

From One 'Remarkable Yeare' to Another:  
Reading *The Beattie of the Remarkable Yeare of Grace, 1638*

'Printed at *Edinburgh* by *George Anderson*, 1638', *The Beattie of the Remarkable Yeare* goes to some lengths to celebrate the National Covenant as a transformation. The poet (known only as T. H.) contrasts the moment's exaltation against everyday *cares*, *griefs*, and *anger* (7, 8, 11); sensual delight blends into spiritual access; writing poetry parallels subscribing to the National Covenant; and the beautiful year echoes Creation. Sexually charged language is never far away: in an *extasie*, the poet sees heaven's infusion of 'floudes of Manna', under which 'th'earth doth swell | Pamp'red in richer balme' (55, 83–84). Scotland has changed from a 'cold hungrie melancholick clime' into a 'sweet Arabie' (288–89); formerly celebrated years are 'but rags' (303); foes turn into allies and vice versa (the winds, 70–72, 179–86, 191–96, 255–64; even the Sun, 186, 230–32). Such changes call for repeated *stretching* of thought, expression, and action: the strings of the poet's theorbo; the sky around the globe; divine wings over the earth; carpets of flowers upon the valleys; and finer poetic skills toward the great occasion (5, 23, 42–43, 238, 388). For a poem about perfection, *The Beattie* is remarkably concerned with becoming.

The distillation of fragrance becomes a leading concept for the conjunction of spirit and matter. 'Pythagorick transmigration' (201) is adduced to explain the intense sensory appeal of the especially abundant flowers of this beautiful year. The winds now gently convey 'spicknard breathes', to which the flowers respond with 'swet Sabean odours' (187, 205). The topic reaches an extreme in the depiction of the trees, nourished by

... Spirites of the Nobler Rose  
Alambiqued by the enquiring nose  
Of *Phoebus* steeds, who snaring flames and light  
Doe yeeld a rellish of a strange delight. (249–52)

In the mutual exchange of *Spirites*, masculine and feminine, matter and spirit, become indistinguishable.

Topics of the world upside-down (278), outdoing (305–07), uncountability (319–32), inexpressibility (333–40), and authorial inadequacy (381–84) assert the year's uniqueness but also locate the poet as a witness and commentator, however peripheral. From this lesser station, the poet warns southern *Enviers* not to disturb the *feasting* and *felicities* (356–58), and urges the 'belov'd Indwellers' to send up a shout that reframes the cosmos and assures peace on earth, for a little while, before the disappointments of the lesser years to come. In corresponding fervour, the poet, like a new Orpheus, prepares to summon the hills and trees to dance.

At such moments, the poet T. H. pushes beyond Petrarchan, 'Castalian', or *godlie* concepts of eloquence. Of note are terms such as *extasie*, *balme*, *sublunarie*, *embalme*, *elixer*, *Pythagorick transmigration*, and *Alambiqued* (55, 84, 91 and 229, 116, 194, 201, 250). Individually, these might be unexceptional, but together they suggest purposeful affiliation. T. H. could have read Donne in the printed editions of 1633 or 1635 (with *The Progresse of the Soule* as their first item); but for a Covenanter to have done so—and to have responded so warmly to what he discovered there—runs athwart of what has been supposed about cultural polarities in seventeenth century Scotland. Donne's Scottish readers have been typified as 'members of a well-educated cultural elite, who possessed estates in the south-east of Scotland.'<sup>1</sup> Crossing sectarian borders, the printed Donne works unexpectedly as a public, even egalitarian presence, to liberate a philosophical and scientific adventuresomeness in T. H.'s diction and design.

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<sup>1</sup> Priscilla Bawcutt, 'John Donne: The Scottish Connection', in *James VI and I, Literature and Scotland: Tides of Change, 1567–1625*, edited by David J. Parkinson, Peeters, 2013, pages 323–38, at page 337.

