these be good and godly too, here shall I showe you playne:
But as I sayde out of fayre flours the spyder poysen takes
And yet the Bee doth feed theron and therwith honie makes.
I do compare this spyder nowe to you whiche so spreeres,
For that you run a patheles waye to leade me in the breeres.
Where fynde you this that dreames can have any effecte at all,
Be not they fansyes of the hed, and so wyse men them call.
Why do you wryte agaynst a dreame which hath a small effect,
Why turn you it to meanyng leadwde, to bringe it in suspect,
You ment no more but me to lerne, so you wolde you excuse,
Syr yf you mynde to kepe a frynd do not your frynd so use.
You bragge you of your master moche when you to skoole dyd goe
You sayde you lerned your duetie well, good syr it seemes not so.
To serve the kyng and praye for hym I learned as well as you
To love hym leall for concyens sake, this lesson well I knew.
His counsell eke for to obaye my duety lernes me too
And with ther matters not to mell nor have therin to do.
This lesson hetherto I kept and shall hereafter kepe
Tyll I to earth retorn agayn where flesh and fell must sleepe.
What is the cause you answerde not to that which I wrott last
You do conclude much lyke a thefe that is condemnde and cast.
For at the barre he prateth long and can no reason shew
To clere hym selfe and save his lyfe whan truth doth hym orethrow.
So you although with matter nowe, I do you styll assault
Yet with great shame you are content to yelde unto your fault.
I wrate more thynges than one or two, yet read them ons agayn
I do perceyve a lytle thyng wyll soon orecome your brayn.
You have sought counsell fourteen daies, it seemes that you dyd dreme
Or els you thought to run away into some other realme.
But now I heare a sodayn sounde, the beast begyns to braye
It is much lyke a camels voyce that dwells in Lyn they saye.
Be as be may you saye your selfe you byd me foet it well
Why wyll the beast now leade the daunce, with beasts I will not mell.
But where you saye I when out whens above eala a note
You gront and grone from gammuth farre, I dare you gage my cote.
Sins you will put me to my trompe, with a false card of ten,
Marke how justice wyll joyn to truth, I wyll make large this when.
Though justice doth belong to Rex, whose sworde puts that in ure,
Yet every justice under hym is not so just and pure.
Because there be knightes of the post, which wil them selves forsweare,
And fained truth wyll forge a tale sometymes in justice eare.
And worke such wyles, justice to blynde, and make him credit lies
Suche crafty mistes these men can caste before true justice eies.
Though justice of hym selfe is pure and cleane devoide of crime
Yet false witnes may alter hym and chaunge his mynde somtyme.
The faut therof is not in hym, he would fayn Joyn to truth
But flatteryng faith may hym corrupt, alas the more is ruth.
When truth is forman of the quest, and ryght shal vardyt gyve
Then justice shal youn stil to truth, and so together lyve.
Thus is this when made manifest, truely as I it ment
And yet it was full playn before to every true entent.
Here have I waide that justice is, to whom it doth pertain
Who swayes the sworde, who doth decree, here have I set out plain.
Now stay a whyle and marke this when, which you call principal
And is the beast among the rest and standeth last of all.
When Rex doth rayne and rule the rost, a conjunction copulutive
Your master taughte you not to know, could he such thyngs descrive?
Now Rex doth rayne, whom God preserve, in long lyfe on us here
And send him rule the rost hym selfe as prince withouten peere.
That he may fynde those secrete slighes which nowe in corners lye
And such as do abuse his lawes and live so wickedlie.
It seemes they live as they delyght and leane not to his lore
Because he doth commende them lawes and they passe not therfore.
Howe doth the master of the schole his schollers rule and tame
Whan he doth geve preceptes and rules and none doth kepe the same.
How doth the kyng his people rule, let this be better wayde
Whan he doth geve them lawes and actes and none of them obayde.
For though that Rex doth rayne and rule as I beleve in dede
Yet doth not he for mercy grete the wicked all out wede.
And like as God is merciful, so doth our kyng in dede
Ensue and folowe in his steps, whom God defende and spede.
His justice is to ponyshe sinne with death and paine extreme
Which is most godly exercisde, and so doth shewe and seme.
Yet yf all those that do offende should have such punyshmente
What man is living nowadays that should escape unshente?
But folowyng the examaple of the Lorde and Kyng of Kynges
Doth often suffer us unkynde in vyle and grevous thynges.
Because he woulde as it doth seme so mercifull and deare
Bee rather loved than obayde for only dreade and feare.
And thys hys mercy godly mente, doothe make us worse in dede
As scollers when they lacke the rodde do lyve withouten drede.
But when he shall begynne agayn to punyshe wickednes
Whiche is hys justice, or more playne, to us but ryghteousnes.
Then folke for feare (but not for love) shall better ende their lyfe,
As horse whipte ye then for feare, shall stynte and cease our stryfe.
Wherfore yf every kyng this daye whych ought in dede to rayne
Do raygne and rule the rost and wede the wicked out full playne.
