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"WESTWARD THE COURSE OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY."

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No. 1.

## CONTEMPLATION: AN IMITATION.

"Scenes formed for contemplation and to nurse  
The growing seeds of wisdom."—COWPER.

The Day-god has awaked; from silken couch,  
Amidst the gleam of golden tapestries,  
Where he lay lightly slumbering, behold  
Come forth in kingly glory and attire,  
With regal crown and sceptre of command,  
The ruler of the earth. Back sink the stars  
Into the shadows of obscurity.  
The moon glides swift from sight; bright Day, alone,  
Claims empire o'er the ceaseless realms of heaven.  
The mountains raise on high their mighty heads  
And homage pay unto their deity.  
The giant woods, sublime in loneliness,  
From their pure choirs tune anthems, solemn, grand,  
Swelling from cliff and cave and mountain-side  
And cañons deep, unto the list'ning heavens.  
All earth rejoices, and a thousand streams  
Call to each other from the echoing rocks.

Unhappy he who lies in land of dreams  
And dreams not of so fair, so glad a land!  
He who on drowsy couch, with weary lid,  
Doth court the flitting gods of Drowsiness,  
To him earth's beauties lose their varied charms  
And Nature gives no gifts of calm delight.  
The languid limb, the foot-step faltering,  
And chest that fears the beating of the wind,  
This is his lot and this he well deserves.  
For me the portion of the active frame,  
The bounding foot, the eye kindling with life,  
The limbs that strengthen with their glowing veins,  
The heart that flutters with the joy of blood,  
While earth still waits, flushed with expectancy,  
The coming of the sun, and wears her veil  
Of snowy, morning mist; I love to trace  
The windings of the mountain pass, and view  
The unconscious features of the slumbering world.  
How silently she sleeps! The dewy peaks  
Which her fair brow adorn, hang motionless  
And mute as crystals in the depth of seas!  
Her beauty is the shades of lessening night  
Commingled with the rosy hues of day;  
Rich as the wine-veined daughter of the wood,  
Whose dusky limbs with crimson veins are tinged.

Tread I, again, my own dear native hills?  
Breathe I, again, my own sweet mountain air?  
These fragrant laurels, shrouded 'neath the mist,  
Like modest beauty gleaming 'neath a veil;  
This leaping stream, whose clear and silvery voice  
Comes softened through the dusky screen below;  
The sloping landscape, widening far and near;  
Each bears a counterpart to other scenes,  
And claims a type of beauty not its own.  
See where, on yonder knoll, the broken rocks  
In massive heaps disjointed, rudely lie.  
Tons upon tons in solid grandeur rise,  
Gazing austere o'er the vale below,  
Like ponderous giants priding in their strength.  
From year to year, from lengthening age to age,  
Whether 'neath smiling sun or frowning cloud,  
Or swept upon by black and dismal storms,  
Still have they stood in lone and silent pride  
And scorned the ravings of the elements.  
Bending unto the horizon's stretching rim,  
The mountains stand secure in lonely peace.  
The vale reposes in morn's tranquil calm,  
Kissed by the fainting gleam of silent waters.

These are thy works, O God! Thy mighty hand  
Upreared them, and thou bad'st them be the home  
Of bird and beast. But man, whom Thou hast placed  
Above them all; man gifted as a god  
With reason's power, and knowledge both of good  
And evil, he to the sacred trust proves false  
And dares Thy vengeance by his cruelty.

The timid squirrel, whose lithe and graceful form  
Joys ever in the freedom of the hills,  
Because, forsooth, by nature taught, he seeks  
The sustenance which neighboring fields afford,  
Relentless man him dooms to pain and death.  
Nor is he e'en secure within his home—  
Amidst the leafy dingles of the wood,  
Where all his occupation is to gather  
The falling nut or clustered spiral-grass.  
Vindictive man, led by a cruelty  
Which he terms sport, seeks his abode  
And kills by cruel artifice contrived.  
Wounded and torn, from limb to limb he drops  
With anguish-cries, till stunned and pouring blood,  
Upon the ground he lies, a quivering heap.  
Does not this anguish cause the softening dew  
Of pity to o'ercome the sportsman's heart?  
With shame for human beings who have not  
A human soul; with double shame for those  
Who pride themselves upon it, we answer, no!  
Rather he glories in the deed; and he  
Whose aim is truest, claims the glory most.

