

XVII.—*Notes by WILLIAM DRUMMOND, of Conversations with BEN JONSON, at Hawthornden, in January 1619; from a Manuscript entitled “ Informations be Ben Jonson to W. D., when he came to Scotland upon foot, 1619.”*

[*Read January 9th, 1832.*]

IN the Notice of the Hawthornden Manuscripts which is inserted in the present Volume, reference is made to the loss of Drummond's Account of his Conversations with Ben Jonson, the Heads of which had been printed in the year 1711. Since that paper was communicated to the Society, I was happy to discover the copy from which the following 'Informations' are now for the first time printed in an entire form. The transcript forms part of a miscellaneous collection in the handwriting of Sir Robert Sibbald, entitled "Adversaria," which is preserved in the Advocates' Library; and, if we may be allowed to judge from internal evidence, it undoubtedly preserves a full and correct copy of Drummond's original Manuscript. It contains at least every thing (though under a different arrangement) that is to be found in the printed selections in 1711; and it is singular also in this respect, that it should have the original title of "Informations and Manners," corresponding with the envelope still preserved among the Hawthornden Manuscripts in the possession of the Society,¹ but under which title these Conversations have in no single instance been quoted.

Jonson must have set out on his pedestrian journey to Scotland in the Summer of 1618; as John Taylor, 'the Water Poet,' who made a similar excursion that year, left London on the 14th of July; and it will be seen that Jonson, while in this country, was under the persuasion that he "had been sent hither to scorn him." But Taylor, in 1623, published an account of his "Pennyless Pilgrimage," in which he vindicates himself with great vehemence against such an imputation, "and vows, by the faith of a Christian," that he "did not un-

¹ See page 69 of the present volume. In Sibbald's transcript (which has no date, but is apparently written between 1700 and 1710) these Notes or Informations are entitled "Ben Jonsiana," a title which has not been retained, any more than a partial register of the names mentioned, inserted by him on the margin.

dergo this project either in malice or mockage of Master Benjamin Jonson," to whom he professes he was "so much obliged for many undeserved courtesies." In fact Taylor came more as a feat, upon the performance of which various *bets* depended (as he was to proceed on his journey without carrying money with him, or begging by the road); and he met Jonson at Leith about the end of September, from whom he received a mark of liberality, which may be best stated by quoting his own words:—"Now the day before I came from Edinborough [on his return to England] I went to Leeth, where I found my long approued and assured good friend Master Beniamin Iohnson, at one Master Iohn Stuarts house: I thanke him for his great kindnesse towards me; for at my taking leaue of him, he gaue me a piece of gold of two and twenty shillings to drink his health in England; and withall willed me to remember his kind commendations to all his friends: So with a friendly farewell, I left him as well as I hope neuer to see him in a worse estate: for he is amongst Noblemen and Gentlemen that knowe his true worth, and their oune honours, where with much respectiue loue he is worthily entertained."²

Jonson remained four months longer in Scotland, as Drummond informs us that "He took his departure from Leith on the 25th of January 1619." He returned as he came, on foot,—a mode of travelling which excited some surprise; and the Reader will observe the fine compliment of the Lord Chancellor Bacon, when he said to Jonson as he was about to set out on his excursion, "He loved not to see Poesy goe on other feet than poetically dactylus and spondaeus." He had reached London May 10, 1619, the date of a letter addressed to Drummond, in which he says: "I am arrived safely, with a most catholick welcome, and my reports not unacceptable to his Majesty. He professed (thank God) some joy to see me, and is pleased to hear of the purpose of my book." This alludes to Jonson's intention to write an account of his pilgrimage to Scotland, to be called a *Discovery*, but which in his own time was unfortunately destroyed by fire.

As Drummond's *Notes of Jonson's Conversations* are in many places brief and obscure, an attempt is made, in the notes, to explain the persons or works referred to. Without making any remarks in this place on the misrepresentations respecting this paper, by the late Editor of Jonson's Works, it may

² Taylor's Works, p. 138, London, 1633, folio. See also an interesting account of Taylor's life and writings, in Mr Southey's late volume on *Uneducated Poets*.

be observed, that it neither comes to us in the form of a regular publication by Drummond, nor makes any pretension of giving a full view of Jonson's critical opinion of the merits of his several contemporaries; for it will be seen, that it consists of a series of detached remarks and anecdotes, recorded without any apparent intention of ever being made public.³ Much as Drummond has been blamed for committing to writing such recollections; it would have been singular, considering his habits, had he not availed himself of such an occasion to preserve some memorial of conversations held with a person then in the zenith of his reputation, who was regarded as the most distinguished author of his time. We could indeed have wished that Jonson either had been more communicative, or that Drummond had been more curious in inquiring into the personal history of those master-spirits whose writings have given a character to that age. But either Drummond was more disposed to hear of those poets who, like himself, were writers of sonnets, madrigals, and courtly compliments, or Jonson, with a natural degree of vanity, was more accustomed to speak of the gay and high-born courtiers, and of persons of rank, than of those who, like himself, lived by their wits; which may explain his silence respecting several of the witty and learned frequenters of 'the Mermaid.' Still, the following paper is one of no ordinary interest in the 'Curiosities of Literature;' and if it says but little of Shakspeare, Fletcher, Raleigh, Bacon, Selden, Sidney, and the gentle Spenser, and of various other eminent contemporaries, it at least furnishes us with a variety of authentic notices of Jonson's own life and manners, and gives us an insight into the kind of discourse which seasoned the repasts and potations of two persons of unequal yet of distinguished genius.

D. LAING.

³ Jonson died August 6th, 1637; Drummond survived till December 4th, 1649; and no portion of these Notes were made public till 1711, or 62 years after Drummond's death, and 74 after Jonson's, which renders quite nugatory all Gifford's accusations of Drummond's having published them 'without shame.' As to 'Drummond's decoying Jonson under his roof,' with any premeditated design on his reputation, as Mr Campbell has remarked, no one can seriously believe it.

CERTAIN INFORMATIONs AND MANNERS OF BEN JOHNSON'S
TO W. DRUMMOND.⁴

1. THAT he had an intention to perfect an Epick Poeme intituled Heroologia, of the Worthies of this Country rowed by Fame; and was to dedicate it to his Country: it is all in couplets, for he detesteth all other rimes. Said he had written a Discourse of Poesie both against Campion and Daniel,⁵ especially this last, where he proves couplets to be the bravest sort of verses, especially when they are broken, like Hexameters; and that crosse rimes and stanzaes (because the purpose would lead him beyond 8 lines to conclude) were all forced.

2. HE recommended to my reading Quintilian, who (he said) would tell me the faults of my verses as if he lived with me; and Horace, Plinius 2dus Epistles, Tacitus, Juvenall, Martiall; whose Epigrame *Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem*, &c. he hath translated.

3. HIS CENSURE OF THE ENGLISH POETS WAS THIS:

That Sidney did not keep a decorum in making every one speak as well as himself. Spenser's stanzaes pleased him not, nor his matter;⁶ the meaning of which Allegorie he had delivered in papers to Sir Walter Raughlie.

Samuel Daniel was a good honest man, had no children, but no poet.

That Michael Drayton's Polyolbion, if [he] had performed what he promised to writte (the deeds of all the Worthies), had been excellent: his long verses pleased him not.

That Silvester's translation of Du Bartas was not well done; (and that he wrote his verses before it, ere he understood to conferr):⁷ nor that of Fairfax

⁴ The above title is also repeated in words quoted at the head of this article.

⁵ Thomas Campion's "Observations in the Art of English Poesie" were first printed in 1602, and Daniel's answer in 1603. The title of this last is "A Defence of Ryme, agaynst a pamphlet entitled, Observations in the Art of English Poesie: wherein is demonstratively proued, that Ryme is the fittest harmonie of wordes that comportes with our language. By Sa: D. At London, 1603," 8vo.

⁶ Alluding to the Faerie Queene.

⁷ That is, before Jonson knew French sufficiently to judge of the merits of Silvester's translation. (See note in Gifford's Jonson, vol. viii. p. 239.)

his.⁸ That the translations of Homer and Virgill in long Alexandrines were but prose.⁹ That John Harrington's Ariosto, under all translations, was the worst.

That when Sir John Harrington desired him to tell the truth of his Epigrammes, he answered him, that he loved not the truth, for they were Narrations, and not Epigrammes.

