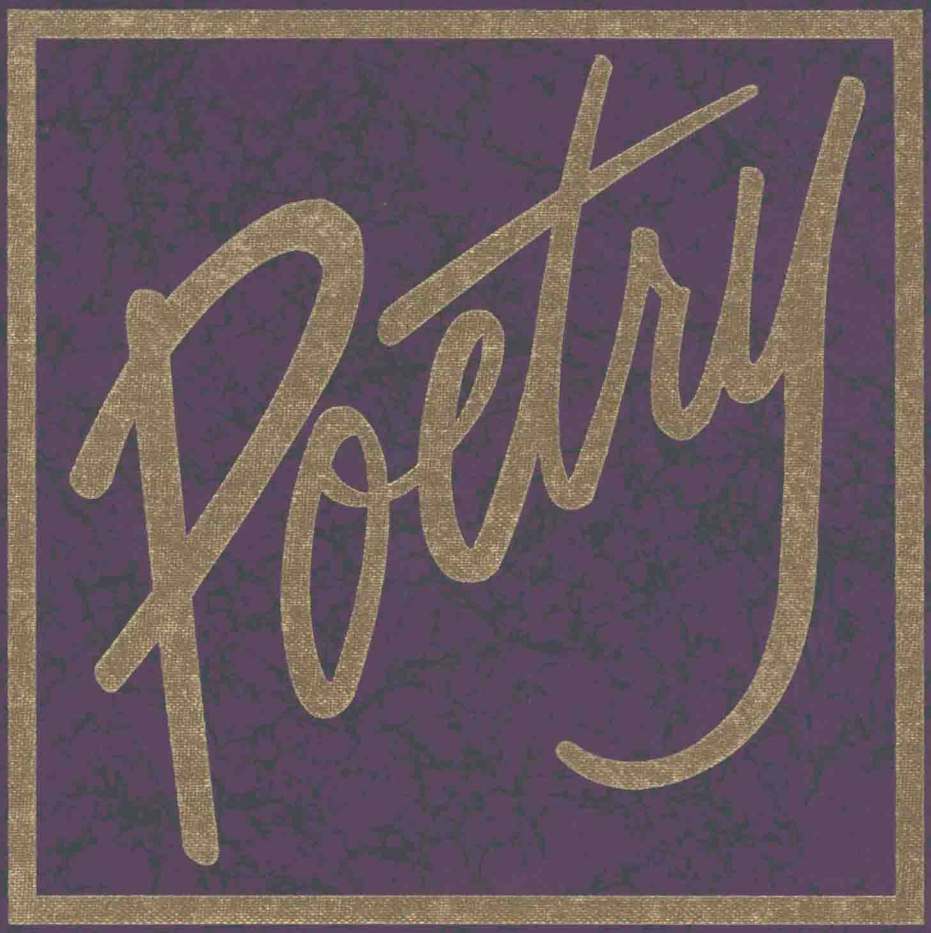

CRITICISM

VOLUME

87

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Poetry Criticism

Excerpts from Criticism of the Works of the Most Significant and Widely Studied Poets of World Literature

Volume 87

Michelle Lee
Project Editor

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Glen, Heather. "Blake's Criticism of Moral Thinking in *Songs of Innocence and of Experience."* In *Interpreting Blake,* edited by Michael Phillips, 32-69. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978. Reprinted in *Poetry Criticism.* Vol. 63, edited by Michelle Lee, 34-51. Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005.

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Contents

Thomas Campion
1567-1620

English poet, composer, playwright, and essayist.

INTRODUCTION

A lyrical poet and composer, Campion is considered unique in English literary and music history based on the fact that he wrote both his own verse as well as the accompanying musical settings for voice and lute. Writing primarily during the early part of the seventeenth century, a period of intense artistic activity by English lutenist composers, Campion published his several *Bookes of Ayres* from 1601 to around 1617, gaining acclaim for the grace and simplicity of his poetry and his skillful blending of music with words.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Campion was born to John Campion and Lucy Searle Campion on February 12, 1567, in St. Andrew's Holborn, England. When Campion was nine years old, his father died; his mother died four years later, in 1580. Orphaned at the age of thirteen, Campion was taken under the care of his stepfather, Augustine Steward, whom his mother had married after John Campion's death. In 1581, Campion was sent to Cambridge University, where he remained for three years. Although he did not earn a degree before he left in 1584, he studied classical literature, an interest that would later influence his writing. In 1586 he entered Gray's Inn to study law, but departed sometime during the late 1580s or early 1590s. At this point, biographical data is scarce. Records indicate that in 1591 he was probably involved in a military mission to Normandy with the Earl of Essex. That same year he published five songs in *Poems and Sonets of Sundrie Other Noblemen and Gentlemen,* and in 1595 published his first full-length work, *Thomae Campiani Poemata,* containing poems in Latin. *A Booke of Ayres* appeared in 1601, establishing Campion as a skilled and adept songwriter. Because of the dedication of the book to Sir Thomas Monson, scholars believe that by this time Campion was writing primarily under the patronage of this significant musical benefactor. The following year, when Campion published *Observations in the Art of English Poesie,* he entered the University of Caen in France. It is believed that he completed his medical degree in 1605, then returned to London to practice medicine. He continued to write poetry and songs, and in 1607, commissioned by James I, began writing masques for court occasions, especially marriages. The unexpected death of Prince Henry in 1612 inspired *Songs of Mourning,* which Campion released in 1613. That same year Campion became embroiled in the inquiry into the murder of poet and courtier Sir Thomas Overbury. Campion's involvement resulted from his connection to Monson, who himself was associated with the individuals directly responsible for the murder. Although both Monson and Campion were eventually released of all charges, Campion's association with his literary patron led to a decline in his prestige; scholars presume that these events caused Campion to remove himself from courtly life. He continued writing and publishing poetry and songs throughout the remainder of his life, including *The Third and Fourth Bookes of Ayres* (c. 1617) and *Thoma Campiani Epigrammatum Libri II* (1619), another collection of Latin poetry. He passed away on March 1, 1620. Scholars speculate that he may have succumbed to the plague, since he wrote his will, died, and was buried all on the same day.