The wounded stag pants o'er the mountain-side,  
The partridge flutters down on quivering wing,  
The flashing trout gasps on the pebbled bank,  
And all for man's amusement! That he may pass  
Some quiet hours within the country air  
And muse upon most bounteous Nature's gifts!  
Oh! shame on man! shame to his ruthless heart!  
Shame that the off-spring of a loving God  
Should claim the attributes of demon foul!  
I, too, have loved to chase the flying stag  
From cliff to cliff, through chapparel and oak  
Dense as the forest's depths, and over steep  
Where one false step had hurled me far below.  
Nor have I scorned for lesser sport than this,  
O'er thorny mead or on the mountain ridge  
Or where the brooklet skirts the stubble base,  
Has the swift quail oft fallen 'neath my aim,  
And timid hare has not escaped unharmed.  
Or where the marshy lake deep-hidden lies,  
Brodered with tules thick or pointed flag  
The brilliant teal or gaily plumaged mallard  
Has fluttered from his swift, unerring flight.  
I name it not with pride that truant aim  
My gun knew not; I scorn the boastful pride  
That loves to dwell upon such deeds of blood,  
Or skill to take the life of bird or beast;  
And mourn that youthful ardor should have once  
Made me inhuman; but if better deeds  
May still atone for deeds that long are past,  
Repentance and atonement shall be mine.

The love of Nature is the love of God,  
For he who sees no beauty in the work  
Has not a kindly feeling for the master.  
If such there be whose soul expands with love  
Of nature, and of whose broad sympathy  
E'en brutes may claim a welcome share, to him  
The world is peopled with a thousand forms  
Of kindred ties, bound by a common bond,  
And earth's remotest scene holds not a spot  
That lonely solitude can claim her own.  
The singing lark, the gay and chirping squirrel,  
The hare that softly rustles amidst the leaves,  
The friend'y robin, that beneath his feet  
Seeks for its humble food, and grants a song  
Of thankfulness, each to his wandering steps  
Is a companion welcome. For what is man  
Ever dependant on his brother man  
For sympathy and joy. Where all the world  
Is chasing each his own, unwearied phantom  
Of happiness, impatient of desires  
Which others may possess, 'tis well for him  
Who knows to look where happiness resides  
And where companionship is always found.

Nor objects animate, alone possess

A kindred spirit to that man whose mind  
Receives the lessons by kind Nature taught.  
The hill, the plain, the awe-inspiring wood,  
And the glad rill, that speaks aloud its joy  
Each has a voice which contemplations mood  
Receives as were those oracles of old.  
But him to whom a selfish end is all  
Worthy of strife, enchanting scenes please not,  
To him the earth is dumb; the beauteous forms  
Of truand flower enchant not by their grace.  
The birds of heaven are made to satiate  
The cravings of his hunger, and the beasts  
Ordained by a beneficent Creator  
To labor that creation's lord may rest!  
Such is the sophistry by beings used  
Possessed of reason, but whose reason's power  
By inactivity or long misuse  
Has lost the force to act as God designs.

Happy the man who, with respect abroad  
And love at home, has not another care  
Than that bestowed on one small patch of earth  
And brutes domestic placed within his trust!  
Him folly moves not, and the jesting world  
Disturbs not with its clamor. Nature's realm  
To him affords all pleasure that he seeks.  
What though his mind, to classic terms unused,  
Sees not a nymph in every leafy glade?  
To him the sylvan trees present no Faun,  
The mountain-sides no haunt of deities,  
The silent wood no Aegle's fairy home;  
But every wind that whispers in the trees,  
Comes laden with the thought of sacred love;  
And every dell and mountain, rill and stream,  
Proclaims with loving voice a changeless God  
Eternal as the void that nature fills.

These the reflections of a thoughtful man,  
Briefly recited and uncouth as brief.  
Yet he who seeks that higher wisdom, love  
For all created things, and knowledge drawn  
From sources whence he least dreams of, to him  
These lines a secret pleasure may bestow  
As picture of a mind shaped as his own.

LEW.

## THE LITERARY ARTIST AND THE WORK OF LITERARY ART.

S. 2.

When one sets out to treat in one essay two distinct subjects, his chief aim, generally, is to bring into view their connection. Accordingly, it is the relation of the Literary Artist to his productions which this essay intends to consider. Any elaborate discussion would of course be, at present, impossible. Suggestions only, therefore, will be attempted.