Then have they welth withouten stryfe whiche God geve us ryght sone,
That all our wickednes were paste and dreedfull dayes were done.
If Dycar sayde when Rex dothe raynge, and all men do obey
How could you Camell, thus conclude? he raygneth not to daye.
Or if he sayde when Chryst is God and you a paythfull man
Would ye conclude? ergo, to him, he is not God now than.
Wherfore yf Rex do raygne and rule, as I beleve he doth,
And I beseche almyghty God he may do longe in sooth.
Yet must you take another poynt conteyned in this when
When Rex doth raygne and rule the rost and wedes out wicked men.
You must not harken halfe the tale, and leave the rest behynde
For than in dede you do amysse and fayne woulde quareles fynde.
You Redde in faythe muche lyke the nunne, omnia probate
And turned not the other syde quod bonum est tenete.
Redde you no more that Rex doth raygne, and left the rest unspyed
Is there not too and rule the rost, the sentence is so tyed.
And wede out wicked worldly men, the spotted from the cleane
Whose vyce infectes the chosen lambs, lo thus did Dycar meane.
He doubted not but Rex doth raygne, the truth it selfe doth show
But yet he thought it good to wede out wicked men I trowe.
And thus I say dyd Dycar Dreme, the sense doth playnly tell,
Yf upryght eyes and righteous myndes do loke and skan hym well.
If you shulde be my judge I se, and deme my dremynge thus
I shuld have but short curtesy, and you my cause discus.
But God hath sawed your hornes so short no great hurt do you can
He made you nether lorde nor judge, nor skarce an honest man.
When Rex doth raygne and rule the rost and out the wicked weede
Then you and many other lyke, wold fy rst of all precede.
But where you set a snare and net, for these that well intende
To show what is the cause of evill and the ende.
There you your selfe, and if it were applied well in frame
As he hath ment, shulde certaynly be catchid in the same.
What if I should cast furth the bone you thought to choke me with,
Perhappes you may repent to late you went so nie the pyth.
Where is your lesson now become you lerned so long ago
That spyde such faut in dicars dreme and yet concey lde ot so.
If it had raught to Jupiters seate, as you affirme in dede,
You ought not it have kept so long, but stright it tolde with sped e.
Or yf you thought you sawe the myst that no man els could skrie
There shuld no cause have stopt you so, to tell it by and by.
If dicars when, as true it is, be clere from blame and blotte
Yet your offence is no whit lesse because you thought it not.
If ignoraunce had sayd amysse, the same be my defence
Yet wilfull ignoraunce in you doth pleade your great offence.
Behold of God the rightuous scourdge, that now a mydde the gryn
You layde to trap the innocent your selfe is fallen therin.
What saye you now, wyse camelles caulfe, if rex wede wicked men
You shulde of right be tyde to short to pervert dicars when.
But tyll such spyders be wede out, and all theyr cobwebes to,
That sekes to trappe the selye flyes, as you begun to do.
The barnes I say that here do wonne, within this bryyttaine lande
Shall byde alas those dredfull daies, and dicars dreme may stande.
O sir you toke my then in hande, wherwith my when I knit,
Where I perceyve your frantike head begyns another fyt.
Can you deny the plages of God which he to us hath sente?
And scourgeth us for our great sinnes, from which we not repent.
Doth not the plow man plowe hys grounde and laborith verey sore?
The earth bringes forthe hys frute lykewyse, encreasyng more and more.
Dothe not the heavens geve us rayne, the waters geves us fyshe?
Doth not the counsell seke our welthe as wel as we can wishe?
Do not they take great care and payne, all evelles to redresse
Yes all these thynges do worke as well as mans tong can expresse.
Yet though our kyng do make good lawes, the earth brings forth much sede,
Tyll god will take his plage awaye, our plenty shalbe nede.
Thus balefull barnes we be unblythe, and dredfull daies doe see
Tyll gracious God of hys goodnes will helpe our miserye.
Within the towne wher you do dwel you knowe no dred nor stryfe
Then is it sure a paradise, I laye theron my lyfe.
For I have traveld here and theare, and sought this world ful wide,
To fynde a restyng quyet place, wher I would fayn abyde.
But in this wery pylgrimage, I never founde such stay
Nor suche a vertuous town as Lyn, yf it be as you saye.
Yf you have done as much in Lynne as you in London have
I thinke that all your neighbours woulde sone wyshe you in your grave.
For we were here in quyet all untyll you came to towne
Sence that we could not live in reste for suche a contrey clowne.
And Davie Dicars dreame forsoothe was lowed of every man
Tyll you began your wrangling riemes to brall upon his whan.
Wherin you lost your honest name, you could not lose much more
Thus are you put to open shame, and have no thanke therfore.
Go showe your councell one by one what gayne you here have got,
Herman wyll help to rowe you home, good syr nowe take your bote.
Nowe trudge awaye deare gentyll beaste, and kycke no more at me
And let them live in peace and reste that thinkes no harme to the.
Thus here I take my leave of you, wishing for grace and healthe
To kepe my prince from all his foes, and eke the comon wealth.

