

Afterwards, having received large reinforcements, which raised his fleet to some fifty sail all told, he went round to Plymouth, and off that port, on 16 Aug., met the Dutch under De Ruyter, whose force, on a comparison of the many differing and opposing estimates, may be considered to have been equal to that with Ayscue. After a close and confused action, which lasted from two or three o'clock in the afternoon till nightfall, the fleets separated without any decided advantage on either side. During the next day they lay in sight of each other, neither of them wishing to begin or to appear to shun a renewal of the fight; but towards evening the Dutch pursued their way to the westward, and the English, too shattered to follow them, went into Plymouth. Both claimed and have continued to claim the victory, which, so far as the immediate contest was concerned, belonged to neither, though undoubtedly the advantage rested with De Ruyter, since he had protected his convoy and pursued his voyage. And this would seem to have been the opinion of the parliament; for with implied, if not expressed censure, they superseded Ayscue in his command, assigning him, however, a pension of 300*l.* a year. Either by inheritance, by commerce, or by prize-money, Sir George would seem by this time to have amassed a comfortable fortune. Whitelocke relates how, on 13 Aug. 1656, the ambassador of Sweden was elaborately entertained at Sir George Aysene's house in Surrey (Ham-Haw in the parish of Chertsey). 'The house,' he writes, 'stands environed with ponds, moats, and water, like a ship at sea; a fancy the fitter for the master's humour, who is himself so great a seaman. There, he said, he had cast anchor and intended to spend the rest of his life in a private retirement.' Within two years, however, he was persuaded by Cromwell to go to Sweden and take the command of the Swedish fleet; and though no opportunity for active service occurred, he stayed in Sweden, presumably as adviser on naval affairs, until the Restoration, when he returned to England, and was appointed one of the commissioners of the navy. On the outbreak of the second Dutch war, in 1664, he was appointed rear-admiral of the blue, and served in that rank in the action of 3 June 1665, with his flag in the *Henry*. On the Duke of York's quitting the fleet he was made vice-admiral of the red, under Lord Sandwich. The following spring he was admiral of the blue, in the *Royal Prince*; but on 30 May, when Prince Rupert had taken part of the fleet away to the westward, and with him Sir Thomas Allin, the admiral of the white, Ayscue was appointed

admiral of the white in the division of the fleet that remained with Monck; and it was as admiral of the white that he took part in the four days' engagement off the North Foreland (*State Papers, Domestic*, Charles II, vol. clvii. No. 57, Clarke to Williamson, 30 May, 1666). On the third day of this great battle, whilst endeavouring to join Prince Rupert's division, which had just come on the scene, the *Royal Prince* struck on the *Gallopier*—a dangerous shoal on the Essex coast—was surrounded by the Dutch and captured. They were unable, however, to get the ship off, and eventually set her on fire; but they carried Sir George Ayscue a prisoner to Holland, and are said, by all our contemporary writers, to have shown a most ignoble exultation over their illustrious captive. That they paraded him through their towns, exhibiting him to the populace, seems to be well established, even if we are unwilling to believe that they first painted him and fastened a tail on him (*Calendar*, 10 July 1666). He was kept a prisoner till after the peace, in October 1667. He arrived in London in November, and on the 12th was presented to the king, by whom he was graciously received. It may be doubted whether he ever served again, though he is said on doubtful authority to have hoisted his flag in 1668 on board the *Triumph*, and again in 1671 on board the *St. Andrew*. In the third Dutch war, beginning in 1672, he held no command; and it would therefore appear probable that he died about that time; but no record of his death has been preserved. His portrait by Lely is in the Painted Hall at Greenwich.

Sir George Ayscue always wrote his name thus; but contemporary writers, with the carelessness of their age, misspelt it, among many other ways, Ayscough and Askew.

[Campbell's *Lives of the Admirals*; Charnock's *Biog. Nav.* i. 89; *Calendars of State Papers*, 1649-52, 1660-66; *Pepys's Diary*; Whitelocke's *Memorials*; Brandt's *Vie de De Ruyter*. A number of contemporary pamphlets, mostly bearing such titles as 'A Bloody Fight,' or 'Another Bloody Fight at Sea' (*Brit. Mus. Catalogue*, s. n. 'Ayscue, George'), are mere crude, hasty, and exaggerated reports, without any authority.]

