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T H E

P L A Y S

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WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

VOL. X.

3823 16

THE

PLAYS

OF

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Vol. X.

THE
P L A Y S

O F

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.

VOLUME the TENTH.

CONTAINING

ROMEO AND JULIET.

HAMLET.

OTHELLO.

L O N D O N,

Printed for C. Bathurst, W. Strahan, J. F. and C. Rivington,
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R O M E O

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J U L I E T.

VOL. X.

B

MEMORANDUM

UNITED STATES

P R O L O G U E.

TWO households, both alike in dignity,
In fair Verona, where we lay our scene,
From ancient grudge break to new mutiny,
Where civil blood makes civil hands unclean.
From forth the fatal loins of these two foes
A pair of star-cross'd lovers take their life;
Whose misadventur'd piteous overthrows
Do, with their death, bury their parents' strife.
The fearful passage of their death-mark'd love,
And the continuance of their parents' rage,
Which, but their childrens' end, nought could remove,
Is now the two hours' traffick of our stage;
The which if you with patient ears attend,
What here shall miss, our toil shall strive to mend*.

* This prologue, after the first copy was published in 1597, received several alterations, both in respect of correctness and versification. In the folio it is omitted.—The play was originally performed by *the Right Honourable the Lord of Hunsdon his servants*.

In the first of K. James I. was made an act of parliament for some restraint or limitation of noblemen in the protection of players, or of players under their sanction. STEEVENS.

Persons Represented.

ESCALUS, *Prince of Verona.*
Paris, *Kinsman to the Prince.*
Montague, } *Heads of two Houses, at variance with*
Capulet, } *each other.*
Romeo, *Son to Montague.*
Mercutio, } *Friends of Romeo.*
Benvolio, }
Tybalt, *Kinsman to Capulet.*
An old Man, his Cousin.
Friar Lawrence, a Franciscan.
Friar John, of the same order.
Balthasar, *Servant to Romeo.*
Sampson, } *Servants to Capulet.*
Gregory, }
Abram, *Servant to Montague.*
Three Musicians.
Peter.

Lady Montague, Wife to Montague.

Lady Capulet, Wife to Capulet.

Juliet, Daughter to Capulet, in love with Romeo.

Nurse to Juliet.

CHORUS, — *Page, Boy to Paris, an Officer, an Apothecary.*

Citizens of Verona, several Men and Women, relations to both Houses; Maskers, Guards, Watch and other Attendants.

The SCENE, in the beginning of the fifth act, is in Mantua; during all the rest of the play, at Verona.

ROMEO AND JULIET¹.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A STREET.

Enter Sampson, and Gregory, two servants of Capulet.

Sam. Gregory, o' my word, ² we'll not carry coals.

Greg. No, for then we should be colliers.

Sam.

¹ The story on which this play is founded, is related as a true one in *Girolamo de la Corte's History of Verona*. It was originally published by an anonymous Italian novelist in 1549 at Venice; and again in 1553, at the same place. The first edition of Banello's work appeared a year later than the last of these already mentioned. Pierre Boitseau copied it with alterations and additions. Belleforest adopted it in the first volume of his collection 1596; but very probably some edition of it yet more ancient had

² *we'll not carry coals.*] Dr. Warburton very justly observes, that this was a phrase formerly in use to signify *the bearing injuries*; but, as he has given no instances in support of his declaration, I thought it necessary to subjoin the following:

Nash, in his *Have with you to Saffron Walden*, 1595, says: "We will bear no coles, I warrant you." So, Skelton:

"——— You, I say, Julian,

"Wyll you beare no coles?"

So, in Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*, 2nd part, 1602: "He has had wrong, and if I were he, I would bear no coles." So, in *Law Tricks*, or, *Who would have thought it?* a comedy, by John Day, 1608: "I'll carry coals an you will, no horns." Again, in *May-Day*, a comedy by Chapman, 1610: "You must swear by no man's beard but your own, for that may breed a quarrel: above all things, you must carry no coals." And again, in the same play: "Now my ancient being a man of an *un-coal-carrying* spirit, &c." Again, in B. Jonson's

Sam. I mean, an we be in choler, we'll draw.

Greg. Ay, while you live, draw your neck out of the collar.

Sam,

had found its way abroad; as, in this improved state, it was translated into English, and published in an octavo volume 1562, but without a name. On this occasion it appears in the form of a poem entitled, *The tragicall Historie of Romeus and Juliet.* It was republished in 1587, under the same title: "*Contayning in it a rare Example of true Constancie: with the subtill Counsels and Practises of an old Fryer, and ibeir Event. Imprinted by R. Robinsón.*" Among the entries on the Books of the Stationers' Company, I find Feb. 18, 1582. "M. Tottell] *Romeo and Julietta.*" Again Aug. 5, 1596: "Edward White] a new ballad of *Romeo and Juliett.*" The same story is found in *The Palace of Pleasure*: however, Shakespeare was not entirely indebted to Painter's epitome; but rather to the poem already mentioned. Stanyhurst, the translator of Virgil in 1582, enumerates Julietta among his heroines, in a piece which he calls an Epitaph, or Commune Defunctorum: and it appears (as Dr. Farmer has observed), from a passage in Ames's *Typographical Antiquities*, that the story had likewise been translated by another hand. Captain Breval in his *Travels* tells us, that he saw at Verona the tomb of these unhappy lovers. STEEVENS.

This story was well known to the English poets before the time of Shakespeare. In an old collection of poems, called "*A gorgeous gallery of gallant Inventions, 1578,*" I find it mentioned;

"Sir *Romeus'* annoy but trifle seems to mine."

And

Every Man out of his Humour: "Here comes one that will carry coals; ergo, will hold my dog." And, lastly, in the poet's own *Hen. V*: "At Calais they stole a fireshovel; I knew by that piece of service the men would carry coals." Again, in the *Malcontent, 1604,*

"Great slaves fear better than love, born naturally for a coal-basket." STEEVENS.

— carry coals,

This phrase continued to be in use down to the middle of the last century. In a little satirical piece of Sir John Birkenhead, intitled, "Two centuries [of Books] of St. Paul's Church-yard, &c." published after the death of K. Cha. I. N^o 22. page 50, is inserted "*Fire, Fire!* a small manual, dedicated to Sir Arthur Haselridge; in which it is plainly proved by a whole chauldron of scripture, that *John Lilburn* will not carry coals." By Dr. Gouge. PERCY.

Sam. I strike quickly, being mov'd.

Greg. But thou art not quickly mov'd to strike.

Sam. A dog of the house of Montague moves me.

Greg. To move, is—to stir; and to be valiant, is—to stand to it: therefore, if thou art mov'd, thou runn'st away.

Sam. A dog of that house shall move me to stand: I will take the wall of any man or maid of Montague's.

Greg. That shews thee a weak slave; for the weakest goes to the wall.

Sam. True; and therefore women, being the weaker vessels, are ever thrust to the wall:—therefore I will push Montague's men from the wall, and thrust his maids to the wall.

Greg. The quarrel is between our masters, and us their men.

Sam. 'Tis all one, I will shew myself a tyrant: when I have fought with the men, I will be ³ cruel with the maids; I will cut off their heads.

Greg. The heads of the maids?

Sam. Ay, the heads of the maids, or their maiden-heads; take it in what sense thou wilt.

Greg. They must take it in sense, that feel it.

Sam. Me they shall feel, while I am able to stand; and, 'tis known, I am a pretty piece of flesh.

Greg. 'Tis well, thou art not fish; if thou hadst,

And again, *Romeo and Juliet* are celebrated in “*A poor Knight his Palace of private Pleasures*, 1579.”

I quote these passages for the sake of observing, that, if Shakespeare had not read Painter's translation, it is not likely that he would have altered the name to *Romeo*. There was another novel on the subject by L. da Porto; which has been lately printed at Venice. FARMER.

The two entries which I have quoted from the books at Stationers' Hall, may possibly dispose Dr. Farmer to retract his observation concerning Shakespeare's change in the names.

³ —cruel with the maids;] The first folio reads *civil* with the maids. JOHNSON.—So does the 4to, 1609. STEEVENS.

thou hadst been Poor John. Draw thy tool; here comes of the house of the Montagues.

Enter Abram, and Balthasar.

Sam. My naked weapon is out; quarrel, I will back thee.

Greg. How? turn thy back, and run?

Sam. Fear me not.

Greg. No, marry; I fear thee!

Sam. Let us take the law of our sides; let them begin.

Greg. I will frown, as I pass by; and let them take it as they list.

Sam. Nay, as they dare. † I will bite my thumb at them; which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sam. I do bite my thumb, sir.

Abr. Do you bite your thumb at us, sir?

Sam. Is the law on our side, if I say—ay?

Greg. No.

† *I will bite my thumb at them; which is a disgrace to them, if they bear it.]* So it signifies in Randolph's *Muses Looking-Glass*, act 3, sc. 3, p. 45.

Orgylus. "To bite his thumb at me.

Argus. "Why should not a man bite his thumb?

Orgylus. "At me? were I scorn'd, to see men bite their thumbs;

"Rapiers and daggers, &c." Dr. GRAY.

Dr. Lodge, in a pamphlet called *Wits Miseric*, &c. 1596, has this passage. "Behold next I see Contempt marching forth, giving mee the *fico* with his *thombe* in his mouth." In a translation from Stephens's *Apology for Herodotus*, in 1607, page 142, I meet with these words: "It is said of the Italians, if they once bite their fingers' ends in a threatening manner, God knows, if they set upon their enemies face to face, it is because they cannot assail them behind their backs." Perhaps Ben Jonson ridicules this scene of Romeo and Juliet, in his *New Inn*:

"*Huff.* How, spill it?

"*Spill it* at me?

"*Tip.* I reck not, but I spill it." STEEVENS.

Sam.

Sam. No, fir, I do not bite my thumb at you, fir; but I bite my thumb, fir.

Greg. Do you quarrel, fir?

Abr. Quarrel, fir? no, fir.

Sam. If you do, fir, I am for you; I serve as good a man as you.

Abr. No better.

Sam. Well, fir.

⁵ *Enter Benvolio.*

Greg. Say—better; here comes one of my master's kinsmen ⁶.

Sam. Yes, better, fir.

Abr. You lye.

Sam. Draw, if you be men.—Gregory, remember thy swashing blow ⁷. [*They fight.*]

Ben. Part, fools; put up your swords; You know not what you do.

⁵ *Enter Benvolio.*] Much of this scene is added since the first edition; but probably by Shakespeare, since we find it in that of the year 1599. POPE.

⁶ "Here comes one of my *Master's* kinsmen." Some mistake has happened in this place: *Gregory* is a servant of the *Capulets*; and *Benvolio* was of the *Montague* faction. FARMER.

Perhaps there is no mistake. *Gregory* may mean *Tybalt*, who enters immediately after *Benvolio*, but on a different part of the stage. The eyes of the servant may be directed the way he sees *Tybalt* coming, and in the mean time, *Benvolio* enters on the opposite side. STEEVENS.

⁷ —*thy swashing blow.*] Ben Jonson uses this expression in his *Staple for News*: "I do confes a *swashing blow*." In the *Three Ladies of London*, 1584, *Fraud* says:

"I will flaunt it and brave it after the lusty *Swasb*."
Again, in *As you like it*:

"I'll have a martial and a *swashing* outside."
To *swash* seems to have meant to be a bully, to be noisily valiant. So, Green, in his *Card of Fancy*, 1608, "— in spending and "spoiling, in swearing and *swashing*." Barrett, in his *Alvearie*, 1580, says, that "to *swash* is to make a noise with swordes against "tergats." STEEVENS.

Enter

Enter Tybalt.

Tyb. What, art thou drawn among these heartless hinds?

Turn thee, Benvolio, look upon thy death.

Ben. I do but keep the peace; put up thy sword, Or manage it to part these men with me.

Tyb. What, drawn, and talk of peace? I hate the word,
As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:
Have at thee, coward.

Enter three or four citizens, with clubs.

Cit. Clubs, bills, and partizans! strike! beat them down!
Down with the Capulets! down with the Montagues!

Enter old Capulet, in his gown; and lady Capulet.

Cap. What noise is this?—⁸ Give me my long sword, ho!

La. Cap. A crutch, a crutch!—Why call you for a sword?

Cap. My sword, I say!—old Montague is come, And flourishes his blade in spite of me.

Enter old Montague, and lady Montague,

Mon. Thou villain, Capulet,—Hold me not, let me go.

⁸ *Give me my long sword.*] The *long sword* was the sword used in war, which was sometimes wielded with both hands. JOHNSON, This *long sword* is mentioned in *The Coxcomb*, a comedy by Beaumont and Fletcher, where the justice says:

“Take their confessions, and my *long sword*;

“I cannot tell what danger we may meet with.”

It appears that it was once the fashion to wear two swords of different sizes at the same time.

So in *Decker's Satiro-mastix*:

“Peter Salamander, tie up your *great* and your *little sword*.”

STEEVENS.

La. Mon. Thou shalt not stir one foot to seek a foe.

Enter Prince, with attendants.

Prin. Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
Profaners of this neighbour-stained steel,—
Will they not hear?—what ho! you men, you
beasts,—

That quench the fire of your pernicious rage
With purple fountains issuing from your veins,—
On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
Throw your mis-temper'd weapons⁹ to the ground,
And hear the sentence of your moved prince.—
Three civil brawls, bred of an airy word,
By thee, old Capulet, and Montague,
Have thrice disturb'd the quiet of our streets;
And made Verona's ancient citizens
Cast by their grave befitting ornaments,
To wield old partizans, in hands as old,
Cankred with peace, to part your cankred hate:
If ever you disturb our streets again,
Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace.
For this time, all the rest depart away:
You, Capulet, shall go along with me;
And, Montague, come you this afternoon,
To know our further pleasure in this case,
To old Free-town, our common judgment-place.
Once more, on pain of death, all men depart.

[Exeunt Prince, Capulet, &c.]

Mon. Who set this ancient quarrel new abroad?—
Speak, nephew, were you by, when it began?

Ben. Here were the servants of your adversary,
And yours, close fighting ere I did approach:
I drew to part them; in the instant came
The fiery Tybalt, with his sword prepar'd;

⁹ — *mis-temper'd weapons* are angry weapons. So in *K. John*:

“ This inundation of *mis-temper'd* humour, &c.” STEEVENS.

Which, as he breath'd defiance to my ears,
 He swung about his head, and cut the winds,
 Who, nothing hurt withal, hiss'd him in scorn:
 While we were interchanging thrusts and blows,
 Came more and more, and fought on part and part,
 'Till the prince came, who parted either part.

La. Mon. O, where is Romeo!—saw you him to-day?
 Right glad I am, he was not at this fray.

Ben. Madam, an hour before the worshipp'd sun
 Peer'd forth the golden window of the east¹,
 A troubled mind drave me to walk abroad;
 Where—underneath the grove of sycamour,
 That westward rooteth from the city' side—
 So early walking did I see your son:

Towards him I made; but he was 'ware of me,
 And stole into the covert of the wood:

I, measuring his affections by my own,—

² That most are busied when they are most alone,—
 Pursu'd my humour, not pursuing his,

³ And gladly shunn'd who gladly fled from me.

Mon. Many a morning hath he there been seen,
 With tears augmenting the fresh morning's dew,
 Adding to clouds more clouds with his deep sighs:
 But all so soon as the all-cheering sun
 Should in the furthest east begin to draw

¹ *Peer'd forth the golden window of the east.*] The same thought occurs in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, B. 2. C. 10.

“ Early before the morn with cremosin ray

“ The windows of bright heaven opened had,

“ Through which into the world the dawning day

“ Might looke, &c.” STEEVENS.

² *That most are busied, &c.*] Edition 1597. Instead of which it is in the other edition thus:

————— by my own,

Which then most sought, where most might not be found,

Being one too many by my weary self,

Pursu'd my humour, &c. POPE.

³ *And gladly shunn'd, &c.*] The ten lines following, not in edition 1597, but in the next of 1599. POPE.

The shady curtains from Aurora's bed,
 Away from light steals home my heavy son,
 And private in his chamber pens himself;
 Shuts up his windows, locks fair day-light out,
 And makes himself an artificial night:
 Black and portentous must this humour prove,
 Unless good counsel may the cause remove.

Ben. My noble uncle, do you know the cause?

Mon. I neither know it, nor can learn it of him.

Ben. Have you importun'd him by any means?

Mon. Both by myself, and many other friends:
 But he, his own affections' counsellor,
 Is to himself—I will not say, how true—
 But to himself so secret and so close,
 So far from sounding and discovery,
 As is the bud bit with an envious worm,
 Ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air,
 5 Or dedicate his beauty to the same.
 Could we but learn from whence his sorrows grow,
 We would as willingly give cure, as know.

Enter Romeo, at a distance.

Ben. See, where he comes: So please you, step aside;
 I'll know his grievance, or be much deny'd.

Ben. *Have you importun'd, &c.*] These two speeches also omitted in edition 1597, but inserted in 1599. POPE.

Or dedicate his beauty to the same.] When we come to consider, that there is some power else besides *balmy air*, that brings forth, and makes the tender buds spread themselves, I do not think it improbable that the poet wrote,

Or dedicate his beauty to the *Sun*.

Or, according to the more obsolete spelling, *Sunne*; which brings it nearer to the traces of the corrupted text, THEOBALD.

I cannot but suspect that some lines are lost, which connected this simile more closely with the foregoing speech: these lines, if such there were, lamented the danger that Romeo will die of his melancholy, before his virtues or abilities were known to the world. JOHNSON.

I suspect no loss of connecting lines. The same expression occurs in *Timon*, Act. 4. Sc. 2.

“A dedicated beggar to the air.” STEEVENS.

Mon.

Mon. I would, thou wert so happy by thy stay,
To hear true shrift.—Come, madam, let's away.

[*Exeunt.*]

Ben. Good morrow, cousin.

Rom. Is the day so young ⁶?

Ben. But new struck nine.

Rom. Ay me! sad hours seem long.

Was that my father that went hence so fast?

Ben. It was:—What sadness lengthens Romeo's
hours?

Rom. Not having that, which, having, makes
them short.

Ben. In love?

Rom. Out ⁷—

Ben. Of love?

Rom. Out of her favour, where I am in love,

Ben. Alas, that love, so gentle in his view,
Should be so tyrannous and rough in proof!

Rom. Alas, that love, whose view is muffled still,
Should, without eyes, see path-ways ⁸ to his will!

Where

⁶ Is the day so *young*? i. e. is it so early in the day? The same expression (which might once have been popular) I meet with in *Acolastus*, a comedy 1529: "It is yet *young nyghte*, or there is yet moche of the nyghte to come." STEEVENS.

⁷ *Rom. Out*—] I take *out* not to be an imperfect part of a sentence cut off by aposiopesis; but rather the interjection still used in the north, where they say *Out!* much in the same sense as we say *fye!*—Romeo indeed afterwards tags a sentence with it, but that he is led into by Benvolio's supplement to the first *Out*. So, in another scene of this play:—*Out alas!* she's cold. PERCY.

Why should *Romco* say, *fye!* on being asked if he were in love? Does he not acknowledge his being so, in the very next line? Would he, a character *all made up of love*, use such terms of resentment or shame, as *Out!* or *fye!* on being suspected of a passion in which he gloried? STEEVENS.

⁸ — *to his will!*] Sir T. Hanmer, and after him Dr. Warburton, read, to his *ill*. The present reading has some obscurity; the meaning may be, that *love* finds out means to pursue his *desire*. That the *blind* should *find paths to ill* is no great wonder. JOHNSON.

I see no obscurity in the text. It is not unusual for those who are blinded by love to overlook every difficulty that opposes their pursuit. NICHOLS.

Where shall we dine?—O me!—What fray was here?

Yet tell me not, for I have heard it all.

Here's much to do with hate, but more with love:—

Why then, O brawling love! O loving hate!

The quarto 1597, reads

Should, without *locus*, give path-ways to our will!

This reading is the most intelligible. STEEVENS.

Why then, O brawling love, &c.] Of these lines neither the sense nor occasion is very evident. He is not yet in love with an enemy; and to love one and hate another is no such uncommon state, as can deserve all this toil of antithesis. JOHNSON.

Had Dr. Johnson attended to the letter of invitation in the next scene, he would have found that Rosaline was niece to Capulet. ANONYMOUS.

Every sonneteer characterises Love by contrarieties. Watson begins one of his canzonets:

“ Love is a sowre delight, a sugred grieve,

“ A living death, an ever-dying life, &c.”

Turberville makes Reason harangue against it in the same manner:

“ A fierie frost, a flame that frozen is with life!

“ A heavie burden light to beare! a vertue fraught with

“ vice! &c.”

Immediately from the *Romaunt of the Rose*:

“ Love it is an hatefull pees,

“ A free aquitaunce without reles—

“ An heavie burthen light to beare,

“ A wicked wawe awaie to weare:

“ And health full of maladie,

“ And charitie full of envie—

“ A laughter that in weping aie,

“ Rest that travaileth night and daie, &c.”

This kind of antithesis was very much the taste of the Provençal and Italian poets; perhaps it might be hinted by the ode of Sappho preserved by Longinus. Petrarch is full of it:

“ Pace non trovo, e non hó da far guerra,

“ E temo, e spero, e ardo, e son un ghiaccio,

“ E volo sopra'l ciel, e ghiaccio in terra,

“ E nulla stringo, e tutto'l mondo abbraccio, &c.” *Son.* 105.

Sir Tho. Wyat gives a translation of this sonnet, without any notice of the original, under the title of, *Description of the contrarious Passions in a Louer*, amongst the *Songes and Sonnetts*, by the Earle of Surrey, and others, 1574. FARMER.

O any thing, of nothing first created!
 O heavy lightness! serious vanity!
 Mis-shapen chaos of well-seeming forms!
 Feather of lead, bright smoke, cold fire, sick health!
 Still-waking sleep, that is not what it is!—
 This love feel I, that feel no love in this.
 Dost thou not laugh?

Ben. No, coz, I rather weep.

Rom. Good heart, at what?

Ben. At thy good heart's oppression.

Rom. ¹ Why, such is love's transgression.—

Griefs of mine own lie heavy in my breast;
 Which thou wilt propagate, to have it prest
 With more of thine: this love, that thou hast shown,
 Doth add more grief to too much of mine own.
 Love is a smoke rais'd with the fume of sighs;
² Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;
³ Being vex'd, a sea nourish'd with lovers' tears:
 What is it else? a madness most discreet,
 A choaking gall, and a preserving sweet.
 Farewel, my coz.

[*Going.*

Ben. Soft, I will go along;

An if you leave me so, you do me wrong.

Rom. Tut, I have lost myself; I am not here;
 This is not Romeo, he's some other where.

¹ *Why, such is love's transgression.—*] Such is the consequence of unskilful and mistaken kindness. JOHNSON.

² *Being purg'd, a fire sparkling in lovers' eyes;*] The author may mean *being purged of smoke*, but it is perhaps a meaning never given to the word in any other place. I would rather read, *Being urg'd, a fire sparkling.* Being excited and enforced. To urge the fire is the technical term. JOHNSON.

³ *Being vex'd, &c.*] As this line stands single, it is likely that the foregoing or following line that rhym'd to it is lost. JOHNSON.

It does not seem necessary to suppose any line lost. In the former speech about Love's contrarities, there are several lines which have no other to rhyme with them; as also in the following, about Rosalind's chastity. STEEVENS.

Ben. 4 Tell me in sadness, who she is you love?

Rom. What, shall I groan, and tell thee?

Ben. Groan? why, no;

But sadly tell me, who.

Rom. Bid a sick man in sadness make his will:—

O word ill urg'd to one that is so ill!—

In sadness, cousin, I do love a woman.

Ben. I aim'd so near, when I suppos'd you lov'd.

Rom. A right good marks-man!—And she's fair I love.

Ben. A right fair mark, fair coz, is soonest hit.

Rom. Well, in that hit, you miss: she'll not be hit

With Cupid's arrow, she hath Dian's wit;

5 And, 6 in strong proof of chastity well arm'd,

From love's weak childish bow she lives unharm'd.

She will not stay the siege of loving terms,

Nor bide the encounter of assailing eyes,

Nor ope her lap to saint-seducing gold:

O, she is rich in beauty; only poor,

That, when she dies, 7 with beauty dies her store.

Ben.

4 *Tell me in sadness,*] That is, tell me *gravely*, tell me in *seriousness*. JOHNSON.

5 *And in strong proof &c.*] As this play was written in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, I cannot help regarding these speeches of Romeo as an oblique compliment to her majesty, who was not liable to be displeas'd at hearing her chastity praised after she was suspected to have lost it, or her beauty commended in the 67th year of her age, though she never possess'd any when she was young. Her declaration that she would continue unmarried increases the probability of the present supposition. STEEVENS.

6 *—in strong proof*] In chastity of proof, as we say in armour of proof. JOHNSON.

7 *—with beauty dies her store.*] Mr. Theobald reads, “*With her dies beauty's store;*” and is followed by the two succeeding editors. I have replaced the old reading, because I think it at least as plausible as the correction. *She is rich*, says he, *in beauty*, and *only poor* in being subject to the lot of humanity, that *her store*, or riches, *can be destroyed by death*, who shall, by the same blow, put an end to beauty. JOHNSON.

Ben. Then she hath sworn, that she will still live chaste?

Rom. She hath, and in that sparing makes huge waste;

For beauty, starv'd with her severity,
Cuts beauty off from all posterity⁹.

She is too fair, too wise; ¹ wisely too fair,
To merit blifs by making me despair:

She hath forsworn to love; and, in that vow,
Do I live dead, that live to tell it now.

Ben. Be rul'd by me, forget to think of her.

Rom. O, teach me how I should forget to think.

Ben. By giving liberty unto thine eyes;
Examine other beauties.

Rom. 'Tis the way

To call hers, exquisite, in question more:

These happy masks², that kiss fair ladies' brows,
Being black, put us in mind they hide the fair;
He, that is stricken blind, cannot forget

Theobald's alteration may be countenanced by the following passage in *Swetnam Arraign'd*, a comedy, 1620:

"Nature now shall boast no more

"Of the riches of her store;

"Since, in this her chiefest prize,

"All the stock of beauty dies."

Again, in the 14th Sonnet of Shakespeare:

"Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date."

Again, in Massinger's *Virgin-Martyr*:

"—— with her dies

"The abstract of all sweetness that's in woman." STEEVENS.

⁹ *Rom.* *She hath, and in that sparing, &c.*] None of the following speeches of this scene are in the first edition of 1597. POPE.

⁹ *For beauty, starv'd with her severity,*

Cuts beauty off from all posterity.]

So in our author's Third Sonnet.

"Or who is he so fond will be the tomb

"Of his self-love, to stop posterity?"

MALONE.

¹ —too wisely fair.] HANMER. For wisely too fair. JOHNSON.

² These happy masks, &c.] i. e. the masks worn by female spectators of the play. Former editors print *those* instead of *these*, but without authority. STEEVENS.

The

The precious treasure of his eye-sight lost:
 Shew me a mistress that is passing fair,
 What doth her beauty serve, but as a note
 Where I may read, who pass'd that passing fair?
 Farewel; thou canst not teach me to forget³.

Ben. I'll pay that doctrine, or else die in debt.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

A S T R E E T.

Enter Capulet, Paris, and Servant.

Cap. And Montague is bound as well as I,
 In penalty alike; and 'tis not hard, I think,
 For men so old as we to keep the peace.

Par. Of honourable reckoning are you both;
 And pity 'tis, you liv'd at odds so long.
 But now, my lord, what say you to my suit?

Cap. But saying o'er what I have said before:
 My child is yet a stranger in the world,
 She hath not seen the change of fourteen years;
 Let two more summers wither in their pride,
 Ere we may think her ripe to be a bride.

Par. Younger than she are happy mothers made.

Cap. 4 And too soon marr'd are those so early made.

³ *Thou canst not teach me to forget.*]

"Of all afflictions taught a lover yet,

"'Tis sure the hardest science, *to forget.*"—Pope's *Eloisa*.

STEEVENS.

⁴ *And too soon marr'd are those so early made.*] The 4to, 1597,
 reads:—And too soon *marr'd* are those so early *married*.

Pottenham, in his *Art of Poetry*, 1589, uses this expression, which
 seems to be proverbial, as an instance of a figure which he calls the
Rebound:

"The maid that *soon married* is, *soon marr'd* is."

The jingle between *marr'd* and *made* is likewise frequent among
 the old writers. So Sidney:

"Oh! he is *marr'd* that is for others *made*!"

Spenser introduces it very often in his different poems. STEEVENS.

The earth hath swallow'd all my hopes but she,
 5 She is the hopeful lady of my earth :
 But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart,
 My will to her consent is but a part ;
 An she agree, within her scope of choice
 Lies my consent and fair according voice.
 This night I hold an old accustom'd feast,
 Whereto I have invited many a guest,
 Such as I love ; and you, among the store,
 One more, most welcome, makes my number more.
 At my poor house, look to behold this night
 6 Earth-treading stars, that make dark heaven light :

5 *She is the hopeful lady of my earth.*] This line is not in the first edition. POPE.

The lady of his earth is an expression not very intelligible, unless he means that she is heir to his estate, and I suppose no man ever called his *lands* his *earth*. I will venture to propose a bold change:

She is the hope *and stay* of my *full years*. JOHNSON.

She is the hopeful lady of my earth.—This is a Gallicism: *Fille de terre* is the French phrase for an *heirefs*.

King Richard II. calls his land, i. e. his kingdom, *his earth*:

“ Feed not thy sovereign’s foe, my gentle *earth*.”

Again,

“ So weeping, smiling, greet I thee, my *earth*.”

Earth, in other old plays is likewise put for *lands*, i. e. landed estate. So in a *Trick to catch the old one*, 1619:

“ A rich widow and four hundred a year in good *earth*.”

STEEVENS.

6 *Earth-treading stars, that make dark heaven light:*] This nonsense should be reformed thus:

Earth-treading stars that make dark *even* light:

i. e. When the evening is dark, and without stars, these earthly stars supply their place, and light it up. So again in this play:

Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night,

Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop’s ear. WARBURTON.

But why nonsense? Is any thing more commonly said, than that beauties eclipse the sun? Has not Pope the thought and the word?

“ Sol through white curtains shot a tim’rous ray,

“ And op’d those eyes that must *eclipse the day*.”

Both the old and the new reading are philosophical nonsense ; but they are both, and both equally, poetical sense. JOHNSON.

Such

Such comfort, as ⁷ do lusty young men feel
 When well-apparel'd April on the heel
 Of limping winter treads, even such delight
 Among fresh female buds shall you this night
 Inherit at my house; hear all, all see,
 And like her most, whose merit most shall be:
⁸ Such, amongst view of many, mine, being one,
 May stand in number, though in reckoning none.

Come,

⁷ —do lusty young men feel] To say, and to say in pompous words, that a *young man shall feel* as much in an assembly of beauties, as *young men feel in the month of April*, is surely to waste sound upon a very poor sentiment. I read:

Such comfort as do lusty *yeomen* feel.

You shall feel from the sight and conversation of these ladies, such hopes of happiness and such pleasure, as the farmer receives from the spring, when the plenty of the year begins, and the prospect of the harvest fills him with delight. JOHNSON.

The following passage from Chaucer's *Romaunt of the Rose*, will support the present reading, and shew the propriety of Shakespeare's comparison: for to tell *Paris* that he should feel the same sort of pleasure in an assembly of beauties, which *young folk* feel in that season when they are most *gay and amorous*, was surely as much as the old man ought to say:

- "That it was May, thus dremid me,
- "In time of love and jolite,
- "That al thing ginnith waxin gay, &c.—
- "Then *yonge folke* entendin aye,
- "For to ben gaie and amorous,
- "The time is then so favorable."

Romaunt of the Rose, v. 51, &c.

STEEVENS.

- ⁸ Such, amongst view of many, mine, being one,
 May stand in number, though in reckoning none.]

The first of these lines I do not understand. The old folio gives no help; the passage is there, *Which one more view*. I can offer nothing better than this;

*Within your view of many, mine being one,
 May stand in number, &c.* JOHNSON.

A very slight alteration will restore the clearest sense to this passage. Shakespeare might have written the lines thus:

*Search among view of many: mine, being one,
 May stand in number, though in reckoning none.*

i. e. *Amongst the many you will view there, search for one that will*

Come, go with me:—Go, firrah, trudge about
Through fair Verona; find those persons out,
Whose names are written there; and to them say,
My house and welcome on their pleasure stay.

[*Exeunt Capulet, and Paris.*

Serv. 9 Find them out, whose names are written here?
It is written — that the shoemaker should meddle
with his yard, and the tailor with his last, the fisher
with his pencil, and the painter with his nets; but
I am sent to find those persons, whose names are
here writ, and can never find what names the writing
person hath here writ. I must to the learned:—
In good time.

Enter Benvolio, and Romeo.

Ben. Tut, man! one fire burns out another's burning,
One pain is lessen'd by another's anguish;
Turn giddy, and be holp by backward turning;
One desperate grief cures with another's languish:
Take thou some new infection to thy eye,
And the rank poison of the old will die.

Rom. 1 Your plantain leaf is excellent for that.

Ben.

please you. Chuse out of the multitude. This agrees exactly with
what he had already said to him:

— Hear all, all see,

And like her most whose merit most shall be."

My daughter (he proceeds) *will, it is true, be one of the number, but
her beauty can be of no reckoning* (i. e. estimation) *among those whom
you will see here. Reckoning for estimation,* is used before in this
very scene:

"Of honourable *reckoning* are you both." STEEVENS.

9 *Find them out, whose names are written here?*] The quarto,
1597, adds. "And yet I know not who are written here: I must
to the learned to learn of them; that's as much as to say, the
tailor, &c." STEEVENS.

1 *Your plantain leaf is excellent for that.*] Tackius tells us, that
a toad, before she engages with a spider, will fortify herself with
some of this plant; and that, if she comes off wounded, she cures
herself afterwards with it. DR. GRAY.

Ben. For what, I pray thee?

Rom. For your broken shin.

Ben. Why, Romeo, art thou mad?

Rom. Not mad, but bound more than a mad-man is;
Shut up in prison, kept without my food,
Whipt, and tormented, and—Good-e'en, good fellow.

Serv. God gi' good e'en.—I pray, sir, can you read?

Rom. Ay, mine own fortune in my misery. †

Serv. Perhaps you have learn'd it without book;
But I pray, can you read any thing you see?

Rom. Ay, if I know the letters, and the language.

Serv. Ye say honestly; Rest you merry!

Rom. Stay, fellow; I can read.

[He reads the list.]

Signior Martino, and his wife, and daughters; County Anselm, and his beauteous sisters; The lady widow of Vitruvio; Signior Placentio, and his lovely nieces; Mercutio, and his brother Valentine; Mine uncle Capulet, his wife, and daughters; My fair niece Rosaline; Livia; Signior Valentio, and his cousin Tybalt; Lucio, and the lively Helena.

A fair assembly; Whither should they come?

Serv. Up.

Rom. Whither? to supper?

Serv. To our house.

Rom. Whose house?

Serv. My master's.

The same thought occurs in *Albumazar*, in the following lines:

“ Help, Armellina, help! I'm fall'n i' the cellar:

“ Bring a fresh *plantain leaf*, I've broke my shin.”

Again, in *The Case is Alter'd*, by Ben Jonson 1609, a fellow who has had his head broke, says: “ 'Tis nothing, a fillip, a device: fellow Juniper, pr'ithee get me a *plantain*.”

The *plantain leaf* is a blood-stauncher, and was formerly applied to green wounds. STEEVENS.

† — to supper?] Surely these words, *to supper*, must belong to the servant's answer in the next speech:

To supper, to our house. STEEVENS.

Rom. Indeed, I should have ask'd you that before.

Serv. Now I'll tell you without asking : My Master is the great rich Capulet ; and if you be not of the house of Montagues, I pray, come and crush a cup of wine³. Rest you merry.

Ben. At this same ancient feast of Capulet's
Supps the fair Rosaline, whom thou so lov'st ;
With all the admired beauties of Verona :
Go thither ; and, with unattainted eye,
Compare her face with some that I shall show,
And I will make thee think thy swan a crow.

Rom. When the devout religion of mine eye
Maintains such falsehood, then turn tears to fires !
And these,—who, often drown'd, could never die,—
Transparent hereticks, be burnt for liars !
One fairer than my love ! the all-seeing sun
Ne'er saw her match, since first the world begun.

Ben. Tut ! tut ! you saw her fair, none else being by,
Herself pois'd with herself in either eye :
But in those crystal scales, ⁴ let there be weigh'd
Your lady's love against some other maid
That I will shew you, shining at this feast,
And she shall scant shew well, that now shews best.

³ — crush a cup of wine.] This cant expression seems to have been once common among low people. I have met with it often in the old plays. So in the *Two Angry Women of Abington*, 1599 :

“ Fill the pot, hostess, &c. and we'll crush it.”

Again, in Hoffman's *Tragedy*, 1631 :

“ — we'll crush a cup of thine own country wine.”

Again, in the *Pinder of Wakefield*, 1599, the Cobler says :

“ Come, George, we'll crush a pot before we part.”

We still say in cant language — to crack a bottle. STEEVENS.

⁴ ——— let there be weigh'd

Your lady's love against some other maid] But the comparison was not betwixt the love that Romeo's mistress paid him, and the person of any other young woman ; but betwixt Romeo's mistress herself, and some other that should be matched against her. The poet therefore must certainly have wrote :

Your lady-love against some other maid. WARBURTON.

Your lady's love is the love you bear to your lady, which in our language is commonly used for the lady herself. REVISAL.

Rom.

Rom. I'll go along, no such fight to be shewn,
But to rejoice in splendor of mine own. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III.

A room in Capulet's house.

Enter lady Capulet, and Nurse.

La. Cap. Nurse, where's my daughter? call her
forth to me.

Nurse. Now, by my maiden-head,—at twelve
year old,—

I bade her come.—What, lamb! what, lady-bird!—
God forbid!—where's this girl?—what, Juliet!

Enter Juliet.

Jul. How now, who calls?

Nurse. Your mother.

Jul. Madam, I am here; what is your will?

La. Cap. This is the matter:—Nurse, give leave
awhile,

We must talk in secret.—Nurse, come back again;
I have remember'd me, thou shalt hear our counsel.
Thou know'st, my daughter's of a pretty age.

Nurse. Faith, I can tell her age unto an hour.

La. Cap. She's not fourteen.

Nurse. I'll lay fourteen of my teeth,—

And yet, ^s to my teen be it spoken, I have but four,—
She's not fourteen: How long is't now to Lammas-
tide?

La. Cap. A fortnight, and odd days.

Nurse. Even or odd, of all days in the year,

^s — to my teen—] To my sorrow. JOHNSON.

So, in *Tancred and Guismond*, 1592:

“And on his cinders wreak my cruel teen.”

Again, in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, B. I. C. 9.

“—— for dread and doleful teen.”

This old word is introduced by Shakespeare for the sake of the
jingle between *teen*, and *four*, and *fourteen*. STEEVENS.

Come Lammas-eve at night, shall she be fourteen.
 Susan and she,—God rest all Christian souls!—
 Were of an age.—Well, Susan is with God;
 She was too good for me: But, as I said,
 On Lammas-eve at night shall she be fourteen;
 That shall she, marry; I remember it well.
 'Tis since the earthquake⁶ now eleven years;
 And she was wean'd,—I never shall forget it,—
 Of all the days of the year, upon that day:
 For I had then laid wormwood to my dug,
 Sttting i' the sun under the dove-house wall,
 My lord and you were then at Mantua:—
 Nay, I do bear a brain⁷:—but, as I said,
 When it did taste the worm-wood on the nipple
 Of my dug, and felt it bitter, pretty fool!
 To see it teachy, and fall out with the dug.
 Shake, quoth the dove-house: 'twas no need, I trow,
 To bid me trudge.
 And since that time it is eleven years:
 For then she could stand alone⁸; nay, by the rood,
 She

⁶ *It is since the earthquake now eleven years;*] But how comes the nurse to talk of an *earthquake* upon this occasion? There is no such circumstance, I believe, mentioned in any of the novels from which Shakespeare may be supposed to have drawn his story; and therefore it seems probable, that he had in view the earthquake, which had really been felt in many parts of England in his own time, viz. on the 6th of April, 1580. [See *Stowe's Chronicle*, and *Gabriel Harvey's* letter in the preface to *Spenser's works*, ed. 1679.] If so, one may be permitted to conjecture, that *Romeo and Juliet*, or this part of it at least, was written in 1591; after the 6th of April, when the *eleven years since the earthquake* were completed; and not later than the middle of July, a fortnight and odd days before *Lammas-tide*. TYRWHITT.

⁷ Well, I do bear a brain.] So, in *Ram-alley*, or *Merry Tricks*, 1611:

“Dasb, we must bear some brain.”

Again, in Marston's *Dutch Courtesan*, 1604:

“—nay an I bear not a brain.”

Again, in Heywood's *Golden Age*, 1611:

“As I can bear a pack, so I can bear a brain.” STEEVENS.

⁸ — could stand alone.] The 4to, 1597, reads: “could stand
 high

She could have run and waddled all about.
 For even the day before, she broke her brow:
 And then my husband—God be with his soul!
 'A was a merry man;—took up the child;
Yea, quoth he, dost thou fall upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward, when thou hast more wit;
Wilt thou not, Jule? and, by my holy-dam,
 The pretty wretch left crying, and said—*Ay*:
 To see now, how a jest shall come about!
 I warrant, an I should live a thousand years,
 I never should forget it; *Wilt thou not, Jule?* quoth he:
 And pretty fool, ' it stinted, and said—*Ay*.

La. Cap. Enough of this; I pray thee, hold thy peace.

' *Nurse.* Yes, madam; Yet I cannot chuse but laugh,
 To think it should leave crying, and say—*Ay*:
 And yet, I warrant, it had upon its brow
 A bump as big as a young cockrel's stone;
 A par'lous knock; and it cried bitterly.
Yea, quoth my husband, fall'st upon thy face?
Thou wilt fall backward when thou com'st to age;
Wilt thou not, Jule? it stinted, and said—*Ay*.

high lone, i. e. quite alone, completely alone. So in another of our author's plays, *high fantastical* means entirely fantastical. STEEVENS.

— *it stinted*.] i. e. it stopped, it forbore from weeping. So Sir Thomas North, in his translation of Plutarch, speaking of the wound which Antony received, says: "for the blood *stinted* a little when he was laid." So in *Titus Andronicus*:

"He can at pleasure *stint* their melody."

Again, in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, 1607: "—— a letter

"New bleeding from their pens, scarce *stinted* yet."

Again, in *Cynthia's Revenge*, by Ben Jonson:

"*Stint* thy babbling tongue."

Again, in *What you will*, by Marston, 1607:

"Pish! for shame *stint* thy idle chat."

Again, in the *Misfortunes of King Arthur*, an ancient drama, 1587:

"—— Fame's but a blast that sounds a while,

"And quickly *stints*, and then is quite forgot."

Spenser uses this word frequently in his *Faerie Queene*. STEEVENS.

' *Nurse.* *Yes, madam; yet I cannot chuse, &c.*] This speech and tautology is not in the first edition. POPE.

Jul. And stint thou too, I pray thee, nurse, say I.

Nurse. Peace, I have done. God mark thee to his grace!

Thou wast the prettiest babe that e'er I nurs'd :
An I might live to see thee married once,
I have my wish.

La. Cap. Marry, that marry is the very theme
I came to talk of :—Tell me, daughter Juliet,
How stands your disposition to be married ?

Jul. ² It is an honour that I dream not of.

Nurse. An honour ! were not I thine only nurse,
I'd say, thou hadst suck'd wisdom from thy teat.

³ *La. Cap.* Well, think of marriage now ; younger
than you,

Here in Verona, ladies of esteem,
Are made already mothers : by my count,
I was your mother much upon these years
That you are now a maid. Thus then, in brief ;—
The valiant Paris seeks you for his love.

Nurse. A man, young lady ! lady, such a man,
As all the world — Why, he's a man of wax ⁴.

La. Cap. Verona's summer hath not such a flower.

² *It is an honour*] The modern editors all read, *it is an honour*. I have restored the genuine word, *hour*, which is more seemly from a girl to her mother. *Your, fire*, and such words as are vulgarly uttered in two syllables, are used as dissyllables by Shakespeare.

JOHNSON.

The first quarto reads *honour* ; the folio *hour*. I have chosen the reading of the quarto.

The word *hour* seems to have nothing in it that could draw from the Nurse that applause which she immediately bestows. The word *honour* was likely to strike the old ignorant woman, as a very elegant and discreet word for the occasion. STEEVENS.

³ Instead of this speech, the quarto, 1597, has only one line :
Well, girl, the noble County Paris seeks thee for his wife.

STEEVENS.

⁴ — *a man of wax.*] So, in *Wily Beguiled* :

“ Why, he's a man as one should picture him in wax.”

STEEVENS.

Nurse.

⁵ *Nurse.* Nay, he's a flower; in faith, a very flower.

⁶ *La. Cap.* What say you? can you love the gentleman?

This night you shall behold him at our feast:
 Read o'er the volume ⁷ of young Paris' face,
 And find delight writ there with beauty's pen;
⁸ Examine every several lineament,
 And see how one another lends content;
 And what obscur'd in this fair volume lies,
 Find written in the margin of his eyes ⁹.
 This precious book of love, this unbound lover,
 To beautify him, only lacks a cover:
 The fish lives in the sea; and 'tis much pride,
 For fair without the fair within to hide:
 That book in many's eyes doth share the glory,
¹ That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;

So

⁵ *Nurse.*] After this speech of the Nurse, Lady Capulet in the old quarto says only:

“ Well, Juliet, how like you of Paris' love?”

She answers, “ I'll look to like, &c.” and so concludes the scene, without the intervention of that stuff to be found in the later quartos and the folio. STEEVENS.

⁶ *La. Cap. What say you? &c.*] This ridiculous speech is entirely added since the first edition. POPE.

⁷ *Read o'er the volume &c.*] The same thought occurs in *Pericles Prince of Tyre*:

“ Her face the book of praises, where is read

“ Nothing but curious pleasures.” STEEVENS.

⁸ *Examine ev'ry several lineament,*] The quarto, 1599, reads, every *married* lineament.—Shakespeare meant by this last phrase, Examine how nicely one feature depends upon another, or accords with another, in order to produce that harmony of the whole face which seems to be implied in *content*.—In *Troilus and Cressida*, he speaks of “ the *married* calm of states;” and in his 8th Sonnet has the same allusion:

“ If the true concord of well-tuned sounds,

“ By unions *married*, do offend thine ear.” STEEVENS.

⁹ — *the margin of his eyes.*] The comments on ancient books were always printed in the margin. So *Horatio* in *Hamlet* says:

“ — I knew you must be edify'd by the *margin*, &c.” STEEVENS.

¹ *That in gold clasps locks in the golden story;*] The *golden story* is perhaps the *golden legend*, a book in the darker ages of popery much

read,

So shall you share all that he doth possess,
By having him, making yourself no less.

Nurse. No less? nay, bigger; women grow by men.

La. Cap. Speak briefly, can you like of Paris' love?

Jul. I'll look to like, if looking liking move:
But no more deep will I endart mine eye,²
Than your consent gives strength to make it fly,

Enter a Servant.

¹ *Serv.* Madam, the guests are come, supper serv'd up, you call'd, my young lady ask'd for, the nurse curs'd in the pantry, and every thing in extremity. I must hence to wait; I beseech you, follow straight.

La. Cap. We follow thee. — Juliet, the county stays.

Nurse. Go, girl, seek happy nights to happy days.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E I V.

A S T R E E T.

Enter Romeo, Mercutio⁴, Benvolio, with five or six Maskers, Torch-bearers, and others.

Rom. What, shall this speech be spoke for our excuse?

Or

read, and doubtless often exquisitely embellished, but of which Canus, one of the popish doctors, proclaims the author to have been *homo ferrei oris, plumbei cordis.* JOHNSON.

The poet may mean nothing more than to say, that those books are most esteemed by the world, where *valuable contents* are embellished by as *valuable binding.* STEEVENS.

² — endart *mine eye,*] The quarto, 1597, reads: “engage mine eye.” STEEVENS.

³ To this speech there have been likewise additions since the elder quarto, but they are not of sufficient consequence to be quoted. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Mercutio.*] Shakespeare appears to have formed this character on the following slight hint in the original story: “— another gentleman called *Mercutio*, which was a courtlike gentleman, very
wel

Or shall we on without apology?

Ben. 5 The date is out of such prolixity:
 We'll have no Cupid hood-wink'd with a scarf,
 Bearing a Tartar's painted bow of lath,
 Scaring the ladies ⁶ like a crow-keeper;
 7 Nor no without-book prologue, faintly spoke
 After the prompter, for our entrance:
 But, let them measure us by what they will,

wel beloved of all men, and by reason of his pleasant and courteous behavior was in al companies wel intertain'd." *Painter's Palace of Pleasure*, tom. 2. p. 221. STEEVENS.

⁵ *The date is out of such prolixity.*] i. e. *Masks* are now out of fashion. That Shakespear was an enemy to these fooleries, appears from his writing none; and that his plays discredited such entertainments, is more than probable. But in James's time, that reign of false taste as well as false politics, they came again in fashion; and a deluge of this affected nonsense overflowed the court and country. WARBURTON.

The diversion going forward at present is not a *masque* but a *masquerade*. In Henry VIII. where the king introduces himself to the entertainment given by Wolsey, he appears, like Romeo and his companions, in a *mask*, and sends a messenger before, to make an apology for his intrusion. This was a custom observed by those who came uninvited, with a desire to conceal themselves for the sake of intrigue, or to enjoy the greater freedom of conversation. Their entry on these occasions was always prefaced by some speech in praise of the beauty of the ladies, or the generosity of the entertainer; and to the *prolixity* of such introductions I believe Romeo is made to allude.

So, in *Histrionastix*, 1610, a man expresses his wonder that the *maskers* enter without any compliment:

"What come they in so blunt, *without device*?"

In the accounts of many entertainments given in reigns antecedent to that of Elizabeth, I find this custom preserved. Of the same kind of masquerading, see a specimen in *Timon*, where Cupid precedes a troop of ladies with a speech. STEEVENS.

Shakespear has written a *masque* which the reader will find introduced in the 4th act of the *Tempest*. It would have been difficult for the reverend annotator to have proved they were discontinued during any period of Shakespear's life. PERCY.

⁶ — *like a crow-keeper* ;] The word *crow-keeper* is explained in *Lear*. JOHNSON.

⁷ *Nor no without-book prologue, &c.*] The two following lines are inserted from the first edition. POPE.

We'll

We'll measure them a measure, and be gone.

Rom. ⁸ Give me a torch,—I am not for this
ambling;

Being but heavy, I will bear the light.

Mer. Nay, gentle Romeo, we must have you
dance.

Rom. Not I, believe me: you have dancing shoes,
With nimble soles; I have a soul of lead,
So staks me to the ground, I cannot move.

⁹ *Mer.* You are a lover; borrow Cupid's wings,
And soar with them above a common bound.

Rom. I am too fore enpearced with his shaft,
To soar with his light feathers; and ¹ so bound,
I cannot bound a pitch above dull woe:

⁸ *Give me a torch,*] The character which Romeo declares his resolution to assume, will be best explained by a passage in *Westward Hoe*, by Decker and Webster, 1607: "He is just like a torch-bearer to maskers; he wears good cloaths, and is ranked in good company, but he doth nothing." A torch-bearer seems to have been a constant attendant on every troop of masks. So, in the second part of *Robert Earl of Huntingdon*, 1601:

" — As on a masque; but for our torch-bearers,
" Hell cannot rake so mad a crew as I."

Again, in the same play:

" ————— a gallant crew,
" Of courtly maskers landed at the stairs;
" Before whom, unintreated, I am come,
" And here prevented, I believe, their page,
" Who, with his torch, is enter'd."

Again, in the *Merchant of Venice*:

" " We have not spoke as yet of torch-bearers."

Again, in Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1603:

" Night, like a masque, is enter'd heaven's great hall,
" With thousand torches ushering the way." STEEVENS.

⁹ *Mer.* *You are a lover, &c.*] The twelve following lines are not to be found in the first edition. POPE.

¹ — so bound,

I cannot bound, &c.] Let Milton's example, on this occasion, keep Shakespeare in countenance:

" — in contempt
" At one slight bound high over-leap'd all bound
" Of hill, &c." Par. Lost, book iv. l. 180. STEEVENS.

Under

Under love's heavy burden do I sink.

Mer. And, to sink in it, should you burden love?
Too great oppression for a tender thing.

Rom. Is love a tender thing? it is too rough,
Too rude, too boist'rous; and it pricks like thorn.

Mer. If love be rough with you, be rough with love;
Prick love for pricking, and you beat love down.—
Give me a case to put my visage in:

[*Putting on a mask.*

A visor for a visor! — what care I,
What curious eye doth quote deformities?²
Here are the beetle-brows, shall blush for me.

Ben. Come, knock, and enter; and no sooner in,
But every man betake him to his legs.

Rom. A torch for me: ³ let wantons, light of heart,
Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels⁴;
⁵ For I am proverb'd with a grandsire phrase,—

I'll

² — *doth quote deformities?*] To quote is to observe. So, in *Hamlet*, Act 2. Sc. 1.

I am sorry, that with better heed and judgment
I had not quoted him. See a note on this passage.

STEEVENS.

³ *Let wantons light of heart, &c.*] Middleton has borrowed this thought in his play of *Blurt Master Constable*, 1602:

“ — bid him, whose heart no sorrow feels,
“ Tickle the rushes with his wanton heels,
“ I have too much lead at mine.” STEEVENS.

⁴ *Tickle the senseless rushes with their heels;*] It has been already observed, that it was anciently the custom to strew rooms with *rushes*, before carpets were in use. So *Hentzner* in his *Itinerary*, speaking of *Q. Elizabeth's* presence-chamber at Greenwich, says: “ The floor, after the English fashion, was strewed with *bay*,” meaning *rushes*. So, in the *Dumb Knight*, 1653:

“ I thou dancest on my heart, lascivious queen,
“ Even as upon these *rushes* which thou treadest.”

The *stage* was anciently strewn with *rushes*. So, in *Decker's Gul's Hornbook*, 1609: “ — on the very *rushes* when the comedy is to daunce.” STEEVENS.

⁵ The *grandsire* phrase is—*The black ox has trod upon my foot.* JOHNSON.

The proverb which *Romeo* means, is contain'd in the line immediately following: *To hold the candle*, is a very common proverbial

I'll be a candle-holder, and look on.—

The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.

Mer. 'Tut! dun's the mouse, the constable's own word:

IF

verbial expression, for being *an idle spectator*. Among Ray's proverbial sentences, is this—"A good *candle-holder* proves a good gamester." STEEVENS.

⁶ *Tut! dun's the mouse, the constable's own word:*] This poor obscure stuff should have an explanation in mere charity. It is an answer to these two lines of Romeo:

For I am proverb'd with a grandfire phrase;—and

The game was ne'er so fair, and I am done.

Mercutio, in his reply, answers the last line first. The thought of which, and of the preceding, is taken from gaming. *I'll be a candle-holder* (says Romeo) *and look on*. It is true, if I could play myself, I could never expect a fairer chance than in the company we are going to: but, alas! *I am done*. I have nothing to play with; I have lost my heart already. Mercutio catches at the word *done*, and quibbles with it, as if Romeo had said, The ladies indeed are *fair*, but I am *dun*, i. e. of a dark complexion. And so replies, *Tut! dun's the mouse*; a proverbial expression of the same import with the French, *La nuit tous les chats sont gris*: as much as to say, You need not fear, night will make all your complexions alike. And because Romeo had introduced his observations with,

I am *proverb'd with a grandfire phrase*,

Mercutio adds to his reply, *the constable's own word*: as much as to say, If you are for old proverbs, I'll fit you with one; 'tis *the constable's own word*; whose custom was, when he summoned his watch, and assigned them their several stations, to give them what the soldiers call, *the word*. But this night-guard being distinguished for their pacific character, the constable, as an emblem of their harmless disposition, chose that domestic animal for his *word*: which, in time, might become proverbial. WAREBURTON.

A proverbial saying, used by Mr. Tho. Heywood, in his play, intitled *The Dutchess of Suffolk*, act 3.

"A rope for Bishop Bonner, Clunce run,

"Call help, a rope, or we are all undone.

"Draw *dun* out of the ditch." DR. GRAY.

Draw dun out of the mire, seems to have been a game. In an old collection of Satyres, Epigrams, &c. I find it enumerated among other pastimes:

"At shove-groate, venter-point, or crosse and pile,

"At leaping o'er a Midsummer bone-fier,

"Or at the *drawing dun out of the myer*."

If thou art dun, we'll draw thee from the mire,
7 Or (save your reverence) love, wherein thou stick'st
Up to the ears.—Come, we burn day-light⁸, ho.

Rom. Nay, that's not so.

Mer. I mean, fir, in delay
We waste our lights in vain,⁹ like lamps by day.

So, Skelton, in his *Crowne of Laurels*:

“*Dun* is in the mire, dame, reach me my spur.”

Again, in *Humour out of Breath*, a comedy, 1607:

“I must play *dun*, and draw them all out of the mire.”

Again, in *St. Patrick for Ireland*, by Shirley, 1640:

“Then draw *dun* out of the mire,

“And throw the clog into the fire.”

Dun's the moufe is a proverbial phrase, which I have likewise met with frequently in the old comedies. So in *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609:

“If my host say the word, the moufe shall be *dun*.”

It is also found among Ray's proverbial similes.

Again, in the *Two merry Milkmaids*, 1620:

“Why then 'tis done, and *dun's the moufe*, and undone all the courtiers.”

Of this cant expression I cannot determine the precise meaning. It is used again in *Westward Hoe*, by Decker and Webster, 1607, but apparently in a sense different from that which Dr. Warburton would affix to it. STEEVENS.

⁷ Or (*save your reverence*) love,—] The word *or* obscures the sentence; we should read *O!* for *or* love. Mercutio having called the affection with which Romeo was entangled by so disrespectful a word as *mire*, cries out,

O! save your reverence, love. JOHNSON.

Mercutio's meaning is lost if we dismiss the word *or*. “We'll draw thee from the mire (*says he*) *or* rather from this love wherein thou stick'st.”

Dr. Johnson has imputed a greater share of politeness to Mercutio than he is found to be possessed of in the quarto, 1597. Mercutio, as he passes through different editions,

“Works himself clear, and as he runs refines:”

for in the former he is made to say,

————— from the mire

Of this fir-reverence love, wherein thou stick'st. STEEV.

⁸ — we burn day-light, ho.] To burn daylight is a proverbial expression, used when candles &c. are lighted in the day time.

STEEVENS.

⁹ — like lamps by day.] Lamps is the reading of the oldest quarto. The folio and subsequent quartos read *lights*, *lights by day*.

STEEVENS.

Take our good meaning; for our judgment fits
Five times in that ¹, ere once in our fine wits.

Rom. And we mean well, in going to this mask;
But 'tis no wit to go.

Mer. Why, may one ask?

Rom. I dreamt a dream to-night.

Mer. And so did I.

Rom. Well, what was yours?

Mer. That dreamers often lye.

Rom. In bed asleep; while they do dream things
true ².

Mer. ³ O, then, I see, queen Mab hath been with
you.

She

¹ *Five times in that.*] The quarto, 1597, reads: "Three times a day;" and *right* wits, instead of *fine* wits. STEEVENS.

² In the quarto 1597, after the first line of Mercutio's speech, Romeo says, *Queen Mab, what's she?* and the printer, by a blunder, has given all the rest of the speech to the same character. STEEVENS.

³ *O, then, I see, Queen Mab hath been with you.*

She is the FAIRIES' midwife,] Thus begins that admirable speech upon the effects of the imagination in dreams. But, Queen Mab the fairies mid-wife? What is she then Queen of? Why, the fairies. What! and their *midwife* too? But this is not the greatest of the absurdities. Let us see upon what occasion she is introduced, and under what quality. It is as a being that has great power over human imagination. But then the title given her must have reference to the employment she is put upon: First then, she is called Queen; which is very pertinent, for that designs her power: then she is called the *fairies' midwife*; but what has that to do with the point in hand? If we would think that Shakespeare wrote sense, we must say, he wrote—the *FANCY'S midwife*; and this is a proper title, as it introduces all that is said afterwards of her *vagaries*. Besides, it exactly quadrates with these lines:

————— I talk of *dreams*,
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain *fantasie*.

These dreams are begot upon *fantasie*, and Mab is the midwife to bring them forth. And *fancy's midwife* is a phrase altogether in the manner of our author. WARBURTON.

All the copies (three of which were published in our author's life-time) concur in reading *fairies' midwife*, and Dr. Warburton's alteration

She is the fairies' midwife; and she comes
 In shape no bigger than an agat-stone
 4 On the fore-finger of an alderman,
 Drawn with a team of little atomies 5

Athwart

alteration appears to be quite unnecessary. The *fairies' midwife* does not mean the midwife to the fairies, but that she was the person among the fairies, whose department it was to deliver the fancies of sleeping men of their dreams, those *children of an idle brain*. When we say the *king's judges*, we do not mean persons who are to judge the king, but persons appointed by him to judge his subjects. STEEVENS.

4 *On the fore-finger of an alderman*] The quarto, 1597, reads, *of a burgo-master*. The alteration was probably made by the poet himself, as we find it in the succeeding copy 1599; but in order to familiarize the idea, he has diminished its propriety. In the pictures of *burgo-masters*, the ring is generally placed on the fore-finger; and from a passage in *The First Part of Henry IV.* we may suppose the citizens in Shakespeare's time to have worn this ornament on the thumb. So again, Glapthorne, in his comedy of *Wit in a Constable*, 1639:

“ — and an alderman,

“ As I may say to you, he has no more

“ Wit than the rest of the bench; and that lies in his
 “ thumb-ring.” STEEVENS.

5 — of atomies] *Atomy* is no more than an obsolete substitute for *atom*. So, in the *Two Merry Milkmaids*, 1620:

“ — I can tear thee

“ As small as atomies, and throw thee off

“ Like dust before the wind.”

Again, in Heywood's *Brazen Age*, 1613:

“ I'll tear thy limbs into more atomies

“ Than in the summer play before the sun.”

In Drayton's *Nymphidia* there is likewise a description of Queen Mab's chariot:

Four nimble Gnats the Horses were,

Their Harness's of Gossamere,

Fly Cranion, her Charioteer,

Upon the coach-box getting:

Her Chariot of a Snail's fine Shell,

Which for the Colours did excell,

The fair Queen Mab becoming well,

So lively was the limning:

The Seat, the soft Wool of the Bee,

Athwart men's noses as they lie asleep :
 Her waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs ;
 The cover, of the wings of grasshoppers ;
 The traces, of the smallest spider's web ;
 The collars, of the moonshine's watry beams ;
 Her whip, of cricket's bone ; the lash, of film :
 Her waggoner, a small grey-coated gnat,
 Not half so big as a round little worm
 Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid :
 Her chariot is an empty hazel-nut,
 Made by the joiner squirrel, or old grub,
 Time out of mind the fairies' coach-makers.
 And in this state she gallops night by night
 Through lovers' brains, and then they dream of love :
 On courtiers' knees, that dream on court'sies straight :
 O'er lawyers' fingers, who straight dream on fees :
 O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream ;
 Which oft the angry Mab with blisters plagues,
 Because their breaths with sweet-meats tainted are.
 6 Sometime she gallops o'er a courtier's nose,

And

The Cover (gallantly to see)
The Wing of a fly'd Butterflee,
Itrow, 'twas simple trimming :
The wheels compos'd of Cricket's Bones,
And daintily made for the nonce,
For Fear of rattling on the Stones,
With Thistle-down they shod it.

STEEVENS.

6 Sometime she gallops o'er a LAWYER'S nose,
 And then dreams he of smelling out a suit :] The old editions
 have it, COURTIER'S nose ; and this undoubtedly is the true read-
 ing : and for these reasons : First, In the present reading there is
 a vicious repetition in this fine speech ; the same thought having
 been given in the foregoing line :

O'er lawyers' fingers, who strait dream on fees :
 Nor can it be objected that there will be the same fault if we read
courtiers', it having been said before :

On courtiers' knees, that dream on curtsies strait ;
 because they are shewn in two places under different views : in the
 first, their *foppery* ; in the second, their *rapacity* is ridiculed. Se-
 condly, In our author's time, a court-solicitation was called, sim-
 ply,

And then dreams he of smelling out a suit :

And

ply, a *suit*; and a process, a *suit at law*, to distinguish it from the other. "The King" (says an anonymous cotemporary writer of the life of Sir William Cecil) "called him [Sir William Cecil] and "after long talk with him, being much delighted with his answers, "willed his father to FIND [i. e. to *smell out*] A SUIT for him. "Whereupon he became SUITER for the reversion of the Custos-
"brevium office in the Common Pleas: which the king willingly
"granted, it being the first SUIT he had in his life." Indeed our poet has very rarely turned his satire against *lawyers* and *law proceedings*, the common topic of later writers: for, to observe it to the honour of the English judicatures, they preserved the purity and simplicity of their first institution, long after chicane had over-run all the other laws of Europe. WARBURTON.

In these lines Dr. Warburton has very justly restored the old reading *courtier's nose*, and has explained the passage with his usual learning; but I do not think he is so happy in his endeavour to justify Shakespeare from the charge of a *vicious repetition* in introducing the *courtier* twice. The second folio, I observe, reads :

ON COUNTRIES knees:—

which has led me to conjecture, that the line ought to be read thus :

ON COUNTIES knees, that dream on courties strait:—

Counties I understand to signify *noblemen* in general. Paris, who, in one place, I think, is called *earl*, is most commonly stiled the *countie* in this play.

And so in *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act 4. we find :

"Princes and *counties*."

And in *All's well that Ends well*, Act 3 :

"A ring the *County* wears."

The *Countie Egmond* is so called more than once in Holingshead, p. 1150, and in the Burleigh papers, vol. I. p. 204. See also p. 7, The *Countie* Palatine Lowys. However, perhaps, it is as probable that the repetition of the *Courtier*, which offends us in this passage, may be owing (not to any error of the press, but) to the players having jumbled together the varieties of several editions, as they certainly have done in other parts of the play. TYRWHITT.

At the first entry of the characters in the *History of Orlando Furioso*, played before Queen Elizabeth, and published in 1594 and 1599, *Sacripant* is called the *Countie* *Sacripant*.

Again, *Orlando*, speaking of himself :

"Surnam'd Orlando, the *Countie* Palatine."

Countie is at least repeated twenty times in the same play.

This speech at different times received much alteration and improvement.

And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's tail,
 Tickling a parson's nose as a' lies asleep,
 Then dreams he of another benefice:
 Sometime she driveth o'er a soldier's neck,
 And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
 Of breaches, ambuscadoes, 7 Spanish blades,
 Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
 Drums in his ear; at which he starts, and wakes;
 And, being thus frightened, swears a prayer or two,
 And sleeps again. This is that very Mab,
 That plats the manes of horses in the night;
 8 And cakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs,

provement. The part of it in question, stands thus in the quarto 1597:

And in this sort she gallops up and down
 Through lovers braines, and then they dream of love:
 O'er courtiers knees, who strait on curfies dreame:
 O'er ladies lips, who dreame on kisses strait;
 Which oft the angrie Mab with blisters plagues,
 Because their breaths with sweetmeats tainted are.
 Sometimes she gallops o'er a lawyer's lap,
 And then dreames he of smelling out a suit:
 And sometime comes she with a tithe-pig's taile,
 Tickling a parson's nose that lies asleepe,
 And then dreames he of another benefice.
 Sometimes she gallops o'er a fouldier's nose,
 And then dreames he of cutting forraine throats,
 Of breaches, ambuscadoes, countermines,
 Of healths five fadome deep, &c.

Shakespeare, as I have observed before, did not always attend to the propriety of his own alterations. STEEVENS.

7 *Spanish blades,*] A sword is called a toledo, from the excellence of the Toletan steel. So Grotius:

“ — Ensis Toletanus”

“ Unda Tagi non est alio celebranda metallo,

“ Utilis in cives est ibi latina suos.” JOHNSON.

The quarto 1597, instead of *Spanish blades*, reads *countermines*. STEEVENS.

8 *And cakes the elf-locks, &c.*] This was a common superstition; and seems to have had its rise from the horrid disease called the Plica Polonica. WARBURTON.

All the old copies that I have seen, concur in reading, “and bakes, &c.” Mr. Pope first made the alteration, which does not appear to be absolutely necessary. STEEVENS.

Which,

Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.
This is the hag, when maids lie on their backs,⁹
That presses them, and learns them first to bear,
Making them women of good carriage.

This is she——

Rom. Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace;
Thou talk'st of nothing.

Mer. True, I talk of dreams;
Which are the children of an idle brain,
Begot of nothing but vain phantasy;
Which is as thin of substance as the air;
And more inconstant than the wind, who woos
Even now the frozen bosom of the north,
And, being anger'd, puffs away from thence,¹
Turning his face to the dew-dropping south.

Ben. This wind, you talk of, blows us from our
selves;
Supper is done, and we shall come too late.

Rom. I fear, too early: for my mind misgives,
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels; and expire the term
Of a despised life, clos'd in my breast,
By some vile forfeit of untimely death:
But He, that hath the steerage of my course,

⁹ — *when maids, &c.*] So, in Drayton's *Nymphidia*:
And Mab, his merry Queen, by Night
Bestrids young Folks that lie upright
(In eider Times the Mare that high)
Which plagues them out of measure.

So, in *Gervase of Tilbury*, Dec. 1. C. 17. *Vidimus quosdam*
dæmones tanto zelo mulieres amare, quod ad inaudita prorumpunt
ludibria, et cum ad concubitum earum accedunt, mirâ mole eas op-
primunt, nec ab aliis videntur.

— *of good carriage.*] So, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act 1. Sc. 2.
“— let them be men of good repute and carriage.”

Moth. Sampson, master; he was a man of good carriage; great
carriage; for he carried the town-gates, &c.” STEEVENS.

¹ — *from thence.*] The quarto 1597, reads: — “in haste.”
STEEVENS.

Direct

Direct my fail!—On, lusty gentlemen.

Ben. Strike, drum³.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E V.

A Hall in Capulet's House.

Enter Servants.

1 *Serv.* 4 Where's Potpan, that he helps not to take away? he shift a trencher⁵! he scrape a trencher!

2 *Serv.* When good manners shall lie all in one or two mens' hands, and they unwash'd too, 'tis a foul thing.

1 *Serv.* Away with the joint-stools, remove the⁶ court-cupboard, look to the plate:—good thou, save

² *Direct my fail!*] I have restored this reading from the elder quarto, as being more congruous to the metaphor in the preceding line. *Suit* is the reading of the folio. STEEVENS.

Direct my suit!] Guide the *sequel* of the adventure. JOHNSON.

³ *Strike drum.*] Here the folio adds: *They march about the stage, and serving men come forth with their napkins.* STEEVENS.

⁴ This scene is added since the first copy. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *he shift a trencher, &c.*] *Trenchers* were still used by persons of good fashion in our author's time. In the household book of the earls of Northumberland, compiled at the beginning of the same century, it appears that they were common to the tables of the first nobility. PERCY.

They continued common much longer in many public societies, particularly in colleges and inns of court; and are still retained at Lincoln's-Inn. NICHOLS.

⁶ — *court-cupboard.*] I am not very certain that I know the exact signification of *court-cupboard*. Perhaps it is what we call at present the *side-board*. It is however frequently mentioned in the old plays: so, in a *Humorous Day's Mirth*, 1599; “—shadow these tables with their white veils, and accomplish the *court-cupboard*.” Again, in *Monsieur D'Olive*, 1606, by Chapman:

“Here shall stand my *court-cupboard* with its furniture of plate.”

Again, in the *Roaring Girl*, 1611:

“Place that in the *court-cupboard*.”

Again, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, 1635:

“—they are together on the *cupboard of the court*, or the *court-cupboard*.”

Again, in Chapman's *May Day*, 1611:

“*Court-cupboards* planted with Flaggons, Cans, Cups, Beakers, &c.”

7 save me a piece of march-pane; and, as thou lov'st me, let the porter let in Susan Grindstone, and Nell.—Antony! and Potpan!

2 *Serv.* Ay, boy; ready.

1 *Serv.* You are look'd for, and call'd for, ask'd for, and fought for, in the great chamber.

2 *Serv.* We cannot be here and there too.—Cheerly, boys; be brisk a while, and the longer liver take all.
[*Exeunt.*]

Enter Capulet, &c. with the Guests and the Maskers.

1 *Cap.* Welcome, gentlemen! ladies, that have their feet

Unplagu'd with corns, will have a bout with you:—
Ah ha, my mistresses! which of you all

Two of these *court-cupboards* are still in Stationers' Hall.

STEEVENS.

The use which to this day is made of those *cupboards* is exactly described in the above-quoted line of Chapman; to display at public festivals the *flaggons, cans, cups, beakers*, and other antique silver vessels of the company, some of which (with the names of the donors inscribed on them) are remarkably large. NICHOLS.

7 *Save me a piece of march-pane;*] *March-pane* was a confection made of pistacho-nuts, almonds, and sugar, &c. and in high esteem in Shakespeare's time; as appears from the account of Queen Elizabeth's entertainment in Cambridge. It is said that the university presented Sir William Cecil their chancellor with two pair of gloves, a *march-pane*, and two sugar-loaves.

Peck's Desiderata Curiosa, vol. ii. p. 29. GRAY.

March-pane was a kind of sweet bread or biscuit; called by some almond-cake. *Hermolaus barbarus* terms it *mazapanis*, vulgarly *martius panis*. G. *macepain* and *massepain*. It. *marzapan*. H. *maçapan*. B. *marcepyn*, i. e. *massa para*. But, as few understood the meaning of this term, it began to be generally though corruptly called *massepyn*, *marcepyn*, *marsepyn*; and in consequence of this mistake of theirs it soon took the name of *martius panis*, an appellation transferred afterwards into other languages. See *Junius*.

HAWKINS.

March-pane was a constant article in the deserts of our ancestors. So, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1529: "—seeing that the issue of the table, fruits and chere or wafers hypocras and *marchpanes* or comfytures, be brought in."

See Dugdale's *Orig. Jurid.* p. 133. STEEVENS.

Will

Will now deny to dance? she that makes dainty, she,
 I'll swear, hath corns; Am I come near you now?
 You are welcome, gentlemen! I have seen the day,
 That I have worn a visor; and could tell
 A whispering tale in a fair lady's ear,
 Such as would please;—'tis gone, 'tis gone, 'tis gone:
 8 You are welcome, gentlemen.—Come, musicians, play.
 9 A hall! a hall! give room, and foot it, girls.

[Musick plays, and they dance.

More light, ye knaves; and turn the tables up,
 And quench the fire, the room is grown too hot.—
 Ah, firrah, this unlook'd-for sport comes well.
 Nay, sit, nay, sit, ' good cousin Capulet;

For

* *You're welcome, gentlemen.*] These two lines, omitted by the modern editors, I have replaced from the folio. JOHNSON.

9 *A hall! a hall!*] Such is the old reading, and the true one, though the modern editors read, *A ball! a ball!* The former exclamation occurs frequently in the old comedies, and signifies, *make room*. So, in the comedy of *Doctor Dodypoll*, 1600:

“ Room! room! a ball! a ball!”

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Tale of a Tub*:

“ — Then cry, a ball! a ball!”

Again, in an Epithalamium by Christopher Brooke, published at the end of *England's Helicon*, 1614:

“ Cry not, a ball, a ball; but chamber-roome;

“ Dancing is lame, &c.”

Again, in the *Widow's Tears*, a comedy, by Chapman, 1612:

“ A ball! a ball! who's without there?”—

“ A ball! a ball! let no more citizens in there.”

Again, in *Herod and Antipater*, 1622:

“ A ball, a ball! let all the deadly sins

“ Come in, and here accuse me!—”

Again, in *Decker's Satiromastix*:

“ His grace comes.—A hall, varlets!—Where be my men?”

Again, in the *Two Maids of More-clacke*, 1609:

“ — Hall, a ball there, musick sound.”

Again, in *Woman will have her will*, 1631:

“ She comes, she comes; A ball, a ball!” STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens reads very rightly: “ *A hall! a ball!* So, in Marston's *Satires*:—“ *A ball, a ball!* Room for the spheres! &c.” And Davies, in one of his Epigrams: “ *A ball!* my masters, give *Rotundus* room.” FARMER.

1 — *good cousin Capulet,*] This *cousin* Capulet is *uncle* in the paper of invitation; but as Capulet is described as old, *cousin*

For you and I are past ² our dancing days :
How long is't now, since last yourself and I
Were in a mask ?

² *Cap.* By'r lady, thirty years.

¹ *Cap.* What, man ! 'tis not so much, 'tis not so
much :

'Tis since the nuptial of Lucentio,
Come pentecost as quickly as it will,
Some five and twenty years ; and then we mask'd.

² *Cap.* 'Tis more, 'tis more : his son is elder, fir ;
His son is thirty.

¹ *Cap.* ³ Will you tell me that ?

His son was but a ward two years ago.

Rom. What lady's that, which doth enrich the hand
Of yonder knight ?

Serv. I know not, fir.

Rom. O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright !
Her beauty hangs upon the cheek of night ⁴
Like a rich jewel in an Æthiop's ear :

is probably the right word in both places. I know not how Capulet and his lady might agree, their ages were very disproportionate ; he has been past masking for thirty years, and her age, as she tells Juliet, is but eight-and-twenty. JOHNSON.

² — *our dancing days.*] Thus the folio : the quarto reads, "*our standing days.*" STEEVENS.

³ — *will you tell me, &c.*] This speech stands thus in the first copy :

Will you tell me that it cannot be so ?

His son was but a ward three years ago ;

Good youths i'faith !—Oh, youth's a jolly thing !

There are many trifling variations in almost every speech of this play ; but when they are of little consequence I have foreborn to encumber the page by the insertion of them. The last, however, of these three lines is natural, and worth preserving. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *cheek of night.*] Shakespeare has the same thought in his 27th sonnet :

" Which, like a jewel hung in gassly night,

" Makes black night beauteous, and her old face new."

The quartos, 1597. 1599. 1609, 1637, and the folio 1623, read :

It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night.

It is to the folio 1632, that we are indebted for the present reading ; but I know not that it is the true one. STEEVENS.

Beauty

Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
 So shews a snowy dove trooping with crows,
 As yonder lady o'er her fellows shows.
 The measure done, I'll watch her place of stand;
 And, touching hers, make happy my rude hand.
 Did my heart love 'till now? forswear it, sight!
 For I ne'er saw true beauty 'till this night.

Tyb. This, by his voice, should be a Montague:—
 Fetch me my rapier, boy:—What! dares the slave
 Come hither, cover'd with an antick face,
 To flear and scorn at our solemnity?
 Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,
 To strike him dead I hold it not a sin.

i Cap. Why, how now, kinsman? wherefore storm
 you so?

Tyb. Uncle, this is a Montague, our foe;
 A villain, that is hither come in spite,
 To scorn at our solemnity this night.

i Cap. Young Romeo is't?

Tyb. 'Tis he, that villain Romeo.

i Cap. Content thee, gentle coz, let him alone,
 He bears him like a portly gentleman;
 And, to say truth, Verona brags of him,
 To be a virtuous and well-govern'd youth:
 I would not for the wealth of all this town,
 Here in my house, do him disparagement:
 Therefore be patient, take no note of him,
 It is my will; the which if thou respect,
 Shew a fair presence, and put off these frowns,
 An ill-beseeming semblance for a feast.

Tyb. It fits, when such a villain is a guest;
 I'll not endure him.

i Cap. He shall be endur'd;
 What, Goodman boy!—I say, he shall:—Go to;—
 Am I the master here, or you? go to.

** For I ne'er saw true beauty till this night.] Thus K. Henry VIII.*
 — o beauty,

'Till now I never knew thee! STEEVENS.

You'll

You'll not endure him!—God shall mend my soul—
You'll make a mutiny among my guests!

You will set cock-a-hoop! you'll be the man!

Tyb. Why, uncle, 'tis a shame.

1 Cap. Go to, go to,

You are a saucy boy:—Is't so, indeed?—

This trick may chance to scathe you⁶;—I know what.—

You must contrary me⁷! marry, 'tis time—

Well said, my hearts:—⁸You are a princox; go:—

Be quiet, or—More light, more light, for shame!—

I'll make you quiet; What!—Cheerly, my hearts.

Tyb. ⁹Patience perforce, with wilful choler meeting,
Makes my flesh tremble in their different greeting.

I will withdraw: but this intrusion shall,

Now seeming sweet, convert to bitter gall. [Exit.]

⁶ To scathe you, i. e. to do you an injury.

So, in *The Pinner of Wakefield*, 1599:

“They shall amend the scath, or kiss the pound.”

Again, in the interlude of *Jacob and Esau*, 1568:

“Alas, what wretched villain hath done me such scath?”

STEEVENS.

⁷ You must contrary me.] The use of this verb is common to our old writers. So, in *Tully's Love* by Greene, 1616: “—rather wishing to die than to contrary her resolution.” Many instances more might be selected from *Sidney's Arcadia*.

Again, in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602. B. 10. Chap. 59.

“—his countermand should have contraried so.”

The same verb is used in Sir Tho. North's translation of Plutarch. STEEVENS.

⁸ You are a princox, go:—] A *princox* is a coxcomb, a conceited person.

The word is used by Ben Jonson in *The Case is alter'd*, 1609; by Chapman in his comedy of *May-Day*, 1610; in the *Return from Parthassus*, 1606: “Your proud university Princox;” again, in *Fumus Froes*, 1603: “That Princox proud;” and indeed by most of the old dramatick writers. Cotgrave renders *un jeune estoudeau superbe*—a young princox boy. STEEVENS.

⁹ Patience perforce,] This expression is in part proverbial: the old adage is,

“Patience perforce is a medicine for a mad dog.” STEEV.

Rom. ¹ If I profane with my unworthy hand

[*To Juliet.*

This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this—

My lips, two blushing pilgrims, ready stand

To smooth that rough touch with a tender kiss.

Jul. Good pilgrim, you do wrong your hand too much,

Which mannerly devotion shews in this;

For saints have hands that pilgrims' hands do touch,

And palm to palm is holy palmers' kiss.

Rom. Have not saints lips, and holy palmers too?

Jul. Ay, pilgrim, lips that they must use in prayer.

Rom. O then, dear saint, let lips do what hands do;

They pray, grant thou, lest faith turn to despair.

Jul. Saints do not move, though grant for prayers' sake.

Rom. Then move not, while my prayer's effect I take.

Thus from my lips, by yours, my sin is purg'd.

[*Kissing her.*

Jul. Then have my lips the sin that they have took.

Rom. Sin from my lips? O trespass sweetly urg'd!

Give me my sin again.

Jul. You kiss by the book.

Nurse. Madam, your mother craves a word with you.

Rom. What is her mother?

Nurse. Marry, bachelor,

¹ *If I profane with my unworthy hand*

This holy shrine, the gentle fine is this,

My lips, two blushing pilgrims, &c.] All profanations are supposed to be expiated either by some meritorious action, or by some penance undergone and punishment submitted to. So Romeo would here say, If I have been profane in the rude touch of my hand, my lips stand ready, as two blushing pilgrims, to take off that offence, to atone for it by a sweet penance. Our poet therefore must have wrote,

—— the gentle fine is this. *WARBURTON.*

Her mother is the lady of the house,
 And a good lady, and a wise, and virtuous :
 I nurs'd her daughter, that you talk'd withal ;
 I tell you—he, that can lay hold of her,
 Shall have the chink.

Rom. Is she a Capulet ?

O dear account ! my life is my foe's debt.

Ben. Away, begone ; the sport is at the best.

Rom. Ay, so I fear ; the more is my unrest.

Cap. Nay, gentlemen, prepare not to be gone ;
 We have a trifling foolish banquet towards².—

Is it e'en so ? Why, then I thank you all ;
 I thank you, honest gentlemen³ ; good night :—
 More torches here !—Come on, then let's to bed.

Ah, firrah, by my fay, it waxes late ;

I'll to my rest.

[*Exeunt.*

Jul. Come hither, nurse⁴ : What is yon gentleman ?

Nurse. The son and heir of old Tiberio.

Jul. What's he, that now is going out of door ?

Nurse. That, as I think, is young Petruchio.

Jul. What's he, that follows there, that would not
 dance ?

Nurse. I know not.

Jul. Go, ask his name :—if he be married,
 My grave is like to be my wedding bed.

² *We have a foolish trifling banquet towards.*] *Towards* is ready, at hand. So, in *Hamlet* :

“ What might be *towards*, that this sweaty haste

“ Doth make the night joint labourer with the day ?”

Again, in the *Pbœnix*, by Middleton, 1607 :

“ — here's a voyage *towards*, will make us all.”

STEEVENS.

³ — *honest gentlemen* ;] Here the quarto, 1597, adds :

“ I promise you, but for your company,

“ I would have been in bed an hour ago ;

“ Light to my chamber, ho !” STEEVENS.

⁴ *Come hither, nurse* : *What is yon gentleman* ?] This and the following questions are taken from the novel. STEEVENS.

Nurse. His name is Romeo, and a Montague;
The only son of your great enemy.

Jul. My only love sprung from my only hate!
Too early seen unknown, and known too late!
Prodigious birth of love it is to me,
That I must love a loathed enemy.

Nurse. What's this? what's this?

Jul. A rhyme I learn'd even now
Of one I danc'd withal. [One calls within, Juliet.

Nurse. Anon, anon:—
Come, let's away; the strangers all are gone.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ^s C H O R U S.

Now old desire doth on his death-bed lie,
And young affection gapes to be his heir;
That fair, for which love groan'd sore, and would die,
With tender Juliet match'd, is now not fair.
Now Romeo is belov'd, and loves again,
Alike bewitched by the charm of looks;
But to his foe suppos'd he must complain,
And she steal love's sweet bait from fearful hooks:
Being held a foe, he may not have access
To breathe such vows as lovers use to swear;
And she as much in love, her means much less
To meet her new-beloved any where:
But passion lends them power, time means to meet,
Temp'ring extremities with extream sweet.

[*Exit Chorus.*

^s CHORUS.] This chorus added since the first edition. POPE.

Chorus. The use of this chorus is not easily discovered; it con-
duces nothing to the progress of the play, but relates what is already
known, or what the next scene will shew; and relates it without
adding the improvement of any moral sentiment. JOHNSON.

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

*The STREET.**Enter Romeo alone.*

Rom. Can I go forward, when my heart is here?
Turn back, dull earth, and find thy center out.

[*Exit.*]*Enter Benvolio, with Mercutio.*

Ben. Romeo! my cousin Romeo!

Mer. He is wise;

And, on my life, hath stol'n him home to bed.

Ben. He ran this way, and leap'd this orchard wall:
Call, good Mercutio.

Mer. Nay, I'll conjure too.—

Why, Romeo! humours! madman! passion! lover!
Appear thou in the likeness of a sigh,
Speak but one rhyme, and I am satisfied;
Cry but—Ay me! couple but—love and dove⁶;
Speak to my gossip Venus one fair word,
One nick-name to her purblind son and heir,

⁶ *Cry but—Ay me! couple but—love and dove.*] The quarto, 1597, reads *pronounce*, the two succeeding quartos and the first folio, *provant*: the 2d, 3d, and 4th folios, *couple*; and Mr. Rowe, who printed from the last of these, formed the present reading. *Provant*, in ancient language, signifies *provision*. So, in "The Court and Kitchen of Elizabeth, called Joan Cromwell, the wife of the late usurper, truly described and represented," 1664, p. 14. "— carrying some dainty *provant* for her own and her daughter's repast." To *provant* is to *provide*; and to *provide* is to *furnish*. "*Provant* but love and dove," may therefore mean *furnish* but such hackney'd rhimes as these are, the trite effusions of lovers.

STEEVENS.

7 Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim,
 8 When king Cophetua lov'd the beggar-maid.—
 He heareth not, he stirreth not, he moveth not;
 The ape is dead, and I must conjure him.—
 I conjure thee by Rosaline's bright eyes,
 By her high forehead, and her scarlet lip,
 By her fine foot, straight leg, and quivering thigh,
 And the demesnes that there adjacent lie,
 That in thy likeness thou appear to us.

Ben. An if he hear thee, thou wilt anger him.

Mer. This cannot anger him: 'twould anger him
 To raise a spirit in his mistress' circle
 Of some strange nature, letting it there stand
 'Till she had laid it, and conjur'd it down;
 That were some spight: my invocation
 Is fair and honest, and, in his mistress' name,
 I conjure only but to raise up him.

Ben. Come, he hath hid himself among those trees,
 To be consort'd with the humorous night⁹:

Blind

⁷ *Young Adam Cupid,*] Alluding to the famous archer Adam Bell. GRAY.

⁸ *When king Cophetua, &c.*] Alluding to an old ballad. POPE.
 This ballad is preserved in the first volume of Dr. Percy's *Reliques of ancient English Poetry*. STEEVENS.

“ ——— her pur-blind son and heir,

“ *Young Adam Cupid, he that shot so trim,*

“ *When, &c.*”

This word *trim*, the first editors consulting the general sense of the passage, and not perceiving the allusion, would naturally alter to *true*; yet the former seems the more humorous expression, and, on account of its quaintness, more likely to have been used by Mercutio. PERCY.

So *trim* is the reading of the oldest copy, and this ingenious conjecture is confirmed by it. In *Decker's Satiromastix* is a reference to the same archer:

“ ——— He shoots his bolt but seldom; but when *Adam* lets go,
 he hits:”

“ He shoots at thee too, *Adam Bell*; and his arrows slick
 here.” STEEVENS.

⁹ — *the humorous night.*] I suppose *Shakspeare* means humid,
 the

Blind is his love, and best befits the dark.

Mer. If love be blind, love cannot hit the mark,
Now will he sit under a medlar tree,
And wish his mistress were that kind of fruit,
As maids call medlars, when they laugh alone.—
Romeo, good night;—I'll to my truckle-bed;
This field-bed is too cold for me to sleep:
Come, shall we go?

† moist dewy night. *Chapman* uses the word in that sense in his translation of *Homer*, book II. edit. 1598:

“The other gods and knights at arms slept all the *humorous* night.”

Again, in *Drayton's Polyolbion*, song 3:

“Such matter as she takes from the gross *humorous* earth.”

Again, song 13th:

“—which late the *humorous* night

“Bespangled had with pearl—”

Again, in his *Barons' Wars*, canto I:

“The *humorous* fogs deprive us of his light.” STEEVENS.

Again, in *Measure for Measure*: “The *vaporous* night approaches.” MALONE.

[As maids, &c.] After this line in the quarto 1597, I find two other verses, containing such ribaldry, that I cannot venture to insert them in the text, though I exhibit them here as a proof that either the poet or his friends knew sometimes how to blot:

O Romeo that she were, O that she were

An open *Et cætera*, thou a *Poprin* Pear!

This pear is mentioned in the *Wife Woman of Hogsden*, 1638.

“What needed I to have grafted in the stock of such a choke-pear, and such a goodly *Poprin* as this to escape me?”

Again, in *A Woman never vex'd*, 1632:

“—I requested him to pull me

“A Katherine Pear, and had I not look'd to him

“He would have mistook and given me a *Popperin*.”

In the *Atheist's Tragedy*, by *Cyril Turner*, 1611, there is much conceit about this Pear. I am unable to explain it, nor does it appear indeed to deserve explanation.

Thus much may safely be said; viz. that our Pear might have been of French extraction, as *Popering* was the name of a parish in the *Marches of Calais*. So, *Chaucer's Rime of Sire Thopas*, edit. 1775, ver. 13650:

“In Flandres, al beyonde the see

“At *Popering* in the place.” STEEVENS.

Ben. Go, then; for 'tis in vain
To seek him here, that means not to be found.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E I I .

Capulet's Garden.

