Review

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social aspects of the age may be considered with equal advantage in connection with the succeeding volume.

F. E. SCHELLING.

PHILADELPHIA.

The Kingis Quair and The Quare of Jelusy. Edited by ALEXANDER LAWSON. London: A. and C. Black. 1910. 8vo. xcv + 169 pp.

This is an extremely elaborate edition of two poems that have little in common but the word 'Quair' in their titles. The long Preface, extending nearly to 100 pages, is chiefly occupied with the discussion of the question as to whether James I of Scotland was the author of the former poem. It does not seem to be suggested that he was the author of the latter.

New editions of these poems are of course welcome, but it seems a pity that they should have been edited together, as this has at least the appearance of assuming a connexion between them which not only does not exist, but could never have existed. The whole trouble is due to Mr J. T. T. Brown's original attack in 1896 upon the title of King James to the authorship of *The Kingis Quair*, when his object was to bring forward every conceivable argument, relevant or irrelevant, that his ingenuity could suggest. Having discovered that the sole MS. which contained a copy of *The Kingis Quair* also contained a copy of *The Quare of Jelusy*, he suggested that a common authorship of the two poems was possible. The object of the suggestion was palpable, viz. to discredit the former poem by bringing it into connexion with the latter, which could easily be shown to be of a rather late date; whence it would follow that the former is the same. It is sad to find that the present editor has given in his adhesion to this theory, which has really nothing to justify it.

It is not necessary to be a philologist to judge of this question to some extent, though the philological argument, as will presently be shown, is most decisive. It is sufficient to read the poems, that is, if one has no preconceived bias, to see the gulf that separates them. For *The Kingis Quair*, be the author who he may, is at least a pleasing and quite readable poem, as every modern treatise on literature testifies. But *The Quare of Jelusy*, with the exception perhaps of the first hundred lines, which hold out a sort of promise that the poem may be tolerable, is one of the dreariest performances imaginable, one of those miserable things that critics regret that it is their painful duty to read. This, by way of specimen, is what the reader is expected to find agreeable.

Quho schall me help, allace! for to endite,
 For to be-waill, to compleyne, and to write
 This vice, that now so large is and commoun?
 What sall I say? quhom sall I awite?
 For hie nor law is non estate to quite,
 Now all hath fele of thilké poysoun.

Allace! this false and wickit condicioun,
 The lustyhede and eury glade delyte
 Hath of this world full nere ybrought a-doun.

There is plenty more of this tedious stuff, and some of it is worse. In what way it can possibly remind one of *The Kingis Quair*, it would be hard to say.

It is a pity that neither Mr Brown nor the present editor appears to know fully how to handle philological arguments. Professor Lawson says, for example, at p. liii—'Internal evidence is difficult to estimate, for interpretations of literary features are apt to be subjective.' He obviously does not perceive that internal evidence, rightly handled, is a most valuable thing, because it exhibits matters of fact that are so far from being subjective that they appeal to any one who can appreciate facts at all. I proceed to show what I mean by this.

The Kingis Quair abounds with imitations of Chaucer's grammar from end to end. A large number of the lines will only scan if Chaucer's usual rules be observed. The author is not always sound in his use of the final *-e*, but he has a fair notion of it, and is frequently correct. And when a final *-e* is inconvenient, he often contrives (with Chaucer) to provide for its elision, which makes the number of examples less striking.

But how is it with *The Quare of Jelusy*? Mr Brown was so obliging as to collect some of the more obvious examples, at p. 82 of his book, to the number of nine; and adds—'I have purposely selected instances of the use of identical words singled out for comment by Prof. Skeat in his introduction to the *K. Q.*, p. xxvii.' Assuming that this is correct, we see that the author of *The Quare of Jelusy* copies correctly in nine instances. But the fact which is suppressed is that, even if we stretch a point or two, there are only eighteen instances of the final *-e* in the whole poem of 607 lines; whereas in the first 607 lines of *The Kingis Quair* there are at least forty!

