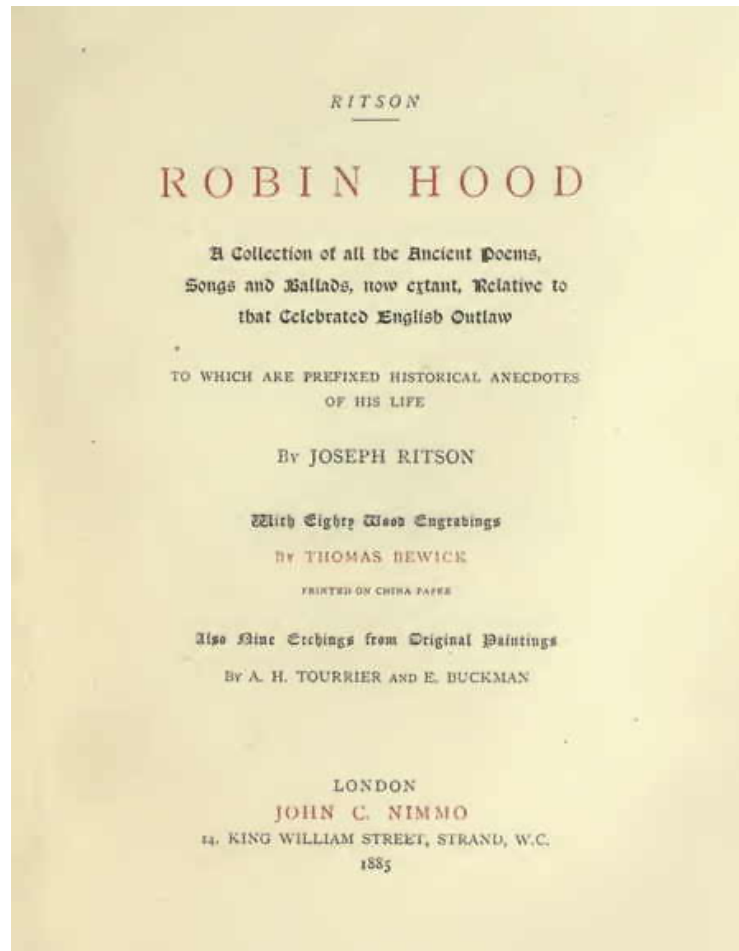


**JOSEPH RITSON,**  
***ROBIN HOOD. A Collection of All the***  
***Ancient Poems, Songs and Ballads (1795,***  
**1885)**



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Joseph Ritson, *Robin Hood. A Collection of all the Ancient Poems, Songs and Ballads, now extant, relative to that celebrated English Outlaw. To which are prefixed Historical Anecdotes of his Life with Eighty Wood Engravings by Thomas Bewick. Printed on China Paper. Also Nine Etchings from Original Paintings by A. H. Tourrier and E. Buckman* (London: John C. Nimmo, 1885).

### *Editor's Introduction*

To make this edition useful to scholars and to make it more readable, I have done the following:

1. inserted and highlighted the page numbers of the original edition
  2. not split a word if it has been hyphenated across a new line or page (this will assist in making word searches)
  3. added unique paragraph IDs (which are used in the "citation tool" which is part of the "enhanced HTML" version of this text)
  4. retained the spaces which separate sections of the text
  5. created a "blocktext" for large quotations
  6. moved the Table of Contents to the beginning of the text
  7. placed the footnotes at the end of the book
  8. formatted short margin notes to float right
  9. inserted Greek and Hebrew words as images
-

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*J. Ritson.*

PORTRAIT OF JOSEPH RITSON.

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### **PUBLISHER'S NOTE.**[↩](#)

Of this fine Large Paper Edition one hundred copies are printed, each being numbered.

The portrait and nine etchings are given in duplicate, one being printed on Whatman paper and the other on Japanese.

### **PUBLISHER'S NOTICE.**[↩](#)

THIS edition of ROBIN HOOD is printed from that published in 1832, which was carefully edited and printed from Mr. RITSON'S own annotated edition of 1795.

The original wood engravings, by the celebrated THOMAS BEWICK, have been again used; and from being printed on China paper, will be found superior in clearness and beauty to the first impression.

The nine etchings now given have been newly etched from original pictures painted by A. H. TOURRIER and E. BUCKMAN.

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**PREFACE.** ↩



THE singular circumstance that the name of an outlawed individual of the twelfth or thirteenth century should continue traditionally popular, be chanted in ballads, and, as one may say,

Familiar in our mouth as household words,

at the end of the eighteenth, excited the editor's curiosity to retrieve all the historical or poetical remains concerning him that could be met with: an object which he has occasionally pursued for many years; and of which pursuit he now publishes the result. He cannot, indeed, pretend that his researches, extensive as they must appear, have been attended with all the success he could have wished; but, at the same time, it ought to be acknowledged that many poetical pieces, of great antiquity and some merit, are deservedly rescued from oblivion.

The materials collected for the "Life" of this celebrated character, which are either preserved at [xii] large or carefully referred to in the "Notes and Illustrations," are not, it must be confessed, in every instance, so important, so ancient, or, perhaps, so authentic, as the subject seems to demand; although the compiler may be permitted to say, in humble second-hand imitation of the poet Martial:

Some there are good, some middling, and some bad;  
But yet they were the best that could be had.

Desirous to omit nothing that he could find upon the subject, he has everywhere faithfully vouched and exhibited his authorities, such as they are: it would, therefore, seem altogether uncandid or unjust to make him responsible for the want of authenticity of such of them as may appear liable to that imputation.



## THE LIFE OF ROBIN HOOD.↵



IT will scarcely be expected that one should be able to offer an authentic narrative of the life and transactions of this extraordinary personage. The times in which he lived, the mode of life he adopted, and the silence or loss of contemporary writers, are circumstances sufficiently favourable, indeed, to romance, but altogether inimical to historical truth. The reader must, therefore, be contented with such a detail, however scanty or imperfect, as a zealous pursuit of the subject enables one to give; and which, though it may fail to satisfy, may possibly serve to amuse.

No assistance has been derived from the labours of his professed biographers ([Note 1](#)); [[1](#)] and even the [[ii](#)] industrious Sir John Hawkins, from whom the public might have expected ample gratification upon the subject, acknowledges that “the history of this popular hero is but little known, and all the scattered fragments concerning him, could they be brought together, would fall far short of satisfying such an inquirer as none but real and authenticated facts will content. We must,” he says, “take his story as we find it.” He accordingly gives us nothing but two or three trite and trivial extracts, with which every one at all curious about the subject was as well acquainted as himself. It is not, at the same time, pretended, that the present attempt promises more than to bring together the scattered fragments to which the learned historian alludes. This, however, has been done, according to the best of the compiler’s information and abilities; and the result is, with a due sense of the deficiency of both, submitted to the reader’s candour.

ROBIN HOOD was born at Locksley, in the county of Nottingham ([Note 2](#)), in the reign of King Henry the Second, and about the year of Christ 1160 ([Note 3](#)). His extraction was noble, and his true name ROBERT FITZTOOTH, which vulgar pronunciation easily corrupted into ROBIN HOOD ([Note 4](#)). He is frequently styled, and commonly reputed to have been, EARL OF HUNTINGDON; a title to which, in the latter part of his life, at least, he actually appears to have had some sort of pretension ([Note 5](#)). In his youth he [[iii](#)] is reported to have been of a wild and extravagant disposition; insomuch that, his inheritance being consumed or forfeited by his excesses, and his person outlawed for debt, either from necessity or choice,

he sought an asylum in the woods and forests, with which immense tracts, especially in the northern parts of the kingdom, were at that time covered([Note 6](#)). Of these, he chiefly affected Barnsdale, in Yorkshire, Sherwood, in Nottinghamshire, and, according to some, Plompton Park, in Cumberland ([Note 7](#)). Here he either found, or was afterward joined by, a number of persons in similar circumstances —

“Such as the fury of ungovern’d youth  
Thrust from the company of awful men,” ([Note 8](#))

who appear to have considered and obeyed him as their chief or leader, and of whom his principal favourites, or those in whose courage and fidelity he most confided, were Little John (whose surname is said to have been Nailor), William Scadlock (Scathelock or Scarlet), George a Green, pinder (or pound-keeper) of Wakefield, Much, a miller’s son, and a certain monk or frier named Tuck ([Note 9](#)). He is likewise said to have been accompanied in his retreat by a female, of whom he was enamoured, and whose real or adopted name was Marian ( [Note 10](#)).

His company, in process of time, consisted of a hundred archers; men, says Major, most skilful in battle, whom four times that number of the boldest fellows durst not attack ([Note 11](#)). His manner of recruiting was somewhat singular; for, in the words of an [iv] old writer, “whersoever he hard of any that were of unusual strength and ‘hardines,’ he would desgyse himselfe, and, rather then fayle, go lyke a begger to become acquaynted with them; and, after he had tryed them with fyghting, never give them over tyl he had used means to drawe [them] to lyve after his fashion” ([Note 12](#)): a practice of which numerous instances are recorded in the more common and popular songs, where, indeed, he seldom fails to receive a sound beating. In shooting with the long bow, which they chiefly practised, “they excelled all the men of the land; though, as occasion required, they had also other weapons” ([Note 13](#)).

In those forests, and with this company, he for many years reigned like an independent sovereign; at perpetual war, indeed, with the King of England, and all his subjects, with an exception, however, of the poor and needy, and such as were “desolate and oppressed,” or stood in need of his protection. When molested, by a superior force in one place, he retired to another, still defying the power of what was called law and government, and making his enemies pay dearly, as well for their open attacks, as for their clandestine treachery. It is not, at the same time, to be concluded that he must, in this opposition, have been guilty of manifest treason or rebellion; as he most certainly can be justly charged with neither. An outlaw, in those times, being deprived of protection, owed no allegiance: “his hand was against every man, and every man’s hand against him” ([Note 14](#)). [v] These forests, in short, were his territories; those who accompanied and adhered to him his subjects:

“The world was not his friend, nor the world’s law:”

and what better title King Richard could pretend to the territory and people of England than Robin Hood had to the dominion of Barnsdale or Sherwood is a question humbly submitted to the consideration of the political philosopher.

The deer with which the royal forests then abounded (every Norman tyrant being, like Nimrod, “a mighty hunter before the Lord”) would afford our hero and his companions an ample supply of food throughout the year; and of fuel, for dressing their vension, or for the other purposes of life, they could evidently be in no want. The rest of their necessaries would be easily procured, partly by taking what they had occasion for from the wealthy passenger who traversed or approached their territories, and partly by commerce with the neighbouring villages or great towns.

It may be readily imagined that such a life, during great part of the year, at least, and while it continued free from the alarms or apprehensions to which our foresters, one would suppose, must have been too frequently subject, might be sufficiently pleasant and desirable, and even deserve the compliment which is paid to it by Shakespeare in his comedy of *As you like it* (act i. scene 1), where, on Oliver's asking, "Where will the old duke live?" Charles answers, "They say he is already in the forest of Arden, and [vi] a many merry men with him; and there they live like the OLD ROBIN HOOD OF ENGLAND; . . . and fleet the time carelessly as they did in the golden world." Their gallant chief, indeed, may be presumed to have frequently exclaimed with the banished Valentine, in another play of the same author: [2]

"How use doth breed a habit in a man!  
This shadowy desert, unfrequented woods,  
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns:  
Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,  
And, to the nightingale's complaining notes,  
Tune my distresses and record my woes."

He would doubtless, too, often find occasion to add:

"What hallooing and what stir is this to-day?  
These are my mates, that make their wills their law,  
Have some unhappy passenger in chace:  
They love me well; yet I have much to do,  
To keep them from uncivil outrages."

But, on the other hand, it will be at once difficult and painful to conceive,

"— — — When they did hear  
The rain and wind beat dark December, how,  
In that their pinching cave, they could discourse  
The freezing hours away!" ( [Note 15](#)).

Their mode of life, in short, and domestic economy, of which no authentic particulars have been even traditionally preserved, are more easily to be guessed at than described. They have, nevertheless, been elegantly sketched by the animating pencil of an excellent though neglected poet: —

[vii]

"The merry pranks he play'd, would ask an age to tell,  
And the adventures strange that Robin Hood befell,  
When Mansfield many a time for Robin hath been laid,  
How he hath cousen'd them, that him would have betray'd;  
How often he hath come to Nottingham disguis'd,  
And cunningly escap'd, being set to be surpriz'd.  
In this our spacious isle, I think there is not one,  
But he hath heard some talk of him and Little John;  
And to the end of time, the tales shall ne'er be done,  
Of Scarlock, George a Green, and Much the miller's son,  
Of Tuck the merry frier, which many a sermon made  
In praise of Robin Hood, his outlaws, and their trade.  
An hundred valiant men had this brave Robin Hood,  
Still ready at his call, that bowmen were right good,  
All clad in Lincoln green ([Note 16](#)), with caps of red and blue,

His fellow's winded horn not one of them but knew,  
 When setting to their lips their little beugles shrill,  
 The warbling ecchos wak'd from every dale and hill.  
 Their bauldricks set with studs, athwart their shoulders cast,  
 To which under their arms their sheafs were buckled fast,  
 A short sword at their belt, a buckler scarce a span,  
 Who struck below the knee, not counted then a man:  
 All made of Spanish yew, their bows were wondrous strong;  
 They not an arrow drew, but was a cloth-yard long.  
 Of archery they had the very perfect craft,  
 With broad-arrow, or but, or prick, or roving shaft,  
 At marks full forty score, they us'd to prick, and rove,  
 Yet higher than the breast, for compass never strove;  
 Yet at the farthest mark a foot could hardly win:  
 At long-outs, short, and hoyles, each one could cleave the pin:  
 Their arrows finely pair'd, for timber, and for feather,  
 With birch and brazil piec'd to fly in any weather;  
 And shot they with the round, the square, or forked pile,  
 The loose gave such a twang, as might be heard a mile.  
 And of these archers brave, there was not any one,  
 But he could kill a deer his swiftest speed upon,  
 Which they did boil and roast, in many a mighty wood,  
 Sharp hunger the fine sauce to their more kingly food.

[viii]

Then taking them to rest, his merry men and he  
 Slept many a summer's night under the greenwood tree.  
 From wealthy abbots' chests, and churls' abundant store,  
 What oftentimes he took, he shar'd amongst the poor:  
 No lordly bishop came in lusty Robin's way,  
 To him before he went, but for his pass must pay:  
 The widow in distress he graciously reliev'd,  
 And remedied the wrongs of many a virgin griev'd: [\(Note 17\)](#)  
 He from the husband's bed no married woman wan,  
 But to his mistress dear, his loved Marian,  
 Was ever constant known, which wheresoe'er she came,  
 Was sovereign of the woods; chief lady of the game:  
 Her clothes tuck'd to the knee, and dainty braided hair,  
 With bow and quiver arm'd, she wander'd here and there,  
 Amongst the forests wild; Diana never knew  
 Such pleasures, nor such harts as Mariana slew." [\[3\]](#)

That our hero and his companions, while they lived in the woods, had recourse to robbery for their better support is neither to be concealed nor to be denied. Testimonies to this purpose, indeed, would be equally endless and unnecessary. Fordun, in the fourteenth century, calls him "*ille famosissimus sicarius*," that most celebrated robber, and Major terms him and Little John "*famatissimi latrones*." But it is to be remembered, according to the confession of the latter historian, that, in these exertions of power, he took away the goods of rich men only; never killing any person, unless he was attacked or resisted: that he would not suffer a woman to be maltreated; nor ever took anything from the poor, but charitably fed them with the wealth he drew from the abbots. I disapprove, says he, of the rapine [\[ix\]](#) of the man: but he was the most humane and the prince of all robbers [\(Note 18\)](#). In allusion, no doubt, to this irregular and predatory course of life, he has had the honour to be compared to

the illustrious Wallace, the champion and deliverer of his country; and that, it is not a little remarkable, in the latter's own time([Note 19](#)).

Our hero, indeed, seems to have held bishops, abbots, priests, and monks, in a word, all the clergy, regular or secular, in decided aversion.

“These byshoppes and thyse archebyshoppes,  
Ye shall them bete and bynde,”

was an injunction carefully impressed upon his followers. The Abbot of Saint Mary's, in York ([Note 20](#)), from some unknown cause, appears to have been distinguished by particular animosity; and the Sheriff of Nottinghamshire ([Note 21](#)), who may have been too active and officious in his endeavours to apprehend him, was the unremitted object of his vengeance.

Notwithstanding, however, the aversion in which he appears to have held the clergy of every denomination, he was a man of exemplary piety, according to the notions of that age, and retained a domestic chaplain (Frier Tuck, no doubt) for the diurnal celebration of the divine mysteries. This we learn from an anecdote preserved by Fordun ([Note 22](#)), as an instance of those actions which the historian allows to deserve commendation. One day, as he heard mass, which he was most devoutly accustomed to do (nor would [x] he, in whatever necessity, suffer the office to be interrupted,) he was espied by a certain sheriff and officers belonging to the king, who had frequently before molested him in that most secret recess of the wood where he was at mass. Some of his people, who perceived what was going forward, advised him to fly with all speed, which, out of reverence to the sacrament, which he was then most devoutly worshipping, he absolutely refused to do. But the rest of his men having fled for fear of death, Robin, confiding solely in Him whom he reverently worshipped, with a very few, who by chance were present, set upon his enemies, whom he easily vanquished; and, being enriched with their spoils and ransom, he always held the ministers of the Church and masses in greater veneration ever after, mindful of what is vulgarly said:

“Him God does surely hear  
Who oft to th' mass gives ear.”

Having, for a long series of years, maintained a sort of independent sovereignty, and set kings, judges, and magistrates at defiance, a proclamation was published ([Note 23](#)) offering a considerable reward for bringing him in either dead or alive; which, however, seems to have been productive of no greater success than former attempts for that purpose. At length, the infirmities of old age increasing upon him ([Note 24](#)), and desirous to be relieved, in a fit of sickness, by being let blood, he applied for that purpose to the Prioress of Kirkleys nunnery in Yorkshire, his [xi] relation (women, and particularly religious women, being, in those times, somewhat better skilled in surgery than the sex is at present), by whom he was treacherously suffered to bleed to death. This event happened on the 18th of November 1247, being the 31st year of King Henry III. and (if the date assigned to his birth be correct) about the 87th of his age (24). He was interred under some trees, at a short distance from the house; a stone being placed over his grave, with an inscription to his memory ([Note 25](#)).

Such was the end of Robin Hood: a man who, in a barbarous age, and under a complicated tyranny, displayed a spirit of freedom and independence which has endeared him to the common people, whose cause he maintained (for all opposition to tyranny is the cause of the people), and, in spite of the malicious endeavours of pitiful monks, by whom history was consecrated to the crimes and follies of titled ruffians and sainted idiots, to suppress all record of his patriotic exertions and virtuous acts, will render his name immortal.

With respect to his personal character: it is sufficiently evident that he was active, brave, prudent, patient; possessed of uncommon bodily strength and considerable military skill; just, generous, benevolent, faithful, and beloved or revered by his followers or adherents for his excellent and amiable qualities. Fordun, a priest, extols his piety, Major (as we have seen) pronounces him the most humane and the prince of all robbers; and Camden, whose testimony is of [xii] some weight, calls him "*prædonem mitissimum*," the gentlest of thieves. As proofs of his universal and singular popularity: his story and exploits have been made the subject as well of various dramatic exhibitions ([Note 26](#)), as of innumerable poems, rimes, songs and ballads ([Note 27](#)): he has given rise to divers proverbs ([Note 28](#)); and to swear by him, or some of his companions, appears to have been a usual practice ([Note 29](#)): his songs have been chanted on the most solemn occasions ([Note 30](#)); his service sometimes preferred to the Word of God ([Note 31](#)): he may be regarded as the patron of archery ([Note 32](#)); and, though not actually canonised (a situation to which the miracles wrought in his favour, as well in his lifetime as after his death, and the supernatural powers he is, in some parts, supposed to have possessed ([Note 33](#)), give him an indisputable claim), he obtained the principal distinction of sainthood, in having a festival allotted to him, and solemn games instituted in honour of his memory, which were celebrated till the latter end of the sixteenth century; not by the populace only, but by kings or princes and grave magistrates; and that as well in Scotland as in England; being considered, in the former country, of the highest political importance, and essential to the civil and religious liberties of the people, the efforts of government to suppress them frequently producing tumult and insurrection ([Note 34](#)). His bow, and one of his arrows, his chair, his cap, and one of his slippers, were preserved, with peculiar veneration, till within [xiii] the present century ([Note 35](#)); and not only places which afforded him security or amusement, but even the well at which he quenched his thirst, still retain his name ([Note 36](#)): a name which, in the middle of the present century, was conferred as a singular distinction upon the prime minister to the king of Madagascar ([Note 37](#)).

After his death his company was dispersed ([Note 38](#)). History is silent in particulars: all that we can, therefore, learn is, that the honour of Little John's death and burial is contended for by rival nations ([Note 39](#)); that his grave continued long "celebrious for the yielding of excellent whetstones;" and that some of his descendants, of the name of Nailor, which he himself bore, and they from him, were in being so late as the last century ([Note 40](#)).



## NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS REFERRED TO IN THE FOREGOING LIFE. ↩

(([Note 1](#)) "*Former biographers,*" &c.] Such, that is, as have already appeared in print, since a sort of manuscript life in the Sloane Library will appear to have been of some service. The first of these respectable personages is the author, or rather compiler, of "The noble birth and gallant achievements of that remarkable outlaw Robin Hood; together with a true account of the many merry extravagant exploits he played; in twelve several stories: newly collected by an ingenious antiquary. London, printed by W. O." [William Onley], 4to, black letter, no date. These "several stories," in fact, are only so many of the songs in the common Garland transposed; and the "ingenious antiquary," who strung them together, has known so little of his trade, that he sets out with informing us of his hero's banishment by King Henry the Eighth. The above is supposed to be the "small merry book" called Robin Hood, mentioned in a list of "books, ballads, and histories, printed for and sold by William Thackeray at the Angel in Duck-lane" (about 1680), preserved in one of the volumes of old ballads (part of Bagford's collection) in the British Museum.

Another piece of biography, from which much will not be expected, is "The lives and heroick achievements of the renowned Robin Hood and James Hind, two noted robbers and highwaymen. London, 1752." 8vo. This, however, is probably nothing more than an extract from Johnson's "Lives of the Highwaymen," in which, as a specimen of the authors historical authenticity, we have the life and actions of that noted robber, Sir John Falstaff.





KIRKLEY HALL.

[xv]

The principal if not sole reason why our hero is never once mentioned by Matthew Paris, Benedictus Abbas, or any other ancient English historian, was most probably his avowed enmity to churchmen; and history, in former times, was written by none but monks. They were unwilling to praise the actions which they durst neither misrepresent nor deny. Fordun and Major, however, being foreigners, have not been deterred by this professional spirit from rendering homage to his virtues.

([Note 2](#)) —“*was born at Locksley, in the county of Nottingham.*”] “Robin Hood,” says a MS. in the British Museum (Bib. Sloan. 715), written, as it seems, toward the end of the sixteenth century, “*was borne at Lockesley in Yorkshyre, or after others in Nottinghamshire.*” The writer here labours under manifest ignorance and confusion, but the first row of the rubric will set him right:

“In Locksly town, in merry Nottinghamshire,  
In merry sweet Locksly town,  
There bold Robin Hood was born and was bred,  
Bold Robin of famous renown.” [4]

Dr. Fuller (*Worthies of England*, 1662, p. 320) is doubtful as to the place of his nativity. Speaking of the “Memorable Persons” of Nottinghamshire, “Robert Hood,” says he, “(if not by birth) by his chief abode this country-man.”

The name of such a town as Locksley, or Loxley (for so we sometimes find it spelled), in the county of Nottingham or of York, does not, it must be confessed, occur either in Sir Henry Spelman’s *Villare Anglicum*, in Adams’s *Index Villaris*, in Whatley’s *England’s Gazetteer*, [5] in Thoroton’s *History of Nottinghamshire*, or in the *Nomina Villarum Eboracensium* (York, 1768, 8vo). The silence of these authorities is not, however, to be regarded as a conclusive proof that such a place never existed. The names of towns and villages, of which no trace is now to be found but in ancient writings, would fill a volume.

[xvi]

([Note 3](#)) —“*in the reign of King Henry the Second, and about the year of Christ 1160.*”] “Robin Hood,” according to the Sloane MS., “was borne . . . in the dayes of Henry the 2nd, about the yeare 1160.” This was the 6th year of that monarch; at whose death (anno 1189) he would, of course, be about 29 years of age. Those writers are therefore pretty correct who represent him as playing his pranks (Dr. Fuller’s phrase) in the reign of King Richard the First, and, according to the last-named author, “about the year of our Lord 1200.” [6] Thus Mair (who is followed by Stowe, *Annales*, 1592, p. 227), “*Circa hæc tempora [sci. Ricardi I.] ut auguror,*” &c. A MS. note in the Museum (Bib. Har. 1233), not, in Mr. Wanley’s opinion, to be relied on, places him in the same period, “Temp. Rich. I.” Nor is Fordun altogether out of his reckoning in bringing him down to the time of Henry III., as we shall hereafter see; and with him agrees Andrew of Wyntowne, in his “*Oryginale Cronykil,*” written about 1420, which, at the year 1283, has the following lines:

“Lytil Jhon and Robyne Hude  
Wayth-men were commendyd gud:  
In Yngil-wode and Barnysdale  
Thai oysyd all this tyme thare trawale.”

A modern writer (*History of Whitby*, by Lionel Charlton, York, 1779, 4to), though of no authority in this point, has done well enough to speak of him as living “in the days of abbot Richard and Peter his successor;” that is, between the years 1176 and 1211. The author of the two plays upon the story of our hero, of which a particular account will be hereafter given, makes him contemporary with King Richard, who, as well as his brother Prince John, is introduced upon the scene; which is confirmed by another play, quoted in Note 5. Warner, also, in his *Albion’s England*, 1602, p. 132, refers his existence to “better daies, first Richard’s daies.” This, to be sure, may not be such evidence as would be sufficient to decide the point in a court of justice; but neither judge nor counsel will dispute [xvii] the authority of that oracle of the law Sir Edward Coke, who pronounces that “This Robert Hood lived in the reign of King R. I.” (3 *Institute*, 197).

We must not therefore regard what is said by such writers as the author of “*George a Greene, the pinner of Wakefield,*” 1599 (see Note 9), who represents our hero as contemporary with King Edward IV., [7] and the compiler of a foolish book called “*The noble birth, &c. of Robin Hood*” (see Note 1), who commences it by informing us of his banishment by King Henry VIII. As well, indeed, might we suppose him to have lived before the time of Charlemagne, because Sir John Harington, in his translation of the *Orlando Furioso*, 1590, p. 391, has made

“Duke ’Ammon in great wrath thus wise to speake:  
This is a Tale indeed of Robin Hood,

Which to beleeve, might show my wits but weake;”

or to imagine his story must have been familiar to Plutarch, because in his *Morals*, translated by Dr. Philemon Holland, 1603, p. 644, we read the following passage:—“Evenso [*i.e.* as the crane and fox serve each other in *Æsop*], when learned men at a table plunge and drowne themselves (as it were), in subtile problemes and questions interlaced with logicke, which the vulgar sort are not able for their lives to comprehend and conceive; whiles they also againe for their part come in with their foolish songs, and vain ballads of Robin-Hood and Little John, telling tales of a tubbe, or of a roasted horse, and such like.” Who, indeed, would be apt to think that his skill in archery was known to Virgil? And yet, as interpreted by our facetious friend Mr. Charles Cotton, he tells us that

“Cupid was a little tyny,  
Cogging, lying, peevish nynny;  
But with a bow the shit-breecht elf  
Would shoot like Robin Hood himself.”

In a word, if we are to credit translators, he must have [xviii] existed before the siege of Troy; for thus, according to one of Homer’s:

“Then came a choice companion  
Of Robin Hood and Little John,  
Who many a buck and many a doe,  
In Sherwood forest, with his bow,  
Had nabb’d; believe me it is true, sir,  
The fellow’s Christian name was Teucer.”

*Iliad*, by Bridges, 4to, p. 231. [8]

This last supposition, indeed, has even the respectable countenance of Dan Geoffrey Chaucer:

“Pandarus answerde, it may be well inough,  
And held with him of all that ever he saied,  
But in his hart he thought, and soft lough,  
And to himselfe full soberly he saied,  
From hasellwood there Jolly Robin plaied,  
Shall come all that thou abidest here,  
Ye, farewell all the snow of ferne yere.”

*Troilus* (B. 5), Speght’s edition, 1602.

(Note 4) “*His extraction was noble, and his true name Robert Fitzooth.*”] In “an olde and auncient pamphlet,” which Grafton the chronicler had seen, it was written that “This man discended of a noble parentage.” The Sloane MS. says “He was of . . . parentage;” and though the material word is illegible, the sense evidently requires noble. So, likewise, the Harleian note: “It is said that he was of noble blood.” Leland also has expressly termed him “nobilis” (*Collectanea*, i. 54). The following account of his family will be found sufficiently particular. Ralph Fitzothes, or Fitzooth, a Norman, who had come over to England with William Rufus, married Maud or Matilda, daughter of Gilbert de Gaunt, Earl of Kyme and Lindsey, by whom he had two sons: Philip, afterward Earl of Kyme, that earldom being part of his mother’s dowry, and William. Philip the elder died without issue; William was a ward to Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, in whose household he received his education, and who, by the king’s express command, gave [xix] him in marriage to his own niece, the youngest of the three daughters of the celebrated Lady Roisia de Vere, daughter of Aubrey de Vere, Earl

of Guisnes in Normandy, and lord high chamberlain of England under Henry I., and of Adeliza, daughter to Richard de Clare, Earl of Clarence and Hertford, by Payn de Beauchamp, baron of Bedford, her second husband. The offspring of this marriage was our hero, Robert Fitzooth, commonly called Robin Hood. (See Stukeley's Palæographia Britannica, No. I. passim.)

A writer in the Gentleman's Magazine for March 1793, under the signature D. H., [9] pretends that Hood is only a corruption of "o' th' wood, q.d. of Sherwood." This, to be sure, is an absurd conceit; but, if the name were a matter of conjecture, it might be probably enough referred to some particular sort of hood our hero wore by way of distinction or disguise. See Scot's Discoverie of Witchcraft, 1584, p. 522. In Jonson's masque of "The king's entertainment at Welbeck" (Works, 1756, vii. 53), certain characters are introduced "in livery hoods," of whom Fitz-ale says,

"Six hoods they are, and of the blood,  
They tell of ancient Robin Hood."

It may be remembered that Hugh *Capet*, the first king of France of the third and last race, obtained that surname from a similar circumstance. It is unnecessary to add that Hood is a common surname at this day, as well as a place in Yorkshire, formerly *Hode*; and that Edward the Third, in the tenth year of his reign, confirmed to Thomas, the son of *Robert de Hode*, of Hoveden, in tail-general, certain places of moorland, &c. *in vasto de Incklesmore*, &c. (Ro. Pa. 10 E. 3. m. 31).

([Note 5](#)) "*He is frequently styled . . . Earl of Huntingdon, a title to which, for the latter part of his life at least, he actually appears to have had some sort of pretension.*" In Grafton's "olde and auncient pamphlet," though the author had, as already noticed, said "this man discended of a NOBLE PARENTAGE," he adds, "or rather beyng of a base stocke [xx] and linage, was for his manhood and chivalry advaunced to the noble dignitie of an ERLE."

In the MS. note (Bib. Har. 1233) is the following passage: "It is said that he was of noble blood no lesse then an earle." Warner, in his *Albion's England*, already cited, calls him "a county." The titles of Mundy's two plays are: "The downfall" and "The death of Robert earle of Huntington." He is likewise introduced in that character in the same author's *Metropolis Coronata*, hereafter cited. In his epitaph we shall find him expressly styled "Robert, Earl of Huntingtun."

In "A pleasant commodie called Looke about you," printed in 1600, our hero is introduced, and performs a principal part. He is represented as the young Earl of Huntington, and in ward to Prince Richard, though his brother Henry, the young king, complains of his having "had wrong about his wardship." He is described as

"A gallant youth, a proper gentleman;"

and is sometimes called "pretty earle" and "little wag." One of the characters thus addresses him:

"But welcome, welcome, and young Huntington,  
Sweet Robyn Hude, honor's best flowing bloome,"

and calls him

"— — — an honourable youth,  
Vertuous and modest, Huntington's right heyre."

It is also said that

“His father Gilbert was the smoothst fac’t lord  
That ere bare armes in England or in Fraunce.”

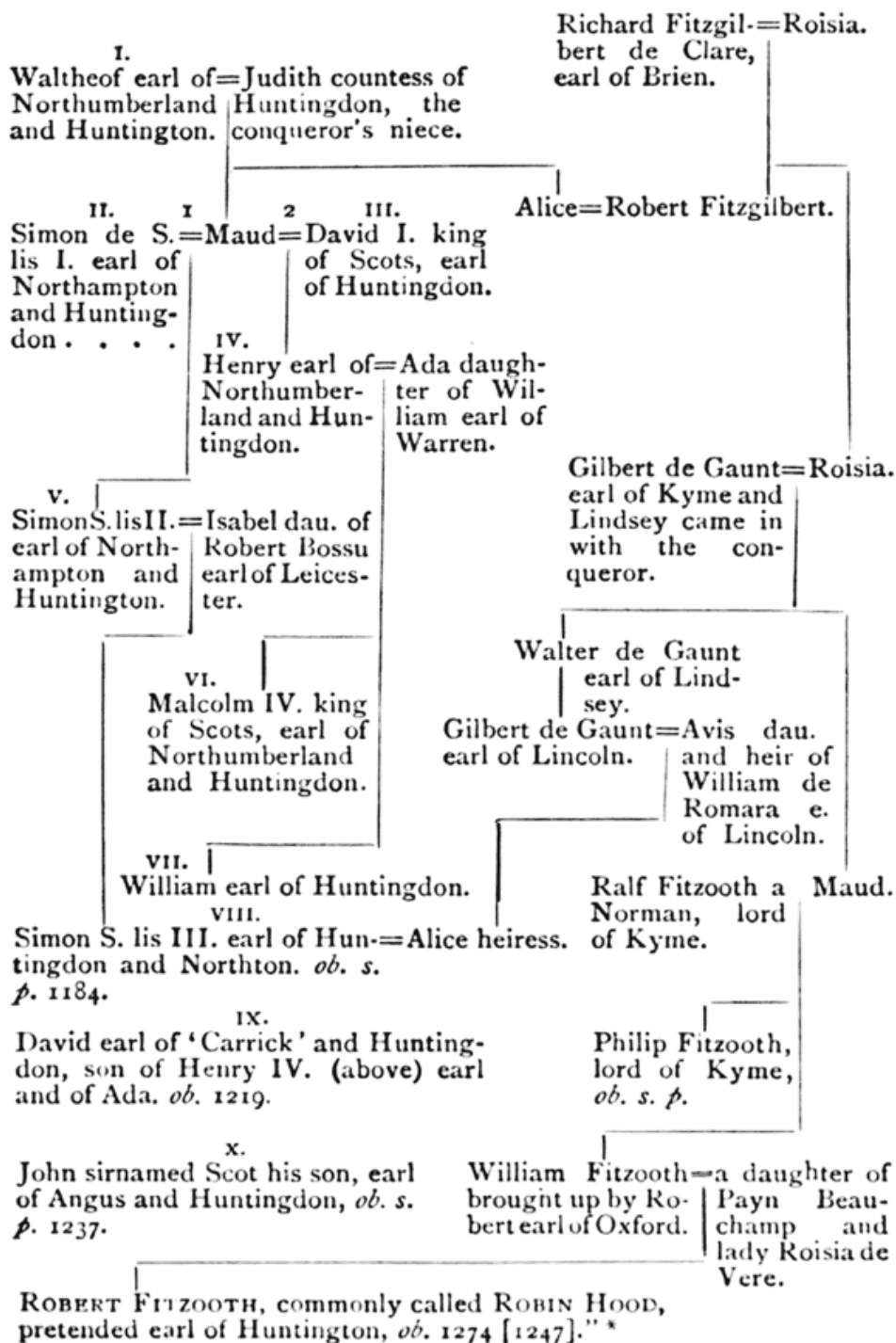
In one scene, “Enter Richard and Robert with coronets.”

“*Rich.* Richard the Prince of England, with his ward,  
The noble Robert Hood, earle Huntington,  
Present their service to your majestie.”

Dr. Percy’s objection, that the most ancient poems make no mention of this earldom, [10] but only call him a yeoman, will be considered in another place. How he founded his pretensions to this title will be seen in his pedigree. Here it is.

[xxi]

“ THE PEDIGREE OF ROBIN HOOD EARL OF HUNTINGTON.



[There is a footnote at the bottom of the family tree concerning "Robert Fitzooth. [\[11\]](#)]

[xxii]

([Note 6](#)) "*In his youth he is reported to have been of a wild and extravagant disposition,*" &c.] Grafton's pamphlet, after supposing him to have been "advaniced to the noble dignitie of an erle," continued thus: "But afterwarde he so prodigally exceeded in charges and expences, that he fell into great debt, by reason whereof, so many actions and sutes were commenced against him whereunto he answered not, that by [\[xxiii\]](#) order of lawe he was outlawed." [\[12\]](#) Leland must undoubtedly have had good authority for calling him "nobilis ille exlex." [\[13\]](#) Fordun supposes him in the number of those deprived of their estates by King Henry III. "Hoc intempore," says he, "de exheredatis surrexit & caput erexit ille famosissimus sicarius Robertus Hode & littill Johanne cum eorum complicitibus" (p. 774). The Sloane MS. says he was "so ryotous that he lost or sould his patrimony & for debt became an outlawe;" and the Harleian note mentions his "having wasted his estate in riotous courses." The former authority, however, gives a different, though, it may be, less credible, account of his being obliged to abscond. It is as follows: "One of his first exploitys was the going abrode into a forrest & bearing with him a bowe of exceeding great strength, he fell into company with certayne rangers or woodmen, who fell to quarrel with him, as making shewe to use such a bowe as no man was able to shoote withall. Whereto Robin replied that he had two better then that at Lockesley, only he bare that with him nowe as a byrding bowe. At length the 'contention' grewe so hote that there was a wager layd about the kylling of a deere a greate distance of, for performance whereof Robin offered to lay his head to a certayne some of money, the advantage of which rash speach the others presently tooke. So the marke being found out, one of them, both to make his hart faynt and hand unsteady, as he was about to shoote urged him with the losse of head if he myst the marke. Notwithstanding Robyn kyld the deare, and gave every man his [\[xxiv\]](#) money agayne, save to him which at the poynt of shooting so upbraided him with danger to loose his hed for that wager; & he sayd they would drinke togeyther: whereupon the others stomached the matter and from quarelling they grewe to fighting with him. But Robin, getting him somewhat of, with shooting dispatch them, and so fled away; and then betaking himselfe to lyve in the woods," &c. [\[14\]](#)

That he lurked or infested the woods is agreed by all. "Circa hæc tempora," says Major, "Robertus Hudus Anglus & parvus Joannes, latrones famatissimi, in nemoribus latuerunt."

Dr. Stukeley says that "Robin Hood took to this wild way of life in imitation of his grandfather Geoffrey de Mandeville, who being a favorer of Maud empress, King Stephen took him prisoner at S. Albans, and made him give up the tower of London, Walden, Plessis, &c., upon which he lived on plunder" (MS. note in his copy of Robin Hood's Garland).

([Note 7](#)) "*Of these, he chiefly affected Barnsdale,*" &c.] "Along on the lift hond," says Leland, "a iii. miles of betwixt Milburne and Feribridge I saw the wooddi and famose forrest of Barnesdale, wher thay say that Robyn Hudde lyvid like an outlaw" (Itinerary, v. 101).

"They haunted about Barnsdale forrest, Compton [r. Plompton] parke, [\[15\]](#) and such other places" (MS. Sloane).

"His principal residence," says Fuller, "was in Shirewood forrest in this county [Notts], though he had another haunt (he is no fox that hath but one hole) near the sea in the North Riding in Yorkshire, where Robin Hood's Bay still retaineth his name: not that he was any pirat, but a land-thief, who retreated to those unsuspected parts for his security" (Worthies of England, p. 320).

In Thoroton's Nottinghamshire, p. 505, is some account of the ancient and present state of Sherwood forest; but one looks in vain through that dry detail of land-owners for any particulars relating to our hero. "In anno domini 1194, King Richard the First, being a hunting in the forrest of Sherwood, did chase a hart out of the forrest of Sherwood into Barnesdale in Yorkshire, and because he could not there recover him, he made proclamation at Tickill in Yorkshire, and at divers other places there, that no person should kill, hurt, or chase the said hart, but that he might safely retorne into forrest againe, which hart was afterwards called a hart-royall proclaimed" (Manwood's Forest Laws, 1598, p. 25, from "an auncient recorde" found by him in the tower of Nottingham Castle). [16]

(Note 8) "*Here he either found,*" &c.] After being outlawed, Grafton tells us, "for a lewde shift, as his last refuge, [he] gathered together a companye of roysters and cutters, and practised robberyes and spoyling of the kinges subjects, and occupied and frequented the forestes or wild countries." See also the following note.

(Note 9) "*Little John, William Scadlock, George a Green, pinder of Wakefield, Much a miller's son, and a certain monk or frier named Tuck.*" Of these, the pre-eminence is incontestably due to Little John, whose name is almost constantly coupled with that of his gallant leader. "Robertus Hode & littill Johanne," are mentioned together by Fordun as early as 1341; and later instances of the connection would be almost endless. After the words, "for debt became an [xxvi] outlaw," the Sloane MS. adds: "then joyninge to him many stout fellowes of lyke disposition, amongst whom one called Little John was principal or next to him, they haunted about Barnsdale forrest," &c. See Notes 39, 40.

With respect to Frier Tuck, "though some say he was an other kynd of religious man, for that the order of freyrs was not yet sprung up" (MS. Sloan.), yet as the Dominican friers (or friers preachers) came into England in the year 1221, upward of twenty years before the death of Robin Hood, and several orders of these religious had flourished abroad for some time, there does not seem much weight in that objection: nor, in fact, can one pay much regard to the term frier, as it seems to have been the common title given by the vulgar (more especially after the Reformation) to all the regular clergy, of which the friers were at once the lowest and most numerous. If Frier Tuck be the same person who, in one of the oldest songs, is called the curtail frier of Fountains-dale, he must necessarily have been one of the monks of that abbey, which was of the Cistercian order. However this may be, Frier Tuck is frequently noticed by old writers as one of the companions of Robin Hood, and as such was an essential character in the morris-dance (see Note 34). He is thus mentioned by Skelton, laureat, in his "goodly interlude" of Magnificence, written about the year 1500, and with an evident allusion to some game or practice now totally forgotten and inexplicable:

"Another bade shave halfe my berde,  
And boyes to the pylery gan me plucke,  
And wolde have made me freer Tucke,  
To preche oute of the pylery hole."

In the year 1417, as Stow relates, "one, by his counterfeite name, called Frier Tucke, with manie other malefactors, committed many robberies in the counties of Surrey & Sussex, whereupon the king sent out his writs for their apprehension" (Annales, 1592).

George a Green is George o' the green, meaning perhaps the town-green, in which the pound or pinfold stood of which he had the care. He has been particularly celebrated, and [xxvii] "As good as George a Green" is still a common saying. [17] Drayton, describing the progress of the river Calder, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, has the following lines:

“It chanc’d she in her course on ‘Kirkley’ cast her eye,  
Where merry Robin Hood, that honest thief, doth lie;  
Beholding fitly too before how Wakefield stood,  
She doth not only think of lusty Robin Hood,  
But of his merry man, the pindar of the town  
Of Wakefield, George a Green, whose fames so far are blown  
For their so valiant fight, that every freeman’s song  
Can tell you of the same; quoth she, be talk’d on long,  
For ye were merry lads, and those were merry days.”

Thus, too, Richard Brathwayte, in his poetical epistle “to all true-bred northerne sparks of the generous society of the Cottoneers” (Strappado for the Divell, 1615):

“But haste, my muse, in colours to display  
Some auncient customes in their high-roade way,  
...  
At least such places labour to make knowne  
As former times have honour’d with renowne.  
...  
The first whereof that I intend to show  
Is merry Wakefield, and her pindar too,  
Which fame hath blaz’d with all that did belong,  
Unto that towne in many gladsome song,  
The pindar’s valour, and how firme he stood  
In th’ townes defence ’gainst th’ rebel Robin Hood,  
How stoutly he behav’d himselfe, and would,  
In spite of Robin, bring his horse to th’ fold,  
His many May-games which were to be seene  
Yearly presented upon Wakefield greene,  
Where lovely Jugge and lustie Tib would go,  
To see Tom-lively turne upon the toe;  
Hob, Lob, and Crowde the fidler would be there,  
And many more I will not speake of here.  
Good God! how glad hath been this hart of mine,  
To see that towne, which hath, in former time,  
So flourish’d and so gloried in her name,  
Famous by th’ pindar who first rais’d the same!  
Yea, I have paced ore that greene and ore  
And th’ more I saw’t I tooke delight the more,

[xxviii]

For where we take contentment in a place,  
A whole daies walke seemes as a cinquepace.  
Yet as there is no solace upon earth  
Which is attended evermore with mirth,  
But when we are transported most with gladnesse,  
Then suddenly our joy’s reduc’d to sadnesse;  
So far’d with me to see the pindar gone,  
And of those jolly laddes that were not one  
Left to survive: I griev’d more then Ile say:  
(But now for Bradford I must hast away).

...

Unto thy task, my muse, and now make knowne  
The jolly shoo-maker of Bradford towne,



His gentle craft so rais'd in former time  
 By princely journey-men his discipline,  
 Where he was wont with passengers to quaffe,  
 But suffer none to carry up their staffe  
 Upon their shoulders, whilst they past through town,  
 For if they did he soon would beat them downe;  
 (So valiant was the souter) and from hence  
 Twixt Robin Hood and him grew th' difference;  
 Which, cause it is by most stage-poets writ,  
 For brevity I thought good to omit."

In the latter part of this extract, honest Richard evidently alludes to "A pleasant conceyted comedie of George a Greene, the pinner of Wakefield; as it was sundry times acted by the servants of the right honourable the earle of Sussex," 1599, 4to, which has been erroneously ascribed to Heywood the epigrammatist, and is reprinted, with other trash, in the late edition of Dodsley's Old Plays; only it unluckily happens that Robin Hood is almost the only person who has no difference with the souter (or shoemaker) of Bradford. The play, in short (or at least that part of it which we have any concern with), is founded on the ballad of Robin Hood and the Pinder of Wakefield (see part ii. song 3), which it directly quotes, and is, in fact, a most despicable performance. [18] King Edward (the Fourth) having taken King James of Scotland prisoner, after a most bloody battle near Middleham Castle, from which of 30,000 Scots not 5000 had escaped, comes with his royal captive in disguise to Bradford, where they [xxix] meet Robin Hood and George a Green, who have just had a stout affray: and after having read this, and a great deal more such nonsensical stuff, Captain Grose sagaciously "supposes that this play has little or no foundation in history;" and very gravely sits down and debates his opinion in form.

"The history of George a Green, pindar of the town of Wakefield," 4to, no date, [19] is a modern production, chiefly founded on the old play just mentioned, of neither authority nor merit.

Our gallant pinder is thus facetiously commemorated by Drunken Barnaby:

"Hinc diverso cursu, sero  
 Quod audissem de pindero  
 Wakefeeldensi; gloria mundi,  
 Ubi socii sunt jucundi,  
 Mecum statui peragraré  
 Georgii fustem visitare."  
 "Turning thence, none could me hinder  
 To salute the Wakefield pindar;  
 Who indeed is the world's glory,  
 With his comrades never sorry.  
 This was the cause, lest you should miss it,  
 George's club I meant to visit."  
 "Veni Wakefield peramænum,  
 Ubi quærens Georgium Greenum,  
 Non inveni, sed in lignum  
 Fixum reperi Georgii signum,  
 Ubi allam bibi feram  
 Donec Georgio fortior eram."  
 "Strait at Wakefield I was seen a,  
 Where I sought for George a Green a;  
 But could find not such a creature,

Yet on a sign I saw his feature,  
Where strength of ale had so much stir'd me,  
That I grew stouter far than Jordie."

Besides the companions of our hero enumerated in the text, and whose names are most celebrated and familiar, we find those of William of Goldsbrough (mentioned by Grafton), Right-hitting Brand (by Mundy), and Gilbert with the white [xxx] hand, who is thrice named in the Lyttell Geste of Robyn Hode (i. 52, 71), and is likewise noticed by Bishop Gawin Douglas in his *Palice of Honour*, printed at Edinburgh in 1579, but written before 1518:

"Thair saw I Maitlaid upon auld Beird Gray,  
Robene Hude, and Gilbert with the quhite hand,  
How Hay of Naughton slew, in Madin land." [20]

As no mention is made of Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudeslie, either in the ancient legend or in more than one of the numerous songs of Robin Hood, nor does the name of the latter once occur in the old metrical history of those famous archers reprinted in Percy's *Reliques*, and among pieces of ancient popular poetry, it is to be concluded that they flourished at different periods, or at least had no connection with each other. In a poem, however, intitled, "Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and young William of Cloudesley, the second part," 1616, 4to, b. 1. (Bib. Bod. Art. L. 71, being a more modern copy than that in Selden C. 39, which wants the title, but was probably printed with the first part, which it there accompanies, in 1605; differing considerably therefrom in several places, and containing many additional verses), are the following lines (not in the former copy):

"Now beare thy father's heart, my boy,  
Said William of Cloudesley then,  
When i was young i car'd not for  
The brags of sturdiest men.  
The pinder of Wakefield, George a Green,  
I try'd a sommer's day,  
Yet he nor i were victors made  
Nor victor'd went away.  
Old Robin Hood, nor Little John,  
Amongst their merry men all,  
Nor fryer Tuck, so stout and young,  
My courage could appall."

([Note 10](#)) "*Marian*."] Who or whatever this lady was, it is observable that no mention of her occurs either in the Lytell Geste of Robyn Hode, or in any other poem or song [xxxi] concerning him, except the not very old ballad of Robin Hood's Golden Prize, where she is barely named, and a still more modern one of no merit (see part ii. song 24). [21] She is an important character, however, in the two old plays of *The death and downfall of Robert earl of Huntington*, written before 1600, and is frequently mentioned by dramatic or other writers about that period. Her presence, likewise, was considered as essential to the morris-dance. See [Note 34](#).

In the *First Part of King Henry IV*. Falstaff says to the hostess, "There's no more faith in thee than in a stew'd prune; nor no more truth in thee than in a drawn fox; and for womanhood, Maid Marian may be the deputy's wife of the ward to thee;" upon which Dr. Johnson observes, that "Maid Marian is a man dressed like a woman, who attends the dancers of the morris." "In the ancient songs of Robin Hood," says Percy, "frequent mention is made of Maid Marian, who appears to have been his concubine. I could quote," adds he, "many passages in my old MS. to this purpose, but shall produce only one: [22]

‘Good Robin Hood was living then,  
Which now is quite forgot,  
And so was fayre Maid Marian,’ &c.”

Mr. Steevens, too, after citing the old play of “The downfall of Robert earl of Huntington,” 1601, to prove “that Maid Marian was originally a name assumed by Matilda, the daughter of Robert, Lord Fitzwater, while Robin Hood remained in a state of outlawry,” observes, that “Shakespeare speaks of Maid Marian in her degraded state, when she was [xxxii] represented by a strumpet or a clown;” and refers to figure 2 in the plate at the end of the play, with Mr. Tollet’s observations on it. The widow, in Sir W. Davenant’s “Love and Honour,” says, “I have been Mistress Marian in a maurice ere now;” and Mr. Warton [23] quotes an old piece, entitled “Old Meg of Herefordshire for a Maid Marian, and Hereford town for a morris-dance: or 12 morris-dancers in Herefordshire of 1200 years old,” London, 1609, 4to, which is dedicated, he says, to one Hall, a celebrated tabourer in that country. [24] See Note 34.

([Note 11](#)) “*His company,*” &c.] See the entire passage quoted from Major in a subsequent note. “By such bootyes as he could get,” says the writer of the Sloane MS., “his company encreast to an hundred and a halfe.”

([Note 12](#)) — “*the words of an old writer.*”] The author of the Sloane manuscript; which adds: “after such maner he procured the pynner of Wakefeyld to become one of his company, and a freyr called Muchel [r. Tuck] ... Scarlock he induced upon this occasion: one day meeting him as he walket solitary & like to a man forlorne, because a mayd to whom he was affyanced was taken from [him] by the violence of her frends, & given to another that was old & welthy, whereupon Robin, understanding when the maryage-day should be, came to the church as a begger, & having his own company not far of, which came in so soone as they hard [xxxiii] the sound of his horne, he tooke the bryde perforce from him that [bare] in hand to have married her, & caused the preist to wed her & Scarlocke togeyther.” (See part ii. song 8.) This MS., of which great part is merely the old legend or Lytell Geste of Robyn Hode turned into prose, appears to have been written before the year 1600.

([Note 13](#)) “*In shooting,*” &c.] MS. Sloan. Grafton also speaks of our hero’s “excelling principally in archery or shooting, his manly courage agreeyng thereunto.”

Their archery, indeed, was unparalleled, as both Robin Hood and Little John have frequently shot an arrow a measured mile, or 1760 yards, which it is supposed no one, either before or since, was ever able to do. “Tradition,” says Master Charlton, “informs us that in one of ‘Robin Hood’s’ peregrinations, he, attended by his trusty mate Little John, went to dine [at Whitby Abbey] with the abbot Richard, who, having heard them often famed for their great dexterity in shooting with the long bow, begged them after dinner to shew him a specimen thereof; when, to oblige the abbot, they went up to the top of the abbey, whence each of them shot an arrow, which fell not far from Whitby-laths, but on the contrary side of the lane; and in memorial thereof, a pillar was set up by the abbot in the place where each of the arrows was found, which are yet standing in these our days; that field where the pillar for Robin Hood’s arrow stands being still called Robin Hood’s field, and the other where the pillar for Little John’s arrow is placed, still preserving the name of John’s field. Their distance from Whitby Abbey is more than a measured mile, which seems very far for the flight of an arrow, and is a circumstance that will stagger the faith of many; but as to the credibility of the story, every reader may judge thereof as he thinks proper; only I must here beg leave to observe that these very pillars are mentioned, and the fields called by the aforesaid names, in the old deeds for that ground, now in the possession of Mr. Thomas Watson” (History of Whitby, York, 1779, p. 146). [25]

[xxxiv]

Dr. Meredith Hanmer, in his *Chronicle of Ireland* (p. 179), speaking of Little John, says, "There are memorable acts reported of him, which I hold not for truth, that he would shoot an arrow a mile off and a great deale more; but them," adds he, "I leave among the lyes of the land." [26] See Note 39.

[xxxv]

(Note 14) "*An outlaw, in those times, being deprived of protection, owed no allegiance,*" &c.] Such a character was, doubtless, at the period treated of, in a very critical situation; it being equally as legal and meritorious to hunt down and dispatch him as it was to kill a wolf, the head of which animal he was said to bear. "Item foris facit," says Bracton (who wrote about the time), "omnia que pacis sunt, quia a tempore quo utlagatus est caput gerit lupinum, ita ut impune ab omnibus interfici possit" (l. 2, c. 35). In the great roll of the exchequer, in the 7th year of King Richard I., is an allowance by writ of two marks to Thomas de Prestwude, for bringing to Westminster the head of William de Elleford, an outlaw. (See Madox's *History of the Exchequer*, 136.) Those who received or consorted with a person outlawed were subject to the same punishment. Such was the humane policy of our enlightened ancestors! See Note 21.

(Note 15)

"— — — *how*  
... *they could discourse*  
*The freezing hours away!*"

(*Cymbeline*, act iii. scene 3). The chief subjects of our hero's conversation are supposed, by a poetical genius of the 16th [xxxvi] century, to have been the commendation of a forest-life and the ingratitude of mankind.

"I have no tales of Robin Hood, though mal-content was he  
In better daies, first Richard's daies, and liv'd in woods as we  
A Tymon of the world; but not devoutly was he soe,  
And therefore praise I not the man: but for from him did groe  
Words worth the note, a word or twaine of him ere hence we goe.

Those daies begot some mal-contents, the principall of whome  
A county was, that with a troope of yomandry did rome,  
Brave archers and deliver men, since nor before so good,  
Those took from rich to give the poore, and manned Robin Hood.  
He fed them well, and lodg'd them safe in pleasant caves and bowers,  
Oft saying to his merry men, What juster life than ours?  
Here use we tallents that abroad the churles abuse or hide,  
Their coffers' excrements, and yeat for common wants denide.  
We might have sterved for their store, & they have dyc't our bones,  
Whose tongues, driftes, harts, intice, meane, melt, as syrens, foxes, stones,  
Yea even the best that betterd them heard but aloofe our mones.  
And redily the churles could prie and prate of our amis,  
Forgetfull of their owne. . . .  
I did amis, not missing friends that wisht me to amend:  
I did amend, but missed friends when mine amis had end:  
My friends therefore shall finde me true, but I will trust no frend.  
Not one I knewe that wisht me ill, nor any workt me well,  
To lose, lacke, live, time, friends, in yncke, an hell, an hell, an hell!

Then happie we (quoth Robin Hood) in merry Sherwood that dwell.” [27]

It has been conjectured, however, that, in the winter season, our hero and his companions severally quartered themselves in villages or country-houses more or less remote, with persons of whose fidelity they were assured. It is not improbable, at the same time, that they might have tolerably comfortable habitations erected in the woods.

Archery, which our hero and his companions appear to have carried to a state of perfection, continued to be cultivated for some ages after their time, down, indeed, to that of Henry VIII., or about the year 1540, when, owing to the introduction of artillery and matchlock-guns, it became neglected, and the bowmen of Cressy and Agincourt utterly extinct; though it may be still a question whether a body of expert archers would not, even at this day, be superior to an equal [xxxvii] number armed with muskets. [28] The loss sustained from this change by the people at large seems irreparable. Anciently, the use of the bow or bill qualified every man for a soldier; and a body of peasants, led on by a Tyler or a Cade, was not less formidable than any military force that could be raised to oppose them: by which means the people from time to time preserved the very little liberty they had, and which their tyrants were constantly endeavouring to wrest from them. See how the case stands at present: the sovereign, let him be who or what he will (kings have been tyrants, and may be so again), has a standing army, well disciplined and accoutred, while the subjects or people are absolutely defenceless: as much care having been taken, particularly since “the glorious revolution,” to deprive them of arms as was formerly bestowed to enforce their use and practice. [29] The following extract from Hale’s *Historia Placitorum Coronæ* (i. 118) will serve to show how familiar the bow and arrow was in the 14th century:—“M. 22. E. 3. Rot. 117. coram rege Ebor. This was the case of Henry Vescy, who had been indicted before the sheriff in turno suo . . . of divers felonies, whereupon the sheriff mandavit commissionem suam Henrico de Clyderawe & aliis ad capiendum prædictum H. Vescy, & salvo ducendum usque castrum de Ebor.” Vescy would not submit to an arrest, but fled, and inter fugiendum shot with his bow and arrows at his pursuers, but in the end was killed by Clyderawe: to which may be added a remarkable passage in Harison’s “Description of England” (prefixed to Holinshed’s *Chronicle*, 1587), to prove how much it had declined in the 16th. “In times past,” says he, “the [xxxviii] cheefe force of England consisted in their long bowes. But now we have in maner generallie given over that kind of artillerie, and for long bowes in deed doo practise to shoot compasse for our pastime; which kind of shooting can never yeeld anie smart stroke, nor beat down our enemies, as our countrymen were woont to doo at everie time of need. Certes the Frenchmen and Rutters, [30] deriding our new archerie in respect of their corslets, will not let, in open skirmish, if anie leisure serve, to turne up their tailes, and crie, Shoote, English; and all because our strong shooting is decaied and laid in bed. But if some of our Englishmen now lived that served King Edward the Third in his warres with France, the breech [31] of such a varlet should have beene nailed to his bum with one arrow, and an other fethered in his bowels, before he should have turned about to see who shot the first” (p. 198). Bishop Latimer, in his sixth sermon before King Edward VI., gives an interesting account how the sons of yeomen were, in his infancy, trained up to the bow. “But now,” says he, “we have taken up whooring in townes, instead of shooting in the fieldes.”

[\(Note 16\)](#)

“*All clad in Lincoln green.*”]

This species of cloth is mentioned by Spenser (*Faerie Queene*, VI. ii. 5):

“All in a woodman’s jacket he was clad  
Of Lincolne greene, belay’d with silver lace  
And on his head an hood with aglets sprad,

And by his side his hunter's horne he hanging had."

It is likewise noticed by our poet himself, in another place:

"Swains in shepherds gray, and gyrles in Lincolne greene." [32]

See Polyolbion, song xxv., where the marginal note says, "Lincolne anciently dyed the best green in England." Thus Coventry had formerly the reputation of dying the best blue. [xxxix] See Ray's Proverbs, p. 178. Kendal green is equally famous, and appears to have been cloth of a similar quality. This colour was adopted by foresters to prevent their being too readily discovered by the deer. See Sir John Wynne's History of the Guedir Family (Barrington's Miscellanies), p. 419. Thus the Scotch Highlanders used to wear brown plaids to prevent their being distinguished among the heath. It is needless to observe that green has ever been the favourite dress of an archer, hunter, &c. See Note 34. [33] We now call it a Saxon or grass green:

"His coat is of a Saxon green, his waistcoat's of a plaid" (O. song).

Lincoln green was well known in France in or before the 13th century. Thus, in an old fabliau, transposed by M. Le Grand (Fabliaux ou Contes, iv. 13), "Il mit donc son surcot fourré d'écureuil, et sa belle robe d'Estanfort teinte en verd." Estanfort is Stamford, in Lincolnshire. [34] This cloth is, likewise, often mentioned by the old Scotch poets under the names of Lincum licht, Lincum twyne, &c., and appears to have been in universal request: and yet, notwithstanding this cloud of evidence, Mr. Pinkerton has had the confidence to assert that "no particular cloth was ever made at Lincoln." (See Ancient Scotch Poems, ii. 430.) But, indeed, this worthy gentleman, as Johnson said of Goldsmith, only stumbles upon truth by accident.

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(Note 17)

"From wealthy abbots' chests," &c.]

"But who," exclaims Dr. Fuller, having cited this passage, "made him a judge? or gave him a commission to take where it might be best spared, and give where it was most wanted?" That same power, one may answer, which authorises kings to take where it can be worst spared, and give it where it is least wanted. Our hero, in this respect, was a knight-errant; and wanted no other commission than that of Justice, whose cause he militated. His power, compared with that of the king of England, was by no means either equally usurped or equally abused: the one reigned over subjects (or slaves) as a master (or tyrant), the other possessed no authority but what was delegated to him by the free suffrage of his adherents, for their general good: and as for the rest, it would be absurd to blame in Robin what we should praise in Richard. [35] The latter, too, warred in remote parts of the world against nations from which neither he nor his subjects had sustained any injury; the former at home against those to whose wealth, avarice, or ambition he might fairly attribute not only his own misfortunes, but the misery of the oppressed and enslaved society he had quitted. In a word, every man who has the power has also the authority to pursue the ends of justice, to regulate the gifts of fortune, by transferring the superfluities of the rich to the necessities of the poor; by relieving the oppressed, and even, when necessary, destroying the oppressor. These are the objects of the social union, and every individual may, and to the utmost of his power should, endeavour to promote them. Had our Robin Hood been, like M'Donald of Barrisdale, a reader of Virgil, he, as well as that gallant chief, might have inscribed on his baldric—

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“Hæ tibi erunt artes; pacis componere mores,  
Parcere subjectis, et debellare superbos.” [36]

(Note 18) “*But it is to be remembered,*” &c.] The passage from Major’s work, which has been already quoted, is here given entire (except as to a single sentence introduced in another place). “Circa hæc tempora [s. Ricardi I.] ut auguror, Robertus Hudus & Parvus Joannes latrones famatissimi, in nemoribus latuerunt, solum opulentum virorum bona diripientes. Nullum nisi eos invadentem vel resistentem pro suarum rerum tuitione occiderunt. Centum sagittarios ad pugnam aptissimos Robertus latrociniis aluit quos 400 viri fortissimi invadere non audebant. Fæminam nullum opprimi permisit, nec pauperum bona surripuit, verum eos ex abbatum bonis ablatis opipare pavit. Viri rapinam improbo sed latronum omnium humanissimus & princeps erat” (Majoris Britanniaë Historia, Edin. 1740, p. 128).

Stowe, in his Annales, 1592, p. 227, gives an almost literal version of the above passage; Richard Robinson versifies it; [37] and Camden slightly refers to it.

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(Note 19) —“*has had the honour to be compared to the illustrious Wallace,*” &c.] In the first volume of Peck’s intended supplement to the Monasticon, consisting of collections for the history of Præmonstratensian monasteries, now in the British Museum, is a very curious riming Latin poem with the following title: “Prioris Alnwicensis de bello Scotico apud Dumbar, tempore regis Edwardi I. dictamen sive rithmus Latinus, quo de Willielmo Wallace Scotico illo Robin Whood, plura sed invidiose canit;” and in the margin are the following date and reference:—“22. Julii 1304. 32. E. 1. Regist. Prem. fol. 59. a.” This, it maybe observed, is the first known instance of our hero’s name being mentioned by any writer whatever; and affords a strong and respectable proof of his early popularity.

(Note 20) “*The abbot of St. Mary’s in York.*”] “In the year 1088, Alan, Earl of Richmond, founded here a stately abbey for black monks to the honour of St. Olave; but it was afterwards dedicated to the Blessed Virgin by the command of king William Rufus. Its yearly revenues at the suppression amounted to £1550, 7s. 9d. Dugd., £2850, 1s. 5d. Speed” (Willis’s Mitred Abbeyes, i. 214). The abbots in our hero’s time were—

Robert de Harpsham (el. 1184), ob. 1198.

Robert de Longo Campo, ob. 1239.

William Rondele, ob. 1244.

Tho. de Wharterhille, ob. 1258.

(Note 21) —“*the sheriff of Nottinghamshire.*”] Ralph Murdach was sheriff of Derby and Nottinghamshires in the first year of King Richard I., and for the seven years preceding, and William Brewerre in his sixth year, between which and the first no name appears on the roll. See Fuller’s Worthies, &c.

In the year 1195, Hubert, Archbishop of Canterbury, [xliii] justiciary of all England, sent throughout the kingdom this form of oath: that all men of the realm of England would keep the peace of the lord the king to their power; and that they would neither be thieves nor robbers, nor the receivers of such, nor consent to them in anything; and that when they were able to know such-like malefactors, they would take them to the utmost of their power, and deliver them to the sheriff; who in no wise should be delivered unless by the lord the king or his chief justice; and if unable to take them, they should cause the bailiffs of the lord the king to know who they were: and, cry being raised for pursuing outlaws, robbers, thieves, or their receivers, all should fully do that suit to the utmost of their power, &c. Knights were to be assigned for these purposes, and men chosen and faithful were sent to execute them in every

county, who by the oath of true men of the vicinages took many and put them in the king's prisons; but many, being forewarned, and conscious of evil, left their houses and possessions and fled (*R. de Hoveden*, p. 757).

([Note 22](#)) —“*an anecdote preserved by Fordun,*” &c.] “De quo etiam quædam commendabilia recitantur, sicut patuit in hoc, quod cum ipse quondam in Barnisdale iram [f. ob iram] regis & fremitum principis, missam, ut solitus erat, devotissime audiret, nec aliqua necessitate volebat interrumpere officium, quadam die cum audiret missam, à quodam vicecomite & ministris regis, sæpius per prius ipsum infestantibus, in illo secretissimo loco nemorali, ubi missæ interfuit, exploratus, venientes ad eum qui de suis hoc perceperunt, ut omni annis fugeret suggererunt, qui, ob reverentiam sacramenti, quod tunc devotissime venerabatur, omnino facere recusavit. Sed ceteris suis, ob metum mortis trepidantibus, Robertus tantum confisus in eum, quem coluit reveritus, cum paucissimis, qui tunc forte ei affuerunt, inimicos congressus & eos de facili devicit, et de eorum spoliis ac redemptione ditatus, ministros ecclesiæ & missas semper in majori veneratione semper & de post habere præelegit, attendens quod vulgariter dictum est:

Hunc deus exaudit, qui missam sæpius audit.”

J. De Fordun *Scotichronicon*, à Hearne, Ox. 1722, p. 774.

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This passage is found in no other copy of Fordun's Chronicle than one in the Harleian Library. Its suppression in all the rest may be fairly accounted for on the principle which is presumed to have influenced the conduct of the ancient English historians. See Note 1.

([Note 23](#)) —“*a proclamation was published,*” &c.] “The king att last,” says the Harleian MS., “sett furth a proclamation to have him apprehended,” &c. Grafton, after having told us that he “practised robberyes,” &c., adds, “The which beyng certefyed to the king, and he beyng greatly offended therewith, caused his proclamation to be made that whosoever would bryng him quicke or dead, the king would geve him a great summe of money, as by the recordes in the Exchequer is to be seene: But of this promise no man enjoyed any benefite. For the sayd Robert Hood, being afterwarde troubled with sicknesse,” &c. (p. 85.) See Note 14.

([Note 24](#)) “*At length the infirmities of old age increasing upon him,*” &c.] Thus Grafton: “The sayd Robert Hood, beyng troubled with sicknesse, came to a certain nonry in Yorkshire called Bircklies [r. Kircklies], where desiryng to be let blood, he was betrayed and bled to death.” The Sloane MS. says that “[Being] dystempered with could and age, he had great payne in his lymmes, his bloud being corrupted, therefore to be eased of his payne by letting bloud, he repayred to the prioies of Kyrkesly, which some say was his aunt, a woman very skylful in physique & surgery; who, perceyving him to be Robyn Hood, & waying howe fel an enemy he was to religious persons, toke reveng of him for her owne howse and all others by letting him bleed to death. It is also sayd that one Sir Roger of Doncaster, bearing grudge to Robyn for some injury, incyted the prioies, with whome he was very familiar, in such a maner to dispatch him.” See the Lytell Geste of Robyn Hode, ad finem. The Harleian MS., after mentioning the proclamation “sett furth to have him apprehended,” adds, “At which time it happened he fell sick at a nunnery in Yorkshire called Birkleys [r. Kirkleys]; & desiring there to be let blood, hee was betrayed & made bleed to death.”

Kirkleys, Kirklees, or Kirkleghe, formerly Kuthale, in the [**xlv**] deanery of Pontefract, and archdeaonry of the West Riding of Yorkshire, was a Cistercian, or, as some say, a Benedictine nunnery, founded, in honour of the Virgin Mary and St. James, by Reynerus



Flandrensis in the reign of King Henry II. Its revenues at the dissolution were somewhat about £20, and the site was granted (36 Hen. 8.) to John Tasburgh and Henry Savill, from whom it came to one of the ancestors of Sir George Armytage, Bart., the present possessor. The remains of the building (if any) are very inconsiderable, and its register has been searched after in vain. See Tanner's Notitia, p. 674. Thoresby's Ducatus Leodiensis, p. 91. Hearne's "Account of Several Antiquities in and about the University of Oxford," at the end of Leland's Itinerary, vol. ii. p. 128.

In 1706 was discovered, among the ruins of the nunnery, the monument of Elisabeth de Staynton, prioress; but it is not certain that this was the lady from whom our hero experienced such kind assistance. See Thoresby and Hearne ubi supra.

"One may wonder," says Dr. Fuller, "how he escaped the hand of justice, dying in his bed, for ought is found to the contrary; but it was because he was rather a merry than a mischievous thief (complementing passengers out of their purses), never murdering any but deer, and . . . 'feasting' the vicinage with his vension" (Worthies, p. 320). See the following note.

([Note 25](#)) "*He was interred under some trees at a short distance from the house; a stone being placed over his grave with an inscription to his memory.*" "Kirkley monasterium monialium, ubi Ro: Hood nobilis ille exlex sepultus" (Leland's Collectanea, i. 54). "Kirkleys Nunnery, in the Woods, whereof Robin Hood's grave is, is between Halifax and Wakefield upon Calder" (Letter from Jo. Savile to W. Camden, Illus. viro epis. 1691).

"— — — as Caldor comes along,  
It chanced she in her course on 'Kirkley' cast her eye,  
Where merry Robin Hood, that honest thief, doth lie."

(Polyolbion, song 28.)

See also Camden's Britannia, 1695, p. 709.

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In the second volume of Dr. Stukeley's Itinerarium Curiosum is an engraving of "the prospect of Kirkley's abby, where Robin Hood dyed, from the footway leading to Heartishead church, at a quarter of a mile distance. A. The New Hall. B. The Gatehouse of the Nunnery. C. The trees among which Robin Hood was buryed. D. The way up the Hill were this was drawn. E. Bradley wood. F. Almondbury hill. G. Castle field. Drawn by Dr. Johnston among his Yorkshire Antiquitys, p. 54 of the drawings. E. Kirkall, sculp." It makes plate 99 of the above work, but is unnoticed in the letterpress.

According to the Sloane MS., the prioress, after "letting him bleed to death, buryed him under a great stone by the hywayes syde;" which is agreeable to the account in Grafton's Chronicle, where it is said that, after his death, "the prioresse of the same place caused him to be buried by the highway-side, where he had used to rob and spoyle those that passed that way. And vpon his grave the sayde prioresse did lay a very fayre stone, wherein the names of Robert Hood, William of Goldesborough, and others were graven. And the cause why she buryed him there was, for that the common passengers and travailers, knowyng and seeyng him there buryed, might more safely and without feare take their jorneyes that way, which they durst not do in the life of the sayd outlawes. And at eyther ende of the sayde tombe was erected a crosse of stone, which is to be seene there at this present."

“Near unto ‘Kirklees’ the noted Robin Hood lies buried under a grave-stone that yet remains near the park, but the inscription scarce legible” (Thoresby’s Ducatus Leodiensis, fo. 1715, p. 91). In the Appendix, p. 576, is the following note, with a reference to “page91:” —

“Amongst the papers of the learned Dr. Gale, late dean of Yorke, was found this epitaph of Robin Hood:

"Hear undernead dis laitl stean  
laiz robert earl of Huntingtun  
nea arcir ver az hie sa geud  
an pipl kauld im robin heud [xlviij]  
sick utlawz az hi an iz men  
vil england nivv si agen.

obiit 24 [r. 14] kal dekembris 1247.”

The genuineness of this epitaph has been questioned. Dr. Percy, in the first edition of his “Reliques of Ancient English Poetry” (1765), says “It must be confessed this epitaph is suspicious, because in the most ancient poems of Robin Hood there is no mention of this imaginary earldom.” This reason, however, is by no means conclusive, the most ancient poem now extant having no pretension to the antiquity claimed by the epitaph: and indeed the Doctor himself should seem to have afterward had less confidence in it, as, in both the subsequent editions, those words are omitted, and the learned critic merely observes that the epitaph appears to him suspicious. It will be admitted that the bare suspicion of this ingenious writer, whose knowledge and judgment of ancient poetry are so conspicuous and eminent, ought to have considerable weight. As for the present editor’s part, though he does not pretend to say that the language of this epitaph is that of Henry the Third’s time, nor indeed to determine of what age it is, he can perceive nothing in it from whence one should be led to pronounce it spurious, *i.e.* that it was never inscribed on the grave-stone of Robin Hood. That there actually was some inscription upon it in Thoresby’s time, though then scarce legible, is evident from his own words: and it should be remembered as well that the last century was not the era of imposition, as that Dr. Gale was both too good and too learned a man either to be capable of it himself or to be liable to it from others.