The Literary Artist is the one whose material is language. This is to him what marble is to the sculptor, what colors are to the painter, what tones are to the musician. Of his art the highest development is Poetry, corresponding to the *ideal* creations of the painter, the music-dramas of the musician. Whatever powers he may concede to other artists, in his own province he is supreme, representing actions more completely than the painter, and expressing feelings more definitely than the musician. If the one surpasses him in scenic effect, and the other in despotic sway over the feelings, he yet leaves behind impressions more durable than those of the first, more tangible than those of the second. In their arts more toil is necessary to acquire mastery over details, in his, greater genius to grasp general ideas. Their merit is in execution, his, in conception. They find it easier to recall in new group-



ings former impressions, his glory is to suggest new experiences. They, finally, are confined the one to suggestive situations, the other, perhaps, to pure emotions; his field is coextensive with both Life and Feeling in their entirety.

These, which are, I think, recognized dicta of criticism, form the best justification of the real value of seeking the connecting link between an author and his works. It is because, more vividly than his fellow-artists can do, the Literary Artist presents the most valuable parts of his personality in his productions, that we take a greater interest in the character of the latter than we are apt to do, other things being equal, in that of any one of his co-laborers in the service of the Muses. If it is a poet we are interested in, the artistic pleasure found in his writings does not alone satisfy us. There is a pleasure of course in the sympathy we give to his fictitious characters, there is high degree of enjoyment in the beauty of newly-suggested thoughts and images, but stronger and deeper than either of these is our delight in *his* sympathy with us. This delight it is which changes our impersonal love of art into a personal interest in the artist. We have found in the poet a friend, one who is on a higher plane than ourselves, but who has passed through more or less of our own cherished emotional experiences of joy or melancholy, who has not only passed through them, but has known how to give voice to those resulting feelings which we have longed in vain to express. And we have found, too, in the words of our friend, instruction that is either not to be found elsewhere at all, or found only when bare of illustration and interest. Having thus once or twice known this sympathy, this instruction, we have an entirely new motive to hunt for more of the same kind in the works where we met with the first examples. In other words we are incited to the study of the poet's personal nature in his productions. No such spontaneous enthusiasm is, I think, aroused by the artist of the musician and the painter. The love of the art absorbs us, we think only secondarily of the creator. Literature then, as it seems to me, does not affect us simply as a palace, whose splendors we enjoy without thinking of the architect. Nor is it, on the other hand merely like a majestic ruin, whose interest in our eyes is but identical with our interest in its builders. It is rather a vast cathedral, in whose lofty aisles we walk, beneath whose solemn shades we worship, whose services have comfort for our deepest melancholy, and expression for our most ecstatic joy, but in the enjoyment of which we never will cease to reverence and to tell of its makers, they amid whose tears and blood, by whose care and love, with whose toil and patience, those stones were laid, those columns moulded, those turrets reared, and whose sainted statues now in marble repose, survey from yonder lofty niches the well done work.

All this we therefore see, is the result of the perfectness of self-expression offered to the artist by literature. Now, since the instrument is so flexible, we may expect the varieties of its modes of usage to be as numerous as the characters of the users. Such, in fact, experience teaches. No great work of art was ever produced which did not at the time absorb all the energies of its creator. No doubt, then, Homer's soul was bound up in the *Iliad*, and no doubt also, Tennyson's soul was bound up in the "In Memoriam." Yet how infinitely different the modes of expression! And think, too, for a moment of the long line of examples which might be given, of how the self-expression of Sophocles differed from that of Shakespeare, how that of Bunyan differed

from that of Milton. Is there any law by which these various sorts of expression can be reduced to order? Can they be definitely connected with particular forms of Literary Art, one with Epic poetry, another with the Drama, another with the Novel? Can they be assigned each its own place in the history of Art? An answer to these questions would throw light on the respective powers of the different species of literature, since each great artist no doubt chose the form best fitted for his purpose, and would, as well, be valuable in teaching us how much of the author, and what parts of his character we might expect, in considering the literature of any period, to find expressed in the works of imagination of that period.

