

The 1540 INTERLUDE reconstructed for performance 2013

Words by Sir David Lyndsay, Sir William Eure, Thomas Bellenden with additional dialogue by Gregory Thompson and Professor Greg Walker

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KING JAMES V. Scott Hoatson
GAVIN DUNBAR, ARCHBISHOP OF GLASGOW. Billy Riddoch
THE PLAYER KING. James Mackenzie
TEMPORALITY. Paul Cunningham
SPIRITUALITY. Tom McGovern
BURGESS. Michael Mackenzie
POOR MAN. Davey Mackay
MUSICIAN & SCRIBE. Peter Kenny

SOLACE. In January 1540 Scotland was just beginning to feel the winds of religious Reformation blowing up from the south and across the sea from Germany. King James V was 28, and at the height of his political and cultural ambitions. It was for James' court that the playwright and royal herald Sir David Lyndsay wrote the first version of –

SIR DAVID LYNDSAY. [LOOKS UP FROM WRITING] Ane Pleasant Satire of the Three Estates. Nearly finished.

SOLACE. We don't know much about the Linlithgow performance, but we do know this: that the King himself, and his new French Queen, the pregnant Mary of Guise were in the hall to see it. The Archbishop of Glasgow, Gavin Dunbar was there too. We know too that the play caused quite a stir, both in Scotland and in England. And we know this because we have / this –

EURE. [SHOWS LETTER] This letter. A letter I wrote. Now I'm Sir William Eure. Henry VIII's man in Scotland. I'm Captain of Berwick Castle and Deputy Warden of the East March. I tell Thomas Cromwell what's up up North.

SOLACE. Eure's been getting his information from his Scottish insiders, especially one –

BELLENDEN. Thomas Bellenden. An educated Scot.

EURE. One of our sort.

BELLENDEN. Indeed.

EURE. Protestant.

BELLENDEN. Not that I called myself that. I prefer New Catholic.

SOLACE. And we don't know much more about him other than he –

BELLENDEN. [HOLDS UP PAPER] Gave Eure an account of the play:

LYNDSAY. Ane Pleasant Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis. Almost finished.

SOLACE. I would like you all to imagine you are going to see the play; that you are the court of King James V. It's coming to the end of Christmas 1540 and we're in the Great Hall of Linlithgow Palace. On the walls are great tapestries from the Netherlands and the most marvelous roof. And of course there's a tension, a dynamic. Who produced this play? Who commissioned it? Is it speaking to the King? His Royal Majesty, King James V. [FANFARE & ENTER KING JAMES V] All rise, come on, are you suspending your disbelief or not? [FANFARE] Aye, that's better. So as well as watching the play, you'll be watching the King watch the play. Serious stuff, aye. Aye sit up straight, that's right, you're in the presence of one of the crowned heads of Europe. And you'll be thinking: Is this play just a flaggerty fuff? Or does it have a darker meaning? Is the King using the medium of the theatrical dialogue to speak to you his court? We've all seen plays where the writer has 'something to say'. Perhaps the King is speaking to someone in particular? Someone like, Gavin Dunbar, the Archbishop of Glasgow. Ladies and gentlemen, the Archbishop of Glasgow. [FANFARE. ENTER THE ARCHBISHOP OF GLASGOW] Come on, all rise, come on, the Archbishop's important, he's a direct link to His Holiness the Pope. Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, the Archbishop of Glasgow. [GLASGOW GIVES AN EXTREMELY LOW BOW TO JAMES V] So you're the court watching a play in the Great Hall of Linlithgow in the presence of James V and over there's the Archbishop of Glasgow. The play was written, like I said, by Sir David Lyndsay.

[ENTER SIR DAVID LYNDSAY] LYNDSAY. Finished.

SOLACE. Ladies and Gentleman: the Author - watch out for him later, he's playing Experience. Oh, the very idea. You're way ahead of yourself. Experience in the sense of Wisdom. Interestingly there was a time, when James was a child, when these three men shared a bedroom. The boy king, James V, and his tutors, his guardians, Lyndsay and Dunbar, sleeping peacefully together. And now they're governing Scotland.

Unfortunately, the script of the 1540 performance hasn't survived. So, I'm sorry, but that's the way it goes with evidence based research. So it's good night from me, / and –

[SOLACE, JAMES AND DUNBAR FORM CURTAIN CALL]

EURE. Hold your wisht, what bout my letter?

BELLENDEN. And my account of the play?

SIR DAVID LYNDSAY. And my later version will survive, surely? It's five times the size. Look here's the Canongate. And there's this edition by Greg Walker. We can rife the play and stick it through the hairt.

BELLENDEN. Following my account.

EURE. And my letter.

LYNDSAY. And borrow from the surviving text.

