

Mr. Boardman also sent a communication in reference to the house in Richmond Row, lately called "The Loggerheads," noticed in Mr. Stonehouse's paper on Everton. It belonged to the Nicholson family, and was sold about twenty-five years ago. In a Liverpool paper of 1766, it is advertised as "half a mile distant from Liverpool." It is rendered remarkable by the fact that Mrs. Hemans in her youth, Ugo Foscolo, and Dr. Clayton of the Octagon Chapel, were guests of its owner, Matthew Nicholson, Esq. This letter was accompanied by a drawing of the house as it appeared in 1793.

Mr. Brooke drew attention to the fact, as shewn by Blackstone, that the privileges secured by Magna Charta were not extended to vassals, but merely to those embraced by the word "liber."—He also drew attention to a passage in it regulating commercial matters.

Dr. Thom communicated the words of Erasmus, about the interpretation of which there were various opinions, as expressed on Mr. Rushton's paper read at the last meeting, and subsequently in Mr. Robson's letter.

PAPER.

NOTICE OF THE PORTION OF THE MS., HARL. MSS., 1927, 10^b—
1574—1578 FORMERLY IN THE POSSESSION OF THOMAS CHALONER,
CITIZEN OF CHESTER.

By Thomas Heywood, Esq., F.S.A.

The pursuits and habits of the citizens of Chester during the latter part of the sixteenth century, presented a remarkable contrast to those of the inhabitants of the adjacent districts. Aix as described by Walter Scott, or Nuremberg as celebrated by Hagen and Longfellow, were not more addicted to poetry and song than Chester, and the Burgundians, and the German "Reiters," were about as uncongenial neighbours to René and Hans Sachs, as the turbulent inhabitants of Lancashire and Cheshire to the refined dwellers on the banks of the Dee.

There were many circumstances which tended to make Chester the resort of poets and musicians. Here, the minstrels came to receive from the Duttons those licenses which still conferred upon them a certain legality and dignity, notwithstanding the severity of acts of parliament, and the failing respect of the multitude. The Chester miracle plays, the subject of somewhat conflicting notices by Lysons, Ormerod, Markland, Collier, and Wright, required not only a number of separate companies of actors drawn from the Trades guilds, in order to insure a simultaneous performance, but

also a considerable auxiliary force of minstrels and singers. The songs introduced were of the most opposite character. Thus the gossips of Noah's wife indulged in the boisterous humor of a tavern, whilst the angels at the Nativity probably borrowed their melody from the cathedral choir. That choir, at the close of the century of which we treat, directed by Pilkington, had acquired great celebrity. Painting too, in various modes, lent its aid to the miracle plays. The necessity for suitably receiving the great officers who were frequently staying at Chester, on their passage to and from Ireland, as well as of doing honor to the Chamberlains, the Earls of Derby and Leicester, accustomed the citizens to speeches, laudatory poems, triumphs, masques, pageants, feats of activity, processions, &c. In some commendatory verses prefixed to one of Pilkington's musical publications, 1624, the high poetical pretensions of Chester, and the conviction of being able to make them good, are thus set forth—

Arts praise, and skill's high pitch, are not so tyed
 To bankes of Po, or silver Thames, (we see,)
 But Jove's faire bird may haunt fine streams beside
 And chaunt sweet layes on brinkes of Antique Dee,
 Old Chester is not so with Eld ore laine,
 That when contention is for praise, she then
 Should not her old borne title still maintaine,
 And put in for her claime to chiefe of men.

Brit: Bibl: 2, 160.

We should nevertheless do this city an injustice, if we believed that it was exclusively a receptacle for Troubadours and Jongleurs. The incessant passing of the military connected with the Irish service, of settlers, (undertakers as they were called,) on confiscated estates, and of soldiers oscillating between the low countries and Ireland; in short, the constant presence of fierce, reckless adventurers, sufficiently kept alive a warlike spirit. On all fitting occasions the citizens of Chester manifested courage and endurance, and especially during the civil wars in the time of Charles the First

Thus, however partaking of enjoyments which had much of an intellectual character, Chester was surrounded by districts then slowly exchanging the excitements incident to the feudal system, for the greater disquiet of theological animosities; they had also become the refuge of the wild and lawless.

