

THE CONY-CATCHING PAMPHLETS

OF ROBERT GREENE:

A Bibliography and Study.

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree

of Ph. D.

October, 1951. [*Degree granted 1952*]

Frances Kirkpatrick Darden

*Vol. 1*

*Univ. of Birmingham*

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1 B

A  
Notable Discouery of Coosenage.  
*Now daily practised by sundry lewd per-  
sons, called Connie-catchers, and  
Crosse-byters.*

Plainely laying open those pernicious sleights that hath brought many igno-  
rant men to confusion.

*Written for the general benefite of all Gentlemen, Cittizens, Apprentises, Countrey Farmers  
and yoemen, that may hap so fall into the company of such coosening companions.*

*With a delightfull discourse of the coosenage of Colliers.*

Nascimur pro patria. By R. Greene, Maister of Arts.



LONDON.  
Printed by Iohn Wolfe for T. N. and are to be sold ouer  
against the great South doore of Paules. 1591.



Title Page of Edition 1 B  
(Huntington Library)

## Preface

The bibliography of Greene's cony-catching pamphlets which precedes my discussion of them supplies a deficiency in our knowledge and enables us to distinguish between editions which in the past have been confused. In my opinion, however, its greatest value is that it supports Greene's claim for the immediate popular success of his Notable Discovery of Coosenage, and disproves the common assumption that Greene was deliberately misrepresenting the facts in his "Address" to The Second and last part of Conny-catching. This, in turn, affects our view of his character.

Collation of the extant copies of the cony-catching pamphlets has revealed the existence of a hitherto unknown edition of The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. It has also revealed that there is only one edition extant of The Defence of Conny catching; a defective copy in the British Museum, made up with the Epistle from a copy of the 1592 edition of A Notable Discovery of Coosenage, has in the past been mistakenly described as another



edition.

Since 1915 there has been no exhaustive study of Greene in English. It is time that his character and work were reassessed in the light of our fuller knowledge of his age, and this I have attempted in the chapters that follow my bibliography.

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A Notable Discovery of Coosenage.

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- 1 A. Defective Title Page.  
C 1 r. with Illustration. Preceding 1 A in Bibliography.
- 1 B. Title Page. Preceding 1 B in Bibliography.
- 1 C. Title Page. Preceding 1 C in Bibliography.
- 1 D. Title Page. Preceding 1 D in Bibliography.

The Second Part of Conny-catching.

- 2 A. Frontispiece  
Title Page. Preceding 2 A in Bibliography.
- 2 B. Title Page. Preceding 2 B in Bibliography.

The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching.

- 3 A. Title Page. Preceding 3 A in Bibliography.
- 3 B. Title Page. Preceding 3 B in Bibliography.

A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher  
and a Shee Conny-catcher.

4. Title Page. Preceding 4 in Bibliography.

The Defence of Conny catching

5. Title Page. Preceding 5 in Bibliography.

The Blacke Bookes Messenger.

6. Title Page. Preceding 6 in Bibliography.

A Notable Discovery of Coosenage.

- 1 A. Signature B 1 r. Page 10.

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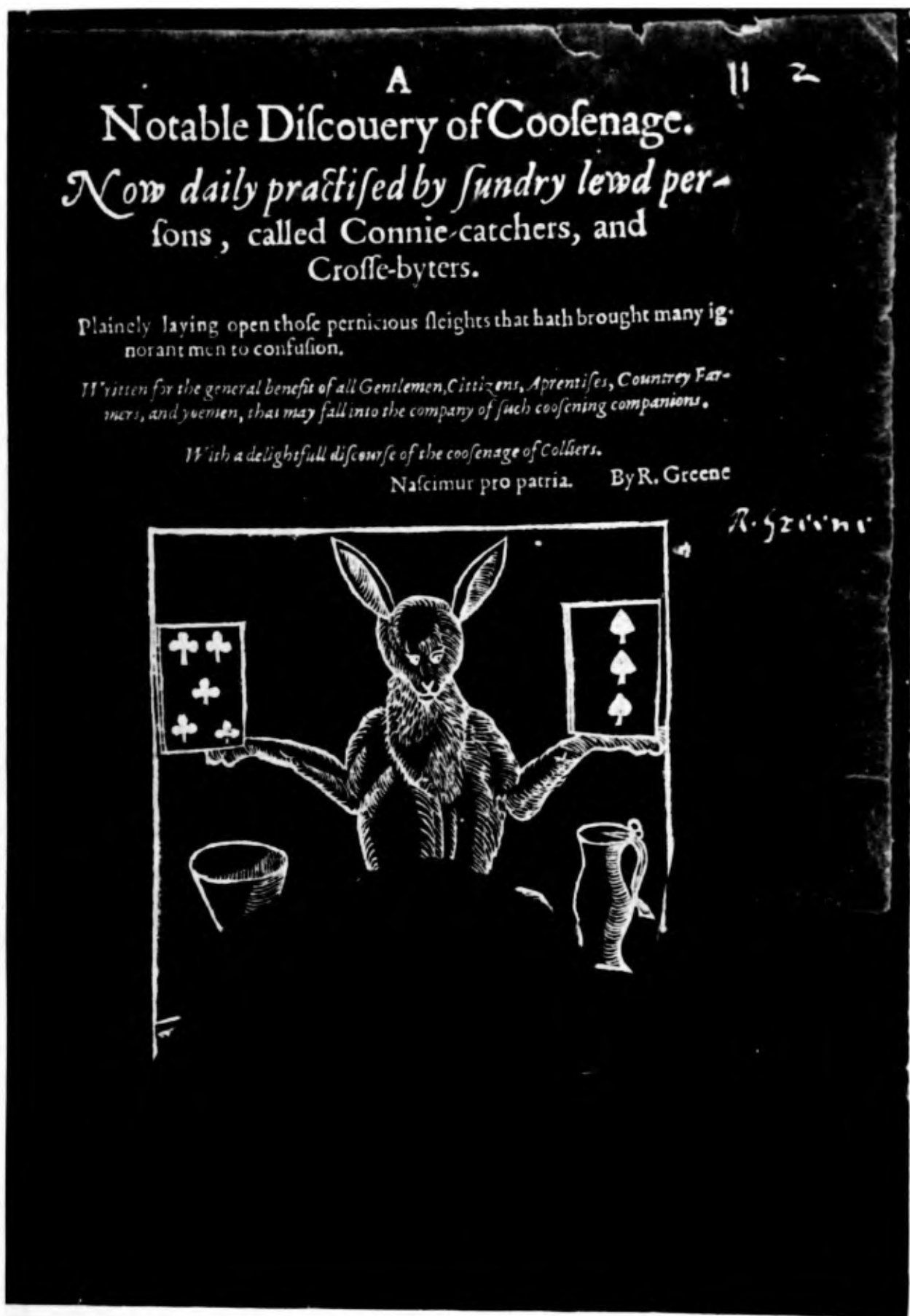
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BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE SURVIVING EDITIONS OF  
GREENE'S CONY-CATCHING PAMPHLETS PUBLISHED  
IN THE AUTHOR'S LIFETIME.



Wood 371 (2)

1	2	3	4	5
BODLEIAN LIBRARY				
				2

Defective Title Page of the Unique  
Copy of 1 A. (Bodleian Library, Wood 371 (2)).

# THE ART OF CON- ny-catching.



**H**ere bee requisite effectually to ad the  
Art of Conny-catching thre severall  
parties : the Setter, the Werser, and  
the Barnackle. The nature of the set-  
ter is to draw in any person familiar-  
ly to drinke with him, which person  
they call the Conie, and their methode  
is according to the man they arme at :  
if a Gentleman, Merchant, or Apprentice: the Connie is the  
more easely caught, in that they are sone induced to play,  
and therefore I omit the circumstance they vse in catching of  
them. And for because the poore Country Farmer, or Peo-  
man is the marke they most shote at, who they know comes  
not

Wood 371(2)

1	2	3	4	5
BODLEIAN				LIBRARY
				2

Correcto of the unique copy of 1 A.  
(Bodleian Library).

1 A

4<sup>o</sup>

1591

Title: "A / Notable Discouery of Coosenage. / Now daily practised by sundry lewd per- / sons, called Connie-catchers, and / Crosse-byters. / Plainely laying open those pernicious sleights that hath brought many ig- / norant men to confusion. / Written for the general benefit of all Gentlemen, Cittizens, Aprentises, Countrey Far- / mers, and yoemen, that may fall into the company of such coosening companions. / With a delightfull discourse of the coosenage of Colliers. / Nascimur pro patria. By R. Greene"  
 (Illustration: A cony holding up the five of clubs in his right paw, and the three of spades in his left.)  
 [The bottom of the illustration and the whole of the imprint is missing; see Note.]

Collation: Title-page, B-F<sup>4</sup> (G wanting); 21 leaves; C 1 r. -

F 4 r. are foliated 1 - 16.

Copy: B.L.O. (Wood 371 (2)); bound with other works of Greene and miscellaneous rogue pamphlets.

Note: This work was entered in the Stationers' Register on 13 December, 1591, at the same time as 2 A, The Second part of Conny-catching. The Stationers' Register entry is unlikely to refer to this edition; probably it was made after successful sales of this,

51C  
15919



1 A

or either or both of the two next editions. The only known copy of this edition (Bodleian Library, Wood 371 (2)) is unfortunately defective. The lower half of the title page is torn off, and everything after F 4 v. is missing. F 4 v. ends with the words: "as soon as shee saw her coales, shee easely gest there was" (which occur on signature E 3 v. of edition 1 B). The remainder of the text, as found in the later edition 1 B, would easily go into three pages of the same size; hence it is possible that the title page and a preliminary blank (constituting signature A), and two leaves constituting signature G, were printed off together. This text has never, as far as I know, been reprinted. Wood 371 (2) appears to have been unknown until Pruvost drew attention to it in 1932.

Contents: Title page; B 1 r. - B 4 v. Address "TO THE YONG GEN- / tlemen, Marchants, Apprenti- / ses, Farmers, and plaine Countreymen: / Health."; B 4 v. ornament; C 1 r. illustration as on title page; C 1 r. - F 4 v. text (foliated 1 - 16.)

A  
 Notable Discouery of Coosenage.  
*Now daily practised by sundry lewd per-*  
 sons, called Connie-catchers, and  
 Crosse-byters.

Plainely laying open those pernicious sleights that hath brought many ignorant men to confusion.

*Written for the general benefit of all Gentlemen, Citizens, Apprentises, Countrey Farmers and yeomen, that may hap to fall into the company of such coosening companions.*

*With a delightfull discourse of the coosenage of Colliers.*

Nascimur pro patria. By R. Greene, Maister of Arts.



LONDON.  
 Printed by Iohn Wolfe for T. N. and are to be sold ouer  
 against the great South doore of Paules. 1591.

Title page of unique copy of 1 B  
 (Huntington Library)



1 B

40

1591

Title: "A / Notable Discouery of Coosenage. / Now daily practised by sundry lewd per- / sons, called Connie-catchers, and / Crosse-byters. / Plainely laying open those pernicious sleighes that nath brought many igno- / rant men to confusion. / Written for the general benefit of all Gentlemen, Cittizens, Aprentises, Countrey Farmers / and yoemen, that may hap to fall into the company of such coosening companions. / With a delightfull discourse of the coosenage of Colliers. / Nascimur pro patria. By R. Greene, Maister of Arts." (Illustration: a cony holding up the five of clubs in his right paw and the three of spades in his left). "LONDON / Printed by Iohn Wolfe for T.N. and are to be sold ouer / against the great South doore of Paules. 1591."

Collation: A - E<sup>4</sup>; 20 leaves.

Copy: H.L. (Britwell Sale. 16 December, 1919, No.43.)

Note: This text has not, as far as I know, been reprinted.

Contents: A 1 r. title page with illustration; A 1 v.

blank; A 2 r. ornament and beginning of Address;

A 2 r. - A 4 v., Address "TO THE YONG GEN- / tlemen, Marchants, Aprentises, / Farmers, and plain Countrey- men / Health."; B 1 r., illustration as on title page; B 1 r. - E 4 v., text. (B 1 - C 4 r. foliated 1 - 8. C 3 r. is foliated incorrectly as 6 instead of 7. D 4 is signed incorrectly as E 4.)

1 C

British Museum

P.19613  
C27 b20

1	2	3	4	5
BRITISH	1	MUSEUM	2	

187  
N<sup>o</sup> 126;  
**Notable Discovery of Coofnage.**  
*Now daily practised by sundry lewd per-  
sons, called Coniac-catchers, and  
Croffe-biters.*

Plainely laying open those pernicious Sleights that hath brought many igno-  
rant men to confusion.

Written for the general benefit of all Gentlemen, Citizens, Apprentises, Country Farmers  
and Yeomen, that may haply fall into the company of such coofnaging companions.

With a delightful discourse of the coofnage of Colliers.

By R. Greene, Maister of Arts.

Nalcinut pro patriz.



3  
LONDON  
Printed by Iohn Wolfe for T.N. and are to be sold ouer  
against the great South doore of Pauls. 1593.

Title page of unique copy of 1 C  
(British Museum, C.27. b. 20)

1080.2.27.65



1 C

40 1591

Title: "A / Notable Discouery of Coosnage. / Now  
daily practised by sundry lewd per- / sons,  
 called Connie-catchers, and / Crosse-biters. /  
 Plainely laying open those pernicious sleights  
 that hath brought many igno- / rant men to con-  
 fusion. / written for the general benefit of all  
Gentlemen, Citizens, Aprentises, Countrey Farmers/  
and yeomen, that may hap to fall into the company  
of such coosening companions. / With a delightfull  
discourse of the coosnage of Colliers. / Nascimur  
 pro patria. By R. Greene, Maister of Arts." (Il-  
 lustration: A cony holding up the five of clubs  
 in his right paw and the three of spades in his  
 left.) "LONDON / Printed by John Wolfe for T.N.  
 and are to be sold ouer / against the great South  
 doore of Paules. 1591."

Collation: A - E<sup>4</sup>; 20 leaves.

Copy: B.M. (C.27, b.20)

Note: This text is reprinted (1) by A.B. Grosart in The  
Life and Complete Works of Robert Greene (Huth  
 Library, 1881-3), Vol.X. pp.1 - 61; (2) by G.B.  
 Harrison in The Bodley Head Quartos, Vol.I, 1923;  
 and (3) by A.V. Judges in The Elizabethan Under-  
world, 1930, pp.119 - 148.

Contents: A 1 r. title page with illustration; A 2 r.  
 ornament; A 2 r.-A 4 v. Address "TO THE YONG  
 GEN- / tlemen, Marchants, Aprentises, /  
Farmers, and plain Countreyemen / Health.";   
 B 1 r. Illustration as on title page; B. 1 r  
 - E 4 v. text.

STC  
 12.79

Notable Discouery of Coosenage.  
*Now daily practised by sundry lewd per-  
sons, called Connie-catchers, and  
Crosse-byters.*

Plainely laying open those pernicious sleights that hath brought many igno-  
rant men to confusion.

*Written for the general benefit of all Gentlemen, Citizens, Apprentices, Country Farmers  
and yeomen, that may hap to fall into the company of such coosening companions.*

*With a delightfull discourse of the coosnage of colliers.*

Nascimur propatria.

By R. Greene, Maister of Arts.



LONDON  
Printed by Thomas Scarlet for Thomas Nelfon.  
1 5 9 2.  
C. STEEVENS

Title page of 1 D  
(From the copy in the Huntington Library)

1 D

40

1592

Title: "A / Notable Discouery of Coosenage. / Now  
daily practised by sundry lewd per- / sons,  
 called Connie-catchers, and / Crosse-byters./  
 Plainely laying open those pernicious sleights  
 that hath brought many igno- / rant men to con-  
 fusion. / Written for the general benefit of all  
Gentlemen, Citizens, Apprentises, Countrey Farmers /  
and yeomen, that may hap to fall into the company  
of such coosening companions. / With a delightfull  
discourse of the coosnage of Colliers. / Nascimur  
 pro patria. By R. Greene, Maister of Arts." (Il-  
 lustration: A cony holding up the five of clubs in  
 his right paw and the three of spades in his left.)  
 "LONDON / Printed by Thomas Scarlet for Thomas  
 Nelson. / 1592."

Collation: A - D<sup>4</sup>; 16 leaves.

STC  
12280

Copies: B.L.O. (Malone 575 (1) ); V. and A. (Dyce.4244);  
 H.L. (Huth copy); and Folger library. *cf. p. xxxix.*

Note: This edition has not, as far as I know, been re-  
 printed; but Grosart says that he added to his  
 edition of A Notable Discovery of Coosnage 1591  
 (Huth Edition) certain "various readings" from  
 B.L.O. Presumably this refers to Malone 575 (1)  
 which is bound up with 2 B, 3, and 6.

Contents: A 1 r., title page with illustration: A 2 r.,  
 ornament; A 2 r. - A 3 v Address "TO ALL YONG  
 GENTLEMEN, / Marchants, Apprentises, Farmers,  
 and plaine Coun - / trie men, health; A 3 v.  
 ornament; A 4 r. - D 4 r. text; D 4 v. ornament.



2 A

Huntington

THE SECOND PART  
of Connie-catching.



Frontispiece to 2 A

(From the unique copy in the Huntington Library)



# THE SECOND

part of Conny-catching.

*Contayning the discovery of certaine wondrous  
Coosenages, either superficialle past ouer, or  
vtterlie vntroucht in the first.*

As the na- ture of	{	The blacke Art,	{	Picking of lockes.
		The Vincents Law,		Coosenage at Bowls.
		The Prigging Law,		Horse stealing.
		The Courbing Law,		Hooking at windows.
		The Lifting Law,		Stealing of parcels
		The Foist,		The pickepocket.
	{	The Nippe,	{	The cut purse.

With sundry pithy and pleasant Tales worthy the reading of all e-  
states, that are enemies to such base and dishonest practises.

*Mallet non esse quam non prodesse patrie.*

R. G.



LONDON.

Printed by Iohn Wolfe for William Wright, and  
are to be sold at his shop in Pauls Church  
yard, neare to the French schoole.

1591.

Title page of unique copy of 2 A  
(Huntington Library)

2 A

4<sup>o</sup> 1591

Title: "THE / SECOND / part of Conny-catching. / Contayning the discouery of certaine wondrous /  
Coosenages, either superficialle past ouer,  
 or / vtterlie vntoucht in the first. / As the  
 nature of The Blacke Art, The Vincents Law. The  
 Prigging Law, The Courbing Law, The Lifting Law,  
 The Foist, The Nippe, Picking of lockes. Coosenage  
 at Bowls. Horse stealing. Hooking at windows.  
 Stealing of parcels. The pickepocket. The cut  
 purse. / With sundry pithy and pleasant Tales  
 worthy the reading of all e - / states, that are  
 ennemies to such base and dishonest practises. /  
Mallē non esse quam non prodesse patriae. / R.G."  
 (Ornament)" LONDON. / Printed by John Wolfe for  
 William Wright, and / are to be sold at his shop  
 in Pauls Church / yard, neare to the French  
 schoole. / 1591."

Collation: \* 4; A - F<sup>4</sup>; 28 leaves; (B<sup>4</sup> is wrongly signed B<sup>7</sup>).

Copy: H.L. (Huth copy).

Note: This work was entered in the Stationers' Register  
 on 13 December, 1591. The Huth copy was reprinted  
 by A.B. Grosart in The Life and Complete Works of  
Robert Greene, (Huth Library 1881 - 3), Vol.X.pp.  
 63 - 133.

Contents: \* 1 r. Frontispiece: A cony, with the right paw  
 holding up a sealed package, and inserting one of  
 a ring of picklocks into the lock of a house door.  
 Two dice lie before him on the ground. \* 1 v. blank.  
 \* 2 v. Title page with ornament. \* 2 v. blank.  
 \* 3 r. ornament. \* 3 - 4 Address "TO ALL YOONG  
 GENTLEMEN, / marchants, citizens, apprentices,  
 yeomen, / and plaine countrey farmers, Health.";   
 A 1 r, illustration of an

2 A

Elizabethan horseman; A 1 r. - F 4 r., text;  
B 1 r. - B 1 v., "A Table of the Lawes contay - /  
ned in this second part."; B 2 r., illustration as  
on the frontispiece; C 2 r. illustration of a knight  
on horseback, a drawn sword in his hand; C 3 v.,  
illustration of a cony holding the five of hearts  
in his right paw and a knife in his left; D 4 r  
illustration of a cony holding up the five of clubs  
in his right paw and the three of spades in his left.  
(as on title page of 1 B).

2 B

Bodleian

# THE SECOND

and last part of Conny-catching.

*With new additions containing many merry tales of  
all lawes worth the reading, because they are wor-  
thy to be remembred.*

Discourfing ftrange cunning in Coofnage, which if you reade with-  
out laughing, Ile giue you my cap for a Noble.

*Mallet non esse quam non prodesse patria.*

R. G.



LONDON.  
Printed by Iohn Wolfe for William Wright.

1597.

*Not in Ames's Art of Printing*

Malone 575(2)

1	2	3	4	5
BODLEIAN LIBRARY				2

Title Page of 2 B

(From the copy in the Bodleian Library)



2 B

4<sup>o</sup> 1592

Title: "THE / SECOND / and last part of Conny-catching. / With new additions containing many merry tales of / all lawes worth the reading, because they are wor -/ thy to be remembred. / Discoursing strange cunning in Coosnage, which if you reade with- / out laughing, Ile giue you my cap for a noble. / Mallem non esse non prodesse patriae. / R.G." (Illustration: A cony with the right paw holding up a sealed packet, and with the left, inserting one of a ring of picklocks into the lock of a house door. Two dice lie before him on the ground.) "LONDON. / Printed by Iohn Wolfe for William Wright. / 1592."

Collation: A - D<sup>4</sup>; E<sup>2</sup>; 18 leaves.

Copies: B.L.O. (Malone 575 (2)); J.L. Clawson; <sup>?</sup>Carl Pforzheimer.

Note: This Bodleian copy was reprinted by G.B. Harrison in The Bodley Head Quartos, Vol. I., 1923; and by A.V. Judges in The Elizabethan Underworld, pp. 149 - 178, 1930. It is bound up with 1 D, 3 A, and 6.

Contents: A 1 r. title page with illustration; A 1 v. Table of laws followed by the statement "For the foist and the Nip, is (sic) in the first Booke"; A 2 r. - A 3 v., Address "To Al Yoong Gentlemen, Marchants, citizens, apprentices, yeomen, and plaine countrey farmers, HEALTH"; A 4 r. - E 3 v., text; A 4 v. illustration of an Elizabethan horseman; B 3 v. illustration as on the title page, preceded by the statement "For the Foist and the Nip, as in the first booke." C 1 v., illustration of a cony holding a card, the five of hearts, in his right paw and a knife in his left.

STC  
1228

3 A

Bodleian

THE  
THIRDE  
and laſt Part of Conny-  
catching.

WITH THE NEW DEVIſED  
knauiſh Art of Foole-taking.

*The like Coſenages and Villenies neuer before  
diſcouered.*

By R. G.



Imprinted at London by Thomas Scarlet for  
Cutberd Burbie, and are to be ſolde at his ſhoppe in the  
Poultrie, by S. Mildreds Church. 1592.

*Not in Amos's H. of Printing.*

Malone 575(3)

1	2	3	4	5
BODLEIAN				LIBRARY
				2

Title Page of the unique copy of 3 A.  
(Bodleian Library)

3 A

4<sup>o</sup> 1592

Title: "THE / THIRDE / and last Part of Conny - / catch-  
ing. / WITH THE NEW DEvised / knavish Art of  
Foole-taking. / The like Cosenages and Villenies  
neuer before / discouered. / By R.G." (Illustration  
of a man dressed as a fool with a card, a knife,  
and a picklock at his feet; and his arm about a  
woman in Elizabethan dress, holding a cony by the  
legs.) "Imprinted at London by Thomas Scarlet for /  
Cutberd Burbie, and are to be solde at his Shoppe  
in the / Poultrie, by S. Mildreds Church. 1592."

Collation: (A 1 Missing ?); A 2 r. title page; A 2 v.  
blank; A 3 - A 4; B - E<sup>4</sup>; F<sup>3</sup>; (F<sup>4</sup> missing). 22  
leaves.

Copy: B.L.O. (Malone 575 (3))

Note: This work was entered in the Stationers' Register  
7 February, 1592. The Bodleian copy was reprinted  
(1) by A.B. Grosart, The Life and Complete Works  
of Robert Greene (Huth Library) 1881 - 3, Vol. X.,  
pp.135 - 192 ( but erroneously referred to by him  
as "the British Museum copy").; (2) by G.B.  
Harrison, The Bodley Head Quartos, Vol. III, 1923;  
and (3) by A.V. Judges, The Elizabethan Underworld,  
pp.179 - 205, 1930. The Bodleian Library copy is  
bound up with 1 D, 2 B, and 6.

Contents: A 1 missing; A 2 r. title page and illustration;  
A 2 v. blank, A 3 r. ornament; A 3 r. - A 4 r.  
Address "TO ALL / SVCH AS HAVE / receiued either  
pleasure or profit / by the two former published  
bookes of this / Argument, and to all beside, that  
desire / to know the wonderful slie de - / uises  
of this hellish crew of / Cony-catchers." A 4 v.  
Illustration as on title page. B.1 r. ornament;  
B 1 r. - F 3 v. text; B 2 r. ornament; D 4 v.  
lion's mask ornament as on title page of 2 A.

57C  
12283.



THE  
Third and last part of Conny-  
catching.

With the new deuised knauish arte of  
Foole-taking.

*The like cosnages and Villanies neuer before discovered.*

By R. G.



Printed by T. Scarlet for C. Burby, and are to be solde at  
his shop vnder S. Mildreds Church in the  
Poultrye.

1592.

Title Page of the unique copy  
of 3 B. (Huntington Library)



3 B

4° 1592

Title: "THE / Third and last part of Conny - / catching./  
 With the new deuised knauish arte of / Foole-  
 taking. / The Like coosnages and villanies neuer  
before discouered. / By R.G." (Illustration of a  
 man dressed as a fool with a card, a knife, and  
 a picklock at his feet; and his arms about a  
 woman in Elizabethan dress, holding a cony by the  
 legs.) "Printed by T. Scarlet for C. Burby, and  
 are to be solde at / his shop vnder S. Mildreds  
 Church in the / Poultrie. 1592."

Collation: (A 1 ?); A 2 r. - A 4 v; B - E<sup>4</sup>; F 1 r. -  
 F 3 v; (F 4 missing). 22 leaves.

Copy: H.L. (Britwell Sale. 16 December, 1919. No.46)

Note: This text has not, as far as I know, been re-  
 printed.

Contents: (A 1 missing). A 2 r. title page; A 3 r.  
 ornament; A 3 r. - A 4 r. Address "TO ALL  
 SVCH AS HAVE / received either pleasure or  
 profite by the two / former published bookes  
 of this / Argument: / And to all beside, that  
 desire to know the won - / derfull slie  
 deuises of this hellish crew / of Conny-  
 catchers;" A 4 r. Ornament; A 4 v., illustra-  
 tion as on title page; B 1 r. - F 3 v. text  
 F 3 v., ornament.

STC.  
 12283.1.

A DISPUTATION,  
Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a  
Shee Conny-catcher, whether a Thiefe or a Whore, is  
most hurtfull in Consonage, to the Com-  
mon-wealth.

DISCOVERING THE SECRET VILLA-  
*nies of alluring Strumpets.*

With the Conversion of an English Courtizen, reformed  
this present yeare, 1592.

Reade, laugh, and learne.

*Nascimur pro patria.*

R. G.



Imprinted at London, by A. I. for T. G. and are to be sold at  
the West ende of Paules. 1592.

Title Page of 4.

(From the copy in the Huntington  
Library)

Title: "A DISPVTATION, / Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher,  
and a Shee Conny-catcher, whether a Theefe or  
a Whoore, is / most hurtfull in Cousonage, to  
the Com - / mon - wealth. / DISCOVERING THE  
SECRET VILLA - / nies of alluring Strumpets. /  
With the Conuersion of an English Courtizen,  
reformed / this present yeare, 1592. / Reade,  
laugh, and learne. / Nascimur pro patria. /  
R.G." (Illustration of a male and female cony  
in Elizabethan dress) "Imprinted at London,  
by A.I. for T.G. and are to be solde at /  
the West ende of Paules. 1592."

Collation: A - F 4; 24 leaves.

Copies: B.L.O. (Malone 574): H.L. (Britwell sale,  
16 December, 1919, No.44.).

Note: The Huth copy was reprinted by A.B.Grosart in  
The Life and Complete Works of Robert Greene (Huth  
Library, 1881-3) Vol.X.pp.193-278. The Bodleian  
copy was reprinted by G.B.Harrison, The Bodley  
Head Quartos, Vol.III.,pp.1-83, 1923; and by A.V.  
Judges, The Elizabethan Underworld,pp.206-247,1930.

Contents: A 1 r. title page and illustration; A 2 r.  
ornament; A 2 r. - A 3 v. Address "To all  
Gentlemen, Marchants, Appren - / tises, and  
Countrey Farmers, health;" A 3 v. ornament;  
A 4 r. - F 4 v. text; F 4 v. ornament.



# THE DEFENCE OF Conny catching.

OR

A CONFUTATION OF THOSE  
two iniurious Pamphlets published by R.G. against  
the practitioners of many Nimble-witted  
and mysticall Sciences.

By Cuthbert Cunny-catcher, Licenciate in Whit-  
tington Colledge.

*Qui bene latuit bene vixit, dominatur enim  
fraus in omnibus.*



Printed at London by A. I for Thomas Gabbins  
and are to be sold by Iohn Baskin. 1592. 6

Title Page of 5

(From the copy in the Huntington  
Library)



Title: "THE DEFENCE OF / Conny catching. / OR / A  
 CONFVTATION OF THOSE / two iniurious Pamphlets  
 published by R.G. against / the practitioners  
 of many Nimble-witted / and mysticall Sciences./  
 By Cuthbert Cunny-catcher, Licenciate in Whit - /  
 tington Colledge. / Qui bene latuit bene vixit,  
dominatur enim / fraus in omnibus." (Illustra-  
 tion of a cony in an attitude of defence, armed  
 with sword and buckler, his gauntlet thrown  
 down.) "Printed at London by A.I. for Thomas  
Gubbins / and are to be sold by John Busbie.  
 1592."

Collation: A - D<sup>4</sup>, E<sup>2</sup>; 18 leaves.

Copies: H.L. (Huth Copy). The British Museum possesses  
 an imperfect copy in which the address has been  
 replaced by the Address from a copy of 1 D. (p. xxv)

Note: This work was entered in the Stationers' Register  
 on 21 April, 1592. The Huth copy was reprinted  
 by J.O. Halliwell-Phillips, 1859; and by A.B.  
 Grosart, The Life and Complete Works of Robert  
Greene. (The Huth Library.) Vol. XI., pp. 39 - 104,  
 1881-3. The "Address" from the Huntington copy  
 was reprinted with the text of the British Museum  
 copy by G.B. Harrison in The Bodley Head Quartos,  
 Vol. X., pp. 5. - 10, 1923.

Contents: A 1 r. title page with illustration; A 1 v.  
 blank; A 2 r. ornament; A 2 r. - A 3 v.  
 Address "To all my good frends / health";  
 A 4 r. ornament; A 4 r. - E 2 v. text.

57C  
3656

# THE BLACKE BOOKES MESSENGER.

Laying open the Life and Death  
of *Ned Browne* one of the most notable Curpurfes,  
*Crosbiters, and Conny-catchers, that*  
*ever lived in England.*

Heerein hee telleth verie plea-  
santly in his owne person such strange prancks and  
monstrous villanies by him and his Consorte  
performed, as the like was yet neuer  
heard of in any of the former  
bookes of Conny-  
catching.

Read and be warnd, Laugh as you like,  
Judge as you find.

*Nascimur pro Patria.*  
by R. G.



Printed at London by Iohn Danter, for *Thomas*  
*Nelson* dwelling in Silver street, neere to the  
signe of the Red-Crosse 1592.

Title Page of 6.

(From the copy in the Huntington  
Library)

Title: "THE / BLACKKE BOOKES / MESSENGER. / Laying open  
the Life and Death / of Ned Browne one of the  
most notable Cutpurses, / Crosbiters, and Conny-  
catchers, that / euer lived in England. / Heerein  
hee telleth verie plea - / santly in his owne per-  
son such strange prancks and / monstrous villanies  
by him and his Consorte / performed, as the like  
was yet neuer / heard of in any of the former /  
bookes of Conny - / catching. / Read and be  
warnd, Laugh as you like, Judge as you find. /  
Nascimur pro Patria. / by R.G." (Ornament)  
"Printed at London by Iohn Danter, for Thomas /  
Nelson dwelling in Silver streete, neere to the /  
sign of the Red-Crosse. 1592."

Collation: A - D<sup>4</sup>; 16 leaves.

Copies: B.L.O. (Malone 575 (5)); H.L. (Britwell sale,  
16 December, 1919, No.47.).

Note: This pamphlet was entered in the Stationers'  
Register 21 August, 1592. It was reprinted (1) by  
A.B. Grosart, Life and Complete Works of Robert  
Greene, (Huth Library) 1881-3, Vol.XI., pp.1 -  
37; (2) by G.B. Harrison, Bodley Head Quartos,  
Vol.X., 1923, and (3) by A.V. Judges, The Eliza-  
bethan Underworld, pp.248 - 264, 1930. The  
Bodleian copy is bound up with 1 D, 2 B, and 3.

Contents: A 1 missing; A 2 r. title and ornament; A 2 v.  
blank; A 3 r. ornament; A 3 r. - A 3 v.  
Address "To the Curteous / Reader Health";  
A 3 v. ornament; A 4 r. ornament and "A Table  
of the words of Art late - / ly deuised by



6

Ned Browne, and his associates, to / Crosbite tne  
old Phrases vsed in the manner / of Conny-catching;"

A 4 v. blank; B 1 r. ornament; B 1 r. - D 4 r. text;

B 2 r. ornament.

CHAPTER I.  
GREENE'S CONY-CATCHING  
PAMPHLETS.

Six pamphlets, all in quarto, represent Robert Greene's contribution to cony-catching literature. They are A Notable Discovery of Coosenage; The Second and last part of Conny-catching; The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching; A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher; The Defence of Conny catching; and The Blacke Bookes Messenger.

The exact date on which the first of these, A Notable Discovery of Coosenage, was published is not known. It was entered in the Stationers' Register (under its running-title of "The Art of Conny-catching") on December 13, 1591, on the same day as, and immediately preceding the entry of its sequel The Second part of Conny-catching.

In his Epistle to The Second part of Conny-catching Greene replies to criticism of A Notable Discovery. As a result of its publication, he claims, the cony-catchers have threatened to cut off his right hand for revealing their malefactions, while his literary friends have complained of the inelegant phraseology of the same revelations. Amidst much bravado and defiance of the cony-catchers, Greene leads his reader to believe that A Notable Discovery has created such consternation that its author's life

is in danger. "... but alas for them, poore snakes", he affirms, "words are wind, and looks but glances: every thunderclap hath not a bolt, nor every Conny-catchers oath an execution. I live still, and I live to display their villanies".<sup>1</sup>.

These references to the reception of the first pamphlet, taken together with its registration on the same day as the second, have occasioned much sad head-shaking at Greene's duplicity. "Trying to hoodwink a gullible public", declares A.V. Judges.<sup>2</sup> J.C. Jordan pronounces Greene "a self-advertising journalist".

All these references to the first pamphlet sound perfectly natural, appearing as they do in the second; and we are really led to believe that Greene's works were making considerable of a stir and that he himself was manifesting much bravery to continue in such dangerous revelations of the underworld. But our own belief in the genuineness of the whole performance is considerably shattered when we remember that in all probability the Notable Discovery and the Second Part were published at the same time, and that the references to the former are, therefore, most likely, pure fiction.<sup>3</sup>.

But may there not lie, behind Greene's bluster and habitual self-advertisement, a modicum of truth? May not a first edition of A Notable Discovery have been published, without registration, earlier than December 13, 1591, which may be the registration date of a

1. The Second and last part of Conny-catching, Epistle to the Reader; ed. G.B. Harrison, Bodley Head Quartos, p.6.
2. The Elizabethan Underworld. George Routledge & Sons Ltd. (London, 1930). p.500.
3. Robert Greene, (New York, Columbia University Press, 1915), p.86.



second or later edition? Such a belief has been affirmed by Mr. G.B. Harrison<sup>1.</sup> and M. René Pruvost.<sup>2.</sup> It is well known that many Elizabethan writings, especially pamphlets, were never registered; Elizabethan publishers did not pay registration fees unless they had occasion to be jealous of their rights. It is interesting to observe that the publishers of Greene's cony-catching pamphlets entered them all in the Stationers' Register, with the single exception of A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher. The registration of A Notable Discovery at the same time as that of its sequel is therefore probably evidence of the publisher's care to protect his rights in an unexpectedly successful publication, as well as confirmation of Greene's claims for its popularity.

Two editions of A Notable Discovery (1 B and 1 C in my bibliography of Greene's pamphlets), bear the date 1591, and still another edition followed in 1592. Almost the only Elizabethan who could be said to earn his living by his pen, he would not have been slow to realize that in cony-catching he had struck a profitable vein. Thomas Nashe is a witness to the eagerness of the booksellers for "the very dregs of Greene's wit".<sup>3.</sup>

1. "Books and Readers", The Library, Fourth Series, Vol. VIII. 1928. pp. 275-76.

2. Robert Greene et ses Romans. (Paris. Société d'Édition. Les Belles Lettres. 1938). p. 422.

3. Four Letters Confuted. The Works of Thomas Nashe. ed. R.B. McKerrow. (London. 1910). Vol. I. p. 287.

Greene may have been speaking only truth when he said in his "Address" : "Thus, Gentlemen, I have discovered in briefe what I mean to prosecute at large."<sup>1</sup> We may, then, accept, even if cum grano salis, Greene's account of the reception of A Notable Discovery by the public.

Until recently it was believed that there were only two editions of A Notable Discovery: 1 C and 1 D of my bibliography. In 1932, however, M. René Pruvost, writing in the Times Literary Supplement,<sup>2</sup> pointed out the existence of a third edition, represented by a unique copy in the Bodleian Library (Wood 371 (2)): 1 A of my bibliography. Although the title page of this copy is defective and gives neither the names of printer and publisher nor date of publication, and although several pages are missing at the end, it is easily distinguishable from the other editions. M. Pruvost believes this edition of Greene's pamphlet, for reasons to be given, the earliest extant.

In 1938 M. Pruvost announced his discovery<sup>3</sup> of

1. The Second and last part of Conny-catching. ed. G.B. Harrison. Bodley Head Quartos. p. 9. Unless otherwise stated, all references are to the Bodley Head Quartos edited by G.B. Harrison in 1923 - 1924.
2. "Robert Greene's 'Notable Discovery of Coosenage'". Times Literary Supplement. October 6, 1938. p.716.
3. Robert Greene et ses Romans. (Paris. Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres". 1938). p. 422-3.

still another, a fourth, edition of A Notable Discovery in the Huntington Library: l B of my bibliography. This edition is similar in size and make-up (five sheets, A - E<sup>4</sup>), and also in the wording (but not the spelling) of its title page, to l C, and, like that, is dated 1591; it is erroneously listed by the Short Title Catalogue under the same number, 12279. Examination of the title page, however, revealed a number of differences in spelling which led M. Pruvost to pronounce the Huntington copy to represent another edition. A close collation of the whole text of l B with that of l C proves that M. Pruvost's assumption is correct.

I believe that we can go further and ascertain from an examination of the four extant editions of A Notable Discovery, the order of their publication. One of these survives in only one copy (Bodleian, Wood 371 (2)), which has lost the lower half of its title page, and its last two or three pages; thus originally it may have borne a date. Pruvost believes this to be the first edition, and although I consider the evidence he adduces inadequate, I believe his conclusion is correct, for the following reasons.

Although any imprint l A may have borne has been torn from its title page, comparison of l A with the



other three extant editions of A Notable Discovery reveals that it was printed by the printer of the two 1591 editions, l B and l C in my bibliography. First, most of the type used is clearly identical with that used for printing l B; second, its woodcut is that used in l B; third, its ornaments reappear in both l B and l C. The printer of all three editions must, therefore, have been John Wolfe, and l A must thus be dated earlier than the 1592 edition printed by Thomas Scarlet, l D.

Collation of the texts of l A and l B proves that these were printed from different settings of the same type, for in both editions identical defects occur in some letters from the same fount. This is true both of the roman and italic letter used for the title page and epistle, and also of the black-letter used for the main text. The supplementary "Coosenage of Colliers" is printed in roman letter in both editions, but the fount used in l B is smaller than that used in l A, presumably to economize in space. It is worth remarking also that there is but one difference in spelling between the title-pages of l A (sleights) and l B (sleightes). They agree upon the spelling of "Coosenage, Crosse-byters,

pernicious, Cittizens," and "yoemen" whereas l C reads "Coosnage, Crosse-biters, pernitiuous, Citizens," and "yeomen," as noted by M. Pruvost.<sup>1</sup>

The close relationship of l A and l B is further shown by the use of the same woodcut. Two blocks, differing in many slight respects, were used to print the woodcuts of a cony that illustrate the four editions of A Notable Discovery. In l A, l B, and l C, the woodcut on the title page is repeated in the text; in l D it appears on the title page only. The repetition is valuable in l A owing to the mutilation of the title page, where the lower half of the woodcut is missing.

As has been said, the woodcut in l A is identical with that in l B. It differs in a number of details from the woodcut of l C which was used again in l D. In the woodcut of l A and l B appear details - the cony's defective right eye, a break in the lower right corner of the frame, and a twist in the tail of the lowest spade on the card in the cony's left paw - that do not occur in the block used in l C and l D. It is also clear that the block used for l A

1. "Robert Greene's 'Notable Discovery of Coosenage'". Times Literary Supplement. October 6, 1938. p. 716.

and 1 B could not have been touched up to give the impressions found in 1 C and 1 D, which must have been made by a new block which copied the old one closely, but not exactly.