Thomas Churchyarde.

Imprinted in Fletstrit by Wylyam Gryffyth, a lyttle above
the condit at the syne of the Gryffin.
A wicked man doth set his minde, his hearte and hole intent,
To sclaunder truth and godlynesse, and hurt the innocent
But blessed be all those that be so falsly lyed appen:
And pacently do suffre it whome God dothe helpe eche one.
Catche no man in his woordes to soone but reade for better minde
For so the Jewes pursued Christe some tryp with hym to fynde.
Dissencion, discorde, variance, and those that make debate,
The Lorde that loveth uniti dothe soore deteste and hate.
Embrace and love your enemi Chryst byddeth very plaine
How can you so? whan you for love do rendre hate againe.
Forsake your forged lyes, and turn your flatery to truth:
And leave in age the wyckednesse that you had in your youthe.
God gyveth all the gyftes to man the whiche be good and pure;
For of our selfe we nothynge but evell, I am sure.
Have no delyte the gyltes of god, so wyckedly to use,
To sclaunder good and vertuous thynges, I can not you excuse.
I praye to God the Lord of myght, that everi wycked tonge
Myght ones by roote be weded out his people from among.
Knowe wel before you knit your knot, the meaning and the ende,
And learne at thinges of Godlynesse, your wycked lyfe to mende.
Lyke as thee Horse dothe wyne when he is rubbed on the gall;
So wicked do at godly things, to mend their lyf with al.
Moche evell comes by those that wolde mayntaine all wyckednesse,
And eke pervert instruction good, and sclaunder godlynesse.
No man can serve two masters wel and pleaseth them I wis,
Ye cannot serve our master Christe, and flatter for ginglyes.
Of suttle, beawe and glosing wordes thee commune sort indem de
Are evermor deceaved quite wherto they take great ease
Perceave and dee the beame so gret whiche is before their eies;
And than correcte they brothers faulte withoute fraude or lies.
Qench firste this your malicious mynde that burneth lyke the fiere,
And than your sclaunder certainly wyl not be thoght of Ire.
Remember that you reconcile you to yor brother againe:
Or els your offering wyl not be receaved, this is plaine.
Speake nothyng judging any man, that wyse man doth exort
With unadvysed wyfylnes, nor gyvyng ill reporte.
Taunte non for vertue while thou lyvest: for than thou are not wyse:
And wylt bee truly taken for a foole, mayntainyng vyce.
Whan Camel folowes any pointe of this, as it apperes
And leaving neaw and suttle wordes, we shal have pleasaunt yeres;
Vewe this good reader folowing, and that whiche is befor
To thend to frame thy lyfe therto, and mend it evermore,
X Christe bideth us ensue his stepps, and suffre wrong and griefe,
As he hath suffred grevous paine whiche is our health and lyfe;
You most sayth Christ observe and kepe, for very inward zeale,
His Godli and devine precepts and than you shal have weale.
Zachary was for godlines of wyl, and not constraynde,
Imputed just before the Lord I knowe this is not fainde.
AND fynali we ought to leave all sclaunder lyes and stryfe,
For nothinge is more wickedder in manes or womans lyfe,
CONsyderyng that we shal gyve accomptes before the lorde
Of al our Dededes, our wycked thoughts, and every ydel worde,
ESTeme not this as vanitie, and neelese matters eke,
for than in it (good brother mine) is wysdome farre to seeke;
AMENde thy lyfe by these preceptes, and beare me no disdain,
And than passe I nothyng at all thoughe it be thankelesse payne.
Rude Pan wold nedes one day in companie
Compare to mend Apollos melodye:
And toke his homlie pipe and gan to blo
The Jentyl god that saw his rudnes so
Although him selfe knewe how for to excell
Contented stode to here his connyng well;
Pan played, and played boystrouslye
Apollo played but played much melodiouslye
And such a tune wyth such musicke gave
It wel became hys knowledge for to have.
Midas stode by to Judge and to decre
Whych of them should best in musicke be,
And as he herde Pan playe and use hys songe
He thought it suche as he had lyked longe
And wonted was to here of others oft
Apollos harp and song went very soft
Abd swete and straunge: as none might sweter be:
But yet thought Midas theys musycke lykes not me,
And therfore strayght ful loude he cried and said:
Pan to mine eares of both hath better plaied.
Quoth then Apollo, syns thus thou demest Pan
Me to excel that God of Connyng am,
And so doest judge of thynges thou canst no skyll,
Midas henceforth lo thus to the I wyl
Thou shalt have eares to shewe and tell I wys,
Both what thy skyl and what they reason is,
Whych on thy heade shall stande and wytnes be
Howe thou hast judged this rural god and me;
Nay be content for I have it sayd
A full sad man stood Midas then dismayde
And as he felt to trye if it so was
He founde he had two eares as hath an Asse,
Newly growen out wher as hys owne reaes stoode
Soore chaunged then hys collour and his moode
But yet for thie, havyng no worde to saye
He shooke hys reaes and sadly went hys waye.
I know no more, but this I wot and knowe
That tho the Phrygian kyng be buryed lo
And both hys reaes eke wyth hym hydden be
And so far worne that no man shall them se
Syns such ther are that lyve at this day yet
Whych have hys skyl, hys judgement and his wit
And take upon them both to judge and know
To them I wyshe even thus and to no mo
That as they have hys judgement and hys yeares,
Even so I woulde they had hys fayre long eares.

