

Classic Poetry Series

**Gabriel Harvey**  
**- poems -**

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# Gabriel Harvey(1550 - 1631)

Gabriel Harvey was an English writer. Harvey was a notable scholar, though his reputation suffered from his quarrel with Thomas Nashe. Henry Morley, writing in the *Fortnightly Review* (March 1869), brought evidence from Harvey's Latin writings showing that he was distinguished by quite other qualities than the pedantry and conceit usually associated with his name.

## <b>Early life</b>

The eldest son of a ropemaker from Saffron Walden, Essex, he matriculated at Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1566, and in 1570 was elected fellow of Pembroke Hall. Here he formed a lasting friendship with <a href="http://www.poemhunter.com/edmund-spenser/">Edmund Spenser</a> who may have been his pupil.

## <b>Promotion of hexameter verse</b>

He wanted to be "epitaphed as the Inventour of the English Hexameter," and was the prime mover in the literary clique known as the Areopagus that wanted to impose the Latin rules of quantity on English verse. In a letter to M. Immerito (Edmund Spenser) he says that Edward Dyer and Philip Sidney were helping forward "our new famous enterprise for the exchanging of Barbarous and Balductum Rymes with Artificial Verses." The document includes a tepid appreciation of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* which had been sent to him for his opinion, and he gives examples of English hexameters illustrative of the principles enunciated in the correspondence. The opening lines--"What might I call this Tree? A Laurell? O bonny Laurell Needes to thy bowes will I bow this knee, and vayne my bonetto"--afford a fair sample of the success of Harvey's metrical experiments, which were an easy mark for the wit of Thomas Nashe. "He (Harvey) goes twitching and hopping in our language like a man running upon quagmires, up the hill in one syllable, and down the dale in another," says Nashe in *Strange Newes*, and he mimics him in the mocking couplet: "But ah ! what news do you hear of that good Gabriel Huff-Snuff, Known to the world for a fool, and clapped in the Fleet for a rhymer?" Harvey influenced Spenser greatly for a short time, and the friendship lasted. Harvey is the "Hobbinoll" of his friend's *The Shepheardes Calender*, and into his mouth is put the beautiful song in the fourth eclogue in praise of Eliza. If he was really the author of the verses "To the Learned Shepheard," signed "Hobynoll" and prefixed to the *Faerie Queene*, he was a good poet spoiled. Harvey's genuine friendship for Spenser shows the best side of his character, which appeared

uncompromising and quarrelsome to the world in general. In 1573 the bad feeling against him in his college was so strong that there was a delay of three months before the fellows would agree to grant him the necessary grace for his M.A. degree.

### <b>Career</b>

He became reader in rhetoric in about 1576, and in 1578, on the occasion of Queen Elizabeth's visit to Sir Thomas Smith at Audley End House, he was appointed to dispute publicly before her. In the next year he wrote to Spenser complaining of the unauthorized publication of satirical verses of his which were supposed to reflect on high personages, and threatened seriously to injure his career. In 1583 he became junior proctor of the university, and in 1585 was elected master of Trinity Hall, of which he had been a fellow from 1578, but the appointment appears to have been quashed at court. He was a protégé of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, to whom he introduced Spenser, and this connection may account for his friendship with Sidney. But in spite of patronage, a second application for the mastership of Trinity Hall failed in 1598.

In 1585 he received the degree of D.C.L. from the University of Oxford, and is found practising at the bar in London. Gabriel's brother, Richard Harvey, had taken part in the Martin Marprelate controversy, and had given offence to Robert Greene by contemptuous references to him and his fellow wits. Greene retorted in his Quip for an Upstart Courtier with some scathing remarks on the Harveys, the worst of which were expunged in later editions, drawing attention among other things to Harvey's modest parentage. In 1599 Archbishop Whitgift made a raid on contemporary satire in general, and among other books the tracts of Harvey and Nashe were destroyed, and it was forbidden to reprint them. Harvey spent the last years of his life in retirement at his native place, dying in 1630. The Letter-Book of Gabriel Harvey, AD, 1573-80 (1884, ed. E.J.L. Scott, Camden Society), contains rough drafts of the correspondence between Spenser and Harvey, letters relative to the disputes at Pembroke Hall, and an extraordinary correspondence dealing with the pursuit of his sister Mercy by a young nobleman. A copy of Quintilian (1542), in the British Museum, is extensively annotated by Harvey.

