

Know, governor, 'tis I that slew thy son;
 I framed the challenge, that did make them meet,
 Know, Colymath, I aimed thy over-throw;
 And, had I but escaped this stratagem,
 I would have brought confusion on you all.
 Damn'd Christian dogs and Turkish infidels,
 But now begins the extremity of heat
 To pinch me with intolerable pangs,
 Die, life; fly, soul; tongue, curse thy fill and die."

To show the esteem in which he was held by his fellow-poets, let me quote these lines from Drayton, a contemporary dramatist:—

"Next, Marlowe, bathed in the Thespian springs,
 Had in him those brave translunary things,
 That the first poets had:—his raptures were
 All air and fire, which made his verses clear;
 For that fine madness still he did retain
 Which rightly should possess a poet's brain."

Leaving "Marlowe's mighty line," as his noble blank verse was termed by Jonson, we have "rare Ben" himself, whose writings are probably better known than any other of Shakespeare's contemporaries. He was a man of ponderous and clumsy, yet lofty genius. He is the founder of the regular or classic school of English Comedy. Of his numerous plays, the best are *Epicene, or The Silent Woman* and the *Alchemist*. *Every Man in His Humour* is one of his best known works, and contains the celebrated Captain Bobadill, whose magnificent boasting we used to read in the school-books of my childhood. Jonson was a pedantic scholar. In all his writings his mind seems oppressed by the burden of his knowledge, yet powerless to shake off the incubus. His learning was too heavy and cumbrous for him. He staggered under its weight.

Next we have Beaumont and Fletcher, famous for their literary partnership, most of their plays being joint productions. They are distinguished by their luxuriant imagination—ever running to waste, and by the graceful beauty of