T. Hedley.

Domine saluum fac regem, et da pacem in diebus nostris.
A Decree Betwene Churchyarde and Camell

A decree upon the dreame made by Davy Dicar with answer to Camel, whose tauntes be more quicker

Wher Dicar hath dreamed of thinges out of frame
And Churchiarde by writing affirmeth the same
And Camell contendeth the same to deface
And thefore hath put hys doyunes in place
Sythe both of those twayne hath set foorth in myter
The wordes of the authour, skyll of the wryghter
And rune in this race, styll chaffyng the bytte
I thynke in thys case much more then is fytte
I myndyng as much as lyeth in me
To mak them both, as in one to agree
Have taken in hande the dream to defende
And so to recite theyr race to the ende
Not so to approve my learning or skill
But onely because it be commeth them yll.
From riming to rayling so ofte to dygresse
Wheras reason and wyt doth wil nothing lesse
As Dicer hath dreamed so time out of minde
Some thynges were amys that some men dyd fynde
If al thynges wer wel, as I woulde god they were
We should not be plagued from yeare unto yeare
If al men do ryght what nedeth the lawe
What nede any justice to hange and to drawe
If no man be wronged, nor wydowe oppressed
Then nedeth no care to have it redressed
If no man wil venter to robbe or to steale
O England thou has a good common weale.
If no man do hurde nor hydeth in store
Then England shall have no dearth any more
If no man offend by way of excesse
Then grace doth abound, the fault is the lesse,
If the lustes of the fleshe be pute oute of ure
The world is amended, the people be pure
If the poore and the nedye be daylye relived
What man is so mad therat to be grevede
If no man do slaunder nor styre up debate
Then Dicar I thinke hath dreamed to late
If no man do flater nor fawne for a gaine
Then may it appeare this dreame is but vaine
If all thing be wel, and in the ryght waye
Why do they not use good lawes to obey.
If no man defraude in bying or sellyng
Then happy is England, for ther is best dwellyng
If faith be unfained and wordes do once bynde
The dreame is all false and so ye may fynde
If truth do take place and in all thinges encreasse
Dreame no more Dicar, but lette thy dreame ceasse,
If this be not so then Camell to you
I fear me thys dreame wyll prove to be true
For it is not so geeson withe us for to heare
But the effect of the dreame doth daylye appeare
And every man is now in such a takinge
It passeth a dreme, they finde it out waking
If you be such a one as never had peere
Then are you fauty in none of this geere
But seyng your writyng doth seeme some what quycke
You seme that you smarted because ye dyd kycke
Yet when the dreame was to printing dyrected
I thincke of the dreamer ye were not suspected.
And wheras you contende it doth not belonge
For Dicar to dreame of right or of wronge
In ded ye dooe wel yf you done amis
To shewe him his faulte and say thus it is
And if you so well know what doth Dicar behove
Then ought you to shewe the same to approve
But me thincketh you want a frendli good will
To deface a good matter though the authour wer ill
And certes of you both indifferentli to tell
I cannot in your railinges comend your doings well.
And both of you twaine are yet to me unknownen
Yet can I aide your doinges, as if they were mine own
Ye passe from your purpose in such unworthi sorte
Ye make of your doinges a very laughing sporte
Ye close and ye glose, in seking to be fine
Ye taunt and retaunt al most in everi line
Ye affirm ye have red both Terence and Cato
Ye count ye do but faletrye wel resemble Gnato,
And looke how muche differs a Fore from a foole
Su much do you differ from Cato and his scole,
For Cato doth affyrme ther is no greater shame
Then to reprove a vyce, and yourselves to do thee same
And because I wyl not seeme your fancy to embrace
As touching your debate, I answer in this case.
Me thinketh in wrytynge ye both have such skyll
Ye mar a good matter and make it very yll.
Wherby to say the truth it appeareth well unto me
Your names and your wytts unnumerable be
Therfore do not thinke that ye can be forborne
But such as be readers shall laugh you to scorne.
And when that your doynges be throughly perused
Then by the same deedes ye shalbe accused
Cease nowe in season, cast all contempt away
Be subject unto reason, I make no more delay
And eyther of you twane do not refuse to knowe
As Cato doth enstructe you but strayght embrace it so
Which though my skil be smal, here thought I to reherse
The text and sence wythe all, of every kynde of verse.