That industrious chronologist and topographer, as well as respectable artist and citizen, master Thomas Gent, of York, in his “List of religious houses,” annexed to “The ancient and modern state of” that famous city, 1730, 12mo, p. 234, informs us that he had been told “that his [Robin Hood’s] tombstone, having his effigy thereon, was order’d, not many years ago, by a certain knight to be placed as a harth-stone in his great hall. When it was laid overnight, the next morning it was ‘surprizingly’ removed [on or to] one side; and [xlviii] so three times it was laid, and as successively turned aside. The knight, thinking he had done wrong to have brought it thither, order’d it should be drawn back again; which was performed by a pair of oxen and four horses, when twice the number could scarce do it before. But as this,” adds the sagacious writer, “is a story only, it is left to the reader to judge at pleasure.” N.B.—This is the second instance of a miracle wrought in favour of our hero!

In Gough’s Sepulchral Monuments, p. cviii., is “the figure of the stone over the grave of Robin Hood [in Kirklees park, being a plain stone with a sort of cross fleuree thereon], now broken and much defaced, the inscription illegible. That printed in Thoresby, Ducat. Leod. 576, from Dr. Gale’s papers, was never on it. [38] The late Sir Samuel Armitage owner of the premises, caused the ground under it to be dug a yard deep, and found it had never been disturbed; so that it was probably brought from some other place, and by vulgar tradition ascribed to Robin Hood” (refers to “Mr. Watson’s letter in Antiquary Society minutes”). This is probably the tomb-stone of Elizabeth de Staynton, mentioned in the preceding note.

The old epitaph is, by some anonymous hand, in a work entitled “Sepulchrorum inscriptiones; or a curious collection of 900 of the most remarkable epitaphs,” Westminster, 1727 (vol. ii. p. 73), thus not inelegantly paraphrased:

“Here, underneath this little stone,  
Thro’ Death’s assaults, now lieth one,  
Known by the name of Robin Hood,  
Who was a thief, and archer good;  
Full thirteen years, and something more,  
He robb’d the rich to feed the poor:

[xlix]

Therefore, his grave bedew with tears,  
And offer for his soul your prayers.” [39]

(Note 26) —“*various dramatic exhibitions.*”] The earliest of these performances now extant is “The play of Robyn Hode, very proper to be played in Maye games,” which is inserted in the Appendix to this work, and may probably be as old as the 15th century. That a different play, however, on the same subject has formerly existed, seems pretty certain from a somewhat curious passage in “The famous chronicle of king Edward the first, surnamed Edward Longshankes,” &c., by George Peele, printed in 1593.

“Lluellen . . . . weele get the next daie from Brecknocke the booke of Robin Hood, the frier he shall instruct us in his cause, and weele even here . . . wander like irregulers up and down the wildernesse, ile be maister of misrule, ile be Robin Hood that once, cousin ‘Rice,’ thou shalt be little John, and hers frier David, as fit as a die for frier Tucke. Now, my sweet Nel, if you will make up the messe with a good heart for maide Marian, and doe well with Lluellen under the green-woode trees, with as good a wil as in the good townes, why plena est curia.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter Mortimor, solus.*

*Mortimor.* . . . . Maisters, have after gentle Robin Hood,  
You are not so well accompanied I hope,  
But if a potter come to plaie his part,  
Youle give him stripes or welcome good or worse.

[*Exit.*

*Enter Lluellen, Meredith, frier, Elinor, and their traine. They are all clad in greene, &c. sing, &c. Blyth and bonny, the song ended, Lluellen speaketh.*

*Luellen.* Why so, I see, my mates of olde,  
All were nor lies that Bedlams [beldams] told;  
Of Robin Hood and little John,  
Frier Tucke and maide Marian.”

Mortimer, as a potter, afterwards fights the frier with “flailes.”

2. “The downfall of Robert earle of Huntington, afterward [I] called Robin Hood of merrie Sherwodde: with his love to chaste Matilda, the lord Fitzwater’s daughter, afterwarde his faire maide Marian. Acted by the right honourable, the earle of Notingham, lord high admirall of England, his servants. ¶ Imprinted at London, for William Leake, 1601.” 4to, b. 1.

3. “The death of Robert, earle of Huntington, otherwise called Robin Hood of merrie Sherwodde: with the lamentable tragedie of chaste Matilda, his faire maid Marian, poysoned at Dunmowe, by king John. Acted, &c. ¶ Imprinted &c. [as above] 1601.” 4to, b. 1.

These two plays, usually called the first and second part of Robin Hood, were always, on the authority of Kirkman, falsely ascribed to Thomas Heywood, till Mr. Malone fortunately retrieved the names of the true authors, Anthony Mundy and Henry Chettle. [40] As they seem partly founded on traditions long since forgotten, and refer occasionally to documents not now to be found; at any rate, as they are much older than most of the common ballads upon the subject, and contain some curious and possibly authentic particulars not elsewhere to be met with, the reader will excuse the particularity of the account and length of the extracts here given.

The first part, or downfall of Robert earle of Huntington, is supposed to be performed at the court and command of Henry VIII., the poet Skelton being the dramatist, and [ii] acting the part of chorus. The introductory scene commences thus:

*“Enter Sir John Eltam, and knocke at Skelton’s doore.*

*Sir John.* Howe, maister Skelton! what, at studie hard?

*[Opens the doore.*

*Skel.* Welcome and wisht for, honest Sir John Eltam,—  
Twill trouble you after your great affairs,

*[i.e. the surveying of certain maps which his majesty had employed him in;*

To take the paine that I intended to intreate you to,  
About rehearsall of your promis’d play.

*Elt.* Nay, master Skelton; for the king himselfe,  
As wee were parting, bid mee take great heede  
Wee faile not of our day: therefore I pray  
Sende for the rest, that now we may rehearse.

*Skel.* O they are readie all, and drest to play.  
What part play you?

*Elt.* Why, I play little John,  
And came of purpose with this greene sute.

*Skel.* Holla, my masters, little John is come.

*[At every doore all the players runne out: some crying where? where?  
others, Welcome, Sir John: among others the boyes and clowne.*

*Skel.* Faith, little Tracy, you are somewhat forward.  
What, our maid Marian leaping like a lad!  
If you remember, Robin is your love,  
Sir Thomas Mantle yonder, not Sir John.

*Clow.* But, master, Sir John is my fellowe, for I am Much the  
miller’s sonne. Am I not?

*Skel.* I know yee are, sir:—  
And, gentlemen, since you are thus prepar’d,  
Goe in, and bring your dumbe scene on the stage.  
And I, as prologue, purpose to expresse  
The ground whereon our historie is laied.

*[Exeunt, manet Skelton.*

*Trumpets sounde, [1] enter first King Richard with drum and auncient, giving Ely a purse and sceptre, his mother and brother John, Chester, Lester, Lacie, others at the king's appointment, doing reverence. The king goes in: presently Ely ascends the chaire, Chester, John, and the queene part displeasantly. [2] Enter ROBERT, EARLE OF HUNTINGTON, leading Marian; followes him Warman, and after Warman, the prior; Warman ever flattering and making curtsie, taking gifts of the prior behinde and his master before. Prince John enters, offereth to take Marian; Queen Elinor enters, offering to pull Robin from her; but they infolde each other, and sit downe within the curteines. [3] Warman with the prior, Sir Hugh Lacy, Lord Sentloe, and Sir Gilbert Broghton folde hands, and drawing the curteins, all (but the prior) enter, and are kindly received by Robin Hoode."*

[lii]

During the exhibition of the second part of the dumb show, Skelton instructs the audience as follows:

“This youth that leads yon virgin by the hand  
Is our earle Robert, or your Robin Hoode,  
That in those daies was earle of Huntington;  
The ill-fac't miser, brib'd in either hand,  
Is Warman, once the steward of his house,  
Who, Judas like, betraies his liberall lord,  
Into the hands of that relentlesse prior,  
Calde Gilbert Hoode, uncle to Huntington.  
Those two that seeke to part these lovely friends,  
Are Elenor the queene, and John the prince,  
She loves earle Robert, he maide Marian,  
But vainely; for their deare affect is such,  
As only death can sunder their true loves.  
Long had they lov'd, and now it is agreed,  
This day they must be troth-plight, after wed:  
At Huntington's faire house a feast is helde,  
But envie turnes it to a house of teares.  
For those false gwestes, conspiring with the prior;  
To whom earle Robert greatly is in debt,  
Meane at the banquet to betray the earle,  
Unto a heavie writ of outlawry:  
The manner and escape you all shall see.  
...  
Looke to your entrance, get you in, Sir John.  
My shift is long, for I play Frier Tucke;  
Wherein, if Skelton hath but any lucke,  
Heele thanke his hearers oft with many a ducke.  
For many talk of Robin Hood that never shot in his bowe,  
But Skelton writes of Robin Hood what he doth truly knowe.”

After some Skeltonical rimes, and a scene betwixt the prior, the sheriff, and justice Warman, concerning the outlawry, which appears to be proclaimed, and the taking of Earl Huntington at dinner, “Enter Robin Hoode, little John following him; Robin having his napkin on his shoulder, as if hee were sodainly raised from dinner.” He is in a violent rage at being outlawed, and Little John endeavours to pacify him. Marian being distressed at his

apparent disorder, he dissembles with her. After she is gone, John thus addresses him:

“Now must your honour leave these mourning tunes,  
And thus by my areede you shall provide;

[liii]

Your plate and jewels ‘i wil’ straight packe up,  
And toward Notingham convey them hence.  
At Rowford, Sowtham, Wortley, Hothersfield,  
Of all your cattell mony shall be made,  
And I at Mansfield will attend your comming;  
Where weele determine which waie’s best to take.

*Rob.* Well, be it so; a God’s name, let it be;  
And if I can, Marian shall come with mee.

*John.* Else care will kill her; therefore if you please,  
At th’ utmost corner of the garden wall,  
Soone in the evening waite for Marian,  
And as I goe ile tell her of the place.  
Your horses at the Bell shall readie bee,  
I meane Belsavage, [41] whence, as citizens  
That ‘meane’ to ride for pleasure some small way,  
You shall set forth.”

The company now enters, and Robin charges them with the conspiracy, and rates their treacherous proceedings. Little John in attempting to remove the goods is set upon by Warman and the sheriff; and during the fray “Enter Prince John, Ely and the prior, and others.” Little John tells the prince he but defends the box containing his own gettings; upon which his royal highness observes,

“You do the fellow wrong; his goods are his:  
You only must extend upon the earles.

*Prior.* That was, my lord, but nowe is Robert Hood,  
A simple yeoman as his servants were.”

Ely gives the prior his commission, with directions to make speed, lest “in his country-house all his heards be solde;” and gives Warman a patent “for the high sherriffewick of Nottingham.” After this, “Enter Robin like a citizen; and then the queen and Marian disguised for each other. Robin takes Marian, and leaves the queen to Prince John, who is [liv] so much enraged at the deception that he breaks the head of Ely’s messenger. Sir Hugh, brother to Lord Lacy, and steward to Ely, who had been deeply concerned in Huntington’s ruin, is killed in a brawl by Prince John, whom Ely orders to be arrested; but the prince, producing letters from the king revoking Ely’s appointment, “lifts up his drawne sworde,” and “Exit, cum Lester and Lacy,” in triumph. Then “Enter Robin Hoode, Matilda at one doore, little John and Much the Miller’s sonne at another doore.” After mutual congratulations, Robin asks if it be

“— — — possible that Warman’s spite  
Should stretch so farre, that he doth hunt the lives  
Of bonnie Scarlet, and his brother Scathlock?

*Much.* O, I, sir. Warman came but yesterday to take charge of the jaile at  
Notingham, and this daie, he saies, he will hang the two outlawes. . . .

*Rob.* Now, by my honour’s hope, . . .  
He is too blame: say, John, where must they die?

*John.* Yonder’s their mother’s house, and here the tree,

Whereon, poore men, they must forgoe their lives;  
And yonder comes a lazy lozell frier,  
That is appointed for their confessor,  
Who, when we brought your monie to their mother's,  
Was wishing her to patience for their deaths."

Here "Enter Frier Tucke;" some conversation passes, and the frier Skeltonizes; after which he departs, saying,

"— — — let us goe our way,  
Unto this hanging businesse; would for mee  
Some rescue or repreeve might set them free.  
*Rob.* Heardst thou not, little John, the frier's speach?  
*John.* He seemes like a good fellow, my good lord.  
*Rob.* He's a good fellowe, John, upon my word.  
Lend me thy horne, and get thee in to Much,  
And when I blowe this horne, come both and helpe mee.  
*John.* Take heed, my lord: the villane Warman knows you,  
And ten to one he hath a writ against you.  
*Rob.* Fear not: below the bridge a poor blind man doth dwell,  
With him I will change my habit, and disguise,  
Only be readie when I call for yee,  
For I will save their lives, if it may bee. . . .

[Iv]

*Enter Warman, Scarlet and Scathlock bounde, Frier Tuck as their confessor,  
officers with halberts.*

*War.* Master frier, be briefe, delay no time.  
Scarlet and Scatlock, never hope for life;  
Here is the place of execution,  
And you must answer lawe for what is done.  
*Scar.* Well, if there be no remedie, we must:  
Though it ill seemeth, Warman, thou shouldst bee,  
So bloodie to pursue our lives thus cruellie.  
*Scat.* Our mother sav'd thee from the gallows, Warman,  
His father did preferre thee to thy lord:  
One mother had wee both, and both our fathers  
To thee and to thy father were kinde friends. . . .  
*War.* Ye were first outlawes, then ye proved theeves. . . .  
Both of your fathers were good honest men;  
Your mother lives their widowe in good fame: [42]  
But you are scapethrifts, unthrifts, villanes, knaves,  
And as ye liv'd by shifts, shall die with shame."

To them enters Ralph, the sheriff's man, to acquaint him that the carnifex, or executor of the law, had fallen off his "curtall" and was "cripplefied" and rendered incapable of performing his office; so that the sheriff was to become his deputy. The sheriff insists that Ralph shall serve the turn, which he refuses. In the midst of the altercation, "Enter Robin Hoode, like an old man," who tells the sheriff that the two outlaws had murdered his young son, and undone himself; so that for revenge-sake he desires they may be delivered to him. They denying the charge, "Robin whispers with them," and with the sheriff's leave, and his man's help, unbinds them: then, sounds his horn; and "Enter little John, Much . . . Fight; the frier, making as if he helpt the sheriffe, knockes down his men crying, Keepe the king's

peace. Sheriffe [perceiving that it is “the outlawed earle of Huntington”] runnes away, and his men.” (See the ballad of “Robin Hood rescuing the widow’s sons,” part ii. num. xxiii.)  
[lvi]

*Fri.* Farewell, earle Robert, as I am true frier,  
I had rather be thy clarke then serve the prior.  
*Rob.* A jolly fellowe! Scarlet, knowest thou him?  
*Scar.* Hee is of Yorke, and of Saint Maries cloister;  
There where your greedie uncle is lord prior. . . .  
*Rob.* Here is no biding, masters; get yee in. . . .  
John, on a sodaine thus I am resolv’d.  
To keepe in Sherewoodde till the king’s returne,  
And being outlawed, leade an outlawe’s life. . . .  
*John.* I like your honour’s purpose exceeding well.  
*Rob.* Nay, no more honour, I pray thee, little John;  
Henceforth I will be called Robin Hoode,  
Matilda shall be my maid Marian.”

Then follows a scene betwixt old Fitzwater and Prince John, in the course of which the prince, as a reason to induce Fitzwater to recall his daughter Matilda, tells him that she is living in an adulterous state, for that

“—Huntington is excommunicate,  
And till his debts be paid, by Rome’s decree,  
It is agreed, absolv’d he cannot be;  
And that can never be.—So never wife,” &c.

Fitzwater, on this, flies into a passion, and accuses the prince of being already married to “earle Chepstowe’s daughter.” They “fight; John falles.” Then enter the queen, &c., and John sentences Fitzwater to banishment: after which “Enter Scathlocke and Scarlet, winding their hornes at severall doores. To them enter Robin Hoode, Matilda, all in greene . . . Much, little John; all the men with bowes and arrowes. [43]

. . .

*Rob.* Wind once more, jolly huntsmen, all your horns,  
Whose shrill sound, with the ecchoing wods assist,  
Shall ring a sad knell for the fearefull deere,  
Before our feathered shafts, death’s winged darts,  
Bring sodaine summons for their fatall ends.

[lvii]

*Scar.* Its ful seven years since we were outlawed first,  
And wealthy Sherewood was our heritage:  
For all those yeares we raigned uncontrolde,  
From Barnsdale shrogs to Notingham’s red cliffes.  
At Blithe and Tickhill were we welcome guests:  
Good George a Greene at Bradford was our friend,  
And wanton Wakefield’s pinner lov’d us well. [44]  
At Barnsley dwels a potter, tough and strong,  
That never brookt we brethren should have wrong.  
The nunnes of Farnsfield (pretty nunnes they bee)  
Gave napkins, shirts, and bands to him and mee.  
Bateman of Kendall gave us Kendall greene;  
And Sharpe of Leedes sharpe arrows for us made.



At Rotherham dwelt our bowyer, God him blisse,  
Jackson he hight, his bowes did never misse.  
This for our goode, our scathe let Scathlocke tell,  
In merry Mansfield how it once befell.

*Scath.* In merry Mansfield, on a wrestling day,  
Prizes there were, and yeomen came to play,  
My brother Scarlet and myselfe were twaine;  
Many resisted, but it was in vaine,  
For of them all we wonne the mastery,  
And the gilt wreathes were given to him and me.  
There by Sir Doncaster of 'Hothersfield,'  
We were bewraied, beset, and forst to yield;  
And so borne bound from thence to Nottingham,  
Where we lay doom'd to death till Warman came."

Some cordial expressions pass between Robin and Matilda. He commands all the yeomen to be cheerful; and orders Little John to read the articles.

*Joh.* First, no man must presume to call our master,  
By name of earle, lorde, baron, knight, or squire:  
But simply by the name of Robin Hoode. — — —

That faire Matilda henceforth change her name,  
'And' by maid Marian's name be only cald.

Thirdly, no yeoman following Robin Hoode  
In Sherewood, shall use widowe, wife, or maid,  
But by true labour, lustfull thoughts expell.

Fourthly, no passenger with whom ye meete,  
Shall yee let passe till hee with Robin feaste:  
Except a poast, a carrier, or such folke,  
As use with foode to serve the market townes.

Fiftly, you never shall the poore man wrong.

[Iviii]

Nor spare a priest, a usurer, or a clarke.

Lastly, you shall defend with all your power  
Maids, widowes, orphants, and distressed men.

*All.* All these we vowe to keepe, as we are men.

*Rob.* Then wend ye to the greenwod merrily,  
And let the light roes bootlesse from yee runne,  
Marian and I, as sovereigns of your toyles,  
Will wait, within our bower, your bent bowes spoiles.

*[Exeunt winding their hornes.]*

In the next scene, we find Frier Tucke feignedly entering into a conspiracy with the prior and Sir Doncaster to serve an execution on Robin in disguise. Jinny, the widow Scarlet's daughter, coming in on her way to Sherwood, is persuaded by the frier to accompany him, "disguised in habit like a pedler's mort." Fitzwater enters like an old man:—sees Robin sleeping on a green bank, Marian strewing flowers on him; pretends to be blind and hungry, and is regaled by them. In answer to a question why the fair Matilda (Fitzwater's daughter) had changed her name, Robin tells him it is

"Because she lives a spotlesse maiden life:  
And shall, till Robin's outlawe life have ende,  
That he may lawfully take her to wife;

Which, if King Richard come, will not be long.”

“Enter Frier Tucke and Jinny like pedlers singing,” and afterward “Sir Doncaster and others weaponed.” The frier discovers the plot, and a fray ensues. The scene then changes to the court, where the prior is informed of six of his barns being destroyed by fire, and of the different execrations of all ranks upon him, as the undoer of “the good lord Robert, earle of Huntington;” that the convent of St. Mary’s had elected “Olde father Jerome” prior in his place; and lastly, a herald brings his sentence of banishment, which is confirmed by the entrance of the prior. Lester brings an account of the imprisonment of his gallant sovereign, King Richard, by the Duke of Austria, and requires his ransom to be sent. He then introduces a description of his matchless valour in the Holy Land. John not only refuses the ransom-money, but usurps the style of king; upon which Lester grows furious, [lix] and rates the whole company. The following is part of the dialogue:

*Joh. (to Lester).* Darest thou attempt thus proudly in our sight?

*Lest.* What is’t a subject dares, that I dare not?

*Sals.* Dare subjects dare, their soveraigne being by?

*Lest.* O God, that my true soveraigne were ny!

*Qu.* Lester, he is.

*Lest.* Madame, by God, you ly.

*Chest.* Unmanner’d man.

*Lest.* A plague of reverence!”

After this, and more on the same subject, the scene returns to the forest, where Ely, being taken by Much, “like a countryman with a basket,” is examined and detected by Robin, who promises him protection and service. On their departure:

*Joh.* Skelton, a worde or two beside the play.

*Fri.* Now, Sir John Eltam, what ist you would say?

*John.* Methinks I see no jeasts of Robin Hoode,

No merry morices of Frier Tuck,

No pleasant skippings up and downe the wodde,

No hunting songs, no coursing of the bucke:

Pray God this play of ours may have good lucke,

And the king’s majestie mislike it not!

*Fri.* And if he doe, what can we doe to that?

I promis’d him a play of Robin Hoode,

His honorable life, in merry Sherewod;

His majestie himselfe survaid the plot,

And bad me boldly write it, it was good.

For merry jeasts, they have bene showne before

As how the frier fell into the well,

For love of Jinny, that faire bonny bell:

How Greeneleafe rob’d the shrieve of Notingham,

And other mirthful matter, full of game.”

“Enter Warman banished.” He laments his fall, and applies to a cousin, on whom he had bestowed large possessions, for relief; but receives nothing, except reproaches for his treachery to his noble master. The jailor of Nottingham, who was indebted to him for his place, refuses him even a scrap of his dog’s meat, and reviles him in the severest terms. Good-wife Tomson, whose husband he had delivered from death, to his great joy, promises him a caudle, but [Ix] fetches him a halter, [45] in which he is about to hang himself, but is prevented by Fitzwater, and some of Robin Hood’s men, who crack a number of jokes upon him; Robin puts an end to their mockery, and proffers him comfort and favour. Then enters

Frier Tucke, with an account of Sir Doncaster and the prior being stripped and wounded in their way to Bawtrey: Robin, out of love to his uncle, hastens to the place. After this “Enter Prince John, solus, in green, bowe and arrowes.

“*John*. Why this is somewhat like, now may I sing,  
As did the Wakefield pinder in his note;  
At Michaelmas commeth my covenant out,  
My master gives me my fee:  
Then Robin Ile weare thy Kendall greene,  
And wend to the greenwodde with thee.” [46]

He assumes the name of Woodnet, and is detected by Scathlocke and Frier Tucke. The prince and Scathlocke fight, Scathelocke grows weary, and the frier takes his place. Marion enters, and perceiving the frier, parts the combatants. Robin enters, and John submits to him. Much enters, running, with information of the approach of “the king and twelve and twenty score of horses.” Robin places his people in order. The trumpets sound, the king and his train enter, a general pardon ensues, and the king confirms the love of Robin and Matilda. Thus the play concludes, Skelton promising the second part, and acquainting the audience of what it should consist.

The second part, or death of Robert earle of Huntington, is a pursuit of the same story. The scene, so far as our hero is concerned, lyes in Sherwood. A few extracts may not be unacceptable.

[lxi]

“Sc. iiii. Winde hornes. Enter king, queene, &c. Frier Tuck carrying a stag’s head, dauncing.” The frier has been sent for to read the following incription upon a copper ring round the stag’s neck:

“When Harold Hare-foote raigned king,  
About my necke he put this ring.”

The king orders “head, ring, and all” to be sent to Nottingham Castle, to be kept for monuments. Fitzwater tells him he has heard “an olde tale.”

“That Harold, being Goodwin’s sonne of Kent, [47]  
Hunted for pleasure once within this wood,  
And singled out a faire and stately stagge,  
Which, foote to foote, the king in running caught;  
And sure this was the stagge.  
*King*. It was no doubt.  
*Chester*. But some, my lord, affirme,  
That Julius Cæsar, many years before,  
Tooke such a stagge, and such a poesie writ.” [48] [lxii]

Upon which his majesty very sagaciously remarks,

“It should not be in Julius Cæsar’s time:  
There was no English used in this land  
Untill the Saxons came, and this is writ  
In Saxon characters.”

The next quotation may be of service to Dr. Percy, who [lxiii] has been pleased to question our hero’s nobility, because “the most ancient poems make no mention of this earldom,” and the old legend expressly asserts him “to have been a yeoman.” It is very true;

and we shall here not only find his title established, but also discover the secret of his not being usually distinguished or designed by it.

*“Enter Roben Hoode.*

*King.* How now, earle Robert!

*Fri.* A forfet, a forfet, my liege lord,  
My master’s lawes are on record,  
The court-roll here your grace may see.

*King.* I pray thee, frier, read them mee.

*Fri.* One shall suffice, and this is hee.  
No man that commeth in this wod,  
To feast or dwell with Robin Hood,  
Shall call him earle, lord, knight, or squire,  
He no such titles doth desire,  
But Robin Hood, plain Robin Hoode,  
That honest yoeman, stout and good,  
On paine of forfetting a marke,  
That must be paid to mee his clarke.  
My liege, my liege, this lawe you broke,  
Almost in the last word you spoke;  
That crime may not acquitted bee,  
Till Frier Tuck receive his fee.”

Now, the reason that “the most ancient poems make no mention of this earldom,” and the old legend expressly asserts him “to have been a yeoman,” appears, plainly enough, to be, that as, pursuant to his own injunction, he was never called, either by his followers, or in the vicinity, by any other name than Robin Hood, so particularly the minstrels, who were always, no doubt, welcome to Sherwood, [49] [Ixiv] and liberally entertained by him and his yeomanry, would take special care never to offend against the above law: which puts an end to the dispute.—Q. E. D.

Our hero is, at length, poisoned by a drink which Doncaster and the prior, his uncle, had prepared for him to give to the king. His departing scene and last dying speech are beautiful and pathetic.

*“Rob.* Inough, inough, Fitzwater, take your child.

My dying frost, which no sunnes heat can thawe,  
Closes the powers of all my outward parts;  
My freezing blood runnes back into my heart,  
Where it assists death, which it would resist:  
Only my love a little hinders death,  
For he beholds her eyes, and cannot smite.

...

*Mat.* O let mee looke for ever in thy eyes,  
And lay my warme breath to thy bloodlesse lips,  
If my sight can restraine death’s tyrannies,  
Or keep lives breath within thy bosome lockt.”

He desires to be buried

“At Wakefield, underneath the abbey-wall;”

directs the manner of his funeral; and bids his yeomen,

“For holy dirges, sing ‘him’ wodmen’s songs.”

The king, upon the earl’s death, expresses his sorrow for the tragical event; ratifies the will; repeats the directions for the funeral; and says,

“Fall to your wod-songs, therefore, yeomen bold,  
And deck his herse with flowers, that lov’d you deere.”

The whole concludes with the following solemn dirge:

“Weepe, weepe, ye wod-men waile,  
Your hands with sorrow wring;  
Your master Robin Hood lies deade,  
Therefore sigh as you sing.

[**lxv**]

“Here lies his primer, and his beades,  
His bent bowe, and his arrowes keene,  
His good sworde and his holy crosse:  
Now cast on flowers fresh and greene.  
“And, as they fall, shed teares and say,  
Well a, well a day, well a, well a day!  
Thus cast yee flowers and sing,  
And on to Wakefield take your way.”

The poet then prosecutes the legend of Matilda, who is finally poisoned, by the procurement of King John, in Dunmow Priory.

The story of this lady, whom the author of these plays is supposed to have been the first that converted into the character of Maid Marian, or connected in any shape with the history of Robin Hood, is thus related by Stow, under the year 1213: “The chronicle of Dunmow sayth, this discord arose betwixt the king and his barons, because of Mawd called the faire, daughter to Robert Fitzwalter, whome the king loved, but her father would not consent; and thereupon ensued warre throughout England. . . . Whilst Mawd the faire remayned at Dunmow, there came a messenger unto her from King John about his suite in love, but because she would not agree, the messenger poysoned a boyled or potched egge against she was hungrie, whereof she died” (Annales, 1592). Two of Drayton’s heroical epistles pass between King John and Matilda. He has also written her legend.

4. “Robin Hood’s penn’orths, by Wm. Haughton.” [50]

5. “Metropolis coronata, the triumphs of ancient drapery: or, rich cloathing of England, in a second yeeres performance. In honour of the advancement of Sir John Jolles, knight, to the high office of lord maior of London, and taking his oath for the same authoritie, on Monday being the 30. day of October, 1615. Performed in heartie affection to him, and at the bountifull charges of his worthy brethren the truely honourable society of drapers, the first that received such dignitie, in this citie. Devised and written by A. M. [**lxvi**] [Anthony Mundy] citizen and draper of London.” 1615, 4to.

This is one of the pageants formerly usual on Lord Mayor’s day, and of which several are extant, written as well by our author Mundy, [51] as by Middleton, Dekker, Heywood, and other hackney dramatists of that period. They were thought of such consequence that the City had for some time (though probably not till after the Restoration) a professed laureat for their composition; an office which expired with Elkanah Settle in 1723–24. They consisted chiefly of machinery, allegorical or historical personages, songs and speeches.

“After all these shewes, thus ordered in their appointed places, followeth another device of huntsmen, all clad in greene, with their bowes, arrowes and bugles, and a new slaine deere, carried among them. It savoureth of earle Robert de la Hude, sometime the noble earle of Huntington, and sonne in law (by marriage) to old Fitz-Alwine, [52] raised by the muses all-commanding power, to honour this triumph with his father. During the time of his out-lawed life in the forest of merry Shirwood, and elsewhere, while the cruel oppression of a most unnatural and covetous brother hung heavy upon him, Gilbert de la Hude, lord abbot of Christall [r. Kirkstall] abbey, who had all or most of his lands in mortgage: he was commonly called Robin Hood, and had a gallant company of men (out-lawed in the like manner) that followed his downecast fortunes; as little John, Scathlocke, Much the miller’s son, Right-hitting Brand, fryar Tuck, and many more. In which condition of life we make instant use of him, and part of his brave bowmen, fitted with bowes and arrowes, of the like strength and length, as good records [Ixvii] deliver testimonie, were then used by them in their killing of deere. . . .

“Afterward, [viz. after “Fitz-Alwine’s speech to the lord maior at night,”] as occasion best presenteth itselfe, when the heate of all other employments are calmly overpast, earle Robin Hood, with fryer Tuck, and his other brave huntsemen, attending (now at last) to discharge their duty to my lord, which the busie turmoile of the whole day could not before afford: they shewe themselves to him in this order, and earle Robin himselfe thus speaketh.

The speech spoken by Earl Robert de la Hude,  
88. 155. commonly called Robin Hood.

Since graves may not their dead containe,  
Nor in their peacefull sleepes remaine,  
But triumphes and great shewes must use them,  
And we unable to refuse them;  
It joyes me that earle Robert Hood,  
Fetcht from the forrest of merrie Shirwood,  
With these my yeomen tight and tall,  
Brave huntsmen and good archers all,  
Must in this joviall day partake,  
Prepared for your honour’s sake.  
No sooner was i raysde from rest,  
And of my former state possest  
As while i liv’d, but being alone,  
And of my yeomen seeing not one,  
I with my bugle gave a call,  
Made all the woods to ring withall.  
Immediately came little John,  
And Scathlock followed him anon,  
With Much the honest miller’s sonne;  
And ere ought else could be done,  
The frolicke frier came tripping in,  
His heart upon a merrie pinne.  
Master (quoth he) in yonder brake,  
A deere is hid for Marian’s sake,  
Bid Scathlock, John, or honest Brand,  
That hath the happy hitting hand,  
Shoote right and have him: and see, my lord,  
The deed performed with the word.  
For Robin and his bow-men bold,  
Religiously did ever holde,

Not emptie-handed to be seene,  
Were't but at feasting on a greene;

[**lxviii**]

Much more then, when so high a day  
Calls our attendance: all we may  
Is all too little, tis your grace  
To winke at weakenesse in this case:  
So, fearing to be over-long,  
End all with our old hunting song.

...

The song of Robin Hood and his huntes-men.

Now wend we together, my merry men all,  
Unto the forrest side a;  
And there to strike a buck or a doae,  
Let our cunning all be tried a.  
Then goe we merrily, merrily on,  
To the green-wood to take up our stand [a],  
Where we will lye in waite for our game,  
With our best bowes all in our hand [a].  
What life is there like to bold Robin Hood?  
It is so pleasant a thing a:  
In merry Shirwood he spends his dayes,  
As pleasantly as a king a.  
No man may compare with bold Robin Hood,  
With Robin Hood, Scathlocke and John [a]:  
Their like was never, nor never will be,  
If in case that they were gone [a].  
They will not away from merry Shirwood,  
In any place else to dwell [a]:  
For there is neither city nor towne,  
That likes them half so well [a].  
Our lives are wholly given to hunt,  
And haunt the merry greene-wood [a];  
Where our best service is daily spent,  
For our master Robin Hood [a].”

6. “Robin Hood and his pastoral May games.” 1624.

7. “Robin Hood and his crew of soldiers.” 1627.

These two titles are inserted among the plays mentioned by Chetwood in his *British Theatre* (p. 67) as written by anonymous authors in the 16th century to the Restoration. But neither Langbaine, who mentions both, nor any other person, pretends to have ever seen either of them. The former, indeed, may possibly be “The playe of Robyn [**lxix**] Hode,” already noticed; and the other is probably a future article. Langbaine, it is to be observed, gives no date to either piece; so that it may be fairly concluded those above specified are of Chetwood’s own invention, which appears to have been abundantly fertile in every species of forgery and imposture.

8. “The sad shepherd, or a tale of Robin Hood.”

The story of our renowned archer cannot be said to have been wholly occupied by bards without a name, since, not to mention Mundy or Drayton, the celebrated Ben Jonson intended a pastoral drama on this subject, under the above title; but dying, in the year 1637, before it was finished, little more than the two first acts have descended down to us. His last editor (Mr. Whalley), while he regrets that it is but a fragment, speaks of it in raptures, and, indeed, not without evident reason, many passages being eminently poetical and judicious.

“The persons of the play,” so far as concerns our immediate purpose, are: [1] “Robin Hood, the chief woodman [i.e. forester], master of the feast. [2] Marian, his lady, the mistress. [3] Friar Tuck, the chaplain and steward. [4] Little John, bow-bearer. [5, 6] Scarlet, Scathlocke, [53] two brothers, huntsmen. [7] George a Green, huisher of the bower. [8] Much, Robin Hood’s bailiff or acater.” The rest are the guests invited, the witch of Papplewick, her daughter, the swin’ard her son, Puck Hairy or Robin Goodfellow, their hind, and lastly a devout hermit. “The scene, Sherwood, consisting of a landscape of a forest, hills, valleys, cottages, a castle, a river, pastures, herds, flocks, all full of country simplicity; Robin Hood’s bower, his well, &c.” “The argument of the first act” is as follows: “Robin Hood, having invited all the shepherds and shepherdesses of the vale of Be’voir to a feast in the forest of Sherwood, and trusting to his mistress, Maid Marian, with her woodmen, to kill him venison against the day; having left the like charge with Friar Tuck, his chaplain and steward, to command the rest of his merry men to see the bower made [lxx] ready, and all things in order for the entertainment: ‘meets’ with his guests at their entrance into the wood, and conducts them to his bower: where, by the way, he receives the relation of the sad shepherd Æglamour, who is fallen into a deep melancholy for the loss of his beloved Earine, reported to have been drowned in passing over the Trent, some few days before. . . . In the meantime Marian is come from hunting. . . . Robin Hood inquires if she hunted the deere at force, and what sport he made? how long he stood? and what head he bore? all which is briefly answered, with a relation of breaking him up, and the raven, and her bone. The suspect had of that raven to be Maudlin the witch of Papplewick, whom one of the huntsmen met i’ the morning at the rousing of the deer, and is confirmed by her being then in Robin Hood’s kitchen, i’ the chimney corner, broiling the same bit which was thrown to the raven at the quarry or fall of the deer. Marian, being gone in to shew the deer to some of the shepherdesses, returns discontented; sends away the venison she had killed to her they call the witch; quarrels with her love Robin Hood, abuseth him, and his guests the shepherds; and so departs, leaving them all in wonder and perplexity.”

By “the argument of the second act” it appears that the witch had “taken the shape of Marian to abuse Robin Hood and perplex his guests.” However, upon an explanation of the matter with the true Marian, the trick is found out, the venison recovered, and “Robin Hood dispatches out his woodmen to hunt and take her: which ends the act.” The third act was designed to be taken up with the chase of the witch, her various schemes to elude the pursuers, and the discovery of Earine in the swineherd’s enchanted oak. Nothing more of the author’s design appearing, we have only to regret the imperfect state of a pastoral drama, which, according to the above learned and ingenious editor, would have done honour to the nation. [54] [lxxi]

9. “Robin Hood and his crew of souldiers, a comedy acted at Nottingham on the day of his saCRed majesties corronation. Vivat rex. The actors names: Robin Hood, commander; Little John, William Scadlocke, souldiers; messenger from the sheriffe. London, printed for James Davis, 1661.” 4to.

This is an interlude, of a few pages and no merit, alluding to the late rebellion, and the subject of the day. The outlaws, convinced by the reasoning of the sheriff’s messenger, become loyal subjects.



10. "Robin Hood. An opera, as it is perform'd at Lee's and Harper's great theatrical booth in Bartholomew-fair." 1730. 8vo.

11. "Robin Hood." 1751. 8vo.

This was a ballad-farce, acted at Drury-lane Theatre, in which the following favourite song was originally sung by Mr. Beard, in the character of Robin Hood:

As blithe as the linnet sings in the green wood,  
So blithe we'll wake the morn;  
And through the wide forest of merry Sherwood  
We'll wind the bugle horn.  
The sheriff attempts to take bold Robin Hood,  
Bold Robin disdains to fly;  
Let him come when he will, we'll, in merry Sherwood,  
Or vanquish, boys, or die.  
Our hearts they are stout, and our bows they are good,  
As well their masters know;  
They're cull'd in the forest of merry Sherwood,  
And never will spare a foe.  
Our arrows shall drink of the fallow deer's blood,  
We'll hunt them all o'er the plain!  
And through the wide forest of merry Sherwood,  
No shaft shall fly in vain.  
Brave Scarlet, and John, who ne'er were subdu'd,  
Give each his hand so bold;  
We'll range through the forest of merry Sherwood,  
What say my hearts of gold?

12. "Robin Hood; or Sherwood forest: a comic opera. As performed at the theatre-royal in Covent-garden. By Leonard Mac Nally, esq." 1784. 8vo.

[lxxii]

This otherwise insignificant performance was embellished with some fine music by Mr. Shield. It has been since reduced to, and is still frequently acted as, an after-piece.

A drama on the subject of Robin Hood, under the title of *The Foresters*, has been long expected from the elegant author of *The School for Scandal*. The first act, said to have been written many years ago, is, by those who have seen or heard it, spoken of with admiration.

[55]

([Note 27](#)) — "*innumerable poems, rimes, songs and ballads.*" The original and most ancient pieces of this nature have all perished in the lapse of time, during a period of between five and six hundred years' continuance; and all we now know of them is that such things once existed. In the *Vision of Pierce Plowman*, an allegorical poem, thought to have been composed soon after the year 1360, and generally ascribed to Robert Langeland, the author introduces an ignorant, idle, and drunken secular priest, the representative, no doubt, of the parochial clergy of that age, in the character of Sloth, who makes the following confession:

"I cannot parfitli mi paternoster, as the preist it singeth,  
But I can ryms of Roben Hode, and 'Randolf' erl of Chester,  
But of our lorde or our lady I lerne nothyng at all." [56]

[lxxiii]

Fordun, the Scottish historian, who wrote about 1340, speaking of Robin Hood and Little John, and their accomplices, says, “of whom the foolish vulgar in comedies and tragedies make lewd entertainment, and are delighted to hear the jesters and minstrels sing them above all other ballads;” [57] and Mair (or Major), whose history was published by himself in 1521, observes that “The exploits of this Robert are celebrated in songs throughout all Britain.” [58] So, likewise, Maister Johne Bellendene, the translator of “that noble clerk Maister Hector Boece” (Bois or Boethius), having mentioned “that waithman Robert Hode with his fallow lital Johne,” adds, “of quhom ar mony fabillis and mery sportis soung among the vulgar pepyll.” [59] Whatever may have been the nature of the compositions alluded to by the above writers, several of the pieces printed in the present collection are [lxxiv] unquestionably of great antiquity; not less, that is, than between three and four hundred years old. The Lytell Geste, which is first inserted, is probably the oldest thing upon the subject we now possess; [60] but a legend, apparently of the same species, was once extant, of, perhaps, a still earlier date, of which it is some little satisfaction to be able to give even the following fragment, from a single leaf, fortunately preserved in one of the volumes of old printed ballads in the British Museum, in a handwriting as old as Henry the Sixth’s time. It exhibits the characters of our hero and his *fidus Achates* in the noblest point of view.

“He sayd Robyn Hod . . . yne the preson,  
And owght off hit was *gon*.

The porter rose a-non certeyn,

As sone as he hard Johan call;

Lytyll Johan was redy with a sword,

And bare hym throw to the wall.

Now will I be jayler, sayd lytyll Johan,

And toke the keys in hond;

He toke the way to Robyn Hod,

And sone he hyme unbond.

He gaffe hym a good swerd in his hond,

His hed ther-with for to kepe;

And ther as the wallis wer lowest,

Anon down ther they lepe.

...

...

...

To Robyn . . . . sayd:

I have *done* the a god torne for an . . .

Quit me when thow may;

I have done the a gode torne, sayd lytyll [Johan],

Forsothe as I the saye;

[lxxv]

I have browghte the under the gren wod . . .

Farewell & have gode daye.

Nay, be my trowthe, sayd Robyn,

So schall it never bee;

I make the master, sayd Robyn,

Off all my men & me.

Nay, be my trowthe, sayd lytyll Johan,

So schall it never bee.”

This, indeed, may be part of the “story of Robin Hood and Little John,” which M. Wilhelm Bedwell found in the ancient MS. lent him by his much honoured good friend M. G. Withers, whence he extracted and published “The Turnament of Tottenham,” a poem of the same age, and which seemed to him to be done (perhaps but transcribed) by Sir Gilbert Pilkington, formerly, as some had thought, parson of that parish. [61]

That poems and stories on the subject of our hero and his companions were extraordinarily popular and common before and during the 16th century is evident from the testimony of divers writers. Thus, Alexander Barclay, priest, in his translation of *The Shyp of Follys*, printed by Pynson in 1508, and by John Cawood in 1570, [62] says:

“I write no jeste ne tale of Robin Hood.”

Again:

“For goodlie scripture is not worth an hawe,  
But tales are loved ground of ribaudry;  
And many are so blinded with their foly,  
That no scriptur thinke they so true nor gode,  
As is a foolish jest of Robin Hode.”

Again:

“And of all fables and jestes of Robin Hood,  
Or other trifles.”

[lxxvi]

The same Barclay, in the fourth of his *Egloges*, subjoined to the last edition of *The Ship of Foles*, but originally printed soon after 1500, has the following passage:

“Yet would I gladly heare some mery fit  
Of maide Marion, or els of Robin Hood,  
Or Benteleyes ale, which chafeth well the blood,  
Of Perte of Norwich, or Sauce of Wilberton,  
Or buckishe Joly [63] well stuffed as a ton.”

Robert Braham, in his epistle to the reader, prefixed to Lydgate’s *Troy-book*, 1555, is of opinion that “Caxton’s recueil” [of *Troy*] is “worthy to be numbred amongst the trifelinge tales and barrayne luerdries of Robyn Hode and Bevyys of Hampton.” (See Ames’s *Typographical Antiquities*, by Herbert, p. 849.)

“For one that is sand blynd,” says Sir Thomas Chaloner, “would take an asse for a moyle, or another prayse a rime of Robyn Hode for as excellent a making as *Troylus* of Chaucer, yet shoulde they not straight-waies be counted madde therefore?” (Erasmus’s *Praise of Folye*, sig. h.)

“If good lyfe,” observes Bishop Latimer, “do not insue and folowe upon our readinge to the example of other, we myghte as well spende that tyme in reading of prophane hystories, of *Canterburye tales*, or a fit of *Roben Hode*” (Sermons, sig. A. iiii.)

The following lines, from a poem in the *Hyndford MS.* compiled in 1568, afford an additional proof of our hero’s popularity in Scotland:

“Thair is no story that I of heir,  
Of Johne nor Robene Hude,  
Nor zit of Wallace wicht but weir,

That me thinkes half so gude,  
As of thre palmaris,” &c.

That the subject was not forgotten in the succeeding age, can be testified by Drayton, who is elsewhere quoted, and in his sixth eclogue makes Gorbo thus address “old Winken de Word:”

[lxxvii]

“Come, sit we down under this hawthorn-tree,  
The morrow’s light shall lend us day enough,  
And let us tell of Gawen, or Sir Guy,  
Of Robin Hood, or of old Clem a Clough.”

Richard Johnson, who wrote “The History of Tom Thumbe,” in prose (London, 1621, 12mo, b. 1.), thus prefaces his work: “My merry muse begets no tales of Guy of Warwicke, &c. nor will I trouble my penne with the pleasant glee of Robin Hood, little John, the fryer, and his Marian; nor will I call to mind the lusty Pinder of Wakefield, &c.”

In “The Calidonian Forrest,” a sort of allegorical or mystic tale, by John Hepwith, gentleman, printed in 1641, 4to, the author says,

“Let us talke of Robin Hoode,  
And little John in mery Shirewoode,” &c. [64]

Of one very ancient, and undoubtedly once very popular, song this single line is all that is now known to exist:

[lxxviii]

“Robin Hood in Barnsdale stood.”

However, though but a line, it is of the highest authority in Westminster Hall, where, in order to the decision of a knotty point, it has been repeatedly cited, in the most solemn manner, by grave and learned judges.

M. 6 Jac. B. R. Witham v. Barker, Yelv. 147. Trespass, for breaking plaintiff’s close, &c. Plea. *Liberum tenementum* of Sir John Tyndall, and justification as his servant and by his command. Replication, That it is true it is his freehold, but that long before the time when &c. he leased to plaintiff at will, who entered and was possessed until, &c. traversing, that defendant entered, &c. by command of Sir John. Demurrer: and adjudged against plaintiff, on the ground of the replication being bad, as not setting forth any seisin or possession in Sir John, out of which a lease at will could be derived. For a title made by the plea or replication should be certain to all intents, because it is traversable. Here, therefor, he should have stated Sir John’s seisin, as well as the lease at will; which is not done here: “*mes tout un come il ust replie* Robin Whood in Barnwood stood, absque hoc q def. p commandement Sir John. Quod nota. Per Fenner, Williams *et* Crook *justices sole en court. Et judgment done accordant.* Yelv. p def.”

In the case of Bush v. Leake, B. R. Trin. 23 G. 3, Buller, justice, cited the case of Coulthurst v. Coulthurst, C. B. Pasch. 12 G. 3 (an action on bond), and observed, “There a case in Yelverton was alluded to, where the court said, you might as well say, by way of inducement to a traverse, Robin Hood in Barnwood stood.”

It is almost unnecessary to observe, because it will be shortly proved, that Barnwood, in the preceding quotations, ought to be Barnsdale. [65] With respect to Whood, the reader [lxxix] will see, under Note 19, a remarkable proof of the antiquity of that pronunciation, which actually prevails in the metropolis at this day. See also the word “whodes” in Note 34. So, likewise, Bale, in his *Actes of English Votaries*, 1560, says, “the monkes had their cowles, caprones or whodes;” and in Stow’s *Survey*, 1598, p. 120, have “a fooles whoode.”

This celebrated and important line occurs as the first of a foolish mock-song, inserted in an old mortality, intitled “A new interlude and a mery of the nature of the iiii elementes,” supposed to have been printed by John Rastall about 1520; where it is thus introduced:

*Hu*[*manyte*]. — — — let us some lusty balet syng.

*Yng*[*norance*]. Nay, syr, by the hevyn kyng:

For me thynkyth it servyth for no thyng,

All suche pevysh prykeryd song.

*Hu*. Pes, man, pryk-song may not be dyspysyd,

For therwith God is well plesyd.

.....

*Yng*. Is God well pleasyd, trowest thou, therby?

Nay, nay, for there is no reason why.

For is it not as good to say playnly

Gyf me a spade,

As gyf me a spa ve va ve va ve vade?

But yf thou wylt have a song that is good,

I have one of Robyn Hode,

The best that ever was made.

[lxxx]

*Hu*. Then a feleshyp, let us here it.

*Yng*. But there is a bordon, thou must here it,

Or ellys it wyll not be.

*Hu*. Than begyn, and care not for . . .

Downe downe downe, &c.

*Yng*. Robyn Hode in Barnysdale stode,

And lent hym tyl a mapyll thystyll;

Than cam our lady & swete saynt Andrewe;

Slepyst thou, wakyst thou, Geffrey Coke? [66]

A c. wynter the water was depe,

I can not tell you how brode;

He toke a gose nek in his hande,

And over the water he went.

He start up to a thystell top,

And cut hym downe a holyn clobbe;

He stroke the wren betwene the hornys,

That fyre sprange out of the pygges tayle.

Jak boy is thy bow i-broke,

Or hath any man done the wryguldly wrange?

He plukkyd muskyllys out of a wyllowe,

And put them in to his sachell.

Wylkyn was an archer good,

And well coude handell a spade;

He toke his bend bowe in his hand,

And set him downe by the fyre.

He toke with hym lx. bowes and ten,  
A pese of befe, another of baken.  
Of all the byrdes in mery Englund,  
So merely pypys the mery bottel.”

“The lives, stories, and giftes of men which are contained in the bible, they [the papists] read as thinges no more pertaining unto them than a tale of Robin Hood” (Tyndale, Prologue to the prophecy of Jonas, about 1531).

Gwalter Lynne, printer, in his dedication to Ann, Duchess of Somerset, of “The true believe in Christ and his sacramentes,” 1550, says, “I woulde wyshe tharfore that al men, [lxxxix] women, and chyl dren, would read it. Not as they haue bene here tofore accustomed to reade the fained storyes of Robin-hode, Clem of the Cloughe, wyth such lyke to passe the tyme wythal,” &c.

In 1562, John Alde had license to print “a ballad of Robyn god,” a mistake, it is probable, for Robyn Hod.

Alexander Hume, minister of Logie, about 1599, says in one of his “Hymnes or Sacred Songs,” printed in that year, that

— — — “much to blame are those of carnal brood,  
Who loath to taste of intellectual food,  
Yet surfeit on old tales of Robin Hood.”

Complaint of Scotland, Edin. 1801, Dissertation, p. 221.

“Exclude the scriptures, and bid them read the story  
Of Robin Hood and Guy, which was both tall and stout,  
And Bevis of Southampton, to seek the matter out.  
Suffer all slander against God and his truth,  
And praise the old fashion in king Arthur’s days,  
Of abbays and monasteries how it is great ruth  
To have them plucked down, and so the eldest says;  
And how it was merry when Robin Hood’s plays  
Was in every town, the morrice and the fool,  
The maypole and the drum, to bring the calf from school,  
With Midge, Madge and Marion, about the pole to dance,  
And Stephen, that tall stripling, to lead Volans dance,  
With roguing Gangweeke, a goodly remembrance,  
With beads in every hand, our prayers stood by tale:  
This was a merry work, talk among our meany,  
And then of good eggs ye might have twenty for a penny.”

L. Ramsey’s Practice of the Divell, b. 1.

All the entire poems and songs known to be extant will be found in the following collection; but many more may be traditionally preserved in different parts of the country which would have added considerably to its value. [67] That [lxxxii] some of these identical pieces, or others of the like nature, were great favourites with the common people in the time of Queen Elizabeth, though not much esteemed, it would seem, by the refined critic, may, in addition to the testimonies already cited, be inferred from a passage in Webbe’s Discourse [lxxxiii] of English Poetrie, printed in 1586. “If I lette passe,” says he, “the unaccountable rabble of ryming ballet-makers and compylers of sencelesse sonets, who be most busy to stufte every stall full of grosse devises and unlearned pamphlets, I trust I shall with the best

sort be held excused. For though many such can frame an alehouse-song of five or six score verses, hobbling upon some tune of a northern jygge, or Robyn Hoode, or La lubber, &c. and perhappes observe just number of sillables, eyght in one line, sixe in an other, and therewithall an A to make a jercke in the ende, yet if these might be accounted poets (as it is sayde some of them make meanes to be promoted to the lawrell), surely we shall shortly have whole swarmes of poets; and every one that can frame a booke in ryme, though, for want of matter, it be but in commendations of copper noses, or bottle ale, wyll catch at the garlande due to poets: whose potticall (poeticall, I should say) heades, I woulde wyshe, at their worshipfull comencements, might, in steede of lawrell, be gorgeously garnished with fayre greene barley, in token of their good affection to our Englishe malt.” The chief object of this satire seems to be William Elderton, the drunken [lxxxiv] ballad-maker, of whose compositions all but one or two have unfortunately perished. [68]

Most of the songs inserted in the second half of this volume were common broad-sheet ballads, printed in black letter, with woodcuts, between the Restoration and the Revolution; though copies of some few have been found of an earlier date. “Who was the author of the collection intituled Robin Hood’s Garland, no one,” says Sir John Hawkins, “has yet pretended to guess. As some of the songs have in them more of the spirit of poetry than others, it is probable,” he thinks, “it is the work of various hands: that it has from time to time been varied and adapted to the phrase of the times,” he says, “is certain.” None of these songs, it is believed, were collected into a garland till after the Restoration; as the earliest that has been met with, a copy of which is in the possession of Francis Douce, Esq., was printed by W. Thackeray, a noted ballad-monger, in 1670. This, however, contains no more than sixteen songs, some of which, very falsely as it seems, are said to have been “never before printed.” “The latest edition of any worth,” according to Sir John Hawkins, “is that of 1719.” None of the old editions of this garland have any sort of preface: that prefixed to the modern ones, of Bow or Aldermary churchyard, being [lxxxv] taken from the collection of old ballads, 1723, where it is placed at the head of Robin Hood’s birth and breeding. The full title of the last London edition of any note is—“Robin Hood’s Garland: being a complete history of all the notable and merry exploits performed by him and his men on many occasions: To which is added a preface [*i.e.* the one already mentioned] giving a more full and particular account of his birth, &c., than any hitherto published. [Cut of archers shooting at a target.]

I’ll send this arrow from my bow,  
 And in a wager will be bound  
 To hit the mark aright, although  
 It were for fifteen hundred pound.  
 Doubt not I’ll make the wager good,  
 Or ne’er believe bold Robin Hood.

Adorned with twenty-seven neat and curious cuts adapted to the subject of each song. London, Printed and sold by R. Marshall, in Aldermary church-yard, Bow-lane.” 12mo. On the back of the title-page is the following Grub-street address:

“To all gentlemen archers.  
 “This garland has been long out of repair,  
 Some songs being wanting, of which we give account;  
 For now at last, by true industrious care,  
 The sixteen songs to twenty-seven we mount;  
 Which large addition needs must please, I know,  
 All the ingenious ‘yeomen’ of the bow.  
 To read how Robin Hood and Little John,  
 Brave Scarlet, Stutely, valiant, bold and free,  
 Each of them bravely, fairly play’d the man,

While they did reign beneath the green-wood tree;  
Bishops, friars, likewise many more,  
Parted with their gold, for to increase their store,  
But never would they rob or wrong the poor.”

The last seven lines are not by the author of the first six, but were added afterwards; perhaps when the twenty-four songs were increased to twenty-seven. [69] [lxxxvi]

([Note 28](#)) —“*has given rise to divers proverbs.*”] Proverbs, in all countries, are, generally speaking, of very great antiquity; and therefore it will not be contended that those concerning our hero are the oldest we have. It is highly probable, however, that they originated in or near his own time, and of course have existed for upwards of 500 years, which is no modern date. They are here arranged, not, perhaps, according to their exact chronological order, but by the age of the authorities they are taken from.

1. “Good even, good Robin Hood.”

The allusion is to civility extorted by fear. It is preserved by Skelton, in that most biting satire against Cardinal Wolsey, “Why come ye not to court?” (Works, 1736, p. 147).

“He is set so hye,  
In his hierarchy,  
...  
That in the chambre of stars  
All matters there he mars;  
Clapping his rod on the borde,  
No man dare speake a word;  
For he hath all the saying,  
Without any renaying:

[lxxxvii]

He rolleth in his recordes,  
He saith, How say ye my lordes?  
Is not my reason good?  
Good even, good Robin Hood.” [70]

2. “Many men talk of Robin Hood that never shot in his bow.”

“That is, many discourse (or prate rather) of matters wherein they have no skill or experience. This proverb is now extended all over England, though originally of Nottinghamshire extraction, where Robin Hood did principally reside in Sherwood forest. He was an arch-robber, and withal an excellent archer; though surely the poet [71] gives a twang to the loose of his arrow, making him shoot one a cloth-yard long, at full forty score mark, for compass never higher than the breast, and within less than a foot of the mark. But herein our author hath verified the proverb, talking at large of Robin Hood, in whose bow he never shot” (Fuller’s Worthies, p. 315).

“One may justly wonder,” adds the facetious writer, “this archer did not at last hit the mark, I mean, come to the gallows for his many robberies.”

The proverb is mentioned, and given as above, by Sir Edward Coke in his 3d Institute, p. 197. See also Note 26. It is thus noticed by Jonson in “The king’s entertainment at Welbeck in Nottinghamshire, 1633:”

“This is . . . . father Fitz-Ale, herald of Derby, &c.  
He can fly o’er hills and dales,



And report you more odd tales  
Of our out law Robin Hood,  
That revell'd here in Sherewood,  
And more stories of him show,  
(Though he ne'er shot in his bow)  
Than au' men or believe, or know."

[lxxxviii]

We likewise meet with it in Epigrams, &c., 1654:

"In Vertutem.  
"Vertue we praise, but practice not her good,  
(Athenian-like) we act not what we know;  
So many men doe talk of Robin Hood,  
Who never yet shot arrow in his bow."

On the back of a ballad in Anthony a Wood's collection he has written,

"There be some that prate  
Of Robin Hood, and of his bow,  
Which never shot therein, I trow."

Ray gives it thus:

"Many talk of Robin Hood, that never shot in his bow,  
And many talk of little John, that never did him know:"

which Kelly has varied, but without authority.

Camden's printer has separated the lines, as distinct proverbs (Remains, 1674):

"Many speak of Robin Hood that never shot in his bow.  
"Many a man talks of little John that never did him know."

This proverb likewise occurs in The downfall of Robert earle of Huntington, 1600, and is alluded to in a scarce and curious old tract intitled "The contention betwyxte Church-year and Camell, upon David Dycer's Dreame," &c. 1560, 4to, b. 1.

"Your sodain stormes and thundre claps, your boasts and braggs so loude:  
Hath doone no harme thogh Robin Hood spake with you in a cloud.  
Go learne againe of litell Jhon, to shute in Robyn Hods bowe,  
Or Dicars dreame shall be unhit, and all his whens, I trowe." [72]

The Italians appear to have a similar saying:

Molti parlan di Orlando  
Chi non viddero mai suo brando.

[lxxxix]

3. "To overshoot Robin Hood."

"And lastly and chiefly, they cry out with open mouth as if they had overshoot Robin Hood, that Plato banished them [*i.e.* poets] out of his commonwealth" (Sir P. Sidney's Defence of Poesie).

4. "Tales of Robin Hood are good [enough] for fools."

This proverb is inserted in Camden's Remains, printed originally in 1605; but the word in brackets is supplied from Ray.

5. "To sell Robin Hood's pennyworths."

"It is spoken of things sold under half their value; or if you will, half sold, half given. Robin Hood came lightly by his ware, and lightly parted therewith; so that he could afford the length of his bow for a yard of velvet. Whithersoever he came, he carried a fair along with him; chapmen crowding to buy his stolen commodities. But seeing the receiver is as bad as the thief, and such buyers are as bad as receivers, the cheap pennyworths of plundered goods may in fine prove dear enough to their consciences" (Fuller's Worthies, p. 315).

This saying is alluded to in the old North-country song of Randal a Barnaby:

"All men said, it became me well,  
And Robin Hood's pennyworths I did sell."

6. "Come, turn about, Robin Hood."

Implying that to challenge or defy our hero must have been the *ne plus ultra* of courage. It occurs in "Wit and Drollery," 1661:

"O love, whose power and might,  
No creature ere withstood,  
Thou forcest me to write,  
Come turn about Robin-hood."

7. "As crook'd as Robin Hood's bow."

That is, we are to conceive, when bent by himself. The following stanza of a modern Irish song is the only authority for this proverb that has been met with:

"The next with whom I did engage,  
It was an old woman worn with age, [xc]  
Her teeth were like tobacco pegs,  
Besides she had two bandy legs,  
Her back more crook'd than Robin Hood's bow,  
Purblind and decrepid, unable to go;  
Altho' her years were sixty-three,  
She smil'd at the humours of Soosthe Bue."

8. "To go round by Robin Hood's barn."

This saying, which now first appears in print, is used to imply the going of a short distance by a circuitous method, or the farthest way about.

([Note 29](#))—"to swear by him, or some of his companions, appears to have been a usual practice." The earliest instance of this practice occurs in a pleasant story among "Certaine merry tales of the mad-men of Gottam," compiled in the reign of Henry VIII. by Dr. Andrew Borde, an eminent physician of that period, which here follows verbatim, as taken from an old edition in black letter, without date (in the Bodleian Library), being the first tale in the book.

"There was two men of Gottam, and the one of them was going to the market at Nottingham to buy sheepe, and the other came from the market; and both met together upon Nottingham bridge. Well met, said the one to the other. Whither be yee going? said he that came from Nottingham. Marry, said he that was going thither, I goe to the market to buy

sheepe. Buy sheepe! said the other, and which way wilt thou bring them home? Marry, said the other, I will bring them over this bridge. By Robin Hood, said he that came from Nottingham, but thou shalt not. By Maid Marrion, said he that was going thitherward, but I will. Thou shalt not, said the one. I will, said the other. Ter here! said the one. Shue there! said the other. Then they beate their staves against the ground, one against the other, as there had beene an hundred sheepe betwixt them. Hold in, said the one. Beware the leaping over the bridge of my sheepe, said the other. I care not, said the other. They shall not come this way, said the one. But they shall, said the other. Then said the other, & if that thou make much to doe, I will put my finger in thy mouth. A turd thou wilt, said the other. And as they were at that contention, another man of Gottam [xci] came from the market, with a sacke of meale upon a horse, and seeing and hearing his neighbours at strife for sheepe, and none betwixt them, said, Ah fooles, will you never learn wit? Helpe me, said he that had the meale, and lay my sack upon my shoulder. They did so; and he went to the one side of the bridge, and unloosed the mouth of the sacke, and did shake out all his meale into the river. Now, neighbours, said the man, how much meale is there in my sacke now? Marry, there is none at all, said they. Now, by my faith, said he, even as much wit is in your two heads, to strive for that thing you have not. Which was the wisest of all these three persons, judge you.” [73]

“By the bare scalp of Robin Hood’s fat frier,” is an oath put by Shakespeare into the mouth of one of his outlaws in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, act iv. scene 1. “Robin Hood’s fat frier” is Frier Tuck; a circumstance of which Doctor Johnson, who set about explaining that author with a very inadequate stock of information, was perfectly ignorant.

([Note 30](#)) —“*his songs have been preferred, not only on the most solemn occasion to the psalms of David, but in fact to the New Testament.*”] [“On Friday, March 9th, 1733] was executed at Northampton William Alcock for the murder of his wife. He never own’d the fact, nor was at all concern’d at his approaching death, refusing the prayers and assistance of any persons. In the morning he drank more than was sufficient, yet sent and paid for a pint of wine, which being deny’d him, he would not enter the cart before he had his money return’d. On his way to the gallows he sung part of an old song of Robin Hood, with the chorus, Derry, derry, down, [74] &c., and swore, kick’d and spurn’d at every person [xcii] that laid hold of the cart; and before he was turn’d off, took off his shoes, to avoid a well-known proverb; and being told by a person in the cart with him, it was more proper for him to read, or hear some body read to him, than so vilely to swear and sing, he struck the book out of the person’s hands, and went on damning the spectators, and calling for wine. Whilst psalms and prayers were performing at the tree, he did little but talk to one or other, desiring some to remember him, others to drink to his good journey; and to the last moment declared the injustice of his case” (Gentleman’s Magazine, vol. iii. P. 154).

To this maybe added, that at Edinburgh, in 1565, “Sandy Stevin menstrall [*i.e.* musician] was convinced of blasphemy, alledging, That he would give no moir credit to The new testament, then to a tale of Robin Hood, except it wer confirmed be the doctours of the church” (Knox’s *Historie of the Reformation in Scotland*, Edin. 1732, p. 368).

William Roy, in a bitter satire against Cardinal Wolsey, intituled, “Rede me and be nott wrothe For I saye nothyng but trothe,” printed abroad, about 1525, speaking of the bishops, says:

“Their frantyke foly is so pevisse,  
That they contempne in Englishshe,  
To have the new testament;  
But as for tales of Robyn Hode,  
With wother jestes nether honest nor goode,  
They have none impediment.”

To the same effect is the following passage in another old libel upon the priests, intituled "I playne Piers which can not flatter, a plowe-man men me call," &c. b. l. n. d. printed in the original as prose:

"No Christen booke,  
Maye thou on looke,  
    Yf thou be an Englishe strunt, [xciii]  
Thus dothe alyens us loutte,  
By that ye spreade aboute,  
    After that old sorte and wonte.  
You allowe they saye,  
Legenda aurea,  
    Roben Hoode, Bevys, & Gower,  
And all bagage be syd,  
But God's word ye may not abyde,  
    These lyese are your churche 'dower.'"

See also before, p. lxxii. [75]

So in Laurence Ramsey's "Practise of the Divell" (n. d. 4to, b. l.):

"Exclude the scriptures, and byd them reade the storie  
Of Robin Hood, and Guye, which was both tall and stout,  
And Bevis of Southampton, to seeke the matter out."

[[Note 31](#)] "*His service to the Word of God.*" "I came once myselfe," says Bishop Latimer (in his sixth sermon before King Edward VI.), "to a place, riding on a jorney homeward from London, and I sent worde over night into the towne that I would preach there in the morning, bicause it was a holy day, and methought it was an holydayes worke. The churche stode in my way; and I tooke my horse and my company and went thither (I thought I should have found a great companie in the churche), and when I came there, the churche dore was faste locked. I taried there half an hower and more; at last the keye was founde; and one of the parishe commes to me, and sayes, Sir, this is a busie day with us, we cannot heare you; it is Robin Hoodes daye. The parishe are gone abroad to gather for Robin Hoode, I pray you let them not. I was fayne there to geve place to Robin Hoode. I thought my rochet shoulde have bene regarded, thoughe I were not; but it woulde not serve, it was fayne to geve place to Robin Hodes men."

[xciv]

"It is no laughyng matter, my frendes, it is a weepyng matter, a heavy matter, under the pretence for gatherynge for Robin Hoode, a traytour [76] and a theefe, to put out a preacher, to have his office lesse esteemed, to preferre Robin Hoode before the ministration of God's worde, and all this hath come of unpreaching prelates. Thys realme hath bene ill provided for, that it hath had suche corrupte judgements in it, to preferre Robin Hoode to God's worde. If the bishoppes had bene preachers, there shoulde never have bene any such thing," &c.

[[Note 32](#)] —"*may be called the patron of archery.*" The bow and arrow makers, in particular, have always held his memory in the utmost reverence. Thus, in the old ballad of London's Ordinary:

"The hosiers will dine at the Leg,  
    The drapers at the sign of the Brush,  
The fletchers to Robin Hood will go,

And the spendthrift to Beggar's-bush." [77]

The picture of our hero is yet a common sign in the country, and, before hanging-signs were abolished in London, must have been still more so in the City; there being at present no less than a dozen alleys, courts, lanes, &c., to which he or it has given a name. (See Baldwin's New Complete Guide, 1770.) The Robin Hood Society, a club or assembly for public debate, or school for oratory, is well known. It was held at a public-house, which had once borne the sign, and still retained the name of this great man, in Butcher Row, near Temple Bar.

It is very usual in the North of England for a publican whose name fortunately happens to be John Little to have [xcv] the sign of Robin Hood and his constant attendant, with this quibbling subscription:

"You gentlemen, and yeomen good,  
Come in and drink with Robin Hood;  
If Robin Hood be not at home,  
Come in and drink with Little John." [78]

An honest countryman, admiring the conceit, adopted the lines, with a slight, but, as he thought, necessary alteration, viz.:

"If Robin Hood be not at home,  
Come in and drink with—Simon Webster."

Drayton, describing the various ensigns or devices of the English counties at the battle of Agincourt, gives to

"Old Nottingham, an archer clad in green,  
Under a tree with his drawn bow that stood,  
Which in a chequer'd flag far off was seen;  
It was the picture of old Robin Hood."

(Note 33) —"*the supernatural powers he is, in some parts, supposed to have possessed.*" ] "In the parish of Halifax is an immense stone or rock, supposed to be a Druidical monument, there called Robin Hood's pennystone, which he is said to have used to pitch with at a mark for his amusement. There is likewise another of these stones, of several tons weight, which the country-people will tell you he threw off an adjoining hill with a spade as he was digging. Every thing of the marvellous kind being here attributed to Robin Hood, as it is in Cornwall to King Arthur" (Watson's History of Halifax, p. 27).

At Birchover, six miles south of Bakewell, and four from Haddon, in Derbyshire, among several singular groups of rocks, are some stones called Robin Hood's stride, being two [xcvi] of the highest and most remarkable. The people say Robin Hood lived here.

(Note 34) —"*having a festival allotted to him, and solemn games instituted in honour of his memory,*" &c.] These games, which were of great antiquity and different kinds, appear to have been solemnised on the first and succeeding days of May, and to owe their original establishment to the cultivation and improvement of the manly exercise of archery, which was not, in former times, practised merely for the sake of amusement.

"I find," says Stow, "that in the moneth of May, the citizens of London, of all estates, lightlie in every parish, or sometimes two or three parishes joyning together, had their severall mayinges, and did fetch in Maypoles, with divers warlike shewes, with good archers, morrice-dancers, and other devices for pastime all the day long: and towards the evening they had stage-playes and bonefires in the streetes. . . . These greate Mayinges and Maygames,

made by the governors and masters of this citie, with the triumphant setting up of the greateshafte (a principall Maypole in Cornhill, before the parish church of S. Andrew, therefore called Undershafte) by meane of an insurrection of youthes against alianes on Mayday 1517, the ninth of Henry the Eight, have not beene so freely used as afore” (Survey of London, 1598, p. 72).

The disuse of these ancient pastimes, and the consequent “neglect of archerie,” are thus pathetically lamented by Richard Niccolls, in his London’s Artillery, 1616:

“How is it that our London hath laid downe  
This worthy practise, which was once the crowne  
Of all her pastime, when her Robin Hood  
Had wont each yeare, when May did clad the wood,  
With lustie greene, to lead his yong men out,  
Whose brave demeanour, oft when they did shoot,  
Invited royall princes from their courts,  
Into the wilde woods to behold their sports!  
Who thought it then a manly sight and trim,  
To see a youth of cleane compacted lim,  
Who, with a comely grace, in his left hand  
Holding his bow, did take his stedfast stand,  
Setting his left leg somewhat forth before,  
His arrow with his right hand nocking sure, [xcvii]  
Not stooping, nor yet standing streight upright,  
Then, with his left hand little ’bove his sight,  
Stretching his arm out, with an easie strength,  
To draw an arrow of a yard in length.” [79]

A description of  
one drawing a  
bow.

The lines,

“Invited royall princes from their courts  
Into the wild woods to behold their sports,”

may be reasonably supposed to allude to Henry VIII., who appears to have been particularly attached, as well to the exercise of archery as to the observance of May. Some short time after his coronation, says Hall, he “came to Westminster with the quene, and all their traine: and on a tyme being there, his grace therles of Essex, Wilshire, and other noble menne, to the nombre of twelve, came sodainly in a mornyng into the quenes chambre, all appareled in short cotes of Kentish Kendal, with hodes on their heddes, and hosen of the same, every one of them his bowe and arrowes, and a sworde and a bucklar, like outlawes, or ‘Robyn’ Hodes men; whereof the quene, the ladies, and al other there were abashed, aswell for the straunge sight, as also for their sodain commyng: and after certayn daunces and pastime made thei departed” (Hen. VIII. fo. 6, b). The same author gives the following curious account of “A maiynge” in the 7th year of this monarch (1516): “The kyng & the quene, accompanied with many lordes & ladies, roade to the high grounde on Shoters hil to take the open ayre, and as they passed by the way they espied a company of tall yomen, clothed all in grene, with grene whodes & bowes and arrowes, to the number of ii. C. Then one of them whiche called hymselfe Robyn Hood, came to the kyng, desyryng hym to se his men shote, & the kyng was content. Then he whisteled, and all the ii. C. archers shot & losed at once; and then he whisteled again, and they likewise shot agayne; their arrowes whisteled by craft of the [xcviii] head, so that the noyes was straunge and great, and muche pleased the kyng, the quene, and all the company. All these archers were of the kynges garde, and had thus appareled themselves to make solace to the kyng. Then Robyn Hood desyred the kyng and quene to come into the grene wood, and to se how the outlawes lyve. The kyng

demaunded of the quene and her ladyes, if they durst adventure to go into the wood with so many outlawes. Then the quene said, if it pleased hym, she was content. Then the hornes blewe tyll they came to the wood under Shoters-hill, and there was an arber made of bowes, with a hal, and a great chamber, and an inner chamber, very well made and covered with floures and swete herbes, which the kyng muche praised. Then sayd Robyn Hood, Sir, outlawes brekefastes is venyson, and therefore you must be content with such fare as we use. Then the kyng and quene sate doune, and were served with venyson and vyne by Robyn Hood and his men, to their great contentacion. Then the kyng departed and his company, and Robyn Hood and his men them conduicted: and as they were returnyng, there met with them two ladyes in a ryche chariot drawn with v. horses, and every horse had his name on his head, and on every horse sat a lady with her name written . . . . and in the chayre sate the lady May, accompanied with lady Flora, richely appareled; and they saluted the kyng with diverse goodly songes, and so brought hym to Grenewyche. At this maiyng was a greate number of people to beholde, to their great solace and confort” (fo. lvi. b).

