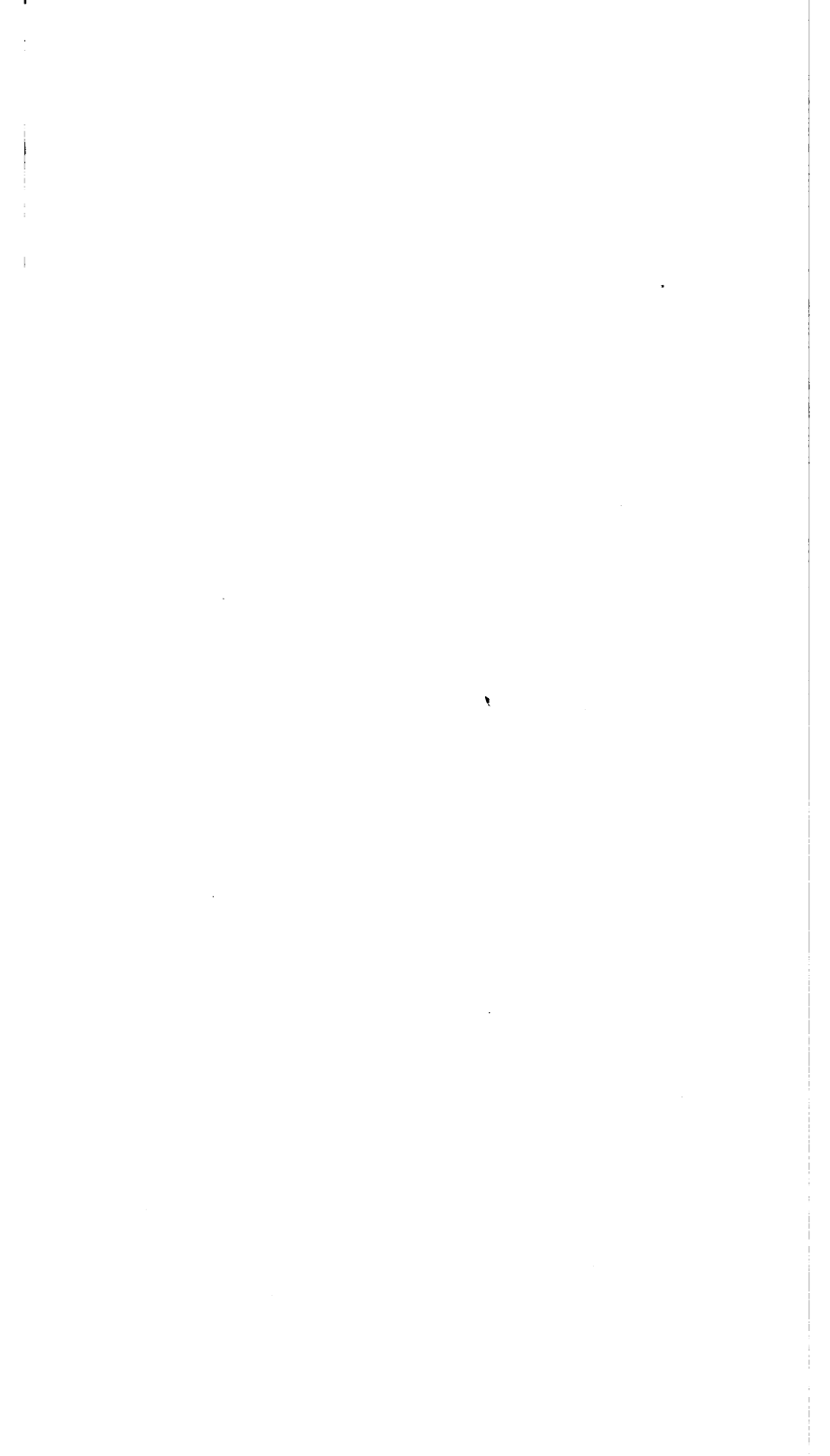
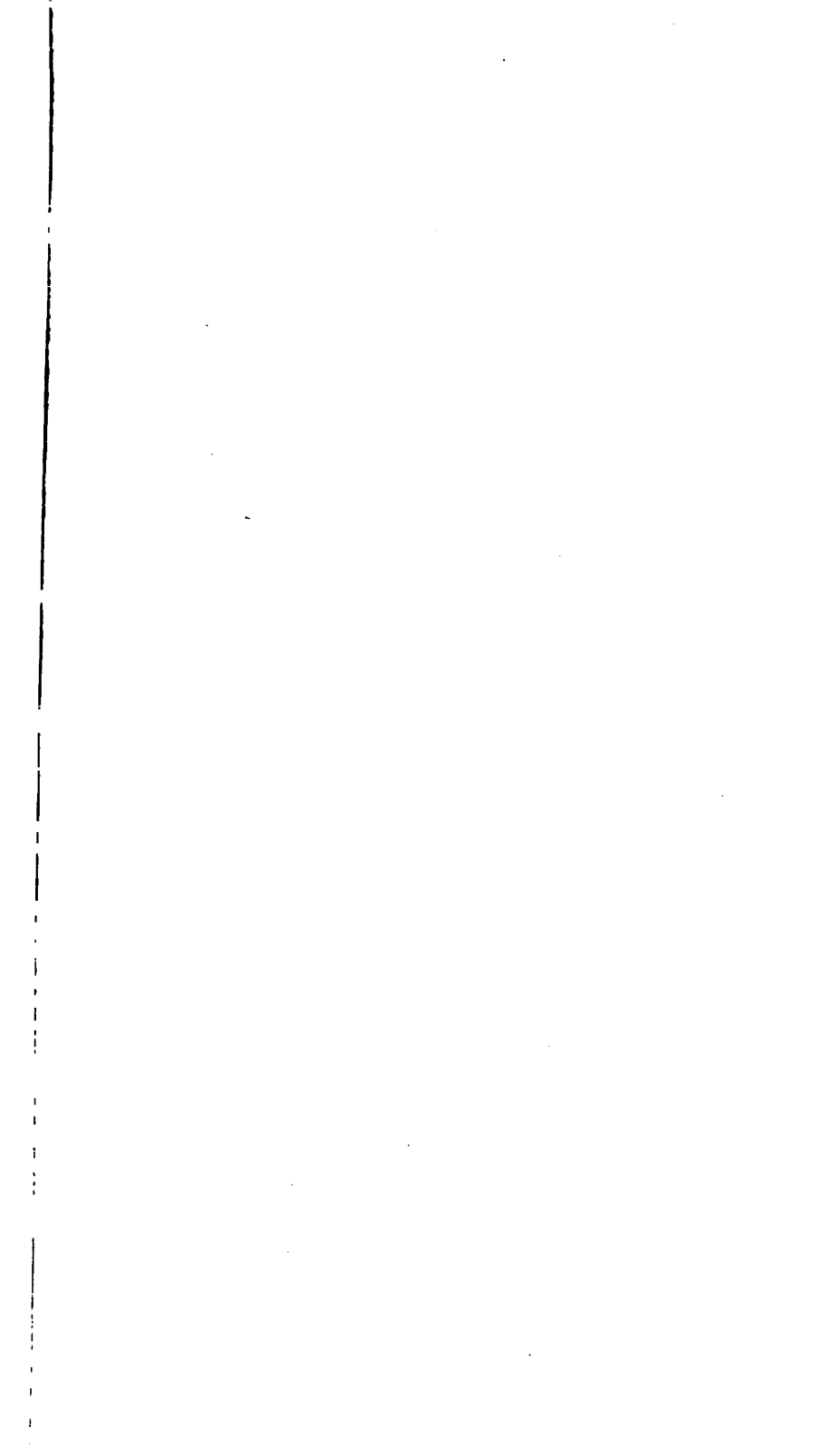


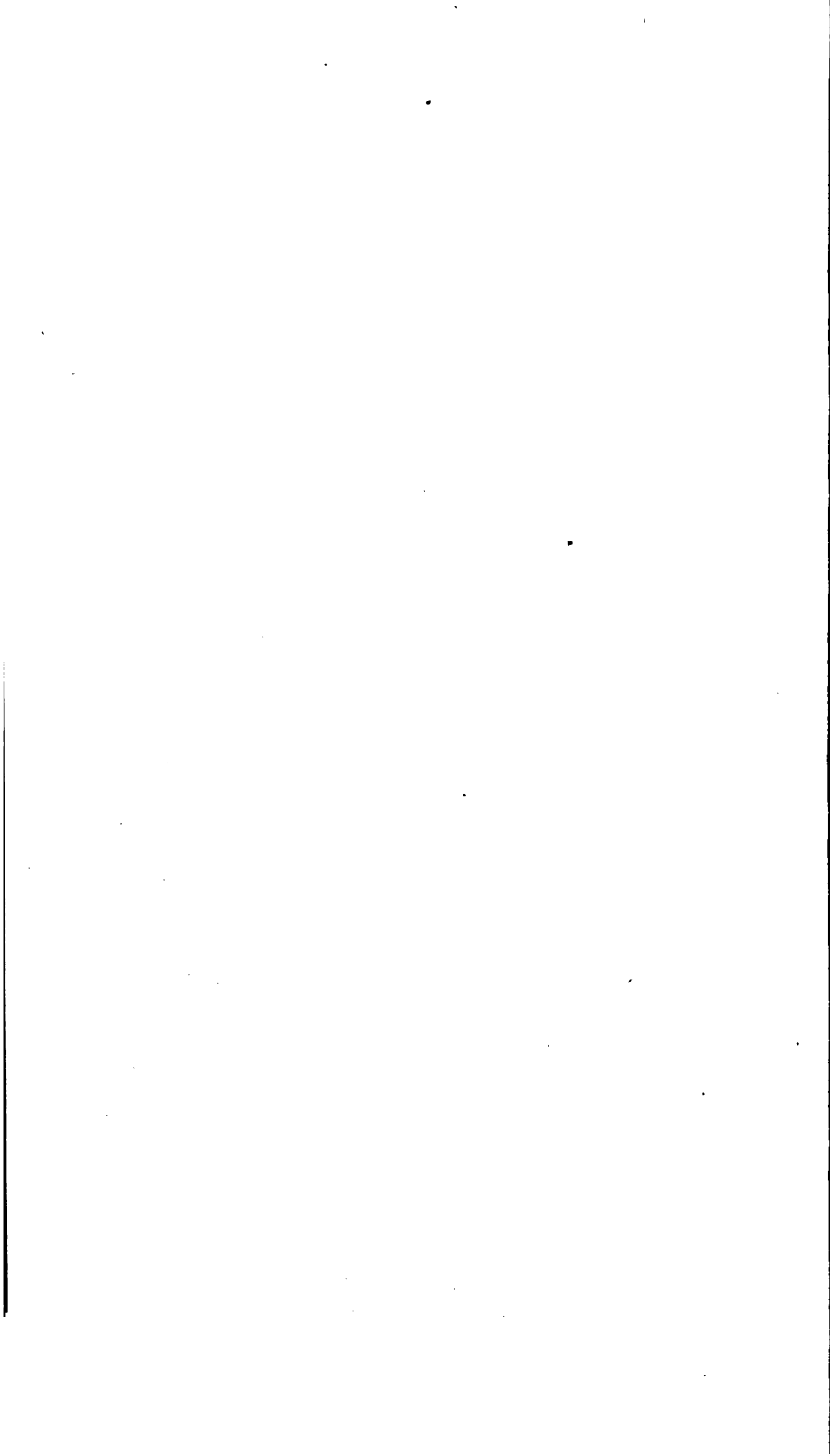
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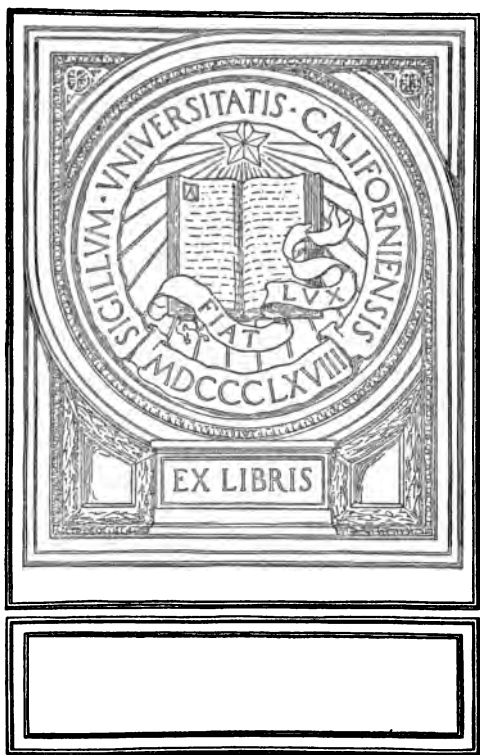




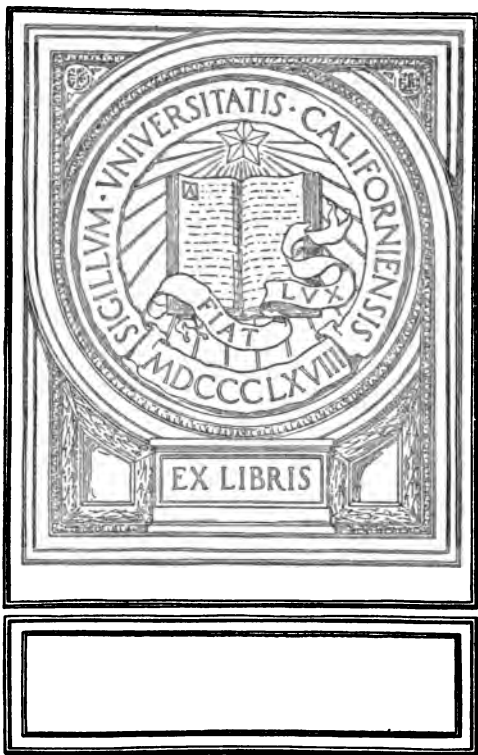
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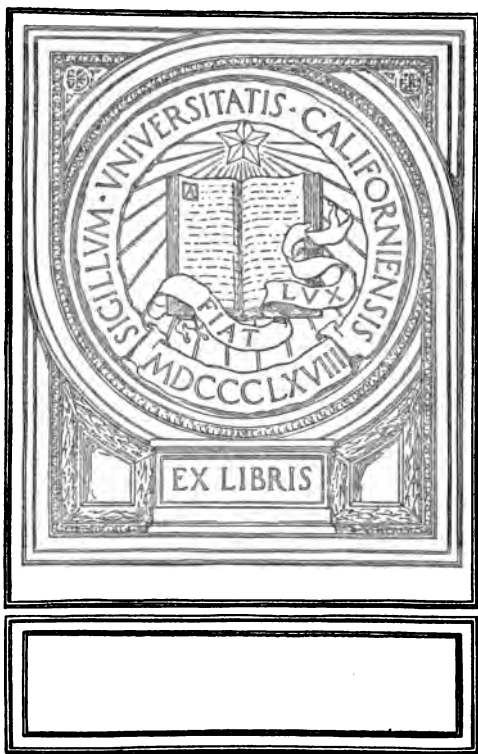
**LIFE**  
**OF**  
**THE ADMIRABLE CRICHTON.**













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Drawn by J. S. C. Syme

Engd by W. & D. Lisars Edin<sup>g</sup>

THE ADMISSIBLE GEOMETRY

FROM A PAINTING IN THE POSSESSION OF COL<sup>L</sup> CRICHTON.

GAYFIELD PLACE EDINBURGH

Published by W. & C. Fife, Edinburgh, June 1839.

*Cleanora Lee Hecatech  
Edinburgh*

**LIFE**

OF

**JAMES CRICHTON OF CLUNY,**

COMMONLY CALLED

**THE ADMIRABLE CRICHTON.**

WITH

AN APPENDIX OF ORIGINAL PAPERS.

---

BY

**PATRICK FRASER TYTLER, ESQ. F.R.S.E.**

ADVOCATE.

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## P R E F A C E.

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**T**HE subject of the following Memoir, is not a person of historical popularity, nor has he left to the world any important writings. Yet his short and melancholy story possesses a peculiar interest, derived as well from the extraordinary talents of the individual, as from the singular state of society and literature when he appeared in Scotland, and travelled in Italy.

In writing this account, I have endeavoured, in the first place, to present an authentic narrative of his adventures, separating the fictitious additions of later biographers, from the details of contemporary authors; and, secondly, to form a true estimate of the evidence upon which this narrative rests, and of

the real character and talents of the remarkable person to whom it relates.

The original poems of Crichton will be found reprinted in an Appendix, along with "The Testimonia" of the various authors, on whose evidence the account of his adventures is founded. An Engraving of Crichton is prefixed, from an original painting in the possession of Colonel Crichton, of Gayfield Place, of which that gentleman most obligingly permitted me to procure a copy.\*

It is now considerably more than two years since this little work was finished, and although in the revisions it has undergone, a scrupulous attention has been exerted in regard to the accuracy of the facts stated, still,

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\* There are two other original pictures of Crichton in this country. One in the possession of Thomas Grahame Stirling, Esq. of Airth, which the kindness of that gentleman permitted me to examine. It bears, both in the canvass and pencilling, marks of great antiquity. The other, which is preserved in the collection of Theodore Morison, Esq. of Bognie, I have never seen.

I fear that errors may have been committed, which will be of easy detection to the eye of erudition. One good effect has resulted from the difficulties experienced in the investigation, since they have filled me with a deeper veneration for those enlightened scholars, who, in their illustrations of the early history and literature of Scotland, have laboured on higher ground—and whose genius has redeemed from the reproach of fable and conjecture the remoter annals of their country.





**L I F E**  
**OF THE**  
**ADMIRABLE CRICHTON.**

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**SECTION I.**

**T**HE name of the Admirable Crichton is very generally known; and, if we wish to denote any person who is particularly remarkable for learning and accomplishments, it is a name which we almost inevitably employ in our panegyric. Owing, however, to the remote period in which he lived, few are acquainted with the romantic and singular adventures of his life, or have perused the contemporary accounts which have been given to us by those authors who witnessed the powers of his genius, and shared the honour of his friendship. And it is perhaps not generally known, that some later writers have endeavoured to discredit the evi-

dence of these authors; that the very existence of this singular man has been questioned; and that various attempts have been made to undermine the foundation upon which his reputation has so long rested, and to convince the world, that the accumulated praise of more than two centuries has been thrown away.

The life of Crichton appears, therefore, an object of interesting investigation. It is interesting, because it embraces a narrative which has all the attractions that can be lent to it by superior talents, by bold adventures, and by severe and early misfortune. It is interesting as a field of historical and biographical argument; and it is most of all interesting, as it will lead to the examination of the contemporary literature of the age in which he lived, embracing the most classic period in the history of Scotland, and the golden age of Leo the Tenth in Italy.

In attempting to investigate the real history, and to estimate the true character of Crichton, it may be proper to begin by collecting, into one continued narrative, the va-

## ERRATA.

- Page 3, for 1561, read 1560.  
 4, for King's Advocate, read Lord of Session.  
 5, In the note, for Mary and Grizel, read Helen and Elspeth.  
 6, In the note, for Helen and Elspeth, read Mary and Grizel.  
 8, In the note, for Sir Robert, read the Advocate.  
 14, for his masters were, read his masters, according to Aldus, were.  
 14, In the note, for elort, read etoit.  
 14, In the note, for Appendix No. X., read Appendix No. XIII.  
 15, for Rhetofordum, read Rhetorfortem.  
 61, for the Timæus of Cicero, read Cicero's Book de Universitate.  
 84, In the note, for 1575, read 1577.  
 93, for narrated, read related.  
 99, for antiquarians, read antiquaries.  
 112, for and the nephew, read the nephew.  
 119, In the note, for St Andrews, read Aberdeen.  
 126, In the note, for letter R, read No. XIII.  
 199, for forty-five, read forty.  
 222, for by the facility, read for the facility.  
 223, for or, read nor.

### APPENDIX.

- 245, for *ιστορηματα*, read *ιστορηματα*.  
 245, for *σηνταινου νιοι νιοιζαι*, read *σηνταινου μοι μοιζαι*.

Manutius, of the Timæus of Cicero, to the Memory of James Crichton, (Appendix, No. VI.) This evidence is corroborated by an entry preserved in the University Register of the College of St Andrews, by which it appears that James Crichton was matriculated at St Salvador's College, in the month of November, 1570; and also by a very curious account of Crichton, published in his life-time at Venice, in 1580, and lately discovered by Mr Singer. Appendix, No. I. Robert Crichton, of Eliock, in his will, printed in the Appendix, writes his name Creychton.

† That James Crichton was eldest son of the Lord Advocate,

office of Lord Advocate,\* first to Queen Mary, and afterwards to King James the Sixth. The mother of Crichton was Elizabeth Stewart,†

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is distinctly proved by the will of Robert Crichton, a very curious document, which is copied from the MS. Records of the Commissary Court, and now printed for the first time in the Appendix, No. XV. The Lord Advocate there names "Mr James Crichton, my eldest sone, tutor testamentar to Agnes Crichton," and he nominates the Earl of Arran, Lord Doune, and a long list of his friends, as protectors of his wife, Isobel Borthwick, "her bairnis and tenentis, at the least aye and till my sone returne out of Italie," and then ordains him "to honor and mentine her as he will answer to God and have my blessing."—See, for additional matter on the History of the Crichton Family, Notes and Illustrations, Note A.

\* Mr Robert Crichton enjoyed this high office, first in conjunction with Mr David Borthwick, (who was probably the father of Isobel Borthwick, the Lord Advocate's third wife,) and afterwards, in consequence of the age and infirmities of his co-adjutor, who was likewise a Lord of Session, was promoted to his seat on the Bench, with the express provision contained in the letter of his sovereign, that, upon the decease of Mr David Borthwick, "Mr Robert bruik the said office in solidum all the dayes of his life-time, but (without) any colleague to be adjoined to him." Mr David Borthwick, Eliock's predecessor, succeeded to the office of King's Advocate in 1573, after the death of Mr John Spens of Condie, as is seen by an extract from the Pitmedden Manuscript, which will be found printed in the Notes and Illustrations, Note B. It appears, from the same useful and curious collection, that Mr John Spens succeeded in this office to Mr Henry Lauder, who had enjoyed it for many years, and died in 1561.

† His mother was Elizabeth Stewart. Evidence of this will be found in Note C of the Notes and Illustrations.

daughter of Sir James Stewart of Beath, the direct ancestor of the present Earl of Moray.

It is well known, that the family of Moray is descended, in the male line, from the house of Avandale or Evandale, which last family sprung from a son of Murdoch, Duke of Albany, who was uncle to James the First.

After the death of his first wife, the Lord Advocate married Agnes Mowbray,\* daughter of John Mowbray of Barnbougall, by whom he had one daughter, Agnes Crichton. The second son Robert, or, as he is generally called, Sir Robert Crichton of Cluny, became afterwards, upon the death of the Admirable Crichton in Italy, heir to the family.†

\* As to the evidence of this marriage of the Lord Advocate with Agnes Mowbray, a curious document will be found in the Notes and Illustrations. Note D.

† According to the will, the family appear to have been divided as follows:—

1st marriage, by Elizabeth Stewart, the Lord Advocate had  
James, the Admirable Crichton,  
Robert, afterwards Sir Robert Crichton of Cluny,  
Mary. See Notes and Illustrations. E.  
Grizel/

2d marriage, by Agnes Mowbray, he had  
Agnes.

Although high in office, a friend of his sovereign, and proprietor of Eliock and Cluny, the Lord Advocate does not appear at his death, which happened in 1582, to have been possessed of a large fortune.\* His debts were heavy, the profits of his situations, as Lord Advocate and Lord of Session, could not, in that age, amount even collectively to a high sum, and he had to sustain the expences of a large establishment and a numerous family. He had already five children by his two first wives, and, at a late period of life, he married, for the third time, Isobell Borthwick, who bore him two daughters, and who seems to have especially endeared herself to him by the care and affection with which she watched over the declining years of his life.†

Young Crichton had the advantage of being related to men in high situations. George Crichton, his uncle, brother to the Lord Ad-

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3d marriage, by Isobell Borthwick, he had two daughters,  
Helen,

Elspeth. See the will in the Appendix.

\* Lord Hailes's Catalogue, p. 5, and Latter Will and Testament, Appendix.

† See Latter Will and Testament in the Appendix.

vocate,\* succeeded to the celebrated Gavin Douglass; the translator of Virgil, in the Bishoprick of Dunkeld, and enjoyed also the eminent situation of Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal to James the Fifth. He is described, by the biographer of the Scottish Bishops,† “as a man nobly disposed, very hospitable, and a magnificent housekeeper; but in matters of religion not much skilled.”‡ Upon the ap-

\* This fact is stated in so decisive a manner in the Statistical Account of the Parish of Cluny, vol. IX. p. 270, that it leads me to believe the authorities which are there mentioned must have been clear and decided on the point. It is to be regretted, however, that the learned gentleman, to whose researches we owe the mention of this important circumstance, had not confirmed it by the satisfactory and incontrovertible evidence of the various deeds which he mentions.

† Keith's Catalogue, p. 58.

‡ This character by Keith, is taken from Spottiswood's History of Scotland, p. 101, who adds a singular trait illustrative of the state of this bishop's religious knowledge. “It was he that said to one of his vicars, whom he was persuading to leave his opinions, that he thanked God he knew neither the New nor the Old Testament, and yet had prospered well enough all his dayes.” Keith mentions that he was keeper of the privy seal; but is ignorant of the precise date when he obtained that office. He adds, that he died in 1543-4; but Mylne, in his MS. History of the Bishops of Dunkeld, as quoted, Statistical Account, vol. IX. p. 271, asserts, that Bishop George Crichton filled the see of Dunkeld from 1522 to 1559. “His disposition of the lands of

proach of the Reformation, the Bishop of Dunkeld, foreseeing the dilapidation of the benefices of the prelates, which was likely to follow the change of the national religion, and dreading the total loss of the lands and castle of Cluny attached to the see of Dunkeld, conveyed to his brother the Lord Advocate the whole of his portion of the barony of Cluny, with the singular reservation, that it should be allowable for the Bishop to resume the possession at any future period. This may at first appear an unaccountable transaction; but the peculiar circumstances of the times render the object of Bishop Crichton sufficiently apparent. It was to preserve to the family of Crichton a rich and wealthy property, in the event of his being incapaci-

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Cluny to his brother, must have happened sometime in the intermediate space. On the rights disposed to him by the bishop, Sir Robert would naturally take possession, not only of the property, but probably of the palace of Cluny, especially as it must then have been in high accommodation, having been lately built and inhabited by Bishop Brown, and esteemed at that time one of the principal houses of this country. The supposition, therefore, that his son, the Admirable Crichton, who died a young man, in the year 1581 (1582,) was born on the island, seems to possess the highest degree of probability."—*Statistical Account*, vol. IX. p. 271.



tated, by the progress of the reformed opinions, from enjoying it in his own person. And it did preserve it, as the Lord Advocate from this period, in addition to his estate of Elioock, became proprietor of the castle and barony of Cluny. In this castle, which is beautifully situated upon a little island in the Lake of Cluny, the Admirable Crichton, according to the ancient and established tradition of the neighbourhood, was born.\*

James Crichton was fully entitled to value himself upon the honourable house from which he sprung. By his connection with the Crichtons, he was allied to a family of ancient and hereditary nobility; and it is certain, that William, the third Lord Crichton, married

\* "This (that the admirable Crichton was born at the Castle of Cluny,) was confidently asserted by the oldest people in the parish, who have died in the memory of the present incumbent. They were educated in this creed, and unwilling to hear of any thing advanced to the contrary."—*Statistical Account, vol. IX. p. 268, of Parish of Cluny, by Rev. DAVID MACRITCHIE.*

It is proper, however, to mention, that the birth place of the Admirable Crichton, like that of other celebrated men, has been contested; and the honour claimed by two different places, Cluny, and Elioock, the original seat of the family, and now the property of Henry Veitch, Esq. of Elioock. At Elioock the chamber is still shown, where Crichton is said to have been born.

Lady Margaret Stewart, daughter of King James the Second. By his mother, Elizabeth Stewart, he could trace a lineal, though not a legitimate, descent from Robert, Duke of Albany, the uncle of James the First. He was connected, therefore, on both sides, with the royal family of Scotland, and his father and uncle held two of the highest offices under the government of their country.

Bishop George Crichton appears to have carried his disposition for a quiet and retired life to an excess, which was singularly disinterested. He had already conveyed his lands and castle of Cluny to his brother the Lord Advocate; and, when he found himself becoming too old for the active duties of his see, he offered to resign his bishoprick in favour of another relation of the family, of the name of Robert Crichton.\* Robert used all

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\* This Robert Crichton, is called by Spottiswood, nephew to the bishop; but his lineage and history are of extremely difficult discovery. It is at least certain, that he is not the same person with Sir Robert Crichton of Cluny, second son of the Lord Advocate, and brother to the Admirable Crichton, because he is Bishop of Dunkeld in 1561, at which time Sir Robert Crichton was not born. It appears by the will of the Lord Advocate, that Sir Robert Crichton was a minor in 1582. This Robert may have been another son of the Lord Advocate, who died before Sir Robert Crichton was born.

the influence which his family could command at Rome, in order to be promoted to the bishoprick of Dunkeld; but both at this time, and on the death of Bishop Crichton, his application was rejected, on account of the more powerful interest possessed by the celebrated John Hamilton, bastard brother to the Earl of Arran,\* then Regent of the kingdom.

On the death of Bishop Crichton, Hamilton was accordingly promoted to the see of Dunkeld. After the murder of Cardinal Beaton, in 1546, he became Archbishop of St Andrews; and upon his arrival at this superior dignity, Robert Crichton was at length raised to the vacant see, but, at what precise period, is not easily discoverable.† Bishop Robert Crichton attached himself, in those days of turbulence and disorder, to the party of his sovereign, Queen Mary, which, as is well known, was opposed by the opposite faction of the Regent of the kingdom. On the de-

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\* I have subjoined, in the Notes and Illustrations, Note F, some curious particulars regarding the Archbishop of St Andrews.

† Keith. Appendix to Scottish History, p. 175, 181.

cline of the queen's affairs, in 1571, his estates were forfeited, in common with many others of the highest nobility in the country; and continuing true to the queen's interest, he was not long after taken in the Castle of Edinburgh, which had been bravely defended by the gallant and unfortunate Sir William Kirkaldy of Grange, and sent prisoner to the Castle of Blackness.\*

In this early stage of our Memoir, when we have seen the unquestionable descent of Crichton from two of the most ancient and honourable families in his country, and have become acquainted with the high situations enjoyed by his more immediate relations, it may be proper to pause for a moment to refute an unfounded accusation, which has originally been raised against him by one of his more ancient biographers. He has been severely blamed by Dempster for having falsely asserted, when in Italy, that he was descended from a noble family connected with the royal house of Scot-

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\* There are two other authors of the name of Crichton, George Crichton and William Crichton, of whom a short notice will be found in Notes and Illustrations, Note G.

land ; and this independent historian pronounces a keen tirade against that surreptitious fame which is the consequence of such pretended nobility.\* We have already seen that the character of our celebrated countryman must remain untainted by these erroneous and unfounded accusations ; and that, when he informed his learned and enthusiastic admirer, Aldus, that he was descended from the royal family, that his father was high in office, and proprietor of Eliock and Cluny,† he asserted nothing but simple facts. His real descent was sufficiently noble to lead him to

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\* “ Hoc ideo, plenius ut mortales intelligant, quam insipida sit quorundam nostratium adolescentium elatio, qui se vilescere apud exteros existimant, nisi, specioso regii sanguinis titulo, se commendaverint ; quod vix unquam a vere nobili viro fieri animadverti.—*Hist. Eccles. Gentis Scot.* p. 189.

† Fifensis et Stormondiensis, by which Aldus means to designate the particular division of Scotland in which the lands of Eliock and Cluny are situated, is certainly an erroneous denomination. Cluny is in Perthshire, and Eliock in Dumfriesshire. But how natural was it for an Italian, utterly unacquainted with Scotland, to fall into this mistake. It is evident the error must have proceeded from Aldus ; for since Crichton had informed him correctly regarding his father's domains of Eliock and Cluny, it is ridiculous to suppose he could have any aim to deceive him by placing them in one county rather than in another.

despise all exaggerated detail; and Dempster might have spared that eloquent philippic against the pride and folly of his youthful countrymen, upon which his own conduct, in arrogating to himself a noble title and origin, furnishes us with no unamusing comment.\*

The young Crichton having received the rudiments of his grammatical education at Perth,† or, according to another authority, at Edinburgh,‡ was sent to improve himself in philosophy and the sciences at St Andrews, at that time the most celebrated and learned seminary in Scotland. The rank and fortune of his father enabled him to give his son, who was already remarkable for the early maturity of his talents and the beauty of his person, the instruction of the most learned men of the time. His masters were Rhutherford, Provost of St Salvator's College, Hepburn, Robertson, and, at a later period, Buchanan,

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\* Bayle tells us, "Dempster elort d'Ecosse, et il disoit quand il fut passe en France, qu'il avoit quite, des grands biens en son pais, a cause de la religion Catholique. Il se piquoit aussi de Grand Noblesse."—*BEACE'S Life of Tasso*, p. 436, vol. II.

† *Biographia Brit. ant. Crichton*, vol. IV. p. 442.

‡ *MS. Life*, by David Buchanan. See Appendix, No. X.

one of the most illustrious scholars at that time in Europe.\* The progress of Crichton was suitable to the eminence of his instructors, and to the celebrity which he was afterwards destined to acquire. In the year 1573, when he had hardly passed his twelfth year, he took his degree as bachelor of arts; and in two years afterwards, such appear to have been his high attainments in the different branches of scholastic knowledge, that he received his degree, as master of arts, at the very early age of fourteen.†

The different students in the University of St Andrews were at this time, previous to their taking their degrees as masters of arts, divided into what were termed circles, according to the talents and proficiency which they exhibited in the examinations which preceded the taking their degrees. The first circle comprehended those of the very highest attainments in the University. The se-

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\* "Maximos hujus tempestatis viros Buchananum, Hepburnium, Robertsonum et Rhetofordum, tibi pater dederit."—*Aldi Dedicat. in Paradox. Ciceronis, Appendix, No. III.*

† See the evidence of this fact, Note I. of Notes and Illustrations.

cond, those whose proficiency, although eminent, was not so comparatively conspicuous; and so on through the different divisions of talent. It is a remarkable circumstance, as it establishes the great and early endowments of Crichton, that at the age of fourteen he takes his degree of master of arts\* in the first circle, being the third in the circle, that is, being in talents and attainments the third scholar at that time in the University; a circumstance which, if we consider the early age of Crichton, sufficiently proves the strength and precocity of those talents which were afterwards to figure so conspicuously upon a wider field in Italy.

Having evinced this extraordinary proficiency, Crichton does not appear to have imagined that his labours were to finish with the honours he had there won, or that the period of study was in any respect concluded. His success only increased his ardour; and

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\* In the Notes and Illustrations will be found a list of the young men who were Crichton's contemporaries, for which, as well as for other communications on the mode of study pursued at the College of St Andrews, I am indebted to the kindness and research of my respected friend, Professor Lee, of St Andrews. See Note I.



the labours of those early and boyish years were repaid, as in the case of Pascal and Clairault, by attainments which would have been remarkable in a scholar of the most advanced age, and the most laborious application. He soon accomplished himself in the various branches of the science and philosophy of the times; and, by the force of natural talents, assisted, as they must have been, by intense application, acquired the use of ten different languages. At this period, and indeed till a much later date, it was the custom for our Scottish gentlemen to finish their education by foreign travel, to acquire, in the army, and in an intercourse with foreign camps and courts, that military and political knowledge, which might afterwards render them serviceable in the wars and the councils of their country. Crichton was accordingly sent by his father to the continent, at a very early age, probably in his sixteenth or seventeenth year. The purpose of his going abroad was, not only to improve himself by the sight of different countries, and to display, as was the custom in these times, the extent of his erudition in the public disputa-

tions which were then extremely common in the universities of the continent, but also to finish his education in the schools of France and Italy.

The young Crichton had not, as we have already seen, been ungrateful to nature for those early talents with which he was intrusted. He had laboured to increase, by every effort of his own, his acquisitions in knowledge and science; and nature had, in return, been prodigal to him of those gifts, which no individual exertion can command. She had given him a form, which, while it was active and powerful, was remarkable for its admirable symmetry and proportion; and a countenance which, from the account of all who had seen him, was a model of manly and intelligent beauty.\* To these endowments was united a most remarkable quickness and aptitude in the acquirement of all the elegant accomplishments which were fitted to exhibit his person to the greatest advantage, and in which the young Scottish nobility of

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\* *Imperialis Museum Physicum. Appendix, No. IX.*; and the *Italian Memoir of 1581. Appendix, No. I.*

the day were educated. The same ardent desire of excellence, and enthusiastic perseverance of cultivation, which had led him on to eminence in his severer studies, contributed to render him equally superior to his youthful compeers in all the martial exercises of that chivalrous age. The science of the sword was, at this time, most sedulously cultivated, both in our own country and on the continent. It was the weapon to which all appeals of honour were made; and its professors (for to this high appellation its teachers aspired) affected to elucidate its different branches, and demonstrate its various rules and evolutions, by the application of geometrical principles. Crichton became one of the most expert and fearless swordsmen of his time. He rode with consummate grace and boldness; and in the gentler accomplishment of dancing, upon excellence in which, even in our own days, (if we may believe a noble author), so many grave and serious consequences depend, he is recorded to have been a very admirable proficient.\* To these va-

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\* Imperialis Museum Physicum.

rious attractions there was added still another, which, in the pleasure it was calculated to bestow, was not inferior to any that has been mentioned,—a strong genius for music. He had, from nature, a sweet and finely modulated voice; and had attained to great excellence in performing upon a variety of musical instruments.\* They who are enthusiasts in this delightful science, and who have felt the deep and inexplicable influence which it possesses over our nature, will not be at a loss to estimate the power which his skill in music must have given to the young and handsome Crichton, in attracting esteem and commanding admiration.

The high rank of his father, and his connection with court, must have enabled the Lord Advocate, not only to command the best masters for these various accomplishments, but to introduce his son to the highest orders of society in the country;† and it

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\* Italian Memoir of 1581. *Imperialis Museum Historicum.*

† Robert Crichton's father appears to have been the personal friend of many of the highest noblemen of the day. The proof of this will be found in his will, (Appendix, No. XV.,) where his friends are enumerated; amongst whom we find the Earl of Arran, Earl of Gowrie, and James Lord Doune.

was from this source that he derived that graceful carriage and elegant deportment which appear to have charmed his foreign friends, and conciliated the minds of all to whom he addressed himself.

Thus fairly and excellently endowed, Crichton set out upon his travels, and directed his course first to Paris, eminent, at that period, not only for the distinguished learning of its public professors and scholars, but for the splendour and gaiety of its court. It was the custom in those days, both in France and in other continental countries, to hold public disputations, in which the learned men of the age contended with each other on the most abstruse questions of the science and philosophy of the times. To Crichton, no fairer opportunity could be presented, than what these public disputations offered, for obtaining distinction. He had already accomplished himself in the studies which furnished the topics of discussion. He had acquired the use of many both of the dead and living languages; and he possessed the manners and figure, not of a pedant who had immured himself in the cloisters of his college, but of

a finished gentleman, who had made books not so much his task as his recreation.\* Soon after his arrival in Paris, he, accordingly, in obedience to the custom of the times, affixed placards, or challenges to literary and philosophic warfare, on the most conspicuous parts of the city, engaging, that, at the expiration of six weeks from the date of the notice, he should present himself at the College of Navarre, to answer upon whatever subject should be there proposed to him, "in any science, liberal art, discipline, or faculty, whether practical or theoretic;" and this in any one of twelve specified languages.† A challenge of this nature, from so young a person, to dispute with the most profound and learned scholars in France, could not fail to excite astonishment; and it was pretty generally expected, that the stranger would decline the contest, under the pretence that his challenge was nothing more than a pasquinade against the University. The disputation, however, took place. Crichton, in the presence of an

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\* See Sir T. Urquhart's Account, p. 69.

† Ibid, p. 65.

immense concourse of spectators, presented himself in this eminent seminary, encountered in argument the gravest philosophers and divines, who had assembled on the occasion, acquitted himself to the astonishment of all who heard him, and received the public praises and congratulations of the president and four of the most eminent professors in the University.\*

But what seemed particularly to increase his triumph, and to embitter the defeat of those who attempted to cope with him, was the light and easy negligence, and the utter contempt of preparation, which he evinced before the contest. The court of Henry the Third of France was, at this time, one of the most gay and gallant in Europe.† In the

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\* Sir T. Urquhart's Account.

† This was a period, remarkable in the history of the French court, for the excessive splendour and frequency of all sorts of public festivals, which, even in the midst of war and tumult, were ardently cultivated by Henry the Third, at that time the sovereign of France. A French chronicle, describing the commotions raised in the kingdom, by the Huguenots, in the year 1576, adds,—“ Et en fut fait plaint au roi, lequel cependant, couroit la bague, vetu en Amazone, et faisoit tous les jours, ballets; et festins nouveaux, comme si son estat eust este paisible.” See *Recueil des Diverses Pieces servant a l'Histoire de Henry III. Roi de France et de Pologne.*

midst of national distresses, which might have sobered any reflecting monarch, and civil commotions which embroiled the country, the whole mind of the sovereign seemed to be occupied in the invention of the most expensive shews, and the arrangement of the most magnificent public festivals. Tournaments, where the knights jostled against each other,—courses at the ring,—tilting against the Saracen, and many other gallant amusements, accompanied with all the pomp and circumstance of chivalry, were at this time the favourite occupations of the king; and it is easy to imagine how acceptable such public shows must have been, to the genius and disposition of Crichton. In the feats of arms which there led to distinction, he was calculated, both by the natural beauty of his figure, and the uncommon skill which he had acquired, to outstrip most of his competitors; we need not therefore wonder, if, instead of betaking himself to his study, he shone pre-eminent in all the gay amusements and elegant accomplishments of the age. He was to be found in the ball-room, in the hunting-field, in the riding-house; and, the day after that in which he had



astonished the most learned and able professors, by a display of such universal talent and erudition, he appeared, with all the fire and freshness of youth, at a tilting match in the Louvre; and here, with consummate skill and address, in presence of many of the ladies and princes of the court of France, he carried off the ring from every competitor, and remained victor in that martial accomplishment which was then so ardently cultivated in this country of chivalry.\*

The display of such various and excellent acquirements, was attended with the effect to be expected; and the young Scotchman became, from this time, known by no other name than that by which he has descended to posterity,—the Admirable Crichton.† Crichton's appears to have been one of those ardent and active minds, which languish without some ruling object and employ-

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\* There can be no doubt that Mackenzie, in his *Life of Crichton*, has fallen into an error in applying the description given by Pasquier, regarding a young man who appeared at the College of Navarre, to Crichton. This error was first detected by an unknown, but acute writer, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. See Kippis' *Life of Crichton*, *Biog. Brit.*

† Mackenzie, vol. III. p. 198. Sir T. Urquhart, p. 65.

ment. He had already attained extraordinary eminence as a scholar, and any long continuance at the University of Paris was unnecessary. He became now anxious to accomplish himself as a soldier; and for this purpose, although his design of travelling to Italy rendered any long continuance in it impossible, he entered into the French service, where he became, after serving for two years in the civil wars, which at that time depopulated France, an experienced officer, and rose to an honourable command in the French army.\*

After two years residence in France, Crichton determined to continue his travels into Italy,† at this time the centre from which all that was most remarkable in philosophy, in literature, and in the fine arts, had emanated throughout Europe. He first travelled to Rome; where, emboldened by his success in France, and in obedience to the manners of

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\* Soldato a tutta botta, e due anni, ha spese alla guerra de Francia, con carico honorato.—*Italian Memoir of Crichton*. Appendix.

† See *Italian Account of Crichton*, written during his lifetime. Appendix.

this age of literary rivalry, he took an early opportunity of publishing a similar challenge, to that which he circulated in Paris: and, on a day appointed, in presence of the Pope and many of the different cardinals, with a numerous audience, amongst which were many of the most learned men of the times, he presented himself to vindicate the pledge which he had given; and, as we are told by his biographer, again astonished and delighted the spectators, by the display of the most universal talents.

After a short residence at Rome, he next repaired to Venice.\* At this time Crichton, notwithstanding the excessive admiration which he had attracted, and the popularity which his talents commanded, appears to have been labouring under some severe distress of mind, but from what cause it may have originated, is not easily discoverable. It has been already observed, that his father, the Lord Advocate, was far from an opulent man; and there are some obscure intimations in the poetry of Crichton himself,

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\* Dempster says he went to Genoa, where he was invited by the offer of an ample salary, "honorario satis amplo."

and some more decided assertions in the account of one of his early biographers,\* which would lead us to conjecture, that, notwithstanding his high connections, he was weighed down by the miseries attendant on poverty. Certain it is, that in a poem, which was written at this time, entitled, “*In suum ad Urbem Venetum appulsum,*” and addressed to Aldus Manutius, then the most celebrated printer in Europe, he alludes to his own distress of mind, and to the severe calamities which he had suffered, in lines whose general meaning is not to be mistaken, whatever obscurity may hang over the particular circumstances to which they relate.† But Crichton, in the

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\* Leitch denominates him, “*constantissimus, præ paupertate, peregrinus.*”

† “*Sæpe meos, animo, casus meditabor iniquos,  
Sæpe humectabam, guttis stillantibus, ora.*”

\* \* \* \* \*

Ut responsa petens, trepidanti ego pectore, tandem  
Verba coacta dedi. Fateor me, candida Nais  
Promeritum, quæcunque fero, *nec turpis egestas*  
Infandumque scelus servi, mea pectora vexat.  
At me, quis, miserum, magna, cognoscit, in urbe.  
Aut quis, ad æquoreas flentem, solatur, arenas.