Contra verbosos noli contendere verbis
Sermo datur cunctis animi sapiencia paucis
Cum recte vivas ne cures berba malorum
Arbitri nostri non est quid quisque loquatur
To strive with men of many wordes, refrain I the advise.
It is not given to every man that he shalbe godlye wyse,
If thou lyve well do not regarde what wicked men do say
For whir it lyeth not in us suche wycked tounges to staye
Thys is it that ye have read, whiche if you lyst to knowe
He wyle aswage your strudy stormes which you have reised so
Take this in worth good Reader now expound it to the best
For I have sayd to theyr devyce, now harcken to the rest.
The Judgement of the Authour

Some thyng is amys and ever shal be so
Scripture writeth thys as; earned men do knowe
And some men have the gyft therof to speake and wryte
Which fal yet at a lyfte to frail and fonde delyte.
It doth behove us al so justly as we canne
To do ryght wel in dede, and eke to wryte it thanne
How be it in hym I Judge mucho greater faulte ther is
Whiche noght can saye or do, but that whiche is amys.
The best may be amended, and that is very true,
The moore that have offended, the more we oughte to rue.
If ant fal from grace, gentelly hym assayle,
Burden hym wythe charity, no rygeur can prevaile,
For why if that the shepherd do wander from the waye,
No marvell if the shepe therafter go astraye.
Some men parhappe ther be wyl take me to the wourst,
I praye you judge of me, as I spake it at the fyrst,
For it becommeth yll in wryting to contende,
Withouten wytte or skyll to mak a rayling ende;
Take me to the best, as one to you unknowne,
Whose worthy wyts I do commends and wolde wyth you be one,
Not minding so assuredli to spende and waste the daie,
To make the people laughe at me,
And here I make astaye.
Westerne Wyll

Westerne Wyll to Camell and for hymselfe alone, 2
Although hee leudely lust to knitte up three in one.

When Calmly blewes the winde, and seas but lytle move,
And cloud appereth none, to threaten from above
Unwelcome chaunge of wether, with rage of stormes loude,
Ne mistes ther manteles spreade, the sonne a way to shroude,
The maister ydle sittes, and shipboyes stere thee sterne,
the course so carelesse is, he luste it not governe;
But when the storme beginnes to rattle in the skies
And wallowing waves a loft, lyke mountains high to ryse
And sourges rouling rounde ful thicke inothers taile,
Behynde and eke before, the crayer ginnes assaile;
Then boyes come fro the helme, and Maisters setto hande
That bettir practis have, the be^owes to withstande
So nowe with me it fars, syth ye begynne to blow
And thonndre in thee ayre and sondrie lyghtnynges threw
And rore agaynst the rockes wheron your mater beates
My selfe to helme am comen, to guyde her in these heats
Sufficed me a fore, when noght appered but calme
To laughe and looke upon the quietise of your qualme;
As doeth the ydle man, uppon the plaiers game
Wher parte hym selfe hath none and yeat uppon yhee same

