

Grierson Herbert - First Half of the Seventeenth Century.djvu/52



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"Toen Orfeus met zyn keel,
 Toen Orfeus met zyn keel, en veel
 In 't mastbosch zong en speelde
 Tierelier, tierelier
 Dat schoone, lustprieel."

None of Vondel's poems stand higher to-day than the satires in the estimation of his countrymen. "As satirist," says Professor Moltzer, "Vondel is a phœnix. In him Dutch poetry attained her zenith,—that is what we may say in thinking of by far the most of his satirical poems and verses." The reason is in part that in none of his poems is Vondel's peculiar ardour of feeling combined with so much of sanity and humour, so free from pedantry and the note of overstrained ecstasy which one may detect in his as in Crashaw's religious poetry.

But making allowance for this strain, the intensity of the satirical poems is only heightened and purified in the best of Vondel's religious poems. Such are, leaving the tragedies aside, the beautiful dedication to the Virgin of the *Brieven der Heilige Maeghden*, the *De Koningklyke Harp*,—a rhapsody on the Psalms of David,—and the best of the consolatory *Lykklachten*. Even in reading the longer didactic poems, though there is in them much that is hardly suitable for poetry, one is amazed by the poet's unflinching

ardour, the range of his study, and the fertility of his thought.

The tenderness of Vondel's feeling is as marked as its ardour. He has written of nature with delicacy and freshness in his *Wiltzang*, *Lantghezang*, and other

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