Charles Lamb, "Essays of Elia"

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1219. Let her be had among the Conuertines.

‘Conuertine’ is so rare a word that the compilers of the *N.E.D.* could find only one example of it. But, as the upholders of Collier’s theory of *The Faire Maide’s* authorship will be glad to point out, that one example is from Day’s *Law Trickes*, Act I, sc. 2:

Did not true learning make the soule diuine,
She hath spoke enough to make me conuertine.

J. LE GAY BRERETON.

MILTON, ‘SAMSON AGONISTES,’ 373.

- M.* Alas, methinks whom God hath chosen once...
He should not so o’erwhelm....
S. Appoint not heavenly disposition, father.
Nothing of all these evils hath befallen me
But justly.

The meaning of the word ‘appoint’ presents some difficulty. The *N.E.D.* explains it as ‘impute blame to,’ but the only other instance which it gives of such a use of the word is obviously no instance at all. The meaning is, I think, ‘prescribe or determine the course of,’ ‘pin down to a fixed course.’ Cp. *Areopagitica* (towards the end): ‘Neither is God appointed and confined where his chosen shall be first heard to speak.’

G. C. MOORE SMITH.

CHARLES LAMB, ‘ESSAYS OF ELIA.’

(1) In the essay *Oxford in the Vacation*, as it originally appeared in the *London Magazine* (II, p. 368), Lamb wrote: ‘D. commenced life, after a course of hard study in the “House of pure Emanuel,” as usher,’ *etc.* The passage was omitted when the *Elia Essays* were reprinted in 1823. Canon Ainger included it in brackets in his edition of the *Essays*, but printed the concluding words: ‘after a course of hard study in the house of “pure Emanuel,” as usher’ *etc.* It is clear that he was not aware of the source of Lamb’s quotation, the poem of Bishop Richard Corbet called *The Distracted Puritan*, of which stanza 2 runs:

In the house of pure Emanuel
I had my education;
Where my friends surmise
I dazeled mine eyes
With the light of revelation.
Chalmers’ *English Poets*, v, 586.

(2) In *Christ's Hospital Thirty-five Years Ago*: '...to hear thee unfold...the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus.' This is the reading of the paper as it originally appeared in the *London Magazine*, II, p. 489, as it was reprinted in 1823, and as it stands in Canon Ainger's edition. I think, however, that Lamb's meaning would probably be made more obvious if in future 'mysteries' were printed 'Mysteries.' The reference is, I suppose, to the work of Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis Ægyptiorum, Chaldeorum, Assyriorum*.

G. C. MOORE SMITH.

DRYDEN'S 'PARALLEL OF POETRY AND PAINTING.'

In Dryden's *Parallel of Poetry and Painting* (1695), he translates a passage from Hippocrates 'as I find him cited by an eminent French critic.' Professor Ker has been unable to identify this critic (*Essays of Dryden*, II, 134, note). It may possibly be worth while to note that the critic is André Dacier, and that the passage occurs in the preface to his translation of Aristotle's *Poetics* (1693).

J. E. SPINGARN.