There is then, I maintain, a regular succession of some at least of the forms of literature. Epic Poetry had its day of glory; so had the Drama. We have not lost our appreciation of either. But, for some reason, our age does not produce Epic poems at all, and would laugh at the idea of it; while, except in a few cases, the Drama of the present time, is either not art, in a literary point of view, or else is mere imitation of old models. Some critics, in view of these facts, have decided that all power of poetic creation has been left behind forever by our restless progress, and that men must now amuse themselves with reminiscences only, of that dreamy, imaginative, sun-lit past, that they must content themselves with being "better theorists, but sigh over the fact that they must remain, along with Mr. Macaulay, 'worse poets.'" But it seems to me, that if art has changed its channels, it has lost but little of its volume. It is subject to periods of rise and of decline, but in the average it is much the same. Uncultivated inspiration produced a Homer, but cultivated inspiration has her Miltons, her Tennysons, her Goethe, and will yield her claims to none, even if she be content to leave Shakespeare as disputable property.

Still there are great differences in the art of different epochs, even if there be equality in value. These differences in external form and in internal character, imply corresponding differences in the modes of self-expression, as we have already noticed. The law governing the one set of changes will consequently govern the other. Let us then briefly indicate this law.

There seem to me to be three stages in Literary art, corresponding to and in point of time respectively preceding, three parallel stages in Science. In Science, as is well known, the three great eras are, first the era of subjective systems, in which nature is made to conform to pre-conceived ideas, developed subjectively by the investigator; second the era of purely objective investigation, naturally confined to the physical sciences; lastly the era in which we are now, where the basis obtained in the preceding stage is used for the construction of a new fabric of subjective inquiry into mental and social laws. Corresponding with the first or subjective stage of science, and preceding it, was an era of purely objective art, where the poet-artist was engaged only to reproduce external nature, and to the very least extent interested in studying artistically his own mind. The second, or objective stage in science, was preceded by social convulsions and moral revolutions which separated men forever from the original, child-like enjoyment of nature, gave them the power, and imposed upon them the necessity of observing the workings of their own tumultuous emotions. Here then was the era of subjective art. The third stage in the progress of Literary art is still the counterpart of the corresponding stage in science as the others were

counterparts of their corresponding stages. It is the stage in which, using the experience gained in the preceding, the intermediate, the stormy stage, the poet once more passes to the contemplation of objective nature, in which the feeling once so crudely personal, spiritualizes itself in works of art that, with farther reaching powers than their compeers of early poetry could have, grasp the whole range of human passion. In this stage the artists have risen

— "on stepping stones  
Of their own selves to higher things."

They have passed through the thunder-storms that clouded their once clear native valleys, and once more they stand beneath the blue sky on the sacred heights of calm.

Proof of this theory of the nature of the progress of art there is no time for. Indeed, I am not certain that the proof could be made complete. The theory is partly a provisional one. But still it would be easy to show by a vast number of examples, how many facts the law explains. Of course, by progression is not meant chronological order when we consider the history of art throughout the whole world. No possible theory of human progress could withstand the unjust criticism that would suppose all parts of the race to be in the same stages of advancement at the same time. There are individual exceptions to the general rules of national progress, and there are national exceptions to the general rules of human progress. Nor may we here attempt to explain fully the reasons why art and science should, at corresponding points of their career, expand in opposite directions, but with similar energies, and under similar forces. And so without further accounting for the apparent exceptions to the theory as a whole, we will assume the above as the general law of art progress. As regards examples, we may say that Homer was, of course, to the first stage of Poetry, what Aristotle was to the first stage of Science; that of the second stage are those obscure writers of the Middle Ages who gave us such hymns as the "Dies Irae," of Celano, and notably in English literature, John Bunyan, while all the most notable of poetic geniuses in modern times have passed through that stage and have given us memorials of it, but themselves have risen, whether by the force of their age or by their own immortal strength, into the clearness and beauty of the third stage.

All this makes it evident, that if we are seeking for a poet's personality, we must not expect to get more than glimpses of it from his writings, if he belongs to the first era. Further, that the writer of the second stage most purely and fully represents his own character, even in some cases giving, like Bunyan, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," his own auto-biography. Lastly, that a writer who belongs to the third stage will once more obscure the view of his personal feelings beneath the vast superstructure of his human sympathies.