Harvey was also a wordsmith and has been credited with the coining or first use of the word "jovial" (derived from the latin for "pertaining to Jove or Jupiter"), circa 1590, as well as the words "conscious", "extensively", "idiom", "notoriety" and "rascality". This claim is supported by the criticism of rival Thomas Nashe, in which Nashe cites Harvey as the creator of the words, announces his dislike of Harvey's words, and then predicts Mr. Harvey's words will not stand the test of time. Noted Etymologist Robert Hendrickson also cites Harvey's hand in creating these words in his book "The Facts On File Encyclopedia of Word and Phrase

<b>Feud with Nashe</b>

After Greene's death Harvey published *Four Letters and certaine Sonnets* (1592), in which he revealed the miserable details of Greene's later years. Nashe settled his personal score with the Harveys, in *Strange Newes* (1593). Harvey rebutted the personal charges made by Nashe in *Pierce's supererogation, or a New Prayse of the Old Asse* (1593). In a religious work, *Christ's Teares over Jerusalem* (1593) Nashe made a full apology to Harvey, who however resumed the controversy in a *New Letter of Notable Contents* (1593). Harvey probably had not seen Nashe's apology in print when he wrote the *New Letter of Notable Contents*, but he knew something along those lines was rumoured. He refused take reports of Nashe's change of heart at face value until he had the proof in black and white:

"Till a public injury be publicly confessed, and print confuted in print, I am one of St. Thomas' disciples, not over prest to believe..." This certainly sounds as if, at the time of writing *New Letter*, Harvey had simply not seen a copy of *Christ's Teares*.

Nashe dramatically withdrew his apology in a new edition (1595) of *Christ's Teares*. Harvey, he claimed, had hinted at wanting a reconciliation so that Nashe would make a public apology, and as soon as he did so he was made to look a fool for his pains:

"Impious Gabriel Harvey, the vowed enemy to all vows and protestations, plucking on with a private slavish submission a general public reconciliation, hath with a cunning ambuscado of confiscated idle oaths, welnear betrayed me to infamy eternal (his own proper chair of torment in hell). I can say no more but the devil and he be no men of their words."

It was nearly two years before Nashe replied to *New Letter*, when hearing that Harvey had boasted of victory he produced the most biting satire of the series in *Have with You to Saffron-Walden* (1596). Harvey never responded. Later Richard Lichfield of Cambridge attacked Nashe in *The Trimming of Thomas Nashe Gentleman* (1597). He signed his work "by the high-titled patron Don Richardo de Medico campo", a play on his name (i.e. "leech-field"). This work was formerly attributed to Harvey.

# A Charm For A Mad Woman

O heavenly med'cine, panacea high,  
Restore this raging woman to her health,  
More worth than hugest sums of worldly wealth,  
Exceedingly more worth than any wealth.  
O light of grace and reason from the sky,  
Illuminate her mad-conceited mind,  
And melancholy cease her wits to blind,  
Cease, fearful melancholy, her wits to blind.

Gabriel Harvey

# An Heroic Address To [oxford], Concerning The Combined Utility And Dignity Of Military Affairs And O

This is my welcome; this is how I have decided to bid All Hail!

to thee and to the other Nobles.

Thy splendid fame, great Earl, demands even more than in the case of others the services of a poet possessing lofty eloquence.

Thy merit doth not creep along the ground,  
nor can it be confined within the limits of a song.

