

# Renascence Editions

Return to  
[Renascence Editions](#)

## A Reply to Stephen Gosson's Schoole of Abuse in Defence of Poetry, Musick, and Stage Plays.

Thomas Lodge.

---

Note: this [Renascence Editions](#) text was transcribed by R.S. Bear, July 2000, from the copy in the Huntington Museum, and compared with the text of Elizabethan & Jacobean Pamphlets, edited by George Saintsbury, 1892 (STC number 16663). Any errors that have crept into the transcription are the fault of the present publisher. The text is in the public domain. Content unique to this presentation is copyright © 2000 The University of Oregon. For nonprofit and educational uses only. Send comments and corrections to the Publisher.

---

## A Reply to Stephen Gosson's Schoole of Abuse in Defence of Poetry, Musick, and Stage Plays.

Thomas Lodge.



*Rotogenes* can know *Apelles* by his line though he se[e] him not, and wise men can consider by the Penn the authoritie of the writer, though they know him not. The Rubie is discerned by his pale rednes, and who hath not hard that the Lyon is knowne by hys claws. Though *Æsopes* craftie crowe be neuer so deftlye decked, yet is his double dealing e[a]sely desiphered: and though men neuer so perfectly pollish there wrytings with others sentences, yet the simple truth wil discover the shadow of their follies: and bestowing euery fether in the bodye of the right M. tourne out the naked dissembler into his owen cote, as a spectacle of follye to all those which can rightlye Judge what imperfections be.

There came to my hands lately a litle (woulde God a wittye) pamphlet, baring a fayre face as though it were the scoole of a buse, but being by me advisedly wayed I fynd it the oftscome of imperfections, the writer fuller of wordes than iudgement; the matter certainly as ridiculus as serius, assuredly his mother witte wrought this wonder, the child to disprayse his father the dogg to byte his mayster for his dainty morcell. But I se (with *Seneca*) y<sup>t</sup> the wrong is to be suffered, since he disprayseth, who by costome hath

left to speake well; but I meane to be short: and teach the Maister what he knoweth not, partly that he may se his owne follie, and partly that I may discharge my promise, both binde me. therefore I would with the good scholmayster to over looke his abuses againe with me, so shall he see an ocean of inormities which begin in his first prinsiple in the disprayse of poetry. And first let me familiarly consider with this find faulte what the learned have alwayes esteemed of poetrie. *Seneca* thoughte a stoike would haue a poetically sonne, and amongst the auncientest *Homer* was no les accompted than *Humanus deus*. What made Alexander I pray you esteme of him so much? Why allotted he for his works so curious a closset? Was there no fitter vnder prop for his pillow the[n] a simple pamphlet? In all *Darius* cofers was there no Jewell so costly? Forsoth my thinks these two (the one the father of Philosophers, the other the cheftaine of chivalrie) were both deceived if all were as a *Gosson* would wish them, yf poets paynt naughte but paltrerie toyes in vearse, their studies tended to foolishnesse, and in all their indeuors they did naught els but *agendo nihil agere*. Lord howe *Virgils* poore gnatt pricketh him, and how *Ovids* fley byteth him, he can beare no bourde, he hath rayed up a new sect of serius stoikes, that can abide naught but their owen shadowe, and alow nothing worthye, but what they conceaue. Did you never reade (my over wittie frend) that under the persons of beastes many abuses were dissiphered? haue you not reason to waye? that whatsoever ether *Virgil* did write of his gnatt, or *Ovid* of his fley: was all covertly to declare abuse? but you are (*homo literatus*) a man of the letter little sauoring of learning, your giddy brain made you leaue your thrift, and your abuses in London some part of your honestie. You say that Poets are subtil, if so, you have learned that poynt of them, you can well glose on a trifeling text. but you haue dronke perhaps of *Lethe*, your gramer learning is out of your head, you forget your Accidence, you reme[m]ber not, that under the person of *Aeneas* in *Virgil*, the practice of a dilligent captaine is discribed, vnder y<sup>e</sup> shadow of byrds, beastes, and trees, the follies of the world were disiphered, you know not that the creation is signified in the Image of *Prometheus*, the fall of pryde in the person of *Narcissus*, these are toyes because they savour of wisdom which you want. Marke what *Campanus* sayth, *Mira fabularum vanitas sed quæ si introspiciantur videri possunt non vanæ*. The vanitie of tales is wonderful, yet if we aduisedly looke into them they wil seme and proue wise, how wonderful are the pithie poemes of *Cato*? the curious comedies of *Plautus*? how brauely discovereth *Terence* our imperfectio[n] in his *Eunuch*? how neatly dissiphereth he *Danus*? how pleasauntly paynteth he out *Gnatho*? whom if we should seeke in our dayes, I suppose he would not be farr from your parson. But I see you woulde seme to be that which you are not, and as the prouerb sayth *Nodum in Cirpo qærere*: Poets you say vse coullors to couer their inco[n]ueniencies, and wittie sentences to burnish theyr bawdery, and you divinute to couer your knaverye. But tell mee truth *Gosson* speakest thou as thou thinkest? What coelers findest thou in a Poete not to be admitted? Are his speaches unperfect? Savor they of inscience[?] I think if thou hast any shame thou canst not but like & approue the[m], are ther gods displesant unto thee? doth *Saturne* in his maiesty moue thee? doth *Iuno* with her riches displease thee? doth *Minerua* with her weapon discomfort thee? doth *Apollo* with his harping harme thee? Thou mayst say nothing les then harme thee because they are not, and I thinke so to because thou knowest them not. For wot thou that in the person of *Saturne* our decaying yeares are signified, in the picture of angry *Iuno*, our affections are dissiphered, in y<sup>e</sup> person of *Minerva* is our understanding signified, both in respect of warre, as policie. when they faine that *Pallas* was begotten of the braine of *Iupiter* their meaning is none other but that al wisdom (as the learned say) is from aboue, and commeth from the father of Lights: in the portrature of *Apollo* all knowledge is denocated. so that, what so they wrot, it was to this purpose, in the way of pleasure to draw men to wisdom: for seing the world in those daies was unperfect, yt was necessary that they like good Phisi[ti]ons: should so frame their potions, that they