SOLACE. All cobbled together? [BELLENDEN, EURE & LYNDSAY NOD.]
Ah so this is what they mean by practise-based research.

EURE. [READING] To the Right Honourable and my very good lord, the Lord Privy Seal –

SOLACE. That's Thomas Cromwell.

EURE. Please it your good Lordship to be advertised that the meeting which I had with two gentlemen of the King of Scots' council at Coldstream for such business as I have advertised your Lordship of in mine other letter, with account of our proceeding in the same. I had diverse communing with Master Thomas Bellenden, one of the said councillors for Scotland, a man by estimation apparent to be about th'age of fifty years or above, and of gentle and sage conversation, specially touching the stay of the spirituality in Scotland. And gathering him to be one inclined to the sort used in our sovereign realm of England...

SOLACE. That's a Protestant.

BELLENDEN. Alright. That's enough.

EURE. I did so largely break with him in those behalves as to move to know of him what mind the king and council of Scotland was inclined unto concerning the Bishop of

Rome, and for the reforming of the misusing of the spirituality of Scotland, whereunto he gently and lovingly answered, showing himself well contented of that communing, and did say that

BELLENDEN. The King of Scots himself, with all his temporal council, was greatly given to the reformation of the misdemeanours of bishops, religious persons and priests within the Realm. And so much so that they have had an interlude –

SOLACE. That's a theatrical production would you believe?

EURE. Played in the feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord last passed.

SOLACE. That's the 6th January 1540.

EURE. Before the King and Queen at Linlithgow, and the whole council, spiritual and temporal. The whole matter whereof concluded upon the Declaration of the naughtiness in Religion, the presumption of bishops, the collusion of the spiritual courts, and misusing of priests.

BELLENDEN. Now I wasn't there myself but I have obtained a note from a Scotsman of our sort, being present at the playing of the said interlude, of the effect thereof,

EURE. which I do send unto your Lordship by this bearer.

SOLACE. So in Scotland they're using theatre to push policy. Imagine that: the Scottish Government funding the production of a play that sets out a radical agenda calling for the end of corruption and the emancipation of the poor. Could it happen now do you think? Well, anyway, this is what the note said:

BELLENDEN. In the first entry comes in SOLACE.

SOLACE. That's me.

BELLENDEN. [SOLACE KEEPS TRYING TO START AS BELLENDEN READS] whose part was but to make merry, sing ballads with his fellows, and drink at the interludes of the play, who showed first to all the audience the play to be played, which was a general thing, meaning nothing in special to displease no man, praying therefore no man to be angry with the same.

SOLACE. Prudent people, I pray you all, / Tak nae man grief in special, / For we shall speak in general, / For pastime and for play. / Therefore, till all our rhymes be rung /

And our mistunit sangs be sung, / Let every man keep weel ane tongue, / And every woman tway.

BELLENDEN. Next came in a King, who passed to his throne. [FANFARE. ENTER THE PLAYER KING TO TAKE HIS THRONE.] The king [IS ABOUT TO SPEAK] had no speech to the end of the play, and then only to ratify and approve as in plain parliament all things done by the rest of the players.

SOLACE. So the real King James V is watching a player king. With the player king came his courtiers – that is a reflection of you lot, remember you’re the court of King James V of Scotland. And now you’re watching courtiers like yourselves.

BELLENDEN. Placebo, Pickthank, and Flattery, and such a like guard, one swearing he’s the lustiest, starkest, best proportioned and most valiant man that ever was, another swearing he’s the best in the world with long-bow, crossbow, and culverin.

SOLACE. What’s a culverin, do you say? A culverin is a small firearm dating from the early 1500s. They’re making them at Edinburgh Castle right now. Historical curiosity for you, a matter of life and death for us.

BELLENDEN. Another swearing he’s the best jousting and man of arms and so forth.

SOLACE. Can you imagine that? Privileged young bucks talking themselves up and sucking up to power? A bunch of flattering, arrogant, entitled young c...

BELLENDEN. Courtiers.

SOLACE. Well, that part of the play is lost so we’ll have to get on.
Famous people, tak tent and ye shall se / The Three Estaitis of this natioun / Come to the court with their auld gravity. / Therefore, I mak you supplicatioun: / Till ye have heard our whole narratioun, / To keep silence and be patient, I pray yow. / Howbeit we speak by adulation, / We shall say nothing but the sooth, I say yow.

BELLENDEN. Thereafter came in a Lord, armed in harness, with a sword drawn in his hand. A Bishop, a Burgess, and Experience, clad like a doctor.

ENTER TEMPORALITY, SPIRITUALITY AND A BURGESS. LYNDAY HAS A DOCTOR’S HOOD.

