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Early English Dramatists

SIX
ANONYMOUS PLAYS

(SECOND SERIES)

COMPRISING

*Jacob and Esau—Youth—Albion, Knight—Misogonus
—Godly Queen Hester—Tom Tyler and his Wife—
Note-Book and Word-List*

EDITED BY

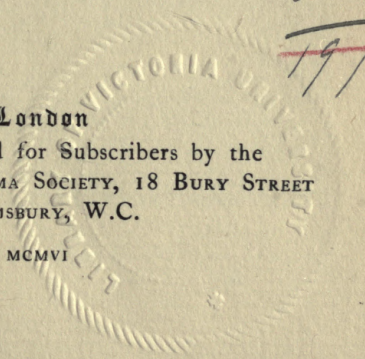
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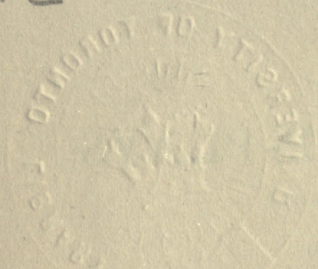
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FEB 17 1950



A newe enterlude

Drawen oute of the holy scripture
of godly queene Hester, beye necessary
newly made and imprinted this pre-
sent yere. M. D. X. I.

Com nere vertuous maatrons & wombe kind
Here may ye learne of Hesters wyse
In all comlines of vertue you shal finde
How to behaue your selues in humillite.

The names of the players.

The prologue	Wybe.
King Aluice	Amulation.
All gentlemen	Ambition.
Humar.	Parry Daryp.
Widowhers	A Jewe.
Hester.	Arbans.
Conclucion.	Seriba.

First Edition.

[Reduced Facsimile of Title-page of "Godly Queen Hester," from Copy now in the Library of the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth.]

The ententide of Queene Hester.

A while in the world they lyfe may they leade,
yea they welth and worshippe dayly reuewe,
But at the length I all woe you in dede,
They fauell and falsched wyl come abiede,
whiche Hall be to them more bytter than gall,
The hygher they clyme the deper they fall,
Alsewerus.

Let vs then este thys consideratione,
And this tyme dytolue this congregation.
Hester.

That lyke as here they haue tyred deuoutly,
So god graunt them in heauen to lyue eternally,
Alsewerus.

To the which we committe all this company.

FINIS

Imprinted at London by Wyllyam Picherpage
and Thomas Hacker, and are to be solde at
theyr shopes.



[Reduced Facsimile of the last page of "Godly Queen Hester," from Copy in the Library of the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth.]

A NEW INTERLUDE

DRAWN OUT OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE, OF GODLY
QUEEN HESTER, VERY NECESSARY, NEWLY MADE AND
IMPRINTED THIS PRESENT YEAR
MDLXI

*Come near virtuous matrons and womenkind,
Here may you learn of Hester's duty;
In all comeliness of virtue you shall find
How to behave yourselves in humility.*

The Names of the Players:

THE PROLOGUE	PRIDE
KING ASSUERUS	ADULATION
THREE GENTLEMEN	AMBITION
AMAN	HARDY DARDY
MARDOCHEUS	A JEW
HESTER	ARBONA
PURSUIVANT	SCRIBA

Imprinted at London by William Pickerynge and
Thomas Hacket, and are to be sold at their shops.
W. P.



THE INTERLUDE OF THE VIRTUOUS AND GODLY QUEEN HESTER

THE PROLOGUE.

Divers philosophers, ancient and sage,
Their clargy and cunning to put in practice,
Oft have disputed, by learning and language,
To whom greatest honour men ought to de-
mise; [arise;
Or, for what cause, high reverence should
And amongst many, some were there doubtless,
That concluded honour due unto riches.
Some also to noble blood and high parage,
Affirmed honour duly to pertain;
And some to policy and wisdom sage;
And some to power and superial reign—
Each man his reason said in certain.
Over this some said, that virtuous demeanour
To be excellent, and of most honour.

*The king sitting in a chair speaketh to
his counsel.*

King. Of these my lords we would be glad
to hear,
Which is most worthy honour to attain;
By your high reasons we think it may appear;
To speak, therefore, we pray you, your sen-
tences plain;
And, as ye determine, so shall we certain

Advance to honour, and to promotion apply
Always the best, and that be most worthy.

The first gentleman [enters.]

Primus generosus. Most dread sovereign,
King Assuerus, to your doughty weighty
and sured :

Of riches, power, wisdom, virtue, or noble
blood— [honour?

Which is most sovereign, and of highest
Meseems as virtue none can be so good,
Not riches nor power, wisdom nor gentle blood.
For where virtue faileth, the other be not sure,
But full unstable, and long cannot endure.

Whoso will labour stories to peruse,
And them with diligence often will read,
May see and perceive how vice did confuse
Many noble princes, which were, indeed,
Of such magnificence, that we not need
To doubt of their riches, power and wisdom;
And yet, for lack of virtue, vice them overcame.

Secundus Generosus. Nabuchodonozor,
Senacherib, and Salmanasar,
Nero, Dyoclisian, Maxentius also,
All these princes of high honour were,
Of riches, power, and wisdom; also
Of noble blood; yet these and many mo,
For lack of virtue, to vice did fall,
To their own destruction and their subjects all.

Tertius Generosus. But then, as me-
seemeth, it were expedient,
Among all virtues appertaining to a prince,
That same to know by some reason urgent;
Which is so necessary to the province,
That without it in no wise he can convince,
Neither sin nor sinners that unjustly deal,
Nor in good order keep his commonweal.

Primus Generosus. In mine opinion, that is
Justice—

A virtue as excellent as may be.

For all things it ordereth in such wise,
That where it is, is peace and tranquillity,
Good order, high honour, wealth and plenty;
And, where it faileth in the prince or king,
The commonweal decayeth without tarrying.

Secundus Generosus. Beside Justice there
must be diligence,

In his own person that same to put in ure;
Or else some time, such coloured sentence
Under cloak of Justice, ye may be sure [cure;
Craftily shall proceed from them that have the
Which, in process, may bring to downfall
The king, his realm, and his subjects all.