The woodcuts of 1 A and 1 B must, therefore, have been printed from the same block.<sup>1</sup> It follows that a close relationship exists not only between 1 A and 1 B, but also between 1 C and the latest of the extant editions, 1 D. Since 1 B is dated 1591, while 1 C and 1 D are dated 1591 and 1592 respectively, it would seem that a new block was cut some time in 1591. Since 1 A reproduces the same block as 1 B, we can date it as printed before 1 C, and therefore in 1591 or earlier.

Corroborative evidence that 1 A was printed by John Wolfe is found in the ornaments and decorated initials. Edition 1 A possesses four ornaments and four initials, and probably had more when complete. Of these, at least four are demonstrably the

1. It would, perhaps, be rash to assert that the lines of the woodcut on the title page and signature C l r. of 1 A are finer and, therefore, earlier than those of 1 B. There is, however, a very slight thickening of outline in the latter which can best be seen in the blurring at the edges of the cards in the cony's left paw and in the thicker lines of the fur on the cony's forehead.



property of John Wolfe. The first is an ornament preceding the "Address" to the reader and consisting of an Atlantis holding branches in its hands, and two leaping horned beasts surrounded by foliage. This ornament appears at the beginning of the "Address" in every edition of the cony-catching pamphlets John Wolfe is known to have printed - in 1 B, 1 C, and also in both editions of The Second part of Conny-catching (2 A and 2 B). It is used twice in 1 A.<sup>1</sup>

The second is a large initial "T", surrounded by foliage. It is used at the beginning of the text of A Notable Discovery not only in 1 A, but also in 1 B and 1 C, and at the beginning of the text on B 2 r. of The Second part of Conny-catching (2 A).

A third that was used by Wolfe elsewhere is a vaguely heart-shaped pattern with foliage ending in small figures resembling fleur-de-lis. It appears on B 4 r. of 1 A and on Page 94 of John Eliot's The Survey or Topographical Description of France which was "Imprinted by Iohn Wolfe, and are to bee sold at his shop at Poules chayne. 1592."

1. See the illustration on Page 10.



TO THE YONG GEN-  
tlemen, Marchants, Apprenti-  
ses, Farmers, and plaine Countrey men:  
Health.



**D**iogenes Gentlemen, from a counterfaite  
Coiner of money, became a currant corre-  
ctor of manners, as absolute in the one, as  
dissolute in the other, time refineth mens  
affectes and their humors grow different  
by the distinction of age. Poore Ouid  
that amorously writte in his youth the art  
of loue, complayned in his exile amongst the Getes of his  
wanton follies. And Socrates age was vertuous though his  
prime was licentious. So Gentlemen my younger yeares had  
uncertaine thoughtes, but now my ripe dayes cals on to  
repentant deedes, and I sorrow as much to see others wilfull,  
as I delighted once to bee wanton. The odde mad-caps I haue  
beene mate too, not as a companion, but as a spie to haue an  
insight into their knaueries, that seeing their traines I might  
eschew their snares: those mad fellowes I learned at last to  
loath, by their owne gracelesse villenies, and what I saw in  
them to their confusion, I can forewarn in others to my coun-  
tries commodity. None could deciphre Tyranisme better  
then Chrisippus, not that his nature was cruell, but that he  
was nourtured with Dionisius: The simple swain that cuts  
B the

Wood 341(2)

1	2	3	4	5
BODLEIAN				LIBRARY
				21

B 1 recto of the unique copy of 1 A  
(Bodleian Library)

A fourth that was used by John Wolfe elsewhere is a sort of urn flanked by two scroll-like figures resembling great, sprawling letter A's which are surmounted by two fantastic birds, perhaps pheasants. This ornament appears upside down on signature F 4 r. of 1 A at the beginning of the chapter "A Pleasant Discouery of the Coosenage of Colliers". It appears to have been used by several printers of the period: twice by Wolfe in John Eliot's The Survey, on A 3 r. and Page 95; and A 2 r. of Nashes Lenten Stuff, "Printed by N. L. and C. B."; and B 1 r. of Richard Harvey's A Theologicall Discourse of the Lamb of God and His Enemies, "Imprinted by Iohn Windet for W.P." The use of these ornaments and initials in 1 A is, of course, by no means conclusive evidence in itself, for I have not been able to establish that the first three decorations were not used by other printers. Taken with the other evidence, however, it is at least corroborative. A search through the Bodleian copies of books printed by John Wolfe of this period has revealed no further evidence of this kind.

That 1 A is the first of the extant editions is testified by its physical make-up. The first indication is the gradual reduction from 1 A to 1 D in the number of printed pages, all roughly of the same size. The matter contained in the 21 leaves of 1 A was got into 20 leaves in 1 B and 1 C and reduced to 16 in 1 D. This was achieved largely by reducing the 9 or possibly more ornaments and decorated initials of 1 A to 3 in 1 B and 1 C and by slight but steady condensation of phrase and clause. This reduction in pages



is the ground for Pruvost's belief that 1 A is the first edition of A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. It certainly suggests an attempt at economy in subsequent editions of a pamphlet whose popularity was assured, but by itself does not prove that 1 A was the first edition.

There are, however, other grounds for holding that 1 A is indeed, as Pruvost rather too easily assumed, the first edition. This is to be found in the quire-signatures of 1 A. In 1 B and 1 C the "Address" begins on signature A 2 r.; whereas in 1 A it begins on signature B 1 r. In this respect 1 A conforms to the general practise of Elizabethan printers in first editions, wherein the text was customarily begun on signature B, signature A being reserved for the frontispiece, title page, dedication, or other prefatory matter; when the text was begun on signature A, the preliminaries were signed with an asterisk.<sup>1</sup> In edition 1 A the title page is the only preliminary material and may be presumed to be A 1 or A 2; it may have been printed as part of the missing sheet G.

The final argument that 1 A is the first edition is the correction of its errors by 1 B, 1 C, and 1 D. "Chrisippus" in 1 A (B 1 r. line 20) is emended in all the other editions to "Aristippus"; this, in all probability, is an author's correction.<sup>2</sup> Another interesting

1. Ronald B. Mc Kerrow. An Introduction to Bibliography, Oxford. 1928, Ch. IV. pp.188-190.
2. An allusion to Aristippus, especially together with Dionysius, as here, was a favourite with Greene. It appears in Greenes Mourning Garment, ed. Grosart Vol.IX, pp.131 and 289, and in Never Too Late, Vol. VIII, p.22.

emendation is the changing of "brawling knave" in 1 A (B 4 r. line 4) to "broking knave" in 1 B (A 4 v. line 17). The correction is repeated in the other two editions. Either word makes sense, but the latter reading is probably correct, because the context of the word indicates that Greene was here using the word "broking" in its now obsolete sense of "procurer"<sup>1</sup>. Still another correction that it is tempting to believe Greene's is the amplification of "By R. Greene" on the title page of 1 A, to "By R. Greene, Maister of Arts" on the title pages of the three other editions; for we know that he had other works published over this academic title, of which he was very proud.<sup>2</sup>

Other types of error in 1 A corrected in 1 B are misprints such as "plently" (B 3 r. line 2) for "plenty" (A 3 v. line 21), "wre" (C 3 v. line 31) for "we" (B 3 v. line 31), "inis" (C 4 r. line 33) for "into" (B 4 r. line 33), and "ruffins" (E 2 r. line 23) for "ruffians" (D 2 r. line 23); errors of punctuation, as "to run away, or banckrout, all" (B 2 v. line 7) for "to run away, or banckrout all" (A 3 v. line 29); or a reversed parenthesis (C 1 r. line 14) corrected (D 1 r. line 14); misreadings such as "composition" (E 2 r. line 9) for "compassion" (D 2 r. line 10); and omissions, such as "eating but every third day, and playing to their" (B 2 r. line 17) for "eating but everie third day, and playing two, so their"

1. The passage reads "when a broking knave cros-bites a gentleman with a bad commodity" (i.e. whore).
2. See Appendix F, "The Descriptions of Robert Greene on Dated Title Pages of His Works Published in His Life-time".

(A 3 r. line 8), or "let it spoke" (C 1 r. line 13) for "let it be spoken" (D 1 r. line 13). These corrections are almost always followed in the subsequent editions. A grammatical error in 1 A and 1 B, "the three knaves you shewd comes not together" (C 4 r. line 24) in 1 A, is corrected in 1 C to "the three knaves you shewd come not together" (B 4 r. line 24). Occasionally 1 C offers a smoother reading such as "Coming down Turnmil street the other day" (C 3 r. lines 31-2) for "Coming down the other day Turnmil street" of 1 A (D 3 r. lines 31-2).

Thus all the evidence - of printing and type, of woodcut, of length, of signatures, or of uncorrected errors - confirms M. Pruvost's assumption that 1 A is the first edition of A Notable Discovery of Coosenage.

That 1 B is the second of the known editions is indicated by its closer relationship to 1 A than to either of the other editions. Its almost identical spelling on the title page and its use of the same type and woodcut as those of 1 A have been discussed. Their relationship is still further demonstrated by a comparison of the the variant readings in all four editions. Fewer differences exist between 1 A and 1 B than between 1 A and the other editions; 1 B adheres closely to 1 A. Infrequently 1 B differs from 1 A, and when it does so the other two editions follow 1 B. In one instance 1 B adheres to the correct reading of 1 A: "as the diuel is more dishonest than the holiest



Angell" (A 4 v. lines 1 - 2); whereas l C and l D both have the obviously wrong reading: "as the deuill is more honest than the holiest Angell". It seems, therefore, that the text of l B was printed from that of l A.

It is not absolutely essential that a new edition of A Notable Discovery be published, but in the interests of scholars and students of Greene, any future editor of the pamphlet should certainly publish the text of l A supplemented with the corrections and the last three pages of l B. Edition l A represents the fullest text of A Notable Discovery as it was before its printers condensed phrases and sentences to reduce the size of the pamphlet. A collation of l A with the variant readings of l B is of interest as some of the variant readings in l B may be due to Greene himself.

The argument that l C is the third extant edition of A Notable Discovery is based upon its obvious relationship to l D, which is dated 1592. It uses the same woodcut as l D. Except for a break in the frame of the woodcut in l D, over the cony's right ear - a defect which may indicate heavy usage - the prints are identical. This identity is shown by minute details such as the rabbit's shaggy left side and left forearm, and the meaningless lines (? shadows) at the rabbit's feet that differ slightly but definitely from those in l A and l B.

Although l C repeats the errors of l B and was probably printed from that text, its variant readings

are closer to the text of 1592. In no instance does it follow 1 A where 1 B does not, but it sometimes varies from 1 B where 1 B agrees with 1 A.

Edition 1 C, like 1 A and 1 B, was printed by John Wolfe. But a closer connection is established between 1 C and 1 D by their agreement in variant readings and by the identity of the woodcut on their title pages.

The Second part of Conny-catching was entered in the Stationers' Register on December 13, 1591, as "Printed by John Wolfe for William Wright." Two editions are known. The first, dated 1591, is entitled The Second part of Conny-catching; the other, dated 1592, is entitled The Second and last part of Conny-catching. The texts differ in several respects.

Of the first edition, 2 A of my bibliography, there is a unique copy in the Huntington Library (Huth); the second edition, 2 B of my bibliography, also exists only in a unique copy in the Bodleian Library (Malone 575 (2)).

M. Pruvost believes that Greene himself changed the title from The Second part of Conny-catching to The Second and last part of Conny-catching, either because he planned to conclude the series of pamphlets at this point, or because, having conceived the idea of a third pamphlet, he wished to surprise his readers by a continuation when he had given them to understand that he would write no more on the subject.<sup>1</sup>

1. Robert Greene et ses Romans. p. 427.

M. Pruvost "does not exclude an even more plausible theory - that Greene was merely trying to increase sales by the "final appearance" of a popular work. The theory is supported by the accusation of Greene's enemy, Gabriel Harvey, that Greene put forth "new, newer, & newest bookes of the maker"<sup>1</sup>.

The emendations in The Second and last part of Conny-catching, asserts Pruvost, are those of Greene himself. The substitution of "A Tale of a Nip" for the story of the Exeter merchant he points out as an author's correction.<sup>2</sup>

The wording on the title pages of the two editions differs widely. That of 2 A describes the pamphlet as "Contayning the discouery of certaine wondrous Coosenages, either superficialle past ouer, or vtterlie vntoucht in the first," whereas 2 B is presented "With new additions containing many merry tales of all lawes worth the reading, because they are worthy to be remembred."

The text of 2 A begins on A 1 r. the frontispiece, title page, and "Address" to the reader being signed with an asterisk. The signatures of 2 B, however, suggest it is a reprint, the title page being A 1 r. and the text beginning on A 4 r.

Nevertheless, identical details appear in the type of both editions, and they use the same woodcut

1. Foure Letters, and certaine Sonnets, Ed.G.B. Harrison, The Bodley Head Quartos. p.37.

2. René Pruvost. op. cit. p.427.



illustration. On both title pages, for example, there is a thick "T" in "THE", the "S" in "SECOND" is flattened at the top; the "n" in "Printed" has the same long tail; and the "W" in "Wolfe" appears to have dropped slightly out of line.

The identity of the woodcut is shown by the incomplete line of the lower flap closing the packet in the cony's right paw. This defect appears in each. The lines of the illustration in 2 B are heavier, but this may be due to inking.

The "Addresses" to the reader are identical in every detail. The arrangement of type, the lining, and the spelling of both are in accord; John Wolfe's ornamental border of Atlantes and horned beasts appears above the "Address" in each case; and the decorated initial is the same nude and bearded man peering between leaves behind a "W".

Both editions are singularly free from misprints and errors. Except for insignificant minor differences of wording, and a slight tendency toward condensation in 2 B, which prints an extra line to each page, the two texts are very close to one another.

We may accept the titles of the editions as indicating the order of their publication. The evidence of signatures, already presented, and that of more elaborate illustration and ornamentation in 2 A show it to be a first edition; while 2 B follows the practice of second editions in reduction of size, emendation of errors, and correction of the illogical

position of the table of laws in 2 A.

The reduction of size from 2 A's fifty-five pages to 2 B's thirty-six seems to illustrate the tendency toward the saving of the expense of production in a reprint. Edition 2 B reduces its pages by incorporating the frontispiece into its title page, and by omitting the ornament and the list of "laws" that appears on the title page in 2 A. It omits the story of Greene's friend, an Exeter merchant, who falls among cony-catchers - a mere rehash of the Barnard's Law set forth in A Notable Discouery of Coosenage;<sup>1</sup> although it replaces this story with that of a cutpurse which, as M. Pruvost observes,<sup>2</sup> is both uninteresting and out of its context.

Edition 2 B further reduces its pages by omitting a singularly inappropriate picture of a knight on horseback that 2 A employs to illustrate "A pleasant Tale of a Horse, how at Uxbridge, hee coosened a Conny-catcher, etc." as well as a reproduction of the title page woodcut from A Notable Discovery of Coosenage that likewise bears no relation to the tales of nips and foists that it adorns.<sup>3</sup>

1. "Epistle to the Reader", ed. G.B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos, pp.11-13.

2. Robert Greene et Ses Romans. p.427.

3. It is interesting to note in passing that this is the same woodcut used by editions 1 A and 1 B of A Notable Discovery of Coosenage, a further reason for accepting 2 A as the first edition of The Second part.

Indeed, John Wolfe seems to have illustrated this edition with whatever woodcuts lay at hand. Four illustrations, exclusive of that on the title page which is repeated on B 2 r., appear haphazardly in 2 A. No other cony-catching pamphlet contains as many. It is, moreover, one of the most heavily ornamented of all the pamphlets - another indication, according to R.B. McKerrow,<sup>1</sup> that it is probably a first edition.

Still another argument for the earlier date of 2 A is the evidence of disorder in its printing. The table of "laws" which should follow the title page is not given until two laws have already been discussed. There is no confusion in the signatures at this point, but the catchword "THE" on A 4 v. indicates that a leaf containing the table of "laws" has been thrust in between that page and B 2 r. which should follow, probably in belated recognition by the printer that the table of "laws" should precede the text.

It is upon the evidence of signatures; reduction in size, omission of unnecessary material, ornament, and illustration; and by its correction of the disorder in the arrangement of 2 A that we may conclude The Second and last part of Conny-catching to be the second edition of the pamphlet.

The Thirde and last part of Conny-catching was entered in the Stationers' Register on February 7, 1592. The Short Title Catalogue is in error in listing but one edition of the pamphlet, 12283. Two

1. R.B. McKerrow. op. cit. p.184.



editions exist, a unique copy in the Bodleian Library (Malone 575 (3), 3 A of my bibliography), and a unique copy, 3 B, in the Huntington Library (Britwell, No. 46),<sup>1</sup> respectively. It is not surprising that these two editions have been confused, for the arrangement of signatures is identical in each, the number of pages is the same, both texts print the same woodcut, and the readings and spelling of both are closer than are those of any other two editions of Greene's pamphlets.

A glance at the title pages, however, is sufficient to indicate their difference, as the division into lines is not at all alike. Line two of 3 A is composed entirely of the one word "THIRDE", whereas that of 3 B includes "Thirde and last part of Conny-". The type of the latter copy is also much smaller in the sixth line: "The like coosnages and Villanies neuer before discovered." The spelling on the title pages varies from "Thirde, Art, Cosenages, Villenies", and "shoppe" in 3 A to "Third, arte, coosnages,

1. In a note prefixed to The Thirde and last part of Conny-catching, The Life and Works of Robert Greene (The Huth Edition), Volume X., p. 136, Grosart states: "The Thirde part of Conny-catching, 1592, is also extremely rare. Our text is from the British Museum". But Mr. H. Sellers of the British Museum assures me that the Museum has never owned The Thirde part of Conny-catching. Grosart's text seems to agree at all points with that of the Bodleian Library.

villanies", and "shop" in 3 B. Whereas 3 A was "Imprinted at London by Thomas Scarlet for Cutberd Burbie, and are to be solde at his shoppe in the Poultrie, by S. Mildreds Church. 1592.", 3 B was "Printed by T. Scarlet for C. Burby, and are to be solde at his shop vnder S. Mildreds Church in the Poultrie. 1592."

Edition 3 A prints thirty-five lines to a page to 3 B's thirty-three. There are remarkably few variant readings in the two editions, and those that exist are immaterial to the content of the pamphlet. They comprise such minor differences as the alteration of "Chronyclers", 3 A (A 3 r. line 3), to "Chronicles" 3 B (A 3 r. line 3 - 4); or the omission of a preposition by the latter text. The errors of 3 A are very rare. They consist of such misprints as "intentting" (B 1 v. line 1) for "intending"; or such awkward readings as "which he would most gladlie he would bestow", (C 3 v. line 35 - D 1 r. line 1), for "he would most gladlie bestow" 3 B (D 1 r. lines 10 - 11). The errors of 3 B seem to be those of a hasty or negligent printer. They are more frequent, about three errors to one in 3 A. Most of them appear to be careless

omissions, such as "porting" (C 1 v. line 7) for "reporting"; "this they proceeded" (F 1 r. line 22), for "this way they proceeded"; "where he had so often" (E 3 v. line 22), for "where he had sped so often"; or an apparent misreading, as "with them, were there got" (C 4 r. line 8), for "with him, were there got"; or "amazement on their part" (F 2 v. line 31) for "amazement on either part".

Although these differences between the texts are quite sufficient to establish their identity as separate editions, they do not indicate which was published first. It remains for the greater amount of decoration in 3 A and the condition of the woodcut in 3 B to pronounce 3 A the earlier of the two.

The number of ornaments and decorated initials in 3 A of The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching totals sixteen, more than any other pamphlet of the series contains. But only four of these decorations are actual ornaments; the rest are decorated initials. Edition 3 B, on the other hand, prints only three ornaments: these do not appear in 3 A. Two of them are placed where 3 A contains no ornament - at the end of the "Address" to the reader and at the end of



the text.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the predominance of decoration in 3 A over that of 3 B is an argument of an earlier date in the former.

A more conclusive argument may be derived from a comparison of the woodcut illustration on the title pages and A 4 v. of the two texts. The block from which the illustrations were printed was obviously the same. But in 3 B the block shows definite signs of age and usage; on the title page a break and a partial break appear in the lower frame of the picture, while in the illustration on A 3 v. these breaks are shown together with still another in the frame, despite heavier inking. We may safely conclude, therefore, that of the two known texts of The Thirde and last part of Conny-catching, 3 A is the first edition.

Self advertisement was customary with Greene. It had long been his habit in his writings to puff forth-

1. It is by the inclusion of these two ornaments, together with printing fewer lines to a page, that 3 B attains the same number of pages as 3 A.

coming works.<sup>1</sup> This practise he continued in the pamphlets. In The Second part of Conny-catching he announces:

Marry the goodman Cony-catchers, those  
base excrements of Dishonesty, report  
they haue got one ( ) I will not  
bewray his name, but a scholler they  
say he is, to make an inuective against  
me...<sup>2</sup>.

An "invective" was duly entered in the Stationers' Register on April 21, 1592, as The Defence of Conny catching under the pseudonym of "Cuthbert Cunny-catcher, Licentiate in Whittington Colledge."

Two copies of this edition, (5 of my bibliography) "Printed at London by A.I. for Thomas Gubbins and are to be sold by Iohn Busbie, 1592"<sup>3</sup> survive. One is in the British Museum (C. 40, b 6), the other in the Huntington Library (Huth copy). The British Museum copy differs from the other in substituting the "Address" of A Notable Discovery of Coosenage (1 D) signed "Yours Rob. Greene" for the correct "Address", signed "Yours in cardes and dice Cuthbert cony-catcher", that appears in the Huntington copy.

1. For a discussion and list of such advertisements in the works of Greene see J.C. Jordan. op. cit. pp. 102 - 3.
2. Ed. G.B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos. p. 28.
3. In The Life and Works of Robert Greene, Volume I., p. 30, Grosart again states: "The Defence of Conny-catching ... is very rare; it is not even at the British Museum." Mr. Sellers informs me, however, that the Museum acquired The Defence on 6 January, 1870.

It is generally conceded by most scholars today that this pamphlet cannot be the work of anyone but Robert Greene or Greene in collusion with a friend.<sup>1</sup> Apart from the question of its authorship, the pamphlet presents two problems: first, the presence in one copy of an inappropriate "Address" incongruously signed "Rob. Greene" although the pamphlet purports to be an attack on him by "Cuthbert Conny-catcher"; and, second, the identity of A.I., the printer of The Defence of Conny catching.

The two copies of the pamphlet are identical in title page, woodcut, and text; they vary only in the "Address" to the reader. The identity of type and setting on the title pages is easily recognizable. In each the lines of type curve slightly upward in the centre of the page. Several letters in the first, fourth, and fifth lines - the longest on the page - have dropped; e. g. the "T" in "The", the "A", and the "tw" in "two". Other details that occur on both title pages are a defective "F" in "DEFENCE", a mark like an inverted "l" under the "F" in "OF", a blurred and slanting "E" in "THOSE", a broken "s" in "practitioners", and a blurred "m" in "enim".

1. See Chapter II which discusses the problem more fully.



The woodcuts of the armed cony on the title pages are likewise identical. Both have a break in the frame to make room for the cony's sword; both have the same minute defect, a projection from the cony's back near the ribs. The lines of the illustration in the Huntington copy are heavier, less delicate than those in the British Museum copy; this may be seen clearly in the curve of the cony's belly, the hair on the cony's face, and outlines of the grass and ferns.

But both impressions are obviously made from the same block, and the difference may be due merely to heavier inking.

In each copy the text is preceded by the same ornament, a narrow rectangle that includes what seem to be two horses, armor, and standards on the left, and sea horses and foliage on the right, and begins with a large initial "I" decorated with twining foliage and roses. The two texts are identical in spelling, lining, and paging. Both show the same defects such as the nearly obliterated "r" in "necessaries" (B 1 r. line 4) and the defective "o" in "Poake" (C 1 r. line 4).

Were it not for the difference in their "Addresses" one would inevitably conclude that the two copies of

The Defence of Conny catching are examples of the same edition. This indeed is probable. An examination of the "Address" in the British Museum copy of The Defence suggests that it is that of the 1592 edition (1 D) of A Notable Discovery of Coosenage bound in with the title page and text of The Defence to make up a defective copy.

The "Address" of the British Museum copy of The Defence has 48 or 50 lines to a page, whereas the text of both copies of The Defence has only 35 or 36 lines, like the "Address" in the Huntington copy. The type used in the "Address" of the Huntington copy is 12-point Roman type; the text in both copies is 12-point black-letter with proper names in Italic, whereas the "Address" in the British Museum copy is printed in the 10-point Roman type used in the 1592 edition of A Notable Discovery (1 D). The size of a page of type in the "Address" and text of the Huntington copy, and of the text in the British Museum copy is 83 centimeters wide by 145 centimeters long (excluding headlines), whereas the size of a text-page in the "Address" of the British Museum copy is 97 centimeters wide by 168 centimeters long. Identical defects occur in

the "Address" of the British Museum copy of The Defence and in that of 1 D: a dropped "T" in "TO",<sup>1</sup> a broken "O" in "YONG", the slightly larger "L" in "GENTLEMEN", the flat-topped "C" in "COUN-", and the fat comma after "repentance" (A 2 r. line 8). The three ornaments in the "Address" of the British Museum copy of The Defence are identical with those of the "Address" in 1 D printed by Thomas Scarlet. But the ornaments in the rest of the British Museum copy are identical with those printed by "A.I." in the Huntington copy.

Equally conclusive evidence is the watermark. In the British Museum copy of The Defence the two leaves of the "Address" bear the "hand and star" watermark, while the other sixteen leaves have a "crown and jug". This "hand and star" watermark in the "Address" occurs in the middle of the fold between signatures A 2 and A 3. The leaves were, therefore, conjugate; although they are no longer so as they have been mended. The "hand and star" watermark is found throughout the two copies of 1 D accessible to me, those of the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Bodleian Library. Other copies of 1 D are in the Huntington Library

1. This dropped "O" does not appear, however, in the 1592 edition of A Notable Discovery in the Victoria and Albert Museum.



and the Folger Library.

It seems certain, therefore, that the "Address" in the British Museum copy of The Defence of Conny catching is an unauthorized insertion. It seems that there was but one edition of The Defence of Conny catching, represented in its perfect state by the Huntington Library copy.

M. Pruvost identified the printer of The Defence of Conny catching as Abel Jeffes, a well known London printer of the period,<sup>1</sup> but did not substantiate this statement. Pruvost's identification seems to be based upon the Short Title Catalogue's inclusion of Abel Jeffes' name in parentheses after the initials "A.I." The initials of no other Elizabethan printer fit the case except those of Adam Islip, who bought the printing house of John Wolfe upon the latter's death in 1601. But there is no record of Islip's ever having printed a book for Thomas Gubbins or John Busby, and the Short Title Catalogue lists eight works printed by Abel Jeffes for either Gubbins or Busby between 1592 and 1594.

1. René Pruvost. op. cit. Ch. XI. p. 443: "la Defence fut inscrite sur les Registres des Librairies le 21 Avril 1592. Inprimee par ((A.I.)), c'est a dire par Abel Jeffes ..."

This evidence is strongly supported by the fact that in February, 1592, the novel Euphues Shadow, edited and published by Greene for his friend Thomas Lodge, then on a sea voyage, was "Printed by Abel Ieffes for T.G. and Iohn Busbie." As Greene would probably take the work to his own publisher, it seems fairly certain that Abel Jeffes was the "A.I." who, in the spring of 1592, printed both The Defence of Conny catching and A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher.

A Disputation exists in a single edition dated 1592, and it was "Imprinted at London by A.I. for T.G.", the printer and publisher of The Defence of Conny catching. M. Pruvost dates the publication of A Disputation after the seventh of February, 1592, when The Thirde part was registered, and before the twenty-first of April, when The Defence of Conny catching was registered.<sup>1</sup> He argues that A Disputation antedates The Defence because it advertises Greene's forthcoming Blacke Booke, outlining the contents. The Defence advertises "The repentance of a Conny-catcher" which was entered 21 August, 1592, under the title of The Blacke Bookes Messenger, and

1. René Pruvost. op. cit. pp. 495 - 460.

in which Greene apologises for the delay in publication of the long- promised Blacke Booke. In the absence of other evidence we can do no other than accept M. Pruvost's suggestion.

The Blacke Booke never appeared. Nor does The Blacke Bookes Messenger completely fulfill the promise of its entry on the Stationers' Register as

"The Repentance of a Conycatcher with the Life and death of ( ) MOURTON and Ned BROWNE, twoo notable cony catchers The one latelie executed, at Tyborne the other at Aix in Ffraunce."<sup>1</sup>.

It gives the life and death of Ned Browne alone.

These are the eleven extant editions of Greene's cony-catching pamphlets published during his lifetime. Since seven of these eleven editions survive only in unique examples, it is of course quite possible that other editions, perhaps even other cony-catching pamphlets, existed and have not come down to us. However, these eleven editions are themselves sufficient to corroborate Greene's claims for the popularity - not only of A Notable Discovery of Coosenage - but also of the cony-catching genre.



## CHAPTER II

The Case for The Defence: A survey of the Critics and  
The Defence of Conny catching.

Since 1859, when J.O. Halliwell first reprinted The Defence of Conny catching, much critical debate has revolved around the question whether it is the work of Robert Greene. The authorities have ranged themselves about equally on either side; those of the nineteenth century chiefly accepting the pamphlet as a genuine rebuttal of Greene, and a majority of the twentieth century scholars affirming Greene's authorship. Since 1913 the authorities have generally agreed that The Defence is the work of Greene, although a small group has either cautiously declined to enter the lists or has conceded that Greene had a hand in publication of the pamphlet.

Halliwell's reprint of The Defence of Conny catching in 1859 bore the sub-title "Being a Reply to Works by R. Greene on the Same Subject". He prefaced it with the following remarks:

The name of the author of the following tract is unknown. It has generally been inserted in the list of the works of the celebrated Robert Greene, but it is obviously not an original work by him, but a reply to two of the pieces of that voluminous writer; one of these being the "Notable Discovery of Coosnage"... republished the following year. The other was perhaps the Groundwork of Coneycatching, three parts of which appeared in the years 1591 and 1592.

That Greene was not the author of the following piece is shown not only by its contents, but conclusively by a singularly curious allusion to a trick played by him in regard to the performance of one of his best dramas, - "but now, sir, by your leaue a little, what if I should proue you a Conny-catcher Maister R.G. would it not make you blush at the matter? Ile go as neare to it as the Fryer did to his Hostesse mayde, when the Clarke of the parish tooke him at Leuatem at midnight. Aske the Queens Players, if you sold them not Orlando Furioso for twenty Nobles, and when they were in the country, sold the same Play to the Lord Admirals men for as much more. Was not this plaine Conny-catching Maister R.G.?"<sup>1</sup>.

Nicholas Storojenko in Robert Greene: His Life and Works, published in Moscow in 1878 and reprinted in translation by A. B. Grosart, wrote:

Greene had hardly published his first two pamphlets when some unknown writer, hiding under the pseudonym of "A Connycatcher", printed "The Defence of Connycatching," which is full of furious abuse of the exposé. <sup>2</sup>.

Commenting upon this statement, Grosart, who did not accept The Defence as Greene's but nevertheless included it in his edition,<sup>3</sup> conjectured that

After all, judging from the title and style, one cannot help a shrewd suspicion that Greene himself may have had a hand in the production of this "Defence". He was capable (I fear) of

1. The Defence of Conny catching. ed. J.O.Halliwel. London. J.E. Adlard. 1859.
2. The Life and Complete Works of Robert Greene. Huth Edition. London. 1881. Volume I.
3. Volume XI., pp.39-104.

resorting to such an expedient in order to call the more attention to his "Conny-catching" pamphlets.<sup>1</sup>.

Richard Simpson, who also wrote an account of Greene's life and works in the same year as Storojenko, 1878, stated his belief that Cuthbert Cony-catcher's was a genuine attack upon Greene, and that he was not the author of the pamphlet.<sup>2</sup>.

In the critical introduction to his edition of Greene's dramatic and poetical works, J. Churton Collins described The Defence as follows:

It is written with some humour and by no means spitefully, and it gives one particular about Greene which, if it be true, as it probably is, is not to his credit.<sup>3</sup>.

Collins too, cited the celebrated passage about Orlando Furioso, clearly regarding The Defence as the work of an enemy.

Grosart's opinion that The Defence is not by Greene was accepted in 1911 by Edward D. McDonald, who, in an article tracing plagiarism from Greene by his contemporary, Samuel Rowlands,<sup>4</sup>. pointed out that Storojenko exaggerated in saying that The Defence is "full of furious abuse of the exposé" of conny-catching. "Besides", McDonald continued, "the tract has little besides its cleverness to indicate [Greene's] able workmanship". He

1. Volume I. n.27., p.30.

2. The School of Shakespeare. London. Chatto and Windus. 1878. Vol.II. pp.339 - 405.

3. The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene. Oxford. The Clarendon Press. 1905. Vol.I. p.34.

4. "An Example of Plagiarism among Elizabethan Pamphleteers." Indiana University Studies. Bloomington, Indiana. No.11, September, 1911. pp.145 - 170.



then proceeded to include among his illustrations of Rowlands' borrowing from Greene a list of passages cribbed by that plagiarist from The Defence, and to wonder if, in this instance, Rowlands was no plagiarist, but the author of The Defence. McDonald concluded by citing Rowlands' work, Greenes Ghost Haunting Cony-catchers, as "the sort of plagiarism which the Elizabethans themselves felt to be clearly immoral."<sup>1</sup>.

Frank Aydelotte in 1913 was the last of the scholars who refused to list The Defence of Conny catching among the works of Robert Greene, regarding it, rather, as "another tribute to the selling power which Greene's works had given the title." He quoted Greene's assertion in The Second part of Conny-catching that the cony-catchers, in revenge for his exposures, had hired a scholar to make an invective against him. "It is a tempting hypothesis," conjectured Aydelotte cautiously, "that the Defence is this invective."<sup>2</sup>.

Two scholars have stated their suspicions that the pamphlet, while not the work of Greene himself, was written by a friend in collusion with him. The first was Grosart, whose statement, based on the title and style, is given above.<sup>3</sup> The second scholar is H. C. Hart, who in 1906 included in a series of articles on "Greene's Prose Works" a full discussion of the authorship of The Defence. "Greene," he claimed, in his

1. Ibid. p. 170.

2. Elizabethan Rogues and Vagabonds. Oxford. The Clarendon Press. 1913. Volume I. p. 128.

3. Volume XI. pp. 39 - 104.

tracts upon cheating - his conny-catching series, and one or two others, has no rival, excepting, perhaps, one contemporary ('Cuthbert Connycatcher') whose identity is unknown."<sup>1</sup>. Hart rejected the pamphlet as Greene's first, upon the evidence of language and style, enumerating about fifty expressions which, he asserted, do not occur in Greene's works elsewhere except in a later pamphlet, A Quip for an Upstart Courtier. Hart explained the presence of these expressions in A Quip by saying that Greene was borrowing from The Defence. "There is also," Hart continued, "a deal of legal jargon interspersed, that he does not usually show familiarity with." Two of Hart's admissions here somewhat damaged his argument. The first was that Greene's style varies so widely in his tracts that an argument based upon it carried little weight. Second, in listing Greene's characteristic expressions, "Greeneisms", (upon the absence of which in The Defence he partly based his conclusions), Hart cited among the foremost an example which occurs in The Defence!

Another obstacle to Hart's acceptance of Greene as the author was the reference in the sub-title of The Defence to "two injurious pamphlets published by R.G." "Why two injurious pamphlets," asked Hart, "when we have the three parts of 'Conny-catching,' and the 'Disputation,' apparently making four of about equal length?"<sup>2</sup>. Hart met this difficulty with the suggestion that "Cuthbert" considered the first three

1. Notes and Queries. Tenth Series. July 1, 1905, pp.1 -4; July 29, 1905, pp.81-84; August 26, 1905, pp.162-64; February 3, 1906, pp.84-5.

2. Ibid. p.84.

pamphlets as part of one work, A Disputation being the second. Next, he argued that had The Defence been Greene's, we should expect a reference to it in his subsequent work; whereas no such mention has been traced. Moreover, he argues, Greene would not have endured the charge of having twice sold his play, Orlando Furioso, without publishing a rebuttal, if one were possible. That Greene did not reply Hart attributed to common knowledge of his double-dealing. Hart stated further that "Greene could not for the life of him have penned" the story of "Cuthbert's" discomfiture that begins The Defence. This statement Hart did not support.

"On the whole, I think The Defence was written by some confederate or friend, jointly perhaps," he concluded.

The inconsistency not only between the professed enmity of "Cuthbert Conny-catcher" and the ineffectiveness of his attack, but also between the pamphlet itself and genuine examples of controversial literature, was noted by Harold V. Routh in his account of Greene in "London and the Development of Popular Literature" in The Cambridge History of English Literature, 1909.

The Defence of Conny-catching claims to be a counterblast to Greene's preceding pamphlets, A Notable Discovery and the later parts of Conny-catching. But these booklets are gratuitously commended by their self-constituted antagonist, and our author is addressed with a respectful suavity, quite out of keeping with the sixteenth century spirit of controversy, but quite in keeping with Greene's methods of self-advertisement. <sup>1</sup>.

1. Volume IV. Ch. XVI. p. 319. n.



Writing in The Academy in 1914, George A. Brown was the first to offer a plausible explanation of the charge of cony-catching brought by "Cuthbert" against Greene:

But is it not probable that Greene was the real author of the "Defence", and wrote it as a method of self advertisement? Or, at least, he was privy to its publication. He would be very likely to congratulate himself on having gulled the players, and take delight in publishing his astuteness.<sup>1</sup>

This explanation, in view of the animosity to the players voiced by Greene even on his deathbed, has since come to be generally accepted.

Another full discussion of The Defence and the problem of its authorship was given by J.C. Jordan in 1915 in Chapter IV of his monograph, Robert Greene.<sup>2</sup> In it Jordan advanced his reasons for the belief that Greene wrote The Defence and included, as he went, his rejoinders to the arguments of Grosart and Hart. "Cuthbert," he claimed, is neither serious in his exposition nor valiant in his defence of cony-catching. He merely hurls "taunts at Greene because he did not include these very important exposures in his book." It is this quality of non-abusiveness in "Cuthbert" that has led to the belief that he and Greene are one and the same person.

Jordan rejected H.C. Hart's assumption that he had definitely settled the case against Greene, and replied

1. "The Conny-Catching Pamphlets of Robert Greene." Vol. 87. August 8, 1914.p.19.
2. New York, Columbia University Press. pp.96-107.

to Hart's arguments in turn. There is no problem, Jordan asserted, in the "two injurious pamphlets" mentioned on the title-page of The Defence. Nor is Hart correct in assuming that "Cuthbert" lumps the three parts of cony-catching in one; instead, he is referring to the first two pamphlets which alone contain exposures of deceits. The Thirde Part, Jordan pointed out, consists entirely of stories.

Jordan saw no connection in Hart's reasoning that Greene did not write The Defence because he made no mention of it in his subsequent work. Jordan observed that the Quip does not mention the Disputation, and that The Blacke Bookes Messenger mentions neither the Disputation nor the Quip. Why, he asked, should Greene's later work be expected to mention The Defence?

Jordan considered as of no significance Greene's failure to refute the charge of having twice sold Orlando Furioso against Hart's supposition that the sale was possibly well known and, therefore, undeniable. Jordan countered "It is quite as reasonable to believe that the play was not resold at all."

Hart's list of words that appear in The Defence but in no other work of Greene's except the Quip was rejected by Jordan as evidence against Greene's authorship. That the words were repeated in the Quip was a weakness in Hart's argument, stated Jordan, who suggested that Greene may have borrowed the terms from an unknown source.

Jordan repeated Hart's statement that he believed Greene had a hand in The Defence, and asked "why we cannot go the rest of the way, at least tentatively."

The considerations that made it more reasonable than not to him to regard Greene as the author are the resemblance of the six stories in the pamphlets to Greene's other tales; the characteristic advertisement of The Defence in The Second Part; the similarity in tone of certain passages in The Defence and in the Disputation, The Blacke Bookes Messenger, and The Second Part; the advertisement in The Defence of a projected work by Greene; and the paradoxical friendliness of the pamphlet's conclusion. Jordan observed that Greene writes from the point of view of the cony-catchers in A Disputation also. This discussion of The Defence was concluded with Jordan's conjecture that the passage on the Martinist was directed at Richard Harvey and may have been a link in the Greene-Harvey-Nashe controversy.

In The History of the English Novel, 1929, E.A. Baker presented a faithful but more sprightly version of the arguments of Jordan. He had, however, one new observation to contribute although otherwise he accepted Jordan's conviction of Greene's insincerity and opportunism.

Perhaps the decisive argument that Cuthbert Conny-catcher was not really a cony-catcher nor really Greene's enemy is that he failed to plant the dagger where it would really have done Greene's business - failed, that is, to demonstrate, as he surely would have done, that the intimate knowledge of the rascally crew which he boasted was all a literary pretence.<sup>1</sup>

1. H. F. & G. Witherby. London. 1929. Vol. II. pp. 139-40.



The most complete and convincing discussion and summary of the arguments relating to The Defence is that of M. René Pruvost in Robert Greene et ses Romans in 1938.<sup>1</sup> M. Pruvost assigned a fourth of his chapter "Sus aux Malandrins" to enumerating his reasons for believing Greene the author of the pamphlet and to considering the arguments of Jordan and Hart.