J. K. L.

AYTON, RICHARD (1786-1823), dramatist and miscellaneous writer, was born in London in 1786. His father, a son of William Ayton, banker in Lombard Street, removed some time afterwards to Macclesfield, Cheshire, and at the grammar school of that town young Ayton obtained a good elementary knowledge of Latin and Greek. In accordance with the wish of his father, who

died in 1799, that he should be educated for the bar, he was sent to study law at Manchester, and at the end of a year became the pupil of a barrister in London; but conceiving from the beginning a distaste for the profession, he never set himself seriously to prepare for it. As soon as he came of age, he retired to the coast of Sussex, resolved to limit his expenses to his comparatively small income, and to consult only his own inclinations in the occupation of his time. There he amused himself with desultory reading and active outdoor exercise, boating being his special delight. In 1811 he returned to London, and accepted a situation in a public office; but this he relinquished in 1813, to accompany William Daniell, A.R.A., in a voyage round Great Britain. An account of the voyage, with views drawn and engraved by Daniell, appeared in 8 vols. folio, 1814-25 [see DANIELL, WILLIAM]; but the letterpress of only the first two volumes is by Aytou. Disagreeing with Daniell in regard to his plans for the future volumes, Aytou declined to proceed further with the book, and betook himself to play-writing. Two of his farces, acted at Covent Garden, were total failures; but he adapted from the French several pieces for the English Opera House with moderate success. During a voyage between Scarborough and London, Aytou was nearly shipwrecked, and received an injury to his ankle which confined him to bed for more than a year. In the spring of 1821 he was sufficiently recovered to go to the coast of Sussex, but his health continued uncertain and precarious. In July 1823 his illness assumed so serious a form, that he removed for medical advice to London, where he died shortly afterwards. During the last eighteen months of his life Aytou occupied himself in the composition of a number of essays, chiefly on pastimes and similar subjects, written in a genial and playful spirit, and displaying considerable sprightliness and humour. These, with a short memoir prefixed, were published in 1825.

[Memoir in *Edinburgh Magazine*, new series, x. 254-5, which contains some additional details to those given in *Monthly Magazine*, iv. 153-4, and *Gent. Mag.* vol. lxxvii. part 2, pp. 731-2.]

T. F. H.

AYTON, or AYTOUN, SIR ROBERT (1570-1638), poet, was a descendant of the Norman house of De Vesey, lords of Sprouston in Northumberland. Gilbert de Vesey, a younger son of the family, settled in Scotland in the reign of King Robert Bruce, having received from him the lands of Aytoun in Berwickshire. Thereupon he changed his name to that of his estate.

In Berwickshire the Aytouns continued as landowners until James III (1460-1488), when a brother of the family of Home married the heiress, and carried the lands into that house. The uncle of the heiress, her father's younger brother, Andrew Aytoun, was captain of Stirling Castle and sheriff of Elgin and Forres during the reign of James IV (1488-1513). For 'faithful services' the king gave him several charters, confirming him in the lands of Nether Dunnure, Kilgour, and Glenduckie in western Fifeshire. By a new charter from the crown somewhat later these lands were constituted into a barony called Aytoun, the proprietor being designated 'of that ilk.'

This Captain Aytoun of Stirling had three sons and seven daughters. John, eldest son, succeeded his father in the estate of Aytoun; Robert, second son, obtained the estate of Inchdairnie; and Andrew, third son, succeeded in 1567 Robert Aytoun, his first cousin, in the estate of Kinaldie, which had come into the family about 1539. Andrew Aytoun, who was a student of the university of St. Andrews in 1539, married Mary Lundie, and she bore him three sons and two daughters. John, the eldest, succeeded to the estate of Kinaldie in 1590; Andrew, second son, proceeded to Ireland; and the third son was Robert, who devoted himself to literature.

Sir Robert Aytoun was born at the castle of Kinaldie, in the parish of Cameron, near St. Andrews, in 1570. He proceeded to the university of St. Andrews (St. Leonard's College) in 1584, and took his degree of M.A. in 1588. He obtained his patrimony in 1590, and thereupon went on the usual round of continental travel. He also studied civil law at the university of Paris. According to Thomas Dempster (*Historia Eccles. Gentis Scotorum*), 'he long cherished useful learning in France, and left there distinguished proof and reputation of his worth' in certain verses in Latin, Greek, and French. An overlooked book by David Echlin [Echlinus], 'Periurium Officiosum ad Vere Nobilem et Generosum optimeque de me meritum virum Robertum Aytounm Equitem . . . 1626,' more than bears out the laudation of Dempster. He is thus addressed:—

Rarum Aytone decus Britanniarum
Musarum soboles Apollinisque . . .