The judgment of Solomon, in his own person,
Between two women of living unchaste,
So feared Israel that utterly none
Durst once rebel, but they thought it waste
In any wise to attempt, either first or last,
Anything of displeasure to his majesty royal,
Fearing his wisdom and Justice so equal.

Tertius Generosus. If by his lieutenant had
been done the same,
His honour should never have sprung so far,
Nor so much renowned by noble fame,
As it is now, and that both here and there.
Nor yet his subjects to such awe and fear,
He could have driven, by no means at all,
As he did by his justice personal.

And over this many a noble man,
At the prince's will and commandment,
To employ justice, did the best they can.
And yet the commons unneth could be con-
tent—

And why? for in their mind they think verament

That, either for riches and honour, Justice will do; [to.

And he only, for the zeal that to Justice he hath Wherefore, noble prince, if in your own person will ye

Employ Justice, the more your honour shall be.

King. My lords, we thank you for your counsel;

As ye have said, so think we, verily,
That Justice maintaineth the commonweal;
And namely the prince must needs himself apply

Unto the same, or else utterly
Shall follow decay, by war or else death,
Quoqz, si princeps malus populus coruet.

And over this, if that his lieutenant
Shall happen to square from truth and justice,
Albeit his fair words and good semblant,
The prince must needs be circumspect and wise,
That no ambition nor covetise,
Through great wealth and riches inordinate
Do erect his courage, for to play checkmate;
For though it be as well as it may need,
It shall be thought nay, I assure you indeed—
Sir, what is your name and progeny?

[One of the gentlemen must answer, which you will.]

Aman. I am Aman, son of Amadathy,
Of the stock of Agag, born lineally.

Assuerus. Your learning and reason pleaseth us well;

And ye seem to be of discretion.
We bear ye, therefore, our favour and zeal,
So that, without means of intercession,

We make you our chancellor—take heed to this lesson :

See ye do justice and truth ever approve,
Or, to your destruction we shall you soon
remove. [was,

Aman. My duty is more now than ever it
Truly to serve your most noble grace,
Both night and day, here and in every place.
(*Et exeat.*)

Assuerus. My lords! as now, thus stands
the case :

We are comfortless for lack of a Queen,
Which should be our joy, and chief solace;
And, to say truth, it hath not been oft seen
But the prince with a princess matched hath
been, [defend!
Lest default of issue should be, which God
Therefore, your counsels first had, to marry we
do intend.

Primus generosus. Then let your officers
peruse this realm,
And of fair maidens, that be virgins pure,
Of most goodly personages that may be seen,
Gather a great number, that we may make
report
Unto your grace; then may ye be sure
To choose the best, when ye have them seen,
And that is fittest to be your queen.

Assuerus. Call to us *Aman*, our trusty
chancellor!

*Here entereth Aman with many men
awaiting on him.*

Aman. If it please your grace, I am here.

Assuerus. *Aman*, this is the counsel of my
lords all,
That our officers in haste we should send

Among other are appointed for one,
 I think it according, therefore, now
 To give you mine advice and instruction.
 Attend ye, therefore, without interruption,
 And by faithful mind and steadfast memory,
 That I shall say, learn it diligently. [kind,
Hester. Noble Mardocheus, my father most
 To that ye shall say I will apply my mind.

Mardocheus. Then, if the king choose you
 to his queen,
 It is of his goodness, bounty, and grace;
 And for none your merits, the truth to be seen.
 Therefore, to him repay must you needs
 obedience,
 True love, and kindness, above persons all,
 Not forged nor feigned, but with affection
 cordial.

Break not the course that queens have had,
 In this noble region most part of all. [bad;
 They have aye been good, and none of them
 To their prince ever sure, just and substantial;
 And good to the commons, when they did call
 By meekness for mercy, to temper the fire
 Of rigor[ou]s justice in fume or in ire. [pure,
Hester. This counsel is perfect, and also so
 I grant it, therefore; and promise you sure
 It is my whole mind and hearty desire
 That same to fulfil, as reason shall require.

*Here entereth Pursuivant with many
 maidens.*

Pursuant. I have here of maidens a fair
 company,
 Of comely stature and goodly visage,
 Which, to the king, I think by and by,
 For to present, and to his counsel sage,
 For their promotion, wealth, and marriage.

Save before, with Mardocheus the Jew,
I must speak for Hester, that is so fair of hue.

Mardocheus. She is here, ready, and doth attend

The king's commandment to fulfil;
And at your pleasure, forth shall she wend
Without resistance, and by her good will.

Pursuivant. Then shall I bring her the king
until.

Come on, lady Hester! and follow me—
To the king shall ye go with your company.

Here Aman meeteth them in the place.

Aman. Sir Pursuivant, have ye these
maidens brought

For the king, like as ye had in commandment?

Pursuivant. Yea, sir, and for them far have
I sought,

Both in village, town, and tenement—
I trust I have done true service and diligent.

Aman. So are ye bound, by very duty
Of your allegiance and fidelity—
See that ye follow us with your whole company.

Pursuivant. As ye have said, so shall it be.

Aman. Pleaseth it your grace, according
your mind

We have made search all your region
For goodly maidens, of nature fine and kind,
And of them have found, in mine opinion,
A number right fair, and of complexion
So pure, and of so fair visage,
That they surmount all other in personage.

Then they go to the king.

Assuerus. Are they also of such competent
age,

Of such demeanour and gravity,
That they be fit for our marriage?

Aman. Upon approof, your grace shall hear
and see,

As well their wisdom as their beauty.

Assuerus. Certes they be fair and goodly,
each one;

And, as it may seem by their first countenance,
Both by look and gesture, nature and com-
plexion,

In them should be kindness, mirth, and dalli-
Wisdom, sadness; and, in love, perseverance;
Constancy knit with comeliness, joy to in-
crease;

Virtue with good demeanour, pleasure to put
But ye, fair damsel! of the highest stature,
And of most ripe age, as should seem

Of all this company, of most finest nature—

Tell us your lineage; for, as yet, we deem
Your looks be so lusty, and in love so breme,
If that your demeanour hereafter be seen
To that according, ye shall be our queen.

Hester. Most noble Prince! as for my
lineage,

Nor yet my country, certes I cannot say.

My parents deceased in mine nonage,

So that I never heard yet, unto this day,

What coast or country, what land or lay

I was bred in, brought forth, or born—

It is to me unknown, as aye hath been before.