MAJOR WORKS OF POETRY

Campion's five songs that appear in *Poems and Sonets of Sundrie Other Noblemen and Gentlemen* revolve around the theme of courtly love between ladies and knights and reveal the influence of Philip Sidney, especially in Campion's use of wit and his experimental style. The poems, however, are seen as more optimistic than Sidney's. The songs in *A Booke of Ayres* reflect the classicism of the Greeks and Romans and center on themes common to poets of the time, including beauty, love, and despair. Noted for their wit and satirical tone, many of the songs are in the form of epigrams and are compressed, dense, and realistic. One of the most well regarded is "My Sweetest Lesbia," which is considered among the greatest of English lyric poems. In *Observations in the Art of English Poesie,* his treatise on poetry, Campion protested against the abuse of rhymed verse and advanced his view that verse written in English should take as its model the metrical rules of Latin literature, although it should be adapted for the natural stresses of the English language. He also discussed which verse forms would best suit English and outlined a method for establishing the number of syllables in lines of English poetry. *Two Bookes of Ayres,* published around 1613, is divided into the first book, *Contayning*

Divine and Morall Songs, and the second, entitled the *Conceits of Lovers.* Centered on religious themes, the songs in the first book examine the complexity of God's world. Marked by a movement away from the contentment of the world to internal contemplations centered on the intellect and mind, the songs assess earthly life through a religious context, associating earth with darkness and heaven with light. Focused on love, the songs in the second book address the idea of courtly love but do not celebrate it; rather they expose the impediments to love and the suffering of lovers.

Songs of Mourning, written amid the grief that encompassed England after young Prince Henry's death, combines religious meditation with factual and detailed information about Henry—his accomplishments as well as his individual attributes and virtues. Several lyrics are addressed to members of the Royal family, including to Queen Anne, King James, Princess Elizabeth, and Prince Charles, and express what Henry meant to his relations. The songs in the third book of *The Third and Fourth Bookes of Ayres,* published around 1617, are identified as brief and compressed; many turn on a single word of significance, like "good" or "simple." Dedicated to Monson upon his release from imprisonment in connection with the Overbury affair, this third book has been described as "curative," containing verses designed to uplift Monson's mood and celebrate his strength and endurance. Relying heavily on aphorisms, the poems are written in a direct, simple style. Songs in the fourth book are retrospective and include several revisions of songs originally published in *A Booke of Ayres.* Considered "scandalous," many of the poems satirize courtly love and its accompanying "games." Seven songs total from both books three and four are narrated by women and are unique because of the full depiction of the characters. Scholars have indicated that these two books signal a shift in Campion's writings away from the lute song tradition toward a focus on revealing the mind of the speaker and examining the interiority of the human heart. Campion also published two volumes of Latin poetry, *Thomae Campiani Poemata* and *Thoma Campiani Epigrammatum Libri II.* During his lifetime, he wrote more than four hundred Latin poems, many of which are in the form of epigrams.

CRITICAL RECEPTION

Well respected by his contemporaries—even while he stirred up controversy with his poetic theories—Campion had nonetheless fallen out of favor by the mid-1600s. Critical interest resurfaced in the late nineteenth century, when his works were collected and published together for the first time. In general, he is regarded as a secondary Renaissance poet, commended for his stirring verse, complex tone and meter, expressive but precise diction, and simple and economical musical setting. He is also singled out as a skilled Latin poet. One of the largest points of critical discussion is Campion's close union of music with poetry—a critical trend that can be traced to a 1938 study by Miles M. Kastendieck. According to Kastendieck, Campion's lyrics must be studied in relation to the music, and not in isolation. Critics are almost unanimous in their praise of how both forms "cooperate" with one another in Campion's songs, pointing to how words and music match with regard to structure, tone, sound, tempo, phrasing, and emotion. Toward the end of the twentieth century, critical interest widened to include examinations of Campion's poems written in the female persona. These are considered among the finest female monologues, for their well-defined and realistic characterizations and their varieties of personalities. Critical analyses revolve around the layers of voices present in these poems: they are narrated by women, but were intended to be performed by male actors—often in falsetto—and consumed for entertainment by a largely male commercial audience. Some commentators have suggested that Campion attempted to illuminate the sexual experiences of both genders. Other scholars have proposed that he endeavored to manipulate entrenched gender constructs, using a female voice to expose the sexual double standard of the Renaissance, wherein males escaped social disgrace for sexual transgressions while females faced condemnation. Critics are also interested in the relationship between Campion's work and his principles of poetic composition and metrical theories, especially his disapproval of the abuse of rhyme, which he spelled out in his *Observations in the Art of English Poesie.*