Aytoun returned from the continent in 1603, bringing over with him a Latin poem in hexameters, addressed to James I: 'De Fœlici, et semper Augusto, Jacobi VI, Scotia Insularumque adiacentium Regis, Imperio nunc recens florentissimis Angliæ et Hiberniæ

Scep̄tris amplificato Roberti Aytoni Scoti Panegyris. Paris, 1603.' He was cordially received at the English court. He rose at once into royal favour, and shared in the king's lavish if rather indiscriminate bounty to his fellow-countrymen. He was appointed gentleman of the bedchamber and private secretary to the queen. He received knight-hood at Rycot on 30 Aug. 1612. He was sent as ambassador to Germany to deliver the king's 'Apology,' before published anonymously, but now avowed and 'delivered' to all the sovereigns of Europe by its complacent author. On 11 Dec. 1619 he obtained a grant of 500*l.* per annum on certain 'royal profits' (*Docquet Book of Exchequer*) for 'thirty-one years;' but in 1620 this was commuted for a life-pension of the same amount. Dr. Charles Rogers has printed a number of his letters on these and other 'affairs.' In 1623 he was a candidate in competition with Bacon for the provostship of Eton. It fell to Sir Henry Wotton, notwithstanding an application addressed to James by Aytoun in verse. This correspondence and casual notices in state and domestic papers show him to have been on intimate terms with the literary men of the period. 'Rare Ben' told Drummond of Hawthornden proudly that 'Sir Robert Aytoun loved him [Jonson] dearly.' Aubrey says of him that 'he was acquainted with all the wits of his time in England,' and that 'he was a great acquaintance of Mr. Thomas Hobbes, of Malmesbury, who told me he made use of him (together with Ben Jonson) for an Aristarchus, when he drew up his epistle dedicatory for his translation of Thucydides.'

On the death of James I in 1625, all his offices and honours were continued to him by Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria.

In 1633-4 he is found mixed up with a 'patent' quarrel. In 1636 he was appointed master of the royal hospital of St. Katherine, with 200*l.* a year. He was also made master of requests and of ceremonies and privy councillor. In his various offices, and on receiving his successive advances, it was acknowledged in his lifetime that 'he conducted himself with such moderation and prudence that when he obtained high honours in the palace, all held he deserved greater.' He died at Whitehall, February 1637-8, in his sixty-ninth year, having a few days before prepared his will. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, and his great monument, which includes his lifelike bust, 'remains with us unto this day.' He is thus entered in the Register of Westminster: '1637-8, Feb. 28, Sir Robert Aeton, secretary to his

majesty, near the steps ascending to King Henry VII's chapel' (CHESTER, p. 133).

The literary repute of Sir Robert Aytoun is as much of a paradox as Sir Edward Dyer's. His Latin productions are stilted and unmellifluous, mere echoes of the iron age of classic Latinity, and simply grotesque beside Buchanan's and Johnston's. Sir John Scot of Scotstarvet indeed gives him a relatively large space in his 'Delitiae Poet. Scot.,' but simply from his contemporary repute. Among his Latin poems appear several epitaphs and epigrams celebrating eminent contemporaries. The latest event to which any of them refers is the death of Buckingham in 1628, commemorated in elegiacs. Aytoun's 'Diophrantus and Charidora' has a certain interest as having been among the earlier writing in English by a Scot, but it is poor in substance. His 'Inconstancy Upbraided' has a ring of truthfulness and touches of music. Such praise as is due to the elegant trifles of an accomplished man of the world is all that can be allowed his poems. If it could be proved that he wrote 'I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair,' of which Burns gave a Scottish version, it would not be necessary to modify this estimate; and it is all but certain that Sir Robert Aytoun did not write it. For (a) in the manuscript of his poems (*Add. MS.* 10308), so reverentially collected and prepared by Sir John Aytoun, his nephew and successor in the estate, it does not appear; (b) neither does it appear in Dr. Rogers's manuscript, also carefully and critically compiled; (c) while in Watson's 'Scots Poems,' which contains other of his poems with his name, this particular poem is placed apart and under no author's name. It seems clear that it came to be ascribed to him from confusion of its title, 'To an Inconstant Mistress,' with his 'Inconstancy Upbraided.' Sir Robert himself made no claim to be a poet. As Sir John Aytoun in his epistle (*Add. MS. ut supra*) put it, 'The author of these ensuing poems did not affect the name of a poet, having neither published in print nor kept coppies of anything he writt, either in Latin or English.' A copy of his 'Basia' is in the Drummond collection of the university of Edinburgh. Dr. Charles Rogers, first in 1844, very uncritically, and more recently in a revised 'privately printed edition,' showing some advance on the former, yet needing improvement, published the poems of Aytoun, with a full if rather discursive life.