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2This poem is not among the broadsides extant in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries, but follows "Camelles Conclusion" in the Huntington volume.
Hys fancie commune wyll, and furthe to of her telle,
What thynge ther semed hym good, or other wyse then welle
But ye no lookers on, in no wyse can abyde
To say their fanseyes free, what toys in you thei spied,
But eche must have hys parte, when ye begynne to rage,
To love a nombre wel, so furnyshe out the stage
And sithe ye wyll therfor, that niedes I shal come in,
Thus for my selfe alone, to answer I beginne:
A man that bendes hym selfe, to sowe thee seedes of payne
No mervayle thogh hee reape suche travaile for his gaine.
A wicked plough it is that forowes up a fielde,
To marre a pleaseant patthe, and no good fruite to yeelde.
Who laboureth so to fynde with dygging in the mould
Declareth wel a wyll to fynde if ought he coulde:
And busieth hym selfe withe maters moe then niedes
And roteth up good herbes to plant in stynkyng wiedes;
And yet would counpted be a sely symple man
That nothyng meanes but right, to further as he canne,
And that ye myght hym rue and pitie some what more;
He makes as though he war but one agaynst asker,
And yet yf al be weighed in balance just uprighte
The chalenge restes in thee that fyrste the fighte;
But that in dede I heare ye have the Beau Lugent
And eke that other one that suche rewarde hath sente
To hym that went about, to stille you with decre
As Phoebus gave to Pan for judgement lyke sayes hee:
Lo here I bringe my boate to rowe ye home to Lynne
But ye suche conscience have for punishment of synne,
That house and home may sincke and oxen sterve at plough,
But ye mai some what gete to carry home wit you
Woulde ye be glad in dede to swincke and lyve in reste
Then have ye much a wrye begonne to make your neste
And that I trust at ones in sobre woordes to showe;
Bestirre ye nowe mi beast, the mariner ginne to rowe,
A person of suche witte, as ye would e seme to be,
Of suche fore caste and zeale and of suche gravities
Before he taketh in hande agaynst a thyng to wryte
And set the same abroch to all the peoples sight
Wille weighe what woordes therin be not wel sayd or ment,
And eke howe farre the same from dutie doe dissent
Whiche thyng yf ye so dyd, in reading of that bille
Then founde ye all thynges wel or some thyng sounding yll
But yf ye founde them well, ye raile and lacke a grounde,
But yf their semed so yll as ye doe make them sounde
Then dutie claymeth this and specially in you
That in your youthe was taughte your dutie wel ynoughe
To have race it fro the post, and when ye warned had
The seller that this dreme was daungerous to be radd,
The same in sobre wyse to open unto those
That lowfull power have our state to binde and louse
Of whom you had thankes had then deserved for your dieede
And taken away the cause wherof more evil mighte conclude
But this thyng dyd ye not, wherfor I mighte conclude
Yf any harme ther be the woorte by you was brued
And ye concealed fyrste the faulte ye dyd espie
And judged it matter meete your wrangling wittes to trye
Ye dreamed ye smalled a spark, that thogh it ware right smalle
Ye could by blowinges bringe, and tindre mirt withalle
To make a flambe righte great, in syghte of many a on
Whiche streight way of it self woulde ells have quenched alone
But had the dreamer given the victory to you
And helde hys peace at fyrst all had bene good enoughe
The purging of your galle and hongre of a cote
As some men doe affirme have chauffed you so hote
Yet yf you so have founde suche sparckles in this dreme
Go blowe them wher they bred, they be withoute my streme,
Although you argue thus, entente wille have effecte
Whiche westerne wil woulde not that any shoulde suspecte
Wherto I answer thus, ye stomble on the plaine
And wher ye thinck all sure your reasons ar moste vaine
Full lytle witte ye have, yf ye cannot espye