Pruvost agreed with Routh that the moderate tone of "Cuthbert" was surprising and not the habitual style of Elizabethan polemicists. An enemy of Greene would not have posed as the mouthpiece of malefactors to vilify him. Apart from accusing Greene of selling his play to two different companies, "Cuthbert" seems uninterested in breaking lances with Greene, but preoccupied with listing and describing multiple forms of dishonesty and making them the pretext for telling piquant tales. Greene is lost to view for whole pages and forgotten except for the question at the end of each chapter: "What say you, Maister R. G., call you not these conny-catchers?" Such an attack is not of a nature to cause great damage. M. Pruvost observed that which had hitherto escaped notice, that The Defence is a development of the speech made to Greene by a cony-catcher in Turnmill Street in

1. Paris. Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres."  
pp. 443-453.

A Notable Discovery.<sup>1.</sup>

Pruvost believes that more collusion than hostility is revealed in the publicity given to the cony-catching pamphlets by "Cuthbert Conny-catcher"

1. Ed. G.B. Harrison. pp.35-6.

"Coming downe Turnmil street the other day, I met one whom I suspected a conycatcher, I drew him on to ye tauern, and after a cup of wine or two, I talkt with him of the maner of his life... Tut sir, quoth he, calling me by my name, as my religion is smal, so my deuotion is lesse, I leaue God to be disputed on by diuines, the two ends I aime at, are gaine and ease, but by what honest gaines I may get, neuer comes within ye compasse of my thoughts. Thogh your experience in trauaile be great, yet in home matters mine be more, yea I am sure you are not so ignorant, but you know that fewe men can liue up-rightly, vnlesse hee haue some prety way more then the world is witnes to, to helpe him withall: Think you some lawyers could be such purchasers, if all their pleas were short, and their proceedinges iustice and conscience? that offices would be so dearly bought, and the buiers so soone enriched, if they counted not pilage an honest kind of purchase? or doe you think that men of handie trades make all their commodities without falshood, when so many of them are become daily purchasers? nay what wil you more, who so hath not some sinister way to help himselfe, but foloweth his nose alwaies straight forward, may wel hold vp the head for a yeare or two, but ye third he must needs sink, and gather the wind into begers hauen, therefore sir, cease to persuade me to the contrarie, for my resolution is to beat my wits, and spare not to busie my braines to saue and help me, by what meanes I care not, so I may auoide the danger of the lawe..."

who testifies to the efficacy of Greene's revelations. Moreover, in the final paragraph of The Defence "Cuthbert" advertises "The repentance of a conny-catcher," half of which appeared, four months later, as The Blacke Bookes Messenger. "Cuthbert" was thus publishing Greene's intentions several months before Greene himself announced them, for Greene's signed works maintained that he was preparing The Blacke Booke. Not until August does Greene himself mention "The repentance of a conny-catcher." The Defence itself was advertised in The Second part of Conny-catching. The two authors were certainly conniving. Why could they not be one and the same?

In refuting the arguments of Hart, Pruvost stated that the Epistle to the Readers of The Defence alludes to the first two books of cony-catching too clearly for acceptance of Hart's theory that the first three books composed one, the Disputation the second of the "two injurious pamphlets." Pruvost concurred with the answer of Jordan; that the first two books alone contained exposures, the third, only stories. Nor, added Pruvost, are cony-catchers the subject of The Thirde Part.

Hart's list of unfamiliar words that appear in The Defence is impressive but not decisive, stated Pruvost. Nor is it necessary to suppose, with Jordan, that Greene obtained the strange words from an unknown source. The difference of the material in The Defence is sufficient to account for their presence. In treating new subjects, naturally Greene used new



words. One cannot deny the pamphlet to Greene on the grounds of vocabulary.

Like Jordan, Pruvost failed to find any significance in Greene's not referring to The Defence in his later work. Greene was, in his opinion, quite capable of writing the story of "Cuthbert's" discomfiture rejected by Hart. M. Pruvost summed up the arguments of Hart as combining to prove that if Greene were not the author of The Defence, the author could only be a friend, working in collusion with him.

To Jordan's contention that Greene must have included the charge of twice selling his play merely to lend verisimilitude to the pamphlet, Pruvost took exception. He found it equivalent to saying that Greene gaily permitted himself to be accused of infamy. This contradiction Pruvost resolved by refuting both Jordan's observation that the charge rests on the word of "Cuthbert" alone, and Hart's suggestion that the sale was possibly so well known as to be a matter of indifference to Greene. Both theories, Pruvost stated, err in regarding the accusation as infamous, attributing to Greene feelings and scruples that he did not possess. His animosity to the actors is well known. He could not forgive them, alone of all his enemies, even on his deathbed. To do them an ill turn would seem in Greene's eyes excusable. If he had really done it, perhaps he would have taken pride in this feat. He would have liked to be thought capable of doing it.

M. Pruvost believes that the arguments of Jordan do not have the weight which he attributes to them, for they show only that The Defence is not the work of an

enemy of Greene. Jordan based his arguments upon passages in The Defence which resemble passages in the Disputation and The Blacke Bookes Messenger, but to prove Greene the author of The Defence, Jordan should have admitted that all of these passages were by the same hand. It is not difficult to do so. First, The Defence is constructed as are the cony-catching pamphlets; its author introduces his tales as Greene does his; he takes the same care to establish that he is relating facts; he shows the same discretion in mentioning names. The style of The Defence, like that of the pamphlets, is simple, appropriate to a technical treatise. One meets upon occasion with the carefully balanced phrases, the allusions to natural history and classical antiquity, the Latin tags and earthy proverbial expressions that return so frequently to the pen of Greene. "Cuthbert Conny-catcher" occasionally makes the same maladroit transitions as does Greene. He shares with Greene a hatred of the Martinists.

Pruvost dismissed the conjecture of Edward D. Mc Donald that Samuel Rowlands wrote The Defence. It would be necessary, he declared, to establish that Rowlands was in 1592 one of Greene's associates, and that The Defence showed more resemblances to the remainder of his work than it does to that of Robert Greene.

"For our purpose", he concluded, "which is to try to understand the secret of his personality, it suffices to have established that, if he were not himself the author of the Defence, Greene was, in all

events, no stranger to its composition."

M. Pruvost's interpretation of the evidence, in the light of his analysis of Greene's character and habits of mind, presents a strong case for Greene's authorship of The Defence. The three objections that have been raised - based on the reference to the "two injurious pamphlets", the unfamiliar expressions that appear only in The Defence and in A Quip for an Upstart Courtier, and the accusation of double-dealing with the actors - have been satisfactorily answered by Jordan and Pruvost. Their conclusions are, however, corroborated by other evidence.

Hart's rejection of Greene's authorship of The Defence on the basis of vocabulary is ungrounded. "There is a deal of legal jargon interspersed," he claimed, "that [Greene] does not usually show familiarity with..."<sup>1</sup>. But examination of this "legal jargon" reveals that it is not actually legal terminology but a familiarity with those statutes that specifically prohibit the activities of cony-catchers as in the following passage:

... her Maiesty & the honourable priuy Counsail, hath in the last Act of Parliament made a strickt statute for hors-stealing, and the sale of horses, whose Prouiso is this: that no man may buy a horse vntold, nor the toule be taken without lawful witnesses, that the party that selleth the horse is the true owner of him, vpon their oath and special knowledg, & that who buyeth a horse without this certificat or proofe, shalbe within the nature of fellony, as well as the party that stealeth him.<sup>2</sup>

1. H.C. Hart. op cit. p.84.

2. The Second and last part of Conny-catching. Ed.G.B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos.p.15.



Such references to the law appear in all six of Greene's pamphlets, most frequently in The Second part of Conny-catching and A Disputation.

Secondly, Hart produced a list of "Greeneisms" or expressions characteristic of Greene and cited "the negative evidence that none of the 'Greeneisms' appears here [in The Defence]." <sup>1</sup>. He also listed from The Defence a number of terms that, he claimed, appear in no other of Greene's works except A Quip for an Upstart Courtier. <sup>2</sup>. Hart failed to observe that a list of "Greeneisms" that do appear, sometimes frequently, in the other pamphlets, may be compiled from The Defence, as will be seen.

Of these expressions, the most popular with Greene is "caterpillars" used to denote parasites in the Commonwealth. Throughout the pamphlets he rings changes with this term, no less in The Defence than elsewhere.

"Great conny-catchers and caterpillers that make barraine the field." Defence. p.9.

"Vipers, moathes of the commonwealth, caterpillers worse than God rayned downe on Egypt". Defence.p.12.

"Those Caterpillers that undoo the poore" Defence.p.13.

"Vipers of the commonwelth." Defence. p.15.

"They bound and pinioned the caterpillers arms." Defence.p.21.

"Ah vile and injurious caterpillar." Defence p.22.

"He is a Caterpillar to others." Defence.p.38.

"The miserable caterpillar the broker." Defence.p.39.

1. H.C. Hart op.cit. p.85.

2. One of these, "this bowical huffe snuffe" (Defence p.59) is probably a printer's error for "comical" or "heroical" huff snuff. The word "bowical" is not recorded in the O.E.D. Greene writes of a "terrible huffe snuffe" in A Notable Discovery p.43.

- "Such worms as eat away the sappe of the tree."  
A Notable Discovery. p.11.
- "Like consuming moths of the common welth."  
A Notable Discovery p.20.
- "Base minded caterpillers." A Notable Discovery.p.30.
- "Generation of these vipers." A Notable Discovery.p.34.1.
- "Learn the caterpillers the highway to Newgate."  
A Notable Discovery. p.37.
- "These villanous vipers... vipers of the world."  
A Notable Discovery. p.40.
- "Certaine caterpillers (coliers I should say)"  
A Notable Discovery.p.52.
- "Poore snakes." The Second Part. p.6.
- "These coosening caterpillers." The Second Part.p.8.
- "They glut themselves as Vipers." The Second Part.p.8.
- "Upstarting suckars that consume the sap from the  
 roote of the tree." The Second Part. p.9.
- "These caterpillers resemble the Syrens."  
The Second Part. p.24.
- "These moathes of the Common-welth."  
The Second Part. p.25.
- "Such filthie Caterpillers." The Second Part. p.51.
- "Caterpillers of the Common-wealth."  
A Disputation. p.6.<sup>2</sup>.
- "Slye insinuating Mothworms." The Blacke Bookes  
 Messenger. p.25.

Excessive repetition, one of Greene's major faults of style, sometimes makes a "Greeneism" of a quite ordinary word or cant expressions of the time; for example, "smoke," of which the earliest example in the O.E.D. is 1608.

- "To smoke such a couple of knaves." Defence p.7.
- "Talke of smeaking." Defence. p.7.

1. Cf. The Bible. Matthew III.7.
2. Cf. Richard II. Act.II.Sc.iii. line 166. The phrase had earlier been used by Gosson.

- "The Father... smoakt him." Defence. p.43.
- "Beginne to smoake them." A Notable Discovery. p.13.
- "If the poore countreyman smoke them." A Notable Discovery. p.20.
- "Another... smokes the cony catchers." A Notable Discovery. p.30.
- "The pore cony smoakes him." The Second Part. p.24.
- "The priggar had smoakt the game." The Second Part. p.26.
- "Suppose he is smoakt." The Second Part. p.45.
- "Hee ne neither smoakt nor cloyed." A Disputation. p.10.
- "Wee are hardly smoakt." A Disputation. p.13.
- "Smoakt them so narrowly." A Disputation. p.19.
- Verse; v. cant. obsolete.
- "I had consorts that could verse, nippe, and foyst." Defence. p.6.
- "You cannot verse upon me." Defence. p.7.
- "Verst upon to the uttermost." Defence. p.15.
- "He that cannot verse upon." Defence. p.25.
- "Maintaine them in this versing." Defence. p.38.
- "Versing Law. Coosenage by false gold." A Notable Discovery. p.38.
- "Then will she verse it." A Notable Discovery. p.44.
- "Her cros-biters have verst him." A Notable Discovery. p.45.
- "Ile verse him." A Notable Discovery. p.47.
- "Versing upon all men." A Disputation. p.13.
- "Thought to verse upon him." A Disputation. p.81.
- "Thought to have verst upon another." A Disputation. p.82.
- "I verst upon him." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.7.
- "To verse and crossbite him." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.9.



Stoop, v. obsolete to put down (stake) money on a game.

"Not stoope a farthing at cardes." Defence. p.6.

"Make him stoope all the money in his purse."  
The Second Part. p.21.

"Make the Maltman stoupe." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.9.

Worshipful, sb.

"The worshipful of the country... sate in commission."  
Defence. p.24.

"Both honourable and worshipful... Justices, as other officers." A Notable Discovery. p.37.

"The worshipfull of the Citie." A Notable Discovery. p.46.

"The honorable & worshipfull of the suburbs." A Notable Discovery. p.55.

"The honorable and worshipful of this land." A Notable Discovery. p.61.

"The honourable and worshipfull of England." The Second Part. p.55.

Waldo F. Mc Neir has pointed out "entertain in the sense of "hospitality" (O.E.D. Now obsolete in this sense) as a word distinctive to Greene's vocabulary.<sup>1</sup>

"Entertained him with such curtesies as a kind wife could any waies affoord him." Defence. p.53.

"Give them his unkindest entertainment" A Notable Discovery. p.37.

"Give thee the best intertainment I may" The Second Part. p.58.

"Lodging, or entertainment." The Thirde Part. p.6.

"Some house... fit to entertaine him." The Thirde Part. p.34.

1. "Robert Greene and John of Bordeaux." P.M.L.A. September, 1949. Vol. LXIV. No.IV. pp.781-801.

Other "Greeneisms" in The Defence are idiomatic or proverbial.

Cole, sb. obsolete. (A deceiver, cheat, sharper at dice.)

"Old cole" Defence. p.14.

"The old colte (cole ?) this graund Cut-purse."  
The Second Part. p.10.

"The old cool, the old cut-purse." The Second Part.p.37.

Frolic, v - or a. The O.E.D. gives no example before 1593.

"Began to frolike it." Defence. p.49.

"Gaine maketh him frolike." A Notable Discovery. p.28.

"This frollicke fellow." The Thirde Part. p.13.

Fox-furd. The O.E.D. cites Greene's as the earliest usage.

"Those Fox-furd Gentlemen." Defence. p.14.

"In his foxfurd gowne." A Groatsworth of Witte. p.7.

To give or yield the bucklers. The Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs cites Greene's as the earliest usage.

"Gave mee the bucklers, as the subtilest." Defence.p.5.

"To yeeld the bucklers to his prentise." The Second Part. p.12.

"Giving you the bucklers at this waapon." A Disputation.  
p. 27.

"I shall bee faine to give you the bucklars."  
A Disputation. p.35.

"This went colde to the olde mans heart." Defence.p.52.

"Strikes... a cold humor unto his heart." A Notable Discovery. p.30.

"She sat as a woman in a trance." Defence. p.52.

"Hee lay mute as in a traunce." Defence. p.54.

"Hee sits as a man in a traunce." A Notable Discovery.p.30.

There is nothing like Greene's usage of "small beer" in the Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs.

"Never went a cup of small beare so sorrowfully down an Ale-knights belly in a frosty morning." Defence. p.8.

"As if in a frostie morning hee had droonke a draught of small beere next his heart." The Second Part. p.39.

Ferret-claw, ferret-beat, v. (The O.E.D. gives no example before 1599.)

"Like a pink-eyed Ferret so clawes the poore Cony in the burrow, that he leaves no haire on his breach nor on his backe." Defence. pp.14-15.

"Their vies and revies uppon the poore Cunnies backe, until they so ferrette beate him, that they leave him neither haire on his skin, nor hole to harbour in." A Notable Discovery. p.11.

"So feret-claw him at cardes, that they leave him as bare of mony, as an ape of a taile." A Notable Discovery. p.20.

"Decking himselfe like the Daw with the faire feathers of other birds." Defence. p.35. (This is an earlier example of the reference to the fable of the daw and the peacock's feathers than that given by the O.E.D., 1731.)

"Upstart crow, beautified with our feathers." A Groatsworth of Witte. p.45.

"Proud with Esop's crow, being pranced with the glorie of others feathers." Francesco's Fortunes. Ed. A.B. Grosart. Volume.VIII p.3.

Occasionally a "Greeneism" reminds us that Greene was once "the ape of Euphues."

"Like the beetle that makes scorne all day of the daintiest flowers, and at night takes up his lodging in a cowsherd." (cow-dung, a cow-turd." O.E.D.) Defence. p.48.

"With the beetle, refusing to light on the sweetest flowers all day, nestled at night in a Cowsheard." A Disputation. p.51.



Nothing is more characteristic of Greene's style than his frequent quotation of Latin tags. My final "Greeneism" from The Defence is such a maxim:

"Ense resecandum est ne pars sincera trahatur."

Defence. p.12; The Second Part. p.9.

Still another argument for Greene's authorship of The Defence is "Cuthbert Conny-catcher's" putting into Greene's mouth sentiments and opinions that we know were actually held by Greene. The high moral purpose in writing of cony-catching professed by Greene in all five of the other pamphlets is explicitly credited to Greene by "Cuthbert." This is hardly the action of an enemy. Moreover, "Cuthbert" seems to have anticipated the well known passage in A Groatsworth of Wit by almost five months. Greene's celebrated "invective" against the players was published on 20 September, 1592. Yet in April we find "Cuthbert" quoting Greene as follows:

But I heare that you made this excuse:  
that there was no more faith to be held with  
Plaiers, than with them that valued faith at  
the price of a feather; for as they were  
Comoedians to act, so the actions of their  
lives were Cameleon like, that they were  
vncertaine, variable, time pleasers, men  
that measured honestie by profite, and that  
regarded their Authors not by desart, but  
by necessitie of time.<sup>1</sup>

How did Cuthbert come to know Greene's opinion of the actors months before Greene himself expressed it in print? Even supposing that the playwright's grievance was common knowledge, what reason had "Cuthbert" to set down Greene's opinion unless he wished to advertise

1. The Defence of Conny catching. p.37.

it, and so to weaken the force of his accusation? It does not advance "Cuthbert's" argument that Greene was a "cony-catcher," but rather provides Greene with an excuse for the action with which he is charged. This passage could have been published in the interests of no one - except Robert Greene.

In view of all the evidence in favour of Greene's authorship set forth by scholars and students of Greene, and in the absence of any evidence that "Cuthbert Conny-catcher" was any one else, it seems reasonable to assume that Greene was the author of The Defence of Conny catching.

## Chapter III

## Greene's Conception of the Writer's Function:

## His Motives in Writing the Pamphlets.

Greene's conception of a writer's function is stated explicitly in The Defence of Conny catching wherein he makes his alter ego, "Cuthbert Cunny-catcher", defend his choice of crime exposures as subject-matter worthy the pen of a "scholler":

Nascimur pro patria: Euery man is not borne for himselfe, but for his country: and that the ende of all studious indeuours ought to tende to the aduancing of vertue, of suppressing of vice in the common-wealth. So that you haue herein done the part of a good suiect, and a good scholler, to anotomize such secret villanies as are practised by cosoning companions, to the ouerthrow of the simple people: for be the discouery of such pernitious lawes, you seeke to roote out of the common-wealth, such ill and licentious liuing persons, as do Ex alieno succo viuere, liue of the sweat of other mens browes, and vnder subtil shiftes of witte abused, seeke<sup>1</sup> to ruine the flourishing estate of Englande.

We cannot doubt that Greene honestly believed that the advancement of virtue, the suppression of vice, and the exposure of villainy in the Commonwealth was the patriotic duty of the writer. This was a dominant idea in English literature of the period in which Greene was writing. To question the sincerity of motive in

1. Pages. 11 - 12.



Greene's statement is to attribute to him a cynicism that runs counter to the main currents of Elizabethan thought. Always orthodox in his beliefs, he could not conceive of literature as detached from some motive of edification.

The general preoccupation of the Elizabethans with ethical instruction found an echo in Greene's own strongly Protestant bias. From the beginning of his career he made edification the apologia for his prose works; they usually bore upon their title pages a Latin motto to inform the hesitating purchaser of their morally instructive contents. "Omne tulit punctum" adorns his euphuistic novels; "Sero sed serio", his repentance novels; and "Nascimur pro patria", his cony-catching pamphlets. The pamphlets promise, by turns, patriotism, useful information, warning against malefactors, repentance and reform of the wicked, and amusement.

Patriotism is frequently professed by Greene as his motive in exposing the villainy of the cony-catchers. "No pains nor danger (are) too great," he maintains, "that groweth to the benefit of my countrie." <sup>1</sup>. Because critics have found these protests hard to reconcile with Greene's self-advertisement, the sincerity of his patriotism has often been called into question. Undeniably Greene wrote to sell; his livelihood depended upon his writings. But we may expect inconsistency from a man such as Greene, alternately the Puritan and the "good fellow." He may have found patriotism a pleasing claim in Harman's Caveat for Common Cursitors; he

1. The Second and last part of Conny-catching.p.5.

doubtless realised its appeal to the citizen at whom his pamphlets were directed. Like that citizen, Greene believed patriotism to be the highest duty of every subject; he could also convince himself that his motives actually were what he believed that they should be, and that in disseminating criminal exposures he had "herein done the part of a good subject."

Greene's didactic motives frequently overlap. His practical and utilitarian concern for the protection of wealth is combined in the pamphlets with his moral warnings against thieves:

Within the Cittie of London, dwelleth  
a worthy man who hath very great dealing  
in his trade, and his shop very  
well frequented with Customers: hath  
had a shrewd mischance of late by a  
Conny catcher, as may well serue for  
an example to others leaste they haue  
the like.<sup>1</sup>

He cautions his readers against consorting with doubtful characters or frequenting places where they may be found such as bowling alleys:

... I wish all men that are carefull of  
their coyne, to beware of such cozeners,  
& none to come in such places, where a  
haunt of such hel-rakers are resident...<sup>2</sup>.

A claim Greene frequently advances for his pamphlets is that they teach piety and virtue by means of awful examples of the fates of evil-doers, and by repentances put into their mouths. His malefactors often

1. The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. p.46.

2. The Second and last part of Conny-catching.p.22.

"journey westward" or "go to heaven in a string."  
 Such is Ned Browne in The Blacke Bookes Messenger,  
 who, about to be hanged for his crimes, delivers a  
 "Tyburn lecture," half a rehearsal of his merry pranks  
 and half exhortation to all the virtues in the  
 Elizabethan calendar:

Trust not in your owne wits, for  
 they will become too wilfull oft,  
 and so deceiue you. Boast not in  
 strength, nor stand not on your  
 manhood, so to maintain quarrels;  
 for the end of brawling is con-  
 fusion: but vse your courage in  
 defence of your country, and then  
 feare not to die; for the bullet is  
 an honourable death. Beware of whores,  
 for they be the Syrens that draw men  
 on to destruction... better is it to  
 be a poore honest man, than a rich &  
 wealthy theefe: for the fairest end  
 is the gallows, and what a shame is  
 it to a mans freends, when hee dies  
 so basely. Scorne not labour (Gentlemen)  
 nor hold any course of life bad or  
 seruile, that is profitable and honest,  
 least in giuing yourselues ouer to  
 idlenesse, and hauing no yeerly main-  
 tenance, you fall into many preiudiciall  
 mischiefs. Contemne not the vertuous  
 counsaile of a frend, despise not the  
 hearing of Gods Ministers, scoffe not  
 at the Magistrates, but fear God, honor  
 your Prince, and loue your country, then  
 God will blesse you.<sup>1</sup>

Lest his gallows speech be insufficient to make a  
 warning example of Ned Browne, Greene adds "a wonderfull  
 iudgment of God shewed vppon him" in that after his  
 death his body was dug up and eaten by a pack of wolves,  
 "where as there lay... many dead carcasses, that they

1. Pages 30-31.



might haue prayde on..."<sup>1</sup>.

Greene's belief in divine judgement is reflected here as elsewhere in random statements scattered throughout the pamphlets: "His evil-doers are "the hated of God,"<sup>2</sup>. "God's enemies," "base roagues... being outcasts from God."<sup>3</sup>. They are subject to divine retribution, "the fatal reuenge that's thretned for such... licentious persons."<sup>4</sup>. The reader is warned that such wickedness will bring about that direct result of God's anger, war:" So if God should in iustice be angrie with vs, as our wickedness hath well deserued ... (as the Lord forfend) our peace should be molested as in former times."<sup>5</sup>.

In A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher Greene again teaches virtue by example, letting Nan, his heroine, paint a vivid picture of the victims of whores, brought, "if to the fairest ende, to beg, if to the second, to the gallows, or at the last and worst, to the Pockes or as preiudiciall diseases."<sup>6</sup>.

To warning example Greene frequently joins the theme of repentance, a favorite with him in any form. It enables him to include in A Disputation "the Conuersion of an English Courtizen, reformed this present year, 1592," which itself is made the framework of "A pleasant discourse, how a wife wanton by her husband's gentle warning, became to be a modest Matron." The "discourse," taken from George Gascoigne's

1. The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.32.
2. The Second and last part of Conny-catching. p.8.
3. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p.40.
4. Ibid. p.20.
5. The Thirde and last part of Conny-catching. p.6.
6. Page.36.

Adventures of Master F.J., presents the repentance of wife and lover in concise narrative; the "Conuersion," told in the first person, begins in the stilted euphuism of Greene's early novels, but ends in the self-accusation of the repentances with the reformation of the harlot. She concludes simply.

... and how I haue liued since and loathed filthie lust, I referre my selfe to the Maiestie of God, who knoweth the secrets of all hearts.

Greene himself adds

Thus Country men I haue publisht the conuersion of an English Courtizen, which if any way it bee profitable either to forewarne youth, or withdraw bad persons to goodnesse, I haue the whole end of my desire, only crauing euery father would bring vp his children with carefull nourture, and euery young woman respect the honour of her virginitie.<sup>1</sup>

Ned Browne was originally described in the "Address" of The Blacke Bookes Messenger as dying "resolute and desperate,"<sup>2</sup> but once Ned stands before us to begin his final harangue, the halter about his neck, Greene forgets his original intention and we get, as we have seen, a pious repentance instead.

Greene, at the time of his death, purposed to write another repentance of a conny-catcher. It was even advertised in the "Address" to The Blacke Bookes Messenger as both virtuous and useful:

For the Conny-catchers repentance which shall shortly be published, it containes a passion of great importance. First how

1. A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher. p.79.

2. Page.1.

he was giuen ouer from all grace and Godlines, and seemed to haue no sparke of the feare of God in him: yet neuerthelesse, through the woonderfull working of Gods spirite, euen in the dungeon at Newgate the night before he died, he so repented him from the bottome of his hart, that it may well beseeme Parents to haue it for their Children, Masters for their seruants, and to bee perused of euery honest person with great regard.<sup>1</sup>.

Greene did not live to write this document which sounds like a repetition of Ned Browne's repentance.

The pamphlets aim at the advancement of virtue, not only in the general public, but in the cony-catchers as well. Several times Greene expresses the hope that his works will be the means of bringing about reform in the malefactors. To further that end he declines to give their names: "... were it not I hope of their amendment, I would in a schedule set downe the names of such coosening Cunny-catchers."<sup>2</sup>. He has, as a result, incurred the charge either of not knowing their names or of being afraid to publish them. That Greene hinted at the names of several persons, describing them in such a way as to identify them to his contemporaries, will be argued in another chapter. If it can be proved that he did so, he may well have had grounds for hope that his pamphlet would bring about reform.

Occasionally the title pages of the pamphlets invite the public to "Reade, laugh, and learn,"<sup>3</sup>. or promise "If you reade without laughing Ile giue you my cap for a

1. Pages 1-2.

2. A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. p.14.

3. A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher.



Noble." <sup>1</sup>. The inclusion of jests and merry tales among didactic and expository elements seems incongruous to the reader today. To the Elizabethan there was no inconsistency. He was accustomed to mirth advertised as a "cordiall against consumption of the spirits," a remedy for melancholy. "Publishers had long used the argument," states Louis B. Wright, "to reassure the readers of the ubiquitous jest books that their time was not being wasted." <sup>2</sup>. Greene might, therefore, have justified as healthful amusement several stories in the pamphlets that lead neither to the teaching of piety nor to the exposure of malefactors.

Greene's didactic concept of the writer's function was illustrated, at any rate to his own satisfaction, by the cony-catching pamphlets. They claimed an ethical purpose and they set forth the abuses of his day mingled with amusing and palatable matter.

Greene may have written to salve his conscience and make amends for his reckless and dissipated life, prompted, as Frank Aydelotte suggested, "by a real, although sentimental repentance." <sup>3</sup>. Greene unquestionably regarded his work in this light. He was, of course, no selfless, high-minded patriot, deliberately seeking the public good. But believing that "the ende of all studious indeuours ought to tende to the advancement of vertue, of suppressing of vice," <sup>4</sup>. Greene required no personal motive to persuade himself that in the cony-catching pamphlets he was serving the Commonwealth.

1. The Second and last part of Conny-catching.

2. Louis B. Wright. Middle-class Culture in Elizabethan England. Huntington Library Publications. Chapel Hill, North Carolina 1935. p.464.

3. Frank Aydelotte. op.cit. pp. 123,126.

4. The Defence of Conny catching. p.12.

## Chapter IV

The Autobiographical Content of Greene's  
Cony-catching Pamphlets.

Unlike Greene's repentance novels, the pamphlets are not subjective; they do not disguise under a thin fiction the story of Robert Greene. The autobiographical data contained in them is therefore limited. Their absolutely dependable biographical statements may be reduced to these: that Greene was a graduate of Cambridge; that he was the author of the play Orlando Furioso and various "love pamphlets"; and that, at the time when he published The Blacke Bookes Messenger, he was too ill to write the Blacke Booke which he had promised. These statements we can accept, for they are corroborated by other evidence. Greene's claim that he had visited several foreign countries, among them Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Poland, and Denmark, is supported only by his own statement elsewhere.

Greene says of himself "I am English borne, and I haue English thoughts."<sup>1</sup> But only once does he mention Norwich, the city of his birth, and then in another connection, speaking of "dealers in London, Norwich, Bristowe, and such like places."<sup>2</sup> He gives no reference to his childhood. Nor does he suggest a personal acquaintance with any city other than London, in any of

1. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p. 8.

2. The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p. 25.

the fifteen shires<sup>1</sup>. to which he assigns cony-catching activities.

It may be conjectured, on the basis of unusually specific detail in one story, that he had visited the city of York. He begins

... Ile tel you a merry iest of a  
Taylor in Yorke not farre from  
Petergate, done about fourteene  
yeare ago...<sup>2</sup>.

and proceeds to describe the tailor "going through Waingat to take aire in the field." The story, which concerns a customer of the tailor, a lady living at Feroy Brigges (now Ferrybridge ?) about seventeen miles from York, is improbable enough, and concerns the discovery of stolen goods by pretended necromancy. But the amount of detail suggests that Greene may have visited York. If the date that he gives is correct, he would have been nineteen or twenty and a university student at the time. That he visited York is, however, merely conjecture.

Nothing is known of Greene's education prior to his admission to St. John's College, Cambridge, as a sizar on November 26, 1575.<sup>3</sup> It is presumed, in the absence of other evidence, that he attended the Free Grammar School at Norwich.<sup>4</sup> Greene did not take lightly his status as a Cambridge "Scholler." He may have been, for

1. Yorkshire, Surrey, Kent, Sussex, Cornwall, Wales, Cumberland, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Devonshire, Cheshire, Wiltshire, Somerset, and Berkshire.
2. The Defence of Conny catching. p.58. seq.
3. The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene. ed. J. Churton Collins. Oxford. The Clarendon Press. 1905. Volume I. p.12.n.2. "Registry of the University, kindly communicated by the Registrar."
4. Ibid. p.14.n.1. "All this from information kindly contributed by the Rev. O.W.Tancock, late Head Master of Norwich Grammar School."



any knowledge to the contrary, the first of his family to have entered a university.<sup>1.</sup>

As J.C. Jordan observes,<sup>2.</sup> Greene was quite vain of his degree of Master of Arts and never missed an opportunity of impressing the reader with his scholarship or of referring to himself outright as Magister in Artibus.<sup>3.</sup> In the cony-catching pamphlets he takes the opportunity when writing in the pretended person of "Cuthbert Cony-catcher" to "enquire what this R.G. should bee." The result, of course, is that

At last I learned that hee was a  
Scholler, and a Maister of Artes...<sup>4.</sup>

Doubtless fearing that his scholarship would reveal him under the mask of the cony-catcher, Greene makes "Cuthbert" also a scholar.

Marry the Goodman Cony-catchers...  
report they haue got one, (        ) I  
will not bewray his name, but a scholler  
they say he is, to make an invective  
against me...<sup>5.</sup>

This "invective" at the beginning of The Defence of Conny catching enables Greene, through the mouth of "Cuthbert Cony-catcher," to boast of his membership in the university and to justify a scholar's choice of cony-catching as subject-matter for pamphlets.

1. If we may accept as autobiographical what he tells us in A Groatsworth of Witte, it was because of his learning that the "well read" Roberto was disregarded by his father; Greene was similarly passed over in his father's will. See A Groatsworth of Witte. ed. G.B.Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos. pp.7-11. Also René Fuvost. Robert Greene et Ses Romans. Paris "Les Belles Lettres." 1938. Appendix II. "Testament du père de Robert Greene."

2. Robert Greene. New York. Columbia University Press 1915. p.1.

3. See Appendix F, "The Descriptions of Robert Greene on Dated Title Pages of His Works Published in His Life-Time."

4. Address to the Readers. The Defence of Conny Catching. p.9.

5. The Second and last part of Conny-catching. p.28.

It had been the part of a Scholler,  
to haue written seriously of some graue  
subiect, either Philosophically to haue  
shewen how you were proficient in  
Cambridge, or diuinely to haue manifested  
your religion to the world...

But to this my obiection, mee thinkes  
I heare your maship learnedly reply,  
Nascimur pro patria: Euery man is not  
borne for himselfe, but for his country:  
and that the ende of all studious  
indeuours ought to tende to the aduanc-  
ing of vertue, of suppressing of vice  
in the common-wealth. So that you haue  
herein done the part of a good subiect,  
and a good scholler to anotomize such  
secret villanies as are practised by  
cosoning companions.<sup>1</sup>

There is no record at Cambridge of Greene's taking  
an M.A. degree. Churton Collins quotes the Cambridge  
University Register as listing Greene's admission to the  
B.A. in 1578 as a member of St. John's College, but re-  
cording no month or day.<sup>2</sup> Scholars who have written of  
Greene<sup>3</sup> state that he received a master's degree from  
Clare College, Cambridge, in 1583,<sup>4</sup> but it appears that  
their only justification for this is a piecing together  
of the following facts: that the title page of Greene's  
novel The Second Part of Mamillia, is signed "By Robert  
Greene, Maister of Arts, in Cambridge;" that the work

1. The Defence of Conny catching. pp.11-12.
2. J. Churton Collins. op.cit. Vol.I p.17.n.2., see also  
John Venn and J.A. Venn: Matriculations and Degrees  
1544-1659, Cambridge University Press. 1913.p.301:  
"Greene took his B.A. Degree between January and March  
24, 1580 [1579/80]."
3. J. Bernhard<sup>4</sup>, A.B. Grosart, J. Churton Collins, J.C.  
Jordan, and René Pruvost.
4. It should be noticed that if Greene proceeded B.A. in  
1578/9, he might have qualified for an M.A. as early  
as 1581/2.



itself, although not published until ten years later, was entered in the Stationers' Register on September 6, 1583; and that the dedication is dated "From my Studie in Clarehall the vij of Julie."

In the absence of definite evidence, we must perforce, accept the traditional assumption as probable fact as R.C. Bald<sup>1</sup>. has done in Clare College 1326 - 1926 in which we find the following statements about Greene:

In November 1575 he entered St. John's College, as a sizar, and took his B.A. from there in 1578... After about a year's travelling he seems to have returned to Cambridge and settled in Clare, for the second part of his novel Mamillia is dated 'from my study in Clare Hall,' and he took his M.A. from there in 1583.<sup>2</sup>

In July, 1588, however, Greene was "incorporated 'M.A.' at Oxford (Wood's Fasti, by Bliss, Part I., p.245),"<sup>3</sup>. a procedure impossible had he not already held an M.A. degree. The title page of his Mourning Garment in 1590-1 calls him "Utriusq[ue] Academiae in Artibus Magister." The Register of the University of Oxford records that Greene was incorporated M.A. at Oxford before June 14, 1588.<sup>4</sup> Greene himself in The life and death of Robert Greene Maister of Artes declares, after mention of "being at the Vniuersitie of Cambridge..."

but after I had by degrees proceeded Maister of Arts, I left the Vniuersitie and away to London...<sup>5</sup>.

1. Mr. Bald wrote the section on Greene in Chapter V, "Alumni: Chiefly Artistic and Literary."
2. Cambridge University Press. 1928. Vol. I. p. 204.
3. Works. ed. A.B. Grosart. Vol. I. pp. 12-13, 69.
4. Andrew Clark, ed. Oxford. Oxford Historical Society Publications. Clarendon Press. 1887. Vol. II. Part I., p. 353.
5. Pages 19-20.



We may, with regard to Greene's degree and university, at any rate, accept the statements of "Cuthbert Cony-catcher."

Whatever his degree, Greene was no scholar. His classical learning is best summarized by J.C.Collins:

Of Greek [he] probably knew little or nothing; and in one of the few passages in which Greene ventures on a Greek phrase he lays himself open to the suspicion of having mistaken the future middle for the infinitive mood. His Latin composition in verse and prose, though very far from being flawless, is respectable, and is sometimes in single lines and sentences not far from a classical standard.<sup>1</sup>

For all that he scorns "to applie a high stile in a base subiect" Greene lards his realistic prose with Latin phrases, maxims, and verse; and puts classical allusions into the mouths of his conny-catchers.

In the same way he employs the language of the medieval disputation which played so large a part in the university curriculum of the Renaissance. It fits his humor to have "Cuthbert Cony-catcher" resolve "to make an Apologie... and to proue that we Conny-catchers are like little flies in the grasse ...<sup>2</sup>. or to have his foist, Lawrence, ask "who shall be moderater in our controuersies, sith in disputing pro & contra, betwixt our selues, it is out your yea and my nay<sup>3</sup>... The form of A Disputation Betweene a

1. J. Churton Collins.op cit. Vol.I. pp.16-17.

2. The Defence of Conny catching. Ed.G.B.Harrison.p.9.

3. A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher. p.11.

Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher is that of the medieval debate of the universities transformed into an argument between a realistic Elizabethan thief and whore: the subject, the respective danger of each to the Commonwealth!

Greene's epistles to his readers also reflect his pretensions as a scholar. For all that they are addressed to middle class citizens, yeomen, apprentices, and "plain country farmers," he feels that he must begin loftily:

When Sceuola, Gentlemen, saw his  
natieue citie beseiged by Porsenna ...<sup>1</sup>.

In the time of king Henrie the fourth,  
as our English Chronyclers haue kept in  
remembrance ...<sup>2</sup>.

As Plato (my good friendes) trauelled  
from Athens to Aegypt ...<sup>3</sup>.

Greene draws rather heavily upon the classics, the majority of his comparisons being derived from the Metamorphoses and the Odyssey, and his examples from the lives of Diogenes and Cicero. Symbolic figures, almost entirely from the Old Testament, are next in frequency: Cain representing damnation; Judas, treachery; Samson and Delilah, man's weakness in the hands of unscrupulous woman; and Sodom and Gomorrhah, unnatural "incestuous whoredoms." Mahomet's "Alcoran" is

1. The Second and last part of Conny-catching. p. 5.

2. The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. p.5.

3. The Defence of Conny catching. p. 5.

synonymous with a "damnable book;"<sup>1</sup>. Aretino with "filthiness;"<sup>2</sup>. and Machiavelli with one "that neither cares for God nor deuill."<sup>3</sup>. Greene indiscriminately uses heroes of legend - King Arthur and Dick Whittington - and historical figures - Don John of Austria, King Henry VIII, and Will Summers. Of contemporary works he refers to A Mirror for Magistrates, (1559),<sup>4</sup>. Nashe's Pierce Pennilesse (1592),<sup>5</sup>. the ballads of Thomas Deloney,<sup>6</sup>. and Roger Ascham's The Scholemaster (1570),<sup>7</sup>. Greene's pamphlets themselves may draw upon such rogue tracts as Gilbert Walker's (?) A Manifest detection of the most vyle and detestable vse of Diceplay (1552) and Thomas Harman's A Caueat or Warening For Common Cursetors Vulgarely Called Vagabones (1567). For one story of domestic relations incorporated into A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher, Greene is indebted to George Gascoigne's Adventures of Master F.J. (1573). Except for The Thirde and last part of Conny-catching whose tone is more of warning than of humor, the pamphlets show throughout the influence of the Elizabethan jest-books, especially in their transitions

1. The Defence of Conny catching. p.39.
2. The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.21.
3. The Second and last part of Conny-catching.p.9.
4. A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher.p.4.
5. A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher. p.9.
6. The Defence of Conny catching. p.11.
7. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage.p.8.



from one story to another: "Now Gentlemen by your leave, and heare a mery iest,"<sup>1</sup>. Greene begins, even when the scurvy trick that follows excites his pity, as well as the reader's, for the victim.

Greene was equally proud of his travel. At the outset of the first pamphlet, A Notable Discovery of Coosenage, he takes upon himself the pose of the world-weary, experienced traveller:

I haue smyled with the Italian, and worne the vipers head in my hand, and yet stopt his venome. I haue eaten Spanishe Mirabolanes, and yet am nothing the more metamorphosed. Fraunce, Germanie, Poland, Denmarke, I knowe them all, yet not affected to any in the fourme of my life; onelie I am English borne, and I haue English thoughts, not a deuill incarnate because I am Italianate, but hating the pride of Italie, because I know their peeuishnes: yet in all these Countreyes where I haue trauelled, I haue not seene more excesse of vanitie then wee Englishe men practise through vain glory...<sup>2</sup>.

This statement is unsupported elsewhere except by Greene's own references to his travel in A Notable Discovery, in which he makes a cony-catcher address him thus:

Thogh your experience in trauaile be great, yet in home matters mine be more...<sup>3</sup>.

and in the pamphlet The Repentance of Robert Greene Maister of Artes. In The Life and death of Robert Greene Maister of Artes Greene again tells us that being at the Vniuersitie of Cambridge, I light amongst wags... who drew mee to trauell into Italy and Spaine...<sup>4</sup>.

1. Ibid. p.58.

2. A Notable Discouery of Coosnage.p.8.

3. Ibid. p.35.

4. The Repentance of Robert Greene Maister of Artes.  
ed. G.B.Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos.pp.19-20.