Again, the poet of the intermediate stage will take some one of those kinds of poetry which afford the best chances for the transparent exhibition of his own views and impressions. He will adopt the plain lyrical form, or he will proceed to the dialogue or the drama. In the last two forms he can plainly indicate his own standpoint. This is what I think is done by Shakespeare in *Hamlet*. But for reasons whose investigation would be interesting, but intricate, the novel would not so well enable him to do this. It perhaps requires too minute a development of character and circumstance, and if written with an obvious personal motive is almost always a failure. It cannot, like the drama, rep-



represent a few things and leave us to fill out the rest. So the novel has been left to the third era of poetical creation to develop, being, on account of its more sober limits, a vehicle for the calmer feelings, the chastened merriment, the subdued pathos, the undercurrent of melancholy which it is their peculiar privilege to express. The Epic form of poetry was found particularly valuable in the first stage. It furnished a universal reflector for all the varied forms of nature; and was used along with the earlier forms of the drama and side by side with the all-embracing lyric poetry.

The only kind of poetry that has always seemed to be of universal flexibility, is the lyric poetry just mentioned. From the Vedas to Tennyson and Longfellow, it has held its own. It is capable of the most strongly personal subjectivity, and of the widest objective impersonality. It may tell us all about the author's frame of mind when he wrote it, and it may tell us next to nothing. It may be devotional, it may be bacchanalian. In a word it is of unlimited expressiveness.

In these various ways then, have the all-powerful emotions of the artist found their way to immortality. Each is the perfect image of the style of mind that produced it; from each we can draw our inferences with clearness and certainty as to the character of the author. And I am fully persuaded, that by no means can we form so valuable a basis for our investigations into the humanity that from age to age finds its expression in works of genius, than by first considering the powers of the different forms of poetic expression that the various ages have adopted.

J. ROYCE, '75.

#### THE PRECURSORS OF THE ENGLISH DRAMA.

*Miracles, Interludes, Moralities, etc.*

In order that we may the better understand the direct precursors of the English Drama, let us direct our attention for a moment to the origin of these precursors themselves.

We are assured that in the very earliest periods, man was fain to be entertained by a species of drama, which, simple as it was, served as the germ from which our present drama has been slowly and laboriously evolved.

In the Bible we find allusions made of singers, as denoting a distinct class of men. The Song of Solomon is held by many to be the earliest drama ever written. It represents two lovers proclaiming to the world each others' perfections. Although this is written in a dramatic style, we have no proof that it was ever played, yet it is probable that it was sung in the temple.

The oldest play that we have, that was written and acted as a play, is called "Christ's Passion," written by Ezekiel, the Jewish tragedian. The characters are Moses, Zipporah, and God from the bush. Moses delivers a prologue of sixty lines, and during his speech his rod turns into a serpent on the stage. This play is supposed by many to have been written before the Christian era; but it appears most probable that it was written just after the fall of Jerusalem for the purpose of raising the spirits of the dejected inhabitants.

We know that the drama existed in Egypt as early as 67 A. D., for history tells us that Nero so far forgot his imperial dignity as to appear as an actor in theatres.

The Grecian drama, thought by many to be the indirect precursor of the English drama was the direct offspring of religion. It was probably instituted during the Heroic age, as it was then that the arts of sculpture, design, and poetry were first cultivated; but of this we have no absolute proof. It was perfected by Æschylus, Euripides, and Sophocles. The polished plays of the Grecian Dramatists were played in Constantinople un-

til the fourth century, when one Gregory of Nazianzen who was an archbishop, and Father of the Church, banished them, substituting Scripture Histories. However, pure the motives of Gregory were, it is certain that in years after, these plays became scandalous.

It is supposed by many that through the channels of trade which connected Turkey and Italy, these plays became introduced into the latter country and from thence worked their way into France and finally into England. This at first appears very probable; but if we examine the annals of these countries, we find that the drama was introduced into Italy first in the 13th century; while the first miracle play produced in England, "St. Catharine," was in 1109, at least one hundred and forty years before anything of the kind appeared in Italy, and two hundred and eighty-eight years before "The Mystery of Passion" was played at St. Maur in France. Hence we may conclude that the miracles and mysteries were the first plays produced in England and that they originated independently of foreign aid. Their origin is attributed to the pilgrims who visited the holy land and returning sang and recited their songs and related stories concerning the life and sufferings of Christ. In those days merchants assembled at marts during certain periods of the year for the purpose of selling their goods. In order to attract large crowds, they employed buffoons, jugglers and minstrels to charm the people.

The priests observing the immoral effect which these strolling actors had upon the people resolved to counteract it, hence they wrote the miracle play entitled "St. Catharine," and acted it themselves in the church. Thus the church became the mother of our English drama, of which, miracles and mysteries were the first precursors.

