

THE BOOK WAS
DRENCHED

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OU_210253

UNIVERSAL
LIBRARY

OSMANIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Call No. 821.34 Accession No. 3611.0
Author D76P
 Drayton, Michael
Title Poems of . v.2. 1953.

This book should be returned on or before the date
last marked below.

The Muses' Library

*

POEMS

OF

MICHAEL DRAYTON



MICHAEL DRAYTON

POEMS OF
MICHAEL DRAYTON

edited
with an introduction
by

JOHN BUXTON

VOLUME TWO

LONDON
ROUTLEDGE AND KEGAN PAUL LTD

First published In 1953
by Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited
Broadway House, 68-74 Chancery Lane
London E C.4
Printed in Great Britain
by Butler and Tanner Limited
Frome and London

Checked 1969

Checked 1965

Checked ...

R ID. No. 00076057

CONTENTS

THE BARONS WARRES	<i>Page</i>	307
INGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES:		445
ROSAMOND AND HENRY II		447
FLINOR COBHAM AND DUKE HUMPHREY		459
EARLE OF SURREY AND LADY GFRAIDINT		470
LADY JANE GRAY AND LORD GILFORD		
DUDLEY		483
THE LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF		
NORMANDH		493
THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT		525
POLY-OLBION:		533
SONG 1		535
SONG 5		557
SONG 6		570
SONG 13		585
SONG 14		602
SONG 15		615
SONG 19		628
SONG 20		645
SONG 25		657
SONG 26		671
SONG 30		691
NOTES		705
GLOSSARY		723

THE BARONS WARRES

The Barons Wanes

In the reigne of Edward the Second

THE FIRST CANTO

The Argument

The grievous plagues, and the prodigious signes,
That this great warre and slaughter doe fore-show,
The cause which the proud Baronage combines,
The Queenes much wrong, whence many mischiefs
grow,
And how the time to this great change inclines,
As with what armes each countrey men doe goe,
What cause to yeeld, the Mortimers pretend,
And their commitment, doth this Canto end.

1

The bloudie factions and rebellious pride
Of a strong nation, whose ill-manag'd might
The Prince and peeres did many a day divide;
With whom, wrong was no wrong, nor right no right,,
Whose strife, their swords knew only to decide,
Spur'd to their high speed, by their equall spight;
Me from soft layes and tender loves doth bring,
Of a farre worse, then civill warre to sing.

2

What hellish furie poys'ned their hot blood?
Or can we thinke 'twas in the power of charmes,
With those so poore hopes of the publike good,
To have intic'd them to tumultuous armes;
And from that safetie, wherein late they stood,
Reft them so farre from feeling of their harmes,
That France and Belgia, with affrighted eyes,
Stood both amazed at their miseries?

THE BARONS WARRES

3

Th'inveterate malice in their bosomes bred,
Who for their charter wag'd a former warre,
Their angrie syres; in them that venom fed,
As their true heires of many a wide-mouth'd skarre:
Or was't the bloud they had in conquest shed,
Having inlarg'd their countries bounds so farre,
That did themselves against themselves oppose,
With blades of Bilbo changing English blowes?

4

O, thou the wise director of my Muse,
Upon whose bountie all my powers depend,
Into my brest thy sacred'st fire infuse;
Ravish my spirit, this great worke to attend;
Let the still night my lab'red lines peruse;
That when my poems game their wished end,
Such, whose sad eyes shall read this tragique storie,
In my weake hand may see thy might and glorie.

5

What care would plot, dissention strove to crosse,
Which like an earthquake rent the tottering State;
In warre abroad they suffered publique losse,
And were at home despoyl'd by private hate:
Whil'st them those strange calamities did tosse,
(For there was none that nourisht not debate)
Confusion did the common peace confound;
No helpe at hand, yet mortall was their wound.

6

Thou Church, then swelling in thy mightinesse,
Which in thy hand so ample power didst hold,
To stay those factions, ere their full excesse,
Which at thy pleasure thou might'st have control'd;

THE BARONS WARRES

Why didst not thou those outrages suppress,
Which to all times, thy prayse might have enrol'd?
Thou shouldst to them have layd the Holy Word,
And not thy hand to the unholyed sword.

7

Bloud-thirstie warre arising first from hell,
And seizing on this chiefe part of the lie,
Where it before neere fortie yeeres did dwell,
And with abhorr'd pollution did defile,
In which so many a famous souldier fell;
By Edward Long-shanks banished awhile,
Transfer'd to Wales, and to Albania, there
To ruine them, as it had ravin'd here.

8

Where hovering long with inauspicious wings,
About the verge of these distemper'd clymes,
By commmg backe, new mischiefe hither brings,
To worke them up to those disasterous crymes;
Weakeneth their power by her dimimshings,
And taking fast hold on those wicked tymes,
So farre inforc'd their fune, that at length
It crackt the nerves which knit their ancient
strength.

9

Whose frightfull vision, at the first approach,
With violent madnesse strooke that desperate age.
And did not onely those rebellions broach
Amongst the commons, but the divellish rage
Did on the best Nobilitie incroach,
And in their damn'd conspiracies, ingage
The royall bloud; them likewise downe to bring,
By unnaturall treasons to their naturall King.

THE BARONS WARRES

10

When in the north (whilst horror yet was young)
Those dangerous seasons swiftly comming on,
Whilst o'er their heads portentuous meteors hung,
And in the skies sterne commets brightly shone,
Prodigious births were intermix'd among,
Such as before to times had beene unknowne;
In bloudie issues, forth the earth doth breake,
Weeping for them, whose woes it could not speake.

11

And by the rankenesse of contagious ayre,
A mortall plague m'vadeth man and beast;
Which ftirre dispersed, and raging every where,
In doubt the same too quickly should have coast,
T'assure them of the slaughter being neere,
Yet was by famine cruelly mcreast;
As though the heavens, in their remisfull doome,
Tooke those they lov'd, from worsere dayes to come.

12

The levell course that we intend to goe,
Now (to the end) that yee may cleerely see,
And that we every circumstance may show,
The state of things, and truly what they be,
And our materialls how we doe bestow,
With each occurrent right in his degree;
From these portents we now divert our view,
To bring to passe the horrors that insue.

13

The calling backe of banish'd Gaveston,
Gainst which, the Barons had to Long-shanks sworne;
The signiories, and high promotion,
Him in his law-lesse courses to suborne;

THE BARONS WARRES

Th'abetting of that wanton minion,
Who held the old Nobilitie in scorne;
 Stifd up that hatefull and outragious strife,
 Which cost so many an English-man his life.

14

O much-lov'd Lacy, hadst thou spar'd that breath,
Which shortly after Nature thee deny'd,
To Lancaster delivered at thy death,
To whom thy only daughter was affy'd,
Taking for pledge, his knightly oath and faith,
Stiffely to sticke upon the Barons side;
 Thy Manors, rents, and titles of rcnowne,
 Had not so soone beene forfeit to the crowne.

15

Those Lordships, Bruse to those two Spensers past,
Crossing the Barons vehement desire,
As from Joves arme, that fearefull lightning cast }
That fiftie townes lay spent in hostile fire;
Alas, too vame and prodigall a waste,
The strong effect of their conceived ire:
 Urging the weake King, by a violent hand,
 T'abjure those false Lords from the troubled land.

16

When as the faire Queene progressing in Kent,
Was there deny'd her entrance into Leeds
By Badlesmer, a Baron eminent.
Against the King, that in this course proceeds,
Which further addeth to their discontent,
A speciall spring, which this great mischiefe feeds,
 Wrong upon wrong, by heaping more and more,
 To thrust on that, which went too fast before.

THE BARONS WARRES

17

Which more and more King Edwards hate increast,
Whose mind ran still on Gaveston degraded,
The thoughts of which, so settled in his brest,
That it had all his faculties invaded:
Which for the Spensers hap'ned out the best,
By whom, thereto he chiefly was perswaded;
And by whose counsels he e're long was led
To leave his bright Queene, and to flye her bed.

18

That shee her selfe, who whilst shee stood in grace,
Imploy'd her powers these discords to appease,
When yet confusion had not fully place,
In times not growne so dangerous as these,
A partie made in their afflicted case,
Her willing hand to his destruction layes;
That time, whose soft palme heals the wound of
warre,
May cure the sore, but never close the skarre.

19

In all that heat, then gloriously began,
The serious subject of my solid vaine,
Brave Mortimer, that some-what more then man,
Of the old heroes great and god-like straine,
For whom, invention doing all it can,
His weight of honour hardly shall sustaine,
To beare his name immortalized, and hye,
Where he in earth un-nubred yeeres shall lye.

20

Whose unckle then (whose name his nephew bare)
The only comfort of the wofull Queene,
Who from his cradle held him as his care,

THE BARONS WARRES

In whom so many early hopes were scene,
For this yong Lord most wisely doth prepare,
Whilst yet her deepe heart-goring wound was greene,
 And on this faire advantage firmly wrought,
 To place him highly in her princely thought.

21

This was the man, at whose unusuall birth
The starres were said, to councell to retyre,
And in aspects of happinesse and mirth,
Mark'd him a spirit, to greatnesse to aspire,
That had no mixture of the drossie earth,
But all compact of perfect heavenly fire;
 So well made up, that such a one as he,
 Jove in a man, like Mortimer would be.

22

The quick'ning vertue of which nobler part,
With so rare purenesse rectify'd his bloud,
And to so high a temper wrought his heart,
That it could not be lock'd within a floud,
That no misfortune possibly could thwart;
Which from the native greatnesse where it stood,
 Shew'd at the first, the pitch it was to flie,
 Could not with lesse be bounded, then the skie.

23

Worthy the grand-child of so great a Lord;
Who, whilst our Long-shanks fortunatly raign'd,
Re-edify'd King Arthurs ancient boord,
Which he at goodly Kenelworth ordain'd,
And to that former glorie it restored,
To which a hundred gallant knights retained,
 With all the pompe that might become a Court,
 Or might give honour to that martiall sport.

THE BARONS WARRES

24

The heart-swolne lords, with furie throughly fir'd,
Whom Edwards wrongs to vengeance still provoke,
With Lancaster and Harford had conspir'd,
No more to beare the Spensers servile yoke;
The time is come, that they a change desir'd;
That they (the bonds of their allegiance broke)
Resolv'd with bloud their hbertie to buy,
And in the quarrell vow'd to live and die.

25

What priviledge hath our free-birth, they say?
Or in our bloud, what vertue doth remaine?
To each lascivious minion made a prey,
That us and our nobilitie disdaine,
Whilst they in triumph boast of our decay;
Either those spirits we never did retaine,
That were our fathers, or by fate we fall
Both from their greatnesse, libertie, and all.

26

Our honor, lifted from that soveraigne state,
From whence at first it challenged the being,
And prostitute to infamie and hate,
As with it selfe in all things disagreeing,
Quite out of order, dis-proportionate,
From the right way preposterously flying;
Whilst others are themselves, and only we
Are not held those, we would but seeme to be.

27

Then to what end hath our great conquest serv'd,
Those acts achieved by the Norman sword,
Our charters, patents, and our deeds reserv'd,
Our offices and titles to record,

THE BARONS WARRES

The crests that on our monuments are carv'd,
If they to us no greater good afford?
Thus doe they murmure every one apart,
With many a vex'd soule, many a grieved heart.

28

This while the Queene into deepe sorrow throwne,
Wherein she wastes her goodly youth away,
Beyond beleefe, to all but heaven unknowne:
This sparke, till now, that closely covered lay,
By the sharpe breath of desp'rate faction blowne,
Converts her long night to a wished day;
Her wofull winter of misfortune cheannng,
As the darke world at the bright sunnes appearing.

29

Though much perplex'd amidst these hard extremes,
Whilst helps fall short, that should her hopes preferre,
Nor clearly yet could she discern those beames,
To her desires that else might lighten her,
Her thoughts oft changing, like deceitfull dreames,
In her sad brest such violent passions stirre;
That (striving which each other should controule)
Worke strange confusion in her troubled soule.

30

To be debarred of that imperiall state,
Which to her graces rightly did belong,
Basely rejected, and repudiate,
A vertuous lady, goodly, faire, and yong;
These with such fervour still doe intimate
Her too-much settled and inveterate wrong;
That to the least, all pardon shee denies,
With arguments of her indignities.

THE BARONS WARRES

31

Whilst, to dispatch, the angry heavens pursue,
What there, un-judg'd, had many a day depended,
When all these mischiefes to full ripenesse grew,
And in their harvest hasting to be ended:
For all these lines into one centre drew,
Which way soe're they seem'd to be extended,
And all together, in proportion layd,
Although but small, adde somewhat to her ayd.

32

Now comes the time, when Mortimer doth enter,
Of great imployment in this tragique act,
His youth and courage boldly bid him venter,
Prompting him still, how strongly he was backt,
Who at this time, even as from heaven was sent her,
When the straight course to her desire was tract;
And she upon more certaintie doth stay,
In a direct, although a dangerous way.

33

This dreadfull comet drew her wond'ring eye,
Which soone began his golden head to reare,
Whose glorious fixure in so cleere a skie,
Strooke the beholder with a horrid feare;
And in a region elevate so high,
And by the forme wherein it did appeare,
As the most skilfull wisely did divine,
Fore-shew'd the kingdome shortly to decline.

34

Yet still recoyling at the Spensers power,
So often checkt with their intemp'rate pride,
Th'inconstant Barons wavering everie houre,
The fierce encounter of this boyst'rous tide,

318

THE BARONS WARRES

That eas'ly might her livelyhood devoure,
Had shee not those that skilfully could guide;
Shee from suspition cunningly retyres,
Carelesse in shew, of what she most desires.

35

Dissembling so, as one that knew not ill,
So can shee rule the greatnesse of her mind,
As a most perfect rect'resse of her will,
Above the usuall weakenesse of her kind:
For all these stormes, immoveable and still,
Her secret drift, the wisest misse to find;
Nor will she know yet, what these factions meant,
But with a pleas'd eye soothes sad discontent.

36

The least suspition craftily to heale,
Still in her lookes humiliatie she beares;
The safest way with mightinesse to deale,
So policie, religions habit weares;
'Twas then no time her grievance to reveale,
'Hee's mad, which takes a lyon by the eares.
This knew the Queene, and this well know the wise:
This must they learne, that rightly temporize.

37

The Bishop Torleton, learned'st of the land,
Upon a text of politiques to preach,
Which he long studying, well did understand,
And by a method could as aptly teach:
He was a prelate of a potent hand,
Wise was the man that went beyond his reach:
This subtill tutor, Isabel had taught
Points, into which King Edward never sought.

THE BARONS WARRES

38

When warre no longer can it selfe containe,
But breaketh forth into a generall flame,
And to be seene more visibly and plame,
Boldly it selfe dares publicuely proclaime,
And as a poore thing proudly doth disdaine
To give it selfe out by another name,
Or take upon it any strange disguise,
But now with legions furiously doth rise.

39

As Severne lately in her ebbes that sanke,
Vast and forsaken leaves th'uncovered sands,
Fetching full tides, luxurious, high, and ranke,
Seemes in her pride t'mvade the neighb'ring lands,
Breaking her limits, covering all her banks,
Threat'neth the proud hills with her wat'rie hands;
As though she meant her empyrie to have,
Where even but lately she beheld her grave.

40

From every place, when souldiers farre and neere,
Flocke to the field, as fortune lots their side,
With th'ancient weapons they had us'd to beare;
Some, as they were directed by their guide;
Others againe, as they affected were;
But the most part, as by their dutie tyde:
As each one finds the motion of his blood,
Let those that lead them, make the quarrell good.

41

From Norfolke, and the countries of the east,
That with the pike most skilfully could fight;
Then those of Kent, unconquer'd of the rest,
That to this day maintaine their ancient right;

THE BARONS WARRES

For courage no whit second to the best,
The Cornish men most active, bold, and light;
Those neere the plaine, the pole-axe best that wield,
And clayme for theirs the vaward of the field.

42

The noble Welsh, of th'ancient British race;
From Lancashire, men famous for their bowes;
The men of Ches-shire, chiefest for their place,
Of bone so bigge, as onely made for blowes,
Which for their faith are had in specialI grace,
And have beene ever fearefull to their foes:
The Northerne then, in feuds so deadly fell,
That for their speare and horsemanship excell.

43

Ail that for use experience could espie,
Such as in fennes and marsh-lands use to trade,
The doubtfull foards and passages to trie,
With stilts and lope-staves, that doe apthest wade,
Most fit for scouts and currers to decrie;
Those from the mynes, with pick-axe and with spade,
For pioners best, that for intrenching are,
Men chiefly needfull in the use of warre.

44

O noble nation, furnished with armes,
So full of spirit, as almost match'd by none!
Had heaven but blest thee, to foresee thy harmes,
And, as thy valiant nephewes did, have gone
Paris, Roan, Orleance, shaking with alarmes;
As the bright sunne, thy glorie then had shone:
To other realmes thou hadst transfer'd this chance;
Nor had your sonnes been first that conquer'd
France.

321

THE BARONS WARRES

45

And thus on all hands setting up their rest,
And all make forward for this mightie day,
Where every one prepares to doe his best,
When at the stake their lives and fortunes lay,
No crosse event their purposes to wrest,
Being now on, in so direct a way;
Yet whilst they play this strange and doubtfull
game,
The Queene stands off, and secretly gives ayme.

46

But Mortimer his foot had scarcely set
Into the road, where fortune had to deale,
But she disposed his forward course to let;
Her lewd condition quickly doth reveale,
Glory to her vaine deitie to get
By him, whose strange birth bare her ominous scale;
Taking occasion from that very houre,
In him to prove and manifest her power.

47

As when we see the early rising sunne,
With his bright beames to emulate our sight;
But when his course yet newly is begun,
The hum'rous fogges deprive us of his light,
Till through the clouds he his cleare forehead runne,
Climbing the noone-stead in his glorious height:
His cleare beginning, fortune cloudeth thus,
To make his mid-day great and glorious.

48

The King (discreetly) that considered
The space of earth, whereon the Barons stand,
As what the powers to them contributed,

THE BARONS WARRES

Then being himselfe but partner of his land;
Of the small strength and armie that he led
'Gajnst them which did so great a power command,
Wisely about him doth begin to looker
Great was the taske which now he undertooke.

49

And warn'd by danger to misdoubt the worst,
In equall scales whilst cithers fortunes hung,
He must performe the utmost that he durst,
Or undergoe intolerable wrong:
As good to stirre, as after be enforced;
To stop the sourse whence all these mischiefes sprung,
He with the Marchers thinks best to begin,
Which first must lose, ere he could hope to winne

50

The Mortimers being men of greatest might,
Whose name was dreadfull, and commanded farre,
Sturdie to manage, of a haughtie spnght,
Strongly ally'd, much followed, popular,
On whom, if he but happily could light,
He hop'd more easMy to conclude the warre;
Which he intended speedily to trie,
To quit that first, which most stood in his eye.

51

For which, he expeditiously provided,
That part of land into his power to get;
Which, if made good, might keepe his foes divided,
Their combination cunningly to let;
Which should they joyne, would be so strongly sided,
Two mightie hoasts, together safely met,
The face of warre would looke so sterne and great,
As it might threat to heave him from his seat.

323

THE BARONS WARRES

52

Wherefore the King from London setteth forth,
With a full armie, furnish'd of the best,
Accompany'd with men of speciall worth,
Which to this warre his promises had prest:
Great Lancaster was lord of all the north,
The Mortimers were masters of the west;
He towards mid-England makes the way 'twixt
either,
Which they must crosse, ere they could come
together.

53

Strongly inveagled with delightfull hope,
Stoutly t'affront and shoulder with debate,
Knowing to meet with a resolved troupe,
That came prepar'd with courage, and with hate;
Whose stubborne crests if he inforc'd to stoupe,
It him behoves to tempt some powerfull fate,
And through sterne guards of swords and hostile
fire,
Make way to peace, or shamefully retire.

54

When now the Marchers, well upon their way,
(Expecting those, that them supplyes should bring,
Which had too long abus'd them by delay)
Were suddenly incountred by the King;
They then perceive, that dilatorie stay
To be the causer of their ruining,
When at their bosomes blacke destruction stood,
With open jawes prepared for their blood.

THE BARONS WARRES

55

And by the shifting of th'unconstant wind,
Seeing what weather they were like to meet,
Which even at first so awkwardly they find,
Before they could give sea-roomth to their fleet,
Cleane from their course, and cast so farre behind,
And yet in perill every houre to split;
Some unknowne harbor suddenly must sound,
Or runne their fortunes desperately on ground.

56

The elder peere, grave, politique, and wise,
Which had all dangers absolutely scan'd,
Finding high time his nephew to advise,
Since now their state stood on this desp'rate hand,
And from this mischiefe, many more to rise,
Which his experience made him understand;
Nephew (sayth he) 'tis but in vaine to strive,
Counsell must helpe, our safetie to contrive.

57

The downe-night perill, present in our eye,
Not to be shun'd, we see what it assures;
Thmke then what weight upon our fall doth lye,
And what our being, this designe procures;
As to our friends, what good may grow thereby,
Proove, which the test of reason best endures;
'For who observes strict policies true lawes,
'Shifts his proceeding, to the varying cause.

58

To hazzard fight with the imperiall powers,
Will our small troupes undoubtedly apall;
Then, this our warre us wilfully devoures:
Yeelding our selves, yet thus we lose not all,

THE BARONS WARRES

We leave our friends this smaller force of ours,
Reserved for them, though haplesly we fall; •
That weakenesse ever hath a glorious hand,
That falls it selfe, to make the cause to stand.

59

Twixt unexpected, and so dangerous ills,
That's saf'st, wherein we smallest perill see,
Which, to make choise of, reason justly wills,
And it doth best with policie agree:
The idle vulgar breath, it nothing skills,
Tis sound discretion must our pilot be;
'He that doth still the fairest meanes preferre,
' Answers opinion, howsoe'er he erre.

60

And to the worlds eye seeming yet so strong,
By our descending willingly from hence,
Twill shew we were provoked by our wrong,
Not having other sinister pretence:
This force left off, that doth to us belong,
Will in opinion lessen our offence;
'Men are not ever incident to losse,
'When fortune seemes them frowardly to crosse.

61

Nor give we envie absolute excesse,
To search so farre, our subtilties to find,
There's neerer meanes, this mischief to redresse,
And make successefull what is yet behind:
Let's not our selves of all hope dis-possesse,
Fortune is ever variously inclin'd;
'A small advantage in th'affaires of Kings,
'Guides a slight meanes, to compasse mighty things.

THE BARONS WARRES

62

This speech so caught his nephewes plyant youth,
(Who his grave earn did ever much respect)
Proceeding from integritie and truth;
Well could he counsell, well could he direct,
With strong perswasions, which he still pursu'th;
Which in a short time shew'd by the effect,
 'A wise mans counsell, by a secret fate,
 ' Seeming from reason, yet proves fortunate.

63

To which, the King they gravely doe invite,
By the most strict and ceremonious way;
Nor circumstance omitted, nor no rite,
That might give colour to their new essay,
Or that applause might publicly excite:
To which, the King doth willingly obay:
 Who like themselves, in seeing danger neere,
 Rather accepts a doubt, then certame feare.

64

Which he receives, in presage of his good,
To his successe auspiciously apply'd;
Which somewhat cool'd his much distemp' red blood,
Ere he their force in doubtfull armes had try'd:
And whilst they thus in his protection stood,
At his disposing wholly to abide,
 He first, in safetie, doth dismisse their power,
 Then sends them both his prisoners to the Tower.

65

O all-preparing Providence divine!
In thy large booke, what secrets are enrol'd?
What sundry helps doth thy great power assigne,
To prop that course which thou intend'st to hold?

THE BARONS WARRES

What mortall sense is able to define
Thy mysteries, thy counsels manifold?
It is thy wisdome, strangely that extends
Obscure proceedings to apparant ends.

66

This was the meanes, by which the fates dispose,
More dreadful! plagues upon that age to bring;
Utter confusion on the heads of those,
That were before the Barons ruining;
With the subversion of the publiques foes,
The murder of the miserable King;
And that which 'came catastrophe to all,
Great Mortimers inevitable fall.

67

This, to these troubles lends a little breath,
As the first pawse, to hearten this affaire,
And for a while deferres oft-threatnmg death,
Whilst each their breach by leysure would reaire,
And as a bound, their furie limiteth;
But in this manner, whilst things strangely fare,
Horror beyond all wonted bounds doth swell,
As the next Canto fearefully shall tell.

The end of the first Canto

THE SECOND CANTO

The Argument

AT Burton Bridge the puissant powers are met,
The forme and order of the doubtfull fight,
Whereas the King the victorie doth get,
And the proud Barons are inforc'd to flight;

328

THE BARONS WARRES

When they againe towards Borough forward set,
Where they by him were vanquished out-right;
Lastly, the lawes doe execute their power
On those, which there the sword did not devoure.

1

This chance of warre, that suddenly had swept
So large a share from their selected store,
Which for their helpe they carefully had kept,
That to their aid might still have added more;
By this ill-lucke into their armie crept,
Made them much weaker than they were before;
So that the Barons reinfoc'd their bands,
Finding their hearts to stand in need of hands.

2

For deadly hate, so long and deeply rooted,
Could not abide to heare the name of peace,
So that discretion but a little booted
'Gainst that, thereby which only did increase;
For the least gnefe, by malice was promoted,
Anger set on, beginning to surcease;
So that all counsell much their eares offended,
But what to spoyle and sad invasion tended.

3

All up in action for the publique cause,
Scarcely the mean'st, but he a partie stood,
Tax'd by the letter of the censuring lawes,
In his estate, if faylmg in his blood;
And who was free'st, mtangled by some clause,
Which to their furie gives continuallfood;
'For where confusion once hath gotten hold,
'Till all fall flat, it hardly is controïd.

THE BARONS WARRES

4

And now by night, when as pale leaden sleepe
Upon their eye-lids heavily did dwell,
And step by step, on every sense did creepe,
Mischiefe, that blacke inhabitant of hell,
Which never failes continuall watch to keepe,
Fearefull to thinke, a horrid thing to tell,
Entred the place, whereas those warlike Lords
Lay mayl'd in armour, gyrt with irefull swords.

5

She with a sharpe sight, and a meager looke,
Was alwayes prying where she might doe ill,
In which, the fiend continual! pleasure tooke,
(Her starved bodie, plentie could not fill)
Searching in every corner, every nooke,
With winged feet, too swift to worke her will;
Furnish'd with deadly instruments she went,
Of every sort, to wound where so she meant.

6

Having a viall filFd with banefull wrath,
(Brought from Cocytus by that cursed spright)
Which in her pale hand purposely she hath,
And drops the poyson upon every wight;
For to each one she knew the readie path,
Though in the midst and dead time of the night;
Whose strength too soone invaded every peere,
Not one escap'd her, that she commeth neere.

7

That, the next morning, breaking in the east,
With a much-troubled and affrighted mind,
Each, whom this venome lately did infest,
The strong effect in their swolne stomacks find;

THE BARONS WARRES

Now doth the poyson boyle in every brest.
To sad destruction every one's inclin'd,
Rumors of spoyle through every eare doe flye,
And threat'ning furie stis in every eye.

8

This done, in haste shee to King Edward hyes,
Who late growne proud upon his good successe,
His time to feasts and wantonnesse applyes,
And with crown'd cups his sorrowes doth suppress,
Upon his fortune wholly that relies;
And in the bosome of his courtly presse,
Vaunteth the hap of this victorious day,
Whilst the sicke land in sorrow pines away.

9

Thither she comes, and in a minions shape,
She getteth neere the person of the King,
And as he tast's the liquor of the grape,
Into the cup her poyson she doth wring:
Not the least drop untainted doth escape,
For to that purpose she her store did bring;
Whose strong commixture (as the sequell try'd)
Fill'd his hot veines with arrogance and pride.

10

That having both such courage, and such might,
As to so great a bus'nesse did belong,
Neither yet thinke, by their unnaturall fight,
What the repubhque suffred them among;
For mystic error so deludes their sight,
(Which still betwixt them and cleere reason hung)
And their opinions in such sort abus'd,
As that their fault can never be excus'd.

THE BARONS WARRES

11

Now our Minerva puts on dreadfull armes,
Further to wade into this bloudie warre,
And from her slumber wak'ned with alarmes,
Riseth, to sing of many a massacre,
Of gloomie magiques, and benumbing charmes,
Of many a deepe wound, many a fearefull skarre;
For that low socke, wherein she us'd to tread,
Marching in greaves, a helmet on her head.

12

Whilst thus vaine hope doth these false Lords
delude,
Who having drawne their forces to a head,
They their fall purpose seriously pursu'd,
By Lancaster and valiant Harford led,
Their long proceeding lastly to conclude;
Whilst now to meet, both armies hotly sped,
The Barons taking Burton in their way,
Till they could heare where Edwards armie lay.

13

To which, report too suddenly bewray'd
Their manner of encamping, and the place,
Their present strength, and their expected ayd,
As what might most avayle them in this case:
The speedie march th'imperiall power had made,
Had brought them soone within a little space;
For still the King conducted had his force,
Which way he heard the Barons bent their course.

14

Upon the east, from bushie Needwoods side,
There riseth up an easie-climbing hill
At whose faire foot, the silver Trent doth slide,

THE BARONS WARRES

And the slow ayre, with her soft murmuring, fill;
Which, with the store of liberall brookes supplyde,
Th'insatiate meads continually doth swill;
Over whose streame, a bridge of wond'rous strength
Leads on from Burton, to that hill in length.

15

Upon the mount, the King his tentage flxt,
And in the towne, the Barons lay in sight,
When as the Trent was risen so betwixt,
That for a while prolonged th'unnaturall fight,
With many waters that it selfe had mixt,
To stay their furie, doing all it might;
Things which presage both good and ill, there be,
'Which heaven fore-shewes, but will not let us see.

16

The heaven (ev'n) mourning o'er our heads doth sit,
Greeving to see the times so out of course,
Looking on them, who never looke at it,
And in meere pittie, melteth with remorse;
Longer from teares that could not stay a whit,
Whose influence on every lower sourse,
From the swolne fluxure of the clouds, doth shake
A ranke impostume upon every lake.

17

O warlike nation, hold thy conquering hand,
Even senselesse things do warne thee yet to pawse;
Thy mother soyle, on whom thou arm'd do'st stand,
Which should restraine thee by all naturall lawes,
Canst thou (unkind) inviolate that band?
Nay, heaven and earth are angry with the cause;
Yet stay thy foot, in mischiefes ugly gate.
'Ill comes too soone, repentance oft too late.

THE BARONS WARRES

18

O, can the clouds weepe over thy decay,
Yet not one drop fall from thy droughtie eyes!
See'st thou the snare, and wilt not shun the way
Nor yet be warn'd by passed miseries?
'Tis yet but early in this dismall day,
Let late experience learne thee to be wise;
'An ill foreseene, may eas'ly be prevented,
'But hap'd, un-help'd, though ne'er inough
lamented.

19

Cannot the Scot of your late slaughter boast,
And are yee yet scarce healed of the sore?
Is't not inough yee have already lost,
But your owne madnesse must needs make it more?
Will yee seeke safetie in some foraine coast?
Your wives and children pitied yee before:
But when your own blouds your own swords
imbrue,
Who pitties them, who should have pittied you?

20

The neigh'bring groves are spoyled of their trees,
For boats, and timber, to assay the flood,
Where men are laboring as 'twere summer bees,
Some hollowing trunkes, some binding heapes of
wood,
Some on their brests, some working on their knees,
To winne the banke whereon the Barons stood;
Which, o'er the current they by strength must tew,
To shed that bloud, which many an age shall rew.

THE BARONS WARRES

21

Some sharp their swords, some right their murrians
set,
Their greaves and pouldrons others rivet fast,
The archers now their bearded arrowes whet,
Whilst every where the clam'rous drums are bras'd;
Some taking view, where they sure ground might get,
Not one, but some advantage doth fore-cast;
With ranks and files, each plaine and medow
swarmes,
As all the land were clad in angry armes.

22

The crests and badges of each nobler name,
Against their owners rudely seeme to stand,
As angry for th'atchievements whence they came,
That to their fathers gave that generous brand.
O yee unworthie of your ancient fame,
Against your selves to lift your conquering hand;
Since foraine swords your height could not abate,
By your owne pride, your selves to ruinate!

23

Upon his surcote, valiant Nevil bore
A silver saltoyre, upon martiall red;
A ladies sleeve, high-spirited Hastings wore;
Ferrer his taberd, with rich verry spread,
Well knowne in many a warlike match before;
A rayen sat on Corbets armed head;
And Culpepper, in silver armes enrayl'd,
Bare thereupon a bloudie bend engrayl'd.

24

The noble Percy, in this dreadfull day,
With a bright cressant in his guidehome came,

THE BARONS WARRES

In his white cornet, Verdon doth display
A fret of gueles, priz'd in this mortall game,
That had been seene in many a doubtfull fray,
His lances penons stayned with the same;
 The angry horse, chafd with the stubborne bit,
 With his hard hoefe the earth in furie smit.

25

I could the summe of Staffords arming show,
What colours, Rosse and Courtney did unfold,
Great Warrens blazon I could let you know,
And all the glorious circumstance have told,
Nam'd every ensigne as they stood arow;
BuC O, deare Muse, too soone thou art control'd!
 For in remembrance of their evill speed,
 My pen, for inke, warme drops of bloud doth sheed.

26

On the Kings part, th'imperiall standard's pitch'd,
With all the hatchments of the English crowne,
Great Lancaster (with no lesse power enrich'd)
Sets the same leopards in his colours downe:
O, if yee be not frantique, or bewitch'd,
Yet doe but see, that on your selves you frowne:
 A little note of difference is in all,
 How can the same stand, when the same doth fall?

27

Behold the eagles, lyons, talbots, beares,
The badges of your famous ancestries;
Shall those brave marks, by their inglorious heires,
Stand thus oppos'd against their families?
More ancient armes no Christian nation beares,
Reliques unworthy of their progenies;
 Those beasts yee beare, doe in their kinds agree,
 O, that then beasts, more savage men should be!

THE BARONS WARRES

28

And whilst the King doth in sad councell sit,
How he might best the other banke recover,
See how misfortune still her time can fit!
Such as were sent, the countrey to discover,
(As up and downe, from place to place they flit)
Had found a foard, to passe their forces over;
'Ill newes hath wings, and with the wind doth goe,
'Comfort's a cripple, and comes ever slow.

29

When Edward fearing Lancasters supplies,
Proud Richmond, Surrey, and great Pembroke sent,
On whose successe, he mightily relies,
Under whose conduct, halfe his armie went,
The neerest way conducted by the spyes;
And he himselfe, and Edmond, Earle of Kent,
Upon the hill, in sight of Burton lay,
Watching to take advantage of the day.

30

Stay, Surrey, stay, thou may'st too soone be gone,
Pawse till this heat be somewhat over-past,
Full little know'st thou whither thou do'st runne;
Richmont and Pembroke, never make such haste,
Yee doe but strive to bring more horror on:
'Never seeke sorrow, for it comes too fast;
Why strive yee thus, to passe this fatall floud,
To fetch but wounds, and shed your neerest bloud?

31

Great Lancaster, yet sheath thy angrie sword,
On Edwards armes, whose edge thou should'st not
set,
Thy naturall kinsman, and thy sov'raigne Lord,

THE BARONS WARRES

Both from the loynes of our Plantaginet,
Call yet to mind thy once engaged word;
Canst thou thy oath to Long-shanks thus forget?
Men should performe, before all other things,
The serious vowes they make, to God, and Kings.

32

The winds were hush'd (no little breath doth blow)
Which seemes sat still, as though they listening stood,
With trampling crowds, the very earth doth bow,
And through the smoake, the sunne appeared like
blood;
What with the showt, and with the dreadfull show,
The heards of beasts ran bellowing to the wood;
When drums and trumpets to the charge did sound,
As they would shake the grosse clouds to the
ground.

33

The Earles then charging with their power of horse,
Taking a signall when they should begin,
Being in view of th'imperiall force,
Which at that time assay'd the bridge to win,
Which made the Barons change their former course,
T'avoid the present danger they were in;
Which on the sudden had they not fore-cast,
Of their last day, that houre had beene the last.

34

When from the hill the Kings maine powers come
downe,
Which had Aquarius to thefe- valiant guide,
Brave Lancaster and Harford, from the towne,
Doe issue forth upon the other side,
Peere against Peere, the Crowne against the Crowne,
The King assayles, the Barons munify'd;

338

THE BARONS WARRES

Englands Red Crosse upon both sides doth flye,
S. George, the King, S. George, the Barons crye.

35

Like as an exhalation hot and drie,
Amongst the ayre-bred moystie vapours throwne,
Spetteth his lightning forth outragiously,
Rending the thicke clouds with the thunder stone,
Whose fierie splinters through the thinne ay re flye,
That with the horror, heaven and earth doth grone;
With the like clamour, and confused O,
To the dread shock the desp'rate armies goe.

36

There might men see the famous English bowes,
Wherewith our foes we wonted to subdue,
Shoot their sharpe arrowes in the face of those,
Which oft before victoriously them drew;
Yet shun their ayme; and troubled in the loose,
Those well-wing'd weapons mourning as they flew,
Slip'd from the bow-string, impotent, and slacke,
As to the archers they would faine turne backe.

37

Behold the remnant of Troyes ancient stocke,
Laying on blowes, as smyths on anvyls strike,
Grappling together in the fearefull shocke,
Where still the strong encountreth with the like,
(And each as ruthlesse as the hard'ned rocke)
Wer't with the speare, or browne bill, or the pike,
Still as the wings, or battels came together,
Ere fortune gave advantage yet to either.

THE BARONS WARRES

38

From batt' red helmes, with ev'ry envious blow,
The scattered plumes flye loosely here and there,
To the beholder like to flakes of snow,
That ev'ry light breath on its wings doth beare,
As they had sense and feeling of our woe:
And thus affrighted with the sudden feare,
Now back, now forward, such strange windings
make,
As though uncertaine which way they should take.

39

Slaughter alike invadeth either hoast,
Whilst still the battell strongly doth abide,
Which ev'ry where runnes raking through the coast,
As't pleas'd outragious furie it to guide,
Yet not suffic'd, where tryannizing most;
So that their wounds, like mouthes, by gaping wide,
Made as they meant to call for present death,
Had they but tongues, their deepnesse gives them
breath.

40

Here lyes a heape halfe slaine, and partly drown'd,
Gasping for breath amongst the slymie segges,
And there a sort layd in a deadly swoun'd,
Trode with the prease into the mudde and dregges;
Others lye bleeding on the firmer ground,
Hurt in the bodies, maym'd of armes and legges;
One sticks his foe, his scalpe another cuts,
Ones feet intangled in anothers guts.

41

One his assayling enemy beguiles,
As from the bridge he fearefully doth fall,

340

THE BARONS WARRES

Crush'd with his weight upon the stakes and pyles;
Some in their gore upon the pavement sprall,
Our native bloud, our native earth defiles,
And dire destruction overwelmeth all;
Such hideous shrikes the bedlam souldiers breath,
As the damn'd sp'rits had howled from beneath.

42

The faction still defying Edwards might,
Edmond of Wood-stock, with the men of Kent,
Charging afresh, renews the doubtfull fight
Upon the Barons, languishing and spent,
Bringing new matter for a tragique sight;
Forth against whom, their skilfull warriors went,
Bravely to end, what bravely did begin,
Their noblest sp'rits will quickly lose, or win.

43

As before Troy, bright Thetis god-like sonne,
Talbot himselfe in this fierce conflict bare,
Mowbray in fight him matchlesse honour wonne,
Clifford for life seem'd little but to care,
Awdley and Elmsbridge perill scorne to shunne,
Gilford seem'd danger to her teeth to dare,
Nor Badlesmer gave back to Edwards power,
As though they strove whom death should first
devoure.

44

He not commend thee Mountfort, nor thee Teis,
Else your high valour much might justly merit;
Nor Denvyle, dare I whisper of thy prayse;
Nor Willington, will I applaud thy spirit;
Your facts forbid, that I your fame should rayse;
Nor Damory, thy due may'st thou inherit;

THE BARONS WARRES

Your bayes must be your well-deserved blame,
For your ill actions quench my sacred flame.

45

O, had you fashion'd your great deeds by them,
Who summon'd Aeon with an English drum;
Or theirs, before, that to Jerusalem
Went with the gen'rall power of Christendome;
Then had yee raught fames richest diadem,
As they who fought to free the Saviours tombe,
And like them, had immortalized your names,
Where now my song can be but of your shames.

46

O age inglorious, armes untimely borne,
When that approved and victorious shield
Must in this civiil massacre be torne,
Brus'd with the blowes of many a foraine field;
And more, in this sad overthrow be worne
By those, in flight inforc'd it up to yeeld;
For which, since then, the stones for very dread,
Against rough stormes, cold drops for teares doe
shead.

47

When soone King Edwards faint and wav'ring
friends,
Which had this while stood doubtfully to pawse,
When they perceive, that destinie intends,
That his successe shall justifie his cause,
Each in himselfe fresh courage apprehends,
'(For victorie both feare and friendship drawes)
And smile on him, on whom they late did frowne,
All lend their hands to hew the conqu'ed downe.

THE BARONS WARRES

48

That scarce a man, which Edward late did lacke,
Whilst the proud Barons bare an upright face,
But (when they saw, that they had turn'd their backe)
Joynes with the King, to prosecute their chase,
The Baronage so headlong goes to wracke;
In the just tryall of so neere a case,
Inforc'd to prove the fortune of the coast,
The day at Burton that had cleerely lost.

49

And to the aid of the victorious King,
(Which more and more gave vigour to his hope,
With good successe him still encouraging,
And to his actions lent an ampler scope)
Sir Andrew Herckley happily doth bring,
On their light horse a valiant northern troupe,
Arm'd but too aptly, and with too much speed,
Most to doe harme, when least thereof was need.

50

When still the Barons making forth their way,
Through places best for their advantage knowne,
Retaine their armie, bodyed as they may,
By their defeat, farre weaker that was growne;
In their best skill devising day by day,
T'offend th'assaylant, and defend their owne,
Of their mis-haps the utmost to endure,
If nothing else their safetie might assure.

51

In their sad flight, with furie followed thus,
Tracing the north through many a tyresome strait,
And forc'd through many a passage perillous,
To Borough Bridge, led by their lucklesse fate:

THE BARONS WARRES

Bridges should seeme to Barons ominous,
For there they lastly were precipitate;
Which place, the marke of their mischance doth
beare,
For since that time, grasse never prospered there.

52

Where, for new bloudshed they new battels rang'd,
And take new breath, to make destruction new:
Chang'd is their ground, but yet their fate unchanged,
Which too directly still doth them pursue;
Nor are they, and their miseries estrang'd,
To their estates though they meere strangers grew;
The only hope whereon they doe depend,
With courage is to consummate their end.

53

Like as a heard of over-heated deere,
By hot-spur'd hunters lab'red to be caught,
With hues and hounds recovered ev'ry where,
When as they find their speed availes them naught,
Upon the toyles runne headlong, without feare,
With noyse of hounds, and hollow's, as distraught;
Even so the Barons, in this desp'rate case,
Turne upon those which lately did them chase.

54

Ensigne beards ensigne, sword 'gainst sword doth
shake,
Drum brawles with drum, as ranke doth ranke
oppose,
Ther's not a man that care of life doth take,
But death in earnest to his bus'nesse goes,
A gen'rall havocke as of all to make,
And with destruction doth them all inclose,

344

THE BARONS WARRES

Dealing it selfe impartially to all,
Friend by his friend, as foe by foe doth fall.

55

Yet the brave Barons, whilst they doe respire,
(In spight of fortune, as they stood prepar'd)
With courage charge, with comelinesse retyre,
Make good their ground, and then relieve their guard,
Withstand the ent'rer, then pursue the flyer,
New-forme their battell, shifting ev'ry ward;
As your high skill, were but your quarrell good,
O noble spirits, how deare had beene your blood!

56

That well-arm'd band, ambitious Herckley led,
Of which, the Barons never dreamt before,
Then greatly stood King Edwards power in stead,
And in the fight assayl'd the enemie sore:
O day most fatall, and most full of dread!
Never can time thy ruinous waste restore;
Which with his strength though he attempt to doo,
Well may he strive for, and yet fayle of too.

57

Pale death beyond his wonted bounds doth swell,
Carving proud flesh in cantles out at large;
As leaves in autumn, so the bodies fell,
Under sharpe steele, at ev'ry boyst'rous charge:
O, what sad pen can their destruction tell!
Where scalpes lay beaten like the batt'red targe;
And every one he claymeth as his right,
Whose lucke it was not to escape by flight.

THE BARONS WARRES

58

Those warlike ensignes, waving in the field,
Which lately seem'd to brave th'imbattell'd foe,
Longer not able their owne weight to wield,
Their loftie tops to the base dust doe bow;
Here sits a helmet, and there lyes a shield:
O, ill did fate those ancient armes bestow!
Which as a quarry on the soyl'd earth lay,
Seiz'd on by conquest, as a glorious prey.

59

Where noble Bohun, that most princely peere,
Harford, much honor'd, and of high desert,
And to this nation none as he so deare,
Passing the bridge with a resolved heart,
To stop his souldiers, which retyring were,
Was 'twixt two plankes slaine through his lower part;
But Lancaster, not destin'd there to die,
Taken, reserv'd to further miserie.

60

Whose tragique scene, some Muse vouchsafe to
sing:
His, of five Earledomes who then liv'd possest,
A brother, sonne, and unckle to a King,
With favour, friends, and with abundance blest:
What could man thinke, or could devise the thing,
That but seem'd wanting to his worldly rest?
'But on this earth, what's free from fortunes power?
'What an age got, is lost in halfe an houre.

61

Some few, themselves in sanctuaries hide;
Which, though they have the mercie of the place,
Yet are their bodies so unsanctify'd,

THE BARONS WARRES

As that their soules can hardly hope for grace;
Where, they in feare and penurie abide
A poore dead life, which length'neth but a space;
Hate stands without, whilst horror still within
Prolongs their shame, yet pard'neth not their sinne.

62

Nor was death then contented with the dead,
Of full revenge as though it were deny'd,
And till it might have that accomplished,
It held it selfe in nothing satisfy'd;
And with delays no longer to be fed,
An unknowne torment further doth provide,
That dead men should in miserie remaine,
To make the living die with greater paine.

63

Yee sov'raine cities of this wofull He,
In cypresse wreaths, and your most sad attyre,
Prepare your selves to build the funerall pile,
Lay your pale hands to this exequious fire,
All mirth and comfort from your streets exile,
Fill'd with the groanes of men, when they expire;
The noblest bloud approaching to be shed,
That ever dropt from any of your dead.

64

When Thomas, Earle of Lancaster, that late
Th'rebellious Barons tray'trously retained,
As the'chiefe agent in this great debate,
Was for the same (ere many dayes) arraign'd,
'Gainst whom, at Pomfret they articulate,
(To whom those treasons, chiefly appertain'd;)
Whose proofes apparant, so well, nay, ill sped,
As from his shoulders reft his rev'rend head.

THE BARONS WARRES

65

Yet Lancaster, it is not thy lost breath,
That can assure the safetie of the crowne,
Or that can make a covenant with death,
To warrant Edward, what he thinks his owne;
But he must pay the forfait of his faith,
When they shall rise, which he hath trodden downe;
'All's not a mans that is from others rackt,
'And other agents other wayes doe act.

66

Nor was it long, but in that fatall place,
The way to death where Lancaster had led,
But many other, in the selfe-same case,
Him in like manner sadly followed.
London, would thou hadst had thy former grace,
As thou art first, most bloud that thou hadst shed,
By other cities not exceeded farre,
Whose streets devoure the remnant of that warre.

67

O parents ruthfull and heart-renting sight!
To see that sonne, that your soft bosomes fed,
His mothers joy, his fathers sole delight,
That with much cost, yet with more care was bred;
A spectacle (even) able to affright
A senselesse thing, and terrifie the dead!
His deare, deare bloud, upon the cold earth
powr'd,
His quartered coarse, of crows and kytes devoured.

68

But 'tis not you that here complaine alone,
Or to your selves this fearefull portion share;
Here's strange and choise varietie of moane,
Poore orphans teares with widowes mixed are,

THE BARONS WARRES

With many friends sigh, many a maidens groane;
So innocent, so simply pure, and rare,
As Nature, which till then had silence kept,
Neere burst with sorrow, bitterly had wept.

69

O bloudie age! had not these things beene done,
I had not now, in these more calmer times,
Into the search of those past troubles runne;
Nor had my virgin unpolluted rimes
Alt'red the course wherein they first begun,
To sing these horrid and unnaturall crimes;
My layes had still been of Ideas bowre,
Of my deare Ancor, or her loved Stowre.

70

Nor other subject then your selfe, had chose,
Your birth, your vertues, and your high respects,
Whose bounties oft have nourish'd my repose;
You, whom my Muse ingenuously elects,
Denying earth your brave thoughts to inclose,
Maugre the momists, and satyricke sects;
That whilst my verse to after-times is sung,
You may live with me, and be honor'd long.

71

But greater things my subject hath in store,
Still to her taske my armed Muse to keepe,
And offreth her occasion as before,
Whereon she may in mournfull verses weepe;
And as a ship being gotten neere the shore,
By awkward winds re-driven to the deepe,
So is the Muse, from whence she came of late,
Into the businesse of a troubled state.

The end of the second Canto

THE BARONS WARRES

THE THIRD CANTO

The Argument

BY sleepe potions that the Queene ordaynes,
Lord Mortimer escapes out of the Tower;
And by false sleights, and many subtill traynes,
She gets to France, to rayse a foraine power:
The French King leaves his sister; need constraynes
The Queene to Henault, in a happie houre;
Edward, her sonne, to Philip is affide;
They for invasion instantly provide.

1

Scarse had these passed miseries an end,
But other troubles instantly began;
As mischiefe doth new matter apprehend,
By things that still irregularly ran:
For further yet their furie doth extend;
All was not yeilded, that King Edward wan;
And some there were, in corners that did lye,
Which o'er his actions had a watchfull eye.

2

When as the King (whilst things thus fairely went)
Who by this happie victorie grew strong,
Summoned at Yorke a solemne parlament,
T'uphold his right, and helpe the Spensers wrong,
(In all affaires t'establish his intent)
Whence more and more his minions greatnesse
sprong;
Whose counsels still, in ev'ry bus'nesse crost
Th'inraged Queene, in all misfortunes tost.

THE BARONS WARRES

3

When as the eld'st, a man extremely hated,
(Whom, till that time, the King could not preferre,
Untill he had the Barons pride abated)
That Parliament made Earle of Winchester;
As Herckley, Earle of Carlel he created;
And likewise, Baldock he made Chancelor;
One, whom the King had for his purpose wraught,
A man, as subtile, so corrupt and naught.

4

When as mis-haps (that seldome come alone)
Thicke in the necks of one another fell;
The Scot began a new invasion,
And France did thence the English powers expell,
The Irish set the English Pale upon,
At home, the commons ev'ry day rebell;
Mischiefe on mischiefe, curse doth follow curse,
One ill scarce past, but after comes a worse.

5

For Mortimer, that wind most fitly blew,
Troubling their eyes, which otherwise might see,
Whilst the wise Queene, who all advantage knew,
Was closely casting, how to set him free;
And did the plot so seriously pursue,
Till she had found the meanes how it should be,
Against opinion, and imperious might,
To worke her owne ends, through the jawes of
spight.

6

And to that purpose she a potion made,
In operation of that poys'ning power,
That it the spirits could presently invade,

THE BARONS WARRES

And quite dis-sense the senses in an houre,
With such cold numnesse, as it might perswade
That very death the patient did devoure,
For certaine houres, and sealed up the eyes,
'Gainst all that art could possibly devise.

7

In which, she plantan and cold lettuce had,
The water-lilly from the marish ground,
With the wan poppie, and the nightshade sad,
And the short mosse, and on the trees is found,
The poys'ning henbane, and the mandrake drad,
With cypresse flowers, that with the rest were pown'd;
The braine of cranes amongst the rest shee takes,
Mix'd with the bloud of dormice, and of snakes.

8

Thus, like Medea, sat shee in her cell,
Which shee had circled with her potent charmes,
From thence all hindrance cleerely to expell;
Then her with magique instruments she armes,
And to her bus'nesse instantly she fell;
A vestall fire she lights, wherewith she warmes
The mixed juices, from those simples wrung,
To make the med'cine wonderfully strong.

9

The sundry feares that from her fact might rise,
Men may suppose, her trembling hand might stay,
Had shee consider'd of the enterprise,
To thinke what perill in th'attempt there lay;
Knowing besides, that there were secret spies
Set by her foes, to watch her ev'ry way:
'But when that sex leave vertue to esteeme,
Those greatly erre, which think them what they
seeme.

THE BARONS WARRES

10

Their plighted faith they at their pleasure leave,
Their love is cold, but hot as fire their hate,
On whom they smile, they surely those deceive,
In their desires they be insatiate:
Them of their will there's nothing can bereave,
Their anger hath no bound, revenge no date;
They lay by feare, when they at ruine ayme,
They shun not sinne, as little weigh they shame.

11

The elder of the Mortimers, this while
That their sure friends so many sundry wayes,
By fight, by execution, by exile,
Had seene cut off; then finished his dayes;
Which (though with grieffe) doth somewhat reconcile
The youngers thoughts, and lends his cares some ease;
Which oft his heart, oft troubled had his head,
For the deare safetie of his unckle, dead.

12

But there was more did on his death depend,
Then heaven was pleas'd the foolish world should
know;
And why the Fates thus hasted on his end,
Thereby intending stranger plagues to show.
Brave Lord, in vame thy breath thou didst not spend,
From thy corruption, greater conflicts grow;
Which began soone, and fruitfully to spring,
New kinds of vengeance on that age to bring.

13

As heart could wish, when ev'ry thing was fit,
The Queene attends her potions power to prove;
Their stedfast friends their best assisting it,

THE BARONS WARRES

Their trustie servants seale up all in love:
And Mortimer, his valour and his wit
Then must expresse, whom most it doth behove;
 Each place made sure, where guides and horses lay,
 And where the ship, that was for his convey.

14

When as his birth-day he had yeerely kept,
And us'd that day, those of the Tower to feed;
And on the warders, other bounties heapt,
For his advantage, he that day decreed;
Which did suspition clearely intercept,
And much awayl'd him at that time of need;
 When after cates, their thirst at last to quench,
 He mix'd their liquor with that sleepe drench.

15

Which soone each sense doth with dead coldnesse
 seize;
When he which knew the keepers of each ward,
Out of their pockets quickly tooke the keyes,
His coarded ladders readily prepared;
And stealing forth, through darke and secret wayes,
(Not then to learne his compas by the card)
 To winne the walls couragiously doth goe,
 Which look'd as scorning to be mastered so.

16

They soundly sleepe, whilst his quicke spirits
 awake,
Expos'd to perill in the high'st extremes,
Alcydes labours as to undertake,
O'er walls, o'er gates, through watches, and through
 streames,
By which, his owne way he himselfe must make:

THE BARONS WARRES

And let them tell King Edward of their dreames;
For ere they came out of their braine-sicke trance,
He made no doubt to be arriv'd in France.

17

The sullen night had her blacke curtaine spred,
Lowring that day had tarried up so long,
And that the morrow might lye long a bed,
She all the heav'n with duskie clouds had hung;
Cynthia pluck'd in her newly-horned head,
Away to west, and under earth she flung,
As she had long'd to certifie the sunne,
What, in his absence, in our world was done.

18

The lesser lights, like sentinels in warre,
Behind the clouds stood privily to prie,
As though unseene, they subtly strove from farre,
Of his escape the manner to descrie;
Hid was each wand'ring, as each fixed starre,
As they had held a councill in the skie,
And had concluded with that present night,
That not a starre should once give any light.

19

In a slow silence, all the shoares are husht,
Only the shreech-owle sounded to th'assault,
And Isis with a troubled murmure rusht,
As if consenting, and would hide the fault;
And as his foot the sand or gravell crusht,
There was a little whisp'ring in the vault,
Mov'd by his treading, softly as he went,
Which seem'd to say, it furthered his intent.

THE BARONS WARRES

20

Whilst that wise Queene, whom care yet restlesse
kept,
For happie speed, to heav'n held up her hands,
With worlds of hopes, and feares together heapt
In her full bosome; listening as she stands,
She sigh'd and pray'd, and sigh'd againe, and wept;
She sees him how he climbs, how swims, how lands,
Though absent, present in desires they bee,
*Our soule much farther then our eyes can see.

21

The small clouds issuing from his lips, she sayth,
Laboring so fast as he the ladder clame,
Should purge the ayre of pestilence and death;
And as from heav'n, that filch'd Promethian flame,
The sweetnesse so, and vertue of his breath,
New creatures in the element should frame;
And to what part it had the hap to stray,
There should it make another Milkie Way.

22

Attayn'd the top, whilst spent, he paws'd to blow,
She saw, how round he cast his longing eyes,
The earth to greet him gently from below,
How greatly he was favored of the skyes;
She saw him marke the way he was to goe,
And tow'rds her palace how he turn'd his eyes;
From the walls height, as when he downe did slide,
She heard him crie, Now fortune be my guide.

23

As he descended, so did she descend,
As she would hold him, that he should not fall,
On whom alone her safetie did depend:

THE BARONS WARRES

But when some doubt did her deepe thoughts appall,
Distractedly she did her hands extend
For speedie helpe, and earnestly did call
Softly againe, if death to him should hap,
She beg'd of heaven, his grave might be her lap.

24

To shew him favour, she intreats the ayre,
For him she beg'd the mercie of the wind,
For him she kneel'd before the night with prayer,
For him, her selfe she to the earth inclin'd,
For him, his tydes beseeching Thames to spare,
And to command his billowes to be kind;
And tells the floud, if he her love would quit,
No floud of her should honor'd be, but it.

25

But when she thought she saw him swim along,
Doubting the streame was taken with his love,
She fear'd the drops that on his tresses hung,
And that each wave, which most should woo him,
strove,
To his cleare bodie that so closely clung,
Which when before him with his brest he drove,
Pallid with griefe, she turn'd away her face,
Jealous, that he the waters should imbrace.

26

That angry lyon having slip'd his chaine,
As in a/ever, made King Edward quake;
Who knew, before he could be caught againe,
Deare was the blood, that his strong thirst must slake;
He found, much labour had beene spent in vaine,
And must be forc'd a further course to take,
Perceiving tempests rising in the wind,
Of which too late, too truly he divin'd.

THE BARONS WARRES

27

By his escape, that adverse part growne prowd,
On each hand working for a second warre,
And in their counsels nothing was allow'd,
But what might be a motive to some Jarre;
And though their plots were carried in a clowd,
From* the discerning of the popular,
The wiser yet, whose judgements farther raught,
Eas'ly perceive how things about were brought.

28

Those secret fires, by envious faction blowne,
Brake out in France, which cover'd long had layne;
King Charles from Edward challenging his owne,
First Guyne, next Pontieu, and then Aquitayne,
To each of which, he made his title knowne,
Nor from their seisure longer would abstaine;
The cause thereof, lay out of most mens view,
Which though fooles found not, wise men quickly
knew.

29

Their projects hitting (many a day in hand)
That to their purpose prosperously had thriv'd,
The base whereon a mightie frame must stand,
By all their cunnings that had beene contriv'd;
Finding their actions were so throughly man'd,
Their fainting hopes were wond'rously reviv'd,
They made no doubt, to see in little time,
The full of that, which then was in the prime.

30

The King much troubled with the French affayre,
Which as a shapelesse and unweldie masse,
Wholly imploy'd the utmost of his care,

THE BARONS WARRES

To Charles of France his embassie to passe,
For which, it much behov'd him to prepare,
Before the warre too deeply settled was;
Which when they found, they likewise cast about
As they would goe, to make him send them out.

31

Which, when they came in councell to debate,
And to the depth had seriously discust,
Finding how neerely it concern'd the state,
To stay a warre, both dang'rous and unjust;
That weightie bus'nesse to negotiate,
They must find one of speciall worth and trust;
Where ev'ry Lord his censure freely past,
Of whom he lik'd, the Bishop was the last.

32

Torlton, whose tongue mens eares in chaines could
tye,
And like Joves fearfull thunderbolt could pierce,
In which there more authoritie did lye,
Then in those words the Sibyls did rehearse,
Whose sentence was so absolute and hye,
As had the power a judgement to reverse,
For the wise Queene, with all his might did stand,
To lay that charge on her well-guiding hand.

33

Urging what credit she the cause might bring,
Impartiall, 'twixt a husband, and a brother,
A Queene in person, betwixt King and King,
And more then that, to shew her selfe a mother,
There for her sonne, his right establishing,
Which did as much concerne them as the other;
Which colour serv'd to worke in this extreamjr
That, of which then, the King did never dreame.

THE BARONS WARRES

34

Torlton, was this thy spirituall pretence?
Would God thy thoughts had beene spirituall,
Or lesse perswasive thy great eloquence:
But O, thy actions were too temporall,
Thy knowledge had too much preheminance,
Thy reason subtill, and sophisticall;
'But all's not true, that supposition sayth,
'Nor have the mightiest arguments most fayth.

35

Nor did the Bishop those his learned lacke,
As well of power, as policie and wit,
That were prepar'd his great designe to backe,
And could amend where ought he did omit:
For with such cunning they had made their packe,
That it went hard, if that they should not hit;
That the faire Queene to France with speed must go,
Hard had he ply'd. that had perswaded so.

36

When she, well fitted both of wind and tyde.
And saw the coast was ev'ry way so cleere,
As a wise woman she her bus'nesse plyde,
Whilst things went currant, and well carried were,
Her selfe, and hers, to get aboard she hyde,
As one, whose fortune made her still to feare,
Knowing those times so variously inclin'd,
And ev'ry toy soone altering Edwards mind.

37

Her followers such, as meerely friendlesse stood,
Sunke, and dejected by the Spensers pride,
Who bore the taynts of treason in their blood,
And for revenge, would leave no wayes untryde,

360

THE BARONS WARRES

Whose meanes were bad, but yet their minds were
good,
When now at hand they had their helpe descryde;
Now were they wanting, mischief to invent,
To worke their wills, and further her intent.

38

Whilst Mortimer (that all this while hath layne,
From our faire course) by fortune strangely crost,
In France was struggling how he might regayne,
That which before in England he had lost,
And all good meanes doth gladly entertame,
No jot dismay'd, in all those tempests tost,
Nor his great mind, could so be overthrowne,
All men his friends, all countries were his owne.

39

Then Muse (transported by thy former zeale,
Led in thy progresse, where his fortune lyes)
To thy sure aid, I seriously appeale:
To shew him fully, without fain'd disguise,
The ancient heroes then I shall reveale,
And in their patterns I shall be precise,
When in my verse, transparent, neat, and cleare,
They, shall in his pure character appeare.

40

He was a man (then boldly dare to say)
In whose rich soule the vertues well did sute,
In whim, so mix'd, the elements all lay,
That none to one could sov'raigtie impute,
As all did governe, yet all did obay;
He of a temper was so absolute,
As that it seem'd, when Nature him began,
She meant to shew all, that might be in man.

THE BARONS WARRES

41

So throughly season'd, and so rightly set,
That in the levell of the clearest eye,
Time never toucht him with deforming fret,
Nor had the power to warpe him but awry;
Whom, in his course, no crosse could ever let,
His elevation fixed was so hye;
That those rough stormes, whose rage the world
doth prove,
Never raught him, who sat them farre above.

42

Which the Queene saw, who had a seeing spirit,
For she had mark'd the largenesse of his mind,
And with much judgement look'd into his merit,
Above the usuall compasse of her kind,
His grandsires greatnesse rightly to inherit;
When as the ages in their course inclin'd,
And the world weake, with time began to bow
To that poore basenesse that it rests at now.

43

He weighs not wealth, nor yet his Wigmore left,
Let needlesse heapes, as things of nothing stand;
That was not his, that man could take by theft,
He was a Lord, if he had sea, or land,
And thought him rich, of those who was not reft;
'Man, of all creatures, hath an upright hand,
'And by the starres is only taught to know,
'That as they progresse heav'n, he earth should doe.

44

Wherefore wise Nature, from this face of ground,
Into the deepe taught man to find the way,
That in the floods her treasure might be found,

THE BARONS WARRES

To make him search, for what she there did lay;
And that her secrets he might throughly sound,
She gave him courage, as her only kay,
That of all creatures, as the worthiest, hee
Her glorie there and wond'rous works should see.