That this sort of May-games was not peculiar to London appears from a passage in Richard Robinson’s “Third assertion Englishe historicall, frendly in favour and furtherance of English archery:” [80] [xcix]

“And, heare because of archery I do by penne explaine,  
The use, the proffet, and the praise, to England by the same,  
Myselfe remembreth of a childe in contreye native mine, (1553)  
A May-game was of Robyn Hood, and of his traine that time, (7. E. 6.)  
To traine up young men, striplings, and eche other younger childe,  
In shooting, yearely this with solempne feast was by the guylde  
Or brotherhood of townsmen don, with sport, with joy, and love,  
To proffet which in present tyme, and afterward did prove.”

The games of Robin Hood seem to have been occasionally of a dramatic cast. Sir John Paston, in the time of King Edward IV., complaining of the ingratitude of his servants, mentions one who had promised never to desert him, “and ther uppon,” says he, “I have keypd hym thys iii yer to pleye seynt Jorge, and Robyn Hod and the sheryf off Notyngham, [81] and now when I wolde have good horse he is goon into Bernysdale, and I withowt a keeper.”

In some old accounts of the churchwardens of St. Helen’s at Abingdon, Berks, for the year 1556, there is an entry For setting up Robin Hoodes Bower; I suppose, says [c] Warton, for a parish interlude. (See History of English Poetry, ii. 175.) [82]

[ci]

In some places, at least, these games were nothing more, in effect, than a morris-dance, in which Robin Hood, Little John, Maid Marian, and Frier Tuck were the principal personages; the others being a clown or fool, the hobby-horse (which appears, for some reason or other, to have been frequently forgot [83] ), the taborer, and the dancers, who were more or less numerous. Thus Warner:

“At Paske began our morrise, and ere pentecost our May,  
Tho Roben Hood, liell John, frier Tuck, and Marian deftly play,  
And lard and ladie gang till kirke with lads and lasses gay.” [84]

Perhaps the clearest idea of these last-mentioned games, about the beginning of the 16th century, will be derived from some curious extracts given by Mr. Lysons in his valuable work intitled “The Environs of London” (vol. i. 1792, p. 226), from the contemporary accounts of the “churchwardens of the parish of Kingston upon Thames.”

“Robin Hood and May-game.

“23 Hen. 7. To the menstorell upon May-day	0 0 4
— — — For paynting of the mores garments and for sarten gret leveres [85]	0 2 4
— — — For paynting of a bannar for Robin Hode	0 0 3
— — — For 2 M. & ½ pynnys	0 0 10
— — — For 4 plyts and ½ of laun for the mores garments	0 2 11
— — — For orseden [86] for the same	0 0 10
— — — For a gown for the lady	0 0 8
— — — For bellys for the dawnsars	0 0 12
24 Hen. 7. For little John’s cote	0 8 0
1 Hen. 8. For silver paper for the mores dawnsars	0 0 7
— — — For Kendall for Robyn Hode’s cote	0 1 3
— — — For 3 yerds of white for the frere’s [87] cote	0 3 0
— — — For 4 yards of kendall for mayde Marian’s [88] huke [89]	0 3 4
— — — For saten of sypers for the same huke	0 0 6
— — — For 2 payre of glovys for Robin Hode and mayde Maryan	0 0 3
— — — For 6 brode arovys	0 0 6
— — — To mayde Maryan for her labour for two years	0 2 0
— — — To Fygge the taborer	0 6 0
— — — Rec <sup>d</sup> for Robyn Hod’s gaderyng 4 marks [90]	
5 Hen. 8. Rec <sup>d</sup> for Robin Hood’s gaderyng at Croydon	0 9 4
11 Hen. 8. Paid for three broad yerds of rosett for maykng the frer’s cote	0 3 6
— — — Shoes for the mores daunsars, the frere and mayde Maryan at 7 <sup>d</sup> a payre	0 5 4
13 Hen. 8. Eight yerds of fustyan for the mores daunsars coats	0 16 0
A dosyn of gold skynnes for the morres [91]	0 0 10
15 Hen. 8. Hire of hats for Robynhode	0 0 16
— — — Paid for the hat that was lost	0 0 10
16 Hen. 8. Rec <sup>d</sup> at the church-ale and Robyn-hode all things deducted	3 10 6
— — — Paid for 6 yerds ¼ of satyn for Robyn Hode’s coyts	0 12 6
— — — For makyng the same	0 2 0
— — — For 3 ells of locram [92]	0 1 6
21 Hen. 8. For spunging and brushing Robyn-hode’s cotys	0 0 2
28 Hen. 8. Five hats and 4 porses for the daunsars	0 0 4½
— — — 4 yerds of cloth for the fole’s cote	0 2 0
— — — 2 ells of worstede for mayde Maryans kyrtle	0 6 8
— — — For 6 payre of double sollyd showne	0 4 6
— — — To the mynstrele	0 10 8
— — — To the fryer and the piper for to go to Croydon	0 0 8
29 Hen. 8. Mem. Lefte in the keping of the wardens nowe beinge.	

151.

A fryers cote of russet and a kyrtele of worstyde weltyd with red cloth, a mowrens [93] cote of buckram, and 4 morres [cv] daunsars cotes of white fustian spangelyd and two gryne saten cotes and a dysardd’s [94] cote of cotton and 6 payre of garters with bells.”

These games appear to have been discontinued at Kingston, as a parochial undertaking at least, after the above period, as the industrious inquirer found no further entries relating to them.

Some of the principal characters of the morris seem to have gradually disappeared, so that at length it consisted only of the dancers, the piper, and the fool. In Mr. Tollet’s window we find neither Robin Hood nor Little John, though Marian and the frier are still distinguished performers. [95] But in the scene of one, introduced in the old play of Jacke



Drum's Entertainment, first printed in 1601, there is not the least symptom of any of the four. [96] "The taber and pipe strike up a morrice. A shoute within: A lord, a lord, a lord, who! [97]

*Ed.* Oh, a morrice is come, observe our country sports,  
'Tis *Whitson tyde*, [98] and we must frolick it.

[cvi"]

*Enter the morrice.*

The song.

Skip it, and trip it, nimbly, nimbly,  
Tickle it, tickle it lustily,  
Strike up the taber, for the wench's favour,  
Tickle it, tickle it lustily.

Let us be seen, on Hygate greene,

To dance for the honour of Holloway.

Since we are come hither, let's spare for no leather,

To dance for the honour of Holloway.

*Ed.* Well said, my boyes, I must have my lord's livory: what is't? a maypole?  
Troth, 'twere a good body for a courtier's impreza, if it had but this life, Frustra  
florescit. Hold, cousin, hold.

*[He gives the fool money.]*

*Foole.* Thankes, cousin, when the lord my father's audit comes, wee'l repay  
you againe. Your benevolence too, sir.

*Mam.* What! a lord's sonne become a begger!

*Foole.* Why not? when beggers are become lord's sons. Come, 'tis but a  
trifle.

*Mam.* Oh, sir, many a small make a great.

*Foole.* No, sir, a few great make a many small. Come, my lords, poore and  
neede hath no law.

*S. Ed.* Nor necessitie no right. Drum, downe with them into the celler. Rest  
content, rest content; one bout more, and then away.

*Foole.* 'Spoke' like a true heart: I kisse thy foote, sweet knight.

*The morrice sing and dance and exeunt."*

It is therefore highly probable, as hath been already suggested, that the *May-game of Robin Hood* and the *morris-dance* had originally no sort of connection; that the performers had united their forces, because their joint efforts proved more successful, lucrative, or agreeable; and that, in fine, the latter gradually shook off companions from whose association they no longer derived any advantage. [99]

An old writer, describing a country bridal show exhibited before Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle in 1575, [cvii] mentions "a lively moris dauns, according too the auncient manner, six daunsers, mawd Marion, and the fool."

Stubbs's chapter, upon "Lords of mis-rule" (*Anatomie of Abuses*, 1583) contains a singular description of a grand parochial morris-dance, which is worthy of perusal.

It is observable that, in the sham second part of *Hudibras*, published 1663, this place is said to be

"Highly famed for *Hocktide games*."

(Grey's edition of *Hudibras*, ii. 90.) Of what nature these were (at Kingston) we are not informed. See Plot's *Natural History of Oxfordshire*; Leland's *Collectanea*, v. Roas.

*Hocktide* or *Hock-day* was the Tuesday fortnight after Easter. Two falsehoods are asserted of this festival: one, that its celebration was owing to the general joy excited by the death of Hardecnute, which in fact took place on the 8th of June: the other, that it was the anniversary of the general slaughter of the Danes in 1042; which Henry of Huntingdon and others expressly fix on St. Brice's day, being the 13th of November.

It plainly appears, by these extracts, that *Robyn Hode*, *Little John*, *the frere*, and *mayde Maryan* were fitted out at the same time with *the mores daunsars*, and, consequently, it would seem, united with them in one and the same exhibition. [100]

"Also it was said, that the ladie hir selfe, the same daie hir husband and she should be crowned, said that she feared they should prove but as a summer king and queene, such as in countrie townes the yong folks choose for short to danse about maipoles" (Holinshed, at the year 1306).

As to the original institution of May-poles, or king and queen of May,—in a word, of the primitive purpose and celebration of a popular festival at that season,—nothing [cviii] satisfactory or consequential can be discovered. The curious reader, at the same time, may consult Spelman's *Glossary*, *voce* MAIUMA, and Ducange, *vv.* MAJUMA, MAIUS.

In an old manuscript music-book given lately by Mr. Dalziel to the Advocates' Library are the following scraps of songs about Robin Hood:

"First when Robin good bow bare,  
Was never bairne so bold,  
    Doune, doune, berrie, doune, doune."  
"Now will ye hear a jollie jest,  
How Robin Hood was pope of Rome,  
And Wallace king of France."  
"Jolly Robin goe to the green wood to thy lemman."  
"The nock is out of Johnes bow, Joly, joly," &c.

Much curious matter on the subject of the morris-dance is to be found in "Mr. Tollet's opinion concerning the Morris-dancers upon his Window." (See Steevens's *Shakespeare*, v. 425, edition 1778, or viii. 596, edition 1793. See also Mr. Waldron's notes upon the *Sad Shepherd*, 1783, p. 255.) Morris-dancers are said to be yet annually seen in Norfolk, [101] and make their constant appearance in Lancashire. [102]

In Scotland, "The game of Robin Hood was celebrated in the month of May. The populace assembled previous to [cvix] the celebration of this festival, and chose some respectable [103] member of the corporation to officiate in the character of Robin Hood, and another in that of Little John his squire. Upon the day appointed, which was a Sunday or holyday, the people assembled in military array, and went to some adjoining field, where, either as actors or spectators, the whole inhabitants of the respective towns were convened. In this field they probably amused themselves with a representation of Robin Hood's predatory

exploits, or of his encounters with the officers of justice [rather, perhaps, in feats of archery or military exercises].

“As numerous meetings for disorderly mirth are apt to engender tumult, when the minds of the people came to be agitated with religious controversy, it was found necessary to repress the game [104] of Robin Hood by public statute. The populace were by no means willing to relinquish their favourite amusement. Year after year the magistrates of Edinburgh were obliged to exert their authority [105] in repressing this game; often ineffectually. In the year 1561, the mob were so enraged at being disappointed in making a Robin Hood, that they rose in mutiny, seized on the city gates, committed robberies upon strangers; and one of the [cx] ringleaders being condemned by the magistrates to be hanged, the mob forced open the jail, set at liberty the criminal and all the prisoners, and broke in pieces the gibbet erected at the cross for executing the malefactor. They next assaulted the magistrates, who were [106] sitting in the council-chamber, and who fled to the Tolbooth for shelter, where the mob attacked them, battering the doors, and pouring stones through the windows. Application was made to the deacons of the corporations to appease the tumult. Remaining, however, unconcerned spectators, they made this answer: ‘They will be magistrates alone; let them rule the people alone.’ The magistrates were kept in confinement till they made proclamation be published, offering indemnity to the rioters upon laying down their arms. Still, however, so late as the year 1592, we find the General Assembly complaining of the profanation of the sabbath, by making [107] of Robin Hood plays” (Arnot’s History of Edinburgh, p. 77).

Notwithstanding the above representation, it is certain that these amusements were considerably upon the decline before the year 1568. This appears from a poem by Alexander Scot, preserved in the Hyndford MS. (in the Advocates’ Library, compiled and written in that identical year), and inaccurately printed in *The Evergreen*:

“In May quhen men zeid everichone  
With Robene Hoid and Littill Johne,  
To bring in bowis and birkin bobbynis:  
Now all sic game is fastlingis gone,  
But gif it be amangis clovin Robbynis.”

([Note 35](#)) —“*His bow, and one of his arrows, his chair, his cap, and one of his slippers were preserved till within the present century.*” “We omitted,” says Ray, “the sight of Fountain’s Abbey, where Robin Hood’s bow is kept” (*Itineraries*, 1760, p. 161).

“Having pleased ourselves with the antiquities of ‘Nottingham,’ we took horse and went to visit the well and [cxi] ancient chair of Robin Hood, which is not far from hence, within the forest of Sherwood. Being placed in the chair, we had a cap, which they say was his, very formally put upon our heads, and having performed the usual ceremonies befitting so great a solemnity, we receiv’d the freedom of the chair, and were incorporated into the society of that renowned brotherhood” (*Brome’s Travels over England, &c.*, 1700, p. 85).

“On one side of this forest [sci. of Sherwood] towards Nottingham,” says the author of “*The Travels of Tom Thumb over England and Wales*” (*i.e.* Robert Dodsley), “I was shewn a chair, a bow, and arrow, all said to have been his [Robin Hood’s] property” (p. 82).

“I was pleased with a slipper, belonging to the famous Robin Hood, shewn me, fifty years ago, at St. Ann’s well, near Nottingham, a place upon the borders of Sherwood forest, to which he resorted” (*Journey from Birmingham to London*, by W. Hutton, Bir. 1785, p. 174).

([Note 36](#)) —“*Not only places which afforded him security or amusement, but even the well at which he quenched his thirst, still retain his name.*” Robin Hood’s Bay is both a bay and a village on the coast of Yorkshire, between Whitby and Scarborough. It is mentioned by

Leland as “a fischer tounlet of 20. bootes caullid Robyn Huddes bay, a dok or bosom of a mile yn length” (Itinerary, i. 53). “When his robberies,” says Master Charlton, “became so numerous, and the outcries against him so loud, as almost to alarm the whole nation, parties of soldiers were sent down from London to apprehend him: and then it was, that fearing for his safety, he found it necessary to desert his usual haunts, and, retreating northward, to cross the moors that surrounded Whitby [one side whereof happens, a little unfortunately, to lie open to the sea], where, gaining the sea-coast, he always had in readiness near at hand some small fishing vessels, to which he could have refuge, if he found himself pursued; for in these, putting off to sea, he looked upon himself as quite secure, and held the whole power of the English nation at defiance. The chief place of his resort [cxii] at these times, where his boats were generally laid up, was about six miles from Whitby, to which he communicated his name, and which is still called Robin Hood’s Bay. There he frequently went a fishing in the summer season, even when no enemy appeared to annoy him, and not far from that place he had buts or marks set up, where he used to exercise his men in shooting with the long-bow.” [108]

Near Gloucester is “a famous hill” called “Robin Hood’s hill,” concerning which there is a very foolish modern song. Another hill of the same name exists in the neighbourhood of Castleton, Derbyshire.

“Over a spring call’d Robin Hoods well (3 or 4 miles [on] this side [*i.e.* north] of Doncaster, and but a quarter of a mile only from 2 towns call’d Skelbrough and Bourmallis) is a very handsome stone arch, erected by the Lord Carlisle, where passengers from the coach frequently drink of the fair water, and give their charity to two people who attend there” (Gent’s History of York. York, 1730, p. 234). [109] [cxiii]

Though there is no attendance at present, nor is the water altogether so fair as it might and should be, the case was otherwise in the days of honest Barnaby.

“Veni Doncaster, &c.  
Nescit sitis artem modi,  
Puteum Roberti Hoodi  
Veni, & liquente vena  
Vincto [110] catino catena,  
Tollens sitim, parcum odi,  
Solvens obolum custodi.”  
“Thence to Doncaster, &c.  
Thirst knowes neither meane nor measure,  
Robin Hood’s well was my treasure;  
In a [111] common dish enchained,  
I my furious thirst restrained:  
And because I drunk the deeper,  
I paid two farthings to the keeper.”

[cxiv]

He mentions it again:

“Nunc longinquos locus odi,  
Vale fons Roberti Hoodi.”  
“Now I hate all foreign places,  
Robin Hood’s well, and his chaces.”

A different well, sacred either to Robin Hood or to St. Ann, has been already mentioned.

“Not far [off Bitham, in Lincolnshire] is *Robyn Huddes cros*, a *limes* of the shires” (Leland’s Itinerary, i. 25).

([Note 37](#)) —“*conferred as a singular distinction upon the prime minister to the king of Madagascar.*”] The natives of this island, who have dealings with our people, pride themselves, it seems, in English names, which are bestowed upon them at the discretion or caprice of the sailors: and thus a venerable minister of state, who should have been called Sir Robert Walpole or Cardinal Fleury, acquired the name of Robin Hood. Mr. Ives, by whom he is frequently mentioned, relates the following anecdote: —

“The reader will excuse my giving him another instance . . . which still more strikingly displays the extreme sensibility of these islanders, in respect to their king’s dignity. Robin Hood (who seemed to act as prime minister, and negotiate most of the king’s concerns with our agent-victualler) was one day transacting business with another gentleman of the squadron, and they happened to differ so much about the value of a certain commodity, that high words arose, and at length Robin Hood in the greatest agitation started from the ground where he was sitting, and swore that he would immediately acquaint the king of Baba with what had passed. Our English gentleman, too much heated with this threat, and the violent altercation which had preceded it, unguardedly replied, ‘D—n the king of Baba.’ The eyes of Robin Hood flashed like lightning, and in the most violent wrath he retorted, ‘D—n King George.’ At the same instant he left the spot, hurrying away towards the Madagascarian cottages. Our countryman was soon struck with the impropriety of his behaviour, followed and overtook the disputant, and having [[cxv](#)] made all proper concessions, the affair was happily terminated.” [[112](#)]

([Note 38](#)) “*After his death his company was dispersed.*”] They and their successors, disciples, or followers are supposed to have been afterward distinguished, from the name of their gallant leader, by the title of Roberdsmen. Lord Coke, who is somewhat singular in accusing him of living “by robbery, burning of houses, felony, waste and spoil, and principally by and with vagabonds, idle wanderers, night-walkers, and draw-latches,” says that “albeit he lived in Yorkshire, yet men of his quality took their denomination of him, and were called Roberdsmen throughout all England. Against these men,” continues he, “was the statute of Winchester made in 13 E. 1. [c. 14], for preventing of robbery, murders, burning of houses, &c. Also the statute of 5 E. 3. [c. 14], which ‘recites’ the statute of Winchester, and that there had been divers manslaughter, felonies, and robberies done in times past, by people that be called Roberdsmen, wasters and draw-latches; and remedy [is] provided by that act for the arresting of them. At the parliament holden 50 E. 3.,” he adds, “it was petitioned to the king that ribauds and sturdy beggars might be banished out of every town. The answer of the king in parliament was, touching ribauds: The statute of Winchester and the declaration of the same with other statutes of Roberdsmen, and for such as make themselves gentlemen, and men of armes, and archers, if they cannot so prove themselves, let them be driven to their occupation or service, or to the place from whence they came.” He likewise notices the statute of 7 R. 2. [c. 5], by which it is provided “that the statutes of Roberdsmen and draw-latches be firmly holden and kept” (3 Inst. 197).

These Roberdsmen are mentioned in *Pierce the Ploughman’s Crede*, written about 1400:

“And right as Robartemen raken aboute.” [[113](#)]

[[cxvi](#)]

Mr. Warton, who had once thought that the friers Robertines were here meant, observes that “the expression of Robin Hoode’s men, in Bishop Latimer’s sermon, is not without an allusion to the bad sense of Roberdsmen” (H. E. P. ii. additions, sig. d. 4). It does not,

however, appear that the latter word has been ever used in a good one; nor is there, after all, sufficient ground for concluding that these people were so named after Robin Hood.

([Note 39](#)) —“*the honour of Little John’s death and burial is contended for by rival nations.*”] I. By England.—At the village of Hathersage, about six miles from Castleton, in Derbyshire, is Little John’s grave. A few years ago some curious person caused it to be opened, when there were found several bones of an uncommon size, which he preserved; but, meeting afterwards with many unlucky accidents, he carefully replaced them; partly at the intercession of the sexton, who had taken them up for him, and who had in like manner been visited with misfortunes: upon restoring the bones all these troubles ceased. Such is the tradition at Castleton. E. Hargrove, in his “Anecdotes of Archery,” York, 1792, asserts that “the grave is distinguished by a large stone placed at the head, and another at the feet, on each of which are yet some remains of the letters I. L.” (p. 26). [[114](#)] II. By Scotland.—“In Murray land,” according to that most veracious historian Maister Hector Bois, “is the kirke of Pette, quhare the banis of lytill Johne remanis in gret admiratioun of pepill. He hes bene fourtene fut of hycht [[115](#)] with square membris effering thairto. Vi. zeris,” continues he, “afore the cumyng of this [[cxvii](#)] werk to lycht we saw his hanche-bane, als mekill as the haill bane of ane man: for we schot our arme in the mouth thair of. Be quhilk apperis how strang and square pepill grew in our region afore thay were effeminat with lust and intemperance of mouth.” [[116](#)] III. By Ireland.—“There standeth,” as Stanihurst relates, “in Ostmantowne greene an hillocke, named little John his shot. The occasion,” he says, “proceeded of this.

“In the yeare one thousand one hundred foure score and nine, there ranged three robbers and outlaws in England, among which Robert Hood and Little John weere cheefeteins, of all theeves doubtlesse the most courteous. Robert Hood being betrayed at a nunrie in Scotland called Bricklies, the remnant of the crue was scattered, and everie man forced to shift for himselfe. Whereupon Little John was faine to flee the realme by sailing into Ireland, where he sojourned for a few daies at Dublin. The citizens being doone to understand the wandering outcast to be an excellent archer, requested him hartilie to trie how far he could shoot at random; who yeelding to their behest, stood on the bridge of Dublin, and shot to that mole hill, leaving behind him a monument, rather by his posteritie to be woondered, than possiblie by anie man living to be counterscored. But as the repaire of so notorious a champion to anie countrie would soone be published, so his abode could not be long concealed: and therefore to eschew the danger of [the] lawes, he fled into Scotland, where he died at a towne or village called Moravie.” [[117](#)] Thus Stanihurst, who is quoted by Dr. Hanmer in his Chronicle of Ireland, p. 179, but Mr. Walker, after observing that “poor Little John’s great practical skill in archery could not save him from an ignominious fate,” says, “it appeared, from some records in the Southwell family, that [[cxviii](#)] he was publicly executed for robbery on Arbor Hill, Dublin.” [[118](#)]

([Note 40](#)) —“*some of his descendants of the name of Nailor,*” &c.] See the preface to the History of George a Green. As surnames were by no means in general use at the close of the twelfth century, Little John may have obtained that of Nailor from his original profession.

(“Ye boasted worthies of the knuckle,  
To Maggs and to the Nailor truckle.”)

But however this, or the fact itself may be, a bow, said to have belonged to Little John, with the name of Naylor upon it, is now, as the editor is informed, in the possession of a gentleman in the West Riding of Yorkshire.

The quotation about whetstones is from the Sloane MS. Those, indeed, who recollect the equivocal meaning of the word may think that this production has not been altogether confined to the grave of Little John.



[1]

## ROBIN HOOD.

### PART I.



### I. A LYTELL GESTE OF ROBYN HODE.↵

This ancient legend is printed from the copy of an edition, in 4to and black letter, by Wynken de Worde, preserved in the public library at Cambridge; compared with, and, in some places, corrected by, another impression (apparently from the former), likewise in 4to and black letter, by William Copland, a copy of which is among the late Mr. Garrick's old plays, now in the British Museum. The full title of the first edition is as follows: "Here beginneth a mery geste of Robyn Hode and his meyne, [2] and of the proude sheryfe of Notyngham;" and the printer's colophon runs thus: "Explycit. Kynge Edwarde and Robyn hode and Lytell Johan Enprented at London in Flete strete at the sygne of the sone By

Wynken de Worde.” To Copland’s edition is added “a newe playe for to be played in Maye games very plesaunte and full of pastyme;” which will be found at large in another place. No other copy of either edition is known to be extant; but, by the favour of the Reverend Dr. Farmer, the editor had in his hands and gave to Mr. Douce a few leaves of an old 4to black letter impression by the above Wynken de Worde, probably in 1489, and totally unknown to Ames and Herbert. Another edition was printed at Edinburgh by Androw Myllar and Walter Chepman in 1508, a fragment whereof is in the Advocates’ Library there. This is probably the edition noticed among the tales enumerated in Wedderburn’s *Complainte of Scotland*, printed at St. Andrews in 1549, under the title of “Robene Hude and lital Jhone.” Among the Doctor’s numerous literary curiosities was likewise another edition, “printed,” after Copland’s, “for Edward White” (4to, black letter, no date, but entered in the Stationers’ books 13 May 1594), which hath been collated, and every variation worthy of notice either adopted or remarked in the margin. The only deviation from all the copies (except in necessary corrections) is the division of stanzas, the indenting of the lines, the addition of points, the disuse of abbreviations, and the occasional introduction or rejection of a capital letter; liberties, if they may be so called, which have been taken with most of the other poems in this collection.

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Lithe and lysten, gentylnen,  
That be of frebore blode;  
I shall you tell of a good yemàn,  
His name was Robyn Hode.

[3]

Robyn was a proude outlawe,  
Whyles he walked on grounde,  
So curteyse an outlawe as he was one  
Was never none yfounde.  
Robyn stode in Bernysdale,  
And lened hym to a tree,  
And by hym stode Lytell Johan,  
A good yeman was he;  
And also dyde good Scathelock,  
And Much the millers sone;  
There was no ynche of his body,  
But it was worthe a grome.  
Than bespake hym Lytell Johan  
All unto Robyn Hode,  
Mayster, yf ye wolde dyne betyme,  
It wolde do you moch good.  
Then bespake good Robyn,  
To dyne I have no lust,  
Tyll I have some bolde baròn,  
Or some unketh gest,  
[Or els some byshop or abbot] [\[119\]](#)  
That may paye for the best;  
Or some knyght or some squyere  
That dwelleth here by west.

[4]



A good maner than had Robyn,  
In londe where that he were,  
Every daye or he woulde dyne  
Thre messes wolde he here:  
The one in the worshyp of the fader,  
The other of the holy goost,  
The thyrde was of our dere lady,  
That he loved of all other moste.  
Robyn loved our dere lady,  
For doute of dedely synne;  
Wolde he never do company harme  
That only woman was ynne.  
Mayster, than sayd Lytell Johan,  
And we our borde shall sprede,  
Tell us whether we shall gone,  
And what lyfe we shall lede;  
Where we shall take, where we shall leve,  
Where we shall abide behynde,  
Where we shall robbe, where we shall reve,  
Where we shall bete and bynde.  
Ther of no fors, sayd Robyn,  
We shall do well ynough;  
But loke ye do no housbonde harme  
That tylleth with his plough;

[5]

No more ye shall no good yemàn,  
That walketh by grene wode shawe,  
Ne no knyght, ne no squyèr,  
That wolde be a good felawe.  
These bysshoppes, and thyse archebysshoppes,  
Ye shall them bete and bynde;  
The hie sheryfe of Notynghame,  
Hym holde in your mynde.  
This worde shall be holde, sayd Lytyll Johan,  
And this lesson shall we lere;  
It is ferre dayes, god sende us a gest,  
That we were at our dynere.  
Take thy good bowe in thy hande, said Robyn,  
Let Moche wende with the,  
And so shall Wyllyam Scathelocke,  
And no man abyde with me;  
And walke up to the Sayles,  
And so to Watlynge-strete, [120]  
And wayte after some unketh gest,  
Up-chaunce ye mowe them mete.

[6]

Be he erle or ony baròn,  
Abbot or ony knyght,  
Brynge hym to lodge to me,  
Hys dyner shall be dyght.  
They wente unto the Sayles,

These yemen all thre,  
They loked est, they loked west,  
    They myght no man see.  
But as they loked in Barnysdale,  
    By a derne strete,  
Then came there a knyght rydyng,  
    Full sone they gan hym mete.  
All dreri then was his [\[121\]](#) semblaunte,  
    And lytell was hys pryde,  
Hys one fote in the sterope stode,  
    That other waved besyde.  
Hys hode hangynge over hys eyen two,  
    He rode in symple aray;  
A soryer man than he was one  
    Rode never in somers-day.  
Lytell Johan was curteyse,  
    And set hym on his kne:  
Welcome be ye, gentyll knyght,  
    Welcome are you to me.



COURTESY OF LITTLE JOHN.

[7]

Welcome be thou to grene wood,  
    Hende knyght and fre;  
My mayster hath abyden you fastynge,  
    Syr, all these oures thre.  
Who is your mayster? sayd the knyght.  
    Johan saydé, Robyn Hode.  
He is a good yeman, sayd the knyght,  
    Of hym I have herde moch good.  
I graunte, he sayd, with you to wende,  
    My brethren all in-ferre; [122]  
My purpose was to have deyned to day  
    At Blythe or Dankastere.  
Forthe than went this [123] gentyll knyght,  
    With a carefull chere,

The teres out of his eyen ran,  
    And fell downe by his lere. [124]  
They brought hym unto the lodge dore,  
    When Robyn gan hym se,  
Full curteysly dyde of his hode,  
    And set hym on his kne.  
Welcome, syr knyght, then said Robyn,  
    Welcome thou arte to me,  
I haue abyde you fastynge, syr,  
    All these houres thre.  
Then answered the gentyll knyght,  
    With wordes fayre and fre,  
God the save, good Robyn,  
    And all thy fayre meynè.  
They washed togyder and wyped bothe,  
    And set tyll theyr dynere;  
Brede and wyne they had ynough,  
    And nombles of the dere;  
Swannes and fesautes they had full good,  
    And foules of the revere;  
There fayled never so lytell a byrde,  
    That ever was bred on breere.  
Do gladly, syr knyght, sayd Robyn.  
    Gramercy, syr, sayd he,  
Suche a dyner had I not  
    Of all these wekes thre;  
If I come agayne, Robyn,  
    Here by this countrè,  
As good a dyner I shall the make,  
    As thou hast made to me.  
Gramercy, knyght, sayd Robyn,  
    My dyner whan I have,  
I was never so gredy, by dere worthy god,  
    My dyner for to crave.

[9]

But pay or ye wende, sayd Robyn,  
    Me thynketh it is good ryght;  
It was never the maner, by dere worthy god,  
    A yeman to pay [125] for a knyght.  
I have nought in my cofers, sayd the knyght,  
    That I may profer for shame.  
Lytell Johan, go loke, sayd Robyn, [126]  
    Ne let not for no blame.  
Tell me trouth, sayd Robyn,  
    So god hath parte of the.  
I have no more but ten shillings, sayd the knyght,  
    So god hath parte of me.  
Yf thou have no more, sayd Robyn,  
    I wyll not one peny;  
And yf thou have nede of ony more,  
    More shall I len the.  
Go now forth, Lytell Johan,

The trouthe tell thou me,  
Yf there be no more but ten shillings,  
Not one peny that I se.  
Lytell Johan spred downe his mantell  
Full fayre upon the grounde,  
And there he founde in the knyghtes cofer  
But even halfe a pounce.

[10]

Lytyll Johan let it lye full styll,  
And went to his mayster full lowe.  
What tydyng Johan? sayd Robyn.  
“Syr, the knyght is trewe inough.”  
Fyll of the best wyne, sayd Robyn,  
The knyght shall begynne;  
Moch wonder thynketh me  
Thy clothyng is so thynne.  
Tell me one worde, sayd Robyn,  
And counsell shall it be;  
I trowe thou were made a knyght of forse,  
Or elles of yemanry;  
Or elles thou hast ben a sory housband,  
And leved in stroke and stryfe;  
An okerer, or elles a lechoure, sayd Robyn,  
With wronge hast thou lede thy lyfe.  
I am none of them, sayd the knyght,  
By god that made me;  
An hondreth wynter here before,  
Myne aunsetters knyghtes have be.  
But ofte it hath befall, Robyn,  
A man hath be dysgrate;  
But god that syteth in heven above  
May amend his state.

[11]

Within two or thre yere, [127] Robyn, he sayd,  
My neyghbores well it ‘kende,’ [128]  
Foure hondreth pounce of good money  
Full wel than myght I spende.  
Now have I no good, sayd the knyght,  
But my chyldren and my wyfe;  
God hath shapen such an ende,  
Tyll god ‘may amende [129] my lyfe.’  
In what maner, sayd Robyn,  
Hast thou lore thy rychès?  
For my grete foly, he sayd,  
And for my kindenesse.  
I had a sone, for soth, Robyn,  
That sholde have ben my eyre,  
When he was twenty wynter olde,  
In felde wolde juste full feyre;  
He slewe a knyght of Lancastshyre, [130]  
And a squyre bolde;

For to save hym in his ryght  
My goodes beth sette and solde;  
My londes beth set to wedde, Robyn,  
Untyll a certayne daye,  
To a ryche abbot here besyde,  
Of Saynt Mary abbay.

[12]

What is the somme? sayd Robyn,  
Trouthe than tell thou me.  
Syr, he sayd, foure hondred ponde,  
The abbot tolde it to me.  
Now, and thou lese thy londe, sayd Robyn,  
What shall fall of the?  
Hastely I wyll me buske, sayd the knyght,  
Over the salte see,  
And se where Cryst was quycke and deed,  
On the mounte of Caluarè.  
Fare well, frende, and have good daye,  
It may noo [131] better be — — —  
Teeres fell out of his eyen two,  
He wolde haue gone his waye—  
Farewell, frendes, and have good day,  
I ne have more to pay.  
Where be [132] thy friendes? sayd Robyn.  
“Syr, never one wyll me know; [133]  
Whyle I was ryche inow at home  
Grete bost then wolde they blowe,  
And now they renne away fro me,  
As bestes on a rowe;  
They take no more heed of me  
Then they me never sawe.” [134]

[13]

For ruthe then wepte Lytell Johan,  
Scathelocke and Much ‘in fere.’ [135]  
Fyll of the best wyne, [136] sayd Robyn,  
For here is a symple chere.  
Hast thou ony frendes, sayd Robyn,  
Thy borowes that wyll be?  
I have none, then sayd the knyght,  
But god that dyed on a tree.  
Do waye thy japes, sayd Robyn,  
Therof wyll I right none;  
Wenest thou I wyll have god to borowe?  
Peter, Poule or Johan?  
Nay, by hym that me made,  
And shope both sonne and mone,  
Fynde a better borowe, sayd Robyn,  
Or mony getest thou none.  
I have none other, sayd the knyght,  
The sothe for to say,  
But yf it be our dere lady,

She fayled me never or this day.  
By dere worthy god, sayd Robyn,  
    To seche all Englond thorowe,  
Yet founde I never to my pay,  
    A moch better borowe.

[14]

Come now forthe, Lytell Johan,  
    And goo to my tresourè,  
And brynge me foure hondred ponde,  
    And loke that it well tolde be.  
Forthe then wente Lytell Johan,  
    And Scathelocke went before,  
He tolde out foure hondred ponde,  
    By eyghtene score. [137]  
Is this well tolde? sayd lytell Much.  
    Johan sayd, What greveth the?  
It is almes to helpe a gentyll knyght  
    That is fall in povertè.  
Mayster, than sayd Lytell Johan,  
    His clothyng is full thynne,  
Ye must gyve the knyght a lyveray,  
    To 'lappe' [138] his body ther in.  
For ye have scarlet and grene, mayster,  
    And many a ryche aray,  
There is no marchaunt in mery Englònde  
    So ryche, I dare well saye.  
Take hym thre yerdes of every coloure,  
    And loke that well mete it be.  
Lytell Johan toke none other mesure  
    But his bowe tre,



LITTLE JOHN AND THE KNIGHT.

[15]

And of every handfull that he met  
He lept ouer fotes thre.  
What devilkyns draper, sayd litell Much,  
Thynkyst thou to be?  
Scathelocke stode full styll and lough,  
And sayd, By god allmyght,  
Johan may gyve hym the better mesure,  
By god, it cost him but lyght.  
Mayster, sayd Lytell Johan,  
All unto Robyn Hode,  
Ye must gyve that knight an hors,  
To lede home al this good.  
Take hym a gray courser, sayd Robyn,  
And a sadell newe;



He is our ladyes messengere,  
God lene [\[139\]](#) that he be true.  
And a good palfraye, sayd lytell Moch,  
To mayntayne hym in his ryght.  
And a payre of botes, sayd Scathelocke,  
For he is a gentyll knyght.  
What shalt thou gyve hym, Lytel Johan? sayd Robyn.  
Syr, a payre of gylte spores clene,  
To pray for all this company:  
God brynge hym out of tene!

[16]

Whan shall my daye be, sayd the knyght,  
Syr, and your wyll be?  
This daye twelve moneth, sayd Robyn,  
Under this grene wode tre.  
It were grete shame, sayd Robyn,  
A knyght alone to ryde,  
Without squyer, yeman or page,  
To walke by hys syde.  
I shall the lene Lytyll Johan my man,  
For he shall be thy knave;  
In a yemans steed he may the stonde,  
Yf thou grete nede have.

#### *THE SECONDE FYTTE.*

Nowe is the knyght went on this way,  
This game he thought full good,  
When he loked on Bernysdale,  
He blyssed Robyn Hode;  
And whan he thought on Bernysdale,  
On Scathelock, Much, and Johan,  
He blyssed them for the best company  
That ever he in come.

[17]

Then spake that gentyll knyght,  
To Lytel Johan gan he saye,  
To morowe I must to Yorke toune,  
To Saynt Mary abbay;  
And to the abbot of that place  
Foure hondred pounde I must pay:  
And but I be there upon this nyght  
My londe is lost for ay.  
The abbot sayd to his covent,  
There he stode on grounde,  
This day twelfe moneth came there a knyght  
And borowed foure hondred pounde.  
[He borowed foure hondred pounde,]  
Upon all his londe fre,  
But he come this ylke day  
Dysherytye shall he be.  
It is full erely, sayd the pryoure, [\[140\]](#)  
The day is not yet ferre gone,

I had lever to pay an hondred pounde,  
And lay it downe a none.  
The knyght is ferre be yonde the see,  
In Englonde is his ryght,  
And suffreth hunger and colde  
And many a sory nyght;

[18]

It were grete pytè, sayd the pryoure,  
So to have his londe,  
And ye be so lyght of your conseynce  
Ye do to him moch wronge.  
Thou arte euer in my berde, sayd the abbot,  
By god and saynt Rycharde. [141]  
With that cam in a fat-heded monke,  
The heygh selerer;  
He is dede or hanged, sayd the monke,  
By god that bought me dere,  
And we shall have to spende in this place  
Foure hondred pounde by yere.  
The abbot and the hy selerer,  
Sterte forthe full bolde,  
The high justyce of Englonde  
The abbot there dyde holde.

[19]

The hye justyce and many mo  
Had take into their honde  
Holy all the knyghtes det,  
To put that knyght to wronge.  
They demed the knyght wonder sore,  
The abbot and hys meynè:  
“But he come this ylke day  
Dysheryte shall he be.”  
He wyll not come yet, sayd the justyce,  
I dare well undertake.  
But in sorowe tyme for them all  
The knyght came to the gate.  
Than bespake that gentyll knyght  
Untyll hys meynè,  
Now put on your symple wedes  
That ye brought fro the see.  
[They put on their symple wedes,]  
And came to the gates anone,  
The porter was redy hymselfe,  
And welcomed them everychone.  
Welcome, syr knyght, sayd the portèr,  
My lorde to mete is he,  
And so is many a gentyll man,  
For the love of the.

[20]

The porter swore a full grete othe,  
By god that made me,

Here be the best coresed hors  
That ever yet sawe I me.  
Lede them into the stable, he sayd,  
That eased myght they be.  
They shall not come therin, sayd the knyght,  
By god that dyed on a tre.  
Lordes were to mete isette  
In that abbotes hall,  
The knyght went forth and kneled downe,  
And salved them grete and small.  
Do gladly, syr abbot, sayd the knyght,  
I am come to holde my day.  
The fyrst word the abbot spake,  
Hast thou brought my pay?  
Not one peny, sayd the knyght,  
By god that maked me.  
Thou art a shrewed dettour, sayd the abbot:  
Syr justyce, drynke to me.  
What doost thou here, sayd the abbot,  
But thou haddest brought thy pay?  
For god, than sayd the knyght,  
To pray of a lenger daye.

[21]

Thy daye is broke, sayd the justyce,  
Londe getest thou none.  
“Now, good syr justyce, be my frende,  
And fende me of my fone.”  
I am holde with the abbot, sayd the justyce,  
Bothe with cloth and fee.  
“Now, good syr sheryf, be my frende.”  
Nay for god, sayd he.  
“Now, good syr abbot, be my frende,  
For thy curteysè,  
And holde my londes in thy honde  
Tyll I have made the gree;  
And I wyll be thy true servaunte,  
And trewely serve the,  
Tyl ye have foure hondred pounde  
Of money good and free.”  
The abbot sware a full grete othe,  
By god that dyed on a tree,  
Get the londe where thou may,  
For thou getest none of me.  
By dere worthy god, then sayd the knyght,  
That all this worlde wrought,  
But I have my londe agayne  
Full dere it shall be bought;

[22]

God, that was of a mayden borne  
Lene us [\[142\]](#) well to spede!  
For it is good to assay a frende

Or that a man have nede.  
The abbot lothely on hym gan loke  
And vylaynesly hym gan 'call;' [143]  
Out, he sayd, thou false knyght,  
Spede the out of my hall!  
Thou lvest, then sayd the gentyll knyght,  
Abbot in thy hal;  
False knyght was I never,  
By god that made us all.  
Up then stode that gentyll knyght,  
To the abbot sayd he,  
To suffre a knyght to knele so longe,  
Thou canst no curteysye;  
In joustes and in tournament  
Full ferre than have I be,  
And put myselfe as ferre in prees  
As ony that ever I se.  
What wyll ye gyve more? sayd the justyce,  
And the knyght shall make a releuse;  
And elles dare I safly swere  
Ye holde never your londe in pees.

[23]

An hondred ponde, sayd the abbot.  
The justyce said, Gyve him two.  
Nay, be god, sayd the knyght,  
Yet gete [144] ye it not soo:  
Though ye wolde gyve a thousande more,  
Yet were 'ye' [145] never the nere:  
Shall there never be myn eyre,  
Abbot, justyse, ne frere.  
He sterte hym to a borde anone,  
Tyll a table rounde,  
And there he shoke out of a bagge  
Even foure hondred ponde.  
Have here thy golde, syr abbot, sayd the knyght,  
Which that thou lentest me;  
Haddest thou ben curteys at my comynge,  
Rewarde sholdest thou have be.  
The abbot sat styll, and ete no more,  
For all his ryall chere,  
He caste his hede on his sholdèr,  
And fast began to stare.  
Take me my golde agayne, sayd the abbot,  
Syr justyce, that I toke the.  
Not a peny, sayd the justyce,  
By god, that dyed on a tree.

[24]

"Syr abbot, and ye men of lawe,  
Now have I holde my daye,  
Now shall I have my londe agayne,  
For ought that you can saye."

The knyght stert out of the dore,  
    Awaye was all his care,  
And on he put his good clothyng,  
    The other he lefte there.  
He wente hym forthe full mery syngynge,  
    As men have tolde in tale,  
His lady met hym at the gate,  
    At home in 'Wierysdale.' [146]  
Welcome, my lorde, sayd his lady;  
    Syr, lost is all your good?  
Be mery, dame, sayd the knyght,  
    And praye for Robyn Hode,  
That ever his soule be in blysse,  
    He holpe me out of my tene;  
Ne had not be his kyndenesse,  
    Beggars had we ben.  
The abbot and I acordyd ben,  
    He is served of his pay,  
The good yeman lent it me,  
    As I came by the way.

[25]

This knyght than dwelled fayre at home,  
    The soth for to say,  
Tyll he had got foure hondreth ponde  
    All redy for too paye.  
He purveyed hym an hondred bowes,  
    The strenges [were] welle dyght,  
An hondred shefe of arowes good,  
    The hedes burnyshed full bryght,  
And every arowe an elle longe,  
    With pecocke well ydyght,  
Inocked all with whyte sylvèr,  
    It was a semly syght.  
He purveyed hym an hondreth men,  
    Well harneysed in that stede,  
And hymselfe in that same sete, [147]  
    And clothed in whyte and rede.  
He bare a launggay in his honde,  
    And a man ledde his male,  
And reden with a lyght songe,  
    Unto Bernysdale.  
As he went at a brydge ther was a wrastelyng,  
    And there taryed was he,  
And there was all the best yemèn,  
    Of all the west countree.

[26]

A full fayre game there was upset,  
    A whyte bull up ipyght; [148]  
A grete courser with sadle and brydil,  
    With golde burneyshed full bryght;  
A payre of gloves, a rede golde rynge,

A pype of wyne, in good fay:  
What man bereth him best, I wys,  
The pryce shall bere away.  
There was a yeman in that place,  
And best worthy was he,  
And for he was ferre and frend bestad,  
Islayne he sholde have be.  
The knyght had reuth of this yemàn,  
In place where that he stode,  
He said that yoman sholde have no harme,  
For love of Robyn Hode.  
The knyght presed into the place,  
An hondred folowed hym 'fre,' [149]  
With bowes bent, and arowes sharpe,  
For to shende that company.  
They sholdred all, and made hym rome,  
To wete that he wolde say,  
He toke the yeman by the honde,  
And gave hym all the playe;

[27]

He gave hym fyve marke for his wyne,  
There it laye on the molde,  
And bad it sholde be sette a broche,  
Drynke who so wolde.  
Thus longe taryed this gentyll knyght,  
Tyll that playe was done,  
So longe abode Robyn fastyng,  
Thre houres after the none.

#### *THE THYRDE FYTTE.*

Lyth and lysten, gentyll men,  
All that now be here,  
Of Lytell Johan, that was the knyghtes man,  
Good myrthe ye shall here.  
It was upon a mery day,  
That yonge men wolde go shete, [150]  
Lytell Johan fet his bowe anone,  
And sayd he wolde them mete.  
Thre tymes Lytell Johan shot about,  
And alway cleft [151] the wande,  
The proude sheryf of Notyngham  
By the markes gan stande.

[28]

The sheryf swore a full grete othe,  
By hym that dyed on a tree,  
This man is the best archere  
That yet sawe I me.  
Say me now, wyght yonge man,  
What is now thy name?  
In what countre were thou [152] born,  
And where is thy wonnyng wan?  
"In Holdernesse I was bore,

I wys all of my dame,  
Men call me Reynolde Grenelefe,  
Whan I am at hame.”  
“Say me, Reynaud Grenelefe,  
Wolte thou dwell with me?  
And every yere I wyll the gyve  
Twenty marke to thy fee.”  
I have a mayster, sayd Lytell Johan,  
A curteys knyght is he,  
May ye gete leve of hym,  
The better may it bee.  
The sheryfe gate Lytell Johan  
Twelve monethes of the knyght,  
Therfore he gave him ryght anone  
A good hors and a wyght.

[29]

Now is Lytel Johan the sheryffes man,  
He gyve us well to spede,  
But alway thought Lytell Johan  
To quyte hym well his mede.  
Now so god [153] me helpe, sayd Lytel Johan,  
And be my trewe lewtè,  
I shall be the worste servaunte to hym  
That ever yet had he.  
It befell upon a wednesday,  
The sheryfe on hontynge was gone,  
And Lytel Johan lay in his bed,  
And was foryete at home.  
Therfore he was fastynge  
Tyl it was past the none,  
Good syr stuard, I pray the,  
Geve me to dyne, sayd Lytel Johan,  
It is to long for Grenelefe,  
Fastynge so long to be;  
Therfore I pray the, stuarde,  
My dyner gyve thou me.  
Shaly thou never ete ne drynke, sayd the stuarde,  
Tyll my lord be come to towne.  
I make myn avowe to god, sayd Lytell Johan,  
I had lever to cracke thy crowne.

[30]

The butler was ful uncurteys,  
There he stode on flore,  
He sterte to the buttery,  
And shet fast the dore.  
Lytell Johan gave the buteler such a rap,  
His backe yede nygh on two,  
Tho he lyved an hundreth wynter,  
The wors he sholde go.  
He sporned the dore with his fote,  
It went up wel and fyne,

And there he made a large lyveray  
Both of ale and wyne.  
Syth ye wyl not dyne, sayd Lytel Johan,  
I shall gyve you to drynke,  
And though ye lyve an hondred wynter,  
On Lytell Johan ye shall thynk.  
Lytell Johan ete, and Lytell [Johan] dronke,  
The whyle that he wolde.  
The sheryfe had in his kechyn a coke,  
A stoute man and a bolde.  
I make myn avowe to god, sayd the coke,  
Thou arte a shrewde hynde,  
In an housholde to dwel,  
For to ask thus to dyne.

[31]

And there he lent Lytel Johan,  
Good strokes thre.  
I make myn avowe, sayd Lytell Johan,  
These strokes lyketh well me.  
Thou arte a bolde man and an hardy,  
And so thynketh me;  
And or I passe fro this place,  
Asayed better shalt thou be.  
Lytell Johan drewe a good swerde,  
The coke toke another in honde;  
They thought nothyng for to fle,  
But styfly for to stonde.  
There they fought sore togyder,  
Two myle way and more, [154]  
Myght neyther other harme done,  
The mountenaunce of an heure.  
I make myn avowe to god, sayd Lytell Johan,  
And be my trewe lewtè,  
Thou art one of the best swerdemen,  
That ever yet sawe I me.  
Coowdest thou shote as well in a bowe,  
To grene wood thou sholdest with me,  
And two tymes in the yere thy clothyng  
Ichaunged sholde be;

[32]

And every yere of Robyn Hode  
Twenty marke to thy fee.  
Put up thy swerde, sayd the coke,  
And felowes wyll we be.  
Then he fette to Lytell Johan  
The numbles of a doo,  
Good brede and full good wyne,  
They ete and dranke therto.  
And whan they had dronken well,  
Ther trouthes togyder they plyght,  
That they wolde be with Robyn



That ylke same day at nyght.  
The dyde [155] them to the tresure hous,  
As fast as they myght gone,  
The lockes that were of good stele  
They brake them everychone;  
They toke away the sylver vessell,  
And all that they myght get,  
Peces, masars, and spones,  
Wolde they non forgete;  
Also they toke the good pence,  
Thre hondred pounde and three;  
And dyde them strayt to Robyn Hode,  
Under the grene wode tre.

[33]

“God the save, my dere maystèr,  
And Cryst the save and se.”  
And than sayd Robyn to Lytell Johan,  
Welcome myght thou be;  
And also be that fayre yemàn  
Thou bryngest there with the.  
What tydynges fro Notyngham?  
Lytell Johan, tell thou me.  
“Well the greteth the proude sheryfe,  
And sende the here by me  
His coke and his sylver vessell,  
And thre hondred pounde and thre.”  
I make myn avow to god, sayd Robyn,  
And to the trenytè,  
It was never by his good wyll,  
This good is come to me.  
Lytell Johan hym there bethought,  
On a shrewed wyle, [156]  
Fyve myle in the forest he ran,  
Hym happed at his wyll;  
Than he met the proud sheryf,  
Huntynge with hounde and horne,  
Lytell Johan coud his curteysye,  
And kneled hym beforne:

[34]

“God the save, my dere maystèr,  
And Cryst the save and see.”  
Raynolde Grenelefe, sayd the sheryfe,  
Where hast thou nowe be?  
“I have be in this forest,  
A fayre syght can I se,  
It was one of the fayrest syghtes [157]  
That ever yet sawe I me;  
Yonder I se a ryght fayre hart,  
His coloure is of grene,  
Seven score of dere upon an herde  
Be with hym all bedene;

His tynde are so sharp, maystèr,  
Of sixty and well mo,  
That I durst not shote for drede  
Lest they wolde me sloo.”  
I make myn avowe to god, sayd the sheryf,  
That syght wolde I fayn se.  
“Buske you thyderwarde, my dere maystèr,  
Anone, and wende with me.”  
The sheryfe rode, and Lytell Johan  
Of fote he was full smarte,  
And whan they came afore Robyn:  
“Lo, here is the mayster harte!”

[35]

Styll stode the proude sheryf,  
A sory man was he:  
“Wo worthe the, [158] Raynolde Grenelefe!  
Thou hast now betrayed me.”  
I make myn avowe to god, sayd Lytell Johan,  
Mayster, ye be to blame,  
I was mysserved of my dynere,  
When I was with you at hame.  
Soone he was to super sette,  
And served with sylver whyte;  
And whan the sheryf se his vessell,  
For sorowe he myght not ete.  
Make good chere, sayd Robyn Hode,  
Sheryfe, for charytè,  
And for the love of Lytell Johan,  
Thy lyfe is graunted to the.  
When they had supped well,  
The day was all agone,  
Robyn commaunded Lytell Johan  
To drawe of his hosen and his shone,  
His kyrtell and his cote a pye,  
That was furred well fyne,  
And take him a grene mantèll,  
To lappe his body therin.

[36]

Robyn commaunded his wyght yong men,  
Under the grene wood tre,  
They shall lay in that same sorte;  
That the sheryf myght them se.  
All nyght laye that proud sheryf,  
In his breche and in his sherte,  
No wonder it was in grene wode,  
Tho his sydes do smerte.  
Make glad chere, sayd Robyn Hode,  
Sheryfe, for charytè,  
For this is our order I wys,  
Under the grene wood tre.  
This is harder order, sayd the sheryfe,

Than ony anker or frere;  
For al the golde in mery Englonde  
I wolde not longe dwell here.  
All these twelve monethes, sayd Robyn,  
Thou shake dwell with me;  
I shall the teche, proud sheryfe,  
An outlawe for to be.  
Or I here another nyght lye, sayd the sheryfe,  
Robyn, nowe I praye the,  
Smyte of my hede rather to-morne,  
And I forgyve it the.

[37]

Lete me go, then sayd the sheryf,  
For saynt Charytè,  
And I wyll be thy best frende  
That ever yet had the.  
Thou shalte swere me an othe, sayd Robyn,  
On my bryght bronde,  
Thou shalt never awayte me scathe,  
By water ne by londe;  
And if thou fynde ony of my men,  
By nyght or by day,  
Upon thyne othe thou shalt swere,  
To helpe them that thou may.  
Now have the sheryf iswore his othe,  
And home he began to gone,  
He was as full of grene wode  
As ever was hepe of stone.

#### *THE FOURTH FYTTE.*

The sheryf dwelled in Notynghame,  
He was fayne that he was gone,  
And Robyn and his mery men  
Went to wode anone.

[38]

Go we to dyner, sayd Lytell Johan.  
Robyn Hode sayd, Nay;  
For I drede our lady be wroth with me,  
For she sent me not my pay.  
Have no dout, mayster, sayd Lytell Johan,  
Yet is not the sonne at rest,  
For I dare saye, and sauffly swere,  
The knyght is trewe and trust.  
Take thy bowe in thy hande, sayd Robyn,  
Let Moch wende with the,  
And so shall Wyllyam Scathelock,  
And no man abyde with me,  
And walke up into the Sayles,  
And to Watlynge-strete,  
And wayte after 'some' [159] unketh gest,  
Up-chance ye may them mete.  
Whether he be messengere,

Or a man that myrthes can,  
Or yf he be a pore man,  
Of my good he shall have some.  
Forth then stert Lytel Johan,  
Half in tray and tene,  
And gyrde hym with a full good swerde,  
Under a mantel of grene.

[39]

They went up to the Sayles,  
These yemen all thre;  
They loked est, they loked west,  
They myght no man se.  
But as 'they' [160] loked in Bernysdale,  
By the hye waye,  
Than were they ware of two blacke monkes,  
Eche on a good palferay.  
Then bespake Lytell Johan,  
To Much he gan say,  
I dare lay my lyfe to wedde,  
That these monkes have brought our pay.  
Make glad chere, sayd Lytell Johan,  
And frese our bowes of ewe,  
And loke your hertes be seker and sad,  
Your strynges trusty and trewe.  
The monke hath fifty two men,  
And seven somers full stronge,  
There rydeth no byssshop in this londe  
So ryally, I understond.  
Brethern, sayd Lytell Johan,  
Here are no more but we thre:  
But we brynge them to dyner,  
Our mayster dare we not se.

[40]

Bende your bowes, sayd Lytell Johan,  
Make all yon [161] prese to stonde,  
The formost monke, his lyfe and his deth  
Is closed in my honde.  
Abyde, chorle monke, sayd Lytell Johan,  
No ferther that thou gone;  
Yf thou doost, by dere worthy god,  
Thy death is in my honde.  
And evyll thryfte on thy hede, sayd Lytell Johan,  
Ryght under thy hattes bonde,  
For thou hast made our mayster wroth,  
He is fastyng so longe.  
Who is your mayster? sayd the monke.  
Lytell Johan sayd, Robyn Hode.  
He is a stronge thefe, sayd the monke,  
Of hym herd I never good.  
Thou lyst, than sayd Lytell Johan,  
And that shall rewe the;

He is a yeman of the forèst,  
To dyne he hath bode the.  
Much was redy with a bolte,  
Redly and a none,  
He set [162] the monke to fore the brest,  
To the grounde that he can gone.

[41]

Of fyfty two wyght yonge men, [163]  
There abode not one,  
Saf a lytell page, and a grome  
To lede the somers with Johan. [164]  
They brought the monke to the lodge dore,  
Whether he were loth or lefe,  
For to speke with Robyn Hode,  
Maugre in theyr tethe.  
Robyn dyde adowne his hode,  
The monke whan that he se;  
The monke was not so curteyse,  
His hode then let he be.  
He is a chorle, mayster, by dere worthy god,  
Than said Lytell Johan.  
Thereof no force, sayd Robyn,  
For curteysy can he none.  
How many men, sayd Robyn,  
Had this monke, Johan?  
“Fyfty and two whan that we met,  
But many of them be gone.”  
Let blowe a horne, sayd Robin,  
That felaushyp may us knowe;  
Seven score of wyght yemen,  
Came pryckyng on a rowe,

[42]

And everych of them a good mantèll  
Of scarlet and of raye,  
All they came to good Robyn,  
To wyte what he wolde say.  
They made the monke to wasshe and wype,  
And syt at his denere,  
Robyn Hode and Lytel Johan  
They served ‘him’ [165] bothe in fere.  
Do gladly, monke, sayd Robyn.  
Gramercy, syr, said he.  
“Where is your abbay, whan ye are at home,  
And who is your avowè?”  
Saynt Mary abbay, sayd the monke,  
Though I be symple here.  
In what offyce? sayd Robyn.  
“Syr, the hye selerer.”  
Ye be the more welcome, sayd Robyn,  
So ever mote I the.  
Fyll of the best wyne, sayd Robyn,

This monke shall drynke to me.  
But I have grete mervayle, sayd Robyn,  
Of all this longe day,  
I drede our lady be wroth with me,  
She sent me not my pay.

[43]

Have no doute, mayster, sayd Lytell Johan,  
Ye have no nede I saye,  
This monke it hath brought, I dare well swere,  
For he is of her abbay.  
And she was a borowe, sayd Robyn,  
Betwene a knyght and me,  
Of a lytell money that I hym lent,  
Under the grene wode tree;  
And yf thou hast that sylver ibroughte,  
I praye the let me se,  
And I shall helpe the eftsones,  
Yf thou have nede of [166] me.  
The monke swore a full grete othe,  
With a sory chere,  
Of the borowehode thou spekest to me,  
Herde I never ere.  
I make myn avowe to god, sayd Robyn,  
Monke, thou arte to blame,  
For god is holde a ryghtwys man,  
And so is his dame.  
Thou toldest with thyn owne tonge,  
Thou may not say nay,  
How thou arte her servaunt,  
And servest her every day:

[44]

And thou art made [167] her messengere,  
My money for to pay,  
Therefore I cun the more thanke,  
Thou arte come at thy day.  
What is in your cofers? sayd Robyn,  
Trewen than tell thou me.  
Syr, he sayd, twenty marke,  
Al so mote I the.  
Yf there be no more, sayd Robyn,  
I wyll not one peny;  
Yf thou hast myster of ony more,  
Syr, more I shall lende to the;  
And yf I fynde more, sayd Robyn,  
I wys thou shalte it forgone;  
For of thy spendynge sylver, monk,  
Therof wyll I ryght none.  
Go nowe forthe, Lytell Johan,  
And the trowth tell thou me;  
If there be no more but twenty marke,  
No peny that I se.

Lytell Johan spred his mantell downe,  
As he had done before,  
And he tolde out of the monkes male,  
Eyght hundreth pounde [168] and more.

[45]

Lytell Johan let it lye full styll,  
And went to his mayster in hast;  
Syr, he sayd, the monke is trewe ynowe,  
Our lady hath doubled your cost.  
I make myn avowe to god, sayd Robyn,  
Monke, what tolde I the?  
Our lady is the trewest womàn,  
That ever yet founde I me.  
By dere worthy god, sayd Robyn,  
To seche all Englonnd thorowe,  
Yet founde I never to my pay  
A moche better borowe.  
Fyll of the best wyne, do hym drynke, sayd Robyn;  
And grete well thy lady hende,  
And yf she have nede of [169] Robyn Hode,  
A frende she shall hym fynde;  
And yf she nedeth ony more sylvèr,  
Come thou agayne to me,  
And, by this token she hath me sent,  
She shall have such thre.  
The monke was going to London ward,  
There to holde grete mote,  
The knyght that rode so hye on hors,  
To brynge hym under fote.

[46]

Whether be ye away? sayd Robyn.  
“Syr, to maners in this londe,  
Too reken with our reves,  
That have done moch wronge.”  
“Come now forth, Lytell Johan,  
And harken to my tale,  
A better yeman I knowe none  
To seke a monkes male.”  
How moch is in yonder other ‘cofer?’ [170] sayd Robyn,  
The soth must we see.  
By our lady, than sayd the monke,  
That were no curteysye,  
To bydde a man to dyner,  
And syth hym bete and bynde.  
It is our olde maner, sayd Robyn,  
To leve but lytell behynde.  
The monke toke the hors with spore,  
No lenger wolde he abyde.  
Aske to drynke, than sayd Robyn,  
Or that ye forther ryde.  
Nay, for god, than sayd the monke,

Me reweth I cam so nere,  
For better chepe I myght have dyned,  
In Blythe or in Dankestere.

[47]

Grete well your abbot, sayd Robyn,  
And your pryour, I you pray,  
And byd hym send me such a monke,  
To dyner every day.  
Now lete we that monke be styll,  
And speke we of that knyght,  
Yet he came to holde his day  
Whyle that it was lyght.  
He dyde hym streyt to Bernysdale,  
Under the grene wode tre,  
And he founde there Robyn Hode,  
And all his mery meynè.  
The knyght lyght downe of his good palfrày,  
Robyn whan he gan see,  
So curteysly he dyde adoune his hode,  
And set hym on his knee.  
“God the save, good Robyn Hode,  
And al this company.”  
“Welcome be thou, gentyll knyght,  
And ryght welcome to me.”  
Than bespake hym Robyn Hode,  
To that knyght so fre,  
What nede dryveth the to grene wode?  
I pray the, syr knyght, tell me.

[48]

And welcome be thou, gentyll knyght,  
Why hast thou be so longe?  
“For the abbot and the hye justyce  
Wolde have had my londe.”  
Hast thou thy lond agayne? [171] sayd Robyn,  
Treuth than tell thou me.  
Ye, for god, sayd the knyght,  
And that thanke I god and the.  
But take not a grefe, I have be so longe; [172]  
I came by a wrastelynge  
And there I dyd holpe a pore yemàn,  
With wronge was put behynde.  
Nay, for god, sayd Robyn,  
Syr knyght, that thanke I the;  
What man that helpeth a good yemàn,  
His frende than wyll I be.  
Have here foure hondred pounde, than sayd the knyght,  
The whiche ye lent to me;  
And here is also twenty marke  
For your curteysy.  
Nay, for god, than sayd Robyn,  
Thou broke it well for ay,



For our lady, by her selerer,  
Hath sent to me my pay;

[49]

And yf I toke it twyse, [173]  
A shame it were to me:  
But trewely, gentyll knyght,  
Welcom arte thou to me.  
Whan Robyn had tolde his tale,  
He leugh and had good chere.  
By my trouthe, then sayd the knyght,  
Your money is redy here.  
Broke it well, sayd Robyn,  
Thou gentyll knyght so fre;  
And welcome be thou, gentill knyght,  
Under my trystell [174] tree.  
But what shall these bowes do? sayd Robyn,  
And these arowes ifedered fre?  
By god, than sayd the knyght,  
A pore present to the.  
“Come now forth, Lytell Johan,  
And go to my treasurè,  
And brynge me there foure hondred ponde,  
The monke over-tolde it me.  
Have here foure hondred ponde,  
Thou gentyll knyght and trewe,  
And bye hors and harnes good,  
And gylte thy spores all newe:

[50]

And yf thou fayle any spendynge,  
Com to Robyn Hode,  
And by my trouth thou shalt none fayle  
The whyles I have any good.  
And broke well thy four hundred pound,  
Whiche I lent to the,  
And make thy selfe no more so bare,  
By the counsell of me.”  
Thus than holpe hym good Robyn,  
The knyght all of his care. [175]  
God, that sytteth [176] in heven hye,  
Graunte us well to fare.

#### ***THE FYFTH FYTTE.***

Now hath the knyght his leve itake,  
And wente hym on his way;  
Robyn Hode and his mery men  
Dwelled styll full many a day.  
Lyth and lysten, gentil men,  
And herken what I shall say,  
How the proud sheryfe of Notyngham  
Dyde crye a full fayre play;

[51]

That all the best archers of the north  
Sholde come upon a day,  
And 'he' that shoteth 'alder' best [177]  
The game shall bere away.  
"He that shoteth 'alder' [178] best  
Furthest fayre and lowe,  
At a payre of fynly buttes,  
Under the grene wode shawe,  
A ryght good arowe he shall have,  
The shaft of sylver whyte,  
The heade and the feders of ryche red golde,  
In Englund is none lyke."  
This then herde good Robyn,  
Under his trystell tre:  
"Make you redy, ye wyght yonge men,  
That shotynge wyll I se.  
Buske you, my mery yonge men,  
Ye shall go with me;  
And I wyll wete the shryves fayth,  
Trewe and yf he be."  
Whan they had theyr bowes ibent,  
Theyr takles fedred fre,  
Seven score of wyght yonge men  
Stode by Robyns kne.

[52]

Whan they cam to Notyngham,  
The buttes were fayre and longe,  
Many was the bolde archere  
That shoted with bowes stronge.  
"There shall but syx shote with me,  
The other shal kepe my hede,  
And stande with good bowes bent  
That I be not desceyved."  
The fourth outlawe his bowe gan bende,  
And that was Robyn Hode,  
And that behelde the proude sheryfe,  
All by the but he stode.  
Thryes Robyn shot about,  
And alway he slist [179] the wand,  
And so dyde good Gylberte,  
With the whyte hande.  
Lytell Johan and good Scatheloke  
Were archers good and fre;  
Lytell Much and good Reynolde,  
The worste wolde they not be.  
Whan they had shot aboute,  
These archours fayre and good,  
Evermore was the best,  
Forsoth, Robyn Hode.

[53]

Hym was delyvered the goode aròw,

For best worthy was he;  
He toke the yeft so curteysly,  
    To grene wode wolde he.  
They cryed out on Robyn Hode,  
    And great hornes gan they blowe.  
Wo worth the, treason! sayd Robyn,  
    Full evyl thou art to knowe.  
And we be thou, thou proud sheryf,  
    Thus gladdynge thy gest,  
Other wyse thou behote me  
    In yonder wylde forest;  
But had I the in grene wode,  
    Under my trystell tre,  
Thou sholdest leve me a better wedde  
    Than thy trewe lewtè.  
Full many a bowe there was bent,  
    And arowes let they glyde,  
Many a kyrtell there was rent,  
    And hurt many a syde.  
The outlawes shot was so stronge,  
    That no man myght them dryve,  
And the proud sheryfes men  
    They fled away full blyve. [180] [54]  
Robyn sawe the busschement to-broke,  
    In grene wode he wolde have be,  
Many an arowe there was shot  
    Amonge that company.  
Lytell Johan was hurte full sore,  
    With an arowe in his kne,  
That he myght neyther go nor ryde;  
    It was full grete pytè.  
Mayster, then sayd Lytell Johan,  
    If ever thou lovest me,  
And for that ylke lordes love,  
    That dyed upon a tre,  
And for the medes of my servyce  
    That I have served the,  
Lete never the proude sheryf  
    Alyve now fynde me;  
But take out thy browne swerde,  
    And smyte all of my hede,  
And gyve me woundes dede and wyde,  
    No lyfe on me be left. [181]  
I wolde not that, sayd Robyn,  
    Johan, that thou were slawe,  
For all the golde in mery Englund,  
    Though it lay now on a rawe [55]  
God forbede, sayd lytell Much,  
    That dyed on a tre,  
That thou sholdest, Lytell Johan,  
    Parte our company.  
Up he toke him on his backe,  
    And bare hym well a myle,

Many a tyme he layd hym downe  
And shot another whyle.  
Then was there a fayre castèll,  
A lytell within the wode,  
Double-dyched it was about,  
And walled, by the rode;  
And there dwelled that gentyll knyght,  
Syr Rychard at the Lee,  
That Robyn had lent his good,  
Under the grene wode tree.  
In he toke good Robyn,  
And all his company:  
“Welcome be thou, Robyn Hode,  
Welcome arte thou [to] me;  
And moche [I] thanke the of thy comfort,  
And of thy curteysye,  
And of thy grete kyndenesse,  
Under the grene wode tre;

[56]

I love no man in all this worlde  
So moch as I do the;  
For all the proud sheryf of Notynggham,  
Ryght here shalt thou be.  
Shyt the gates, and drawe the bridge,  
And let no man com in;  
And arme you well, and make you redy,  
And to the walle ye wyne.  
For one thyng, Robyn, I the behote,  
I swere by saynt Quyntyn,  
These twelve dayes thou wonest with me,  
To suppe, ete, and dyne.”  
Bordes were layed, and clothes spred,  
Reddely and anone;  
Robyn Hode and his mery men  
To mete gan they gone.

#### *THE SYXTE FYTTE.*

Lythe and lysten, gentylmen,  
And herken unto your songe;  
How the proude sheryfe of Notynggham,  
And men of armes stronge, [57]  
Full faste came to the hye sheryfe,  
The countre up to rout,  
And they beset the knyghts castèll,  
The walles all about.  
The proude sheryf loude gan crye,  
And sayd, Thou traytour knyght,  
Thou kepeste here the kynges enemye,  
Agayne the lawes and ryght.  
“Syr, I wyll avowe that I have done,  
The dedes that here [182] be dyght,  
Upon all the londes that I have,

As I am a trewe knyght.  
Wende forthe, syrs, on your waye,  
And doth no more to me,  
Tyll ye wytte our kynges wyll  
What he woll say to the.”  
The sheref thus had his answer,  
With out ony leasyng,  
Forthe he yode to London toune,  
All for to tel our kyng.  
There he tolde him of that knyght,  
And eke of Robyn Hode,  
And also of the bolde archeres,  
That noble were and good.

[58]

“He wolde avowe that he had done,  
To mayntayne the outlawes stronge,  
He wolde be lorde, and set you at nought,  
In all the north londe.”  
I woll be at Notyngham, sayd the kyng,  
Within this fourtynyght,  
And take I wyll Robyn Hode,  
And so I wyll that knyght.  
Go home, thou proud sheryf,  
And do as I bydde the, [183]  
And ordayne good archeres inowe,  
Of all the wyde countree.  
The sheryf had his leve itake,  
And went hym on his way:  
And Robyn Hode to grene wode [went]  
Upon a certayn day;  
And Lytell Johan was hole of the arowe,  
That shote was in his kne,  
And dyde hym strayte to Robyn Hode,  
Under the grene wode tre.  
Robyn Hode walked in the foreste,  
Under the leves grene,  
The proude sheryfe of Notyngham,  
Therefore he had grete tene.



ROBIN HOOD AND THE LADY.

[59]

The sheryf there fayled of Robyn Hode,  
He myght not have his pray,  
Then he awayted that gentyll knyght,  
Bothe by nyght and by daye.  
Ever he awayted that gentyll knyght,  
Syr Rychard at the Lee;  
As he went on haukyng by the ryver syde,  
And let his haukes flee,  
Toke he there this gentyll knyght,  
With men of armes stronge,  
And lad hym home to Notyngham warde,  
Ibonde both fote and honde. [184]  
The sheryf swore a full grete othe,  
By hym that dyed on a tre,  
He had lever than an hondrede ponde,

That Robyn Hode had he. [185]  
Then the lady, the knyghtes wyfe,  
A fayre lady and fre,  
She set her on a gode palfrày,  
To grene wode anon rode she.  
When she came to the forèst,  
Under the grene wode tre,  
Founde she there Robyn Hode,  
And all his fayre meynè.

[60]

“God the save, good Robyn Hode. [186]  
And all thy company;  
For our dere ladyes [187] love,  
A bone graunte thou me.  
Let [188] thou never my wedded lorde  
Shamfully slayne to be; [189]  
He is fast ibounde to Notyngham warde,  
For the love of the.”  
Anone then sayd good Robyn,  
To that lady fre,  
What man hath your lorde itake?  
The proude shirife, than sayd she. [190]  
[The proude sheryfe hath hym itake]  
Forsoth as I the say;  
He is not yet thre myles,  
Passed on ‘his’ [191] waye.  
Up then sterte good Robyn,  
As a man that had be wode:  
“Buske you, my mery younge men,  
For hym that dyed on a rode;

[61]

And he that this sorowe forsaketh,  
By hym that dyed on a tre,  
And by him that al thinges maketh,  
No lenger shall dwell with me.” [192]  
Sone there were good bowes ibent,  
Mo than seven score,  
Hedge ne dyche spared they none,  
That was them before.  
I make myn avowe to god, sayd Robyn,  
The knyght wolde I fayn se,  
And yf I may hym take,  
Iquyt than shall he [193] bee.  
And whan they came to Notyngham,  
They walked in the strete,  
And with the proud sheryf, I wys,  
Sone gan they mete.  
Abyde, thou proud sheryf, he sayd,  
Abyde and speake with me,  
Of some tydynges of our kynge,  
I wolde fayne here of the.

This seven yere, by dere worthy god,  
    Ne yede I so fast on fote,  
I make myn avowe to god, thou proud sheryfe,  
    ‘It’ [194] is not for thy good.