That Warner, since the King's coming to England, had marred all his Albions England.¹⁰

That Donne's Anniversarie was profane and full of blasphemies: that he told Mr Donne, if it had been written of the Virgin Marie it had been something; to which he answered, that he described the Idea of a woman, and not as she was. That Donne, for not keeping of accent, deserved hanging.

That next himself, only Fletcher and Chapman could make a mask.

That Shakspear wanted arte.¹¹

That Sharpham, Day, Dekker, were all rogues;¹² and that Minshew was one.¹³

⁸ Alluding to Fairfax's beautiful version of Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, first printed in the year 1600. Jonson entertained particular notions in regard to poetical translations, which led him to underrate some of those that still continue to be justly admired. Fairfax's *Jerusalem*, Mr Campbell emphatically says, "was inscribed to Queen Elizabeth, and forms one of the glories of her reign."

⁹ Referring evidently to Chapman's Homer's *Iliad*, and to Phaer and Twynne's Virgil.

¹⁰ Warner's poem under the title of *Albion's England*, which had passed through several editions, and of which "A Continuance" appeared in 1606.

¹¹ In the printed selections 1711, this remark is very improperly connected with Jonson's subsequent observation in regard to *The Tempest*, as follows:—"He said, Shakspear wanted *Art and sometimes Sense*; for in one of his plays he brought in a number of men saying they had suffered Ship-wrack in Bohemia, where is no sea near by 100 miles." One would think that Jonson's own words (where he freely states, with much judgment and good sense, his opinion of Shakspeare) should have silenced the idle but long-continued cry of his envy and malice; for, speaking of SHAKSPEARE, JONSON says, "I LOVED THE MAN, AND DO HONOUR HIS MEMORY, ON THIS SIDE IDOLATRY, AS MUCH AS ANY." (*Works*, vol. ix. p. 175.)

¹² Edward Sharpham, a member of the Middle Temple, published *The Fleire*, a comedy, in 1610; and John Day wrote several plays, the titles of which will be found in the *Biographia Dramatica*. Thomas Dekker is a still more voluminous author, and his history is better known, partly in consequence of Ben Jonson's *Poetaster*, in which he has ridiculed Dekker under the character of Demetrius, and Marston under that of Crispinus; and which the former retorted upon Jonson as Young Horace, in his *Satyro Mastix*, or the *Untrussing a Humorous Poet*.

¹³ Minshew is chiefly known as the author of a *Polyglot Dictionary*, in eleven languages, published in 1617.

That Abram Francis,¹⁴ in his English Hexameters, was a foole.

4. HIS JUDGMENT OF STRANGER POETS WAS :

That he thought not Bartas a poet, but a verser, because he wrote not fiction. He cursed Petrarch for redacting Verses to Sonnets; which he said were like the Tirrants bed, wher some who were too short were racked, others too long cut short.

That Guarini, in his Pastor Fido, kept not decorum, in making Shepherds speak as well as himself could.

That Lucan, taken in parts, was good divided; read altogidder, merited not the name of a poet.

That Bonefonius' Vigilium Veneris was excellent.

That he told Cardinall de Perron, at his being in France, anno 1613, who shew him his translations of Virgill, that they were naught.

That the best pieces of Ronsard were his Odes.

*All this was to no purpose, for he [Jonson] neither doeth understand French nor Italiane.*¹⁵

5. HE read his translation of that Ode of Horace, *Beatus ille qui procul negotiis*, &c. and admired it. Of ane Epigramme of Petronius—*Fœda et brevis est Veneris voluptas*,¹⁶ concluding

To me he read the preface of his Arte of Poesie, upon Horace Arte of Poesie,

¹⁴ For the titles of the several publications by Abraham Fraunce, see Ritson's *Bibliographia Poetica*, p. 211. George Peele, in the Order of the Garter, 1593, calls Fraunce "a peerless sweet translator of our time." (Works, vol. ii. p. 221.)

¹⁵ The words in Italics are evidently the expression of Drummond's own sentiments. Gifford quotes them with this remark, "It is observable that every addition by Drummond is tinged with spleen: what a tissue of malevolence must the original record of these conversations have been!" (Vol. i. p. cxxiv.) Had Mr Gifford lived to see this "original record" as now published, he might probably have regretted the intemperate wrath he displayed against the Poet of Hawthornden, as there are so few instances of such "additions." Drummond's remark in this place must however be taken in a limited sense, as Jonson could not fail to understand both languages, which in his day were far more familiar to Englishmen than at present.

¹⁶ The fragment of Petronius Arbiter here referred to was translated by Jonson, and printed among his Underwoods. (Works, vol. ix. p. 147.) A few words here, not very legible, are omitted, and also one or two anecdotes, near the conclusion, marked with points, but which are unimportant, as having no personal reference to Jonson.

wher he heth ane Apologie¹⁷ of a play of his, St. Bartholomee's Faire:¹⁸ by Criticus is understood Done. Ther is ane Epigrame of Sir Edward Herbert's befor it: this he said he had done in my Lord Aubanie's house ten years since, anno 1604.

The most common place of his repetition was a Dialogue pastoral between a Shepherd and a Shepherdess about singing.¹⁹ Another, Parabostes Pariane with his letter; that Epigrame of Gout; my Lady Bedford's bucke; his verses of drinking, *Drinke to me bot with thyne eyes; Swell me a Bowle*, &c. His verses of a kisse,²⁰

*Bot kisse me once and faith I will begone;
And I will touch as harmelesse as the bee
That doeth but taste the flower and flee away.*

That is, but half a one, what sould be done but once, should be done long.

He read a satyre of a Lady come from the Bath; verses on the Pucelle of the Court, Mistriss Boulstred;²¹ whose Epitaph Done made a satyre, telling there was no abuses to write a Satyre of, and [in] which he repeateth all the abuses in England and the World. He insisted in that of Martiall's *Vitam quæ faciunt beatiorem*.

6. HIS CENSURE OF MY VERSES WAS :

That they were all good, especiallie my Epitaph on the Prince, save that they

¹⁷ This Translation of Horace's Art of Poetry, although one of Jonson's earliest works, was not printed till some years after his death. The Preface alluded to was probably destroyed, along with the copious Notes prepared to illustrate the translation, in the fire about the year 1623, which consumed so many of Jonson's papers. In the preface to his *Sejanus*, in 1605, he speaks of his Observations upon Horace his Art of Poetry, "which (says he), with the text translated, I intend shortly to publish."

¹⁸ The Comedy of Bartholomew Fair, although acted in 1614, and probably printed at the time, is not included in the folio Works 1616, a circumstance which his late Editor cannot account for. As we here learn it required an Apology, we may infer that it had given offence to the King, to whom we are told it had been dedicated, and therefore purposely omitted.

¹⁹ Probably "The Musical Strife, a pastorall Dialogue." (Works, vol. viii. p. 317.)

²⁰ Most of these pieces are well known. "*Swell me a bowle of lusty wine*," a little ode, inserted in the *Poetaster*, was parodied by Decker. "*Drink to me only with thine eyes*" has always been a popular drinking song. For the lines of a Kisse, see Works, vol. viii. p. 312.

²¹ An Epigram on the Court Pucelle will be found among his Works, vol. viii. p. 437. See afterwards, page 268, where he says it had been stolen out of his pocket, and brought him into trouble. There are two elegies "on Mistris Boulstred," printed in *Donne's Poems*, pp. 253 and 258, edit. 1669, 8vo.

smelled too much of the Schooles, and were not after the fancie of the tyme: for a child (says he) may writte after the fashion of the Greeks and Latine verses in running; yett that he wished, to please the King, that piece of Forth Feasting had been his owne.²²

7. HE esteemeth John Done the first poet in the world in some things: his verses of the lost Chaine he hath by heart, and that passage of the Calme, *That dust and feathers doe not stirr, all was so quiet.* Affirmeth Done to have written all his best pieces err he was 25 years old.

Sir Edward Wotton's verses of a happie lyfe²³ he hath by heart; and a piece of Chapman's translation of the 13 of the Iliads, which he thinketh well done.

That Done said to him he wrott that Epitaph on Prince Henry, *Look to me, Faith,*²⁴ to match Sir Ed: Herbert in obscurenesse.

He hath by heart some verses of Spenser's Calender, about wyne, between Coline and Pertye.