Enter Romeo.

Rom. ² He jests at scars, that never felt a wound.—
But, soft! what light through yonder window breaks?
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!—

[*Juliet appears above, at a window.*]

Arise, fair sun, and kill the envious moon,
Who is already sick and pale with grief,
That thou her maid art far more fair than she :

³ Be not her maid, since she is envious;
Her vestal livery is but sick and green,
And none but fools do wear it; cast it off.—

⁴ It is my lady; O, it is my love :

O, that she knew she were!—

She speaks, yet she says nothing; What of that?
Her eye discourses, I will answer it.—

I am too bold, 'tis not to me it speaks :

Two of the fairest stars in all the heaven,
Having some business, do intreat her eyes
To twinkle in their spheres 'till they return.

What if her eyes were there, they in her head?

The brightness of her cheek would shame those stars,
As day-light doth a lamp; her eye in heaven
Would through the airy region stream so bright,
That birds would sing, and think it were not night.

² *He jests at scars,*] That is, Mercutio jests, whom he overheard. JOHNSON.

³ *Be not her maid,*] Be not a votary to the moon, to Diana. JOHNSON.

⁴ *It is my lady;*] This line and half I have replaced. JOHNSON.
See,

See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
 5 O, that I were a glove upon that hand,
 That I might touch that cheek!⁶

Jul. Ay me!

Rom. She speaks:—

7 O, speak again, bright angel! for thou art
 As glorious to this night, being o'er my head,
 As is a winged messenger of heaven
 Unto the white-upturned wond'ring eyes
 Of mortals, that fall back to gaze on him,
 When he bestrides⁸ the lazy-pacing clouds,
 And sails upon the bosom of the air.

Jul. O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?
 Deny thy father, and refuse thy name:
 Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,
 And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

Rom. Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

[*Aside.*

⁵ *O that I were a glove upon that hand,*] This passage appears to have been ridiculed by Shirley in *The School of Compliments*, a comedy, 1637:

“Oh that I were a flea upon that lip,” &c. STEEVENS.

⁶ — touch *that cheek!*] The quarto, 1597, reads; “*kiss that cheek.*” STEEVENS.

⁷ *Oh, speak again, bright angel! for thou art*

As glorious to this night,] Though all the printed copies concur in this reading, yet the latter part of the simile seems to require,

As glorious to this sight;—

and therefore I have ventured to alter the text so. THEOBALD.

I have restored the old reading, for surely the change was unnecessary. The plain sense is, that Juliet appeared as splendid an object in the vault of heaven obscured by darkness, as an angel could seem to the eyes of mortals, who were falling back to gaze upon him.

As glorious to this night, means *as glorious an appearance in this dark night,* &c. It should be observed, however, that the simile agrees precisely with Theobald's alteration, and not so well with the old reading. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *the lazy-pacing clouds.*] Thus corrected from the first edition, in the other *lazy-puffing.* POPE.

Jul. 'Tis but thy name, that is my enemy;
 1 Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.
 What's Montague? it is nor hand, nor foot,
 Nor arm, nor face, nor any other part:
 What's in a name? that which we call a rose,
 By any other name would smell as sweet;
 So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
 Retain that dear perfection which he owes,
 Without that title:—Romeo, doff thy name;
 And for that name, which is no part of thee,
 2 Take all myself.

Rom. I take thee at thy word:
 Call me but love, and I'll be new baptiz'd;
 Henceforth I never will be Romeo.

Jul. What man art thou, that, thus bescreen'd in
 night,
 So stumblest on my counsel?

Rom. By a name
 I know not how to tell thee who I am:
 My name, dear saint, is hateful to myself,
 Because it is an enemy to thee;
 Had I it written, I would tear the word.

Jul. My ears have yet not drunk a hundred words
 Of that tongue's uttering, yet I know the sound;

¹ *Thou art thyself, though not a Montague.*] i. e. you would be just what you are, although you were not of the House of Montague. WARBURTON.

I think the true reading is,

Thou art thyself, *then* not a Montague.

Thou art a being of peculiar excellence, and hast none of the malignity of the family from which thou hast thy name.—
Hammer reads;

Thou art not *thyself* so, *though* a Montague. JOHNSON.

This line is wanting in the elder quarto; all the other editions concur in one reading. I think the passage will support Dr. Johnson's sense without his proposed alteration. Thou art thyself (i. e. a being of distinguished excellence) though thou art not what thou appearest to others, akin to thy family in malice. STEEVENS.

² *Take all myself.*] The elder quarto [reads, *Take all I have.*

STEEVENS.

Art

Art thou not Romeo, and a Montague?

Rom. Neither, fair saint, if either thee dislike.

Jul. How cam'st thou hither, tell me? and wherefore?

The orchard-walls are high, and hard to climb;
And the place death, considering who thou art,
If any of my kinsmen find thee here.

Rom. With love's light wings did I o'er-perch these walls;

For stony limits cannot hold love out:
And what love can do, that dares love attempt;
Therefore thy kinsmen are no stop to me.

Jul. If they do see thee, they will murder thee.

Rom. Alack! there lies more peril in thine eye,
Than twenty of their swords³; look thou but sweet,
And I am proof against their enmity.

Jul. I would not for the world, they saw thee here.

Rom. I have night's cloak to hide me from their sight;

And, but thou love me, let them find me here;
My life were better ended by their hate,
Than death prorogued⁴, wanting of thy love.

Jul. By whose direction found'st thou out this place?

Rom. By love, who first did prompt me to enquire;
He lent me counsel, and I lent him eyes.
I am no pilot; yet, wert thou as far
As that vast shore wash'd with the farthest sea,
I would adventure for such merchandise.

Jul. Thou know'st, the mask of night is on my face;

³ — there lies more peril in thine eye,

[Than twenty of their swords;]

B. & Fletcher have copied this thought in *The Maid in the Mill*:

“The lady may command, sir;

“She bears an eye more dreadful than your weapon.”

STEEVENS.

⁴ *Than death prorogued,*] To *prorogue* has not, in this place, its common signification, but means to *delay*, STEEVENS.

Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek,
 For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.
 Fain would I dwell on form, fain fain deny
 What I have spoke; But farewell compliment!
 Dost thou love me? I know, thou wilt say—Ay;
 And I will take thy word: yet, if thou swear'st,
 Thou may'st prove false; at lovers' perjuries,
 They say, Jove laughs. O, gentle Romeo,
 If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully:
 Or if thou think'st I am too quickly won,
 I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,
 So thou wilt woo; but, else, not for the world.
 In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond;
 And therefore thou may'st think my haviour light:
 But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true,
 Than those that have more cunning to be strange.
 I should have been more strange, I must confess,
 But that thou over-heardst, ere I was ware,
 My true love's passion: therefore pardon me;
 And not impute this yielding to light love,
 Which the dark night hath so discovered.

Rom. Lady, by yonder blessed moon I vow,
 That tips with silver all these fruit-tree tops,—

Jul. O, swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon
 That monthly changes in her circled orb,
 Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.

Rom. What shall I swear by?

Jul. Do not swear at all;
 Or, if thou wilt, swear by thy gracious self,

⁵ — *coying to be strange.*] For *coying*, the modern editions have *cunning*. JOHNSON.

Cunning is the reading of the elder quarto, and I have restored it. To *coy* is nevertheless an old verb. So, in *A Woman never vex'd*, 1632:

“Love is so young, it *coys* but cannot speak.”

To *be strange*, is to put on affected coldness, to appear shy. So, in Greene's *Mamillia*, 1593: “— Is it the fashion in Padua to be so *strange* with your friends?” STEEVENS.

Which

Which is the god of my idolatry,
And I'll believe thee.

Rom. If my heart's dear love—

Jul. Well, do not swear; although I joy in thee,
I have no joy of this contract to-night:
It is too rash, too unadvis'd, too sudden;
Too like the lightning, which doth cease to be,
Ere one can say—It lightens ⁶. ⁷ Sweet, good night!
This bud of love, by summer's ripening breath,
May prove a beauteous flower when next we meet.
Good night, good night! as sweet repose and rest
Come to thy heart, as that within my breast!

Rom. O, wilt thou leave me so unsatisfied?

Jul. What satisfaction canst thou have to-night?

Rom. The exchange of thy love's faithful vow for mine.

Jul. I gave thee mine before thou didst request it:
And yet I would it were to give again.

Rom. Would'st thou withdraw it? for what purpose, love?

Jul. But to be frank, and give it thee again.
And yet I wish but for the thing I have:
My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
My love as deep; the more I give to thee,
The more I have, for both are infinite.
I hear some noise within; Dear love, adieu!

[*Nurse calls within.*]

⁶ *Ere one can say—It lightens.*] So, in the *Miracles of Moses*, by Drayton:

“ — lightning ceaselessly to burn,
“ Swifter than thought from place to place to pass,
“ And being gone, doth suddenly return
“ *Ere you could say precisely what it was.*”

The same thought occurs in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

STEEVENS.

⁷ *Sweet, good night.*] All the intermediate lines from *Sweet, good night*, to *Stay but a little*, &c. were added after the first copy. STEEVENS.

Anon, good nurse!—Sweet Montague, be true.
Stay but a little, I will come again. [*Exit.*]

Rom. O blessed blessed night! I am afeard,
Being in night, all this is but a dream,
Too flattering-sweet to be substantial.

Re-enter Juliet, above.

Jul. Three words, dear Romeo, and good night,
indeed.

If that thy bent of love be honourable,
Thy purpose marriage, send me word to-morrow,
By one that I'll procure to come to thee,
Where, and what time, thou wilt perform the rite;
And all my fortunes at thy foot I'll lay,
And follow thee my lord throughout the world.

[*Within*: Madam.

I come, anon:—But if thou mean'st not well,
I do beseech thee,—[*Within*: Madam.] By and by,
I come:—

To cease thy suit, and leave me to my grief:
To-morrow will I send.

Rom. So thrive my soul,—

Jul. A thousand times good night! [*Exit.*]

Rom. A thousand times the worse, to want thy
light.—

Love goes toward love, as school-boys from their
books;
But love from love, towards school with heavy looks.

Re-enter Juliet again, above.

Jul. Hift! Romeo, hift!—O, for a faulconer's voice,
To lure this tassel-gentle back again!

Bondage

³ *To lure this tassel-gentle back again!*] The *tassel* or *tiercel* (for so it should be spelt) is the male of the *gosshawk*; so called, because it is a *tierce* or *third* less than the female. This is equally true of all
all

Bondage is hoarse, and may not speak aloud;
 Else would I tear the cave where echo lies,
 And make her airy tongue more hoarse than mine
 With repetition of my Romeo's name.

Rom. It is my soul, that calls upon my name:
 How silver-sweet sound lovers' tongues by night,
 Like softest music to attending ears!

Jul. Romeo!

Rom. My sweet?

Jul. At what o'clock to-morrow
 Shall I send to thee?

Rom. By the hour of nine.

Jul. I will not fail; 'tis twenty years 'till then.
 I have forgot why I did call thee back.

Rom. Let me stand here 'till thou remember it.

Jul. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
 Rememb'ring how I love thy company.

Rom. And I'll still stay, to have thee still forget,
 Forgetting any other home but this.

Jul. 'Tis almost morning, I would have thee gone:
 And yet no further than a wanton's bird;
 Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
 Like a poor prisoner in his twisted gyves,
 And with a silk thread plucks it back again,
 So loving-jealous of his liberty.

all birds of prey. In the *Booke of Falcourye*, by George Turberville,
 gent. printed in 1575, I find a whole chapter on the *falcon-gentle*,
 &c. So, in *The Guardian*, by Massinger,

“ ——— then for an evening flight

“ A *tiercel-gentle*.”

Taylor the water poet uses the same expression, “ ——— By casting
 “ out the lure, she makes the *tassel-gentle* come to her fist.”

Again, in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, b. 3. c. 4.

“ Having far off espyde a *tassel-gent*,

“ Which after her his nimble wings doth straine.”

Again, in Decker's *Match me in London*, 1631:

“ Your *tassel-gentle*, she's lur'd off and gone.”

This species of hawk had the epithet of gentle annexed to it,
 from the ease with which it was tamed, and its attachment to
 man. STEEVENS,

Rom.

Rom. I would, I were thy bird.

Jul. Sweet, so would I;

Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing.

Good night, good night! parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say—good night, 'till it be morrow.

[*Exit.*

Rom. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy
breast!—

'Would I were sleep and peace, so sweet to rest!

Hence will I to my ghostly father's cell;

His help to crave, and my dear hap to tell. [*Exit.*

S C E N E III.

A MONASTERY.

Enter friar Lawrence, with a basket.

Fri. 'The grey-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning
night,

Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light;
And flecked darkness¹ like a drunkard reels

⁹ *The grey-ey'd morn, &c.*] These four first lines are here replaced, conformable to the first edition, where such a description is much more proper than in the mouth of Romeo just before, when he was full of nothing but the thoughts of his mistress. POPE.

In the folio these lines are printed twice over, and given twice to Romeo, and once to the friar. JOHNSON.

The same mistake has likewise happened in the quartos, 1599, 1609, and 1637. STEEVENS.

¹ *And flecked darkness*] *Flecked* is spotted, dappled, streak'd, or variegated. In this sense it is used by Churchyard, in his *Legend of Tho. Mowbray Duke of Norfolk*. Mowbray, speaking of the Germans, says:

“All jagg'd and frounc'd, with divers colours deck'd,

“They iwear, they curse, and drink till they be *fleck'd*.”

Lord Surrey uses the same word in his translation of the 4th *Æneid*:

“Her quivering cheekes *flecked* with deadly staine.”

The same image occurs in *Much ado about nothing*, act. 5. sc. 3.

“Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.” STEEVENS.

From

From forth day's path-way, made by Titan's wheels :
 Now ere the sun advance his burning eye,
 The day to chear, and night's dank dew to dry,
 I must up-fill this ozier cage of ours ²
 With baleful weeds, and precious-juiced flowers.
³ The earth, that's nature's mother, is her tomb ;
 What is her burying grave, that is her womb :
 And from her womb children of divers kind
 We sucking on her natural bosom find ;
 Many for many virtues excellent,
 None but for some, and yet all different.
 O, mickle is the ⁴ powerful grace, that lies
 In plants, herbs, stones, and their true qualities :
 For nought so vile that on the earth doth live ⁵,
 But to the earth some special good doth give ;
 Nor ought so good, but, strain'd from that fair use,
 Revolts from true birth, stumbling on abuse :
 Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied ;
 And vice sometime's by action dignify'd.
 Within the infant rind of this small flower
 Poison hath residence, and med'cine power :
 For this, being smelt, with that part chears each part ;

² *I must up-fill this ozier cage of ours, &c.*] So, in the 13th song of Drayton's *Polyolbion* :

“ His happy time he spends the works of God to see,
 “ In those so sundry herbs which there in plenty grow,
 “ Whose sundry strange effects he only seeks to know.
 “ And in a little *maund*, being made of *oziers* small,
 “ Which serveth him to do full many a thing withal,
 “ He very choicely sorts his simples got abroad.”

Drayton is speaking of a hermit. STEEVENS.

³ *The earth, that's nature's mother, is her tomb ;*]

“ *Omniparens, eadem rerum commune sepulchrum.*”

Lucretius.

“ The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave.” *Milton.*

STEEVENS.

⁴ — *powerful grace,*] Efficacious virtue. JOHNSON.

⁵ *For nought so vile that on the earth doth live.*] The quarto, 1597, reads :

For nought so vile that *vile* on earth doth live. STEEVENS.

Being

Being tasted, slays all senses with the heart.
 ' Two such opposed foes encamp them still
 In man as well as herbs, grace, and rude will;
 And, where the worser is predominant,
 Full soon the canker death eats up that plant.

Enter Romeo.

Rom. Good morrow, father!

Fri. *Benedicite!*

What early tongue so sweet saluteth me?—
 Young son, it argues a distemper'd head,
 So soon to bid good morrow to thy bed:
 Care keeps his watch in every old man's eye,
 And where care lodges, sleep will never lie;
 7 But where unbruised youth with unstuff'd brain
 Doth couch his limbs, there golden sleep doth reign:
 Therefore thy earliness doth me assure,
 Thou art up-rouz'd by some distemp'ature;
 Or if not so, then here I hit it right—
 Our Roméo hath not been in bed to-night.

Rom. That last is true, the sweeter rest was mine.

Fri. God pardon sin! wast thou with Rosaline?

* *Two such opposed FOES*—] This is a modern sophistication. The old books have it *opposed KINGS*. So that it appears, Shakespeare wrote, *Two such opposed KIN*. Why he calls them *kin* was, because they were qualities residing in one and the same substance. And as the enmity of *opposed kin* generally rises higher than that between strangers, this circumstance adds a beauty to the expression. WARBURTON.

Foes may be the right reading, or *kings*, but I think *kin* can hardly be admitted. Two *kings* are two opposite powers, two contending potentates, in both the natural and moral world. The word *encamp* is proper to commanders. JOHNSON.

Foes is the reading of the oldest copy; *kings* of that in 1609.

STEEVENS.

7 — *with unstuff'd brain &c.*] The copy, 1597, reads:

“ ——— with unstuff'd brains

“ Doth couch his limmes, there golden sleep remaines.”

STEEVENS.

Rom.

Rom. With Rosaline, my ghostly father? no;
I have forgot that name, and that name's woe.

Fri. That's my good son: But where hast thou
been then?

Rom. I'll tell thee, ere thou ask it me again.
I have been feasting with mine enemy;
Where, on a sudden, one hath wounded me,
That's by me wounded; both our remedies
Within thy help and holy physick lies:
I bear no hatred, blessed man; for, lo,
My intercession likewise steads my foe.

Fri. Be plain, good son, and homely in thy drift;
Ridding confession finds but riddling shrift.

Rom. Then plainly know, my heart's dear love is
set

On the fair daughter of rich Capulet:
As mine on hers, so hers is set on mine;
And all combin'd, save what thou must combine
By holy marriage: When, and where, and how,
We met, we woo'd, and made exchange of vow,
I'll tell thee as we pass; but this I pray,
That thou consent to marry us this day.

Fri. Holy saint Francis! what a change is here!
Is Rosaline, whom thou didst love so dear,
So soon forsaken? young men's love then lies
Not truly in their hearts, but in their eyes.
³ Holy saint Francis! what a deal of brine
Hath wash'd thy fallow cheeks for Rosaline!
How much salt water thrown away in waste,
To season love, that of it doth not taste!
The sun not yet thy sighs from heaven clears,
Thy old groans ring yet in my ancient ears;
Lo, here upon thy cheek the stain doth sit
Of an old tear, that is not wash'd off yet:
If e'er thou wast thyself, and these woes thine,
Thou and these woes were all for Rosaline;

¹ *Holy Saint Francis!* Old copy, *Jgn^o Maria!* STEEVENS.

And art thou chang'd? pronounce this sentence then—
Women may fall, when there's no strength in men.

Rom. Thou chidd'st me oft for loving Rosaline.

Fri. For doating, not for loving, pupil mine.

Rom. And bad'st me bury love.

Fri. Not in a grave,

To lay one in, another out to have.

Rom. I pray thee, chide not: she, whom I love
now,

Doth grace for grace, and love for love allow;
The other did not so.

Fri. O, she knew well,

Thy love did read by rote, and could not spell.

But come, young waverer, come go with me,

In one respect I'll thy assistant be;

For this alliance may so happy prove,

To turn your households' rancour to pure love⁹.

Rom. O, let us hence; I stand on sudden haste.

Fri. Wisely, and slow; They stumble, that run fast.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E IV.

The S T R E E T.

Enter Benvolio, and Mercutio.

Mer. Where the devil should this Romeo be?—
Came he not home to-night?

Ben. Not to his father's; I spoke with his man.

Mer. Why, that same pale hard-hearted wench,
that Rosaline,

Torments him so, that he will sure run mad.

Ben. Tybalt, the kinsman of old Capulet,
Hath sent a letter to his father's house.

Mer. A challenge, on my life.

⁹ The two following lines were added since the first copy of this play. STEEVENS.

Ben. Romeo will answer it.

Mer. Any man, that can write, may answer a letter.

Ben. Nay, he will answer the letter's master, how he dares, being dar'd.

Mer. Alas, poor Romeo, he is already dead! stabb'd with a white wench's black eye, shot thorough the ear with a love-song; the very pin of his heart cleft with the blind bow-boy's butt-shaft; And is he a man to encounter Tybalt?

Ben. Why, what is Tybalt?

Mer. ¹More than prince of cats, I can tell you. O, he is the ²courageous captain of compliments: he fights as you sing prick-song, keeps time, distance³, and proportion; he rests his minim, one, two, and the third in your bosom: the very butcher of a silk button⁴, a duellist, a duellist; ⁵a gentleman of the very first house;

¹ *More than prince of cats,—*] *Tybert*, the name given to the *Cat*, in the story-book of *Reynard the Fox*. WARBURTON.

So, in *Decker's Satiromastix*:

“—tho' you were *Tybert*, the long-tail'd prince of Rats.”

Again, in *Have with you to Saffron Walden*, &c. 1598:

“—not *Tibault* prince of Cats, &c.” STEEVENS.

² — *courageous captain of compliments*:] A complete master of all the laws of ceremony, the principal man in the doctrine of punctilio.

“A man of compliments, whom right and wrong

“Have chose as umpire;”

says our author of *Don Armado*, the Spaniard, in *Love's Labour's Lost*. JOHNSON.

³ — *keeps time, distance, and proportion.*] So *Jensen's Bobadil*:

“Note your *distance*, keep your due *proportion of time*.”

STEEVENS.

⁴ — *the very butcher of a silk button,*] So, in the *Return from Parnassus*:

“Strikes his poinado at a *button's breadth*.” STEEVENS.

⁵ *A gentleman of the very first house;—of the first and second cause:*] i. e. one who pretends to be at the head of his family, and quarrels by the bowk. See a note on *As you like it*, Act 5. Sc. 6.

WARBURTON.

Tybalt cannot pretend to be at the head of his family, as both

house;—of the first and second cause: Ah, the immortal passado! the punto reverso! ⁶ the hay!—

Ben. The what?

Mer. The pox of such antick, lispings, affecting fantasticoes ⁷; these new tuners of accents!—*By*—*a very good blade!*—*a very tall man!*—*a very good whore!*—⁸ Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandfire, that we should be thus afflicted with these strange flies, these fashion-mongers, ⁹ these Pardonnez-moy's, who stand so much on the new form, that they cannot sit at ease on the old bench? ¹⁰ O, their *bon's*, their *bon's*!

Enter

Capulet and Romeo barr'd his claim to that elevation. "A gentleman of the *first house*;—of the *first and second cause*," is a gentleman of the first rank, of the first eminence among these duellists; and one who understands the whole science of quarrelling, and will tell you of the *first cause*, and the *second cause*, for which a man is to fight.—The *Clown*, in *As you like it*, talks of the *seventh cause* in the same sense. STEEVENS.

⁶ —*the hay!*] All the terms of the modern fencing-school were originally Italian; the rapier, or small thrusting sword, being first used in Italy. The *hay* is the word *bai*, you *have* it, used when a thrust reaches the antagonist, from which our fencers, on the same occasion, without knowing, I suppose, any reason for it, cry out, *ba!* JOHNSON.

⁷ —*affecting fantasticoes.*] Thus the old copies, and rightly. The modern editors read, *phantasies*. Nash, in his *Have with you to Saffron Walden*, 1596, says—"Follow some of these new-fangled Galiardo's and Signor Fantastico's," &c. Again, in Decker's *Comedy of Old Fortunatus*, 1600:—"I have danc'd with queens, dallied with ladies, worn strange attires, seen *fantastico's*, convers'd with humorists," &c. STEEVENS.

⁸ *Why, is not this a lamentable thing, grandfire,*] Humourously apostrophising his ancestors, whose sober times were unacquainted with the fopperies here complained of. WARBURTON.

⁹ —*these pardonnez-mois,*] *Pardonnez-moi* became the language of doubt or hesitation among men of the sword, when the point of honour was grown so delicate, that no other mode of contradiction would be endured. JOHNSON.

¹⁰ *O, their bones, their bones!*] Mercutio is here ridiculing those frenchified fantastical coxcombs whom he calls *pardonnez-moi's*.

Enter Romeo.

Ben. Here comes Romeo, here comes Romeo.

Mer. Without his roe, like a dried herring:—O flesh, flesh, how art thou fishified!—Now is he for the numbers that Petrarch flow'd in: Laura, to his lady, was but a kitchen-wench;—marry, she had a better love to be-rhyme her: Dido, a dowdy; Cleopatra, a gipsy; Helen and Hero, hildings and harlots; Thisbé, a grey eye or so, but not to the purpose.—Signior Romeo, *bon jour!* there's a French salutation to your French slop². You gave us the counterfeit fairly last night.

Rom. Good morrow to you both. What counterfeit³ did I give you?

Mer. The slip, sir, the slip; Can you not conceive?

Rom.

mer's: and therefore, I suspect here he meant to write French too.

O, their *bon's!* their *bon's!*

i. e. how ridiculous they make themselves in crying out *good*, and being in ecstasies with every trifle; as he had just described them before.

“ — a very good blade!” &c. THEOB.

They stand so much on the *new form*, that they cannot sit at ease on the *old bench*.”] This conceit is lost, if the double meaning of the word *form* be not attended to. FARMER.

A quibble on the two meanings of the word *form* occurs in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act. 1. Sc. 1: — sitting with her on the *form*, and taken following her into the park; which, put together, is, in manner and *form* following.” STEEVENS.

² *Your French slop.*] *Slops* are large loose *breeches* or *trousers* worn at present only by sailors. They are mentioned by Jonson in his *Alchymist*:

“ — six great *slops*

“ Bigger than three *Dutch boys*.”

Again, in *Ram-alley*, or *Merry Tricks*, 1611:

“ — three pounds in gold

“ These *slops* contain.” STEEVENS.

Hence evidently the term *slop-seller* for the venders of ready-made cloaths. NICHOLS.

³ — *What counterfeit, &c.?*

Mer. The slip, the slip, sir;] To understand this play upon the words *counterfeit* and *slip*, it should be observed that in our Author's time there was a counterfeit piece of money distinguished by the name of a *slip*. This will appear in the following instances:

“ And therefore he went and got him certain *slips*, which are

Rom. Pardon, good Mercutio, my business was great; and, in such a case as mine, a man may strain courtesy.

Mer. That's as much as to say—such a case as yours constrains a man to bow in the hams.

Rom. Meaning—to curt'fy.

Mer. Thou hast most kindly hit it.

Rom. A most courteous exposition.

Mer. Nay, I am the very pink of courtesy.

Rom. Pink for flower.

Mer. Right.

Rom. Why, then is my pump well flower'd.

Mer. Well said: follow me this jest now, 'till thou hast worn out thy pump; that, when the single sole of it is worn, the jest may remain, after the wearing, solely singular.

Rom. O single-sol'd jest, solely singular for the singleness!

Mer. Come between us, good Benvolio; my wit faints.

Rom. Switch and spurs, switch and spurs; or I'll cry a match.

Mer. Nay, if thy wits run the wild-goose chase, I am done; for thou hast more of the wild-goose in one

“counterfeit pieces of money, being brasse, and covered over with silver, which the common people call *slips*.” *Thieves falling out, True men come by their goods*; by Robert Greene.

Again, “I had like t'have been

“Abus'd i' the business, had the *slip* slur'd on me,

“A counterfeit.” *Magnetick Lady*, A. 3. S. 6. REED.

The *slip* is again used equivocally in *No Wit like a Woman's*, a comedy, by Middleton, 1657: *Clown*. “Because you shall be sure on't, you have given me a *nine pence* here, and I'll give you *the slip* for it.” [Exit. MALONE.

— then is my pump well flower'd.] Here is a vein of wit too thin to be easily found. The fundamental idea is, that Romeo wore pinked pumps, that is, punched with holes in figures. JOHNSON.

See the shoes of the *morris-dancers* in the plate at the conclusion of the first part of *K. Henry IV*, with Mr. Toller's remarks annexed to it.

It was the custom to wear ribbons in the shoes formed into the shape of roses, or of any other flowers. So Middleton, in the *Masque*, by the Gent. of Gray's-Inn, 1614: “Every masker's pump was fasten'd with a flower suitable to his cap.” STEEVENS.

of thy wits, than, I am sure, I have in my whole five: Was I with you there for the goose?

Rom. Thou wast never with me for any thing, when thou wast not there for the goose.

Mer. I will bite thee by the ear for that jest.

Rom. Nay, good goose, bite not.

Mer. Thy wit is a very bitter sweeting; it is a most sharp sauce.

Rom. And is it not well serv'd in to a sweet goose?

Mer. O, here's a wit of cheverel, that stretches from an inch narrow to an ell broad!

Rom.

⁴ I will bite thine ear —] So Sir Epicure Mammon to Face in Jonson's *Alchymist*.

"Slave, I could bite thine ear." STEEVENS.

⁵ — Good goose, bite not,] Is a proverbial expression, to be found in Ray's Collection; and is used in *The Two Angry Women of Abington*, 1599. STEEVENS.

⁶ — a very bitter sweeting;] A bitter sweeting, is an apple of that name. So, in *Summer's last Will and Testament*, 1600:

"— as well crabs as sweetings for his summer fruits."

Again, in *Fair Em*, 1631:

"— what, in displeasure gone!

And left me such a bitter sweet to gnaw upon?"

Again, in Gower, *De Confessione Amantis*, lib. 8. fol. 174. b:

"For all such tyme of love is lore,

"And like unto the bitter swete

"For though it thinke a man fyrst swete

"He shall well felen at laste

"That it is sower, &c."

An allusion to fruit remains unexplained in Ben Jonson's *Bartolomeo Fair*, Act 1:

"A soft velvet head like a *Mellicotton*."

i. e. a *Malacoton*, a species of peach, at that time newly imported from France. STEEVENS.

⁷ — a wit of cheverel,] *Cheverel* is soft leather for gloves. JOHNSON.

So, in the *Two Maids of More-clacke*, 1609:

"Drawing on love's white hand a glove of warmth,

"Not *cheveril* stretching to such prophanation."

From *Cheveau*, a *Kid*, Fr. So again, in *TEXNOTAMIA*, or *The Marriages of the Arts*, 1618:

"The quilting of Ajax his shield was but a thin *cheverel* to it."

F 4

Again,

Rom. I stretch it out for that word—broad; which added to the goose, proves thee far and wide a broad goose.

Mer. Why, is not this better now than groaning for love? now thou art sociable; now art thou Romeo; now art thou what thou art, by art as well as by nature: for this driveling love is like a great natural, that runs lolling up and down to hide his bauble in a hole⁸:

Ben. Stop there, stop there.

Mer. Thou desirest me to stop in my tale against the hair⁹.

Ben. Thou would'st else have made thy tale large.

Mer. O, thou art deceiv'd, I would have made it short: for I was come to the whole depth of my tale; and meant, indeed, to occupy the argument no longer.

Rom. Here's goodly geer!

Enter Nurse, and Peter.

Mer. A fail, a fail, a fail!

Ben. Two, two; a shirt, and a smock.

Again, in the *Cobler's Prophecy*, 1594:

“To day in pumps and *cheveril* gloves to walk she will be bold.”

Again, in *The Owl*, by Drayton:

“A *cheverell* conscience, and a searching wit.” STEEVENS.

Cheveril is from Chevreuil, Roebuck. MUSGRAVE.

⁸ — *to hide his bauble in a hole.*] It has been already observed by Sir J. Hawkins, in a note on *All's Well*, &c. that a *bauble* was one of the accoutrements of a licensed fool or jester. So again, in Sir W. D'Avenant's *Albion*, 1629: “For such rich widows there, love court fools, and use to play with their *baubles*.”

Again, in *The longer thou livest, the greater Fool thou art*, 1570:

“And as stark an idiot as ever bare *bable*.”

See the plate at the end of *K. Henry IV.* P. 1. with Mr. Tollet's observations on it. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *against the hair.*] *A contrepoil*: Fr. An expression equivalent to one which we now use — “against the grain.” STEEVENS.

Nurse.

Nurse. Peter!

Peter. Anon?

Nurse. My fan, Peter!

Mer. Do, good Peter, to hide her face; for her fan's the fairer of the two.

Nurse. God ye good morrow, gentlemen.

Mer. God ye good den, a fair gentlewoman.

Nurse. Is it good den?

Mer. 'Tis no less, I tell you; for the bawdy hand of the dial is now upon the prick of noon.

Nurse. Out upon you! what a man are you?

Rom. One, gentlewoman, that God hath made himself to mar.

Nurse. By my troth, it is well said;—For himself to mar, quoth'a?—Gentlemen, can any of you tell me where I may find the young Romeo?

Rom. I can tell you; but young Romeo will be older when you have found him, than he was when you fought him: I am the youngest of that name, for fault of a worse.

Nurse. You say well.

¹ *My fan, Peter.*] The business of Peter carrying the Nurse's fan, seems ridiculous according to modern manners; but I find such was formerly the practice. In an old pamphlet, called "*The Serving-man's Comfort*," 1598, we are informed, "The mistress must have one to carry her cloake and hood, another her fanne." FARMER.

Again, in *Love's Labour's Lost*:

To see him walk before a lady, and to bear her fan.

Again, in *Every Man out of his Humour*: "If any lady, &c. wants an upright gentleman in the nature of a gentleman usher, &c. who can hide his face with her fan, &c." STEEVENS.

² *God ye good den,*] i. e. God give you a good even. The first of these contractions is common among the ancient comic writers. So, in R. Brome's *Northern Lassi*, 1633:

"God you good even, sir." STEEVENS.

³ — *the hand of the dial*—] In the *Puritan Widow*, 1605, which has been attributed to our author, is a similar expression:

"—the feskewe of the diall is upon the chrisse-crosse of noon."

STEEVENS.

Mer.

Mer. Yea, is the worst well? very well took;
i'faith; wisely, wisely.

Nurse. If you be he, fir, I desire some confidence
with you.

Ben. She will indite him to some supper.

Mer. A bawd, a bawd, a bawd! So ho!

Rom. What hast thou found?

Mer. ⁴ No hare, fir; unless a hare, fir, in a
lenten pye, that is something stale and hoar ere it be
spent.

*An old bare hoar^s,
And an old bare hoar,
Is very good meat in lent:
But a bare that is hoar,
Is too much for a score,
When it hoars ere it be spent.—*

Romeo, will you come to your father's? we'll to din-
ner thither.

Rom. I will follow you.

Mer. Farewel, ancient lady; farewel, lady, lady,
lady ⁶.

[*Exeunt Mercutio, and Benvolio.*]

⁴ *No bare, fir;*] Mercutio having roared out, *So ho!* the cry
of the sportsmen when they start a hare; Romeo asks *what he has
found.* And Mercutio answers, *No bare,* &c. The rest is a series
of quibbles unworthy of explanation, which he who does not un-
derstand, needs not lament his ignorance. JOHNSON.

⁵ *An old bare hoar,*] *Hoar* or *boary*, is often used for mouldy,
as things grow white from moulding. So, in *Pierce Pennyles's Sup-
plication to the Devil*, 1595: "— as *boary* as Dutch butter." Again, in F. Beaumont's letter to Speght on his edition of Chaucer,
1602: "Many of Chaucer's words are become as it were *vinew'd*
and *boarie* with over long lying." Again, in *Every Man out of his
Humour*: "— mice and rats

" Eat up his grain; or else that it might rot

" Within the *boary* ricks e'en as it stands." STEEVENS.

⁶ — *lady, lady, lady.*] The burthen of an old song. See Dr.
Farmer's note on *Twelfth Night*, p. 196. STEEVENS.

Nurse.

Nurse. I pray you, sir, what saucy merchant⁷ was this, that was so full⁸ of his ropery?

Rom. A gentleman, nurse, that loves to hear himself talk; and will speak more in a minute, than he will stand to in a month.

Nurse. An 'a speak any thing against me, I'll take him down an 'a were lustier than he is, and twenty such Jacks; and if I cannot, I'll find those that shall. Scurvy knave! I am none of his flirt-gills; I am⁹ none of his skains-mates:—And thou must stand by too, and suffer every knave to use me at his pleasure?

Pet.

⁷ — *what saucy merchant was this, &c.*] The term *merchant* which was, and even now is, frequently applied to the lowest sort of dealers, seems anciently to have been used on these familiar occasions in contradistinction to *gentleman*; signifying that the person shewed by his behaviour he was a low fellow. The term *chap*, i. e. *chapman*, a word of the same import with *merchant* in its less respectable sense, is still in common use among the vulgar, as a general denomination for any person of whom they mean to speak with freedom or disrespect. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *of his ropery?*] *Ropery* was anciently used in the same sense as *rogue* is now. So, in the *Three Ladies of London*, 1584:

“Thou art very pleasant and full of thy ropery.”

Rope-tricks are mentioned in another place. STEEVENS.

⁹ *None of his skains-mates.*] The word *skains-mate*, I do not understand, but suppose that *skains* was some low play, and *skains-mate*, a companion at such play. JOHNSON.

A *skain* or *skain* was either a knife or a short dagger. By *skains-mates* the nurse means none of his loose companions who frequent the fencing-school with him, where we may suppose the exercise of this weapon was taught.

The word is used in the old tragedy of *Soliman and Perseda*, 1599.

“Against the light-foot Irish have I serv'd,

“And in my skin bare tokens of their *skains*.”

Again, in the comedy called *Lingua*, &c. 1607. At the opening of the piece *Lingua* is represented as apparelled in a particular manner, and among other things—having “a little *skene* tied in “a purple scarf.”

Green, in his *Quip for an upstart Courtier*, describes “an ill-favour'd knave, who wore by his side a *skaine* like a brewer's “bung-knife.”

Skain

Pet. I saw no man use you at his pleasure; if I had, my weapon should quickly have been out, I warrant you: I dare draw as soon as another man, if I see occasion in a good quarrel, and the law on my side.

Nurse. Now, afore God, I am so vext, that every part about me quivers. Scurvy knave!—Pray you, sir, a word: and as I told you, my young lady bade me enquire you out; what she bade me say, I will keep to myself: but first let me tell ye, if ye should lead her into a fool's paradise, as they say, it were a very gross kind of behaviour, as they say: for the gentlewoman is young; and, therefore, if you should deal double with her, truly, it were an ill thing to be offered to any gentlewoman, and very weak dealing.

Rom. Nurse, commend me to thy lady and mistress. I protest unto thee,—

Nurse. Good heart! and, i'faith, I will tell her as much: Lord, lord, she will be a joyful woman.

Rom. What wilt thou tell her, nurse? thou dost not mark me.

Nurse. I will tell her, sir,—that you do protest; which, as I take it, is a gentleman-like offer.

Rom.

Skein is the Irish word for a *knife*. Again, in the *Fatal Contract*; by J. W. Hemings, 1653:

“How easily this *skein* is sheath'd in him.”

Again, in the *Merry Devil of Edmonton*, 1626:

“—with this frantic and untamed passion,
To whet their *skains*.”

Again, in Drayton's *Miseries of Q. Margaret*:

“Came in the van-guard with his Irishmen,
“With darts and *skains*.”

Again, in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, song 4:

“—those crooked *skaines* they us'd in war to bear.”

Again, in Warner's *Albions England*, 1602, book 5. chap. 26:

“And hidden *skains* from underneath their forged garments
drew.” STEEVENS.

Swift has the word in his description of an Irish feast:

“A cubit at least the length of their *skains*.” NICHOLS.

—*protest*.] Whether the repetition of this word conveyed any idea peculiarly comic to Shakespeare's audience, is not at present

Rom. Bid her devise some means to come to shrift
This afternoon ;

And there she shall at friar Laurence' cell
Be shriv'd, and marry'd. Here is for thy pains.

Nurse. No, truly, sir ; not a penny.

Rom. Go to ; I say, you shall.

Nurse. This afternoon, sir ? well, she shall be there.

Rem. And stay, good nurse, behind the abby-wall :
Within this hour my man shall be with thee ;

And bring thee cords made ² like a tackled stair,

³ Which to the high top-gallant of my joy

Must be my convoy in the secret night.

Farewel !—Be trusty, and I'll quit thy pains.

Farewel !—Commend me to thy mistress.

Nurse. Now God in heaven bless thee !—Hark
you, sir.

Rom. What say'st thou, my dear nurse ?

Nurse. Is your man secret ? Did you ne'er hear
say—

Two may keep counsel, putting one away ?

Rom. I warrant thee ; my man's as true as steel.

Nurse. Well, sir ; my mistress is the sweetest lady—
Lord, lord !—when 'twas a little prating thing,—
O,—there's a nobleman in town, one Paris, that

sent to be determined. The use of it, however, is ridiculed in the
old comedy of *Sir Giles Goosecap*, 1606 :

“ There is not the best duke's son in France dares say, *I profess*,
till he be one and thirty years old at least ; for the inheritance of
that word is not to be possessed before.” STEEVENS.

² — *like a tackled stair,*] Like stairs of rope in the tackle of a
ship. JOHNSON.

³ — *top-gallant of my joy*] The *top-gallant* is the highest extremity of the mast of a ship.

The expression is common to many writers ; among the rest, to
Markham in his *English Arcadia*, 1607 :

“ — beholding in the high *top-gallant* of his valour.”
Again, in *Eliosto Libidinoso*, 1606 :

“ — that, vailing *top-gallant*, she returned. &c.”
STEEVENS.

would

would fain lay knife aboard; but she, good soul, had as lieve see a toad, a very toad, as see him. I anger her sometimes, and tell her that Paris is the properer man; but, I'll warrant you, when I say so, she looks as pale as any clout in the varfal world. Doth not rosemary and Romeo begin both with a letter?

4 *Rom.* Ay, nurse; What of that? both with an R.

4 *Rom.* Ay, Nurse; what of that? both with an R.

Nurse. *Ab, mocker! that's the dog's name.* R is for the no, I know it begins with no other letter;] I believe, I have rectified this odd stuff; but it is a little mortifying, that the sense, when found, should not be worth the pains of retrieving it.

“ ——— spissis indigna theatris

“ Scripta pudet recitare, & nugis addere pondus.”

The Nurse is represented as a prating silly creature; she says, she will tell Romeo a good joke about his mistress, and asks him, whether Rosemary and Romeo do not begin both with a letter: He says, Yes, an R. She, who, we must suppose, could not read, thought he had mock'd her, and says, No, sure, I know better: our dog's name is R. yours begins with another letter. This is natural enough, and in character. R put her in mind of that sound which is made by dogs when they snarl; and therefore, I presume, she says, that is the dog's name, R in the schools, being called *The dog's letter*. Ben Jonson, in his *English Grammar*, says, *R is the dog's letter, and birreth in the sound.*

“ Irritata canis quod R. R. quam plurima dicat.” *Lucil.*

WARBURTON.

Dr. Warburton reads: — R. is for *Thee*? STEEVENS.

This passage is thus in the old folio. *A mocker, that's the dog's name. R is for the no, I know it begins with some other letter.* In this copy the error is but small. I read, *Ab, mocker, that's the dog's name. R is for the nonce, I know it begins with another letter.* For the nonce, is for some design, for a sly trick. JOHNSON.

For the nonce is an expression common to all the ancient writers. *For the nonce* is for the present purpose. So Holinshead, p. 933: “ — she withdrew into a little place made for the nones.” So Phaer, in his translation of *Virgil*, B. ii. speaking of Sinon:

“ That for the nonce had done himself, by yielding to be took.”

Again, one of the stage-directions in *Alphonsus Emperor of Germany*, says: “ They must have axes made for the nonce, to fight withal.” Again, in M. Kyffin's translation of the *Andria* of Terence, 1588: “ — dost thou think but small difference between that one doth in good earnest, and that which is done for the nonce?” STEEVENS.

Nurse.

Nurse. Ah, mocker! that's the dog's name⁵. R is for the dog. No; I know it begins with some other letter: and she hath the prettiest sententious of it, of you and rosemary, that it would do you good to hear it.

Rom. Commend me to thy lady. [Exit.]

Nurse. Ay, a thousand times.—Peter!

Pet. Anon?

Nurse. Peter, take my fan, and go before. [Exitunt.]

S C E N E V.

Capulet's Garden.

Enter Juliet.

Jul. The clock struck nine, when I did send the nurse;

In half an hour she promis'd to return.

Perchance, she cannot meet him:—that's not so.—

O, she is lame! love's heralds⁶ should be thoughts,

Which ten times faster glide than the sun's beams,

Driving back shadows over lowering hills:

Therefore do nimble-pinion'd doves draw love,

And therefore hath the wind-swift Cupid wings.

Now is the sun upon the highmost hill

Of this day's journey; and from nine 'till twelve

⁵ *Ab mocker! that's the dog's name. R is for the No, &c.]* I believe we should read, *R is for the dog.* No; I know it begins with some other letter. TYRWHITT.

I have adopted this emendation. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *should be thoughts, &c.]* The speech is thus continued in the quarto, 1597:

— should be thoughts,

And run more swift than hasty powder fir'd,
Doth hurry from the fearful cannon's mouth.

Oh, now she comes! Tell me, gentle Nurse,
What says my love?—

The greatest part of the scene is likewise added since that edition.

STEEVENS.

80 R O M E O A N D J U L I E T .

Is three long hours,—yet she is not come.
 Had she affections, and warm youthful blood,
 She'd be as swift in motion as a ball;
 My words would bandy her to my sweet love,
 And his to me;
 But old folks, many feign as they were dead;
 Unwieldy, slow, heavy and pale as lead.

Enter Nurse, with Peter.

O God, she comes!—O honey nurse, what news?
 Hast thou met with him? Send thy man away.

Nurse. Peter, stay at the gate. [*Exit Peter.*]

Jul. Now, good sweet nurse,—O lord! why
 look'st thou sad?

Though news be sad, yet tell them merrily;
 If good, thou sham'st the musick of sweet news
 By playing it to me with so sour a face.

Nurse. I am aweary, give me leave a while;—
 Fie, how my bones ache! What a jaunt have I had!

Jul. I would, thou hadst my bones, and I thy news:
 Nay, come, I pray thee, speak;—good, good nurse,
 speak.

Nurse. What haste? can you not stay awhile?
 Do you not see, that I am out of breath?

Jul. How art thou out of breath, when thou hast
 breath

To say to me—that thou art out of breath?
 The excuse, that thou dost make in this delay,
 Is longer than the tale thou dost excuse.

Is thy news good, or bad? answer to that;
 Say either, and I'll stay the circumstance;
 Let me be satisfied; Is't good or bad?

Nurse. Well, you have made a simple choice; you
 know not how to chuse a man: Romeo! no, not he;
 though his face be better than any man's, yet his leg
 excels all men's; and for a hand, and a foot, and a
 body,—though they be not to be talk'd on, yet they

are past compare: He is not the flower of courtesy, but, I'll warrant him, as gentle as a lamb.—Go thy ways, wench; serve God:—What, have you din'd at home?

Jul. No, no: But all this did I know before; What says he of our marriage? what of that?

Nurse. Lord, how my head akes! what a head have I?

It beats as it would fall in twenty pieces.

My back o' the other side,—O, my back, my back!—
Beshrew your heart, for sending me about,
To catch my death with jaunting up and down!

Jul. I'faith, I am sorry that thou art not well: Sweet, sweet, sweet nurse, tell me, what says my love?

Nurse. Your love says like an honest gentleman, And a courteous, and a kind, and a handsome, and I warrant, a virtuous:—Where is your mother?

Jul. Where is my mother?—why, she is within; Where should she be? How oddly thou reply'st?

*Your love says like an honest gentleman, —
Where is your mother?*

Nurse. O, God's lady dear!
Are you so hot? Marry, come up, I trow;
Is this the poultice for my aking bones?
Henceforward do your messages yourself.

Jul. Here's such a coil;—Come, what says Romeo?

Nurse. Have you got leave to go to shrift to-day?

Jul. I have.

Nurse. Then hie you hence to friar Laurence' cell,
There stays a husband to make you a wife:
Now comes the wanton blood up in your cheeks,
They'll be in scarlet straight at any news.
Hie you to church; I must another way,
To fetch a ladder, by the which your love
Must climb a bird's nest soon, when it is dark;
I am the drudge, and toil in your delight;

But you shall bear the burden soon at night.
Go, I'll to dinner; hie you to the cell.

Jul. Hie to high fortune!—honest nurse, farewell.
[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E VI.

Friar Laurence's cell.

Enter Friar Laurence, and Romeo 7.

Friar. So smile the heavens upon this holy act,
That after-hours with sorrow chide us not!

Rom.

⁷ This scene was entirely new formed: the reader may be pleased to have it as it was at first written:

Rom. Now, father Laurence, in thy holy grant
Consists the good of me and Juliet.

Friar. Without more words, I will do all I may
To make you happy, if in me it lie.

Rom. This morning here she 'pointed we should meet,
And consummate those never-parting bands,
Witness of our hearts' love, by joining hands;
And come she will.

Friar. I guess she will indeed:
Youth's love is quick, swifter than swiftest speed.

Enter Juliet somewhat fast, and embraceth Romeo.

See where she comes!—
So light a foot ne'er hurts the trodden flower;
Of love and joy, see, see the sovereign power!

Jul. Romeo!

Rom. My Juliet, welcome! As do waking eyes
(Clos'd in night's mists) attend the frolick day,
So Romeo hath expected Juliet;
And thou art come.

Jul. I am (if I be day)
Come to my sun; shine forth, and make me fair.

Rom. All beauteous fairness dwelleth in thine eyes.

Jul. Romeo, from thine all brightness doth arise.

Friar. Come, wantons, come, the stealing hours do pass;
Defer embracements to some fitter time;

Rom. Amen, amen! but come what sorrow can,
It cannot countervail the exchange of joy
That one short minute gives me in her sight:
Do thou but close our hands with holy words,
Then love-devouring death do what he dare,
It is enough I may but call her mine.

Friar. These violent delights have violent ends,
And in their triumph, die; like fire and powder,
Which, as they kiss, consume: The sweetest honey
Is loathsome in his own deliciousness,
And in the taste confounds the appetite:
Therefore, love moderately; long love doth so;
⁸ Too swift arrives as tardy as too slow.

Enter Juliet.

⁹ Here comes the lady:—O, so light a foot
Will ne'er wear out the everlasting flint:
A lover may bestride the goffamour¹

Part for a time; "you shall not be alone,
" 'Till holy church hath join'd you both in one."

Rom. Lead, holy father, all delay seems long:

Jul. Make haste, make haste, this ling'ring doth us wrong.

Friar. O, soft and fair makes sweetest work they say;

Haste is a common hind'rer in cross-way. [*Exeunt.*]

STEEVENS.

⁸ *Too swift arrives*] He that travels too fast is as long before he comes to the end of his journey, as he that travels slow. Precipitation produces mishap. JOHNSON.

⁹ *Here comes the lady, &c.*] However the poet might think the alteration of this scene on the whole to be necessary, I am afraid, in respect of the passage before us, he has not been very successful. The violent hyperbole, of *never wearing out the everlasting flint* appears to me not only more reprehensible, but even less beautiful than the lines as they were originally written, where the lightness of Juliet's motion is accounted for from the cheerful effects the passion of love produced in her mind. STEEVENS.

¹ *A lover may bestride the goffamour.*] The *Goffamer* is the long white filament which flies in the air in summer. So, in *Hannibal and Scipio*, 1637, by *Nabbes*:

"Fine as Arachne's web, or goffamer,

"Whose curls when garnish'd by their dressing, shew

"Like that spun vapour when 'tis pear'd with dew?"

STEEVENS.

That idles in the wanton summer air,
And yet not fall; so light is vanity.

Jul. Good even to my ghostly confessor.

Friar. Romeo shall thank thee, daughter, for us both.

Jul. As much to him, else are his thanks too much.

Rom. Ah, Juliet, if the measure of thy joy
Be heap'd like mine, and that thy skill be more
To blazon it, then sweeten with thy breath
This neighbour air, and let rich musick's tongue
Unfold the imagin'd happiness that both
Receive in either by this dear encounter.

Jul. Conceit, more rich in matter than in words,
Brags of his substance, not of ornament:
They are but beggars that can count their worth;
But my true love is grown to such excess,
I cannot sum up half my sum of wealth².

Friar. Come, come with me, and we will make
short work;

For, by your leaves, you shall not stay alone,
'Till holy church incorporate two in one. [*Exeunt.*]

A C T III. S C E N E I.

A S T R E E T.

Enter Mercutio, Benvolio, Page, and Servants.

Ben. I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire;
The day is hot, the Capulets abroad,

² *I cannot sum up half my sum of wealth.*] The old copies read:
I cannot sum up *sum of half* my wealth,
and,

I cannot sum up *some* of half my wealth. STEEVENS.

³ *The day is hot.*] It is observed, that in Italy almost all assassinations are committed during the heat of summer. JOHNSON.

And,

And, if we meet, we shall not 'scape a brawl;
For now, these hot days, is the mad blood stirring.

Mer. Thou art like one of those fellows, that, when he enters the confines of a tavern, claps me his sword upon the table, and says, *God send me no need of thee!* and, by the operation of the second cup, draws it on the drawer, when, indeed, there is no need.

Ben. Am I like such a fellow?

Mer. Come, come, thou art as hot a Jack in thy mood as any in Italy; and as soon mov'd to be moody, and as soon moody to be mov'd.

Ben. And what too?

Mer. Nay, an there were two such, we should have none shortly, for one would kill the other. Thou! why thou wilt quarrel with a man that hath a hair more, or a hair less, in his beard, than thou hast. Thou wilt quarrel with a man for cracking nuts, having no other reason but because thou hast hazel eyes; What eye, but such an eye, would spy out such a quarrel? Thy head is as full of quarrels, as an egg is full of meat; and yet thy head hath been beaten as addle as an egg, for quarrelling. Thou hast quarrell'd with a man for coughing in the street, because he hath waken'd thy dog that hath lain asleep in the sun. Didst thou not fall out with a taylor for wearing his new doublet before Easter? with another, for tying his new shoes with old ribband? and yet thou wilt tutor me for quarrelling!

Ben. An I were so apt to quarrel as thou art, any man should buy the fee-simple of my life for an hour and a quarter.

Mer. The fee-simple? O simple!

* These two speeches have been added since the first quarto, together with some few circumstances in the rest of the scene, as well as in the ensuing one. STEEVENS.

Enter Tybalt, and others.

Ben. By my head, here come the Capulets.

Mer. By my heel, I care not.

Tyb. Follow me close, for I will speak to them.—
Gentlemen, good den: a word with one of you.

Mer. And but one word with one of us? Couple it with something; make it a word and a blow.

Tyb. You shall find me apt enough to that, sir, if you will give me occasion.

Mer. Could you not take some occasion without giving?

Tyb. Mercutio, thou consort'st with Romeo,—

Mer. Consort! what, dost thou make us minstrels? an thou make minstrels of us, look to hear nothing but discords: here's my fiddlestick; here's that shall make you dance. 'Zounds, consort!

Ben. We talk here in the publick haunt of men:
Either withdraw into some private place,
Or reason coldly of your grievances,
Or else depart; here all eyes gaze on us.

Mer. Men's eyes were made to look, and let them gaze;
I will not budge for no man's pleasure, I.

Enter Romeo.

Tyb. Well, peace be with you, sir! here comes my man.

Mer. But I'll be hang'd, sir, if he wear your livery; Marry, go first to field, he'll be your follower; Your worship, in that sense, may call him—man.

Tyb. Romeo, the hate I bear thee, can afford No better term than this—Thou art a villain.

Rom. Tybalt, the reason that I have to love thee Doth much excuse the appertaining rage

To

To such a greeting:—Villain I am none;
Therefore farewell; I see, thou know'st me not.

Tyb. Boy, this shall not excuse the injuries
That thou hast done me; therefore turn, and draw.

Rom. I do protest, I never injur'd thee;
But love thee better than thou canst devise,
'Till thou shalt know the reason of my love:
And so, good Capulet,—which name I tender
As dearly as my own,—be satisfied.

Mer. O calm, dishonourable, vile submission!
^s *A la stoccata* carries it away.—

Tybalt, you rat-catcher, will you walk?

Tyb. What wouldst thou have with me?

Mer. Good king of cats, nothing, but one of your
nine lives; that I mean to make bold withal, and, as
you shall use me hereafter, dry-beat the rest of the
eight. ⁶ Will you pluck your sword out of his pil-
cher by the ears? make haste, lest mine be about
your ears ere it be out.

Tyb. I am for you, [Drawing.]

⁵ *A la stoccata*—] *Stoccata* is the Italian term for a thrust or
stab with a rapier. So, in the *Devil's Charter*, 1607:

“ He makes a thrust; I with a swift passado

“ Make quick avoidance, and with this *stoccata*, &c.”

STEEVENS.

⁶ *Will you pluck your sword out of his PILCHER by the ears?*
We should read *pilche*, which signifies a cloke or coat of skins,
meaning the scabbard. WARBURTON.

The old quarto reads *scabbard*. Dr. Warburton's explanation
is, I believe, just. Nash, in *Pierce Pennyles his Supplication*, 1595,
speaks of a carman in a leather *pilche*. Again, in *Decker's Satiro-*
maslix:

“ I'll beat five pounds out of his leather *pilch*.”

Again,

“ Thou hast forgot how thou ambled'st in a leather *pilch*, by a
play-waggon in the highway, and took'st mad Jeronimo's part, to
get service among the mimics.”

It appears from this passage, that *Ben Jonson* acted the part of
Hieronimo in the Spanish tragedy, the speech being addressed to
Horace, under which character old *Ben* is ridiculed. STEEVENS.

Rom. Gentle Mercutio, put thy rapier up.

Mer. Come, fir, your passado. [*They fight.*]

Rom. Draw, Benvolio;

Beat down their weapons:—Gentlemen, for shame
 Forbear this outrage;—Tybalt—Mercutio—
 The prince expressly hath forbid this bandying
 In Verona streets:—hold, Tybalt;—good Mercutio.
 [*Exit Tybalt.*]

Mer. I am hurt;—

A plague o' both the houses!—I am sped:—
 Is he gone, and hath nothing?

Ben. What, art thou hurt?

Mer. Ay, ay, a scratch, a scratch; marry, 'tis
 enough.—

Where is my page?—go, villain, fetch a surgeon.

[*Exit Page.*]

Rom. Courage, man; the hurt cannot be much.

Mer. No, 'tis not so deep as a well, nor so wide as
 a church door; but 'tis enough, 'twill serve: ask for
 me to-morrow, and you shall find me 7 a grave man.
 I am pepper'd, I warrant, for this world:—A plague

⁷ — a grave man.] After this, the quarto 1597 continues Mer-
 cutio's speech as follows:

— A pox o' both your houses! I shall be fairly
 mounted upon four men's shoulders for your house of the
 Montague's and the Capulets: and then some peafantly
 rogue, some sexton, some base slave, shall write my epitaph,
 that Tybalt came and broke the prince's laws, and Mer-
 cutio was slain for the first and second cause. Where's
 the surgeon?

Boy. He's come, fir.

Mer. Now he'll keep a mumbling in my guts on the other
 side.—Come, Benvolio, lend me thy hand: A pox o'
 both your houses! STEEVENS.

“You will find me a grave man.” This jest was better in old
 language, than it is at present; Lidgate says, in his elegy upon
 Chaucer:

“My master Chaucer now is grave.” FARMER.

I meet with the same quibble in the *Revenger's Tragedy*, 1608,
 where *Vindici* dresses up a lady's skull, and observes:

“— she has a somewhat grave look with her.” STEEVENS.
 o' both

o' both your houses!—What! a dog, a rat, a mouse, a cat, to scratch a man to death! a braggart, a rogue, a villain, that fights by the book of arithmetick!—Why, the devil, came you between us? I was hurt 'under your arm.

Rom. I thought all for the best.

Mer. Help me into some house, Benvolio, Or I shall faint.—A plague o' both your houses! They have made worm's meat of me: I have it, and soundly too:—Your houses!

[*Exeunt Mercutio, and Benvolio.*]

Rom. This gentleman, the prince's near ally, My very friend, hath got his mortal hurt In my behalf; my reputation stain'd With Tybalt's slander, Tybalt, that an hour Hath been my kinsman:—O sweet Juliet, Thy beauty hath made me effeminate, And in my temper soften'd valour's steel.

Re-enter Benvolio.

Ben. O Romeo, Romeo, brave Mercutio's dead; That gallant spirit hath aspir'd the clouds⁸, Which too untimely here did scorn the earth.

Rom. ⁹ This day's black fate on more days doth depend; This but begins the woe, others must end.

Re-enter Tybalt.

Ben. Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.

⁸ —*hath aspir'd the clouds.*] So, in *Greene's Card of Fancy*, 1608:

“ Her haughty mind is too lofty for me to *aspire*.”

We never use this verb at present without some particle, as, *to* and *after*. STEEVENS.

⁹ *This day's black fate on more days does depend;*] This day's unhappy destiny *hangs over* the days yet to come. There will yet be more mischief. JOHNSON.

Rom.

Rom. Alive! in triumph! and Mercutio slain!
 Away to heaven, respective lenity,
 And fire-ey'd fury be my conduct now!—
 Now, Tybalt, take the villain back again,
 That late thou gav'st me; for Mercutio's soul
 Is but a little way above our heads,
 Staying for thine to keep him company;
 Or thou, or I, or both, shall follow him.

Tyb. Thou, wretched boy, that didst consort him
 here,
 Shalt with him hence.

Rom. This shall determine that.

[They fight, Tybalt falls.]

Ben. Romeo, away, be gone!
 The citizens are up, and Tybalt slain:—
 Stand not amaz'd:—the prince will doom thee death,
 If thou art taken:—hence!—be gone!—away!

Rom. O! I am fortune's fool!

Ben. Why dost thou stay? *[Exit Romeo.]*

Enter Citizens, &c.

Cit. Which way ran he, that kill'd Mercutio?
 Tybalt, that murderer, which way ran he?

Ben. There lies that Tybalt.

Cit. Up, sir, go with me;
 I charge thee in the prince's name, obey.

Enter Prince, Montague, Capulet, their Wives, &c.

Prin. Where are the vile beginners of this fray?

Ben. O noble prince, I can discover all
 The unlucky manage of this fatal brawl:

¹ O! I am fortune's fool!] I am always running in the way
 of evil fortune, like the fool in the play. *Thou art death's fool, in
 Measure for Measure.* See Dr. Warburton's note. JOHNSON.

In the first copy, O! I am fortune's slave. STEEVENS.

There

There lies the man, slain by young Romeo,
That slew thy kinsman, brave Mercutio.

La. Cap. Tybalt, my cousin!—O my brother's
child!—

O prince!—O husband!—O, the blood is spill'd
Of my dear kinsman!—Prince, ² as thou art true,
For blood of ours, shed blood of Montague.—
O cousin, cousin!

Prin. Benvolio, who began this bloody fray?

Ben. Tybalt, here slain, whom Romeo's hand did
slay;

Romeo that spoke him fair, bid him bethink
³ How nice the quarrel was, ⁴ and urg'd withal
Your high displeasure: all this—uttered
With gentle breath, calm look, knees humbly bow'd,—
Could not take truce with the unruly spleen
Of Tybalt deaf to peace, but that he tilts
With piercing steel at bold Mercutio's breast;
Who, all as hot, turns deadly point to point,
And, with a martial scorn, with one hand beats
Cold death aside, and with the other sends
It back to Tybalt, whose dexterity
Retorts it: Romeo he cries aloud,
Hold, friends! friends, part! and, swifter than his
tongue,

His agile arm beats down their fatal points,
And 'twixt them rushes; underneath whose arm
An envious thrust from Tybalt hit the life
Of stout Mercutio, and then Tybalt fled:
But by and by comes back to Romeo,
Who had but newly entertain'd revenge,

² — *as thou art true,*] As thou art *just* and *upright*. JOHNSON.

³ *How nice the quarrel*—] How *slight*, how *unimportant*, how
petty. So in the last act,
The letter was not *nice*, but full of charge
Of dear import. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *and urg'd withal*—] The rest of this speech was new writ-
ten by the poet, as well as a part of what follows in the same
scene. STEEVENS.

And to't they go like lightning; for, ere I
 Could draw to part them, was stout Tybalt slain;
 And, as he fell, did Romeo turn and fly:
 This is the truth, or let Benvolio die.

La. Cap. He is a kinsman to the Montague,
⁵ Affection makes him false, he speaks not true:
 Some twenty of them fought in this black strife,
 And all those twenty could but kill one life:
 I beg for justice, which thou, prince, must give;
 Romeo slew Tybalt, Romeo must not live.

Prin. Romeo slew him, he slew Mercutio;
 Who now the price of his dear blood doth owe?

La. Mont. Not Romeo, prince, he was Mercutio's
 friend;

His fault concludes but, what the law should end,
 The life of Tybalt.

Prin. And, for that offence,
 Immediately we do exile him hence:

⁶ I have an interest in your hates' proceeding,
 My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a bleeding;
 But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine,

⁵ *Affection makes him false,*] The charge of falshood on Benvolio, though produced at hazard, is very just. The author, who seems to intend the character of Benvolio as good, meant perhaps to shew, how the best minds, in a state of faction and discord, are detorted to criminal partiality. JOHNSON.

⁶ *I have an interest in your hearts' proceeding,*] Sir Thomas Hanmer saw that this line gave no sense, and therefore put, by a very easy change,

I have an interest in your *bates* proceeding:
 which is undoubtedly better than the old reading which Dr. Warburton has followed; but the sense yet seems to be weak, and perhaps a more licentious correction is necessary. I read therefore,

I had no interest in your bates proceeding.
 This, says the prince, is no quarrel of mine, *I had no interest in your former discord*; I suffer merely by your private animosity. JOHNSON.

The quarto, 1597, reads *bates' proceeding*. This renders all emendation unnecessary. I have followed it. STEEVENS.

That

That you shall all repent the loss of mine :
 I will be deaf to pleading and excuses ;
 Nor tears, nor prayers, shall purchase out abuses ⁷,
 Therefore use none : let Romeo hence in haste,
 Else, when he's found, that hour is his last.
 Bear hence this body, and attend our will :
 Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill ⁸.

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E II.

An apartment in Capulet's house.

Enter Juliet.

Jul. Gallop apace, you fiery-footed steeds,
 Towards ⁹ Phœbus' mansion ; such a waggoner
 As Phaeton would whip you to the west,
 And bring in cloudy night immediately ¹. —
² Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night !
 That

⁷ *Nor tears nor prayers, shall purchase out abuses ;*] This was probably designed as a stroke at the church of Rome, by which the different prices of murder, incest, and all other crimes, were minutely settled, and as shamelessly received. STEEVENS.

⁸ *Mercy but murders, pardoning those that kill.*] So, in *Hale's Memorials* : "When I find myself swayed to mercy, let me remember likewise that there is a mercy due to the country." MALONE.

⁹ — *Phœbus' mansion ;*] The second quarto and folio read, *lodging*. STEEVENS.

¹ — *immediately.*] Here ends this speech in the eldest quarto. The rest of the scene has likewise received considerable alterations and additions. STEEVENS.

² *Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night, That run-away's eyes may wink ;*] What run-aways are these, whose eyes Juliet is wishing to have stopt? Macbeth, we may remember, makes an invocation to night much in the same strain :

" — Come, feeling night,

" Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day," &c.

So Juliet would have night's darkness obscure the great eye of the day, the *sun* ; whom considering in a poetical light as *Phœbus*, drawn in his car with *fiery-footed steeds*, and *passing* through the heavens,

That run-away's eyes may wink; and Romeo
 Leap to these arms, untalk'd of, and unseen!—
 Lovers can see to do their amorous rites
 By their own beauties: or, if love be blind,
 It best agrees with night.—³ Come, civil night,
 Thou sober-suited matron, all in black,
 And learn me how to lose a winning match,
 Play'd for a pair of stainless maidenhoods:
 Hood my ⁴ unmann'd blood bating in my cheeks,
 With

heavens, she very properly calls him, with regard to the swiftness of his course, the *run-away*. In the like manner our poet speaks of the night in the *Merchant of Venice*:

“For the close night doth play the *run-away*.” WARBURTON.

I am not satisfied with this explanation, yet have nothing better to propose. JOHNSON.

The construction of this passage, however elliptical or perverse, I believe to be as follows:

May that run-away's eyes wink!

Or, *That run-away's eyes, may (they) wink!*

These ellipses are frequent in Spenser; and *that for ob!* *that* is not uncommon, as Dr. Farmer observes in a note on the first scene of the *Winter's Tale*. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act 3. Sc. 6.

That ever I should call thee cast-away!

Juliet first wishes for the absence of the sun, and then invokes the night to spread its curtain close around the world:

Spread thy close curtain, love-performing night!

next, recollecting that the night would seem short to her, she speaks of it as of a *run-away*, whose flight she would wish to retard, and whose eyes she would blind lest they should make discoveries. The *eyes of night* are the stars, so called in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. Dr. Warburton has already proved that Shakespeare terms *the night* a *run-away* in the *Merchant of Venice*: and in the *Fair Maid of the Exchange*, 1607, it is spoken of under the same character:

“The night hath play'd the swift-foot *run-away*.”

Romeo was not expected by Juliet 'till the sun was gone, and therefore it was of no consequence to her that any eyes should wink but those of the night; for, as Ben Jonson says in *Sejanus*:

“— *night hath many eyes,*

“Whereof, tho' most do sleep, yet some are spies.” STEEVENS.

³ *Come, civil night,*] *Civil is grave, decently solemn.* JOHNSON.

⁴ — *unmann'd blood* —] *Blood yet unacquainted with man.*
 JOHNSON.

Hood my unmann'd blood bating in my cheeks,] These are terms of falconry. An *unmanned* hawk is one that is not brought to endure

With thy black mantle; 'till strange love, grown bold,
Thinks true love acted, simple modesty.

Come, night!—Come, Romeo! come, thou day in
night!

For thou wilt lie upon the wings of night
Whiter than new snow on a raven's back.—

Come, gentle night; come, loving, black-brow'd
night,

Give me my Romeo: and, when he shall die,
Take him and cut him out in little stars,
And he will make the face of heaven so fine,
That all the world shall be in love with night,
And pay no worship to the ⁶ garish sun.—

endure company. *Bating* (not *baiting*, as it has hitherto been printed) is fluttering with the wings as striving to fly away. So, in Ben Jonson's *Sad Shepberd*:

“ A hawk yet half so haggard and *unmann'd*.”

Again, in the *Booke of Haukyng*, &c. bl. l. no date: “ It is called *bating*, for she *bateth* with herselfe most often causelesse.” STEEVENS.

‘ *Take him and cut him into little stars*, &c.] The same childish thought occurs in *The Wisdome of Doctor Dodypoll*, which was acted before the year 1596:

“ The glorious parts of faire Lucilia,

“ Take them and joine them in the heavenly spheres;

“ And fixe them there as an eternal light,

“ For lovers to adore and wonder at.” STEEVENS.

‘ — *the garish sun*.] Milton had this speech in his thoughts when he wrote *Il Penseroso*:

“ — *Civil* night,

“ Thou sober-suited matron.”—*Shakespeare*.

“ Till *civil-suited* morn appear.”—*Milton*.

“ Pay no worship to the *garish* sun.”—*Shakespeare*.

“ Hide me from day's *garish* eye.”—*Milton*. JOHNSON.

Garish is gaudy, showy. So, in *Richard III*:

A dream of what thou wast, a *garish* flag.

Again, in Marlow's *Edward II*, 1622:

“ — march'd like players

“ With *garish* robes.”

It sometimes signifies wild, flighty. So, in the following instance: “ — starting up and *gairishly* staring about, especially on the face of *Eliosto*.”

Hinde's *Eliosto Libidinoso*, 1606.

STEEVENS.

O, I have bought the mansion of a love,
 But not possess'd it; and, though I am sold,
 Not yet enjoy'd: So tedious is this day,
 As is the night before some festival
 To an impatient child, that hath new robes,
 And may not wear them. O, here comes my nurse,

Enter Nurse, with cords.

And she brings news; and every tongue, that speaks
 But Romeo's name, speaks heavenly eloquence.—
 Now, nurse, what news? What hast thou there? the
 cords,

That Romeo bid thee fetch?

Nurse. Ay, ay, the cords.

Jul. Ay me! what news? why dost thou wring
 thy hands?

Nurse. Ah well-a-day! he's dead, he's dead, he's dead!
 We are undone, lady, we are undone!—
 Alack the day!—he's gone, he's kill'd, he's dead!

Jul. Can heaven be so envious?

Nurse. Romeo can,
 Though heaven cannot:—O Romeo! Romeo!—
 Who ever would have thought it?—Romeo!

Jul. What devil art thou, that dost torment me
 thus?

This torture should be roar'd in dismal hell.
 Hath Romeo slain himself? say thou but *I*,
 7 And that bare vowel *I* shall poison more

Than

? *And that bare vowel ay shall poison more*

Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice.] I question much
 whether the grammarians will take this new vowel on trust from
 Mr. Pope, without suspecting it rather for a *diphthong*. In short,
 we must restore the spelling of the old books, or we lose the poet's
 conceit. At his time of day, the affirmative adverb *ay* was gene-
 rally written *I*: and by this means it both becomes a *vowel*, and
 answers in sound to *eye*, upon which the conceit turns in the
 second line. THEOBALD.

death-darting

Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice :
 I am not I, if there be such an I ;
 Or those eyes shut, that make thee answer, I.
 If he be slain say—I ; or if not, no :
 Brief sounds determine of my weal, or woe.

Nurse. I saw the wound, I saw it with mine eyes,—
 God save the mark !—here on his manly breast :
 A piteous corse, a bloody piteous corse ;
 Pale, pale as ashes, all bedawb'd in blood,
 All in gore blood ;—I fownded at the sight.

Jul. O break, my heart !—poor bankrupt, break
 at once !

To prison, eyes ! ne'er look on liberty !
 Vile earth, to earth resign ; end motion here ;
 And thou, and Romeo, press one heavy bier !

Nurse. O Tybalt, Tybalt, the best friend I had !
 O courteous Tybalt ! honest gentleman !
 That ever I should live to see thee dead !

— *death-darting eye of cockatrice.*] The strange lines that follow here in the common books, are not in the old edition. POPE.

The strange lines are these :

I am not I, if there be such an I,
 Or these eyes shot, that makes thee answer I ;
 If he be slain, say I ; or if not, no ;
 Brief sounds determine of my weal or woe.

These lines hardly deserve emendation ; yet it may be proper to observe, that their meanness has not placed them below the malice of fortune, the two first of them being evidently transposed ; we should read :

— That one vowel *I* shall poison more,
 Than the death-darting eye of cockatrice,
 Or those eyes *shot*, that make thee answer, I.
 I am not I, &c. JOHNSON.

I think the transposition recommended may be spared. The second line is corrupted. Read *shot* instead of *shot*, and then the meaning will be sufficiently intelligible.

Shot, however, may be the same as *shot*. So, in Chaucer's *Miller's Tale*, late edit. ver. 3358 :

“ And dressed him up by a *shot* window.” STEEVENS.

Jul. What storm is this, that blows so contrary?
Is Romeo slaughter'd? and is Tybalt dead?
My dear-lov'd cousin, and my dearer lord?—
Then, dreadful trumpet, sound the general doom!
For who is living, if those two are gone?

Nurse. Tybalt is gone, and Romeo banished;
Romeo, that kill'd him, he is banished.

Jul. O God!—did Romeo's hand shed Tybalt's
blood?

Nurse. It did, it did; alas the day! it did.

Jul. O serpent heart, hid with a flow'ring face!
Did ever dragon keep so fair a cave?
Beautiful tyrant! fiend angelical!

⁸ Dove-feather'd raven! wolfish-rav'ning lamb!
Despised substance of divinest show!

Just opposite to what thou justly seem'st,
A damned saint, an honourable villain!—

O, nature! what hadst thou to do in hell,

When thou didst bower the spirit of a fiend

In mortal paradise of such sweet flesh?—
Was ever book, containing such vile matter,

So fairly bound? O, that deceit should dwell

In such a gorgeous palace!

Nurse. There's no trust,

No faith, no honesty in men; all perjur'd,

⁸ *Dove-feather'd raven! &c.*] In old editions,

Ravenous dove, feather'd raven, &c.] The four following
lines not in the first edition, as well as some others which I have
omitted. POPE.

Ravenous dove, feather'd raven,

Wolfish-rav'ning lamb!] This passage Mr. Pope has

thrown out of the text, because these two noble *hemistichs* are in-
harmonious: but is there no such thing as a crutch for a labour-
ing, halting verse? I'll venture to restore to the poet a line that
is in his own mode of thinking, and truly worthy of him. *Ra-
venous* was blunderingly coined out of *raven* and *rav'ning*; and, if
we only throw it out, we gain at once an harmonious verse, and a
proper contrast of epithets and images:

Dove-feather'd raven! wolfish-rav'ning lamb! THEOBALD.

All forsworn, all naught, all dissemblers —
 Ah, where's my man? give me some *aqua vite*:—
 These griefs, these woes, these sorrows make me old.
 Shame come to Romeo!

Jul. Blister'd be thy tongue,
 For such a wish! he was not born to shame:
 Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit;
 For 'tis a throne where honour may be crown'd
 Sole monarch of the universal earth.
 O, what a beast was I to chide at him!

Nurse. Will you speak well of him that kill'd
 your cousin?

Jul. Shall I speak ill of him that is my husband?
 Ah, poor my lord, what tongue shall smooth thy name,
 When I, thy three-hours wife, have mangled it?—
 But, wherefore, villain, didst thou kill my cousin?
 That villain cousin would have kill'd my husband:
 Back, foolish tears, back to your native spring;
 Your tributary drops belong to woe,
 Which you, mistaking, offer up to joy.
 My husband lives, that Tybalt would have slain;
 And Tybalt dead, that would have slain my husband:
 All this is comfort; Wherefore weep I then?
 Some word there was, worser than Tybalt's death,
 That murder'd me: I would forget it fain;
 But, O! it presses to my memory,
 Like darning guilty deeds to sinners' minds:
Tybalt is dead, and Romeo—banished;

^o Upon his brow shame is ashamed to sit;] So, in *Painter's Palace of Pleasure*, tom. ii. p. 223: "Is it possible that under such beautie and rare comelinesse, dilloyaltie and treason may have their sledge and lodging?" STEEVENS.

¹ Back foolish tears, &c.] So, in the *Tempest*:

— I am a fool

To weep at what I am glad of.

I think, in this speech of Juliet, the words *woe* and *joy* should change places; otherwise, her reasoning is inconclusive.

STEEVENS.

That—*banished*, that one word—*banished*,
² Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts. Tybalt's death
 Was woe enough, if it had ended there :
 Or,—if four woe delights in fellowship,
 And needly will be rank'd with other griefs,—
 Why follow'd not, when she said—Tybalt's dead,
 Thy father, or thy mother, nay, or both,
³ Which modern lamentation might have mov'd ?
 But, with a rear-ward following Tybalt's death,
Romeo is banished,—to speak that word,
 Is father, mother, Tybalt, Romeo, Juliet,
 All slain, all dead :—*Romeo is banished*,—
 There is no end, no limit, measure, bound,
 In that word's death ; no words can that woe sound.—
 Where is my father, and my mother, nurse ?

Nurse. Weeping and wailing over Tybalt's corse :
 Will you go to them ? I will bring you thither.

Jul. Wash they his wounds with tears ? mine shall
 be spent,

When theirs are dry, for Romeo's banishment.
 Take up those cords :—Poor ropes, you are beguil'd,
 Both you and I ; for Romeo is exil'd :
 He made you for a highway to my bed ;
 But I, a maid, die maiden-widowed.
 Come, cords ; come, nurse ; I'll to my wedding bed ;
 And death, not Romeo, take my maidenhead !

Nurse. Hie to your chamber : I'll find Romeo
 To comfort you ;—I wot well where he is.
 Hark ye, your Romeo will be here at night ;
 I'll to him ; he is hid at Laurence' cell.

Jul. O find him ! give this ring to my true knight,
 And bid him come to take his last farewell.

[*Exeunt.*

² *Hath slain ten thousand Tybalts.*] Hath put Tybalt out of my mind, as if out of being. JOHNSON.

³ *Which modern lamentation, &c.*] This line is left out of the later editions, I suppose because the editors did not remember that Shakespeare uses *modern* for *common*, or *slight* : I believe it was in his time confounded in colloquial language with *moderate*. JOHNSON.

S C E N E III.

Friar Laurence's cell.

Enter Friar Laurence, and Romeo.

Fri. Romeo, come forth; come forth, thou fearful man;

Affliction is enamour'd of thy parts,
And thou art wedded to calamity.

Rom. Father, what news? what is the prince's doom?

What sorrow craves acquaintance at my hand,
That I yet know not?

Fri. Too familiar

Is my dear son with such foul company:
I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.

Rom. What less than dooms-day is the prince's doom?

Fri. A gentler judgment vanish'd from his lips,
Not body's death, but body's banishment.

Rom. Ha! banishment? be merciful, say—death;
For exile hath more terror in his look,
Much more than death: do not say—banishment.

Fri. Here from Verona art thou banished:
Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.

Rom. There is no world without Verona walls,
But purgatory, torture, hell itself.

Hence-banished is banish'd from the world,
And world's exile is death; then banishment
Is death mis-term'd: calling death—banishment,
Thou cut'st my head off with a golden axe,
And smil'st upon the stroke that murders me.

Fri. O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!
Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,
Taking thy part, hath rush'd aside the law,

And turn'd that black word death to banishment :
This is dear mercy, and thou see'st it not.

Rom. 'Tis torture, and not mercy: heaven is here,

Where Juliet lives; and every cat, and dog,
And little mouse, every unworthy thing,
Lies here in heaven, and may look on her,
But Romeo may not.—⁴ More validity,
More honourable state, more courtship lives
In carrion flies, than Romeo: they may seize
On the white wonder of dear Juliet's hand,
And steal immortal blessings from her lips;
Who, even in pure and vestal modesty,
Still blush, as thinking their own kisses sin:
Flies may do this, when I from this must fly;
They are free men, but I am banished.
And say'st thou yet, that exile is not death?
But Romeo may not; he is banished⁵.
Hadst thou no poison mix'd, no sharp-ground knife,
No sudden mean of death, though ne'er so mean,
But—banished—to kill me? banished?
O friar, the damned use that word in hell;
Howlings attend it: How hast thou the heart,
Being a divine, a ghostly confessor,
A sin-absolver, and my friend profess'd,
To mangle me with that word—banishment?

Fri. Thou fond mad man, hear me but speak a word.

Rom. O, thou wilt speak again of banishment.

⁴ — More validity,

More honourable state, more courtship lives

In carrion flies, than Romeo.] Validity seems here to mean worth or dignity: and courtship the state of a courtier permitted to approach the highest presence. JOHNSON.

⁵ *But Romeo may not; he is banished.]* This line is very awkwardly introduced here, and might better be inserted after—*their own kisses sin.* STEEVENS.

Fri. I'll give thee armour to keep off that word;
Adversity's sweet milk, philosophy,
To comfort thee, though thou art banished.

Rom. Yet banished?—Hang up philosophy!
Unless philosophy can make a Juliet,
Displant a town, reverse a prince's doom;
It helps not, it prevails not, talk no more.

Fri. O, then I see that madmen have no ears.

Rom. How should they, when that wise men have
no eyes?

Fri. Let me dispute with thee of thy estate.

Rom. Thou canst not speak of what thou dost not
feel:

Wert thou as young as I, Juliet thy love,
An hour but marry'd, Tybalt murdered,
Doating like me, and like me banished,
Then might'st thou speak, then might'st thou tear thy
hair,

And fall upon the ground, as I do now,
Taking the measure of an unmade grave.

Fri. Arise; one knocks; good Romeo hide thy-
self. [Knock within.]

Rom. Not I; unless the breath of heart-sick groans,
Mist-like, infold me from the search of eyes.

[Knock.]

Fri. Hark, how they knock!—Who's there?—
Romeo, arise;

Thou wilt be taken:—Stay a while:—stand up;

[Knock.]

Run to my study:—By and by:—God's will!

What wilfulness is this?—I come, I come.

[Knock.]

Who knocks so hard? whence come you? what's
your will?

* What wilfulness] The folio reads—What *simplicity*.

Nurse. [*within.*] Let me come in, and you shall know my errand;
I come from lady Juliet.
Fri. Welcome then.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. O holy friar, O, tell me, holy friar,
Where is my lady's lord, where's Romeo?

Fri. There, on the ground; with his own tears
made drunk.

Nurse. O, he is even in my mistress' case,
Just in her case! —

Fri. O woeful sympathy!
Piteous predicament!

Nurse. Even so lies she,
Blubbering and weeping, weeping and blubbering: —
Stand up, stand up; stand, an you be a man:
For Juliet's sake, for her sake, rise and stand;
8 Why should you fall into so deep an O?

Rom. Nurse!

Nurse. Ah sir! ah sir! — death is the end of all.

Rom. Spak'st thou of Juliet? how is it with her?
Doth she not think me an old murderer,
Now I have stain'd the childhood of our joy
With blood remov'd but little from her own?
Where is she? and how doth she? and what says
My conceal'd lady to our 9 cancell'd love?

9 O woeful sympathy!

Piteous predicament!] One may wonder the editors did not see that this language must necessarily belong to the *Friar*:
FARMER.

Dr. Farmer's emendation may justly claim that place in the text to which I have now advanced it. STEEVENS.

8 *Why should you fall into so deep an ob?*] *Hammer* reads:

Why should you fall into so deep an —

Rom. Ob nurse! JOHNSON.

9 — cancell'd love?] The folio reads *conceal'd love*. JOHNSON.
The quarto, *cancell'd love*. STEEVENS.

Nurse.

Nurse. O, she says nothing, sir, but weeps and weeps;

And now falls on her bed; and then starts up,
And Tybalt calls; and then on Romeo cries,
And then down falls again.

Rom. As if that name,
Shot from the deadly level of a gun,
Did murder her; as that name's cursed hand
Murder'd her kinsman.—O tell me, friar, tell me,
In what vile part of this anatomy
Doth my name lodge? tell me, that I may sack
The hateful mansion. [*Drawing his sword.*]

Fri. Hold thy desperate hand:
Art thou a man? thy form cries out, thou art;
Thy tears are womanish; thy wild acts denote
The unreasonable fury of a beast:
Unseemly woman, in a seeming man!
Or ill-beseeming beast, in seeming both!
Thou hast amaz'd me: by my holy order,
I thought thy disposition better temper'd.
Hast thou slain Tybalt? wilt thou slay thyself?
And slay thy lady too that lives in thee,
By doing damned hate upon thyself?
Why rail'st thou on thy birth, the heaven, and earth?
Since birth, and heaven, and earth, all three do meet
In thee at once; which thou at once would'st lose.

* *Unseemly woman, &c.*] This strange nonsense Mr. Pope threw out of his edition for desperate. But it is easily restored as Shakespeare wrote it into good pertinent sense.

Unseemly woman in a seeming man!

An ill-beseeming beast in seeming groth.

i. e. you have the *ill-beseeming* passions of a brute beast in the well-seeming shape of a rational creature. For having in the *first* line said, he was a woman in the shape of a man, he aggravates the thought in the *second*, and says, he was even a brute in the shape of a rational creature. *Seeming* is used in both places for *seemly*. WARBURTON.

The old reading is probable. *Thou art a beast of ill qualities, under the appearance both of a woman and a man.* JOHNSON.

Fie,

Fie, fie! thou sham'st thy shape, thy love, thy wit;
 Which, like an usurer, abound'st in all,
 And usest none in that true use indeed
 Which should bedeck thy shape, thy love, thy wit.
 Thy noble shape is but a form of wax,
 Digressing from the valour of a man:
 Thy dear love, sworn, but hollow perjury,
 Killing that love which thou hast vow'd to cherish.
 Thy wit, that ornament to shape and love,
 Mis-shapen in the conduct of them both,
 Like powder in the skill-less soldier's flask²,
 Is set on fire by thine own ignorance,
³ And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.
 What, rouse thee, man! thy Juliet is alive,
 For whose dear sake thou wast but lately dead;
 There art thou happy: Tybalt would kill thee,
 But thou slew'st Tybalt; there too art thou happy:
 The law, that threaten'd death, becomes thy friend,
 And turns it to exile; there art thou happy:
 A pack of blessings lights upon thy back;
 Happiness courts thee in her best array;
 But, like a mis'hav'd and a sullen wench,
 Thou pout'st upon thy fortune and thy love:
 Take heed, take heed, for such die miserable.
 Go, get thee to thy love, as was decreed,
 Ascend her chamber, hence and comfort her;
 But, look, thou stay not 'till the watch be set,

² *Like powder in the skill-less soldier's flask, &c.*] To understand the force of this allusion, it should be remembered that the ancient English soldiers, using *match*-locks, instead of locks with flints as at present, were obliged to carry a lighted *match* hanging at their belts, very near to the wooden *flask* in which they kept their powder. The same allusion occurs in *Humor's Ordinary*, an old collection of English epigrams:

“When she his *flask* and touch-box set on fire,

“And till this hour the burning is not out.” STEEVENS

³ *And thou dismember'd with thine own defence.*] And thou torn to pieces with thy own weapons. JOHNSON.

For then thou canst not pass to Mantua;
 Where thou shalt live, 'till we can find a time
 To blaze your marriage, reconcile your friends,
 Beg pardon of the prince, and call thee back
 With twenty hundred thousand times more joy
 Than thou went'st forth in lamentation.—
 Go before, nurse: commend me to thy lady;
 And bid her hasten all the house to bed,
 Which heavy sorrow makes them apt unto:
 Romeo is coming ⁴.

Nurse. O Lord, I could have staid here all the
 night,
 To hear good counsel: O, what learning is!—
 My lord, I'll tell my lady you will come.

Rom. Do so, and bid my sweet prepare to chide.

Nurse. Here, sir, a ring she bid me give you, sir:
 Hie you, make haste, for it grows very late.

Rom. How well my comfort is reviv'd by this!

Fri. ⁵ Go hence. Good night:—and ⁶ here stands
 all your state,—

Either be gone before the watch be set,
 Or by the break of day disguis'd from hence:
 Sojourn in Mantua; I'll find out your man,
 And he shall signify from time to time
 Every good hap to you, that chances here:
 Give me thy hand; 'tis late: farewell; good night.

Rom. But that a joy past joy calls out on me,
 It were a grief, so brief to part with thee:
 Farewel.

[*Exeunt.*]

⁴ *Romeo is coming*] Much of this speech has likewise been added since the first edition. STEEVENS.

⁵ *Go hence. Good night, &c*] These three lines are omitted in all the modern editions. JOHNSON.

⁶ —*here stands all your state*;] The whole of your fortune depends on this. JOHNSON.

SCENE IV.

A room in Capulet's house.

Enter Capulet, lady Capulet, and Paris.

Cap. Things have fallen out, fir, fo unluckily,
That we have had no time to move our daughter :
Look you, ſhe lov'd her kinsman Tybalt dearly,
And ſo did I ;— Well, we were born to die.—
'Tis very late, ſhe'll not come down to-night :
I promiſe you, but for your company,
I would have been a-bed an hour ago.

Par. Theſe times of woe afford no time to woo:—
Madam, good night : commend me to your daughter.

La. Cap. I will, and know her mind early to-
morrow ;

To-night ſhe's mew'd up ⁸ to her heavineſs.

Cap. ⁹ Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender
Of my child's love : I think, ſhe will be rul'd
In all reſpects by me ; nay more, I doubt it not.—
Wife, go you to her ere you go to bed ;
Acquaint her here with my ſon Paris' love ;
And bid her, mark you me, on wedneſday next—
But, ſoft ; What day is this ?

Par. Monday, my lord.

⁷ SCENE IV. Some few unneceſſary verſes are omitted in this ſcene according to the oldeſt editions. POPE.

Theſe verſes are ſuch as will by no means connect with the laſt and moſt improved copy of the play. STEEVENS.

⁸ *mew'd up.*] This is a phraſe from falconry. A *mew* was a place of confinement for hawks. STEEVENS.