Notwithstanding, I have had food and
fostering

Of Mardocheus all my life days—

Whom I called father in my young age,

And so intend to do eftsoons and always—

Whom, for his friendship, I have good cause
to praise,

Beseeching your grace, and that most meekly,

To my said foster-father, good lord for to be.

Assuerus. Call in Mardocheus, that we may
see his face. [your grace.

Mardocheus. I am here, to attend upon
Assuerus. Mardocheus! what call you
your daughter? [name is Hester;

Mardocheus. If it please your grace, her
Assuring you, she is a virgin pure,
A pearl undefiled, and of conscience clear;
Sober, sad, gentle, meek, and demure;
In learning and literature, profoundly seen;
In wisdom eke semblant to Saba the Queen;
Fit for any prince to have in marriage,
If his pleasure agree to her personage.

Assuerus. Ye say right well; then, we
think it expedient

Somewhat to prove, by communication,
Her learning, and her language eloquent;
And, by some problem of high dubitation,
To know her answer and consultation. [seen
How say you, Hester, have you ought read or
Of virtues that be best, and fittest for a queen?

Hester. To speak before a king—it is no
child's play;
Therefore, I ask pardon of that I shall say.

Assuerus. We pardon you, whatsoever ye
say.

Hester. Then, to be bold right well I may:
No queen there is but by marriage of a prince,
And under covert, according to the law;
So that the jurisdiction of the whole province
To the king pertaineth—this is the true saw.
Albeit, sometime more for love than for awe,
The king is content to be counselled by the
queen,
In many sundry causes, as oft hath been seen;

Which sentence is sure and grounded with
reason.

But yet, notwithstanding, this is not all;
But eftsoons it may chance, at sundry season,
The king with his council, most part of all
From this realm to be absent, when war doth
call.

Then the Queen's wisdom sadly must deal,
By her great virtue, to rule the common weal.

Wherefore, as many virtues be there must,
Even in the Queen as in the prince;
For fear lest, in war, some treason unjust
The realm should subdue, and falsely convince.
The Queen must safeguard all the whole pro-
vince;

And so, as much goodness aye must be seen,
As in the king, to be in the Queen;
And how many virtues long to a king,
Like unto your grace, I cannot make reckoning.

Assuerus. Then, I doubt not, but the
wisdom of us two,

Knit both together in perfect charity,
All things in this realm shall compass so,
By truth and justice, law and equity,
That we shall quench all vice and deformity.

Hester. Then, at my beginning, I beseech
your grace [and space.

That I may show my mind, while I have time

Assuerus. Speak at your liberty, I will hear
it gladly. [hath no peer :

Hester. Then I will be plain, for verity
And for a principal of this my tale—

And eke his subjects, both great and small,
In honour and wealth—yea, all the province—
So rich and so strong that they may convince
All their enemies, wheresoever they dwell,

That would invade, resist, or rebel.

And where God's service and hospitality
Doth decay, and alms to the poraille—
There may be wealth in places two or three,
But I assure you, the most part, in general,
Neither have meat, nor money, nor strength
substantial

Fit to do you service, when ye have need—
Which is no good order, methinks in very
deed.

Let God alway, therefore, have His part,
And the poor fed by hospitality ;
Each man his measure, be it pint or quart ;
And no man too much, for that is great
jeopardy ;

A mean to lose all, as I do fear me ;
For, when all is gathered together on a heap,
It may soon be conveyed—carriage is good
cheap.

This I speak with true heart and mind,
Beseeching your grace to take it in good kind.

Assuerus. Of these matters, another time,
more at large

We shall speak, and of divers other mo.
Aman ! see our servants do accomplish their
charge

To await upon our Queen ; and that, also,
In haste, unto our wardrobe, see ye go
For rich apparel of gold and pall,
As well for herself as for her ladies all.

*Here departeth the Queen and Aman
and all the maidens.*

Aman. Then, if it please you to license the
Queen,
As to her pleasure awhile shall besene.

Assuerus. And we, for a season, this business will cease,
And ourself repose for our pleasure and ease.

[*Here entereth Pride singing, poorly arrayed.*

[*Pride.*] To men that be heavy, and would fain be merry
Though they feel smart :
Oft chance such reckoning that, with their mouth they sing,
Though they weep in their heart.
Sometime they dance, with merry countenance,
When they had liever sleep : [ween,
Eke they laugh and grin when, by this sun ! I
In the heart they weep.

Whoso will accord with this double world
Must use such arts :
Outwardly kind, in his heart a fiend—
A knave of two parts.
Outward honesty, inward infidelity—
Both rides on a mule :
In peace he is bold, but in war he is cold,
That soonest will recoil.

Many be that proffers, but few that offers
Devoutly in their heart : [befall,
They say they can do all, but when need doth
They begin to start.

He that is double loves alway trouble,
And at no time will cease :
And yet he will not fight, by day nor yet by night,
In war nor in peace. [cattle,

But such men by battle may get corn and
Bullion and plate : [it—
And if they once get it, let us no more crave
By God ! we come too late

Either to beg or borrow, except shame or
sorrow,

Displeasure and hate. [aside

Sirs, my name is Pride, but I have laid
All my goodly array :

Ye ween I lie—there is a cause why

That I go not gay :

I tell you at a word ; Aman, that new lord,
Hath bought up all good cloth, [towns,

And hath as many gowns as would serve ten
Be ye never so loth : [gown,

And any man in the town do buy him a good
He is very wroth ; [apparel

And will him straight tell, the statute of
Shall teach him good :

Wherefore, by this day, I dare not go gay ;

Threadbare is my hood.

Pride was wont to be a man of jollity,
Of high countenance and face :

And since Aman reigned, no man him retained,
Almost in any place. [self

For Aman, that elf, would no man but him—
Should be proud indeed.

For as men say, all pride he taketh away—
Well, God send him good speed !

Adulation. And as for Adulation, must
change his occupation,

It is not worth a pease.

Pride. Why so? [that he can—

Adulation. For my lord Aman doeth all
I assure you without doubt— [clatterers

To take up all flattere[r]s, and all crafty
That dwell forty mile about. [substantial,

Pride. Yea, but the law shall, by order
Punish all those. [law now, and flattering

Adulation. Yea, I will tell you one thing :

Aye together goes.