The rest of this poem, in which there are many passages of eminent beauty, particularly in the descriptive part, will be found in the Appendix, No. V.

eminent individual to whom these verses were directed, was destined to find a friend, whose high admiration of his talents, and ardent cultivation of his friendship, were better calculated to raise his sinking spirits, than the poetical consolation of the fair-haired Naiad, whom he introduces into his poem.

On his arrival at Venice, he presented his verses to Aldus, who could not fail to remark the talents which appeared in many parts of the poem, and to be highly flattered by the compliments to his genius and to his liberality, which it contained. The appearance, the manners, and the conversation of the young stranger, were calculated to confirm these impressions. "When he presented his verses to Manutius," says Kippis, "that critic was struck with a very agreeable surprise, and judged, from the performance, that the author must be a person of extraordinary genius. Upon discoursing with the stranger, he was filled with admiration; and finding him to be skilled in every subject, he introduced him to the acquaintance of the men of principal learning and note in Venice."\*

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\* Kippis' Life of Crichton, Biog. Brit.

Crichton, accordingly, contracted an intimate acquaintance, not only with Manutius, to whose admiration for his talents we owe the most animated and interesting account which remains of him, but with other men of learning and dignity in this celebrated city. His chief friends were Sperone Speroni, one of the most learned and venerable names in the history of Italian literature, Lorenzo Massa, the secretary to the Republic of Venice, and equally eminent as a scholar and a politician,\* and John Donati. Two Latin odes, one addressed to Massa, and the other to Donati, are still preserved amongst the few poems which have reached our time. The former, to Massa, is a very beautiful little lyric poem, which, for classic elegance, might do honour to any age of modern Latin poetry.

Soon after his arrival in Venice, he was publicly introduced to the Doge and the Senate,† in whose presence he made an oration, of which the eloquence was so brilliant, and

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\* Aldi Dedicatio, In Parad. Ciceronis.

† Aldi Dedicatio, in Paradoxa Ciceronis. Imperialis Museum Historicum, art. Crichton.

the manner of delivery so consummately graceful, that, in the words of Imperialis, "he was esteemed a prodigy of nature." He afterwards disputed upon different subjects of theology, philosophy, and the mathematics; before the most eminent professors of the city, and an immense concourse of people, who, attracted by the high reputation which he had acquired, now flocked from all quarters to hear him. A very great and general impression appears to have been made at Venice, by his uncommon learning, his engaging manners, and various accomplishments. Lives of him were drawn up, and published. Aldus deemed it an honour to himself, that the name of Crichton should be united with his magnificent edition of Cicero, and believed that he did honour to others, when he celebrated them as the friends of so illustrious a scholar. Copies of his verses were commonly circulated, and eagerly sought after; and his popularity extended, not only amongst the scholars, who could appreciate his talents, but, what was perhaps more flattering at his early age, he became the idol of the gay and the

young, "the observed of all observers," the centre, to which were directed the fondest wishes, and the fairest eyes, in that country of love and beauty.\* After a residence of four months at Venice, we find that Crichton, who had fallen into a bad state of health, from which he now slowly recovered, repaired, by the advice of his friends, to Padua; the University of which city enjoyed, at that time, a very high degree of reputation. Although enfeebled by sickness, he does not appear to have, in any degree, relaxed, either in the ardour with which he pursued his studies, or in that eager and honourable desire of distinction, which seems to have been the master passion of his mind. †

The day after his arrival, there was an assembly held of the most eminent and learned men of Padua, † in the house of Jacobus

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\* Sir T. Urquhart's Life of Crichton.

† Nam, postquam, adversa valetudine, jam quatuor menses laborasses, priusquam in integrum priscae sanitatis statum redires, amicorum consilio, ad Patavinam Academiam, tanquam ad sapientiae officinam, profectus es; ubi, Idibus Martii, in diem sequentem, suscepto consilio, omnes, omnium disciplinarum, professores, in oedibus clarissimi viri, Jacobi Aloisii Cornelii, ejus auctoritate et precibus, ut convocarentur, petiisti. Aldi Dedicat.—Jacobus



**Aloisius Cornelius.** They were naturally attracted thither, by the accounts which they had received of this extraordinary person; and both Aldus and Imperialis have left us the most particular details of this meeting.\*

Crichton opened the assembly with an encomiastic poem, in praise of the city, the university, and the audience. He then, with that versatility of talent for which he was so remarkable, diverged from the fields of poetry into the less ornate regions of prose; and disputed, for the space of six hours, with the most celebrated professors and scholars who had assembled, upon various subjects of learning and philosophy. He, more especially, exposed the errors of Aristotle and his commentators, with so much solidity and acuteness, yet, at the same time, with such engaging modesty, that he excited here, as he had done both at Rome and Venice, universal admiration.

Not satisfied with this display of his talents in the severer subjects of philosophy and the-

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Aloisius Cornelius, is transformed by Mackenzie into Jacobus Moynius Cornelina.

\* Aldi Prefatio in Parad. Scipionis.—Imperialis Vita Crichtoni.

ology, Crichton next assumed a more playful tone ; and, with much ingenuity, concluded, (as if anxious to decline the encomiums which were lavished upon him,\* and to reconcile his audience to their comparative inferiority,) by declaiming upon the happiness of ignorance,—a subject somewhat similar to that which was afterwards to afford a field for the satire and pleasantry of the celebrated Erasmus.†

These exhibitions, and the applauses which they drew upon him, could not fail to become grateful to Crichton ; and a repetition of them appears to have been eagerly demanded by the public. A day was accordingly fixed for another public disputation, in the palace of the Bishop of Padua ; but some unforeseen circumstances intervened, and prevented it from taking place. This disappointment afforded an opportunity to a set of weak and envious opponents of the celebrity of Crichton,‡

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\* Aldi Dedicatio.—Imperialis Vita Crichtoni.

† In his *Encomium Moriaë*, which he wrote in the course of a week during his residence in the house of the Chancellor, Sir Thomas More.—JORTIN'S *Life of Erasmus*, Vol. I. p. 31.

‡ Aldi Præfat. in Parad. Ciceronis.

to attack and disparage that excellence which had eclipsed them. These, not only attempted to detract from his merits, but affected to consider him as a literary impostor, whose acquirements were totally superficial.

To confound such invidious opponents, Crichton caused a challenge to be fixed on the gate of two of the principal churches at Padua. The chief subject on which he engaged to dispute, was the philosophy of Aristotle;—a subject, which, as opposed to the philosophy of Plato, at this period, nearly absorbed the attention, and divided the talents, not only of the University of Padua, and the learned world of Italy, but of almost all Europe. Crichton appears to have espoused the Platonic side of the question. He engaged to demonstrate, before the University, that the errors of Aristotle and all the followers of his philosophy, were nearly innumerable; and that the latter had entirely failed, both in the explanation of their master's meaning, and in their manner of discussing theological subjects. Nor was this all. He undertook, likewise, to expose the errors which had been fallen into by certain mathematical professors,

whose names are not given in the written challenge, but who were probably those persons who had affected to consider him as an impostor; and he pledged himself to expound whatever should be proposed to him, and to reply to whatever should be objected against him, in the whole circle of the sciences. These various points he engaged to explain, either according to the ordinary logical rules which were followed in the schools, or, where they could be applied, in numbers and mathematical figures; or, if the subject admitted of poetical discussion and embellishment, in an infinite variety of different kinds of verse.\*

This was the last and most difficult contest which had been yet undertaken by Crichton. It embraced the greatest variety of subjects; and these, too, were subjects upon which there was the greatest variety of opinion. His opponents could not fail to be both numerous and learned, where the matter of dispute was the Aristotelian philosophy; and, from

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\* The Programma, or Challenge of Crichton, will be found in the Appendix, No. III.

the boldness with which the gauntlet was thrown down, and the feelings of satiric spleen and envy with which he had been lately attacked, we need have no doubt but that every effort must have been made for his confusion and discomfiture. But the star of Crichton's genius was still in its ascendant. The contest, indeed, was long, for it lasted three days, before an innumerable concourse of spectators; his friend Marinus being himself present, and a spectator, to use his own words, "of this miraculous encounter."\* But the protracted nature of the combat, served only to increase the honour of the victory. Crichton's defamers appear to have been for ever silenced by the overwhelming power of the talents which they had affected to despise. He remained upon the field, during this long period of probation, prepared to engage with every opponent. He argued with a courageous readiness and success, which were so truly admirable, that

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\* "Tu vero, me spectatorem pugnarum mirificarum, habuisti."

Aldus can only describe them by expressions borrowed from actual warfare; and the clamour of applause and admiration, which, at the last, burst from the assembly, was superior to what had ever before been lavished upon man. "*Sic acriter et vehementer præliatus est, ut clamor, concursusque insolitus, ad studia tua lenienda, tantâ cum laude fieret, ut nihil unquam magnificentius, ab hominibus, auditum sit.*"\*

Crichton, pursuing his travels through Italy, proceeded, from Padua, to the court of Mantua; where the strength of his courage, and the versatility of his accomplishments, were about to be tried in a very different scene from those in which he had been so lately engaged.

It has been already remarked, that the science of the sword was, at this time, particularly studied throughout Europe; and nowhere was it carried to greater perfection than in Italy. Crichton, too, was, as we have seen, particularly famous for his skill in this

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\* Aldi Dedicatio in Paradoxa Ciceronis.

manly accomplishment, previous to his leaving his native country; and it is very probable, that, during his travels in France and Italy, he had paid assiduous attention to his improvement in that science, which was, at this period, esteemed essential to the education of a gentleman.

There happened, at this time, to be at the court of Mantua, a certain Italian gentleman, in the words of Urquhart, "of a mighty, able, strong, nimble, and vigorous body; but, by nature, fierce, cruel, warlike, and audacious, and superlatively expert and dexterous in the use of his weapon." Elated by his uncommon skill, and rendered haughty by continual victory, this gentleman had chosen for himself a very singular profession,—that of a travelling gladiator, or bravo. His custom was, on his arrival in any city, to challenge all who chose to try their skill with him in single combat; he himself laying down a certain sum of money, and his opponent the same, with the proviso, that the united purses should be the meed of the conqueror. On his arrival at Mantua, three gentlemen had speedily accepted his chal-

lenge ; and such was the uncommon skill of their opponent, that all had paid the penalty of their rashness with their lives. Their deaths were the subject of universal regret at the court of Mantua ; and this feeling became the more poignant, on account of the ungenerous exultation of the Italian ; in whom, contrary to what we generally find in brave men, there appear to have been united the three extremes of courage, cruelty, and insolence.

Crichton, disregarding the danger he underwent, unappalled by the fate of his precursors in the enterprize, and perhaps confident, from having witnessed their attempts, of his own superior skill, determined to exchange the peaceful encounters in which he had astonished the Italians, for a combat of a more desperate kind. He, accordingly, sent a challenge to this formidable antagonist, and encountered him, before the assembled court of Mantua. It is easy to imagine, when we take into consideration the extraordinary popularity of this young foreigner, his amiable manners, and various and uncommon endowments, the very high interest



which such a single combat must have excited. It was the struggle of the brutal courage of a professional duellist, against the high-spirited and chivalrous bravery of an accomplished gentleman ; and the result was equally glorious to him here, as upon all other occasions. After a contest, in which he, at first, acted on the defensive, and evinced the most consummate skill in foiling the attacks, and at length completely exhausting the strength of his antagonist, he dexterously seized the advantage, became the assailant, and obtained an easy victory ; putting the Italian to death, by thrice passing his sword through his body.\*

In consequence of this achievement, and the high reputation which he had acquired in Italy,† the Duke of Mantua engaged him in his service as the companion and preceptor to his son,‡ Vincenzo di Gonzaga, a young man

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\* Sir Thomas Urquhart's Life of Crichton.

† David Buchanan. In vitâ Crichtoni.

‡ David Buchanan, in his MS. Life of Crichton, which is printed in the Appendix, asserts, that it was on the recommendation of Pope Clement the Eighth, that the Duke of Mantua appointed Crichton preceptor to his son. This is manifestly an

who had evinced a strong passion for literature, but who was otherwise of a passionate temper, and dissolute manners.\*

The court of Mantua, of which Crichton was now a distinguished ornament, had evinced a very early passion for the drama; and, under the patronage of the house of Gonzaga,† it had become highly celebrated for the excellence of its actors, and the perfection of the machinery of its stage. Crichton, in the suite of a young and gay prince, who, though his character was a prey sometimes to the haughty and resentful passions, had redeemed his failings by the enthusiasm with which he cultivated letters, and the generosity with which he rewarded their professors, now directed the powers of his mind to the composition of some dramatic work by which he might delight and gratify his master. Endowed, as we have already seen, with the

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error, for Clement the Eighth was not pope till many years after this date.

\* Muratori Annali D'Italia, vol. XI. p. 38.

† Possevino, Gonzagæ Familiæ Historia, p. 844.

most varied talents, possessing a mind which, amongst its other efforts, had already distinguished itself in poetical composition, and in the ease and grace with which he spoke in public, he only required to have these powers drawn forth by the sight and study of correct models, to become both a dramatic writer and dramatic performer; nor were these models wanting. At the time of his residence in Paris, as well as during his stay in Italy, Crichton must have had many opportunities of imbibing, and of cultivating that taste for dramatic representations, which began to evince itself in France, and to be very widely disseminated through Italy, during the respective periods which he passed in both these countries. The body of Italian comedians, who were denominated *I. Gelosi*, had commenced their performances under the patronage of Henry the Third, who was enthusiastically fond of these exhibitions;\* and such was the

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\* We learn, from a contemporary French chronicle, that these exhibitions were given on the Sabbath day. "Le Dimanche, dix neuveume, les comediens Italiens, sornommez i gelosi, commencerent a jouer leurs Comedies, en la salle de l'Hostel de

rapid progress of their popularity, that we are informed by the historians of those times, the united congregations of four of the most popular preachers in Paris, could not equal the audience which daily assembled to hear the *Gelosi*.

Another amusing species of dramatic performance, which was known by the name of the *Comœdia a soggetto*, had begun to be extremely popular in Italy, at the time when Crichton visited that country.\* In it, the province of the actor embraces a much higher kind of excellence, than that of the common comedian. He must draw, not so much on his memory, as on his invention; and must clothe, in extemporaneous effusions of his own, those rude sketches of dramatic scenes, which are all that are presented to him by his author.

Crichton accordingly composed a comedy,

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Bourbon, a Paris, ils prenoient de salaire, quatre sols pour teste, de tous les Francois qui les vouloient aller voir jouer, ou ils y avoit tels concours, et affluence de peuple, que les quatre meilleurs predicateurs de Paris, n'en avoient pas ensemble, autant, quand ils prechoient."

\* See Walker's Essay on the Italian Drama, p. 199. 248.

or species of dramatic satire, in which he exposed the vices, and ridiculed the weaknesses of the different occupations in life.\* The divine, the philosopher, the statesman, the soldier, and many of the other studious or active professions, into which inventive man has divided his labours, were successively introduced; and the prevailing and characteristic failings of each, pourtrayed in colours of the most playful and amusing satire. But this was not all; Crichton, in this concluding effort of his genius, for it proved his last, asserted his claim to that uncommon versatility of talent, which had already rendered him so remarkable. When his comedy was brought upon the stage of Mantua, he himself undertook to sustain the parts of the most prominent and difficult characters in the piece; and supported these, with such an inimitable change of voice, habit, and manner, and such power of dramatic painting, that, like one of the exquisite comedians of our own day, he appeared a separate actor in every different character, and

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\* Sir T. Urquhart. Dempster, Hist. Ecclesiastica.

it became impossible to determine in which he had proved himself most truly excellent.

We are now arrived at the utmost limits of the life of this remarkable man, who, though yet scarcely entitled to a graver name than that of youth, for he had not completed his twenty-second year, had crowded, into this short space of time, a series of actions, which might have graced the maturest period of genius, and done honour to the most advanced period of life. But that career which had so brilliantly begun, was now hastening to a dark and melancholy conclusion.

When walking one night through the streets of Mantua, returning from a visit which he had paid to his mistress, and playing, as he went along, upon his guitar, he found himself suddenly attacked by a riotous company of persons in masks, whom, with that skill and activity for which he was so remarkable, he soon foiled and put to flight. Before this, however, he had disarmed and seized the leader of the party, and upon unmasking him, discovered that it was the Prince of Mantua, to whose court he belonged. Crichton, although he had been attacked in

the meanest manner, and had only disarmed his master, in defending himself, was yet affected by the deepest concern, upon this discovery. He instantly dropt upon one knee ; and taking his sword by the point, with romantic devotion, presented it to the prince, his master. Vincenzo, naturally of a revengeful and treacherous temper, was at this moment inflamed by wine, irritated by defeat, and perhaps by jealousy.\* Certain it is, that it will require the presence of one or all, of these dark and conflicting passions, to account for the act which followed. He received

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\* I have said that the prince was inflamed by jealousy, because other historians have represented the whole of this transaction as the result of a midnight brawl, in which Crichton, who was then in company with a lady to whom he had secretly paid his addresses, and who was also admired by the prince, was attacked by the latter and his attendants, in a fit of jealousy, and killed upon the spot. I have given the best authenticated and most probable account of this mysterious event. It seems, however, still uncertain whether Crichton owed his death to an accidental rencounter, or to a purpose of premeditated assassination. But all his biographers agree, that whatever may have been the particular circumstances accompanying this calamitous event, he fell by the hand of his own master, Vincenzo Prince of Mantua. His death, as was to be expected from the impression made by his uncommon talents, occasioned great and universal lamentation.

Crichton's sword, and instantly, with equal meanness and brutality, employed it in piercing his defenceless, and injured benefactor, through the heart.

Thus died the Admirable Crichton, in the twenty-second year of his age; preserving, in this last fatal encounter, that superiority to all other men which rendered his life so remarkable; and then, only, conquered, when his romantic ideas of honour had made him renounce the powers and the courage which, upon every other occasion, had so pre-eminently distinguished him.



## SECTION II.

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**H**AVING presented this brief account of the remarkable talents, the singular adventures, and the melancholy catastrophe of Crichton, we come now to the more difficult, but not less interesting task, of detailing and examining the various historical authorities upon which the above detail is entirely founded.

There are several different ways in which the reputation of those eminent persons who have flourished in former centuries, and whose talents have been recorded by contemporary writers, may be attacked by modern authors. The first, and most evident method, is to discredit the authority of those contemporary authors themselves, and thus induce the mind to distrust, if not wholly

reject, the accounts which they have transmitted. The next is to shew, that these accounts are in themselves utterly improbable, contradicted by the common experience of mankind, and contrary to all that we know of human nature. And lastly, if any literary productions of such eminent person have been preserved, these may, upon examination, be found unworthy of the high character which he has acquired, and the eulogies which his contemporaries have pronounced upon him. These different methods of examination constitute, as far as I can see, the only weapons by which the reputation of any man, whose character is to be estimated by the accounts which have been given of him, and the works which he has left, may be either attacked or defended. If the authority of his biographers prove to be unimpeachable; if the relation which they have left us be neither incredible nor improbable; if the literary fragments which remain, evince, or even do not contradict, that eminent talent which is otherwise attributed to him, then, by the common rules of human belief, and by every principle which ought to be followed

in biographical criticism, the character of a writer so attacked emerges from the ordeal through which he has been compelled to pass, with more unshaken and more unsullied honour than before.

In proceeding to the examination of the historical evidence by which the reputation of the Admirable Crichton is supported, I shall begin with the contemporary accounts of him, and so descend to his more modern biographers; esteeming this to be at once a more fair and more natural mode of adducing the evidence, than to commence, as has been done by Dr Kippis and the learned biographer of Tasso, with the later and more dubious, and descend, from these, to the more early eulogists.\* In following this mode of exa-

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\* The Testimonia regarding Crichton, which will be found printed separately at the end of the Notes and Illustrations, include the evidence of Aldus Manutius, of John Imperialis, of Felix Alstolfi, of the Italian Biographical Sketch, or Handbill, written during Crichton's residence at Venice, and the MS. of Signor Morelli, quoted in Serassi's Life of Mazzoni. After these, we may include the biographical accounts of Dempster, Abernethy, David Buchanan, Johnston, and Leitch; and this brings us down to the Life of him, written in "The Jewel," by Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty. The more modern names of Mackenzie, Dr S. Johnson, Pennant, the Earl of Buchan, Kippis,

mination, we come first of all to the accounts left us by contemporary Italian writers.

It has been already observed, that Crichton was received with the highest admiration, and enjoyed very great popularity at Venice; that lives of him were written, during his residence in that city; and crowds flocked, from all quarters, to witness the exhibition of his talents. All these assertions are authenticated by a late discovery of a most curious piece of evidence. This is a short biographical and descriptive memoir, published at Venice in 1580, and containing at once an accurate and comprehensive account of his very various endowments.

“The Scotchman,”\* says this unknown writer, “whose name is James Crichton, is a young man of twenty years of age upon the 19th of August last. He is distinguished by a birth-mark, or mole, beneath his right eye. He is master of ten languages. These are, Latin and Italian, in which he is excellently

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and Black, complete the catalogue of those authors who have described the exploits, or descanted on the literary character of Crichton.

\* See the original in the Appendix, No. I.

skilled ; Greek, in which he has composed epigrams ; Hebrew, Chaldaic, Spanish, French, Flemish, English, and Scotch ; and he is also acquainted with the German. He is deeply skilled in philosophy, in theology, and in astrology ; in which science he holds all the calculations of the present day to be erroneous. On philosophical and theological questions, he has frequently disputed with very able men, to the astonishment of all who have heard him. He possesses a most thorough knowledge of the Cabala. His memory is so astonishing, that he knows not what it is to forget ; and, whenever he has once heard an oration, he is ready to recite it again, word for word, as it was delivered. He possesses the talent of composing Latin verses, upon any subject which is proposed to him, and in every different kind of metre. Such is his memory, that even though these verses have been extempore, he will repeat them backwards, beginning from the last word in the verse. His orations are unpremeditated and beautiful. He is also able to discourse upon political questions with much solidity. In his person he is extremely beautiful. His ad-

dress is that of a finished gentleman, even to a wonder ; and his manner, in conversation, the most gracious which can be imagined. He is, in addition to this, a soldier at all points, (*soldato a tutta botta,*) and has, for two years, sustained an honourable command in the wars of France. He has attained to great excellence in the accomplishments of leaping and dancing, and to a remarkable skill in the use of every sort of arms ; of which he has already given proofs. He is a remarkable horseman, and breaker of horses, and an admirable joust-er, (*giostratore singolare*). His extraction is noble ; indeed, by the mother's side, regal ; for he is allied to the royal family of the Stuarts. Upon the great question of the procession of the Holy Spirit, he has held disputations with the Greeks, which were received with the highest applause ; and, in these conferences, has exhibited an incalculable mass of authorities, both from the Greek and Latin Fathers, and also from the decisions of the different councils. The same exuberance is shewn, when he discourses upon subjects of philosophy or theology ; in which he has all Aristotle and the commentators at his finger

ends. (*alle mani.*)\* Saint Thomas and Duns Scotus, with their different disciples, the Thomists and Scotists, he has all by heart, and is ready to dispute, *in utramque partem*; which talent he has already exhibited with the most distinguished success: and, indeed, such is his facility upon these subjects, that he has never disputed, unless upon matters which were proposed to him by others. The Doge and his consort were pleased to hear him; and, upon doing so, testified the utmost amazement. He also received a present from the hands of his Serene Highness. Upon the whole, he is a wonder of wonders; in so much so, that the possession of such various and astonishing talents, united in a body so gracefully formed, and of so sanguine and amiable a temperament, has given rise to many strange and chimerical conjectures. He has, at present, retired from town to a villa, to extend two thousand conclusions, embracing questions in all the different faculties, which he means, within the space of

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\* See this passage in the original, in which the meaning is somewhat obscure. One line, of which I cannot see the import, I have omitted.

two months, to sustain and defend in Venice, in the church of St John and St Paul ;—not being able to give his attention both to his own studies and to the wishes of those persons who would eagerly devote the whole day to hear him.” \*

This is a most curious and valuable document. It is written, as we may see, at the time when the admiration for Crichton had reached its highest pitch in Venice. It marks his exact age and the day of his birth ; he had not then attained majority. It exhibits a minute, but confused and ill-arranged catalogue of his various accomplishments, both mental and physical ; of the books he had studied, the feats he had performed, the intellectual battles, in which his prowess had been so remarkably conspicuous. The beauty of his person, the elegance of his manners, the nobility of his descent, and his services in the French army, are all particularly insisted on ; and upon all these points the highest praise is given, the richest colouring employed.

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\* There is added to this sketch, which seems to have been an *affiche*, or hand-bill, the date, in these words :—“ Printed at Venice, for the brothers Dom. and Geo. Batt. Guerra, 1580.” See the original in the Appendix, No. I.



The precise time in which this elege is written, evidently enhances its value, because it determines its authenticity. It is a true and just transcript of the popular feeling at the time when Crichton had made his first appearance at Venice; when such was the impression which his remarkable talents had created, that he found it impossible to satisfy the curiosity of the numbers who flocked to hear him, and at the same time attend to those studies, for his improvement in which he had travelled into Italy. It proves, also, that, although remarkable for unpremeditated efforts in minor matters, Crichton, upon great occasions, required both time and study to mature his natural powers; and that, previous to one of his greatest disputations, he had retired to a villa at a distance from the city, to prepare in solitude for the contest which awaited him. This piece of evidence is, as already remarked, of very recent discovery. It is the very earliest, and certainly one of the most valuable, of the contemporary accounts of Crichton.\*

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\* The manner in which this curious document was discovered, is thus described by the learned gentleman, Mr G. Hibbert

The next document in this class has been preserved by the Abbe Serassi, the accurate and indefatigable author of the *Life of Tasso*, in a biographical memoir which he has written of Mazzoni. The account is taken from a manuscript Venetian Chronicle, in possession of the Abbe Giacomo Morelli. "Crichton," says the Chronicle, "arrived at Venice in the month of August, 1580, and attracted the admiration of this whole city; since, besides his knowledge of ten languages, he shewed himself particularly versed in philosophy, theology, the mathematics, and astrology; and to these endowments was added so remarkable a memory, that when he had once heard an oration or a discourse from the pulpit, he could repeat it again to the

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of Clapham, in whose possession it now is, and to whom the literary world are indebted for its publication:—"A book lately came into my possession from the collection of an amiable and accomplished amateur of Italian literature, (Mr S. W. Singer of Fulham,) into which has been inserted a single printed leaf, of genuine date and originality, published when Crichton was at Venice, in 1580. The book in which it is inserted, is the second Aldine folio edition of the *Cortegiano* of Castiglione, printed in 1545. The book belonged to Francesco Melchiori of Venice, who made it the depository of some other curious papers, as well as of this interesting document."

*Edinburgh Magazine for July, 1818, p. 29.*

most minute word. He composed Latin verses, *extempore*, in every different measure. He discoursed, with solidity, upon affairs of state, or on matters of war; or, in general, upon every subject which was started. He possessed, in addition to this, in the most perfect manner, the accomplishments of singing, of dancing, and the art of playing with every different sort of weapon. His descent is noble; indeed, by the mother's side, it is regal; so that, in seeing so many, and such excellent endowments concentrating, as they do, in a single body, itself most beautiful and finely proportioned, very various conjectures have arisen concerning this remarkable person.\*

It would be superfluous to offer any reflections upon this decisive passage, as it is evident that the remarks which were made regarding the former document, apply with

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\* When we come to consider the evidence establishing the fact of Crichton's death by the hand of Vincenzo di Gonzaga, there will be quoted a very singular passage which follows this account of Crichton, regarding a monody, said to be written by him, upon the death of the Cardinal Charles Borromeo. In the mean time, I may remark that none of his former biographers have had an opportunity of considering or examining these two Italian accounts of him.

equal force to the present. The next author who has left us a contemporary account of Crichton, is the celebrated Aldus Manutius; and his evidence is at once of the most unexceptionable, and the most conclusive nature. This author does not transcribe what he only heard from other persons, or had read in other books, regarding events which had passed before his own time. He was a contemporary, an intimate friend of Crichton's, and an eye-witness of those public disputations which he records. "*Tu vero me non solum auatorem consiliorum, sed spectatorem pugnarum mirificarum, habuisti.*" He accordingly describes, with the most pointed minuteness, the different scenes in which Crichton exhibited his talents; he dwells upon the various powers, which, in the different branches of philosophy, in the use of many different languages, and in his facility in poetical composition, he had exhibited before men who were Aldus's own contemporaries, some of whom must have been Crichton's literary rivals, and all of whom were ready to contradict his statement, had it been unsupported by fact. He records the illustrious

descent of Crichton, the estates possessed, and the authority enjoyed by his father, the extreme beauty of his countenance and person, his excellence in all manly and martial exercises, his exact age, the eminent preceptors to whom his education was entrusted, his arrival at Venice, and the verses which he presented upon that occasion. Nor is he contented with the testimony of his own individual admiration. In the dedication of his *Lælius* to Lorenzo Massa, who then held one of the highest offices in the Venetian Republic, he congratulates this eminent man upon his intimacy with Crichton, "divinum plane juvenem;" and he subjoins an ode which had been addressed by the young scholar to the Venetian secretary. Lastly, in a pathetic dedication of the *Timæus* of Cicero to the memory of Crichton, he records the year of his death, the violence by which it was occasioned, and the universal regret which accompanied it.\*

Here, then, by an eye-witness, we are presented with the most particular account of

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\* See Appendix, Nos. III. IV. V. and VI.

the extraordinary endowments of Crichton ; and this an account which, when we consider the abilities of Aldus to appreciate the talents of which he speaks, the references he makes to other eminent men, whom he represents as, equally with himself, the friends and admirers of Crichton, and the publicity which he knew awaited this Dedication, is entitled to the very highest credit. The two modern authors, Dr Black, and Dr Kippis, who have attempted to reduce the reputation of Crichton to what they conceive its proper level, have evidently felt much difficulty with regard to the different testimonies transmitted by Aldus.\* To discredit such a witness altogether, was impossible ; and Kippis, accordingly, after having nibbled round the corners of his evidence, and gently insinuated a few objections which require no serious reply, seems compelled to admit that the personal presence of Aldus is a very staggering circumstance, and that he “ is a positive and

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\* Dr Black observes, that “ Kippis goes on pretty smoothly till he comes to the Dedication of Aldus ; but here his path roughens, and he is evidently at a loss.”

undoubted witness, with respect to Crichton's intellectual and literary exertions at Padua and Venice."\* He observes, however, that he is the only living authority upon the subject of Crichton's celebrity, a remark which we have already seen to be perfectly erroneous, and winds up his examination of Aldus' testimony with this consoling reflection.

Dr Black, in his Biographical Critique on Crichton, when he begins to examine the evidence contained in the Dedication of Aldus, is not more successful in his attempt to invalidate its authority ; and, although he observes, with a good-humoured metaphor, that the path which was trod by the leveller of Crichton's fame, became suddenly rough and laborious the moment he entered upon this Dedication, it is singular that he endeavours to clear it by the very same weapons which had proved so feeble in the hands of his predecessor.

We have already vindicated the honour and veracity of Crichton from that unfounded

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\* Biog. Brit. Art. Crichton, p. 452.

attack of Dempster's, regarding his descent from the royal blood of Scotland. Dr Black has reiterated very nearly the same accusation; and that, in the most broad and ungal-lant terms. "It is evident," says he, "that Crichton told an untruth to Aldus concern-ing his father's possessions. *Robertus Crito-nius, pater tuus, Fifensis in Scotia, et Stormondiensis, Elioki, et Clunæi, tot prævidiorum, tot oppidorum dominus.*" Aldus; (he adds,) could only have learnt the existence of such places, from Crichton. We have already re-plied to the error evidently made by Aldus, and not by Crichton, in the insertion of the words, *Fifensis et Stormondiensis*; and, with the exception of these, it is easy to see that the assertion of Dr Black, regarding this un-truth, rests upon a foundation as hollow and unsound as the accusation of Dempster. Crichton's father *was* Robert Crichton, pro-prietor of the estates of Eliock and Cluny, and enjoyed the high situations of Lord Ad-vocate, and Lord of Session. The untruth,

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\* Life of Tasso, vol. II. p. 435.



therefore, cannot apply to the words, *Elioki et Clunæi dominus*. The word, *præsidium*,\* used in its pure and classic sense by Aldus, denotes any high command or situation entrusted to an individual who watches over the safety of others, and is therefore, with perfect propriety, applied to the distinguished public situations held by Robert Crichton; and the term, ‘*oppidorum*,’ is perhaps a natural, though ludicrous mistake of Manutius, who hearing Crichton, in the language of his country, describe the different *townes*† on his father’s estates, imagined that he used the English word, *town*, and instantly, in the excess of his respect, dubbed the Lord Advocate, “*Dominus oppidorum*.”

The Dedication of Aldus is, in the next place, held up to doubt and discredit, by an assertion that all the dedications of this author are in the same high-flown strain of exaggerated panegyric,—that, having never suf-

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\* See Nizolius in Ciceronem, sub voce *præsidium*.

† *Towne* was used in the time of Crichton, and is still used in old Scotch, to denote a collection of cot-houses. I am aware, that, to support this explanation, we must believe that Aldus was acquainted, in some degree, with the English language; an assumption which is certainly hypothetical.

ficiently practised the Horatian precept of "Nil admirari," the learned printer was in the habit of regarding "the stage of life as an opera, on which prodigies were perpetually passing;" and that his familiar letters furnish very striking instances of this disposition.\*

When a particular account of any eminent person has been given by a contemporary writer, who was his intimate friend, and the eye-witness of the exploits which he recounts,—when the only definite accusation which has been brought against the correctness of such an account, is found to be a groundless accusation,—and when every circumstance which it includes is, as we shall immediately see, corroborated by the concurrent testimony of other authors, in a case like this, any such general and unembodied assertions, as that this writer is addicted to a hyperbolical style of writing, or fond of attending an opera peopled by prodigies of his own creation, are too vague and inconclusive to

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\* See Black's *Life of Tasso*, No. XXV. Appendix to vol. II. p. 438.

deserve much attention. But, even here, Dr Black has been unnecessarily severe upon the Aldine prefaces, and the authority to be given to the evidence which they contain ; nor does the sentence of Renouard, which he has quoted in support of his opinion, appear to imply that heavy weight of censure which is ascribed to it.

With regard to the taste for the marvellous, and the disposition to tell many untruths for the purpose of increasing his encomium, *dir molte buglie in accrescimento di lode*, which is said to appear in the Letters of Aldus, we may remark, that so far from their being considered as a collection of vain and empty literary compliments, these Letters have received high commendations, both for the elegance of their style, and the justice and discernment of their opinions. It is the opinion of Zeno, in speaking of these Letters, says Renouard, in his *Memoires de l'Imprimerie des Aldes*, that they are compositions remarkable for the purity and elegance of the style in which they are written, and that they present us with a most advantageous picture of their author. His opinions regarding others

are formed with justice, and he is uniformly modest in his estimation of himself. *Juste, quand il parle des autres, et toujours tres modeste, quand il est question de lui meme.*

In proceeding to illustrate his argument, Dr Black has given quotations from several letters\* addressed by Aldus to different Italian noblemen and literati, introducing to their acquaintance a young Polish scholar of the name of Stanislaus Niegoseusky, in terms certainly of the very highest panegyric. These praises seem to be, in the letters at least, almost entirely given to his poetical talents, if we except the sentence where he is said to be excellent in feats of letters and of arms. “*Con le prouvé delle lettere e dell armi.*” It is evident that the argument against Crichton, drawn from the alleged encomiastic disposition of Aldus, is not complete, till it is proved that these praises were, in the particular instance of Niegoseusky, unfounded and hyperbolic. Now, this has not even been attempted; and the opponents of Crichton’s

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\* The introductory letters will be found in the Appendix to Dr Black’s Life of Tasso, vol. ii. p. 440.

fame have thus entirely neglected to supply a material link in the chain of evidence against him. But even allowing that Niegoseusky had been proved to be a person unwarrantably eulogised by Aldus, does this solitary instance establish what has been so broadly asserted, that the stage of life was by Aldus so constantly peopled with prodigies, and his mind so overheated with the contemplation of them, that his testimony is unworthy of credit, when, taking the whole range of his letters and his life, we find this young Polish scholar to be the only person who is spoken of in terms at all approaching to those which he has employed in his encomium of Crichton?

So far, then, the attempt to discredit the authority of Aldus is unsuccessful. But the argument may be still more effectually defeated; for the truth is, that Niegoseusky was a man of very extraordinary talents, remarkable for his poetical powers,—the admirer and panegyrist of Crichton,—the only person who was esteemed, in some degree, the rival of his celebrity, and, by a remarkable coincidence, not only addicted to the same studies, but of

exactly the same age.\* The character of this young Polish scholar is illustrated by a dedication to him, by Aldus, of Cicero's first and only poetical production, a translation of the verses of Aratus; and it is particularly interesting, as it contains another testimony regarding Crichton, which has not before been discovered by any of his biographers. After some introductory matter, which is of no importance, Aldus proceeds.—“ I send to you those verses of Aratus, which have been translated by Cicero—one poet to another—but with this difference, that it is a poet of inferior, to one of superior genius. My book, *De Universitate*, was dedicated to my friend, alas! my departed friend, Crichton. Now that I inscribe to you the verses of Aratus, say shall I dedicate them to you, as his rival, or his panegyrist, or his superior; or shall I ascribe to you all these characters at once?  
\* \* \* It is not enough to say that you write verses; you pour them forth with that unex-

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\* A coincidence of dates induces Dr Black to think that Ni-goseusky is the same person who is mentioned in a letter of Tasso to his friend Cataneo, where Tasso tells him, “ I was visited by that Polish youth, who deserves such admiration.”—*Opere de Tasso*, vol. IX. p. 345.

amplified animation and facility, which instantly declares that you were born a poet.\*

In an epistolary dedication, addressed to a friend, it will be said that scope is generally allowed for exaggerated praise; and it may be argued, as has been done in the instance of Crichton, that the evidence is here much weaker than when we find the encomium conveyed through a less direct, and therefore more unsuspecting channel. This remark is met by the following striking and curious passage, contained in an Address, by Aldus, to John Zamosky, Chancellor of Poland, a person who had risen to the highest military and civil offices in the government of his country.

After complimenting Zamosky† upon his

\* The whole dedication to Niegoseusky, which is dated 4th November, 1583, will be found in the Appendix, No. VII.

† This great man presided in the councils, and led the armies of Poland for twenty-four years, and was equally eminent as a general, as a minister, and as an admirer and encourager of literature. It was the military talents of Zamosky which effectually checked the conquests of Basilides, Czar of Muscovy, and delivered the provinces of Palesia, Volesia, and Livonia. Zamosky, on the death of his sovereign, was entreated to ascend the throne, but he had the greatness of mind to refuse this elevation, and to vote for Sigmund.

military successes, and his eminent talents, both in peace and war, Aldus proceeds.—“It is for this reason that Stanislaus Niegoseusky, an illustrious youth, illustrious from birth, but still more illustrious from his eminent virtues, is the more dear to me, because he is never weary of talking of thee, of admiring and extolling thee. Indeed, in this employment, it is hard to say which of us can yield to the other. It is a peculiar characteristic of your Polish climate, that it is most productive in the article of genius. Who is not charmed with the recollection of Stanislaus Orichovius?\* Who does not admire the writings of James Gorscius? Who does not extol to the stars the names of Stanislaus Socolovius,† Andreas Patritius, and Martin Slachezinius? Nor do I hesitate to prophecy that my dear Niegoseusky, although now so young,

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\* Stanislaus Orichovius, who, for his eloquence, obtained the surname of the Polish Demosthenes, wrote six books of the *Annals of the History of Poland*, which are to be found in *D'Lucossii Historia Polonica*, vol. II. coll. 233.

† Stanislaus Socolovius was a learned scholar of Cracow, who translated from the Greek original, and published, with notes, an *Examination of the Principal Heresies of the Eastern Church*, by the Patriarch Hieremias.—See *De BURE*, vol. I. p. 361.



will, one day, also become a great man ; for, even at this age, he is able to accomplish what many would assert to be impossible,—to perform things, which he who does not see them with his own eyes would pronounce incredible. We account it no common talent to speak extempore on any subject. But to deliver your opinion, to reply to the arguments brought against you in verse, this I must reckon one of those endowments which savour of divinity. Yet did Niegoseusky publish a written challenge, in which he undertook to descant upon any proposed subject extempore, in verse. He stood firm to his engagement, and indeed fulfilled it nobly, to the admiration of all who heard him, entailing immortality upon his own name, and conferring glory upon Poland. Nor did he only evince his talents for versification, but exhibited his powers, which are of a high order, in declamatory prose. I was anxious, therefore, to inclose the programma or writing, which he published, in this Letter, that it might be preserved as evidence of so uncommon a genius. Here, therefore, it is, elaborat-

ed, as all will acknowledge, with uncommon skill."

There follows accordingly this programma, which, as an example of the mode followed in those days of publishing a literary cartel or challenge, is extremely curious.\*

On a perusal of this singular relic of those ancient times, it may be readily believed, that any learned man of the present age would esteem it, and justly, a very ridiculous performance. To solve mathematical questions in hexameter and pentameter verses,—to profess an acquaintance with the whole body of the Aristotelian philosophy,—to speak extempore,—or to declaim in poetic numbers upon any proposed question,—engagements of this nature may be very justly regarded as a proof of the degraded condition to which the studies which were then so generally cultivated, had reduced the human mind. But it is here never to be forgotten, that in the argument which we are now illustrating, it is not by any means asserted that the philosophy or the li-

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\* See Notes and Illustrations, letter K.

terature of those ages was of that high character which belongs to these branches of human knowledge in their present improved condition. On the contrary, it is allowed, that nothing could be more utterly useless than the system of scholastic philosophy which was at this time prevalent in Europe ; and that the terms of the mathematical sciences, the words moral and natural philosophy, and the science dignified by the name of the scholastic theology, conveyed, in those days, a meaning which it would be degradation to affix to them in the present advanced condition of human knowledge. All that we are endeavouring to prove is, that James Crichton, whatever may be the comparative estimate of the condition of those sciences in which he excelled, in relation to the state of our knowledge in the present day, had attained, in his acquaintance with them, a very remarkable superiority to all his contemporaries.

The evidence of Aldus is decisive upon this point. To repell it, this author has been accused of excessive exaggeration ; and, instead of many which were promised, a single instance has been attempted to be raised up,

in the person of Stanislaus Niegoseusky. This is an unfortunate example, for Niegoseusky turns out to have been a young man of very extraordinary learning and accomplishments, and, in every way, entitled to the introductory encomiums of Aldus.\*

The veracity of Aldus remains, therefore, unimpeached, by the erroneous character which has been imputed to him. The well-known research of Dr Black has discovered, in his Letters, only one solitary example of praises at all similar to those lavished upon Crichton. The argument would have been imperfect, even had it been shown that they were undeserved, and becomes still more imperfect, since no attempt has been made to establish this fact; but it is reduced to no argument at all, it crumbles into impotence, when it is once proved that Niegoseusky had really de-

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\* Aldus, in a different dedication to another eminent Polish scholar, Jacobus Gorscius, doctor of the civil and canon law at Cracow, congratulates him on his familiar and intimate friendship with the illustrious Niegoseusky, again takes an opportunity of indulging in prophetic dreams of the future eminence which the young scholar is likely to attain, and claims the friendship of Gorscius, which had been promised him by their mutual acquaintance, Niegoseusky. See this dedication in the Notes and Illustrations, letter L.

served the praises which were bestowed upon him.

Having said so much on the subject of Aldus Manutius, enough at least, it is hoped, to restore to him that rank of merit, and that character of authenticity, of which the learned biographer of Tasso has attempted to deprive him,—we may now leave him to stand by himself, and proceed to the testimony of John Imperialis.

“Imperialis,” says Dr Black, “is another of the witnesses adduced in evidence of Crichton’s endowments. His work is a collection of heads, with short eulogies, in which almost every person is represented as a phoenix; and a mass of pompous epithets are heaped together, less for the purpose of celebrating the person, than of shewing the eloquence of the author. In Italy, a number of such encomiastic works have been published, as, besides that of Imperialis, those of Crasso, Ghilini, Capaccio, and others, useless for every biographical purpose, and containing the most absurd and ridiculous panegyric.”\*

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\* See Black’s *Life of Tasso*, No. XXV. Appendix, vol. II. p. 429.

It is undoubtedly true, that, during the sixteenth century, a variety of biographical works appeared in Italy, which, in their overstrained and bombastic encomiums, are very rarely observant of truth and accuracy. Such were certainly the works of Crasso, Ghilini, and Capaccio; but under so low a character, the *Museum Historium of Imperialis* does not fall; for it ought to be particularly remarked, that Morhoff,\* in his excellent work on the *History of Philosophy and Literature*, in which, with great critical acumen, with very sufficient severity, and a profound erudition, he has characterised the different writers in the departments of philosophy, of history, and of general literature,—has carefully separated the *Museum Historicum of Imperialis* from the other ephemeral authors who devoted themselves to the penning of *Elogia*.