[62]

Robyn bent a good bowe,  
    An arrowe he drewe at his wyll,  
He hyt so the proud sheryf,  
    Upon the grounde he lay full styll;  
And or he myght up aryse,  
    On his fete to stonde,  
He smote of the sheryves hede,  
    With his bryght bronde.  
“Lye thou there, thou proud sheryf,  
    Evyll mote thou thryve;  
There myght no man to the trust,  
    The whyles thou were alyve.”  
His men drewe out theyr bryght swerdes,  
    That were so sharpe and kene,  
And layde on the sheryves men,  
    And dryved them downe bydene.  
Robyn stert to that knyght,  
    And cut a two his bonde, [195]  
And toke hym in his hand a bowe,  
    And bade hym by hym stonde.  
“Leve thy hors the behynde,  
    And lerne for to renne;  
Thou shalt with me to grene wode,  
    Through myre, mosse and fenne;

[63]

Thou shalt with me to grene wode,  
    Without ony leasyng,  
Tyll that I have gete us grace,  
    Of Edwarde our comly kynge.”

#### *THE SEVENTH FYTTE*

The kynge came to Notynghame,  
    With knyghtes in grete araye,  
For to take that gentyll knyght,  
    And Robyn Hood, yf [196] he may.  
He asked men of that countrè,  
    After Robyn Hode,  
And after that gentyll knyght,  
    That was so bolde and stout.  
Whan they had tolde hym the case,  
    Our kynge understonde ther tale,  
And seased in his honde  
    The knyghtes londes all,  
All the passe of Lancasshyre,  
    He went both ferre and nere,  
Tyll he came to Plomton parke,  
    He faylyd many of his dere [64]



There our kynge was wont to se  
Herdes many one,  
He coud unneth fynde one dere,  
That bare ony good horne.  
The kynge was wonder wroth withall,  
And swore by the trynyte,  
“I wolde I had Robyn Hode,  
With eyen I myght hym se;  
And he that wolde smyte of the knyghtes hede  
And brynge it to me,  
He shall have the knyghtes londes,  
Syr Rycharde at the Le;  
I gyve it hym with my chartèr,  
And sele it with my honde,  
To have and holde for ever-more,  
In all mery Englonde.”  
Than bespake a fayre olde knyght,  
That was treue in his fay,  
A, my lege lorde the kynge,  
One worde I shall you say;  
There is no man in this countrè  
May have the knyghtes londes,  
Whyle Robyn Hode may ryde or gone,  
And here a bowe in his hondes;

[65]

That he ne shall lese his hede,  
That is the best ball in his hode:  
Give it no man, my lorde the kynge,  
That ye wyll any good.  
Half a yere dwelled our comly kynge,  
In Notyngham, and well more,  
Coude he not here of Robyn Hode,  
In what countre that he were;  
But alway went good Robyn  
By halke and eke by hyll,  
And alway slewe the kynges dere,  
And welt them at his wyll.  
Than bespake a proude fostere,  
That stode by our kynges kne,  
If ye wyll se good Robyn,  
Ye must do after me;  
Take fyve of the best knyghtes  
That be in your lede,  
And walke downe by ‘yon’ [197] abbay,  
And gete you monkes wede.  
And I wyll be your ledes man,  
And lede you the way,  
And or ye come to Notyngham,  
Myn hede then dare I lay, [66]  
That ye shall mete with good Robyn,  
On lyve yf that he be,  
Or ye come to Notyngham,

With eyen ye shall hym se.  
Full hastily our kynge was dyght,  
So were his knyghtes fyve,  
Everych of them in monkes wede,  
And hasted them thyder blyth.  
Our kynge was grete above his cole,  
A brode hat on his crowne,  
Ryght as he were abbot-lyke,  
They rode up in-to the towne.  
Styf botes our kynge had on,  
Forsoth as I you say,  
He rode syngynge to grene wode,  
The covent was clothed in graye,  
His male hors, and his grete somèrs,  
Folowed our kynge behynde,  
Tyll they came to grene wode,  
A myle under the lynde,  
There they met with good Robyn,  
Stondynge on the waye,  
And so dyde many a bolde archere,  
For soth as I you say.

[67]

Robyn toke the kynges hors,  
Hastely in that stede,  
And sayd, Syr abbot, by your leve,  
A whyle ye must abyde;  
We be yemen of this foreste,  
Under the grene wode tre,  
We lyve by our kynges dere,  
Other shyft have not we; [198]  
And ye have chyrches and rentes both,  
And gold full grete plentè;  
Gyve us some of your spendynge,  
For saynt Charytè. [199]  
Than bespake our cumly kynge,  
Anone than sayd he,  
I brought no more to grene wode,  
But forty ponde with me;

[68]

I have layne at Notyngham,  
This fourtynyght with our kynge,  
And spent I have full moche good,  
On many a grete lordynge;  
And I have but forty ponde,  
No more than have I me,  
But yf I had an hondred ponde,  
I would geve it to the. [200]  
Robyn toke the forty ponde,  
And departed it in two partye,  
Halfendell he gave his mery men,  
And bad them mery to be.

Full curteysly Robyn gan say,  
Syr, have this for your spendyng,  
We shall mete a nother day.  
Gramercy, than sayd our kynge;  
But well the greteth Edwarde our kynge,  
And sent to the his seale,  
And byddeth the com to Notyngham,  
Both to mete and mele.  
He toke out the brode tarpe, [201]  
And sone he lete hym se;  
Robyn coud his courteysy,  
And set hym on his kne:

[69]

“I love no man in all the worlde  
So well as I do my kynge,  
Welcome is my lordes seale;  
And, monke, for thy tydyng,  
Syr abbot, for thy tydynges,  
To day thou shalt dyne with me,  
For the love of my kynge,  
Under my trystell tre.”  
Forth he lad our comly kynge,  
Full fayre by the honde,  
Many a dere there was slayne,  
And full fast dyghtande.  
Robyn toke a full grete horne,  
And loude he can blowe,  
Seven score of wyght yonge men,  
Came redy on a rowe,  
All they kneeled on theyr kne,  
Full fayre before Robyn.  
The kygne sayd hymselfe untyll,  
And swore by saynt Austyn,  
Here is a wonder semely syght,  
Me thynketh, by goddes pyne;  
His men are more at his byddyng,  
Then my men be at myn.

[70]

Full hastly was theyr dyner idyght,  
And therto gan they gone,  
They served our kynge with al theyr myght,  
Both Robyn and Lytell Johan.  
Anone before our kynge was set  
The fatte venyson,  
The good whyte brede, the good red wyne,  
And therto the fyne ale browne. [202]  
Make good chere, sayd Robyn,  
Abbot, for charytè;  
And for this ylke tydyng,  
Blyssed mote thou be.  
Now shalte thou se what lyfe we lede,

Or thou hens wende,  
Than thou may enfourme our kynge,  
Whan ye togyder lende.  
Up they sterte all in hast,  
Theyr bowes were smartly bent,  
Our kynge was never so sore agast,  
He wende to have be shente.  
Two yerdes there were up set,  
There to gan they gange;  
By fifty pase, our kynge sayd,  
The merkes were to longe.

[71]

On every syde a rose garlonde,  
They shot under the lyne.  
Who so fayleth of the rose garlonde, sayd Robyn,  
His takyll he shall tyne,  
And yelde it to his mayster,  
Be it never so fyne,  
For no man wyll I spare,  
So drynke I ale or wyne.  
And bere a buffet on his hede  
I wys [203] ryght all bare.  
And all that fell in Robyns lote,  
He smote them wonder sare.  
Twyse Robyn shot aboute,  
And ever he cleved the wande,  
And so dyde good Gylberte,  
With the whyte [204] hand.  
Lytell Johan and good Scathelocke,  
For nothyng wolde they spare,  
When they fayled of the garlonde,  
Robyn smote them full sare.  
At the last shot that Robyn shot,  
For all his frendes fare,  
Yet he fayled of the garlonde,  
Thre fyngers and mare.

[72]

Than bespake good Gylberte,  
And thus he gan say:  
Mayster, he sayd, your takyll is lost,  
Stand forth and take your pay.  
If it be so, sayd Robyn,  
That may no better be;  
Syr abbot, I delyver the myn arowe,  
I pray the, syr, serve thou me.  
It falleth not for myn order, sayd our kynge,  
Robyn, by thy leve,  
For to smyte no good yemàn,  
For doute I sholde hym greve.  
Smyte on boldely, sayd Robyn,  
I give the large leve.

Anone our kynge, with that worde,  
    He folde up his sleve,  
And sych a buffet he gave Robyn,  
    To grounde he yede full nere.  
I make myn avowe to god, sayd Robyn,  
    Thou arte a stalworthe frere;  
There is pith in thyn arme, sayd Robyn,  
    I trowe thou canst well shote.  
Thus our kynge and Robyn Hode  
    Togeder than they met.

[73]

Robyn behelde our comly kynge  
    Wystly in the face,  
So dyde syr Richarde at the Le,  
    And kneled downe in that place;  
And so dyde all the wylde outlawes,  
    Whan they se them knele.  
“My lorde the kynge of Englonde,  
    Now I knowe you well.”  
Mercy, then Robyn sayd to our kynge,  
    Under your trystyll tre,  
Of thy goodnesse and thy grace,  
    For my men and me!  
Yes, for god, sayd Robyn,  
    And also god me save;  
I aske mercy, my lorde the kynge,  
    And for my men I crave.  
Yes, for god, than sayd our kynge,  
    Thy peticion I graunt the,  
With that thou leve the grene wode,  
    And all thy company:  
And come home, syr, to my courte,  
    And there dwell with me. [205]  
I make myn avowe to god, sayd Robyn,  
    And ryght so shall it be;

[74]

I wyll come to your courte,  
    Your servyse for to se,  
And brynge with me of my men  
    Seven score and thre.  
But me lyke well your servyse,  
    I come agayne full soone,  
And shote at the donne dere,  
    As I am wonte to done.

#### ***THE EIGHTH FYTTE.***

Haste thou ony grene cloth, sayd our kynge,  
    That thou wylte sell nowe to me?  
Ye, for god, sayd Robyn,  
    Thyrty yerdes and thre.  
Robyn, sayd our kynge,  
    Now pray I the,

To sell me some of that cloth,  
To me and my meynè.  
Yes, for god, [206] then sayd Robyn,  
Or elles I were a fole;  
Another day ye wyll me clothe,  
I trowe, ayenst the Yole.

[75]

The kynge kest of his cote then,  
A grene garment he dyde on,  
And every knyght had so, I wys,  
They clothed them full soone. [207]  
Whan they were clothed in Lyncolne grene,  
They kest away theyr graye.  
Now we shall to Notynggham,  
All thus our kynge gan say.  
Theyr bowes bente and forth they went,  
Shotynge all in-fere,  
Towarde the towne of Notynggham,  
Outlawes as they were.  
Our kynge and Robyn rode togyder,  
For soth as I you say,  
And they shote plucke-buffet,  
As they went by the way;  
And many a buffet our kynge wan  
Of Robyn Hode that day;  
And nothyng spared good Robyn  
Our kynge in his pay.  
So god me helpe, sayd our kynge,  
Thy game is nought to lere,  
I sholde not get a shote of the,  
Though I shote all this yere.

[76]

All the people of Notynggham  
They stode and behelde,  
They sawe nothyng but mantels of grene  
That covered all the felde;  
Than every man to other gan say,  
I drede our kynge be slone;  
Come Robyn Hode to the towne, I wys,  
On lyve he leveth not one. [208]  
Full hastily they began to fle,  
Both yemen and knaves,  
And olde wyves that myght evyll goo,  
They hypped on theyr staves.  
The kynge loughe [209] full fast,  
And commanded theym agayne;  
When they se our comly kynge,  
I wys they were full fayne.  
They ete and dranke, and made them glad,  
And sange with notes hye.  
Than bespake our comly kynge

To syr Rycharde at the Lee:  
He gave hym there his londe agayne,  
A good man he bad hym be.  
Robyn thanked our comly kynge,  
And set hym on his kne.

[77]

Had Robyn dwelled in the kynges courte  
But twelve monethes and thre,  
That he had spent an hondred ponde,  
And all his mennes fe.  
In every place where Robyn came,  
Ever more he layde downe,  
Both for knyghtes and for squyres,  
To gete hym grete renowne.  
By than the yere was all agone,  
He had no man but twayne,  
Lytell Johan and good Scathelocke,  
Wyth hym all for to gone.  
Robyn sawe yonge men shote,  
Full fayre [210] upon a day,  
Alas! than sayd good Robyn,  
My welthe is went away.  
Somtyme I was an archere good,  
A styffe and eke a stronge,  
I was commytted [211] the best archere,  
That was in mery Englonde.  
Alas! then sayd good Robyn,  
Alas and well a woo!  
Yf I dwele lenger with the kynge,  
Sorowe wyll me sloo.

[78]

Forth than went Robyn Hode,  
Tyll he came to our kynge:  
“My lorde the kynge of Englonde,  
Graunte me myn askynge.  
I made a chapell in Bernysdale,  
That semely is to se,  
It is of Mary Magdalene,  
And thereto wolde I be;  
I myght never in this seven nyght,  
No tyme to slepe ne wynke,  
Nother all these seven dayes,  
Nother ete ne drynke.  
Me longeth sore to Bernysdale,  
I may not be therfro,  
Barefote and wolwarde I have hyght  
Thyder for to go.”  
Yf it be so, than sayd our kynge,  
It may no better be;  
Seven nyght I gyve the leve,  
No lengre, to dwell fro me.

Gramercy, lorde, then sayd Robyn,  
And set hym on his kne;  
He toke his leve full courtesly,  
To grene wode then went he.

[79]

Whan he came to grene wode,  
In a mery mornyng,  
There he herde the notes small  
Of byrdes mery syngyng.  
It is ferre gone, sayd Robyn,  
That I was last here,  
Me lyste a lytell for to shote  
At the donne dere.  
Robyn slewe a full grete harte,  
His horne than gan he blow,  
That all the outlawes of that forèst,  
That horne coud they knowe,  
And gadred them togyder,  
In a lytell throwe,  
Seven score of wight yonge men,  
Came redy on a rowe;  
And fayre dyde of theyr hodes,  
And set them on theyr kne:  
Welcome, they sayd, our maystèr,  
Under this grene wode tre.  
Robyn dwelled in grene wode,  
Twenty yere and two,  
For all drede of Edwarde our kynge  
Agayne wolde he not goo.

[80]

Yet he was begyled, I wys,  
Through a wycked womàn,  
The pryoresse of Kyrkesly,  
That nye was of his kynne,  
For the love of a knyght,  
Syr Roger of Donkestèr, [212]  
That was her owne speciall,  
Full evyll mote they 'fare.' [213]  
They toke togyder theyr counsell  
Robyn Hode for to sle,  
And how they myght best do that dede,  
His banis for to be.  
Than bespake good Robyn,  
In place where as he stode,  
To morow I muste to Kyrkesley,  
Craftely to be leten blode.  
Sir Roger of Donkestere,  
By the pryoresse he lay,  
And there they betrayed good Robyn Hode  
Through theyr false playe.  
Cryst have mercy on his soule,



That dyed on the rode!  
For he was a good outlawe,  
And dyde pore men moch god.

[81]

## II. ROBYN HODE [AND THE POTTER]. ↩



This curious, and hitherto unpublished, and even unheard of, old piece is given from a manuscript among Bishop More's collections, in the public library of the University of Cambridge (Ee. 4. 35). The writing, which is evidently that of a vulgar and illiterate person, appears to be of the age of Henry the Seventh, that is, about the year 1500; but the composition (which he has irremediably corrupted) is probably of an earlier period, and much older, no doubt, than "The Play of Robyn Hode," which seems allusive to the same story. At the end of the original is "Expleycyt Robyn Hode."

[82]

In schomer, when the leves spryng,  
The bloschens on every bowe,  
So merey doyt the berdys syng,  
Yn wodys merey now.  
Herkens, god yemen,  
Comley, cortessey, and god,  
On of the best that yever bar bou,  
Hes name was Roben Hode.  
Roben Hood was the yemans name,  
That was boyt corteys and fre;  
For the loffe of owr ladey,  
All wemen werschep 'he.' [214]  
Bot as the god yeman stod on a day,  
Among hes mery manèy,  
He was war of a proud potter,  
Cam dryfyng owyr the 'ley.' [215]  
Yonder comet a prod potter, seyde [216] Roben,

That long hayt hantyd this wey,  
He was never so corteys a man  
On peney of pawage to pay.

[83]

Y met hem bot at Wentbreg, seyde [\[217\]](#) Lytyll John,  
And therfor yeffell mot he the,  
Seche thre strokes he me gafe,  
Yet they cleffe by my seydis.  
Y ley forty shillings, seyde Lytyll John,  
To pay het thes same day,  
Ther ys nat a man among hus [\[218\]](#) all  
A wed schall make hem ley. [\[219\]](#)  
Her ys forty shillings, seyde Roben,  
Mor, and thow dar say,  
That y schall make that prowde pottèr,  
A wed to me schall he ley.  
Ther thes money they leyde,  
They toke het a yeman to kepe;  
Roben befor the potter he breyde,  
'And up to hem can lepe.' [\[220\]](#)  
Handys apon hes horse he leyde,  
And bad 'hem' [\[221\]](#) stonde foll stell.  
The potter schorteley to hem seyde,  
Felow, what ys they well?  
All thes thre yer, and mor, potter, he seyde,  
Thow hast hantyd thes wey,  
Yet wer tow never so cortys a man  
One peney of pauage to pay.

[84]

What ys they name, seyde the potter,  
For pauage thow aske of me?  
"Roben Hod ys mey name,  
A wed schall thow leffe me."  
Wed well y non leffe, seyde the potter,  
Nor pavag well y non pay;  
Awey they honde fro mey horse,  
Y well the tene eyls, be mey fay.  
The potter to hes cart he went,  
He was not to seke,  
A god to-hande staffe therowt he hent,  
Befor Roben he 'lepe.' [\[222\]](#)  
Roben howt with a swerd bent,  
A bokeler on hes honde [therto];  
The potter to Roben he went,  
And seyde, Felow, let mey horse go.  
Togeder then went thes two yemen,  
Het was a god seyt to se;  
Therof low Robyn hes men,  
Ther they stod onder a tre.  
Leytell John to hes felowhes [\[223\]](#) seyde,  
Yend potter welle steffeley stonde.

The potter, with a caward stroke,  
Smot the bokeler owt of hes honde;

[85]

And [224] ar Roben meyt get hen agen,  
Hes bokeler at hes fette,  
The potter yn the neke hem toke,  
To the gronde sone he yede.  
That saw Roben hes men,  
As thay stode ender a bow;  
Let us helpe owr master, seyde Lytell John,  
Yonder potter els well [225] hem sco.  
These yemen went [226] with a breyde,  
To 'ther' [227] master they cam.  
Leytell John to hes master seyde,  
Ho haet the wager won?  
Schall y haff yowr forty shillings, seyde Lytel [228] John,  
Or ye, master, schall haffe myne?  
Yeff they wer a hundred, seyde Robèn,  
Y feythe, they ben all theyne.  
Het ys fol leytell cortesey, seyde the potter,  
As y haffe harde weyse men saye,  
Yeff a por yeman com drywyng ower the wey,  
To let hem of hes gorney.  
Be mey trowet, thow seys soyt, seyde Roben,  
Thow seys god yemenrey; [229]  
And thow dreyffe forthe yevery day,  
Thow schalt never be let for me.

[86]

Y well prey the, god potter,  
A felischepe well thow haffe?  
Geffe me they clothyng, and thow schalt hafe myne;  
Y well go to Notynggam.  
Y grant [230] therto, seyde the potter,  
Thow schalt feynde me a felow gode;  
Bot thow can sell mey pottes well,  
Com ayen as thow yode. [231]  
Nay, be mey trowt, seyde Roben,  
And then y bescro mey hede,  
Yeffe y bryng eney pottes ayen,  
And eney weyffe well hem chepe.  
Than spake Leytell John,  
And all hes felowhes heynd,  
Master, be well war of the screffe of Notynggam,  
For he ys leytell howr frende.  
Thorow the helpe of howr ladey,  
Felowhes, let me alone;  
Heyt war howte, seyde Roben,  
To Notynggam well y gon.  
Robyn went to Notynggam,  
Thes pottes for to sell;  
The potter abode with Robens men,

Ther he fered not eylle. [\[232\]](#) **[87]**  
Tho Roben droffe on hes wey,  
So merey ower the londe.  
Heres mor and affter ys to saye,  
The best ys beheynde.

***[THE SECOND FIT.]***

When Roben cam to Notynggam,  
The soyt yef y scholde saye,  
He set op hes horse anon,  
And gaffe hem hotys and haye.  
Yn the medys of the towne,  
Ther he schowed hes war,  
Pottys! pottys! he gan crey foll sone,  
Haffe hansell for the mar.  
Foll effen agenest the screffeys gate,  
Schowed he hes chaffar;  
Weyffes and wedowes abowt hem drow,  
And chepyd fast of hes war.  
Yet, Pottys, gret chepe! creyed Robyn,  
Y loffe yeffell thes to stonde.  
And all that saw [\[233\]](#) hem sell,  
Seyde he had be no potter long.

**[88]**

The pottys that wer werthe pens feyfte,  
He solde tham for pens thre:  
Preveley seyde man and weyffe,  
Ywnder potter schall never the.  
Thos Roben solde foll fast,  
Tell he had pottys bot feyffe;  
Op he hem toke of his car,  
And sende hem to the screffeys weyffe.  
Therof sche was foll fayne,  
Greamarsey, sir, than seyde sche, [\[234\]](#)  
When ye com to thes contre ayen,  
Y schall bey of 'they' [\[235\]](#) pottys, so mot y the.  
Ye schall haffe of the best, seyde Roben,  
And swar be the treneytè.  
Foll corteysley 'she' [\[236\]](#) gan hem call,  
Come deyne with the screfe and me.  
Godamarsey, seyde Roben,  
Yowr bedyng schall be doyn.  
A mayden yn the pottys gan ber,  
Roben and the screffe weyffe folowed anon.  
Whan Roben ynto the hall cam,  
The screffe sone he met,  
The potter cowed of corteysy,  
And sone the screffe he gret.



THE BANQUET.

[89]

“Loketh [237] what thes potter hayt geffe yow and me!

Feyffe pottys smalle and grete!”

He ys fol welcom, seyde the screffe,

Let os was, and ‘go’ [238] to mete.

As they sat at her methe,

With a nobell cher,

Two of the screffes men gan speke

Off a gret wagher,

Was made the thother daye,

Off a schotyng was god and feyne, [239]

Off forty shillings, the soyt to saye,

Who scholde thes wager wen.

Styll than sat thes prowde potter,

Thos than thowt he,

As y am a trow Cerstyn man,  
Thes schotyng well y se.  
When they had fared of the best,  
With bred and ale and weyne,  
To the 'bottys they' [240] made them prest,  
With bowes and boltys [241] foll feyne.  
The screffes men schot foll fast,  
As archares that weren godde,  
Ther cam non ner ney the marke  
Bey halfe a god archares bowe.

[90]

Stell then stod the prowde potter,  
Thos than seyde he,  
And y had a bow, be the rode,  
On schot scholde yow se.  
Thow schall haffe a bow, seyde the screffe,  
The best that thow well cheys of thre:  
Thow semyst [242] a stalward and a stronge,  
Asay schall thow be.  
The screffe comandyd a yeman that stod hem bey  
Affter bowhes to wende;  
The best bow that the yeman browthe  
Roben set on a stryng.  
"Now schall y wet and thow be god,  
And polle het op to they ner."  
So god me helpe, seyde the prowde pottèr,  
Thys ys bot rygzt weke ger.  
To a quequer Roben went,  
A god bolt owthe he toke,  
So ney on to the marke he went,  
He fayled not a fothe.  
All they schot abowthe agen,  
The screffes men and he,  
Off the marke he welde not fayle,  
He cleffed the preke on thre.

[91]

The screffes men thowt gret schame,  
The potter the mastry wan;  
The screffe lowe and made god game,  
And seyde, Potter, thow art a man;  
Thow art worthy to ber a bowe,  
Yn what plas that thow 'gang.' [243]  
Yn mey cart y haffe a bowe,  
Forsoyt, he seyde, and that a godde;  
Yn mey cart ys the bow  
That 'I had of Robyn Hode.' [244]  
Knowest thow Robyn Hode? seyde the screffe,  
Potter, y prey the tell thou me.  
"A hundred torne y haffe schot with hem,  
Under hes tortyll tre."  
Y had lever nar a hundred ponde, seyde the screffe,

And swar be the trenitè,  
[Y had lever nar a hundred ponde, he seyde,]  
That the fals owtelawe stod be me.  
And ye well do afftyr mey red, seyde the potter,  
And boldeley go with me,  
And to morow, or we het bred,  
Roben Hode wel we se.

[92]

Y well queyt the, kod the screffe,  
And swere be god of meythe. [245]  
Schetyng thay left, and hom they went,  
Her scoper was redey deythe.  
Upon the morow, when het was day,  
He boskyd hem forthe to reyde;  
The potter hes carte forthe gan ray,  
And wolde not [be] leffe beheynde.  
He toke leffe of the screffys wyffe,  
And thankyd her of all thyng:  
“Dam, for mey loffe, and ye well thys wer,  
Y geffe yow her a golde ryng.”  
Gramarsey, seyde the weyffe,  
Sir, god eylde het the.  
The screffes hart was never so leythe,  
The feyr forest to se.  
And when he cam ynto the foreyst,  
Yonder the leffes grene,  
Berdys ther sange on bowhes prest,  
Het was gret goy to sene.  
Her het ys merey to be, [246] seyde Roben,  
For a man that had hawt to spende:  
Be mey horne ‘we’ [247] schal awet  
Yeff Roben Hode be ‘ner hande.’

[93]

Roben set hes horne to hes [248] mowthe,  
And blow a blast that was foll god,  
That herde hes men that ther stode,  
Fer [249] downe yn the wodde.  
I her mey master, seyde Leytyll John:  
They ran as thay wer wode.  
Whan thay to thar master cam,  
Leytell John wold not spar:  
“Master, how haffe yow far yn Notynggam?  
Haffe [250] yow solde yowr war?”  
“Ye, be mey trowthe, Leytyll [251] John,  
Loke thow take no car;  
Y haffe browt the screffe of Notynggam,  
For all howr chaffar.”  
He ys foll wellcom, seyde Lytyll John,  
Thes tydyng ys foll godde.  
The screffe had lever nar a hundred ponde  
[He had never sene Roben Hode].

“Had I west [\[252\]](#) that beforen,  
At Notynggam when we wer,  
Thow scholde not com yn feyr forest  
Of all thes thowsande eyr.”

[94]

That wot y well, seyde Roben,  
Y thanke god that y be [\[253\]](#) her;  
Therfor schall ye leffe yowr horse with hos,  
And all your hother ger.  
That fend I godys forbode, kod the screffe,  
So to lese mey godde.  
“Hether ye [\[254\]](#) cam on horse foll hey,  
And hom schall ye go on fote;  
And gret well they weyffe at home,  
The woman ys foll godde.  
Y schall her sende a wheyt palffrey, [\[255\]](#)  
Het hambellet as the weynde;  
Ner for the loffe of yowr weyffe,  
Off mor sorow scholde yow seyng.”  
Thes parted Robyn Hode and the screffe,  
To Notynggam he toke the waye;  
Hes weyffe feyr welcomed hem hom,  
And to hem gan sche saye:  
Seyr, how haffe yow fared yn grene foreyst?  
Haffe ye browt Roben hom?  
“Dam, the deyell spede hem, bothe bodey and bon,  
Y haffe hade a foll grete skorne.

[95]

Of all the god that y haffe lade to grene wod,  
He hayt take het fro me,  
All bot this feyr palffrey,  
That he hayt sende to the.”  
With that sche toke op a lowde lawhyng,  
And swhar be hem that deyed on tre:  
“Now haffe you payed for all the pottys  
That Roben gaffe to me.  
Now ye be com hom to Notynggam,  
Ye schall haffe god ynowe.”  
Now speke we of Roben Hode,  
And of the pottyr onder the grene bowhe. [\[256\]](#)  
“Potter, what was they pottys worthe  
To Notynggam that y ledde with me?”  
They wer worth two nobellys, seyde he,  
So mot y treyffe or the;  
So cowde y had for tham,  
And y had ther be. [\[257\]](#)  
Thow schalt hafe ten ponde, seyde Roben,  
Of money feyr and fre:  
And yever whan thow comest to grene wod,  
Wellcom, potter, to me.

[96]



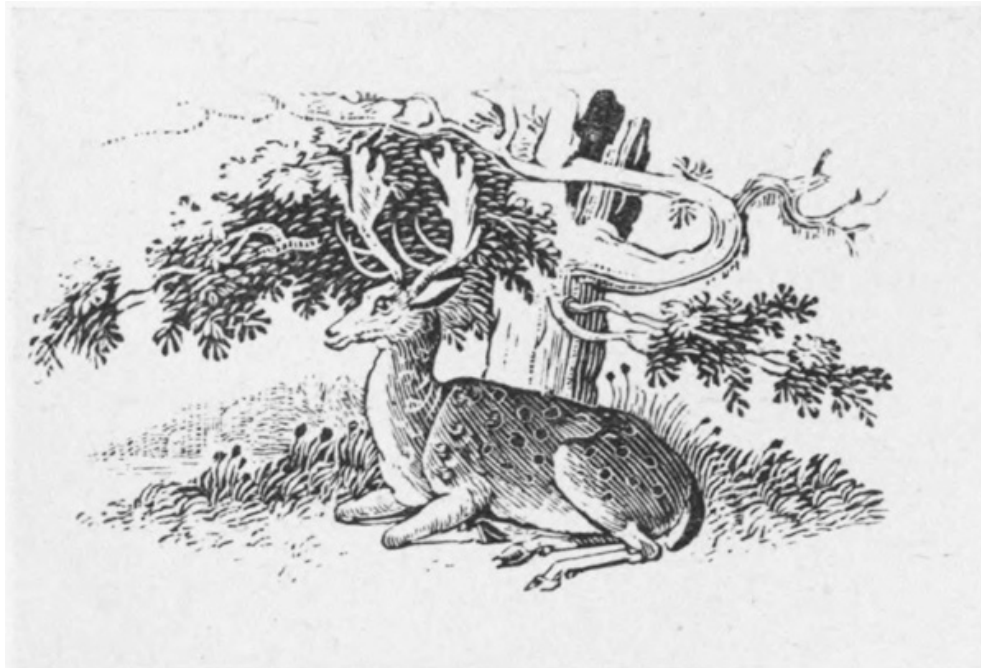
Thes partyd Robyn, the screffe, and the potter,

Ondernethe the grene wod tre.

God haffe mersey on Roben Hodys solle,

And saffe all god yemanrey!

[97]



### III. ROBIN HOOD AND THE BEGGAR. ↵



This poem, a North-country (or perhaps Scottish) composition of some antiquity, is given from a modern copy printed at Newcastle, where it was accidentally picked up: no other edition having been ever seen or heard of. The corruptions of the press being equally numerous and minute, some of the most trifling have been corrected without notice. But it may be proper to mention that each line of the printed copy is here thrown into two: a step which, though absolutely necessary from the narrowness of the page, is sufficiently justified by the frequent recurrence of the double rime. The division of stanzas was conceived to be a

still further improvement.—The original title is, “A Pretty Dialogue betwixt Robin Hood and a Beggar.”

A similar story (“Comment un moine se débarasse des voleurs”) may be found in “Le Moyen de Parvenir,” i. 304 (edit. 1739).

[98]

Lyth and listen, gentlemen,  
That be of high born blood,  
I'll tell you of a brave booting  
That befell Robin Hood.  
Robin Hood upon a day,  
He went forth him alone,  
And as he came from Barnsdale  
Into fair evening,  
He met a beggar on the way,  
Who sturdily could gang;  
He had a pike-staff in his hand  
That was both stark and strang;  
A clouted clog about him was,  
That held him frae the cold,  
The thinnest bit of it, I guess,  
Was more than twenty fold.  
His meal-poke hang about his neck,  
Into a leathern whang,  
Well fasten'd to a broad bucle,  
That was both stark and 'strang.'  
He had three hats upon his head,  
Together sticked fast,  
He car'd neither for wind nor wet,  
In lands where'er [\[258\]](#) he past.

[99]

Good Robin cast him in the way,  
To see what he might be,  
If any beggar had monèy,  
He thought some part had he.  
Tarry, tarry, good Robin says,  
Tarry, and speak with me.  
He heard him as he heard him not,  
And fast on his way can hy.  
'Tis be not so, says [good] Robin,  
Nay, thou must tarry still.  
By my troth, said the bold beggar,  
Of that I have no will.  
It is far to my lodging house,  
And it is growing late,  
If they have supt e'er I come in  
I will look wondrous blate.  
Now, by my truth, says good Robin,  
I see well by thy fare,  
If thou shares well to thy supper,  
Of mine thou dost not care,

Who wants my dinner all this day

And wots not where to ly,  
And would I to the tavern go,  
I want money to buy.

[100]

Sir, you must lend me some monèy  
Till we meet again.

The beggar answer'd cankardly,  
I have no money to lend:

Thou art a young man as I,  
And seems to be as sweer;

If thou fast till thou get from me,  
Thou shalt eat none this year.

Now, by my truth, says [good] Robin,  
Since we are assembled so,

If thou hast but a small farthing,  
I'll have it e'er thou go.

Come, lay down thy clouted cloak,  
And do no longer stand,

And loose the strings of all thy pokes,  
I'll ripe them with my hand.

And now to thee I make a vow,  
If 'thou' make any din,

I shall see a broad arròw,  
Can pierce a beggar's skin.

The beggar smil'd, and answer made,  
Far better let me be;

Think not that I will be afraid,  
For thy nip crooked tree;

[101]

Or that I fear thee any whit,

For thy curn nips of sticks,  
I know no use for them so meet  
As to be puding-pricks.

Here I defy thee to do me ill,

For all thy boisterous fair,  
Thou's get nothing from me but ill,  
Would'st thou seek evermair.

Good Robin bent his noble bow,  
He was an angry man,

And in it set a broad arròw;  
Lo! e'er 'twas drawn a span,

The beggar, with his noble tree,  
Reach'd him so round a rout,

That his bow and his broad arròw  
In flinders flew about.

Good Robin bound him to his brand,  
But that prov'd likewise vain,

The beggar lighted on his hand  
With his pike-staff again:

[I] wot he might not draw a sword

For forty days and mair.  
Good Robin could not speak a word,  
His heart was ne'er so sair.

[102]

He could not fight, he could not flee,  
He wist not what to do;  
The beggar with his noble tree  
Laid lusty slaps him to.  
He paid good Robin back and side,  
And baist him up and down,  
And with his pyke-staff laid on loud,  
Till he fell in a swoon.  
Stand up, man, the beggar said,  
'Tis shame to go to rest;  
Stay till thou get thy money told,  
I think it were the best:  
And syne go to the tavern house,  
And buy both wine and ale;  
Hereat thy friends will crack full crouse,  
Thou hast been at the dale.  
Good Robin answer'd ne'er a word,  
But lay still as a stane;  
His cheeks were pale as any clay,  
And closed [259] were his een.  
The beggar thought him dead but fail,  
And boldly bound his way.—  
I would ye had been at the dale,  
And gotten part of the play.

[103]

#### *THE SECOND PART.*

Now three of Robin's men, by chance,  
Came walking by the way,  
And found their master in a trance,  
On ground where that he lay.  
Up have they taken good Robìn,  
Making a piteous bear,  
Yet saw they no man there at whom  
They might the matter spear.  
They looked him all round about,  
But wound on him saw 'nane,'  
Yet at his mouth came bocking out  
The blood of a good vain.  
Cold water they have gotten syne,  
And cast unto his face;  
Then he began to hitch his ear,  
And speak within short space.  
Tell us, dear master, said his men,  
How with you stands the case.  
Good Robin sigh'd e'er he began  
To tell of his disgrace.

[104]

“I have been watchman in this wood  
Near hand this twenty year,  
Yet I was never so hard bestead  
As ye have found me here;  
A beggar with a clouted clock,  
Of whom I fear’d no ill  
Hath with his pyke-staff cla’d my back,  
I fear ’twill never be well.  
See, where he goes o’er yon hill,  
With hat upon his head;  
If e’er ye lov’d your master well,  
Go now revenge this deed;  
And bring him back again to me,  
If it lie in your might,  
That I may see, before I die,  
Him punish’d in my sight:  
And if you may not bring him back,  
Let him not go loose on;  
For to us all it were great shame  
If he escape again.”  
“One of us shall with you remain,  
Because you’re ill at ease,  
The other two shall bring him back,  
To use him as you please.”

[105]

Now, by my truth, says good Robin,  
I true there’s enough said;  
And he get scouth to wield his tree,  
I fear you’ll both be paid.  
“Be not fear’d, our mastèr,  
That we two can be dung  
With any bluter base beggàr,  
That has nought but a rung.  
His staff shall stand him in no stead,  
That you shall shortly see,  
But back again he shall be led,  
And fast bound shall he be,  
To see if ye will have him slain,  
Or hanged on a tree.”  
“But cast you sliely in his way,  
Before he be aware,  
And on his pyke-staff first hands lay,  
Ye’ll speed the better far.”  
Now leave we Robin with this man,  
Again to play the child,  
And learn himself to stand and gang  
By halds, for all his eild.  
Now pass we to the bold beggàr,  
That raked o’er the hill,  
Who never mended his pace more,  
Then he had done no ill.

[106]

...

...

And they have taken another way, [260]

Was nearer by miles three.

They stoutly ran with all their might,

Spared neither dub 'nor' mire,

They started at neither how nor height,

No travel made them tire,

Till they before the beggar wan,

And cast them in his way;

A little wood lay in a glen,

And there they both did stay;

They stood up closely by a tree,

In each side of the gate,

Untill the beggar came them nigh,

That thought of no such late:

And as he was betwixt them past,

They leapt upon him baith;

The one his pyke-staff gripped fast,

They feared for its skaith.

The other he held in his sight

A drawn durk to his breast,

And said, False 'carel,' quit thy staff,

Or I shall be thy priest.

[107]

His pyke-staff they have taken him frae,

And stuck it in the green,

He was full loath to let it gae,

An better might it been.

The beggar was the feardest man

Of any that e'er might be,

To win away no way he can,

Nor help him with his tree.

Nor wist he wherefore he was ta'en,

Nor how many was there;

He thought his life days had been gane,

He grew into despair.

Grant me my life, the beggar said,

For him that dy'd on the tree,

And hold away that ugly knife,

Or else for fear I'll die.

I griev'd you never in all my life,

Neither by late or air,

You have great sin if you would slay

A silly poor beggar.

Thou lies, false lown, they said again,

For all that may be sworn;

Thou hast 'near' slain the gentlest man

Of one that e'er was born;

[108]

And back again thou shall be led,  
    And fast bound shalt thou be,  
To see if he will have thee slain,  
    Or hanged on a tree.  
The beggar then thought all was wrong,  
    They were set for his wrack,  
He saw nothing appearing then  
    But ill upon warse back.  
Were he out of their hands, he thought,  
    And had again his tree,  
He should not be led back for nought,  
    With such as he did see.  
Then he bethought him on a wile,  
    If it could take effect,  
How he might the young men beguile,  
    And give them a begeck. [261]  
Thus to do them shame for ill  
    His beastly breast was bent,  
He found the wind blew something shrill,  
    To further his intent.  
He said, Brave gentlemen, be good,  
    And let a poor man be:  
When ye have taken a beggar's blood,  
    It helps you not a flee.

[109]

It was but in my own defence,  
    If he has gotten skaith;  
But I will make a recompence  
    Is better for you baith.  
If ye will set me fair and free,  
    And do me no more dear,  
An hundred pounds I will you give,  
    And much more odd silvèr,  
That I have gather'd this many years,  
    Under this clouted cloak,  
And hid up wonder privately,  
    In bottom of my poke.  
The young men to the council yeed, [262]  
    And let the beggar gae;  
They wist full well he had no speed  
    From them to run away.  
They thought they would the money take,  
    Come after what so may;  
And yet they would not take him back,  
    But in that place him slay.  
By that good Robin would not know  
    That they had gotten coin,  
It would content him [well] to show  
    That there they had him slain, [110]  
They said, False carel, soon have done,  
    And tell forth thy monèy,  
For the ill turn that thou hast done

It's but a simple plea.  
And yet we will not have thee back,  
    Come after what so may,  
If thou will do that which thou spak, [263]  
    And make us present pay.  
O then he loosed his clouted clock,  
    And spread it on the ground,  
And thereon lay he many a poke,  
    Betwixt them and the wind.  
He took a great bag from his hals, [264]  
    It was near full of meal,  
Two pecks in it at least there was,  
    And more, I wot full well.  
Upon this cloak he set it down,  
    The mouth he opened wide,  
To turn the same he made him bown, [265]  
    The young men ready spy'd;  
In every hand he took a nook  
    Of that great leathren 'mail,' [266]  
And with a fling the meal he shook  
    Into their face all hail:

[111]

Wherewith he blinded them so close,  
    A stime they could not see;  
And then in heart he did rejoice,  
    And clap'd his lusty tree.  
He thought if he had done them wrong,  
    In mealing of their cloaths, [267]  
For to strike off the meal again  
    With his pyke-staff he goes.  
E'er any of them could red their een,  
    Or a glimring might see,  
Ilke one of them a dozen had,  
    Well laid on with his tree.  
The young men were right swift of foot,  
    And boldly bound away,  
The beggar could them no more hit,  
    For all the haste he may.  
What's all this haste? the beggar said,  
    May not you [268] tarry still,  
Untill your money be received?  
    I'll pay you with good will.  
The shaking of my pokes, I fear,  
    Hath blown into your een;  
But I have a good pyke-staff here  
    Can ripe them out full clean.

[112]

The young men answered never a word,  
    They were dum as a stane;  
In the thick wood the beggar fled,  
    E'er they riped their een:



And syne the night became so late,  
    To seek him was in vain:  
But judge ye if they looked blate  
    When they cam home again.  
Good Robin speer'd how they had sped. [269]  
    They answered him, Full ill.  
That can not be, good Robin says,  
    Ye have been at the mill.  
The mill it is a meat-rife part,  
    They may lick what they please,  
Most like ye have been at the art,  
    Who would look at your 'claiths.' [270]  
They hang'd their heads, they drooped down,  
    A word they could not speak.  
Robin said, Because I fell a-sound,  
    I think ye'll do the like.  
Tell on the matter, less or more,  
    And tell me what and how  
Ye have done with the bold beggàr  
    I sent you for right now.

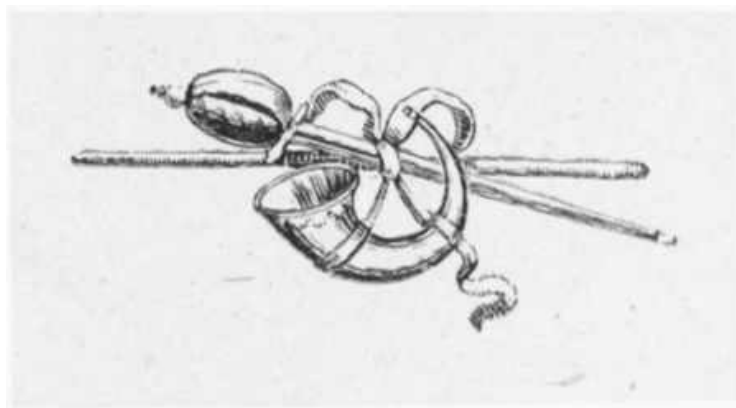
[113]

And when they told him to an end,  
    As i have said before,  
How that the beggar did them blind,  
    What 'mister' presses more?

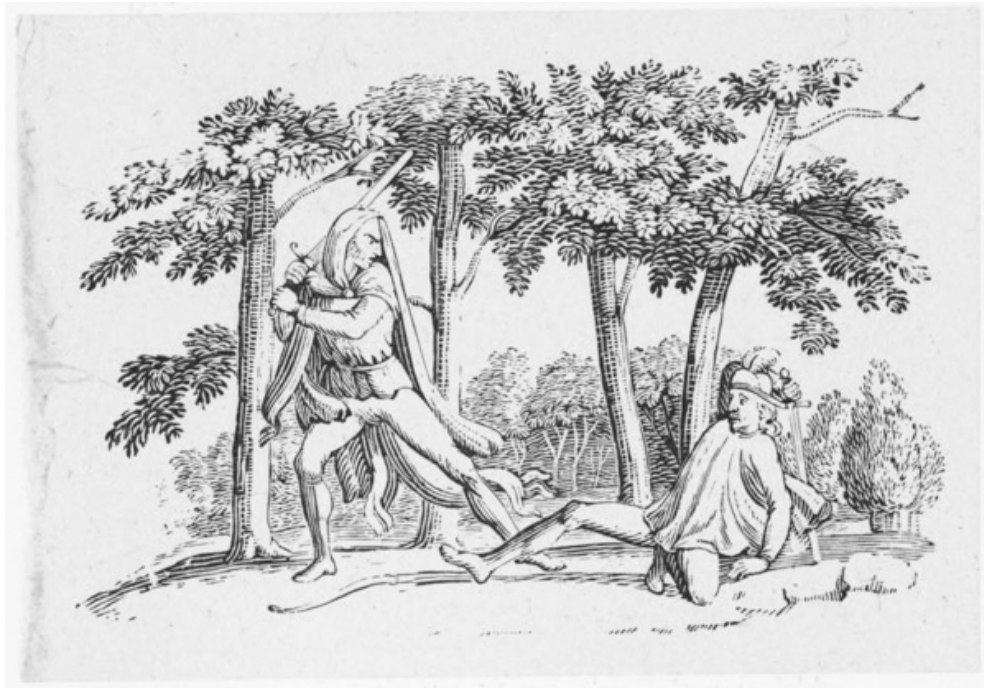
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...

And how in the thick woods he fled,  
    E'er they a stime could see;  
And how they scarcely could win home,  
    Their bones were baste so sore;  
Good Robin cry'd, Fy! out! for shame!  
    We're sham'd for evermore.  
Altho good Robin would full fain  
    Of his wrath revenged be,  
He smil'd to see his merry young men  
    Had gotten a taste of the tree.



[114]



is reprinted from the “Reliques of Ancient English Poetry,” published by Dr. Percy (vol. i. p. 81), who there gives it from his “folio MS.” as “never before printed, and ‘carrying’ marks of much greater antiquity than any of the common popular songs on this subject.”

As for Guy of Gisborne, the only further memorial which has occurred concerning him is in an old satirical piece by William Dunbar, a celebrated Scottish poet of the 15th century, on one “Schir Thomas Nory” (MS. Maitland, p. 3; MSS. More, Ll. 5, 10), where he is named along with our hero, Adam Bell, and other worthies, it is conjectured, of a similar stamp, but whose merits have not, less fortunately, come to the knowledge of posterity.

[115]

“Was nevir WEILD ROBEINE under bewch,  
 Nor yitt Roger of Clekkinslewch,  
     So bauld a bairne as he;  
 GY OF GYSBURNE, na Allane Bell,  
 Na Simones sones of Quhynsell,  
     Off thocht war nevir so slie.”

Gisborne is a market-town in the West Riding of the county of York, on the borders of Lancashire.

In the fourth edition of the publication above referred to, which appeared in July 1795, it is acknowledged that “some liberties were, by the editor, taken with this ballad, which in this edition hath been brought nearer to the folio MS.” The new readings have therefore been introduced into the present text.

Whan shaws beene sheene, and shraddes [\[271\]](#) full fayre,  
     And leaves both large and longe,  
 Itt’s merrye walkyng in the fayre forrèst  
     To heare the small birdes songe.  
 The woodweele sang, and wold not cease,  
     Sitting upon the spraye,  
 Soe lowde, he wakened Robin Hood,  
     In the greenwood where he lay.  
 Now, by my faye, sayd jollye Robìn,  
     A sweaven I had this night;

I dreamt me of tow wighty yemèn,  
That fast with me can fight.

[116]

Methought they did me beate and binde,  
And tooke my bowe me froe;  
Iff I be Robin alive in this lande,  
Ile be wroken on them towe.  
Sweavens are swift, master, quoth John,  
As the wind that blowes ore a hill;  
For iff itt be never so loude this night,  
To-morrow it may be still.  
“Buske yee, bowne yee, my merry men all,  
And John shall goe with mee,  
For Ile goe seeke yond wighty yeomèn,  
In greenwood where they bee.”  
Then they cast on theyr gownes of grene,  
And tooke theyr bowes each one;  
And they away to the greene forrèst  
A shooting forth are gone;  
Untill they came to the merry greenwood,  
Where they had gladdest to bee,  
There they were ware of a wight yeomàn,  
His body leaned to a tree.  
A sword and a dagger he wore by his side,  
Of manye a man the bane;  
And he was clad in his capull hyde,  
Topp and tayll and mayne.

[117]

Stand you still, master, quoth Little John,  
Under this tree so grene,  
And I will go to yond wight yeomàn,  
To know what he doth meane.  
“Ah! John, by me thou settest noe store,  
And that I farley finde:  
How oft send I my men before,  
And tarry my selfe behinde?  
It is no cunning a knave to ken,  
And a man but heare him speake;  
And it were not for bursting of my bowe,  
John, I thy head wold breake.”  
As often wordes they breeden bale,  
So they parted Robin and John:  
And John is gone to Barnesdale;  
The gates he knoweth eche one.  
But when he came to Barnesdale,  
Great heavynesse there he hadd,  
For he found tow of his own fellòwes,  
Were slaine both in a slade.  
And Scarlette he was flying a-foote  
Fast over stocke and stone,  
For the proud sheriffe with seven score men

Fast after him is gone.

[118]

One shoote now I will shoote, quoth John,  
    With Christ his might and mayne;  
Ile make yond sheriffe that flyes soe fast,  
    To stopp he shall be fayne.  
Then John bent up his long bende-bowe,  
    And fetteled him to shoote:  
The bow was made of tender boughe,  
    And fell downe at his foote.  
“Woe worth, woe worth thee, wicked wood,  
    That ever thou grew on a tree!  
For now this day thou art my bale,  
    My boote when thou shold bee.”  
His shoote it was but loosely shott,  
    Yet flewe not the arrowe in vaine,  
For itt mett one of the sheriffes men,  
    Good William a Trent was slaine.  
It had bene better of William a Trent  
    To have bene abed with sorrowe,  
Than to be that day in the greenwood slade  
    To meet with Little Johns arrowe.  
But as it is said, when men be mett  
    Fyve can doe more than three,  
The sheriffe hath taken Little John,  
    And bound him fast to a tree.

[119]

“Thou shalt be drawn by dale and downe,  
    And hanged hye on a hill.”  
But thou mayst fayle of thy purpose, quoth John,  
    If it be Christ his will.  
Lett us leave talking of Little John,  
    And thinke of Robin Hood,  
How he is gone to the wight yeomàn,  
    Where under the leaves he stood.  
Good morrowe, good fellowe, sayd Robin so fayre,  
    Good morrowe, good fellow, quo’ he: [\[272\]](#)  
Methinkes by this bowe thou beares in thy hande,  
    A good archere thou sholdst bee.  
I am wilfulle of my waye, quo’ the yemàn,  
    And of my morning tyde.  
Ile lead thee through the wood, sayd Robin;  
    Good fellow, Ile be thy guide.  
I seeke an outlawe, the straunger sayd,  
    Men call him Robin Hood;  
Rather Ild meet with that proud outlàwe  
    Than fortye pound soe good.

[120]

“Now come with me, thou wighty yemàn  
    And Robin thou soone shalt see;  
But first let us some pastime find

Under the greenwood tree.  
First let us some masterye make  
Among the woods so even,  
We may chance to meet with Robin Hood  
Here at some unsett steven.”  
They cutt them down two summer shroggs,  
That grew both under a breere,  
And sett them threescore rood in twaine,  
To shoote the prickes y-fere.  
Leade on, good fellowe, quoth Robin Hood,  
Leade on, I do bidd thee.  
Nay, by my faith, good fellowe, hee sayd,  
My leader thou shalt bee.  
The first time Robin shot at the pricke,  
He mist but an inch it fro:  
The yeoman he was an archer good,  
But he cold never shoote soe.  
The second shoote had the wightye yemàn,  
He shot within the garlànd:  
But Robin he shott far better than hee,  
For he clave the good pricke-wande.

[121]

A blessing upon thy heart, he sayd;  
Good fellowe, thy shooting is goode;  
For an thy hart be as good as thy hand,  
Thou wert better than Robin Hoode.  
Now tell me thy name, good fellowe, sayd he,  
Under the leaves of lyne.  
Nay, by my faith, quoth bold Robin,  
Till thou have told me thine.  
I dwell by dale and downe, quoth hee,  
And Robin to take Ime sworne;  
And when I am called by my right name  
I am Guy of good Gisbòrne.  
My dwelling is in this wood, sayes Robin,  
By thee I set right nought:  
I am Robin Hood of Barnèsdale,  
Whom thou so long hast sought.  
He that had neyther beene kythe nor kin,  
Might have seen a full fayre fight,  
To see how together these yeomen went  
With blades both browne and bright.  
To see how these yeomen together they fought  
Two howres of a summers day:  
Yett neither Robin Hood nor sir Guy  
Them fettled to flye away.

[122]

Robin was reachles on a roote  
And stumbled at that tyde;  
And Guy was quicke and nimble withall,  
And hitt him ore the left syde.

Ah, deere ladye, sayd Robin Hood tho,  
Thou art both [273] mother and may,  
I think it was never mans destynye  
To dye before his day.  
Robin thought on our ladye deere,  
And soone leapt up againe,  
And strait he came with a[n] awkwarde [274] stroke,  
And he sir Guy [275] hath slayne.  
He took sir Guys head by the hayre,  
And sticked itt upon his bowes end:  
“Thou hast beene a traytor all thy life,  
Which thing must have an end.”

[123]

Robin pulled forth an Irish knife,  
And nicked sir Guy in the face,  
That he was never on woman born  
Cold tell whose head it was.  
Sayes, Lye there, lye there, now sir Guye,  
And with me be not wrothe;  
Iff thou have had the worst strokes at my hand,  
Thou shalt have the better clothe.  
Robin did off his gown of greene,  
And on sir Guy did it throwe,  
And he put on that capull hyde,  
That cladd him topp to toe.  
“The bowe, the arrowes, and little horne,  
Now with me I will beare;  
For I will away to Barnèsdale,  
To see how my men doe fare.”  
Robin Hood sett Guyes horne to his mouth,  
And a loude blast in it did blow:  
That beheard the sheriffe of Nottingham,  
As he leaned under a lowe.  
Hearken, hearken, sayd the sheriffe,  
I heare nowe tydings good,  
For yonder I heare sir Guyes horne blow,  
And he hath slaine Robin Hoode.

[124]

Yonder I heare sir Guyes horne blowe,  
Itt blowes soe well in tyde,  
And yonder comes that wightye yeomàn,  
Cladd in his capull hyde.  
Come hyther, come hyther, thou good sir Guy,  
Aske what thou wilt of mee.  
O I will none of thy gold, sayd Robin,  
Nor I will none of thy fee:  
But now I have slaine the master, he sayes,  
Let me goe strike the knave;  
For this is all the meede I aske;  
Nor no other will I have.  
Thou art a madman, sayd the sheriffe,

Thou shouldst have had a knightes fee:  
But seeing thy asking hath beene soe bad,  
Well granted it shal bee.  
When Little John heard his master speake,  
Well knewe he it was his steven:  
Now shall I be looſet, quoth Little John,  
With Christ his might in heaven.  
Fast Robin hee hyed him to Little John,  
He thought to looſe him belive;  
The ſheriffe and all his companye  
Fast after him did drive.

[125]

Stand abacke, stand abacke, ſayd Robin;  
Why draw you mee ſo neere?  
It was never the uſe in our countryè,  
Ones ſhriſt another ſhold heere.  
But Robin pulled forth an Iriſh knife,  
And loſed John hand and foote,  
And gave him ſir Guyes bow into his hand,  
And bade it be his boote.  
Then John he took Guyes bow in his hand,  
His boltes and arrowes eche one:  
When the ſheriffe ſaw Little John bend his bow,  
He fettled him to be gone.  
Towards his houſe in Nottingham towne,  
He fled full faſt away;  
And ſoe did all the companye:  
Not one behind wold ſtay.  
But he cold neither runne ſoe faſt,  
Nor away ſoe faſt cold ryde,  
But Little John with an arrowe ſoe broad,  
He ſhott him into the ‘backe’-ſyde. [276]

[126]

**V. A TRUE TALE OF ROBIN HOOD: OR, ↩**



A briefe touch of the life and death of that renowned outlaw Robert earl of Huntingdon, vulgarly called Robin Hood, who lived and dyed in A. D. 1198, [277] being the 9th year of king Richard the first, commonly called Richard Cœur de Lyon.

Carefully collected out of the truest writers of our English Chronicles: and published for the satisfaction of those who desire truth from falshood.  
BY MARTIN PARKER.

[127]

This poem, given from an edition in black letter printed for I. Clarke, W. Thackeray, and T. Passinger, 1686, remaining in the curious library left by Anthony a Wood, appears to have been first entered on the hall-book of the Stationers' Company the 29th of February 1631.

Martin Parker was a great writer of ballads, several of which, with his initials subjoined, are still extant in the Pepysian and other collections. (See "Ancient Songs," 1829, ii. p. 263.) Dr. Percy mentions a little miscellany intitled, "The garland of withered roses, by Martin Parker, 1656." The editor has, likewise, seen "The nightingale warbling forth her own disaster, or the rape of Philomela: newly written in English verse by Martin Parker, 1632;" and, on the 24th of November 1640, Mr. Oulton enters at Stationers' Hall "a book called The true story of Guy earle of Warwicke, in prose, by Martyn Parker."

At the end of this poem the author adds "The epitaph which the prioress of the monastery of Kirkslay in Yorkshire set over Robin Hood, which," he says, "(as is before mentioned) was to be read within these hundred years, though in old broken English, much to the same sence and meaning." He gives it thus:

"Decembris quarto die, 1198. anno regni Richardi primi 9.

"Robert earl of Huntington  
"Lies under this little stone,  
"No archer was like him so good;  
"His wildness named him Robin Hood;  
"Full thirteen years, and something more,  
"These northern parts he vexed sore;  
"Such outlaws as he and his men  
"May England never know again."



“Some other superstitious words,” he adds, “were in, which I,” says he, “thought fit to leave out.” Now, under this precise gentleman’s favour, one would be glad to know what these same “superstitious words” were; there not being anything of the [128] kind in Dr. Gale’s copy, which seems to be the original, and which is shorter by two lines than the above. Thirteen should be thirty.

Both gentlemen, and yeomen bold,  
Or whatsoever you are,  
To have a stately story told  
Attention now prepare:  
It is a tale of Robin Hood,  
Which i to you will tell;  
Which, being rightly understood,  
I know will please you well.  
This Robin (so much talked on)  
Was once a man of fame,  
Instiled earl of Huntington,  
Lord Robin Hood by name.  
In courtship and magnificence  
His carriage won him praise,  
And greater favour with his prince  
Than any in ‘those’ [278] days.  
In bounteous liberality  
He too much did excell,  
And loved men of quality  
More than exceeding well.

[129]

His great revenues all he sold  
For wine and costly chear;  
He kept three hundred bow-men bold,  
He shooting lov’d so dear.  
No archer living in his time  
With him might well compare;  
He practis’d all his youthful prime  
That exercise most rare.  
At last, by his profuse expence,  
He had consum’d his wealth;  
And, being outlaw’d by his prince,  
In woods he liv’d by stealth.  
The abbot of Saint Maries rich,  
To whom he money ought,  
His hatred to the earl was such  
That he his downfall wrought.  
So being outlaw’d (as ’tis told)  
He with a crew went forth  
Of lusty cutters stout and bold,  
And robbed in the North.  
Among the rest one Little John,  
A yeoman bold and free,  
Who could (if it stood him upon)  
With ease encounter three.

[130]

One hundred men in all he got,  
    With whom (the story says)  
Three hundred common men durst not  
    Hold combat any waies.  
They Yorkshire woods frequented much,  
    And Lancashire also,  
Wherein their practises were such  
    That they wrought muckle woe.  
None rich durst travel to and fro,  
    Though ne'r so strongly arm'd,  
But by these thieves (so strong in show)  
    They still were rob'd and harm'd.  
His chiefest spight to th' clergy was,  
    That liv'd in monstrous pride:  
No one of them he would let pass  
    Along the highway side,  
But first they must to dinner go,  
    And afterwards to shrift:  
Full many a one he served so,  
    Thus while he liv'd by theft.  
No monks nor fryers he would let go  
    Without paying their fees:  
If they thought much to be used so,  
    Their stones he made them lese.

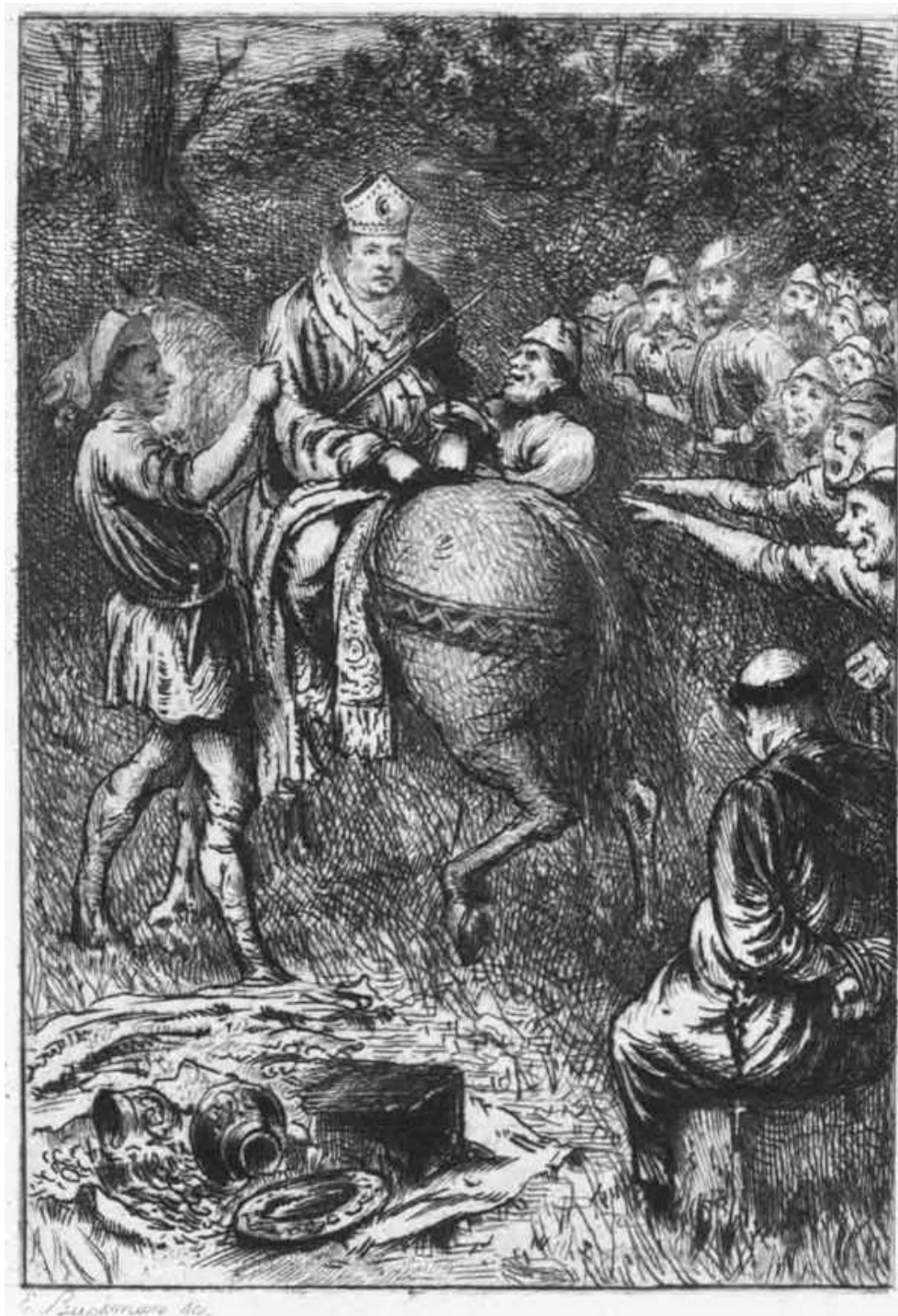
[131]

For such as they the country fill'd  
    With bastards in those days:  
Which to prevent, these sparks did geld  
    All that came in their ways. [279]  
But Robin Hood so gentle was,  
    And bore so brave a mind,  
If any in distress did pass,  
    To them he was so kind,  
That he would give and lend to them,  
    To help them in their need;  
This made all poor men pray for him,  
    And wish he well might speed.  
The widow and the fatherless  
    He would send means unto;  
And those whom famine did oppress  
    Found him a friendly foe.

[132]

Nor would he do a woman wrong,  
    But see her safe convey'd:  
He would protéct with power strong  
    All those who crav'd his aid.  
The abbot of Saint Maries then,  
    Who him undid before,  
Was riding with two hundred men,  
    And gold and silver store:  
But Robin Hood upon him set,

With his couragious sparks,  
And all the coyn perforce did get,  
Which was twelve thousand marks.  
He bound the abbot to a tree,  
And would not let him pass,  
Before that to his men and he  
His lordship had said mass:  
Which being done, upon his horse  
He set him fast astride,  
And with his face towards his a—  
He forced him to ride.  
His men were forced to be his guide,  
For he rode backward home:  
The abbot, being thus villify'd,  
Did sorely chafe and fume.



[133]

Thus Robin Hood did vindicate  
     His former wrongs receiv'd:  
 For 'twas this covetous prelâte  
     That him of land bereav'd.  
 The abbot he rode to the king,  
     With all the haste he could;  
 And to his grace he every thing  
     Exactly did unfold:  
 And said that if no course were ta'n,  
     By force or stratagem,  
 To take this rebel and his train,  
     No man should pass for them.  
 The king protested by and by  
     Unto the abbot then,  
 That Robin Hood with speed should dye,  
     With all his merry men.  
 But e're the king did any send,  
     He did another feat,  
 Which did his grace much more offend,  
     The fact indeed was great:  
 For in a short time after that  
     The kings receivers went  
 Towards London with the coyn they got  
     For's highness northern rent:

[134]

Bold Robin Hood and Little John,  
     With the rest of their train,  
 Not dreading law, set them upon,  
     And did their gold obtain.  
 The king much moved at the same,  
     And the abbots talk also,  
 In this his anger did proclaim,  
     And sent word to and fro,  
 That whosoever alive or dead  
     Could bring bold Robin Hood,  
 Should have one thousand marks well paid  
     In gold and silver good.  
 This promise of the king did make  
     Full many yeomen bold  
 Attempt stout Robin Hood to take  
     With all the force they could.  
 But still when any came to him  
     Within the gay green wood,  
 He entertainment gave to them  
     With venison fat and good;  
 And shew'd to them such martial sport  
     With his long bow and arrow,  
 That they of him did give report,  
     How that it was great sorow [135]

That such a worthy man as he  
Should thus be put to shift,  
Being a late lord of high degree,  
Of living quite bereft.  
The king to take him more and more  
Sent men of mickle might;  
But he and his still beat them sore,  
And conquered them in fight:  
Or else with love and courtesie,  
To him he won their hearts.  
Thus still he liv'd by robbery  
Throughout the northern parts;  
And all the country stood in dread  
Of Robin Hood and's men:  
For stouter lads ne'r liv'd by bread  
In those days, nor since then.  
The abbot, which before i nam'd,  
Sought all the means he could  
To have by force this rebel ta'n,  
And his adherents bold.  
Therefore he arm'd five hundred men,  
With furniture compleat;  
But the outlaws slew half of them,  
And made the rest retreat, [136]  
The long bow and the arrow keen  
They were so us'd unto  
That still he kept the forrest green  
In spight o' th' proudest foe.  
Twelve of the abbots men he took,  
Who came to have him ta'n,  
When all the rest the field forsook,  
These he did entertain  
With banqueting and merriment,  
And, having us'd them well,  
He to their lord them safely sent,  
And will'd them him to tell,  
That if he would be pleas'd at last  
To beg of our good king,  
That he might pardon what was past,  
And him to favour bring,  
He would surrender back again  
The mony which before  
Was taken by him 'and his' men  
From him and many more.  
Poor men might safely pass by him,  
And some that way would chuse,  
For well they knew that to help them  
He evermore did use.

[137]

But where he knew a miser rich  
That did the poor oppress,  
To feel his coyn his hands did itch,

He'd have it, more or less:  
And sometimes, when the high-way fail'd,  
Then he his courage rouzes,  
He and his men have oft assaild  
Such rich men in their houses:  
So that, through dread of Robin then,  
And his adventurous crew,  
The misers kept great store of men,  
Which else maintain'd but few.  
King Richard, of that name the first,  
Surnamed Cœur de Lyon,  
Went to defeat the Pagans curst,  
Who kept the coasts of Sion.  
The bishop of Ely, chancellor,  
Was left a vice-roy here,  
Who, like a potent emperor,  
Did proudly domineer.  
Our chronicles of him report,  
That commonly he rode  
With a thousand horse from court to court,  
Where he would make abode.

[138]

He, riding down towards the north,  
With his aforesaid train,  
Robin and his men did issue forth,  
Them all to entertain;  
And with the gallant gray-goose wing  
They shew'd to them such play  
That made their horses kick and fling,  
And down their riders lay,  
Full glad and fain the bishop was,  
For all his thousand men,  
So seek what means he could to pass  
From out of Robins ken.  
Two hundred of his men were kill'd,  
And fourscore horses good,  
Thirty, who did as captives yield,  
Were carried to the green wood;  
Which afterwards were ransomed,  
For twenty marks a man:  
The rest set spurs to horse and fled  
To th' town of Warrington.  
The bishop, sore intraged, then  
Did, in king Richards name,  
Muster up a power of northern men,  
These outlaws bold to tame.

[139]

But Robin with his courtesie  
So won the meaner sort,  
That they were loath on him to try  
What rigour did import.

So that bold Robin and his train  
    Did live unhurt of them,  
Until king Richard came again  
    From fair Jerusalem:  
And then the talk of Robin Hood  
    His royal ears did fill;  
His grace admir'd that i' th' green wood  
    He was continued still.  
So that the country far and near  
    Did give him great applause;  
For none of them need stand in fear,  
    But such as broke the laws.  
He wished well unto the king,  
    And prayed still for his health,  
And never practis'd any thing  
    Against the common-wealth.  
Only, because he was undone  
    By th' cruel clergy then,  
All means that he could think upon  
    To vex such kind of men, [140]  
He enterpris'd with hateful spleen;  
    For which he was to blame,  
For fault of some to wreak his teen  
    On all that by him came.  
With wealth that he by roguery got  
    Eight alms-houses he built,  
Thinking thereby to purge the blot  
    Of blood which he had spilt.  
Such was their blind devotion then,  
    Depending on their works;  
Which if 'twere true, we Christian men  
    Inferiour were to Turks.  
But, to speak true of Robin Hood,  
    And wrong him not a jot,  
He never would shed any mans blood  
    That him invaded not.  
Nor would he injure husbandmen,  
    That toil at cart and plough;  
For well he knew wer't not for them  
    To live no man knew how.  
The king in person, with some lords,  
    To Nottingham did ride,  
To try what strength and skill affords  
    To crush this outlaws pride.

[141]

And, as he once before had done,  
    He did again proclaim,  
That whosoever would take upon  
    To bring to Nottingham,  
Or any place within the land,  
    Rebellious Robin Hood,  
Should be preferr'd in place to stand

With those of noble blood.  
When Robin Hood heard of the same,  
    Within a little space,  
Into the town of Nottingham  
    A letter to his grace  
He shot upon an arrow head,  
    One evening cunningly;  
Which was brought to the king, and read  
    Before his majesty.  
The tenour of this letter was  
    That Robin would submit,  
And be true liegeman to his grace  
    In any thing that's fit,  
So that his highness would forgive  
    Him and his merry men all;  
If not, he must i' th' green wood live,  
    And take what chance did fall.

[142]

The king would feign have pardoned him,  
    But that some lords did say,  
This president will much condemn  
    Your grace another day.  
While that the king and lords did stay  
    Debating on this thing,  
Some of these outlaws fled away  
    Unto the Scottish king.  
For they suppos'd, if he were ta'n  
    Or to the king did yield,  
By th' commons all the rest of 's train  
    Full quickly would be quell'd.  
Of more than full an hundred men,  
    But forty tarried still,  
Who were resolv'd to stick to him,  
    Let Fortune work her will.  
If none had fled, all for his sake  
    Had got their pardon free;  
The king to favour meant to take  
    His merry men and he.  
But e're the pardon to him came  
    This famous archer dy'd:  
His death and manner of the same  
    I'le presently describe.

[143]

For, being vext to think upon  
    His followers revolt,  
In melancholy passiòn  
    He did recount his fault.  
Perfidious traytors! said he then,  
    In all your dangers past  
Have i you guarded as my men,  
    To leave me thus at last!



This sad perplexity did cause  
    A fever, as some say,  
Which him unto confusion draws,  
    Though by a stranger way.  
This deadly danger to prevent,  
    He hie'd him with all speed  
Unto a nunnery, with intent  
    For his healths-sake to bleed.  
A faithless fryer did pretend  
    In love to let him blood,  
But he by falshood wrought the end  
    Of famous Robin Hood.  
The fryer, as some say, did this  
    To vindicate the wrong  
Which to the clergy he and his  
    Had done by power strong.

[144]

Thus dyed he by treachery,  
    That could not die by force;  
Had he liv'd longer, certainly  
    King Richard, in remorse,  
Had unto favour him receiv'd,  
    'His' brave men elevated:  
'Tis pittty he was of life bereav'd  
    By one which he so hated.  
A treacherous leach this fryer was,  
    To let him bleed to death;  
And Robin was, methinks, an ass  
    To trust him with his breath.  
His corps the prioress of the place,  
    The next day that he dy'd,  
Caused to be buried, in mean case,  
    Close by the high-way side.  
And over him she caused a stone  
    To be fixt on the ground,  
An epitaph was set thereon,  
    Wherein his name was found;  
The date o' th' year and day also,  
    She made to be set there:  
That all, who by the way did go,  
    Might see it plain appear.

[145]

That such a man as Robin Hood  
    Was buried in that place;  
And how he lived in the green wood  
    And robbed for a space.  
It seems that though the clergy he  
    Had put to mickle woe,  
He should not quite forgotten be  
    Although he was their foe.  
This woman, though she did him hate,

Yet loved his memory;  
And thought it wondrous pittie that  
His fame should with him dye.  
This epitaph, as records tell,  
Within this hundred years,  
By many was discerned well,  
But time all things out-wears.  
His followers, when he was dead,  
Were some repriev'd to grace;  
The rest to foreign countries fled,  
And left their native place.  
Although his funeral was but mean,  
This woman had in mind,  
Least his fame should be buried clean  
From those that came behind.