Pride. Why so? [adulation, in his chest

Adulation. For all law east and west, and
Aman hath locked fast; [into flattering;
And, by his crafty pattering, hath turned law
So that, first and last,

The client must pay or the lawyer assay
The law for to clatter: [by this light!
And when ye ween he said right, I assure you,
He doth not else but flatter.

Pride. Why so? [shrinks,

Adulation. For if Aman winks, the lawyer
And not dare say yea nor nay. [daw:
And if he speak the law, the other calls him
No more then dare he say.

So that was law yesterday, is no law this day,
But flattering lasteth alway, ye may me believe.

Pride. Divines that do preach, methinks
they should teach
And flattering reprove.

Adulation. Sir, they have left preaching,
and take them to flattering
Most part of them all.

Pride. I marvel of that. [tell

Adulation. Do ye marvel? marry! I will you
A cause substantial.

When they preached, and the truth teached,
Some of them caught a knock,
And they that should assisted, I wot not how
they were bristed,
But they did nothing but mock.

And that saw they, and gat them away
As fast as might be.
They sold their wool, and purchased a bull,
With a plurality.

And left predication, and took adulation,

And what by mendation, and dispensation,
They gat the nomination of every good benefice.

So better by flattering, than by preaching,
To wealth they did arise.
But yet ye must beware.

Pride. Whereof? [beyond the mark;

Adulation. That they do not square far
For, if it be a good fee, Aman sayeth that
longeth to me;

Be it benefice or park.

If he espy to that promotion he will straight
give him a portion,
A lap of a thousand marks. [treble nor mean,
He shall be purged clean, he shall sing neither
Nor yet speak one word.

Pride. Is he well seen in adulation?

Adulation. He is warden of the occupation,
without all jesting boord;
And no man so hardy, but by his authority,
The same to use.

Here entereth Ambition.

Ambition. No, for if he do, he were better
no,
His brains he will confuse.

Pride. Why, who art thou? [to work.

Ambition. He that can tell how Aman used

Pride. Is not Ambition thy name?

Ambition. Yes, for[e] God the same!—I was
wont to be a great clerk; [mule
But sin Aman bare rule neither horse nor
But is as wise as I.

Adulation. How so?

Ambition. For all rules and laws were
made by fools and daws,
He sayeth verily.

Ordinances and foundation, without consideration,

He sayeth, were devised. [fashion

Therefore, his imagination brings all out of

And so all is disguised. [be empty,

Sometime where was plenty, now the barns

And many men lacks bread. [none to get,

And where sometime was meat, there now is

But all be gone and dead.

Beggars now do ban, and cry out of Aman,

That ever he was born. [food;

They swear by the rood, he eateth up all their

So that they get no good, neither even nor

morn. [to door

And many that be poor—though not from door

A-begging they did go—

Yet had they relief, both of bread and beef,

And drink also. [can we get

And now the door stands shet, and no man

To work, neither to fight.

Wherefore if war should chance, either with

Scotland or France,

This gear would not go right.

Adulation. And where is all this become?

Ambition. As for that—*Dominus vobiscum!*

—I dare say nothing but mum,

Not till another time. [done by reason,

Pride. All this is out of season, and nothing

Nor yet by good rhyme.

Adulation. How say you, *Ambition*, have ye

not provision for to get promotion as ye

were wont to do? [lord, Aman,

Ambition. No, by my halidom! for my

Handles all things so

That every office and fee, whatsoever it be,

That may be seen and found—

By his wit he will it fetch, and or it fall he
will it catch

That never cometh to the ground.

So that I repent that ever I went

Unto the schools :

[bition,

For his large commission, maketh me, Am-

To dwell among fools.

Pride. And is there no remedy?

Adulation. None that I can spy, while he

doth reign.

[till we die,

Ambition. Then let us make merry, even
And drive away pain :

Pride. I heard once a friar—as true a liar
As any in the country—

He preached, verament, that our testament

Always ready should be.

[lack breath,

Adulation. For at our death, we shall

And then farewell we.

[tide,

Ambition. Then master Pride, begin this
Let us hear your fashion.

[the plain text

Adulation. And ye shall hear next even
Of me, Adulation.

[plainly,

Pride. Then, by and by, ye shall hear
Without impediment,

[until :

The tenor of my will if ye take heed there

This is my testament.

[ride,

All my presumptuous pride—whether he go or
Now or else than—

My heart and courage, for power and language,
I give it unto Aman.

[divide

Let him keep of my pride what he will, the rest

Among his whole guard.

withal—

And when they have it all, what they will do

Advise them afterward.

If pride have a fall, let them be content withal

As I am now :

For, as for Pride lasteth but a tide,
 I assure you.
 If to it long shame, let them a God's name!
 Take them both:
 For, as I fear me, so must it needs be,
 Be they never so loth, [fashion
 Adulation. And I, Adulation, of the same
 At this time present,
 To record every man, give unto Aman
 By this my testament:
 All my subtlety, and forged fidelity,
 To him and his espies.
 I wot they will it use, true men to confuse,
 And that craftily. [speed,
 And if they do, indeed, I pray God they may
 Even as honestly, [Watering
 As he that, from steyling, goeth to St. Thomas
 In his young age. [tatter
 So they, from pitter patter, may come to titter
 Even the same pilgrimage. [mission
 Ambition. And I, Ambition, had a com-
 By force of a bull,
 To get what I could but not as I would,
 Neither of lamb nor wool. [half
 The bull nor the calf could please the one
 Of my fervent desire. [have had
 But ever I thought, by Gad! there was I would
 When I was never thee near. [commission
 Therefore, all my ambition, together in a
 Under my seal,
 I give it to Aman, to the intent that Sathan
 May love him well:
 That while he is here, he may still desire
 And yet never the near: sometime to be,
 And when he goeth hence, he may with him
 dispense

By a large faculty.

That for his sins seven, or he come to heaven,
Without boord or game,
Sometime or tide he may, for his pride,
Suffer some shame.

