

THE SHEPHERDS CALENDER

JANUARIE

ÆGLOGA PRIMA. ARGUMENT

In this fyrst Æglogue Colin Cloute, a shepherdes boy, complaineth him of his unfortunate love, being but newly (as semeth) enamoured of a countrie lasse called Rosalinde: with which strong affection being very sore traveled, he compareth his carefull case to the sadde season of the yeare, to the frostie ground, to the frozen trees, and to his owne winter-beaten flocke. And, lastlye, fynding himselfe robbed of all former pleasaunce and delights, hee breaketh his Pipe in peeces, and casteth him selfe to the ground.

COLIN CLOUTE

A SHEPEHEARDS boye, (no better doe him call,
 When Winters wastful spight was almost spent,
 All in a sunneshine day, as did befall,
 Led forth his flock, that had bene long ypent:
 So faynt they woxe, and feeble in the folde,
 That now unnethes their feete could them uphold.
 All as the Sheepe, such was the shepeheards looke,
 For pale and wanne he was, (alas the while!)
 May seeme he lovd, or els some care he tooke;
 Well couth he tune his pipe and frame his stile:
 Tho to a hill his faynting flocke he ledde,
 And thus him playnd, the while his shepe there fedde.
 ‘Ye Gods of love, that pitie lovers payne,
 (If any gods the paine of lovers pitie,)
 Looke from above, where you in joyes remaine,
 And bowe your eares unto my dolefull dittie:
 And, Pan, thou shepherds God that once didst love,
 Pitie the paines that thou thy selfe didst prove.

unnethes, scarcely.

'Thou barrein ground, whome winters wrath hath
 wasted,

Art made a myrrhour to behold my plight:
 Whilome thy fresh spring flowrd, and after hasted
 Thy sommer prowde, with Daffadillies dight;
 And now is come thy wynters stormy state,
 Thy mantle mard, wherein thou maskedst late.

'Such rage as winters reigneth in my heart,
 My life-bloud friesing with unkindly cold;
 Such stormy stoures do breede my balefull smart,
 As if my yeare were wast and woxen old;
 And yet, alas! but now my spring begonne,
 And yet, alas! yt is already donne.

'You naked trees, whose shady leaves are lost,
 Wherein the byrds were wont to build their bowre,
 And now are clothd with mosse and hoary frost,
 Insteade of bloosmes, wherewith your buds did flowre;
 I see your teares that from your boughes doe raine,
 Whose drops in drery ysicles remaine.

'All so my lustfull leafe is drye and sere,
 My timely buds with wayling all are wasted;
 The blossome which my braunch of youth did beare
 With breathed sighes is blowne away and blasted;
 And from mine eyes the drizzling teares descend,
 As on your boughes the ysicles depend.

'Thou feeble flocke, whose fleece is rough and rent,
 Whose knees are weake through fast and evill fare,
 Mayst wnesse well, by thy ill government,
 Thy maysters mind is overcome with care:
 Thou weake, I wanne; thou leane, I quite forlorne:
 With mourning pyne I; you with pyning mourne.

stoures, tumults.

THE SHEPHERDS CALENDER 3

'A thousand sithes I curse that carefull hower
 Wherein I longd the neighbour towne to see,
 And eke tenne thousand sithes I blesse the stoure
 Wherein I sawe so fayre a sight as shee:
 Yet all for naught: such sight hath bred my bane.
 Ah, God! that love should breede both joy and payne!

'It is not Hobbinol wherefore I plaine,
 Albee my love he seeke with dayly suit;
 His clownish gifts and curtsies I disdain,
 His kiddes, his cracknelles, and his early fruit.
 Ah, foolish Hobbinol! thy gyfts bene vayne;
 Colin them gives to Rosalind againe.

'I love thilke lasse, (alas! why doe I love?)
 And am forlorne, (alas! why am I lorne?)
 Shee deignes not my good will, but doth reprove,
 And of my rurall musicke holdeth scorne.
 Shepherds devise she hateth as the snake,
 And laughs the songs that Colin Clout doth make.

'Wherefore, my pype, albee rude Pan thou please,
 Yet for thou pleasest not where most I would:
 And thou, unlucky Muse, that wontst to ease
 My musing mynd, yet canst not when thou should;
 Both pype and Muse shall sore the while abye.'
 So broke his oaten pype, and downe dyd lye.

By that, the welked Phœbus gan availe
 His weary waine; and nowe the frosty Night
 Her mantle black through heaven gan overhaile:
 Which scene, the pensife boy, halfe in despight,
 Arose, and homeward drove his sonned sheepe,
 Whose hanging heads did seeme his carefull case to
 weepe.

sithes, times. *availe*, bring down.