The mysteries were taken from some scripture story; while the miracles partook of the nature of tragedy, taking for their subjects certain acts of martyrdom.

These plays were acted, if you will remember during, the time that the Jews were so cruelly persecuted by the Christians; miracles and mysteries supplied just what the taste of the people called for. Let me give you a specimen of miracle plays. It is taken from "The Play of the Blessed Sacrament." Among the characters are Christ, five Jews, a bishop, a curate, a Christian merchant and a physician. The merchant steals a loaf of bread and sells it to the Jews, on the condition that they shall become Christians if they find it possessed of miraculous powers. To test its character they stab it; it bleeds, and one of them goes mad at the sight; one attempts to nail it to a post and his hand is torn off. The physician is called but after a comic scene is turned off as being a quack. They then boil the loaf in water which turns to blood. They finally try to burn it in a blazing furnace, when the oven bursts open, and the image of Christ arises before them. They prostrate themselves and become Christians at once. The bishop now forms a procession, and they march to the Jews' house; he enters, and addresses the image, which again changes to bread. He then delivers an epilogue on transubstantiation.

These plays became very popular in the reigns of Henry II. and Richard I.

Chaucer's "Wife of Bath," tells us how she spent her time in Lent, in the following lines:

"Therefore make I my visitations,  
To vigilies and to processions,  
To preachings, and to those pilgrimages,  
To plays of miracles and to marriages."

It would be needless to say that there were neither theatres nor actors when the miracle plays first appeared. They were played by the clergy, on a stage

erected in one end of the church. The stage consisted of three platforms, erected one above the other. Upon the upper one was seated a person representing God the Father, surrounded by his angels; on the middle one sat the glorified saints, and on the third appeared persons not yet passed from this life. At one side of the stage there was generally a black cavern from whence issued the appearance of flame and smoke. This was called hell-mought; and we are told that when it was necessary the audience was treated with loud groans and shrieks, as proofs of the anguish and pain which condemned souls were undergoing, tormented as they were by merciless demons. And again we are assured that these demons were constantly issuing forth from their dark abode, for the purpose of instructing and edifying the audience.

Nothing was too sacred for these miracle players. They played the crucifixion, bringing in every part of it with gross familiarity. They played the resurrection, and even the last supper.

Solemn as were the subjects of these miracle plays yet they often afforded elements for the broadest mirth. For instance, Beelzebub and his attendant, Vice, used undoubtedly to make the house ring with laughter. He was represented with horns, cloven feet and a tail; and wore a mask with a very large mouth, staring eyes, large nose and red beard; his constant attendant was Vice, whose part it was to leap on his master's shoulders and beat him with a wooden sword until he made him roar. Beelzebub generally took his revenge by taking his tormentor upon his back and running off with him into hell-mought.

Finally the counsel and prelate forbade the playing of such pieces in the church or by the clergy. It then fell into the hands of the lay-brothers, and hands of the priesthood. The plays were presented on movable scaffolds or platforms which were dragged about from street to street. At last the plays fell into the hands of the laymen exclusively, and then the different tradesmen were employed as actors. Each trade reserved to itself a certain portion of the scriptures.

Thus in Chester the tanners represented "The Fall of Lucifer," the drapers, "The Creation," the dyers, "The Deluge." At Coventry, the shearmen played "The Nativity," the cappers "The Resurrection," and "Descent into Hell."

By degrees, allegorical characters began to be used, abstract ideas were personified; finally a drama was devised which consisted wholly of abstract personification. These plays were called Moralities. They appeared about the time of Edward IV. There are several of these plays yet extant, among them are: "Marriage of Wit and Science," "The longer thou livest the more fool thou art," and the "Conflict of Conscience."

In 1543, Henry VIII passed a law forbidding all religious plays, ballads, etc., "as equally pestiferous, and noisome to the common weal." Henry was opposed to them in religion, and thus the drama became the subject of religious controversy. They were slightly revived during the reign of Queen Mary, and were played throughout the reigns of Elizabeth and James I. During this period, however, they were made the instruments of Religion and Politics, partaking of the nature of whichever party was in the ascendant.

But now there appears upon the stage a short play. It partakes somewhat of the character of the Moralities, but is shorter, aims more at the customs and habits of the people, and is indeed somewhat satirical. It is played during the interval which takes place between the heavy meal and the desert, and is hence called the Interlude. This play, under the different names of masques and pageants, is the direct precursor to the,