1 This preliminary study is editorially grounded. The editorial underpinnings will be obvious in the way evidence is presented in the slides for this presentation. Research began with an attempt to situate *The Beattie of the Remarkable Year* in relation to the event it celebrates, the National Covenant. In the process of studying the text and its contexts, my emphasis has shifted, toward questions of literary affiliation and individuation: might the occasion have allowed for or stimulated a radically revisionary concept of poetic invention? *The Remarkable Year* is a more revolutionary creation than it appears.

2 Some related concepts come to the fore that pertain to this concept of invention: the release of divine force from previously unopened containers; the stretching of matter to engage with spirit; 3 the purification and rarefaction of material elements; and the willing participation of communities of fully realised sentient beings in this process, during which, space, time and identity undergo further transformations.

4 The world is reoriented—even turned upside-down—and time past and future are emptied to contribute completeness to *here and now*.

5 The poetic self is depicted as an aspiring, devout young singer who wants to celebrate the wooing of the Earth by Heaven. 6 Nearing the end of the poem—something of a prelude—this singer gets ready to engage directly in the reanimation of the natural world. Making the poem prepares for that more direct and miraculous participation, toward which various musical instruments, classical and modern, including the poet's lute, seem to be turning into living, organic forms.

7 In this way, poetic composition is treated as an allegory of personal dedication to the National Covenant. Both acts are a divinely inspired outcome and a contribution to the fullness of the present moment. Recipients become actors, and participation becomes almost evolutionary.

8 All along, the transformed human community is embedded in a remade natural world with its other communities. Birds become artists, flowers ambassadors, and trees a community pledged to mutual friendship and defence. Each of these communities brings with it a host of literary associations. What I want to do now is consider how allusions may possess more than an ornamental, enriching, affiliative value, in that they contrast with and even oppose prevailing styles and prescribed functions of poetry.

9 Opposition or at least individuation would be most pointedly apparent in the closing lines. The singer is reflecting on the littleness but importance of the ordinary individual human's utterance. Though much can be said about the intertwined scriptural and classical allusions in the text, the contemporary echoes can be especially pointed. I'd like to notice a few of these.

Refuting King James's truism about the the insignificance of tributaries leads into a direct challenge to 'highbred sprites', the reigning poets of the day (the recalcitrant Drummond of Hawthornden among them), to add their voices to praising—and affirming—the Covenant.