This argument to be muche truer contrarrie
For sieldomer entente atteineth to effecte
Then as ye folishelly thee other do object.
I bydde no man to take it as dreme or fantasie
But ther I plainly shewed that even so took it I
And nothing ells dyd meane in homely western wille
But so to choppe in trenchour termes as folkes do at the mille
Wher eche to other carpes in rude or borrell spieche
Of thynges wherwith them selves do neither smarte nor itche
And yf ye woulde for this we learned bothe to dyve
My boate and I toguether god let ye never thryve
But god bee thencked ever that so for us provides
More noble harts and wyse or comon welth that guydes
As he them list assigne that reigneth in the toppe
Our true redoubted kynge of suche excellent hope
As never subjectes had a paterne more expresse
Of kingly vertues all, and learned nobleness
Whose persons ar to highe to stowpe into this rythme,
And better nothynge sayd then spoken out of time
To you my pen I turn, that judgen me amysse
And praye you wel to note the packinge up of this
Sith ye so wel can racke the meninge of ones mynde
And have a grace to smelle that fewe men ells woulde fynde
Contente your selfe a while, and neither fume ne freate
Thogh withe your owne to you I doo like mesure meate
And sure I wille not chuse the woorst emong the rost
But take the woord wherein you sieme to triomphe most
Because ye woulde be thoghte to reverence the powers
(As wel becomes us alle, to alle our governours)
Suche name as they righte wel contented are to heare
And suche as of it selfe a majestie doth beare
Contented are ye not to usen in your verse
But by the name of goddes ye do them oft reherse
Now yf ye wille alleage the scripture useth this
According to your skylle: ego dixi dii estis.
Then harken I beseche your goddes howe they agree
To hym that we call God, and one beleve to be,
Lo in your rythmes afore, peruse them who that wyl,
It wel appeares the Godes, whom you them liken till,
Ware neither goddes nor men of cyvyle lyvyng good
But fansyes of ydolatres, and dreames of Robin hood,
But graunt that they were goddes of olde gentilitie
Yet muste we take them suche as they them wryte to bee;
Then ponder wel my friend, sithe ye the latten knowe
What tales in them be tolde of Jupiter arowe
And what a worthi clue ye winde up of this threade
When ye thee magistrates conjoine to suche a heade;
And here yf I woulde bringe entent to have effecte
I coulde make some beleve ye ware to be suspecte;
Ye meane them honour least wher most ye do them glose
And use suche termes as mighte be made a shipmans hose
I coulde ye here paynte out a rable of those Goddes
Betwixt the which and magistrates I trowe ye should put eddes;
But that I doe avoide, and feare also in diede
That people in my rithmes suche thynges unfytt would riede;
I am not yet so bold to talk at large of them
Whome alwayes I have feared, if they but winke or hem,
But use in you hath bred such skylly bi sondry change
That happen what so wyl, it seldom semeth straunge;
Wher practys small is had in any kynde of feate
To suche it iften happes that tryfile seme them great,
But stomacke so are you by travaile in your trade
Withe many a wandring course from post to pyllour made,
That nothynge mountes so highe, ne semeth of suche wayte
That ye wyl not attempte if ones ye wynde the baite.
Thus far I am contente to wafte ye on the waye
And as for alle the reste that you to other saye
Let them the aunswer make to whom it apperteignes
For I have some what elles to occupye my braynes
And for your lesson, lo by Christ I lyke it well
And suche a lyke I wiene Dothe Pierce the ploughmen telle;
But yet leave out this clause to spreade it on the floore,
It was ynough to have it written on thee doore,
For yf it comme so lowe, to lye uppon the grounde,
I feare that many fiete wille make it full unsounde,
And tread it all to durte, in sorte I you assure,
That ye may happe forgette to put the thynges in ure.