might be appliable to the quesie stomaks of their werish patients. but our studientes by your meanes haue made shipwrack of theyr labors, our schoolemaisters haue so offended that by your iudgement they shall *subire pœnam capitis* for teaching poetry, the universitie is litle behoding to you, al their practices in teaching are frivolus. Witt hath wrought that in you, that yeares and studie never settled in the heads of our sagest doctors. No meruel though you dispraysse poetrye, when you know not what it meanes. *Erasmus* will make that the path waye to knowledge which you dispraysse, and no meane fathers vouchsafe in their seriouse questions of deuinitie, to inserte poetically sensures. I think if we shal wel overlake y<sup>e</sup> Philosophers, we shal find their judgeme[n]ts not halfe perfect, Poetes you say fayle in their fables, Philosophers in the verye secrets of Nature. Though *Plato* could wish the expulsion of Poetes from his well publiques, which he might doe with reason, yet the wisest had not all that same opinion, it had bene better for him to haue sercht more narrowly what the soule was, for his difinition was verye friuolus, when he would make it naught els but *Substantiam intellectu predictam*. If you say that Poetes did labour about nothing, tell me (I besech you) what wonders wroughte those your dunce Doctors in ther reasons *de ente et non ente?* in theyr definition of no force and les witt? How sweate they power soules in makinge more things then could be? that I may vse your owne phrase, did not they spende one candle by seeking another. *Democritus, Epicurus*, with ther scholler *Metrodorus* how labored they in finding out more worlds the[n] one? your *Plato* in midst of his precisnes wrought that absurdite that never may be redd in Poets, to make a yearthly creature to beare the person of the creator, and a corruptible substaunce, an incomprehensible God: for determining of the principall causes of all thinges, a made them naught els but an *Idea* which if it be conferred wyth the truth, his sentence will savour of Inscience. But I speake for Poetes, I answeare your abuse, therefore I will disproue, or dispraysse naught, but wish you with the wise *Plato*, to dispraysse that thing you offend not in. *Seneca* sayth that the studdie of Poets is to make childe[n] ready to the understanding of wisdom, and y<sup>t</sup> our auncients did teache *artes Eleutherias. i. liberales*, because the instructed childe[n] by the instrume[n]t of knowledg in time became *homines liberi. i. Philosophie*. it may be that in reding of poetry, it happened to you as it is with the Oyster, for she in her swimming receiveth no ayre, and you in your reeding lesse instruction. It is reported that the shepe of *Euboa* want ther gale, and one the contrarye side that the beastes of *Naxus* have *distentum fel*. Men hope that scollers should haue witt brought vpp in the Universite, but your sweet selfe with the cattell of *E[u]boia*, since you left your College haue lost your learning. you dispraysse *Maximin[us] Tirus* pollicey, and that thinge that he wrott to manifest learned Poets meaning, you attribute to follye. O holy hedded man, why may not *Iuno* resemble the ayre? why not *Alexander* valour? why not *Vlisses* pollice? Will you haue all for yo[ur] owne tothe? must men write that you maye know theyr meaning? as though your wytt were to wrest all things? Alas simple *Irus*, begg at knowledge gate awhile, thou hast not wonne the mastery of learning. weane thyself to wisdom, and vse thy tallant in zeale not for enuie, abuse not thy knowledge in dispraysing that which is pereles: I shold blush from a player, to become an enuiose preacher, if thou hadst zeale to preach, if for *Sions* sake thou coldst not holde thy to[n]gue, thy true dealing were prayse worthy, thy reuolting woulde counsell me to reuerence thee. pittie weare it, that poetrye should be displaced, full little could we want *Buchanans* workes, *Boetius* comfortes may not be banished. what made *Erasmus* labor in *Euripides* tragedies? did he indeuour by painting them out of Greeke into Latine to manifest sinne vnto us? or to confirm vs in goodnes? Labor (I pray thee) in Pamphlets more prayse worthy; thou haste not saued a Senator, therefore not worthy a Lawrell wreth, thou hast not (in disprouing poetry) reproued an abuse, and therefore not worthy commendation. *Seneca* sayth that *Magna vitæ pars elabitur male agentibus, maxima*

*nihill agentibus, tota alind agentibus*, the most of our life (sayd he) is spent ether in doing euill, or nothing, or that wee should not, and I would wish you weare exempted from this sensure, geve eare but a little more what may be said for poetrie, for I must be briefe. you have made so greate matter that I may not stay on one thing to long, lest I leaue an other untouched. And first whereas you say, y<sup>t</sup> *Tullie* in his yeres of more iudgement despised Poetes, harke (I pray you) what he worketh for them in his oratio[n] *pro Archia poeta*. (but before you heare him least you fayle in the incounter, I would wyshe you to follow the aduise of the dasterdlye Ichneumon of *Ægypt*, who when shee beholdeth the *Aspis* her enemye to drawe nighe, calleth her fellowes together, bismering her selfe with claye, against the byting and stroke of the serpent, arme your selfe, cal your witts together: want not your wepons, lest your imperfect iudgement be rewardede with Midas eares. you had neede play the night burd now, for yo[n] day Owl hath misconned his parte, and for to who now a dayes he cryes foole you: which hath brought such a sort of wondering birds about your eares, as I feare me will chatter you out of your Ivey bush. the worlde shames to see you, or els yo[u] are afrayde to shew yourselfe. you thought poetrye should want a patron (I think) when you fyrste published this inuectiue, but yet you fynd al to many eve[n] *preter expectatione [m]*, yea though it can speake for it self, yet her patron *Tullie* now shall tell her tale, *Hæc studia* (sayth he) *adolescenciam alunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas, res ornant, aduersis per fugium ac Solatium prebent, delectant domi, non impediunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrin[antur], rusticantur*. then will you dispraise y<sup>t</sup> which all men commend? you looke only upon y<sup>e</sup> refuse of y<sup>e</sup> abuse, nether respecting the importance of y<sup>e</sup> matter nor the weighe of y<sup>e</sup> wryter. *Solon* can fayne himself madde, to further the *Athenians*. *Chaucer* in pleasant vain can rebuke sin v[n]controld, & though he be lauish in the letter, his sence is serious. who in Rome lame[n]ted not *Roscius* death? & ca[n]st thou suck no plesure out of thy *M. Claudians* writings? hark, what *Cellarius* a learned father attributeth to it, *acuit memoriam* (saith he) it profiteth y<sup>e</sup> memory. Yea & *Tully* atributeth it for prais to *Archias* y<sup>t</sup> upon any theame he cold versify exte[m]pory. who liketh not of the promptnes of *Ouid*? who not vnworthely cold bost of himself thus *Quicquid conabar dicere versus erat*. who then doothe not wonder at poetry? who thinketh not y<sup>t</sup> it procedeth fro[m] aboue? What made y<sup>e</sup> *Chians* & *Colophonians* fal to such controuersy? Why seke y<sup>e</sup> *Smirnians*, to recouer fro[m] y<sup>e</sup> *Salaminians* the prais of *Homer*? al wold haue him to be of ther city, I hope not for harme, but because of his knoledge. *Themistocles* desireth to be acquainted w<sup>t</sup> those w<sup>c</sup> could best discipher his praises. euen *Marius* himselfe, tho neuer so cruel, acco[m]pted of *Plotinus* poems. what made *Aphricanus* esteme *Ennius*? why did Alexander giue prais to *Achilles* but for y<sup>e</sup> prayes which he found writte[n] of hym by *Homer*? Why estemed *Pompie* so mucche of *Theophanes Mitiletus*, or Brutus so greatlye the wrytinges of *Accius*? *Fuluius* was so great a favorer of poetry, that after the Aetolian warres, he attibuted to the Muses those spoiles that belonged to *Mars*. in all the Romaine conquest, hardest thou euer of a slayne Poete? nay rather the Emperours honored them, beautified them with benefites, & decked their sanctuaries [with] sacrifice. *Pindarus* colledg is not fit for spoil of *Alexander* ouercome, nether feareth poetry y<sup>e</sup> persecutors sword. what made *Austin* so much affectate y<sup>e</sup> heavenly fury? not folly, for if I must needes speake, *ill[u]d non ausim affirmare*, his zeale was, in setting vp of the house of God, not in affectate eloquence, he wrot not, he accompted not, he honored not, so much that (famous poetry) whyche we prayse, without cause, for if it be true that *Horace* reporteth in his book *de arte poetica*, all the answeares of the Oracles weare in verse. among the precise Jewes, you shall find Poetes, and for more maiestie *Sibilla* will prophesie in verse. *Hiroaldus* can witnes with me, that *David* was a poet, and that his vayne was in imitating (as S. Jerom witnesseth) *Horace, Flaccus, & Pindarus*, somtimes his verse runneth in an *Iambus* foote, anone he hath recourse to