SPIRITUALITY. Gloir, honour, laud, triumph, and victory / Be to your mighty prudent Excellence. / Here are we come, all the Estaitis three, / Ready to mak our due

obedience / At your command with humble observance, / As may pertain to
Spirituality, / With counsel of the Temporality.

TEMPORALITY. Sir, we with mighty courage at command / Of your super-excellent
Majesty, / Shall mak service baith with our hairt and hand, / And shall not dreid in thy
defence to die.

BURGESS. Sir, we are here, your burgesses and merchands. / Thanks be to God that
we may see your face, / Traistin' we may now into diverse lands / Convey our gear with
support of Your Grace. / For now, I traist, we shall get rest and peace, / When miss-
doers are with your sword overthrowin / Then may leil merchands live upon their owin.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Sit down, my Lords, into your proper places: / Syne let
the King consider all sic cases. / Sit down, sir Scribe, and sit down Solace too, / And fence
the court as ye war wont to do.

THEY ARE SET DOWN AND EXPERIENCE SHALL PASS TO HIS SEAT.
SOLACE FENCES THE COURT.

SOLACE. And the court is fenced, creating the parliament. The parliament was not a
building but a created space in which only the members could go. It could be in
Edinburgh, Stirling or Fife. Think of it as a parliament without walls.

BELLENDEN. After them come a Poor Man,

ENTER POOR MAN.

BELLENDEN. Who did go up and down the scaffold, making a heavy complaint, that
he was harried through the courtiers' taking his feu in one place, and also his tax in
another place, where through he had skailed his house, his wife and children begging
their bread, and so of many thousand in Scotland, which would make the King's Grace
lose of men if His Grace stood need, saying there was no remedy to be gotten; for
though he would sue to the King's Grace, he was neither acquainted with Controller
nor Treasurer, and without them might no man get no goodness of the King.

PAUPER. My father was ane auld man and ane hoar, / And was of age fourscore of
years and more, / And Mald, my mother, was fourscore and fifteen, / And with my labour
I did them baith sustain. / We had ane mare that carryit salt and coal, / And every ilk
year sho brought us hame ane foal. / We had three ky that was baith fat and fair, / Nane
tidier into the toon of Ayr. / My father was sae weak of blood and bane / That he died,
wherefore my mother made great main. / Then she died within ane day or two, / And
there began my poverty and woe. / Our good grey mare was baitin' on the field, / And

our land's laird took her for his hiald. / The vicar took the best cow by the head, /
Incontinent, when my father was dead. / And, when the vicar heard tell how that my
mother / Was dead, frahand he took to him another. / Then Meg, my wife, did mourn
both e'en and morrow, / Till at the last sho died for very sorrow. / And when the vicar
heard tell my wife was dead, / The third cow he cleekit by the head.

BELLENDEN. And after he speired for the King,

POOR MAN. Good maister, I would speir at you ane thing: / Where traist ye I shall
find yon new comed King?

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Come over, and I shall show thee to his Grace.

BELLENDEN. And when he was showed to the man that was King in the play, he
answered and said:

POOR MAN. Nae, he is nae king, for there is but ane King, / Wha made all and
governeth all, who is eternal.

BELLENDEN. to Whom he and all earthly kings are but officers, of the which they
must make reckoning, I and so forth much more to that effect.

POOR MAN. What is ane king? Nought but ane officer, / To cause his lieges live in
equity, / And under God to be ane punisher / Of trespassers against His majesty. / But,
when the king does live in tyranny, / Breakin' justice for fear or affectioun, / Then is his
realm in weit and poverty, / With shameful slaughter but correctioun / Sir, if your
Highness yearns lang to ring, / First dread your God above all other thing, / For ye are
but ane mortal instrument / To that great God and King Omnipotent / Preordinat by
His divine Majesty, / To rule His people intil unity. / For David, king of Israel, / Whilk
was the gret prophet royal, / Says God has hail at his command, / The hearts of princes
in his hand; / Even as he list them for to turn, / That mun they do without sojourn; /
Some to exalt to dignity, / And some to deprive, in poverty, / Sometime of lewd men to
make lordis, / And sometime lordis to bind in cordis / And them all utterly destroy, / As
pleases God, that royal roy.

BELLENDEN. And then he looked to the King and said he was not the King of
Scotland.

POOR MAN. Ye are nat, my lord, King in Scotland, / For there is another king in this
land [ALL LOOK AT JAMES V] That hanged John Armstrong and Sim the Laird /
And many another near at hand / Who brought us peace and stanchd theft / [ALL

BOW TO JAMES.] But one thing undone that king hath left / That stands well to his charge as other.

BELLENDEN. And, when he was asked what that was, he made a long narration of the oppression of the poor by the taking of the corpse-present beasts.

SOLACE. That's death duties for the poor.

