

Put up your sword if you will be,
For I am but a child.

ABRAHAM.—Ho ! my heart will break in three,
To hear thy words I have pitie ;
As thou wilt Lord, it must be,
To thy will I must yield.

ISAAC.—Would my mother were here with me !
She would kneel down upon her knee,
Praying you, father, if it may be,
For to save my life.

Isaac meekly asks, "Is it God's will I should be slain?" and then quietly submits. He begs pardon for all his faults, and craves his father's blessing, sends his love to his mother, and asks to be slain with as few strokes as possible. Abraham kisses him, binds his eyes, and is about to slay him, when the angel arrests his hand. The sacrifice of Iphigenia cannot be compared for pathos with this. The "Doctor" expounds the scene as having reference to the perfect obedience, even unto death, of Jesus Christ. A messenger interrupts his lengthy exposition by exclaiming,

Make room, lordings, and give us way,
And let Balek come in and play.

Balaam and his speaking ass are a source of great merriment. Balek desiring to be avenged on those "false losel Jews," swears horribly at the prophet when they are thrice blessed.

There are also plays about Joseph, Moses, David, and other leading characters of the Old Testament ; but the chief interest of the drama gathers about the life of Christ. The Gospel narrative is largely supplemented by legendary lore, or embellished by the fancy of the poet—frequently with intense humanness ; but sometimes its beauty is marred by coarseness or frivolity. The "Emperoure Octavian" and the Sibyl both prophesy of Christ's advent ; and on the birth the gods of Rome fall down, as also do those of Egypt when he goes thither. Joseph complains that he is only a poor carpenter, who has his meat by his hammer and plane, and so can ill afford to pay the newly levied tax. He and the Virgin Mary arrive, weary and wayworn, at Bethelhem, at the approach of night, and take refuge in a cave used as a stable, and there, between an ox and an ass, that night the Holy Child