a *Saphier vaine*, and *aliquando, semipede ingreditur*. Ask *Iosephus*, and he will tel you that Esay, Job and Salomon voutsafed poetical practises, for (if *Origen* and he fault [not]) theyre verse was *Hexameter, and pentameter*. Enquire of *Cassiodorus*, he will say that all the beginning of Poetry proceeded from the Scripture. *Paulinus* tho the byshop of *Nolanum* yet voutsafe the name of a Poet, and *Ambrose* tho he be a patriake in *mediolanu[m]* loveth versifying *Beda* shameth not y<sup>e</sup> science that shamelesse *Gosson* misliketh. reade ouer *Lactantius*, his prooffe is by poetry. & *Paul* voutsafeth to ouerlookeye *Epimenides* let the Apostle preach at Athens he disdaineth not of *Aratus* authorite. it is a pretye sentence yet not so prety as pithy, *Poeta nascitur orator fit* as who should say, Poetry commeth from aboue from a heauenly seate of a glorious God vnto an excellent creature man, an orator is but made by exercise. for if wee examine well what befell *Ennius* amonge the Romans, and *Hesiodus* among his contrimen the Gretians, ho[w]e they came by theyr knowledge whence they receued their heauenly furye, the first will tell us that sleping upon the Mount of *Parnassus* he dreamed that he recei[u]ed the soule of *Homer* into him, after the which he became a Poete, the next will assure you that it commeth not by labor, nether that night watchings bringeth it, but y<sup>t</sup> we must haue it thence whence he fetched it w<sup>c</sup> was (he saith ) fro[m] a wel of y<sup>e</sup> Muses w<sup>c</sup> *Cabelimus* calleth *Poru[m]*, a draught whereof drewe him to his perfection, so of a shephard he becam an eloque[n]t poet. wel the[n] you see y<sup>t</sup> it commeth not by excise of play making, nether insertio[n] of gawds, but from nature, and from aboue: and I hope y<sup>t</sup> *Aristotle* hath sufficiently taught you: that *Natura nihil fecit frustra*. *Perseus* was made a poete *divino furore percitus*. and whereas the poets were sayde to call for the Muses helpe ther mening was no other as *Iodocus Badius* reporteth, but to call for heauenly inspiration from aboue to direct theyr endeours. Nether were it good for you to sette light by the name of a poet since y<sup>e</sup>oftspring from whence he com[m]eth is so heauenly. *Sibilla* in hir answers to *Aeneas* against hir will as the poet telleth vs was possessed w<sup>t</sup> thys fury, ye wey consideratly but of the writing of poets, and you shall se that whe[n] ther matter is most heavenly, their stile is most loftye, a strange token of the wonderfull efficacy of the same. I would make a long discourse vnto you of *Platoes* 4. furies but I leue them it pitieth me to bring a rodd of your owne making to beate you wythal. But mithinks while you heare thys I see you swallowe down your owne spittle for reuenge, where (God wot) my wryting sauoreth not of enuye. In this case I coulde wyshe you fare farre otherwyse from your foe. If you please I wyll become your frende and see what a potion or receypt I can frame fytt for your diet. and herein I will proue my selfe a practiser, before I purdge you, you shall take a preparatiue to disburden your heauy hedde of those grose follis you haue conceued: but the receipt is bitter, therefore I would wyshe you first to taste[n] your mouth with the Suger of persevera[n]ce: for ther is a cold collop y<sup>t</sup> must downe your throate yet such a one as shall chau[n]ge your complection quit. I wyll have you therefore to tast first of y<sup>t</sup> cold river *Phricus*, in *Thratia* which as *Aristotle* reporteth changeth blacke into white, or of *Scamandar*, which maketh gray yalow y<sup>t</sup> is of an env[i]ous ma[n] a wel minded person, reprehending of zeale y<sup>t</sup> wherin he hath sinned by folly, & so being preparad, thy purgation wyll worke more easy, thy vnderstandinge wyll be more perfit, thou shalt blush at thy abuse, and reclaime thy selfe by force of argument so will thou proue of clene recouered patie[n]t, and I a perfecte practiser in framing so good a potion. this broughte to passe I with the wil seeke out some abuse in poetry, which I will seeke for to disproue by reason first pronounced by no smal birde euen *Aristotle* himself[.] *Poetae* (sayth he) *multa mentiuntur* and to further his opinion seuer *Cato* putteth in his censure.

*Admiranda canunt sed non credenda poetæ*. These were sore blemishes if obiected rightly and heare you may say the streme run[n]es a wronge, but if it be so by you[r] leve I wyll bring him shortly in his right chanel. My answeere shall not be my owne, but a learned father shall tell my tale, if you wil know

his name men call him *Lactantius*: who in hys book *de diuinis institutionibus* reesoneth thus. I suppose (sayth he) Poets are full of credit, and yet it is requesite for those that wil vnderstand them to be admonished, that among them, not onely the name but the matter beareth a show of that it is not: for if sayth he we examine the Scriptures litterallye nothing will seeme more falls, and if we way Poetes wordes and not ther meaning, our learning in them wilbe very mene you see nowe that your *Catoes* iudgement [i]s of no force and that all your obiections you make agaynst poetry be of no valor yet lest you should be altogether discouraged I wyll helpe you forwarde a little more, it pities me to consider the weaknes of your cause I wyll therefore make your strongest reason, more stro[n]g and after I haue builded it vp destroy it agayn. Poets you confesse are eloquent but you reprove them in their wantonnesse, they write of no wisdom, you may say their tales are friuolous, they prophane holy thinges, they seeke nothing to the perfection of our soules. Theyr practise is in other things of lesse force: to this obiection I answer no otherwise then Horace doeth in his booke *de arte poetica* where he wryteth thus.