J.C. Collins is disposed to accept these statements and declares:

Reminiscences of these travels have undoubtedly supplied him with some of the local coloring of many of his fictions.<sup>1</sup>

But apart from the one bare statement, there is little indication in the pamphlets of Greene's having visited the Continent. Indeed the cursory nature of Greene's travel cannot be set forth more accurately than by the two passages in which he describes the boasting of others:

This Gentleman forsooth... openly shadoweth his disguise with the name of a Traueller, so that he wil haue a superficiall insight into certaine phrases of euerie language,<sup>2</sup> and pronounce them in such a grace, as if almost hee were that Countryman...<sup>3</sup>

... yea what place is it they will not sweare they haue beene in, and I warrant you tell such a sound tale, as if it were all Gospell they spake: not a corner in Fraunce but they can describe. Venice, why it is nothing, for they haue intelligence from it euery houre, & at euery worde will come in with Strado Curtizano, and tell you such miracles of Madam Padilia and Romana Imperia, that you will bee mad tyll you bee out of England...<sup>4</sup>

Before examining the cony-catching pamphlets for reflections of Greene's personal life it will be well to review such other information as we possess about

1. J. Churton Collins. op.cit. Vol.I.p.17.
2. Samples of Greene's foreign phrases: "Alla reuolto," "cauileuarst," "Souldados," "Poligamoi," "Alla Neopolitano," and "le don du merci,"
3. The Defence of Conny catching. p.34.
4. The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.21.

it. Greene tells us in The Life and death of Robert Greene Maister of Artes that he married, had a child, and deserted his wife.

... soone after I married a Gentlemans daughter of good account, with whom I liued for a while: but forasmuch as she would perswade me from my wilfull wickednes, after I had a child by her, I cast her off, hauing spent vp the marriage money which I obtained by her.

Then left I her at six or seuen, who went into Lincolnshire, and I to London...<sup>1</sup>.

The date of this marriage is thought by J.Churton Collins to be "At the close probably of 1584 or the early part of 1585."<sup>2</sup> J.C. Jordan, presumably on the same grounds, merely states: "Sometime in 1585 or '86 he was married;"<sup>3</sup> while René Pruvost sets the latest possible date as 1585, giving as his reason Greene's slackening of literary activity between the publication of Planetomachia at an indeterminate date in 1585 and that of Penelope's Web in June of 1587. This interval, believes M.Pruvost, Greene occupied in spending his wife's dowry!<sup>4</sup> The theory certainly accords with the portrait of Greene by Nashe as one who

made no account of winning credite by his workes...his only care was to haue a spel in his purse to coniure vp a good cuppe of wine with at all times.<sup>5</sup>

Taking into consideration the arguments of J.Churton Collins and that of M.Pruvost, it seems that 1585 is

1. The Repentance of Robert Greene Maister of Artes.p.24.
2. Greene, in the summer of 1592, wrote in The Repentance of "my deare wife, whose company and sight I haue refrained these sixe years..."p.26. See also J.Churton Collins.Vol.I.p.22.
3. J.C. Jordan.op. cit.p.1.
4. René Pruvost.op. cit.pp.244-5.
5. "Foure Letters Confvted;" The Works of Thomas Nashe, ed. R.B.McKerrow.(London,1910). Vol.I.p.287.



the likeliest date for Greene's marriage.

There is no reference to this marriage in the cony-catching pamphlets, but in them appears the outline of a story which closely resembles the theme of Greene's "autobiographical novels."

Churton Collins believes

... that the memory of his wife ever afterwards haunted him. The same beautiful, pure, and long-suffering figure appears and reappears among the women of his novels and plays, the uncomplaining victim of man's selfishness and cruelty.<sup>1</sup>

If this is probable, it is equally possible to read autobiography into Greene's careful descriptions of the London prostitutes. His fascination by their appearance, dress, habitual speech, and customs; and his bitterness at their avarice and fickleness and at the penury and disease consequent upon association with them - these are hardly academic. We must, however, conclude with Collins that "if we may suspect the influence of [such harlots as] an Infida or a Lamilia we are not authorized to assume it."<sup>2</sup>

To our knowledge of Greene's career as a writer the pamphlets add little. The story of the friend who found in Greene's room a cony-catching pamphlet, "New come out of the press,"<sup>3</sup> is probably mere self-advertisement and, at any rate, tells us nothing. "Cuthbert Cony-catcher" credits Greene with "love Pamphlets"<sup>4</sup> and one play Orlando Furioso, but this

1. Churton Collins, Vol.I.p.23.

2. Ibid. pp.22-23.

3. The Second part of Conny-catching. Ed.A.B. Grosart. The Huth Library.pp.95-6.

4. The Defence of Conny catching.p.11.

is not news. The passage relating to the play is important, however, for other reasons. It has been much discussed in the debate about the authorship of The Defence of Conny catching, as has been seen. But its biographical value lies in its relation to the celebrated "upstart crow" passage from the Groatsworth of Witte.

As early as April, 1592, "Cuthbert Cony-catcher" pointed out that an injury had been done Greene by faithless players. He then answers himself in the person of Greene:

But I heare when this was obiected, that you made this excuse: that there was no more faith to be held with Plaiers, than with them that valued faith at the price of a feather: for as they were Camoedians to act, so the actions of their lives were Camelion like, that they were vncertaine, variable, time pleasers, men that measured honestie by profite, and that regarded their Authors not by desarte, but by necessitie of time.<sup>1</sup>

It is one of the commonplaces of literary history that Greene, a few months later, even on his deathbed, displayed a small-minded envy of those greater than himself. The sympathy of the public has deservedly gone to the "upstart crow," the familiar passage concerning whom needs no repetition here. But the lines immediately preceding that passage are seldom quoted although they explain what follows. When they are quoted, the occasion is usually an attempt to identify Greene's fellow-playwrights rather than to recognise what Greene is saying. A consideration of Greene's

1. Ibid. p. 37.

plight has been completely lost in the hubbub of excitement over a possible contemporary reference to Shakespeare.

What Greene says in the Groatsworth of Witte is that to him the players have proved faithless and ungrateful, and that such will be their treatment of his fellow playwrights:

Base-minded men all three of you, if by my miserie you be not warnd: for vnto none of you (like mee) sought those burres to cleaue: those Puppets (I meane) that spake from our mouths, those Anticks garnisht in our colours. Is it not strange that I, to whom they all haue beene beholding: is it not like that you, to whome they all haue beene beholding, shall (were yee in that case as I am now) bee both at once of them forsaken?<sup>1</sup>.

It will hardly be denied that this is the language of sincerity. Even if we were inclined to doubt the truth upon the lips of the dying Greene, there is the clear implication that the three playwrights addressed, among others, knew of Greene's injury at the hands of players. This injury, as Greene indicated, was such as might befall his fellow playwrights. It was probably, therefore, what most scholars have believed it, Greene's abandonment by the actors in favour of one greater than he. The effect upon him must have been "a plague as ill as hell, which is, present loss of money, & ensuing miserie."<sup>2</sup> His livelihood and the prestige of "an Arch-plaimaking-poet,"<sup>3</sup> thus taken from him, Greene would have been more than human not to resent his successful rival. As we do not know the facts, it may well be that

1. Ed. G.B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos. p.45.

2. A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. pp.30-31.

3. A Groatsworth of Witte. p.36.



in the general condemnation of his envy, justice has not been done to Greene. Whatever the circumstances, it is clear that by April, 1592, Greene was on bad terms with the players; and that his connection with the theatre had been broken.

To students of Greene these meagre autobiographical statements are less valuable than what the cony-catching pamphlets tell us about Greene himself - the Greene of variegated, at times conflicting qualities; Greene the Puritan; Greene the "good fellow" described by Nashe - a complex figure who illustrates many aspects of the English Renaissance.

Greene passed his childhood in zealous, non-conformist Norwich; and his youth in Cambridge, with its strong Puritan faction. That he absorbed some of their religious bias,<sup>1</sup> in spite of the "mad wags" he fell among, we know from his later writings and from his own account<sup>2</sup> of a brief period of repentance occasioned by the sermon of a popular reformer at St. Andrew's Church in Norwich.

By their nature the pamphlets would seem to give small scope to this basic Puritanism that is reflected in the purity of Greene's works, the professions of piety always on his lips, and the earnestness that elevates his Repentance to a worthy place in "confessional literature." Such is not the case. The pamphlets depict faithfully the same fundamental belief in moral order as do Greene's other works. They are

1. For a discussion of the Puritan influences of Greene's youth see René Pruvost. op.cit. pp. 16-18, 36-40.
2. The Repentance of Robert Greene Maister of Artes. Ed. G.B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos. pp. 22-24.

as free from licentiousness and ribaldry as his earlier writings. They are written for didactic purposes which he states explicitly. They express throughout the hope that their contents will help the representatives of the law to root out evil in the Commonwealth, and that the cony-catchers themselves will amend their ways.

The theme of patriotism is always in Greene's mouth. "Euery man is not borne for himselfe, but for his country,"<sup>1</sup>. he asserts. Scattered throughout his revelations of cony-catching are his claims that "no pains nor danger (are) too great that groweth to the benefit of my countrie."<sup>2</sup>. This patriotism he identifies with the advancement of virtue about which he was unquestionably sincere.

The pamphlets illustrate, too, his custom of quoting the Bible and of constantly preaching the same sermon - to beware of harlots. These two habits are linked by a common theme. The quotation into which he relapses is almost always those lines of Solomon that furnish the text of his sermon:

A shameless woman hath hony in her lippes,  
and her throte as sweet as hony, her  
throte as soft as oyle: but the end of  
her is more bitter than Aloes, and her  
tongue is more sharp than a two-edged  
sword, her feet go vnto death, and her  
steppes leade vnto hell.<sup>3</sup>

Like Chaucer's Pardoner Greene is most eloquent against his own besetting sin. Given but the slightest

1. The Defence of Conny catching. pp.11-12.
2. The Second and last part of Conny-catching. p.5.
3. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p.43.

of opportunities, he will launch into this theme which he builds to an effective climax in A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher. Such are the naturalness and fervour of his sermon that one is tempted not only to read into it autobiography but also to give evidence to that mare's nest of Bernhardt, Grosart, Fleay, and Storojenko, that Greene was at one time a minister.<sup>1</sup>

Above all, through the pamphlets runs the theme of repentance, almost the dominant motif of Greene's works as it was an expression of the conflict between his beliefs and his way of life. Like harlots, repentance is a subject that Greene cannot resist. It appears in A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher, in the stories of the courtesan and the wanton wife; and then in The Blacke Bookes Messenger, where it violates Greene's announced intentions.

Because of the inconsistency between Greene's life and his professions, and the inconsistency that often mars his works, critics have frequently dismissed him as a cynical journalist, writing only to sell. Yet none has doubted the sincerity and self-revelation of The Repentance of Robert Greene Maister of Artes, which contains this passage:

But I thanke God, that hee put into my head, to lay open the most horrible coosenages of the common Conny-catchers, Cooseners, and Crosse-biters, which I haue indifferently handled in those my seuerall discourses already imprinted.

1. For a discussion and effective disposal of this time-wasting question see Grosart, op.cit. I., lxviii-lxxi; J. Churton Collins, op.cit. I. pp. 19-21; J. C. Jordan, op.cit. pp. 211-213; and René Pruvost, op.cit. pp. 97-99.



And my trust is, that those discourses will doe great good, and bee very beneficiall to the Commonwealth of England.<sup>1</sup>

We may be the more inclined to accept Greene's claims to patriotism when we consider his regard for the Elizabethan middle class. The pamphlets reveal in every word an awareness of the value to the Commonwealth of honest merchants, yeomen, country farmers, citizens, and apprentices. Greene's letters to his readers are addressed specifically to these groups. The pamphlets voice, throughout, concern lest the business of worthy men should be jeopardized by cony-catchers.

The poore man that commeth to the Tearme to trie his right... looseth all his money, by which meanes he, his wife and children, is brought to vtter ruine and miserie. The poore Prentice, whose honest minde aymeth only at his Maisters profites... is... robd of his Maisters money, which farceth him oft times eyther to run away, or banckrout all, to the ouerthrow of some honest and wealthy Cittizen...<sup>2</sup>

thus are seruing men oft entised to play and lose al: thus are prentises induced to be Connies, and so are cosened of their masters money, yea yoong gentlemen, merchants, and others, are fetcht in by these damnable rakehels... The poore farmer simply going about his busines, or vnto his attorneys chamber, is catcht vp & cosoned of all. The seruing - man sent with his Lordes treasure, loseth oft times most part to these worms of the commonwelth, the prentice hauing his masters money in charge, is spoiled by them, and from an honest seruant either driven to run away, or to live in discredit for euer. The gentleman loseth his land, the marchant his stock...<sup>3</sup>

1. Ed. G.B.Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos. pp.25-26.
2. A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. pp.10-11.
3. Ibid. pp.30-31.

Just as in A Quip for an Upstart Courtier Greene gives "Cloth Breeches" the victory in the debate upon the question whether the courtier or the tradesman is better entitled to the realm,<sup>1</sup> so in The Defence of Conny catching he laughs at a tailor of York who dresses as elegantly as a gentleman. For all his pretensions to scholarship, Greene can never be accused of aspirations beyond his class. His title-pages may boast him "Master of Arts;" they never call him "Gentleman." He appears, therefore, to advantage beside his bitter enemy, the snobbish Gabriel Harvey, whom he taunted in the Quip<sup>2</sup> with being ashamed of his humble origin.

That Greene by addressing himself to the middle class was attempting to widen his hitherto more limited audience and increase his sales has not escaped notice; nor is it without significance in other connections. He did so, however, in the company of many writers of his age; and in so doing, he seems to have followed the dictates of his beliefs and inclinations.

Above all his other writings the cony-catching pamphlets explain and justify his friend, Thomas Nashe's portrait of Greene:

Hee inherited more vertues than vices:  
a iolly long red peake, like the spire  
of a steeple, hee cherisht continually  
without cutting, whereat a man might  
hang a Iewell, it was so sharpe and  
pendant.

... Hee had his faultes...  
Debt and deadly sinne, who is not  
subiect to? with any notorious crime

1. Ed. G.B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos.
2. These lines, missing from most copies of A Quip, are quoted by G.B. Harrison in Shakespeare's Fellows. London. The Bodley Head, Ltd. 1923. pp. 59-60.

I neuer knew him tainted... A good fellowe hee was, and would have drunke with thee...

Hee made no account of winning credite by his workes... his only care was to haue a spel in his purse to coniure up a good cuppe of wine with at all times...<sup>1</sup>.

As "Cuthbert Cunny-catcher" Greene slyly describes himself as "one that fauoured good fellowes, so they were not palpable offenders in such desperate lawes."<sup>2</sup>. All six of the pamphlets show Greene to be "a good fellowe" in Nashe's popular sense.

His tastes are those of a pleasure-loving, superficial and self-indulgent young man about London in any century - fine clothes, money, horses, sport, a jest, and a merry tale. In addition, Greene possesses some of the best qualities of a realistic writer - an interest in people, a keen eye for detail, and a zest for the life of the city about him.

Greene's love of fine clothes supports Nashe's contradiction of Gabriel Harvey. Far from being penniless at the time of his death as Harvey declared, Greene owned in the extravagant rhetoric of Nashe, "a doublet for which a Broker would give thirty shillings, a very faire Cloake with sleeues, of a graue goose turd greene," and "a greasy paire of silk stockings also."<sup>3</sup>. From his emphasis upon costume in the pamphlets we might expect Greene to dress well. Greene notes the important details of clothing worn by all classes and types - ladies,

1. "Fovre Letters Confuted" The Works of Thomas Nashe. ed. R.B. McKerrow. A.H. Bullen. London. 1904. Vol. I. p. 287.

2. The Defence of Conny catching. p. 9.

3. Thomas Nashe. op. cit. p. 288.



whores, countrey farmers, cony-catchers, soldiers, ploughmen, travelers, and serving men. He complains bitterly of tailors who change the fashions that they may filch satin and velvet undetected. In fact, tailors come off rather badly in the pamphlets, as three stories of cozenage are directed against tailors alone. Greene quotes prices, dwells lovingly upon materials, and ridicules the absurdities of the current styles. The Elizabethan love of finery often noted in Marlowe, is no less evident in Greene.

His attitude towards money is implicit in the theme of the pamphlets, a warning against "a plague as ill as hell, which is present losse of money & ensuing miserie."<sup>1</sup> Greene, as Nashe implies in the passage quoted, did not want "the oyle of angels" for itself but for those pleasures that it procured. Frequently in debt according to his own admission and that of Nashe and Harvey, Greene is here taking thought for the money of others, cautioning his fellows against what was to him the greatest of misfortunes.

Gabriel Harvey's malevolent account of Greene's death from a surfeit of "Rhenish wine and pickled herring" gave rise to the traditional figure of Greene the debauché and toss-pot.

Poor Greene's last cup of Rhenish, in an age from which the clink of the ale-can sounds loud across three centuries, has almost drowned for posterity the subtle flavour of his genius,

Wrote J.M.Brown in 1877.<sup>2</sup>

1. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. pp.30-1.
2. "An Early Rival of Shakespere" New Zealand Magazine. No.6, April, 1877. pp.97-133.

Nashe's more tolerant words present Greene's love of wine in a convivial light. They are borne out by the pamphlets. In them Greene gives the names of many London taverns and specifies his favourite drinks - hippocras, malmsey, claret, and rhenish. The pamphlets indicate that wine was to Greene an essential part of social intercourse.

Greene seems to be familiar with numerous sporting activities, both the games themselves and their abuse by criminals. An exception is dice-play, whereon he is inexplicably silent.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, he knows the thieves' jargon applicable to them. For all his borrowing of material from earlier pamphlets Greene knows his card tables and his bowling alleys, and describes the games of his cony-catchers with relish for their sport. At a later date he would have known the racecourses. He displays quite a convincing knowledge of horses and their furniture, the tokens of a good horse, the marking and branding of horses, and the methods of priggars or horse-stealers.

The pamphlets portray Greene as a "good fellowe" whose humor is undeniable. It arises from situation but, most of all, from character and human nature. It lies in the cynicism that finds mirth in a boastful competition between thief and whore as to which does most harm to his fellow-man. It is grim in the realism of their dialogue and in the picture of degradation that it paints. On the other hand, Greene's humor is rollicking in The Defence of Conny catching,

1. A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. p.28.

as he sheds the pious "R.G." to become flippant "Cuthbert Conny-catcher." It is best in his brief caricatures of the absurdity of human nature.

Greene, the "good fellowe" described by Nashe, may be observed in his quick interest in people, in his fascination by the wicked, in the realistic portraits of the thieves and harlots of the city streets, and in his zest for the life of Elizabethan London. Greene, the Puritan, is best observed in his didacticism, in the earnest subjectivity of his sermon against harlots, and in the almost emotional repentance. These traits compose the fabric of the cony-catching pamphlets.



## Chapter V

### The Sociological and Historical Content of the Pamphlets.

It is difficult to evaluate the sociological and historical content of the pamphlets, first because of Greene's habit of drawing upon sources outside his own experience; and second, because we cannot determine the points at which he invents his material.

Indirectly, the cony-catching pamphlets present, as they describe the action, a series of vivid impressions of Elizabethan London - the public buildings, the streets, the taverns, the fairs, the plays. They sketch for us briefly the homes and shops of merchants, their families and their servants, their food and drink, and their amusements.

With a quick eye for detail Greene depicts the people of the city going about their business - legitimate and illegitimate - the professional classes, the tradesmen, the apprentices, the countrymen, the adventurers, the criminals, and the harlots. His most valuable sociological contribution, however, is his description of the organisation and hierarchy of Elizabethan criminal life. In one pamphlet he points out that all men, of whatever trade or profession, are cony-catchers, and describes the sly methods that each employs to profit by his fellow man.

The pamphlets are amazingly compact. Greene's subject is a survey of criminal life and activity in sixteenth century London, but, like Defoe's, his fondness

for verisimilitude leads to him to include many scraps of incidental information that throw light upon other aspects of the time.

The scene is not restricted to London. Occasionally a story will be set in Cornwall, in Wiltshire, or even in Cumberland. But there is nothing to indicate that Greene knew these shires at first hand, whereas the London stories are full of lively detail. They cover almost the whole of the City in Greene's day - from Whitechapel to Westminster, from Southwark to Finsbury Fields. Occasionally a story is laid in a village outside London as Enfield or Edmonton, but the district that seems to have comprised the principal haunts of the cony-catchers is that part of London, from Bishopgate and Billingsgate in the east, extending westward to Aldersgate, Newgate, and Ludgate; beyond the City to Fleet Street, the Temple, Charing Cross, and Westminster Hall in the west; and Smithfield and St. Sepulchre in the north.

Two public buildings of London emerge in the pamphlets as centres of criminal activity - Westminster Hall and St. Paul's Cathedral. Both are crowded places of resort and assembly, and therefore commonly so haunted by the cutpurse and the pickpocket that honest men are forewarned of their reputation. Nevertheless, the middle aisle of St. Paul's is a customary place of appointment for the transaction of business among merchants and for the consultation of lawyer with client. Adventurers dressed as gentlemen walk up and down in Paul's on the lookout for some opportunity of profit.

Cony-catchers, once in Paul's, may easily escape from their victims in the throng. The "liberty of St. Paul's," as a place of privilege, prevents the Sheriff and his officers from making arrests. Westminster Hall, too, has its advantage for criminals, for female pickpockets may go there disguised as distressed women carrying supplications to a judge or bills of information to lawyers.

Like St. Paul's, the other churches that Greene mentions - St. Dunstan's in the West, St. Bartholomew's, St. Giles in the Fields, and the Temple - figure in the pamphlets as useful locations for secular rather than ecclesiastical events.

Many of the taverns that appear in the pamphlets cannot be traced today. Among them are the Blue Bell,<sup>1</sup> the Swan in Lambeth Marsh,<sup>2</sup> the Galley,<sup>3</sup> the Talbot,<sup>3</sup> the Blue Boar,<sup>3</sup> the Peacock,<sup>3</sup> and the White Hart of Fetter Lane,<sup>4</sup> But the Three Tuns in Newgate Market,<sup>5</sup> known to Jonson;<sup>6</sup> and the St. John's Head,<sup>7</sup> a celebrated tavern that stood on the northside of Ludgate Hill, have been identified.<sup>8</sup>

The home of an Elizabethan citizen and tradesman within the city is described in some detail by Greene as its arrangement plays a part in one story of The

1. The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. p. 48.
2. A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher. p. 30.
3. Ibid. p. 39.
4. Ibid. p. 80.
5. The Second and last part of Conny-catching. p. 37.
6. Henry B. Wheatley, in London Past and Present, Vol. III. p. 379, quotes Herrick's poem to Jonson about this tavern.
7. A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher. p. 40.
8. A.V. Judges. The Elizabethan Underworld. pp. 503, 505.



Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. On the ground floor is the shop, but there is another door to the house leading up a flight of stairs to the residential part. Here is the hall where the family and servants dine. It includes a cupboard, where stands the plate, and also "a very faire bed, as in such sightly rouses... Citizens vse not to haue anie thing meane or simple."<sup>1</sup>. The room is further beautified with "Cushions, Carpets, stools, and other deuises of needle work"<sup>2</sup>. and serves as a bedroom for guests. In the next chamber the maids and children are lodged; the room beyond is the master's chamber to which the apprentices bring up the keys of the street door every night before retiring to their garret over the master's room at the back of the house. In the chamber of the citizen and his wife might stand a handsome trunk containing such household goods as excellent linen, sweetened with rose-leaves and lavender, "a faire gilt salte, two siluer french bowles for wine, two siluer drinking pots, a stone Iugge couered with siluer, and a dosen of siluer spoons."<sup>3</sup>.

In two of his stories<sup>4</sup>. Greene shows how citizens of London were cheated by cony-catchers who offered them such scarce commodities as a gammon of bacon and a cheese from the country or broken sugar and spices from abroad.

On a Sunday afternoon the London citizen may go for a walk with his wife and children in Finsbury Fields,<sup>5</sup>.

1. Page.18.

2. Page.16.

3. Page.47.

4. Pages 11-21, 31-34.

5. Ibid. p.13.

his servants in turn attending him. During the Christmas holidays another diversion may be plays at the Bull Theatre within Bishopgate.<sup>1</sup>

Greene does not share the interests of an antiquarian like Stow. It is the life of London, rather than the streets and buildings of the city, that engages Greene's interest. He mentions in the pamphlets over forty professions, occupations, or trades, exclusive of degrees and distinctions among criminals. To the legal profession he is nearly always respectful: justices, judges, lawyers, constables, sergeants, sheriffs, and their officers are "the honorable and worshipfull of this land." Usurers and brokers do not come off so well, figuring as "old churles," "caterpillers," and "fox furd gentlemen." In his consistently unsympathetic picture of the usurer Greene may owe something to Lodge's Alarum against Usurers, and, not unlikely, something to personal experience.

The young gentleman and gallant about London, the country farmer come to the city to consult his lawyer, or the honest citizen or tradesman is presented as the innocent victim of the cony-catcher against whose cunning no foresight or warning avails. With them Greene is always in sympathy.

Other tradesmen such as colliers with sacks of illegal dimensions and tailors who can cut out cloth so as to steal undetected, are portrayed as little more than cony-catchers themselves. The jailers of Newgate and Marshalsea, also, take advantage of their position to profit from their prisoners.

1. Ibid. pp.37-39.

Certain classes of Londoners work in league with the cony-catchers. These are the informers and "knights of the past" who will depose to any oath that suits a cony-catcher's purpose. Ballad singers at the doors of theatres<sup>1</sup>. and in markets are frequently compacted with cutpurses to cloak their activities.

Other cony-catchers pretend to the character of returned soldiers or experienced travellers who will act as guides to young gentlemen ambitious to see foreign lands.

The primary value of Greene's pamphlets to the sociologist and historian rests upon their picture of the Elizabethan underworld. No one before Greene's time depicts criminals and harlots in literature as he does, speaking the realistic English of the streets mingled with their authentic jargon. Greene outlines the hierarchy among criminals, describes their "laws", their customs, and their pass words. The thieves he describes in groups according to their methods: cony-catchers, foists, nips, lifts and curbers. The cony-catcher steals by a variety of means, notably by trickery with cards or dice. He hangs about the court, St. Paul's, Westminster Hall, or the Exchange, follows sermons, or watches in the street for simple country farmers. The cony-catcher hazards his person by making the acquaintance, for however brief a time, of his victim; and therefore, must seem to be a respectable citizen or gentleman. The foist and the

1. The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. pp. 26-29.



nip ooth have purses as their object, but the foist, as a pickpocket, is scornful of the nip, who uses a knife. He calls himself "Gentleman Foist," says Greene, and refuses "even to wear a knife about him to cut his meat, least he might be suspected to grow into the nature of the nip.<sup>1</sup> The foists disguise themselves as lawyer's clerks or servingmen, and they together with the nips, haunt places of resort and assembly such as St. Paul's, Westminster Hall, theatres, the Bear-garden, the Lord Mayor's Day celebrations, the circuit courts, festivals, markets, frays, or fairs. The nip especially loiters at the doors of theatres to see where men put their purses after paying to enter. The lift steals anything that lies at hand, carrying it away under his cloak. He commonly works with accomplices that he may convey the goods to them and avoid suspicion. The shops of mercers, haberdashers, goldsmiths or scriveners, or the chambers of lawyers are the places commonly haunted by the gentlemen lifts, while the common lifts pilfer cloaks, swords, pots or platters from alehouses. The next type of thief described by Greene is the curber or hooker who robs at windows with a pole nine feet long, having a hook with three tines at one end. This instrument is jointed like an angling rod and folds into a walking staff until it is ready for use. Similar to the curber is the diver, who instead of a hook, puts a little boy in at the window. In The Second and last part of Conny-catching, Greene adds the "prigger," or

1. The Second and last part of Conny-catching.p.30.

horse-stealer, the Vincent, who cheats at bowling alleys, and the picklock, or practitioner of the "black art."

These different types of robbery are known in thieves' argot as "laws". In A Notable Discovery of Coosnage Greene lists eight of these "laws" with a definition of each, and follows with a list of the terms employed in their performance. The "laws" actually defined and illustrated in the pamphlets are the "cross-biting law," the "cony-catching law," the "barnard's law," the "lifting law," the "prigging law," the "curbing law," the "black art," and the "vincent's law."

Cony-catchers recognize one another, declares Greene, by the password "Quest." Information of a successful robbery is conveyed in the word "Twag," while the term "Bell brow" is applied to the house of the receiver of stolen goods.

The receiver of a cony-catcher's spoils is one who seems to be an honest, substantial citizen. His house, with a porter, stands ready at all hours of the night to receive the thieves. On the other hand, the receiver for the lifts may be either a bawd who keeps a brothel and whose harlots are consorts to the lifts; or else a broker who protects himself by making for the goods a bill of sale that conceals the lifts under assumed names.

Greene's most vivid passages in his exposure of criminal activities are those in which he demonstrates the close alliance between thievery and prostitution. In a Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher the prostitute, Nan, points out to

Lawrence, a foist, that whores are more dangerous than male criminals because they can practise all the other types of thievery with better opportunity than the men. They can themselves pick pockets with less suspicion or, by pushing and shoving in a crowd, create opportunity for a male accomplice to do so. They can persuade a man to enter a "Trugging house" where he pays eighteen pence for a "pipping Fye that cost in the Market four pence;" and where they can rob him in security among their ruffian friends. They can lift goods and conceal them on their persons more easily than the male lift, and they can even steal horses. In Westminster Hall they can rob, disguised as distressed women with a suit to a justice or lawyer; in the market, with a basket in hand, they can seem thrifty housewives. All this thieving they can add to the evils of prostitution.

Another criminal practise, closely allied to prostitution and dependent upon it, is cross-biting, which Greene calls the "cross-biting law." It is simply blackmail. A whore leads a man to a "trugging house" or tavern where her pretended husband or brother, taking them together, draws his weapon and threatens to have them before the justice or constable. The victim, to avoid trouble, pays heavily to go free.

The clarity and realistic detail with which Greene depicts his cony-catchers, often putting their stories dramatically into their own mouths, is of interest to criminologist and historian alike. It would be hard to credit Greene's invention or his sources with the material of the pamphlets, for his characters speak in an idiom that may be heard today.



"The significance of The Defence," observes F.W.Chandler, "lies in its aim to extend the discoveries of roguery from criminals to tradesmen."<sup>1</sup>.

In a passage which links the present with the past and gives an insight into business methods of the period. Greene argues ruefully that all men are cony-catchers:

... there is no myserie nor science almost, wherein a man may thriue, without it be lincked to this famous Art of Conny-catching. The Alewife vnles she nicke her Pots and Conny-catch her gwestes with stone Pottes and petty Cannes, can hardly paye her Brewer, nay and yet that wil not serue, the chalke must walke to set vp now and then a shilling or two too much, or else the rent wil not bee answered at the quarter day, besides ostrey, faggots, and faire chambring, and pretty wenches that haue no wages, but what they get by making of beddes. I know some Taphouses about the Subberbes, where they buy a shoulder of mutton for two groats, and se~~l~~ it to their ghuest for two shillings, and yet haue no female friends to sup withall ... God is my witnesse. I haue seene Chaunlers about London, haue two paire of waites, and when the searchers come, they shew them those that are sealed, but when their poore neighbors buy ware, they vse them that lack weight... And is this not flat Conny-catching... Why the base sort of Ostlers haue their shifts, & the crue of S Patrickes Costerdmongers, can sell a simple man a crab for a pipping. And but that I haue loued wine wel, I wold touch both the Vintner and his bush, for they haue such brewring and tunning, such chopping and changing, such

1. Frank Wadleigh Chandler. The Literature of Roguery. London. Archibald Constable and Co., Ltd. 1907. Vol. I. Ch. III. p. 102.

mingling & mixing, what of wine with water in the quart pot, and tempering one wine with another in the vessel, that it is hard to get a neate cup of wine and simple of it selfe, in most of our ordinary Tauerns, & do not they make poore men connies, that for their currant money giue them counterfeit wine.

What say you to the Butcher with his prickles, that hath pollicies to puffe vp his meate to please the eye, is not al his craft vsed to draw the poore Conny to ryd him of his ware. Hath not the Draper his darke shop to shadow the dye and wooll of his cloth, and all to make the countrey Gentleman or Farmer a conny. What trade can maintaine his traffique? what science vphold it self? what man liue, vnles he growe into the nature of a Cony-catcher? Doo not the Lawyers make long Pleaes, stand upon their demurres, and haue their quirks and quiddities to make his poore Client a Cony? I speake... particularly of such as hold gaines their God, and esteeme more of coyne then of conscience."<sup>1</sup>.

In addition to the organization and methods of cony-catchers Greene appears to have had a superficial acquaintance with the law in so far as it related to the operations of cony-catchers. Scattered throughout the pamphlets are realistic pictures of thieves' operations at Westminster Hall; accounts of the advantage of term-time to landlords, thieves, and whores; and quotations of statutes prohibiting the specific activities of cony-catchers, together with the tricks by which each statute might be circumvented.

In A Notable Discovery of Coosnage, for example, Greene cites the statute regulating the size of collier's sacks to those holding four bushels of coal - and suggests that the "honorable and worshipfull"

1. The Defence of Conny catching. pp.29-31.

should look to those colliers whose long and narrow sacks hold not three bushels and those "small wilow coles, and half dros."<sup>1</sup>. In The Second and last part of Conny-catching he points out that

her Maiesty & the honorable priuy Counsail, hath in the last Act of Parliament made a strict statute for hors-stealing, and the sale of horses, whose Prouiso is this: that no man may buy a horse vntould, nor the toule be taken without lawful witnesses, that the party that selleth the horse is the true owner of him, vpon their oath and special knowledg, & that who buyeth a horse without this certificat or prooffe, shalbe within the nature of felony, as well as the party that stealeth him.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, this statute is avoided by means of confederates, "perjured knaves" who offer to depose that they know the horse to be the horse-stealer's, "although perhaps they neuer saw man nor horse before." Receivers, also, may take whatever stolen goods be offered,

be it linnen, wollen, plate, Jewels, and this they doe by a bill of sale, making the bill in the name of Iohn a Nokes or Iohn a Stiles so that they ...keepe themselves without the danger of the law.<sup>3</sup>

These references constitute no real evidence of legal knowledge on the part of Greene and are in themselves negligible. However, they throw a certain amount of light upon the period.

1. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p.53.

2. Page.5.

3. The Second and last part of Conny-catching.p.47.



Greene's picture of life in Elizabethan London is fragmentary and occasionally complicated by the introduction of material drawn from his reading. But compressed into the pages of Greene's cony-catching pamphlets is much information for the sociologist and the historian, although some of it is undeniably superficial. And in these pamphlets Greene demonstrates a genuine insight into social problems as well as a deeper understanding of human nature than he shows in any other of his works. The pamphlets are not the least valuable among the accounts of Elizabethan life.

## Chapter VI.

Derivative and Fabricated Elements in  
Greene's Cony-Catching Pamphlets.

As we have indicated, it is impossible to determine the extent of Greene's contribution to cony-catching literature without considering the indebtedness to earlier pamphlets. This need not lead to such disillusion as J.C. Jordan's:-

... when one by one the attributions to Greene's own originality grow smaller and smaller, as scholars investigate the sources of his work and as we cease to be surprised when we learn that a pamphlet or a plot we thought to be his is only a copy or an imitation of another's.<sup>1</sup>

Jordan's condemnation is typical of those critics who disregard Elizabethan literary practise.

Greene's cony-catching pamphlets had three predecessors in the field of rogue and criminal exposures: A Manifest Detection of Dice-play (1552) by Gilbert Walker (?), The Fraternity of Vagabonds (1561) by John Awdeley, and A Caveat for Common Cursitors (1566) by Thomas Harman. To these may be added Thomas Lodge's An Alarum against Usurers (1584).

The content of A Manifest Detection of the most vile and detestable use of Diceplay, and other practises like the same is summed up, together with its relation to the cony-catching pamphlets of Greene by Frank Aydelotte:

1. J.C. Jordan op.cit. p.95.





## Walker.

A bale of barred sice - aces.  
 A bale of barred cater - treys.  
 A bale of flat cater - treys.  
 A bale of fullams of the best making.  
 A bale of light graviars.  
 A bale of langrets contrary to the vantage.  
 A bale of gourds with as many high men as low men for passage.  
 A bale of demies.  
 A bale of long dice for even and odd.  
 A bale of bristles.  
 A bale of direct contraries.  
 A Manifest Detection.<sup>1</sup> p.27.

## Greene.

Pardon me Gentlemen for al-  
 though no man could better  
 than myself discouer this  
 lawe and his tearmes, and  
 the names of their Cheats  
 Barddice, Flats, Forgers,  
 Langrets, Gourds, Demies,  
 and many other, with their  
 nature, & the crosses and  
 contraries to them vpon  
 aduantage, yet for some  
 speciall reasons, herein  
 I will be silent. p.38.

Like A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher, A Manifest Detection is written in dialogue form. The scene, as in so many of Greene's tales, is St. Paul's Cathedral.

M. Pruvost has discussed Greene's indebtedness in several passages to Walker's pamphlet.<sup>2</sup> The parallel passages are quoted in full. Greene derives the term "law" itself, as applied to the methods of criminals in cheating their victims, from a paragraph in A Manifest Detection.

A Notable Discovery, in describing how Greene meets a cony-catcher in Turnmill Street and, taking him to a tauern, talks with him "of the maner of his life," introduces, as Pruvost observes,<sup>3</sup> the same cynical argument

1. Published in The Elizabethan Underworld by A.V. Judges, (London, Routledge 1930.)

2. René Pruvost. op. cit. pp.439-442.

3. Ibid. p.440.

contained in Walker's conversation of a cheater with a young gentleman whom he has reduced to poverty.

It is certain that Greene obtained his account of receivers of stolen goods and their methods from Walker, as the following passage shows; Pruvost does not quote it in full although he recognizes in it a "fugitive but direct echo" of Walker.<sup>1</sup>

Walker.

... a treasurer they choose in some blind corner, a trusty secret friend that whensoever there cometh any jewels plate, or such gear to their share, the present sale whereof might chance to discover the matter the same is committed into his hands in pledge as it were of money lent, and he taketh a bill of sale in default of repayment, as if all things were done by good faith and plain dealing. So that Whensoever he shall seek to make money of his gages, at the end of two or three months, if any question arises how he came by them, he showeth anon a fair bill for his discharge, from Iohn a Knock or Iohn a Stile, a man that never was, never shall be found. And such theft by this occasion is ever mannerly covered. A Manifest Detection of Dice-Play. p.49.

Greene.

... Brokers, a kind of idle sort of leud liuers, as pernicious as the lift, for they receiue at their hands whatsoever Garbage is conuained, be it linnen, wollen, plate, Jewels, and this they doe by bill in the name of John a Nokes or John a Stiles, so that they shadow the Lift & yet keepe them selues without the danger of the law.

A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. p.47.

Pruvost does not observe that Greene may have taken his assignments of cony-catchers to various parts of the city in The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching.<sup>2</sup> from Walker's discussion of "figging," with its dispersing of "fig-boys" about London,<sup>3</sup> to St. Paul's,

1. Ibid. pp.439-440.

2. Pages. 12, 21-2.

3. Gilbert Walker.op.cit.pp.48-49.

Westminster Hall in term-time, Cheapside, bear-baiting, the Court, markets, fairs, and places of assembly.

Although it would be difficult to determine the source of cant words and expressions used by Greene, it is noteworthy that some of them appear in A Manifest Detection. Such are "God's cope," which Greene assigns to St. Peter,<sup>1</sup> "mumchance, legerdemain, cheaters, sacking law, figging law, high law, foist, chop and change, old cole, cog, cousin (cozen, as a noun in the sense of victim), verse, college (in the sense of school for criminals), "stoop," and "primers."

Upon the evidence of Greene's borrowings Jordan concluded that Greene learned all he knew about cony-catching from A Manifest Detection.<sup>2</sup> Pruvost likewise believes that with Walker's pamphlet as a guide and source of information, Greene could invent or reproduce, under slightly altered names, all the descriptions of criminal methods set forth in his pamphlets.<sup>3</sup> In part, it is possible to accept these opinions. Although Jordan's statement is too sweeping, we may agree with M. Pruvost that one source of Greene's revelations of criminal practise was Walker's Manifest Detection of Dice-Play, and that Greene's indebtedness to that tract was considerable.

John Awdeley's The Fraternity of Vagabonds begins with a simple classification of beggars and rogues, both male and female, and concludes with three semi-narratives, illustrating the methods of "cozeners and shifters, a cheater or fingerer," and "a ring-faller."

1. A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. p.25.
2. J.C. Jordan.op.cit. p.89.
3. René Pruvost.op.cit.p.441.



It is by no means certain that Greene knew Awdeley's pamphlet, but if so, the episodes of the "barnard" and the dropping of money or a key by Greene's cony-catchers may owe something to Awdeley's "fingerer" and "ring-faller."

In three stanzas of doggerel, "The Printer to the Reader," Awdeley declares that a vagabond was his source of information for the pamphlet. Like Greene later, he claims that his relations have endangered his life.

'But if my fellows do know,' said he,  
That thus I did, they would kill me!  
The Fraternity of Vagabonds.p.53.

His statement may be compared with Greene's frequent assurances that the cony-catchers have threatened him with bodily harm, as for example, in A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher:

mistresse Nan this good Oratresse, hath  
sworn to weare a long Hamborough knife  
to stabbe mee, and all the crue haue  
protested my death...<sup>1</sup>.

Harman's Caveat for Common Cursitors is a list of the different kinds of rogue, together with a roster of their names and a glossary of their jargon, or "pedlar's French." Apparently it was based on authentic information gathered from the rogues themselves, as Harman claims, for some of the names he gives have been found in contemporary records.<sup>2</sup>

Jordan observed and briefly quoted a few passages in Harman's Caveat which resemble similar statements in Greene's pamphlets.<sup>3</sup>

Both on his title page and in his Epistle to the reader Harman advances patriotic motives for writing, as does Greene throughout his pamphlets.<sup>4</sup>

1. Page. 40.

2. Frank Aydelotte. op.cit.p.122.

3. J.C.Jordan.op.cit. pp.85-87. notes.

4. These passages are quoted in part by Jordan.  
op.cit. p.85,note,7.

## Harman.

... set forth by Thomas Harman, Esquire, for the utility and profit of his natural country. A Caveat for Common Cursitors. Title page.