[Rogers's edition of Aytoun's poems; Campbell's Introduction to the History of Poetry in Scotland, 1798; notice by John Hill Burton

in S.D.U.K. Biog. Diet.; Dr. Irving; Public Records; Hew Scott's *Fasti Ecclesiæ Scoti-canæ*, 1869 (4to), i. 462, 464; Chester's Reg. of Westminster Abbey; Hobbes of Malmesbury's *Life and Works*—Aytoun assisted in his *Thuey-lides*; Addit. MS. 10308, in the Brit. Mus. Library; Rogers without any authority includes 'Auld Lang Syne' (pp. i and ii) and Raleigh's 'Sweet Empress' in Aytoun's Poems.]

A. B. G.

AYTOUN, WILLIAM EDMONSTOUNE (1813–1865), poet, born in Edinburgh on 21 June 1813, was the son of Roger Aytoun, writer to the signet, and of Joan Keir. Through both father and mother he belonged to old Scottish families, his progenitors on the father's side being the Aytouns of Inchdairnie in Fifeshire, and the Edmonstounes, formerly of Edmonstoune and Ednam, and afterwards of Corehouse in Lanarkshire, and on the mother's side the Keirs of Kinmonth and West Rhynd in Perthshire. Among his ancestors he counted Sir Robert Ayton, who followed James VI to England, and was attached to the court till his death in 1638, when he was buried in Westminster Abbey, having been a friend of all the leading men of letters in London, including Ben Jonson and Hobbes of Malmesbury, and himself taken rank among them as a poet. In that character he is chiefly known as the reputed author of two songs, which Burns worked into more modern shape, one of them being 'Should auld acquaintance be forgot, the song, of all others, dear to Scotchmen [see AYTON or AYTOUN, SIR ROBERT]. Both Aytoun's parents were of literary tastes; and by his mother he was early imbued with a passion for ballad poetry and an imaginative sympathy for the royal race of Stuart. She had seen much of Sir Walter Scott in his boyhood and youth, and supplied his biographer Lockhart with many of the details for his life of Scott. Her knowledge of ballad lore was great, and was very serviceable in enabling her son to fill up gaps, and to correct false readings when preparing his edition of the 'Ballads of Scotland' in 1858. Aytoun was educated at the Edinburgh academy and university, and wrote verses fluently and well while still a student. At the age of seventeen he published a small volume called 'Poland, Homer, and other Poems,' in which the qualities of his later style were already apparent. He thought of going to the English bar, but after a winter in London, attending the courts of law, he abandoned this intention. Aytoun disliked the idea of following his father's profession, but after a residence of some months at Aschaffenburg, where he

devoted himself with enthusiasm to the study of German literature, he returned to Edinburgh. Having no fortune, he put aside the thought of devoting himself to literary pursuits, resumed his place in his father's office, and was admitted as a writer of the signet in 1835. The discipline of his legal practice was of great use in giving him a power of mastering the details of political and other questions which was of distinct service to him at a later period. In 1840 he was called to the Scottish bar, which had more attraction for him than the irksome monotony of a solicitor's practice, and made a fair position for himself there during the years in which he remained in active practice. His heart, however, was in literary pursuits, and he had already begun to feel his way in them by translations from Uhland, Homer, and others, as well as in original poems, which appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine' during the years from 1836 to 1840. Between that period and 1844 he worked together with [Sir] Theodore Martin in the production of what are known as the 'Bon Gaultier Ballads,' which acquired such great popularity that thirteen large editions of them were called for between 1855 and 1877. They were also associated at this time in writing many prose magazine articles of a humorous character, as well as a series of translations of Goethe's ballads and minor poems, which, after appearing in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' were some years afterwards (1858) collected and published in a volume. It was during this period that Aytoun began to write the series of ballads known as 'Lays of the Cavaliers,' which first drew attention to him as an original poet, and which have taken so firm a hold of the public that no less than twenty-nine editions of them have appeared, eleven of them since Aytoun's death in 1865. In 1844 he became one of the staff of 'Blackwood's Magazine,' to which he continued till his death to contribute political and other articles on a great variety of subjects with unflagging industry and a remarkable fertility and variety of resource. Among these were several tales, in which Aytoun's humour and shrewd practical sense were conspicuous. Of these perhaps the most amusing were 'My First Spec in the Biggleswades,' and 'How we got up the Glenmutchkin Railway, and how we got out of it;' and they had a most salutary effect in exposing the rascality and folly of the railway mania of 1845. People laughed, but they profited—for a time—by the lessons there read to them. In 1845 Aytoun was appointed professor of rhetoric and belles lettres in the univer-