*Silvestres homines sacer interpresque deorum  
Sedibus, et victu fædo deterruit orpheus.  
Dictus ob hoc lenire Tigres rabidosque leones.  
Dictus et Amphion Thebanæ condit vrbis  
Saxa mouere sono, testudius et prece blanda  
Ducere quo vellet fuit hoc sapientia quondam.  
Publica priuatis secernere sacra prophanis.  
Concubitu prohibere vago, dare Iura maritis,  
O pida moliri leges, niscidere ligno.*

The holy spokesman of the Gods  
With heaue[n]ly Orpheus hight:  
Did driue the savage men from wods,  
And made them liue aright.  
And therefore is sayd the Tygers fierce,  
And Lyons full of myght  
To overcome: *Amphion*, he  
Was sayd of Theabs the founder,  
Who by his force of Lute dyd cause  
The stones to part a sonder.  
And by his speach did them drect,  
Where he would have them staye:  
This wisdom this was it of olde  
All strife for to allay.  
To giue to eury man his owne,  
To make the Gods be knowne  
To drive each lecher from the bed,  
That never was his owne.  
To teach the law of mariage,  
The way to build a towne,

For to engraue these lawes in woods  
 This was these mens renowne.

I cannot leave *Tirtheus* pollicy untouched, who by force of his pen could incite men to the defence of theyr countrye. If you require of y<sup>e</sup> Oracle of *Apollo* what successe you shal haue: *respondet bellicoso numine*. o now you see your obiections my answers, you behold or may perceiue manifestlye that Poetes were the first raysors of cities, prescribers of good lawes, mayntayners of religion, disturbors of the wicked, advancers of the wel disposed, inve[n]tors of laws, and lastly the very fotpaths to knowledg. & vndersta[n]ding ye if we shold beleue Herome he wil make *Platos* exiles honest me[n], & his pestiferous poets good preachers: for he accounteth *Orpheus Museus & Linus, Christians*, therefore *Virgil* (in his 6 boke of *Æneidos* wher he lernedly describeth y<sup>e</sup> journey of *Æneas* to *Elis[i]um*) asserteneth us, y<sup>t</sup> among them y<sup>t</sup> were ther for the zeale they beare toward there country, ther wer found *Quinque pij vates et Phæbo* digna loquti but I must answer al obiectio[n]s, I must fil every nooke. I must arme myself now, for here is the greatest bob I can gather out of your booke forsoth *Ouids* abuses, in descrybing whereof you labour very vehementlye termi[n]g him letcher, & in his person dispraise all poems, but shall on mans follye destroye a univer[sall] co[m]modity? What gift what perfit knowledg hath ther bin, emong y<sup>e</sup> professors of w<sup>c</sup> ther hath not bin a bad on[,] the Angels have sinned in heaue[n], *Ada[m]* & *Eve* in earthly paradise, emo[n]g y<sup>e</sup> holy apostles vngratious Iudas. I reson not y<sup>t</sup> al poetes are holy but I affirme y<sup>t</sup> poetry is a heave[n]ly gift, a perfit gift then which I know not greater plesure. & surely if I may speak my mind I thi[n]k we shall find but few poets if it were exactly wayd what they oughte to be your *Muscovian* straungers, your *Scithian* monsters wonderful by one *Eurus* brought upon one stage in ships made of Sheepskins, wyll not proue you a poet nether your life alow you to bee of that learning if you had wisely wayed y<sup>e</sup> abuse of poetry if you had reprehended y<sup>e</sup> foolish fantasis of our poets *nomine non re* which they bring forth on stage, my self wold have liked of you & allowed your labor. But I perceiue nowe y<sup>t</sup> all red colloured stones are not Rubies, nether is every one *Alexandar* y<sup>t</sup> hath a stare in his cheke, al lame men are not *Vulcans*, nor hooke nosed men, *Ciceroes* nether each professor a poet, I abhore those poets that savor of ribaldry, I will with the zealous admit the expullcion of suche enormities poetry is dispraised not for the folly that is in it, but for the abuse whiche manye ill Writers couller by it. Beleeeve me the magestrats may take advise, (as I knowe wisely can) to roote out those odde rymes which runnes in euery rascals mouth. Sovoring of rybaldry, those foolishe ballets, that are admitted, make poets good and godly practises to be refused. I like not of a wicked *Nero* that wyll expell *Lucan*, yet admit I of a zealous governour that wil seke to take away the abuse of poetry. I like not of an angry *Augustus* which wyll banishe *Ovid* for envy, I love a wise Senator, which in wisdom wyll correct him and with advise burne his follyes: unhappy were we yf like poore *Scaurus* we shoulde find *Tiberius* that wyll put us to death for a tragedy making but most blessed were we if we might find a iudge that seuerely would amende the abuses of Tragedies but I leave the reformation thereof to more wyser than my selfe, And retourne to Gosson whom I wyshe to be fully perswaded in this cause, and therefore I will tell hym a prety story, which *Iustin* wryteth in the prayse of poetrye. The *Lacedemonians* when they had loste many men in diuers incountrys with theyr enemyes soughte to the Oracles of *Apollo* requiring how they myght recouer theyr losses, it was answered that they mighte ouercome if so be that they could get an *Athenian* gouernor, whereupon they sent Orators vnto the *Athenians* humbly requesting them that they woulde appoynt them out one of theyr best captaynes: the *Athenians* owinge them old malice, sent them in steede of a *soldado vechio* a scholar of the Muses: in steede of a worthy warrior a poore poet; for