It is a wonder which reaches as far as the heavenly orbs.

O great-hearted one, strong in thy mind and thy fiery will,  
thou wilt conquer thyself, thou wilt conquer others;

thy glory will spread out in all directions beyond the Arctic Ocean;  
and England will put thee to the test and prove thee to be native-born Achilles.

Do thou but go forward boldly and without hesitation.

Mars will obey thee, Hermes will be thy messenger,  
Pallas striking her shield with her spear shaft will attend thee,  
thine own breast and courageous heart will instruct thee.

For long time past Phoebus Apollo has cultivated thy mind in the arts.

English poetical measures have been sung by thee long enough.

Let that Courtly Epistle —

more polished even than the writings of Castiglione himself —  
witness how greatly thou dost excel in letters.

I have seen many Latin verses of thine, yea,  
even more English verses are extant;

thou hast drunk deep draughts not only of the Muses of France and Italy,  
but hast learned the manners of many men, and the arts of foreign countries.

It was not for nothing that Sturmius, himself was visited by thee;

neither in France, Italy, nor Germany are any such cultivated and polished men.

O thou hero worthy of renown, throw away the insignificant pen, throw away  
bloodless books,

and writings that serve no useful purpose; now must the sword be brought into  
play,

now is the time for thee to sharpen the spear and to handle great engines of war.

On all sides men are talking of camps and of deadly weapons; war and the Furies  
are everywhere,

and Bellona reigns supreme.

Now may all martial influences support thy eager mind, driving out the cares of

Peace.

Pull Hannibal up short at the gates of Britain. Defended though he be by a mighty host,

let Don John of Austria come on only to be driven home again. Fate is unknown to man,

nor are the counsels of the Thunderer fully determined.

And what if suddenly a most powerful enemy should invade our borders?

If the Turk should be arming his savage hosts against us?

What though the terrible war trumpet is even now sounding its blast?

Thou wilt see it all; even at this very moment thou art fiercely longing for the fray.

I feel it. Our whole country knows it.

In thy breast is noble blood, Courage animates thy brow, Mars lives in thy tongue,

Minerva strengthen thy right hand, Bellona reigns in thy body, within thee burns the fire of Mars.

Thine eyes flash fire, thy countenance shakes a spear;

who would not swear that Achilles had come to life again?

Gabriel Harvey

# Frendly Caueat To The Second Shakerley Of Powles

SLumbring I lay in melancholy bed,  
Before the dawning of the sanguin light:  
When Eccho Shrill, or some Familiar Spright  
Buzzed an Epitaph into my hed.  
Magnifique Mindes, bred of Gargantuas race,  
In grisly weedes His Obsequies waiment,  
Whose Corps on Powles, whose mind triumph'd on Kent,  
Scorning to bate Sir Rodomont an ace.  
I mus'd awhile: and hauing mus'd awhile,  
Iesu, (quoth I) is that Gargantua minde  
Conquerd, and left no Scanderbeg behinde ?  
Vowed he not to Powles A Second bile?  
What bile, or kibe? (quoth that same early Spright)  
Haue you forgot the Scanderbegging wight?  
Glosse.  
Is it a Dreame? or is the Highest minde,  
That euer haunted Powles, or hunted winde,  
Bereaft of that same sky-surmounting breath,  
That breath, that taught the Timpany to swell?  
He, and the Plague contended for the game:  
The hawty man extolles his hideous thoughtes,  
And gloriously insultes vpon poore soules,  
That plague themselues: for faint harts plague themselues.  
The tyrant Sicknesse of base-minded slaues  
Oh how it dominer's in Coward Lane?  
So Surquidry rang-out his larum bell,  
When he had girn'd at many a dolefull knell.  
The graund Dissease disdain'd his toade Conceit,  
And smiling at his tamberlaine contempt,  
Sternely struck-home the peremptory stroke.  
He that nor feared God, nor dreaded Diu'll,  
Nor ought admired, but his wondrous selfe:  
Like Iunos gawdy Bird, that prowdly stares  
On glittering fan of his triumphant taile:  
Or like the ugly Bugg, that scorn'd to dy,  
And mountes of Glory rear'd in towring witt:  
Alas: but Babell Pride must kisse the pitt.  
L'enuoy .  
Powles steeple, and a hugyer thing is downe:



Beware the next Bull-beggar of the towne.