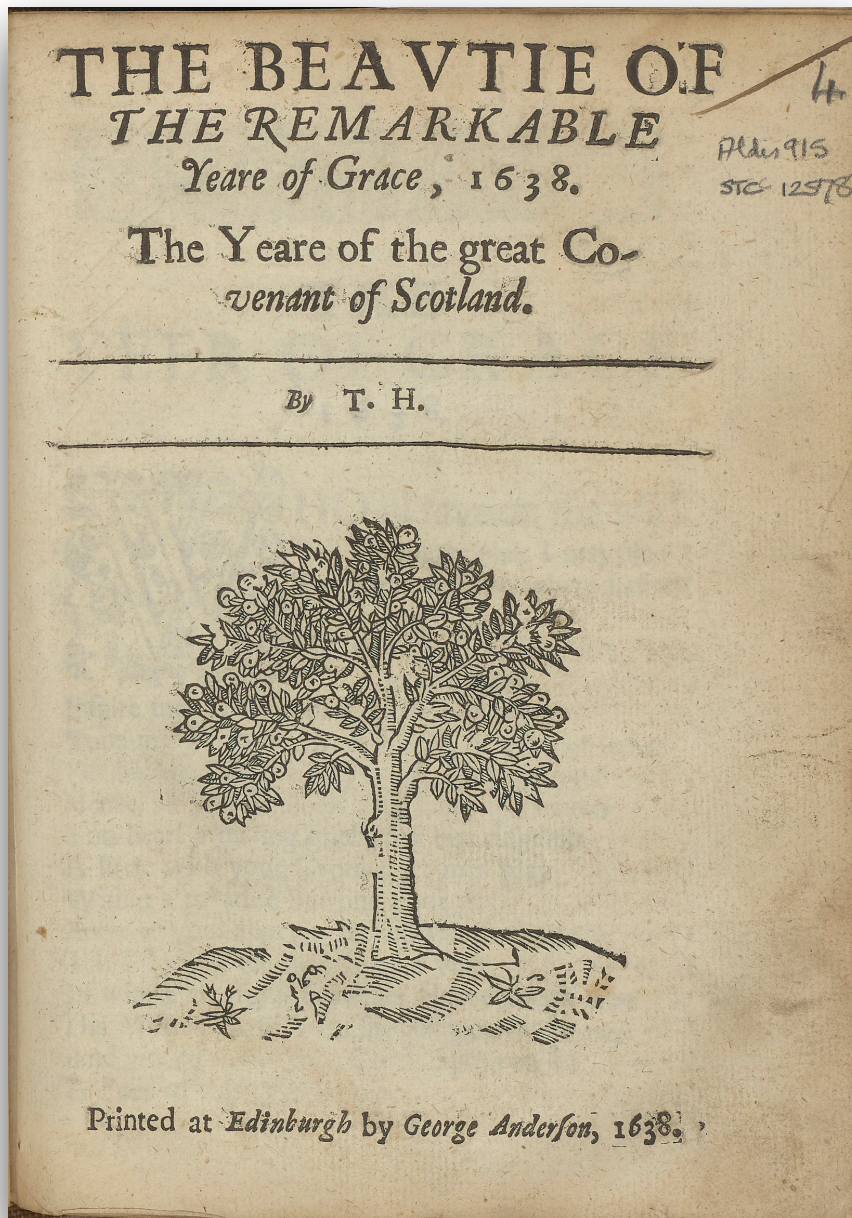
10 The singer of *The Remarkable Year* engages especially pointedly with William Drummond of Hawthornden, whose *Forth Feasting* celebrated the return of James VI to Scotland in 1617, and 11 who contributed verses for the entry of Charles I to Edinburgh in 1633.

12 The singer also seems drawn to Donne's adventurous framing of natural observation, ecstatic union, and the relation between soul and body; phrases and concepts are taken up from the beginnings of various poems available in the printed editions of 1633 and 1635.

13 Countering royal discourse and responding to Donne's new style, the singer overturns a persistent theme in Scottish literature post-1603, of national marginalization and neglect. In this remarkable year of 1638 at least, things are different. Imagining the future, the singer

suppresses apocalypticism and anticipates instead an anticlimactic future. Meanwhile, the present is so full that its record, 'a volume great' implicitly outweighs all chronicles past and future (325–7, 331). <sup>14</sup> Without attempting to fill such a volume, the singer still outdoes former poets, if only by accepting what they ignore, that a 'few atomes' of text could never capture 'all this All' (333, 340). The value of the poem must be more as a symbolic act of perception and gratitude.

From this perspective, all the classical ornamentation and allusions to contemporary poetry point to a worn-out poetics, which the singer makes use of only to allude to something greater. The 'highbred sprites that weare the Bayes' will be roused by this new song; but they will have to 'stretch their numbers' if they are to rise to the occasion. This is one reason why the faint echoes of Donne are exciting to me. The themes of ensouled bodies and rarefaction of the material elements, the conceitful technique, and the stressing of poetic 'numbers', all make Donne an especially apt point of reference for the singer of *The Remarkable Yeare*.



From One  
'Remarkable Yeare'  
to Another:

Reading  
*The Beavtie of  
the Remarkable  
Yeare of Grace, 1638*

University of Glasgow,  
17–19 2021



5 Tune my Theorbe, sweet sisters, stretch the string<sup>1</sup>  
Yet higher, that she may more sweetly sing.<sup>2</sup>



145                   the great change of the tyme;  
Which all the Elements do preach; which are  
Not of so ley a mettall as they were,<sup>3</sup>  
But more ennobled, and lesse discordant.