BELLENDEN. And of the harrying of poor men by consistory law, and of many other abusions of the spirituality and church, with many long stories and authorities.

POOR MAN. To aid poor men who on lands do dwell. / For men who swinken to keep the kirk / See not the profits of their own work. / But others thrive, as all may ken: / Sir, I complain upon the idle men, / For why, sir, it is God's own bidding / All Christian men to work for their living. / Sanct Paul, that pillar of the Kirk, / Says to the wretches that will not work, / And been to virtuous labour laith, / 'Wi non laborat non manducet'. / This is, in English tongue or leit, / 'Wha labours not, he shall not eat'. / This been against the strang beggars, / Fiddlers, pipers, and pardoners, / Thir jugglers, jesters, and idle cuitchors, / Thir carriers and thir quintacensors, / This been against thir great fat freirs, / Augustines, Carmelites, and Cordeleirs, / And all others that in cowls been cled, / Whilk labours not and been well fed. / I mean not labourin' Spiritually, / Nor for their living corporeally, / Lyin' in dens like idle dogs, / I them compare to well fed hogs! / I think they do themselves abuse, / Seeing that they the world refuse: / Having professed sic poverty, / Sin flees fast frae necessity. / What if they poverty would profess, / And do as did Diogenes? / That great famous philosopher, / Seeing in earth but vain labour, / All utterly the world refused / And in ane tumb himself enclosed, / And lived on herbs and water cold; / Of corporeal food nae mair he would. / He trotted not from town to town / Beggin' to feed his carrion. / Fra time that life he did profess, / The world of him was cummerless. / Right sae of Mary Magdalene, / And of Mary th'Egyptian, / And of auld Paul, the first hermit: / All thir had poverty complete. / Ane hundreth mair I might declare, / But to my purpose I will fair, / Concluding slothful idleness, / Against the Commonweal express.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Whom upon mair will ye complain?

POOR MAN. Marry, on mair and mair again. / For the poor people cries with / The infetching of Justice airs: / Exercit mair for covetise / Then for the punishing of vice. / Ane peggrel thief that steals ane cow / Is hanged; but he that steals ane bow, / With als muckle gear as he may turse, / That thief is hangit by the purse. / Sic pickin' peggrel thieves are hangit, / But he that all the world has wrangit, / Ane cruel tyrant, ane strang transgressor, / Ane common public plain oppressor, / By buds may he obtain favours / Of treasurers and compositors. / Though he serve great punitioun, / Gets easy

compositioun: / And through laws consistorial, / Prolix, corrupt, and partial, / The
common people are put sae under, / That they be poor, it is nae wonder.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Good man, I grant all that is true, / Your infortune full
sair I rue. / Man, have ye any mair debates / Against the Lords of spiritual states?

POOR MAN. Na, sir, I dare not speak ane word. / To plaint on priests, it is nae board.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Flyte on thy foo fill, I desire thee, / Swa that thou show
but the verity.

POOR MAN. Grand-mercies, then I shall not spare, / First to complain on the vicar. /
Our Parson here, he takes nae other pine, / But to receive his teinds and spend them
sine, / Howbeit he be obleist by good reason, / To preach the Evangel to his parichoun. /
Howbeit they should want preaching seventeen year, / Our parson will not want ane
sheaf of bier. / Our bishops with their lusty rockets white, / They flow in riches royally
and delight: / Like Paradise been their palaces and places, / And wants nae pleasure of
the fairest faces. / Als thir prelates has great prerogatives, / For why they may depairt ay
with their wives, / Without any correctioun or damnage, / Syne tak ane other wantoner,
but marriage. / But doubt I would think it ane pleasant life, / Aye, and when I list to part
with my wife, / Syne tak another of far greater beauty. / But ever alas, my lords, that may
not be; / For I am bound, alas, in marriage; / But they like rams rudely in their rage /
Unpissalt rins among the silly ewes, / Sa lang as kind of nature in them grows.

BELLENDEN. And then the Bishop rose and rebuked him, saying [it] effaired not to
him to speak such matters, commanding him silence or else to suffer death for it by their
law. Thereafter rose the man of arms, alleging the contrary, and commanded the poor
man to speak, saying their abusion had been over long suffered, without any law.

SPIRITUALITY. Thou lies, false whoreson, raggit loon: / There is nae priests in all
this town, / That ever usit sic vicious crafts.

POOR MAN. The Fiend receive thy flattin' chafts! / Sir Domine, I trowit ye had be
dumb. / Where Devil gat we this ill faired blaitie bum?

SPIRITUALITY. To speak of priests, be sure, it is nae bourds: / They will burn men
now for rakless words, / And all they words are heresy indeed.

POOR MAN. The meckle Fiend resave the soul that lied. / All that I say is true, though
thou be greivit, / And that I offer on thy pallet to preef it.