“*John Imperialis*,” says he, “is author of

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\* Daniel George Morhoff, one of the most eminent scholars in Germany, was born at Wismar, in 1639. He became, first of all, Professor of Eloquence and Poetry at the University of Keil; and to this preferment was afterwards added the Professorship of History. In 1688, he published his celebrated work, *Poly-Historia Philosophica et Literaria*. He died in 1691.

the Historical and Physical Museum, or a Collection of Eulogies on Eminent Literary Men. This is a good work, and contains many remarkable features and circumstances in the lives of eminent men. He does not confine himself to an eloge on their writings, but throws in particular incidents in the history of their lives. In other respects, the writers of elogia are not entitled to such full credit as the authors of the lives of celebrated men.”\*

It is also a circumstance, in weighing the evidence of *Imperialis*, by no means unimportant, that the learned and accurate *Tiraboschi*, in a passage (of which a part has been quoted by *Dr Black*,) where he has given the character of that crowd of encomiastic writers who, in the sixteenth century, inundated the Italian press with their perishable productions, and of whom he has inserted a long

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\* “*Joannes Imperialis scripsit Museum Historicum et Physicum, sive Elogia virorum literis illustrium. Bonus ille liber est; multa continet, de viris doctis, memorabilia; quorum elogia, non solum descripsit, sed et singularia sæpe immiscet. Alioquin elogiorum scriptores non tam plenam fidem mereantur, quam vitæ scriptores.*”—*Morhoff*, book I. c. 19.

catalogue, does not, in this list, include the *Museum Historicum of Imperialis*. It was not, therefore, altogether just to drag in the name of this author, whose productions have been regarded, by such respectable authorities, as possessing a much higher value, into the deserved censure which has been pronounced upon such writers as Crasso, Ghilini, Capacio, and their followers in the field of biographical bombast.

The truth is, that the *Museum Historicum of Imperialis*, embraces the lives of men, who, although forgotten, and perhaps deservedly, in these modern days, were all of eminence in the literary or political history of their own times; and, except that the style is too deeply tinged with that passion for metaphor which then infected the biographical writers of Italy, it is at once an interesting and useful work.

The testimony, therefore, of *Imperialis*, is entitled to credit, because he is esteemed a writer of authority; and still more is it entitled to credit, because it is the testimony of a contemporary, whose account is taken from the lips of his own father, who was, as his son expressly states, an eye-witness of Crichton's



remarkable exhibition at Padua.\* And what is the import of this evidence? It corroborates every particular which has been mentioned by Aldus;—Crichton's first appearance, and remarkable exhibition at Venice,—his journey to Padua, and the eminence which he there acquired,—his sickness at that city,—his return to Venice,—the disputes which he there held with the most eminent scholars,—the astonishing powers of his mind, and versatility of his talents, in which he is affirmed to have been approached by none except Picus Prince of Mirandula†,—the beauty of his person,—his excellence in all manly and martial accomplishments,—lastly, his unfortunate connection with Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, and his melancholy death, by the hands of his son, Vincenzo; an event, regarding which the author declares that it is uncertain whether it happened by accident or design. “*Consulto an casu incertum.*”

But even allowing that Imperialis, in his Historical Museum, had conferred upon all,

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\* See, for the original Life by Imperialis, Appendix, No. IX.

† Some account of this remarkable person will be found in the sequel.

I have seen the original of this  
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whom he has there included in his elogia, an exaggerated reputation, and (which is quite unallowable, however,) that this work was written, like many others of the same age, with the premeditated design of exalting to the highest eminence, every name which it contained, we are still furnished with a reply to all this in two passages, which are to be found in a different work of the same author, entitled, *The Physical Museum*; or a *Treatise on Genius*,\* and which, in collecting the evidence regarding Crichton's endowments, are curious and important. The author is speaking of the symptoms of genius, discoverable from the particular physical temperament and bodily form of different persons; and after some general remarks, he introduces, as illustrations of the doctrine which he lays down, the example of the celebrated Julius Cæsar Scaliger, and James Crichton. "With the particular constitution above mentioned," says he, "there is generally found united not only a very exalted kind of mind, but a particularly powerful and athletic form of body, an example of which we

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\* *Museum Physicum, sive De Ingenio Humano.*

have formerly seen in the instance of Julius Cæsar Scaliger,\* and more recently in the person of James Crichton, the Scotsman. These celebrated persons, in addition to an astonishing acuteness in disputation, and a wonderful facility in the acquisition of the different sciences, were so remarkable for dexterity and ease in the acquisition of all bodily accomplishments, that in the use of arms, in the accomplishments of dancing, of riding, and breaking of horses, and, in short, in every sort of gymnastic exercise, they excelled in a most miraculous manner. I ascribe their strength to the warmth, and their mental powers to the purity and fineness of their blood.”†

Again, in speaking of the effects of climate upon the character of different nations, Imperialis pays another testimony to the unequalled talents of Crichton, and his extreme popularity in Italy.—“The brave nation of the Scotch,” says he, “living under nearly

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\* In Joseph Scaliger's Epistle, De claritud. Gentis Scaliger. and in the Confutat. Fabulæ Burdon, will be found a description of the exercises of his father, Jul. Cæsar Scaliger, which he followed when arrived at a very advanced age. One of these was very peculiar: The old scholar used to divert and delight himself much, by leaping into and out of a tub.

† Museum Physicum, B. I. c. 17.

the same climate, is troubled beyond measure with public factions, and embroiled with private feuds ; but, at the same time, they possess a genius fitted both to excel in the acquisition of the sciences, and in the management of public affairs, as is proved in ancient times, by these two celebrated luminaries, John Duns Scotus, who obtained the distinguishing name of the Subtile Doctor ; and John Suisset, called the Calculator ; and, lately, John (James) Crichton, who has been so highly celebrated by the Italians, as to be esteemed the phoenix amongst the most eminent men of his age.”\*

Now, without attributing very great soundness to this singular doctrine of Imperialis,†

\* In this passage, John is evidently a misprint for James.

† In the brief Memoir of Imperialis, as well as in the more detailed Dedication of Aldus, there are some further particulars well worthy of attention. Aldus informs us, that Rutherford was one of Crichton's preceptors. This was John Rutherford, a man of learning and eminence in his own days ; a fellow professor with Buchanan, at the University of Coimbra, in Portugal ; from which, on account of his religious opinions, being forced to fly, along with his celebrated colleague, into France, he returned at last to his native country, where he died, Professor of Philosophy at St Andrews, in 1575. “ At multæ reconditæ eruditionis, fuit, hoc tempore, Joannes Rhetorfortis, non suis solum, sed exteris, ob singularem eruditionem, notus. Docuit Conimbriæ in Hispania. Andrea poli item, in patria, publicam

it is clear, that the evidence it contains, in regard to Crichton's remarkable talents, is

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professionem, magna sua laude, majori literarum commodo, honoratus. Ejus habemus, de arte disserendi, lib. 4. ; et alia in Philosophia Opuscula." This passage, which I copy from Sir R. Sibbald, in his *Histor. Literaria Gentis Scotorum*, (MS. Advoc. Library) is itself copied from an Oration of Gilbert Gray, on the illustrious writers of Scotland, prefixed to Mackenzie's *Lives*. A catalogue of Rutherford's works will be found in Dempster, *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Scotorum*, B. xvi. p. 565. Aldus Manutius has also mentioned Robertson amongst the eminent men who were masters to Crichton. From the correspondence of dates, it is not improbable that this was the same scholar, of whose life and works Dempster has left us the following very meagre detail:—"Andreas Robertsonus, magno nomine, patriam suam illustravit; et nonnulla versa prosaque edidit. Ego tantum vidi Epithalamium Jacobi Sexti et Annæ Scotorum Regum. Obiit Edinburgi, anno 1595."—DEMPSTER, B. xvi. p. 577.

With regard to Crichton's having been, in his youth, under the tuition of Buchanan, which fact is stated by Aldus, I have not discovered any materials which might lead us to form an accurate opinion. He could not have been placed under the care of this great scholar, at St Andrews, since it is certain that Buchanan left that University as early as the year 1569, before Crichton was matriculated. But there is an interval in the life of Crichton, the period between his leaving St Andrews, which is known to have been in 1575, and the period of his going to France, (which is unknown, but which was probably in the 1577,) of which no particular details are discoverable; and it is certainly not improbable, that the son of the Lord Advocate, who had already evinced very uncommon talents, should, on his return to Edinburgh, have been introduced to Buchanan, who had acquired a great reputation, and that, at this period of his life, the Young Crichton might have enjoyed the benefit of this eminent scholar's advice and instruction.

unassailable by any of the arguments which have been brought against the passage in his *Museum Historicum*. The passage which has been now quoted, is taken from another and a different work, against which no accusation of inaccuracy has ever been advanced, and where the author, in soberly and impartially discussing a certain question, introduces, as an illustration of his argument, the character of J. Cæsar Scaliger, and James Crichton.

Here, then, from the same author, we have a new and unexceptionable testimony to the remarkable talents and universal endowments of Crichton,—to his moral eminence in the study and knowledge of the sciences,—and to his physical powers, and uncommon excellence in all the manly and martial exercises of the age.

The next authority, in support of the extraordinary abilities of Crichton, is that which has been given from the work of Felix Astolfi,—his *Officina Historica*. It is, like that of Aldus, a testimony proceeding from a contemporary author, who states the facts it contains from his own knowledge, but who was not,

like Aldus, a personal friend of the man whom he describes. It is, besides this, an uninterested testimony proceeding from an Italian, regarding the eminent abilities of a Scotchman who had shown himself superior to the Italians of his time. It was therefore the more unbiased by the partialities of country and of friendship. It is sober and moderate in the tone in which it is given; but it is strong, pertinent, and conclusive, in the evidence which it conveys. If there was any ground to suspect the partiality of Aldus,—if there was any the least reason to receive with hesitation the biographical eulogy of Imperialis, there can be none whatever to induce us to refuse unlimited credit to the simple and unornamented statement of Astolfi. He appeals to the fact of Crichton's being well known to all of his time. "*Lo Scozzese e notissimo a tutti, chiamavasi Giacomo Crichtono;*" and he then shortly mentions his stupendous memory,—his very early age,—his intimate acquaintance with the sciences, with philosophy, and theology,—and the impression of wonder and astonishment which his appearance left on all who witnessed it.

“The abilities of the Scotsman,” says he, “are known to all. His name was James Crichton, who appeared like a prodigy in these our own times, and was admired for the stupendous powers of his memory. Although a youth of only twenty-two years of age, he yet penetrated into the most recondite sciences, and explained the most difficult passages, and the most obscure processes of reasoning in the writings of theologians and philosophers; so that, to all who considered only his early youth, it seemed impossible that he could have read through, to say nothing of committing to memory, such a mass of erudition.”\* It would have been hopeless to have attacked a passage of this nature; and accordingly not a single reflection has been advanced by any author against the testimony of Astolfi.

There is one other testimony, which, as it proceeds from a contemporary author of distinguished celebrity, who affirms that his information was obtained in Italy, ought not to be passed over;—I allude to an

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\* See the original passage in the Appendix, No. VIII.



account of Crichton, preserved by Joseph Scaliger. "I have heard," says the author, "when I was in Italy, of one Crichton, a Scotchman, who had only reached the age of twenty-one, when he was killed by the command of the Duke of Mantua, who knew twelve different languages,—had studied the fathers and the poets,—disputed *de omni scibili*, and replied to his antagonists in verse. He was a man of very wonderful genius; more worthy of admiration than of esteem. He had something of the coxcomb about him, and only wanted a little common sense. It is remarkable that princes are apt to take an affection for geniuses of this stamp, but very rarely for truly learned men." This passage, from the Scaligerana, is valuable in many points of view. Scaliger obtained his information in Italy, in all probability, from those who had been witnesses of the genius of Crichton; and the whole sentence bears strongly upon it the marks of truth and impartiality. Crichton, he tells us, "was a little of a coxcomb," a circumstance by no means inconsistent with his eminent talents, and a failing exceedingly natural in a young man possessed of such uncommon powers of mind and beauty of per

son, who had been tried by that severest of all ordeals,—admiration ; the admiration, too, not of a limited circle of friends, or of an insulated university, but of a whole people ; and what is perhaps still more difficult to bear, who had listened to the praises of the sweetest tongues, and been exposed to the radiance of the fairest eyes in Italy ; yet, after touching upon his failings, Scaliger does justice to his genius. “ He was a man of stupendous powers.” *C'estoit ingenium prodigiosum* ; and I need not say that this encomium comes with infinite force, when we take into account the sarcastic matter with which it is accompanied.

From the contemporary testimonies to the unexampled abilities of Crichton, we proceed now to the consideration of those evidences which are to be deemed ancient, when compared with the more modern stories of Urquhart or Mackenzie, but which are themselves of a later date than the preceding accounts contained in the Italian memoir, the MS. of Abbe Morelli, the Dedication of Aldus, the Life by Imperialis, the short “ Notice” of Scaliger, or the concluding document of Astolfi. I be-

gin with the account transmitted by Thomas Dempster, the author of the *Historia Ecclesiastica Scotiæ*, and certainly a man of a most singular character.

Possessed, as even his enemies have allowed, of very eminent talents, and these improved by a complete education in the scholastic philosophy of the age,—keen in temper,—violent in argument,—and uniting to a disposition naturally ambitious, a haughty fearlessness of mind, Dempster was in no respect a character fitted to conciliate the esteem, or even to disarm the censure, of his literary rivals and contemporaries. The terms, accordingly, in which he is spoken of, are sufficiently severe. Erythræus, while he allows that he possessed very high talents, describes him with a sort of awe and terror, as an author of a most ferocious disposition,—*præferocis ingenii*. But the most serious accusation, and that with which those who appeal to him as an authority are alone interested, is the charge of literary forgery which has lately been raised against him. “Dempster,” says Dr Black, “has rendered himself infamous among such literary men as know any thing

of him or of his writings, by his forgeries.”\*  
 “Thomas Dempster,” continues the same author, quoting Baillet,—“*nous a donné une Histoire Ecclésiastique d’Ecosse en dix neuf livres, où il parle beaucoup des gens de lettres de cette contrée. Mais quoiqu’il fût habile d’ailleurs, il n’en avoit ni le sens plus droit, ni le jugement plus solide, ni la conscience meilleure. Il eût voulu que tous les Savans fussent Ecossois, il a forgé des titres des livres qui n’ont jamais été mis au monde pour relever la gloire de sa patrie, et il a commis divers autres fourbes qui l’ont décrié parmi les gens de lettres.*”  
 And Baillet adds,—“*Ce sont à peu près les plaintes qui font de lui Usserius, Waræus, le Pere Labbé, Sandius, Nicolaus Antoine.*” †

The history of this accusation of forgery, which would, at first sight, appear to be a most deep and serious charge proceeding from every quarter against an author, and receiving the corroborating testimony of Usher, Waræus, or Ware, Labbé, Sandius, Nicolas Antoine, and Baillet, affords a curious illustration of that passion for literary scandal, and

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\* Appendix to Life of Tasso, p. 434.

† Jugemens des Savans, tom. II. p. 106.

that strange avidity with which, even amongst many eminent men, it has been circulated, which is a mortifying feature in the literary history of the sixteenth century. The parent of the tale against Dempster, seems to have been Archbishop Usher; and, emboldened by his authority, all the other authors, whose names swell the catalogue of his accusers, have done little more than retail the censure of the exasperated prelate.

That portion of the history of Scotland and Ireland, (and, indeed, in the history of every nation,) which includes its early annals, is well known to form a kind of disputed or debateable ground, upon which historians and antiquarians have, in all ages, carried on a most bitter and determined contest. Many authors, of unquestionable authority upon other subjects, have forfeited this high character, when they come to treat of these remote periods. Misled by a desire to antedate the celebrity of their own country, they have too often sacrificed their love of historical truth to their spirit of nationality, and, in this view, narrated events, and quoted authorities, which were no where to be found but

in their own imaginations. That this has been done, and to a very great degree, by Dempster, it would argue great ignorance of his writings, to deny. Our argument is, that, as far as this accusation goes, he has only imitated the example of other eminent historians and antiquaries, when treating of this particular and obscure portion of history; and that, as this offence in these historians, amongst whom we may enroll Usher himself, has not been held to invalidate their accounts of more modern times, neither ought it, when committed by Dempster, to destroy his credit, in any narration which is within the limits of authentic history. To return to the history of this accusation.

Archbishop Usher\* was a great antiquarian, and exceedingly national. Dempster was also

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\* James Usher, Archbishop of Armagh, was born in the year 1580, and died in 1655. He was a profound scholar, full of much remote and extensive erudition, and so generally known as such in Europe, that the University of Leyden entreated him to accept the place of an honorary professor, and Cardinal Richelieu endeavoured, by high offers, to engage him to settle in France. His works are,—A Treatise on the Ancient Religion of Ireland; A Chronological History of the World; A Collection of the Epistles of St Ignatius, Barnabas, and Polycarp; *Antiquitates Ecclesiarum Britannicarum*; and *Syntagma de Editione LXX Interpretum*.

learned in the history and antiquities of his native country, and zealous to ennoble it, by including, in its earlier literary annals, as many illustrious names, and enrolling, in its sacred calendar, as many Scottish saints as possible. Now it happened, that these two authors, in their literary expeditions for the purpose of collecting materials for their annals of the fifth century, chanced unfortunately to stumble upon the body of an old saint, of the name of Godelbertus. Dempster immediately recognises him as a countryman, and claims him for a Scottish saint. Usher as stoutly denies the fact, and, utterly unable to prove him to have been of Irish extraction, he insists that Godelbertus was at least an Anglo-Saxon saint; and, in the bitterness of his heart, fulminates against Dempster the following passage:—

“ Nam quod in Sanctorum Catalogum Dempsterus eum refert, et (quod Cottam fortasse legisset, *neque indisertum Academicum pertimuisse, nec sine ista Philosophia Rhetorem quamvis eloquentem*) inter *Rhetores disertissimos, atque Philosophos Platonicae sectae subtilissimos* eundem connumerat; commenti genus est illi homini non minus familiare, quam librorum

qui nunquam scripti sunt ex ipsius otioso de-prompta cerebro recensio.”\*

It is here to be particularly remarked, that not only does this accusation of forgery, brought against Dempster, relate solely, as we see in this passage from Usher, to the disputes regarding the calendar of Scottish saints, and the early literary history of that country, in the fifth century, but that two of the other authors cited by Baillet, Nicolas Antonio,† and Father Labbé, in the Bibliotheca,‡ do nothing more than repeat the tale of Usher, adducing no other examples of forgery from their own authority, but simply mentioning the name, and re-echoing the philippic of the Irish primate. Now, really, when we consider that Usher himself has been arraigned, and that by an author of high authority, the learned and intelligent Goodall, of literary crimes very similar to his own charges against Dempster, and that, when descanting on the same subjects of national antiquities, and fighting his way through the same disputed ground, he has been remarkable neither for

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\* Britan. Eccles. Antiquitates, cap. 13, fol. ed. 1687. p. 248.

† In Præfat. Biblioth. Hisp. Vet. p. 29.

‡ Biblioth. Bibl. p. 336. Lipsiæ, 1682.



candour or integrity, in employing every possible mode of carrying his point, the accusation proceeding from such a quarter, and regarding such a subject, really diminishes into comparative insignificance. No one will deny that Dempster, in the earlier annals of his *Scottish Ecclesiastical History*, misled by that enthusiasm which enables an antiquary to see every fact, and to reason on every circumstance, in the light most convenient to his own theory, has given a very unpardonable licence to his invention. He has, in this, been guilty of the same crime as Hector Boece, Buchanan, Usher, Innes, and many others, who have embraced, in works otherwise valuable, the more ancient annals of their country.\* But does any one,—and here we come to the point,—does any one,

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\* In Chalmers's laborious and valuable *Account of the Pictish Period*, the flights of imagination, in which some of our early historians have indulged, are described in very strong colours. It is apparent, says he, at the conclusion of one of his notes, (*Caledonia*, vol. I. p. 104,) that Boece, Bellenden, Buchanan, and other *fablers*, have confounded the Pictish Elpin, who fell in A.D. 730, at Bas Elpin, in Forfarshire, with the Scoto-Irish Elpin, who fell, more than a century afterwards, at Laicht-Alpine, in Ayrshire.

for this reason, reject the testimony of such historians, as to events passing within the pale of the history of their own times, confirmed by authentic evidence, and guaranteed by their own testimony, and that of their contemporaries? Do we question the veracity of Buchanan, when he relates any precise event which has either passed in his own memory, or has been recorded in the sober pages of authentic history, because we could show that he has invented, or at least inserted, the names of Scottish kings, who never ruled over any thing but his own brain? Why then is Dempster's narrative respecting events which are not only within the limits of modern history, but, which is infinitely stronger, must have been in the recollection of himself, and many of his contemporaries, to be arraigned as incredible, and his character as a writer, on subjects embracing the literature of his own times, declared infamous, because he has endeavoured to prove that old Godelbert was a Scottish saint; because, with regard to these delicate points of national antiquities, he has been accused of manufacturing authorities by one who has himself been suspected of sup-

pressing, garbling, and concealing them;\* and because some other authors, without condescending upon any proofs of their own, have thought proper to copy the features, and accelerate the circulation of this tale of literary animosity?

Now, it is a natural question here, in the course of our argument, and one necessary for the full and entire vindication of Dempster,† to inquire, what is his literary character, in the opinion, not of inflamed and angry antiquarians, who abuse him because he

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\* Goodall's Introduction to History of Scotland, cap. V.

† A life of Dempster, embracing annals of the contemporary literature of the times, would be an interesting subject for biography. His father was Thomas Dempster, Baron of Muresk. His mother, Jane Leslie, was eldest daughter to William Leslie, Baron of Balquhane.\* He was born in 1579, and, leaving his native country, when a boy of eleven years of age, pursued his studies at Cambridge, Bologna, and at Paris. He afterwards went to Flanders, and studied at the Scots College of Louvaine, from which he was sent to Rome, by William Crichton,† a Jesuit, Principal of the College of Louvaine. He calls himself Thomas Dempster De Muresk, and boasts, as we have formerly seen, of the nobility of his family. In an Epistle addressed to James the First, and prefixed to the edition of his Roman Antiquities, he dignifies his father by a variety of high-sounding titles,—“ Patre Barone Muresci, Achterlesi, Chislemonti, Bamflæ vero ac Buchaniæ prorege seu Irenarca; Matre vero Baronissa Balco-

\* Laurus Lesleana, cap. LXI. *Histor. Ecclesiast. Gentis Scot.* p. 673.

† See Black's Life of Tasso, vol. II. p. 431.

may have counteracted their own particular views; but of impartial and learned men,

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nise ac Aberdonii Principi.\* His master was the celebrated Justus Lipsius, under whose care he appears to have made so remarkable a progress in his studies, that, at the age of sixteen, he taught publicly at Tournay. He was appointed a doctor of jurisprudence in the University of Paris, in which he afterwards succeeded to the chair held by David Sinclair, who was one of the professors there.\* He left this University to visit his native country, to which he was invited by desire of his sovereign, then King of England. It is said, that the object of James the First was to engage Dempster in some historical work, perhaps that which he afterwards published under the title of "*Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Scotorum.*" He soon, however, returned to the continent, and having acquired great literary reputation in Italy, was, in the year 1596, promoted by the pope, on the recommendation of the Cardinal Bonsius, to a professor's chair in the celebrated Academy of Pisa. He here delivered lectures on jurisprudence, and planned and executed his curious and learned work, "*De Etruria Regali*;" having first undertaken a journey to his native country, from which, it is said, he brought many curious books, for his information and assistance in this literary undertaking. In 1597, he returned to Pisa, where he was occupied for two years in his work on Tuscany. In 1599, he embraced the resolution of leaving, for what reason does not appear, the University of Pisa. He first, however, presented his work, "*De Etruria Regali*," to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, in a short epistle, which was not prefixed to the work, but is preserved in the manuscripts of Camillo Guidi of Volterra.†

Dempster now set out for Bologna, after having, for three years, delivered lectures on the Pandects at Pisa. The fame which he had acquired, caused him to be received with the

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\* In Sir R. Sibbald's MS. entitled, *Historia Literaria Gentis Scotorum*, p. 31, we find David Sinclair denominated Lothianus, Matheseon, Professor Regius Lutetia.

† See Coke *Præfatio ad Lib. Etrur. Regalis*.

who judge calmly upon his merits, and are animated by no interest impelling them either to censure or to praise. Vossius has characterized Dempster as a learned Scotsman, to whom the cause of letters is under high obligations; "*eruditus Scotus, beneque de literis meritus.*"\* Felix Ossius, in his Commentaries upon the *Historia Augusta Henrici VII. of Musatus*, although he takes occasion to question a particular opinion of Dempster's, yet, so far

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highest honours in that University; and he was immediately, with the concurrence and approbation of all who were interested in its prosperity, elected to the chair of Humanity and Belles Lettres. He taught at Bologna with the happiest success, both in reputation and profit, for seventeen years, and died there, on the 9th of September, 1615. I have taken the particulars of this short sketch of Dempster from the preface to the splendid edition of his three first books, "*De Etruria Regali*," published at Florence, in 1723, by Thomas Coke. Both the dedication to Cosmo, the third Grand Duke of Etruria, and the preface, are ably written. The character of this singularly learned, and laborious writer, has already been given in another part of this Essay. It has been very justly estimated in the following passage from a MS. work of Sir R. Sibbald, which is entitled, "*De Historicis Scotis et Politicis.*"—"The famous Thomas Dempster, Doctor of the Law, his too great affection for his country, with his bilious and haughty humour, biassed him too much, and drove him to many scrapes, by relying on conjecture, rather than certainty; yet, by collating of our Scotch authors, I found him exacter than at first I thought him, especially in the authors of his own time."

\* De Vit. Serm. Book I. cap. 10.

from imitating the example of Usher, pronounces him, at the very time when he enters his dissent, to be a man of extensive knowledge, and profound erudition. "*Neque enim hic assentior Dempstero, recondite aliquin doctrinæ, et multiplici eruditionis viro.*" I might add, in corroboration of these testimonies to the character of Dempster, the opinion of Dilherius, in his *Academical Disputations*; and of Barthius, in his *Adversaria*: but it is unnecessary, since sufficient praise has already been given, to defeat, or, at least, wholly neutralize, the censure of Usher.

The accusation of forgery, therefore, as far as that accusation can be applicable to our argument, rests on no good authority. The long and formidable catalogue of names, from which it appeared to come, contracts, upon examination, into a very small compass, and seems to rest chiefly on the authority of an author,\* who, although highly respectable on

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\* In the "*Bibliotheca Hispana Vetus*," Preface, p. 29, is to be found the passage from Nicolaus Antonius. It is as follows:— "*Habent similiter et Angli, virorum literis illustrium suæ nationis laudatores, Joannem Balæum, Joannem Lelandium juniores, Joannem Pitæum; Scoti, Thomam Dempsterum, cui ta-*

other points, is himself, upon such subjects as involve early national antiquities, of suspicious veracity; and even, if thoroughly established, it does not throw discredit upon Dempster's account of the literature of his own age, the only subject with which we are interested, because it embraces the narrative of the *Life of Crichton*.

It is also a circumstance well worthy of notice, in weighing the credit due to this narrative, that Dempster, on one point, has, with great virulence, attacked Crichton. He has accused him, as we have seen, of falsely affirming that he was connected with the royal family of Scotland, and ridiculed him for so vain an assumption of eminence. Crichton was here

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naen multæ alias lectionis viro, Jacobus Userius, Hiberniæ appellatus Primas, historiæ rerum antiquarum peritissimus, librorum qui nusquam scripti sunt, ex ejus otioso depromptorum cerebro, receptionem imputare non dubitavit; quocum in re, Philippus Labbeus consentit, in *Bibliotheca Bibliothecarum*." Such is all concerning Dempster in Nic. Antonius. The passage from Sandius is to be found in his "Note in Vossium," page 175. He adduces no proofs against Usher; but, accusing another author of interpolating some old inscriptions with his own inventions, he adds, "Simili studio Dempsteræ, quævis virum illustrem Scotum fuisse vellet; in suam rem violenter abrepto quovis testimonio, licet vix umbram veritatis sapiat."

arrogating to himself no ideal honour, and Dempster was himself in the wrong; but this, at least, proves, that, in the narrative which he has given, he was not animated by that spirit of indiscriminate eulogy which is ascribed to Aldus; but that, on the contrary, he was as ready to condemn the weaknesses, as to appreciate the talents, of his learned countryman. We are, from all this, entitled to conclude, that the account which has been given by Dempster, is entitled to full credit; and that, determining, as we must, our opinion of it, as a piece of evidence, by the rules of reason and analogy which we follow on similar occasions, we are not at liberty to reject it.

We have only to remark, therefore, that it corroborates, in the strongest and most satisfactory manner, in all material points, the evidence of Mr Hibbert's Italian Memoir, the MS. of the Abbe Morelli, the Dedication of Aldus, the Memoir of Imperialis, and the paragraph from Astolphi, as to Crichton's early visit to France and Italy, his astonishing and versatile talents, the public proofs which he gave of his philosophic and literary



proWess, and his sudden and lamentable death by the hand of the younger Gonzaga. He mentions, also, that Crichton's most intimate friends were, Lorenzo Massa, at that time secretary to the Venetian State, Aldus Manutius, and Sperone Speroni. We have already seen the confirmation of Crichton's intimacy with Massa, from the Dedication of Aldus to that eminent Italian, in which the same fact is dwelt upon, and Massa congratulated on his friendship with "that youth of divine genius, James Crichton." Aldus Manutius is also already known to us. The last in this eminent triumvirate, which included the friends of Crichton, is Sperone Speroni, professor of philosophy in the University of Padua, and at this time one of the most celebrated authors in the literary history of Italy; remarkable for the eloquence of his public lectures, his extensive knowledge in theology, and his profound acquaintance with the ancient languages.

"We have already," says a historian of those times,\* "spoken of those who were ce-

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\* Bernardus Scardeonius, in his *Annals of the History of Padua*.

lebrated in their own day, and have exchanged life for death; let us now turn to those living authors who are the glory of our country. Sperone Speroni is still alive, and known to the whole of Italy by his brilliant acquirements; an excellent philosopher, a scholar of consummate erudition, both in the civil law, and in every branch of knowledge, and endowed with such a power and eloquence in public speaking, more especially in our own Italian tongue, that if, at any time, he happens to be delivering his opinion, in the senate, on the affairs of our republic, from that moment we see the courts of justice deserted, and the discussions of our lawyers forgotten, that every one may be enabled to listen, so long as he continues to address them. He is, indeed, possessed of a most prompt invention, a sound judgment, a wonderful memory, a grave, copious, and gentle manner of delivery; and his sentences are, at the same time, so clear in their meaning, and so elegant in their construction, (which I regard as one of the chief merits in public speaking,) that it is impossible to say, whether he finds most ease in the ornamental, the argumentative, or the persuasive parts of

his discourse. He has published "Dialogues," written in the Italian language, a most learned work; also, a Tragedy, called *Æolus*; and a volume of elegant Epistles to his Friends, written in Italian. We daily are looking for still greater productions from his pen."

Such is the character of Speroni, the friend of Crichton. I will only add, that he was a man of a severe and critical disposition, fastidious in his judgment, and slow in his praise;\* and I would ask, if such a shallow and contemptible dabbler in literature, as Crichton is represented to be, would have been likely to have commanded the admiration, and secured the friendship, of a scholar of this description of character? †

It has been asserted by Dr Black, that Crichton was a person with whom no man of talents or eminence in those days would condescend to engage in disputation. ‡ And this remark was

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\* Life of Tasso, Vol. I. p. 12.

† De Thou, in his History, Riccoboni, in his Annals of the University of Padua, Erythræus, in his Pinacotheca, and Teissier, in his Eloges, have all enlarged, in the highest terms of praise, upon the accomplishments of Speroni.

‡ "To conclude this ungracious topic," says Dr Black, in summing up the evidence on Crichton, "it appears probable

probably chiefly founded upon the authority of Dr Kippis, who, after admitting that Imperialis records the contest in which Crichton encountered the celebrated philosopher Arcangelus Mercenarius, ironically exclaims, who ever heard of the famous philosopher Arcangelus Mercenarius? It is very possible that Mercenarius might have been a man of eminence in the scientific acquirements of the age, and yet that Kippis, unless he had chosen to employ that ordinary research into the literary history of those remote times, without which, it was presumptuous in him to attempt to decide on the character of Crichton, might never have heard of even his name. This was, accordingly, the case. The argument owes its birth to the ignorance of Kippis, not to the obscurity of Mercenarius; for he was a professor, who filled one of the highest chairs, in one of the most learned Universities, at that time in Europe,—the University of Padua; and this incidental circum-

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that Crichton was, in Italy, considered as one of those literary mountebanks who were numerous in that age, and with whom no man of talents and reputation condescended to enter the arena." Appendix to Life of Tasso, No. XXV. vol. II. p. 444.

stance, it may be observed, confirms the account of Crichton's remarkable appearances in this city. The title of *Philosophia Extraordinaria*, was given to the class taught by *Mercenarius*; and it was in this that the more advanced students became instructed in the higher branches of philosophy. *Arcangelus* succeeded, in 1567, to *Francis Piccolomini*, and had, for his colleague and assistant, the celebrated Count *James Zabarella*, to whose talents in philosophy, both *Morhoff* and *Vossius* have paid distinguished testimony.\* *Antonio Riccoboni*, whose name has already occurred in this Essay, has written the *Annals of the University of Padua*; and in this work, which is extremely curious, as it presents an interesting sketch of the state of literature and philosophy in Italy during the 16th century, and of the internal organization of the Italian Universities of that period, there is to be found an account

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\* "*Jacobus Zabarella Patavinus, nemini ignotus auctor, de quo prolixè verba facere opus non est. Scripsit in logicis et physicis de animâ multâ. Omnibus celebrata Peripateticis.*"—*Vol. II. b. i. c. 14. § 63. Morhoffii Polyhist. Liter.*

*Zabarella* was particularly famous for his Commentaries upon the *Analytics of Aristotle*. See *Bayle, Art. Zabarella*.

of the philosophical and literary labours of Mercenarius.\*

It is evident, therefore, that this Arcangelus Mercenarius, although forgotten in our modern days, and, perhaps, justly forgotten, because he has fallen with that erroneous system which he taught, was still, in the knowledge of the scholastic philosophy, a person of no ordinary eminence; and, in the opinion of his countrymen, entitled to fill one of the highest chairs in the most celebrated University in Italy. The assertion, then, of Dr Black, that Crichton was a person with whom no man of talents and reputation would condescend to enter the arena, is completely disproved by the acknowledged fact, that the person who did enter the arena with him was the philosopher Arcangelus Mercenarius.†

The attacks of Dr Kippis and Dr Black have been chiefly, indeed almost entirely,

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\* See Notes and Illustrations, letter N.

† The following passage in the Life of the celebrated James Mazzoni, written by the Abbe Serassi, a work already quoted, will throw additional light on the celebrity of Arcangelus Mercenarius. *Vita del MAZZONI*, p. 7.—“ Quale stima poi avesse concepita il Pendasio medesimo, dell'ingegno, della penetrazione,

directed against the evidence of Aldus, Imperialis, and Dempster. The accounts of these authors, as they were the most ancient, (until the recent discovery of the Italian Memoir, in the work of Castiglione,) some of them written during the life, and the rest at no very distant period from the death of Crichton, formed, in some measure, the corner-stones of his celebrity. I trust I have succeeded in shewing, that the attempts of the author of the Biographia Britannica, as well as those of the learned biographer of Tasso, to

e della dottrina di questo suo discepolo, ben si vide dalla scelta, ch'ei fece di lui, tra tanto numero di scolari, per rispondere ad alcuni scritti, publicati contro certe sue opinioni, da Arcangelo Mercenari, altro illustre professore di filosofia in quello. Nel che il Mazzoni per commune quidizio, riuscì tanto felicemente che il Mercenari dopo molto aggirarsi s'avvide ch'ogni difesa era vana, e dovette perciò darsi alla fine per vinto. E questa vittoria fu tanto piu gloriosa pel nostro Mazzoni quanto ch'egli non ebbe a farre con un debole o poco agguerrito avversario, *ma con un sotile e consumatissimo filosofo, qual si fu veramente il Mercenari*, comme si puo comprendere dall'opere, che di lui si vezzono in istampa. e non meno dall'enfatico elogio, che si trova di questo celebre professore presso Pietro Bucci nella terza delle sue Giornate. ove. e chiamato. *'Filosofo dottissimo ornato di maravigliosa acutezza d'ingegno, prontissimo, e nelle scienze molto fondato, e nella materia del disputare cosi arguto, pronto, guidizioso, ed, intendente, che pochissimi pari ritrova, e superior nessuno.'*"

overturn the evidence of these writers, have been in no degree successful; and that the accusations regarding the literary encomiums of Aldus, the fustian of Imperialis, and the forgeries of Dempster, however plausible they may appear, if brought forward in general and superficial terms, when they come to be fairly met, and critically examined, are found equally destitute of truth and reality.

Indeed, there is something so repulsive and unnatural in the suppositions of the learned biographer of Tasso, that they may be said, in this light, to carry their confutation in their own bosom. Let us examine them for a moment. We have before us, as the subject of discussion, the eldest son of the Lord Advocate of Scotland, and the nephew of the Bishop of Dunkeld, and the Lord Privy Seal. Descended, on both sides of his house, from the royal family,—his father the intimate friend of his sovereign, and of the principal men of his time,—his masters the most eminent scholars in Scotland,—and he himself giving promise, by the display of talents of the most uncommon brilliancy,—by his excellence in all the chivalrous ex-



ercises of the age,—by the gracefulness of his manners, and the noble and dignified beauty of his person, of becoming an honour, not only to his family, but to his country. This young man is found in Italy, and the Italian authors have given the most enthusiastic descriptions of his universal accomplishments. The hypothesis of Dr Black insists, that he was a superficial and needy adventurer, who was compelled to act the part of a literary mountebank in foreign countries, and to gain, by such exhibitions, a precarious and miserable subsistence. We contend, on the other hand, that Crichton was sent (in the same manner as were most of the noble youths of his age,) to France and Italy, for the accomplishment of his education, and to enjoy the advantages of foreign travel; that, according to the common and established practice of the times, he disputed in the public schools and academies of these countries; and that, in these disputations, he acquired that high reputation which has come down to our times. Let any unprejudiced person determine which of these hypotheses is the more likely to be true. Which, again, is the more natural sup-

position of the two,—that a young man, who was honoured by the intimate friendship of some of the most eminent men in Italy, both in respect of talents and birth, and high and dignified station,—whose great powers, and unexampled acquirements are commemorated by foreigners, who had not even the inducement of his being a countryman of their own, to tempt them to exaggerate, should turn out, nevertheless, according to Dr Black, a very common and inferior kind of person, a species of needy empiric in science and philosophy, who possessed a smattering of languages, and with whom no man of talents would condescend to enter the lists? or, should not rather be, according to the judgment of one who had seen him and known him, a person of great genius, and uncommon attainments,—a youth, who, in the midst of that constellation of eminent scholars, and laborious and learned authors, who, in every department of classical literature, then adorned their native Italy, exhibited an extent of knowledge which attracted universal admiration, and which, when united to high birth, to excellence in all the martial accomplishments of the age,

and to exceeding beauty and gracefulness of person, caused him to be regarded as a model of physical and moral excellence, and a kind of prodigy amongst men?

It is, therefore, quite impossible to reconcile the character of Crichton, as a literary impostor and adventurer, (the level to which Baillet, Kippis, and Dr Black have endeavoured to reduce it,) with the high and enthusiastic eulogies of the writer of the biographical *Programma*, preserved in the works of Castiglione, of the MS. of Morelli, of the accounts of Aldus, Imperialis, and Astolfi. Were this his real character,—were this the poor and contemptible station which he filled in the eye of the world,—what possible inducement had Aldus to praise him? What end did it serve, to lavish his incense of false adulation upon a being so much beneath his notice, and whose name, when affixed to his magnificent edition of Cicero, must have attracted ridicule, rather than insured respect? The same argument applies with equal force to the accounts given by Imperialis and Astolfi; and with still greater force to the friendship between Crichton and Lorenzo Massa,

as well as to his intimacy with Sperone Speroni.

We shall have occasion, in the third part of this argument, to consider the state of literature and philosophy in Italy at the revival of letters, which was the period of Crichton's appearance, in comparison with its present condition; and the object, in doing so, will be to shew, that if, in estimating the remarkable powers of Crichton, as we find them described in contemporary writers, we allow our minds to be influenced by ideas borrowed from the present state of modern science and modern literature, we are inevitably conducted to an erroneous conclusion. And this fallacious mode of reasoning, indeed, will, perhaps, be found to lie at the root of all the modern scepticism as to the character and endowments of Crichton. But there is still one question which ought to be put, and that in the strongest manner, to those who insist that Crichton was a literary impostor.—Why, when it is well known, that, owing to the wide diffusion of classical literature, the general study of the ancient systems, combined with the scholastic phi-

losophy, the very high eminence to which the speaking and writing the Greek and Latin languages had been carried; and next, owing to the numerous candidates for literary and scientific honours, the attainment of these honours in Italy, during the sixteenth century, was in no respect an easy contest;—why, when in this contest an Italian public were the judges, Italian scholars his competitors, and Italian writers his biographers, has Crichton, a Scotchman, and a stranger, been, by contemporary writers, universally allowed to have carried off the palm? If he was not different from the many other adventurers in science and in literature, who, it is well known, then swarmed in Italy, why has his name come down to us, and theirs been forgotten? Why, when the tide of time has wafted Crichton, with all his youthful honours, down to the present day, has it swept them into forgetfulness? Is it not the only natural explanation, that his was the celebrity founded upon true genius; theirs the eminence which hardly outlives its exhibition; his the steady ray of talent; theirs the evanescent gleam of empiricism.

The consideration of the remaining testimonies to the celebrity of Crichton, cannot detain us long. The most important are those of John Johnston, Abernethy, Buchanan, and Leitch ; the first of which, alone, was known to the modern biographers of Crichton,—Black and Kippis ; and, as they have found nothing to be said against it, nothing need be here added in its support ; for, in every literary controversy, the absence of censure may be considered as the admission of authenticity. It corroborates, as we have already seen, the exact circumstances of the death of Crichton, as narrated by Aldus and Imperialis, and marks them to have happened in the year 1581.\* It relates, in a few short, but expressive lines, the eminent and universal talents of Crichton, *Musarum pariter et Martis alumnus*, the admiration caused by his appearance in Italy, and the general horror for his untimely death. This short poem of Johnston forms the connecting link between those writers who flourished in the lifetime of Crichton.

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\* It must be admitted, that there is here an inaccuracy in Johnston, in dating Crichton's death in 1581, instead of 1582.

ton, and have left testimonies regarding him founded on their own personal knowledge, and those later writers who have transmitted the accounts of his uncommon abilities, but, from their having lived after his death, could not have personally witnessed their exhibition. But the account of Johnston deserves particular notice, from this circumstance, that it was written not many years after the death of Crichton by one who, both on the continent and in Scotland, might, without any overstrained supposition, be understood to have received his information from those who had been personally acquainted with his character and talents.\*

When we are examining the testimony of Johnston, and passing from it to the authority of later writers, there is one remark,

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\* Johnston was educated at the University of St Andrews, and afterwards travelled through Germany and France. He was abroad in the 1587. We find him at Heidelberg, in the 1590, and it is probable he returned to Scotland some time about the 1595. He died in the 1612. At what time the *Heroes Scoti* was written, is not certain. It was first printed at Leyden, in 1603; but the Dedication is dated in the 1601, which is *eighteen* years after the death of Crichton. It might, however, have been composed at even an earlier period.

shown, by the learned biographer of Buchanan,\* to have been borrowed from the classic stores of Buchanan and Fracastoro;) but because they contain a decided proof of the murder of Crichton, by the Duke of Mantua, a fact, the truth of which has been questioned by Dr Black.

*“ Tuque, licet princeps, peperit quem Mantua clara,  
Gonzaga infelix ! tua quam temeraria dextra !  
Heu decus Aonidum fixisti vulnere fædo,  
Doctoremque tuæ, formatoremque juventæ !”*

“ And thou, Gonzaga, to whom illustrious Mantua has given birth, unhappy even though a prince, with what a daring hand hast thou slain the glory of the muses,—the master of thy studies,—and the guide of thy youth !”†

Another very interesting account of Crichton, is a Biographical Sketch, written by David Buchanan, in the year 1625, forty-two years after his death. It contains a concise, but animated description, of his short and brilliant career ; and the terms in which this

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\* Irving's Life of Buchanan, Appendix, page 400.