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<sup>1</sup> The *theorbo*, an ‘instrument of the Western lute family with stopped courses [pairs of strings] considerably longer than those of a lute and with a separate nut and pegbox for a set of longer, unstopped bass strings’ (*Grove Music Online*); it is an emblem of spiritual song (Bath 265), as in Francis Quarles, *Emblemes*—‘Skrue up the heightened pegs | Of thy Sublime Theorboe foure notes higher’ (Invocation, lines 2–3).

<sup>2</sup> Various tunings were prescribed for the theorbo, the highest courses of which ‘are too long ... to withstand the tension necessary to tune them as they would be tuned on the lute’ (*Grove Music Online*). As the first instance of stretching in the poem, this encouragement to a higher tuning therefore involves tension and risk of damage. Later, God stretches the sky around the globe (line 23), Heaven stretches its wings over the earth (42–43), the valleys stretch out their carpets of flowers (238), and in the last line, nobler poets are challenged to *stretch* their prosodic skills.

<sup>3</sup> *ley*: mixed, impure; *lay metal* is ‘the name of a [less valuable] kind of pewter’ with a higher proportion of lead to tin (*OED*, *lay*, n.6). In Donne’s ‘The Extasie’ (line 56), bodies are ‘allay’ (better than mere ‘drosse’ for pure souls).

115        Ah gallant Sun, thy wanton dangling hair  
             Provokes the Frolick Earth t'embalme the air,<sup>4</sup>  
             Where numberlesse golden atomes of the day<sup>5</sup>  
             Hath hanging at each one pearles

247        Those Heaven-beloved trees do drinke no more  
             The vulgar vapors, as they did before,  
             But feedes on Spirites of the Nobler Rose  
             Alambiqued by the enquiring nose<sup>6</sup>  
             Of *Phoebus* steeds, who snaring flames and light  
             Doe yeeld a rellish of a strange delight.

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<sup>4</sup> This is the second instance in which the combination of heavenly and earthly desire produces fragrance. (See further lines 84, 187, 191–95, 205–06, 235–36, 249–52.)

<sup>5</sup> The numberlessness of epithalamium (Feeney); *atomes* refer to particles of dust visible in a sunbeam (*OED*, *atom*, sense 7). Connoting abundance by the word *atomes* contrasts with Drummond's use of the word to connote emptiness, in *Exequies*, where hopes 'should Atomes prove' (line 78).

<sup>6</sup> *Alambiqued*: 'distilled'; as a verb, *alembic* is earliest attested in the 1630s (*OED*, *alembic*, v.). Drummond uses this verb in *Irene* (1638; first published in *Works*, 1711; at p. 170).

142           the great change of the tyme

278           Both Poles were changed,<sup>7</sup> and the Spheres to have  
Some other motion

288           Like One transported to sweet Arabie  
From some cold hungrie melancholic clime

301           So other yeeres that were the lights of time  
The glory of Chronicles, must now think shame,  
And hold themselves but rags when this shall be  
A dyademe to all Eternitie.

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<sup>7</sup> *Both Poles*: of the northern and southern hemispheres; implicitly, the world has turned upside-down.

17

Heer all you smyling fancies, hasten heere  
You nobler raptures of Apolloes Lyre,<sup>8</sup>  
And throng within my breast, all you Ideas  
Within his Cabinet, come if you please<sup>9</sup>  
And my poor soul enrich, come all which may  
Teach a young wanton bashfull pen to play.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Apollo is properly mentioned as the leader of the Muses but also as the patron of a *carmen saeculare* such as Horace's for Augustus. As such, Apollo is the apotheosis of kingship.