I am he
 Have measured all the Shires of England over,
 Wales and her mountains, seen those wilder nations
 of people, in the Peak, and Lancashire,
 Their Pipers, Fiddlers, Rushers, puppet masters,
 Jugglers and Gypsies, all the sort of Canters,
 and Colonies of Beggars, Tumblers, Ape carriers,
 For to these Savages I was addicted.

(The New Inn, Ben Jonson.—Act 5, s 1.)

A manuscript book existing in the British Museum, (Harl. MSS. 1927, fo: 10^b) affords a considerable insight into the social economy of the city of Chester, at the period to which we are alluding. This work is written in various handwritings, on white paper, and is of the octavo size. It contains 120 folios, and belonged to Thomas Chaloner, and the eldest Randle Holmes. It is to the first fifty-three folios, the portion of the book occupied as an album by the productions of Chaloner, and his friends, that we would now direct attention. These are written between 1574 and 1578, the rest of the book is in Holmes' autograph, on paper of a red tint, the latest date being 1638.

Thomas Chaloner may have descended from the same Welsh family with his great namesake, although we have seen no evidence of such an alliance. The name existed in the counties of North Wales; and Chester was the resort of adventurers from the principality.

Ormerod, (Cheshire, vol. 1, p. xviii.) states on the authority of Dr. Gower, that "Thomas, Jacob, and James Chaloner, were father, son, and grandson, and carried on the business of herald painters, and professed compilers of genealogies at Chester, as conducted by Randle Holmes. Many of their pedigrees are extant among the Harl. MSS., and one entire volume of them was in the hands of the late Dean of Chester." In the Harl: MS., 1970, Thomas Chaloner is designated as "King of armes for Ireland," and on the monument of his widow's husband (Ormerod, 1, 266) he is called "Ulster King at Arms." In examining, however, the epitaph in St. Michael's church, Chester, (Ormerod, 1, 271) we discover that he finally attained more important rank. *Hic jacet corpus Thomæ Chaloner nuper de hac urbe civis quem pater patratus a Trenta in boream sibi ad diem obitus 14^o Maii anno 1598 surrogarat quo magno suo desiderio expiravit.* Here lies the body of Thomas Chaloner, lately of this city, a Citizen whom Garter King at Arms appointed herald north of the

Trent, on the day of his (Chaloner's) death, the 14th of May, 1598, when to the great grief of Garter, he expired. Chaloner married Elizabeth Alcock of Chester, who becoming afterwards the wife of the first Randle Holmes, probably conveyed to him her deceased husband's collections of poetry. This lady died 1635, and Holmes in 1655, aged 84.

These Chester verses betray in their construction the age to which they belong. They have much of the smoothness which Surrey and Wyatt transferred from Italian to English poetry, qualified by a large admixture of Saxon metres, and by that use of alliteration which even Chaucer condemned. We must account 1574 as a very early period in the history of English poetry, and consequently, one in which models for improvement were scanty and little known. The two poets we have mentioned, with Chaucer, Baldwin, and Vaux, would almost complete the list of those who could then be deemed popular writers. There were ballads innumerable, poems of which the "Nut browne Maid" is an exquisite specimen, and songs of great pathos and beauty, snatches of which have been preserved by the dramatists of the succeeding age; but the value of these was less appreciated in Chaloner's days than in after times. For although Lilly's Euphues only appeared in 1581, yet affectation had previously been the received Gradus ad Parnassum, and Chaloner might indisputably be admitted to share in Puttenham's very doubtful eulogy on Vaux of being a poet of "counterfeit action." Where this Chester writer felt strongly, and wrote naturally, we think he was successful; but where he undertakes to display the emotions of his admiring friends, we regret that Sir Piercy Shafton cannot be resuscitated duly to estimate the performance.