† See the original poem, Appendix, No. XII.



author paints the uncommon precocity of his talents, the facility with which he acquired every distinct and different species of knowledge, and the astonishment which his appearance created amongst the learned men of his age, are, in every respect, as strong and ardent as the Dedication of his friend and contemporary, Aldus. “ *Nullum peculiare studium est secutus ; sed, quasi per omnia vagatus, uti erat juvenis multiplicis doctrinæ et memoriæ, stupendique ingenii, modo in politicis et rhetoricis, modo in philosophicis studiis, et modo in theologicis se exercuit, ita ut in omni genere scientiarum doctissimus haberetur. De nam longinquas petit regiones, ut illuc meliores in studiis progressus faceret ; et tum in Gallia, Germania, et Italia peregrinaret, inter omnes viros doctos illius sæculi, tanquam miraculum doctrinæ divinitus missum, tum inter Pontificos, tum inter Protestantes, habitus est.*”

“ He confined himself to no particular study, but ranged alike through all the sciences ; and, as he was a youth of universal erudition, and stupendous memory and talents, he, at one time, exercised himself in political, at another, in rhetorical studies : then, again, he would devote himself to philosophical, and,

after these, to theological subjects ; and this with such success, that he was accounted most deeply versant in every kind of science. At length, he determined to seek foreign countries, that he might there make still greater progress in these studies. He travelled through France, Germany, and Italy, and was accounted, even amongst the most learned, as a miracle of learning, who had been sent from heaven upon earth ; and this opinion was alike entertained by Catholics and Protestants.”\*

In the year 1637, that is, fifty-six years after the death of Crichton, an oration was published by David Leitch, or, according to his classic appellation, Leochæus, Professor of Philosophy at Aberdeen, which he entitled, *Philosophia Illacrymans, hoc est querela Philosophiæ, et Philosophorum Scotorum, præsertim vero Borealium, oratorie expressa, publice habita in Auditorio Maximo Collegii Regii Aberdonensis*. In speaking of the most

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\* See Notes and Illustrations, letter R, for the whole of the Life of David Buchanan. It was never printed, but is to be found in the MS. volume of Lives by this author, preserved in the Advocates' Library.

eminent authors in Scottish literature, he uses the following remarkable expressions ; “ In proof of this assertion, passing over other examples, I may instance that celebrated triumvirate of Scottish philosophers, the first of which is the Admirable Crichton, forced by poverty to be a constant wanderer, yet who, in philosophic subtilty, stood alone, and without a rival ; whose memory, whose fame, whose glory, shall be disseminated not only through Scotland, which produced, nor through Italy, which cultivated his genius, but through the whole inhabitable globe.”

After the consideration of these later testimonia from Dempster, Abernethy, Johnston, Buchanan, and Leitch, I shall not detain the reader by bringing forward the later, and, for that reason, more incorrect, and less interesting accounts of Crichton. It will be observed, that all that we have already seen is prior to the extraordinary and amusing narrative of Sir Thomas Urquhart.\*

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\* There is no life of Crichton in Bayle ; but this is supplied by Moreri, whose life of him is exclusively taken from Aldus and Imperialis. In a MS. work, entitled, “ Hay’s Memoirs,” preserved in the Advocates’ Library, and written in the year

It is difficult to determine what is the precise weight and notice to be allowed in this inquiry to the testimony of this strange and eccentric, but highly amusing writer. If the account given by Sir Thomas Urquhart were the only record relating to the exploits of Crichton which had reached our times, the course to be followed would have been plain

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1760, we find another biographical sketch of him, which, however, is copied, nearly *verbatim*, from Moreri. It concludes with a copy of the verses of Roncinus, which are subjoined to the *Eloge of Imperialis*. The more modern names of Baillet, Mackenzie, Pennant, Kippis, the Earl of Buchan, Black, and Irving, complete the catalogue of those authors, who have either written the *Life*, or descanted upon the literary character of Crichton. Baillet's account is entitled to little notice, because he contents himself with pronouncing the character and attainments of Crichton to be suspicious, without assigning any grounds whatever for this opinion. Mackenzie's *Life* is a curious compilation; but it is full of errors, and incorrect as to its authorities. Pennant's Account, which he does not profess to have written, but only reprinted, from a work published at Aberdeen, is an exact transcript of Mackenzie, only leaving out the Latin quotations, and inserting their translation. Pennant was not aware of this, for he makes no mention of Mackenzie. The Earl of Buchan's Biographical Memoir was, I believe, never printed, but communicated to Dr Kippis, and engrossed in his article in the *Biographia Britannica*. Dr Samuel Johnson, in the eighty-first Number of the *Adventurer*, has given an abridgment of Crichton's adventures. Johnson, as we are told by his biographer, Sir J. Hawkins, dictated the whole from memory; and it is, I think, very evident, that all his information was taken from Mackenzie's *Life*.

and easy ; and this, both because the learned knight is not himself, upon other subjects, of the most scrupulous veracity ; and because, upon this subject, he has not condescended to give any authorities in support of his narrative. Were such the case, a single perusal of his extraordinary biographical sketch would have induced every sober reader to throw it aside, as an excellent piece of burlesque. But, considering the different circumstances under which we come to its perusal, we are not entitled to take this decided step. The contemporary accounts of other unsuspected authors, coincide with all the material parts of the story, and give that stamp of truth and authenticity to the narrative, of which it is nearly deprived by its own bombastic pretensions. Accordingly, when we come to examine and analyze this narrative, and to uncase the bare facts from the fancy dresses in which Sir Thomas has equipped them, we do not find that what he has advanced is, in itself, either more extraordinary or improbable than the account contained in the Dedication by Aldus. But it is unfortunate, unfortunate at least for the posthumous repu-

tation of Crichton, though not for the pleasure and amusement of the readers, that Sir Thomas cannot describe the plainest circumstance or event, except in a language most peculiarly his own. He is, in this way, a sort of Ancient Pistol in literature. If he wishes, for instance, to inform us that the rector of the University of Paris first addressed Crichton, and that Crichton, in his turn, replied to the speech of the rector, "in compliments," says he, after this manner, "*ultro citroque habitis*, tossed to and again, retorted, contrerisposted, back-reverted, and now and then graced with a quip or a clench for the better relish of the gear; being unwilling, in this kind of straining courtesie, to yield to one another, they spent a full half hour and more."\*

It has been already mentioned, that Crichton, for the entertainment of his pupil the prince, and the court of Mantua, in what seems to have been a sort of masque or dramatic satire, performed himself fourteen different characters in succession;—a circum-

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\* "Jewel," p. 66.

stance, which, when we consider that his whole acting probably consisted in changing his dress, and reciting some appropriate lines, is neither incredible nor improbable. But let us listen for a moment to the inimitable language with which this story is clothed by Sir Thomas Urquhart.—“O, with how great liveliness did he represent the condition of all manner of men! how naturally did he set before the eyes of the beholders the rogueries of all professions, from the over-weening monarch to the peevish swain, through all the intermediate degrees of the superficial courtier, or proud warrior, dissembled churchman, doting old man, cozening lawyer, lying traveller, covetous merchant, rude seaman, pedantic scholar, amorous shepherd, envious artizan, vain-glorious master, and tricky servant! He did with such variety display the several humours of all these sorts of people, and with so bewitching energy, that he seemed to be the original, they the counterfeit; and they the resemblance whereof he was the prototype. He had all the jeers, squibs, bulls, quips, taunts, whims, jests, clenches, gybes, mokes, jerks, with all the several kinds of

equivocations, and other sophistical captions, that could properly be adapted to the person by whose representation he had intended to inveigle the company into mirth; and would keep, in that miscellany discourse of his, which was all for the spleen, and nothing for the gall, such a climacterical and mercurially digested method, that, when the fancy of the hearers was tickled with any rare conceit, and that the jovial blood was moved, he held it going with another new device upon the back of the first, and another, yet another, and another again, succeeding one another, for the premoval of what is a stirring into a higher agitation, till, in the closure of the luxuriant period, the decumanal wave of the oddest whimsy of all, enforced the charmed spirits of the auditory (for affording room to his apprehension) suddenly to burst forth into a laughter; which commonly lasted so long, as he had leisure to withdraw behind the screen, shift off, with the help of a page, the suite he had on, apparel himself with another, and return to the stage to act afresh; for, by that time, their transported disparpled, and sublimated fancies, by the wonder-



fully operating engines of his solacious inventions, had, from the height to which the inward screws, wheels, and pulleys of his wit had elevated them, descended, by degrees, into their wonted stations, he was ready for the personating of another carriage; whereof, to the number of fourteen several kinds, (during the five hours' space, at the duke's desire, the solicitation of the court, and his own recreation, he was pleased to histrionize it,) he shewed himself so natural a representative, that any would have thought he had been so many several actors, different in all things else, save only the stature of the body. \* \*—First, he did present himself with a crown on his head, a sceptre in his hand, being clothed with a purple robe, furred with ermine; after that, with a mitre on his head, a crosier in his hand, and accoutred with a pair of lawn sleeves; and thereafter, with a helmet on his head, the visor up, a commanding stick in his hand, and arrayed in a buff suit, with a scarf about his middle. Then, in a rich apparel, after the newest fashion, he did shew himself like another Sejanus, with a periwig daubed with Cypress powder; in sequel

of that, he came out with a three-cornered cap on his head, some parchments in his hand, and writings hanging at his girdle, like chancery bills ; and next to that, with a furred gown about him, an ingot of gold in his hand, and a bag full of money at his side ; after all this, he appears again clad in a country jacket, with a prong in his hand, and a Monmouth-like cap on his head ; then, very shortly after, with a palmer's coat on him, a bourdon in his hand, and some few cockle shells stuck to his hat, he looked as if he had come in pilgrimage from St Michael ; immediately after that, he domineers it in a bare unlined gowne, with a pair of whips in the one hand, and Corderius in the other ; and in suite thereof he honderspondered it with a pair of panner-like breeches, a montera cap on his head, and a knife in a wooden sheath, dagger-ways, by his side : about the latter end he comes forth again, with a square in one hand, a rule in the other, and a leathern apron before him ; then, very quickly after, with a scrip by his side, a sheep-hook in his hand, and a basket full of flowers to make nose-gays for his mistress : and now, drawing

to a closure, he rants it, first, in cuerpo, and vapouring it with jingling spurs, and his arms a-kenbol, like a Don Diego, he struts it, and, by the loftiness of his gait, plays the Capitan Spavento; then, in the very twinkling of an eye, you would have seen him again issue forth with a cloak upon his arm, in a livery garment, thereby representing the serving man: and lastly, at one time, amongst those other, he came out with a long grey beard and pucked ruff, crouching on a staff tipt with the head of a barber's cithern, and his gloves hanging by a button at his girdle."\*

The remaining parts of Sir Thomas's account of Crichton, are given in so admirable a style, as to lend the air of marvellous fiction to the most common and credible events. His duel with the bravo, or gladiator, at Mantua, his disputation with the most eminent doctors and scholars of the Parisian University, the admiration occasioned by his dramatic powers at the court of Mantua, and the extraordinary effects of these upon my lady duchess's maids of honour, the wonderful popularity which

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\* Sir T. Urquhart's Jewel, pages 72, 73, and 74.

he attained, and the exceeding admiration in which he was held by the fair sex ; so that the young unmarried “ ladies of all the most eminent places were not any thing respected, who had not either a lock of his hair, or a copy of verses of his composing ;” all these circumstances are dwelt upon by Sir Thomas, with extreme richness of description. Crichton’s gallant adventures with the young lady who had fallen in love with him, their tender courtship, and midnight supper, in which Sir Thomas informs us, in the spirit of Hostess Quickly when she describes the minutiae attending Falstaff’s proposal of marriage to her, that “ Crichton and his lovely mistresse, on a blue velvet couch, sat by one another, towards a charcoal fire, burning in a silver brasero ;” and the cruel and disastrous death which so soon followed ;—all this is conveyed with a felicity of painting, and a luxuriance of description and of epithet, of which no other writer of the age of Urquhart can furnish, I believe, a similar example.

It is not proposed, however, to criticise the story of Urquhart, but to endeavour to separate the true and authentic parts of his

narrative, from the superfluous comic matter with which it is accompanied ; and this is not difficult.

Crichton, we are informed by this author, was endowed with a most retentive and admirable memory, so that, "after having heard any sermon, speech, or harangue, or other manner of discourse, of an hour's continuance, he was able to recite it, without hesitation, after the same manner of gesture and pronounciation, in all points, wherewith it was delivered at first ;" that he was possessed of very universal talents. We are told also, in the words of Sir Thomas, that "he understood, almost naturally, quiddities of philosophy ; and as for the abstrusest and most researched mysteries of other disciplines, arts, and faculties, the intentional species of them were as really obvious to the interior view and perspicacity of his mind, as those of the common visible colours, to the external sight of him that will open his eyes to look upon them."\* That, in addition to this, his coun-

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\* "Jewel," p. 65.

tenance was exceedingly beautiful, and his form admirably proportioned; that he excelled in all kinds of athletic exercises, and was highly accomplished in playing upon all sorts of musical instruments,—are, in truth, the principal matters in the testimony of Sir Thomas Urquhart; and they seem entitled to full credit, from being corroborated by the concurring testimony of the more sober and rational biographers of Crichton.

On the other hand, his encounter with the gladiator at Mantua, the particulars of his public exhibition at Paris, and the wonderful dramatic powers with which he astonished the Court of Gonzaga, are particulars peculiar to Urquhart's Narrative, and are not to be found in the pages of his other biographers. But we are not entitled wholly to reject such facts, merely on the ground of the strange and questionable language in which Sir Thomas has chosen to recount them. They are, in themselves, far from improbable; and since we have found many, though not all the other circumstances in the Sketch given by Sir Thomas to be true, although couched in

the same grotesque and ludicrous phraseology, we may reason, by a fair analogy, that the same understratum of truth belongs also to those parts of the narrative, which are not corroborated by any other author. Nor does it destroy the credibility of these facts, that the style in which they have been communicated by the ingenious Sir Thomas, has been forced to bear as many rich and gaudy flowers, as the other parts of his amusing story.

The object of this argument is not to raise the testimony of the Knight of Cromarty, in any degree to a level with the more respectable authorities which have been quoted. All that is meant, is to show, that he is placed in the predicament of a witness who certainly is not to be wholly believed, but who, far less, can be wholly rejected.\*

There is little doubt that the burlesque and extraordinary style of writing adopted by Sir Thomas Urquhart, in his Account of

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\* Some curious particulars relative to the Life of Sir T. Urquhart, will be found in the Notes and Illustrations, Letter P.

Crichton, the many inaccuracies in which he may be detected, and the sweeping assertion with which he has closed his narrative,\* must have had the most mischievous consequences in lowering the future character and reputation of Crichton. The "Jewel," by Urquhart, which contains the panegyric lately examined, was first printed in 1652, and republished in 1774; and from the singular nature of the tracts which it contains, and the admirable humour with which many of the anecdotes are given, it was probably much read. When Aldus, Imperialis, Astolfi, and other contemporary authors, were gradually assuming their places amongst those ancient and forgotten stores of literature, which are sought after only by the historian, or the antiquary, Sir Thomas and his "Jewel" were glittering in the public eye, and rising into daily notoriety; and, I think, we may date the first appearance of scepticism, in regard to the ta-

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\* "The verity of this story I have here related, concerning this incomparable Crichton, may be certified by above two thousand men yet living, who have known him."—*Jewel*, p. 96.



lents and history of Crichton, from the period, when the productions of this eccentric writer became more generally known.

If such was the effect of the eulogy of Sir Thomas Urquhart, the evil was increased, rather than removed, by the appearance of Mackenzie's *Life of Crichton*, in the year 1722. Never, perhaps, was any biographical article written in more complete defiance of all accurate research. Had Mackenzie taken due pains to examine the contemporary authorities of Aldus and Imperialis, to which he refers, he must have seen, that Crichton could not, according to these writers, have been born before the year 1562, yet he places the date of his birth in the year 1551. Had he looked into the most common histories of his own country, he could not have failed to discover that the principal command in Queen Mary's army, at the battle of Langside, was entrusted to the Earl of Argyle; yet he places Robert Crichton of Cluny at the head of the Queen's troops. If the work of Trajan Boccalini, which he has ventured to quote, had been examined by this unfaithful historian of Scottish literature, he would have found, that the

Italian satyrist, in his attack upon Crichton, says not a syllable about his coming to Rome, or of himself having been in that city; yet Mackenzie affirms, that "Trajan Boccalini, in his advertisements from Parnassus, tells us, that he came to *Rome, Boccalini being then at Rome himself.*" Had he weighed the account of Imperialis, it would have informed him, that Crichton was killed in July, and that the assertion of Urquhart, who states that his death happened during the Carnival, could not be correct; at least, that the one was directly contradictory of the other; yet this accommodating author adopts both stories, without perceiving that there is any inconsistency between them. These are but a small number of the offences of this writer against truth and accuracy. He adds to the account of Aldus, expressions of his own invention; and mistakes the testimony of Astolfi, quoting, instead of the original words, the erroneous expressions of Dempster, under the idea, that Astolfi wrote in Latin, not in Italian; and, not content with thus mutilating Astolfi, he concludes his career of misquotation, by placing, amongst the catalogue of

Crichton's works, which he affirms is copied from Dempster, a comedy in the Italian language, which is nowhere to be found mentioned in the Life written by that author.

All these errors were perpetuated by Penant, whose Life of Crichton was an exact reprint of the biographical account of Mackenzie, with this difference, that he rendered detection more difficult; because the Latin passages, which might possibly have excited curiosity, and provoked a comparison with the text and the original,\* were left out entirely, and a translation substituted in their place. His "Life," accordingly, has received from Sir John Hawkins all the honours due to a production of established authority and accurate research.†

By thus falling into the hands of authors,

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\* The only modern writer, previous to the accounts of Dr Kippis and Dr Black, who seems to have come to his subject with the inclination and the ability for accurate research, is the Earl of Buchan. His Manuscript Memoir I have never seen; but much that is valuable in Kippis's account is derived from it; although a material fault is committed, if Kippis's account is correct, by the omission of the original authorities and documents on which the facts are founded.

† Hawkins's Life of Johnson, p. 308.

who could not feel any merit in adhering to the truth, or who would not exert the industry, which is requisite for its investigation and transmission, the fame of Crichton has been, by Baillet, Kippis, and Black, regarded with doubt, and even treated with ridicule ; yet, in forming an estimate of the consideration to be given to these opinions, it is most material to enquire, who were they who honoured, and who are they who have derided him ? His honours have been bestowed, not, as Dr Black seems to insinuate, by authors who saw him “ through the mists of distance and antiquity,”\* where remoteness conferred that ideal lustre, which proximity would have dissolved. These, on the contrary, are the very men who have regarded his fame as suspicious. His eulogists were those who knew him, and lived with him—who saw, and heard, and felt, the powers of the remarkable person whom they described, and around the living presence of whose genius no charm of antiquity, no enchantment of distance was thrown.

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\* Life of Tasso, Appendix xxv. vol. ii. p. 444.

The murder of Crichton, by the hand of Vincenzo Gonzaga, Prince of Mantua, is an event, of which the particulars are involved in great obscurity ; and, as is remarked by Dr Black, it is peculiarly unfortunate, that the general histories of Italy, at this period, and the more private annals of the noble families in that country, are equally silent on the subject.\* This author has endeavoured, with a warm and natural partiality towards Vincenzo, the youthful patron of Tasso, to throw an air of doubt and uncertainty over the whole of the circumstances connected with this melancholy history. " Whatever opinions," says he, " we may form of the talents of Crichton, it is evident, that the guilt of his murder, *if he was murdered by the Prince of Mantua*, is in no respect diminished."

" As to the real cause and manner of our young Scotsman's death," says Kippis,† " both of them remain in some degree of obscurity. That he was killed at a rencounter at the

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\* Appendix to the Life of Tasso, No. XXV. p. 445.

† Biog. Brit. Article Crichton, vol. iv. p. 453.

Carnival at Mantua, (if on the 3d of July, it could not be during the Carnival,) is testified by too many authors to be reasonably doubted. But whether there was that particular malignity, on the part of Vincenzo di Gonzaga, which is commonly ascribed to him, may be considered as uncertain." From both of these passages, it might be imagined, that the fact of Crichton's having been slain by Vincenzo Gonzaga, the Prince of Mantua, was of difficult and doubtful proof; and the expression of Kippis, in particular, would lead us to believe that some of his biographers had stated the circumstance of his having been killed by Vincenzo, but that other authors were content with simply mentioning that he was slain in a rencounter, during the Carnival at Mantua. It is added, by Dr Black, "that his biographers do not dwell with horror on the atrocity of the prince." Let us hear the account by Imperialis. "Crichton," says he, "after he had left Venice, was, on account of his talents, most favourably received by William Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua. On a certain evening, he happened to be strolling through the city, with his guitar in

his hand, and his sword under his arm, in the manner of gentlemen of the court; and being met by Vincenzo, the duke's son, (it is uncertain whether the rencounter was accidental or premeditated,) he was loudly called upon to draw, and, at the same moment, a most violent and sudden assault was made upon him, and his two companions. He, however, not only parried the attack, but caused the assailants themselves to be in the utmost peril for their lives, and, at last, so completely wore out and overcame the prince, that, with a loud voice he was forced to discover himself to Crichton. Upon this he fell on his knees, and, while in that attitude, intreating pardon, and representing to the prince that he had not, on account of the darkness of the night, been able to recognize him, he was pierced to the heart by the hand of the furious and inexorable Vincenzo."

By what process of reasoning, Dr Kippis, having this passage of *Imperialis* before him, was induced to conclude that it proved only that Crichton was killed at Mantua during the Carnival, and that, as he would seem to

insinuate, the fact of Vincenzo di Gonzaga having been his murderer, or even that the prince was animated with malignity against him, is still "very uncertain," it is not easy to discover. And, indeed, if without bringing forward any argument, or adducing any authority which tends to throw suspicion on the account of a historian, we are to be permitted, in this vague manner, to throw aside his testimony, it is hard to say where literary scepticism will have an end. Kippis also ought to have been aware that the evidence of Johnston, in his introductory inscription prefixed to his epitaph on Crichton, was, upon this point, equally positive and satisfactory. The epitaph of this author is, as we have already seen, preceded by this inscription:—  
"James Crichton of Cluny, the pupil of Mars and the Muses, slain at Mantua, by the son of the Duke of Mantua, in the 1581." The testimony of Abernethy is, on this point, just as strong and explicit.

The account of Crichton's death, as given by Imperialis, is strikingly corroborated by two interesting passages from English tra-



vellers, which seem to place the guilt of Vincenzo of Gonzaga, beyond question. The first of these is well worthy of attention, because it comes from a contemporary, who was in Italy at the time when the melancholy event took place, and who states the fact upon his own authority. This is Thomas Wright, the author of a singular work, entitled, "The Passions of the Mind in General,"\* in the Preface to which he states himself "to have had long experience in the schooles both in Spaine, Italy, France, and Flanders."

"I remember (says the author, speaking of the dangerous effects of the passion of precipitation,) when I was in Italy, there was a Scottish gentleman, of most rare and singular parts, who was a retainer to a duke of that country; hee was a singular good scholler, and as good a souldier; it chanced one night the young prince, either upon some spleen, or false suggestion, or to trie the Scots valor,

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\* Published in 1621.

met him in a place where he was wont to haunt, resolving either to kill, wound, or beat him ; and for this effect, conducted with him two of the best fencers he could find ; the Scot had but one friend with him ; in fine, a quarrel was pickt, they all draw ; the Scot presently ranne one of the fencers throw, and killed him in a trice ; with that he bended his forces to the prince, who, fearing lest that which was befallen the fencer, might happen upon himselfe, he exclaimed out instantly, that he was the prince, and therefore willed him to look about him what he did. The Scot perceiving well what he was, fell downe upon his knees, demanding pardon at his hands, and gave the prince his naked rapier ; who, no sooner had received it, but with the same sword he ran him thorow to death ; the which barbarous fact, as it was condemned of all men, so it sheweth the precipitation of his passionate ireful heart ; for, if he had considered the humble submission of his servant, and loyaltie of his subject, and valour of his souldier ; if he had weighed the cowardlinesse of his fact, the infamie that he should thereby

incurre, he would never have precipitated into so savage an offence.”\*

That the Scottish gentleman, who is described in this passage, “as possessing most rare and singular parts, as a retainer of a duke of that country, a singular good scholar, and as good a soldier,” was none other than James Crichton of Clunie, the exact coincidence of the circumstances in the narrative of Wright, with the accounts of Imperialis and the other biographers of Crichton, will not allow us to doubt. Upon the same grounds, we are entitled to conclude, that the young prince, who “received the naked rapier from the Scot who fell down on his knees, and no sooner received it than he ran him through to death,” was Vincenzo of Gonzaga, Prince of Mantua.

The second passage, illustrative more of the extreme sorrow which afflicted the house

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\* The author of this work, in his preface to the reader, says, “I had perceived, by long experience, in schooles both in Spain, Italy, France, and Flanders, that Flemings, Scots, and Englishmen, were ever equal, and rather deeper schollars, than either Italians or Spaniards.”

of Gonzaga after the death of Crichton, than of the particulars which accompanied it, is taken from the works of that strange and fantastic traveller, William Lithgow, and is introduced by him in his description of his arrival at Malta, and his reception there by the Knights of St John of Jerusalem.

“ And withall,” says he, “ to my great contentment I rencountered here with a country gentleman of mine, being soldier there, named William Douglass, who, afterwards, for his long and good services at sea, was solemnly knighted, and made one of their order ; whose fidele and manly services have been since as plausibly regarded by the Maltezes as Monsieur Crichton, his worth in learning and excellent memory, rests admired in Italy ; but especially by the noble Gonzagaes, and dependent friends of the house of Mantua, for whose loss and accidentall death they still heavily bemoane ; acknowledging that the race of that princely stock by God’s judgments, was cut off because of his untimely death.”

Lithgow travelled through Italy in the year 1609, about fifteen years after the death of

Crichton. His testimony, therefore, regarding his worth in learning, and excellent memory, "the admiration which it had created in Italy;" the lamentations made for his death, especially by the "noble Gonzagas," and the gloomy conviction which they cherished, that for their participation in it, they had been visited by the judgments of God, and deprived of the hopes of succession; all this, when we consider the circumstances under which the information was received, is entitled to great credit.

The account of David Buchanan, in support of the fact that Crichton was slain by Vincenzo di Gonzaga, is as clear and explicit as any of the above narratives. "Crichton," says he, "was for his admirable learning recommended to the Prince and Duke of Mantua, for the purpose of instructing his son in polite learning, *by whom*, during some nightly excursion, *he was unhappily slain*, in the flower of his age, and when he had scarcely attained to his thirtieth year."\* He adds,

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\* P. 330, part vii. *Travels*, p. 10.

*quod amasiam principis deperiret*, “because he had passionately loved a mistress of the prince’s;” a circumstance to be found in the account of Sir Thomas Urquhart alone.

Seeing before us, therefore, the concurrent testimony of these authors,—of Imperialis, Johnston, Abernethy, Wright, Lithgow, and Buchanan, it is impossible to agree with the opinion of Dr Black, that the fact of Crichton having been murdered in the streets of Mantua by Vincenzo de Gonzaga is *uncertain*. It is proved as certainly as any other historical event can be proved. It may possibly be true, as has been remarked by the biographer of Tasso, that there is room to doubt whether Crichton ever was Vincenzo’s tutor; it may be correct that Vincenzo was fond of literature, and consoled himself, during his hours of melancholy, in reading the poems and apostrophising the shade of his favourite Virgil; that he was a handsome prince and not likely to be supplanted, by a rival, in any affair of gallantry, need not be questioned;—and yet what do all these united observations establish when weighed against this short, plain, and unanswerable passage

of Imperialis, "*furenti atque inexorabili Vincentii dextera transverberatus est.*" Indeed, after insisting that the fact of Vincenzo being the murderer of Crichton was uncertain, and endeavouring to adduce some passages, in order to clear the prince "from the charge of having committed this dreadful crime," the author appears himself to be appalled with the temerity of the attempt; and candidly, though somewhat contradictorily, remarks, in conclusion, that none of the passages which he has brought forward are at all sufficient to balance the direct evidence in support of the opposite story.\*

The only remaining subject on which there still rests some uncertainty is with regard to the year and month of Crichton's death. Imperialis has fixed it to the 3d of July 1583. Aldus, in his Dedication of "Cicero's Book De Universitate," to the memory of Crichton, which is dated the 4th of November, 1583, confirms this opinion; and both of these authors add, that he was killed "ere he had completed his twenty-second year." This account

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\* Appendix to Life of Tasso, Vol. II. p. 451.

given by Imperialis and Aldus is not corroborated, as far as regards his exact age, by the Italian hand-bill or memoir in the Cortegiano of Castiglione; for Crichton was born, it is there stated, on the 19th of August, and was in the year 1580 a young man of twenty years of age.\* He was born, therefore, on the 19th of August, 1560; and if, according to Aldus and Imperialis, he was killed on the 3d of July, 1583, it is evident that instead of having not attained, he was then above the age of twenty-two years. The Earl of Buchan arrived, therefore, at a true and accurate conclusion, when he stated, in contradiction to the common accounts of his other biographers, that Crichton was born in the month of August 1560; and if it is true, as stated by Aldus, that he was killed before he was twenty-two years of age, his noble biographer is equally correct in fixing this melancholy catastrophe to the month of July 1582.†

But all these reasonings are overturned, and Crichton could not have been slain at

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\* Biog. Brit. p. 447, Vol. IV.

† Kippis' Biog. Brit. p. 442—447.



any period before the 4th of November 1584, at which time, instead of his twenty-second, he was in his twenty-fifth year, if the following passage, from the Abbe Serassi's Life of Mazzoni, be esteemed worthy of credit. In speaking of Crichton's being killed by Vincenzo Gonzaga, in a midnight brawl, "*In una ruffa notturna, Di che,*" says he,\* "*si puo vedere L'Imperiali nel Museo Istorico, p. 242, il quale peraltro s'inganni ponendo la sua morte a 3 di Luglio del 1583, quando Io trovo che Critonio era tuttavia in vita nel Novembre del 1584, nel qual tempo scrisse e stampo in Milano un Elegia pel passaggio alla celeste gloria del grande Archivescovo S. Carlo Borromeo. chio tengo tra le mie miscellanee con questo titolo.*"—"Epicedium Illustrissimi et Reverendissimi Cardinalis Caroli Borromei, ab Jacobo Critonio, Scoto, rogatu clarissimi summaque in optimum pastorem suum pietate viri Joannis Antonii Magii Medeolanen: proximo post obitum die exaratum Mediolina ex Typographia Pacifici Pontii MD.LXXXIII.

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\* Vita del Mazzonii, p. 126, 127.

in 4. E' noto che S. Carlo mori alli 3 di Novembre del 1584 alle 3 ore di notte."

This is a perplexing passage, nor is it to be lightly regarded; for, in every point of view, the authority it contains is entitled to grave consideration. Serassi, an author of high character for accuracy, asserts, that he has *in his own hands*, amongst his miscellanies, an Epicedion, written on the death of the Cardinal and Saint, Charles Borromeo, by James Crichton, Scotsman, and printed the very day after his death. Serassi copies the title of this Epicedion verbatim, and evidently must have had it before him, when he wrote the passage. All supposition of mistake upon his part, is thus precluded. The coincidence of the two names, Jacobus Critonius, the additional appellative Scotus, and the circumstance, that the elegy was written, and printed, and published, the day after the death of the Cardinal, fixes the poem upon James Crichton of Cluny; as the improbability of the supposition, that there should have been another Scotsman of the name of James Crichton in Italy in the year 1584, possessed

with the same astonishing facility of poetical composition, is quite apparent. And, lastly, the subject on which this elegy was composed, renders any error almost impossible. Had it been a poem on any indifferent subject, or a prose work relating to any disputed point in physics, or in morals, we might have been allowed to conjecture, that the date 1584 was erroneous; but the death of the Cardinal Charles Borromeo ties us down to a certain and unalterable time. An Epicedion on this venerable character could not have been written anterior to 1584, and every supposition of error in the date is thus excluded. On the one side, therefore, we have Aldus, Imperialis, and all his succeeding biographers, fixing the death of Crichton to the year 1582 or 1583; on the other hand, we have the Admirable Crichton himself writing an Epicedion on the Cardinal Borromeo, on the 4th of November, 1584. On which side the truth is to be found, must be left to future writers to discern.

Genealogical details are, in general, dry and uninteresting; and perhaps it is only

when pursued in the illustration of some disputed point of history or biography, that they ought to enjoy that reflected importance, to which of themselves they are not entitled. But any man who has greatly distinguished himself, ennobles his ancestors, and forbids them to be forgotten. We feel a generous curiosity in tracing the early annals of the family, to whom the future man of genius is to belong ; and if, after him, it has fallen into decay, we have even a melancholy pleasure in marking the steps of its extinction.

The possession of the lands of Eliock by the family of Crichton, is a fact which carries us back to the middle of the fifteenth century. In the 1453, Sir Robert Crichton of Sanquhar, father of the first Lord Crichton, obtained from Charteris of Amisfield the lands of Eliock ; and the charter of confirmation from the crown, along with the original grant, is still upon record.\* In the books

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\* 21st October, 1464. Douglas, p. 449, vol. i. For this fact, and many of the succeeding details regarding the Crichton family, I am indebted to the well-known research, and kind communications, of my learned friend, Mr J. Riddell.

of the Privy Seal, we find a remission granted in the 1518 to various persons of rank and property in the family of Crichton, among whom is found Robert Crichton, son of the late John Crichton in Eliock. In those days, it was not an uncommon practice, for the young sons of opulent families to be portioned by having a favourable lease granted to them of part of their father's estate. John Crichton was probably a younger son of the Eliock family, and obtaining a lease of this nature of the lands of Eliock, then forming a part of the estate belonging to the family, he is designed Joannes Crichton *in* Eliock, not *de* Eliock. It cannot be stated as a fact, but it is at least a fair conjecture, that Robert, the son of this John Crichton, was the father of the Lord Advocate, and grandfather to the Admirable Crichton; and that, by some family transaction or agreement, of which we have now lost all direct evidence, the tenant in the lease became eventually the proprietor of the estate of Eliock.

James, the Admirable Crichton, even before he left Scotland and became so celebrated in Italy, appears to have been regarded with

much affection and interest by his relations ; and the estate and castle of Cluny was settled upon him and his heirs-male by a charter from James, Bishop of Dunkeld, in 1576,\* when he was yet only sixteen years of age. The Lord Advocate was proprietor of some lands in Ettrick Forest, which had belonged to the Chancellor Morton, the accomplice of the Secretary Lethington in his treasons against Queen Mary. These, also, were settled upon James Crichton of Cluny by a charter, of which the confirmation is still upon record.†

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\* The charter of confirmation upon this original charter is still extant, dated *Apud Castrum de Strivling, tertio die Mensis Junii Anno Dom. 1579*. It will be found in the Appendix, No. XV.

† This James, Bishop of Dunkeld, was probably James Paton, who, in Spottiswood's table at the end of his Ecclesiastical History, is set down as the last Bishop in the See of Dunkeld, coming after Robert Crichton, who succeeded to George, the brother of the Lord Advocate. There is something difficult to explain in this grant. How the estate and castle of Cluny, which, by George, Bishop of Dunkeld, had been conveyed to his brother, should have returned into the hands of Bishop James Paton, and then be by him again conveyed in the broadest terms to the Admirable Crichton, is not easily understood.

The Lord Advocate was likewise possessed of lands, which he had purchased from the Mowbrays of Barnebougal, in the barony of Dumvanie, and county of Linlithgow.

The expression, therefore, which is used by Leitch, in speaking of Crichton's travels, "*constantissimus præ paupertate peregrinus,*" is contradicted, whether we look to the landed estates, and the high official situations possessed by his father, or to the substantial inheritance, which, at a very early age, was settled upon himself. That he may have experienced some temporary inconvenience at the time when he addresses to Aldus his desponding hexameters, is not improbable; but that the heir of Cluny, the eldest son of the Lord Advocate, and the near relation of so many rich and noble families, should have been compelled, at the first, to leave his native country, and, eventually, to continue a solitary wanderer upon the continent, from the pressure of poverty, is an assertion against which the probable evidence arising from undoubted facts, is so strong, that it may be almost pronounced impossible to be true.

Sir Robert Crichton, of Cluny, the second son of the Lord Advocate,\* and full brother to

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\* That Sir Robert was the brother-german to James Crichton, appears from the following charter:—

the Admirable Crichton, became, after his death in Italy, the heir of the family, and eventually succeeded to the estates of Eliock and Cluny. His character appears to have offered in every respect, a contrast to that of his accomplished brother. Educated in times of turbulence and dissension, when the civil commotions, which then tore the kingdom, the independance of feudal manners, and the struggle between the reformed and the catholic religions, had produced many men of fierce and intolerant habits, he yet appears a singular instance of depravity amid the dark characters with which he is surrounded.

Associating with men of riotous habits, he seems, in the prosecution of his enterprizes, to have had little respect for the public laws of his country, or for the private appeals of family affection. One of these enterprizes is worth relating, because it throws

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*June 5, 1581.—Rex, pro bono servitio nobis, per nostrum familiarem clericum et consiliarium, Magistrum Robertum Crichton de Eliock, nostrum Advocatum, impenso, concessit, Roberto Crichton, filio inter præfatum Magistrum Robertum et Elisabetham Stewart, ejus sponsam, terras et loca seu prædia de Catslack.” It has before been shown that Elizabeth Stewart was mother of the Admirable Crichton.*



light not only on the personal character of this feudal Knight, but on the manners of Scotland at the close of the sixteenth century.

Marion Crichton was his half sister, and the eldest daughter of the Lord Advocate, by his third marriage.\* Upon the death of her father, James Stirling of Feodallis, who married Isabel Borthwick, the Lord Advocate's widow, had been appointed tutor to Marion; and he had chosen to place her, when she was yet a very young girl, under the care of his brother, Henry Stirling of Ardoch, that she might remain with him, to use the expressive language of the old deed which describes this nefarious transaction, "this summer season, for learning of sic things as wes maist proper for ane bairne of her estate."

Sir Robert Crichton determined to get possession of Marion, with the view either of compelling her into a marriage with some of

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\* In the Record of Signatures, Vol. XV. for the years 1591 and 1592, page 68, letter B, we find a grant, in which allusion is made to unquhile Maister Robert Crichton of Eliock, and Isabel Borthwick, his spous, being a grant of the mariage of Marion Crichton, their dochter and heir, (i. e. heir of that marriage.)

his associates, or intimidating her into a settlement of her fortune upon himself. He procured the assistance of some of the boldest of his friends; and these, with forty horsemen, fully armed, assembled under cover of night, and attacked the house of Ardoch.\* At this time, the Earl of Bothwell, who had been declared a rebel and traitor in the year 1591, was known to be in concealment in some part of the country; and this armed band of plunderers pretended that they came to search for that nobleman. They soon scaled the outer wall of the building, and Sir Robert, crying and shouting that he knew that the Earl of Bothwell was there, and that he had orders to apprehend him, insisted on entering the castle. Henry of Ardoch appeared at the door, and incautiously admitted the party. Their conduct was now equally cruel and cowardly. They maltreated Ardoch's lady in the most brutal manner. They robbed the house of many valuable articles; and they accomplished the main purpose for which they came, by violently carry-

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\* July 13, 1592.

ing off the defenceless girl from her friends and protectors. Nothing can furnish us with a more convincing proof of the lawless manners of this age, than the circumstance, that the leaders in this cruel assault were gentlemen of family and property in this part of the country.\*

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\* These persons are all ordained to appear by a certain day, and produce Marion Crichton, which having failed to do, they are declared rebels in common form. See, for the original deed, giving a most minute description of the cruel circumstances attending this midnight attack on the house of Ardoch, Privy Council Register, volume for 1591 and 1594, p. 144.—The names of Sir Robert Crichton's associates, are Patrick Graham of Inchbrackie, William Stewart, brother to the Laird of Innermeith, Walter Rollo, tutor of Duncrub, Andro Ramsay of Inchstraffie, and Gawin Douglass, brother to the Laird of Dalzel, with forty horsemen armed with pistols, &c. The deed declares, "they first maist shamefullie and unonestlie misused the said Harie's wife, being grite with bairne, dang and harlit her up and doune at their pleasure; they then sought Marion Crichton, and having found her, violentlie carryed her away, and reft, and away took, a grite part of Ardoch's moveables." On the 26th of January, 1593, Sir Robert Crichton is again denounced on an accusation of certain treasonable practices and conspiracies; and, in the same volume which contains the record of his outlawry, we find proof that the knight had not forsaken his old habit of attacking his enemies in their houses. Philip Mowbray of Pitliver Mill, who was probably a relation of the Lord Advocate's second wife, Agnes Mowbray, complains of John Stewart, James Stewart the younger, and Sir Robert

The Lord Advocate, by his first marriage with Elizabeth Stewart, was nearly connected with the Earl of Moray. Lord Doune, the father of the earl, was his brother-in-law; and his son, Sir Robert Crichton, naturally espoused the party, and held himself bound to avenge the quarrel of his noble cousin. It is not unimportant to remark in passing, that James Stewart, this Earl of Moray, cousin to the Admirable Crichton, was married to Lady Elizabeth Stewart, daughter of the Regent Moray. The Regent Moray, it is well known, was a natural son of King James V. His daughter, therefore, was cousin to King James VI.; and I entreat the reader to remark the perfect accuracy with which this marriage is recorded by Aldus Manutius, in his dedication:—“*Neque Regis in consobrinum tuum, Jacobum Stuardum, clementia,—cui, cum Moraviæ Principatu, consobrinam uxorem dedit.*” Surely this is a circumstance which marks equally the fidelity with which the information had been given to Aldus by Crichton, and transmitted in his writings to posterity.

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Crichton, for an attack upon his house, somewhat similar to the *Raid of Ardoch*.

It is well known, that Moray, who had been guilty of receiving and harbouring the Earl of Bothwell, after his unsuccessful attempt to seize the king in the palace of Holyrood, was accused of having been an accomplice in this ill-concerted scheme. The Earl of Huntly received orders to bring Moray to his trial; and he, according to that savage and summary mode of justice so commonly adopted in these times, having assembled his vassals, attacked the castle of Dunibirstle, where Moray then resided with the Lady Doune, his mother. The castle was set fire to; and Moray, after a feeble defence,\* favoured by the confusion of the fray and the darkness of the night, had contrived to escape: but the silk strings attached to his steel cap having caught fire, he was thus betrayed to his merciless pur-

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\* Spottiswood, p. 387. Melvill's Memoirs, p. 201. Burrell's Diary, 7th February, 1591. Calderwood, p. 267.

In the Genealogical History of the Earls of Sutherland, it is mentioned, p. 216, that the Earl of Moray was killed by the Laird of Cluny, and the Laird of Gicht. The ballad on the death of the bonny Earl of Moray is well known. It will be found in Ritson's Scottish Songs, vol. II. p. 29.

suers, who murdered him among the rocks on the sea-shore.

A transaction of this cruel nature incensed the people, by whom Moray was much beloved, and made a deep impression on his relations, who clamoured loudly for justice against Huntly. Revenge, however, was more congenial to the feelings of his cousin, Sir Robert Crichton; who, meeting with the Laird of Moncoffer, a partisan of Huntly,\* at the chapel of Egismalay, slew him upon the spot, unawed by the sanctity of the place, and reckless of the consequences of the crime.

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\* This circumstance, that the Laird of Moncoffer was a partisan of Huntly, is not positively asserted, but is strongly implied, in the following passage:—"Mr Robert Crichton, advocate, left a fair estate behind him, viz. the Barony of Eliock and Clunie, to his son, Sir Robert Crichtoune of Cluny. But after he had killed the Laird of Moncoffer (in revenge of the Earl of Murray's slaughter,) at the chapell of Egismalay, had never good success in his affairs."—*Staggering State of Scots Statesmen, MS. Advocate's Library.*

"Holyrood House, 13th February, 1598.—The diet appointed to Clunie, for his compearance before the justice and his deputies, to underlye the law for the slauchter of the Laird of Moncoffer, continued to the 22d of May next, and proclamation to be direct hereupon."—*Privy Council Record for 1602 and 1603.—Sederunt Book.*

Sir Robert was summoned to stand his trial for this murder ; but here, as upon most other occasions, he declined appearing in person, and the affair was probably hushed up and forgotten. These repeated warnings did not effect any change upon his turbulent character. Received again into favour, he attended upon the king when he held his court at St Andrews in the 1602, and was there a third time guilty of a violent assault, committed within the chamber and in the presence of royalty.\* Incensed at this proud contempt of his authority, the king immediately summoned Sir Robert Crichton to answer before him for his crime, at the Palace of Falkland.

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\* A document regarding this assault is preserved in the Privy Council Record of 1601—1602, from which I take the following extract :—

“ Anent the charge given by virtue of our Soverane Lordes letters to Sir Robert Crychtoun of Cluny, Knyght, to have compeirit personallie before the Kingis Majestie at Falkland, to have answerit upoune the proud contempt and indignitie done by him lattlie upon the 10th day of this instant, against his heines in the persute, dinging, and invasioune of — Chalmers, within our awin chalmer and ludging in Sanct Androis, quhairin his Majestie was present for the tyme.” Sir Robert does not appear, and is forfeited. Page 941, vol. for the above year.

On his failing to obey the order, his estates were forfeited, nor does he ever again appear to have enjoyed that rank and consideration to which his high connections had at first promoted him.