PRINCIPAL WORKS

Poetry

Thomae Campiani Poemata. Ad Thamesin. Fragmentum Umbra. Liber Elegiarum. Liber Epigrammatum 1595

A Booke of Ayres, Set foorth to be song to the Lute, Orpherian, and Base Violl [with Philip Rosseter] (songs) 1601

Songs of Mourning: Bewailing the Untimely Death of Prince Henry. Worded by Tho. Campion. And Set Forth to Bee Sung with One Voyce to the Lute, or Violl: by John Coprario (songs) 1613

Two Bookes of Ayres: The First Contayning Divine and Morall Songs: The Second, Light Conceits of Lovers (songs) c. 1613

The Third and Fourth Bookes of Ayres c. 1617
Thoma Campiani Epigrammatum Libri II. Umbra. Elegiarum liber unus 1619
The Works of Dr. Thomas Campion [edited by A. H. Bullen] (songs, poetry, treatises, and plays) 1889
Campion's Works (songs, poetry, treatises, and plays) 1909
The Works of Thomas Campion: Complete Songs, Masques, and Treatises with a Selection of the Latin Verse (songs, poems, masques, and treatises) 1967
Ayres and Observations: Selected Poems of Thomas Campion 1976
Thomas Campion: Poems (selected by Charles Simic) 2007

Other Major Works

Observations in the Art of English Poesie (treatise) 1602
The Lord Hay's Masque (play) 1607; published as *The Description of a Maske, Presented before the Kings Maiestie at White-H———, on Twelfth Night last, in honour of the Lord Hayes, and his Bride, Daughter and Heire to the Honourable the Lord Dennye* 1607
A New Way of Making Fowre parts in Counter-point, by a most familiar, and infallible Rule. Secondly, a necessary discourse of Keyes, and their proper Closes. Thirdly, the allowed passages of all Concords perfect, or imperfect, are declared. Also by way of Preface, the nature of the Scale is expressed, with a briefe Method teaching to Sing (treatise) c. 1610
The Caversham Entertainment (play) 1613; published as *A Relation of The Late Royall Entertainment given By The Right Honourable The Lord Knowles, at Cawsome House neere Redding: to our most Gracious Queene, Queene Anne in her Progresse toward the Bathe, upon the seven and eight and twentie dayes of April 1613. Whereunto is annexed the Description, Speeches and Songs of the Lords Maske, presented in the Banqueting House on the Mariage night of High and Mightie, Count Palatine, and the Royally descended the Ladie Elizabeth* 1613; published as *The Description of a Maske. Presented in the Banqueting roome at Whitehall on Saint Stephens Night last, at the Mariage of the Right Honourable the Earle of Somerset: And the right noble the Lady Francis Howard* 1614
The Lords' Masque (play) 1613
The Somerset Masque (play) 1613

CRITICISM

A. H. Bullen (essay date 1903)

SOURCE: Bullen, A. H. Introduction to *Thomas Campion: Songs and Masques, with Observations in the Art of English Poesy,* edited by A. H. Bullen, pp. ix-xxx. London: A. H. Bullen, 1903.

[*In the following essay, Bullen offers a chronological account of Campion's writings, intermixing brief overviews of his works along with anecdotal details about Campion's social, literary, and political relationships.*]

Dr. Thomas Campion was held in high esteem by his contemporaries; but the materials for his memoir are very scanty. Dr. Jessopp, in the *Dictionary of National Biography,* suggests that he was probably the second son of Thomas Campion of Witham, Essex, gent., by Anastace, daughter of John Spettey, of Chelmsford.[1] This suggestion cannot be accepted; for it appears from Chester's *London Marriage Licences* that Thomas Campion of Witham married Anastace Spettey in 1597,—when Dr. Campion was about thirty years of age. Sir Harris Nicolas, in his preface to Davison's *Poetical Rhapsody* (p. cxxi), pointed out that a Thomas Campion was admitted a member of Gray's Inn in 1586;[2] and conjectured that this was the poet, who is shown to have had some connection with the Inn from the fact that in 1594 he wrote a song, **"Of Neptune's empire let us sing,"** &c., for the Gray's Inn Masque. Had Nicolas been acquainted with Campion's Latin epigrams, he might have greatly strengthened his case by adducing the following verses[3] addressed to the members of Gray's Inn:—

"Ad Graios."

"Graii, sive magis juvat vetustum
Nomen Purpulii,[4] decus Britannum,
Sic Astraea gregem beare vestrum,
Sic Pallas velit, ut favere nugis
Disjuncti socii velitis ipsi,
Tetrae si neque sint, nec infacetae,
Sed quales merito exhibere plausu
Vosmet, ludere cum lubet, soletis."