Another thing that is suppressed is that the author of *The Quare of Jelusy* frequently forgets all about the matter, and perpetrates such phrases as 'the bricht' instead of 'the brichte' in l. 38, before a consonant; so also 'the derk,' 72; 'this foul' (written 'foule,' but monosyllabic), 182; 'the sad,' 202; 'this fals,' 269; 'this ilk,' 385. The failures of this character in *The Kingis Quair* are much further apart. From such indications as these it is obvious that the dates of these poems must be wide apart instead of near. *The Kingis Quair* belongs to the time when Chaucer's rules were far better understood, certainly to the early part of the fifteenth century; whilst the other must be placed near the end, not only for the preceding reasons, but for the far stronger ones of its atrocious grammar. Thus, at the end of l. 529, we find 'vnknewe,' meaning 'unknown.' The form 'knewe,' for the past participle, will not be found among the four and twenty spellings given in the *N. E. D.*; but it is not a scribal error, for it rhymes with 'rewē,' to rue. And observe lines 575—6:

This fantasy to leve, quhich thou hath tone;
 And furth among gud falouschip thou gone.

What are we to say to 'tone' and 'gone,' which are not scribal errors, for they rhyme with 'dispone'? 'Tone' is known to be a licentious and objectionable variant of 'tane,' taken; for which, curiously enough, *The Kingis Quair* has only 'take' and 'tak,' and not even 'tan' or 'tane.' 'Gone' is not in the Glossarial Index. The context suggests that it is the imperative, and that 'thou gone' means 'do thou go.' A wondrous form for an imperative!

And surely *The Kingis Quair* has nothing like 'thou hath,' 575, or 'thou helpith,' 312, 'thou feynyth,' 469, 'thou gevith,' 470, 'thou virkith,' 489, 'thou passith,' 553, 'thou suffrith,' 559. Its only error of this kind is 'thou wate,' thou knowest, st. 129; owing to a common confusion between *wot* and *wost*, which is not quite the same thing.

Yet one more decisive difference between the poems is that *The Kingis Quair* never uses 'in-to' for 'in,' as in *The Bruce* and in *The Quare of Jelusy*, *passim*; when 'into' occurs in st. 45, it means 'into.' In st. 117, Prof. Lawson's text has 'into' in l. 6; but the MS. has 'in,' and the metre can be amended otherwise. This simple test is quite independent of the scribe, because the one word has one syllable, and the other has two, and we can count the syllables in the line.

We have every right to protest against the association of two poems so dissimilar in liveliness, in metre, and in grammar. And all for the sake of making a point against the unfortunate King James.

Apart from this protest, upon which, unfortunately, it was necessary to enlarge, we can fully appreciate the pains and trouble which the editor has bestowed upon the work. Particular attention should be given to the Preface, which certainly contains much that is useful. The edition is one which all serious students will welcome, and we have much pleasure in recommending it to their consideration.

WALTER W. SKEAT.

CAMBRIDGE.

The Complete Works of George Gascoigne. Edited by JOHN W. CUNLIFFE. Vol. II. (Cambridge English Classics.) Cambridge: University Press. 1910. 8vo. viii + 600 pp.

Professor Cunliffe in this volume completes his valuable edition of Gascoigne's Works, the first part of which was briefly noticed in the *Modern Language Review*, Vol. IV, p. 130. The present part contains *The Glasse of Government*, *The Princely Pleasures at Kenelworth Castle*, *The Steele Glas* and other poems and prose works, including some pamphlets which have been almost inaccessible—for example *A delicate Diet, for daintiemouthde Droonkardes*, of which a unique copy exists at Britwell Court. It also contains *The Spoyle of Antwerpe*, Gascoigne's authorship of which was not established till Professor Cunliffe satisfied himself by a comparison of Gascoigne's undoubted signature with that of the agent of the English Merchants, that