We shall now give a portion of the table of contents of Chaloner's book, occasionally making quotations, and especially directing attention to a state of society in which the Muses acted so considerable a part.

" Sent to a gentlewoman whom he loved, long to her not known, 1576,
" May 2. T. C."

" Writt to a gentlewoman to the same effect."

" An epitaph for Jane, wife of Walter Foxe, Merchant, written in the
" Cittie of Chester, 1575. T. C."

" A poesie writt in a handkerchief for E. C. T. Ch."

" A wish, 1575."

"A younge gentleman's letter to a gentlewoman, wherein he compares his
 "love to the Merchant and his affections to the Shipp, written p. T. C.
 "to J. B. the 20 June 1576 at Chester."

"Ten lines each beginning with the word "Tyme" p R Salisbury."

"A copie of demonstrations." These are verses made by Chaloner explanatory of a screen designed by Parker of Lord Derby's household, for the great hall at Lathom. The signs of the zodiac, the mariner's compass, and certain geographical problems, were explained on this screen, which also dealt in astrology, and even condescended to treat of the economy of the household. The poetry was inscribed on the outside of the first fold. There also occurs a poem on Parker's old age, in which Chaloner personating that important domestic, bids the world adieu.

He has here followed closely the piece written either by Surrey or Vaux, and given in Percy's Reliques, book 2, number 2, entitled, "The aged lover renounceth love," from which also Shakspeare did not disdain to borrow.

Lord Vaux writes,

My lusts they do me leave,
 My fancies all are fled,
 And tract of time begins to weave
 Graie haire upon my head.

For age with stealing steps
 Hath claw'd with me his crowch,
 And lusty youthe away he leaps,
 As there had been none suche.

* * *

A pikeaxe and a spade
 And eke a shrouding sheet,
 A house of claye for to be made,
 For such a guest most meete.

Chaloner thus paraphrases these verses,

My youthful wantonness,
 which flewe as swyfte as arowe,
 Brings me no other fruitfulness,
 but seeds of sores and sorrowe.

Tyme hath me overflowne
 old age hath me in snare
 Graie haire are rife, and overgrowne,
 and will me to prepare.

* * *

Wheare youthe doth me abhorre
and laughs to see my crutche
With scornes and toyes to see me wore,
as he shold be none sutche.

* * *

A pickaxe and a spade,
a platt to make my grave,
So tract of time hath turned younge trade,
which age no more must have.

Again Vaux says,

Methinkes I heare the clerke
That knolles the careful knell,
And bids me leave my weary worke
E're nature me compel.

Which Chaloner renders,

Come on thou knowlinge clerk,
and toll thie bell for me,
For I have done my worldly worke
and have no fear of thee.

Parker, with the other members of the Lathom household, no doubt resorted to Chester to share the amusements in which that city abounded. Of these an excellent account is given in the first volume of Ormerod's Cheshire. Two are alluded to in these verses, the horse race in which the silver bell given by the Draper's Company was the reward, and some other mode of competition for which a banner was the prize; thus the records of Chester inform us, that in "1578 Sheriff Montfort did win the standard "on Shrove Tuesday at the Rood Eye."

Chaloner representing Parker says,

Since I no more can beare,
and boast the banner brave,
I yelde it youthe henceforth to weare,
which age no more may have.

All bewtie won of yore,
old age hath conquered quight,
That bewtie brave, and lovers lore,
age doth no more delight.

Farewell therefore brave brute
that beares the boasting bell,
Farewell my sweet, & loving, lute,
whom I have lov'd so well

My children whom God brought
farewell to you eithe one,
For age to mee a passport brought
that I must needs be gone

The story of Troilus and Cressida so generally admired from the days of Chaucer to those of Shakespeare, and which, notwithstanding the asseverations of the Father of English poetry, is believed to have been of his own making, is noticed by Chaloner, folio 29, in stanzas to M. N. :—

If Troilus whose truthe was tryde
of craftie Cressis might complayne
as he had cause in care to byde,
no lesse a pinch doth pricke my payne.