The words "disjuncti socii" plainly show that Campion had at one time belonged to the society of Gray's Inn. But the legal profession (as we learn from more than one of his Latin epigrams) was not to his taste; and he does not appear to have been called to the Bar. Applying himself to medicine, he took his degree of M.D., and practised as a physician. Dr. Jessopp supposes that his degree was taken abroad; but we have clear evidence to prove that he studied at Cambridge. W[illiam] C[lerke] in *Polimanteia,* 1595, noticing various poets of the time, writes: "I know, Cambridge, howsoever now old, thou hast some young, bid them be chaste, yet suffer them to be witty; let them be soundly learned, yet suffer them to be gentlemanlike qualified." The marginal annotation to the passage is "Sweet Master Campion." But I can find no particulars about Campion's Cambridge career. He is not once mentioned in Messrs. Cooper's *Athenae Cantabrigienses.*

Among the poems "of Sundrie other Noblemen and Gentlemen" annexed to the surreptitious edition (Newman's) of Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella,* 1591, was printed anonymously Campion's delightful song **"Hark, all you ladies that do sleep"**; and in 1593 he was praised in the prologue to Peele's *Honour of the Garter.* It is clear that many of his poems had been circulated in MS., according to the custom of the time, among his friends. Peele addresses him as

> "thou
> That richly clothest conceit with well-made words."

The reference in *Polimanteia* is probably to his English poems; and in Harl. MS. 6910, which is dated 1596, three of his songs are found. Doubtless much of his best work was written before the close of the sixteenth century.

The first of Campion's publications was a volume of Latin poems, entered in the Stationers' Register 2nd December, 1594 (Arber's "Transcript,"[5] ii. 666), and printed in the following year. So rare is the edition of 1595 that only one perfect copy, in the library of Viscount Clifden, is known to exist. This collection, with large additions and a dedication to Charles, Prince of Wales, was reprinted in 1619. The first edition of the ***Poemata*** is a 16 mo., containing fifty leaves (Title page; verso blank; A 2 **"Ad Lectorem,"** with "Errata" on verso; sigs. B, C, D, E, F, G, each of eight leaves). It was issued by Richard Field,[6] Shakespeare's fellow-townsman and the printer of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece.* The first poem is in praise of Queen Elizabeth, **"Ad Dianam"**; it is followed by poems on the Earl of Essex (**"Ad Daphnin"**) and on the defeat of the Spanish Armada (**"Ad Thamesin"**). These three pieces were not reprinted in ed. 1619. The fourth poem, **"Fragmentum Umbræ,"** was afterwards enlarged. Then follows a group of sixteen elegies: ten were reprinted in ed. 1619, with the addition of two new elegies. One of the six pieces that were omitted from the later edition is headed **"Ad amicos cum aegrotaret,"** and vividly describes a fit of profound dejection. The rest of the volume consists of epigrams. Most of these were reprinted in ed. 1619, but a few are found only in the early edition. In ed. 1619 all the epigrams in the First Book were new: the epigrams reprinted from ed. 1595 were included (with more than a hundred additional pieces) in the Second Book.

From the epigrams we learn something of the society in which Campion moved. A tribute of glowing admiration is paid to the famous lutenist and composer John Dowland. In 1597 Campion prefixed commendatory Latin verses to Dowland's *First Book of Songs or Airs*; but I fear that in later years an estrangement must have been brought about, for the epigram given below from the 1595 volume was not reprinted in the edition of 1619:—

"Ad Io. Dolundum" [*sic*].

"O qui sonora cœlites altos cheli
Mulces, & umbras incolas atræ Stygis,
Quam suave murmur! quale fluctu prominens
Lygia madentes rore dum siccat comas,
Quam suave murmur flaccidas aures ferit,
Dùm lenis oculos leviter invadit sopor!
Ut falce rosa dissecta purpureum caput
Dimittit, undique foliis spargens humum,
Labuntur hei sic debiles somno tori,
Terramque feriunt membra ponderibus suis.
Dolande, misero surripis mentem mihi,
Excorsque cordæ [sic] pectus impulsæ premunt.
Quis tibi deorum tam potenti numine
Digitos trementes dirigit? is inter deos
Magnos oportet principem obtineat locum.
Tu solus affers rebus antiquis fidem,
Nec miror Orpheus considens Rhodope super
Siquando rupes flexit et agrestes feras.
At, ô beate, siste divinas manus,
Jam jam parumper siste divinas manus!
Liquescit anima, quam cave exugas mihi."