a couragious *Themistocles* a silly *Tirrhethus*, a man of great eloquence and singuler wytte, yet was he but a lame lymde captaine more fit for the co[u]che then the field, the *Lacedemonians* trusting the Oracle, receued the champion, and fearing the government of a stranger, made him ther Citizen. which once don and he obteneing the Dukdome, he assended the theater, and ther very learnedly, wyshing them to forget theyr folly, and to thinke on victory they being acuate by his eloque[n]ce waging battail won the fieelde. Lo now you see that the framing of common welthes, & defence thereof, proceedeth from poets, how dare you therefore open your mouth against them? how can you disprays the preseruer of a countrie? you compare *Homer* to *Methecus*, cookes to Poetes, you shame your selfe in your vnreverent similituds, you may see your follies *verbum sapienti sat*: whereas *Homar* was an ancient poet, you disalow him, and accompte of those of lesser judgement. *Strabo* calleth poetry, *primam sapientiam*. *Cicero* in his firste of his *Tusculans* attributeth y<sup>e</sup> invencion of philosophy, to poets. God keepe us from a Plato that should expel such men. pittie were it that the memory of these valiant victours should be hidden, which haue dyed in the behalfe of ther countrys: miserable wereour state yf we wanted those worthy volumes of poetry[.] could the learned beare the losse of *Homer*? or our younglings the wrytings of *Mantuan*? or you your volumes of historyes? beleue me yf you had wanted your Mysteries of nature, & your stately storyes, your booke would have scarce bene fedde wyth matter. if therefore you will deale in things of wisdome, correct the abuse, honor the science, renewe your schoole, crye out over Hierusalem wyth the prophet, the woe that he pronounced, wish the teacher to reforme hys lyfe, that his weake scholler may proue the wyser, cry out against unsaciabie desyre in rich men, tel the house of Iacob theyr iniquities, lament with the Apostle the want of laborers in the Lords vineyards, cry out on those dume doggs that will not barke, wyll the mightye that they overmayster not the poore, and put downe the beggers prowde heart by thy perswasions. Thunder oute with the Prophete *Micha* the mesage of the L O R D, and with hym desyre the Iudges to heare thee, the Prynces of Iacob to hearken to thee, and those of the house of Israell to understande then tell them that they abhorre iudgement, and prevent equitie, that they iudge for rewardes, and that theyr priests teach for hyre, and the prophets thereof prophesie for money, and yet that they saye the Lord is wyth them, and that no evil can befall them, breath out the sweete promises to the good, the curses to the badde, tell them that a peece muste needes haue a warre, and that God can raise up another *Zenacharib*, shew the[m] that Salomons kingdome was but for a season and that aduersitie cometh ere we espye it. these be the songs of Sion, these be those rebukes which you oughte to add to abuses[;] recover the body, for it is sore, the appendices thereof will easely be reformed, if that wear at a staye, but other matters call me and I must not staye upon this onely, there is an easier task in hand for me, and that which if I may speak my conscience, fitteth my vain best, your second abuse Gosson, your second abuse your disprayses of Musik, which you vnaduisedly terme pyping: that is it wyll most byte you, what so is a overstay of life, is displesant to your person, musik may not stand in your presence, whereas all the learned Philosophers haue alwayes had it in reuerence. *Homar* commendeth it highly, referring to the prayses of the Gods whiche Gosson accompteth folishnesse, looke upon the harmonie of the Heavens? hange they not by Musike? doe not the *Spheares* moue? the *primus* motor governe, be not they *inferiora corpora* affected *quadam sumpathia* and agreement? howe can we measure the debilitie of the patient but by the disordered motion of the pulse? is not man worse accompted of when he is most out of tune? is there any thinge that more affecteth the sence? doth there any pleasure more acuat our understanding. can the wonders y<sup>t</sup> hath wroughte and which you your selfe confesse no more moue you? it fitteth well nowe that the learned have sayd, *musica requirit generosum animu[m]* which since it is far from you, no maruel though you favor not that profession. It is reported of the *Camelion* that shee can change her selfe unto all coollors saue whyte, and you can accompte of all thinges saue such as have



honesty. *Plutarch* your good Mayster may bare me witnes, that the ende whereto Musick was, will proove it prayes worthy, O Lord howe maketh it a man to remember heauenly things. to wo[n]der at the works of the creator, *Eloquence* can stay the souldiars sworde from slayinge an Orator, and shall not musicke be magnified which not onely saueth the bodye but is a comfort to the soule? David reioyseth singeth and prayeth the Lorde by the Harpe, the Simbale is not removed from his sanctuary, the Aungels syng *gloria in excelsis*. Surely the imagination in this present instant, calleth me to a deepe consideration of my God. looke for wonders where musike worketh, and wher harmonie is ther followeth incredible delectation. The bowels of the earth yeld, where the instrument soundeth and *Pluto* cannot keepe *Proserpina* if *Orpheus* recorde. The Seas shall not swallowe *Arion* whilst he singeth, nether shall he perish while he harpeth, a doleful tuner yf a diing musition can moue a Monster of y<sup>e</sup> sea, to mourne. A Dolphin respectet a heavenly recorde. call your selfe home therefore and reclayme thys follye, it is to foule to bee admitted, you may not mayntaine it. I hadd well hoped you woulde in all these thynges haue wiselye admytted the thyng, and disalowe naughte but the abuse, but I see your mynde in youre wrytinge was to penn somewhat you knowe not what, and to confyrme it I wot not howe, so that yourselfe hath hatched vs an Egge yet so that it hath blest us wyth a monsterus chickin, both wythoute hedde, and also tayle, lyke the Father, full of imperfection and lesse zeale. Well marke yet a lyttle more, beare with me though I be bytter, my loue is never the lesse for that I haue learned of *Tullye*, that *Nulla remedia tam faciunt dolorem quam qæ sunt salutaria*, the sharper medycine the better it cures, the more you see your follye, the sooner may you amend it. Are not the straines in Musike to tickle and delyght the eare? are not our warlike instruments to move men to valor? You confess they mooue us, but yet they delight not our eares, I pray you whence grew that poynt of Phylosophy? it is more then ever my Maister taught mee, that a thyng of sounde shoulde not delyghte the eare. belyke yee suppose that men are monsters, withoute eares, or else I thynke you wyll saye they heare with their heeles, it may bee so; for indeede when wee are delighted with Musike, it maketh our heart to scypp for ioye, and it maye bee perhaps by assending from the heele to the hygher partes, it may moue us, good policie in sooth, this was of your owne coyning, your mother never taught it you, but I wyll not deale by reason of philosophye wyth you for that confound your senses, but I can asure you this one thinge, that this principle will make the wiser to mislike your invention, it had bene a fitter iest for your howlet in your playe, then an orname[n]t in your booke. but since you wrote of abuses we may licence you to lye a little, so y<sup>e</sup> abuse will be more manifest. lord with how goodly a cote have you clothed your conceiptes, you abound in storyes but impertinent, they bewray your reeding but not your wisdom would God they had bin well aplyed. But now I must play the musitian right nolesse buggs now come in place but pauions and mesures, dumps & fancies, & here growes a great question what musick *Homer* vsed in curing y<sup>e</sup> diseased gretians, it was no dump you say, and so think I, for y<sup>t</sup> is not apliable to sick men, for it favoereth Malancholie. I am sure, it was no mesure, for in those days they were not such good da[n]sers for soth the[n] what was it? if you require me, if you name me the instrume[n]t, I wyl tel you what was y<sup>e</sup> musik. Meanwhile a gods name let us both dout, y<sup>t</sup> is no part of our saluation to know what it was nor how it went? when I speak with *Homer* next you shall knowe his answeare.