Pride. Now, by Wade's mill! every man's
will

Is wondrously well. [be wisdom;

Adulation. And, by my halidom! I ween it
For folk often chat how men die in estate,
But so shall not we. [lord Aman,

Ambition. No, by Saint Ann! but yet my
Never the better shall be.

Pride. No force, so God me save! if we
our will might have
We would he should never thee. [content
Now made is our testament, I pray you be
Some mirth to devise.

Adulation. Let us begin with singing, and
conclude with drinking—
It is the new guise.

Ambition. Then let us begin a song, that
will last even as long
As hence to the tavern door. (*Et exeunt.*)

They depart singing, and Aman entereth.

Aman. Most noble prince, and of highest
wisdom!

I do not doubt of your consider[a]tion, [I am,
But that you know what I have been, eke what
Both in will and words, and occupation,
Of assured thought without adulation,
And as glad to do service unto your grace
As ever I was to live any time or space.

And, for the same great malice I do sustain,
Both of your nobles and communalty,
To my great grievance and marvellous pain.

And eke further, I fear the jeopardy
 Of my life, goodness, credence and honesty.
 To cease their malice, unless you put in ure
 Your power royal, I cannot long endure
 The slanderous reports, the lies that be made,
 The feigned detractions and contumelious,
 The rhymes, the railings so far set abroad,
 Both painted and printed in most shameful
 wise,

And, God to record ! all is but leasings and lies ;
 Was never made on man like, as is on me,
 Only for applyment of law and equity.

Insomuch that of late now, indeed,
 Before all the commons, upon mine and me,
 Most damnable reports were set abroad,
 To my dishonour and shameful villainy ;
 And all that were there of that company,
 As I might see, by their countenance and voice,
 That same allowed and greatly did rejoice.
 Wherefore, noble prince ! I beseech your grace
 Let me be removed, another to have my place.

Assuerus. Aman ! we heard with delibera-
 tion
 Uttered, and pronounced by language clean,
 A very elegant and prudent oration
 Of you, as evertofore was seen ;
 By whose tenor we know what ye mean.
 And, have ye no doubt, so shall we for you
 provide [side.

That your enemies shall damage you on no
 We know right well the lords envious to be,
 One against another for fee and office ;
 But, that to regard, in no wise need ye,
 As long as ye observe truth and justice.
 From the which we would that, in no wise,
 Ye should digress ; for if ye do, indeed,

Your own destruction shortly ye shall breed.

But, for your comfort, hark what I shall tell;
And, for more assistance in this that ye do fear,
We make you lieutenant to rule Israel.

Take here these robes—see ye do them wear;
Eke this golden wand in your hand to bear,
A token of honour and of estate royal— [all?
God send you continuance and well to do with
Aman. Noble prince!, according as I am
bound,

I will do you service till death me confound.

Assuerus. For a season we will, to our
solace,

Into our orchard or some other place.

*Here the king entereth the traverse and
Hardydardy entereth the place.*

Hardydardy. A proverb, as men say: a dog
hath a day

Whensoever that it chance.

He that will drink wine, and hath never a vine,
Must send or go to France.

And, if he do not, endure he cannot,

He must needs shrink.

Shrink? yea, say that again! for it is a great [pain
To be without drink.

In such case am I, I swear, by God's pity!

I lack both drink and meat.

But, as I say, a dog hath a day;

For now I trust to get.

My time is come for to get some,

If I be not let.

It is the common word, *Aman* is a lord,

And *Aman* is of price;

And hath, perdy! all this country

At his rule and device.

And I trust to be one of his yeomanry,

To wear his badge and mark.
 An office I would bear and it nought else wear,
 But the keeper of his park.

Aman. Meseems ye are not fit.

Hardydardy. Ye ween I lack wit, it may
 be so well!

Yet a fool, when it doth hap, may sometime
 chance to stop a gap

When wise men will not mell. [their thought.

Aman. Fools largely will boord and tell all

Hardydardy. And wise men will not speak
 one word till all become to nought. [sore.

Aman. Fools will tell all, and that troubleth

Hardydardy. And wise men will say nought
 at all till all be gone and more. [prest.

Aman. Fools to idleness, all ways be

Hardydardy. And wise men use such busi-
 ness it were better they were at rest.

Aman. Fools let the reformation of common
 weal.

Hardydardy. And wise men be so full of
 imagination

They wot not how they deal.

Aman. Wise men would do right

And fools say nay. [when wise men run away.

Hardydardy. And fools be fain to fight

Aman. Fools spend all till they nought have.

Hardydardy. And wise men carry all till
 they dare no more crave.

Aman. Ye are a fool, ye do but clatter.

Hardydardy. Many go to school till they
 can flatter. [tardy.

Aman. Leave your clatter, lest ye come

Hardydardy. It makes no matter, for my
 name is Hardydardy.

Aman. Is your name Hardydardy?

Hardydardy. Yea, that is it, verily! I would,
if it please ye,
Be one of your yeomanry.

Aman. As for that, let it pass; we take you
for our solace,
And mirth sometime to ken.

Hardydardy. I ween, by God's grace! one
fool in a place
Doth well among wise men.

Ye must needs laugh among; and, if a fool
sing a song,

I hold you then a groat [the pain
Some wise man must be fain sometime to take
To do on a fool's coat;

And then, perchance, it is not ready.

Aman. Well, ye can speak merrily, where—
with I am content. [walk—

Sirs, tarry you a season! see that far ye not
I will to the king secretly to talk.

[To Assuerus.]

Most victorious prince, and of highest
honour,

Primate of the world, and president chief!

By whose wisdom, and politic demeanour
All the world at this day takes relief— [brief,

Both king, page, and lord; yea, in sentence
No realm nor region able were to stand

Unless your counsel with them be at hand.

Who compelleth lords to maintain their
nobility;

Who learneth knights their feats martial;

Or, who religion subdueth to humility; [all—
Who have crafts and labourers the world over

In civil city, or village royal;

Compelleth each man to his order and place;

But only the wisdom and policy of your grace.

Your strength defendeth, your wisdom
saveth all,
Your plenty relieveth almost every man.
Such is your honour and order royal
That none other counsel, at this day, can
Reach nor attain to know, how or whan,
Like good order or honourable guise
As you, by wisdom daily, do devise.

So is it; your grace, from very base parage
And poor estate, me to high honour have
brought;

For none my virtues nor wisdom sage,
But only your goodness have made me of
nought.