[146]

For certainly, before nor since,  
No man e're understood,  
Under the reign of any prince,  
Of one like Robin Hood.  
Full thirteen years, and something more,  
These outlaws lived thus;  
Feared of the rich, loved of the poor:  
A thing most marvellous.  
A thing impossible to us  
This story seems to be;  
None dares be now so venturous,  
But times are chang'd we see.  
We that live in these later days  
Of civil government,  
If need be, have an hundred ways  
Such outlaws to prevent.  
In those days men more barbarous were,  
And lived less in awe;  
Now (god be thanked) people fear  
More to offend the law.  
No waring guns were then in use,  
They dreamt of no such thing;  
Our Englishmen in fight did use  
The gallant gray-goose wing;

[147]

In which activity these men,  
Through practise, were so good,  
That in those days none equal'd them,  
Especially Robin Hood.  
So that, it seems, keeping in caves,  
In woods and forests thick,  
They'd beat a multitude with staves,  
Their arrows did so prick:  
And none durst neer unto them come,  
Unless in courtesie;

All such he bravely would send home  
With mirth and jollity:  
Which courtesie won him such love,  
As i before have told,  
'Twas the chief cause that he did prove  
More prosperous than he could. [280]  
Let us be thankful for these times  
Of plenty, truth and peace;  
And leave our great and horrid crimes,  
Least they cause this to cease.  
I know there's many feigned tales  
Of Robin Hood and 's crew;  
But chronicles, which seldome fails,  
Reports this to be true.

[148]

Let none then think this is a lye,  
For, if 'twere put to th' worst,  
They may the truth of all descry  
I' th' reign of Richard the first.  
If any reader please to try,  
As i direction show,  
The truth of this brave history,  
He'l find it true I know.  
And i shall think my labour well  
Bestow'd to purpose good,  
When't shall be said that i did tell  
True tales of Robin Hood.



[149]

## ROBIN HOOD.

### PART II.



## I. ROBIN HOOD'S BIRTH, BREEDING, VALOUR, AND MARRIAGE.↩

From a black letter copy in the large and valuable collection of old ballads late belonging to Thomas Pearson, Esq., and now in the possession of the Duke of Roxburghe. This is the collection mentioned in the Harleian Catalogue, and would seem to be the greater part of that originally made by old Bagford (see Hearne's Appendix to Hemingi Chartularium, p. 662), another volume or two having come, with the rest of his typographical collections, to the British Museum. The three vols. which went to Osborne were probably bought of him by Mr. West, at whose sale they [150] were purchased by Major Pearson, by whom the collection was new-arranged, ornamented, and improved.

In reading this song, we are admonished by the editor of the collection of old ballads printed in 1723 (who thinks it "the most beautiful and one of the oldest extant, written on that subject") to observe one thing, "and that is, between some of the stanzas we must suppose a considerable time to pass. Clorinda," he says, "might be [thought] a very forward girl, if between Robin Hood's question and her answer we did not suppose two or three hours to have been spent in courtship; and between Robin Hood's being entertained at Gamwell-hall and his having ninety-three bowmen in Sherwood, we must allow some years."

With respect to its antiquity, Dr. Percy, in the new edition of his "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry" (vol. i. p. xcvi.), expresses a very different opinion; since, according to him, it "seems of much later date than most of the others, and can scarce be older than the reign of King Charles I.; FOR," says he, "King James I. had no issue after his accession to the throne of England;" an observation which, if any way to the purpose, is certainly NOT TRUE. "It may even," he continues, "have been written since the Restoration, and only express the wishes of the nation for issue on the marriage of their favourite King Charles II. on his marriage (*sic*) with the infanta of Portugal." However this may be, the writer's having deviated from "all the old traditions concerning this celebrated outlaw," is no proof that he was "ignorant" of them; and that Dr. Percy chooses to "think it is not found in the Pepys Collection" only shows conjecture to be easier than investigation. 🖱️ In the second volume of that collection, any person disposed to the search will find at least TWO COPIES of it, both in black letter.

The full title of the original is: "A new ballad of bold Robin Hood; shewing his birth, breeding, valour, and marriage at Titbury Bull-running. Calculated for the meridian of Staffordshire, but may serve for Derbyshire or Kent."

[151]

Kind gentlemen, will you be patient awhile?  
Ay, and then you shall hear anon  
A very good ballad of bold Robin Hood,  
And of his man brave Little John.  
In Locksly town, in merry Nottinghamshire,  
In merry sweet Locksly town,  
There bold Robin Hood he was born and was bred,  
Bold Robin of famous renown.  
The father of Robin a forrester was,  
And he shot in a lusty strong bow  
Two north-country miles and an inch at a shot,  
As the Pinder of Wakefield does know.  
For he brought Adam Bell, and Clim of the Clugh,  
And William of 'Clowdesle,' [281]  
To shoot with our forrester for forty mark,  
And the forrester beat them all three.  
His mother was neece to the Coventry knight,  
Which Warwickshire men call sir Guy;  
For he slew the blue bore that hangs up at the gate,  
Or mine host of the Bull tells a lie.

[152]

Her brother was Gamwel, of Great Gamwel-hall,  
A noble house-keeper was he,  
Ay, as ever broke bread in sweet Nottinghamshire,  
And a 'squire of famous degree.  
The mother of Robin said to her husband,  
My honey, my love, and my dear,  
Let Robin and I ride this morning to Gamwel,  
To taste of my brother's good cheer.  
And he said, I grant thee thy boon, gentle Joan,  
Take one of my horses, I pray:  
The sun is arising, and therefore make haste,  
For to-morrow is Christmas-day.  
Then Robin Hood's father's grey gelding was brought,  
And sadled and bridled was he;  
God-wot a blue bonnet, his new suit of cloaths,  
And a cloak that did reach to his knee.  
She got on her holyday kirtle and gown,  
They were of a light Lincoln green;  
The cloath was homespun, but for colour and make  
It might 'have beseemed' [282] our queen.  
And then Robin got on his basket-hilt sword,  
And his dagger on his tother side;  
And said, My dear mother, let's haste to be gone,  
We have forty long miles to ride.

[153]

When Robin had mounted his gelding so grey,  
His father, without any trouble,  
Set her up behind him, and bad her not fear,  
For his gelding 'had' oft carried double.  
And when she was [283] settled, they rode to their neighbours,  
And drank and shook hands with them all;  
And then Robin gallopt, and never gave o're,  
Till they lighted at Gamwel-hall.  
And now you may think the right worshipful squire  
Was joyful his sister to see;  
For he kist her, and kist her, and swore a great oath,  
Thou art welcome, kind sister, to me.  
To-morrow, when mass had been said at the chappel,  
Six tables were covered in the hall,  
And in comes the squire, and makes a short speech,  
It was, Neighbours, you're welcome all.  
But not a man here shall taste my March beer,  
Till a Christmas carrol he does sing.  
Then all clapt their hands, and theys houted and sung,  
Till the hall and the parlour did ring.  
Now mustard and brawn, roast beef and plumb pies  
Were set upon every table;  
And noble George Gamwel said, Eat and be merry,  
And drink too as long as you're able.

[154]

When dinner was ended, his chaplain said grace,  
And, Be merry, my friends, said the squire;  
It rains and it blows, but call for more ale,  
And lay some more wood on the fire.  
And now call ye Little John hither to me,  
For Little John is a fine lad,  
At gambols and juggling, and twenty such tricks,  
As shall make you both merry and glad.  
When Little John came, to gambols they went,  
Both gentlemen, yeomen, and clown;  
And what do you think? Why, as true as I live,  
Bold Robin Hood put them all down.  
And now you may think the right worshipful squire  
Was joyful this sight for to see;  
For he said, Cousin Robin, thou'st go no more home,  
But tarry and dwell here with me:  
Thou shalt have my land when I die, and till then,  
Thou shalt be the staff of my age.  
Then grant me my boon, dear uncle, said Robin,  
That Little John may be my page.  
And he said, Kind cousin, I grant thee thy boon;  
With all my heart, so let it be.  
Then come hither, Little John, said Robin Hood,  
Come hither my page unto me:

[155]

Go fetch me my bow, my longest long bow,

And broad arrows, one, two, or three.  
For when 'tis fair weather we'll into Sherwood,  
Some merry pastime to see.  
When Robin Hood came into merry Sherwood,  
He winded his bugle so clear;  
And twice five and twenty good yeomen and bold,  
Before Robin Hood did appear.  
Where are your companions all? said Robin Hood,  
For still I want forty and three.  
Then said a bold yeoman, Lo, yonder they stand,  
All under the [\[284\]](#) green wood tree.  
As that word was spoke, Clorinda came by,  
The queen of the shepherds was she;  
And her gown was of velvet as green as the grass,  
And her buskin did reach to her knee.  
Her gate it was graceful, her body was straight,  
And her countenance free from pride;  
A bow in her hand, and a quiver of arrows  
Hung dangling by her sweet side.  
Her eye-brows were black, ay, and so was her hair,  
And her skin was as smooth as glass;  
Her visage spoke wisdom, and modesty too:  
Sets with Robin Hood such a lass!

**[156]**

Said Robin Hood, Lady fair, whither away?  
O whither, fair lady, away?  
And she made him answer, To kill a fat buck;  
For to-morrow is Titbury day.  
Said Robin Hood, Lady fair, wander with me  
A little to yonder green bower;  
There set down to rest you, and you shall be sure  
Of a brace or a 'leash' [\[285\]](#) in an hour.  
And as we were going towards the green bower,  
Two hundred good bucks we espy'd;  
She chose [\[286\]](#) out the fattest that was in the herd,  
And she shot him through side and side.  
By the faith of my body, said bold Robin Hood,  
I never saw woman like thee;  
And com'st thou from east, or com'st thou from west,  
Thou needst not beg venison of me.  
However, along to my bower you shall go,  
And taste of a forrester's meat:  
And when we came thither we found as good cheer  
As any man needs for to eat.  
For there was hot venison, and warden pies cold,  
Cream clouted, and honey-combs plenty;  
And the servitors they were, besides Little John,  
Good yeomen, at least four and twenty.

**[157]**

Clorinda said, Tell me your name, gentle sir:  
And he said, 'Tis bold Robin Hood:

Squire Gamwel's my uncle, but all my delight  
Is to dwell in the merry Sherwood;  
For 'tis a fine life, and 'tis void of all strife.  
So 'tis, sir, Clorinda reply'd.  
But oh! said bold Robin, how sweet would it be,  
If Clorinda would be my bride!  
She blusht at the motion; yet, after a pause,  
Said, Yes, sir, and with all my heart.  
Then let us send for a priest, said Robin Hood,  
And be married before we do part.  
But she said, It may not be so, gentle sir,  
For I must be at Titbury feast;  
And if Robin Hood will go thither with me,  
I'll make him the most welcome guest.  
Said Robin Hood, Reach me that buck, Little John,  
For I'll go along with my dear;  
And bid my yeomen kill six brace of bucks,  
And meet me to-morrow just here.  
Before he had ridden five Staffordshire miles,  
Eight yeomen, that were too bold,  
Bid Robin Hood stand, and deliver his buck:  
A truer tale never was told.

[158]

I will not, faith, said bold Robin; come, John,  
Stand by me, and we'll beat 'em all.  
Then both drew their swords, and so cut 'em, and slasht 'em,  
That five out of them did fall.  
The three that remain'd call'd to Robin for quarter,  
And pitiful John begg'd their lives:  
When John's boon was granted, he gave them good counsel,  
And sent them all home to their wives.  
This battle was fought near to Titbury town,  
When the bagpipes baited the bull;  
I'm the king of the fiddlers, and I swear 'tis truth,  
And I call him that doubts it a gull: [287]  
For I saw them fighting, and fiddled the while;  
And Clorinda sung "Hey derry down!  
The bumkins are beaten, put up thy sword, Bob,  
And now let's dance into the town."  
Before we came in we heard a great shouting,  
And all that were in it look'd madly;  
For some were on bull-back, some dancing a morris,  
And some singing *Arthur-a-Bradley*. [288] [159]  
And there we see Thomas, our justices clerk,  
And Mary, to whom he was kind;  
For Tom rode before her, and call'd Mary madam,  
And kiss'd her full sweetly behind:  
And so may your worships. But we went to dinner,  
With Thomas and Mary, and Nan;  
They all drank a health to Clorinda, and told her,  
Bold Robin Hood was a fine man.  
When dinner was ended, sir Roger, the parson



Of Dubbridge, was sent for in haste:  
He brought his mass-book, and he bad them take hands,  
    And joy'n'd them in marriage full fast.  
And then, as bold Robin Hood and his sweet bride  
    Went hand in hand to the green bower,  
The birds sung with pleasure in merry Sherwood,  
    And 'twas a most joyful hour.  
And when Robin came in sight of the bower,  
    Where are my yeomen? said he:  
And Little John answer'd, Lo, yonder they stand,  
    All under the green-wood-tree.  
Then a garland they brought her by two and by two,  
    And plac'd them all on the bride's head:  
The music struck up, and we all fell to dance,  
    'Till the bride and bridegroom were a-bed.

[160]

And what they did there must be counsel to me,  
    Because they lay long the next day;  
And I had haste home, but I got a good piece  
    Of bride-cake, and so came away.  
Now, out, alas! I had forgotten to tell ye,  
    That marry'd they were with a ring;  
And so will Nan Knight, or be buried a maiden:  
    And now let us pray for the king;  
That he may get children, and they may get more,  
    To govern and do us some good:  
And then I'll make ballads in Robin Hood's bower  
    And sing 'em in merry Sherwood.



[161]

## II. ROBIN HOOD'S PROGRESS TO NOTTINGHAM.↵



From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood. It is there said to go  
 “To the tune of Bold Robin Hood;” and the chorus is repeated in every stanza. To the above  
 title are added the following doggerel lines:

Where hee met with fifteen forresters all on a row,  
 And hee desired of them some news for to know,  
 But with crosse grain’d words they did him thwart,  
 For which at last hee made them smart.  
 ROBIN HOOD he was and a tall young man,

*Derry derry down,*

And fifteen winters old;  
 And Robin Hood he was a proper young man,  
 Of courage stout and bold.

*Hey down, derry derry down. [162]*

Robin hee[1] would and to fair Nottingham,  
 With the general for to dine;  
 There was hee aware of fifteen forrestèrs,  
 And a drinking bear, ale, and wine.  
 What news? What news? said bold Robin Hood.  
 “What news fain wouldest thou know?”  
 Our king hath provided a shooting match,  
 And I’m ready with my bow.  
 We hold it in scorn, said the forrestèrs,  
 That ever a boy so young  
 Should bear a bow before our king,  
 That’s not able to draw one string.  
 I’le hold you twenty marks, said bold Robin Hood,  
 By the leave of our lady,  
 That I’le hit a mark a hundred rod,  
 And I’le cause a hart to dye.  
 We’l hold you twenty mark, then said the forrestèrs,  
 By the leave of our lady,  
 Thou hit’st not the marke a hundred rod,  
 Nor causest a hart to dye.  
 Robin he [289] bent up a noble bow,  
 And a broad arrow he let flye,

He hit the mark a hundred rod,  
And he caused a hart to dye.

[163]

Some say hee brake ribs one or two,  
And some say hee brake three;  
The arrow within the hart would not abide,  
But it glanced in two or three.  
The hart did skip, and the hart did leap,  
And the hart lay on the ground;  
The wager is mine, said bold Robin Hood,  
If't were for a thousand pound.  
The wager's none of thine, then said the forresters,  
Although thou beest in haste;  
Take up thy bow, and get thee hence,  
Lest wee thy sides do baste.  
Robin Hood hee took up his noble bow,  
And his broad arrows all amain;  
And Robin he[1] laught, and begun [for] to smile,  
As hee went over the plain.  
Then Robin he[1] bent his noble bow,  
And his broad arrows he let flye,  
Till fourteen of these fifteen forresters  
Upon the ground did lye.  
He that did this quarrel first begin  
Went tripping over the plain;  
But Robin he [290] bent his noble bow,  
And hee fetcht him back again.

[164]

You said I was no archer, said Robin Hood,  
But say so now again:  
With that he sent another arrow,  
That split his head in twain.  
You have found mee an archer, saith Robin Hood,  
Which will make your wives for to wring,  
And wish that you had never spoke the word,  
That I could not draw one string.  
The people that lived in fair Nottingham  
Came running out amain,  
Supposing to have taken bold Robin Hood,  
With the forresters that were slain.  
Some lost legs, and some lost arms,  
And some did lose their blood;  
But Robin hee took up his noble bow,  
And is gone to the merry green wood.  
They carried these forresters into fair Nottingham,  
As many there did know;  
They dig'd them graves in their church-yard,  
And they buried them all a-row.

\*.\* The paragraph of which the following is an extract appeared in the evening paper intitled "The Star," April 23, 1796: "A few days ago as some labourers were digging in a garden at Fox-lane, near Nottingham, they discovered six human skeletons entire, deposited

in regular order side by side, supposed [165] to be part of the fifteen foresters that were killed by Robin Hood. Near the above place anciently stood a church, built in the early ages of Christianity, dedicated to St. Michael, which was totally demolished at the Reformation. . . . No doubt but the bones in question were properly buried in St. Michael's churchyard. The proprietors of the garden humanely ordered the pit where the bones were found to be filled up, being unwilling to disturb the relics of humanity and the ashes of the dead."



[166]

### III. THE JOLLY PINDER OF WAKEFIELD, WITH ROBIN HOOD, SCARLET, AND JOHN. ↵



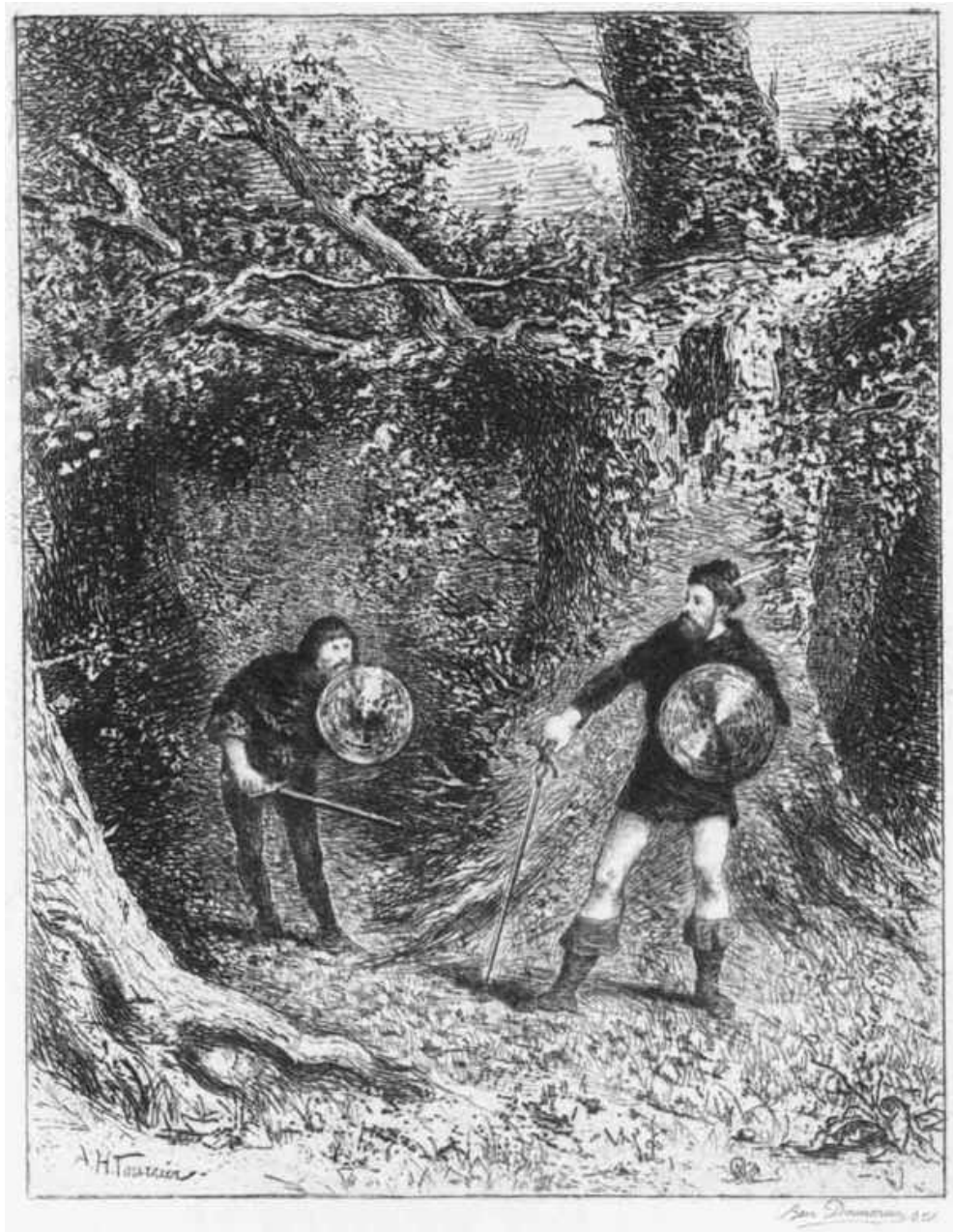
From an old black letter copy in Anthony a Wood's collection, compared with two others in the British Museum, one in black letter. It should be sung "To an excellent tune," which has not been recovered.

Several lines of this ballad are quoted in the two old plays of the “Downfall” and “Death of Robert, Earle of Huntington,” 1601, 4to, b. 1., but acted many years before. It is also alluded to in Shakespeare’s *Merry Wives of Windsor*, act i. scene 1, and again in his *Second Part of King Henry IV.*, act v. scene 3.

In 1557 certain “ballets” are entered on the books of the Stationers’ Company “to John Wallye and Mrs. Toye,” one of which is entitled “Of wakefyld and a grene:” meaning apparently the ballad here reprinted.

[167]

In Wakefield there lives a jolly pindèr,  
    In Wakefield all on a green,  
    In Wakefield all on a green:  
There is neither knight nor squire, said the pindèr,  
    Nor baron that is so bold,  
    Nor baron that is so bold,  
Dare make a trespass to the town of Wakefield,  
    But his pledge goes to the pifold, &c.  
All this beheard three witty young men,  
    ’Twas Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John;  
With that they espy’d the jolly pindèr,  
    As he sat under a thorn.  
Now turn again, turn again, said the pindèr,  
    For a wrong way you have gone;  
For you have forsaken the kings highway,  
    And made a path over the corn.  
O that were a shame, said jolly Robin,  
    We being three, and thou but one.  
The pinder leapt back then thirty good foot,  
    ’Twas thirty good foot and one.  
He leaned his back fast unto a thorn,  
And his foot against a stone, [168]  
And there he fought a long summers day,  
    A summers day so long,  
Till that their swords on their broad bucklèrs  
    Were broke fast into their hands. [291]  
Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said bold Robin Hood,  
    And my merry men every one;  
For this is one of the best pindèrs,  
    That ever I tryed with sword.  
And wilt thou forsake thy pinders craft,  
    And live in the green-wood with me?  
“At Michaelmas next my cov’nant comes out,  
    When every man gathers his fee;  
Then I’le take my blew blade all in my hand,  
    And plod to the green-wood with thee.”  
Hast thou either meat or drink, said Robin Hood,  
    For my merry men and me?  
I have both bread and beef, said the pindèr,  
    And good ale of the best.  
And that is meat good enough, said Robin Hood,  
    For such unbidden ‘guests.’



ROBIN HOOD AND THE PINDER.

[169]

“O wilt thou forsake the pinder his craft,  
    And go to the green-wood with me?  
Thou shalt have a livery twice in the year,  
    The one green, the other brown.”  
“If Michaelmas day was come and gone,  
    And my master had paid me my fee,  
Then would I set as little by him,  
    As my master doth by me.”



[170]

#### IV. ROBIN HOOD AND THE BISHOP, ↵



1066.

“Shewing how Robin Hood went to an old woman’s house and changed cloaths with her to scape from the bishop; and how he robbed the bishop of all his gold, and made him sing a mass. To the tune of Robin Hood and the Stranger.” From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood.

Come, gentlemen all, and listen awhile,

*Hey down, down, an a down,*

And a story ile to you unfold;  
Ile tell you how Robin Hood served the bishop,  
When he robbed him of his gold.

[17B1]

As it fell out on a sun-shining day,

When Phœbus was in 'his' prime,  
Then Robin Hood, that archer good,  
    In mirth would spend some time.  
And as he walk'd the forrest along,  
    Some pastime for to spy,  
There was he aware of a proud bishòp,  
    And all his company.  
O what shall I do, said Robin Hood then,  
    If the bishop he doth take me?  
No mercy he'l show unto me, I know,  
    But hanged I shall be.  
Then Robin was stout, and turned him about,  
    And a little house there he did spy;  
And to an old wife, for to save his life,  
    He loud began for to cry.  
Why, who art thou? said the old womàn,  
    Come tell to me for good.  
"I am an out-law, as many do know,  
    My name it is Robin Hood;  
And yonder's the bishop and all his men,  
    And if that I taken be,  
Then day and night he'l work my spight,  
    And hanged I shall be."

[172]

If thou be Robin Hood, said the old wife,  
    As thou 'dost' seem to be,  
I'le for thee provide, and thee I will hide,  
    From the bishop and his company.  
For I remember, 'one' Saturday night,  
    Thou brought me both shoos and hose;  
Therefore I'le provide thy person to hide,  
    And keep thee from thy foes.  
"Then give me soon thy coat of gray,  
    And take thou my mantle of green;  
Thy spindle and twine unto me resign,  
    And take thou my arrows so keen."  
And when Robin Hood was so araid,  
    He went straight to his company,  
With his spindle and twine, he oft lookt behind,  
    For the bishop and his company.  
O who is yonder, quoth little John,  
    That now comes over the lee?  
An arrow I will at her let flie,  
    So like an old witch looks she.  
O hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood then,  
    And shoot not thy arrows so keen;  
I am Robin Hood, thy master good,  
    And quickly it shall be seen.

[173]

The bishop he came to the old womans house,  
    And called, with furious mood,



Come let me soon see, and bring unto me  
That traitor Robin Hood.  
The old woman he set on a milk-white steed,  
Himselfe on a dapple gray;  
And for joy he had got Robin Hood,  
He went laughing all the way.  
But as they were riding the forrest along,  
The bishop he 'chanc'd' for to see  
A hundred brave bowmen bold,  
Stand under the green-wood tree.  
O who is yonder, the bishop then said,  
That's ranging within yonder wood?  
Marry, says the old woman, I think it to be  
A man call'd Robin Hood.  
Why, who art thou, the bishop he said,  
Which I have here with me?  
"Why, I am an old woman, thou cuckoldly bishop,  
Lift up my leg and see."  
Then woe is me, the bishop he said,  
That ever I saw this day!  
He turn'd him about, but Robin stout  
Call'd him, and bid him stay.

[174]

Then Robin took hold of the bishop's horse,  
And ty'd him fast to a tree;  
Then Little John smil'd his master upon,  
For joy of that company.  
Robin Hood took his mantle from's back,  
And spread it upon the ground,  
And out of the bishops portmantle he  
Soon told five hundred pound.  
Now let him go, said Robin Hood.  
Said little John, That may not be;  
For I vow and protest he shall sing us a mass,  
Before that he goe from me.  
Then Robin Hood took the bishop by the hand,  
And bound him fast to a tree,  
And made him sing a mass, god wot,  
To him and his yeomandree.  
And then they brought him through the wood,  
And set him on his dapple gray,  
And gave him the tail within his hand,  
And bade him for Robin Hood pray.

[175]

## V. ROBIN HOOD AND THE BUTCHER.↵



From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony Wood. The tune is “Robin Hood and the Begger.”

Come, all you brave gallants, listen awhile,

*With hey down, down, an a down,*

That are ‘this bower’ [\[292\]](#) within;

For of Robin Hood, that archer good,

*A song I intend for to sing.*

Upon a time it chanced so,

Bold Robin in [the] forrest did ‘spy

A jolly butchèr, with a bonny fine mare,

*With his flesh to the market did hye.*

**[176]**

Good morrow, good fellow, said jolly Robìn,

*What food hast [thou], tell unto me?*

Thy trade to me tell, and where thou dost dwell,

*For I like well thy company.*

The butcher he answer’d jolly Robin,

*No matter where I dwell;*

For a butcher I am, and to Nottingham

*I am going, my flesh to sell.*

What is [the] price of thy flesh? said jolly Robìn,

*Come tell it soon unto me;*

And the price of thy mare, be she never so dear,

*For a butcher fain would I be.*

The price of my flesh, the butcher repli’d,

*I soon will tell unto thee;*

With my bonny mare, and they are not too dear,

*Four mark thou must give unto me.*

Four mark I will give me, saith jolly Robin,

*Four mark it shall be thy fee;*

The mony come count, and let me mount,

*For a butcher I fain would be.*

Now Robin he is to Nottingham gone,

*His butchers trade to begin;*

With good intent to the sheriff he went,

And there he took up his inn.

[177]

When other butchers they opened their meat,  
    Bold Robin he then begun;  
But how for to sell he knew not well,  
    For a butcher he was but young.  
When other butchers no meat could sell,  
    Robin got both gold and fee;  
For he sold more meat for one peny  
    Then others could do for three.  
But when he sold his meat so fast,  
    No butcher by him could thrive;  
For he sold more meat for one peny  
    Than others could do for five.  
Which made the butchers of Nottingham  
    To study as they did stand,  
Saying, Surely he 'is' some prodigal,  
    That hath sold his fathers land.  
The butchers stepped to jolly Robin,  
    Acquainted with him for to be;  
Come, brother, one said, we be all of one trade,  
    Come, will you go dine with me?  
Accurst of his heart, said jolly Robin,  
    That a butcher doth deny;  
I will go with you, my brethren true,  
    As fast as I can hie.

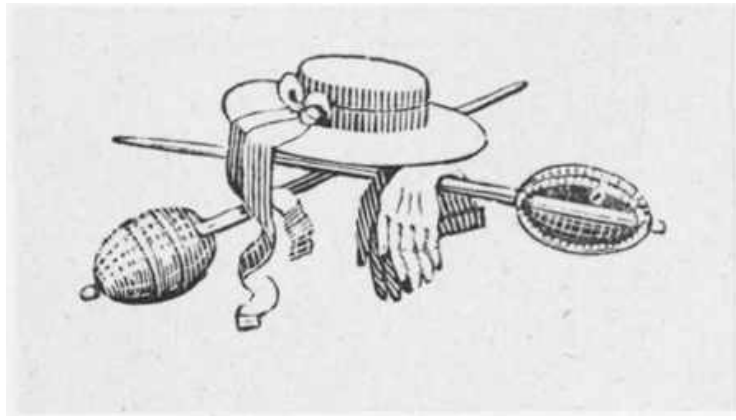
[178]

But when to the sheriffs house they came.  
    To dinner they hied apace,  
And Robin Hood he the man must be  
    Before them all to say grace.  
Pray god bless us all, said jolly Robìn,  
    And our meat within this place;  
A cup of sack so good will nourish our blood  
    And so I do end my grace.  
Come fill us more wine, said jolly Robìn,  
    Let us be merry while we do stay;  
For wine and good cheer, be it never so dear,  
    I vow I the reckning will pay.  
Come, 'brothers,' be merry, said jolly Robìn,  
    Let us drink, and never give ore;  
For the shot I will pay, ere I go my way,  
    If it cost me five pounds and more.  
This is a mad blade, the butchers then said.  
    Saies the sheriff, He is some prodigal,  
That some land has sold for silver and gold,  
    And now he doth mean to spend all.  
Hast thou any horn beasts, the sheriff repli'd,  
    Good fellow, to sell unto me?  
"Yes, that I have, good master sheriff,  
    I have hundreds two or three, [179]

And a hundred aker of good free land,  
If you please it to see:  
And Ile make you as good assurance of it,  
As ever my father made me.”  
The sheriff he saddled his good palfrèy,  
And, with three hundred pound in gold,  
Away he went with bold Robin Hood,  
His horned beasts to behold.  
Away then the sheriff and Robin did ride,  
To the forrest of merry Sherwood,  
Then the sheriff did say, God bless us this day,  
From a man they call Robin Hood!  
But when a little farther they came,  
Bold Robin he chanced to spy  
A hundred head of good red deer,  
Come tripping the sheriff full nigh.  
“How like you my horn’d beasts, good master sheriff?  
They be fat and fair for to see.”  
“I tell thee, good fellow, I would I were gone,  
For I like not thy company.”  
Then Robin set his horn to his mouth,  
And blew but blasts three;  
Then quickly anon there came Little John,  
And all his company.

[180]

What is your will, master? then said Little John,  
Good master, come tell unto me.  
“I have brought hither the sheriff of Nottingham  
This day to dine with thee.”  
He is welcome to me, then said Little John,  
I hope he will honestly pay;  
I know he has gold, if it be but well told,  
Will serve us to drink a whole day.  
Then Robin took his mantle from his back,  
And laid it upon the ground;  
And out of the sheriffs portmantle  
He told three hundred pound.  
Then Robin he brought him thorow the wood,  
And set him on his dapple gray;  
“O have me commended to your wife at home:”  
So Robin went laughing away.



[181]

**VI. ROBIN HOOD AND THE TANNER; OR, ROBIN HOOD MET  
WITH HIS MATCH: [↪](#)**



“A merry and pleasant song relating the gallant and fierce combat fought between Arthur Bland, a tanner of Nottingham, and Robin Hood, the greatest and most noblest archer of England. Tune is, Robin Hood and the Stranger.” From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood.

In Nottingham there lives a jolly tannèr,  
    *With a hey down, down, a down, down,*  
His name is Arthur-a-Bland;  
There is nere a squire in Nottinghamshire  
    Dare bid bold Arthur stand.

[182]

With a long pike-staff upon his shouldèr,  
    So well he can clear his way;  
By two and by three he makes them to flee,  
    For he hath no list to stay.  
And as he went forth, in a summers morning,  
    Into the ‘forrest of merry’ Sherwood,  
To view the red deer, that range here and there,  
    There met he with bold Robin Hood.

As soon as bold Robin 'he did' [293] espy,  
He thought some sport he would make,  
Therefore out of hand he bid him to stand,  
And thus to him 'he' spake:  
Why, what art thou, thou bold fellòw,  
That ranges so boldly here?  
In sooth, to be brief, thou lookst like a thief,  
That comes to steal our kings deer.  
For I am a keeper in this forrest,  
The king puts me in trust  
To look to his deer, that range here and there;  
Therefore stay thee I must.  
"If thou beest a keeper in this forrèst,  
And hast such a great command,  
'Yet' thou must have more partakers in store,  
Before thou make me to stand."

[183]

"Nay, I have no more partakers in store,  
Or any that I do not need;  
But I have a staff of another oke graff,  
I know it will do the deed.  
For thy sword and thy bow I care not a straw,  
Nor all thine arrows to boot;  
If I get a knop upon the bare scop,  
Thou can'st as well sh—e as shoote."  
Speak cleanly, good fellow, said jolly Robìn,  
And give better terms to me;  
Else Ile thee correct for thy neglect,  
And make thee more mannerly.  
Marry gep with a wenion! quod Arthur-a-Bland,  
Art thou such a goodly man?  
I care not a fig for thy looking so big,  
Mend thou thyself where thou can.  
Then Robin Hood he unbuckled his belt,  
And laid down his bow so long;  
He took up a staff of another oke graff,  
That was both stiff and strong.  
Ile yield to thy weapon, said jolly Robin,  
Since thou wilt not yield to mine;  
For I have a staff of another oke graff,  
Not half a foot longer then thine.

[184]

But let me measure, said jolly Robìn,  
Before we begin our fray;  
For I'le not have mine to be longer then thine,  
For that will be counted foul play.  
I pass not for length, bold Arthur reply'd,  
My staff is of oke so free;  
Eight foot and a half, it will knock down a calf,  
And I hope it will knock down thee.  
Then Robin could no longer forbear,

He gave him such a knock,  
Quickly and soon the blood came down,  
Before it was ten a clock.  
Then Arthur he soon recovered himself,  
And gave him such a knock on the crown,  
That from every side of bold Robin Hoods head,  
The blood came trickling down.  
Then Robin raged like a wild boar,  
As soon as he saw his own blood:  
Then Bland was in hast he laid on so fast,  
As though he had been cleaving of wood.  
And about, and about, and about they went,  
Like two wild bores in a chase,  
Striving to aim each other to maim,  
Leg, arm, or any other place.

[185]

And knock for knock they lustily dealt,  
Which held for two hours and more;  
That all the wood rang at every bang,  
They ply'd their work so sore.  
Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,  
And let thy quarrel fall;  
For here we may thrash our bones all to mesh,  
And get no coyn at all:  
And in the forrest of merry Sherwood  
Heerafter thou shalt be free.  
“God a mercy for ‘nought,’ my freedom I bought,  
I may thank my staff, and not thee.”  
What tradesman art thou? said jolly Robìn,  
Good fellow, I prithee me show;  
And also me tell, in what place thou dost dwell:  
For both of these fain would I know.  
I am a tanner, bold Arthur reply'd,  
In Nottingham long have I wrought;  
And if thou'lt come there, I vow and swear,  
I will tan thy hide for ‘nought.’  
God-a-mercy, good fellow, said jolly Robìn,  
Since thou art so kind and free;  
And if thou wilt tan my hide for ‘nought,’  
I will do as much for thee.

[186]

And if thou'lt forsake thy tanners trade,  
And live in the green wood with me,  
My name's Robin Hood, I swear by the ‘rood,’  
I will give thee both gold and fee.  
If thou be Robin Hood, bold Arthur reply'd,  
As I think well thou art,  
Then here's my hand, my name's Arthur-a-Bland,  
We two will never depart.  
But tell me, O tell me, where is Little John?  
Of him fain would I hear;

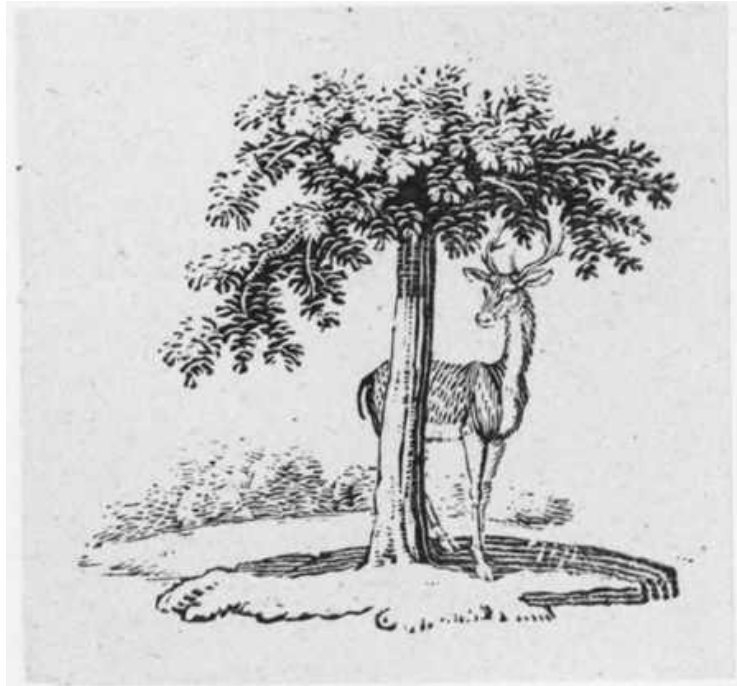
For we are alide by the mothers side,  
And he is my kinsman dear.  
Then Robin Hood blew on the beugle horn,  
He blew full lowd and shrill;  
But quickly anon appear'd Little John,  
Come tripping down a green hill;  
O what is the matter? then said Little John,  
Master, I pray you tell:  
Why do you stand with your staff in your hand?  
I fear all is not well.  
“O man I do stand, and he makes me to stand,  
The tanner that stands thee beside;  
He is a bonny blade, and master of his trade,  
For soundly he hath tan'd my hide.”

[187]

He is to be commended, then said Little John,  
If such a feat he can do;  
If he be so stout, we will have a bout,  
And he shall tan my hide too.  
Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,  
For as I do understand,  
He's a yeoman good, of thine own blood,  
For his name is Arthur-a-Bland.  
Then Little John threw his staff away,  
As far as he could it fling,  
And ran out of hand to Arthur-a-Bland,  
And about his neck did cling.  
With loving respect, there was no neglect,  
They were neither 'nice' nor coy,  
Each other did face with a lovely grace,  
And both did weep for joy.  
Then Robin Hood took 'them both' by the hands,  
And danc'd round about the oke tree:  
“For three merry men, and three merry men,  
And three merry men we be:  
And ever hereafter as long as we live,  
We three will be 'as' one;  
The wood it shall ring, and the old wife sing,  
Of Robin Hood, Arthur, and John.”

[188]





[189]

VII. ROBIN HOOD AND THE TINKER. ↵



From an old black letter copy in the library of Anthony a Wood. The full title is—

“A new song to drive away cold winter,  
Between Robin Hood and the jovial tinker:

How Robin by a wile  
The Tinker he did cheat;  
But at the length as you shall hear  
The Tinker did him beat;  
Whereby the same they did then so agree,  
They after liv'd in love and unity.  
To the tune of, In summer time.”

In summer time, when leaves grow green,  
*Down, a down, a down.*  
And birds sing on every tree,  
*Hey down, a down, a down.*

[190]

Robin Hood went to Nottingham,  
*Down, a down, a down.*  
As fast as hee could dree.  
*Hey down, a down, a down.*  
And as hee came to Nottingham,  
A tinker he did meet,  
And seeing him a lusty blade,  
He did him kindly greet.  
Where dost thou live? quoth Robin Hood,  
I pray thee now mee tell:  
Sad news I hear there is abroad,  
I fear all is not well.  
What is that news? the tinker said,  
Tell mee without delay:  
I am a tinker by my trade,  
And do live at Banburà.  
As for the news, quoth Robin Hood,  
It is but as I hear,  
Two tinkers were set ith' stocks,

For drinking ale and 'beer.'  
If that be all, the tinker he said,  
As I may say to you,  
Your news is not worth a f—t,  
Since that they all bee true.

[191]

For drinking good ale and 'beer,'  
You will not lose your part.  
No, by my faith, quoth Robin Hood,  
I love it with all my heart.  
What news abroad? quoth Robin Hood,  
Tell me what thou dost hear:  
Seeing thou goest from town to town,  
Some news thou need not fear.  
All the news I have, the tinker said,  
I hear it is for good,  
It is to seek a bold outlâw,  
Which they call Robin Hood.  
I have a warrand from the king,  
To take him where I can;  
If you can tell me where hee is,  
I will make you a man.  
The king would give a hundred pound  
That he could but him see;  
And if wee can but now him get,  
It will serve thee and mee.  
Let me see that warrant, said Robin Hood,  
Ile see if it bee right;  
And I will do the best I can  
For to take him this night.

[192]

That will I not, the tinker said,  
None with it I will trust;  
And where hee is if you'll not tell,  
Take him by force I must.  
But Robin Hood perceiving well  
How then the game would go,  
"If you would go to Nottingham,  
We shall find him I know."  
The tinker had a crab-tree staff,  
Which was both good and strong,  
Robin hee had a good strong blade;  
So they went both along.  
And when they came to Nottingham,  
There they both tooke their inn;  
And they called for ale and wine,  
To drink it was no sin.  
But ale and wine they drank so fast,  
That the tinker hee forgot  
What thing he was about to do;  
It fell so to his lot,

That, while the tinker fell asleep,  
    'Robin' made haste [294] away,  
And left the tinker in the lurch,  
    For the great shot to pay.

[193]

But when the tinker wakenèd,  
    And saw that he was gone,  
He call'd then even for his host,  
    And thus hee made his moan:  
I had a warrant from the king,  
    Which might have done me good,  
That is to take a bold outlâw,  
    Some call him Robin Hood:  
But now my warrant and mony's gone,  
    Nothing I have to pay;  
And he that promis'd to be my friend,  
    He is gone and fled away.  
That friend you tell on, said the host,  
    They call him Robin Hood;  
And when that first hee met with you,  
    He ment you little good.  
"Had I but known it had been hee,  
    When that I had him here,  
Th' one of us should have tri'd our might  
    Which should have paid full dear.  
In the mean time I will away,  
    No longer here Ile bide,  
But I will go and seek him out,  
    Whatever do me betide.

[194]

But one thing I would gladly know,  
    What here I have to pay."  
Ten shillings just, then said the host,  
    "Ile pay without delay;  
Or elce take here my working-bag,  
    And my good hammer too;  
And if that I light but on the knave,  
    I will then soon pay you."  
The onely way, then said the host,  
    And not to stand in fear,  
Is to seek him among the parks,  
    Killing of the kings deer.  
The tinker hee then went with speed,  
    And made then no delay,  
Till he had found 'bold' Robin Hood,  
    That they might have a fray.  
At last hee spy'd him in a park,  
    Hunting then of the deer.  
What knave is that, quoth Robin Hood,  
    That doth come mee so near?  
No knave, no knave, the tinker said,

And that you soon shall know;  
Whether of us hath done any wrong,  
My crab-tree staff shall show.

[195]

Then Robin drew his gallant blade,  
Made then of trusty steel:  
But the tinker he laid on so fast,  
That he made Robin reel.  
Then Robins anger did arise,  
He fought right manfully,  
Until he had made the tinkèr  
Almost then fit to fly.  
With that they had a bout again,  
They ply'd their weapons fast;  
The tinker threshed his bones so sore,  
He made him yeeld at last.  
A boon, a boon, Robin hee cryes,  
If thou wilt grant it mee.  
Before I do it, the tinker said,  
Ile hang thee on this tree.  
But the tinker looking him about,  
Robin his horn did blow;  
Then came unto him Little John,  
And William Scadlock too.  
What is the matter, quoth Little John,  
You sit on th' highway side?  
"Here is a tinker that stands by,  
That hath paid well my hide."

[196]

That tinker then, said Little John,  
Fain that blade I would see,  
And I would try what I could do,  
If hee'l do as much for me.  
But Robin hee then wish'd them both  
They should the quarrel cease,  
"That henceforth wee may bee as one,  
And ever live in peace.  
And for the jovial tinkers part,  
A hundred pounds Ile give  
In th' year [for] to maintain him on,  
As long as he doth live.  
In manhood he is a mettled man,  
And a mettle man by trade;  
Never thought I that any man  
Should have made mee so afraid.  
And if hee will bee one of us,  
Wee will take all one fare;  
And whatsoever wee do get  
He shall have his full share."  
So the tinker was content  
With them to go along,

And with them a part to take:

And so I end my song.

[197]

### VIII. ROBIN HOOD AND ALLIN 'A' DALE: ↵



“Or a pleasant relation how a young gentleman, being in love with a young damsel, ‘she’ was taken from him to be an old knight’s bride: and how Robin Hood, pitying the young man’s case, took her from the old knight, when they were going to be married, and restored her to her own love again. To a pleasant northern tune, Robin Hood in the green-wood stood.

Bold Robin Hood he did the young man right,  
And took the damsel from the doting knight.”

From an old black letter copy in Major Pearson’s collection.

Come listen to me, you gallants so free,  
All you that love mirth for to hear,  
And I will tell you of a bold outlâw,  
That lived in Nottinghamshire.

[198]

As Robin Hood in the forest stood,  
All under the green wood tree,  
There he was aware of a brave young man,  
As fine as fine might be.  
The youngster was cloathed in scarlet red,  
In scarlet fine and gay;  
And he did frisk it over the plain,  
And chanted a round-de-lay.  
As Robin Hood next morning stood  
Amongst the leaves so gay,  
There did [he] espy the same young man  
Come drooping along the way.  
The scarlet he wore the day before  
It was clean cast away;  
And at every step he fetcht a sigh,

“Alack and a well a day;”  
Then stepped forth brave Little John,  
And ‘Midge’ [295] the millers son,  
Which made the young man bend his bow,  
When as he see them come.  
Stand off, stand off, the young man said,  
What is your will with me?  
“You must come before our master straight,  
Under yon green wood tree.”

[199]

And when he came bold Robin before,  
Robin askt him courteously,  
O, hast thou any money to spare  
For my merry men and me?  
I have no money, the young man said,  
But five shillings and a ring;  
And that I have kept this seven long years,  
To have it at my wedding.  
Yesterday I should have married a maid,  
But she from [296] me was tane,  
And chosen to be an old knights delight,  
Whereby my poor heart is slain.  
What is thy name? then said Robin Hood,  
Come tell me, without any fail.  
By the faith of my body, then said the young man,  
My name it is Allin a Dale.  
What will thou give me, said Robin Hood,  
In ready gold or fee,  
To help thee to thy true love again,  
And deliver her unto thee?  
I have no money, then quoth the young man,  
No ready gold nor fee,  
But I will swear upon a book  
Thy true servant for to be.

[200]

“How many miles is it to thy true love?  
Come tell me without guile.”  
By the faith of my body, then said the young man,  
It is but five little mile.  
Then Robin he hasted over the plain,  
He did neither stint nor lin,  
Until he came unto the church,  
Where Allin should keep his wedding.  
What hast thou here? the bishop then said,  
I prithee now tell unto me.  
I am a bold harper, quoth Robin Hood,  
And the best in the north country.  
O welcome, O welcome, the bishop he said,  
That musick best pleaseth me.  
You shall have no musick, quoth Robin Hood,  
Till the bride and the bridegroom I see.

With that came in a wealthy knight,  
Which was both grave and old,  
And after him a finikin lass,  
Did shine like the glistering gold.  
This is not a fit match, quod bold Robin Hood,  
That you do seem to make here,  
For since we are come into the church,  
The bride shall chuse her own dear.

[201]

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,  
And blew blasts two or three;  
When four and twenty bowmen bold  
Came leaping over the lee.  
And when they came into the church-yard,  
Marching all on a row,  
The first man was Allin a Dale,  
To give bold Robin his bow.  
This is thy true love, Robin he said,  
Young Allin, as I hear say,  
And you shall be married at 'this' same time,  
Before we depart away.  
That shall not be, the bishop he said,  
For thy word shall not stand;  
They shall be three times askt in the church,  
As the law is of our land.  
Robin Hood pull'd off the bishops coat,  
And put it upon Little John;  
By the faith of my body, then Robin said,  
This 'cloth' does make thee a man.  
When Little John went into the quire,  
The people began to laugh;  
He askt them seven times in the church,  
Lest three times should not be enough.

[202]

Who gives me this maid? said Little John.  
Quoth Robin Hood, That do I;  
And he that takes her from Allin a Dale,  
Full dearly he shall her buy.  
And thus having ended this merry wedding,  
The bride lookt like a queen;  
And so they return'd to the merry green-wood,  
Amongst the leaves so green.





[203]

### IX. ROBIN HOOD AND THE SHEPHERD. ↩



“Shewing how Robin Hood, Little John, and the Shepherd fought a sore combate.

The shepherd fought for twenty pound, and Robin for bottle and bag,  
But the shepherd stout, gave them the rout, so sore they could not wag.  
Tune is, Robin Hood and Queen Katherine.”

From two old black letter copies, one of them in the collection of Anthony a Wood, the other in that of Thomas Pearson, Esq. At the head of the former is a fine cut of Robin Hood.

All gentlemen, and yeomen good,

*Down, a down, a down, a down,*

I wish you to draw near;

For a story of gallant bold Robin Hood

Unto you I will declare.

*Down a, &c.* [204]

As Robin Hood walkt the forrest along,

Some pastime for to spie,

There he was aware of a jolly shephèrd,

That on the ground did lie.

Arise, arise, cried jolly Robin,

And now come let me see

What's in thy bag and bottle; I say,

Come tell it unto me.

“What's that to thee? thou proud fellòw,

Tell me as I do stand:

What hast thou to do with by bag and bottle?

Let me see thy command.”

“My sword, which hangeth by my side,

Is my command I know;

Come, and let me taste of thy bottle,

Or it may breed thy woe.”

“The devil a drop, thou proud fellòw,

Of my bottle thou shalt see,

Until thy valour here be tried,

Whether thou wilt fight or flee.”

What shall we fight for? cries Robin Hood,

Come tell it soon to me;

Here is twenty pound in good red gold,

Win it and take it thee.

[205]

The shepherd stood all in a maze,

And knew not what to say:

“I have no money, thou proud fellòw,

But bag and bottle ile lay.”

“I am content, thou shepherd swain,

Fling them down on the ground;

But it will breed thee mickle pain,

To win my twenty pound.”

“Come draw thy sword, thou proud fellòw,

Thou standest too long to prate;

This hook of mine shall let thee know,

A coward I do hate.”

So they fell to it, full hardy and sore,

It was on a summers day,

From ten till four in the afternoon

The shepherd held him play.

Robins buckler prov'd his 'chief' [297] defence,

And saved him many a bang,

For every blow the shepherd gave

Made Robins sword cry twang.  
Many a sturdie blow the shepherd gave,  
And that bold Robin found,  
Till the blood ran trickling from his head,  
Then he fell to the ground.

[206]

“Arise, arise, thou proud fellow,  
And thou shalt have fair play,  
If thou wilt yield before thou go,  
That I have won the day.”  
A boon, a boon, cry’d bold Robìn,  
If that a man thou be,  
Then let me have my beugle horn,  
And blow but blasts three.  
Then said the shepherd to bold Robìn,  
To that I will agree;  
‘For’ if thou shouldst blow till to-morrow morn,  
I scorn one foot to flee.  
Then Robin he set his horn to his mouth,  
And he blew with mickle main,  
Until he espied Little John  
Come tripping over the plain.  
“O who is yonder, thou proud fellow,  
That comes down yonder hill?”  
“Yonder is John, bold Robin Hoods man,  
Shall fight with thee thy fill.”  
What is the matter? saies Little John,  
Master, come tell to me.  
My case is bad, cries Robin Hood,  
For the shepherd hath conquered me.

[207]

I am glad of that, cries Little John:  
Shepherd, turn thou to me;  
For a bout with thee I mean to have,  
Either come fight or flee.  
“With all my heart, thou proud fellow,  
For it never shall be said  
That a shepherds hook of thy sturdy look  
Will one jot be dismaied.”  
So they fell to it, full hardy and sore,  
Striving for victorie.  
Ile know, says John, ere we give o’er,  
Whether thou wilt fight or flee.  
The shepherd gave John a sturdie blow,  
With his hook under the chin.  
Beshrew thy heart, said little John,  
Thou basely dost begin.  
Nay, that is nothing, said the shephèrd,  
Either yield to me the daie,  
Or I will bang thy back and sides,  
Before thou goest thy way.

What! dost thou think, thou proud fellow,  
That thou canst conquer me?  
Nay, thou shalt know, before thou go,  
Ile fight before ile flee.

[208]

Again the shepherd laid on him,  
‘Just as he first begun.’  
Hold thy hand, cry’d bold Robin,  
I will yield the wager won.  
With all my heart, said Little John,  
To that I will agree;  
For he is the flower of shepherd swains,  
The like I did never see.  
Thus have you heard of Robin Hood,  
Also of Little John;  
How a shepherd swain did conquer them:  
The like was never known.



[209]

**X. ROBIN HOOD AND THE CURTALL FRYER.** [↪](#)



From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood; corrected by a much earlier one in the Pepysian Library, printed by H. Gosson, about the year 1610; compared with a later one in the same collection. The full title is: "The famous battell betweene Robin Hood and the curtall fryer. To a New Northerne tune."

"The curtail fryer," Dr. Stukeley says, "is a cordelier, from the cord or rope which they wore round their wast, to whip themselves with. They were," adds he, "of the Franciscan order." Our fryer, however, is undoubtedly so called from his "curtall dogs," or curs, as we now say (Courtalt, F.) In fact, he is no fryer at all, but a monk of Fountains Abbey, which was of the Cistercian order.

[210]

In summer time, when leaves grow green,  
     And flowers are fresh and gay,  
 Robin Hood and his merry men  
     [They] were disposed to play.  
 Then some would leape, and some would runne,  
     And some would use artillery:  
 "Which of you can a good bow draw,  
     A good archèr for to be?  
 Which of you can kill a bucke,  
     Or who can kill a doe;  
 Or who can kill a hart of Greece  
     Five hundreth foot him fro?"  
 Will Scadlòcke he kild a bucke  
     And Midge he kild a doe;  
 And Little John kild a hart of Greece,  
     Five hundreth foot him fro.  
 Gods blessing on thy heart, said Robin Hood,  
     That hath such a shot for me;  
 I would ride my horse a hundred miles,  
     To find one could match thee.  
 That caused Will Scadlòcke to laugh,  
     He laught full heartily:  
 "There lives a curtall fryer in Fountaines-Abbey  
     Will beate both him and thee.

[211]

The curtall fryer in Fountaines-Abbey

Well can a strong bow draw,

He will beat you and your yeomèn,

Set them all on a row.”

Robin Hood he tooke a solemne oath,

It was by Mary free,

That he would neither eate nor drinke,

Till the fryer he did see.

Robin Hood put on his harnesse good,

On his head a cap of steel,

Broad sword and buckler by his side,

And they became him weele.

He tooke his bow into his hand,

It was made of a trusty tree,

With a sheafe of arrowes at his belt,

And to Fountaine-Dale went he.

And comming unto Fountaine-Dale,

No farther he would ride;

There he was aware of the curtall fryer,

Walking by the water side.

The fryer had on a harnesse good,

On his head a cap of steel,

Broad sword and buckler by his side,

And they became him weele.

[212]

Robin Hood lighted off his horse,

And tyed him to a thorne:

“Carry me over the water, thou curtall fryer,

Or else thy life’s forlorne.”

The fryer tooke Robin Hood on his backe,

Deepe water he did bestride,

And spake neither good word nor bad,

Till he came at the other side.

Lightly leapt Robin offe the fryers backe;

The fryer said to him againe,

Carry me over this water, [thou] fine fellòw,

Or it shall breed thy paine.

Robin Hood took the fryer on his backe,

Deepe water he did bestride,

And spake neither good word nor bad,

Till he came at the other side.

Lightly leapt the fryer off Robin Hoods backe,

Robin Hood said to him againe,

Carry me over this water, thou curtall fryer,

Or it shall breede thy pain.

The fryer tooke Robin on’s backe againe,

And stept in to the knee.

Till he came at the middle streame,

Neither good nor bad spake he, [213]

And comming to the middle streame,

There he threw Robin in:

“And chuse thee, chuse thee, fine fellòw,

Whether thou wilt sink or swim.”  
Robin Hood swam to a bush of broome,  
The fryer to a wigger-wand;  
Bold Robin Hood is gone to shore,  
And took his bow in his hand.  
One of his best arrowes under his belt  
To the fryer he let fly;  
The curtall fryer, with his steele bucklèr,  
Did put that arrow by.  
“Shoot on, shoot on, thou fine fellòw,  
Shoot as thou hast begun,  
If thou shoot here a summers day,  
Thy marke I will not shun.”  
Robin Hood shot passing well,  
Till his arrows all were gane;  
They tooke their swords and steele bucklèrs,  
They fought with might and maine,  
From ten o’th’ clock that [very] day,  
Till four i’ th’ afternoon;  
Then Robin Hood came to his knees,  
Of the fryer to beg a boone.

[214]

“A boone, a boone, thou curtall fryer,  
I beg it on my knee;  
Give me leave to set my horne to my mouth,  
And to blow blasts three.”  
That I will do, said the curtall fryer,  
Of my blasts I have no doubt;  
I hope thoult blow so passing well,  
Till both thy eyes fall out.  
Robin Hood set his horne to his mouth,  
He blew out blasts three;  
Halfe a hundreth yeomen, with bowes bent,  
Came raking over the lee.  
Whose men are these, said the fryer,  
That come so hastily?  
These men are mine, said Robin Hood;  
Fryer, what is that to thee?  
A boone, a boone, said the curtall fryer,  
The like I gave to thee;  
Give me leave to set my fist to my mouth,  
And to whute whues three.  
That will I doe, said Robin Hood,  
Or else I were to blame;  
Three whues in a fryers fist  
Would make me glad and faine.

[215]

The fryer set his fist to his mouth,  
And whuted whues three:  
Half a hundred good band-dogs  
Came running over the lee.

“Here’s for every man a dog,  
And I myselfe for thee.”  
Nay, by my faith, said Robin Hood,  
Fryer, that may not be.  
Two dogs at once to Robin Hood did goe,  
The one behind, the other before,  
Robin Hoods mantle of Lincolne greene  
Off from his backe they tore.  
And whether his men shot east or west,  
Or they shot north or south,  
The curtall dogs, so taught they were,  
They kept ‘the’ arrows in their mouth.  
Take up thy dogs, said Little John,  
Fryer, at my bidding be.  
Whose man art thou, said the curtall fryer,  
Comes here to prate with me?  
“I am Little John, Robin Hoods man,  
Fryer, I will not lie;  
If thou take not up thy dogs soone,  
I’le take up them and thee.”

[216]

Little John had a bow in his hand,  
He shot with might and main;  
Soon halfe a score of the fryers dogs  
Lay dead upon the plain.  
Hold thy hand, good fellow, said the curtall fryer,  
Thy master and I will agree;  
And we will have new orders taken,  
With all the hast may be.  
“If thou wilt forsake fair Fountaines-dale,  
And Fountaines-Abbey free,  
Every Sunday throwout the yeere,  
A noble shall be thy fee:  
And every holliday through the yeere,  
Changed shall thy garment be,  
If thou wilt goe to faire Nottinghàm,  
And there remaine with me.”  
This curtall fryer had kept Fountaines-dale  
Seven long yeeres and more,  
There was neither knight, lord, nor earle,  
Could make him yeeld before.





## XI. ROBIN HOOD AND THE STRANGER. ↩



1300.

From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood. The title now given to this ballad is that which it seems to have originally borne, having been foolishly altered to “Robin Hood newly revived.” The circumstances attending the second part will be explained in a note.

The tune is already inserted, at the end of “Rood Hood and the Tanner.”

Come listen awhile, you gentlemen all,  
*With a hey down, down, a down, down,*  
 That are this bower within,  
 For a story of gallant bold Robin Hood,  
 I purpose now to begin.

[218]

What time of day? quod Robin Hood then.  
 Quoth Little John, 'Tis in the prime.  
 “Why then we will to the green wood gang,  
 For we have no vittles to dine.”  
 As Robin Hood walkt the forrest along,  
 It was in the mid of the day,  
 There he was met of a deft young man,  
 As ever walkt on the way.  
 His doublet was of silk ‘tis said,  
 His stockings like scarlet shone;  
 And he walked on along the way,  
 To Robin Hood then unknown.  
 A herd of deer was in the bend,  
 All feeding before his face:  
 “Now the best of you ile have to my dinner,  
 And that in a little space.”  
 Now the stranger he made no mickle adoe,  
 But he bends and a right good bow,

And the best of all the herd he slew,  
Forty good yards him froe. [298]  
Well shot, well shot, quod Robin Hood then,  
That shot it was shot in time;  
And if thou wilt accept of the place,  
Thou shalt be a bold yeoman of mine.

[219]

Go play the chiven, the stranger said,  
Make haste and quickly go,  
Or with my fist, be sure of this,  
Ile give thee buffets sto'.  
Thou had'st not best buffet me, quod Robin Hood,  
For though I seem forlorn,  
Yet I have those will take my part,  
If I but blow my horn.  
Thou wast not best wind thy horn, the stranger said,  
Beest thou never so much in haste,  
For I can draw out a good broad sword,  
And quickly cut the blast.  
Then Robin Hood bent a very good bow,  
To shoot, and that he would fain;  
The stranger he bent a very good bow,  
To shoot at bold Robin again.  
Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, quod Robin Hood,  
To shoot it would be in vain;  
For if we should shoot the one at the other,  
The one of us may be slain.  
But let's take our swords and our broad bucklèrs,  
And gang under yonder tree,  
As I hope to be sav'd, the stranger he said,  
One foot I will not flee.

[220]

Then Robin Hood lent the stranger a blow,  
'Most scar'd him out of his wit:  
Thou never felt blow, the stranger he said,  
That shall be better quit.  
The stranger he drew out a good broad sword,  
And hit Robin on the crown,  
That from every haire of bold Robins head  
The blood ran trickling down.  
God a mercy, good fellow! quod Robin Hood then,  
And for this that thou hast done,  
Tell me, good fellow, what thou art,  
Tell me where thou doest won.  
The stranger then answered bold Robin Hood,  
Ile tell thee where I do dwell;  
In Maxwell town I was bred and born,  
My name is young Gamwell.  
For killing of my own fathers steward,  
I am forc'd to this English wood,  
And for to seek an uncle of mine,

Some call him Robin Hood.  
“But ‘art thou’ a cousin of Robin Hood then?  
The sooner we should have done.”  
As I hope to be sav’d, the stranger then said,  
I am his own sisters son.

[221]

But, lord! what kissing and courting was there,  
When these two cousins did greet!  
And they went all that summers day,  
And Little John did [not] meet.  
But when they met with Little John,  
He ‘unto them’ did say,  
O master, pray where have you been,  
You have tarried so long away?  
I met with a stranger, quod Robin Hood,  
Full sore he hath beaten me.  
Then I’le have a bout with him, quod Little John,  
And try if he can beat me.  
Oh [no], oh no, quoth Robin Hood then,  
Little John, it may [not] be so;  
For he is my own dear sisters son,  
And cousins I have no mo.  
But he shall be a bold yeoman of mine,  
My chief man next to thee;  
And I Robin Hood, and thou Little John,  
And ‘Scadlock’ he shall be.  
And weel be three of the bravest outlaws  
That live in the north country,  
If ‘you will’ hear more of bold Robin Hood,  
In ‘the’ second part it will be.

[222]

*[PART THE SECOND.\*]*

Now Robin Hood, Will Scadlock, and Little John,  
Are walking over the plain,  
With a good fat buck, which Will Scadlock  
With his strong bow had slain.

[223]

Jog on, jog on, cries Robin Hood,  
The day it runs full fast;  
For tho’ my nephew me a breakfast gave,  
I have not yet broke my fast.  
Then to yonder lodge let us take our way,  
I think it wondrous good,  
Where my nephew by my bold yeomèn  
Shall be welcom’d unto the green-wood.

[224]

With that he took ‘his’ bugle-horn,  
Full well he could it blow;  
Streight from the woods came marching down

One hundred tall fellows and mo.  
Stand, stand to your arms, says Will Scadlòck,  
Lo! the enemies are within ken.  
With that Robin Hood he laugh'd aloud,  
Crying, They are my bold yeomèn.  
Who, when they arriv'd, and Robin espy'd,  
Cry'd, Master, what is your will?  
We thought you had in danger been,  
Your horn did sound so shrill.  
Nay nay, now nay, quoth Robin Hood,  
The danger is past and gone;  
I would have you welcome my nephew here,  
That has paid me two for one.  
In feasting and sporting they passed the day,  
Till Phœbus sunk into the deep;  
Then each one to his quarters hy'd,  
His guard there for to keep.  
Long had they not walked within the green-wood,  
But Robin he soon espy'd,  
A [\[300\]](#) beautiful damsel all alone,  
That on a black palfrey did ride.

[225]

Her riding-suit was of a sable hew black,  
Cypress over her face,  
Through which her rose-like cheeks did blush,  
All with a comely grace.  
Come tell me the cause, thou pretty one,  
Quoth Robin, and tell me aright,  
From whence thou comest, and whither thou goest,  
All in this mournful plight?  
From London I came, the damsel reply'd,  
From London upon the Thames,  
Which circled is, O grief to tell!  
Besieg'd with foreign arms,  
By the proud prince of Arragon,  
Who swears by his martial hand  
To have the princess to his spouse,  
Or else to waste this land;  
Except such champions can be found,  
That dare fight three to three,  
Against the prince, and giants twain,  
Most horrid for to see;  
Whose grisly looks, and eyes like brands,  
Strike terrour where they come,  
With serpents hissing on their helms,  
Instead of feathered plume.

[226]

The princess shall be the victor's prize,  
The king hath vow'd and said,  
And he that shall the conquest win,  
Shall have her to his bride.

Now we are four damsels sent abroad,  
    To the east, west, north, and south,  
To try whose fortune is so good  
    To find these champions 'out.' [301]  
But all in vain we have sought about,  
    For none so bold there are  
That dare adventure life and blood,  
    To free a lady fair.  
When is the day? quoth Robin Hood,  
    Tell me this and no more.  
On Midsummer next, the dam'sel said,  
    Which is June the twenty-four.  
With that the tears trickled down her cheeks,  
    And silent was her tongue;  
With sighs and sobs she took her leave,  
    Away her palfrey sprung.  
The news struck Robin to the heart,  
    He fell down on the grass,  
His actions and his troubled mind  
    Shew'd he perplexed was.

[227]

Where lies your grief? quoth Will 'Scadlòck,'  
    O, master, tell to me:  
If the damsels eyes have pierc'd your heart,  
    I'll fetch her back to thee.  
Now nay, now nay, quoth Robin Hood,  
    She doth not cause my smart;  
But 'tis the poor distressed princèss,  
    That wounds me to the heart;  
I'll go fight the [prince and] giants all,  
    To set the lady free.  
The devil take my soul, quoth Little John,  
    If I part with thy company.  
Must I stay behind? quoth Will Scadlòck,  
    No, no, that must not be;  
I'le make the third man in the fight,  
    So we shall be three to three.  
These words cheer'd Robin to the heart,  
    Joy shone within his face,  
Within his arms he hugg'd them both,  
    And kindly did imbrace.  
Quoth he, We'll put on mothley grey,  
    And long staves in our hands,  
A scrip and bottle by our sides,  
    As come from the holy land.

[228]

So may we pass along the high-way,  
    None will ask us from whence we came,  
But take us pilgrims for to be,  
    Or else some holy men.  
Now they are on their journey gone,

As fast as they may speed,  
Yet for all their haste, ere they arriv'd,  
The princess forth was led,  
To be deliver'd to the prince,  
Who in the list did stand,  
Prepar'd to fight, or else receive  
His lady by the hand.  
With that he walk'd about the lists,  
With giants by his side:  
Bring forth, said he, your champions,  
Or bring me forth my bride.  
This is the four and twentieth day,  
The day prefixt upon:  
Bring forth my bride, or London burns,  
I swear by 'Alcaron.' [302] [229]  
Then cries the king, and queen likewise,  
Both weeping as they 'spake,' [230]  
Lo! we have brought our daughter dear,  
Whom we are forc'd to forsake.  
With that stept out bold Robin Hood,  
Crys, My liege, it must not be so:  
Such beauty as the fair princèss  
Is not for a tyrants mow.  
The prince he then began to storm,  
Cries, Fool, fanatick, baboon! [303]  
How dare thou stop my valours prize?  
I'll kill thee with a frown.  
Thou tyrant Turk, thou infidel,  
Thus Robin began to reply,  
Thy frowns I scorn; lo! here's my gage,  
And thus I thee defie.  
And for those two Goliahs there,  
That stand on either side,  
Here are two little Davids by,  
That soon can tame their pride.  
Then the king did for armour send,  
For lances, swords, and shields;  
And thus all three in armour bright,  
Came marching to the field.

[231]

The trumpets began to sound a charge,  
Each singled out his man;  
Their arms in pieces soon were hew'd,  
Blood sprang from every vain.  
The prince he reacht Robin Hood a blow,  
He struck with might and main,  
Which forc'd him to reel about the field,  
As though he had been slain.  
God-a-mercy, quoth Robin, for that blow!  
The quarrel shall soon be try'd;  
This stroke shall shew a full divorce  
Betwixt thee and thy bride.

So from his shoulders he's cut his head,  
Which on the ground did fall,  
And grumbling sore at Robin Hood,  
To be so dealt withal.  
The giants then began to rage  
To see their prince lie dead:  
Thou's be the next, quoth Little John,  
Unless thou well guard thy head.  
With that his faulchion he wherl'd about,  
It was both keen and sharp;  
He clave the giant to the belt,  
And cut in twain his heart.

[232]

Will Scadlock well had play'd his part,  
The giant he had brought to his knee;  
Quoth Will, The devil cannot break his fast,  
Unless he have you all three.  
So with his faulchion he run him through,  
A deep and 'ghastly' wound;  
Who dam'd and foam'd, curst and blasphem'd,  
And then fell to the ground.  
Now all the lists with shouts were fill'd,  
The skies they did resound,  
Which brought the princess to herself,  
Who had fal'n in a swoond.  
The king and queen, and princess fair,  
Came walking to the place,  
And gave the champions many thanks,  
And did them further grace.  
Tell me, quoth the king, whence you are,  
That thus disguised came,  
Whose valour speaks that noble blood  
Doth run through every vein.  
A boon, a boon, quoth Robin Hood,  
On my knees I beg and crave.  
By my crown, quoth the king, I grant,  
Ask what, and thou shalt have.

[233]

Then pardon I beg for my merry men,  
Which are in the green-wood,  
For Little John and Will Scadlock,  
And for me, bold Robin Hood.  
Art thou Robin Hood? quoth the king;  
For the valour thou hast shewn,  
Your pardons I do freely grant,  
And welcome every one,  
The princess I promise the victor's prize,  
She cannot have you all three.  
She shall chuse, quoth Robin. Said Little John,  
Then little share falls to me.  
Then did the princess view all three,

With a comely lovely grace,  
And took Will Scadlock by the hand,  
Saying, Here I make my choice.  
With that a noble lord stept forth,  
Of Maxfield earl was he,  
Who look'd Will Scadlock in the face,  
And wept most bitterly.  
Quoth he, I had a son like thee,  
Whom I lov'd wondrous well,  
But he is gone, or rather dead,  
His name it is young Gamwell.

[234]

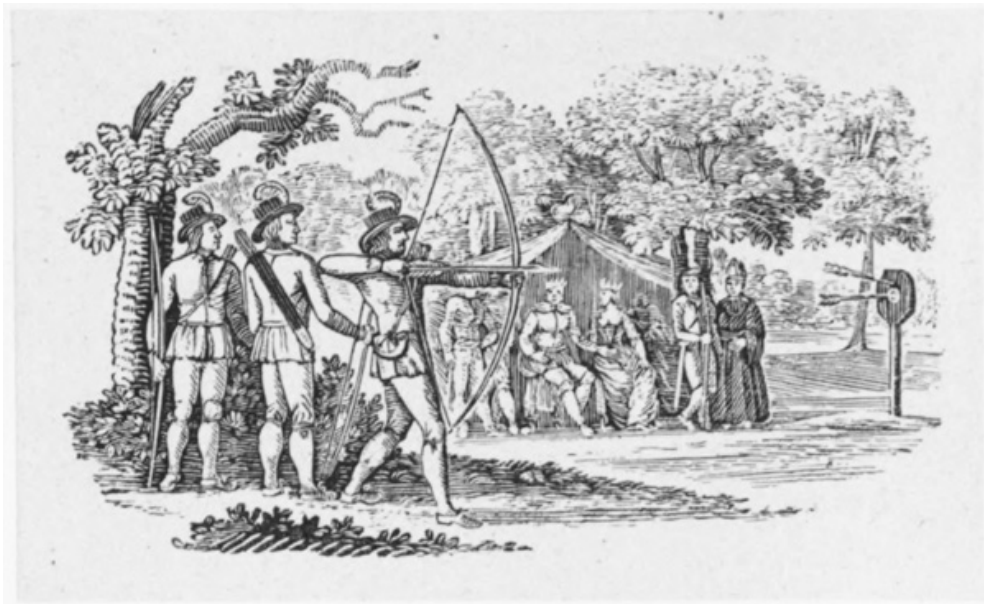
Then did Will Scadlock fall on his knees,  
Cries, Father! father! here,  
Here kneels your son, your young Gamwell,  
You said you lov'd so dear.  
But, lord! what imbracing and kissing was there,  
When all these friends were met!  
They are gone to the wedding, and so to [the] bedding:  
And so I bid you good night.