But faithfully for the profit and benefit of my country I have done it. A Caveat for Common Cursitors. p.67.

## Greene.

Thus for the benefit of my country I have briefly discovered the law of Cony-catching... A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p.37. I could not be silent seeing this abuse, but thought to reueal it for my countries commoditie... A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p.54. This instance ...hath emboldened me to thinke no pains nor danger too great that groweth to the benefit of my countrie...The Second and last part of Conny-catching.p.5.

For different reasons both Greene and Harman excuse their writing in plain language, Harman, because he cannot do otherwise, and Greene, because of its suitability to his subject matter. Harman declares that his pamphlet will undoubtedly annoy the rogues he depicts. Greene, on the other hand, makes stronger assertions of threats against his life. The passage concerning Nan and her Hamborough knife has been quoted above.<sup>1</sup>

Like Greene later, Harman hopes that his rogues will mend their way of life.

## Harman.

Whereas indeed, if it be well weighed, it is set forth for their singular profit and commodity, for the sure safeguard of their lives here in this world, that they shorten not the same before their time, and that by their true labour and good life in the world to come they may save their souls ... A Caveat for Common Cursitors. p.63.

## Greene.

...were it not I hope of their amendment, I would in a schedule set downe the names of such coosening Cunny-catchers. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage.p.14. ...cony-catchers, whose names I omit, because I hope of their amendment. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p.32. Ile say no more, perhaps she will amend her maners. A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher. p.29.

1. Cf. page 105.



These passages have also been discussed by M. Pruvost, who drew attention to others.<sup>1</sup> For example, Harman, like Greene, urges the authorities to look into the evils he discloses and to administer justice with greater severity.

Harman.

... that thereby the Justices and shrieves may in their circuits be more vigilant to punish these malefactors, and the constables, bailiffs and borsholders, setting aside all fear, sloth, and pity, may be more circumspect in executing the charge given them by the aforesaid Justices. A Caveat for Common Cursitors. p.62.

Greene.

... I would wishe the Iustices appoynted as seuere Censors of such fatall mischiefes, to shewe themselves patres patriae, by rooting this base degree of Cooseners out of so peaceable and prosperous countrey... A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. p.11. ... desiring all Iustices, if such coseners light in their precinct, euen to use summum ius against them... And so desiring both honourable and worshipful, as well Iustices, as other officers, and all estates... to rest professed enemies to these base-minded cony-catchers. A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. p.37.

M. Pruvost believes that these resemblances between Harman and Greene are not significant, as Greene may have found the material in other contemporary works such as Lodge's Alarum for Usurers. But in Harman alone, states M. Pruvost, Greene found the claim to first-hand information obtained from the rogues themselves, descriptive exposition of malefactors and their methods; concrete examples, anecdotes, and tales illustrating criminal practises; and a glossary of cant terms. Harman alone gives a long list of names. Pruvost points out

1. Pruvost does not quote the parallel passages.  
op. cit. pp.434-438.



the similarity of attitude and atmosphere in the works of both Harman and Greene and concludes that Greene is indebted to A Caveat for Common Cursitors for the structure and form of his pamphlets; for the attitude of imparting information and threatening to publish the names of evil-doers; and, above all, for the idea of a thieves' vocabulary.

I do not concede that Jordan and Pruvost have established Greene's indebtedness to Harman. It is true that the resemblances they have noted exist, but these are insufficient in themselves to prove that Greene knew and drew upon the older pamphlet. A few words of jargon - "prigger of prancers, hooker," and "snout-fair" are used by both writers, but these Greene could have obtained from other sources. There is no such conclusive evidence of Greene's indebtedness to Harman's Caveat as there is of his debt to Walker's Manifest Detection of Dice-Play. Walker is the only predecessor to whom Greene is certainly indebted.

Except for the Barnard's Law, Greene's "plagiarisms," as Aydelotte observes, "are all in comparatively unimportant passages..."<sup>1</sup>. In the earlier rogue pamphlets Greene found, ready to hand, the concept of criminals and the underworld as literary material, a subject whose fascination for the general public would not escape a popular writer like himself. In them he found patriotism as a motive for writing, despite real or imaginary personal danger; that this motive was genuine Greene could easily convince himself. Here, too

1. Frank Aydelotte. op.cit.p.125.

he found a direct realistic style appropriate to the subject; a framework such as he knew in the Italian novella; and, above all, the illustrative tale that best fitted his talents.

In addition to the rogue tracts, other popular reading of the sixteenth century left its mark upon Greene's pamphlets. Greene's possible debt to Lodge's Alarum against Usurers has been mentioned in connection with his unsympathetic portraits of usurers, especially in the first story of The Defence of Conny catching. Like Lodge, he inveighs against harlots and cites legal statutes whose penalties are evaded by his malefactors. As M. Pruvost has pointed out,<sup>1</sup> Greene may have found in Lodge as well as in Harman the claim of writing for the public good, of persevering in spite of threats and personal danger, and of hoping to reform the wicked. Both writers draw comparisons from the classics and the Bible. Greene may have found in Lodge<sup>2</sup> the phrase "broking knave" which is found in the second edition of A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. In 1916 J.C. Jordan pointed out that the story of the wanton wife told in "The Conuersion of an English Courtizan" included in A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher had been lifted in its entirety from George Gascoigne's Adventures of Master F.J. (1573). The story of the wanton wife lacks any connection with its context, Greene's realistic picture of a London thief and whore.

Greene's knowledge of the jest-books so popular in his day shows itself unmistakably in the cony-catching

1. René Pruvost. op.cit. p.437.

2. Thomas Lodge. An Alarum against Usurers. The Shakespeare Society. London. 1853. p.46.

pamphlets. As early as the second story in A Notable Discovery of Coosnage Greene begins to introduce his tales as "blithe and merry jests:"

I remember a merry iest done of late  
to a welchman...<sup>1</sup>.

It is possible that many of his unidentified allusions concern characters and incidents from jest-books. Who was Miles, "the merry Cobler of Shorditch," for example, "that swore he would neuer trauaile further, than from his shop to the Alehouse"? <sup>2</sup>. What was the story of the Friar, the Hostess' maid, and the Clerk of the parish?<sup>3</sup>.

The number of stories introduced in the jest-book manner increases in the pamphlets until The Blacke Bookes Messenger assumes almost the nature of a jest book. Like the Merrie Conceited Jests of George Peele it has a central figure, but Ned Browne is never sufficiently characterized for the personality of the jest-book rogue or anti-hero. At the end of the pamphlet Greene suddenly reverts to the theme of repentance and the resemblance disappears.

That Greene invented some parts of the cony-catching pamphlets he freely admits in the Address "To the Gentleman Reader" of Greenes Vision, published posthumously in 1592: "I have shotte at many abuses, over shotte myselfe in describing of some: where truth failed my invention hath stood my friend."<sup>4</sup>. To what portions he refers, who can say?

Greene's invention in these pamphlets has proved as disconcerting to some of his critics as his lack of

1. Page.31.

2. The Defence of Conny-catching.pp.36-7.

3. Ibid.p.37.

4. Ed. A.B. Grosart. Huth Edition.Volume XII.pp.195-6.



originality to others. Greene claimed that he wrote "faithfullie to discouer these coosening practices."<sup>1</sup>. Yet he confesses that his information was not altogether fact in his day. It is not, therefore, historically dependable in ours. As J.C. Jordan chooses to put it, Greene was, admittedly, "a literary liar."<sup>2</sup>.

This view of Greene, adopted by E.A. Baker and others from Jordan, is over-simplified. It is an attempt to reduce to twentieth century ideas of consistency and literary ethics a psychologically complex man of the Renaissance. It ignores Greene's basic preoccupation with moral order, made explicit again and again in his writings; and views Greene's works entirely in terms of his private life, his own morbid self-reproach, and the vilification of Gabriel Harvey. It ignores, moreover, the rule laid down by Coleridge as the primary consideration of critics: "What has this man tried to do?" Greene's purpose in writing the cony-catching pamphlets is but one aspect of what he conceived to be the purpose of all literature.

1. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p. 9.

2. J.C. Jordan. op. cit. p. 94.

## Chapter VII

## Greene's Style in the Cony-catching Pamphlets.

In the cony-catching pamphlets Greene uses a framework of exposition or narrative to introduce and unify a number of stories. Greene used this method or organization in ten of his novels.<sup>1</sup> The framework of the cony-catching pamphlets is at times argument or fictitious biography. The tales in this last framework, in The Blacke Bookes Messenger, are related by a unifying character, Ned Browne. In all cases, however, they are concerned with deceits practised upon unsuspecting victims.

In the rogue pamphlet of his predecessor, Thomas Harman, Greene found such a framework of criminal exposure, the illustrative tales, and the table of thieves' jargon that he employs in A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. He begins in his "Address" to the reader by describing the practise of the "Barnard's Law" which he declares, is far surpassed by the art of cony-catching, outlined in his text. The principal information that Greene has to impart is contained in his table of eight "laws", or criminal practises, with which is included a vocabulary of thieves' jargon. Two of these laws, cony-catching and cros-biting, he

1. Planetomachia, 1585, Penelopes Web, 1587, Euphues Censure to Philautus 1587, Perymedes, 1588, Alcida 1588, Ciceronis Amor 1589, Orpharion 1590, Mourning Garment 1590, Francescos Fortunes 1590, Greenes Vision 1590, Farewell to Follie 1591, and A Groatsworth of Wit 1592.

describes, adding stories to illustrate each. At the end of the pamphlet Greene appends an account of "legering," or false measuring of coals, together with two anecdotes of the revenge taken by a cook's wife and a flaxwife upon cheating colliers. The organization of this pamphlet is, to say the least, careless. Two laws are given and one of them illustrated by two tales before Greene presents his table of laws; legering, which comes after the conclusion of the text, does not even appear among the eight laws.

In The Second part of Conny-catching Greene adheres to a similar plan. He begins with a table of five laws: the Vincent's Law, prigging, lifting, curbing, and the black art. The last three he had named but not defined in A Notable Discovery. To them he adds a list of jargon employed in each practise. An explanation of these five laws makes up the framework of the pamphlet, but Greene's talent for story-telling leads him to include more narratives than exposition. There are nine tales in The Second part of Conny-catching to the three in A Notable Discovery. This pamphlet also demonstrates the same casual disregard of structure and organization as did the first. Sandwiched between the discussion of the Vincent's Law and the methods of foists and nips is an account of the success of Greene's "late editions" in warning countrymen, and of the cony catchers' anger and threats against the author. Even this digression is interrupted by "A pleasant tale of a hors," after which Greene returns to his self-advertisement to



announce a forthcoming "invective" against himself. Neither A Notable Discovery nor The Second part of Conny-catching exhibits any especial contribution by Greene to the type of pamphlet as evolved by Harman.

"In the 'Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching'," writes F.W. Chandler, "a distinct advance was made toward pure fiction, and the beggar-book features dropped away."<sup>1</sup> This pamphlet is composed of stories contained in so slight a framework that J.C. Jordan pronounced it no framework at all.<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, the Thirde Part begins with Greene's invitation to a supper at which "divers, both of worship and of good accompt" were present. Their conversation enables Greene at once to advertise his two recent books on cony-catching and introduce his third in the guise of "notes" promised him on this occasion by a gentleman "within commission of the peace." The notes "which heere are in our booke compiled together" consist of ten tales, some of them the best in the series. Greene makes no attempt to link them together, and there is no conclusion beyond a sentence ending each story with a warning not to deal with "any such kinde of people."

The last three paragraphs, though adhering to the general pattern of framework and tale, are more original in treatment and more characteristic of Greene. All are dramatic in form; two are monologues spoken by

1. F.W. Chandler. The Literature of Roguery. London. Archibald Constable and Co., Ltd. 1907. Vol. I. p. 97.
2. J.C. Jordan. op.cit. p. 111.

cony-catchers<sup>1</sup>. and the first part of the third is a dialogue between a male and a female cony-catcher.

A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher, as has been observed, is in the form of a debate. The dialogue is introduced by Greene in his Epistle to the reader together with a warning against the evils caused by whores. Then Nan, a whore, and Lawrence, a foist, meet one another in a London street and engage in a realistic and merry debate in defence of their respective occupations. They wager a supper upon the outcome of their debate and proceed to a tavern where Nan illustrates her argument with two stories to Lawrence's one, and wins both the debate and the supper. Greene then steps in to advertise his Blacke Booke, promised in spite of the threats of the cony-catchers and a recent attempt upon his life.

A Disputation is rightly regarded by most scholars as the best of the cony-catching series. It is more original in conception than the other pamphlets and more graphic in its picture of the Elizabethan underworld. With A Disputation Greene achieves a more natural and realistic characterization and dialogue than he does elsewhere in his prose

The second half of the pamphlet is devoted to "The conuersion of an English Courtizan." M. Pruvost believes that

... la Disputation semble bien avoir eté conçue, suivant une formule de balancement

1. The Blacke Bookes Messenger is prefaced by a letter signed "R.G." The conclusion, with no more transition than a comma, shifts from the first person of Ned Browne to the third person of Greene for an edifying last paragraph.

chère à notre auteur, comme un dyptique sur chacun des volets duquel sont peints les portraits contrastes d'une prostituée cynique et d'une prostituée repentie.<sup>1</sup>

The balance of the two parts is very unequal, however, for in novelty and interest A Disputation far outweighs the "Conversion." The conjecture of E.A. Baker, that in the latter part Greene was merely using up old euphuistic material,<sup>2</sup> seems probable; for the "Conversion" begins with stilted, artificial rhetoric in strong contrast to the earthy dialogue of Nan and Lawrence. Nevertheless, as the story progresses, the euphuisms disappear. At the conclusion the courtesan is speaking as simply and realistically as Nan herself.

The story of the courtesan contains, as has been observed earlier, a sermon by the heroine's uncle and a tale of reformation of a wanton wife. In concluding the pamphlet, Greene adds a lame tale of a sick man's revenge on the host who has been starving him. The irrelevance of this story is artistically indefensible.

The Defence of Conny catching is a monologue put into the mouth of a cony-catcher. In his "Address" "Cuthbert" provides Greene with an excellent advertisement by describing the difficulties of his profession since the publication of the cony-catching pamphlets. He challenges Greene to verbal combat. However, his text proves to be no retort but an extension

1. René Pruvost. op. cit. p. 465.

2. E.A. Baker. op. cit. p. 140.



of the definition of cony-catching to include all trades and professions. The pamphlet has a flimsy framework of pretended exposure and mockery of Greene which serves to introduce six unrelated stories. But the exposures are no more than generalized railing at the deceits of usurers, brokers, millers, tailors, vintners, and other tradesmen. "Cuthbert's" pretended mockery of Greene has been discussed in an earlier chapter. As J.C. Jordan observes,<sup>1</sup> there is little real exposition in the pamphlet, but the fiction of revelation is maintained. "Cuthbert" concludes with references that amount to an advertisement of Greene's projected work, The repentance of a Conny-catcher.

The framework of The Blacke Bookes Messenger is a rogue's biography. Ned Browne, a cony-catcher who has robbed a church, tells the story of his life and exploits to the crowd assembled to see him hanged. He starts out boldly but inconsistently with a merry account of his pranks, interspersed with five tales of his successful exploits, but he finishes penitently with a sermon. Greene himself ends the pamphlet with a pious discourse of God's judgment upon Ned Browne.

By using a single rogue-hero in both framework and tales Greene achieves in The Blacke Bookes Messenger a unity not attained by his other pamphlets.

1. J.C. Jordan. op. cit. p. 96.

Greene never completely frees the rogue pamphlets from the stiff structure of framework and tale in which he found them. In his hands they suffer, as well, from carelessness and inconsistency, his two worst failings as an artist. Nevertheless, his experiments in combining the form with narrative, monologue, dialogue, and biography give it flexibility and vitality and indicate what rogue literature was later to become.

Like his favourite chameleon Greene adapted his literary style to the changing colours of fashion. This adaptability tells much about his writing, explaining both his popularity and his mediocrity, the lack of distinctive features in his style. The cony-catching pamphlets show us Greene the euphuist in the process of transformation to Greene the realist. Throughout the pamphlets appear the old rhetorical trappings of "the ape of Euphues."<sup>1</sup> In the epistles, especially in the opening paragraphs, Greene is addressing the "gentleman readers" in the elaborate prose that had pleased them for almost eleven years. Although aware that such language is inappropriate here,<sup>2</sup> he cannot shake it off completely.

He begins as it becomes a University Wit, with an historical or classical allusion:

Diogenes, Gentlemen, from a  
Counterfait Coiner of money, became  
a currant corrector of manners...<sup>3</sup>.

Such a characteristic opening of Greene's "Address" to the reader appears in all the pamphlets except the

1. Gabriel Harvey. Pierce's Supererogation. Huth Edition Ed. A. B. Grosart. Vol. II. p. 222.

2. Cf. The Second and last part of Conny-catching. p. 7.

3. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p. 7.

two most realistic, A Disputation and The Blacke Bookes Messenger.

Latin quotations - words, phrases, and sentences - are liberally sprinkled through the pamphlets.<sup>1</sup> Even in A Disputation and The Blacke Bookes Messenger they are occasionally put, incongruously, into the mouths of the cony-catchers, Nan, Lawrence, and Ned Browne. On the whole, these quotations are of a proverbial or didactic nature, as will be seen by the following examples:

"Cum multis alius (sic) quae nunc praescribere longum est."<sup>2</sup> A Notable Discovery. p.39.

"Immedicabile vulnus, Ense resecandum est ne pars sincera trahatur."<sup>3</sup> The Second Part. p.9.  
The Defence. p.12.

"Quo semel est imbuta recens seruiabit odorentesta diu."<sup>4</sup> A Disputation. p.53.

"Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipse"<sup>5</sup>.  
A Disputation. p.45.

"Per varios casus et per tot discrimina rerum."<sup>6</sup>.  
The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.23.

1. Oddly enough there are none in The Thirde Part. The reason for this variation from Greene's habitual style may be that in this pamphlet he claims to be compiling "notes" sent him by the Justice whom he met at dinner. Cf. p.11. For a list of Greene's Latin quotations see Appendix B.

2. Eton Latin Grammar. (Genders of nouns).

3. Ovid. Meta. I.191.

4. Horace. Epodes. I.2.70.

5. Ovid. De Arte Amandi. I.99.

6. Vergil. Aeneid. I.204.



The pamphlets are sprinkled with the classical allusions beloved by the Euphuists.<sup>1</sup> Mythological figures appear frequently beside Greek philosophers and characters from classical history. Greene's favourite reference is to the sirens to whom he almost invariably likens harlots in his ever-recurrent theme:

Beware of whores, for they be the Syrens that draw men on to destruction, their sweet words are enchantments, their eyes allure, and their beauties bewitch.<sup>2</sup>

... these caterpillers resemble the Syrens, who sitting with their watching eies vppon the rockes, to allure Sea-passengers to their extreame preiudice, sound out most heauenly melodie in such pleasing cords, that who so listens to their harmony, lends his eare vnto his own bane & ruine: but if any wary Ullisses passe by and stop his eares against their inchauntments, then haue they most delightfull iewels to shew him, as glorious obiects, to inueigle his eie with such pleasant vanities, that comming more nigh to behold them, they may dash their ship against a rocke and so vtterly perish.<sup>3</sup>

The Euphuistic device most overworked by Greene and most difficult for him to shake off is excessive antithesis or parallelism, ordinarily accompanied by alliteration. This characteristic is almost as pronounced in the last of the pamphlets as in the first. A few examples will serve to illustrate Greene's fondness for parallel epithets, phrases, and clauses.<sup>4</sup>

1. For a list of these allusions see Appendix H.
2. The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.31.
3. The Second part of Conny-catching. pp.24-5.
4. For a more complete list of these constructions see Appendix J.

- "Two such pestilent and preiudiciall practises."  
A Notable Discovery. p.9.
- "Confound, or conuert such base minded Cooseners."  
Second part of Conny-catching. p.10.
- "Consume it as vainly as they get it villanously."  
A Notable Discovery. p.31.
- "Hee that was hit with the horn was pinchd at the  
heart." A Disputation. p.58.
- "What they got in the bridge they lost in the saddle,  
what they coosened at cards, had like to cost  
them their neckes." The Second part of Conny-  
catching. p.28.
- "From a counterfait Coiner of money, became a currant  
corrector of manners, as absolute in the one, as  
dissolute in the other." A Notable Discovery.p.1.
- "Such as couet to coosen all, are crost tnmselfes  
oftentimes almost to the crosse." The Second  
part of Conny-catching.p.28.

Greene shared the Euphuists' fascination with the rhetorical possibilities provided by science. In 1938 Don Cameron Allen<sup>1</sup>. pointed out that the sources of some of Greene's allusions to "unnatural natural history" were Aristotle for animals, Pliny for plants, and the Secrets of Albertus Magnus for herbs. When his sources failed to provide a satisfactory allusion, however Greene did not scruple to invent his own stones and herbs. Gabriel Harvey in Pierce's Supererogation<sup>2</sup> accused Greene of inventing his scientific allusions; his accusation is corroborated by Nashe in Have With You to Saffron Walden.<sup>3</sup> Even when writing of cony-catching Greene occasionally employs one of these

1. "Science and Invention in Greene's Prose" P.M.L.A. Vol.53.1938.pp.1007-1018.
2. The Works of Gabriel Harvey.Ed.A.B.Grosart.Huth Edition.London.Hazell,Watson, and Viney,Ltd.1884. Vol.II. pp.125-6.
3. The Works of Thomas Nashe.Ed.R.B.McKerrow.London. A.H.Bullen.1905. Vol.III.p.132.

fantastic similes drawn from "unnatural natural history."

"Resembling heerin the nature of the Ape, that ever killeth that young one which he loueth most, with embracing it to fervently." A Disputation. p.43.

"The fayrest Hawke hath oftentimes the sickest feathers, that the hottest day hath the most suddaine showre." A Disputation. p.46.

"As the Tygre though for a while snee hide her clawes, yet at last shee will reueale her crueltie; and as the Agnus Castus leafe when it lookes most drye, is then most full of moysture." A Disputation. p.56.

"Playing like the beetle that makes scorne al day of the daintiest flowers, and at night takes up his lodging in a cowsherd." The Defence of Conny-catching. p.48.

In spite of his love of showy rhetoric and his inability to free himself altogether from the artificialities of Euphuism, Greene realized in beginning A Notable Discovery that his over-decorated style was unsuited to his new subject matter. In the "Address" to The Second Part he defends change of style and explains his reason:

... giue me leaue to answeere an ohiection, that some inferred against me; which was, that I shewed no eloquent phrases, nor fine figuratiue conueiance in my first booke as I had done in other of my workes, to which I reply that...a certaine decorum is to bee kept in euerie thing, and not to applie a high stile in a base subiect...I should dishonor that high misterie of eloquence, and derogate from the dignitie of our English toonge, eyther to employ any figure or bestow one choyce English word vpon such disdained rakehels as these Conny-catchers. Therefore humbly I craue pardon, and desire I may write basely of such base wretches..." 1.



Although he begins A Notable Discovery rhetorically, by the end of the Epistle Greene is writing in prose that conveys the idiom and realism of Elizabethan speech:

And if perhaps when the mony is lost (to vse their word of Arte) the poore Countrey man beginne to smoake them, and sweares the drounken knaue shall not gette his money so, then standeth the Rutter at the doore and draweth his sword and picketh a quarrell at his owne shadowe, if he lacke an Osler or a Tapster or some other to brabble with, that while the streete and company gather to the fray, as the manner is, the Barnard steales away with all the coine, and gets him to one blinde Tauerne or other, where these Cooseners had appointed to meete.<sup>1</sup>

In the exposition Greene often pauses unnecessarily to vilify the cony-catchers, but these passages are negligible beside the narrative. Greene is not concerned with character; he can depict only types, not individuals. He shows us, in the pamphlets, the genus cony, the genus cony-catcher, and the genus whore. Nan, the heroine of A Disputation, comes close at times to being an individual; as does, to a lesser extent, Margaret,<sup>2</sup> the victim of the cony-catcher who pretended relationship to steal her master's goods. But neither is completely individualized.

Greene is not concerned with description. He cannot visualize a scene although he may enumerate details when they satisfy the needs of his narrative - usually for the purpose of lending verisimilitude.

1. Page 13.

2. The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. pp. 11-21.

Fortunately for his readers, such concrete details often play a part in the story, so we are given - indirectly - information about the streets, public buildings, taverns, and citizens of Elizabethan London.

Greene's dialogue can be racy, realistic, idiomatic in the dispute between Nan and Lawrence, or on the lips of the reformed courtesan. The pamphlets are a rich source of idiom and proverb current in the sixteenth century. They offer, too, a sizeable vocabulary of thieves' cant.<sup>1</sup>

But the strength of Greene's pamphlets is their narrative, for it is there that Greene's interest lies. The chief traits of his style in the pamphlets - clarity, economy of word, and the choice of realistic or colloquial detail - lend themselves admirably to his talent for story-telling. Both in the exposition of cony-catching practices and in the illustrative tales these traits combine to form a style, well adapted to its purpose, that never intrudes itself between reader and narrative. It is, states M. Pruvost, the simple and direct style of the realistic novel.<sup>2</sup>

1. For lists of Greene's idioms, proverbs, and thieves' cant, see Appendices I and K.

2. René Pruvost. op. cit. p. 489.

## Chapter VIII

## The Literary Faults of the Pamphlets.

Greene's didacticism in the pamphlets is at times, excessive. His piety and patriotism intrude upon criminal revelation and narrative alike. At the end of each story Greene appears to shake a warning finger

...let each take heede of dealing  
with any such kinde of people. l.

or to revile the cony-catchers and wish that the "honorable and worshipfull" of the land would look to them, or to assure his readers once again that he does all "to the benefit of my countrie."

At least four times in the pamphlets we are treated to absolute sermons. Greene occasionally enlarges upon his favourite text, "Beware of harlots;" the full sermon appears twice, in the Epistle and in the final argument of A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher. The heroine of "The Conuersion of an English Courtizen" is interrupted by an uncle who preaches, in choice euphemism, "A Watch-word to wanton Maidens;" and for a long digression of a warning to parents to correct their children.

Although these sententious passages are in themselves interesting for the light they throw upon Elizabethan literary practise and upon the psychology of Robert Greene, they disturb the balance of structure and interrupt the continuity of the pamphlets.

An even more serious artistic blemish is Greene's inconsistency - purpose of viewpoint, of character

1. The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching.p.56.



portrayal, and choice of material.

This inconsistency alone has created, in the minds of almost all the scholars, the traditional view of Greene as a cynical, insincere, time-serving journalist.

His professedly didactic purpose in writing the pamphlets, his claims that he is serving the Commonwealth are sadly at variance with his frequent amorality and indifference. He shifts from the serious exposure of criminals and pious hopes that his revelations will bring about reform, to the old jest-book attitude of heartless delight in the cleverness of his rogues' tricks. In one passage he is describing the misery of the poor farmer and his wife and children, robbed of all they have by the pitiless cony-catchers. Suddenly Greene breaks off to introduce another such tale as "a merry jest."<sup>1</sup>

One of the worst examples of this shifting point of view is the abrupt and awkward change, from the pious close of the reformed courtesan's story - cautioning fathers to nurture their children carefully, and young women to respect their virginity - to this passage:

But amongst all these blythe and merry Iestes,  
a little by your leaue, if it be no farther  
than Fetterlane, oh take heed, thats too nye  
the Temple, what then, I will draw as neare  
the signe of the white Hart as I can, and...  
Ile tell you a merry Iest...<sup>2</sup>.

As we have suggested above, the pamphlets may owe this confusion to Greene's use of jest-book stories so

1. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p. 31.

2. A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher. pp. 79 - 80.

popular in his day. Had Greene but launched boldly into his new field of criminal revelation by means of expository framework and illustrative tale, and fulfilled its requirements instead of falling back upon the tried and familiar ground of the merry jest, he might have created in the pamphlets works of unified merit. But the actual confusion is a serious artistic fault.

Greene's stated object of serving the Commonwealth has been questioned for another reason. He assures his reader that he is exposing criminal activities that he has learnt at first hand from his association with the cony-catchers. Yet he derived some of his material from literary sources, and he admits, in the Epistle to Greenes Vision<sup>1</sup>, that he has at times supplemented his knowledge with his invention.

Greene's inconsistency reveals itself further in his characterizations. Portrayal of character was never one of his strong points, but even in the narrow space of the pamphlet Greene cannot sustain his conception. His characters constantly dwindle into Greene. Carried away by his argument, he puts into their mouths his own sentiments, heedless of the resulting absurdity and confusion.

For example, Nan, the prostitute in A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher, is arguing with Lawrence, a pick-pocket, the superiority of her profession to his mischief-making.

But at the height of her cynical peroration she begins to speak of "base-whores" and "beastliness" and preaches such a sermon to "beware of whores" as a reformer might boast. The realism is maintained, but the characterization is violated.

So it is with Ned Browne in The Blacke Bookes Messenger. As long as he is telling short tales of his own exploits, he is the merry, hardened cony-catcher. But in the long description of pretended travellers with their accounts of foreign countries, Browne alters. These travellers begin as his "companions," but by the end of the passage Browne has become Greene, and they are "these slye insuating Mothworms, that...are the decay of the forwardest Gentlemen and best wittes."<sup>1</sup> He actually concludes by wishing that a law be revived to put such felons to death!

Nor is this the only inconsistency in Greene's picture of Ned Browne. The Epistle to the pamphlet has told us that he died "resolute and desperate,"<sup>2</sup> and Browne himself has begun by saying

If you thinke (Gentlemen) to heare a repentant man speake, or to tel a large tale of his penitent sorrowes, ye are deceiued: for as I haue euer liued lewdly, so I meane to end my life as resolutely, and not by a cowardly confession to attempt the hope of a pardon.<sup>3</sup>

Does he do so? Not at all. At the conclusion of a story in which the tables are turned on the cony-

1. Pages 24-5.

2. Page 1.

3. Ibid. p.5.



catchers, he launches into a confession and homily that with few changes could be interpolated into one of Greene's repentance novels, and ends with a hope of God's blessing.

A more interesting failure to sustain a characterization occurs in The Defence of Conny catching. Greene is pretending to write in the character of "Cuthbert Cunny-catcher," whose purpose is to defend his profession from Greene's attacks. He does not really defend cony-catchers at all. The most that he offers as an excuse is the plea that professional men and tradesmen practise cony-catching as well.

Moreover, Cuthbert is described as a scholar, a partisan hired by the malefactors to oppose Greene. Yet, as we have seen, he shows himself strangely familiar with Greene's personal opinions and viewpoint. Greene really wishes to set forth his concept of the writer's function<sup>1</sup>. and his disillusionment with the actors who,<sup>2</sup> he felt, had abused him. He does so, careless that these sentiments are attributed to him by so unlikely a person as a cony-catcher.

The final inconsistency in the character of Cuthbert is his lame conclusion. He neither voices an ultimate defiance of Greene nor even adheres to his own viewpoint, but advertises Greene's promised repentance of a Conny-catcher with its revelation of the malpractices of Newgate and Marshalsea jailors.

Another inconsistency in the pamphlets is Greene's

1. A Defence of Conny catching. pp.11-12.

2. Ibid. p.37.

use of material unsuited to its context.<sup>1</sup> Such is the "Conuersion of an English Courtizen, reformed this present year, 1592." Its subject has, perhaps, some connection with the disputation betweene a thief and a whore, but the stilted euphuism of the early passages alters to earnest repentance in the later ones. The tone of both alike is inappropriate in a cony-catching pamphlet.

In relation to the novel E.A. Baker has pointed out Greene's inability to visualize a scene or to depict local colour.<sup>2</sup> This fault is equally conspicuous in the pamphlets. At no time does Greene describe the cony-catchers or the scenes in which they move. The details that he gives are those that play a part in the action. In two solitary instances, accounts of whores, standing "like the deuils si quis at a tauern or alehouse,"<sup>3</sup> he enumerates.

...they shold see how these street walkers wil iet in rich garded gowns, quaint peri-wigs, rufs of the largest size, quarter and a half deep, gloried richly with blew starch, their cheekes diea with surfuling water...<sup>4</sup>

What flatteries they vse to bewitch, what sweet words to inueagle, what simple holines to intrap, what amorous glaunces, what smirking Ocyliades, what cringing curtesies, what stretching Adios, following a man like a blood-hound, with theyr eyes white, laying out of haire, what frouncing of tresses, what paintings, what Ruffes, Cuffes, and braueries...<sup>5</sup>

1. Such is the inclusion of the "pretended traveller" in a pamphlet that purports to relate the exploits of Ned Browne.
2. Ernest A. Baker. op. cit. p. 112.
3. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. p. 44.
4. Ibid. p. 44.
5. A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher. Frank Aydelotte. op. cit. p. 124.

Another fault of the pamphlets is the occasional improbability of plot. The story of the polygamist of Wiltshire who married fourteen wives, of the woman who made a usurer confess his trickery by nailing his ears to a window, of a man who helped a thief steal his own trunk, and of a theft solved by pretended necromancy are examples of what Aydelotte terms "fantastic" tales.

Their purpose is that of the Italian novelle - amusement, rather than warning or edification.

Characterization in the pamphlets is, of course, limited by the exposition and narrative. But when, unhampered by the traditions of novel and drama, the opportunity for realistic portrayal of human beings presented itself, Greene failed to realize it. He may have been prevented by his customary haste and carelessness; but, more probably, his concentration on what happened to people rather than on the people themselves makes his characters wooden. Except for random bits of conversation, Greene's characters are types, not individuals. J.C. Jordan has rather overstated the case by terming Ned Browne a puppet on the end of a string,<sup>1</sup> lacking even the individuality of the jest-book anti-hero. None of the characters in the pamphlets are unified. Most of them are shadowy figures - the cony-catcher and his prey.

Repetition is still another defect in the pamphlet. It is improbable that Greene ever thought of his writings

1. J.C. Jordan. op. cit. pp. 108-109.



as likely to be collected into one edition. Once published, Greene's works seem no longer to have concerned him, for he borrows from them as freely as from those of his predecessors. As a result, there are many repetitions of phrases, sentences, speeches, descriptions, plots, and even entire stories in the pamphlets alone, and scholars are constantly finding new instances of Greene's having "cribbed" from himself. C.J. Vincent, in 1939, stated his belief that Greene kept a commonplace book, upon which he could draw at any time.<sup>1</sup> An earlier scholar, H.C. Hart, in his series of articles on Greene's prose works<sup>2</sup> traces Greene's borrowings from himself as well as from others, but concedes:

His reiteration was simply due to the speed that creditors and publishers drove him at... nor can he be accused of repeating himself... to any blameable extent, in his prose...the bulk of his tales are, so far as we know, of his own invention.<sup>3</sup>

These borrowings may, in the pamphlets, consist of examples as that noted by J.C. Jordan in which Greene, in The Defence, picks up his own mention of Whittington College, founded by Sir Richard Whittington, and plays on its name in The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching.

...I...desirous...to search the depth of those liberall Artes wherein I was a professour,  
lefte my studie in Whittington Colledge...<sup>4</sup>

Edified by the margin of The Defence, Jordan goes on to inform us:

1. "Further Repetitions in the Works of Robert Greene."  
Philological Quarterly. XVIII. January 1, 1939. p. 73.
2. (Cf. Chapter II.)
3. "Greene's Prose Works". Notes and Queries. Tenth Series.  
. July 1, 1905. p.2.
4. The Defence of Conny catching. p. 5.

From a gloss in the margin, "Newgate builded by one Whittington," it is clear that he means the Newgate prison rebuilt by Whittington's executors, and not the Whittington College proper also established by his directions, which Greene had in mind in the Last Part.<sup>1</sup>

Greene's Quip for an Upstart Courtier draws freely on The Defence for descriptive phrases and accusations of cheating brought against the different trades and occupations. These passages have been examined elsewhere as they bear upon the question of the authorship of The Defence.

A more characteristic example of Greene's reemploying his own expository material occurs in the following passage from The Defence, condensed into lively, colloquial paraphrase for The Blacke Bookes Messenger.

There bee in Englande, but especially about London, certayne quaint, pickt, and neate companions...and can fit his humor to all companies, and openly shadoweth his disguise with the name of a Traueller, so that he wil haue a superficial all insight into certaine phrases of euerie language, and pronounce them in such a grace, as if almost hee were that Countryman borne: then shal you hear him vaunt of his trauels, and tel what wonders he hath seene in strange countries: how he hath bin at Saint Iames of Compostella in Spaine, at Madril in the Kings Court: and then drawing out his blade, hee claps it on the boord, and sweares he bought that in

There are a number of my companions yet liuing in England, who beeing men for all companies... Discourse with them of Countries, they will set you on fire with trauailing, yea what place is it they will not sweare they haue beene in, and I warrant you tell such a sound tale, as if it were all Gospell they spake: not a corner in Fraunce but they can describe, Venice, why it is nothing, for they haue intelligence from it euery houre, & at euery worde will come in with Strado Curtizano and

1. J.C. Jordan. op. cit. p.96.n.



Toledo; then will he roue to Venice, and with a sigh, discouer the situation of the citie, how it is seated two Leagues from Terra frenia, in the Sea, and speake of Rialto Freuiso and Murano, where they make glasses: and to set the young gentlemans teeth on edge; he will make a long tale of La Strado Courtizano, where the beautiful Curtizans dwel, describing their excellency, and what angellical creatures they be, and how amorously they wil entertaine strangers. Tush, he wil discourse the state of Barbary, and there to Eschites and Alcaires, and thence leape to Fraunce, Denmarke, and Germany... The Defence of Conny catching. pp. 33-35.

tell you such miracles of Madam Padilia and Romana Imperia, that you will bee mad tyll you bee out of England. The Blacke Bookes Messenger. pp. 20-21.

Perhaps Greene was not as indifferent as has been thought to the carelessness and haste with which he wrote. He never repeats himself verbatim in the pamphlets, but revises, sometimes condensing, sometimes selecting more graphic detail than in his earlier version. One story that appears in The Second and last part of Conny-catching, that of "A quaint conceit of a Cutler and Cutpurse," is retold at twice the length in The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching as "Of one that came to buy a knife, and made first prooffe of his trade on him that sold it." Greene's additions consist of details chosen to lend verisimilitude. The Nip specifies that the knife is to be three inches long; the purse of the cutler on which he tries his purchase hangs at a button hole of the man's waistcoat; and it is "a whole groat" that the cutler promises to bestow upon his neighbors at the Alehouse. In the second



version the cutler does not miss his purse until he has ordered drink for his friends at the tavern, whereas in the first he discovers his loss when changing money for a customer. The conversation of the cutler and the nip is given in dialogue instead of narrative in The Thirde Part; and Greene, feeling perhaps that some explanation is due to his reader for so obvious a repetition, concludes:

This tale, because it was somewhat misreported before, vpon talke had with the poore Cutler himselfe, is set downe now in true forme and maner how it was done, therefore is there no offence offered, when by better consideration, a thing may be enlarged or amended, or at least the note be better confirmed.<sup>1</sup>

When short of material Greene often resorts to "padding." He does not hesitate to include in his works a tale that can be twisted to a semblance of bearing on his subject. Three such instances occur in the pamphlets. The first is that of the information and stories relating to the colliers. Having set out to expose the trickeries of criminals, Greene shifts to the malpractices of tradesmen. J.C. Jordan regards this non sequitur as a device to fill up the pamphlet. However, as it is the more likely to have been drawn from first-hand experience, it has compensatory interest for the social historian.

"The Conuersion of an English Courtizan, reformed this present yeare, 1592" is included in A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher. Neither in style nor content is it relevant to A Dis-  
 1. The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. p. 37.

putation - except in the profession of its heroine.

At the beginning, the language is artificial and euphuistic, as in Greene's early novels; but towards the conclusion it becomes sincere and emotional, as it is in his repentances. Only in one or two sentences does it approach the realism of the cony-catchers' conversation. Perhaps, as E.A. Baker suggests, Greene began by using up, inappropriately, old material.

Not so flagrant an example, but still unsuited to Greene's pamphlets is "A pleasant Tale of Will Sommers," a jest-book story of the sort that was beginning to cluster around the figure of the jester of Henry VIII in the later sixteenth century. Its point is the old joke of dividing a walnut between three men, in which two get the shells. The story may certainly be regarded as padding in a pamphlet that purports to expose "professions that bee great Conny-catchers."<sup>1</sup>

The most serious imperfection of the pamphlet is one which few of Greene's critics have failed to mention - his carelessness. To it may be attributed most of the other defects. Thomas Nashe is a witness to Greene's haste in writing and disregard of his literary reputation in the necessity to earn a living.<sup>2</sup>

1. The Defence of Conny catching. p. 9.

2. Four Letters Confuted. The Works of Thomas Nashe. Ed. R.B. McKerrow. p. 287.

His testimony is borne out by the pamphlets themselves with their digressions, their inconsistency, their inclusion of unsuitable material, and their repetition. Greene has often been called a man of great talent, rather than of genius; capable of brilliant touches, but not of sustained effort. This criticism is pre-eminently true of the cony-catching pamphlets; in which, one feels, the majority of his literary faults could easily have been eliminated, while his literary virtues lead one to much futile conjecture of what Greene might have done had he devoted himself exclusively to realistic writing.



## Chapter IX

## Greene's Realism.

Greene has come to be recognized as one of the forerunners who were influential in establishing a school of realism.<sup>1</sup> Here again we encounter the paradox of Greene's nature: the Euphuist has become a realist.