<sup>9</sup> The phrasing appears to be secular but has sacred precedents, for example George Peele, *The Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe*, lines 1991–3, 'Thy soule shall ioy the sacred cabinet | Of those deuine Ideas, that present | Thy changed spirit with a heauen of blisse.' *OED*, *cabinet* 6. *figurative*, 'A secret receptacle, treasure-chamber, store-house; *arcanum*, etc.' Though the poet's theorbo may be a forerunner of this theme, Apollo's cabinet is the the first explicit instance of containers of divine wealth and power: the Creator's treasury (lines 61, 87, 89); the 'Cove' of the hostile winds (line 258).

<sup>10</sup> The oxymoronic collocation *wanton*, *bashfull* has pastoral associations, but usually the terms are opposed; in Giles Fletcher, *Purple Island* (I.6.40), the shepherd poet—a 'bashfull boy'—rejects love songs as 'wanton toys'; *wanton* recurs in lines 86 and 115.

Reach me my warbling lute,<sup>11</sup> and I'll accord  
 Th'espoused vaines, sollicite every cord;<sup>12</sup>  
 I'll court the Ladie's lyres, whose sacred wombe<sup>13</sup>  
 All Graces, all sweet Melodie doth entombe,  
 Bring me my pleasant Harpe, my Gythare dear,<sup>14</sup>  
 And I will joine with you, I'll strain an air  
 So sweet, so full, as shall you Hilles entrance  
 And make their Trees come laughing heer, and dance.

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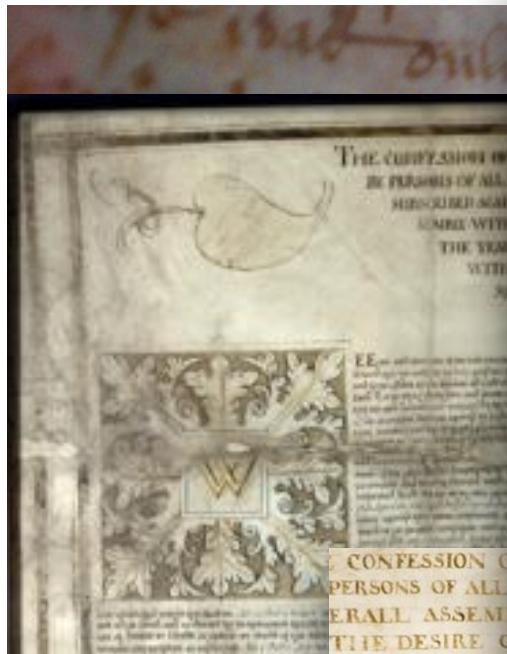
<sup>11</sup> *warbling lute*: the lute is conventionally described as warbling (*OED*, *warble*, v., sense 5b).

<sup>12</sup> *espoused vaines*: an extension of the usual semantic range of the verb *espouse*, with reference to marriage. The *vaines* are the strings of the lute.

*sollicite*: 'to urge, importune' (*OED*, *solicit*, v., sense 2).

<sup>13</sup> *wombe*: the convex hollow cavity of a lyre's resonator; the comparison between the musical instrument and the (increasingly female) human body began with the reference to the strings as *vaines* in line 374. This Lady may be Urania, referred to above, the heavenly Muse.

<sup>14</sup> *Gythare*: the cithara, an instrument associated with Apollo (Tibullus, *Elegies* 2.3.12), possibly with overlapping reference to the guitar, a very recent arrival in Scotland and England (*OED*, *guitar*, earliest reference 1637 [*guittara*]; cf. *DOST*, *kittarr* [1677]), or (more likely) the earlier cithern (*DOST*, *gittern*, *gutterne*, *siterin*).



