The Plays of John Lyly, edited by Carter A. Daniel. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1988. Pp. i, 374.

The rise in John Lyly's reputation as a dramatist over the last thirty years or so is clearly seen in the work of scholars such as Jonas Barish, G.K. Hunter, Robert Y. Turner, Michael Best, Joseph W. Houppert, Peter Saccio, Susan D. Thomas, and David Bergeron: it is no longer considered fashionable or just to dismiss Lyly on the grounds that his delicate, graceful, and often carefully-crafted plays are flimsy and insubstantial. Oxford's 1967 reprinting of R.W. Bond's *The Complete Works of John Lyly* (originally published in three volumes in 1902), and Anne B. Lancashire's 1969 edition of *Gallathea* and *Midas* for the Regents Renaissance Drama Series (to which Daniel nowhere refers) are further signs of a lively academic interest in this too-often underrated dramatist. Nonetheless, Lyly's plays remain largely the preserve of specialists; to others Lyly is little more than the man who bestowed the dubious gift of euphuism on the world. It is the educated general reader's neglect and misconstruction of Lyly as a playwright that Carter A. Daniel's new edition of Lyly's plays is primarily designed to rectify.

More specifically, Daniel's purpose, as explained in his bibliographical notes (25), is "to make Lyly's plays conveniently available to the modern reader without any more scholarly encumbrances than are necessary." Although "is it not intended to provide variant textual readings or complete variorum commentaries or to break any new bibliographic ground," Daniel has in fact "completely reedited" these plays "from microfilm copies of the printed quartos of the 1580s and 1590s and the collected *Six Court Comedies* of 1632," so his edition is of interest to the specialist in Lyly as well as to the more general reader to whom the introduction, the afterwords to the plays, and the endnotes are directed.

On the whole, Daniel achieves his stated purpose quite well: Lyly's plays are now made generally accessible by virtue of Daniel's being a modern-spelling edition and of its being in one attractively-printed, eminently-readable volume (the first one-volume edition of the plays since Edward Blount's in 1632, in fact). The level of language and the tone in Daniel's own prose are well-suited to the goal of making Lyly attractive and meaningful to the modern non-specialist reader: his writing is relaxed, informal, and, on occasion, colloquial. Only a strict purist would respond with outrage to his rendering *natura naturans* as "Nature doing its thing" (362, note 25 to *Campaspe*). Still, three features in the overall presentation of the volume impede its ease of use by, for example, undergraduate students: first, the lines are not numbered, so one is virtually forced to refer to individual passages by page number rather than by the conventional act, scene, and line numbers, and, of course, finding a passage alluded to by a critic but not quoted by him is made more difficult; second, the act and scene numbers are not indicated at the top of the page, so locating a passage takes longer than it should; and third, the notes, though fairly numerous, are not generally lengthy, and should have been presented as footnotes rather than as endnotes.

The introduction (divided into a section on euphuism, one on children's plays and court plays, a biographical sketch of Lyly, an encomiastic account of Lyly's role in the evolution of Tudor drama, and a discussion of the nature of the plays) provides the modern reader with a brief but serviceable orientation to the plays that follow, and to the circumstances of their original composition and production. Daniel is especially concerned to alert his readers to the constraints in theme, tone, subject matter, emotional range, etc., imposed on Lyly by the fact that most of these plays were written for child rather than adult actors and for presentation before Queen Elizabeth I. He dismisses the rather passé view that Lyly's plays depict Elizabethan court intrigues in allegorical form, and sees as the source of their importance Lyly's ability to make theme the unifying and organizing force in a play, his use of a principle of "graduated spectacle" whereby the most spectacular scene is reserved for the end of the play, and his ability to delineate character through dialogue. The least satisfying part of the introduction is Daniel's defense of euphuism as essentially the expression of Lyly's comic spirit, as a "sort of smiling parody of over-earnest innocence" (12), and as, because self-mocking, a "built-in protection against ridicule" in all Lyly's works (13). This defense is not adequate to account for the variety of contexts in which euphuism is found nor the subtlety of effects Lyly often achieves with it; Daniel's discussion would have profited from a serious consideration of Jonas Barish's study ("The Prose Style of John Lyly", *ELH* 23 (1956), (14-35), but nowhere does he direct his readers to this acute analysis.