8. THE conceit of Done's transformation, or *Μετεμψυχωσις*,²⁵ was, that he sought

²² Drummond's Teares for the Death of Meliades appeared in 1613; and his Forth Feasting, written on occasion of the King's visit to Scotland, in 1617. The writer of an excellent article on Drummond's Poetry, in the Retrospective Review, in reference to the current but unfounded tradition of Jonson's object in visiting Scotland, quotes the above words, and says, "Truly if this be admiration enough for a pilgrimage, and by such a man as Jonson, there is much less enthusiasm wanting on such occasions than we have heretofore imagined." (Vol. ix. p. 355.)

²³ The poem here mentioned, is "The Character of a Happy Life," by Sir Henry Wotton, and is so beautiful that we may be excused quoting the first two and last verses.

How happy is he born and taught	Whose passions not his masters are,
That serveth not another's will?	Whose soul is still prepared for death;
Whose armour is his honest thought,	Untied unto the World by care
And simple truth his utmost skill?	Of publick fame, or private breath.

This Man is freed from servile bands,

Of hopes to rise, or fear to fall:

Lord of himself, though not of lands,

And having nothing, yet hath all.

²⁴ Donne's Elegy on the Prince was first printed in 1613.

²⁵ His "Metempsychosis, the Progress of the Soule," bears the date August 16, 1601, in the collection of his Poems, p. 286. The fragment extends to 52 stanzas of ten lines.—It may be added, that Donne appears to have still better claims than either Bishop Hall or Marston to be considered the first English Satirist. In Drummond's transcript, Donne's Fourth Satire is dated "Anno 1594," three years previous to the publication of Hall's.

the soule of that aple which Eva pulled, and thereafter made it the soule of a bitch, then of a shee wolf, and so of a woman: his general purpose was to have brought in all the bodies of the Hereticks from the soule of Cain, and at last left it in the bodie of Calvin. Of this he never wrotte but one sheet, and now, since he was made Doctor, repenteth highlie and seeketh to destroy all his poems.²⁶

9. THAT Petronius, Plinius Secundus, Tacitus, spoke best Latine; that Quintilianes 6. 7. 8. bookes were not only to be read, but altogether digested. Juvenal, Perse, Horace, Martiall, for delight; and so was Pindar. For health Hippocrates.

Of their Nation, Hooker's Ecclesiasticall historie (whose children are now beggars,²⁷) for church matters. Selden's Titles of Honour for Antiquities here; and ane book of the Gods of the Gentiles, whose names are in the Scripture, of Selden's.

Tacitus, he said, wrott the secrets of the Councill and Senate, as Suetonius did those of the Cabinet and Courte.

10. FOR a Heroick poeme he said ther was no such ground as King Arthur's fiction; and that S. P. Sidney had ane intention to have transform'd all his Arcadia to the stories of King Arthur.²⁸

²⁶ Donne's Poems were not collected and published till after his death in 1631. Izaak Walton says of him, that "the recreations of his youth were Poetry;" and "of those pieces which were facetiously composed and carelessly scattered," most of them were written before the twentieth year of his age. He adds, "It is a truth, that in his penitential years, viewing some of those pieces too loosely scattered in his youth, he wish't they had been abortive, or so short-liv'd that his own eyes had witnessed their funerals."

²⁷ See, however, the Appendix to Walton's Life of Hooker, edit. 1670, p. 113. He died Nov. 2, 1600, leaving four daughters, and a widow who married again with such indecent haste, that she had not time enough to repent it; "for which (says Walton), doubtless, she would have found cause if there had been but four months betwixt Mr Hooker's and her death."

²⁸ Milton also intended Arthur for his subject; and Dryden gave the plan of an Epic poem on Arthur, in the preface to his translation of Juvenal, which Blackmore laid hold of, with what success the neglect of posterity is no doubt a just criterion.

11. HIS ACQUAINTANCE AND BEHAVIOUR WITH POETS LIVING WITH HIM.

Daniel was at jealousies with him.²⁹

Drayton feared him, and he esteemed not of him.

That Francis Beaumont loved too much himself and his own verses.

That Sir John Roe loved him; and when they two were ushered by my Lord Suffolk from a Mask, Roe wrott a moral epistle to him, which began,³⁰ 'That next to playes, the Court and the State were the best.' 'God threatneth Kings, Kings Lords, and Lords do us.'

He beat Marston, and took his pistoll from him.

Sir W. Alexander was not half kinde unto him, and neglected him, because a friend to Drayton.

That Sir R. Aiton loved him dearly.

Ned Field³¹ was his schollar, and he had read to him the Satyres of Horace, and some Epigrammes of Martiall.

That Markam (who added his English Arcadia) was not of the number of the Faithfull, *i. e.* Poets, and but a base fellow.

That such were Day and Middleton.

That Chapman and Fletcher were loved of him.

Overbury was first his friend, then turn'd his mortall enimie.

12. PARTICULARS OF THE ACTIONS OF OTHER POETS; AND APOTHEGMES.

That the Irish having rob'd Spenser's goods and burnt his house and a litle child new born, he and his wyfe escaped;³² and after, he died for lake of

²⁹ Jonson says (in a letter to the Countess of Rutland) that Daniel "envied him, though he bore no ill will on his part." (Vol. v. p. 251.)

³⁰ The moral epistle here alluded to; and containing the words quoted, is dated January 6, 1603, and is printed as a poem of Donne. (Edit. 1669, p. 197.) Other instances of poems erroneously attributed to Donne might be pointed out. Thus, for instance, the one beginning *Deare Love, continue*, &c. (*Poems*, p. 59) is transcribed by Drummond, and signed "J. R." probably the initials of John Roe. See note 35 respecting him.

³¹ Nathan Field, an actor and dramatic poet of some celebrity, performed, as one of the Children of the Chapel, a principal part in Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*, in 1600. (See *Biogr. Dram.* and note in Weber's *Beaumont and Fletcher*, vol. i. p. xxvii.)

³² Edmund Spenser, the author of the *Fairy Queen*, accompanied Arthur Lord Grey to Ireland as his Secretary, August 12, 1580; and was appointed Clerk in Chancery March 22, 1581; but Lord Grey being recalled from his Irish government in 1582, Spenser returned with him to England. It has been nowhere stated that he was ever in Scotland, and I can

bread in King Street, and refused 20 pieces sent to him by my Lord of Essex, and said, He was sorrie he had no time to spend them. That in that paper S. W. Raughly had of the Allegories of his *Fayrie Queen*, by the Blating beast the Puritans were understood, by the false Duessa the Q. of Scots.

That Southwell was hanged;³³ yet so he had written that piece of his, the *Burning Babe*, he would have been content to destroy many of his.

only conjecture that the Poet may have been the person who is mentioned in the following post-script of a letter to Queen Elizabeth, from James VI. dated St Andrews, July 2, 1583 (in the King's own hand): "Madame i haue staid maister Spenser upon the letter quhilk is uritten with my auin hand, quhilk sall be readie uithin tua daies." (MS. Cotton. Calig. c. vii. f. 191.) Spenser, unfortunately, after his return to Ireland, had rendered himself obnoxious to the Irish by some proceedings in regard to the forfeited lands that had been assigned him. Various interesting particulars respecting the Poet and his Descendants are given by Mr Hardiman in his *Irish Minstrelsy*, 1831, vol. i. p. 319, &c. Spenser died broken-hearted, and Phineas Fletcher, in his *Purple Island*, thus alludes to Lord Essex's having paid him attention at the time of his death.

And had not that great Hart (whose honour'd head
Ah lies full low) pitied thy woful plight,
There hadst thou lien unwept, unburied,
Unblest, nor graced with any common rite.

³³ Southwell entered the order of the Jesuits, and having returned to England to convert his countrymen, was apprehended and executed at London in 1595. As the Reader may have some curiosity to see a poem so much admired by Jonson, and not easily to be met with, it is here inserted from the edition of Southwell's Works, London, 1636, 12mo, sign G. 6.

As I in hoarie Winters night Stood shivering in the snow, Surpriz'd I was with sudden heat, Which made my heart to glow; And lifting up a fearefull eye To view what fire was neere, A prettie Babe, all burning bright, Did in the aire appeare; Who, scorched with excessive heat, Such fouds of teares did shed, As though his fouds should quench his flames, Which with his teares were bred: Alas (quoth he) but newly borne, In fierie heats I frie, Yet none approach to warme their hearts, Or feele my fire, but I;	My faultlesse brest the furnace is, The fuell wounding thornes: Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke, The ashes shames and scornes; The fuell justice layeth on, And mercy blowes the coales, The metall in this furnace wrought Are Mens defiled soules: For which, as now on fire I am, To worke them to their good, So will I melt into a bath, To wash them in my blood. With this he vanisht out of sight, And swiftly shrunke away, And straight I called unto minde That it was Christmasse Day.
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Franc. Beaumont died ere he was 30 years of age.³⁴

Sir John Roe was ane infinit spender, and used to say, when he had no more to spende he could die. He died of the pest, and he [Jonson] furnished his charges 20 lb.; which was given him back.³⁵

That Drayton was chalenged for intitling one book *Mortimeriades*. That S. J. Davies played in ane Epigrame on Drayton's, who in a sonnet concluded his Mistress might bee the ninth Worthy, and said, he used a phrase like *Dametas* in *Arcadia*, who said for wit his Mistressse might be a gyant.³⁶

Dones grandfather on the mother's side was Heywood the Epigramatist. That Done himself, for not being understood, would perish.