Sir Robert Crichton married Lady Margaret Stewart, a daughter of John the sixth Lord Innermeath, and sister to James, Earl of Atholl.\* That he had sons, is certain; but neither their names nor their history can be discovered.† His unsettled and riotous life appears to have wasted his fortune; and, in the 1596, he sold his estate of Eliock to his brother-in-law, Sir Robert Dalzell of Dalzell, afterward first Earl of Carnwath.‡ The

\* Douglas's Peerage, p. 140, Vol. I.

† 29th Jan. 1607.—“ In presence of the Lordes of Secret Counsell Compeirit personallie Sir Robert Crichton of Clunie, and Harring of Lethindie, and declaret upon their great aith, that they were not interdicted; and that their sons, nor any otheris, were infest in fee of their landis.”—*Privy Council Record for Cautionary Book, vol. for 1591, 1616.*

‡ We find this proved in the following extract from a MS. Notorial Transumpt of the writs and evidentis of the Lordship of Carnwath, of date the 18th December, 1648.

“ Item, ane chartour grantit be Sir Robert Crichton of Clunie, Knyght, with consent of Sir James Stewart of Ballaquhane, Knight, to Robert Dalzell, younger of that ilk, of the forty



lands of Eliock and Euchane thus passed into the family of the Earls of Carnwath; and the succession to the paternal inheritance, which, under happier auspices, might have been graced by the talents, and transmitted to the descendants of the Admirable Crichton, in the person of his fierce and unlettered brother was prematurely brought to an end. Although the male succession of the family to the estates possessed by their forefathers was thus closed, the Lord Advocate, in the year 1582, concluded a marriage between his eldest daughter Margaret, and that ancient house to which his estates of Eliock and Euchane were at a future period to pass. She married Sir Robert Dalzel of Dalzel, afterwards raised to the peerage by the title of Earl of Carnwath. Margaret Crichton, therefore, the eldest sister of the Admirable Crich-

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schillingis, and forty penny land of Eliock, and forty schillingis land of Euchane, to be halden of the Lord Sanquhar; dated the 8th and 10th of November, 1796. We find from the same document, that a chartour of confirmation of the above was grantit by the Lord Sanquhar, and David Crichton of Lugtown, on the 7th of July, 1604. The words *titulo venditionis* appear, in a subsequent part of the deed, and prove the absolute sale of the estate of Eliock, by Sir Robert Crichton.

ton, became the female stem of the noble family of the Earls of Carnwath.\*

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\* In the Register of bonds and obligations for the year 1582, we find the following extract. "I Robert Dalzel of that ilk, grant me to have receivit frae Mr Robert Crichton, Advocate to our Soverane Lord, the soume of ane thousande merkes, and yat in complet payment of the tocher gude promittit be him to me, conform to the contract of marriage past betwixt us, Robert Dalzel, my eldest sone and apparand are, and Margaret Crichton, his eldest dochter, now spouse to the said Robert, at Dalzel, 26th May, 1582." Mary, another of the youngest sisters of Crichton, who is specially mentioned in her father's will, was, four years after his death, married to Sir James Stewart of Ballechin, the descendant of Sir John Stewart, natural son to King James the Second of Scotland, from whom the family of Stewarts of Ballechin in Perthshire are directly descended.—*Douglas' Baronage*, p. 469.

### SECTION III.

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**WE** come now to the third part of this biographical criticism,—to the consideration of the argument against the endowments of Crichton, founded on the assertion that the powers ascribed to him are supernatural, and therefore incredible ; and that, however entitled to authority his biographers may be, when they have written upon other subjects, the stories they have left regarding this extraordinary person, exceed the common limits of human belief, and carry with them, in their utter impossibility, their own confutation.

The review of this argument will lead us upon interesting ground ; for, in order to pronounce whether Crichton's endowments are incredible, it is necessary to be at least cursorily acquainted with the course of instruction in the sciences and other branches of learning

which Crichton must have pursued, under the direction of those eminent men who were his masters. We must, therefore, advert, for a few moments, to the state of literature and philosophy in Scotland and in Italy, during the sixteenth century,—to the nature of those studies in which the human mind, after it had risen from the sleep of so many centuries, began then to exercise itself,—and the powers which were required towards attaining in them any thing like a remarkable proficiency.

It is well known that the learned men of Europe were, at this period, divided into two great classes, the followers of the Platonic, and the disciples of the Aristotelian Philosophy; that these two great philosophers divided between them, at this time, the sovereignty of the mental world; and, certainly, however we, who are educated in the light and knowledge of these modern days, may be enabled to ridicule some of the errors, and to escape from the slavery of these ancient systems, it is impossible not to admire the efforts of those two mighty minds, who framed so wide and so lasting a despotism. Nor is it less curious to remark, at this period, the inef-

efforts which were made, by some gifted spirits, to throw off the yoke of these established systems;\* to see them attempting to frame new, and, as they conceived, more perfect models of philosophy, where, instead of an attentive observation of nature, Imagination was ever ready to present her fantastic theories, and where conjecture so constantly supplied what truth and experiment refused to furnish. One would think, that the human mind seemed conscious of the delusion under which it laboured, aware that it was wrong, yet unable, in the dim twilight which surrounded it, to discern what was right, and anxious only, by these vigorous struggles, to preserve that liberty of thought, which was destined at last to break the spell, and to let in the light of truth and nature.

Nothing, indeed, can be more striking, than the ardour with which philosophy and literature were cultivated at this remarkable period; nothing more wonderful than that enthusiasm with which, after its long slum-

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\* It is sufficient here to mention the names of Bruno, Campanella, and Cardan.

ber, the human mind rose at once, refreshed instead of enervated, and summoned all its faculties, and rallied all its powers, and again sprung forward in the course of intellectual improvement. Universities were founded, schools endowed, riches profusely expended in the encouragement of every species of knowledge; men of letters were raised to be the equals of princes, and princes thought themselves honoured by being associated with men of letters. Labour, and pain, and travel, were cheerfully undergone, and ease and pleasure, without hesitation, sacrificed in the cause of science. These remarks apply, with particular force, to the literary history of Italy, during the sixteenth century; but the name of Scotland stood also very high in Europe, in the scale of intellectual cultivation, at the period when Crichton received the rudiments of his education. Under the royal line of Stuart, the nation was induced, not only by the munificent patronage, but by the example of many of its sovereigns, to pay a principal attention to the cultivation of letters; and, although it laboured under many disadvantages, Scotland had already produced some

of the ablest scholars, and most eminent mathematicians in Europe.

The effects of the reformation, the collision of contending intellects, and the mental strength and vigour produced by the religious discussions which at this period engrossed the attention of the nation,—the sources of information and improvement derived from the intercourse of our ablest reformers with the continent,—and, above all, the admission of the lower classes, whose ignorance under the Roman Catholic church was equally profound and hopeless, to a participation in that increasing intelligence and freedom which accompanied the doctrines of the reformation; all these causes co-operated to render the sixteenth century a period of no less eminence in the literary history of Scotland, than in that of Italy. The single names of Knox, Buchanan, and Napier, are sufficient to prove the truth of these observations; and, were it necessary, many others, though not of equal eminence, might be added to this triumvirate of talent.

It was, we see then, in the Platonic and Aristotelian systems of philosophy, and in an acquaintance with the works of those who were termed innovators upon Aristotle and

Plato, that, at the period when Crichton appeared, the learned youth of Italy and of Scotland were educated. Indeed, we ought to say, the learned youth of Europe; for nearly the same course of instruction was followed in France, Germany, and Spain, in Scotland, and in England. One great cause of this appears to have been, the constant emigration of learned men from one country to another; many professors repairing from Scotland and England, to France, Italy, and Spain; while, from these countries, many learned foreigners were invited to our own island.\*

Although, however, nothing could exceed the intense labour, and constant exertion, which was to be seen in all who were candi-

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\* Inter archiva, (says Sir R. Sibbald, MS. *Hist. Liter. Scotiæ*, p. 34,) Collegii Scotici apud Parisienses, Registrum habetur omnium illustrium Scotorum, præsertim Scotorum ejus Collegii, qui floruerunt in Academia Parisiensi, a fundatione ejus Collegii Scotici, Anno Dom. 1325, ad nostra tempora; ex quo apparet, septendecem aut octodecem Scotos fuisse Rectores Universitatis Parisiensis. It would be an endless task to give the names of the eminent Scotamen who were teachers or professors in France, Italy, and other continental countries, during the sixteenth century. Boece, Buchanan, the two Barclays, Dempster, George Crichton, Blackwood, and many others, occur immediately in our literary recollections.



dates for fame in the knowledge and the literature of this period, there is yet one remark, relating to the nature of such knowledge, which ought particularly to be insisted on; and this is,—that in attaining a proficiency in these studies, no uncommon power of what we call *genius*, no supernatural mental endowments are necessary. I wish here to make a distinction between the greater stretch of mind required to attain to uncommon eminence, or to make important discoveries in the higher sciences, and the more common species of intellect, which is fitted to excel in the knowledge of languages, in the attainment of eminence in the elegant pursuits of literature, in the lower walks of science, or the comparatively easier studies of the Platonic or Aristotelian philosophy. To have attained the knowledge of many different languages,—to have acquired an astonishing facility in the extemporaneous composition both of verse and prose,—to have become master of the philosophy of Aristotle, and of his syllogistic mode of disputation,—are surely pursuits requiring none of the rare and uncommon powers to be found in those greater

minds which have widened the boundaries, and advanced the discoveries, of real science; in such minds as Newton, Kepler, Locke, and Pascal.

The faculty which is primarily necessary, in the acquisition of the first species of knowledge, is that of memory,—a faculty, of every other, the most under the management, and subjected to the improvements, of man. The power required in the other, is that of profound, unfatigued, uninterrupted thought; of intensely concentrating the mind upon one subject. This is not only of itself a very uncommon talent, but it must be joined to an excellence in the higher and more difficult branches of the most abstract and difficult sciences, to a mightiness, and yet a modesty of mind, which are seldom found united, to a power of philosophical invention, and yet a distrust of all ideal theories. It includes, in short, qualifications so high, so peculiar, yet so dissimilar, as to be met with very rarely in the history of man. While, therefore, we observe the state of knowledge in Europe, at the time, in which Crichton appeared, and the high advantages which he en-

joyed in being educated at a period when all the different branches of the learning of these times were so enthusiastically cultivated, let us not forget the last observation, as to the nature and power of the faculties required for such cultivation.

Now, to come to the application of these observations to the case of Crichton, we say, in reply to the assertion that the account given of his extraordinary talents is supernatural and incredible, that this is not the case; because all that he accomplished, was nothing more than the attainment of a high, and certainly extraordinary proficiency in the circle of the sciences then taught in the schools; and this it is evident, to a man of superior talents, though not of profound genius, possessing a natural turn for languages, and assisted by a memory which he had cultivated to the highest degree, was very far from being impossible or incredible. It was what was done, in a lesser degree, by almost every individual in that constellation of philosophers and poets, and learned authors, who were regularly educated in the course of study then pursued in the different universities of the continent. But still, by allowing this, we do not con-

cede, in the smallest degree, the point of Crichton's uncommon superiority; for, let it be remembered, that in these studies, and in the knowledge of the Aristotelian philosophy, in all its various and complicated branches, in the use of the learned languages, in the talent for public disputation, and *extempore* composition, Crichton is universally acknowledged to have, with a single exception, excelled all who attempted to cope with him,—to have astonished and delighted the learned world of Italy; and this at a period when knowledge was so eagerly cultivated, so generally diffused, and the literary world enriched by so many eminent scholars, that it required certainly no common person to create the sensation which he appears to have excited. When it is added, that Crichton died at the age of twenty-two, we shall no longer wonder at the enthusiastic admiration occasioned by his appearance, and the deep regret which followed his death.

Although, therefore, it is asserted, in reply to the argument which has been brought against the authenticity of the biographical accounts of Crichton, that there is nothing incredible or unnatural in the endowments as-

cribed to him, let us not forget, at the same time, that in the particular course of studies which were cultivated by the learned at this period, *he* had, at an age when others are only commencing, completed his brilliant career,—that in these he had not only attained so high a pitch of eminence as to challenge, in the public disputations which were then common, the most distinguished men in Italy, but that he had united to all this, the possession of every accomplishment which could adorn the gentleman and the soldier.

But further, an extraordinary proficiency in the sciences, and in general literature, at a very early age, is not uncommon in the history either of ancient or of modern letters; and although, certainly, there have been many instances where such precocity of talent has not conducted to that maturity of excellence which might have been expected, yet, on the other hand, are there, perhaps, as many examples of early ability, in persons afterwards destined to arrive at confirmed and superior excellence.

Looking to the annals of ancient literature, it is well known that Cicero composed, at the age of thirteen, a treatise of rhetoric, entitled,

“*De Ratione Dicendi*,” which in his riper years, at the request of his friends, he new-modelled into the valuable treatise, “*De Oratore*.”\* We are informed, by Plutarch,† that the same great writer had published, when quite a boy, a poetical piece, entitled, “*Glacus Pontius*,” founded on a story which furnished to Æschylus the argument for one of his tragedies. His poetical translation of the *Phenomena* of Aratus, composed as early as his seventeenth year, furnishes a third proof of the precocity of his talents. It is true, no doubt, that his verses of Aratus are poor and unpoetical, and that, reasoning by a fair analogy, his *Glacus Pontius* was probably worse: yet, in proving that the early endowments of Crichton are not incredible, the instance cannot be called inapposite; for if, after such an early, although imperfect exhibition of talent, the abilities of the youthful translator of Aratus rose into such strength, in the detector of Catiline, what might not have been hoped:

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\* Baillet des Enfans Celebres, p. 25. Cicero de Oratore, Book I.

† See Plutarch in Vit. Ciceronis, or Langhorne's Plutarch, p. 272, vol. V.

from that maturity which was to follow the still more perfect and uncommon youth of Crichton?

Pliny, the younger, composed a Greek tragedy\* at the age of sixteen, and a collection of Elegies and Epigrams, then considered so excellent, that they were translated into Greek, and set to music. Nor were his abilities confined to poetry. At the age of nineteen, he had already figured in public life,—had shewn his talents as a pleader, in the management of causes of high importance and difficulty, in which his opponents were often the most celebrated orators of the time.

It is easy to bring forward a great many proofs in support of the same observations, drawn from the lives and writings of the most celebrated scholars of the sixteenth century,—proofs, that however brilliant the talents of Crichton, they were by no means unparalleled in the literary history of this period; and that, although in the career of

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\* The early productions of Pliny are mentioned by Baillet, *des Hommes Celebres*, p. 30, 31; and by Pliny himself, in the fourth Epistle of his Seventh Book.

eminence, in the same admirable combination of general knowledge with the more elegant accomplishments, none have equalled, yet many have very nearly approached, and some have, in particular points, surpassed him.

Picus, Prince of Mirandula, upon whom Scaliger has bestowed the singular epithet of *Monstrum sine Vitio*, was, at the age of twenty-four, profoundly acquainted with the ancient languages of Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, and Chaldaic, in addition to his knowledge of the more modern tongues of Europe. At the same age, he undertook to maintain, in the manner of those times, a public disputation at Rome, in which it was his intention to defend nine hundred propositions in dialectics, theology, cabalism, and physics. Such was the enthusiasm with which he pursued this great design of challenging the whole literary world, not of Italy only, but of Europe, that, although born to rank and affluence, he preferred the seclusion of incessant and solitary study, to all the public distinctions which they held out to him. In a letter to a friend, who had advised him to make a trial of the pleasures of ambition, he replies,



in these remarkable words :—“ True to these sentiments, I prefer my solitude, my studies, the delights of reading, the peace of my own mind, to the palaces of princes, the bustle of politics, and all the wiles and favours of a court. Nor do I desire, as the fruit of my literary leisure, to be whelmed and agitated in the tide and tumult of public scenes, but to bring at length to the birth the offspring which I have conceived, and to give, in a propitious hour, to public view, such works as, however devoid of genius or learning, may attest at least the industry of their author. To convince you that the latter admits of no remission, I have, by assiduous and intense application, attained to the knowledge of the Hebrew and Chaldaic languages, and am at present struggling with the difficulties of the Arabic. Such are the achievements which I have ever thought, and still think worthy, of the ambition of a nobleman ; though the expression may contain as much satire as truth.”\*

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\* Greswell's *Life of Pico della Mirandola*, page 232. I have

Not only, according to the accounts of all his biographers, was this remarkable man endowed with a very rapid perception in matters of science, but the powers of his memory may furnish a proof of what has been already remarked,—the uncommon perfection, to which the course of studies pursued by the learned in this age, conducted this pliable faculty. At the age of fourteen, he had made himself master of the canon law, and composed, in the prosecution of his legal studies, an abridgement of its doctrines, with so much skill and precision, that it was esteemed an excellent work by the ablest lawyers of the times. Like Crichton, Picus next determined to visit the most celebrated universities in France and Italy; and, in the course of these learned peregrinations, which continued for seven years, he had so deeply profited by the instructions he received, and the discussions he held with the most celebrated scholars of the age, that, before he had yet reached manhood, he was considered one of

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made use of Mr Greswell's excellent translation of this part of Picus' Epistle.

the most eminent philosophers, and most accomplished scholars of his age.

He had also, at a very early period of his studies, dedicated his attention to poetry, and composed five books of Latin elegies, with a variety of Italian verses; all of which, after his mind had received a more serious turn, he destroyed; conceiving them inconsistent with the resolution he had then taken, of devoting himself entirely to sacred studies.\* It is a remarkable circumstance, that an extent of knowledge, so varied and wonderful, provoked his enemies and detractors to represent his acquisitions as the result of an intercourse with dæmons, and openly to accuse him of magic; an accusation which he thought himself called upon to refute, by composing a treatise to ridicule the study of judicial astrology.† In the history of this extraordinary

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\* There remains, however, one poetical production of Picus, preserved in a Commentary on the Fifteenth Psalm, which is beautiful, and well worth preservation. It is to be found in his Works, p. 339, and is entitled, "Joannis Pici Mirandulæ Deprecatoria ad Deum." It is printed also in the *Delitiæ Poetarum Italorum*, vol. II. p. 201.

† This treatise is entitled, "Joannis Pici Mirandulæ Con-

man, there are some coincidences with the accounts which have been given of the talents and disputations of Crichton, which are well worthy of observation. After having perfected himself by a long course of severe labour, in the different departments of classical, as well as oriental knowledge, and pursued the study of philosophy, in all the various senses, which, according to the language of the schools, this comprehensive term then embraced, Picus repaired to Rome for the purpose of holding that public and solemn disputation, to a preparation for which, he had devoted the greatest portion of his life. And on arriving there, he published the following challenge, which was followed by the various *conclusions* he had engaged to defend.\* It will be found to resemble strongly

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cordiæ Comitæ Disputationum in Astrologiam ;” and prefixed to it is a dedication, by his nephew, John Francis Picus, of Mirandula, to the lovers of truth, who are called upon, in strong and energetic language, to rejoice in the destruction of the absurd and impious system of judicial astrology, by the publication of the work of Picus.

\* That Picus was not a mere scholar, but a man who possessed a boldness and originality of thought, which was very remarkable for the times in which he lived, is evident, from many

the *Programma* of Crichton, preserved in the Dedication of Aldus.

*“ John Picus, Prince of Mirandula—To the reader.—*

“ John Picus, of Mirandula, will dispute upon the under-written nine hundred questions in dialectics, morals, physics, mathematics, metaphysics, theology, magic, and cabalism. He will argue on the opinions of the wise men amongst the Chaldees, the Arabians, the Hebrews, the Greeks, the Egyptians, and the Latins. In these disputations he will not confine himself to the classical elegance of the Roman language, but will imitate that species of colloquial dialect which is in use amongst the most celebrated Parisian doc-

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of the conclusions which he undertook to defend, and which, from the free and liberal spirit in which they are conceived, might have done honour to the later age of Luther. For instance, one of his conclusions on the subject of the freedom of individual opinion, is this:—“ *Sicut nullus præcise sic opinatur, quia vult sic opinari, ita nullus credit sic esse verum quia vult sic credere;*” from which he deduces the following corollary: (*Apologia*, p. 148.)—“ *Non est in libera potestate hominis credere articulum fidei esse verum, quando sibi placet, et credere eum non esse verum, quando sibi placet.*”—See GRESWELL'S *Life of Picus*.

tors; because it is this which is employed by all the philosophers of the time.\*

Nor was this the only coincidence between the literary exploits of Picus and Crichton. There is reason to believe, that Crichton was assailed at Rome by those pasquinades and witticisms, under which ignorance and jealousy so commonly carry on their petty warfare against real talent; and we know, that Trajan Boccalini has satirized him in broad and scurrilous terms, in his *Ragguagli del Parnaso*. † In like manner, Picus was first attacked by a variety of lampoons, whose authors affected to ridicule his literary pretensions; and was afterwards accused of inserting, amongst the theses he was to defend,

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\* “ De adscriptis numero noningentis dialecticis, moralibus, physicis, mathematicis, metaphysicis, theologiacis, magicis, cabalisticis, cum suis, tum Sapientum, Chaldeorum, Arabum, Hebræorum, Græcorum, Ægyptiorum, Latinorumque, placitis, disputabit publice Joannes Picus Mirandulanus, Concordiæ Comes. In quibus recitandis non Romanæ linguæ nitorem, sed celebratissimorum Parisiensium disputatorum dicendi genus est imitatus; propterea, quod eo nostri temporis philosophi plerique emanens utuntur.”

† *Ragguagli del Parnaso*, Advertisement XL. The passage from Boccalini will be found in the Appendix, No. *XXVIII*.

opinions of a heretical tendency ;—an accusation which compelled him to abandon altogether the design of throwing down the gauntlet to the philosophers and literati of Italy.

There cannot easily be imagined a more conclusive corroboration of the remarks which were made on the condition of the literature and philosophy of the times, and the perishable nature of the obligations bestowed upon science by some of the most eminent scholars of those ages, than is to be found in the History of the Life and Writings of the accomplished Prince of Mirandula. He was, according to the united testimony of the most learned men of his time, a prodigy in literary and scientific acquirements ; in the words of Scaliger, “ the phoenix of his age, the delight of the muses, the favourite pupil of philosophy ;” yet the name of Picus is now nearly forgotten, and his works have long ago passed into oblivion. This, however, is in a great degree to be ascribed to his having devoted himself to the vain and extraordinary task of illustrating the most mystic and unintelligible parts of the Platonic philosophy, by the

sacred writings of Moses. Picus's challenge to the world of science was published at the age of twenty-four. He died in his thirty-second year.

It would be easy to adduce a great many other examples, which prove, that, in this age of enthusiastic study, there were several eminent men who nearly equalled, and, in some points, really surpassed, the extraordinary and universal talents of Crichton ; and that any argument, therefore, founded on the assertion that the narrative of his biographers is incredible, and impossible to be true, is not entitled to respect.

We know that Politian, the friend of Lorenzo de Medici, and the master of Leo X., at a much earlier age than that in which Crichton distinguished himself, had attained to distinguished poetical eminence. His " Stanze per la Giostra di Giuliano de Medici," were written before the author completed his fourteenth year ; and yet this poem is considered, by one of the most distinguished of the Italian critics, Tiraboschi, as not only entitled to the highest praise for the beauty of its poetry, but as having formed an im-



portant æra in the history of Italian versification. "It is matter of astonishment," says this writer, "that, at a time when those who had been longest exercised in the practice of Italian versification could not divest themselves of their antiquated rusticity, a youthful poet, who had scarce begun to touch the lyre, should be able to leave them so far behind."\* In his eighteenth year, Politian composed his tragedy of "Orfeo." This dramatic piece was written in the year 1472, and is

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\* Mr Roscoe, in his *Life of Lorenzo de Medici*, in speaking of Politian's poem on the Jousting of Giuliano de Medici, and comparing it with some other productions of that time, observes, "The poem of Politian is of a very different character, and, though produced about the same period, is a century posterior in point of refinement. The age of Politian, when he wrote it, scarcely exceeded fourteen years; and it must not be denied, that the poem bears upon the face of it the marks of juvenility; but what a manhood does it promise? From such an early exuberance of blossom, what fruits might we not expect? The general approbation with which it was received, must have been very flattering both to the poet and the hero. Nor has posterity appealed from the decision; on the contrary, it has been generally allowed, that this was one of the earliest productions in the revival of letters that breathed the true spirit of poetry, and that it not only far excelled the *Giostra of Pulci*, but essentially contributed towards the establishment of a better taste in Italy."—See also *Tiraboschi, Storia dell. Liter. Ital.*, Vol. II. p. 211. of Mathias' edit.

commonly believed to have been the earliest attempt towards the composition of a regular pastoral drama which is known in the history of Italian literature. In introducing into his drama of Orfeo that bold and irregular measure known by the name of the Tuscan Dithyrambic, Politian has asserted his title to the appellation of a poet, not in its most common and inferior sense, but in its higher and original meaning, as a creator of a new style of poetry, borrowed from the Greek, and unknown, before his time, alike by the Latin and the Italian poets.\* But perhaps the most striking proof of the great powers of application, and astonishing facility of composition, which were united in this singular man, is to be found in the circumstance, that his tragedy was composed in the course of two days, amid the festivities and distractions of the

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\* “ Il Dittirambo e un componimento Lirico mescolata d’ogni sorta di versi e di metri, e ripieno di stranezze frasi e locuzioni. \* \* Egli per quanto noi stimiamo non primo del tempo d’Angelo Politiano capito dalla Grecia (non sappiamo che fusse in uso appo i Latini) nella Toscana, come abbian detto nella nostra historia.”—*Crescembini all. Istoria della Poesia Italiana*, Mathias’ edit. Vol. II. p. 78.

court of Mantua. "*La fabula di Orfeo*," says Politian, in a letter to Cardinal Canale, "*la quale, a requisizione del nostro reverendissimo Cardinale Mantuano, in tempo di duo giorni, intra continui tumulti, in stilo volgare, perche dagli spettatore fusse meglio intesa, avevo composta.*"\*

This eminent man, who deserves to be reckoned one of the principal restorers of classical literature in Europe, was born at Monte Pulciano in Tuscany, on the 14th July, 1454, and died at Florence, in the 1494, at the age of forty-five. "I must confess," says Erasmus, in speaking of Politian, "that I regard this Angelo as having been endowed with a mind that truly deserves to be called angelic. He was a rare miracle in the works of nature; and to whatever species of composition he directed his attention, proved his title to that appellation."†

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\* Greswell's Life of Politian, p. 21. I am chiefly indebted to this author for the sketch I have given of the literary labours of this eminent Italian.

† "Fateor Angelum prorsus angelica fuisse mente rarum nature miraculum, ad quodcumque scripti genus applicaret animum."—*Erasmus in Ciceron.*

It has been before observed, that, in a short memoir of Crichton preserved in Hay's manuscript collection, it is stated, that he was a great admirer of Mazzonius. I had not at this time discovered, that, in Imperialis's Life of Mazzoni, there was a particular passage relative to a controversy between Crichton and this celebrated professor; and as it is there expressly stated that Crichton was forced to acknowledge himself defeated, it is evident, that, in weighing the testimony of Imperialis, this is a passage of much importance. It produces upon his evidence exactly the same effect as Dempster's accusation of Crichton regarding his descent from the royal family of Scotland, was remarked to have upon the account which that author has given of his extraordinary attainments. It proves that Imperialis had no premeditated design of indiscriminately eulogizing our countryman; that he had no desire to conceal his defects, and only to proclaim his victories; and that, as his testimony was impartial, his praises must have been sincere. The sentence is as follows:—"Amongst those who disputed at Venice upon the deepest

points of science with that miracle of genius Crichton the Scotsman, Mazzonius was the only man who was impelled, by his own feelings, to enter voluntarily into a contest. He appeared at a feast given for this purpose by the nobility, and thrice encountered Crichton; who (as I learn from the testimony of many who bore witness to the event) was so overwhelmed by the supernatural copiousness and unexampled subtilty of his arguments, that he was compelled at last warily to decline the contest, declaring, that he had been accustomed to devote himself rather to the profession of arms, than to the cultivation of science.\*

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\* "Inter omnes qui, Venetiis, cum Scoto illo, Critonio, ingeniorum miraculo, de scientiarum apicibus disceptarunt, unus, forte animi gratia eo appulsus, extitit Mazzonius: qui, in nobiliorum conviviis consulto initis accersitus, ternum cum illo acerrimæ disputationis congressum subivit; at eo, multis ingenue testantibus, eventu, ut Critonius, divinâ illius argumentorum copia et inusitata subtilitate obrutus, tandem se conflictui calide subtrahere sit coactus, dictitans armorum se magis quam scientiarum studia profiteri."—*Imperialis Museum Hist.* p. 237. None of the biographers of Crichton have taken notice of this circumstance, his being encountered and defeated, in disputation, by Mazzonius. Indeed, Dr Black goes so far as to regret that they never met.—Appendix to Life of Tasso, Vol. II. p. 432.

Now, we before observed that, although in the combination of abstruse and difficult learning with the more attractive and elegant accomplishments, there appear to have been none who were in any degree equal to Crichton; still, in some particular points, he has been surpassed by other eminent persons of his own time. The singular powers in disputation, possessed by Mazzonius, and this express testimony of his having defeated Crichton, afford a confirmation of this remark. Mazzoni was himself a most remarkable man; and, if we may believe the character ascribed to him by the intelligent historian of literature, Morhoff, it was more honour to Crichton to have sustained a controversy with him, than to have defeated his other opponents. "James Mazzoni," says this author, "a philosopher who was ready to engage in every species of literary controversy, was truly a prodigy amongst men. He was a most ready and indefatigable controversialist; as is proved by his publication of five thousand, one hundred, and ninety-seven tenets of Aristotle and Plato, which he undertook to defend against the attacks of all the learned

men who ventured to impugn them. When it was objected against him, that he had never taken the degree of doctor, which usually requires a seven years' course of study, he demanded only six months to prepare himself; at the end of which time, to the astonishment of all, he replied to every question which was proposed to him." \*

Mazzoni was born in the 1548, and became successively Professor of Philosophy in Cesena, in Pisa, and at Rome. He died in the 1598, at the age of forty-nine. It would not be easy to point out a stronger, or more pertinent illustration, of the singular perfection to which the constant study of the philosophy of Aristotle, and the other branches of what was then termed theological and physical philosophy, had brought the faculty of memory than we find in the history of Mazzonius. Erythræus, in his amusing "Pinacotheca," when speaking of his great talent for disputation, confirms this remark:—"Nor, indeed," says he, "ought such a talent to be considered as incredible in him, since there

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\* Morhoff, Vol. II. Book I. Cap. xi. § 19.

was scarcely any literary work which he had not read, and nothing read which he had not retained in his memory, from which, as from a storehouse, he selected different facts, as occasion required, and placed each in their respective and appropriate places.\*

It would be an easy task to submit many other illustrations on this subject, drawn from the history of literature, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, were not the examples already given of *Mirandula*, *Politian*, and *Mazzonius*, of themselves, sufficient for the purpose of argument. A remarkable instance is to be found in that young man, who, in the year 1445, astonished the College of Navarre, by an exhibition of talents very similar to Crichton's; † the story of whose ex-

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\* “*Neque id incredibile videri debuit in eo, cui nil usquam consignatum est literis, quod non legisset; nil legisset, quod comprehensum memoria non contineret; unde, tanquam ex promptuario aliquo, cum esset opus, singula proferret, et suo quæque loco collocaret.*” We have not only the testimony of *Erythræus* on this subject; the extraordinary memory of *Mazzoni* is still more particularly insisted on in a letter of *Camillo Paleotti*, to be found in his *Latinii Epist.* p. 354, 361. It will be found quoted in *Tiraboschi*, Book II. vol. VII. p. 439.

† Some account of this youth will be found in the Appendix, No. XIX.



ploits is recorded in Pasquier's *Researches*. I could add the names of Barratier, Manetti, Cherubini,\* and Marchisetti;† and, coming from Italy to our own country, I might dwell on the remarkable instances of Mark Alexander Boyd, and of Dempster. I might advert to the philosophic and literary history of

\* Alexander Cherubini was born of a literary family. His father, Laertius Cherubinus, was a celebrated lawyer, who had collected the *Consuetudines Pontificum*, formerly undigested, and dispersed through various channels, into a single volume. Erythræus has left a *Life*, or rather an *Eloge* of Cherubini, in his *Pinacotheca*, which, like many other biographical sketches of the same author, is more conspicuous for the elegance of its language, than for the curiosity or interest of the facts which it contains. Cherubini is described by him as a man of universal genius, as a scholar and philosopher, nearly deserving the same rank as Picus of Mirandula, but oppressed by poverty, and compelled to remain in neglect and obscurity, from the want of friends and money.

† Marchisetti's attainments, as a boy, were almost incredible; but he turned out to be one of those forward plants which shoot, with early luxuriance, into leaves, and disappoint us of fruit. His life is shortly written by Erythræus, in his *Pinacotheca*, p. 128, who affirms of him, as has been elsewhere said of our Gray, that he never was a boy. "*Nunquam fuit ille ingenio puer; statim a principio senex.*" At the age of thirteen, he is said to have made himself master of the whole philosophy of Aristotle; and at fifteen, published a work, containing two thousand theological questions, which he undertook to defend, according to the manner of those times, against all who appeared to attack them, in a public exhibition, which was to last for three days.

France, and there find the eminent examples of Voltaire and Pascal ;\* or, turning to Holland, cite the instance of Grotius, whose " Adamus Exul" was composed at the age of eighteen ; and of the learned Anna Maria Schurmann,† who, from her earliest years, dis-

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\* In a Life of Pascal which appeared in the Christian Observer, an able and eloquent piece of biography, there will be found many other instances of early abilities which expanded and strengthened into confirmed genius ; Leibnitz, Melancthon, Father Maignan, and Mr Petit the elder, are among these examples.

‡ Anna Maria Schurmann was born in 1607, and exhibited early marks of a remarkable genius. At the age of ten, she became a proficient in the fine arts, and distinguished herself by her productions in music, painting, sculpture, and engraving. She afterwards applied herself to the study of the learned languages, and to the cultivation of astronomy and philosophy, in all of which she made a most remarkable progress. I have before me a duodecimo volume of her works, containing a little treatise, *De vitæ termino* ; a dissertation, *An Fœminæ Christianæ convenit studium literarum* ; or, as we may translate it in modern fashionable phraseology, on the Expediency of Christian Ladies becoming Blue-Stockings ; A Collection of Letters to the most eminent Scholars of her Time, in French and Latin, Greek and Hebrew ; with a variety of short Latin Poems, many of which possess merit, though not much originality in the thoughts, and most of them considerable elegance of expression. At the end of this little volume, are to be found an infinite variety of elogia, by the most eminent scholars of the age ; by Salmasius, Græterus, Heinsius, Balzac, and many other eminent men. The following passage from Salmasius, contains the best and most comprehensive description of the acquirements of this extraordinary wo-

tinguished for the universality of her talents, attained, before the middle period of life, to an erudition which has exhausted the praises of the most learned authors of her age.

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man:—"There may be seen, in this city, at the distance of a single day's journey from this place, a young woman, of noble family, who is equal to Hippias, in every art and accomplishment; and this is so much the more remarkable, because it rarely happens that we see so wonderful a fertility of genius, and so astonishing a combination of excellence in the arts, in the female sex. \* \* She alone, in her single person, possesses all the accomplishments which the mind can conceive, or the hand can execute. She paints in an unrivalled manner; she engraves; and, with equal excellence, she models in wax, in brass, and in wood. In needle-work, and in all accomplishments and acquirements which are more peculiarly feminine, she can challenge and overcome all examples, both of the women of antiquity, and of her own times. She is so excellently skilled in all sorts of learning, that one cannot determine in which she most excels. She has acquired so many languages, that, not content with the European tongues, she has applied herself to the study of the oriental languages, and has now added a knowledge of the Hebrew, the Arabic, and the Syriac, to those which she before possessed. She writes in Latin, so admirably, that she is not surpassed, in elegance, by those authors who have dedicated their lives to the acquisition of this accomplishment. Her letters in French, are scarcely surpassed by those of Balzac. She is as much at ease in the use of the more modern languages of Europe, as those to whom they are vernacular. She is able to correspond with the Jewish literati in Hebrew; with the Saracens, in Arabic; nay, she discourses on the most abstruse and difficult sciences, on theology, and the scholastic philosophy, in such a manner as to create in all, the same astonishment which arises on the appearance of a miracle. None

In the literary history of Spain, there is an instance of still more singular precocity; in that justly celebrated, and most fortunate of all authors, Lopez de Vega. He is said to have written verses at five years old, and at eleven to have been remarkable for his progress in the Latin language, and in the sister studies of rhetoric, eloquence, and poetry. Tasso, at seven, recited poems and orations. His *Rinaldo*, unquestionably, was written at the age of eighteen. Pope had composed an epic poem at twelve. The history of the jurisprudence of our own country

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attempt to emulate her, because her talents are beyond all hope of imitation; none to envy her, because she is herself so far above all envy."

The future history of this remarkable woman is singular. She had early manifested very deep religious feelings, but these soon appear to have changed into a kind of unsound and overheated enthusiasm. She became acquainted with the licentious and hypocritical Labadie,—attached herself to the sect which he had formed,—embraced his doctrines, and accompanied him wherever he went, until the period of his death, in 1674. Maria Schurmann then retired to Fresland, where she died in 1678, at the age of seventy-one. There is a curious account of a visit paid to her by the Queen of Poland, in a work, entitled, "*Histoire de Voyage de la Reyne de Pologne*," par Jean le Laboureur. Printed at Paris, in 1648; from which an extract is to be found in the Works of Maria Schurmann, above quoted.

will also furnish us with an example of uncommon power and prematurity of talent, in the instance of one of the greatest lawyers who ever presided in our court,—the President, Viscount Stair ;\* who, when in the army, and a very young man, appeared at Glasgow College, a candidate for the chair of Philosophy, and publicly contended, in his regimentals, with the grave and sable-gowned doctors who were his competitors. The result of this trial forms a very striking feature in the history of this eminent lawyer. The young soldier was preferred, before all his opponents, to the vacant chair ; a situation which demanded, at this time, more various and difficult

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\* Upon the solicitation of some of the Professors in the University of Glasgow, of his old acquaintance, *a Martis ad Musarum castra traductus fuit*, (to use his own phrase), he stood a candidate, in buff and scarlet, at a comparative trial for a chair of philosophy, then vacant there ; to which he was preferred with great applause, though he kept his company a considerable time after.—*Preface to Forbes' Journal*, p. 30. Having become obnoxious to the government of James the Second, Lord Stair retired to Holland in the 1682, and there printed an Institute of Experimental Philosophy in the 1686, the same year in which the Newtonian philosophy was first published in England. It is entitled, “ *Physiologia Nova Experimentalis, in qua generales notiones Aristotelis, Epicuri, et Cartesii, suppleuntur, errores deteguntur et emendantur.*”

qualifications than are at present required in the same situation.

In the science of music, two masters, whose names rank high in the annals of this charming art, were as remarkable for the precocity of their powers as for the excellence of their compositions; I mean Haydn and Mozart. Surely we ought not to rely on that common and hackneyed argument, that an early display of genius forebodes a future weakness, when we find this remarkable prematurity connected with that master mind which was afterwards to conceive and embody so great a work as the Oratorio of the Creation. And the truth of this observation is yet more strongly corroborated by the history of the early years, and of the subsequent splendid career of Mozart.

Leaving these instances of early genius, let us attend for a few moments to the account given of the abilities of Crichton, as an improvisatore; for this certainly, to one unacquainted with the literary annals of Italy at this period, and aware of the exceeding difficulty of versification, appears, perhaps, more incredible than any other part of

his history. It was already observed, that, on his first public appearance at Padua, Crichton opened the assembly by an extemporaneous poem, which he recited with uncommon ease and eloquence, in praise of the city, the university, and the learned audience, who had met to receive him; and that, after his disputations with Arcangelus Mercenarius, and the other antagonists who had entered the field, he concluded the whole by delivering an extemporaneous poem in praise of ignorance, so exceedingly ingenious, witty, and elegant, that his hearers were astonished and delighted. We know also that he undertook, in his second public appearance at Mantua, to extemporise upon any subject, in a hundred different kinds of verse.

When these facts are presented to the mind, there is, at first, it must be allowed, a kind of natural recoil from them:—they are pronounced to be impossible. But, when we pause upon them—when due consideration is given to the uncommon natural powers, and facility of versification, with which many have been endowed,—when we acquaint ourselves with the principles on which the im-

provement of these powers depend, and the perfection to which this improvisatorial art was at this time conducted in Italy,—it will be found that much higher talents for extemporaneous versification than those here attributed to Crichton, were not only not incredible, but of common occurrence in the country where Crichton concluded his career. Of this style of poetical composition, and those who have excelled in it, Tiraboschi has given some very curious and interesting details. The most celebrated person whom he describes, is an improvisatore in Latin poetry, of the name of Andrea Marone, who died at Rome, in the year 1527. “Jovius,” says Tiraboschi, “Geraldi, Valeriano, and all the writers of these times, who had themselves known and heard him, tell the most wonderful stories of the facility which he possessed of speaking extemporaneous Latin verses on any subject which was proposed to him. At the sound of the violin, which he himself played, he began to versify; and the more he advanced, the more did he appear to improve in eloquence, in ease, in ardour, and in elegance. The sparkling of



his eyes, the sweat which poured down his cheeks, the swelling of his veins, gave the stamp of reality to the fire which seemed to burn within him, and held his audience in suspense and astonishment. They could not but imagine that Marone delivered premeditated verses."

Marone, after being held in the highest esteem in the court of Leo the Tenth, who, with a princely encouragement of talent, rewarded his abilities by the gift of a benefice in the diocese of Capua, fell into neglect and misfortune under the pontificate of Clement the Seventh; and partly through his own imprudencies, and partly owing to the disturbed state of Rome at this period, was gradually stript of his whole fortune, and reduced to that condition of extreme wretchedness and poverty in which he died.

In addition to this example of Marone, the names of Aurelio, Brandolini, Camillo, and Querno, might be mentioned as improvisatori in Latin verse; and in Italian, of Luigi Alamanni, Giovanni Battista Strozzi, Nicolo Franciotti, Cesare da Fano, with many others, particularized in the literary annals

of Tiraboschi. To dwell on these instances, would be superfluous and impertinent ; but I cannot resist here bringing in the name of Cardinal Silvio Antoniano,\* who, not only in this remarkable talent for improvisatorial versification, but in his early progress in other branches of literature, affords an interesting example in illustration of the argument in this second part of our critical examination.

It has, lastly, been attempted to destroy the eminence which his biographers have awarded to Crichton, by asserting that his verses possess no poetical merit, and are full of false quantities. Dr Kippis, with the assistance of a friend, whose criticisms are ex-

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\* Silvio was born at Rome, in the 1540 ; and, having given proofs of very singular talents when quite a boy, was adopted and educated by the Cardinal Otho Truceses. At the age of fifteen, he had made uncommon progress in the Latin and Greek languages ; and, at eighteen, he composed some of those orations which he afterwards published, and which are so highly eulogized by Ricci, in his Letters. So much eminence had Silvio acquired by that extensive erudition which he united to his talents for poetical composition, that, on the accession of Pius IV. to the pontificate, he was by this Pope immediately invited to Rome, and appointed preceptor to the young Cardinal Borromeo. The remainder of his life, he dedicated entirely to sacred studies. He was raised to the purple in 1598, and died at the age of 63.

tremely fastidious, attempts to point out various errors in support of this concluding accusation.

The consideration of the first argument against Crichton, involving the examination of the credibility of his biographers, was a proper subject for strict and positive reasoning. So also was the second argument against him, as to the impossible and incredible nature of his endowments. But this third argument embraces principally a question of taste,—a question which depends on our own particular feelings of poetical beauty, compared with those of Dr Kippis and his friend. As these feelings differ, Crichton's verses may appear beautiful to one person, and devoid of poetical merit to another. The standard of excellence may, in our minds, be different from that which must measure the productions of fancy in the mind of another person: and as, on a point like this, we cannot pretend by reasoning to convince, all that can be done is, to leave the decision of the question to the individual taste of the reader; and, should the general opinion be against the poems which we admire, to lament, in the

words of the Clown to Audrey, "that the gods have not made us poetical."

Several of the smaller poems of Crichton, more particularly his Odes, possess high poetical merit. The Ode to Lorenzo Massa is a very beautiful example of lyrical composition, nor do any of these relics of early genius deserve for a moment the unqualified censure pronounced upon them by Dr Kippis. In regard to the false quantities, the few and trivial errors which have been discovered in Crichton's poetical pieces must, from their nature, and from the incorrect and inaccurate edition from which these poems are taken, be nothing else than typographical blunders. Indeed, the only serious accusation which has been advanced of his having employed ungrammatical or inelegant constructions, has no foundation, but in the ignorance of its author ; \* so that the ar-

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\* This may easily be proved by comparing Kippis' Criticisms on the two Odes of Crichton, the first addressed to John Donati, and the second to Lorenzo Massa, with the Odes themselves as printed in Aldus. This Aldine Cicero is, perhaps, of all the publications which issued from this press, the most thickly sown with typographical blunders. In the Ode to Massa, *fove* is evidently a typographical error for *fave*, and *aut* for *et*. *Te*, in the

gument against the authenticity of Crichton's story, drawn from an examination of the po-

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last stanza but one, instead of being thrust in to fill up the verse, is very elegantly used to add energy to the idea. The same taste might quarrel, on the same ground, with the well-known beautiful line of Virgil—

“Te, dulcis conjux, te solo in littore secum,  
Te, veniente die, te, decedente, canebat.”