⁹ *Sir Paris, I will make a desperate tender Of my child's love.*—] *Desperate* means only *bold, advent'rous*, as if he had ſaid in the vulgar phraſe, *I will ſpeak a bold word, and venture to promiſe you my daughter.* JOHNSON.

So, in *The Weakeſt goes to the Wall*, 1618:

Witness this *deſperate tender* of mine honour." STEEVENS.

Cap.

Cap. Monday? ha! ha! Well, wednesday is too soon,

O' thursday let it be;—o' thursday, tell her,
She shall be married to this noble earl:—

Will you be ready? do you like this haste?

We'll keep no great ado;—a friend, or two:—

For hark you, Tybalt being slain so late,

It may be thought we held him carelessly,

Being our kinsman, if we revel much:

Therefore we'll have some half a dozen friends,

And there an end. But what say you to thursday?

Par. My lord, I would that thursday were to-morrow.

Cap. Well, get you gone:—o' thursday be it then:—

Go you to Juliet ere you go to bed,

Prepare her, wife, against this wedding-day.—

Farewell, my lord.—Light to my chamber, ho!

'Fore me, it is so very late, that we

May call it early by and by:—Good night. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E V.

Juliet's chamber.

Enter Romeo, and Juliet.

Jul. Wilt thou be gone? it is not yet near day:

It was the nightingale, and not the lark,

That pierc'd the fearful hollow of thine ear;

Nightly she sings¹ on yon pomegranate tree:

Believe me, love, it was the nightingale.

¹ Nightly she sings on yon pomegranate tree:] This is not merely a poetical supposition. It is observed of the nightingale that, if undisturbed, she sits and sings upon the same tree for many weeks together. STEEVENS.

Rom.

Rom. It was the lark, the herald of the morn,
No nightingale: look, love, what envious streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east:
Night's candles are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountains' tops;
I must be gone and live, or stay and die.

Jul. Yon light is not day-light, I know it, I;
It is some meteor that the sun exhales,
To be to thee this night a torch-bearer,
And light thee on thy way to Mantua:
Therefore stay yet, thou need'st not to be gone.

Rom. Let me be ta'en, let me be put to death;
I am content, if thou wilt have it so.
I'll say, yon grey is not the morning's eye,
'Tis but the ² pale reflex of Cynthia's brow;
Nor that is not the lark, whose notes do beat
The vaulty heaven so high above our heads:
³ I have more care to stay, than will to go;—
Come, death, and welcome! Juliet wills it so.—
How is't, my soul? let's talk, it is not day.

Jul. It is, it is, hie hence, be gone, away;
It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords, and displeasing sharps.
Some say, the lark makes sweet division ⁴;
This doth not so, for she divideth us:
Some say, the lark and loathed toad change eyes;
⁵ O, now I would they had chang'd voices too!

Since
² — *the pale reflex*—] The appearance of a cloud opposed to the moon. JOHNSON.

³ *I have more care to stay, than will to go.*] Would it be better thus, *I have more will to stay, than care to go?* JOHNSON.

⁴ — *sweet division*;) *Division* seems to have been the technical term for the pauses or parts of a musical composition. So, in *K. Henry IV.* P. 1:

Sung by a fair queen in a summer's bower,
With ravishing *division* to her lute. STEEVENS.

⁵ *O, now I would they had chang'd voices too!*] The *toad* having very fine eyes, and the *lark* very ugly ones, was the occasion of a common saying amongst the people, that *the toad and lark had changed eyes.* To this the speaker alludes. But sure she need not

6 Since arm from arm that voice doth us affray,
7 Hunting thee hence with hunts-up to the day.
O, now be gone; more light and light it grows.

have wished that they had changed voices too. The lark appeared to her untunable enough in all conscience; as appears by what she said just before,

*It is the lark that sings so out of tune,
Straining harsh discords and unpleasing sharps.*

This directs us to the right reading. For how natural was it for her after this to add,

*Some say the lark and loathed toad change eyes;
O, now I wot they have chang'd voices too.*

i. e. the lark sings so harshly, that I now perceive the toad and she have changed voices as well as eyes. WARBURTON.

This tradition of the toad and lark I have heard expressed in a rustick rhyme,

— To hear'n I'd fly,

But that the toad beguil'd me of mine eye. JOHNSON.

6 *Since arm from arm, &c.*] These two lines are omitted in the modern editions, and do not deserve to be replaced, but as they may shew the danger of critical temerity. Dr. Warburton's change of *I would* to *I wot* was specious enough, yet it is evidently erroneous. The sense is this, *The lark, they say, has lost her eyes to the toad, and now I would the toad had her voice too, since she uses it to the disturbance of lovers.* JOHNSON.

7 *Hunting thee up with huntsup to the day.*] The *buntsup* was the name of the tune anciently played to wake the hunters, and collect them together. So, in the play of *Orlando Furioso*, 1594 and 1599:

"To play him *buntsup* with a point of war,
"I'll be his minstrell with my drum and fife."

Again, in *The Seven Champions of Christendom*, a comedy, 1638:

"— When Calib's concert plays
"A *buntsup* to her."

Again, in *Westward Hoe*, 1607:

"— Make a noise, its no matter; any *buntsup* to waken vice."

Again, in the *Return from Parnassus*, 1606:

"Yet will I play a *bunts-up* to my Muse."

Again, in *Aristippus, or the Jovial Philosopher*, 1630:

"Heyday! there goes the *buntsup*—"

Again, in *Monfieur Thomas*, 1639:

"I'll pipe you such a *buntsup*."

Again, in the *Four Prentices of London*, 1632:

"— a drum

"To give me a *buntsup*."

Again, in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, song 13th:

"But *bunts-up* to the morn the feather'd sy'ravs sing."

Rom. More light and light?—more dark and dark
our woes.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Madam!

Jul. Nurse?

Nurse. Your lady mother's coming to your chamber:

The day is broke; be wary, look about.

[Exit Nurse.]

Jul. Then, window, let day in, and let life out.

Rom. Farewel, farewel! one kifs, and I'll descend.

[Romeo descends.]

Jul. Art thou gone so? Love! lord! ah, husband!
friend!

I must hear from thee every day i' the hour,
For in a minute there are many days:

⁸ O! by this count I shall be much in years,
Ere I again behold my Romeo.

Rom. Farewel! I will omit no opportunity
That may convey my greetings, love, to thee.

Jul. O, think'st thou, we shall ever meet again?

Rom. I doubt it not; and all these woes shall serve
For sweet discourses in our time to come.

Jul. ⁹ O God! I have an ill-divining soul;

⁸ O! by this count I shall be much in years,
Ere I again behold my Romeo.

" Illa ego, quæ fueram te decedente puella,

" Protinus ut redeas, facta videbor anus." *Ovid. Epist. 1.*

STEEVENS.

⁹ O God! I have an ill-divining soul, &c.] This miserable pre-
science of futurity I have always regarded as a circumstance parti-
cularly beautiful. The same kind of warning from the mind
Romeo seems to have been conscious of, on his going to the enter-
tainment at the house of Capulet.

" — my mind misgives,

" Some consequence yet hanging in the stars,

" Shall bitterly begin his fearful date

" From this night's revels." STEEVENS.

Methinks, I see thee, now thou art so low,
 As one dead in the bottom of a tomb:
 Either my eye-sight fails, or thou look'st pale.

Rom. And trust me, love, in my eye so do you:
 Dry sorrow drinks our blood¹. Adieu! adieu!

[*Exit Romeo.*]

Jul. O fortune, fortune! all men call thee fickle:
 If thou art fickle, what dost thou with him
 That is renown'd for faith? Be fickle, fortune;
 For then, I hope, thou wilt not keep him long,
 But send him back.

La. Cap. [witbin.] Ho, daughter! are you up?

Jul. Who is't that calls? is it my lady mother?
 Is she not down so late, or up so early?
 What unaccustom'd cause² procures her hither?

Enter Lady Capulet.

La. Cap. Why, how now, Juliet?

Jul. Madam, I am not well.

La. Cap. Evermore weeping for your cousin's death?
 What, wilt thou wash him from his grave with tears?
 An if thou could'st, thou could'st not make him live;
 Therefore, have done: Some grief shews much of
 love;

But much of grief shews still some want of wit.

Jul. Yet let me weep for such a feeling loss.

La. Cap. So shall you feel the loss, but not the
 friend

Which you weep for.

Jul. Feeling to the loss,
 I cannot choose but ever weep the friend.

La. Cap. Well, girl, thou weep'st not so much for
 his death,

¹ *Dry sorrow drinks our blood.*] This is an allusion to the proverb — "Sorrow's dry." STEEVENS.

² — procures her hither?] Procures for brings. WARBURTON.

As that the villain lives which slaughter'd him.

Jul. What villain, madam?

La. Cap. That same villain, Romeo.

Jul. Villain and he are many miles asunder.

God pardon him! I do, with all my heart;
And yet no man, like he, doth grieve my heart.

La. Cap. That is, because the traitor murderer
lives.

Jul. Ay, madam, from the reach of these my
hands:

'Would, none but I might venge my cousin's death!

La. Cap. We will have vengeance for it, fear thou
not:

Then weep no more. I'll send to one in Mantua,—
Where that same banish'd runagate doth live,—
That shall bestow on him so sure a draught⁴,
That he shall soon keep Tybalt company:
And then, I hope, thou wilt be satisfied.

Jul. Indeed, I never shall be satisfied
With Romeo, 'till I behold him—dead—
Is my poor heart so for a kinsman vext:—
Madam, if you could find out but a man
To bear a poison, I would temper it;
That Romeo should, upon receipt thereof,
Soon sleep in quiet.—O, how my heart abhors
To hear him nam'd,—and cannot come to him,—
To wreak the love I bore my cousin Tybalt,
Upon his body that hath slaughter'd him!

³ *Ay, madam, from—*] Juliet's equivocations are rather too artful for a mind disturbed by the loss of a new lover. JOHNSON.

⁴ *That shall bestow on him so sure a draught,*] Thus the elder quarto, which I have followed in preference to the quartos 1599 and 1609, and the folio 1623, which read, less intelligibly,

“ Shall give him such an unaccustom'd dram.” STEEVENS.

— *unaccustom'd dram,*] In vulgar language, Shall give him a dram which he is not us'd to. Though I have, if I mistake not, observed, that in old books *unaccustomed* signifies *wonderful, powerful, efficacious*. JOHNSON.

La. Cap. 5 Find thou the means, and I'll find such a man.

But now I'll tell thee joyful tidings, girl.

Jul. And joy comes well in such a needful time: What are they, I beseech your ladyship?

La. Cap. Well, well, thou hast a careful father, child;

One, who, to put thee from thy heaviness,
Hath sorted out a sudden day of joy,
That thou expect'st not, nor I look'd not for.

Jul. Madam, 6 in happy time, what day is that?

La. Cap. Marry my child, early next thursday morn,

The gallant, young, and noble gentleman,
The county Paris 7, at saint Peter's church,
Shall happily make thee there a joyful bride.

Jul. Now, by saint Peter's church, and Peter too,
He shall not make me there a joyful bride.

I wonder at this haste; that I must wed

5 *Find thou, &c.*] This line in the quarto 1597, is given to Juliet. STEEVENS.

6 — *in happy time,*—] *A la bonne beure.* This phrase was interjected, when the hearer was not quite so well pleased as the speaker. JOHNSON.

7 *The County Paris,*—] It is remarked, that “Paris, though in one place called *Earl*, is most commonly stiled the *Countie* in this play. Shakespeare seems to have preferred, for some reason or other, the *Italian Comte* to our *Count*: perhaps he took it from the old English novel, from which he is said to have taken his plot.”—He certainly did so: Paris is there first stiled a *young Earle*, and afterward *Counte*, *Countee*, and *County*; according to the unsettled orthography of the time.

The word however is frequently met with in other writers; particularly in Fairfax:

“As when a captaine doth besiege some hold,

“Set in a marish or high on a hill,

“And trieth waies and wiles a thousand fold,

“To bring the place subjected to his will;

“So far'd the *Countie* with the Pagan bold,” &c.

Godfrey of Bulloigne, Book 7. Stanza 90.

FARMER.

Ere he, that should be husband, comes to woo.
 I pray you, tell my lord and father, madam,
 I will not marry yet; and, when I do, I swear,
 It shall be Romeo, whom you know I hate,
 Rather than Paris:—These are news indeed!

La. Cap. Here comes your father; tell him so
 yourself,
 And see how he will take it at your hands.

Enter Capulet, and Nurse.

Cap. When the sun sets, the air doth drizzle dew;
 But for the sun-set of my brother's son,
 It rains downright.—

How now? a conduit, girl? what, still in tears?
 Evermore showering? In one little body
 Thou counterfeit'st a bark, a sea, a wind:
 For still thy eyes, which I may call the sea,
 Do ebb and flow with tears; the bark thy body is,
 Sailing in this salt flood; the winds, thy sighs;
 Who,—raging with thy tears, and they with them,—
 Without a sudden calm, will overset
 Thy tempest-tossed body.—How now, wife?
 Have you deliver'd to her our decree?

La. Cap. Ay, sir; but she will none, she gives
 you thanks:

I would, the fool were married to her grave!

Cap. Soft, take me with you, take me with you,
 wife.

How! will she none? doth she not give us thanks?
 Is she not proud? doth she not count her blest,
 Unworthy as she is, that we have wrought
 So worthy a gentleman to be her bridegroom?

Jul. Not proud, you have; but thankful, that
 you have:

Proud can I never be of what I hate;
 But thankful even for hate, that is meant love.

Cap.

Cap. How now! how now! chop logick? What is this?

Proud—and, I thank you—and, I thank you not—
And yet not proud—Mistress minion, you ⁸,

Thank me no thankings, nor proud me no prouds,
But settle your fine joints 'gainst thursday next,

To go with Paris to faint Peter's church,
Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.

Out, you green-sickness carrion! ⁹ out, you baggage!
You tallow-face!

La. Cap. Fie, fie! what are you mad?

Jul. Good father, I beseech you on my knees,
Hear me with patience but to speak a word.

Cap. Hang thee, young baggage! disobedient
wretch!

I tell thee what,—get thee to church o' thursday,
Or never after look me in the face:

Speak not, reply not, do not answer me;

My fingers itch.—Wife, we scarce thought us blest,
That God hath sent us but this only child;

But now I see this one is one too much,
And that we have a curse in having her:

Out on her, hilding!

Nurse. God in heaven blefs her!—

You are to blame, my lord, to rate her so.

⁸ *And yet not proud, &c.*] This line is wanting in the folio.
STEEVENS.

⁹ — *Out, you baggage!*

You tallow-face!] Such was the indelicacy of the age of Shakespeare, that authors were not contented only to employ these terms of abuse in their own original performances, but even felt no reluctance to introduce them in their versions of the most chaste and elegant of the Greek or Roman poets. Stanyhurst, the translator of Virgil in 1582, makes Dido call Æneas—*Hedge-brat, cullion, and tar-breech*, in the course of one speech.

Nay, in the Interlude of the *Repentance of Mary Magdalene*, 1567, *Mary Magdalene* says to one of her attendants:

“*Horefon, I besrowe your heart, are you here?*” STEEVENS.

Cap. And why, my lady wisdom? hold your tongue,

Good prudence; smatter with your gossips, go.

Nurse. I speak no treason.

Cap. O, God ye good den!

Nurse. May not one speak?

Cap. Peace, you mumbling fool!

Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl,

For here we need it not.

La. Cap. You are too hot.

Cap. God's bread! it makes me mad: Day, night,
late, early,

At home, abroad, alone, in company,

Waking, or sleeping, still my care hath been

To have her match'd: and having now provided

A gentleman of princely parentage,

Of fair demesnes, youthful, and nobly train'd,

Stuff'd (as they say) with honourable parts,

Proportion'd as one's thought would wish a man,—

And then to have a wretched puling fool,

A whining mammet, in her fortune's tender,

To answer—*I'll not wed,—I cannot love,—*

I am too young,—I pray you, pardon me;—

But, an you will not wed, I'll pardon you:

Graze where you will, you shall not house with me;

Look to't, think on't, I do not use to jest.

Thursday is near; lay hand on heart, advise:

An you be mine, I'll give you to my friend;

An you be not, hang, beg, starve, die i' the streets,

For, by my soul, I'll ne'er acknowledge thee,

Nor what is mine shall never do thee good:

Trust to't, bethink you, I'll not be forsworn.

[*Exit.*

Jul. Is there no pity sitting in the clouds,

That sees into the bottom of my grief?—

O, sweet my mother, cast me not away!

Delay this marriage for a month, a week;

Or,

Or, if you do not, make the bridal bed
In that dim monument where Tybalt lies †.

La. Cap. Talk not to me, for I'll not speak a
word;

Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee. [*Exit.*]

Jul. O God!—O nurse! how shall this be pre-
vented?

My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven;
How shall that faith return again to earth,
Unless that husband send it me from heaven
By leaving earth?—comfort me, counsel me.—
Alack, alack, that heaven should practise stratagems
Upon so soft a subject as myself!—
What say'st thou? hast thou not a word of joy?
Some comfort, nurse.

Nurse. † Faith, here 'tis: Romeo
Is banished; and all the world to nothing,
That he dares ne'er come back to challenge you;
Or, if he do, it needs must be by stealth.
Then, since the case so stands as now it doth,
I think it best you married with the county.
Oh! he's a lovely gentleman!
Romeo's a dish-clout to him; an eagle, madam,
Hath not † so green, so quick, so fair an eye

† *In that dim monument, &c.*] The modern editors read *dim* monument. I have replaced *dim* from the old quarto 1597, and the folio. STEEVENS.

‡ *Faith, here it is:—*] The character of the nurse exhibits a just picture of those whose actions have no principles for their foundation. She has been unfaithful to the trust reposed in her by Capulet, and is ready to embrace any expedient that offers, to avert the consequences of her first infidelity. STEEVENS.

‡ *—so green,—*] So the first editions. *Hammer* reads,—*so keen.* JOHNSON.

Perhaps Chaucer has given to *Emetrius*, in the *Knigbt's Tale*, eyes of the same colour:

His nose was high, his eyin bright *citryx*:
i. e. of the hue of an unripe lemon or citron.

Again, in the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, by Fletcher and Shakespeare,
Act 5. Sc. 1. “—oh vouchsafe,

“With that thy rare *green* eye, &c.—” STEEVENS.

As Paris hath. Beshrew my very heart,
 I think you are happy in this second match;
 For it excels your first: or if it did not,
 Your first is dead; or 'twere as good he were,
 4 As living here and you no use of him.

Jul. Speakest thou from thy heart?

Nurse. And from my soul too;
 Or else beshrew them both.

Jul. Amen!

Nurse. What?

Jul. Well, thou hast comforted me marvellous
 much.

Go in; and tell my lady I am gone,
 Having displeas'd my father, to Laurence' cell,
 To make confession, and to be absolv'd.

Nurse. Marry, I will; and this is wisely done.

[*Exit.*

Jul. Ancient damnation! 5 O most wicked fiend!
 Is it more sin—to wish me thus forsworn,
 Or to dispraise my lord with that same tongue
 Which she hath prais'd him with above compare
 So many thousand times?—Go, counsellor;
 Thou and my bosom henceforth shall be twain.—
 I'll to the friar, to know his remedy;
 If all else fail, myself have power to die. [*Exit.*

4 *As living here,—*] Sir T. Hanmer reads, *as living* hence; that is, at a distance, in banishment; but *here* may signify, *in this world*. JOHNSON.

5 *Ancient damnation!*] This term of reproach occurs in the *Malcontent*, 1604:

“—out, you *ancient damnation!*” STEEVENS.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Friar Laurence's cell.

Enter Friar Laurence, and Paris.

Fri. On thursday, fir? the time is very short.

Par. My father Capulet will have it so;

⁶ And I am nothing slow, to slack his haste.

Fri. You say, you do not know the lady's mind;
Uneven is the course, I like it not.

Par. Immoderately she weeps for Tybalt's death,
And therefore little have I talk'd of love;
For Venus smiles not in a house of tears.
Now, fir, her father counts it dangerous,
That she do give her sorrow so much sway;
And, in his wisdom, hastes our marriage,
To stop the inundation of her tears;
Which, too much minded by herself alone,
May be put from her by society:
Now do you know the reason of this haste.

Fri. I would I knew not why it should be slow'd ⁷.

[*Aside.*

Look, fir, here comes the lady towards my cell.

* *And I am, &c.] His haste shall not be abated by my slowness.*
It might be read:

And I am nothing slow to *back* his haste:
that is, I am diligent to *abet* and *enforce* his haste. JOHNSON.

Slack was certainly the author's word, for, in the first edition,
the line ran——

“ For I am nothing *slack* to *slow* his haste.”

Back could not have stood there. MALONE.

⁷ — *be slow'd.*] So, in Sir A. Gorges' translation of the second
book of Lucan:

“ —— will you overflow
“ The fields, thereby my march to *slow*?” STEEVENS.

Enter

Enter Juliet.

Par. Happily met, ^s my lady, and my wife!

Jul. That may be, sir, when I may be a wife.

Par. That may be, must be, love, on thursday next.

Jul. What must be shall be.

Friar. That's a certain text.

Par. Come you to make confession to this father?

Jul. To answer that, were to confess to you.

Par. Do not deny to him, that you love me.

Jul. I will confess to you, that I love him.

Par. So will you, I am sure, that you love me.

Jul. If I do so, it will be of more price,
Being spoke behind your back, than to your face.

Par. Poor soul, thy face is much abus'd with tears.

Jul. The tears have got small victory by that;
For it was bad enough, before their spight.

Par. Thou wrong'st it, more than tears, with that report.

Jul. That is no slander, sir, which is a truth;
And what I spake, I spake it to my face.

Par. Thy face is mine, and thou hast slander'd it.

Jul. It may be so, for it is not mine own.—
Are you at leisure, holy father, now;

Or shall I come to you at evening mass?

Fri. My leisure serves me, pensive daughter, now:—
My lord, we must intreat the time alone.

Par. God shield, I should disturb devotion!—

Juliet, on thursday early will I rouze you:

'Till then, adieu! and keep this holy kifs.

[Exit Paris.]

Jul. O, shut the door! and when thou hast done so,
Come weep with me; Past hope, past cure, past help!

^s — *my lady and my wife!*] As these four first lines seem intended to rhyme, perhaps the author wrote thus:

—— my lady and my life! JOHNSON.

Friar.

Friar. Ah, Juliet, I already know thy grief;
It strains me past the compass of my wits:
I hear thou must, and nothing may prorogue it,
On Thursday next be married to this county.

Jul. Tell me not, friar, that thou hear'st of this,
Unless thou tell me how I may prevent it:
If, in thy wisdom, thou canst give no help,
Do thou but call my resolution wise,
And with this knife I'll help it presently.
God join'd my heart and Romeo's, thou our hands;
And ere this hand, by thee to Romeo seal'd,
Shall be the label to another deed,
Or my true heart with treacherous revolt
Turn to another, this shall slay them both:
Therefore, out of thy long-experienc'd time,
Give me some present counsel; or, behold,
'Twixt my extremes and me this bloody knife
Shall play the umpire, arbitrating that
Which the ¹ commission of thy years and art
Could to no issue of true honour bring.
Be not so long to speak; I long to die,
If what thou speak'st speak not of remedy.

Friar. Hold, daughter; I do spy a kind of hope,
Which craves as desperate an execution
As that is desperate which we would prevent.
If, rather than to marry county Paris,
Thou hast the strength of will to slay thyself;
Then is it likely, thou wilt undertake
A thing like death to chide away this shame,
That cop'st with death himself to scape from it;
And, if thou dar'st, I'll give thee remedy.

Jul. O, bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,

* *Shall play the umpire;—*] That is, this knife shall decide the struggle between me and my distresses. JOHNSON.

¹ *— commission of thy years and art*] *Commission* is for authority or power. JOHNSON.

From off the battlements of yonder tower ² ;
³ Or walk in thievish ways ; or bid me lurk
 Where serpents are ; chain me with roaring bears ;
 Or hide me nightly in a charnel house,
 O'er-cover'd quite with dead men's rattling bones,
 With reeky shanks, and yellow chapless skulls ;
 Or bid me go into a new-made grave,
 And hide me with a dead man in his shroud,
 Things that, to hear them told, have made me
 tremble ;

And I will do it without fear or doubt,
 To live an unstain'd wife to my sweet love.

Fri. Hold, then ; go home, be merry, give consent
 To marry Paris : Wednesday is to-morrow ;
 To-morrow night look that thou lie alone,
 Let not thy nurse lie with thee in thy chamber :
 Take thou this phial ⁴, being then in bed,

And

² — of yonder tower ;] Thus the quarto 1597. All other ancient copies — of any tower. STEEVENS.

³ Or chain me, &c.]

Or walk in thievish ways, or bid me lurk
 Where serpents are ; chain me with roaring bears,
 Or hide me nightly, &c.

It is thus the editions vary. POPE.

My edition has the words which Mr. Pope has omitted ; but the old copy seems in this place preferable ; only perhaps we might better read,

Where *savage* bears and *roaring* lions roam. JOHNSON.

I have inserted the lines which Pope omitted ; for which I must offer this short apology : in the lines rejected by him we meet with three distinct ideas, such as may be supposed to excite terror in a woman, for one that is to be found in the others. The lines now omitted are these :

Or chain me to some steepy mountain's top,
 Where roaring bears and savage lions roam ;
 Or shut me — STEEVENS.

⁴ Take thou this phial, &c.] Thus *Painter's Palace of Pleasure*, tom. ii. p. 237. "Beholde heere I give thee a viole, &c. drink so much as is contained therein. And then you shall feele a certaine kinde of pleafant sleepe, which incroching by litle and litle all the parts

And this distilled liquor drink thou off:
 When, presently, through all thy veins shall run ⁵
 A cold and drowsy humour, which shall seize
 Each vital spirit; for no pulse shall keep
 His natural progress, but surcease to beat:
 No warmth, no breath, shall testify thou liv'st;
 The roses in thy lips and cheeks shall fade
 To paly ashes; thy eyes' windows fall,
 Like death, when he shuts up the day of life;
 Each part, depriv'd of supple government,
 Shall stiff, and stark, and cold appear like death:
 And in this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death
 Thou shalt remain full two and forty hours,
 And then awake as from a pleasant sleep.
 Now when the bridegroom in the morning comes
 To rouse thee from thy bed, there art thou dead:
 Then (as the manner of our country is)
⁶ In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier,

Thou

parts of your body, wil constrain them in such wise, as unmoveable they shal remaine: and by not doing their accustomed duties, shall loose their natural feelings, and you abide in such extasie the space of xl houres at the least, without any beating of poulse or other perceptible motion, which shall so astonne them that come to see you, as they will judge you to be dead, and according to the custome of our citie, you shall be caried to the churchyard hard by our church, when you shall be intombed in the common monument of the Capellets your ancestors, &c." STEEVENS.

⁵ — *through all thy veins shall run*

A cold and drowsy humour,] The first edition in 1597, has in general been here followed, except only, that instead of *a cold and drowsy humour*, we there find — '*a dull and heavy slumber.*'

MALONE.

⁶ *In thy best robes uncover'd on the bier,*] Between this line and the next, the quartos 1599, 1609, and the first folio, introduce the following verse, which the poet very probably had struck out on his revival, because it is quite unnecessary, as the sense of it is repeated, and as it will not connect with either:

Be borne to burial in thy kindred's grave.

Had Virgil lived to have revised his *Æneid*, he would hardly have permitted both of the following lines to remain in his text:

" At

Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault,
 Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie.
 In the mean time, against thou shalt awake,
 Shall Romeo by my letters know our drift;
 And hither shall he come; ⁷ and he and I
 Will watch thy waking, and that very night
 Shall Romeo bear thee hence to Mantua.
 And this shall free thee from this present shame;
⁸ If no unconstant toy, nor womanish fear,
 Abate thy valour in the acting it.

Jul. Give me, O give me! tell me not of fear.

Fri. Hold; get you gone, be strong and prosperous
 In this resolve: I'll send a friar with speed
 To Mantua, with my letters to thy lord.

Jul. Love, give me strength! and strength shall
 help afford.

Farewel, dear father! [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

Capulet's house.

Enter Capulet, Lady Capulet, Nurse, and Servants.

Cap. So many guests invite as here are writ.—
 Sirrah, go hire me twenty cunning cooks.

Serv. You shall have none ill, sir; for I'll try if
 they can lick their fingers.

“ At *Venus* obscuro gradientes aëre sepsit;

“ Et multo nebulæ circum *dea* fudit amictu.”

The awkward repetition of the nominative case in the second of them, seems to decide very strongly against it. STEEVENS.

⁷ ——— and he and I

Will watch thy waking,—] These words are not in the folio. JOHNSON.

⁸ *If no unconstant toy,—*] If no fickle freak, no light caprice, no change of fancy, hinder the performance. JOHNSON.

Cap.

Cap. How canst thou try them so?

Serv. Marry, sir, 'tis an ill cook that cannot lick his own fingers: therefore he, that cannot lick his fingers, goes not with me.

Cap. Go, begone.— [Exit Servant.
We shall be much unfurnish'd for this time.—
What, is my daughter gone to friar Laurence?

Nurse. Ay, forsooth.

Cap. Well, he may chance to do some good on her:
A peevish self-will'd harlotry it is.

Enter Juliet.

Nurse. See, where she comes from shrift⁹ with merry look.

Cap. How now, my head-strong? where have you been gadding?

Jul. Where I have learnt me to repent the sin
Of disobedient opposition
To you, and your behests; and am enjoin'd
By holy Laurence to fall prostrate here,
And beg your pardon:—Pardon, I beseech you!
Henceforward I am ever rul'd by you.

Cap. Send for the county; go, tell him of this;
I'll have this knot knit up to-morrow morning.

Jul. I met the youthful lord at Laurence' cell;
And gave him what becomed love I might,
Not stepping o'er the bounds of modesty.

Cap. Why, I am glad on't; this is well, stand up:
This is as't should be.—Let me see the county;
Ay, marry, go, I say, and fetch him hither.—

⁹ —from shrift, i. e. from confession.] So, in the *Merry Devil of Edmonton*, 1626:

“Ay, like a wench comes roundly to her *shrift*.”

In the old Morality of *Every Man*, bl. l. no date, confession is personified:

“Now I pray you *shriste*, mother of salvacyon.”

Now, afore God, this reverend holy friar,
¹ All our whole city is much bound to him.

Jul. Nurse, will you go with me into my closet,
 To help me sort such needful ornaments
 As you think fit to furnish me to-morrow?

La. Cap. No, not 'till thursday; there is time
 enough.

Cap. Go, nurse, go with her:—we'll to church
 to-morrow. [*Exeunt Juliet, and Nurse.*]

La. Cap. ² We shall be short in our provision;
 'Tis now near night.

Cap. Tush! I will stir about,
 And all things shall be well, I warrant thee, wife:
 Go thou to Juliet, help to deck up her;
 I'll not to bed to-night;—let me alone;
 I'll play the housewife for this once.—What, ho!—
 They are all forth: Well, I will walk myself
 To county Paris, to prepare him up
 Against to-morrow: my heart is wondrous light,
 Since this same wayward girl is so reclaim'd.

[*Exeunt Capulet, and lady Capulet.*]

S C E N E III.

Juliet's Chamber.

Enter Juliet, and Nurse ³.

Jul. Ay, those attires are best:—But, gentle nurse,
 I pray thee, leave me to myself to-night;

¹ *All our whole city is much bound to him.*] Thus the folio and the quartos 1599 and 1609. The oldest quarto reads, I think, more grammatically:

All our whole city is much bound unto. STEEVENS.

² *We shall be short—*] That is, we shall be *defective*. JOHNSON.

³ *Enter Juliet, and Nurse.*] Instead of the next speech, the quarto 1597, supplies the following short dialogue:

Nurse. Come, come, what need you anie thing else?

Juliet. Nothing good nurse, but leave me to myselfe.

Nurse. Well there's a cleane smocke under your pillow, and so good night. STEEVENS.

* For I have need of many orisons
To move the heavens to smile upon my state,
Which, well thou know'st, is cross and full of sin.

Enter Lady Capulet.

La. Cap. What, are you busy? do you need my help?

Jul. No, madam; we have cull'd such necessaries
As are behoveful for our state to-morrow:
So please you, let me now be left alone,
And let the nurse this night sit up with you;
For, I am sure, you have your hands full all,
In this so sudden business.

La. Cap. Good night!
Get thee to bed, and rest; for thou hast need.

[Exeunt Lady, and Nurse.]

Jul. ⁵ Farewel!—God knows, when we shall meet again.

I have a faint cold fear thrills through my veins,
That almost freezes up the heat of life:
I'll call them back again to comfort me;—
Nurse!—What should she do here?
My dismal scene I needs must act alone.—
Come, phial.—
What if this mixture do not work at all ⁶?

Shall

⁴ *For I have need, &c.]* Juliet plays most of her pranks under the appearance of religion: perhaps Shakspeare meant to punish her hypocrisy. JOHNSON.

⁵ *Farewel! &c.]* This speech received considerable additions after the elder copy was published. STEEVENS.

⁶ *What if this mixture do not work at all?] So, in Painter's Palace of Pleasure, tom. ii. p. 239. "—but what know I (sayd she) whether the operation of this powder will be to soone or to late, or not correspondent to the due time, and that my faulte being discovered, I shall remayne a jesting stocke and fable to the people? what know I moreover, if the serpents and other venomous and crawling wormes, which commonly frequent the graves and pittes of the earth, will hurt me thinking that I am dead? But how shall I indure the sinche of so many carions and bones of*

7 Shall I of force be married to the count?—
No, no;—this shall forbid it:—lie thou there⁸.—

[Laying down a dagger.

What if it be a poison, which the friar
Subtly hath minister'd to have me dead;
Lest in this marriage he should be dishonour'd,
Because he married me before to Romeo?
I fear, it is: and yet, methinks, it should not,
For he hath still been tried a holy man:
9 I will not entertain so bad a thought.—
How if, when I am laid into the tomb;
I wake before the time that Romeo
Come to redeem me? there's a fearful point!
Shall I not then be stifled in the vault,
To whose foul mouth no healthsome air breathes in;
And there die strangled ere my Romeo comes?
Or, if I live, is it not very like,
The horrible conceit of death and night,

myne auncestors which rest in the grave, if by fortune I do awake before Romeo and frier Laurence doe come to help me? And as she was thus plunged in the deepe contemplation of things, she thought that she sawe a certaine vision or fanisie of her cousin Thibault, in the very same sort as she sawe him wounded and imbrued with blood; &c." STEEVENS.

7 *Shall I of force be married to the count?* Thus the eldest quarto. Succeeding quartos and the folio read:

Shall I be married then to-morrow morning? STEEVENS.

8 — *lie thou there.* *Laying down a dagger.*] This stage-direction has been supplied by the modern editors. The quarto, 1597, reads: "— *Knife*, lie thou there." It appears from several passages in our old plays, that *knives* were formerly part of the accoutrements of a bride; and every thing *behoofeful* for Juliet's *state* had just been left with her. So, in Decker's *Match me in London*, 1631:

" See at my girdle hang my *wedding knives!*"

Again, in *King Edward III.* 1599:

" Here by my side do hang my *wedding knives*;

" Take thou the one, and with it kill thy queen,

" And with the other, I'll dispatch my love." STEEVENS.

9 *I will not entertain so bad a thought.*] This line I have restored from the quarto, 1597. STEEVENS.

Together

Together with the terror of the place,—
 1 As in a vault, an ancient receptacle,
 Where, for these many hundred years, the bones
 Of all my buried ancestors are pack'd;
 Where bloody Tybalt, yet but green in earth 2,
 Lies festring 3 in his shroud; where, as they say,
 At some hours in the night spirits resort;—
 Alack, alack! 4 is it not like, that I,
 So early waking,—what with loathsome smells;
 And shrieks like mandrakes torn out of the earth,
 That living mortals, hearing them 5, run mad——

1 *As in a vault, &c.*] This idea was probably suggested to our poet by his native place. The charnel at Stratford upon Avon is a very large one, and perhaps contains a greater number of bones than are to be found in any other repository of the same kind in England.—I was furnished with this observation by Mr. Murphy, whose very elegant and spirited defence of Shakespeare against the criticisms of Voltaire, is one of the least considerable out of many favours which he has conferred on the literary world. STEEVENS.

2 — *green in earth,*] i. e. fresh in earth, newly buried. So, in *Hamlet*:

“ — of our dear brother's death,

“ The memory be *green*.”

Again, in the *Opportunity*, by Shirley:

“ — I am but

“ *Green* in my honours.” STEEVENS.

3 *Lies festring*—] To *feſter* is to corrupt. So, in *K. Edward III.* 1599:

“ Lillies that *feſter* ſmell far worſe than weeds.”

This line likewise occurs in the 94th Sonnet of Shakespeare. The play of *Edward III.* has been ascribed to him. STEEVENS.

4 — *is it not like, that I*] This speech is confused, and inconsequential, according to the disorder of Juliet's mind. JOHNSON.

5 — *run mad*—] So, in Webster's *Dutchess of Malfy*, 1623:

“ I have this night dig'd up a *mandrake*,

“ And am grown mad with't.”

So, in *The Atheiſt's Tragedy*, 1611:

“ The cries of *mandrakes* never touch'd the ear

“ With more ſad horror, than that voice does mine.”

Again, in *A Chriſtian turn'd Turk*, 1612:

“ I'll rather give an ear to the black ſhrieks

“ Of *mandrakes*,” &c.

Again, in *Ariſtippus*, or the Jovial Philoſopher:

“ This is the *mandrake's* voice that undoes me.” STEEVENS.

O! if I wake, shall I not be distraught⁶,
 Environed with all these hideous fears?
 And madly play with my forefathers' joints?
 And pluck the mangled Tybalt from his shroud?
 And, in this rage, with some great kinsman's bone,
 As with a club, dash out my desperate brains?
 O, look! methinks, I see my cousin's ghost
 Seeking out Romeo, that did spit his body
 Upon a rapier's point:—Stay, Tybalt, stay!—
 Romeo, I come! this do I drink to thee.

[*She throws herself on the bed.*]

S C E N E I V.

Capulet's hall.

Enter Lady Capulet, and Nurse.

La. Cap. Hold, take these keys, and fetch more
 spices, nurse.

Nurse. They call for dates and quinces in the pastry.

Enter Capulet.

Cap. Come, stir, stir, stir! the second cock hath
 crow'd,

⁷ The curfew bell hath rung, 'tis three o'clock:—

⁶ — be *distraught*.] *Distraught* is distracted. So, in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, Song 10:

“Is, for that river's sake, near of his wits *distraught*.”

Again, in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, B. 1. C. 9:

“What frantic fit, quoth he, hath thus *distraught*, &c.”

STEEVENS.

⁷ *The curfew bell*—] I know not that the morning-bell is called the *curfew* in any other place. JOHNSON.

The *curfew* bell was rung at nine in the evening, as appears from a passage in the *Merry Devil of Edmonton*, 1626:

“— well 'tis *nine* o'clock, 'tis time to ring *curfew*.”

STEEVENS.

Look

Look to the bak'd meats, good Angelica :
Spare not for cost.

Nurse. Go, you cot-quean, go,
Get you to bed ; 'faith, you'll be sick to-morrow
For this night's watching.

Cap. No, not a whit ; What ! I have watch'd ere
now

All night for a less cause, and ne'er been sick.

La. Cap. Ay, you have been a mouse-hunt^r in your
time ;

But I will watch you from such watching now.

[*Exeunt Lady Capulet, and Nurse.*

Cap. A jealous-hood, a jealous-hood !—Now, fellow,
What's there ?

Enter three or four, with spits, and logs, and baskets.

Serv. Things for the cook, sir ; but I know not
what.

Cap. Make haste, make haste. Sirrah, fetch drier
logs ;

Call Peter, he will shew thee where they are.

Serv. I have a head, sir, that will find out logs,
And never trouble Peter for the matter. [*Exit.*

Cap. 'Mafs, and well said ; A merry whoreson ! ha,
Thou shalt be logger-head.—Good faith, 'tis day :
The county will be here with musick straight,

[*Musick within.*

For so he said he would. I hear him near : —

Nurse !—Wife !—what, ho !—what, *Nurse*, I say !

Enter Nurse.

Go, waken Juliet, go, and trim her up ;

* — a mouse-hunt—] It appears from a passage in *Hamlet*, that
mouse was once a term of endearment applied to a woman :

“ Pinch wanton on your cheek, call you his *mouse*.”

I'll go and chat with Paris :—Hie, make haste,
 Make haste ! the bridegroom he is come already :
 Make haste, I say !

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E V.

Juliet's Chamber; Juliet on the Bed.

Enter Nurse.

Nurse. Mistress !—what, mistress !—Juliet !—fast,
 I warrant her ;—
 Why, lamb !—why, lady !—fie, you slug-a-bed !—
 Why, love, I say !—madam ! sweet-heart !—
 why, bride !—
 What, not a word ?—you take your pennyworths
 now ;
 Sleep for a week ; for the next night, I warrant,
 The county Paris hath ² set up his rest,
 That you shall rest but little.—God forgive me,
 (Marry, and amen !) how sound is she asleep !
 I must needs wake her :—Madam ! madam ! madam !
 Ay, let the county take you in your bed ;
 He'll fright you up, i'faith.—Will it not be ?
 What, drest ! and in your clothes ! and down again !

² — *set up his rest,*] This expression, which is frequently employed by the old dramattick writers, is taken from the manner of firing the harquebuzs. This was so heavy a gun, that the soldiers were obliged to carry a supporter called a *rest*, which they fixed in the ground before they levelled to take aim. Decker uses it in his comedy of *Old Fortunatus*, 1600 : “ — set your heart at rest, for I have *set up my rest*, that unless you can run swifter than a hart, home you go not.” The same expression occurs in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Elder Brother* :

“ — *My rest is up,*

“ Nor will I go less —”

See Montfaucon's *Monarchie Françoise*, tom. v. plate 48.

STEEVENS.

I must

I must needs wake you:—Lady! lady! lady!
 Alas! alas!—Help! help! my lady's dead!—
 O, well-a-day, that ever I was born!—
 Some aqua-vitæ, ho!—My lord!—my lady!

Enter Lady Capulet.

La. Cap. What noise is here?

Nurse. O lamentable day!

La. Cap. What's the matter?

Nurse. Look, look! O heavy day!

La. Cap. O me, O me!—my child, my only life!
 Revive, look up, or I will die with thee!—
 Help, help!—call help.

Enter Capulet.

Cap. For shame, bring Juliet forth; her lord is
 come.

Nurse. She's dead, deceas'd, she's dead; alack the
 day!

La. Cap. Alack the day! she's dead, she's dead,
 she's dead.

Cap. Ha! let me see her:—Out, alas! she's cold;
 Her blood is settled, and her joints are stiff;
 Life and these lips have long been separated:
 Death lies on her, like an untimely frost
 Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.
 Accursed time! unfortunate old man!

Nurse. O lamentable day!

La. Cap. O woeful time!

Cap. Death, that hath ta'en her hence to make me
 wail,

Ties up my tongue, and will not let me speak.

Enter Friar Laurence, and Paris, with Musicians.

Fri. Come, is the bride ready to go to church?

Cap. Ready to go, but never to return:—

¹ O son, the night before thy wedding day
Hath death lain with thy bride ² :—See, there she lies
Flower as she was, deflowered now by him ³ ;

⁴ Death is my son-in-law, death is my heir;
My daughter he hath wedded! I will die,
And leave him all; life leaving, all is death's.

Par. Have I thought long to see this morning's
face ⁵ ,

And doth it give me such a sight as this?

La. Cap. Accurs'd, unhappy, wretched, hateful day!
Most miserable hour, that time e'er saw

In lasting labour of his pilgrimage!

But one, poor one, one poor and loving child,

But one thing to rejoice and solace in,

And cruel death hath catch'd it from my sight.

Nurse. ⁶ O woe! O woeful, woeful, woeful day!

¹ *O son, the night before thy wedding day*

Hath death lain with thy wife.—] Euripides has sported with
this thought in the same manner. *Iphig. in Aul.* ver. 460.

“ Τὴνδ' αὖτάλαϊναν παρθένον (τί παρθένον;

“ Ἄδης ἦν, ὡς εἶπες, νυμφεύσει τάχα.)” Sir W. RAWLINSON.

² *Hath death lain with thy bride:*] Perhaps this line is coarsely
ridiculed in Decker's *Satiromastix*:

“ Dead: she's death's bride; he hath her maidenhead.”

STEEVENS.

³ *Flower as she was, deflowered now by him.*] This jingle was
common to other writers; and among the rest, to Greene, in his
Greene in Concept. 1598: “—a garden-house having round
about it many *flowers*, and within it much *deflowering*.” COLLINS.

⁴ *Death is my son-in-law, &c.*] The remaining part of the
speech I have restored from the quarto, 1609. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *morning's face,*] The quarto, 1597, continues the speech of
Paris thus:

And doth it now present such prodigies?

Accur'd, unhappy, miserable man,

Forlorn, forsaken, destitute I am;

Born to the world to be a slave in it;

Distress, remediless, unfortunate.

O heavens! Oh nature! wherefore did you make me,

To live so vile, so wretched as I shall? STEEVENS.

⁶ *O woe! oh woeful, &c.*] This speech of exclamations is not in
the edition above-cited. Several other parts, unnecessary or tauto-
logy, are not to be found in the said edition; which occasions the
variation in this from the common books. POPE.

Most

Most lamentable day! most woeful day,
That ever, ever, I did yet behold!
O day! O day! O day! O hateful day!
Never was seen so black a day as this:
O woeful day, O woeful day!

Par. Beguil'd, divorced, wronged, spighted, slain!
Most detestable death, by thee beguil'd,
By cruel cruel thee quite overthrown!—
O love! O life!—not life, but love in death!

Cap. Despis'd, distressed, hated, martyr'd, kill'd!—
Uncomfortable time! why cam'st thou now
To murder murder our solemnity?—
O child! O child!—my soul, and not my child!—
Dead art thou!—alack! my child is dead;
And, with my child, my joys are buried!

Fri. ⁷ Peace, ho, for shame! confusion's cure
lives not

In these confusions. Heaven and yourself
Had part in this fair maid; now heaven hath all,
And all the better is it for the maid:
Your part in her you could not keep from death;
But heaven keeps his part in eternal life.
The most you sought was—her promotion;
For 'twas your heaven, she should be advanc'd:
And weep ye now, seeing she is advanc'd,
Above the clouds, as high as heaven itself?
O, in this love, you love your child so ill,
That you run mad, seeing that she is well:
She's not well marry'd, that lives marry'd long:

⁷ *Peace, ho, for shame, confusions: care lives not*

In these confusions.] This speech, though it contains good Christian doctrine, though it is perfectly in character for the Friar, Mr. Pope has curtailed to little or nothing, because it has not the sanction of the first old copy. But there was another reason: certain corruptions started, which should have required the indulging his *private sense* to make them intelligible, and this was an unreasonable labour. As I have reformed the passage above-quoted, I dare warrant I have restored our poet's text; and a fine sensible reproof it contains against immoderate grief. THEOBALD.

But

But she's best marry'd, that dies marry'd young.
 Dry up your tears, and stick your rosemary
 On this fair corse; and, as the custom is,
 In all her best array bear her to church:
 * For though fond nature bids us all lament,
 Yet nature's tears are reason's merriment.

Cap. All things, * that we ordained festival,
 Turn from their office to black funeral:
 Our instruments, to melancholy bells;
 Our wedding cheer, to a sad burial feast;
 Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;
 Our bridal flowers serve for a bury'd corse,
 And all things change them to the contrary.

Fri. Sir, go you in,—and, madam, go with him;—
 And go, sir Paris;—every one prepare
 To follow this fair corse unto her grave:
 The heavens do lour upon you, for some ill;
 Move them no more, by crossing their high will.

[*Exeunt Capulet, lady Capulet, Paris, and Friar.*

Mus. 'Faith, we may put up our pipes, and be gone.

Nurse. Honest good fellows, ah, put up, put up;
 For, well you know, this is a pitiful case.

[*Exit Nurse.*

Mus. Ay, by my troth, the case may be amended.

Enter Peter †.

Pet. Musicians, O, musicians, *Heart's ease, heart's ease;*

* For though some nature bids us all lament,] *Some nature?* Sure, it is the general rule of nature, or she could not bid us all lament. I have ventured to substitute an epithet, which, I suspect, was lost in the idle corrupted word *some*; and which admirably quadrates with the verse succeeding this. THEOBALD.

† *All things, &c.*] Instead of this and the following speeches, the eldest quarto has only a couplet:

Cap. Let it be so, come woeful sorrow-mates,

Let us together taste this bitter fate. STEEVENS.

† *Enter Peter.*] From the quarto of 1599, it appears, that the part of *Peter* was originally performed by *William Kempe*. MALONE.

O, an you will have me live, play—*heart's ease*.

Mus. Why *heart's ease*?

Pet. O, musicians, because my heart itself plays—

² *My heart is full of woe:* ³ O, play me some merry dump, to comfort me.

Mus. ⁴ Not a dump we; 'tis no time to play now.

Pet. You will not then?

Mus. No.

Pet. I will then give it you soundly.

Mus. What will you give us?

Pet. No money, on my faith; but the gleek ⁵: I will give you the minstrel.

Mus. Then will I give you the serving-creature.

Pet. Then will I lay the serving-creature's dagger on your pate. I will carry no crotchets: I'll *re* you, I'll *fa* you; Do you note me?

² *My heart is full of woe:*] This, if I mistake not, is the beginning of an old ballad. STEEVENS.

³ *O, play me some merry dump, to comfort me.*] This is not in the folio, but the answer plainly requires it. JOHNSON.

It was omitted in the folio by mistake, for it is found in the quarto 1609, from which the folio was manifestly printed. MALONE.

⁴ *A dump* anciently signified *some kind of dance*, as well as *sorrow*. So, in *Humour out of Breath*, a comedy, by John Day, 1607:

"He loves nothing but an *Italian dump*,

"Or a *French brawl*."

But on this occasion it means a mournful song. So, in the *Arraignment of Paris*, 1584, after the shepherds have sung an elegiac hymn over the hearse of *Colin*, *Venus* lays to *Paris*:

"—How cheers my lovely boy after this *dump* of woe?

"*Paris*. Such *dumps*, sweet lady, as bin these, are deadly *dumps* to prove." STEEVENS.

⁵ — *the gleek*:] So, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*:

"Nay, I can *gleek*, upon occasion."

To *gleek* is to scoff. The term is taken from an ancient game at cards called *gleek*. STEEVENS.

The game is mentioned in the beginning of the present century, by Dr. King of the Commons, in his *Art of Love*:

"But whether we diversion seek

"In these, in *Comet*, or in *Gleek*,

"Or *Ombre*, &c." NICHOLS.

Mus.

Mus. An you *re* us, and *fa* us, you note us.

2 *Mus.* Pray you, put up your dagger, and put out your wit.

Pet. Then have at you with my wit; I will dry-beat you with an iron wit, and put up my iron dagger: — Answer me like men:

When griping grief⁶ the heart doth wound,

7 And doleful dumps the mind oppress,

Then musick, with her silver sound,

Why silver sound? why, musick with her silver sound? What

* *When griping grief, &c.*] The epithet *griping* was by no means likely to excite laughter at the time it was written. Lord Surry, in his translation of the second book of Virgil's *Æneid*, makes the hero say:

“ New gripes of dred then pearse our trembling brestes.”

Dr. Percy thinks that the questions of Peter are designed as a ridicule on the forced and unnatural explanations too often given by us painful editors of ancient authors. STEEVENS.

In Commendation of Musicke.

Where griping grief y^e hart would wou^d, (& dolful domps y^e mind oppresse,

There musick with her silver sound, is wont with spede to geue redresse,

Of troubled minds for every fore, swete musick hath a salue in store.

In ioy it maks our mirth abound, in grief it chers our heauy sprights,

The carfull head releaf hath found, by musicks pieasant swete delights

Our senses, what should I saie more, are subject unto musicks lore.

The Gods by musick hath their pray, the soule therein doth ioye,
For as the Romaine poets saie, in seas whom pirats would destroye
A Dolphin sau'd from death most sharpe, Arion plaiyng on his harp.

Oh

⁷ *And doleful dumps the mind oppress,*] This line I have recovered from the old copy. It was wanting to complete the stanza as it is afterwards repeated. STEEVENS.

What say you, Simon Catling⁸?

¹ *Mus.* Marry, sir, because silver hath a sweet sound.

Pet. Pretty! What say you, ⁹ Hugh Rebeck?

² *Mus.* I say—*silver sound*, because musicians sound for silver.

Pet. Pretty too!—What say you, James Soundpost?

³ *Mus.* 'Faith, I know not what to say.

Pet. O, I cry you mercy! you are the singer: I will say for you¹. It is—*musick with her silver sound*², because such fellows as you have no gold for founding:—

Oh heavenly gift that turnes the minde, like as the sterne doth rule the ship,

Of musick whom y^e Gods affignde to comfort mā, whom cares would nip,

Sith thou both man, & beast doest moue, what wisemā thē will thee reprove?

From the Paradife of Daintie *Richard Edwards.*
Deuises, Fol. 31. b.

Of Richard Edwards and William Hunnis, the authors of fundry poems in this collection, see an account in Wood's *Athenæ Oxon.* and also in Tanner's *Bibliotheca*. SIR JOHN HAWKINS.

Another copy of this song is published by Dr. Percy, in the first volume of his *Reliques of ancient English Poetry*. STEEVENS.

⁸ Simon Catling?] A *catling* was a small lutestring made of *catgut*. STEEVENS.

⁹ Hugh Rebeck?] The fidler is so called from an instrument with three strings, which is mentioned by several of the old writers. *Rebec, rebecquin*. See Menage, in v. *Rebec*. So, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*: "—'Tis present death for these fidders to tune their *rebecks* before the Great Turk's grace." In *England's Helicon*, 1614, is *The Shepberd Arsilus his Song to his REBECK*, by Bar. Yong. STEEVENS.

¹ — because such fellows as you—] Thus the quarto 1597. The others read—because *musicians*. I should suspect that a fidler made the alteration. STEEVENS.

² — *silver sound*,] So, in the *Return from Parnassus*, 1606:

"Faith, fellow fidders, here's no *silver sound* in this place."

Again, in *Wily Beguiled*:

"— what harmony is this

"With *silver sound* that glutteth Sophos' ears?"

Spenser perhaps is the first who used this phrase:

"A *silver sound* that heav'n'y music seem'd to make."

STEEVENS.

Then musick with her silver sound,

With speedy help doth lend redress. [Exit, singing.]

1 *Mus.* What a pestilent knave is this same?

2 *Mus.* Hang him, Jack! Come, we'll in here;
tarry for the mourners, and stay dinner. [Exeunt.]

ACT V. SCENE I.

M A N T U A.

A S T R E E T.

Enter Romeo.

Rom. 4 If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,
My dreams presage some joyful news at hand:

5 My bosom's lord sits lightly on his throne;

And

2 *Act V.]* The acts are here properly enough divided, nor did any better distribution than the editors have already made, occur to me in the perusal of this play; yet it may not be improper to remark, that in the first folio, and I suppose the foregoing editions are in the same state, there is no division of the acts, and therefore some future editor may try, whether any improvement can be made, by reducing them to a length more equal, or interrupting the action at more proper intervals. JOHNSON.

4 *If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep,]* The sense is, *If I may only trust the honesty of sleep,* which I know however not to be so nice as not often to practise flattery. JOHNSON.

The oldest copy reads—*the flattering eye of sleep.* Whether this reading ought to supersede the more modern one, I shall not pretend to determine: it appears to me, however, the most easily intelligible of the two. STEEVENS.

5 *My bosom's lord—]* So, in *King Arthur*, a Poem, by R. Chester, 1601:

“That neither Uter nor his counsell knew

“How his deepe *bosome's lord* the dutcheſs thwarted.”

The Author, in a marginal note, declares, that by *bosom's lord* he means—*Cupid.* Thus too, Shakespeare (as Mr. Malone observes to me) in *Twelfth Night* and *Othello*:

It gives a very echo to the feat

Where *love* is thron'd.—

Again,

Yield up, o *Love*, thy crown and *hearted throne.* STEEVENS.

My bosom's lord—] These three lines are very gay and pleasing. But why does Shakespeare give Romeo this involuntary cheerfulness

And, all this day, an unaccustom'd spirit
 Lifts me above the ground with chearful thoughts.
 I dreamt, my lady came and found me dead ;
 (Strange dream! that gives a dead man leave to think)
 And breath'd such life with kisses in my lips,
 That I reviv'd, and was an emperor.
 Ah me! how sweet is love itself possess'd,
 When but love's shadows are so rich in joy ?

Enter Balthasar.

News from Verona!—How now, Balthasar?
 Dost thou not bring me letters from the friar?
 How doth my lady? Is my father well?
 How fares my Juliet? That I ask again;
 For nothing can be ill, if she be well.

Balth. Then she is well, and nothing can be ill;
 Her body sleeps in Capulet's monument⁶,
 And her immortal part with angels lives;
 I saw her laid low in her kindred's vault,
 And presently took post to tell it you:
 O pardon me for bringing these ill news,
 Since you did leave it for my office, sir.

cheerfulness just before the extremity of unhappiness? Perhaps to shew the vanity of trusting to those uncertain and casual exaltations or depressions, which many consider as certain foretokens of good and evil. JOHNSON.

The poet has explained this passage himself a little further on:

“ How oft, when men are at the point of death,
 “ Have they been merry? which their keepers call
 “ A lightning before death.”

Again, in G. Whetstone's *Castle of Delight*, 1576:

“ — a lightning delight against his sudden destruction.”

STEEVENS.

⁶ — in Capulet's monument.] The old copies read in *Capel's* monument; and thus Gascoigne in his *Flowers*, p. 51:

“ Thys token whych the *Mountacutes* did beare alwaies, so
 that

“ They covet to be knowne from *Capels* where they passe,
 “ For ancient grutch whych long ago 'twene these two
 houses was.” STEEVENS.

Rom.

Rom. Is it even so? then I defy you, stars!⁷—
Thou know'st my lodging: get me ink and paper,
And hire post-horses; I will hence to-night.

Balth. Pardon me, sir, I dare not leave you thus⁸:
Your looks are pale and wild, and do import
Some misadventure.

Rom. Tush, thou art deceiv'd;
Leave me, and do the thing I bid thee do:
Hast thou no letters to me from the friar?

Balth. No, my good lord.

Rom. No matter: Get thee gone,
And hire those horses; I'll be with thee straight.

[Exit Balthasar.]

Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to night.
Let's see for means:—O, mischief! thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men!

I do remember an apothecary,—

And hereabouts he dwells,—whom late I noted
In tatter'd weeds, with overwhelming brows,
Culling of simples; meager were his looks,
Sharp misery had worn him to the bones:

And in his needy shop a tortoise hung,

An alligator stuff'd, and other skins

Of ill-shap'd fishes; and about his shelves

⁹ A beggarly account of empty boxes,

⁷ — *I defy you, stars!*] The folio reads—*deny you, stars.*

STEEVENS.

⁸ *Pardon me, sir, I dare not leave you thus.*] This line is taken from the quarto, 1597. The quarto, 1609, and the folio, read:

“I do beseech you, sir, have patience.” STEEVENS.

⁹ *A beggarly account of empty boxes;*] Dr. Warburton would read, a *braggartly* account; but *beggarly* is probably right: if the boxes were empty, the account was more *beggarly*, as it was more pious. JOHNSON.

This circumstance is likewise found in Painter's translation, tom. ii. p. 241. “—beholdyng an apoticaries shoppe of lyle furniture, and lesse store of boxes and other thynges requisite for that science, thought that the verie povertie of the mayster apothecarye woulde make him wyllyngly yelde to that whych he pretended to demaunde.” STEEVENS.

Green earthen pots, bladders, and musty feeds,
 Remnants of packthread, and old cakes of roses,
 Were thinly scatter'd, to make up a shew.
 Noting this penury, to myself I said—
 An if a man did need a poison now,
 Whose sale is present death in Mantua,
 Here lives a caitiff wretch would sell it him:
 O, this same thought did but fore-run my need;
 And this same needy man must sell it me.
 As I remember, this should be the house:
 Being holiday, the beggar's shop is shut.—
 What, ho! apothecary!

Enter Apothecary.

Ap. Who calls so loud?

Rom. Come hither, man.—I see, that thou art poor;
 Hold, there is forty ducats: let me have
 A dram of poison; such soon-speeding gear
 As will disperse itself through all the veins,
 That the life-weary taker may fall dead;
 And that the trunk may be discharg'd of breath
 As violently, as hasty powder fir'd
 Doth hurry from the fatal cannon's womb.

Ap. Such mortal drugs I have; but Mantua's law
 Is death, to any he that utters them.

Rom. Art thou so bare, and full of wretchedness,
 And fear'st to die? famine is in thy cheeks,
 Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes¹,
² Upon thy back hangs ragged misery,

The

¹ *Need and oppression starveth in thine eyes,*] The first quarto reads:

“And starved famine dwelleth in thy cheeks.”

The quartos, 1599, 1609, and the folio:

“Need and oppression *starveth* in thine eyes.”

Our modern editors, without authority,

Need and oppression *stare* within thine eyes. STEEVENS.

² *Upon thy back hangs ragged misery,*] This is the reading of

The world is not thy friend, nor the world's law :
The world affords no law to make thee rich ;
Then be not poor, but break it, and take this.

Ap. My poverty, but not my will, consents.

Rom. I pay thy poverty, and not thy will.

Ap. Put this in any liquid thing you will,
And drink it off; and, if you had the strength
Of twenty men, it would dispatch you straight.

Rom. There is thy gold; worse poison to men's
fouls,

Doing more murders in this loathsome world,
Than these poor compounds that thou may'st not sell :
I sell thee poison, thou hast sold me none.

Farewel; buy food, and get thyself in flesh.—

Come, cordial, and not poison; go with me
To Juliet's grave, for there must I use thee. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E I I .

Friar Laurence's cell.

Enter Friar John.

John. Holy Franciscan friar! brother, ho!

Enter Friar Laurence.

Lau. This same should be the voice of friar John.—
Welcome from Mantua: What says Romeo?
Or, if his mind be writ, give me his letter.

John. Going to find a bare-foot brother out,

the oldest copy. I have restored it in preference to the following line, which is found in all the subsequent impressions:

“Contempt and beggary hang upon thy back.”

In the *First Part of Jeronimo*, 1605, is a passage somewhat resembling this of Shakespeare:

“Whose famish'd jaws look like the chaps of death,

“Upon whose eye-brows hang damnation.” STEEVENS.

One

One of our order, to associate me,
 Here in this city visiting the sick,
 And finding him, the searchers of the town,
 Suspecting that we both were in a house
 Where the infectious pestilence did reign,
 Seal'd up the doors, and would not let us forth;
 So that my speed to Mantua there was stay'd.

Lau. Who bare my letter then to Romeo?

John. I could not send it,—here it is again,—
 Nor get a messenger to bring it thee,
 So fearful were they of infection.

Lau. Unhappy fortune! by my brotherhood,
 The letter was not nice, but full of charge
 Of dear import; and the neglecting it
 May do much danger: Friar John, go hence;
 Get me an iron crow, and bring it straight
 Unto my cell.

John. Brother, I'll go and bring it thee. [Exit.]

Lau. Now must I to the monument alone;

³ *One of our order, to associate me,*] Each friar has always a companion assigned him by the superior whenever he asks leave to go out; and thus, says Baret, they are a check upon each other.

STEEVENS.

⁴ — *was not nice,*—] i. e. was not written on a trivial or idle subject.

Nice signifies *foolish* in many parts of Gower, and Chaucer. So, in the second book *De Confessione Amantis*, fol. 37:

“ My sonne, eschewe thilke vice.—

“ My father elles were I *nice*.”

So, in Chaucer's *Scogan unto the lordes*, &c.

“ — the most complaint of all,

“ Is to thinkin that I have be so *nice*,

“ That I ne would in vertues to me call, &c.”

Again, in *The longer thou livest the more Fool thou art*, 1570:

“ You must appeare to be straunge and *nyce*.”

The learned editor of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, 1775, observes, that H. Stephens informs us, that *nice* was the old French word for *niais*, one of the synonimes of *fool*. Apol. Herod. l. i. c. 4.

STEEVENS.

6 Fair Juliet, that with angels dost remain,
Accept this latest favour at my hands;
That living honour'd thee, and, being dead,
With funeral praises do adorn thy tomb!

[The boy whistles.

The boy gives warning; something doth approach.
What cursed foot wanders this way to-night,
To cross my obsequies, and true love's rites?
What, with a torch!—muffle me, night, a while.

Enter Romeo, and Balthasar with a torch, &c.

Rom. Give me that mattock, and the wrenching
iron.

Hold, take this letter; early in the morning
See thou deliver it to my lord and father.
Give me the light: Upon thy life I charge thee,
Whate'er thou hear'st or see'st, stand all aloof,
And do not interrupt me in my course.
Why I descend into this bed of death
Is, partly, to behold my lady's face:
But, chiefly, to take thence from her dead finger
A precious ring; a ring, that I must use
In 7 dear employment: therefore hence, be gone:—
But

6 *Fair Juliet, that with angels, &c.*] These four lines from the old edition. POPE,

The folio has these lines:

“ Sweet flow'r, with flow'rs thy bridal bed I strew;
“ O woe! thy canopy is dult and stones,
“ Which with sweet water nightly I will dew,
“ Or, wanting that, with tears distill'd by moans.
“ The obsequies which I for thee will keep,
“ Nightly shall be, to strew thy grave, and weep.”

JOHNSON,

Mr. Pope has followed no copy with exactness; but took the first and fourth lines from the elder quarto, omitting the two intermediate verses, which I have restored. STEEVENS.

7 — *dear employment,*] That is, *action of importance.* Gems were supposed to have great powers and virtues. JOHNSON.

But if thou, jealous, dost return to pry
 On what I further shall intend to do,
 By heaven, I will tear thee joint by joint,
 And strew this hungry church-yard with thy limbs :
 The time and my intents are savage-wild ⁸ ;
 More fierce, and more inexorable far,
 Than empty tygers, or the roaring sea.

Balth. I will be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

Rom. So shalt thou shew me friendship. — Take
 thou that :

Live, and be prosperous ; and farewell, good fellow.

Balth. For all this same, I'll hide me hereabout ;
 His looks I fear, and his intents I doubt. [*Exit Balth.*]

Rom. Thou detestable ⁹ maw, thou womb of death,
 Gorg'd with the dearest morsel of the earth,
 Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,

[*Breaking up the monument.*]

And, in despight, I'll cram thee with more food !

Par. This is that banish'd haughty Montague,
 That murder'd my love's cousin ; — with which grief,
 It is supposed, the fair creature dy'd, —

And here is come to do some villainous shame
 To the dead bodies : I will apprehend him. —
 Stop thy unhallow'd toil, vile Montague ;

Ben Jonson uses the word *dear* in the same sense :

“ Put your known talents on so *dear* a business.”

Catiline, Act 1.

Again, in Chapman's version of the 10th book of the *Odyssy* :

“ — full pitching on

“ The *dearest* joint his head was plac'd upon.” STEEVENS.

⁸ — *savage-wild* ;] Here the speech concludes in the old
 copy. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *detestable* —] This word, which is now accented on the
 second syllable, was once accented on the first ; therefore this line
 did not originally seem to be inharmonious. So, in the *Tragedie of*
Crasus, 1604 :

“ Court with vain words and *detestable* lyes.”

Again, in Shakespeare's *K. John*, Act 3. Sc. 3 :

“ And I will kiss thy *detestable* bones.” STEEVENS.

Can

Can vengeance be pursu'd further than death?
 Condemned villain, I do apprehend thee:
 Obey, and go with me; for thou must die.

Rom. I must, indeed; and therefore came I hither.—
 Good gentle youth, tempt not a desperate man,
 Fly hence and leave me;—think upon these gone;
 Let them affright thee.—I beseech thee, youth,
 Pull not ¹ another sin upon my head,
 By urging me to fury:—O, be gone!
 By heaven, I love thee better than myself;
 For I come hither arm'd against myself:
 Stay not, be gone;—live, and hereafter say—
 A madman's mercy bade thee run away.

Par. ² I do defy thy conjuration,
 And apprehend thee for a felon here.

Rom.

¹ *Pull not &c.*] The quarto, 1597, reads:—*besp* not. The quartos 1599 and 1609, and all the folios:—*Put* not.—Mr. Rowe first made the change, which may be discontinued at the reader's pleasure. STEEVENS.

² *I do defy &c.*] The quarto, 1597, reads, *I do defy thy conjuration,*] Paris conceived Romeo to have burst open the monument for no other purpose than to do *some villainous strame* on the dead bodies, such as witches are reported to have practised; and therefore tells him he defies him, and the magic arts which he suspects he is preparing to use. So, in Painter's translation of the novel, tom. ii. p. 244. “—the watch of the city by chance passed by, and seeing light within the grave, suspected straight that they were necromancers which had opened the tombs *to abuse the dead bodies* for aide of their arte.”

The folio reads:

I do *defy* thy commiseration.

To *defy*, anciently meant to *refuse* or *deny*. So, in the *Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*, 1601:

“Or, as I said, for ever I *defy* your company.”

Again,

“Even from my soul I villainy *defy*.”

Again, in the *Miseries of Lucre Margaret*, by Drayton:

“My liege, quoth he, all mercy now *defy*.”

Again, in R. Green's *Placetomachia*, 1585:

“I *defy* thee for my father who hast so displeas'd the Gods.”

Again, in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, b. ii. c. 8:

“Foolc (said the Pagan) I thy gift *defye*.”

Rom. Wilt thou provoke me? then have at thee,
boy. [They fight, Paris falls.]

Page. O lord! they fight: I will go call the watch.

Par. O, I am slain!—If thou be merciful,
Open the tomb, lay me with Juliet. [Dies.]

Rom. In faith, I will:—Let me peruse this face;—
Mercutio's kinsman, noble county Paris:—

What said my man, when my betossed soul
Did not attend him as we rode? I think,
He told me, Paris should have marry'd Juliet:
Said he not so? or did I dream it so?

Or am I mad, hearing him talk of Juliet,
To think it was so?—O, give me thy hand,
One writ with me in four misfortune's book!
I'll bury thee in a triumphant grave,—

A grave? O, no; a lanthorn, slaughter'd youth,
For here lies Juliet, and her beauty makes
This vault a feasting³ presence full of light.
Death, lie thou there, by a dead man interr'd.

[Laying Paris in the monument.]

How oft when men are at the point of death
Have they been merry? which their keepers call
A lightning before death: 4 O, how may I

Call

Again, b. v. c. 5:

“She daily told her, love he did *desye*.”

Paris may, however, mean—I refuse to do as thou *conjurest* me to do, *i. e.* to depart. STEEVENS.

³ — *presence*—] A *presence* is a *public room*. JOHNSON.

This thought, extravagant as it is, is borrowed by Middleton in his comedy of *Blurt Master Constable*, 1602:

“The darkeſt dungeon which ſpite can deviſe
“To throw this carcaſe in, her glorious eyes
“Can make as lightſome as the faireſt chamber
“In Paris Louvre.” STEEVENS.

⁴ — O, how may I

Call this a lightning?—] I think we ſhould read,

— O, now may I

Call this a lightning?— JOHNSON.

This idea occurs frequently in the old dramatic pieces. So in the ſecond part of *The Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*, 1601;

Call this a lightning?—O, my love! my wife!
 Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath,
 Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty:
 Thou art not conquer'd; beauty's ensign yet
 Is crimson in thy lips, and in thy cheeks,
 And death's pale flag is not advanced there⁵.—
 Tybalt, ly'st thou there in thy bloody sheet⁶?
 O, what more favour can I do to thee,
 Than with that hand that cut thy youth in twain,
 To funder his that was thine enemy?
 Forgive me, cousin!—Ah, dear Juliet,

“ I thought it was a lightning before death,
 “ Too sudden to be certain.”

Again, in Chapman's translation of the 15th Iliad:

“ — since after this he had not long to live,
 “ This lightning flew before his death.”

Again, in his translation of the 18th Odysssey:

“ — extend their cheer
 “ To th' utmost lightning that still ushers death.”

STEEVENS.

⁵ *And death's pale flag, &c.*] So, in Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond*, 1594:

“ And nought-respecting death (the last of paines)
 “ Plac'd his pale colours (th' ensign of his might)
 “ Upon his new-got spoil; &c.”

In the first edition of *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespear is less florid in his account of the lady's beauty; and only says:

“ — ah, dear Juliet,
 “ How well thy beauty doth become the grave!”

The speech, as it now stands, is first found in the quarto, 1599.

STEEVENS.

And death's pale flag is not advanced there.] An ingenious friend some time ago pointed out to me a passage of *Marini*, which bears a very strong resemblance to this:

*Morte la'nsegna sua pallida e bianca
 Vincitrice spiegará sul volto mio.*

Rime lugubri, p. 149, ed. Vener. 1605.

TYRWHITT.

⁶ *Tybalt, ly'st thou there in thy bloody sheet?*] So, in Painter's translation, tom. ii. p. 242. “ — what greater or more cruel satisfaction canste thou desyre to have, or henceforth hope for, than to see hym which murdered thee, to be empoyned wyth hys owne handes, and buryed by thy syde?” STEEVENS.

Why

Why art thou yet so fair? Shall I believe—
 I will believe (come lie thou in my arms)
 That unsubstantial death is amorous;
 And that the lean abhorred monster keeps
 Thee here in dark to be his paramour.
 For fear of that, I will still stay with thee;
 7 And never from this palace of dim night

Depart

And never from this palae of dim night
 Depart again: (Come lie thou in my arms;
 Here's to thy health. O true apothecary!

Thy drugs are quick.)] Mr. Pope's, and some other of the worse editions acknowledge absurdly the lines which I have put into parenthesis here; and which I have expunged from the text, for this reason: Romeo is made to confess the effect of the poison before ever he has tasted it. I suppose, it hardly was so savoury that the patient should choose to make two draughts of it. And, eight lines after these, we find him taking the poison in his hands, and making an apostrophe to it; inviting it to perform its office at once; and then, and not till then, does he clap it to his lips, or can with any probability speak of its instant force and effects. Besides, Shakespeare would hardly have made Romeo drink to the *health* of his *dead* mistress. Though the first quarto in 1599, and the two old folios, acknowledge this absurd stuff, I find it left out in several later quarto impressions. I ought to take notice, that though Mr. Pope has thought fit to stick to the old copies in this addition, yet he is no fair transcriber; for he has sunk upon us an hemistich of most profound absurdity, which possesses all those copies.

— Come, lie thou in my arms;
 Here's to thy health, where-e'er thou tumblest in.
 O true apothecary! &c. THEOBALD.

I have no edition but the folio, which has all the passage here mentioned. I have followed Mr. Theobald. JOHNSON.

I am sorry to say, that the foregoing note is an instance of dissimulation, as well as inattention in Mr. Theobald, who, relying on the scarcity of the old quartos, very frequently makes them answerable for any thing he thinks proper to assert.

The quarto in 1599, was not the first. It was preceded by one in 1597; and though Mr. Theobald declares, *he found the passage left out in several of the later quarto impressions*, yet in the list of those he pretends to have collated for the use of his edition, he mentions but one of a later date, and had never seen either that published in 1609, or another without any date at all; for in the former of these, the passage in question is preserved (the latter I have no

copy

Depart again: here, here will I remain
 With worms that are thy chamber-maids; O, here
 Will

copy of), and he has placed that in 1637, on the single faith of which his rejection is founded, among those quartos of middling authority: so that what he so roundly affirms of several, can with justice be said of only one; for there are in reality no later quarto editions of this play than I have here enumerated, and two of those (by his own confession) he had never met with.

The hemistich, which Mr. Theobald pronounces to be of *most profound absurdity*, may deserve a somewhat better character; but being misplaced, could not be connected with that part of that speech where he found it; yet, being introduced a few lines lower, seems to make very good sense.

“Come bitter conduct! come unsavoury guide!

“Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on

“The dashing rocks my sea-sick, weary bark!

“*Here's to thy health, wherever thou tumb'st in.*

“Here's to my love! O true apothecary!

“Thy drugs are quick. Thus with a kiss I die.”

To tumble into port in a storm, I believe to be a sea-phrase, as is *a tumbling sea*, and agrees with the allusion to the pilot or the tempest-beaten bark. *Here's success*, says he (continuing the allusion) *to thy vessel wherever it tumbles in*, or perhaps, *to the port who is to conduct, or tumble it in*; meaning, *I wish it may succeed in ridding me of life, whatever may befall me after it, or wherever it may carry me*. He then drinks to the memory of Juliet's love, adding (as he feels the poison work) a short apostrophe to the apothecary, the effect of whose drugs he can doubt no longer; and turning his thoughts back again to the object most beloved, he dies (like Othello) on a kiss.

The other hemistich (not disposed of) may yet be introduced; how naturally, must be left to the reader to determine. The quarto of 1609, exhibits the passage thus:

“— Ah, dear Juliet!

“Why art thou yet so fair? I will believe;

“Shall I believe? that unsubstantial death is amorous,

“And that the lean, &c.

If such an idea could have any foundation in nature, or be allowed in poetry, and Romeo, in consequence of having raised it to his imagination, was jealous of death, it would follow, that in his first frenzy, he might address himself to his mistress, and take her in his arms for the greater security. That being granted, with a slight transposition (one verse already exceeding the measure by two feet) the passage might be read thus:

“— Ah,

Will I set up my everlasting rest^o;
 And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars
 From this world-wearied flesh.—Eyes, look your last!
 Arms, take your last embrace! and lips, O you
 The doors of breath, seal with a righteous kiss
 A dateless bargain to engrossing death!—

“ — Ah, dear Juliet!

“ Why art thou yet so fair? *shall* I believe—

“ I *will* believe (*come lie thou in my arms*)

“ That unsubstantial death is amorous,

“ And that the lean,” &c.

The object of dispute may perhaps be such as hardly to deserve this toil of transposition, but one critick has just as good a right to attempt the insertion of what he thinks he understands, as another has to omit a passage, because he can make no use of it at all. The whole of the conjecture is offered with the least degree of confidence, and from no other motive than a desire of preserving every line of Shakespeare, when any reason, tolerably plausible, can be given in its favour.

Mr. Theobald has not dealt very fairly in his account of this speech, as the absurdity is apparently owing to the repetition of some of the lines by a blunder of the printer, who had thereby made Romeo confess the effects of the poison before he had tasted it.

On second thoughts, it is not improbable, that Shakespeare had written—*I will believe*, and afterwards corrected it to—*shall I believe*, without erasing the former: by which means it has happened that the printer has given us both. Thus, in what follows—*Come lie thou in my arms*, &c. might have been the poet's first sketch of the conclusion of Romeo's speech, which he forebore to obliterate, when he substituted—*here, here will I remain*, &c. This seems indeed to be evident from the edition of 1599, and the other old editions after that, in all which—*Depart again*, as the catch word, from which his amendment was to begin, is repeated. Let some future editor decide. STEEVENS.

^o — *my everlasting rest*;] See a note on scene 5th of the preceding act. So, in the *Spanish Gipsie*, by Middleton and Rowley, 1653:

“ — could I *set up my rest*

“ That he were lost, or taken prisoner,

“ I could hold truce with sorrow.”

To *set up one's rest* is to be determined to any certain purpose, to rest in perfect confidence and resolution, to make up one's mind. Again, in the same play:

“ *Set up thy rest*; her marriest thou, or none.” STEEVENS.

Come,

Come, bitter conduct⁹ come, unfavoury guide!
 Thou desperate pilot, now at once run on
 The dashing rocks thy sea-sick weary bark!
 Here's to thy health, where'erthou tumblest in:
 Here's to my love!—[*Drinks*] O, true apothecary!
 Thy drugs are quick.—Thus with a kiss I die. [*Dies.*]

Enter Friar Laurence, with a lantern, crow, and spade.

Lau. Saint Francis be my speed! how oft to-night
 Have my old feet stumbled at graves¹?—Who's
 there?

Enter Balthasar.

Balth. Here's one, a friend, and one that knows you
 well.

Lau. Blis be upon you! Tell me, good my friend,
 What torch is yond', that vainly lends his light
 To grubs and eyeless sculls? as I discern,
 It burneth in the Capulets' monument.

Balth. It doth so, holy fir; and there's my master,
 One that you love.

Lau. Who is it?

Balth. Romeo.

Lau. How long hath he been there?

⁹ *Come bitter conduct.*] Marston also in his satires, 1599, uses
conduct for *conductor*:

“Be thou my *conduct* and my genius.”

So, in a former scene in this play:

“And fire-ey'd fury be my *conduct* now.” MALONE.

¹ — *how oft to-night*

Have my old feet stumbled at graves?] This accident was
 reckoned ominous. So, in *K. Henry VI.* p. 3.

For many men that *stumble* at the threshold,
 Are well foretold, that danger lurks within.

Again, in *K. Richard III.* Hastings, going to execution, says:
 Three times to-day my footcloth horse did *stumble*.

STEEVENS.

Balth.

Balth. Full half an hour.

Lau. Go with me to the vault.

Balth. I dare not, sir:

My master knows not, but I am gone hence;
And fearfully did menace me with death,
If I did stay to look on his intents.

Lau. Stay then, I'll go alone;— Fear comes upon
me;

O, much I fear some ill unlucky thing.

Balth. As I did sleep under this yew-tree here,
² I dreamt my master and another fought,
And that my master slew him.

Lau. Romeo?—

Alack, alack, what blood is this, which stains
The stony entrance of this sepulchre?—

What mean these masterless and gory swords
To lie discolour'd by this place of peace?—

Romeo! O, pale!—Who else? what, Paris too?
And steep'd in blood?—Ah, what an unkind hour
Is guilty of this lamentable chance!—

The lady stirs.

Jul. [*waking.*] O, comfortable friar! where is my
lord?

I do remember well where I should be,
And there I am;—Where is my Romeo?

[*Noise within.*]

Lau. I hear some noise.—Lady, come from that
nest

² *I dreamt my master and another fought,*] This is one of the touches of nature that would have escaped the hand of any painter less attentive to it than Shakespeare. What happens to a person while he is under the manifest influence of fear, will seem to him, when he is recovered from it, like a dream. Homer, Book 8th, represents Rhesus dying fast asleep, and as it were beholding his enemy in a dream plunging a sword into his bosom. Eustathius and Dacier both applaud this image as very natural; for a man in such a condition, says Pope, awakes no further than to see confusedly what environs him, and to think it not a reality, but a vision. STEEVENS.

Of death, contagion,³ and unnatural sleep;
 A greater Power than we can contradict
 Hath thwarted our intents; come, come away:
 Thy husband in thy bosom there lies dead;
 And Paris too; come, I'll dispose of thee
 Among a sisterhood of holy nuns:
 Stay not to question, for the watch is coming;
 Come, go, good Juliet, — [*Noise again.*] I dare stay
 no longer. [*Exit.*]

Jul. Go, get thee hence, for I will not away.—
 What's here? a cup, clos'd in my true love's hand?
 Poison, I see, hath been his timeless end:—
 O churl! drink all; and leave no friendly drop,
 To help me after?—I will kiss thy lips;
 Haply, some poison yet doth hang on them,
 To make me die with a restorative. [*Kisses him.*]
 Thy lips are warm!

Watch. [*within*] Lead, boy:—Which way?

Jul. Yea, noise?—then I'll be brief.—O happy
 dagger! [*Snatching Romeo's dagger* 4.
 This is thy sheath; [*Stabs herself.*] there rust, and let
 me die 5.

Enter Watch, with the Page of Paris.

Page. This is the place; there, where the torch doth
 burn.

³ — *and unnatural sleep*;] Shakespeare alludes to the sleep of
 Juliet, which was *unnatural*, being brought on by drugs.

STEEVENS.

⁴ *Snatching Romeo's dagger.*] So, in Painter's translation of
Pierre Boissieu, tom. ii. p. 244.—Drawing out the dagger which
 Romeo wore by his side, she pricked herself with many blowes
 against the heart." STEEVENS.

⁵ — *there rust and let me die.*] Is the reading of the quarto
 1599. That of 1597 gives the passage thus:

"I, noise? then must I be resolute.

"Oh, happy dagger! thou shalt end my fear,

"Rest in my bosom, thus I come to thee."

The alteration was probably made by the poet, when he introduced
 the words,

"This is thy sheath." STEEVENS.

Watch.

Watch. The ground is bloody; Search about the church-yard;
Go, some of you, whome'er you find, attach.

[*Exeunt some.*]

Pitiful sight! here lies the county slain;—
And Juliet bleeding; warm, and newly dead,
Who here hath lain these two days buried.—

Go, tell the prince,—run to the Capulets,—
‘Raife up the Montagues,—some others search:—
We see the ground whereon these woes do lie;
But the true ground of all these piteous woes,
We cannot without circumstance descry.

Enter some of the Watch, with Balthasar.

2 Watch. Here's Romeo's man, we found him in the church-yard.

1 Watch. Hold him in safety, 'till the prince come hither.

Enter another Watchman, with Friar Laurence.

3 Watch. Here is a friar, that trembles, sighs, and weeps:

We took this mattock and this spade from him,
As he was coming from this church yard side.

1 Watch. A great suspicion; Stay the friar too.

Enter the Prince, and attendants.

Prince. What misadventure is so early up,
That calls our person from our morning's rest?

‘*Raife up the Montagues.—Some others search:—*’ Here seems to be a rhyme intended, which may be easily restored;

“Raife up the Montagues. Some others, go.

“We see the ground whereon these woes do lie,

“But the true ground of all *this* piteous woe

“We cannot without circumstance descry.” JOHNSON.

It was often thought sufficient, in the time of Shakespeare, for the second and fourth lines in a stanza, to rhyme with each other.

STEEVENS.

Enter

Enter Capulet, and lady Capulet, &c.

Cap. What should it be, that they so shriek abroad?

La. Cap. The people in the street cry—Romeo,
Some—Juliet, and some—Paris; and all run,
With open out-cry, toward our monument.

Prince. What fear is this, which startles in our ears?

Watch. Sovereign, here lies the county Paris slain;
And Romeo dead; and Juliet, dead before,
Warm and new kill'd.

Prince. Search, seek, and know how this foul murder comes.

Watch. Here is a friar, and slaughter'd Romeo's man;

With instruments upon them, fit to open
These dead men's tombs.

Cap. O, heaven!—O, wife! look how our daughter bleeds!

This dagger hath mista'en, for, lo! his house

Lies

¹ *What fear is this, which startles in your ears?*] Read,

“What fear is this, which startles in *our* ears?” JOHNSON.

² — *lo! his house, &c.*] The modern editors (contrary to the authority of all the ancient copies, and without attention to the disagreeable assonance of *sheatb* and *sheatbed*, which was first introduced by Mr. Pope) read,

“This dagger hath mista'en; for, lo! *the sheath*

“Lies empty on the back of Montague,

“*The point* mis-sheatbed in my daughter's bosom.”

The quarto, 1597, erroneously,

“— this dagger hath mistook,

“For (*loe*) the backe is empty of yong Montague,

“And it is sheatbed in our daughter's breast.”

The quarto, 1599, affords the true reading,

“This dagger hath mistane, for, *loe!* his house

“Is emptie on the back of Mountague,

“And *it* mis-sheatbed in my daughter's bosome.”

If we do not read *it* instead of *is*, Capulet will be made to say—
The scabbard is at once empty on the back of Montague, and sheathed in Juliet's bosom. The construction even with this emendation will be irregular.

Lies empty on the back of Montague,
And it mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom.

La. Cap. O me! this sight of death is as a belt
That warns my old age to a sepulchre.

Enter Montague, and Others.

Prince. Come, Montague; for thou art early up,
To see thy son and heir more early down.

Mon. ¹ Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night;
Grief of my son's exile hath stopp'd her breath:
What further woe conspires against my age?

Prince. Look, and thou shalt see.

Mon. O thou untaught! ² what manners is in this,
To press before thy father to a grave?

The quartos, 1609, 1637, and the folio 1623, offer the same reading, except that they concur in giving *is* instead of *it*.

It appears that the dagger was anciently worn *behind the back*. So, in *The longer thou livest the more Fool thou art*, 1570;

"Thou must weare thy sworde by thy side,

"And thy dagger handsomly at thy backe."

Again, in *Humor's Ordinarie*, &c. an ancient collection of satires, no date:

"See you the huge bum dagger at his backe?" STEEVENS.

The passage, as it stands in the quarto of 1609, and in the first folio, if regulated thus, is perfectly grammatical:

"This dagger hath mista'en, (for lo! his house

"Lies empty on the back of Montague)

"And *is* mis-sheathed in my daughter's bosom."

MALONE.

⁹ — *for thou art early up, &c.*] This speech (as appears from the following passage in *The Second Part of the Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*, 1601) has something proverbial in it:

"In you i'faith the proverb's verified,

"*You are early up*, and yet are ne'er the near." STEEVENS.

¹ *Alas, my liege, my wife is dead to-night;*] After this line the quarto 1597 adds,

"And young Benvolio is deceased too."

But this I suppose the poet rejected on his revision of the play, as unnecessary slaughter. STEEVENS.

² *O, thou untaught!* &c.] So, in *The Tragedy of Darius*, 1603:

"Ah me! malicious fates have done me wrong:

"Who came first to the world, should first depart.

"It not becomes the old t'o'er-live the young;

"This dealing is preposterous and o'er-thwart." STEEVENS.

Prince.

Prince. Seal up the mouth of outrage for a while,
 'Till we can clear these ambiguities,
 And know their spring, their head, their true descent;
 And then will I be general of your woes,
 And lead you even to death: Mean time forbear,
 And let mischance be slave to patience.—
 Bring forth the parties of suspicion.

Lau. I am the greatest, able to do least,
 Yet most suspected, as the time and place
 Doth make against me, of this direful murder;
 And here I stand, both to impeach and purge
 Myself condemned and myself excus'd.

Prince. Then say at once what thou dost know in this.

Lau. I will be brief, for my short date of breath
 Is not so long as is a tedious tale.
 Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet;
 And she, there dead, that Romeo's faithful wife:
 I married them; and their stolen marriage-day
 Was Tybalt's dooms-day, whose untimely death
 Banish'd the new-made bridegroom from this city;
 For whom, and not for Tybalt, Juliet pin'd.
 You—to remove that siege of grief from her—
 Betroth'd, and would have married her perforce,
 To county Paris:—Then comes she to me;
 And, with wild looks, bid me devise some means
 To rid her from this second marriage,
 Or, in my cell, there would she kill herself.
 Then gave I her, so tutor'd by my art,
 A sleeping potion; which so took effect
 As I intended, for it wrought on her
 The form of death: mean time I writ to Romeo,
 That he should hither come as this dire night,
 To help to take her from her borrow'd grave,
 Being the time the potion's force should cease.

Lawrence.] It is much to be lamented, that the poet did not conclude the dialogue with the action, and avoid a narrative of events which the audience already knew. JOHNSON.

But he which bore my letter, friar John,
 Was staid by accident; and yesternight
 Return'd my letter back: Then all alone,
 At the prefixed hour of her waking,
 Came I to take her from her kindred's vault;
 Meaning to keep her closely at my cell,
 'Till I conveniently could send to Romeo:
 But, when I came, (some minute ere the time
 Of her awaking) here untimely lay
 The noble Paris, and true Romeo, dead.
 She wakes; and I entreated her come forth,
 And bear this work of heaven with patience:
 But then a noise did scare me from the tomb;
 And she, too desperate, would not go with me,
 But (as it seems) did violence on herself.
 All this I know; and to the marriage
 Her nurse is privy: And, if aught in this
 Miscarry'd by my fault, let my old life
 Be sacrific'd, some hour before his time,
 Unto the rigour of severest law.

Prince. We still have known thee for a holy man.—
 Where's Romeo's man? what can he say to this?