That S. W. Roughly esteemed more of fame than conscience. The best wits of England were employed for making his historie. Ben himself had written a peece to him of the Punick warre, which he altered and set in his booke.

S. W.³⁷ heth written the lyfe of Queen Elizabeth, of which ther is [are] copies extant.

³⁴ Beaumont died in the beginning of March 1616, and was buried on the ninth of that month, in Westminster Cathedral. Jonson's lines *How I do love thee, Beaumont, and thy Muse*, evince his great regard for his young friend.

³⁵ Jonson, in more than one copy of verses, embalmed his memory (See Jonson's Works by Gifford, vol. viii. pp. 165, 168, 196), and in particular in the following beautiful lines:

In place of Scutcheons that should deck thy herse,
Take better ornaments, my tears and verse.
If any sword could save from Fates, ROE's could;
If any muse outlive their spight, his can;
If any friend's tears could restore, his would;
If any pious life ere lifted man
To heaven,—his hath: O happy state! wherein
We, sad for him, may glory and not sin.

Mr Gifford supposes Sir John Roe, for whom Jonson had a great regard and esteem, to have been a son of Sir Thomas Roe, an eminent merchant of London.

³⁶ Drayton's Sonnet is the XVIIIth of "Ideas." (Chalmers's *British Poets*, vol. vi. p. 402.) The following is the Epigram by Sir John Davies, *In Decium*.

Audacious painters have Nine Worthies made,
But Poet Decius more audacious farre,
Making his Mistressse march with men of warre,
With title of Tenth Worthie doth her lade.
Methinkes that Gul did use his termes as fitt,
Which termde his Love a Giant for her witte.

³⁷ By "S. W." is evidently meant Sir Walter Raleigh.

Sir P. Sidney had translated some of the Psalmes which went abroad under the name of the Countesse of Pembrock.³⁸

Marston wrott his Father-in-Lawes preaching, and his Father-in-Law his Commedies.³⁹

Sheakspear, in a play, brought in a number of men saying they had suffered shipwrack in Bohemia, wher y^r is no sea neer by some 100 miles.⁴⁰

Daniel wrott *Civill Warres*, and yett hath not one batle in all his book.⁴¹

The Countess of Rutland was nothing inferior to her Father Sir P. Sidney in poesie. Sir Th: Overburie was in love with her, and caused Ben to read his *Wyffe* to her, which he, with ane excellent grace, did, and praised the author. That the morne thereafter he discorded with Overburie, who would have him to intend a sute y^t was unlawful. The lines my Lady keep'd in remembrance, *He comes too near. who comes to be denied.*⁴² Beaumont wrot that Elegie on the death of the Countess of Rutland, and in effect her husband.⁴³

Owen is a pure pedantique schoolmaster, sweeping a living from the posteriors of litle children; and hath no thinge good in him, his Epigrames being bare narrations.⁴⁴

Chapman hath translated Musaeus, in his verses, like his Homer.⁴⁵

³⁸ The metrical version of the Psalms, begun by Sir Philip Sidney, and completed by his sister Lady Pembroke, was first published in 1823, but had probably been extensively circulated in manuscript.

³⁹ Little is known of Marston's personal history, and nothing of his father-in-law; excepting that Mr Gifford has shown; that the latter probably was William Wilkes, Chaplain to King James; and that Marston died June 25, 1634. (Vol. i. p. cxxiii. note.)

⁴⁰ See before, Note 11. In justice to the author, Mr Gifford's note on this passage should be here added: "This (he says) is the tritest of all our author's observations. No one ever read the play without noticing the 'absurdity,' as Dr Johnson calls it; yet for this simple *truism*, for this casual remark in the freedom of conversation, Jonson is held up to the indignation of the world, as if the blunder was invisible to all but himself, or, as if he had uttered the most deliberate and spiteful calumny!" (Vol. i. p. cxxii. note.)

⁴¹ The allusion is to Daniel's narrative poem of the Civil Wars.

⁴² "Another and a more celebrated Lady kept this line in remembrance. See Lady M. W. Montague's Poems, where this maxim is printed as her own." (MS. note by Charles K. Sharpe, Esq.)

⁴³ Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Philip Sidney, and widow of Roger, fifth Earl of Rutland, died in August 1612. (See the Elegy in Beaumont and Fletcher's works, vol. xiv. p. 441.)

⁴⁴ This is too harsh a sentence, as any one will perceive who looks into Owen's book.

⁴⁵ The poem of Hero and Leander, here alluded to, was begun by Marlowe and finished by Chapman, and printed at London, 1606, 4to.

Flesher and Beaumont, ten yeers since, hath written the Faithfull Shepherdesse, a Tragicomedie, well done.⁴⁶

Dyer died unmarried.⁴⁷

Sir P. Sidney was no pleasant man in countenance, his face being spoiled with pimples, and of high blood, and long: that my Lord Lisle, now Earle of Worster, his eldest son, resembleth him.⁴⁸

13. OF HIS OWNE LYFE, EDUCATION, BIRTH, ACTIONS.

His Grandfather came from Carlisle, and, he thought, from Anandale to it: he served King Henry 8, and was a gentleman. His Father losed all his estate under Queen Marie, having been cast in prisson and forfeitted; at last turned Minister: so he was a ministers son. He himself was posthumous born, a month after his father's decease;⁴⁹ brought up poorly, putt to school by a friend (his master Cambden);⁵⁰ after taken from it, and put to ane other craft (*I think was to be a wright or bricklayer*), which he could not endure; then went to the Low Countries, but returning soone he betook himself to his wonted studies. In his service in the Low Countries, he had, in the face of both the campos, killed aneemie and taken *opima spolia* from him;⁵¹ and

⁴⁶ The Faithful Shepherdesse, a pastoral drama of great beauty, by Fletcher, was brought out in 1610, but not printed for some yeers. The old 4to has no date. Of the plays published under their joint names, Beaumont had a concern only in a few; in the words of Sir Aston Cockayne, 1647,

— the main

Being sweet issues of sweet Fletcher's brain.

⁴⁷ Sir Edward Dyer, whose poetry, if we may judge from what remains of it, was strangely overrated by his contemporaries. (See note by Mr Dyce in his excellent edition of Greene's Works, vol. i. p. xxxiv.)

⁴⁸ As Jonson was only thirteen at the time of Sidney's death, in 1586, and then moved in a very different sphere of life, it is very unlikely that he could have known any thing of his personal appearance.

⁴⁹ His birth must be placed in 1573, and not 1574 as stated by Mr Gifford and other authorities. (See note 91.) His mother married her second husband in November 1575.

⁵⁰ On many occasions Jonson expressed his sincere regard towards his old Master; but it may be sufficient to notice that his first printed play, *Every Man in his Humour*, is dedicated "To the most learned and my honoured friend MASTER CAMDEN, Clarencieux."

⁵¹ Ben Jonson's Epigram addressed to true Soldiers touches on this incident of his life with some elation of heart, at killing one of the enemies in the Low Countries. (Works, viii. 219.)

since his comming to England, being appealed to the fields, he had killed his adversarie, which [who] had hurt him in the arme, and whose sword was 10 inches longer than his; for the which he was emprissoned and almost at the gallows. Then took he his religion, by trust, of a priest who visited him in prisson. Thereafter he was 12 yeeres a Papist.

He was Master of Arts in both the Universities, by their favour, not his studie.⁵²

He married a wyfe who was a shrew, yet honest: 5 yeeres he had not bedded with her, but remayned with my Lord Aulbanie.