45

Let wretched worldlings sweat for mud and earth,
Whose groveling bosomes hcke the recreant stones,
Such pesants carke for plentie, and for dearth,
Fame never lookes upon those prostrate drones;
The brave mind is allotted in the birth,
To manage empires from the state of thrones,
Frighting coy fortune, when she stern'st appears,
Which scorneth sighes, and jeereth at our teares.

46

But when report (as with a trembling wing)
Tickled the entrance of his listning eare,
With newes of ships, sent out the Queene to bring,
For her at Sandwich which then wayting were;
He surely thought he heard the angels sing,
And the whole frame of heav'n make up the quire,
That his full soule was smoth'red with excesse,
Her ample joyes unable to expresse.

47

Quoth he, slide billowes smoothly for her sake,
Whose sight can make your aged Nereus yong,
For her faire passage even allyes make,
And as the soft winds waft her sayles along,
Sleeke ev'ry little dimple of the lake:
Sweet Syrens, and be readie with your song;
Though *tis not Venus that doth passe that way
Yet is as faire as she borne on the sea.

THE BARONS WARRES

48

Yee scalie creatures, gaze upon her eye,
And never after, with your kind make warre;
O steale the accents, from her lippes that flye,
Which like the tunes of the celestials are,
And them to your sicke amorous thoughts apply,
Compar'd with which, Arions did but jarre;
Wrap them in ayre, and when blacke tempests rage,
Use them as charmes, the rough seas to ass wage.

49

France, send t'attend her with full sholes of oares,
With which her fleet may evVy way be plyde;
And when she landeth on thy blessed shoares,
And the vast navie doth at anchor ryde,
For her departure, when the wild sea roares,
Ship mount to heaven, and there be stellifyde;
Next Jasons Argo, on the burnish'd throne,
Assume thy selfe a constellation.

50

Queene Isabel then landing with delight,
Had what rich France could lend her for her ease;
And as she pass'd, no towne but did invite
Her with some shew, her appetite to please:
But Mortimer once comming in her sight,
His shape and features did her fancie seize;
When she, that knew how her fit time to take,
Thus she her most-lov'd Mortimer bespake:

51

O Mortimer, sweet Mortimer, quoth she,
What angry power did first the meanes devise,
To separate Queene Isabel, and thee,
Whom (to despight) love yet together tyes?

THE BARONS WARRES

But if thou thinkst the fault was made by me,
For a just penance to my longing eyes,
 Though guiltlesse they, this be to them assign'd,
 To gaze upon thee, till they leave me blind.

52

My deare, deare heart, thought I to see thee thus,
When first in Court, thou didst my favor weare,
When we have watch'd, lest any noted us,
Whilst our lookes us'd loves messages to beare,
And we by signes sent many a secret busse;
An exile then, thought I to see thee here?
 But what couldst thou be then, but now thou art?
 Though bamsh'd England, yet not from my heart.

53

That fate which did thy franchisement inforce,
And from the depth of danger set thee free,
Still regular, and constant in that course,
Made me this straight and even path to thee,
Of our affections as it tooke remorse,
Our birth-fix'd starres so luckily agree,
 Whose revolution seriously directs
 Our like proceedings, to the like effects.

54

Onely wise counsell hath contriv'd this thing,
For which we wish'd so many a wofull day,
Of which, the cleare and perfect managing,
Is that strong prop, whereon our hopes may stay;
Which in it selfe th'authoritie doth bring,
That weake opinion hath not power to sway,
 Confuting those, whose sightlesse judgements sit
 In the thicke ranke, with ev'ry common wit.

THE BARONS WARRES

55

Then since th'assay our good successe assures,
And we her fav'rites leane on fortunes brest,
That ev'ry houre new comforts us procures,
Of these her blessings let us chuse the best,
And whilst the day of our good hap endures,
Let's take the bounteous benefits of rest;
Let's feare no storme, before we feele a showre,
My sonne a King, two kingdomes helpe my dowre.

56

Of wanton Edward when I first was woo'd,
Why cam'st thou not into the Court of France?
Before thy King, thou in my grace hadst stood:
O Mortimer, how good had beene thy chance!
My love attempted in that youthfull mood,
I might have beene thine owne inheritance;
Where entring now by force, thou holdst by might.
And art disseisor of anothers right.

57

Thou idoll, honour, which we fooles adore,
(How many plagues doe rest in thee, to grieve us?)
Which when we have, we find there is much more,
Then that which onely is a name, can give us;
Of reall comforts thou do'st leave us poore,
And of those joyes thou often do'st deprive us,
That with our selves doth set us at debate,
And makes us beggers in our greatest state.

58

With such brave raptures from her words that rise,
She made a breach in his impressive brest,
And all his pow'rs so fully did surprize,
As seem'd to rocke his senses to their rest,

THE BARONS WARRES

So that his wit could not that thing devise,
Of which he thought his soule was not possest;
Whose great abundance, like a swelling flood
After a showre, ran through his ravish'd blood.

59

Like as a lute, that's touch'd with curious skill,
Each strong stretch'd up, his right tone to retayne,
Musikes true language that doth speake at will,
The base and treble married by the meane,
Whose sounds each note with harmonie doe fill,
Whether it be in descant, or on playne;
So their affections, set in keyes alike,
In true concent meet, as their humors strike.

60

As the plaine path to their designe appears,
Of whose wish'd sight, they had been long debar'd,
By the dissolving of those threatening feares,
That many a purpose, many a plot had mar'd;
Their hope at full, so heartily them cheares,
And their protection, by a stronger guard,
Lends them that leysure, the events to cast
Of things to come, by those alreadie past.

61

For this great bus'nesse eas'ly setting out,
By due proportion, measuring ev'ry pace,
T'avoid the cumbrance of each hind'ring doubt;
And not to fayle of comelinesse and grace,
They came with every circumstance about,
Observe the person, as the time, and place;
Nor leave they ought, that in discretions lawes,
They could but thinke might beautifie the cause.

THE BARONS WARRES

62

Their embassie deliv'ring in that height,
As of the same, the dignitie might fit,
Apparelling a matter of that weight,
In ceremonie, well beseeming it;
And that it should go steadily, and right,
They at their audience no one point omit,
As to the full each tittle to effect,
That in such cases wisdome should respect.

63

Nor to negotiate, never doe they cease,
Till they againe that ancient league combine;
Yet so, that Edward should his right release,
And to his sonne the provinces resigne:
With whom, King Charles concludes the happy peace,
Having the homage due to him for Guyne;
And that both realmes should ratifie their deed,
They for both Kings an enterview decreed.

64

Yet in this thing, which all men thought so plaine,
And to have been accomplish'd with such care,
Their inward falsehood hidden did remame,
Quite from the colour that the out-side bare:
For onely they this enterview did gaine,
T'intrap the King, so trayned to their snare;
For which, they knew that he must pass the seas,
Or else the Prince, which better would them please.

65

Which by the Spensers was approved; who
(As in his counsels they did chiefly guide)
With him their sov'raigne, nor to France durst goe,
Nor in his absence, durst at home abide;

THE BARONS WARRES

Whilst the weake King stood doubtful! what to doe,
His list'ning eares they with perswasions plyde,
That he to stay, was absolutely wonne,
And for that bus'nesse, to dispatch his sonne.

66

Thus is the King incompass'd by their skill,
And made to act what Torlton did devise,
Who thrust him on, to draw them up the hill,
That by his strength they might get power to rise,
For they in all things were before him still;
That perfect steers-man in all policies,
Had cast to walke, where Edward bare the light,
And by his ayme, he levelled their sight.

67

Thus having made, what Edward most did will
For his advantage, further their intent,
With seeming good so varnishing their ill,
That it went curreant by the faire event,
And of their hopes the utmost to fulfill;
Things in their course came in so true concent,
To bring their bus'nesse to that happie end,
That they the same might publiquely defend.

68

The precious time no longer they protract,
Nor in suspence their friends at home doe hold,
Being abroad so absolutely backt,
They quickly waxed confident and bold,
In their proceeding publishing their act;
Nor did they feare to whom report it told,
But with an armed and erected hand,
To abet their owne, did absolutely stand.

THE BARONS WARRES

69

And that base Bishop then of Excester,
A man experienc'd in their counsels long,
(Thinking perhaps his falsehood might preferre,
Him, or else moved with King Edwards wrong;
Or whether his frayletie made him erre,
Or other fatall accident among:)
But he from France, and them, to England flew,
And knowing all, discovered all he knew.

70

Their treasons long in hatching, thus disclosed,
And Torltons drift by circumstances found,
With what conveyance things had beene dispos'd,
The cunning us'd in casting of their ground,
The frame as fit in every point compos'd,
When better counsell coldly came to sound,
Awak'd the King, to see his weake estate,
When the prevention came a day too late.

71

Yet her departing whilst she doth adorne,
Charles, as a brother, by perswasion deales,
Edward with threats would force her to returne;
Pope John, her with his dreadfull curse assayles:
And all in vaine against her will they spurne,
Perswasion, threat, nor curse with her prevayles;
Charles, Edward, John, strive all to doe your worst,
The Queene fares best, when she the most is curst.

72

Which to the Spensers speedily made scene,
With what cleane sleight things had been brought
about,

370

THE BARONS WARRES

And that those here, which well might rul'd have
 beene,
Quickly had found, that they were gotten out,
And knowing well their wit, their power, and spleene,
Of their owne safeties much began to doubt,
 And therefore must some present meanes invent,
 T'avoid a danger, else most eminent.

73

When they, who had the Frenchmens humors felt,
And knew the bayt wherewith they might be caught,
By promise of large pensions, with them dealt,
If that King Charles might from her aid he wrought:
'What mind so hard, that money cannot melt?
Which they to passe in little time had brought;
 That Isabel, too eas'ly over-way'd
 By their great summes, was frustrate of her aid.

74

Yet could not this amaze that mightie Queene,
(Whom sad affliction never had control'd,
Never such courage in that sex was seene,
She was not cast in other womens mold)
Nor could rebate the edge of her high spleene,
Who could endure warre, travell, want, and cold,
 Struggling with fortune, ne're by her opprest,
 Most chearefull still, when she was most distrest,

75

But then resolv'd to leave ingratefull France,
And in the world her better fate to trye,
Changing the ayre, hopes time may alter chance,
Under her burthen scorning so to lye,
Her weakened state still striving to advance,
Her mightie mind flew in a pitch so hye;

371

THE BARONS WARRES

Yet ere she went, her vex'd heart that did ake,
Somewhat to ease, thus to the King she spake:

76

Is this a Kings, a brothers part (quoth shee?)
And to this end, did I my grieffe unfold?
Came I to heale my wounded heart to thee,
Where slaine out-right, I now the same behold?
Be these thy vows, thy promises to me?
In all this heat, art thou become so cold?
To leave me thus forsaken at the worst,
My state at last, more wretched then at first.

77

Thy wisdome weighing what my wants require,
To thy deare mercie might my teares have ty'd,
Our blouds receiving heat both from one fire;
And we by fortune as by birth ally'd,
My sute supported by my just desire,
Were arguments not to have been deny'd;
The grievous wrongs that in my bosome bee,
Should be as neere thy care, as I to thee.

78

Nature too eas'ly working on my sex,
Thus at thy pleasure my poore fortune leaves,
Which being intic'd with hopes of due respects
From thee, my trust dishonestly deceives,
Who me and mine unnaturally neglects,
And of all comfort lastly us bereaves;
What 'twixt thy basenesse, and thy beastly will,
T' expose thy sister to the worst of ill.

THE BARONS WARRES

79

But for my farewell, thus I propheticie,
That from my wombe hee's sprung, or he shall spring,
Who shall subdue thy next postentie,
And lead a captive thy succeeding King,
The just revenge of thy vile injune;
To fatall France, I as a sibyl sing
Her cities sacke, the slaughter of her men,
Of whom, one Englishman shall conquer ten.

80

The Earle of Renault, in that season great,
The wealthie Lord of many a warlike tower,
Who, for his friendship, Princes did intreat.
As fearing both his policie, and power,
Having a brother wond'rously compleat,
Cal'd John of Beamount (in a happie houre,
As it for the distressed Queene did chance)
That time abiding in the Court of France.

81

He, there the while, this shuffling that had seene,
Who to her partie Isabel had wonne,
To passe for Henault, humbly prayes the Queene,
Prompting her still, what good might there be done.
To ease the anguish of her tumorous spleene,
Offering his faire neece to the Prince her sonne,
The only way to winne his brothers might,
Against the King to backe her in her right.

82

Who had an eare, not fil'd with his report,
To whom the souldiers of that time did throng,
The patterne to all other of his sort,
Well learn'd in what to honour did belong,

THE BARONS WARRES

With that brave Queene long trayned up in Court,
And constantly confirmed in her wrong;
 Besides all this, cross'd by the adverse part,
 In things that sat too neere to his great heart.

83

Sufficient motives to invite distresse,
To apprehend so excellent a meane,
(Against those ills that did so strongly presse)
Whereon the Queene her weake estate might leane,
And at that season, though it were the lesse,
Yet for a while it might her want sustaine;
 Untill th'approching of more prosp'rous dayes,
 Her drouping hopes to their first height might rayse.

84

When they at large had leysure to debate,
Where welcome look'd with a well-pleas'd face,
From those dis-honors she received late,
For there she wanted no obsequious grace,
Under the guidance of a gentler fate,
All bounteous offers freely they imbrace;
 And to conclude, all ceremonies past,
 The Prince affyres faire Philip at the last;

85

All covenants betwixt them surely seal'd,
Each to the other lastingly to bind,
Nothing but done with equitie and zeale,
And suting well with Henaults mightie mind,
Which, to them all did much content reveale;
The ease the Queene was like thereby to find,
 The comfort comming to the lovely bride,
 Prince Edward pleas'd, and joy on every side.

The end of the third Canto

THE BARONS WARRES

THE FOURTH CANTO

The Argument

THE Queene in Renault mightie friends doth win,
In Harwitch Haven safely is arriv'd,
Garboyles in England more and more begin,
King Edward of his safetie is deprived,
Flyeth to Wales, at Neath received in,
Whilst many plots against him are contrived;
 Lastly betray'd, the Spensers and his friends
 Are put to death: with which, this Canto ends.

1

Now seven times Phcebus had his welked waine,
Upon the top of Cancers tropicke set,
And seven times, in his descent againe,
His fiene wheelles had with the fishes wet,
In the occurrents of King Edwards raigne,
Since mischiefe did these miseries beget;
 Which through more strange varieties had runne,
 Then he that while celestiall signes had done.

2

Whilst our ill-thriving in those Scottish broyles,
Their strength and courage greatly did advance,
In a small time made wealthie by our spoyles;
And we, much weakened by our warres in France,
Were weil-neere quite dis-heart'ned by our foyles:
But at these things the Muse must only glance,
 Arid Herckleys treasons haste to bring to view,
 Her serious subject sooner to pursue.

3

When Robert Bruse, with his brave Scottish band,
By other in-rides on the borders made,

THE BARONS WARRES

Had well-neere wasted all Northumberland,
Whose townes he levell with the earth had layd;
And finding none his power there to withstand,
On the north part of spacious Yorkshire prey'd,
 Bearing away with pride his pillage got,
 As fate to him did our last fall allot.

4

For which, that Herckley, by his sov'raigne sent,
Tintreat a needfull, though dis-honor'd peace;
Under the colour of a true intent,
Kindled the warre, in a faire way to cease,
And with King Robert did a course invent,
His homage due to Edward, to release:
 Besides, their faith they each to other plight,
 In peace and warre to joyne with all their might.

5

Yet more, King Robert (things being carried so)
His sister to that trech'rous Earle affyde;
Which made too playne and evident a show,
Of what before his trust did closely hyde:
But the cause found, from whence this league should
 grow,
By such as (neere) into their actions pryde,
 Discovered treasons, which not quickly crost,
 Had shed more bloud, then all the warres had cost.

6

Whether the Kings weake counfels causes are,
That ev'ry thing so badly falleth out,
Or that the Earle did of our state despayre,
When nothing prospered, that was gone about,
And therefore carelesse how the English fare;
He not dispute, but leave it as a doubt:

THE BARONS WARRES

Or some vaine title his ambition lackt;
But some thing hatch'd this treasonable act.

7

Which once revealed to the jealous King;
Th'apprehension of that trayt'rous peere
He left to the Lord Lucyes managing,
(One whose prov'd faith he had held ever deare)
By whose brave carriage in so hard a thing,
He did well worthie of his trust appeare;
Who, in his castle, carelessly defended,
That craftie Cartel closely apprehended.

8

For which, ere long, to his just tryall led,
In all the robes befitting his degree,
Where Scroope, chiefe justice in that dang'rous stead,
Commission had, his lawfull judge to be;
And on the proofes of his indictment read,
His treasons, all so easily might see;
Which soone themselves so plainly did expresse,
As might assure them of his ill successe.

9

His style and titles to the King restor'd,
Noted with names of infamie, and scorne,
And next, disarmed of his knightly sword,
On which (before) his fealtie was sworne,
Then, by a varlet of his spurres dis-spur'd,
His coat of armes (before him) ras'd and torne;
And to the hurdle lastly he was sent,
To a trayt'rous death, that trayt'rously had meant.

THE BARONS WARRES

10

Whereon the King a Parliament procur'd,
To fixe some things, whose fall he else might feare;
Whereby he hop'd, the Queene to have abjur'd,
His sonne, and such as their adjutors were:
But those, of whom himselfe he most assur'd,
What they had seem'd, the same did not appeare;
When he soone found, he had his purpose mist,
For there were those, that durst his power resist.

11

For Hereford, in Parliament accus'd
Of sundry treasons, wherein he was caught,
By such his courses strictly as perus'd,
Whereby subversion of the realme was sought,
His holy habit and his trust abus'd;
Who, to his answer when he should be brought,
Was by the clergie (in the Kings despight)
Seiz'd, under colour of the churches right.

12

When some, the favorers of this fatall warre,
Whom this example did more sharpely whet,
Those for the cause that then imprisoned were,
Boldly attempt, at libertie to set;
Whose purpose frustrate, by their enemies care,
New garboyles doth continually beget,
Bidding the King, with care to looke about,
Those secret fires so howrely breaking out.

13

And th'Earle of Kent, who was by Edward plac'd
As the great gen'rall of his force in Guyne,
Was in his absence, here at home disgrac'd,
And frustrated both of supplyes and coyne,

THE BARONS WARRES

By such lewd persons, to maintains their waste,
As from his treasures ceas'd not to purloyne;
Nor could the King be mov'd, so carelesse still
Both of his owne losse, and his brothers ill.

14

Whose discontent too quickly being found,
By such as all advantages did wait,
Who still apply'd strong cor'sives to the wound,
And by their tricks, and intricate deceit,
Hind'red those meanes that hap'ly might redound,
That fast arising mischief to defeat;
Til Edmunds wrongs were to that ripenesse growne,
That they had made him absolute their owne;

15

With all his faithfull followers in those warres,
Men well experienced, and of worthiest parts,
Who for their pay received only scarres,
Whilst the inglorious had their due deserts;
And minions hate of other hope debarres,
Which vex'd them deeply, to the very hearts,
That to their Gen'rall for revenge they cry,
Joyning with Beamount, giving him supply.

16

These great commanders, and with them combyne
The Lord Pocelles, Sares, and Boyseers,
Dambretticourt, the young and valiant Hein,
Estotivyle, Comines, and Villeers,
The valiant Knights, Sir Michael de la Lyne,
Sir Robert Baliol, Boswit, and Semeers;
Men of great skill, whom spoyle and glory warmes,
Such as (indeed) were dedicate to armes.

THE BARONS WARRES

17

Leading three thousand must'red men, in pay,
Of French, Scots, Alman, Swisser, and the Dutch;
Of native English, fled beyond the sea,
Whose number neere amounted to as much,
Which long had look'd, nay, wayted for that day,
Whom their revenge did but too neerely touch;
 Besides, friends readie to receive them in:
 And new commotions ev'ry day begin.

18

Whilst the wise Queene, from England day by day,
Of all those doings that had certaine word,
Whose friends much blam'd her over-long delay,
When as the time such fitnessse did afford;
Doth for her passage presently purvay,
Bearing provision ev'ry howre aboard,
 Ships of all burthens rig'd and manned are,
 Fit for invasion, to transport a warre.

19

When she for England fairely setting forth,
Spreading her proud sayles on the wat'rie playne,
Steereth her course directly to the north,
With her young Edward, Duke of Aquitaine,
With other three, of speciall name and worth,
(The destin'd scourges of King Edwards raigne)
 Her souldier Beamount, and the Earle of Kent,
 With Mortimer, that mightie malecontent.

20

For Harwitch Road, a fore-wind finely blowes,
But blew too fast, to kindle such a fire,
Whilst with full sayle, and the stiffe tyde, she goes;
It should have turn'd, and forc'd her to retire,

THE BARONS WARRES

The fleet it drove, was fraughted with our woes:
But seas and winds doe Edwards wracke conspire;
'For when just heaven, to chastise us is bent,
'All things convert to our due punishment.

21

The coasts were kept with a continuall ward,
The beacons watch'd, her comming to descne;
Had but the love of subjects been his guard,
T had been t'effect, that he did fortifier
But whilst he stood against his foes prepar'd,
He was betray'd by his home enemie;
Small helpe by this he was but like to win,
Shutting wai re out, he lockt destruction in.

22

When Henry, brother to that lucklesse Prince,
The first great mover of that civill strife,
Thomas, whom law but lately did convince,
That had at Pomfret left his wretched life;
That Henry, in whose bosome ever since,
Revenge lay covered, watching for reliefe,
Like fire in some fat myn'rall of the earth,
Finding a fit vent, gives her furie birth.

23

And being Earle Marshall, great upon that coast,
With bells and bone-fires welcomes her ashore;
And by his office gathering up an hoast,
Shew'd the great spleene that he to Edward bore,
Nor of the same, abash'd at all to boast;
The clergies power in readinesse before,
And on their friends a tax as freely layd,
To rayse munition, for their present ayd.

THE BARONS WARRES

24

And to confusion all their powers expose,
On the rent bosome of the land, which long
Warre, like the sea, on each side did inclose,
A warre, from our owne home dissentions sprong,
In little time which to that greatnesse rose,
As made us loath'd our neighb'ring states among:
But this invasion, that they hither brought,
More mischief farre then all the former wrought.

25

Besides, this innovation in the state
Lent their great action such a violent hand,
When it so boldly durst insinuate
On the cold faintnesse of th'infeebled land:
That being arm'd with all the power of fate,
Finding a way so openly to stand,
To their intend'ment, might, if followed well,
Regayne that height, from whence they lately fell.

26

Their strengths together in this meane time met,
All helps, and hurts, by warres best counsels way'd,
As what might further, what their course might let,
As their reliefes conveniently they layd,
As where they hop'd securitie to get,
Whereon, at worst, their fortunes might be stay'd;
So fully furnish'd, as themselves desir'd,
Of what the action needfully required.

27

When at Saint Edmunds they a while repose,
To rest themselves, and their sea-beaten force,
Better to learne the manner of their foes,
To th'end not idly to direct their course,'

THE BARONS WARRES

And seeing dayly how their armie growes,
To take a full view of their foot and horse ;
 With much discretion managing the warre,
 To let the world know what to doe, they dare.

28

When as the King of their proceedings heard,
And of the routs that dayly to them runne;
But little strength at London then prepar'd,
Where he had hop'd most favour to have wonne;
He left the citie to the watchfull guard
Of his approv'd, most trusted Stapleton;
 To John of Eltham, his deare sonne, the Tower,
 And goes himselfe tow'rds Wales, to rayse him
 power.

29

Yet whilst his name doth any hope admit,
He made proclaym'd, in paine of goods and life,
Or who would have a subjects benefit,
Should bend themselves against his sonne and wife,
And doth all slaughters gen'rally acquit,
Committed on the movers of this strife;
 As who could bring in Mortimers proud head,
 Should freely take th'revenues of the dead.

30

Which was encountred by the Queenes edict,
By publishing the justnesse of her cause;
That she proceeded in a course so strict,
T'uphold their ancient liberties and lawes:
And that on Edward she did nought inflict,
For private hate, or popular applause;
 Only the Spensers to account to bring,
 Whose wicked counsels had abus'd the King.

383

THE BARONS WARRES

31

Which ballasted the multitude, that stood
As a barke, beaten betwixt wind and tide,
By winds expos'd, opposed by the flood,
Nought therein left, to land the same to guide;
Thus floated they in their unconstant mood,
Till that the weaknesse of King Edwards side
Suffred a seisure of it selfe at last,
Which to the Queene a free advantage cast.

32

Thus Edward left his England to his foes,
Whom danger did to recreant flight debase,
As farre from hope, as he was neere his woes,
Depriv'd of princely sov'raignetie and grace,
Yet still grew lesse, the farther that he goes,
His safetie soone suspecting ev'ry place;
No helpe at home, nor succour seene abroad,
His mind wants rest, his bodie safe aboard.

33

One scarce to him his sad discourse hath done,
Of Henaults power, and what the Queene intends;
But whilst he speakes, another hath begun;
A third then takes it, where the second ends,
And tells what rumors through the countries run,
Of those new foes, of those revolted friends;
Straight came a fourth, in poste that thither sped,
With news of foes come in, of friends out-fled.

34

What plagues did Edward for himselfe prepare?
Forsaken King, O whither didst thou flye!
Changing the clyme, thou couldst not change thy
care,

384

THE BARONS WARRES

Thou fledst thy foes, but followedst miserie:
Those evill lucks, in numbers many are,
That to thy foot-steps doe themselves apply;
And still thy conscience, corrosiv'd with greefe,
Thou but pursu'st thy selfe, both rob'd, and theefe.

35

Who seeking succour, offred next at hand,
At last, for Wales he takes him to the seas,
And seeing Lundy, that so faire did stand,
Thither would steere, to give his sorrowes ease;
That little modell of his greater land,
As in a dreame, his fancie seem'd to please;
For faine he would be King (yet) of an ile,
Although his empire bounded in a mile.

36

But when he thought to strike his prosp'rous sayle,
As under lee, past danger of the flood,
A sudden storme of mixed sleet and hayle,
Not suffreth him to rule that piece of wood:
'What doth his labor, what his toyle avayle,
'That is by the celestiall powers withstood?
And all his hopes him vainely doe delude,
By God, and men, incessantly pursu'd.

37

In that blacke tempest, long turmoyrd and tost,
Quite from his course, and well he knew not where,
'Mofigst rocks and sands, in danger to be lost,
Not in more penll, then he was in feare;
At length perceiving he was neere some coast,
And that the weather somewhat 'gan to cleare,
He found 'twas Wales; and by the mountaines tall,
That part thereof, which we Glamorgan call.

385

THE BARONS WARRES

38

In Neath, a castle next at hand, and strong,
Where he commandeth entrance, with his crue,
The Earle of Gloster, worker of much wrong,
His chancelor Baldock, which much evill knew,
Reding his Marshall, other friends among;
Where closely hid (though not from envies view)
The Muse a little leaveth them to dwell,
And of great slaughter shapes her selfe to tell.

39

Now, lighter humor, leave me, and be gone,
Your passion poore, yeelds matter much too slight:
To write those plagues that then were comming on,
Doth aske a pen of ebon, and the night;
If there be ghosts, their murthers that bemoane,
Let them approach me, and in pittious plight
Howie, and about me with blacke tapers stand,
To lend a sad light to my sadder hand.

40

Each line shall lead to some one weeping woe,
And ev'ry cadence as a tort'red cry,
Till they force teares in such excesse to flow,
That they surround the circle of each eye:
Then whilst these sad calamities I show,
All loose affections, stand yee idly by,
Destin'd againe to dip my pen in gore,
For the sad'st tale that time did e'er deplore.

41

New sorts of plagues were threatened to the earth,
The raging Ocean past his bounds did rise,
Strange apparitions, and prodigious birth,
Unheard of sicknesse, and calamities,

THE BARONS WARRES

More unaccustomed and unlook'd for dearth,
New sorts of meteors gazing from the skies;
As what before, had small or nothing bin,
And only then their plagues did but begin.

42 -

And whilst the Queene did in this course proceed,
The land lay open to all offred ill;
The lawlesse exile did returne with speed,
Not to defend his cuntry, but to kill;
Then were the prisons dissolutely freed,
Both field and towne with wretchednesse to fill:
London, as thou wast author of such shame,
Even so wast thou most plagued with the same.

43

Whose giddie commons, mercilesse and rude,
Let loose to mischief on that dismall day,
Their hands in bloud of Edwards friends imbru'd;
Which in their madnesse having made away,
Th'implacable, the monstrous multitude,
On his lieutenant Stapleton did prey;
Who drag'd by them o'er many a lothsome heape,
Beheaded was before the crosse in Cheape.

44

Here first shee red, upon her ruin'd wall,
Her sad destruction, which was but too nye,
Upon her gates was charactered her fall,
In mangled bodies, her anatomic,
Which for her errors did that reck'ning call,
As might have wraught teares from her ruthlesse eye;
And if the thicke ayre dim'd her hatefull sight,
Her buildings were on fire, to give her light.

THE BARONS WARRES

45

Her chanel serv'd for inke, her paper, stones,
Whereon to write her murther, incest, rape;
And for her penn's, a heape of dead mens bones,
To make each letter in some monstrous shape;
And for her accents, sad departing grones:
And that to time no desp'rate act should scape,
If she with pride againe should be o'ergone,
To take that booke, and sadly looke thereon.

46

The tender gyrl, spoyl'd of her virgin shame,
Yet for that sinne, no ravisher was shent:
Blacke is my inke, more blacke was her defame,
None to revenge, scarce any to lament;
Nought could be done, to remedie the same;
It was too late those mischiefes to prevent;
Against those horrors she did idly strive,
But saw her selfe to be devoured alive.

47

She wants redresse, and ravishment remorse,
None would be found, to whom she could complayne,
And crying out against th'adult'ers force,
Her plaints untimely did returne in vayne;
The more she gnev'd, her miserie the worse,
Onely to her this helpe there did remayne,
She spoyl'd of fame, was prodigall of breath,
And made her life cleere by her resolute death.

48

Then, of that world men did the want complayne,
When they might have been buried when they dyde,
Young children safely in their cradles layne,
The man new marryed have enjoy'd his bryde,

THE BARONS WARRES

When in some bounds ill could it selfe contayne;
The sonne kneel'd by his fathers death-bed side,
The living wrong'd, the dead no right could have,
The father saw his sonne to want a grave.

49

But 'twas too late those courses to recall,
None have external! nor mternall feare,
Those deadly sounds, by their continuall fall,
Settle confusion in each deaf'ned eare;
Of our ill times, this was the worst of all,
Onely of garboyles that did love to heare,
Armes our attyre, and wounds were all our good,
Branded the most with rapine and with blood.

50

Inglorious age, of whom it should be sayd,
That all these mischiefes should abound in thee,
That all these sinnes should to thy charge be layd,
From no calumnious nor vile action free!
O let not Time, us with those ills upbrayd,
Lest feare what hath been, argue what may be,
And fashioning so a habit in the mind,
Make us alone the haters of our kind!

51

O pow'rfull heaven, in whose most sov'raigne
raigne,
All thy pure bodies move in harmonic,
By thee, in an inviolable chayne,
Together link'd; so ty'd in unitie,
That they therein continually remayne,
Sway'd in one certaine course eternally;
Why, his true motion keepeth ev'ry starre,
Yet what they governe, so irregular.

THE BARONS WARRES

52

But in the course of this unnaturall warre,
Muse, say from whence this height of mischief grew,
That in so short time spread it selfe so farre,
From whence so sundry bloodsheds did ensue,
The cause, I pray thee, faithfully declare:
What, men religious, was the fault in you?
Which restie growne, with your much power,
 withdraw
Your stiffened necks from th'yoke of civill awe.

53

No wonder though the people grew prophane,
When church-mens lives gave lay-men leave to fall,
And did their former humblenesse disdain;
The shirt of hayre turn'd coat of costly pall,
The holy Ephod made a cloake for gayne;
What done with cunning, was canonicall,
 And blind promotion shun'd that dang'rous rode,
 Which the old prophets diligently trode.

54

Hence 'twas, that God so slightly was ador'd,
That rocke remov'd, whereon our faith was grounded,
Conscience esteem'd but as an idle word,
And being weake, by vaine opinions wounded:
Professors lives did little fruit afford,
And in her sects, religion lay confounded;
 Most sacred things were merchandise become,
 None talk'd of texts, but prophecying dumbe.

55

The Church then rich, and with such pride possest,
Was like the poyson of infectious ayre,
That having found a way into the brest,

THE BARONS WARRES

Is not prescrib'd, nor long time staves it there,
But through the organs seizeth on the rest,
The ranke contagion spreading ev'ry where;
So, from that evill by the Church begun,
The Common-wealth was lastly over-run.

56

When craft crept in, to cancell wholesome lawes,
Which fastening once on the defective weale,
Where doubts should cease, they rose in ev'ry clause,
And made them hurt, which first were made to heale;
*One evill still another forward drawes:
⁴For when disorder doth so farre prevayle,
'That conscience is cast off, as out of use,
'Right is the cloake of wrong, and all abuse.

57

Meane while, the King thus keeping in his hold,
(In that his poore imprisoned hbertie,
Living a death, in hunger, want, and cold,
Almost beyond imagined miserie)
By hatefull treason secretly was sold,
Through keyes deliver'd to the enemye;
'For when th'oppress'd is once up to the chin,
'Quite over head, all helpe to thrust him in.

58

The dyre disaster of that captiv'd King,
So surely seiz'd on by the adverse part,
(To his few friends sad matter menacing)
Strucke with pale terror ev'ry willing heart,
Their expectation cleane discouraging,
Him no evasion left, whereby to start;
And the blacke cloud which greatliest did them
feare,
Rose, where their hopes once brightest did appeare.

THE BARONS WARRES

59

For first, their envie with unusuall force,
Fell on the Spensers, from whose onely hate
The warre first sprung; who found, their lawlesse
course
Drew to an end, confined by their fate;
Of whom, there was not any tooke remorse:
But as pernicious cankers of the state,
The father first to Bristow being led,
Was drawne to death, then hang'd and quartered.

60

When as the heire to Winchester then dead,
The lot, ere long, to his sonne Gloster fell;
Reding the Marshall, the like way was ied,
And after him, the Earle of Arundel,
To pay the forfait of a reverend head:
Then Muchelden, and with him Daniel;
These following him in his lascivious wayes,
Then went before him, to his fatall dayes.

61

Like some large pillar, of a lordly height,
On whose proud top some huge frame dpth depend,
By tune disabled to uphold the weight,
And that with age his backe begins to bend,
Shrinkes to his first seat, and in pittious plight,
The lesser props with his sad load doth spend;
So far'd it with King Edward, crushing all
That had stood neere him, in his violent fall.

62

The state whereon these princes proudly leane,
Whose high ascent, men trembling still behold,
From whence oft times, with insolent disdain,

THE BARONS WARRES

The kneeling subject heares himself control'd,
Their earthly weakenesse truly doth explaine,
Promoting whom they please, not whom they should;
When as their fall shewes how they foulely er'd,
Procured by those, whom fondly they prefer'd.

63

For when that men of merit goe ungrac'd,
And by her fautors, ignorance held in,
And parasites in good mens roomes are plac'd,
Onely to sooth the highest in their sinne,
From those whose skill and knowledge is debas'd,
There many strange enormities begin;
'For great wits forged into factious tooles,
Trove great men (oft) to be the greatest fooles.

64

But why, so vainely time doe I bestow,
The base abuse of this vile world to chide?
Whose blinded judgement ev'ry houre doth show,
What folly weake mortaltie doth guide.
Wise was that man which laugh'd at humane woe;
My subject still more sorrow doth provide,
And these designes more matter still doe breed,
To hasten that which quickly must succeed.

The end of the fourth Canto

THE FIFTH CANTO

The Argument

TH'IMPRISONED King his scepter doth forsake,
To quit himselfe of what he was accus'd;
His foes, him from the Earle of Lester take,

393

THE BARONS WARRES

Who their commission faine would have refus'd;
His torturers a mock'ne of him make;
And basely and reprochfully abus'd,
By secret wayes to Berckley he is led,
And there in prison lastly murdered.

1

The wretched King unnaturally betray'd,
By too much trusting to his native land,
From Neath in Wales to Kenelworth convay'd,
By th'Earle of Lester, with a mightie band;
Some few his favorers, quickly over-wayd:
When straight there went a Parlament in hand,
To ratifie the general intent,
For resignation of his government.

2

Faine, through his frayletie, and intemperate will,
That with his fortune it so weakly far'd,
To undergoe that unexpected ill,
For his deserved punishment prepared;
Past measure, as those miseries to fill
To him allotted, as his just reward;
All arm'd with malice, either lesse, or more,
To strike at him, who strucke at all before.

3

It being a thing the commons still did crave,
The Barons thereto resolutely bent,
Such happie helpes on ev'ry side to have,
To forward that their forcible intent,
So perfect speed to their great action gave,
Established by the generall consent;
On Edward that such miseries did bring,
As never were inflicted upon King.

THE BARONS WARRES

4

Earles, Bishops, Barons, and the Abbots all,
Each in due order, as became their state,
By Heralds placed in the castle hall;
The Burgesses for places corporate,
(Whom the great businesse at that time did call)
For the Cinque Ports, the Barons convocate
With the Shire Knights, for the whole body sent,
Both for the south, and for the north of Trent.

5

When Edward, cloathed mournfully in blacke,
Was forth before the great assembly brought,
A dolefull hearse upon a dead mans backe,
Whose heavie lookes expressed his heavie thought,
In which there did no part of sorrow lacke,
'True grieffe needs not fayn'd action to be taught;
His funerall solemniz'd in his cheere,
His eyes the mourners, and his legs the beere.

6

Torlton, as one select to that intent,
The best experienc'd in that great affayre,
A man grave, subtill, stout, and eloquent,
First, with faire speech th'assembly doth prepare;
Then, with a grace, austere and eminent,
Doth his abuse effectually declare,
Winning each sad eye to a reverend feare,
To due attention drawing every eare.

7

Urging th'exactions raysed by the King,
With whose full plentie he his mynions fed,
Him and his subjects still impoverishing;
And the much bloud he lavishly had shed,

THE BARONS WARRES

A desolation on the land to bring:
As under him, how ill all bus'nesse sped;
The losse in warre, sustayned through his blame,
A lasting scandall to the English name.

8

Withall, proceeding with the future good,
That they thereby did happily intend,
And with what upright policie it stood,
No other hopes their fortunes to amend;
The resignation to his proper blood,
That might the action lawfully defend;
The present want, that will'd it to be so,
Whose imposition they might not foreslow.

9

Much more he spake; but faine would I be short,
To this intent a speech delivering;
Nor may I be too curious to report,
What toucheth the deposing of a King:
Wherefore I warne thee Muse, not to exhort
The after-times to this forbidden thing,
By reasons for it, by the Bishop layd,
Or from my feeling what he might have sayd.

10

The grave deliverie of whose vehement speech,
Grac'd with a dauntlesse, uncontracted brow,
Th'assembly with severitie did teach,
Each word of his authentike to allow,
That in the bus'nesse there could be no breach,
Each thereto bound by a peculiar vow;
Which they in publique gen'rally protest,
Calling the King to consummate the rest.

THE BARONS WARRES

11

Whose faire cheekes, cover'd with pale sheets of
shame,
Neere in a swound, he his first scene began,
Wherein his passions did such postures frame,
As ev'ry sense playd the tragedian,
Truly to shew from whence his sorrowes came,
Farre from the compasse of a common man;
As Nature to herselfe had added art,
To teach despayre to act a kingly part.

12

O pitie! didst thou live, or wert thou not?
(Mortals by such sights have to stone beene turn'd)
Or what men have been, had their seed forgot?
Or that for one, another never mourn'd?
In what, so strangely were yee over-shot,
Against your selves, that your owne frayletie spurn'd?
Or had teares then abandoned humane eyes,
That there was none to pitie miseries?

13

His passion calm'd, his crowne he taketh to him.
With a slight view, as though he thought not on it,
As he were senselesse that it should forgoe him;
And then he casts a scornfull eye upon it,
As he would leave it, yet would have it woo him:
Then snatching at it, loth to have forgone it,
He puts it from him; yet he would not so,
He faine would keepe, what faine he would forgoe.

14

In this confused conflict in his mind,
Teares drowning sighes, and sighes repelling teares:
But when in neyther, that he ease could find,

THE BARONS WARRES

And to his wrong no remedie appears,
Perceiving none to pittie there inclined,
Besides, the time to him prefixed, weares;
As then his sorrow somewhat 'gan to slake,
From his full bosome, thus he them bespake:

15

If first my title stedfastly were planted
Upon a true indubitate succession,
Confirm'd by nations, as by Nature granted,
Which lawfully delivered me possession;
You must thinke heaven sufficiencie hath wanted,
And so denie it power; by your oppression,
That into question dare thus boldly bring
The awfull right of an anoynted King.

16

That hallowed unction, by a sacred hand,
Which once was powr'd upon this crowned head,
And of this kingdome gave me the command,
When it, about me, the rich verdure spred,
Either my right in greater stead should stand,
Or wherefore then was it so vainely shed?
Whose prophanation, and unrev'rend touch,
Just heaven hath often punish'd, alwayes much.

17

As from the sunne, when from our sov'raigne due,
Whose vertuall influence, as the sourse of right,
Lends safetie of your livelyhood to you,
As from our fulnesse taking borrowed light;
Which to the subject being ever true,
Why thus oppugne you, by prepost'rous might?
But what heaven lent me, wisely to have used,
It gives to him, that vainely I abused.

THE BARONS WARRES

18

Then here I doe resigne it to your King;
Pawing thereat, as though his tongue offended,
With griping throwes seem'd forth that word to bring,
Sighing a full point, as he there had ended.
O, how that sound his grieved heart did wring!
Which he recalling, gladly would have mended.
'Things of small moment we can scarcely hold,
'But griefes that touch the heart, are hardly told.

19

Which sayd, his eyes seem'd to dissolve to teares,
After some great storms, like a show'r of rayne,
As his tongue strove to keepe it from his eares,
Or he had spoke it with exceeding payne;
O, in his lips how vile that word appears,
Wishing it were within his brest againe!
Yet sayth he, Say so to the man you beare it,
And thus say to him, that you meane shall weare it.

20

'Let him account his bondage from that day,
'That he is with a diadem invested;
'(A glittering crowne hath made his hayre so gray)
'Within whose circle he is but arrested,
'To true content, this is no certaine way,
'With sweeter cates the meane estate is feasted;
'For when his proud feet scorne to touch the mold,
'His head's a prisoner in a gaole of gold.

21

'In numbring subjects, he but numbers care;
'And when with shouts the people doe begin,
'Let him suppose, th'applause but prayers are,
'That he may scape the danger he is in,

THE BARONS WARRES

' Wherein t'adventure, he so boldly dare;
'The multitude hath multitudes of sinne,
'And he that first doth cry, God save the King,
'Is the first man him evill newes doth bring.

22

'Lost in his owne, mis-led in others wayes,
'Sooth'd with deceits, and fed with flatteries,
'Himselfe displeasing, wicked men to please,
'Obey'd no more then he shall tyrannize,
'The least in safetie, being most at ease,
'With one friend winning many enemies;
'And when he sitteth in his greatest state,
'They that behold him most, beare him most hate.

23

A King was he but now, that now is none,
Disarmed of power, and here dejected is;
By whose deposing, he enjoys a throne,
Who were he naturall, should not have done this:
I must confesse, th'inheritance his owne;
But whilst I live, it should be none of his:
But the sonne climbes, and thrusts the father downe,
And thus the crowned, goes without a crowne.

24

Thus having play'd his hard constrayned part,
His speech, his reigne, the day, together ended,
His brest shot through with sorrowes deadlyest dart,
Car'd for of none, not look'd on, unattended,
Sadly returning, with a heavie heart,
To his strait lodging strictly recommended,
Left to bemoane his miserable plight,
To the deafe walls, and to the darkesome night.

THE BARONS WARRES

25

Whilst things were thus disastrously decreed,
Seditious libels ev'ry day were spread,
(By such as lik'd not of the violent deed)
That he by force should be delivered:
Whether his wrong, remorse in some did breed,
That him (alas) untimely pittied;
Who knew: or, whether but devis'd by some,
To cloake his murther, afterward to come.

26

And hate at hand, which heark'ning still did lurke,
And still suspitious, Edward was not sure,
Fearing, that bloud with Leicester might worke,
Or, that him friends his name might yet procure,
Which the Queenes faction mightily did irke;
At Kenelworth, that no way could endure
His longer stay; but cast to have him layd,
Where his friends least might hope to lend him ayd.

27

Of which, when as they had debated long,
Of Berckley Castle they themselves bethought,
A place by nature that was wond'rous strong,
And yet farre stronger eas'ly might be wrought;
Besides, it stood their chiefest friends among,
And where he was unlikelyest to be sought;
And for their men, to worke what they desyr'd,
They knew where villaines were, that might be
hyr'd.

28

For though the great, to cover their intent,
Seeme not to know of any that are ill,
Yet want they not a diveUish instrument,

THE BARONS WARRES

Which they have readie ever at their will;
Such men these had, to mischief wholly bent,
In villanie, notorious for their skill,
Dishonest, desp'rate, mercilesse, and rude,
That dar'd into damnation to intrude.

29

Vile Gurney and Matrevers were the men,
Of this blacke scene, the actors chose to be,
Whose hatefull deed pollutes my maiden pen:
But, I beseech you, be not griev'd with me,
Which have these names now (that were famous then)
Some boughes grow crooked from the straightest
tree;
Yee are no way partakers of their shame,
The fault is in their fact, not in their name.

30

To Kenelworth they speedily dispatch'd,
Fitted with each thing that they could desire,
At such a time, as few their comming watch'd,
When of their bus'nesse none was to enquire:
Well were the men and their commission match'd;
For they had their authoritie entire,
To take the King, his guardian to acquit,
And to bestow him where they thought it fit.

31

This crue of rubalds, villanous and nought,
With their co-agents in this damned thing,
To noble Lester their commission brought,
Commanding the deliv'rie of the King,
Which (with much grieffe) they lastly from him
wrought;
About the castle closely hovering,

402

THE BARONS WARRES

Watching a time, till silence, and the night,
Could with convenience priviledge their flight.

32

With shameful! scoffes, and barbarous disgrace,
Him on a leane ill-favor'd jade they set,
In a vile garment, beggerly, and base,
Which, it should seeme, they purposely did get;
So carrying him in a most wretched case,
Benum'd, and beaten with the cold and wet,
Deprived of all repose, and naturall rest,
With thirst and hunger grievously opprest.

33

Yet still suspitious that he should be knowne,
From beard and head they shav'd away the hayre,
Which was the last that he could call his owne:
Never left fortune any wight so bare,
Such tyrannic on King was never showne,
And till that time, with mortals had beene rare;
His comfort then did utterly deceive him,
But to his death, his sorrowes did not leave him.

34

For when they had him farre from all resort,
They took him downe from his poore wearie beast,
And on a mole-hill (for a state in court)
With puddle water him they lewdly drest,
Then with his wofull miseries made sport;
And for his bason, fitting with the rest,
A rustie iron skull: O wretched sight!
Was ever man so miserably dight?

THE BARONS WARRES

35

His teares increas'd the water, with their fall,
Like a poole, rising with a sudden rayne,
Which wrestled with the puddle, and withall,
A troubled circle made it to retayne;
His endlesse grieve which to his mind did call,
His sighes made billowes like a little maine;
Water and teares contending, whether should
The mast'rie have, the hot ones, or the cold.

36

Vile traytors, hold off your unhallowed hands,
His brow, upon it, majestie still beares;
Dare yee thus keepe your Sov'raigne Lord in bands?
And can your eyes behold th'anoynted's teares?
Or if your sight all pittie thus withstands,
Are not your hearts yet pierced through your eares?
'The mind is free, what ere afflict the man,
'A King's a King, doe fortune what she can.

37

'Dare man take that which God himselfe hath
given?
'Or mortall spill the spirit by him infus'd,
'Whose pow'r is subject to the pow'r of Heaven?
'Wrongs passe not unreveng'd, although excus'd.
Except that thou set all at six and seven,
Rise majestie, when thou art thus abus'd;
Or for thy refuge, which way wilt thou take,
When in this sort thou do'st thy selfe forsake?

38

When in despite, and mdck'rie of a crowne,
A wreath of grasse they for his temples make:
Which when he felt, then comming from a swowne,

THE BARONS WARRES

And that his spirits a little gan to wake;
Fortune (quoth he) thou do'st not alwayes frowne,
I see thou giv'st, as well as thou do'st take,
That wanting naturall covert for my braine,
For that defect, thou lend'st me this againe.

39

To whom, just heaven, should I my grieffe
complayne,
Since it is onely thou, that workest all?
How can this bodie naturall strength retayne,
To suffer things so much unnaturall?
My cogitations labour but in vaine,
'Tis from thy justice that I have my fall,
That when so many miseries doe meet,
The change of sorrow makes my torment sweet.

40

Thus they to Berckley brought the wretched King,
Which, for their purpose, was the place fore-thought.
Yee heavenly pow'rs, doe yee behold this thing,
And let this deed of horror to be wrought,
That might the nation into question bring!
But O, your wayes with justice still are fraught!
But he is hap'd into his earthly hell,
From whence he bad the wicked world farwell.

41

They lodg'd him in a melancholy roome,
Where, through strait windows, the dull light came
farre,
(In which, the sunne did at no season come)
Which strengthened were with many an iron barre,
Like to a vault under some mightie tombe,
Where night and day wag'd a continuall warre;

THE BARONS WARRES

Under whose floore, the common sewer past
Up to the same, a loathsome stench that cast.

42

The ominous raven often he doth heare,
Whose croking, him of following horror tells,
Begetting strange imaginarie feare,
With heavie ecchoes, like to passing bells;
The howling dogge a dolefull part doth beare,
As though they chym'd his last sad burying knells;
Under his eave, the buzzing shreech-owle sings,
Beating the windowes with her fatall wings.

43

By night affrighted, in his fearefull dreames,
Of raging fiends and goblins that he meets,
Of falling downe from steepe rocks into streames,
Of deaths, of buryals, and of wynding sheets,
Of wand'ring helpelesse, in farre forraine realmes,
Of strong temptations by seducing sprights;
Wherewith awak'd, and calling out for aid,
His hollow voyce doth make himselfe afraid.

44

Then came the vision of his bloudie raigne,
Marching along with Lancasters sterne ghost,
Twentie eight Barons, either hang'd, or slaine,
Attended with the rufull mangled hoast,
That unreveng'd did all that while remayne,
At Burton Bridge, and fatall Borough lost;
Threat'ning with frownes, and quaking ev'ry lim,
As though that piece-meale they would torture him.

THE BARONS WARRES

45

And if it chanc'd, that from the troubled skyes,
The least small starre through any chinke gave light,
Straightwayes on heapes the thronging clouds did rise,
As though that Heaven were angry with the night,
That it should lend that comfort to his eyes;
Deformed shaddowes glimpsing in his sight,
As darkenesse, that it might more ugly bee,
Through the least cranny would not let him see.

46

When all th'affliction that they could impose
Upon him, to the utmost of their hate,
Above his torments, yet his strength so rose,
As though that Nature had conspir'd with fate;
When as his watchfull and too warie foes,
That ceas'd not still his woes to aggravate,
His further helpes suspected, to prevent,
To take away his life, to Berckley sent.

47

And to that end a letter fashioning,
Which in the words a double sense did beare;
Which seem'd to bid them, not to kill the King,
Shewing with all, how vile a thing it were;
But by the pointing, was another thing,
And to dispatch him, bids them not to feare;
Which taught to find, the murth'ers need no more,
Being thereto, too readie long before.

48

When Edward hap'd a chronicle to find,
Of those nine Kings, which did him here precede,
Which some, there lodg'd, forgotten had behind,
On which, to passe the how'rs, he fell to read,

407

THE BARONS WARRES

Thinking thereby to recreate his mind;
But in his brest, that did sore conflicts breed:
For when true sorrow once the fansie seizeth,
'What ere we see, our miserie increaseth.

49

And to that Norman, entring on this ile,
Cal'd William Conqueror, first his time he plyes,
The fields of Hastings how he did defile
With Saxon bloud, and Harold did surprize,
And those, which he so could not reconcile,
How over them he long did tyrannize
Where he read, how the strong o'ercame the strong,
As God oft-times makes wrong to punish wrong.

50

How Robert then, his eldest sonne, abroad,
Rufus, his second, seiz'd on his estate,
His fathers steps apparantly that trode,
Depressing those who had beene conquer'd late:
But as on them he layd a heavie load,
So was he guerdon'd by impartiall fate;
For whilst mens roomes for beasts he did intend,
He in that forrest had a beastly end.

51

Henry, his young'st, his brother William dead,
Taket the crowne from his usurping hand,
Due to the eldest, good Duke Robert's head,
Not then returned from the Holy Land;
Whose power was there so much diminished,
That he his foe not able to withstand,
Was ta'en in battell, and his eyes out-done;
For which, the seas left Henry not a sonne.

THE BARONS WARRES

52

To Maud the Empresse he the scepter leaves,
His onely daughter, whom (through false pretext)
Stephen, Earle of Bulloyn, from the kingdome heaves:
The conquerors nephew, in succession next,
By which, the land a stranger warre receives,
Wherewith it long was miserably vext;
Till Stephen faylmg, and his issue gone,
The heire of Maud steps up into ths throne.

53

Henry the second, Maud the Empresse sonne,
Of th'English Kings, Plantaginet the first,
By Stephens end, a glorious reigne begun;
But yet his greatnesse strangely was accurst,
By his sonne Henries coronation:
Which to his age much woe and sorrow nurst;
When his, whom he had labor'd to make great,
Abroad his townes, at home usurp'd his seat.

54

Richard, his sonne, him worthily succeeds;
Who not content with what was safely ours,
(A man, whose mind sought after glorious deeds)
Into the east transports the English powers;
Where, with his sword whilst many a pagan bleeds,
Relentlesse fate doth haste on his last houres,
By one, whose syre he justly there had slaine,
With a sharpe arrow shot into the braine.

55

Next followed him his faithlesse brother John,
By Arthurs murther (compass'd by his might)
His brother Geffrey, th'Earle of Britaines sonne;
But he by poyson was repay'd his spight:

THE BARONS WARRES

For whilst he strove to have made all his owne,
(For what he got by wrong, he held his right)
And on the clergie tyrannously fed,
Was by a monke of Swinsted poysoned.

56

Henry his sonne, then crowned very young,
For hate the English to the father bare,
The sonne's here raining was in question long,
Who thought, on France t'have cast the kingdomes
care:
With whom the Barons, insolent and strong,
For the old charter in commotion were;
Which his long raigne did with much care molest,
Yet with much peace went lastly to his rest.

57

Of him descends a prince, stout, just, and sage,
(In all things happie, but in him, his sonne)
In whom, wise Nature did her selfe ingage,
More then in man, in Edward to have done;
Whose happie raigne recur'd the former rage,
By the large bounds he to his empire wonne:
O God (quoth he) had he my patterne bin,
Heav'n had not powr'd these plagues upon my
sinne.

58

Turning the leafe, he found as unawares,
What day young Edward, Prince of Wales, was borne;
Which letters look'd like conjuring characters,
Or to despight him, they were set in scorne,
Blotting the paper like disfiguring skarres:
O, let that name (quoth he) from bookes be torne,
Lest in that place the sad displeas'd earth
Doe loath it selfe, as slandered with my birth.

410

THE BARONS WARRES

59

Be thence hereafter humane birth exil'd,
Sunke to a lake, or swallowed by the sea;
And future ages asking for that child,
Say 'twas abortive, or 'twas stolne away:
And lest, O Time, thou be therewith defil'd,
In thy un-numberd houres deuoure that day;
Let all be done, that pow'r can bring to passe,
To make forgot, that such a one there was.

60

The troubled teares then standing in his eyes,
Through which, he did upon the letters looke,
Made them to seeme like roundlets, that arise
By a stone cast into a standing brooke,
Appearing to him in such various wise,
And at one time such sundry fashions tooke,
As like deluding goblins did affright,
And with their foule shapes terrifie his sight.

61

And on his death-bed sits him downe at last,
His fainting spirits fore-shewing danger nie,
When the doores forth a fearefull howling cast,
To let those in, by whom he was to die:
At whose approach, whilst there he lay agast,
Those ruthesse villaines did upon him flie;
Who seeing none, to whom to call for ayd,
* Thus to these cruell regicydes he sayd:

62

O be not authors of so vile an act,
My bloud on your posteritie to bring,
Which after-time with horror shall distract,
When fame shall tell it, how you kil'd a King;

THE BARONS WARRES

And yet more, by the manner of the fact,
Mortalitie so much astonishing,
That they shall count their wickednesse scarce
sinne,
Compar'd to that, which done by you hath bin.

63

And since you deadly hate me, let me live;
Yee this advantage angry heaven hath left,
Which, except life, hath ta'en what it did give,
But that revenge should not from you be reft,
Me yet with greater miserie to grieve,
Hath still reserved this from its former theft;
That this, which might of all these plagues prevent
me,
Were I depriv'd it, lasteth to torment me.

64

Thus spake this wofull and distressed Lord,
As yet his breath found pasrage to and fro,
With many a short pant, many a broken word,
Many a sore groane, many a grievous throw,
Whilst him his spirit *could any strength afford*
To his last gaspe, to move them with his woe;
Till over-mast'red by their too much strength,
His sickly heart submitted at the length.

65

When 'twixt two beds they clos'd his wearied coarse,
Basely uncovering his most secret part,
And without humane pittie, or remorse,
With a hot spit they thrust him to the heart.
O that my pen had in it but that force,
T'expresse the paine! but that surpasseth art;
And that, the soule must even with trembling doe,
For words want weight, nor can they reach thereto.

THE BARONS WARRES

66

When those (i'th'death and dead time of the night)
Poore simple people, that then dwelled neare,
Whom that strange noyse did wond'rously affright,
That his last shreeke did in his parting heare,
As pittying that most miserable wight,
(Betwixt compassion and obedient feare)
Turn'd up their eyes, with heavinesse opprest,
Praying to heaven, to give the soule good rest.

67

Berckley, whose faire seat hath bin famous long,
Let thy sad echoes shreeke a deadly sound,
To the vast ayre complayne his grievous wrong,
And keepe the bloud that issued from his wound,
The teares that drop'd from his dead eyes among,
In their blacke foot-steps printed on the ground,
Thereby that all the ages that succeed,
May call to mind the foulnesse of their deed.

68

Let *thy large buildings still retayne his grones,*
His sad complaints by learning to repeat,
And let the dull walls, and the senselesse stones,
By the impression of his torment sweat,
And for not able to expresse his mones,
Therefore with paine and agonie repleat,
That all may thither come, that shall be told it,
As in a mirror clearely to behold it.

69

And let the genius of that wofull place
Become the guide of his more frightfull ghost,
With hayre dishevel'd, and a gastly face,
And haunt the prison where his life was lost,

THE BARONS WARRES

And as the den of horror, and disgrace,
Let it be fearefull over all the coast;
That those hereafter, that doe travell neare,
Never may view it, but with heavie cheare.

The end of the fifth Canto

THE SIXTH CANTO

The Argument

LORD MORTIMER, made Earle of March; how he
And the bright Queene rule all things by their
 might;
The state wherein at Nottingham they be,
The cost wherewith their pompous Court is dight,
Envy'd by those, their hatefull pride that see:
The King attempts the dreadfull cave by night;
 Entring the Castle, taketh him from thence,
And March at London dyes for his offence.

1

Now, whilst of sundry accidents we sing,
Some, of much sadnesse, others, of delight,
In our conceit, strange objects fashioning;
We our free numbers tenderly invite,
Somewhat to slacke this melancholy string;
For we too soone of death come to endite,
 When things of moment, in the course we hold,
 Fall in their order fitly to be told.

2

Whilst they, the houres doe carefully redeeme,
Their fraudfull courses finely to contrive,
How foule soe'r, to make them fayre to seeme,

THE BARONS WARRES

For which, they all did diligently strive,
To tempt men still, so of them to esteeme,
That all might wish their purposes to thrive;
For it was cunning, mixed with their might,
That had, and still must, make their wrong seeme
right.

3

The pompous synod of those earthly gods,
Was then assigned to Salisburie, to bring
Things to be even, that had been at ods,
To the faire entrance of the new-crown'd King,
And thereby so to settle their abodes,
That peace from their first Parlament might spring;
Wisely to end what well they had begun,
For many thought, that strange things had been
done.

4

Whilst Mortimer (so Lord of his desire,
That none prevayPd, his purpose to defeat)
His stile of Baron, heav'd an Earledome higher,
Textend the honour of his auncient seat,
That his command might be the more entire;
Who only then, but the Earle of March, was great?
Who knew, the land into her lap was throwne,
Which having all, would never starve her owne.

5

And firme they stood, as those two stedfast poles,
'Twixt which, this all doth on the axtree move,
Whose strength the frame of government upholds,
Which to those times, their wisdomes did approve:
Strong must that fate be, which their will controules,
Or had the power, them from their seats to shove;

THE BARONS WARRES

For well they found, that that which they could
 feele,
Must of force make the realme it selfe to reele.

6

When Edwards nonage, that of peace had need,
The Scot encourag'd to renew the warre,
Of which, it much behoov'd them to take heed
Matters so strangely manag'd as they were,
Which should they suffer (by neglect) to breed,
Nothing they yet had made, but it might marre,
 Which for their good (reserving their estate)
 They prove to purchase at the dearest rate.

7

Nor lesse then Ragman the rough Scot suffic'd,
Of all our writings, of the most renoune,
By which, the Kings of Scotland had dismis'd,
Their yeerely homage to the English Crowne,
With other reliques (that were highly priz'd)
But that which made the patient'st men to frowne,
 Was the Blacke Crosse of Scotland, ominous
 deem'd,
 Before all other, anciently esteem'd.

8

To colour which, and to confirme the peace,
They made a marriage betweene them and us,
And for a strong pretext to that release,
Which to the wisest seem'd most dangerous;
Whilst Robert reign'd, and after his decease,
That it might last, it was concluded thus,
 David their Prince, our Princess Joan should take,
 Betwixt the realmes a lasting league to make.

THE BARONS WARRES

9

When th'Earle of Kent, that had been long of those,
Which in their actions had a pow'rfull hand,
Perceiving them of matters to dispose,
Tending to the subversion of the land,
And further danger dayly did disclose,
If that the kingdome they should still command;
 Whilst he their fall did cunningly fore-cast,
 Did but his owne too violently haste.

10

For giving out, his brother to survive,
(Of all men called the deceased King)
Into the peoples heads such doubts did drive,
As into question Edwards right did bring.
Ill this report was rays'd, and worse did thrive,
Being so foule and dangerous a thing;
 That as a mover of intestine strife,
 He for the treason forfeited his life.

11

Whilst Edward takes but what they onely give,
Whose nonage crav'd their carefulllest protection,
Who knew to rule, and he but learn'd to live,
From their experience taking his direction:
Hard was the thing, that they could not contrive,
When he that reign'd was crown'd by their election;
 And that the right which did to him belong,
 And must uphold him, chiefly made them strong.

12

Providing for the councill of the King,
Those of most power, the noblest of the peeres,
Experienc'd well, complete in ev'ry thing,
Whose judgements had been rip'ned with their yeeres;

THE BARONS WARRES

With comelinesse their actions managing:
Yet whilst they rowe, 'tis Mortimer that steeres;
 'Well might we thinke, the man were more then
 blind,
That wanted sea-roomth, and could rule the wind.

13

Keeping their course, that it still clearely shone,
By the most curious cunning to be scan'd,
And made that which was Edwards then, their owne,
Being received from his sov'raigne hand,
Into their bosomes absolutely throwne,
Both for his good, and safetie of his land,
 All their proceedings coloured with that care,
 To the worlds eye so faire an out-side bare.

14

And they which could the complements of state,
To greatnesse gave each ceremonious rite,
To their designs to give the longer date,
The like againe in others to excite;
In entertaining love, they welcom'd hate,
And to one banquet freely both invite;
 *A Princes wealth, by spending still doth spred,
 'Like to a brooke, by many fountaines fed.

15

To Nottingham, the North's imperious Eye,
Which as a Pharus doth survey the soyle,
Armed by Nature, danger to defie;
March to repose him, after all his toyle,
(Where treason least advantage might espie)
Closely convey'd his past-price valued spoyle;
 That there residing from the publike sight,
 He might with pleasure relish his delight.