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THE CONFESSION OF FAITH SUBSCRIBED AT FIRST BY THE KINGS MAJESTY  
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CONFIRMATION BY THE HONORABLE MEN BARONETS GENTLEMEN, BURGESSES, MINISTERS, & COMMONS  
IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED AFTER-SPECIFIED TO MAINTAINE THE SAID TRUE RELIGION  
AND DOCTRINE OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST  
NOW  
CONFIRMED BY THE  
HONORABLE MEN BARONETS GENTLEMEN, BURGESSES, MINISTERS, & COMMONS  
IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED

**W**EE ALL, and therefore wee believe with our hearts, confesse with our mouths, and  
showe with our lives, that there is one God, the Father, Almighty, Maker of  
heaven and earth, visible and invisible, Father of Jesus Christ our Lord,  
of whom Jesus Christ the only begotten Son, was borne, who is true God  
of true God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father,  
by whom all things were made, who sitteth on the right hand of the Father,  
and shall come again to judge the living and the dead, to whom all power  
is given in heaven and in earth. And wee believe that Jesus Christ, who  
was conceived by the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, was  
born, was baptized in the River Jordan, grew up, was tempted, was  
crucified, dead, buried, and rose againe the third day, ascended into  
heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and shall come againe  
with the clouds of heaven, to judge the living and the dead. And wee  
believe that he shall come againe, to receive the kingdom of God, and  
to sit on his throne, with the Father, for ever ever. And wee believe that  
there shall be a resurrection of the dead, and a life of the world to come.  
And wee acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and wee  
acknowledge one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was crucified  
for us, who was buried, and rose againe the third day, who sitteth on  
the right hand of the Father, and shall come againe to judge the living  
and the dead. And wee acknowledge one holy catholic and apostolic  
Church, wee acknowledge the communion of saints, wee acknowledge the  
restitution of the body of Christ, and wee acknowledge the life of the  
world to come. Amen.



**WEE ALL**, and

And therefore wee believe with our hearts, confesse with our mouths, and showe with our lives, that there is one God, the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, visible and invisible, Father of Jesus Christ our Lord, of whom Jesus Christ the only begotten Son, was borne, who is true God of true God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and shall come againe to judge the living and the dead, to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth. And wee believe that Jesus Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, was born, was baptized in the River Jordan, grew up, was tempted, was crucified, dead, buried, and rose againe the third day, ascended into heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and shall come againe with the clouds of heaven, to judge the living and the dead. And wee believe that he shall come againe, to receive the kingdom of God, and to sit on his throne, with the Father, for ever ever. And wee believe that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, and a life of the world to come. And wee acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and wee acknowledge one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was crucified for us, who was buried, and rose againe the third day, who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and shall come againe to judge the living and the dead. And wee acknowledge one holy catholic and apostolic Church, wee acknowledge the communion of saints, wee acknowledge the restitution of the body of Christ, and wee acknowledge the life of the world to come. Amen.

the LORD our GOD that wee shall continue in the obedience of the Doctrine & Discipline of  
Gods Churchfull Judgement. And seeing that things are thus, wee praye for the King  
our LORD our GOD that wee shall continue in the obedience of the Doctrine & Discipline of  
Gods Churchfull Judgement. And seeing that things are thus, wee praye for the King

**W**EE ALL, and therefore wee believe with our hearts, confesse with our mouths, and showe with our lives, that there is one God, the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, visible and invisible, Father of Jesus Christ our Lord, of whom Jesus Christ the only begotten Son, was borne, who is true God of true God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made, who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and shall come againe to judge the living and the dead, to whom all power is given in heaven and in earth. And wee believe that Jesus Christ, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, was born, was baptized in the River Jordan, grew up, was tempted, was crucified, dead, buried, and rose againe the third day, ascended into heaven, sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and shall come againe with the clouds of heaven, to judge the living and the dead. And wee believe that he shall come againe, to receive the kingdom of God, and to sit on his throne, with the Father, for ever ever. And wee believe that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, and a life of the world to come. And wee acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and wee acknowledge one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was crucified for us, who was buried, and rose againe the third day, who sitteth on the right hand of the Father, and shall come againe to judge the living and the dead. And wee acknowledge one holy catholic and apostolic Church, wee acknowledge the communion of saints, wee acknowledge the restitution of the body of Christ, and wee acknowledge the life of the world to come. Amen.