In the tyme of his close imprisonment, under Queen Elizabeth, his judges could get nothing of him to all their demands but I and No. They placed two damn'd villains to catch advantage of him, with him, but he was advertised by his keeper: of the spies he hath ane epigrame.⁵³

When the King came in England at that tyme the pest was in London, he being in the country at Sir Robert Cotton's house with old Cambden, he saw in a vision his eldest sone, then a child and at London, appear unto him with the mark of a bloodie crosse on his forehead, as if it had been cutted with a suord, at which amazed he prayed unto God, and in the morning he came to Mr Cambden's chamber to tell him; who persuaded him it was but ane apprehension of his fantasie, at which he sould not be disjected; in the mean tyme comes there letters from his wife of the death of that boy, in the plague.⁵⁴ He appeared to him (he said) of a manlie shape, and of that grouth that he thinks he shall be at the resurrection.

He was dilated by Sir James Murray to the King, for writting something against the Scots in a play *Eastward Hoe*,⁵⁵ and voluntarily emprissoned with Chapman and Marston, who had written it amongst them. The report was that they should then [have] had their ears cut and noses. After their delivery

⁵² This is probably what Jonson refers to when he says, "to render myself grateful, and am studious to justify the bounty of your act," in his dedication of *Volpone* in 1607, "To the two famous Universities." There is no evidence that he had ever the benefit of an academical education.

⁵³ It begins, *Spies, you are lights in state, but of base stuff.* (Works, vol. viii. p. 182.)

⁵⁴ This plague broke out in 1603, and Jonson's child was then in his 7th year. (See Mr Gifford's note, Works, vol. viii. p. 175.)

⁵⁵ The objectionable passage was probably omitted in the printed copy of the play.

he banqueted all his friends; there was Camden, Selden, and others; at the midst of the feast his old Mother dranke to him, and shew him a paper which she had (if the sentence had taken execution) to have mixed in the prisson among his drinke, which was full of lustie strong poison, and that she was no churle, she told she minded first to have drunk of it her self.

He had many quarrells with Marston, beat him, and took his pistoll from him, wrote his Poetaster on him;⁵⁶ the beginning of them were, that Marston represented him in the stage, in his youth as given to venerie. He thought the use of a maide nothing in comparison to the wantonness of a wyfe, and would never have ane other mistress. He said two accidents strange befel him;⁵⁷ one, that a man made his own wyfe to court him, whom he enjoyed two yeares ere he knew of it, and one day finding them by chance, was passingly delighted with it; ane other, lay divers tymes with a woman, who shew him all that he wished, except the last act, which she would never agree unto.

S. W. Raulighe sent him Governour with his Son, anno 1613, to France.⁵⁸ This youth being knavishly inclined, among other pastimes, as the setting of the favoure of damesells on a cod piece, caused him to be drunken, and dead drunk, so that he knew not wher he was, thereafter laid him on a carr, which he made to be drawn by pioners through the streets, at every corner showing his governour strecthed out, and telling them, that was a more lively image of the Crucifix than any they had; at which sport young Raughlies mother delyghted much (saying his father young was so inclyned), though the Father abhorred it.

He can set horoscopes, but trusts not in them. He with the consent of a friend cousened a lady, with whom he had made ane apointment to meet ane old Astrologer in the suburbs, which she kept; and it was himself disguysed

⁵⁶ The Poetaster was brought out in 1601, and in it he ridicules Marston and Dekker under the respective names of Crispinus and Demetrius. (See before, note 12.)

⁵⁷ The relation of these "accidents" might have been well spared, but so much has been said in regard to this literary document that I could not think myself justified in withholding any passages in it that relate to Jonson's personal history.

⁵⁸ The story of Ben Jonson's visit to France as Governor of Sir Walter Raleigh's son is discredited by Mr Gifford, proceeding on the inaccuracy in the date, 1593, given by Aubrey, which is indeed two years before Sir Walter's son was born. The date 1613, when young Raleigh was in the 18th year, corresponds with the previous note of Jonson's conversation with Cardinal du Perron, while at Paris.

in a longe gowne and a whyte beard at the light of dimm burning candles, up in a little cabinet reached unto by a ladder.

Every first day of the new year he had 20lb. sent him from the Earl of Pembrok to buy bookes.

After he was reconciled with the Church, and left of to be a recusant, at his first communion, in token of true reconciliation, he drank out all the full cup of wyne. Being at the end of my Lord Salisburies table with Inigo Jones, and demanded by my Lord, Why he was not glad? My Lord, said he, you promised I should dine with you, bot I doe not, for he had none of his meate; he esteemed only that his meate which was of his own dish.

He hath consumed a whole night in lying looking to his great toe, about which he hath seen Tartars and Turks, Romans and Carthaginians, feight in his imagination.

Northampton was his mortall enemie for beating, on a St Georges day, one of his attenders: He was called before the Councill for his Sejanus,⁵⁹ and accused both of poperie and treason by him.

Several times he hath devoured his bookes, *i. e.* sold them all for necessity. He hath a minde to be a churchman, and so he might have favour to make one sermon to the King, he careth not what thereafter sould befall him: for he would not flatter though he saw Death.

At his hither comming, Sr Francis Bacon⁶⁰ said to him, He loved not to sie Poesy goe on other feet than poeticall dactylus and spondaeus.

14. HIS NARRATIONS OF GREAT MEN.

He never esteemed of a man for the name of a Lord.

Queen Elizabeth never saw her self after she became old in a true glass; they painted her, and sometymes would vermilion her nose. She had alwayes about Christmass evens set dice that threw sixes or five, and she knew not they

⁵⁹ Sejanus was first acted in 1603, but not published till 1605. Jonson says that it had outlived the malice of its enemies, when he republished it in his Works, 1616.

⁶⁰ Jonson, in his "Discoveries," has done himself honour in the affectionate manner in which he delineates the character of Lord Bacon. "My conceit of his person (he says) was never increased toward him by his place or honours: but I have and do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper to himself, in that he seemed to me ever, by his work, one of the greatest men, and most worthy of admiration, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that God would give him strength; for greatness he could not want." (Works, vol. ix. p. 185.) See also his lines "on Lord Bacon's Birthday." (Ibid. vol. viii. 440.)

were other, to make her win and esteame herself fortunate. That she had a membrana⁶¹ on her, which made her incapable of man, though for her delight she had tried many. At the coming over of Monsieur, ther was a French chirurgion who took in hand to cut it, yet fear stayed her, and his death. King Philip had intention by dispensation of the Pope to have married her.

Sir P. Sidney's Mother, Leicesters sister, after she had the litle pox,⁶² never shew herself in Court thereafter but masked.

The Earl of Leicester gave a botle of liquor to his Lady, which he willed her to use in any faintness; which she, after his returne from Court, not knowing it was poison, gave him, and so he died.⁶³

Salisbury never cared for any man longer nor he could make use of him. My Lord Lisles daughter, my Lady Wroth,⁶⁴ is unworthily married on a jealous husband.

⁶¹ "This impediment is mentioned in a letter from our Queen Marie, addressed to her sister Queen, printed in the Burghley Papers. I have read somewhere that the epistle was supposed to be a forgery, in order to irritate Queen Elizabeth against Queen Marie. It appeared to me long ago to be a trick of Queen Marie's, to enrage Elizabeth against Lady Shrewsbury. I think there is something about this in Lord Orford's Royal and Noble Authors." (MS. note by Charles K. Sharpe, Esq.) Appendix to Hume's History. See also Seward's Anecdotes.

⁶² Jonson has "an Epigram to the Small-pox," which may have allusion to the Lady above mentioned. (Works, vol. viii. p. 399.)

⁶³ Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, died September 4, 1588. It had been suspected he died of poison, and that his Lady served him as he is said to have served others; but the above statement goes far to prove that it was unintentional. In Drummond's MSS. is the following Epitaph, "Of the Earle of Leister," probably communicated by Ben Jonson:

Heere lies a valiant warrior,
who never drew a sword;
Here lies a noble courtier,
who never kept his word;
Here lies the Earle of Leister,
who govern'd the Estates;
Whom the Earth could never living love,
and the just Heaven now hates.

⁶⁴ Jonson dedicated his Alchemist, in 1612, to Lady Mary Wroth, who was daughter to Robert Earl of Leicester, and consequently niece to Sir Philip Sidney. She wrote a pastoral romance called *Urania*, in imitation of her uncle's *Arcadia*, printed in 1621, which contains some very pretty verses. Her husband was Sir Robert Wroth of Durance, in the county of Middlesex. See notes in Gifford's Jonson, vol. iv. p. 5, and vol. viii. p. 391.