THE BARONS WARRES

16

Ninescore in check belonging to their court,
By honor'd knight-hood knit in mutuall bands,
Men most select, of speciall worth and sort;
Much might they doe, that had so many hands:
March and the Queene maintaine one equall port
In that proud castle, which so farre commands;
From whence they seem'd, as they like those would
rise,
Who once threw rocks at the imperiall skies.

17

As fortune meant, her power on March to show,
And in her armes to beare him through the skye,
By him to daunt whos'ever sat below,
Having above them mounted him so hye:
Who, at his beck was he that did not bow,
If at his feet he did not humbly lye?
'All things concurre with more then happy chance,
To rayse the man, whom fortune will advance.

18

Here all along, the flower-befilled vales,
On her cleere sands the silver Trent doth slide,
And to the medowes telling wanton tales,
Her crystall limbes lasciviously, in pride,
(As ravished with the inamor'd gales)
With often turnings casts from side to side;
As she were loth the faire sight to forsake,
And runne her selfe into the German Lake.

19

And north from thence, rude Sherwood as she
roves,
Casts many a long looke at those loftie tow'rs,

THE BARONS WARRES

And with the thicknesse of her well-growne groves,
Shelters the towne from stormie winters show'rs,
In pleasant summer, and to shew her loves,
Bids it againe to see her shadie bow'rs;
 Courting the castle, which as turning to her,
 Smiles to behold th'inamor'd wood-nymph woo her.

20

March and the Queene so planted in that place,
Thither, in person, princely Edward drawes,
Who seem'd, their friendships friendly to imbrace,
And upon ev'ry little offred cause,
Readie to doe them ceremonious grace;
Whom they observe (of court that knew the lawes:)
 Whilst in the towne King Edward took his seate,
 The Queenes great confluence made the castle
 sweat.

21

Where, when they pleas'd in councill to debate,
Or they the King at any pleasure met,
They came with such magnificence of state,
As did all eyes upon their greatnesse set,
Prizing their presence at that costly rate,
As to the same due rev'rence might beget;
 Which, in most people admiration wrought,
 And much amazed many a wand'ring thought.

22

O, could ambition apprehend a stay,
The giddie course it wand'reth in, to guide!
And give it safetie in that slipp'rie way,
Where the most worldly provident doe slide;
It not so soone should see it owne decay:
But it so much besotted is with pride,

THE BARONS WARRES

That it ne'r thinketh of that pit at all,
Wherein, through boldnesse, it doth blindly fall.

23

But never doth it surfet with excesse,
Each dish so savorie, season'd with delight,
Nor nothing can the gluttonie suppress,
But still it longs, so liquorish is the sight,
Nor having all, is in desire the lesse,
Till it so much be tempted, past the might,
That the full stomacke more then well suffic'd,
Vomits, what late it vilely gourmandiz'd.

24

Like to some low brooke, from a loftier ground,
By waste of waters that is over-flow'd,
Is sated, till it shouldreth downe the mound,
And the old course quite of it selfe unload,
That where it was, it after is not found,
But from the strait bankes layes it selfe abroad,
Leading the fountaine that doth feed it, by,
So leaves the channel! desolate and drie.

25

When as those few, that many teares had spent,
By gazing long on murth'ed Edwards grave,
Mutt'ed in corners, griev'd, and discontent;
And finding those, them willing eare that gave,
Still, as they durst, discovered what they meant,
Tending their pride and greatnesse to deprave;
Urging withall, what some might justly doe,
If things so borne, were rightly look'd into.

THE BARONS WARRES

26

And some gave out, that Mortimer, to rise,
Had cut off Kent, that next was to succeed,
Whose treasons they avow'd, March to surmise,
As a meere colour to that lawlesse deed;
Which his ambition onely did devise,
Quite out the Royall family to weed,
And made account, if Edward once were gone,
He, o'r the rest, might step into the throne.

27

As those his favorers, in those former times,
Then credulous, that honour was his end,
And for the hate they bare to others crimes,
Did not his faults so carefully attend;
Perceiving he so dissolutely clymes,
Having then brought his purpose to an end,
With a severe eye did more strictly looke
Into the course which his ambition tooke.

28

All fence the tree, that serveth for a shade,
Whose big-growne bodie doth beare off the wind,
Till that his wastfull branches doe invade
The new-sprung plants, and them in prison bind;
When as a tyrant to his weaker made,
And as a vile devourer of his kind,
All lend their hands, at his large root to hew,
Whose greatnesse hind'reth others that would grow.

29

So, at his ease securely whilst he sate,
And as he would, so all things settled were,
Under the guidance of a gracious fate,
Never more free from jealousy and feare;

THE BARONS WARRES

So great his mind, so mightie his estate,
As they admit not danger to be neere;
And still we see, before a sudden showre,
The sunne upon us hath the greatest power.

30

Within the castle had the Queene devis'd,
(Long about which, she busied had her thought)
A chamber, wherein she imparadiz'd
What shapes for her could any where be sought;
Which in the same were curiously compriz'd,
By skilfull painters excellently wrought:
And in the place of greatest safetie there,
Which she had nam'd the tower of Mortimer.

31

A roome prepar'd with pilasters, she chose,
That to the rooffe their slender poynts did reare,
Arching the top, whereas they all did close,
Which from below shew'd like an hemisphere;
In whose concavitie, she did compose
The constellations, that to us appeare,
In their corporeall shapes, with starres inched,
As by th'old poets they on heaven were placed.

32

About which lodging, towards the upper face,
Ran a tine border, circularly led,
As equall 'twixt the zenith and the base,
Which as a zone the waste ingirdled,
That lent the sight a breathing, by the space
'Twixt things neere hand, and those farre over head;
Upon the plaine wall of which lower part,
Painting expressed the utmost of her art.

THE BARONS WARRES

33

There Phoebus clipping Hiacynthus, stood,
Whose lifes last drops did the gods brest imbrew,
His teares so mixed with the young boyes blood,
That whether was the more, no eye could view;
And though together lost as in a flood,
Yet here and there th'one from th'other drew;
The prettie wood-nymphes chafing him with balme,
Proving to wake him from his deadly qualme.

34

Apollo's quiver, and farre-killing bow,
His gold-frindg'd mantle on the grasse-full ground,
T'expresse whose act, art (ev'n) her best did show,
The sledge so shadow'd still, as to rebound,
As it had scarce done giving of the blow,
Lending a lasting freshnesse to the wound;
The purple flower from the boyes bloud begun,
That since ne'r spreads, but to the rising sunne.

35

Neere that, was 16, in a heyfers shape,
Viewing her new-ta'n figure in a brooke,
In which, her shadow seem'd on her to gape,
As on the same she greedily did looke,
To see how Jove could cloud his wanton scape:
So done, that the beholders oft mistooke
Themselves; to some, that one way did allow
A womans likenesse, th'other way, a cow.

36

There Mercurie was like a shepherds boy,
Sporting with Hebe, by a fountaine brim,
With many a sweet glance, many an am'rous toy;
He sprinkling drops at her, and she at him:

424

THE BARONS WARRES

Wherein the painter so explain'd their joy,
As he had meant the very life to limne;
For on their browes he made the drops so cleare,
That through each drop, their faire skins did
 appeare.

37

By them, in landskip, rockie Cynthus rear'd,
With the clouds leaning on his loftie crowne,
On his sides shewing many a stragglng heard,
And from his top, the cleare springs creeping downe
By the old rocks, each with a hoarie beard,
With mosse and climbing ivy over-growne;
 So done, that the beholders, with the skill,
 Never nough their longing eyes could fill.

38

The halfe-nak'd nymphs, some climbing, soms
 descending,
The sundry flowers at one another flung,
In postures strange, their limber bodies bending;
Some cropping branches, that seem'd lately sprung,
Upon the brakes, their coloured mantles rending,
Which on the mount grew here and there among;
 Combing their hayre some, some made garlands by;
 So strove the painter to content the eye.

39

In one part, Phaeton cast amongst the clouds
By Phoebus palfreyes, that their reynes had broke,
His chariot tumbling from the welked shrowds,
And the fierce steeds flew madding from their yoke,
The elements confusedly in crowds,
And heaven and earth were nought but flame and
 smoke:

425

THE BARONS WARRES

A piece so done, that many did desire
To warme themselves, some frighted with the fire.

40

And into Padus falling, as he burn'd,
Thereinto throwne by Jove, out of the skyes;
His weeping sisters, there to trees were turn'd.,
Yet so of women did retayne the guise,
That none could censure, whether (as they mourn'd)
Drops from their boughes, or teares fell from their
eyes:
Done for the last, with such exceeding life,
As art therein with Nature seem'd at strife.

41

And for the light to this brave lodging lent,
The workeman, who as wisely could direct,
Did for the same the windowes so invent,
That they should artificially reflect
The day alike on ev'ry liniament,
To their proportion, and had such respect,
As that the beames, condensated and grave,
To ev'ry figure a sure colour gave.

42

In part of which, under a golden vine,
Which held a curious canopie through all,
Stood a rich bed, quite cover'd with the twyne,
Shadowing the same, in the redoubling fall,
Whose clusters drew the branches to decline,
'Mongst which, did many a naked Cupid sprawle:
Some, at the sundry-colour'd birds did shoot,
And some, about to plucke the purple fruit.

THE BARONS WARRES

43

On which, a tissue counterpoyne was cast,
Arachnes web did not the same surpasse,
Wherein the storie of his fortunes past,
In lively pictures, neatly handled was;
How he escap'd the Tower, in France how grac'd,
With stones imbroyd'ed, of a wond'rous masse;
About the border, in a fine-wrought fret,
Emblem's, Empressa's, Hieroglyphicks, set.

44

This flattering sunne-shine had begot the showre.
And the blacke clouds with such abundance fed,
That for a wind they wayted but the howre,
With force to let their furie on his head:
Which when it came, it came with such a pow'r,
As he could hardly have imagined;
'But when men thinke they most in safetie stand,
*Their greatest perill often is at hand.

45

For to that largenesse they increased were,
That Edward felt March heavie on his throne,
Whose props no longer both of them could beare,
Two, for one seat, that over-great were growne,
Prepost'rously that moved in one sphere,
And to the like predominancie prone,
That the young King, downe Mortimer must cast,
If he himself would e'r hope to sit fast.

46

Who finding the necessitie was such,
That urg'd him still th'assault to undertake,
And yet his person it might neerely touch,
Should he too soone his sleeping power awake:

THE BARONS WARRES

Th'attempt wherein the danger was so much,
Drove him at length a secret meanes to make,
Whereby he might the enterprise effect,
And hurt him most, where he did least suspect.

47

Without the castle, in the earth, is found
A cave, resembling sleepe Morpheus cell,
In strange meanders wynding under ground,
Where darkenesse seekes continually to dwell,
Which with such feare and horror doth abound,
As though it were an entrance into hell;
By architects to serve the castle, made
When as the Danes this iland did invade.

48

Now, on along the crankling path doth keepe,
Then, by a rocke turnes up another way,
Rising tow'rds day, then falling tow'rds the deepe,
On a smooth levell then it selfe doth lay,
Directly then, then obliquely doth creepe,
Nor in the course keeps any certaine stay;
Till in the castle, in an odde by-place,
It casts the foule maske from its duskie face.

49

By which, the King with a selected crue,
Of such as he with his intent acquainted,
Which he affected to the action knew,
And in revenge of Edward had not fainted,
That to their utmost would the cause pursue,
And with those treasons that had not been tainted;
Adventured, the labyrinth t'assay,
To rowse the beast, which kept them all at bay.

THE BARONS WARRES

50

Long after Phoebus tooke his laboring teams,
To his pale sister and resigned his place,
To wash his cauples in the ocean streams,
And coole the fervor of his glowing face;
And Phcebe, scanted of her brothers beame,
Into the west went after him apace,
Leaving blacke darknesse to possesse the skie,
To fit the time of that blacke tragedie.

51

What time, by torch-light, they attempt the cave,
Which at their entrance seemed in a fright,
With the reflection that their armour gave,
As it till then had ne'r seene any light;
Which, striving there pre-eminence to have
Darknesse therewith so daringly doth fight,
That each confounding other, both appeare,
As darknesse light, and light but darknesse were.

52

The craggie cleeves, which crosse them as they goc,
Made, as their passage they would have denyde,
And threatened them their journey to forslow,
As angry with the path that was their guide,
And sadly seem'd their discontent to show,
To the vile hand that did them first divide;
Whose comb'rous falls and risings seem'd to say,
So ill an action could not brooke the day.

53

And by the lights as they along were led,
Their shadowes then them following at their backe,
Were like to mourners, carrying forth their dead,
And as the deed, so were they ugly blacke,

THE BARONS WARRES

Or like to fiends that them had followed,
Pricking them on to bloudshed, and to wracke;
 Whilst the light look'd as it had been amazed,
 At their deformed shapes whereon it gazed.

54

The clatt'ring armes their masters seem'd to chide,
As they would reason, wherefore they should wound,
And strooke the cave, in passing on each side,
As they were angry with the hollow ground,
That it an act so pittilesse should hide;
Whose stonie roofe lock'd in their angrie sound,
 And hanging in the creekes, drew backe againe,
 As willing them from murther to refraine.

55

The night wax'd old (not dreaming of these things)
And to her chamber is the Queene withdrawne,
To whom a choise musician playes and sings,
Whilst she sat under an estate of lawne,
In night-attyre, more god-like glittering,
Then any eye had seene the chearefull dawne,
 Leaning upon her most-lov'd Mortimer,
 Whose voice, more then the musike, pleas'd her
 eare.

56

Where her faire brests at libertie were let,
Whose violet veines in branched riverets flow,
And Venus swans, and milkie doves were set
Upon those swelling mounts of driven snow;
Whereon whilst Love, to sport himselfe doth get,
He lost his way, nor backe againe could goe,
 But with those bankes of beautie set about,
 He wand'red still, yet never could get out.

THE BARONS WARRES

57

Her loose hayre look'd like gold (O word too base!
Nay, more then sinne, but so to name her hayre)
Declining, as to kisse her fayrer face,
No word is fayre ynough for thing so fayre,
Nor never was there epithite could grace
That, by much praysing, which we much impayre;
And where the pen fayles, pensils cannot show it,
Only the soule may be supposed to know it.

58

She layd her fingers on his manly cheeke,
The gods pure scepters, and the darts of love,
That with their touch might make a tygre meeke,
Or might great Atlas from his seat remove;
So white, so soft, so delicate, so sleeke,
As she had worne a lilly for a glove,
As might beget life, where was never none,
And put a spirit into the hardest stone.

59

The fire, of precious wood; the light, perfume,
Which left a sweetnesse on each thing it shone,
As ev'ry thing did to it selfe assume
The sent from them, and made the same their owne:
So that, the painted flowres within the roome
Were sweet, as if they naturally had growne;
The light gave colours, which upon them fell,
And to the colours the perfume gave smell.

60

When on those sundry pictures they devise,
And from one peece they to another runne,
Commend that face, that arme, that hand, those eyes,
Shew how that bird, how well that flowre was done,

THE BARONS WARRES

How this part shadow'd, and how that did rise,
This top was clouded, how that trayle was spunne,
The land-skip, mixture, and delineatings,
And in that art, a thousand curious things.

61

Looking upon proud Phaeton, wrap'd in fire,
The gentle Queene did much bewayle his fall;
But Mortimer commended his desire,
To lose one poore life, or to governe all:
What though (quoth he) he madly did aspire,
And his great mind made him proud fortunes thrall?
Yet in despight, when she her worst had done,
He perish'd in the chariot of the sunne.

62

Phoebus she said was over-forc'd by art,
Nor could she find, how that imbrace could be:
But Mortimer then tooke the painters part;
Why thus, bright Empresse, thus, and thus, quoth he;
That hand doth hold his backe, and this his heart,
Thus their armes twyne, and thus their lippes you see;
Now are you Phoebus, Hiacynthus I,
It were a life thus ev'ry houre to die.

63

When, by that time, into the castle hall
Was rudely entred that well-armed rout,
And they within suspecting nought at all,
Had then no guard, to watch for them without:
'(See how mischances suddenly doe fall,
'And steale upon us, being farth'st from doubt;)
'Our life's uncertaine, and our death is sure,
'And tow'rds most perill, man is most secure.

THE BARONS WARRES

64

Whilst youthfull Nevil, and brave Turrington,
To the bright Queene that ever wayted neere,
Two, with great March much credit that had woon,
That in the lobby with the ladies were,
Staying delight, whilst time away did runne,
With such discourse as women love to heare;
Charged on the sudden by the armed trayne,
Were, at their entrance, miserably slayne.

65

When, as from snow-crown'd Skidow's loftie
cleeves,
Some fleet-wing'd haggard, tow'rds her preying howre,
Amongst the teyle and moore-bred mallard drives,
And th'ayre of all her feather'd flocks doth scowre,
Whilst to regayne her former height, she strives,
The fearefull fowle all prostrate to her power;
Such a sharpe shreeke did ring throughout the
vault,
Made by the women at the fierce assault.

66

Unarm'd was March (she onely in his armes,
Too soft a shield to beare their boyst'rous blowes)
Who least of all suspected such alarmes,
And to be so encountred by his foes,
When he was most improvident of harmes.
O, had he had but weapons to his woes!
Either his valour had his life redeem'd,
Or in her sight dy'd happily esteem'd.

67

But there, about him looking for the King,
Whom he supposed his judgement could not misse;

THE BARONS WARRES

Which when he found, by his imagining,
Of those most perfect liniaments of his:
Quoth he, The man that to thy crowne did bring
Thee, at thy hands might least have look'd for this;
And in this place, the least of all the rest,
Where onely sacred solitude is blest.

68

Her presence frees th'offendor of his ill,
Whose god-like greatnesse makes the place divine;
And canst thou, King, thus countermand her will,
Who gave to thee the power that now is thine,
And in her armes in safetie kept thee still,
As in a most inviolated shrine?
Yet dar'st thou irreligiously despise,
And thus prophane these sacred liberties.

69

But, even as when old Ilion was surprised,
The Grecians issuing from the wooden horse,
The pride and furie roughly exercis'd,
Op'ning the wide gates, letting in their force,
Putting in act what was before devis'd,
Without all humane pitie, or remorse;
Even so did they, with whose confused sound,
Words were not heard, and poore complaints were
drown'd.

70

Dissolv'd to teares, she followed him: O teares!
Elixar-like, turae all to pearle you touch;
To weepe with her, the hard wall scarce forbears,
The wofull words she uttered, were such,
Able to wound th'impenitiblest eares,
Her plaints so piercing, and her grieve so much;

434

THE BARONS WARRES

And to the King, when she at last could come,
Thus to him spake, though he to her were dumbe:

71

Deare sonne (quoth she) let not his bloud be spilt,
So often ventured to redeeme thy crowne.
In all his life can there be found that guilt?
Thinke of his love, on which thou once shouldst
frowne:
'Twas he, thy seat that so substantiall built,
Long with his shoulder sav'd from shaking downe;
Twas he, the meanes that first for thee did find,
To passe for France, to exercise thy mind.

72

Even for the love thou bear'st to that deare blood.
From which (my sonne) thou didst receive thy life,
Play not the niggard in so small a good,
With her, to whom thy bounties should be rife,
Beg'd on those knees, at which thou oft hast stood:
O, let my up-held hands appease this strife!
Let not the breath, from this sad bosome sent,
Without thy pittie, be but vainely spent.

73

When in the tumult, with the sudden fright,
Whilst ev'ry one for safetie sought about,
And none regarded to maintaine the light,
Which being over-wasted, was gone out,
It being then the mid time of the night,
Ere they could quit the castle of the rout;
The Queene alone (at least, if any neare)
They were her women, almost dead with feare.

THE BARONS WARRES

74

When horror, darkenesse, and her inward woe,
Began to worke on her afflicted mind,
Upon her weakenesse tyrannizing so,
As they would doe their utmost, in their kind,
And as then those, she need no other foe,
Such power her fortune had to them assigned,
To racke her conscience (by their torture due)
It selfe t'accuse of whatsoe'r it knew.

75

O God! (thought she) is yet an houre scarce past,
Since that my greatnesse, my command more hie,
And eminencie, wherein I was plac'd,
Wan me respect in ev'ry humble eye?
How am I now abused, how disgraced?
Did ever Queene in my dejection lye?
These things she pond'red, as despaire still brought
Their sundry formes into her troubled thought.

76

To London thus they March a prisoner led,
Which there had oft been courted by the Queene,
From whom, his friends and his late followers fled,
Of many a gallant follow'd that had been,
Of which, there was not one durst shew his head,
Much lesse t'abet his side, that durst be seene;
Which at his fall made them to wonder more,
Who saw the pompe wherein he liv'd before.

77

O miserie! where once thou art possest,
See but how quickly thou canst alter kind,
And like a Circe, metamorphosest
The man, that hath not a most god-like mind:

THE BARONS WARRES

The fainting spirit, O how thou canst infest!
Whose yeelding frayltie eas'ly thou canst find,
And by thy vicious presence, with a breath
Gives him up fett'red, basely fear'd to death.

78

When soone the King a Parlament decreed,
(Ne'r till that time sole master of his crowne)
And against March doth legally proceed,
Fitted with tooles to digge that mountaine downe,
To which, both high and low tooke spsciall heed;
He ne'r had fawne, but then he had a frowne,
King Edwards bloud, with both the Spensers,call
For vengeance on him, by the voice of all.

79

With deare Kents death, his credit next they blot,
Then on him lay the wards and liveries,
Which he by craft into his hands had got,
The summes then seized to his treasuries:
Then Joan the Princesse, married to the Scot,
The signe at Stanhope, to the enemies;
With all things ripp'd from the records of time,
That any way might aggravate his crime.

80

O dire revenge! when thou by time art rak'd
Out of the ashes which have hid thee long,
(Wherein thou lay'st, as thou hadst quite been slak'd)
And becom'st kindled with the breath of wrong,
How soone thy hideous furie is awak'd?
From thy poore sparks, what flames are quickly
sprung?
To waste their tops, how soone do'st thou aspire,
Whose weight and greatnesse once repress thy fire?

THE BARONS WARRES

81

And what avayl'd his answer in that case?
Which the time then did utterly distaste,
And look'd upon him with so sterne a face,
As it his actions utterly disgrac'd:
No friendly bosome gave him any place,
Who was cleane out of all opinion cast;
Taking his pen, his sorrowes to deceive,
Thus of the Queene he lastly took his leave.

82

Bright Empresse, yet be pleased to peruse
The swan-like dirges of a dying man,
Although not like the raptures of a Muse,
In our fresh youth, when our love first began,
Into my brest that did the fire infuse,
That glorious day, that I thy rich glove wan,
And in my course, a flame of lightning bet
Out of proud Harfords high-plum'd burgonet.

83

As for your sonne, that hast'neth on my death,
Madame, you know, I lov'd him as mine owne,
And when I could have grasped out his breath,
I set him eas'ly on his fathers throne;
Which now his power too quickly witnesseth,
Who to this height in tyrannic is growne;
But yet, be his ingratitude forgiven,
As after death, I wish to be in Heaven.

84

And for the sole rule, whereon so he stands,
Came bastard William but himselfe to shore?
Or had he not our fathers valiant hands,
Who in that field our ancient ensigne bore,

438

THE BARONS WARRES

(Guarded about with our well-order'd bands)
Which then his leopards for their safetie wore,
Looking at Hastings like that ominous lake,
From whose black depths our glorious name we
take?

85

Why fell I not from that my all-arm'd horse,
On which I rode before the gates of Gaunt,
Before the Belgick and Burgonian force,
There challenging their countries combatant;
Cast from my seat, in some robustious course,
That they of me the victorie might vaunt?
Why sunke I not under my batt'red shield,
To grace a brave foe, and renowne a field?

86

Yet never serv'd I fortune like a slave,
Nor have, through basenesse, made her bounties
lesse,
In me her judgement poorely to deprave;
Nought hath she lent me, that He not confesse,
Nay, interest for her principall I gave,
My mind hath suted with her mightinesse;
Her frownes with scorne, and Mortimer doth beare,
For nothing can she doe, that he can feare.

87

That ne'r quayles me, at which your greatest quake,
Nor ought that's dreadfull, danger me can show,
Through sword and fire so us'd my way to take:
In death what can be (that I doe not know)
That I should feare a covenant to make
With it, which welcom'd, finisheth my woe?
'And nothing can th'afflicted conscience grieve,
'But He may pardon, who can all forgive.

439

THE BARONS WARRES

88

And thus, thou most adored in my heart,
The thoughts of whom, my humbled spirit doth rayse,
Lady most faire, most deare, of most desert,
Worthie of more then any mortall prayse.
Condemned March thus lastly doth depart,
From the great'st Empresse living in her dayes;
Nor with my dust mine honour I interre:
Caesar thus dy'd, and thus dies Mortimer.

89

When secretly he sent this letter to her,
Whose superscription, was her princely stile;
She knew the hand, and thought it came to woo her,
With which conceit she pleas'd her selfe a while,
Then which, no one thing serv'd so t'undo her,
By feeding her with flatt'rie and with guile,
To make her still more sensible of paine,
Which her sad heart was shortly to sustaine.

90

Using her fingers to up-rip the seale,
Which holpe to hide these ill newes from her eyes,
Loth as it were, such tidings to reveale,
As might her senses suddenly surprize;
But when her white hand did so hardly deale
With the poore paper, that the wax must rise,
It strucke upon her fingers bloudie red,
As to portend some deare bloud should be shed,

91

When by degrees she eas'ly doth begin,
And as a fish playes with a bayted hooke,
So softly yet she swallow'd sorrow in,
Till she her bane into her bowels tooke;

THE BARONS WARRES

And then she sees th'expences of her smne
Sadly set downe in that blacke doomes-day booke,
And the deare summes that were to be defray'd,
Before the debt were absolutely pay'd.

92

Whole hoasts of sorrowes her sicke heart assayle,
When ev'ry letter lanc'd her like a dart,
Striving against her, which should most prevayle,
And yet not one, but prick'd her to the heart;
Where one word might anothers woe bewayle,
And with its neighbour seem'd to beare a part,
Each line serv'd for so true a text to her,
As in her woes would no way let her erre.

93

Griefe bad her looke, yet soone it bad her leave,
Wherewith o'rcharg'd, she neither sees nor heares,
Her useful'st senses soonest her deceive,
The sight shuts up her eyes, the sound her eares,
And of her reading doe her quite bereave,
When for a fescue she doth use 'her teares,
Which, when some line she loosely over-past,
The drops could tell her, where she left the last.

94

Somewhat at length recovering of her sight,
Deepely she curs'd her sorrow-seeing eye,
And sayd, she was deluded by the light,
Or was abus'd by the orthographie,
Or some one had devised it in spight,
Poynting it false, her scholarship to trie;
'Thus when we fondly flatter our desires,
'Our best conceits doe prove the greatest lyers.

THE BARONS WARRES

95

Her trembling hand, as in a fever, quakes,
Wherewith the paper doth a little stirre,
Which she imagines at her sorrow shakes,
And pitties it, which she thinkes pitties her;
Each small thing somewhat to the greater makes,
And to her humor something doth inferre;
Her woe-ty'd tongue but when she once could free:
Sweet Mortimer, my most-lov'd Lord (quoth she)

96

For thy deare ashes be my brest the urne,
Which as a relique, I of thee will save,
Mix'd with the teares that I for thee shall mourne,
Which in this bosome shall their buriall have;
Out of which place, they never shall returne,
Nor give the honour to another grave,
But here, as in a temple, be preserv'd,
Wherein thy image is most lively carv'd.

97

Then breakes she out, in cursing of her sonne,
But Mortimer so runneth in her mind,
As that shee ended, ere she had begun,
Speaking before, what should have come behind:
From that, she to another course doth runne,
To be reveng'd in some notorious kind,
By stab, or poyson; and shee'le sweare to both,
But for her life she could not find an oath.

98

She pen and paper takes, and makes no doubt,
But the Kings cruell dealing to discover;
But soone forgetting what she went about,
Poore Queene, she fell to scribbling to her lover:

THE BARONS WARRES

Here she put in, and there she blotted out,
Her passion did so violently move her,
That turning backe to read what she had writ,
She tore the paper, and condemn'd her wit.

99

But from her passion being somewhat rays'd,
Like one that lately had been in a swound,
Or felt some strange extremitie appeas'd,
That had been taken from some blow, or wound,
Yet on that part it had so strongly seiz'd,
That for the same no remedie was found;
But at the very point their life to lose,
As they their goods, she doth her grieve dispose.

100

Quoth she, King Edward, as thou art my sonne,
Leaving the world, this legacie I leave thee:
My hearts true love, my Mortimer hath wonne,
And yet of all he shall not so bereave thee;
But for this mischief to thy mother done,
Take thou my curse, so that it may out-live thee,
That as thy deed doth dayly me torment,
So may my curse thee, by my testament.

101

And henceforth, in this solitarie place,
Ever residing from the publique sight,
A private life I willingly imbrace,
No more rejoycing in the obvious light,
To consummate this too-long ling'ring space,
Till death inclose me in continual! night;
Let never sleepe more close my wearied eye,
So Isabella, lay thee downe, and dye.

The end of the sixth Canto

ENGLANDS
HEROICALL EPISTLES

*The Epistle of Rosamond
to King Henry the
Second*

The Argument

HENRY the Second keepeth (with much care)
Lord Cliffords daughter, Rosamond the faire;
And whilst his sonnes doe Normandie invade,
He forc'd to France, with wond'rous cost had made
A Labyrinth in Woodstock, where unseene 5
His Love might lodge safe, from his jealous Queene:
Yet when he stay'd beyond his time abroad,
Her pensive brest, his darling to unload,
In this Epistle doth her grieve complaine;
And his rescription tells her his againe. 10

If yet thine eyes (great Henry) may endure
These tainted lines, drawne with a hand impure,
(Which faine would blush, but feare keeps blushes
backe,

And therefore suted in despairing blacke)
Let me for loves sake their acceptance crave, 5
But that sweet name (vile) I prophaned have;
Punish my fault, or pittie mine estate,
Reade them for love, if not for love, for hate.

If with my shame thine eyes thou faine would'st
feede,

Here let them surfet, of my shame to reade: 10
This scribbled paper which I send to thee,
If noted rightly, doth resemble mee:
As this pure ground, whereon these letters stand,
So pure was I, ere stayned by thy hand;
Ere I was blotted with this foule offence, 15
So cleere and spotlesse was mine innocence:

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Now, like these markes which taint this hatefull
 scroule,
 Such the blacke sinnes which spot my leprous soule.
 What, by this conquest, canst thou hope to winne,
 Where thy best spoyle, is but the act of smne? 20
 Why on my name this slander do'st thou bring,
 To make my fault renowned by a King?
 Tame never stoopes to things, but meane and poore,
 'The more our greatnesse, our fault is the more;
 'Lights on the ground, themselves doe lessen farre, 25
 'But in the ayre, each small sparke seemes a starre.
 Why, on my woman-frayltie should'st thou lay
 So strong a plot, mine honour to betray?
 Or thy unlawfull pleasure should'st thou buy,
 Both with thine owne shame, and my infamie? 30
 'Twas not my minde consented to this ill,
 Then had I beene transported by my will;
 For, what my bodie was mforc'd to doe,
 (Heaven knowes) my soule yet ne'r consented to:
 For, through mine eyes had she her liking seene, 35
 Such as my love, such had my lover beene.
 'True love is simple, like his mother truth,
 'Kindly affection, youth to love with youth;
 'No greater corsive to our blooming yeeres,
 'Then the cold badge of winter-blasted hayres. 40
 'Thy kingly power makes to withstand thy foes,
 'But cannot keepe backe age, with time it growes;
 'Though honour our ambitious sex doth please,
 'Yet in that honour, age a foule disease:
 'Nature hath her free course in all, and then 45
 'Age is alike, in Kings, and other men.
 Which all the world will to my shame impute,
 That I, my selfe did basely prostitute;
 And say, that gold was fuell to the fire,
 Gray hayres in youth not kindling greene desire. 50
 O no; that wicked woman, wrought by thee,
 My tempter was to that forbidden tree;

ROSAMOND AND HENRY II

That subtill serpent, that seducing devill,
 Which bad me taste the fruit of good and evill;
 That Circe, by whose magicke I was charm'd, 55
 And to this monstrous shape am thus transformed;
 That vip'rous hag, the foe to her owne kind,
 That divellish spirit, to damne the weaker mind;
 Our fraylties plague, our sexes onely curse,
 Hells deep'st damnation, the worst evils worse. 60

But Henry, how canst thou affect me thus,
 T'whom thy remembrance now is odious?
 My haplesse name, with Henries name I found,
 Cut in the glasse with Henries diamond;
 That glasse from thence faine would I take away, 65
 But then I feare the ayre would me betray;
 Then doe I strive to wash it out with teares,
 But then the same more evident appears.
 Then doe I cover it with my guiltie hand,
 Which that names witnesse doth against me stand; 70
 Once did I sinne, which memorie doth cherish,
 Once I offended, but I ever perish.

'What griefe can be, but time doth make it lesse?
 'But infamie, time never can suppressse.
 Sometimes, to passe the tedious irkesome houres, 75
 I climbe the top of Woodstocks mounting towres,
 Where, in a turret, secretly I lye,
 To view from farre such as doe travell by;
 Whither (me thinkes) all cast their eyes at mee,
 As through the stones my shame did make them see,
 And with such hate the harmeslesse walls doe view, 81
 As e'vn to death their eyes would me pursue.

The married women curse my hatefull life,
 Wronging a faire Queene, and a vertuous wife;
 The maidens wish, I buried quicke may die, 85
 And from each place neere my abode, doe flie.
 Well knew'st thou what a monster I would be,
 When thou didst build this Labyrinth for me,
 Whose strange meanders turning ev'ry way

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Be like the course wherein my youth did stray; 90
 Onely a clue doth guide me out and in,
 But yet still walke I circular in sinne.
 As in the gallerie this other day,
 I and my woman past the time away,
 'Mongst many pictures, which were hanging by, 95
 The silly girle at length hapt to espie
 Chaste Lucrece image, and desires to know,
 What shee should be, her selfe that murd' red so?
 Why girle (quoth I) this is that Roman dame;
 Not able then to tell the rest for shame, 100
 My tongue doth mine owne guiltinesse betray;
 With that I sent the prattling wench away,
 Lest when my lipping guiltie tongue should hault,
 My lookes might prove the index to my fault.
 As that life-bloud which from the heart is sent, 105
 In beauties field pitching his crimson tent,
 In lovely sanguine sutes the lillie cheeke,
 Whilst it but for a resting place doth seeke;
 And changing oftentimes with sweet delight,
 Converts the white to red, the red to white; 110
 The blush with palenesse for the place doth strive,
 The palenesse thence the blush would gladly drive;
 Thus in my brest a thousand thoughts I carrie,
 Which in my passion diversly doe varie.
 When as the sunne haies tow'rds the westerne
 slade, 115
 And the trees shadowes hath much taller made,
 Forth goe I to a little current neere,
 Which like a wanton trayle creepes here and there,
 Where, with mine angle casting in my bait,
 The little fishes (dreading the deceit) 120
 With fearefull nibbling flye th'inticing gin,
 By Nature taught what danger lies therein.
 Things reasonlesse, thus warn'd by Nature be,
 Yet I devour'd the bait was layd for me:
 Thinking thereon, and breaking into grones, 125

ROSAMOND AND HENRY II

The bubbling spring, which trips upon the stones,
 Chides me away, lest sitting but too nie,
 I should pollute that native puritie.
Rose of the World, so doth import my name,
Shame of the World, my life hath made the same. 130
 And to th'unchaste this name shall given be,
 Of Rosamond, deriv'd from sinne and me!
 The Cliffords take from me that Name of theirs,
 Which hath beene famous for so many yeeres:
 They blot my birth with hateful bastardie, 135
 That I sprang not from their nobilitie;
 They my alliance utterly refuse,
 Nor will a strumpet shall their name abuse.

Here, in the garden, wrought by curious hands,
 Naked Diana in the fountaine stands, 140
 With all her nymphes got round about to hide her,
 As when Acteon had by chance espy'd her:
 This sacred image I no sooner view'd,
 But as that metamorphos'd man, pursu'd
 By his owne hounds; so, by my thoughts am I, 145
 Which chase me still, which way soe'r I flye.
 Touching the grasse, the honey-dropping dew,
 Which falls in teares before my limber shoo,
 Upon my foot consumes in weeping still,
 As it would say, Why went'st thou to this ill? 150
 Thus, to no place in safetie can I goe,
 But every thing doth give me cause of woe.

In that faire casket, of such wond'rous cost,
 Thou sent'st the night before mine honour lost,
 Amimone was wrought, a harmelesse maid, 155
 By Neptune, that adulterous god, betray'd;
 She prostrate at his feet, begging with prayers,
 Wringing her hands, her eyes swolne up with teares:
 This was not an intrapping bait from thee,
 But by thy vertue gently warning mee, 160
 And to declare for what intent it came,
 Lest I therein should ever keepe my shame.

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

And in this casket (ill I see it now)
 That Joves love 16, turn'd into a cow;
 Yet was she kept with Argus hundred eyes: 165,
 So wakefull still be Juno's jealousies:
 By this I well might have fore-warned beene,
 Thave cleer'd my selfe to thy suspecting Queene,
 Who with more hundred eyes attendeth mee,
 Then had poor Argus single eyes to see. 170
 In this thou rightly imitatetest Jove,
 Into a beast thou hast transform'd thy love;
 Nay, worser farre (beyond their beastly kind)
 A monster both in bodie and in mind.
 The waxen taper which I burne by night, 175
 With the dull vap'rie dimnesse mockes my sight,
 As though the dampe which hinders the cleere flame,
 Came from my breath, in that night of my shame;
 When as it look'd with a darke lowring eye,
 To see the losse of my virginitie. 180
 And if a starre but by the glasse appeare,
 I straight intreat it, not to looke in here;
 I am alreadie hatefull to the light,
 And will it too, betray me to the night?
 Then sith my shame so much belongs to thee, 185
 Rid me of that, by onely murd'ring mee;
 And let it justly to my charge be layd,
 That I thy person meant to have betray'd:
 Thou shalt not need by circumstance t'accuse me,
 If I denie it, let the heavens refuse me. 190
 My life's a blemish, which doth cloud thy name,
 Take it away, and cleare shall shine thy fame:
 Yeeld to my sute, if ever pittie mov'd thee,
 In this shew mercie, as I ever lov'd thee.

ROSAMOND AND HENRY II

Henry to Rosamond

WHEN first the post arrived at my tent,
 And brought the letters Rosamond had sent,
 Thinke from his lips but what deare comfort came,
 When in mine eare he softly breath'd thy name:
 Straight I injoynd him, of thy health to tell, 5
 Longing to heare my Rosamond did well;
 With new enquiries then I cut him short,
 When of the same he gladly would report,
 That with the earnest haste, my tongue oft trips,
 Catching the words halfe spoke, out of his lips: 10
 This told, yet more I urge him to reveale,
 To lose no time, whilst I unrip'd the scale.
 The more I reade, still doe I erre the more,
 As though mistaking somewhat said before:
 Missing the point, the doubtfull sense is broken, 15
 Speaking againe what I before had spoken.

Still in a swoond, my heart revives and faints,
 'Twixt hopes, despaires, 'twixt smiles and deepe
 complaints.

As these sad accents sort in my desires,
 Smooth calmes, rough stormes, sharpe frosts, and
 raging fires, 20
 Put on with boldnesse, and put backe with feares,
 For oft thy troubles doe extort my teares.
 O, how my heart at that blacke line did tremble!
 That blotted paper should thy selfe resemble;
 O, were there paper but neere halfe so white! 25
 The gods thereon their sacred lawes would write
 With pens of angels wings; and for their inke,
 That heavenly nectar, their immortall drinke.

Majestike courage strives to have suppress
 This fearefull passion, stir'd up in my brest; 30
 But still in vaine the same I goe about,
 My heart must breake within, or woes breake out.
 Am I at home pursu'd with private hate,

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

And warre comes raging to my palace gate?
 Is meager envie stabbing at my throne, 35
 Treason attending when I walke alone?
 And am I branded with the curse of Rome,
 And stand condemned by a Councels doome?
 And by the pride of my rebellious sonne,
 Rich Normandie with armies over-rurme? 40
 Fatall my birth, unfortunate my life,
 Unkind my children, most unkind my wife.
 Griefe, cares, old age, suspition to torment me;
 Nothing on earth to quiet or content me;
 So many woes, so many plagues to find, 45
 Sicknesse of bodie, discontent of mind;
 Hopes left, helps reft, life wrong'd, joy interdicted,
 Banish'd, distressed, forsaken, and afflicted.
 Of all reliefe hath fortune quite bereft me?
 Onely my love yet to my comfort left me: 50
 And is one beautie thought so great a thing,
 To mitigate the sorrowes of a King?
 Bar'd of that choice the vulgar often prove;
 Have we, then they, lesse priviledge in love?
 Is it a King the wofull widdow heares? 55
 Is it a King dryes up the orphans teares?
 Is it a King regards the clyents crie?
 Gives life to him, by law condemn'd to die?
 Is it his care the common-wealth that keepes,
 As doth the nurse her babie, whilst it sleepes? 60
 And that poore King of all those hopes prevented,
 Unheard, unhelp'd, unpitti'd, unlamented?
 Yet let me be with povertie opprest,
 Of earthly blessings rob'd, and dis-posstest,
 Let me be scorn'd, rejected, and revil'd, 65
 And from my kingdome let me live exil'd,
 Let the worlds curse upon me still remaine,
 And let the last bring on the first againe;
 All miseries that wretched man may wound,
 Leave for my comfort onely Rosamond. 70

ROSAMOND AND HENRY II

For thee, swift time his speedie course doth stay,
 At thy command, the destinies obay;
 Pittie is dead, that comes not from thine eyes,
 And at thy feet ev'n mercie prostrate lyes.

75

If I were feeble, rheumatike, or cold,
 These were true signes that I were waxed old:
 But I can march all day in massie steele,
 Nor yet my armes unwiely weight doe feele;
 Nor wak'd by night with bruise or bloudie wound,
 The tent my bed, no pillow but the ground:

80

For very age had I layne bedred long,
 One smile of thine, againe could make me yong.
 Were there in art a power but so divine,
 As is in that sweet angell-tongue of thine,
 That great enchantresse, which once tooke such
 paines,

85

To put young bloud into old bisons veines,
 And in groves, mountaines, and the moorish fen,
 Sought out more hearbes then had been knowne to
 men,
 And in the pow'rfull potion that she makes,
 But bloud of men, of birds, of beasts, and snakes;

90

Never had needed to have gone so farre,
 To seeke the soyles where all those simples are;
 One accent from thy lips the bloud more warmes,
 Then all her philters, exorcismes, and charmes.
 Thy presence hath repaired in one day,

95

What many yeeres with sorrowes did decay,
 And made fresh beautie in her flower to spring,
 Out of the wrinckles of times ruining.
 Ev'n as the hungry winter-starved earth,
 When she by nature labours towards her birth,

100

Still as the day upon the darke world creepes,
 One blossome forth after another peepes,
 Till the small flower, whose root (at last) unbound,
 Gets from the frostie prison of the ground,
 Spreading the leaves unto the pow'rfull noone,

105

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Deck'd in fresh colours, smiles upon the sunne.

Never unquiet care lodg'd in that brest,
 Where but one thought of Rosamond did rest;
 Nor thirst, nor travaile, which on warre attend,
 Ere brought the long day to desired end; 110
 Nor yet did pale feare, or leane famine live,
 Where hope of thee did any comfort give:

Ah, what injustice then is this of thee,
 That thus the guiltlesse do'st condemne for me?
 When onely she (by meanes of my offence) 115
 Redeemes thy purenesse, and thy innocence,
 When to our wills perforce obey they must,
 That's just in them, what ere in us unjust,
 Of what we doe, not them account we make;
 The fault craves pardon for th'offendors sake: 120
 'And what to worke, a Princes will may merit,
 'Hath deep'st impression in the gentlest spirit.

If't be my name, that doth thee so offend,
 No more my selfe shall be mine owne names friend;
 If it be that, which thou do'st onely hate, 125
 That name, in my name, lastly hath his date;
 Say 'tis accurst, and fatall, and dispraise it,
 If written, blot it, if engraven, raze it;
 Say, that of all names 'tis a name of woe,
 Once a Kings name, but now it is not so: 130
 And when all this is done, I know 'twill grieve thee;
 And therefore (sweet) why should I now beleeve thee?

Nor shouldst thou thinke, those eyes with envie
 lowre,
 Which passing by thee, gaze up to thy towre;
 But rather prayse thine owne, which be so cleere, 135
 Which from the turret like two starres appeare:
 Above, the sunne doth shine, beneath, thine eye,
 Mocking the heav'n, to make another skye.

The little streame which by thy tow'r doth glide,
 Where oft thou spend'st the wearie ev'ning tide, 140
 To view thee well, his course would gladly stay,

ROSAMOND AND HENRY II

As loth from thee to part so soone away,
 And with salutes thy selfe would gladly greet,
 And offer up some small drops at thy feet;
 But finding, that the envious bankes restraine it, 145
 T'excuse it selfe, doth in this sort complaine it,
 And therefore this sad bubbling murmure keepes,
 And for thy want, within the channel I weepes.
 And as thou do'st into the water looke,
 The fish which see thy shaddow in the brooke, 150
 Forget to feede, and all amazed lye,
 So daunted with the lustre of thine eye.

And that sweet name, which thou so much do'st
 wrong,

In time shall be some famous poets song;
 And with the very sweetnesse of that name, 155
 Lyons and tygers men shall learne to tame.
 The carefull mother, at her pensive brest,
 With Rosamond shall bring her babe to rest;
 The little birds (by mens continuall sound)
 Shall learne to speake, and prattle Rosamond: 160
 And when in Aprill they begin to sing,
 With Rosamond shall welcome in the spring;
 And she in whom all rarities are found,
 Shall still be said to be a Rosamond.

The little flowers dropping their honied dew, 165
 Which (as thou writ'st) doe weepe upon thy shoo,
 Not for thy fault (sweet Rosamond) doe moane,
 Onely lament, that thou so soone art gone;
 For if thy foot touch hemlocke as it goes,
 That hemlock's made more sweeter then the rose. 170

Of Jove, or Neptune, how they did betray,
 Speake not; of Io, or Amimone,
 When she, for whom Jove once became a bull
 Compar'd with thee, had beene a tawnie trull;
 He a white bull, and she a whiter cow, 175
 Yet he nor she neere halfe so white as thou.

Long since (thou know'st) my care provided for

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

To lodge thee safe from jealous Ellinor;
 The Labyrinths conveyance guides thee so,
 (Which onely Vaughan, thou, and I doe know) 180
 If she doe guard thee with an hundred eyes,
 I have an hundred subtill Mercuries,
 To watch that Argus which my love doth keepe,
 Untill eye, after eye, fall all to sleepe. 184
 And those starres which looke in, but looke to see,
 (Wond'ring) what starre here on the earth should be;
 As oft the moone, amidst the silent night,
 Hath come to joy us with her friendly light,
 And by the curtaine help'd mine eye to see
 What envious night and darkenesse hid from me; 190
 When I have wish'd, that she might ever stay,
 And other worlds might still enjoy the day.
 What should I say? words, teares, and sighes be
 spent,
 And want of time doth further helpe prevent;
 My campe resounds with fearefull shockes of warre,
 Yet in my brest more dang'rous conflicts are; 196
 Yet is my signall to the battels sound,
 The blessed name of beautious Rosamond.
 Accursed be that heart, that tongue, that breath,
 Should thinke, should speake, or whisper of thy
 death; 200
 For in one smile, or lowre from thy sweet eye,
 Consists my life, my hope, my victorie.
 Sweet Woodstock, where my Rosamond doth rest,
 Be blest in her, in whom thy King is blest:
 For though in France a while my body bee, 205
 My heart remaines (deare paradise) in thee.

Elinor Cobham to Duke Humphrey

The Argument

WISE Humphrey, Duke of Gloster, nam'd the
 Good,
 Next to his nephew, of the royall blood,
 (Henry the sixt then being very yong)
 Chosen Protector: by ambition strong
 Whose Duchesse Elinor, violently led, 5
 To thinke the Crowne theirs, were yong Henry
 dead,
 Convicted was, with sorcerers to conspire,
 Which practised to hasten her desire:
 For which, she her thrice-penance was assign'd;
 To th'Ile of Man and afterwards confined: 10
 From whence, she writes this letter to her Lord,
 Who that sad Lady doth the like afford.

Me thinks, not knowing who these lines should send,
 Thou straight turn'st over to the latter end;
 Where, thou my name no sooner hast espy'd,
 But in disdain my letter casts aside:
 Why, if thou wilt, I will my selfe deny, 5
 Nay, I'll affirme and swear, I am not I;
 Or, if in that thy shame thou do'st perceive,
 Lo, for thy deare sake, I my name will leave.
 And yet, me thinkes, amaz'd thou shouldst not stand,
 Nor seeme so much appalled at my hand; 10
 For my misfortunes have inur'd thine eye,
 (Long before this) to sights of miserie:
 No, no, reade on, 'tis I, the very same,
 All thou canst reade, is but to reade my shame.
 Be not dismay'd, nor let my name affright, 15
 The worst it can, is but t'offend thy sight;
 It cannot wound, nor doe thee deadly harme,
 It is no dreadfull spell, no magick charme;

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

If she that sent it, love Duke Humphrey so,
 Is't possible her name should be his foe? 20
 Yes, I am El'nor, I am very shee,
 Who brought for dower a virgins bed to thee;
 Though envious Beuford slander'd me before,
 To be Duke Humphreyes wanton paramour.
 And though indeed I can it not deny, 25
 To magick once I did my selfe apply;
 I wonne thee not, as there be many thinke,
 With poyss'mng philters, and bewitching dnnke;
 Nor on thy person did I ever prove
 Those wicked potions, so procuring love. 30

I cannot boast, to be rich Hollands heire,
 Nor of the bloud and greatnesse of Baveire;
 Yet El'nor brought no forraine armies in,
 To fetch her backe, as did thy Jacomin;
 Nor clam'rous husband followed me that fled, 35
 Exclayming, Humphrey to defile his bed;
 Nor wast thou forc'd, the slander to suppress,
 To send me backe as an adulteresse:
 Brabant, nor Burgoyne, claymed me by force,
 Nor su'd to Rome, to hasten my divorce; 40
 Nor Belgians pompe, defac'd with Belgia's fire.
 The just reward of her unjust desire:
 Nor Bedfords spouse, your noble sister Anne,
 That princely-issued great Burgonian,
 Need stand with me, to move a womans strife, 45
 To yeeld the place to the Protectors wife;
 If Cobhams name my birth can dignifie,
 Or Sterborough renowne my family.

Where's Greenwich now, thy El'nors Court of late,
 Where she with Humphrey held a princely state? 50
 That pleasant Kent, when I abroad should ride,
 That to my pleasure laid forth all her pride?
 The Thames, by water when I took the ayre,
 That danc'd my barge, in lanching from the stayre?
 The anchoring ships, which when I pass'd the road,

ELINOR COBHAM AND DUKE HUMPHREY

Were wont to hang their chequ'ed tops abroad?
 How could it be, those that were wont to stand
 To see my pomps, so goddesse-like to land,
 Should after see me mayl'd up in a sheet,
 Doe shamefull penance three times in the street? 60
 Rung with a bell, a tapsr in my hand,
 Bare-foot to trudge before a beadles wand;
 That little babes, not having use of tongue,
 Stood pointing at me, as I came along.

Where then was Humphrey, where was his
 command? 65

Was thou not Lord Protector of the land?
 Or for thy justice, who could thee denie
 The title of the good Duke Humphrey?
 What bloud, extract from famous Edwards line,
 Could boast it selfe to be so pure as thins? 70
 Who else, next Henry, should the realms preferre,
 If it allow the line of Lancaster?

But Rayners daughter must from France be fet,
 And with a vengeance on our throne be set;
 Mauns, Maine, and Anjou, on that begger cast, 75
 To bring her horns to England in such haste:
 And what for Henry thou hadst laboured there,
 To joyne the King with Armmack's rich heire,
 Must all be dash'd, as no such thing had beene.
 Poole needs must have his darling made a Queene, 80
 How should he with our Princes else be plac'd,
 To have his Earleship with a Dukedoms grac'd;
 And rayne the off-spring of his bloud so hie,
 As Lords of us and our posteritie?

O, that by sea when he to France was sent, 85
 The ship had sunke, wherein the traytor went;
 Or that the sands had swallow'd her, before
 She e'r set foot upon the English shore!
 But all is well, nay, we have store to give,
 What need we more, we by her lookes can live: 90
 All that great Henry by his conquests heapt,

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

And famous Bedford to his glorie kept,
 Is given backe to Rayner all in post;
 And by this meanes, rich Normandie is lost.

Those who have come as mistresses of ours, 95
 Have into England brought their goodly dow'rs,
 Which to our coffers yeerely tribute brings,
 The life of subjects, and the strength of Kings;
 The meanes whereby faire England ever might
 Rayse power in France, to backe her ancient right:
 But she brings ruine here to make abroad, 101
 And cancels all our lawfull clayme abroad;
 And she must recapitulate my shame,
 And give a thousand by-words to my name,
 And call me, beldam, gib, witch, night-mare, trot,
 With all despight that may a woman spot. 106

O, that I were a witch but for her sake!
 Yfaith her Queeneship little rest should take;
 I would scratch that face, that may not feele the ayre,
 And knit whole ropes of witch-knots in her hayre:
 O, I would hag her nightly in her bed, 111
 And on her brest sit like a lumpe of lead,
 And like a fairie pinch that daintie skin,
 Her wanton bloud is now so cocker'd in;
 Or take me some such knowne familiar shape, 115
 As she my vengeance never should escape.
 Were I a garment, none should need the more
 To sprinkle me with Nessus poys'ned gore;
 It were ynough, if she once put me on,
 To teare boh flesh and sinewes from the bone: 120
 Were I a flower, that might her smell delight,
 Though I were not the poys'ning aconite,
 I would send such a fume into her brow,
 Should make her mad, as mad as I am now.

They say, the Druides once liv'd in this ile, 125
 This fatall Man, the place of my exile,
 Whose pow'rfull charmes such dreadfull wonders
 wrought,

ELINOR COBHAM AND DUKE HUMPHREY

Which in the Gotish Island tongue were taught;
 O, that their spels to me they had resign'd,
 Wherewith they rays'd and calm'd both sea and
 wind! 130
 And made the moone pawse in her paled sphere,
 Whilst her grim dragons drew them through the ayre:
 Their hellish power, to kill the plow-mans seed,
 Or to fore-speake whole flocks, as they did feed;
 To nurse a damned spirit with humane bloud, 135
 To carry them through earth, ayre, fire, and fload:
 Had I this skill, that time hath almost lost,
 How like a goblin I would haunt her ghost?
 O pardon, pardon my mis-govern'd tongue,
 A womans strength cannot endure my wrong. 140
 Did not the heavens her comming in withstand,
 As though affrighted, when she came to land?
 The earth did quake, her comming to abide,
 The goodly Thames did twice keepe backe his tide,
 Pauls shooke with tempests, and that mounting spire,
 With lightning sent from heav'n, was set on fire; 146
 Our stately buildings to the ground were blowne,
 Her pride by these prodigious signes were showne;
 More fearefull visions on the English earth,
 Then ever were at any death, or birth. 150
 Ah Humfrey, Humfrey, if I should not speake,
 My brest would split, my very heart would breake.
 I, that was wont so many to command,
 Worse now then with a clap-dish in my hand;
 A simple mantle covering me withall, 155
 The very'st leper, of Cares Hospital;
 That from my state a presence held in awe,
 Glad here to kennell in a pad of straw;
 And like an owle, by night to goe abroad,
 Roosted all day within an ivy tod, 160
 Among the sea-cliffes, in the dampie caves,
 In charnell-houses, fit to dwell in graves.

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Saw'st thou those eyes, in whose sweet cheerefull
looke

Duke Humphrey once such joy and pleasure tooke,
Sorrow hath so despoyl'd them of all grace, 165

Thou couldst not say, this was my El'nors face:
Like a foule gorgon, whose dishevel'd hayre
With every blast flyes glaring in the ayre;
Some standing up like homes upon my head,
Even like those women that in Coos are bred: 170

My lanke brests hang like bladders left unblowne,
My skin with lothsome jaundize over-growne;
So pin'd away, that if thou long'st to see
Ruines true picture, onely looke on mee.
Sometime, in thinking of what I have had, 175

I from a sudden extasie grow mad:
Then, like a bedlam, forth thy El'nor runnes,
Like one of Bacchus raging frantike nunnes;
Or like a Tartar, when in strange disguise,
Prepared unto a dismall sacrifice. 180

That prelate Beauford, a foule ill befall him,
Prelate said I! nay, devill I should call him:
Ah God forgive me, if I thinke amisse,
His very name, me thinkes, my poyson is:
Ah that vile Judas, our professed foe, 185

My curse pursue him, wheresoe'r he goe;
That to my judgement, when I did appeare,
Laid to my charge those things that never were:
That I should know of Bullenbrookes intents,
The hallowing of his magicke instruments; 190

That I procured Southwell to assist,
Which was by order consecrate a priest;
That it was I should cover all they did,
Which but for him had to this day beene hid.
Ah that vile bastard, that himselfe dare vaunt, 195

To be the sonne of thy brave grandsire Gaunt,
Whom he but father'd of meere charitie,
To rid his mother of that infamie;

ELINOR COBHAM AND DUKE HUMPHREY

Who, if report of elder times be true,
Yet to this day his father never knew. 200
He that by murthers blacke and odious crime,
To Henries throne attempted once to clime,
Having procured by hope of golden gaine,
A fatall hand his soveraigne to have slaine;
Whom to his chamber closely he convay'd, 205
And for that purpose fitly there had layd;
Upon whose sword that famous Prince had dy'd,
If by a dogge he had not beene descry'd.

But now the Queene, her minion Poole, and he,
As it please them, ev'n so must all things be; 210
England's no place for any one beside;
All is too little to maintame their pride.
What, of a King, hath Henry, but the name;
And now scarce that, so publike his defame?
And I pray God, I doe not live the day, 215
To see his ruine, and the realmes decay:
And yet as sure as Humphrey seemes to stand,
He be preserved from that vile traytors hand.
From Glosters seat I would thou wert estrang'd,
Or would to God that Dukedomes name were
chang'd, 220
For it portends some after-ill to us;
Ah Humphrey, Humphrey, it is ominous:
Yet rather then thy hap so hard should be,
I would thou wert here banished with me.
Humphrey adiew, farewell true noble Lord, 225
My wish is all thy EFnor can afford.

Duke Humphrey to Elinor Cobham

ME THINKES thou shouldst not doubt, I could forget
Her, whom so many doe remember yet;
'No, no, our joyes away like shadowes slide,
'But sorrowes firme in memorie abide;

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Nay, I durst answer, thou do'st nothing lesse, 5
 But into passion, urg'd by thy distresse:
 No El'nor, no, thy woes, thy griefe, thy wrong,
 Have in my brest beene resident too long.

Oh, when report in ev'ry place had spread,
 My El'nor was to sanctuane fled, 10
 With cursed Onley, and the witch of Eye,
 As guiltie of their vile conspiracie;
 The dreadfull spirits when they did invoke,
 For the succession, and the realmes estate;
 When Henries image they in waxe had wrought, 15
 By which he should have to his death beene brought;
 That as his picture did consume away,
 His person so by sicknesse should decay:
 Griefe, that before could ne'r my thoughts controule,
 That instant tooke possession of my soule. 20

Ah, would to God I could forget thine ill!
 As for mine owne, let that inflict me still;
 But that before hath taken too sure hold:
 Forget it, said I? would to God I could.
 Of any woe, if thou hast but one part, 25
 I have the whole remaining in my heart;
 I have no need, of others cares to borrow,
 For all I have, is nothing else but sorrow.
 No, my sweet Nell, thou took'st not all away,
 Though thou went'st hence, here still thy woes doe
 stay; 30
 Though from thy husband thou wert forc'd to goe,
 Those still remaine, they will not leave him so:
 No eye bewayles my ill, moanes thy distresse,
 Our griefe's the more, but yet our debt the lesse;
 We owe no teares, no mourning dayes are kept, 35
 For those that yet for us have never wept;
 We hold no obiits, no sad exequies,
 Upon the death-dayes of unweeping eyes.

Alas, good Nell, what should thy patience move,
 T'upbraid thy kind Lord with a forraine love? 40

ELINOR COBHAM AND DUKE HUMPHREY

Thou might'st have bid all former ills adue,
 Forgot the old, we have such store of new.
 Did I omit thy love to entertaine,
 With mutuall griefe to answeere griefe againe? 45
 Or think'st thou, I unkindly did forbear
 To bandie woe for woe, and teare for teare?
 Did I forget, or carelessly neglect
 Those shewes of love, that ladies so respect?
 In mournefull blacke was I not seene to goe,
 By outward signes t'expresse my inward woe? 50
 Did I thy losse not publicquely lament,
 Nor by my lookes bewray'd my discontent?
 Is this the cause? If this be it, know then,
 'One griefe conceal'd, more grievous is then ten:
 If in my brest those sorrowes sometimes were, 55
 And never utt'red, they must still be there;
 And if thou know'st, they many were before,
 By time encreasing, they must needs be more.
 England to me can challenge nothing lent,
 Let her cast up what is received, what spent; 60
 If I her owne, can she from blame be free,
 If she but prove a step-mother to mee?
 That if I should with that proud bastard strive,
 To plead for birth-right my prerogative,
 Be that allow'd, I should not need to feare it, 65
 For then my true nobilitie should beare it:
 If counseil ayd, that France will tell (I know)
 Whose townes lye waste before the English foe,
 When thrice we gave the conquer'd French the foile
 At Agincourt, at Cravant, and Vernoyle: 70
 If faith availe, these armes did Henry hold,
 To clayme his Crowne, yet scarsely nine months old:
 If countries care have leave to speake for me,
 Gray hayres in youth my wisse then may be:
 If peoples tongues give splendour to my fame, 75
 They adde a title to Duke Humphrey's name:
 If toyle at home, French treason, English hate,

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Shall tell my skill in managing the state,
 If forraine travell my successe may try,
 Then Flanders, Almaine, Boheme, Burgundie. 80
 That robe of Rome proud Beauford now doth weare,
 In every place such sway should never beare:
 The crosier staffe in his imperious hand,
 To be the scepter that controules the land;
 That home to England, dispensations drawes, 85
 Which are of power to abrogate our lawes;
 And for these summes the wealthie Church should
 Pay,
 Upon the needie comminalltie to lay:
 His ghostly counsels onely doe advise,
 The meanes how Langleyes progenie may rise, 90
 Pathing young Henries unadvised wayes,
 A Duke of Yorke from Cambridge House to rayse,
 Which after may our title undermine,
 Grafted since Edward, in Gaunts famous line,
 Us of succession falsely to deprive; 95
 Which they from Clarence fainedly derive;
 Knowing the will old Cambridge ever bore,
 To catch the wreathe that famous Henry wore:
 With Gray and Scroope when first he layd the plot,
 From us, and ours, the garland to have got; 100
 As from the March-borne Mortimer to raigne,
 Whose title Glendour stoutly did maintaine,
 When the proud Percies, haughtie March, and hee,
 Had shar'd the land by equal! parts, in three.
 His priesthood now sterne Mowbray will restore, 105
 To stirre the fire that kindled was before;
 Against the Yorkists shall their clayme advance,
 To steele the point of Norfolkes sturdie lance,
 Upon the brest of Harfords issue bent,
 In just revenge of ancient banishment. 110
 He doth advise to let our prisoner goe,
 And doth inlarge the faithlesse Scottish foe,
 Giving our heires in marriage, that their dow'rs

ELINOR COBHAM AND DUKE HUMPHREY

May bring invasion upon us and ours.
 Ambitious Suffolke so the helme doth guide, 115
 With Beaufords damned policies supply'd;
 He and the Queene in counsell still conferre,
 How to rayse him, who hath advanced her.
 But my deare heart, how vainely doe I dreame,
 And flye from thee, whose sorrowes are my theame?
 My love to thee, and England thus divided, 121
 Which hath the most, how hard to be decided?
 Or thou, or that, to censure I am loth,
 So neere are you, so deare unto me both;
 'Twixt that and thee, for equall love I find, 125
 England ingratefull, and my EFnor kind.
 But though my countrey justly I reprove,
 Yet I for that, neglected have my love;
 Neverthesse, thy Humfrey's to thee now,
 As when fresh beautie triumphed on thy brow; 130
 As when thy graces I admired most,
 Or of thy favours might the frankly'st boast:
 Those beauties were so infinite before,
 That in abundance I was onely poore;
 Of which, though time hath taken some againe, 135
 I aske no more but what doth yet remame.
 Be patient, gentle heart, in thy distresse,
 Thou art a princesse, not a whit the lesse.
 Whilst in these brests we beare about this life,
 I am thy husband, and thou art my wife. 140
 Cast not thine eye on such as mounted be,
 But looke on those cast downe as low as we;
 For some of them which proudly perch so hie,
 Ere long shall come as low as thou or I.
 They weepe for joy, and let us laugh in woe, 145
 We shall exchange, when heav'n will have it so;
 We mourne, and they in after-time may mourne,
 Woe past, may once laugh present woe to scorne:
 And worse then hath beene, we can never taste,
 Worse cannot come, then is alreadie past: 150

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

'In all extremes, the onely depth of ill,
Is that which comforts the afflicted still.