[235]

## XII. ROBIN HOOD AND QUEEN KATHERINE. [↪](#)





From an old black letter copy in a private collection, compared with another in that of Anthony a Wood. The full title is: “Renowned Robin Hood; Or, His famous archery truly related in the worthy exploits he acted before Queen Katherine, he being an outlaw man; and how he obtained his own and his fellows pardon. To a new tune.”

It is scarcely worth observing that there was no queen-consort named KATHERINE before Henry the Fifth’s time; but as Henry the Eighth had no less than three wives so called, the name would be sufficiently familiar to our ballad-maker.

Gold tane from the kings harbengers,  
*Downe, a downe, a downe,*  
 As seldome hath beene seene,  
*Downe, a downe, a downe,*  
 And carried by bold Robin Hood  
 For a present to the queene,  
*Downe, a downe, a downe.*

[236]

If that I live a yeare to an end,  
 Thus gan queene Katherine say,  
 Bold Robin Hood, I will be thy friend,  
 And all thy yeomen gay.  
 The queene is to her chamber gone,  
 As fast as she can wen;  
 She calls unto her lovely page,  
 His name was Richard Pattrington.  
 “Come thou hither to mee, thou lovely page,  
 Come thou hither to mee;  
 For thou must post to Nottingham.  
 As fast as thou can dree;  
 And as thou goest to Nottingham,  
 Search all the English wood,  
 Enquire of one good yeoman or another,  
 That can tell thee of Robin Hood.”  
 Sometimes hee went, sometimes hee ran,  
 As fast as hee could win;  
 And when hee came to Nottingham,  
 There hee tooke up his inne.

And when he came to Nottingham,  
And had tooke up his inne,  
He cald for a pottle of Rhenish wine,  
And dranke a health to his queene.

[237]

There sate a yeoman by his side,  
Tell mee, sweet page, said hee,  
What is thy businesse and the cause,  
So far in the north countrey?  
This is my businesse and the cause,  
Sir, I'le tell it you for good,  
To enquire of one good yeoman or another,  
To tell mee of Robin Hood.  
"Ile get my horse betimes in the morne,  
By it be break of day,  
And I will shew thee bold Robin Hood,  
And all his yeomen gay."  
When that he came at Robin Hoods place,  
Hee fell down on his knee:  
"Queen Katherine she doth greet you well,  
She greets you well by mee;  
She bids you post to fair London court,  
Not fearing any thing;  
For there shall be a little sport,  
And she hath sent you her ring."  
Robin Hood tooke his mantle from his back,  
It was of the Lincolne greene,  
And sent it by this lovely page,  
For a present unto the queene.

[238]

In summer time, when leaves grow green,  
It's a seemely sight to see,  
How Robin Hood himselfe had drest,  
And all his yeomandry.  
He clothed his men in Lincolne greene,  
And himselfe in scarlet red;  
Blacke hats, white feathers, all alike,  
Now bold Robin Hood is rid:  
And when hee came at Londons court,  
Hee fell downe on his knee.  
Thou art welcome, Locksly, said the queen,  
And all thy good 'yeomandree.'  
The king is into Finsbury field [\[304\]](#)  
Marching in battle-ray,  
And after follows bold Robin Hood,  
And all his yeomen gay.

[239]

Come hither, Tepus, said the king,  
Bow-bearer after mee;  
Come measure me out with this line,  
How long our mark must be.

What is the wager? said the queene,  
That must I now know here.  
“Three hundred tun of Rhenish wine,  
Three hundred tun of beere;  
Three hundred of the fattest harts  
That run on Dallom-lee.” [305]  
That’s a princely wager, said the king,  
That needs must I tell thee.

[240]

With that bespake one Clifton then,  
Full quickly and full soone,  
Measure no markes for us, most soveraigne liege,  
Wee’l shoot at sun and moone.  
“Full fifteene score your marke shall be,  
Full fifteene score shall stand.”  
He lay my bow, said Clifton then,  
He cleave the willow wand.  
With that the kings archers led about,  
While it was three, and none;  
With that the ladies began to shout,  
“Madam, your game is gone.”  
A boone, a boone, queene Katherine cries,  
I crave it on my bare knee;  
Is there any knight of your privy counsell  
Of queen Katherines part will be?  
Come hither to mee, sir Richard Lee,  
Thou art a knight full good;  
For I do knowe by thy pedigree  
Thou sprung’st from Gowers blood.  
Come hither to me, thou bishop of Herefordshire:  
For a noble priest was hee.  
By my silver miter, said the bishop then,  
He not bet one peny.

[241]

The king hath archers of his own,  
Full ready and full light,  
And these be strangers every one,  
No man knowes what they hight.  
What wilt thou bet? said Robin Hood,  
Thou seest our game the worse.  
By my silver miter, then said the bishop,  
All the money within my purse.  
What is in thy purse? said Robin Hood,  
Throw it downe on the ground.  
Fifteen score nobles, said the bishop;  
It’s neere an hundred pound. [306]  
Robin Hood took his bagge from his side,  
And threw it downe on the greene:  
William Scadlocke then went smiling away,  
“I know who this money must win.”  
With that the kings archers led about,

While it was three and three;  
With that the ladies gave a shout,  
“Woodcock, beware thy knee!”

[242]

It is three and three, now, said the king,  
The next three pays for all.  
Robin Hood went and whisper'd the queen,  
The kings part shall be but small.  
Robin Hood hee led about,  
Hee shot it under hand;  
And Clifton with a bearing arrow,  
Hee clave the willow wand.  
And little Midge, the millers son,  
Hee shot not much the worse;  
He shot within a finger of the prick:  
“Now, bishop, beware thy purse!”  
A boone, a boone, queene Katherine cries,  
I crave ‘it’ on my bare knee,  
That you will angry be with none  
That are of my partie.  
“They shall have forty daies to come,  
And forty daies to goe,  
And three times forty to sport and play;  
Then welcome friend or foe.”  
Thou art welcome, Robin Hood, said the queene,  
And so is Little John,  
And so is Midge, the millers son;  
Thrice welcome every one.

[243]

Is this Robin Hood? now said the king,  
For it was told to me  
That he was slain in the palace gates,  
So far in the north country.  
Is this Robin Hood? quoth the bishop then,  
As ‘it seems’ [307] well to be:  
Had I knowne ‘it’ had been that bold outlâw,  
I would not [have] bet one peny.  
Hee tooke me late one Saturday at night,  
And bound mee fast to a tree,  
And made mee sing a masse, God wot,  
To him and his ‘yeomandree.’  
What, an if I did, saies Robin Hood,  
Of that masse I was faine;  
For recompence of that, he saies,  
Here’s halfe thy gold againe.  
Now nay, now nay, saies Little John,  
Master, that shall not be;  
We must give gifts to the kings officèrs;  
That gold will serve thee and mee.

[244]

### XIII. ROBIN HOOD'S CHASE:↵



“Or, a merry progress between Robin Hood and King Henry: Shewing how Robin Hood led the king his chase from London to London; and when he had taken his leave of the queen, he returned to merry Sherwood. To the tune of Robin Hood and the Beggar.”

From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood.

Come, you gallants all, to you I do call,  
    *With hey down, down, an a down,*  
    That now ‘are’ in this place;  
For a song I will sing of Henry the king,  
    How he did Robin Hood chase.

[245]

Queen Katherin she a match did [308] make,  
    As plainly doth appear,  
For three hundred tun of good red wine,  
    And three [hundred] tun of beere.  
But yet her archers she had to seek,  
    With their bows and arrows so good;  
But her mind it was bent with a good intent,  
    To send for bold Robin Hood.  
But when bold Robin he came there,  
    Queen Katherin she did say,  
Thou art welcome, Locksley, said the queen,  
    And all thy yeomen gay.  
For a match of shooting I have made,  
    And thou on my part must be.  
“If I miss the mark, be it light or dark,  
    Then hanged I will be.”  
But when the game came to be played,  
    Bold Robin he then drew nigh,  
With his mantle of green, most brave to be seen,  
    He let his arrows fly.  
And when the game it ended was,  
    Bold Robin wan it with a grace;  
But after the king was angry with him,

And vowed he would him chase.

[246]

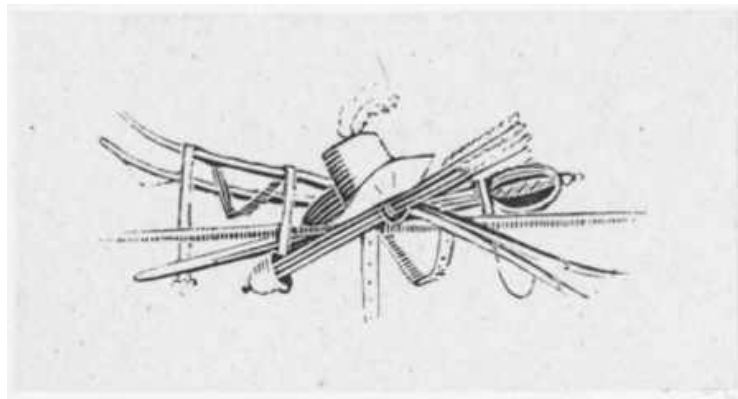
What though his pardon granted was,  
While he with him did stay;  
But yet the king was vexed at him,  
When as he was gone his way.  
Soon after the king from the court did hye,  
In a furious angry mood,  
And often enquired both far and near  
After bold Robin Hood.  
But when the king to Nottingham came,  
Bold Robin was in the wood:  
O, come now, said he, and let me see  
Who can find me bold Robin Hood.  
But when that bold Robin he did hear  
The king had him in chase,  
Then said Little John, 'Tis time to be gone,  
And go to some other place.  
And away they went from merry Sherwood,  
And into Yorkshire he did hye;  
And the king did follow, with a hoop and a hallow,  
But could not come him nigh.  
Yet jolly Robin he passed along,  
'And went strait' to Newcastle town;  
And there 'he' stayed hours two or three,  
And 'then' to Barwick 'is' [309] gone.

[247]

When the king did see how Robin did flee,  
He was vexed wondrous sore;  
With a hoop and a hallow he vowed to follow,  
And take him, or never give ore.  
Come now let's away, then crys Little John,  
Let any man follow that dare;  
To Carlisle we'l hye, with our company,  
And so then to Lancastèr.  
From Lancaster then to Chester they went,  
And so did king Henry;  
But Robin [went] away, for he durst not stay,  
For fear of some treachery.  
Says Robin, Come let us for London goe,  
To see our noble queens face,  
It may be she wants our company,  
Which makes the king so us chase.  
When Robin he came queene Katherin before,  
He fell low upon his knee:  
"If it please your grace, I am come to this place  
For to speak with king Henry."  
Queen Katherine answered bold Robin [310] again,  
The king is gone to merry Sherwood;  
And when he went away to me he did say,  
He would go and seek Robin Hood.

[248]

“Then fare you well, my gracious queen,  
For to Sherwood I will hie apace;  
For fain would I see what he would with me,  
If I could but meet with his grace.”  
But when king Henry he came home,  
Full weary, and vexed in mind,  
And that he did hear Robin had been there,  
He blamed dame Fortune unkind.  
You’re welcome home, ‘queen’ Katherin cried,  
Henry, my sovereign liege;  
Bold Robin Hood, that archer good,  
Your person hath been to seek.  
But when king Henry he did ‘hear,’  
That Robin had been there him to seeke,  
This answer he gave, He’s a cunning knave,  
For I have sought him this whole three weeks.  
A boon! a boon! ‘queen’ Katherin cry’d,  
I beg it here ‘of’ your grace,  
To pardon his life, and seek not strife:  
And so endeth Robin Hoods chase.



[249]

#### XIV. ROBIN HOOD’S GOLDEN PRIZE. ↩



“He met two priests upon the way,  
And forced them with him to pray;  
For gold they prayed, and gold they had,  
Enough to make bold Robin glad;  
His share came to four hundred pound,  
That then was told upon the ground.  
Now mark, and you shall hear the jest,  
You never heard the like exprest.  
Tune is, Robin Hood was a tall young man, &c.”

This ballad (given from an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood) was entered (amongst others) in the Stationers’ book, by Francis Coule, 13th June 1631, and by Francis Grove, 2d June 1656.

I have heard talk of Robin Hood,  
*Derry, derry down,*  
And of brave Little John,  
Of fryer Tuck, and Will Scarlèt,  
Loxley, and maid Mariòn.

[250]

But such a tale as this before  
I think was never knone:  
For Robin Hood disguised himself,  
And ‘from’ [311] the wood is gone.  
Like to a fryer bold Robin Hood  
Was accoutered in his array;  
With hood, gown, beeds, and crucifix,  
He past upon the way.  
He had not gone miles two or three,  
But it was his chance to spy  
Two lusty priests, clad all in black,  
Come riding gallantly.  
*Benedicite*, then said Robin Hood,  
Some pitty on me take;  
Cross you my hand with a silver groat,  
For our dear ladies sake.  
For I have been wandring all this day,  
And nothing could I get;  
Not so much as one poor cup of drink,  
Nor bit of bread to eat.  
Now, by our holy dame, the priests repli’d,  
We never a peny have;  
For we this morning have been rob’d,  
And could no money save.

[251]

I am much afraid, said bold Robin Hood,  
That you both do tell a lie;  
And now before you do go hence,  
I am resolv’d to try.  
When as the priests heard him say so,  
Then they rode away amain;  
But Robin Hood betook to his heels,  
And soon overtook them again.



Then Robin Hood laid hold of them both,  
And pull'd them down from their horse:  
O spare us, fryer! the priests cry'd out,  
On us have some remorse!  
You said you had no mony, quoth he,  
Wherefore, without delay,  
We three will fall down on our knees,  
And for mony we will pray.  
The priests they could not him gainsay,  
But down they kneeled with speed:  
Send us, O send us, then quoth they,  
Some mony to serve our need.  
The priests did pray with a mournful chear,  
Sometimes their hands did wring;  
Sometimes they wept, and cried aloud,  
Whilst Robin did merrily sing.

[252]

When they had been praying an hours space,  
The priests did still lament;  
Then quoth bold Robin, Now let's see  
What mony heaven hath us sent.  
We will be sharers all alike  
Of [the] mony that we have;  
And there is never a one of us  
That his fellow shall deceive.  
The priests their hands in their pockets put,  
But mony would find none:  
We'l search ourselves, said Robin Hood,  
Each other, one by one.  
Then Robin [312] took pains to search them both,  
And he found good store of gold,  
Five hundred peeces presently  
Upon the grass was told.  
Here is a brave show, said Robin Hood,  
Such store of gold to see,  
And you shall each one have a part,  
Cause you prayed so heartily.  
He gave them fifty pounds a-peece,  
And the rest for himself did keep:  
The priests [they] durst not speak one word,  
But they sighed wondrous deep.



ROBIN HOOD AND THE FRIARS.

[253]

With that the priests rose up from their knees,

Thinking to have parted so:

Nay, nay, says Robin Hood, one thing more

I have to say ere you go.

You shall be sworn, said bold Robin Hood,

Upon this holy grass,

That you will never tell lies again,

Which way soever you pass.

The second oath that you here must take,

That all the days of your lives,

You shall never tempt maids to sin,

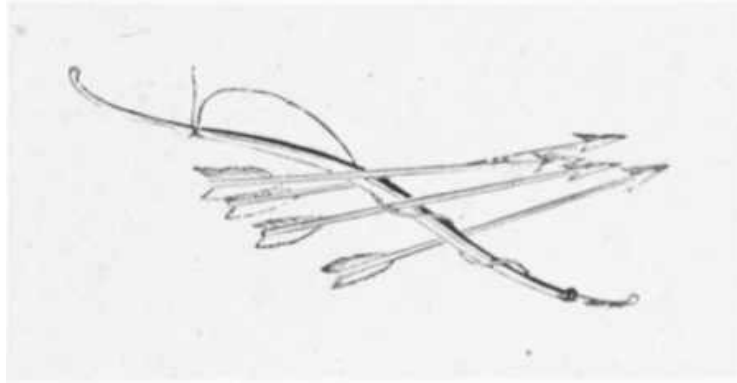
Nor lie with other mens wives.

The last oath you shall take, it is this,

Be charitable to the poor;

Say, you have met with a holy fryar,

And I desire no more.  
He set them on their horses again,  
And away then they did ride;  
And he return'd to the merry green-wood,  
With great joy, mirth, and pride.



[254]

### XV. ROBIN HOOD'S RESCUING WILL STUTLY.↩



From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood. The full title is:  
“Robin Hood his rescuing Will Stutly from the sheriff and his men, who had taken him  
prisoner, and was going to hang him. To the tune of Robin Hood and Queen Katherine.”  
[\[313\]](#)

When Robin Hood in the green wood liv'd,  
*Derry, derry down,*  
Under the green wood tree,  
Tidings there came to him with speed,  
Tidings for certainty;  
*Hey down, derry, derry down;*

[255]

That Will Stutly surprized was,  
And eke in prison lay;

Three varlets that the sheriff had hired,  
Did likely him betray:  
“I, and to-morrow hanged must be,  
To-morrow as soon as it is day;  
Before they could this victory get,  
Two of them did Stutly slay.”  
When Robin Hood he heard this news,  
Lord! he was grieved sore;  
And to his merry men he did say,  
(Who altogether swore),  
That Will Stutly should rescued be,  
And be brought ‘back’ again;  
Or else should many a gallant wight  
For his sake there be slain.  
He cloathed himself in scarlet ‘red,’  
His men were all in green;  
A finer shew, throughout the world,  
In no place could be seen.  
Good lord! it was a gallant sight  
To see them all on a row;  
With every man a good broad sword,  
And eke a good yew bow.

[256]

Forth of the green wood are they gone,  
Yea all couragiously,  
Resolving to bring Stutly home,  
Or every man to die.  
And when they came the castle neer,  
Whereas Will Stutly lay,  
I hold it good, saith Robin Hood,  
Wee here in ambush stay,  
And send one forth some news to hear,  
To yonder palmer fair,  
That stands under the castle wall,  
Some news he may declare.  
With that steps forth a brave young man,  
Which was of courage bold,  
Thus did hee speak to the old man:  
I pray thee, palmer old,  
Tell me, if that thou rightly ken,  
When must Will Stutly die,  
Who is one of bold Robin’s men,  
And here doth prisoner lie?  
Alack! alas! the palmer said,  
And for ever wo is me!  
Will Stutly hanged must be this day,  
On yonder gallows-tree.

[257]

O had his noble master known,  
He would some succour send;  
A few of his bold yeomandree

Full soon would fetch him hence.  
I, that is true, the young man said;  
I, that is true, said he;  
Or, if they were neer to this place,  
They soon would set him free.  
But fare 'thee' well, thou good old man,  
Farewell, and thanks to thee;  
If Stutly hanged be this day,  
Reveng'd his death will be.  
Hee was no sooner from the palmer gone,  
But the gates 'were' open'd wide,  
And out of the castle Will Stutly came,  
Guarded on every side.  
When hee was forth of the castle come,  
And saw no help was nigh,  
Thus he did say to the sherïff,  
Thus he said gallantly:  
Now seeing that I needs must die,  
Grant me one boon, said he,  
For my noble master nere had a man,  
That yet was hang'd on the tree.

[258]

Give me a sword all in my hand,  
And let mee be unbound,  
And with thee and thy men Ile fight,  
Till I lie dead on the ground.  
But his desire he would not grant,  
His wishes were in vain;  
For the sheriff had sworn he hanged should be,  
And not by the sword be slain.  
Do but unbind my hands, he saies,  
I will no weapons crave,  
And if I hanged be this day,  
Damnation let me have.  
O no, O no, the sheriff said,  
Thou shalt on the gallows die,  
I, and so shall thy master too,  
If ever in me it lie.  
O, dastard coward! Stutly cries,  
Thou faint-heart pesant slave!  
If ever my master do thee meet,  
Thou shalt thy paiment have.  
My noble master 'doth thee' scorn,  
And all thy 'coward' crew;  
Such silly imps unable are,  
Bold Robin to subdue.

[259]

But when he was to the gallows come,  
And ready to bid adiew,  
Out of a bush leaps Little John,  
And comes Will Stutly 'to':

“I pray thee, Will, before thou die,  
Of thy dear friends take leave:—  
I needs must borrow him for a while,  
How say you, master ‘shrieve’?”  
Now, as I live, the sheriff he said,  
That varlet will I know;  
Some sturdy rebell is that same,  
Therefore let him not go.  
Then Little John most hastily,  
Away cut Stutly’s bands,  
And from one of the ‘sheriffs’ men,  
A sword twicht from his hands.  
“Here, Will, here, take thou this same,  
Thou canst it better sway;  
And here defend thyself awhile,  
For aid will come straightway.”  
And there they turn’d them back to back,  
In the middle of them that day,  
Till Robin Hood approached near,  
With many an archer gay.

[260]

With that an arrow by them flew,  
I wist from Robin Hood;  
Make haste, make haste, the sheriff he said,  
Make haste, for it is good.  
The sheriff is gon, his ‘doughty’ [314] men  
Thought it no boot to stay,  
But, as their master had them taught,  
‘They’ run full fast away.  
O stay, O stay, Will Stutly said,  
Take leave ere you depart;  
You neere will catch bold Robin Hood,  
Unless you dare him meet.  
O ill betide you, quoth Robin Hood,  
That you so soon are gone;  
My sword may in the scabbord rest,  
For here our work is done.  
I little thought, ‘Will Stutly said,’ [315]  
When I came to this place,  
For to have met with Little John,  
Or seen my masters face.  
Thus Stutly was at liberty set,  
And safe brought from his foe:  
“O thanks, O thanks to my mastèr,  
Since here it was not so:

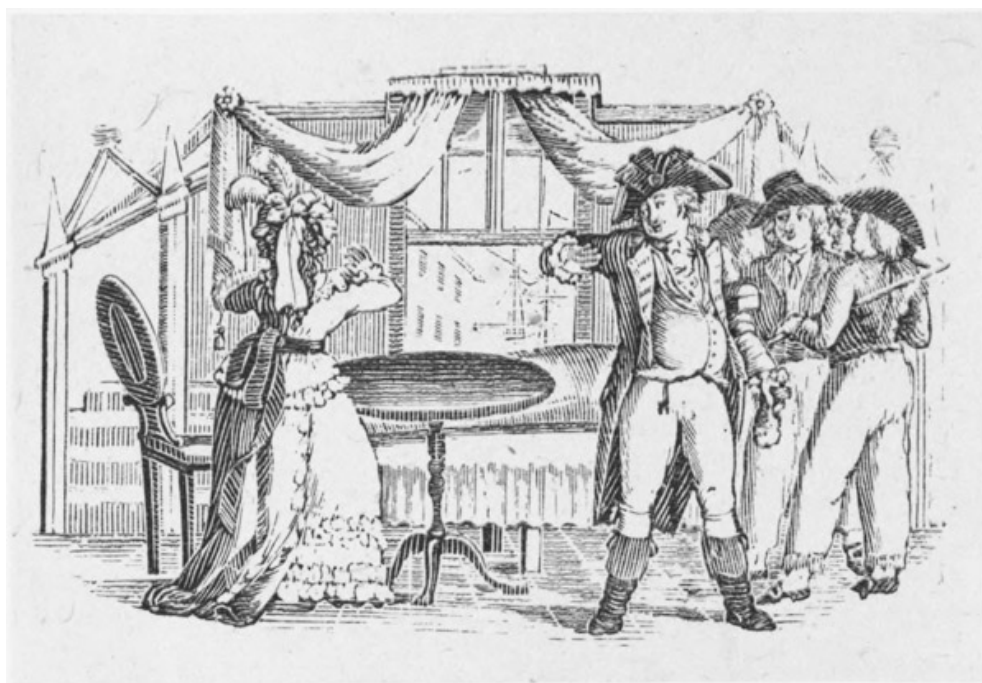
[261]

And once again, my fellows [all],  
We shall in the green woods meet,  
Where we [will] make our bow-strings twang,  
Musick for us most sweet.”



[262]

**XVI. THE NOBLE FISHER-MAN; OR, ROBIN HOOD'S  
PREFERMENT: ↪**



1514.

“Shewing how he won a prize on the sea, and how he gave the one halfe to his dame, and the other to the building of almes-houses. The tune is, In summer time, &c.”

From three old black letter copies, one in the collection of Anthony a Wood, another in the British Museum, and the third in a private collection.

In summer-time, when leaves grow green,  
When they doe grow both green and long,—  
Of a bold outlaw, call'd Robin Hood,  
It is of him I sing this song,— [263]  
When the lilly leafe, and the 'eglantine,'  
Doth bud and spring with a merry cheere,  
This outlaw was weary of the wood-side,  
And chasing of the fallow-deere.  
“The fisher-men brave more mony have  
Than any merchants two or three;  
Therefore I will to Scarborough go,  
That I a fisherman brave may be.”  
This outlaw called his merry men all,  
As they sate under the green-wood tree:  
“If any of you have gold to spend,  
I pray you heartily spend it with me.”  
Now, quoth Robin Hood, Ile to Scarborough go,  
It seems to be a very faire day.  
‘He’ tooke up his inne at a widdow-womans house,  
Hard by upon the water gray:  
Who asked of him, Where wert thou borne?  
Or tell to me where dost thou fare?  
I am a poor fisherman, said he then,  
This day intrapped all in care.  
“What is thy name, thou fine fellòw,  
I pray thee heartily tell it to mee?”  
“In my own country, where I was borne,  
Men call me Simon over the Lee.”

[264]

Simon, Simon, said the good-wife,  
I wish thou mayest well brook thy name.  
The out-law was ware of her courtesie,  
And rejoyced he had got such a dame.  
“Simon, wilt thou be my man?  
And good round wages Ile give thee;  
I have as good a ship of my own,  
As any sails upon the sea:  
Anchors and planks thou shalt not want,  
Masts and ropes that are so long.”  
And if you thus do furnish me,  
Said Simon, nothing shall goe wrong.  
They pluckt up anchor, and away did sayle,  
More of a day then two or three;  
When others cast in their baited hooks,  
The bare lines into the sea cast he.  
It will be long, said the master then,  
Ere this great lubber do thrive on the sea;  
I’le assure you he shall have no part of our fish,  
For in truth he is no part worthy.  
O woe is me! said Simon then,  
This day that ever I came here!  
I wish I were in Plompton parke,



In chasing of the fallow deere.

[265]

For every clowne laughs me to scorne,  
And they by me set nought at all;  
If I had them in Plompton park,  
I would set as little by them all.  
They pluckt up anchor, and away did sayle,  
More of a day then two or three:  
But Simon espyed a ship of warre,  
That sayled towards them most valorously.  
O woe is me! said the master then,  
This day that ever I was borne!  
For all our fish we have got to day,  
Is every bit lost and forlorne.  
For your French robbers on the sea,  
They will not spare of us one man,  
But carry us to the coast of France,  
And ligge us in the prison strong.  
But Simon said, Doe not feare them,  
Neither, mastèr, take you no care;  
Give me my bent bow in my hand,  
And never a Frenchman will I spare.  
“Hold thy peace, thou long lubbèr,  
For thou art nought but brags and boast;  
If I should cast thee over-board,  
There’s but a simple lubber lost.”

[266]

Simon grew angry at these words,  
And so angry then was he,  
That he took his bent bow in his hand,  
And in the ship-hatch goe doth he.  
Master, tye me to the mast, saith he,  
That at my mark I may stand fair,  
And give me my bent bow in my hand,  
And never a Frenchman will I spare.  
He drew his arrow to the very head,  
And drew it with all might and maine,  
And straightway in the twinkling of an eye,  
‘To’ the Frenchmans heart the ‘arrow’s gane.’ [316]  
The Frenchman fell down on the ship-hatch,  
And under the hatches ‘there’ below;  
Another Frenchman, that him espy’d,  
The dead corpse into the sea doth throw.  
O master, loose me from the mast, he said,  
And for them all take you no care;  
For give me my bent bow in my hand,  
And never a Frenchman will I spare.  
Then streight [they] boarded the French ship,  
They lyeing all dead in their sight;  
They found within ‘that’ ship of warre,  
Twelve thousand pound of mony bright.

[267]

The one halfe of the ship, said Simon then,  
Ile give to my dame and [her] children small;  
The other halfe of the ship Ile bestow  
On you that are my fellowes all.  
But now bespake the master then,  
For so, Simon, it shall not be,  
For you have won it with your own hand,  
And the owner of it you shall bee.  
“It shall be so, as I have said;  
And, with this gold, for the opprest  
An habitation I will build,  
Where they shall live in peace and rest.”



[268]

## XVII. ROBIN HOOD'S DELIGHT: [↪](#)



“Or, a merry combat fought between Robin Hood, Little John, and Will Scarelock, and three stout Keepers in Sheerwood Forrest.

Robin was valiant and stout,  
So was Scarelock and John in the field,  
But these Keepers stout did give them rout,

And made them all for to yield.  
But after the battel ended was,  
    Bold Robin did make them amends,  
For claret and sack they did not lack,  
    So drank themselves good friends.  
  
To the tune of, Robin Hood and Queen Katherine; or, Robin Hood and the Shepheard.”  
  
From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood.

[269]

There's some will talk of lords and knights,  
    *Down, a down, a down,*  
And some of yeomen good;  
But I will tell you of Will Scarlòck,  
    Little John, and Robin Hood.  
    *Down, a down, a down, a down.*  
They were outlaws, 'tis well known,  
    And men of a noble blood;  
And many a time was their valour shown  
    In the forrest of merry Sheerwood.  
Upon a time it chanced so,  
    As Robin [317] would have it be,  
They all three would a walking go,  
    The pastime for to see.  
And as they walked the forest along,  
    Upon a Midsummer day,  
There was they aware of three keepèrs,  
    Clad all in green aray.  
With brave long fauchions by their sides  
    And forrest-bills in hand,  
They call'd aloud to those bold outlàws,  
    And charged them to stand.

[270]

Why, who are you, cry'd bold Robin,  
    That 'speak' so boldly here?  
“We three belong to King Henry,  
    And are keepers of his deer.”  
The devil 'you are!' sayes Robin Hood,  
    I am sure that it is not so;  
We be the keepers of this forrèst,  
    And that you soon shall know.  
Come, your coats of green lay on the ground,  
    And so will we all three,  
And take your swords and bucklers round,  
    And try the victory.  
We be content, the keepers said,  
    We be three, and you no less,  
Then why should we be of you afraid,  
    'As' we never did transgress?  
“Why, if you be three keepers in this forrèst,  
    Then we be three rangers good,  
And will make you know before you do go,

You meet with bold Robin Hood.”  
“We be content, thou bold outlàu,  
Our valour here to try,  
And will make you know, before we do go,  
We will fight before we will fly.

[271]

Then, come draw your swords, you bold outlàuws,  
No longer stand to prate,  
But let us try it out with blows,  
For cowards we do hate.  
Here is one of us for Will Scarlòck,  
And another for Little John,  
And I myself for Robin Hood,  
Because he is stout and strong.”  
So they fell to it hard and sore,  
It was on a Midsummers day;  
From eight of the clock till two and past,  
They all shewed gallant play.  
There Robin, and Will, and Little John,  
They fought most manfully,  
Till all their winde was spent and gone,  
Then Robin aloud did cry:  
O hold, O hold, cries bold Robin,  
I see you be stout men;  
Let me blow one blast on my bugle-horn,  
Then Ile fight with you again.  
“That bargain’s to make, bold Robin Hood,  
Therefore we it deny;  
Thy blast upon the bugle-horn  
Cannot make us fight or fly.

[272]

Therefore fall on, or else be gone,  
And yield to us the day:  
It never shall be said that we are afraid  
Of thee, nor thy yeomen gay.”  
If that be so, cries bold Robin,  
Let me but know your names,  
And in the forrest of merry Sheerwood,  
I shall extol your fames.  
And with our names, one of them said,  
What hast thou here to do?  
Except that you wilt fight it out,  
Our names thou shalt not know.  
We will fight no more, sayes bold Robin,  
You be men of valour stout;  
Come and go with me to Nottingham,  
And there we will fight it out.  
With a but of sack we will bang it ‘about,’  
To see who wins the day;  
And for the cost make you no doubt,  
I have gold ‘enough’ to pay.

And ever hereafter so long as we live,  
    We all will brethren be;  
For I love these men with heart and hand,  
    That will fight and never flee.

[273]

So, away they went to Nottingham,  
    With sack to make amends;  
For three days they the wine did chase,  
    And drank themselves good friends.



[274]

### XVIII. ROBIN HOOD AND THE BEGGAR.



“Shewing how Robin Hood and the Beggar fought, and how he changed cloaths with the Beggar, and how he went a begging to Nottingham; and how he saved three brethren from being hang’d for stealing of deer. To the tune of Robin Hood and the Stranger.”

From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood.

Come and listen, you gentlemen all,  
*Hey down, down, an a down,*  
That mirth do love for to hear,  
And a story true Ile tell unto you,  
If that you will but draw near.

[275]

In elder times, when merriment was,  
And archery was holden good,  
There was an outlâw, as many 'do' know,  
Which men called Robin Hood.  
Upon a time it chanced so,  
Bold Robin was merry disposed,  
His time for to spend he did intend  
Either with friends or foes.  
Then he got upon a gallant brave steed,  
The which was worth angels ten,  
With a mantle of green, most brave to be seen,  
He left all his merry men.  
And riding towards Nottingham,  
Some pastime for to 'spy,  
There was he aware of a jolly beggâr,  
As ere he beheld with his eye.  
An old pacht coat the beggar had on,  
Which he daily did use to wear;  
And many a bag about him did wag,  
Which made Robin [318] to him repair.  
God speed, God speed, said Robin Hood,  
What countryman? tell to me.  
"I am Yorkshire, sir; but, ere you go far,  
Some charity give unto me."

[276]

Why, what wouldst thou have? said Robin Hood,  
I pray thee tell unto me.  
No lands nor livings, the beggar he said,  
But a penny for charitie.  
I have no money, said Robin Hood then,  
But a ranger within the wood;  
I am an outlaw, as many do know,  
My name it is Robin Hood.  
But yet I must tell the, bonny beggâr,  
That a bout with [thee] I must try;  
Thy coat of grey, lay down I say,  
And my mantle of green shall lye by.  
Content, content, the beggar he cry'd,  
Thy part it will be the worse;  
For I hope this bout to give thee the rout,  
And then have at thy purse.  
So the beggar he had a mickle long staffe,  
And Robin [319] a nut-brown sword;  
So the beggar drew nigh, and at Robin let fly,

But gave him never a word.  
Fight on, fight on, said Robin Hood then,  
This game well pleaseth me.  
For every blow that Robin gave,  
The beggar gave buffets three.

[277]

And fighting there full hard and sore,  
Not far from Nottingham town,  
They never fled, till from Robin Hoods head  
The blood came trickling down.  
O, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood then,  
And thou and I will agree.  
If that be true, the beggar he said,  
Thy mantle come give unto me.  
Now a change, a change, cri'd Robin Hood,  
Thy bags and coat give me;  
And this mantle of mine Ile to thee resign,  
My horse and my braverie.  
When Robin [320] had got the beggars clothes,  
He looked round about;  
Methinks, said he, I seem to be  
A beggar brave and stout.  
For now I have a bag for my bread,  
So I have another for corn;  
I have one for salt, and another for malt,  
And one for my little horn.  
And now I will a begging goe,  
Some charitie for to find.  
And if any more of Robin you'll know,  
In 'the' second part 'tis behind.

[278]

Now Robin he is to Nottingham bound,  
With his bag hanging down to his knee,  
His staff, and his coat, scarce worth a groat,  
Yet merrilie passed he.  
As Robin he passed the streets along,  
He heard a pittiful cry;  
Three brethren dear, as he did hear,  
Condemned were to dye.  
Then Robin he highed to the sheriffs [house],  
Some reliefe for to seek;  
He skipt, and leapt, and capered full high,  
As he went along the street.  
But when to the sheriffs doore he came,  
There a gentleman fine and brave,  
Thou beggar, said he, come tell unto me  
What it is thou wouldest have.  
No meat, nor drink, said Robin Hood then,  
That I come here to crave;  
But to get the lives of yeomen three,  
And that I fain would have.

That cannot be, thou bold beggàr,  
Their fact it is so clear;  
I tell to thee, they hanged must be,  
For stealing of our king's deer.

[279]

But when to the gallows they did come,  
There was many a weeping eye:  
O, hold your peace, said Robin Hood then,  
For certain 'they shall' not dye.  
Then Robin he set his horn to his mouth,  
And he blew out blastes three,  
Till a hundred bold archers brave  
Came kneeling down to his knee.  
What is your will, mastèr? they said,  
We are at your command.  
Shoot east, shoot west, said Robin Hood then,  
And see you spare no man.  
Then they shot east, and they shot west,  
Their arrows were so keen;  
The sheriffe he, and his companie,  
No longer 'could' be seen.  
Then he stept to those brethren three,  
And away he has them tane;  
The sheriffe was crost, and many a man lost,  
That dead lay on the plain.  
And away they went into the merry green wood,  
And sung with a merry glee;  
And Robin Hood took these brethren good  
To be of his yeomandrie.

[280]

## **XIX. LITTLE JOHN AND THE FOUR BEGGARS.** [↪](#)





From an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood: the full title being, "A new merry song of Robin Hood and Little John, shewing how Little John went a begging, and how he fought with the four beggers, and what a prize he got of the four beggers. The tune is, Robin Hood and the Begger."

All you that delight to spend some time,  
    *With a hey down, down, a down, down,*  
    A merry song for to sing,  
Unto me draw neer, and you shall hear  
    How Little John went a begging.

[281]

As Robin Hood walked the forest along,  
    And all his yeomandree.  
Sayes Robin, Some of you must a begging go,  
    And, Little John, it must be thee.  
Sayes John, If I must a begging go,  
    I will have a palmer's weed,  
With a staff and a coat, and bags of all sort,  
    The better then I may speed.  
Come, give me now a bag for my bread,  
    And another for my cheese,  
And one for a peny, when as I get any,  
    That nothing I may leese.  
Now Little John he is a begging gone,  
    Seeking for some relief;  
But of all the beggers he met on the way,  
    Little John he was the chief.  
But as he was walking himself alone,  
    Four beggers he chanced to spy,  
Some deaf, and some blind, and some came behind;  
    Sayes John, Heres a brave company.  
Good-morrow, said John, my brethren dear,  
    Good fortune I had you to see;  
Which way do you go? pray let me know,  
    For I want some company.

[282]

O! what is here to do? then said Little John:  
    Why ring all these bells? said he;  
What dog is a hanging? Come, let us be ganging,  
    That we the truth may see.  
Here is no dog a hanging, then one of them said,  
    Good fellow, we tell unto thee;  
But here is one dead, that will give us cheese and bread,  
    And it may be one single penny,  
We have brethren in London, another he said,  
    So have we in Coventry,  
In Barwick and Dover, and all the world over,  
    But ne'er a crookt carril like thee.  
Therefore stand thee back, thou crooked carèl,  
    And take that knock on the crown.  
Nay, said Little John, Ile not yet be gone,  
    For a bout will I have of you round.

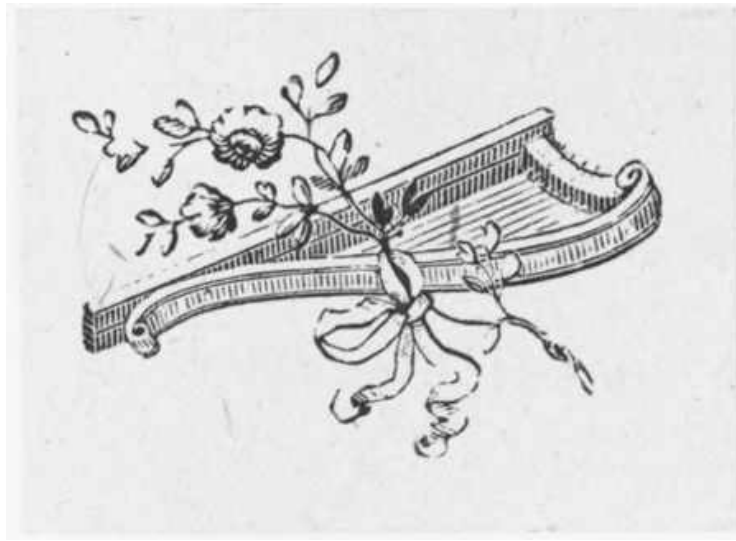
Now have at you all, then said Little John,  
If you be so full of your blows;  
Fight on all four, and nere give ore,  
Whether you be friends or foes.  
John nipped the dumb, and made him to rore,  
And the blind 'he made to' [\[321\]](#) see;  
And he that a cripple had been seven years,  
He made run then faster than he.

[283]

And flinging them all against the wall,  
With many a sturdie bang,  
It made John sing, to hear the gold ring,  
Which again the walls cryed twang.  
Then he got out of the beggers cloak,  
Three hundred pound in gold,  
Good fortune had I, then said Little John,  
Such a good sight to behold.  
But what found he in the beggar's bag  
But three hundred pound and three?  
"If I drink water while this doth last,  
Then an ill death may I dye:  
And my begging trade I will now give ore,  
My fortune hath bin so good;  
Therefore Ile not stay, but I will away,  
To the forrest of merry Sherwood."  
And when to the forrest of Sherwood he came,  
He quickly there did see  
His master good, bold Robin Hood,  
And all his company.  
What news? What news? then said Robin Hood,  
Come, Little John, tell unto me;  
How hast thou sped with thy beggers trade?  
For that I fain would see.

[284]

No news but good, said Little John,  
With begging ful wel I have sped;  
Six hundred and three I have here for thee,  
In silver and gold so red.  
'Then' Robin Hood took Little John by the hand,  
And danced about the oak tree:  
"If we drink water while this doth last,  
Then an il death may we die."  
So to conclude my merry new song,  
All you that delight it to sing;  
'Tis of Robin Hood, that archer good,  
And how Little John went a beggìng.



[285]

**XX. ROBIN HOOD AND THE RANGER: OR, TRUE FRIENDSHIP  
AFTER A FIERCE FIGHT.** ↩



No ancient copy of this ballad having been met with, it is given from an edition of "Robin Hood's Garland," printed some years since at York. The tune is Arthur a Bland.

When Phœbus had melted the 'sickles' of ice,

*With a hey down, &c.*

And likewise the mountains of snow,

Bold Robin Hood he would ramble away,

To frolick abroad with his bow.

[286]

He left all his merry men waiting behind,

Whilst through the green vallies he pass'd,

Where he did behold a forester bold,

Who cry'd out, Friend, whither so fast?

I am going, quoth Robin, to kill a fat buck,

For me and my merry men all;

Besides, ere I go, I'll have a fat doe,  
Or else it shall cost me a fall.  
You'd best have a care, said the forester then,  
For these are his majesty's deer;  
Before you shall shoot, the thing I'll dispute,  
For I am head forester here.  
These thirteen long summers, quoth Robin, I'm sure,  
My arrows I here have let fly,  
Where freely I range; methinks it is strange  
You should have more power than I.  
This forest, quoth Robin, I think is my own,  
And so are the nimble deer too;  
Therefore I declare, and solemnly swear,  
I'll not be affronted by you.  
The forester he had a long quarter-staff,  
Likewise a broad sword by his side;  
Without more ado, he presently drew  
Declaring the truth should be try'd.

[287]

Bold Robin Hood had a sword of the best,  
Thus, ere he would take any wrong,  
His courage was flush, he'd venture a brush,  
And thus they fell to it ding dong.  
The very first blow that the forester gave,  
He made his broad weapon cry twang;  
'Twas over the head, he fell down for dead,  
O that was a damnable bang!  
But Robin he soon recovered himself,  
And bravely fell to it again;  
The very next stroke their weapons they broke,  
Yet never a man there was slain.  
At quarter-staff then they resolved to play,  
Because they would have the other bout;  
And brave Robin Hood right valiantly stood,  
Unwilling he was to give out.  
Bold Robin he gave him very hard blows,  
The other return'd them as fast;  
At every stroke their jackets did smoke;  
Three hours the combat did last  
At length in a rage the forester grew,  
And cudgel'd bold Robin so sore,  
That he could not stand, so shaking his hand,  
He cry'd, Let us freely give o'er.

[288]

Thou art a brave fellow, I needs must confess  
I never knew any so good;  
Thou art fitting to be a yeoman for me,  
And range in the merry green wood.  
I'll give thee this ring as a token of love,  
For bravely thou hast acted thy part;  
That man that can fight, in him I delight,

And love him with all my whole heart.  
Robin Hood set his bugle-horn to his mouth,  
A blast then he merrily blows;  
His yeomen did hear, and strait did appear  
A hundred with trusty long bows.  
Now Little John came at the head of them all,  
Cloath'd in a rich mantle of green;  
And likewise the rest were gloriously drest,  
A delicate sight to be seen!  
Lo! these are my yeomen, said bold Robin Hood,  
And thou shalt be one of the train:  
A mantle and bow, and quiver also,  
I give them whom I entertain.  
The forester willingly enter'd the list,  
They were such a beautiful sight;  
Then with a long bow they shot a fat doe,  
And made a rich supper that night.

[289]

What singing and dancing was in the green wood,  
For joy of another new mate!  
With might and delight they spent all the night,  
And liv'd at a plentiful rate.  
The forester ne'er was so merry before,  
As then he was with these brave souls,  
Who never would fail, in wine, beer, or ale,  
To take off their cherishing bowls.  
Then Robin Hood gave him a mantle of green,  
Broad arrows, and curious long bow:  
This done, the next day, so gallant and gay,  
He marched them all on a row.  
Quoth he, My brave yeomen, be true to your trust,  
And then we may range the woods wide.  
They all did declare, and solemnly swear,  
They would conquer, or die by his side.



[290]

**XXI. ROBIN HOOD AND LITTLE JOHN:** [↩](#)



“Being an account of their first meeting, their fierce encounter, and conquest. To which is added, their friendly agreement; and how he came to be called Little John. Tune of Arthur a Bland.”

This ballad is named in a schedule of such things under an agreement between W. Thackeray and others in 1689 (Col. Pepys. vol. 5), but is here given as corrected from a copy in the “Collection of Old Ballads,” 1723.

The notion that Little John obtained this appellation, ironically, from his superior stature, though doubtless ill-founded, is of considerable antiquity. See “Notes and Illustrations to the Life,” p. cxvi.

When Robin Hood was about twenty years old,  
     *With a hey down, down, and a down;*  
 He happen'd to meet Little John,  
 A jolly brisk blade, right fit for the trade,  
     For he was a lusty young man.

[291]

Tho' he was call'd Little, his limbs they were large,  
     And his stature was seven foot high;  
 Wherever he came, they quak'd at his name,  
     For soon he would make them to fly.  
 How they came acquainted, I'll tell you in brief,  
     If you would but listen awhile;  
 For this very jest, among all the rest,  
     I think it may cause you to smile.  
 For Robin Hood said to his jolly bowmèn,  
     Pray tarry you here in this grove;  
 And see that you all observe well my call,  
     While thorough the forest I rove.  
 We have had no sport for these fourteen long days,  
     Therefore now abroad will I go;  
 Now should I be beat, and cannot retreat,  
     My horn I will presently blow.  
 Then did he shake hands with his merry men all,  
     And bid them at present good b' w'ye:  
 Then, as near the brook his journey he took,

A stranger he chanc'd to espy.  
They happen'd to meet on a long narrow bridge,  
And neither of them would give way;  
Quoth bold Robin Hood, and sturdily stood,  
I'll shew you right Nottingham-play.

[292]

With that from his quiver an arrow he drew,  
A broad arrow with a goose-wing.  
The stranger reply'd, I'll liquor thy hide,  
If thou offer to touch the string.  
Quoth bold Robin Hood, Thou dost prate like an ass,  
For were I to bend but my bow,  
I could send a dart, quite thro' thy proud heart,  
Before thou could'st strike me one blow.  
Thou talk'st like a coward, the stranger reply'd;  
Well arm'd with a long bow you stand,  
To shoot at my breast, while I, I protest,  
Have nought but a staff in my hand.  
The name of a coward, quoth Robin, I scorn,  
Therefore my long bow I'll lay by;  
And now, for thy sake, a staff will I take,  
The truth of thy manhood to try.  
Then Robin Hood stept to a thicket of trees,  
And chose him a staff of ground oak;  
Now this being done, away he did run  
To the stranger, and merrily spoke:  
Lo! see my staff is lusty and tough,  
Now here on the bridge we will play;  
Whoever falls in, the other shall win  
The battle, and so we'll away.

[293]

With all my whole heart, the stranger reply'd,  
I scorn in the least to give out;  
This said, they fell to't without more dispute,  
And their staffs they did flourish about.  
At first Robin he gave the stranger a bang,  
So hard that he made his bones ring:  
The stranger he said, This must be repaid,  
I'll give you as good as you bring.  
So long as I am able to handle a staff,  
To die in your debt, friend, I scorn.  
Then to it each goes, and follow'd their blows,  
As if they'd been threshing of corn.  
The stranger gave Robin a crack on the crown,  
Which caused the blood to appear;  
Then Robin enrag'd, more fiercely engag'd,  
And follow'd his blows more severe.  
So thick and so fast did he lay it on him,  
With a passionate fury and ire;  
At every stroke he made him to smoke,  
As if he had been all on fire.

O then into fury the stranger he grew,  
And gave him a damnable look,  
And with it a blow that laid him full low,  
And tumbl'd him into the brook.

[294]

I prithee, good fellow, O where art thou now?  
The stranger, in laughter, he cry'd.  
Quoth bold Robin Hood, Good faith, in the flood,  
And floating along with the tide.  
I needs must acknowledge thou art a brave soul,  
With thee I'll no longer contend;  
For needs must I say, thou hast got the day,  
Our battel shall be at an end.  
Then unto the bank he did presently wade,  
And pull'd himself out by a thorn;  
Which done, at the last he blow'd a loud blast  
Straitway on his fine bugle-horn:  
The eccho of which through the vallies did fly,  
At which his stout bowmen appear'd,  
All cloathed in green, most gay to be seen,  
So up to their master they steer'd.  
O, what's the matter? quoth William Stutely,  
Good master, you are wet to the skin.  
No matter, quoth he, the lad which you see  
In fighting hath tumbl'd me in.  
He shall not go scot-free, the others reply'd;  
So strait they were seizing him there,  
To duck him likewise: but Robin Hood cries,  
He is a stout fellow; forbear.

[295]

There's no one shall wrong thee, friend, be not afraid;  
These bowmen upon me do wait;  
There's threescore and nine; if thou wilt be mine,  
Thou shalt have my livery strait,  
And other accoutrements fit for a man;  
Speak up, jolly blade, never fear:  
I'll teach you also the use of the bow,  
To shoot at the fat fallow deer.  
O, here is my hand, the stranger reply'd,  
I'll serve you with all my whole heart;  
My name is John Little, a man of good mettle;  
Ne're doubt me, for I'll play my part.  
His name shall be alter'd, quoth William Stutely,  
And I will his godfather be;  
Prepare then a feast, and none of the least,  
For we will be merry, quoth he.  
They presently fetch'd him a brace of fat does,  
With humming strong liquor likewise;  
They lov'd what was good; so, in the green wood,  
This pretty sweet babe they baptize.  
He was, I must tell you, but seven foot high,



And, may be, an ell in the waste;  
A sweet pretty lad: much feasting they had;  
    Bold Robin the christ'ning grac'd, [296]  
With all his bowmen, which stood in a ring,  
    And were of the Nottingham breed;  
Brave Stutely came then, with seven yeomèn,  
    And did in this manner proceed:  
This infant was called John Little, quoth he;  
    Which name shall be changed anon:  
The words we'll transpose; so wherever he goes,  
    His name shall be call'd Little John.  
They all with a shout made the elements ring;  
    So soon as the office was ore,  
To feasting they went, with true merriment,  
    And tippl'd strong liquor gillore.  
Then Robin he took the pretty sweet babe,  
    And cloath'd him from top to the toe,  
In garments of green, most gay to be seen,  
    And gave him a curious long bow.  
"Thou shalt be an archer, as well as the best,  
    And range in the green wood with us;  
Where we'll not want gold nor silver, behold,  
    While bishops have ought in their purse.  
We live here like 'squires, or lords of renown,  
    Without ere a foot of free land;  
We feast on good cheer, with wine, ale, and beer,  
    And ev'ry thing at our command."

[297]

Then musick and dancing did finish the day;  
    At length, when the sun waxed low,  
Then all the whole train the grove did refrain,  
    And unto their caves they did go.  
And so, ever after, as long as he liv'd,  
    Altho' he was proper and tall,  
Yet, nevertheless, the truth to express,  
    Still Little John they did him call.



[298]



This excellent ballad, given from the common edition of Aldermay-church-yard (compared with the York copy), is supposed to be modern; the story, however, seems alluded to in the ballad of "Renowned Robin Hood." The full title is "The Bishop of Hereford's entertainment by Robin Hood and Little John, &c. in merry Barnsdale." The tune is added from an engraved sheet.

Some they will talk of bold Robin Hood,  
 And some of barons bold;  
 But I'll tell you how he serv'd the bishop of Hereford,  
 When he robb'd him of his gold.

[299]

As it befel, in merry Barnsdale,  
 'All' under the green-wood-tree,  
 The bishop of Hereford was to come by,  
 With all his company.  
 Come, kill [me] a ven'son, said bold Robin Hood,  
 Come, kill me a good fat deer,  
 The bishop of Hereford is to dine with me to-day,  
 And he shall pay well for his cheer.  
 We'll kill a fat ven'son, said bold Robin Hood,  
 And dress it by the highway side;  
 And we will watch the bishop narrowly,  
 Lest some other way he should ride.  
 Robin Hood dress'd himself in shepherd's attire,  
 With six of his men also;  
 And, when the bishop of Hereford came by,  
 They about the fire did go.  
 O what is the matter? then said the bishòp,  
 Or for whom do you make this a-do?  
 Or why do you kill the king's ven'son,  
 When your company is so few?  
 We are shephèrds, said bold Robin Hood,  
 And we keep sheep all the year,

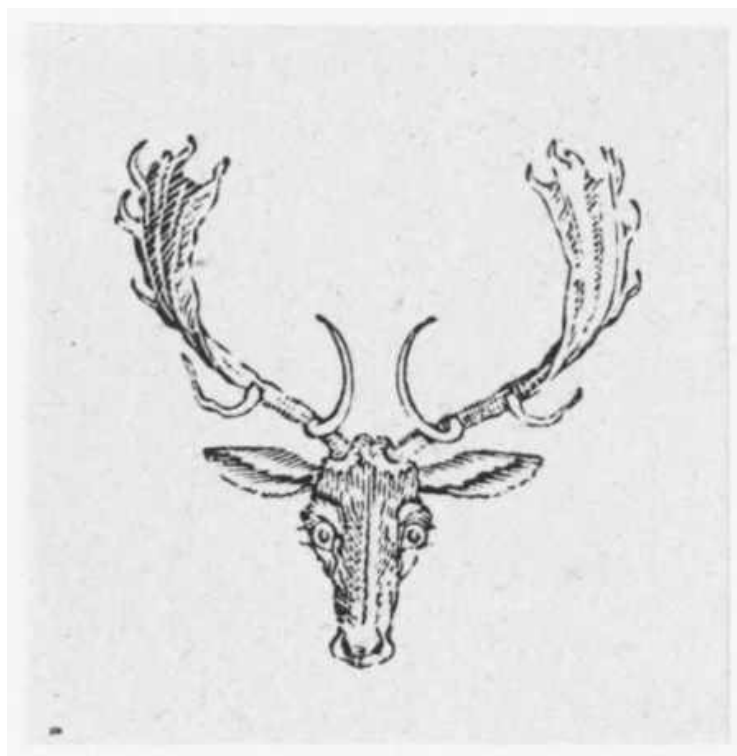
And we are disposed to be merry this day,  
And to kill of the king's fat deer.

[300]

You are brave fellows! said the bishòp,  
And the king of your doings shall know:  
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,  
For before the king you shall go.  
O pardon, O pardon, said bold Robin Hood,  
O pardon, I thee pray;  
For it becomes not your lordships coat  
To take so many lives away.  
No pardon, no pardon, said the bishòp,  
No pardon I thee owe;  
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,  
For before the king you shall go.  
Then Robin set his back against a tree,  
And his foot against a thorn,  
And from underneath his shepherds coat  
He pull'd out a bugle-horn.  
He put the little end to his mouth,  
And a loud blast did he blow,  
Till threescore and ten of bold Robin's men  
Came running all on a row;  
All making obeysance to bold Robin Hood;  
'Twas a comely sight for to see.  
What is the matter, master, said Little John,  
That you blow so hastily? [301]  
"O here is the bishop of Herefòrd,  
And no pardon we shall have."  
Cut off his head, master, said Little John,  
And throw him into his grave.  
O pardon, O pardon, said the bishòp,  
O pardon I thee pray;  
For if I had known it had been you,  
I'd have gone some other way.  
No pardon, no pardon, said bold Robin Hood,  
No pardon I thee owe;  
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,  
For to merry Barnsdale you shall go.  
Then Robin he took the bishop by the hand,  
And led him to merry Barnsdale;  
He made him to stay and sup with him that night,  
And to drink wine, beer, and ale.  
Call in a reckoning, said the bishòp,  
For methinks it grows wond'rous high.  
Lend me your purse, master, said Little John,  
And I'll tell you bye and bye.  
Then Little John took the bishop's cloak,  
And spread it upon the ground,  
And out of the bishop's portmantua  
He told three hundred pound.

[302]

Here's money enough, master, said Little John,  
And a comely sight 'tis to see;  
It makes me in charity with the bishòp,  
Tho' he heartily loveth not me.  
Robin Hood took the bishop by the hand,  
And he caused the music to play;  
And he made the [old] bishop to dance in his boots,  
And glad he could so get away.



[303]

**XXIII. ROBIN HOOD RESCUING THE WIDOW'S THREE SONS  
FROM THE SHERIFF WHEN GOING TO BE EXECUTED.** [↩](#)



This ballad, from the York edition of “Robin Hood’s Garland,” is probably one of the oldest extant of which he is the subject. In the more common editions is a modernised copy, in which the “silly old woman” is converted into “a gay lady;” but even this is more ancient than many of the pieces here inserted, and is entitled, by its merit, to a place in the Appendix.

The circumstance of Robin’s changing clothes with the palmer is, possibly, taken from an old romance intitled “The noble hystory of the moost excellent and myghty prynce and hygh renowned knyght kynge Ponthus of Galyce and of lytell Brytayne, Enprynted at London in Flete strete at the sygne of the sonne by Wynkyn de Worde, In the yere of our lorde god, M.CCCCC.XI.,” 4to, b. 1., sig. I. 6: “And as he [Ponthus] rode he met with a poore palmer beggyng his brede the whiche had his gowne all to clouted and an olde pyllled hatte, so he alyght and sayd to the palmer, frende we shall make a chaunge of all our garmentes, for [304] ye shall have my gowne and I shall have yours and your hatte. A syr sayd the palmer ye bourde you with me. In good fayth sayd Ponthus I do not, so he dyspoyled hym and cladde hym with all his rayment, and he put vpon hym the poore mannes gowne, his gyrdell, his hosyn, his shone, his hatte, and his bourden.”

There are twelve months in all the year,  
As I hear many say,  
But the merriest month in all the year  
Is the merry month of May.  
Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone  
With a link a down, and a day,  
And there he met a silly old woman  
Was weeping on the way.  
“What news? what news? thou silly old woman,  
What news hast thou for me?”  
Said she, There’s three squires in Nottingham town,  
To-day ‘are’ [322] condemned to die.  
Oh, have they parishes burnt? he said,  
Or have they ministers slain?  
Or have they robbed any virgin?  
Or with other men’s wives have lain?  
“They have no parishes burnt, good sir,  
Nor yet have ministers slain,  
Nor have they robbed any virgin,  
Nor with other men’s wives have lain.”

[305]

Oh, what have they done? said Robin Hood,  
I pray thee tell to me.  
“It’s for slaying of the kings fallow deer,  
Bearing their long bows with thee.”  
Dost thou not mind, old woman, he said,  
Since thou made me sup and dine?  
By the truth of my body, quoth bold Robin Hood,  
You could not tell it in better time.  
Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,  
With a link, a down, and a ‘day,’ [323]  
And there he met with a silly old palmer,  
Was walking along the highway.  
“What news? what news? thou silly old man,  
What news, I do thee pray?”  
Said he, Three squires in Nottingham town,  
Are condemn’d to die this day.  
“Come change thy apparel with me, old man,  
Come change thy apparel for mine;  
Here is forty shillings in good silvèr,  
Go drink it in beer or wine.”  
Oh, thine apparel is good, he said,  
And mine is ragged and torn;  
Wherever you go, wherever you ride,  
Laugh ne’er an old man to scorn.

[306]

“Come change thy apparel with me, old churl,  
Come change thy apparel with mine;  
Here are twenty pieces of good broad gold,  
Go feast thy brethren with wine.”  
Then he put on the old man’s hat,  
It stood full high on the crown;  
“The first bold bargain that I come at,  
It shall make thee come down.”  
Then he put on the old man’s cloak,  
Was patch’d black, blew, and red;  
He thought it no shame, all the day long,  
To wear the bags of bread.  
Then he put on the old man’s breeks,  
Was patch’d from ballup to side:  
By the truth of my body, bold Robin can say,  
This man lov’d little pride.  
Then he put on the old man’s hose,  
Were patch’d from knee to wrist:  
By the truth of my body, said bold Robin Hood,  
I’d laugh if I had any list.  
Then he put on the old man’s shoes,  
Were patch’d both beneath and aboon;  
Then Robin Hood swore a solemn oath,  
It’s good habit that makes a man.

[307]

Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,  
    With a link a down and a down,  
And there he met with the proud sheriff,  
    Was walking along the town.  
Oh 'Christ you' save, oh, sheriff, he said, [324]  
    Oh 'Christ you save and' see;  
And what will you give to a silly old man  
    To-day will your hangman be?  
Some suits, some suits, the sheriff he said,  
    Some suits, I'll give to thee;  
Some suits, some suits, and pence thirteen,  
    To-day's a hangman's fee.  
Then Robin he turns him round about,  
    And jumps from stock to stone:  
By the truth of my body, the sheriff he said,  
    That's well jump't, thou nimble old man.  
I was ne'er a hangman in all my life,  
    Nor yet intends to trade;  
But curst be he, said bold Robin,  
    That first a hangman was made.  
I've a bag for meal, and a bag for malt,  
    And a bag for barley and corn;  
A bag for bread, and a bag for beef,  
    And a bag for my little small horn.

[308]

I have a horn in my pocket.  
    I got it from Robin Hood,  
And still when I set it to my mouth,  
    For 'thee' [325] it blows little good.  
"Oh, wind thy horn, thou proud fellow,  
    Of thee I have no doubt;  
I wish that thou give such a blast,  
    Till both thy eyes fall out."  
The first loud blast that he did blow,  
    He blew both loud and shrill;  
A hundred and fifty of Robin Hoods men  
    Came riding over the hill.  
The next loud blast that he did give,  
    He blew both loud and amain,  
And quickly sixty of Robin Hoods men,  
    Came shining over the plain.  
Oh, who are 'those,' the sheriff he said,  
    Come tripping over the lee?  
They're my attendants, brave Robin did say,  
    They'll pay a visit to thee.  
They took the gallows from the slack,  
    They set it in the glen,  
They hang'd the proud sheriff on that,  
    Releas'd their own three men.

[309]



This ballad, which has never been inserted in any of the publications intituled “Robin Hood’s Garland” (and, perhaps, was not worth inserting here), is given from an old black letter copy in the collection of Anthony a Wood. Its full title is, “A famous battle between Robin Hood and Maid Marian; declaring their love, life, and liberty. Tune, Robin Hood Reviv’d” (see before, p. 217).

A bonny fine maid of a noble degree,  
    *With a hey down, down, a down, down,*  
Maid Marian call’d by name,  
Did live in the North, of excellent worth,  
    For shee was a gallant dame.

[310]

For favour and face, and beauty most rare,  
    Queen Hellen shee did excell:  
For Marian then was prais’d of all men,  
    That did in the country dwell.  
’Twas neither Rosamond nor Jane Shore,  
    Whose beauty was clear and bright,  
That could surpass this country lass,  
    Beloved of lord and knight.  
The earl of Huntington, nobly born,  
    That came of noble blood,  
To Marian went, with a good intent,  
    By the name of Robin Hood.  
With kisses sweet their red lips did meet,  
    For she and the earl did agree;  
In every place, they kindly embrace,  
    With love and sweet unity.  
But fortune bearing these lovers a spight,  
    That soon they were forced to part:  
To the merry green wood then went Robin Hood,  
    With a sad and sorrowfull heart.  
And Marian, poor soul, was troubled in mind,  
    For the absence of her friend;



With finger in eye, shee often did cry,  
And his person did much comend.

[311]

Perplexed and vexed, and troubled in mind,  
Shee drest herself like a page,  
And ranged the wood, to find Robin Hood,  
The bravest of men in that age.  
With quiver and bow, sword, buckler, and all,  
Thus armed was Marian most bold,  
Still wandering about to find Robin out,  
Whose person was better then gold.  
But Robin Hood, hee himself had disguis'd,  
And Marian was strangly attir'd,  
That they prov'd foes, and so fell to blowes,  
Whose vallour bold Robin admir'd.  
They drew out their swords, and to cutting they went,  
At least an hour or more,  
That the blood ran apace from bold Robins face,  
And Marian was wounded sore.  
O hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,  
And thou shalt be one of my string,  
To range in the wood with bold Robin Hood,  
And hear the sweet nightingall sing.  
When Marian did hear the voice of her love,  
Herself shee did quickly discover,  
And with kisses sweet she did him greet,  
Like to a most loyall lover.

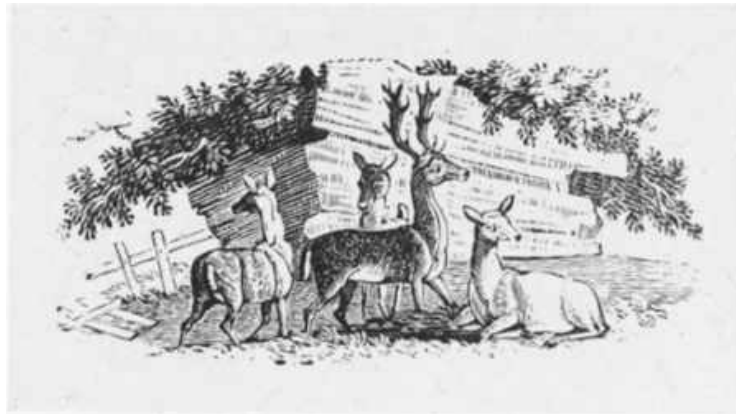
[312]

When bold Robin Hood his Marian did see,  
Good lord, what clipping was there!  
With kind embraces, and jobbing of faces,  
Providing of gallant cheer.  
For Little John took his bow in his hand,  
And 'wandred' [\[326\]](#) in the wood,  
To kill the deer, and make good chear,  
For Marian and Robin Hood.  
A stately banquet 'they' had full soon,  
All in a shaded bower,  
Where venison sweet they had to eat,  
And were merry that present hour.  
Great flaggons of wine were set on the board,  
And merrily they drunk round  
Their boules of sack, to strengthen the back,  
Whilst their knees did touch the ground.  
First Robin Hood began a health  
To Marian his onely dear;  
And his yeomen all, both comly and tall,  
Did quickly bring up the rear:  
For in a brave venie they tost off the bouls,  
Whilst thus they did remain;  
And every cup, as they drunk up,

They filled with speed again.

[313]

At last they ended their merriment,  
And went to walk in the wood,  
Where Little John, and Maid Mariàn,  
Attended on bold Robin Hood.  
In sollid content together they liv'd,  
With all their yeomen gay;  
They liv'd by 'their' hands, without any lands,  
And so they did many a day.  
But now to conclude an end I will make,  
In time as I think it good;  
For the people that dwell in the North can tell  
Of Marian and bold Robin Hood.



[314]

## XXV. THE KING'S DISGUISE, AND FRIENDSHIP WITH ROBIN HOOD, ↵



from the common collection of Aldermay-church-yard, seems to be taken from the old legend in Part I., and to have been written by some miserable retainer to the press, merely to eke out the book; being, in fact, a most contemptible performance.

The two concluding lines (the same with those of the next ballad) refer to song xxvii., which they have once immediately preceded.

King Richard hearing of the pranks  
Of Robin Hood and his men,  
He much admir'd, and more desired  
To see both him and them.

[315]

Then, with a dozen of his lords,  
To Nottingham he rode;  
When he came there, he made good cheer,  
And took up his abode.  
He having staid there some time,  
But had no hopes to speed,  
He and his lords, with one accord,  
All put on monks weeds.  
From Fountain-abbey they did ride,  
Down to Barnsdale;  
Where Robin Hood prepared stood  
All company to assail.  
The king was higher than the rest,  
And Robin thought he had  
An abbot been whom he had seen,  
To rob him he was glad.  
He took the king's horse by the head,  
Abbot, says he, abide;  
I am bound to rue such knaves as you,  
That live in pomp and pride.  
But we are messengers from the king,  
The king himself did say;  
Near to this place his royal grace  
To speak with thee does stay.

[316]

God save the king, said Robin Hood,  
And all that wish him well;  
He that does deny his sovereignty,  
I wish he was in hell.  
Thyself thou cursedst, says the king,  
For thou a traitor art.  
"Nay, but that you are his messenger,  
I swear you lie in heart.  
For I never yet hurt any man  
That honest is and true;  
But those who give their minds to live  
Upon other mens due.  
I never hurt the 'husbandmen'  
That use to till the ground:  
Nor spill their blood who range the wood,  
To follow hawk or hound.  
My chiefest spite to clergy is,  
Who in these days bear great sway;  
With fryars and monks, with their fine sprunks,

I make my chiefest prey.”  
But I am very glad, says Robin Hood,  
That I have met you here;  
Come, before we end, you shall, my friend,  
Taste of our green-wood cheer.

[317]

The king he then did marvel much,  
And so did all his men;  
They thought with fear, what kind of cheer,  
Robin would provide for them.  
Robin took the kings horse by the head,  
And led him to his tent:  
Thou wouldst not be so us'd, quoth he,  
But that my king thee sent.  
Nay, more than that, quoth Robin Hood,  
For good king Richards sake,  
If you had as much gold as ever I told,  
I would not one penny take.  
Then Robin set his horn to his mouth,  
And a loud blast he did blow,  
Till a hundred and ten of Robin Hoods men,  
Came marching all of a row.  
And when they came bold Robin before,  
Each man did bend his knee:  
O, thought the king, 'tis a gallant thing,  
And a seemly sight to see.  
Within himself the king did say,  
These men of Robin Hoods  
More humble be than mine to me;  
So the court may learn of the woods.

[318]

So then they all to dinner went,  
Upon a carpet green;  
Black, yellow, red, finely mingled,  
Most curious to be seen.  
Venison and fowls were plenty there,  
With fish out of the river:  
King Richard swore, on sea or shore,  
He never was feasted better.  
Then Robin takes a cann of ale:  
“Come, let us now begin;  
And every man shall have his cann:  
Here's a health unto the king.”  
The king himself drank to the king,  
So round about it went;  
Two barrels of ale, both stout and stale,  
To pledge that health was spent.  
And, after that, a bowl of wine  
In his hand took Robin Hood;  
Until I die, I'll drink wine, said he,  
While I live in the green wood.

Bend all your bows, said Robin Hood,  
And with the grey-goose-wing,  
Such sport now show, as you would do  
In the presence of the king.

[319]

They shewed such brave archery,  
By cleaving sticks and wands,  
That the king did say, such men as they  
Live not in many lands.  
Well, Robin Hood, then says the king,  
If I could thy pardon get,  
To serve the king in every thing  
Would'st thou thy mind firm set?  
Yes, 'with all' my heart, bold Robin said,  
So they flung off their hoods;  
To serve the king in every thing,  
They swore they would spend their 'bloods.'  
For a clergyman was first my bane,  
Which makes me hate them all,  
But if you will be so kind to me,  
Love them again I shall.  
The king no longer could forbear,  
For he was mov'd with 'ruth.'

...

...

"I am the king, 'your' sovereign king,  
That appears before you all."  
When Robin saw that it was he,  
Strait then he down did fall.

[320]

Stand up again, then said the king,  
I'll thee thy pardon give;  
Stand up, my friend, who can contend,  
When I give leave to live?  
So they are all gone to Nottingham,  
All shouting as they came:  
But when the people them did see,  
They thought the king was slain;  
And for that cause the outlaws were come,  
To rule all as they list;  
And for to shun, which 'way' to run,  
The people did not wist.  
The plowman left the plow in the fields,  
The smith ran from his shop;  
Old folks also, that scarce could go,  
Over their sticks did hop.  
The king soon did let them understand  
He had been in the green-wood,  
And from that day, for evermore,  
He'd forgiven Robin Hood.  
Then [when] the people they did hear,

And [that] the truth was known,  
They all did sing, God save the king!  
Hang care, the town's our own!

[321]

What's that Robin Hood? then said the sheriff,  
That varlet I do hate;  
Both me and mine he caused to dine,  
And serv'd us all with one plate.  
Ho, ho, said Robin Hood, I know what you mean,  
Come, take your gold again;  
Be friends with me, and I with thee,  
And so with every man.  
Now, master sheriff, you are paid,  
And since you are beginner,  
As well as you give me my due,  
For you ne'er paid for that dinner.  
But if 'that it' should please the king,  
So much your house to grace,  
To sup with you, for, to speak true,  
[I] know you ne'er was base.  
The sheriff [this] could not gainsay,  
For a trick was put upon him;  
A supper was drest, the king was a guest,  
But he thought 'twould have outdone him.  
They are all gone to London court,  
Robin Hood with all his train;  
He once was there a noble peer,  
And now he's there again.

[322]

Many such pranks brave Robin play'd,  
While he liv'd in the green wood:  
Now, my friend, attend, and hear an end  
Of honest Robin Hood.



[323]



A composition of a similar nature with the preceding, and from the same authority.

When as the sheriff of Nottingham  
Was come with mickle grief,  
He talk'd no good of Robin Hood,  
That strong and sturdy thief.  
*Fal la dal de.*

So unto London road he past,  
His losses to unfold  
To king Richàrd, who did regard  
The tale that he had told.

[324]

Why, quoth the king, what shall I do?  
Art thou not sheriff for me?  
The law is in force, to take thy course  
Of them that injure thee.  
Go get thee gone, and by thyself  
Devise some tricking game,  
For to enthral yon rebels all,  
Go take thy course with them.  
So away the sheriff he return'd,  
And by the way he thought  
Of th' words of the king, and how the thing  
To pass might well be brought.  
For within his mind he imaginèd,  
That when such matches were,  
Those outlaws stout, without all doubt,  
Would be the bowmen there.  
So an arrow with a golden head,  
And shaft of silver-white,  
Who on the day should bear away  
For his own proper right.  
Tidings came to bold Robin Hood,  
Under the green-wood tree:  
"Come prepare you then, my merry men,  
We'll go yon sport to see."