The last line of the Ode to Lorenzo Massa is next affirmed to be unintelligible. It becomes, however, perfectly clear when we attend to the peculiar circumstance in the history of Crichton, which is alluded to by Aldus in his dedication—that he left his country “ob Catholicæ fidei ardorem.”

There is no doubt, that, in the fourth stanza, the line

“Vellem nec Indos, interve Syrtis,”

has a syllable too much; but this error evidently arises from that which so frequently happens, an improper transposition of the printer; for, keeping the same words, and reading, “Vellem Indos, nec interve Syrtis,” the objectionable line becomes correct. The truth is, that this Ode to Massa, so far from deserving the censure of Kippis, who would have us believe that it possesses no poetical merit whatever, is, on the contrary, a very perfect specimen of lyric talent, and has been pronounced to be “singularly beautiful” by a scholar, “from the decision of whose classical taste,” says Dr Black, “few will be inclined to appeal.”

In the Ode to Joannes Donatus, it is certainly true that the line “Rursus invoco furens” is out of all shape. Here a syllable is plainly omitted by the inaccuracy of the Aldine press, which candour might easily have supposed to have been thus:

“Nunc rursus invoco furens.”

etical pieces which he has left, is susceptible of very easy refutation.

We began this piece of critical biography by enumerating the three great methods by

Itheus, which is noticed by Kippis as a mistake in quantity, is evidently, as he himself suggests, an error for Ithacus, as Apollinari is for Apollinis. We come lastly to the line,

“ *Labore desisto gravi ;*”

upon which the observations of Dr Kippis evince a considerable ignorance of poetical language and composition. “ In prose,” says he, “ there should be ‘ a labore.’—*Quære*. May *a* be omitted in verse ?” Now it is commonly known, that *Desisto* is used by the best authors without the preposition ; and that, both in prose and verse. We find Livy, in his 24th Book and second chapter, using the expression “ *desistere incepto,*” and Virgil, in his 1st Book, 37th line, employing the same expression—“ *Me ne incepto desistere victam ;*” and Cicero, in the constant use of the same phrase. For instance, in the *De Officiis*—“ *Cum sint docti a peritis, desistunt facile sententiâ.*” And again, in the same treatise, we have “ *desistere pugna ;*” in his *Epistles*, “ *desistere causâ ;*” in his *Academic Questions*, “ *desistere sententiâ.*”

Cæsar also, in his 5th Book, *De Bello Gallico*, 11 cap. repeats a like construction—“ *desistere itinere.*” The observation, therefore, of Dr Kippis, and the unknown critic who has attacked the prosody and endeavoured to expose the errors of Crichton’s poetical pieces, that in prose “ *desistere*” must be coupled with the preposition, is contradicted by the practice of the best writers of Latin prose ; and his additional *quære* as to its omission in verse, evinces an ignorance of the works and the language of the most eminent Latin poets. I am indebted for these remarks to some MS. notes on Crichton’s poetry, preserved amongst the papers of my late father.

which the posthumous celebrity of the Admirable Crichton had been attacked. These were, by impeaching the authority of his biographers, by insisting on the incredible nature of the talents ascribed to him, and by assertions that his poetical remains are devoid of talent and genius. The examination of these three methods of attack is now finished. We have endeavoured to prove that the various biographers, through whom the accounts of Crichton's abilities have been transmitted, are entitled to credit. What may be called the poetical part of the argument, because it includes the examination of Crichton's poetry, has been dismissed with a very few observations. It is a matter of opinion and taste, not fitted for reasoning or illustration. The only remaining argument, founded on the allegation that Crichton's exploits, as related by his biographers, are impossible to be believed, has, it is hoped, been shewn to be unworthy of any serious credit. From the state of science and literature at this period, in Scotland and in Italy, where Crichton commenced and perfected his education, any man, possessing, as he did, uncommon ta-

lents, and enjoying the advantages of an education under the most eminent masters of the times, must have arrived at very high excellence, while, at the same time, this progress did not, owing to the very nature of these studies, imply the possession of so rare and transcendent a genius as it would be unnatural or incredible to find in so young a man. The possession of such early eminence in the dead languages, of so wonderful a memory, and so singular a talent for disputation, is not incredible, because the same is to be found in Picus Mirandula, Politian, and Mazzonius.\* The possession of such rare talents at so early an age, is not to be construed into an argument against maturer excellence; and we are not to be told, that this precocity in youth forebodes a failure of the intellectual

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\* In the instances of universal erudition which I have cited, I purposely confined myself to examples of departed genius. Had it been necessary to have confirmed the argument by proofs of living talents in many respects similar, and in some superior, to Crichton, I might have described the multifarious erudition, the learned and useful labours, of the Rev. Dr Lee, Arabic Professor in the University of Cambridge; in whose mind is to be seen that most beautiful of all combinations, profound learning and genuine piety.

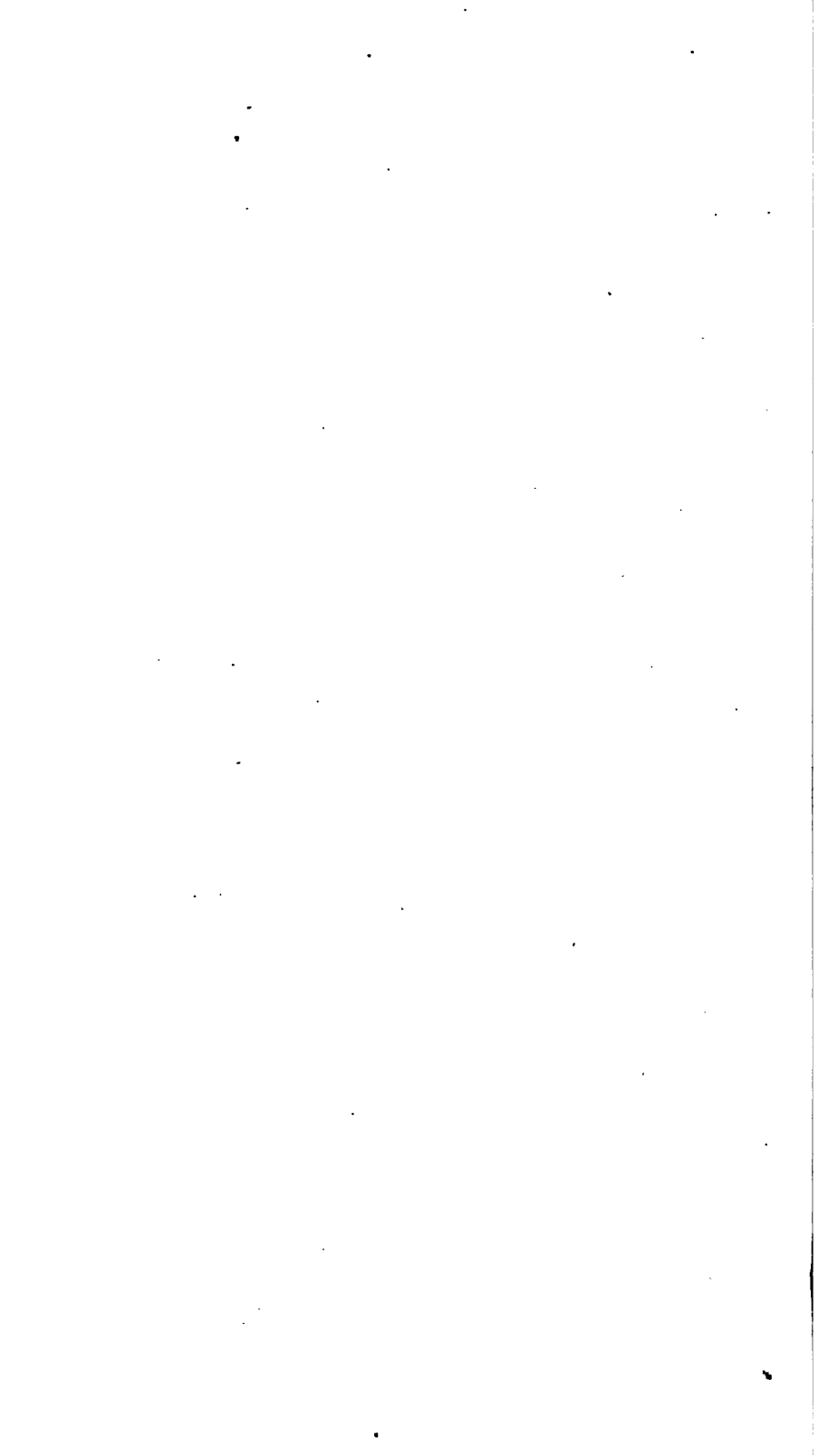


powers in manhood, when we can point, in the catalogue of early talent, to such names as Cicero and Pliny, as Tasso, Grotius, Voltaire, and Pope. We are not to be told that the stories, narrated in the most positive terms, of the eloquence of Crichton in extemporaneous composition, of his unpremeditated excellence in Latin prose, and the ease and elegance of the unstudied verses which he delivered, are unworthy of belief, when we know the perfection to which this singular art of extemporizing was then carried in Italy, and when the names of Marone, Querno, Silvio, and a constellation of other Italian improvisatori, are found, at the very same period, in the annals of Italian literature. But we may be told, (and this is the very point for which we contend,) that the union of all these talents, the combination of this variety of intellectual excellence, in so young a man, is a very remarkable circumstance. We may be told, and we do insist, that this union becomes still more remarkable, when we consider, that, in all the manly and military exercises, which are so commonly neglected even by the inferior candidates for scientific or literary eminence,

this singular man had arrived at such perfection as to excel those whose lives were devoted to their study ;—that in all the more elegant accomplishments which belong to the gentleman and the courtier, he was conspicuous by the facility with which he had acquired, and the ease and grace with which he displayed them ;—that, from the accounts of his most intimate friends, he who concentrated in himself this various store of intellectual and physical powers, was remarkable for a modesty of manner, and a sweetness and gentleness of disposition, which endeared him to his friends, and disarmed the jealousy of his rivals ; and that, to finish the picture, he was, in his figure and countenance, one of the handsomest men of his age. When all this is put together, when all these rays of excellence are traced back into one focus, and found centering in one person, we may indeed be told, and there are few who will not assent to the observation, that this person must have been no common man.—We say, that if, as has been shewn, the authors, through whom this account has been transmitted, are entitled to perfect credit, this union of talent

is, although neither supernatural or incredible, entitled to high admiration;—that it is not to be wondered at, that his contemporaries should have been astonished and dazzled by the appearance of so brilliant a vision,—a vision, too, which rose so bright and beautiful only to set so sadly and so soon. And we, lastly, contend, that the possessor of such unrivalled excellence was not only entitled to receive from them, but is now as fully entitled to demand from us, that appellation by which, as the only reward of his labours, his genius, and his misfortunes, he has descended to posterity,—*the Admirable Crichton.*

END OF THE LIFE.

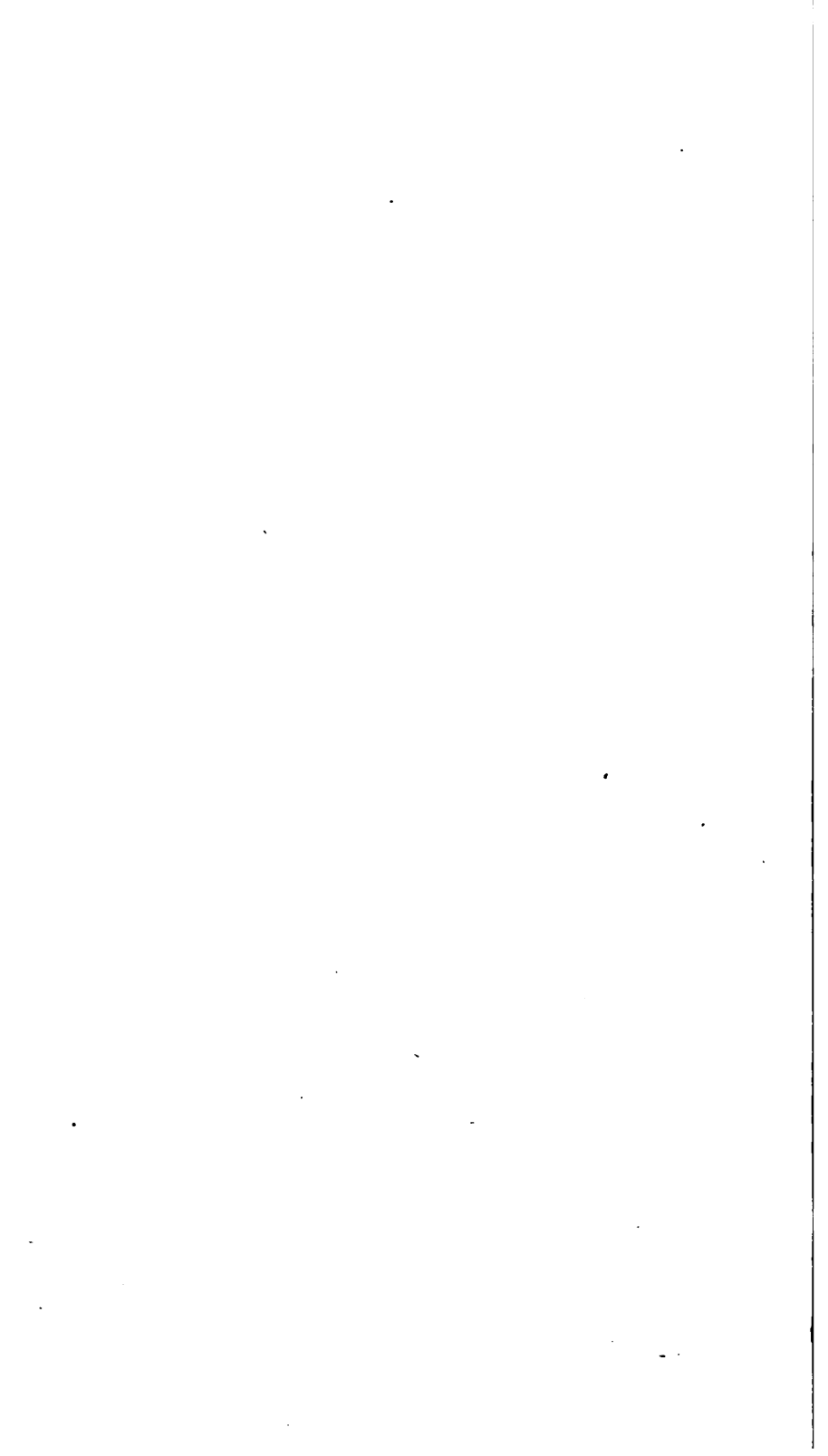


# APPENDIX.

CONTAINING,

I. NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

II. TESTIMONIA OF VARIOUS AUTHORS REGARD-  
ING CRICHTON.



## NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

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### NOTE A.

*His father was Robert Crichton of Eliock, &c.—Page 2.*

IN Scot of Scotstarvet's *Staggering State of Scotch Statesmen*, there occur the following curious notices of the Crichton family:—Mr Rob<sup>t</sup> Creightoune, advocat, left a fair estait behind him, viz. the barony of Cluny and Eliok, to his (son) S<sup>r</sup> Robert Crichtoune of Cluny. But after he had killed the Laird of Moncoffer, (in revenge of the Earle of Murray's slaughter) at the Chappell of Egismalay, had never good success in his affaires. His eldest broy<sup>r</sup> James, as Manucius sayes, was a miracle of nature, seeing he could forget nothing; but he was killed be the young Duke of Mantua, whom he attended, coming out from the duke's mistress, and be that means S<sup>r</sup> Robert fell to be laird; but he sold all the land in his own tyme, and at this day no memorie is left of him. He descended, by all appearance, as all the rest of that name, from the Lord Crichton's house, who was Chancellor in King James the II<sup>d</sup> his tyme, and was forfaulted for holding out his house against the king's authoritie; and latelie, all the cadents of him are destroyed, and have litle or no land left undisponed; for the Lord Sanquhar, in anno 1612, having caused his footman kill a fencer who had dung out his eye at fencing, he y<sup>r</sup>for was hanged at London, and his estaite, by K. James 6<sup>th</sup> his decret-arbitrall, was taken from his bastard son, to whom it was taylsied, and gave it to his cussing, William of Ryhill, who was thereafter made Earle of Dumfreize.

## NOTE B.

20th October, 1573. Mr David Borthwick admitted, in place of Mr John Spence of Condie, to the place of Session vacand be the deceis of the said unquhill Mr John Spence, under the kings letter, which bears, that a place of Session is vacand be deceas of the said Mr John, and that Mr David Borthwick is qualified for that place. And siclyke, Mr David Borthwick was the Kings Advocat, be deceas of Mr John Spence of Condie.—*Pitmedden MS. Advoc. Lib.*

## NOTE C.

In the seventh volume of the Records of Bonds and Obligations, there is preserved a contract, dated at Edinburgh, 27th April, 1563, "between Maister James Ogilvy, of Balfour, and Maister Robert Crichton, Advocat to the King; that is to say, ye said Maister Robert for himself, and *Elisabeth Stewart*, his spouse, the onelie sister-germane of unquhile Margaret Stewart, spous for the tyme to ye said Maister James, and also co-assigneas lawfullie constitute be James, Commendator of St Columba, Henry Stewart, and Archibald Stewart, the onelie broyer of the said unquhile Margaret, in and to yare pertis of abulziements, jewellis, and executry of Margaret," &c. &c. It appears that this Margaret having died intestate, Maister Robert Crichton gets, by this agreement, 500 merks, in contentation of his wife's right to the jewellis, &c.

The above contract contains a decided proof that the mother of the Admirable Crichton was Elisabeth Stewart, daughter of Sir James Stewart of Beath, by whom he was descended from the royal family of Scotland.

## NOTE D.

*Married Agnes Mowbray.*—Page 3.

In the Register of Bonds and Obligations, vol. II. preserved in the Register-Office, the marriage-contract between these parties is to be found at length. It is dated at Barnebougall, 6th of August, 1572, (at which time the Admirable Crichton could be only a boy of twelve years of age,) and describes the parties,



as follows:—" betwixt honorabill persones, Jehne Moubray of Barnebougall, and Agnes Moubray, his dochter, and Maister Robert Creychton of Eliok, Advocate to our Sovereine Lord," &c.

It appears from this contract, that Robert Creychton is to infest her in life-rent " in all and hail his lands of Eliock and Buchane, extending to sex merks and forty-penny land of old extent, lying within the barony of Sanquhar; and quhat tyme, or quhow sone, it sall pless God to send a sone, procreat betwix ye said Mr Robert and his future spouse, the said Mr Robert sall dewlie and sufficientlie infest him, and the heirs-male to be gottin of his bodie, quhilkis failsieing, ye airis-male to be gottin of Mr Robert's bodye, and his future spouse, &c. in all and hail the foresaidis lands (of Eliock) wyt yare pertinentis, free blenche," reserving the life-rent to Robert and Agnes Moubray.

## NOTE E.

Besides Mary, the Lord Advocate had another daughter by his third marriage, named Marion Crichton, who appears to have been forcibly carried off by her own brother, Sir Robert Crichton of Cluny. There is a curious document to be found in the *Registrum Secreti Sigilli*, vol. LXIV. f. 131, in which Robert Crichton of Cluny, and Andro Ramsay, are put to the horn for not comparing personally, and for not bringing and exhibiting before the king, on the 13th June, 1592, Marion Crichton, daughter to the deceased Mr Robert Crichton of Eliock, advocate, in the same state that she was in " y<sup>e</sup> tyme of the reavesing and away taking of hir from Harie Stirling of Ardoch." 13th June, 1592.

## NOTE F.

*Bastard Brother to the Earl of Arran.*

I have here followed all the contemporary historians in calling Hamilton a natural brother of the Earl of Arran. But Calderwood, in his History, vol. I. MS. p. 161, mentions a singular report which was prevalent at that time, which, were it true, would make him a cousin of the admirable Crichton. " In this time," says he, " arrived from France, John Hamilton, Abbot of Pas-

ley, bastard brother to the Governour, whom many notwithstanding esteemed sons to Creichtoun, old Bishop of Dunkeld." Whatever was his origin, he appears to have been a man of profligate manners, and of an ambitious and intriguing temper. Calderwood, after noticing that peace had, in 1580, been concluded between the French and the English, and extended to Scotland, remarks, that, " although the countrie enjoyed peace in respect of the forraignemie, it was no less grievously vexed by the avarice and crueltie of the Governour, and his bastard brother, Archbishop of St Andrews, then if it had been oppressed with war. The bastard Bishop, a licentious man, spared neither wives nor virgins, as his bastard birds did witness. William Creichtoun, Lord Sanquhar, was slain almost within the Governour's own sight, he Robert Sempell, but he escaped by means of his daughter, the Ladie Stenhous, taken from her husband—the Bishop's concubine, neither fair nor weel-favour'd. She was commonly called Lady Gilton."—CALDERWOOD, vol. I. p. 307.

In the MS. of Scot of Scotstarvet's *Staggering State*, there is the following brief account of the life and miserable death of this abandoned prelate:—" Bishop John Hamilton, Archbishop of St Andrews, and bastard son to the Earle of Arrane, was Treasurer. He was blotted, as being accessory to the murder of the King, committed by the Earle of Bothwell; and, that night that it was committed, was marked to lodg in his brother's house, where now is the colledg of Edinburgh, hard by the Kirk of Field. When the murder was perpetrated, he also did instigate the barons of the Borders to invade England, when Queen Mary was put in streat prison, anno 1571; but, after the field of Langsyde, fled to Dumbartone Castell, where he being apprehended at command of the Viceroy, the Earle of Lennox, he was brought to Sterling, and there hanged."

#### NOTE G.

There are two other authors of the name of Crichton, of whom it is proper to say a few words. The first of these is George Crichton, a man who, in his own time, appears to have been considered of distinguished literary talents. A short sketch of

his life has been given by Dempster, in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*, p. 190; and a more voluminous memoir, by Nicéron, in his *Memoires des Hommes Illustres*. He was educated at Paris, and became afterwards Regius Professor of Greek. He died in the year 1591.

NOTE H.

The second is William Crichton, a learned member of the Society of the Jesuits, who, after a life devoted to the propagation of his faith, died at Leyden, in the year 1596. Of the talents, travels, and misfortunes of this author, the following account is preserved by Dempster:—

“Gulielmus Crichtonius, Societatis Jesu presbyter eruditus et pius, quinquaginta annis religiosè in eadem societate transactis, perigrinando, docendo, scribendo, indefesso labore cives suos, hæresi abdicata, Catholicæ Ecclesiæ unire annisus est; vir probissimæ conversationis, etiam a sectariis, judicatus: Majestatis regie acerrimus propugnator; quippe cum Anglus quidam ei detexisset Elisabetham Angliæ reginam velle se, quacunq[ue] ratione, e medio tollere, intercessit, et quantum fieri potuit ab incepto retraxit. Petrus Matherus, lib. VI. Hist. Gallic. Narrat. II. Eoque beneficio Regina devincta, cum ille, ex itinere Scotico mari interceptus, in Turrim Londinensæ conjiceretur, e vestigio liberum dimisit; ultro confessa, non posse improbum esse, cui curæ esset Regia dignitas et animarum salus. Sileant ergo perditæ hæreticorum voces clamantium, a societate in principes sicarios armari; cum hic Jesuita, hostium etiam confessione, longè ab eo fuerit consilio.”

Ejus sunt,

Excerpta ex SS. Patribus.

In primam partem D. Thomæ. Lib. I.

Theologia Scholastica contra Sectarios.

De legitimo, Jacobi VI. Scotiæ Regis, titulo ad Regni Anglicani successionem.

*Quo libro, Leonii scripto, vis periculum coasit, extra amœna Regis Hispaniæ ditiones relegatus: Pro Hispani vero in idem regnum jure, scripsit Robertus Personius, Jesuita Anglus.*

## Casus Conscientiæ.

Obiit Lugdani Galliarum, mdcxvi. Multis armis Collegium Lovanii Scotorum rexit.

## NOTE I.

Jacobus Chrycton, Bac. Coll. Salv. 20 Martij. 1573-4.

*Nomina Magistrorum anni 1574*

David Monypenny, S.

Jo<sup>us</sup> Hall, L.

Jacobus Chrycton, S.

Alex<sup>r</sup> Cunnygame, M.

Jab<sup>us</sup> Keyd, S.

The<sup>o</sup> Gray, L.

Patr. Symson, L.

## 2 Circ.

Jo. Knox, L.

Guil. Fowlston, M.

Jo<sup>us</sup>. Spotiswod, L.

David Louchmalony, S.

Ja<sup>us</sup>. Borthwyk, M.

Andreas Duncane, L.

&c. &c. &c. 36 in all.

*Acta Facultatis Artium ab initio Studii St Andreae, fundati et privilegiati per Benedictum xiij, A.D. MCCCCXIII.*

## NOTE K.

*Illustrissimo D. Joanni Zamoscio, R. P. Cancellario, et Exercituum Imp. et C.*

Virtuti locum non esse, queri jam desinamus, Illustrissime Zamosci. Tua te virtus evexit, et effecit, ut, illustriori loco cum sis, illustriorem etiam gratiam ei referre possis. Equidem ego, patri meo cum multum debeam, nullam fortasse ob causam tantum me debere sentio, quantum quod hereditariam mihi tui observantiam reliquerit. Lætorque mirum in modum, ejus manibus comprobatum esse judicium de te suum. Fore te dicebat celeberrimi Regni tamquam speculum, in quem homines intueren-

tur, et quem sibi ad imitandum proponerent; optimeque tunc actum iri cum Regno, cum tua virtus se ostendisset. Patris iudicium Stephani Regis sapientia comprobavit. Quo fit, ut tanto Regi mirum in modum gratuler, qui te cum voluerit esse cuius consilio, et virtute totum Regnum nitatur. Multoque magis gaudeo, quod omnium de te opiniones quam maxime tuis virtutibus superas. Quas ego dum assidue contemplor, fateor profecto nullo me orationis vel uberrimo genere res tuas præclare domi bellique gestas complecti unquam posse. Quis enim vel clarissimus orator recensere unquam posset, quæ tu pro salute, pro dignitate Regis, pro universæ Poloniæ Regni maiestate gessisti? Ut recte admodum Rex ille prudentissimus, sapientissimusque, te sibi in primis amandum proposuerit, deinde divino quodam iudicio omnibus honoribus ac dignitatibus afficiendum censuerit, teque consanguinitate sibi maxime esse conjunctissimum voluerit; qui jamdiu antiquissimæ nobilissimæque familiæ tuæ splendorem perpetuamque gloriam tuis virtutibus auges. Tu toga, tu armis ingenii magnitudinem ostendens, Poloniæ exercituum imperator, innumerabilibus Moscoviæ ducis exercitibus, non exiguo etiam Othomanorum terrore, ingentem stragem, inferiore interdum militum copia, eximia tua virtute, sæpius attulisti; potentissimorum hostium furorem fortiter sæpe repressisti; terminos invictissimi Regis tui quam longissime protulisti. Hæc qui audiunt, multo etiam magis qui intuentur, carere omnino invidia tua præclara facinora asserunt; quæ, omnium iudicio, nullo modo gloria aut virtute superari possunt, neque vel longissima historia satis pro meritis complecti. Ut difficillimum illud, Gloria invidiam superare, facillimum tibi fuisse ostenderis. Jam per universum terrarum orbem adeo nominis tui summa gloria increbuit, ut cum Romanis clarissimis oratoribus, vel cum exercituum maximis imperatoribus, jure comparari possis. Hæc si ego rationibus comprobare vellem, viderer profecto omnibus in meridie lumen accendere. Hoc tantum dicam, quod etiam vix pro maximo meo desiderio explicare possum, me nihil unquam magis libenter aut audire aut loqui, quam cum de tuis summis honoribus et dignitatibus audio, aut cum de divinis animi tui dotibus loquor, ac palam prædico. Quo fit, ut Stanislaum Nyegos-

scuski, illustrem adolescentem, adolescentem dico, multo tamen virtute illustriorem, magis carum habeam, qui te semper in ore habeat, qui te admiretur, qui denique tuas decantet virtutes; in quo neuter nostrum alteri cedit. Est hoc Poloni cæli propria, ut ingeniorum feracissimum solum sit. Quis non Stanislai Orichovii memoria delectatur? Quis Jacobi Gorscii scripta non admiratur? Quis Stanislæum Socolovium, Andream Patricium, Martinum Slachezium, divinos plane viros, ad sidera non extollit? Ut meum Nyegosseuski, tantum adolescentem, non dubitem augurari magnum fore aliquando hominem. Hæc enim ætate ea præstat, quæ adæva prorsus judicari debent, et quæ vix, qui non vidit, esse potuisse, vel posse unquam credat. Divinum numen est poësis; et qui Poëtæ titulum meruerunt, divini fere habitus sunt et dicti. Sed, qui inter Poëtæ majorem *ἔργον* repererit, huic profecto Poësin debere, non ipsam Poësin, æneam affirmare. Dicere extempore, magnum patatur: sed versibus dicere, sed argumentis respondere,—hoc ex iis est, quæ ego divinum quid sapere existimo. Edidit scriptum, in quo pollicebatur se in unaquaque materia proposita extempore carmine responsurum. Promissis stetit, et egregie id præstitit; summa omnium admiratione, nominis sui immortalitate, et Polonæ gloriæ fama. Neque tantum quid versibus, sed et quid soluta oratione valeat, (valet autem plurimum) ostendit. Extare autem illud volui, hisce literis inclusum; ut existet tantæ virtutis testimonium. Estque hoc, miro artificio elaboratum, ut in omnibus ingenium eluceat.

“SERENISSIMO, &c. &c.

“Ut esset perpetuum STANISLAI NYEGOSSEUVII, POLONI, in  
 “nomen *Venetum* pietatis argumentum; tum vero cum Aldo  
 “Mannuccio dignum mutue caritatis pignus, et tamquam hospita-  
 “pitalitatis quædam tessera; vel hoc ætatis nec ab litteris ab-  
 “horrens, nec amicorum sententia immaturus, in alto festæ  
 “pacis otio, et sensus Theologorum, et res Aristotelis omnes,  
 “sibi tuendas suscepit.

I. De Theologia Positiva, et Scholastica.

II. De Universa Aristotelis Philosophia, Naturali, Morali, Divina.

III. De rebus Mathematicis.

“ Ad Objecta Responsurus Carmine Hexametro, vel Pentametro.

“ Ut vero, quantum liberalis doctrinæ, et politioris humanitatis studio ipse profecerit, quisque intelligat, Oratione, vel soluta, vel numeris Poetice vincta, propositam habens ad dicendum materiam, ex tempore dicet. Deinde Platonicos numeros, Calculistarumque somnia, ex proponentium arbitrio refutabit.

“ In D. D. Joannis, et Paulli æde Sacra, in ipso Sancto Purificationis die, post meridiem, exordium sumet.”

∞ DXXCIV

Epistolæ clausula sit, Polonæ immortalitatis me studiosissimum esse; neque umquam passuram, quantum vires meæ ferent, ut scripta mea Polona gloria non illustrentur: in eoque maximam mihi iudicii laudem ab omnibus deberi certo polliceor. A te vero, Ill<sup>m</sup>. Zamosci, Literarum Armorumque decus eximium, suppliciter peto, ut me, jam tuum, in tuis non solum esse velis, quod jam te velle non dubito, sed etiam aliis id persuadeas: nam ego in amore et benevolentia tua, gloriam mihi summam constitutam puto. Deus opt. max. te felicem esse velit; ut ista felicitate boni omnes utantur, cum tu bonis faveas, eoque te gratum esse præclare ostendas.

Ill<sup>m</sup>. D. T. addictissimus,

ALDUS MANNUCCIUS, P. F. A. N.

Venetiis, Kal. Mart.

CIO IO XXCIV.

NOTE L.

*Præstantissimo viro, Jacobo Gorscio, Juris utriusque Doctori, Canonico Cracoviensi Gnesnensi Plocensi.*

Næ præclare mecum est actum; et magna Stanislao Nyegosenuski, illustri adolescenti, quique, quod valet, valet autem plurimum, (ut de eo felicia omnia augurari facile liceat, et secunda omnia sperem) magna tibi ex parte acceptum referat, gratia mihi referenda est; quod, cum de te multa collocuti esse-

mus, quæ ad tuam gloriam vel maxime pertinent, ad tuam mihi amicitiam aditum sit pollicitus. Est hoc ejus humanitatis, qua præstat; erit illud tuæ virtutis, qua, jam tuis notus, alienioribus nobis quoque observandus es. Scriptis tuis eruditissimis hoc es assecutus. Quæ enim de Figuris, quæ de Periodis, quæ de Generibus Dicendi, quæ de Dialecticis, a te sunt literis mandata, nomen tuum illustrent. Ea vero sic me affecerunt, ut miro semper flagrarim desiderio te salutandi. Nam, cum in Polonos omnes (quod judicio excellere eos semper judicarem) optime sim animatus; tum vero tui similibus omnia me debere officia censeo. Et sane habet Rex potentissimus, idemque vere Rex, quod gaudeat, ejus Regni se Regem esse, qui inter alia Regna literarum laude præcipuas sibi partes vindicet. Illustrissimus Zamoscius magnæ suæ virtutis specimen, juvenis cum adhuc esset, in Italia dedit; quam bellicis triumphis postea insigniorem fecit, maximas de Mosco victorias reportans, et Polonum nomen, illustrem antea et hostibus formidabilem, gloriosiore reddens. Patricius quoque, me puero, maximam sui expectationem concitavit, quam postea facile superavit. De notis de facie loquor; nam, omnes vestrates si vellem recensere qui mihi fama noti sunt, dies me prius et charta deficeret. Sint hæc igitur pauca sibi summæ observantiæ meæ indicium; quam tibi primum ipsi, deinde aliis notam esse volo.

Tuarum virtutum observantissimus,

ALDUS MANNUCCIUS, P. F. A. N.

Venetiis, Kal. Feb. ∞ DXXCIII.

#### NOTE M.

##### *De Sperone Speroni.*

Bernardini Scardeonii *Historiæ Patavinæ*, Lib. II. Class. XI.

“Hactenus de his qui clari suâ ætate fuerunt, et vitam cum morte commutarunt; posthac de vivis, cum maximâ patriæ nostræ gloria, dicemus.

Vivit et splendet illustri famâ in universâ Italia Spero Speronus, excellens philosophus, Jurisque Civilis et omnium disciplinarum genere eruditissimus; tantæ vero facundiæ in dicendo, et in suadendo, præsertim in Hetrusca et nostra Italica lingua, ut si contingat ei aliquando, pro nostræ Reipublicæ negotiis, Venetiis, in conspectu Senatus causam dicere, cessat



illico ipso dicente forum, et differuntur vadimonia advocatorum, ut fiat interim in eâ urbe veluti justitium, quo dum loquitur in causa a cunctis ordinibus audiri commode possit. \* \* Est enim ad inveniendum ingenio promptus, mente stabilis, et ad reminiscendum insigni et excellenti memoria: ad dicendum sermone gravi, copioso et suavi, et ubi sermonis maxima consistit virtus, ita grato et dilucido, ut discernere nequeas utrum sit ornatior in dicendo aut facilius in explicando, aut efficacior in persuadendo. Est denique (ut me uno verbo expediam) in eo genere perfectus nostræ ætatis orator. Leguntur hujus *Dialogi* lingua Hetrusca doctissimi; similiter et tragedia *Eolus*, et plures epistolæ eadem lingua ad amicos eleganter conscriptæ. Expectantur ab eodem indices majora.—*Extat in Grævii Thesaurò Antiq. et Hist. Italiæ*, vol. VI. part III. p. 292.

## NOTE N.

*De Archangelo Mercenario.*

Antonii Riccoboni de Gymnasio Patavino, Lib. II. Cap. XLI.

“Arcangelus Mercenarius, a Monte Sancto, munus docendi philosophiam extraordinariam in secundo loco cœpit obire, cum Franciscus Piccolomineus Senensis primum teneret, an. 1560: postea primum locum adeptus, collegam habuit in secundo Bernardinum Petrellam, Burgopolitanum, anno 1567; deinde Comitum Jacobum Zabarellam, electum anno 1568. Cum Petrella ad Logicam fuit revocatus, anno autem 1577, ei datus est locus secundus Philosophiæ ordinariæ. Decessit anno 1585. Ejus extant, “*In plurima Aristotelis perobscura, et nonnulla Averrois loca, Dilucidationes.*” Ejusdem *Obscuriorum locorum, et questionum Philosophiæ Naturalis Aristotelis ejusque Interpretum Dilucidationes;*” quibus accesserunt *Disputationes de putredine*, ejusdem Mercenarii, et Thomæ Eræsti, adversariæ quatuor.”—GRAVIUS, vol. VI. part III.

## NOTE O.

*De morte Speronis Speronii.*

A. Riccoboni De Gym. Lib. VI. C. XI.

“Spero Speronius Patavinus, qui, anno 1524, Philosophiam

extraordinariam in hoc gymnasio explicaverat, anno 1688, ex hac vita excessit; non tribus solis maximis rebus, quibus M. Cato, aut quinque, quibus P. Crassus Mutianus, dicitur præstitime, sed longe pluribus, sane summis et præcipuis, clarissimus: nobilitate patriæ, splendore familiæ, fortunarum amplitudine, corporis firmitate, ingenii præstantiâ, disserendi ratione; Poetica, Rhetorica, scribendi excellentiâ; Sæcræ Scripturæ, omnisque antiquitatis cognitione; rerum futurarum prudenti quadam prædictione; Equestri dignitate, Principum consuetudine. Quæ omnia de eo celebravi, oratione habita in Ecclesia Cathedrali, Nonis Junii."

## NOTE P.

*Sir T. Urquhart.*

Unfortunately, Sir Thomas Urquhart's own writings are the only biographical documents which remain of him. In a fanciful and ridiculous work, entitled, "The true Pedigree and Lineal Descent of the Family of Urquhart," he affirms, that he was the son of Sir Thomas Urquhart, knighted by King James, at Edinburgh, in the year 1617, and Christian Elphinston, daughter of Alexander Lord Elphinston, and was agnamed Parresiasias. "This Sir Thomas," says the continuator of the Genealogical Tree, "the third of that name, chief of the honourable house of Urquharts, was knighted by King Charles I., in Whitehall Gallery, on the 7th of April, in the year 1641." He was a man of great learning and merit, and was a steady loyalist; on which account he suffered many hardships. He fought on the king's side at the battle of Worcester, where he was taken prisoner, and confined for several years in the Tower of London, from whence he made his escape, and went beyond seas, where he died suddenly, in a fit of excessive laughter, on being informed, by his servant, that the king was restored. He was compiler of the foregoing Genealogy.

Where Sir Thomas was educated, or at what time he commenced his literary career, we have no documents to determine. He appears, from his works, to have received, probably both at home and abroad, a learned education. It is likely that he devoted himself to the profession of arms; and yet, like many

other military scholars of those days, found leisure for the pursuits of literature and science. In his first work, which is entitled, "*Trissotetras; or Nova Trigonometra docens,*" and which he published in 1550, he calls himself *student in the mathematick*. But, in a beautiful and curious little portrait which is prefixed to this treatise, his titles are given at the following more imposing length:—Sir Thomas Urquhart, knight of Bray and Udol, etc.; Baron of Ficherie and Clohorby, etc.; Laird, Baron of Cromartie, and heritable Sheriff thereof, etc. Sir Thomas has subjoined to this trigonometrical rhapsody, a dedication to The Right Honourable and most noble Lady, my deare and loving Mother, the Lady Dowager of Cromartie; the language of which proves, that he had very early adopted that strange and rhapsodical style of writing, in which he afterwards became so eminent a proficient. "Thus, madam," says he, "unto you doe I totally belong, but so as that those exterior parts of mine, which by birth are from your ladyship derived, cannot be more fortunate in this their subjection (notwithstanding the egregious advantages of blood, and consanguinity thereby to them accruing,) then my selfe am happy, as from my heart I doe acknowledge it, in the just right which your ladyship hath to the eternal possession of the never-dying powers of my soule."

Another work of this author was a Collection of Epigrams, which he published at London, in 1641, and dedicated to James Marquis of Hamilton. It is singular, that as Sir Thomas' prose is exceedingly extravagant and hyperbolic, his verses, on the other hand, are uncommonly rational and moderate, and often even prosaic; a circumstance which has, perhaps, induced the anonymous author of an epistle prefixed to his *Trissotetras*, to declare, in a spirit of criticism so unintelligible that it is very probable it was written by the learned knight himself, that "this mathematicall tractate doth no lesse bespeak him a good poet and good orator, than by his elaboured poems he hath shewn himself already a good philosopher and mathematician."

In his political principles, this singular man was a steady Royalist; and in those violent and sanguinary struggles which

at this period occurred between the Presbyterian faction in Scotland, and the King's party, he invariably espoused the cause of his sovereign. He was, as we have above seen, taken prisoner in the battle of Worcester, and wrote, during his confinement in the Tower, his treatise entitled, "The Jewel," which he published in the 1652; in which he endeavours, by the communication of the discovery of a universal language, (which is as full of empiricism as any other of his works,) and by the promise of greater and more useful inventions,—by enlarging on the antiquity of the Scottish nation, and the many eminent men which it has produced,—and by a vindication of his own conduct and principles, to induce the parliament to grant him his liberty.\*

Whether these writings had any effect in procuring their author his enlargement at some future period, or whether the story regarding his escape from the Tower is founded on fact, we cannot now discover. It is certain, however, that Urquhart was still confined in 1653; for in that year he published his inimitable Translation of the Two First Books of Rabelais; and, in the preface informs us, that he intends soon after to present the public with the remaining three books. The high merits of this translation have been enlarged upon by Lord Woodhouselee, in his essay on that subject; and, indeed, it is impossible to look into it without admiring the air of ease, freshness, and originality which the translator has so happily communicated to his performance. All those singular qualifications which unfitted Urquhart to succeed in serious composition,—his extravagance, his drollery, his unbridled imagination, his burlesque and endless epithets, are, in the task of translating Rabelais, transplant-

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\* He prays the State, Parliament, and Supreme Council of Great Britain, to vouchsafe unto the aforesaid Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty, Knight, heritable Sheriff and proprietary thereof, a grant of the releasement of his person from any imprisonment wherunto, at the discretion of those that took his parole, he is engaged; the possession likewise of his house of Cromarty free from garrisoning, and the enjoyment of his whole estate in lands.

ed into their true field of action, and revel through his pages with a license and boyancy which is quite unbridled, yet quite allowable. Indeed, Urquhart and Rabelais seem, in many points, to have been congenial spirits ; and the translator seems to have been born for his author.

## APPENDIX.

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### TESTIMONIA REGARDING CRICHTON.

#### No. I.

*Affiché in the Cortegiano of Castiglione.*

Lo Scozzese, detto Giacomo Critonio, è giovane di 20 anni finiti à 19 di Agosto passato ; ha una voglia nell ochio destro ; possiede dieci lingue ; la Latina e l'Italiana in eccellenza, Greca e na fa epigrammi ; Hebraea ; Caldea ; Spagnuola ; Francese ; Fiaminga ; Inglese ; Scota ; et intende anche la Tedesca. Intendentissimo di Filosofia, di Teologia, di Matematica, Astrologia ; e tiene tutti i calcoli fatti sin' hoggi per falsi ; di filosofia e teologia ha moltissime volte disputato con valent' huomini con stupore di tutti. Ha cognitione perfettissima della cabala, di memoria tale che non sa che cosa sia il dimenticarsi et ogni oratione uïdta da lui recita a parola a parola, fa versi Latini improvvisi in qual si voglia sorte di versi e materia ; e ne fa anche cominciando dall' l'ultima parola del verso, pur improvvisi orationi ; improvise e belle ; ragiona di cose di stato con fondamento : di bellissimo aspetto ; cortigiano complitissimo a meraviglia ; et è il più gratioso che si possa desiderare nella conversatione. Soldato a tutta botta, et due anni ha spei alla guerra di Francia con carico honorato. Salta, balla, eccelentemente ; armeggia, gioca di ogni sorte d'armi et ne ha fatto prove. Maneggiator di cavalli ; giostratore singolare ; di sangue nobile ; anzi per Madre Regale, Stuardo. Ha disputato con Greci nella materia della processione dello Spirito Santo con grande applauso et con grandissima copia di autorità di dottori Greci, e Latine e concilii, come anco fa quando tratto di filosofia e teologia, havendo tutto Aristotele e commentatori

alle mani, e scitandone le facciate, non chele re righe, Greche. Ha tutto S. Tomaso Scoto, Tomisti et Scotisti, a mente, e disputa in utramque partem. Il che ha fatto molte volte felicemente. Nè ragiona mai di materia alcuna che non sia proposta da altri. Volle il principe et la Signoria udirlo et ne stupirono: fu honorato da S. serenità di un presente. In sotima è in mostro de' mostri; et tale che alcuni vedendo così fatte qualità ridotte in un solo corpo, benissimo proportionato, et lontano dalla malinconia, fanno di molte chimere. Hora si è ridotto fuori in villa, per stendere 2000 conclusioni le quali, in tutte le professioni, vuol sostenere in Venetia, nella Chiesa di San Gio e Paolo, fra due mesi; non potendo egli supplire alla volontà delle persone che desideranno udirlo tutto giorno et a suoi studi.