Ah would to God thou couldst thy griefes deny,
And on my backe let all the burthen lye!
Or if thou canst resigne, make them mine owne, 155
Both in one carriage to be undergone,
Till we againe our former hopes recover,
And prosperous times blow these misfortunes over;
For in the thought of those fore-passed yeeres,
Some new resemblance of old joy appeares. 160
Mutuall our care, so mutuall be our love,
That our affliction never can remove:
So rest in peace, where peace hath hope to live,
Wishing thee more then I my selfe can give.

*Henry Howard, Earle of Surrey,
to the Lady Geraldine*

The Argument

THE Earle of Surrey, that renowned Lord,
Th'old English glory bravely that restored;
That Prince, and poet (a name more divine)
Falling in love with beautious Geraldine,
Of the Geraldi, which derive their name 5
From Florence: whither, to advance her fame,
He travels, and in publique justs maintayn'd
Her beautie peerelesse, which by armes he gayn'd:
But staying long, faire Italy to see,
To let her know, him constant still to bee, 10
From Tuskany this letter to her writes;
Which her rescription instantly invites.

From learned Florence (long time rich in fame)
From whence thy race, thy noble grandsirs came,

EARLE OF SURREY, AND LADY GERALDINE

To famous England, that kind nurse of mine,
Thy Surrey sends to heav'nly Geraldine:
Yet let not Tuscan thinke I doe it wrong, 5
That I from thence write in my native tongue.
That in these harsh-tun'd cadences I sing,
Sitting so neere the Muses sacred spring;
But rather thinke it selfe adorn'd thereby,
That England reades the prayse of Italy. 10
Though to the Tuscans I the smoothnesse grant,
Our dialect no majestic doth want,
To set thy praises in as high a key,
As France, or Spaine, or Germanic, or they.
What day I quit the Fore-land of faire Kent, 15
And that my ship her course for Flanders bent,
Yet thinke I with how many a heavy looke,
My leave of England and of thee I tooke,
And did intreate the tide (if it might be)
But to convey me one sigh backe to thee. 20
Up to the decke a billow lightly skips,
Taking my sigh, and downe againe it slips;
Into the gulfe, it selfe it headlong throwes,
And as a post to England-ward it goes.
As I sate wondring how the rough seas stird, 25
I might farre off perceive a little bird,
Which as she faine from shore to shore would flie,
Had lost her selfe in the broad vastie skie,
Her feeble wing beginning to deceive her,
The seas of life still gaping to bereave her; 30
Unto the ship she makes, which she discovers,
And there (poore foole) a while for refuge hovers;
And when at length her flagging pinnion failes,
Panting she hangs upon the rattling sailes,
And being forc'd to loose her hold with paine, 35
Yet beaten off, she straight lights on againe,
And tos'd with flawes, with stormes, with wind, with
weather,
Yet still departing thence, stOl turneth thither:

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Now with the poepe, now with the prow doth beare,
 Now on this side, now that, now here, now there; 40
 Me thinks these stormes should be my sad depart;
 The silly helplesse bird is my poore heart,
 The ship, to which for succour it repaires,
 That is your selfe, regardlesse of my cares.
 Of every surge doth fell, or waves doth rise, 45
 To some one thing I sit and moralize.

When for thy love I left the Belgicke shore,
 Divine Erasmus, and our famous Moore,
 Whose happy presence gave me such delight,
 As made a minute of a winters night; 50
 With whom a while I staid at Roterdame,
 Now so renowned by Erasmus name.

Yet every houre did seemc a world of time,
 Till I had scene that sole-reviving clime,
 And thought the foggie Netherlands unfit, 55
 A watry soyle to clogge a fiery wit;

And as that wealthy Germany I past,
 Comming unto the Emperours Court at last,
 Great learn'd Agrippa, so profound in art
 Who the infernall secrets doth impart 60

When of thy health I did desire to know,
 Me in a glasse my Geraldine did show,
 Sicke in thy bed, and for thou could'st not sleepe,
 By a waxe taper set the light to keepe;

I doe remember thou did'st reade that ode, 65
 Sent backe whil'st I in Thanet made abode,
 Where when thou cam'st unto that word of love,
 Even in thine eyes I saw how passion strove;

That snowie lawne which covered thy bed,
 Me thought look'd white, to see thy cheeke so red, 70
 Thy rosie cheeke oft changing in my sight,
 Yet still was red, to see the lawne so white;

The little taper which should give thee light,
 Me thought wax'd dimme, to see thine eye so bright;
 Thine eye againe supply'd the tapers turne, 75

EARLE OF SURREY AND LADY GERALDINE

And with his beames more brightly made it burne,
 The shrugging ayre about thy temples hurles,
 And wrapt thy breath in little clouded curies,
 And as it did ascend, it straight did seaze it,
 And as it sunke, it presently did raise it: 80
 Canst thou by sicknesse banish beautie so?
 Which if put from thee, knowes not where to goe,
 To make her shift, and for her succour seeke,
 To every rivel'd face, each bankrupt cheeke.
 'If health preserv'd, thou beautie still do'st cherish,
 'If that neglected, beautie soone doth perish. 86
 Care drawes on care, woe comforts woe againe,
 Sorrow breeds sorrow, one griefe brings forth twaine:
 If live or die, as thou do'st, so doe I,
 If live, I live, and if thou die, I die, 90
 One heart, one love, one joy, one griefe, one troth,
 One good, one ill, one life, one death to both.
 If Howards bloud thou hold'st as but too vile,
 Or not esteem'st of Norfolk's princely s.tile,
 If Scotlands coate no mark of fame can lend, 95
 That lyon plac'd in our bright silver bend,
 Which as a trophy beautifies our shield,
 Since Scottish bloud discolour'd Floden field;
 When the proud Cheviot our brave ensigne bare,
 As a rich Jewell in a ladyes haire, 100
 And did faire Bramstons neighbouring vallies choke
 With clouds of canons, fire-disgorged smoke,
 Or Surreys Earledome insufficient be,
 And not a dower so well contenting thee;
 Yet am I one of great Apollo's heires, 105
 The sacred Muses challenge me for theirs.
 By princes, my immortall lines are sung,
 My flowing verses grac'd with ev'ry tongue;
 The little children when they learne to goe,
 By painefulFmothers daded to and fro, 110
 Are taught my sugred numbers to rehearse,
 And have their sweet lips season'd with my verse.

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

When heav'n would strive to doe the best it can,
And put an angels spirit into a man,
The utmost pow'r it hath, it then doth spend, 115
When to the world a poet it doth intend.
That little diff'rence 'twixt the gods and us,
(By them confirm'd) distinguish'd onely thus:
Whom they, in birth, ordaine to happy dayes,
The gods commit their glory to our prayse; 120
T'eternall life when they dissolve their breath,
We likewise share a second pow'r by death.

When time shall turne those amber lockes to gray,
My verse againe shall guild and make them gay,
And tricke them up in knotted curies anew, 125
And to thy autumnne give a summers hiew;
That sacred pow'r that in my inke remaines,
Shall put fresh bloud into thy wither'd veines,
And on thy red decay'd. thy whitenesse dead,
Shall set a white, more white, a red, more red: 130
When thy dimme sight thy glasse cannot descry,
Nor thy craz'd mirrour can discernne thine eye;
My verse, to tell th'one what the other was,
Shall represent them both, thine eye and glasse:
Where both thy mirrour and thine eye shall see, 135
What once thou saw'st in that, that saw in thee;
And to them both shall tell the simple truth,
What that in purenesse was, what thou in youth.

If Florence once should lose her old renowne,
As famous Athens, now a fisher-towne; 140
My lines for thee a Florence shall erect,
Which great Apollo ever shall protect,
And with the numbers from my penne that falls,
Bring marble mines, to re-erect those walls.
Nor beautious Stanhope, whom all tongues report
To be the glory of the English Court, 146
Shall by our nation be so much admir'd,
If ever Surrey truely were inspired.
And famous Wyat, who in numbers sings,

EARLE OF SURREY AND LADY GERALDINE

To that enchanting Thracian harpers strings, 150
 To whom Phcebus (the poets god) did drinke
 A bowle of nectar, fill'd up to the brinke;
 And sweet-tongu'd Bryan (whom the Muses kept,
 And in his cradle rockt him whilst he slept)
 In sacred verses (most divinely psn'd) 155
 Upon thy praises ever shall attend.

What time I came into this famous towne,
 And made the cause of my arrivall knowne,
 Great Medices a list (for triumphs) built;
 Within the which, upon a tree of gilt, 160
 (Which was with sundry rare devices set)
 I did erect thy lovely counterfet,
 To answe're those Italian dames desire,
 Which dayly came thy beautie to admire:
 By which, my lion, in his gaping jawes 165
 Held up my lance, and in his dreadfull pawes
 Reacheth my gauntlet unto him that dare
 A beautie with my Geraldines compare.
 Which, when each manly valiant arme assayes,
 After so many brave triumphant dayes, 170
 The glorious prize upon my lance I bare,
 By heralds voyce proclaym'd to be thy share;
 The shiver'd staves, here for thy beautie broke,
 With fierce encounters past at ev'ry shocke,
 When stormie courses answer'd cuffe for cuffe, 175
 Denting proud bevers with the counter-buffe,
 Upon an altar, burnt with holy flame,
 I sacrificed, as incense to thy fame:
 Where, as the Phoenix from her spiced fume
 Renues her selfe, in that she doth consume; 180
 So from these sacred ashes live we both,
 Ev'n as that one Arabian wonder doth.

When to my chamber I my selfe retire,
 Burnt with the sparkes that kindled all this fire,
 Thinking of England, which my hope containes, 185
 The happie ile where Geraldine remaines;

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Of Hunsdon, where those sweet celestiall eyne
 At first did pierce this tender brest of mine;
 Of Hampton Court, and Windsor, where abound
 All pleasures that in paradise were found; 190
 Neere that faire castle is a little grove,
 With hanging rocks all cover'd from above,
 Which on the banke of goodly Thames doth stand,
 dipt by the water from the other land,
 Whose bushie top doth bid the sunne forbéare, 195
 And checks his proud beames, that would enter there;
 Whose leaves still mutt'ring, as the ayre doth breathe,
 With the sweet bubbling of the streame beneath,
 Doth rocke the senses (whilst the small birds sing)
 Lulled asleepe with gentle murmuring; 200
 Where light-foot faynes sport at prison-base,
 (No doubt there is some pow'r frequents the place)
 There the soft poplar and smooth beech doe beare
 Our names together carved ev'ry where,
 And Gordian knots doe curiously entwine 205
 The names of Henry and of Geraldine.
 O, let this grove in happy times to come,
 Be call'd, *The Lovers bless'd Elizium;*
 Whither my mistress wonted to resort,
 In summers heat, in those sweet shades to sport: 210
 A thousand sundry names I have it given,
 And call'd it Wonder-hider, Cover-Heaven,
 The rooffe where beautie her rich court doth keepe,
 Under whose compasse all the starres doe sleepe.
 There is one tree, which now I call to minde, 215
 Doth beare these verses carved in his rinde:
*When Geraldine shall sit in thyfaire shade,
 Fanne her sweet tresses withperfumedaire,
 Let thy large boughes a canopie be made,
 To keepe the sunnefrom gazing on myfaire; 220*
*And when thy spreading branched armes be sunke,
 And thou no sap norpith shall more retaine,
 Ev'nfrom the dust ofthy unweldie trunk,*

EARLE OF SURREY AND LADY GERALDINE

*/ will renue thee Phoenix-like againe,
And from thy dry decayed root will bring* 225
A new-borne stem, another Æsons spring.

I find no cause, nor judge I reason why,
My countrey should give place to Lumbardy;
As goodly flow'rs on Thamesis doe grow,
As beautifie the bankes of wanton Po; 230
As many nymphs as haunt rich Arnus strand,
By silver Severne tripping hand in hand:
Our shade's as sweet, though not to us so deere,
Because the sunne hath greater power there:
This distant place doth give me greater woe; 235
Farre off, my sighes the farther have to goe.
Ah absence! why thus should'st thou seeme so long?
Or wherefore should'st thou offer time such wrong,
Summer so soone to steale on winters cold,
Or winters blasts so soone make summer old? 240
Love did us both with one-selfe arrow strike,
Our wound's both one, our cure should be the like;
Except thou hast found out some meane by art,
Some pow'rfull med'cine to withdraw the dart;
But mine is fixt, and absence being proved, 245
It stickes too fast, it cannot be removed.

Adiew, adiew, from Florence when I goe,
By my next letters Geraldine shall know,
Which if good fortune shall by course direct,
From Venice by some messenger expect; 250
Till when, I leave thee to thy hearts desire,
By him that lives thy vertues to admire.

*The Lady Geraldine, to Henry Howard,
Earle of Surrey*

SUCH greeting as the Noble Surrey sends,
The like to thee thy Geraldine commends;

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

A maidens thoughts do check my trembling hand,
 On other termes or complements to stand,
 Which (might my speech be as my heart affords) 5
 Should come attyred in farre richer words:
 But all is one, my faith as firme shall prove,
 As hers that makes the greatest shew of love.

In Cupid's schoole I never read those bookes,
 Whose lectures oft we practise in our lookes, 10
 Nor ever did suspitious rivall eye
 Yet lye in wait my favours to espie;
 My virgin thoughts are innocent and meeke,
 As the chaste blushes sitting on my cheeke:
 As in a feaver, I doe shiver yet, 15
 Since first my pen was to the paper set.
 If I doe erre, you know my sexe is weake,
 Feare proves a fault, where maids are forc'd to
 speake.

Doe I not ill? Ah sooth me not herein;
 O, if I doe, reprove me of my sinne: 20
 Chide me in faith, of if my fault you hide,
 My tongue will teach my selfe, my selfe to chide.
 Nay, noble Surrey, blot it if thou wilt,
 Then too much boldnesse should returne my guilt:
 For that should be ev'n from our selves conceaFd 25
 Which is disclos'd, if to our thoughts reveal'd;
 For the least motion, more the smallest breath,
 That may impeach our modestie, is death.

The page that brought thy letters to my hand,
 (Me thinkes) should marvell at my strange demand:
 For till he blush'd, I did not yet espie 31
 The nakednesse of my immodestie,
 Which in my face he greater might have seene,
 But that my fanne I quickly put betweene;
 Yet scarcely that my inward guilt could hide, 35

*Feare seeing all, feares it of all is spy'd.
 Like to a taper lately burning bright,
 But wanting matter to maintaine his light;

EARLE OF SURREY AND LADY GERALDINE

The blaze ascending, forced by the smoke,
Living by that which seeks the same to choke; 40
The flame still hanging in the ayre, both burne,
Untill drawne downe, it backe againe returne:
Then cleare, then dim, then spreadeth, and then
 closeth,

Now getteth strength, and now his bnghtnesse loseth;
As well the best discerning eye may doubt, 45
Whether it yet be in, or whether out:
Thus in my cheeke my sundry passions shew'd.
Now ashie pale, and now againe it glow'd.

If in your verse there be a pow'r to move,
It's you alone, who are the cause I love; 50
It's you bewitch my bosome, by mine eare;
Unto that end I did not place you there:
Ayres to asswage the bloudie souldiers mind,
Poore women, we are naturally kind.

Perhaps you'le thinke, that I these termes inforce, 55
For that in court this kindnesse is of course;

Or that it is that honey-steeped gall,
We oft are said to bait our loves withall;
That in one eye we carrie strong desire,
In th'other, drops, which quickly quench that fire. 60
Ah, what so false can envie speake of us,
But it shall find some vainely credulous?

I doe not so, and to adde prooffe thereto,
I love in faith, in faith, sweet Lord I doe;
Nor let the envie of invenom'd tongues, 65
Which still is grounded on poore ladies wrongs,
Thy noble brest disasterly possesse,
By any doubt to make my love the lesse.

My house from Florence I doe not pretend,
Nor from those Gerald's clayme I to descend; 70
Nor hold those honours insufficient are,
That I receive from Desmond, or Kildare:
Nor adde I greater worth unto my blood,
Then Irish milke to give me infant-food;

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Nor better ayre will ever boast to breathe, 75
 Then that of Lemster, Munster, or of Meath;
 Nor crave I other forraine farre allies,
 Then Windsor's, or Fitz-Gerald's families:
 It is enough to leave unto my heires,
 If they but please t'acknowledge me for theirs. 80
 To what place ever did the Court remove,
 But that the house gives matter to my love?
 At Windsor still I see thee sit, and walke,
 There mount thy courser, there devise, there talke;
 The robes, the garter, and the state of Kings, 85
 Into my thoughts thy hoped greatnesse brings:
 None-such, the name imports (me thinkes) so much,
 None such as it, nor as my Lord, none such;
 In Hamptons great magnificence I find
 The lively image of thy princely mind; 90
 Faire Richmonds tow'rs like goodly trophies stand,
 RearM by the pow'r of thy victorious hand;
 White-Halls triumphing galleries are yet
 Adorn'd with rich devices of thy wit;
 In Greenwich still, as in a glasse, I view, 95
 Where last thou bad'st thy Geraldine adiew:
 With ev'ry little perling breath that blowes,
 How are my thoughts confus'd with joyes and woes;
 As through a gate, so through my longing eares
 Passe to my heart whole multitudes of feares. 100
 O, in a map that I might see thee show
 The place where now in danger thou do'st goe!
 Whilst we discourse, to travell with our eye
 Romania, Tuscan, and faire Lumbardy;
 Or with thy pen exactly to set downe 105
 The modell of that temple, or that towne;
 And to relate at large where thou hast beene,
 And there, and there, and what thou there hast seene:
 Expressing in a figure, by thy hand,
 How Naples lyes, how Florence faire doth stand; 110
 Or as the Grecians finger dip'd in wine,

EARLE OF SURREY AND LADY GERALDINE

Drawing a river in a little line,
 And with a drop, a gulfe to figure out,
 To modell Venice, moted round about;
 Then adding more, to counterfet a sea, 115
 And draw the front of stately Genoa.
 These from thy lips were like harmonious tones,
 Which now doe sound like mandrakes dreadfull
 grones.

Some travell hence, finrich their minds with skill,
 Leave here their good, and bring home others ill; 120
 Which seeme to like all countries but their owne,
 Affecting most, where they the least are knowne;
 Their leg, their thigh, their back, their neck, their
 head,

As they had been in sev'rall countries bred;
 In their attyre, their gesture, and their gate, 125
 Found in each one, in all Italionate;
 So well in all deformitie in fashion,
 Borrowing a limbe of ev'ry sev'rall nation;
 And nothing more then England hold in scorne,
 So live as strangers whereas they were borne: 130

But thy returne in this I doe not reade,
 Thou art a perfect gentleman indeed;
 O God forbid that Howards noble line,
 From ancient vertue should so farre decline;
 The Muses traine (whereof you selfe are chiefe) 135
 Onely to me participate their grieve:
 To sooth their humors, I doe lend them eares.

*He gives a poet, that his verses heares.
 Till thy returne, by hope they only live;
 Yet had they all, they all away would give: 140
 The world and they, so ill according be,
 That wealth and poets never can agree.

Few live in Court that of their good have care,
 The Muses friends are every-where so rare;
 Some praise thy worth (that it did never know) 145
 Onely because the better sort doe so,

ENGLAMDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Whose judgement never further doth extend,
 Then it doth please the greatest to commend;
 So great an ill upon desert doth chance,
 When it doth passe by beastly ignorance. 150
 Why art thou slacke, whilst no man puts his hand
 To raise the mount where Surrey's towers must stand?
 Or who the groundsill of that worke doth lay,
 Whilst like a wand'rer thou abroad do'st stray,
 Clip'd in the armes of some lascivious dame, 155
 When thou shouldst reare an Ilion to thy name?
 When shall the Muses by faire Norwich dwell,
 To be the citie of the learned well?
 Or Phoebus altars there with incense heap'd,
 As once in Cyrrha, or in Thebe kept? 160
 Or when shall that faire hoefe-plow'd spring distill
 From great Mount-Surrey, out of Leonards hill?
 Till thou returne, the Court I will exchange
 For some poore cottage, or some country grange,
 Where to our distaves, as we sit and spin, 165
 My maide and I will tell what things have bin,
 Our lutes unstrung shall hang upon the wall,
 Our lessons serve to wrap our towe withall,
 And passe the night, whiles winter tales we tell,
 Of many things, that long agoe befell; 170
 Or tune such homely carrols as were sung
 In country sport, when we our selves were yong,
 In pretty riddles to bewray our loves,
 In questions, purpose, or in drawing gloves.
 The noblest spirits, to vertue most inclined, 175
 These here in Court thy greatest want doe find;
 Others there be, on which we feed our eye,
 Like Arras-worke, or such like imagerie:
 Many of us desire Queene Kath'rines state,
 But very few her vertues imitate. 180
 Then, as Ulysses wife, write I to thee,
 Make no reply, but come thy selfe to mee.

*The Lady Jane Gray, to the
Lord Gilford Dudley*

The Argument

EDWARD the sixt his timelesse life bereft;
 (Though doubtfully) yet his dominion left
 To his sister Mary: but by Henry Gray,
 Then Duke of Suffolke, bearing mightie sway,
 With the consent, and by the pow'rfull hand 5
 Of John, the stout Duke of Northumberland,
 His fourth sonne Gilford Dudley, they affy'd
 To faire Jane Gray, which by the mothers side
 Some title claym'd: this marriage them betweene,
 The Lady Jane was here proclaymed Queene. 10
 But Mary soone prevayling by her pow'r,
 Causes those two preserved in the Tow'r,
 There to be prison'd; where, their blame to quite,
 They each to other these epistles write.

Mine owne deare Lord, sith thou art lock'd from me,
 In this disguise my love must steale to thee,
 Since to renue all loves, all kindnesse past,
 This refuge scarcely left, yet this the last.
 My keeper comming, I of thee inquire, 5
 Who with thy greeting answeres my desire;
 Which my tongue willing to returne againe,
 Griefe stops my words, and I but strive in vaine:
 Wherewith amaz'd, away in haste he goes,
 When through my lips my heart thrusts forth my
 woes. 10
 But then the dores that make a dolefull sound,
 Drive backe my words, that in the noyse are drown'd,
 Which somewhat hush'd, the eccho doth record,
 And twice or thrice reiterates my word;
 When like an adverse winde in Isis course, 15
 Against the tide bending his boistrous force;

ENGLANDS HEROICAJLL EPISTLES

But when the floud hath wrought it selfe about,
 He following on, doth head-long thrust it out;
 Thus strive my sighes with teares e're they begin,
 And breaking out, againe sighes drive them in. 20

A thousand formes present my troubled thought,
 Yet prove abortive e're they forth are brought.
 *The depth of woe with words we hardly sound,
 'Sorrow is so insensibly profound.

As teares doe fall and rise, sighes come and goe, 25
 So doe these numbers ebbe, so doe they flow.

These briny teares doe make my incke looke pale,
 My incke clothes teares in this sad mourning vale,
 The letters mourners, weepe with my dim eye,
 The paper pale, griev'd at my miserie. 30

Yet miserable our selves why should we deeme,
 Sith none are so, but in their owne esteeme?
 'Who in distresse from resolution flies,
 'Is rightly said, to yeeld to miseries.

They which begot us, did beget this sinne, 35
 They first begun, what did our grieffe beginne,
 We tasted not, 'twas they which did rebell,
 (Not our offence) but in their fall we fell;

They which a crowne would to my Lord have Hnck'd,
 All hope of life and libertie extinct; 40

A subject borne, a soveraigne to have beene,
 Hath made me now, nor subject, nor a Queene.
 Ah vile ambition, how dost thou deceive us,
 Which shew'st us heav'n, and yet in hell dost leave us?

'Seldome untouch'd doth innocence escape, 45
 'When errorr commeth in good counsels shape,
 'A lawful title countercheckes proud might,
 'The weakest things become strong props to right.

Then my deare Lord, although affliction grieve us,
 Yet let our spotlesse innocence relieve us. 50

'Death but an acted passion doth appeare,
 'Where truth gives courage, and the conscience cleare.
 And let thy comfort thus consist in mine,

LADY JANE GRAY AND LORD GILFORD DUDLEY

That I beare part of whatsoe're is thine;
As when we liv'd untouch'd with these disgraces, 55
When as our kingdome was our deare embraces;
At Durham Palace, where sweet Hymen sang,
Whose buildings with our nuptiall music rang:
When prothalamions prays'd that happie day,
Wherein great Dudley match'd with noble Gray, 60
When they devis'd to linke by wedlocks band,
The House of Suffolke to Northumberland;
Our fatall Dukedome to your Dukedome bound,
To frame this building on so weake a ground.
For what avayles a lawlesse usurpation, 65
Which gives a scepter, but not rules a nation?
Onely the surfet of a vaine opinion:
'What gives content, gives what exceeds dominion.
When first mine eares were pierced with the fame
Of Jane, proclaymed by a princes name, 70
A sudden fright my trembling heart appalls:
The feare of conscience entreth yron walls.
Thrice happy for our fathers had it beene,
If what we fear'd, they wisely had foreseene,
And kept a meane gate, in an humble path, 75
To have escap'd the heav'ns impetuous wrath.
The true-bred eagle strongly stems the wind,
And not each bird resembling their brave kind;
He like a King, doth from the clouds command
The fearefull fowle, that move but neere the land. 80
Though Mary be from mightie Kings descended,
My bloud not from Plantagmet pretended;
My grandsire Brandon did our House advance,
By princely Mary, Dowager of France;
The fruit of that faire stocke, which did combine, 85
And York's sweet branch with Lancaster's entwine,
And in one stalke did happily unite
The pure vermillion rose, and purer white;
I, the untimely slip of that rich stem,
Whose golden bud brings forth a diadem. 90

LADY JANE GRAY AND LORD GILFORD DUDLEY

There to be made as perfect as is mine;
So shall our faiths as firmly be approved, 125
As I of thee, or thou of me beloved.
This life, no life, wert thou not deare to me,
Nor this no death, were I not woe for thee.
Thou my deare husband, and my Lord before,
But truly learne to die, thou shalt be more. 130
Now live by prayer, on heaven fixe all thy thought,
And surely finde, what e're by zeale is sought;
For each good motion that the soule awakes,
A heavenly figure sees, from whence it takes
That sweet resemblance, which by power of kinde,
Formes (like it selfe) an image in the minde, 136
And in our faith the operations bee,
Of that divinenesse which through that we see;
Which never erres, but accidentally,
By our fraile fleshes imbecillity; 140
By each temptation over-apt to slide,
Except our spirit becomes our bodies guide;
For as these towers our bodies doe enclose,
So our soules prisons verily are those;
Our bodies, stopping that celestiall light, 145
As these doe hinder our exterior sight;
Whereon death seazing, doth discharge the debt,
And us at blessed libertie doth set.
Then draw thy forces all up to thy heart,
The strongest fortresse of this earthly part, 150
And on these three let thy assurance lye,
On faith, repentance, and humilitie;
By which, to heav'n ascending by degrees,
Persist in prayer upon your bended knees:
Whereon if you assuredly be stay'd, 155
You need in perill not to be dismay'd,
Which still shall keepe you, that you shall not fall,
For any perill that can you appall:
The key of heav'n thus with you, you shall beare,
And grace you guiding, get you entrance there; 160

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

And you of those celestiall joyes possesse,
Which mortall tongue's unable to expresse.

Then thanke the heav'n, preparing us this roome,
Crowning our heads with glorious martyrdome,
Before the blacke and dismall dayes begin, 165
The dayes of all idolatrie and sinne;

Not suffering us to see that wicked age,
When persecution vehemently shall rage;
When tyrannie new tortures shall invent,
To inflict vengeance on the innocent. 170

Yet heav'n forbid, that Maries wombe should bring
Englands faire scepter to a forraine King;
But she to fair Elizabeth shall leave it,
Which broken, hurt, and wounded shall receive it;
And on her temples having plac'd the crowne, 175

Root out the dregges idolatry hath sowne;
And Sions glory shall againe restore,
Laid mine, waste, and desolate before;
And from blacke sinders, and rude heapes of stones,
Shall gather up the martyrs sacred bones; 180
And shall extirpe the pow'r of Rome againe,
And cast aside the heavie yoke of Spame.

Farewell, sweet Gilford, know our end is neere,
Heav'n is our home, we are but strangers heere:
Let us make haste to goe unto the blest, 185
Which from these weane worldly labours rest.

And with these lines, my dearest Lord, I greet thee,
Untill in heav'n thy Jane againe shall meet thee.

Gilford Dudley to the Lady Jane Gray

As the swan singing at his dying how'r,
So I reply from my impris'ning tow'r:
O, could there be that pow'r but in my verse,
T'expresse the griefe which my sad heart doth pierce!

LADY JANE GRAY AND LORD GFLFORD DUDLEY

The very walls that straitly thee inclose, 5
Would surely weepe at reading of my woes;
Let your eyes lend, He pay you every teare,
And give you int'rest, if you doe forbear,
Drop for a drop, and if youle needs have lone,
I will repay you frankely, two for one. 10

Perhaps you'le thinke (your sorrowes to appease)
That words of comfort fitter were then these.
True, and in you when such perfection liveth,
As in most grieffe, me now most comfort giveth:
But thinke not (Jane) that cowardly I faint, 15
To begge mans mercy by my sad complaint,
That death so much my courage can controule,
At the departing of my living soule.
For if one life a thousand lives can bee,
All those too few to consummate with thee, 20
When thou this crosse so patiently doest beare,
As if thou wert incapable of feare,
And doest no more this dissolution flie,
Then if long age constrained thee to die.

Yet it is strange thou art become my foe, 25
And only now add'st most unto my woe;
Not that I loath what most did me delight,
But that so long deprived of thy sight:
For when I speake and would complaine my wrong,
Straight-wayes thy name possesseth all my tong, 30
As thou before me evermore didst lie
The present object to my longing eie.

No ominous starre did at thy birth-tide shine
That might of thy sad destinie divine;
'Tis only I that did thy fall perswade, 35
And thou by me a sacrifice art made,
As in those countries, where the loving wives
With their kind husbands end their happy lives,
And crown'd with garlands, in their brides attyre,
Burne with his body, in the fun'rail fire; 40
And she the worthiest reckoned is of ail,

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Whom least the perill seemeth to appall.

I boast not of Northumberlands great name,
 (Nor of Ket conquer'd, adding to our fame)
 When he to Norfolke with his armies sped, 45
 And thence in chaynes the rebels captive led,
 And brought safe peace returning to our dores,
 Yet spred his glory on the easterne shores;
 Nor of my brothers, from whose naturall grace
 Vertue may spring, to beautifie our race; 50
 Nor of Grayes match, my children borne by thee,
 Of the great bloud undoubtedly to bee:
 But of thy vertue onely doe I boast,
 That wherein I, may justly glory most.

I crav'd no kingdomes, though I thee did crave, 55
 It me sufficed, thy onely selfe to have:
 Yet let me say, how ever it befell,
 Me thinks a crowne should have becom'd thee well;
 For sure thy wisdome merited (or none)
 To have beene heard with wonder from a throne. 60
 When from thy lips the counsell to each deed,
 Doth as from some wise oracle proceed;
 And more esteem'd thy vertues were to mee,
 Then all that else might ever come by thee:
 So chaste thy love, so innocent thy life, 65
 As being a virgin when thou wert a wife;
 So great a gift the heav'n on me bestow'd,
 As giving that, it nothing could have ow'd:
 Such was the good I did possesse of late,
 Ere worldly care disturb'd our quiet state; 70
 Ere trouble did in ev'ry place abound,
 And angry warre our former peace did wound.
 But to know this, ambition us affords,
 'One crowne is guarded with a thousand swords;
 To meane estates, meane sorrowes are but showne, 75
 'But crownes have cares, whose workings be
 unknowne.

When Dudley led his armies to the east,

LADY JANE GRAY AND LORD GILFORD DUDLEY

Of our whole forces generally possest,
What then was thought his enterprise could let,
Whom a grave Councell freely did abet, 80
That had the judgement of the pow'rfull lawes,
In ev'ry point to justifie the cause?
The holy Church a helping hand that laide,
Who would have thought that these could not have
swaide?

But what alas can Parlements availe, 85
Where Maries right must Edwards acts repeale?
When Suffolks power doth Suffolks hopes withstand,
Northumberland doth leave Northumberland;
And they that should our greatnesse undergoe,
Us, and our actions only overthrow. 90

Ere greatnesse gain'd, we give it all our heart,
But being once come, wee wish it would depart,
And indiscreetly follow that so fast,
Which overtaken punisheth our haste;
If any one doe pittie our offence, 95

Let him be sure that he be farre from hence:
Here is no place for any one that shall
So much as (once) commiserate our fall:
And we of mercy vainely should but thinke,
Our timelesse teares th'insatiate earth doth drinke.
All lamentations utterly forlorne, 101
Dying before they fully-can be borne.

Mothers that should their wofull children rue,
Fathers in death to kindly bid adue,
Friends their deare farewell lovingly to take, 105
The faithfull servant weeping for our sake;
Brothers and sisters waiting on our beere,
Mourners to tell what wee were living heere:
But we (alas) deprived are of all,
So fatall is our miserable fall. 110

And where at first for safety we were shut
Now in darke prison wofully are put,
And from the height of our ambitious state,

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

Lie to repent our arrogance too late.
To thy perswasion thus I then replie; 115
Hold on thy course resolved still to die,
And when we shall so happily be gone,
Leave it to heaven to give the rightfull throne,
And with that health regret I thee againe,
Which I of late did gladly entertaine. 120

THE LEGEND OF ROBERT,
DUKE OF NORMANDIE

*The Legend of Robert,
Duke of Normandie*

WHAT time soft night had silently begun
To steale by minutes on the long-liv'd dayes,
The furious dog-starre following the bright sunne,
With noysome heat infests his chearefull rayes,
Filling the earth with many a sad disease; 5
Which then inflam'd with their intemp'rate fires,
Her selfe in light habilliments attyres.

And the rathe morning newly but awake,
Was with fresh beautie burnishing her browes,
Her selfe beholding in the gen'rall lake, 10
To which she payes her never-ceasing vowes,
With the new day me willingly to rowze;
Downe to faire Thames I gently tooke my way,
With whom the winds continually doe play.

Striving to fancie his chaste brest to move, 15
Whereas all pleasures plentifully flow,
When him along, the wanton tyde doth shove,
'And to keepe backe, they easily doe blow,
Or else force forward, thinking him to slow;
Who with his waves would check the winds imbrace,
Whilst they fanne ay re upon his cry stall face. 21

Still forward sallying from his bountious sourse,
Along the shores lasciviously doth strayne,
Making such strange meanders in his course,
As to his fountaine he would back agayne, 25
Or turn'd about to looke upon his trayne;
Whose sundry soyles with coy regards he greets,
Till with cleare Medway happily he meets.

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Steering my compasse by this wand'ring streame,
Whose flight preach'd to me times swift-posting
how'rs, 30

Delighted thus as with some prettie dreame,
Where pleasure wholly had possess'd my powers,
And looking back on Londons stately tow'rs,
So Troy, thought I, her stately head did rere,
Whose crazed ribs the furrowing plow doth eyre.

Wearie, at length a willow tree I found, 36
Which on the banke of this brave river stood,
Whose root with rich grasse greatly did abound,
Forc'd by the fluxure of the swelling flood;
Ordayn'd (it seem'd) to sport his nymphish brood, 40
Whose curled top, envy'd the heav'ns great eye,
Should view the stock it was maintained by.

The larke, that holds observance to the sunne,
Quaver'd her cleare notes in the quiet ayre,
And on the rivers murmuring base did runne, 45
Whilst the pleas'd heav'n her fayrest liv'rie ware,
The place such pleasure gently did prepare;
The flow'rs my smell, the floud my taste to steepe,
And the much softnesse lulled me asleepe.

When in a vision as it seem'd to me, 50
Triumphall musike from the floud arose,
As when the sov'raigne we embarged see,
And by faire London for his pleasure rowes,
Whose tender welcome the glad citie showes;
The people swarming on the pest'red shoares, 55
And the curl'd water over-sprede with oares.

A troupe of nymphs came suddenly on land,
In the full end of this triumphall sound,
And me incompass'd, taking hand in hand,
Casting themselves about me in a round, 60

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

And so downe set them on the easie ground,
Bending their cleare eyes with a modest grace
Upon my swart and melancholy face.

Next, 'twixt two ladies came a goodly knight,
As newly brought from some distressefull place, 65
To me who seemed some right worthy wight,
Though his attyre were miserably base,
And time had worne deepe furrowes in his face;
Yet, though cold age had frosted his fayre hayres,
It rather seem'd with sorrow then with yeares. 70

The one, a lady of a princely port,
Leading this sad Lord, scarcely that could stand;
The other fleering in disdainefull sort,
With scornefull gestures drew him by the hand:
Who lame and blind, yet bound with many a band, 75
When I perceived, neerer as they came,
This foole was Fortune, and the braver, Fame.

Fame had the right hand, in a robe of gold,
(Whose trayne old Time obsequiously did beare)
Whereon, in rich embrod'rie, was enrol'd 80
The names of all that worthies ever were,
Which all might reade, depainted lively there,
Set downe in loftie well-composed verse,
Fit'st the great deeds of heroes to rehearse.

On her faire brest she two broad tablets wore; 85
Of crystall one, the other ebonie:
On which, ingraven were all names of yore,
In the cleare tombe of living memorie,
Or the blacke book of endlesse obloquie;
The first, with poets and with conquerors pyl'd, 90
That with base worldlings ev'ry where defil'd.

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

And in her words appeared (as a wonder)
Her present force, and after-during might,
Which softly spoke, farre off were heard to thunder,
About the world that quickly tooke their flight, 95
And brought the most obscurest things to light;
That still, the farther off, the greater still
Did make our good, or manifest our ill.

Fortune, as blind as he whom she did lead,
Changing her feature, often in an howre 100
Fantastically carrying her head,
Soone would she smile, and suddenly would lowre,
And with one breath her words were sweet and sowre;
Upon starke fooles she amorously would glance,
And upon wise-men coyly looke ascance. 105

About her neck, in maner of a chaine,
Torne diadems and broken scepter's hung,
If any, on her stedfastly did leane,
Them to the ground despightfully she flung,
And in this posture, as she past along, 110
She bags of gold out of her bosome drew,
Which she to sots and arrant ideots threw.

A duskie vaile did hide her sightlesse eyes,
Like clouds that cover our uncertaine lives,
Whereon were portray'd direfull tragedies, 115
Fooles wearing crownes, and wisemen clog'd in gyves,
How all things she prepostrously contrives,
Which as a map, her regency discovers
In campos, in courts, and in the way of lovers.

An easie banke neere to this place there was, 120
A seat faire Flora us'd to sit upon,
Curling her cleere locks in this liquid glasse,
Putting her rich gems, and attyrings on,
Fitter then this about us there was none:

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Where they set downe that poore distressed man,
When to the purpose Fortune thus began: 126

Behold this Duke of Normandy, quoth she,
The heire of William Conqueror of this ile,
Appealing to be justified by thee,
(Whose tragedy this poet must compile,) 130
He whom I ever have esteemed vile,
Marking his birth with an unlucky brand;
And yet of him thou com'st prepared to stand.

What art thou, but a tumor of the mind,
A bubble, blowne up by deceitfull breath, 135
Which never yet exactly wert defin'd,
In whom no wise-man e'r reposed faith,
Speaking of few well, untill after death,
That from loose humor hast thy time-lesse birth,
Unknowne to heaven, nor much esteem'd on earth?

First, by opinion had'st thou thy creation, 141
On whom thou still dost servilly attend,
And like whom, long thou keep'st not any fashion,
But with the world incertainely do'st wend,
Which as a poste thee up and downe doth send: 145
Without prophane tongues thou canst never rise,
Nor be up-holden, be it not with lies:

In ev'ry corner prying liKe a theefe,
And through each cranny like the wind do'st creepe,
Apt to report, as easie of beleefe. 150
What's he, whose counsell thou didst ever keepe?
Yet into closets sawcily dar'st peepe,
Telling for truth, what thou canst but suppose,
Divulging that, which thou shouldst not disclose.

With extreme toyle and labour thou art sought,
Death is the way which leadeth to thy cell, 156

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Onely with bloud thy favour must be bought,
And who will have thee, fetcheth thee from hell,
Where thou, impal'd with fire and sword, do'st dwell;
And when thou art in all this perill found, • 160
What art thou, onely but a tinkling sound?

Such as the world doth hold to be but base,
Of humane creatures, and the most doth scorne,
That amongst men sit in the servil'st place,
These, for the most part, thou do'st most suborne,
Those follow Fame, whose weeds are neerely worne;
Yet those poore wretches cannot come to thee, 167
Unlesse prefer'd and dignify'd by me.

The trumpet such supposed to advance,
Is but, as those fantastically deeme, 170
Whom folly, youth, or frenzie doth intrance,
Nor doth it sound, but onely so doth seeme,
(Which the wise sort a dotage but esteeme)
Onely thereby the humorous abusing,
Fondly their error, and thy fault excusing. 175

Except in perill, thou do'st not appeare;
Yet scarcely then, but with intreats and wooing,
Flying farre off, when as thou should'st be neere,
At hand diminished, and augmented going,
Upon slight toyes the greatest cost bestowing, 180
Oft promising, mens losses to repayre,
Yet the performance, but a little ayre.

On balefull herses (as the fittest grounds)
Written with bloud, thy sad memorials lye,
Whose letters are immedicable wounds, 185
Onely fit objects for the weeping eye;
Thou from the dust mens worths do'st onely try,
And what before thou falsely didst deprave,
Thou do'st acknowledge onely in the grave.

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

The world it selfe is wisse of my pow'r, 190
Ov'r whom I raigne with the eternall fates,
With whom I sit in counsell ev'ry how'r,
On th'alteration of all times and states,
Setting them downe their changes, and their dates,
In fore-appointing ev'ry thing to come, 195
Untill the great and universal! doome.

The starres to me an everlasting booke,
In that eternall register, the skie,
Whose mightie volumes I oft over-looke,
Still turning ov'r the leaves of destinie, 200
Which man I too inviolate denie,
And his frayle will thereby I see control'd,
By such strong clauses as are there inrol'd.

Predestination giving me a beeing,
Whose depth mans wisdom never yet could sound,
Into whose secrets onely I have seeing, 206
Wherein wise reason doth her selfe confound,
Searching where doubts doe more thereby abound;
For sacred texts unlock the way to mee,
To lighten those that will my glory see. 210

Those names th'old poets to their gods did give,
Were onely figures to expresse my might,
To shew the vertues that in Fortune live,
And my much power in this all-moving wight,
Who all their altars to my god-head dight; 215
Which alterations upon earth doe bring,
And give them matter still whereon to sing.

What though uncertaine, varying in my course,
I make my changes ayme one certaine end,
Crossing mans fore-cast, to make knowne my force,
Still foe to none, to none a perfect friend, 221
To him least hoping, soonest I doe send,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

That all should find, I worthily bestow,
And 'tis a reason, that I thinke it so.

Forth of my lap I powre abundant blisse, 225
All good proceeds from my all-giving hand,
By me, man happy, or unhappy is,
For whom I sticke, or whom I doe withstand,
And it is I am friendships onely band;
And upon me, all greedily take hold, 230
Which being broke, all worldly love growes cold.

Pawsing, she frown'd, when suddenly withall
A fearefull noyse ariseth from the flood,
As when a tempest furiously doth fall
Within the thick waste of some ancient wood; 235
That in amazement ev'ry mortall stood,
As though her words such pow'rfulnessse did beare,
That each thing seem'd her menaces to feare.

When fame yet smyling, mildly thus replies;
Alas (quoth she) what labour thou hast lost? 240
What wond'rous mysts thou cast'st before our eyes?
Yet will the gayne not counter-vaile the cost.
What would'st thou say, if thou hadst cause to boast?
Which set'st thy state out in such wond'rous sort,
Which, but thy selfe, none ever could report. 245

For what is Fortune onely, but event,
Breeding in some a transitorie terror?
A what men will, that falls by accident,
And onely named to excuse their error?
What else is Fortune, or who doth preferre her? 250
Or who to her so foolish is to leane,
Which weake tradition onely doth maintaine?

A toy, whereon the doting world doth dreame,
First soothed by uncertaine observation,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

- Of raens attempts that being the extreame, 255
Fast'neth thereby on weake imagination;
Yet notwithstanding all this usurpation,
Must to thy selfe be incidently loathing,
Most when thou would'st be, that art rightly
nothing.
- And with the world insinuating thus, 260
And under so allowable pretence,
Closely incrochest on mans genius,
In good and evill taking residence;
And having got this small preeminence,
When to thy selfe a being thou would'st frame, 265
Art in conclusion onely but a name.
- Those ignorant, which made a god of Nature,
And Natures god divinely never knew,
Were those, to Fortune that first built a stature,
From whom thy worship ignorantly grew; 270
Which being adored foolishly by few,
Grounded thy looser and uncertaine lawes
Upon so weake and indigent a cause.
- First sloth did hatch thee in her sleepy cell,
And thee with ease dishonorably fed, 275
Delivering thee with cowardice to dwell,
Which with base thoughts, continually thee bred,
By superstition id'ly being led,
It an imposture after did thee make,
Whom for a goddesse fooles doe onely take. 280
- Nor never do'st thou any thing forecast,
But as thou art improvident, so light,
And this most wicked property thou hast,
That against vertue thou bend'st all thy might,
With whom thou wapest, a continuall fight; 285

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

The yeelding spirit, in fetters thou do'st bind
But art a meere slave to the constant mind.

Such is thy froward and malignant kind;
That what thou do'st, thou still do'st in despight,
And art inamor'd of the barbarous hind: 290
Whom thou do'st make thy onely favotfte:
None but the base, in basenesse doe delight:
For wer't thou heavenly, thou in love would'st bee,
With that which nearest doth resemble thee.

But I alone the herald am of heaven, 295
Whose spacious kingdome stretcheth farre and wide,
Through ev'ry coast upon the lightning driven,
As on the sunne-beames, gloriously I ride,
By them I mount, and downe by them I slide,
I register the worlds long-durmg houres, 300
And know the hie will of th'immortall powers.

Men to the starres me guiding them doe clime,
That all demensions perfectly expresse,
I am alone the vanquisher of time:
Bearing those sweets, which cure death's bitternesse:
I all good labours plentifully blesse, 306
Yea, all abstruse profoundities impart,
Leading men through the tedious wayes of art.

My palace placed, betwixt earth and skies,
Which many a tower, ambitiously up beares, 310
Whereof the windowes are glaz'd all with eyes,
The wall's as neatly builded are of eares,
Where ev'ry thing in heaven and earth appears,
Nothing so softly whisper'd in the round,
But through my palace presently doth sound. 315

And under foot floor'd all about with drummes,
The rafters, trumpets, admirably cleare,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Sounding aloud each name that thither comes,
The crannies, tongues, and talking ev'ry where,
And all things past, in memorie doe beare, 320
 The doores unlocke with ev'ry little breath,
 Nay, open wide with each word which man sayth.

And hung about with armes and conqu'ed spoyles;
The posts whereon the goodly roofe doth stand,
Are pillars graven with Herculian toyles; 325
Th'atchievements great, of many a warlike hand,
As well in christned, as in heathen land,
 Done by those nobles that are most renown'd,
 That there by me immortally are crown'd.

Here, in the bodies likenesse whilst it lives, 330
Apppeare the thoughts, proceeding from the mind,
To which the place a glorious habit gives,
When once to me they freely are resigned,
To be preserv'd here: and are so refin'd, 334
 That when the corps by death doth lastly perish,
 Then doth this place the minds true image cherish.

My beautie never fades, but still new-borne,
As yeeres increase, so ever waxing young,
My strength is not diminished, nor worne,
Time weak'ning all things, onely makes me strong,
Nor am I subject to base worldly wrong; 341
 The power of kings I utterly defie,
 Nor am I aw'd by ail their tyrannic.

The brow of heav'n my monuments containe,
(And is the mightie register of fame) 345
Which there in fierie characters remaine,
The gorgeous seeling of th'immortall frame,
The constellations publishing my name,
 Where my memorials evermore abide,
 So by th'old poets was I glorify'd. 350

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Fame having ended, Fortune soone began
Further to urge what she before had said;
When lo (quoth she) Duke Robert is the man
Which as my prisoner, I in bonds doe lead,
For whom thou com'st against me here to plead, 355
Whom I alone deprived of his crowne.
'Who can rayse him, that Fortune will have downe?

A fitter instance, Fame replying, none,
Then is Duke Robert, Fortune doe thy worst,
Greater on man thy might was never showne, 360
Doing to him all that thou could'st, or durst:
And since thy turne allotted is the first,
Proceed; see which, the Norman Duke shall have,
After so long being iayd up in his grave.

Quoth Fortune, Then I found th'unstedfast starre,
Whose lucklesse working limited his fate, 366
That mark'd his sad nativitie with warre,
And brothers most unnaturall debate,
As to be punish'd by his parents hate; 369
For that the kingdome which the Conqu'ror wonne,
Should be the wracke of him, his first-borne sonne.

By that which Nature did on him bestow,
In him her best, that strayned her to try,
Thereby, himselfe I made him overthrow,
In humane birth so powerfull am I, 375
Marking his brest too openly to lye,
From both his brothers different too farre,
Too mild for peace, too mercifull for warre.

And yet the courage that he did inherite,
And from the greatnesse of his bloud did take, 380
Though shrowded in so peaceable a spirit,
When once his wrongs came roughly to awake,
Forth, with so strange and violent furie brake,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

As made the world apparantly to see
All humane actions managed by mee. 385

That till revenge was wholly him bereft,
(In ev'ry thing opposed by my pow'r)
For him to leane to, nothing being left,
And danger him most threatened to devoure,
To the last period of the utmost houre, 390
Oft by vaine hopes, that he might get my love,
There was no perill, but I made him prove.

For whilst his father, with the Norman sword,
His prosperous entrance upon England made,
I layd the project, that this youthfull Lord 395
In the meane time did Normandie invade,
Upon his syre, and made him draw his blade;
The meane whereby he thought he could not misse
That which he else might fayle of, to make his.

That Robert dayly in disgrace might runne, 400
With the great Conqu'ror, as he still did grow
Neerer his death; who vexed by his sonne,
(His pride which but too openly did show)
His state devised wisely to bestow
Upon his second, that his dayes to close, 405
Himselfe he might more quietly repose.

And then, lest time might chance to coole his blood,
That lucklesse warre by ling'ring I supply'd,
That whilst Duke Robert justly censured stood,
For disobedience and unnaturall pride, 410
In heat of this, the Conqu'ror William dy'd,
Setting your Rufus upon Englands throne,
Leaving his eldest struggling for his owne.

Which in short time so many mischiefes bred,
(As sundry plagues on William's off-spring sent) 415

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Which soone rose to so violent a head,
That policie them no way could prevent
When to destruction all things headlong went;
And in the end, as consummating all,
Duke Robert's irrecoverable fall. 420

Whom then I did auspiciously perswade,
Once more with warre to fright the English fields,
His brother (then King William) to invade,
To make him know the difTrence of their shields;
Where though his armes he ne'r so wisely wieldes, 425
And though by him the kingdome were not taken,
His scepter should be violently shaken.

These sundry soyles, in both of which was sowne
(By so approved and fortunate a hand) 429
Seed, which to both might prosperously have growne,
Had they remain'd in friend-ships sacred band,
In opposition when they came to stand:
Farre wyder wounds to either of them lent,
Then all the power that Europe could have sent.

Thus did I winne King William in his life, 435
His conquered realme on Rufus to bestowe,
What he had got by strength, to leave in strife,
Those to molest that from his stock should growe;
Which by my cunning I contrived so,
To plague his issue with a generall ill, 440
Yet the extreme to fall on Robert still.

That prelate Odo (that with William held)
To Bishop Lanfrank for his deadly spight,
That William lov'd, against the King rebel'd,
With all his power abetting Roberts right, 445
Ayded by Mortayn's and Montgomerie's might,
Upon this land to bring a second warre,
Of her late conquest, whilst she bare the skarre.

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

And when he was in so direct a way,
Great friends at hand his enterprize to back, 450
Ready before him, when his entrance lay;
Nor could he thinke of ought that he did lack,
Yet wonne I him his enterprize to slack,
Stopping the course which rightly he had runne,
All to undoe that he before had done. 455

Thus did I first provoke him to that rage,
Which had so farre prevayl'd upon his blood,
And at my pleasure did the same asswage,
When this brave heat in stead might him have stood,
So to my humor alt'red I his mood, 460
By taking armes, his cost and coyne to lose,
And leaving them, to animate his foes.

That by concluding this untimely peace,
I might thereby a ling'ring warre begin,
That whilst these tumults for a while did cease, 465
William on Robert might advantage wme;
Thus let I treason secretly in,
Giving deceitfull pohcie the kay,
Into the closet where his counsels lay.

Thus, in the habit of a faithfull friend, 470
I drew into him a most dang'rous foe,
His wit, that used to no other end,
But to cloath treason in a vertuous show,
Which he for currant so contrived to goe,
As he in secret hurt Duke Robert more 475
By this soft peace, then in the warre before.

And to thee, Fame, I then my pow'r addest,
Nay, thee mine onely instrument I made,
That whilst these brothers at this point did rest,
Robert to warre, I wonne thee to perswade, 480
With those that went the Soldan to invade,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

With great Duke Godfrey pressing forth his bands,
From his proud pow'r to free the Holy Lands.

Thus, by thee, Fame, did I his humor feed,
The only way to draw this Duke abroad, 485
That whilst at home his presence most should need,
In forraine parts to fasten his aboad:
Him in this manner wisely I bestow'd.

That William dying, Robert being gone,
Henry might seat him on the English Throne. 490

His eare so seasoning with the sound of armes,
As in ought else no musike it could find,
Neither had any feeling of his harmes:
On Palestine so placed he his mind,
(Clearly that shew'd the greatnesse of his kind) 495
And him so high and with such force did beare,
As when he had most cause, he least did feare.

Thus was he throwne into his endlesse thrall;
Which though the meane devised was by me,
And ev'ry thing was fitted to his fall, 500
Which none could hinder, though the most fore-see,
Yet here I made an instrument of thee;
'For where destruction I doe once pretend,
'All that man doth, still sorteth to that end.

He gone, and Rufus being rob'd of breath, 505
And Henry Beaucleark coveting to raigne,
Off red so fairely by King Williams death,
Whilst Robert doth in Palestine remaine,
Whereby a kingdome he might eas'ly gaine;
What by his pow'r, and science to psrwade, 510
Himselfe a monarch absolutely made.

Whilst this great Duke imbraced was by thee,
Which thou as thine do'st absolutely clayme,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

But finds meere shadowes, only missing me,
And idle castles in the ayre doth frame; 515
Lo, such a mightie monarchesse is Fame,
That what she gives, so easie is to beare,
As none therefore needs violence to feare.

Till Robert safely from the Holy Warres
Returning, honour'd by the Pagans flight, 520
From forraine battels, into civill jarres,
From getting others, for his owne to fight,
Inforc'd to use the utmost of his might,
With that brave sword, in pagan bloud imbru'd,
To save himselfe, by his owne friends pursued. 525

When wanting summes, the sinewes of a force,
(Which his high spirit too quickly came to find,
Ere he could put himselfe into his course)
Most strangely seem'd to mollifie his mind;
And on the sudden Henry seeming kind, 530
Offred, his love at any rate to buy,
So that fast to him, he the Duke might tye.

Thus, of Duke Robert wisely did he winne,
Not then so well established as he would,
Till he by craft had closely copen in, 535
Setting himselfe substantially to hold,
Offering him great summes of bewitching gold,
As yeerely tribute from this realme to rise,
Quite to blot out all former injuries.

Which to the poore Duke yeelding much reliefe,
Henry to passe his purposes so brought, 541
Whilst Robert yet suspected not that theefe,
Which under-hand so cunningly him caught;
Of whom, the least when princely Robert thought,
Ev'n a moment did annoy him more, 545
Then all those ills, that hap'd to him before.

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Which to this Lord (beleeving well) unknowne,
And he not finding, eas'ly could not flie,
For it, a bait into his way was throwne,
Which to avoid, Duke Robert look'd too hie: 550
'Into good minds, craft can the eas'lyest prie;
For in his plyant nature, as a mould,
Well could I cast what forme soe'r I would.

For by this tribute cutting off the clayme,
Which he, the elder, to his England made, 555
His former hopes he forcibly did mayme,
Which for a while by Henry being pay'd,
But after by him fraudulently stayM,
As from a fountaine, plentiously did spring
Th'efficient cause of Robert's ruining. 560

When as his friends, so well to him that meant,
To take his part and did their force prepare,
Finding him thus their purpose to prevent,
And how thereby 'twas like with him to fare;
Upon King Henry planted all their care, 565
Giving their pow'rs, their peace with him to make,
Gath'red at first the Norman part to take.

And I that friendly evermore had beene,
To the stout Normans, which by me had wonne,
To prove my selfe the earth's imperious Queene, 570
And shew the world, by me what can be done,
To spight this Robert, William Conquerors sonne,
With England against Normandie doe stand,
Conqu'red but lately by the Norman hand.

Their issue, which were conqu'rors of this ile, 575
At Hastings which the English men did tame,
Here natives, graced with the English stile,
To their first countrey carry back their clayme,
Conquest returning, whence it lately came;

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

That once as England felt Nuestna's stroke, 580
To make Nuestria, to beare Englands yoke.

Those angry brothers in the field in armes,
Then whom there were not two more deadly foes,
Ech seeking other in the hot'st alarmes,
And at their meeting, changing deadly blowes, 585
Quickly that meant to winne, or soone to lose,
 Robert would faine release himselfe of thrall,
 Henry againe doth hotly put for all.

On him, which late in Palestine I smiFd,
Returned, at fatall Tenacbray I frowne, 590
And from his Dukedome him that day exil'd,
Which had he wonne it, might have worne a crowne:
And to be sure him in mis-hap to drowne,
 Lastly himselfe, he in the fight did lose,
 Taken a prisoner, by his trayt'rous foes. 595

Which bound to England basely did him bring,
Baselyer abus'd and mock't at of his owne,
A captive where he should have beene a King;
Such was the lot by me upon him throwne:
There, to lament his misery alone, 600
 Prescribed to one poore solitary place,
 Who should have progres'd all a kingdomes space.

Could humane knowledge comprehend my hate,
Or reason sound the depth of things divine,
The world amazed at Duke Roberts state, 605
Might thinke no power, to be compar'd to mine;
And wish the gods would all to me resigne:
 In this man's fall apparently to see,
 Above the star's, what might there rests in me.

That blade, on him, in battell which had power,
Was too much blunted, to abridge his dayes, 611

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Time, that so fast from all away doth scowre,
Deferres his end with dilatorie staves,
Whilst he his brothers tyrannic obayes,
That he in life a thousand deaths might dye; 615
Where I will plague, so tyrannous am I.

And while in Cardiffe he a captive lyes,
Whose windowes were but niggards of their light;
I wrought, this Henrie's rage not to suffice,
But that he rob'd Duke Robert of his sight, 620
To turne this little piece of day to night,
As though that sense, whose want should be the
last
To all things living, he the first should taste.

That Robert so unfortunately blinde,
No outward object might disperse his care, 625
The better to illuminate his mind,
To see his sorrowes throughly what they were,
To doe so much to this great Prince, I dare,
By taking from him, that which serv'd him best,
To his affliction to turne all the rest. 630

And when he was bereaved of his ease,
With the remembrance of so haynous wrong,
Upon his brest so strongly that did seize,
And his sad heart so violently stung,
Yet made I nature in that Prince so strong, 635
That grieffe, which many doth of life deprive,
Seem'd to preserve and keepe him still alive.

Him I forbad, that any foe should kill
Nor by his owne hand surTred him to die,
That life to Robert should be lothsome still, 640
And that death from him evermore should flie,
Making them both to him anemie,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Willing to die, by life him double killing,
Urged to live, twice dying, he unwilling.

So many yeeres as he had worne a crowne, 645
So many yeeres as he had hop'd to rise,
So many yeeres upon him did I frowne,
So many yeeres he liv'd without his eyes,
So many yeeres in dying, ere he dyes,
So many yeeres shut up in prison strong; 650
Though sorrow make the shortest time seeme long.

Thus sway I in the course of earthly things,
To make time worke him everlasting spight,
To shew how I can tyrannize on Kings,
And in the fall of great ones doe delight, 655
In fyned things my working infinite:
All worldly changes, at my will disposed,
For that in me all wonder is inclosed.

At Fortunes speech amazed whilst they stand,
And Fame her selfe much wondred at his woe, 660
When from Duke Robert Fortune tooke her hand,
Whose miserie shee thus had let them know:
When now to answere her despightfull foe,
Fame from deepe silence seeming to awake,
For her deare clyent, modestly thus spake: 665

What time I held my residence in Rome,
Striving my selfe o'r Europe to advance,
To winne her princes, to regayne the tombe,
Which had beene lost by their misgovernance,
Awaking England, Germanie, and France, 670
All which were woo'd, and bravely wonne by mee,
From the proud pagans, Palestine to free.

Peter-, that holy hermit putting on,
Tall Christian Princes to preach out the losse,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

And stirring brave Duke Godfrey to be gone, 675
Under the banner of the bloody crosse,
And whilst in so faire forwardnesse it was,
 And every eare attentive seem'd to stand,
 To heare what power brave Bullbyne should
 command.

 Thither did I all happy spirits exhort, 680
As to that bus'nesse luckily to bring,
Allured by the confident report,
That from so great an enterprize did spring,
T'adventure in so popular a thing,
 And deemed no man worthy to be mine, 685
 That was found backward in this great designe.

 What time this Duke, great William Conquerors
 sonne,
That in his native Normandy did rest:
For of what else, his valiant father wonne,
His brother William Rufus was possest, 690
Which, whilst he striveth from his hands to wrest,
 This brave attempt, brake like a deluge forth,
 By my shrill trumpet sounded through the north.

 Which having got free entrance to his eare,
Such entertaynment hapned there to find, 695
As suffered no psrswasion to be there,
From that high purpose to divert his mind,
For being most religiously inclind;
 Woo'd with this offer; wisely did prepare,
 Himselfe to furnish for this great affaire. 700

 That kingdome he doth carelesly neglect,
Which William Rufus wrongfully did keepe,
And onely that doth constantly respect,
Where he once in his sepulcher did sleepe, •
At whose deare death the very rocks did weepe, 705

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

His crowne of gold this Christian Prince doth
 score,
So much he lov'd him, that was crown'd with
 thorne.

And though his wants him grievously oppres'd,
Of those great summes which lately he had spent,
In levying power, which him should have posses'd,
Of England, and much hindred his intent, 711
Yet his brave purpose it could not prevent;
 Although awhile it seem'd delay to make
 Of that, which he resolv'd to undertake.

Wherefore this noble, and cleere-spirited Lord, 715
Whilst the great bus'nesse standeth at this stay,
And since his state no better could afford,
In gage to William, Normandy doth lay,
Providing first his soudiers how to pay,
 And of the two yet rather chose to leave 720*
 His crowne, then he that army would deceive.

To his victorious ensigne came from farre,
Th'in iled Redshanks, toucht with no remorse,
The nimble Irish, that with darts doe warre,
The Scot, that is so cunning on his horse, 725
The English archer of a Lyons force,
 The valiant Norman, not the least among
 The Camber-Britan, hardy, big, and strong,

Which long inclos'd within these colder climes,
He to the blessed Sepulcher did bring, 730
And taught them how they should redeeme the times
Whence their eternall memorie might spring,
To see the place whereas their heavenly King,
 Their deare redemption happily began:
 Living on earth, that was both God and man, 735

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Yee ilanders, bound in the oceans chayne,
Lock'd up like pns'ners, from the cheerefull day,
Your brave commander brought yee to the mayne,
Which to my court shew'd yee the open way,
And his victorious hand became the kay, 740
 To let yee in, to my rich treasure, where
 None ever come, but those that I hold deare:

And did thereto so zealously proceed,
That those faire locks, whose curies did him adorne,
Till he had seene the Holy Citie freed: 745
He deeply vow'd, he never would have shorne,
Which, for they so religiously were worne,
 In every eye did beautifie him more,
 Then did the crowne of Normandie before.