[325]

With that stept forth a brave young man,  
    David of Doncastèr,  
Master, said he, be rul'd by me,  
    From the green wood we'll not stir.  
To tell the truth, I'm well inform'd,  
    Yon match it is a wile;  
The sheriff, I wiss, devises this  
    Us archers to beguile.  
Thou smells of a coward, said Robin Hood,  
    Thy words do not please me;  
Come on't what will, I'll try my skill,  
    At yon brave archery.  
O then bespoke brave Little John,  
    Come let us thither gang;  
Come listen to me, how it shall be,  
    That we need not be ken'd.  
Our mantles all of Lincoln-green  
    Behind us we will leave;  
We'll dress us all so several,  
    They shall not us perceive.  
One shall wear white, another red,  
    One yellow, another blue;  
Thus in disguise, 'to' the exercise  
    We'll gang, whate'er insue.

[326]

Forth from the green wood they are gone,  
    With hearts all firm and stout,  
Resolving [then] with the sheriff's men  
    To have a hearty bout.  
So themselves they mixed with the rest,  
    To prevent all suspicion;  
For if they should together hold,  
    They thought it no discretion.  
So the sheriff 'looked' round about,  
    Amongst eight hundred men,  
But could not see the sight that he  
    Had long suspected then.  
Some said, If Robin Hood was here,  
    And all his men to boot,  
Sure none of them could pass these men,  
    So bravely they do shoot.  
Ay, quoth the sheriff, and scratch'd his head,  
    I thought he would have been here;  
I thought he would, but tho' he's bold,  
    He durst not now appear.  
O that word griev'd Robin Hood to the heart,  
    He vexed in his blood;  
Ere long, thought he, thou shalt well see  
    That here was Robin Hood.

[327]



Some cried, Blue jacket! another cried, Brown!  
And a third cried, Brave yellow!  
But the fourth man said, Yon man in red  
In this place has no fellow.  
For that was Robin Hood himself,  
For he was cloath'd in red;  
At every shot the prize he got,  
For he was both sure and dead.  
So the arrow with the golden head,  
And shaft of silver-white,  
Brave Robin Hood won, and bore with him,  
For his own proper right.  
These outlaws there, that very day,  
To shun all kinds of doubt,  
By three or four, no less nor more,  
As they went in came out.  
Until they all assembled were  
Under the green-wood shade,  
Where they 'report,' in pleasant sport,  
What brave pastime they made.  
Says Robin Hood, all my care is,  
How that yon sheriff may  
Know certainly that it was I  
That bore his arrow away.

[328]

Says Little John, My counsel good  
Did take effect before,  
So therefore now, if you'll allow,  
I will advise once more.  
Speak on, speak on, said Robin Hood,  
Thy wit's both quick and sound,  
...  
...  
This I advise, said Little John,  
That a letter shall be penn'd,  
And when it is done, to Nottingham  
You to the sheriff shall send.  
That is well advised, said Robin Hood,  
But how must it be sent?  
"Pugh! when you please, 'tis done with ease;  
Master, be you content.  
I'll stick it on my arrow's head,  
And shoot it into the town;  
The mark must show where it must go,  
Whenever it lights down."  
The project it was well perform'd,  
The sheriff that letter had,  
Which when he read, he scratch'd his head,  
And rav'd like one that's mad.

[329]

So we'll leave him chafing in 'his' grease,

Which will do him no good:  
Now, my friends, attend, and hear the end  
Of honest Robin Hood.



[330]

## XXVII. ROBIN HOOD AND THE VALIANT KNIGHT.↵



“Together with an account of his death and burial, &c. Tune of Robin Hood and the fifteen Foresters.” From the common garland of Aldermay-church-yard; corrected by the York copy.

When Robin Hood, and his merry men all,  
    *Derry down, down,*  
    Had reigned many years,  
The king was then told that they had been bold  
    To his bishops and noble peers.  
    *Hey down, derry, derry down.* [331]  
Therefore they called a council of state,  
    To know what was best to be done,  
For to quell their pride, or else they reply'd  
    The land would be over-run.  
Having consulted a whole summer's day,  
    At length it was agreed,  
That one should be sent to try the event,

And fetch him away with speed.  
Therefore a trusty and most worthy knight  
The king was pleased to call,  
Sir William by name; when to him he came,  
He told him his pleasure all.  
“Go you from hence to bold Robin Hood,  
And bid him, without more ado,  
Surrender himself, or else the proud elf  
Shall suffer with all his crew.  
Take here a hundred bowmen brave,  
All chosen men of great might,  
Of excellent art to take thy part,  
In glittering armour most bright.”  
Then said the knight, My sovereign liege,  
By me they shall be led;  
I’ll venture my blood against bold Robin Hood,  
And bring him alive or dead.

[332]

One hundred men were chosen straight,  
As proper as e’er men saw:  
On Midsummer-day they marched away,  
To conquer that brave outlaw.  
With long yew bows, and shining spears,  
They march’d with mickle pride,  
And never delay’d, nor halted, nor stay’d  
Till they came to the green-wood side.  
Said he to his archers, Tarry here,  
Your bows make ready all,  
That if need should be, you may follow me,  
And see you observe my call.  
I’ll go first in person, he cry’d,  
With the letters of my good king,  
Well sign’d and seal’d, and if he will yield,  
We need not to draw one string.  
He wander’d about till at length he came  
To the tent of Robin Hood;  
The letter he shows; bold Robin arose,  
And there on his guard he stood.  
They’d have me surrender, quoth bold Robin Hood,  
And lie at their mercy then;  
But tell them from me, that never shall be,  
While I have full seven score men.

[333]

Sir William the knight, both hardy and bold,  
He offer’d to seize him there,  
Which William Locksley by fortune did see,  
And bid him that trick to forbear.  
Then Robin Hood set his horn to his mouth,  
And blew a blast or twain,  
And so did the knight, at which there in sight  
The archers came all amain.

Sir William with care he drew up his men,  
And plac'd them in battle-array;  
Bold Robin, we find, he was not behind:  
Now this was a bloody fray.  
The archers on both sides bent their bows,  
And the clouds of arrows flew;  
The very first flight that honour'd knight  
Did there bid the world adieu.  
Yet nevertheless their fight did last  
From morning till almost noon;  
Both parties were stout, and loth to give out,  
This was on the last day of June.  
At length they left off: one party they went  
To London with right good will;  
And Robin Hood he to the green-wood tree,  
And there he was taken ill.

[334]

He sent for a monk, to let him blood,  
Who took his life away;  
Now this being done, his archers they run,  
It was not a time to stay.  
Some got on board, and cross'd the seas,  
To Flanders, France, and Spain,  
And others to Rome, for fear of their doom,  
But soon return'd again.



[335]

**XXVIII. ROBIN HOOD'S DEATH AND BURIAL:** [↩](#)



“Shewing how he was taken ill, and how he went to his cousin at Kirkley-hall, who let him blood, which was the cause of his death. Tune of Robin Hood’s Last Farewel, &c.”

This very old and curious piece is preserved solely in the editions of “Robin Hood’s Garland” printed at York (or such as have been taken from them), where it is made to conclude with some foolish lines (adopted from the London copy of the preceding ballad), in order to introduce the epitaph. It is here given from a collation of two different copies, containing numerous variations, a few of which are retained in the margin.

When Robin Hood and Little John,  
    *Down a down, a down, a down,*  
Went o’er yon bank of broom,  
Said Robin Hood to Little John,  
    We have shot for many a pound:  
    *Hey down, a down, a down.*

[336]

But I am not able to shoot one shot more,  
    My arrows will not flee;  
But I have a cousin lives down below,  
    Please god, she will bleed me.  
Now Robin is to fair Kirkley gone,  
    As fast as he can win;  
But before he came there, as we do hear,  
    He was taken very ill.  
And when that he came to fair Kirkley-hall,  
    He knock’d all at the ring,  
But none was so ready as his cousin herself  
    For to let bold Robin in.  
Will you please to sit down, cousin Robin, she said,  
    And drink some beer with me?  
“No, I will neither eat nor drink,  
    Till I am blooded by thee.” [327]  
Well, I have a room, cousin Robin, she said,  
    Which you did never see,  
And if you please to walk therein,  
    You blooded by me shall be. [328]

She took him by the lilly-white hand,  
And led him to a private room,  
And there she blooded bold Robin Hood,  
Whilst one drop of blood would run.



ROBIN HOOD AND HIS BETRAYER.

[337]

She blooded him in the vein of the arm,  
And lock'd him up in the room;  
There did he bleed all the live-long day,  
Untill the next day at noon.  
He then bethought him of a casement door,  
Thinking for to be gone; [329]  
He was so weak he could not leap,  
Nor he could not get down.  
He then bethought him of his bugle-horn,  
Which hung low down to his knee;

He set his horn unto his mouth,  
    And blew out weak blasts three.  
Then Little John, when hearing him,  
    As he sat under the tree,  
“I fear my master is near dead,  
    He blows so wearily.”  
Then Little John to fair Kirkley is gone,  
    As fast as he can dree;  
But when he came to Kirkley-hall,  
    He broke locks two or three;  
Untill he came bold Robin to,  
    Then he fell on his knee;  
A boon, a boon, cries Little John,  
    Master, I beg of thee.

[338]

What is that boon, quoth Robin Hood,  
    Little John, thou begs of me?  
“It is to burn fair Kirkley-hall,  
    And all their nunnery.”  
Now nay, now nay, quoth Robin Hood,  
    That boon I’ll not grant thee;  
I never ‘hurt’ [330] woman in all my life,  
    Nor man in woman’s company.  
I never hurt fair maid in all my time,  
    Nor at my end shall it be;  
But give me my bent bow in my hand,  
    And a broad arrow I’ll let flee:  
And where this arrow is taken up,  
    There shall my grave digg’d be.  
Lay me a green sod under my head,  
    And another at my feet; [331]  
And lay my bent bow by my side,  
    Which was my music sweet;  
And make my grave of gravel and green,  
    Which is most right and meet.  
Let me have length and breadth enough,  
    With a green sod under my head; [332] [339]  
That they may say, when I am dead,  
    Here lies bold Robin Hood.  
These words they readily promis’d him,  
    Which did bold Robin please:  
And there they buried bold Robin Hood,  
    Near to the fair Kirkleys.



[341]

## APPENDIX. ↩



### I. THE PLAYE OF ROBYN HODE ↩

1872.

is printed by Copland at the end of his edition of the “Mery Geste,” &c., inserted in the present volume. It seems to be composed, certainly with little improvement, partly from the ballad of “Robin Hood and the Curtall Frier” (see before, p. 209), or rather, perhaps, some still older piece on the same subject, and partly from the ancient poem of “Robin Hood and the Potter” (see p. 81). The whole title runs—“Here beginnethe the playe of Robyn Hoode, very proper to be played in Maye games.” It has here received a few corrections from White’s edition, 1634.



ROBYN HODE.

Now stand ye forth, my mery men all,  
And harke what I shall say;  
Of an adventure I shal you tell,  
The which befell this other day.

[342]

As I went by the hygh way,  
With a stout frere I met,  
And a quarter-staffe in his hande,  
Lyghtely to me he lept,  
And styll he bade me stande;  
There were strypes two or three,  
But I cannot tell who had the worse,  
But well I wote the horeson lept within me,  
And fro me he toke my purse.  
Is there any of my mery men all,  
That to that frere wyll go,  
And bryng him to me forth withall,  
Whether he wyll or no?

LYTELL JOHN.

Yes, mayster, I make god avowe,  
To that frere wyll I go,  
And bring him to you,  
Whether he wyl or no.

FRYER TUCKE.

*Deus hic, deus hic*, god be here!  
Is not this a holy worde for a frere?  
God save all this company!  
But am not I a jolly fryer?  
For I can shote both farre and nere,  
And handle the sworde and bucklèr,  
And this quarter-staffe also.  
If I mete with a gentyman or yemàn, [343]  
I am not afrayde to loke hym upon,  
Nor boldly with him to carpe;  
If he speake any wordes to me,  
He shall have strypes two or thre,  
That shal make his body smarte.  
But, maisters, [333] to shew you the matter,  
Wherefore and why I am come hither,  
In fayth I wyl not spare:  
I am come to seke a good yeman,  
In Bernisdale men sai is his habitacion,  
His name is Robyn Hode.  
And if that he be better man than I,  
His servaunt wyll I be, and serve him truely;  
But if that I be better man than he,  
By my truth my knave shall he be,  
And leade these dogges all three.

ROBYN HODE.

Yelde the, fryer, in thy long cote.

FRYER TUCKE.

I beshrew thy hart, knave, thou hurtest my throt.

ROBYN HODE.

I trowe, fryer, thou beginnest to dote;  
Who made the so malapert and so bolde,  
To come into this forest here,  
Amonge my falowe dere? [344]

FRYER.

Go louse the, ragged knave,  
If thou make mani wordes, I will geve the on the eare,  
Though I be but a poore fryer.  
To seke Robyn Hode I am com here,  
And to him my hart to breke.

ROBYN HODE.

Thou lousy frer, what wouldest thou with hym?  
He never loved fryer, nor none of freiers kyn.

FRYER.

Avaunt, ye ragged knave!  
Or ye shall have on the skynne.

ROBYN HODE.

Of all the men in the morning thou art the worst,  
To mete with the I have no lust;  
For he that meteth a frere or a fox in the morning,  
To spede ill [334] that day he standeth in jeopardy:  
Therefore I had lever mete with the devil of hell,  
Fryer, I tell the as I thinke,  
Then mete with a fryer or a fox  
In a mornynge, or I drynk.

FRYER.

Avaunt, thou ragged knave, this is but a mock,  
If thou make mani words thou [335] shal have a knock.  
[345]

ROBYN HODE.

Harke, frere, what I say here,  
Over this water thou shalt me bere,  
The brydge is borne away.

FRYER.

To say naye I wyll not,  
To let the of thine oth it were great pitie and sin,  
But up on a fryers backe, and have even in.

ROBYN HODE.

Nay, have over.

FRYER.

Now am I, frere, within, and thou, Robin, without,

To lay the here I have no great doubt.  
Now art thou, Robyn, without, and I, frere, within,  
Lye ther, knave; chose whether thou wilte sinke or swym.

ROBYN HODE.

Why, thou lowsy frere, what hast thou done? [336]

FRYER.

Mary, set a knave over the shone.

ROBYN HODE.

Therfore thou shalt aby.

[346]

FRYER.

Why, wylt thou fyght a plucke?

ROBYN HODE.

And god send me good lucke.

FRYER.

Than have a stroke for fryer Tucke.

ROBYN HODE.

Holde thy hande, frere, and here me speke.

FRYER.

Saye on, ragged knave,  
Me semeth ye begyn to swete.

ROBYN HODE.

In this forest I have a hounde,  
I wyl not give him for an hundreth pound,  
Geve me leve my horne to blowe,  
That my hounde may knowe.

FRYER.

Blowe on, ragged knave, without any doubte,  
Untyll bothe thyne eyes starte out.  
Here be a sorte of ragged knaves come in,  
Clothed all in Kendale grene,  
And to the they take their way nowe.

[347]

ROBYN HODE.

Peradventure they do so.

FRYER.

I gave the leve to blowe at thy wyll,  
Now give me leve to whistell my fyll.

ROBYN HODE.

Whystell, frere, evyll mote thou fare,  
Untyll bothe thyne eyes stare. [337]

FRYER.

Now Cut and Bause!  
Brenge forth the clubbes and staves,  
And downe with those ragged knaves!

ROBYN HODE.

How sayest thou, frere, wylt thou be my man,  
To do me the best servyse thou can?  
Thou shalt have both golde and fee,  
And also here is a lady free,  
I wyl geve her unto the,  
And her chapplayn I the make,  
To serve her for my sake.

FRYER.

Here is a huckle duckle, an inch above the buckle;

[348]

She is a trul of trust, [338] to serve a frier at his lust,  
A prycker, a pauncer, a terer of shetes, [339]  
A wagger of buttockes [340] when other men slepes.  
Go home, ye knaves, and lay crabbes in the fyre,  
For my lady and I wil daunce in the myre, for veri pure joye.

ROBYN HODE.

Lysten to [me], my mery men all,  
And harke what I shall say;  
Of an adventure I shall you tell,  
That befell this other daye.  
With a proude potter I met,  
And a rose garlande on his head, [341] [349]  
The floures of it shone marvaylous freshe;  
This seven yere and more he hath used this waye,  
Yet was he never so curteyse a potter,  
As one peny passage to paye.  
Is there any of my mery men all  
That dare be so bolde  
To make the potter paie passage,  
Either silver or golde?

LYTELL JOHN.

Not I, master, for twenty pound redy tolde,  
For there is not among us al one  
That dare medle with that potter man for man.  
I felt his handles not long agone,  
But I had lever have ben here by the,  
Therefore I knowe what he is.  
Mete him when ye wil, or mete him whan ye shal,  
He is as propre a man as ever you medle withal.

[350]

ROBYN HODE.

I will lai with the, Litel John, twenti pound so read,  
If I wyth that potter mete,  
I wil make him pay passage, maugre his head.

LYTELL JOHN.

I consente therto, so eate I bread,  
If he pay passage maugre his head,  
Twenti pound shall ye have of me for your mede.

THE POTTERS BOYE JACKE.

Out alas, that ever I sawe this daye!  
For I am clene out of my waye  
From Notynggham towne;  
If I hye me not the faster,  
Or I come there the market [342] wel be done.

ROBYN HODE.

Let me se, are thy [343] pottes hole and sounde?

JACKE.

Yea, meister, but they will not breake the ground.

ROBYN HODE.

I wil them breke, for the cuckold thi maisters sake;  
And if they will not breake the grounde,  
Thou shalt have thre pence for a pound. [344] [351]

JACKE.

Out alas! what have ye done?  
If my maister come, he will breke your crown.

THE POTTER.

Why, thou horeson, art thou here yet?  
Thou shouldest have bene at markt.

JACKE.

I met with Robin Hode, a good yemàn,  
He hath broken my pottes,  
And called you kuckolde by your name.

THE POTTER.

Thou mayst be a gentylman, so god me save,  
But thou semest a noughty knave.  
Thou callest me cuckolde by my name,  
And I swere by god and saynt John  
Wyfe had I never none.  
This cannot I denye,  
But if thou be a good felowe,  
I wil sel mi horse, mi harneis, pottes and paniers to,  
Thou shalt have the one halfe and I will have the other;  
If thou be not so content,  
Thou shalt have stripes if thou were my brother.

ROBYN HODE.

Harke, potter, what I shall say:  
This seven yere and more thou hast used this way, [352]  
Yet were thou never so curteous to me,  
As one penny passage to paye.

THE POTTER.

Why should I paye passage to thee?

ROBYN HODE.

For I am Robyn Hode, chiefe governoure  
Under the grene woode tree.

THE POTTER.

This seven yere have I used this way up and downe,  
Yet payed I passage to no man,  
Nor now I wyl not beginne, so do [345] the worst you can.

ROBYN HODE.

Passage shalt thou pai here under the grene-wode tre,  
Or els thou shalt leve a wedde [346] with me.

THE POTTER.

If thou be a good felowe, as men do the call,  
Lay awaye thy bowe,  
And take thy sword and buckeler in thy hande,  
And se what shall befall.

ROBYN HODE.

Lyttle John, where art thou?

LYTELL [JOHN].

Here, mayster, I make god avowe.

[353]

I tolde you, mayster, so god me save,  
That you shoulde fynde the [347] potter a knave.  
Holde your buckeler fast in your hande,  
And I wyll styfly by you stande,  
Ready for to fyghte;  
Be the knave never so stoute,  
I shall rappe him on the snoute,  
And put hym to flyghte.


## II. A FREEMAN'S SONG, FOR THREE VOICES.↩

This strange and whimsical performance is taken from a very rare and curious publication, intitled "Deuteromelia: or the second part of musicks melodie, or melodius musicke. Of pleasant roundelaies; K. H. mirth, or freemens songs. And such delightfull catches. London: printed for Thomas Adams dwelling in Paules church-yard at the signe of the white lion, 1609." 4to. Freeman's songs is supposed to be a corruption of Three men's songs, from their being generally for three voices. K. H. is King Henry's. See "Ancient Songs," ed. 1829, vol. i. p. lxxix., and vol. ii. p. 54, &c.


In the collection of old printed ballads made by Anthony a Wood is an inaccurate copy of this ancient and singular production, in his own handwriting: "This song," says he, "was esteemed an old song before the rebellion broke out in 1641." It thereby appears that the first line of every stanza was "to be sung thrice." Beside the music here given, there are three parts of "Another way," which it was not thought necessary to insert.

[354]

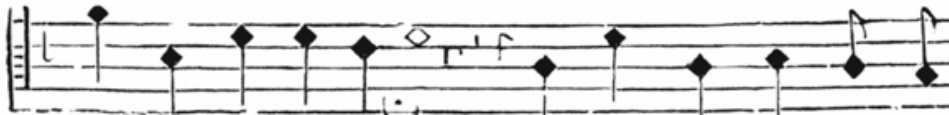
TREBLE.




Y Lands-dale hey ho, by mery Lands-dale



there dwelt a jolly miller, And a very good old man



was hee, was he, hey ho He had, he had and a

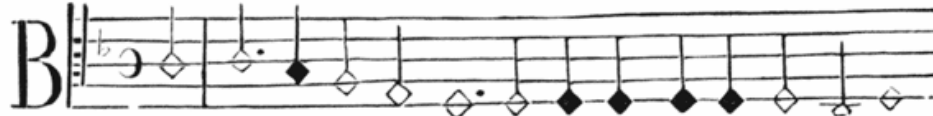


sonne a. He had, he had and a sonne.


TREBLE.

By Lands-dale hey ho, by mery Lands-dale there dwelt a jolly miller, And a very good old man was hee, was he, hey ho He had, he had and a sonne a, He had, he had and a sonne.]

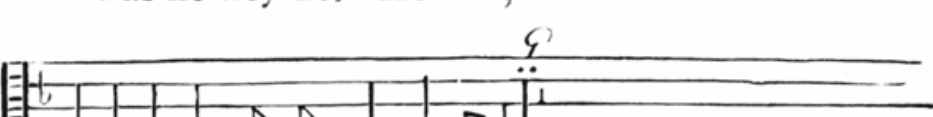
TENOR.



Y Lands-dale hey ho, by mery Lands dale hey ho



was he hey ho. He had, he had and a sonne a



TENOR.

By Lands-dale hey ho, by mery Lands dale hey ho was he hey ho. He had, he had and a sonne a]

BASSUS.

Y Lands-dale hey ho, by mery Lands-dale, hey ho,  
 :||: There dwelt a jolly miller, and a very good old man was  
 he, hey ho, He had, he had and a sonne a, he had  
 :||: he had, he had

**BASSUS.**

By Lands-dale hey ho, by mery Lands-dale, hey ho, There dwelt a jolly miller, and a very good old man was he, hey ho, He had, he had and a sonne a, he had he had, he had]

He had, he had and a sonne a,

Men called him Renold,

And mickle of his might

Was he, was he, hey ho.

And from his father a wode a,

His fortune for to seeke,

From mery Landsdale

Wode he, wode he, hey ho.

[356]

His father would him seeke a,

And found him fast asleepe.

Among the leaves greene

Was he, was he, hey ho.

He tooke, he tooke him up a,

All by the lilly-white hand,

And set him on his feet,

And bad him stand, hey ho.

He gave to him a benbow,

Made all of a trusty tree,

And arrowes in his hand,

And bad him let them flee.

And shoote was that that a did a,

Some say he shot a mile,

But halfe a mile and more

Was it, was it, hey ho.

And at the halfe miles end [a],



There stood an armed man;  
 The childe he shot him through,  
 And through, and through, hey 'ho.'  
 His beard was all on a white a,  
 As white as whaleis bone,  
 His eyes they were as cleare  
 As christall stone, hey ho.

[357]

And there of him they made [a]  
 Good yeoman Robin Hood,  
 Scarlet, and Little John,  
 And Little John, hey ho.

### III. A ROUND ↩

from "Pammelia. Musicks miscellanie. Or, mixed varietie of pleasant roundelays, and delightfull catches, of 3. 4 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. parts in one. None so ordinarie as musicall, none so musical as not to all very pleasing and acceptable. London Printed by William Barley, for R. B. and H. W. and are to be sold at the Spread Eagle at the great north dore of Paules, 1609," 4to, a work equally scarce and curious with that before cited. This, however, is only the tenor part; but the words of the other parts are very trifling, and relate to different subjects. It is called "A round of three country-dances in one."

The image shows three staves of musical notation in G-clef and 3/4 time. The first staff begins with a large 'R' and a 'bis' marking. The lyrics are: 'ROBIN Hood, Robin Hood, said Little John, Come dance before the queene a: In a red petticote and a greene jacket, a white hose and a greene a ut supra.' The notation includes various note values, rests, and repeat signs.

[Robin Hood, Robin Hood, said Little John, Come dance before the queene a: In a red petticote and a greene jacket, a white hose and a greene a greene a *ut supra*.]

[358]

### IV. HEY JOLLY ROBIN. ↩

These stanzas are supplied by "A musicall dreame, or the fourth booke of ayres, &c. Composed by Robert Iones. London, Imprinted by the assignees of William Barley, and are to be solde in Powles church-yard, at the signe of the Crowne, 1609," fo. The music, a composition of little merit or curiosity for the present age, was not transcribed.

In Sherwood livde stout Robin Hood,  
 An archer great, none greater:  
 His bow and shafts were sure and good,  
 Yet Cupids were much beter.

Robin could shoot at many a hart and misse,  
Cupid at first could hit a hart of his.  
Hey jolly Robin, hoe jolly Robin, hey jolly Robin Hood,  
Love finds out me, as well as thee, to follow me, to follow me to the green wood.  
A noble thiefe was Robin Hoode,  
Wise was he could deceive him;  
Yet Marrian, in his bravest mood,  
Could of his heart bereave him.  
No greater thief lies hidden under skies  
Then beauty closely lodgde in womens eyes.  
Hey jolly Robin.

[359]

An out-law was this Robin Hood,  
His life free and unruly;  
Yet to faire Marrian bound he stood,  
And loves debt payed her duely.  
Whom curbe of strickttest law could not hold in  
Love with obeyednes and a winke could winne.  
Hey jolly Robin.  
Now wend we home, stout Robin Hood,  
Leave we the woods behind us;  
Love-passions must not be withstood,  
Love every where will find us.  
I livde in fiede and towne, and so did he,  
I got me to the woods, Love followed me.  
Hey jolly Robin.

## V. A MERRY WEDDING; OR, O BRAVE ARTHUR OF BRADLEY.↩

This old ballad, referred to in p. 158 of the present volume, is given from a black letter copy in a private collection, compared with and very much corrected by “An antidote against melancholy: made up in pills, compounded of witty ballads, jovial songs, and merry catches, 1661.” The running title of the volume is “Pills to purge melancholy,” which was afterward borrowed by Durfey.

[360]

There is a different, but probably much more modern, ballad upon this popular subject, in the same measure, intituled “Arthur o’ Bradley,” and beginning,

“All in the merry month of May.”

In Jonson’s “Bartholomew Fair,” Moon-calf addresses Justice Overdo by this name: “O lord! do you not know him, mistress? ’tis mad Arthur of Bradley that makes the orations. Brave master, old Arthur of Bradley, how do you do? welcome to the fair, when shall we hear you again to handle your matters with your back against a booth, ha? I ha’ been one o’ your little disciples, i’ my days!”

In “The Honest Whore,” by Decker, 1604, Bellafront, on the Duke’s assurance that Matthio shall make her amends and marry her, replies, “Shall he? O brave Arthur of Bradley then!”

See you not Pierce the piper,  
His cheeks as big as a miter,  
A piping among the swains,  
That dance on yonder plains?

Where Tib and Tom do trip it,  
And youths to the hornpipe nip it,  
With every one his carriage,  
To go to yonder marriage;  
Not one would stay behind,  
But go with Arthur of Bradley,  
    Oh fine Arthur of Bradley,  
    Oh fine Arthur of Bradley,  
    Oh fine Arthur of Bradley, oh, &c.

Arthur had got him a lass,  
A bonnier never was;

[361]

The chief youths of the parish  
Came dancing of the morris;  
With country lasses trouncing,  
And lusty lads bousing,  
Jumping with mickle pride,  
And each his wench by his side;  
They all were fine and gay,  
    For the honour of Arthur of Bradley,  
    Oh fine Arthur of Bradley, oh, &c.

And when that Arthur was married,  
And his bride home had carried,  
The youngsters they did wait  
To help to carry up meat;  
Francis carried the furnety,  
Michael carried the mince-pye,  
Bartholomew the beef and the mustard,  
And Christopher carried the custard;  
Thus every one in his array,

    For the honour of Arthur of Bradley,  
    Oh fine Arthur of Bradley, oh, &c.

And when that dinner was ended,  
The maidens they were befriended,  
For out steps Dick the draper,  
And he bid, Strike up, scraper!  
It's best to be dancing a little,  
And then to the tavern to tipple:  
He call'd for a hornpipe, [362]

That went fine on the bagpipe;  
Then forward, piper, and play,

    For the honour of Arthur of Bradley,  
    Oh fine, &c.

Richard he did lead it,  
And Margery did tread it,  
Francis followed them,  
And after courteous Jane;  
Thus every one after another,  
As if they had been sister and brother;  
That 'twas great joy to see  
How well they did agree;  
And then they all did say,

Hay for Arthur of Bradley!

Oh fine Arthur of Bradley, oh, &c.

Then Miles in his motley breeches,  
And he the piper beseeches  
To play him *Haw-thorn buds*,  
That he and his wench might trudge:  
But Lawrence liked not that,  
No more did lusty Kate;  
For she cry'd, Can'st thou not hit it,  
To see how fine Thomas can trip it,

For the honour of Arthur of Bradley, &c.

When all the swains did see  
This mirth and merry glee,  
There was never a man did flinch, [363]  
But each one kist his wench;  
But Giles was greedy of gain,  
For he would needs kiss twain:  
Her lover seeing that,  
Did rap him over the pate,  
That he had nought to say,

For the honour of Arthur of Bradley,

Oh fine Arthur of Bradley, oh, &c.

The piper lookt aside,  
And there he spied the bride,  
He thought it was a hard chance,  
That none would lead her a dance;  
But there was none durst touch her,  
Save only Bat the Butcher;  
He took her by the hand,  
And danced while he could stand:  
The bride was fine and gay,

For the honour of Arthur of Bradley,

Oh fine Arthur of Bradley, oh, &c.

Then out stept Will the weaver,  
And he swore he'd not leave her,  
He hopp'd it all on one leg,  
For the honour of his Peg:  
But Kister in cambrick ruffe,  
He took that all in snuffe;  
For he against that day  
Had made himself fine and gay,  
His ruffe was whipt with blew, [364]  
And he cried, A new dance, a new,  
Then strike up a round-delay,

For the honour of Arthur of Bradley,

Oh fine, &c.

Then gan the sun decline,  
And every one thought it time  
To go unto his home,  
And leave the bridegroom alone.  
Tut, tut, says lusty Ned,  
I'le see them both in bed,  
For I'le gib at a joynt,

But I'le have his codpeece-point:  
Then forward piper and play,  
    For the honour of Arthur of Bradley,  
    Oh fine, &c.  
And thus the day was spent,  
And no man homeward went,  
There was such a crowding and thrusting,  
That some were in danger of bursting,  
To see them go to bed;  
For all the skill they had,  
He was got to his bride,  
And lay close to her side:  
Then got they his points and his garters,  
And cut them in pieces like martyrs;  
And then they all did play  
    For the honour of Arthur of Bradley,  
    Oh fine, &c.

[365]

Then Will and his sweetheart  
Did call for *Loth to depart*;  
And then they did foot it, and toss it,  
Till the cook brought in the sack-posset.  
The bride-pye was brought forth,  
A thing of mickle worth:  
And so all at the beds side  
Took leave of Arthur and his bride,  
And so went all away  
    From the wedding of Arthur of Bradley,  
    Oh fine, &c.

## VI. ROBIN HOOD RESCUING THE THREE SQUIRES FROM NOTTINGHAM GALLOWS.↵

This song and its tune, as the editor is informed by his ingenious friend Edward Williams, the Welsh bard, are well known in South Wales by the name of “Marchog glas,” *i.e.* Green knight. Though apparently ancient, it is not known to exist in black letter, nor has any better authority been met with than the common collection of Aldermay-church-yard. See before, p. 303.

Bold Robin Hood ranging the forrest all round,  
    The forrest all round ranged he;  
O there did he meet with a gay lady,  
    She came weeping along the highway.

[366]

Why weep you, why weep you? bold Robin he said,  
    What weep you for gold or fee?  
Or do you weep for your maidenhead,  
    That is taken from your body?  
I weep not for gold, the lady reply'd,  
    Neither do I weep for fee;  
Nor do I weep for my maidenhead,  
    That is taken from my body.  
What weep you for then? said jolly Robin,

I prithee come tell unto me.  
“Oh? I do weep for my three sons,  
For they are all condemned to die.”  
What church have they robbed? said jolly Robìn,  
Or parish-priest have they slain?  
What maids have they forced against their will?  
Or with other mens wives have lain?  
No church have they robbed, this lady reply’d,  
Nor parish-priest have they slain;  
No maids have they forced against their will,  
Nor with other mens wives have lain.  
What have they done then? said jolly Robìn,  
Come tell me most speedily.  
“Oh! it is for killing the king’s fallow deer,  
‘That’ [348] they are all condemned to die.”

[367]

Get you home, get you home, said jolly Robin,  
Get you home most speedily,  
And I will unto fair Nottingham go,  
For the sake of the ’squires all three.  
Then bold Robin Hood for Nottingham goes,  
For Nottingham town goes he,  
O there did he meet with a poor beggar-man,  
He came creeping along the highway.  
“What news, what news, thou old beggar-man?  
What news, come tell unto me.”  
“O there’s weeping and wailing in Nottingham [town],  
For the death of the ’squires all three.”  
This beggar-man had a coat on his back,  
’Twas neither green, yellow, nor red;  
Bold Robin Hood thought ’twas no disgrace  
To be in the beggar-mans stead.  
“Come, pull off thy coat, thou old beggar-man,  
And thou shalt put on mine;  
And forty good shillings I’ll give thee to boot,  
Besides brandy, good beer, ale and wine.”  
Bold Robin Hood then unto Nottingham came,  
Unto Nottingham town came he;  
O there did he meet with great master sheriff,  
And likewise the ’squires all three.

[368]

One boon, one boon, says jolly Robìn,  
One boon I beg on my knee;  
That, as for the death of these three ’squires,  
Their hangman I may be.  
Soon granted, soon granted, says master sheriff,  
Soon granted unto thee;  
And ‘thou shalt’ [349] have all their gay cloathing,  
Aye, and all their white monèy.  
“O I will have none of their gay cloathing,  
Nor none of their white monèy,

But I'll have three blasts on my bugle-horn,  
 That their souls to heaven may flee."  
 'Then' [350] Robin Hood mounted the gallows so high,  
 Where he blew loud and shrill,  
 Till a hundred and ten of Robin Hoods men  
 Came marching down the green hill.  
 Whose men are these? says master sheriff,  
 Whose men are they? tell unto me. [351]  
 "O they are mine, but none of thine,  
 And are come for the 'squires all three."  
 O take them, O take them, says great master sheriff,  
 O take them along with thee;  
 For there's never a man in fair Nottingham  
 Can do the like of thee.

[369]

## VII. ROBIN HOOD'S DELIGHT.↵

Dr. Pepusch, among other very curious articles of ancient English music, was possessed of a MS. folio (supposed to be still extant), which at p. 15 contained a tune intitled "Robin Hood." See Ward's "Lives of the Professors of Gresham College," 1740 (an interleaved copy, corrected and augmented by the author, in the British Museum). "Robene Hude" is likewise the name of a dance in Wedderburn's "Complainte of Scotland," printed in 1549. The following tune is preserved by Oswald in his "Caledonian Pocket Companion."



[370]

## VIII. ROBIN HOOD AND THE MONK.↵

This singularly curious and excellent poem, which is probably the earliest extant on the subject, was first printed in the "Ancient Metrical Tales," edited by the Rev. C. H. Hartshorne (8vo, 1829), from a MS. in the library of University College, Cambridge (F. F. 5. 48), with which it has been since obligingly collated by Frederic Madden, Esq. A few lines are unfortunately rendered illegible by damp.

In somer when the shawes be sheyne,

And leves be large and longe,  
Hit is fulle mery in feyre foreste  
To here the foulys song.  
To se the dere draw to the dale,  
And leve the hilles hee,  
And shadow hem in the leves grene  
Vndur the grene wode tre.  
Hit befel on whitsontide,  
Erly in a may mornynge,  
The son vp fayre can shyne,  
And the briddis mery can syng.  
This is a mery mornynge, seid litulle Johne,  
Be hym that dyed on tre,  
A more mery man than I am one  
Lyves not in cristianté.

[371]

Pluk vp thi hert my dere mayster,  
Litulle Johne can sey,  
And thynk hit is a fulle fayre tyme  
In a mornynge of may.  
Ze on thyngre greves me seid Robyne,  
And does my hert myche woo,  
That I may not so solem day  
To mas nor matyns goo.  
Hit is a fourtnet and more, seyde hee,  
Syn I my sauour see;  
To day wil I to Notyngham, seid Robyn,  
With the myght of mylde Mary.  
Then spake Moche the mylner[s] sune,  
Euer more wel hym betyde,  
Take xii of thi wyght zemen  
Welle weppynd be ther side.  
Such on wolde thi selfe slon  
That xii dar not abyde,  
Off alle my mery men, seid Robyne,  
Be my feithe I wil non haue.  
But litulle Johne shalle beyre my bow  
Til that me list to drawe

...

...

Thou shalle beyre 'thin own' [\[352\]](#) seid litulle Jon,  
Maister & I wil beyre myne,  
And we wille shete a peny, seid litulle Jon,  
Vnder the grene wode lyne.  
I wil not shete a peny, seyde Robyn Hode,  
In feith litulle Johne with thee,  
But euer for on as thou shetes, seid Robyn,  
In feith I hold the thre.  
Thus shet thei forthe these zemen too  
Bothe at buske and brome,  
Til litulle Johne wan of his maister  
V s. to hose and shone.



A ferly strife fel them betwene  
As they went bi the way;  
Litulle Johne seid he had won v shylyngs,  
And Robyn Hode seid schortly nay.  
With that Robyn Hode lyed litul Jone,  
And smote hym with his honde,  
Litul John waxed wroth therwith,  
And pulled out his bright bronde.  
Were thou not my maister, seid litulle Johne,  
Thou shuldis by hit ful sore,  
Get the a man where thou wilt, Robyn,  
For thou getes me no more.

[373]

Then Robyn goes to Notyngham  
Hymselfe mornynge allone,  
And litulle Johne to mery Scherewode,  
The pathes he knowe alkone.  
Whan Robyn came to Notyngham,  
Sertenly withoutene layne,  
He prayed to god and myld Mary  
To brynge hym out saue agayne.  
He gos into seynt Mary[s] chirche,  
And knelyd downe before the rode,  
Alle that euer were the churchen within  
Beheld wel Robyne Hode.  
Besyde hym stode a gret hedid munke,  
I pray to god woo he be,  
Ful sone he knew gode Robyn [Hode]  
As sone as he hym se.  
Out at the durre he ran  
Ful son and anon,  
Alle the zatis of Notyngham  
He made to be sparred euerychone.  
Rise vp, he seid, thou prowde schereff,  
Buske the and make the bowne,  
I haue spyed the kynges felone,  
For sothe he is in this towne.

[374]

I haue spyed the false felone  
As he stondes at his masse,  
Hit is longe of the seide the munke,  
And euer he fro vs passe.  
This traytur[s] name is Robyn Hode,  
Vndur the grene wode lynde,  
He robbyt me onys of a C pound,  
Hit shalle neuer out of my mynde.  
Vp then rose this prowde schereff,  
And zede towarde hym zare;  
Many was the modur son  
To the kyrk with hym can fare.  
In at the dures thei throly thurst

With staves ful gode 'ilkone' [353]  
Alas, alas, seid Robyn Hode,  
Now mysse I litulle Johne.  
But Robyne toke out a too-hond sworde  
That hangit down be his kne,  
Ther as the schereff and his men stode thyckust  
Thidurward wold he.  
Thryes thorow at them he ran,  
Ther for sothe as I yow say,  
And woundyt many a modur sone,  
And xii he slew that day.

[375]

His sworde vpon the schireff hed  
Sertanly he brake in too;  
The smyth that the made, seid Robyn,  
I pray god [354] wyrke hym woo.  
For now am I weppynlesse, seid Robyne,  
Alasse agayn my wylle;  
But if I may fle these traytors fro,  
I wot thei wil me kyllle.  
Robyns men to the churche ran  
Throout hem euer ilkon,  
Sum fel in swonyng as thei were dede,  
And lay still as any stone.

...

...

Non of theym were in her mynde  
But only litulle Jon.  
Let be your rule, seid litulle Jon,  
For his luf that dyed on tre,  
Ze that shulde be duzty men  
Hit is gret shame to se.  
Oure maister has bene hard bystode,  
And zet scapyd away  
Pluk up your hertes and leve this mone,  
And herkyn what I shal say.

[376]

He has seruyd our lady many a day,  
And zet wil securly,  
Therefore I trust in her specialy  
No wycked deth shal he dye.  
Therfor be glad, seid litul Johne,  
And let this mournyng be,  
And I shall be the munkes gyde  
With the myght of mylde Mary.  
And I mete hym, seid litull Johne,  
We wille go but we too

...

...

Loke that ze kepe weloure tristil tre  
Vndur the levys smale,

And spare non of his venyson  
That gose in thys vale.  
Forthe thei went these zemen too,  
Litul Johne and Moche onfere,  
And lokid on Moche emys hows  
The hyeway lay fulle nere.  
Litul John stode at a window in the mornynge  
And lokid forth at a stage,  
He was war wher the munke came ridynge,  
And with hym a litul page.

[377]

Be my feith, seid litul Johne to Moche,  
I can the tel tithyngus gode;  
I see wher the munk comys rydyng,  
I know hym be his wyde hode.  
Thei went into the way these zemen bothe,  
As curtes men and hende,  
Thei spyrrred tithyngus at the munke  
As thei hade bene his frende.  
Fro whens come ze, seid litul Johne,  
Tel vs tithyngus I yow pray  
Off a false owtlay [called Robyn Hode]  
Was takyn zisturday.  
He robbyt me and my felowes bothe  
Of xx marke in serten;  
If that false owtlay be takyn,  
For sothe we wolde be fayne.  
So did he me, seid the munke,  
Of a C pound and more;  
I layde furst hande hym apon,  
Ze may thonke me therfore.  
I pray god thanke yow, seid litulle Johne,  
And we wil when we may,  
We wil go with yow with your leve,  
And brynge yow on your way.

[378]

For Robyn Hode hase many a wilde felow,  
I telle yow in certen,  
If thei wist ze rode this way,  
In feith ze shulde be slayn.  
As thei went talkyng be the way,  
The munke and litulle Johne,  
Johne toke the munkes horse be the hede  
Ful sone and anone.  
Johne toke the munkes horse be the hed,  
For sothe as I yow say,  
So did Muche the litulle page,  
For he shulde not stirre away.  
Be the golett of the hode  
Johne pulled the munke downe,  
Johne was nothyng of hym agast,

He lete hym falle on his crowne.  
Litulle John was 'sore' [355] agrevyd,  
And drew out his swerde in hye,  
The munke saw he shulde be ded,  
Lowd mercy can he crye.  
He was my maister, seid litulle Johne,  
That thou base browzt in bale,  
Shalle thou neuer cum at oure kyng  
For to telle hym tale.

[379]

Johne smote of the munkes hed,  
No longer wolde he dwelle,  
So did Moche, the litulle page,  
For ferd lest he wold tell.  
Ther thei beryed hem both  
In nouthur mosse nor lynge,  
And litulle Johne and Muche infere  
Bare the letturs to oure kyng.

...

He kneled down vpon kis kne,  
God zow saue, my lege lorde,  
Jesus yow saue and se.  
God yow saue, my lege kyng,  
To speke Johne was fulle bolde;  
He gaf hym the letturs in his hond,  
The kyng did hit unfold.  
The kyng red the letturs anon,  
And seid so mot I the,  
Ther was neuer zoman in mery Ingland  
I longut so sore to see.  
Wher is the munke that these shuld haue browzt,  
Oure kyng can say,  
Be my trouthe, seid litulle Jone,  
He dyed aftur the way.

[380]

The kyng gaf Moche and litul Jon  
xx pound in sertan,  
And made theim zemen of the crowne,  
And bade theim go agayn.  
He gaf Johne the seel in hand,  
The scheref for to bere,  
To brynge Robyn hym to,  
And no man do hym dere.  
Johne toke his leve at oure kyng,  
The sothe as I yow say;  
The next way to Notyngham  
To take he zede the way.  
Whan Johne came to Notyngham  
The zatis were sparred ychone,  
Johne callid vp the porter,  
He answerid sone anon.

What is the cause, seid litul John,  
Thou sparris the zates so fast?  
Because Robyn Hode, [356] seid [the] porter,  
In depe prison is cast.  
Johne, and Moche, and Wylle Scathlok,  
For sothe as I yow say,  
Thir slew oure men vpon oure wallis,  
And sawtene vs euery day.

[381]

Litulle Johne spyrrred aftur the schereff,  
And sone he hym fonde,  
He oppnyed the kyngus priue seelle  
And gaf hym in his honde.  
When the schereff saw the kyngus seelle  
He did of his hode anon,  
Wher is the munke that bare the letturs?  
He seid to litulle Johne.  
He is so fayn of him, seid litulle Johne,  
For sothe as I yow sey;  
He has made hym abot of Westmynster,  
A lorde of that abbay.  
The scheref made John gode chere,  
And gaf hym wine of the best;  
At nyzt thei went to her bedde,  
And euery man to his rest.  
When the scheref was on-slepe  
Dronken of wine and ale,  
Litul Johne and Moche for sothe  
Toke the way vnto the gale;  
Litul Johne callid vp the jayler,  
And bade hym rise anon;  
He seid Robyn Hode had brokyn preson,  
And out of hit was gon.

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The portere rose anon sertan,  
As sone as he herd John calle;  
Litul Johne was redy with a swerd,  
And bare hym to the walle.  
Now will I be porter, seid litul Johne,  
And take the keyes in honde;  
He toke the way to Robyn Hode,  
And sone he hym vnbonde.  
He gaf hym a gode swerd in his hond,  
His hed [ther-]with for to kepe,  
And ther as the walle was lowyst  
Anon downe can thei lepe.  
Be that the cok began to crow,  
The day began to sprynge,  
The scheref fond the jaylier ded,  
The comyn belle made he ryng.  
He made a crye thoroowt al the tow[n],

Whedur he be zoman or knave,  
That cowthe brynge hym Robyn Hode,  
His warisone he shuld haue.  
For I dar neuer, said the scheref,  
Cum before oure kynge;  
For if I do I wot serten,  
For sothe he wil me henge.

[383]

The scheref made to seke Notyngham,  
Bothe be strete and stye,  
And Robyn was in mery Scherwode  
As lizt as lef on lynde.  
Then bespake gode litulle Johne  
To Robyn Hode can he say,  
I haue done the a gode turne for an euylle,  
Quyte 'me' [357] whan thou may.  
I haue done the a gode turne, said litulle Johne,  
For sothe as I you saie,  
I haue brouzt the vndur [the] grene wode lyne,  
Fare wel, and haue gode day.  
Nay be my trouthe, seid Robyn Hode,  
So shalle hit neuer be,  
I make the maister, seid Robyne Hode,  
Off alle my men and me.  
Nay be my trouthe, seid litulle Johne,  
So shall hit neuer be,  
But lat me be a felow, seid litulle Johne,  
No nodur kepe I'll be.  
Thus Johne gate Robyn Hode out of prisone  
Sertan withoutyn layne,  
When his men saw hym hol and sounde  
For sothe they were ful fayne.

[384]

They filled in wyne, and made him glad  
Vndur the levys smale,  
And zete pastes of venysone  
That gode was 'withal.' [358]  
Than worde came to our kynge,  
How Robyn Hode was gone,  
And how the scheref of Notyngham  
Durst neuer loke hyme vpone.  
Then bespake oure cumly kynge,  
In an angur hye,  
Litulle Johne hase begyled the schereff,  
In faith so hase he me.  
Litulle Johne has begyled vs bothe,  
And that fulle wel I se,  
Or ellis the schereff of Notyngham  
Hye hongut shuld he be.  
I made hem zemen of the crowne,  
And gaf hem fee with my hond,

I gaf hem grithe, seid oure kyng,  
    Thorowout alle mery Ingland.  
I gaf hem grithe, then seid oure kyng,  
    I say, so mot I the,  
For sothe soche a zeman as he is on  
    In alle England ar not thre.

[385]

He is trew to his maister, seid oure kynge,  
    I sey, be swete seynt Johne,  
He louys bettur Robyn Hode,  
    Then he dose vs ychone.  
Robyne Hode is euer bond to him,  
    Bothe in strete and stalle,  
Speke no 'more' [359] of this matter, seid our kynge,  
    But John has begyled vs alle.  
Thus endys the talkyng of the munke,  
    And Robyne Hode I wysse;  
God, that is euer a crowned kyng,  
    Bryng vs alle to his blisse.



[387]

## GLOSSARY.↩



*Abye*, [to suffer].

*Air*, early.

*Alderbest*, best of all. This phrase, which occurs in Chaucer, is corrupted in De Worde's edition to "*al ther*" and "*al theyre*," which Coplande has changed to "*al of the*;" whence it may be inferred that the expression was become already obsolete, and consequently that the poem is of much greater antiquity than 1520: and yet Shakespeare, above half a century after, puts the word *Alderliest* into the mouth of Queen Margaret in his *Second Part of Henry the Sixth*.

*Angels*, pieces of gold coin, value 10s.

*Anker*, hermit, anchorite.

*Ar*, ere.

*Asay*, *Asayed*, essayed, tried, proved.

*A-sound*, in a swoon.

*Aunsetters*, ancestors.

*Avow*, *Avowe*, protestation, confession. “*I make myn avow to God,*” profess to God: from *aveu*, F.

*Avowe*, maintain, *verbum juris*.

*Avowè*, founder, patron, protector. See Spelman’s *Glossary*, v. ADVOCATUS.

*Awayte*, *Awayte me scathe*, lie in wait to do me harm.

*Awayted*, lay in wait for.

*Awet*, wit, know.

*Awkwarde*, backward. *An awkwarde stroke* seems to mean an unusual or out of the way stroke, one which the receiver could not foresee, be aware of, or guard against; a sort of left or back hand stroke. “*An auke stroke*” is a frequent expression in *La Mort d’Arthur*.

*Ayent*, against.

*Baist*, *Baste*, basted, belaboured.

*Baith*, both.

*Bale*, mischief, woe, sorrow, misery.

*Ballup*, p. 306.

*Banis*, bane, destruction.

*Bear*, moan, lamentation, outcry.

*Bearing*, arrow.

*Bedene*, behind, one after another?

[388]

*Bedyng*, asking. *Your bedyng shall be doyn*, your invitation shall be complied with.

*Beforen*, before.

*Begeck*, *Give them a begeck*, play them a trick, make fools of them.

*Behote*, promised.

*Benbow*, [a bent bow?].

*Bent*, ii. 84.

*Bescro*, beshrew.

*Bestad*, *Ferre and friend bestad*, far from home and without a friend. The passage, however, seems corrupt. Perhaps, indeed, it should be *fren* (*frend* or *fremd*) *bestad*, i.e. beset or surrounded by strangers. (*Fremd*, Saxon.) Thus, in Spenser’s 4th eclogue:

“So now his friend is changed for a *fren*.”

Again, in Florio’s *Worlde of Wordes*, 1598: “*Alieno*, an alien, a stranger, a forraine, a *freme*.”

*Bestead*, beset, put to it.

*Beth*, are, be.



*Blate*, sheepish or foolish, as we should now say.

*Blive*, believe, immediately.

*Bloschems*, blossoms.

*Bluter*, p. 105.

*Blyve*, fast, quickly, briskly.

*Bocking*, pouring, flowing.

*Bode*, bidden, invited.

*Bolt*, *Bolte*, *Boltes*, *Boltys*. A bolt was an arrow of a particular kind, used chiefly for shooting at birds; having a round or blunt head. Much's object, it has been observed, was not to wound, but stun, the monk, and the bolt from its shape was peculiarly adapted to this purpose. In other passages, however, it seems to mean either an arrow in general, or one used for shooting at a mark. "I'll make a shaft or a bolt on't," which Shakespeare has put into the mouth of M. Slender, appears, from Ray's *Collection*, to have been a common proverb.

*Boote*, help.

*Booting*, p. 98.

*Borde*, table.

*Borowe*, *Borrow*, pledge, surety, bail.

*Borowehode*, suretyship.

*Boskyd*, busked, prepared, got ready.

*Bottle*, a small vessel, of wood or leather, in the shape of a cask, in which shepherds and others employed abroad in the fields carry or keep their drink.

*Bottys*, butts.

*Bou*, bow.

*Bound*, betook, went. *Boldly bound away*, briskly scampered off.

*Bowe*, bough.

[389]

*Bown*, ready. *Bowne ye*, prepare ye, get ready.

*Boyt*, both.

*Breche*, breeches.

*Breyde*, started, stepped hastily.

*Breyde*, start, quick or hasty step.

*Broke*, brook, enjoy, use, keep.

*Bronde*, brand, sword.

*Bushement*, ambush.

*Buske*, *I wyll me buske*, i.e. go, betake myself. *Buske you*, address or prepare yourselves, make ready.

*Bydene*, one after another.

*Can*, did.

*Carpe*, [to speak].

*Cankardly*, peevishly, with ill-temper.

*Capull hyde*, horse hide. *Capal* or *Capul* in Irish or Erse is a horse or mare, as *Kephyl* is in Welsh.

*Carel*, *Carril*, carle, old fellow.

*Caward*, awkward or backward. See *Awkwarde*.

*Cerstyn*, Christian.

*Chaffar*, chaffer, merchandise, commodity.

*Chepe*, *better chepe*, cheaper; *à meilleur marché*, F. *Gret chepe*, very cheap; *à très bon marché*.

*Chepe*, cheapen, buy. *Chepyd*, cheapened, bought.

*Cheys*, choose.

*Chiven*, p. 219.

*Chorle*, churl, peasant, clown.

*Cla'd*, scratched.

*Clock*, cloak.

*Clouted*, patched.

*Cole*, p. 66.

*Come*, (pronounced com) came.

*Command*, warrant, authority.

*Commytted*, accounted.

*Coresed*, p. 20.

*Cortessey*, courteous. Q. *Corteyse*.

*Cote a pye*, upper garment, short cloke; *courtepy*, Chaucer. See Tyrwhitt's note, iv. 201.

*Coud*, knew, understood.

*Counsell*, "*And counsell shall it be,*" and it shall be kept secret; in allusion, perhaps, to the oath of a grand juror:—"the king's *counsel*, your fellows, and your own you shall keep secret." The phrase is, however, used by Chaucer:

"Shall it be *conseil*? sayed the firste shrewe;

And I shall tellen thee in wordes fewe  
What we shall don, and bring it wel aboute."

—*Pardoneres Tale*.

*Covent*, convent; whence our Covent Garden.

*Cowed*, could, knew. *Cowed of curteyse*, understood good manners.

[390]

*Crack*, boast.

*Craftely*, skilfully, *secundum artem*.

*Crouse*, brisk.

*Cun*, con, owe, give.

*Curn*, p. 101.

*Curtall*, p. 210, 211.

*Curteyse*, courteous.

*Cutters*, sharking fellows; such as live by robbery or violence; bravos. So in the old play of *Arden of Feversham*, h. d. b. l.: "And they are cutters, and may cut your throat."

*Dame*, mother.

*Dead*, certain; so in the common saying, "As dead as Chelsea;" *i.e.* as certain as a situation in that hospital.

*Demed*, judged.

*Depart*, part, separate.

*Derne*, privy, secret.

*Deyell*, devil.

*Deythe*, dight, dressed.

*Donne*, dun.

*Doyt*, doth, do.

*Dree*, hye.

*Dreyffe*, drive.

*Dub*, shallow miry pool.

*Dung*, beaten, overcome.

*Durk*, dagger.

*Dyght*, dressed, done.

*Dyghtande*, p. 69.

*Dysgrate*, disgraced, degraded. *Hath be dysgrate*, hath fallen into poverty.

*Een*, eyes.

*Eftsones*, hereafter, afterward.

*Eild*, age.

*Elephant*, p. 263.

*Ender*, under.

*English wood*. If *Inglewood Forest* be here intended, the Queen is a little out in her geography: she probably means *Sherwood*, but neither was that in the page's way to Nottingham, and *Barnsdale* was still farther north. See *Ancient Popular Poetry*, 1791, p. 3.

*Ere*, before.

*Eylde*, yield.

*Eyr*, year.

*Eyre*, heir.

*Fail*, *But fail*, without fail, without doubt.

*Failyd*, wanted, missed.

*Fair*, fare, ado.

*Fare*, live.

*Farley*, fairly, plainly.

*Fay*, faith.

[391]

*Fayne*, glad.

*Fe*, fee, wages.

*Feardest*, fearfulest, most frightened or afraid.

*Feders*, feathers.

*Fend*, *Fend I godys forbode*.

*Fende*, defend.

*Fered*, feared, lived.

*Ferre*, far. *Ferre dayes*, far in the day; *grand jour*, F. *Ferre gone*, long since.

*Fette*, fetched.

*Fetteled him*, made him ready, prepared himself, set about. *Fettled*, *Them fettled*, attempted, set about.

*Feyffe*, five.

*Finikin*, finical, fine, spruce.

*Flee*, fly.

*Flinders*, splinters.

*Fone*, foes, enemies.

*Forbode*, *Godys forbode*, 'prohibition or curse.' Florio, in his Italian dictionary, 1598, renders the phrase, *Adio non piaceia*. God forbid, *Godes forbode*. In *A Briefe Conceipte of English Policy*, 1581, it is corrupted to "*God swarbote*."

*Force*, care.

*Forgone*, forego, lose.

*Fors*, see *Force*.

*Forsoyt*, forsooth, truly.

*Foryete*, forgotten.

*Fostere*, forester.

*Fothe*, foot.

*Frae*, from.

*Frebore*, free-born, gentle.

*Frese*, p. 39.

*Furmety*, [*fumenty*].

*Frere*, [*friar*].

*Fynly*, goodly.

*Gae*, go.

*Gan*, *Gan they gone*, are they gone, did they go.

*Gang*, *Gange*, go.

*Gate, Gates*, ways, passes, paths, ridings. *Gate* is a common word in the North for way.—*P.*

*Geffe*, given.

*General*, perhaps the governor, Nottingham still being a garrison town.

*Ger*, gear, stuff, goods, property, effects.

*Gereamarsey*, see *Gramercy*.

*Gillore*, plenty.

*Glen*, valley.

*God*, good, goods, property.

*God-a-marsey*, God-a-mercy! See *Gramercy*.

*Godde*, see *God*.

[392]

*Godys forbode*. See *Forbode*.

*Gorney*, journey.

*Goy*, joy.

*Graff*, *Oke graff*, oak branch or sapling.

*Gramercy*, thanks, or many thanks; *grand mercie*, F.

*Gree*, satisfaction.

*Gret*, greeted, saluted.

*Gripped*, grasped, laid hold of.

*Grome*, a common man.

*Hail*, *All hail*, wholly, entirely.

*Halds*, holds, holding-places, supports.

*Halke*, perhaps haugh, low ground by the side of a river. See the glossary to Bishop Douglas's *Virgil*, v. *Hawchis*. *Halke* with Chaucer signifies a corner; but seems here used in opposition to *hill*.

*Halfendell*, half.

*Hals*, neck.

*Hambellet*, ambleth.

*Hansell*. The vendor of any wares is said to receive *hansel* of his first customer; but the meaning of the text, *Haffe hansell for the mar*, is not understood, unless it can be thought to imply, *Give me hansel*, i.e. buy of my pots.

*Hart of Greece* means perhaps no more than a fat hart, for the sake of a quibble between Greece and grease.

*Hawt*, aught, anything, something.

*Hayt*, hath.

*Held*, kept preserved.

*Hende*, gentle, courteous.

*Hent*, took, caught.

*Hepe*, hip, haw, the fruit of the white thorn. So in *Gil Morrice*, a Scottish ballad: —

“I was once AS FOW of Gill Morrice  
AS THE HIP IS O’ THE STEAN.”

*Her*, their.

*Het*, it.

*Het*, eat.

*Heynd*, gentle, courteous.

*Heyt war howte*, p. 86.

*Highed*, hyed, hastened.

*Hight*, *What they hight*, what they are called.

*Holde*, keep, held, retained of council.

*Holy*, wholly.

*Holy dame*, *Our holy dame*, p. 250, the Virgin Mary (so called); unless, for our “holy dame” we should read our halidome, which may mean our holiness, honesty, chastity; haligoome, sanctimonia.

*Hos*, *Hus*, us.

*Hotys*, oats.

*Housband*, *Housbonde*, manager, husbandman, peasant.

[393]

*How*, hill.

*Howt*, out.

*Hyght*, vowed, promised.

*Hynde*, knave.

*I*, ay.

*Ibent*, bent.

*Ibonde*, bound.

*Ichaunged*, changed.

*Idyght*, dight, dressed, prepared, made ready.

*Ifedered*, feathered.

*Ilke*, each.

*In-fere*, together.

*Inocked*, nocked, notched.

*Ipyght*, *Up ipyght*, p. 26.

*Iquyt*, acquitted, set at liberty.

*Iswore*, sworn.

*Itake*, taken.

*Japes*, tricks.

*Ken*, know.

*Kest*, cast.

*Kirtle*, upper petticoat.

*Knave*, servant, man.

*Kod*, quod, quoth, said.

*Kyrtell*, waistcoat.

*Kythe nor kin*, acquaintance nor kindred.

*Lappe*, wrap.

*Late*, lake, play, game.

*Launsgay*, a sort of lance.

*Leasyng*, lying, falsehood.

*Lede*, train, suite.

*Ledesman*, guide.

*Lee*, plain.

*Lefe*, willing. *Whether he were loth or lefe*, whether he would or not.

*Leffe*, leave, left.

*Leffes*, leaves.

*Lende*, meet, encounter.

*Lene*, lend.

*Lere*, learn.

*Lere*, cheek.

*Lese*, lose.

*Let*, omit, hinder, hindered.

*Leugh*, laughed.

*Lever*, rather.

*Lewtè*, loyalty, faith, truth; *leauté*, F.

*Leythe*, light.

*Ligge*, lay.

*Lin*, stop, stay.

*Lithe*, attend, hear, hearken.

[394]

*Loffe*, love.

*Lore*, lost.

*Lough*, *Loughe*, *Low*, laughed.

*Lowe*, "a little hill." — *P.*

*Lown*, villain, knave, base fellow.

*Lust*, desire, inclination.

*Lyght*, light; or, perhaps, for *lyte*, little.

*Lynde, Lyne*, the lime or linden tree; or collectively lime trees, or trees in general.

*Lyth*, see *Lithe*.

*Lyveray*, livery, habit, delivery: the mess, portion, or quantity of provisions delivered out at a time by the butler was called *a livery*.

*Masars*, cups, vessels.

*Masterye*, “a trial of skill, high proof of skill.”—*P*.

*Mair*, more.

*Maney*, see *Meyne*.

*May*, maid.

*Me, That ever yet sawe I me*, a gallicism; *que jamais j’ai vu moi*.

*Meal*, oat-meal.

*Meal-poke*, meal-bag, bag in which oatmeal is put.

*Meat-rife*.

*Mede, To quyte hym well his mede*, to reward him to some purpose.

*Medys*, midst, middle.

*Meede*, reward.

*Mesh, All to mesh*, to a mash or jelly.

*Met, Mete*, measured.

*Methe*, meat.

*Meyne*, attendants, retinue; *mesnie*, F.

*Meythe*, might.

*Mickle*, much, great, very.

*Mister*, need. It is *misters* in the original.

*Mo*, more.

*Molde*, earth.

*Mot, Mote*, might, may.

*Mote*, meeting, assembly, court, audit.

*Mountenaunce*, amount, duration, space.

*Mow*, mouth.

*Mowe*, may.

*Muckle*, see *Mickle*.

*Myrthes*, mirth, merriment. *A man that myrthes can*, a minstrel, fiddler, juggler, or the like.

*Myster*, need.

*Nane*, none.

*Nar*, nor, than.

*Ner*, ear. So in “*The Romaunt of the Rose*:”

“He streight up to his *ere* ydrough  
The stronge bowe.”



[395]

*Ner*, (*ne wer it*), were it not.

*Nip*, p. 100.

*Nips*, p. 101.

*Nobellys*, nobles. The *noble* was a gold coin, value 6s. 8d.

*Nombles*, *Numbles*, entrails; those parts which are usually baked in a pie: now, corruptly, called *humbles* or *umbles*: *nombles*, F. Thus we say, *an Adder*, *an Apron*, *an Ouche*, instead of *a Nadder*, (*Naddre*), *a Napron*, *a Nouche*: the *n* being, through ignorance, transferred to the article. The reverse has happened in the words *A newt*, which should be written *An ewt*: a mistake the more remarkable as we say and write *An eft*; both from the same root: *Efet*, Saxon.

*Obeyedores*, [*obediener*].

*Okerer*, usurer.

*Or*, [*en*].

*Os*, us.

*Outdone*, undone.

*Owthe*, out.

*Paid*, beat, beaten.

*Palmer*. A *palmer* was, properly, a pilgrim who had visited the Holy Land, from the palm-branch or cross which he bore as a sign of such visitation: but it is probable that the distinction between *palmer*s and other *pilgrim*s was never much attended to in this country. The *palmer* in the text seems to be no more than a common beggar; as is, likewise, the one in the romance.

*Partakers*, assistants, persons to take thy part.

*Passe*, extent, bounds, limits, district; as the *Pas de Calais*. Copland's edition reads *compas*.

*Pauage*, *Pavag*, *Pavage*, *Pawage*, a toll or duty payable for the liberty of passing over the soil or territory of another: *paagium*, L.

*Pay*, content, satisfaction, money.

*Peces*, p. 32.

*Pecoche*, *With pecocke well ydight*, handsomely dressed with peacock feathers. Thus Chaucer, describing his "*squire's yeman*:"

"A shefe of *pecocke arwes* bright and kene,  
Under his belt he bare ful thriftely."

In a little treatise of "*The Hors, the Shepe, and the Ghoos*," printed by Caxton, it is said—

"Thurgh all the londe of Brutes Albyon  
For fetherd arowes as I reherce can  
*Ghoos* is the best to make comparison  
Excepte fethers of *pecok* and of *swan*."

*Pinder*. The *pinder* is the *pounder* or *pound-keeper*; the petty officer of a manor, whose duty it is to impound all strange cattle straying upon the common, &c.

[396]

*Plucke-buffet*, p. 75.

*Polle*, pull.

*Poke*, bag.

*Preke*, prick, a piece of wood in the centre of the target.

*Prese*, company.

*Prest*, ready, ready to go.

*Puding-pricks*, skewers that fasten the pudding-bag.

*Pyne*, *Goddess pyne*, Christ's passion or crucifixion.

*Quequer*, quiver: Gocur, Saxon.

*Queyt*, quit, recompense.

*Qod*, quoth, says, said.

*Raked*, walked apace.

*Ray*, *Battle ray*, Battle-array. The same expression occurs in *The Tragicall History of Didaco and Violenta*, 1567:

“To traverse forth his grounde, to place

His troupes *in batayle ray*.”

*Ray*, array, put in order.

*Raye*. *Cloth of ray* was cloth not coloured or dyed. It is mentioned in many old statutes in contradistinction to *cloth of colour*. See 17 E. 3. c. 1, 7 H. 4. c. 10, 11 H. 4. c. 6, 1 R. 3. c. 8. The “*reied or striped cloth*” (Stow's *Survay*, 1598, p. 436, 430) must have been very different.

*Reachles*, careless, regardless, unobservant.

*Red*, clear.

*Reuth*, pity, compassion.

*Reve*, taken by force.

*Reves*, bailiffs, receivers.

*Ripe*, cleanse. *Riped*, cleansed.

*Rod*, poles, perches. A rod, pole, or perch is usually sixteen feet and a half, but in Sherwood forest (according to Blount) it is 21 feet, the foot there being 18 inches.

*Rode*, rood, cross.

*Rung*, staff.

*Ryall*, royal.

*Ryalty*, royalty.

*Ryghtwys*, righteous, just.

*Sack*, a kind of Spanish wine, perhaps sherry, formerly much drank in this country; very different, at least, from the sweet (or canary) wine now so called.

*Sair*, sore.

*Salved*, (*salued*?) saluted. The word *salewed*, in this sense, occurs repeatedly in *The Hystorye of Reinard the Foxe* (Pinson's edition); and (*vide tamen Salvid* in the *Gesta Romanorum*, MS. Har. 7333, No. 48) in that of “*Kynge Ponthus of Galyce*,” 1511. “*Salue*,” F. i. “*Salewe*,” F. ii. K. Ponthus.

*Scathe*, harm.

*Schetyng*, shooting.

*Schomer*, summer.

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*Sclo*, slay.

*Scop*, scalp, pate.

*Scoper*, supper.

*Scouth*, p. 105.

*Serefe*, *Screffe*, sheriff.

*Se*, vide *See*.

*Seche*, seek.

*See*, regard, protect. The same phrase occurs in Chaucer's *Troilus and Cresside*:

"Madame, quoth Pandare, God you save see."

*Seker*, sure.

*Selerer*. The cellarer (*celerier*, *cellarius*, or *cellarius*) was that officer who furnished the convent with provisions, *cui potus et escæ cura est, qui cellæ vinariæ et escariæ præest, promus* (DU CANGE). He appears to have been a person of considerable trust, and to have had a principal concern in the management of the society's revenues. See Spelman's *Glossary*, Fuller's *Church History*, &c.

*Semblaunte*, semblance, appearance.

*Sene*, see.

*Sete*, p. 25.

*Sets*. *Sets with Roben Hood such a lass!* probably such a lass would suit or become him well; but the passage is either singular or corrupt.

*Sette*, mortgaged.

*Shawe*. *Shaw* is usually explained by *little wood*, but *greenwood little wood* would be ridiculous tautology; it may therefore mean *shade*, which appears its primitive signification: *Scuþa*, Saxon. See p. 327, ver. 5. *Shaws*, "little woods."—P.

*Shende*, hurt, annoy. *Shente*, hurt, wounded.

*Shet*, shut.

*Shete*, shoot.

*Shone*, [shoes].

*Shope*, shaped, made.

*Shraddes*. See the note.

*Shrewde*, *Shrewed*, unlucky.

*Shrift*, confession.

*Shroggs*, "shrubs, thorns, briars. G. Doug. *scroggis*."—P.

*Shyt*, shut.

*Skaith*, hurt, harm. *They feared for his skaith*, i.e. for the harm it might do them.

*Slack*, low ground.

*Slade*, “a slip of greensward between plow-lands, or woods, &c.”—P.

*Slawe*, *Slone*, slain.

*Sle*, *Sloo*, slay.

*Somers*, sumpter-horses.

*Sorowe*, sorry.

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*Sothe*, sooth, truth.

*Sound*, see *A-sound*.

*Soyt*, sooth, truth.

*Spear*, ask. *Speer'd*, asked, inquired.

*Stalward*, *Stalworthe*, stout, well made.

*Stane*, stone.

*Stark*, stiff.

*Stede*, time.

*Steven*. *At some unsett-steven*, at some unlooked for time, by some odd accident, by mere chance, voice.

*Stime*, spark, particle or ray of light.

*Stint*, stop.

*Sto'*, store, p. 219.

*Strang*, strong.

*Strete*, lane, path, way.

*Sweaven*, dream.

*Sweer*, p. 100.

*Syne*, after, afterward, then.

*Syth*, afterward.

*Takles*, arrows.

*Takyll*, arrow.

*Tarpe*, p. 68.

*Tene*, grief, sorrow, distress, vexation.

*Tene*, grieve.

*The*, thrive, prosper.

*Thes*, thus, this.

*Thos*, thus.

*Throwe*, space.

*To-broke*, broken.

*To-hande staffe*, two-hand staff, quarter-staff.

*Tortyll*, wreathed, twined, twirled, twisted; *tortillé*, F.

*Tray*, anger.

*Tree*, staff.

*Treyffe*, thrive.

*Trow*, true.

*Trowet*, troth.

*True*, trow, believe.

*Trystell*, *Trystyll*.

*Tynde*, *Tyndes*, tines, antlers, the pointed branches that issue from the main beam of a stag.

“In Ynglond ther ys a shepcote, the wyche schepekote hayt ix dorys, & at yeuery dor stondet ix ramys, & every ram hat ix ewys, & yeuery ewe hathe ix lambys, & yeuery lambe hayt ix homes, & every horne hayt ix TYNDES: what ys the somm of all thes belle?” (MSS. More, Ee. 4. 35.)

*Unketh*, uncouth, strange.

*Unneth*, scarcely.

*Up-chaunce*, by chance.

*Venie*, *Brave venie*, merry vein, jovial humour.

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*Wan*, *Wonnyng* *wan*, dwelling-place.

*Wan*, got.

*Warden-pies*. *Wardens* are a species of large pears. In Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*, the clown, enumerating the articles he had to provide for the sheep-shearing feast, says he “must have saffron to colour the *warden-pies*.”

*Warse*, worse.

*Was*, wash. “And afterward the justices arise and *wasse*, and geffe thanks unto the new serjaunts forther gode dyner” (*Origines Juridiciales*, p. 116). This ceremony, which, in former times, was constantly practised as well before as after meat, seems to have fallen into disuse on the introduction of forks, about the year 1620: as before that period our ancestors supplied the place of this necessary utensil with their fingers.

*Watchman*, a probable mistake for *Waithman*, outlaw. See Notes, &c., p. lxxiii.

*Wed*, *Wedde*, pawn, pledge, or deposit. *To wedde*, in mortgage. *Lay my life to wedde*, pawn my life.

*Weele*, well.

*Welt*, *Welt them at his wyll*, did as he pleased with them, used them at his pleasure.

*Wed*, *Wende*, go, hye.

*Wenest*, thinkest.

*Wenion*, *Marry gep with a wenion!* “He shoulde have bene at home a preaching *with a waniant*,” says Bishop Latimer, *Sermons before King Edward VI.*, p. 35. This phrase, *with a wannion*, is common in old plays, but, though its meaning be obvious, even Mr. Steevens is unable to “explain the word at the end of it” (*Shak.* xiii. 440). It is now corrupted to *with a vengeance*.

*Went*, wended, gone.

*Werschep*, worshipped, revered, respected.

*West*, wist, known.

*Wete*, know.

*Whang*, *Leathern whang*, leather thong or string.