The growth of Greene's realism may be traced in the conny-catching pamphlets from A Notable Discovery of Coosenage; it culminated, according to M. Pruvost<sup>2</sup> in A Disputation and The Blacke Bookes Messenger, "on the road to the realistic novel." In his earnest attempts to achieve verisimilitude, to convince his readers that he wrote from experience, Greene added precise, realistic details to his narratives - the exact sum of money lost by a ship's master to a crew of cros-biters;<sup>3</sup> a careful description of a horse-thief's saddle, bridle, and spurs, "so...featlie formed, that...they may be put in a buckram bag;"<sup>4</sup> a list of articles in a trunk stolen from a London citizen."<sup>5</sup> From these details Greene proceeded to the depicting of criminal types, as he may have seen them in the streets of London, speaking in earthy, colloquial idiom. These types he made the chief figures in the sordid but always vital action of his narratives.

1. R.W.Cawley. Unpathed Waters. Princeton University Press. Princeton, New Jersey. 1940. p.220.
2. René Pruvost. op.cit. Ch.XII. pp.459-490.
3. A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. p.49.
4. The Second and last part of Conny-catching. pp.14-15.
5. The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. p.47.

The story of the Curber who, with his hook, pulled down a chamber pot upon his head<sup>1</sup>. was cited by M. Pruvost as further advanced on the road to gross realism than Greene had ever gone.<sup>2</sup> Certainly there is nothing comparable to it elsewhere in his works. Pruvost believes that Greene's increasing realism is a triumph of his Puritan bias over his Renaissance love of romance.<sup>3</sup> It may be so. On the other hand, it may be yet another illustration of Greene's extraordinary sensitivity to the tendencies of his age, a reflection of the growing realism of the late sixteenth century.

In yet another aspect Greene's pamphlets extend their influence beyond the age that produced them - in their contribution to the literature of roguery, of which his cony-catching series is the beginning. As George A. Brown pointed out in 1914,<sup>4</sup> "Greene was one of the first to perceive the possibilities for literary effect in such a theme as roguery." Greene progressed from an exposure of rogue's tricks to using a rogue as an anti-hero.<sup>5</sup> His focus upon the cleverness of the trick, his amusement, that is so at variance with his professed didactic purpose, and that disrupts the unity of the pamphlets, is the viewpoint proper to the rogue story. In The Blacke Bookes Messenger Ned Browne

1. The Blacke Bookes Messenger. pp. 27-29.

2. René Pruvost. op. cit. p. 489.

3. Ibid. p. 490.

4. George A. Brown. op. cit. p. 191.

5. F.W. Chandler. op. cit. p. 98.

relates his adventures in the first person as literary rogues were to do in succeeding centuries. This pamphlet, asserted F.W. Chandler, "achieved what of all [Greene's] writings most nearly approaches picaresque fiction."<sup>1</sup> In it Greene attained a unity lacking in the other pamphlets by assigning varied adventures to one central figure, the narrator and anti-hero who has been likened to Fielding's Jonathan Wilde or Thackeray's Barry Lyndon.<sup>2</sup>

G.A. Brown believes that Greene's treatment of "The Conversion of an English Courtezan" foreshadows "that human pity for the lost and fallen" that inspired Manon Lescaut, Marion de Lorme, and La Dame aux Camelias.<sup>3</sup> But Greene's courtezan is more akin to the forthright, English Moll Flanders than to foreign frailty. She laments the follies of her childhood and the indulgence of her parents in balanced Euphuisms, but she does not condone or rationalize her "filthie lust." At times she rivals Nan herself in realistic speech. It is hard to see in Greene the ancestor, however remote, of eighteenth and nineteenth century sentiment.

There is no better testimony to the success of Greene's rogue pamphlets than the flood of imitations that they occasioned in the last years of the sixteenth and the first of the seventeenth centuries. Some pamphleteers exploited his name; some merely reprinted his material; others wrote

1. F.W. Chandler. op. cit. p. 99.

2. E.A. Baker. op. cit. p. 143.

3. George A. Brown. op. cit. p. 191.



tracts that plagiarized Greene's.

In the years immediately following his death, certain enterprising opportunists made use of the popular interest in Greene to bring out books and pamphlets that bore his name on their title pages or in their Epistles to the reader. In three of these pamphlets Greene appears as a ghost urging the publication of a book or papers, or the delivery of a letter; or is represented as pursuing cony-catchers after death. Two such pamphlets are Kind-Hartes Dreame, 1592, by Henry Chettle<sup>1</sup>. and Greenes Newes both from Heaven and Hell, 1593, by Barnabe Rich.<sup>2</sup> Greene in Concept, 1598, by John Dickenson,<sup>3</sup> is an exceptionally tedious Euphuistic novel, obviously inspired by Greene's Disputation. A third pamphlet plagiarizes freely from Greene, thereby lending some aspect of truth to its Epistle which claims it to be a work of Greene's that "came by chance" to the writer's hands. It is entitled Greenes Ghost Haunting Cony-catchers, 1602, and is believed to be the work of Samuel Rowlands.<sup>4</sup>

Greenes Funeralls, 1594,<sup>5</sup> by "R.B., Gent." is believed to have been written shortly after Greene's death but not published until two years later. It consists of a group of very bad poems eulogizing the dead man, and its only value lies in its list of

1. Ed.G.B.Harrison.The Bodley Head Quartos.Vol.IV. John Lane, The Bodley Head,Ltd.London.1923.
2. Ed.R.B.McKerrow.The Shakespeare Head.Stratford-upon-Avon. 1922.
3. Richard Bradocke for William Jones.1598.(Bodleian).
4. For a full discussion of Rowlands' indebtedness to Greene in this pamphlet,see Edward D.McDonald.  
op.cit.pp.145-170.
5. Ed.R.B.McKerrow.The Shakespeare Head.Stratford-upon-Avon. 1922.

Greene's works and in three lines alluding to the "upstart crow" passage from a Groatsworth of Witte.

Greene gave the ground to all that wrote upon him,  
Nay more, the men that so eclipsed his fame  
Purloyned his plumes; can they deny the same?  
Sonnet IX. ll.4-6.<sup>1</sup>

One of Greene's own pamphlets, A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher, led a protracted posthumous life under the title of Theeves Falling Out, True Men Come by Their Goods; or, The Belman Wanted a Clapper, 1615. It bears Greene's name on the title page and is reprinted with a bogus epistle signed "Robert Greene" that alludes to Dekker's Lanthorne and Candlelight and The Belman of London, both published in 1608, sixteen years after Greene's death. In Theeves Falling Out Nan and Lawrence are rechristened "Stephen and Kate," a "hee-foyst and a shee-foyst." Throughout the pamphlet occur other trivial alterations of wording: the names of Elizabethan persons and places are either omitted or changed to Jacobean. The reference to bearing arms against Don John of Austria becomes a more timely allusion to bearing arms "in the Low-country warres". It is the Belman, "instead of "R.G.," who has sworn "to tell such a fowle Tale...in his second part" instead of "in his blacke Booke." Could Dekker have been responsible for this theft as he was for others? It was reprinted many times in 1615, 1617, 1621, 1637, and 1809.

1. Ibid. p.81.

For forty years after Greene's death many a dull rogue pamphleteer borrowed a few sparks of vitality from the stories, criminal revelations, and canting vocabulary of Greene's cony-catching series.<sup>1</sup> Foremost among these plagiarists were Thomas Dekker and Samuel Rid. The extent of their pilfering, together with that of others, has been outlined by F.W. Chandler in The Literature of Roguery.<sup>2</sup>

Greene's cony-catching pamphlets are not merely phenomena of the Elizabethan age. They are the earliest recognizable ancestors of a type of literature that matured a century later in the work of Defoe, and that still flourishes in our own time. In contemporary anti-heroes as in the rogues and harlots of the past, we may trace the features of the Renaissance cony-catchers portrayed by Robert Greene.

1. For a list of these pamphlets, see Appendix L.

2. Pages 93-110.



## Chapter X

## Robert Greene's Integrity.

Any study of Robert Greene is inadequate without an attempt to view the character of the man according to the ideas of his age. This is why many scholars have failed, I believe, either to understand Greene or to appreciate his work. They have consistently judged him by the standards of their own times - sentimentally in the nineteenth century, sceptically in the twentieth. They have forgotten in discussing Greene that plagiarism in the sixteenth century was not regarded as it is today, or that the humanists' concept of the writer's duty to serve the state might be other than a hypocritical cloak for self-interest. Moreover, scholars have ignored Greene's complexity, which was apparent to Storojenko and Grosart.

The cony-catching pamphlets have lowered Greene's character in the eyes of scholars. His sincerity, originality, and veracity have been questioned in turn - for contradictory reasons.

A charge frequently brought against Greene is summarized by W.W.Greg: "The moral intention of the Coney-catching pamphlets...cannot be taken seriously."<sup>1</sup> Greg's reason for doubting Greene's profession of ethical motive in writing is that he associated with criminals, and was doing so at the time of his death.

1. Review of J.Churton Collins' The Plays and Poems of Robert Greene. Modern Language Review. Vol.I. 1906. p.241.

Greg ridicules "Greene's assertion that he associated with the sharpers whose tricks he exposed 'not as a companion, but as a spie to have an insight into their knaueries'" as "belied by all that we know of his London life."

Greg's argument that Greene's moral purpose in the pamphlets may be disregarded because he consorted with criminals and "turned his knowledge of crime to literary account" is an example of judgment by standards of another century. Why should Greene's avowed moral intentions be suspect because of his mode of life? His belief in the advancement of virtue, the suppression of vice, and the exposure of villainy as the duty of the writer has been pointed out. They are the intentions he professed in the pamphlets. That he took them seriously is made clear by a passage in The Repentance of Robert Greene, Maister of Artes. In the last months of his life, while condemning himself far more severely than any of his critics have done, he wrote:

But I thanke God, that he put it into my head, to lay open the most horrible coosenages of the common Conny-catchers, Cooseners, and Crosse-biters, which I haue indifferently handled in these my seuerall discourses already imprinted. And my trust is, that those discourses will doe great good, and bee very beneficiall to the Commonwealth of England.<sup>1</sup>

There is no reason to doubt this. Greene looked upon the cony-catching pamphlets as making amends, to some extent, for his way of life.

1. Ed. G.B.Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos. pp. 25-6.

A second charge against Greene is that he is unoriginal. J.C. Jordan claims that Greene's knowledge of "the lowest classes of society" is not the basis for his disclosures, and that he got all he knew about cony-catching from Gilbert Walker's Manifest Detection of Dice-Play. Jordan asks

whether we should not deprive [Greene] in connection with these conny-catching pamphlets, of the title he lays claim to as 'comrade of the disreputable,' and confer upon him another, - that of being a 'literary liar.'<sup>1</sup>

The contradiction between the views of Greg and Jordan on Greene's first-hand knowledge of the underworld is obvious. Greg believes Greene to have been a companion of cony-catchers, with whom he fraternized until his death, and from whom he acquired the knowledge of crime displayed in his pamphlets. Jordan, on the contrary, says

I am not going to deny...that [Greene] did not associate with such persons as those of whom he speaks.<sup>2</sup>

but he believes that Greene got the essential material for cony-catching from Walker's Manifest Detection of Dice-Play, that Greene is only "pretending to be a personal observer,"<sup>3</sup> that his "information does not seem, of necessity, to have been obtained from direct knowledge,"<sup>4</sup> and that he declines to set down the names of cony-catchers, the cheating law, and other

1. J.C. Jordan. op.cit. p.94.

2. Ibid. p.94.

3. Ibid. p.92.

4. Ibid. p.93.



thieves' practises because he "had no definite information."<sup>1</sup>.

Greene's pamphlets are undeniably indebted to Walker's Manifest Detection. But their realistic details were not evolved in Greene's study at Clare Hall, Cambridge. Greene's contemporaries did not accuse him of lacking verisimilitude or of deriving his material from a literary source although presumably they had the same access as he to Walker's pamphlet. Greene's claim of familiarity with cony-catchers is supported by Gabriel Harvey,<sup>2</sup> and Samuel Rowlands;<sup>3</sup> it is not refuted by his friends Henry Chettle,<sup>4</sup> and Thomas Nashe.<sup>5</sup> We cannot, of course, know precisely to what extent Greene drew upon his knowledge of the Elizabethan underworld in his writing; but I agree with Greg that Greene's association with criminals is confirmed by all the evidence, and I see no reason to doubt that if Greene presented the criminal practises he found in Walker's tract, he nevertheless made use of incidents, descriptive detail, and the cony-catching jargon and London street idioms that he himself knew at first hand.

Both Greg and Jordan accuse Greene of "threatening to expose the names and haunts of villains in a Black Book" but of never carrying out his threat. Greene's failure to publish names, even when dying is attributed by Greg to his fear of the scoundrels

1. Ibid. p.93.

2. Four Letters, and certaine Sonnets. Ed. G. B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos. pp.19,33.

3. Greene's Ghost haunting Conie-catchers. 1602. Ed. J. O. Halliwell. London. 1860. p.7.

4. Kind Harts Dreame. Ed. G. B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos. pp.35-6.

5. Thomas Nashe. op.cit. Vol. I. p.287.

with whom he associated. Jordan, on the other hand, believes that Greene could not reveal names for he knew none. "One is at a loss to understand such passages [as threaten but do not name cony-catchers]," declares Jordan, "...if they do not mean that Greene had no definite information upon that particular matter."<sup>1</sup>

It is true that Greene does not fulfill his promise with a long catalogue of names such as Harman appends to his Caveat for Common Cursitors. However, in several passages he hints at names or describes persons in such a way that they may have been identifiable to his contemporaries. At times he gives a cony-catcher's initials, together with the street in which he lives, as in the following passages:

...in bishopgate street there was there  
fiue traffiques, pretty, but common  
huswiues...the eldest of them, and most  
experienced...called Mal B...Without the  
tauern dore stood two of their husbands.  
J.B. & J.R....he was made welcome to M.  
Mals house, and one of the three went  
into a chamber,...whose name was A.B.  
... in comes J.B....the good man of the  
house...M.Mall...had bidden a sharper  
brunt before; witnes tne time of her  
martirdome, when vpon her shoulders  
was engrauen the history of her whorish  
qualities...A Notable Discovery of  
Coosenage. pp.47-50.

A crue of his companions...met either at  
Laurence Pickerings, or at Lambeth: let  
the Blackamore take heede I name him  
not, least an honorable neighbor of his  
frowne at it. A Disputation. p.19.

...some cowardly knaues...become Crosbites  
 ...for example, Iacke Rhoades is now a re-  
 formed man, whatsoeuer he hath been in his  
 youth, now in his latter daies hee is growne  
 a corrector of vice, for whom soeuer hee takes  
 suspitious with his wife, I warrant you he  
 sets a sure fine on head. A Disputation.p.27.

...aske poore A.B. in Turnmill street, what a  
 sawcie Signor there is, whose purblind eyes can  
 scarcely discerne a lowse from a Flea, and yet  
 he hath such insight into the mysticall Trade  
 of Crosbiting, that hee can furnish his boord,  
 with a hundreth poundes worth of Plate, I doubt  
 the sandeyde Asse, will kick like a Western  
 Pugge....although hee boastes of the chiefe of  
 the Clargies fauour, yet Ile so set his name  
 out that the boyes at Smithfield barres shall  
 chalk him on the backe for a Crosbite. A  
Disputation.p.28.

Not far off from Hogsdon, perhaps it was there,  
 and if you thinke I lye, aske master Richard  
 Chot, and maister Richard Strong, two honest  
 gentlemen that can witnesse as well as I...  
 dweltt here...a good auncient Matron that had  
 a faire wench to her daughter...how many shee  
 had cousoned vnder the pretence of marriage,  
 well poore plaine Signor, See, you were not  
 stiffe inough for her, although it cost you  
 many crownes and the losse of your seruice.  
A Disputation. p.29.

...I thought thou hadst spoken of R.B. of Long  
 Lane and his wife, take heed they be parlous  
 folks and greatly acquainted with keepers and  
 Gaylers, therefore meddle not you with them,  
 for I heare say, R.G. hath sworne in despite  
 of the brazill staffe, to tell such a fowle  
 Tale of him in his blacke Booke, that it will  
 cost him a daungerous Ioynt. A Disputation.  
 pp.30-31.

...one of R.B. his friends...was strangely washt  
 alate by a French Barbar, and had all the haire



of his face miraculously shauen off by the  
 Sythe of Gods vengeance, in so much that  
 some sayd he had that he had not, but as hap  
 was, how soeuer his haire fell off, it stoad  
 him in some stead when the brawle was alate,  
 for if hee had not cast off his beard and so  
 being vnknowne, it had cost him some knockes...  
A Disputation. p.31.

Some Conicatchers dare weare noblemans  
 liueryes, as W.Bickerton and others (marginal  
 note in The Defence.p.6.)  
 ...I meane to borrow Will Bickertons blade, of  
 as good a temper as Morglay King Arthures  
 sword was. The Defence. pp.9-10.

...your poetical Brethren: amongst the which,  
 one learned Hypocrite, that could brooke no  
 abuses in the Commonwealth, was so zealous,  
 that he began to put an English she Saint in  
 the Legend, for the holinesse of her life:and  
 forgot not so much as her dogge, as Tobies  
 was remembred, that wagged his tayle at the  
 sight of his olde Mistresse. This pure  
 Martinist (if he were not worse) had a combat  
 betweene the flesh and the spirite, that he  
 must needes haue a Wife...he was a kind of  
 Scholastical panyon, nourst vp onely at  
 Grammer schoole, least going to the Vniuer-  
 sitie, through his nimble witte, too much  
 learning should make him mad...he pronounst  
 his wordes like a bragout, and helde vp his  
 head like a Malt-horse, and could talke  
 against Bishops, and wish very mannerly the  
 discipline of the Primitiue Church were  
 restored...this Gentleman had espyed (I dare  
 not say about Fleetstreet) a proper mayd...  
 to this girle goeth this proper Greek a  
 wooing, naming himselfe to be a Gentleman  
 of Cheshire...Come coossen I, quoth he,...  
 I am sure your brother P. wil giue you leaue.<sup>1</sup>

1. It is this story that Jordan conjectures to refer  
 to the Harvey brothers.J.C.Jordan.op.cit.pp.105-6.  
 I can find no evidence to substantiate tne theory.

Greene's favourite device in these passages is to add an irrelevant ejaculation that contains a pun on the man's name, such as the famous "onely Shake-scene in the countrey."<sup>1</sup>

I know some Taphouses about the Subberbes, where they buy a shoulder of mutton for two groats, and sel it to their ghuest for two shillings...let such take heed, least my fathers white Horse loose saddle & bridle & they go on foote to the diuel on pilgrimage. The Defence. p. 30.

I knew not farre from Fleetbridge a Haberdasher, it were a good deed to take Paine to tel his name. The Defence. p. 40. (The pages of the British Museum copy of The Defence have been trimmed too closely for the marginal note on this passage to be visible. That of the Huntington Library copy reads: "Paine." C 4 r.)

Except for the accounts of Mistress Mall, the Nip and his apprentice, the "Samson" of the black art, and the "scholastical panyon," these references are entirely irrelevant to Greene's text; they are really digressions. They seem to be directed against actual persons, and should be taken into consideration when Greene is accused of failing to carry out his threat.

A further charge brought against Greene by Jordan is of total disregard for truth and accuracy in his efforts to advertise his pamphlets. This is based upon Greene's references in The Second Part of Conny-catching to the public reception of A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. The pamphlet, Greene claims, has

1. A Groatsworth of Witte. Ed. G.B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quarto. p. 46.

excited criticism of its style and has angered male-factors because of its exposures. It has, moreover, "greatlie impoverished" the trade of cony-catching and cross-biting. These statements have considerably shattered Jordan's belief "in the genuineness of the whole performance" because both pamphlets were entered in the Stationers' Register on the same date and were apparently published at the same time. Therefore, concludes Jordan, Greene's references in the second pamphlet to the stir created by the first are "most likely pure fictions."<sup>1</sup>

Jordan was unaware that the entry of A Notable Discovery of Coosenage on the Stationers' Register represented the effort of an Elizabethan publisher to secure his rights in what was probably a third edition of the pamphlet. The second and third editions bear the date 1591, and the first edition was printed in 1591 or earlier. Of these three, at least two editions were unregistered. Registration itself was, as we have pointed out,<sup>2</sup> an argument for the pamphlet's popularity. A fourth edition followed in 1592. The fact that A Notable Discovery had appeared in two earlier unregistered editions explains Greene's referring to that pamphlet's reception in The Second Part of Conny-catching and justifies his claims for its popularity.

This earlier publication of unregistered editions also invalidates Jordan's evidence of Greene's duplicity. The rest is conjecture. Greene may have exaggerated the impact of his pamphlets upon the cony-catchers and the

1. J.C. Jordan, op. cit. pp. 86-7.

2. Cf. Chapter I. p. 3.



resulting danger to himself. It is quite probable that he did so. But we cannot prove that he misrepresented the facts. The bibliographical evidence shows that, even in his advertisement, Greene was speaking more truthfully than has been believed.

This supposition of deliberate falsehood has led Jordan to view the whole of Greene's utterances with profound scepticism. He has ultimately dismissed Greene as no more than a "self-advertising journalist," a conclusion that has been echoed by other scholars.<sup>1</sup> It has served as a facile explanation of Greene's complexity and inconsistencies, and a convenient label for Greene in the popular mind.

Like most generalizations, it is but a half truth. To refer to Greene as a "self-advertising journalist" is to apply to him an anachronistic epithet and concept of a much later day. If, by this term, Jordan means one who dashes off his work with little regard for his literary reputation, who repeats himself, borrows a bit here and there from the works of others, who is careless and inconsistent, then the term is rightly applied to Greene. If, on the other hand, Jordan means one whose agile mind grasps possibilities of literary treatment in subjects as yet fresh, untried; again the term is applicable to Greene. What is it, in that case, but the originality of the pioneer?

The sting of the phrase lies in "self-advertising." Greene unquestionably sought to call attention to his

1. As we have pointed out, E.A. Baker in The History of the English Novel accepts without question Jordan's verdict on Greene. Cf. Chapter II.

work by devices familiar to modern booksellers - by proclaiming its popularity, its scarcity, and the sensational results of its publication. These unworthy practises were occasioned by necessity. Greene's livelihood depended upon his popularity. As we have said, he was, perhaps, the first Englishman who made his living by his pen, to whom literature was a profession. We know, too, the wretched circumstances of that last year of Greene's life and the poverty in which he died. His "self-advertisement" needs no other excuse.

It is surely time for a reassessment of Greene's character. His work has been judged, on the one hand, in terms of the accounts of his two worst enemies - Gabriel Harvey, and, more dangerous, himself in a fit of that repentance which was the necessary outlet of a man who believed whole-heartedly in virtues he was too divided and too weak to practise. The prejudice created by these accounts has resulted in the almost complete discrediting of Greene. On the other hand, it is possible to err with Storojenko in taking Greene's statements too literally, forgetting that he was prone to self-deception. He was incapable of seeing the inconsistencies in his statements; in a single

work he could be equally sincere in an artistic detachment that savoured "more of sympathy than satire,"<sup>1</sup> and in the belief that he was promoting the welfare of the state. He could convince himself that his own best interests were those of the public. Between these opposing interpretations lies a valid estimate of Greene's aims and his achievements.

1. J. Churton Collins. op. cit. p. 31.



## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A.

The Entries of the Cony-catching Pamphlets on the  
Stationers' Register

From A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of  
Stationers of London 1554-1640. Volume II. Edited by  
 Edward Arber. London, 1875.

1591

p. 600. "13 Decembris. Edward White and Thomas Nelson.

Entred for their copie under the handes of mas-  
 ter HARTWELL and ( ) The arte of Connye  
katchinge vjd"

p. 600. "13 Decembris William wright. Entred for his  
 copie to be printed alwayes for him by John  
 wolf The second part of Connye katchinge under  
 th(e) (h)andes of master HARTWELL And / ( )  
 v  
vjd"

p. 603. "7 Februarii 1592. Thomas Scarlet Entred for  
 his Copye vnder Master HARTWELLES hande a booke  
 intituled the Thirde and laste parte of Connye  
Catchinge with the newe devysed knavyshe Arte  
of foole takinge. vjd"

p. 609. "21 April 1592 Thomas Gubbin John Busbye.

Entred for their copie vnder the handes of  
 master HARTWELL and master Watkins / a booke

intituled, The Defence of Conye Catchinge /  
or a confutacon of those ij Iniurious pamphletes  
published by R(OBERT) G(REENE) againste the  
pratisioners of many nymble wytted and misticall  
Sciences vjd"

p. 619. "21 August 1592 John Danter Entred for his  
 copie under th(e h)andes of master WATKINS  
 and master STIRROP / a booke intituled / The  
Repentance of a Conycatcher. / with the life  
and death of ( ) MOURTON and NED BROWNE,  
twoo notable conycatchers / The one latelie  
executed at Tyborne the other at Aix in  
 Ffraunce vjd S./"



## APPENDIX B

A List of Printers and Publishers of Editions of the  
Conny-catching Pamphlets Published in Greene's Lifetime

- 1 A. A Notable Discovery of Coosenage Title Page defective;  
imprint wanting.
- 1 B. A Notable Discovery of Coosenage, 1591. John Wolfe  
for T. N(elson).
- 1 C. A Notable Discovery of Coosnage, 1591. John Wolfe  
for T. N(elson).
- 2 A. The Second Part of Conny-catching, 1591. J. Wolfe  
for W. Wright.
- 1 D. A Notable Discovery of Coosenage, 1592. T. Scarlet  
for T. Nelson.
- 2 B. The Second and last part of Conny-catching, 1592.  
John Wolfe for  
William Wright.
- 3 A. The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching, 1592.  
Thomas Scarlet  
for Cutberd Burbie.
- 3 B. The Third and last part of Conny-catching, 1592.  
T. Scarlet for  
C. Burby.
4. A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a  
Shee Conny-catcher, 1592. A. I(effes) for T. G(ubbins).
5. The Defence of Conny catching, 1592. A. I(effes) for  
Thomas Gubbins and are to be sold by John Busbie.
6. The Blacke Bookes Messenger, 1592. John Danter for  
Thomas Nelson.

## Appendix C.

Modern Editions of the Cony-catching  
Pamphlets, 1847 to the Present.M. A. RICHARDSON.A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. Newcastle. 1847.J. O. HALLIWELL.A Notable Discovery of Coney-Catcher's Cozenage.  
(1591-2). London. 1859. (26 copies.)The Defence of Coney-Catching. (1592). London. 1859.A. B. GROSART.A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. Works. Vol. X.  
(Huth Edition). 1881-3. pp. 1-61.The Second part of Conny-catching. Vol. X. pp. 63-133.The Thirde and last part of Conny-catching. Vol. X.  
pp. 135-192.A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a  
Shee Conny-catcher. Vol. X. pp. 193-278.The Defence of Conny catching. Vol. XI. pp. 39-104.The Blacke Bookes Messenger. Vol. XI. pp. 1-37.G. B. HARRISON.A Notable Discovery of Coosnage. The Bodley Head  
Quartos. 1923. Vol. I.The Second and last part of Conny-catching. Vol. I.The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. Vol. III.A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a  
Shee Conny-catcher. Vol. III.The Defence of Conny catching. Vol. X.The Blacke Bookes Messenger. Vol. X.

A. V. JUDGES.

A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. The Elizabethan Underworld. 1930. pp.119-148.

The Second and last part of Conny-catching. pp.149-178.

The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. pp.179-205.

A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher. pp.206-247.

The Blacke Bookes Messenger. pp.248-264.



## APPENDIX D.

## Autobiographical Statements in the Pamphlets

1. Autobiographical Statement in A Notable Discouery of Coosnage. 1591.

"... So, Gentlemen, my yovnger yeeres had vncertaine thoughtes, but now my ripe daies calls on to repentant deedes, and I sorrow as much to see others wilful, as I delighted once to be wanton. The odde madcaps I haue beene mate too, not as a companion, but as a spie to haue an insight into their knaueries, that seeing their traines I might eschew their snares: those mad fellowes I learned at last to loath ... and what I saw in them to their confusion, I can forewarne in others to my countries commodity ... though I haue not practised their deceits, yet conuersing by fortune, and talking vppon purpose with such copes-mates, hath geuen mee light into their conceiptes, and I can decipher their qualities, though I vtterly mislike of their practises. To be briefe Gentlemen, I haue seen the world and rounded it, though not with trauell, yet with experience ... I haue smyled with the Italian, and worne the vipers head in my hand, and yet stopt his venome. I haue eaten Spanishe Mirabolanes, and yet am nothing the more metamorphosed. Fraunce, Germanie, Poland, Denmarke, I knowe them all, yet not affected to any in the fourme of my life; onelie I am English borne, and I haue English thoughts, not a deuill incarnate because I am Italianate, but hating the pride of Italie, because I know their peevishnes: yet in all these Countreyes where I haue travelled, I haue not seene more excesse of vanitie than wee Englishe men practise..." p.7. [Ed. by G.B. Harrison.]

"Yet Gentlemen am I sore threatened by the hacksters of that filthie facultie, that if I sette their practises in print, they will cut off that hande that writes the Pamphlet, but now I feare their brauadoes, you shall perceiue by my plaine painting out of them, yea, so little doe I esteeme such base minded braggardes, that were it not I hope of their amendment, I would in a schedule set downe the names of such coosening Cunny-catchers ..." p.14.

"Coming downe Turnmil street the other day, I met one whom I suspected a conycatcher, I drew him on to ye tauern, and after a cup of wine or two, I talkt with him of the maner of his life, & told him I was sorry for his frends sake, yt he tooke so bad a course ... Tut sir, quoth he, calling me by my name ... Though your experience in trauaile be great, yet in home matters mine be more ...<sup>1</sup>. wherupon, seeing this cony-catcher resolved in his forme of life, leauing him to his lewdness I went away ..." p.35seq.

"Pardon me Gentlemen for although no man could better then myself discouer this lawe and his tearmes, and the name of their Cheats, Barddice, Flats, Forgers, Langrets, Gourds, Demies, and many other, with their nature, & the crosses and contraries to them vpon aduantage, yet for some speciall reasons, herein I will be silent".p.38.seq.

II. Greene's references to himself in The Second part of Conny-catching. 1591.

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Note. 1. As A.V. Judges pointed out in The Elizabethan Underworld, n.6, p.500, Greene is here paraphrasing a speech from Gilbert Walker's A Manifest Detection of Dice-Play, 1552, which reads: "Though your experience in the world be not so great as mine, yet am I sure ye see that no man is able to live an honest man ..."

"Not long after this the cony chanced to come to my chamber to visit me for old acquaintance, where he found a book of Cony-catching new come out of the presse, which when he had smilde at, for the strangenesse of the title: at last he began to reade it, and there saw how simplie hee was made a conny, and stript of hys crownes: with that he fetcht a great sign, and sayd: sir, if I had seen this booke but two dayes since, it had saued me nine pound in my purse, and then hee rehearst the whole discourse, howe kindly hee was made a conny."

"... I know I shall haue many braues vttered against me for this inuective, but so I may profit my countrimen, I will hazard my selfe against their deepest villanies.." p.97. [Ed. by A.B. Grosart.]

III. Greene's references to himself in The Second and last part of Conny-catching. 1592.

"But Gentlemen these Conny-catchers ... swearing ... that they will ... cut off my right hand for penning downe their abominable practises: but alas for them poore snakes, words are wind, & looks but glances: euery thunderclap hath not a bolt, nor euery Conny-catchers oath an execution. I liue still, & I liue to display their villanies, which gentlemen you shal see set down in most ample maner in this small treatise, but heere by the way, giue me leaue to answere an obiection, that some inferred against me: which was, that I shewed no eloquent phrases, nor fine figuratiue conueiance in my first booke as I had done in other of my workes, to which I reply that *Τὸ Τρεῖον* a certaine decorum is to bee kept in



euerie thing, and not to applie a high stile in a base subiect beside the facultie is so odious, and the men so seruile and slauish minded, that I should dishonor that high misterie of eloquence, and derogate from the dignitie of our English toonge, eyther to employ any figure or bestow one choyce English word vpon such disdained rakehels as those Conny-catchers. Therefore humbly I craue pardon, and desire I may write basely of such base wretches..." p.6. seq.

"...God wot, I haue many a coosening curse at these Conny-catchers hands, but I solemnly sticke to the old prouerbe: the Foxe, the more he is curst, the better hee fares..."p.24.

"So these Conny catchers, for that I smoakt them in my last booke, and laid open their plots & policies ... Tush, it was so easie for the Setter to take vp a Cony before I discouered their cosenage, that one stigmaticall shameles companion amongst the rest ... swears by all the shooes in his shop, I shall be tne next man he means to kil, for spoyling of his occupation: but I laugh at his brauados..." p.25.

"Wel Gentlemen, thus I haue bewraied much and got litle thankes, I mean of the dishonest sort, but I hope such as measure vertue by her honors, will iudge of me as I deserue. Marry the goodman Cony-catchers, those base excrements of dishonesty, report they haue got one ( ) I will not bewray his name, but a scholler they say he is, to make an inuectiue against me, in that he is a fauourer of those base reprobats: but let them, him, and al know, the proudest pesant of them all, dare

not lift his plumes in disparagement of my credit..."

IV. Greene's references to himself in A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher 1592.

Nan: "...tis by wit that I liue and will liue, in dispight of that peeuish scholler, that thought with his conny-catching bookes to have crosbyt our t~~rade~~ade." p.9. seq.

Laurence. "...I need not discribe the lawes of villanie, because R.G. hath so amply pend them downe in the first part of Conny-catching, that though I be one of the facultie, yet I cannot discouer more than hee hath layde open." "...though the bookes of Conny-catching hath somewhat hindred vs, and brought many rare foystes to the haulter..." p.12.seq.

Nan: "... I fear me R.G. will name them too soone in his blacke booke, a pestilence on him, they say hee hath there set downe my husbandes pettigree and yours too Lawrence, if he do it, I feare your brother in law Bull, is like to be troubled with you botn.

Laurence: "I know not what to say to him, Nan, hath plagued mee already, I hope hee hath done with mee, and yet I heard say, hee would haue about at my Nine hoales, but leauing him as an enemy of our trade, againe to our disputation..."

Nan: "I thought thou hadst spoken of R.B. of Long Lane and his wife ... for I heare say, R.G. hath sworne in despight of the brasill staffe, to tell such a fowle Tale of him in his blacke Booke, that it will cost nim

a daungerous Ioynt.

Laurence: "Nan, Nan let R.G. beware" p.30.seq.

"...although mistresse Nan this good Oratresse, hath sworne to weare a long Hamborough knife to stabbe mee, and all the crue haue protested my death, and to prooue they ment good earnest, they belegard me about in the Saint Iohns head within Ludgate beeing at supper, there were some fourteene or fifteene of them met, and thought to haue made that the fatall night of my ouerthrowe, but that the courteous Cittizens and Apprentises tooke my part, and so two or three of them were carryed to the Counter, although a Gentleman in my company was sore hurt. I cannot deny that they beginne to waste away about London, and Tyborne (since the setting out of my booke) hath eaten vp many of them, and I will plague them to the extremitie, let them doe what they dare with their bilbowe blades, I feare them not: and to giue them their last adue, looke shortly Countrimen for a Phamphet against them, called The blacke Booke... and although some say, Idare not doe it, yet I will shortly set it aproach, and whosoeuer I name or touch, if hee thinkes himselfe greeued, I will answere him before the Honourable priuie Counsayle." p.40.seq. [Ed. by G.B. Harrison.]

V. Greene's References to Himself in The Defence of Connycatching 1592.

"As soone as I was at liberty, I got one of these bookes, & began to tosse it ouer very deuoutly, wherein I found one art so perfectly anotomized, as if he had bene



practitioner in our facultie forty winters before:  
 then with a deepe sign I began to curse this R.G.  
 that had made a publike spoyle of so noble a science,  
 and to exclaime against that palpable asse whosoeuer,  
 that would make any pen-man priuy to our secret  
 sciences." p.7.seq.

"...I began to enquire what this R.G. should bee.  
 At last I learned that hee was a scholler, and a  
 Maister of Artes, and a Conny-catcher in his kinde,  
 though not at cards, and one that fauoured good fell-  
 owes, so that they were not palpable offenders in  
 such desperate lawes: wherevpon reading his bookes,  
 and surveying euery line with deepe judgement, I be-  
 gan to note folly in the man, that would straine a  
 Gnat, and lette passe an Elephant ... I meane to haue  
 about with this R.G. and to giue him such a veny, that  
 he shalbe afrayd heereafter to disparage that mysticall  
 science of Conny-catching: if not, and that I proue too  
 weake for him in sophistrie, I meane to borrowe Will  
Bickertons blade, of as good a temper as Morglay King  
Arthures sword was, and so challenge him to the single  
 combat..." p.9.seq.

"I cannot but wonder maister R.G. what Poeticall  
 fury made you so fantasticke, to wryte against Conny-  
 catchers? Was your braine so barraine that you had no  
 other subiect? or your wittes so dried with dreaming  
 of loue Pamphlettes, that you had no other humour  
 left, but satirically with Diogenes, to snarle at all  
 mens manners? You neuer founde in Tully nor Aristotle,  
 what a setter or a verser was.

It had been the part of a Scholler, to haue written seriously of some graue subiect, either Philosophically to haue shewen how you were proficient in Cambridge, or diuinely to haue manifested your religion to the world. Such triuiall trinkets and threadbare trash, had better seemed T.D. whose braines beaten to the yarking vp of Ballades, might more lawfully haue glaunst at the quaint conceites of conny-catching and crosse-biting.

But to this my obiection, mee thinkes I heare your maship learnedly reply, Nascimur pro patria: Euery man is not borne for himselfe, but for his country: and that the ende of all studious indeuours ought to tende to the aduancing of vertue, of suppressing of vice in the common-wealth. So that you haue herein done the part of a good subiect, and a good scholler, to anotomize such secret villanies as are practised by cosoning companions, to the ouerthrow of the simple people, for by the discouery of such pernicious lawes, you seeke to roote out of the common-wealth, such ill and licentious liuing persons, as do Ex alieno succo viuere, liue of the sweat of other mens browes, and vnder subtil shiftes of witte abused, seeke to ruine the flourishing estate of Englande. These you call vipers, moathes of the common-wealth, caterpillers worse than God rayned downe on Egypt, rotten flesh which must be diuided from the whole.

"Ense resecandum est ne pars sincera trahatur."

"This maister R.G. I know will be your answere, as it is the pretended cause of your iniurious Pamphlets... wny should you bee so spitefull maister R.G. to poore Conny-catchers aboue all the rest...? p.11. seq.

"But now Sir by your leaue a little, what if I should proue you a Conny-catcher Maister R.G. would it not make you blush at the matter? Ile go as neare to it as the Fryer did to his Hostesse mayde, when the Clarke of the parish tooke him at Leuatem at midnight. Aske the Queens Flayers, if you sold them not Orlando Furioso for twenty Nobles, and when they were in the country, sold the same Play to the Lord Admirals men for as much more. Was this not plaine Conny-catching Maister R.G.?

"But I heare when this was obiected, that you made this excuse: that there was no more faith to be held with Plaiers, than with them that valued faith at the price of a feather: for as they were Comoedians to act, so the actions of their liues were Cameleon like, that they were vncertain, variable, time pleasures, men that measured honestie by profite, and that regarded their Authors not by desart, but by necessitie of time. If this may serue you for a shadow, let mee vse it for an excuse of our Card Conny-catching..." p.37. [Edited by G.B. Harrison.]

Vl. Greene's references to himself in the "Address" to The Blacke Bookes Messenger. 1592.

"Gentlemen, I knowe that you haue long expected the comming foorth of my Blacke Booke, which I long haue promised, and which I had many daies since finished,



had not sickness hindered my intent: Neuerthelesse,  
be assured it is the first thing I meane to publish  
after I am recouered. This Messenger to my Blacke  
Booke I commit to your curteous censures, being  
written before I fell sick, which I thoght good in  
the meane time to send you as a Fayring..."p.1.

[Edited by G.B. Harrison.]

## APPENDIX E.

## Contemporary Allusions to Greene's

## Cony-catching Pamphlets.

Some allusions by his contemporaries to Greene's cony-catching pamphlets are listed below. Unfortunately most of these references occur in the Greene-Harvey-Nashe controversy and do little more than identify Greene's name with cony-catching.

1. Gabriel Harvey: Fovre Letters, and certaine Sonnets. 1592. Ed. G.B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos.

From "A due Commendation of the Quipping Autor."  
... Greene the Connycatcher, of this Dreame  
the Autor,  
For his dainty deuise, deserueth the  
hauter. p. 11.

... Yet to some conceited witt, that could take delight to discover knaueries, or were a fitte person to augment the history of Conny-catchers: O Lord, what a pregnant occasion were here presented, to display leaud vanity in his liuely coullours, & to decipher the very misteries of that base Arte? Petty Cooseners are not worth the naming: he they say, was the Monarch of Crosbiters, and the very Emperour of shifters... who in London hath not heard of his dissolute, and licentious liuing: ... his fine coosening of Iuglers, and finer iugling with cooseners: hys villainous cogging, and foisting ... pp. 18 -19.

Let the paltry fellowe go: Lorde, what a  
 lewde Companion was hee? What an egregious  
 makeshift. Where should Conny-catchers haue  
 gotten such a Secretarie: How shal cosenage  
 do for a new Register... p. 39.

From "John Harveys Welcome to Robert Greene"  
 ... Thy Conny-catching Pageants are past:  
 Some other must those arrant Stories tell.  
 p. 98.

2. From Pierces Supererogation or a New Prayse  
of the Old Asse. 1593. The Works of Gabriel Harvey, D.C.L.  
 Volume II. Ed. A.B. Grosart (The Huth Edition). 1884.

There is a fatall Period of whatsoeuer wee  
 terme flourishinge... The Ciceronian may  
 sleepe, til the Scogginist hath plaid his  
 part: One sure Conny-catcher, woorth  
 twenty Philosophers... all harsh, or obscure,  
 that tickleth not idle phantasies with wanton  
 dalliance, or ruffianly iestes. p. 53.

He [Thomas Nashe] was neuer a non proficient  
 in good matters; and hath not studied his  
 fellowes Arte of Cunnycatching for nothinge.  
 p. 87.

... Tarletons trickes, Eldertons Ballats,  
 Greenes Pamflets, Euphuus Similes, double  
 V's phrases, are too well knowen, to go  
 vnknown. p. 216.

