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TEXTUAL NOTES ON A NEWLY-DISCOVERED FLODDEN POEM

(B.M. Add. MS. 45102, U.1)

The necessary particulars of this early sixteenth-century poem, a dramatic monologue in which the dead James IV is the speaker, are given in a paper by Dr. C. E. Wright recently published in the *British Museum Quarterly* xii, 13-17. A diplomatic print of the text, which in language shows only a few Northern characteristics, is also given by Dr. Wright. There is no serious difficulty in restoring the lost letters in the first five stanzas. Examination under the ultra-violet lamp has however failed to establish any reading for the last few letters of VI, 4, or for the penultimate word of VI, 7, and the initial only of the last word of VI, 7, is legible. I have suggested to Dr. Wright that the last word of VI, 4, should be completed as *hegh*[*hude*] 'nobility' rhyming with *ingratitude* and *exclud*[*e*], and the last two words of VI, 7, as [*gram*] *g*[*ryll*], or possibly [*grem*] *g*[*ryll*] 'fierce wrath (of God)'; cf. *godds gram* in *Cursor Mundi* 2423. Dr. Wright agrees that the restorations suggested fill the spaces.

The stanza would read then:

Notwithstanding my messeralbyll condiciun,
my fatell fall and myne ingratitude,
I requer my reder to forgyff my transgressiun,
most humly s[*u*]bmettyng me unto hys hegh[*hude*],
praying all Crysstyn pepell not me tyll exclud[*e*]
from ther pur prayers, yff it be godds wy[*ll*],
Off hys infinitt mersy, not hys [*gram*] *g*[*ryll*].

BRUCE DICKINS.