But you can not be content to erre but you must maintain it to. *Pithagoras* you say allowes not that musik is decern[e]d by eares, but hee wisheth us to assend vnto the sky & marke that harmony. surely this is but one doctors opinion (yet I dislike not of it) but to speake my conscience my thinkes musike best pleaseth me when I heare it, for otherwise the catter walling of Cats, were it not for harmonie: should more delight mine eies then the tunable voyces of men. but these things are not the chieftest poynts you shote

at, thers somewhat els sticketh in your stomak God graunt it hurt you not, from the daunce you run to the pype, from 7. to 3. which if I shoulde add I beleewe I could wrest out halfe a score inco[n]ueniences more out of your booke. our pleasant consortes do discomfort you much, and because you lyke not thereof they arr discomendable, I have heard it is good to take sure fotinge when we trauel vnknown countryes, for when we wade aboue our shoe latchet *Appelles* wyll reprehende us for coblers, if you had bene a father in musick and coulde have decerned of tunes I would perhaps have likt your opinion sumwhat where now I abhor it, if you wear a professor of that practise I would quickly perswade you, that the adding of strings to our instrument make the sound more hermonious, and that the mixture of Musike maketh a better concent. But to preach to unskillfull is to perswad y<sup>e</sup> brut beastes, I wyl not stand long in thys point although the dignytye thereof require a volume, but howe learned men have esteemed this heauenly gift, if you please to read you shall see. *Socrates* in hys old age will not disdain to learn y<sup>e</sup> science of Music amo[n]g children, he can abide their correctio[n]s to, so much accou[n]ted he that, w<sup>t</sup> you contemn, so profitable thought he y<sup>t</sup>, w<sup>t</sup> you mislike. *Solon* wil esteme so much of y<sup>e</sup> knowledg of singing, y<sup>t</sup> he wil soner forget to dye the[n] to sing. *Pithagoras* likes it so wel y<sup>t</sup> he wil place it in *Greace*, and *Aristoxenus* will saye y<sup>t</sup> the soule is musik. *Plato* (in his booke *de legibus*) will affirme that it can not be handled without all sciences, the *Lacedemonians* and *Cretensis* wer sturred to warre by Anapestus foote, and *Timotheus* with the same incensed kinge *Alexander* to batel, ye yf *Boetyus* fitten not, on *Tauromitanus* (by this *Phrigian* sound) hastened to burn a house wher a stru[m]pet was hidden. so little abideth this heave[n]ly harmony our humane filthines y<sup>t</sup> it worketh wonders as you may perceve most manifestly by the history of *Agamemnon* who going to y<sup>e</sup> Troian war, left at home a musitian y<sup>t</sup> playde the *Dorian* tune, who w<sup>t</sup> the foote *Spondeus* preserued his wife *Clitemnestra* in chastity & honesty, wherfore she cold not bee deflowred by *Ægistus*, before he had wickedly slain the musitian. so y<sup>t</sup> as the magnetes draweth Iorne, & the Theamides (w<sup>c</sup> groweth in *Ægypt*) driueth it away: so musik calleth to it selfe al honest plesures, & dispelleth fro[m] it all vaine misdemanors. y<sup>e</sup> matter is so ple[n]tiful that I cannot find where to end, as for beginnings they be infinite, but these shall suffice. I like not to long circu[m]stances wher les doe serue. only I wish you to accompt wel of this heave[n]ly concent, w<sup>c</sup> is ful of perfetcio[n], proceding fro[m] aboue, drawing his original fro[m] the motion of y<sup>e</sup> stars, fro[m] the agrement of the planets, fro[m] the whisteling winds & fro[m] al those celestial circles, where is ether perfit agreeme[n]t or any *Sumphonia*, but as I like musik so admit I not of thos that deprauē the same your pipers are as odius to mee as your selfe, nether alowe I your harpinge merye beggers: althoughe I knewe you my selfe a professed play maker, & a paltry actor. since which y<sup>e</sup> windmill of your with hath but tornd so long wyth the wynde of folly, that I fear me we shall see the dogg returne to his vomit, and the clensed sow to her myre, and the reformed schoolemayster to hys old teaching of follye. beware it be not so, let not yo[u]r booke be a blemish to your own profession. Correct not musik therfore whe[n] it is praies worthy, least your worthlesse misliking bewray your madnes. way the abuse and that is matter sufficient to serue a magistrates animaduersion. heere may you aduise well, and if you haue any stale rethorik flourish vpon thys text, the abuse is, when that is applyed to wantonnesse, which was created to shewe Gods worthinesse. When y<sup>e</sup> shamefull resorts of shameles curtezanēs in sinful sonnets, shall prophane vertue these are no light sinnes, these make many goodmen lament, this causeth parents hate there right borne children, if this were reformed by your policie I should esteme of you as you wys. I feare me it fareth far other wise, *latet anguis in herba*, vnder your fare show of conscience take heede you cloake not your abuse, it were pittie the learned should be ouerseene in your simplenesse, I feare me

you will be politick wyth *Machauel* not zealous as a prophet. Well I will not stay long vpon the abuse, for that I see it is to manifest, the remembraunce thereof is discommendable among the godly, and I my self am very loth to bring it in memory. to the wise aduised reader these mai suffice, to flee the *Crocodel* before hee commeth, lest we be bitten, and to auoyde the abuse of musik, since we se it, lest our misery be more When we fall into folly. *Ictus piscator sapit*, you heare open confession, these abuses are disclaimed by our Gosson, he is sory that hee hath so lewdly liued, & spent the oyle of his perfection in vnsauery Lampes. he hath *Argus* eyes to watch him now, I wold wish him beware of his Islington, and such lyke resorts, if now he retourne from his lyfe to his old folly, Lord how foule wil be his fall. men know more then they speak if they be wise, I feare me some wil blushe that readeth this, if he be biten, wold God Gosson at that instant might haue a watchman. but I see it were nedelesse, perhaps he hath *Os durum*, and then what auayleth their presence. Well, I leaue this poynt til I know further of your mynde, mean while I must talke a little wyth you about y<sup>e</sup> thyrd abuse, for the later cosens of pypers, theyr names (as you terme them be players, and I think as you doe for your experience is sufficient to enforme me. but here I must loke about me, *quacunq; te tigris vlcus est*, here is a task that requireth a long treatis, and what my opinion is of players ye now shall plainly perceue. I must now serch my wits, I see this shall passe throughe many seuere sensors handling, I must aduise me what I write, and write that I would wyssh. I way wel the seriousnes of the cause, and regarde very much the Iudges of my endeour, whom if I could I would perswade, that I woulde not nourish abuse, nether mayntaine that which should be an vniuersall dismomoditye. I hope they wil not iudge before they read, nether condemne without occasion. The wisest wil alwais carry to eares, in y<sup>t</sup> they are to discerne two indifferent causes, I meane not to hold you in suspe[n]c (seuere Iudges) if you gredely expect my verdit brefely this is it.