Another friend of Campion was William Percy (a son of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland), the author of a collection of sonnets, *Caelia,* 595. Percy was a member of Glocester Hall, now Worcester College, Oxford; and to the same society belonged Edward Mychelburne (or Michelbourne), who, with his brothers Laurence and Thomas, was among Campion's most intimate friends.[7] Wood calls Edward Mychelburne "a most noted poet of his time;" but with the exception of two copies of commendatory verses prefixed to Peter Bales' *Art of Brachygraphy,* 1597, some Latin verses before Fitzgeffrey's *Affaniae* and a contribution to *Camdeni Insignia* 1624, he published nothing. Both Fitzgeffrey and Campion thought very highly of his abilities, and urged him to print a work which they had read with admiration in MS. Another member of the Oxford circle was Barnabe Barnes, the lyric poet and sonneteer. For some unknown reason Campion quarrelled with Barnes, whom he assailed with epigrams both Latin and English. Nashe, in *Have with you to Saffron Walden,* 1596, refers gleefully to that "universal applauded Latin poem of Master Campion's" in which Barnes is taunted with cowardice.[8] In or before 1606 a reconciliation was patched up between Barnes and Campion; for in that year Campion prefixed two copies of commendatory verses to Barnes' *Four Books of Offices.* But the quarrel was subsequently renewed; and in 1619 Campion not only retained the obnoxious epigram of 1595, but added another (i. 17) in ridicule of Barnes. Campion's relations with the brilliant satirist Thomas Nashe appear to have been most cordial. In the edition of 1595 we find the following epigram:—

"Ad Nashum."

"Commendo tibi, Nashe, Puritanum
Fordusum, & Taciti canem Vitellum
Teque oro tua per cruenta verba,

Perque vulnificos sales, tuosque
Natos non sine dentibus lepores,
Istudque ingenii tui per acre
Fulmen insipidis & inficetis
Perindè ac tonitru Jovis timendum;
Per te denique candidam Pyrenen,
Parnassumque Heliconaque Hippocrinenque
Et quicunque vacat locus camœnis
Nunc oro, rogoque improbos ut istos
Mactes continuis decem libellis:
Nam sunt putiduli, atque inelegantes,
Mireque exagitant sacros poetas
Publiumque tuum, & tuum Maronem,
Quos amas uti te decet, fovesque
Nec sines per ineptias perire.
Ergo si sapis undique hos latrones
Incursabis, & erues latentes,
Conceptoque semel furore nunquam
Desistes, at eos palam notatos
Saxis contuderit prophana turba."

The heading **"Ad Nashum"** was altered in ed. 1619 to **"Ad Nassum,"** but undoubtedly the person addressed was Nashe. It may be noted that in ed. 1619 the first two lines ran:—

"Commendo tibi, Nasse, pædagogum
Sextillum et Taciti canem Potitum."

The "Puritanum" or "pædagogum" may have been Gabriel Harvey, but I can make no guess at his fellow-delinquent. The words "putiduli atque inelegantes" and "exagitant sacros poetas" suggest that Campion is deriding Harvey's insipid attempts at writing English hexameters and elegiacs.

An epigram in ed. 1595, not reprinted in the later edition, is addressed to Sir John Davies, author of *Orchestra* and *Nosce Tripsum*:—

"Ad. Io. Davisium."

"Quod nostros, Davisi, laudas recitasque libellos
Vultu quo nemo candidiore solet:
Ad me mitte tuos, jam pridem postulo, res est
In qua persolvi gratia vera potest."

The following couplet to Spenser was not reprinted:—

"Ad Ed. Spencerum."

"Sive canis silvas, Spencere, vel horrida belli
Fulmina, dispeream ni te amem, et intime amem."

There are memorial poems on Walter Devereux (brother of the Earl of Essex), who was killed by a musket shot under the walls of Rouen in September 1591, and on Sir Philip Sidney. One epigram is inscribed **"Ad Ge. Chapmannum,"** doubtless George Chapman the poet. In ed. 1619 it was reprinted with the heading **"Ad Corvinum,"** and under that title was included in my 1889 edition of Campion (pp. 339-340). A clever but somewhat malicious couplet was directed against Nicholas Breton:—

"In Bretonem."

"Carmine defunctum, Breto, caute inducis Amorem;
Nam numeris nunquam viveret ille tuis."

This was retained in ed. 1619.

Other epigrams show that Campion was jealous for the honour of his profession and viewed with contempt the pretensions of quacks.[9]

Among the epigrams first printed in ed. 1619 we find mention of other friends of Campion. Two are addressed to Charles Fitzgeffrey, the author of a spirited poem, *Sir Francis Drake, His Honorable Life's Commendation,* &c., 1596. In 1601 Fitzgeffrey published a volume of Latin epigrams, *Affaniae,* and addressed two of them to Campion. As *Affaniae* is a scarce little book, which few readers have seen, I will quote one of the epigrams:—

"Ad Thomam Campianum."

"O cujus genio Romana elegeia deber
Quantum Nasoni debuit ante suo!
Ille, sed invitus, Latiis deduxit ab oris
In Scythicos fines barbaricosque Getas.
Te duce caeruleos invisit prima Britannos
Quamque potest urbem dicere jure suam.
(Magnus enim domitor late, dominator et orbis
Viribus effractis, Cassivelane, tuis,
Julius Ausonium populum Latiosque penates
Victor in hac olim jusserat urbe coli.)
Ergo relegatas Nasonis crimine Musas
In patriam revocas restituisque suis."

A couple of fine epigrams are addressed by Campion to Bacon, whose *De Sapientia Veterum* is enthusiastically praised. To Bacon's learning, eloquence, and munificence Campion paid a worthy tribute:—

"Quantus ades, seu te spinosa volumina juris,
Seu schola, seu dulcis Musa (Bacone) vocat!
Quam super ingenti tua re Prudentia regnat,
Et tota aethereo nectare lingua madens!
Quam bene cum tacita nectis gravitate lepores!
Quam semel admissis stat tuus almus amor!
Haud stupet aggesti mens in fulgore metalli;
Nunquam visa tibi est res peregrina dare."