The afterwords, which range from two to four pages in length, are too brief for detailed critical treatment of plays. However, Daniel does a creditable job, on the whole, of illustrating Lyly's organizing his plays by themes rather than by plot exigencies or by slavishly following his sources, of arguing for Lyly's use of dialogue for differentiation of character, of suggesting Lyly's versatile use of the stage resources at his disposal, and of providing a quick survey of some of the major readings of the plays. The only major lapse is his claim that none of the earlier versions of the Endymion story portrays Endymion as the lover rather than as the beloved (195-196). As Susan D. Thomas points out in an article not mentioned by Daniel ("*Endymion* and Its Sources," *CL* 30 (1978), 35-52), this version of the story can be found in Pliny (*Natural History*, II. vi. 41-43).

The notes are often very good (e.g. the explanation of points in note 11 to *Gallathea*), but there are some strange lapses and some inconsistent assumptions about the intended audience. Some references are too imprecise to be of much practical use to the reader. For example, note 45 to *Sapho and Phao* tells us that the "stories of Cupid's love for Psyche, and Venus's for Adonis, were widely told;" it is not clear how this is to help the reader, since those who know the stories presumably know that they were widely told. Note 11 to *Midas* tells us that "Phaeton lost control of the sun's chariot and nearly burned up the world," but not that Phaeton met a fiery end, and it is Phaeton's end that is the point of Lyly's allusion. Note 92 to *Gallathea* tells us that in "Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Iphis and Ianthes were indeed

sex-changed—although not by Venus.” Again, one wonders whom this note is designed to help; readers who need to be told, for example, who Psyche and Circe are (*Gallathea*, note 67), will be very much in the dark about Iphis and Ianthes. Surely a recounting of the main lines of the story would help the curious decide for themselves about Lyly’s purpose in alluding to it. Daniel typically refers to classical authors by name only, with the occasional title included; more complete references would not constitute undue “scholarly encumbrances” to the general reader who is tackling Lyly in the first place. A few notes contain errors that should be corrected in any subsequent edition; note 6 to *Campaspe* mistakenly identifies Pallas as Venus rather than as Athena; note 27 to *Sapho and Phao* has the Greeks themselves actually taking the wooden horse into Troy; and note 64 to *Gallathea* assumes that Silenus is supposed to be an artist, whereas what Lyly is alluding to, and wittily reversing, are the ancient images of the ugly satyr, Silenus, which concealed within themselves wondrous images of the gods. Note 80 to *Gallathea* (“‘Jovialist’ and ‘Venerian’ mean born under the signs of Jupiter and Venus”) is misleading since Jupiter and Venus are not zodiacal signs, nor are the signs ruled by them the whole story; a better note that would still avoid the complications of astrological theory would read: “one whose character and destiny are strongly influenced by the planets Jupiter and Venus,” or “are born when the influences of the planets Jupiter and Venus were especially strong.” Finally, there are a few typographical errors: 106, “between;” 145, “Diana’s numphs;” 370, note 74 is missing the slash between the lines of verse; 372, note 18, “King” should read “Queen,” and 381, note 180 seems to be missing a word.

Lyly as dramatist deserves a wider and more sympathetic audience than he has hitherto received this century, and Daniel’s edition, despite the limitations noted above, is generally well-tailored to fostering that renewal of appreciation.

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Robert Aulotte, *Montaigne: “Essais”*, Paris, P.U.F., 1988.

Chaque fervent des *Essais* s’y mire et, plus ou moins, les fait siens. Le danger est de s’y enfermer. Aussi, pour qui aime Montaigne, est-il tonique de savoir comment les lisent leurs meilleurs commentateurs. Le diligent lecteur qui ouvrira le *Montaigne: Essais* de Robert Aulotte ne quittera l’ouvrage qu’après l’avoir terminé.

Dans sa concision, qu’exige la collection, cet ouvrage renferme une subtile et rare richesse. Son titre n’a pas été choisi à la légère; les deux points qui séparent les deux noms montrent assez que ni l’auteur, ni l’oeuvre ne seront oubliés. “*Essais*” et non “*les Essais*”, car nous voyons page 1 que la forme la plus couramment utilisée date de l’édition posthume. Donc le texte en formation ou achevé, mais dont Montaigne fut uniquement responsable. Robert Aulotte porte ainsi un double regard