Balth. I brought my master news of Juliet's death;
 And then in post he came from Mantua,
 To this same place, to this same monument.
 This letter he early bid me give his father;
 And threaten'd me with death, going in the vault,
 If I departed not, and left him there.

Prince. Give me the letter, I will look on it.
 Where is the county's page that rais'd the watch?—
 Sirrah, what made your master in this place?

Page. He came with flowers to strew his lady's
 grave;
 And bid me stand aloof, and so I did:
 Anon, comes one with light to ope the tomb;
 And, by and by, my master drew on him;
 And then I ran away to call the watch.

Prince. This letter doth make good the friar's words,

Their course of love, the tidings of her death :
 And here he writes—that he did buy a poison
 Of a poor 'pothecary, and therewithal
 Came to this vault to die, and lie with Juliet.—
 Where be these enemies ? Capulet ! Montague !—
 See, what a scourge is laid upon your hate,
 That heaven finds means to kill your joys with love !
 And I, for winking at your discords too,
 Have lost a brace of kinsmen :—all are punish'd.

Cap. O, brother Montague, give me thy hand :
 This is my daughter's jointure, for no more
 Can I demand.

Mon. But I can give thee more :
 For I will raise her statue in pure gold ;
 That, while Verona by that name is known,
 There shall no figure at such rate be set,
 As that of true and faithful Juliet.

Cap. As rich shall Romeo by his lady lie ;
 Poor sacrifices of our enmity !

Prince. A glooming peace + this morning with it
 brings ;

The sun, for sorrow, will not shew his head :
 Go hence, to have more talk of these sad things ;
 + Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished :

For

* *A glooming peace, &c.*] The modern editions read—*gloomy* ;
 but *glooming*, which is the old reading, may be the true one. So,
 in the *Spanish Tragedy*, 1605 :

“ Through dreadful shades of ever-glooming night.”

To *gloom* is an ancient verb used by Spenser ; and I meet with it
 likewise in the play of *Tom Tyler and his Wife*, 1598 :

“ If either he gaspeth or gloometh.” STEEVENS.

‡ *Some shall be pardon'd, and some punished :*] This seems to be
 not a resolution in the *prince*, but a reflection on the various dis-
 pensations of Providence ; for who was there that could justly be
 punished by any human law ? EDWARDS'S MSS.

This line has reference to the novel from which the fable is
 taken. Here we read that Juliet's female attendant was banished

For never was a story of more woe,
Than this of Juliet and her Romeo ⁶. [*Exeunt omnes.*

for concealing the marriage; Romeo's servant set at liberty because he had only acted in obedience to his master's orders; the apothecary taken, tortured, condemned, and hanged; while Friar Laurence was permitted to retire to a hermitage in the neighbourhood of Verona, where he ended his life in penitence and peace. STEEVENS.

* —*Juliet and her Romeo.*] Shakespeare has not effected the alteration of this play by introducing any new incidents, but merely by adding to the length of the scenes.

The piece appears to have been always a very popular one. Marston, in his satires, 1598, says:

“Luscus, what's play'd to-day?—faith, now I know
“I set thy lips abroad, from whence doth flow
“Nought but pure Juliet and Romeo.” STEEVENS.

THIS play is one of the most pleasing of our author's performances. The scenes are busy and various, the incidents numerous and important, the catastrophe irresistibly affecting, and the process of the action carried on with such probability, at least with such congruity to popular opinions, as tragedy requires.

Here is one of the few attempts of Shakespeare to exhibit the conversation of gentlemen, to represent the airy sprightliness of juvenile elegance. Mr. Dryden mentions a tradition, which might easily reach his time, of a declaration made by Shakespeare, that *he was obliged to kill Mercutio in the third act, lest he should have been killed by him.* Yet he thinks him *no such formidable person, but that he might have lived through the play, and died in his bed, without danger to a poet.* Dryden well knew, had he been in quest of truth, that, in a pointed sentence, more regard is commonly had to the words than the thought, and that it is very seldom to be rigorously understood. Mercutio's wit, gaiety, and courage, will always procure him friends that wish him a longer life; but his death is not precipitated, he has lived out the time allotted him in the construction of the play; nor do I doubt the ability of Shakespeare to have continued his existence, though some of his sallies are perhaps out of the reach of Dryden; whose genius was not very fertile of merriment, nor ductile to humour, but acute, argumentative, comprehensive, and sublime.

The Nurse is one of the characters in which the author delighted: he has, with great subtilty of distinction, drawn her at once loquacious and secret, obsequious and insolent, trusty and dishonest.

His comic scenes are happily wrought, but his pathetic strains are always polluted with some unexpected depravations. His persons, however distressed, *have a conceit left them in their misery, a miserable conceit.* JOHNSON.

H A M L E T .

Persons Requested.

H A M L E T.

Persons Represented.

CLAUDIUS, *king of Denmark.*

Hamlet, *son to the former, and nephew to the present king.*

Fortinbras, *prince of Norway.*

Polonius, *lord chamberlain.*

Horatio, *friend to Hamlet.*

Laertes, *son to Polonius.*

Voltimand,

Cornelius,

Rosencrantz,

Guildenstern,

Osrick, *a courtier.*

Another courtier.

A priest.

Marcellus,

Bernardo,

Francisco, *a soldier.*

Reynaldo, *servant to Polonius.*

A captain; An ambassador.

Ghost of Hamlet's father.

Gertrude, *queen of Denmark, and mother to Hamlet.*

Ophelia, *daughter to Polonius.*

*Lords, ladies, players, grave-diggers, sailors, messengers,
and other attendants.*

SCENE, *Elfsneur.*

H A M L E T.

ACT I. SCENE I.

EL SINOUR.

A platform before the palace.

Francisco on his post. Enter to him Bernardo.

Ber. Who's there?

Fran. Nay, answer me: stand, and unfold yourself.

Ber.

¹ *Hamlet.*] The original story on which this play is built, may be found in Saxo Grammaticus the Danish historian. From thence Belleforest adopted it in his collection of novels, in seven volumes, which he began in 1564, and continued to publish through succeeding years. From this work, *The Historie of Hamblett*, quarto, bl. l. was translated. I have hitherto met with no earlier edition of the play than one in the year 1604, though it must have been performed before that time, as I have seen a copy of Speght's edition of Chaucer, which formerly belonged to Dr. Gabriel Harvey, (the antagonist of Nash) who, in his own hand-writing, has set down the play, as a performance with which he was well acquainted, in the year 1598. His words are these: "The younger sort take much delight in Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*; but his *Lucrece*, and his tragedy of *Hamlet Prince of Denmarke*, have it in them to please the wiser sort, 1598."

In the books of the Stationers' Company this play was entered by James Roberts, July 26, 1602, under the title of "A booke called *The Revenge of Hamlett, Prince of Denmarke*, as it was lately acted by the Lord Chamberlain his servantes."

In

² *Act I.*] This play is printed both in the folio of 1623, and in the quarto of 1637, more correctly, than almost any other of the works of Shakespeare. JOHNSON.

³ — *me:*] i. e. *me* who am already on the watch, and have a right to demand the watch-word. STEEVENS.

Ber. Long live the king!

Fran. Bernardo?

Ber. He.

Fran. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Ber. 'Tis now struck twelve; get thee to bed,
Francisco.

Fran. For this relief, much thanks: 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Ber. Have you had quiet guard?

Fran. Not a mouse stirring.

Ber. Well, good night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,

In *Eastward Hoe* by G. Chapman, B. Jonson, and T. Marston, 1605, is a fling at the hero of this tragedy. A footman named *Hamlet* enters, and a tankard-bearer asks him—"Sfoote, *Hamlet*, are you mad?" The following particulars, relative to the date of the piece, are borrowed from Dr. Farmer's *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*, p. 85, 86, second edition.

"Greene, in the Epistle prefixed to his *Arcadia*, hath a lash at some "vaine glorious tragedians," and very plainly at Shakespeare in particular.—"I leave all these to the mercy of their *mother-tongue*, that feed on nought but the crums that fall from the *translator's* trencher.—That could scarcely *latinize* their neck verse if they should have neede, yet *English Seneca* read by candlelight yeelds many good sentences—hee will afford you whole *Hamlets*, I should say, *handfuls* of tragical speeches."—I cannot determine exactly when this *Epistle* was first published; but, I fancy, it will carry the original *Hamlet* somewhat further back than we have hitherto done: and it may be observed, that the oldest copy now extant, is said to be "enlarged to almost as much againe as it was." *Gabriel Harvey* printed at the end of the year 1592, "Foure Letters and certaine Sonnetts, especially touching *Robert Greene*;" in one of which his *Arcadia* is mentioned. Now *Nash's* Epistle must have been previous to these, as *Gabriel* is quoted in it with applause; and the *Foure Letters* were the beginning of a quarrel. *Nash* replied, in "Strange news of the intercepting certaine Letters, and a Convoy of Verbes, as they were going *privilie* to victuall the *Low Countries*, 1593." *Harvey* rejoined the same year in "*Pierce's* Supercerogation, or a new praise of the old Ass." And *Nash* again, in "Have with you to *Saffron-Walden*, or *Gabriel Harvey's* Hunt is up; containing a full answer to the eldest sonne of the halter-maker, 1596."—*Nash* died before 1606, as appears from an old comedy called "The Return from Parnassus." STEEVENS.

The

4 The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Enter Horatio, and Marcellus.

Fran. I think, I hear them.—Stand, ho! Who is there?

Hor. Friends to this ground.

Mar. And liegemen to the Dane.

Fran. Give you good night.

Mar. O, farewell, honest soldier:

Who hath reliev'd you?

Fran. Bernardo hath my place.

Give you good night.

[*Exit Francisco.*]

Mar. Holla! Bernardo!

Ber. Say,

What, is Horatio there?

5 *Hor.* A piece of him.

4 *The rivals of my watch,*] *Rivals*, for partners. WARBURTON.

By *rivals of the watch* are meant those who were to watch on the next adjoining ground. *Rivals*, in the original sense of the word, were proprietors of neighbouring lands, parted only by a brook, which belonged equally to both. HANMER.

So, in Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece*, 1636:

"*Tullia.* Aruns, associate him.

"*Aruns.* A rival with my brother, &c."

Again, in the *Tragedy of Hoffman*, 1637:

"And make thee rival in those governments."

Again, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act 3. Sc. 5:—having made use of him in the wars against Pompey, presently deny'd him *rivality*." STEEVENS.

I should propose to point and alter this passage thus—

If you do meet Horatio, and Marcellus

The rival of my watch—

Horatio is represented throughout the play as a gentleman of no profession. Marcellus was an officer, and consequently did that through duty, for which Horatio had no motive but curiosity. Besides, there is but one person on each watch. Bernardo comes to relieve Francisco, and Marcellus to supply the place of some other on the adjoining station. The reason why Bernardo as well as the rest expect Horatio, was because he knew him to be informed of what had happened the night before. WARNER.

5 *Hor.* A piece of him.] But why a *piece*? He says this as he gives his hand. Which direction should be marked. WARE.

A piece of him, is, I believe, no more than a cant expression.

STEEVENS.

Ber.

Ber. Welcome, Horatio; welcome, good Marcellus,

Mar. What⁶, has this thing appear'd again to-night?

Ber. I have seen nothing.

Mar. Horatio says, 'tis but our phantasy;
And will not let belief take hold of him,
Touching this dreaded sight, twice seen of us:
Therefore I have intreated him along,
With us to watch⁷ the minutes of this night;
That, if again this apparition come,
He may⁸ approve our eyes, and speak to it.

Hor. Tush! tush! 'twill not appear.

Ber. Sit down a while;
And let us once again assail your ears,
That are so fortified against our story,
⁹ What we two nights have seen.

Hor. Well, sit we down,
And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Ber. Last night of all,
When yon same star, that's westward from the pole,
Had made his course to illumine that part of heaven
Where now it burns, Marcellus, and myself,
The bell then beating one,——

⁶ *What, &c.*] The quartos give this speech to Horatio.

STEEVENS.

⁷ — *the minutes of this night* ;] This seems to have been an expression common in Shakespeare's time. I find it in one of Ford's plays, *The Fancies*, Act 5.

I promise ere *the minutes of the night*. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *approve our eyes,——*] Add a new testimony to that of our eyes. JOHNSON.

So, in Heywood's *Iron Age*, 1632:

“ I can by grounded arguments *approve*

“ Your power and potency.”

Again, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

—— I am full sorry

That he *approves* the common liar, who

Thus speaks of him at Rome.— STEEVENS.

⁹ *What we two nights have seen.*] This line is by Hammer given to Marcellus, but without necessity. JOHNSON.

Mar.

Mar. Peace, break thee off; look, where it comes again!

Enter Ghost.

Ber. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

Mar. Thou art a scholar, speak to it, Horatio.

Ber. Looks it not like the king? mark it, Horatio.

Hor. Most like:—it harrows¹ me with fear, and wonder.

Ber. It would be spoke to.

Mar. Speak to it, Horatio.

Hor. What art thou, that usurp'st this time of night,

Together with that fair and warlike form
In which the majesty of bury'd Denmark
Did sometime march? by heaven I charge thee,
speak.

Mar. It is offended.

Ber. See! it stalks away.

Hor. Stay; speak; I charge thee, speak.

[*Exit Ghost.*

Mar. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Ber. How now, Horatio? you tremble, and look pale:

Is not this something more than phantasy?
What think you of it?

Hor. Before my God, I might not this believe,
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Mar. Is it not like the king?

Hor. As thou art to thyself:

Such was the very armour he had on,

¹ *It harrows me, &c.*] To *barrow* is to conquer, to subdue. The word is of Saxon origin. So, in the old bl. l. romance of *Syr Eglamour of Artoys*:

“He swore by him that *barowed* hell.” STEEVENS.

When he the ambitious Norway combated ;
 So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle ²,
³ He smote the ⁴ sledded Polack on the ice.
 'Tis strange.

Mar. Thus, twice before, ⁵ and just at this dead
 hour,
 With martial stalk he hath gone by our watch.

Hor.

² — *an angry parle,*] This is one of the affected words introduced by *Lilly*. So, in *Two Wise Men and all the Rest Fools*, 1619:

“ — that you told me at our last *parle*.” STEEVENS.

³ *He smote the sledded Polack on the ice.*] *Pole-ax* in the common editions. He speaks of a prince of Poland whom he slew in battle. He uses the word *Polack* again, Act 2. Scene 4. POPE.

Polack was, in that age, the term for an inhabitant of Poland: *Polaque*, French. As in F. Davison's translation of Passeratius's epitaph on Henry III. of France, published by Camden:

“ Whether thy chance or choice thee hither brings,

“ Stay, passenger, and wail the best of kings.

“ This little stone a great king's heart doth hold,

“ Who rul'd the fickle French and *Polacks* bold:

“ Whom, with a mighty warlike host attended,

“ With trait'rous knife a cowed monster ended.

“ So frail are even the highest earthly things,

“ Go, passenger, and wail the hap of kings.” JOHNSON.

Again, in *Vittoria Coromona*, &c. 1612:

“ — I scorn him

“ Like a shav'd *Pollack*—” STEEVENS.

⁴ *A sled, or sledge*] Is a carriage without wheels, made use of in the cold countries. So, in *Tamburlaine or the Scythian Shepherd*, 1590.

“ — upon an ivory *sled*

“ Thou shalt be drawn among the frozen poles.” STEEV.

⁵ — *and just at this dead hour,*] The old quarto reads *jump*: but the following editions discarded it for a more fashionable word. WARBURTON.

The old reading is, *jump at this same hour*; *same* is a kind of correlative to *jump*; *just* is in the oldest folio. The correction was probably made by the author. JOHNSON.

Jump and *just* were synonymous in the time of Shakespeare. Ben Jonson speaks of verses made on *jump names*, i. e. names that suit exactly. Nash says—“ and *jumpe*, imitating a verse in *As in præsentia*.” So, in Chapman's *May Day*, 1611:

“ Your appointment was *jump* at three, with me.”

Again, in *The Arcadia* by Shirley, 1640.

“ — so even and *jump* with his desires.”

Hor. ⁶ In what particular thought to work, I know
not ;

But, in the ⁷ gross and scope of mine opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Mar. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that
knows,

Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land ?

And why such daily cast ⁸ of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war ?

Why such impress of ship-wrights, whose sore task
Does not divide the Sunday from the week ?

What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day ;

Who is't, that can inform me ?

Hor. That can I ;

At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king,
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,

Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,
Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,

Dar'd to the combat ; in which, our valiant Hamlet
(For so this side of our known world esteem'd him)

Did slay this Fortinbras ; ⁹ who, by a seal'd compact,
Well

Again, in *M. Kiffin's* translation of the *Andria* of Terence, 1588 :

“ Comes he this day to jump in the very time of this
marriage ? ” STEEVENS.

⁶ *In what particular thought to work,*] i. e. What particular train
of thinking to follow. STEEVENS.

⁷ — *Gross and scope*—] General thoughts, and tendency at
large. JOHNSON.

⁸ — *daily cast*—] The quartos read *cost*. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *who by a seal'd compact,*

Well ratified by law and heraldry,] The subject spoken of is
a duel between two monarchs, who fought for a wager, and entered
into articles for the just performance of the terms agreed upon.
Two sorts of law then were necessary to regulate the decision of the
affair: the *civil law*, and the *law of arms*; as, had there been a
wager without a duel, it had been the *civil law only*; or a duel
without a wager, the *law of arms only*. Let us see now how our
author is made to express this sense.

— a seal'd

Well ratify'd by law, and heraldry,
 Did forfeit, with his life, all those his lands,
 Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror:
 Against the which, a moiety competent
 Was gaged by our king; which had return'd
 To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
 Had he been vanquisher; ¹ as, by that covenant,
² And carriage of the articles design'd,
 His fell to Hamlet: Now, fir, young Fortinbras,
³ Of unimproved mettle hot and full,

Hath

———— a seal'd compact,

Well ratified by law and heraldry.

Now *law*, as distinguished from *heraldry*, signifying the *civil law*; and this seal'd compact being a *civil law* act, it is as much as to say, *An act of law well ratified by law*, which is absurd. For the nature of *ratification* requires that which ratifies, and that which is ratified, should not be one and the same, but different. For these reasons I conclude Shakespeare wrote:

———— who by seal'd compact

Well ratified by law of heraldry.

i. e. the execution of the civil compact was ratified by the law of arms; which, in our author's time, was called the *law of heraldry*. So the best and exactest speaker of that age: *In the third kind*, [i. e. of the *Jus gentium*] *the law of heraldry in war is positive, &c.* Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*. WARBURTON.

Mr. Upton says, that Shakespeare sometimes expresses one thing by two substantives, and that *law and heraldry* means, by the *herald law*. So *Ant. and Cleop.* Act 4.

“Where rather I expect victorious life,

“Than *death and honour*, i. e. honourable death.”

STEEVENS.

Puttenham, in his *Art of Poesie*, speaks of the *Figure of Twynnes*, “*horses and barbes*, for *barbed horses*, *venim & Dartes*, for *venimous Dartes*, &c.” FARMER.

¹ — as, by that cov'nant,

And carriage of the articles design'd,] The old quarto reads:

— as by the same comart;

and this is right. *Comart* signifies a bargain, and *carriage of the articles*, the *covenants* entered into to confirm that bargain. Hence we see the common reading makes a tautology. WARBURTON.

I can find no such word as *comart* in any dictionary. STEEV.

² *And carriage of the articles design'd,*] *Carriage*, is *import: design'd*, is *formed*, *drawn up between them*. JOHNSON.

³ *Of unimproved mettle*——] *Unimproved*, for *unrefined*.

WARBURTON.

Full

Hath in the skirts of Norway, here and there,
 4 Shark'd up a list of landless resolute,
 For food and diet, to some enterprize
 5 That hath a stomach in't; which is no other
 (As it doth well appear unto our state)
 But to recover of us, by strong hand,
 6 And terms compulsory, those foresaid lands
 So by his father lost: And this, I take it,
 Is the main motive of our preparations;
 The source of this our watch; and the chief head
 Of this post-haste and romage⁷ in the land.

Ber. [⁸ I think, it be no other, but even so:
 Well may it fort⁹, that this portentous figure
 Comes armed through our watch; so like the king
 That was, and is the question of these wars.

Hor. A mote it is¹, to trouble the mind's eye.
 In the most high and² palmy state of Rome,
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,

Full of unimproved mettle, is full of spirit not regulated or guided by knowledge or experience. JOHNSON.

⁴ *Shark'd up a list, &c.*] I believe to *shark up* means to pick up without distinction, as the *shark*-fish collects his prey. The quartos read *lawless* instead of *landless*. STEEVENS.

⁵ *That hath a stomach in't;—*] *Stomach*, in the time of our author, was used for *constancy, resolution*. JOHNSON.

⁶ *And terms compulsative,—*] The old quarto, better, *compulsatory*. WARBURTON.

⁷ *— romage—*] Tumultuous hurry. JOHNSON.

⁸ *I think, &c.*] These, and all other lines confin'd within crotchets throughout this play, are omitted in the folio edition of 1623. The omissions leave the play sometimes better and sometimes worse, and seem made only for the sake of abbreviation. JOHNSON.

It may be worth while to observe, that the title pages of the first quartos in 1604 and 1605, declare this play to be *enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect copy*.

STEEVENS.

⁹ *Well may it fort,—*] The cause and the effect are proportionate and suitable. JOHNSON.

¹ *A mote it is,—*] The first quarto reads, *a moth*. STEEVENS.

² *— palmy state of Rome,*] *Palmy*, for *victorious*; in the other editions, *flourishing*. POPE.

The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets;
 Stars shone with trains of fire; dews of blood fell³;
 4 Disasters veil'd the sun; and the moist star,
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
 Was sick almost to dooms-day with eclipse.
 And⁵ even the like⁶ precursor of fierce events,—
 As harbingers preceding still the fates,
 7 And prologue to the omen coming on,—
 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
 Unto our climatures and countrymen.—]

³ *Stars shone with trains of fire, dews of blood fell; &c.]* Thus Mr. Rowe altered these lines, which have no immediate connection with the preceding ones. The quartos read (for the passage is not in the folio):

*As stars with trains of fire, and dews of blood,
 Disasters in the sun,—*

Perhaps an intermediate line is lost. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Disasters veil'd the sun;—]* *Disasters* is here finely used in its original signification of evil conjunction of stars. WARBURTON.

⁵ *And even—]* Not only such prodigies have been seen in Rome, but the elements have shewn our countrymen like forerunners and foretokens of violent events. JOHNSON.

⁶ *— precursor of fierce events,]* *Fierce*, for *terrible*. WARBURTON.

I rather believe that *fierce* signifies *conspicuous, glaring*. It is used in a somewhat similar sense in *Timon*.—O the *fierce* wretchedness that glory brings! STEEVENS.

⁷ *And prologue to the omen coming on,]* But *prologue* and *omen* are merely synonymous here. The poet means, that these strange *phenomena* are prologues and forerunners of the events *presag'd*: and such sense the slight alteration, which I have ventured to make, by changing *omen* to *omen'd*, very aptly gives. THEOBALD.

Omen, for fate. WARBURTON.

Hammer follows Theobald.

A distich from the life of Merlin, by Heywood, will shew that there is no occasion for correction:

“Merlin well vers'd in many an hidden spell,

“His countries *omen* did long since foretell.” FARMER.

Again, in the *Vowbreaker*:

“And much I fear the weakness of her braine

“Should draw her to some *ominous* exigent.” STEEVENS.

Re-enter

Re-enter Ghost.

But, soft; behold! lo, where it comes again!
I'll cross it, though it blast me.—Stay, illusion!

* If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
Speak to me:

If there be any good thing to be done,
That may to thee do ease, and grace to me,
Speak to me:

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
Which, hapily, foreknowing may avoid,
O, speak!

Or, if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,

[*Cock crows.*

Speak of it:—stay, and speak.—Stop it, Marcellus.—

Mar. Shall I strike at it with my partizan?

Hor. Do, if it will not stand.

Ber. 'Tis here!

Hor. 'Tis here!

Mar. 'Tis gone!

[*Exit Ghost.*

We do it wrong, being so majestical,
To offer it the shew of violence;
For it is, as the air, invulnerable,
And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Ber. It was about to speak, when the cock crew.

Hor. And then it started like a guilty thing
Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn,
Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
Awake the god of day; and, at his warning,

* If thou hast any sound,—] The speech of Horatio to the spectre is very elegant and noble, and congruous to the common traditions of the causes of apparitions. JOHNSON.

9 Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
 1 The extravagant and erring spirit hies
 To his confine: and of the truth herein
 This present object made probation.

Mar. It faded on the crowing of the cock².
 Some say, that ever 'gainst that season comes
 Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 This bird of dawning singeth all night long:

⁹ *Whether in sea, &c.*] According to the pneumatology of that time, every element was inhabited by its peculiar order of spirits, who had dispositions different, according to their various places of abode. The meaning therefore is, that all *spirits extravagant*, wandering out of their element, whether aerial spirits visiting earth, or earthly spirits ranging the air, return to their station, to their proper limits in which they are *confined*. We might read,

— And at his warning

“Th' extravagant and erring spirit hies

“To his confine, whether in sea or air,

“Or earth, or fire. And of,” &c.

But this change, though it would smooth the construction, is not necessary, and, being unnecessary, should not be made against authority. JOHNSON.

Bourne of Newcastle, in his *Antiquities of the common People*, informs us, “It is a received tradition among the vulgar, that at the time of cock-crowing, the midnight spirits forsake these lower regions, and go to their proper places.—Hence it is, says he, that in country places, where the way of life requires more early labour, they always go cheerfully to work at that time; whereas if they are called abroad sooner, they imagine every thing they see a wandering ghost.” And he quotes on this occasion, as all his predecessors had done, the well-known lines from the first hymn of *Prudentius*. I know not whose translation he gives us, but there is an old one by Heywood. The *pious Chansons*, the *hymns* and *carols*, which Shakespeare mentions presently, were usually copied from the elder Christian poets. FARMER.

¹ *Th' extravagant*—] i. e. got out of its bounds. WARBURTON. So, in *Nobody and Somebody*, 1598: “—they took me up for a *'stravagant*.” STEEVENS.

² *It faded on the crowing of the cock.*] This is a very ancient superstition. Philostratus giving an account of the apparition of Achilles' shade to Apollonius Tyaneus, says that it vanished with a little glimmer as soon as the cock crowed. Vit. Apol. iv. 16.

STEEVENS.

And

And then, they say, no spirit³ dares stir abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
⁴ No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Hor. So have I heard, and do in part believe it.
But, look, the morn, in ruffet mantle clad,
Walks o'er the dew of yon^s high eastern hill:
Break we our watch up; and, by my advice,
Let us impart what we have seen to-night
Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life,
This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him:
Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Mar. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning
know
Where we shall find him most convenient. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

A room of state.

*Enter the Queen, Hamlet, Polonius, Laertes, Voltimand,
Cornelius, Lords and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's
death
The memory be green; and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief, and our whole kingdom

³ *Dares stir abroad.* Quarto. The folio reads—*can walk*—
STEEVENS.

⁴ *No fairy takes,*] No fairy *strikes* with lameness or diseases.
This sense of *take* is frequent in this author. JOHNSON.

⁵ — *high eastern hill:*] The old quarto has it better *east-*
ward. WARBURTON.

The superiority of the latter of these readings is not, to me at
least, very apparent. I find the former used in *Lingua*, &c.
1607: "—— and overclimbs

"Yonder gilt *eastern hills.*"

Eastern and *eastward*, alike signify *toward the East.* STEEVENS.

To be contracted in one brow of woe;
 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature,
 That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
 Together with remembrance of ourselves.
 Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
 The imperial jointress of this warlike state,
 Have we, as 'twere, with a defeated joy,—
 With one auspicious, and one dropping eye⁶;
 With mirth in funeral, and with dirge in marriage,
 In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
 Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
 With this affair along:—For all, our thanks.

Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,—
 Holding a weak supposal of our worth;
 Or thinking, by our late dear brother's death,
 Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,—
⁷ Colleagu'd with this dream of his advantage,
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
 Importing the surrender of those lands
 Lost by his father, with all bands of law,
 To our most valiant brother.—So much for him.

⁶ *With one auspicious, and one dropping eye;*] Thus the folio,
 The quarto, with somewhat less of quaintness:

With *an* auspicious, and *a* dropping eye.

The same thought, however, occurs in the *Winter's Tale*:
 "She had *one eye* declined for the loss of her husband; *another*
 elevated that the oracle was fulfilled." STEEVENS.

⁷ *Colleagu'd with this dream of his advantage,*] The meaning
 is, He goes to war so indiscreetly, and unprepared, that he has no
 allies to support him but a *dream*, with which he is *colleagu'd* or
 confederated. WARBURTON.

Hanmer reads—*collogued*, and perhaps rightly, as this word is
 frequently used by Shakespeare's contemporaries. So, in Marston's
Malecontent, 1604: "Why look you, we must *collogue* sometimes,
 forswear sometimes." Again, in Green's *Tu Quoque*, 1599:
 "*Collogue* with her again." Again, in Heywood's *Love's Mistress*,
 1636: "This *colloguing* lad." Again, in *Sweetnam Arraign'd*,
 1620: "For they are cozening, *colloguing*, ungrateful, &c."

STEEVENS.

Now

Now for ourself, and for this time of meeting :
 Thus much the business is : We have here writ
 To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
 Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
 Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
 His further gait herein ⁸ ; in that the levies,
 The lists, and full proportions, are all made
 Out of his subject :—and we here dispatch
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway ;
 Giving to you no further personal power
 To business with the king, more than the scope ⁹
 Of these dilated articles allows ¹.

Farewel ; and let your haste commend your duty.

Vol. In that, and all things, will we shew our
 duty.

King. We doubt it nothing ; heartily farewel.

[*Exeunt Voltimand, and Cornelius.*]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you ?
 You told us of some suit ; What is't, Laertes ?
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
 And lose your voice ; What would'st thou beg,
 Laertes,

That shall not be my offer, not thy asking ?

² The head is not more native to the heart,

The

⁸ — to suppress

[*His further gait therein,*] Gate or gait is here used in the
 northern sense, for *proceeding, passage* ; from the A. S. verb *gac*.
 A gate for a path, passage, or street, is still current in the north.

PERCY.

⁹ — more than the scope] More than is comprised in the general
 design of these articles, which you may explain in a more diffuse
 and dilated stile. JOHNSON.

¹ — these dilated articles] i. e. the articles when dilated.

MUSGRAVE.

² The head is not more native to the heart,

The hand more instrumental to the mouth,

Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.] This is a flagrant
 instance of the first editor's stupidity, in preferring sound to sense.

The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
What would'st thou have, Laertes?

Laer. My dread lord,
Your leave and favour to return to France;
From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
To shew my duty in your coronation;
Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France,
And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave? What says
Polonius?

Pol. He hath, my lord, [wrung from me my flow
leave,

But *head*, *heart*, and *hand*, he thought must needs go together, where an honest man was the subject of the encomium: tho' what he could mean by the *head's* being native to the *heart*, I cannot conceive. The mouth indeed of an honest man might, perhaps, in some sense, be said to be *native*, that is, allied to the heart. But the speaker is here talking not of a *moral*, but a *physical* alliance. And the force of what is said is supported only by that distinction. I suppose, then, that Shakespeare wrote:

*The blood is not more native to the heart,—
Than to the throne of Denmark is thy father.*

This makes the sentiment just and pertinent. As the blood is formed and sustained by the labour of the heart, the mouth supplied by the office of the hand, so is the throne of Denmark by your father, &c. The expression too of the *blood's* being *native to the heart*, is extremely fine. For the heart is the laboratory where that vital liquor is digested, distributed, and (when weakened and debilitated) again restored to the vigour necessary for the discharge of its functions. WARBURTON.

Part of this emendation I have received, but cannot discern why the *head* is not as much *native to the heart*, as the *blood*, that is, *natural* and *congenial* to it, *born with it*, and co-operating with it. The relation is likewise by this reading better preserved, the *counsellor* being to the *king* as the *head* to the *heart*. JOHNSON.

I am not certain that the part of Dr. Warburton's emendation which is received, is necessary. The sense seems to be this, the head is not formed to be more useful to the heart, the hand is not more at the service of the mouth, than my power is at your father's service. That is, he may command me to the utmost; he may do what he pleases with my kingly authority. STEEVENS.

By

By labourfome petition; and, at laft,
Upon his will I feal'd my hard consent :]
I do befeech you, give him leave to go.

King. ³ Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be
thine,

And thy beft graces fpend it at thy will.—
But now, my coufin Hamlet, and my fon,—

Ham. ⁴ A little more than kin, and lefs than kind.

[*Afide.*

King.

³ *Take thy fair hour, Laertes; time be thine,*

And thy fair graces: fpend it at thy will.] This is the pointing in both Mr. Pope's editions; but the poet's meaning is loft by it, and the clofe of the fentence miferably flatten'd. The pointing, I have reftored, is that of the beft copies; and the fenfe, this: "You have my leave to go, Laertes; make the faireft ufe you please of your time, and fpend it at your will with the faireft graces you are mafter of." THEOBALD.

I rather think this line is in want of emendation. I read,

—————*Time is thine,*

And my beft graces; fpend it at thy will. JOHNSON.

⁴ *Ham. A little more than kin, and lefs than kind.]* The king had called him, *coufin* Hamlet, therefore Hamlet replies,

A little more than kin, —————

i. e. A little more than coufin; becaufe, by marrying his mother, he was become the king's fon-in-law: fo far is eafy. But what means the latter part,

—————*and lefs than kind?*

The king, in the prefent reading, gives no occafion for this reflection, which is fufficient to fhew it to be faulty, and that we fhould read and point the firft line thus,

But now, my coufin Hamlet—kind my fon—————

i. e. But now let us turn to you, coufin Hamlet. *Kind my fon* (or, as we now fay, Good my fon) lay afide this clouded look. For thus he was going to expofultate gently with him for his melancholy, when Hamlet cut him fhort by reflecting on the titles he gave him;

A little more than kin, and lefs than kind,
which we now fee is a pertinent reply. WARRURTON.

A little more than kin, and lefs than kind.] It is not unreafonable to fuppofe that this was a proverbial expreffion, known in former times for a relation fo confufed and blended, that it was hard to define it. HANMER.

Kind is the Teutonick word for *child*. Hamlet therefore answers with propriety, to the titles of *coufin* and *fon*, which the king had given

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you ?

Ham. Not so, my lord, I am 's too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
Do not, for ever, with thy 'vailed lids
Seek for thy noble father in the dust :

given him, that he was somewhat more than *cousin*, and less than *son*. JOHNSON.

In this line, with which Shakespeare introduces *Hamlet*, Dr. Johnson has perhaps pointed out a nicer distinction than it can justly boast of. To establish the sense contended for, it should have been proved that *kind* was ever used by any English writer for *child*. *A little more than kin*, is a little more than a common relation. The king was certainly something *less than kind*, by having betrayed the mother of Hamlet into an indecent and incestuous marriage, and obtained the crown by means which he suspects to be unjustifiable. In the 5th Act, the Prince accuses his uncle of having *popt in between the election and his hopes*; which obviates Dr. Warburton's objection to the old reading, viz. that "the king had given no occasion for such a reflection."

A jingle of the same sort is found in *Mother Bombie* 1594, and seems to have been proverbial, as I have met with it more than once: "— the nearer we are in blood, the further we must be from love; the greater the *kindred* is, the less the *kindness* must be." Again, in *Gorboduc*, a tragedy, 1565:

"In kinde a father, but not in *kindlyness*."

As *kind*, however, signifies *nature*, Hamlet may mean that his relationship was become an *unnatural* one, as it was partly founded upon incest. Our author's *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *King Richard II*, and *Titus Andronicus*, exhibit instances of *kind* being used for *nature*; and so too in this play of *Hamlet*, Act 2, Sc. the last:

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, *kindless* villain.

STEEVENS.

's — *too much i' the sun*.] He perhaps alludes to the proverb, *Out of heaven's blessing into the warm sun*. JOHNSON.

— *too much i' the sun*.

Meaning probably his being sent for from his studies to be exposed at his uncle's marriage as his *chiefest courtier*, &c. STEEVENS.

I question whether a quibble between *sun* and *son* be not here intended. FARMER.

'vailed lids,] With lowering eyes, cast down eyes. JOHNSON.

Thou

Thou know'st, 'tis common; all, that live, must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen. If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee?

Ham. Seems, madam! nay, it is; I know not
seems.

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black,
Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,
Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
Together with all forms, modes, shews of grief,⁷
That can denote me truly: These, indeed, seem,
For they are actions that a man might play:
But I have that within, which passeth shew;
These, but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King, 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature,
Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father:

But, you must know, ⁸ your father lost a father;

That

⁷ — shews of grief,] Thus the folio. The first quarto reads —
cbapes—I suppose for *shapes*. STEEVENS.

⁸ — your father lost a father;

That father, his; and the survivor bound] Thus Mr. Pope
judiciously corrected the faulty copies. On which the editor Mr.
Theobald thus descants: *This supposed refinement is from Mr. Pope,*
but all the editions else, that I have met with, old and modern, read,

That father lost, lost his;—

The reduplication of which word here gives an energy and an elegance, WHICH IS MUCH EASIER TO BE CONCEIVED THAN EXPLAINED IN TERMS. I believe so: for when *explained in terms* it comes to this; That father after he had lost himself, lost his father. But the reading is *ex fide codicis*, and that is enough. WARBURTON.

I do not admire the repetition of the word, but it has so much of our author's manner, that I find no temptation to recede from the old copies. JOHNSON.

— your father lost a father;

That father lost, lost his;—

That father lost, lost his; and the survivor bound
 In filial obligation, for some term
 To do ⁹ obsequious sorrow: But to persevere
¹ In obstinate condolment, is a course
 Of impious stubbornness; 'tis unmanly grief:
 It shews ² a will most incorrect to heaven;
 A heart unfortify'd, or mind impatient;
 An understanding simple and unschool'd:
 For what, we know, must be, and is as common
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
 Why should we, in our peevish opposition,
 Take it to heart? Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
³ To reason most absurd, whose common theme
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cry'd,
 From the first corse, 'till he that died to-day,
This must be so. We pray you, throw to earth
 This unprevailing woe; and think of us
 As of a father: for, let the world take note,
 You are the most immediate to our throne;
⁴ And, with no less nobility of love

The meaning of the passage is no more than this. *Your father lost a father*, i. e. your grandfather, which *lost grandfather*, also lost his father. STEEVENS.

⁹ — obsequious sorrow.—] *Obsequious* is here from *obsequies* or funeral ceremonies. JOHNSON.

So, in *Titus Andronicus*:

“ To shed *obsequious* tears upon his trunk.” STEEVENS.

Again, in our author's 31st Sonnet:

How many a holy and *obsequious* tear,

Hath dear religious love stoll'n from mine eye! MALONE.

¹ In obstinate condolment,] *Condolment*, for *sorrow*.

WARBURTON.

² — a will most incorrect—] *Incorrect*, for *untutor'd*.

WARBURTON.

³ To reason most absurd;—] *Reason*, for *experience*.

WARBURTON.

Reason is here used in its common sense, for the *faculty* by which we form conclusions from arguments. JOHNSON.

⁴ And with no less nobility of love,] *Nobility*, for *magnitude*.

WARBURTON.

Nobility is rather *generosity*. JOHNSON.

Than

Than that which dearest father bears his son,
 5 Do I impart toward you. For your intent
 In going back to school in Wittenberg,
 It is most retrograde to our desire :

And, we beseech you, 6 bend you to remain
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Ham-
 let ;

I pray thee, stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply ;
 Be as ourself in Denmark.—Madam, come ;
 This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
 Sits smiling to my heart : in grace whereof,
 7 No jocund health, that Denmark drinks to-day,
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell ;
 And the king's rouse the heaven shall bruit again,
 Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come, away. [*Exeunt.*

Manet Hamlet.

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,

⁵ *Do I impart toward you.*—] *Impart*, for *proffers*. WARBURTON.

I believe *impart* is, *impart myself*, *communicate* whatever I can be-
 stow. JOHNSON.

Do I impart toward you.—

The crown of Denmark was elective. So, in *Sir Chyomon Knight of
 the Golden Shield*, &c. 1599 :

“ And me possess for spoused wife, who in *election* am

“ To have the *crown of Denmark* here, as heir unto the same.”

The king means, that as Hamlet stands the fairest chance to be next
 elected, he will strive with as much love to ensure the crown to him,
 as a father would shew in the continuance of heirdom to a son.

STEEVENS.

⁶ — *bend you to remain*] i. e. subdue your inclination to go from
 hence, and remain, &c. STEEVENS.

⁷ *No jocund bealib*,—] The king's intemperance is very
 strongly impressed ; every thing that happens to him gives him oc-
 casion to drink. JOHNSON.

Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew⁸!

⁹ Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd

His canon 'gainst self-slaughter! O God! O God!

How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable

Seem to me all the uses of this world!

Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden,

That grows to feed; things rank, and gross in nature,

Possess it merely. That it should come to this!

But two months dead!—nay, not so much, not two:

¹ So excellent a king; that was, to this,

Hyperion to a satyr: so loving to my mother,

² That he might not let e'en the winds of heaven

Visit

⁸ — resolve *itself into a dew*] *Resolve* means the same as *dis-*
solve. Ben Jonson uses the word in his *Volpone*, and in the same sense.

“Forth the *resolved* corners of his eyes.”

Again, in the *Country Girl*, 1647:

“—my swoln grief, *resolved* in these tears.” STEEVENS.

⁹ Or that the Everlasting had not *fix'd*

His canon 'gainst self-slaughter!] The generality of the editions read thus, as if the poet's thought were, *Or that the Almighty had not planted his artillery, or arms of vengeance, against self-murder*. But the word which I restored (and which was espoused by the accurate Mr. Hughes, who gave an edition of this play) is the true reading, i. e. *that he had not restrained suicide by his express law and peremptory prohibition*. THEOBALD.

There are yet those who suppose the old reading to be the true one, as they say the word *fixed* seems to decide very strongly in its favour. I would advise such to recollect Virgil's expression:

— *fixit leges pretio, atque refixit*. STEEVENS.

¹ So excellent a king, that was, to this,

Hyperion to a Satyr:—] This similitude at first sight seems to be a little far-fetch'd; but it has an exquisite beauty. By the *Satyr* is meant *Pan*, as by *Hyperion*, *Apollo*. *Pan* and *Apollo* were brothers, and the allusion is to the contention between those gods for the preference in music. WARBURTON.

All our English poets are guilty of the same false quantity, and call *Hypērion* *Hypērion*; at least the only instance I have met with to the contrary, is in the old play of *Fuimus Troes*, 1603:

“— Blow gentle *Africus*,

“ Play on our poops, when *Hypērion*'s fon

“ Shall couch in West.” STEEVENS.

² In former editions,

That he permitted not the winds of heaven] This is a sophistical

Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth!
 Must I remember? why, she would hang on him,
 As if increase of appetite had grown
 By what it fed on: And yet, within a month,—
 Let me not think on't;—Frailty, thy name is
 woman!—

A little month; or ere those shoes were old,
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears:—why she, even she,—
 O heaven! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
 Would have mourn'd longer,—marry'd with my
 uncle,

My father's brother; but no more like my father,
 Than I to Hercules: Within a month;
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
 Had left the flushing in her gauled eyes,
 She marry'd.—O most wicked speed, to post
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
 It is not, nor it cannot come to, good:
 But break, my heart; for I must hold my tongue!

scical reading, copied from the players in some of the modern editions, for want of understanding the poet, whose text is corrupt in the old impressions: all of which that I have had the fortune to see, concur in reading;

— *So loving to my mother,
 That he might not betwene the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly.*

Beteene is a corruption without doubt, but not so inveterate a one, but that, by the change of a single letter, and the separation of two words mistakenly jumbled together, I am verily persuaded, I have retrieved the poet's reading—*That he might not let e'en the winds of heaven, &c.* THEOBALD.

So, in the *Enterlude of the Lyfe and Repentaunce of Marie Magdalaine, &c.* by Lewis Wager, 1567:

“ But evermore they were unto me very tender,
 “ They would not suffer the wynde on me to blowe.”

STEEVENS.

So again, in Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1603:

“ — she had a lord,
 “ Jealous that air should ravish her chaste looks.” MALONE.

Enter

Enter Horatio, Bernardo, and Marcellus.

Hor. Hail to your lordship!

Ham. I am glad to see you well:

Horatio, — or I do forget myself?

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant
ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend; I'll change that name
with you ³.

And ⁴ what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio? —
Marcellus?

Mar. My good lord, —

Ham. I am very glad to see you; ⁵ good even, sir. —
But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so;
Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,
To make it truster of your own report
Against yourself: I know, you are no truant.
But what is your affair in Elsinour?

We'll teach you to drink deep, ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-
student;

I think, it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

³ — *I'll change that name—*] I'll be your servant, you shall be my friend. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *what make you—*] A familiar phrase for *what are you doing*. JOHNSON.

⁵ — *good even, sir.*] So the copies. Sir Th. Hanmer and Dr. Warburton put it, *good morning*. The alteration is of no importance, but all licence is dangerous. There is no need of any change. Between the first and eighth scene of this act it is apparent, that a natural day must pass, and how much of it is already over, there is nothing that can determine. The king has held a council. It may now as well be *evening* as *morning*. JOHNSON.

Ham.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral bak'd meats⁶

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
 'Would I had met my 7 dearest foe in heaven,
 Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!——
 My father,—Methinks, I see my father.

Hor. O where, my lord?

Ham. In my mind's eye⁸, Horatio.

Hor.

⁶ — *the funeral bak'd meats*] It was anciently the general custom to give a cold entertainment to mourners at a funeral. In distant counties this practice is continued among the yeomanry. See *The Tragique Historie of the Faire Valeria of London*, 1558. "His corpes was with funerall pompe conveyed to the church, and there solemnly entred, nothing omitted which necessitie or custom could claime; a sermon, a banquet, and like observations." Again, in the old romance of *Syr Degore*, bl. l. no date.

"A great feaste would he holde

"Upon his queenes mornyng day

"That was buryed in an abbey." COLLINS.

⁷ *Dearest*, for *deest*, most dreadful, most dangerous. JOHNSON. *Dearest* is *most immediate, consequential, important*. So, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

"— a ring that I must use

"In *dear* employment."

Again, in B. and Fletcher's *Maid in the Mill*:

You meet your *dearest* enemy in love,

With all his hate about him.

Again, in *Timon*:

"—— In our *dear* peril."

Again, in *Twelfth Night*:

"Whom thou in terms so bloody and so *dear*

"Hast made thine enemies."

Again, in *K. Henry IV.* P. 1.

"—— Which art thy nearest and *dearest* enemy."

Again, in *Any Thing for a quiet Life*, 1662:

"He was my nearest and *dearest* enemy." STEEVENS.

⁸ *In my mind's eye*.] This expression occurs again in our author's *Rape of Lucrece*:

"—— himself behind

"Was left unseen, save to the *eye of mind*."

Ben Jonson has borrowed it in his Masque called *Love's Triumph through Callipolis*:

"As only by the *mind's eye* may be seen."

Hor. I saw him once, he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw! who?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father!

Hor. Season your admiration for a while
With an attent ear; 'till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Ham. For heaven's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead waste and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd. A figure like your father,
Arm'd at all points², exactly, cap-à-pé,
Appears before them, and, with solemn march,
Goes slow and stately by them: thrice he walk'd,
By their opprest and fear-surprized eyes,
Within his truncheon's length; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly³ with the act of fear,

Stand

Telemachus lamenting the absence of Ulysses, is represented in like manner:

² Ὀσσομένος πατήρ ἰσθλὸν ἐνὶ φρεσίν, — STEEVENS.

³ I shall not look upon his like again.] Mr. Holt proposes to read from Sir ——— Sainuel's emendation:

"Eye shall not look upon his like again;"

and thinks it is more in the true spirit of Shakespeare than the other. So, in *Stowe's Chronicle*, p. 746: "In the greatest pomp that ever eye behelde." Again, in *Sandys's Travels*, p. 150: "We went this day through the most pregnant and pleasant valley that ever eye beheld." STEEVENS.

¹ Season your admiration—] That is, *temper* it. JOHNSON.

² Arm'd at all points,] Thus the folio. The quartos — *armed at point*. STEEVENS.

³ — *with the act of fear,*] Shakespeare could never write so improperly as to call the *passion of fear*, the *act of fear*. Without doubt the true reading is,

— *with th' effect of fear.* WARBURTON.

Here

Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
 In dreadful secrecy impart they did ;
 And I with them, the third night, kept the watch :
 Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
 Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
 The apparition comes : I knew your father ;
 These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this ?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we
 watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it ?

Hor. My lord, I did ;

But answer made it none : yet once, methought,
 It lifted up its head, and did address
 Itself to motion, like as it would speak :
 But, even then, the morning cock crew loud ;
 And at the sound it shrunk in haste away,
 And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true ;
 And we did think it writ down in our duty,
 To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
 Hold you the watch to-night ?

All. We do, my lord.

Ham. Arm'd, say you ?

All. Arm'd, my lord.

Ham. From top to toe ?

Here is an affectation of subtilty without accuracy. *Fear* is every day considered as an *agent*. *Fear laid hold on him ; fear drove him away*. If it were proper to be rigorous in examining trifles, it might be replied, that Shakespear would write more erroneously, if he wrote by the direction of this critick ; they were not *disfilled*, whatever the word may mean, *by the effect of fear* ; for that *distillation* was itself the *effect* ; *fear* was the *cause*, the active cause, that *disfilled* them by that force of operation which we strictly call *act* involuntary, and *power* in involuntary agents, but popularly call *act* in both. But of this too much. JOHNSON.

The folio reads : — *hail'd*. STEEVENS.

All. My lord, from head to foot.

Ham. Then saw you not his face.

Hor. O, yes, my lord; he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, 'look'd he frowningly?

Hor. A countenance more

In sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale, or red?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would, I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amaz'd you.

Ham. Very like,

Very like: Stay'd it long?

Hor. While one with moderate haste

Might tell a hundred.

Both. Longer, longer.

Hor. Not when I saw it.

Ham. His beard was grizzl'd? no?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,

A fable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night;

Perchance, 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant, it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,

I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape,

And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,

If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,

* Let it be tenable in your silence still;

And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,

Give it an understanding, but no tongue;

I will requite your loves: So, fare you well:

* *Let it be treble in your silence still:]* If *treble* be right, in propriety it should be read,

Let it be treble in your silence now:

But the old quarto reads,

Let it be TENABLE in your silence still.

And this is right. WARBURTON.

Upon

Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you : Farewel.

[*Exeunt.*

My father's spirit in arms ! all is not well ;
I doubt some foul play : 'would, the night were
come !

'Till then fit still, my soul : Foul deeds will rise,
(Though all the earth o'erwhelm them) to men's eyes.

[*Exit.*

S C E N E III.

An apartment in Polonius' house.

Enter Laertes, and Ophelia.

Laer. My necessaries are embark'd ; farewel :
And, sister, as the winds give benefit,
And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
But let me hear from you.

Oph. Do you doubt that ?

Laer. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour,
Hold it a fashion, and a toy in blood ;
A violet in the youth of primy nature,
Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
^s The perfume and suppliance of a minute ;
No more.

^s *The perfume, and suppliance of a minute:] Thus the quarto:
the folio has it,*

———— Sweet, not lasting,

The suppliance of a minute.

It is plain that *perfume* is necessary to exemplify the idea of *sweet, not lasting*. With the word *suppliance* I am not satisfied, and yet dare hardly offer what I imagine to be right. I suspect that *sofiance*, or some such word, formed from the Italian, was then used for the act of fumigating with sweet scents. JOHNSON.

The perfume, and *suppliance* of a minute ; i. e. what is supplied to us for a minute. The idea seems to be taken from the short duration of vegetable perfumes. STEEVENS.

Oph. No more but so?

Laer. Think it no more:

For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
 In thews⁶, and bulk; but, as this temple waxes,
 The inward service of the mind and soul
 Grows wide withal. Perhaps, he loves you now;
 7 And now no foil, nor cautel, doth besmirch
 The virtue of his will: but, you must fear,
 His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own;
 For he himself is subject to his birth:
 He may not, as unvalued persons do,
 Carve for himself; for on his choice depends
 8 The safety and the health of the whole state;
 And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body,

⁶ *In thews,*] i. e. in sinews, muscular strength. STEEVENS.

⁷ *And now no foil, nor cautel,*—] From *cautela*, which signifies only a *prudent foresight* or caution; but, passing through French hands, it lost its innocence, and now signifies *fraud, deceit*. And so he uses the adjective in *Julius Caesar*:

Swear priests and cowards, and men cautelous,

But I believe Shakespear wrote,

And now no foil of cautel—

which the following words confirm:

—— doth besmirch

The virtue of his will:—

For by *virtue* is meant the *simplicity* of his will, not *virtuous will*: and both this and *besmerch* refer only to *foil*, and to the foil of craft and insincerity. WARBURTON.

So, in the second part of Greene's *Art of Cony-catching*, 1592: "— and their subtil *cautels* to amend the statute." To amend the statute was the cant phrase for evading the law. STEEVENS.

Virtue seems here to comprise both *excellence* and *power*, and may be explained the *pure effect*. JOHNSON

⁸ *The sanctity and the health of the whole state;*] What has the *sanctity* of the state to do with the prince's disproportioned marriage? We should read with the old quarto *safety*. WARBURTON.

Hanmer reads very rightly, *sanity*. *Sanctity* is elsewhere printed for *sanity*, in the old edition of this play. JOHNSON.

Sanity and *health* may have the same meaning. I therefore read with all the quartos,

The safety and the health, &c. STEEVENS.

Whereof

Whereof he is the head: Then if he says, he loves
you,

It fits your wisdom so far to believe it,
As he in his particular act and place
May give his saying deed; which is no further,
Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
If with too credent ear you list his songs;
Or lose your heart; or your chaste treasure open
To his⁹ unmaster'd importunity.

Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister;
And¹ keep you in the rear of your affection,
Out of the shot and danger of desire.

The chariest maid² is prodigal enough,
If she unmask her beauty to the moon:
Virtue itself scapes not calumnious strokes:
The canker galls the infants of the spring,
Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd;
And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
Contagious blastments are most imminent.

Be wary then: best safety lies in fear;
Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Oph. I shall the effect of this good lesson keep,
As watchman to my heart: But, good my brother,
Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
Shew me the steep and thorny way to heaven;
³ Whilst, like a puff and reckless libertine,

Himself

⁹ — unmaster'd—] i. e. licentious. JOHNSON.

¹ — keep within the rear, &c.] The: is. do not advance so far as your affection would lead you. JOHNSON.

² The chariest maid] *Chary* is cautious. So, in Greene's *Never too Late*, 1616: "Love requires not chastity, but that her soldiers be *chary*." Again, "She liveth chafily enough, that liveth *charyly*." STEEVENS.

³ Whilst, like a puff and careless libertine,] This reading gives us a sense to this effect, Do not you be *like* an ungracious preacher, who is *like* a careless libertine." And there we find, that he who is so *like* a careless libertine, is the careless libertine himself. This could not come from Shakespeare. The old quarto reads,

Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own read.

Laer. O, fear me not.

I stay too long;—But here my father comes.

Enter Polonius.

A double blessing is a double grace;
Occasion smiles upon a second leave.

Pol. Yet here, Laertes! aboard, aboard, for
shame;

Whiles a puff and reckless libertine,
which directs us to the right reading,

Whilst he, a puff and reckless libertine.

The first impression of these plays being taken from the play-house copies, and those, for the better direction of the actors, being written as they were pronounced, these circumstances have occasioned innumerable errors. So *a* for *be* every where.

———— *'a was a goodly king,*

'A was a man take him for all in all.

———— *I warn't it will,*

for *I warrant.* This should be well attended to in correcting Shakespeare. WARBURTON.

The emendation is not amiss, but the reason for it is very inconclusive: we use the same mode of speaking on many occasions. When I say of one, *he squanders like a spendthrift,* of another, *he robbed me like a thief,* the phrase produces no ambiguity; it is understood that the one is a *spendthrift,* and the other a *thief.* JOHNSON.

⁴ — recks not his own read.] That is, heeds not his own lessons. POPE.

So, in *Hycke Scorners*;

“ — I reck not a feder.”

Ben Jonson uses the word *reed* in his *Catiline*:

“ So that thou couldst not move

“ Against a public reed.”

Again, in Sir Tho. North's translation of Plutarch: “ — Dispatch, I read you, for your enterprize is betray'd.” Again, in the old Morality of *Hycke Scorners*:

“ And of thy living, I reed amend thee.”

So the *Old Proverb* in the *Two Angry Women of Abington*, 1599:

“ Take heed, is a good reed.”

Again, in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602, book 5. chap. 27:

“ — and to his reed already bent.” STEEVENS.

The wind sits in the ^s shoulder of your sail,
 And you are staid for: There,—my blessings with
 you; [*Laying his hand on Laertes' head.*
 And these few precepts in thy memory
 Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
 Nor any unproportion'd thought his act.
 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar.
 The friends thou hast, and their adoption try'd,
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel;
 6 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
 Of each new-hatch'd unfledg'd comrade. Beware
 Of entrance to a quarrel; but, being in,
 Bear it that the opposer may beware of thee.
 Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice:
 Take each man's censure ⁷, but reserve thy judgment.
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
 But not expres'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy:
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man;
 And they in France, of the best rank and station,
 8 Are most select, and generous chief, in that.
 Neither a borrower, nor a lender be:
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend;
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.

⁵ — *the shoulder of your sail,*] This is a common sea phrase.
 STEEVENS.

⁶ *But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade.*] The literal sense
 is, *Do not make thy palm callous by shaking every man by the hand.*
 The figurative meaning may be, *Do not by promiscuous conversation
 make thy mind insensible to the difference of characters.* JOHNSON.

⁷ — *each man's censure,*] *Censure* is opinion. So, in *King
 Richard III*: — *To give your censures in this weighty business.*
 STEEVENS.

⁸ *Are most select and generous, chief in that.*] I think the whole
 design of the precept shews we should read,
Are most select, and generous chief, in that.

Chief is an *adjective* used *adverbially*, a practice common to our
 author. Chiefly generous. Yet it must be owned that the punc-
 tuation recommended is very stiff and harsh. STEEVENS.

This

This above all,—To thine ownself be true;
 9 And it must follow, as the night the day,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man.
 Farewel; 1 my blessing season this in thee!

Laer. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord,

9 *And it must follow, as the night the day.*] The sense here requires, that the similitude should give an image not of *two effects of different natures*, that follow one another alternately, but of a *cause and effect*, where the effect follows the cause by a *physical necessity*. For the assertion is, Be true to thyself, and then thou must *necessarily* be true to others. Truth to himself then was the *cause*, truth to others the *effect*. To illustrate this necessity, the speaker employs a similitude: but no similitude can illustrate it, but what presents an image of a *cause and effect*: and such a cause as that, where the effect follows by a *physical*, not a *moral* necessity: for if only, by a *moral* necessity, the thing *illustrating* would not be more certain than the thing *illustrated*; which would be a great absurdity. This being premised, let us see what the text says,

And it must follow, as the night the day.

In this we are so far from being presented with an *effect* following a *cause* by a physical necessity, that there is no cause at all: but only two different effects, proceeding from two different causes, and succeeding one another alternately. Shakespeare, therefore, without question wrote,

And it must follow, as the light the day.

As much as to say, Truth to thyself, and truth to others, are inseparable, the latter depending necessarily on the former as *light depends upon the day*; where it is to be observed, that *day* is used figuratively for the *sun*. The ignorance of which, I suppose, contributed to mislead the editors. WARBURTON.

And it must follow, as the night the day.

This note is very acute, but the common succession of night to day was, I believe, all that our author meant to make Polonius think of, on the present occasion.

So, in the 145th Sonnet of Shakespeare:

“That follow’d it as gentle day

“Doth follow night, &c.” STEEVENS.

1 — my blessing season this in thee!] *Season*, for *infuse*.

WARBURTON.

It is more than to *infuse*, it is to *infix* it in such a manner as that it never may wear out. JOHNSON.

So, in the mock tragedy represented before the king:

— who in want a hollow friend doth try,

Directly *seasons* him his enemy. STEEVENS.

Pol. 'The time invites you; go, your servants tend^s.

Laer. Farewel, Ophelia; and remember well
What I have said to you.

Opb. 'Tis in my memory lock'd,
And you + yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laer. Farewel. [Exit Laertes.]

Pol. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you?

Opb. So please you, something touching the lord
Hamlet.

Pol. Marry, well bethought:
'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late
Given private time to you; and you yourself
Have of your audience been most free and bounteous;
If it be so, (as so 'tis put on me,
And that in way of caution) I must tell you,
You do not understand yourself so clearly,
As it behoves my daughter, and your honour:
What is between you? give me up the truth.

Opb. He hath, my lord, of late made many
tenders
Of his affection to me,

* *The time invites you*.—] This reading is as old as the first folio; however, I suspect it to have been substituted by the players, who did not understand the term which possesses the elder quartos:

The time invests you;

i. e. besieges, presses upon you on every side. To *invest a town*, is the military phrase from which our author borrowed his metaphor. THEOBALD.

Either reading may serve. Macbeth says,

"I go, and it is done, the bell *invites* me." STEEVENS.

3 — *your servants tend*.] i. e. your servants are waiting for you. JOHNSON.

4 — *yourself shall keep the key of it*.] That is, By thinking on you, I shall think on your lessons. JOHNSON.

The meaning is, that your counsels are as sure of remaining locked up in my memory, as if you yourself carried the key of it. So, in *Northward Ho*, by Decker and Webster, 1607: "You shall close it up like treasure of your own, and yourself shall keep the key of it." STEEVENS.

Pol.

Pol. Affection? puh! you speak like a green girl,
 5 Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them?

Oph. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Pol. Marry, I'll teach you: think yourself a baby;
 That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay,
 Which are not sterling. 6 Tender yourself more
 dearly;

Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase)
 Wronging it thus, you'll tender me a fool.

Oph. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love,
 In honourable fashion.

5 Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.] *Unsifted*, for *untried*. *Untried* signifies either not *tempted*, or not *refined*; *unsifted*, signifies the latter only, though the sense requires the former. WARBURTON.

6 — Tender yourself more dearly;

Or (not to crack the wind of the poor phrase)

Wronging it thus, you'll tender me a fool.] The parenthesis is closed at the wrong place; and we must have likewise a slight correction in the last verse. Polonius is racking and playing on the word *tender*, till he thinks proper to correct himself for the licence; and then he would say—not farther to crack the wind of the phrase, by *twisting* and *contorting* it, as I have done.

WARBURTON.

I believe the word *wronging* has reference, not to the phrase, but to Ophelia; if you go on *wronging it thus*, that is, *if you continue to go on thus wrong*. This is a mode of speaking perhaps not very grammatical, but very common; nor have the best writers refused it.

To sinner it or saint it,
 is in Pope. And Rowe,

— Thus to coy it,

To one who knows you too.

The folio has it,

— roaming it thus,—

That is, *letting yourself loose to such improper liberty*. But *wronging* seems to be more proper. JOHNSON.

“See you do not coy it,” is in Massinger's *New way to pay old Debts*. Mr. Rowe had read this author, and borrowed from him the plan of the *Fair Penitent*, though without the most trivial acknowledgement. STEEVENS.

Pol.

Pol. Ay, ⁷ fashion you may call it; go to, go to.

Opb. And hath given countenance to his speech,
my lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Pol. Ay, ⁸ springes to catch woodcocks. I do
know,

When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul

Lends the tongue vows: These blazes, daughter,

Giving more light than heat,—extinct in both,

Even in their promise, as it is a making,—

You must not take for fire. From this time,

Be somewhat scancer of your maiden presence;

⁹ Set your entreatments at a higher rate,

Than a command to parley. For lord Hamlet,

Believe so much in him, That he is young;

And with a ¹ larger tether may he walk,

Than may be given you: In few, Ophelia,

Do not believe his vows: for they are brokers;

Not of that dye which their investments shew,

But meer implorators of unholy suits,

² Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,

The

⁷ — fashion you may call it:—] She uses *fashion* for *manner*, and he for a *transient practice*. JOHNSON.

⁸ — *springes to catch woodcocks.*] A proverbial saying.

“Every woman has a *springe to catch a woodcock.*”

STEEVENS.

⁹ *Set your entreatments*] *Entreatments* here means *company, conversation*, from the French *entrétiou*. JOHNSON.

¹ — *larger tether*—] A string to tie horses. POPE.

Tether is that string by which an animal, set to graze in grounds uninclosed, is confined within the proper limits. JOHNSON.

So, in Greene's *Card of Fancy*, 1601: “To tye the ape and the bear in one *tetter*.” *Tetter* is a string by which any animal is fastened, whether for the sake of feeding or the air. STEEVENS.

² *Breathing like sanctified and pious bonds,*] On which the editor Mr. Theobald remarks, *Tho' all the editions have swallowed this reading implicitly, it is certainly corrupt; and I have been surprized how men of genius and learning could let it pass without some suspicion. What ideas can we frame to ourselves of a breathing bond, or of its being sanctified and pious, &c.?* But he was too hasty in *framing ideas*

before

The better to beguile. This is for all;—
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth;
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
 As to give words or talk with the lord Hamlet.
 Look to't, I charge you; come your ways.

Opb. I shall obey, my lord. [Exit.

S C E N E IV.

The Platform.

Enter Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus.

Ham. The air bites shrewdly; it is very cold.

Hor. It is a nipping and an eager air.

Ham. What hour now?

Hor. I think, it lacks of twelve.

Mar. No, it is struck.

Hor. Indeed? I heard it not: it then draws near
 the season,

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[Noise of musick within.]

What does this mean, my lord?

Ham.

before he understood those already framed by the poet, and expressed in very plain words. Do not believe (says Polonius to his daughter) Hamlet's amorous vows made *to you*; which pretend religion in them (*the better to beguile*) like those sanctified and pious vows [*or bonds*] made *to heaven*. And why should not this pass without suspicion? WARBURTON.

Theobald for *bonds* substitutes *barws*. JOHNSON.

³ *I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,*

Have you so slander any moment's leisure,] The humour of this is fine. The speaker's character is all affectation. At last he says he will *speack plain*, and yet cannot for his life; his plain speech of *slandering a moment's leisure* being of the like fustian stuff with the rest. WARBURTON.

Here is another *fine* passage, of which I take the beauty to be only imaginary. Polonius says, *in plain terms*, that is, not in language

Ham. The king doth wake to-night, and takes his rouse ⁴,
Keeps wassel, ⁵ and ⁶ the swaggering up-spring reels;
And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down,
The kettle-drum, and trumpet, thus bray out
The triumph of his pledge.

Hor. Is it a custom?

Ham. Ay, marry, is't:

But, to my mind,—though I am native here,
And to the manner born,—it is a custom
More honour'd in the breach, than the observance.
⁷ This heavy-headed revel, east and west,

Makes

guage less elevated or embellished than before, but in terms that cannot be misunderstood: I would not have you so disgrace your most idle moments, as not to find better employment for them than Lord Hamlet's conversation. JOHNSON.

⁴ — takes his rouse,] A rouse is a large dose of liquor, a debauch. So, in *Othello*:

“ — they have given me a rouse already.”

It should seem from the following passage in Decker's *Gals Harbink*, 1609, that the word *rouse* was of Danish extraction. “Teach me, thou sovereigne skinker, how to take the German's uply freeze, the *Danish rousa*, the Switzer's sloop of rhenish, &c.” STEEVENS.

⁵ Keeps wassel,] See *Macbeth*, act 1. Again, in the *Hog* *ban* *loft his Pearl*, 1614:

“ By Croesus name and by his castle,

“ Where winter nights he keepeth *wassel*.” STEEVENS.

⁶ — the swaggering up-spring—] The blustering upstart.

JOHNSON.

It appears from the following passage in *Aphonsus Emperor of Germany*, by Chapman, that the *up-spring* was a German dance:

“ We Germans have no changes in our dances;

“ An *almain* and an *up-spring*, that is all.”

Spring was anciently the name of a tune, so in B. and Fletcher's *Prophesy*:

“ — we will meet him,

“ And strike him such new *spring*—”

The word is used by G. Douglas in his translation of Virgil, and, I think, by Chaucer. Again, in an old Scots proverb.—“ Another would play a *spring* ere you tune your pipes.” STEEVENS.

⁷ This heavy-headed revel, east and west,] i. e. This revelling that observes no hours, but continues from morning to night, &c. WARBURTON.

I should

Makes us traduc'd, and tax'd of other nations :
 They clepe us, drunkards, and with swinish phrase
 Soil our addition; and, indeed, it takes
 From our achievements, though perform'd at height;
⁸ The pith and marrow of our attribute.
 So, oft it chances in particular men,
 That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,
 As, in their birth, (wherein they are not guilty,
 Since nature cannot chuse his origin)
 By the o'er-growth of some ⁹ complexion,
 Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason ;
 Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
 The form of plausible manners ;—that these men,—
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect ;
 Being nature's livery, or ¹ fortune's star,—
 Their virtues else (be they as pure as grace,
² As infinite as man may undergo)
 Shall in the general censure take corruption
 From that particular fault : ³ The dram of base
 Doth

I should not have suspected this passage of ambiguity or obscurity, had I not found my opinion of it differing from that of the learned critic. I construe it thus, *This heavy-headed revel makes us traduced east and west, and taxed of other nations.* JOHNSON.

⁸ *The pith and marrow of our attribute.*] The best and most valuable part of the praise that would be otherwise attributed to us. JOHNSON.

⁹ —complexion,] *i. e.* humour; as sanguine, melancholy, phlegmatic, &c. WAREBURTON.

¹ —fortune's star,] In the old quarto of 1637, it is
 ————fortune's star:

But I think *scar* is proper. JOHNSON.

All the quartos read—*star*. STEEVENS.

² *As infinite as man may undergo,*] As large as can be accumulated upon man, JOHNSON.

³ *The dram of ease*

Doth all the noble substance of a doubt,

To his own scandal.] I do not remember a passage throughout all our poet's works, more intricate and depraved in the text, of less meaning to outward appearance, or more likely to baffle the attempts of criticism in its aid. It is certain; there is
 neither

Doth all the noble substance of worth out,
To his own scandal.

Enter Ghost.

Hor. Look, my lord, it comes!

Ham. Angels and ministers of grace defend us!—
Be

neither sense nor grammar as it now stands: yet with a slight alteration, I'll endeavour to cure those defects, and give a sentiment too, that shall make the poet's thought close nobly. The dram of *base* (as I have corrected the text) means the least alloy of baseness or vice. It is very frequent with our poet to use the *adjective* of *quality* instead of the substantive signifying the thing. Besides, I have observed, that elsewhere, speaking of *worth*, he delights to consider it as a quality that adds *weight* to a person, and connects the word with that idea. THEOBALD.

⁴ *Doth all the noble substance of worth out,*] Various conjectures have been employed about this passage. The author of *The Revival* would read,

“Doth all the noble substance *oft* eat out.”

Or,

“Doth all the noble substance *soil with doubt.*”

Mr. Holt reads,

“Doth all the noble substance *oft* adopt.”

And Dr. Johnson thinks, that Theobald's reading may stand.

I would read,

Doth all the noble substance (i. e. the sum of good qualities) *oft do out.* Perhaps we should say, *To its own scandal.* *His* and *its* are perpetually confounded in the old copies.

As I understand the passage, there is little difficulty in it. This is one of the low colloquial phrases which at present are neither employed in writing, nor perhaps are reconcilable to the propriety of language. *To do a thing out*, is *to extinguish it*, or *to efface or obliterate any thing painted or written.*

In the first of these significations it is used by Drayton, in the 5th Canto of his *Barons' Wars*:

“Was ta'en in battle, and his eyes *out-dew.*” STEEVENS.

⁵ *Angels and ministers of grace defend us!*] Hamlet's speech to the apparition of his father seems to me to consist of three parts. When first he sees the spectre, he fortifies himself with an invocation:

Angels and ministers of grace defend us!

As the spectre approaches, he deliberates with himself, and determines, that whatever it be he will venture to address it.

Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd⁶,
 Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
 Be thy intents wicked, or charitable,
 Thou com'st in such a⁷ questionable shape,
 That I will speak to thee; I'll call thee, Hamlet,
 King, father, royal Dane: O, answer me!
 Let me not burst in ignorance! but⁸ tell,

Why

*Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd,
 Bring with thee airs from heaven, or blasts from hell,
 Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
 Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
 That I will speak to thee. I'll call thee, &c.*

This he says while his father is advancing; he then, as he had determined, speaks to him, and calls him—*Hamlet, King, Father, Royal Dane: oh! answer me.* JOHNSON.

⁶ *Be thou a spirit of health, or goblin damn'd, &c.]* So in *Acolastus his After-wit*, 1600:

“Art thou a god, a man, or else a ghost?

“Com'st thou from heaven, where bliss and solace dwell?

“Or from the airie cold-engending coast?

“Or from the darksome dungeon-hold of hell?”

The first known edition of this play is in 1604. STEEVENS.

⁷ — *questionable shape,*] By *questionable* is meant provoking question. HANMER.

So in *Macbeth*:

Live you, or are you aught

That man may question? JOHNSON.

Questionable, I believe means only *propitious to conversation, easy and willing to be conversed with*. So in *As you like it*, “An *unquestionable* spirit, which you have not.” *Unquestionable* in this last instance certainly signifies *unwilling to be talked to*. STEEVENS.

Questionable, I believe, only means *capable of being conversed with*. To *question*, certainly in our author's time signified *to converse*. So, in his *Tarquin and Lucrece*, 1593:

“For after supper long he *questioned*
 With modest Lucrece—”

Again, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

“Out of our *question* wipe him.” MALONE.

⁸ ——— tell,

Why thy canoniz'd bones, bear'd in death,

Have burst their cearments?] Hamlet here speaks with wonder, that he who was dead should rise again and walk. But this, according to the vulgar superstition here followed, was no wonder. Their only wonder was, that one, who had the rites of sepulture performed

Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearfed in death,
 Have burft their cearments? why the fepulchre,
 Wherein

formed to him, fhould walk; the want of which was fuppofed to be the reafon of walking ghofts. Hamlet's wonder then fhould have been placed here: and fo Shakefpeare placed it, as we fhall fee prefently. For *hearfed* is ufed figuratively, to fignify *reposed*, therefore the place *where* fhould be defigned: but *death* being no place, but a *privation* only, *hearfed in death* is nonfense. We fhould read,

— tell,
 Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearfed in earth,
 Have burft their cearments?

It appears, for the two reafons given above, that *earth* is the true reading. It will further appear for thefe two other reafons. Firft, From the words, *canoniz'd bones*; by which is not meant (as one would imagine) a compliment for, *made holy* or *fainted*; but for *bones* to which the rites of fepulture have been performed; or which were buried according to the canon. For we are told he was murdered with all his fins fresh upon him, and therefore in no way to be fainted. But if this licentious ufe of the word *canoniz'd* be allowed, then *earth* muft be the true reading, for inhuming bodies was one of the effential parts of fepulchral rites. Secondly, From the words, *Have burft their cearments*, which imply the preceding mention of *inhuming*, but no mention is made of it in the common reading. This enabled the Oxford editor to improve upon the emendation; fo he reads,

Why thy bones bears'd in canonized earth.

I fuppofe for the fake of harmony, not of fense. For though the rites of fepulture *performed* canonizes the body *buried*; yet it does not canonize the earth in which it is laid, unlefs every funeral fervice be a new confecration. WARBURTON.

It were too long to examine this note period by period, though almoft every period feems to me to contain fomething reprehenfible. The critic, in his zeal for change, writes with fo little confideration, as to fay, that Hamlet cannot call his father *canonized*, becaufe *we are told he was murdered with all his fins fresh upon him*. He was not then told it, and had fo little the power of knowing it, that he was to be told it by an apparition. The long fucceffion of reafons upon reafons proves nothing, but what every reader discovers, that the king had been buried, which is implied by fo many adjuncts of burial, that the direct mention of *earth* is not neceffary. Hamlet, amazed at an apparition, which, though in all ages credited, has in all ages been confidered as the moft wonderful and moft dreadful operation of fupernatural agency, enquires of the fpectre, in the moft emphatic terms, why he

Wherein we saw thee quietly in-urn'd⁹,
 Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws,
 To cast thee up again? What may this mean,—
¹ That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
 Making night hideous; and ² we fools of nature
 So horribly ³ to shake our disposition,

breaks the order of nature, by returning from the dead; this he asks in a very confused circumlocution, confounding in his fright the soul and body. Why, says he, have *thy bones*, which with due ceremonies have been intombed *in death*, in the common state of departed mortals, *burst* the folds in which they were embalmed? Why has the tomb, in which we saw thee quietly laid, opened his mouth, that mouth which, by its weight and stability, seemed closed for ever? The whole sentence is this: *Why dost thou appear, whom we know to be dead?*

Had the change of the word removed any obscurity, or added any beauty, it might have been worth a struggle; but either reading leaves the sense the same.

If there be any asperity in this controversial note, it must be imputed to the contagion of peevishness, or some resentment of the incivility shewn to the Oxford editor, who is represented as supposing the ground *canonized* by a funeral, when he only meant to say, that the *body* was deposited in *holy ground*, in ground consecrated according to the *canon*. JOHNSON.

⁹ — *quietly in-urn'd.*] The quartos read *interr'd*. STEEVENS.

¹ *That thou, dead corse, again, in complete steel,*] It is probable that Shakespeare introduced his ghost in armour, that it might appear more solemn by such a discrimination from the other characters; though it was really the custom of the Danish kings to be buried in that manner. Vide *Olaus Wormius*, cap. 7.

“Struem regi nec vestibibus, nec odoribus cumulant, *sua cuique arma*, quorundam igni et equus adjicitur.”

“—— sed postquam magnanimus ille Danorum rex collem sibi magnitudinis conspicuæ extruxisset (cui post obitum regio diademate exornatum, *armis indutum*, inferendum esset “cadaver,” &c. STEEVENS.

² — *us* fools of nature] The expression is fine, as intimating we were only kept (as formerly, tools in a great family) to make sport for nature, who lay hid only to mock and laugh at us, for our vain searches into her mysteries. WARBURTON.

³ — *to shake our disposition*] *Disposition*, for *frame*. WARBURTON.

With

With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls?
 Say, why is this? wherefore? what should we do?

Hor. It beckons you to go away with it,
 As if it some impartment did desire
 To you alone.

Mar. Look, with what courteous action
 It waves you to a more removed ground:
 But do not go with it.

Hor. No, by no means.

Ham. It will not speak; then I will follow it.

Hor. Do not, my lord.

Ham. Why, what should be the fear?
 I do not set my life at a pin's fee⁴;
 And, for my soul, what can it do to that,
 Being a thing immortal as itself?
 It waves me forth again;—I'll follow it.

Hor. What, if it tempt you toward the flood, my
 lord?

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff,
 That beetles o'er his base into the sea?
 And there assume some other horrible form,
 Which might⁵ deprive your sovereignty of reason,
 And draw you into madness? think of it:
 [⁶ The very place⁷ puts toys of desperation,
 Without more motive, into every brain,
 That looks so many fathoms to the sea,
 And hears it roar beneath.]

Ham. It waves me still:—

⁴ —*pin's fee*:] The value of a pin. JOHNSON.

⁵ —*deprive* your sovereignty, &c.] Dr. Warburton would read *deprave*; but several proofs are given in the notes to *King Lear* of Shakespeare's use of the word *deprive*, which is the true reading. STEEVENS.

I believe *deprive* in this place signifies simply to *take away*.
 JOHNSON.

⁶ *The very place*] The four following lines added from the first edition. POPE.

⁷ —*puts toys of desperation,*] *Toys*, for *rubins*. WARBURTON.

Go on, I'll follow thee.

Mar. You shall not go, my lord.

Ham. Hold off your hands.

Hor. Be rul'd, you shall not go.

Ham. My fate cries out,

And makes each petty artery in this body

As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve. —

Still am I call'd—unhand me, gentlemen; —

[*Breaking from them.*]

By heaven, I'll make a ghost of him⁸ that lets me: —

I say, away: — Go on, — I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost, and Hamlet.*]

Hor. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Mar. Let's follow; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Hor. Have after: — To what issue will this come?

Mar. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

Hor. Heaven will direct it⁹.

Mar. Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E V.

A more remote Part of the Platform.

Re-enter Ghost, and Hamlet.

Ham. Whither wilt thou lead me? speak, I'll go
no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Ham. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Ham. Alas, poor ghost!

⁸ —that lets me:] To let among our old authors signifies to prevent, to hinder. STEEVENS.

⁹ Heaven will direct it:] Perhaps it may be more apposite to read "Heaven will detect it." FARMER.

Ghost.

Gboft. Pity me not, but lend thy ferious hearing
To what I fhall unfold.

Ham. Speak, I am bound to hear.

Gboft. So art thou to revenge, when thou fhalt
hear.

Ham. What?

Gboft. I am thy father's fpirit;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night;
And, for the day, ¹ confin'd to faft in fires,
'Till the foul crimes, done in my days of nature,
² Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To

¹ — *confin'd to faft in fires,*] We fhould read,
— *too faft in fires.*

i. e. very clofely confined. The particle *too* is ufed frequently for the fuperlative *moft*, or *very*. WAREBURTON.

I am rather inclined to read, *confin'd to lafting fires*, to fires *unremitted* and *unconfumed*. The change is flight. JOHNSON.

*Doom'd for a certain time to walk the night,
And for the day confin'd to faft in fires.*

Chaucer has a fimilar paffage with regard to the punifhments of hell. *Parfon's Tale*, p. 193. Mr. Urry's edition: "And moreover the mife of hell, fhall be in defeaute of mete and drinke."
SMITH.

Nafh, in his *Pierce Pennilefs's Supplication to the Devil*, 1595, has the fame idea: "Whether it be a place of horror, ftench, and darknefs, where men *fee meat, but can get none*, and are ever thirfty, &c." Before I had read the *Perfon's Tale* of Chaucer, I fuppofed that he meant rather to drop a ftroke of fatire on facerdotal luxury, than to give a ferious account of the place of future torment. Chaucer, however, is as grave as Shakefpeare. So likewife at the conclufion of an ancient pamphlet called *The Wyll of the Deevyll*, bl. l. no date:

"Thou fhalt lye in froft and fire

"With fickneffe and hunger; &c." STEEVENS.

² *Are burnt and purg'd away.*—] Gawin Douglas really changes the Platonic hell into the "punytion of Saulis in purgatory:" and it is obfervable, that when the ghofit informs Hamlet of his doom there,

"Till the foul crimes done in his days of nature

"Are burnt and purg'd away,—

the expreffion is very fimiliar to the bifhop's: I will give you his verfion as concifely as I can; "It is a needful thyng to fuffer

To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
 I could a tale unfold, whose lightest word
 Would harrow up thy soul; freeze thy young blood;
 Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres;
 Thy knotty and combined locks to part,
 And each particular hair to stand on end
 Like quills upon the fretful porcupine³:
 But this eternal blazon must not be
 To ears of flesh and blood:—Lift, lift, O lift!—
 If thou did'st ever thy dear father love,——

Ham. O heaven!

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder⁴.

Ham. Murder?

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is;
 But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

“ panis and torment—Sum in the wyndis, sum under the watter,
 “ and in the fire uthir sum: thus the mony vices—

“ Contrakkit in the corpis be *done away*

“ *And purgit.*”——

Sixte Book of Eneados, fol. p. 191.

FARMER.

³ — *fretful porcupine*:] The quartos read *fearful* porcupine. Either may serve. This animal is at once irascible and timid. The same image occurs in the *Romant of the Rose*, where *Chaucer* is describing the personage of *danger*:

“ Like sharpe urchons his *beere* was grow.”

An *urchin* is a hedge-hog. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.*] As a proof that this play was written before 1597, of which the contrary has been asserted by Mr. Holt in Dr. Johnson's appendix, I must borrow, as usual, from Dr. Farmer. “Shakespeare is said to have been no extraordinary actor; and that the top of his performance was the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*. Yet this *chef d'oeuvre* did not please: I will give you an original stroke at it. Dr. Lodge published in the year 1596 a pamphlet called *Wit's Miserie, or the World's Madnes*, discovering the incarnate devils of the age, quarto. One of these devils is, *Hate virtuc, or sorrow for another man's good successe*, who, says the doctor, is a *foule lubber*, and looks as pale as the vizard of the *Ghost*, which cried so miserably at the theatre, *Hamlet revenge.*” STEEVENS.

Ham.

Ham. Haste me to know it; that I, with wings as swift

5 As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt;

6 And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed
7 That rots itself in ease on Lethe's wharf,
Would'st thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear:
'Tis given out, that, sleeping in my orchard,
A serpent stung me; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd: but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent, that did sting thy father's life,
Now wears his crown.

5 *As meditation or the thoughts of love,]* This similitude is extremely beautiful. The word *meditation* is consecrated, by the *mystics*, to signify that stretch and flight of mind which aspires to the enjoyment of the supreme good. So that Hamlet, considering with what to compare the swiftness of his revenge, chooses two of the most rapid things in nature, the ardency of divine and human passion, in an *enthusiast* and a *lover*. WARBURTON.

The comment on the word *meditation* is so ingenious, that I hope it is just. JOHNSON.

6 *And duller should'st thou be than the fat weed*

That rots itself in ease on Lethe's wharf, &c.] Shakespeare, apparently through ignorance, makes Roman Catholics of these Pagan Danes; and here gives a description of purgatory; but yet mixes it with the Pagan fable of Lethe's wharf. Whether he did it to insinuate to the zealous Protestants of his time, that the Pagan and Popish purgatory stood both upon the same footing of credibility, or whether it was by the same kind of licentious inadvertence that Michael Angelo brought Charon's bark into his picture of the Last Judgment, is not easy to decide. WARBURTON.

7 *That rots itself, &c.]* The quarto reads—That *rots* itself. Mr. POPE follows it. OTWAY has the same thought:

“ — like a coarse and useless dunghill weed

“ Fix'd to one spot, and rot just as I grow.”

The superiority of the reading of the folio is to me apparent: to be in a crescent state (i. e. to *root* itself) affords an idea of activity; to *rot* better suits with the dullness and inaction to which the Ghost refers. Nevertheless, the accusative case (*itself*) may seem to demand the verb *rots*. STEEVENS.

Ham.

Ham. O, my prophetick soul! my uncle?

Ghost. Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traiterous gifts,
(O wicked wit, and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce!) won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen:
O, Hamlet, what a falling-off was there!
From me, whose love was of that dignity,
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage; and to decline
Upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine!

But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven;
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.

But, soft! methinks, I scent the morning air——
Brief let me be:—Sleeping within mine orchard⁸,
My custom always of the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,

And

⁸ —mine orchard,] Orchard for garden. So, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

“The orchard walls are high, and hard to climb.”

STEEVENS.

⁹ With juice of cursed hebenon in a vial,] The word here used was more probably designed by a *metathesis*, either of the poet or transcriber, for *hebenon*, that is, *henbane*; of which the most common kind (*hyoscyamus niger*) is certainly *narcotic*, and perhaps, if taken in a considerable quantity, might prove poisonous. Galen calls it cold in the third degree; by which in this, as well as *opium*, he seems not to mean an actual coldness, but the power it has of benumbing the faculties. Dioscorides ascribes to it the property of producing madness (*νοσηύκιμος μανιώδης*). These qualities have been confirmed by several cases related in modern observations. In Wepfer we have a good account of the various effects of this root upon most of the members of a *convent* in Germany, who eat of it for supper by mistake, mixed with *suc-cory*;

And in the porches of mine ears did pour
 The leperous distilment; whose effect
 Holds such an enmity with blood of man,
 That, swift as quick-silver, it courses through
 The natural gates and alleys of the body;
 And, with a sudden vigour, it doth posset
 And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
 The thin and wholesome blood: so did it mine;
 And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
 Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
 All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
 Of life, of crown, of queen, ¹ at once dispatch'd:

² Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,

³ Unhousell'd ⁴ disappointed, ⁵ unaneal'd;

No

cory;—heat in the throat, giddiness, dimness of sight, and delirium. *Cicut. Aquatic.* c. 18. GRAY.

So in Drayton's *Barons' Wars*, p. 51.

“The pois'ning *henbane*, and the mandrake drad.”

Again, in the Philosopher's 4th Satire of Mars, by Robert Anton, 1616:

“The poison'd *Henbane* whose cold juice doth kill.”

Again, in Glapthorne's *Hollander*, 1640:

“—these are tears

“Such as distill from *Herbane* full of poison.”

Again, in the *Noble Soldier*, 1634:

“*Henbane* and poppy, and that magical weed, &c.”

In *Heywood's Jew of Malta*, 1633, the word is written in a different manner,

“—the blood of Hydra, Lerna's bane,

“The juice of *Hebon*, and Cocytus' breath.” STEEVENS.

¹ —at once dispatch'd:] *Dispatch'd*, for *bereft*. WARBURTON.

² *Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin, &c.*] The very words of this part of the speech are taken (as I have been informed by a gentleman of undoubted veracity) from an old *Legend of Saints*, where a man, who was accidentally drowned, is introduced as making the same complaint. STEEVENS.

³ *Unhousell'd*:] Without the sacrament being taken. POPE.

⁴ *Unanoointed*:] Without extreme unction. POPE.

⁵ *Unanel'd*:] No knell rung. POPE.

In other editions,

Unbouzzled, unanoointed, unaneal'd:

The ghost, having recounted the process of his murder, proceeds

No reckoning made, but sent to my account
With all my imperfections on my head :

O,

to exaggerate the inhumanity and unnaturalness of the fact, from the circumstances in which he was surprized. But these, I find, have been stumbling blocks to our editors; and therefore I must amend and explain these three compound adjectives in their order. Instead of *unhouzzel'd*, we must restore, *unhoufel'd*, i. e. *without the sacrament taken*; from the old Saxon word for the sacrament, *houfel*. In the next place, *unanointed* is a sophistication of the text: the old copies concur in reading, *disappointed*. I correct,

Unhoufel'd, unappointed,——

i. e. no confession of sins made, no reconciliation to heaven, no appointment of penance by the church. *Unaneal'd* I agree to be the poet's genuine word; but I must take the liberty to dispute Mr. Pope's explication of it, *viz.* no *knell* rung. The adjective formed from *knell*, must have been *unknell'd*, or *unknoll'd*. There is no rule in orthography for sinking the *k* in the deflection of any verb or compound formed from *knell*, and melting it into a vowel. What sense does *unaneal'd* then bear? Skinner, in his Lexicon of old and obsolete English terms, tells us, that *aneal'd* is *unctus*; from the Teutonic preposition *an*, and *ole*, i. e. *oil*: so that *unaneal'd* must consequently signify, *unanointed*, not having the *extreme unction*. The poet's reading and explication being ascertained, he very finely makes his *ghost* complain of these four dreadful hardships: that he had been dispatched out of life without receiving the *hosie*, or sacrament; without being *reconci'd* to heaven and *absolv'd*; without the benefit of *extreme unction*; or without so much as a *confession* made of his sins. The having no *knell* rung, I think, is not a point of equal consequence to any of these; especially, if we consider, that the Romish church admits the efficacy of *praying* for the *dead*. THEOBALD.

This is a very difficult line. I think Theobald's objection to the sense of *unaneal'd*, for *notified by the bell*, must be owned to be very strong. I have not yet by my enquiry satisfied myself. Hanmer's explication of *unaneal'd* by *unprepar'd*, because to *anneal* metals, is to *prepare* them in manufacture, is too general and vague; there is no resemblance between any funeral ceremony and the practice of *annealing* metals.

Disappointed is the same as *unappointed*, and may be properly explained *unprepared*; a man well furnished with things necessary for any enterprize, was said to be well *appointed*. JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson's explanation of the word *disappointed* may be countenanced by the advice which Isabel'a gives to her brother in *Measure for Measure*.

“ Therefore your best *appointments* make with speed.”