I was not wont to endight in this stile:  
 but for terming his fellow Greene, as he  
 was notoriously knowen, the Scriuener of  
 Crosbiters; the founder of vgly othes,  
 the greene master of the blacke art; the  
 mocker of the simple world, et caetera ...  
 p. 229.



... one such... enemy, was incomparably more pernicious, then... a thousand Greenes, or Cunny-catchers... p. 303.

3. Thomas Nashe: The foure Letters Confuted. The Works of Thomas Nashe. 1592. Ed. R.B. McKerrow. Volume I. 1910.

Greene for dispraising his practise in that kinde, is the Greene Maister of the blacke Art, the Founder of vglie oathes, the father of misbegotten Infortunatus, the Scriuener of Crossebiters, the Patriark of Shifters, &c.

The Monarch of Crossebiters, the wretched fellowe Prince of Beggars, Emperour of Shifters, hee had cald him before, but like a drunken man, that remembers not in the morning what he speakes ouernight, still he fetcheth Metaphors from Conny-catchers, & doth nothing but torment vs with tautologies. p. 299.

From Haue with you to Saffron-walden. 1596.

Volume III.

... he girds me with imitating of Greene... Did I euer write of Cony-catching? stufft my stile with hearbs & stones? or apprentised my selfe to running of the letter? If not, how then doo I imitate him? p. 132.

4. Henrie Chettle: Kind-Harts Dreame. 1592. Ed.

G.B. Harrison. The Bodley Head Quartos.

... Onely for my last labours affirming, my intent was to reprove vice, and lay open such villanies, as had beene very necessary

to be made knowne, whereof my Blacke Booke,  
if euer it see light, can sufficiently  
witnessse. pp. 35-6.

5. B.R. (Barnabe Rich ?) Greenes Newes both  
from Heaven and Hell. 1593. Reprinted with notes  
by R.B. McKerrow. Stratford-upon-Avon. The Shakespeare  
Head. 1922.

O (quoth S. Peter) I have heard of you, you  
haue beene a busie fellowe with youre penne,  
it was you that writ the Bookes of cony-  
catching, but sirra, could you finde out the  
base abuses of a company of petty varlets that  
lived by pilfering cosonages, and could you  
not as well haue descryed the subtill and  
fraudulent practises of great conny-catchers,  
such as rides upon footeclotthes, and sometimes  
in coatches, and walkes the streets in long  
gownes and velvet coates? p. 17.

... in hell... there were gathered together an  
infinite number of Cony-catchers... who seeing  
me to stand by, they beganne to growe into con-  
fused exclamations against mee, some saide, let  
vs teare the villaine in peeces, that hath  
written so many bookes against vs: other sayde,  
let vs fley of his skinne, and cut the flesh  
from his bones in small gobbets, that hath so  
manifested the secrets of our trade and pro-  
fession, to the world: some other sayde, let  
vs cut the tongue out of his head, and put out  
both his eyes, that hath beene an enemy to the  
arte of Cony-catching and hath so shamefully  
inueyed against the practises; Then came there  
foorth an infinite number of womes Cony-catchers,  
and they sware they would geld me, for marring  
theyr Market, and hindering them of theyr  
taking... But Lucifer commaunded mee presently

to be thrust foorth of hell... for my too  
much plainnesse... p.60.

6. S.R. (Samuel Rowlands ?) Greenes Ghost

Havnting Cony-catchers. 1602. Ed. J.O. Halliwell.

London. J.E. Adlard. 1860.

The bookes that were not long agoe set forth concerning Conycatching and crosse-biting, and the discouery of each (if any sparke of grace were) might haue beene so many restraints and bridles to call them [conicatchers] from that abhominable life, but they that are giuen ower to their owne hearts lust, with all their might inueigh both against them and their Author.

Epistle to the reader. p. 2.

There haue beene of late dayes published two merry and pithy Pamphlets of the Art of Conicatching: wherein the Author hath sufficiently expressed his experience, as also his loue to his Countrey. p. 7.



## APPENDIX F.

THE DESCRIPTIONS OF ROBERT GREENE ON DATED TITLE  
PAGES OF HIS WORKS PUBLISHED IN HIS LIFE-TIME.

Mamillia. A Mirrour or looking-glasse for the Ladies of  
Englande. By Robert Greene Graduate in Cambridge. 1583.

The Myrrour of Modestie. By R.G. Maister of Artes. 1584.

Arbasto, The Anatomie of Fortune. By Robert Greene Mayster  
of Arte. 1584.

Morando The Tritameron of Love. By Robert Greene, Maister of  
Artes in Cambridge. 1584.

Planetomachia. By Robert Greene, Master of Arts and Student  
in Phisicke. 1585.

The Second Part of the Tritameron of Love. By Robert Greene,  
Maister of Artes in Cambridge. 1587.

Greenes Carde of Fancie. 1587. (The first edition, 1584, was  
published as Gwydonius. The Carde of Fancie without an  
author's name.)

Penelopes Web. By Robert Greene Maister of Artes in Cambridge.  
1587.

Euphues his censure to Philautus. Robertus Greene. In artibus  
magister. 1587.

Pandosto. The Triumph of Time. By Robert Greene Maister of  
Artes in Cambridge. 1588.

The Spanish Masquerado. By Robert Greene, in Artibus Magister.  
1589.

Ciceronis Amor. Tullies Love. Robert Greene, in Artibus  
magister. 1589.

Menaphon Camillas alarum to slumbering Euphues. Robertus  
Greene in Artibus magister. 1589.

The Royal Exchange. Rob. Greene, in Artibus Magister. 1590.

Greenes Never too Late. Or, A Powder of Experience. Rob.  
Greene in artibus Magister. 1590.

Francescos Fortunes: Or, The Second part of Greenes Never too  
late. Robertus Greene in Artibus Magister. 1590.

Greenes Mourning Garment. R. Greene Utriusque Acadamiæ,  
in Artibus Magister. 1590.

Greenes farewell to Folly. Robert Greene. Utriusque Acadamiæ,  
in Artibus Magister. 1591.

A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. By. R. Greene, Maister of  
Arts. [Title page defective, imprint wanting.]

A Notable Discouery of Coosenage. By R. Greene, Maister of  
Arts. 1591.

A Notable Discouery of Coosnage. By R. Greene, Maister of  
Arts. 1591.

The Second part of Conny-catching. R.G. 1591.

A Maidens Dreame Upon the Death of the right Honorable Sir  
Christopner Hatton Knight, late Lord Chancelor of England.  
By Robert Greene Master of Arts. 1591.

A Notable Discouery of Coosenage. By R. Greene, Maister  
of Arts. 1592.

The Second and last part of Conny-catching. R.G. 1592.

The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. By R.G. 1592.

The Third and last part of Conny-catching. By. R.G. 1592.

A Dispvttation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee  
Conny-catcher, R.G. 1592.

Philomela. The Lady Fitzwaters Nightingale. By Robert Greene.  
Utriusque Academiæ in Artibus Magister. 1592.

The Blacke Bookes Messenger. by R.G. 1592.

The Repentance of Robert Greene Maister of Artes. 1592.

## Appendix F.

A List of the Latin Phrases and Quotations  
in Greene's Conny-catching Pamphlets.

Greene's Latin quotations are not always grammatically correct, nor are they always classical. Some of them seem to be legal Latin or Elizabethan sententiae which he may have translated into Latin himself.

- "A Morbus Anglicus." A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher.p.37.
- "Aqua vitae." The Second and last part of Conny-catching. p.25.
- "As in praesenti." The Defence of Conny catching.p.41.
- "Beneuolentiam captare." The Second Part. p.25.
- "Cum multis aliis quae nunc praescribere longum est." A Notable Discovery of Coosenage.p.39.Cf. Eton Latin Grammar. (Genders of nouns).
- "Carmen Heroicum." The Defence.p.41.
- "Consueto peccandi tallebat sensum peccati." A Disputation. p.73. Cf. Vergil. Aeneid.I.204.
- "Diebus illis." A Disputation.p.6.
- "In Esse...in Posse." The Defence.p.6.
- "Ex alieno succo viuere." The Defence.p.12. Cf.Ovid. De Arte Amandi.I.99.
- "Fallere fallentem non est fraus." A Notable Discovery, p.51.
- "Forma bonum fragile est quantumque accedit ad Annos, Fit minor et spacio Carpitur ipsa suo." A Disputation. p.47.
- "Immedicabile vulnus, Ense resecandum est ne pars sincera trahatur." The Second Part.p.9; The Defence.p.12.Cf.Ovid. Meta.I.191.
- "Lento gradu." The Second Part.p.26.



- "Magister in Artibus." The Second Part.p.10.
- "Mallem non esse quam non Prodesse patria." The Second Part.p.7.
- "Miserere mei." The Second Part.p.28.
- "Multa latent quae non patent." A Notable Discovery.p.40.
- "Nascimur pro patria." Title page motto: A Notable Discovery of Coosenage, A Disputation, The Blacke Bookes Messenger.
- "Omnia sub sole vanitas." A Notable Discovery.p.8.
- "Patres patriae." A Notable Discovery.p.11.
- "Per varios casus & tot discrimina rerum." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.23.
- "Pleonasmos, Hisce oculia." The Defence.p.57.
- "Quatuor his casibus sine dubio cadet adulter,  
Aut hic pauper erit, aut hic subito morietur,  
Aut cadet in causum qua debet iudice vinci,  
Aut aliquod membrum casu vell crimine perdet."  
A Disputation. p.6.
- "Qui bene latuit bene vixit, dominatur enim fraus  
in omnibus." Title page motto.The Defence.
- "Quis nisi mentis inops oblatum respuit aurum."  
A Notable Discovery.p.21.
- "Quo semel est imbuta recens seruibit odorentesta  
diu." A Disputation.p.53.Cf.Horace.Epodes.I.2.70.
- "Senex fornicator." The Blacke Bookes Messenger." p.8.
- "Si nihil attuleris ibis homere foras." A Disputation.  
p.72.
- "Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur vt ipse."  
A Disputation. p.45.
- "Summum ius." A Notable Discovery.p.37.
- "Vnguentum Aureum." A Disputation. p.27.
- "Venus in vinis, ignis in igne fuit." A Notable Discovery. p.48.

Note: Latin words or phrases which were wholly or partly Anglicized e.g., "mittimus, si quis" and others, have been omitted.

## Appendix H.

A List of the Classical Allusions in Greene's  
Conny-catching Pamphlets.

Greene's classical allusions are too general and obvious in nature to furnish any clues to his reading. However, they throw some interesting light upon his attitude to the classics and upon the Elizabethan conception of classical deities as in the following quotation:

And therefore Diana is painted with  
a Tortuse vnder her feete, meaning,  
that a Maid shoulde not be a stragler.  
A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-  
catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher.p.48.

Greene's allusions occasionally provide information about the history of a concept as in this example from Renaissance Mythology:

...set with the Epicures gaine, and  
ease, their summum bonum.  
The Second and last part of  
Conny-catching. p.9.

"It were to bee wished that Amasis Law were reuiued,  
who ordayned that euery man at the yeares ende shoulde  
giue account to the Magistrate how he liued, and he  
that did not so, or could not make an account of an  
honest life, to be put to death as a Fellon without  
favour or pardon." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.25.

"If a man had Argus eyes, he could scant prie into  
the bottom of their practises." A Notable Discovery of  
Coosenage. pp.36-7.

"None could decipher Tyranisme better than Aristippus,  
not that his nature was cruell, but that he was  
nourtured with Dionisius." A Notable Discovery of  
Coosenage.p.8.

"He would with Batillus hang himselfe at my inuectiue."  
The Second and last part of Conny-catching. p.25.  
(Bathyllus? I cannot find the source of this  
allusion.)

"Whom he so dearly affected, as euer Damon did his  
Pythias, Pilades his Orestes, or Tytus his Gisippus."  
A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a  
Shee Conny-catcher. p.60.

"Diogenes...from a counterfait Coiner of money became  
a currant corrector of manners." A Notable Discovery  
of Coosenage.p.7.

"As greeuous is it for them to let slip a country  
farmer...as it was for the boies of Athens, to let  
Diogenes passe by without a hisse." The Second Part.  
pp.23-4.

"Satirically with Diogenes, to snarle at all mens  
manners." The Defence of Conny catching. p.11.

"Cornelia was not famozed for ornaments of golde,  
but for excellent vertues." A Disputation. p.41.

"The Crocodile hath not more teares, Proteus more  
shape, Ianus more faces, the Hieria, more sundry tunes  
to entrap the passengers." A Disputation. p.5.

"She looked as Medea did when she attempted reuenge  
against Iason." The Defence of Conny catching.p.21.



"For beastly communication Messalyna of Rome might haue bin [my] wayting mayde." A Disputation.p.73.

"Poore Ouid that amorously writ in his youth the art of loue, complained in his exile amongst the Getes of his wanton follies." A Notable Discovery of Coosenage.p.7.

"Whereof spake Ouid well in his Metamorphosis,  
Immedicabile vulnus,  
Ense resecandum est ne pars sincera trahatur."  
The Second Part. p.9.

"I obserued Ouids rule right: Spectatum veniunt,  
veniunt spectentur vt ipse (sic).

"As Plato (my good friendes)trauelled from Athens to Aegypt, and from thence through sundry clymes to increase his knowledge." The Defence of Conny catching.p.5.

"A fearefull beard as though he were one of Polyphemus cut." A Notable Discovery of Coosenage.p.42.

"When Sceuola...saw his native citie besieged by Porsenna, and that Rome the mistresse of the world was readie to be maistred by a professed foe to the publicke estate: hee entred boldly into the enemies camp, and in the Tent of the king (taking him for the king) slew the kings Secretarie, whereupon condemned, brought to the fire, he thrust his right hand into the flame burning it off voluntarie, because it was so infortunat to misse the fatal stab he had intended to his countries enimies, and then with an honourable resolution breathd out this. Mallet non esse quam non prodesse patria. The Second Part. p.5.

"The Syrens, who sitting with their watching eies vppon the rockes, to allure Sea-passengers to their extreame preiudice, sound out most heauenly melodie in such pleasing cords, that who so listens to their harmony, lends his eare vnto his own bane & ruine: but if any wary Ullisses passe by and stop his eares against their enchantments, then haue they most delightfull iewels to shew him, as glorious objects, to inueigle his eie with such pleasant vanities, that comming more nigh to beholde them, they may dash their ship against a rocke and so vtterly perish." The Second Part.pp.24-5.

"Cyrces had neuer more charms, Calipso more enchantments, the Syrens more subtil tunes." A Disputation.p.10.

"Entised with the Syrens, or enchanted by Cyrces." A Disputation. pp.48-9.

"They be the Syrens that draw men on to destruction." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.31.

"And Socrates age was vertuous thogh his prime was licentious." A Notable Discovery of Coosenage.p.7.

"When the Cittie of Thebes was beseiged by them of Lacedemonia, being girt within strong fenced walles, and hauing men enough, and able to rebat the enemie, they found no inconuenience of force to breed their ensuing bane, but famine, in that when victuals waxed scant, hunger would either make them yeeld by a fainting composition or a miserable death. Whereuppon to wearie the foe with wintering at the sledge, the Thebanes deuised this pollicie, they found out the Method of Cards and Dice, and so busied their

braines with the pleasantnesse of that new invention, passing away the time with strange recreations and pastimes, beguyling hunger with the delight of the new sports, and eating but euery thirde day, and playing two, so their frugal sparing of victuals kept them from famine, the Cittie from sacking, and raysed the foe from a mortall sledge."

A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. pp.9-10.

"But if any wary Ullisses passe by and stop his eares." The Second Part.p.24.

"If she hath not eyther with Vlisses tasted of Moly, or stopt her eares warily." A Disputation. p.48.

"The sight of sundry countries made Vlisses so famous." The Defence of Conny catching.p.35.

"As pleasing...as the curious phisnomy of Venus was to the amorous God of warre." The Second Part.p.37.

"The Vestall Virgins were not revered of the Senators for their curious clothing, but for their chastitie. " A Disputation.p.47.



## Appendix I.

List of the Proverbs and Unusual Phrases  
Occuring in Greene's Cony-catching Pamphlets.

## Proverbs.

"To draw...as the adamant doth the Iron." The Second Part of Conny-catching. p.46. Not in O.D.P. (A name of the hardest metal; identified with the loadstone or magnet.) Obs.O.E.D. lists examples from c.1400.

"The Ape, that euer killeth that young one which he loueth most, with embracing it to feruently." A Disputation Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher.p.43. Not in O.D.P.

"As if in a frostie morning hee had droonke a draught of small beere next his heart." The Second Part.p.39.  
 "Neuer went a cup of small beare so sorrowfully down an ale-knight's belly in a frosty morning." The Defence of Conny catching. p.8. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D. in a similar usage.

"Had my parentes...bent the tree while it was a wand." A Disputation. p.53. "Had they bent tne wand while it had been greene." A Disputation.p.43. O.E.D. lists examples from 1509.

"What is not bent in the Cradle, will hardly be bowed in the Sadle." A Disputation.p.44. (Greene seems to be combining two proverbs here.Cf.O.D.P. "Fair in the cradle and foul in the saddle," or vice versa.1614. Greene's usage is earlier.)

"Burnt children dread the fire." The Second Part.  
p.10. Q.E.D. lists examples from c.1300.

"Chaunge of pasture makes fat Calues." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.12. Also The Defence of Conny catching.p.45-6. O.D.P. lists examples from 1546.

"The beetle, refusing to light on the sweetest flowers all day, nestled at night in a cowsherd." A Disputation. p.51. "The beetle that makes scorn all day of the daintiest flowers, and at night takes up his lodging in a cowsherd." The Defence. p.48. Not in O.D.P.

"Many things fall out between the cup and the lip." A Disputation. pp.18-19. O.D.P. lists English examples from 1539.

"One death dischargeth all." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.14. This is an earlier use of the proverb than that of 1597 recorded by the O.D.E.P.

"Eagles always resort where the carrion is." A Disputation.p.55. O.D.P. lists examples from 1573.

"'Tis as hard to find a hare without a meuse as a woman without a 'scuse." A Disputation.p.22. Listed as earliest usage by O.D.P.

"Fire and flax put together will kindle." A Disputation. p.48.O.D.P. lists examples from 1386.

"The fly dallies with a flame but at length she burneth." A Disputation. p.48. O.D.P. lists examples from 1591.

"You know not what hands Fortune may light in your lap." A Disputation. p.19. Not in O.D.E.P.

"The fox, the more he is cursed, the better he fares." The Second Part. p.24. Also in The Defence. p.25.O.D.P. lists examples from 1548.

"The old fox that knew the ox by the horn was subtle enough to spy a pad in the straw." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.9. Cf.O.D.P. "Old foxes want no tutors."

"He that fears the gallows shall never be a good thief while he lives." A Disputation.p.12. Listed as earliest usage in O.D.P. and O.E.D.

"An untoward girl makes a good woman." A Disputation. p.43. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"Hasty journeys breed dangerous sweats." A Disputation. p.31. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D. in this usage.

"The hawk that is most perfect for the flight and will , seldom proveth haggard." A Disputation.p.43. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"Had my parents...taught the hound while he was a puppy." A Disputation.p.53. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"Old jades whinny when they cannot wag the tail." The Defence.p.20. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"Easy lists cannot make heavy burdens." A Disputation. p.9. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"She was afraid to match in haste lest she might repent at leisure." The Defence.p.48. O.D.P. lists English examples from 1566.



"I guessed by his noase what porredge he loued." A Disputation. p.75. O.D.P. lists examples from 1564.

"He that medles with pitch, cannot but be defiled." A Disputation. pp.5-6. O.D.P. lists English examples from 1300.

"Yet at last, so long the pitcher goeth to the brook that it cometh broken home." The Second Part. p.32.

"So often the Pitcher goes to the brooke that it comes broken home." A Disputation. p.29. "So long the pot goes to the water that it comes broken home." A Disputation. p.48. "So long goes the pitcher to the water that at length it comes broken home." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.28. O.D.P. lists examples from 1340.

"Young Saints, old deuils." A Disputation. p.44. "A yoong Saint will proove an old deucl." A Disputation. p.74. O.D.P. lists examples from 1470.

"As smoake will hardly be concealed, so loue will not long be smothred." A Disputation. p.51. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"Soft fire makes sweet mault." The Defence. p.27. O.D.P. lists examples from 1530.

"In sparing the rod, they hated the child." A Disputation. p.43. O.D.P. lists examples from 1000.

"Three properties that a good Surgeon should haue, and that is an Eagles eie, a Ladies hand, and a Lions heart." The Second Part. p.34. Not in O.E.D.. O.D.P. lists examples from 1589.

"As the Tygre though for awhile shee hide her clawes, yet at last shee will reueale her crueltie." A Disputation. p.56. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"As tyde nor tyme tarrieth no man." A Disputation. p.45. O.D.P. lists examples from 1386.

"Wedding and hanging comes by destenie." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.11. O.D.P. lists examples from 1546.

"A quarterne winde cannot make a quicke saile." A Disputation. p.9. Not in O.D.P. Listed as earliest usage by O.E.D.

"Who loues wyne so ill, that hee will not eate grapes if they fall into his mouth." A Disputation. p.14.

#### Unusual Phrases.

"As bare of mony as an ape of a taile." A Notable Discovery of Coosenage. p.20. Not in O.D.P.

"To giue her the bagge." The Defence. p.47. This usage is earlier than Greene's use of it in A Quip for an Upstart Courtier, 1592, which is listed in O.D.P.

"To hit home by hazard as blinde men shoote the Crow." The Defence. p.31. O.D.P. lists examples from 1546.

"Following a man like a blood-hound." A Disputation. p.5. Not in O.D.P. O.E.D. lists examples from 1350, but not this exact wording until 1624.

"Drawne on to the bent of their bows." A Disputation. p.5. O.E.D. lists examples from 1631, but not this exact usage.

"You are two bowes downe the wind." A Disputation. p.11. Not in O.D.P. Greene's usage is listed in the O.E.D. but this instance is earlier than that of the Quip listed first.

"Halfe in a browne studie." A Notable Discovery. p.18. O.D.P. lists examples from 1300.

"To yeeld the bucklers." The Second Part. p.12.

"Giuing you the bucklers at this weapon, let me haue a blow with you at another." A Disputation. p.27. "I thincke I shall bee faine to giue you the bucklars." A Disputation. p.35. O.D.P. lists the first of these quotations as the earliest usage. O.E.D. lists examples from 1500.

"As if butter would not melt in their mouthes." A Notable Discovery. p.18. O.E.D. lists examples from 1530.

"No butter wil cleaue on my bread." A Notable Discovery. p.24. Not in O.E.D. or O.D.P.

"He must as the Cat watch for a Mouse." A Disputation. p.12. O.D.P. lists examples from 1579.

"These cony-catchers turne the cat in the pan." A Notable Discovery. p.34. O.E.D. lists examples from 1532.

"The chalke must walke." (= the score must be increased) The Defence. p.29. Not in O.D.P. This is an earlier usage than 1597, that listed by the O.E.D.



"The boyes shall chalke him on the backe for a Crosbite." A Disputation. p.28. This usage is listed as the earliest by the O.E.D.

"They strip like the prodigall childe." A Disputation. p.5. "Beateth him out lyke the Prodigall childe." A Disputation. p.36. "They beate him out of the doores with the prodigall childe." A Disputation. p.72. "Turne them out of doores like prodigall children." A Disputation. p.28. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D. in this usage.

"We made a choppe and change and swapt up a... bargaine." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. pp.12-13. "Steals the horse...and chops and changes nim away." The Second Part. p.13. O.E.D. lists examples from 1557.

"Yet haue they clokes for the raine, and shadowes for their vilanies." (= an expedient in every difficulty O.D.P.) A Notable Discovery. p.34. O.D.P. lists examples from 1520.

"By cocke and pie." The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. p.35. Not in O.D.P. O.E.D. lists examples from 1550.

"My mother and father...cockered me vp." A Disputation. p.43. "Cockering their children vnder their winges." A Disputation. p.53. (Cf. "He that cockereth his child, provides for his enemy." O.D.P. The earliest usage given is 1640.) O.E.D. lists examples from 1499.

"The Crocodile hath not more teares." A Disputation.  
p.5. "Crocodiles when you weepe." A Disputation. p.40.  
"They be Crocodiles, that when they weepe, destroy."  
The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.31. O.D.P. lists  
English examples from 1579.

"Haue a curious eye to the person." (= note him well).  
A Disputation. p.12. Not in O.D.P. O.E.D. lists  
examples from 1386.

"He leapt at a daysie." (= was hanged.) The Blacke  
Bookes Messenger. p.2. Not in O.E.D. O.D.P. lists  
examples from 1553.

"To dogge the partie." (= follow someone) A Dis-  
putation.p.12. Not in O.D.P. O.E.D. lists examples  
from 1519.

"With the dogge fell to my olde vomit." The Blacke  
Bookes Messenger.p.30. O.E.D. lists examples from  
1388.

"Being in my dumps." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.  
pp.17,18. Not in O.D.P. O.E.D. lists examples from  
1529.

"They can get...what wee fish for with danger." A  
Disputation.p.27. Not in O.D.P. O.E.D. lists  
examples from 1563 of similar usage.

"Went home with fleas in their eares." The Defence.  
p.33. O.E.D. lists examples from 1430.

"Tis a foule byrd that defiles the owne neast." A  
Disputation.p.30. O.D.P. lists examples from 1025.

"The Ass will kicke...if I rubbe him on the gaule."

A Disputation. p.28. O.E.D. lists examples from 1386.

"Blusht as if she had been full of grace." A Disputation.

p.33. Not in O.D.P. O.E.D. lists examples from 1325.

"One selfe same ground brings foorth flowers and  
tnistles." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.5. Not in  
O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"Strikes a cold humor vnto his heart." A Notable  
Discovery.p.30. "This went colde to the olde mans  
heart." The Defence. p.52. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"To strike when the yron was hotte." A Disputation.  
p.51. O.D.P. lists examples from 1374.

"A bill in the name of Iohn a Nokes or Iohn a Stiles."  
The Second Part.p.47. O.D.P. lists examples from 1581.

"It will cast him a dangerous Ioynt." A Disputation.  
p.3. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"Who cry with the Lapwing farthest from their nest."  
The Second Part.p.14. O.E.D. lists this usage. The  
earliest usage listed is 1580.

"As yong and tender as a morrow masse priests Lemman."  
A Disputation.p.28.O.E.D. lists examples from 1546.

"Driuen into...a maze." The Defence.p.7.

"Droue the honest Cittizen into a great maze." The  
Defence.p.44. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D. in this usage.



"Bid the Miller put out, and if he asketh what, they say a theeues head and a theeues paire of eares." The Defence.p.25. (Cf.O.D.P."Many a miller, many a thief.") Not in O.E.D. in this usage.

"Nettes to catch fooles." A Disputation.p.18. Not in O.D.P. or O.E.D.

"Upon their pantophels." The Second Part.p.45. O.D.P. lists examples from 1575.

"To walke penny-lesse in Mark-lane." The Second Part.p.26. Greene's usage is listed in O.E.D. Also similar examples from 1310 are given.

"Plain as a pike staf." A Notable Discovery.p.23. Listed by O.D.P. among examples from 1532.

"Put vp your pipes (= shut up) A Disputation.p.14.O.D.P. lists examples from 1556.

"The...Asse,will kicke like a Western Pugge." A Disputation.p.28. Not in O.D.P. This usage is quoted by the O.E.D.

"Having a respect to the maine chance." A Disputation.p.72. Not in O.D.P. O.E.D. lists examples of "Having a respect to" from 1483.

"Lye a litle further & Giue mee some roome." A Disputation.p.11. Not in O.D.P.

"Set the priggars teeth a water." The Second Part.p.17.  
 "At this my teeth watered." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.18. (Cf. "You see no green cheese but your teeth must water." O.D.P.) O.E.D. lists examples from 1555.

"Sat like one in a trance." A Notable Discovery.  
 p.30. "Hee lay mut~~e~~ as in a traunce." The Defence.  
 p.54. Not in O.D.P.

"Goes the worlde on wheeles?" A Disputation.p.9.  
O.E.D. lists examples from 1546.

"Cuthbert Cunny-catcher, Licentiate in Whittington  
 College." The Defence. Title page. (Cf. "He has  
 studied at Whittington's College.") O.D.P. lists  
 Greene's usage as the earliest.

"Walk like a woodcock home by weeping cross." A  
Disputation. p.17. (Cf. "He that goeth out with  
 often loss, at last comes home by weeping cross."  
O.E.P.) O.E.D. lists examples from 1579.

## Appendix J.

Parallel Construction in the Cony-catching  
Pamphlets.

The use of antithesis or parallel construction was a habit of style that Greene acquired in his days of writing novels in imitation of Lyly's Euphues. Even at his most realistic Greene could never free himself completely from the habit. Antithesis appears, although slowly diminishing in quantity, throughout the cony-catching pamphlets.

A Notable Discovery of Coosenage.

"From a counterfait Coiner of money, became a currant corrector of manners, as absolute in the one, as dissolute in the other." p.7.

"And Socrates age was vertuous thogh his prime was licentious." p.1.

"My younger yeeres had vncertaine thoughtes but now my ripe daies cals on to repentant deedes, and I sorrow as much to see others wilful, as I delighted once to be wanton." p.7.

"That seeing their traines I might eschew their snares." p.7.

"What I saw in them to their confusion, I can forewarne in others to my countries commodity." p.8.

"Not that his nature was cruell, but that he was nourtered with Dionisius." p.8.



"Though I haue not practised their deceits, yet...I can decipher their qualities." p.8.

"I haue eaten Spanishe Mirabolanes, and yet am nothing the more metamorphosed." p.8.

"Not a deuill incarnate because I am Italianate, but hating the pride of Italie, because I know their peeuishnes." p.8.

"As our wits be as ripe as any, so our willes are more ready than they all, to put in effect any of their licentious abuses." p.8.

"Two such pestilent and preiudiciall practises."p.9.

"I goe not about to disproue or disalow." p.9.

"From an honest recreation, it is grown to a preiudiciall practise." p.10.

"The high Lawyer that challengeth a purse by the high way side...are nothing so daungerous to meete with all, as these Coosening Cunny-catchers. The Chetors that with their false dice make a hande... are nothing so daungerous as these base minded Caterpillers." p.11.

"They leaue him neither haire on his skin, nor hole to harbour in." p.10.

"Talke of matters in law, he hath plenty of Casis at his fingers ends...Speake of grasing and husbandry, no man knoweth more shires than hee." p.12.

"Thus...haue I giuen you a light in briefe, what I meane to prosecute at large." p.15.

"As bare of mony, as an ape of a taile." p.20.

"Thus haue the filthie fellows their subtle fetches to draw on poor men to fall into their cosening practises: thus like consuming moths of the common welth, they pray vpon the ignorance of such plain soules." p.20.

"Preferring sosenage before labor, and chusing an idle practise before any honest form of good liuing." p.20.

"Thus are the poore conies robbed by these base minded caterpillers: thus are seruing men oft entised to play, and lose al: thus are prentises induced to be Connies, and so are cosened of their masters mony." p.30.

"Consume it as vainly as they get it villanously." p.31.

"As the Carpenter hath many termes...that other vnderstand not at al, so haue the cony-catchers not without great cause." p.35.

"As my religion is smal, so my deuotion is lesse... Thogh your experience in trauaile be great, yet in home matters mine be more." p.35.

"Are in religion meere atheists as they are in trade flat dissemblers." p.36.

"Hatcht with Cain, and consumed with Iadas." p.40.

"The Cheater, when he has no cosin to grime with his stop dice, or the high lawier, when he hath no set

match to ride about, and the Nip when there is no tearme, fair, nor time of great assemblie." p.41.

"Either walke like stales vp and down the streets, or stande like the deuils Si quis at a tauern or alehouse, as if who shoulde say, if any be so minded to satisfie his filthie lust, to lende me his purse, and the deuil his soule, let him come in and be welcome." p.44.

"Then the cosening informer or cros-biter promiseth to wipe him out of the booke, & discharge him from the matter, wnen it was neither knowen nor presented." p.46.

"Venus in vinis, ignis in igne fuit." p.48.

"Rather to spend their coine amongst honest companie, then to bequeath it to such base cros-biters." p.51.

#### The Second and last part of Conny-catching.

"Though I cannot as he mannadge with my courtlax, nor attempt to vnleager Porsenna: yet with my pen I will indeuour to display the nature and secrets of diuers coosenages." pp.5-6.

"Euery thunderclap hath not a bolt, nor euery Conny-catchers oath an execution." p.6.

"I may write basely of such base wretches, who liue onely to liue dishonestly." p.7.

"Not onely abhorred of men, but hated of God, liuing idely to themselues & odiously to the worlde." p.8.



"And as the Gangrena is a disease incurable by the censure of the Chirugians, vnlesse the member where it is fixt be cut off: so this vntoward generation of loose Libertines, can by no wholesome counsailes, nor aduised perswasions be dissuaded from their lothsom kind of life, till by death they be fatally, and finally cut off from the commonwealth." p.9.

"Thus...I haue discovered in briefe, what I meane to prosecute at large: though not eloquently, yet so effectually, that if you be not altogether carelesse, it may redownd to your commoditie: forewarned,forearmed." pp.9-10.

"But hoping...my labours...shall not be onely taken with thankes, but applied with care." p.10.

"God either confound, or conuert such base minded Cooseners." p.10.

"The more he is curst, the better hee fares." p.24.

"As they use rethorical tropes and figures, the better to draw their hearers with the delight of varietie: so these moathes of the Commonwealth, apply their wits to wrappe in wealthy farmers with strange and vncoth conceits." p.25.

"Were as ready to haue a cast at cards, as he had a hazard at a horse." p.26.

"He fell from wine to money, and from pence to pounās." p.26.

"What they got in the bridle they lost in the saddle, what they coosened at cards, had like to cost them their neckes at the Sessions." p.28.

"He had catcht many Connies, but now a horse had like to caught him." p.28.

"Every deceit hath his due, he that maketh a trap falleth into the snare himselfe, and such as couet to coosen all, are crost themselues oftentimes almost to the crosse." p.28.

"The nip vseth his knife, and the foist his hand: the one cutting the purse, the other drawing the pocket." p.30.

"So long the pitcher goeth to the brooke that it commeth broken home: and so long the foists put their villanie in practise, that West-ward they goe, and there solemnly make a rehearsall sermon at tiborne." p.32.

"For if ye citie foist spy one of the country foists in London, straight he seeks by som means to smoke him. And so the countrey Nip, if he spy a Citty Nip in any faire, then hee smoakes him straight, and brings him in danger." p.35.

"But leauing such Strumpets to their soules confusion and bodies correction in Bride-wel." p.35.

"In shaking the dust out of the Gentlemans necke, hee shaked his money out of his purse." p.40.

"I made a knife to cut other mens purses, and mine is the first handsell, well reuenge is fallen vpon me, but I hope the rope will fall vpon him." p.43.

"They defie the world for their honestie, because they be as dishonest as any in the world." p.45.

The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching.

"Remembring their subtle meanes there, and slie practises here, be prepared against the reaches of any such companions." p.12.

"If he had not listened his singing, he had not lost his purse." p.28.

"I heare of their iourney westward, but not of their returne." p.29.

"Both for the nonest simplicitie on the one side and most cunning knauerie vsed on the other." p.29.

"But let not the Gentleman be offended...if...I blame his rash pride, or simple credulitie : for betweene the one and other, the Chaine he paide so deere for about ten of the clock in the morning, the Cunny catchers the same day ere night shared amongst them." p.40.

A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher  
and a Shee Conny-catcher.

"Discoursing the base qualities of them both, and discovering the inconuence that growes to men." p.3.



"What preiudice ensues by haunting of whore-houses, what dangers grows by dallying with Common harlottes, what inconuence followes the inordinate pleasures of vnchast Libertines." p.3.

"Which makes many cry out in their bones, whilst Goodman Surgion laughs in his purse: a thing to be feared as deadly while men liue, as hell is to be dreaded after death, for it not only infecteth the bodie, consumeth the soule, and waste wealth and worship, but ingraues a perpetuall shame in the forehead of the partie so abused." p.4.

"What flatteries they vse to bewitch, what sweet words to inueagle, what simple holines to intrap, what amorous glaunces, what smirking Ocyliades, what cringing curtesies, what stretching Adios...what frowning of tresses, what paintings, what Ruffes, Cuffes, and braueries." p.5.

"Whom when they haue drawn on to the bent of their bow, they strip like the prodigall childe and turne out of doores like an outcast of the world. The Crocodile hath not more teares, Proteus, more shape, Ianus more faces, the Hieria, more sundry tunes."p.5.

"Who thinkes himselfe wise inough to escape their flatteries, him they crosbyte, who holdes himselfe to rule, to be bitten with a counterfeyt Apparater, him they rifle, if hee be not so to bee verst vpon, they haue a foyst or a nyppe vpon him, and so sting him to the quicke. p.5.

"Thus he that medles with pitch, cannot but be defiled, and he that acquainteth himselfe or conuerseth with any of these Conny catching strumpets, cannot but by some way or other be brought to confusion." pp.5-6.

"Your cherry cheekes discouers your good fare, and your braue apparell bewraies a fat purse." p.9.

"Thinke you a quarterne winde cannot make a quick saile, that easie lystes cannot make heauy burthens, that women haue not wiles to compasse crownes as well as men." p.9.

"For though they be not so strong in the fists, they bee more ripe in their wittes." p.9.

"Cyrces had neuer more charms, Calipso more enchantments the Syrens more subtil tunes, then I haue crafty slightes to inueagle a Conny, and fetch in a country Farmer." p.10.

"Are you growne so stiffe, to thincke that your fair lookes can get as much as our nimble fingers, or that your sacking can gaine as much as our foysting." p.11.

"He must haue an eye to spye the boung or purse, and then a heart to dare to attempt it." p.12.

"For who loues wyne so ill, that hee will not eate grapes if they fall into his mouth, and wno is so base, that if he see a pocket faire before him, wil not foyst in if he may." p.14.

"Women Foysts and Nippes, as neat in that Trade as you, of as good an eye, as fine and nimble a hand, and of

as resolute a heart." p.14.

"Tis as hard to finde a Hare without a Muse, as a woman without a scuse." p.22.

"A Matrone of my profession, nimble of her handes, quicke of toong, and light of her taile." p.26.

"Women haue quicke wittes, as they haue snort heeles, and they can get with pleasure, wnat wee fish for with danger." p.27.

"The one only taking his money, the other bringing him to vtter confusion, for if the Foyst light vpon him or the Conny-catcher he looseth at the most some hundreth poundes, but if hee fall into the companie of a whoore, she flatters him, she inueagles him, shee bewitcheth him, that he spareth neither goodes nor landes to content her." p.36.

"Who...brings him if to the fairest ende to beg, if to the second, to the gallowes, or at the last and worst, to the Pockes." p.36.

"If Concubines could inueagle Salomon, if Delilah could betraie Sampson, then wonder not if we...can seduce poore yoong Nouices." pp.37-8.

"Search the Gayles, there you shall heare complaints of whoores, looke into the Spittles and Hospitalles, there you shall see men...giuing instruction...to beware of whoores, bee an Auditor or eare witnesse at the death of any theefe, and his last Testament is, Take heed of a whoore." p.38.



"Bridewell woulde haue verie fewe Tenants, the Hospitall would want Patientes, and the Surgians much woork~~e~~...if wee were not." pp.38-9.

"There is none so great inconuenience in the Common wealth, as growes from whores, first for the corrupting of youth, infecting of age, for breeding of brawles...you men theeues touch the bodie and wealth, but we ruine the soule...you make worke onely for the gallowes, we both for the gallowes and the diuel." pp.39-40.

"You are Crocodiles when you weepe, Basilisks when you smile, Serpents when you deuise, and the diuels cheefest broakers to bring the world to distruction." p.40.

"Sith to discover my parentage, woulde double the griefe of my lyuing Parents...Sith to manifest ye place of my birth, would be a blemish...to the Shyre where I was borne: sith to disclose my name, might be holden a blot in my kindreds browe...I will conceale my parents, kin, and Country." p.42.

"I was the fairest of all, and yet not more beautifull then I was witty." p.42.

"Woulde to God, eyther the Proverbe had been authenticall, or their sayings prophecies." p.43.

"But now I find, in sparing the rod, they hated the chyld, that ouer kind fathers, make vnruly daughters. Had they bent the wand while it had beene greene, it woulde haue beene plyant." p.43.

"The Hawk that is most perfect for the flight and will, seldom proueth hagarde, and children that are vertuously nurtured in youth, will be honestly matured in age: fie upon such as say, young Saints, olde deuils, it is no doubt a deuillish and damnable saying, for what is not bent in the Cradle, will hardly be bowed in the Sadle." pp.43-44.

"Spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur vt ipse." p.45.

"Cosin, I see the fayrest Hawke hath oftentimes the sickest feathers, that ye hottest day hath the most sharpest thunders, the brightest sunne, the most suddaine showre, & the youngest Virgins, the most daungerous fortunes." p.46.

"For as they be glistering, so they be momentary."p.46.

"Beauty Cozen, as it florisheth in youth, so it fadeth in age." p.46.

"Beauties painting, that hatched by tyme, perrisheth in short tyme." p.47.

"The vestall Virgins were not reuerenced of the Senators for their curious clothing, but for their chastitie. Cornelia was not famozed for ornaments of golde, but for excellent vertues...men iudge of Maydens rarenesse, by the modestie of their rayment, holding it rather garish then glorious to be trickt vp." pp.47-8.

"For shee that is looked on by many, cannot chuse but bee hardly spoken of by some." p.48.

"So long the pot goes to the water, that it comes broken home, and such as looke much must like at last: the Fly dallyes with a flame, but at length she burneth." p.48.

"Light behauieur is a signe of lewd thoughts, and men will say, there goes a wanton that will not want one." p.49.

"The Beetle, refusing to light on the sweetest flowers all day, nestled at night in a Cowsheard." p.51.

"As smoake will hardly be concealed, so loue will not bee long smothred." p.51.