BELLENDEN. Then the Poor Man showed the great abusion of bishops, Prelates, Abbots, reeving men's wives and daughters, and holding them, and of the maintaining of their children and of their over buying of lords' and barons' eldest sons to their daughters, where through the nobility of the blood of the Realm was degenerate, and of the great superfluous rents that pertained to the church, by reason of over much temporal lands given to them, which they proved that the King might take both by the canon law, and civil law, and of the great abominable vices that reign in cloisters, and of the common bordellos that was kept in cloisters of nuns. All this was proved by Experience. And also was showed th'office of a bishop, and produced the New Testament with the authorities to that effect.

HERE SPIRITUALITY FAMES AND RAGES.

SPIRITUALITY. My Lords, why do ye thole that lurdun loon / Of Kirkmen to speak sic detractioun? / I let you wit, my Lords, it is nae bourds, / Of prelates for till speak sic wanton words. / Yon villain puts me out of charity!

TEMPORALITY. Why, my Lord, says he ought but verity? / Ye cannot stop ane poor man for to pleiny, / If he has faulted, summon him to your Seinye.

SPIRITUALITY. Yea, that I shall. I shall mak great God a vow, / He shall repent that he spak of the cow. / I will not suffer sic words of yon villain.

POOR MAN. Than gar give me my three fat ky again.

SPIRITUALITY. False carl, to speak to me stands thou not awe?

POOR MAN. The Fiend receive them that first devised that law! / Within an hour after my dad was dead / The vicar had my cow hard be the heed.

SPIRITUALITY. False whoreson carl, I say that law is good, / Because it has been lang our consuetude.

POOR MAN. When I am Paip, that law I shall put down: / It is ane sair law for the poor commouns.

SPIRITUALITY. I mak ane vow, they words thou shall repent.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. I you require, my Lords, be patient. / We came not here for disputatiouns; / We came to make good reformatiouns. / Therefore, of this your propositioun, / Conclude and put to executioun.

BURGESS. My Lords, conclude that all the temporal lands / Be set in feu to labourers with their hands, / With sic restrictiouns as shall be devisit, / That they may live and not to be supprisit, / With ane reasonable augmentatioun: / And when they hear ane proclamatioun / That the King's Grace does mak him for the weir, / That they be ready with harness, bow, and spear. / As for myself, my Lord, this I conclude.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Sae say we all, your reason be sae good. / To mak an Act on this we are content.

POOR MAN. On that, sir Scribe, I tak an instrument. / What do ye of the corpse-present and cow?

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. I will conclude nothing of that as now, / Without my Lord of Spirituality / Thereto consent. / My Lord Bishop, will ye thereto consent?

SPIRITUALITY. Nae, nae, never till the Day of Judgement! / We will want nathing that we have in use, / Kirtle nor cow, teind lamb, teind grise, nor goose.

TEMPORALITY. Forsooth, my Lord, I think we should conclude. / Seeing this cow ye have in consuetude, / We will discern here that the King's Grace / Shall write unto the Paip's holiness: / With his consent by proclamatioun, / Baith corpse-present and cow we shall cry down.

POOR MAN. My Lords, ye have right prudently concludit. / Tak tent now how the land is clean denudit / Of gold and silver, whilk daily gais to Rome, / For buds, mair than the rest of Christindom. / Were I ane king, sir, be cock's Passioun, / I should gar mak ane proclamatioun, / That never ane penny should go to Rome at all, / Nae mair than did to Peter nor to Paul. / Do ye not sa, here for conclusioun, / I give you all my braid, black malisoun.

BURGESS. It is of truth, sirs, by my Christendom, / That meckle of our money gais to Rome. / For we merchants, I wit, within our bounds, / Has furnished priests ten hundreth thousand pounds / For their finance; nane knows sae well as we. / Therefore, my Lords, devise some remedy. / For through their pleas and their promotioun, / Mair for denniers nor for devotioun, / Sir Simony has made with them ane band, / The gold of weight they lead out of the land. / The Commonweal there-through been sair oppressed; / Therefore devise remeid as ye think best.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. It is short time sen any benefice / Was sped in Rome except great bishopries. / But now for ane unworthy vicarage / Ane priest will rin to Rome in pilgrimage. / Ane cavel, whilk was never at the school, / Will rin to Rome and keep ane bishop's mule, / And syne come hame with many colourit crack, / With ane

burden of benefices on his back; / Whilk been against the law, ane man alane / For to possess mair benefices nor ane. / Their great commends, I say withoutin fail, / Should not be given but to the blood royal. / Sa I conclude, my Lords, and says for me, / Ye should annul all this plurality.

SPIRITUALITY. The Paip has given us dispensatiouns.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Yea, that is be your false narratiouns. / Though the Paip for your pleasure will dispense, / I trow that cannot clear your conscience. / Advise, my Lords, what ye think to conclude.

