"Underneath This Sable Herse," Etc.

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easily discernible; also that Burns, as is well known, was, like Scott, very familiar with the ballads, the best version of 'Tam Lin' (No. 39 in Child) being communicated by him.

My personal inclination is therefore toward the second alternative. Should this be some day fully proved, these crude American ballads will deserve recognition among the literary sources of the authors concerned. But whether echo or source, they offer more than a stimulus to the curious student of folk-lore.

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'UNDERNEATH THIS SABLE HERSE,' ETC.

In his note to this epitaph which he prints from Lansdowne MS. 777 Mr Goodwin (*William Browne: The Muses Library*, 1894) says that the lines are also contained 'in the middle-seventeenth century MS. in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, and are there signed "William Browne." They appear to have been first printed in Osborne's traditional *Memoirs in the Reign of King James* 1658, and were also included in the *Poems* of Pembroke and Ruddier, 1661.' In all these, I gather from the note—I have not seen Osborne's volume—the epitaph has two sextains, 'Underneath this sable herse,' etc. being followed immediately by 'Marble tombs let no man raise,' etc. In Aubrey's *Natural History of Wiltshire* on the other hand, and Whalley's *Jonson* 1756, only the first is given. 'The epitaph' Mr Goodwin says very justly 'is certainly more effective as a single sextain'; and Mr Hazlitt suggests that 'whoever composed the original sextain, the addition is the work of another pen, namely Lord Pembroke's.' Still it must be remembered that Browne has occasionally marred his work by not knowing when to stay his hand, and the epitaph as it appears in the Lansdowne and Dublin MSS. reflects him at his best and at his worst.

I venture to suggest that what has happened is that two distinct epitaphs—both by Browne—have been accidentally run together, as often happened when poems were circulated in MS. It is generally considered that what appears as the fourth stanza of Catullus' 'Ille mi par esse deo videtur,' that beginning 'Otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est,' cannot belong to the translation of Sappho's poem but has been wrongly attached to it. Professor Mackail mentions an instance in the Anthology where two epigrams in Callimachus have been given as one

in the Palatine MS. 'but are properly separated in the Planudean and in modern editions.' I hope to be able to show that some poems attributed to Donne are not his but have been assigned to him because in the same theme and therefore given with his in MS. collections.

This explanation of Browne's sextains has been suggested to me by the manner in which they are given in a Bodleian MS., Rawlinson, Poet. 160, f. 25 *b*. There, after two other epitaphs, one conjecturally (I think rightly) assigned by Mr Chambers to Donne; the other Ben Jonson's

Wilt thou hear what man can say, etc.

comes the following:

Epitaphium
Comitissae Pembroke.

Reader this same stone doth tell
The pearles gone here lies the shell
But if thou knewest either Earle
Tho'uld'st sweare here lyes the mother of pearle.

Aliud.
Underneath this sable hearse, etc.

Aliud.
Marble piles let no man raise, etc.

BROWNE.

Here three distinct epitaphs are attributed to Browne. The first I have met before but cannot just now remember where. It is not generally assigned to Browne. It is just possible that the third only is Browne's and that he has been given the second and best by a chance adhesion. But the balance of evidence is in favour of his authorship. Lansdowne MS. 777 is a good authority for Browne's poems. The ascriptions in the second part of the Trinity College, Dublin MS. (there are two quite distinct collections in this MS.) are of no value.

H. J. C. GRIERSON.

ABERDEEN.

GIBBON AND DANTE.

Since my note on the above subject in the last issue of the *Modern Language Review* was written, yet another reference to Dante by Gibbon has been brought to my notice. In his *Outlines of the History of the World*, composed, according to Lord Sheffield, between 1758 and 1763, Gibbon observes: 'The advantages of trade were common to several