W. Watreman
APPENDIX C

FOLKLORE MOTIFS IN THE "FLYTING OF MONTGOMERIE AND POLWART"

The material listed below is arranged according to the Motif-Index of Folk Literature by Stith Thompson and the Motif-Index of Early Irish Literature by Tom Peete Cross. Other motifs relevant to the Montgomerie-Polwart poems are discussed but not indexed in such works as John G. Campbell's Superstitions of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland (Glasgow, 1911), William G. Stewart's Popular Superstitions of the Highlanders (Edinburgh, 1823), and in the Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend, edited by Maria Leach and Jerome Fried (New York, 1950).
Motif-Index of Folk Literature

G 201: Three witch sisters or hags.
G 229.3: Witches lack bread and salt.
G 241.4.3: Witch travels in sieve.
G 241.3: Witch rides backward on horse.
G 241.1.2: Witch rides stalk of broom
G 243.1.1: Witches kiss devil's tail.
G 244.1: Witch winds yarn.
G 265.6.2.1: Witch causes cattle to run about wildly.
G 272.2.1: Rowan wood protects against witches.
G 283: Witches have control over weather.
G 303.6.1.5: Devil appears when cards are played.
D 2083.3.2: Hair rope transfers cow's milk.
F 241.1.7: Fairies steal stalks of hemp and turn them into horses.
G 303.13.4: Devil tries to learn a trade; he fails miserably at all but verse making. He now loiters in ale houses and sings songs.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motif-Index of Early Irish Literature</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G 247:</td>
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<tr>
<td>G 303.10.4:</td>
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<tr>
<td>G 263.4.4:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G 263.4.0:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G 225.0.2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G 283.1:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G 303.5.2:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G 303.6.1.7:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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