TEMPORALITY. Sir, be my faith, I think it very good, / That frae henceforth nae priests shall pass to Rome, / Because our substance they do still consume / For pleas and for their profit singlar, / They have of money made this realm bare. / And als I think it best, be my advice, / That ilk priest shall have but ane benefice. / And if they keep not that fundatioun, / It shall be cause of deprivatioun.

BURGESS. / As ye have said, my Lord, we will consent. / Scribe, mak an Act on this incontinent.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. My Lords, there is ane thing yet unproponit, / How prelates and priests ought to be disponit. / This bein' done, we have the less ado. / What say ye, sirs? This is my counsel, lo, / That, or we end this present Parliament, / Of this matter to tak ripe advisement. / Mark well, my Lords, there is nae benefice / Given to ane man but for ane good office. / Wha taks office and syne they cannot use it, / Giver and taker, I say, are baith abusit. / Ane bishop's office is for to be ane preacher, / And of the law of God ane public teacher. / Right sae the parson unto his parichoun, / Of the Evangel should leir them ane lessoun. / There should nae man desire sic dignities, / Without he be able for that office. / And for that cause I say, without leasing, / They have their teinds, and for nae other thing.

SPIRITUALITY. Friend, where find ye that we should preachers be?

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Look what Sanct Paul writes unto Timothy. / Tak there the Buik: let see if ye can spell.

SPIRITUALITY. I never read that, therefor read it yoursel.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. [READS LATIN BIBLE & ENGLISH TRANSLATION.] 'Fidelis sermo, si wis Episcopatum desiderat, bonum opus desiderat. Oportet [ergo], eum irreprehensibilem esse, unius uxoris virum, sobrium, prudentem, ornatum, pudicum, hospitem, doctorem: non vinolentum, non

percussorem, sed modestum.’ That is: ‘This is a true saying, If any man desire the office of a Bishop, he desireth a worthy work: a Bishop, therefore, must be unreprouable, the husband of one wife...’

SPIRITUALITY. Ye temporal men, by Him that harried Hell, / Ye are over pert with sik matters to mell.

TEMPORALITY. Sit still, my Lord, ye need not for till brawl, / Thir are the very words of th’Apostle Paul.

SPIRITUALITY. Some says, by Him that wore the crown of thorn, / It had been good that Paul had ne’er been born.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. But ye may know, my Lord, Sanct Paul’s intent. / Sir, read ye never the New Testament?

SPIRITUALITY. Na sir, by him that our Lord Jesus sold, / I read never the New Testament nor Auld. / Nor ever thinks to do sir, be the Rood! / I hear friars say that reading does nae good.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Till you to read them, I think it is nae lack, / For anis I saw them baith bound on your back; / That samen day that ye was consecrat. / Sir, what meanis that?

SPIRITUALITY. The Fiend stick them that wat!

BURGESS. Then, before God, how can ye be excusit; / To have ane office and wats not how to use it? / Whererfore were given you all the temporal lands, / And all thir teinds ye have among your hands? / They were given you for other causes, I ween, / Nor mummle Matins and hold your clays clean. / Ye say to the Apostles that ye succeed, / But ye show not that into word nor deed. / The law is plain: our teinds should furnish teachers.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Yea, that it should, or sustain prudent preachers.

POOR MAN. / Sir, God nor I be stickit with ane knife, / If ever our Parson preachit in all his life.

SPIRITUALITY. What Devil raks thee of our preaching, undocht?

POOR MAN. Think ye that ye should have the teinds for nought?

SPIRITUALITY. Trows thou to get remeid, carl, of that thing?

POOR MAN. Yea, be God's bread, richt soon, war I ane king.

SPIRITUALITY. Would thou of prelates mak deprivatioun?

POOR MAN. Na, I should gar them keep their foundatioun.

SPIRITUALITY. My Lords, when was there any prelates wont / Of their office till any king mak count? / But, of my office if ye would have the feel, / I let you wit I have used it weel. / For I tak in my count twice in the year, / Wanting not of my teind ane boll of beir. / I gat good payment of my temporal lands, / My buttockmail, my coats, and my offrands, / With all that does pertain my benefice. / Consider now, my Lord, if I be wise. / I dare not marry contrair the common law. / Ane thing there is, my Lord, that ye may know: / Howbeit I dar not plainly spouse ane wife, / Yet concubines I have had four or five. / And to my sons I have given rich rewairds / And all my daughters marryit upon lairds. / I let you wit, my Lord, I am nae fool, / Forwhy I ride upon ane amblin' mule, / There is nae temporal lord in all this land, / That maks sic cheer, I let you understand. / And als, my Lord, I give with good intentioun, / To diverse temporal lords ane yearly pensioun, / To that intent that they with all their heart, / In right and wrang shall plainly tak my part. / Now have I told you, sir, on my best ways, / How that I have exercit my office.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. I pray thee, brother, gar me understand / Wherever Christ possessit ane foot of land.