163           The fethered voyces, Birdes, devoutly bends  
              Their keene and learned bills, which nimbly indents<sup>15</sup>  
              Thousand of various checkred,<sup>16</sup> conquering noates

210                     Floraes People, which did Eden grace,  
              Your Pompe's unusuall,<sup>17</sup> and yee seeme to come  
              Natures Embassadours,<sup>18</sup> for to tell some  
              Strange glory of this age

253           Now intertwist good Trees your amarous armes,<sup>19</sup>  
              Freely possesse your self in those your charmes,

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<sup>15</sup> *indents*: the birds' beaks give a 'strongly seriate outline' to or 'inlay' (ornament) the notes sung (*OED*, *indent*, v.1, sense I.1.a; *indent*, v.2, sense I.1).

<sup>16</sup> *checkred*: an extension into sound of the usual association with variegation (*DOST*, *chekker(i)t*).

<sup>17</sup> Drummond, *Forth Feasting*, line 7: the mountains 'in vnusuall Pompe on tip-toes stand.'

<sup>18</sup> *come* | *Nature's Embassadours*: ellipsis for *come as*.

<sup>19</sup> The National Covenant bound its subscribers to 'the mutual defence and assistance every one of us of another in the same cause of maintaining the true Religion and his Majesty's Authority' (Donaldson, ed., page 200).

So doth a Candle help the Sun to see,<sup>20</sup>  
 So doth a sillie Streame ingrosse the Sea;<sup>21</sup>  
 So doth the Heaven in Arras work appeare;  
 With every emprison'd Star and silent Sphere,  
 As my Rash Muse hath now diffused her layes<sup>22</sup>  
 And whispered as shee could the great yeares praise  
 Awaking highbred sprites that weare the Bayes,  
 To stretch their numbers, their proud notes to raise.

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<sup>20</sup> To light a candle in the sun is proverbial for 'lost labour' (Tilley S988); Montgomerie 67.III, 'Can goldin Titan'; Mure of Rowallan, 'To Prince Charles', lines 12–4, 'thy gloryes schyne, / *Qubich* (lyk the boundles ocean) swels no moir / Tho springs and founts infuis thair liquid stoir.'

<sup>21</sup> This statement contrasts with James VI's assertion that 'When all is done, do to him [the sea] what they [rivers and streams] can | None can persaeue that they do swell him mair' ('Paraphrasticall Translation ovt of the Poete Lycane,' lines 17–18; in *Essayes of a Prentise*, 1584), an emblem which James applies to the futility of rebellion by the commons against their king.

*ingrosse*: 'increase in size' (*OED*, *engross*, v., sense 10).

<sup>22</sup> *hath now diffused*: implying that this poem was written for publication (*OED*, *diffuse*, v., sense 1a)?

- 73           How [the winds] embosome the enamour'd earth<sup>23</sup>
- 242           [riches and delights] do as far  
Exceed before times, as the Idalian star  
Outshines the lay meteors in the air<sup>24</sup>
- 272           The treasures which golden Ceres doth disclose<sup>25</sup>
- 313           [Nature] hath taught heavens spheres to'utweave a year so fine<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *embosome*: contrasting with Drummond's depiction of a Scotland bereft of her King, 'While *Tithons* wife embosom'd by Him lies' (*Forth Feasting*, line 95).

<sup>24</sup> The comparison is from Drummond, *Forth Feasting*: 'past as farre | As Meteors are by the Idalian Starre' (lines 317–18). Here, *lay* distinguishes the meteors as 'unsanctified; unspiritual; secular' compared to celestial, *Idalian Venus* (*OED*, *lay*, adj., sense 3c).