*Demostines* thoughte not that *Phillip* shoulde ouercome when he reprobud hym, nether feared *Cicero Antonies* force, when in the Senate he rebuked hym. To the ignorant ech thinge that is vnknowne semes vnprofitable, but a wise man can foresee and prayse by prooffe. *Pythagoras* could spy out in womens eyes two kind of teares, the one of grefe the other of disceit: & those of iudgement can from the same flower suck honey with the bee, from whence the Spyder ( mean the ignorant) take their poison. Men y<sup>t</sup> haue knowledge what comedies & tragedis be, wil comend the[m], but it is sufferable in the folish to reprove that they know not, becaus ther mouthes wil hardly be stopped. Firste therefore if it be not tedious to Gosson to harken to the lerned, the reder shall perceiue the antiquity of playmaking, the inuentors of comedies, and therewithall the vse and comoditaye of the[m]. So that in y<sup>e</sup> end I hope my labor shall be liked, and the learned wil soner conceue his folly. For tragedies and comedies *Donate* the gramarian sayth, they wer inuented by lerned fathers of the old time to no other purpose, but to yeelde prayse vnto God for a happy haruest, or plentifull yeere, and that thys is trewe the name of Tragedye doeth importe, for if you consider whence it came, you shall perceiue (as *Iodocus Badius* reporteth) that it drewe his original of *Tragos*, *Hircus*, & *Ode*, *Cantus* (so called) for that the actors thereof had in rewarde for theyr labour, a Gotes skynne fylled with wyne. You see then that the fyrste matter of Tragedies was to giue thankes and prayses to G O D, and a gratefull prayer of the countrymen for a happye haruest, and this I hope was not discommendable. I knowe you will iudge is farthest from abuse. but to wade farther, thys fourme of inuention being found out, as the dayes wherein it was vsed did decay, and the world grew to more perfection, so y<sup>t</sup> witt of the younger sorte became more riper, for they leauing this fourme, inuented an other, in the which they altered the nature but not the name: for so[n]nets in prayse of y<sup>e</sup> gods, they did set forth the sower fortune of many exiles, the miserable fal of haples princes, the reuinous decay of many cou[n]tryes, yet not content with this, they presented the liues of *Satyers*, so that they might

wiselye, vnder the abuse of that name, discover the follies of many theyr folish fellow citesens: and those monsters were then, as our parasites are now adayes: suche as with pleasure reprehended abuse. as for commedies because they bear a more plesantur vain, I wil leaue the other to speake of them. *Tully* defines them thus. *Comedia* (sayth he) is *Imitatio vitæ, speculum consuetudinis, et imago veritatis*, and it is sayde to be termed of *Comai* (emongste the Greekes) whiche signifieth *Pagos*, and *Ode, Cantus*: for that they were exercised in the fielde. they had they beginning wyth tragedies, but their matter was more plessaunt, for they were suche as did reprehend, yet *quodam lepore*. These first very rudely were inuented by *Susarion Bullus*, and *Magnes* to auncient poets, yet so that they were meruelous profitable to the reclamynge of abuse: whereupon *Eupolis* with *Cratinus*, & *Aristophanes* began to write, and with ther eloquenter vaine and perfection of stil, dyd more seuerely speak agaynst the abuses the[n] they: which *Horace* himselfe witnesseth. For sayth he ther was no abuse but these men reprehended it. a thefe was loth to be seene one there spectacle. a coward was neuer present at theyr assemblies. a backbiter abhord that company, and I my self could not ha[u]e blamed your (Gosson) for exempting yourselfe from this theater, of troth I should haue lykt your pollicy. These therefore, these wer they that kept men in awe, these restrayned the vnbridled cominaltie, whereupon *Horace* wisely sayeth,

*Oderunt peccare boni, virtutis maore,  
Oderunt peccare mali, formidine penæ.*

The good did hate al sinne for vertues loue,  
The bad for feare of shame did sin remoue.

Yea would god our realme could light vppon a *Lucillius*, then should the wicked bee poynted out from the good, a harlot would seeke no harbor at stage plais, lest she shold here her owne name growe in question: and the discourse of her honesty cause her to be hated of the godly. As for you I am sure of this one thing, he would paint you in your players orname[n]ts, for they best becam you. But as these sharpe corrections were disanulde in Rome when they grewe to more licenciousnes: So I fear me if we shold practise it in our dayes, the same intertainmente would followe. But in ill reformed Rome what comedies now? a poets wit can correct, yet not offend. *Philemon* will mitigate the corrections of sinne, by repruing them couertly in shadowes. *Menandar* dare not offend y<sup>e</sup> Senate openly, yet wants he not a parasite to touch them priuely. *Terence* wyl not report the abuse of harlots vnder there proper stile, but he can finely girde the[m] vnder the person of *Thais*. Hee dare not openly tell the Rich of theyr couetousnesse and seuerity towards their children, but he can controle them vnder the person of *Durus Demeas*. he must not shew the abuse of noble yong gentilmen vnder theyr owne title, but he wyll warne them in the person of *Pamphilus*. wil you learne to know a parasite? Looke vpon his *Dauus*. wyl you seke the abuse of courtly flatterers? Behold *Gnato*: and if we had some Satericall Poetes nowe a dayes to penn our comedies, that might be admitted of zeale to discypher the abuses of the worlde in the person of notorious offenders. I know we should wisely ryd our assemblyes of many of your brotherhod, but because you may haue a full scope to reprehende, I wyll ryp vp a rableme[n]t of playmakers, whose wrightinges I would wishe you ouerlooke, and seeke out theyr abuses. can you mislike of *Cecillius*? or dispise *Plinius*? or amend *Neuius*? or find fault with *Licinius*? where in offended *Actilius*? I am sure you can not but wonder at *Terrence*? wil it please you to like of *Turpelius*? or alow of *Trabea*? you muste needs make much of *Ennnius* for ouerloke al thes, & you shal find ther volums ful of wit if you examine the[m]: so if

you had no other masters, you might deserue to be a doctor, wher now you are but a folishe scholemaister. but I wyll deale wyth you verye freendlye, I wil resolue eueri doubt that you find. Those instrumentes which you mislike in playes grow of auncient custome, for when *Rossius* was an Actor, be sure that as with his teares he moued affections, so the Musitian in the Theater before the entrance, did mornefully record it in melody (as *Seruius* reporteth). The actors in Rome had also gay clothing & euery ma[n]s aparel was apliable to his part & person. The old men in white, y<sup>e</sup> rich men in purple, the parasite disguisedly, the yong men in gorgeous coulours, ther wanted no deuise nor good iudgeme[n]t of y<sup>e</sup> comedy, whe[n]c I suppose our players, both drew ther plais and fourme of garments. as for the appointed dayes wherin comedies wer shown, I reede that the Romaynes appoynted them on the festival dayes, in such reputation were they had at that time. Also *Ioducus Badius* will ascertain you that the actors for shewing pleasure receued some profite. but let me apply those dayes to ours, their actors to our players, their autors to ours. Surely we want not a *Rossius*, nether at ther great scarsity of *Terrences* professio[n], but yet our men dare not now a dayes presume so much, as the old Poets might, and therefore they apply ther writing to the peoples vain, wheras if in the beginning they had ruled, we should now adaies haue found smal spectacles of folly. But (of truth) I must confes with *Aristotle*, that men are greatly delighted with imitation, and that it were good to bring those things on stage, that were altogether tending to vertue: all this I admit, and hartely wysh, but you say vnlesse the thinge be taken away the vice will continue, nay I say if the style were changed the practise would profit. And I thinke our theaters fit, that *Ennius* seeing our wa[n]ton *Glicerium* may rebuke her, if our poetes will nowe become seure, and for prophane things write of vertue: you I hope should see a reformed state in those thinges, which I feare me yf they were not, the idle hedded commones would worke more mischief. I wish as zealously as the best that all abuse of playenge were abolished, but for the thing, the antiquitie causeth me to allow it, so it be vsd as it should be. I cannot allow the prophaning of the Sabaoth, I praise your reprehension in that, you did well in discommending the abuse, and surely I wysh that that folly wer disclaymed, it is not to be admitted, it maks those sinne, which perhaps if it were not, would haue binne present at a good sermon. it is in the Magistrate to take away that order, and appoynt it otherwyse. but sure it were pittie to abolish y<sup>t</sup> which hath so great vertue in it, because it is so abused. The Germanes when the vse of preaching was forbidden them, what helpe had they I pray you? forsoth the learned were fayne couertly in comodies to declare abuses, and by playing to incite the people to vertues, whe[n] they might heare no preaching. Those were lamentable dayes you will say, and so thinke I, but was not this I pray you a good help in reforming the decaying Gospel? You see then how comedies (my seure iudges) are requestit both for ther antiquity, and for ther commoditye, for the dignity of the wrighters, and the pleasure of the hearers. But after your discrediting of playmaking, you salue vppon the sore somewhat, and among many wise workes ther be some that fitte your vaine: the practise of parasites is one, which I meruel it likes you so well since it bites you so sore. but sure in that I like your iudgement, and for the rest to, I approue your wit, but for the pigg of your own sow, (as you terme it) assuredly I must discommend your verdit, tell me Gosson was all your owne you wrote there: did you borow nothing of your neyghbours? but of what booke patched you out *Ciceros* oration? whence fet you *Catulins* inuectiue? Thys is one thing, *alienam olet lucernâ non tuam*. So that your helper may wisely reply vpon you with *Virgil*,