The

6 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!
If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not;

Let

The hope of gaining a worthless alliteration is all that can tempt an editor to prefer *unappointed* or *unanointed* to *disappointed*. MILTON has the following lines, consisting of three words each, in which this childish practice is constantly observed.

Unrespited, unpitied, unreprie'd. Par. Lost. B. 2.

—*unmov'd,*

Unshaken, uneduc'd, unterrified. B. 5.

Unbumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd. Par. Reg. B. 3.

Again, in *Daniel's Civil Wars*, &c. B. 2.

"*Uncourted, unrespected, unobey'd.*"

Again, in *Spenser's Faery Queen*, B. 2. C. 10.

"*Unpeopled, unmanur'd, unprov'd, unprais'd.*"

In the *Textus Roffensis* we meet with two of these words—
"The monks offering themselves to perform all priestly functions of *houfeling* and *aveyling*." *Aveyling*, I believe, is misprinted for *aveyling*. STEEVENS.

See *Mort d'Arthur*, p. iii. c. 175. "So when he was *houfeted* and *aneled*, and had all that a Christian man ought to have, &c." TYRWHITT.

The subsequent extract from a very scarce and curious copy of *Fabian's Chronicle*, printed by Pynson, 1516, seems to remove every possibility of doubt concerning the true signification of the words *unhoufeted* and *unanel'd*. The historian, speaking of Pope Innocent's having laid the whole kingdom of England under an interdict, has these words: "Of the maner of this interdiccion of this lande have I seen dyverse opynyons, as some ther be that saye that the lande was enterdyted thorowly and the churchis and housys of relygyon clofyd, that no where was used masse, nor dyvyne servyce, by whiche reason none of the VII sacramentis all this terme should be mynystred or occupyed, nor chyld *crystened*, nor man *confessed* nor *married*; but it was not so strayght. For there were dyverse placys in England, whiche were occupyed with dyvyne servyce all that season by lycence purchasid than or before, also chyldren were crystenyd thoroughe all the lande and men *houfeted* and *aneled*." Fol. 14. Septima Pars Johannis.

The Anglo-Saxon noun-substantives *busef* (the eucharist) and *ele* (oil) are plainly the roots of these last-quoted compound adjectives

6 O, horrible! O, horrible! most horrible!] It was ingeniously hinted to me by a very learned lady, that this line seems to belong to Hamlet, in whose mouth it is a proper and natural exclamation; and who, according to the practice of the stage, may be supposed to interrupt so long a speech. JOHNSON.

Let not the royal bed of Denmark be
 7 A couch for luxury and damned incest.
 But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contri v 2
 Against thy mother aught; leave her to he a n,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once!
 The glow-worm shews the matin to be near,
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire 8:

adjectives—For the meaning of the affix *an* to the last, I quote Spelman's Gloss. in Loco. "Quin et dictionibus (an) adjungitur, siquidem vel majoris notationis gratia, vel ad singulare aliquid, vel unicum demonstrandum." Hence *anehyd* should seem to signify *oiled* or *anointed* by way of eminence, *i. e.* having received extreme unction. For the confirmation of the sense given here there is the strongest internal evidence in the passage. The historian is speaking of the VII sacraments, and he expressly names five of them, viz. baptism, marriage, auricular confession, the eucharist, and extreme unction.

The antiquary is desired to consult the edition of Fabian, printed by Pynson, 1516, because there are others, and I remember to have seen one in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, with a continuation to the end of Queen Mary, London, 1559, in which the language is much modernized.

Newcastle upon Tyne.

J. B.

This note is taken from the *St. James's Chronicle*. STEEVENS.

7 *A couch for luxury*—] *i. e.* for lewdness. So, in *K. Lear*:
To't luxury pell-mell for, &c.

Again, in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, 1607, where the old duke, who is remarkable for his incontinence, is repeatedly called

— a parch'd and juiceless *luxur*. STEEVENS.

8 — *uneffectual fire*.] *i. e.* shining without heat. WARBURTON,
To pale is a verb used by Lady Elizabeth Carew, in her *Tragedy of Mariam*, 1613:

" — Death can *pale* as well

" A cheek of roses as a cheek less bright."

Again, in Urry's Chaucer, p. 368: "The sterre *paleth* her white cheres by the flambes of the sonne, &c."

Uneffectual fire, I believe, rather means, fire that is no longer seen when the light of morning approaches. So, in *Pericles Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

" — like a glow worm, —

" The which hath fire in darkness, none in light."

STEEVENS.

Adieu,

Adieu, adieu, adieu! ' remember me. [Exit.

Ham. O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?

And shall I couple hell?—O fie!—Hold, hold, my heart;

And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
But bear me stiffly up!—Remember thee?

Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. ' Remember thee?

Yea, from the table of my memory

I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,

All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,

That youth and observation copied there;

And thy commandment all alone shall live

Within the book and volume of my brain,

Unmix'd with baser matter: yes, by heaven!

O most pernicious woman!

O villain, villain, smiling, damn'd villain!

My tables,—meet it is, I set it down²,

¹ *Adieu, adieu, adieu!* &c.] The folio reads:

Adieu, adieu, Hamlet: remember me. STEEVENS.

² —this *distracted globe.*] i. e. in this head confused with thought. STEEVENS.

³ *My tables,—meet it is I set it down.*] This is a ridicule of the practice of the time. Hall says, in his character of the *Hypocrite*, "He will ever sit where he may be scene best, and in the midst of the sermon pulles out his *tables* in haste, as if he feared to loose that note, &c." FARNER.

So, in the induction to Webster's *Malcobant*, 1604: "I tell you I am one that hath seen this play often, and can give them intelligence for their action: I have most of the jests of it here in my *table-book*." Again, in *Love's Sacrifice*, 1633:

"You are one loves courtship:

"He had some change of words; 'twere no loss labour

"To stuff your *table-books*."

Again, in *Antonio's Revenge*, 1602:

"Balardo draws out his *writing-tables* and writes."

"Return and *obtain*, good words, very good words."

Again, in *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609:

"Let your *tables* befriend your memory; write &c."

STEEVENS.

That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain;
 At least, I am sure, it may be so in Denmark: [*Writing.*]
 So, uncle, there you are. ³ Now to my word;
 It is, *Adieu, adieu! remember me.*
 I have sworn it.

Hor. My lord, my lord,—— [*Within.*

Mar. Lord Hamlet,—— [*Within.*

Hor. Heaven secure him! [*Within.*

Ham. So be it!

Mar. Illo, ho, ho, my lord! [*Within.*

Ham. Hillo, ho, ho, boy! ⁴ come, bird, come.

Enter Horatio, and Marcellus.

Mar. How is't, my noble lord?

Hor. What news, my lord?

Ham. O, wonderful!

Hor. Good my lord, tell it.

Ham. No; you will reveal it.

Hor. Not I, my lord, by heaven.

Mar. Nor I, my lord.

Ham. How say you then; would heart of man
 once think it?——

But you'll be secret,——

Both. Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Ham. There's ne'er a villain, dwelling in all Den-
 mark,

But he's an arrant knave.

³ — *now to my word;*] Hamlet alludes to the *watch-word* given every day in military service, which at this time he says is, *Adieu, Adieu, remember me.* So, in *The Devil's Charter*, a tragedy, 1607: "Now to my *watch-word.*"—— STEEVENS.

⁴ — *come, bird, come.*] This is the call which falconers use to their hawk in the air when they would have him come down to them. HANMER.

This expression is used in *Marston's Dutch Courtesan*, and by many others among the old dramatic writers.

It appears from all these passages, that it was the falconer's call, as *Hanmer* has observed. STEEVENS.

Hor. 5 There needs no ghost, my lord, come from
the grave,

To tell us this.

Ham. Why, right; you are in the right;
And so, without more circumstance at all,
I hold it fit, that we shake hands, and part:
You, as your business, and desire, shall point you;—
For every man hath business, and desire,
Such as it is,—and, for my own poor part,
Look you, I will go pray.

Hor. These are but wild and whirling words, my lord;

Ham. I am sorry they offend you, heartily;
Yes 'faith, heartily.

Hor. There's no offence, my lord.

Ham. Yes, 6 by saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio;
And much offence too. Touching this vision here,—
It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you:
For your desire to know what is between us,
O'er-master it as you may. And now, good friends;
As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
Give me one poor request.

Hor. What is't, my lord? we will.

Ham. Never make known what you have seen to-
night.

Both. My lord; we will not.

Ham. Nay, but swear it.

Hor. In faith, my lord, not I.

Mar. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

5 *There needs no ghost, &c.*] This piece of humbug is repeated by our author in *Timon, &c.* Act 5. Sc. 2. STEEVENS.

6 —by St. Patrick,—] How the poet comes to make Hamlet swear by St. Patrick, I know not. However, at this time all the whole northern world had their learning from Ireland; to which place it had retired, and there flourished under the auspices of this Saint. But it was, I suppose, only said at random; for he makes Hamlet a student of Wittenberg. WARBURTON.

Dean Swift's "Verses on the sudden drying-up of St. Patrick's Well, 1726," contain many learned allusions to the early cultivation of literature in Ireland. NICHOLS.

Ham. Upon my sword.

Mar. We have sworn, my lord, already.

Ham. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear.

Ham. Ha, ha, boy! say'st thou so? art thou there,
true-penny? ⁷

Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellaridge,—
Consent to swear.

Hor. Propose the oath, my lord.

Ham. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
⁸ Swear by my sword.

Ghost.

⁷ — *true-penny*.] This word, as well as some of Hamlet's former exclamations, we find in the *Malecontent*, 1604:

“ Illo, ho, ho, ho; art there old *True-penny*?” STEEVENS.

⁸ *Swear by my sword*.] Here the poet has preserved the manners of the ancient Danes, with whom it was *religion* to swear upon their swords. See *Bartholinus, De causis contempt. mort. apud Dan.*

WARBURTON.

I was once inclinable to this opinion, which is likewise well defended by Mr. Upton; but Mr. Garrick produced me a passage, I think, in *Brantôme*, from which it appeared, that it was common to swear upon the sword, that is, upon the cross which the old swords always had upon the hilt. JOHNSON.

Shakespeare, it is more than probable, knew nothing of the ancient Danes, or their manners. Every extract from Dr. Farmer's pamphlet must prove as instructive to the reader as the following:

“ In the *Passus Primus* of *Pierce Plowman*,

“ David in his daies dubbed knightes,

“ And did them *swere* on her *sword* to serve truth ever.”

“ And in *Hieronymo*, the common butt of our author, and the
“ wits of the time, says Lorenzo to Pedringano:—

“ Swear on this *cross*, that what thou say'st is true,

“ But if I prove thee perjur'd and unjust,

“ This very *sword*, whereon thou took'st thine oath,

“ Shall be a worker of thy tragedy.”

To the authorities produced by Dr. Farmer, the following may be added from *Holinshed*, p. 664: “ Warwick kissed the cross of
“ K. Edward's sword, as it were a vow to his promise.”

Again, p. 1038. it is said, “ that Warwick drew out his sword,
“ which other of the honourable and worshipful that were then
“ present likewise did, whom he commanded, that each one should
“ kiss other's sword, according to an ancient custom amongst men

“ of

Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear.

Ham. *Hic & ubique?* then we'll shift our ground:—
Come hither, gentlemen,
And lay your hands again upon my sword:
Swear by my sword,
Never to speak of this that you have heard.

Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear by his sword.

Ham. Well said, old mole! can't work i'the earth
so fast?

A worthy pioneer!—Once more remove, good friends.

Hor. O day and night, but this is wondrous
strange!

Ham. 9 And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.
But come;—

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy!
How strange or odd so'er I bear myself,—
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an antick disposition on,—
That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

“ of war in time of great danger; and herewith they made a
“ solemn vow,” &c. Again, in Green's *Tu quoque*:

“ By the *cross* of these hiltes.”

Again, in Decker's comedy of *Old Fortunatus*, 1600:

“ He has sworn to me on the *cross* of his pure Toledo.”

Again, in the Second Part of *The Downfall of Robert Earl of
Huntington*, 1601:

“ — by the *cross* of my good blade,

“ An excellent mother to bring up a maid.”

Again, in Decker's *Satiromastix*: “ By the *cross* of this sword and
dagger, captain, you shall take it.”

In the soliloquy of *Roland* addressed to his sword, the *cross* on
it is not forgotten: “ — capulo eburneo candidissime, *cruce aurea*
splendidissime, &c.”

Turpini Hist. de Gestis Caroli Mag. cap. 22.

STEEVENS.

9 *And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.*] i. e. receive it to
yourself; take it under your own roof; as much as to say, *Keep it*

secret. Alluding to the laws of hospitality. WARBURTON.

(With arms encumber'd thus; or this head-shake;
 Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
*As, Well, well, we know;—or, We could, an if we
 would;—or, If we list to speak;—or, There be, an if
 they might;—*
 Or such ambiguous giving out) denote ¹
 That you know aught of me: ² This do ye swear,
 So grace and mercy at your most need help you!
 Swear.

Ghost. [*beneath*] Swear.

Ham. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!—So, gentlemen,
 With all my love I do commend me to you:
 And what so poor a man as Hamlet is
 May do, to express his love and friending to you,
 God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;
 And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
 The time is out of joint;—O cursed spight!
 That ever I was born to set it right!—
 Nay, come, let's go together. [*Exeunt.*

¹ — *denote.*] The old copies concur in reading *to note*. The alteration, which seems necessary, is Theobald's. STEEVENS.

If we read "*Nor* by pronouncing," the passage as it stands in the folio, though embarrassed, is still intelligible, provided the punctuation be changed.

That you, at such time seeing me, never shall
 With arms encumber'd thus, or thus, head shake;
Nor by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase,
As, well, we know, or, we could and if we would,
Or, if we list to speake; or, there be and if there might,
 Or such ambiguous giving out, to note
 That you know aught of me; this not to do
 (So grace and mercy at your most need help you!)
 Swear.

MALONE.

² — *this do you swear, &c.*] The folio reads, *this not to do*.

STEEVENS.

ACT II. SCENE I.

An apartment in Polonius' house.

Enter Polonius, and Reynaldo.

Pol. Give him this money, and these notes,
Reynaldo.

Rey. I will, my lord.

Pol. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
Before you visit him, to make enquiry
Of his behaviour.

Rey. My lord, I did intend it.

Pol. Marry, well said; very well said. Look you, sir,
Enquire me first what Danfers⁴ are in Paris;
And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
What company, at what expence; and finding,
By this encompassment and drift of question,
That they do know my son, come you more nearer;
Then your particular demands will touch it:
Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him;
As thus,—*I know his father, and his friends,*
And, in part, him,—Do you mark this, Reynaldo?

Rey. Ay, very well, my lord.

Pol. *And, in part, him;*—but, you may say,—*not well:*

*But, if't be he I mean, he's very wild;
Addicted so and so;*—and there put on him
What forgeries you please; marry, none so rank
As may dishonour him; take heed of that;
But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips,
As are companions noted and most known
To youth and liberty.

Rey. As gaming, my lord.

³ The quartos read, *Enter old Polonius with his man or two.*

⁴ *Danfers*] *Danfer* (in Warner's *Albions England*) is the ancient name of Denmark. STEEVENS.

Pol. Ay, or ⁵ drinking, fencing, swearing,
Quarrelling, drabbing:—You may go so far.

Rey. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Pol. 'Faith, no; as you may season it in the charge.
You must not put ⁶ another scandal on him,
That he is open to incontinency;
That's not my meaning: but breathe his faults so
quaintly,

That they may seem the taints of liberty;
The flash and out-break of a fiery mind;
⁷ A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
⁸ Of general assault.

Rey. But, my good lord,—

Pol. Wherefore should you do this?

Rey. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Pol. Marry, sir, here's my drift;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant ⁹:
You laying these slight fullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little foil'd i' the working,
Mark you, Your party in converse, him you would
sound,
Having ever seen, in the prenominate crimes ¹,
The youth, you breathe of, guilty, be assur'd,
He closes with you in this consequence;

⁵ — *drinking, [fencing,] swearing,] Fencing, an interpolation.* WARBURTON.

How *fencing* can be an interpolation, I know not. I find it in all the old copies. STEEVENS

I suppose, by *fencing* is meant a too diligent frequentation of the fencing-school, a resort of violent and lawless young men. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *another—]* Thus the old editions. Theobald reads, *an utter.* JOHNSON.

⁷ *A savageness—]* *Savageness, for wildness.* WARBURTON.

⁸ *Of general assault.]* i. e. such as youth in general is liable to. WARBURTON.

⁹ *And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant:]* So the folio. The quarto reads, — a fetch of wit. STEEVENS.

¹ — *prenominate crimes.]* i. e. crimes already named.

² *Good fir*, or *so*; or *friend*, or *gentleman*,—
According to the phrase, or the addition,
Of man, and country.

Rey. Very good, my lord.

Pol. And then, fir, does he this,—He does—What
was I

About to say? I was about to say
Something: Where did I leave?

Rey. At, closes in the consequence.

Pol. At, closes in the consequence,—*Ay, marry*;
He closes with you thus:—*I know the gentleman*;
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,
Or then, or then; with such, or such; and, as you say,
There was he gaming; there o'ertook in his rouse;

² *Good fir, or so, or friend, &c.*] We should read,
— or *fire*, *i. e.* father. WAREBURTON.

I know not that *fire* was ever a general word of compliment, as distinct from *fir*; nor do I conceive why any alteration should be made. It is a common mode of colloquial language to use, or *so*, as a slight intimation of more of the same, or a like kind, that might be mentioned. We might read, but we need not,

Good, fir, forsooth, or friend, or gentleman.

Forsooth, a term of which I do not well know the original meaning, was used to men as well as to women. JOHNSON.

Good fir, or so, &c. Dr. Johnson would read—*Good fir, forsooth, &c.*

Forsooth, which has been sometimes supposed to be a form of address, and, since its proper meaning has been forgot, may perhaps have been sometimes so applied by vulgar ignorant people, originally had no such signification. It was a more enforcing of an asseveration. *Sooth* is *truth*, and *insooth* or *forsooth* signify originally and properly only *in truth* and *for truth*. In Shakespeare's time the proper sense was not left out of use; and therefore I think he could hardly have inserted *forsooth* in the text, as a form of address. PERCY.

I believe we should read,

Good fir, or so forth, friend or gentleman;

So, in *Humor's Ordinarie*, a collection of ancient satires, no date:

“Then tells him, brother, friend, or *so forth*, heare ye.”

In the *Winter's Tale*, the same expression occurs. Act 1.

“*Sicilia* is a *so forth*.”

Nay, Polonius uses it again a little further on in this very speech.

STEEVENS.

We might read *Good fir, or fir, &c.* TYRWHITT,

*There falling out at tennis: or, perchance,
I saw him enter such a house of sale,
(Videlicet, a brothel) or so forth.*—See you now;
Your bait of falshood takes this carp of truth:
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlaces, and with affays of bias,
By indirections find directions out;
So, by my former lecture and advice,
Shall you my son: You have me, have you not?

Rey. My lord, I have.

Pol. God be wi'you; fare you well.

Rey. Good my lord,—

Pol. Observe his inclination³ in yourself.

Rey. I shall, my lord.

Pol. And let him ply his musick.

Rey. Well, my lord.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Ophelia.

Pol. Farewel.—How now, Ophelia? what's the matter?

Oph. O, my lord, my lord, I have been so affrighted!

Pol. With what, in the name of heaven?

Oph. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,
Lord Hamlet,—with his doublet all unbrac'd;
No hat upon his head,⁴ his stockings foul'd,

Ungarter'd,

³ — *in yourself.*] Hanmer reads, *e'en yourself*, and is followed by Dr. Warburton; but perhaps *in yourself* means, *in your own person*, not by spies. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *his stockings foul'd,*

Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his angle,] I have restored the reading of the elder quartos—*his stockings loose*.—The change, I suspect, was first from the players, who saw a contradiction in his stockings being *loose*, and yet *shackled* down at ankle. But they, in their ignorance, blundered away our author's word, because they did not understand it:

Ungarter'd, and down-gyred,

i. e. turned down. So, the oldest copies; and, so his stockings

Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle;
 Pale as his shirt; his knees knocking each other;
 And with a look so piteous in purport,
 As if he had been loosed out of hell,
 To speak of horrors,—he comes before me;

Pol. Mad for thy love?

Opb. My lord, I do not know;
 But, truly, I do fear it.

Pol. What said he?

Opb. He took me by the wrist, and held me hard;
 Then goes he to the length of all his arm;
 And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,
 He falls to such perusal of my face,
 As he would draw it. Long staid he so;
 At last,—a little shaking of mine arm,
 And thrice his head thus waving up and down,—

were properly loose, as they were *ungarter'd* and *row'd down* to the ancle. THEOBALD.

Theobald is unfaithful in his account of this *elder quarto*. I have all the *quartos* and the *folios* before me, and they concur in reading:

— *bis stockings foul'd.*

I believe *gyred* to be nothing more than a false print. *Down-gyved* means hanging down like the loose cincture which confines the fetters round the ancles. *Gyre* always signifies a circle formed by a top, or any other body when put into motion.

It is so used by Drayton in the Black Prince's letter to Alice countess of Salisbury:

“ In little circlets first it doth arise,

“ Then somewhat larger seemeth in mine eyes;

“ And in this *gyring* compass as it goes,

“ So more and more my love in greatness grows.”

Again, in the Second Part of Heywood's *Iron Age*, 1632:

“ — this bright and flaming brand

“ Which I so often *gyre* about mine ears.”

Again, in *Lingua*, &c. 1607:

“ First I beheld him hovering in the air,

“ And then down stooping with a hundred *gyres*, &c.”

Again, in Barten Holyday's Poem, called the *Woes of Esay*:

“ His chariot-wheels wrapt in the whirlwind's *gyre*,

“ His horses hoof'd with flint, and shod with fire.”

STEEVENS:

He

He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound,
 As it did seem to shatter all his bulk,
 And end his being: That done, he lets me go:
 And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,
 He seem'd to find his way without his eyes;
 For out o'doors he went without their helps,
 And, to the last, bended their light on me.

Pol. Come, go with me; I will go seek the king.
 This is the very ecstasy of love;
 Whose violent property foredoes ^s itself,
 And leads the will to desperate undertakings,
 As oft as any passion under heaven,
 That does afflict our natures. I am sorry,—
 What, have you given him any hard words of late?

Opb. No, my good lord; but, as you did command,
 I did repel his letters, and deny'd
 His access to me.

Pol. That hath made him mad.
 I am sorry, that with better heed, and judgment,
⁶ I had not quoted him: I fear'd, he did but trifle,

^s — *foredoes* itself.] To *foredo* is to destroy. So, in *Othello*:

“That either makes me, or *foredoes* me quite.” STEEVENS.

⁶ *I had not quoted him*:—] The old quarto reads *coted*. It appears Shakespeare wrote *noted*. *Quoted* is nonsense. WARBURTON.

To *quote* is, I believe, to *reckon*, to take an account of, to take the *quotient* or result of a computation. JOHNSON.

Since I proposed a former explanation, I met with a passage in the *Isle of Gulls*, a comedy, by *John Day*, 1633, which proves Dr. Johnson's sense of the word to be not far from the true one:

—“'twill be a scene of mirth

“For me to *quote* his passions, and his smiles.”

To *quote* on this occasion undoubtedly means to *observe*. Again, in Drayton's *Mooncalf*:

“This honest man the prophecy that noted,

“And things therein most curiously had *quoted*;

—“Found all these signs, &c.”

Again, in *The Woman Hater*, by B. and Fletcher, the Intelligencer says — “I'll *quote* him to a tittle.” i. e. I will observe him.

Again, in *Certaine Satyres*, 1598:

“But must our moderne crittick's envious eye,

“Seeme thus to *quote* some grosse deformity?” STEEVENS.

And

And meant to wreck thee; but, beshrew my jealousy!

It seems, ⁷ it is as proper to our age

To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,

As it is common for the younger sort

To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king:

⁸ This must be known; which, being kept close,
might move

More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.

Come. [Exit.

S C E N E II.

The palace.

Enter King, Queen, Rosincrantz, Guildenstern, and attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosincrantz, and Guildenstern!

Moreover that we much did long to see you,
The need, we have to use you, did provoke

⁷ — it is as proper to our age

To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions,

As it is common for the younger sort

To lack discretion.—]

This is not the remark of a weak man. The vice of age is too much suspicion. Men long accustomed to the wiles of life cast commonly beyond themselves, let their cunning go further than reason can attend it. This is always the fault of a little mind, made artful by long commerce with the world. JOHNSON.

The quartos read—*By heaven it is as proper &c.* STEEVENS.

⁸ *This must be known; which, being kept close, might move*

More grief to hide, than hate to utter love.] i. e. This must be

made known to the king, for (being kept secret) the hiding Hamlet's love might occasion more mischief to us from him and the queen, than the uttering or revealing of it will occasion hate and resentment from Hamlet. The poet's ill and obscure expression seems to have been caused by his affectation of concluding the scene with a couplet.

Hammer reads,

More grief to hide hate, than to utter love. JOHNSON.

Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
 Of Hamlet's transformation; so I call it,
 Since nor the exterior nor the inward man
 Resembles that it was: What it should be,
 More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
 So much from the understanding of himself,
 I cannot dream of: I entreat you both,
 That,—being of so young days brought up with him;
 And, since, so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,⁹—
 That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
 Some little time: so by your companies
 To draw him on to pleasures; and to gather,
 So much as from occasion you may glean,
¹ Whether aught, to us unknown, afflicts him thus;
 That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of
 you;
 And, sure I am, two men there are not living,
 To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
² To shew us so much gentry, and good will,
 As to expend your time with us a while,
³ For the supply and profit of our hope,
 Your visitation shall receive such thanks
 As fits a king's remembrance.

Ros. Both your majesties
 Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,
 Put your dread pleasures more into command
 Than to entreaty.

Guil. But we both obey;
 And here give up ourselves, ⁴ in the full bent,

⁹ — and *humour*.] Thus the folio. The quartos read, *haviour*.
 STEEVENS.

¹ *Whether aught, &c.*] This line is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

² *To shew us so much gentry—*] *Gentry*, for *complaisance*.
 WARBURTON.

³ *For the supply, &c.*] That the hope which your arrival has
 raised may be completed by the desired effect. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *in the full bent*.] *Bent*, for *endeavour*, *application*.

To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz, and gentle Guilden-
stern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildenstern, and gentle Rosen-
crantz :

And I beseech you instantly to visit
My too much changed son.—Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guil. Heavens make our presence, and our practices;
Pleasant and helpful to him! [*Exeunt Ros. and Guil.*]

Queen. Ay, amen!

Enter Polonius.

Pol. The embassadors from Norway, my good
lord,
Are joyfully return'd.

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Pol. Have I, my lord? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God, and to my gracious king:
And I do think (or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the * trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do) that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O, speak of that; that I do long to hear.

Pol. Give first admittance to the embassadors;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them
in. [*Exit Polonius,*]

He tells me, my dear Gertrude, he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper.

Queen. I doubt, it is no other but the main;
His father's death, and our o'er-hasty marriage.

* — the trail of policy—] The trail is the course of an animal
pursued by the scent. JOHNSON.

† — the fruit—] The defects after the meat. JOHNSON.

Re-enter

Re-enter Polonius, with Voltimand, and Cornelius.

King. Well, we shall sift him.—Welcome, my good friends!

Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway?

Volt. Most fair return of greetings, and desires.
Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
His nephew's levies; which to him appear'd
To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
But, better look'd into, he truly found
It was against your highness: Whereat griev'd,—
That so his sickness, age, and impotence,
Was falsely borne in hand⁶,—sends out arrests
On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys;
Receives rebuke from Norway; and, in fine,
Makes vow before his uncle, never more
To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
⁷Gives him threescore thousand crowns in annual fee⁸;
And his commission, to employ those soldiers,
So levied as before, against the Polack:
With an entreaty, herein further shewn,
That it might please you to give quiet pass
Through your dominions for this enterprize;

⁶ — borne in hand,—] *i. e.* deceived, imposed on. So, in *Macbeth*, Act 3:

“How you were borne in hand, how cross, &c.”

See a note on this passage. STEEVENS.

⁷ Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee;] This reading first obtained in the edition put out by the players. But all the old quartos (from 1605, downwards) read as I have reformed the text. THEOBALD.

⁸ — annual fee.] *Fee* in this place signifies reward, recompence. So, in *All's well that ends well*:

“—Not helping, death's my fee;

“But if I help, what do you promise me?”

The word is commonly used in Scotland for *wages*, as we say *lawyer's fee*, *physician's fee*. STEEVENS.

On such regards of safety, and allowance,
As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well;

And, at our more consider'd time, we'll read,
Answer, and think upon this business.

Mean time, we thank you for your well-took labour:

Go to your rest; ⁹ at night we'll feast together:

Most welcome home! [Exeunt Volt. and Cor.

Pol. This business is well ended.

¹ My liege, and madam, ² to expostulate

What

⁹ — at night we'll feast—] The king's intemperance is never suffered to be forgotten. JOHNSON.

² My liege, and madam, to expostulate] The strokes of humour in this speech are admirable. Polonius's character is that of a weak, pedant, minister of state. His declamation is a fine satire on the impertinent oratory then in vogue, which placed reason in the formality of method, and wit in the gingle and play of words. With what art is he made to pride himself in his wit:

That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity;

And pity 'tis, 'tis true: A foolish figure,

But farewell it——

And how exquisitely does the poet ridicule the *reasoning in fashion*, where he makes Polonius remark on Hamlet's madness:

Though this be madness, yet there's method in't:

As if method, which the wits of that age thought the most essential quality of a good discourse, would make amends for the madness. It was *madness* indeed, yet Polonius could comfort himself with this reflection, that at least it was *method*. It is certain Shakespeare excels in nothing more than in the preservation of his characters; *To this life and variety of character* (says our great poet in his admirable preface to Shakespeare) *we must add the wonderful preservation*. We have said what is the character of Polonius; and it is allowed on all hands to be drawn with wonderful life and spirit, yet the *unity* of it has been thought by some to be grossly violated in the excellent *precepts* and *instructions* which Shakespeare makes his statesman give to his son and servant in the middle of the *first*, and beginning of the *second act*. But I will venture to say, these critics have not entered into the poet's art and address in this particular. He had a mind to ornament his scenes with those fine lessons

² — to expostulate] To *expostulate*, for to enquire or discuss.

What majesty should be, what duty is,
 Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
 Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
 Therefore,—since brevity is the soul of wit,

And

lessons of social life; but his Polonius was too weak to be author of them, though he was pedant enough to have met with them in his reading, and sop enough to get them by heart, and retail them for his own. And this the poet has finely shewn us was the case, where, in the middle of Polonius's instructions to his servant, he makes him, though without having received any interruption, forget his lesson, and say,

And then, sir, does he this;

He does——What was I about to say?

I was about to say something——where did I leave?

The servant replies,

At, closes in the consequence. This sets Polonius right, and he goes on,

At, closes in the consequence.

——*Ay marry,*

He closes thus:——I know the gentleman, &c.

which shews they were words got by heart which he was repeating. Otherwise *closes in the consequence*, which conveys no particular idea of the subject he was upon, could never have made him recollect where he broke off. This is an extraordinary instance of the poet's art, and attention to the preservation of character. **WARBURTON.**

This account of the character of Polonius, though it sufficiently reconciles the seeming inconsistency of so much wisdom with so much folly, does not perhaps correspond exactly to the ideas of our author. The commentator makes the character of Polonius, a character only of manners, discriminated by properties superficial, accidental, and acquired. The poet intended a nobler delineation of a mixed character of manners and of nature. Polonius is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident of his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his character is accidental, the rest is natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it is become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in the particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight. While he depends upon his memory, and can draw
 from

And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,—
I will be brief: Your noble son is mad:
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is't, but to be nothing else but mad:
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear, I use no art at all.—
That he is mad, 'tis true: 'tis true, 'tis pity;
And pity 'tis, 'tis true: a foolish figure;
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then: and now remains,
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or, rather say, the cause of this defect;
For this effect, defective, comes by cause:
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus perpend.
I have a daughter; have, whilst she is mine;
Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
Hath given me this: Now gather, and surmise.

³ *To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia—*

That's

from his repositories of knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful counsel; but as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, the old man is subject to sudden dereliction of his faculties, he loses the order of his ideas, and entangles himself in his own thoughts, till he recovers the leading principle, and falls again into his former train. This idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom, will solve all the phenomena of the character of Polonius. JOHNSON.

³ *To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia—*] I have ventured at an emendation here, against the authority of all the copies; but, I hope, upon examination, it will appear probable and reasonable. The word *beautified* may carry two distinct ideas, either as applied to a woman made-up of artificial beauties, or to one rich in native charms. As Shakespeare has therefore chose to use it in the latter acceptation, to express natural countenances; I cannot imagine, that here he would make Polonius except to the phrase, and call it a *vile one*. But a stronger objection still, in my mind, lies against it. As *celestial* and *soul's idol* are the introductory characteristics of Ophelia, what a dreadful anticlimax is it to descend to such an epithet as *beautified*? On the other

That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase; *beautify'd*
Is a vile phrase; but you shall hear:—

These in her excellent white bosom, & these, &c.—

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her?

Pol. Good madam, stay a while; I will be faithful.—

*Doubt thou, the stars are fire; [Reading,
Doubt, that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt, I love.*

O dear Ophelia, I am ill at these numbers; I have not

hand, *beautified*, as I have conjectured, raises the image: but Polonius might very well, as a Roman Catholic, call it a *vile phrase*, *i. e.* favouring of profanation; since the epithet is peculiarly made an adjunct to the Virgin Mary's honour, and therefore ought not to be employed in the praise of a mere mortal. THEOBALD.

Dr. Warburton has followed Theobald; but I am in doubt whether *beautified*, though, as Polonius calls it, a *vile phrase*, be not the proper word. *Beautified* seems to be a *vile phrase*, for the ambiguity of its meaning. JOHNSON.

The most *beautified* Ophelia.] Heyward, in his *History of Edward VI*, says, “*Katherine Parre*, queen dowager to king Henry VIII, was a woman *beautified* with many excellent virtues.” FARMER.

So, in *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*, 1614:

“A maid of rich endowments, *beautified*

“With all the virtues nature could bestow.”

, Again, Nash dedicates his *Christ's Tears over Jerusalem*, 15—.

“to the most *beautified* lady the lady Elizabeth Carey.”

Again, in Greene's *Mamillia*, 1593: “— although thy person is so bravely *beautified* with the dowries of nature.”

Ill and *vile* as the phrase may be, our author has used it again in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

— seeing you are *beautified*

With good shape, &c. STEEVENS.

⁴ *These to her excellent white bosom,*] So, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

Thy letters ———

Which, being writ to me, shall be deliver'd

Even in the *milk-white bosom of thy love*.

See a note on this passage. STEEVENS.

art to reckon my groans: but that I love thee best,
O most best, & believe it. *Adieu.*

*Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst
this machine is to him, Hamlet,*

This, in obedience, hath my daughter shewn me;
And, ⁶ more above, hath his solicitings,
As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
Receiv'd his love?

Pol. What do you think of me?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable.

Pol. I would fain prove so. But what might you
think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,
(As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
Before my daughter told me) what might you,
Or my dear majesty your queen here, think,
⁷ If I had play'd the desk, or table-book;
⁸ Or given my heart a working, mute and dumb;
Or look'd upon this love with idle sight?
What might you think? no, I went round to work,

⁵ — *O most best*—] So, in *Acadamas*, a comedy, 1529:
“—that same *most best* redresser or reformer, is God.” STEEVENS.

⁶ — *more above*,—] is, *moreover*, besides. JOHNSON.

⁷ *If I had play'd the desk or table-book*;

Or giv'n my heart a working, mute and dumb;

Or look'd upon this love with idle sight;

What might you think?—] *i. e.* If either I had conveyed intelligence between them, and been the confident of their amours [*play'd the desk or table-book*], or had consaiv'd at it, only observed them in secret, without acquainting my daughter with my discovery [*giv'n my heart a mute and dumb working*]; or lastly, had been negligent in observing the intrigue, and overlooked it [*look'd upon this love with idle sight*]; what would you have thought of me?

WARBURTON,

⁸ *Or given my heart a working*,—] The folio reads *a working*.
STEVENSON.

And my young mistress thus I did bespeak;
 ° *Lord Hamlet is a prince:—out of thy sphere;*
This must not be: and then I precepts gave her¹,
 That she should lock herself from his resort,
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
 Which done², she took the fruits of my advice:
 And he, repulsed, (³ a short tale to make)
 Fell into a sadness; then into a fast;
 Thence to a watch; thence into a weakness;
 Thence to a lightness; and, by this declension,
 Into the madness wherein now he raves,
 And all we mourn for.

King. Do you think, 'tis this?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Pol. Hath there been such a time, (I'd fain know
 that)

° *Lord Hamlet is a prince out of thy sphere,]* All princes were alike out of her sphere. I give it thus:

Lord Hamlet is a prince:—out of thy sphere.

Two of the quartos, and the first folio, read *star*. STEEVENS.

¹ — precepts gave her.] Thus the folio. The two elder quartos read, *prescripts*. STEEVENS.

² *Which done, she took the fruits of my advice;*

And he, repulsed—] The fruits of advice are the effects of advice. But how could she be said to take them? The reading is corrupt. Shakespeare wrote,

Which done, see too the fruits of my advice;

For, he repulsed— WARBURTON.

She took the fruits of advice when she obeyed advice, the advice was then made fruitful. JOHNSON.

³ — a short tale to make,

Fell into a sadness; then into a fast, &c.] The ridicule of this character is here admirably sustained. He would not only be thought to have discovered this intrigue by his own sagacity, but to have remarked all the stages of Hamlet's disorder, from his sadness to his raving, as regularly as his physician could have done; when all the while the madness was only feigned. The humour of this is exquisite from a man who tells us, with a confidence peculiar to small politicians, that he could find

Where truth was hid, though it were hid indeed

Within the centre. WARBURTON.

That

That I have positively said, 'Tis so,
When it prov'd otherwise?

King. Not that I know.

Pol. Take this from this, if this be otherwise :

[*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*

If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further?

Pol. You know, sometimes he walks four hours
together⁴,

Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does, indeed.

Pol. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him:
Be you and I behind an arras then;
Mark the encounter: if he love her not,
And be not from his reason fallen thereon,
Let me be no assistant for a state,
But keep a farm, and carters.

King. We will try it.

Enter Hamlet, reading.

Queen. But, look, where sadly the poor wretch
comes reading.

Pol. Away, I do beseech you, both away;
I'll board him presently:—O, give me leave.—

[*Exeunt King, and Queen.*

How does my good lord Hamlet?

Ham. Well, god-a'-mercy.

Pol. Do you know me, my lord?

Ham. Excellent well;

You are a fishmonger.

Pol. Not I, my lord.

⁴ — *four hours together,*] Perhaps it would be better were we
to read indefinitely,

— *for hours together.* TYRWHITT.

Ham. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Pol. Honest, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; to be honest, as this world goes,
Is to be one man pick'd out of ten thousand.

Pol. That's very true, my lord.

Ham. For if the sun breeds maggots in a dead dog,
Being a god, kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter?

Pol.

⁵ *For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog,
Being a good kissing carrion —*

Have you a daughter?] The editors seeing Hamlet counterfeit madness, thought they might safely put any nonsense into his mouth. But this strange passage, when set right, will be seen to contain as great and sublime a reflection as any the poet puts into his hero's mouth throughout the whole play. We shall first give the true reading, which is this;

*For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog,
Being a god, kissing carrion —*

As to the sense we may observe, that the illative particle [for] shews the speaker to be reasoning from something he had said before: what that was we learn in these words, *to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one picked out of ten thousand.* Having said this, the chain of ideas led him to reflect upon the argument which libertines bring against Providence from the circumstance of abounding evil. In the next speech therefore he endeavours to answer that objection, and vindicate Providence, even on a supposition of the fact, that almost all men were wicked. His argument in the two lines in question is to this purpose, *But why need we wonder at this abounding of evil? For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, which though a god, yet shedding its heat and influence upon carrion—* Here he stops short, lest talking too consequentially the hearer should suspect his madness to be feigned; and so turns him off from the subject, by enquiring of his daughter. But the inference which he intended to make, was a very noble one, and to this purpose. If this (says he) be the case, that the effect follows the thing operated upon [carrion] and not the thing operating [a god;] why need we wonder, that the supreme cause of all things diffusing its blessings on mankind, who is, as it were, a dead carrion, dead in original sin, man, instead of a proper return of duty, should breed only corruption and vices? This is the argument at length; and is as noble a one in behalf of Providence as could come from the schools of divinity. But this wonderful man had an art not only of acquainting the audience with what his actors say, but with what they think. The sentiment too is altogether in character,

Pol. I have, my lord.

Ham. Let her not walk i' the sun: conception is a blessing⁶; but not as your daughter may conceive: friend, look to't.

Pol. How say you by that? [*Afide.*] still harping on my daughter:—yet he knew me not at first; he said, I was a fishmonger: He is far gone, far gone: and, truly, in my youth I suffer'd much extremity for love; very near this.—I'll speak to him again.—What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words!

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. 7 Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says here, that old men have grey beards; that their faces
are

character, for Hamlet is perpetually moralizing, and his circumstances make this reflection very natural. The same thought, something diversified, as on a different occasion, he uses again in *Measure for Measure*, which will serve to confirm these observations:

The tempter or the tempted, who sins most?

Not she; nor doth she tempt; but it is I

That lying by the violet in the sun,

Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,

Corrupt by virtuous season.—

And the same kind of expression is in *Cymbeline*,

Common-kissing Titus. WAREBURTON.

This is a noble emendation, which almost sets the critic on a level with the author. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *conception is a blessing; &c.*] Thus the folio. The quartos read thus:

— *conception is a blessing;*

But as your daughter may *conceive*, friend, look to't.

The meaning seems to be, *conception* (i. e. understanding) is a blessing; but as your daughter may *conceive* (i. e. be pregnant), friend look to't, i. e. have a care of that. The same quibble occurs in the first scene of *K. Lear*:

“*Kent.* I cannot *conceive* you, sir.

“*Glo.* Sir, this young fellow's mother *could*.” STEEVENS.

⁷ *Slanders, sir: for the satirical slave says here, that old men, &c.*] By the *satirical slave* he means Juvenal in his tenth satire:

are wrinkled; their eyes purging thick amber, and plum-tree gum; and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams: All which, fir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down; for yourself, fir, shall be as old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward.

Pol. Though this be madness, yet there's method in't, [*Aside.*

Will you walk out of the air, my lord?

Ham. Into my grave?

Pol. Indeed, that is out o' the air. — How pregnant⁸ sometimes his replies are! a happiness that

*Da spatium vitæ, multos da Jupiter annos:
Hoc cælo vultu, solum hoc et pallidus optas.
Sed quàm continuis et quantis longa senectus
Plena malis! deformem, et tetrum ante omnia vultum,
Dissimilemque sui, &c.*

Nothing could be finer imagined for Hamlet, in his circumstances, than the bringing him in reading a description of the evils of long life. WARBURTON.

Had Shakespeare read *Juvenal* in the original, he had met with “*De temone Britanno, Excidet Arviragus*” — and

— “*Uxorem, Posthume, ducis?*”

We should not then have had continually in *Cymbeline*, *Arviragus* and *Posthūnus*. Should it be said that the *quantity* in the former word might be forgotten, it is clear from the mistake in the latter, that Shakespeare could not possibly have read any one of the Roman poets.

There was a translation of the 10th satire of *Juvenal* by Sir John Beaumont, the elder brother of the famous Francis: but I cannot tell whether it was printed in Shakespeare's time. In that age of quotation, every classic might be picked up by *piece-meal*.

I forgot to mention in its proper place, that another description of *Old Age* in *As you like it*, has been called a parody on a passage in a French poem of Garnier. It is trifling to say any thing about this, after the observation I made in *Macbeth*: but one may remark **once** for all, that Shakespeare wrote for the *people*; and could not have been so absurd to bring forward any allusion, which had not been familiarized by some accident or other. FARMER.

⁸ How pregnant &c.] *Pregnant* is ready, dexterous, apt.

STEEVENS.
often

often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be deliver'd of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter.—My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you.

Ham. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that I will more willingly part withal; except my life, except my life, except my life.

Pol. Fare you well, my lord.

Ham. These tedious old fools!

Enter Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

Pol. You go to seek lord Hamlet; there he is.

[*Exit.*]

Ros. God save you, sir!

Guil. Mine honour'd lord!—

Ros. My most dear lord!—

Ham. My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both?

Ros. As the indifferent children of the earth.

Guil. Happy, in that we are not over-happy; On fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Ham. Nor the soles of her shoe?

Ros. Neither, my lord.

Ham. Then you live about her waist, or in the middle of her favours?

Guil. 'Faith, her privates we.

Ham. In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What news?

Ros. None, my lord; but that the world's grown honest.

Ham. Then is dooms-day near: But your news is not true. [Let me question more in particular:

⁹ *And suddenly &c.*] This, and the greatest part of the two following lines, are omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

¹ [*Let me &c.*] All within the crotchets, is wanting in the quartos. STEEVENS.

What have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of fortune, that she sends you to prison hither?

Guil. Prison, my lord!

Ham. Denmark's a prison.

Rof. Then is the world one.

Ham. A goodly one; in which there are many confines, wards, and dungeons; Denmark being one of the worst.

Rof. We think not so, my lord.

Ham. Why, then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is a prison.

Rof. Why, then your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nut-shell, and count myself a king of infinite space; were it not that I have bad dreams.

Guil. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition; for the very substance of the ambitious is merely ² the shadow of a dream.

Ham. A dream itself is but a shadow.

Rof. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality, that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Ham. ³ Then are our beggars, bodies; and our monarchs, and out-stretch'd heroes, the beggars' shadows: Shall we to the court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

² — *the shadow of a dream.*] Shakespeare has accidentally inverted an expression of Pindar, that the state of humanity is *οὐκ ἔστιν ὄντως ὁ ὄντας ὁ ὄντας ὁ ὄντας*, the dream of a shadow. JOHNSON.

So Davies,

“ Man's life is but a dreame, nay, less than so,

“ *A shadow of a dreame.*” FARMER.

So, in the tragedy of *Darius* 1603, by Lord Sterline:

“ Whose best was but the shadow of a dream.” STEEVENS.

³ *Then are our beggars, bodies;—*] Shakespeare seems here to design a ridicule of these declamations against wealth and greatness, that seem to make happiness consist in poverty. JOHNSON.

Both. We'll wait upon you.

Ham. No such matter: I will not fort you with the rest of my servants; for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended.] But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elfinour?

Ros. To visit you, my lord; no other occasion.

Ham. Beggar that I am; I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear at a half-penny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, come; deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak.

Guil. What should we say, my lord?

Ham. Any thing—but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks, which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know, the good king and queen have sent for you.

Ros. To what end, my lord?

Ham. That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no?

Ros. What say you?

[*To Guilden.*

Ham. ⁴ Nay, then I have an eye of you;—if you love me, hold not off.

Guil. My lord, we were sent for.

Ham. I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. ⁵ I have of late, (but, wherefore,

⁴ *Nay, then I have an eye of you:—*] An eye of you means, I have a glimpse of your meaning. STEEVENS.

⁵ *I have of late, &c.*] This is an admirable description of a rooted melancholy sprung from thickens of blood; and artfully

wherefore, I know not) lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercises: and, indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'er-hanging firmament, ⁶ this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me, than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! how infinite in faculties! in form, and moving, how express and admirable! in action, how like an angel! in apprehension, how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon of animals! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust? man delights not me,—nor woman neither; though, by your smiling, you seem to say so.

Ros. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Ham. Why did you laugh then, when I said *Man delights not me*?

Ros. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what *lenten* entertainment ⁷ the players shall receive from you: we coted them on the way ⁸; and hither are they coming, to offer you service.

Ham.

fully imagined to hide the true cause of his disorder from the penetration of these two friends, who were set over him as spies. WARBURTON.

⁶ — *this brave over-hanging firmament,*] Thus the quarto. The folio reads, — *this brave o'er-hanging, this &c.* STEEVENS.

⁷ — *lenten* entertainment] i. e. sparing, like the entertainments given in *Lent*. So, in the *Duke's Mistress*, by Shirley, 1631:

“ — to maintain you with bisket,

“ Poor John, and half a livery, to read moral virtue

“ And *lenten* lectures.” STEEVENS.

⁸ *We coted them on the way,*—] To cote is to overtake. I meet with this word in *The Return from Parnassus*, a comedy, 1606:

“ — marry we presently coted and outstript them.”

I have

Ham. He that plays the king, shall be welcome; his majesty shall have tribute of me: the adventurous knight shall use his foil, and target: the lover shall not sigh gratis; the humorous man shall end his part in peace: the clown shall make those laugh, whose lungs are tickled o' the sere; and the lady

I have observed the same verb to be used in several more of the old plays. So, in the Second Part of Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*, 1602:

" — quick observation scud

" To *cote* the plot." —

Again, in our author's *K. Henry VI.* P. III:

" Whose haughty spirit, winged with desire,

" Will *cote* my crown."

Again, in the 23d Song of Drayton's *Polyolbion*:

" Which dog first turns the hare, which first the other *coats*."

i. e. outtrips the other in the course.

Again, in Warner's *Albions England*, 1602, book 6. chap. 30:

" Was of the gods and goddesses for wantonness out-*coted*."

Again, in Drant's translation of Horace's *satires*, 1567:

" For he that thinks to *coat* all men, and all to overgoe."

Chapman has more than once used the word in his version of the 23d Iliad.

In the laws of coursing, says Mr. Tollet, " a *cote* is when a greyhound goes endways by the side of his fellow, and gives the hare a turn." This quotation seems to point out the etymology of the verb to be from the French *coté*, the side. STEEVENS.

" — shall end his part in peace:] After these words the folio adds, *the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' th' sere.*

WARBURTON.

This passage I have omitted, for the same reason, I suppose, as the other editors: I do not understand it. JOHNSON.

The clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickled o' th' sere, i. e. those who are asthmatical, and to whom laughter is most uneasy. This is the case (as I am told) with those whose lungs are tickled by the *sere* or *serum*: but about this passage I am neither very confident, nor very solicitous.

The word *seare* occurs as unintelligibly in an ancient *Dialogue betweene the Comen Secretary and Jealousy, touchynge the unfastenings of barlottes*, bl. l. no date:

" And wyll byde whyssperynge in the eare,

" Thyneke ye her taylor is not lyght of the *seare*."

The *sere* is likewise a part about a hawk. STEEVENS.

" — the lady shall, &c.] *The lady shall have no obstruction, unless from the lameness of the verse.* JOHNSON.

shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't.—What players are they?

Rof. Even those you were wont to take such delight in, the tragedians of the city.

Ham. How chances it, they travel? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Rof. ¹ I think, their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation.

Ham. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city? Are they so follow'd?

Rof. No, indeed, they are not.

² [*Ham.* How comes it? Do they grow rusty?

¹ *I think, their inhibition—*] I fancy this is transposed: Hamlet enquires not about an *inhibition*, but an *innovation*; the answer therefore probably was, *I think, their innovation, that is, their new practice of strolling, comes by means of the late inhibition.*

JOHNSON.

The drift of Hamlet's question appears to be this.—How chances it they travel?—i. e. *How happens it that they are become strollers?*—Their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.—i. e. *to have remained in a settled theatre, was the more honourable as well as the more lucrative situation.* To this, Rosencrantz replies—Their *inhibition* comes by means of the late *innovation*.—i. e. *their permission to act any longer at an established house is taken away, in consequence of the NEW CUSTOM of introducing personal abuse into their comedies.* Several companies of actors in the time of our author were silenced on account of this licentious practice. See a dialogue between *Comedy* and *Envy* at the conclusion of Mucedorus, 1598, as well as the Preludium to *Aristippus, or the Jovial Philosopher*, 1630, from whence the following passage is taken: “*Shews* having been long intermitted and forbidden by authority, for their abuses, could not be raised but by conjuring.” *Shew* enters, whipped by two furies, and the prologue says to her:

“—with tears wash off that guilty sin,

“Purge out those ill-digested dregs of wit,

“That use their ink to blot a spotless name:

“Let's have no one particular man traduc'd—

“— spare the persons &c.”

Alteration therefore in the order of the words seems to be quite unnecessary. STEEVENS.

² The lines enclosed in crotchets are in the folio of 1623, but not in the quarto of 1637, nor, I suppose, in any of the quartos.

JOHNSON.

Rof.

Rof. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace: But there is, fir, an aiery of children, ³ little yafes, that ⁴ cry out on the top of question, and

³ — *an Aiery of children, &c.*] Relating to the play-houses then contending, the *Bankſide*, the *Fortune*, &c. played by the children of his majeſty's chapel. POPE.

It relates to the young ſinging men of St. Paul's, concerning whoſe performances and ſucceſs in attracting the beſt company, I find the following paſſage in *Jack Drum's Entertainment, or Paſquil and Katherine*, 1601:

“ I ſaw the children of Powles laſt night;

“ And troth they pleas'd me pretty, pretty well,

“ The apes, in time, will do it handſomely.

— “ I like the audience that frequenteth there

“ With much applauſe: a man ſhall not be choak'd

“ With the ſtrench of garlick, nor be paſted

“ To the barmy jacket of a beer-brewer.

— “ 'Tis a good gentle audience, &c.”

It is ſaid in Richard Flecknoe's *Short Diſcourſe of the Engliſh Stage*, 1674, that “ both the children of the chappel and St. Paul's, acted playes, the one in White-Frier's, the other behinde the Convocation-houſe in Paul's; till people growing more pre- ciſe, and playes more licentious, the theatre of Paul's was quite ſuppreſt, and that of the children of the chappel converted to the uſe of the children of the revels.” STEEVENS.

Little Yafes, that cry out on the top of question,—] The poet here ſteps out of his ſubject to give a laſh at home, and ſneer at the prevailing faſhion of following plays performed by the children of the chapel, and abandoning the eſtabliſhed theatres. But why are they called *little Yafes*? As he firſt calls 'em an *Aiery* of children (now, an *Aiery* or *Eyery* is a hawk's or eagle's neſt); there is not the leaſt queſtion but we ought to reſtore—*little Eyafes*; i. e. young neſtlings, creatures juſt out of the egg. THEOBALD.

So, in the *Booke of Haukyng*, &c. bl. l. no date: “ And ſo hycauſe the beſt knowledge is by the eye, they be called *eyeffed*. Ye may alſo knowe an *eyeffe* by the paleneſs of the ſeres of her legges, or the ſere over the beake.” STEEVENS.

⁴ — *cry out on the top of question,*—] The meaning ſeems to be, they aſk a common queſtion in the higheſt notes of the voice.

JOHNSON:

I believe *queſtion*, in this place, as in many others, ſignifies *con- verſation, dialogue*. So, in *The Merchant of Venice*: “ — *Thinke* “ you *queſtion* with a Jew.” The meaning of the paſſage may therefore be—*Children that perpetually recite in the higheſt notes of voice that can be uttered.* STEEVENS.

are

are most tyrannically clapp'd for't: these are now the fashion; and so berattle the common stages, (so they call them) that many, wearing rapiers, are afraid of goose quills, and dare scarce come thither.

Ham. What, are they children? Who maintains 'em? how are they ⁴ escorted? ⁵ Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players, (as it is most like ⁶, if their means are no better) their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession ⁷?

Ros. 'Faith, there has been much to do on both sides; and the nation holds it no sin, to tarre them on to controversy ⁸: There was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question.

Ham. Is it possible?

Guil. O, there has been much throwing about of brains.

Ham. Do the boys carry it away?

Ros. Ay, that they do, my lord; ⁹ Hercules and his load too.]

⁴ — *escorted?*] Paid. From the French *escot*, a shot or reckoning. JOHNSON.

⁵ *Will they pursue the quality no longer than they can sing?*] Will they follow the *profession* of players no longer than they keep the voices of boys? So afterwards he says to the player, *Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.* JOHNSON.

⁶ — *most like,*—] The old copy reads, — *like most.* STEEVENS.

⁷ — *their writers do them wrong, &c.*] I should have been very much surprized if I had *not* found Ben Jonson among the writers here alluded to. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *to tarre them on to controversy.*] To provoke any animal to rage, is *to tarre him.* The word is said to come from the Greek *ταράσσω.* JOHNSON.

⁹ — *Hercules and his load too.*] *i. e.* they not only carry away the world, but the world-bearer too: alluding to the story of Hercules's relieving Atlas. This is humorous. WARBURTON.

The allusion may be to the *Globe* playhouse, on the Bankside, the sign of which was *Hercules carrying the Globe.* STEEVENS.

Ham.

Ham. ' It is not very strange: for my uncle is king of Denmark; and those, that would make mouths at him while my father liv'd, give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats a-piece, for his picture in little ². There is something ³ in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out.

[*Flourish of trumpets.*

Guil. There are the players.

Ham. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinour. Your hands. Come then: the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony: ⁴ let me comply with you in this garb; lest my extent to the players, which, I tell you, must shew fairly outward, should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome: but my uncle-father, and aunt-mother, are deceiv'd.

Guil. In what, my dear lord?

Ham. I am but mad north-north-west: when the wind is southerly ⁵, I know a hawk from a hand-saw ⁶.

Enter

¹ *It is not very strange: for mine uncle—*] I do not wonder that the new players have so suddenly risen to reputation, my uncle supplies another example of the facility with which honour is conferred upon new claimants. JOHNSON.

² — *in little.*] *i. e.* in miniature. So, in the *Noble Soldier*, 1634:

“ The perfection of all Spaniards, Mars *in little.*”

Again, in Drayton's *Shepherd's Sirens*:

“ Paradise *in little* done.”

Again, in Massinger's *New way to pay old debts*:

“ His father's picture *in little.*” STEEVENS.

³ *There is something—*] The old editions read,—*'tis hard*, there is, &c. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *let me comply—*] Hammer reads, *Let me compliment with you.* JOHNSON.

⁵ *When the wind is southerly, &c.*] So, in *Damon and Pythias*, 1582:

“ But I perceive now, either the *wind is at the south,*

“ Or else your tunge cleaveth to the rooffe of your mouth.”

STEEVENS.

⁶ — *I know a hawk from a hand-saw.*] This was a common proverbial speech. The *Oxford Editor* alters it to, *I know a hawk from an hen's foot*, as if the other had been a corruption of the

Enter Polonius.

Pol. Well be with you, gentlemen!

Ham. Hark you, Guildenstern;—and you too;—
at each ear a hearer: That great baby, you see there,
is not yet out of his swadling-clouts.

Ros. Haply, he's the second time come to them;
for, they say, an old man is twice a child.

Ham. I will prophesy, he comes to tell me of the
players; mark it.—You say right, sir: on monday
morning; 'twas then, indeed.

Pol. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Ham. My lord, I have news to tell you.—When
Roscius was an actor in Rome,——

Pol. The actors are come hither, my lord.

Ham. 7 Buz, buz!

Pol. Upon mine honour,——

Ham. 8 *Then came each actor on his ass,*——

Pol. The best actors in the world, either for tra-
gedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical,
historical-pastoral, [9 tragical-historical, tragical-comi-
cal,

players; whereas the poet found the proverb thus corrupted in the
mouths of the people: so that this critic's alteration only serves to
shew us the original of the expression. WARBURTON.

Similarity of sound is the source of many literary corruptions.
In Holborn we have still the sign of the *Bull and Gate*, which ex-
hibits but an odd combination of images. It was originally (as I
learn from the title page of an old play) the *Bullogne Gate*, *i. e.* one
of the gates of *Bullogne*; designed perhaps as a compliment to
Henry VIII. who took that place in 1544.

The *Bullogne mouth*, now the *Bull and Mouth*, had probably the
same origin, *i. e.* the *mouth of the harbour of Bullogne*. STEEVENS.

7 *Buz, buz!*—] Mere idle talk, the *buz* of the vulgar.

JOHNSON.

Buz, buz! are, I believe, only interjections employed to inter-
rupt Polonius. B. Jonson uses them often for the same purpose, as
well as Middleton in *A Mad World my Masters*, 1608. STEEVENS.

8 *Then came, &c.*] This seems to be a line of a ballad.

JOHNSON.

9 — *tragical &c.*] The words within the crotchets I have re-
covered from the folio, and see no reason why they were hitherto

omitted.

cal, historical-pastoral,] scene undividable, or poem unlimited: ¹ Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light: ² For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.

Ham. O *Jephtha, judge of Israel*,—what a treasure hadst thou!

Pol. What a treasure had he, my lord?

Ham. Why,—*One fair daughter, and no more,
The which he loved passing well.*

Pol. Still on my daughter. [*Aside.*

Ham. Am I not i' the right, old Jephtha?

Pol. If you call me Jephtha, my lord, I have a daughter, that I love passing well.

Ham. Nay, that follows not.

Pol. What follows then, my lord?

Ham. ³ Why, as *By lot, God wot*,—and then, you know, *It came to pass, as most like it was*,—⁴ The first

omitted. There are many plays of the age, if not of Shakespeare, that answer to these descriptions. STEEVENS.

¹ *Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.*] The tragedies of Seneca were translated into English by Tho. Newton, and published in 1581. One comedy of Plautus, viz. the *Mænachi*, was likewise translated and published in 1595. STEEVENS.

² *For the law of writ, and the liberty, these are the only men.*] All the modern editions have, *the law of wit, and the liberty*; but both my old copies have, *the law of writ*, I believe rightly. *Writ*, for *writing, composition*. *Wit* was not, in our author's time, taken either for *imagination*, or *acuteness*, or *both together*, but for *understanding*, for the faculty by which we *apprehend* and *judge*. Those who wrote of the human mind, distinguished its primary powers into *wit* and *will*. Ascham distinguishes: *boys* of tardy and of active faculties into *quick wits* and *slow wits*. JOHNSON.

³ Why, as *by lot, God wot*—&c.] The old song from which these quotations are taken, I communicated to Dr. Percy, who has honoured it with a place in the second and third editions of his *Reliques of ancient English Poetry*. In the books belonging to the Stationers' Company, there is a late entry of this Ballad among others. "*Jessa Judge of Israel*," p. 93. vol. iii. Dec. 14, 1624.

STEEVENS.

⁴ *the pious chanson*—] It is *pons chansons* in the first folio edition. The old ballads sung on bridges, and from thence called *Pons chansons*. Hamlet is here repeating *quods* of old songs. POPE.

first row of the pious chanſon will ſhew you more ;
for look, where ⁵ my abridgment comes.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, maſters ; welcome, all :—I am glad to ſee thee well :—welcome, good friends.—O, old friend ! Why, thy face is valanc'd ſince I ſaw thee laſt ; Com'ſt thou to beard me in Denmark ?—What ! my young lady and miſtreſs ! By-'r-lady, your ladyſhip is nearer to heaven, than when I ſaw you laſt, ⁶ by the altitude of a chioppine. Pray God,

It is *pious chanſons* in the quarto too. I know not whence the *rubric* has been brought, yet it has not the appearance of an arbitrary addition. The titles of old ballads were never printed red ; but perhaps *rubric* may ſtand for *marginal explanation*.

JOHNSON.

There are five large vols. of ballads in Mr. Pepys's collection in Magdalen college library, Cambridge, ſome as ancient as Henry VII's reign, and not one red letter upon any one of the titles. GRAY.

The firſt row of the RUBRIC will, &c.] The words, *of the rubric* were firſt inſerted by Mr. Rowe, in his edition in 1709. The old quartos in 1604, 1605, and 1611, read *pious chanſon*, which gives the ſenſe wanted, and I have accordingly inſerted it in the text.

The *pious chanſons* were a kind of *Chriſtmas carols*, containing ſome ſcriptural hiſtory thrown into looſe rhimes, and ſung about the ſtreets by the common people when they went at that ſeaſon to ſolicit alms. Hamlet is here repeating ſome ſcraps from a ſong of this kind, and when Polonius enquires what follows them, he refers him to the *firſt row* (*i. e.* diſtinction) of one of theſe, to obtain the information he wanted. STEEVENS.

⁵ —*my abridgment*—] He calls the players afterwards, *the brief chronicles of the time* ; but I think he now means only *thoſe who will ſhorten my talk*. JOHNSON.

An *abridgement* is uſed for a dramatic piece in the *Midſummer Night's Dream*, Act 5. Sc. 1.

“ Say what *abridgment* have you for this evening ?”

but it does not comodiouſly apply to this paſſage. STEEVENS.

⁶ —*by the altitude of a chioppine.*] A *chioppine* is a high ſhoe worn by the Italians, as in Tho. Heywood's *Challenge of Beauty*, Act 5. Song.

The

God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, 7 be not crack'd within the ring.—Masters, you are all welcome. We'll e'en to't ⁸ like French falconers, fly at any thing we see: We'll have a speech straight:

The Italian in her high *chopeene*,
 Scotch lass and lovely free too;
 The Spanish Donna, French Madame,
 He doth not feare to go to.

So, in Ben Jonson's *Cynthia's Revels*:

"I do wish myself one of my mistress's *Cioppini*." Another demands, why would he be one of his mistress's *Cioppini*? a third answers, "because he would make her *bigger*."

Again, in Decker's *Match me in London*, 1631: "I'm only taking instructions to make her a lower *Chopeene*; she finds fault that she's lifted too high."

Again, in Chapman's *Cæsar and Pompey*, 1631:

"— and thou shalt

"Have *Chopines* at commandement to any height

"Of life thou canst wish." STEEVENS.

⁷ — be not crack'd within the ring.] That is, *crack'd too much for use*. This is said to a young player who acted the parts of women. JOHNSON.

I find the same phrase in *The Captain*, by B. and Fletcher:

"Come to be married to my lady's woman,

"After she's *crack'd in the ring*."

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Magnetic Lady*:

"Light gold, and *crack'd within the ring*."

Again, in *Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks*, 1611:

"— not a penny the worse

"For a little use, *whole within the ring*."

Again, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, 1635: "You will not let my oaths be *crack'd in the ring*, will you? STEEVENS.

⁸ — like friendly falconers—] Hanmer, who has much illustrated the allusions to falconry, reads, *like French falconers*. JOHNSON.

French falconers is not a correction by Hanmer, but the reading of the first folio.

The amusement of falconry was much cultivated in France. In *All's well that ends well*, Shakespear has introduced an *astringer* or falconer at the French court. Mr. Tollet, who has mentioned the same circumstance, likewise adds that it is said in *Sir Tho. Browne's Tracts*, p. 116. that "the *French* seem to have been the first and noblest falconers in the western part of Europe;" and, that the *French* king sent over his falconers to shew that sport to King James the first." See Weldon's *Court of King James*.

STEEVENS.

Come, give us a taste of your quality; come, a passionate speech.

¹ *Play*. What speech, my good lord?

Ham. I heard thee speak me a speech once,—but it was never acted; or, if it was, not above once: for the play, I remember, pleas'd not the million; 'twas 'caviare to the general: but it was (as I receiv'd it, and others, whose judgments, in such matters, 'cried in the top of mine) an excellent play; well digested in the scenes, 'set down with as

^o *Caviare to the general*:] *Caviare* is the spawn of sturgeon pickled, and is imported hither from Russia. Sir J. HAWKINS.

The *Caviare* is not the spawn of the *sturgeon*, but of the *sterlett*, a fish of the sturgeon kind, which seldom grows above thirty inches long. It is found in many of the rivers of Russia, but the Volga produces the best and in the greatest plenty.

See Bell's *Journey from Petersburg to Ispahan*.

B. Jonson has ridiculed the introduction of these foreign delicacies in his *Cynthia's Revels*.—"He doth learn to eat Anchovies, Macaroni, Bovoli, Fagioli, and *Caviare*," &c.

Again, in the *Muse's Looking Glass*, by Randolph, 1638:

"—the pleasure that I take in spending it,

"To feed on *Caviare* and eat anchovies."

Again, in the *White Devil*, 1612:

"—one citizen

"Is lord of two fair manors that call'd you master,"

"Only for *Caviare*."

Again, in Marston's *What you will*, 1607:

"—a man can scarce eat good meat,

"Anchovies, *Caviare*, but he's fatired."

Mr. Malone observes that lord Clarendon uses *the general* for *the people*, in the same manner. And so by undervaluing many particulars (which they truly esteemed) as rather to be consented to than that *the general* should suffer." B. 5. p. 530. STEEVENS.

¹ —cried in the top of mine—] *i. e.* whose judgment I had the highest opinion of. WARBURTON.

I think it means only that *were higher than mine*. JOHNSON.

Whose judgment, in such matters, was in much higher vogue than mine. REVISAL.

Perhaps it means only—whose judgment was more clamorously delivered than mine. We still say of a bawling actor, that he speaks *on the top of his voice*. STEEVENS.

² —set down with as much modesty—] *Modesty*, for *simplicity*.
WARBURTON.

much

much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there were no fallets³ in the lines, to make the matter favoury; nor no matter in the phrase, ⁴ that might indite the author of affection: ⁵ but call'd it, an honest method; [as ⁶ wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine.] One speech in it I chiefly lov'd: 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido; and thereabout of it especially; where he speaks of Priam's slaughter: If it live in your memory, begin at this line; let me see, let me see;—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,—
'tis not so; it begins with Pyrrhus.

*The rugged Pyrrhus,—he, whose sable arms,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,—
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd*

³ — *there were no fallets, &c.*] Such is the reading of the old copies. I know not why the later editors continued to adopt the alteration of Mr. Pope, and read, no *fall*, &c.

Mr. Pope's alteration may indeed be in some degree supported by the following passage in *Decker's Satiromastix*: “—a proper'd troop of gallants, who shall dillicate every *unjust* line in their fly-blown comedies.” Though the other phrase was used as late as in the year 1665, in a *Banquet of Jestes*, &c. “—for junkets, joci; and for curious *fallers, sales.*” STEEVENS.

⁴ — *that might indite the author—*] *Indite, for convict.*

WARBURTON.

—*indite the author of affection:*] *i. e.* convict the author of being a fantastical *affected* writer. Maria calls Malvolio an *affected* ass, *i. e.* an *affected* ass; and in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Nathaniel tells the Pedant, that his reasons “*have been witty without affection.*”

Again, in the translation of *Castiglione's Courtier*, by Hobby, 1556: “Among the chief conditions and qualities in a waiting gentlewoman,” is “to see *affection* of curiosity.” STEEVENS.

⁵ — *but call'd it, an honest method,—*] Hamlet is telling how much his judgment differed from that of others. *One said, there was no fall in the lines, &c. but call'd it an honest method.* The author probably gave it, *But I call'd it an honest method, &c.* JOHNSON.

—*an honest method,—*] *Honest, for chaste.* WARBURTON.

⁶ — *wholesome &c.*] This passage was recovered from the quartos by Dr. Johnson. STEEVENS.

*With heraldry more dismal; head to foot
Now is he total gules⁷; horribly trick'd
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons;
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and a damned light
To their lord's murder: Roasted in wrath, and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the bellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks:—So, proceed you.*

Pol. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken; with good accent, and good discretion.

I Play. *Anon he finds him,
Striking too short at Greeks; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command: Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives; in rage, strikes wide;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base; and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear: for, lo! his sword
Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick:
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood;
And, like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.*

*But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless, and the orb below
As hush as death: anon, the dreadful thunder.*

⁷ Now is he total gules;] *Gules* is a term in the barbarous jargon peculiar to heraldry, and signifies *red*. Shakespeare has it again in *Timon*:

“With man's blood paint the ground; *gules, gules.*”

Heywood, in his *Second Part of the Iron Age*, has made a verb from it:

“—old Hecuba's reverend locks

“Be *gul'd* in slaughter.”— STEEVENS.

Doth rend the region: So, after Pyrrbus' pause,
A roused vengeance sets him new a-work;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,
With less remorse than Pyrrbus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.—

Out, out, thou strumpet Fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bowl the round nave down the bill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends!

Pol. This is too long.

Ham. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.—
Pr'ythee, say on:—He's for a jig, or a tale of baw-
dry, or he sleeps:—say on; come to Hecuba.

1 Play. But who, a woe! had seen^s the mobled
queen,—

Ham. The mobled queen?

^s —the mobled queen—] *Mobled* or *mabled* signifies *veiled*. So Sandys, speaking of the Turkish women, says, *their beads and faces are mabled in fine linen, that no more is to be seen of them than their eyes*. Travels. WARBURTON.

Mabled signifies *buddled*, *grossly covered*. JOHNSON.

The folio reads—the *inobled* queen; and in all probability it is the true reading. This pompous but unmeaning epithet might be introduced merely to make her Phrygian majesty appear more ridiculous in the following lines, where she is represented as wearing a clout on her head; or, *inobled* queen may however signify the queen *unobled*, i. e. divested of her former dignities. Mr. Upton would read *mob-led* queen: *Magna comitante cateroa*.

I am informed that *mab-led*, in Warwickshire (where it is pronounced *mob-led*) signifies *led astray by a will o' the wisp*, an *ignis fatuus*. STEEVENS.

“The *mobbled* queen.”

I meet with this word in *Shirley's Gentleman of Venice*,

“The moon does *mobble* up herself.” FARMER.

In the latter end of the reign of King Charles II. the rabble that attended the Earl of Shaftsbury's partizans was first called *mobile vulgus*, and afterwards, by contraction, the *mob*; and ever since, the word *mob* has become proper English. Consequently Mr. Upton's supposition must fall to the ground. TOLLET.

Pol.

Pol. That's good; mobled queen is good.

1 *Play.* Run bare-foot up and down, threat'ning the flames.

2 *With biffon rheum; a clout upon that head,*

Where late the diadem stood; and, for a robe,

About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,

A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up;

Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,

'Gainst fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd:

But if the gods themselves did see her then,

When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport

In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs;

The instant burst of clamour that she made,

(Unless things mortal move them not at all)

Would have made milch¹ the burning eyes of heaven,

And passion in the gods.

Pol. Look, wher he has not turn'd his colour, and has tears in's eyes.—Pr'ythee, no more.

Ham. 'Tis well; I'll have thee speak out the rest of this soon.—Good my lord, will you see the players well bestow'd? Do you hear, let them be well used; for they are the abstract, and brief chronicles, of the time: After your death, you were better have a bad epitaph, than their ill report while you live.

Pol. My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Ham. Odd's bodikins, man, much better: Use every man after his desert, and who shall 'scape whipping? Use them after your own honour and dignity: The less they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take them in.

¹ *With biffon rheum;—]* *Biffon* or *beefen*, i. e. blind. A word still in use in some parts of the north of England.

So in *Coriolanus*: "What harm can your *biffon* conspectuities glean out of this character?" STEEVENS.

² —made *milch*—] Drayton in the 13th Song of his *Polyolbion* gives this epithet to dew. "Exhaling the *milch* dew, &c."

STEEVENS.

Pol.

Pol. Come, sirs. [Exit Polonius.]

Ham. Follow him, friends: we'll hear a play to-morrow.—Dost thou hear me, old friend; can you play the murder of Gonzago?

1 Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, for a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines, which I would set down, and insert in't? could you not?

1 Play. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Very well. Follow that lord; and look you mock him not.—My good friends, [to *Ros.* and *Guild.*] I'll leave you 'till night: you are welcome to Elfinour.

Ros. Good, my lord. [Exeunt *Ros.* and *Guil.*]

Ham. Ay, so, God be wi' you:—Now I am alone.
O, what a rogue and peasant slave am I!
Is it not monstrous, that this player here,²
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit,
That, from her working,³ all his visage warm'd;

Tears

² *Is it not monstrous, that this player here,*] It should seem from the complicated nature of such parts as Hamlet, Lear, &c. that the time of Shakespeare had produced many excellent performers. He would scarce have taken the pains to form characters which he had no prospect of seeing represented with force and propriety on the stage. STEEVENS.

³ — *all his visage warm'd;*] This might do, did not the old quarto lead us to a more exact and pertinent reading, which is,
————— *visage wan'd;*

i. e. turn'd pale or wan. For so the visage appears when the mind is thus affectioned, and not warm'd or flush'd. WARBURTON.

The working of the soul, and the effort to shed tears, will give a colour to the actor's face, instead of taking it away. The visage is always warm'd and flush'd by any unusual exertion in a passionate speech; but no performer was ever yet found, I believe, whose feelings were of such exquisite sensibility as to produce paleness in any situation in which the drama could place him. But if players were indeed possessed of that power, there is no such

4 Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? And all for nothing!
For Hecuba!

5 What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
That he should weep for her? What would he do,
Had he the motive and ⁶ the cue for passion,
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave ⁷ the general ear with horrid speech;
Make mad the guilty, and appall the free,
Confound the ignorant; and amaze, indeed,
The very faculty of eyes and ears.

Yet I,
A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,

such circumstance in the speech uttered before Hamlet, as could introduce the *wanness* for which Dr. Warburton contends.

STEEVENS.

* "Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect." The word *aspect* (as Dr. Farmer very properly observes) was in Shakespeare's time accented on the second syllable. The folio exhibits the passage as I have printed it. STEEVENS.

⁵ *What's Hecuba to him, &c.*] The expression of Hamlet, *What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba*, is plainly an allusion to a passage in *Plutarch's Life of Pelopidas*, so exquisitely beautiful, and so pertinent, that I wonder it has never yet been taken notice of.

"And another time, being in a theatre where the tragedy of *Troades of Euripides* was played, he [Alexander Phœæus] went out of the theatre, and sent word to the players notwithstanding, that they should go on with their play, as if he had been still among them; saying, that he came not away for any misliking he had of them or of the play, but because he was ashamed his people should see him weep, to see the miseries of *Hecuba* and *Andromache* played, and that they never saw him pity the death of any one man, of so many of his citizens as he had caused to be slain." Sir JOHN HAWKINS.

This observation had been already made by Mr. Upton.

STEEVENS.

⁶ — *the cue for passion.*] The *hint*, the *direction*. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *the general ear*—] The ears of all mankind. So before, *Caviare to the general*, that is, to the *multitude*. JOHNSON.

Like

* Like John-a-dreams, * unpregnant of my cause,
 And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
 Upon whose property, and most dear life,
 † A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
 Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
 Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?
 Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lye i' the throat,
 As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this?
 Ha! Why I should take it: for it cannot be,
 But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
 To make oppression bitter; or, ere this,
 I should have fatted all the region kites
 With this slave's offal: Bloody, bawdy villain!

* Like *John-a-dreams*.—] Perhaps this name is corrupted. *John-a-drynes* seems to have been some well known character, as I have met with more than one allusion to him. So, in *Have with you to Saffron Walden, or Gabriel Harvey's Hunt is up*, by Nashe, 1596: "The description of that poor *John-a-drynes* his man, whom he had hired, &c." *John a Drynes* is likewise a foolish character in Whetstone's *Promus and Cassandra*, 1578, who is seized by informers, has not much to say in his defence, and is cheated out of his money. STEEVENS.

* — unpregnant of my cause,] Unpregnant, for having no due sense of. WAREURTON.

Rather, not quicken'd with a new desire of vengeance; not rous'd with revenge. JOHNSON.

† A damn'd defeat was made.—] Defeat, for destruction. WAREURTON.

Rather, *dispassionate*. JOHNSON.

The word *defeat* is very licentiously used by the old writers. Shakspeare in another play employs it yet more quaintly.— "Defeat my favour with an usurped beard;" and Middleton, in his comedy called *Any Thing for a Quiet Life*, says—"I have heard of your *defeat* made upon a mercer."

Again, in *Revenge for Honour*, by Chapman:

"That he might meantime make a sure *defeat*

"On our aged father's life."

Again, in the *Wits*, by Sir W. D'Avenant, 1637: "—Not all the skill I have can pronounce him free of the *defeat* upon my gold and jewels."

Again, in the *Isle of Gulls*, 1633: "My late shipwreck has made a *defeat* both of my friends and treasure." STEEVENS.

Remorseless,

Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, ² kindless villain!
³ Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave;
 That I, the son of a dear father murder'd,
 Prompted to my revenge by heaven, and hell,
 Must, like a whore, unpack my heart with words,
 And fall a cursing, like a very drab,
 A scullion ⁴!

Fie upon't! foh!

⁵ About, my brains! Hum! I have heard,
⁶ That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,
 Have by the very cunning of the scene
 Been struck so to the soul, that presently
 They have proclaim'd their malefactions:
 For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak
 With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
 Play something like the murder of my father,
 Before mine uncle: I'll observe his looks;
 I'll ⁷ tent him to the quick; ⁸ if he do blench,

I know

² — kindless—] *Unnatural.* JOHNSON.

³ *Why, what an ass am I? This is most brave,*] The folio reads,
 "O vengeance!

"Who? what an ass am I? Sure this is most brave."

STEEVENS.

⁴ *A scullion!*] Thus the folio. The quartos read, *a stallion.*

STEEVENS.

⁵ *About, my brain!*] *Wits, to your work. Brain, go about the present business.* JOHNSON.

This expression occurs in the Second Part of the *Iron Age*, by Heywood, 1632:

"My brain about again! for thou hast found

"New projects now to work on." STEEVENS.

⁶ ——— *I've heard,*

That guilty creatures, sitting at a play,] A number of these stories are collected together by Tho. Heywood, in his *Actor's Vindication.* STEEVENS.

⁷ — tent him—] Search his wounds. JOHNSON.

⁸ — if he but blench,] If he shrink, or start.

The word is used by B. and Fletcher in the *Wild Goose Chase*:

"Your sister, sir? Do you blench at that?"—

Again, in *The Night-walker*:

"Blench at no danger, though it be the gallows."

Again,

I know my course. The spirit, that I have seen,
 May be a devil; and the devil hath power
 To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and, perhaps,
 Out of my weakness, and my melancholy,
 (As he is very potent with such spirits)
 Abuses me to damn me: I'll have grounds
 More relative than this; The play's the thing,
 Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king. [*Exit.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

The PALACE.

*Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz,
 and Guildenstern.*

King. And can you by no drift of conference¹
 Get from him, why he puts on this confusion;
 Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
 With turbulent and dangerous lunacy?

Ros. He does confess, he feels himself distracted;
 But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guil. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded;
 But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
 When we would bring him on to some confession
 Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well?

Again in Gower, *De Confessione Anantis*, lib. vi. fol. 128:

"Without *bleuchinge* of mine &c." STEEVENS.

More relative than this;—] *Relative*, for *convictive*.

WAREURTON.

Convictive is only the consequential sense: *Relative* is, nearly
 related, closely connected. JOHNSON.

¹ — conference] The 1010 reads, *circumstance*. STEEVENS.

Ros.

Rof. Most like a gentleman.

Guil. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Rof. ² Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime?

Rof. Madam, it so fell out, that certain players
We ³ o'er-raught on the way: of these we told him;
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it: They are here about the court;
And, as I think, they have already order
This night to play before him.

Pol. 'Tis most true:
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties,
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart; and it doth much con-
tent me
To hear him so inclin'd.

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Rof. We shall, my lord. [*Exeunt Rof. and Guil.*]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too:
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither;
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here

² Niggard of question; but, of our demands,
Most free in his reply.] This is given as the description of
the conversation of a man whom the speaker found not forward to
be sounded; and who kept aloof when they would bring him to con-
fession: but such a description can never pass but at cross-purposes,
Shakespeare certainly wrote it just the other way:

Most free of question; but, of our demands,
Niggard in his reply.

That this is the true reading, we need but turn back to the pre-
ceding scene, for Hamlet's conduct, to be satisfied. WARBURTON.

³—o'er-raught on the way:—] Over-raught is over-reached,
that is, over-took. JOHNSON.

So, in Spenser's *Faery Queen*, b. 6. c. 3:

“ Having by chance a close advantage view'd,

“ He over-raught him, &c.” STEEVENS,

4 Affront Ophelia.

Her father, and myself (lawful espials⁵)
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,
We may of their encounter frankly judge;
And gather by him, as he is behav'd,
If't be the affliction of his love, or no,
That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you:—
And, for my part, Ophelia, I do wish,
That your good beauties be the happy cause
Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope, your virtues
Will bring him to his wonted way again,
To both your honours.

Oph. Madam, I wish it may. [*Exit Queen.*]

Pol. Ophelia, walk you here:—Gracious, so please
you,
We will bestow ourselves:—Read on this book;
[*To Oph.*]

That show of such an exercise may colour
Your loneliness.—⁶ We are oft to blame in this,—
⁷ 'Tis too much prov'd,—that, with devotion's visage,
And pious action, we do sugar o'er
The devil himself.

King. O, 'tis too true! how smart
A lash that speech doth give my conscience! [*Aside.*]

⁴ Affront Ophelia.] To *affront*, is only to meet directly. JOHNSON.
Affrontare. Ital. So, in the *Devil's Charter*, 1607:

“*Affronting* that port where proud Charles should enter.”

Again, in Sir W. D'Avenant's *Cruel Brother*, 1630:

“In sufferance *affronts* the winter's rage.” STEEVENS.

⁵ — *espials*] i. e. spies. So in one of our author's historical
plays: — as he march'd along

By your *espials* were discovered

Two mightier troops.

The words — *lawful espials*, are wanting in the folio.

STEEVENS.

⁶ Your loneliness.] Thus the folio. The first and second
quartos read *lonelinesse*. STEEVENS.

⁷ 'Tis too much prov'd, —] It is found by too frequent ex-
perience. JOHNSON.

The harlot's cheek, beauty'd with plastring art,
Is not ⁸ more ugly to the thing that helps it,
Than is my deed to my most painted word:
O heavy burden!

Pol. I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my lord.
[*Exeunt King, and Polonius.*]

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. ⁹ To be, or not to be, that is the question:—
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to suffer

The

⁸ — *more ugly to the thing that helps it,*] That is, compared with the thing that helps it. JOHNSON.

⁹ *To be, or not to be?*—] Of this celebrated soliloquy, which bursting from a man distracted with contrariety of desires, and overwhelmed with the magnitude of his own purposes, is connected rather in the speaker's mind, than on his tongue, I shall endeavour to discover the train, and to shew how one sentiment produces another.

Hamlet, knowing himself injured in the most enormous and atrocious degree, and seeing no means of redress, but such as must expose him to the extremity of hazard, meditates on his situation in this manner: *Before I can form any rational scheme of action under this pressure of distress,* it is necessary to decide, whether, *after our present state, we are to be, or not to be.* That is the question, which, as it shall be answered, will determine, *whether 'tis nobler,* and more suitable to the dignity of reason, *to suffer the outrages of fortune patiently,* or to take arms against them, and by opposing end them, *though perhaps with the loss of life.* If *to die, were to sleep, no more, and by a sleep to end the miseries of our nature,* such a sleep were *devoutly to be wished;* but if *to sleep in death, be to dream,* to retain our powers of sensibility, we must pause to consider, *in that sleep of death what dreams may come.* This consideration *makes calamity so long endured; for who would bear the vexations of life, which might be ended by a bare bodkin,* but that he is afraid of something in unknown futurity? This fear it is that gives efficacy to conscience, which, by turning the mind upon *this regard,* chills the ardour of resolution, checks the vigour of enterprise, and makes the current of desire stagnate in inactivity.

We may suppose that he would have applied these general observations to his own case, but that he discovered Ophelia.

JOHNSON.

I cannot but think that Dr. Johnson's explication of this passage, though excellent on the whole, is wrong in the outset.—He explains

The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune¹;
² Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
 And, by opposing, end them?—³ To die;—to sleep;—
 No more?—and, by a sleep, to say we end
 The heart-ach, and the thousand natural shocks
 That flesh is heir to,—’tis a consummation

plains the words—*To be, or not to be*—“Whether after our present state, we are to be, or not;” whereas the obvious sense of them—*To live, or to put an end to my life*, seems clearly to be pointed out by the following words, which are manifestly a paraphrase on the foregoing—*Whether ’tis nobler in the mind to suffer, &c. or to take arms*—The train of *Hamlet’s* reasoning, which Dr. *Jubastin* has so well explained, is sufficiently clear, which ever way the words are understood. MALONE.

¹ —arrows of outrageous fortune;] “Homines nos ut esse meminimus, ea lege natos, ut omnibus talis fortune proposita sit vita nostra.” Cic. Epist. Fam. v. 16. STEEVENS.

² Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,] Without question Shakespeare wrote,

—against assail of troubles,
i. e. assault. WARBURTON.

Mr. Pope proposed *seize*. I know not why there should be so much solicitude about this metaphor. Shakespeare breaks his metaphors often, and in this desultory speech there was less need of preserving them. JOHNSON.

The change which Mr. Pope would recommend, may be justified from a passage in *Romeo and Juliet*, scene the last:

You—to remove that *seize* of grief from her— STEEVENS.

Again, from another in *Troilus*:

“—Not even nature

“To whom all foreshows *lay seize*.”

The same metaphor is used by Marston, in the Second Part of *Antonio and Melinda*, 1602:

“Whom fretful galls of chance, stern fortune’s *seize*.”

Again, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

“She will not stay the *seize* of loving terms.”

Again, in our author’s 65th *Sonnet*:

“Or how shall summer’s honey-breath hold out

“Against the wrackful *seize* of bast’ring days—” MALONE.

³ — *To die,—to sleep,—*] This passage is ridiculed in the *Schoolful Lady* of B. and Fletcher, as follows:

“—be deceas’d, that is, asleep, for so the word is taken.

“*To sleep, to die; to die, to sleep*; a very figure, sir.” &c. &c.

STEEVENS.

Devoutly to be wish'd. To die;—to sleep;—
To sleep! perchance, to dream;—Ay, there's the
rub;

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this ⁴ mortal coil,
Must give us pause: There's the respect,
That makes calamity of so long life:
For who would bear ⁵ the whips and scorns of time,
The

⁴ — *mortal coil,*] i. e. turmoil, bustle. WARBURTON.

⁵ — *the whips and scorns of time,*] The evils here complained of are not the product of time or duration simply, but of a corrupted age or manners. We may be sure, then, that Shakespeare wrote:

— *the whips and scorns of th' time.*

And the description of the evils of a corrupt age, which follows, confirms this emendation. WARBURTON.

I doubt whether the corruption of this passage is not more than the editor has suspected. *Whips and scorns* have no great connexion with one other, or with *time*: *whips and scorns* are evils of very different magnitude, and though at all *times* *scorn* may be endured, yet the *times* that put men ordinarily in danger of *whips* are very rare. Falstaff has said, that the *courtiers would whip him with their fine wits*; but I know not that *whip* can be used for a *scoff* or *insult*, unless its meaning be fixed by the whole expression.

I am afraid lest I should venture too far in correcting this passage. If *whips* be retained, we may read,

For who would bear the whips and scorns of tyrants.

But I think that *quip*, a *sneer*, a *sarcastm*, a contemptuous jest, is the proper word, as suiting very exactly with *scorn*. What then must be done with *time*? it suits no better with the new reading than with the old, and *tyrant* is an image too bulky and serious. I read, but not confidently:

For who would bear the quips and scorns of title.

It may be remarked, that Hamlet, in his enumeration of miseries, forgets, whether properly or not, that he is a prince, and mentions many evils to which inferior stations only are exposed. JOHNSON.

I think we might venture to read the *whips and scorns o' th' times*, i. e. of times satirical as the age of Shakespeare, which probably furnished him with the idea.

In the reigns of Elizabeth and James (particularly in the former) there was more illiberal private abuse and peevish satire published, than in any others I ever knew of, except the present one. I have many of these publications, which were almost all pointed at individuals.

Daniel,

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 The pangs of despis'd love, ' the law's delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself ' might his quietus make

With

Daniel, in his *Mysophibus*, 1599, has the same complaint:

“ Do you not see these pamphlets, *libels*, rhymes,
 “ These strange confused tumults of the mind,
 “ Are grown to be the sickness of these times,
 “ The great disease inflicted on mankind?”

Whips and *scorns* are surely as inseparable companions, as public punishment and infamy.

Quips, the word which Dr. Johnson would introduce, is derived, by all etymologists, from *whips*.

Hamlet is introduced as reasoning on a question of general concernment. He therefore takes in all such evils as could befall mankind in general, without considering himself at present as a prince, or wishing to avail himself of the few exemptions which high place might once have claimed.