sity of Edinburgh. Here he was in his element; and he made his lectures so attractive that he raised the number of students from 30 in 1846 to upwards of 1,850 in 1864. His professorial duties did not interfere with his position at the bar, and in 1852, when the tory party came into power, they required his services as a political writer by appointing him sheriff of Orkney. In the following year Oxford conferred on him the honorary degree of D.C.L. The duties of Aytoun's sheriffship did not engross much of his time. These, and his work as professor, both most conscientiously discharged, left him leisure for literary work. In 1854 he produced the dramatic poem 'Firmilian,' perhaps the most brilliant of his works, which was written in ridicule of the extravagant themes and style of Bailey, Dobell, and Alexander Smith. It was, however, so full of imagination and fine rhythmical swing, that its object was mistaken, and what was meant for caricature was accepted as serious poetry. In 1856 Aytoun published 'Bothwell,' a poetical monologue, dealing with the relations between the hero and Mary Queen of Scots. It contained many fine passages, and three editions of it were published. In 1858 he published a collection, in two volumes, of the 'Ballads of Scotland,' carefully collated and annotated, of which four editions, the last in 1860, have been published. In 1861 his novel of 'Norman Sinclair' was published: it had already appeared in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and is interesting for its pictures of society in Scotland, as Aytoun saw it in his youth, and for many passages which are, in fact, autobiographical. About this time Aytoun's health began to fail, and his spirits had sustained a shock, from which he never wholly

recovered, in the death (15 April 1859) of his wife, the youngest daughter of Professor Wilson (Christopher North), whom he had married in April 1849, and to whom he was devotedly attached. He sought relief in hard work, but life had thenceforth lost much of its zest for him. Being childless, its loneliness became intolerable, and in December 1863 he married again. But by this time his constitution was seriously shaken, and on 4 Aug. 1865 he died at Blackhills, near Elgin, whither he had gone to spend the summer in the hope of recruiting his health. Aytoun's life had been, upon the whole, a happy one. He was of a genial, kindly disposition, full of playfulness, and of original and cultured humour, warmly esteemed by his friends, and constant in his attachments to them. Nature and education fitted him for a man of letters, and he took delight in the very varied literary labours by which his free and facile pen enriched the pages of 'Blackwood's Magazine,' and added a few books to literature of permanent interest.

His published works are:—1. 'Poland, Homer, and other Poems,' Edinburgh, 1832. 2. 'The Life and Times of Richard the First,' London, 1840. 3. 'Lays of the Cavaliers,' Edinburgh, 1848, 29th edition 1883. 4. 'Ben Gaultier's Ballads' (jointly with Theodore Martin), London, 1855, 13th edition 1877. 5. 'Bothwell,' London, 1856. 6. 'Firmilian,' 1854. 7. 'Poems and Ballads of Goethe' (jointly with Theodore Martin), London, 1858. 8. 'Ballads of Scotland,' 2 vols. London, 1858, 4th edition 1870. 9. 'Nuptial Ode to the Princess Alexandra,' London, 1863. 10. 'Norman Sinclair,' 3 vols. London, 1861.

[W. E. Aytoun's Life, by Theodore Martin, 1867.] T. M.

B

BAALUN, or **BALUN**, JOHN DE (*d.* 1235), justice itinerant, was a baron who possessed estates in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and Wiltshire, and was descended from one Hameline de Baalun, who came over with the Conqueror, built the castle of Abergavenny, and died in 1089. His father was Reginald de Balun, and in 1207 John de Balun paid a fine for the lands of Hameline, on behalf of his father, to Geoffrey Fitz-Ace and Agnes, his wife, and 100 marks and a palfrey to the king. In 12 John (1210-11) Balun accompanied the king to Ireland, but at the end of John's reign lost his lands for taking part in

the barons' attack upon the king. On the accession of Henry III he was restored on returning to his allegiance, and in 9 Henry III (1224-5) was appointed a justice itinerant for Gloucestershire along with Matthew de Pateshull, archdeacon of Norfolk, Richard de Veym, and the abbot of Tewkesbury. He died in 1235. His son John paid 100*l.* for his relief, and did homage for his inheritance, and, dying in 1274, was succeeded by another of John's sons, Walter (*Abb. Rot. Orig.* i. 24). A justice itinerant who was appointed 9 Henry III and died in the following year (1226) bore the name of ROGER DE BAALUN