In Venetia, appresso Domenico et Gio Battista Guerra fratelli,  
MDLXXX.

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No. II.

*Extract from the Manuscript of the ABBE MORELLI.*

Di questo giovane meraviglioso dicono gran cose gli scrittori, particolarmente Aldo il giovane, Guiseppe Scaligero L'Imperiali, Il Caferro, ed Adriano Baillet. Da una Cronica Veneta MS. presso il Ch. Sig. Ab. Jacopo Morelli si ha che "giunto il Critonio a Venezia nel mese d'Agosto del 1580, trasse in ammirazione tutta quella città, poichè oltre al possedere dieci e più linguaggi, si mostrava intendentissimo di Filosofici, Teologia, Matematica, Astrologia, ed era di così profonda memoria, che udita un' orazione o predica una sola volta, la ripeteva minutissimamente: componeva versi Latini all'improvviso d'ogni sorte, ragionava di cose di stato, di guerra, e generalmente d'ogni cosa con fondamento, cantava, ballava, giucava di ogni sorte d'armi eccellentemente, di sanguine nobile, di-ceasi per parte di madre Regale; di maniera che vedendosi tali e tante qualità ridotte in un sol corpo benissimo proportionato, lontano da malinconia e giovane, venivano fatti diversi concetti della sua persona." Non avea egli allora che circa venti anni, e continuò a dar prova ma-

ravigliose del suo sapere, così in Venezia, come in Padova, sin che dopo tre anni condottosi a Mantova, benissimo veduto ed accolto dal Duca Guglielmo, un tanto lume restò disgraziatamente estinto per mano del giovenetto Principe Vincenzo Gonzaga in una zuffa notturna ; di che si può vedere L'Imperiali nel Museo Istoricò, pag. 242, il quale peraltro s'inganna, ponendo la sua morte a 3 di Luglio del 1583, quando Io trovo che Critonio era tuttavia in vita vel Novembre del 1584, nel qual tempo scrisse e stampò in Milano un Elegia pel passaggio alla celeste gloria del grande Arcivescovo S. Carlo Borromeo, ch'io tengo tra le mie Miscellanee con questo titolo: *Epicedium Illustrissimi et Reverendissimi Cardinalis Caroli Borromaei, ab Jacobo Critonio Scoto, rogatu clarissimi summaque in optimum Pastorem suam pietate viri, Joannis Antonii Magii Mediolanen, proximo post obitum die exaratum. Mediolani, ex Typographia Pacifici Pontii M.D.LXXXIII, in 4 E' noto che S. Carlo morì alli 3 di Novembre del 1584, alle 3 ore di notte.—Serassi Vita del Mazzoni, p. 126, 127.*

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### No. III.

*Dedication of ALDUS MANUTIUS.*

Aldine Cicero, vol. X. p. 232.

*Nobilissimo Juveni JACOBO CRITONIO, Scoto.*

Cum nihil in te sit summissum et popolare, (mi Jacobe Critoni) quin omnia tam ampla, excelsa, atque admiranda, ut elapsi temporis viris illustribus ac sapientissimis gloriam, futuris vero etiam spes tua amplitudo auferat, nostro autem saeculo singulare afferat ornamentum ; cumque non minus opiniones tibi, quam vita sint admirabiles : sententias illas, quæ Paradoxa vocantur, quæ non sane probantur in vulgus philosophorum, in Stoicorum scholis natas, nudas admodum, et squalidas, nunc vero M. Tullii Ciceronis eloquentia exornatas et auctoritate, meis Commentariis illustratas, nomini tuo dicare volui, cui ista



maxime conveniant; non tantum, ut amoris erga te mei indicium præbeam, qui nisi jam antea tibi ex tantis conститit argumentis, nunquam ex illo patebit officio, quam ut animi grati pro Carminibus quæ in tuo ad urbem Venetam oppulso mihi dedisti. Nunc vero etiam lætor, toti Italiæ, et orbi fortasse terrarum universo perspectum esse judicium de te meum, et ea quæ, cum huc venisses, scriptis commendavi; quæ tibi ipsi, ac nonnullis acerrimis censoribus, aspera atque injucunda videbantur. Nam, licet tum amorem malui ostendere, quam prudentiam, nunc ambo cum amicis tuis, tum inimicis, si qui amplius tam feri atque inhumani reperiuntur, manifesta sunt, postquam tua virtus tam clarum sui splendorem diffudit. Ego enim, junctam invidiæ ac multorum inimicitias, eximiam quandam atque immortalem gloriam sum consecutus. Nam quid illustris, quid honestius, quid vero etiam gloriosius ad nomen meum accedere potuit, quam ut a me prolota *καρδοξίτατα* primum, tum *εὐνομία* viderentur, nunc vero *εὐκρίτα* ab omnibus habeantur: cum multi homines sui judicii levitatem infirmitatemque, cum essent stultitia obcæcati, mei vero constantiam, veritatemque perspiciant; poteram enim (*εὐκρατῆσαι τὰς ἐπινοίας*) Illustris, Critoniam, et Serenissimam Stuardam, quibus oriundus es, familias extollere. Sed, quid Reges tui majores, (licet ea laus Scotorum Regibus merito tribui possit, quod inter omnes Europæ Reges vetustissimi Christiani sint,) quos nunquam Romani imperio suo subegere; cum Cæsar, propter tumultus excitatos, et res in Gallia fluctuantes, exercitum a Regni expugnatione revocaret: Quid, inquam, isti, tuis virtutibus, amisque dotibus amplius solidæ laudis afferunt? Quid Critonii, qui cum Scotorum militiæ Imperatores summi plerumque essent, Anglos e Galliæ Regno, et Scotiæ finibus toties, ac tanta virtute ejeecerunt? Quid Robertus Critonius, pater tuus, Fifensis in Scotia, et Stormondiensis, Elioki, et Clunsei, tot oppidorum, tot præsidiorum dominus,—qui longo tempore inter omnes Regni proceres, serumnosissimæ simul et beatissimæ Reginæ, quæ apud Anglos (pro dolor!) jam captiva est, et Christianæ religionis acerrimus exstitit propugnator; præsertim qui copias ad prælium quod Langsydium vocant, duxisset; quid ille tibi splendoris veri affert? Non tantum illi fortasse debet, quod te

genuerit, quod maximos hujus tempestatis viros, *Bachanatum, Heppurnium, Robertsonium, et Rhetorfotem* præceptens tibi dederit, quod tam amplas pecunias fortunasque in te erudiendo insumperit, et omnes vires animi atque ingenii in educando profuderit, quantum quod ob intestinas seditiones, et prælia domestica contra te suscitata, quæ cum patre gessisti, Regno ducere, et Regem relinquere, coegit. Sed laudem, quæ a majoribus ad nos derivatur, ne laudem quidem esse, aspicentissimus ille vir *Ulixæa* existimavit. Neque te vero multum commendo, quod specie, et corporis viribus pollens; fateor tamen aliquid esse in his, quod non tam a fortuna, quantum ab animo pendet, immortalitatis memoris prosequendum: quod scilicet Regno, patria, domoque, ob Catholicæ fidei ardorem, tam longe abes; nec ullum ex his ærumnis dolorem, sed incredibilem animo sentias voluptatem. Neque Regis in consobrinum tuum *Jacobum Stuardum* clementia, cui cum *Moraviæ Principatu* suam consobrinam uxorem dedit; neque communis cum Rege educatio permovent; immo ne movent quidem; putas enim majores quædam opes, et firmiora, quam quæ amisisti, præsidia esse quærenda. In corporis vero bonis id habes, quod effigies oris, atque sermonis animi nobilissimi filia sit. Sed belli studia in ipsis ephebis inire, eadem animo atque amore prosequi, et cum literis et Philosophia, tanquam alter *Brutus*, conjungere, nemini unquam ab initio humani generis obtigit. Magna sunt ista profecto, et inaudita: mediocria tamen, si cetera spectemus; quod, scilicet, decem linguarum, multorum idiomatum, omnium disciplinarum cognitionem, ante vigesimum primum ætatis annum, sis adeptus; et digladiandi, saltandi, omnium gymnasticarum exercitationum, et equitandi studia, tanta cum alacritate ingenii, animique humanitate, mansuetudine, et facilitate conjuxeris, ut nihil te admirabilius, nihil etiam amabilius reperiri possit. Sed non innumerabiles vite tue transactæ laudes; non mirificam illam coram *Serenissimo Principe, ac Illustrissimis Venetæ Reipublice* proceribus actionem; non subtilissimas tuas de Theologia, Philosophia, et rebus Mathematicis, disputationes in plerisque maximorum hominum consessibus, recensere; non tantorum hominum ad te videndum concursum, ut olim *Platonis a Sicilia revertenti, relicto Olympico spectaculo, tota Atheni-*

eniam celebritas occurrisset ; cum te omnes, signo rubee Rose, quod tibi natura circa dextrum lumen impressit, tamquam unicam et raram in terris avem, homines cognoscerent. Quae enim gentes tam ferae sunt, quae, te cum adspexerint, non maximum cepisse fructum putent ? Sed, his praetermissis, nunc propria narrabo : quae scilicet in Patavina Academia fecisti ; tum quae in hac urbe, totius orbis nobilissima ; cujus amplitudinem, et augustissimam majestatem inter omnes alias civitates, te accipere, fovere, atque amplecti decuit ; te vero etiam, humani generis miraculum, admirandam urbem incolere, amare, et omnibus aliis antepone. Nam, postquam adversa valetudine jam quatuor menses laborasses, priusquam in integrum pristinae sanitatis statum redires, amicorum consilio ad Patavinam Academiam, tanquam ad sapientiae officinam, profectus es ; ubi Idibus Martii in diem sequentem, suscepto consilio, omnes omnium disciplinarum professores in aedibus clarissimi viri Jacobi Aloisii Cornelli, ejus auctoritate, et precibus, ut convocarentur, petiisti. Cum autem maximus doctissimorum hominum coetus, et omnes ex insperato pene studiosi, et nobiles Gymnasii juvenes una convenissent, statim in primi ingressus vestibulo, elegantissimo carmine Patavinas laudes (nam ea tibi proposita erat ad dicendam materia) ex tempore decantasti : deinde cum celeberrimis illis doctoribus multa ex variis disciplinis tam acute exagitasti, tam docte pertractasti, erroresque Aristotelis, ac interpretum tam solide refutasti, tanta denique cum maximis viris modestia egisti, ut omnes in virtutis admirationem, et morum suavitatis amorem simul allexeris. Neque id silentio praetereundum est, quod ex tempore etiam, post sex horarum de re literaria colloquia et disputationes, cum oblata tibi esset Ignorantem laudandi occasio, tam ornate de ea re dixisti, ut illi ipsi qui intererant potius somnia fovere quam rem veram, et praesentem videre se putasse mihi postea affirmarint. Alium postea diem, indixisti in aedibus Illustrissimi Patavini Episcopi, non ut altius ingenii tui specimen praeberes, quod profecto frustra fecisses, sed ut eorum, qui primis disputationibus non interfuerant, obnoxii precibus satisfaceres. Variæ res huic proposito obstaculo fuere. Ad secundum certamen ventum non est ; sed plerique cum primis Europæ viris sermones habiti sunt. Nonnunquam homi-

num expectationes, licet propter facta tam illustria de te maximas, plerumque etiam et te ipsum superasse dictus es. Ex quibus actis cum illico surrexisset magna fama, obtretractatores aliqui, quibus ex aliorum bene gestis et rebus secundis invidentia esse solet, homuli, nescio quid dicam, tuæ virtuti aliquid derogare frustra tentaverunt : ostendentes in obscuro odio apertas inimicitias, et in quo nihil nocere poterant, summam voluntatem nocendi. Tum tu, ut istas obtretractationes malevolentissimas pusillorum malevolorumque prosternereres atque obtereres, duo hæc Theoremata in hac urbe edidisti :

*Ut iis, qui (virtute veraque animi nobilitate aliis prælucentes) bene de Virtutis Amatoribus sentire consueverunt, gratias agat immortales, JACOBUS CRITONIUS SCOTUS, profligatisque et perditis hominibus omnem in posterum jactandi occasionem auferat ; errores Aristotelis pene innumerabiles, et omnium Latinorum Philosophorum, sive cum de ipsius mente disputant, sive cum res Theologicas attingunt, et nonnullorum quoque Matheseos professorum somnia refutabit, et ad objecta respondebit.*

*Liberam ad hæc in omnibus disciplinis, sive illæ publice doceri soleant, sive sapientissimis tantum hominibus pervia sint, arguendi occasionem dat : responsurus, sive Logicis et consuetis responsionibus, sive per Secretam Numerorum rationem, aut figuras Mathematicas, sive per aliquod ex centum carminum generibus, ex proponentium arbitrio.*

*In D. D. Joannis et Paulli Æde Sacra, in ipso Sanctissimo Pentecostas die, post Meridiem,*

#### EXORDIUM SUMET.

et per triduum indefessus sustinuisti; et, quamdiu tua auctoritas tibi defendenda fuit, sic acriter, et vehementer proeliatu es, ut clamor, concursusque insolitus ad studia tua lenienda, tanta cum laude fieret, ut nihil umquam magnificentius ab hominibus auditum sit. Tu vero me, non solum auctorem con-

siliorum, sed spectatorem pugnarum mirificarum habuisti. Nunc, quoniam laudis semper avidissimus fui, et præter ceteros φιλαρκετός ab omnibus habeor, multorumque odia pro tua causa suscepi; cura obsecro, et effice, ut facis, ut, quia veram virtutem cognovi ab omnibus amer, amari, et laudari possim, et ut major in ea mihi in dies spes resideat. Meas igitur in Ciceronis Paradoxa lucubrationes, hoc ipso, quia in Paradoxa sunt, sub tuo nomine prodire volui; quod veteribus gratiam, novis favorem conciliare solet. Tu autem has nostras vigilias, et Stoicorum opiniones simul (quoad veritas patitur) tuebere: id enim tibi admodum erit facile; jam enim pepe omnes homines aut gratiam, aut eloquentiam, aut tantarum rerum, ne dicam omnium, scientiam suspiciunt. Vive nostri memor, et Vale

*Venetis, XIV. Kal. Jun. ∞ D XXCI.*

JACOBI CRITONII, *Scoti, ad clarissimum virum, Patritium Venetum, Joannem Donatum.*

## ODE.

Dum Cupidus, tumidusque Deo tua dicere facta,  
 Donate, quæro, maxime;  
 Mens desideriis ardet, sed lenta fatiscit  
 Sub corde virtus anxio.  
 Non tenui tentanda videns freta turbida velo,  
 Tardoque Pontum remige,  
 Compresso fervore semel sub pectore anhelo  
 Labore desisto gravi.  
 Sed nihil intonsus frustra mihi Cinthius umquam!  
 Snaait, vel alta numina.  
 Ergo Deum, et doctas sæpe in mea vota camœnas  
 Rursus invoco furens.  
 Tum mens evehitur multa seu candidus aura  
 Olor levatus evolat,  
 Præpetibusque petit volitans sublimia pennis,  
 Magnumque inane dividit.  
 Victorem armatæ flammis si Musa Chimære

Canora vetis extulit,  
 Sive trucidantes humana monstra, vel ipsum  
 Natum Marine Tethyos,  
 Aut Anchisiadem, Priameiumque Hectora grande  
 Carmen poetarum beat,  
 Si vivant Theronque, Hieronque, atque Ithacus ille,  
 Ob vana Clari ludicra,  
 Quos nunquam obscura sub nube silentia condent  
 Obliviosa Tartari,  
 Hoc opus o vestrum, muse, est. Mihi cingite frontem,  
 Tempusque Lauro Apollinari.  
 Nec deerit divos inter, regesque deorum  
 Genus, Donato gloria.

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 No. IV.

*Præstantissimo Viro, LAURENTIO MASSÆ, Recip. Venetæ  
 Secretario.*

Meos in M. T. Ciceronis de Amicitia Dialogum tibi nuncupo  
 commentarios, mi Laurenti Massa ; tibi, inquam, quem honestis-  
 simum, et ornatissimum virum, tum propria, tum majorum  
 gloria, perillustrem, mihi arctissimo amicitie vinculo adjungere  
 tanta dignum laude duco, ut majorem expetere nequeam. Si-  
 quidem ego, non tantum, honore, amplitudine, aut præpotenti-  
 um opibus, (quæ omnia simul in te maxima sunt) quam animo  
 virtute prædito delectari soleo ; qui (ut cum Cicerone nostro di-  
 cam) amare, aut redamare possit : qualem tu mediis fidiis  
 animum semper erga omnes, et me præsertim, quibuscunque  
 licuit officiis, iisque minime vulgaribus, ostendisti. Juxta Ve-  
 nerem Charites, juxta Bacchum Æthiopes quondam Mercurium  
 veteres posuere ; et Capitolino Jovi vicina fuit Fides, ut in Ca-  
 tonis oratione scriptum fuit. Tuae vero statuae, quæ jampridem  
 tali virtuti debetur, ad immortalitatis memoriam aliquis  
 amicitie typus adjungendus profecto esset, et omnis de amicitia

sermo, omnis oratio, et disputatio ad te merito pertinere debet, tibi que dicari; cum fortunas animique vires pro amicis profundere, ita proprium tibi sit et peculiare, ut, quod nunquam vulgare fuit, nunquam permanavit ad multos, tu vix tibi pati-are commune esse cum paucis. Quod si ego, pro mea tenuitate, pari erga te officio et observantia uti non potui; Deum tamen immortalem testor, nunquam mihi officiosissimam voluntatem defuisse: quæ tuis in primis, ut æquum est, in me meritis, excitari atque augeri solet, quoties eorum mihi venit in mentem; recolo autem ea sæpissime. Nihiloque minus vetustissimam, et præclarissimam Massonum familiam complector animo, ex qua dein Massæ cognominantur, quæ postquam omnem suam gloriam in te, Laurenti nobilissime, transtulit, et illustrior facta est, et gloriosior. Etenim Nicolaus ille, Boccaccii testimonio celebris, et alter ejus cognominis, uterque singulari medicæ facultatis laude clarissimus, tibi merito cedunt. Itemque tres illi, nihilominus illustres, ejusdem item nominis virtutisque, Antonii; quorum primus, Theologus clarissimus ordinis minorum, pro Nicolao V. Nuncii Constantinopolitani munere functus est. Secundus vero Antonius, Massa Gallæsius, juris legumque scientia adeo clarus, ut nulli suæ memoriæ in eo genere præstanti viro secundus foret. Tertius denique doctissimus ille, pater Apollonii, adhuc superstitis, qui tantam atque tam præclaram inter medicos laudem consecutus est, nihil ut ad eam accedere posse videatur. Hi, inquam, omnes tibi merito cedant, qui tantam iis reddis gloriam solus, quantam a tot viris illustribus acceperis. Te enim non temere Secretarium Republica Veneta complectitur, filium amat, consultorem alloquitur, in te fidem laudat, amorem commendat, sapientiam admiratur; te quoque cujuscunque ordinis homines suspiciunt, tuamque immensam virtutem et comitatem, quam vel ex ipso adspectu et corporis habitu contemplari licet, diligentissime colunt. Me studiorum paritas, virtutis amor, communisque animorum ardor, quo Critonium nostrum, divinum plane juvenem, prosequimur, subigit, ut te æque ac ipsum amem; et quæ ipse de te cecinit, in primisque ea quæ hic subscripsi, dulcis utriusque vestrum memoriæ ergo sæpe ac libenter usurpem. Vale.

*Venetis, Idib. Jun. MDLXXCI.*

JACOBI CRITONII, SCOTI, *ad LAURENTIUM MASSAM,*

## ODE.

Errantem ab oris me Caledoniis  
 Postquam triremis per freta Nerei  
 Vexit, volentem, mox remotos  
 Conspicere, et populos, et urbes,

Musæ per undas præcipites piæ  
 Vagum secutæ, numine candido  
 Sævis obarmatum periculis,  
 Incolumem sine labe servant,

Nati labores seu Dea Cypria  
 Secuta, longas per pelagi vias  
 Hostile per ferrum, per ignes,  
 Perque minas comes ibat omnes.

Si forte Gades impiger ultimos,  
 Syrtes ve, aut Indos visere barbaros,  
 Vellem, nec Indos, interve Syrtes  
 Destituent ope contumaces.

En obstrepentis qui Oceani freta  
 Mutavi amicæ fluctibus Hadriæ,  
 Latinus hospes, jam relictis  
 Diis patriis, gelidoque cælo.

At non egenum Cætus Aonius  
 Abjecit ; adsunt mi faciles deæ,  
 Præstantque dulces una amicos,  
 Quos eadem pia cura jungit.

Te, Massa, clari gloria sanguinis,  
 Pars una summi, et maxima consili,  
 Ardensque virtus te nitentem,  
 Te decorant et opes beatum.



Musis amicis cum vigeas tamen,  
Musis amico Critonio fove ;  
O digne Divarum favore,  
Quique Deum faveas amicis.

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## No. VI.

*Extract from* ALDUS MANUTIUS.

In a criticism on the classical use of the word, *stare*, Aldus observes, "Stare enim firmitudinem quandam habet. Quo modo, Critoni, usurpasti in iis versibus quos ad me in tuo ad urbem Venetam appulsu superiore anno scripsisti."

"Placuit autem eos hoc loco describere, ne homines eorum desiderio teneantur."—*Aldine Cicero*, vol. X. p. 243.

Dum procul a Patria, Hadriaci prope litora Ponti  
Consedì, mediis celsam miratus in undis  
Stare urbem, sævi obtingunt cui jura Tridentis,  
Et Pelagi imperium constans, æternaque sceptræ :  
Sæpe meos animo casus meditabar iniquos,  
Sæpe humectabam guttis stillantibus ora ;  
Cum mihi sese offert Diva veneranda figura  
Naias, Eridani quondam prope cognita ripas,  
Naias, una quidem doctis gratissima Musis.  
Principio rebur simulacrum, aut vana videre  
Somnia (nulla fides oculis) cum protinus illa  
His me ultro aggreditur dictis : Non te tua fallunt  
Lumina ; nec nostri vana est, quam cernis, imago.  
Nam mandata fero Musarum, et jussa facesso  
Palladis armisonæ, quibus una est cura salutis  
Certa tuæ ; nec te per tanta pericula vectum  
Urbem in præclaram tumido sub pectore curas  
Fas premere est : meliora jubent sperare, monentque.

Non hæc ista tibi tantum infortunia nota  
 Contingunt: ne cede malis, neu te sine vincî.  
 Cernis enim, ut late terras Saturnas in omnes  
 Acer agit pestem, quæ fibris cæca sub ipsis,  
 Conditur, atque alias magno jam turbine clades;  
 Haud secus, ac Phœbi juratos Aulide Graios,  
 Quando Agamemnonio tetigit pro crimine dextra.  
 Hic natos vitæ exsortes, ast ille parentem  
 Grandævum deflet, vel matris triste feretrum;  
 Proque viro conjux, aut vir pro conjuge luget.  
 Ast alios volucris fortunæ incommoda tangunt:  
 Reges, indomitas gentes, populosque rebelles,  
 Aut urbes domini terrarum, atque oppida cernunt  
 Erepta; hic auri fulvum sibi pondus ademptum;  
 Morborumque cohors alios immissa fatigat:  
 Namque in Hyperboreis tabes quæ cosperat oris  
 Materiem inveniens primum, dehinc viribus illa  
 Sensim fota suis, Europam irrepit in omnem;  
 Non secus, ac lentus flatu succenditur ignis,  
 Paulatimque alimenta trahit, mox flamma per auras  
 Illa crepat, seseque involvit lumine fulvo  
 Fumida, Vulcanum late per inania jactans.  
 Primum exorta quidem flavos infausta Britannos,  
 Germanos tum cæruleos, Gallosque feroces,  
 Hinc etiam atra lues calidos infecit Iberos,  
 Fertilis Italiæ dehinc altas fusa per urbes  
 Invaluit: sensere omnes, (miserabile dictu)  
 Aut pauci evasere mali exitiale venenum.  
 Torquet adhuc primo pueros in limine vitæ,  
 Invalidosque senes extremo in limite vitæ.  
 Et juvenes rapido firmissima pectora bello,  
 Disjicit: infractæ languent ad prælia vires.  
 Una etiam matres petit, intonsasque puellas,  
 Parcere nec formæ, nec parcere sueta juventæ.  
 Necnon armenta in campis errantia cernas,  
 Quæ vix ægra caput fessa cervice retentant,  
 Horribilesque feras, picturatasque volucres  
 Languere, ut laso demisso papavera collo.

Nam circumfusus cunctis animantibus æther  
 Concepit nocuos gremio, densosque vapores.  
 Utque aliquas leges, æternaque fœdera rebus  
 Imposuit natura parens, sine nomine multa  
 Sic in principiis latitant discrimina rerum, et  
 Mille movent: nam, ni Veneris placidissimus ignis  
 Sedaret varios infausti luminis ignes,  
 Discuteretque potens radiis contraria Phœbus,  
 Mille malis rueret sævis obnoxius orbis;  
 Namque intemperiem ostendit modo marcidus aer,  
 Sæpeque mutatus, præsens occasio morbi est.  
 O genus humanum, quantas te audacia fecit,  
 Iapeti proles, species perferre malorum,  
 Cum nova supplicia, et pœnas immisit acerbas  
 Juppiter omnipotens subductum infensus ob ignem  
 Curribus ætheriis, perfectaue corpora limo?  
 Quisque deos, et fata vocat crudelia: culpæ  
 Nemo suæ justum capit imo in corde dolorem.  
 At placanda foret divum inclementia thure,  
 Et precibus; sic mortales, sic vivere dignum est.  
 Dixerat, et pressis tacuit formosa labellis.  
 Tum me luminibus tacitis intenta pererrat,  
 Ut responsa petens. Trepidanti ego pectore tandem  
 Verba coacta dedi: Fateor me, candida Nais,  
 Promeritum quæcunque fero: nec turpis egestas,  
 Infandum ve scelus servi mea pectora vexat.  
 At me quis miserum magna cognoscit in urbe,  
 Aut quis ad æquoreas flentem solatur arenas?  
 Cumque sinum irrero lacrymis, verba irrita ventis  
 Trado, nec quisquam est, gemitus qui sentiat imos.  
 Collidunt vitreo auricomæ aub gurgite Nymphæ,  
 Assiduoque novos Glaucus meditatur amores.  
 Alma latet Doris, latet et Panopeia virgo,  
 Quas Siren blando mulcet sub gurgite cantu:  
 Nec me Carpathiis vates in fluctibus audit  
 Cærulæ, et variis assuetus ludere formis,  
 Ac sese in rerum miracula vertere cuncta.  
 Sed nec equos bipedes tangunt tam parva furentes,

Quæ siccis oculis turpes in gurgite Phocas  
 Depasci humanos pavitantes dentibus artus,  
 Cernunt Scylla vorax, aut navifragum Scylacæum,  
 Cum rapiunt fractas sinuosa sub æquora puppes,  
 Numina nil nostros miserantur torva labores.  
 Ergo preces scopulis, montrisque natantibus ultro  
 Fundimus : heu nimium surdent immania saxa.  
 At vos, assuetæ nostras audire quærelas,  
 O Nymphæ, ad sacros latices quæ dulcîa rura  
 Incolitis, gelidumque nemus, placidosque recessus,  
 Cur me numinibus disjungunt æquora vestris ?  
 Cur non virgineas patiuntur cernere musas ?  
 Pœnarum exhaustum satis est ; heu parcite, Fata,  
 Tuque graves, O Diva, meos miserare labores.  
 Illa autem roseo rursus sic ore locuta est :  
 Ipsa tibi expediam casus, si scire cupido est,  
 Auxiliumque feram certum modo rebus egenis.  
 Non te divini, divisque parentibus orti,  
 Aldi fama latet, totum diffusa per orbem ?  
 Hunc Asiæ gentes norunt, et Cantaber atrox,  
 Decolor atque Indus, vel qui colit incola terras  
 Extremas penitus, sive auro insignis Orion,  
 Sive Hyades pluvîæ, seu septem adversa Trioni  
 Sidera clara caput semper sublime coronant.  
 Huic (pharetra tantum insignis) crinitus Apollo  
 Se Tritoniaca confessus arundine victum,  
 Atque lyra cedit ; nec se negat esse secundum,  
 Formosæ natus Maiæ ; neque docta Minerva  
 Dedita parem est : tantum nitet aurea virtus.  
 Hunc pete ; namque regens filo vestigia cæca  
 Diriget ille tuos optato in tramite gressus :  
 Inde viam pandet. Sequere hunc quæcunque jubentem :  
 Sic te Diva monet, sævum quæ Gorgona gestat,  
 Quæ plerumque tuis præsens erit optima votis ;  
 Namque hic contemptis tandem dominatur Athenis.  
 Nec te tam longe disjungunt æquora Musis ;  
 Immo hæc indigenæ veniunt ad litora Muse,  
 Necnon et Drymo, Lygeaque, Cymodoceque,

Nymphaque Junonis pulcherrima Deiopeia,  
 Quæque illas superant, atque Oceanitides ambas ;  
 Hæc eadem Hadriacæ fulgent ad litora Nymphæ,  
 Doctæ Palladias Veneri conjungere curas.  
 Ipsa etiam, spretis Cnidoque, Paphoque, Cytheraque,  
 Aurea collucens Venetas Venus incolit arces.  
 Præterea summo coram te Principe ducet,  
 Quem tibi Diva dedit comitem, sacrumque Senatam  
 Adspicies, divosque omnes longo ordine Patres.  
 Non ita Tantalides, Regum cingente corona  
 Argolica, solio enituit sublimis ab alto,  
 Atque orbis dominos inter, patresque Latinos,  
 Augustus Cæsar, qualem fulgere videbis  
 Grandævum, atque annis et majestate verendam  
 Eximios inter proceres, gentemque togatam,  
 Patrem urbis Venetæ : Divumque ut Juppiter ipse  
 Consilio in magno tectum omnipotentis Olympi  
 Concutit, ac terras humiles, Erebumque sonantem,  
 Apparens cælo, ac terris, Ereboque tremendus.  
 Dique etiam fulgent reliqui splendore perenni :  
 Sic Patri ætherio modo Principis æmula virtus  
 Semideûmque, Deis prædatur sidera, et altum  
 Religione polum ; hinc terras ditione, opibusque  
 Et bello quatit, ac sævum pietate Acheronta.  
 Donec nocturnis Dictynna invecta quadrigis  
 Cum Phæbo alterno lustrabit lumine terras,  
 Pulchraque per tacitum labentur sidera mundum,  
 Stabunt res Venetæ, et præclaræ gloria Gentis,  
 Æternum positis tutissima fundamentis.

Dixerat, et levibus vix æquora tingere plantis  
 Visa, petit binis propius de cornibus unum,  
 Quo pater Eridanus violentibus influit undis  
 In mare purpureum, et vitreo caput abdidit amne.

Manet autem me φιλίστια, cujus maximam esse vim scitio, ut Oden etiam, quam ad me scripsisti, hoc loco inseram.—Ea autem hæc est.

Intermissa diu Chelys,  
 Nec Lydiis cecini carmina tibiis,  
 Nec molles cithara modos,  
 Carmen perpetuo flebile personans.  
 Sed nunc mente feror nova,  
 Per sacrumque trahit Melpomene netrus.  
 Lauro tempora Delphico  
 Cinctam Pierius me rapit, et chorus  
 Phœbo, qua tumidus sequor,  
 Te clarum recinens, Akde, in Apollinis  
 Arte, et conspicuum. Tuae  
 Laudes lætitiæ, dulceque gaudium,  
 Solamenque dabant mihi,  
 Et mentem eripient triatibus e malis ;  
 Syren carminibus truces  
 Sæva mulcet pelagi præcipitis minas  
 Cantu, vel fide Lesbia,  
 Dum lenit virides Nereidum choros,  
 Et Thetis cupide sonos  
 Dulces sub vitreo gurgite concipit.  
 Sic laudes quoties tuos  
 Pulsis experior corde molestis,  
 Non suspiria ab intimo  
 Ducam corde dolens, ut soleo nimis ;  
 Sed Phoebus facilis meæ  
 Erranti injiciens fræna licentiæ,  
 Permittet pede candido  
 Errare, et gelidos visere liberum  
 Nympharum latices sinet.  
 Tunc ipse ex adytis rite Heliconiis  
 Metrum grandius eloquar,  
 Candoremque canem semper amabilem.

## No. VI.

*Memoriae JACOBI CRITONII.*

Vel mortuum enim te laudari par est, Jacobe Critoni, quem inopportuna mors nobis abripuit. Quis enim te vivum non admiratus est? Quis mortuum non luget? Ego quidem, te vivo, maximum judicii mei fructum capiebam; mortuo, doloris modum non invenio. Vixesses, Critoni! vixisses! neque unquam te Virgili patria vidisset! Fato enim quodam nobis misero contigit, ut quæ ipsi ortum dedit, superiore anno, (cum nondum XXII. ætatis annum explesses, gloriæque satis, nobis minimum vixisses,) tibi vi vitam eriperet. Semper ego tui memoriam colam; semper tua imago aute oculos obversabitur; semper idem mihi eris, qui idem semper eris bonis omnibus. Faxit deus ut cælestia omnia tibi felicia contingant; qui cælestia vivens semper adamaris, et in eorum contemplatione totus versatus sis.—O diem funestum V. Non. Quinet!—Hæc ad te, ex hoc infelici ad illud cæleste domicilium, bona omnia precans, scribo.

*Venetis IV. non. Nov. M DCCXIII.*

Qui te vivum coluit, mortuumque observat,  
Aldus Mannuccius, P. F. A. N.

## No. VII.

*Illustri Adolescenti STANISLAO NIEGOSSEUSKI, POLONO.*

Optime cecidit, Stanislae præstantissime, ut quod ego summo-pere optabam, id tu vicissim optares. Nota mihi tua virtus erat, nota tuarum laudum gloria; restabat ut tu mihi, ego tibi, de facie notus essem. Maximopere igitur devinctum me esse profiteor Gabrieli Cavatio, ingenii et judicii laude præstanti, qui effecit non solum ut te nossem, sed ut tuum congressum, excellentemque virtutem gustarem. Ego te magni faciebam; nunc fa-

teor vicissè te opinionem meam, divinumque ingenium tuum esse a vulgo longe remotum ; qui ea præstes quæ homines neque mirari satis pro dignitate possunt. O te felicem ! O me quoque felicem ! cui contigit te nosse, tuaque amicitia frui. Fac, quæso, diutius nos non esse in tui desiderio, neque tuam præsentiam nobis nega ; qui, te præsentè, aliquid sumus, absente, nihil prorsus esse nobis videmur. Ut igitur mei memoriam tibi renovem, hæc ad te mitto Arati versus, a Cicerone conversos ;—Poetam Poetæ ;—malum poetam bono poetæ. *Librum de Universitate, Critonio meo, vel mortuo, dedi : tibi, Critonii laudatori, ne dicam, an æmulo ? an utrique ? an superiori ? Aratum do.* Mirum, dum scribo, me inflammat tui videndi desiderium ; totos dies tecum libenter essem, qui ex tua consuetudine maximum fructum capio. Tu versus non scribis, sed fundis ; ut vere poetam te natum esse omnes judicent. Non tu Thomam Peregrinum, in celeberrimo isto Patavino Gymnasio Metaphysicen, eximia sui gloria et auditorum utilitate publice docentem, mortuum, in funere carmine ex tempore publice laudasti ? Quid plura ? Næ, qui te laudare vult, neque initium neque finem reperiet tuarum laudum ; quæ cum maximæ sint et immortales, immortalis præconio dignæ sunt, et te ipsum laudatorem quærunt. Redeo igitur ad primum illud : Fac, Venetias revertens, ut possimus te regnare, et omnibus tuam virtutem communicare ; occultam enim eam esse non ego facile patior, neque ea esse vult. Modestus sis, quantum vis : modestiam tuam superabunt amici tui ; neque te latere volent, qui nimium jamdiu latueris, modestiæ tuæ vitio ; hoc enim titulo appellare libet. Majorum tuorum nobilitas, vel maxima, nihil te illustrat ; nihil ex ea ad te redundat, bonorum omnium iudicio : nobilitatem ipsam illustras, per te ipsum, qui tantum ei splendoris affers, quantum alii ex ea accipere sæpe gloriantur. Et, si saperent, non gloriarentur. Vera nobilitas est, virtute præstare, et a se ipso nobilitatem petere ; iique mihi vere nobiles videntur, qui vel si maxime nobiles sint, qualis tu præcipue es, nobilitatis vetustis titulis contemptis, nobilitatem a se sumunt, in eaque gloriantur. O veram gloriam ! quam qui consequuntur, beati illi mihi bonisque omnibus videri solent, et beati certe sunt.

Deus Opt. Max. te, qui tantam virtutem (nondum XIIIX.



annum natum, quod est mirum dictu) possides, diu felicem esse velit.

Venetis, IV Non. Nov. M DCCXIII.

Tui observantissimus,

Aldus Mannuccius, P. F. A. N.

### No. VIII.

*Extract from the Officina Historica of FELIX ASTOLPHI.*

“Lo scozzese è notissimo à tutti (chiamavasi Giacopo Critonio,) ilquale, quasi per un mostro maraviglioso à tempi nostri fu ammirato per la sua stupenda memoria, si come quello, che penetrando quantunque giovanetto di 22. anni, per entro alle più recondite scienze sponeva sensi oscuri, sentenze difficillissime di Filosofi et Teologi, si che à tutti quei, che la sua prima lanugine guardavano, pareva impossibile, ch'egli leggere, non che mandare alla memoria avesse potuto tanto.”—Page 76.

### No. IX.

*Extract from the Museum Historicum of IMPERIALIS, published in the 1640, about sixty years after the death of Crichton.*

Hic est Critonius ille Scotus, transacti dudum sæculi monstrum, prodigioso naturæ opificis conatu editum, quo Parnassi spatia stupendo et inusitato spectaculo illustrarentur. Hic est totius adhuc orbis iudicio Phoenix habitus ingeniorum; divine mentis igniculis summi potius Datoris referens majestatem,

quam mortalem ad simulandum lacescens industriam: Secessit in Italiam ex Insula Scotiæ, Occiduo contermina Oceano, tunc temporis, cum religionis causa intestinæ infibi seditiones exortæ, luctuosas toti regno calamitates attulerant; regina ipsa e sede pulsa, et Anglorum carceri tradita; nec non ferro ac flammis, in lares et fima Deûm, perditè grassantibus. Robertus siquidem ejus pater ex Stuarda Regum Scotorum familia oriundus, oppidorum Dominus, et copiarum Ecclesiæ jura tuentium ductor, præclarum e tot incendiis eximendum filium, traducendumque Venetias, tutum pacis asyllum, existimavit. Ibi statim coram Duce ac Senatu perorans, adolescens vigesimum vix attingens annum, tam propensis hominum studiis est exceptus, ut admiratio venerationem, plausum urbis in ipsum frequentia superaret. Oris enim suavissimi species, erectum corpus, valida membra, rosæ signum circa dextrum lumen innatum, ut omnium facillè alliciebat oculos; sic præalta facundia, rerumque notitia præclarissimarum, dæmonicum prorsus (qualem magnis viris attribuit Aristoteles) ei subesse animi testabantur vigorem. Quid aut magnificentius, aut admirabilius, quam in ipsis ephëbis, belli detentum studiis ingenium, tantam in doctrinarum arvis messem cogere potuisse? Quid humanum magis exsuperans captum, quam vigesimo primo ætatis anno, decena linguarum peritia, necnon Philosophiæ, Mathematicæ, Theologiæ, miltiorum artium, cæterarumque omnium disciplinarum apicibus præstitisse? Porro quid magis in toto terrarum ambitu inauditum, quam digladiandi, saltandi, sonandi, equitandi, totiusque gymnasticæ præstantiam singularem, tot arcanis elatæ mentis junxisse prærogativis? Deperiit ipsum præ cæteris Patavina juvenus, dum in ornatissimum ejus Lyceum prodiens, cum celeberrimis Europæ doctoribus, de rebus omnibus disputationes iussit, incredibili memoriæ, dictionis, ac ingenii felicitate, adeo ut ab ejus ore singuli velut delapsi a coelo numinis dependerent. Ac sanè illud Aldi junioris testimonio traditum in præfatione Ciceronis Paradoxorum, quod acutis, in Jacobi Aloysii Cornelii Senatoris clarissimi domicilio, cunctis omnium ordinum gymnasii professoribus, cum Patavinas laudes ex tempore decantavit, tam, sex horarum spacie, susceptis plurimum scientiarum colloquiis, ac tandem etiam proposito sibi laudandæ Ignorantiæ

themate, tam ornate ac diserte ea de re dixit, ut somnia potius, quam rem veram et presentem audire ac videre arbitrarentur. Hinc factum, ut alio die indictum in ædibus Illustrissimi Patavini Episcopi congressum, declinarent prope omnes; cuius tamen rei causam idem Aldus aperte non refert. Mihi quidem ex patris mei, qui ipsum audiit, sermonibus agnitus, ex doctoribus unum, interriti spiritus acie, Arcangetum Mercenarium, insignem Philosophum, cum Critonio de rebus Physicis copiose, graviterque disseruisse, impugnando, resolvendo, interpretando subtiliter, ac prompte singula, qui propterea perhonorificum lectissimæ coronæ, ac vel ipsius disceptatoris iudicium est emeritus. Cæterum Patavinæ hic deserens stadia, seu ludis omnibus victor, Venetias rursum se contulit; ubi cum rabidis iniquorum morsibus excitus, omnem vellet repandere livoris acutiem, inferas, in Æde sacra Divi Joannis et Pauli, conclusiones ad disputandum exposuit, Pentecastes die, ac per triduum propugnatas. [Ut iis, qui, virtute veraque animi nobilitate aliis prælucens, bene de virtutis amatoribus sentire consueverunt, gratias agat immortales Jacobus Critonius Scotus, profligatiq; ac perditis hominibus omnem in posterum jactandi occasionem auferat; errores Aristotelis pene innumerabiles, et omnium Latinorum Philosophorum, sive cum de ipsius mente disputant, sive cum res Theologicas attingunt, et nonnullorum quoque Matheseos professorum sorania refutabit. Liberam ad hæc in omnibus disciplinis sive illæ publice tradi soleant, sive sapientissimis tantum hominibus perviæ sint, arguendi occasionem dat; responsurus sive Logicis et consuetis responsionibus, sive per secretam numerorum rationem, aut figuras Mathematicas, sive per aliquod ex centum carminum generibus, ex proponentium arbitrio.] En sacri celsissimæ originis impetus, quibus pares nulla temporum memoria, præterquam in Pico Mirandula vix invenias. Tantis igitur humani generis fulgor occidit sub iniquo heu nimis Mantuæ cælo, deplorando semper eventu. Eo siquidem, cum Venetiis abstractus humanitate Guyllelmi Gonzagæ Ducis, animi gratia recessisset, ac vespere quodam cum cithara, et ense sub aliis solo, aulicorum more per urbem iisset; contigit, ut Ducis filio, Vincentio (consulto an casu incertum) occurrens, ad arma fuerit acriter lacessitus: qui repente stre-

nuissimo in ipsum, duosque socios insultu, non solum efferos repellens ictus, sed magnum ipsis periculum inferens, eo lassatum tandem redegit principem, ut edita voce Jacobo se pandere ait coactus. Hic vero prolapsis statim genibus, veniam affectate impensius vindictæ dum peteret, se, quod illum in tenebris non dignovisset, excusans, furenti atque inexorabili Vincentii dextera transverberatus est, V. Non. Quinet. anno MDXXCIII., expleto nondum ætatis vigesimo secundo. Miserabilis hercule facti rumor in ultimas usque terras expansus, nedum tetricis viuentes institutis homines perculit, sed naturam prope turbavit universam; quæ, pompam excidisse suam ingemens, haud amplius tantis se mortales cumulaturam honoribus minata est.

#### GEORGII ROTINI.

Ignoto latuit Phoenix Critonius ævo,  
 Funereis postquam Mantua mersit aquis;  
 Scilicet, ut surgat redivivus in æthera Phoenix,  
 Auxilium posset qui dare nullus erat.  
 Famigeras iterum Critonius exit in auras,  
 Et volat ingenio docta per ora virum.  
 Addidit imperio mansuras Dædalus alas  
 Et penna has pennas Imperialis habet.

#### RONCONII.

Fert præjudicium sapiens Critonius annis,  
 Dum vincit roseis tempora cana comis.  
 Hinc parat insidias ætas, quibus ille recedat,  
 Invidæ quæ tantum nollet habere virum.  
 Ast iterum superat languens fera sæcula, namquæ  
 Quæ superest, famam non gelida urna capit.  
 Ingenio Phoenix, Phœnicis sorte novare  
 Debuit occiduum, non moritura dies.

## No. X.

*Dempster's Account of Crichton.*

Hist. Eccles. Gentis Scot<sup>m</sup>. Lib. III. p. 187.