<sup>25</sup> Drummond depicts James VI's departure from Scotland in 1603 in the opposite terms: 'Faire Ceres curst our Fields with barren Frost' (*Forth Feasting*, line 81).

<sup>26</sup> *to'utweave*: 'To weave to an end or completion' (*OED*, *outweave*, v. 1, with Drummond, *Forth Feasting*, line 39 as the sole example: 'May neuer Houres the Webbe of Day out-weaue'; not in *DOST*).

329

Each twinkle of a star, or her sweet smile,  
Who did the boy Endimion ne'er beguile<sup>27</sup>  
Would be too thronged in a volume great,  
And craves more lines than my poore pen can get

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<sup>27</sup> In this transformation of the myth of Endymion, the moon bewitches no one. *The Entertainment of the High and Mighty Monarch Charles ... into his Auncient and Royall City of Edinburgh, the fifteenth of Iune, 1633* includes an interlude in which Endymion introduces the planetary gods (Drummond, *Poetical Works*, vol. 2, pp. 111–36 (at 127–28)).

83

th'earth doth swell | Pamp'ed in richer balme.<sup>28</sup>

*A Pregnant bank swel'd up*

*... Our hands were firmly cimented*

*With a fast balme*

107

Indeed the Taper which we had before thee

Was but a sparkling diamond to thy glorie;

Or like the thin squibes of thy Sisters face<sup>29</sup>

*The Sunne is spent, and now his flasks*

*Send forth light squibs, no constant rayes.*

201

If Pythagorick transmigration could

'Mongst flowres, and trees establish'd be<sup>30</sup>

*the Pithagorian doctrine doth not onely carry one soule from man to man, nor man to beast, but indifferently to plants also*

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<sup>28</sup> The swelling Earth and its emission of 'balme' recalls the opening of Donne's 'The Extasie'.

<sup>29</sup> For *squibs* to refer to dim rays of light, see Donne, 'A Nocturnall upon S. Lucies Day', lines 3–4.

<sup>30</sup> This is the contention given in the prefatory Epistle to Donne's 'The Progresse of the Soule' (A3v).

Nature hath spent her Spirit for to trime  
Her self with Buskings, and to grace the tyme,  
Strain'd all her Force and Riches for to show  
Unto the world what wonders shee can do,  
She hath taught heavens spheres to'utweave a year so fine<sup>31</sup>  
That of this Twist they have no more behinde  
Which sweetlie doth erect it's statelie head,  
O'relooking other humble yeares as dead,  
Termines the Worlds hopes,<sup>32</sup> who wondering gaze.  
And crownes it worthie of immortall Bayes.

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<sup>31</sup> *to'utweave*: 'To weave to an end or completion' (*OED*, *outweave*, v. 1, with Drummond, *Forth Feasting* as the sole example: 'May neuer Houres the Webbe of Day out-weaue'; not in *DOST*).

<sup>32</sup> *Termines*: this year concludes the world's hopes (*OED*, *termine*, v., sense 3a); 'For, Death is dead, Time terminated, Corruption conquer'd clean' (Sylvester, *New-Hierusalem*, line 1115).

The Pagnim Poets who can magnifie  
A sillie rose, and base things deifie,  
Who nature rude thinke that they do obscure,  
Metamorphosing, violets in stars pure<sup>33</sup>  
Can no more reach the glory of this time  
And seasons beautie, nor they can confine  
The boundlesse Ocean in their narrow quill,  
Or with few atomes all this All can fill

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<sup>33</sup> In an entertainment for James VI during his 1617 visit, Clytie, spurned by the Sun, is metamorphosed into a violet (Ovid, *Met.* 4.256–273) or a ‘*Heliotropion* or *Solsequium*’, but not a star (‘The Kings Maiestie Came to Paisley the xxiii of July,’ ed. Adamson, *Muses Welcome*, pages 259–61) .