“Acrostic upon the name of Jane Hanmer and Robert Salisbury fin:
“P. R. S.”

“Chaloner’s dream of a presetion” (procession), occupies 93 stanzas.

“To a friend that loved letteys and salletes in winter when there was no force therein. Sepr 6. 1576”—That is when they were tasteless, forcing of vegetables is supposed to have been introduced into England at the close of the seventeenth century.

The only historical piece in this MS. is the epitaph on Walter, Earl of Essex. Chaloner here mourns the loss of one unknown to him at the request of Hurlton, a Chester follower of the Earls :—

Yet Hurlton for thie sake
My skill shall be in hazardes hands, this sad discourse to make.

And Chaloner also says, in conclusion of the subject of his verse, that he—

“was a stranger to his worthynesse.”

The poem would probably be written about 1576, soon after the Earl’s decease in Ireland. The imputation against Leicester of having unfairly caused Essex’s death in order to marry his wife, the beautiful, and afterwards, long-lived Lettice Knolles, is not alluded to in this epitaph. Yet the charge was early made, officially inquired into by Sir Henry Sidney, and occupied of course a conspicuous place in “Leycester’s Commonwealth.” The valour, generosity, and openmess of character, which rendered the two first Earls of Essex so dear to the English people, was faithfully represented by the sorrowing Hurlton to Chaloner, as the characteristics of his late commander.

We could have wished, in thus conveying grief in lines of sixteen syllables, Chaloner had arrived at a more musical cadence, and left us the usual power of breaking each line into two. But his pauses render this a matter of difficulty and undesirable, and we conclude the dragging this slow length along is supposed to be congenial to the mournful occasion.

He had a face by fortune fram'd to lure no lack of love,
 Who can come fourthe and saie he lackt his right that did him prove?
 Who ever knew a nobleman that had more courtesie,
 Who ever saw a man like moved in cases of extremitie
 In Justice chair like Dove he sate where mercy should redound,
 In broyles he bore the braynes of Mars, whose Vallar did abound,
 In hart he had bold Hectors might, or Cesars mynd withall,

* * * * *

For he of gould makes no account but throwes it everywhere
 To them that doth by merytt want, or any worth appear,
 The golden gyftes hee gave to gwestes, a world of worthies waune
 Lyke him since brut did Bryttaine breed in bountie sutch a man?
 No! no! he hath not left behynd none sutch a one as he,
 That leafe behynd a fertile soil in bloodie broyles to be,
 To winne his countrie fame did he this loathesome soil imbrace,
 And not by Coninges craft, for goulde or luker of the place.
 Farewell of Essex noble Earle, as mylde as was the dove,
 Whose princelie port, & pleasant speech, didst purchase peoples love—

* * * * *

A noble souldier form'd by kynd thus mutch to him is right,
 By open crie of every man that sawe him serve in sight,
 He kept a house & householde francke in all the countries wheare,
 He did abyde, as men would saie, some prince was placed there,
 Like bees the wortheie souldiers swarm'd about his howses gate,
 He was a lanthorn of great light, & miror of the state.

Love and death, metrical billets doux, sonnets, and epitaphs, did not entirely absorb the versifying powers of the citizens of Chester, good advice was conveyed in rhyme. At folio 10 we have "a coppie of a few lynes "which were wrytt upon the backside of a booke, wrytt by T. C. for good "Counsell to A. S. a yonge wyddow by a brother, which booke was gyven "by the name of a glasse for a fairing—fin: T. C. 1576 June 20"—

In March, 1577, Chaloner addressed A. P. (Ann Percival?) in eight stanzas, beginning—

The hart I have in holde
 and Cheast, ys none of myne,
 The hart thou hast, & feel'st,
 in breast is none of thyne.

There are twelve stanzas headed "Sydanen," and signed Jo. Lloyd, beginning—

Flee Statelie Juno Samos fro
 From Delos straight Diana goe,
 Minerva Athens must forsake
 Sydanen Queen your state must take,
 Sydanen conquers, &c.