No threats, his hand could cause him to with-hold,
As I the sequell briefly shall relate, 751
Yet bare himselfe right wisely as he could,
And best became his dignitie and state;
Teaching how his, themselves should moderate,
 Not following life, so with his chance content, 755
 Nor flying death, so truely valient.

So did he all his faculties bestow,
That every thing exactly might be done,
That true foresight, before the act might goe,
Others grosse errors happily to shunne, 760
Wisely to finish well what was begunne,
 Justly directed in the course of things,
 By the straight rule which sound experience brings.

Idle regards of greatnesse he did scorne,
Carelesse of pompe, magnificent to bee, 765
That man reputing to be noblest borne,
Where was the most magnanimous, and free,
In honour so impartiall was hee,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Esteeming titles meritlesse and nought,
Unlesse with danger absolutely bought: 770

Giving the souldier comfortable words,
And oft imbalm'd his well-received wound,
And in his need him maintenance affords,
To brave attempts encouragmg the sound,
Never dismaid in any danger found: 775
His tent a seate of justice to the griev'd;
And 'twas a court when want should be reliev'd.

So perfectly celestiall was that fire,
Bestow'd in the composure of his mind,
To that high pitch as rayesd his desire; 780
Above the usuall compasse of his kinde,
And from all drosse so cleerely him refin'd,
As did him wholly consecrate to glory,
And made him a fit subject for a story.

Who on ambassage to the Emperor sent, 785
Passing along through Macedon and Thrace,
Ne'r came in bed, nor slept out of his tent,
Till he reviewed Duke Godfrey's reverent face;
Nor till he came into that hallowed place,
Above three houres, by night he never slept: 790
Such were the cares his troubled braine that kept.

O wherefore thou great singer of thy dayes,
Renowned Tasso in thy noble story,
Wert thou so slacke in this great worthy's prayse,
And yet so much should'st set forth others glory? 795
Me thinks for this, thou canst not but be sorry,
That thou should'st leave another to recite
That, which so much thou did'st neglect to write.

There was not found in all the Christian host,
Any, then he, more forward to the field, 800

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Nor could the army, of another boast,
To beare himselfe more bravely with his shield:
So well his armes this noble Duke could wield,
As such a one he properly should be,
That I did meane to consecrate to me: 805

Of so approved and deliver force,
Handling his lance or brandishing his blade:
For oft he had the leading of their horse,
That where he charg'd, he slaughter ever made,
At all assayes so happy to invade: 810
That were he absent, when they gave the chace,
It was suppos'd the day did lose the grace.

In doubtfull fights, where danger hap'd to fall,
He would be present ever by his will,
And where the Christians for supplies did call, 815
Thither through perill Robert pressed still,
To helpe by courage, or relieve by skill:
To every place so providently seeing,
As power in him had absolutely beeing.

When in the morne his courser he bestrid, 820
He seem'd compos'd essentially of fire,
But from the field he ever drouping rid,
As he were vanquish'd, onely to retyre;
Neerest his rest, the furthest from his desire:
And in the spoyles, his souldiers shar'd the
crownes, 825
They rich in gold, he onely rich in wounds.

And when they had the Holy Citie wonne,
The King thereof they gladly would him make,
All sov'raigne titles he so much did shunne,
As he refus'd the charge on him to take, 830
He the vaine world so clearly did forsake;

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

So farre it was from his religious mind,
To mixe vile things, with those of heav'nly kind.

He would, that him no triumph should adorne,
But his high prayse, for sinfull man that dy'd, 835
By him no marke of victorie was worne,
But the red crosse, to tell him crucify'd;
All other glories he himselfe deny'd;
A holy life but willingly he leads,
In dealing almes, and bidding of his beads. 840

And as a pilgrim, he returned agayne,
For glitt'ring armes, in palmers homely gray,
Leaving his Lords to leade his warlike trayne,
Whilst he alone came sadly on the way,
Dealing abroad his lately purchas'd prey; 845
A hermits staffe his carefull hand did hold,
That with a lance the heathen foe control'd.

But now to end this long-continued strife;
Hence-forth thy malice takes no further place,
Thy hate began and ended with his life, 850
By thee his spirit can suffer no disgrace,
Now in mine armes his vertues I imbrace;
His body thine, his crosses wnesse bee,
But mine his mind, that from thy pow'r is free.

Thou gav'st up rule, when he gave up his breath,
And where thou endedst, there did I begin, 856
Thy strength was buried in his timelesse death,
And as thy conqu'ror, lastly come I in;
And all thou gott'st, from thee againe I winne:
To me, thy right I call thee to resigne, 860
And make thy glory absolutely mine.

To the base world then Fortune get thee back,
The earth with drierie tragedies to fill,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

Empires and kingdomes bring thou there to wrack,
And on weake mortals onely worke thy will; 865
And since thou onely do'st delight in ill,
 Heare his complaint, who wanting eyes to see,
 Can lend thee sight, which art as blind as hee.

At her great words, amazed whilst they stand,
The Prince, which look'd most fearefully and 870
 grim,
Bearing his eyes in his distressefull hand,
Whose places stood with bloud up to the brim;
And as in anguish, quaking ev'ry lim,
 After deepe sighes, and lamentable throwes,
 Thus to the world disburthened his woes. 875

Deare eyes, adiew, by envie thus put out,
Where in your places buried is my joy,
With endlesse darknesse compassed about,
Which death would scarce have dared to destroy;
To breed my more perpetuall annoy, 880
 That, even that sense I onely should forgoe,
 That could alone give comfort to my woe.

Yee which beheld faire Palestine restor'd,
From the prophane hands of the Pagans freed,
The Sepulcher of that most glorious Lord, 885
And seene that place ahere his deare wounds did
 bleed,
Which with the sight my zealous soule did feed,
 Sith from your functions, night doth you dissever,
 Seclude me now from worldly joyes for ever.

Yee saw no sunne, nor did yee view the day, 890
Except a candle, yee beheld no light,
The thick stone-wals, those blessings kept away.
What could be fear'd? yee could not hurt the night,
For then teares wholly hind'red yee of sight:

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

O then, from whence should Henrie's hate arise,
That I saw nothing, yet that I had eyes! 896

The wretched'st thing, the most despised beast,
Enjoies that sense as gen'rally as we,
The very gnat, or what then that is least,
Of sight, by Nature kindly is made free. 900
What thing hath mouth to feed, but eyes to see?
O, that a tyrant then should me deprave,
Of that which else all living creatures have!

Whilst yet the light did mitigate my mone, 904
Teares found a meane, to sound my sorrowes deepe,
But now (aye me) that comfort being gone,
By wanting eyes, wherewith I erst did weepe,
My cares alone concealed I must keepe.
O God, that blindnesse, darknmg all delight,
Should above all things give my sorrow sight! 910

Where sometime stood the beauties of this face,
Lampes cleerly lighted, as the vestall flame,
Is now a dungeon, a distressefull place,
A harbor fit for infamie and shame:
Which but with horroure one can scarsly name, 915
Out of whose darke grates, miserie and grieve,
Starved, for vengeance daily begge reliefe.

The day abhorres me, and from me doth flye,
Night still me followes, yet too long doth stay,
Th'one I o'rtake not, though it still be nye, 920
Th'other comming vanisheth away,
But what availeth, either night, or day?
All's one to me, still day, or ever night,
My light is darknesse, and my darknesse light.

O yee, wherewith I did my comfort view, 925
Th'all covering heaven, and glorie that it beares,

LEGEND OF ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

No more that sight shall e'r be scene of you!
The blessed sunne, that every mortail cheeres,
Eclips'd to me, eternally appears,
 Robert, betake thee to the darksome cell, 930
 And bid the world eternally farewell.

His speech thus ending; Fortune discontent,
Turned her selfe, as shee away would flie,
Playing with fooles, and babes incontinent,
As never touch'd with humane misene, 935
As what she was, her selfe to verifie,
 And straight forgetting what she had to tell,
 To other speech, and girlish laughter fell.

When gracefull Fame, conveying thence her charge,
(As first with him, she thither did resort,) 940
Gave me this booke, wherein was writ at large,
His life, set out, though in this legend short,
T'amaze the world, with this so true report:
 But Fortune, angrie with her foe, therefore
 Gave me the gift that I should still be poore. 945

Finis

THE BALLAD OF
AGINCOURT

THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

And turning to his men, 25
Quoth our brave Henry then,
Though they to one be ten,
 Be not amazed.
Yet have we well begunne,
Battels so bravely wonne, 30
Have ever to the sonne,
 By fame beene raysed.

And for my selfe (quoth he,)
This me full rest shall be,
England ne'r mourne for me, 35
 Nor more esteeme me.
Victor I will remaine,
Or on this earth lie slaine,
Never shall shee sustaine,
 Losse to redeeme me. 40

Poitiers and Cressy tell,
When most their pride did swell,
Under our swords they fell,
 No lesse our skill is,
Then when our grandsire great, 45
Clayming the regall seate,
By many a warlike feate,
 Lop'd the French lillies.

The Duke of Yorke so dread,
The eager vaward led; 50
With the maine, Henry sped,
 Among'st his hench-men.
Excester had the rere,
A braver man not there,
O Lord, how hot they were, 55
 On the false French-men!

THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

They now to fight are gone,
Armour on armour shone,
Drumme now to drumme did grone,
 To heare, was wonder; 60
That with cryes they make,
The very earth did shake,
Trumpet to trumpet spake,
 Thunder to thunder.

Well it thine age became, 65
O noble Erpingham,
Which didst the signall ayme,
 To our hid forces;
When from a medow by,
Like a storme suddenly, 70
The English archery
 Stuck the French horses,

With Spanish ewgh so strong,
Arrowes a cloth-yard long,
That like to serpents stung, 75
 Piercing the weather;
None from his fellow starts,
But playing manly parts,
And like true English hearts,
 Stuck close together. 80

When downe their bowes they threw,
And forth their bilbowes drew,
And on the French they flew,
 Not one was tardie;
Armes were from shoulders sent, 85
Scalpes to the teeth were rent,
Downe the French pesants went,
 Our men were hardie. *

THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

- This while our noble King,
His broad sword brandishing, 90
Downe the French hoast did ding,
As to o'r-whelme it;
And many a deepe wound lent,
His armes with bloud besprent,
And many a cruell dent 95
Bruised his helmet.
- Gloster, that Duke so good,
Next of the royall blood,
For famous England stood,
With his brave brother; 100
Clarence, in steele so bright,
Though but a maiden knight,
Yet in that furious fight,
Scarce such another.
- Warwick in bloud did wade, 105
Oxford the foe invade,
And cruell slaughter made,
Still as they ran up;
Suffolke his axe did ply,
Beaumont and Willoughby 110
Bare them right doughtily,
Ferrers and Fanhope,
- Upon Saint Crispin's day
Fought was this noble fray,
Which fame did not delay, 115
To England to carry;
O, when shall English men
With such acts fill a pen,
Or England breed againe,
Such a King Harry? 120

THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

[When Brownistes banisht be,
Sectes and disloyalty,
Scizme and popery,

Then shall we flourish;
And when the greate shall aime 125
True justice to maintaine,
And shall imploye their braine
Vertue to nourish,]

POLY-OLBION

Poly-Olbion

THE FIRST SONG

The Argument

THE sprightly Muse her wing displaies,
And the French ilands first survaies;
Beares-up with Neptune, and in glory
Transcends proud Cornwalls promontorie;
There crownes Mount-Michaell, and discries 5
How all those riverets fall and rise;
Then takes in Tamer, as shee bounds
The Cornish and Devonian grounds.
And whilst the Devonshire-nymphes relate
Their loves, their fortunes, and estate, 10
Dert undertaketh to revive
Our Brute, and sings his first arrive:
Then North-ward to the verge shee bends,
And her first song at Ax shee ends.

Of Albions glorious He the wonders whilst I write,
The sundry varying soyles, the pleasures infinite
(Where heate kills not the cold, nor cold expelis the
heat,
The calmes too mildly small, nor winds too roughly
great,
Nor night doth hinder day, nor day the night doth
wrong, 5
The summer not too short, the winter not too long)
What helpe shall I invoke to ayde my Muse the while?
Thou genius of the place (this most renowned ile)
Which livedst long before the all-earth-drowning
flood,
Whilst yet the world did swarme with her gigantick
brood; 10

POLY-OLBION

And dwelt in darksome groves, there counsailing
with sprites
(But their opinions faild, by error led awry,
As since cleere truth hath shew'd to their posteritie)
When these our soules by death our bodies doe
forsake,
They instantlie againe doe other bodies take; 40
I could have wisht your spirits redoubled in my
breast,
To give my verse applause, to times eternal! rest.
Thus scarcelie said the Muse, but hovering while
she hung
Upon the Celtick wastes, the sea-nymphes loudlie
sung:
O ever-happie iles, your heads so high that beare, 45
By Nature stronglie fenc't, which never need to feare,
On Neptunes watry realmes when Eolus raiseth
warres,
And every billow bounds, as though to quench the
starres:
Faire Jersey first of these heere scattred in the deepe,
Peculiarlie that boast'st thy double-horned sheepe: 50
Inferior nor to thee, thou Jemsey, bravelie crown'd
With rough-imbatteld rocks, whose venom-hating
ground
The hardned emerill hath, which thou abroad doost
send:
Thou Ligon, her belov'd, and Serk, that doost attend
Her pleasure everie howre; as Jethow, them at need,
With phesants, fallow deere, and conies that doost
feed: 56
Yee seaven small sister iles, and Sorlings, which to see
The halfe-sunk sea-man joyes, or whatsoe're you be,
From fruitfull Aurney, neere the ancient Celtick
shore,
To Ushant and the Seames, whereas those nunnes of
yore 60

POLY-OLBION

Gave answers from their caves, and tooke what
 shapes they please:
Ye happie ilands set within the British seas,
With shrill and jocund shouts, th'unmeasur'd deepes
 awake,
And let the gods of sea their secret bowres forsake,
Whilst our industrious Muse great Britaine forth
 shall bring, 65
Crown'd with those glorious wreathes that beautifie
 the spring;
And whilst greene Thetis nymphes, with many an
 amorous lay
Sing our invention safe unto her long-wisht bay.
Upon the utmost end of Cornwalls furrowing beake,
Where Bresan from the land the tilting waves doth
 breake; 70
The shore let her transcend, the promont to discry,
And viewe about the point th'unnumbered fowle that
 fly.
Some, rising like a storme from off the troubled sand,
Seeme in their hovering flight to shadow all the land;
Some, sitting on the beach to prune their painted
 breasts, 75
As if both earth and aire they onelie did possesse.
Whence, climing to the cleeves, her selfe she firmlie
 sets
The bourns, the brooks, the becks, the rills, the
 rivilets,
Exactlie to derive; receiving in her way
That straightened tongue of land, where, at Mount-
 Michaells Bay, 80
Rude Neptune cutting in, a cantle forth doth take;
And, on the other side, Hayles vaster mouth doth
 make
A Chersonese thereof, the corner clipping in:
Where to th'industrious Muse the Mount doth thus
 begin;

POLY-OLBION

Before thou further passe, and leave this setting
shore, 85
Whose townes unto the saints that lived heere of yore,
(Their fasting, works, and pray'rs, remaining to our
shames)
Were rear'd, and justly calPd by their peculiar names,
The builders honour still; this due and let them have,
As deigne to drop a teare upon each holie grave; 90
Whose charitie and zeale, in steed of knowledge
stood:
For, surely in themselves they were right simply good.
If, credulous too much, thereby th'offended heaven
In their devout intents, yet be their sinnes forgiven.
Then from his rugged top the teares downe trickling
fell; 95
And in his passion stirr'd, againe began to tell
Strange things, that in his daies times course had
brought to pass,
That fortie miles now sea, sometimes firme fore-land
was;
And that a forrest then, which now with him is flood,
Whereof he first was calTd the Hoare-Rock in the
Wood; 100
Relating then how long this soile had laine forlorne,
As that her genius now had almost her forsworne,
And of their ancient love did utterly repent,
Sith to destroy her selfe that fatall toole she lent
By which th'insatiate slave her intrailles out doth
draw, 105
That thrusts his gripple hand into her golden mawe;
And for his part doth wish, that it were in his power
To let the ocean in, her wholly to devoure.
Which, Hayle doth over-heare, and much doth
blame his rage,
And told him (to his teeth) hee doated with his age.
For Hayle (a lustie nymph, bent all to amorous play,
And having quicke recourse into the Severne Sea 112

POLY-OLBION

With Neptunes pages oft disporting in the deepe;
One never touch't with care; but how her selfe to
 keepe
In excellent estate) doth thus againe intreate; 115
Muse, leave the wayward Mount, to his distempred
 heate,
Who nothing can produce but what doth taste of
 spight:
He shew thee things of ours most worthy thy delight.
Behold our diamonds heere, as in the quarr's they
 stand,
By Nature neatly cut, as by a skilfull hand, 120
Who varieth them in formes, both curiouslie and oft;
Which for shee (wanting power) produceth them too
 soft,
That vertue which she could not liberallie impart,
Shee striveth to amend by her owne proper art.
Besides, the seaholme heere, that spreadeth all our
 shore, 125
The sick consuming man so powerfull to restore:
Whose roote th'eringo is, the reines that doth inflame
So stronglie to performe the Cytheraeane game,
That generally approov'd, both farre and neere is
 sought.
And our Main-Amber heere, and Burien trophy,
 thought 130
Much wrongd, not yet preferd for wonders with the
 rest.
But, the laborious Muse, upon her journey prest,
Thus uttereth to her selfe; To guide my course aright,
What mound or steddie mere is offered to my sight
Upon this out-stretcht arme, whilst sayiing heere at
 ease, 135
Betwixt the southern waste, and the Sabrinian seas,
I view those wanton brookes, that waxing, still doe
 wane;
That scarcelie can conceive, but brought to bed againe;

POLY-OLBION

Scarce rising from the spring (that is their naturall
mother)
To growe into a streame, but buried in another. 140
When Chore doth call her on, that wholly doth betake
Her selfe unto the Loo; transformed into a lake,
Through that impatient love shee had to entertaine
The lustfull Neptune oft; whom when his wracks
restraine,
Impatient of the wrong, impetuousslie hee raves: 145
And in his ragefull flowe, the furious King of waves,
Breaks foming o're the beach, whom nothing seemes
to coole,
Till he have wrought his will on that capacious poole:
Where Menedge, by his brookes, a Chersonese is cast,
Widening the slender shore to ease it in the wast; 150
A promont jutting out into the dropping south,
That with his threatning cleeves in horrid Neptunes
mouth,
Derides him and his power: nor cares how him he
greetes.
Next, Roseland (as his friend, the mightier Menedge)
meets
Great Neptune when he swells, and rageth at the
rocks 155
(Set out into those seas) inforcing through his shocks
Those armes of sea, that thrust into the tinny strand,
By their meandred creeks indenting of that land
Whose fame by everie tongue is for her myneralls
hurld,
Neere from the mid-daies point, throughout the
westerne world. 160
Heere Vale, a livelie flood, her noble name that gives
To Flamouth; and by whom, it famous ever lives,
Whose entrance is from sea so intricatelie wound,
Her haven angled so about her harbrous sound,
That in her quiet bay a hundred ships may ride, 165
Yet not the tallest mast, be of the tall'st decri'd;

POLY-OLBION

Her braverie to this nymph when neighbouring rivers
told,
Her mind to them againe shee brieflie doth unfold;
Let Camell, of her course, and curious windings
boast,
In that her greatnesse raignes sole mistress of that
coast 170
Twixt Tamer and that bay, where Hayle poures forth
her pride:
And let us (nobler nymphs) upon the mid-daie side,
Be frolick with the best. Thou Foy, before us all,
By thine owne named towne made famous in thy fall,
As Low, amongst us heere; a most delicious brooke,
With all our sister nymphes, that to the noone-sted
looke, 176
Which glyding from the hills, upon the tinny ore,
Betwixt your high-rear'd banks, resort to this our
shore:
Lov'd streames, let us exult, and thinke our selves no
lesse
Then those upon their side, the setting that possesse.
Which, Camell over-heard: but what doth she
respect 181
Their taunts, her proper course that loosely doth
neglect?
As frantick, ever since her British Arthurs blood,
By Mordreds murtherous hand was mingled with her
flood.
For, as that river, best might boast that conquerors
breath, 185
So sadlie shee bemoanes his too untimelie death;
Who, after twelve proud fields against the Saxon
fought,
Yet back unto her banks by fate was lastly brought:
As though no other place on Britaines spacious earth,
Were worthie of his end, but where he had his
birth: 190

POLY-OLBION

And carelesse ever since how shee her course doe
steere,
Thus muttred to her selfe, in wandring here and
there;
Even in the agedst face, where beautie once did
dwell,
And nature (in the least) but seemed to excell,
Time cannot make such waste, but something wil
appeare, 195
To shewe some little tract of delicacie there.
Or some religious worke, in building manie a day,
That this penurious age hath suffred to decay,
Some lim or modell, dragd out of the ruinous mass,
The richness will declare in glorie whilst it was; 200
But time upon my waste committed hath such theft,
That it of Arthur heere scarce memorie hath left:
The nine-ston'd trophic thus whilst shee doth enter-
taine,
Proude Tamer swoopes along, with such a lustie
traine 204
As fits so brave a flood two countries that divides:
So, to increase her strength, shee from her equall
sides
Receives their severall rills; and of the Cornish kind,
First taketh Atre in: and her not much behind
Comes Kensey: after whom, cleere Enian in doth
make,
In Tamers roomthier bankes, their rest that scarcelie
take. 210
Then Lyner, though the while aloofe she seem'd to
keepe,
Her soveraigne when shee sees t'approach the surge-
full deepe,
To beautifie her fall her plentious tribute brings.
This honours Tamer much: that shee whose plentious
springs,

POLY-OLBION

Those proud aspyring hills, Bromwelly and his
frend 215

High Rowter, from their tops impartiallie commend
And is by Carewes Muse, the river most renound,
Associate should her grace to the Devonian ground,
Which in those other brookes doth emulation breed.
Of which, first Car comes crown'd, with oziar, segs
and reed: 220

Then Lid creeps on along, and taking Thrushel,
throwes
Her selfe amongst the rocks; and so incavern'd goes,
That of the blessed light (from other floods) debarr'd,
To bellowe under earth, she onelie can be heard,
As those that view her tract, seemes strangelie to
affright: 225

So, Toovy straineth in; and Plym, that claimes by
right
Tha christning of that bay, which beares her nobler
name.

Upon the British coast, what ship yet ever came
That not of Plymouth heares, where those brave
navies lie,
From canons thundring throats, that all the world
defie? 230

Which, to invasive spoile, when th'English list to
draw,
Have checkt Iberias pride, and held her oft in awe:
Oft furnishing our dames, with Indias rar'st devices,
And lent us gold, and pearle, rich silks, and daintie
spices. 234

But Tamer takes the place, and all attend her here,
A faithfull bound to both; and two that be so neare
For likeliness of soile, and quantitie they hold,
Before the Roman came; whose people were of old
Knowne by one generall name, upon this point that
dwell,
All other of this ile in wrastling that excel!: 240

POLY-OLBION

With collars be they yokt, to prove the arme at length,
Like bulls set head to head, with meere delyver
strength:

Or by the girdles graspt, they practise with the hip,
The forward, backward, falx, the mare, the turne, the
trip,

When stript into their shirts, each other they invade
Within a spacious ring, by the beholders made, 246

According to the law. Or when the ball to throw,
And drive it to the gole, in squadrons forth they goe:
And to avoid the troupes (their forces that fore-lay)
Through dikes and rivers make, in this robustious
play; 250

By which, the toiles of warre most livelie are exprest.
But Muse, may I demaund, why these of all the
rest

(As mightie Albyons eld'st) most active are and
strong?

From Corin came it first, or from the use so long?
Or that this fore-land lies furthest out into his sight,
Which spreads his vigorous flames on everie lesser
light? 256

With th'vertue of his beames, this place that doth
inspire:

Whose pregnant wombe prepared by his all-powerful
fire,

Being purelie hot and moist, projects that fruitfull
seed,

Which stronglie doth beget, and doth as stronglie
breed: 260

The weldisposed heaven heere proving to the earth,
A husband furthering fruite; a midwife helping birth.

But whilst th'industrious Muse thus labours to
relate

Those rilletts that attend proud Tamer and her state,
A neighbourer of this nymphes, as high in fortunes
grace, 265

POLY-OLBION

And whence calme Tamer trippes, cleere Towridge in
that place
Is poured from her spring; and seemes at first to flowe
That way which Tamer straines: but as she great doth
growe
Remembreth to fore-see, what rivalls she should find
To interrupt her course: whose so unsettled mind 270
Ock comming in perceives, and thus doth her per-
swade;
Now Neptune shield (bright nymph) thy beautie
should be made
The object of her scorne, which (for thou canst not be
Upon the southern side so absolute as shee)
Will awe thee in thy course. Wherefore, faire flood
recoile: 275
And where thou maist alone be soveraigne of the
soile,
There exercise thy power, thy braveries and displaie;
Turne Towridge, let us back to the Sabrinian sea;
Where Thetis handmaids still in that recoursefull
deepe
With those rough gods of sea, continuall revells
keepe; 280
There maist thou live admir'd, the mistress of the lake.
Wise Ock shee doth obey, returning, and doth take
The Tawe: which from her fount forc't on with
amorous gales,
And easely ambling downe through the Devonian
dales,
Brings with her Moule and Bray, her banks that
gentlie bathe; 285
Which on her daintie breast, in many a silver swathe
Shee beares unto that bay, where Barstable beholds,
How her beloved Tawe cleere Towridge there enfolds.
The confluence of these brooks divulg'd in Dert-
moore, bred 289
Distrust in her sad breast, that shee, so largeticie spread,

POLY-OLBION

And in this spacious shire the neer'st the center set
Of anie place of note; that these should bravelie get
The praise, from those that sprung out of her pearlie
lap;

Which, nourisht and bred up at her most plentious
pap, 294

No sooner taught to dade, but from their mother trip,
And in their speedie course, strive others to out-strip.
The Yalme, the Awne, the Aume, by spacious Dert-
moore fed,

And in the Southern sea, b'ing likewise brought to
bed;

That these were not of power to publish her desert,
Much griev'd the ancient Moore: which understood
by Dert 300

(From all the other floods that onely takes her name,
And as her eld'st (in right) the heire of all her fame)
To shew her nobler spirit it greatiie doth behove.

Deare Mother, from your breast this feare (quoth
she) remove:

Defie their utmost force: ther's not the proudest
flood, 305

That falls betwixt the Mount and Exmore, shall make
good

Her royaltie with mine, with me nor can compare:
I challenge any one, to answeere me that dare;

That was, before them all, predestinate to meet
My Britaine-founding Brute, when with his puissant
fleet 310

At Totnesse first he toucht: which shall renowne my
streame

(Which now the envious world doth slander for a
dreame.)

Whose fatall flight from Greece, his fortunate arrive
In happy Albyon heere whilst stronglie I revive, 314
Deare Harburne at thy hands this credit let me win,

POLY-OLBION

Quoth she, that as thou hast my faithfull hand-maid
bin:

So now (my onelie brooke) assist me with thy spring,
Whilst of the god-like Brute the storie thus I sing.

When long-renowned Troy lay spent in hostile fire,
And aged Priams pompe did with her flames expire,
Aeneas (taking thence Ascanius, his young sonne, 321
And his most reverent sire, the grave Anchises, wonne
From sholes of slaughtering Greeks) set out from
Simois shores;

And through the Tirrhene Sea, by strength of toyling
ores,

.Raught Italic at last: where, King Latinus lent 325
Safe harbor for his ships, with wrackfull tempests
rent:

When, in the Latine Court, Lavinia young and faire
(Her fathers onely child, and kingdoms onely heire)
Upon the Trojan Lord her liking stronglie plac't,
And languisht in the fiers that her faire breast

imbrac't: 330

But, Turnus (at that time) the proud Rutulian King,
A suter to the maid, Aeneas malicing,
By force of armes attempts, his rivall to extrude:
But, by the Teucrian power courageouslie subdu'd,
Bright Cythereas sonne the Latine crowne

obtained; 335

And dying, in his stead his sonne Ascanius raign'd.
Next, Silvius him succeeds, begetting Brute againe:
Who in his mothers wombe whilst yet he did remaine,
The oracles gave out, that next borne Brute should
bee

His parents onelie death: which soone they liv'd to
see. 340

For, in his painfull birth his mother did depart;
And ere his fifteenth yeere, in hunting of a hart,
He with a lucklesse shaft his haplesse father slew:

POLY-OLBION

For which, out of his throne, their King the Latines
threw.

Who, wandering in the world, to Greece at last doth
get. 345

Where, whilst he liv'd unknowne, and oft with want
beset,

He of the race of Troy a remnant hapt to find,
There by the Grecians held; which (having still in
mind

Their tedious tenne yeeres warre, and famous heroes
slaine)

In slaverie with them still those Trojans did detain:
Which Pyrrhus thither brought (and did with hate
pursue, 351

To wreake Achilles death, at Troy whom Paris slew)
There, by Pandrasus kept, in sad and servile awe.

Who, when they knew young Brute, and that brave
shape they saw, 354

They humbly him desire, that he a meane would bee,
From those imperious Greeks, his countrymen to free.

Hee, finding out a rare and sprightly youth, to fit
His humour every way, for courage, power, and wit,
Assaracus (who, though that by his sire he were
A Prince amongst the Greeks, yet held the Trojans
deere; 360

Descended of their stock upon the mothers side:
For which, he by the Greeks his birth-right was
deni'd)

Impatient of his wrongs, with him brave Brute arose,
And of the Trojan youth courageous captaines chose,
Raysd earth-quakes with their, drummes, the ruffling
ensignes reare; 365

And, gathering young and old that rightlie Trojan
were,

Up to the mountaines march, through straits and
forrests strong:

Where, taking-in the townes, pretended to belong

POLY-OLBION

Unto that Grecian Lord, some forces there they put:
Within whose safer walls their wives and children
shut, 370

Into the fields they drew, for libertie to stand.
Which when Pandrasus heard, he sent his strict
command

To levie all the power he presentlie could make:
So, to their strengths of warre the Trojans them
betake.

But whilst the Grecian guides (not knowing how or
where 375

The Teucrians were entrencht, or what their forces
were)

In foule disordred troupes yet straggled, as secure,
This loosness to their spoyle the Trojans did allure,
Who fiercely them assail'd: where stanchlesse furie
rap't

The Grecians in so fast, that scarcely one escap't: 380
Yea, proud Pandrasus flight, himselfe could hardiie
free.

Who, when he saw his force thus frustrated to bee,
And by his present losse, his passed error found
(As by a later warre to cure a former wound)
Doth reinforce his power to make a second fight. 385
When they whose better wits had over-matcht his
might,

Loth what they got to lose, as politiquelie cast
His armies to intrap, in getting to them fast
Antigonus as friend, and Anaclet his pheere
(Surpriz'd in the last fight) by gifts who hired were
Into the Grecian campe th'insuing night to goe 391
And faine they were stolne forth, to their allies to
show

How they might have the spoile of all the Trojan
pride;
And gaining them beleefe, the credulous Grecians
guide 394

POLY-OLBION

Into th'ambushment neere, that secretlie was laid:
So to the Trojans hands the Grecians were betraid;
Pandrasus selfe surpriz'd; his crown who to redeeme
(Which scarcely worth their wrong the Trojan race
esteeme)

Their slaverie long sustained did willinglie release:
And (for a lasting league of amitie and peace) 400
Bright Innogen, his child, for wife to Brutus gave,
And furnisht them a fleete, with all things they could
crave

To set them out to sea. Who lanching, at the last
They on Lergecia light, an lie; and ere they past,
Unto a temple built to great Diana there, 405
The noble Brutus went; wise Trivia to enquire,
To shew them where the stock of ancient Troy to
place.

The goddesse, that both knew and lov'd the Trojan
race,
Reveal'd to him in dreames, that furthest to the west,
He should discrie the He of Albion, highlie blest; 410
With giants latelie stor'd; their numbers now decaid:
By vanquishing the rest, his hopes should there he
staid:

Where, from the stock of Troy, those puissant Kings
should rise,
Whose conquests from the west, the world should
scant suffice.

Thus answer'd; great with hope, to sea they put
again, 415
And safelie tinder saile, the howres doe entertaine
With sights of sundrie shores, which they from farre
discrie:

And viewing with delight th'Azarian mountaines hie,
One walking on the deck, unto his friend would say
(As I have heard some tell) So goodly Ida lay. 420

Thus talking mongst themselves, they sun-burnt
Africk keepe

POLY-OLBION

Upon the lee-ward still, and (sulking up the deepe)
For Mauritania make: where putting-in, they find
A remnant (yet reserv'd) of th'ancient Dardan kind,
By brave Antenor brought from out the Greekish
 spoiles 425
(O long-renowned Troy! Of thee, and of thy toyles,
What country had not heard?) which, to their
 Generall, then
Great Corineus had, the strongest of mortall men:
To whom (with joyfull harts) Dianas will they show.
 Who easlie beeing wonne along with them to goe,
They altogether put into the watry plaine: 431
Oft-times with pyrats, oft with monsters of the maine
Distressed in their way; whom hope forbids to feare.
Those pillars first they passe which Joves great sonne
 did reare.
And cuffing those sterne waves which like huge
 mountaines roule 435
(Full joy in every part possessing every soule)
In Aquitane at last the Ilion race arrive.
Whom strongly to repulse when as those recreants
 strive,
They (anchoring there at first but to refresh their fleet,
Yet saw those savage men so rudely them to greet)
Unshipt their warlike youth, advauncing to the
 shore. 441
The dwellers, which perceiv'd such danger at the dore,
Their King Groffarius get to raise his powerfull
 force:
Who, mustring up an host of mingled foote and
 horse,
Upon the Trojans set; when suddainly began 445
A fierce and dangerous fight: where Corineus ran
With slaughter through the thick-set squadrons of the
 foes;
And with his armed axe laid on such deadlie blowes,

POLY-OLBION

That heapes of livelesse trunks each passage stopt up quite.

Groffarius having lost the honour of the fight, 450
Repaires his ruin'd powers; not so to give them
breath:

When they, which must be free'd by conquest or by death,

And, conquering them before, hop't now to doe no lesse

(The like in courage still) stand for the like successe,
Then sterne and deadlie warre put-on his horridst
shape; 455

And wounds appear'd so wide, as if the grave did
gape

To swallow both at once; which strove as both should
fall,

When they with slaughter seem'd to be encircled all:
Where Turon (of the rest) Brutes sisters valiant sonne
(By whose approved deeds that day was chiefly
wonne) 460

Sixe hundred slue out-right through his peculiar
strength:

By multitudes of men yet over-prest at length.
His nobler uncle there, to his immortall name,
The citie Turon built, and well endow'd the same.

For Albion sayling then, th'arrived quicklie heere
(O! never in this world men halfe so joyful were 466
With shoutes heard up to heaven, when they beheld
the land)

And in this verie place where Totnesse now doth
stand,

First set their gods of Troy, kissing the blessed shore;
Then, forraging this ile, long promisd them before,
Amongst the ragged cleeves those monstrous giants
sought: 471

Who (of their dreadfull kind) t'appall the Trojans,
brought

POLY-OLBION

Great Gogmagog, an oake that by the roots could
teare:
So mightie were (that time) the men who lived there:
But, for the use of armes he did not understand 475
(Except some rock or tree, that comming next to
hand
Hee raz'd out of the earth to execute his rage)
Hee challenge makes for strength, and offereth there
his gage.
Which, Corin taketh up, to answer by and by,
Upon this sonne of earth his utmost power to try. 480
All, doubtful to which part the victorie would goe,
Upon that loftie place at Plimmouth calPd the Hoe,
Those mightie wrestlers met; with many an ireful!
looke
Who threatned, as the one hold of the other tooke:
But, grapled, glowing fire shines in their sparkling
eyes. 485
And, whilst at length of arme one from the other lyes,
Their lusty sinewes swell like cables, as they strive:
Their feet such trampling make, as though they
forc't to drive
A thunder out of earth; which stagger'd with the
weight: 489
Thus eithers utmost force urg'd to the greatest height.
Whilst one upon his hip the other seekes to lift,
And th'adverse (by a turne) doth from his cunning
shift,
Their short-fetcht troubled breath a hollow noise doth
make,
Like bellowes of a forge. Then Corin up doth take
The giant twixt the grayns; and, voyding of his hould
(Before his combrous feet he well recover could) 496
Pitcht head-long from the hill; as when a man doth
throw
An axtree, that with sleight delivered from the toe
Rootes up the yeelding earth: so that his violent fall,

POLY-OLBION

Strooke Neptune with such strength, as shouldred
him withall; 500
That where the monstrous waves like mountaines late
did stand,
They leap't out of the place, and left the bared sand
To gaze upon wide heaven: so great a blowe it gave.
For which, the conquering Brute, on Corineus brave
This home of land bestow'd, and markt it with his
name; 505
Of Corin, Cornwall call'd, to his immortall fame.
Cleere Dert delivering thus the famous Brutes
arrive,
Inflam'd with her report, the stragling rivetets strive
So highlie her to raise, that Ting (whose banks were
blest
By her beloved nymph deere Leman) which addrest
And fullie with her selfe determined before 511
To sing the Danish spoyles committed on her shore,
When hither from the east they came in mightie
swarmes,
Nor could their native earth containe their numerous
armes, 514
Their surcrease grew so great, as forced them at last
To seeke another soyle (as bees doe when they cast)
And by their impious pride how hard she was bested,
When all the country swam with blood of Saxons
shed:
This river (as I said) which had determined long
The deluge of the Danes exactlie to have song, 520
It utterlie neglects; and studying how to doe
The Dert those high respects belonging her unto,
Inviteth goodlie Ex, who from her ful-fed spring
Her little Barlee hath, and Dunsbrook her to bring
From Exmore: when she yet hath scarcely found her
course, 525
Then Creddy commeth in, and Forto, which inforce
Her faster to her fall; as Ken her closelie clips,

POLY-OLBION

And on her easterne side sweet Lemman gentlie slips
Into her widened banks, her soveraigne to assist 529
As Columb winnes for Ex, cleere Wever and the Clist,
Contributing their streames their mistress fame to
raise.

As all assist the Ex, so Ex consumeth these;
Like some unthrifitie youth, depending on the court,
To winne an idle name, that keeps a needless port;
And raising his old rent, exacts his farmers store 535
The land-lord to enrich, the tenants wondrous poore:
Who having lent him theirs, he then consumes his
owne,

That with most vaine expense upon the Prince is
throwne:

So these, the lesser brooks unto the greater pay;
The greater, they againe spend all upon the sea: 540
As, Otrei (that her name doth of the otters take,
Abounding in her banks) and Ax, their utmost make
To ayde stout Dert, that dar'd Brutes storie to revive.
For, when the Saxon first the Britans forth did drive,
Some up into the hills themselves o're Severne shut:
Upon this point of land, for refuge others put, 546
To that brave race of Brute still fortunate. For where
Great Brute first disembarqu't his wandring Trojans,
there

His ofspring (after long expulst the inner land,
When they the Saxon power no longer could with-
stand) 550
Found refuge in their flight; where Ax and Otrei first
Gave these poore soules to drinke, opprest with
grievous thirst.

Heere Fie unyoke awhile, and turne my steeds to
meat:

The land growes large and wide: my teame begins to
sweat.

POLY-OLBION

THE FIFT SONG

The Argument

IN this song, Severne gives the doome
What of her Lundy should become.
And whilst the nimble Cambrian rills
Daunce hy-day-gies amongst the hills,
The Muse them to Carmarden brings; 5
Where Merlins wondrous birth shee sings,
From thence to Penbrooke shee doth make,
To see how Milford state doth take:
The scattered ilands there doth tell:
And, visiting Saint Davids cell, 10
Doth sport her all the shores along,
Preparing the ensuing song.

Now Sabine, as a Queene, miraculously faire,
Is absolutely plac't in her imperiall chaire
Of crystall richly wrought, that gloriously did shine,
Her grace becomming well, a creature so divine: 4
And as her god-like selfe, so glorious was her throne,
In which himselfe to sit great Neptune had been
known;
Whereon there were ingrav'd those nymphs the gods
had woo'd,
And every severall shape wherein for love he su'd;
Each daughter, her estate and beautie, every sonne;
What nations he had rul'd, what countries he had
wonne. 10
No fish in this wide waste but with exceeding cost
Was there in antique worke most curiously imbost.
She, in a watchet weed, with manie a curious wave,
Which as a princelie gift great Amphitrite gave;
Whose skirts were to the knee, with corall fring'd
belowe 15
To grace her goodly steppes. And where she meant to
goe,

POLY-OLBION

The path was strew'd with pearle: which though they
orient were,
Yet scarce knowne from her feet, they were so
wondrous cleere:
To whom the mermaids hold her glasse, that she may
see
Before all other floods how farre her beauties bee: 20
Who was by Nereus taught, the most profoundly
wise
That learned her the skill of hidden prophecies,
By Thetis special care; as Chiron earst had done
To that proud bane of Troy, her god-resembling
sonne.
For her wise censure now, whilst everie listmng
flood 25
(When reason some-what could their late distempred
mood)
Inclosed Severne in; before this mightie rout,
Shee sitting well prepar'd, with countenance grave
and stout,
Like some great learned judge, to end a waightie
cause, 29
Well furnisht with the force of arguments and lawes,
And everie special prooffe that justlie may be brought;
Now with a constant brow, a firme and setled thought,
And at the point to give the last and finall doome:
The people crowding neere within the pestred roome,
A slowe, soft murmuring moves amongst the
wondring throng, 35
As though with open eares they would devoure his
tongue:
So Severne bare her selfe, and silence so she wanne,
When to th'assembly thus shee seriouslie began;
My neere and loved nymphs, good hap yee both
betide: 39
Well Britans have yee sung; you English, well repli'd:

POLY-OLBION

Which to succeeding times shall memorize your
stories
To either countries praise, as both your endlesse
glories.
And from your listning eares, sith vaine it were to
hold
What all-appointing heaven will plainlie shall be told,
Both gladlie be you pleas'd: for thus the powers
reveale, 45
That when the Norman line in strength shall lastlie
faile
(Fate limiting the time) th'ancient Britan race
Shall come againe to sit upon the soveraigne place.
A branch sprung out of Brute, th'imperiall top shall
get,
Which grafted in the stock of great Plantaginet, 50
The stem shall strongly wax, as still the trunk doth
wither:
That power which bare it thence, againe shall bring
it thither
By Tudor, with faire winds from little Bntaine driven,
To whom the goodlie Bay of Milford shall be given;
As thy wise prophets, Wales, fore-told his wisht
arrive, 55
And how Lewellins line in him should doubly thrive.
For from his issue sent to Albany before,
Where his neglected blood, his vertue did restore,
Hee first unto himselfe in faire succession gain'd
The Stewards nobler name; and afterward attained 60
The royal Scottish wreath, upholding it in state.
This stem, to Tudors joyn'd (which thing all-powerfull
fate
So happily produc't out of that prosperous bed,
Whose mariages conjoynd the white-rose and the
red)
Suppressing every plant, shall spred it selfe so wide,
As in his armes shall clip the ile on every side. 66

POLY-OLBION

By whom three severM realities in one shall firmlic
stand,
As Britain-founding Brute first monarchiz'd the land.
And Cornwall, for that thou no longer shalt contend,
But to old Cambria cleave, as to thy ancient friend,
Acknowledge thou thy brood, of Brutes high blood
to bee; 71
And what hath hapt to her, the like t'have chanc't to
thee;
The Britains to receive, when heaven on them did
lowre,
Loegria forc't to leave; who from the Saxons powre
Themselves in deserts, creeks, and mount'nous wasts
bestow'd, 75
Or where the fruitlesse rocks could promise them
aboad:
Why strive yee then for that, in little time that shall
(As you are all made one) to one unto you all;
Then take my finall doome pronounced lastlie, this;
That Lundy like ally'd to Wales and England is. 80
Each part most highlie pleas'd, then up the session
brake:
When to the learned maids againe invention spake;
O yee Pegasian nymphs, that hating viler things;
Delight in loftie hills, and in delicious springs,
That in Pierus borne, and named of the place, 85
The Thracian Pimpla love, and Pindus often grace;
In Aganippas fount, and in Castalia's brims,
That often have been known to bathe your crystall
lims,
Conduct me through these brooks, and with a
fastned clue,
Direct mee in my course, to take a perfect view 90
Of all the wandring streames, in whose entransing
gyres,
Wise Nature oft her selfe her workmanship admires
(So manifold they are, with such meanders wound,

POLY-OLBION

As may with wonder seeme invention to confound)
 That to those British names, untaught the eare to
 please, 95

Such relish I may give in my delicious layes,
 That all the armed orks of Neptunes grislie band,
 With musick of my verse, amaz'd may listning stand;
 As when his Trytons trumps doe them to battell call
 Within his surging lists to combat with the whale. 100

Thus, have we over-gone the Glamorgaman Gowre,
 Whose promontorie (plac't to check the oceans
 powre)
 Kept Severne yet her selfe, till beeing growne too
 great,

Shee with extended armes unbounds her ancient seat:
 And turning lastlie sea, resignes unto the maine 105
 What soveraigntie her selfe but latelie did retaine.

Next, Loghor leads the way, who with a lustie crue
 (Her wild and wandring steps that ceaseleslie pursue)
 Still forward is inforc't: as, Amond thrusts her on,
 And Morlas (as a mayd shee much relies upon) 110

Intreats her present speed; assuring her withall,
 Her best-beloved ile, Bachannis, for her fall,
 Stands specially prepar'd, of every thing supplied.

When Guendra with such grace deliberately doth
 glide

As Tovy doth entice: who setteth out prepar'd 115
 At all points like a Prince, attended with a guard:
 Of which, as by her name, the neer'st to her of kin
 Is Toothy, tripping downe from Verwins rushie lin,
 Through Rescob running out, with Pescover to meet
 Those rills that forest loves; and doth so kindly greet,
 As to intreat their stay shee gladly would prevaile.

Then Tranant nicelie treads upon the watry traile: 122
 The livelie skipping Brane, along with Gwethrick
 goes;

In Tovies wandring banks themselves that scarcely
 lose,

POLY-OLBION

But Mudny, with Cledaugh, and Sawthy, soone
resort, 125

Which at Langaddock grace their soveraignes watry
court.

As when the servile world some gathering man
espies,

Whose thriving fortune showes, he to much wealth
may rise,

And through his Princes grace his followers may
preferre,

Or by renew left by some dead ancestor; 130

All lowting lowe to him, him humbly they observe,

And happy is that man his nod that may deserve:

To Tovy so they stoupe, to them upon the way

Which thus displaies the spring within their view that
lay.

Neere Denevoir, the seat of the Demetian King 135

Whilst Cambria was herselfe, full, strong, and
florishing,

There is a pleasant spring, that constant doth abide
Hard-by these winding shores wherein wee nimble
slide;

Long-of the ocean lov'd, since his victorious hand
First proudlie did insult upon the conquer'd land. 140

And though a hundred nymphs in faire Demetia bee,
Whose features might allure the sea-gods more then
shee,

His fancie takes her forme, and her he onelie likes
(Who ere knew halfe the shafts where-with blind
Cupid strikes?)

Which great and constant faith, shew'd by the God
of Sea, 145

This cleere and lovelie nymph so kindlie doth repay,
As suffring for his sake what love to lover owes,
With him she sadlte ebbs, with him she proudlie
flowes,

To him her secret vowes perpetually doth keepe,

POLY-OLBION

Observing everie lawe and custome of the deepe. 150
Now Tovy towa'rd her fall (Langaddock over-gon)
Her Dulas forward drives: and Cothy comming on
The traine to over-take, the neerest way doth cast
Ere shee Carmarden get: where Gwilly, making hast,
Bright Tovy entertaines at that most famous towne
Which her great prophet bred who Wales doth so
renowne: 156
And taking her a harpe, and tuning well the strings,
To princely Tovy thus shee of the prophet sings;
Of Merlin and his skill what region doth not heare?
The world shall still be full of Merlin everie where.
A thousand lingering yeeres his prophecies have
runne, 161
And scarcely shall have end till time it selfe be done:
Who of a British nymph was gotten, whilst she
plaid
With a seducing spirit, which wonne the goodlie
maid;
(As all Demetia through, there was not found her
peere) 165
Who, be'ing so much renown'd for beautie farre and
neere,
Great Lords her liking sought, and still in vaine they
prov'd:
That spirit (to her unknowne) this virgin onelie lov'd;
Which taking humane shape, of such perfection
seemd, 169
As (all her suters scorn'd) shee onelie him esteem'd.
Who, fayning for her sake that he was come from
farre,
And richlie could endow (a lustie batcheler)
On her that prophet got, which from his mothers
wombe
Of things to come fore-told untill the generall doome.
But, of his fayned birth in sporting idlie thus, 175
Suspect mee not, that I this dreamed incubus

POLY-OLBION

By strange opinions should licentiouslie subsist;
Or, selfe-conceited, play the humorous Platonist,
Which boldlie dares affirme, that spirits, themselves
supply
With bodies, to commix with fraile mortalitie, 180
And heere allow them place, beneath this lower sphere
Of the unconstant moone; to tempt us dailie here.
Some, earthly mixture take; as others, which aspire,
Them subtler shapes resume, of water, ayre, and fire,
Being those immortalls long before the heaven, that
fell, 185
Whose deprivation thence, determined their hell:
And loosing through their pride that place to them
assign'd,
Predestined that was to mans regenerate kind,
They, for th'inveterate hate to his election, still
Desist not him to tempt to every damned ill: 190
And to seduce the spirit, oft prompt the frailer blood,
Invegling it with tastes of counterfitted good,
And teach it all the sleights the soule that may excite
To yeeld up all her power unto the appetite.
And to those curious wits if we our selves apply, 195
Which search the gloomie shades of deepe philosophy,
They reason so will clothe, as well the mind can show,
That contrane effects, from contraries may grow;
And that the soule a shape so stronglie may conceal,
As to her selfe the-while may seeme it to creat; 200
By which th'abused sense more easelie oft is led
To thinke that it enjoyes the thing imagined.

But, toyl'd in these darke tracts with sundrie doubts
repleat,
Clame shades, and cooler streames must quench this
furious heat:
Which seeking, soone we finde where Cowen in her
course, 205
Tow'rds the Sabrinian shores, as sweeping from her
source,

POLY-OLBION

Amongst his wel-growne woods, the shag-haired
satyrs stand
(The sylvans chiefe resort) the shores then sitting hie,
Which under water now so many fadoms lie: 236
And wallowing porpice sport and lord it in the flood,
Where once the portly oke, and large-limb'd popler
stood:
Of all the forrests kind these two now onely left.
But time, as guilty since to mans insatiate theft, 240
Transfere the English names of townes and households
hither,
With the industrious Dutch since sojourning together.
When wrathfull heaven the clouds so liberally
bestow'd,
The seas (then wanting roomth to lay their boystrous
loade)
Upon the Belgian marsh their pampred stomackes
cast, 245
That peopled cities sanke into the mightie wast.
The Flemings were inforc't to take them to their ores,
To trie the setting maine to find out firmer shores;
When as this spacious ile them entrance did allow,
To plant the Belgian stocke upon this goodly brow:
These nations, that their tongues did naturally affect,
Both generallie forsooke the British dialect: 252
As when it was decreed by all-fore-dooming fate,
That ancient Rome should stoupe from her emperious
state,
With nations from the north then altogether fraught,
Which to her civill bounds their barbarous customes
brought, 256
Of all her ancient spoyles and lastlie be forlorne,
From Tybers hallowed banks to old Bizantium borne:
Th'abundant Latine then old Latium lastly left,
Both of her proper forme and elegancie reft; 260
Before her smoothest tongue, their speech that did
prefer,

POLY-OLBION

And in her tables fixt their ill-shap't character.

A divination strange the Dutch made-English have,
Appropriate to that place (as though some power it
gave) 264

By th'shoulder of a ram from off the right side par'd,
Which usuallie they boile, the spade-boane beeing
bar'd,

Which then the wizard takes, and gazing there-upon,
Things long to come fore-showes, as things done long
agon;

Scapes secretlie at home, as those abroad, and farre;
Murthers, adulterous stealths, as the events of warre,
The raignes and death of Kings they take on them to
know: 271

Which onelie to their skill the shoulder-blade doth
show.

You goodlie sister floods, how happy is your state!
Or should I more commend your features, or your
fate;

That Milford, which this ile her greatest port doth
call 275

Before your equall floods is lotted to your fall!
Where was saile ever seene, or wind hath ever blowne,
Whence Penbrooke yet hath heard of haven like her
owne?

She bids Dungleddy dare Iberias proudest road,
And chargeth her to send her challenges abroad 280
Along the coast of France, to prove if any bee
Her Milford that dare match; so absolute is shee.

And Clethy comming downe from Wrenyvaur her sire
(A hill that thrusts his head into th'etheriall fire) 284

Her sisters part doth take, and dare avouch as much:
And Percily the proud, whome neerlie it doth touch,
Said, he would beare her out; and that they all should
know.

And there-withall he struts, as though he scorn'd to
show

POLY-OLBION

His head belowe the heaven, when he of Milford
spake: 289

But there was not a port the prize durst undertake.
So highlie Milford is in every mouth renownd,
Noe haven hath ought good, in her that is not found:
Whereas the swelling surge, that with his fomie head,
The gentler looking land with furie menaced,
With his encountring wave no longer there contends;
But sitting mildly downe like perfect ancient friends,
Unmov'd of any wind which way so ere it blow, 297
And rather seeme to smile, then knit an angry brow.
The ships with shattred ribs scarce creeping from the
seas,

On her sleeke bosome ride with such deliberate ease,
As all her passed stormes shee holds but meane and
base, 301

So shee may reach at length this most delightfull
place,
By nature with proud cleeves invironed about,
To crowne the goodlie road: where builds the falcon
stout,
Which we the gentill call; whose fleet and active
wings, 305

It seemes that Nature made when most shee thought
on Kings:

Which manag'd to the lure, her high and gallant
flight,

The vacant sportfull man so greatlie doth delight,
That with her nimble quills his soule doth seeme to
hover,

And lie the verie pitch that lustie bird doth cover; 310
That those proud airies, bred whereas the scorching
skie

Doth sindge the sandie wyldes of spicefull Barbaric;
Or underneath our pole, where Norwaies forests wide
Their high cloud-touching heads in winter snowes doe
hide,

POLY-OLBION

Out-brave not this our kind in mettle, nor exceed 315
The falcon, which some-times the British cleeves doe
breed:

Which prey upon the lies in the Vergivian waste,
That from the British shores by Neptune are imbrac't;
Which stem his furious tides when wildliest they doe
rave,

And breake the big-swolne bulke of manie a
boystrous wave: 320

As, calme when hee becomes, then likewise in their
glorie

Doe cast their amorous eyes at many a promontorie
That thrust their foreheads forth into the smiling
south;

As Rat and Sheepy, set to keepe calme Milfords
mouth,

Expos'd to Neptunes power. So Gresholme farre doth
stand: 325

Scalme, Stockholme, with Saint Bride, and Gatholme,
neerer land

(Which with their veinie breasts intice the gods of sea,
That with the lustie iles doe revell every day)

As crescent-like the land her bredth here inward
bends, 329

From Milford, which she forth to old Menevia sends;

Since, holy Davids seat; which of especiall grace
Doth lend that nobler name, to this unnobler place.

Of all the holy men whose fame so fresh remames,
To whom the Britans built so many sumptuous fanes,
This saint before the rest their patron still they hold:

Whose birth, their ancient bards to Cambria long
foretold; 336

And seated heere a see, his bishoprick of yore,
Upon the farthest point of this unfruitfull shore;
Selected by himselfe, that farre from all resort
With contemplation seem'd most fitly to comport;

POLY-OLBION

That, voyd of all delight, cold, barren, bleake, and
dry, 341
No pleasure might allure, nor steale the wandring eye:
Where Ramsey with those rockes, in ranke that
ordered stand
Upon the furthest point of Davids ancient land,
Doe raise their rugged heads (the sea-mans noted
markes) 345
CallM, of their mytred tops, The Bishop and bis
Clarkes;
Into that chanell cast, whose raging current rores
Betwixt the British sands, and the Hibernian shores:
Whose grimme and horrid face doth pleased heaven
neglect,
And beares bleake winter still in his'more sad aspect:
Yet Gwin and Nevern neere, two fine and fishfull
brookes, 351
Do never stay their course, how sterne so ere he
lookes;
Which with his shipping once should seeme to have
commerst,
Where Fiscard as her flood, doth only grace the first.
To Newport fals the next: where we a while will
rest; 355
Our next ensuing song to wondrous things adress.

THE SIXT SONG

The Argument

WITH Cardigan the Muse proceeds,
And tells what rare things Tivy breeds:
Next, proud Plynillimon shee plyes;
Where Severne, Wy, and Rydoll rise.
With Severne shee along doth goe, 5
Her Metamorphosis to showe;

POLY-OLBION

And makes the wandring Wy declame
In honour of the British name:
Then musters all the watry traine
That those two rivers entertaine: 10
And viewing how those rillets creepe
From shore to the Vergivian deepe,
By Radnor and Mountgomery then
To Severne turnes her course agen:
And bringing all their riverets in, 15
There ends; a new song to begin.

Sith I must stem thy streame, cleere Tivy, yet
before
The Muse vouchsafe to seise the Cardiganian shore,
Shee of thy sourse will sing in all the Cambrian coast;
Which of thy castors once, but now canst onelie
boast
The salmons, of all floods most plentifull in thee. 5
Deere brooke, within thy banks if anie powers there
bee;
Then Neiads, or yee nymphs of their like watrie kind
(Unto whose onelie care, great Neptune hath assigned
The guidance of those brooks wherein he takes
delight)
Assist her: and whilst shee your dwelling shall recite,
Be present in her work: let her your graces view, 11
That to succeeding times them livelie shee may shew;
As when great Albions sonnes, which him a sea-
nymph brought
Amongst the grisly rocks, were with your beauties
caught
(Whose onelie love surpriz'd those of the Phlegrian
size, 15
The Titanois, that once against high heaven durst
rise)
When as the hoarie woods, the climing hills did hide,

POLY-OLBION

And cover'd everie vale through which you gentle
glide;
Even for those inly heats which through your loves
they felt, 19
That oft in kindlie teares did in your bosomes melt,
To view your secret bowres, such favour let her win.
Then Tivy commeth downe from her capacious Lin,
Twixt Mirk and Brenny led, two handmaids, that doe
stay
Their mistres, as in state shee goes upon her way.
Which when Lanbeder sees, her wondrouslie shee
likes: 25
Whose untam'd bosome so the beautious Tivy
strikes,
As that the forrest faine would have her there abide.
But shee (so pure a streame) transported with her
pride
The offer idlie scorns; though with her flattering
shade
The Sylvan her entice with all that may perswade 30
A water-nymph; yea, though great Thetis selfe shee
were:
But nothing might prevaile, nor all the pleasures
there
Her mind could ever more one minute staie to make.
Mild Mathern then, the next, doth Tivy over-take:
Which instantlie againe by Dittor is suppli'd. 35
Then, Keach and Kerry helpe: twixt which on either
side,
To Cardigan shee conies, the soveraigne of the shere.
Now Tivy let us tell thy sundrie glories here.
When as the salmon seekes a fresher streame to
find
(Which hither from the sea comes yeerely by his
kind, 40
As he in season growes) and stems the watry tract
Where Tivy falling downe, doth make a cataract,

POLY-OLBION

Forc't by the rising rocks that there her course
oppose,
As though within their bounds they meant her to
inclose;
Heere, when the labouring fish doth at the foote
arrive, 45
And finds that by his strength but vainlie he doth
strive,
His taile takes in his teeth; and bending like a bowe,
That's to the compasse drawne, aloft himself doth
throwe:
Then springing at his height, as doth a little wand,
That bended end to end, and flerted from the hand,
Farre off it selfe doth cast; so doth the salmon vault.
And if at first he faile, his second summersaut 52
Hee instantlie assaies; and from his nimble ring,
Still yarking, never leaves, untill himselfe he fling
Above the streamefull top of the surrounded heape.
More famous long agone, then for the salmons
leape, 56
For bevers Tivy was, in her strong banks that bred,
Which else no other brooke of Brittainie nourished:
Where Nature, in the shape of this now-perisht beast
His propertie did seeme t'have wondrouslye exprest; 60
Be'ing bodied like a boat, with such a mightie taile
As serv'd him for a bridge, a helme, or for a saile,
When kind did him commaund the architect to play,
That his strong castle built of branched twigs and
clay:
Which, set upon the deepe, but yet not fixed there, 65
Hee easelie could remove as it he pleas'd to stere
To this side or to that; the workmanship so rare,
His stullfe where-with to build, first beeing to prepare,
A forraging he goes, to groves or bushes nie,
And with his teeth cuts downe his timber: which laid-
by, 70
He tumes him on his back, his belly laid abroad,

POLY-OLBION

When with what he hath got, the other doe him load,
Till lastlie by the weight, his burthen hee have found.
Then, with his mightie taile his carriage having
bound

As carters doe with ropes, in his sharpe teeth hee
grip't 75

Some stronger stick: from which the lesser branches
stript,

He takes it in the midst; at both the ends, the rest
Hard holding with their fangs, unto the labour prest,
Going backward, tow'rds their horns their loaded
carriage led,

From whom, those first heere borne, were taught the
usefull sled. 80

Then builded he his fort with strong and several fights;
His passages contriv'd with such unusuall sleights,
That from the hunter oft he issu'd undiscern'd,
As if men from this beast to fortifie had learn'd;
Whose kind, in her decayed, is to this ile unknowne.
Thus Tivy boasts this beast peculiarly her owne. 86

But here why spend I time these trifles to areed?
Now, with thy former taske my Muse againe proceed,
To shewe the other floods from the Cerettick shore
To the Vergivian sea contributing their store: 90

With Bidder first begin, that bendeth all her force
The Arron to assist, Arth holding on her course
The way the other went, with Werry which doth win
Faire Istwid to her ayde; who kindlie comming in,
Meets Rydoll at her mouth, that faire and princelie
maid, 95

Plymillimons deere child, deliciouslie arraid,
As fits a nymph so neere to Severne and her Queene.
Then come the sister Salks, as they before had seene
Those delicater dames so trippinglie to tread: 99

Then Kerry; Cletur next, and Kinver making head
With Enion, that her like cleere Levant brings by her.

Plymillimons high praise no longer Muse defer;

POLY-OLBION

What once the Druids told, how great those floods
should bee

That here (most mightie hill) derive themselves from
thee.