Gabriel Harvey

# Gorgon Or The Wonderful Year

|S+t+| Fame dispos'd to cunnycatch the world,  
Vproar'd a wonderment of Eighty Eight:  
The Earth addreading to be ouerwhurld,  
What now auailles, quoth She, my ballance weight ?  
The Circle smyl'd to see the Center feare :  
The wonder was, no wonder fell that yeare.

Wonders enhaunse their powre in numbers odd:  
The fatall yeare of yeares is Ninety Three :  
Parma hath kist; De-maine entreates the rodd:  
Warre wondreth, Peace and Spaine in Fraunce to see.  
Braue Eckenberg, the dowty Bassa shames :  
The Christian Neptune, Turkish Vulcane tames.

Nauarre woos Roome: Charlmaine giues Guise the Phy:  
Weepe Powles, thy Tamberlaine voutsafes to dye.

L'enuoy.

The hugest miracle remaines behinde ,  
The second Shakerley Rash-Swash to binde.

Gabriel Harvey

# Speculum Tuscanismi

Since Galatea came in, and Tuscanism gan usurp,  
Vanity above all: villainy next her, stateliness Empress  
No man but minion, stout, lout, plain, swain, quoth a Lording:  
No words but valorous, no works but womanish only.  
For life Magnificoes, not a beck but glorious in show,  
In deed most frivolous, not a look but Tuscanish always.  
His cringing side neck, eyes glancing, fisnamy smirking,  
With forefinger kiss, and brave embrace to the footward.  
Large bellied Cod-pieced doublet, uncod-pieced half hose,  
Straight to the dock like a shirt, and close to the britch like a diveling.  
A little Apish flat couched fast to the pate like an oyster,  
French camarick ruffs, deep with a whiteness starched to the purpose.  
Every one A per se A, his terms and braveries in print,  
Delicate in speech, quaint in array: conceited in all points,  
In Courtly guiles a passing singular odd man,  
For Gallants a brave Mirror, a Primrose of Honour,  
A Diamond for nonce, a fellow peerless in England.  
Not the like discourser for Tongue, and head to be found out,  
Not the like resolute man for great and serious affairs,  
Not the like Lynx to spy out secrets and privities of States,  
Eyed like to Argus, eared like to Midas, nos'd like to Naso,  
Wing'd like to Mercury, fittst of a thousand for to be employ'd,  
This, nay more than this, doth practice of Italy in one year.  
None do I name, but some do I know, that a piece of a twelve month  
Hath so perfited outly and inly both body, both soul,  
That none for sense and senses half matchable with them.  
A vulture's smelling, Ape's tasting, sight of an eagle,  
A spider's touching, Hart's hearing, might of a Lion.  
Compounds of wisdom, wit, prowess, bounty, behavior,  
All gallant virtues, all qualities of body and soul.  
O thrice ten hundred thousand times blessed and happy,  
Blessed and happy travail, Travailer most blessed and happy.  
"Tell me in good sooth, doth it not too evidently appear  
that this English poet wanted but a good pattern before his eyes,  
as it might be some delicate and choice elegant Poesy  
of good Master Sidney's or Master Dyer's  
(our very Castor and Pollux for such and many greater matters)  
when this trim gear was in the matching?"



# The Writers Postscript: Or A Frendly Caueat To The Second Shakerley Of Powles

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Before the dawning of the sanguin light:  
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- - - - - Fata immatura vagantur.

Gabriel Harvey