In part of K. James I's *Entertainment passing to his Coronation*, by Ben Jonson and Decker, is the following line, and note on that line:

“ And first account of years, of months, OF TIME.”

“ By time we understand the present.” This explanation affords the sense for which I have contended, and without alteration.

STEEVENS.

“ — of despis'd love,] The folio reads—Of *dispriz'd* love.

STEEVENS.

' — might his *Quietus* make

With a bare *bodkin*?—] The first expression probably alluded to the writ of discharge, which was formerly granted to those barons and knights who personally attended the king on any foreign expedition. This discharge was called a *Quietus*.

It is at this time the term for the acquittance which every sheriff receives on settling his accounts at the exchequer.

The word is used for the discharge of an account, by Webster, in his *Dutchess of Massy*, 1623:

“ You had the trick in audit time to be sick

“ Till I had sign'd your *Quietus*.”

Again,

“ And 'cause you shall not come to me in debt

“ (Being now my steward) here upon your lips

“ I sign your *Quietus*.”

A *bodkin* was, I believe, the ancient term for a small dagger. Gascoigne, speaking of *Julius Caesar*, says,

T ;

“ A

With a bare bodkin? who would fardels bear,
 8 To groan and sweat under a weary life;
 But that the dread of something after death,—
 The undiscover'd country, from whose bourn
 No traveller returns⁹— puzzles the will;

“ At last with *bodkins*, dub'd and doust to death

“ All all his glory vanish'd with his breath.”

In the margin of *Stowe's Chronicle*, edit. 1614, it is said, that Cæsar was slain with *bodkins*; and in *The Muses' Looking-glass*, by Randolph, 1638:

“ *Apb.* A rapier's but a *bodkin*.

“ *Deil.* And a *bodkin*

“ Is a most dang'rous weapon; since I read

“ Of Julius Cæsar's death, I durst not venture

“ Into a taylor's shop for fear of *bodkins*.”

Again, in *The Custom of the Country*, by B. and Fletcher:

“ — Out with your *bodkin*,

“ Your pocket-dagger, your stiletto.”—

Again, in *Sappho and Phao*, 1591: “— there will be a desperate fray between two, made at all weapons, from the brown bill to the *bodkin*.”

Again in *Chaucer*, as he is quoted at the end of a pamphlet called the *Serpent of Division*, &c. *whereunto is annexed the Tragedy of Gorboduc*, &c. 1591:

“ With *bodkins* was Cæsar Julius

“ Murdered at Rome, of Brutus Crassus.” STEEVENS.

⁸ *To groan and sweat*—] All the old copies have, *to grunt and sweat*. It is undoubtedly the true reading, but can scarcely be borne by modern ears. JOHNSON.

This word occurs in the *Death of Zoroas*, a fragment in blank verse, printed at the end of *Lord Surry's Poems*:

“ — none the charge could give;

“ Here *grunts*; here grones; echwhere strong youth is spent.”

And *Stanyburst* in his translation of *Virgil*, 1582, for *supremum conuenit* gives us: “— for fighting it *grunts*.” STEEVENS.

⁹ *That undiscover'd country, from whose bourn*

No traveller returns—] This has been cavilled at by Lord Orrery and others, but without reason. The idea of a *traveller* in Shakespeare's time, was of a person who gave an account of his adventures. Every voyage was a *Discovery*. John Taylor has “ *A Discovery by sea from London to Salisbury*.” FARMER.

Again, *Marston's Insatiate Countess*, 1603:

“ — wrestled with death,

“ From whose stern cave none tracks a backward path.”

Qui nunc it per iter tenebricosum

Illic unde negant redire quenquam. *Catullus*. STEEVENS.

And

And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
 Than fly to others that we know not of?
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
 And thus the native hue of resolution
 Is sickly'd o'er with the pale cast of thought;
 And enterprizes of great pith¹ and moment,
 With this regard, their currents turn awry²,
 And lose the name of action.—Soft you, now!

[*Seeing Ophelia.*

The fair Ophelia?—³ Nymph, in thy orisons
 Be all my sins remember'd.

Oph. Good my lord,

How does your honour for this many a day?

Ham. I humbly thank you; well.

Oph. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
 That I have longed long to re-deliver;
 I pray you, now receive them.

Ham. No, not I;

I never gave you aught.

Oph. My honour'd lord, you know right well,
 you did;

And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
 As made the things more rich: their perfume lost,
 Take these again; for to the noble mind
 Rich gifts wax poor, when givers prove unkind.
 There, my lord.

Ham. Ha, ha! are you honest?

Oph. My lord?

Ham. Are you fair?

¹ — great pith] Thus the folio. The quartos read, of great pith. STEEVENS.

² — turn awry,] Thus the quartos. The folio—turn away.

STEEVENS.

³ — Nymph, in thy orisons, &c.] This is a touch of nature. Hamlet, at the sight of Ophelia, does not immediately recollect, that he is to personate madness, but makes her an address grave and solemn, such as the foregoing meditation excited in his thoughts. JOHNSON.

Opb. What means your lordship ?

Ham. ⁴ That, if you be honest, and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Opb. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce than with honesty ?

Ham. Ay, truly ; for the power of beauty will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into its likeness : this was some time a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love you once.

Opb. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Ham. You should not have believ'd me : for virtue cannot so inoculate ⁵ our old stock, but we shall relish of it : I lov'd you not.

Opb. I was the more deceiv'd.

Ham. Get thee to a nunnery ; Why would'st thou be a breeder of sinners ? I am myself indifferent honest ; but yet I could accuse me of such things, that it were better, my mother had not borne me : I am very proud, revengeful, ambitious ; with more offences ⁶ at my beck, than I have thoughts to put

⁴ *That if you be honest and fair, you should admit no discourse to your beauty.*] This is the reading of all the modern editions, and is copied from the quarto. The folio reads, your honesty *should admit no discourse to your beauty.* The true reading seems to be this, *If you be honest and fair, you should admit your honesty to no discourse with your beauty.* This is the sense evidently required by the process of the conversation. JOHNSON.

⁵ —*inoculate*] This is the reading of the first folio. The first quarto reads *euocutat* ; the second, *evacuat* ; and the third, *evacuate.* STEEVENS.

⁶ —*at my beck,*—] That is, *always ready to come about me.*

With more offences at my beck, than I have thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in.] What is the meaning of *thoughts to put them in* ? A word is dropt out. We should read,

——— *thoughts to put them in name.*

This was the progress. The offences are first conceived and named, then projected to be put in act, then executed.

WARBURTON.

To put a thing into thought, is to think on it. JOHNSON.

them in, imagination to give them shape, or time to act them in: What should such fellows as I do crawling between earth and heaven? We are arrant knaves, all; believe none of us: Go thy ways to a nunnery. Where's your father?

Opb. At home, my lord.

Ham. Let the doors be shut upon him; that he may play the fool no where but in's own house. Farewel.

Opb. O, help him, you sweet heavens!

Ham. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague for thy dowry; Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery; farewell: Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool; for wise men know well enough, what monsters you make of them. To a nunnery, go; and quickly too. Farewel.

Opb. Heavenly powers, restore him!

Ham. ⁷ I have heard of your paintings too well enough; God hath given you one face, and you make yourselves another: you jig, you amble, and you lisp, and nick-name God's creatures, and ⁸ make

⁷ *I have heard of your paintings too, well enough, &c.]* This is according to the quarto; the folio, for *painting*, has *prattlings*, and for *face*, has *pace*, which agrees with what follows, *you jig, you amble*. Probably the author wrote both. I think the common reading best. JOHNSON.

I would continue to read, *paintings*, because these destructive aids of beauty seem, in the time of Shakespeare, to have been general objects of satire. So, in Drayton's *Mooncalf*:

“ No sooner got the teens,
 “ But her own natural beauty she disdain's;
 “ With oyls and broths most venomous and base
 “ She plaisters over her well-favour'd face;
 “ And those sweet veins by nature rightly plac'd
 “ Wherewith she seems that white skin to have lac'd,
 “ She soon doth alter; and with fading blue,
 “ Bianching her bosom, she makes others new.”

STEEVENS.

⁸ *- make your wantonness your ignorance.]* You mistake by *wanton* affectation, and pretend to mistake by *ignorance*. JOHNSON.

your

your wantonness your ignorance: Go to; I'll no more on't; it hath made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages: those that are married already, all but one, shall live; the rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. [*Exit Hamlet.*]

Oph. O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!
 ' The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue,
 sword;

The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
 The glass of fashion, and ¹ the mould of form,
 The observ'd of all observers! quite, quite down!
 And I, of ladies most deject ² and wretched,
 That suck'd the honey of his music vows,
 Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
 Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune ³ and harsh;
 That unmatch'd form and feature ⁴ of blown youth,
 Blasted with ecstasy ⁵: O, woe is me!

To

⁹ *The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword;*] The poet certainly meant to have placed his words thus:

The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword;
 otherwise the excellence of *tongue* is appropriated to the *soldier*, and the *scholar* wears the *sword* WARNER.

This regulation is needless. So, in *Tarquin and Lucrece*:

"Princes are the *glass*, the *school*, the *book*,
 "Where subjects eyes do *learn*, do *read*, do *look*."

And in *Quintilian*: "Mulum agit sexus, ætas, conditio; ut in *facminis, senibus, pupillis, liberos, parentes, conjuges, alligantibus*."

FARMER.

¹ — *the mould of form,*] The model by whom all endeavoured to form themselves. JOHNSON.

² — *most deject*] So, in Heywood's *Silver Age*, 1613;

"— What knight is that

"So passionately *deject*?" STEEVENS.

³ — *out of tune*] Thus the folio. The quarto—out of *time*.

STEEVENS.

⁴ — *and feature*] Thus the folio. The quartos read *stature*.

STEEVENS.

⁵ — *with ecstasy.*] The word *ecstasy* was anciently used to signify some degree of alienation of mind.

So G. Douglas, translating—*stetit acri fixa dolore*:

"In *ecstasy* she stood, and mad almost."

To have seen what I have seen, see what I see!

Re-enter King, and Polonius.

King. Love! his affections do not that way tend;
Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
Was not like madness. There's something in his soul,
O'er which his melancholy sits on brood;
And, I do doubt, the hatch, and the disclose,
Will be some danger; Which for to prevent,
I have, in quick determination,
Thus set it down; He shall with speed to England,
For the demand of our neglected tribute:
Haply, the seas, and countries different,
With variable objects, shall expel
This something-settled matter in his heart;
Whereon his brains still beating, puts him thus
From fashion of himself. What think you on't?

Pol. It shall do well: But yet do I believe
The origin and commencement of his grief
Sprung from neglected love.—How now, Ophelia?
You need not tell us what lord Hamlet said;
We heard it all.—My lord, do as you please;
But, if you hold it fit, after the play,
Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
To shew his grief; let her be round with him⁶;
And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
Of all their conference: If she find him not,
To England send him; or confine him, where
Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so:
Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. [*Exeunt.*

So, in *Macbeth*:

“ ——— on the torture of the mind to lie

“ In restless *ecstasy.*” STEEVENS.

⁶ — *be round with him*;] To be *roued* with a person, is to reprimand him with freedom. So, in *A Mad World my Masters*, by Middleton, 1640: “She's *round* with her faith.” MALONE.

SCENE

A Hall.

Enter Hamlet, and two or three of the players.

Ham. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounc'd it to you, trippingly on the tongue: but if you mouth it, as many of our players do, I had as lieve the town-crier spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with your hand, thus; but use all gently: for in the very torrent, tempest, and (as I may say) whirlwind of your passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul, to hear a robustious perriwig-pated ⁷ fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of ⁸ the groundlings;

⁷ — *perriwig-pated*] This is a ridicule on the quantity of false hair worn in Shakespeare's time, for wigs were not in common use till the reign of Charles II. In the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Julia* says—"I'll get me such a colour'd *perriwig*."

Goff, who wrote several plays in the reign of James I. and was no mean scholar, has the following lines in his tragedy of the *Courageous Turk*, 1632: "— How now, you heavens,

" Grow you so proud you must needs put on curl'd locks,

" And clothe yourselves in *perriwigs* of fire?"

Players; however, seem to have worn them most generally. So, in *Every Woman in her Humour*, 1609: "— as none wear hoods but monks and ladies; and feathers but fore-horses, &c;— none *perriwigs* but *players* and pictures. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *the groundlings*;—] The meaner people then seem to have sat below, as they now sit in the upper gallery, who, not well understanding poetical language, were sometimes gratified by a mimical and mute representation of the drama, previous to the dialogue. JOHNSON.

Before each act of the tragedy of *Jocasta*, translated from *Euripides*, by Geo. Gascoigne and Fra. Kinwelmersh, the order of these dumb shews is very minutely described. This play was presented at Gray's Inn by them in 1566. The mute exhibitions included in it are chiefly emblematical, nor do they display a

lings; who, for the most part, are capable of nothing but 'inexplicable dumb shews, and noise: I

picture of one single scene which is afterwards performed on the stage. In some other pieces I have observed, that they serve to introduce such circumstances as the limits of a play would not admit to be represented.

Thus in *Herod and Antipater*, 1622:

" ——— *Let me see*

" *Entreat your worthy patience to contain*

" *Much in imagination; and, what words*

" *Cannot have time to utter, let your eyes,*

" *Out of this DUMB SHOW, tell your memories."*

In short, dumb shews sometimes supplied deficiencies, and, at others, filled up the space of time which was necessary to pass while business was supposed to be transacted in foreign parts. With this method of preserving one of the unities, our ancestors appear to have been satisfied. Ben Jonson mentions the *groundlings* with equal contempt. "The understanding gentlemen of the *ground* here."

Again, in *The Case is Alter'd*, 1609:—"a rude barbarous crew that have no brains, and yet *grounded* judgments; they will hiss any thing that mounts above their *grounded* capacities."

Again, in *Lady Alimony*, 1659: "Be your stage-curtains artificially drawn, and so covertly shrowded that the *squint-ey'd groundling* may not peep in?" In our early play-houses the pit had neither floor nor benches. Hence the term of *groundlings* for those who frequented it.

The *groundling*, in its primitive signification, means a fish which always keeps at the bottom of the water. STEEVENS.

' — *inexplicable dumb shews,*] I believe the meaning is, *shews, without words to explain them.* JOHNSON.

Rather, I believe, shews which are too confusedly conducted to explain themselves.

I meet with one of these in Heywood's play of the *Four Prentices of London*, 1632, where the *Professor* says,

"I must entreat your patience to forbear

"While we do feast your eye and starve your ear.

"For in *dumb shews*, which were they writ at large

"Would ask a long and tedious circumstance,

"Their infant fortunes I will soon express:" &c.

Then follow the *dumb shews*, which well deserve the character Hamlet has already given of this species of entertainment, as may be seen from the following passage: "Enter Tancred, with Bella Franca richly attired, she *somewhat assisting him*, though she makes no *shew* of it." Surely this may be called an *inexplicable dumb shew.*"

STEEVENS.

would

would have such a fellow whipp'd for o'er-doing
 1 Termagant; it out-herods Herod 2: Pray you,
 avoid it.

1 Play.

2 —Termagant;—] *Termagant* was a Saracen deity, very clamorous and violent in the old moralities. PERCY.

Termagant is mentioned by Spenser in his *Fairy Queen*, and by Chaucer in *The Tale of Sir Topas*; and by B. and Fletcher in *King or no King*, as follows:

“ This would make a faint swear like a soldier, and a soldier
 like *Termagant*.”

Again, in *Ram-Alley, or Merry Tricks*, 1611:

“ — swears, God blefs us,

“ Like a very *Termagant*.”

Again, in *The Picture*, by Massinger:

“ — a hundred thousand Turks

“ Assail'd him, every one a *Termagant*.” STEEVENS.

2 — out-herods Herod:] The character of *Herod* in the ancient mysteries was always a violent one:

See the *Coventriæ Ludus* among the Cotton Mss. Vespasian D. VIII.

“ Now I regne lyk a kyng arayd ful rych,

“ Rollyd in rynggs and robys of array,

“ Dukys with dentys I dryve into the dych;

“ My dedys be ful dowty demyd be day.”

Again, in the *Chester Whitsun Plays*, Ms. Harl. 1013:

“ I kyng of kynges non soe keene,

“ I soveraigne fir as well is seene,

“ I tyrant that maye bouth take and teene

“ Castell tower and towne.

“ I welde this worlde withouten were,

“ I beate all those unbuxome beene;

“ I drive the devills alby dene

“ Deepe in hell a downe.

“ For I am kinge of all mankinde,

“ I byd, I beate, I lose, I bynde,

“ I master the moone, take this in mynde

“ That I am most of mighte.

“ I ame the greatest above degree

“ That is, that was, or ever shall be;

“ The sonne it dare not shine on me,

“ And I byd him goe downe.

“ No raine to fall shall now be free,

“ Nor no lorde have that liberty

“ That dare abyde and I byd fleey,

“ But I shall crake his crowne.”

See the *Vintner's Play*, p. 67.

Chaucer

1 *Play.* I warrant your honour.

Ham. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor: suit the action to the word, the word to the action; with this special observance, that you o'er-step not the modesty of nature: For any thing so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first, and now, was, and is, to hold as 'twere the mirror up to nature; to shew virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very ³ age and body of the time his form and ⁴ pressure. Now this, over-done, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one, must, in your allowance, o'er-weigh a whole theatre of others. O, there be players ⁵, that I have seen play,—and heard others praise, and that highly,—⁶ not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent

Chaucer describing a parish clerk, in his *Miller's Tale*, says,

“ He playith *Herode* on a skaffold high.”

The parish clerks and other subordinate ecclesiastics appear to have been our first actors, and to have represented their characters on distinct pulpits or *scaffolds*. Thus, in one of the stage-directions to the 27th pageant in the Coventry collection already mentioned; “What tyme that procesioun is entered into y^t place, and the Herowdys takyn his *schaffalde*, and Annas and Cayphas their *schaffaldys*, &c.” STEEVENS.

³ —age and body of the time,—] The *age of the time* can hardly pass. May we not read, the *face* and *body*, or did the author write, the *page*? The *page* suits well with *form* and *pressure*, but ill with *body*. JOHNSON.

To exhibit the *form and pressure* of the *age of the time*, is, to represent the manners of the time suitable to the period that is treated of, according as it may be ancient, or modern. STEEVENS.

⁴ —*pressure*—] Resemblance, as in a *print*. JOHNSON.

⁵ —*O, there be players*] I would read thus: “There be players, that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly (not to speak profanely) that neither having the accent nor the gait of Christian, Pagan, nor *Mussulman*, have so strutted and bellowed, that I thought some of nature's journeymen had made *the men*, and not made them well, &c.” FARMER.

⁶ —(not to speak it profanely)—] *Profanely* seems to relate, not to the praise which he has mentioned, but to the censure which he

accent of christians, nor the gait of christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted, and bellow'd, that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men, and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably.

1 Play. I hope, we have reform'd that indifferently with us.

Ham. O, reform it altogether. And let those, that play your clowns, speak no more than is set down for them⁷: For there be of them, that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too; though, in the mean time, some necessary question of the play be then to be considered: that's villainous; and shews a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready.—

[*Excunt Players.*]

Enter Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

How now, my lord? will the king hear this piece of work?

he is about to utter. Any gross or indelicate language was called *profane*. JOHNSON.

⁷ —*Speak no more than is set down for them.*] So, in *The Antipodes*, by Brome, 1638:

“— you, sir, are incorrigible, and

“ Take licence to yourself to add unto

“ Your parts, your own free fancy, &c.”

— “ That is a way, my lord, has been allow'd

“ On elder stages, to move mirth and laughter.”

— “ Yes, in the days of *Tarlton*, and of *Kempe*,

“ Before the stage was purg'd from barbarism, &c.”

Stowe informs us (p. 697, edit. 1615), that among the twelve players who were sworn the queen's servants in 1583, “ were two rare men, viz. Thomas Wilson, for a quicke delicate refined *extemporall witt*; and Richard Tarleton, for a wondrous plentiful, pleasant *extemporall witt*, &c.”

Again, in *Tarlton's Newes from Purgatory*: “— I absented myself from all plaies, as wanting that merrye Roscius of plaiers that famosed all comedies so with his pleasant and *extemporall invention*.” STEEVENS.

Pol.

Pol. And the queen too, and that presently.

Ham. Bid the players make haste.—[*Exit Polonius.*
Will you two help to hasten them?

Bob. Ay, my lord. [*Exeunt Ros. and Guil.*

Ham. What, ho; Horatio!

Enter Horatio.

Hor. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Ham. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

Hor. O, my dear lord,—

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter:
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast, but thy good spirits,
To feed, and cloath thee? Why should the poor be
flatter'd?

No, let the candy'd tongue lick absurd pomp;
And crook ⁸ the pregnant hinges of the knee,
Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear?
Since ⁹ my dear soul was mistress of her choice,
And could of men distinguish ¹, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself: for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man, that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks: and blest are those,
² Whose blood and judgment are so well co-mingled,

⁸ — *the pregnant hinges of the knee,*] I believe the sense of *pregnant* in this place is, *quick, ready, prompt.* JOHNSON.

⁹ — *my dear soul*—] Perhaps, *my dear soul.* JOHNSON:
Dear soul is an expression equivalent to the *φίλα ψυχήν, φίλον ψυχήν*, of Homer. STEEVENS.

¹ *And could of men distinguish, her election*
Hath seal'd thee for herself:] Thus the folio. The quarto thus:

And could of men distinguish her election,
It hath seal'd thee, &c. STEEVENS.

² *Whose blood and judgment*—] According to the doctrine of the four humours, *desire and confidence* were seated in the blood, and *judgment* in the phlegm, and the due mixture of the humours made a perfect character. JOHNSON.

That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
 To sound what stop she please: Give me that man
 That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
 In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
 As I do thee.—Something too much of this.—
 There is a play to-night before the king;
 One scene of it comes near the circumstance,
 Which I have told thee, of my father's death.
 I pr'ythee, when thou see'st that act a-foot,
 Even with the very comment of thy soul
 Observe my uncle: if his occulted guilt
 Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen;
 And my imaginations are as foul
 As Vulcan's stithy: Give him heedful note:
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face;
 And, after, we will both our judgments join
 In censure of his seeming.

Hor. Well, my lord:

If he steal aught, the whilst this play is playing,
 And scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Ham. They are coming to the play; I must be idle:
 Get you a place.

Danish march. A flourish.

*Enter King, Queen, Polonius, Ophelia, Rosencrantz,
 Guildenstern, and others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

³ —*Vulcan's stithy.*—] *Stithy* is a smith's *anvil*. JOHNSON.
 So, in *Troilus and Cressida*:

Now by the *forge* that *stithied* Mars's helm.

So, in Greene's *Card of Fancy*, 1608:—"determined to strike
 on the *stith* while the iron was hot."

Again, in Chaucer's celebrated description of the *Temple of
 Mars*, late edit. ver. 2028:

"—the smith

"That forgeth sharpe swerdes on his *stith*." STEEVENS.

Ham.

Ham. Excellent, i' faith; of the camelion's dish: I eat the air, promise-cramm'd: You cannot feed capons so.

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine.

Ham. No, nor mine now.—My lord, you play'd once i' the university, you say? *To Polonius.*

Pol. That did I, my lord: and was accounted a good actor.

Ham. And what did you enact?

Pol. I did enact Julius Cæsar: I was kill'd i' the Capitol; Brutus kill'd me.

Ham. It was a brute part of him^s, to kill so capital a calf there.—Be the players ready?

Ros. Ay, my lord; ⁶ they stay upon your patience.

Queen. Come hither, my dear Hamlet, sit by me.

Ham. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Pol. O hó! do you mark that? *[To the king.]*

Ham. Lady, shall I lie in your lap?

[Lying down at Ophelia's feet.]

⁴ — *nor mine now.*] A man's words, says the proverb, are his own no longer than he keeps them unspoken. JOHNSON.

⁵ — *It was a brute part of him,*—] Sir John Harrington, in his *Metamorphosis of Ajax*, 1596, has the same quibble: "O brave-minded Brutus! but this I must truly say, they were two *brutish parts* both of him and you; one to kill his sons for treason, the other to kill his father in treason." STEEVENS.

⁶ — *they stay upon your patience.*] May it not be read more intelligibly, *They stay upon your pleasure.* In *Macbeth* it is:

"Noble Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure." JOHNSON.

⁷ — *at Ophelia's feet.*] To lie at the feet of a mistress during any dramatic representation, seems to have been a common act of gallantry. So, in the *Queen of Corinth*, by B. and Fletcher:

"Ushers her to her coach, lies at her feet"

"At solemn masques, applauding what she laughs at."

Again, in Gascoigne's *Greene Knight's farewell to Fancie*:

"To lie along in ladies lapses, &c."

This fashion which Shakespeare probably designed to ridicule by appropriating it to Hamlet during his dissembled madness, is likewise exposed by Decker, in his *Guls Hornbook*, 1609.

See an extract from it among the prefaces. STEEVENS.

Oph. No, my lord.

Ham. I mean, my head upon your lap⁸?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

*Ham.*⁹ Do you think, I meant country matters?

Oph. I think nothing, my lord.

Ham. That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs.

Oph. What is, my lord?

Ham. Nothing.

Oph. You are merry, my lord.

Ham. Who, I?

Oph. Ay, my lord.

Ham. O! your only jig-maker¹. What should a man do, but be merry? for, look you, how cheerfully my mother looks, and my father died within these two hours.

Oph. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Ham. So long?² Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens! die

⁸ *I mean, &c.*] This speech and *Ophelia's* reply to it, are omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

⁹ *Do you think I meant country matters?*] I think we must read, *Do you think I meant country manners?* Do you imagine that I meant to sit in your lap, with such rough gallantry as clowns use to their lasses? JOHNSON.

¹ — *your only jig-maker.*] There may have been some humour in this passage, the force of which is now diminished:

“ — many gentlemen

“ Are not, as in the days of understanding,

“ Now satisfied without a jig, which since

“ They cannot, with their honour, call for after

“ The play, they look to be serv'd up in the middle.”

Changes, or Love in a Maze, by Shirley, 1632.

In the *Hog has lost his Pearl, 1614*, one of the players comes to solicit a gentleman to write a jig for him. A jig was not in Shakespeare's time a dance, but a ludicrous dialogue in metre, and of the lowest kind, like *Hamlet's* conversation with *Ophelia*. Many of these jiggs are entered in the books of the Stationers' Company: — “*Philips his Jigg of the slyppers, 1595. Kempe's Jigg of the Kitchen-stuff-woman, 1595.*” STEEVENS.

² — *Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables.* —] The conceit of these words is not taken. They are an ironical

die two months ago, and not forgotten yet? Then there's hope, a great man's memory may outlive his life half a year: But, by'r-lady, he must build churches then: or else shall he suffer³ not thinking on,

ironical apology for his mother's cheerful looks: two months was long enough in conscience to make any dead husband forgotten. But the editors, in their nonsensical blunder, have made Hamlet say just the contrary. That the devil and he would both go into mourning, though his mother did not. The true reading is this, *Nay, then let the devil wear black, 'fore I'll have a suit of sable.* 'Fore, i. e. before. As much as to say, Let the devil wear black for me, I'll have none. The *Oxford Editor* despises an emendation so easy, and reads it thus, *Nay, then let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of ermine.* And you could expect no less, when such a critic had the dressing of him. But the blunder was a pleasant one. The senseless editors had wrote *sables*, the fur so called, for *sable*, black. And the critic only changed this fur for that; by a like figure, the common people say, *You rejoice the cockles of my heart, for the muscles of my heart*; an unlucky mistake of one shell-fish for another. **WARBURTON.**

I know not why our editors should, with such implacable anger, persecute their predecessors. *Οἱ νεκροὶ μὴ δύνανται*, the dead, it is true, can make no resistance, they may be attacked with great security; but since they can neither feel nor mend, the safety of mauling them seems greater than the pleasure; nor perhaps would it much misbecome us to remember, amidst our triumphs over the *nonsensical* and the *senseless*, that we likewise are men; that *debemur morti*, and, as *Switt* observed to *Burnet*, shall soon be among the dead ourselves.

I cannot find how the common reading is nonsense, nor why Hamlet, when he laid aside his dress of mourning, in a country where it was *bitter cold*, and the air was *nipping and eager*, should not have a *suit of sables*. I suppose it is well enough known, that the fur of sables is not black. **JOHNSON.**

A *suit of sables* was the richest dress that could be worn in Denmark. **STEEVENS.**

Here again is an equivoque. In *Massinger's Old Law*, we have

—“ A cunning grief,

“ That's only faced with *sables* for a show,

“ But gawdy-hearted.”— **FARMER.**

³ —*suffer not thinking on, with the hobby-horse*;—] Amongst the country may-games there was an hobby-horse, which, when the puritanical humour of those times opposed and discredited these games, was brought by the poets and ballad-makers as an instance

on, with the hobby-horse; whose epitaph, is *For, O, for, O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*

Trumpets sound. The dumb shew follows.

Enter a king and queen ⁴, *very lovingly; the queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes shew of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck: lays him down upon a bank of flowers; she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon, comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The queen returns; finds the king dead, and makes*

of the ridiculous zeal of the sectaries: from these ballads Hamlet quotes a line or two, WARBURTON.

— *O, the hobby-horse is forgot.*] In *Love's Labour's Lost*, this line is also introduced. In a small black-letter book, intitled, *Playes Confuted*, by Stephen Gosson, I find the *hobby-horse* enumerated in the list of dances. “For the devil (says this author) beside the beautie of the houses, and the stages, sendeth in gearish apparell, maskes, vaulting, tumbling, dauncing of giggcs, galiardcs, morisces, *hobbi-horses*,” &c. and in Green's *Tu quoque*, 1599 the same expression occurs:

“The other *hobby-horse*, I perceive, is not forgotten.”

In *TEXNOTAMIA*, or *The Marriage of the Arts*, 1618, is the following stage-direction.

“Enter a *hobby-horse*, dancing the morrice,” &c.

Again, in B. and Fletcher's *Women Pleas'd*:

Soto. “Shall the *hobby-horse* be forgot then,

“The hopeful *hobby-horse*, shall he lie founder'd?”

The scene, in which this passage is, will very amply confirm all that Dr. Warburton has said concerning the *hobby-horse*.

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Entertainment for the Queen and Prince at Aliborpe*:

“But see, the *hobby-horse* is forgot,

“Fool, it must be your lot,

“To supply his want with faces,

“And some other buffoon graces.”

See figure 5 in the plate at the end of the First Part of *King Henry IV*, with Mr. Toller's observations on it. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Enter, &c.*] In our former edition several notes on this passage were assembled; but being all founded on a mistaken reading, they are now omitted. STEEVENS.

passionate

passionate action. The poisoner, with some two or three mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The poisoner wooes the queen with gifts; she seems loath and unwilling a while, but in the end, accepts his love.

[*Exeunt.*

Opb. What means this, my lord?

Ham. 5 Marry, this is miching malicho; it means mischief.

Opb.

5 *Marry, this is miching malicho; it means mischief.*] The *Oxford Editor*, imagining that the speaker had here englished his own cant phrase of *miching malicho*, tells us (by his glossary) that it signifies *mischief lying hid*, and that *malicho* is the Spanish *malbeco*; whereas it signifies, *Lying in wait for the poisoner*. Which, the speaker tells us, was the very purpose of this representation. It should therefore be read *malbecor* Spanish, the *poisoner*. So *mich* signified, originally, to keep hid and out of sight; and, as such men generally did it for the purposes of *lying in wait*, it then signified to rob. And in this sense Shakespeare uses the noun, a *micher*, when speaking of prince Henry amongst a gang of robbers. *Shall the blessed sun of heaven prove a micher? Shall the son of England prove a thief?* And in this sense it is used by Chaucer, in his translation of *Le Roman de la Rose*, where he turns the word *lierre* (which is *larron, voleur*) by *micher*. WARBURTON.

I think Hanmer's exposition most likely to be right. Dr. Warburton, to justify his interpretation, must write, *miching* for *malbecor*, and even then it will be harsh. JOHNSON.

Dr. Warburton is right in his explanation of the word *miching*. So, in the *Raging Turk*, 1631:

“ — wilt thou, envious dotard,

“ Strangle my greatness in a *miching* hole?”

Again, in Stanyhurst's *Virgil*, 1582:

“ — wherefore thus vainely in land Lybye *mitche* you?”

The quarto reads — *munching mallico*. STEEVENS.

Miching, secret, covered, lying hid. In this sense Chapman, our author's cotemporary, uses the word in *The Widow's Tears*, *Dods. Old Pl.* vol. iv. p. 291. Lyfander, to try his wife's fidelity, elopes from her: his friends report that he is dead, and make a mock funeral for him: his wife, to shew excessive sorrow for the loss of her husband, shuts herself up in his monument; to which he comes in disguise, and obtains her love, notwithstanding he had assured her in the mean time, that he was the man who murdered her husband. On which he exclaims,

Oph. Belike, this show imports the argument of the play.

Enter Prologue.

Ham. We shall know by this fellow : the players cannot keep counsel ; they'll tell all.

Oph. Will he tell us what this shew meant ?

Ham. Ay, or any shew that you'll shew him : Be not you asham'd to shew ⁶, he'll not shame to tell you what it means.

Oph. You are naught, you are naught ; I'll mark the play.

Pro. For us, and for our tragedy,
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your bearing patiently.

Ham. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring ?

Oph. 'Tis brief, my lord.

Ham. As woman's love.

—— Out upon the monster !

Go tell the governour, let me be brought
To die for that most famous villany ;
Not for this *milching* base transgression
Of truant negligence.——

And again, p. 301.

—— My truant

Was *nicht*, fir, into a blind corner of the tomb.

In this very sense it occurs in the *Philaster* of Beaumont and Fletcher, vol. i. p. 142. "A rascal *milching* in a meadow." That is, as the ingenious editors (who have happily substituted *milching* for *milking*) remark, "A lean deer, creeping, solitary, and with-
" drawn from the herd." WARTON.

⁶ — *Be not you asham'd to shew, &c.*] The conversation of Hamlet with Ophelia, which cannot fail to disgust every modern reader, is probably such as was peculiar to the young and fashionable of the age of Shakespeare, which was, by no means, an age of delicacy. The poet is, however, blameable ; for extravagance of thought, not indecency of expression, is the characteristic of madness, at least of such madness as should be represented on the scene. STEEVENS.

Enter

Enter a King, and a Queen.

P. King. Full thirty times hath Phoebus' cart ⁷ gone round

Neptune's salt wash, and Tellus' orb'd ground;
And thirty dozen moons, with borrowed ⁸ sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been;
Since love our hearts, and Hymen did our hands,
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.

P. Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er, ere love be done!

But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer, and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must:
For women fear too much, ⁹ even as they love.
And women's fear and love hold quantity;
In neither ought, or in extremity.

Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know;
¹ And as my love is fix'd, my fear is so.

⁷ — *cart*] A chariot was anciently so called. Thus Chaucer in the *Knights Tale*, late edit. ver. 2024:

The *carrier* overridden with his *cart*. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *sheen*] Splendor, lustre. JOHNSON.

⁹ — *even as they love*.] Here seems to be a line lost, which should have rhymed to *love*. JOHNSON.

This line is omitted in the folios. Perhaps a triplet was designed, and then instead of *love*, we should read, *last*. The folio gives the next line thus:

“For women's fear and love holds quantity.” STEEVENS.

¹ *And as my love is fix'd, my fear is so*.] Mr. Pope says, I read *fix'd*; and, indeed, I do so; because, I observe, the quarto of 1605 reads, *fix'd*; that of 1611, *fix'd*; the folio in 1632, *fix*; and that in 1623, *fix'd*: and because, besides, the whole tenor of the context demands this reading: for the lady evidently is talking here of the quantity and proportion of her love and fear; not of their continuance, duration, or stability. Cleopatra expresses herself much in the same manner, with regard to her grief for the loss of Antony:

— *our fire of sorrow,*
Proportion'd to our cause, may be as great
As that which makes it. THEOBALD.

Where

Where love is great², the littlest doubts are fear;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.

P. King. 'Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too;

My operant powers³ their functions leave to do:
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd; and, haply, one as kind
For husband shalt thou——

P. Queen. O, confound the rest!
Such love must needs be treason in my breast:
In second husband let me be accurst!
None wed the second, but who kill'd the first.

Ham. That's wormwood.

P. Queen. ⁴ The instances, that second marriage
move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love:
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.

P. King. I do believe, you think what now you speak:
But, what we do determine, oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory;
Of violent birth, but poor validity:
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree;
But fall, unshaken, when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis, that we forget
To pay ourselves⁵ what to ourselves is debt;
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.

² *Where love, &c.*] These two lines are omitted in the folio.

STEEVENS.

³ — operant powers] *Operant* is active. Shakespeare gives it in *Timon* as an epithet to *poison*. Heywood has likewise used it in his *Royal King and Loyal Subject*, 1637:

“ — may my operant parts

“ Each one forget their office!”

The word is now obsolete. STEEVENS.

⁴ *The instances, —*] *The motives*. JOHNSON.

⁵ — *what to ourselves is debt:*] The performance of a resolution, in which only the *resolver* is interested, is a debt only to himself, which he may therefore remit at pleasure. JOHNSON.

6 The violence of either grief or joy,
 Their own enactures with themselves destroy:
 Where joy most revels, grief doth most lament;
 Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.
 This world is not for aye; nor 'tis not strange,
 That even our loves should with our fortunes
 change;

For 'tis a question left us yet to prove,
 Whether love lead fortune, or else fortune love.
 The great man down, you mark, his favourite flies;
 The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.
 And hitherto doth love on fortune tend:
 For who not needs, shall never lack a friend;
 And who in want a hollow friend doth try,
 Directly seasons him his enemy.
 But, orderly to end where I begun,—
 Our wills, and fates, do so contrary run,
 That our devices still are overthrown;
 Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own:
 So think thou wilt no second husband wed;
 But die thy thoughts, when thy first lord is dead.

P. Queen. Nor earth to give me food, nor heaven light!
 Sport, and repose, lock from me, day, and night!
 To desperation ⁷ turn my trust and hope!

² An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!

Each

⁶ *The violence of either grief or joy,*

Their own enactures with themselves destroy:] What grief or joy enact or determine in their violence, is revoked in their abatement. *Enactures* is the word in the quarto; all the modern editions have *enactors*. JOHNSON.

⁷ *To desperation, &c.]* This and the following line are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

² *An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!]* May my whole liberty and enjoyment be to live on hermit's fare in a prison. *Anchor* is for *anchoret*. JOHNSON.

This abbreviation of the word *anchoret* is very ancient. I find it in the Romance of *Robert the Devil*, printed by *Wynkyn de Worde*: "We have robbed and killed nonnes, holy *aunkers*, preestes, clerkes, &c." Again, "the foxe will be an *aunker* for he begynneth to preche."

Again,

Each opposite, that blanks the face of joy,
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy!
Both here, and hence, pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife!

Ham. If she should break it now,—— [*To Oph.*

P. King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here
a while;

My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep. [*Sleeps.*

P. Queen. Sleep rock thy brain;

And never come mischance betwixt us twain! [*Exit.*

Ham. Madam, how like you this play?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Ham. O, but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument? Is there no
offence in't?

Ham. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest; no
offence i' the world.

King. What do you call the play?

Ham. The mouse-trap⁹. Marry, how? Tropically.
This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna:
Gonzago is the duke's name; his wife, 'Baptista:
you shall see anon; 'tis a knavish piece of work: But
what of that? your majesty, and we that have free
souls, it touches us not: Let the gall'd jade wince²,
our withers are unwrung.—

Again, in *The Vision of Pierce Plowman*:

“As *ankers* and hermits that hold hem in her felles.”

This and the foregoing line are not in the folio. I believe we
should read—*anchor's chair*. So, in the second Satire of Hall's
fourth book edit. 1602, p. 18:

“Sit seven yeares pining in an *anchore's ebeyre*

“To win some parched shreds of minevere.” STEEVENS.

⁹ *The mouse-trap.*] He calls it the *mouse-trap*, because it
is ——— the thing

In which he'll *catch* the conscience of the king.

STEEVENS.

¹ *Baptista* is, I think, in Italian, the name always of a man.

² *Let the gall'd jade wince, &c.*] This is a proverbial saying.
So, in *Damon and Pythias*, 1582:

“I know the *gall'd horse* will soonest *wince*.” STEEVENS.

Enter

Enter Lucianus.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the duke.

Opb. You are as good as a chorus, my lord.

³ *Ham.* I could interpret between you and your love, if I could see the puppets dallying.

Opb. You are keen, my lord, you are keen.

Ham. It would cost you a groaning, to take off my edge.

Opb. ⁴ Still better, and worse.

Ham. ⁵ So you mistake your husbands.

Begin, murderer.—Leave thy damnable faces, and begin.

Come—The croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

³ *Ham.* *I could interpret, &c.*] This refers to the interpreter, who formerly sat on the stage at all *motions* or *puppet-shows*, and interpreted to the audience.

So, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

“ Oh excellent *motion*! oh exceeding *puppet*!

“ Now will he *interpret* for her.”

Again, in Greene's *Groat-worth of Wit*, 1621: “ — It was I that penn'd the moral of man's wit, the dialogue of Dives, and for seven years' space was absolute *interpreter* of the puppets.”

STEEVENS.

⁴ *Still better, and worse.*] i. e. better in regard to the wit of your *double entendre*, but worse in respect of the grossness of your meaning. STEEVENS.

⁵ *So you mistake your husbands.*] Read, *So you must take your husbands*; that is, *for better, for worse*. JOHNSON.

Theobald proposed the same reading in his *Shakespeare Restored*, however he lost it afterwards. STEEVENS.

“ So you *mistake* your husbands.”

I believe this to be right: the word is sometimes used in this ludicrous manner. “ Your true trick, rascal (says Ursula in *Bartholomew Fair*) must be to be ever busie, and *mistake* away the bottles and cans, before they be half drunk off.” FARMER.

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Masque of Anguiss*: “ — To *mistake* six torches from the chandry, and give them one.”

Again, in the *Elder Brother* of Fletcher:

“ I fear he will persuade me to *mistake* him.” STEEVENS.

I believe the meaning is—you do amiss for yourselves to take husbands for the worse. You should take them only for the better. TOLLET.

Luc.

Luc. Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and
time agreeing ;
Confederate season, else no creature seeing ;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecat's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic, and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.

[*Pours the poison into his ears.*]

Ham. He poisons him i' the garden for his estate.
His name's Gonzago: the story is extant, and written
in very choice Italian: You shall see anon, how the
murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife.

Oph. The king rises.

Ham. What! frightened with false fire⁶!

Queen. How fares my lord?

Pol. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light:—away!

All. Lights, lights, lights⁷!

[*Exeunt All but Hamlet, and Horatio.*]

Ham. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play:
For some must watch, whilst some must sleep;
Thus runs the world away.—

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, (if the
rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me⁸) with two
Provencial

⁶ *What! frightened with false fire!*] This speech is omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

⁷ *Lights, lights, lights!*] The quartos give this speech to Polonius. STEEVENS.

⁸ — turn Turk with me] This expression has occurred already in *Much Ado about Nothing*, and I have met with it in several old comedies. So, in Greene's *Tu Quoque*, 1599: "This it is to turn Turk, from an absolute and most compleat gentleman, to a most absurd, ridiculous, and fond lover." It means, I believe, no more than to change condition fantastically. Again, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, 1635:

"—'tis damnation,

"If you turn Turk again."

Perhaps the phrase had its rise from some popular story like that of *Ward* and *Danfiker*, the two famous pirates; an account of
whose

Provencial roses² on my rayed shoes, get me a fellowship in¹ a cry of players, sir?

Hor.

whose overthrow was published by A. Baker 1609; and, in 1612, a play was written on the same subject called *A Christian turn'd Turk*. STEEVENS.

² *Provencial roses*] Why *provencial roses*? Undoubtedly we should read *Provencial*, or (with the French *ç*) *Provencal*. He means roses of *Provence*, a beautiful species of rose, and formerly much cultivated. WARTON.

— with *raw provencial roses on my rayed shoes*,] When shoe-strings were worn, they were covered, where they met in the middle, by a ribband, gathered into the form of a rose. So, in an old song:

“ Gil-de-Roy was a bonny boy,

“ Had roses tall his shoes.”

Rayed shoes, are shoes braided in lines. JOHNSON.

These *roses* are often mentioned by our ancient dramatic writers. So, in the *Devil's Law-case*, 1623:

“ With over-blown roses to hide your gouty ankles.”

Again, in the *Roaring Girl*, 1611: “ — many handsome legs in silk stockings have villainous splay feet, for all their great roses.”

The reading of the quartos is *raw'd shoes*; that of the folio *raw'd shoes*. Probably the poet wrote *raised shoes*, i. e. shoes with *high heels*; such as by adding to the stature, are supposed to increase the dignity of the player. In Stubbs's *Anatomic of Abuses* 1595, there is a chapter on the *cocked shoes* in England, “ which (he says) beare them up two inches or more from the ground, &c. some of red, blacke, &c. *razed*, carved, cut, and stitched, &c.”

Again, in Warner's *Allison's England*, 1602, b. 9. ch. 47:

“ Then wore they shoes of ease, now of an inch-broad, *cocked high*.”

Stowe's *Chronicle*, anno 1353, mentions women's hoods *royed* or striped. *Raise* is the French word for a stripe. Johnson's *Collection of Ecclesiastical Laws* informs us, under the years 1222 and 1353, that

¹ — a cry of players,] Allusion to a pack of hounds.

WARBURTON.

A pack of hounds was once called a cry of hounds. So, in the *Two Noble Kinsmen*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

“ — and well have halloo'd

“ To a deep cry of hounds.”

Again, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*:

“ — a cry more tunable

“ Was never halloo'd to or cheer'd with horn.”

Milton, likewise, has — “ A cry of hell-hounds — ” STEEVENS.

Hor. Half a share.

Ham. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, ² O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was

Of Jove himself; and now reigns here

³ A very, very—peacock.

Hor.

that in disobedience of the canon, the clergy's shoes were *checkered* with red and green, exceeding long, and variously pinked.

The reading of the quartos may likewise be supported. *Bulwer*, in his *Artificial Changeling*, speaks of gallants who pink and *raze* their fatten damask, and Duretto skins. To *raze* and to *race*, alike signify to *streak*. See *Minshew's Dict.* The word is used in the same signification in *Markham's Country Farm*. p. 585. "—baking all (i. e. wafer cakes) together between two irons, having within them many *raced* and checkered draughts after the manner of small squares." It should be remembered that *ray'd* is the conjecture of *Mr. Pope*. STEEVENS.

² — O Damon dear,] *Hamlet* calls *Horatio* by this name, in allusion to the celebrated friendship between *Damon* and *Pythias*. A play on this subject was written by *Rich. Edwards*, and published in 1582. STEEVENS.

³ A very, very—peacock.] This alludes to a fable of the birds choosing a king, instead of the eagle, a peacock. POPE.

The old copies have it *paiock*, *paicocke*, and *pajocke*. I substitute *paddock*, as nearest to the traces of the corrupted reading. I have, as *Mr. Pope* says, been willing to substitute any thing in the place of his *peacock*. He thinks a fable alluded to, of the birds choosing a king; instead of the eagle, a peacock. I suppose, he must mean the fable of *Barlandus*, in which it is said, the birds, being weary of their state of anarchy, moved for the setting up of a king; and the peacock was elected on account of his gay feathers. But, with submission, in this passage of our *Shakespeare*, there is not the least mention made of the eagle in antithesis to the peacock; and it must be by a very uncommon figure, that *Jove* himself stands in the place of his bird. I think, *Hamlet* is setting his father's and uncle's characters in contrast to each other: and means to say, that by his father's death the state was stripp'd of a godlike monarch, and that now in his stead reign'd the most despicable poisonous animal that could be; a mere paddock, or toad. PAD, *buso*, *rubeta major*; a toad. This word, I take to be of *Hamlet's* own substituting. The verses, repeated, seem to be from some old ballad; in which, rhyme being necessary, I doubt not but the last verse ran thus:

A very, very—*as*. THEOBALD,

A peacock

Hor. You might have rhym'd.

Ham. O good Horatio, I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive?

Hor. Very well, my lord.

Ham. Upon the talk of the poisoning,—

Hor. I did very well note him.

Ham. Ah, ha!—Come, some music; come, the recorders.—

For if the king like not the comedy,

⁴ Why then, belike, he likes it not, perdy s.—

Enter Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

Come, some music.

Guil. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Ham. Sir, a whole history.

Guil. The king, sir,—

Ham. Ay, sir, what of him?

Guil. Is, in his retirement, marvelous distemper'd.

Ham. ⁶ With drink, sir?

Guil. No, my lord, with choler.

Ham. Your wisdom should shew itself more richer, to signify this to the doctor; for, for me to put him

A peacock seems proverbial for a fool. Thus *Gascoigne* in his *Weeds*:

“ A theefe, a cowarde, and a *peacocke* foole.” FARMER.

I believe *paddock* to be the true reading. In the last scene of this act, Hamlet, speaking of the king, uses the same expression:

“ Would from a *paddock*, from a bat, a gib,

“ Such dear concernments hide?” MALONE.

⁴ *Why, then, belike—*] Hamlet was going on to draw the consequence, when the courtiers entered. JOHNSON.

⁵ *—he likes it not, perdy.*] *Perdy* is a corruption of *par Dieu*, and is not uncommon in the old plays. So, in *The Play of the Four P's*, 1569:

“ In that, you Palmer, as deputie,

“ May cleerly discharge him *pardie*.” STEEVENS.

⁶ *With drink, sir?*] Hamlet takes particular care that his uncle's love of drink shall not be forgotten. JOHNSON.

to his purgation, would, perhaps, plunge him into more choler.

Guil. Good my lord, put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Ham. I am tame, sir:—pronounce.

Guil. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you.

Ham. You are welcome.

Guil. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. If it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment: if not, your pardon, and my return, shall be the end of my business.

Ham. Sir, I cannot.

Guil. What, my lord?

Ham. Make you a wholesome answer; my wit's diseas'd: But, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command; or, rather, as you say, my mother: therefore no more, but to the matter: My mother, you say,—

Rof. Then thus she says; Your behaviour hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Ham. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother!—But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration? impart.

Rof. She desires to speak with you in her closet, ere you go to bed.

Ham. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any ⁷ further trade with us?

Rof. My lord, you once did love me.

Ham. And do still ⁸, by these pickers and stealers.

Rof. Good my lord, what is your cause of distemper? you do, surely, bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend.

⁷ —*further trade*—] Further business; further dealing.

⁸ —*by these pickers, &c.*] By these hands. JOHNSON.

Ham.

Ham. Sir, I lack advancement.

Ros. How can that be, when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark?

Ham. Ay, sir, but *While the grass grows*,—the proverb is something musty.

Enter the Players, with Recorders.

O, the recorders:—let me see one.—To withdraw with you:—Why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I pray you.

Guil. Believe me, I cannot.

⁹ — *Recorders.*] i. e. a kind of flute. In *The Antipodes*, a comedy, by Brome, 1638, is "A solemn lesson upon the recorders."

Again, in *Sidney's Arcadia*: "—the other shepherds pulling out recorders, which possess'd the place of pipes, &c."

Again, in the old enticade of the *Repentance of Mary Magdalene*, 1567:

"If that you can play upon the recorder,

"I have as faire a one as any is in this border:

"Truely you have not seene a more goodlie pipe."

To *record*, anciently signified to sing or modulate. STEEVENS.

¹ *O my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.*] i. e. if my duty to the king makes me press you a little, my love to you makes me still more importunate. If that makes me bold, this makes me even unmannerly. WARBURTON.

I believe we should read—*my love is not unmannerly*. My conception of this passage is, that, in consequence of Hamlet's moving to take the recorder, Guildenstern also shifts his ground, in order to place himself beneath the prince in his new position. This Hamlet ludicrously calls "going about to recover the wind, &c." and Guildenstern may answer properly enough, I think, and like a courtier; "if my duty to the king makes me too bold in pressing you upon a disagreeable subject, my love to you will make me not unmannerly, in shewing you all possible marks of respect and attention." TYRWHITT.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying: govern these ² ventages with your fingers and thumb ³, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me? You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass: and

² — *ventages*—] The holes of a flute. JOHNSON.

³ — *and thumb*,—] The first quarto reads—with your fingers and the *umber*. This may probably be the ancient name for that piece of moveable brass at the end of a flute, which is either raised or depressed by the finger. The word *umber* is used by Stowe the chronicler, who, describing a single combat between two knights—says, “he brast up his *umber* three times.” Here, the *umber* means the visor of the helmet. So, in Spenser’s *Faery Queene*, b. 3. c. 1. st. 42:

“ But the brave maid would not disarmed be,

“ But only vented up her *umbriere*,

“ And so did let her goodly visage to appere.”

Again, b. 4. c. 4:

“ And therewith smote him on his *umbriere*.”

Again, in the second book of Lidgate on the Trojan War, 1513:

“ Thorough the *umber* into Troylus’ face.” STEEVENS.

If a *recorder* had a brass key like the *German Flute*, we are to follow the reading of the quarto; for then the thumb is not concerned in the government of the ventages or stops. If a *recorder* was like a *tabourer’s pipe*, which has no brass key, but has a stop for the thumb, we are to read—Govern these ventages with your finger and thumb. In *Cotgrave’s Dictionary*, *ombre*, *ombraire*, *ombriere*, and *ombrelle*, are all from the Latin *umbra*, and signify a shadow, an umbrella, or any thing that shades or hides the face from the sun; and hence they may have been applied to any thing that hides or covers another; as for example, they may have been applied to the brass key that covers the hole in the German flute. So Spenser used *umbriere* for the visor of the helmet, as Rous’s history of the Kings of England uses *umbrella* in the same sense. TOLLER.

there

there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. Why, do you think, that I am easier to be play'd on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me. [*Enter Polonius.*]—God bless you, sir!

Pol. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Ham. Do you see yonder cloud, that's almost in shape of a camel?

Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Ham. Methinks it is like a weazel⁴.

Pol. It is back'd like a weazel.

Ham. Or, like a whale?

Pol. Very like a whale.

Ham. Then will I come to my mother by and by.—
5 They fool me to the top of my bent.—I will come by and by.

Pol. I will say so.

Ham. By and by is easily said.—Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt Ros. Guil. Hor. &c.*]

'Tis now the very witching time of night;

⁴ *Methinks, &c.*] This passage has been printed in modern editions thus:

Methinks it is like an oxen, &c. *Pol.* It is *black* like an *oxen*.

The first folio reads, *it is like a weazel*.

Pol. It is *black'd* like a *weazel*—: and what occasion for alteration there was, I cannot discover. The *weazel* is remarkable for the length of its *back*; but though I believe a *black weazel* is not easy to be found, yet it is as likely that the cloud should resemble a *weazel* in shape, as an *oxen* (*i. e.* black-bird) in colour.

Mr. Tollet observes, that we might read—"it is *back'd* like a weazel," *i. e.* weazel-snouted. So, in Holinshed's *Description of England*, p. 172: "if he be *wezell-becker*." Quarles uses this term of reproach in his *Virgin Widow*: "Go you *weazel-snouted*, addle-pated, &c." Mr. Tollet adds, that Milton in his *Evander*, calls a promontory *beaked*, *i. e.* prominent like the *beak* of a bird.

STEEVENS.

⁵ *They fool me to the top of my bent*—] They compel me to pay the fool, till I can endure to do it no longer. JOHNSON.

When church yards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world: Now could I drink hot
blood,

⁶ And do such business as the bitter day
Would quake to look on. Soft; now to my mo-
ther.—

O, heart, lose not thy nature; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom:

Let me be cruel, not unnatural:

I will speak daggers to her ⁷, but use none;

My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites:

How in my words foever she be shent ⁸,

To

⁶ *And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on.*—] The expression is almost bur-
lesque. The old quarto reads,

And do such business as the bitter day

Would quake to look on.—

This is a little corrupt indeed, but much nearer Shakespeare's
words, who wrote,

— better day,

which gives the sentiment great force and dignity. At this very time
(says he) hell breathes out contagion to the world, whereby *night*
becomes polluted and execrable; the horror therefore of this season
fits me for a deed, which the *pure* and *sacred day* would quake to
look on. This is said with great classical propriety. According to
ancient superstition, *night* was prophane and execrable; and *day*,
pure and holy. WARBURTON.

And do such *bitter business*—] The expression *bitter business* is
still in use, and though at present a vulgar phrase, might not have
been such in the age of Shakespeare. The *bitter day* is the day
rendered hateful or *bitter* by the commission of some act of
mischiefe.

Watts, in his *Logic*, says: "*Bitter* is an equivocal word;
there is *bitter* wormwood, there are *bitter* words, there are *bitter*
enemies, and a *bitter* cold morning." It is, in short, any thing
unpleasing or hurtful. STEEVENS.

⁷ *I will speak daggers to her,*] A similar expression occurs in the
Return from Parnassus: "They are pestilent fellows, they speak
nothing but *bodkins*." It has been already observed, that a *bodkin*
anciently signified a *short dagger*. STEEVENS.

⁸ — be shent,] To *shent*, is to reprove harshly, to treat with
injurious language. So, in *The Coxcomb* of B. and Fletcher:

"— We shall be *shent* soundly."

Again,

‘ To give them seals never, my soul, consent!

S C E N E III.

A room in the palace.

Enter King, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

King. I like him not; nor stands it safe with us,
To let his madness range. Therefore, prepare you;
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you:
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so near us, as doth hourly grow
‘ Out of his lunies.

Guil. We will ourselves provide:
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe,
That live, and feed, upon your majesty.

Ref.

Again, in *David and Bathsheba*, 1599:

“ And sing his praise who *sheweth* David’s fame.”

Again, in *TEXNOGAMIA*, 1618: “ I had rather undertake my
performed journey about the world, than thou shouldst be *shew*
for me.”

Again, in *Cupid’s Whirligig*, 1633:

“ I shall be *shew* for letting you in.”

Again, in *Lilly’s Eubynia*, 1591:

“ I could stay all day with him, if I feared not to be *shew*.”

STEEVENS.

‘ To give them seals—] i. e. put them in execution.

WARBURTON.

‘ Out of his lunacies.] The old quartos read,

Out of his brows.

This was from the ignorance of the first editors; as is this unnecessary Alexandrine, which we owe to the players. The poet, I am persuaded, wrote,

— as doth hourly grow

Out of his lunies.

i. e. his *madness, frenzy.* TROSBALD.

Lunacies is the reading of the folio.

I take *brows* to be, properly read, *frowns*, which, I think, is a provincial word for *perverse humours*; which being, I suppose, not understood,

Rof. The fingle and peculiar life is bound,
 With all the ftrength and armour of the mind,
 To keep itfelf from 'noyance; but much more,
² That fpirit, upon whose weal depend and reft
 The lives of many. The ceafe of majesty
 Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
 What's near it, with it: It is a mafly wheel,
 Fix'd on the fummit of the higheft mount,
 To whose huge fpoles ten thousand leffer things
 Are mortis'd and adjoin'd; which, when it falls,
 Each fmall annexment, petty confequence,
 Attends the boifterous ruin. Never alone
 Did the king figh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage;
 For we will fetters put upon this fear,
 Which now goes too free-footed.

Both. We will hafte us, [*Exeunt Rof. and Guil.*]

Enter Polonius.

Pol. My lord, he's going to his mother's clofet;
 Behind the arras I'll convey myfelf,
 To hear the procefs; I'll warrant, fhe'll tax him
 home:
 And, as you faid, and wifely was it faid,

underftood, was changed to *lunacies*. But of this I am not confident. JOHNSON.

I would receive Theobald's emendation, becaufe Shakefpeare uſes the word *lunes* in the ſame ſenſe in *The Merry Wives of Windſor*, and *The Winter's Tale*. From the redundancy of the meaſure nothing can be inferred.

Since this part of my note was written, I have met with an inſtance in ſupport of Dr. Johnson's conjecture:

“—were you but as favourable as you are *frowiſh*—”

Tully's Love, by Greene, 1616.

Perhaps, however, Shakefpeare deſigned a metaphor from horned cattle, whoſe powers of being dangerous, encreaſe with the *growth of their brows*. STEEVENS.

² *That ſpirit, upon whose weal—*] So the quarto. The folio gives,
 That ſpirit, upon whose *ſpirit—* STEEVENS.

'Tis

'Tis meet, that some more audience than a mother,
 3 Since nature makes them partial, should o'er-hear
 The speech, 4 of vantage. Fare you well, my liege:
 I'll call upon you ere you go to bed,
 And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord. [Exit.

O, my offence is rank, it smells to heaven;
 It hath the primal eldest curse upon't,
 A brother's murder!—Pray can I not,
 5 Though inclination be as sharp as will;
 My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent;
 And, like a man to double business bound,
 I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
 And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
 Were thicker than itself with brother's blood?
 Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens,
 To wash it white as snow? Whereto serves mercy,
 But to confront the visage of offence?
 And what's in prayer, but this two-fold force,—
 To be fore-stalled, ere we come to fall,
 Or pardon'd, being down? Then I'll look up;
 My fault is past. But O, what form of prayer
 Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder!—

3 *Since nature makes them partial, &c.]*

“ ——— Matres omnes filiis

“ In peccato adjutrices, auxilii in paterna injuria

“ Solent esse.” ——— *Ter. Haut. Act. 5. Sc. 2.*

STEEVENS.

4 — *of vantage.]* By some opportunity of secret observation.

JOHNSON.

5 *Though inclination be as sharp as will;]* Dr. Warburton would read,

Though inclination be as sharp as *it's* ill.

The old reading is—as sharp as will. STEEVENS.

I have followed the easier emendation of Theobald received by Hamner: i. e. as *'twill*. JOHNSON.

Will is *command, direction*. Thus, *Eccles. xliii. 16.* “— and at his *will* the south wind bloweth.” The king says, his mind is in too great confusion to pray; even though his *inclination* were as strong as the *command* which requires that duty. STEEVENS.

That

That cannot be; since I am still possess'd
 Of those effects for which I did the murder,
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen.
 6 May one be pardon'd, and retain the offence?
 In the corrupted currents of this world,
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
 And oft 'tis seen, the wicked prize itself
 Buys out the law: But 'tis not so above:
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In his true nature; and we ourselves compell'd,
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
 To give in evidence. What then? what rests?
 Try what repentance can: What can it not?
 7 Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?
 O wretched state! O bosom, black as death!
 8 O limed soul; that, struggling to be free,
 Art more engag'd! Help, angels, make assay!
 Bow, stubborn knees! and, heart, with strings of
 steel,
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe;
 All may be well! [The King kneels,

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now might I do it, pat, now he is praying;

⁶ *May one be pardon'd, and retain the offence?*] He that does not amend what can be amended, *retains his offence.* The king kept the crown from the right heir. JOHNSON.

⁷ *Yet what can it, when one cannot repent?*] *What can repentance do for a man that cannot be penitent, for a man who has only part of penitence, distress of conscience, without the other part, resolution of amendment?* JOHNSON.

⁸ *O, limed soul;—*] This alludes to *bird-lime.* Shakespeare uses the same word again, *Henry VI.* P. ii.

“Madam, myself have *lim'd* a bush for her.” STEEVENS.

⁹ — *pat, now he is praying;*] Thus the folio. The quartos read — *but now, &c.* STEEVENS.

And.

And now I'll do't;—And so he goes to heaven:
 And so am I reveng'd? That would be scann'd¹:
 A villain kills my father; and, for that,
 'I, his sole son, do this same villain send
 To heaven.

Why, this is hire and salary², not revenge.
 He took my father grossly, full of bread;
 With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May;
 And, how his audit stands, who knows, save heaven?
 But, in our circumstance and course of thought,
 'Tis heavy with him: And am I then reveng'd,
 To take him in the purging of his soul,
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage?
 No.

4 Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent:

¹ — *That would be scann'd:*] i. e. that should be considered, estimated. STEEVENS.

² *I, his sole son, do this same villain send*] The folio reads *sole son*, a reading apparently corrupted from the quarto. The meaning is plain. *I, his only son*, who am bound to punish his murderer. JOHNSON.

³ — *hire and salary,*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*base and fily*. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Up, sword; and know thou a more horrid hent;*] In the common editions,

Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid time.] This is a sophisticated reading, warranted by none of the copies of any authority. Mr. Pope says, I read conjecturally:

———— *a more horrid hent.*

I do so; and why? the two oldest quartos, as well as the two elder folios, read:

———— *a more horrid hent.*

But as there is no such English substantive, it seems very natural to conclude, that with the change of a single letter, our author's genuine word was, *hent*; i. e. *drift, scope, inclination, purpose,* &c. THEOBALD.

This reading is followed by Sir T. Hanmer and Dr. Warburton; but *hent* is probably the right word. To *hent* is used by Shakespeare for, to *seize*, to *catch*, to *lay hold on*. *Hent* is, therefore, *hold*, or *seizure*. *Lay hold on him, sword, at a more horrid time.* JOHNSON.

When

When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage ⁵ ;
 Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed ;
 At gaming, swearing ; or about some act
 That has no relish of salvation in't :
 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven ⁶ ;
 And that his soul may be as damn'd, and black,
⁷ As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays :
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [Exit.

⁵ *When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage ;*

Or in the incestuous pleasures of his bed ;] So, in Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1603 :

Didst thou not kill him drunk ?

Thou shouldst, or in th' embraces of his lust. STEEVENS,

⁶ — *that his heels may kick at heaven ;]* So, in Heywood's *Silver Age*, 1613 :

“ Whose heels tript up, kick'd gainst the firmament.”

STEEVENS.

⁷ *As hell, whereto it goes.—]* This speech, in which Hamlet, represented as a virtuous character, is not content with taking blood for blood, but contrives damnation for the man that he would punish, is too horrible to be read or to be uttered. JOHNSON.

The same fiend-like disposition is shewn by Lodowick, in Webster's *Vittoria Corombona*, 1612 :

“ — to have poison'd

“ The handle of his racket. O, that, that !—

“ That while he had been bandying at tennis,

“ He might have sworn himself to hell, and struck

“ *His soul* into the hazard !”

Again, in *The Honest Lawyer*, 1616 :

“ I then should strike his body with his *soul*,

“ And sink them both together.”

Again, in the third of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Four Plays in one* :

“ No, take him dead drunk now *without repentance*.”

STEEVENS,

The same horrid thought has been adopted by Lewis Machin, in the *Dumb Knight*, 1633 :

“ Nay, but be patient, smooth your brow a little,

“ And you shall take them as they clip each other,

“ Even in the height of sin ; then damn them both,

“ And let them stink before they ask God pardon,

“ That *your revenge may stretch unto their souls*.” MALONE.

The King rises.

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below:

Words, without thoughts, never to heaven go: [*Exit.*

S C E N E IV.

The Queen's closet.

Enter Queen, and Polonius.

Pol. He will come straight. Look, you lay home to him:

Tell him, his pranks have been too broad to bear with;

And that your grace hath screen'd and stood between Much heat and him. * I'll silence me e'en here.

Pray you, be round with him.

Ham. [*within.*] Mother, mother, mother!—

Queen. I'll warrant you; fear me not.

Withdraw, I hear him coming.

[*Polonius hides himself.*

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. Now, mother; what's the matter?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Ham. Mother, you have my father much offended.

* — I'll silence me e'en here:

[*Pray you, be round with him.*] Sir T. Hanmer, who is followed by Dr. Warburton, reads,

— I'll sence me here.

Retire to a place of security. They forget that the contrivance of Polonius to overhear the conference, was no more told to the queen than to Hamlet.—*I'll silence me even here,* is, *I'll use no more words.*

JOHNSON.

Queen.

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Ham. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet?

Ham. What's the matter now?

Queen. Have you forgot me?

Ham. No, by the rood, not so:

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife;
And—'would it were not so!—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay, then I'll set those to you that can speak.

Ham. Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;

You go not, 'till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.

Queen. What wilt thou do? thou wilt not murder me?

Help, help, ho!

Pol. [*Behind*] What, ho! help!

Ham. How now! a rat?

Dead, for a ducat, dead.

[*Hamlet strikes at Polonius through the arras.*]

Pol. [*Behind*] O, I am slain.

Queen. O me, what hast thou done?

Ham. Nay, I know not:

Is it the king?

Queen. O, what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Ham. A bloody deed;—almost as bad, good mother,

As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king?

* *How now, a rat?—*] This (as Dr. Farmer has observed) is an expression borrowed from *The Historye of Hamblett*, a translation from the French of Belleforest. STEEVENS.

† *As kill a king?*] This interrogation may be considered as some hint, that the queen had no hand in the murder of Hamlet's father. STEEVENS.

Ham. Ay, lady, 'twas my word.—

Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

[*To Polonius.*]

I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune:

Thou find'st, to be too busy, is some danger.—

Leave wringing of your hands: Peace; sit you down,

And let me wring your heart: for so I shall,

If it be made of penetrable stuff;

If damned custom have not braz'd it so,

That it be proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done, that thou dar'st wag thy
tongue

In noise so rude against me?

Ham. Such an act,

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty;

Calls virtue, hypocrite; ² takes off the rose

From

² — *takes off the rose*] Alluding to the custom of wearing roses on the side of the face. See a note on a passage in *King John*, Act I. WARBURTON.

I believe Dr. Warburton is mistaken; for it must be allowed that there is a material difference between an ornament worn on the *forehead*, and one exhibited on *the side of the face*. Some have understood these words to be only a metaphorical enlargement of the sentiment contained in the preceding line:

— blurs the grace and *blush* of modesty:

but as the *forehead* is no proper situation for a *blush* to be displayed in, we may have recourse to another explanation.

It was once the custom for those who were betrothed, to wear some flower as an external and conspicuous mark of their mutual engagement. So, in *Spenser's Shepherds' Calendar for April*:

“Bring coronations and *sops in wine*
Worn of paramours.”

Lyte, in his *Herbal*, 1578, enumerates *sops in wine* among the smaller kind of single gilliflowers or pinks.

Figure 4, in the *Merric-dance* (a plate of which is annexed to the First Part of *K. Henry IV.*) has a flower fixed on his *forehead*, and seems to be meant for the *paramour* of the female character. The flower might be designed for a *rose*, as the colour of it is red in the painted glass, though its form is expressed with as little adherence to nature as that of the *marygold* in the hand of the lady. It may, however, conduct us to affix a new meaning to the lines in question. This flower, as I have since discovered, is exactly shaped like the *sops in wine*, now called the *Deptford Pink*.

Sets

From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
 And sets a blister there; makes marriage vows
 As false as dicers' oaths: O, such a deed,
 As ³ from the body of contraction plucks
 The very soul; and sweet religion makes
 A rhapsody of words: ⁴ Heaven's face doth glow;
 Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
 With tristful visage, as against the doom;
 Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ay me, what act,

Sets a *blister* there, has the same meaning as in *Measure for Measure*:

Who falling in the flaws of her own youth,
 Hath *blister'd* her report.

See a note on this passage, Act 2. Sc. 3. STEEVENS.

³ — *from the body of contraction*—] *Contraction for marriage contract.* WARBURTON.

⁴ — *Heaven's face doth glow*;

*Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
 With tristful visage, as against the doom,
 Is thought-sick at the act.*]

If any sense can be found here, it is this. The sun glows [and does it not always?] and the very solid mass of earth has a tristful visage, and is thought-sick. All this is sad stuff. The old quarto reads much nearer to the poet's sense:

*Heaven's face does glow,
 O'er this solidity and compound mass,
 With heated visage, as against the doom,
 Is thought-sick at the act.*

From whence it appears, that Shakespeare wrote:

*Heaven's face doth glow,
 O'er this solidity and compound mass,
 With tristful visage; and, as 'gainst the doom,
 Is thought-sick at the act.*

This makes a fine sense, and to this effect. The sun looks upon our globe, the scene of this murder, with an angry and mournful countenance, half hid in eclipse, as at the day of doom. WARBURTON.

The word *heated*, though it agrees well enough with *glow*, is, I think, not so striking as *tristful*, which was, I suppose, chosen at the revival. I believe the whole passage now stands as the author gave it. Dr. Warburton's reading restores two improprieties, which Shakespeare, by his alteration, had removed. In the first, and in the new reading, *Heaven's face glows with tristful visage*; and, *Heaven's face is thought-sick*. To the common reading there is no just objection. JOHNSON;

That

5 That roars so loud, and thunders in the index?

Ham. 6 Look here, upon this picture, and on this;
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.
See, what a grace was seated on this brow:
Hyperion's curls 7; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten and command;
A station 8 like the herald Mercury,
New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill;
A combination, and a form, indeed,

5 *That roars so loud, &c.*] The meaning is, *What is this act, of which the discovery, or mention, cannot be made, but with this violence of clamour?* JOHNSON.

— and thunders in the index?] Mr. Edwards observes, that the *indexes* of many old books were at that time inserted at the beginning, instead of the end, as is now the custom. This observation I have often seen confirmed.

So, in *Othello*, Act 2. Sc. 7. — an *index* and obscure prologue to the history of lust and foul thoughts. STEEVENS.

6 *Look on this picture, and on this;*] It is evident from the following words,

A station, like the herald Mercury, &c.

that these pictures, which are introduced as miniatures on the stage, were meant for whole lengths, being part of the furniture of the queen's closet.

— like *Maia's son be stood,*

And shook his plumes — Milton, B. V. STEEVENS.

7 *Hyperion's curls;* —] It is observable that *Hyperion* is used by Spenser with the same error in quantity. FARMER.

I have never met with an earlier edition of Marston's *Insatiate Countess* than that in 1603. In this the following lines occur, which bear a close resemblance to Hamlet's description of his father:

“ A donative he hath of every god;

“ *Apollo gave him locks, Jove his high front.*” STEEVENS.

8 *A station* —] *Station* in this instance does not mean *the spot where any one is placed*, but *the act of standing*. So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act 3. Sc. 3:

Her motion and her *station* are as one.

On turning to Theobald's first edition, I find that he had made the same remark, and supported it by the same instance. The observation is necessary, for otherwise the compliment designed to the attitude of the king, would be bestowed on the place where Mercury is represented as standing. STEEVENS.

Where every god did seem to set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man :
This was your husband. — Look you now, what
follows :

Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear^o,
Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten¹ on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it, love: for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood² is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment; And what judgment
Would step from this to this? ³ Sense, sure, you
have,

Else,

^o — like a mildew'd ear,

Blasting his wholesome brother.] This alludes to Pharaoh's
Dream in the 41st chapter of Genesis. STEEVENS.

¹ — batten—] i. e. to grow fat. So, in *Claudius Tiberius
Nero*, 1607:

“ — and for milk

“ I batten'd was with blood.”

Again, in Marlow's *Jew of Malta*, 1633:

“ — make her round and plump,

“ And batten more than you are aware.”

Bat is an ancient word for *increase*. Hence the adjective *batful*,
so often used by Drayton in his *Polyolbion*. STEEVENS.

² *The hey-day in the blood*] This expression occurs in Ford's
'Tis Pity she's a Whore, 1633:

“ — must

“ The hey-day of your luxury be fed

“ Up to a surfeit?” STEEVENS.

³ *Sense, sure, you have,—*] In former editions,

— *Sense, sure, you have,*

Else, could you not have motion:—] But from what philo-
sophy our editors learnt this, I cannot tell. Since *motion* depends
so little upon *sense*, that the greatest part of *motion* in the universe,
is amongst bodies devoid of *sense*. We should read,

Else, could you not have notion,

i. e. intellect, reason, &c. This alludes to the famous peripatetic
principle of, *Nil fit in intellectu, quod non fuerit in sensu*. And how
fond our author was of applying, and alluding to, the principles of
this philosophy, we have given several instances. The principle
in particular has been since taken for the foundation of one of the
noblest works that these latter ages have produced. WARBURTON.

Else, could you not have motion: But, sure, that sense
 Is apoplex'd: for madness would not err;
 Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd,
 But it reserv'd some quantity of choice,
 To serve in such a difference. What devil was't,
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?⁴
 Eyes without feeling,⁵ feeling without sight,
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling fans all,
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense
 Could not so mope.⁶
 O shame! where is thy blush?⁷ 7 Rebellious hell,

If

The whole passage is wanting in the folio; and whichsoever of the readings be the true one, the poet was not indebted to this boasted philosophy for his choice. STEEVENS.

Motion is frequently used, by Shakespeare and others, for impulse of nature,—*libidinous inclination*. Taking it in this sense, the passage is sufficiently intelligible without any alteration. So, in *Othello*: “— we have reason to cool our raging *motions*, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts.”

Again, in *Cymbeline*;

“— for there's no *motion*

“That tends to vice in man, but I affirm

“It is the woman's part.”

Again, in Brathwaite's *Survey of Histories*, 1614: “These *continent* relations will reduce thy stragling *motions* to a more settled and retired harbour.” MALONE.

⁴ — at hoodman-blind? This is, I suppose, the same as *blind-man's-buff*. So, in the *Merry Devil of Edmonton*, 1626:

“And ever since hath shot at *hoodman-blind*.”

Again, in the *Two Maids of Moorclacke*, 1609:

“— was I bewitched,

“That thus at *hoodman-blind* I dallied?”

Again, in the *Wife Woman of Hog-fen*, 1638:

“Why should I play at *hood-man-blind*?” STEEVENS.

⁵ *Eyes without &c.*] This and the three following lines are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

⁶ *Could not so mope.*] i. e. could not exhibit such marks of stupidity. The same word is used in the *Tempest*, Sc. ult.—
 “And were brought *moping* hither.” STEEVENS.

⁷ — *Rebellious hell,*

[*If thou canst mutiny in a matron's bones, &c.*] Alluding to what he had told her before, that her enormous conduct shewed a kind of possession.

If thou canst mutiny⁸ in a matron's bones,
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
 And melt in her own fire: proclaim no shame,
 When the compulsive ardour gives the charge;
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
 And⁹ reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet, speak no more:
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul;
 And there I see such black and¹ grained spots,
 As will not leave their tinct².

Ham. Nay, but to live
 In the rank sweat of an³ incestuous bed;

Stew'd

— *What devil was't,
 That thus hath, &c.*—

And again afterwards:

*For use can almost change the stamp of nature,
 And master even the devil, or throw him out
 With wondrous potency—*

But the *Oxford Editor*, not apprehending the meaning, alters it to
 — *rebellious heat,
 If thou canst, &c.*

And so makes nonsense of it. For must not *rebellious lust* mutiny wherever it is quartered? That it should get there might seem strange, but that it should do its kind when it was there seems to be natural enough. *WARBURTON.*

I think the present reading right, but cannot admit that Hanmer's emendation produces nonsense. May not what is said of *heat*, be said of *hell*, that it will mutiny wherever it is quartered? Though the emendation be elegant, it is not necessary. *JOHNSON.*

⁸ — *mutiny*] The old copies read *mutine*. Shakespeare calls *mutineers—mutines*, in a subsequent scene. *STEEVENS.*

⁹ — *reason panders will.*] So the folio, I think rightly; but the reading of the quarto is defensible:

— *reason paddons will.* *JOHNSON.*

¹ — *grained—*] Dyed in grain. *JOHNSON.*

² *As will not leave their tinct.*] The quartos read:

“As will leave there their tinct.” *STEEVENS.*

³ — *incestuous bed;*] The folio has *inseamed*, that is, *greasy* bed. *JOHNSON.*

Beaumont and Fletcher use the word *inseamed* in the same sense, in the third of their *Four Plays in one*:

“His leachery *inseam'd* upon him.”

In

Stew'd in corruption; honying, and making love
Over the nasty tye;—

Queen. O, speak to me no more;
These words like daggers enter in mine ears;
No more, sweet Hamlet.

Ham. A murderer, and a villain:
A slave, that is not twentieth part the tythe
Of your precedent lord:—a vice of kings:
A cutpurse of the empire and the rule;
5 That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
And put it in his pocket!

Queen. No more.

Enter Ghost.

Ham. 6 A king of shreds and patches:—
Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards!—What would your gracious
figure?

Queen. Alas, he's mad.

Ham. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, 7 laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O, say!

In the *Book of Hawking, &c.* bl. l. no date, we are told that
“*Enjayne* of a hauke is *the grece*.”

In most places it means the grease or oil with which clothiers
besmear their wool to make it draw out in spinning.

Incessuous is the reading of the quarto, 1611. STEEVENS.

4 — *vice of kings!*] a low mimick of kings. The vice is the
fool of a farce; from whom the modern *punch* is descended.

JOHNSON.

5 *That from a shelf, &c.*] This is said not unmeaningly, but
to shew, that the usurper came not to the crown by any glorious
villainy that carried danger with it, but by the low cowardly theft
of a common pilferer. WAREBURTON.

6 *A king of shreds and patches:*] This is said, pursuing the
idea of the *vice of kings*. The vice was dressed as a fool, in a coat
of party-coloured patches. JOHNSON.

7 — *laps'd in time and passion,—*] That, having suffered time to
slip, and passion to cool, lets go, &c. JOHNSON.

Ghost. Do not forget: This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits:
O, step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works;
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Ham. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas, how is't with you?
That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, ⁸ like life in excrements,
Starts up, and stands on end. O gentle son,
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Ham. On him! on him!——Look you, how pale
he glares!

His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones,
Would make them capable.—Do not look upon me;
Lest, with this piteous action, you convert
My stern effects: then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears, perchance, for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Ham. Do you see nothing there?

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all, that is, I see.

Ham. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing, but ourselves.

Ham. Why, look you there! look, how it steals
away!

⁹ My father, in his habit as he liv'd!

Look,

⁸ — like life in excrements,] The hairs are excrementitious, that is, without life or sensation; yet those very hairs, as if they had life, start up, &c. POPE.

⁹ My father, in his habit as he liv'd!] If the poet means by this expression, that his father appeared in his own familiar habit, he has either forgot that he had originally introduced him in armour, or must have meant to vary his dress at this his last appearance.

The

Look, where he goes, even now, out at the portal!

[Exit Ghost.]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Ham. Ecstasy!¹

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time,
And makes as healthful music: It is not madness,
That I have utter'd: bring me to the test,
And I the matter will re-word; which madness
Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
Lay not that flattering unction to your soul,
That not your trespass, but my madness, speaks:
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place;
Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven;
Repent what's past; avoid what is to come;
And² do not spread the compost on the weeds,
To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue:
For, in the fatness of these purfy times,
Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg;
Yea,³ curb, and woo, for leave to do him good.

Queen. O, Hamlet! thou hast cleft my heart in
twain.

Ham. O, throw away the worser part of it,
And live the purer with the other half.

The difficulty might perhaps be a little obviated by pointing the line thus:

My father—in his habit—as he liv'd. STEEVENS.

¹ *Ecstasy!*] *Ecstasy* in this place, and many others, means a temporary alienation of mind, a fit. So, in *Elioffs Libidinoso*, a novel, by John Hinde, 1606: “—that bursting out of an *ecstasy* wherein she had long stood, like one beholding Medusa's head, lamenting, &c.” STEEVENS.

² — *do not spread the compost, &c.*] Do not, by any new indulgence, heighten your former offences. JOHNSON.

³ — *curb*—] That is, *lead* and *truckle*. Fr. *courber*. So, in *Pierre Plowman*:

“Then I *courbid* on my knees, &c.” STEEVENS.

Good night: but go not to mine uncle's bed;
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.

⁴ That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this;
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock, or livery,
That aptly is put on: Refrain to night;
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence: the next, more easy ⁵:
For use can almost change the stamp of nature,
And either master the devil, or throw him out
With wondrous potency. Once more, good night!
And when you are desirous to be blest,
I'll blessing beg of you.—For this same lord,

[*Pointing to Polonius.*

I do repent; But heaven hath pleas'd it so,—

⁶ To punish him with me, and me with this,—
That I must be their scourge and minister.

I will bestow him, and will answer well

The death I gave him. So, again good night!—

I must be cruel, only to be kind:

Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind.—

⁴ *That monster custom, who all sense doth eat,*

Of habit's devil, is angel yet in this;] This passage is left out in the two elder folios: it is certainly corrupt, and the players did the discreet part to stifle what they did not understand. *Habit's devil* certainly arose from some conceited tamperer with the text; who thought it was necessary, in contrast to *angel*. The emendation of the text I owe to the sagacity of Dr. Thirlby:

That monster custom, who all sense doth eat

Of habits evil, is angel, &c. THEOBALD.

I think Thirlby's conjecture wrong, though the succeeding editors have followed it; *angel* and *devil* are evidently opposed.

JOHNSON.

⁵ — *the next, more easy;*] This passage, as far as *potency*, is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

⁶ *To punish him with me, &c.*] This is Hammer's reading; the other editions have it,

To punish me with this, and this with me. JOHNSON.

One word more, good lady⁷.

Queen. What shall I do?

Ham. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do:
Let the bloat king⁸ tempt you again to bed
Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you, his mouse⁹;
And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses¹,
Or padding in your neck with his damn'd fingers,
Make you to ravel all this matter out,
² That I essentially am not in madness,

But

⁷ *One word more, &c.]* This passage I have restored from the quartos. STEEVENS.

⁸ *Let the foud king—]* The old quarto reads,

Let the bloat king ———

i. e. bloated, which is better, as more expressive of the speaker's contempt. WARBURTON.

⁹ — his *mouse*;] *Mouse* was once a term of endearment. So, in Warner's *Libby's England*, 1602, b. 2. chap. 10:

“God blefs thee *mouse*, the bridegroom said, &c.”

Again, in the *Menecchini*, 1595: “Shall I tell thee, sweet *mouse*? I never look upon thee, but I am quite out of love with my wife.” STEEVENS.

¹ — *reechy* kisses,] *Reechy* is smoky. The author meant to convey a coarse idea, and was not very scrupulous in his choice of an epithet. The same, however, is applied with greater propriety to the neck of a cook-maid in *Coriolanus*. Again, in *Hans Beer-Pot's Invisible Comedy*, 1618:

“— bade him go

“And wash his face, he look'd so *reechily*,

“Like bacon hanging on the chimney's roof.”

STEEVENS.

² *That I essentially am not in madness,*

But mad in craft.—] The reader will be pleased to see Dr. Farmer's extract from the old quarto *Historie of Hamblet*, of which he had a fragment only in his possession.—“It was not without
“cause, and just occasion, that my gestures, countenances, and
“words, seeme to proceed from a madman, and that I desire to
“have all men esteeme mee wholly deprived of sence and rea-
“sonable understanding, bycause I am well assured, that he that
“hath made no conscience to kill his owne brother (accustomed
“to murthers, and allured with desire of gouvernement without
“controll in his treasons) will not spare to saue himselfe with the
“like crueltie, in the blood, and flesh of the loyns of his brother,
“by him massacred: and therefore it is better for me to sayne
“madnesse, then to use my right senses as nature hath bestowed
“them

But mad in craft. 'Twere good, you let him know,
 For who, that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
 Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib,²
 Such dear concernings hide? who would do so?
 No, in despite of sense, and secrecy,
 Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
 Let the birds fly; and, like the famous ape,
 To try conclusions⁴, in the basket creep,

“ them upon me. The bright shining clearnes thereof I am
 “ forced to hide vnder this shadow of dissimulation, as the sun
 “ doth hir beams vnder some great cloud, when the wether in
 “ summer time ouercasteth: the face of a madman serueth to couer
 “ my gallant countenance, and the gestures of a fool are fit for
 “ me, to the end that, guiding myself wisely therein, I may pre-
 “ serue my life for the Danes and the memory of my late de-
 “ ceased father, for that the desire of reuenging his death is so
 “ inrauen in my heart, that if I dye not shortly, I hope to take
 “ such and so great vengeance, that these countreyes shall for euer
 “ speake thereof. Neuertheless I must stay the time, meanes,
 “ and occasion, lest by making ouer great hast, I be now the
 “ cause of mine owne sodaine ruine and ouerthrow, and by that
 “ meanes end, before I beginne to effect my hearts desire: hee
 “ that hath to doe with a wicked, disloyall, cruell, and discour-
 “ teous man, must vse craft, and politike inuentions, such as a
 “ fine witte can best imagine, not to discover his interprise: for
 “ seeing that by force I cannot effect my desire, reason alloweth
 “ me by dissimulation, subtiltie, and secret practises to proceed
 “ therein.” STEEVENS.

² — a gib,] So, in Drayton's Epistle from *Elinor Cobham* to
Duke Humphrey:

“ And call me beldam, gib, witch, night-mare, trot.”

Gib was a common name for a cat. So, in Chaucer's *Rom. of
 the Rose*, ver. 6204:

“ — gibbe our cat,

“ That waiteth mice and rats to killen.” STEEVENS.

³ *Unpeg the basket on the house's top,*

Let the birds fly;—] Sir John Suckling, in one of his letters,
 may possibly allude to the same story. “ It is the story of the
 “ *jackanapes* and the partridges; thou starest after a beauty till it
 “ is lost to thee, and then le'st out another, and starest after that
 “ till it is gone too.” WARNER.

⁴ *To try conclusions,*] i. e. experiments. So, in *Antony and
 Cleopatra*:

“ She has pursu'd *conclusions* infinite

“ Of easy ways to die.” STEEVENS.

And

And break your neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,

And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
What thou hast said to me.

Ham. I must to England; you know that?

Queen. Alack, I had forgot; 'tis so concluded on.

Ham. ⁵ There's letters seal'd: and my two school-fellows,—

Whom I will trust, as I will ⁶ adders fang'd,—
They bear the mandate; they must sweep my way,
And marshal me to knavery: Let it work;
For 'tis the sport, to have the engineer
Hoist ⁷ with his own petar: and it shall go hard,
But I will delve one yard below their mines,
And blow them at the moon: O, 'tis most sweet,
When in one line two crafts directly meet!—
This man shall set me packing.
I'll lug the guts ⁸ into the neighbour room:—
Mother, good night.—Indeed, this counsellor
Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
Who was in life a foolish prating knave.

⁵ *There's letters seal'd, &c.*] The nine following verses are added out of the old edition. POPE.

⁶ — *adders fang'd,*] That is, adders with their *fangs*, or *poisonous teeth*, undrawn. It has been the practice of mountebanks to boast the efficacy of their antidotes by playing with vipers, but they first disabled their fangs. JOHNSON.

⁷ *Hoist &c.*] *Hoist* for *hoised*; as *past* for *passed*. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *the guts*—] The word *guts* was not anciently so offensive to delicacy as it is at present; but was used by *Lydly* (who made the first attempt to polish our language) in his serious Compositions. So, in his *Mydas*, 1592: "Could not the treasure of Phrygia, nor the tributes of Greece, nor mountains in the East, whose *guts* are gold, satisfy thy mind?" In short, *guts* was used where we now use *entrails*. *Stanybush* often has it in his translation of Virgil, 1582:

Pectoribus inhians spirantia consulit *exta*.

"She weens her fortune by *guts* heate smockye to consier."

STEEVENS.

Come,

2 Come, fir, to draw toward an end with you:—
Good night, mother.

[Exit the Queen, and Hamlet dragging in Polonius.]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

A royal apartment.

Enter King, Queen, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound
heaves;
You must translate; 'tis fit we understand them:
Where is your son?

Queen. Bestow this place on us a little while 2.—

[To Ros. and Guil. who go out.]

Ah, my good lord 3, what have I seen to night?

King. What, Gertrude? How does Hamlet?

Queen. Mad as the sea, and wind, when both con-
tend

Which is the mightier: In his lawless fit,

2 *Come, fir, to draw toward an end with you:]* Shakespeare has been unfortunate in his management of the story of this play, the most striking circumstances of which arise so early in its formation, as not to leave him room for a conclusion suitable to the importance of its beginning. After this last interview with the *Ghost*, the character of Hamlet has lost all its consequence. STEEVENS.

3 *ACT IV.]* This play is printed in the old editions without any separation of the acts. The division is modern and arbitrary; and is here not very happy, for the pause is made at a time when there is more continuity of action than in almost any other of the scenes. JOHNSON.