The Bards with furie rapt, the British youth among,
Unto the charming harpe thy future honor song 106
In brave and loftie straines; that in excesse of joy,
The beldam and the girle, the grandsire and the boy,
With shouts and yearning cries, the troubled ayre did
load

(As when with crowned cuppes unto the Elian God
Those priests his orgyes held; or when the old world
saw 111

Full Phcebs face ecliptst, and thinking her to daw
Whom they supposed falne in some enchanted swound,
Of beaten tinkling brasse still ply'd her with the
sound)

That all the Cambrian hills, which high'st their heads
doebear 115

With most obsequious shoves of lowe subjected feare,
Should to thy greatnes stoupe: and all the brooks
that be,

Doe homage to those floods that issued out of thee:
To princelie Severne first; next, to her sister Wye,
Which to her elders court her course doth still apply.
But Rydoll, young'st, and least, and for the others
pride 121

Not rinding fitting roomth upon the rising side,
Alone unto the west directlie takes her way.
So all the neighboring hills Plynillimon obey.
For, though Moylvadian beare his craggy top so hie.
As scorning all that come in compasse of his eye, 126
Yet greatlie is he pleas'd Plynillimon will grace
Him with a cheerfull looke: and, fawning in his face,
His love to Severne shoves as though his owne she
were,

Thus comforting the flood; O ever-during heire 130

POLY-OLBION

Of Sabine, Locryns child (who of her life bereft,
Her ever-living name to thee faire river left)
Brutes first begotten sonne, which Gwendolin did
wed;
But soone th'unconstant Lord abandoned her bed
(Through his unchaste desire) for beautiful Elstreds
love. 135
Now, that which most of all her mightie hart did
move,
Her father, Cornwalls Duke, great Corineus dead,
Was by the lustfull King unjustlie banished.
When shee, who to that time still with a smoothed
brow
Had seem'd to beare the breach of Locrines former
vow, 140
Perceiving stil her wrongs insufferable were;
Growne bigge with the revenge which her full breast
did beare,
And ayded to the birth with every little breath
(Alone shee beeing left the spoyle of love and death,
In labour of her grieffe outrageously distract, 145
The utmost of her spleene on her false Lord to act)
Shee first implores their aide to hate him whom shee
found;
Whose harts unto the depth she had not left to sound.
To Cornwall then shee sends (her country) for sup-
plies:
Which all at once in armes with Gwendolin arise. 150
Then with her warlike power, her husband shee
pursu'd,
Whom his unlawfull love too vainlie did delude.
The fierce and jealous Queene, then voyde of all
remorce,
As great in power as spirit, whilst hee neglects her
force, 154
Him suddainlie surpriz'd, and from her irefull hart
All pittie cleane exil'd (whom nothing could convert)

POLY-OLBION

The sonne of mightie Brute bereaved of his life;
Amongst the Britans here the first intestine strife,
Since they were put a-land upon this promis'd shore.
Then crowning Madan King, whom shee to Locrine
bore, 160

And those which serv'd his sire to his obedience
brought;
Not so with blood suffic'd, immediatly she sought
The mother and the child: whose beautie when shee
saw,

Had not her hart been flint, had had the power to
draw
A spring of pittying teares; when, dropping liquid
pearle, 165

Before the cruell Queene, the ladie and the girle
Upon their tender knees begg'd mercie. Woe for thee
Faire Elstred, that thou should'st thy fairer Sabine
see,

As shee should thee behold the prey to her sterne rage
Whom kingleie Locrins death suffic'd not to asswage:
Who from the bordring cleeves thee with thy mother
cast 171

Into thy christned flood, the whilst the rocks aghast
Resounded with your shriekes; till in a deadlie
dreame

Your corses were dissolved into that crystall streame,
Your curies to curled waves, which plainlie still
appeare 175

The same in water now, that once in locks they were:
And, as you wont to clip each others neck before,
Yee now with liquid armes embrace the wandring
shore.

But leave we Severne heere, a little to pursue
The often wandring Wye (her passages to view, 180
As wantonlie shee straines in her lascivious course)
And muster every flood that from her bountious
source

POLY-OLBION

Attends upon her streame, whilst (as the famous
bound
Twixt the Brecknokian earth, and the Radnorian
ground)
Shee every brooke receives. First, Clarwen commeth
in, 185
With Clarwy: which to them their consort Eland
win
To ayde their goodly Wye; which, Ithon gets againe:
She Dulas drawes along: and in her watry traine
Clowedock hath recourse, and Comran; which she
brings
Unto their wandring flood from the Radnorian
springs: 190
As Edwy her attends, and Matchwy forward heaves
Her mistresse. When, at last the goodly Wye per-
ceaves
She now was in that part of Wales, of all the rest
Which (as her very waste) in breadth from east to
west,
In length from north to south, her midst is every way,
From Severns bordring banks unto the either sea,
And might be tearm'd her hart. The ancient Britans
heere, 197
The river calls to mind, and what those British were
Whilst Britain was her selfe, the Queene of all the
west.
To whose old nations praise whilst shee her selfe
address, 200
From the Brecknokian bound when Irvon comming
in,
Her Dulas, with Commarch, and Wevery that doth
win,
Perswading her for them good matter to provide.
The wood-nymphs so againe, from the Radnorian
side,

POLY-OLBION

As Radnor, with Blethaugh, and Knuckles forrests,
call 205

To Wye, and bad her now bestirre her for them all:
For, if shee stuck not close in their distressed case
The Britans were in doubt to under-goe disgrace.
That stronglie thus provok't, shee for the Britans
sales;

What spirit can lift you up, to that immortall praise
You worthilie deserve? by whom first Gaul was
taught 211

Her knowledge: and for her, what nation ever
wrought

The conquest you atchiev'd? And, as you were most
drad,

So yee (before the rest) in so great reverence had
Your Bards which sung your deeds, that when sterne
hosts have stood 215

With lifted hands to strike (in their inflamed blood)
One Bard but comming in, their murderous swords
hath staid;

In her most dreadful voice as thundring heaven had
said,

Stay Britans: when he spake, his words so powrefull
were.

So to her native priests, the dreadlesse Druides
here, 220

The nearest neighboring Gaul, that wiselie could dis-
cerne

Th'effect their doctrine wrought, it for their good to
learne,

Her apt and pregnant youth sent hither yeere by
yeere,

Instructed in our rites with most religious feare.
And afterward againe, when as our ancient seat 225

Her surcrease could not keepe, growne for her soile
too great

(But like to casting bees, so rising up in swarmes)

POLY-OLBION

Our Cymbri with the Gaules, that their commixed
armes
Joyn'd with the German powers (those nations of the
north
Which over-spread the world) together issued forth:
Where, with our brazen swords, we stoutly fought,
and long; 231
And after conquests got, residing them among,
First planted in those parts our brave courageous
brood:
Whose natures so adher'd unto their ancient blood,
As from them sprang those priests, whose praise so
farre did sound, 235
Through whom that spacious Gaul was after so
renown'd.
Nor could the Saxons swords (which many a
lingring yeere
Them saddie did afflict, and shut us Britans heere
Twixt Severne and this sea) our mightie minds deject;
But that even they which fain'st our weaknes would
detect, 240
Were forced to confesse, our wildest beasts that breed
Upon our mightie wastes, or on our mountaines feed,
Were farre more sooner tam'd, then heere our Welch-
men were:
Besides, in all the world no nation is so deere
As they unto their owne; that here within this ile, 245
Or else in forraine parts, yea, forced to exile,
The noble Britan still his countryman releeves;
A patriot, and so true, that it to death him greeves
To heare his Wales disgrac't: and on the Saxons
swords 249
Oft hazardeth his life, ere with reprochefull words
His language or his leeke hee'le stand to heare abus'd.
Besides, the Britan is so naturallie infus'd
With true poetick rage, that in their measures, art
Doth rather seeme precise, then comlie; in each part

POLY-OLBION

Their metre most exact, in verse of th'hardest kind.
And some to riming be so wondrouslie inclin'd, 256
Those numbers they will hit, out of their genuine
vaine,

Which many wise and learn'd can hardly ere attaine.

O memorable Bards, of unmixt blood, which still
Posteritie shall praise for your so wondrous skill, 260
That in your noble songs, the long descents have
kept

Of your great Heroes, else in Lethe that had slept,
With theirs whose ignorant pride your labours have
disdain'd;

How much from time, and them, how bravelie have
you gain'd!

Musician, Herault, Bard, thrice maist thou be
renown'd, 265

And with three severall wreathes immortallie be
crown'd;

Who, when to Penbrooke call'd before the English
King,

And to thy powerfull harpe commaunded there to
sing,

Of famous Arthur told'st, and where hee was interred;
In which, those retchlesse times had long and blindlie
err'd, 270

And ignorance had brought the world to such a pass
As now, which scarce beleeves that Arthur ever was.
But when King Henry sent th'reported place to view,
He found that man of men: and what thou said'st was
true.

Heere then I cannot chuse but bitterlie exclaime 275
Against those fooles that all antiquitie defame,
Because they have found out, some credulous ages
layd

Slight fictions with the truth, whilst truth on rumor
stayd;

And that one forward time (perceiving the neglect

POLY-OLBION

A former of her had) to purchase her respect, 280
 With toys then trimd her up, the drowsie world
 failure,

And lent her what it thought might appetite procure
 To man, whose mind doth still varietie pursue;
 And therefore to those things whose grounds were
 verie true,
 Though naked yet and bare (not having to content
 The weyward curious eare) gave fictive ornament; 286
 And fitter thought, the truth they should in question
 call,

Then coldlie sparing that, the truth should goe and all.
 And surelie I suppose, that which this froward time
 Doth scandalize her with to be her heynous crime,
 That hath her most preserv'd: for, still where wit
 hath found 291

A thing most cleerlie true, it made that, fictions
 ground:
 Which shee suppos'd might give sure colour to them
 both:

From which, as from a roote, this wondred error
 grow'th
 At which our criticks gird, whose judgements are so
 strict, 295

And he the bravest man who most can contradict
 That which decrepit age (which forced is to leane
 Upon tradition) tells; esteeming it so meane,
 As they it quite reject, and for some trifling thing
 (Which time hath pind to truth) they all away will
 fling, 300

There men (for all the world) like our precisions bee,
 Who for some crosse or saint they in the window see
 Will pluck downe all the church: soule-blinded sots
 that creepe

In durt, and never saw the wonders of the deepe.
 Therefore (in my conceit) most rightlie serv'd are they
 That to the Roman trust (on his report that stay) 306

POLY-OLBION

Our truth from him to learne, as ignorant of ours
As we were then of his; except t'were of his powers:
Who our wise Druides here unmercifullie slew;
Like whom, great Natures depths no men yet ever
knew, 310

Nor with such dauntlesse spirits were ever yet
inspired;
Who at their proud arrive th'ambitious Romans fir'd
When first they heard them preach the soules
immortall state;

And even in Romes despight, and in contempt of fate,
Graspt hands with horrid death: which out of hate
and pride 315

They slew, who through the world were revered
beside.

To understand our state, no marvaile then though
wee

Should so to Caesar seeke, in his reports to see
What ancientlie we were; when in our infant war,
Unskilfull of our tongue but by interpreter, 320
Hee nothing had of ours which our great Bards did
sing,

Except some few poore words; and those againe to
bring

Unto the Latine sounds, and easiness they us'd,
By their most filed speech, our British most abus'd.
But of our former state, beginning, our descent, 325
The warres we had at home, the conquests where we
went,

He never understood. And though the Romans here
So noble trophies left, as verie worthie were
A people great as they, yet did they ours neglect,
Long rear'd ere they arriv'd. And where they doe
object, 330

The mines and records we show, be verie small
To prove our selves so great: even this the most of all
(Gainst their objection) seemes miraculous to mee,

POLY-OLBION

That yet those should be found so generall as they
bee;
The Roman, next the Pict, the Saxon, then the Dane,
All landing in this ile, each like a horrid raine 336
Deforming her; besides the sacrilegious wrack
Of many a noble booke, as impious hands should sack
The center, to extirp all knowledge, and exile
All brave and ancient things, for ever from this ile:
Expressing wondrous grieffe, thus wandring Wye did
sing. 341
But, backe, industrious Muse; obsequiously to
bring
Cleere Severne from her sourse, and tell how she doth
straine
Downe her delicious dales; with all the goodly traine,
Brought forth the first of all by Brugan: which to
make 345
Her party worthy note, next, Dulas in doth take.
Moylvadian his much love to Severne then to showe,
Upon her southerne side, sends likewise (in a rowe)
Bright Biga, that brings on her friend and fellow
Floyd;
Next, Dungum; Bacho then is busily imploy'd, 350
Tarranon, Carno, Hawes, with Becan, and the Rue,
In Severn's souveraine bankes, that give attendance
due.
Thus as she swoopes along, with all that goodly
traine,
Upon her other banke by Newtowne: so agame
Comes Dulas (of whose name so many rivers bee, 355
As of none others is) with Mule, prepar'd to see
The confluence to their Queene, as on her course she
makes:
Then at Mountgomery next cleere Kennet in she
takes;
Where little Fledding fals into her broader banke;

POLY-OLBION

Forkt Vurnway, bringing Tur, and Tanot: growing
ranke, 360
She plyes her towards the Poole, from the Gomerian
feelds;
Then which in all our Wales, there is no country
yeelds
An excellenter horse, so full of naturall fire,
As one of Phoebus steeds had been that stalyons sire
Which first their race begun; or of th'Asturian kind,
Which some have held to be begotten by the wind, 366
Upon the mountaine mare; which strongly it receaves,
And in a little time her pregnant part upheaves.
But, leave we this to such as after wonders long:
The Muse prepares her selfe unto another song.

THE THIRTEENTH SONG

The Argument

THIS song our shire of Warwick sounds;
Revives old Ardens ancient bounds.
Through many shapes the Muse heere roves;
Now sporting in those shady groves,
The tunes of birds oft staies to heare: 5
Then, finding herds of lustie deare,
She huntresse-like the hart pursues;
And like a hermit walks, to chuse
The simples every where that growe;
Comes Ancors glory next to showe; 10
Tells Guy of Warwicks famous deeds;
To th'Vale of Red-horse then proceeds,
To play her part the rest among;
There shutteth up her thirteenth song.

Upon the mid-lands now th'industrious Muse doth
fall;

POLY-OLBION

That shire which wee the hart of England well may
call,

As shee her selfe extends (the midst which is decreed)
Betwixt S. Michaels Mount, and Barwick-bord'ring
Tweed,

Brave Warwick; that abroad so long advane't her
beare, 5

By her illustrious Earles renowned every where;
Above her neighboring shires which alwaies bore
her head.

My native country then, which so brave spirits hast
bred,

If there be vertue yet remaining in thy earth,
Or any good of thine thou breathd'st into my birth,
Accept it as thine owne whilst now I sing of thee; 11
Of all thy later brood th'unworthiest though I bee.

Muse, first of Arden tell, whose foot-steps yet are
found

In her rough wood-lands more then any other ground
That mighty Arden held even in her height of pride; 15
Her one hand touching Trent, the other, Severns side.

The very sound of these, the wood-nymphs doth
awake:

When thus of her owne selfe the ancient forrest spake;

My many goodly sites when first I came to showe,
Here opened I the way to myne owne over-throwe: 20

For, when the world found out the fitnessse of my
soyle,

The gnpple wretch began immediatly to spoyle
My tall and goodly woods, and did my grounds
inclose:

By which, in little time my bounds I came to lose. 24

When Britaine first her fields with villages had fild,
Her people wexing still, and wanting where to build,
They oft dislodg'd the hart, and set their houses,
where

POLY-OLBION

He in the broome and brakes had long time made his
leyre.

Of all the forrests heere within this mightie ile,
If those old Britains then me soveraigne did instile,
I needs must be the great'st; for greatnesse tis alone
That gives our kind the place: else were there many a
one 32

For pleasantnes of shade that farre doth mee excell.
But, of our forrests kind the quality to tell,
We equally partake with wood-land as with plaine, 35
Alike with hill and dale; and every day maintaine
The sundry kinds of beasts upon our copious wast's,
That men for profit breed, as well as those of chase.

Here Arden of her selfe ceast any more to showe;
And with her sylvan joyes the Muse along doth goe.

When Phoebus lifts his head out of the winters
wave, 41

No sooner doth the earth her flowerie bosome brave,
At such time as the yeere brings on the pleasant
spring,

But hunts-up to the morne the feath' red sylvans sing:
And in the lower grove, as in the rising knole, 45
Upon the highest spray of every mounting pole,
Those quirristers are pearcht with many a speckled
breast.

Then from her burnisht gate the goodly glittering east
Guilds every lofty top, which late the humorous night
Bespangled had with pearle, to please the mornings
sight: 50

On which the mirthfull quires, with their cleere open
throats,

Unto the joyfull morne so straine their warbling
notes,

That hills and valleys ring, and even the ecchoing ayre
Seemes all compos'd of sounds, about them every
where. 54

The throstell, with shrill sharps; as purposely he song

POLY-OLBION

T'awake the lustlesse sunne; or chyding, that so long
He was in comming forth, that should the thickets
thrill:

The woosell neere at hand, that hath a golden bill;
As Nature him had markt of purpose, t'let us see
That from all other birds his tunes should different
bee: 60

For, with their vocall sounds, they sing to pleasant
May;

Upon his dulcet pype the merle both onely play.
When in the lower brake, the nightingale hard-by,
In such lamenting straines the joy full howres doth ply,
As though the other birds shee to her tunes would
draw. 65

And, but that Nature (by her all-constraining law)
Each bird to her owne kind this season doth invite,
They else, alone to heare that charmer of the night
(The more to use their eares) their voyces sure would
spare,

That moduleth her tunes so admirably rare, 70
As man to set in parts, at first had learn'd of her.

To Philomell the next, the linet we prefer;
And by that warbling bird, the wood-larke place we
then,

The red-sparrow, the nope, the red-breast, and the
wren,

The yellow-pate: which though shee hurt the bloom-
ing tree, 75

Yet scarce hath any bird a finer pype then shee.
And of these chaunting fowles, the goldfinch not
behind,

That hath so many sorts descending from her kind.
The tydie for her notes as delicate as they,

The laughing hecco, then the counterfeiting jay, 80
The softer, with the shrill (some hid among the leaves,
Some in the taller trees, some in the lower greaves)

Thus sing away the morne, untill the mounting sunne,

POLY-OLBION

Through thick exhaled fogs, his golden head hath
runne,
And through the twisted tops of our close covert
creeps 85
To kisse the gentle shade, this while that sweetly
sleeps.
And neere to these our thicks, the wild and fright-
full heards,
Not hearing other noyse but this of chattering birds,
Feed fairely on the launds; both sorts of seasoned
deere:
Here walke, the stately red, the freckled fallowe
there: 90
The bucks and lusty stags amongst the rascalls
strew'd,
As sometime gallant spirits amongst the multitude.
Of all the beasts which we for our veneriall name,
The hart amongst the rest, the hunters noblest game:
Of which most princely chase sith none did ere
report, 95
Or by description touch, t'expresse that wondrous
sport
(Yet might have well beseem'd th'ancients nobler
songs)
To our old Arden heere, most fitly it belongs:
Yet shall shee not invoke the Muses to her ayde;
But thee Diana bright, a goddesse and a mayd: 100
In many a huge-growne wood, and many a shady
grove,
Which oft hast borne thy bowe (great huntresse) us'd
to rove
At many a cruell beast, and with thy darts to pierce
The lyon, panther, ounce, the beare, and tiger fierce;
And following thy fleet game, chaste mightie forrests
Queene, 105
With thy disheveld nymphs attyr'd in youthfull
greene,

POLY-OLBION

About the launds haſt ſcower'd, and waſtes both farre
and neere,

Brave huntreſſe: but no beaſt ſhall prove thy quarries
heere;

Save thoſe the beſt of chaſe, the tall and luſty red,
The ſtag for goodly ſhape, and ſtatelineſſe of head,
Is fitteſt to hunt at force. For whom, when with his
hounds 111

The laboring hunter tufts the thicke unbarbed
grounds

Where harbor'd is the hart; there often from his feed
The dogs of him doe find; or thorough ſkilfull heed,
The huntsman by his ſlot, or breaking earth, per-
ceaves, 115

Or entring of the thicke by preſſing of the greaves
Where he hath gone to lodge. Now when the hart
doth heare

The often-bellowing hounds to vent his ſecret leyre,
He rouzing ruſheth out, and through the brakes doth
drive,

As though up by the roots the buſhes he would rive.
And through the combrouſe thicks, as fearefully he
makes, 121

Hee with his branched head, the tender ſaplings
ſhakes,

That ſprinkling their moiſt pearle doe ſeeme for him
to weepe;

When after goes the cry, with yellings lowd and
deepe,

That all the forreſt rings, and every neighbouring
place: 125

And there is not a hound but falleth to the chaſe.
Rechating with his home, which then the hunter
cheeres,

Whilſt ſtill the luſtie ſtag his high-palm'd head up-
beares,

His body ſhowing ſtate, with unbent knees upright,

POLY-OLBION

Expressing (from all beasts) his courage in his flight.
But when th'approaching foes still following he perceives, 131
That hee his speed must trust, his usuall walke he leaves;
And or'e the champaine flies: which when th'assembly find,
Each followes, as his horse were footed with the wind.
But beeing then imboost, the noble stately deere 135
When he hath gotten ground (the kennell cast arere)
Doth beat the brooks and ponds for sweet refreshing soyle:
That serving not, then proves if he his sent can foyle,
And makes amongst the heards, and flocks of shag-wooll'd sheepe,
Them frightening from the guard of those who had their keepe. 140
But when as all his shifts his safety still denies,
Put quite out of his walke, the wayes and failowes tryes.
Whom when the plow-man meets, his teame he letteth stand
T'assaile him with his goad: so with his hooke in hand,
The shepheard him pursues, and to his dog doth halow: 145
When, with tempestuous speed, the hounds and huntsmen follow;
Untill the noble deere through toyle bereav'd of strength,
His long and sinewy legs then fayling him at length,
The villages attempts, enrag'd, not giving way
To any thing hee meets now at his sad decay. 150
The cruell ravenous hounds and bloody hunters neer,
This noblest beast of chase, that vainly doth but feare,
Some banke or quick-set finds: to which his hanch oppos'd,

POLY-OLBION

He turnes upon his foes, that soone have him inclos'd,
The churlish throated hounds then holding him at
bay, 155

And as their cruell fangs on his harsh skin they lay,
With his sharp-poynted head he dealeth deadly
wounds.

The hunter, comming in to helpe his wearied
hounds,

He desperatly assailes; untill opprest by force,
He who the mourner is to his owne dying corse, 160
Upon the ruthlesse earth his precious teares lets fall.

To forrests that belongs; but yet this is not all:
With solitude what sorts, that here's not wondrous
rife?

Whereas the hermit leades a sweet retyred life,
From villages replete with ragg'd and sweating
clownes, 165

And from the lothsome ayres of smoky cittied townes.
Suppose twixt noone and night, the sunne his halfe-
way wrought

(The shadowes to be large, by his descending brought)
Who with a fervent eye lookes through the twyring
glades,

And his dispersed rayes commixeth with the shades,
Exhaling the milch dewe, which there had tarried
long, 171

And on the ranker grasse till past the noone-sted
hong;

When as the hermet comes out of his homely cell,
Where from all rude resort he happily doth dwell:
Who in the strength of youth, a man at armes hath
been; 175

Or one who of this world the vilenesse having seene,
Retyres him from it quite; and with a constant mind
Mans beastliness so loathes, that flying humane kind,
The black and darksome nights, the bright and glad-
some dayes 179

POLY-OLBION

Indifferent are to him, his hope on God that stales.
Each little village yeelds his short and homely fare:
To gather wind-fame sticks, his great'st and onely
care;

Which every aged tree still yeeldeth to his fire.

This man, that is alone a King in his desire,
By no proud ignorant lord is basely over-aw'd, 185
Nor his false prayse affects, who grosly beeing claw'd,
Stands like an itchy moyle; nor of a pin he wayes
What foolles, abused kings, and humorous ladies
raise.

His free and noble thought, nere envies at the grace
That often times is given unto a baud most base, 190
Nor stirres it him to thinke on the impostour vile,
Who seeming what hee's not, doth sensually beguile
The sottish purblind world: but absolutely free,
His happy time he spends the works of God to see,
In those so sundry hearbs which there in plenty
growe: 195

Whose sundry strange effects he onely seeks to knowe.
And in a little maund, beeing made of oziars small,
Which serveth him to doe full many a thing withall,
He very choicely sorts his simples got abroad.

Heere finds he on an oake rheume-purging
pohpode; 200
And in some open place that to the sunne doth lye,
He fumitorie gets, and eye-bright for the eye:
The yarrow, where-with-all he stops the wound-made
gore:

The healing tutsan then, and plantan for a sore.
And hard by them againe he holy vervaine finds, 205
Which he about his head that hath the megrim binds.
The wonder-working dill hee gets not farre from
these,

Which curious women use in many a nice disease.
For them that are with newts, or snakes, or adders
stong,

POLY-OLBION

He seeketh out an hearbe that's called adders-tong;
As Nature it ordain'd, its owne like hurt to cure, 211
And sportive did her selfe to niceties inure.

Valerian then he crops, and purposely doth stampe,
T'apply unto the place that's haled with the crampe.
As century, to close the wideness of a wound: 215
The belly hurt by birth, by mugwort to make sound.
His chickweed cures the heat that in the face doth
rise.

For physick, some againe he inwardly applies.
For comforting the spleene and liver, gets for juce,
Pale hore-hound, which he holds of most especiall
use. 220

So saxifrage is good, and harts-tongue for the stone,
With agrimony, and that hearbe we call S. John.
To him that hath a flux, of sheepeards purse he
gives,
And mous-eare unto him whom some sharpe rupture
grieves.
And for the laboring wretch that's troubled with a
cough, 225
Or stopping of the breath, by fleagme that's hard and
tough,

Campana heere he crops, approved wondrous good:
As comfrey unto him that's brused, spetting blood;
And from the falling-ill, by five-leafe doth restore,
And melancholy cures by soveraigne hellebore. 230

Of these most helpfull hearbs yet tell we but a few,
To those unnumberd sorts of simples here that grew.
Which justly to set downe, even Dodon short doth
fall;

Nor skilfull Gerard, yet, shall ever find them all.

But from our hermit heere the Muse we must in-
force, 235

And zealously proceed in our intended course:
How Arden of her rills and riverets doth dispose;
By Alcester how Alne to Arro easely flowes;

POLY-OLBION

And mildly beeing mixt, to Avon hold their way:
And likewise tow'rd the north, how lively-tripping
Rhea, 240

Tattend the lustier Tame, is from her fountaine sent:
So little Cole and Blyth goe on with him to Trent.
His Tamworth at the last, he in his way doih win:
There playing him awhile, till Ancor should come in,
Which trifleth twixt her banks, observing state, so
slowe, 245

As though into his armes she scorn'd her selfe to
throwe:
Yet Arden wilFd her Tame to serve her on his knee;
For by that nymph alone, they both should honor'd
be.

The forrest so much falne from what she was before,
That to her former height fate could her not restore;
Though oft in her behalfe, the genius of the land 251
Importuned the heavens with an auspicious hand.
Yet granted at the last (the aged nymph to grace)
They by a ladies birth would more renoune that
place

Then if her woods their heads above the hills should
seat; 255
And for that purpose, first made Coventry so great
(A poore thatcht village then, or scarcely none at all,
That could not once have dream'd of her now stately
wall)

And thither wisely brought that goodly virgin-band,
Th'eleven thousand maids, chaste Ursula's com-
maund, 260

Whom then the Britaine Kings gave her full power
to presse,

For matches to their friends in Britanny the lesse.
At whose departure thence, each by her just bequest
Some speciall vertue gave, ordayning it to rest
With one of their owne sex, that there her birth
should have, 265

POLY-OLBION

Till fulnesse of the time which fate did choicely save;
Untill the Saxons raigne, when Coventry at length,
From her small, meane regard, recovered state and
strength,

By Leofrick her lord yet in base bondage held,
The people from her marts by tollage who expeld:
Whose Dutchesse, which desir'd this tribute to re-
lease, 271

Their freedome often begg'd. The Duke, to make her
cease,

Told her that if shee would his losse so farre mforce,
His will was, shee should ride starke nak't upon a
horse

By day light through the street: which certainly he
thought, 27\$

In her heroi'ck breast so deeply would have wrought,
That in her former sute she would have left to deale.
But that most princely dame, as one devoured with
zeale,

Went on, and by that meane the cittie cleerly freed.

The first part of whose name, Godiva, doth fore-
reed 280

Th'first syllable of hers, and Goodere halfe doth
sound;

For by agreeing words, great matters have been
found.

But further then this place the mystene extends.

What Arden had begun, in Ancor lastly ends:

For in the British tongue, the Britaines could not
find, 285

Wherefore to her that name of Ancor was assign'd:

Nor yet the Saxons since, nor times to come had
known,

But that her beeing heere, was by this name fore-
shown,

As prophecying her. For, as the first did tell
Her sir-name, so againe doth Ancor lively spell 290

POLY-OLBION

To Cathnesse, which the furth'st of Scotland wee
account.)
And then proceed to showe, how Avon from her
spring,
By Newnhams fount is blest; and how she,
blandishing,
By Dunsmore drives along. Whom Sow doth first
assist,
Which taketh Shirburn in, with Cune, a great while
mist; 320
Though Coventry from thence her name at first did
raise,
Now flourishing with fanes, and proud piramides;
Her walls in good repaire, her ports so bravely built,
Her halls in good estate, her crosse so richly gilt,
As scorning all the townes that stand within her view:
Yet must shee not be griev'd, that Cune should claime
her due. 326
Tow'rds Warwick with this traine as Avon trips
along;
To Guy-cliffe beeing come, her nymphs thus bravely
song;
To thee renowned knight, continuall prayse wee owe,
And at thy hallowed tombe thy yeerely obiits showe;
Who, thy deere Phillis name and country to advance,
Left'st Warwicks wealthy seate: and sayling into
France 332
At tilt, from his proud steed, Duke Otton threw'st to
ground:
And with th'invalewed prize of Blanch the beautious
crown'd
(The Almaine Emperors heire) high acts didst there
atchieve: 335
As Lovaine thou againe didst valiantly relieve.
Thou in the Soldans blood thy worthy sword
imbru'dst;
And then in single fight, great Amerant subdu'dst.

POLY-OLBION

T'was thy Herculian hand, which happily destroyed
That dragon, which so long Northumberland annoy'd;
And slew that cruell bore, which waste our wood-
lands layd, 341

Whose tusks turn'd up our tilths, and dens in
medowes made:

Whose shoulder-blade remaines at Coventry till now;
And, at our humble sute, did quell that monstrous
cow

The passengers that us'd from Dunsmore to affright.
Of all our English (yet) O most renowned knight, 346
That Colebrond overcam'st: at whose amazing fall
The Danes removed their campe from Winchesters
siegd wall.

Thy statue Guy-cliffe keepes, the gazers eye to please;
Warwick, thy mighty armes (thou English Hercules)
Thy strong and massy sword, that never was controll'd:
Which, as her ancient right, her Castle still shall
hold. 352

Scarce ended they their song, but Avons winding
streame,
By Warwick, entertaines the high-complexion'd
Leame:

And as she thence along to Stratford on doth straine,
Receiveth little Heile the next into her traine: 356
Then taketh in the Stour, the brooke, of all the rest
Which that most goodly Vale of Red-horse loveth
best:

A vally that enjoyes a verie great estate,
Yet not so famous held as smaller, by-her fate: 360
Now, for report had been too partiall in her praise,
Her just conceived greefe, faire Red-horse thus
bewraies;

Shall every vale be heard to boast her wealth? and I,
The needie countries neere that with my corne supply
As bravely as the best, shall onely I endure 365
The dull and beastly world my glories to obscure;

POLY-OLBION

Neere way-lesse Ardens side, sith my rety'rd aboard
Stood quite out of the way from every common road?
Great Evshams fertill gleabe, what tongue hath not
extold?

As though to her alone belongd the garbe of gold.
Of Bevers batfull earth, men seeme as though to
faine, 371

Reporting in what store shee multiplies her graine:
And folke such wondrous things of Alsburie will tell,
As though aboundance strove her burthened wombe
to swell.

Her roome amongst the rest, so White-horse is
decreed: 375

Shee wants no setting forth: her brave Pegasian steed
(The wonder of the West) exalted to the skies:
My Red-horse of you all contemned onely lies.
The fault is not in me, but in the wretched time:
On whom, upon good cause, I well may lay the
crime: 380

Which as all noble things, so mee it doth neglect.
But when th'industrious Muse shall purchase me
respect

Of countries neere my site, and win me forraine fame
(The Eden of you all deservedly that am)

I shall as much be praysd for delicacie then, 385
As now in small account with vile and barbarous men.
For, from the loftie Edge that on my side doth lye,
Upon my spacious earth who casts a curious eye,
As many goodly seates shall in my compasse see,
As many sweet delights and rarities in mee 390

As in the greatest vale: from where my head I couch
At Cotswolds countries foot, till with my heeles I
touch

The North-hamptonian fields, and fatning pastures;
where

I ravish every eye with my inticing cheere.

POLY-OLBION

As still the yeere growes on, that **Ceres** once doth
load 395
The full earth with her store; my plentious bosome
strow'd
With all aboundant sweets: my frim and lustie flanke
Her bravery then diplayes, with meadowes hugely
ranke.
The thick and well-growne fogge doth matt my
smoother slades,
And on the lower leas, as on the higher hades 400
The daintie clover growes (of grasse the onely silke)
That makes each udder strout abundantly with milke.
As an unlettred man, at the desired sight
Of some rare beautie moov'd with infinite delight,
Not out of his owne spirit, but by that power divine,
Which through a sparkling eye perspicuously doth
shine, 406
Feeles his hard temper yeeld, that hee in passion
breakes,
And things beyond his height, transported strangely
speaks:
So those that dwell in mee, and live by frugall toyle,
When they in my defence are reasoning of my soyle,
As rapted with my wealth and beauties, learned
growe, 411
And in wel-fitting tearmes, and noble language, showe
The lordships in my lands, from Rolright (which
remaines
A witnesse of that day we wonne upon the Danes) 414
To Tawcester wel-neere: twixt which, they use to tell
Of places which they say doe Rumneys selfe excell.
Of Dasset they dare boast, and give Wormlighton
prize,
As of that fertill flat by Bishopton that lies.
For showing of my bounds, if men may rightly
ghesse 419
By my continued forme which best doth me expresse,

POLY-OLBION

On either of my sides and by the rising grounds,
Which in one fashion hold, as my most certaine
 mounds,
In length neere thirtie miles I am discern'd to bee.
 Thus Red-horse ends her tale; and I therewith agree
To finish heere my song: the Muse some ease doth
 aske, 425
As wearied with the toyle in this her serious taske.

THE FOURTEENTH SONG

The Argument

HER sundry straines the Muse to prove
Now sings of homely country love;
What moane th'old heardsman Clent doth make,
For his coy wood-nymph Feckn'hams sake;
And, how the nymphs each other greet, 5
When Avon and brave Severne meet.
The Vale of Evsham then doth tell,
How farre the vales doe hills excell.
Ascending, next, fair Cotswolds plaines,
Shee revels with the shepherds swaines; 10
And sends the daintie nymphes away,
Gainst Tame and Isis wedding day.

At length, attain'd those lands that south of Severne
 lye,
As to the varying earth the Muse doth her apply,
Poore sheep-hook and plaine goad, she many times
 doth sound:
Then in a buskind strain she instantly doth bound.
Smooth as the lowly streame, shee softly now doth
 glide: 5
And with the mountaines straight contendeth in her
 pride.

POLY-OLBION

Now back againe I turne, the land with mee to take,
From the Staffordian heaths as Stour her course doth
make.

Which Clent, from his proud top, contentedly doth
view:

But yet the aged hill, immoderately doth reweave 10
His loved Feckn'hams fall, and doth her state
bemoane;

To please his amorous eye, whose like the world had
none.

For, from her very youth, he (then an aged hill)
Had to that forrest-nymph a speciall lyking still:
The least regard of him who never seemes to take, 15
But suffreth in her selfe for Salwarp's onely sake;
And on that river doats, as much as Clent on her.

Now, when the hill perceiv'd, the flood she would
prefer,

All pleasure he forsakes; that at the full-bagd cow,
Or at the curle-fac't bull, when venting he doth
low, 20

Or at th'unhappy wags, which let their cattell stray,
At nine-holes on the heath whilst they together play,
He never seemes to smile; nor ever taketh keepe
To heare the harmlesse swaine pype to his grazing
sheepe:

Nor to the carters tune, in whistling to his teame; 25
Nor lends his listning eare (once) to the ambling
streame,

That in the evening calme against the stones doth
rush

With such a murmuring noyse, as it would seeme to
hush

The silent meads asleepe; but, voyd of all delight,
Remediesly drown'd in sorrow day and night, 30
Nor Licky his allie and neighbour doth respect:

And there-with beeing charg'd, thus answereth in
effect;

POLY-OLBION

That Lickey to his height seem'd slowly but to rise,
And that in length and bredth he all extended lyes,
Nor doth like other hills to suddaine sharpnesse
mount, 35

That of their kingly kind they scarce can him
account;

Though by his swelling soyle set in so high a place,
That Malverns mightie selfe he seemeth to out-face.

Whilst Cient and Licky thus, doe both expresse
their pride, 39

As Salwarpe slips along by Feck'nhams shady side,
That forrest him affects in wandring to the Wych:
But he, himselfe by salts there seeking to enrich,
His Feck'nham quite forgets; from all affection free.

But she, that to the flood most constant meanes to
be,

More prodigally gives her woods to those strong fires
Which boyle the source to salts. Which Clent so much
admires, 46

That love, and her disdain, to madness him provoke:
When to the wood-nymph thus the jealous mountaine
spoke;

Fond nymph, thy twisted curies, on which were all
my care,

Thou lett'st the furnace waste; that miserably bare 50
I hope to see thee left, which so doost mee despise;
Whose beauties many a morne have blest my longing
eyes:

And, till the wearie sunne sunk downe unto the west,
Thou still my object wast, thou once my onely best.

The time shall quickly come, thy groves and pleasant
springs, 55

Where to the mirthfull merle the warbling mavis sings,
The painfull laborers hand shall stock the roots, to
burne;

The branch and body spent, yet could not serve his
turne;

POLY-OLBION

Which when, most wilfull nymph, thy chauce shal
 be to see,
Too late thou shalt repent thy small regard of mee.
 But Saltwarpe downe from Wyche his nimblere feet
 doth ply, 61
Great Severne to attend, along to Teuksbury,
With others to partake the joy that there is seene,
When beautious Avon comes unto her soveraigne
 Queene.
Heere downe from Evshams Vale, their greatnesse to
 attend, 65
Comes Swilliat sweeping in, which Cotswold downe
 doth send:
And Garran there arrives, the great recourse to see.
Where thus together met, with most delightfull glee,
The cheerfull nymphs that haunt the valley rank and
 lowe 69
(Where full Pomona seemes most plentiously to flowe,
And with her fruitery swells by Pershore, in her
 pride)
Amongst the batfull meads on Severns either side,
To these their confluent floods, full boales of pery
 brought:
Where, to each others health past many a deep-fetcht
 draught,
And many a sound carouse from friend to friend doth
 goe. 75
Thus whilst the mellowed earth with her owne juice
 doth flowe,
Inflamed with excesse the lustie pampred Vale,
In praise of her great selfe, thus frames her glorious
 tale;
I doubt not but some vale enough for us hath said,
To answer them that most with basenesse us upbray'd;
Those high presumptuous hills, which bend their
 utmost might, 81
Us onely to deject, in their inveterate spight:

POLY-OLBION

But I would have them thinke, that I (which am the
Queene
Of all the British vales, and so have ever beene
Since Comers giant-brood inhabited this ile, 85
And that of all the rest, my selfe may so enstile)
Against the highest hill dare put my selfe for place,
That ever threatned heaven with the austerest face.
And for our praise, then thus; What fountaine send
they forth
(That finds a rivers name, though of the smallest
worth) 90
But it invales it selfe, and on it either side
Doth make those fruitfull meads, which with their
painted pride
Imbroader his proud banke? whilst in lascivious gyres
He swiftly sallieth out, and suddainly retyres
In sundry works and trailes, now shallowe, and then
deepe, 95
Searching the spacious shores, as though it meant to
sweepe
Their sweets with it away, with which they are
repleat.
And men, first building townes, themselves did
wisely seat
Still in the bountious vale: whose burthened pasture
beares
The most abundant swathe, whose gleabe such
goodly eares, 100
As to the weightie sheafe with sythe or sickle cut,
When as his hardned hand the labourer comes to put,
Sinks him in his owne sweat, which it but hardly
wields:
And on the come-strew'd lands, then in the stubble
fields,
There feed the heards of neat, by them the flocks of
sheep, 105
Seeking the scatt' red come upon the ridges steepe:

POLY-OLBION

And in the furrowe by (where Ceres lyes much spild)
Th'unweldy larding swine his mawe then having fild,
Lies wallowing in the myre, thence able scarce to rise.
When as those monstrous hills so much that us

despise 110

(The mountaine, which forsooth the lowly valley
mocks)

Have nothing in the world upon their barren rocks,
But greedy clambring goats, and conies, banisht quite
From every fertill place; as rascals, that delight 114

In base and barren plots, and at good earth repine.
And though in winter we to moysture much incline,
Yet those that be our owne, and dwell upon our
land,

When twixt their burly stacks, and full-stufft barnes
they stand,

Into the softer clay as easely they doe sinke,
Pluck up their heavie feet, with lighter spirits, to
thinke 120

That autumnne shall produce, to recompence their
toyle,

A rich and goodly croppe from that unpleasant soyle.
And from that envious foe which seekes us to
deprave,

Though much against his will this good we cleerly
have,

We still are highly prais'd, and honor'd by his hight.
For, who will us survey, their cleere and judging
sight 126

May see us thence at full: which else the searchingst
eye,

By reason that so flat and levelled we lie,
Could never throughly view, our selves nor could we
showe. 129

Yet more; what lofty hills to humble valleys owe,
And what high grace they have which neere to us are
plac't,

POLY-OLBION

In Breedon may be seene, beeing amorously imbrac't
In cincture of mine armes. Who though he doe not
 vaunt
His head like those that looke as they would heaven
 supplant:
Yet let them wisely note, in what excessive pride 135
He in my bosome sits; while him on every side
With my delicious sweets and delicates I trym.
And when great Malvern looks most terrible and
 grym,
Hee with a pleased brow continually doth smile.
 Heere Breedon, having heard his praises all the
 while, 140
Grew insolently proud; and doth upon him take
Such state, as he would seeme but small account to
 make
Of Malvern, or of Mein. So that the wiser vales,
To his instruction turnes the processe of her tale.
T'avoyd the greater wrath, and shunne the meaners
 hate, 145
Quoth shee, take my advice, abandon idle state;
And by that way I goe, doe thou thy course contrive:
Give others leave to vaunt, and let us closely thrive.
Whilst idly but for place the loftie mountaines toyle,
Let us have store of graine, and quantity of soyle.
To what end serve their tops (that seeme to threat the
 skie) 151
But to be rent with stormes? whilst we in safety lie.
Their rocks but barren be, and they which rashly
 clime,
Stand most in envies sight, the fairest prey for time.
And when the lowely vales are clad in sommers
 greene, 155
The grisled winters snowe upon their heads is seene.
Of all the hills I knowe, let Mein thy patterne bee:
Who though his site be such as seemes to equall thee,
And destitute of nought that Arden him can yeeld;

POLY-OLBION

Nor of th'especiall grace of many a goodly field; 160
Nor of deere Cliffords seat (the place of health and
sport)

Which many a time hath been the Muses quiet port.
Yet brags not he of th'at, nor of himselfe esteemes
The more for his faire site; but richer then he seemes,
Clad in a gowne of grasse, so soft and wondrous
wanne, 165

As him the sommers heat, nor winters cold can
harne.

Of whom I well may say, as I may speake of thee;
From either of your tops, that who beholdeth mee,
To Paradise may thinke a second hee had found,
If any like the first were ever on the ground. 170

Her long and zealous speech thus Evsham doth
conclude:

When straight the active Muse industriously pursu'd
This noble countries praise, as matter still did rise.
For Gloster in times past her selfe did highly prize,
When in her pride of strength she nourisht goodly
vines, 175

And oft her cares repest with her delicious wines.
But, now th'all-cheering sun the colder soyle deceaves,
And us (heere tow'rds the Pole) still falling south-
ward leaves:

So that the sullen earth th'effEct thereof doth prove;
According to their books, who hold that he doth
move 180

From his first zeniths poynt; the cause we feele his
want.

But of her vines deprived, now Gloster learns to
plant

The peare-tree every where: whose fruit shee straines
forjuce,

That her pur'st pery is, which first shee did produce
From Worstershire, and there is common as the
fields; 185

POLY-OLBION

Which naturally that soyle in most abundance
yeelds.
But the laborious Muse, which still new worke
assaies,
Here sallyeth through the slades, where beautilous
Severne playes,
Until that river gets her Glosters wished sight:
Where, she her streame divides, that with the more
delight 190
Shee might behold the towne, of which shee's
wondrous proud:
Then takes shee in the Frome, then Cam, and next *
the Strowd,
As thence upon her course she wantonly doth straine.
Supposing then her selfe a sea-god by her traine,
Shee Neptune-like doth float upon the bracky marsh.
Where, least she should become too combersome and
harsh, 196
Faire Micklewood (a nymph, long honor'd for a
chase,
Contending to have stood the high'st in Severns
grace,
Of any of the Dryad's there bordring on her shore)
With her coole amorous shades, and all her sylvan
store, 200
To please the goodly flood imployes her utmost
powers,
Supposing the proud nymph might like her woody
bowers.
But Severne (on her way) so large and head-strong
grew,
That shee the wood-nymph scornes, and Avon doth
pursue;
A river with no lesse then goodly Kings-wood
crown'd, 205
A forrest and a flood by eithers fame renown'd;

POLY-OLBION

And each with others pride and beautie much
bewitcht;
Besides, with Bristowes state both wondrously
enricht.
Which soone to Severne sent th'report of that faire
road
(So burthened still with barks, as it would over-load
Great Neptune with the weight) whose fame so farre
doth ring. 211
When as that mightie flood, most bravely flourishing,
Like Thetis goodlie selfe, majestically glides;
Upon her spacious breast tossing the surgefull tydes,
To have the river see the state to which shee growes,
And how much to her Queene the beautiful Avon
owes. 216
But, noble Muse, proceed immediatly to tell
How Evshams fertile vale at first in liking fell
With Cotswold, that great king of shepheards: whose
proud site
When the faire vale first saw, so nourisht her delight,
That him she onely lov'd: for wisely shee beheld 221
The beauties cleane throughout that on his sur-face
dweld:
Of just and equall height two banks arising, which
Grew poore (as it should seeme) to make some valley
rich: 224
Betwixt them thrusting out an elbowe of such height,
As shrouds the lower soyle; which, shadowed from
the light,
Shootes forth a little grove, that in the sommers day
Invites the flocks, for shade that to the covert stray.
A hill there holds his head, as though it told a tale,
Or stooped to looke downe, or whisper with a vale;
Where little purling winds like wantons seeme to
dally, 231
And skip from bank to banke, from valley trip to
valley.

POLY-OLBION

Such sundry shapes of soyle where Nature doth
devise,
That she may rather seeme fantasticall, then wise.
T'whom Sarum's plaine gives place: though famous
for her flocks, 235
Yet hardly doth she tythe our Cotswolds wealthy
locks.
Though Lemster him exceed for finenesse of her ore,
Yet quite he puts her downe for his abundant store.
A match so fit as hee, contenting to her mind,
Few vales (as I suppose) like Evsham hapt to find:
Nor any other wold, like Cotswold ever sped, 241
So faire and rich a vale by fortunung to wed.
Hee hath the goodly wooll, and shee the wealthy
graine:
Through which they wisely seeme their household to
maintaine.
He hath pure wholesome ayre, and daintie crystall
springs. 245
To those delights of his, shee daily profit brings:
As to his large expense, she multiplies her heapes:
Nor can his flocks devour th'abundance that shee
reaps;
As th'one with what it hath, the other strove to grace.
And, now that every thing may in the proper place
Most aptly be contriv'd, the sheepe our wold doth
breed 251
(The simplest though it seeme) shall our description
need,
And shepherd-like, the Muse thus of that kind doth
speak;
No browne, nor sullyed black the face or legs doth
streak,
Like those of Moreland, Cank, or of the Cambrian
hills 255
That lightly laden are: but Cotswold wisely fills
Her with the whitest land: whose browes so woolly be,

POLY-OLBION

With those delicious brooks, by whose immortall
streames
Her greatnesse is begunne: so that our rivers King,
When he his long descent shall from his bel-sires
bring,
Must needs (great pastures Prince) derive his stem by
thee, 285
From kingly Cotswolds selfe, sprung of the third
degree:
As th'old worlds heroes wont, that in the times of yore,
On Neptune, Jove, and Mars, themselves so highly
bore.
But easely from her source as Isis gently dades;
Unto her present ayde, downe through the deeper
slades, 290
The nimbler footed Churne, by Cisseter doth slide;
And first at Greeklade gets prehemence to guide;
Queene Isis on her way, ere shee receive her traine.
Cleere Colne, and lively Leech, so downe from Cots-
wolds plaine, 294
At Leechlade linking hands, come likewise to support
The mother of great Tames. When, seeing the resort,
From Cotswold Windrush scowres; and with her selfe
doth cast
The traine to over-take, and therefore hies her fast
Through the Oxfordian fields; when (as the last of all
Those floods, that into Tames out of our Cotswold
fall, 300
And farthest unto the north) bright Enload forth doth
beare.
For, though it had been long, at length she came to
heare
That Isis was to Tame in wedlock to be ti'd:
And therefore shee prepar'd t'attend upon the bride;
Expecting, at the feast, past ordinarie grace. 305
And being neere of kinne to that most spring-full
place,

POLY-OLBION

Some strewing sweets, some sorting flowres: 10
Where lustie CharweU himselfe raises,
And sings of rivers, and their praises,
Then Tames his way tow'rd Windsore tends.
Thus, with the song, the mariage ends.

Now fame had through this ile divulg'd, in every
eare,
The long-expected day of mariage to be neere,
That Isis, Cotswolds heire, long woo'd was lastly
wonne,
And instantly should wed with Tame, old Chiltern's
sonne.

And now that wood-mans wife, the mother of the
flood. 5
The rich and goodly Vale of Alsbury, that stood
So much upon her Tame was busied in her bowres,
Preparing for her sonne, as many sutes of flowres,
As Cotswold for the bride, his Isis, lately made;
Who for the lovely Tame, her bridegroom, onely
staid. 10

Whilst every crystall flood is to this business prest,
The cause of their great speed and many thus request;
O! whither goe yee floods? what suddaine wind doth
blowe,

Then other of your kind, that you so fast should
flowe?

What busines is in hand, that spurres you thus away?
Faire Windrush let me heare, I pray thee Charwell
say: 16

They suddainly reply, What lets you should not see
That for this nuptiall feast we all prepared bee?
Therefore this idle chat our eares doth but offend:
Our leysure serves not now these trifles to attend. 20

But whilst things are in hand, old Chiltern (for his
life)
From prodigall expense can no way keepe his wife;

POLY-OLBION

Who feedes her Tame with marie, in cordiall-wise
prepared,
And thinks all idly spent, that now she onely spar'd
In setting forth her sonne: nor can shee thinke it well,
Unlesse her lavish charge doe Cotswold's farre excel!
For, Alsbury's a vale that walloweth in her wealth, 27
And (by her wholesome ayre continually in health)
Is lustie, frim, and fat, and holds her youthfull
strength.
Besides her fruitfull earth, her mightie breadth and
length, 30
Doth Chiltern fitly match: which mountainously hie,
And beeing very long, so likewise shee doth lie;
From the Bedfordian fields, where first she doth
begin,
To fashion like a vale, to th'place where Tame doth
win
His Isis wished bed; her soyle throughout so sure, 35
For goodnesse of her gleabe, and for her pasture
pure,
That as her graine and grasse, so shee her sheepe
doth breed,
For burthen and for boane all other that exceed:
And shee, which thus in wealth abundantly doth
flowe,
Now cares not on her child what cost shee doe
bestowe. 40
Which when wise Chiltern saw (the world who long
had try'd,
And now at last had layd all garish pompe aside;
Whose hoare and chalkie head discry'd him to be old,
His beechen woods bereft that kept him from the
cold) 44
Would faine perswade the vale to hold a stedy rate;
And with his curious wife, thus wisely doth debate:
Quoth hee, you might allow what needeth, to the
most:

POLY-OLBION

But where as lesse will serve, what meanes this idle
cost?
Too much, a surfet breeds, and may our child annoy:
These fat and lushious meats doe but our stomacks
cloy. 50
The modest comly meane, in all things likes the wise,
Apparrell often shewes us womanish precise.
And what will Cotswold thinke when he shall heare
of this?
Hee'll rather blame your waste, then praise your cost
iwiss.
But, women wilfull be, and shee her will must have,
Nor cares how Chiltern chides, so that her Tame be
brave. 56
Alone which tow'rd his love shee easely doth convey:
For the Oxonian Ouze was lately sent away
From Buckingham, where first he finds his nimbler
feet;
Tow'rd Whittlewood then takes: where, past the
noblest street, 60
Hee to the forrest gives his farewell, and doth keepe
His course directly downe into the German deepe,
To publish that great day in mightie Neptunes hall,
That all the sea-gods there might keep it festivall.
As wee have told how Tame holds on his even
course, 65
Returne we to report, how Isis from her sourse
Comes tripping with delight, downe from her daintier
springs;
And in her princely traine, t'attend her marriage,
brings
Ciere Churnet, Colne, and Leech, which first she
did retaine,
With Windrush: and with her (all out-rage to re-
straine 70
Which well might offred be to Isis as shee went)

POLY-OLBION

Came Yenload with a guard of satyres, which were
sent

From Whichwood, to await the bright and god-like
dame.

So, Bernwood did bequeath his satyres to the Tame,
For sticklers in those stirres that at the feast should
bee. 75

These preparations great when Charwell comes to
see,

To Oxford got before, to entertaine the flood,
Apollo's ayde he begs, with all his sacred brood,
To that most learned place to welcome her repaire.

Who in her comming on, was wext so wondrous
faire, 80

That meeting, strife arose betwixt them, whether they
Her beauty should extoll, or shee admire their bay.
On whom their severall gifts (to amplifie her dowre)
The Muses there bestowe; which ever have the power
Immortal! her to make. And as shee past along, 85

Those modest Thespian maids thus to their Isis song;
Yee daughters of the hills, come downe from every
side,

And due attendance give upon the lovely bride:
Goe strew the paths with flowers by which shee is to
passe,

For be yee thus assur'd, in Albion never was 90

A beautie (yet) like hers: where have yee ever seene
So absolute a nymph in all things, for a Queene?

Give instantly in charge the day be wondrous faire,
That no disorderd blast attempt her braided haire.

Goe, see her state prepar'd, and everything be fit, 95
The bride-chamber adorn'd with all beseeming it.

And for the princely groome, who ever yet could
name

A flood that is so fit for Isis as the Tame?

Yee both so lovely are, that knowledge scarce can tell,
For feature whether hee, or beautie shee excell: 100

POLY-OLBION

That ravished with joy each other to behold,
When as your crystall wastes you closely doe enfold,
Betwixt your beautious selves you shall beget a sonne,
That when your lives shall end, in him shall be
begunne.

The pleasant Surryan shores shall in that flood de-
light, 105

And Kent esteeme her selfe most happy in his sight.
The shire that London loves, shall onely him prefer,
And give full many a gift to hold him neer to her.

The Skeld, the goodly Mose, the rich and viny
Rheine,

Shall come to meet the Thames in Neptunes watry
plaine. 110

And all the Belgian streames and neighboring floods
of Gaul,

Of him shall stand in awe, his tributaries all.

As of fayre Isis thus, the learned virgins spake,
A shrill and suddaine brute this Prothalamion brake;
That White-horse, for the love she bare to her ally,
And honored sister vale, the bountious Alsbury, 116
Sent presents to the Tame by Ock her onely flood,
Which for his mother vale, so much on greatnesse
stood.

From Oxford, Isis hasts more speedily, to see
That river like his birth might entertained bee: 120

For, that ambitious vale, still striving to commaund,
And using for her place continually to stand,
Proud White-horse to perswade, much busines there
hath been

T'acknowledge that great Vale of Evsham for her
Queen.

And but that Evsham is so opulent and great, 125
That thereby shee her selfe holds in the soveraigne
seat,

This White-horse all the vales of Britaine would
or'beare.

POLY-OLBION

And absolutely sit in the imperiall chaire;
And boasts as goodly beards, and numerous flocks to
 feed;
To have as soft a gleabe, as good increase of seed;
As pure and fresh an ayre upon her face to flowe, 131
As Evsham for her life: and from her steed doth
 showe,
Her iustie rising downes, as faire a prospect take
As that imperious wold: which her great Queene doth
 make
So wondrously admyr'd, and her so farre extend. 135
But, to the mariage, hence, industrious Muse descend.
 The Nai'ads, and the nymphs extreemly over-joy'd,
And on the winding banks all busily imploy'd,
Upon this joyfull day, some dainty chaplets twine:
Some others chosen out, with ringers neat and fine,
Brave anadems doe make: some bauldricks up do
 bind: 141
Some, garlands: and to some, the noseгаies were
 assign'd;
As best their skill did serve. But, for that Tame should
 be
Still man-like as him selfe, therefore they will that he
Should not be drest with flowers, to gardens that
 belong 145
(His bride that better fitte) but onely such as sprong
From the replenisht meads, and fruitfull pastures
 neere.
To sort with flowers, some sit; some making garlands
 were;
The primrose placing first, because that in the spring
It is the first appeares, then onely flourishing; 150
The azur'd hare-bell next, with them, they neatly
 mixt:
T'allay whose lushious smell, they woodbind plac't
 betwixt.

POLY-OLBION

Amongst those things of sent, there prick they in the
lily:
And neere to that againe, her sister daffadiHy.
To sort these flowers of showe, with th'other that
were sweet, 155
The cowslip then they couch, and th'oxslip, for her
meet:
The columbine amongst they sparingly doe set,
The yellow king-cup, wrought in many a curious fret,
And now and then among, of eglantine a spray,
By which againe a course of lady-smocks they lay:
The crow-flower, and there-by the clover-flower they
stick, 161
The daysie, over all those sundry sweets so thick,
As Nature doth her selfe; to imitate her right:
Who seems in that her pearle so greatly to delight,
That every plaine therewith she powdret to beholde:
The crimson darnell flower, the blew-bottle, and gold:
Which though esteem'd but weeds; yet for their
dainty hewes, 167
And for their sent not ill, they for this purpose chuse.
Thus having told you how the bridegroome Tame
was drest,
He shew you, how the bride, faire Isis, they invest;
Sitting to be attyr'd under her bower of state, 171
Which scornes a meaner sort, then fits a princely
rate.
In anadems for whom they curiously dispose
The red, the dainty white, the goodly damask rose,
For the rich ruby, pearle, and amatist, men place 175
In Kings emperiall crownes, the circle that enchase.
The brave carnation then, with sweet and soveraigne
power
(So of his colour call'd, although a July-flower)
With th'other of his kinde, the speckled and the pale:
Then th'odoriferous pink, that sends forth such a
gale 180

POLY-OLBION

Of sweetnes; yet in sents, as various as in sorts.
The purple violet then, the pansie there supports:
The mary-gold above, t'adorne the arched bar:
The dubble daysie, thrift, the button-batcheler,
Sweet william, sops in wine, the campion: and to
these, 185
Some lavender they put, with rosemary and bayes:
Sweet marjoram, with her like, sweet basill rare for
smell,
With many a flower, whose name were now too long
to tell:
And rarely with the rest, the goodly flower-delice.
Thus for the nuptiall houre, all fitted point-device.
Whilst some still busied are in decking of the bride,
Some others were again as seriously imploy'd 192
In strewing of those hearbs, at bridalls us'd that be;
Which every where they throwe with bountious hands
and free.
The healthfull balme and mint, from their full laps
doe fly, 195
The sent-full camomill, the verdurous costmary.
They hot muscado oft with milder maudlin cast:
Strong tansy, fennell coole, they prodigally waste:
Cleere isop, and therewith the comfortable thyme,
Germander with the rest, each thing then in her
prime; 200
As well of wholesome hearbs, as every pleasant
flower,
Which Nature here produc't, to fit this happy houre.
Amongst these strewing kinds, some other wilde that
growe,
As burnet, all abroad, and meadow-wort they throwe.
Thus all things falling out to every ones desire, 205
The ceremonies done that mariage doth require,
The bride and bridegroome set, and serv'd with
sundry cates,
And every other plac't, as fitted their estates;

POLY-OLBION

Amongst this confluence great, wise Charwell here
was thought
The first to cheare the guests: who throughly had
been taught 210
In all that could pertaine to court-ship, long agon,
As comming from his sire, the fruitfull Helidon,
He travelleth to Tames; where passing by those
townes
Of that rich country neere, whereas the mirthfull
clownes,
With taber and the pipe, on holydayes doe use 215
Upon the may-pole greene, to trample out their
shoes:
And having in his eares the deepe and solemne rings,
Which sound him all the way, unto the learned
springs,
Where he, his soveraigne Ouze most happily doth
meet,
And him, the thrice-three maids, Apollos ofspring,
greet 220
With all their sacred gifts: thus, expert being growne
In musicke; and besides, a curious maker knowne:
This Charwell (as I said) the first these floods among,
For silence having call'd, thus to th'assembly song;
Stand fast ye higher hills; low vallies easily lie: 225
And forrests that to both you equally apply
(But for the greater part, both wilde and barren be)
Retire ye to your wastes; and rivers only we,
Oft meeting let us mixe: and with delightfull grace,
Let every beautious nymph, her best lov'd flood
imbrace, 230
An alien be he borne, or neer to her owne spring,
So from his native fount he bravely flourishing,
Along the flowry fields, licentiously do straine,
Greeting each curled grove, and circling every plaine;
Or hasting to his fall, his sholy gravell scowr's, 235

POLY-OLBION

And with his crystall front, then courts the climbing
towres.

Let all the world be judge, what mountaine hath a
name,

Like that from whose proud foot, their springs some
flood of fame:

And in the earth's survey, what seat like that is set,
Whose streets some ample streame, abundantly doth
wet? 240

Where is there haven found, or harbour, like that
road,

Int'which some goodly flood, his burthen doth un-
load?

By whose rank swelling streame, the far-fetcht
forraine fraught,

May up to in-land townes conveniently be brought.
Of any part of earth, we be the most renown'd; 245

That countries very oft, nay, empires oft we bound.
As Rubicon, much fam'd, both for his fount and fall,
The ancient limit held, twixt Italy and Gaule.

Europe and Asia keep on Tanais either side.
Such honor have we floods, the world (even) to
divide. 250

Nay: kingdoms thus we prove are christened oft by
us;

Iberia takes her name of crystall Iberus,
Such reverence to our kinde the wiser ancients gave,
As they supposed each flood a deity to have:

But with our fame at home returne we to
proceed. 255

In Britanne here we find, our Severne, and our Tweed,
The tripartited ile doe generally divide,
To England, Scotland, Wales, as each doth keep her
side.

Trent cuts the land in two, so equally, as tho
Nature it pointed-out, to our great Brute to show 260
How to his mightie sonnes the iland he might share.

POLY-OLBION

A thousand of this kinde, and neerer, I will spare;
Where if the state of floods, at large I list to show,
I proudly could report how Pactolus doth throwe
Up graines of perfect gold; and of great Ganges tell,
Which when full India's showers inforceth him to
swell, 266

Gilds with his glistering sands the over-pampered
shore:

How wealthy Tagus first by tumbling down his ore,
The rude and slothfull Moores of old Iberia taught,
To search into those hills, from which such wealth he
brought. 270

Beyond these if I pleas'd, I to your praise could bring,
In sacred Tempe, how (about the hoofe-plow'd
spring)

The Heliconian maides, upon that hallowed ground,
Recounting heavenly hymnes eternally are crown'd.
And as the earth doth us in her owne bowels nourish;
So every thing, that growes by us, doth thrive and
flourish. 276

To godly vertuous men, we wisely likened are:
To be so in themselves, that do not only care;
But by a sacred power, which goodnesse doth awaite,
Doe make those vertuous too, that them associate.

By this, the wedding ends, and brake up all the
showe: 281

And Tames, got, borne, and bred, immediately doth
flowe,

To Windsor-ward amaine (that with a wondring eye,
The forrest might behold his awfull emperie)

And soon becometh great, with waters wext so rank,
That with his wealth he seemes to retch his widned
bank: 286

Till happily attayn'd his grandsire Chilterns grounds,
Who with his beechen wreaths this King of rivers
crownes.

Amongst his holts and nils, as on his way he makes,

POLY-OLBION

That princely order first, our first that conquered
France; 316
The Temple of Saint George, whereas his honored
knights,
Upon his hallowed day, observe their ancient rites:
Where Eaton is at hand to nurse that learned brood,
To keepe the Muses still neere to this princely flood;
That nothing there may want, to beautifie that
seate, 321
With every pleasure stor'd: And here my song com-
plete.

THE NINETEENTH SONG

The Argument

THE Muse, now over Thames makes forth,
Upon her progresse to the north,
From Cauney with a full carrere,
Shee up against the streame doth beare;
Where Waltham forrests pride exprest, 5
Shee poynts directly to the east,
And shewes how all those rivers straine
Through Essex, to the German mayne;
When Stoure, with Orwels ayd prefers,
Our Brittish brave sea-voyagers; 10
Halfe Suffolke in with them shee take,
Where of this song an end shee makes.