"They had made mee more vertuous and themselues lesse sorrowfull. A fathers frowne is a bridle to the childe, and a mothers check is a stay to the stubborn daughter." p.52.

"Let all Parents take heed, least in louing their children too tenderly, they subuert them vtterly, least in manuring the ground too much with the vn-skilful husbandman, it waxe too fat...least cockering their children vnder their winges without correction, they make them carelesse and bring them to destruction, as their nurture is in youth, so will their nature grow in age." p.53.

"But as the Tygre though for a while shee hide her clawes, yet at last shee will reueale her crueltie, and as the Agnus Castus leafe when it lookes most drye, is then most full of moysture, so womens wantonnesse is not quallified by their warinesse, nor do



their charnesse for a moneth, warrant their chastitie for euer." p.56.

"I loued him more for the time at the heele then the other at the heart." p.58.

"Hee that was hit with the norne was pinchd at the heart." p.58.

"Sith it pleased him to conseale it, neuer to reueale it." p.64.

"The oldest lecher was as welcom as the youngest louer." p.72.

"Thus to the greefe of my friendes, hazard of my soule, and consuming of my bodie, I spent a yeare." p.74.

"Greeued that so foule properties were hidden in so good a proportion, and that such rare wit and excellent bewtie, was blemisht with whoredomes base deformitie." p.74.

#### The Defence of Conny Catching.

"I would bee sure to strippe him of all that his purse had in Esse, or his credyt in Posse." p.6.

"That would strain a Gnat, and lette passe an Elephant : that would touch small scapes, and lette grosse faultes passe without any reprehension." p.9.

"Was your braine so barraine that you had no other subiect? or your wittes so dried with dreaming of loue Pamphlettes, that you had no other humour left." p.11.

"Either Philosophically to haue shewen how you were proficient in Cambridge, or diuinely to have manifested your religion to the world." p.11.

"Such triueall trinkets and threedbare trash." p.11.

"To the aduancing of vertue, of suppressing of vice." p.12.

"Men are valued by theyr wealth, not by their vertues." p.13.

"Men put their sonnes...not to learne trades and occupations, but craftes and mysteries." p.13.

"You straine Gnats, and passe ouer Elephants; you scoure the ponde of a few croaking Frogges, and leaue behind an infinite number of most venemous Scorpions." p.13.

"You decypher poore Conny-catchers, that...winne forty shillings from a churle that can spare it, and neuer talke of those Caterpillers that vndoo the poore, ruine whole Lordships, infect the commonwealth, and delight in nothing but wrongfull extorting and purloyning of pelfe." p.13.

"The olde Cole hath such quirkes and quiddities in the conueyance, such prouisoos, such dayes, howers, nay minutes of payments." p.14.

"The gentlewoman let loose his eares, and let slip his head." p.23.

"But the Fox the more he is curst the better he fares, and the oftener the Miller is called theefe, the richer he waxeth." p.25.

"They haue such brewing and turning, such chopping and changing, such mingling & mixing, what of wine with water in the quart pot, and tempering one wine with another in the vessel." p.30.

"What trade can maintaine his traffique? what science vphold it self? what men liue?" p.31.

"Standing as stiffe as if he wore a Ruler in his mouth, or else nickt off with the Italian cut." p.33.

"Eyther sharpe lyke the single of a Deere, or curtold lyke the broad ende of a Moule spade." p.34.

"Deeking himselfe like the Daw with the faire feathers of other birds, and discoursing what he heard other men report." p.35.

"As they were Comoedians to act, so the actions of their liues were Cameleon like." p.37.

"He gets that by pilling and polling of the poore, that we strip him of by sleight and agilitie of wit." p.38.

"As their licentious lust leades them, whether the eye for fauour, or the eare for riches." p.46.

"She was afrayde to match in haste lest shee might repent at leysure...But...the coyest maydes happen



on the coldest mariages, playing like the beetle  
that makes scorne al day of the daintiest flowers,  
and at night takes vp his lodging in a cowsherd."p.48.

"At last lighted on a match, that for euer after  
mard her market." p.48.

"The man lying in great paine of body, & agony of  
mind." p.55.

"What Poet hath so many fictions, what Painter so  
many fancies, as a Taylor hath fashions." p.56.

"The occasion of most mischief, of greatest nipping  
and foysting, and of al vilanies." p.65.

The Blacke Bookes Messenger.

"The one died resolute and desperate, the other  
penitent and passionate." p.2.

"As I haue liued lewdly, so I meane to end my life  
as resolutely." p.5.

"So of a sound stocke prooued an vntoward Syen; and  
of a vertuous father, a most vicious sonne." p.5.

"What sinne was it that I would not commit with  
greedinesse, what attempt so bad that I would not  
endeuour to execute." p.6.

"Cutting of purses, stealing of horses, lifting,  
picking of lockes, and all other notable coossenages."  
p.6.

"Swearing and forswearing...that such as heard mee,  
rather trembled at mine oathes, than feared my braues."  
p.7.

"I liued wantonly, and therefore let me end merrily."  
p.17.

"Thus I got much by villany, and spent it amongst  
whores as carelesly." p.29.

"But as men, though they chaunge Countries, alter not  
their minds: so giuen ouer by God into a reprobate  
sence, I had no feeling of goodnes." p.30.

"Reuenge deferd is not quittanst, that though God  
suffer the wicked for a time, yet hee paies home at  
length." p.30.

"I haue helde you long, as good at the first as at  
the last." p.30.

"Trust not in your owne wits, for they will become  
too wilfull oft, and so deceiue you. Boast not in  
your strength, nor stand not on your manhood, so to  
maintain quarrels." p.31.

"Beware of whores, for they be the Syrens that draw  
men on to destruction, their sweet words are inchant-  
ments, their eyes allure, and their beauties bewitch:  
O take heede of their perswasions, for they be  
Crocodiles, that when they weepe, destroy." p.31.

"Better it is to be a poore honest man, than a rich &  
wealthy theefe." p.31.

"Contemne not the vertuous counsaile of a frend, despise  
not the hearing of Gods Ministers, scoffe not at the  
Magistrates, but feare God, honor your Prince, and  
loue your country." p.31.

"But the judgments of God as they are iust, so they are inscrutable...as he was one that delighted in rapine and stealth in his life, so at his death the ravenous Wolves deuoured him." p.32.



## Appendix K.

A List of the Thieves' Cant Terms Appearing  
in the Cony-catching Pamphlets.

ALL HALLOWS. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D. in this sense.)  
"In Prigging Law: The touling place,  
All hallowes." The Second and last  
part of Conny-catching. p.4.

APPLE SQUIRE. sb.Obs. a harlot's attendant; a pimp.  
(O.E.D. lists examples from 1500.) "The  
Bawd, if a man, an Apple squire" A  
Notable Discovery of Coosenage. p.38.  
"A farre of as attending applesquires,  
certaine cross-biters stand." Ibid. p.42.

BARD CATER TRAY. sb.Obs. barred dice. (O.E.D. lists  
examples from 1532.) "When the Chetor  
...will cros-bite a bard cater tray."  
A Notable Discovery. p.14. (Cf. cater  
trey.)

BARNACLE. sb. Cant term. A companion or follower  
that sticks close. A decoy swindler.  
(O.E.D. cites Greene's usage as the  
earliest.) "There be requisit...to act  
the Art of Conny-catching...the Verser,  
and the Barnackle." A Notable Discovery.  
p.17. "As thus they sit tipling, comes  
the Barnacle." Ibid. p.26. "Then the  
Barnacle vies, and the countriman vies  
vpon him." Ibid. p.29.

BARNARD. sb.Obs. The member of a gang of swindlers  
who acts as a decoy; a lurking scoundrel,  
a sharper. (O.E.D. lists examples from  
1532.) "Four persons were required...the  
Verser, the Barnard." A Notable Discovery  
p.11. "Comes in the Barnard...like some  
aged Farmer of the Countrey." Ibid. p.12.  
"The Barnard steales away with all the  
coine." Ibid. p.13.

- BARNARD'S LAW. sb.Obs. Cf.barnard. (Not in O.E.D.)  
 "A drunken cosenage by cards." A  
Notable Discovery. p.38.
- BATFOWLING. sb.Obs. Slang. Swindling, victimizing  
 the simple. (O.E.D. gives examples  
 from 1602. Greene's usage is earlier.)  
 "Connycatching to be called Batfowling."  
The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.4.
- BAWKER. sb.Obs. [? for Balker.] (O.E.D. lists  
 the second of the following examples  
 as the earliest usage.) "In Vincents  
 law: They which play bootie, the Bankars  
 Bawkers. " The Second and last part of  
Conny-catching.p.3. "The Bawkers, for so  
 the common hanterers of the Ally are  
 tearmed." Ibid.p.19. "The bawkers go  
 forward with their bowles." Ibid.p.20.
- BEATER. sb.Obs.Cf. beating the bush.(Not in  
O.E.D. in this sense.) "He that drawes  
 the fish to the bait, the Beater." The  
Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.4.
- BEATING THE BUSH. vbl.sb.Obs.fig. In batfowling, to  
 rouse the birds that they may fly into  
 the net held by someone else. (O.E.D.  
 lists examples from 1440.) "The fetching  
 in a Conny, beating the bush." The  
Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.4.
- BIRD. sb.fig. Prey, object of attack. (The  
O.E.D. lists examples from 1596. Greene's  
 usage is earlier.) "The foole that is  
 caught, the Bird." The Blacke Bookes  
Messenger. p.4.
- BLIND. a.Obs. Out of sight, secret, obscure,  
 privy. "One blinde Tauerne or other."  
A Notable Discovery. p.13. "Chops them  
 away in some blind Faieres." The Second  
Part. p.13.

- BLACK ART. Sb. Thieves' Cant. Obs. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "Blacke arte: Picking of lockes." The Second Part.p.3. "So experienced in the black Art, that if I do but blow vpon ye locke, it shall fly open." Ibid.p.55.
- BUNG. sb. (Also bong, bounge.) Thieves' cant.Obs. Purse.(O.E.D. lists examples from 1567). When he had nipt a Bung or cut a good purse." "His apprentice strooke the strings and took his boong cleere." The Second and last part of Conny-catching.p.11. "I will nip a boong." Ibid. p.11. "Bitten of all the bite in his bung." Ibid.p.26. "There was no hope of nipping the bounge." "The Thirde and last Part of Conny-catching. p.22. "Would venter all the byte in their bounge." The Defence of Conny catching. (O.E.D. lists this usage.) "When he had nipt a Bung or cut a good purse." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.3.
- BUSH. sb. (Not in O.E.D. in this usage.) Probably from bush, v. to place in ambush, hide in a bush, lie in ambush. (O.E.D. gives examples from 1330.) "The Tauerne where they goe, the Bush." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.4.
- CATCH-DOLT. sb. Obs. (Not in O.E.D.) "The name of suche games as Connicatchers vse." The Defence of Conny-catching.p.5. "At... Catch-dolt...none durst euer make compare with me." Ibid.p.5.
- CATER. sb. Obs. (Cf.bard cater trey) Four at dice or cards. Cater-trey - the four and the three; hence apparently a cant term for dice and? falsified dice.
- CHARM. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D. in this sense.) "In blacke Arte: The pickelocke is called a Charme." The Second Part. p.3. "The Charm is he that doth the feat." Ibid.p.54.



- CHEAT. sb. Obs. Thieves' Cant. Originally "a stolen thing" but as early as 1567 used in a general sense of "thing, article," usually preceded by some descriptive word. "Although no man could better than myself discover...the name of their Cheats." A Notable Discovery.p.38. "Therefore had I cheates for the very sise." The Defence.p.6.
- CHEATER. sb.Obs. A dishonest gamester, a sharper. (O.E.D. lists examples from 1532.) (Cf. Cheating Law.) "The Chetors that with their false Dice make a hande." A Notable Discovery p.11. "The Chetor with a langret...will crosbite a bard cater tray." Ibid.p.14. "The Cheater, when he has no cosin to grime with his stop dice." Ibid.p.41.
- CHEATING LAW. sb.Obs.Cf.Cheater. (Not in O.E.D.) "Cheting law: play at false dice." A Notable Discovery.p.38.
- COMMODITY. sb.Thieves' Cant. (O.E.D. does not list this usage.) "In sacking Law: The whoore, a Commoditie." A Notable Discovery.p.38. "When a broaking knaue cros-biteth a Gentleman with a bad commoditie." Ibid.p.14.
- CONY. sb.Obs. (Also conie, conny, coney, conye, cunny.) A gull, a dupe; the victim of the 'cony-catcher'! (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "To draw any person...to drinke with him, which person they call the Conie." A Notable Discovery.p.17. "Ere they part, they make him a cony." Ibid.p.20. "Thus are the poore conies robbed...thus are prentises induced to be Connies." Ibid.p.30. "It was so easie for the Setter to take vp a Cony." The Second Part.p.25.
- CONY-CATCHER. Sb.Obs. One who catches 'conies' or dupes; a cheat, sharper, swindler. (A term made famous by Greene in 1591, and in great vogue for 60 years after." O.E.D. lists Greene's as the first usage.) "Practised by sundry

lewd persons, called Connie-catchers." A Notable Discovery. Title page. "Nothing so dangerous...as these Coosening Cunny-catchers." Ibid.p.11. "The Conny-catchers, apparalled like honest ciuil gentlemen." Ibid.p.18. "The goodman Cony-catchers...haue got one...to make an inuective against me." The Second Part.p.28.

CONY-CATCH. v.Obs.trans, and intrans.Cf.cony-catcher.  
"Conny-catcher, that was Conny-catcht himselfe."  
A Disputation,Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher and a Shee Conny-catcher.p.80. "How the knaue went about to Conny-catch him." Ibid.p.81.

CONY-CATCHING. vbl.sb.Obs. Cheating, duping, knavery.  
(O.E.D.: lists the title page of The Second and last part of Conny-catching as the earliest usage.) "The Art of Cunny catching." A Notable Discovery. p.9. "There be requisit to act the Art of Cony-catching three seueral parties." Ibid.p.17. "He had this cursed book of Cony-catching." The Defence.p.7. "There is no mysterie nor science almost...without it be lincked to this famous Art of Conny-catching." Ibid.p.29.

CONY-CATCHING. ppl.a.Obs. That cheats or tricks; gulling, swindling. "Calling it by the name of...conny-catching art, or cony-catching law." A Notable Discovery.p.34. "Any of these Conny-catching strumpets." A Disputation, Betweene a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher.p.6. "That peeuish scholler...with his conny-catching bookes." Ibid.p.10.

COPEs-MATE. sb. Obs. An accomplice in cheating, a confederate at cards, dice or the like."Talking upon purpose with such copes-mates." A Notable Discovery.p.8.

COUSIN.sb.Obs. A dupe, a gull. Cf. cozen. "When he has no cosin to grime with his stop dice." A Notable Discovery.p.41.

COZEN. v.Obs. trans. and intrans. To beguile, deceive, mislead, impose upon, gull, hoax. (O.E.D. lists

examples from 1580.) "So are cozened of their masters money." A Notable Discovery p.30. "Catcht vp and cosened of all." Ibid. p.31. "He told him how he was cosened at cards." Ibid. p.32. "He that is coosned the Connie." Ibid. p.39. "Such as couet to coosen all." The Second Part. p.28.

COZENAGE. sb.Obs. The practise or habit of cozening; cheating, deception, fraud; the fact of being cheated. "Growing by enormitie into a Coosenage." A Notable Discovery. p.9. "Offering him no shew of cosnage." Ibid. p.26. "A Notable coosenage at bowles." The Second Part. p.7. "Diuers other practises there are in bowling tending vnto coosenage." Ibid. p.22. "Before I discovered their cosenage." Ibid. p.25.

COZENER. sb.Obs. A deceiver, cheat, imposter. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "This base degree of Cooseners." A Notable Discovery. p.11. "Meere shifters and cosoners." Ibid. p.45. "So deeply are these monstrous cooseners hated." The Second Part. p.9. "God...conuert such base minded Cooseners." Ibid. p.10. "Beware of such coseners." Ibid. p.22.

COZENING. vbl.sb.Obs.Cf.cozen:Cheating, defrauding."The basenes of the cosening." A Notable Discovery. p.34.

COZENING. ppl.a.Obs.Cf.cozen.Cheating, defrauding. "The names of such coosening Cunny-catchers." A Notable Discovery. p.14. "To fall into their cosening practises." Ibid. p.20. "Those coosning cros-biters." Ibid. p.45. "Many a coosening curse." The Second Part. p.24. "Hee is but a coozening companion." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.27.

CREEPING LAW. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D.) "The creeping Law of petty theemes that rob about the Suburbes." A Disputation. p.41.



CROSS-BITE. v. Obs. trans. Cf. cross-biting law. To bite the biter; to cheat in return; to cheat by outwitting, to 'take-in'; gull, deceive. (O.E.D. lists the following usage.) "When a broaking knaue cros-biteth a Gentleman." A Notable Discovery p.14. "Forty pound cros-bitten at one time." Ibid. p.46. "Taking them together, he may cros-bite the party." Ibid. p.40. You cannot cros-bite without the helpe of a woman." A Disputation. p.27. "If I tooke but one suspitiously in her companie, straight I...crossebit him." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.7. "My wife...in the ende was crosse-bitten her self." Ibid. p.28.

CROSS-BITE. sb. Obs. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage.) "When the Nip...hath a cros-bite." A Notable Discovery. p.14.

CROSS-BITER. sb. Obs. (Also cross-bite.) One who 'cross-bites,' a swindler. "Sundry lewd persons, called Connie-catchers and Crosse-biters." A Notable Discovery. Title page. "Some cowardly knaues...become Crosbites." A Disputation. p.27. "Chalke him on the backe for a Crosbite." Ibid. p.28. "I was holden in my time the most famous Crosbyter in all London." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.11.

CROSS-BITING. vbl. sb. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage.) "Two such...abuses...the second, the Arte of Cros-biting." A Notable Discovery. p.9. "The quaint conceits of...crosse-biting." The Defence. p.11. "Crosbiting now adaies is growne to a maruellous profitable exercise." A Disputation. p.27.

CROSS-BITING. ppl. a. Cf. Cross-bite. "Thou base cros-biting baud." A Notable Discovery. p.50.

CROSS-BITING LAW. sb. Obs. Cf. cross-bite. "Cosenage by whores." A Notable Discovery. p.38.

- CURB. v. Thieves' Cant.Obs. (No meaning given, O.E.D. lists Greene's usage in A Disputation, but calls it Theeves Falling Out.) "Though you can foyst, nyp, prig, lift, courbe," A Disputation.p.27. "Then they let it out at the length, and hook or curb whatsoeuer is lose and within the reach." The Second Part. p.48.
- CURB. sb.Obs. Thieves Cant. A hook. "He that with a Curb or hook, doth pul out of a window any stuffe." The Second Part.p.47-48. "Tooke his Courbe, and thrust it into the Chamber." Ibid. p.50.
- CURBER. sb.Thieves' Cant.Obs. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage in The Second Part: "The Courber, which the common people call the Hooker." p.47. as earliest. "The Curber...he puts in a hooke." Ibid.p.49. "A Hooker, whom some call a Curber." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.28.
- CURBING LAW. sb.Obs. (O.E.D. lists the following usage as the earliest.) "The curbing law, which is the filchers and theeues...hookers at windowes." A Notable Discovery.p.52. "Courbing Law: Hooking at windowes." The Second Part.p.3.
- DEQUOY. sb. (Obs. (Not in O.E.D..) "The names of suche games as Connicatchers vse." The Defence. p.5. "At Dequoy...none durst euer make compare with me." The Defence.p.5.
- DICE BARDE. sb.Obs.Cf.bard dice. "Therefore had I cheats for the very sise, of the...dice barde for all aduantages." The Defence.p.6.
- DIVER. Sb.Obs. A pickpocket. Greene's usage is earlier than that of 1608 listed by the O.E.D. "A Diuer...puts in at the windowe some little figging boy who...can deliuer to the Diuer what snappinges he finds in the Chamber." The Second Part.p.49.

- DUTCH NODDIE. sb.Thieves' Cant.Obs.(Not in O.E.D.)  
 "The name of such a game as Conni-  
 catchers vse." The Defence.p.5. "At  
Dequoy...Dutch Noddie...none durst  
euer make compare with me." Ibid.p.5.
- FARSING. vbl.sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D. in this  
 sense.) "Picking the lock, Farsing."  
The Second Part.p.3.
- FETCH. sb.Obs. A contrivance, dodge, strategem,  
 trick. (O.E.D. lists examples from 1530.)  
 "Thus haue the filthie felows their subtle  
 fetches to draw on poor men." A Notable  
Discovery. p.20.
- FIGGING. ppl.a.Obs. (O.E.D. only gives this term  
 as vbl.sb.in figging law.) "Some little  
 figging boy." The Second Part.p.49.
- FIGGING LAW. Slang.Obs.The art of picking pockets.  
 (O.E.D. lists examples from 1550.)"  
 "Figging law: cutting of purses, &  
 picking of pockets." A Notable Discovery  
 p.38.
- FOIN. sb.Thieves' Cant.Obs.(Not in O.E.D. in  
 this sense.) "In Figging law: The picke  
 pocket, a Foin." A Notable Discovery.  
 p.39.
- FOIST. sb.Obs. A cheat, a rogue; a pickpocket.  
 (O.E.D. lists the first of Greene's  
 usages as the earliest.) "The Foyst,the  
 pick-pockets (sin reuerence I meane)"  
A Notable Discovery.p.14. "The nip  
 vseth his knife, and the foist his hand."  
The Second Part.p.30. "An exquisite Foist  
 must haue three properties that a good  
 Surgeon should haue...an Eagles eie, a  
 Ladies hand, and a Lions heart." Ibid.  
 p.34. "The Foist drewe the farmers purse."  
Ibid.p.41.



- FOISTING. vbl.sb.Obs.Cf.foist."All thy brauery comes by his Nipping, Foysting, and lifting." A Disputation.p.10.
- GARBAGE. sb.Obs.(Not in O.E.D. in this sense.) "In Vincents law: The goodes gotten Garbage." The Second Part.p.3. "Garbage (for so he cal's the goods stolne.)" Ibid.p.44. "He commits his garbage to the marker." Ibid.p.45.
- GOURDS. sb.Obs. A swindle, a kind of false dice. (O.E.D. lists examples from 1545.) "No man could better then my self discouer ...the name of their...Gourds." A Notable Discovery.p.38. "Therefore had I cheates for the very sise, of the... gourds...for all aduantages." The Defence of Conny Catching.p.6.
- GRIPE. sb.Obs.Slang. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest.) "In Vincents Law: He that betteth, the Gripe." The Second Part.p.3. "Lookers on...and these are called Gripes." Ibid.p.20. "The gripes and the bawkers are confederate." Ibid.p.20.
- GRIPERS. sb.rare.One who oppresses people by extortionate or niggardly methods, an extortioner. "Certaine Colliers...called Gripers." A Notable Discovery.p.57.
- HACKSTER. sb.Obs. 1. One who hacks, a hacker or cutter, a cut-throat, a swaggering ruffian, a swashbuckler. (O.E.D. lists examples from 1581.) "Yet Gentlemen am I sore threatned by the hacksters of that filthie facultie." A Notable Discovery.p.14. 2. A prostitute's bully. (O.E.D. lists examples from 1607.) "Three or foure old Hacksters whom she had prouided vpon purpose." A Disputation.p.23. 3. A prostitute. (O.E.D. lists examples from 1594.) "She was...the commonest

harlot and hackster that euer made fray  
vnder the shadowe of Colman hedge." The  
Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.12. (In these  
last two examples Greene's usage is  
earlier than that given by the O.E.D.)

HIGH LAW. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D.) "There be also  
other lawes; as high law." A Notable  
Discovery.p.34." High law: robbing by  
the highway-side." Ibid.p.37.

HIGH LAWYER. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D.) "In high Lawre:  
the Theefe is called a High lawier." A  
Notable Discovery.p.38. "Ye high lawier,  
when he hath no set match to ride about."  
Ibid.p.41.

IRISH ONE AND THIRTY. sb.Obs. An old game resembling  
backgammon? (O.E.D. gives examples from  
1590 but calls the game simply "Irish.")  
"The names of suche games as Connicatchers  
vse." The Defence.p.5. "At...Irish one and  
thirtie, none durst euer make compare with  
me." Ibid.p.5.

JUGGING LAW. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D.) "The Jugging Law,  
wherein I will set out the disorders at  
Nyneholes and Ryfling." A Disputation.p.41.

LANGRET. sb.Obs. A kind of false die. (O.E.D. lists  
examples from 1550.) "At dice, when the  
Chetor with a langret...will cros-bite."  
A Notable Discovery.p.14. "No man could  
then my selfe discouer...the name of their  
...Langrets." Ibid.p.38. "Had I cheates for  
the very sise, of the...langrets." The  
Defence.p.6.

LAUNCE-MAN. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D.) "The Priggar if  
he be a Launce-man, that is, one that is  
already horst." The Second Part.p.13. "But  
again to our Launce-men Priggars." Ibid.  
p.14.

- LIFT. sb.Obs. "He that stealeth or prowleth any plate, iewells, boultts of saten, veluet, or such parcels." The Second Part.p.44. "The Lift is without his cloake...to auoid the more suspition." Ibid.p.45. "The fingers of lifts are fourmed of Adamant." Ibid.p.46.
- LIFTING LAW. sb.Obs.Cf.Lift.(Not in O.E.D.) "Lifting Law: stealing of any parcels." The Second Part.p.3.
- LIMETWIGS. sb.Obs.(Not in O.E.D. in this sense.) "The Cards to be called, the Limetwigs." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.4.
- LURTCH. v.Obs.To defraud, cheat, rob.(The O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as well as examples from 1530.) "An old connycatcher...that could lurtch a poor conny of so many thousands." The Defence.p.19.
- LIMITING LAW. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D. in this sense.) "The lymitting Lawe, discoursing the orders of such as followe Iudges, in their circuities, and goe about from Fayre to Fayre." A Disputation.p.41.
- MARKER. sb.Obs.slang.(O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "In lifting law: He that receiues it, the Markar." The Second Part.p.4. "The Marker which is the receyuer of the Lifts luggage." Ibid.p.45. "The Marker, ...deliuers him whatsoeuer the Lift hath conuaied vnto him." Ibid.p.45.
- MARTAR. sb.Obs.One who bargains; esp.in thieves' slang, a dealer in stolen goods. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest.) "The Martar is he that receiues the horse and chops and changeth him away." The Second Part.p.13. "They make sale of them by the Martars means." Ibid.p.14.



- MUMCHANCE. sb.Obs. A dicing game resembling hazard. (O.E.D. gives examples from 1528.) "The names of suche games as Connicatchers vse." The Defence.p.5. "At Dequoy, Mumchance... none durst euer make compare with me." Ibid.p.5.
- NIP. sb.Obs. Applied to persons. A cutpurse or pickpocket."The Nip, which the common people call a Cutpurse." A Notable Discovery.p.14. "The foist, the nip... I mean the pick-pockets and cut-purses." Ibid.p.11. The nip vseth his knife... cutting the purse." The Second Part.p.30.
- NIP. v.Obs.To pick pockets, to steal (O.E.D. cites Greene's usage in The Defence as earliest.) "I had consorts who could verse, nip, and foyst." The Defence.p.6. "When he had nipt a Bung or cut a good purse." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.3.
- NON EST POSSIBLE. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D.) "The name of suche games as Connicatchers vse." The Defence.p.5. "At Dequoy... Non est possible ...none durst euer make compare with me." Ibid.p.5.
- OAK. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D. in this sense.) "In high Lawe: He that standeth to watch, an Oake." A Notable Discovery.p.38.
- OURE LE BOURSE. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D.) "The name of suche games as Connicatchers vse." The Defence.p.5. "At...Oure le bourse...none durst euer make compare with me." Ibid.p.5.
- PELFREY. sb.Obs.Things pilfered; booty, spoil. (O.E.D. lists examples from 1480.) "In blacke Arte: The gaines gotten, Pelfrey." The Second Part. p.3.

- PETULACERY. sb.Obs. Corrupt forms of petty larceny. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) Base rogues, that lift... paltry trash, which commonly is called pilfering or petulacery." The Second Part. p.44.
- POT HUNTER. sb.Obs.An opprobrious appellation, a sycophant, a parasite. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "The Barnacle [he that comes in to them] the pot hunter." The Blacke Bookes Messenger p.4.
- PRANKER. sb.Thieves' Cant.Obs. a horse. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "In Prigging Law: The horse, the Prancar." The Second Part.p.4. "Do take an especiall ...view where prankers or horses be." Ibid.p.13.
- PRIG. v.Obs. slang. To ride. (Cf.prick.) (O.E.D. lists examples from 1567.) "He bestrides the horse which he priggeth." The Second Part. p.15.
- PRIGGER. sb.Obs.Slang.One who prigs, a thief. (O.E.D. quotes Greene's usage in The Second Part.) "The Priggar is he that steales the horse." p.13. "The horse-stealer, the Priggar." Ibid.p.4.
- PRIGGING LAW.vbl.sb.Thieves' Cant. Slang. Stealing (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage in the following examples.) "The discovery of the Prigging Law, or nature of horse stealing." The Second Part.p.12. "In Prigging Law: The horse-stealer, the Priggar." Ibid.p.3.
- QUETRIES. sb.Obs. (I have been unable to trace this term in the O.E.D.) "In Prigging Law: the Suerties, Quetries." The Second Part. p.3.

- RETRIEVER. sb.Obs. One employed to set up game again.  
(O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "The verser in conny-catching is called, The Retrieuer." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.4.
- REVIE. v.Intr. To make a revie or revies. In card-playing. To meet by venturing a larger stake than that proposed by an opponent. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage among other examples from 1591.) "So they vie and revie till some ten shillings bee on the stake." A Notable Discovery.p.28. "Stil they vie and revie." Ibid.p.29.
- REVIES. sb.Obs. In card-playing, a higher stake ventured by a player against that proposed by an opponent. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "They have their vies and their revies vppon the poore Cunnies backe." A Notable Discovery.p.11. "To check vies with revies, he laide his horse in the hazard and lost him." The Second Part. p.26.
- RIFLER. sb.Obs. A robber, plunderer, spoiler. (O.E.D. lists examples from 1326, including Greene's usage.) "In Prigging Law: The touler, the Rifler." The Second Part. p.3.
- RUTTER. sb.Obs. One of a party of swindlers. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "Then standeth the Rutter at the doore and draweth his sword and picketh a quarrell at his owne shadowe." A Notable Discovery. p.13. "In Barnards lawe: he that makes the fray, the Rutter." Ibid.p.39.
- SACKING LAW. sb.Obs.Cant. The occupation of a prostitute. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage in the following examples.) "Sacking law: lecherie." A Notable Discovery.p.37. "In sacking Law: the Bawd if it be a woman." Ibid.p.38. "Why Nan, are you growne so stiffe, to thincke that...your sacking can gaine as much as our foysting." A Disputation. p.11.



- SANTAR. sb.Obs.Thieves' Slang. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest.) "In lifting Law: He that standeth without and caries it away, the Santar." The Second Part.p.3. "The Santar that walkes before the window." Ibid.p.45. "The Santar goes his way, who neuer came within the shop." Ibid.p.45.
- SETTER. sb.Obs. A confederate of sharpers or swindlers, employed as a decoy. "The nature of the Setter is to draw any person familiarly to drinke with him." A Notable Discovery.p.17. "In Coni-catching law: The partie that taketh vp the Connie, the Setter." Ibid.39. "I see you are a...Conny-catcher, and this your companion your setter." The Defence.p.6.
- SHELLS. sb.Obs.Cant. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage.) "In Figging law: The monie, the Shels." A Notable Discovery.p.38. "Not so much for the bounng as the shels." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.18. "Spied a good bung containing many shels." Ibid.p.20.
- SCRIPPER. sb.Obs.Cant. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest.) "In high Lawe: He that setteth the Watch, a Scrippet [Scripper]." A Notable Discovery.p.38.
- SHRAP. sb.Obs. From Anglo-Indian Shrab? (wine, spirits, or a drink prepared with them. O.E.D. lists a much later date, 1662, as first usage of this term.) "The wine to be called, the Shrap." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.4.
- SIMPLER. sb.Cant.Obs. from simple.a. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest.) "In Cros-biting lawe: The man that is brought in, the Simpler." A Notable Discovery.p.39. "They have sundry praies that they cal simplers which are men fondly and wantonly given." Ibid.p.41. "Here is a simpler quoth she." Ibid.p.47.

- SMACK.** v.Obs. Of persons. To perceive by sense of smell. Also fig. to experience, to suspect. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage.) "If he smack the setter and smells a rat." A Notable Discovery.p.19.
- SMOKE.** v. now arch. To get an inkling of, to smell or suspect (a plot, design, etc.) (O.E.D. gives 1608 as the earliest date. Greene's usage is 1591.) "If...the poore Countrey man beginne to smoake them." A Notable Discovery.p.13. "So smoakt for his purchase." Ibid.p.14. "Pamphlet, that hath taught me to smoke such a couple of knaues." The Defence.p.7.
- SNAP.** sb.Thieves' Cant.Obs.A sharper or swindler, a sly or treacherous fellow. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest.) "When the Foyst...is cros-bitten by the Snap." A Notable Discovery.p.14. "In Figging law: He that is halfe with him, the Snap." Ibid.p.39.
- SNAPPINGS.**Sb.Thieves' Cant. Obs.The proceeds of a theft or robbery; a share of stolen goods claimed by a snap. (O.E.D. lists the following examples of Greene's usage.) "In Curbing Law: The goods, Snappingses." The Second Part.p.3. "Looking in, spied fat snappingses." Ibid.p.50.
- SQUARIERS.**sb.Obs. A sort of false dice. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest but attributes it to A Notable Discovery. "Therefore had I cheates for the very sise, of the squariers ...for all aduantages." The Defence.p.6.
- STALE.** sb.Obs. A person who acts as a decoy; esp. the accomplice of a thief or sharper. (O.E.D. lists examples from 1526, including the first usage of Greene.) "In Figging law: He that faceth the man, the Stale." A Notable Discovery.p.39. "As stales to draw men into hell." Ibid.p.42. "Such damnable stales as drawes men on." Ibid.p.51.

- STAND.** sb.Obs.Slang. A thief's assistant who stands on watch. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "In blacke Arte: He that watcheth, a Stond." The Second Part.p.3. "Two persons are required, the Charme and the Stand...the Stand is he that watcheth." Ibid.p.54. "game,gd. he to his fellows, marke the stand." The Thirde Part. p.22.
- STOOP.** v.Obs. To put down, stake (money) on a game. (O.E.D. gives examples from 1550, including Greene's usage.) "If the poore countrey man...wil not stoupe vnto either of their lures." A Notable Discovery.p.21. "Not in any wise to stoope to their bets." The Second Part. p.22. "Plot how they might make him stoope all the money in his purse." Ibid.p.26.
- STOOPING.** vbl.sb.Obs.Cf. Stoop."The goode Asse if he be woone, stooping to the Lure." The Blacke Bookes Messenger.p.4.
- STOP DICE.**sb.Obs. Some kind of false or loaded dice. No cosin to grime with his stop dice." A Notable Discovery.p.41.."Therefore had I cheates for the very sise of the...stoppe-dice...for all aduantages. The Defence.p.7.
- STRIPPING LAW.** sb.Obs. The 'art' of fleecing prisoners as practised by jailers. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest.)"The stripping Lawe, wherein I will laye open the lewde abuses of sundry Iaylors in England." A Disputation.p.41. "The stripping Law, which is the abuse offered by the Keepers of Newgate to poore prisoners." The Defence. p.65.
- TAKER UP.** sb.Obs. A member of a gang of swindlers. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage in the first example.) "Four persons were required... The Taker Vp, the Verser." A Notable Discovery.p.11. "The Taker vp seemeth a skilful man in al things." Ibid.p.11.



- TAPPING HOUSES. sb.Obs. (Not in O.E.D. in this sense.)  
 "Bawds...keepe commonlie tapping houses." The Second Part.p.47.
- TERMAGE. sb.Obs. Slang. Name for the winnings in some form of gambling or cheating.  
 (O.E.D. cites Greene's usage as earliest.)  
 "In Vincents law: Gaines gotten, Termage." The Second Part.p.4.
- TRAFFIC. sb.Obs.rare. A prostitute. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as first.) "In Cros-biting lawe. The whore, the Traffique." A Notable Discovery.p.39. "These trafickes, these common truls I meane." Ibid.p.41. "There was there fiue traffiques...common huswiues." Ibid.p.47.
- TRAILER. sb.Obs. slang. One who travels on foot, esp. a footpad. "Some base Priggar that steales of meere necessity, and beside is a Trailer. The Trailer is one that goeth on foot." The Second Part.p.14.
- TRICKAR. sb.Obs.rare. Some tool used by burglars. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest)  
 "He [the Curber] hath his trickers, which are engins of Iron...that...wil cut a barre." The Second Part.p.48.
- TRUG. sb.Obs.dial. A prostitute. a trull.  
 (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage in a Quip for an Upstart Courtier as earliest but the following usages are earlier.)  
 "Some fond men are so farre in with these detestable trugs." A Notable Discovery.p.45. "Bawds...haue yong trugs in their house." The Second Part.p.47.  
 "Hee spied his trugge or queane coming vp the Church." The Thirde Part.p.22.

TRUGGING PLACE. Sb.Obs.(O.E.D. lists both of the following examples, as the earliest usage.) "In sacking Law: "The whore house, a Trugging place." A Notable Discovery.p.38. "He shall pay...at one of the Trugging houses." A Disputation.p.17. "Had a haunt into Petticoat Lane to a Trugging house there." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.8.

# VERSE.

v. Cant Obs.1. To practise fraud or deception.(O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest.) "If the poore Farmer bee bashful, then will she verse it with him." A Notable Discovery.pp.44-5. "I had consorts who could verse, nip and foyst." The Defence.p.6. "A coossenage compacted betweene her and me to verse ...him." The Blacke Bookes Messenger. p.9. 2. To impose upon, to cozen, cheat, defraud. "Till she and her cross-biters haue verst him to the beggers estate." A Notable Discovery.p.45. "Quoth she, Ile verse him, or hang me." Ibid.p.47. "He...that thought to haue verst vpon another." A Disputation.p.82.

# VERSER.

sb.Obs.Cant.One of a gang of cozeners or swindlers.(O.E.D. lists examples from 1550, including Greene's usage.) "There be requisit...the Verser, and the Barnackle." A Notable Discovery.p.17. "In Barnards lawe: The landed man the Verser." Ibid.p.39. "The Verser, a man of more worshippe than the Taker vp." Ibid.p.12.

VERSING LAW. vbl.sb.Cant.Obs.(O.E.D. lists Greene's usage in the following examples.) "Versing law: cosenage by false gold." A Notable Discovery.p.38.

- VIE. v.Obs. In card-playing, to hazard a certain sum on the strength of one's hand. "So they vie and revie till some ten shillings bee on the stake." A Notable Discovery.p.28. "The Barnacle vies and the Countriman vies vpon him." Ibid.p.29.
- VIES. sb Obs.In card-playing: a challenge, venture or bid, a sum ventured or staked on one's cards. "They ~~have~~ their vies and their revies vppon the poore Cunnies backe." A Notable Discovery.p.11. "To check vies with revies." The Second Part.p.26.
- VINCENT. sb.Obs.slang. The dupe in a betting game of bowls or the like. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "In Vincents law: He that is coosened, the Vincent." The Second Part.p.3. "The vincent, for that is the simple man that stands by." Ibid.p.20.
- VINCENTS LAW. sb.Obs. Slang.The art of cheating at bowles. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest.) "In Vincents law: He that is coosened, the Vincent." The Second Part.p.3. "The Vincents Law is a common deceit or cosenage vused in Bowling-allies." Ibid.p.19.
- WARP. sb.Thieves' Cant.Obs. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as the earliest.) "In Curbing law: He that watcheth the warpe." The Second Part.p.3. "Then straight he sets the Warp to watch, who hath a long cloke to couer what soeuer he gets." Ibid.p.48.
- WRESTERS. sb.Obs. An implement for picking locks. (O.E.D. lists Greene's usage as earliest.) "In blacke Arte: Their Engines,Wresters." The Second Part.p.3. "The charme hath many keies and wrests." Ibid.p.54.



## Appendix L.

A List of Rogue-Pamphlets which Imitate  
Greene and Exploit His Name after His Death.

## Pamphlets Imitating Greene.

The Groundwork of Conicatching. 1592. Anon.

(A reprint of Harman's Caveat for Common  
Cursitors with additions.) Bodleian.

The Blacke Dogge of Newgate. 1596. Luke Hutton.

Ed. A.V. Judges. The Elizabethan Underworld.  
1930. pp. 265-291.

Mihil Mumchance. Anon. [no date] . Bodleian.

The Black Book. 1604. Thomas Middleton. Partly

ed. A.V. Judges. The Elizabethan Underworld.  
1930. pp. 296-302.

The Life and Death of Gamaliel Ratsey. 1605. Anon.  
Bodleian.

The Belman of London. 1608. Thomas Dekker. Bodleian.

Ed. A.V. Judges. The Elizabethan Underworld. 1930.  
pp. 303-311.

Lanthorne and Candlelight. 1608. Thomas Dekker. Ed. A.V.

Judges. The Elizabethan Underworld. 1930. pp. 312-  
365.

Martin Mark-all. 1612. Samuel Rid. Bodleian.

The Art of Jugling. 1612. Samuel Rid. Bodleian.

O Per Se O. 1612. Samuel Rid. Ed. A.V. Judges. The

Elizabethan Underworld. 1930. pp. 366-382.

## Pamphlets Exploiting Greene's Name.

Greenes Newes both from Heaven and Hell. 1593.

[Barhaby Rich ?] Ed. R.B. McKerrow. 1911.

Greenes Funeralls. 1594. ["By R.B., Gent."] Ed. R.B.

McKerrow. 1911.

Greene in Conceipt. 1598. John Dickenson. Bodleian.

Greenes Ghost Haunting Conycatchers. 1602, 1626. Anon.

[Samuel Rowlands ?] British Museum.