SPIRITUALITY. Yea, that he did, father, withoutin fail, / For Christ Jesus was King of Israel.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. I grant that Christ was King above all kings, / But he mellit never with temporal things: / As he has plainly done declare Him-sell, / As thou may read in his Haly Evangel; / 'Birds has their nests, and tods has their den, / But Christ Jesus, the Saviour of men, / In all this world has not ane penny braid / Whereon He may repose His heavenly head'.

TEMPORALITY. And is that true?

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Yes, brother, by All Hallows: / Christ Jesus had nae property but the gallows, / And left not when He yeildit up the spreit / To buy Himself ane simple windingsheet.

TEMPORALITY. Christ's successors, I understand, / Thinks nae shame to have temporal land. / Father, they have nae will, I you assure, / In this world to be indigent

and poor. / Sir, we beseek your sovereign celsitude / Of our daughters to have
compassioun. / Whom we may nae way marry, by the Rood, / Without we mak some
alienatioun / Of our land for their supportatioun. / For-why the market raisit been sae
high / That prelates' daughters of this natioun, / Are marryit with sic superfluity, / They
will not spare to give twa thousand pound, / With their daughters to ane noble man, / In
riches sae they do super-abound. / But we may not do sae, by Sant Allan, / Thir proud
prelates our daughters sair may ban, / That they remain at hame sae lang unmarryit; /
Sir, let your barons do the best they can, / Some of our daughters, I dreid, shall be
miscarryit.

POOR MAN. What Devil is this? Whom of should Kings stand awe / To do the thing
that they should by the law? / Were I ane king, be cock's dear Passioun, / I should right
soon mak reformatioun. / What if King David were livin' in thir days / The whilk did
found sae many gay abbeys? / Or out of Heaven what if he lookit down, / And saw the
great abominatioun, / Among thir abbesses and thir nunn'ries, / Their public
whoredoms and their harlotries? / He would repent he narrowit sa his bounds, / Of
yearly rent three-score of thousand pounds. / His successors maks little ruisse, I guess, /
Of his devotioun or of his holiness.

SPIRITUALITY. How dare thou, carl, presume for to declare, / Or for to mell thee
with sae high a matter? / For in Scotland there did yit never ring, / I let thee wit, ane
mair excellent king. / Of holiness he was the very plant, / And now in Heaven he is ane
mightful Sanct, / Because that fifteen abbasies he did found, / Wherethrough great
riches has ay done abound / Into our Kirk and daily yet abounds. / But kings now, I trow,
few abbasies founds / I dare well say thou art condempnit in Hell, / That does presume
with sic matters to mell. / False whoreson carl, thou art over arrogant / To judge the
deeds of sic ane haly sanct.

POOR MAN. King James the first, roy of this regioun, / Said that he was ane sair sanct
to the croun. / I hear men say that he was something blind, / That gave away mair nor he
left behind. / His successours that haliness did repent, / Whilk gart them do great
inconvenient.

TEMPORALITY. My Lords, let be your disputatioun. / Conclude with firm
deliberatioun / How prelates frae thine shall be deponit.

BURGESS. I think for me even as ye first proponit, / That the King's Grace shall give
nae benefice, / But till ane preacher that can use that office. / The silly souls that been
Christ's sheep / Should not be given to gormand wolves to keep. / What been the cause
of all the heresies / But the abusioun of the prelacies? / They will correct and will not be
correctit, / Thinkin' to nae prince they will be subjectit. / Wherefore I can find nae
better remeid, / But that thir Kings mun take it in their head / That there be given to

nae man bishopries, / Except they preach outthrough their dioceses, / And ilk parson preach in his parichon: / And this I say for final conclusion.

TEMPORALITY. We think your counsel is very good, / As ye have said, we all conclude. / Of this conclusioun, Noter, we mak ane Act.

SOLACE. She writes all day, but gets never ane plack!

POOR MAN. Och, my Lords, for the Haly Trinity, / Remember to reform the Consistory. / It has mair need of reformatioun / Nor Pluto's court, sir, be cock's Passioun!

SPIRITUALITY. What cause has thou, false pellour, for to pleiny? / Where was ye ever summoned to the Seinye?