FEBRUARIE

ÆGLOGA SECUNDA. ARGUMENT

This Æglogue is rather morall and generall, then bent to any secrete or particular purpose. It specially conteineth a discourse of old age, in the person of Thenot, an olde Shepheard, who for his crookednesse and unlustinesse is scorned of Cuddie, an unhappy Heardmans boye. The matter very well accordeth with the season of the moneth, the yeare now drouping, and as it were drawing to his last age. For as in this time of yeare, so then in our bodies, there is a dry and withering cold, which congealeth the crudled blood, and frieseth the wetherbeaten flesh with stormes of Fortune, and hoare frosts of Care. To which purpose the olde man telleth a tale of the Oake and the Bryer, so lively, and so feelingly, as, if the thing were set forth in some Picture before our eyes, more plainly could not appeare.

CUDDIE. THENOT

Cuddie

AH for pittie! wil rancke Winters rage
 These bitter blasts never ginne tasswage?
 The kene cold blowes through my beaten hyde,
 All as I were through the body gryde:
 My ragged rontes all shiver and shake,
 As doen high Towers in an earthquake:
 They wont in the wind wagge their wrigle tayles,
 Perke as a Peacock; but now it avales.

Thenot

Lewdly complainest thou, laesie ladde,
 Of Winters wracke for making thee sadde.
 Must not the world wend in his commun course,
 From good to badd, and from badde to worse,
 From worse unto that is worst of all,
 gryde, pierced. *rontes*, young bullocks.

THE SHEPHERDS CALENDER 5

And then returne to his former fall?
 Who will not suffer the stormy time,
 Where will he live tyll the lusty prime?
 Selfe have I worne out thrise threttie yeares,
 Some in much joy, many in many teares,
 Yet never complained of cold nor heate,
 Of Sommers flame, nor of Winters threat,
 Ne ever was to Fortune foeman,
 But gently tooke that ungently came;
 And ever my flocke was my chiefe care,
 Winter or Sommer they mought well fare.

Cuddie

No marveile, Thenot, if thou can beare
 Cherefully the Winters wrathful cheare;
 For Age and Winter accord full nie,
 This chill, that cold; this crooked, that wrye;
 And as the lowring Wether lookes downe,
 So semest thou like Good Fryday to frowne:
 But my flowring youth is foe to frost,
 My shippe unwont in stormes to be tost.

Thenot

The soveraigne of seas he blames in vaine,
 That, once sea-beate, will to sea againe:
 So loytring live you little heardgroomes,
 Keeping your beastes in the budded broomes:
 And, when the shining sunne laugheth once,
 You deemen the Spring is come attonce;
 Tho gynne you, fond flies! the cold to scorne,
 And, crowing in pypes made of greene corne,
 You thincken to be Lords of the yeare;
 But eft, when ye count you freed from feare,
 Comes the breme Winter with chamfred browes,
 breme, cold. *chamfred*, chapped.

Full of wrinckles and frostie furrowes,
 Drerily shooting his stormy darte,
 Which cruddles the blood and pricks the harte:
 Then is your carelesse corage accoied,
 Your carefull heards with cold bene annoied:
 Then paye you the price of your surquedrie,
 With weeping, and wayling, and misery.

Cuddie

Ah, foolish old man! I scorne thy skill,
 That wouldest me my springing youngh to spil:
 I deeme thy braine emperished bee
 Through rusty elde, that hath rotted thee:
 Or sicker thy head veray tottie is,
 So on thy corbe shoulder it leanes amisse.
 Now thy selfe hast lost both lopp and topp,
 Als my budding braunch thou wouldest cropp;
 But were thy yeares greene, as now bene myne,
 To other delights they would encline:
 Tho wouldest thou learne to caroll of Love,
 And hery with hymnes thy lasses glove;
 Tho wouldest thou pype of Phyllis prayse;
 But Phyllis is myne for many dayes.
 I wonne her with a gyrdle of gelt,
 Embost with buegle about the belt:
 Such an one shepeheard would make full faine;
 Such an one would make thee younge againe.

Thenot

Thou art a fon of thy love to boste;
 All that is lent to love wyll be lost.

accoied, daunted.
surquedrie, pride.
sicker, surely.

corbe, crooked.
hery, worship.
fon, fool.

THE SHEPHERDS CALENDER 7

Cuddie

Seest howe brag yond Bullocke beares,
 So smirke, so smoothe, his pricked eares?
 His hornes bene as broade as Rainebowe bent,
 His dewelap as lythe as lasse of Kent:
 See howe he venteth into the wynd;
 Weenest of love is not his mynd?
 Seemeth thy flocke thy counsell can,
 So lustlesse bene they, so weake, so wan;
 Clothed with cold, and hoary wyth frost,
 Thy flocks father his corage hath lost.
 Thy Ewes, that wont to have blowen bags,
 Like wailefull widdowes hangen their crags;
 The rather Lambes bene starved with cold,
 All for their Maister is lustlesse and old.