Beare bravely up my Muse, the way thou went'st
before,
And crosse the kingly Thames to the Essexian shore,
Stem up his tyde-full streame, upon that side to rise,
When Cauney, Albions child in-iled richly lyes,
Which, though her lower scite doth make her seeme
but meane, 5

POLY-OLBION

Of him as dearly lov'd as Shepey is or Greane,
And him as dearly lov'd: for when he would depart,
With Hercules to fight, she tooke it so to heart,
That falling low and flat, her blubbered face to hide,
By Thames shee welneere is surrounded every tyde:
And since of worldly state, she never taketh keepe, 11
But onely gives her selfe, to tend, and milke her
sheepe.

But Muse, from her so low, divert thy high-set
song

To London-wards, and bring from Lea with thee
along

The forrests, and the floods, and most exactly show,
How these in order stand, how those directly flow: 16
For in that happy soyle, doth pleasure ever wonne,
Through forrests, where cleere rills in wild meanders
runne;

Where daintie summer bowers, and arborets are
made,

Cut out of busshy thicks, for coolenesse of the shade.
Fooles gaze at painted courts, to th'countrey let me
goe, 21

To climbe the easie hill, then walke the valley lowe;
No gold-embossed roofes, to me are like the woods;
No bed like to the grasse, nor liquor like the floods:
A citie's but a sinke, gay houses gawdy graves, 25
The Muses have free leave, to starve or live in caves:

But Waltham Forrest still in prosperous estate,
As standing to this day (so strangely fortunate)
Above her neighbour nymphs, and holds her head
aloft;

A turfe beyond them all, so sleeke and wondrous
soft, 30

Upon her setting side, by goodly London grac'd,
Upon the north by Lea, her south by Thames
embrac'd.

Upon her rising point, shee chaunced to espie,

POLY-OLBION

A daintie forrest-nymph of her societie.
Faire Hatfield, which in height all other did sur-
mount, 35
And of the Dryades held in very high account;
Yet in respect of her stood farre out of the way,
Who doubting of her selfe, by others late decay,
Her sisters glory view'd with an astonish'd eye,
Whom Waltham wisely thus reproveth by and by. 40
Deare sister rest content, nor our declining rue,
What thing is in this world (that we can say) is new;
The ridge and furrow shewes, that once the crooked
plow,
Turn'd up the grassy turfe, where okes are rooted
now:
And at this houre we see, the share and coulter teare
The full corne-bearing gleabe, where sometimes 46
forrests were;
And those but caitifes are, which most doe seeke our
spoyle,
Who having sold our woods, doe lastly sell our soyle;
Tis vertue to give place to these ungodly times,
When as the fostred ill proceeds from others crimes;
Gainst lunatiks, and fooles, what wise folke spend 51
their force;
For folly headlong falls, when it hath had the course:
And when God gives men up, to wayes abhor'd and
vile,
Of understanding hee deprives them quite, the while
They into errour runne, confounded in their sinne, 55
As simple fowles in lyme, or in the fowlers gynne.
And for those prettie birds, that wont in us to sing,
They shall at last forbear to welcome in the spring,
When wanting where to perch, they sit upon the
ground,
And curse them in their notes, who first did woods 60
confound.
Deare sister Hatfield, then hold up thy drooping head,

POLY-OLBION

We feele no such decay, nor is all succour fled:
For Essex is our dower, which greatly doth abound,
With every simple good, that in the ile is found:
And though we goe to wracke in this sogenerall waste,
This hope to us remains, we yet may be the last. 66

When Hatfield taking heart, where late she sadly
stood,

Sends little Roding foorth, her best-beloved flood;
Which from her christall fount, as to enlarge her fame,
To many a village lends, her cleere and noble name,
Which as she wandreth on, through Waltham holds

her way, 71

With goodly oken wreaths, which makes her
wondrous gay;

But making at the last into the watry marsh,
Where though the blady grasse unwholesome be and
harsh,

Those wreaths away she casts, which bounteous
Waltham gave, 75

With bulrush, flags, and reed, to make her wondrous
brave,

And her selves strength divides, to sundry lesser
streames,

So wantoning shee falls into her soveraigne Thames.

From whose vast beechy bankes a rumor straight
resounds,

Which quickly ran it selfe through the Essexian
grounds, 80

That Crouch amongst the rest, a rivers name should
seeke,

As scorning any more the nickname of a creeke,
Well furnisht with a streame, that from the fill to fall,
Wants nothing that a flood should be adorn'd
withall.

Of Benge's batfull side, and at her going out, 85
With Walnut, Foulnesse faire, neere watred round
about.

POLY-OLBION

Two iles for greater state to stay her up that stand,
Thrust farre into the sea, yet fixed to the land;
As Nature in that sort them purposely had plac'd,
That shee by sea and land, should every way be
 grac'd. 90
Some sea-nymphs and besides, her part (there were)
 that tooke,
As angry that their Crouch should not be cald a
 brooke;
And bad her to complaine to Neptune of her wrong.
 But whilst these grievous stirres thus hapned them
 among,
Choice Chelmer comes along, a nymph most neatly
 cleere, 95
Which welneere through the midst doth cut the
 wealthy sheere,
By Dunmow gliding downe to Chelmsford hold her
 chase,
To which she gives the name, which as she doth
 imbrace
Cleere Can comes tripping in, and doth with Chelmer
 close:
With whose supply (though small as yet) she greater
 growes. 100
She for old Maldon makes, where in her passing by,
Shee to remembrance calls that Roman Colony,
And all those ominous signes her fall that did foregoe,
As that which most expres'd their fatall overthrow;
Crown'd victory reverst, fell downe whereas shee
 stood, 105
And the vast greenish sea, discoloured like to blood.
Shreeks heard like peoples cries, that see their deaths
 at hand;
The pourtratures of men imprinted in the sand.
When Chelmer scarce arrives in her most wished bay,
But Blakwater comes in, through many a crooked
 way, 110

POLY-OLBION

Which Pant was call'd of yore; but that, by time exild,
Shee Froshwell after hight, then Blakwater instil'd,
But few, such titles have the British floods among.

When Northey neere at hand, and th'Ile of Ousey
rung

With shouts the sea-nymphs gave, for joy of their
arrive, 115

As either of those iles in curtesie doe strive,
To Tethis darlings, which should greatest honor doe;
And what the former did, the latter adds thereto.

But Colne, which frankly lends faire Colechester
her name,

(On all the Essexian shore, the towne of greatest
fame) 120

Perceiving how they still in courtship did contend,
Quoth she, wherefore the time thus idly doe you
spend?

What is there nothing here, that you esteeme of
worth,

That our big-bellied sea, or our rich land brings
forth?

Thinke you our oysters here, unworthy of your
praise? 125

Pure Walfleet, which doe still the daintiest pallats
please:

As excellent as those which are esteemed most.

The Cizic shels, or those on the Lucrinian coast;
Or cheese, which our fat soyle to every quarter sends;

Whose tacke the hungry clowne, and plow-man so
commends. 130

If you esteeme not these, as things above the ground,
Looke under, where the urnes of ancient times are
found:

The Roman Emp'rours coynes, oft dig'd out of the
dust,

And warlike weapons now consumed with cankring
rust:

POLY-OLBION

The huge and massy bones, of mighty fearefull men,
To tell the worlds full strength, what creatures lived
then; 136

When in her height of youth, the lustie fruitfull earth
Brought foorth her big-limb'd brood, even gyants in
their birth.

Thus spoke shee, when from sea they suddenly doe
heare

A strong and horrid noyse, which struck the land
withfeare: 140

For with their crooked trumps, his Tritons, Neptune
sent,

To warne the wanton nymphs, that they incontinent
Should straight repaire to Stour, in Orwells pleasant
load;

For it had been divulg'd the ocean all abroad,
That Orwell and this Stour, by meeting in one bay,
Two, that each others good, intended every way, 146
Prepared to sing a song, that should precisely show,
That Medway for her life, their skill could not out-
goe:

For Stour, a daintie flood, that duly doth divide
Fair Suffolke from this shire, upon her other side;
By Clare first comming in, to Sudbury doth show,
The even course she keepes; when farre she doth not
flow, 152

But Breton a bright nymph, fresh succour to her
brings:

Yet is she not so proud of her superfluous springs,
But Orwell comming in from Ipswitch thinks that
shee, 155

Should stand for it with Stour, and lastly they agree,
That since the Britans hence their first discoveries
made,

And that into the east they first were taught to trade.
Besides, of all the roads, and havens of the east,

POLY-OLBION

'This harbor where they meet, is reckoned for the
best. 160
Our voyages by sea, and brave discoveries knowne
Their argument they make, and thus they sing their
owne;
In Severns late tun'd lay, that Emprise of the
west,
In which great Arthurs actes are to the life exprest:
His conquests to the north, who Norway did invade,
Who Groneland, Iseland next, then Lapland lastly
made 166
His awfull empires bounds, the Britans acts among,
This god-like heroes deeds exactly have beene sung:
His valiant people then, who to those countries
brought,
Which many an age since that, our great'st discoveries
thought. 170
This worthiest then of ours, our Argonauts shall lead.
Next Malgo, who againe that conquerors steps to
tread,
Succeeding him in raigne, in conquests so no lesse,
Plow'd up the frozen sea, and with as faire successe,
By that great conquerors claime, first Orkney over-
ran; 175
Proud Denmarke then subdu'd, and spacious Norway
wan,
Ceasd Iseland for his owne, and Goteland to each
shore,
Where Arthurs full-saild fleet had ever toucht before.
And when the Britans raigne came after to decline,
And to the Cambrian hills their fate did them confine,
The Saxon swaying all, in Alfreds powerfull raigne,
Our English Octer put a fleet to sea againe, 182
Of th'uge Norwegian hilles, and newes did hither
bring,
Whose tops are hardly wrought in twelve dayes
travailing.

POLY-OLBION

But leaving Norway then a sterboard, forward kept,
And with our English sayles what mightie ocean
swept, 186

Where those sterne people wonne, whom hope of
gaine doth call,
In hulkes with grapling hooks, to hunt the dreadfull
whall;

And great Duma downe from her first springing
place,
Doth roule her swelling waves in churlish Neptunes
face. 190

Then Woolstan after him discovering Dansig found,
Where Wixels mighty mouth is powrd into the sound,
And towing up his streame, first taught the English
oares,
The useful! way of trade to those most gainefull
shores.

And when the Norman stem here strong and potent
grew, 195
And their successefull sonnes, did glorious acts
pursue,

One Nicholas nam'd of Lyn, where first he breath'd
the ayre,
Though Oxford taught him art, and well may hold
him deare:

Ith'mathematicks learnd, (although a fryer profest)
To see those northerne climes, with great desire
possest, 200

Himselfe he thither ship'd, and skilfull in the globe,
Tooke every severall height with his true astrolobe;
The whirlpooles of the seas, and came to understand,
From the foure card'nall winds, foure indraughts
that command;

Int'any of whose falls, if th'wandring barque doth
light, 205

It hurried is away with such temptestuous flight,

POLY-OLBION

Into that swallowing gulfe, which seemes as it would
draw

The very earth it selfe into th'mfernall maw.

Foure such immeasur'd pooles, phylosophers agree,
Ith foure parts of the world undoubtedly to bee; 210
From which they have supposed, Nature the winds
doth raise,

And from them to proceed the flowing of the seas.

And when our civill warres began at last to cease,
And these late calmer times of olive-bearing peace,
Gave leasure to great minds, farre regions to descry;
That brave adventrous knight, our Sir Hugh

Willoughby, 216

Ship'd for the northern seas, mongst those congealed
piles,

Fashioned by lasting frosts, like mountaines, and like
iles,

(In all her fearefulst shapes saw horror, whose great
mind,

In lesser bounds then these, that could not be con-
fin'd, 220

Adventured on those parts, where winter still doth
keepe;

When most the icy cold had chaine'd up all the deeps)
In bleake Arzina's road his death neere Lapland
tooke,

Where Kegor from her scite, on those grim seas doth
looke.

Two others follow then, eternall fame that wonne,
Our Chancellor, and with him, compare we Jenkin-
son; 226

For Russia both imbarqu'd, the first ariving there,
Entring Duina's mouth, up her proud streame did
steere

To Volgad, to behold her pompe, the Russian state,
Moscovia measuring then; the other with like fate,

POLY-OLBION

Both thoss vast realmes survay'd, then into Bactria
past, 231
To Boghors bulwarkt walls, then to the liquid wast,
Where Oxus roleth downe twixt his farre distant
shores,
And o're the Caspian maine, with strong unttyred
oares,
Adventured to view rich Persias wealth and pride,
Whose true report thereof, the English since have
tride. 236
With Fitch, our Eldred next, deservedly placed is;
Both travailing to see, the Syrian Tripolis.
The first of which (in this whose noble spirit was
showne)
To view those parts, to us that were the most un-
knowne, 240
On thence to Ormus set, Goa, Cambaya, then,
To vast Zelabdim, thence to Echubar, agen
Croft Ganges mighty streame, and his large bankes
did view,
To Baccola went on, to Bengola, Pegu;
And for Mallaccan then, Zeiten, and Cochin cast,
Measuring with many a step, the great East-Indian
wast. 246
The other from that place^ the first before had gone,
Determining to see the broad-wald Babylon,
Croft Euphrates, and row'd against his mightie
streame;
Licia, and Gaza saw, with great Hierusalem, 250
And our deare Saviours seat, blest Bethlem did
behold,
And Jourdan, of whose waves, much is in scriptures
told.
Then Macham, who (through love to long adven-
tures led)
Mederas wealthy iles, the first discovered, 254
Who having stolne a mayd, to whom he was affi'd,

POLY-OLBION

And with their precious wood, sugar, and cotton
fraught, 285

It by his safe returne, into his countrie brought.

Then Forboshers, whose fame flew all the ocean o'r,
Who to the northwest sought, huge China's wealthy
shore,

When nearer to the north, that wandring sea-man set,
Where hee in our hotst mon'ths of June and July met
With snow, frost, haile, and sleet, and found sterne
winterstrong, 291

With mighty iies of ice, and mountaines huge and
long.

Where as it comes and goes, the great eternall light,
Makes halfe the yeare still day, and halfe continuall
night.

Then for those bounds unknown, he bravely set
again, 295

As he a sea-god were, familiar with the maine.

The noble Fenton next, and Jackman we preferre,
Both voyagers, that were with famous Forboshers.

And Davies, three times forth that for the north-
west made;

Still striving by that course, t'inrich the English
trade: 300

And as he well deserv'd to his eternall fame.

There by a mightie sea, imortaliz'd his name.

With noble Gilbert next, comes Hoard who tooke
in hand

To cleere the course scarce knowne into the New-
found Land,

And view'd the plenteous seas, and fishfull havens,
where 305

Our neighbouring nations since have stor'd them
every yeare.

The globe-engirdling Drake, the navall palme that
wonne,

Who strove in his long course to emulate the sunne:

POLY-OLBION

Of whom the Spaniard us'd a prophecie to tell,
 That from the British Isles should rise a dragon fell,
 That with his armed wings, should strike th'Tberian
 maine, 311
 And bring in after time much horror upon Spaine.
 This more then man (or what) this demie-god at sea,
 Leaving behind his backe, the great America,
 Upon the surging maine his wel-stretch't tacklings
 flew'd, 315
 To fortie three degrees of north'ly latitude;
 Unto that land before to th'Christian world un-
 knowne,
 Which in his countries right he nam'd New Albion;
 And in the Westerne Inde, spight of the power of
 Spaine,
 Hee Saint Iago tooke, Domingo, Cartagene: 320
 And leaving of his prowess, a marke in every bay,
 Saint Augustins surpriz'd, in Terra Florida.
 Then those that fourth for sea, industrious
 Rawleigh wrought,
 And them with every thing, fit for discovery fraught;
 That Amadas, (whose name doth scarsely English
 sound) 325
 With Barlow, who the first Virginia throughly found.
 As Greenville, whom he got to undertake that sea,
 Three sundry times from hence, who touch'd Vir-
 ginia.
 (In his so rare a choyce, it well approv'd his wit;
 That with so brave a spirit, his turne so well could fit.
 O Greenville, thy great name, for ever be renown'd,
 And borne by Neptune still, about this mightie
 round; 332
 Whose navall conflict wanne thy nation so much
 fame,
 And in th'Iberians bred feare of the English name.
 Nor should fame speake her low'dst, of Lane, shee
 could not lie, 335

POLY-OLBION

Who in Virginia left, with th'English colony,
Himselfe so bravely bare, amongst our people there,
That him they onely lov'd, when others they did feare,
And from those barbarous, brute, and wild Vir-
ginians wan

Such reverence, as in him there had been more then
man. 340

Then he which favoured still, such high attempts as
these,
Rawleigh, whose reading made him skil'd in all the
seas,

Imbarqu'd his worthy selfe, and his adventurous crue,
And with a prosperous sayle to those faire countries
flew,

Where Orenoque, as he, on in his course doth roule,
Seemes as his greatnes meant, grim Neptune to con-
troule; 346

Like to a puisant King, whose realmes extend so
farre,

That many a potent Prince his tributaries are.
So are his branches seas, and in the rich Guiana,
A flood as proud as he, the broad-brim'd Orellana:
And on the spacious firme Manoa's mightie seat, 351
The land (by Natures power) with wonders most
repleat.

So Leigh, Cape Briton saw, and Rameas lies
a game;

As Tompson undertooke the voyage to New-Spaine:
And Hawkins not behind, the best of these before,
Who hoysing sayle, to seeke the most remotest shore,
Upon that new-nam'd Spaine, and Guinny sought his
prize, 357

As one whose mighty mind small things could not
suffice,

The sonne of his brave syre, who with his furrowing
keele,

POLY-OLBION

Long ere that time had touch'd the goodly rich
Brazeel. 360

Couragious Candish then, a second Neptune here,
Whose fame fild every mouth, and tooke up every
eare.

What man could in his time discourse of any seas,
But of brave Candish talk'd, and of his voyages;
Who through the south seas past, about this earthly
ball, 365

And saw those starres, to them that onely rise and
fall,

And with his silken sayles, stayn'd with the richest ore,
Dar'd any one to passe where he had been before.

Count Cumberland, so hence to seeke th'Asores
sent,

And to the Westerne-Inde, to Porta Ricco went, 370
And with the English power it bravely did surprize.

Sir Robert Dudley then, by sea that sought to rise,
Hoyst sayles with happy winds to th'Iles of Trinidado:
Pana then he past, the Hands of Granado;

As those of Sancta Cruz, and Porta Ricco: then 375
Amongst the famous ranke of our sea-searching men,
Is Preston sent to sea, with Summers foorth to finde,
Adventures in the parts upon the Westerne-Inde;

Port Santo who surpriz'd, and Coches, with the fort
Of Coro, and the towne, when in submissive sort, 380
Cumana ransome crav'd, Saint James of Leon sack'd;
Jamica went not free, but as the rest they wrack'd.

Then Sherley, (since whose name such high re-
nowne hath won)

That voyage undertooke, as they before had done:
He Saint Iago saw, Domingo, Margarita, 385
By Terra Firma sayl'd to th'Ilands of Jamica,
Up Rio Dolce row'd, and with a prosperous hand,
Returning to his home, touch'd at the New-found-
land,

Where at Jamicas lies, couragious Parker met

POLY-OLBION

With Sherley, and along up Rio Dolce set, 390
Where bidding him adue, on his owne course he ran,
And tooke Campeches towne, the chief 'st of Jucatan.
A freegate, and from thence did home to Britan
bring,
With most strange tribute fraught, due to that Indian
King,
At mightie Neptunes beck, thus ended they their
song, 395
When as from Harwich all to Loving-land along,
Great claps and shouts were heard resounding to the
shore,
Wherewith th'Essexian nymphs applaud their loved
Stour,
From the Suffolcean side yet those which Stour pre-
ferre
Their princely Orwell praise, as much as th'other her:
For though cleare Briton be rich Suffolkes from her
spring, 401
Which Stour upon her way to Harwich downe doth
bring,
Yet Deben of her selfe a stout and stedfast friend,
Her succour to that sea, neere Orwels road doth send.
When Waveney to the north, rich Suffblks onely
meere, 405
As Stour upon the south, from Essex parts this
Sheere;
Lest Stour and Orwell thus might steale her nymphs
away,
In Neptunes name commands, that here their force
should stay:
For that her selfe and Yar in honor of the deepe,
Were purposed a feast in Loving-land to keepe. 410

POLY-OLBION

THE TWENTIETH SONG

The Argument

THE Muse that part of Suffolke sings,
That lyes to Norfolke, and then brings
The bright Norfolcean nymphes, to ghest
To Loving-land, to Neptunes feast;
To Ouze the lesse then downe shee takes, 5
Where shee a flight at river makes:
And thence to marsh-land shee descends,
With whose free praise this song shee ends.

From Suffolke rose a sound, through the Norfol-
cean shore
That ran it selfe, the like had not bin heard before:
For he that doth of sea the powerful trident weld,
His Tritons made proclaime, a nymphall to be held 5
In honor of himselfe, in Loving-land, where he
The most selected nymphes appointed had to be.
Those seamayds that about his secret walkes doe
dwell,
Which tend his mightie heards of whales, and fishes
fell,
As of the rivers those, amongst the meadowes ranke,
That play in every foar'd, and sport on every banke,
Were summon'd to be there, in paine of Neptunes
hate: 11
For he would have his feast, observed with god-like
state,
When those Suffolcean floods, that sided not with
Stoure,
Their streames but of themselves into the ocean
powre,
As Or, through all the coast a flood of wondrous
fame, 15
Whose honored fall begets a haven of her name.

POLY-OLBION

And Blyth a daintie brooke, their speedy course doe
cast,
For Neptune with the rest, to Loving-land to hast:
When Waveney in her way, on this septentrill side,
That these two easterne shires doth equally divide, 20
From Laphamford leads on, her streame into the east,
By Bungey, then along by Beckles, when possest
Of Loving-land, 'bout which her limber armes she
throwes,
With Neptune taking hands, betwixt them who
inclose,
And her an iland make, fam'd for her scite so farre.
But leave her Muse awhile, and let us on with Yar, 26
Which Gariena some, some Hier, some Yar doe
name;
Who rising from her spring not farre from Walsing-
ham,
Through the Norfolcean fields seemes wantonly to
play,
To Norwich comes at length, towards Yarmouth on
her way, 30
Where Wentsum from the south, and Bariden doe
beare
Up with her, by whose wealth she much is honored
there,
To intertaine her Yar, that in her state doth stand,
With townes of high'st account, the fourth of all the
land:
That hospitable place to the industrious Dutch, 35
Whose skill in making stufes, and workmanship is
such,
(For refuge hither come) as they our ayd deserve,
By labour sore that live, whilst oft the English starve;
On roots, and pulse that feed, on beefe and mutton
spare,
So frugally they live, not gluttons as we are. 40

POLY-OLBION

But from my former theame, since thus I have
digrest,
He borrow more of time, untill my nyrnphs be drest:
And since these foods fall out so fitly in my way,
A little while to them I will convert my lay.
The colewort, colifloure, and cabidge in their
season, 45
The rouncefall, great beanes, and early ripening
peason;
The onion, scallion, leeke, which housewives highly
rate;
Their kinsman garlicke then, the poore mans
Mithridate;
The savory parsnip next, and carret pleasing food;
The skirret (which some say) in sallats stirres the
blood; 50
The turnip, tasting well to clownes in winter weather.
Thus in our verse we put, roots, hearbs, and fruits
together.
The great moyst pumpkin then, that on the ground
doth lie,
A purer of his kind, the sweet muske-million by;
Which dainty pallats now, because they would not
want, 55
Have kindly learnt to set, as yearely to transplant:
The radish somewhat hote, yet urine doth provoke;
The cucumber as cold, the heating artichoke;
The citrons, which our soyle not easly doth affourd;
The rampion rare as that, the hardly gotten gourd. 60
But in these triviall things, Muse, wander not too
long,
But now to nimble Yar, turne we our active song,
Which in her winding course, from Norwich to the
mayne,
By many a stately seat lasciviously doth straine,
To Yarmouth till she come, her onely christned
towne, ~ 65

POLY-OLBION

Whose fishing through the realme, doth her so much
renowne,
Where those that with their nets still haunt the
boundles lake,
Her such a sumptuous feast of salted herrings make,
As they had rob'd the sea of all his former store,
And past that very howre, it could produce no more.
Her owne selves harbour here, when Yar doth
hardly win, 71
But kindly she againe, saluted is by Thrin,
A faire Norfolcean nymph, which gratifies her fall.
Now are the Tritons heard, to Loving-land to call,
Which Neptunes great commaunds, before them
bravely beare, 75
Commanding all the nymphs of high account that
were,
Which in fat Holland lurke amongst the queachy
plashes,
Or play them on the sands, upon the fomy washes,
As all the watry brood, which haunt the German
deepe,
Upon whose briny curies, the dewy morning weepes,
To Loving-land to come, and in ther best attires, 81
That meeting to observe, as now the time requires.
When Erix, Neptunes sonne by Venus, to the shore
To see them safely brought, their herault came
before,
And for a mace he held in his huge hand, the home
Of that so-much-esteem'd, sea-honoring Unicorne, 86
Next Proto wondrous swift, led all the rest the way,
Then she which makes the calmes, the mild Cymodice,
With god-like Dorida, and Galatea faire,
With daintie nets of pearle, cast o'r their braided
haire: 90
Analiis which the sea doth salt, and seasoned keepe,
And Batheas, most supream and soveraigne in the
deepe,

POLY-OLBION

Brings Cyane, to the waves which that greene colour
gives;
Then Atmis, which in fogs and mistie vapours lives:
Phrinax, the billowes rough, and surges that be-
strides, 95
And Rothion, that by her on the wilde waters rides;
With Icthias, that of frye the keeping doth retaine,
As Pholoe, most that rules the monsters of the maine:
Which brought to beare them out, if any need should
fall,
The dolphin, sea-horse, gramp, the wherlpoole, and
the whall. 100
An hundred more besides, I readily could name,
With these as Neptune wil'd, to Loving-land that
came.
These nymphs trick'd up in tyers, the sea-gods to
delight:
Of currall of each kind, the blacke, the red, the white;
With many sundry shels, the scallop large, and faire;
The cockle small and round, the periwinkle spare, 106
The oyster, wherein oft the pearle is found to breed,
The mussell, which retaines that daintie orient seed:
In chaines and bracelets made, with linkes of sundry
twists,
Some worae about their wasts, their necks, some on
the wrists. 110
Great store of amber there, and jeat they did not
misse;
Their lips they sweetned had with costly ambergris.
Scarcely the Neriad's thus arrived from the seas,
But from the fresher streames the brighter Niades,
To Loving-land make haste with all the speed they
may, 115
For feare their fellow-nymphes should for their
comming stay.
Glico the running streames in sweetnesse still that
keepes,

POLY-OLBION

And Clymene which rules, when they surround their
deepes.

Spio, in hollow bankes, the waters that doth hide:
With Opis that doth beare them backward with the
tyde. 120

Semaia that for sights doth keepe the water cleare:
Zanthe their yellow sands, that maketh to appeare,
Then Drymo for the okes that shaddow every banke,
Phylodice, the boughs for garlands fresh and ranke.
Which the cleare Naiades make them anadems with-
all, 125

When they are cald to daunse in Neptunes mightie
hall.

Then Ligea, which maintaines the birds harmonious
layes,

Which sing on rivers banks amongst the slender
sprayes,

With Rhodia, which for them doth nurse the roseat
sets,

loida, which preserves the azure violets. 130

Anthea, of the flowers, that hath the generall charge,
And Syrinx of the reeds, that grow upon the marge,
Some of these lovely nymphes wore on their flaxen
haire

Fine chaplets made of flaggs, that fully flowred were:
With water-cans againe, some wantonly them dight,
Whose larger leafe and flower, gave wonderfull
delight 136

To those that wistly view'd their beauties: some
againe, -

That soveraigne places held amongst the watry traine,
Of cat-tayles made them crownes, which from the
sedge doth grow,

Which neatly woven were, and some to grace the
show, 140

Of lady-smocks most white, doe rob each neighbour-
ing mead,

POLY-OLBION

Wherewith their looser locks most curiously they
breyd.

Now thus together com'n, they friendly doe devise,
Some of light toyes, and some of matters grave and
wise.

But to breake off their speech, her reed when Syrinx
sounds, 145

Some cast themselves in rings, and fell to hornepipe
rounds:

They ceasing, as againe to others turnes it falls,
They lustie galiards tread, some others jiggs, and
braules.

This done, upon the banke together being set,
Proceeding in the cause, for which they thus were
met, 150

In mightie Neptunes praise, these sea-borne virgins
sing:

Let earth, and ayre, say they with the high praises
ring,

Of Saturne by his Ops, the most renowned sonne,
From all the gods but Jove, the diadem that wonne,
Whose ofspring wise and strong, deare nymphes let
us relate, 155

On mountaines of vast waves, know he that sits in
state,

And with his trident rules, the universall streame,
To be the onely syre of mightie Polypheme.

On fayre Thoosa got old Phorcus loved child,
Who in a fained shape that god of sea beguild 160

Three thousand princely sonnes, and lovely nymphs
as we,

Were to great Neptune borne, of which we sparing be:
Some by his goodly Queene, some in his lemmans
bed;

Chryasor grim begot, on sterne Medusas head.

Swart Brontes, for his owne so mightie Neptune
takes 165

POLY-OLBION

One of the Cyclops strong, Joves thunder-bolts that
makes.

great Neptune, Nelius got, (if you for wisdom
seeke)

Who was old Nestors syre, the grav'st and wisest
Greeke.

Or from this King of waves, of such thou lov'st to
heare,

Of famous nations first, that mightie founders were;
Then Cadmus, who the plot of ancient Thebes con-
triv'd, 171

From Neptune god of sea, his pedigree deriv'd,
By Agenor his old syer, who rul'd Phenicia long:
So Inachus, the chiefe of Argives great and strong
Claim'd kinred of this King, and by some beautious
neece, 175

So did Pelasgus too, who peopled ancient Greece.
A world of mightie Kings and Princes I could name,
From our god Neptune sprung; let this suffice, his
fame

Incompasseth the world; those starres which never
rise,

Above the lower south, are never from his eyes: 180
As those againe to him doe every day appeare,
Continually that keepe the northerne hemisphere;
Who like a mightie king, doth cast his watched robe,
Farre wider then the land, quite round about the
globe.

Where is there one to him that may compared be, 185
That both the poles at once continually doth see;
And gyant-like with heaven as often maketh warres;
The ilands (in his power) as numberlesse as starres,
He washeth at his will, and with his mightie hands,
He makes the even shores, oft mountainous with
sands: 190

Whose creatures, which observe his wide emperiall
seat,

POLY-OLBION

Like his immeasured selfe, are infinite and great.
Thus ended they their song, and off th'assembly
brake,
When quickly towards the west, the Muse her way
doth take;
Whereas the swelling soyle, as from one banke doth
bring 195
This Waveney sung before, and Ouse the lesse, whose
spring
Towards Ouse the greater poynts, and downe by
Thetford glides,
Where shee cleere Thet receives, her glory that
divides,
With her new-named towne, as wondrous glad that
shee,
For frequency of late, so much esteemd should be:
Where since these confluent floods, so fit for hauking
lye, 201
And store of fowle intice skil'd falkoners there to flye.
Now of a flight at brooke shall my description be:
What subject can be found, that lies not faire to me.
Of simple shepherds now, my Muse exactly sings,
And then of courtly loves, and the affaires of Kings.
Then in a buskind straine, the warlike speare and
shield, 207
And instantly againe of the disports of field;
What can this ile produce, that lyes from my report,
Industrious Muse, proceed then to thy hauking
sport. 210
When making for the brooke, the falkoner doth
espie
On river, plash, or mere, where store of fowle doth
lye:
Whence forced over land, by skilfull falconers trade:
A faire convenient flight, may easily be made.
He whistleth off his hawkes, whose nimble pineons
streight, 215

POLY-OLBION

Doe worke themselves by turnes, into a stately height:
And if that after check, the one or both doe goe,
Sometimes he them the lure, sometimes doth water
show;

The trembling fowle that heare the jigging hawk-bels
ring,

And find it is too late, to trust then to their wing, 220
Lye flat upon the flood, whilst the high-mounted
hawks,

Then being lords alone, in their etheriall walkes,
Aloft so bravely stirre, their bells so thicke that shake;
Which when the falkoner sees, that scarce one plane
they make:

The gallant'st birds saith he, that ever flew on wing.
And swears there is a flight, were worthy of a King.

Then making to the flood, to force the fowles to
rise, 227

The fierce and eager hawkes, downe thrilling from the
skies,

Make sundry canceleers e'r they the fowle can reach,
Which then to save their lives, their wings doe lively
stretch. 230

But when the whizzing bels the silent ayre doe cleave,
And that their greatest speed, them vainly doe
deceive;

And the sharpe cruell hawkes, they at their backs doe
view,

Themselves for very feare they instantly ineawe.

The hawkes get up againe into their former place;
And ranging here and there, in that their ayery race:
Still as the fearefull fowle attempt to scape away, 237
With many a stouping brave, them in againe they lay.
But when the falkoners take their hawking-poles in
hand,

And crossing of the brooke, doe put it over land: 240
The hawke gives it a souse, that makes it to rebound,

POLY-OLBION

Well neere the height of man, sometime above the
ground;
Oft takes a leg, or wing, oft takes away the head,
And oft from necke to tayle, the backe in two doth
shread.
With many a wo ho ho, and jocond lure againe, 245
When he his quarry makes upon the grassy plaine.
But to my floods againe: when as this Ouze the
lesse
Hath taken in cleere Thet, with farre more free
accesse
To Ouse the great shee goes, her Queene that
commeth crown'd,
As such a river fits, so many miles renown'd; 250
And poynting to the north, her christall front she
dashes
Against the swelling sands of the surrounded washes;
And Neptune in her armes, so amply doth imbrace,
As she would rob his Queene, faire Thetis of her
place.
Which when rich Marsh-land sees, least she should
loose her state, 255
With that faire river thus, shee gently doth debate.
Disdaine me not, deare flood, in thy excessive
pride,
There's scarcely any soyle that sitteth by thy side,
Whose turfe so batfull is, or beares so deepe a swath;
Nor is there any marsh in all Great Britaine, hath
So many goodly seats, or that can truely show 261
Such rarities as I: so that all marshes owe
Much honor to my name, for that exceeding grace,
Which they receive by me, so soveraigne in my place.
Though Rumney, as some say, for finenesse of her
grasse, 265
And for her daintie scite, all other doth surpasse:
Yet are those seas but poore, and rivers that confine

POLY-OLBION

Her greatnesse but meane rills, be they compar'd
with mine.
Nor hardly doth shee tyth th'abundant fowle and
fish,
Which Nature gives to me, as I my selfe can wish. 270
As Amphitrite oft, calls me her sweet and faire,
And sends the northrene winds to curie my braided
haire.
And makes the washes stand, to watch and ward me
still,
Lest that rough god of sea, on me should worke his
will.
Old Wisbitch to my grace, my circuit sits within, 275
And neere my banks I have the neighbourhood of
Lyn.
Both townes of strength and state, my profits still that
vent:
No marsh hath more of sea, none more of continent.
Thus Marsh-land ends her speech, as one that
throughly knew,
What was her proper praise, and what was Ouzes
due. 280
With that the zealous Muse, in her poetique rage,
To Walsingham would needs have gone a pilgrimage,
To view those farthest shores, whence little Niger
flowes
Into the northrene maine, and see the gleabe where
growes
That saffron, (which men say) this land hath not the
like, 285
All Europe that excels: but here she sayle doth strike.
For that Apollo pluckt her easily by the eare;
And told her in that part of Norfolke, if there were
Ought worthy of respect, it was not in her way,
When for the greater Ouze, her wing she doth dis-
play. 290

POLY-OLBION

THE FIVE AND TWENTIETH SONG

The Argument

TOW'RDS Lincolnshire our progresse layd,
Wee through deepe Hollands ditches wade,
Fowling, and fishing in the fen;
Then come we next to Kestiven,
And bringing Wytham to her fall, 5
On Lindsey light wee last of all,
Her scite and pleasures to attend,
And with the Isle of Axholme end.

Now in upon thy earth, rich Lincolnshire I straine,
At Deeping, from whose street, the plentious ditches
draine,
Hemp-bearing Hollands Fen, at Spalding that doe fall
Together in their course, themselves as emptying all 5
Into one generall sewer, which seemeth to divide,
Low Holland from the high, which on their easterne
side
Th'in-bending ocean holds, from the Norfolcean
lands,
To their more northern poynt, where Wainfleet
drifted stands,
Doe shoulder out those seas, and Lindsey bids her
stay,
Because to that faire part, a challenge she doth lay. 10
From fast and firmer earth, whereon the Muse of late,
Trode with a steady foot, now with a slower gate,
Through quicksands, beach, and ouze, the washes
she must wade,
Where Neptune every day doth powerfully invade
The vast and queachy soyle, with hosts of wallowing
waves, 15
From whose impetuous force, that who himselfe not
saves,
By swift and sudden flight, is swallowed by the deepe,

POLY-OLBION

When from the wrathfull tydes the foming surges
 sweepe,
The sands which lay all nak'd, to the wide heaven
 before,
And turneth all to sea, which was but lately shore, 20
From this our southerne part of Holland, caFd the
 low,
Where Crowlands ruines yet, (though almost buried)
 show
Her mighty founders power, yet his more Christian
 zeale,
Shee by the Muses ayd, shall happily reveale
Her sundry sorts of fowle, from whose abundance
 she 25
Above all other tracts, may boast her selfe to be
The mistris, (and indeed) to sit without compare,
And for no worthlesse soyle, should in her glory
 share,
From her moyst seat of flags, of bulrushes and reed,
With her just proper praise, thus Holland doth pro-
 ceed. 30
Yee Acherusian fens, to mine resigne your glory,
Both that which lies within the goodly territory
Of Naples, as that fen Thesposia's earth upon,
Whence that infernail flood, the smutted Acheron
Shoves forth her sullen head, as thou most fatall fen,
Of which Hetruria tells, the watry Thrasimen, 36
In history although thou highly seemst to boast,
That Haniball by thee o'rthrew the Roman host.
I scorne th'Egyptian fen, which Alexandria showes,
Proud Mareotis, should my mightinesse oppose, 40
Or Scythia, on whose face the sunne doth hardly
 shine,
Should her Meotis thinke to match with this of mine,
That covered all with snow continually doth stand.
I stinking Lerna hate, and the poore Libian sand.

POLY-OLBION

Marica that wise nymph, to whom great Neptune
gave 45
The charge of all his shores, from drowning them to
save,
Abideth with me still upon my service prest,
And leaves the looser nymphs to wayt upon the rest:
In summer giving earth, from which I sqare my peat,
And faster feedings by, for deere, for horse, and
neat. 50
My various fleets for fowle, O who is he can tell,
The species that in me for multitudes excell!
The Duck, and Mallard first, the falconers onely
sport,
(Of river-flights the chiefe, so that all other sort,
They onely greene-fowle tearme) in every mere
abound, 55
That you would thinke they sate upon the very
ground,
Their numbers be so great, the waters covering quite,
That rais'd, the spacious ayre is darkened with their
flight;
Yet still the dangerous dykes, from shot doe them
secure,
Where they from flash to flash, like the full epicure 60
Waft, as they lov'd to change their diet every meale;
And neere to them ye see the lesser dibling Teale
In bunches, with the first that flie from mere to mere,
As they above the rest were lords of earth and ayre.
The Gossander with them, my goodly fennes doo
show 65
His head as ebon blacke, the rest as white as snow,
With whom the Widgeon goes, the Golden-Eye, the
Smeath,
And in odde scattred pits, the flags, and reeds
beneath;
The Coot, bald, else cleane black, that whitenesse it
doth beare

POLY-OLBION

Upon the forehead star'd, the Water-Hen doth weare
Upon her little tayle, in one small feather set. 71

The Water-woosell next, all over black as jeat,
With various colours, black, greene, blew, red, russet,
white,

Doe yeeld the gazing eye as variable delight,
As doe those sundry fowles, whose several plumes
they be. 75

The diving Dob-chick, here among the rest you see,
Now up, now downe againe, that hard it is to proove,
Whether under water most it liveth, or above:
With which last little fowle, (that water may not
lacke;

More then the Dob-chick doth, and more doth love
the brack) 80

The Puffin we compare, which comming to the dish,
Nice pallats hardly judge, if it be flesh or fish.

But wherefore should I stand upon such toyes as
these,

That have so goodly fowles, the wandring eye to
please.

Here in my vaster pooles, as white as snow or milke,
(In water blacke as Stix) swimmes the wild Swanne,
the like, 86

Of Hollanders so tearm'd, no niggard of his breath
(As poets say of Swannes, which onely sing in death)
But oft as other birds, is heard his tunes to roat,
Which like a trumpet comes, from his long arched
throat, 90

And tow'rds this watry kind, about the flashes
brimme,

Some cloven-footed are, by nature not to swimme.
There stalks the stately Crane, as though he march'd
in warre,

By him that hath the Herne, which (by the fishy carre)
Can fetch with their long necks, out of the rush and
reed, 95

POLY-OLBION

Snigs, fry, and yellow frogs, whereon they often feed:
And under them againe, (that water never take,
But by some ditches side, or little shallow lake
Lye dabling night and day) the pallat-pleasing Snite,
The Bidcocke, and like them the Redshanke, that
delight 100

Together still to be, in some small reedy bed,
In which these little fowles in summer time were bred.
The buzzing Bitter sits, which through his hollow bill,
A sudden bellowing sends, which many times doth fill
The neighbouring marsh with noyse, as though a bull
did roare; 105

But scarcely have I yet recited halfe my store:
And with my wondrous flocks of Wild-geess come I
then,
Which looke as though alone they peopled all the fen,
Which here in winter time, when all is overflowed,
And want of sollid sward inforceth them abroad, 110
Th'abundance then is seene, that my full fennes doe
yeeld,

That almost through the isle, doe pester every field.
The Barnacles with them, which wheresoere they
breed,
On trees, or rotten ships, yet to my fennes for feed
Continually they come, and chiefe abode doe make,
And very hardly forc'd my plenty to forsake: 116
Who almost all this kind doe challenge as mine owne,
Whose like I dare averre, is elsewhere hardly knowne.
For sure unlesse in me, no one yet ever saw
The multitudes of fowle, in mooting time they
draw: 120

From which to many a one, much profit doth accrue.
Now such as flying feed, next these I must pursue;
The Sea-meaw, Sea-pye, Gull, and Curlew heere doe
keepe,
As searching every shole, and watching every deepe,

POLY-OLBION

To find the floating fry, with their sharpe-pearing
sight, 125

Which suddenly they take, by stouping from their
height.

The Cormorant then comes, (by his devouring kind)
Which flying o'r the fen, imediatly doth find

The fleet best stor'd of fish, when from his wings at
full

As though he shot himselfe into the thickned skull,
He under water goes, and so the shoale pursues, 131

Which into creeks doe flie, when quickly he doth
chuse,

The fin that likes him best, and rising, flying feeds.

The Ospray oft here seene, though seldome here it
breeds,

Which over them the fish no sooner doe espie, 135

But (betwixt him and them, by an antipathy)

Turning their bellies up, as though their death they
saw,

They at his pleasure lye, to stufte his glutt'nous maw.

The toying fisher here is tewing of his net:

The fowler is imployd his lymed twigs to set. 140

One underneath his horse, to get a shoot doth stalke;

Another over dykes upon his stilts doth walke:

There other with their spades, the peats are squaring
out,

And others from their carres, are busily about,

To draw out sedge and reed, for thatch and stover fit,

That whosoever would a landskip rightly hit. 146

Beholding but my fennes, shall with more shapes be
stor'd,

Then Germany, or France, or Thuscan can afford:

And for that part of me, which men high Holland call,

Where Boston seated is, by plenteous Wythams fall,

I peremptory am, large Neptunes liquid field, 151

Doth to no other tract the like abundance yeeld.

For that of all the seas invironing this isle,

POLY-OLBION

Our Irish, Spanish, French, how e'r we them enstyle,
The German is the great'st, and it is onely I, 155
That doe upon the same with most advantage lye.

What fish can any shore, or British sea-towne show,
That's eatable to us, that it doth not bestow
Abundantly thereon? the Herring King of sea,
The faster feeding Cod, the Mackrell brought by
May, 160

The daintie Sole, and Plaice, the Dabb, as of their
blood;

The Conger finely sous'd, hote summers coolest food;
The Whiting knowne to all a generall wholesome
dish;

The Gurnet, Rochet, Mayd, and Mullet, dainty fish;
The Haddock, Turbet, Bert, fish nourishing and
strong; 165

The Thornback, and the Scate, provocative among:
The Weaver, which although his prickles venom bee,
By fishers cut away, which buyers seldome see:
Yet for the fish he beares, tis not accounted bad;
The Sea-Flounder is here as common as the Shad;
The Sturgeon cut to Keggs, (too big to handle whole)
Gives many a dainty bit out of his lusty jole. 172

Yet of rich Neptunes store, whilst thus I idely chat,
Thinke not that all betwixt the Wherpoole, and the
Sprat,

I goe about to name, that were to take in hand, 175
The atomy to tell, or to cast up the sand;
But on the English coast, those most that usuall are,
Wherewith the staules from thence doe furnish us for
farre;

Amongst whose sundry sorts, since thus farre I am in,
He of our shell-fish speake, with these of scale and fin:
The sperme-increasing Crab, much cooking that
doth aske, 181

The big-legg'd Lobster, fit for wanton Venus taske,
Voluptuaries oft take rather then for food,

POLY-OLBION

And that the same effect which worketh in the blood
The rough long Oyster is, much like the Lobster
limb'd: 185

The Oyster hote as they, the Mussle often trimd
With orient pearle within, as thereby Nature show'd,
That she some secret good had on that shell bestow'd:
The Scallop cordial! judgd, the dainty Wilk and Limp,
The Periwinkle, Prawne, the Cockle, and the
Shrimpe, 190

For wanton womens tasts, or for weake stomacks
bought.

When Kestiven this while that certainly had
thought,
Her tongue would ne'r have stopt, quoth shee, O how
I hate,

Thus of her foggy fennes, to heare rude Holland
prate,
That with her fish and fowle, here keepeth such a
coyie, 195

As her unwholesome ayre, and more unwholesome
soyle,
For these of which shee boasts, the more might suffred
be;

When those her feathered flocks she sends not out to
me,

Wherein cleare Witham they, and many a little
brooke,

(In which the sunne it selfe may well be proud to
looke) 200

Have made their flesh more sweet by my refined food,
From that so ramish tast of her most fulsome mud,
When the toyld cater home them to the kitchen
brings,

The cooke doth cast them out, as most unsavory
things. 204

Besides, what is she else, but a foule woosie marsh,
And that shee calls her grasse, so blady is, and harsh,

POLY-OLBION

As cuts the cattels mouthes, constrained thereon to
feed,
So that my poorest trash, which mine call rush and
reed,
For litter scarcely fit, that to the dung I throw,
Doth like the penny grasse, or the pure clover show,
Compared with her best: and for her sundry fish, 211
Of which she freely boasts, to furnish every dish.
Did not full Neptunes fields so furnish her with store,
Those in the ditches bred, within her muddy moore,
Are of so earthy taste, as that the ravenous crow 215
Will rather starve, thereon her stomack then bestow.

From Stamford as along my tract tow'rd Lincolne
straines,

What shire is there can shew more valuable vaines
Of soyle then is in mee? or where can there be found,
So faire and fertile fields, or sheep-walks nere so
sound? 220

Where doth the pleasant ayre resent a sweeter
breath?

What countrey can produce a delicater heath,
Then that which her faire name from Ancaster doth
hold?

Through all the neighboring shires, whose praise
shall still be told,

Which Flora in the spring doth with such wealth
adorne, 225

That Sever needs not much her company to scorne,
Though shee a vale lye low, and this a heath sit hye,
Yet doth she not alone, allure the wondring eye
With prospect from each part, but that her pleasant
ground

Gives all that may content, the well-breath'd horse
and hound: 230

And from the Britans yet, to shew what then I was,
One of the Roman wayes neere through my midst did
passe:

POLY-OLBION

Besides to my much praise, there hath been in my
mould
Their painted pavements found, and armes of perfect
gold.
They neere the Saxons raigne, that in this tract did
dwell, 235
All other of this isle, for that they would excell
For churches every where, so rich and goodly rear'd
In every little dorpe, that after-times have fear'd
T'attempt so mighty workes; yet one above the rest,
In which it may be thought, they strove to doe their
best, 240
Of pleasant Grantham is, that piramis so hye,
Rear'd (as it might be thought) to overtop the skie,
The traveller that strikes into a wondrous maze,
As on his horse he sits, on that proud height to gaze.
When Wytham that this while a listning eare had
laid, 245
To hearken (for her selfe) what Kestiven had said, '
Much pleasd with this report, for that she was the
earth
From whom she onely had her sweet and seasoned
birth,
From Wytham which that name derived from her
springs,
Thus as she trips along, this dainty rivelet sings. 250
Ye easie ambling streames, which way soe'r you
runne,
Or tow'rds the pleasant rise, or tow'rds the mid-day
sunne:
By which (as some suppose by use that have them
tride)
Your waters in their course are neatly purifi'd.
Be what you are, or can, I not your beauties feare,
When Neptune shall commaund the Naiades
t'appare. 256
In river what is found, in me that is not rare:

POLY-OLBION

Yet for my wel-fed Pykes, I am without compare.
From Wytham mine owne towne, first watred with
my sourse,
As to the easterne sea, I hasten on my course. 260
Who sees so pleasant plaines, or is of fairer seene,
Whose swaines in shepherds gray, and gyrles in
Lincolne greene?
Whilst some the rings of bells, and some the bag-
pipes ply,
Dance many a merry round, and many a hydeggy.
I envy, any brooke should in my pleasure share, 265
Yet for my daintie Pykes, I am without compare.
No land-floods can mee force to over-proud a
height;
Nor am I in my course, too crooked, or too streight:
My depths fall by descents, too long, nor yet too
broad,
My foards with pebbles, cleare as orient pearles, are
strowd; 270
My gentle winding banks, with sundry flowers are
drest,
The higher rising heaths, hold distance with my brest.
Thus to her proper song, the burthen still she bare;
Yet for my daintie Pykes, I am without compare.
By this to Lincolne com'n, upon whose loftie
scite, 275
Whilst wistly Wytham looks with wonderfull delight,
Enamoured of the state, and beautie of the place,
That her of all the rest especially doth grace,
Leaving her former course, in which she first set forth,
Which seemed to have been directly to the north: 280
Shee runnes her silver front into the muddy fen,
Which lyes into the east, in her deepe journey, when
Cleare Ban a pretty brooke, from Lyndsey comming
downe,
Delicious Wytham leads to holy Botulphs towne, 284
Where proudly she puts in amongst the great resort,

POLY-OLBION

That their appearance make in Neptunes watry court.

Now Lyndsey all this while, that duely did attend,
Till both her rivals thus had fully made an end
Of their so tedious talke, when lastly shee replies;
Loe, bravely here she sits, that both your states
defies. 290

Faire Lincolne is mine owne, which lies upon my
south,

As likewise to the north, great Humbers swelling
mouth

Encircles me, twixt which in length I bravely lye:
O who can me the best, before them both deny?
Nor Britaine in her bounds, scarce such a tract can
show, 295

Whose shore like to the backe of a well-bended bow,
The ocean beareth out, and every where so thicke,
The villages and dorps upon my bosome sticke,
That it is very hard for any to define, 299

Whether up-land most I be, or most am maratine.
What is there that compleat can any country make,
That in large measure I, (faire Lindsey) not pertake,
As healthy heaths, and woods, faire dales, and
pleasant hils,

All watred here and there, with pretty creeping rills,
Fat pasture, mellow gleabe, and of that kind what
can, 305

Give nourishment to beast, or benefit to man,
As Kestiven doth boast, her Wytham so have I,
My Ancum (onely mine) whose fame as farre doth
flie,

ForTat and daintie Eeles, as hers doth for her Pyke,
Which makes the proverbe up, the world hath not the
like. 310

From Razin her cleere springs, where first she doth
arive,

As in an even course, to Humber fourth doth drive,

POLY-OLBION

Faire Barton shee salutes, which from her scite out-
braves

Rough Humber, when he strives to shew his sternest
waves.

Now for my bounds to speake, few tracts (I thinke)
there be, 315

(And search through all this isle) to paralell with mee:
Great Humber holds me north, (as I have said before)
From whom (even) all along, upon the easterne shore,
The German Ocean lyes; and on my southerne side,
Cleere Wytham in her course, me fairely doth divide
From Holland; and from thence the Fosdyke is my
bound, 321

Which our first Henry cut from Lincolne, where he
found,

Commodities by Trent, from Humber to convay:
So Nature, the cleere Trent doth fortunatly lay,
To ward me on the west, though farther I extend, 325
And in my larger bounds doe largely comprehend
Full Axholme, (which those neere, the fertile doe
instile)

Which Idle, Don, and Trent, imbracing make an isle.

But wherefore of my bounds, thus onely doe I
boast,

When that which Holland seemes to vaunt her on the
most, 330

By me is overmatcht; the fowle which shee doth
breed:

Shee in her foggy fennes, so moorishly doth feed:
That phisick oft forbids the patient them for food,
But mine more ayrie are, and make fine spirits and
blood:

For neere this batning isle, in me is to be seene, 335
More then on any earth, the Plover gray, and greene,
The corne-land-loving Quayle, the daintiest of our
bits,

POLY-OLBION

The Rayle, which seldome comes, but upon rich mens
spits:

The Puet, Godwit, Stint, the pallat that allure,
The miser and doe make a wastfull epicure: 340

The Knot, that called was Canutus bird of old,
Of that great King of Danes, his name that still doth
hold,

His appetite to please, that farre and neere was sought,
For him (as some have sayd) from Denmarke hither
brought:

The Dotterell, which we thinke a very daintie dish.
Whose taking makes such sport, as man no more can
wish; 346

For as you creepe, or cower, or lye, or stoupe, or goe,
So marking you (with care) the apish bird doth doe,
And acting every thing, doth never marke the net,
Till he be in the snare, which men for him have set.

The big-boan'd Bustard then, whose body beare that
size, 351

That he against the wind must runne, e're he can rise:
The Shouler, which so shakes the ayre with saily
wings,

That ever as he flyes, you still would thinke he sings.
These fowles, with other soyles, although they tre-
quent be, 355

Yet are they found most sweet and delicate in me.
Thus whilst shee seemes t'extoll in her peculiar
praise,

The Muse which seem'd too slacke, in these too low-
pitcht layes,

For nobler height prepares, her oblique course, and
casts

A new booke to begin, an end of this shee hasts. 360

POLY-OLBION

THE SIXE AND TWENTIETH SONO

The Argument

THREE shires at once this song assayes,
By various and unusuall wayes.
At Nottingham first comming in,
The Vale of Bever doth begin;
Towards Lester then her course shee holds, 5
And sayling o'r the pleasant oulds,
Shee fetcheth Soare downe from her springs,
By Charnwood, which to Trent shee brings,
Then shows the braveries of that flood,
Makes Sherwood sing her Robin Hood; 10
Then rouzes up the aged Peake,
And of her wonders makes her speaker
Thence Darwin downe by Darby tends,
And at her fall, to Trent, it ends.

Now scarcely on this tract the Muse had entrance
made,
Enclining to the south, but Bevers batning slade
Receiveth her to guest, whose comming had too long
Put off her rightfull praise, when thus her selfe she
sung.

Three shires there are (quoth she) in me their parts
that claime, 5
Large Lincolne, Rutland rich, and th'norths eye
Nottingham.

But in the last of these since most of me doth lye,
To that my most-lov'd shire my selfe I must apply.

Not Evsham that proud nymph, although she still
pretend
Her selfe the first of vales, and though abroad she
send 10
Her awfull dread command, that all should tribute
pay

POLY-OLBION

To her as our great Queene; nor White-horse, though
her clay
Of silver seeme to be, new melted, nor the vale
Of Alsbury, whose grasse seemes given out by tale,
For it so silken is, nor any of our kind, 15
Or what, or where they be, or howsoere inclind,
Me Sever shall outbrave, that in my state doe scorne,
By any of them all (once) to be overborne,
With theirs, doe but compare the country where I lye,
My hill, and oulds will say, they are the islands eye.
Consider next my scite, and say it doth excell; 21
Then come unto my soyle, and you shall see it swell,
With every grasse and graine, that Britaine forth can
bring:
I challenge any vale, to shew me but that thing
I cannot shew to her, (that truly is mine owne) 25
Besides I dare thus boast, that I as farre am knowne,
As any of them all, the south their names doth sound,
The spacious north doth mee, that there is scarcely
found
A roomth for any else, it is so fild with mine,
Which but a little wants of making me divine: 30
Nor barren am of brookes, for that I still reteine
Two neat and daintie rills, the little Snyte, and
Deane,
That from the lovely oulds, thsir beautious parent
sprong
From the Lecestrian fields, come on with me along,
Till both within one banke, they on my north are
meint, 35
And where I end, they fall, at Newarck, into Trent.
Hence wandring as the Muse delightfully beholds
The beautie of the large, and goodly full-flockd oulds,
Shee on the left hand leaves old Lecesier, and flies,
Untill the fertile earth glut her insatiate eyes, 40
From rich to richer still, that riseth her before,
Untill shee come to cease upon the head of Soare,

POLY-OLBION

Where Fosse, and Watling cut each other in their
course
At Sharnford, where at first her soft and gentle
source,
To her but shallow bankes, beginneth to repayre, 45
Of all this beautious isle, the delicatest ayre;
Whence softly sallying out, as loath the place to leave,
Shee Sence a pretty rill doth courteously receive:
For Swift, a little brooke, which certainly shee
thought
Downe to the banks of Trent, would safely her have
brought, 50
Because their native springs so neerely were allyde,
Her sister Soare forsooke, and wholly her applide
To Avon, as with her continually to keepe,
And wayt on her along to the Sabrinian deepe.
Thus with her hand-mayd Sence, the Soare doth
eas'ly slide 55
By Leicester, where yet her mines show her pride,
Demolisht many yeares, that of the great foundation
Of her long buried walls, men hardly see the station;
Yet of some pieces found, so sure the cyment locks
The stones, that they remaine like perdurable rocks:
Where whilst the lovely Soare, with many a deare
imbrace, 61
Is solacing her selfe with this delightfull place,
The forrest, which the name of that brave towne doth
beare,
With many a goodly wreath, crownes her disheveld
hayre,
And in her gallant greene, her lusty livery showes 65
Her selfe to this faire flood, which mildly as shee
flowes,
Reciprocally likes her length and breadth to see,
As also how shee keepes her fertile purlues free:
The herds of fallow deere shee on the launds doth
feed,

POLY-OLBION

As having in her selfe to furnish every need. 70
But now since gentle Soare, such leasure seemes to
take,
The Muse in her behalfe this strong defence doth
make,
Against the neighbour floods, for that which tax her
so,
And her a channell call, because she is so slow.
The cause is that shee lyes upon so low a flat, 75
Where Nature most of all befriended her in that,
The longer to enjoy the good she doth possesse:
For had those (with such speed that forward seeme to
presse)
So many dainty meads, and pastures theirs to be,
They then would wish themselves to be so slow as
she, 80
Who well may be compared to some young tender
mayd,
Entring some princes court, which is for pompe
arayd,
Who led from roome to roome amazed is to see
The furnitures and states, which all imbroyderies be,
The rich and sumptuous beds, with tester-covering
plumes, 85
And various as the sutes, so various the perfumes,
Large galleries, where piece with piece doth seeme to
strive,
Of pictures done to life, landskip, and perspective,
Thence goodly gardens sees, where antique statues
stand
In stone and copper, cut by many a skilfull hand, 90
Where every thing to gaze, her more and more entices,
Thinking at once shee sees a thousand paradices,
Goes softly on, as though before she saw the last,
She long'd againe to see, what she had slightly past.
So the enticing soyle the Soare along doth lead, 95
As wondring in her selfe, at many a spacious mead;

POLY-OLBION

When Charnwood from the rocks salutes her wished
sight,
(Of many a wood-god woo'd) her darling and delight,
Whose beautie whilst that Soare is pawsmg to behold
Cleere Wreakin comming in, from Waltham on the
Quid, 100
Brings Eye, a pretty brooke, to beare her silver traine,
Which on by Melton make, and tripping o'r the
plaine,
Here finding her surpriz'd with proud Mount-Sorrels
sight,
By quickning of her course, more eas'ly doth invite
Her to the goodly Trent, where as she goes along 105
By Loughborough, she thus of that faire forrest sung.
O Charnwood, be thou cald the choycest of thy
kind,
The like in any place, what flood hath hapt to find?
No tract in all this isle, the proudest let her be,
Can shew a sylvan nymph, for beautie like to thee:
The satyrs, and the fawnes, by Dian set to keepe, 111
Rough hilles, and forrest holts, were sadly scene to
weepe,
When thy high-palmed harts the sport of bowes and
hounds,
By gripple borderers hands, were banished thy
grounds.
The Driades that were wont about thy lawnes to rove,
To trip from wood to wood, and scud from grove to
grove, 116
On Sharpley that were seene, and Cadmans aged
rocks,
Against the rising sunne, to brayd their silver locks;
And with the harmesse elves, on heathy Bardons
height,
By Cynthia's colder beames to play them night by
night, 120
ExiFd their sweet aboard, to poore bare commons fled,

POLY-OLBION

They with the okes that liv'd, now with the okes are
dead.

Who will describe to life, a forrest, let him take
Thy surface to himselfe, nor shall he need to make
An other forme at all, where oft in thee is found 125
Fine sharpe but easie hills, which reverently are
crownd

With aged antique rocks, to which the goats and
sheepe,

(To him that stands remoat) doe softly seeme to
creepe,

To gnaw the litle shrubs, on their steepe sides that
grow;

Upon whose other part, on some descending brow,
Huge stones are hanging out, as though they downe
would drop, 131

Where under-growing okes, on their old shoulders
prop

The others hory heads, which still seeme to decline,
And in a dimble neere, (even as a place divine,
For contemplation fit) an ivy-seeled bower, 135
As Nature had therein ordaynM some sylvan power;
As men may very oft at great assemblies see,
Where many of most choyce, and wondred beauties
be:

For stature one doth seeme the best away to beare;
Another for her shape, to stand beyond compare; 140

Another for the fine composure of a face:

Another short of these, yet for a modest grace
Before them all preferd; amongst the rest yet one,
Adjudg'd by all to bee, so perfect paragon,
That ail those parts in her together simply dwell, 145
For which the other doe so severally excell.

My Charnwood like the last, hath in her selfe alone,
What excellent can be in any forrest showne,

On whom when thus the Scare had these high
praises spent,

POLY-OLBION

So strongly is surpriz'd, and taken with the sight,
That shee from running wild, but hardly can refraine,
To view in how great state, as she along doth straine,
That brave exalted seat, beholdeth her in pride, 181
As how the large-spread meads upon the other side*
All flourishing in flowers, and rich embroyderies
drest,

In which she sees her selfe above her neighbours
blest.

As rap'd with the delights, that her this prospect
brings, 185

In her peculiar praise, loe thus the river sings.