*Whereas*, where.

*Whute*, whistle.

*Wigger wand*, wicker wand.

*Wight*, *Wighty*, strong. *N.B.* The latter word seems everywhere a mistake for the former.

*Wilfulle*, doubtful.

*Win*, see *Wen*.

*Win*, get.

*Wist*, wis, trow, believe.

*Wist*, knew.

*Wode*, mad.

*Wodys*, woods.

*Wolwarde*, wearing a flannel shirt, by way of penance. See Steeven's *Shakespeare*, 1793, v. 360.

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*Won*, dwell.

*Wonest*, dwellest.

*Woodweele*, "the golden ouzle, a bird of the thrush kind." —P.

*Worthe*, *Wo worthe the*, woe be to thee.

*Wrack*, ruin, destruction.

*Wroken*, wreaked, revenged.

*Wyght*, strong, stout.

*Wynne*, go.

*Wys*, trow; there is no modern word precisely synonymous.

*Wyte*, *Wytte*, know.

*Y*, I.

*Yede*, *Yeed*, went.

*Yeff*, if.

*Yeffell*, evil.

*Yeft*, gift.

*Yemenry*, yeomanry. *Thow seys god yemenry*, thou speakest honestly, fairly, sensibly, like a good yeoman.

*Yend*, yon.

*Yeomandree*, *Yeomandry*, yeomanry, followers.

*Yerdes*, rods.

*Yever*, ever.

*Yfere*, together.

*Ylke*, same. *Ylke same*, very same.

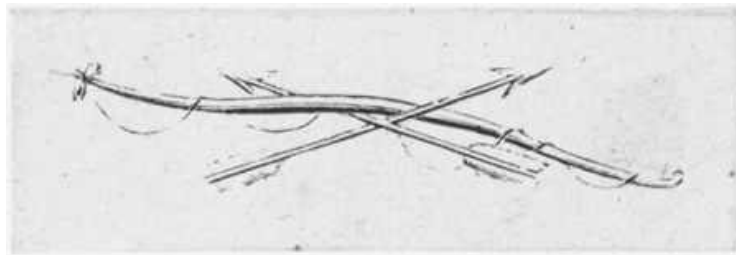
*Ynowe*, enough.

*Yode*, went.

*Yole*, Christmas.

*Yonder*, under.

*Yong men*, yeomen (which is every where substituted in Copland's edition). See Spelman's *Glossary* in the wordes *Juniores*, *Yeoman*; Minshen's *Guide into Tongues*, in the latter word; Tyrwhitt's edition of the *Canterbury Tales*, iv. 195; Shakespeare's *Plays*, 1793, xiv. 347.



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## ENDNOTES ↩

### FOOTNOTES TO “THE LIFE OF ROBIN HOOD”, pp. i–xiii

- [1] For Notes, &c., see p. xiv. *et seq.*
- [2] Two Gentlemen of Verona, act v. scene 4.
- [3] Drayton’s Polyolbion, song xxvi.

### FOOTNOTES TO “NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS”, pp. xiv–cxviii ↩

- [4] See Part II. Ballad 1.
- [5] All three mention a Loxley in Warwickshire, and another in Staffordshire (“near Needwood forest; the manor and seat of the Kinardsleys”).
- [6] It is 1100 in the original, but that is clearly an error of the press.
- [7] King Edward, it is true, is introduced in the “Lytell Geste,” &c., but the author has unquestionably meant the *first* of that name.
- [8] Thus, likewise, in a much earlier version from the same immortal bard (*Homer a la mode*, 1664), we read of
- “— — — greate Apollo, who’s as good  
At pricks and buts as *Robin Hood*.”
- [9] *Alias* R. G., the scurrilous and malignant editor of that degraded publication.
- [10] The authority cited by Grafton in 1569 as then “olde and auncient” must have been at least of equal antiquity with the most ancient poems that Dr. P. is acquainted with.
- [11] Stukeley’s *Palæographia Britannica*, No. II. p. 115. In an interleaved copy of Robin Hood’s Garland formerly belonging to Dr. Stukeley, and now in the possession of Francis Douce, esquire, opposite the second page of the first song, is the following note in his own hand:

“ Guy earl of Warwick.

George Gamwell  
of Gamwell hall *magna*  
esq.

Joanna =  
|  
Fitz Odoth

|  
Robin Fitz Odoth

Gamwell the king’s forester in Yorkshire,  
mentioned in Camden.

See my answer, No. II. of Lady Roisia,  
where is Robin Hood’s true pedigree.”



The Doctor seems, by this pedigree, to have founded our hero's pretensions on his descent from Roisia, sister of Robert Fitzgilbert, husband of Alice, youngest daughter of Judith, Countess of Huntingdon, which, whatever it might do in those times, would scarcely be thought sufficient to support such a claim at present. Beside, though John the Scot died without issue, he left three sisters, all married to powerful barons, either in Scotland or in England, none of whom, however, assumed the title. It is, therefore, probable, after all, that Robin Hood derived his earldom by some other channel.

Dr. Stukeley, whose learned labours are sufficiently known and esteemed, was a professed antiquary, and a beneficed clergyman of the Church of England. He has not, it is true, thought it necessary to cite any ancient or other authority in support of the above representations; nor is it in the editor's power to supply the deficiency. Perhaps, indeed, the Doctor might think himself entitled to expect that his own authority would be deemed sufficient: upon that, however, they must be content to rest. *Sit fides penes auctorem!* Mr. Parkin, who published "A reply to the peevish, weak, and malevolent objections brought by Dr. Stukeley in his *Origines Roystonianæ*, No. 2" (Norwich, 1748, 4to), terms "his pedigree of Robin Hood, quite jocose, an original indeed!" (See pp. 27, 32.)

Otho and Fitz-Otho, it must be confessed, were common names among the Anglo-Normans,\* but no such name as Othes, Ooth, Fitz-Othes, or Fitz-Ooth, has been elsewhere met with. Philip de Kime, also, was certainly a considerable landholder in the county of Lincoln in the time of King Henry II., but it nowhere appears, except from Dr. Stukeley, that his surname was Fitz-Ooth.

The Doctor likewise informs us that the arms of Ralph Fitz-Ooth, and consequently of our hero, were "g. two bendlets engrailed, o."

[\*] "Filius Roberti filii Odonis est in custodia Domini Regis, et est vj annorum, et ipse est heres decime partis unius militis, et vix possunt inde habere victum suum ipse et mater sua." Rotulus de vidius, &c. (31 H. 2) MSS. Har. 624.

[12] Grafton's Chronicle, p. 85.

[13] Collec. i. 54.

[14] See Robin Hood's Progress to Nottingham, part ii. ballad 2.

[15] Plompton Park, upon the banks of the Peterill, in Cumberland, was formerly very large, and set apart by the kings of England for the keeping of deer. It was disafforested or disparked by Henry VIII. See Camden's Britannia, by Bishop Gibson, who seems to confound this park with Inglewood forest, a district of sixteen miles in length, reaching from Carlisle to Penrith, where the kings of England used to hunt, and Edward I. is reported to have killed 200 bucks in one day (*Ibid.*)

[16] *Anno 1194] Vicesima nona die mensis martii Richardus rex Angliæ projectus est videre Clipestone, & forrestas de Sirewode, quas ipse nunquam viderat antea: & placuerunt ei multum, & eodem die rediit ad Notingham* (R. de Hoveden, Annales, p. 736).

Drayton (Polyolbion, song 26) introduces Sherwood in the character of a nymph, who, out of disdain at the preference shown by the poet to a sister-forest,

"All self praise set apart, determineth to sing  
That lusty Robin Hood, who long time like a king  
Within her compass liv'd, and when he list to range,  
For some rich booty set, or else his air to change,  
To Sherwood still retir'd, his only standing court."

[17] It occurs in “Tarlton’s Newes out of Purgatory,” 1630, 4to (entered on the Stationers’ books in 1590).

[18] It likewise gives the proverb noticed in a preceding page thus:

“Were he as good as George a Greene, I would strike him sure.”

[19] There is an edition in 1706, 8vo.

[20] *Scottish Poems*, i. 122.

[21] Surely the “lady” alluded to in the old May-game cannot be our Maid Marian. The earliest notice of her occurs in Barclay’s *Egloges*, about 1500, where she is evidently connected with Robin Hood. See Note [26](#).]

[22] Without “the ancient songs,” to which the Doctor refers, are confined to his “old MS.,” he evidently asserts what he would probably find it difficult to prove. As for the passage he produces, it seems nothing to the purpose; as, in the first place, it is apparently not “antient,” and, in the second, it is apparently not from a “song of Robin Hood.”

[23] Mr. Warton, having observed that “The play of Robin and Marian is said to have been performed by the school-boys of Angiers, according to annual custom, in the year 1392: The boys were deguisiez, says the old French record; and they had among them un fillette desguisee (Carpent. Du Cange, v. Robinet-Pentecoste),” adds, “Our old character of Mayd Marian may be hence illustrated” (*His. En. po. i.* 245). This, indeed, seems sufficiently plausible; but unfortunately the Robin and Marian of Angiers are not the Robin and Marian of Sherwood. The play is still extant. See *Fabliaux ou Contes*, Paris, 1781, ii. 144. There are, likewise, some very ancient pastoral ballads on the subject of these two lovers. See La Borde, *Essai sur la Musique*, ii. 163, 215. But, in fact, the names of *Robin* and *Marion* seem to have been used by the *chansonniers* of antiquity like those of *Colin* and *Phæbe*, &c.

[24] In 1592, Richard Jones, stationer, entered on the Company’s books, “A pleasant fancie, or merrie conceyt, called the passion et morrys, daunst by a crue of 8 couple of wores.

[25] “The quarry from whence King Wolfere fetched stones for his royal structure [*i.e.* Peterborough] was undoubtedly that of Bernack near unto Stamford . . . . And I find in the charter of K. Edward the Confessor, which he granted to the abbot of Ramsey, that the abbot of Ramsey should give to the abbot and convent of Peterburgh 4000 eeles in the time of Lent, and in consideration thereof the abbot of Peterburgh should give to the abbot of Ramsey as much freestone from his pitts in Bernack, and as much ragstone from his pitts in Peterburgh as he should need. Nor did the abbot of Peterburgh from these pits furnish only that but other abbies also, as that of St. Edmunds-Bury: in memory whereof there are two long stones yet standing upon a balk in Castor-field, near unto Gunwade-ferry; which erroneous tradition hath given out to be draughts of arrows from Alwalton churchyard thither; the one of Robin Hood, and the other of Little John; but the truth is, they were set up for witnesses, that the carriages of stone from Bernack to Gunwade-ferry, to be conveyed to S. Edmunds-Bury, might pass that way without paying toll; and in some old terrars they are called S. Edmund’s stones. These stones are nicked in their tops after the manner of arrows, probably enough in memory of S. Edmund, who was shot to death with arrows by the Danes” (*Gunton’s History of the Church of Peterburgh*, 1686, p. 4).

[26] “In this relation,” Mr. Walker observes, “the Doctor not only evinces his credulity, but displays his ignorance of archery; for the ingenious and learned Mr. Barrington, than whom no man can be better informed on the subject, thinks that eleven score and seven

yards is the utmost extent that an arrow can be shot from a long bow” (Archæologia, vol. viii.) According to tradition, he adds, Little John shot an arrow from the Old-bridge, Dublin, to the present site of St. Michael’s church, a distance not exceeding, he believes, that mentioned by Mr. Barrington (Historical Essay on the Dress of the Ancient and Modern Irish, p. 129).

What Mr. Barrington “thinks” may be true enough, perhaps, of the Toxophilite Society and other modern archers; but people should not talk of Robin Hood who never shot in his bow. The above ingenious writer’s censure of Dr. Hanmer’s credulity and ignorance, seems to be misapplied, since he cannot be supposed to believe what he holds not for truth, and actually leaves among the lyes of the land.

See also the old song, printed in the Appendix, No. 3. Drayton, who wrote before archery had fallen into complete disuse, says—

“At marks full forty score they us’d to prick and rove.”

That Mr. Barrington, indeed, was very ill informed on the subject is evident from a most scarce book in the editor’s possession, intitled “Aime for the archers of St. George’s fields, containing the names of all the marks in the same fields, with their true distances according to the dimensuration of the line. Formerly gathered by Richard Hannis, and now corrected by Thomas Bick and others. London, Printed by N. Howell for Robert Minehard and Benjamin Brownsmith, and are to be sold at the sign of the man in the moon in Blackman street, 1664,” 16mo, where the distance from *Alpha* to *Bick’s memorial* is 18 score 16 yards; and 11 score 7 yards (though there are inferior numbers, the lowest being 9, 12) appears to be a very moderate shot indeed. Two of these marks are *Robin Hood* and *Little John*. See also Shakespeare’s *Second Part of K. Henry IV.*, act iii. scene 2, where it is said that *Old Double* “would have clapp’d i’ the clout at *twelve score*; and carry’d you a forehand shaft a *fourteen and fourteen and a half*,” and the notes upon the passage in Steevens’s edition, 1793. It is probable, after all, that the word *forty* in Drayton is an error, of the transcriber or pressman, for *fourteen*.

Whatever Robin Hood’s father might do, there can be no question that the author of the old ballad in which he is mentioned (part ii. song 1) has “shot in a lusty strong bow” when he speaks of

“Two north-country miles and an inch at a shot.”

[27] Warner’s *Albion’s England*, 1602, p. 132. It is part of the hermit’s speech to the Earl of Lancaster.

[28] Sir Roger Williams, in his *Briefe discourse of warre*, 1590, has a chapter “To prooue bow-men the worst shot vsed in these daies.” Sir John Smythe, however, was of a different opinion. See his “Discourses concerning the formes and effects of divers sorts of weapons, &c. As also, of the great sufficiencie, excellencie, and wonderful effects of archers,” 1590, 4to. See also a different treatise by him upon the same subject in Num. 132 of the Harleian MSS.

[29] “A prince who fills the throne with a disputed title dares not arm his subjects, the only method of securing a people fully both against domestic oppression and foreign conquest” (Hume’s *Essays*, “Of the Protestant Succession”).

[30] Flemings.

[31] Breeches.

[32] Thus also in part ii. ballad 1:

“She got on her holyday kirtle and gown

They were of a light Lincolne green.”

[33] In the sign of The green man and still, we perceive a huntsman in a green coat standing by the side of a still; in allusion, as it has been facetiously conjectured, to the partiality shown by that description of gentry to a morning dram. The genuine representation, however, should be the green-man (or man who deals in green herbs) with a bundle of peppermint or penny-royal under his arm, which he brings to have distilled.

“And farewell all gaie garments now,  
With jewels riche of rare devise:  
Like Robin Hood, I wot not how,  
I must goe raunge in woodmen’s wyse,  
Cladde in a cote of greene or gray,  
And gladde to get it if i maye.”

The workes of a young wyt, Done by N. B. Gent. 1577, 4to, b. 1.

[34] There appears, however, to be a town of this name in Flanders, which may be the place here meant. The above conjecture, therefore, will be received for no more than it is worth.

[35] When Bulas, or Felix, the robber, was brought before Papinian, the latter asked him why he gave himself up to robbing and spoiling: “And why, sir,” was the answer, “are you ‘a governor’?” See Dio Cassius in Severus.

“Because I do that,” said the pirate to Alexander, “with a single ship which thou dost with a great fleet, I am called a thief, and thou art called a king.”

[36] See Pennant’s Tour in Scotland MDCCLXXII. part i. p. 404. The original reading, whether altered by mistake or design, is—

“—pacificque imponere morem.”

One might, to the same purpose, address our hero in the words of Plautus (Trinummus, act iv. scene x):

“Atque hanc tuam gloriam jam ante auribus acceperam, et nobiles apud homines,  
Pauperibus te parcere solitum, divites damnare atque domare.  
Abi, laudo, scis ordine, ut æquom’st,  
Tractare homines, hoc dis dignum’st, semper mendicis modesti sint.”  
— — — I’ve heard before  
This commendation of you, and from great ones,  
That you were wont to spare the indigent,  
And crush the wealthy.—I applaud your justice  
In treating men according to their merits.—  
’Tis worthy of the gods to have respect  
Unto the poor.”

[37]

“Richard Cœur de Lyon cald a king and conquerour was,  
With Phillip king of France who did unto Jerusalem passe:  
In this king’s time was Robyn Hood, that archer and outlawe,  
And little John his partener eke, unto them which did drawe  
One hondred tall and good archers, on whom foure hondred men,  
Were their power never so strong, could not give onset then;  
The abbots, monkes, and carles rich these onely did molest,  
And reskewd woemen when they saw of theeves them so opprest;  
Restoring poore men’s goods, and eke abundantly releevd

Poore travellers which wanted food, or were with sicknes greeved.”

(Third Assertion, &c., quoted elsewhere.)

[38] That this epitaph had been printed, or was well known, at least, long before the publication of Mr. Thoresby’s book, if not before either he or Dr. Gale was born, appears from the “True Tale of Robin Hood” by Martin Parker, written, if not printed, as early as 1631. That dates, about this period, were frequently by *ides* and *kalends*, see Madox’s *Formulare Anglicanum* (Dissertation), p. xxx. Even Arabic figures are produced in some of still greater antiquity; see *Collectanea de rebus Hibernicis*, ii. 331. Robert Grosthead, Bishop of Lincoln, makes use of these figures about the year 1240. Astle’s *Origin of Writing*, p. 188.

[39] In “The Travels of Tom Thumb over England and Wales” [by Mr. Robert Dodsley], p. 106, is another though inferior version:

“Here, under this memorial stone,  
Lies Robert earl of Huntingdon;  
As he, no archer e’er was good,  
And people call’d him Robin Hood:  
Such outlaws as his men and he  
Again may England never see.”

[40] In “a large folio volume of accounts kept by Mr. Philip Henslowe, who appears to have been proprietor of the Rose theatre near the Bankside in Southwark,” he has entered—

“Feb. 1597–8.

The first part of Robin Hood, by Anthony Mundy.

The second part of the downfall of earl Huntington, surnamed Robinhood, by Anthony Mundy and Henry Chettle.”

In a subsequent page is the following entry: “Lent unto Robarte Shawe, the 18 of Novemb. 1598, to lend unto Mr. Cheattle, upon the mending of the first part of Robart Hoode, the sum of xs.,” and afterwards—“For mending of Robin Hood for the corte.” See Malone’s edition of “The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare,” 1790, vol. i. part ii. (Emendations and additions.)

[41] That is, the inn so called, upon Ludgate Hill. The modern sign, which, however, seems to have been the same 200 years ago, is a bell and a wild man; but the original is supposed to have been a beautiful Indian; and the inscription, *La belle sauvage*. Some, indeed, assert that the inn once belonged to a Lady Arabella Savage; and others, that its name, originally *The bell and savage*, arose (like *The George and blue boar*) from the junction of two inns, with those respective signs. Non nostrum est tantas componere lites.

[42] She is called the Widow Scarlet; so that Scathlocke was the elder brother. In fact, however, it was mere ignorance in the author to suppose the Scathlocke and Scarlet of the story distinct persons, the latter name being an evident corruption of the former; Scathlock, Scadlock, Scarlock, Scarlet.

[43] In “The booke of the inventory of the goods of my lord admeralles men tacken the 10 of Marche in the yeare 1598,” are the following properties for Robin Hood and his retinue in this identical play:

“Item, . . . i green gown for Maryan.  
Item, vi grene cottes for Roben Hoode, and iiii knaves sewtes.  
Item, i hatte for Robin Hoode, i hobihorse.

*Item, Roben Hoodes sewtte.*

*Item, the fryers trusse in Roben Hoode."*

Malone's *Shak.* II. ii. (Emen. & ad.)

[44] George a Greene and Wakefield's pinner were one and the same person. The shoemaker of Bradford is anonymous.

[45] Which, by the way, was termed a *hempen caudle*. See the *Second Part of K. H. VI.*, act iv. scene 7. Lord-Chancellor Jeffries, at the revolution, was treated much in the same manner. One day, during his confinement in the Tower, he received a barrel of oysters, upon which he observed to his keeper, "Well, you see, I have yet some friends left:" at the bottom of the barrel, however, he found a halter; which changed his countenance, and is even thought to have hastened his death.

[46] See the ballad of "The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield," part ii. num. iii.

[47] Fitzwater confounds one man with another; Harold Harefoot was the son and successor of Canute the great.

[48] This tradition is referred to, and the inscription given, in Ray's *Itineraries*, 1760, p. 153: — "We rode through a bushet or common called Rodwell-hake, two miles from Leeds, where (according to the vulgar tradition) was once found a stag, with a ring of brass about its neck, having this inscription:

When Julius Cæsar here was king,  
About my neck he put this ring;  
Whosoever doth me take,  
Let me go for Cæsar's sake."

In *The Midwife, or Old Woman's Magazine* (vol. i. p. 250), Mrs. Midnight, in a letter "To the venerable society of antiquarians," containing a description of Cæsar's camp on Windsor forest, has the following passage: "There have been many extraordinary things discovered about this camp. One thing, I particularly remember, was a deer of about sixteen hundred years old. . . . This deer it seems was a favourite of Cæsar's, and on that account he bedecked her neck with a golden collar and an inscription, which I shall by and by take notice of; she had been frequently taken, but when the hunters, the peasants, and poor people saw the golden collar on her neck, they readily let her go again. However, as she continually increased in strength and in bulk, as well as in age, after the course of about fifteen or sixteen centuries, the flesh and skin were entirely grown over this collar, so that it could not be discover'd till after she was kill'd, and then to the surprise of the virtuosi it appear'd with this inscription:

When Julius Cæsar reigned here,  
Then was I a little deer;  
If any man should me take,  
Let me go for Cæsar's sake.

"This collar, which is of pure gold, I am told weighs thirty ounces, and as the blood of the creature still appears fresh upon it, I believe it may be as valuable as any of your gimcracks; however, there will be no harm in my sending of it to you; and if I can procure it, you may depend on my taking the utmost care of it." As no notice is announced of this wonderful piece of antiquity in the voluminous and important lucubrations of the above learned body, it most probably never came into their possession; which is very much to be lamented, as it would have been an admirable companion for *Hardecnute's chamber-pot*, *King Edward the first's finger*, and other similar curiosities.

Juvenal des Ursins gravely relates that in the year 1380 a hart was taken at Senlis with a chain about his neck inscribed "*Cæsar hoc me donavit.*"\*

Upton, to be even with him, supposes a hart to have been taken at Bagshot near Windsor, with a motto on the collar in the French language, which proves the ancient Romans were familiar therewith long before it existed:

*"Julius Cæsar, quant jeo fus petis,  
Cest coler suz mon col ad mys."*†

This *dictator perpetuo*, in fact, seems to have collared every hart he took. The family of *Pompei* in Italy use two harts for their supporters on whose collars were the letters N. M. T., in memory of one on whose collar were these words: "*Nemo Me Tangat, Cæsaris sum.*" Anstis, ii. 113.

The original of all these stories is to be found in Pliny, who says: "It is generally held and confessed that the stagge or hind live long; for an hundred yeer after Alexander the great, some were taken with golden collars about their necks, overgrowne now with haire and growne within the skin: which collars the said king had done upon them" (*Naturall Historie*, by Holland, 1601, B. 8, c. 32). Pausanias, moreover, speaking of one Leocydas, who fought for the Megalopolitans, in conjunction with Lydiades, against the Lacedæmonians (about the year 243 before Christ), says he was reported to be the descendant in the ninth degree of that Arcesilaus, who living in Lycosura saw that stag which is sacred to the goddess Despoine worn out with old age. This stag, he adds, had a collar on its neck with the following inscription:

Caught young, when Agapenor sail'd for Troy.

By which, he concludes, it is evident that a stag lives much longer than an elephant (B. 8, c. 10).

[\*] *Histoire de Charles VI.*

[†] Upton *de re militari*, p. 119.

[49] Robin, in the old legend, expresses his regard for this order of men (concerning which the reader may consult an ingenious "Essay" in the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, vol. i., and some "Observations" in a collection of ancient songs, printed in 1790):

"Whether he be messengere,  
Or a man that myrthes can,  
Or yf he be a pore man,  
Of my good he shall have some."

[50] This play is entered in Master Henslowe's account-book with the date of December 1600. See Malone's *Shakespeare*, vol. ii. part ii. (Emen. & ad.)

[51] "The Triumphes of Reunited Britannia. A pageant in honour of Sir Leonard Holliday, lord mayor." 1605.

[52] Henry Fitz-Alwine Fitz-Liefstane, goldsmith, first mayor of London, was appointed to that office by King Richard I. in 1189, and continued therein till the 15th of King John, 1212, when he "deceased, and was buried in the priorie of the holy trinitie, neare unto Aldgate" (*Stow's Survey*, 1598, p. 418). His relationship with Robin Hood is merely poetical, and invented by Mundy "for the nonce;" though it is by no means improbable that they were acquainted, and that our hero might have occasionally dined at the Mansion-house on a Lord Mayor's day.

[53] Jonson was led into this mistake by the old play of Robin Hood. See before, p. lv.

- [54] This play appears to have been performed upon the stage after the Restoration. The prologue and epilogue (spoken by Mr. Portlock) are to be found in num. 1009 of the Sloane MSS. It was republished, with a continuation and notes, by Mr. Waldron, of Drury-lane Theatre, in 1783.
- [55] A most stupid pantomime on this subject, under the title of “Merry Sherwood, or Harlequin, forester,” was performed in December 1795, at the Theatre-royal, Covent-garden.
- [56] 1st edit. 1550, fo. xxvi. b. (Randolf is misprinted Rand of.) Subsequent editions, even of the same year, reading only “Randall of Chester.” Mr. Warton (*History of English Poetry*, ii. 179) makes this genius, whom he calls a frier, say “that he is well acquainted with the rimes of Randall of Chester;” and these rimes he, whimsically enough, conjectures to be the old Chester Whitsun plays; which, upon very idle and nonsensical evidence, he supposes to have been written by Randal Higden, the compiler of the *Polychronicon*. Of course, if this absurd idea were at all well founded, the rimes of Robin Hood must likewise allude to certain Yorkshire or Nottinghamshire plays, written by himself. The “Randolf erl of Chester” here meant is Randal Blundevile, the last earl of that name, who had been in the Holy Land, was a great warrior and patriot, and died in 1231.

The reading of the original edition is confirmed by a very old manuscript in the Cotton Library (Vespasian, B. XVI.) differing considerably from the printed copies, which gives the passage thus:

“I can nouzt perfitli my pater-noster as a prest it syngeth:  
I can rymes of Robyn Hood, of Rondolf erl of Chestre,  
Ac of oure lorde ne of oure ladi the leste that ever was maked.”

(See also *Caligula*, A. XI.)

The speaker himself could have told Mr. Warton he was no frier:

“I have ben prieste & person passynge thyrti winter,  
Yet can I nether solfe, ne singe, ne sayntes lyves read;  
But I can find in a felde or in a furlong an hare,  
Better than in Beatus vir or in Beati omnes  
Construe one clause well, & kenne it to my parishens.”

- [57] “De quibus stolidum wigus hianter in comœdiis & tragædiis prurienter festum faciunt, & super ceteras ‘romancias mimos & bardanos cantitare delectantur” (*Scotichronicon*, à Hearne, p. 774). Comedies and tragedies are—not dramatic compositions, but—poems of a comic or serious cast. Romance in Spanish, and romance in French, signify—not a tale of chivalry, but—a vulgar ballad, at this day.

- [58] “Rebus hujus Roberti gestis tota Britannia in cantibus utitur” (*Majoris Britanniae Historia*, Edin. 1740, p. 128).

- [59] *Hystory of Scotland*, Edin. 1541, fo. The word “waithman” was probably suggested by Andrew of Wyntown (see before, Note 3). It seems equivalent to the English vagabond, or perhaps outlaw. Waith is waif; and it is to be remembered that, in the technical language of the English courts, a woman is said to be waived, and not outlawed. “In our auld Scottish langage,” says Skene, “ane *Vothman* is ane out-law, or ane fugitive fra the lawes” (*De verborum significatione*, Edin. 1597). It is from *þæðan*, *venari*, *fugare*. See Lye’s Dictionary. The passage above quoted does not occur in Boise’s original work.



[60] Of this poem there have been at least five editions at London or Westminster, and one at Edinburgh. In a list of “bookes printed and . . . sold by Jane Bell, at the east end of Christ-church [1655],” in company with Frier Rush, *The frier and the boy, &c.*, is “a book of Robin Hood and Little John.” Captain Cox of Coventry appears to have had a copy of some old edition: see Laneham’s Letter from Killingworth, 1575.

[61] “Description of the Town of Tottenham-high-crosse,” &c. London (1631, 4to), 1781, 8vo. The invaluable MS. alluded to has been since discovered; and the entire poem, of which Mr. Ritson has here given a fragment, will be found in the Appendix.—ED.

[62] The book, under the same title, printed by Wynken de Worde, in 1517, is a different translation in prose.

[63] Mr. Warton reads *Toby*; and so, perhaps, it may be in former editions.

[64] Honest Barnaby, *i.e.* Richard Brathwayte, who wrote or travelled about 1640, was well acquainted with our hero’s story.

“Veni Nottingham tyrones  
Sherwoodenses sunt latrones.  
Instar Robin Hood, & servi  
Scarlet & Joannis Parvi;  
Passim, sparsim, peculantur,  
Cellis, sylvis deprædantur.”  
“Thence to Nottingham, where rovers,  
Highway riders, Sherwood drovers,  
Like old Robin Hood and Scarlet,  
Or like Little John his varlet;  
Here and there they shew them doughty,  
In cells and woods to get their booty.”

Whitlock relates that “the [parliament] committee who carried the propositions of peace to Oxford, had the king’s answer sealed up and sent to them. They, upon advice together, thought it not fit for them to receive an answer in that manner . . . and made an address to his majesty that they might know what his answer was, and have a copy of it: to which his majesty replied, What is that to you, who are but to carry what I send, and if I will send the song of *Robin Hood and Little John*, you must carry it? To which the commissioners only said, that the business about which they came was of somewhat more consequence than that song” (*Memorials*, p. 115).

[65] There is, in fact, such a place as Barnwood forest, in Buckinghamshire; but no one, except Mr. Hearne, has hitherto supposed that part of the country to have been frequented by our hero. Barnwood, in the case reported by Yelverton, has clearly arisen from a confusion of Barnsdale and green wood. “Robin Hood in the greenwood stood” was likewise the beginning of an old song now lost : and it is not a little remarkable that Jefferies, serjeant, on the trial of Pilkington and others, for a riot, in 1683, by a similar confusion, quotes the line in question thus:

“Robin Hood upon Greendale stood” (State-trials, iii. 634).

A third corruption has taken place in Parker, p. 131 (*King v. Cotton*), though expressly cited from Yelverton, viz.

“Robin Hood in Barnwell stood.”

The following most vulgar and indecent rime, current among the peasantry in the North of England, may have been intended to ridicule the perpetual repetition of “Robin Hood in greenwood stood:”

Robin Hood  
In green-wood stood.  
    With his back against a tree;  
He fell flat  
Into a cow-plat,  
    And all besh—n was he

[66] It is possible that, amid these absurdities, there may be other lines of the old song of Robin Hood, which is the only reason for reviving them.

“O sleepst thou, or wakst thou, Jeffery Cooke?”

occurs, likewise, in a medley of a similar description, in Pammelia 1609.

[67] In “*Heraclitus ridens*, or a discourse between Jest and Earnest,” a periodical paper against the Whigs, published in 1681, and collected and republished in 1713 (No. 34), Jest begins singing:

“Bills, bows, and axes, quoth Robin Hood,  
    But I have not time to tell;  
Yonder’s the sheriff and his company,  
    But I hope all will be well.

    Hei, down, derry, derry, down;”

and says, “I hope I may sing of old Robin without offending a grand jury, or being presented for disuniting Protestants.”

In The Gentleman’s Magazine for December 1790 is the first verse of a song used by the inhabitants of Helston in Cornwall on the celebration of an annual festivity on the 8th of May, called the Furry-day, supposed Flora’s day, not, it is imagined, “as many have thought, in remembrance of some festival instituted in honour of that goddess, but rather from the garlands commonly worn on that day.” (See the same publication for June and October 1790.) This verse was the whole that Mr. Urban’s correspondent could then recollect, but he thought he might be afterwards able “to send all that is known of it, for,” he says, “it formerly was very long, but is now much forgotten.” The stanza is as follows:

“Robin Hood and Little John  
They are both gone to fair O;  
And we will go to the merry green-wood,  
To see what they do there O.  
    With hel an tow,  
    And rum-be-low,  
And chearily we’ll get up,  
As soon as any day O,  
All for to bring the summer home,  
The summer and the May O.”

“After which,” he adds, “there is something about the grey goose wing; from all which,” he concludes, “the goddess Flora has nothing to say to it.” She may have nothing to say to the song, indeed, and yet a good deal to do with the thing. But the fact is, that the first eight days of May, or the first day and the eighth, seem to have been devoted by the Celtic nations to some great religious ceremony. Certain superstitious observances of this period still exist in the Highlands of Scotland, where it is called the Bel-tein; Beltan, in that country, being a common term for the beginning of May, as “between the Beltans” is a saying significant of the first and eighth days of that month. The games of Robin Hood, as we shall elsewhere see, were, for whatever reason, always celebrated in May.—N.B. “Hel-an-tow,” in the above stanza, should be heave and how. Heave and how, and

Rumbelow, was an ordinary chorus to old ballads, and is at least as ancient as the reign of Edward II., since it occurs in the stanza of a Scottish song, preserved by some of our old historians, on the battle of Bannockburn.

To lengthen this long note: Among the Harleian MSS. (num. 367) is the fragment of “a tale of Robin Hood dialouge-wise beetweene Watt and Jeffry. The morall is the overthrowe of the abbyes; the like being attempted by the Puritane, which is the wolfe, and the politician, which is the fox, agaynst the bushops. Robin Hood, bushop; Adam Bell, abbot; Little John, colleagues of the university.” This seems to have been a common mode of satirising both the old Church and the reformers. In another MS. of the same collection (N. 207), written about 1532, is a tract entitled “The banckett of John the reve, unto Peirs Ploughman, Laurens Laborer, Thomlyn Tailyor, and Hobb of the Hille, with others;” being, as Mr. Wanley says, a dispute concerning transubstantiation by a Roman Catholic. The other, indeed, is much more modern: it alludes to the indolence of the abbots, and their falling off from the original purity in which they were placed by the bishops, whom it inclines to praise. The object of its satire seems to be the Puritans; but here it is imperfect, though the lines preserved are not wholly destitute of poetical merit. —“Robin Hood and the Duke of Lancaster, a ballad, to the tune of The Abbot of Canterbury,” 1727, is a satire on Sir Robert Walpole.

[68] Chatterton, in his “Memoirs of a Sad Dog,” represents “Baron Otranto” (meaning the honourable Horace Walpole, now Earl of Orford), when on a visit to “Sir Stentor,” as highly pleased with Robin Hood’s ramble, “melodiously chaunted by the knight’s groom and dairy-maid, to the excellent music of a two-stringed violin and bag-pipe,” which transported him back “to the age of his favourite hero, Richard the Third;” whereas, says he, “the songs of Robin Hood were not in being till the reign of Queen Elizabeth.” This, indeed, may be in a great measure true of those which we now have, but there is sufficient evidence of the existence and popularity of such-like songs for ages preceding; and some of these, no doubt, were occasionally modernised or new-written, though most of them must be allowed to have perished.

The late Dr. Johnson, in controverting the authenticity of Fingal, a composition in which the author, Mr. Macpherson, has made great use of some unquestionably ancient Irish ballads, said, “He would undertake to write an epick poem on the story of Robin Hood, and half England, to whom the names and places he should mention in it are familiar, would believe and declare they had heard it from their earliest years” (Boswell’s Journal, p. 486).

[69] The following note is inserted in the fourth edition of the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, published in July 1795 (vol. i. p. xcvi.):

“Of the 24 songs in what is now called ‘Robin Hood’s Garland,’ many are so modern as not to be found in Pepys’s collection, completed only in 1700. In the [editor’s] folio MS. are ancient fragments of the following, viz.—Robin Hood and the beggar.—Robin Hood and the butcher.—Robin Hood and fryer Tucke.—Robin Hood and the pindar.—Robin Hood and queen Catharine, in two parts.—Little John and the four beggars, and “Robine Hood his death.” This last, which is very curious, has no resemblance to any that have yet been published; [it is probably num. xxviii. of part ii.], and the others are extremely different from the printed copies; but they unfortunately are in the beginning of the MS. where half of every leaf hath been torn away.”

As this MS. “contains several songs relating to the civil war in the last century,” the mere circumstance of its comprising fragments of the above ballads is no proof of a higher antiquity; any more than its not containing “one that alludes to the Restoration”

proves its having been compiled before that period; or than, because some of these 24 songs are not to be found in Pepys's collection, they are more modern than 1700. If the MS. could be collated, it would probably turn out that many of its contents have been inaccurately and unfaithfully transcribed, by some illiterate persons, from printed copies still extant, and, consequently, that it is, so far, of no authority. See the advertisement prefixed.

[70] Mr. Warton has mistaken and misprinted this line so as to make it absolute nonsense.

“Is not my reason good?  
Good—even good—Robin Hood.”

(His. En. po. vol. ii.)

[71] Drayton's *Polyolbion*, song 26, p. 122 (*supra*, p. vii.)

[72] In Churchyard's "Replication onto Camel's Objections" he tells the latter:

“Your knowledge is great, your judgement is good,  
The most of your study hath ben of Robyn Hood;  
And Bevys of Hampton, and syr Launcelot de Lake,  
Hath taught you full oft your verses to make.”

[73] See the original story, in which two brothers, of whom one had wished for as many oxen as he saw stars, the other for a pasture as wide as the firmament, kill each other about the pasturage of the oxen (from *Camer. oper. subscis. cent. 1, c. 92, p. 429*), in Wanley's *Little World of Man*, edition of 1774, p. 426. *Camerarius*, it seems, had the story from *Scardeonius de claris civibus Patavinis*, whence it is also related in the notes to *Upton de studio militari*; and an older, of the like kind, is in the *Facetiæ* of *Poggius*.

[74] “Derry down is the burden of the old songs of the Druids sung by their Bards and Voids, to call the people to their religious assemblys in the groves. *Doire* in Irish (the old Punic) is a grove: corrupted into derry. A famous Druid grove and academy at the place since called Londonderry from thence.”—MS. note by Dr. Stukeley, in his copy of *Robin Hood's Garland*. “Paul, Paul, thou art beside thyself!”

[75] Mr. Boyd, the famous preacher in Childsdale, finding that several of his hearers went away after the forenoon sermon, had this expression in his afternoon prayers: “Now, Lord, thou seest that many people go away from hearing thy Word; but had we told them stories of Robin Hood or Davie Lindsay, they had stayed; and yet none of these are near so good as thy Word that I preach” (*Scotch Presbyterian Eloquence*, 1714, p. 156).

[76] The Bishop grows scurrilous. “I never heard,” says Coke, attorney-general, “that Robin Hood was a traitor, they say he was an outlaw.” (*State Trials*, i. 218.—Raleigh had said, “Is it not strange for me to make myself a Robin Hood, a Kett, or a Cade?”)

[77] This ballad seems to have been written in imitation of a song in Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece*, 1630, beginning—

“The gentry to the King's-head,  
The nobles to the crown,” &c.

[78] In Arnold's *Essex Harmony* (ii. 98) he gives the inscription, as a catch for three voices, of his own composition, thus:

“My beer is stout, my ale is good,  
Pray stay and drink with Robin Hood;  
If Robin Hood abroad is gone,  
Pray stay and drink with Little John.”

[79] This description is finely illustrated by an excellent woodcut at the head of one of Anthony a Wood's old ballads in the Ashmolean Museum. The frontispiece to Gervas Markham's *Archerie*, 1634, is likewise a man drawing a bow.

[80] See "The auncient order societie and unities laudable of prince Arthure and his knightly armory of the round table . . . Translated and collected by R. R. London, Imprinted by John Wolfe dwelling in Distaffe-lane neere the signe of the Castle, 1583." 4to, b. 1. It appears from this publication that on the revival of London archery in Queen Elizabeth's time, "the worshipfull socyety of archers," instead of calling themselves after Robin Hood and his companions, took the names of "the magnificent prince Arthure and his knightly traine of the round table." It is, probably, to one of the annual meetings of this identical society that Master Shallow alludes in the *Second Part of King Henry IV*. "I remember," says he, "at Mile-end Green [their usual place of exercise],—I was then Sir Dagonet in Arthur's shew," &c. (See also Steevens's *Shakespeare*, 1793, ix. 142.) The successors of the above "friendly and frank fellowship" assumed the ridiculous appellations of Duke of Shoreditch, Marquis of Clerkenwell, Earl of Pankridge, &c. See Wood's *Bowman's Glory*, 1682.

[81] Meaning that his sole or chief employment had been in Christmas or May games, Whitsun-ales, and such like idle diversions. See *Original Letters*, &c., ii. 134.

In an old circular woodcut, preserved on the title of *Robin Hood's Garland*, 1670, as well as on that of Adam Bell, &c., printed at Newcastle in 1772, is the apparent representation of a May-game, consisting of the following personages: 1. A bishop. 2. Robin Hood. 3. The potter (or beggar). 4. Little John. 5. Frier Tuck. 6. Maid Marian. Figures 2 and 4 are distinguished by their bows and different size. The frier holds out a cross; and Marian has flowing hair, and wears a sort of coronet. But the execution of the whole is too rude to merit a copy.

At Lord Fitzwilliams's at Richmond there is, or lately was, a curious painting by Vinckenbooms, representing old Richmond palace, with a group of morris-dancers. It has been badly engraved by Godfrey, who reduced the figures to too small a scale. Mr. Douce has a tracing from the original picture with all the figures distinctly marked. See a poem at the end of Hall's *Downfall of May-games*, 1661, 4to.

[82] The precise purpose or meaning of setting up Robin Hood's bower has not been satisfactorily ascertained. Mr. Hearne, in an attempt to derive the name of "The Chiltern country" (ciltern, Saxon) from silex, a flint, has the following words: "Certe Silcestriam, &c. *i.e.* Certainly Silchester, in Hampshire, signifies nothing but the city of flints (that is, a city composed or built of flint-stones). And what is more, in that very Chiltern country you may frequently see houses built of flints, in erecting which, in ancient times, I suppose that many persons involved themselves deeply in debt, and that, in order to extricate themselves, they took up money at interest of I know not what great men, which so far disturbed their minds that they would become thieves and do many things in no wise agreeable to the English government. Hence, the nobility ordered that large woods in the Chiltern country should in a great measure be cut down, lest they should conceal any considerable body of robbers, who were wont to convert the same into lurking places. It concerns this matter to call to mind that of this sort of robbers was that Robin or Robert Hood, of whom the vulgar dayly sing so many wonderful things. He (being now made an outlaw) before he retired into the north parts, frequently robbing in the Chiltern country, lurked in the thickets thereof on purpose that he should not be taken. Thence it was that to us boys (exhilarating, according to custom, the mind with sports) certain countrymen, with whom we had accidentally some conversation, shewed us that sort of den or retreat (vulgarly called Robin Hood's bower) in *Maydenhead-thicket*; which

thicket is the same that Leland in his Itinerary called Frith, by which name the Anglo-Saxons themselves spoke of thickets. For although frið in reality signifies peace, yet since numerous groves with them (as well as before with the Britons) were deemed sacred, it is by no means to be wondered at that a great wood (because manifestly an asylum) should, in the judgment of the Anglo-Saxons, be called by no other name than frðes : and that Maydenhead-thicket was esteemed among the greater woods Leland himself is a witness. Rightly therefore did Robin Hood (as frið-bena) reckon himself to abide there in security” (Chronicon de Dunstaple, p. 387). What he means by all this is, doubtless, sufficiently obscure: the mere name, however, of Robin Hood’s bower seems a very feeble authority for concluding that gallant outlaw to have robbed or skulked in the Chiltern hundreds.

It may seem, perhaps, from a passage in Browne’s *Britannia’s Pastorals* (Song 4), that *Robin Hood’s bower* was prepared for the reception of himself and his Marian, as king and queen of May. The lines are these:

“As I have seene the lady of the May  
 Set in an arbour, on a holy-day,  
 Built by the May-pole, where the jocund swains,  
 Dance with the maidens to the bagpipe’s strains.”

[83] See Steevens’s Shakespeare, 1793, x. 186.

[84] Albion’s England, 1602, p. 121. It is part of the “Northerne man’s speech against the friers.” He adds:

“At Baptis-day with ale and cakes bout bonfires neighbours stood,  
 At Martle masse wa turnd a crabbe, thilke told of Roben Hood,  
 Till after long time myrke, when blest were windowes, dares and lights,  
 And pails were fild, and hathes were swept, gainst fairie elves and sprits:  
 Rock and plow Mondaies gams . . . with saint-feasts and kirk-lights.”

A very learned and ingenious gentleman conceives that the enumeration of characters in the passage quoted in the text belongs solely to the *May*, and has no relation whatever to the *morris*. That the two games, however, though essentially distinct in their origin, got somehow or other blended together appears unquestionable.

“As fit as a *morris* for *May-day*” is one of the clown’s similes in *All’s well that ends well* (act ii. scene 2).

[85] “The word livery was formerly used to signify anything delivered; see the Northumberland Household Book, p. 60. If it ever bore such an acceptation at that time, one might be induced to suppose, from the following entries, that it here meant a badge, or something of that kind:

15 C. of leveres for Robin Hode	0 5 0
For leveres, paper and sateyn	0 0 20
For pynnes and leveres	0 6 5
For 13 C. of leveryys	0 4 4
For 24 great lyvereys	0 0 4

36.

We are told that formerly, in the celebration of May-games, the youth divided themselves into two troops, the one in winter livery, the other in the habit of the spring. See Brand’s *Popular Antiquities*, p. 261.” This quotation is misapplied. Liveries, in the present instance, are pieces of paper or sateyn with some device thereon, which were

distributed for money among the spectators. So in a passage which will be shortly quoted from Jack Drum's Entertainment: "Well said, my boyes, I must have my lord's livory; what is't? a May-pole?" See also Stubbs's Anatomie of Abuses, 1583, sig. M. 2 b, and Skelton's Don Quixote, part ii. chap. 22.

[86] "Though it varies considerably from that word, this may be a corruption of orpiment, which was much in use for colouring the morris garments." How orseden can be a corruption of orpiment is not very easy to conceive: it may as well be supposed to mean worsted or buckram. Mr. Steevens thinks that this *orseden* is the *Arse-dine* of old Joan Trash, in Jonson's Bartholomew Fair, and means *flame-coloured paint*, used to *hobby-horses*. The four giants for the revived Midsummer shew at Chester, in 1668, were "to be culled *tinsille arsedine*" (MSS. Har. 2150, fo. 373, b.)

[87] "The friar's coat was generally of russet, as it appears by the following extracts . . . ." The coat of this mock frier would, doubtless, be made of the same stuff as that of a real one.

[88] "Marian was the assumed name of the beloved mistress of Robert, Earl of Huntingdon, whilst he was in a state of outlawry, as Robin Hood was his. See Mr. Steevens's note to a passage in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*. This character in the morris-dances was generally represented by a boy. See Strutt's View of Customs and Manners, vol. iii. p. 150. It appears by one of the extracts, given above, that at Kingston it was performed by a woman, who was paid a shilling each year for her trouble."

[89] "Mr. Steevens suggests, *with great probability*, that this word may have the same meaning as howve or houve, used by Chaucer for a head-dress; Maid Marian's head-dress was always very fine: indeed some persons have derived her name from the Italian word *morione*, a head-dress." Mr. Steevens was never less happy than he is in this very probable conjecture. The word howve or houve, in Chaucer, is a mere variation of hood: and Maid Marian's head-dress must, to be sure, have been "very fine" when made of four yards of broad cloth! A huke is a woman's gown or habit. (Huke, palla, toga, palium Belgicis feminis usitatum.—*Skin*.) Skelton mentions it in his Elinour Ruming:

"Her *huke* of Lyncole grene."

"All women in general," says Moryson, speaking of the Netherlands, "when they goe out of the house, put on a *hoyke* or vaile, which covers their heads, and hangs downe vpon their backs to their legges," &c. (Itinerary, 1617, part 3, p. 169).

Sir John Cullum seems to have mistaken Rose Sparkes' "best hook" for a "hook worn at the bottom of the stays, to regulate the sitting of the apron" (History of Hawsted, p. 25). *Morione*, in Italian, signifies a murrion or scull-cap; and though the derivation alluded to appears to have the sanction of Blount's Glosographia, nothing can be more completely absurd. *Marian* is *Mary*.

"And *Marian*'s nose looks rede and raw."

[90] "It appears that this, as well as other games, was made a parish concern."

[91] "Probably gilt leather, the pliability of which was particularly accommodated to the motion of the dancers."

[92] "A sort of coarse linen."

[93] "Probably a Moor's coat; the word *Morion* is sometimes used to express a Moor.—The morris dance is by some supposed to have been originally derived from Moorish-dance. Black buckram appears to have been much used for the dresses of the ancient mummers. One of the figures in Mr. Tollet's window is supposed to be a *morisco*."

[94] “Disard is an old word for a fool.”

[95] In Ben Jonson’s *Masque of the Metamorphosed Gipsies*, presented to King James in 1621 (the very date, by the way, which appears on Mr. Tollet’s window), we have the following dialogue between *Cockret* and *Clod*:

“*Coc*. Oh the lord! what be these? . . .

*Clo*. They should be morris-dancers by their gingle, but they have no napkins.

*Coc*. No, nor a hobby-horse.

*Clo*. Oh, he’s often forgotten, that’s no rule; but there is no *maid Marian* nor *friar* amongst them, which is the surer mark.

*Coc*. Nor a *fool* that I see.”—(*Tollet’s Memoir*.)

[96] Neither is any notice taken of them, where the characters of the morris-dance are mentioned, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, by Shakespeare and Fletcher.

[97] This was a usual cry on occasions of mirth and jollity. Thus, in the celebration of St. Stephen’s day in the Inner-Temple hall, as we find it described in Dugdale’s *Origines Juridicales*: “Supper ended, the constable-marshall ‘presenteth’ himself with drums afore him, mounted upon a scaffold, born by four men; and goeth three times round about the harthe, crying out aloud, A lord, a lord, &c. Then he descendeth and goeth to dance,” &c. (p. 156).

[98]

— — — “’Tis meet we all go forth,  
To view the sick and feeble parts of France:  
And let us do it with no show of fear;  
No, with no more, that if we heard that England  
Were busied with a *Whitsun morris-dance*.”

Shak. *K. Hen. V.*, act ii. scene 4.

[99] Perhaps also, Robin Hood and his party had never appeared in company with the morris-dancers but at one particular period, in the beginning of May, whereas we find that *Whitsuntide* was no less devoted to the latter.

[100] It must be confessed that no other direct authority has been met with for constituting *Robin Hood* and *Little John* integral characters of the morris-dance. That *Maid Marian*, however, and the *Frier*, were almost constantly such, is proved beyond the possibility of a doubt; and why or how they should become so, without Robin Hood, at least, is unaccountable.

[101] This county would seem to have been famous for their exertions a couple of centuries ago. Will Kemp the player was a celebrated morris-dancer; and in the Bodleian Library is the following scarce and curious tract by him: “Kemp’s nine daies wonder performed in a daunce from London to Norwich. Containing the pleasure, paines and kind entertainment of William Kemp between London and that city in his late morrice. Wherein is somewhat set downe worth note; to reprove the slaunders spred of him, many things merry, nothing hurtfull. Written by himself to satisfie his friends. London, printed by E. A. for Nicholas Ling, 1600” 4to, b. 1. On the title-page is a woodcut figure of Kemp as a morrice-dancer, preceded by a fellow with a pipe and drum, whom he, in the book, calls Thomas Slye his taberer.—See, in Richard Brathwayte’s *Remains after Death*, 1618, some lines “upon Kempe and his morrice, with his epitaph.”



[102] “On Monday [July 30] the morris-dancers of Pendleton paid their annual visit in Salford. They were adorned with all the variety of colours that a profusion of ribbons could give them, and had a very showy garland.”—*Star*, Aug. 9, 1792.

[103] “Council Register, v. 1, p. 30.”

[104] “Mary, parliament 6, c. 61, A.D. 1555.” “Anentis Robert Hude, and abbot of Unreason. Item, It is statute and ordained, that in all times cumming, na maner of person be chosen Robert Hude, nor Little John, abbot of unreason, queenis of Maij, nor utherwise, nouthur in burgh, nor to landwart, in onie time to cum: and gif ony provest, baillies, counsell, and communitie, chuse sik ane personage as Robert Hude, Little John, abbotis of unreason, or queenis of Maij, within burgh, the chusers of sik sall tine their freedome for the space of five zeires; and utherwise salbe punished at the queenis grace will; and the acceptar of sik like office sall be banished foorth of the realme; and gif ony sik persones . . . . beis chosen out-with burgh, and uthers landward townes, the chusers sall pay to our souveraine ladie ten poundes, and their persones [be] put in waird there to remaine during the queenis grace pleasure.” Abbot of unreason is the character better known in England by the title of abbot or lord of misrule, “who,” says Percy, “in the houses of our nobility presided over the Christmas gambols, and promoted mirth and jollity at that festive season” (Northumberland Household Book, notes, p. 441).

[105] “Council Register, v. 4, p. 4, 30.”

[106] “Knox’s History, p. 270.”

[107] “Book of Universal Kirk, p. 414.” See also Keith’s History of Scotland, p. 216.

[108] History of Whitby, York, 1779, p. 146. “It was always believed,” adds the worthy pedagogue, “that these butts had been erected by him for that very purpose, till the year 1771, when this popular notion was discovered to be a mistake; they being no more than the barrows or tumuli thrown up by our pagan predecessors on interring their leaders or the other persons of distinction amongst them. However, notwithstanding this discovery, there is no doubt but Robin Hood made use of those houes or butts when he was disposed to exercise his men, and wanted to train them up in hitting a mark.” Be that as it may, there are a few hillocks of a similar nature not far from Guisbrough, which likewise bear the name of Robin Hood’s butts; and others, it is imagined, may be met with in other parts.

[109] Epigram on Robin Hood’s well, “a fine spring on the road, ornamented by Sir John Vanbrugh;” by Roger Gale, Esq. (Bib. Topo. Britan. No. II. part iii. p. 427).

“Nympha fui quondam latronibus hospita sylvæ  
Heu nimium sociis nota, Robine, tuis.  
Me pudet innocuos latices fudisse scelestis,  
Jamque viatori pocula tuta fero,  
En pietatis honos! Comes hanc mihi Carliolensis  
Ædem sacravit quâ bibis, hospes, aquas.”

The same author (Gent), in his “long and pathetick prologue,” setting forth “the contingencies, vicissitudes or changes of this transitory life,” “spoken, for the most part, on Wednesday and Friday the 18th and 20th of February 1761, at the deep tragedy of beautiful, eloquent, tender-hearted, but unfortunate Jane Shore, . . . . uttered and performed at his benefit” . . . (being then ætatis 70, and far declined into the vale of sorrow,\*) has very artfully contrived to introduce our hero and his famous well.

“The concave hall, ’mongst sources never view’d,  
Nor heard the goddesses, in merry mood,

At their choice viands sing bold Robin Hood:†  
Whose tomb at Kirkley's nunnery display'd,  
A false, hard-hearted, irreligious maid,  
Who bled, and to cold death that earl betray'd.  
But fame still lasts, while country folks display  
His limpid fountain, and loud-surgin' bay."

[\*] He died in 1778, aged 87.

[†]

"Omnes agnovere deam; lætique receptant  
Alcæum musæ comitem, ponuntur Iâcchi  
Crateres; flaventque scyphis Cerealina vina:  
Accedunt vultus hilares; festique lepores,  
Et jocus, et risus: dulci testudine Naias  
Pulchra modos variat; furtisque insignis et arcu  
Hodi latronis, fluvios bene nota per istos,  
Ludicra gesta canit: resonant laquearia plausu."

[110]

"Viventes venæ, spine, catinusque catenæ,  
Sunt Robin Hoodi nota trophæa sui."

[111]

"A well, thorne, dish, hung in an iron chaine,  
For monuments of Robin Hood remaine."

[112] Voyage from England to India, 1773, p. 8. In a subsequent page this great man is employed in a commerce of a more delicate, indeed, but, according to European notions, less honourable nature, which he manages with consummate address.

[113] They likewise seem alluded to in the Vision, fo. 1, b:

"And ryse wyth ribaudy as Rebertes knaves."

[114] "On a loose paper, in Mr. Ashmole's handwriting, in the museum at Oxford, is the following little anecdote:—

"The famous Little John (Robin Hood's companion) lyes buried in Fethersedge churchyard, in the peak of Derbyshire, one stone at his head, another at his feet, and part of his bow hangs up in the chancell. Anno 1652." H. E[llis]. European Magazine, October 1794, p. 295.

[115] This seems the established size of an ancient hero. The grave of Gawin, King Arthur's nephew, discovered in the time of William the Conqueror, was, according to Malmesbury, "*quatuor decim pedes longum*" (De gestis regum, l. 3). Bois, from the above circumstance, conceives our "Litol Jhon" to have been so called "*per ironiam*." See his original work, fo. ix.

[116] Historie of Scotland, translatis be Maister Johne Bellenden, Edin. 1541, fo. The luxury of his countrymen will appear a strange complaint in the mouth of a Scottishman of the 16th century, to such as believe, with the late Dr. Johnson, that they learned to plant kail from Cromwell's soldiers, and that "when they had not kail they probably had nothing" (Journey to the Western Islands, p. 55).

[117] Description of Ireland, in Holinshed's Chronicle, 1587.

[118] Historical Essay, &c., p. 129. This allegation demands what the lawyers call a *profert in curiam*. It is, however, certain that there have been persons who usurped the name of Little John. In the year 1502, “about mydsomer, was taken a felow whyche had renued many of Robyn Hodes pagentes, which named himselfe Grenelef” (Fabyan’s Chronicle, 1559). Therefore, beware of counterfeits!

### FOOTNOTES TO “PART THE FIRST”, pp. 1–148↩

[119] The irregularity or defect of the versification, in this and similar passages, is probably owing to the loss of a line.

[120] This seems to have been, and, in many parts, is still, the name generally used by the vulgar for Erming Street. The course of the real Watling Street was from Dover to Chester.

The Sayles appears to be some place in the neighbourhood of Barnsdale, but no mention of it has elsewhere occurred: though, it is believed, there is a field so called not far from Doncaster.

[121] All his. PCC.

[122] So R. [Rastall.] all thre. W. C. [de Worde and Copland.]

[123] This. R. that. W. C.

[124] Ere. R.

[125] To pay. R. pay. W. C.

[126] Robyn. R. Robyn Hoode. W. C.

[127] Two yere. R.

[128] Knowe. OCC.

[129] It may amende. OCC.

[130] Lancasesshyre. R.

[131] Not. W. C.

[132] By. W. C.

[133] So R. knowe me. W. C.

[134] The fragment of Rastall’s edition ends here.

[135] Also. PCC.

[136] Wyme. PCC.

[137] *i.e.* by so many score to the hundred, or three hundred for one. It is certainly a very hyperbolic expression: but he measures the cloth in the same way.

[138] Helpe. W. wrappe. C.

[139] Leue. W. lende. C.

[140] The prior, in an abbey, was the officer immediately under the abbot; in priories and conventual cathedrals he was the superior.

[141] This was a “S. Richard, king and confessour, somme to Lotharius king of Kent, who, for the love of Christ, taking upon him a long peregrination, went to Rome for devotion to that sea, and in his way homward, died at Luca, about the year of Christ, seaven hundred and fifty, where his body is kept untill this day with great veneration, in the oratory and chappell of S. Frigidian, and adorned with an epitaph both in verse and prose” (English Martyrologe, 1608).

There were other saints of the same name, as Richard de la Wich, bishop of Chichester, canonised in 1262; and Richard, bishop of St. Andrews in Calabria. See Drayton’s Polyolbion, song 24.

[142] Leue. W. Sende us. C.

[143] Loke. W. C.

[144] Grete. W. get. C.

[145] Thou. PCC.

[146] Uterysdale. O. CC. Wierysdale is the name of a forest in Lancashire: though it appears, in a subsequent part of this poem, that the knight’s castle was in Nottinghamshire.

[147] Sute. C.

[148] I up pyght. W. up ypyght. C.

[149] Fere. W. in fere. C.

[150] Shote. W.

[151] He sleste (sliced?) W.

[152] Thou wast. C. wast thou. Wh.

[153] Ge. W. f. God.

[154] *i.e.* while a man might have walked two miles and upward.

[155] Hyed, C.

[156] Whyle. W.

[157] Syght. W. sightes. C.

[158] Wo the worth. W.

[159] Such. W.

[160] He. Old copies.

[161] You. W. Make you yonder preste. C.

[162] Set. ‘shet’?

[163] Yemen. C.

[164] Lytell Johan, O. CC.

[165] Them. O. CC.

[166] To. W.

[167] Nade. W. not in C.

[168] Eyght pounde. W.

[169] To. W.

[170] Corser. W. courser. C.

[171] Gayne. W.

[172]

But take not a grefe, sayd the knyght,  
That I have be so longe. O. CC.

[173] I twyse. W.

[174] Thi trusty. C.

[175] This care. W.

[176] Syt. W.

[177]

And that shoteth al ther best. W.  
And they that shote al of the best. C.

[178] Al theyre. W. al of the. C.

[179] They slist. W. he cleft. C.

[180] Belyve. C.

[181] That I after eate no bread. C.

[182] Thou. W.

[183] The bydde. OCC.

[184] Honde and fote. W. foote and hande. C.

[185] That he had Robyn Hode. W.

[186] God the good Robyn. W.

[187] Lady. W.

[188] Late.

[189] Shamly I slayne be. W.

[190] For soth as I the say. W.

[191] Your. W. You may them over take. C.

[192] Shall he never in grene wode be Nor longer dwell with me. W.

[193] It. W.

[194] At. W. That. C.—good] boote. Wh.

[195] Hoode. W. bande. C.

[196] And yf. W.

[197] Your. OCC.

[198] Under the grene wode tre. W.

[199] This saint is also mentioned by Chaucer in the Sompnour's tale; by Spenser, in his 5th eclogue; in the Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington, 1601; and in one of Ophelia's songs in Hamlet. (See a note upon this last passage in the edition of 1793, vol. xv. p. 163.) Mr. Steevens's assertion that "Saint Charity is a known saint among the Roman Catholics," may be supported by infallible authority. "We read," says Dr. Douglas, "in the Martyrology on the first of August—Romæ passio sanctarum virginum, Fidei, Spei, et Charitatis, quæ sub Hadriano principe martyris coronam adeptæ sunt" (Criterion, p. 68). Pierre Nadal, commonly called Petrus de Natalibus, in his Catalogus Sanctorum, has given the history of the saints Faith, Hope, and Charity, the daughters of St. Sophia (or Wisdom). Nothing can be too absurd for superstition.

[200] I vouche it halfe on the. W.

[201] Seale. C.

[202] And browne. W.

[203] A wys, W. For that shall be his fyne. C.

[204] Good whyte. W. lilly white. C.

[205] And therto sent I me. W.

[206] Good. OCC.

[207] Another had full sone. W.

[208] Lefte never one. W.

[209] Lughe. W.

[210] Ferre. W.

[211] Commended for. C.

[212] Donkesley. W.

[213] The. OCC.

[214] Ye.

[215] Lefe.

[216] Syde.

[217] Syde.

[218] Hys.

[219] Leffe.

[220] A bad hem stond stell.

[221] The potter.

[222] Leppyd.

[223] Fellow he.

[224] A.

[225] Seyde hels.

[226] Went yemen.

[227] Thes.

[228] Lytl.

[229] Yemerey.

[230] Grat.

[231] Yede.

[232] This stanza is misplaced in the MS., coming after the first verse at top of page.

[233] Say.

[234] Seyde sche s' than.

[235] The.

[236] He.

[237] Loseth.

[238] To.

[239] These two lines are transposed in the MS.

[240] Pottys the.

[241] Bolt yt.

[242] Senyst.

[243] Goe.

[244] That Robyng gaffe me.

[245] Mey they.

[246] Se.

[247] He.

[248] Her.

[249] For.

[250] How haffe.

[251] I leyty.

[252] He had west.

[253] That ye be.

[254] y.

[255] The MS. repeats this line after the following: Het ambellet be mey sey.

[256] Bowhes.

[257] Be ther.

[258] Wher'e.

[259] Cloed. We might read: And clos'd were [baith] his een.

[260] The preceding lines of this stanza are wanting in the original.

[261] Gave, begack.

[262] Yeen.

[263] Spok.

[264] Half.

[265] Bound.

[266] Bag.

[267] Cloath.

[268] Thou.

[269] Speed.

[270] Cloaths.

[271] "It should perhaps be swards, *i.e.* the surface of the ground, viz. 'when the fields are in their beauty.'"—PERCY. Rather shrobbes (shrubs). The plural of sward was never used by any writer whatever. For shaws the MS. has shales.

[272] Dr. Percy, by the marks he has bestowed on this line, seems to consider it as the yeoman's reply; but it seems rather a repetition of Robin's complimentary address.

[273] This in the three former editions of the "Reliques" is improperly altered to 'but.'

[274] So, according to Percy, reads his MS. He has altered it to 'backward.'

[275] The title of SIR, Dr. Percy says, was not formerly peculiar to knights; it was given to priests, and sometimes to very inferior personages. If the text did not seem to be in favour of the latter part of this assertion, one might reasonably question its truth. Another instance, at least, it is believed, admitting this to be one, which is by no means certain, cannot be produced.

[276] Sic PC. quere the MS.

[277] An absurd mistake, scarcely worth notice in this place, and which the reader will have it in his own power to correct.

[278] Our.

[279] There is no authority for imputing this execrable practice to our hero or his companions, in any one single instance. If, however, the *lex talionis* were at all justifiable, they certainly had sufficient provocation to exercise it—not, indeed, upon the



clergy, in particular, but upon the king, his ministers, judges, and nobles. "The ancient punishment for killing the king's deer," says Dr. Percy, "was loss of eyes and castration: a punishment far worse than death!"

[280] *i.e.* than he could otherwise have been.

## FOOTNOTES TO "PART THE SECOND", pp. 148–339 ↩

[281] Clowdel le. For an account of these worthies the reader may consult their old metrical legend in Percy's "Reliques," vol. i., or "Ancient Popular Poetry," 1791.

[282] A beseem'd.

[283] Has.

[284] A.

[285] Lease.

[286] Choose.

[287] For an account of Tutbury bull-running, and the character of king of the minstrels there, see Dr. Plott's "Natural History of Staffordshire," chap. x. § 69; Sir J. Hawkins's "History of Music," vol. ii. p. 64; and Blount's "Ancient Tenures," by Beckwith, p. 303, 8vo edit.

[288] See this old and popular ballad in the Appendix.

[289] Robin Hood.

[290] Robin Hood.

[291] The editor thinks it his duty to retain, in some instances, even the manifest corruptions of the old copies; in hopes that earlier and better authorities may one day enable him to remove them.

[292] In the bowers.

[293] Did him.

[294] Made then.

[295] Nicke.

[296] Soon from.

[297] Chiefest.

[298] Full froe.

[299] This (from an old black letter copy in Major Pearson's collection) is evidently the genuine second part of the present ballad, although constantly printed as an independent article, under the title of "Robin Hood, Will Scadlock, and Little John: Or, a narrative of their victories obtained against the prince of Aragon and the two giants; and how Will Scadlock married the princess. Tune of Robin Hood; or, Hey down, down, a down:" Instead of which, in all former editions, are given the following incoherent stanzas, which have all the appearance of being the fragment of a quite different ballad:—

Then bold Robin Hood to the north he would go,  
With valour and mickle might,

With sword by his side, which oft had been tri'd,  
 To fight and recover his right.  
 The first that he met was a bonny bold Scot,  
 His servant he said he would be.  
 No, quoth Robin Hood, it cannot be good,  
 For thou wilt prove false unto me;  
 Thou hast not been true to sire nor cuz.  
 Nay, marry, the Scot he said,  
 As true as your heart, Ile never part,  
 Gude master, be not afraid.  
 Then Robin turned his face to the east,  
 Fight on, my merry men stout:  
 Our cause is good, quod brave Robin Hood,  
 And we shall not be beaten out.  
 The battel grows hot on every side,  
 The Scotchman made great moan;  
 Quoth Jockey, Gude faith, they fight on each side,  
 Would I were with my wife Joan!  
 The enemy compast brave Robin about,  
 'Tis long ere the battel ends;  
 Ther's neither will yield, nor give up the field,  
 For both are supplied with friends.  
 This song it was made in Robin Hoods dayes:  
 Let's pray unto Jove above,  
 To give us true peace, that mischief may cease,  
 And war may give place unto love.

[300] Of a.

[301] Forth.

[302] Acaron. This termagant prince seems intended for a sort of Mahometan Pagan. Alcaron is a deity formed by metathesis from Alcoran, a book: a conversion much more ancient than the present ballad. Thus in the old metrical romance of "The Sowdon of Babyloyne," a MS. in the possession of Dr. Farmer:

"Whan Laban herde of this myschief,  
 A sory man was he,  
 He trumped his men to relefe,  
 For to cease that tyme mente he.  
 Mersadage kinge of Barbarye  
 He did carye to his tente,  
 And beryed him by right of Sarsenye,  
 With brennynge fire riche oynemente;  
 And songe the *dirige* of ALKARON,  
*That bibill is of here laye;*  
 And wayled his deth everychon,  
 Seven nyghtis and seven dayes."

Here Alkaron is expressly the name of a BOOK (*i.e.* the Koran or Alcoran); in the following passage it is that of a GOD:

"Now shall ye here of Laban:  
 Whan tidynges to him were comen,  
 Tho was he a fulle sory man,  
 Whan he herde howe his vitaile were nomen,

And howe his men were slayne,  
And Gye was go safe hem froo;  
He defyed *Mahounde*, and *Apolyne*,  
*Jubiter*, *Astarol*, and ALCARON also.”

Wynken de Worde printed “A lytell treatyse of the Turkes law called Alcaron, &c.”  
See Herbert, 224.

If, however, Acaron be the true reading, we shall find an idol of that name in the Bible, 2 Regum i. 16, ed. Vulgate.

It was, at the same time, a proper name in the East: as “Accaron princeps insulæ Cypri” is mentioned by Roger de Hoveden, 786.

[303] We should probably read frantick baboon!

[304] Ground near Moorfields, London, famous in old times for the archery practised there. “In the year 1498,” says Stow, “all the gardens which had continued time out of minde, without Mooregate, to wit, about and beyond the lordship of Fensberry, were destroyed. And of them was made a plaine field for archers to shoote in.” *Survay of London*, 1598, p. 351. See also p. 77, where it is observed that “about the feast of S. Bartlemew . . . the officers of the city . . . were challengers of all men in the suburbes, . . . before the ‘lord’ maior, aldermen, and sheriffes, in FENSBERY FIELDE, to shoote the standarde, broade arrow, and flight, for games.” There is a tract intitled, “Ayme for Finsburie archers, or an alphabetical table of the names of every marke within the same fields, with the true distances, both by the map, and dimensuration with the line. Published for the ease of the skilfull, and behoofe of the younge beginners in the famous exercise of archerie, by J. J. and E. B. To be sold at the signe of the Swan in Grub-street, by F. Sergeant, 1594.” 16mo. Republished by R. F. 1604; and again by James Partridge, 1628, 12mo.

These famous archers are mentioned by Ben Jonson (*Every Man in his Humour*, act i. scene 1): “Because I dwell at Hogsden I shall keep company with none but the archers of Finsbury.”

The practice of shooting here is alluded to by Cotton in his *Virgile Travestie* (b. iv.), 1667:

“And arrows loos’d from Grub-street bow,  
In FINSBURY, to him are slow;”

and continued till within the memory of persons now living.

[305] The situation of this chase cannot be ascertained. There is an ancient family seat in Westmoreland called Dalham-tower.

[306] Either the bishop was a very bad reckoner, or there is some mistake in the copy: three hundred nobles are exactly a hundred pounds. The common editions read ninety-nine angels, which would be no more than £49, 10s. No such coin or denomination, however, as either angel or noble existed in Robin Hood’s time.

[307] I see.

[308] Then did.

[309] He . . . was.

[310] Robin Hood.

[311] To.

[312] Robin Hood.

[313] See before, p. 235.

[314] Doubtless.

[315] When I came here.

[316] Doth . . . arrow gain.

[317] Robin Hood.

[318] Robin Hood.

[319] He had.

[320] Robin Hood.

[321] That could not.

[322] Is.

[323] Down a.

[324]

Oh save, oh save, oh sheriff he said,  
Oh save and you may see.

[325] Me.

[326] Wandring.

[327] Till I blood letted be.

[328] You blood shall letted be.

[329] Get down.

[330] Burnt. This stanza is omitted in one edition.

[331]

With verdant sods most neatly put,  
Sweet as the green wood tree.

[332] This line is manifestly impertinent and corrupt. We might read:

With a stone upon the sod.

### FOOTNOTES TO “APPENDIX”, pp. 341–385↩

[333] Maister. C.

[334] Ell. C.

[335] You. you. C.

[336] Donee. C.

[337] Starte. C.

[338] A trul of trust was a common phrase. So in the ancient morality of the iiii elements (Sig. E iij 6):

“For to satisfye your wanton lust  
I shall apoynt you a trull of trust,  
Not a feyrer in this towne.”

Again, in Warner’s Albion’s England, 1602:

“How cheere you Pan, quoth Pryapus, the shameles god of lust,  
Thus can i fit such friends as you with such a trull of trust.”

[339] Shefes. C.

[340] Ballockes. C.

[341] How a pottor comes to be decked with so elegant and honourable a chaplet, does not seem easy to account for; unless for the reason given by Chaucer, that

—“soche araie costnith but lite.”

The poet Gower, as represented on his monument in the church of St. Mary-Overy, hath, according to Stow, “on his head a chaplet, like a coronet of foure roses;” and it may be remembered that Copland, the printer of this identical May-game, dwelled “at the signe of the rose garlande.” We see, likewise, that “a rose garlonde” was set up (to be shot through, it is presumed) in the “Lytell Geste of Robyn Hode,” fyttre 7, v. 177. Though the fashion of wearing such an ornament was formerly common in France (for which see Chaucer’s “Romaunt of the Rose,” a close translation from the French), and at a still later period in Germany, see “The Hystorye of Reynarde the Foxe,” a translation from the language of that country, and Moryson’s Itinerary, 1617 (part 1, p. 25, and part 3, p. 167), no further instance has been met with of its prevalence in this country.

[342] Maryet. C.

[343] The. C.

[344] Not omitted in W.

[345] To do. C. to or so omitted in W.

[346] Wedded. C. wed. W.

[347] Your. C.

[348] And.

[349] You shall.

[350] When.

[351] Come tell.

[352] Th’ now. MS.

[353] Wone. MS.

[354] I pray *to*. MS.

[355] So. MS.

[356] Because of Robyn Hode. MS.

[357] The. MS.

[358] That gode was *with ale*. MS.