Ben one day being at table with my Lady Rutland, her Husband coming in, accused her that shee kept table to poets, of which she wrott a letter to him, which he answered. My Lord intercepted the letter, but never chaledged him.

My Lord Chancelor of England wringeth his speeches from the strings of his band, and other Councillours from the pyking of their teeth.

Pembrok and his Lady discoursing, the Earl said, The woemen were mens shadowes, and she maintained them. Both appealing to Johnson, he affirmed it true, for which my Lady gave a pennance to prove it in verse; hence his epigrame.⁶⁵

Essex wrote that Epistle or preface befor the translation of the last part of Tacitus,⁶⁶ which is A. B. The last book the gentleman durst not translate for the evill it containes of the Jewes.

The King said Sir P. Sidney was no poet.⁶⁷ Neither did he see ever any verses in England to the scullors: It were good that the half of the preachers of England were plain ignorants, for that either in their sermons they flatter, or strive to shew their own eloquence.

15. HIS OPINIONE OF VERSES. That he wrott all his first in prose, for so his Master, Cambden, had learned him.

That verses stood by sense without either colours or accent, *which yett other tymes he denied.*

A great many epigrams were ill, because they expressed in the end what

⁶⁵ See this Epigram, or "Song" as it is called, in his Works, vol. viii. p. 265.

⁶⁶ There are two old translations of parts of Tacitus into English, one by Richard Greenway, dedicated to the Earl of Essex; the other, by Sir Henry Savile, dedicated to Queen Elizabeth, contains the address "A. B. To the Reader," to which Jonson alludes.

⁶⁷ King James, in his youth, wrote a Sonnet on Sir Philip Sidney's death, in which he calls upon Mars, Minerva, Apollo, and 'the Sisters who dwell on Parnassus,' to

Lament for him who duellie served you all.

This Sonnet was not only translated into Latin by the King himself, but was honoured in a similar manner by several of his courtiers, namely, by Patrick afterwards Lord Gray, Sir John Maitland afterwards Lord Thirlestane, and Alexander Seton afterwards Earl of Dunfermline, besides two different versions "per Coronellum Ja. Halkerston," the person mentioned at pages 102 and 225. The Sonnet and these different versions are inserted in the volume entitled "Academia Cantabrigiensis Lachrymæ tumulo Nobilissimi Equitis, Phillipi Sidneij sacratæ, per Alex. Nevillum." Londini, 1587, 4to.

sould have been understood by what was said. That of S. Joh. Davies, 'Some loved running verses,' *plus mihi complacet*.

He imitated the description of a night from Bonifonius his *Vigilium Veneris*.

He scorned such verses as could be transposed.

Wher is the man that never yett did hear
Of faire Penelope, Ulisses Queene?
Of faire Penelope, Ulisses Queene,
Wher is the man that never yett did hear?

16. OF HIS WORKES: That the half of his Comedies were not in print.

He hath a pastorall intitled The May Lord.⁶⁸ His own name is Alkin, Ethra the Countesse of Bedford's, Mogibell Overberry, the old Countesse of Suffolk and inchanteress; other names are given to Somerset's Lady, Pembroke, the Countesse of Rutland, Lady Wroth. In his first storie, Alkin commeth in mending his broken pipe. *Contrary to all other pastoralls, he bringeth the clownes making mirth and foolish sports.*

He hath intention to writt a fisher or pastorall play, and sett the stage of it in the Lommond lake.⁶⁹

That Epithalamium that wants a name in his printed Workes was made at the Earl of Essex' mariage.⁷⁰

He is to writt his foot pilgrimage hither, and to call it a Discoverie.

In a poem he calleth Edinborough, the part of Scotland, '*Britaines other eye*.'

A play of his, upon which he was accused, The Divell is an Ass,⁷¹ accord-

⁶⁸ This pastoral, *The May Lord*, is supposed to have perished in the fire which accidentally consumed Jonson's papers. Mr Gifford objects in strong terms to the remark by Drummond at the end of the paragraph "Contrary to all other pastorals," &c. (Vol. vi. p. 250.)

⁶⁹ Jonson appears to have greatly admired the beautiful scenery of Lochlomond, and in his letters to Drummond reminds him of his promise to send him "some things concerning the Loch of Lomond;" and Drummond, in a letter dated July 1, 1619, says, in his last he had sent a description of Loch Lomond, with a map of Inch-merinloch. (Works, p. 157.)

⁷⁰ This appears from the title to the original 4to edition, 1606, the date of the Nuptials. The Earl was divorced from the Countess in 1613, who then espoused Carr, Earl of Somerset, the favourite of King James, a circumstance sufficient to account for his omitting the names of the parties in his Works, 1616. See vol. vii. p. 47.

⁷¹ The comedy of 'The Devil is an Ass,' was acted in 1616, but not printed for many years

ing to *Comedia Vetus*, in England the Divell was brought in either with one Vice or other: the play done the Divel caried away the Vice, he brings in the Divel so overcome with the wickedness of this age that thought himself ane Ass. Παρεργους is discoursed of the Duke of Drounland: the King desired him to conceal.

He hath commented and translated Horace' Art of Poesie: it is in dialogue wayes; by Criticus he understandeth Dr Done.⁷² The old book that goes about, The Art of English Poesie, was done yeers since, and kept long in wrytt as a secret.

He had ane intention to have made a play like Plautus' Amphitrio, but left it of, for that he could never find two so like others that he could persuade the spectators they were one.⁷³

17. OF HIS JEASTS AND APOTHEGMES.⁷⁴

At what tyme Henry the 4th turn'd Catholick Pasquill had in his hand a book, and was asked by Morphorius What it was? he told him, It was Gramer. Why doe ye studie Gramer, being so old? asked Morphorius. Because, answered he, I have found a positive that hath no superlative, and a superlative that wants a positive. The King of Spain is Rex Catholicus, and is not Catholicissimus; and the French King Christianissimus, yett is not Christianus.

When they drank on him he cited that of Plinie that they had call'd him *Ad prandium, non ad poenam et notam*. And said of that Panegyriste who wrott panegyriques in acrostics, windowes crosses, that he was *Homo miserri-mæ patientiæ*.

He scorned Anagrams; and had ever in his mouth

*Turpe est difficiles amare nugas,
Et stultus labor est ineptiarum.*

afterwards, and during that interval may have undergone alterations by the Author in consequence of the accusation referred to above. The 'Vice' was the buffoon in the old Mysteries and Moralities of the English stage.

⁷² See before, Note 17.

⁷³ If the spectators were so persuaded, they could not possibly relish the play.

⁷⁴ Of these 'Jests and Apotegmes' several are found repeated by Drummond in his "Democritie; a Labyrinth of Delight, or worke preparative for the apologie of Democritus:" containing anecdotes, pasquils, anagrams, &c. which is preserved among the Hawthornden Manuscripts in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. See page 78.

A Cook who was of ane evill lyfe, when a minister told him He would to hell; askt What torment was there? Being answered Fyre. Fire (said he), that is my play-fellow.

A Lord playing at Tennis, and having asked those in the gallerie Whither a strock was Chase or Losse? A Brother of my Lord Northumberland's answered it was Loss. The Lord demanded If he did say it? I say it, said he, what are yow? I have played your worth! said the Lord. Ye know not the worth of a gentleman! replied the other. And it proved so, for ere he died he was greater than the other. Ane other English Lord lossed all his game, if he had seen a face that liked him not he stroke his balls at that gallerie.

Ane Englishman who had maintained Democritus' opinion of atomes, being old wrott a book to his son (who was not then six years of age), in which he left him arguments to maintain and answer, objections for all that was in his book; only, if they objected obscuritie against his book, he bid him answer that his Father above all names in the world hated most the name of Lucifer, and all open writters were *Luciferi*.

Butlar excommunicat from his table all reporters of long poems, wilfull disputers, tedious discoursers: the best banquets were those wher they mistered no musitians to chase tyme.

The greatest sport he saw in France was the picture of our Saviour with the Apostles eating the Pascall lamb, that was all larded.

At a supper wher a gentlewoman had given him unsavoury wild-foul, and thereafter, to wash, sweet water; he commended her that shee gave him sweet water, because her flesh stinked.

He said to Prince Charles of Inigo Jones, that when he wanted words to express the greatest villaine in the world, he would call him Ane Inigo.⁷⁵

Jones having accused him for naming him behind his back, A foole, he denied it; but, says he, I said he was ane arrant knave, and I avouch it.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ "Jonson said to Prince Charles, That when he wanted words to sett forth a knave he would name him an Inigo." Hawth. MSS. See page 79.