Perhaps the most surprising specimen of affectation is contained in the "poem, in which a friend who styles himself Tuus dum suus semper et "ubique unus, Rod: Nelson," takes leave for apparently a short absence—

Oh brother Challoner, the powers divine
 All hevelie hevelie wofully mourning,
 Not one but all this person may gujde,
 All hevelie hevelie wofully wandering,
 And wheresoever my bodye remayns,
 My hart with thine, till dethe shall abyde,
 With sorrowful sighing,
 Farewell my delighting,
 Untill my returning againe.

And thus it proceeds through several stanzas.

At folio 41 there is a poem entitled (J. F.?) in the behaulfe of T. C.'s present calamytie, 1577, Julii, "we think Chaloner is the author, as it bears his signature.

And lyke the witlesse dogge that bytes the hurled stone
 We curse the harme, & let the hurlinge hande alone.
 I speake by prooffe, I pine through inward woode
 I rive my wounde, but like the hands that strike,
 I hate my harme, and love my friendly foe,
 That most I mynde that makes me most mislyke
 And though I feel, and see, that venom'd is my meate,
 I cannot stay desire of hunger bid me eate.

In folio 38 is an exceedingly spirited poem, with which we shall close our remarks. It is Chaloner's lament at losing a lady whom he had courted, and who had married another, apparently a friend, who suddenly returning after long absence was entrusted with Chaloner's confidence, who undertaking to advance his suit, had made good his own. The difficulty of the situation in being no longer either allowed to love or to complain, a married lady being the cause of his disappointment, is forcibly given, and throughout there is an earnestness of expression which is highly poetical. The poem, like several others, is dated from Knowsley, and is entitled "Wherein is shewed that parting causeth paine." At the conclusion is written—"fyn pr T. Challoner ano: 1577 apud Knowsley pr Anne —," the name being scratched through with a pen.

Since fancie first me fetered
 In Cupid's chaine being caught,
 Where bewtie brave me bated,
 Repulse agaynst avayld me naught;
 Yet wisdom warn'd me very playne,
 To shune the showe that showde in vayne.

My frendes full ofte did warne me still
 In gentle and in angree sort,
 That time at once my love wolde spill,
 And change good will to ill report,
 And wisdom will'd me to refrayne
 The proffers that would prove but vayne.
 If any man wolde aske mee nowe
 How growes the greatest greife that is?
 Let him goe string Sir Cupides bow
 With leave to shoot, & marke to mys;
 And wyne of game eithe shott but one,
 Which only makes the game alone.
 I had the whirling wynd at will,
 I had all oddes uppon my syde,
 I had the game, the upp shott till,
 I had the upp shott not far wyde,
 Yet lost I all for want of straight,
 Such falsehoode founde my fancies frayghte.
 If that was greife to loose the game,
 And loose as well the fame thereof,
 Say now was fortune not to blame,
 To yelde mee sutch a soddaine scoffe?
 The greatest greife that growes is this
 To part from that wee may not mys.
 Why doithe hee lyve that Longe was deade?
 How doith my fate with fancy frame?
 Why doith dame Nature geave him bread,
 That strainge & falslie chaing'd his name?
 Why did Dame love mee lure thus Longe,
 And suffer tyme to doe mee wronge?
 What meane the maides of fatalls three,
 To drawe sutch length of evill thread?
 Where wisdom now erepteth mee,
 From her whereon I onlie bred,
 Dame tyme in tyme with truth shall try,
 That my true hart shall never wrye.
 What tho' my corps may not Imbrace,
 That hart that myne by justice is?
 My eyes must not behold her face
 What tho' my mynd shall never miss?
 But love I will, who so say naye,
 And love I must, but as I maye.
 I hover still good happ to have,
 & hope the best, whilst yet I lyve,
 God graunt me then the guyfte I crave,
 So shall I have, as I do geave,
 A faythfull hart in pledge of all,
 Welcome to mee as God send shall!