“ Jacobus Crichtonius, sive Critonius, illustri familiâ Cluniâ natus, in patrio Gymnasio prima Musarum stipendia meruit. Inde ut erat vivaci ingenio, militiam adolescens secutus peregrinam. Ejus etiam brevi conditionis pertæsus, in Italiam, literarum domicilium et humanitatis sacrarium, concessit ; ubi Genua relicta, qua honorario satis amplo invitatus fuerat, Venetias abiit, eaque ingenii sui, et ad portentum stupendæ memoriæ, incredibili ea ætate lectione et judicio, monumenta edidit, ut vulgo *miraculum orbis* et diceretur, et esset. Atque crebrescente secunda illa fama, inde evocatus, Principis Mantuani juventuti præpositus, ab eodem noctù interfectus, gravi Ducis patris dolore, nec minore indignatione : summo vero sui, et apud cives suos, et Italos saltem æquiores virtutum æstimatores, desiderio relicto. Amicos habuit præcipuos *Laurentium Massam*, Seriniarium Venetum, *Speronem Speronium*, qui egregie eum in Epistolâ commendat ad eum scriptis, *Aldum Manutium*, qui *Paradoxon* Commentarium illi inscripsisse dignatus. Ab unico Trajano Boccacino maledicentissimo male exceptus est ; sed cum in eo homine scurrilis dicacitas sine ulla eruditionis mixtura sit, honori erit Crichtonio nostro a tam imperito violari. Sed programma Patavii ab ipso propositum adducam ; quo facilius quanta ingenii præstantia fuerit intelligatur.” [*Here follows the Programma, given in page 248. Dempster then continues :*]

Hanc sane ingenii ostentationem lubentius ferrem et fidentius prædicarem, quam possem pati jactabundè ad Scotiæ Reges genus ipsius referendum ; nam inane est ea se gentis aut sanguinis gloria perperam arrogatâ venditare, cum tanta claritudo in tenui

fortuna ridicula videatur.\* Quare ut verum sit, familiam Cluniam nobilem esse, ita illud mendacissimum, Regis Scotiæ Jacobi Critonii *Majores* ullos extitisse; quod tamen, in Epistola ad Commentarium in laudes Paradoxa liminari, asseruit Aldus Manutius, plus nimio in laudes Sanguinis et Familiæ effusus: hoc ideo, plenius ut Mortales intelligant, quam insipida sit quorundam nostratium adolescentium elatio, qui se vilescere apud externos existimant, nisi specioso Regii sanguinis titulo se commendaverint; quod vix unquam a vere nobili viro fieri animadverti. Sed ad rem redeo.

Ejus sunt,

Ode ad Laurentium Massam plures.

Lib. I.

Laudes Patavinæ.

Lib. I.

*Carmen ex tempore effusum, cum, in Jacobi Aloysii Cornelii domo, experimentum ingenii, coram tota Academiæ frequentia, non sine multorum stupore, faceret.*

Ignorantiæ laudatio.

Lib. I.

*Extemporale thema ibidem redditum, post sex horarum disputationes. Ut præsentis somnia potius fovere, quam rem verum videre affirmarint, ait Manutius.*

De impulsu suo Venetias.

Lib. I. *Epos.*

Ode ad Aldum Manutium.

Lib. I.

Epistolæ ad diversos.

Lib. I.

Præfationes solennes in omnes scientias, sacras et profanas.

Lib. I.

Judicium de Philosophis.

Lib. I.

\* It has already been shewn (p. 10.) that Crichton, in maintaining his descent from the royal House of Stuart, asserted nothing but the truth; and if such an assertion be found to savour somewhat of vain glory, yet, in this, he only followed the example of the age, and of his countrymen, who were not always so well grounded in their "boast of heraldry."—"Nulli," says Barclay, in his character of the Scottish nation, "nulli magis memores suæ stirpis, adeo ut familiæ decus malint interdum sua paupertate fœdare, quam suppressere intempestivos titulos, et suæ cognationis parumper oblivisci. Nam in regione virorum fœcundiore quam frugum, necesse est clarissimi sanguinis multos in egestatem nasci: quibus, per diversa terrarum quærentibus opes, (nec alii fide aut industria præcellent,) et ad præconia suæ nobilitatis obstinatis, sæpius audientium risus, quam lachrymæ et fides accessit.—*Barclai Satyricon*, 1674, p. 391.

Errores Aristotelis. Lib. I.

Refutatio Mathematicorum. Lib. I.

Artes an Literæ præstant? *Controversia Oratoria*. Lib. I.

Vixit anno MDLXXXI. Plures libros memoriter tenebat, quam quisquam ea ætate legerat. (*Felix Astolphus, in Officina Historica, pagina CII.*)

### No. XI.

*Johnston's praise of Crichton.*

Another poetical testimony to the merits of Crichton, is that of John Johnston, in his *Heroes Scoti*; a poem, consisting of a collection of short characteristic stanzas on the most eminent persons in Scottish history, written in the year 1603. It also fixes the date of his death, and the hand by which he fell.—

“*Jacobus Crittonius, Clunius, Musarum pariter et martis alumnus, omnibus in studiis admirabilis, Mantuæ, a Ducis Mantuanæ filio cæsus, 1581.*”

Et genus et censum dat Scotia: Gallia pectus  
 Excolit: admirans Itala terra virum  
 Ambit, et esse suum vellet. Gens æmula vitam  
 Abstulit.—An satis hoc, dicat ut illa suum?  
 Mantua habet cineres, scelus exsecrata nefandum,  
 At tumuli tanto gaudet honore tamen.

### No. XII.

*Abernethy's Encomium on Crichton.*

Musa Campestris, Monspelii, 1609.—Page 52.

D. M.

Popularis sui, Jacobi Chrichtoni a Cluny, Juvenis incomparabilis, tan acumine, judicio, memoriæque omnium literarum oblivisci nescia, quam equestri, gladiatoria, omniumque armo-

rum exercitatione, quo ad majorem stuporem totius Italiae, ita et ejusdem mœrorem indigne trucidati a G. G. D. M. D. S.

O felix animi juvenis Chrichtone vigore  
 Ingenii volitante supra, qui vectus in astra  
 Humanam sortem et mortalis culmen honoris !  
 Seu placuit musas colere, aut glomeramine campum  
 Tundere cornipedis, pictisve ardescere in armis.  
 Grandia sublimis nuper miracula mentis  
 Monstrasti attonito, et rapuisti protinus orbi.  
 Tuque, licet Princeps, peperit quem Mantua clara,  
 Gonzaga infelix ! tua quam temeraria dextra !  
 Heu decus Aonidum fixisti vulnere fœdo,  
 Doctoremque tuæ, formatoremque juventæ ;  
 Quo nimium, nimium infelix Chrichtonus obiit,  
 Ætheris invisas auras, lucemque relinquens ;  
 Nunc facinus pueri deplora ætate senili.  
 Illum Antenoridæ flerunt, Phaetontias unda  
 Deflevit miserum, flevit Venetusque Senatus,  
 Matronæ Adriacæ simul, Italidesque puellæ.  
 Flevit olorifero peramœnus Mincius amne,  
 Illum omnes Athesisque Deæ, et Benacides omnes  
 Flevere : at doctæ ante alias flevere Sorores.  
 Quin popularis adhuc gemitum Fortha abdit in alveo,  
 Fortha, Caledoniis fœcundans arva colonis.  
 Ergo, flos Juvenum, Scotiæ spes, Palladis ingens,  
 Ereptumque decus Musarum e dulcibus ulnis,  
 Te, quamvis sileant alii, Chrichtone, Poetæ,  
 Teque, tuamque necem, nunquam mea Musa silebit :  
 Flebilibusque modis semper tua fata queretur,  
 Sæpe iterans luctus, et singultantia verba.

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IN EUNDEM.

Si videas quæ mira diu, mirabere non plus ;  
 Sin semel, in totos mira loquere dies.  
 Chrichtonum hinc Superi voluere ostendere mundo  
 Tantum : non mundo hunc hi voluere dare.



## No. XIII.

*David Buchanan's Account of Crichton.*

From his MS. written about the year 1625, preserved in the Advocates' Library.

Jacobus Crichtonius, genere et natione Scotus, ex familia Cluniensi in Angusia generosis parentibus ortus, a teneris annis in Schola Edinburgena bonis literis informatus, et in academia Andreaapolitana philosophicis studiis imbutus. Postquam vero artes liberales ex parte didicisset, jamque sui juris plane factus, nullum peculiare studium est secutus; sed quasi per omnia vagatus, uti erat juvenis multiplicis doctrinæ et memoriæ, stupendique ingenii, modo in grammaticis, modo in politicis et rhetoricis, modo in philosophicis studiis, et modo in theologicis se exercuit, ita ut in omni genere scientiarum doctissimus haberetur. Demum longinquas petit regiones, ut illic meliores in studiis progressus faceret, et tum in Gallia, Germania, et Italia peregrinaret. Inter omnes viros doctos illius seculi, tanquam miraculum doctrinæ divinitus missum, tum inter Pontificios, tum inter Protestantes, habitus est. Vita ipsius a Paulo Manutio scripta est, in præfatione Commentariorum ad Paradoxa Ciceronis; quos Commentarios eidem Critonio inscribit, dedicatque. In horum decursu, Carmina Crichtonii nonnulla ab oblivionis injuria vindicat Manutius, cum mirabili illo programme valvis Academiæ Patavinæ affixo, in quo publice se obtulit contra omnes Professores et Doctores ejusdem academiæ, imo totius Italiæ, de omni questione Artium aut Scientiarum cum illis disserere: quod postea in præcipuis Academiis, maxime vero in ipsa Romana Civitate, præsentibus Pontifice, Cardinalibus, Ducibus, Principibus, aliisque doctis viris; in qua tantam obtinuit laudem-gloriam, et victoriam, ut a Clemente VIII. pro admirabili ipsius ingenio et doctrina commendatus fuerat Principi et Duci de Mantua, ad filium suum instituendum in omni politiori doctrina; a quo postea, in nocturna quadam ambulatione, quod amasiam principis deperiret, infeliciter est interfectus, in ætatis suæ flore, cum vix trigesimum attigisset annum. Ejus effigies in Vaticana Bibliotheca posita fuit, et in hunc usque diem conser-

vatur a Pontifice. Vir erat in humaniore literatura supra vulgarem morem eruditus ; poeta non vulgaris, orator disertus, philosophus acutissimus ; acris ingenii, solidi iudicii, summæ eruditionis, paræ eloquentiæ, incredibilis industriæ et laboris ; denique, in omni melioris doctrinæ genere tantam consecutus est perfectionem, ut inter eruditissimos ætatis suæ viros non immerito esset numerandus. Reliquit multa egregie calamo annotata, (plura quidem multo et majora relicturus, nisi morte repentina fuisset præventus,) quæ docta cum voluptate legeret posteritas ; præcipuæ hæc,—*Orationes* quasdam, *Theses* quasdam, *Carmina* varia. Claruit, anno intimatæ Pacis Evangelicæ 1582, sub Scotiæ Rege, Jacobo Sexto.

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#### No. XIV.

*Sir Thomas Urquhart's Account of Crichton.*

From the *Jewel*, p. 58.

To speak a little now of his (Lord Napier's) compatriot Crichton, I hope will not offend the ingenuous reader ; who may know, by what is already displayed, that it cannot be heterogeneal from the proposed purpose, to make report of that magnanimous act atchieved by him at the Duke of Mantua's court, to the honour not only of his own, but to the eternal renown also of the whole Isle of Britain ; the manner whereof was thus :

A certaine Italian gentleman, of a mighty, able, strong, nimble, and vigorous body, by nature fierce, cruel, warlike, and audacious, and in the gladiatory art so superlatively expert and dextrous, that all the most skilful teachers of escrime, and fencing-masters of Italy (which in matter of choice professors in that faculty needed never as yet to yield to any nation in the world) were by him beaten to their good behaviour, and, by blows and thrusts given in which they could not avoid, enforced to ac-

knowledge him their overcomer : bethinking himself, how, after so great a conquest of reputation, he might by such means be very suddenly enriched, he projected a course of exchanging the blunt to sharp, and the foiles into tucks ; and in this resolution providing a purse full of gold, worth neer upon four hundred pounds English money, traveled alongst the most especial and considerable parts of Spaine, France, the Low Countryes, Germany, Pole, Hungary, Greece, Italy, and other places, wherever there was greatest probability of encountering with the eagerest and most atrocious duellists ; and immediately after his arrival to any city or town that gave apparent likelihood of some one or other champion that would enter the lists and cope with him, he boldly challenged them with sound of trumpet, in the chief market place, to adventure an equal sum of money against that of his, to be disputed at the sword's point, who should have both. There failed not several brave men, almost of all nations, who accepting of his cartels, were not afraid to hazard both their person and coine against him : but (till he midled with this Crichtoun) so maine was the ascendant he had above all his antagonists, and so unlucky the fate of such as offered to scuffle with him, that all his opposing combatants (of what state or dominion soever they were) who had not lost both their life and gold, were glad, for the preservation of their person, (though sometimes with a great expence of blood,) to leave both their reputation and money behind them. At last returning homewards to his own country, loaded with honour and wealth, or rather the spoile of the reputation of those forraigners, whom the Italians call Tramontani, he, by the way, after his accustomed manner of aboarding other places, repaired to the city of Mantua, where the Duke (according to the courtesie usually bestowed on him by other princes) vouchsafed him a protection, and savegard for his person : he (as formerly he was wont to do by beat of drum, sound of trumpet, and several printed papers, disclosing his designe, battered on all the chief gates, posts and pillars of the town,) gave all men to understand, that his purpose was to challenge at the single rapier, any whosoever of that city or country, that durst be so bold as to fight with him, provided he would deposite a bag of

five hundred Spanish pistols, over against another of the same value, which himself should lay down, upon this condition, that the enjoyment of both should be the conqueror's due. His challenge was not long unanswered: for it happened at the same time, that three of the most notable cutters in the world, (and so highly cried up for valour, that all the bravos of the land were content to give way to their domineering, how insolent soever they should prove, because of their former constantly obtained victories in the field,) were all three together at the court of Mantua; who hearing of such a harvest of five hundred pistols, to be reaped (as they expected) very soon, and with ease, had almost contested amongst themselves for the priority of the first encounterer, but that one of my Lord Duke's courtiers moved them to cast lots who should be first, second, and third, in case of none the former two should prove victorious. Without more ado, he whose chance it was to answer the cartel with the first defiance, presented himself within the barriers, or place appointed for the fight, where his adversary attending him, as soon as the trumpet sounded a charge, they jointly fell to work: and (because I am not now to amplify the particulars of a combat) although the dispute was very hot for a while, yet, whose fortune it was to be the first of the three in the field, had the disaster to be the first of the three that was foiled: for at last with a thrust in the throat he was killed dead upon the ground. This nevertheless not a whit dismayed the other two; for the next day he that was second in the roll, gave his appearance after the same manner as the first had done, but with no better success; for he likewise was laid flat dead upon the place, by means of a thrust he received in the heart. The last of the three finding that he was as sure of being engaged in the fight, as if he had been the first in order, pluckt up his heart, knit his spirits together, and, on the day after the death of the second, most courageously entering the lists, demeaned himself for a while with great activity and skill; but at last, his luck being the same with those that preceded him, by a thrust in the belly, he within four-and-twenty hours after gave up the ghost. These (you may imagine) were lamentable spectacles to the Duke and citie of Mantua,

who casting down their faces for shame, knew not what course to take for reparation of their honour. The conquering duellist, proud of a victory so highly tending to both his honour and profit, for the space of a whole fortnight, or two weeks together, marched daily along the streets of Mantua (without any opposition or controulment) like another Romulus, or Marcellus, in triumph: which the never-too-much-to-be-admired Crichtoun perceiving, to wipe off the imputation of cowardise lying upon the court of Mantua, to which he had but even then arrived, (although formerly he had been a domestic thereof,) he could neither eat nor drink till he had first sent a challenge to the conqueror, appelling him to repair with his best sword in his hand, by 9 of the clock in the morning of the next day, in presence of the whole court, and in the same place where he had killed the other three, to fight with him upon this quarrell; that, in the Court of Mantua, there were as valiant men as he; and, for his better encouragement to the desired undertaking, he assured him, that, to the aforesaid five hundred pistols, he would adjoin a thousand more; wishing him to do the like, that the victor, upon the point of his sword, might carry away the richer booty. The challenge, with all its conditions, is no sooner accepted of, the time and place mutually condescended upon kept accordingly, and the fifteen hundred pistols *hinc inde* deposited, but of the two rapiers of equal weight, length, and goodness, each taking one, in presence of the Duke, Dutchess, with all the noblemen, ladies, magnifico's, and all the choicest of both men, women, and maids of that city, as soon as the signal for the duel was given, by the shot of a great piece of ordinance, of three score and four pound ball, the two combatants, with a lion-like animosity, made their approach to one another; and, being within distance, the valiant Crichtoun, to make his adversary spend his fury the sooner, betook himself to the defensive part; wherein, for a long time, he shewed such excellent dexterity, in warding the other's blows, slighting his falsifyings, in breaking measure, and often, by the agility of his body, avoiding his thrusts, that he seemed but to play, whilst the other was in earnest. The sweetness of Crichtoun's countenance, in the hottest of the assault, like a glance of lightning

on the hearts of the spectators, brought all the Italian ladies on a sudden to be enamoured of him ; whilst the sternness of the other's aspect, he looking like an enraged bear, would have struck terror into wolves, and affrighted an English mastiff. Though they were both in their linens, (to wit shirts and drawers, without any other apparel), and in all outward conveniences equally adjusted ; the Italian, with redoubling his strokes, foamed at the mouth with a choleric heart, and fetched a pantling breath : the Scot, in sustaining his charge, kept himself in a pleasant temper, without passion, and made void his designs : he alters his wards from tierce to quart ; he primes and seconds it, now high, now lowe, and casts his body (like another Prothee) into all the shapes he can, to spie an open on his adversary, and lay hold of an advantage ; but all in vain : for the invincible Crichtoun, whom no cunning was able to surprise, contrepatures his respective wards, and, with an incredible nimbleness both of hand and foot, evades his intent, and frustrates the invasion. Now is it that the never-before-conquered Italian, finding himself a little faint, enters into a consideration that he may be overmatched ; whereupon, a sad apprehension of danger seizing upon all his spirits, he would gladly have his life bestowed upon him as a gift, but that, having never been accustomed to yeeld, he knows not how to beg it. Matchless Crichtoun, seeing it now high time to put a gallant catastrophe to that so-long-dubious combat, animated with a divinely inspired fervencie, to fulfill the expectation of the ladies, and crown the Duke's illustrious hopes, changeth his garb, falls to act another part, and, from defender, turns assailant : never did art so grace nature, nor nature second the precepts of art with so much liveliness, and such observancie of time, as when, after he had struck fire out of the steel of his enemies sword, and gained the feeble thereof, with the fort of his own, by angles of the strongest position, he did, by geometrical flourishes of straight and oblique lines, so practically execute the speculative part, that, as if there had been Remora's and secret charms in the variety of his motion, the fierceness of his foe was in a trice tranquilized into the numness of a pegeant. Then was it that, to vindicate the reputation of the

Duke's family, and expiate the blood of the three vanquished gentlemen, he alonged a *stoccade de pied ferme*; then recoyling, he advanced another thrust, and lodged it home; after which, retiring again, his right foot did beat the cadence of the blow that pierced the belly of this Italian; whose heart and throat being hit with the two former stroaks, these three franch bouts given in upon the back of other: besides that, if lines were imagined drawn from the hand that livered them, to the places which were marked by them, they would represent a perfect Isosceles triangle, with a perpendicular from the top angle, cutting the basis in the middle; they likewise give us to understand, that by them he was to be made a sacrifice of atonement for the slaughter of the three aforesaid gentlemen, who were wounded in the very same parts of their bodies by other three such venees as these, each whereof being mortal, and his vital spirits exhaling as his blood gushed out, all he spoke was this, That seeing he could not live, his comfort in dying was, that he could not die by the hand of a braver man: after the uttering of which words he expiring, with the shril clareens of trumpets, bouncing thunder of artillery, bethwacked beating of drums, universal clapping of hands, and loud acclamations of joy for so glorious a victory, the aire above them was so rarified, by the extremity of the noise and vehement sound, dispelling the thickest and most condensed parts thereof, that (as Plutarch speaks of the Grecians, when they raised their shouts of all-gress up to the very heavens, at the hearing of the gracious proclamations of Paulus Æmilius in favour of their liberty,) the very sparrows and other flying fowls were said to fall to the ground for want of aire enough to uphold them in their flight.

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No. XV.

*Will of Mr Robert Creychtoun of Eliock, 24th January, 1586.*

Preceding the Will, there is inserted in the Commissary Books a very particular Inventory of the Testator's Effects, which is

curious, but too long to be here printed.—The following account of his *Debts* and *Gear* may be interesting :—

Summa of the dettis awand be the deid, -	£1214	11	4
Resteth of frie geir, the dettis deducit, -	4652	2	8
To be divided in thrie partis, the deid's part is	1550	14	2
Q'of the quot is componit for 50 merkis.			

*Follows the deidis Legacie and Latter Will.*

At Ed' the xviii day of June, the yeir of God i<sup>m</sup>v<sup>l</sup>xxxii yeiris. The quhilk day, I, Mr Robert Creychtoun of Eliok, advocat to our Soverane Lord, knawand perfytlie that nathing is mair suir than deid, nor nathing sa uncertane as the hour of deid, thairfore now being of guid sence and judgement, althocht debilitat and waik in person, makis my testament, and declaris my latter will to bein manner following: First, I commend mysaul in the hands of the Lord, beand surlie persuadit with myself that their is na salvatioun for man bot in the bluid of the Immaculat Lamb Jesus Chryst, according to the promeis maid immediatlie efter the fall of Adame, and I haif sure hope to be savit heirby, and that he sall not remember the synes of my youth, nor my rebelliones, bot sall be mercifull to me, according to his greit kyndnes; I hoip to see the gudness of the Lord in the land of the leiving: Prayes to the Lord evermair, sobeit, evermair sobeit, even sobeit. Nixt, I leif my bodie to be bureit quhair my wyf and freindis thinks gude. Thridlie, as to my guidis and geir, I am not very ryche thairin, yit I mak Isobell Borthuik, my wyf, to be my onlie executrix and intronessatrix with my haill guidis, geir, and dettis auchtand to me, and to mak Inventar thereupon as scho thinks expedient; and failyeing of hir, be deceis or non-acceptation of the said office, I nominat Mr James and Robert Creychtouns, my sounes, my executors, for I am auchtand to hir saxtene hundreth merkis of the sex thousand merkis that was destinat to be laid on land be the contract of marriage maid betwix me and hir. Item, because that my wyf hes lyfrent gevin be me to hir in hir viginie, of the lands of Eliok and Euchane, within the baronie of Sanquhair, conforme to our contract of marriage, Thairfoir it is my sempill desire and maist



cairfull request, that my friendis following, viz. my Lord Erle of Arrane, my Lord Erle of Gourie, James Lord Doune, Ar<sup>d</sup> Stewart, burges of Ed<sup>r</sup>, his broder, William Creychtoun, tutor of Sanquhare, James Creychtoun of Carte, Robert Dalzell, appeirand of that ilk, James Herrot of Trabroun, George Home of Broxmouthe, Mr James Borthuik of Lochill, Alex<sup>r</sup> Creychtoun, fear of Nauchten, Patrick Creychtoun of Lugtoun, and John Creychtoun of Burnstoun, for the gudewill and loue that has been amangis us, that thai will take the mantenance of hir and hir tennentis, in cais ony persone wald do hir wrang, quhilk is not believit, for it war the will of God and dewtie constrains me that scho be not hurt, for scho has bene to me ane honest lowing wyf, chest in hir persoune, and ane that feiris God : I nominat thir self same persounes to fortifie and mentene hir, hir bairnis and tennentis, in the lands of Eist Cragy, quhilk wer conquest with hir awin tocher at the leist, ay and quhill my sone returne out of Italie, and thane ordains him to honour and mentene hir, as he will answer to God and haif my blessing. Item, I ordane the said Isobell Borthuik, my wyf, to ware the sextene hundreth merkis forsaidis upoun sic lands, rounes, and possessiouns as may be conquest thairwith, the lyffent thair of to hirself, and the fie to hir twa bairnis, quhilkis failyng to my airis whatsumever, conforme to the contract of mariage, and that by the advyse of my freinds foirsaidis, or ony four of thame at hir optioun. Item, I leif to my said spous ane maser of silver, with ane fute haifand baith our names and armes gravit thairupon. Item, ane uther littell maser without ane fute. Item, I leif to hir ane littell silver peice, with ane silver cover ourgilt, quhilk Agnes Stewart gaif in gift to Margaret Creychtoun, our dochter. Item, ane silver saltfatt ourgilt, haifand bayth our names and arms ingraven thairupon. Item, ane half dussone silver spounes, markit with bayth our names. Item, ane silver pece, with bayth our names and armes grawin thairon ; becaus the haill silver wark above writen was made in hir awin tyme with her awin guidis and geir, and thairfoir maist properlie appertenis to hir ; And this far concerning my wyf, to the glorie of God, subscrivit with my hand, befor thir witnesses, Johne Haliday and Mr William Kellie. *Sic subscribitur*, R. Creychtoun. Item, I haif

appointit Marie to remane with the Laird of Kinnaird and the Lady, my faythfull and constant freinds ever frome the beginning; and quhan scho enteris, I ordane that hir infestment of Balden be delyverit to hir self; that scho be not overchargeable to hir friends, I haif assignit to hir twa yeiris proffit of Cluney and Friertoun, quhilk wilbe ane sufficient tocher to hir, being weill keipit and gadderit togidder, and yit we houpe to provyde uther wayis in the menetyme. Sicklyke I haif appointed Grisell to remane with my lord of Downe, and my leddy his bed fallow, my faythfull and constant freindis ay from the beginning; and quhan scho enteris, I ordane that hir infestment of Rossie Ochell be delyverit to hirself; that scho be not overchargeabill to hir freindis, I haif assignit to hir twa yeiris proffit of Cluney and Friertoun, quhilk will be ane sufficient tocher to hir, being weill keipit and gadderit togidder, yit hoipis to provyde utherways in the mene tyme. Item, I haif appointit Helene to remane with the mastres of Ochiltree, my faythfull, constant, and godlie freind, ay from the beginning, and that scho haif her assignation of the teinda of Forneochis, quhairthrow scho be not overchargeabill to hir freinds, quhilk will mak her ane honest present lyf, single as scho is and hes gude rycht thairto aye and quhile her broder lay down to her <sup>m</sup>li. Item, I haif appointit Elspeth to remain with my wyf, and that sho haif hir assignatoun of the teindis of Cluney, quhairthrow scho be nocht over chargeabill to hir freindis. To the quhilk scho hes gude rycht ay and quhilk hir broder pay to hir <sup>m</sup>merkis. Item, I haif appointit Robert to remane with Archibald Stewart and Helene Aichesoun, my gude brother and sister, and that he haif his ryghts delyverit to thame, To witt his lettir of pensioun of the priorie of St Andrews of thrie chalder Kerse aittis, with the kingis confirmation and decret, and four formes past thairupon, togidder with his infestment of Catalak, quhilks lands ar worth all the leving I haif, gif thai culd be defendit fra bangisteris, theiff and traitor. I nominat my Lord of Downe and the said Archibald tutoris testamentaris conjunctlie and severallie to the said Robert. Item, as to Agnes Creychtoun, my dochter, gottin betwix me and Agnes Mowbray, my second spous, I haif her to be brocht up with her guddame, the Lady Barnebow-

gall, and I assigne to hir that thousand merkis of tocher gude, pronisit to me be her gudsir and his cautioneris, and giffis hir full power to persew the samyn; and I sall schortlie provyde hir ane present lyfe, quhill the hous cum in division, that it may be leunit quhat scho fallis, I nominat Mr James Creychtoun, my eldest sone, hir tutor testamentar. Item, I will that my Lord of Downe and Archibald Stewart, his broder, haif the insycht and handling of all my evidentis concerning my sone, Mr James, and that Johne Haliday and M<sup>r</sup> Wm. Kellie, haif the keiping of the key of the kest to that effect quhilk is in Donhill. Item, I declair my will anent the annualrent furth of Cranstoun, togidder with the principall sowme, That incas ony thing may be recoverit thair of at ony tyme, the same halelie be applyit to the furtherance of the mariages of my dochteris, Marie and Grissell Creychtouns. Subscryvit with my hand at Ed<sup>r</sup> the xviii day of June, the yeir of God i<sup>m</sup>v<sup>o</sup>lxxxii yeiris, befor thir witnesses, George Lawsons, John Haliday, and Mr William Kellie, with utheris diveris, *sic subscribitur* R. Creychtoun.

We, Mr John Prestoun, &c. be the tennour heirof, ratifies, approvis, and confermis this present testament or inventar, in sa far as the samyn is deullie and lawfullie maid, of the gudis and gear abone specifiet allanerlie, and gevis and commitis the intro-mission with the samyn to the said Isobell Borthuik, only executer testamentar nominat be the said umquhile Mr Robert Creychtoun, reservand compt to be maid be hir thereof as accords of the law. And scho being sworne, mayd fayth treulie to exerce the said office, and hes fundin caution that the gudis and gear fersaids sal be furthcumand to all parties, haifand intres, as law will, as ane act maid thereupon beiris.

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### No. XVI.

Preceptum Cartæ Confirmationis super Carta et Infeodatione facta per reverendum patrem Jacobum Episcopum Dunkelden. cum consensu et assensu Capituli ejusdem, Magistro Jacobo

Crychtoun, filio primo genito Magistri Roberti Crychtoun de Eliok, advocati S. D. N. Regis, ac heredibus masculis dicti Magistri Jacobi de corpore suo legitime procreandis, quibus deficientibus, Roberto Crychtoun ejus fratri germano, ac heredibus suis masculis, de corpore suo legitime procreandis, quibus deficientibus, dicto Magistro Roberto, eorum patri, ac reliquis aliis heredibus suis masculis, de corpore suo legitime procreatis seu procreandis, quibus omnibus deficientibus, legitimis et propinquioribus heredibus seu assignatis dicti Magistri Roberti quibuscunque, de totis et integris terris de Cluny subscriptis, viz. Terris Dominicalibus de Cluny vocat. *lie Manys*, cum crofta orientali earundem, pratis, lacu, antiquo monte castri, ac custodia castri et fortalicii de Cluny juxta dictum lacum, Terris de Brew-hous de Concragy, Terris de Adamestoun *alias* Baldernoch, Terris de Craigend, Terris de Concragy, Molendino et Mylntoun de Concragy, cum multuris solitis et consuetis, tam terrarum de Drummalie, quam reliquarum terrarum suprascriptarum, cum omnibus et singulis suis pertinentiis, Jacentibus infra Diocesim Dunkelden. et Vicecomitatum de Perth. ac etiam de Jure patronatus, libera et plena Dispositione, duarum Capellaniarum seu Prebendarum Capellæ divæ Katherine, intra lacum antedictum situat. Reservato libero tenemento et vitali reddito omnium et singularum præfatarum Terrarum ac reliquorum suprascriptorum, cum Jure Patronatus et Donationis antedicto præfato Magistro Roberto Crychtoun, pro omnibus diebus vite suæ; Tenenda de dicto episcopo ac successoribus suis, &c. Apud castrum de Striveling, tertio die mensis Junii, Anno Domini millesimo quingentesimo Septuagesimo Nono.—*Ex Registro Secreti Sægilli*, xlvi, 8.

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No. XVII.

“ Jay oui parler d’un Criton Ecossois en Italie qui n’avoit que 21 ans. quand il estoit tué par le commandement de Duc de Mantoue, et qui sçavoit 12 langues, avoit leu les peres, poetes

disputoit de omni scibili et repondoit en vers. C'estoit ingenium prodigiosum admiratione magis quam amore dignum. Il estoit un peu fat. Ei judicium non tantum adfuit. Principes solent illa ingenia amare, non vero bene doctos."

This passage in the Scaligerana, as well as the former from the poems of Abernethy, p. 58, was discovered by Dr Irving, and engrossed by him in a short notice regarding the Admirable Crichton, which is printed in his Appendix to the Life of Buchanan. The evidence contained in the account by Scaliger is certainly, in estimating the merits of Crichton, entitled to that weight and importance, which the learned biographer of Buchanan has assigned to it.

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No. XVIII.

*Extract from the Ragguagli di Parnasso of Boccacini.*

*Giacomo Critonio Scozzese, con una sua troppo superba disfida havendo in Parnaso stomacati i Vertuosi, essi con una acerba faccetta talmente lo svergognano, che senza che segua la disputa, lo violentano à partirsi da Parnaso.*

Il portento di natura nelle buone Lettere Giacomo Critonio Scozzese, con tanta vana gloria, pompa e millantatione di se stesso alcuni giorni sono giunse à questa Corte, che ne' più accapati Vertuosi di questo Stato, i quali benissimo sanno, che per esattamente possedere una sola scienza, il continuamente studiarla ottant' anni è tempo breve, il vedere, che un giovane di venticinque pretendesse di compitamente possederle tutte, mosse altrettanta nausea, quanta ammiratione nella più vil plebe infarinata di quattro lettere. Il Critonio dunque il giorno dopò il suo ingresso in Parnaso, e nelle porte di tutti i Ginnasii, e nelle Colonne di tutti i Portici Delfici fece affigere un foglio molto grande, nel quarle con lettere cubitali si vedevano scritte le seguenti parole. *Nos, Jacobus Critonius Scotus, cuicumque rei propositæ ex improvviso respondebimus.* Questa ardita disfida, che

da infiniti fù riputata arrogante, talmente punse gli animi di questi Virtuosi, che molti furono quelli, che nelle più difficili scienze si armarano di argomenti tali, che scuramente speravano di jugularlo al primo colpo: mà da un arguto Poëta Satirico al Collegio tatto de i letterati fù tolto il gusto di quella disputa; perchè la notte stessa, che seguì all' affissione della disfida, in quei fogli aggiunse que' pungenti parole. *E chi lo vuol vedere, vada all' hosteria del Falcone, che li sarà mostrato.* Questa tanto mordace facelia di modo punse l'animo del Critonio, che pieno di vergogna e di confusione, si parti subito di Parnaso. Havendo prima fatto saper à sua Maestà, che con sua riputatione non li pareva di poter più comparire trà quei virtuosi, che gli haveano fatto lo smacco di haverlo trattato da bagattelliere, e da Cantimbanco.

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### No. XVIII.

It has been already remarked, that M'Kenzie has applied to Crichton, the description given by Pasquier, of a young man who, in the year 1445, astonished the learned in Paris, by exhibitions and disputations very similar to those described in the text. I own I was very anxious to discover an error in the date given by Pasquier, and to make out, on some good grounds, that this passage might possibly be a description of Crichton's appearance in Paris; but the investigation was quite unsuccessful. There can, I think, be no doubt that Pasquier's young man is the same person as the Ferdinand of Cordova, described by Trithemius in the following passage:—"Verum ista nobis scribentibus, *Ferrandus Cordubensis* ad memoriam reduci-tur, qui, anno MCCCCXLV, juvenis annorum XX, miles auratus, Artium, Medecine, et sacræ Theologiæ Doctor, cum VIII equis de Hispania venit in Franciam, et totam Parisiorum scholam, sua mirabili scientiâ, vertit in striporem. Erat enim omni facultate scripturarum doctissimus, vita et conversatione honestissimus, non (sicut ille de quo jam diximus) arrogans et superbus, sed humilis multum et reverentia plenus. Memoriter tenuit Bibliam totam, Nicolaum quoque de Lyrâ, scripta Sanctæ Thomæ Aquinatis, Alexandri de Hales, Joannis Scoti, Bo-

naventuræ, et aliorum in Theologia complurium; Decretum quoque, et omnes utriusque juris libros; et, in Medicinis, Avicennam, Galenum, Hippocratem, et Aristotelem, atque Albertum: omnesque Philosophiæ et Metaphysices libros et commentaria, ad unguem (ut aiunt) memoria conservabat. In allegando fuit promptissimus, in disputando acutus, ut nullo unque superatus. Denique linguas Hebraicam, Græcam, Latinam, Arabicam, et Chaldeam perfecte legit, scripsit, ac intellexit. Romam a Rege Castellæ missus orator, in omnibus Italiæ Galliæque Gymnasiis publicis disputans, convicit omnes; ipse a nemine, vel in minimo, convictus. Varia de ipso inter Doctores Parisienses movebatur opinio; aliis magum illum ac Dæmone plenum cavillantibus, aliis sentientibus contrarium. Non defuerunt qui Antichristum putarent, propter incredibilem scientiam scripturarum, qua cunctos mortales videbatur excellere. Commentaria quedam in Almagestum Ptolomei edidit, et Apocalypsim divi Johannis expositione pulcherrima illustravit. Scripsit ingenii sui et alia quedam plene eruditionis opuscula, quorum titulos ad memoriam hæc vice non potuimus revocare. Iste Fernandus erat, qui Carolo Duci Burgundionum astronomica vaticinatione longe antea prædixit interitum, quem ille spernens, non suspicabatur esse tam proximum.\*

The manner in which Pasquier introduces his description is as follows: Alluding to a former chapter, part of which, he tells us, had been extracted from a MS. which he sometimes quoted, but of which he neither gives us the title nor the name of the author, he proceeds—" Il faut que j'enfile tout d'une suite avecques le chapitre precedent ce que j'ay maintenant à deduire, pour estre retiré d'un meame Autheur: et vous representant, cette histoire en sa simplicité, sans y apporter aucun fard, vous y adjousterez plus de foy: car autrement peut estre la penseriez-vous outrepasser toute humaine opinion. Item en celuy an (dit-il parlant de l'an mil quatre cens quarante cinq) vint un jeune homme qui n'avoit que vingt ans ou environ, qui sçavoit tous les sept arts liberaux, par le tesmoignage de tous

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\* Tritheimii Chronicon Sponheimense, 1601, page 415.

les Clercs de l'Université de Paris, et si sçavoit jôier de tous les instruments, chanter et deschanter mieux que nul autre, peindre, et enluminer mieux que nul autre qu'on sçeut à Paris ne ailleurs. Item en fait de guerre, nul plus expert, et jôioit de l'espee à deux mains si merveilleusement, que nul ne s'y comparast ; car quand il voyoit son ennemy il ne failloit point à saillir sur luy vingt ou vingt quatre pieds à un sault. Item il est Maistre en Arts, Maistre en Medecine, Docteur en Loix, Docteur en Decret, Docteur en Theologie : et vrayment il a disputé à nous au College de Navarre, qui estions plus de cinquante des plus parfaicts Clercs de l'Université de Paris, et plus de trois mille autres Clercs, et a si hautement respondu à toutes les questions qu'on luy a faictes, que c'est une droicte merveille à croire qui ne l'auroit veu. Item il parle Latin trop subtil, Grec, Hebrieu, Caldaïque, Arabique, et plusieurs autres langages. Item il est chevalier en armes, et vrayement si un homme pouvoit vivre cent ans sans boire, sans manger, sans dormir, il n'auroit pas les sciences qu'il a du tout par cœur apprises, et pour certain il nous fit tres-grand freor : car il sçait plus que ne peut sçavoir nature humaine : car il reprend tous les quatre Docteurs de Sainte Eglise : Bref, c'est de sa Sapience la nonpareille chose du monde : Et nous avons en l'Escriture que l'Antichrist sera engendré de pere Chrestien, et de mere Juifue, qui se feindra Chrestienne, et chaucun croira qu'elle le soit, il sera né de par le diable en temps de toutes guerres, et que tous jeunes seront desguisez d'habit, tant femmes qu'hommes."\*

M<sup>r</sup>Kenzie has made several strange mistakes regarding this passage from Pasquier. He first of all affirms that it relates to Crichton. Now the commencement of the sentence, *There came in the year 1445*, refutes this at once ; and accordingly the date is omitted in the translation given by this author. He next observes that the account is that of an eye-witness. "Speaking of Crichton's travels to France, and coming to Paris," says he, "it is not to be imagined what consternation

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\* Les Recherches de la France de Pasquier, Paris 1633, chap. xxxix.  
— *Histoire d'un jeune homme de prodigieux esprit.*



he raised in that famous university, as we have it from an eye-witness, who gives us this account of it." After which comes the mutilated quotation from Pasquier. Now Pasquier was not, and could not possibly have been, an eye-witness to the appearance of this remarkable young man, because his exhibitions took place in the year 1455, and Pasquier lived a century later. He accordingly states, that he takes his account from a MS. to which he sometimes refers. And lastly, M'Kenzie, as if to put an end to all doubts, declares he will subjoin the words of his author. From this we should be led to believe we are to have the original passage from Pasquier Recherches: on the contrary, M'Kenzie subjoins a Latin translation by Launoy of the passage from Pasquier, in which he again omits to give the date of the young man's appearance; although on referring to Launoy, *Historia Regii Gymnasii Navarræ*, (p. 364, vol. IV. Opera, Launoi,) we find the year 1455 expressly mentioned.

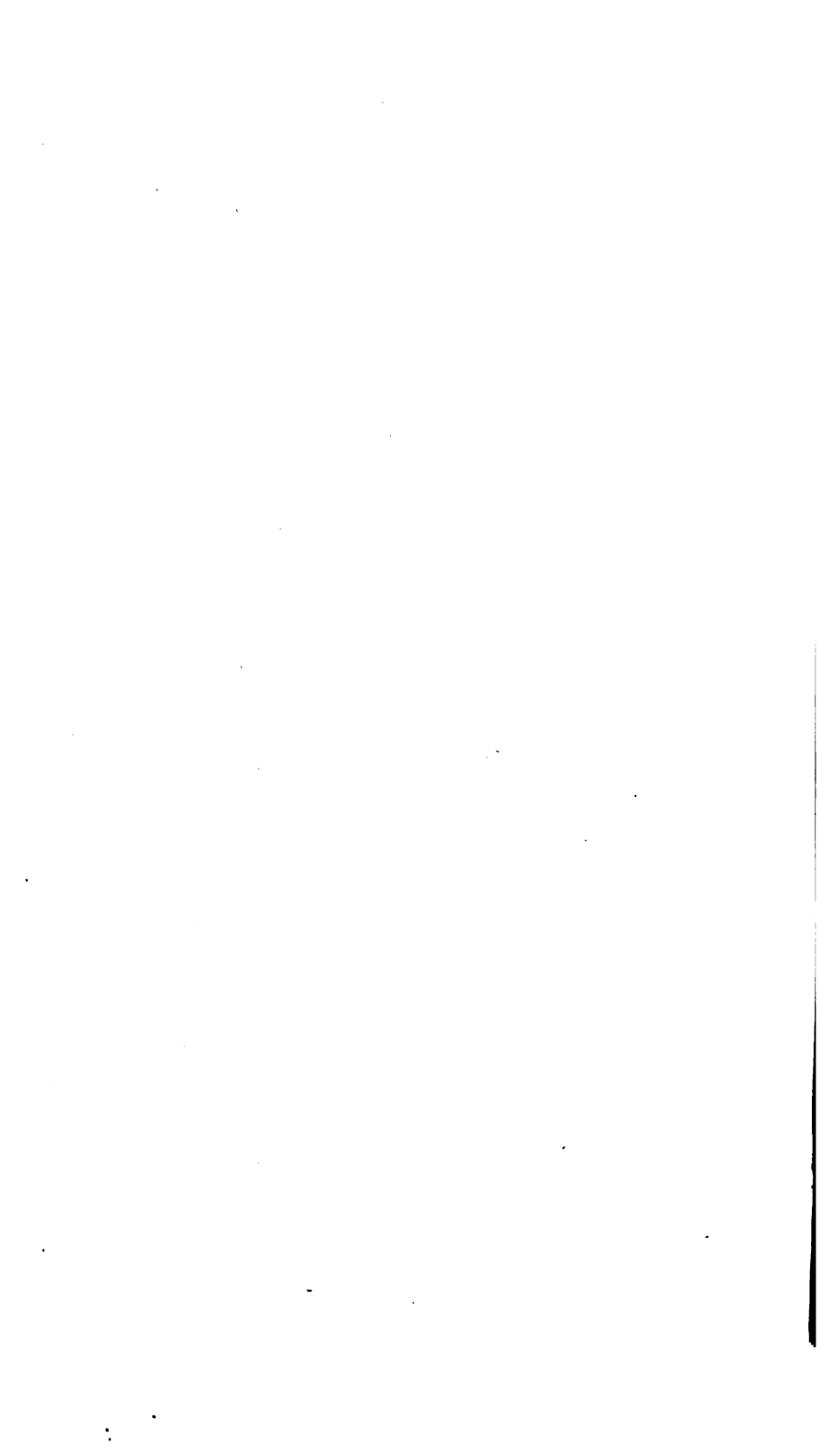
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In depicting the character of Vincenzo Gonzaga, I ought not to have omitted, among his better qualities, the patronage which he extended to literature. It may be considered as a singular destiny, that so celebrated a scholar as Crichton, should have fallen the victim of a prince, whose protection and favour extended from the noblest epic poet of his country, to its most insignificant novelist, from Tasso to Ascanio Mori da Ceno. "Ceno's novels," says Mr Dunlop in his excellent work on the History of Fiction, "are dedicated to Vincenzo Gonzaga, noted as the assassin of Crichton, and the patron of Tasso.\*"

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\* History of Fiction, Second edition, vol. II. p. 471.





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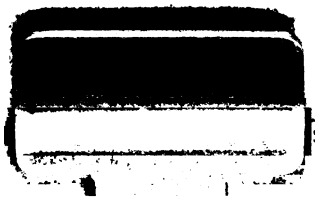
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