Well-earned praise is bestowed on William Camden, and Sir Robert Carey, first Lord Monmouth, is very cordially greeted. Poor voluminous Anthony Munday is gently satirised He had been a popular writer in his time, but the public had tired of him. Hence publishers would take his work only on condition that his name was kept off the title-page (a stipulation that publishers sometimes make to-day):—

"In Mundum."

"Mundo libellos nemo vendidit plures,
Novos, stiloque a plebe non abhorrenti;
Quos nunc licet lectoribus minus gratos

Librarii emptitant, ea tamen lege
Ne Mundus affigat suis suum nomen."

From one epigram we learn that Campion was sparely built, and that he envied men of a full habit of body.

"Crassis invideo tenuis nimis ipse, videtur
Satque mihi felix qui sat obesus erit.
Nam vacat assidue mens illi, corpore gaudet,
Et risu curas tristitiamque fugat.
Praecipuum venit haec etiam inter commoda, Luci,
Quod moriens minimo saepe labore perit."

I suspect that few will care to read all these epigrams, though Campion's Latinity is usually easy and elegant, and occasionally recalls the compact neatness of Martial. He handled hendecasyllables with some success, and the Sapphics are gracefully turned. Meres, in *Palladis Tamia,* 1598, mentions him among the "English men, being Latin poets," who had "attained good report and honourable advancement in the Latin empire." It would be difficult to name any other English writer of that time whose Latin verse shows so much spirit and polish.

But it is not by his Latin verse that Campion will be remembered. In 1601 appeared the first collection of his English songs, ***A Book of Airs.*** The music was written partly by Campion and partly by Philip Rosseter; but all the poetry, we may be sure, was Campion's. From the dedicatory epistle by Rosseter it appears that Campion's songs had been circulated in MS., "whereby they grew both public and, as coin cracked in exchange, corrupt"; further, that some impudent persons had claimed the credit both of the music and the poetry. The unsigned address To the Reader, which follows the dedicatory epistle, was clearly written by Campion. "The lyric poets among the Greeks and Latins," we are told, "were first inventors of airs, tying themselves strictly to the number and value of their syllables; of which sort you shall find here only one song, in Sapphic verse; the rest are after the fashion of the time, ear-pleasing rhymes without art." Let us be thankful that there was only one Sapphic, and that the rest of the songs were in "ear-pleasing rhymes." It would have been a sad loss to English poetry if Campion had abandoned rhyme and written his songs in unrhymed metres formed on classical models. In 1602, the year after the publication of his ***Book of Airs,*** he produced his *Observations in the Art of English Poesy,* in which he strove to show that the "vulgar and unartificial custom of rhyming" should be forthwith discontinued. The specimens of unrhymed verse that he gives in his *Observations*—iambic dimetres, trochaics, Anacreontics, and the rest—are, with few exceptions, merely interesting as metrical curiosities. There was a time when Spenser busied himself with profitless metrical experiments and sought the advice of such persons as Drant and Gabriel Harvey; but both Spenser and Campion soon saw the error of their ways. Rhyme found an able champion in Samuel Daniel, who promptly published his *Defence of Rhyme,* 1602 (ed. 2, 1603), in answer to Campion's *Observations.* Daniel expressed his surprise that an attack on rhyme should have been made by one "whose commendable rhymes, albeit now himself an enemy to rhyme, have given heretofore to the world the best notice of his worth." He was careful to state, with that courtesy which distinguished him, that Campion was "a man of fair parts and good reputation." Ben Jonson wrote (as we learn from his conversations with Drummond) a Discourse of Poesy "both against Campion and Daniel"; but it was never published.

"Ear-pleasing rhymes without art." Such is the description that Campion gives of his songs. "Ear-pleasing" they undoubtedly are; there are no sweeter lyrics in English poetry than are to be found in Campion's songbooks. But "without art" they assuredly are not, for they are frequently models of artistic perfection. It must be admitted that there is inequality in Campion's work; that some of the poems are carelessly worded, others diffuse. But when criticism has said its last word in the way of disparagement, what a wealth of golden poetry is left! There is nothing antiquated about these old songs; they are as fresh as if they had been written yesterday. Campion was certainly not "born out of his due time"; he came at just the right moment. Lodge and Nicholas Breton were less fortunate; they could not emancipate themselves, once for all, from the lumbering versification on which their youth had been fostered. Campion's poetry is sometimes thin, common-place if you will, but it is never rude or heavy. "In these English airs," he writes in the address To the Reader before ***Two Books of Airs,*** "I have chiefly aimed to couple my words and notes lovingly together"; and he succeeded. His lyrics are graceful and happy and unconstrained; never a jarring note; everywhere ease and simplicity. John Davies of Hereford (in the addresses To Worthy Persons appended to *The Scourge of Folly,* 1610-11) praised him in most felicitous language:—

"Never did lyrics' more than happy strains,
Strained out of Art by Nature so with ease,
So purely hit the moods and various veins
Of Music and her hearers as do these."