Thenot

Cuddie, I wote thou kenst little good,
 So vainely tadvaunce thy headlesse hood;
 For youngth is a bubble blown up with breath,
 Whose witt is weakenesse, whose wage is death,
 Whose way is wildernesse, whose ynnne Penaunce,
 And stoope-gallaunt Age, the hoste of Greevaunce.
 But shall I tel thee a tale of truth,
 Which I cond of Tityrus in my youth,
 Keeping his sheepe on the hils of Kent?

Cuddie

To nought more, Thenot, my mind is bent
 Then to heare novells of his devise;
 They bene so well-thewed, and so wise,
 What ever that good old man bespake.

can, knows. *crags*, necks. *rather*, early.

Thenot

Many meete tales of youth did he make,
 And some of love, and some of chevalrie;
 But none fitter then this to applie.
 Now listen a while and hearken the end.

There grewe an aged Tree on the greene,
 A goodly Oake sometime had it bene,
 With armes full strong and largely displayd,
 But of their leaves they were disarayde:
 The bodie bigge, and mightely pight,
 Thoroughly rooted, and of wonderous hight;
 Whilome had bene the King of the field,
 And mochell mast to the husband did yelde,
 And with his nuts larded many swine:
 But now the gray mosse marred his rine;
 His bared boughes were beaten with stormes,
 His toppe was bald, and wasted with wormes,
 His honor decayed, his braunches sere.

Hard by his side grewe a bragging Brere,
 Which proudly thrust into Thelement,
 And seemed to threat the Firmament:
 It was embellisht with blossomes fayre,
 And thereto aye wonned to repayre
 The shepherds daughters to gather flowres,
 To peinct their girlonds with his colowres;
 And in his small bushes used to shrowde
 The sweete Nightingale singing so lowde;
 Which made this foolish Brere wexe so bold,
 That on a time he cast him to scold
 And snebbe the good Oake, for he was old.
 ‘Why standst there (quoth he) thou brutish blocke?
 Nor for fruct nor for shadowe serves thy stocke;
 Seest how fresh my flowers bene spreadde,

pight, fixed.

THE SHEPHERDS CALENDER 9

Dyed in Lilly white and Cremsin redde,
 With Leaves engrained in lusty greene;
 Colours meete to clothe a mayden Queene?
 Thy wast bignes but combers the grownd,
 And dirks the beauty of my blossomes rownd:
 The mouldie mosse, which thee accloieeth,
 My Sinamon smell too much annoieeth:
 Wherefore soone I rede thee hence remove,
 Least thou the price of my displeasure prove.'
 So spake this bold brere with great disdaine:
 Little him aunswered the Oake againe,
 But yekled, with shame and greefe adawed,
 That of a weede he was overcrawed.

Yt chaunced after upon a day,
 The Hus-bandman selfe to come that way,
 Of custome for to survewe his grownd,
 And his trees of state in compasse rownd:
 Him when the spitefull brere had espyed,
 Causelesse complained, and lowdly cryed
 Unto his lord, stirring up sterne strife.

'O, my liege Lord! the God of my life!
 Pleaseth you ponder your Suppliants plaint,
 Caused of wrong and cruell constraint,
 Which I your poore Vassall dayly endure;
 And, but your goodnes the same recure,
 Am like for desperate doole to dye,
 Through felonous force of mineemie.'

Greatly aghast with this piteous plea,
 Him rested the goodman on the lea,
 And badde the Brere in his plaint proceede.
 With painted words tho gan this proude weede
 (As most usen Ambitious folke:)
 His colowred crime with craft to cloke.

adawed, daunted.

‘Ah, my soveraigne! Lord of creatures all,
 Thou placer of plants both humble and tall,
 Was not I planted of thine owne hand,
 To be the primrose of all thy land;
 With flowring blossomes to furnish the prime,
 And scarlot berries in Sommer time?
 How falls it then that this faded Oake,
 Whose bodie is sere, whose braunches broke,
 Whose naked Armes stretch unto the fyre,
 Unto such tyrannie doth aspire;
 Hindering with his shade my lovely light,
 And robbing me of the swete sonnes sight?
 So beate his old boughes my tender-side,
 That oft the bloud springeth from woundes wyde;
 Untimely my flowres forced to fall,
 That bene the honor of your Coronall:
 And oft he lets his cancker-wormes light
 Upon my braunches, to worke me more spight;
 And oft his hoarie locks downe doth cast,
 Where-with my fresh flowretts bene defast:
 For this, and many more such outrage,
 Craving your goodlihead to aswage
 The ranckorous rigour of his might,
 Nought aske I, but onely to hold my right;
 Submitting me to your good sufferance,
 And praying to be garded from greevance.’
 To this the Oake cast him to replie
 Well as he couth; but his enemie
 Had kindled such coles of displeasure,
 That the good man noulde stay his leasure,
 But home him hasted with furious heate,
 Encreasing his wrath with many a threate:
 His harmefull Hatchet he hent in hand,

hent, caught.