What should I care at all, from what my name I
take,

That thirtie doth import, that thirty rivers make;
My greatnesse what it is, or thirty abbayes great,
That on my fruitfull banks, times formerly did
seat: 190

Or thirtie kinds offish, that in my streames doe live,
To me this name of Trent did from that number give.
What reack I: let great Thames, since by his fortune he
Is soveraigne of us all that here in Britaine be;
From Isis, and old Tame, his pedigree derive: 195
And for the second place, proud Severne that doth
strive,

Fetch her discent from Wales, from that proud moun-
taine sprung,

Plinillimon, whose praise is frequent them among,
As of that princely mayd, whose name she boasts to
beare,

Bright Sabrin, which she holds as her undoubted
heyre. 200

Let these imperious floods draw downe their long
discent

From these so famous stocks, and only say of Trent,
That Moorelands barren earth me first to light did
bring,

POLY-OLBION

Which though she be but browne, my cleere complexiond spring,
Gain'd with the nymphs such grace, that when I first
did rise, 205
The Naiades on my brim, danc'd wanton hydagies,
And on her spacious breast, with heaths that doth
abound
Encircled my faire fount with many a lustie round:
And of the British floods, though but the third I be.
Yet Thames, and Severne both in this come short of
me, 210
For that I am the mere of England, that divides
The north part from the south, on my so either sides,
That reckoning how these tracts in compasse be
extent,
Men bound them on the north, or on the south of
Trent;
Their banks are barren sands, if but compared with
mine, 215
Through my perspicuous breast, the pearly pebbles
shine:
I throw my christall armes along the flowry vallies,
Which lying sleeke, and smooth, as any garden-allies,
Doe give me leave to play, whilst they doe court my
streame,
And crowne my winding banks with many an
anademe: 220
My silver-scaled skuls about my streames doe sweepe,
Now in the shallow foords, now in the falling deepe:
So that of every kind, the new-spawn'd numerous frie
Seeme in me as the sands that on my shore doe lye.
The Barbell, then which fish, a braver doth not
swimme, 225
Nor greater for the ford wkhin my spacious brimme,
Nor (newly taken) more the curious taste doth please;
The Greling, whose great spawne is big as any pease;

POLY-OLBION

The Pearch with pricking finnes, against the Pike
prepared,
As Nature had thereon bestow'd this stronger guard,
His daintinesse to keepe, (each curious pallats
proofe) 231
From his vile ravenous foe: next him I name the
Ruffe,
His very neere ally, and both for scale and fin,
In taste, and for his bayte (indeed) his next of kin;
The pretty slender Dare, of many cald the Dace, 235
Within my liquid glasse, when Phoebus looks his
face,
Oft swiftly as he swimmes, his silver belly shows,
But with such nimble slight, that ere yee can disclose
His shape, out of your sight like lightning he is shot.
The Trout by Nature markt with many a crimson
spot, 240
As though shee curious were in him above the rest,
And of fresh-water fish, did note him for the best;
The Roche, whose common kind to every flood doth
fall;
The Chub, (whose neater name) which some a Chevin
call,
Food to the tyrant Pyke, (most being in his power)
Who for their numerous store he most doth them
devoure; 246
The lustie Salmon then, from Neptunes watry realme,
When as his season serves, stemming my tydefull
streame,
Then being in his kind, in me his pleasure takes,
(For whom the fisher then all other game forsakes)
Which bending of himselfe to th'fashion of a ring, 251
Above the forced weares, himselfe doth nimbly fling,
And often when the net hath dragd him safe to land,
Is seene by naturall force to scape his murderers hand:
Whose graine doth rise in flakes, with fatnesse inter-
larded, 255

POLY-OLBION

Of many a liquorish lip, that highly is regarded.
And Humber, to whose waste I pay my watry store,
Me of her Sturgeons sends, that I thereby the more
Should have my beauties grac'd, with some thing
from him sent:

Not Ancums silvered Eele exceedeth that of Trent;
Though the sweet-smelling Smelt be more in Thames
then me, 261

The Lamprey, and his lesse, in Severne generail be;
The Flounder smooth and flat, in other rivers caught,
Perhaps in greater store, yet better are not thought:
The daintie Gudgeon, Loche, the Minnow, and the
Bleake, 265

Since they but little are, I little need to speake
Of them, nor doth it fit mee much of those to reck,
Which every where are found in every little beck;
Nor of the Crayfish here, which creepes amongst my
stones, 269

From all the rest alone, whose shell is all his bones:
For Carpe, the Tench, and Breame, my other store
among,

To lakes and standing pooles, that chiefly doe belong,
Here scowring in my foards, feed in my waters cleere,
Are muddy fish hi ponds to that which they arc heere.

From Nottingham, neere which this river first
begun, 275

This song, she the meane while, by Newarke having
run,

Receiving little Snyte, from Bevers batning grounds,
At Gaynsborough goes out, where the Lincolnian
bounds.

Yet Sherwood all this while not satisfied to show
Her love to princely Trent, as downward shee doth
flow, 280

Her Meden and her Man, shee downe from Mans-
field sends

To Idle for her ayd, by whom she recommends

POLY-OLBION

Her love to that brave Queene of waters, her to meet,
When she tow'rds Humber comes, do humbly kisse
her feet,
And clip her till shee grace great Humber with her
fall. 285
When Sherwood somewhat backe, the forward Muse
doth call;
For shee was let to know, that Soare had in her song
So chanted Charnwoods worth, the rivers that along,
Amongst the neighbouring nymphs, there was no
other layes,
But those which seem'd to sound of Charnwood, and
her praise: 290
Which Sherwood tooke to heart, and very much
disdam'd,
(As one that had both long, and worthily maintained
The title of the greatest, and bravest of her kind)
To fall so farre below, one wretchedly confined
Within a furlongs space, to her large skirts compared:
Wherefore shee as a nymph that neither fear'd, nor
car'd 296
For ought to her might chance, by others love or
hate,
With resolution arm'd, against the power of fate,
All selfe-praise set apart, determineth to sing 299
That lustie Robin Hood, who long time like a King
Within her compasse hv'd, and when he list to range
For some rich booty set, or else his ayre to change,
To Sherwood still retyr'd, his onely standing court,
Whose praise the forrest thus doth pleasantly report.
The merry pranks he playd, would aske an age to
tell, 305
And the adventures strange that Robin Hood befell,
When Mansfield many a time for Robin hath bin
layd,
How he hath cosned them, that him would have
betrayd;

POLY-OLBION

How often he hath come to Nottingham disguisd,
And cunningly escapt, being set to be surprizd. 310
In this our spacious isle, I thinke there is not one,
But he hath heard some talke of him and little John;
And to the end of time, the tales shall ne'r be done,
Of Scarlock, George a Greene, and Much the millers
sonne,
Of Tuck the merry frier, which many a sermon made,
In praise of Robin Hood, his out-lawes, and their
trade. 316
An hundred valiant men had this brave Robin Hood,
Still ready at his call, that bow-men were right good,
All clad in Lincolne greene, with caps of red and
blew, 319
His fellowes winded home, not one of them but knew,
When setting to their lips their little beugles shrill,
The warbling eccho's wakt from every dale and hill:
Their bauldricks set with studs, athwart their
shoulders cast,
To which under their armes, their sheafes were
buckled fast,
A short sword at their belt, a buckler scarce a span,
Who strooke below the knee, not counted then a
man: 326
All made of Spanish yew, their bowes were wondrous
strong;
They not an arrow drew, but was a cloth-yard long.
Of archery they had the very perfect craft,
With broad-arrow, or but, or prick, or roving shaft,
At markes full fortie score, they us'd to prick, and
rove, 331
Yet higher then the breast, for compasse never strove;
Yet at the farthest marke a foot could hardly win:
At long-butts, short, and hoyles, each one could cleave
the pin:
Their arrowes finely pair'd, for timber, and for
feather, 335

POLY-OLBION

With birch and braziU peec'd, to flie in any weather;
And shot they with the round, the square, or forked
pyle,

The loose gave such a twang, as might be heard a
myle.

And of these archers brave, there was not any one,
But he could kill a deere his swiftest speed upon, 340
Which they did boyle and rost, in many a mightie
wood,

Sharpe hunger the fine sauce to their more kingly
food.

Then taking them to rest, his merry men and hee
Slept many a summers night under the greenwood
tree.

From wealthy abbots chests, and churles abundant
store, 345

What often times he tooke, he shar'd amongst the
poore:

No lordly bishop came in lusty Robins way,
To him before he went, but for his passe must pay:
The widdow in distresse he graciously reliev'd,
And remedied the wrongs of many a virgin griev'd:
He from the husbands bed no married woman wan,
But to his mistris deare, his loved Marian 352
Who ever constant knowne, which wheresoere shee
came,

Was soveraigne of the woods, chiefe lady of the game:
Her clothes tuck'd to the knee, and daintie braided
haire, 355

With bow and quiver arm'd, shee wandred here and
there,

Amongst the forrests wild; Diana never knew
Such pleasures, nor such harts as Mariana slew.

Of merry Robin Hood, and of his merrier men,
The song had scarcely ceas'd, when as the Muse
agen 360

POLY-OLBION

Wades Erwash, (that at hand) on Sherwoods setting
side,
The Nottinghamian fields, and Derbiah doth divide,
And northward from her springs, haps Scardale forth
to find,
Which like her mistris Peake, is naturally enclind
To thrust forth ragged cleeves, with which she scat-
tered lyes, 365
As busie Nature here could not her selfe suffice,
Of this oft-altring earth the sundry shapes to show,
That from my entrance here, doth rough and rougher
grow,
Which of a lowly dale, although the name it beare,
You by the rocks might think that it a mountaine
were, 370
From which it takes the name of Scardale, which
exprest,
Is the hard vale of rocks, of Chesterfield possst,
By her which is instild; where Rother from her rist,
Ibber, and Crawley hath, and Gunno, that assist
Her weaker wandring streame tow'rds Yorkeshire as
she wends, 375
So Scardale tow'rds the same, that lovely Iddle sends,
That helps the fertile seat of Axholme to in-isle:
But to th'unwearied Muse the Peake appears the
while,
A withered beldam long, with bleared watrish eyes,
With many a bleake storme dim'd, which often to the
skies 380
Shee cast, and oft to th'earth bow'd downe her aged
head,
Her meager wrinkled face, being sullyed still with
lead,
Which sitting in the workes, and poring o'r the mines,
Which shee out of the oare continually refines:
For shee a chimist was, and Natures secrets knew, 385
And from amongst the lead, she antimony drew,

POLY-OLBION

And christall there congeal'd, (by her enstyled flowers)
And in all medcins knew their most effectual powers.
The spirits that haunt the mynes, she could command
and tame,

And bind them as she Jist in Saturns dreadfull name:
Shee mil-stones from the quarrs, with sharpned picks
could get, 391

And dainty whetstones make, the dull-edgd tooles to
whet.

Wherefore the Peake as proud of her laborious toyle,
As others of their corne, or goodnesse of their soyle,
Thinking the time was long, till shee her tale had told,
Her wonders one by one, thus plainly doth unfold.

My dreadfull daughters borne, your mothers deare
delight, 397

Great Natures chiefest worke, wherein shee shew'd
her might;

Yee darke and hollow caves, the pourtraturés of hell,
Where fogs, and misty damps continually doe dwell;
O yee my onely joyes my darlings, in whose eyes, 401
Horror assumes her seat, from whose abiding flyes
Thicke vapours, that like rugs still hang the troubled
ayre,

Yee of your mother Peake, the hope and onely care:
O thou my first and best, of thy blacke entrance
nam'd 405

The Divels-Arse, in me, O be thou not asham'd,
Nor thinke thy selfe disgraced, or hurt thereby at all,
Since from thy horror first men us'd thee so to call;
For as amongst the Moores, the jettiest blacke are
deem'd

The beautifulst of them; so are your kind esteem'd,
The more ye gloomy are, more fearefull and obscure,
(That hardly any eye your sternnesse may endure) 412
The more yee famous are, and what name men can
hit,

That best may ye expresse, that best doth yee befit:

POLY-OLBION

For he that will attempt thy blacke and darksome
 jawes, 415
In midst of summer meets with winters stormy flawes,
Cold dewes, that over head from thy foule roofe
 distill,
And meeteth under foot, with a dead sullen rill,
That Acheron it selfe, a man would thinke he were
Immediately to passe, and stay'd for Charon there 420
Thy flore drad cave, yet flat, though very rough it be,
With often winding turnes; then come thou next to
 me,
My prettie daughter Poole, my second loved child,
Which by that noble name was happily enstild,
Of that more generous stock, long honor'd in this
 shire, 425
Of which amongst the rest, one being out-law'd here,
For his strong refuge tooke this darke and uncouth
 place,
An heyre-loome ever since, to that succeeding race:
Whose entrance though deprest below a mountaine
 steepe,
Besides so very strait, that who will see't, must creepe
Into the mouth thereof, yet being once got in, 431
A rude and ample roofe doth instantly begin
To raise it selfe aloft, and who so doth intend
The length thereof to see, still going must ascend
On mightie slippery stones, as by a winding stayre,
Which of a kind of base darke alablaster are, 436
Of strange and sundry formes, both in the roofr and
 floore,
As Nature show'd in thee, what ne'r was scene before.
For Elden thou my third, a wonder I preferre
Before the other two, which perpendicular 440
Dive'st downe into the ground, as if an entrance were
Through earth to lead to hell, ye well might judge it
 here,

POLY-OLBION

Whose depth is so immense, and wondrously profound,
As that long line which serves the deepest sea to sound,
Her bottome never wrought, as though the vast descent, 445
Through this terrestriall globe directly poynting went
Our antipods to see, and with her gloomy eyes,
To giote upon those starres, to us that never rise;
That downe into this hole if that a stone yee throw,
An acres length from thence, (some say that) yee may goe, 450
And commmg backe thereto, with a still listning eare,
May heare a sound as though that stone then falling were.
Yet for her caves, and holes, Peake onely not excelis,
But that I can againe produce those wondrous wells
Of Buckston, as I have, that most delicious fount, 455
Which men the second Bath of England doe account,
Which in the primer raignes, when first this well began
To have her vertues knowne unto the blest Saint Anne,
Was consecrated then, which the same temper hath,
As that most daintie spring, which at the famous Bath, 460
Is by the Crosse enstild, whose fame I much preferre,
In that I doe compare my daintiest spring to her,
Nice sicknesses to cure, as also to prevent,
And supple their cleare skinnes, which ladies oft frequent;
Most full, most faire, most sweet, and most delicious source. 465
To this a second fount, that in her natural! course,
As mighty Neptune doth, so doth shee ebbe and flow.

POLY-OLBION

If some Welsh shires report, that they the like can
show,
I answere those, that her shall so no wonder call,
So farre from any sea, not any of them all. 470
My caves, and fountaines thus delivered you, for
change,

A little hill I have, a wonder yet more strange,
Which though it be of light, and almost dusty sand,
Unaltred with the wind, yet firmly doth it stand;
And running from the top, although it never cease,
Yet doth the foot thereof, no whit at all increase. 476

Nor is it at the top, the lower, or the lesse,
As Nature had ordain'd, that so its owne excesse,
Should by some secret way within it selfe ascend,
To feed the falling backe; with this yet doe not end
The wonders of the Peake, for nothing that I have,
But it a wonders name doth very justly crave: 482

A forrest such have I, (of which when any speake,
Of me they it enstile, the Forrest of the Peake)
Whose hills doe serve for brakes, the rocks for
shrubs and trees, 485

To which the stag pursu'd, as to the thicket flees;
Like it in all this isle, for sternnesse there is none,
Where Nature may be said to show you groves of
stone,

As she in little there, had curiously compyld
The modell of the vast Arabian stony wyld. 490
Then as it is suppos'd, in England that there be
Seven wonders: to my selfe so have I here in me,
My seaven before rehearc'd, allotted me by fate,
Her greatnesse, as therein ordain'd to imitate.

No sooner had the Peake her seven proud wonders
sung, 495
But Darwin from her fount, her mothers hills among,
Through many a crooked way, opposd with envious
rocks,

POLY-OLBION

Comes tripping downe tow'rds Trent, and sees the
goodly flocks
Fed by her mother Peake; and heards, (for home and
haire,
That hardly are put downe by those of Lancashire,)
Which on her mountaines sides, and in her bottoms
graze, 501
On whose delightfull course, whilst Unknidge stands
to gaze,
And looke on her his fill, doth on his tiptoes get,
He Nowstoll plainly sees, which likewise from the set,
Salutes her, and like friends, to Heaven-hill farre
away, 505
Thus from their lofty tops, were plainly heard to say.
Faire hill bee not so proud of thy so pleasant scite,
Who for thou giv'st the eye such wonderfull delight,
From any mountaine neere, that g'orious name of
Heaven,
Thy bravery to expresse, was to thy greatnesse given:
Nor cast thine eye so much on things that be above:
For sawest thou as we doe, our Darwin, thou
wouldstlove 512
Her more then any thing, that so doth thee allure;
When Darwin that by this her travell could endure,
Takes Now into her traine, (from Nowstoll her great
sire, 515
Which shewes to take her name) with many a wind-
ing gyre.
Then wandring through the wylds, at length the
pretty Wye,
From her blacke mother Poole, her nimbler course
doth plye
Tow'rds Darwin, and along from Bakewell with her
brings
Lathkell a little brooke, and Headford, whose poore
springs, 520
But hardly them the name of riverets can affoord;

POLY-OLBION

When Burbrook with the strength, that Nature hath
her stor'd,
Although but very small, yet much doth Darwin sted.
At Worksworth on her way, when from the mynes of
lead,
Browne Ecclesborne comes in, then Amber from the
east, 525
Of all the Darbian nymphs of Darwin lov'd the best,
(A delicateser flood from fountaine never flow'd)
Then comming to the towne, on which she first
bestow'd
Her naturall British name, her Darby, so againe,
Her, to that ancient seat, doth kindly intertaine, 530
Where Marten-Brooke, although an easie shallow rill,
There offereth all she hath, her mistris banks to fill,
And all too little thinks that was on Darwin spent;
Fiom hence as shee departs, in travailing to Trent,
Backe goes the active Muse, tow'rds Lancashire
amaine, 535
Where matter rests ynough her vigor to maintaine,
And to the northern hills shall lead her on along,
Which now must wholly bee the subject of my song.

THE THIRTIETH SONG

The Argument

OF Westmerland the Muse now sings,
And fetching Eden from her springs,
Sets her along, and Kendall then
Surveying, beareth backe agen;
And climing Skidows loftie hill, 5
By many a river, many a rill,
To Cumberland, where in her way,
Shee^Copland calls, and doth display

POLY-OLBION

Her beauties, backe to Eden goes,
Whose floods, and fall shee aptly showes. 10

Yet cheerely on my Muse, no whit at all dismay'd,
But look aloft tow'rds heaven, to him whose power-
full ayd;
Hath led thee on thus long, and through so sundry
soiles,
Steep mountains, forrests rough, deepe rivers, that
thy toyles
Most sweet refreshings seeme, and still thee comfort
sent, 5
Against the bestial! rout, and boorish rabblement
Of those rude vulgar sots, whose braines are onely
slime,
Borne to the doting world, in this last yron time,
So stony, and so dull, that Orpheus which (men say)
By the mticing straines of his melodious lay, 10
Drew rocks and aged trees, to whether he would
please;
He might as well have moov'd the universe as these;
But leave this frie of hell in their owne filth defilde,
And seriously pursue the sterne Westmerian wilde,
First ceazing in our song, the south part of the shire,
Where Westmerland to west, by wide Wynander mere,
The Eboracean fields her to the rising bound, 17
Where Can first creeping forth, her feet hath scarcely
found,
But gives that dale her name, where Kendale towne
doth stand,
For making of our cloth scarce match'd in all the
land, 20
Then keeping on her course, though having in her
traine,
But Sput, a little brooke, then Winster doth retaine,
Tow'rds the Vergivian sea, by her two mighty falls,
(Which the brave Roman tongue, her Catadupae calls)

POLY-OLBION

This eager river seemes outrageously to rore, 25
 And counterfetting Nyle, to deafe the neighboring
 shore,

To which she by the sound apparantly doth show,
 The season foule or faire, as then the wind doth blow:
 For when they to the north, the noyse doe easliest
 heare,

They constantly affirme the weather will be cleere; 30
 And when they to the south, againe they boldly say,
 It will be clouds or raine the next approaching day.
 To the Hibernick Gulfe, when soone the river hasts,
 And to those queachy sands, from whence her selfe
 she casts,

She likewise leaves her name as every place where she,
 In her cleare course doth come, by her should
 honored be. 36

But backe into the north from hence our course doth
 lye,

As from this fall of Can, still keeping in our eye,
 The source of long-liv'd Lun, I long-liv'd doe her call;
 For of the British floods, scarce one amongst them
 all, 40

Such state as to her selfe, the destinies assigne,
 By christning in her course a Countie Palatine
 For Luncaster so nam'd, the fort upon tha Lun,
 And Lancashire the name from Lancaster bsgun:
 Yet though shee be a flood, such glory that doth
 gaine, 45

In that the British crowne doth to her state pertaine,
 Yet Westmerland alone, not onely boasts her birth,
 But for her greater good the kind Westmerian earth,
 Cleere Burbeck her bequeaths, and Barrow to attend
 Her grace, till shee her name to Lancaster doe lend.

With all the speed we can, to Cumberland we hye, 51
 (Still longing to salute the utmost Albany)

By Eden, issuing out of Husseat-Morviil Hill,
 And pointing to the north, as then a little rill,

POLY-OLBION

There simply takes her leave of her sweet sister Swale,
Borne to the selfe same sire, but with a stronger gale,
Tow'rds Humber hyes her course, but Eden making
on, 57

Through Malerstrang hard by, a forrest woe begone
In love with Edens eyes, of the cleere Naiades kind,
Whom thus the wood-nymph greets: What passage
shalt thou find, 60

My most beloved brook, in making to thy bay,
That wandering art to wend through many a crooked
way,

Farre under hanging hills, through many a cragged
strait,

And few the watry kind, upon thee to await,
Opposed in thy course with many a rugged cliffe, 65
Besides the northern winds against thy streame so
stiffe,

As by maine strength they meant to stop thee in thy
course,

And send thee easly back to Morvill to thy source.
O my bright lovely brooke, whose name doth beare
the sound

Of Gods first garden-plot, th'imparadized ground,
Wherein he placed man, from whence by sinne he
fell. 71

O little blessed brooke, how doth my bosome swell,
With love I beare to thee, the day cannot suffice
For Malerstang to gaze upon thy beautious eyes.

This sayd, the forrest rubd her rugged front the
while, 75

Cleere Eden looking back, regreets her with a smile,
And simply takes her leave, to get into the maine;
When Below a bright nymph, from Stanmore downe
doth straine

To Eden, as along to Appleby shee makes,
Which passing, to her traine, next Troutbeck in shee
takes, 80

POLY-OLBION

And Levenant, then these, a somewhat lesser rill,
When Glenkwin greets her well, and happily to fill,
Her more abundant banks, from Uils, a mightie mere
On Cumberlands confines, comes Eymot neat and
cleere, 84

And Loder doth allure, with whom she haps to meet,
Which at her comming in, doth thus her mistris greet.
Quoth shee, thus for my selfe I say, that where I
swell

Up from my fountaine first, there is a tyding-well,
That daily ebbs and flowes, (as writers doe report)
The old Euripus doth, or in the selfe same sort, 90
The Venedocian fount, or the Demetian spring,
Or that which the cold Peake doth with her wonders
bring,

Why should not Loder then, her mistris Eden please,
With this, as other floods delighted are with these.

When Eden, though shee seem'd to make unusuall
haste, 95

About cleere Loders neck, yet lovingly doth cast
Her oft infolding armes, as Westmorland shee leaves,
Where Cumberland againe as kindly her receives.
Yet up her watry hands, to Winfield forrest holds
In her rough woody armes, which amorously infolds
Cleere Eden comming by, with all her watry store,
In her darke shades, and seemes her parting to de-
plore. 102

But southward sallying hence, to those sea-
bordring sands,
Where Dudden driving downe to the Lancastrian
lands,
This Cumberland cuts out, and strongly doth con-
fine, 105

This meeting there with that, both meerly maratine,
Where many a daintie rill out of her native dale,
To the Vii givian makes, with many a pleasant gale;

POLY-OLBION

As Eske her farth'st, so first, a coy bred Cumbrian
 Jasse,
Who commeth to her road, renowned Ravenglasse,
By Devoock driven along, (which from a large-brim'd
 lake, 111
To hye her to the sea, with greater haste doth make)
Meets Nyte, a nimble brooke, their rendevous that
 keepe
In Ravenglasse, when soone into the blewish deepe
Comes Irt, of all the rest, though small, the richest
 girle, 115
Her costly bosome strew'd with precious orient
 pearle,
Bred in her shining shels, which to the deaw doth
 yawne,
Which deaw they sucking in, conceive that lusty
 spawne,
Of which when they grow great, and to their fulnesse
 swell,
They cast, which those at hand there gathering, dearly
 sell. 120
This cleare pearle-paved Irt, Bleng to her harbor
 brings,
From Copland comming downe, a forrest-nymph,
 which sings
Her owne praise, and those floods, their fountains
 that derive
From her, which to extoll, the forrest thus doth strive.
 Yee northerne Dryades all adorn'd with moun-
 taines steepe, 125
Upon whose hoary heads cold winter long doth keepe,
Where often rising hils, deepe dales and many make,
Where many a pleasant spring, and many a large-
 spread lake,
Their cleere beginnings keepe, and doe their names
 bestow

POLY-OLBION

Upon those humble vales, through which they eas'ly
flow. 130

Whereas the mountaine nymphs, and those that doe
frequent

The fountaines, fields, and groves, with wondrous
meriment,

By moone-shine many a night, doe give each other
chase,

At hood-winke, barley-breake, at tick, or prison-
base,

With tricks, and antique toyes, that one another
mocke, 135

That skip from crag ,O crag, and leape from rocke to
rocke.

Then Copland, of this tract a corner, I would know,
What place can there be found in Britan, that doth
show

A surface more austere, more sterne from every way.

That who doth it behold, he cannot chuse but say,

Th'aspect of these grim hills, these darke and mistie
dales, 141

From clouds scarce ever cleer'd, with the strongst
northern gales,

Tell in their mighty roots, some minerall there doth
lye,

The islands generall want, whose plenty might supply:

Wherefore as some suppose of copper mynes in me,

I Copper-land was cald, but some will have't to be

From the old Britans brought, for Cop they use to

call 147

The tops of many nils, which I am stor'd withall.

Then Eskdale mine ally, and Niterdale so nam'd,

Of floods from you that flow, as Borowdale most

fam'd, 150

With Wasdale walled in, with hills on every side,

Howsoever ye extend within your wasts so wide,

For th'surface of a soyle, a Copland, Copland cry,

POLY-OLBION

Till to your shouts the hills with echoes all reply.
Which Copland scarce had spoke, but quickly every
hill, 155
Upon her verge that stands, the neighbouring vallies
fill;
Helvillon from his height, it through the mountaines
threw,
From whom as soone againe, the sound Dunbalrase
drew,
From whose stone-trophied head, it on to Wendrosse
went, 159
Which tow'rds the sea againe, resounded it to Dent,
That Brodwater therewith within her banks astound,
In sayhng to the sea, told it in Egremound,
Whose buildings, walks, and streets, with echoes
loud and long
Did mightily commend old Copland for her song.
Whence soone the Muse proceeds, to find out
fresher springs, 165
Where Darwent her cleere fount from Borowdale that
brings,
Doth quickly cast her selfe into an ample lake,
And with Thurls mighty mere, betweene them two
doe make
An island, which the name from Darwent doth derive,
Within whose secret breast nice Nature doth con-
trive, 170
That mighty copper myne, which not without its
vaines,
Of gold and silver found, it happily obtaines
Of royaltie the name, the richest of them all
That Britan bringeth forth, which royall she doth call.
Of Borowdale her dam, of her owne named isle, 175
As of her royall mynes, this river proud the while,
Keepes on her course to sea, and in her way doth win
Cleere Coker her compeere, which at her comming in,
Gives Coker-mouth the name, by standing at her fall,

POLY-OLBION

Into faire Darwents banks, when Darwent there-
withall, 180
Runnes on her watry race, and for her greater fame,
Of Neptune doth obtaine a haven of her name,
When of the Cambrian Hills, proud Skiddo that
doth show
The high'st, respecting whom, the other be but low,
Perceiving with the floods, and forrests, how it
far'd, 185
And all their severall tales substantially had heard,
And of the mountaine kind, as of all other he,
Most like Pernassus selfe that is suppos'd to be,
Having a double head, as hath that sacred mount,
Which those nine sacred nymphs held in so hie
account, 190
Bethinketh of himselfe what he might justly say,
When to them all he thus his beauties doth display.
The rough Hibernian sea, I proudly overlooke,
Amongst the scattered rocks, and there is not a
nooke,
But from my glorious height into its depth I pry, 195
Great hills farre under me, but as my pages lye;
And when my helme of clouds upon my head I take,
At very sight thereof, immediatly I make
Th'inhabitants about, tempestuous stormes to feare,
And for faire weather looke, when as my top is
cleere; 200
Great Fournesse mighty fells, I on my south surway:
So likewise on the north, Albania makes me way,
Her countries to behold, when Scurfell from the skie,
That Anadale doth crowne, with a most amorous eye,
Salutes me every day, or at my pride lookes grim, 205
Oft threatning me with clouds, as I oft threatning him:
So likewise to the east, that rew of mountaines tall,
Which we our English Alpes may very aptly call,
That Scotland here with us, and England doe divide,
As those, whence we them name upon the other side,

POLY-OLBION

Doe Italy, and France, these mountaines heere of
 ours, 211
 That looke farre off like clouds, shap't with
 embattelled towers,
 Much envy my estate, and somewhat higher be,
 By lifting up their heads, to stare and gaze at me.
 Cleere Darwent dancing on, I looke at from above,
 As some enamoured youth, being deeply struck in
 love, 216
 His mistris doth behold, and every beauty notes;
 Who as shee to her fall, through fells and vallies
 flotes,
 Oft lifts her limber selfe above her banks to view,
 How my brave by-clift top, doth still her course
 pursue. 220
 O all yee topick gods, that doe inhabite here,
 To whom the Romans did, those ancient altars reare,
 Oft found upon those hills, now sunke into the soyles,
 Which they for trophies left of their victorious spoyles,
 Ye genii of these floods, these mountaines, and these
 dales, 225
 That with poore shepherds pipes, and harmlesse
 heardsmans tales
 Have often pleased been, still guard me day and
 night,
 And hold me Skidow still, the place of your delight.
 This speech by Skidow spoke, the Muse makes
 forth againe,
 Tow'rds where the in-borne floods, cleere Eden inter-
 taine, 230
 To Cumberland com'n in, from the Westmerian
 wasts,
 Where as the readiest way to Carlill, as shee casts,
 Shee with two wood-nymphs meets, the first is great
 and wilde,
 And Westward Forrest night; the other but a childe,
 Compared with her phere, and Inglewood is cald, 235

POLY-OLBION

Both in their pleasant scites, most happily instald.

What sylvan is there seene, and be she nere so coy,
Whose pleasures to the full, these nymphs doe not
enjoy,

And like Dianas selfe, so truly living chast?

For seldome any tract, doth crosse their waylesse
waste, 240

With many a lustie leape, the shagged satyrs show
Them pastime every day, both from the meres below,
And hils on every side, that neatly hemme them in;
The blushing morne to breake, but hardly doth begin,
But that the ramping goats, swift deere, and harme-
lesse sheepe, 245

Which there their owners know, but no man hath to
keepe,

The dales doe over-spread, by them like motley made;
But Westward of the two, by her more widened slade,
Of more abundance boasts, as of those mighty mynes,
Which in her verge she hath: but that whereby she
shines, 250

Is her two daintie floods, which from two hils doe
flow,

Which in her selfe she hath, whose banks doe bound
her so

Upon the north and south, as that she seemes to be
Much pleased with their course, and takes delight to
see

How Elne upon the south, in sallying to the sea 255

Confines her: on the north how Wampull on her way,
Her purlews wondrous large, yet limitteth againe,
Both falling from her earth into the Irish maine.

No lesse is Westward proud of Waver, nor doth win
Lesse praise by her cleere spring, which in her course
doth twin 260

With Wiz, a neater nymph scarce of the watry kind,
And though shee be but small, so pleasing Wavers
mind,

POLY-OLBION

That they entirely mix'd, the Irish seas imbrace,
But earnestly proceed in our intended race.

At Eden now arriv'd, whom we have left too long,
Which being com'n at length, the Cumbrian hills
among, 266

As shee for Carlill coasts, the floods from every
where,

Prepare each in their course, to entertaine her there,
From Skidow her tall sire, first Cauda cleerely brings
In Eden all her wealth; so Petterell from her springs,
(Not farre from Skidows foot, whence dainty Cauda
creeps) 271

Along to overtake her soveraigne Eden sweeps,
To meet that great concourse, which seriously attend
That dainty Cumbrian Queene; when Gilsland downe
doth send

Her riverets to receive Queene Eden in her course,
As Irthing comming in from her most plenteous
source, 276

Through many a cruell crag, though she be forc'd to
crawl,

Yet working forth her way to grace her selfe with all,
First Pultrosse is her page, then Gelt shee gets her
guide, 279

Which springeth on her south, on her septentrion side,
Shee crooked Cambeck calls, to wait on her along,
And Eden overtakes amongst the watry throng.

To Carlill being come, cleere Bruscaeth beareth in,
To greet her with the rest, when Eden as to win 284
Her grace in Carlils sight, the court of all her state,
And Cumberlands chiefe towne, loe thus shee doth
dilate.

What giveth more delight, (brave citie) to thy seat,
Then my sweet lovely selfe? a river so compleat,
With all that Nature can a dainty flood endow 289
That all the northerne nymphs me worthily allow,
Of all their Nyades kind the neatest, and so farre

POLY-OLBION

Transcending, that oft times they in their amorous
warre,
Have offered by my course, and beauties to decide
The mastery, with her most vaunting in her pride, 294
That mighty Roman fort, which of the Picts we call,
But by them neere those times was stil'd Severus wall,
Of that great Emperour nam'd, which first that worke
began,
Betwixt the Irish Sea, and German Ocean,
Doth cut me in his course neere Carlill, and doth end
At Boulnesse, where my selfe I on the ocean spend.
And for my country here, (of which I am the chiefe
Of all her watry kind) know that shee lent reliefe, 302
To those old Britains once, when from the Saxons
they,
For succour hither fled, as farre out of their way,
Amongst her mighty wylds, and mountains freed from
feare, 305
And from the British race, residing long time here,
Which in their genuine tongue, themselves did
Kimbri name,
Of Kimbri-land, the name of Cumberland first came;
And in her praise bee't spoke, this soyle whose best is
mine,
That fountaine bringeth forth, from which the
southern Tyne, 310
(So nam'd for that of north, another hath that stile)
This to the easterne sea, that makes forth many a
mile,
Her first beginning takes, and Vent, and Alne doth
lend,
To wait upon her foorth; but further to transcend
To these great things of note, which many countries
call 315
Their wonders, there is not a tract amongst them all,
Can shew the like to mine, at the lesse Sakeld, neere
To Edens bank, the like is scarcely any where,

POLY-OLBION

Stones seventie seven stand, in manner of a ring,
Each full ten foot in height, but yet the strangest
thing, 320
Their equal distance is, the circle that compose,
Within which other stones lye flat, which doe inclose
The bones of men long dead, (as there the people
say;)
So neere to Loders spring, from thence not farre
tiway, 324
Be others nine foot high, a myle in length that runne,
The victories for which these trophies were begun,
From darke oblivion thou, O Time shouldst have
protected;
For mighty were their minds, them thus that first
erected:
And neere to this againe, there is a piece of ground,
A little rising bank, which of the table round, 330
Men in remembrance keepe, and Arthurs table name.
But whilst these more and more, with glory her
inflame,
Supposing of her selfe in these her wonders great,
All her attending floods, faire Eden doe entreat,
To lead them down to sea, when Leven comes along,
And by her double spring, being mightie them
among, 336
There overtaketh Eske, from Scotland that doth hie,
Faire Eden to behold, who meeting by and by,
Downe from these westerne sands into the sea doe
fall,
Where I this canto end, as also therewithall 340
My England doe conclude, for which I undertooke,
This strange Herculean toyle, to this my thirtieth
booke.

NOTES

I could have written longer notes, for
the art of writing notes is not of difficult
attainment.

DR. JOHNSON

NOTES

THE BARONS WARRES

IN 1596 D. published *Mortimeriados. The Lamentable civell 'warres of Edward the second and the Barrons*, a poem of nearly 3000 lines in the rhyme royal stanza. In the previous year Daniel had published the first five books of his great historical poem, *The Civile Wars*, which was written in ottava rima. It may well be, as Mrs. Tillptson suggests, that D. was led to rewrite his poem in Daniel's stanza and in Daniel's manner because of his admiration of that poem. But the two poems are very different, as I have tried to show in my Introduction, and it would be unwise to interpret D.'s constant readiness to learn from other poets as indicating any lack of independence. D.'s own account of the reasons for undertaking the huge task of rewriting this poem seems to me sufficient. 'Therefore' (he says) 'as at first, the dignitie of the thing was the motive of the doing, so the cause of this my second greater labour was the insufficient and carelesse printing of many impressions, not only of this poeme of the Warres;... And whereas I was advised to write it, and also began it in the stanza of seven lines, wherein there are two couplets, i.e. in lines 4 and 5, and 6 and 7.. .the often harmony thereof, softned the verse more then the majestie of the subject would permit, unlesse they had all beene.. .couplets. Therefore (but not without fashioning the whole frame) I chose this stanza, of all other the most complete and best proportioned, consisting of eight lines, six interwoven, and a couplet in base.' And he continues with great acuity to point out the greater suitability of ottava rima. Similarly Daniel,

NOTES

on the advice of Hugh Sanford, went through his *Civile Wars*, removing feminine rhymes from it—a lesser task, but with a similar, and perfectly correct, motive. It may have been Daniel who convinced D. of the superiority of ottava rima over rhyme royal for his purposes, but it may equally well have been Ariosto or Tasso, or their two great contemporary translators, Harington and Fairfax. At least there can be no doubt that *The Barons Warres* was much more the poem D. intended than *Mortimeriados* had been. It was first published in 1603 and reprinted eight times in D.'s life-time: the text here printed is of D.'s final revision, made for the edition of 1619. In some respects the text of 1603 is more lively, but (as I have previously explained) I have thought it better to respect the judgement of so meticulous a critic of his own work as was D.

Mortimeriados had been dedicated to the Countess of Bedford, but *The Barons Warres* was dedicated from the first to Sir Walter Aston, in the editions before 1619 in a sonnet, and thereafter in prose.

Canto 7, st. 3 Bilbo] A Citie of Spain, from whence wee anciently had our best swords-D., i.e. Bilbao. Cf. *Ballad of Agincourt, I. 82. st. 7* Albania] Scotland. *st. 14* Henry Lacy, Earle of Lincolne-D. He died 1311. Thomas Plantaginet Earle of Lancaster, the sonne of Edmond, called Crouch-back, who was the second sonne of Henry the third-D. *st. 15* The two Spensers, by the favour of the King, bought the lands of the Lord Bruse in the Marches of Wales, out of some of the Barons hands; for which, the Barons burnt the towns there, belonging to the Spensers; and shortly, caused the King to banish them-D. *st. 20* Roger Mortimer the unckle, and Roger, the nephew-D. *st. 23* Roger Mortimer grandfather to this Roger-D. *st. 41* Plaine] Those of Hampshire, Wiltshire, and borderers of the Plaine of Salisbury, clayme the vaward of the Eng-

NOTES

lish Battels-D. *st.* 43 Cf. *Poly-Olbion*, 25, /, 142. *st.* 54 The Marchers] The Mortimers so called, for their great power in the Marches-D.

Canto 2, st. 11 The Socke, or soft shoo, used in comicke and light poesies, from which hee ascendeth to this tragique poeme-D. Cf. *Elegie to Henery Reynolds*, /, 120. *st.* 15 Tentage used in place, for the tents, generally carried along with the armie-D. *st.* 19 Remembring the great overthrow they had received by the Scots at Banocksburne-D. *st.* 21 Pieces of armour well knowne to souldiers-D. But perhaps not to twentieth-century soldiers: Murrian, or morion, is a kind of helmet; greaves, armour for the legs; pouldrons, armour for the shoulders. *st.* 23 Some short blazons of the bearings of some of the English Nobilitie, in this, and the next stanza following, expressed in the termes of Heraldrie-D. Characteristically D. selects nobles from his own Midlands, and perhaps includes a Culpepper because they were lords of the manor of Hartshill, and Sir Walter Aston's sister had married a Culpepper. There is a similar heraldic passage in Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*, x. 63-72 (Harington's translation). *st.* 34 Aquarius] An expert souldier of those times-D. *st.* 45 Aeon] Their ancestors that went with Richard Coeur de Lyon to the warres against the pagans-D. Jerusalem] Those before them, that went with Duke Robert, the eldest son of the Conqueror, under the conduct of Godfrey of Bulloyne[^] to the Holy Land-D. V. *The Legend of Robert, Duke of Normandie*. *st.* 49 This knight after created Earle of Carlel-D. *st.* 65 His word forfeited to the Barons, for recalling Gaveston, and the Spensers-D. *st.* 68 I have inserted 'a' before 'friends' where metre and syntax seem to require it. *st.* 69 Polesworth on the Ancor, Clifford Chambers on the Stowre. Cf. Introduction, p. xiii. *st.* 70 Sir Walter Aston.

NOTES

Canto 3, st. 8 A fire lighted in an angular vessell, by the contraction of the sunbeames-D. *st. 10* A character of meere woman-D. *st. 35* A metaphor taken from card-play-D. *st. 41* A metaphor from timber-D. *st. 42* Looke to the 23. stanza of the first canto-D. *st. 45* It was much debated whether the brave mind was or was not allotted in the birth. Dante had denied this, but the English opinion seems to have agreed rather with Spenser (v. *Fairy Queene*, Book VI) and Drayton, though the great Lord Burghley was cynical enough: 'Nobility is but ancient riches.' *st. 48* Fayned to make fishes attend him, with the musike of his harper-D. *st. 79* Her prophecie [which D. invented] was fulfilled by Edward the third, her sonne, in his conquest thereof; whose sonne, Edward, the Blacke Prince, tooke King John of France at the battell at Poycters, who died a prisoner in England-D. *st. 84* Prince Edward, after Edward the third, married Philip, the Earle of Henaults daughter-D.

•*Canto 4, st. 1* A periphrasis of seven yeeres-D. 1315-22. jr. 9 The degrading of an earle-D. *st. 28* Walter Stapleton, Bishop of Excester, mentioned in the 69. stanza of the third booke-D.

Canto 5, st. 1 Native land] Edward, borne at Carnarvon in Wales-D. *st. 26* Leicester here scanned as a trisyllable, *st. 47* Edwardum occidere nolite: timefe bonum est. Edwardum occidere, nolite timere: bonum est-D. *st. 49* As Harold, the sonne of Earle Godwyn, had usurped the crowne from young Edgar, called the sonne of the outlaw; so Duke William tooke it from him by conquest, having as little right to it as he-D. *st. 50* Duke Robert, the eldest sonne of the Conqueror, was at his fathers death with Godfrey of Bulloine, in the Holy Warres-D. New Forrest in Hampshire] in which he was slaine, -with an arrow out of a crosse-bow, by Sir Walter

NOTES.

Tirrell-D. *st.* 51 Henry, for his learning named Beauclearke, the fourth and youngest sonne of the Conqueror-D. Seas] King Henries sonnes drowned, as they were comming by sea out of France into England, to keepe the feast of Christmas with their father-D. *st.* 52 Maud, daughter to Henry the first, was first married to Henry the Emperour-D. Stephen, the sonne of Stephen, Earle of Blois, by Constance, William Conquerors sister-D. *st.* 53 Henry, the sonne of Maud the Emperesse, by her second husband Geffrey Plantaginet, Earle of Anjou-D. The sonne being crowned by his father in his life, sought after to depose his kind parent-D. *st.* 54 Slaine by Peter Bazeel-D. *st.* 55 Oft rebelling against his brother Richard, who much loved him. Arthur, the sonne of Geffrey, the second sonne of Henry the second, who in the right of Constance, daughter and heire of Conan, Earle of Little Britaine in France, was Earle of the same-D. *st.* 56 Crowned at 9. yeres old. The Barons sent in for Lewis, the sonne of Philip, King of France, thinking to have made him King-D. Charter] About the Statutes made at Oxford-D. *st.* 57 Edward the first, named Long-shankes, a most fortunate and victorious prince. The happinesse of his reigne, recovered the losse of the warres that the Barons held against his father. He conquered Wales, and made Scotland do him homage-D. *st.* 58 Edward the second was the first Prince of Wales, called of Carnarvon, the place of his birth-D.

Canto 6, st. 4 Mortimer, created Earle of March, first of the family, which had that title-D. 1327. *st.* 5 The whole frame of heaven, moving betwixt the two Pole-Starres, North and South-D. *st.* 7 Of some called, the Ragman Role-D. Black Crosse] A Jewell of great price, anciently belonging to the Crowne of Scotland-D. *st.* 8 Joan, the third child of Edward

NOTES

the second, by Queene Isabel, married to Prince David, heir apparent to Robert Bruce, King of Scots-D. *st.* 15 Nottingham] Being upon the North side of Trent; and for the ample prospect it hath to the South, not unproperly called, The Eye of the North-D. Pharus] The Pharus is a tower, placed upon some promontorie, or loftie ground, with light in the top, to direct men at sea; to which, hee liketh Nottingham, for the stately situation-D. *st.* 31 Pilasters] Little pillars, as we see in many buildings of State, which be about greater-D. *st.* 65 Skidow] A loftie mountaine in Cumberland, under which, lye many lakes and meres, abounding with fowle of sundry kinds-D. D. seems to have known Skiddaw: cf. *Poly-Olbion*, 30, // 183-92. *st.* 77 What poore things the most part of men be-D. *st.* 79 Stanhope] An especiall article against Mortimer, that the Scots escaped at Stanhope Parke, by a signall given to them by him-D. *st.* 84 Leopards] The Conqueror bare two Leopards Passant, or, in a Field, geules-D.

ENGLANDS HEROICALL EPISTLES

These epistles, D.'s most popular work in his own day and for long afterwards, were first published in 1597. Revisions were not very considerable, but I have preferred, for reasons given above, to print D.'s final recension from the edition of 1619.

Rosamond to Henry II. First printed 1597, with dedications to the Countess of Bedford, retained in all ten subsequent editions before 1619.

129-30 *Rosa mundi sed non rosa munda.* Giraldus Cambrensis is the first to mention this pun on her name. D.'s 'Annotations of the Chronicle Historic' to these lines mentions the destruction by St. Hugh, Bishop of Lincoln, of Rosamond's sumptuous monument at Godstow, in 1191.

NOTES

Henry to Rosamond. 37 King Henry the second, the first Plantaginet, accused for the death of Thomas Becket, Arch-bishop of Canterburie, slaine in that Cathedrall Church, was accursed by Pope Alexander, although he urged sufficient prooffe of his innocencie in the same, and offered to take upon him any penance, so he might avoid the curse and interdiction of his realme-D. 39-40 Henry the young King, whom King Henry had caused to be crowned in his life...rebelled against him...and invaded Normandie-D. 42 Never King more unfortunate then King Henry, in the disobedience of his children: first Henry, then Geffrey, then Richard, then John.. .unnaturally rebelled against him; then, the jealousie of Elinor his Queene, who suspected his love to Rosamond-D. 180 This Vaughan was a Knight, whom the King exceedingly loved, who kept the Palace at Woodstock etc.-D.

Elinor Cobham to Duke Humphrey. First printed 1598, without dedication, but from 1599 dedicated to Maister James Huish in ail editions before 1619. 33-4 Jacomin, or as some call her, Jaquet, daughter and heire to William Bavier, Duke of Holland, before married, and lawfull wife to John, Duke of Brabant, then living: which after.. .caused great warres, by reason that the Duke of Burgoyne tooke part with Brabant, against the Duke of Gloucester; which being arbitrated by the Pope, the Ladie was adjudged to be delivered backe to her former husband-D. 48 Sterborough Castell in Kent the aincient house of the Lord Cobhams-B. 49 That faire and goodly Palace of Greenwich, in Kent, was first builded by that famous Duke-D. In 1437. 190 The Instruments which Bullenbrooke used in his conjurations, according to the divellish ceremonies and customes of these unlawfull arts, were dedicated at

NOTES

a masse, in the Lodge in Harnsey Parke, by Southwell, priest of Westminster-D.

Duke Humphrey to Elinor Cobham. 70 The three famous battels fought by the Englishmen in France: Agincourt, by Henry the fifth, against the whole power of France; Cravant, fought by Mountacute, Earle of Salisbury, and the Duke of Burgoyne, against the Dolphin of France, and William Stuart, Constable of Scotland: Vernoyle, fought by John, Duke of Bedford, against the Duke of Alanson, and with him most of the Nobilitie of France; Duke Humphrey an especial counsellor in all these expeditions-D. 80 Here remembering the ancient amitie which in his embassies he had concluded betwixt the King of England, and Sigismund, Emperour of Almaine, drawing the Duke of Burgoyne into the same League.. -D. 83 Henry Beauford, Cardinall of Winchester,.. received the Cardinalls hat at Calice, by the Popes Legate; which dignitie, Henry the fifth, his nephew, forbad him to take upon him, knowing his haughtie and malicious spirit, unfit for that robe and calling-D. 1427. 113 James Stuart, King of Scots, having beene long prisoner in England, was released, and tooke to wife the daughter of John, Duke of Somerset, sister to John, Duke of Somerset, neece to the Cardinall, and the Duke of Excester, and cousin-german removed to the King: this King broke the oath he had taken, and became after a great enemy to England-D.

Earle of Surrey to Lady Geraldine. First printed, without the reply, in 1598, and dedicated to Maister Henry Lucas in that and all subsequent editions before 1619.

I Florence.. was the original] of the family, out of which this Geraldine did spring, as Ireland the place

NOTES

of her birth, which is intimated by these verses of the Earle of Surrey.

From Tuscan came my Ladies worthy race,
Faire Florence was sometimes her ancient seate,
The Westerne Isle, whose pleasant shore doth face
Wilde Cambers cliffes, did give her lively heate.-D.

These and later quotations are from Surrey's-
'Description and praise of his love Geraldine' in
TotteVs Miscellany (1557). 59 Cornelius Agrippa,
a man in his time so famous for magicke... as in
this place needs no further remembrance-D. 98-101
Bramston is near Flodden Field. 187 D. quotes
Hunsdon did first present her to mine eyne. 189 D.
quotes

Hampton me taught to wish her first for mine,
Windsor (alas) doth chase me from her sight.

153 Bryanl v. note to *Elegie to H. Reynolds*, L 67.
201 Prison-base] v. n. to *Muses Eliztum*. I. /. 27.
229 D. quotes with some differences Wyatt's Tagus,
fare well', etc. (Muses' Library ed., p. 82), but attri-
butes it to Surrey or Brian.

Lady Geraldine to Earle of Surrey. First printed 1599.

752 Alluding to the sumptuous house which was
afterward builded by him upon Leonards Hill, right
against Norwich; which, in the rebellion of Nor-
folke, under Ket, in King Edward the sixts time, was
much defaced by that impure rabble-D.

Lady Jane Gray to Lord Gilford Dudley. First printed
1597 with dedications to Mistris Francis Goodere
(sister of Idea) which were retained in all editions
before 1619. Both, but especially Dudley's reply,
were much revised.

83 Henry Gray, Duke of Suffolke, married Francis,
the eldest daughter of Charles Brandon, Duke of
Suffolke, by the French Queene; by which Francis,

NOTES

he had this Lady Jane; this Mary, the French Queene, was daughter to King Henry the seventh, by Elizabeth his Queene; which happie marriage conjoynd the two noble families of Lancaster and York-D.

Gilford Dudley to Lady Jane Gray. 60 Seldome hath it ever beene knowne of any woman indued with such wonderful! gifts, as was this lady, both for her wisdome and learning-D.

ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDIE

First printed 1596, when it was 1,426 lines in length; much revised for edition of 1605, and reduced to 945 lines; again revised with care, but without any further reduction in length, for edition of 1619 here reprinted. Originally dedicated to the Countess of Bedford and her mother Lady Anne Harington, but in 1619 dedicated to Sir Walter Aston.

In his preface To the Reader D. says of his poem that 'the principall is, that being a species of an.epick or heroick poeme, it eminently describeth the act or acts of some one or other eminent persons; not with too much labour, compasse, or extension, but roundly rather, and by way of briefe, or compendium. This maine rule is not here forgotten: for there is given to thee in my Duke Robert, the life of a just, though outwardly infortunate prince; to shew the world, that events are not the measure of counsels, Gods pleasure over-swaying in all, for hidden causes.'

43-9 The five senses all at once pleased-D. 393-9 Duke Robert claymed Normandie, by his fathers promise, to be delivered him, so soone as his said father had conquered England: under which colour he invaded it, and got the better of his father, at the battell of Archenbray-D. The siege of Archenbray (Gerberoi) took place in 1078-9. 482 Godfrey of

NOTES

Bulloyne, the hero of Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, of which Fairfax' translation (1600), one of the greatest of Elizabethan translations, and now (absurdly) quite inaccessible, was probably known to D. (Cf. / . 793.) 554 Tribute] Three thousand markes by the yeere, and the survivor to be heire to the other: which Henry, after he had seated himselfe strongly in the kingdome, neglected to pay, making a scorne of his brother-D. 580 That part of France, now called Normandy, was anciently called Nues-
tria-D. 590 i.e. Tinchebrai, in 1106. 666 Pope Urban, a great moover to this warre-D. 709 Duke Robert morgaged the county of Constantine in the Duchy of Normandie, to Henrie hisyongest brother, for mony to levy an armie against William, who had gotten the realme of England-D. 723 Redshanks] The Scottish-Irish-D. 793 Duke Robert plays no important part in Tasso's poem, but is mentioned in Book I.

THE BALLAD OF AGINCOURT

First printed in 1606. Here I have used the text of 1619, which has been revised in many instances from the original version; and, with some hesitation, I have printed in square brackets the final stanza which Richard Butcher wrote in the copy of Poems 1619 which D. gave him. I have little doubt that the stanza derives from D.'s psn, but I think it more likely that it was the production of a convivial evening in the Apollo room, rather than a part of the original poem which had been omitted out of discretion. The false rhyme, excusable enough in an extempore stanza, would hardly have been left untouched for fifteen years in a poem over which D. had been so much concerned; nor should we expect the gallant rhetoric of the rest of the poem to sink into this grumbling

NOTES

sententiousness except on some particular occasion. But by printing the stanza it is possible to let the reader make up his own mind.

82 V. note to *The Barons Warres*, I, 3.

POLY-OLBION

The first part, i.e. the first eighteen songs with notes by Selden, was first published in 1612. The second part, songs 19 to 30, was published without notes in 1622.

I have been able to make very little use of Selden's notes, which are of great antiquarian interest, owing to the exigencies of space, and have had to be content to provide the reader with the means to follow D.'s peregrination on a modern map.

Song 1. 23 Th'Armorick sands] the coast of Brittany. 27 Thuly] i.e. Thule 'the furthest He in the British Ocean' as D. says, but not to be identified outside the realms of legend. 28 Ducalidon] The sea upon the north of Scotland-D. 44 Celtick wastes] The French seas-D. 54 Ligon] Lihou. 57 Seaven small sister lies] Les Sept Isles. Sorlings] The Isles of Scilly. 59 Aurney] Alderney. 60 Seames] lies de Sein, south of Ushant. 70 Bresan] A small Hand upon the very point of Cornwall-D. Now the Brisons. 100 The Hoare-Rock in the Wood] Selden quotes from Carew's *Description of Cornwall* the Cornish name of St. Michael's Mount, Careg Clowz in Cowz (carrec loys en coys), of which this is a translation. 104-6 An early grumble about industrialization. 130 Main-Amber] a logan stone hear Helston which was thrown down by the Puritan Governor of Pendennis. Burien trophy] the stone circle at St. Buryan. 141 Chore] Cober. 208 AtreJ Ottery. 209 Enian] Inny. 276 Rowter] Roughtor. 277 Richard Carew, author of the *Survey of Cornwall*, 1602. 244 The words of art in wrastling-D.

NOTES

- 254 Corin] Our first great wrestler ariving heere with Brute-D. 285 Moule] Mully. 297 Awne] Avon. Aume] Erme. 509 Ting] Teign. 510 Leman] Lowman. 524 Dunsbrook] Danes Brook. 526 Forto] Fortin. 530 Columb] Culm.
- Song 5.* 107 Loghor] Llchwyr. 112 Bachannis] Bachynys. 115 Tovy] Towy. 118 Toothy] Twrch. Yerwin] Berwyn. 119 Rescob] Esgob. 725 Cledaugh] Clydach. Sawthy] Sawddwy. 135 Denevoir] Dynevor. 205 Cowen] Cymmen. 207 Karkenny] Carth Kenny. 279 Dungleddy] Dau Cleddau. 326 Scalme] Skomer. Stockholme] Skokholm. 357 Gwin] Gwaun.
- Song 6.* *Arg.* 4 Rydoll] Rheidol. 23 Mirk] Meurig. Brenny] Brayan. 30 Sylvan] Silian. 36 Keach] Cych. 39-65 quoted by I. Walton, *Compleat Angler*, ch. 7. 89 Cerettick] Of Cardigan-D. 92 Arron] Ayron. 93 Werry] Wyre. 94 Istwid] Ystwyth. 101 Levant] Llyfnant. 191 Matchwy] Bachwy. 205 Blethaugh] Bieddfa. 347 Moylvadian]. Foei Fadian. 349 Floyd] Llwyd. 351 Rue] Rhiw Kennet] Kemlet. 360 Tur] Twrch.
- Song 13.* 62 Of all birds, only the blackbird whistleth-D. 371 Bever] Belvoir. 373 Alsburie] Aylesbury.
- Song 14.* 22 Nine-holes] V. note to *Muses Elizium*, VI. /. 200. 41 Wych] Droitwich. 66 Swiiliat] Swilgate. 67 Garran] Cararn. 143 Mein] Meon. 161 ClifFords seat] Sir Henry Rainsford's house at ClifFord Chambers. 209 Kings Road-D. 292 Greeklade] Cricklade. 301 Enload] Evenlode.
- Song 15.* 60 The noblest street] Watling-D. 72 Yenload] Evenlode. 709 Skeld] Scheldt. Mose] Meuse.
- Song 19.* The first Song of Part H, published in 1622.
- Arg.* 3 Cauney] Canvey. 6 Greane] Grain. 85 Bengel] The fruitfulst Hundred of Essex-D. Dengie. 86 Walnot] Wallasea. 114 Ousey] Osea. 276-24 V.

NOTES

Hakluyt (Everyman's Library ed., vol. 1, pp. 244-54). 'The river or haven wherein Sir Hugh Willoughbie with the companie of his two ships perished for cold, is called Arzina in Lapland, neere unto Kegor. But it appeareth by a will found in the ship that Sir Hugh Willoughbie and most of the company were alive in January 1554.* 225-36 For Richard Chancellor's voyage to Russia in 1554, v. Hakluyt, vol. 1, pp. 254-94. For Anthony Jenkinson's voyage in 1557-8, v. Hakluyt, vol. 1, pp. 408-64. 229 Volgad] Vologda. 237-46 For Ralph Fitch's voyage, v. Hakluyt, vol. 3, pp. 281-315. D. has turned Hakluyt's version of the Great Moghul's name, Zelabdim Echebar (for Jejel-ed-dim Akbar), into the name of two places! 253-74 For Macham's discovery of Madeira, v. Hakluyt, vol. 2, p. 455. 275-6 V. Hakluyt, vol. 4, pp. 40-3. 277-5 For John Lock's voyage to Guinea, v. Hakluyt, vol. 4, pp. 47-76. For William Towerson's three voyages, v. Hakluyt, vol. 4, pp. 66-129. For George Fenner's voyage, v. Hakluyt, vol. 4, pp. 139-56. 279-86 For Sir James Lancaster's voyage to the E. Indies, v. Hakluyt, vol. 4, pp. 242-59; and for his voyage to 'Farnambuke', v. vol.8 , pp. 26-44. 287-96 For Sir Martin Frobisher's voyages in search of the North-West Passage, v. Hakluyt, vol. 5, pp. 131-71. 297 For Edward Fenton's voyage to China, v. Hakluyt, vol. 8, pp. 107-32; and for Charles Jackman's search for the North-East Passage, v. vol. 2, pp. 227-44. 299-302 For John Davis' voyages in search of the North-West Passage, v. Hakluyt, vol. 5, pp. 281-331. 303-6 For Sir Humfrey Gilbert's voyage to Newfoundland in 1583, v. Hakluyt, vol. 6, pp. 1-9. Hoard (Hakluyt's Hore). 307-22 For Drake's voyage of Circumnavigation, v. *The World Encompassed* by Sir Francis Drake, and Hakluyt, vol. 8, pp. 48-74. 323 For Sir Walter Raleigh's voyages to

NOTES

Virginia, v. Hakluyt, vol. 6, pp. 115-62. 525 For Philip Amadas' voyage to Virginia, v. Hakluyt, vol. 6, pp. 121-32. He was accompanied by Arthur Barlow. 331 For Sir Richard Grenville's voyage to Virginia, v. Hakluyt, vol. 6, pp. 132-8; and for the last fight of the *Revenge*, v. vol. 5, pp. 1-14, and Tennyson's Ballad. 336-40 Ralph Lane, first Governor of Virginia: v. his account of Virginia in Hakluyt, vol. 6, pp. 141-62. 341-52 For Sir Walter Raleigh's voyage to Guiana, v. his own *Discovery of the Large, Rich and Beautiful Empire of Guiana*, in Hakluyt, vol. 7, pp. 272-350. 353 For Charles Leigh's voyage, v. Hakluyt, vol. 6, pp. 100-13. 354 For Robert Tomson's voyage, v. Hakluyt, vol. 6, pp. 246-63. 355-60 For Sir John Hawkins' voyages to Guinea and the W. Indies, v. Hakluyt, vols. 4, 6 and 7; and for his father, William Hawkins', voyages to Brazil, v. vol. 8, p. 13. 361-8 For Thomas Cavendish's voyage to the South Seas, v. Hakluyt, vol. 8, pp. 206-55. 369-71 For the Earl of Cumberland's voyages, v. Hakluyt, vol. 4, pp. 355-80. 372-5 For Sir Robert Dudley's voyage to Trinidad, v. Hakluyt, vol. 7, pp. 164-71. 377 For Amyas Preston's voyage to the W. Indies, v. Hakluyt, vol. 7, pp. 173-83. 383-94 For Sir Anthony Sherley's voyage to the W. Indies, v. Hakluyt, vol. 7, pp. 213-22; also same ref. for William Parker. 396 Loving-land] Lothmgländ. 406 Hebel, following 1622, reads 'north' again here, in defiance of geography and of D.'s marginal note: 'Suffolke bounded on the south and north'.

Song 20. 21 Laphamford] Lopham. 31 Bariden] Breydon. 72 Thrin] Bure. 2/7 check] After pigeons, crows, or such like-D. 224 plane] When they soar as kites doe-D. 229 Canceleers] Crossing the ayre in their downe-come-D. 234 ineawe] Lay the fowles againe into the water-D. 283 Niger] Glaven.

NOTES

- Song 25.* 89 tunnes 1622. 308 Ancum] Ancholme.
311 Razin] Market Rasen.
- Song 26.* Arg. 13 Darwin] Derwent. 39 Leicester]
Trisyllabic as in /. 56 etc. 374 Ibber] Hipper. 387
Blue John. 466 Tydeswell-D. 472 Mam Tor.
- Song 30.* 18 Can] Kent. 22 Sput] Sprint. 53 Husseat-
Morvill] Baugh Fell. 81 Levenant] Lyvennet. 82
Glenkwin] Glencoin. 84 Eymot] Eamont. 85
Loder] Lowther. 92 Cf. 26, 466. 134 V. note to
Muses Elizium, I, /. 27. 158 Dunbalrase] Dunmail
Raise. 159 Wendrosse] Wrynose. 161 Brodwater]
Brothers' Water. 203-6 These lines recurred to
Wordsworth's memory when he visited Burns'
house at Ellisland, according to Dorothy, who
quotes them. (*Recollections of a Tour made in Scot-
land A.D. 1803*; 18th August.) 255 Elne] Ellen. 269
Cauda] Caldew. 283 Bruseath] Brunstock.

GLOSSARY

(Only words not glossed in the C.O.D. included)

batfull	fertile
bidcocke	water-rail
catnpana	elecampane
cast	swarm
cater	caterer
cauple	horse
currer	mounted scout
dade	toddle
daw	revive
dimble	dingle
dorpe	hamlet
earn	uncle
emenll	emery
empressa	device (impresa)
eyre	plough
finny	fenny
fnra	luxuriant
garboyle	brawl
grayns	groins
greaves	groves
griple	grasping
guidehome	guidon
hade	balk
hecco	green woodpecker
hydegy (etc.)	a dance
imbost	driven to extremity
jole	jowl
laund	glade
lim	limning
lin	a poole or watry moore-D.
maund	woven basket
meint	mingled
mooting	moulting
moyle	polled cow
muske-million	musk melon
nope	bull-finch
ould	wold

GLOSSARY

penny grasse		yellow rattle
red-sparrow		reed bunting
rechating		'one of the measures in winding the horn'-D.
segs	flag	iris
sheafe		bundle of 24 arrows
shouler		spoonbill
slade		dell
smeath		smew
snig		elver
stickler		umpire
stover		winter fodder
strout		swell
sulk		plough
tew		tow
tuft		beat (covert)
twyring		pierced with light
tydie		gold-crest (probably)
woosell		ouzel
yark		jerk
yellow-pate		yellow-hammer