The praise could hardly be bettered; for every reader must be struck by Campion's sureness of touch and by his variety. His devotional poetry impresses the reader by its sincerity. The achievements of our devotional poets are for the most part worthless, and our secular poets seem to lose their inspiration when they touch on sacred themes. To fine religious exaltation Campion joined the true lyric faculty; and such a union is one of the rarest of literary phenomena. His sacred poems never offend against good taste. In richness of imagina-

tion the man who wrote **"When thou must home to shades of underground,"** and **"Hark, all you ladies that do sleep,"** was the equal of Crashawe; but he never failed to exhibit in his sacred poetry that sobriety of judgment in which Crashawe was sometimes painfully deficient.[10]

In 1607 was published Campion's first masque, written for the marriage of Sir James Hay, and presented at Whitehall before the King on Twelfth-night, 1606-7. It is a pleasing and ingenious entertainment, the song of the Sylvans—**"Now hath Flora robbed her bowers"**—being in Campion's choicest style. The additional songs at the end are not so successful; but the Apology to the Reader, **"Neither buskin now nor bay,"** is wholly delightful. In 1613 Campion prepared three masques: one, the Lords' Masque, for the marriage of the Princess Elizabeth, another for the Queen's entertainment at Cawsome [Caversham] House near Reading, and the third for the marriage of Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset. Chamberlain gives an indifferent account of the Lords' Masque in one of his letters; "Of the Lords' Masque I hear no great commendation, save only for riches, their devices being long and tedious, and more like a play than a masque" (Winwood's *Memorials,* iii. 435). It is to be noticed that Chamberlain himself was not present; he wrote merely from hearsay. The star-dance, arranged by Inigo Jones, was surely most effective; and the hearers must have been indeed insensate if they were not charmed by the beautiful song, **"Advance your choral motions now."** It is gratifying to find Campion at the close of the song commending Inigo Jones' skill and modestly putting himself in the background: "According to the humour of this song, the stars moved in an exceeding strange and delightful manner, and I suppose few have ever seen more neat artifice than Master Inigo Jones shewed in contriving their motion, who in all the rest of the workmanship which belonged to the whole invention shewed extraordinary industry and skill, which if it be not as lively exprest in writing as it appeared in view, rob not him of his due, but lay the blame on my want of right apprehending his instructions for the adorning of his art." Campion's relations with Inigo Jones were pleasanter than Ben Jonson's. Of the masque in honour of the nuptials of the Earl of Somerset and the infamous Lady Frances Howard, presented at Whitehall on St. Stephen's night, 1613, Chamberlain again speaks disparagingly: "I hear little or no commendation of the masque made by the Lords that night, either for device or dancing, only it was rich and costly." One thing is certain,—that it was infinitely too good for the occasion. With what bitter mockery the Fates answered the poet's prayer for the happiness of the bridegroom and the bride!—

> "All blessing which the Fates prophetic sung
> At Peleus' nuptials, and whatever tongue
> Can figure more, this night and aye betide
> The honoured bridegroom and the honoured bride."

It is to be regretted that Campion should have come forward to bless so unhallowed a union.[11]

The untimely death of Prince Henry, in November 1612, was a heavy blow for the whole nation, and for men of letters in particular. There was no insincerity in the grief shown by the poets. Each felt that he had lost a friend and a protector; for this young Prince—he was but eighteen when he died—had shown himself a true patron of art and letters. To him Drayton had dedicated the *Polyolbion,* and under his patronage Chapman had laboured at his translation of Homer. Campion, who no doubt had been personally acquainted with the Prince, was among those whose grief found utterance in verse. He issued in 1613 a small collection of songs entitled ***Songs of Mourning,*** set to music by an eminent composer, John Coperario (whose real name was John Cooper). The songs are dedicated to the King, the Queen, Prince Charles, Princess Elizabeth, the Count Palatine (who had come to England to marry the Princess Elizabeth, and whose marriage had been postponed owing to the Prince's death), to Great Britain, and to the World. Good though they are, these songs do not rank with Campion's best work, for he was necessarily somewhat cramped by the nature of the subject. The elegy that precedes the songs bears eloquent testimony to the Prince's virtues and abilities.

Campion's second song-book, ***Two Books of Airs,*** is undated; but it must have been issued after November 1612 (probably in 1613), for in one of the songs there is a reference to the death of Prince Henry (p. 62). The first book consists of **"Divine and Moral Songs,"** and is dedicated to the Earl of Cumberland, who appears from the prefatory sonnet to have been a patron of Campion:—

> "What patron could I choose, great Lord, but you?
> Grave words your ears may challenge as their own:
> And every note of music is your due
> Whose house the Muses' Palace I have known."

The second book, a collection of love-songs, **"Light Conceits of Lovers,"** is dedicated to the Earl's eldest son, Lord Clifford. From the Address to the Reader we learn that Campion had many other songs in reserve; "but of many songs," he writes, "which, partly at the request of friends, partly for mine own recreation, were by me long since composed, I have now enfranchised a few."

