

**A PROGRESS OF PIETY:
WHOSE JESSES LEAD
INTO THE HARBOUR OF
HEAVENLY HEART'S EASE**

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A Progress of Piety: Whose Jesses Lead into the Harbour of Heavenly Heart's Ease by John Norden

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JOHN NORDEN

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BY
JOHN NORDEN.

Hom. xts.
Continue in Prayer.

REPRINTED FOR
The Parker Society,

FOR THE PERCUSSION OF
THE WORKS OF THE FATHERS AND EARLY WRITERS OF THE
REFORMED ENGLISH CHURCH.



CAMBRIDGE:
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THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.

M.DCCO.XLVII.

1847

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE.

THE little volume here presented to the members of the Parker Society is one of extreme rarity. A copy of it some years since came into the possession of the late George Stokes, Esq., the Society's Honorary Librarian; but it was an imperfect one, wanting the title-page and the dedication. To supply these defects, a second copy was searched for in all directions, in the chief of the public libraries, and many private ones, throughout the kingdom, as well as through the booksellers; but without success. At length, most unexpectedly, a complete copy was met with, but of a different edition from that of Mr Stokes, and bearing date in its title-page 1596. It was found upon examination to contain several prayers not inserted in the earlier edition; but the omissions in the later are much more copious than the additions. It seemed therefore desirable to reprint the first edition complete, and to incorporate with it the new matter supplied in the other. This has been done accordingly, and all the differences of

matter between the two editions are carefully noted in the margin.

The more important variations also of readings are recorded: but in publishing a work whose value and use is altogether of a devotional character, it has not been considered necessary to register all the verbal discrepancies, except where a reading of the later edition has been substituted for one of the earlier.

The date of the first edition may be gathered with tolerable accuracy from a passage in p. 95 of this reprint: "Our most sacred queen Elizabeth, in whom, under our good God, we have been *this thirty-three years almost complete*, so happily defended." This stands in the edition of 1596, "thirty-nine years." The conclusion would be, that the earlier edition was published in 1590. But in point of fact, Elizabeth began to reign in November, 1558. Consequently the thirty-ninth year of her reign would not be *complete* till November, 1597; whereas the year which the title-page assign to the publication (1596) would terminate, even according to the old computation, eight months before. It may be that this later edition was produced soon after the *commencement* of the thirty-ninth year of Elizabeth's reign, and in introducing the change from the thirty-third to the thirty-ninth year extreme accuracy was not attended to. Upon this supposition the earlier

edition may have been published somewhat late in 1591.

And this conclusion is strengthened by another circumstance. In p. 110 of the present reprint, we meet with the following: "Such a strong deceiver arose *of late, even yesterday*, that hideous Hacket." Now Hacket's conspiracy and execution, according to Strype, (*Annals*, Vol. iv. p. 96, *Oxf.*) took place in July, 1591. If the book therefore was published in the interval between that and the following November, the language of the reference to Hacket would be strictly accurate. It may be observed that no bibliographer except Lowndes (see p. 2) makes any mention of the earlier edition, and he does not assign its date.

As the two copies in question are the only ones whose existence is known of, there are no means of ascertaining whether any other edition was printed in the interval between these two. Nor again, though it is here assumed that the edition of 1590—91 was the first, is there any evidence to substantiate it. The probability of it is sustained by the fact of the great alterations made in the book *after* this edition, as such a remodelling of the work would be more likely to take place after the first, than after a later, edition.

Some of the poetical pieces in this volume have been already reprinted by the Parker Society in

“Select Poetry of the reign of queen Elizabeth,” pp. 460, &c. But in the account there given of the author (p. xliii.) it is erroneously stated, that the “Progress of Piety” was “*first* printed in 1596.”

Of the author's history little is known. He published several theological works, of which the “Mirror for the Multitude,” mentioned in the beginning of the Dedication of the present volume, appeared in 1586, and others both before and after that: but whether he was the same with John Norden, the topographer, is doubtful, though the coincidence in name and time seems to make it probable. He was a layman, as we learn from himself (see p. 118); and his little work here republished will be appreciated by the friends of the Reformation as a specimen of the degree in which the influence of that great event had leavened the minds of thinking and religious men at that period. And though its author was not numbered among the dignitaries or martyrs who led on that glorious triumph, yet the circumstance of his book being dedicated to the queen, with his own testimony to her majesty's “gracious acceptance of his former travail,” must be taken as an indication that its scriptural principles and devotional feelings were in accordance with the tone of religion then prevailing in our reformed Church.

It is a satisfaction therefore to the Council of

the Parker Society to have succeeded in rescuing from oblivion a book of such intrinsic merit and interest, and to introduce it now to an extended circulation as a sample of the practical and devotional theology of the Elizabethan age. And indeed they would hardly feel excused to their subscribers, several of whom have urged the subject upon their attention, if, besides the more learned works, which are so valuable both intrinsically and as authoritative documents, they did not put forth some occasional specimens of what may be considered the more popular manuals of that day; of which many, both doctrinal and practical, yet remain.

November, 1847.

The following is the list of Norden's works, extracted from Watt, *Bibliotheca Britannica*, omitting those of the topographer, as being of no interest to the reader, even if they belong to the same author:—

1. *A Pensive Man's Practise.* 4to. 1585. 1591.
2. *The Sinful Man's Solace.* 8vo. 1585.
3. *A Mirrour for the Multitude.* 8vo. 1586.
4. *Antithesis; or Contrarietie between the Wicked and the Godly.* 1587.

5. A Reforming Glass. 16mo. 1596.
6. A Progress of Pietie. 24mo. 1596.
7. Christian Familiar Comfort and Encouragement unto all English Subjects, not to Dismale at the Spanish Threats. 4to. 1596.
8. The Mirrour of Honour. 4to. 1597.
9. Vicissitudo Rerum; an Elegiacall Poeme. 4to. 1600.
10. The Labyrinth of Man's Life. 4to. 1614.
11. The Pensive Soule's Delighte. 8vo. 1615.
12. An Eye to Heaven in Earth. 8vo. 1619.