*Hos ego versiculos feci tulit alter honores.*

I made these verses other bear the name. Beleue me I should preferr Wilsons, shorte and sweete if I were

iudge, a peece surely worthy prayse, the practise of a good scholler, would the wiser would ouerlooکه that, they may perhaps cull some wisdomه, out of a players toye. Well, as it is wisdomه to commend where the cause requireth, so it is a poynt of folly to praise without deserte. you dislike players very much, theyr dealings be not for your commodity, whom if I myghte aduise they shoulde learne thys of *Iuuenal*.

*Viuendum est recte  
Cum propter plurima, tum his  
Præcipue causis: vt linguas mancipiorum  
Contenas. Na[m] lingua mali pars pessima serui.*

We ought to leade our liues aright,  
For many causes moue.  
Especially for this same cause,  
Wisdomه doth vs behoue.  
That we may set at nough those blames,  
Which seruants to vs lay,  
For why, the tongue of euel slaue,  
Is worst as wisemen euer say.

Methinks I heare some of them verifiing these verses vpon you, if it so be that I hear them, I wil concele it, as for the statute of apparrell and the abuses thereof, I see it manifestly broken, and if I should seeke for example, you cannot but offend my eyes. For if you examine the statuts exactly, a simple cote should be fitted to your backe. We should bereue you of your brauerye, and examine your au[n]cestry, and by profession in respect of y<sup>e</sup> statute, we should find you catercosens with a (but hush), you know my meaning, I must for pitie your credite in that you were once a scholler. you runne farther to Cardrs, dicers, fencers, bowlers, dauncers, and tomblers, whose abuses I wold rebuke with you, had not your self moued other matters. but to eche I say thus, for dicing I wyshe those that know it not to leaue to learn it, and let the fall of others make them wiser. Yf they had an *Alexander* to gouern they shold be punished, and I could wish them not to abuse the lenitie of their prince. *Cicero* for a great blemish reputeth that wich our gentlemen vse for brauery, but *sufficit ista leuiter attigisse*, a word against fencers, & so an end. Whom I wish to beware with *Demonax* lest admitting theyr fencing delightes, they destroy (with the *Athenians*) the alters of peace; by raysing quarrellous causes, they worke vprores: but you and I reprove the[m] in abuse, yet I (for my part) cannot but allow the practise so it be well vsed. As for the filling of our gracious princes cofers with peace, as it pertaineth not to me, because I am none of her receiuors, so men think vnlesse it hath bine lately you haue not bene of her maiesties counsel. But now here as you begin folishly, so surely you end vnlearnedly. Prefer you warre before peace? the sword before the Goune? the rule of a Tyrant before y<sup>e</sup> happy days of our gracious Queen? You know the philosophers are against you, yet dare you stand in handy grips with *Cicero*: you know that force is but an instrume[n]t when counsell fayleth, and if wisdomه win not, farwel warre. Aske *Alphonsus* what counsellors he lyketh of? hee will say his bookes. and hath not I pray you pollicy alwais ouermastered force? who subdued *Hannibal* in his great royaltie? he y<sup>t</sup> durst knock at Rome gates to haue the[m] opened is now become a pray to a sylly senator. *Appius Claidius et senex et cæcus* a father full of wisdomه can releue

the state of decaying Rome. And was it force that subdued *Marius*? or armes that discouered *Catulins* conspiracies? Was it rash reuendg in punishing *Cethegus*? or want of witt in the discouerye of treason? *Cato* can correct himselfe for traueling by Sea, when the land profereth passage, or to be fole hardy in ouer mutch hazard. *Aristotle* accompteth counsell holye, & *Socrates* can terme it the key of certentye. what shall we count of war but wrath, of battel but hastines, and if I did rule (with *Augustus Cæsar*) I woulde refuse these counselors. what made y<sup>e</sup> oracle I pray you accompt of *Calchas* so much? was it not for his wisdom? who doth not like of the governer that had rather meete with *Vnum Nestorem* than *decem Aiaces*? You cannot tame a Lyon but in tyme, neither a Tigres in fewe dayes. Counsell in *Regulus* will preferring the liberty of his country before his lyfe, not remit the deliuey of *Carthaginian* captiues, *Hannibal* shall flesh himselfe on an olde mans carcas, whose wisdom preserued his citye. *Adrian* with letters can gouerne hys legions, and rule peasablye his prouinces by policye. Aske *Siluius Italicus* what peace is and he will say:

*Pax optima rerum quas homini nouisse.  
datum est, pax vna triumphis  
Innumeris potior, pax custodire salutem.  
Et ciues æquare potens.*

No better thing to man did nature  
Euer giue then peace,  
Then which to know no greater ioy  
Can come to our encrease.  
To foster peace is stay of health,  
And keepes the land in ease.

Take cou[n]sell of *Ouid* what sayth he?

*Candida pax homines, trux decet atra feras.*

To men doth heauenly peace pertaine,  
And currish anger fitteth brutish vaine?

Well as I wish it to haue continuance, so I praye God wyth the Prophet it be not abused. and because I think my selfe to haue sufficiently answered that I supposed, I conclude wyth this. God preserue our peacable princes, & confound her enemies. God enlarge her wisdom, that like *Saba* she may seeke after a *Salomon*: God confounde the imaginations of her enemies, and perfit his graces in her, that the daies of her rule may be continued in the bonds of peace, that the house of the chosen Israelites may be maynteyned in happinesse: lastly I frendly bid Gosson farwell, wyshinge him to temper his penn with more discretion.