God is my judge! it is, therefore, my thought
And daily study, above all worldly treasure,
That thing to do that is your wealth and
pleasure. [hear

And, if it please your grace, therefore, to
One thing as I shall make rehearsal.

When I have said I think it shall appear
To your pleasure and profit substantial.

And, to be plain, this is it first of all. [dwell;
A great number of Jews within this realm do
A people not good, nor for your commonweal.

They be dispersed over all your province,
Within themself dwelling, dissevered from our
nation.

By their new laws they think to convince,
And eke draw unto their conversation,
And unto their ceremonies and faction,
Of our people as many as may be,
Intending to subdue all gentility.

Moreover, the precepts of your law
They refuse, and have in great contempt;
They will in no wise live under awe;

Of any prince but they will be exempt;
 Whereby good order may soon be interempt;
 And occasion is, as I do fear me,
 Your subjects to rebel in hope of like liberty.

And your grace knoweth it is expedient
 Their malice to increase thus by sufferance;
 For by that may chance great inconvenience;
 And to all your realm importune perturbation.
 For their possessions be of substance [length,
 So great, and so large, that I fear, at the
 They will attempt to subdue you by strength.

My counsel, therefore, to avoid jeopardy,
 Is that your grace, by your power royal,
 Shall give sentence, and plainly decree
 To sleet these Jews in your realm over all;
 None to escape—let your sentence be general.
 Ye shall by that win, to say I dare be bold,
 To your treasure ten thousand pound of gold.

Assuerus. My lord Aman! we have heard
 right well

All your oration, which is so elegant,
 And so well touched that needs we must feel
 And perceive your mind; your words be so
 pregnant.

And, as touching the Jews which be so valiant,
 Both of good and great possession,
 We do agree unto their suppression.

We right well perceive that unto them draw
 Much of our people and gentle nation;
 Which, to our honour, and also to our law,
 Must needs be a great derogation,
 A mean to bring all out of fashion. [well;
 To quench them, therefore, we be contented
 In token whereof, hold here a ring and seal.

Aman. Of your sentence there shall not
 lack one clause,

But all shall be done and that without pause—
The Pursuants call to us shortly.

Pursuivants. If it like you, we are here!

Aman. These letters devised we would ye
should apply

To bear forth, and that diligently,
With as much haste as may be,
To the rulers of every town and city,
Straightly commanding them all that they may
The same to execute at their prefixed day.

Pursuivants. To his high pleasure we shall
make us prest,
And till it be done, we will take no rest.

Aman. We be glad we have attained our
purpose;

I trust it shall abate the high courage
Of Mardocheus, and eke all those
That be his clients bring to repentance.

Hardydardy. Marry, sir! they be like to
take penance;

It would grieue any man, young or old of age,
Without his head to go on pilgrimage.

Aman. They have deserved it, and they
shall have it;

It is for them according. [men do say,

Hardydardy. If I should bewray that some
It were a mad boording.

Aman. Say what ye list. [not angry.

Hardydardy. So would I, if wist ye would

Aman. Ye have liberty, as ye pleased be,
To stand or tumble. [lose your head;

Hardydardy. Men say, indeed, ye shall
And that would make you stumble.

Aman. Why so?

Hardydardy. They say it is convenient
should be fulfilled the testament

Of Ambition, Adulation and Pride :
 They gave you all their pride and flattering,
 And after that, Saint Thomas Watering, there
 to rest a tide ;

And men think at host, with them was the
 Holy Ghost,

Their testament was made so holily, [said
 Wherefore all that they said cannot be take or
 But as a prophecy.

Aman. Well, ye are verily disposed merrily
 Now for to talk ;

And I am surely minded secretly
 For my solace to walk.

Et exeat.

Here entereth a Jew and speaketh.

[*A Jew.*] O Lord ! what a thing is credulity
 When to it is annexed covetous and pride !

It destroyeth both town and country,
 Eke all regions on every side ;

All is for him too little, his mouth is so wide ;
 His rigour ravenous spares not to spill
 Both man and child to have his own will.

This ravenous wolf—*Aman* I do mean—
 That hath persuaded the king to kill and slee,
 And from all this province to avoid clean
 All men and women and children that be
 Jews born, and of the Jews' consanguinite.
 The precept is set up men to remember,
 And it shall be executed the thirteenth day of
 December.

Alas ! that ever should fortune such rage
 From so cankered a caitiff to proceed.

It is his mind, my head I lay to gage,
 All those to slay, I assure you, indeed, [feed—
 That will not by flattery his presumptions
 He would be glorified above creatures all ;
 And yet, I trust, as Lucifer deep he shall fall.

Another Jew. The Mantuans thought it a
 great punishment
 To be proscribed from their goods and land,
 As reciteth Virgil, that poet eloquent.
 Much more is our pain, ye may understand,
 That shall lose our lives, unless God take in
 hand
 Us to deliver, or else me not can
 Avoid the murder of this carnifex, Aman.

Another Jew. He shall by this murder our
 goods win,
 And himself enlarge, his pride to advance;
 And when he hath all he shall be new to begin,
 Evermore to get by some other chance.

Mardocheus. Yet, at the last, all shall come
 to mischance;
 For, both him and his, God shall make tame;
 And, for their pride and pillage, send them
 worldly shame.

Hester. Mardocheus! with your company,
 We have heard your lamentation,
 To' our grief and displeasure, verily!
 Yet we trust, by meek supplication,
 First unto God by humble oration,
 And then to the king by desire cordial,
 A mean to find for to safeguard ye all:
 Call in the chapel to the intent they may
 Sing some holy himpne to speed us this day.

Then the chapel do sing.

After this prayer and our former abstinence
 To the good Lord I call for comfort,
 To inspire the prince, and his mind incense;
 That I may obtain now, at my resort,
 To redeem the Jews, all the whole sort.
 Eke to disclose the falsed, favell, and fraud
 Of this cruel Aman, to Thy praise and laud.

Assuerus. O goodly Hester, our most noble
Queen!

Of personage peerless, and in wisdom alone;
In courage and countenance none like is seen;
So discreet in dalliance was never none.

Where is your comfort? care can be none—
Lo! here our wand, approach near to this
place [brace.