2 *Bestow this place on us a little while.]* This line is wanting in the folio. STEEVENS.

3 *— my good lord,]* The quartos read—*mine own lord.*

STEEVENS.

Behind

Behind the arras hearing something stir,
 He whips his rapier out, and cries, *A rat! a rat!*
 And, in this brainish apprehension, kills
 The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed!

It had been so with us, had we been there:
 His liberty is full of threats to all;
 To you yourself, to us, to every one.
 Alas! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd?
 It will be laid to us; whose providence
 Should have kept short, restrain'd, and ⁴ out of
 haunt,

This mad young man: but, so much was our love,
 We would not understand what was most fit;
 But, like the owner of a foul disease,
 To keep it from divulging, let it feed
 Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd:
 O'er whom his very madness, ⁵ like some ore,
 Among a mineral of metals base,
 Shews itself pure; he weeps for what is done.

King. O, Gertrude, come away!

The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch,
 But we will ship him hence: and this vile deed
 We must, with all our majesty and skill,
 Both countenance and excuse.—Ho! Guildenstern!

⁴ — *out of haunt,*] I would rather read, *out of harm.* JOHNSON.

Out of haunt, means *out of company.* So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

“Dido and her Sichæus shall want troops,

“And all the *haunt* be ours.”

Again, in Warner's *Albion's England*, 1602, book 5. chap. 26:

“And from the smith of heaven's wife allure the amorous
baunt.”

The place where men assemble, is often poetically called the
baunt of men. So, in *Roméo and Juliet*:

“We talk here in the public *baunt* of men.” STEEVENS.

⁵ — *like some ore*] Shakespeare seems to think *ore* to be *or*,
 that is, gold. Base metals have *ore* no less than precious.

JOHNSON.

Enter

Enter Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid :
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,
And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him :
Go, seek him out ; speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[*Exeunt Ros. and Guil.*

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends ;
And let them know, both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done : for haply, slander,
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name ;

*Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter,
As level as the cannon to his blank,
Transports its poison'd shot, may miss our name,*

And hit the woundless air.—O, come away !] Mr. Pope takes

notice, that I replace some verses that were imperfect (and, though of a modern date, seem to be genuine), by inserting two words. But to see what an accurate and faithful collator he is, I produced these verses in my *Shakespeare Restored*, from a quarto edition of *Hamlet*, printed in 1637, and happened to say, that they had not the authority of any earlier date in print, that I knew of, than that quarto. Upon the strength of this Mr. Pope comes and calls the lines *modern*, though they are in the quartos of 1605 and 1611, which I had not then seen, but both of which Mr. Pope pretends to have collated. The verses carry the very stamp of Shakespeare upon them. The coin, indeed, has been clipt from our first receiving it ; but it is not so diminished, but that with a small assistance we may hope to make it pass current. I am far from affirming, that, by inserting the words, *For haply, slander*, I have given the poet's very words ; but the supplement is such as the sentiment naturally seems to demand. The poet has the same thought, concerning the diffusive powers of *slander*, in another of his plays :

“ ——— No, 'tis *slander* ;

“ Whose edge is sharper than the sword, whose tongue

“ Out-venoms all the worms of Nile, whose breath

“ Rides on the posting winds, and doth bely

“ All corners of the world.” *Cymbeline*. THEOBALD.

And

And hit the woundless air.—O, come away!
My soul is full of discord, and dismay. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E II.

Another room.

Enter Hamlet.

Ham. —Safely stow'd, But soft?—

Ros. &c. within. Hamlet! Lord Hamlet!

Ham. What noise? who calls on Hamlet? O,
here they come.

Enter Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern.

Ros. What have you done, my lord, with the
dead body?

Ham. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Ros. Tell us where 'tis; that we may take it
thence,

And bear it to the chapel.

Ham. Do not believe it.

Ros. Believe what?

Ham. That I can keep your counsel, and not mine
own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge!—what
replication should be made by the son of a king?

Ros. Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

Ham. Ay, sir; that soaks up the king's counte-
nance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers
do the king best service in the end: He keeps them,
like an ape, in the corner of his jaw; first mouth'd,
to

⁷ — *But soft,*] I have added these two words from the quartos.
STEEVENS.

⁸ — *Like an ape,*—] The quarto has *ape*, which is generally followed. The folio has *ape*, which Hamner has received, and illustrated with the following note.

“It is the way of monkeys in eating, to throw that part of
“their food, which they take up first, into a pouch they are pro-
“vided

to be last swallow'd: When he needs what you have glean'd, it is but squeezing you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Ros. I understand you not, my lord.

Ham. I am glad of it: A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.

Ros. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Ham. ⁹ The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing——

Guil. A thing, my lord?

Ham. ¹ Of nothing: bring me to him. ² Hide fox, and all after.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE

“ vided with on the side of their jaw, and then they keep it, till they have done with the rest.” JOHNSON.

Surely this should be “like an *ape* an *apple*.” FARMER.

⁹ *The body is with the king,*—] This answer I do not comprehend. Perhaps it should be, *The body is not with the king; for the king is not with the body.* JOHNSON.

Perhaps it may mean this. The body is in the king's house (*i. e.* the present king's) yet the king (*i. e.* he who should have been king) is not with the body. Intimating that the usurper is here, the true king in a better place. Or it may mean—*the guilt of the murder lies with the king, but the king is not where the body lies.* The affected obscurity of Hamlet must excuse so many attempts to procure something like a meaning. STEEVENS.

¹ *Of nothing,*—] Should it not be read, *Or nothing?* When the courtiers remark, that Hamlet has contemptuously called the king a *thing*, Hamlet defends himself by observing, that the king must be a *thing*, or *nothing*. JOHNSON.

The text is right. So, in the Spanish tragedy:

“ In troth, my lord, it is a *thing of nothing*.”

And, in one of Harvey's letters, “ a silly bug-beare, a sorry puffe of winde, a *thing of nothing*.” FARMER.

So,

² *Hide fox,*—] There is a play among children called, *Hide fox, and all after*. HANMER.

The same sport is alluded to in Decker's *Satironastix*: “ — our unhandsome-faced poet does play at bo-peep with your grace, and cries—*All hid, as boys do.*”

This passage is not in the quarto. STEEVENS.

S C E N E III.

*Another room.**Enter King.*

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body.
 How dangerous is it, that this man goes loose?
 Yet must not we put the strong law on him:
 He's lov'd of the distracted multitude,
 Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes;
 And, where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd,
 But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even,
 This sudden sending him away must seem
 Deliberate pause: Diseases, desperate grown,
 By desperate appliance are reliev'd,
 Or not at all.—How now? what hath befallen?

Enter Rosencrantz.

Ros. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord,
 We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Ros. Without, my lord; guarded, to know your
 pleasure.

King. Bring him before us.

Ros. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

So, in Decker's *Match me in London*, 1631:

“At what dost thou laugh?”

“At a *thing of nothing*, at thee.”

Again, in *Look about you*, 1600:

“And believe a little thing would please her,

“A very little thing, a *thing of nothing*.”

Again, in the Interlude of *Jacob and Esau*, 1568:

“But a matter of a straw, and a *thing of nought*.”

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Magnetic Lady*:

“A toy, a *thing of nothing*.”

Again, in Chapman's translation of the 9th Book of the *Odyssey*:

“When now, a weakling came, a dwarfy thing,

“A *thing of nothing*.” STEEVENS.

Enter Hamlet, and Guildenstern.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Ham. At supper.

King. At supper? Where?

Ham. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politick worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else, to fat us; and we fat ourselves for maggots: Your fat king, and your lean beggar, is but variable service; two dishes, but to one table; that's the end.

King. Alas, alas!

Ham. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king; and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm.

King. What dost thou mean by this?

Ham. Nothing, but to shew you how a king may go a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius?

Ham. In heaven; send thither to see: if your messenger find him not there, seek him i' the other place yourself. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month, you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

King. Go seek him there.

Ham. He will stay 'till you come.

[Exeunt Attendants.]

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,—
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done,—must send thee hence
With fiery quickness⁴: Therefore, prepare thyself;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,

³ *Alas, alas!*] This speech, and the following, are omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

⁴ *With fiery quickness:*] These words are not in the quartos.

STEEVENS.

⁵ — *the wind at help,*] I suppose it should be read,

The bark is ready, and the wind at helm. JOHNSON.

The

The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Ham. For England?

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Ham. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes.

Ham. I see a cherub, that sees them.—But, come;
for England!—Farewel, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Ham. My mother:—Father and mother is man and
wife; man and wife is one flesh; and, so, my mother.
Come, for England. [*Exit.*

King. Follow him at foot; tempt him with speed
aboard;

Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night:

Away; for every thing is seal'd and done

That else leans on the affair: Pray you, make haste.

[*Exeunt Ros. and Guil.*

And, England! if my love thou hold'st at aught,

(As my great power thereof may give thee sense;

Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red

After the Danish sword, and thy free awe

Pays homage to us) thou may'st not coldly ⁶ set

Our sovereign process; which imports at full,

⁷ By letters conjuring to that effect,

The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England;

For like the hectic in my blood he rages,

And thou must cure me: 'Till I know 'tis done,

⁶ ——— set by

Our sov'reign process,—] So Hamner. The others have
only *set*. JOHNSON.

———— set

Our sovereign process,—] I adhere to the reading of the
quarto and folio. *To set*, is an expression taken from the gaming-
table. STEEVENS.

⁷ *By letters conjuring*—] Thus the folio. The quarto reads,

“ By letters *conjuring*.” STEEVENS.

⁷ Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E IV.

The frontiers of Denmark.

Enter Fortinbras, with an army.

For. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king;
Tell him, that, by his licence, Fortinbras
Craves⁸ the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us,
We shall express our duty in his eye,
And let him know so.

Capt. I will do't, my lord.

For. Go softly on. [*Exit Fortinbras, &c.*]

Enter Hamlet, Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, &c.

Ham. Good fir⁹, whose powers are these?

Capt. They are of Norway, fir.

Ham. How purpos'd, fir, I pray you?

Capt. Against some part of Poland.

Ham. Who commands them, fir?

Capt. The nephew of old Norway, Fortinbras.

Ham. Goes it against the main of Poland, fir,

⁷ *Howe'er my haps, my joys will ne'er begin.*] This being the termination of a scene, should, according to our author's custom, be rhymed. Perhaps he wrote,

Howe'er my hopes, my joys are not begun.

If *haps* be retained, the meaning will be, *'till I know 'tis done, I shall be miserable, whatever befall me.* JOHNSON.

The folio reads, in confirmation of Dr. Johnson's remark,—

Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun. STEEVENS.

⁸ *Craves*] Thus the quartos. The folio—*claims*— STEEVENS.

⁹ *Good fir, &c.*] The remaining part of this scene is omitted in the folios. STEEVENS.

Or

Or for some frontier?

Capt. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground,
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it;
Nor will it yield to Norway, or the Pole,
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Ham. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Capt. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

Ham. Two thousand souls, and twenty thousand
ducats,

Will not debate the question of this straw:
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace;
That inward breaks, and shews no cause without
Why the man dies.—I humbly thank you, sir.

Capt. God be wi'ye, sir. [*Exit Captain.*]

Ros. Will't please you go, my lord?

Ham. I will be with you straight. Go a little before.

[*Exeunt Ros. and the rest.*]

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge! What is a man,
If his ¹ chief good, and market of his time,
Be but to sleep, and feed? a beast, no more.
Sure, he, that made us with such ² large discourse,
Looking before, and after, gave us not
That capability and god-like reason
To fust in us unus'd. Now, whether it be
Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part
wisdom,
And, ever, three parts coward,—I do not know

¹ — *chief good and market*—] If his highest good, and *that for which he sells his time*, be to sleep and feed. JOHNSON.

² — *large discourse*,] Such latitude of comprehension, such power of reviewing the past, and anticipating the future.

JOHNSON.

Why yet I live to say, *This thing's to do* ;
 Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means
 To do't. Examples, gross as earth, exhort me :
 Witness, this army, of such mass, and charge,
 Led by a delicate and tender prince ;
 Whose spirit, with divine ambition puffed,
 Makes mouths at the invisible event ;
 Exposing what is mortal, and unsure,
 To all that fortune, death, and danger, dare,
 Even for an egg-shell. ³ Rightly, to be great
 Is not to stir without great argument ;
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
⁴ Excitements of my reason, and my blood,
 And let all sleep? while, to my shame, I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
 That, for a fantasy, and trick of fame,
 Go to their graves like beds ; fight for a plot,
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
 Which is not tomb enough, and continent ⁵,

³ ——— *Rightly to be great,*

Is not to stir without, &c.] This passage I have printed according to the copy. Mr. Theobald had regulated it thus :

——— *'Tis not to be great,*

Never to stir without great argument ;

But greatly, &c.

The sentiment of Shakespeare is partly just, and partly romantic.

——— *Rightly to be great,*

Is not to stir without great argument ;
 is exactly philosophical.

But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,

When honour is at stake,

is the idea of a modern hero. *But then*, says he, *honour is an argument, or subject of debate, sufficiently great, and when honour is at stake, we must find cause of quarrel in a straw.* JOHNSON.

⁴ *Excitements of my reason and my blood,*] Provocations which excite both my reason and my passions to vengeance. JOHNSON.

⁵ — *continent*] *Continent*, in our author, means that which comprehends or encloses. So, in *King Lear* :

“ Rive your concealing continents.” STEEVENS.

To hide the slain?—O, from this time forth,
My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth! [*Exit.*]

S C E N E V.

Elfinour. A room in the palace.

Enter Queen, and Horatio.

Queen. —I will not speak with her.

Hor. She is importunate: indeed, distract;
Her mood will needs be pity'd.

Queen. What would she have?

Hor. She speaks much of her father; says, she
hears,
There's tricks i' the world; and hems, and beats her
heart;

6 Spurns enviously at straws; speaks things in doubt,
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
The hearers to collection⁷; they aim at it⁸,

⁶ *Spurns enviously at straws;*] *Envy* is much oftener put by
our poet (and those of his time) for direct *aversion*, than for
malignity conceived at the sight of another's excellence or happiness.

So in *Henry VIII.* Act 1:

“ ——— No black *envy*
“ Shall make my grave.” —

Again, Act 3:

“ You turn the good we offer into *envy.*”

Again, in *Herod and Antipater*, 1622:

“ — although his words
“ Accus'd my Mariam, it is his sin,
“ Not person, that I *envy.*”

Again, in *God's Revenge against Murder*, 1621, *Hist.* VI.
“ — She loves the memory of Syontus, and *envies* and detests
that of her two husbands.” STEEVENS.

⁷ — to collection;] i. e. to deduce consequences from such
premises. So, in *Cymbeline*, Scene the last:

—— whose containing
Is so from sense to hardness, that I can
Make no *collection* of it.

See the note on this passage. STEEVENS.

⁸ — they aim at it,] The quartos read—they *yearn* at it.
To *aim* is to guess. STEEVENS.

And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts;
Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield
them,

Indeed would make one think, there might be
thought,

° Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Queen. ° 'Twere good, she were spoken with; for
she may strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds:

Let her come in.

[*Exit Horatio.*

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,

Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss²;

So full of artless jealousy is guilt,

It spills itself, in fearing to be spilt.

Re-enter Horatio, with Ophelia.

Oph. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark?

Queen. How now, Ophelia?

° *Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.*] i. e. though her meaning cannot be certainly collected, yet there is enough to put a mischievous interpretation to it. WARBURTON.

That *unbappy* once signified *mischievous*, may be known from P. Holland's translation of *Pliny's Nat. Hist.* b. 19. ch. 7. "—the shrewd and *unbappie* fowles which lie upon the lands, and eat up the seed new sowne." We still use *unlucky* in the same sense.

STEEVENS.

° *'Twere good she were spoken with;—*] These lines are given to the *Queen* in the folio, and to *Horatio* in the quarto.

JOHNSON.

° — *to some great amiss:*] Shakespeare is not singular in his use of this word as a substantive. So, in the *Arraignment of Paris*, 1584:

"Gracious forbearers of this world's *amiss*."

Again, in *Lilly's Woman in the Moon*, 1597:

"Pale be my looks to witness my *amiss*."

Again, in *Greene's Disputation between a He Conycatcher, &c.* 1592: "—revive in them the memory of my great *amiss*."

STEEVENS.

Oph.

Oph. ³ *How should I your true love know
From another one?*

⁴ *By his cockle hat, and staff,
And by his sandal shoon.* [Singing.]

Queen. Alas, sweet lady, what imports this song?

Oph. Say you? nay, pray you, mark.

*He is dead and gone, lady,
He is dead and gone;
At his head a grass-green turf,
At his heels a stone.*

O, ho!

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia,——

Oph. Pray you, mark.

White his shroud as the mountain snow,

Enter King.

Queen. Alas, look here, my lord.

³ *How should I your true love, &c.*] There is no part of this play, in its representation on the stage, is more pathetic than this scene, which I suppose proceeds from the utter insensibility she has to her own misfortunes.

A great sensibility, or none at all, seems to produce the same effect. In the latter the audience supply what she wants, and with the former they sympathize. Sir J. REYNOLDS.

⁴ *By his cockle hat and staff,
And by his sandal shoon.*] This is the description of a pilgrim. While this kind of devotion was in favour, love-intrigues were carried on under that mask. Hence the old ballads and novels made pilgrimages the subjects of their plots. The cockle-shell hat was one of the essential badges of this vocation: for the chief places of devotion being beyond sea, or on the coasts, the pilgrims were accustomed to put cockle-shells upon their hats, to denote the intention or performance of their devotion.

WARBURTON.

So, in *Green's Never too late*, 1616, a Pilgrim is described:

“A hat of straw like to a furzin,

“Shelter for the sun and rain,

“With a *scallop-shell* before, &c.” STEEVENS.

Oph.

Oph. ⁵ *Larded all with sweet flowers ;
Which bewept to the grave did go ⁶,
With true-love showers.*

King. How do you, pretty lady ?

Oph. Well, God 'ield you ! They say, ⁷ the owl was a baker's daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be. God be at your table !

King. Conceit upon her father.

Oph. Pray, let us have no words of this ; but when they ask you, what it means, say you this :

*To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day ⁸,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine :
Then up he rose, and don'd ⁹ his cloaths,
¹ And dupt the chamber door ;
Let in the maid, that out a maid
Never departed more.*

King.

⁵ *Larded all with sweet flowers :*] The expression is taken from cookery. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *did go,*] The old editions read, — *did not go.* STEEVENS.

⁷ — *the owl was a baker's daughter.*] This was a metamorphosis of the common people, arising from the mealy appearance of the owl's feathers, and her guarding the bread from mice.

WARBURTON.

To guard the bread from mice, is rather the office of a cat than an owl. In barns and granaries, indeed, the services of the owl are still acknowledged. This was, however, no metamorphosis of the common people, but a legendary story, which both Dr. Johnson and myself have read, yet in what book at least I cannot recollect. — Our Saviour being refused bread by the daughter of a baker, is described as punishing her by turning her into an owl.

STEEVENS.

⁸ *To-morrow is, &c.*] Without doubt,

“ Good morrow, 'tis Saint Valentine's day. FARMER.

⁹ — *don'd his cloaths.* To *don*, is to *do on*, to put on, as *doff* is to do off, put off. STEEVENS.

¹ *And dupt the chamber-door ;*] To *dup*, is to *do up* ; to lift the latch. It were easy to write,

And op'd ——— JOHNSON.

King. Pretty Ophelia!

Oph. Indeed, without an oath, I'll make an end on't.

² By *Gis*, and by *Saint Charity*,
Alack, and fie for shame!

Young men will do't, if they come to't;

By cock³, they are to blame.

To *dap*, was a common contraction of to *do up*. So, in *Damon and Pythias*, 1582: "—the porters are drunk, will they not *dap* the gate to-day?"

Lord Surry, in his translation of the second *Æneid*, renders *Panduntur portæ*, &c. "The gates *cast up*, we issued out to play." The phrase seems to have been adopted either from *doing up* the *latch*, or drawing up the *portcullis*. Again, in the *Cooke's Play*, in the Chester collection of mysteries, Ms. Harl. 1013, p. 140:

"Open up hell-gates anon."

It appears from *Martin Mark-all's Apologie to the Bel-man of London*, 1610, that in the cant of gypsies, &c. *Dap the gigger*, signified to open the doore. STEEVENS.

² By *Gis*.—] I rather imagine it should be read,

By *Cis*,——

That is, by *St. Cecily*. JOHNSON.

—— by *Saint Charity*,] *Saint Charity* is a known saint among the Roman Catholics. Spenser mentions her, *Eclog.* 5. 255:

"Ah dear lord, and sweet *Saint Charity!*"

I find, by *Gisse*, used as an adjuration, both by Gascoigne in his Poems, by Preston in his *Cambyses*, and in the comedy of *See me, and See me not*, 1618.

"By *Gisse* I swear, were I so fairly wed." &c.

Again, in *K. Edward I.* 1599:

"By *Gis*, fair lords, ere many daies be past, &c."

Again, in Heywood's 23d Epigram, Fourth Hundred:

"Nay, by *Gis*, he looketh on you maister, quoth he."

Again, in *The Downfall of Rob. E. of Huntington*, 1601:

"Therefore, sweet maister, for *Saint Charity.*"

STEEVENS.

By *Gis* ——

There is not the least mention of any saint whose name corresponds with this, either in the *Roman Calendar*, the service in *Usum Sarum*, or in the *Benedictionary* of Bishop Athelwold. I believe the word to be only a corrupted abbreviation of *Jesus*, the letters J. H. S. being anciently all that was set down to denote that sacred name, on altars, the covers of books, &c. RIDLEY.

³ By *cock*.] This is likewise a corruption of the sacred name. Many instances of it are given in a note at the beginning of the 5th Act of the Second Part of *K. Henry IV.* STEEVENS.

*Quoth she, before you tumbled me,
You promis'd me to wed: He answers 4.
So would I ha' done, by yonder sun,
An thou hadst not come to my bed.*

King. How long hath she been thus?

Oph. I hope, all will be well. We must be patient: but I cannot choose but weep, to think, they should lay him i' the cold ground: My brother shall know of it, and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach! Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies: good night, good night. [*Exit.*]

King. Follow her close; give her good watch, I pray you. [*Exit Horatio.*]

O! this is the poison of deep grief; it springs
All from her father's death: And now behold, O
Gertrude, Gertrude,

When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions! First, her father slain;
Next, your son gone; and he most violent author
Of his own just remove: The people muddy'd,
Thick and unwholsome in their thoughts, and whispers,
For good Polonius' death; and we have done⁵ but
greenly,

⁶ In hugger-mugger to inter him: Poor Ophelia
Divided

⁴ *He answers.*] These words I have added from the quartos.

STEEVENS.

⁵ — *but greenly,*] But *unskilfully*; with *greenness*; that is without *maturity* of judgment. JOHNSON.

⁶ *In hugger-mugger to inter him;*—] All the modern editions that I have consulted, give it,

In private to inter him;—

That the words now replaced are better, I do not undertake to prove; it is sufficient that they are Shakespeare's; if phraseology is to be changed as words grow uncouth by disuse, or gross by vulgarity, the history of every language will be lost; we shall no longer have the words of any author; and, as these alterations will be often unskilfully made, we shall in time have very little of his meaning. JOHNSON.

This expression is used in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, 1609:

“—he

Divided from herself, and her fair judgment;
 Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts.
 Last, and as much containing as all these,
 Her brother is in secret come from France:
 7 Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
 And wants not buzzers to infect his ear
 With pestilent speeches of his father's death;
 8 Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
 Will nothing stick our person to arraign
 In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude, this,
 9 Like to a murdering piece, in many places
 Gives me superfluous death! *[A noise within.*

Queen

“ — he died like a politician

“ In *lagger-magger*.”

Shakespeare probably took the expression from the following passage in Sir T. North's translation of Plutarch.—“ Antonius
 “ thinking that his body should be honourably buried, and not in
 “ *lagger-magger*.”

Again, in Harrington's *Ariosto*:

So that it might be done in *lagger-magger*.

See also, B. 2. St. 13. It is likewise in Spenser's *Minster
 Hubbard's Tale*.

Again, in Decker's *Satirimagick*:

“ One word, Sir Quintilian, in *lagger-magger*.”

It appears from Greene's *Groundwork of Comedynghing*, 1592:
 that to *lagger*, was to lurk about. STEEVENS.

7 Feeds on his wonder,—] The folio reads,

Keeps on his wonder,—

The quarto,

Feeds on this wonder.—

Thus the true reading is picked out from between them. Hammer
 reads unnecessarily,

Feeds on his anger.— JOHNSON.

8 Wherein necessity, &c.] Hammer reads,

Whence animosity, of matter beggar'd.

He seems not to have understood the connection. *Wherein*, that
 is, *in which pestilent speeches, necessity, or, the obligation of an excuse*
to support his charge, will nothing stick, &c. JOHNSON.

9 Like to a murdering piece,—] Such a piece as *assaults us*,
 with many barrells. It is necessary to apprehend this, to see the
 justness of the similitude. WARBURTON.

Like

Queen. Alack! what noise is this¹?

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Attend. Where are my Switzers? Let them guard the door:—

What is the matter?

Gen. Save yourself, my lord;

² The ocean, over-peering of his list,

Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste,

Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,

O'er-bears your officers! The rabble call him, lord;

And, as the world were now but to begin,

Antiquity forgot, custom not known,

³ The ratifiers and props of every ward,

They

Like a murdering piece,—] This explanation of Dr. Warburton's is right; and a passage in *The Double Marriage* of Beaumont and Fletcher will justify it:

“And, like a *murdering piece*, aims not at one,

“But all that stand within the dangerous level.”

Again, in *All's lost by Lust*, a tragedy, by Cyril Turner, 1633:

“If thou fail'st too, the King comes with a *murdering piece*,

“In the rear.”

Again, in *A Fair Quarrel*, by Middleton and Rowley, 1622:

“There is not such another *murdering piece*

“In all the stock of calumny.” STEEVENS.

¹ *Alack!* &c.] This speech of the Queen is omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

² *The ocean, over-peering of his list,*] The lists are the barriers which the spectators of a tournament must not pass. JOHNSON.

³ *The ratifiers and props of every word;*] The whole tenor of the context is sufficient to shew, that this is a mistaken reading. What can antiquity and custom, being the props of *words*, have to do with the business in hand? Or what idea is conveyed by it? Certainly the poet wrote:

The ratifiers and props of every ward.

The messenger is complaining that the riotous head had overborne the king's officers, and then subjoins, that antiquity and custom were forgot, which were the ratifiers and props of every *ward*, i. e. of every one of those *securities* that nature and law place about the person of a king. All this is rational and consequential. WARBURTON.

With

They cry, *Choose we; Laertes shall be king!*
Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
Laertes shall be king, Laertes king!

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry!
* O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.

King. The doors are broke. [Noise within.]

Enter Laertes, with others.

Laer. Where is this king?—Sirs, stand you all without.

All. No, let's come in.

Laer. I pray you, give me leave.

With this emendation, which was in Theobald's edition, Hanmer was not satisfied. It is indeed harsh. Hanmer transposes the lines, and reads,

They cry, "Choose we Laertes for our king;"

The ratifiers and props of every word,

Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds.

I think the fault may be mended at less expence, by reading,

Antiquity forgot, custom not known,

The ratifiers and props of every weal.

That is, of every government, JOHNSON.

The ratifiers and props of every word.] By *word* is here meant a declaration, or proposal; it is determined to this sense, by the inference it hath to what had just preceded,

The rabble call him lord, &c.

This acclamation, which is the *word* here spoken of, was made without regard to antiquity, or received custom, whose concurrence, however, is necessarily required to confer validity and stability in every proposal of this kind. REVISAL.

Sir T. Hanmer would transpose the two last lines. Dr. Warburton proposes to read, *ward*; and Dr. Johnson, *weal*, instead of *word*. I should be rather for reading, *work*. TYRWHITT.

The ratifiers and props of every word] In the first folio there is only a comma at the end of the above line; and will not the passage bear this construction?—The rabble call him lord, and as if the world were now but to begin, and as if the ancient custom of hereditary succession were unknown, they, the ratifiers and props of *every word* he utters, cry, Let us make choice, that Laertes shall be king. TOLLET.

* O, this is counter, you false Danish dogs.] Hounds run counter when they trace the trail backwards. JOHNSON.

All.

All. We will, we will.

[*Exeunt.*]

Laer. I thank you :—Keep the door.—O thou vile king,

Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

Laer. That drop of blood, that's calm, proclaims me bastard;

Cries, cuckold, to my father; brands the harlot Even here, between the chaste^s unsmirched brow Of my true mother.

King. What is the cause, Laertes, That thy rebellion looks so giant-like?— Let him go, Gertrude; do not fear our person; There's such divinity doth hedge a king, That treason can but peep to what it would, Acts little of his will.—Tell me, Laertes, Why thou art thus incens'd;—Let him go, Gertrude;—

Speak, man.

Laer. Where is my father?

King. Dead:

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laer. How came he dead? I'll not be juggled with:

To hell, allegiance! vows, to the blackest devil! Conscience, and grace, to the profoundest pit! I dare damnation: To this point I stand,— That both the worlds I give to negligence, Let come what comes; only I'll be reveng'd Most throughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you?

^s — *unsmirched brow,*] i. e. clean, not defiled. To *besmirch*, our author uses Act 1. Sc. 5.

This seems to be an allusion to a proverb often introduced in the old comedies. Thus, in the *London Prodigal*, 1605: “— as true as the skin between any man's brows.” STEEVENS.

Laer.

Laer. My will, not all the world's :
And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,
They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,
If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge,
That, sweep-stake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser ?

Laer. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then ?

Laer. To his good friends, thus wide I'll ope my
arms ;

And, like the kind life-rend'ring pelican ⁶,
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child, and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensible in grief for it,
It shall as level ⁷ to your judgment 'pear,
As day does to your eye.

Crowd within. Let her come in.

Laer. How now ! what noise is that ?

⁶ — *life-rend'ring pelican,*] So, in the ancient *Interlude of Nature*, bl. l. no date :

“ Who taught the cök hys wachte-howres to observe,

“ And syng of corage wyth shrill throte on hye ?

“ Who taught the *pelhycan* her tender hart to carve ?—

“ For the nolde suffer her byrdys to dye ?”

It is almost needless to add that this account of the bird is entirely fabulous. STEEVENS.

⁷ — *to your judgment 'pear,*] So the quarto ; the folio, and all the later editions, read :

———— *to your judgment pierce,*
less intelligibly. JOHNSON.

This elision of the verb to *appear*, is common to Beaumont and Fletcher. So, in *The Maid in the Mill*: “ — They 'pear so handsomely, I will go forward.”

Again,

“ And where they 'pear so excellent in little,

“ They will but flame in great.” STEEVENS.

Enter Ophelia, fantastically dress'd with straws and flowers.

O heat, dry up my brains! tears, seven times salt,
 Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye!—
 By heaven, thy madness shall be pay'd with weight,
 'Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May!
 Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia!—
 O heavens! is't possible, a young maid's wits
 Should be as mortal as an old man's life?
 * Nature is fine in love: and, where 'tis fine,
 It sends some precious instance of itself
 After the thing it loves.

Oph. *They bore him bare-fac'd on the bier*;
Hey no nonny, nonny hey nonny:
And on his grave rain'd many a tear;—

Fare you well, my dove!

Laer. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade re-
 venge,
 It could not move thus.

* *Nature is fine in love: and, where 'tis fine,
 It sends some precious instance of itself*

After the thing it loves.] These lines are not in the quarto, and might have been omitted in the folio without great loss, for they are obscure and affected; but, I think, they require no emendation. Love (says Laertes) is the passion by which nature is most exalted and refined; and as substances, refined and subtilised, easily obey any impulse, or follow any attraction, some part of nature, so purified and refined, flies off after the attracting object, after the thing it loves.

*As into air the purer spirits flow,
 And separate from their kindred dregs below,
 So flew her soul.*— JOHNSON.

The meaning of the passage may be—that her wits, like the spirit of fine essences, flew off or evaporated. STEEVENS.

⁹ *They bore him bare-fac'd on the bier, &c.*] So, in Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, late edit. ver. 2879:

“ He laid him bare the visage on the bere,
 “ Therwith he wept that pitee was to here.” STEEVENS.

Oph.

Oph. You must sing, *Down a-down*¹, an you call him
a-down-a.

² O, how the wheel becomes it! It is the false steward,
that stole his master's daughter.

Laer. This nothing's more than matter.

Oph. ³ There's rosemary, that's for remembrance;
pray you, love, remember: and there is pansies, that's
for thoughts.

Laer.

¹ —*sing, Down a-down.*] Perhaps Shakespeare alludes to *Phyllis's Sonnet*, by Tho. Lodge, which the reader may find in *England's Helicon*, 1614:

Downe a-downe,

Thus Phillis sung,

By fancy once distressed: &c.

And so sing, I, with *downe a-downe*, &c.

Down a-down is likewise the burthen of a song in the *Three Ladies of London*, 1584, and perhaps common to many others. STEEVENS.

² O how the wheel becomes it!] We should read *wheel*. She is now rambling on the ballad of the steward and his lord's daughter. And in these words speaks of the state he assumed. WARBURTON.

I do not see why *wheel* is better than *wobel*. The story alluded to I do not know; but perhaps the lady stolen by the steward was reduced to *spin*. JOHNSON.

You must sing, Down-a-down, &c.

“O how the *wobel* becomes it!”—] The *wobel* may mean no more than *the burthen of the song*, which she had just repeated, and as such was formerly used. I met with the following observation in an old quarto black letter book, published before the time of Shakespeare.

“The song was accounted a good one, though it was not moche
“graced by the *wobele*, which in no wise accorded with the subject
“matter thereof.”

I quote this from memory, and from a book, of which I cannot recollect the exact title or date; but the passage was in a preface to some songs or sonnets. I well remember to have met with the word in the same sense in other old books.

The ballad, alluded to by Ophelia, is perhaps entered on the books of the Stationers' Company. “October 1580. Four ballades of the Lord of Lorn and the *False Steward*, &c.” STEEVENS.

³ *There's rosemary, that's for remembrance: and there's pansies, that's for thoughts.*] There is probably some mythology in the choice of these herbs, but I cannot explain it. *Pansies* is for *thoughts*, because of its name, *Pensées*; but why *rosemary* indicates

Laer. A document in madness; thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Oph. There's fennel for you, and columbines⁴:
 5 There's rue for you;—and here's some for me:—
 we

remembrance, except that it is an ever-green, and carried at funerals, I have not discovered. JOHNSON.

So, in *All Fools*, a comedy, by Chapman, 1605:

“What flowers are these?—

“The *Pansie* this.

“O, that's for lovers' thoughts!”

Rosemary was anciently supposed to strengthen the memory, and was not only carried at funerals, but worn at weddings, as appears from a passage in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Elder Brother*, Act 3. Sc. 3. And from another in *Ram-Alley*, or *Merry Tricks*, 1611:

“—will I be wed this morning,

“Thou shalt not be there, nor once be graced

“With a piece of *rosemary*.”

Again, in the *Noble Spanish Soldier*, 1634: “I meet few but are stuck with *rosemary*: every one asked me who was to be married.”

Again, in Greene's *Never too late*, 1616: “—she hath given thee a nosegay of flowers, wherein, as a top-gallant for all the rest, is set in *rosemary* for remembrance.” STEEVENS.

⁴ *There's fennel for you, and columbines:*] Greene, in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, 1620, calls *fennel*, *women's weeds*: “fit generally for that sex, sith while they are maidens, they wish wantonly.”

I know not of what *columbines* were supposed to be emblematical. They are again mentioned in *All Fools*, by Chapman, 1605:

“What's that?—a *columbine*?

“No: that *thankless* flower grows not in my garden.”

Gerard, however, and other herbalists, impute few, if any, virtues to them; and they may therefore be stiled *thankless*, because they appear to make no grateful return for their creation.

Again, in the 15th Song of Drayton's *Polyolbion*:

“The *columbine* amongst, they sparingly do set.”

From the *Caliba Poetarum*, 1599, it should seem as if this flower was the emblem of cuckoldom:

“—the blew *cornuted* columbine,

“Like to the crooked horns of Acheloy.” STEEVENS.

⁵ *There's rue for you;—and here's some for me:—we may call it herb of grace o' Sundays:*] *Herb of grace* is the name the country people give to *rue*. And the reason is, because that herb was a principal ingredient in the potion which the Romish priests used to force the possessed to swallow down when they exorcised them.

Now

we may call it, herb of grace o' Sundays:—⁶ you may wear your rue with a difference.—There's a daisy:—I would give you some violets; but they wither'd all, when my father died:—They say, he made a good end,—

⁷ For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,—

Laer. Thought, and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour, and to prettiness.

Oph.

Now these exorcisms being performed generally on a Sunday, in the church before the whole congregation, is the reason why she says, we may call it *herb of grace o' Sundays*. Sandys tells us, that at Grand Cairo there is a species of *rue* much in request, with which the inhabitants perfume themselves, not only as a preservative against infection, but as very powerful against evil spirits. And the cabalistic Gaffarel pretends to have discovered the reason of its virtue, *La semence de rue est faible comme une croix, et c'est par aventure la cause qu'elle a tant de vertu contre les possedez, et que l'Eglise s'en sert en les exorcisant*. It was on the same principle that the Greeks called *sulphur*, *Σύωρ*, because of its use in their superstitious putgations by fire. Which too the Romish priests employ to fumigate in their exorcisms; and on that account hallow or consecrate it. WARBURTON.

There's rue for you; and here's some for me, &c.] I believe there is a quibble meant in this passage; *rue* anciently signifying the same as *Rub*, i. e. sorrow. Ophelia gives the queen some, and keeps a proportion of it for herself. There is the same kind of play with the same word in *King Richard the Second*.

Herb of grace is one of the titles which *Tucca* gives to *William Rufus*, in *Decker's Satiromastix*. I suppose the first syllable of the surname *Rufus* introduced the quibble. STEEVENS.

⁶ You may wear your rue *with a difference*.] This seems to refer to the rules of heraldry, where the younger brothers of a family bear the same arms *with a difference*, or mark of distinction. So, in Holinshed's *Reign of King Richard II.* p. 443: "— because he was the youngest of the Spensers, he bare a border gules for a *difference*."

There may, however, be somewhat more implied here, than is expressed. *You, madam* (says Ophelia to the Queen), *may call your RUE by its Sunday name, HERB OF GRACE, and so wear it with a difference to distinguish it from mine, which can never be any thing but merely RUE, i. e. sorrow.* STEEVENS.

⁷ For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy,—] This is part of an old song, mentioned likewise by Beaumont and Fletcher. *Two Noble Kinsmen*, Act 4. Sc. 1:

Oph. *And will he not come again?
And will he not come again?
No, no, he is dead,
Go to thy death-bed,
He never will come again.*

⁸ *His beard was as white as snow,
All flaxen was his poll:
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan;
God a' mercy on his soul!*

And of all christian souls! I pray God. God be wi' you.

[Exit Oph.

Laer. Do you see this, O God?

King. Laertes, I must common with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me:

“ — I can sing the broom,
“ And *Bonny Robin.*”

In the books of the Stationers' Company, 26 April, 1594, is entered “ A ballad, intituled, A doleful adewe to the last Erle of Darbie, to the tune of *Bonny sweet Robin.*” STEEVENS.

⁸ *His beard was as white as snow, &c.]* This, and several circumstances in the character of Ophelia, seem to have been ridiculed in *Eastward Hoe*, a comedy written by Ben Jonson, Chapman, and Marston, printed 1605, Act 3:

“ *His bead as white as milk,
“ All flaxen was his hair;
“ But now he's dead,
“ And laid in his bed,
“ And never will come again.*

“ God be at your labour! STEEVENS.

⁹ *God a' mercy on his soul!*

And of all Christian souls!] This is the common conclusion to many of the ancient monumental inscriptions. See Weever's *Funeral Monuments*, p. 657, 658. Berthelette, the publisher of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, 1554, speaking first of the funeral of Chaucer, and then of Gower, says, “ — he lieth buried in the monasterie of Seynt Peter's at Westminster, &c. *On whose soules and all christen, Jesu have mercie.*” STEEVENS.

If by direct or by collateral hand
 They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
 Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
 To you in satisfaction; but, if not,
 Be you content to lend your patience to us,
 And we shall jointly labour with your soul
 To give it due content.

Lacr. Let this be so;

His means of death, his obscure funeral,—
¹ No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
 No noble rite, nor formal ostentation,—
 Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
 That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall;

² And, where the offence is, let the great axe fall.
 I pray you, go with me. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E VI.

Another Room.

Enter Horatio, with a Servant.

Hor. What are they, that would speak with me?

Serv. Sailors, sir;

They say, they have letters for you.

¹ *No trophy, sword, or hatchment—*] It was the custom, in the times of our author, to hang a sword over the grave of a knight.

JOHNSON.

No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,] This practice is uniformly kept up to this day. Not only the sword, but the helmet, gauntlet, spurs, and tabard (*i. e.* a coat whereon the armorial ensigns were anciently depicted, from whence the term *coat of armour*) are hung over the grave of every knight.

Sir J. HAWKINS.

² *And where the offence is, let the great axe fall.*] We should read,

— *let the great axe fall.*

i. e. penalty, punishment. WARBURTON.

Fall corresponds better to *axe*. JOHNSON.

Hor. Let them come in.—

I do not know from what part of the world
I should be greeted, if not from lord Hamlet.

Enter Sailors.

Sail. God bless you, sir.

Hor. Let him bless thee too.

Sail. He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir: it comes from the embassador that was bound for England; if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is.

Horatio reads the letter.

HORATIO, when thou shalt have overlook'd this, give these fellows some means to the king; they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase: Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compell'd valour, and in the grapple I boarded them: on the instant, they got clear of our ship; so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me, like thieves of mercy; but they knew what they did; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou would'st fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear, will make thee dumb; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England: of them I have much to tell thee. Farewel.

He that thou knowest thine, Hamlet.

³ — for the bore of the matter.] The bore is the caliber of a gun, or the capacity of the barrel. The matter (says Hamlet) would carry heavier words. JOHNSON.

Come,

Come, I will make you way for these your letters;
 And do't the speedier, that you may direct me
 To him from whom you brought them. [Exit,

S C E N E VII.

Another Room.

Enter King, and Laertes.

King. Now must your conscience my acquittance
 seal,

And you must put me in your heart for friend;
 Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear,
 That he, which hath your noble father slain,
 Pursu'd my life.

Laer. It well appears:—But tell me,
 Why you proceeded not against these feats,
 So crimeful and so capital in nature,
 As by your safety, greatness, wisdom, all things else,
 You mainly were stirr'd up?

King. O, for two special reasons;
 Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unfinew'd,
 And yet to me they are strong. The queen, his
 mother,

Lives almost by his looks; and for myself,
 (My virtue, or my plague, be it either which)
 She is so conjunctive to my life and soul,
 That, as the star moves not but in his sphere,
 I could not but by her. The other motive,
 Why to a publick count I might not go,
 Is, the great love⁴ the general gender bear him:
 Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
⁵ Work, like the spring that turneth wood to stone,

⁴ — the general gender] The common race of the people.

JOHNSON.

⁵ Work, like the spring—] This simile is neither very seasonable in the deep interest of this conversation, nor very accurately applied. If the *spring* had changed base metals to gold, the thought had been more proper. JOHNSON.

The folio, instead of—work, reads—would. STEEVENS.

Convert

Convert his gyves to graces; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind⁶;
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laer. And so have I a noble father lost;
A sister driven into desperate terms;
Whose worth, ⁷ if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections:—But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that: you must
not think,
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull,
That we can let our beard be shook with danger⁸,
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more:
I lov'd your father, and we love ourself;
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,—
How now? what news⁹?

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet¹:
This to your majesty; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet! Who brought them?

Mess. Sailors, my lord, they say: I saw them not;
They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them

⁶ —for so loud a wind,] Thus the folio. One of the quartos reads — for so loved, arm'd. If these words have any meaning, it should seem to be—The instruments of offence I employ, would have proved too weak to injure one who is so loved and arm'd by the affection of the people. Their love, like armour, would revert the arrow to the bow. STEEVENS.

⁷ —if praises may go back again,] If I may praise what has been, but is now to be found no more. JOHNSON.

⁸ That we can let our beard be shook with danger,] It is wonderful that none of the advocates for the learning of Shakespeare have told us that this line is imitated from Persius, Sat. 2:

*Idcirco solidam præbet tibi vellere barbam
Jupiter?* STEEVENS.

⁹ How now? &c.] Omitted in the quartos. THEOBALD.

¹ Letters, &c.] Omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

Of him that brought them ?

King. Laertes, you shall hear them :—
Leave us.

{Exit Mess.

HIGH and mighty, you shall know, I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes: when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasion of my sudden and more strange return. Hamlet.

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
Or is it some abuse, and no such thing?

Laer. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. *Naked,—*
And, in a postscript here, he says, *alone:*
Can you advise me?

Laer. I am lost in it, my lord. But let him come;
It warms the very sickness in my heart,
That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
Thus diddest thou.

King. If it be so, Laertes,—
As how should it be so?—how otherwise?—
Will you be rul'd by me?

Laer. Ay, my lord;
So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace.

King. To thine own peace. If he be now re-
turn'd,—

3 As checking at his voyage, and that he means

² *Of him that brought them.*] I have restored this hemistich from the quartos. STEEVENS.

³ *As liking not his voyage,—*] The folio,

As checking at his voyage.

Checking is, I think, the best reading. The phrase is from falconry; and may be justified from the following passage in *Hinde's Eliosto Libidinoso*, 1606: "—For who knows not, quoth she, that this hawk, which comes now so fair to the fist, may to-morrow *chicke* at the lure?"

Again, in G. Whetstone's *Castle of Delight*, 1576:

"But as the hawke, to gad which knowes the way,

"Will hardly leave to *chicke* at carren crowes, &c." STEEVENS.

No more to undertake it,—I will work him
 To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
 Under the which he shall not choose but fall :
 And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe ;
 But even his mother shall uncharge the practice,
 And call it, accident.

Laer. 4 My lord, I will be rul'd ;
 The rather, if you could devise it so,
 That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right.
 You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
 And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
 Wherein, they say, you shine : your sum of parts
 Did not together pluck such envy from him,
 As did that one ; and that, in my regard,
 5 Of the unworthiest siege.

Laer. What part is that, my lord ?

King. A very ribband in the cap of youth,
 Yet needful too ; for youth no less becomes
 The light and careless livery that it wears,
 Than settled age his fables, and his weeds,
 6 Importing health, and graveness.—Two months
 since,
 Here was a gentleman of Normandy,—
 I have seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,

4 *Laer.*] The next sixteen lines are omitted in the folio.

STEEVENS.

5 *Of the unworthiest siege.*] Of the lowest rank. *Siege*, for *seat*,
place. JOHNSON.

So, in *Othello*: “ — I fetch my birth

“ From men of royal *siege*.” STEEVENS.

6 *Importing health and graveness.*—] But a warm furr'd gown
 rather implies sickness than *health*. Shakespeare wrote,

Importing wealth and graveness.—

i. e. that the wearers are rich burghers and magistrates.

WARBURTON.

Importing here may be, not *inferring* by logical consequence, but
producing by physical effect. A young man regards show in his
 dress, an old man, *health*. JOHNSON.

And they can well on horseback: but this gallant
 Had witchcraft in't; he grew unto his seat;
 And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
 As he had been incorps'd and demy-natur'd
 With the brave beast: so far he topp'd my thought,
 That I, ⁷ in forgery of shapes and tricks,
 Come short of what he did.

Laer. A Norman, was't?

King. A Norman.

Laer. Upon my life, Lamond.

King. The very same.

Laer. I know him well: he is the brooch, indeed,
 And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you;
 And gave you such a masterly report,
 For art and exercise ⁸ in your defence,
 And for your rapier most especial,
 That he cried out, 'Twould be a fight indeed,
 If one could match you: ⁹ the scrimers of their
 nation,

He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
 If you oppos'd them: Sir, this report of his
 Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy,
 That he could nothing do, but wish and beg
 Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him.
 New out of this,——

Laer. What out of this, my lord?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you?
 Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
 A face without a heart?

Laer. Why ask you this?

⁷ — *in forgery of shapes and tricks,*] I could not contrive so many proofs of dexterity as he could perform. JOHNSON.

⁸ — *in your defence,*] That is, in the science of defence.

JOHNSON.

⁹ — *the scrimers—*] The *fencers*. JOHNSON.
 This passage is not in the folio. STEEVENS.

King.

King. Not that I think, you did not love your father;

But that I know, ¹ love is begun by time;
 And that I see, ² in passages of proof,
 Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
 There lives ³ within the very flame of love
 A kind of wick, or snuff, that will abate it;
 And nothing is at a like goodness still;
⁴ For goodness, growing to a pleurisy,
 Dies in his own too much: That we would do,
 We should do when we would; for this *would* changes,
 And hath abatements and delays as many,
 As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents;
⁵ And then this *should* is like a spendthrift sigh
 That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer:

Hamlet

¹ — *love is begun by time*;] This is obscure. The meaning may be, *love* is not innate in us, and co-essential to our nature, but begins at a certain time from some external cause, and being always subject to the operations of time, suffers change and diminution.

JOHNSON.

² — *in passages of proof*;) In transactions of daily experience.

JOHNSON.

³ *There lives &c.*] The next ten lines are not in the folio.

STEEVENS.

⁴ *For goodness, growing to a pleurisy*, I would believe, for the honour of Shakespeare, that he wrote *plethory*. But I observe the dramatic writers of that time frequently call a fulness of blood a *pleurisy*, as if it came, not from *πλευρά*, but from *plus, pluris*.

WARBURTON.

I think the word should be spelt—*plurisy*. This passage is fully explained by one in Mascall's treatise on Cattle, 1662, p. 187. "Against the blood, or *plurisie* of blood. The disease of blood is, some young horses will feed, and being fat will *increase* blood, and so grow to a *plurisie*, and die thereof if he have not soon help."

TOLLET.

And then this should is like a spendthrift's sigh

That hurts by easing.—] This nonsense should be read thus

And then this should is like a spendthrift's sigh

That hurts by easing;—

i. e. though a spendthrift's entering into bonds or mortgages gives him a present relief from his straits, yet it ends in much greater distresses. The application is, If you neglect a fair opportunity now,

Hamlet comes back ; What would you undertake,
To shew yourself your father's son in deed
More than in words ?

Laer. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctua-
rize ;

Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber :
Hamlet, return'd, shall know you are come home :
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you ; bring you, in fine, to-
gether,

And wager o'er your heads : ' he, being remiss,
Most generous, and free from all contriving,
Will not peruse the foils ; so that, with ease,
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose

now, when it may be done with ease and safety, time may throw
so many difficulties in your way, that, in order to surmount them,
you must put your whole fortune into hazard. WARBURTON.

This conjecture is so ingenious, that it can hardly be opposed,
but with the same reluctance as the bow is drawn against a hero
whose virtues the archer holds in veneration. Here may be ap-
plied what Voltaire writes to the empress :

Le genereux Francois—

Te combat et t' admire.

Yet this emendation, however specious, is mistaken. The original
reading is, not a *spendbrift's* sigh, but a *spendbrift* sigh ; a *sigh*
that makes an unnecessary waste of the vital flame. It is a notion
very prevalent, that *sighs* impair the strength, and wear out the
animal powers. JOHNSON.

Hence Shakespeare, in *K. Henry VI.* calls them

— blood-consuming *sighs*.

The idea is enlarged upon in Fenton's *Tragical Discourses*, 1579 :
“ Why stave you not in tyme the source of your scorching *sighes*,
that have already drayned your body of his wholesome humoures,
appoynted by nature to gyve sucke to the entrals and inward partes
of you ?” MALONE.

— *he being remiss,*] He being not vigilant or cautious.

JOHNSON.

A sword

7 A sword unbated, and, in ⁸ a pass of practice,
Requite him for your father.

Laer. I will do't :

And, for the purpose, I'll anoint my sword.
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal, that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood, no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death;
That is but scratch'd withal: I'll touch my point
With this contagion; that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this;
Weigh, what convenience, both of time and means,
⁹ May fit us to our shape: If this should fail,
And that our drift look through our bad per-
formance,

'Twere better not assay'd; therefore, this project
Should have a back, or second, that might hold,

⁷ *A sword unbated,*—] *i. e.*, not blunted as foils are. Or, as one edition has it, *embaited* or *envenomed*. POPE.

There is no such reading as *embaited* in any edition. In Sir Thomas North's Translation of Plutarch, it is said of one of the *Metelli*, that "he shewed the people the cruel fight of fencers at *unrebated* swords." STEEVENS.

⁸ — *a pass of practice,*] Practice is often by Shakespeare, and other writers, taken for an *insidious stratagem*, or *privy treason*, a sense not incongruous to this passage, where yet I rather believe, that nothing more is meant than a *thrust for exercise*. JOHNSON.

So, in *Look about you*, 1600:

"I pray God there be no *practice* in this change."

Again, "— the man is like to die:

"*Practice*, by th' mass, *practise* by the, &c.—

"*Practise* by the Lord, *practice*, I see it clear."

Again, more appositely in our author's *Twelfth Night*, Act 5:
Sc. ult.

This *practise* hath most shrewdly *pass'd* upon thee.

STEEVENS.

⁹ *May fit us to our shape:*—] *May enable* us to *assume proper characters*; and to act our part. JOHNSON.

If this should ¹ blast in proof. Soft;—let me see:—
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings,—
I ha't:

When in your motion you are hot and dry,
(As make your bouts more violent to that end)
And that he calls for drink, ² I'll have prepar'd him
A chalice for the nonce; whereon but sipping,
If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there. But stay, what noise ³?

Enter Queen.

How now; sweet queen?

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow:—Your sister's drown'd, Laertes.

Laer. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aseason the brook,
That shews his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
Therewith fantastic garlands did she make,
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, ⁶ and long purples,
That

¹ — *blast in proof.*] This, I believe, is a metaphor taken from a mine, which, in the proof or execution, sometimes breaks out with an ineffectual *blast*. JOHNSON.

The word *proof* shews the metaphor to be taken from the trying or proving fire-arms or cannon, which often *blast* or *burst* in the *proof*. STEEVENS.

² — *I'll have prepar'd him*] Thus the folio. The quartos read, I'll have *prepar'd* him. STEEVENS.

³ — *But stay, what noise?*] I have recovered this from the quartos. STEEVENS.

⁴ *One woe doth tread upon another's heel,*] A similar thought occurs in *Pericles Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

⁴ "One sorrow never comes, but brings an heir

⁴ "That may succeed as his inheritor." STEEVENS.

⁵ — *aseason the brook,*] Thus the quartos. The folio reads, *asslant*. *Asslance* is interpreted in the Glossary to Coarce:—*aslew, aspic, fleways*. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *and long purples,*] By *long purple* is meant a plant, the modern botanical name of which is *orchis morio mas*, anciently *testicularis moriois*. The *grosser* name by which it passes, is sufficiently known in many parts of England, and particularly in the

That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
 But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them :
 There on the pendant boughs her coronet weeds
 Clambering to hang, an envious siver broke ;
 When down her weedy trophies, and herself,
 Fell in the weeping brook. Her cloaths spread wide ;
 And, mermaid-like, a while they bore her up :
 7 Which time, she chaunted snatches of old tunes ;
 As one incapable of her own distress,
 Or like a creature native and indu'd
 Unto that element : but long it could not be,
 'Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
 Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
 To muddy death.

Laer. Alas then, is she drown'd ?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd.

Laer. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
 And therefore I forbid my tears : But yet
 It is our trick ; nature her custom holds,
 Let shame say what it will : when these are gone,
 The woman will be out.—Adieu, my lord !
 I have a speech of fire ; that fain would blaze,
 But that this folly drowns it. [*Exit.*

King. Let's follow, Gertrude :
 How much I had to do to calm his rage !
 Now fear I, this will give it start again ;
 Therefore, let's follow. [*Exeunt.*

county where Shakespeare lived. Thus far Mr. Warner. Mr. Collins adds, that in Suffex it is still called *dead men's bands* ; and that in Lyte's Herbal, 1578, its various names, too gross for repetition, are preserved. STEEVENS.

7 *Which time, she chaunted snatches of old tunes ;*] Fletcher, in his *Scornful Lady*, very invidiously ridicules this incident :

“ I will run mad first, and if that get not pity,

“ P'll drown myself to a most disinal duty.” WARBURTON.

The quartos read—“ snatches of old lauds,” i. e. *hymns.*

STEEVENS.

ACT

ACT V. SCENE I.

*A Church-yard.**Enter two Clowns, with spades, &c.*

1 *Clown*. Is she to be bury'd in christian burial, that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

2 *Clown*. I tell thee, she is; therefore, ² make her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it christian burial.

1 *Clown*. How can that be, unless she drown'd herself in her own defence?

2 *Clown*. Why, 'tis found so.

1 *Clown*. It must be *se offendendo*; it cannot be else. For here lies the point: If I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: and ³ an act hath three branches; it

² — *make her grave straight*:] Make her grave from east to west in a direct line parallel to the church; not from north to south, athwart the regular line. This, I think, is meant.

JOHNSON.

I cannot think that this means any more than *make her grave immediately*. She is to be buried in *christian burial*, and consequently the grave is to be made as usual. My interpretation may be justified from the following passages in *K. Henry V.* and the play before us: "—We cannot lodge and board a dozen or fourteen gentlewomen who live by the prick of their needles, but it will be thought we keep a bawdy-house *straight*."

Again, in *Hamlet*, Act 3. Sc. 4:

Pol. He will come *straight*.

Again, in the *Lover's Progress*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

"*Lif.* Do you fight *straight*?"

"*Clar.* Yes, presently."

Again, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*:

"—we'll come and dress you *straight*."

Again, in *Othello*:

"Farewel, my Desdemona, I will come to thee *straight*."

STEEVENS.

³ — *an act hath three branches; it is to act, to do, and to perform.*]

Ridicule on scholastic divisions without distinction; and of distinctions without difference. WARBURTON.

is, to act, to do, and to perform : Argal, she drown'd herself wittingly.

2 *Clown*. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver.

1 *Clown*. Give me leave. Here lies the water ; good : here stands the man ; good : If the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes ; mark you that : but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself : Argal, he, that is not guilty of his own death, shortens not his own life.

2 *Clown*. But is this law ?

1 *Clown*. Ay, marry is't ; 1 crowner's-quest law.

2 *Clown*. Will you ha' the truth on't ? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been bury'd out of christian burial.

1 *Clown*. Why, there thou say'st : And the more pity ; that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves, more than 2 their even christian. Come ; my spade. There is no ancient

¹ — *crowner's quest-law*.] I strongly suspect that this is a ridicule on the case of Dame Hales, reported by Plowden in his commentaries, as determined in 3 Eliz.

It seems her husband Sir James Hales had drowned himself in a river, and the question was, whether by this act a forfeiture of a lease from the dean and chapter of Canterbury, which he was possessed of, did not accrue to the crown ; an inquisition was found before the coroner, which found him *felô de se*. The legal and logical subtilties, arising in the course of the argument of this case, gave a very fair opportunity for a sneer at *crowner's quest-law*. The expression, a little before, that *an act hath three branches*, &c. is so pointed an allusion to the case I mention, that I cannot doubt but that Shakespeare was acquainted with and meant to laugh at it.

It may be added, that on this occasion a great deal of subtilty was used, to ascertain whether Sir James was the *agent* or [the *patient* ; or, in other words, whether *he went to the water, or the water came to him*. The cause of Sir James's madness was the circumstance of his having been the judge who condemned *Lady Jane Gray*. Sir J. HAWKINS.

² — *their even christian*.] So all the old books, and rightly. An old English expression for fellow-christians. THIRLBY.

So,

cient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers; they hold up Adam's profession.

2 *Clown*. Was he a gentleman?

1 *Clown*. He was the first that ever bore arms.

3 2 *Clown*. Why, he had none.

1 *Clown*. What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the scripture? The scripture says, Adam digg'd; Could he dig without arms? I'll put another question to thee: if thou answer'st me not to the purpose, confess thyself—

2 *Clown*. Go to.

1 *Clown*. What is he, that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

2 *Clown*. The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

1 *Clown*. I like thy wit well, in good faith; the gallows does well: But how does it well? it does well to those that do ill: now thou dost ill, to say, the gallows is built stronger than the church; argal, the gallows may do well to thee. To't again; come.

2. *Clown*. Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter?

1 *Clown*. 4 Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

2 *Clown*.

So, in Chaucer's *Jack Upland*: "If freres cannot or mow not excuse 'hem of these questions asked of 'hem, it semeth that they be horrible giltie against God, and *ther even christian*; &c."

Again, in Gower, *De Confessione Amantis*, lib. 5. fol. 102:

"Of beautie sighe he never hir *even*."

Again, Chaucer's *Persones Tale*: "—of his neighebour, that is to sayn, of his *even cristen*, &c." STEEVENS.

3 2 *Clown*.] This speech, and the next as far as—*without arms*, is not in the quartos. STEEVENS.

4 *Ay, tell me that, and unyoke*.] *i. e.* when you have done that, I'll trouble you no more with these riddles. The phrase is taken from husbandry. WARBURTON.

Alluding to what the Greeks called by one word Βελυτός, the time for unyoking. Hom. Il. II. 779.

Ἡμῶν δ' ἥλιος μετεπίσσειτο βελυτόδε.

Schol. ἐπὶ τὴν ἐσπέραν δείδης, καὶ ὃ κλιζὸν οἱ βοῖς ἀπολύονται τῷ ἔργῳ. UPTON.

2 *Clown*. Marry, now I can tell.

1 *Clown*. To't.

2 *Clown*. Mafs, I cannot tell.

Enter Hamlet, and Horatio, at a distance.

1 *Clown*. Cudgel thy brains no more about it; for your dull afs will not mend his pace with beating; and, when you are ask'd this question next, say, a grave-maker; the houses that he makes, last 'till doomsday. Go, get thee to Yaughan, and fetch me a stoup of liquor. [Exit 2 *Clown*.

He digs, and sings.

*5 In youth when I did love, did love,
Metbought, it was very sweet,
To contract, O, the time, for, ah, my behove
O, metbought, there was⁶ nothing meet.*

Ham.

If it be not sufficient to say, with Dr. Warburton, that the phrase might be taken from husbandry, without much depth of reading, we may produce it from a dittie of the workmen of Dover, preserved in the additions to Holinshed, p. 1546.

“ My bow is broke, I would unyoke,

“ My foot is fore, I can worke no more,” FARMER,

Again, in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, at the end of Song I.

“ Here I'll unyoke a while and turne my steeds to meet.”

Again, in P. Holland's Translation of *Pliny's Nat. Hist.* p. 593:
“ in the evening, and when thou dost unyoke.” STEEVENS.

⁵ *In youth when I did love, &c.*] The three stanzas, sung here by the grave-digger, are extracted, with a slight variation, from a little poem, called *The Aged Lover renounceth Love*, written by Henry Howard earl of Surrey, who flourished in the reign of king Henry VIII. and who was beheaded in 1547, on a strained accusation of treason. THEOBALD.

⁶ — *nothing meet.*] Hanmer reads.

— *nothing so meet.* JOHNSON.

The original poem from which this stanza is taken, like the other succeeding ones, is preserved among lord Surrey's poems; though, as Dr. Percy has observed, it is attributed to lord Vaux by George Gascoigne,

Ham. Has this fellow no feeling of his business? he sings at grave-making.

Hor. Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.

Ham. 'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.

Clown sings.

*But age, with his stealing steps,
Hath claw'd me in his clutch,
And hath shipped me into the land,
As if I had never been such 7.*

Ham. That scull had a tongue in it, and could sing once: How the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! This might be the pate of ⁶ a politician,

Gascoigne. See an epistle prefixed to one of his poems, printed with the rest of his works, 1575. By others it is supposed to have been written by Sir Thomas Wyatt.

*I like that I did love;
In youth that I thought sweet:
As time requires for my behove,
Mathematics they are not meet.*

The entire song is published by Dr. Percy, in the first volume of his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*. STEEVENS.

⁷ *As if I had never been such.*] Thus, in the original.

*For age with stealing steps
Hath claw'd me with his clutch;
And hath shipped me away he leaves,
As there had been none such.* STEEVENS.

⁸ — a politician,—one that would circumvent God;] This character is finely touched. Our great historian has well explained it in an example, where, speaking of the death of cardinal Mazarine, at the time of the Restoration, he says, "The cardinal was probably struck with the wonder, if not the agony of that undream'd-of prosperity of our king's affairs; as if he had taken it ill, and laid it to heart, that God Almighty would bring such a work to pass in Europe without his concurrence, and even against all his machinations." *History of Rebellion*, book 16.

WARRBURTON.

9 which this ass now o'er-reaches; one that would circumvent God, might it not?

Hor. It might, my lord.

Ham. Or of a courtier; which could say, *Good-morrow, sweet lord! How dost thou, good lord?* This might be my lord such-a-one, that prais'd my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it¹; might it not?

Hor. Ay, my lord.

Ham. Why, e'en so: ² and now my lady worm's; chapless, and knock'd about the mazzard with a sexton's spade: Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't. Did these bones cost no more the

⁹ — *which this ass o'er-offices;—*] The meaning is this. People in office, at that time, were so over-bearing, that Shakespear, speaking of insolence at the height, calls it, *Insolence in office.* And Donne says,

Who is he,

Who officers' rage and suitors' misery

Can write in jest.—— Sat.

Alluding to this character of ministers and politicians, the speaker observes, that this insolent officer is now *o'er-officer'd* by the sexton, who, knocking his scull about with his spade, appears to be as insolent in his office as they were in theirs. This is said with much humour. **WARBURTON.**

In the quarto, for *o'er-offices* is, *over-reaches*, which agrees better with the sentence: it is a strong exaggeration to remark, that an *ass* can *over-reach* him who would once have tried to *circumvent*.—I believe both the words were Shakespear's. An author in revising his work, when his original ideas have faded from his mind, and new observations have produced new sentiments, easily introduces images which have been inore newly impressed upon him, without observing their want of congruity to the general texture of his original design. **JOHNSON.**

The folio reads—*o'er-offices.* **STEEVENS.**

¹ *This might be my lord such-a-one, that prais'd my lord such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it;*] So, in *Timon of Athens*, Act 1:

— my lord you gave

Good words the other day of a bay courser

I rode on; it is yours, because you lik'd it. **STEEVENS.**

² — *and now my lady Worm's;*] The scull that was *my lord's* *Such-a-one's*, is now *my lady Worm's.* **JOHNSON.**

breeding,

breeding, but to³ play at loggats with them? mine
ache to think on't.

Clown sings.

*A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade,
For—and a shrowding sheet:
O, a pit of clay for to be made
For such a guest is meet⁴.*

Ham. There's another: Why may not that be
the scull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddits⁵ now,
his quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks?
why does he suffer this rude knave now to knock

³ — *play at loggats*—] A play, in which pins are set up to be
beaten down with a bowl. JOHNSON.

— *to play at loggats with 'em?*—] This is a game played in
several parts of England even at this time. A stake is fixed into
the ground; those who play, throw *loggats* at it, and he that is
nearest the stake, wins: I have seen it played in different counties
at their sheep-sheering feasts, where the winner was entitled to a
black fleece, which he afterwards presented to the farmer's maid to
spin for the purpose of making a petticoat, and on condition that
she knelt down on the fleece to be kissed by all the rusticks present.

So Ben Jonson, *Tale of a Tub*, Act 4. Sc. 6.

“Now are they tossing his legs and arms,

“Like *loggats* at a pear-tree.”

So in an old collection of epigrams, satires, &c.

“To play at *loggats*, nine holes, or ten pinnes.”

Again, in Decker's *If this be not a good Play, the Devil is in it*,
1612: “— two hundred crowns!

“I've lost as much at *loggats*.”

It is one of the unlawful games enumerated in the statute of
33 of Hen. VIII. STEEVENS.

⁴ *For such a guest is meet.*] Thus in the original.

A pick-axe and a spade,

And ere a shrowding sheet;

A house of clay for to be made,

For such a guest most meet. STEEVENS.

⁵ *Quiddits, &c.*] i. e. subtilties. So, in *Soliman and Perseda*;

“I am wise, but *quiddits* will not answer death.”

Again, in *Ran-Alley, or Merry Tricks*, 1611:

“Nay, good Sir Throat, forbear your *quilllets* now.”

STEEVENS.

— him

him about the sconce⁶ with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his action of battery? Hum! This fellow might be in's time a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances, his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries: Is this the fine of his fines⁷, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have his fine pate full of fine dirt? will his vouchers vouch him no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the length and breadth of a pair of indentures? The very conveyances of his lands will hardly lie in this box; and must the inheritor himself have no more? ha?

Hor. Not a jot more, my lord.

Ham. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins?

Hor. Ay, my lord, and of calves-skins too.

Ham. They are sheep, and calves, which seek out assurance in that⁸. I will speak to this fellow:—
Whose grave's this, firrah?

Clown. Mine, fir.—

*O, a pit of clay for to be made—
For such a guest is meet.*

Ham. I think it be thine, indeed; for thou ly'st in't.

Clown. You lie out on't, fir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, yet it is mine.

⁶ — the sconce] i. e. the head. So, in Lilly's *Mother Bombie*, 1594:

“Laudo ingenium, I like thy sconce.”

Again, in *Merry Tricks*, or *Ram-Alley*, 1611:

“—— I say no more,

“But 'tis within this sconce to go beyond them.”

STEEVENS.

⁷ Is this the fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries,] Omitted in the quartos. STEEVENS.

⁸ — assurance in that.] A quibble is intended. Deeds, which are usually written on parchment, are called the common assurances of the kingdom. MALONE.

Ham. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't, and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou ly'st.

Clown. 'Tis a quick lie, fir; 'twill away again, from me to you.

Ham. What man dost thou dig it for?

Clown. For no man, fir.

Ham. What woman then?

Clown. For none neither.

Ham. Who is to be buried in't?

Clown. One, that was a woman, fir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

Ham. How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it; the age is grown so picked, that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier,

⁹ — *by the card,*—] The *card* is the paper on which the different points of the compass were described. *To do any thing by the card, is, to do it with nice observation.* JOHNSON.

So, in *Macbeth*:

“ And the very ports they blow, &c.

“ On the shipman's *card*.” STEEVENS.

¹ — *the age is grown so picked,*—] So *smart, so sharp*, says Hamlet, very properly; but there was, I think, about that time, a *facted* shoe, that is, a shoe with a long pointed toe, in fashion, to which the allusion seems likewise to be made. *Every man now is smart; and every man now is a man of fashion.* JOHNSON.

This fashion of wearing shoes with long pointed toes was carried to such excess in England, that it was restrained at last by proclamation so long ago as the fifth year of Edward IV. when it was ordered, “ that the beaks or pykes of shoes and boots should not pass two inches, upon pain of cursing by the clergy, and forfeiting twenty shillings, to be paid one noble to the king, another to the cordwainers of London, and the third to the chamber of London;—and for other countries and towns the like order was taken.—Before this time, and since the year 1382, the pykes of shoes and boots were of such length, that they were fain to be tied up to the knees with chains of silver, and gilt, or at least with filken laces.” STEEVENS.

he galls his kibe.—How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

Clown. Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras.

Ham. How long is that since?

Clown. Cannot you tell that? every fool can tell that: It was that very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

Ham. Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

Clown. Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Ham. Why?

Clown. 'Twill not be seen in him there; there the men are as mad as he.

Ham. How came he mad?

Clown. Very strangely, they say.

Ham. How strangely?

Clown. 'Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Ham. Upon what ground?

Clown. Why, here in Denmark: I have been sexton here, man, and boy, thirty years.

Ham. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

Clown. 'Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, (as we have many pocky corfes now-a-days, that will scarce hold the laying in) he will last you some eight year, or nine year: a tanner will last you nine year.

Ham. Why he more than another?

Clown. Why, sir, his hide is so tann'd with his trade, that he will keep out water a great while; and your water is a sore decayer of your whoreson dead body. Here's a scull now has lain you i' the earth three-and-twenty years.

Ham. Whose was it?

Clown. A whoreson mad fellow's it was; Whose do you think it was?

Ham.

Ham. Nay, I know not.

Clown. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue! he pour'd a flaggon of Rhenish on my head once. This same scull, fir, was Yorick's scull, the king's jester.

Ham. This?

Clown. E'en that.

Ham. Alas, poor Yorick!—I knew him, Horatio; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how abhorr'd in my imagination it is! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips, that I have kiss'd I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now? your gambols? your songs? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? Not one now, to mock your own grinning? quite chap-fallen? Now get you to my lady's chamber¹, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come; make her laugh at that.—Pr'ythee, Horatio, tell me one thing.

Hor. What's that, my lord?

Ham. Dost thou think, Alexander look'd o' this fashion i' the earth?

Hor. E'en so.

Ham. And smelt so? pah!

Hor. E'en so, my lord.

Ham. To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, 'till he find it stopping a bung-hole?

Hor. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Ham. No, 'faith, not a jot; but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it: As thus; Alexander died, Alexander was buried, Alexander returneth to dust; the dust is earth; of earth we make loam; And why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barral?

¹ *my lady's chamber,*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*my lady's table,* meaning, I suppose, her *dressing-table*. STEEVENS.

Imperial Cæsar, dead, and turn'd to clay,
 Might stop a hole to keep the wind away:
 O, that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
 Should patch a wall to expel the ² winter's flaw!
 But soft! but soft, aside;—Here comes the king,

*Enter King, Queen, Laertes, the corpse of Ophelia,
 with Lords and Priests attending.*

The queen, the courtiers: Who is this they follow?
 And with such ³ maimed rites! This doth betoken,
 The corse, they follow, did with desperate hand
 Fordo its own life ⁴. 'Twas of ⁵ some estate:
 Couch we a while, and mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

Ham. That is Laertes,
 A very noble youth: Mark.

Laer. What ceremony else?

⁶ *Priest.* Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
 As we have warranty: Her death was doubtful;
 And, but that great command o'erflows the order,
 She should in ground un sanctify'd have lodg'd
 'Till the last trumpet; for charitable prayers,
 Shards, flints, and pebbles, should be thrown on her:

² — *winter's flaw!*] Winter's blast. JOHNSON.

So, in *Marius and Sylla*, 1594:

“— no doubt this stormy *flaw*,

“That Neptune sent to cast us on this shore.”

The quartos read—to expel the *water's flaw*. STEEVENS.

³ — *maimed rites!*—] Imperfect obsequies. JOHNSON.

⁴ *Fordo its own life.*] To *fordo*, is to undo, to destroy. So, in *Otello*:

“— this is the night
 “That either makes me or *fordoes* me quite.”

Again, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1529: “— wolde to God it might be lesful for me to *fordoo* myself, or to make an ende of me!” STEEVENS.

⁵ — *some estate:*] Some person of high rank. JOHNSON.

⁶ *Priest.*] This *Priest* in the old quarto is called *Doctor*.

STEEVENS.

Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
Of bell and burial.

Laer. Must there no more be done?

Priest. No more be done;

We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a *requiem*, and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls.

Laer. Lay her i' the earth;—

And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
May violets spring!—I tell thee, churlish priest,
A ministring angel shall my sister be,
When thou liest howling.

Ham. What, the fair Ophelia!

Queen. Sweets to the sweet: Farewel!

[Scattering flowers.

I hop'd, thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife;
I thought, thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,

1 — *allow'd her virgin rites,*] The old quarto reads *virgin crants*, evidently corrupted from *chants*, which is the true word. A *specific* rather than a *generic* term being here required to answer to *maiden strewments*. WAREBURTON.

I have been informed by an anonymous correspondent, that *crants* is the German word for *garlands*, and I suppose it was retained by us from the Saxons. To carry *garlands* before the bier of a maiden, and to hang them over her grave, is still the practice in rural parishes.

Crants therefore was the original word, which the author, discovering it to be provincial, and perhaps not understood, changed to a term more intelligible, but less proper. *Maiden rites* give no certain or definite image. He might have put *maiden wreaths*, or *maiden garlands*, but he perhaps bestowed no thought upon it, and neither genius nor practice will always supply a hasty writer with the most proper diction. JOHNSON.

In Minshew's *Dictionary*, see *Beades*, where *roses beads* means *sertum rosarium*; and such is the name of a character in this play.

TOLLET.

2 *Of bell and burial.*] *Burial*, here, signifies interment in consecrated ground. WAREBURTON.

3 *To sing a Requiem.*—] A *Requiem* is a mass performed in Popish churches for the rest of the soul of a person deceased. The folio reads—*sing sage requiem*. STEEVENS.

And

And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laer. O, treble woe

Fall ten times treble on that cursed head,
Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of!—Hold off the earth a while,
'Till I have caught her once more in mine arms:

[*Laertes leaps into the grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead;
'Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'er-top old Pelion, or the skyish head
Of blue Olympus.

Ham. [*advancing*] What is he, whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,

[*Hamlet leaps into the grave.*]

Hamlet the Dane.

Laer. The devil take thy soul! [*Grappling with him.*]

Ham. Thou pray'st not well.

I pr'ythee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For, though I am not spleenetic and rash,
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear: Hold off thy hand.

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet, Hamlet!

¹ *All.* Gentlemen,—

Hor. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The attendants part them.*]

Ham. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme,
Until my eye-lids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son! what theme?

Ham. I lov'd Ophelia; forty thousand brothers
Could not with all their quantity of love
Make up my sum.—What wilt thou do for her?

King. O, he is mad, Laertes.

¹ *All. &c.*] This is restored from the quartos. STEEVENS:

Queen. For love of God, forbear him.

Ham. Shew me what thou'lt do :

Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear
thyself?

* Woo't drink up Efil? eat a crocodile?

I'll

* *Woo't drink up Efill? eat a crocodile?*] This word has through all the editions been distinguished by Italic characters, as if it were the proper name of some river; and so, I dare say, all the editors have from time to time understood it to be. But then this must be some river in Denmark; and there is none there so called; nor is there any near it in name, that I know of, but *Yffel*, from which the province of Overysfel derives its title in the German Flanders. Besides, Hamlet is not proposing any impossibilities to Laertes, as the drinking up a river would be: but he rather seems to mean, Wilt thou resolve to do things the most shocking and distasteful to human nature? and, behold, I am as resolute. I am persuaded the poet wrote:

Wilt drink up Eisel? eat a crocodile?

i. e. Wilt thou swallow down large draughts of *vinegar*? The proposition, indeed, is not very grand: but the doing it might be as distasteful and unfavoury, as eating the flesh of a *crocodile*. And now there is neither an impossibility, nor an anticlimax: and the lowness of the idea is in some measure removed by the uncommon term. THEOBALD.

Hamlet has,

Wilt drink up Nile? or eat a crocodile?

Hamlet certainly meant (for he says he will rant) to dare Laertes to attempt any thing, however difficult or unnatural; and might safely promise to follow the example his antagonist was to set, in draining the channel of a river, or trying his teeth on an animal, whose scales are supposed to be impenetrable. Had Shakespeare meant to make Hamlet say—*Wilt thou drink vinegar?* he probably would not have used the term *drink up*; which means, *totally to exhaust*; neither is that challenge very magnificent, which only provokes an adversary to hazard a fit of the heart-burn or the colic.

The commentator's *Yffel* would serve Hamlet's turn or mine. This river is twice mentioned by Stowe, p. 735. "It standeth a good distance from the river *Yffel*, but hath a scönce on *Yffel* of incredible strength."

Again, by Drayton, in the 24th Song of his *Polyolbion*:

The one *O'er Yffel's* banks the ancient Saxons taught;

At *Over Yffel* rests, the other did apply:

And, in *K. Richard II.* a thought in part the same, occurs,

Act 2. Sc. 2: "—the task he undertakes

"Is numbring sands, and *drinking oceans dry.*"

I'll do't.—Dost thou come here to whine?
 To out-face me with leaping in her grave?
 Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
 And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
 Millions of acres on us; 'till our ground,
 Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
 Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth,
 I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness:
 And thus a while the fit will work on him;
 Anon, as patient as the female dove,
 When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,
 His silence will sit drooping.

Ham.

But in an old Latin account of Denmark and the neighbouring provinces, I find the names of several rivers little differing from *Esil*, or *Elfill*, in spelling or pronunciation. Such are the *Essa*, the *Ocsil*, and some others. The word, like many more, may indeed be irrecoverably corrupted; but, I must add, that no authors later than Chaucer or Skelton make use of *eyfel* for *winegar*: nor has Shakespeare employed it in any other of his plays. The poet might have written the *Weifel*, a considerable river which falls into the Baltic ocean, and could not be unknown to any prince of Denmark. STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens appears to have forgot our author's 111th sonnet:

“ I will drinke

“ Potions of *Eysell*.”

I believe it has not been observed that many of these sonnets are addressed to his beloved nephew *William Harte*. FARMER.

I have since observed, that *Mandevile* has the same word.

STEEVENS.

³ When *that her golden couplets*—] We should read, *E'er that*—for it is the patience of birds, during the time of incubation, that is here spoken of. The pigeon generally sits upon two eggs; and her young, when first disclos'd, are covered with a yellow down. WARBURTON.

Perhaps it should be,

Ere yet ———

Yet and *that* are easily confounded. JOHNSON.

To *disclose* was anciently used for to *hatch*. So, in the *Booke of Huntyng, Hawking, Fyshyng, &c.* bl. l. no date: “ First they ben eges; and after they ben *disclosed*, haukes; and commonly *gof-haukes* ben *disclosed* as sone as the *choughes*.” To *exclude* is the technical

Ham. Hear you, fir ;
 What is the reason that you use me thus ?
 I lov'd you ever : But it is no matter ;
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,
 The cat will mew, and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*
King. I pray thee, good Horatio, wait upon him.—
 [*Exit Hor.*
 Strengthen your patience in our last night's speech ;
 [*To Laertes.*
 We'll put the matter to the present push.—
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.—
 This grave shall have a living monument :
 An hour of quiet shortly * shall we see ;
 'Till then in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E II.

A ball in the palace.

Enter Hamlet, and Horatio.

Ham. So much for this, fir : now shall you see
 the other ;—
 You do remember all the circumstance ?
Hor. Remember it, my lord !
Ham. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fight-
 ing,

technical term at present. I believe neither commentator has rightly explained this image. During three days after the pigeon has *hatched* her *couplets* (for she lays no more than *two* eggs), she never quits her nest, except for a few moments in quest of a little food for herself ; as all her young require in that early state, is to be kept warm, an office which she never entrusts to the male.

STEEVENS.

* —*shortly*] The second and third quartos read, *thereby*. Perhaps rightly. STEEVENS.

That would not let me sleep; methought, I lay
Worse than the ⁵ mutines in the bilboes. ⁶ Rashly,
And prais'd be rashness for it—Let us know,

Our

⁵ — mutines *in the bilboes.*] *Mutines*, the French word for sedi-
tious or disobedient fellows in the army or fleet. *Bilboes*, the *ship's*
prison. JOHNSON.

The *bilboes* is a bar of iron with fetters annexed to it, by which mutinous or disorderly sailors were anciently linked together. The word is derived from *Bilboa*, a place in Spain where instruments of steel were fabricated in the utmost perfection. To understand Shakespeare's allusion completely, it should be known, that as these fetters connect the legs of the offenders very close together, their attempts to rest must be as fruitless as those of Hamlet, in whose mind *there was a kind of fighting that would not let him sleep*. Every motion of one must disturb his partner in confinement. The *bilboes* are still shewn in the Tower of London, among the other spoils of the Spanish Armada. The following is the figure of them. STEEVENS.



⁶ ——— Rashly,

And prais'd be rashness for it—Let us know,

Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,

When, &c.] The sense in this reading is, *Our rashness lets us know that our indiscretion serves us well, when, &c.* But this could never be Shakespeare's sense. We should read and point thus:

————— *Rashness*

(And prais'd be rashness for it) lets us know;

Or indiscretion sometimes serves us well,

When, &c.] *i. e.* Rashness acquaints us with what we cannot penetrate to by plots. WARBURTON.

Both my copies read,

————— *Rashly,*

And prais'd be rashness for it, let us know.

Hamlet,

Our indiscretion sometime serves us well,
When our deep plots do fail: and that should teach
us,

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew them how we will.

Hor. That is most certain.

Ham. Up from my cabin,
My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
Grop'd I to find out them: had my desire;
Finger'd their packet; and, in fine, withdrew
To mine own room again: making so bold,
My fears forgetting manners, to unseal
Their grand commission; where I found, Horatio,
A royal knavery; an exact command,—
Larded with many several sorts of reasons,
Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
7 With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life,—

Hamlet, delivering an account of his escape, begins with saying, That he *rashly*—and then is carried into a reflection upon the weakness of human wisdom. I *rashly*—praised be *rashness* for it—*Let us not think these events casual, but let us know, that is, take notice and remember, that we sometimes succeed by indiscretion, when we fail by deep plots, and infer the perpetual superintendance and agency of the Divinity.* The observation is just, and will be allowed by every human being who shall reflect on the course of his own life. JOHNSON.

This passage, I think, should be thus distributed.—*Rashly*

(And prais'd be *rashness*, for it lets us know,

Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well,

When our deep plots do fail; and that should teach us,

There's a divinity that shapes our ends,

Rough hew them how we will;—

Hor. That is most certain.—)

Ham. Up from my cabin, &c. So that *rashly* may be joined in construction with *in the dark grop'd I to find out them.* TIRWHITT.

1 With, ho! such bugs and goblins in my life;] With such causes of terror, rising from my character and designs. JOHNSON.

A bug was no less a terrific being than a goblin. So, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, B. 2. c. 3:

“As ghastly bug their haire on end does reare.”

We call it at present a *bugbear*. STEEVENS.

That, on the supervize, ⁸ no leisure bated,
 No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
 My head should be struck off.

Hor. Is't possible?

Ham. Here's the commission; read it at more leisure.

But wilt thou hear now how I did proceed?

Hor. Ay 'beseech you.

Ham. ⁹ Being thus benetted round with villainies,
 Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,
 They had begun the play;—I sat me down;
 Devis'd a new commission; wrote it fair:

⁸ — no leisure bated,] *Bated*, for *allowed*. To *abate*, signifies to *deduct*; this deduction, when applied to the person in whose favour it is made, is called an *allowance*. Hence he takes the liberty of using *bated* for *allowed*. WARBURTON.

⁹ *Being thus benetted round with villainies,*

Ere I could make a prologue to my brains,

They had begun the play:—] The second line is nonsense.

The whole should be read thus:

Being thus benetted round with villainies,

Ere I could mark the prologue to my bane,

They had begun the play.

i. e. they began to *act*, to my destruction, before I knew there was a *play* towards. *Ere I could mark the prologue.* For it appears by what he says of his *foreboding*, that it was that only, and not any apparent mark of villainy, which set him upon *fingering their packet*. *Ere I could make the prologue*, is absurd: both, as he had no thoughts of playing them a trick till they had played him one; and because his *counterplot* could not be called a *prologue* to their *plot*. WARBURTON.

In my opinion no alteration is necessary. Hamlet is telling how luckily every thing fell out; he groped out their commission in the dark without waking them; he found himself doomed to immediate destruction. Something was to be done for his preservation. An expedient occurred, not produced by the comparison of one method with another, or by a regular deduction of consequences, but before he *could make a prologue to his brains, they had begun the play*. Before he could summon his faculties, and propose to himself what should be done, a complete scheme of action presented itself to him. His mind operated before he had excited it. This appears to me to be the meaning. JOHNSON.

I once did hold it, ¹ as our statists do,
 A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
 How to forget that learning; but, sir, now
 It did me ² yeoman's service: Wilt thou know
 The effect of what I wrote?

Hor. Ay, good my lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the king,—
 As England was his faithful tributary;
 As love between them like the palm might flourish,
³ As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities;

And

¹ — as our statists do,] A *statist* is a *statesman*. So, in Shirley's *Humorous Courtier*, 1640:

“— that he is wise, a *statist*.”

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Magnetic Lady*:

“Will screw you out a secret from a *statist*.” STEEVENS.

² — yeoman's service:] The meaning, I believe, is, *This yeomanly qualification was a most useful servant, or yeoman, to me*; i. e. did me eminent service. The ancient *yeomen* were famous for their military valour. These were the good archers in times past (says Sir Thomas Smith), and the stable troop of footmen that affraide all France.” STEEVENS.

³ As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,

And stand a comma 'tween their amities;] Peace is here properly and finely personalized as the goddess of good league and friendship; and very classically dressed out. Ovid says,

Pax Cererem nutrit, pacis alumna Ceres.

And Tibullus,

At nobis, pax alma! vixi, spicamque teneto.

But the placing her as a *comma*, or stop, between the *amities* of two kingdoms, makes her rather stand like a cypher. The poet without doubt wrote:

And stand a commere 'tween our amities.

The term is taken from a trafficker in love, who brings people together, a procurer. And this idea is well appropriated to the satirical turn which the speaker gives to this wicked adjuration of the king, who would lay the foundation of the peace of the two kingdoms in the blood of the heir of one of them. Periers, in his novels, uses the word *commere* to signify a she-friend. *A tous ses gens, chacun une commere.* And Ben Jonson, in his *Devil's an Ass*, engulphes the word by a *middling gossip*.

*Or what do you say to a middling gossip
 To bring you together?* WARBURTON.

And many such like 4 as's of great charge,—
That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further, more, or less,
He should the bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving time allow'd.

Hor. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant;
I had my father's signet in my purse,
Which was the model of that Danish seal;
Folded the writ up in form of the other;
Subscrib'd it; gave 't the impressiion; plac'd it safely,
s The changeling never known: Now, the next day
Was our sea-fight; and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hammer reads,

And stand a cement —

I am again inclined to vindicate the old reading. That the word *commere* is French, will not be denied; but when or where was it English?

The expression of our author is, like many of his phrases, sufficiently constrained and affected, but it is not incapable of explanation. The *comma* is the note of *connection* and continuity of sentences; the *period* is the note of *abruption* and disjunction. Shakespeare had it perhaps in his mind to write, That unless England complied with the mandate, *war should put a period to their amity*; he altered his mode of diction, and thought that, in an opposite sense, he might put, that *Peace should stand a comma between their amities*. This is not an easy stile; but is it not the stile of Shakespeare? JOHNSON.

⁴ — as's of great charge,] *Asses* heavily loaded. A quibble is intended between *as* the conditional particle, and *ass* the beast of burthen. That *charg'd* anciently signified *loaded*, may be proved from the following passage in *The Widow's Tears*, by Chapman, 1612:

“Thou must be the *ass* charg'd with crowns to make way.”

JOHNSON.

Shakespeare has so many quibbles of his own to answer for, that there are those who think it hard he should be charged with others which he never thought of. STEEVENS.

⁵ *The changeling never known:—*] A *changeling* is a *child* which the fairies are supposed to leave in the room of that which they steal. JOHNSON.

Hor.

Hor. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Ham. Why, man⁶, they did make love to this employment;

They are not near my conscience; their defeat
7 Doth by their own insinuation grow:

'Tis dangerous, when the baser nature comes
Between the pass and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why, what a king is this!

Ham. Does it not, think thee, stand me now
upon?

He that hath kill'd my king, and whor'd my mother;
Popt in between the election and my hopes;
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage; is't not perfect conscience,
8 To quit him with this arm? and is't not to be
damn'd,

To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil?

Hor. It must be shortly known to him from
England,

What is the issue of the business there.

Ham. It will be short: the interim is mine;
And a man's life's no more than to say, one.
But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself;
For by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his: I'll count his favours⁹:

⁶ *Why, man, &c.*] This line is omitted in the quartos.

STEEVENS.

⁷ *Doth by their own insinuation grow:*] *Insinuation*, for corruptly obtruding themselves into his service. WAREBURTON.

⁸ *To quit him—*] To requite him; to pay him his due.

JOHNSON.

This passage, as well as the three following speeches, is not in the quartos. STEEVENS.