In his latest collection, the ***Third and Fourth Books of Airs,*** he enfranchised a few more. The third book was dedicated to Sir Thomas Monson, and the fourth book to his son, John Monson. In 1615 Sir Thomas Monson was examined in regard to the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, and in October of that year a warrant was is-

sued for his arrest. During his confinement in the Tower Campion was allowed to act as his medical attendant (Hist. MS. Comm., Rep. vii., 671). It appears that Campion himself was examined on 26 October, 1615. He admitted that he had received £1400—£1000 in gold and £400 in "white money"—from Alderman Helwys (or Elwys) on behalf of Sir Gervase Helwys, for the use of Sir Thomas Monson, the midsummer after Sir Gervase became Lieutenant of the Tower; but he knew not for what consideration the money was paid (Cal. State Papers, Dom., 1611-19).[12] Suspicions attached to Sir Thomas Monson, but no evidence of a definite character was forthcoming. In October 1616 he was released on bail, and he was pardoned—not acquitted, but pardoned—in February 1617. Campion's undated song-book was published after Monson's pardon had been granted, for in the dedicatory epistle he congratulated his patron upon the fact that

> "those clouds that lately overcast
> Your fame and fortune are dispersed at last."

Prefixed to the fourth book is an Address to the Reader in which Campion remarks, "Some words are in these books which have been clothed in music by others, and I am content they then served their turn: yet give me now leave to make use of mine own." I think there can be little doubt that Campion did not reclaim all his poems, but that some are scattered up and down the song-books of the time. In the autumn of 1617 the Earl of Cumberland received the King, on his return journey from Scotland, at Brougham Castle. Preparations were made for a musical entertainment; and the Earl wrote to his son Lord Clifford: "Sonn, I have till now expected your letters according to your promis at your departure: so did George Minson [Mason] your directions touching the musicke, whereupon he mought the better have writt to Dr. Campion." The *Airs sung and played at Brougham Castle* were published in 1618. Mason and Earsden were the composers of the music; but I have little doubt that Campion supplied the words. The charming song, "Robin is a lovely lad" (printed in my *Lyrics from Elizabethan Song-books*), is quite in Campion's vein. In Robert Jones' collections we find some songs that unquestionably belong to Campion and were claimed by him; and I have a strong suspicion that Jones' "My love bound me with a kiss"[13] (also in the *Lyrics*) is Campion's.

There is one work by Campion which is not reprinted,—*A New Way of making Four parts in Counterpoint, by a most familiar and infallible Rule,* &c., n.d. (1617?), 8 vo. It is a strictly technical treatise. For long it was considered a standard work, and was frequently reprinted (from 1655 onwards) in Playford's *Introduction.* I give here the dedicatory epistle to Prince Charles:—

> To the Flower of Princes, Charles, Prince of Great Britain.
>
> The first inventor of music (most sacred Prince) was by old records Apollo, a King, who, for the benefit which mortals received from his so divine invention, was by them made a God. David, a Prophet and a King, excelled all men in the same excellent art. What then can more adorn the greatness of a Prince, than the knowledge thereof? But why should I, being by profession a physician, offer a work of music to his Highness? Galen either first, or next the first of physicians, became so expert a musician that he could not contain himself, but needs he must apply all the proportions of music to the uncertain motions of the pulse. Such far-fetched doctrine dare not I attempt, contenting myself with only a poor and easy invention; yet new and certain; by which the skill of music shall be redeemed from much darkness, wherein envious antiquity of purpose did involve it. To your gracious hands most humbly I present it, which if your clemency will vouchsafe favourably to behold, I have then attained to the full estimate of all my labour. Be all your days ever musical (most mighty Prince) and a sweet harmony guide the events of all your royal actions. So zealously wisheth
>
> *Your Highness' most humble servant,* THO: CAMPION.

In 1619 Campion republished, with large additions, his Latin epigrams; and he died on 1st March, 1619-20. Mr. Gordon Goodwin, to whom students are indebted for so many valuable discoveries, found his will in the Commissary Court of London, Book 1616-1621, folio 358b. In the presence of divers witnesses Campion executed a nuncupative will on 1st March, 1619-20, leaving "all that he had vnto Mr. Phillip Rosseter,[14] and wished that his estate had bin farr more." The value of the estate, as set forth in the inventory, amounted to twenty-two pounds (Probate and Admin. Act Book, 1619-1625, fol. 31[b]). He was described in his will as "late of the parishe of St. Dunston's in the West, Doctor of phisicke"; and on 1st March, 1619-20 is the entry in St. Dunstan's Register, "Thomas Campion doctor of Physicke was buried." As he was buried on the day of his death, it may perhaps be inferred that he died of the plague.

The more we read his songs the more their charm will grow upon us. They tell of Love with all its sweets and sours, its raptures and laments; of patience under suffering; of faith in a benign Providence. At their best—as in **"Kind are her answers"** or **"Follow your Saint"** or **"Now winter nights enlarge"** (to cite but three)—they display a metrical skill that is nothing short of sheer witchery. Few indeed are the poets who have handled our stubborn English language with such masterly deftness. So long as "elegancy, facility, and golden cadence of poesy" are admired, Campion's fame will be secure.

Notes

1. See the *Visitation of London* (Harleian Society, 1880, i. 134).
2. See *Admittances to Gray's Inn,* Harl. MS. 1912.