That we may kiss you, and in our arms em-
Here they kiss.

What ask you, lady? and what do you demand?
Half our realm is yours if ye command. [dear!

Hester. Noble prince, and our espouse most
Since that to ask ye have given me liberty,
I beseech your grace, with heart most entire,
That it may please you this day to dine with
me;

Eke my lord Aman I would be glad to see
At the same banquet, for to take repast.

Assuerus. Call us in Aman that we may go
in haste: [your grace!

Aman. I am here, ready to attend upon
*Here must be prepared a banquet in the
place.*

Assuerus. Then let us go while we have
time and space.

Lady Hester, our most beloved Queen!
So pure and so exquisite is this repast,
Both of wine and meat that no better may
been; [attaste,

Your mirth eke, and manners so pleasant to
That for to depart we make no manner haste;
Eke our presence we know is to your pleasure
Far better than gold, or any worldly treasure.

Wherefore, as we said, we would ye should
demand,

And at your pleasure your petition make.
 The one half of our realm, if ye it command,
 We shall with depart, only for your sake,
 And of it to you a plain surrender make;
 And the more ye ask, with loving intent,
 The more we shall give, and the better be
 content.

Hester. Noble prince! your high magnifi-
 cence,

Your bounty, and especial grace,
 So oft and so kindly doth incense
 To make request some profit to purchase,
 So that longer delay were in me great trespass;
 And by that also your grace right well may it
 think

That finally your love unto my heart did sink.
 Wherefore, this favour since I have obtained
 Of your grace to have any my request,
 This I do ask with true heart unfeigned
 And with charity, of all virtues best: [west,
 That through all your realm, both east and
 As many as be of the Jewish nation [tion.
 Your grace will them pardon, at my supplica-
 Assuring you I am of that nation,
 Born and eke bred in Jerusalem;
 Yet I, and all they, by one condemnation,
 To death are determined through all this
 realm—

No remedy: lest your pardon us redeem.
 We would rather we might be sold to bondage
 Than thus to perish, by fury and outrage.

Assuerus. What is he, or what is his au-
 thority,

That is so bold this act to attempt?

Hester. It is Aman that, by cruel envy,
 Is our mortal enemy, and would us interrupt,

That our life and goods from us were
adempt;

Then would he rule all, and if he might, to all
get; [set.

And all should not suffice, so high his heart is

His pomp and his pride so much is, indeed,

That if he had all, it could him not suffice:

At this time his treasure yours doth exceed,

And yet content is he in no wise,

But to get more daily he doth devise;

The commons he extorteth till they be lame;

He takes the profit, and ye bear the name.

But better it were that he should suffer pain

Than thus, by craft, your honour to distain;

By his false leasings he putteth other in blame,

Deluding your grace, when he list to fain;

And no man so worthy for to suffer pain

As he himself, that by his poison and gall

Hath deceived you, and eke your commons all.

Assuerus. He signified unto me that the
Jews did

Not feed the poor by hospitality.

Their possessions, he said, were all but hid

Among themselves, living voluptuously;

Thinking the same might be, verily,

Much better employed for the commonweal

Where now it little profiteth, or never a deal.

Hester. Noble prince! as for hospitality

Of the Jews dwelling in your region,

It is with them as always hath been

Since the beginning of their possession,

Which God to them gave, of His mere motion;

Eke great knowledge, both of cattle and of
grain, [tain.

That none to them like household could main-

Is not of Abraham the hospitality

In Scripture noted, and of noble fame?
 But one honouring when he received three,
 The Trinity figured in the same.
 Both Isaac and Jacob had a like name,
 Of whom the twelve tribes descended be,
 Whichever did maintain hospitality. [hold

Since God, therefore, hath begun their house-
 And aye hath preserved their hospitality,
 I advise no man to be so bold
 The same to dissolve, whatsoever he be.
 Let God alone, for He shall orderly,
 A fine ad finem, both here and there,
 Omnia disponere suaviter. [dissembler!

Assuerus. O caitiff, most crafty! O false
 With thy flattering tongue thou hast deceived
 me.

All noble princes by me may beware
 Whom they shall trust and put in authority;
 Eke whom they shall promote to riches and
 dignity. [tude,
 But we shall teach thee good for thine ingrati-
 And by thee all other their prince to delude.

Aman. O lady Hester, most noble princess!
 Of thine honour and goodness sovereign,
 Extend to me that pity, or else, doubtless,
 To death I am dressed, and mortal pain.
 I wot I have deserved it for certain,
 And against thee my offence is great.
 Wherefore, unneth I dare thy goodness entreat.
 But truth is, the merit of this is better,
 And God it more accepteth a thousandfold
 Against whom the offence is greater,
 And of them that of injury could not tell me.
 Wherefore, to speak somewhat it makes me
 bold—

To increase thy merit and reward heavenly—

Save my life, and I thy servant shall be.

Hester. Aman, this matter so heinous is,
indeed, [speed.

That of our honour we will neither speak nor

Aman. Alas! then am I utterly marred;

I must straight die—it cannot be deferred.

Assuerus. O, thou caitiff! canst thou not
be content

With the mischief by thee done before,

But the queen wilt oppress, we being present?

What need we call for evidence more? [sore;

Make him sure and fast, and thereto bind him

We will that our counsel shortly devise,

How we shall bestow him, according to justice.

Arbona. There is in the house of this traitor,
Aman,

A pair of gallows of fifty cubits high;

Upon them he had thought, either now or than,

To have caused Mardocheus to die. [by and by,

Assuerus. Lead him hence, and upon them,

See that ye hang him, and so stop his breath—

Without favour see he suffer death.

Hardydardy. Other folks be tardy, as well
as Hardydardy.

By this reckoning [else—

A, sir—beside bells, bacon, and somewhat

Must needs have hanging. [that deserve

Assuerus. Hanging do serve, when they

Are false faitors. [herrings and sprots,

Hardydardy. And it comes to lots of

Which be no traitors, [cloak

To hang in the smoke till they change their

From white to red. [they do not hong

Assuerus. But such do no wrong; wherefore

Till they be dead. [it toucheth the quick

Hardydardy. Ye speak somewhat like, for

To be hanged in good heal. [wise and ware,
Assuerus. Yet none need to care, that is
 And truly will deal. [Ovid,

Hardydardy. Have ye not read of Naso
 That eloquent poet?