⁷⁶ These notes bear ample testimony to the fact of Jonson's having quarrelled with Inigo Jones, although they may have been reconciled previous to their fresh animosity, when Jones, with a spirit unworthy of a man of such genius, embittered the declining years of the Poet, then suffering under the two-fold pressure of disease and poverty. In Drummond's MSS. is the following epigram 'Of Inigo Jones,' by Sir William Alexander:

This man so conversantlye acts his part
That it turnes naturall to him what late was art.

One who fired a Tobacco pipe with a Ballet the next day having a sore-head, swoare he had a great singing in his head, and he thought it was the Ballet. A poet should detest a Ballet maker.

He saw a picture painted by a bad painter, of Easter, Haman and Assuerus. Haman courting Esther, in a bed after the fashion of ours, was only seen by one leg. Assuerus back was turned, with this verse over him, And wilt thou, Haman, be so malicious as to lye with myne own wyfe in myne house? He himselfe being once so taken, the Goodman said, I would not believe yee would abuse my house so.

In a profound contemplation a student of Oxford ran over a man in the fields, and walked 12 miles ere he knew what he was doing.

One who wore side hair being asked of ane other who was bald, why he suffered his haire to grow so long, answered, It was to sie if his haire would grow to seed, that he might sow of it on bald pates.⁷⁷

A painter who could paint nothing but a rose, when ane Innkeeper had advised him about ane ensing, said, That a horse was a good one, so was a hare, but a rose was above them all.

A little man drinking Prince Henrie's health between two tall fellowes, said, He made up the H.

Sir Henry Wotton,⁷⁸ befor his Majesties going to England, being disguised at Lieth on Sondag when all the rest were at church, being interrupted of his occupation by ane other wenche who came in at the door, cried out, and betrayed himself.

A Justice of Peace would have commanded a Captaine to sit first at a table, because, sayes he, I am a Justice of Peace; the other drawing his sword commanded him, for sayeth he, I am a Justice of War.

What is that, the more yow out of it, groweth still the longer?—A Ditch. He used to say that they who delight to fill men extraordinarie full in their own houses loved to have their meate againe.

⁷⁷ This jest of beards running to seed 'to sow bald pates withall,' is introduced by Jonson in *The Staple of News*, act iii. scene 2.

⁷⁸ Isaac Walton relates of Sir Henry Wotton, that about a year before Queen Elizabeth's death, Sir Henry came to Scotland, taking the name and language of an Italian, and remained there three months under the assumed name of Octavio Baldi, only known to James VI.; having been sent by Ferdinand Grand Duke of Florence, "who had intercepted certain letters that discovered a design to take away the life of the then King of Scots."

A certain puritain Minister would not give the Communion save unto 13 at once. (Imitating as he thought our Master.) Now, when they were sett, and one bethinking himself that some of them must represent Judas, that it sould not be he returned, and so did all the rest, understanding his thought.

A Gentlewoman fell in such a phantasie or phrensie with one Mr Dod a puritain preacher, that she requeested her Husband that for the procreation of ane Angel or Saint he might lye with her; which having obtained, it was but ane ordinarie birth.

Scaliger writtes ane epistle to Casaubone, wher he scorns the English speaking of Latine, for he thought he had spoken English to him.

A Gentleman reading a poem that began with
Wher is the man that never yet did hear
Of fair Penelope, Ulysses Queene?

calling his Cook, asked If he had ever heard of her? Who answering, No, demonstrate to him,

Lo ther the man that never yet did hear
Of fair Penelope, Ulysses Queene!

A Judge comming along a hall, and being stopped by a throng, cried *Domnum cognoscite vestrum*. One of them ther said, They would, if he durst say the beginning of that verse (for he had a fair wyfe): *Actæon ego sum*, cryed he, and went on.

A packet of letters which had fallen over board was devored of a fish that was tane at Flushing, and the letters were safely delivered to him to whom they were written at London.

He scorned that simplicitie of Cardan about the peeble stone of Dover, which he thought had that vertue, kepted betweene one's teeth, as to save him from being sick.

A scholar expert in Latine and Greke, but nothing in the English, said of hott broath, that he would make the danger of it: for it could not be ill English that was good Latine, *facere periculum*.

A translatur of the Emperours Iyves, translated Antoninus Pius, Antonie Pye.

The word Harlott was taken from Arlotte,⁷⁹ who was the mother of William the Conquerour; a Rogue from the Latine, *Erro*, by putting a G to it.

Sr Geslaine Piercy asked the Maior of Plimmouth, Whether it was his own

⁷⁹ See note by Gifford, to a passage in Jonson's *Volpone*, vol. iii. p. 311.

beard or the Town's beard that he came to welcome my Lord with? for he thought it was so long that he thought every one of the Town had eked some part to it.

That he stroke at Sr Hierosme Bowes breast, and asked him If he was within.

An epitaphe was made upon one who had a long beard, "*Here lyes a man at a beards end,*" &c.⁸⁰

He said to the King, his Master, M. G. Buchanan, had corrupted his eare when young, and learned him to sing verses when he sould have read them.

Sr Francis Walsingham said of our King, when he was Ambassadour in Scotland, *Hic nunquam regnabit supernis*.

Of all his Playes he never gained two hundreth pounds.

He had oft this verse, though he sorned it:

So long as we may, let us enjoy this breath,
For nought doth kill a man so soon as Death.

Heywood the Epigramatist⁸¹ being apparelled in velvet by Queen Mary, with his cap on in the presence, in spight of all the Gentlemen, till the Queen herself asked him what he meant? and then he asked her, If he was Heywood? for she had made him so brave that he almost had misknownen himself.

His Impressa was a compass with one foot in center, the other broken, the word *Deest quod duceret orbem*.

Essex, after his brother's death, Mr D'Evreux, in France, at tilt had a black shield void, the word *Par nulla figura dolori*. Ane other tyme, when the Queen was offended at him, a diamond with its own ashes, with which it is cutt, about it, *Dum formas minuis*.

He gave the Prince, *Fax gloria mentis honestæ*.⁸²

He said to me, that I was too good and simple, and that oft a man's modestie made a fool of his witt.

His armes were three spindles or *rhombi*; his own word about them, *Percuncator* or *Perscrutator*.

⁸⁰ See this Epitaph, printed at page 78.

⁸¹ Old John Heywood the Epigrammatist was among the earliest of the English dramatic writers, and his works possess a good deal of wit and coarse humour. Jonson introduces his name in his *Tale of a Tub*.

⁸² This is the motto of the badge which our Nova Scotia Baronets now bear, but it runs,—*Fax mentis honestæ gloria*.

His epitaph, by a companion written, is,

Here lyes Benjamin Johnson dead,
And hath no more wit than a goose in his head;
Yet as he was wont, so doth he still,
Live by his wit, and evermore will.⁶³

Ane other.

Here lyes honest Ben,
That had not a beard on his chen.

18. MISCELLANIES.

John Stow had monstrous observations in his Chronicle, and was of his craft a tailour. He and I walking alone, he asked two criples, what they would have to take him to their order.

In his Sejanus he hath translated a whole oration of Tacitus: the first four bookes of Tacitus ignorantly done in Englishe.

J. Selden liveth on his owne, is the Law book of the Judges of England, the bravest man in all languages; his booke Titles of Honour written to his chamber-fellow Heyward.

Tailor was sent along here to scorn him.⁶⁴

⁶³ In the Antiquarian Society MSS. these lines are also found, with some verbal alteration, entitled "B. Johnson his Epitaph, told to mee by himselfe: not made by him." See page 78.

⁶⁴ In the introductory note it has been remarked that Taylor vindicates himself from such an imputation. His own words are so striking that the passage may be quoted at full length, from the dedication to "The Pennyles Pilgrimage, or the Moneylesse Perambulation of John Taylor, alias the King's Majesties Water-Poet."—"To all my loving Adventurers, by what name or title soever, my generall salutation," he says: "READER, these Travailes of mine into Scotland were not undertaken, neither in imitation or emulation of any man, but only devised by myself, on purpose to make triall of my friends, both in this Kingdome of England, and that of Scotland; and because I would be an eye-witnes of divers things which I had heard of that Countrey; and whereas many shallow-brain'd critickes doe lay an aspersion on me, that I was set on by others, or that I did undergoe this project either in malice, or mock-age of Master Benjamin Jonson, I vow by the faith of a Christian that their imaginations are all wide; for he is a Gentleman to whom I am so much obliged for many undeserved courtesies that I have received from him, and from others by his favour, that I durst never to be so impudent or ungratefull, as either to suffer any mans persuasions, or mine own instigation, to incite me to make so bad a requittall, for so much goodnesse formerly received." (Works, London, 1630, folio, p. 121.) An interesting account of this very singular character is given by Mr Southey in his Lives of Uneducated Poets. London, 1831, 8vo.