POOR MAN. Marry, I lent my gossip my mare to fetch hame coals, / And he her drownit into the querrell holes. / And I ran to the Consistory for to pleiny, / And there I happinit amang ane greedy many. / They gave me first ane thing they call citandum, / Within aucht days I gat but lybellandum, / Within ane month I gat ad opponendum, / In half ane year I gat interloquendum, / And syne I gat, how call ye it? ad replicandum, / Bot I could never ane word yet understand 'em. / And then they gart me cast out many placks, / And gart me pay for four and twenty acts. / But, or they came half gate to concludendum, / The Fiend ane plack was left for to defend him. / Thus they postponit me twa year with their train, / Sine hodie ad octo had me come again; / And then thir rooks they roupit wonder fast, / For sentence silver they cryit at the last. / Of pronunciantum they made me wonder fain, / But I gat never my good grey mare again.

BELLENDEN. And then rose the Man of Arms and the Burgess, and did say that all that was produced by the Poor Man and Experience was reasonable, of verity and of great effect, and very expedient to be reformed with the consent of parliament. And the Bishop said he would not consent thereunto. The Man of Arms and Burgess said they were two, and he but one, wherefore their voice should have most effect.

TEMPORALITY. We will conclude as they have done in France: / Let spritual matters pass to Sprituality, / And temporal matters to Temporality. / Who fails of this shall cost them of their good; / Scribe, mak ane Act for sae we will conclude.

SPIRITUALITY. That act, my Lords, plainly I will declare: / It is against our profit singlar. / We will not want our profit, by Sanct Geill!

TEMPORALITY. Your profit is against the commonweal. / It shall be done, my Lords as ye have wrought: / We cure not whidder ye consent or not. / Wherefore serves then all

thir temporal judges, / If temporal matters should seek at you refuges? / My Lord, ye say that ye are spritual, / Wherefore mell ye then with things temporal? / As we have done conclude, sae shall it stand. / Scribe, put our Acts in order even frae hand.

SPIRITUALITY. To that, my Lords, we plainly disassent: / Noter, thereof I tak ane instrument.

TEMPORALITY. My Lord, be Him that all the world has wrought, / We set not by whidder ye consent or not: / Ye are but ane Estait and we are twa, / Et ubi major pars ibi tota.

BELLENDEN. [SCRIBE HANDS KING PAPER WHICH HE SIGNS]
Thereafter the King in the play ratified, approved, and confirmed all that was rehearsed.

LYNDSAY/EXPERIENCE. Or ye depart, sir, / Give this the Poor Man here ane gay garmoun; / Because the Commonweal has been overlookit, / That is the cause that Commonweal is crookit. / With singular profit he has been sae supprisit, / That he is baith cold, nakit, and disguisit.

PLAYER KING. As ye have said, I am content. / Solace, give him ane new habilement / Of satin, damais, or of the velvet fine. / And give him place in our Parliament syne.

HEIR SHALL THEY CLEITH THE POOR MAN GORGEOUSLY, AND SET HIM DOWN AMANG THEM IN THE PARLIAMENT.

PLAYER KING. All virtuous people now may be rejoiced, / Since Commonweal has gotten ane gay garmoun, / Blessed is that realm that has ane prudent king, [BOW TO JAMES V] / There may nae people have prosperity, / Where ignorance has the dominion, / And commonweal by tyrants trampit down.

SOLACE. And that was the end of the play, and there was stunned silence or rapturous applause, I can't remember which.

EURE. But, my Lord, the same Master Bellenden showed me that after the said interlude finished,

BELLENDEN. The King of Scots did call upon the Archbishop of Glasgow, being Chancellor, and diverse other bishops, exhorting them to

JAMES V. Reform your factions and manners of living,

BELLENDEN. Saying that unless they so did,

JAMES V. I will send six of the proudest of you unto mine uncle of England,

BELLENDEN. And, as those were ordered, so

JAMES V. I will order all the rest that will not amend.

BELLENDEN. And thereunto the Chancellor should answer, and say unto the King that

GLASGOW. One word of His Grace's mouth should suffice us to be at commandment,

JAMES V. I would gladly bestow any words of my mouth that could amend you.

EURE. I am also advertised by the same Master Bellenden that

BELLENDEN. The King of Scots is fully minded to expel all spiritual men from having any authority by office under his Grace, either in household or elsewhere in the realm, and daily studieth and deviseth for that intent.

EURE. And that was that. The end of Bellenden's account and the end of my letter. At the King's Majesty's castle of Berwick, the 26th day of January 1540. Your Lordship's, at commandment, William Eure.

SOLACE. You cannae end like that.

EURE. I'm afraid that's all we've got. History is incomplete, my boy.

SOLACE. Is that it. Is that all you said? Didn't you see what else was going on? What about the voice of the poor? A poor man speaking freely in the presence of the King. And being heard. Does that happen in England? [EURE SMILES.] Within a year Thomas Cromwell was dead. Within two years James V was dead.

LYNDSAY. So Lyndsay had to write a different sort of play for a Scotland without a king.