Nor Valery, which tells merrily

The proper feats,
 How the smith Perillus, like a tuta vilus,
 Made a bull of brass?

He had thought, i-wis, to have pleased king
 Phalaris,

But yet he did much worse,

Assuerus. Why so? [rod

Hardydardy. I ween, by God! he made a
 For his own arse. [shet—

Phalaris could not get within the bull to
 Lo here begins the game.

Wherefore, indeed, he took for need

Perillus, maker of the same.

In he did him turn, and made the fire to burn,
 And greatly to increase; [sweat,

He cast him in such heat, and eke in such
 He fried him in his grease.

Assuerus. What mean you by this?

Hardydardy. I will tell you, by Gis! my
 whole intention.

I mean, my master is the first taster

Of his own invention.

The gallhouse he made both high and broad,
 For Mardocheus he them meant;

And now he is fain himself, for certain,
 To play the first pageant. [certain,

Assuerus. He that deserves pain is worthy,
 Even for to have it.

Hardydardy. Therefore, God send all those
 that will steal men's clothes,

That once they may go naked.

Arbona. If it please your grace, this
traitor, Aman,
We have put to death as was your command-
ment. [as we can,

Assuerus. Then shall we straight, as well
Bestow his goods, for he made no testament.

Lady Hester! this is our intent:

The house of Aman, with all his treasure,
We give it you; do with all your pleasure.

Hester. I thank your grace, with heart
entire.

Now, dare I be bold to show you the plainness
Of my mind, since Mardocheus is here.

If it please your grace, the truth is, doubtless,
Albeit or now I did it not confess;

This Mardocheus is, for certain,
My father's brother, no longer I will it leyne.

A gentle man he is, for lineally
He is born of the stock of Benjaminy.

Assuerus. We be right glad we know his
lineage;

His truth to us before was known well.

We will him advance according his parage.

Hold, Mardocheus! here is our ring and seal;
It is our trust ye will with justice deal; [cretion,
We commit, therefore, unto your wise dis-
Of all this province judgment and correction.

Mardocheus. I thank your grace, trusting
ye shall not hear

In all things but as justice doth require.

Hester. Noble prince, and our espouse most
dear!

I beseech your grace, at my supplication,
The precept your grace sent, at Aman's desire,
Against me and all the Jewish nation,

May be revoked; and upon convocation
Anew devised by them that can do best,
And that sent forth, to set the Jews at rest.
Moreover, let the realm be perused
By them that be of your high council,
And if any have the law abused
Of all the Jews within your common weal,
Let them not spare correction to deal,
And straightly constrain themselves to address
To observe that law God give them by Moses.
The Jews be the people of God elected,
And wear his badge of circumcision;
The daily prayer of that whole sect—
As the psalms of David by ghostly inspiration;
Eke holy ceremonies of God's provision—
To God is available, that nothing greater,
And all the whole realm for them fares the
better. [ye near;

Assuerus. Stand ye up, Lady! and approach
Your petition we grant it gladly.

Hester. Then, if it please your grace to hear,
This epistle is made to the sealing ready.

Assuerus. Let it be read, that it may, by
and by,
Be sealed and consigned, and so forth sent;
And then I trust ye shall be content.

Here the Scribe doth read the king's letter.

Scribe. We, Assuerus, king and high regent
From India to Ethiopia plain,
Send greeting, and straight commandment
To all the heads and rulers certain;
Willing they should, upon a great pain,
In a hundred provinces, and seven and twenty,
All men compel to this our decree.
Although it be so our precepts that be sent
Be of diverse nature, and plain repugnant,

When ye know our mind ye shall be content
 To think it no lightness, nor wit inconstant,
 But the necessity of times variant;
 And as cause requireth for the utility
 Of our whole realm heeds and commonalty.
 And to the intent ye may know our plain mind,
 The son of Amadathy called Aman,
 A Macedon born, and like to their own kind,
 Not of our nation, as all men tell can;
 Which, by his subtlety, both now and than,
 Our gentleness so infecteth for certain
 That near we were like all Jews to have slain.
 We favoured him that he was called
 Our father, and all men did to him honour.
 But his heart with pride so strongly was walled
 That, by his slight and crafty demeanour,
 Had we not espied his subtle behaviour,
 He would have destroyed Queen Hester, our
 wife,
 And from us, at the length, have taken our life.
 But as for the Jews, we found them innocent
 And without all blame, though to death they
 were dyth.

Wherefore Aman, we thought it convenient
 To hang him till the death, according to right,
 Within Susis, our noble city of might. [fate
 Not only our deed, nor yet their chance nor
 But God's own Justice, whatsoever they prate.

This our precept and high commandment
 We would to all cities ye should declare.
 This is our purpose and very intent:
 The Jews to their laws themselves should prepare
 Duly to keep them, and not from them square;
 And no man to hurt them, see ye remember,
 As it was meant the thirteenth day of
 December,

Dated at Susis—this is certain—
The fourth day of December the third year of
our reign.

Assuerus. This is well ! see it be sealed anon,
And that every city of them may have one.
Now, madam ! I trust ye be content.

Hester. Yea, and that verament !
May it now please you yourself to repose ?

Assuerus. Very well ; save first we will dis-
close

Part of our mind, which we think necessary ;
If it be well heard we trust it shall edify.
My Lords ! by this figure ye may well see
The multitude hurt by the head's negligence.
If to his pleasure so given is he,
That he will no pain take nor diligence,
Who careth not for his cure oft loseth cre-
A proverb of old some time in usage ; [dence ;
Few men that serve but for their own ad-
vantage.

Hester. And yet the servants that be untrue,
Awhile in the world their life may they lead ;
Yea, their wealth and worship daily renew ;
But, at the length, I assure you, indeed,
Their favell and falsehood will come abrede ;
Which shall be to them more bitter than gall :
The higher they climb the deeper they fall,

Assuerus. Let us then cease this convoca-
tion,
And this time dissolve this congregation.

Hester. That like as here they have lived
devoutly

So God grant them in heaven to live eternally,

Assuerus. To the which we commit all this
company.

FINIS.