Cambden wrot that book Remaines of Bretayne.⁶⁵

Joseph Hall the harbenger to Done's Anniversarie.

The epigrame of Martial, *Vir verpium* he vantes to expone.

Lucan, Sidney, Guarini, make every man speak as well as themselves, forgetting decorum; for Dametas sometymes speaks grave sentences. Lucan taken in parts excellent, altogedder naught.

He dissuaded me from Poetrie, for that she beggered him, when he might have been a rich lawer, physitian, or marchant.⁶⁶

Questioned about English, them, they, those. *They* is still the nominative, *those* accusative, *them* neuter; collective, not them man, *them* trees, but them by itself referred to many. Which, Who, be relatives, not That. Flouds, hilles, he would have masculines.

He was better versed, and knew more in Greek and Latin, than all the Poets in England, and quintessance their braines.

He made much of that Epistle of Plinius, wher *Ad prandium non ad notam* is; and that other of Marcellinus, who Plinie made to be removed from the table; and of the grosse turbat.

One wrote one epigrame to his father, and vanted that he had slain ten, the quantity of *decem* being false. An other answered the epigrame, telling that *decem* was false. S. J. Davies Epigrame of . . . compared to a coule.

Of all stiles he loved most to be named Honest, and hath of that ane hundred letters so naming him.

He had this oft,—

Thy flattering picture, Phrenee, is lyke thee
Only in this, that ye both painted be.⁶⁷

In his merry humor he was wont to name himself the Poet.

He went from Lieth homeward the 25 of January 1619,⁶⁸ in a pair of shoes which he told lasted him since he came from Darnton, which he minded to

⁶⁵ Camden's 'Remains' were published originally without the author's name.

⁶⁶ At a later period, in his "Discoveries," he says, "Poetry, in this latter age, hath proved but a mean mistress to such as have wholly addicted themselves to her, or given their names up to her family. They who have but saluted her on the by, and now and then tendered their visits, she hath done much for, and advanced in the way of their own professions (both the law and the gospel), beyond all they could have hoped or done for themselves without her favour." (Works, vol. ix. p. 175.)

⁶⁷ This Epigram is printed in Donne's Poems, p. 64, edit. 1669, 8vo.

⁶⁸ In Drummond's Works is a short letter to Jonson, dated January 17, 1619, mentioning

take back that farr againe: they were appearing like Coriats. The first two dayes he was all excoriate.

If he died by the way, he promised to send me his papers of this Country, hewen as they were.—I have to send him descriptions of Edinbrough, Borrowlands, of the Lowmond.

That piece of the Pucelle of the Court was stolen out of his pocket by a gentleman who drank him drousie, and given Mistress Boulstraid, which brought him great displeasure.⁸⁹

19. HE sent to me this Madrigal:

[TO THE HONOURING RESPECT,

BORN

TO THE FRIENDSHIP CONTRACTED WITH

THE RIGHT VIRTUOUS AND LEARNED

MR WILLIAM DRUMMOND,

AND THE PERPETUATING THE SAME BY ALL OFFICES OF LOVE

HEREAFTER,

I BENJAMIN JOHNSON,

WHOM HE HATH HONOURED WITH THE LEAVE TO BE CALLED HIS,

HAVE WITH MINE OWN HAND, TO SATISFY HIS REQUEST,

WRITTEN THIS IMPERFECT SONG.]

ON A LOVERS DUST, MADE SAND FOR ANE HOURE GLASSE.⁹⁰

Doe but consider this smal dust here running in the glasse

by atomes moved,

Could thou believe that this the bodie ever was

of one that loved?

And, in his Mistresse flaming playing like the flye,

turned to cinders by her eye?

Yes, and in death, as lyfe unblest

to have it exprest

Even ashes of Lovers find no rest.

his having heard from Court, that Jonson's "absence was regretted: such applause (he adds) hath true worth," &c. p. 234.

⁸⁹ See before, Note 21.

⁹⁰ This madrigal, and the lines that follow it, dated January 19, 1619, in Drummond's Works, p. 155, are introduced with the dedication which is inserted above within brackets.

And that which is (as he said) a Picture of himself.

I DOUBT that Love is rather deafe than blinde,

for else it could not bee

that shee

whom I adore so muche, should so slight mee,

And cast my sute behinde.

I'm sure my language to her is as sweet,

And all my closes meet

In numbers of as subtile feete

as makes the youngest hee

that sits in shadow of Apollos tree.

O, but my conscions feares

that flye my thoughts betweene,

Prompt mee, that she hath seene

my hundred of gray haire,

told six and forty yeeres.⁹¹

Read so much waste as she cannot embrace

my mountaine belly and my rockye face,

And all these through her eies have stop'd her cares.

January 19, 1619.

He [Jonson] is a great lover and praiser of himself; a contemner and scorner of others; given rather to losse a friend than a jest; jealous of every word and action of those about him, especially after drink, which is one of the elements in which he liveth; a dissembler of ill parts which reigne in him, a bragger of some good that he wanteth, thinketh nothing well bot what either he himself or some of his friends and countrymen hath said or done; he is passionately kynde and angry; careless either to gain or keep; vindicative, but, if he be well answered, at himself.

For any religion, as being versed in both.⁹² Interpreteth best sayings

⁹¹ As this was undoubtedly written in 1619, and not in 1619–20, as Mr Gifford states, (vol. i. p. iii.), it would place Jonson's birth in the year 1573, and not in the subsequent year, the date usually assigned.

⁹² After these words the following interpolations first appeared in Cibber's Lives of the English Poets: "He was for any religion, being versed in all; his inventions were smooth and easy, but above all he excelled in translation. In short, he was in his personal character the very reverse of Shakespeare, as surly, ill-natured, proud, and disagreeable, as Shakespeare,

*and deeds often to the worst. Oppressed with fantasie, which hath ever mastered his reason, a generall disease in many poets. His inventions are smooth and easie; but above all he excelleth in a translation.*⁹³

When his play of a Silent Woman was first acted, ther was found verses after on the stage against him, concluding that that play was well named the Silent Woman, ther was never one man to say Plaudite to it.

with ten times his merit, was gentle, good-natured, easy, and amiable." (Vol. i. p. 241.) For the words here printed in Italics, Drummond's MSS. furnish no kind of authority. Neither does Sibbald's transcript contain "The Character of several Authors, given by Mr Drummond" himself, which is inserted in his Works, p. 226.

The summing up of Jonson's character remains indeed as unqualified as ever, and it is by no means a flattering picture. The only question however is, whether Drummond was a competent and an unprejudiced observer?—and whether the impression left on his mind, after several days social intercourse, be a correct delineation of Jonson's personal character and disposition?—points which need not be here discussed. Mr Gifford admits, "that forbearance was at no time our Poet's (Jonson's) virtue," while Drummond's testimony was not required in order to satisfy us of Jonson's overweening vanity, of his occasional arrogance, and his despite and jealousy of some of his contemporaries; but, on the other hand, he possessed many redeeming qualities, and a warm-hearted humanity, which had been sacrificed to an imaginary envy of Shakspeare. His character cannot be better drawn than in the words of Mr Campbell, with part of which we may conclude.

"It is true that he [Jonson] had lofty notions of himself, was proud even to arrogance in his defiance of censure, and in the warmth of his own praises of himself was scarcely surpassed by his most zealous admirers; but many fine traits of honour and affection are likewise observable in the portrait of his character, and the charges of malice and jealousy that have been heaped on his name for an hundred years turn out to be without foundation. In the quarrel with Marston and Dekker his culpability is by no means evident. He did not receive benefits from Shakspeare, and did not sneer at him in the passages that have been taken to prove his ingratitude; and instead of envying that great poet, he gave him his noblest praise; nor did he trample on his contemporaries, but liberally commended them." (Specimens of the British Poets, vol. iii. p. 142.)

⁹³ Jonson himself and his friends maintained that his translations were the best parts of his works; a conclusion in which Gifford and other modern critics are by no means disposed to acquiesce. See Works, vol. ii. p. 474, note.