⁹ *I'll count his favours:*] Thus the folio. Mr. Rowe first made the alteration, which is unnecessary. *I'll count his favours is—I will make account of them, i. e. reckon upon them, value them.*

STEEVENS.

But,

But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Hor. Peace; who comes here?

Enter Ofrick.

Of. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Ham. I humbly thank you, sir,—¹ Dost know this water-fly?

Hor. No, my good lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know him: He hath much land, and fertile; let a beast be lord of beasts, and his crib shall stand at the king's mess; ² 'Tis a chough; but, as I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Ofr. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure, I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Ham. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of spirit: Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.

Ofr. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Ham. No, believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.

Ofr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.

Ham. ³ But yet, methinks, it is very fultry and hot; or my complexion ⁴—

Ofr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very fultry,—as 'twere,—I cannot tell how.—My lord, his majesty

¹ — *Dost know this water-fly?*] A water-fly skips up and down upon the surface of the water, without any apparent purpose or reason, and is thence the proper emblem of a busy trifler.

JOHNSON.

² — *It is a chough;—*] A kind of jackdaw. JOHNSON.

³ *But yet, methinks, it is very fultry, &c.*] Hamlet is here playing over the same farce with Ofrick, which he had formerly done with Polonius. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *or my complexion.*] The folio read—“for my complexion.” STEEVENS.

bade me signify to you, that he has laid a great wager on your head: Sir, this is the matter,—

Ham. I beseech you, remember—

[*Hamlet moves him to put on his hat.*

Ofr. Nay, good my lord; for my ease⁵, in good faith.—Sir⁶, here is newly come to court, Laertes: believe me, an absolute gentleman, ⁷ full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and great shewing: Indeed, to speak feelingly⁸ of him, he is ⁹ the card or calendar of gentry; ¹ for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.

Ham. ² Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you;—though, I know, to divide him inventorially, would

⁵ “Nay, in good faith—for mine ease.” This seems to have been the affected phrase of the time.—Thus in *Marston's Malcontent*, “I beseech you, sir, be covered.”—“No, in good faith for my ease.” And in other places. FARMER.

⁶ Sir, &c.] The folio omits this and the following fourteen speeches; and in their place substitutes only, “Sir, you are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is at his weapon.”

STEEVENS.

⁷ —full of most excellent differences,—] Full of distinguishing excellencies. JOHNSON.

⁸ —speak feelingly] The first quarto reads, *feelingly*.

STEEVENS.

⁹ —the card or calendar of gentry;—] The general preceptor of elegance; the *card* by which a gentleman is to direct his course; the *calendar* by which he is to choose his time, that what he does may be both excellent and seasonable. JOHNSON.

¹ —for you shall find in him the continent of what part a gentleman would see.] You shall find him containing and comprising every quality which a gentleman would desire to contemplate for imitation. I know not but it should be read, *You shall find him the continent*.

JOHNSON.

² Sir, his definement, &c.] This is designed as a specimen, and ridicule of the court-jargon amongst the *precieux* of that time. The sense in English is, “Sir, he suffers nothing in your account of him, though to enumerate his good qualities particularly would be endless; yet when we had done our best, it would still come short of him. However, in strictness of truth, he is a great genius, and of a character so rarely to be met

“with,

would dizzy the arithmetic of memory; ³ and yet but raw neither, in respect of his quick fail. But, in the verity of extolment, I take him to be ⁴ a soul of great article; and his infusion ⁵ of such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him, his semblable is his mirror; and, who else would trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Ofr. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy, sir? why do we wrap the gentleman in our more rawer breath?

Ofr. Sir?

Hor. ⁶ Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? You will do't, sir, really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this gentleman?

⁶ with, that to find any thing like him we must look into his
⁶ mirror, and his imitators will appear no more than his shadows."

WARBURTON.

³ — and yet but raw neither—] We should read *slow*.

WARBURTON.

I believe *raw* to be the right word; it is a word of great latitude; *raw* signifies *unripe, immature, thence unformed, imperfect, unskilful*. The best account of him would be *imperfect*, in respect of his quick fail. The phrase *quick fail* was, I suppose, a proverbial term for *activity of mind*. JOHNSON.

⁴ — a soul of great article;—] This is obscure. I once thought it might have been, *a soul of great altitude*; but, I suppose, *a soul of great article*, means *a soul of large comprehension, of many contents*; the particulars of an inventory are called *articles*.

JOHNSON.

⁵ — of such dearth—] *Dearth* is *dearness*, value, price. And his internal qualities of such value and rarity. JOHNSON.

⁶ *Is't not possible to understand in another tongue? you will do't, sir, really.*] Of this interrogatory remark the sense is very obscure. The question may mean, *Might not all this be understood in plainer language*. But then, *you will do it, sir, really*, seems to have no use, for who could doubt but plain language would be intelligible? I would therefore read, *Is't possible not to be understood in a mother tongue*. You will do it, sir, really. JOHNSON.

Suppose we were to point the passage thus: *Is't not possible to understand? In another tongue you will do it, sir, really.*

The speech seems to be addressed to *Ofrick*, who is puzzled by Hamlet's imitation of his own affected language. STEEVENS.

Ofr.

Ofr. Of Laertes?

Hor. His purse is empty already; all's golden words are spent.

Ham. Of him, sir.

Ofr. I know, you are not ignorant——

Ham. I would, you did, sir; yet, in faith, ⁷ if you did, it would not much approve me:—Well, sir.

Ofr. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes is.

Ham. ⁸ I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him in excellence; but, to know a man well, were to know himself.

Ofr. I mean, sir, for his weapon; but in the imputation laid on him by them, ⁹ in his meed he's unfellow'd.

Ham. What's his weapon?

Ofr. Rapier and dagger.

Ham. That's two of his weapons: but, well.

Ofr. The king, sir, hath wager'd with him six Barbary horses: against the which he has ¹ impon'd, as I take it, six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as girdle, hangers ², and so: Three of the
carriages,

⁷ — if you did, it would not much approve me.] If you knew I was not ignorant, your esteem would not much advance my reputation. To approve, is to recommend to approbation. JOHNSON.

⁸ I dare not confess that, lest I should compare with him, &c.] I dare not pretend to know him, lest I should pretend to an equality: no man can completely know another, but by knowing himself, which is the utmost extent of human wisdom. JOHNSON.

⁹ — in his meed,— In his excellence. JOHNSON.

¹ — impon'd,—] Perhaps it should be, *depon'd*. So Hudibras,

“ I would upon this cause *depone*,

“ As much as any I have known.”

But perhaps *imponed* is pledged, *imparcuned*, so spelt to ridicule the affectation of uttering English words with French pronunciation.

JOHNSON.

² — *bangers*,] It appears from several old plays, that what was called a *Casse of Hangers*, was anciently worn. So, in the *Birth of Merlin*, 1662:

“ He has a fair sword, but his *bangers* are fallen.”

Again,

carriages, in faith, are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Ham. What call you the carriages?

Hor. I knew, ³ you must be edified by the margin, ere you had done.

Ofr. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Ham. The phrase would be ⁴ more germane to the matter, if we could carry a cannon by our sides; I would, it might be hangers 'till then. But, on: Six Barbary horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three liberal-conceited carriages; that's the French bett against the Danish: Why is this impon'd, as you call it?

Ofr. ⁵ The king, sir, hath lay'd, that in a dozen passes between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you

Again,

“ He has a feather, and fair *bangers* too.”

Again, in *Rhodon and Iris*, 1631: “— a rapier

“ Hatch'd with gold, with hilt and *bangers* of the new fashion.”

STEEVENS.

³ — you must be edified by the margin,—] Dr. Warburton very properly observes, that in the old books the gloss or comment was usually printed on the margin of the leaf. So, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, part 2d, 1630:

“ — I read

“ Strange comments in those *margins* of your looks.”

This speech is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

⁴ — more germane—] More *a-kin*. JOHNSON.

⁵ *The king, sir, hath laid,—*] This wager I do not understand. In a dozen passes one must exceed the other more or less than three hits. Nor can I comprehend, how, in a dozen, there can be twelve to nine. The passage is of no importance; it is sufficient that there was a wager. The quarto has the passage as it stands. The folio, *He hath one twelve for mine*. JOHNSON.

The king hath laid that in a dozen passes, &c. This passage compared with two others in which this wager is again mentioned, is certainly obscure; yet with a slight correction already made by Sir T. Hanmer in the last of them, the three passages may, I think, be reconciled.

By a dozen passes between yourself and him, I understand a dozen passes for each. The meaning then is—“ The king hath laid, that

that

you three hits: he hath lay'd on twelve for nine; and it would come to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the answer.

Ham. How if I answer, no?

Ofr. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person in trial.

Ham. Sir, I will walk here in the hall: If it please his majesty, it is the breathing time of day with me; let the foils be brought: the gentleman willing, and the king hold his purpose, I will win for him, if I can; if not, I will gain nothing but my shame, and the odd hits.

Ofr. Shall I deliver you so?

Ham. To this effect, sir; after what flourish your nature will.

Ofr. I commend my duty to your lordship. [*Exit.*

Ham. Yours, yours.—He does well, to commend it himself; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Hor. 'This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.

Ham.

that in a dozen passes apiece between you and Laertes, he shall not have the advantage of you by three hits. *He* (viz. the king) *hath laid on* the terms of Laertes making twelve hits for nine which you shall make.—Or perhaps the last *he* means Laertes, and then it will run—" *He* (viz. Laertes) *hath laid on* terms of making twelve hits for nine which you shall make."

This just exceeds Hamlet's number by three.—If therefore Laertes in his 12 passes should make 12 hits, and Hamlet in his 12 but 9, the king would lose.—If on the other hand, Laertes should make but 11 hits, and Hamlet 9, or Laertes 12 and Hamlet 10, his majesty would win.—The other two passages in which this *he* is mentioned, shall be considered in their proper places. MALONE.

⁶ *This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.*] I see no particular propriety in the image of the lapwing. Ofrick did not run till he had done his business. We may read, *This lapwing ran away*—That is, *this fellow was full of unimportant talk from his birth.* JOHNSON.

The same image occurs in Ben Jonson's *Staple of News*.

Ham. 7 He did compliment with his dug, before he suck'd it. Thus has he (and many more of the same breed⁸, that, I know, the drossy age dotes on) only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter⁹; ¹ a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed

“ ——— and coachmen

“ To mount their boxes reverently, and drive

“ Like *lapwings* with a shell upon their heads

“ Thorough the streets.”

And I have since met with it in several other plays. The meaning, I believe, is—This is a *forward* fellow. So, in *Vittoria Corombona*, or the *White Devil*, 1612:

“ — *Forward* lapwing,

“ He flies with the shell on's head.”

Again, in *Greene's Never too late*, 1616: “Are you no sooner hatched, with the *lapwing*, but you will run away with the *shell on your head*?”

Again, in *Revenge for Honour*, by Chapman:

“ Boldness enforces youth to hard achievements

“ Before their time; makes them run forth like *lapwings*

“ From their warm nest, part of the *shell yet sticking*

“ Unto their downy heads.” STEEVENS.

⁷ He did so, sir, with his dug, &c.] What, run away with it? The folio reads, *He did comply with his dug*. So that the true reading appears to be, *He did compliment with his dug*, i. e. stand upon ceremony with it, to shew he was born a courtier. This is extremely humorous. WARBURTON.

Hanmer has the same emendation. JOHNSON.

I doubt whether any alteration be necessary. Shakespeare seems to have used *comply* in the sense in which we use the verb *compliment*. See before, Act 2, Sc. 2. *let me comply with you in this garb*. TYRWHITT.

⁸ — the same breed,] It is *beavy* in the first folio, and there may be a propriety in it, as he has just called him a *lapwing*.

TOLLET.

— and many more of the same breed. The first folio has— and mine more of the same *beavy*. The second folio— and nine more, &c. Perhaps the last is the true reading. STEEVENS.

⁹ — outward habit of encounter;] Thus the folio. The quartos read—out of an habit of encounter. STEEVENS.

¹ — a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fond and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trials, the bubbles are out.] The metaphor is strangely mangled by

nowed opinions; and ² do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter

by the intrusion of the word *fool*, which undoubtedly should be read *fav'd*; the allusion being to corn separated by the fan from chaff and dust. But the editors seeing, from the character of this *jesty collection*, that the *opinions*, through which they were so currently *carried*, were false opinions; and *fav'd* and *winnow'd* opinions, in the most obvious sense, signifying *tried and purified* opinions; they thought *fav'd* must needs be wrong, and therefore made it *fool*, which word signified, in our author's time, foolish, weak, or childish. They did not consider that *fav'd* and *winnow'd* opinions had also a different signification: for it may mean the opinions of great men and courtiers, men separated by their quality from the vulgar, as corn is separated from chaff. This *jesty collection*, says Hamlet, insinuates itself into people of the highest quality, as yeast into the finest flour. The courtiers admire him, when he comes to the trial, &c. WARBURTON.

This is a very happy emendation; but I know not why the critic should suppose that *fool* was printed for *fav'd* in consequence of any reason or reflection. Such errors, to which there is no temptation but idleness, and of which there was no cause but ignorance, are in every page of the old editions. This passage in the quarto stands thus: "They have got out of the habit of encounter, a kind of misty collection, which carries them through and through the most profane and trennownd opinions." If this printer preserved any traces of the original, our author wrote, "the most *fav'd* and renowned opinions," which is better than *fav'd* and *winnow'd*.

The meaning is, "these men have got the cant of the day, a superficial readiness of slight and cursory conversation, a kind of frothy collection of fashionable prattle, which yet carries them through the most select and approved judgments. This airy facility of talk sometimes imposes upon wise men."

Who has not seen this observation verified? JOHNSON.

Fool is evidently opposed to *winnow'd*. *Fool*, in the language of Shakespeare's age, signified *foolish*. So, in the *Merchants of Venice*:

Thou naughty jailer, why art thou so *fool*, &c.

Winnow'd

² — *do but blow them, &c.*] These men of snow, without solidity, are like bubbles raised from soap and water, which dance, and glitter, and please the eye, but if you extend them, by blowing hard, separate into a mist; so if you oblige these specious talkers to extend their compass of conversation, they at once discover the reality of their intellects. JOHNSON.

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord³, his majesty commended him to you by young Ofrick, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall: He sends to know, if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time.

Ham. I am constant to my purposes, they follow the king's pleasure: if his fitness speaks, mine is ready; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now.

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

Ham. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you, to use some⁴ gentle entertainment to Laertes, before you fall to play.

Ham. She well instructs me. [*Exit Lord.*

Hor. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the

Winnowed is *sifted*, *examined*. The sense is then, that their conversation was yet successful enough to make them passable not only with the weak, but with those of sounder judgment. The same opposition in terms is visible in the reading which the quartos offer. *Profane* or *vulgar*, is opposed to *trenowned*, or *thrice renowned*.

STEEVENS.

Fann'd and *winnow'd* seems right to me. Both words *winnowed*, *fan'd** and *dress*, occur together in Markham's *English Husbandman*, p. 117. So do *fan'd* and *winnow'd*, *fanned* and *winnowed* in his *Husbandry*, p. 18. 76, and 77. So Shakespeare mentions together the *fan* and *wind* in *Troilus and Cressida*, Act 5. Sc. 3.

TOLLET.

³ *My lord*, &c.] All that passes between *Hamlet* and this *Lord* is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *gentle entertainment*—] Mild and temperate conversation.

JOHNSON.

* So written without the apostrophe, and easily might in MS. be mistaken for *send*.

odds.

odds 5. But thou would'st not think, how ill all's here about my heart: but it is no matter.

Hor. Nay, good my lord,—

Ham. It is but foolery; but it is such ⁶ a kind of gain-giving, as would, perhaps, trouble a woman.

Hor. ⁷ If your mind dislike any thing, obey it: I will forestal their repair hither, and say, you are not fit.

Ham. Not a whit, we defy augury; there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all:—⁸ Since no man knows aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.

Enter

⁵ *I shall win at the odds.*] By odds are generally understood either unequal stakes, or an advantage given to an adversary. That no odds was laid in the former sense, appears from the bet itself, which has already been particularly mentioned. When Hamlet, therefore, says, *I shall win at the odds*, he means I shall succeed with the advantage which I am allowed, I shall make more than nine hits for Laertes' twelve. MALONE.

⁶ —a kind of gain-giving] Gain-giving is the same as mis-giving. STEEVENS.

⁷ *If your mind dislike any thing, obey it:*] With these prefaces of future evils arising in the mind, the poet has forerun many events which are to happen at the conclusions of his plays; and sometimes so particularly, that even the circumstances of calamity are minutely hinted at, as in the instance of Juliet, who tells her lover from the window, that he appears like one dead in the bottom of a tomb. The supposition that the genius of the mind gave the alarm before approaching dissolution, is a very ancient one, and perhaps can never be totally driven out: yet it must be allowed the merit of adding beauty to poetry, however injurious it may sometimes prove to the weak and the superstitious. STEEVENS.

⁸ *Since no man has ought of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes?*] This the editors called reasoning. I should have thought the premises concluded just otherwise: for since death strips a man of every thing, it is but fit he should shun and avoid the despoiler. The old quarto reads, *Since no man, of ought he leaves, knows, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.* This is the true reading. Here the premises conclude right, and the argument drawn out at length is to this effect: “It is true, that, by death, “we lose all the goods of life; yet seeing this loss is no otherwise

Enter King, Queen, Laertes, Lords, Osrick, and attendants with foils, &c.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[*The King puts the hand of Laertes into that of Hamlet.*

Ham. Give me your pardon, sir: I have done you wrong;

But pardon it, as you are a gentleman.

This presence knows, and you must needs have heard,
How I am punish'd with a sore distraction.

What I have done,

That might your nature, honour, and exception,

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes? Never, Hamlet:

“an evil than as we are sensible of it; and since death removes all sense of it, what matters it how soon we lose them? Therefore come what will, I am prepared.” But the ill pointing in the old book hindered the editors from seeing Shakespeare's sense, and encouraged them to venture at one of their own, though, as usual, they are come very lamely off. WARBURTON.

The reading of the quarto was right, but in some other copy the harshness of the transposition was softened, and the passage stood thus: *Since no man knows aught of what he leaves.* For *knows* was printed in the later copies *has*, by a slight blunder in such typographers.

I do not think Dr. Warburton's interpretation of the passage the best that it will admit. The meaning may be this, *Since no man knows aught of the state of life which he leaves*, since he cannot judge what other years may produce, why should he be afraid of leaving life betimes? Why should he dread an early death, of which he cannot tell whether it is an exclusion of happiness, or an interception of calamity. I despise the superstition of augury and omens, which has no ground in reason or piety; my comfort is, that I cannot fall but by the direction of Providence.

Hanmer has, *Since no man owes aught*, a conjecture not very reprehensible. *Since no man can call any possession certain*, what is it to leave? JOHNSON.

⁹ *Give me your pardon, sir:]* I wish Hamlet had made some other defence; it is unsuitable to the character of a good or a brave man, to shelter himself in falsehood. JOHNSON.

If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
 And, when he's not himself, does wrong Laertes,
 Then Hamlet does it not, Hamlet denies it.
 Who does it then? His madness: If't be so,
 Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd;
 His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.
 Sir, in this audience,
 Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil
 Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
 That I have shot my arrow o'er the house,
 And hurt my brother.

Laer. * I am satisfy'd in nature,
 Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
 To my revenge: but in my terms of honour
 I stand aloof; and will no reconciliation,
 'Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
 I have a voice and precedent of peace,
 To keep my name ungor'd: But, 'till that time,
 I do receive your offer'd love like love,
 And will not wrong it.

Ham. I embrace it freely;
 And will this brother's wager frankly play.—
 Give us the foils; come on.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. I'll be your foil, Laertes; in mine ignorance
 Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night,
 Stick fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mock me, sir.

Ham. No, by this hand.

* *Sir, &c.]* This passage I have restored from the folio.

STEEVENS.

* *I am satisfied in nature, &c.]* This was a piece of satire on fantastical honour. Though *nature* is satisfied, yet he will ask advice of older men of the sword, whether *artificial honour* ought to be contented with Hamlet's submission.

There is a passage somewhat similar in the *Maid's Tragedy*:

“ *Erast.* Will you forgive me then?

“ *Mel.* Stay, I must ask mine honour first.” STEEVENS.

King. Give them the foils, young Ofrick.—Cousin Hamlet,

You know the wager?

Ham. Very well, my lord;

³ Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

King. I do not fear it; I have seen you both:—
But since he's better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laer. This is too heavy, let me see another.

Ham. This likes me well: These foils have all a length? [*They prepare to play.*]

Ofr. Ay, my good lord.

King. Set me the stoups⁴ of wine upon that table:—
If Hamlet give the first, or second hit,
Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
Let all the battlements their ord'nance fire;
The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath;
⁵ And in the cup an union shall he throw,

Richer

³ *Your grace hath laid upon the weaker side.*] Thus Hanmer. All the others read,

Your grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side.

When the odds were on the side of Laertes, who was to hit Hamlet twelve times to nine, it was perhaps the author's slip.

JOHNSON.

For the reason given in a former note, I think we ought to read with Hanmer,

Your grace hath laid upon the weaker side.

The king's answer is then pertinent and clear.—“I have no apprehensions, for I am acquainted with the skill of each of you. However, as Laertes is improved by practice in his travels, we (viz. Hamlet and the King) have an advantage given us.” The compositor at the press probably caught the word *odds* from the line next but one, and inadvertently inserted it in Hamlet's speech. MALONE.

⁴ —*the stoups of wine*] A *stoup* is a flaggon, or bowl.

STEEVENS.

⁵ *And in the cup an union shall be throw,*] In some editions, *And in the cup an onyx shall be throw.* This is a various reading in several of the old copies; but *union* seems to me to be the true word. If I am not mistaken, neither the *onyx*, nor *sardonyx*, are jewels which ever found place in an imperial crown. An *union* is the finest sort of pearl, and has its place in all crowns and coronets.

Richer than that which four successive kings
 In Denmark's crown have worn : Give me the cups ;
 And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
 The trumpet to the cannoneer without,
 The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
Now the king drinks to Hamlet.—Come, begin ;—
 And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Ham. Come on, fir.

Laer. Come, my lord.

[*They play.*]

Ham. One.

Laer. No.

Ham. Judgment.

Ofs. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laer. Well,——again,——

King. Stay, give me drink : Hamlet, this pearl is
 thine ;

Here's to thy health.—Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound ; foot goes off.*]

Ham. I'll play this bout first, set it by a while.

[*They play.*]

nets. Besides, let us consider what the king says on Hamlet's giving Laertes the first hit :

Stay, give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine ;

Here's to thy health.

Therefore, if an *amion* be a *pearl*, and an *onyx* a gem, or stone, quite differing in its nature from *pearls* ; the king saying, that Hamlet has car'd the *pearl*, I think, amounts to a demonstration that it was an *amion* pearl, which he meant to throw into the cup. THEOBALD.

So, in *Soliman and Persida* :

“ Ay, were it Cleopatra's *amion*.”

The *amion* is thus mentioned in P. Holland's translation of *Pliny's Nat. Hist.* “ And hereupon it is that our dainties and delicacies here at Rome, &c. call them *amions*, as a man would say singular and by themselves alone.” STEEVENS.

* — *this pearl is thine ;*] Under pretence of throwing a *pearl* into the cup, the king may be supposed to drop some poisonous drug into the wine. Hamlet seems to suspect this, when he afterwards discovers the effects of the poison, and tauntingly asks him, — *Is the *amion* here?* STEEVENS.

Come.—Another hit; What say you?

Laer. A touch, a touch, I do confess.

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath 7.—

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows:

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet 8.

Ham. Good madam,—

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord;—I pray you, pardon me.

King. It is the poison'd cup; it is too late. [*Aside.*

Ham. I dare not drink yet, madam; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laer. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think't.

Laer. And yet it is almost against my conscience.

[*Aside,*

Ham. Come, for the third, Laertes: You do but dally;

I pray you, pass with your best violence;

I am afraid, 9 you make a wanton of me.

Laer.

? *Queen.* *He's fat, and scant of breath.*—] It seems that *John Lowin*, who was the original *Falstaff*, was no less celebrated for his performance of *Henry VIII.* and *Hamlet*. See the *Historia Histrionica*, &c. If he was adapted, by the corpulence of his figure, to appear with propriety in the two former of these characters, Shakespeare might have put this observation into the mouth of her majesty, to apologize for the want of such elegance of person as an audience might expect to meet with in the representative of the youthful Prince of Denmark, whom *Ophelia* speaks of as “the glass of fashion and the mould of form.” This, however, is mere conjecture, as *Joseph Taylor* likewise acted *Hamlet* during the life of Shakespeare. STEEVENS.

* *The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.*] So, in *David and Bethsabe*, 1599:

“With full carouses to his fortune past.”

“And bind that promise with a full carouse.” Ibid.

“Now, lord Urias, one carouse to me.” Ibid.

STEEVENS.

9 — *you make a wanton of me.*] A *wanton* was a man feeble and effeminate. In *Cymbeline*, *Imogen* says,

“I am

Laer. Say you so? come on. [*Play.*

Ofr. Nothing neither way.

Laer. Have at you now.

[*Laertes wounds Hamlet; then, in scuffling, they change rapiers, and Hamlet wounds Laertes.*

King. Part them, they are incens'd.

Ham. Nay, come again.

Ofr. Look to the queen there, ho!

[*The Queen falls.*

Hor. They bleed on both sides:—How is it, my lord?

Ofr. How is't, Laertes?

Laer. Why, as a woodcock to my own springe, Ofrick;

I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery.

Ham. How does the queen?

King. She swoons to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet!—

The drink, the drink;—I am poison'd—

[*The Queen dies.*

Ham. O villainy!—Ho! let the door be lock'd: Treachery! seek it out.

Laer. It is here, Hamlet: Hamlet, thou art slain; No medicine in the world can do thee good, In thee there is not half an hour's life; The treacherous instrument is in thy hand, Unbated, and envenom'd: the foul practice Hath turn'd itself on me; lo, here I lie, Never to rise again: Thy mother's poison'd; I can no more;—the king, the king's to blame.

Ham. The point envenom'd too!—

Then, venom, to thy work, [*Stabs the King.*

All. Treason! treason!

" I am not so citizen a creature,

" To die, ere I be sick." JOHNSON.

King. O, yet defend me, friends, I am but hurt.

Ham. Here, thou incestuous, murd'rous, damned Dane,

Drink off this potion :—Is the union here ?¹

Follow my mother.

[*King dies.*]

Laer. He is justly serv'd ;

It is a poison temper'd by himself.—

Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet :

Mine and my father's death come not upon thee ;

Nor thine on me !

[*Dies.*]

Ham. Heaven make thee free of it ! I follow thee, I am dead, Horatio :—Wretched queen, adieu !—

You that look pale and tremble at this chance,

² That are but mutes or audience to this act,

Had I but time, (as this fell serjeant, death,

Is strict in his arrest) O, I could tell you,—

But let it be :—Horatio, I am dead ;

Thou liv'st ; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Hor. Never believe it ;

I am more an antique Roman than a Dane,

Here's yet some liquor left.

Ham. As thou'rt a man,—

Give me the cup ; let go ; by heaven, I'll have it.—

O God !—Horatio, what a wounded name,

Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind
me ?³

If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart,

Absent thee from felicity a while,

¹ *Is the union here ?*] In this place likewise the quarto reads, an *onyx*. STEEVENS.

² *That are but mutes or audience to this act,*] That are either mere *auditors* of this *catastrophe*, or at most only *mute performers*, that fill the stage without any part in the action. JOHNSON.

³ —*shall live behind me ?*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*shall I leave behind me*. STEEVENS.

And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain,
To tell my story.— [*March afar off, and foot within.*
What warlike noise is this?

Ofr. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from
Poland,
To the ambassadors of England gives
This warlike volley.

Ham. O, I die, Horatio;
The potent poison quite o'er-grows my spirit⁴;
I cannot live to hear the news from England:
But I do prophesy, the election lights
On Fortinbras; he has my dying voice;
So tell him, with the occurrents⁵, more and less,
'Which have solicited,—The rest is silence. [*Dies.*
Hor. ' Now cracks a noble heart:—Good night,
sweet prince;

And

⁴ *The potent poison quite o'er-grows my spirit;*] The first quarto and the first folio read,

——— *o'er-grows* my spirit;

alluding perhaps to a victorious cock exulting over his conquered antagonist. The same word occurs in *Lingua*, &c. 1607:

“ Shall I? th'embassadress of gods and men,
“ That pull'd proud Phœbe from her brightsome sphere,
“ And dark'd Apollo's countenance with a word,
“ Be *over-crowed*, and breathe without revenge?”

Again, in *Hall's Satires*, lib. 5. sat. 2:

“ Like the vain bubble of Iberian pride,
“ That *over-croweth* all the world beside.”

This phrase often occurs in the controversial pieces of Gabriel Harvey, 1593, &c. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *the occurrents*—] i. e. incidents. The word is now disused. So, in *The Hog bath lost his Pearl*, 1614:

“ Such strange *occurrents* of my fore-past life.”

Again, in the *Barnes' Wars*, by DRYDEN, Canto I.

“ With each *occurrent* right in his degree.” STEEVENS.

⁶ *Which have solicited*—] *Solicited*, for brought on the event. WARBURTON.

⁷ *Now cracks a noble heart. Good night, sweet prince;*

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!] Let us review for a moment the behaviour of Hamlet, on the strength of which

And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!—
Why does the drum come hither?

Enter

Horatio finds this eulogy, and recommends him to the patronage of angels.

Hamlet, at the command of his father's ghost, undertakes with seeming alacrity to revenge the murder; and declares he will banish all other thoughts from his mind. He makes, however, but one effort to keep his word, and that is, when he mistakes Polonius for the king. On another occasion, he defers his purpose till he can find an opportunity of taking his uncle when he is least prepared for death, that he may insure damnation to his soul. Though he assassinated Polonius by accident, yet he deliberately procures the execution of his school-fellows, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, who appear to have been unacquainted with the treacherous purposes of the mandate which they were employed to carry. Their death (as he declares in a subsequent conversation with Horatio) gives him no concern, for they obtruded themselves into the service, and he thought he had a right to destroy them. He is not less accountable for the distraction and death of Ophelia. He comes to interrupt the funeral designed in honour of this lady, at which both the king and queen were present; and, by such an outrage to decency, renders it still more necessary for the usurper to lay a second stratagem for his life, though the first had proved abortive. He comes to insult the brother of the dead, and to boast of an affection for his sister, which, before, he had denied to her face; and yet at this very time must be considered as desirous of supporting the character of a madman, so that the openness of his confession is not to be imputed to him as a virtue. He apologizes to Horatio afterwards for the absurdity of this behaviour, to which, he says, he was provoked by that nobleness of fraternal grief, which, indeed, he ought rather to have applauded than condemned. Dr. Johnson has observed, that to bring about a reconciliation with Laertes, he has availed himself of a dishonest fallacy; and to conclude, it is obvious to the most careless spectator or reader, that he kills the king at last to revenge himself, and not his father.

Hamlet cannot be said to have pursued his ends by very warrantable means; and if the poet, when he sacrificed him at last, meant to have enforced such a moral, it is not the worst that can be deduced from the play; for, as *Maximus*, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Valentinian*, says,

“Although his justice were as white as truth,

“His way was crooked to it; that condemns him.”

The late Dr. Akinfide once observed to me, that the conduct of Hamlet was every way unnatural and indefensible, unless he were
to

Enter Fortinbras, the English Ambassadors, and others.

Fort. Where is this fight?

Hor. What is it, you would see?

If aught of woe, or wonder, cease your search.

Fort. ⁸ This quarry cries, on havock!—O proud death!

What feast is toward in thine infernal cell,⁹
That thou so many princes, at a shot,
So bloodily hast struck?

Amb. The fight is dismal;
And our affairs from England come too late:
The ears are senseless, that should give us hearing,
To tell him, his commandment is fulfill'd,
That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead:
Where should we have our thanks?

Hor. Not from his mouth,¹
Had it the ability of life to thank you;
He never gave commandment for their death.

to be regarded as a young man whose intellects were in some degree impaired by his own misfortunes; by the death of his father, the loss of expected sovereignty, and a sense of shame resulting from the hasty and incestuous marriage of his mother.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, because Hamlet seems to have been hitherto regarded as a hero not undeserving the pity of the audience; and because no writer on Shakespeare has taken the pains to point out the immoral tendency of his character.

STEEVENS.

⁸ *This quarry cries, on havock!*] Hammer reads,
— *cries out, havock!*

To *cry on*, was to *exclaim against*. I suppose, when unfair sportsmen destroyed more *quarry* or *game* than was reasonable, the censure was to cry, *Havock*. JOHNSON.

⁹ *What feast is toward in thine infernal cell,*] Shakespeare has already employed this allusion to the *Cbœæ*, or *feasts of the dead*, which were anciently celebrated at Athens, and are mentioned by Plutarch in the life of *Antonius*. Our author likewise makes *Talbot* say to his son in the First Part of *King Henry VI*:

Now art thou come unto a *feast of death*." STEEVENS..

¹ — *his mouth,*] *i. e.* the king's. STEEVENS.

But

But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
 You from the Polack wars, and you from England
 Are here arriv'd; give order, that these bodies
 High on a stage be placed to the view;
 And let me speak, to the yet unknowing world,
 How these things came about: So shall you hear
 Of cruel², bloody, and unnatural acts;
 Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters;
 Of deaths put on by cunning, and forc'd cause³;
 And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
 Fall'n on the inventors' heads: all this can I
 Truly deliver.

Fort. Let us haste to hear it,
 And call the noblest to the audience.
 For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune;
 I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
 Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Hor. Of that I shall have also cause to speak,
² And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more:
 But let this same be presently perform'd,

Even

² *Of cruel, &c.*] Thus the more modern editors. The first quarto, and the folio, read—*Of carnal, &c.* referring, I suppose, to the usurper's criminal intercourse with the mother of Hamlet.

COLLINS.

³ — *and forc'd cause.*] Thus the folio. The quartos read—*and for no cause.* STEEVENS.

⁴ *And from his mouth whose voice will draw no more.*] This is the reading of the old quartos, but certainly a mistaken one. We say, *a man will no more draw breath*; but that *a man's voice will draw no more*, is, I believe, an expression without any authority. I choose to espouse the reading of the elder folio:

And from his mouth, whose voice will draw on more.

And this is the poet's meaning. Hamlet, just before his death, had said:

*But I do prophesy, the election lights
 On Fortinbras: he has my dying voice;
 So tell him, &c.*

Accordingly, Horatio here delivers that message; and very justly infers, that Hamlet's *voice* will be seconded by others, and procure them in favour of Fortinbras's succession. THEOBALD.

If

Even while men's minds are wild; lest more mis-
chance

On plots, and errors, happen.

Fort. Let four captains

Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage;

For he was likely, had he been put on,

To have prov'd most royally: and, for his passage,

The soldiers' music, and the rites of war,

Speak loudly for him.—

Take up the bodies:—Such a fight as this

Becomes the field, but here shews much amiss.

Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

*[Exeunt: after which, a peal of ord'nance
is shot off.]*

If the dramas of Shakespear were to be characterised, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of Hamlet the praise of variety. The incidents are so numerous, that the argument of the play would make a long tale. The scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity; with merriment that includes judicious and instructive observations; and solemnity, not strained by poetical violence above the natural sentiments of man. New characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth, the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that in the first act chills the blood with horror, to the top in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.

The conduct is perhaps not wholly secure against objections. The action is indeed for the most part in continual progression, but there are some scenes which neither forward nor retard it. Of the feigned madness of Hamlet there appears no adequate cause, for he does nothing which he might not have done with the reputation of sanity. He plays the madman most, when he treats Ophelia with so much rudeness, which seems to be useless and wanton cruelty.

Hamlet is, through the whole piece, rather an instrument than an agent. After he has, by the stratagem of the play, convicted the king, he makes no attempt to punish him; and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet had no part in producing.

The catastrophe is not very happily produced; the exchange of weapons is rather an expedient of necessity, than a stroke of art. A
scheme

scheme might easily be formed to kill Hamlet with the dagger, and Laertes with the bowl.

The poet is accused of having shewn little regard to poetical justice, and may be charged with equal neglect of poetical probability. The apparition left the regions of the dead to little purpose; the revenge which he demands is not obtained, but by the death of him that was required to take it; and the gratification, which would arise from the destruction of an usurper and a murderer, is abated by the untimely death of Ophelia, the young, the beautiful, the harmless, and the pious. JOHNSON.

A C T II. Scene 2.

The rugged Pyrrhus, he, &c.] The two greatest poets of this and the last age, Mr. Dryden, in the preface to *Troilus and Cressida*, and Mr. Pope, in his note on this place, have concurred in thinking that Shakespeare produced this long passage with design to ridicule and expose the bombast of the play from whence it was taken; and that Hamlet's commendation of it is purely ironical. This is become the general opinion. I think just otherwise; and that it was given with commendation to upbraid the false taste of the audience of that time, which would not suffer them to do justice to the simplicity and sublime of this production. And I reason, first, from the character Hamlet gives of the play, from whence the passage is taken. Secondly, from the passage itself. And thirdly, from the effect it had on the audience.

Let us consider the character Hamlet gives of it, *The play, I remember, pleas'd not the million, 'twas Caviare to the general; but it was (as I received it, and others, whose judgment in such matters cried in the top of mine) an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember, one said, there was no salt in the lines to make the matter savoury; nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection; but called it an honest method.* They who suppose the passage given to be ridiculed, must needs suppose this character to be purely ironical. But if so, it is the strangest irony that ever was written. *It pleas'd not the multitude.* This we must conclude to be true, however ironical the rest be. Now the reason given of the designed ridicule is the supposed bombast. But those were the very plays, which at that time we know took with the multitude. And Fletcher wrote a kind of *Rehearsal* purposely to expose them. But say it is bombast, and that therefore it took not with the multitude. Hamlet presently tells us what it was that displeas'd them. *There was no salt in the lines to make the matter savoury; nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection; but called it an honest method.* Now whether a person speaks ironically or no, when he quotes others, yet common sense requires he

he should quote what they say. Now it could not be, if this play displeas'd because of the bombast, that those whom it displeas'd should give this reason for their dislike. The same inconsistencies and absurdities abound in every other part of Hamlet's speech, supposing it to be ironical: but take him as speaking his sentiments, the whole is of a piece; and to this purpose. The play, I remember, pleas'd not the multitude, and the reason was, its being wrote on the rules of the ancient drama; to which they were entire strangers. But, in my opinion, and in the opinion of those for whose judgment I have the highest esteem, it was an excellent play, *well digested in the scenes*, i. e. where the three unities were well preserv'd. *Set down with as much modesty as cunning*, i. e. where not only the art of composition, but the simplicity of nature, was carefully attended to. The characters were a faithful picture of life and manners, in which nothing was overcharg'd into farce. But these qualities, which gain'd my esteem, lost the public's. For *I remember one said, There was no salt in the hints to make the matter savoury*, i. e. there was not, according to the mode of that time, a fool or clown to joke, quibble, and talk freely. *Nor no matter in the phrase that might indite the author of affection*, i. e. nor none of those passionate, pathetic love scenes, so essential to modern tragedy. *But he call'd it an honest method*, i. e. he own'd, however *tasteless* this method of writing, on the ancient plan, was to our times, yet it was chaste and pure; the distinguishing character of the Greek drama. I need only make one observation on all this; that, thus interpreted, it is the justest picture of a good tragedy, wrote on the ancient rules. And that I have rightly interpreted it, appears farther from what we find in the old quarto, *An honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more HANDSOME than FINE*, i. e. it had a natural beauty, but none of the focus of false art.

2 A second proof that this speech was given to be admir'd, is from the intrinsic merit of the speech itself; which contains the description of a circumstance very happily imagin'd, namely, Ilium and Priam's falling together, with the effect it had on the destroyer.

————— *The bellish Pyrrhus, &c.*

To, *Repugnant to command.*

The unnerv'd father falls, &c.

To, ————— *So after Pyrrhus' pause.*

Now this circumstance, illustrat'd with the fine similitude of the storm, is so highly work'd up, as to have well deserv'd a place in Virgil's second book of the *Aeneid*, even though the work had been carry'd on to that perfection which the Roman poet had conceiv'd.

3. The third proof is, from the effects which follow'd on the recital. Hamlet, his best character, approves it; the player is deeply affect'd in repeating it; and only the foolish Polonius is'd with it. We have said enough before of Hamlet's sentiments.

As for the player, he changes colour, and the tears start from his eyes. But our author was too good a judge of nature to make bombast and unnatural sentiment produce such an effect. Nature and Horace both instructed him,

Si vis me flere, dolendum est

Primum ipsi tibi, tunc tua me infortunia lædent,

Telephe, vel Peleu. MALE SI MANDATA LOQUERIS,

Aui dormitabo aut ridebo.

And it may be worth observing, that Horace gives this precept particularly to shew, that bombast and unnatural sentiments are incapable of moving the tender passions, which he is directing the poet how to raise. For, in the lines just before, he gives this rule,

Telephus & Peleus, cum pauper & exul uterque,

Projicit Ampullas, & sesquipedalia verba.

Not that I would deny, that very bad lines in bad tragedies have had this effect. But then it always proceeds from one or other of these causes.

1. Either when the subject is domestic, and the scene lies at home; the spectators, in this case, become interested in the fortunes of the distressed; and their thoughts are so much taken up with the subject, that they are not at liberty to attend to the poet; who, otherwise, by his faulty sentiments and diction, would have stifled the emotions springing up from a sense of the distress. But this is nothing to the case in hand. For, as Hamlet says,

What's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba?

2. When bad lines raise this affection, they are bad in the other extreme; low, abject, and groveling, instead of being highly figurative and swelling; yet, when attended with a natural simplicity, they have force enough to strike illiterate and simple minds. The tragedies of Banks will justify both these observations.

But if any one will still say, that Shakespeare intended to represent a player unnaturally and fantastically affected, we must appeal to Hamlet, that is, to Shakespeare himself in this matter; who, on the reflection he makes upon the player's emotion, in order to excite his own revenge, gives not the least hint that the player was unnaturally or injudiciously moved. On the contrary, his fine description of the actor's emotion shews, he thought just otherwise:

———*this player here,*

But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,

Could force his soul so to his own conceit,

That from her working all his visage wan'd:

Tears in his eyes, distraction in his aspect,

A broken voice, &c.

And indeed had Hamlet esteemed this emotion any thing unnatural, it had been a very improper circumstance to spur him to his purpose.

As Shakespear has here shewn the effect which a fine description of nature, heightened with all the ornaments of art, had upon an intelligent player, whose business habituates him to enter intimately and deeply into the characters of men and manners, and to give nature its free workings on all occasions; so he has artfully shewn what effects the very same scene would have upon a quite different man, Polonius; *by nature*, very weak and very artificial [two qualities, though commonly enough joined in life, yet generally so much disguised as not to be seen by common eyes to be together; and which an ordinary poet durst not have brought so near one another]; *by discipline*, practised in a species of wit and eloquence, which was stiff, forced, and pedantic; and *by trade* a politician, and therefore, of consequence, without any of the affecting notices of humanity. Such is the man whom Shakespear has judiciously chosen to represent the false taste of that audience which had condemned the play here reciting. When the actor comes to the finest and most pathetic part of the speech, Polonius cries out, *This is too long*; on which Hamlet, in contempt of his ill judgment, replies, *It shall to the barber's with thy beard* [intimating that, by this judgment, it appeared that all his wisdom lay in his length of beard,] *Pry'thee, say on. He's for a jig or a tale of bawdry* [the common entertainment of that time, as well as this, of the people] *or he sleeps, say on.* And yet this man of modern taste, who stood all this time perfectly unmoved with the forcible imagery of the relator, no sooner hears, amongst many good things, one quaint and fantastical word, put in, I suppose, purposely for this end, than he professes his approbation of the propriety and dignity of it. *That's good. Mubled queen is good.* On the whole then, I think, it plainly appears, that the long quotation is not given to be ridiculed and laughed at, but to be admired. The character given of the play, by Hamlet, cannot be ironical. The passage itself is extremely beautiful. It has the effect that all pathetic relations, naturally written, should have; and it is condemned, or regarded with indifference, by one of a wrong, unnatural taste. From hence (to observe it by the way) the actors, in their representation of this play, may learn how this speech ought to be spoken, and what appearance Hamlet ought to assume during the recital.

That which supports the common opinion, concerning this passage, is the turgid expression in some parts of it; which, they think, could never be given by the poet to be commended. We shall therefore, in the next place, examine the lines most obnoxious to censure, and see how much, allowing the charge, this will make for the induction of their conclusion.

*Pyrrhus at Priam drives, in rage strikes wide,
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unarm'd father falls.*

And again,

*Out, out, thou strumpet fortune! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power:*

*Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,
And bow the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends.*

Now whether these be bombast or not, is not the question; but whether Shakespeare esteemed them so. That he did not so esteem them appears from his having used the very same thoughts in the same expressions, in his best plays, and given them to his principal characters, where he aims at the sublime. As in the following passages.

Troilus, in *Troilus and Cressida*, far outstrains the execution of Pyrrhus's sword, in the character he gives of Hector's:

*When many times the captive Grecians fall
Even in the fan and wind of your fair sword,
You bid them rise and live.*

Cleopatra, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, rails at fortune in the same manner:

*No, let me speak, and let me rail so high,
That the false huswife Fortune break her wheel,
Prowok'd at my offence.*

But another use may be made of these quotations; a discovery of this recited play: which, letting us into a circumstance of our author's life (as a writer) hitherto unknown, was the reason I have been so large upon this question. I think then it appears, from what has been said, that the play in dispute was Shakespeare's own; and that this was the occasion of writing it. He was desirous, as soon as he had found his strength, of restoring the chasteness and regularity of the ancient stage: and therefore composed this tragedy on the model of the Greek drama, as may be seen by throwing so much *action* into *relation*. But his attempt proved fruitless; and the raw, unnatural taste, then prevalent, forced him back again into his old Gothic manner. For which he took this revenge upon his audience. **WARBURTON.**

The praise which Hamlet bestows on this piece is certainly dissembled, and agrees very well with the character of madness, which, before witnesses, he thought it necessary to support. The speeches before us have so little merit, that nothing but an affectation of singularity, could have influenced Dr. Warburton to undertake their defence. The poet, perhaps, meant to exhibit a just resemblance of some of the plays of his own age, in which the faults were too general and too glaring to permit a few splendid passages to atone for them. The player knew his trade, and spoke the lines in an affecting manner, because Hamlet had declared them to be pathetic, or might be in reality a little moved by them: for, "There are less degrees of nature (says Dryden) by which some faint emotions of pity and terror are raised in us, as a less engine will raise a less proportion of weight, though not so much as one of Archimedes' making." The mind of the prince, it must be confessed, was fitted for the reception of gloomy ideas.

and his tears were ready at a slight solicitation. It is by no means proved, that Shakespear has employed the same thoughts cloathed in the same expressions, in his best plays. If he bids *the false buswife Fortune break her wheel*, he does not desire her to break all its spokes; nay, even its periphery, and make use of the nave afterwards for such an immeasurable cast. Though it what Dr. Warburton has said should be found in any instance to be exactly true, what can we infer from thence, but that Shakespear was sometimes wrong in spite of conviction, and in the hurry of writing committed those very faults which his judgment could detect in others? Dr. Warburton is inconsistent in his assertions concerning the literature of Shakespear. In a note on *Troilus and Cressida*, he affirms, that his want of learning kept him from being acquainted with the writings of Homer; and, in this instance, would suppose him capable of producing a complete tragedy written on the ancient rules; and that the speech before us had sufficient merit to entitle it to a place in the second book of Virgil's *Æneid*, even though the work had been carried to that perfection which the Roman poet had conceived.

Had Shakespear made one unsuccessful attempt in the manner of the ancients (that he had any knowledge of their rules, remains to be proved) it would certainly have been recorded by contemporary writers, among whom Ben Jonson would have been the first. Had his darling ancients been unskillfully imitated by a rival poet, he would at least have preserved the memory of the fact, to shew how unsafe it was for any one, who was not as thorough a scholar as himself, to have meddled with their sacred remains.

“Within that circle none durst walk but he.” He has represented Inigo Jones as being ignorant of the very names of those classic authors, whose architecture he undertook to correct: in his *Poetaster* he has in several places hinted at our poet's injudicious use of words, and seems to have pointed his ridicule more than once at some of his descriptions and characters. It is true that he has praised him, but it was not while that praise could have been of any service to him; and posthumous applause is always to be had on easy conditions. Happy it was for Shakespear, that he took nature for his guide, and, engaged in the warm pursuit of her beauties, left to Jonson the repositories of learning: so has he escaped a contest which might have rendered his life uneasy, and bequeathed to our possession the more valuable copies from nature herself: for Shakespear was (says Dr. Hurd, in his notes on Horace's *Art of Poetry*) “the first that broke through the bondage of classical superstition. And he owed this felicity, as he did some others, to his want of what is called the advantage of a learned education. Thus, uninfluenced by the weight of early prepossession, he struck at once into the road of nature and common sense: and without designing, without knowing it, hath left us in his historical plays, with all their anomalies, an exacter resemblance of the Athenian

stage, than is any where to be found in its most professed admirers and copyists." Again, *ibid.* "It is possible, there are, who think *a want of reading*, as well as vast superiority of genius, hath contributed to lift this astonishing man, to the glory of being esteemed the most original THINKER and SPEAKER, since the times of Homer."

To this extract I may add the sentiments of Dr. Edward Young on the same occasion. "Who knows whether Shakespeare might not have thought less, if he had read more? Who knows if he might not have laboured under the load of Jonson's learning, as Enceladus under *Ætna*? His mighty genius, indeed, through the most mountainous oppression would have breathed out some of his inextinguishable fire; yet possibly, he might not have risen up into that giant, that much more than common man, at which we now gaze with amazement and delight. Perhaps he was as learned as his dramatic province required; for whatever other learning he wanted, he was master of two books, which the last conflagration alone can destroy; the book of nature, and that of man. These he had by heart, and has transcribed many admirable pages of them into his immortal works. These are the fountain-head, whence the Castalian streams of *original* composition flow; and these are often mudded by other waters, though waters in their distinct channel, most wholesome and pure: as two chemical liquors, separately clear as crystal, grow foul by mixture, and offend the sight. So that he had not only as much learning as his dramatic province required, but, perhaps, as it could safely bear. If Milton had spared some of his learning, his muse would have gained more glory, than he would have lost by it."

Conjectures on Original Composition.

THE first remark of Voltaire on his tragedy, is that the former king had been poisoned by his brother and *his queen*. The guilt of the latter, however, is far from being ascertained. The Ghost forbears to accuse her as an accessory, and very forcibly recommends her to the mercy of her son. I may add, that her conscience appears undisturbed during the exhibition of the mock tragedy, which produces so visible a disorder in her husband who was really criminal. The last observation of the same author has no greater degree of veracity to boast of; for now, says he, all the actors in the piece are swept away, and one Monsieur Fortenbras is introduced to conclude it. Can this be true, when Horatio Ofrick, Voltimand, and Cornelius survive? These, together with the whole court of Denmark, are supposed to be present at the catastrophe, so that we are not indebted to the Norwegian chief for having kept the stage from vacancy.

Monsieur de Voltaire has since transmitted in an Epistle to the Academy of Belles Lettres some remarks on the late French translation of Shakespeare; but alas! no traces of genius or vigour

are discoverable in this *crambe reperta*, which is notorious only for its insipidity, fallacy, and malice. It serves indeed to shew an apparent decline of talents and spirit in its writer, who no longer relies on his own ability to depreciate a rival, but appeals in a plaintive strain to the queen and princesses of France for their assistance to stop the further circulation of Shakespeare's renown.

Impartiality, nevertheless, must acknowledge that his private correspondence displays a superior degree of animation. Perhaps an ague shook him when he appealed to the public on this subject; but the effects of a fever seem to predominate in his subsequent letter to Monsieur D'Argenteuil on the same occasion; for such a letter it is as our John Dennis (while his frenzy lasted) might be supposed to have written. "C'est moi qui autrefois parlai le premier de ce Shakespeare: c'est moi qui le premier montrai aux François quelques perles quels j'avois trouvé dans son enorme fumier." Mrs. Montague, the justly celebrated authoress of the *Essay on the genius and writings* of our author, was at Paris, and in the circle where these ravings of the Frenchman were first publicly recited. On hearing the illiberal expression already quoted, with no less elegance than readiness she replied—"C'est un fumier qui a fertilizé une terre bien ingrate."—In short, the author of *Zoyre*, *Mahomet*, and *Semiramis*, possesses all the mischievous qualities of a midnight felon, who, in the hope to conceal his guilt, sets the house which he has robbed on fire.

As for Messieurs D'Alembert and Marmontel, they might safely be passed over with that neglect which their impotence of criticism deserves. Voltaire, in spite of his natural disposition to vilify an English poet, by adopting sentiments, characters, and situations from Shakespeare, has bestowed on him involuntary praise. Happily, he has not been disgraced by the worthless encomiums or disfigured by the awkward imitations of the other pair, who "follow in the chase not like hounds that hunt, but like those who fill up the cry." When D'Alembert declares that more sterling sense is to be met with in ten French verses than in thirty English ones, contempt is all that he provokes.—such contempt as can only be exceeded by that which every scholar will express, who may chance to look into the prose translation of Lucan by Marmontel, with the vain expectation of discovering either the sense, the spirit, or the whole of the original. STEEVENS,

The history of the United States of America is a story of growth and development. It begins with the first settlers who came to the shores of the continent in search of a new home. These early pioneers faced many hardships and challenges, but they persevered and established a new society. Over time, the United States grew from a small colony to a powerful nation. It fought wars, expanded its territory, and became a leader in the world. The story of the United States is a story of courage, sacrifice, and the pursuit of the American dream.

Supplemental Note on *Hamlet*, p. 263 and 420.

The ruzzed Pyrrbus, &c.]

Mr. Malone once observed to me, that a late editor supposed the speech uttered by the *Player* before *Hamlet*, to have been taken from an ancient drama, entitled "Dido Queen of Carthage." I had not then the means of justifying or confuting his remark, the piece alluded to having escaped the hands of the most liberal and industrious collectors of such curiosities. Since, however, our last sheet was printed off, I have met with this performance, and am therefore at liberty to pronounce that it did not furnish our Author with more than a general hint for his description of the death of Priam, &c: unless, with reference to
— the whiff and wind of his fell sword

The unnerved father falls,——

we read, ver. 23:

And with the wind thereof the king fell down ;
and can make out a resemblance between

So as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood ;

and ver. 32 :

So leaning on his sword, he stood stone still.

The greater part of the following lines are surely more ridiculous in themselves, than even Shakespeare's happiest vein of burlesque or parody could have made them :

" At last came *Pirrus* fell and full of ire,

" His harnesse dropping blood, and on his speare

" The mangled head of *Priamus* yongest sonne,

" And after him his band of Mirmidons,

" With balles of wilde fire in their murdering pawes,

" Which made the funerall flame that burnt faire *Troy* :

" All which hemd me about, crying, this is he.

" *Dido*. Ah, how could poore *Aeneas* scape their hands ?

" *Aen*. My mother *Venus* jealous of my health,

" Convaid me from their crooked nets and bands :

" So I escapt the furious *Pirrus* wrath :

" Who then ran to the pallace of the King,

" And at *Jove's* Altar finding *Priamus*,

" About whose withered necke hung Hecuba,

" Foulding his hand in hers, and joyntly both

" Beating their breasts and falling on the ground,

" He with his faulchions point raise up at once ;

" And with *Megeras* eyes stared in their face,

" Threatning a thousand deaths at every glance.

" To whom the aged king thus trembling spoke : &c.—

" Not mov'd at all, but smiling at his teares,

" This butcher, whil't his hands were yet held up,

- “ Treading upon his breast, strooke off his hands.
 “ *Dido.* O end *Aeneas*, I can heare no more.
 “ *Æn.* At which the franticke queene leapt on his face,
 “ And in his eyelids hanging by the nayles,
 “ A little while prolong’d her husband’s life :
 “ At last the souldiers puld her by the heeles,
 “ And swong her howling in the emptie ayre,
 “ Which sent an eccho to the wounded king :
 “ Whereat he lifted up his bedred lims,
 “ And would have grappeld with Achilles sonne,
 “ Forgetting both his want of strength and hands ;
 “ Which he disdainig, whistk his sword about,
 23. “ And with the wound thereof the king fell downe :
 “ Then from the navell to the throat at once,
 “ He ript old Priam ; at whose latter gaspe
 “ Jove’s marble statue gan to bend the brow,
 “ As lothing Pirrhus for this wicked act :
 “ Yet he undaunted tooke his fathers flage,
 “ And dipt it in the old kings chill cold bloud,
 “ And then in triumph ran into the streetes,
 “ Through which he could not passe for slaughtred men :
 32. “ So leaning on his sword he stood stone still,
 “ Viewing the fire wherewith rich Ilion burnt.” Act. 2.

The exact title of the Play from which these lines are copied, is as follows: The | Tragedie of Dido | *Queene of Carthage.* | Played by the Children of her | *Maiesties Chappell.* | Written by Christopher Marlowe, and | *Thomas Nasb. Gent.* | —Actors | *Jupiter.* | *Ganimed.* | *Venus.* | *Cupid.* | *Juno.* | *Mercurie, or* | *Hermes.* | *Æneas.* | *Ascanius.* | *Dido.* | *Anna.*—*Acbates.* | *Ilioneus.* | *Iarbas.* | *Cloantbes.* | *Sergestus.* | At London, | Printed, by the Widdowe Orwin, for *Thomas Woodcocke*, and | are to be solde at his shop, in Paules Church-yard, at | the signe of the blacke Beare. 1594. |

In the *Tempest*, p. 43. I had likewise imagined some allusion to this piece ; but, on reading it over, have discovered not the slightest grounds for my supposition.

In *Macbeth*, p. 448. [—unseam’d him from the nave to the chops] I have idly strove to support Dr. Warburton, who reads *nape* instead of *nave* ; the latter being justified by a passage quoted above, from *Dido* :

Then from the *navel* to the *throat*, at once
 He ript old Priam.

STEEVENS.

O T H E L L O.

Evades them, with a bombast circumstance,
Horribly stuff'd with epithets of war;
And, in conclusion,
Non-suits my mediators; for, *certes*, says he,
I have already abus'd my officer.
And what was he?
Forsooth, a great arithmerician⁶,
One Michael Cassio⁷, a Florentine,
A fellow almost damn'd⁸ in a fair wife;

That

⁵ — *certes*,] i. e. certainly, in truth. Obsolete. So Spenser, in the *Faery Queen*, b. 4. c. 9:

“*Certes* her losse ought me to sorrow most.” STEEVENS.

⁶ *Forsooth, a great arithmerician,*] So, in *Romeo and Juliet*, Mercutio says: “— one that fights by the book of *arithmetick*.”

STEEVENS.

⁷ — *a Florentine,*] It appears from many passages of this play (rightly understood) that Cassio was a Florentine, and Iago a Venetian. HANMER.

⁸ — *in a fair wife;*] In the former editions this hath been printed, *a fair wife*; but surely it must from the beginning have been a mistake, because it appears from a following part of the play, that Cassio was an unmarried man; on the other hand, his beauty is often hinted at, which it is natural enough for rough soldiers to treat with scorn and ridicule. I read therefore:

A fellow almost damn'd in a fair phys. HANMER.

———— *a Florentine,*

A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife;] But it was Iago, and not Cassio, who was the Florentine, as appears from Act 3. Sc. 1. The passage therefore should be read thus:

———— *a Florentine's,*

A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife;] These are the words of Othello (which Iago in this relation repeats) and signify, that a Florentine was an unfit person for command, as being always a slave to a fair wife; which was the case of Iago. The Oxford Editor, supposing this was said by Iago of Cassio, will have Cassio to be the Florentine; which, he says, is plain from many passages in the play, rightly understood. But because Cassio was no married man (though I wonder it did not appear he *was*, from some passages rightly understood) he alters the line thus:

A fellow almost damn'd in a fair phys.

A White-friars' phrase. WARBURTON.

As Mr. Theobald's note on this passage appears to have been written in concert with Dr. Warburton, it were useless to insert them both. The former, however, concludes his observations thus:

“*Iago,*

That never set a Squadron in the field,
Nor the division of a battle knows

More

"Iago, not Cassio, was the *Florentine*; Iago, not Cassio, was the married man; Iago's wife attends *Deshdemona* to Cyprus; Cassio has a mistress there, a common strumpet; and Iago kills him in the fourth act:

She gives it out that you shall marry her.

which would be absurd, if Cassio had been already married at Venice. Besides, our poet follows the authority of his novel in giving the villainous ensign a fair wife." STEEVENS.

This is one of the passages which must for the present be resigned to corruption and obscurity. I have nothing that I can, with any approach to confidence, propose. I cannot think it very plain from Act 3. Sc. 1. that Cassio was or was not a Florentine.

JOHNSON.

Othello uses the name of *Florentine* as a term of reproach; and perhaps, the reason is because the *Florentines* were still in opposition to the *Venetians*.

See Philip de Comines, b. 5. c. 1.

A fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife.] Thus *fair* is spelt in the first folio; and some might have no objection to read, *A fellow almost damn'd in a fairs wife*; as the jealous Ford in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act 2. Sc. 2. says, "See the hell of having a *fairs* woman;" but the original text may mean a fellow almost as unhappy as the damned with jealousy of a fair wife. Iago afterwards, Act 2. Sc. 1. and Act 3. Sc. 3. in words equally emphatical thus owns the sufferings of his mind, while he professes revenge:

"For that I do suspect the lusty Moor

Hath leap'd into my seat. The thought whereof

Doth, like a poisonous mineral gnaw my inwards."—

"But, oh, what *damned* minutes tells he o'er,

Who doubts, yet doubts; suspects, yet strongly loves."

TOLLET.

The great difficulty is to understand in what sense any man can be said to be *almost damn'd in a fair wife*; or *fair phys*, as Sir T. Hanmer proposes to read. I cannot find any ground for supposing that either the one or the other have been reputed to be damnable sins in any religion. The poet has used the same mode of expression in *The Merchant of Venice*, Act 1. Sc. 1:

"O my Anthonio, I do know of those

Who therefore only are reputed wise,

For saying nothing; who, I'm very sure,

"If they should speak, would *almost damn* those ears,

"Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools."

And there the allusion is evident to the gospel-judgment against those

More than a spinster; unless the bookish theoretic,
Wherein

those, who call their brothers fools. I am therefore inclined to believe, that the true reading here is,

“A fellow almost damn'd in a fair life;”

and that Shakespeare alludes to the judgment denounced in the gospel against those *of whom all men speak well*.

The character of Cassio is certainly such, as would be very likely to draw upon him all the peril of this denunciation, literally understood. Well-bred, easy, sociable, good-natured; with abilities enough to make him agreeable and useful, but not sufficient to excite the envy of his equals, or to alarm the jealousy of his superiors. It may be observed too, that Shakespeare has thought it proper to make Iago, in several other passages, bear his testimony to the amiable qualities of his rival. In Act 5. Scene 1. he speaks thus of him;

“———If Cassio do remain,

“He hath a daily beauty in his life,

“That makes me ugly.”

I will only add, that, however hard or far-fetch'd this allusion (whether Shakespeare's, or only mine) may seem to be, archbishop Sheldon had exactly the same conceit, when he made that singular compliment, as the writer calls it, [Biog. Britan. Art. TEMPLE] to a nephew of Sir William Temple, that “he had the “curse of the gospel, because all men spoke well of him.”

TYRWHITT.

Mr. Tyrwhitt's ingenious emendation is supported by a passage in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, where *good life* is used for a *fair character*: “Defend your reputation, or bid farewell to your *good life* for ever.” MALONE.

The poet, I think, does not appear to have meant Iago to be a Florentine, which has hitherto been inferred from the following passage in Act 3. Scene 1. where Cassio, speaking of Iago, says,

——— *I never knew*

A Florentine more kind and honest.

It is surely not uncommon for us to say in praise of a foreigner, that we never knew one of our own countrymen of a more friendly disposition. This, I believe, is all that Cassio meant by his observation.

From the already-mentioned passage in Act 3. Scene 3. it is certain (as Sir T. Hanmer has observed) that Iago was a Venetian:

“I know *our country disposition* well,

“In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks

“They dare not shew their husbands.”

Again,

Wherein the toged consuls can propose
As masterly as he: mere prattle, without practice,

Again,

“ Alas, my friend and my dear countryman

“ Roderigo, &c.”

“ Gra. What of Venice?”

“ Iago. Even he, &c.”

That Cassio, however, was *married*, is not sufficiently implied in the words, *a fellow almost damn'd in a fair wife*, since they may mean, according to Iago's licentious manner of expressing himself, no more than a man *very near being married*. This seems to have been the case in respect of Cassio, Act 4. Scene 1. Iago, speaking to him of Bianca, says—*Why the cry goes that you shall marry her*. Cassio acknowledges that such a report has been raised, and adds, *This is the monkey's own giving out: she is persuaded I will marry her out of her own love and self-flattery, not out of my promise*. Iago then, having heard this report before, very naturally circulates it in his present conversation with Roderigo. If Shakespeare, however, designed Bianca for a curtizan of Cyprus (where Cassio had not yet been, and had therefore never seen her) Iago cannot be supposed to allude to the report concerning his marriage with her, and consequently this part of my argument must fall to the ground.

Had Shakespeare, consistently with Iago's character, meant to make him say that Cassio was *actually damn'd in being married to a handsome woman*, he would have made him say it *outright*, and not have interposed the palliative *almost*. Whereas what he says at present amounts to no more than that (however near his marriage) he is not yet *completely damn'd*, because he is not *absolutely married*. The succeeding parts of Iago's conversation sufficiently evince, that the poet thought no mode of conception or expression too brutal for the character. STEEVENS.

Wherein the toged consuls—] So the generality of the impressions read; but the oldest quarto has it *toged*; the senators, that assisted the duke in council, in their proper *gowns*.—But let me explain why I have ventured to substitute *counsellors* in the room of *consuls*: the Venetian nobility constitute the great *council* of the senate, and are a part of the administration; and summoned to assist and counsel the Doge, who is prince of the senate. So that they may very properly be called *Counsellors*. Though the government of Venice was democratic at first, under *consuls* and *tribunes*; that form of power has been totally abrogated, since Doges have been elected. THEOBALD.

Wherein the toged consuls—] *Consuls*, for *counsellors*.

WARBURTON.

By

Is all his soldiership. But he, fir, had the election :
 And I,—of whom his eyes had seen the proof,
 At Rhodes, at Cyprus ; and on other grounds
 Christian and heathen,—² must be be-lee'd and calm'd
 By debtor and creditor, this counter-caster ³ ;
 He, in good time, must his lieutenant be,
 And I, fir, (bless the mark ⁴ !) his Moor-ship's ⁵ an-
 cient.

Rod. By heaven, I rather would have been his
 hangman.

Iago. But there's no remedy, 'tis the curse of ser-
 vice ;

Preferment goes ⁶ by letter, and affection,

By *toged* perhaps is meant *peaceable*, in opposition to the *warlike* qualifications of which he had been speaking. He might have formed the word, in allusion to the Latin adage—*Cedant arma togæ*. STEEVENS.

² — *must be led and calm'd*] So the old quarto. The first folio reads *be-lee'd*: but that spoils the measure. I read *let*, hindered.

WARBURTON.

Be-lee'd suits to *calm'd*, and the measure is not less perfect than in many other places. JOHNSON.

Be-lee'd and *be-calm'd* are terms of navigation.

I have been informed that one vessel is said to be in the *Lee* of another when it is so placed that the wind is intercepted from it. Iago's meaning therefore is, that Cassio had got the wind of him, and *be-calm'd* him from going on.

To *be-calm* (as I learn from Falconer's *Marine Dictionary*) is likewise to obstruct the current of the wind in its passage to a ship, by any contiguous object. STEEVENS.

³ — *this counter-caster* ;] It was anciently the practice to reckon up sums with *counters*. To this Shakespeare alludes again in *Cymbeline*, Act 5. “— it sums up thousands in a trice: you have no true debtor and creditor, but it: of what's past, is, and to come, the discharge. Your neck, fir, is pen, book, and *counters*,” &c. Again, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1529: “ I wyl cast my *counters*, or with *counters*, make all my reckenynge.” STEEVENS.

⁴ — *bless the mark* !] Kelly, in his comments on Scots proverbs, observes, that the Scots, when they compare person to person, use this exclamation. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *his Moorship's*—] The first quarto reads—*his worship's*—
 STEEVENS.

⁶ — *by letter*,—] *By recommendation* from powerful friends.

JOHNSON.

Not

Not by the old gradation, where each second
 Stood heir to the first. Now, sir, be judge yourself,
 Whether I in any just term am affin'd
 To love the Moor.

Rod. I would not follow him then.

Iago. O, sir, content you;
 I follow him to serve my turn upon him:
 We cannot all be masters, nor all masters
 Cannot be truly follow'd. You shall mark
 Many a duteous and knee-crooking knave,
 That, doting on his own obsequious bondage,
 Wears out his time, much like his master's ass,
 For nought but provender, and, when he's old, ca-
 thier'd;

Whip me such honest knaves: Others there are,
 Who, trimm'd in forms and visages of duty,
 Keep yet their hearts attending on themselves;
 And, throwing but shows of service on their lords,
 Do well thrive by them, and, when they have lin'd
 their coats,
 Do themselves homage: these fellows have some
 soul;
 And such a one do I profess myself.

⁷ Not by the old gradation.—] What is old gradation? He immediately explains gradation very properly. But the idea of old does not come into it:

—where each second
 Stood heir to the first.—

I read therefore,

Not (as of old) gradation—i. e. it does not go by gradation, as it did of old. WARBURTON.

Old gradation, is gradation established by ancient practice. Where is the difficulty? JOHNSON.

⁸ If I in any just term am affin'd] Affin'd is the reading of the third quarto and the first folio. The second quarto and all the modern editions have affin'd. The meaning is, Do I stand within any such terms of propinquity or relation to the Moor, as that it is my duty to love him? JOHNSON.

⁹ —honest knaves.—] Knave is here for servant, but with a mixture of its concept. JOHNSON.

For, fir,

It is as fure as you are Roderigo,
Were I the Moor, I would not be Iago:
In following him, I follow but myself;
Heaven is my judge, not I for love and duty,
But seeming fo, for my peculiar end:
For when my outward action doth demonstrate
The native act and figure of my heart
In compliment extern, 'tis not long after
But I will wear my heart upon my sleeve
For daws² to peck at: I am not what I am.

Rod. What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe³,
If he can carry't thus!

Iago. Call up her father,
Rouse him: make after him, poison his delight,
Proclaim him in the streets; incense her kinsmen,
And, though he in a fertile climate dwell,
Plague him with flies: though that his joy be joy,
Yet throw such changes of vexation on't,
As it may lose some colour.

Rod. Here is her father's house; I'll call aloud.

Iago. Do; with like timorous accent, and dire yell,
⁴ As when, by night and negligence, the fire
Is spy'd in populous cities.

Rod.

¹ *In compliment extern,*—] In that which I do only for an outward shew of civility. JOHNSON.

So, in Sir *W. D'Avenant's Albovine*, 1629:

“—that in sight *extern*

“A patriarch seems.” STEEVENS.

² *For daws*—] The first quarto reads, for *doves*— STEEVENS.

³ *What a full fortune does the thick-lips owe?*] *Full fortune* is, I believe, a complete piece of good fortune, as in another scene of this play a *full soldier* is put for a complete soldier. To *owe* is in ancient language, to *own*, to possess. STEEVENS.

⁴ *As when, by night and negligence, the fire*

Is spy'd in populous cities.] This is not sense, take it which way you will. If *night* and *negligence* relate to *spied*, it is absurd to say, *the fire was spied by negligence*. If *night* and *negligence* refer only to the time and occasion, it should then be *night*, and *through negligence*.

Rod. What ho! Brabantio! signior Brabantio, ho!

Iago. Awake! what, ho! Brabantio! thieves!
thieves!

Look to your house, your daughter, and your bags!
Thieves! thieves!

Brabantio, above, at a window.

Bra. What is the reason of this terrible summons?
What is the matter there?

Rod. Signior, is all your family within?

Iago. Are your doors lock'd?

Bra. Why? wherefore ask you this?

Iago. Sir, you are robb'd; for shame, put on your
gown;

Your heart is burst⁶, you have lost half your soul;

negligence. Otherwise the particle *by* would be made to signify *time* applied to one word, and *cause* applied to the other. We should read therefore, *Is spread*, by which all these faults are avoided. But what is of most weight, the similitude, thus emended, agrees best with the fact it is applied to. Had this notice been given to Brabantio before his daughter ran away and married, it might then indeed have been well enough compared to the alarm given of a fire just *spied*, as soon it as was begun. But being given after *the parties were bedded*, it was more fitly compared to a fire *spread by night and negligence*, so as not to be extinguished. WARBURTON.

The particle is used equivocally; the same liberty is taken by writers more correct.

The wonderful creature! a woman of reason!

Never grave out of pride, never gay out of season.

JOHNSON.

Dr. Warburton seems to have forgot that the marriage was not consummated till the parties arrived at Cyprus:

Come, my dear love!

The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue;

That profit's yet to come 'twixt me and you.

STEEVENS.

⁵ *Are your doors lock'd?*] The first quasto reads, *Are all doors lock'd?* STEEVENS.

⁶ — *is burst,*] i. e. broken. *Burst* for *broke* is used in our author's *King Henry IV.* P. 2: “—and then he *burst* his head for crowding among the marshal's men.” STEEVENS.

Even now, very now, an old black ram
Is topping your white ewe. Arise, arise;
Awake the snorting citizens with the bell,
Or else the devil will make a grandfire of you:
Arise, I say.

Bra. What, have you lost your wits?

Rod. Most reverend signior, do you know my voice?

Bra. Not I; What are you?

Rod. My name is—Roderigo.

Bra. The worse welcome:

I have charg'd thee, not to haunt about my doors:
In honest plainness thou hast heard me say,
My daughter is not for thee; and now, in madness,
Being full of supper, and distemp'ring draughts,
Upon malicious bravery, dost thou come
To start my quiet.

Rod. Sir, sir, sir,—

Bra. But thou must needs be sure,
My spirit, and my place, have in them power
To make this bitter to thee.

Rod. Patience, good sir.

Bra. What tell'st thou me of robbing? this is
Venice;
My house is not a grange⁷.

Rod.

⁷ *Grange.*] — this is Venice;

My house is not a *grange*.—

That is, “you are in a populous city, not in a lone house, where a robbery might easily be committed.” *Grange* is strictly and properly the farm of a monastery, where the religious reposed their corn. *Grangia* Lat. from *Granum*. But in Lincolnshire, and in other northern counties, they call every lone house, or farm which stands solitary, a *grange*. WARTON.

So, in T. Heywood's *English Traveller*, 1633:

“Who can blame him to absent himself from home,
“And make his father's house but as a *grange*, &c.?”

Again, in Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond*, 1599:

“—soon was I train'd from court
“To a solitary *grange*, &c.”

Again

Rod. Most grave Brabantio,
In simple and pure soul I come to you.

Iago. Sir, you are one of those, that will not serve God, if the devil bid you. Because we come to do you service, you think we are ruffians: You'll have your daughter cover'd with a Barbary horse; you'll have your nephews² neigh to you: you'll have courfers for cousins, and gennets for Germans³.

Bra. ¹ What profane wretch art thou?

Iago. I am one, sir, that comes to tell you, ² your daughter

Again, in *Measure for Measure*:

“ — at the moment *grange* resides this dejected Mariana.”

STEEVENS.

¹ — *your nephews neigh to you*:] *Nephew*, in this instance, has the power of the Latin word *nepos*, and signifies a grandson, or any lineal descendant, however remote. So, in Spenser:

“ And all the sons of these five brethren reign'd”

“ By due success, and all their *nephews* late,

“ Even thirce eleven descend the crown obtain'd”

Again, in Chapman's version of the *Odyssy*, B. 24. *Lucretius* says of *Telemachus* his *grandson*:

“ — to behold my son

“ And *nephew* close in such contention.”

Sir W. Dugdale very often employs the word in this sense; and without it, it would not be very easy to see how *Brabantio* could have *nephews* by the marriage of his *daughter*. Ben Jonson likewise uses it with the same meaning. The alliteration in this passage caused Shakespeare to have recourse to it. STEEVENS.

² — *gennets for Germans*.] A *gennet* is a Spanish horse. So, in Heywood's *Rape of Lucrece*, 1630:

“ — there lays within my tent

“ A winged *gennet*.” STEEVENS.

³ *What profane wretch art thou?*] That is, *what scotch of Greek and Italian languages?* In that sense Shakespeare often uses the word *profane*. JOHNSON.

It is so used by other writers of the same age:

“ How far off dwells the house foregone?

“ — You are a *profane* fellow, I trow.”

Again, in Ben Jonson's *Tale of a Tub*;

“ By the fly justice, and his drink *profane*.” STEEVENS.

² — *your daughter and the Moor are making the beast with two backs*.] This is an ancient proverbial expression in the French language, whence Shakespeare probably borrowed it; for in the

daughter and the Moor are now making the beast with two backs.

Bra. Thou art a villain.

Iago. You are—a senator.

Bra. This thou shalt answer; I know thee, Roderigo.

Rod. Sir, I will answer any thing. But I beseech you,

[³ If't be your pleasure, and most wise consent,
(As partly, I find, it is) that your fair daughter,
At ⁴ this odd even and dull watch o' the night,
Transported—with no worse nor better guard,
But with a knave of common hire, a gondalier,—
To the gross clasps of a lascivious Moor:—

Dictionnaire des Proverbes Françoises, par G. D. B. Brusselles, 1710, 12mo, I find the following article: “Faire la Bête a deux Dos” pour dire faire l’amour. PERCY.

In the *Dictionnaire Comique*, par le Roux, 1750, this phrase is more particularly explained under the article *Bete*. “Faire la bete a deux dos.—Maniere de parler qui signifie etre couché avec une femme; faire le deduit.”—“Et faisoient tous deux souvent ensemble la bete a deux dos joyeusement.”—Rabelais, liv. I. There was a translation of Rabelais published in the time of Shakespeare.

MALONE.

³ *If't be, &c.*] The lines printed in crotchets are not in the first edition, but in the folio of 1623. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *this odd even*—] The *even of night* is *midnight*, the time when night is divided into *even* parts. JOHNSON.

Odd is here ambiguously used, as it signifies *strange, uncouth, or unvonted*; and as it is opposed to *even*.

This expression, however explained, is very harsh; and the poet might have written—At this odd *seven*. *Seven* is an ancient word signifying *time*. So, in the old ballad of *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*:

“We may chance to meet with Robin Hood

“Here at some unset *seven*.”

Again, in the *Booke of the moste victorious Prynce Guy of Warwick*, bl. 1. no date:

“Nowe we be mette at unsette *seven*,

“Therefore we shall make us even.”

Again, in Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, late edit. ver. 1526:

“For al day meten men at unset *seven*” STEEVENS.

If this be known to you, and your allowance,
 We then have done you bold and saucy wrongs;
 But, if you know not this, my manners tell me,
 We have your wrong rebuke. Do not believe,
 That, from the sense of all civility,
 I thus would play and trifle with your reverence:
 Your daughter,—if you have not given her leave,—
 I say again, hath made a gross revolt;
 Tying her duty, beauty, wit, and fortunes,
 To an extravagant and wheeling stranger,
 Of here and every where: Straight satisfy yourself:]
 If she be in her chamber, or your house,
 Let loose on me the justice of the state
 For thus deluding you⁶.

Bra. Strike on the tinder, ho!
 Give me a taper;—call up all my people:—
 This accident is not unlike my dream,
 Belief of it oppresses me already:—
 Light, I say! light!

Iago. Farewel; for I must leave you:
 It seems not meet, nor wholesome to my place,
 To be produc'd⁷ (as, if I stay, I shall)
 Against the Moor: For, I do know, the state,—
 However this may gall him with⁸ some check,—
 Cannot with safety⁹ cast him; for he's embark'd
 With such loud reason to the Cyprus' war,
 (Which even now stands in act) that, for their souls,
 Another of his fathom they have not,

⁶ To an extravagant, &c.] The old copies read, In an extravagant, &c. Mr. Pope made this change, which seems to be necessary.

Extravagant is here used in its Latin signification, for *considering*. Thus in *Hamlet*: “—The *extravagant* and erring spirit.”

STEEVENS.

⁷ For thus deluding you.] The first quarto reads, For this delusion. STEEVENS.

⁸ To be produc'd] The folio reads, *produced*. STEEVENS.

⁹ — some check,] Some rebuke. JOHNSON.

⁹ — cast him:—] That is, *dismiss* him; *reject* him. We still say, a *cast* coat, and a *cast* serving-man. JOHNSON.

To lead their business: in which regard,
 Though I do hate him as I do hell pains,
 Yet, for necessity of present life,
 I must shew out a flag and sign of love,
 Which is indeed but sign. That you shall surely
 find him,
 Lead to the Sagittary the rais'd search;
 And there will I be with him. So, farewell. [*Exit.*]

Enter, below, Brabantio, and servants.

Bra. It is too true an evil: gone she is;
¹ And what's to come of my despised time,
 Is nought but bitterness.—Now, Roderigo,
 Where didst thou see her?—O unhappy girl!—
 With the Moor, say'st thou?—Who would be a
 father?—
 How didst thou know 'twas she?—² O, thou deceiv'st
 me
 Past thought!—What said she to you?—Get more
 tapers;
 Raise all my kindred.—Are they marry'd, think you?
Rod. Truly, I think, they are.

¹ *And what's to come of my despised time,]* Why despised time?
 We should read,
 despised time,

i. e. vexatious. WARBURTON.

Despised time, is time of no value; time in which

“ There's nothing serious in mortality,

“ The wine of life is drawn, and the mere dregs

“ Are left this vault to brag of.” *Macbeth.* JOHNSON.

Again, in *Romeo and Juliet*:

“ — expire the term

“ Of a *despised* life clos'd in my breast.” STEEVENS.

² — O, thou deceiv'st me

Past thought!— Thus the quarto 1622. The folio 1623,
 and the quartos 1630 and 1655 read,

O, she deceives me

Past thought.

I have chosen the apostrophe to his absent daughter, as the most
 spirited of the two readings. STEEVENS.

Bra.

Bra. O heaven!—How got she out?—O treason of the blood!—

Fathers, from hence trust not your daughters' minds
By what you see them act.—Are there not charms,
3 By which the property of youth and maidhood 4
May be abus'd? Have you not read, Roderigo,
Of some such thing?

Rod. Yes, sir; I have, indeed.

Bra. Call up my brother.—O, 'would you had had her!—

Some one way, some another.—Do you know
Where we may apprehend her and the Moor?

Rod. I think, I can discover him; if you please
To get good guard, and go along with me.

Bra. Pray you, lead on. 5 At every house I'll call;
I may command at most:—Get weapons, ho!
And raise some special officers of might 6.—
On, good Roderigo; I'll deserve your pains. [*Exeunt.*

S C E N E II.

Another street.

Enter Othello, Iago, and attendants.

Iago. Though in the trade of war I have slain men,
Yet do I hold it very stuff 7 o' the conscience

To

[3 *By which the property of youth and maidhood May be abus'd?—*] By which the faculties of a young virgin may be infatuated, and made subject to illusions and to false imagination:

“Wicked dreams abuse

“The curtain'd sleep.” *Macbeth.* JOHNSON.

4 — and maidhood—] The quartos read—and *manhood*—.

STEEVENS.

5 *Pray you, lead on.*] The first quarto reads, *Pray lead me on.*

STEEVENS.

6 — of might.] The first quarto reads—of *night.* STEEVENS.

7 — stuff o' the conscience] This expression to common readers appears harsh. *Stuff of the conscience* is, *substance*, or *essence* of the conscience.

To do no contriv'd murder ; I lack iniquity
Sometimes, to do me service : Nine or ten times
I had thought to have jerk'd him here under the ribs,

Oth. 'Tis better as it is.

Iago. Nay, but he prated,
And spoke such scurvy and provoking terms
Against your honour,
That, with the little godliness I have,
I did full hard forbear him. But, I pray you, sir,
Are you fast marry'd ? for, be sure of this,—
That the ^s magnifico is much belov'd ;
And hath, in his effect, a voice potential
As double as the duke's : he will divorce you ;

Or

conscience. *Stuff* is a word of great force in the Teutonic languages. The elements are called in Dutch, *Hoofd stoffen*, or *head stuffs*. JOHNSON.

Again, in *King Henry VIII* :

You're full of heavenly *stuff*, &c.

Frisch's *German Dictionary* gives this explanation of the word *stoff* :—materies ex qua aliquid fieri poterit. STEEVENS.

^s — the magnifico] “The chief men of Venice are by a peculiar name called *Magnifici*, i. e. *magnificoes*.” Minshew's *Dictionary*. See too *Volpone*. TOLLET.

⁹ *As double as the duke's* :—] Rymer seems to have had his eye on this passage, amongst others, where he talks so much of the impropriety and barbarity in the stile of this play. But it is an elegant Grecism. *As double*, signifies as *large*, as *extensive* ; for thus the Greeks use *δπλας*. *Diosc.* l. 2. c. 213. And in the same manner and construction, the Latins sometimes used *duplex*. And the old French writers say, *La plus double*. Dr. Bentley has been as severe on Milton for as elegant a Grecism :

Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove, lib. 9. ver. 396.

It is an imitation of the *Πάρθενον ἐκ θαλάμῳ* of Theocritus, for an *unmarried virgin*. WARBURTON.

This note has been much censured by Mr. Upton, who denies that the quotation is in *Dioscorides*, and disputes, not without reason, the interpretation of Theocritus.

All this learning, if it had even been what it endeavours to be thought, is, in this place, superfluous. There is no ground of supposing, that our author copied or knew the Greek phrase ; nor does it follow, that, because a word has two senses in one language, the word which in another answers to one sense, should answer

Or put upon you what restraint and grievance
The law (with all his might, to enforce it on)
Will give him cable.

Osb. Let him do his spite:

My services, which I have done the signiory,
Shall out-tongue his complaints. 'Tis yet to know,
(Which, when I know that boasting is an honour,
I shall promulgate) I fetch my life and being
From ¹ men of royal siege; ² and my demerits

May

swer to both. *Maurus*, in Latin, signifies both a *band* and a *troop of soldiers*, but we cannot say, that *the captain marched at the head of his hand*; or, that *he laid his troop upon his sword*. It is not always in books that the meaning is to be sought of this writer, who was much more acquainted with naked reason and with living manners.

Double has here its natural sense. The president of every deliberative assembly has a *double* voice. In our courts, the chief justice and one of the inferior judges prevail over the other two, because the chief justice has a *double* voice.

Brabantio had, *in his effect*, though not by law, yet by weight and influence, a voice not *actual* and formal, but *potential* and operative, as *double*, that is, a voice that when a question was suspended, would turn the balance as effectually as *the duke's*. *Potential* is used in the sense of science; a *causic* is called *potential* fire. JOHNSON.

I believe here is a mistake. The chief justice and one of the inferior judges do *not* prevail over the other two. The lord mayor in the court of aldermen has a double voice. TOLLET.

¹ — *men of royal siege*;—] Men who have sat upon royal thrones. The quarto has,

— *men of royal height*.

Siege is used for *seat* by other authors. So, in Stowe's *Chronicle*, p. 575: "— there was set up a throne or *sege* royall for the king."

Again, in Greene's *Never too late*, 1616:

"Thy wonted *sege* of honour safely climb."

Again, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, b. 2. c. 2:

"From lofty *sege* began these words aloud to sound."

Again, b. 2. c. 7:

"A stately *sege* of soveraigne majesty." STEEVENS.

² — *and my demerits*] *Demerits* has the same meaning in our author, and many others of that age, as *merits*:

"Opinion that so sticks on Martius, may

"Of his *demerits* rob Cominius." *Coriolanus*.

So,

5 May speak, unbonnetted, to as proud a fortune
 As this that I have reach'd : For know, Iago,
 But that I love the gentle Desdemona,
 I would not my ⁴ unhoufed free condition
 Put into circumscription and confine
 5 For the sea's worth. But, look ! what lights come
 yonder ?

Enter

So, in Shirley's *Humorous Courtier*, 1640 :

“ — we have heard so much of your *demerits*,

“ That 'twere injustice not to cherish you.”

Again, in *Dugdale's Warwickshire*, p. 850. edit. 1730 : “ Henry Conway, esq. for his singular *demerits* received the dignity of knighthood.”

Mereo and *demereo* had the same meaning in the Roman language. STEEVENS.

³ — *Speak*, unbonnetted, —] Thus all the copies read. It should be *unbonnetting*, i. e. without putting off the bonnet. POPE.

——— and my *demerits*

May speak unbonnetted to as proud a fortune

As this that I have reach'd. —] Thus all the copies read this passage. But, to speak *unbonnetted*, is to speak *with the cap off*, which is directly opposite to the poet's meaning. *Othello* means to say, that his birth and services set him upon such a rank, that he may speak to a senator of Venice with his hat on ; i. e. without shewing any marks of deference or inequality. I therefore am inclined to think Shakespeare wrote :

May speak, and bonnetted, &c. THEOBALD.

I do not see the propriety of Mr. Pope's emendation, though adopted by Dr. Warburton. *Unbonnetting* may as well be, *not putting on*, as *not putting off*, the bonnet. Hanmer reads *even bonnetted*. JOHNSON.

Bonnetter (says Cotgrave) is to *put off one's cap*. So, in *Coriolanus* : “ Those who are supple and courteous to the people, *bonnetted* without any further deed to heave them at all into their estimation.” *Unbonnetted* may therefore signify, *without taking the cap off*. We might, I think, venture to read *imbonnetted*. It is common with Shakespeare to make or use words compounded in the same manner. Such are *impawn*, *impaint*, *impale*, and *immask*. Of all the readings hitherto proposed, that of Theobald is, I think, the best. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *unhoufed* —] Free from *domestic* cares. A thought natural to an adventurer. JOHNSON.

⁵ *For the sea's worth.*] I would not marry her, though she were as rich as the Adriatic, which the Doge annually marries.

JOHNSON.

I believe

Enter Cassio, with others.

Iago. These are the raised father, and his friends :
You were best go in.

Oth. Not I: I must be found ;
My parts, my title, and my perfect soul,
Shall manifest me rightly. Is it they ?

Iago. By Janus, I think no.

Oth. The servants of the duke, and my lieutenant.
The goodness of the night upon you, friends !
What is the news ?

Cas. The duke does greet you, general ;
And he requires your haste, post-haste appearance,
Even on the instant.

Oth. What is the matter, think you ?

Cas. Something from Cyprus, as I may divine ;
It is a business of some heat : the gallies
Have sent a dozen sequent messengers ⁶
This very night, at one another's heels ;
And many of the ⁷ consuls, rais'd, and met,

Are

I believe the common and obvious meaning is the true one.

The same words occur in Sir W. D'Avenant's *Cruel Brother*,
1630: " — he would not lose that privilege

" *For the sea's worth.*"

Perhaps the phrase is proverbial.

Pliny the naturalist has a chapter on *the riches of the sea*.
Again, in the *Winter's Tale*:

— for all the sun sees, or

The close earth wombs, or *the profound sea hides*

In unknown fathoms, &c.

Again, in *King Henry V.* Act 1 :

— as rich with praise,

As is the ouze, and bottom of the sea,

With sunken wreck, and sumless treasures. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *sequent messengers*] The first quarto reads—*frequent* mes-
sengers. STEEVENS.

⁷ — *consuls*,] Hanmer reads, *council*. Theobald would have us
read *counsellors*. Venice was originally governed by *consuls*: and
consuls seems to have been commonly used for *counsellors*, as before
in this play. In *Abdion's Triumph*, a masque, 1631, the emperor

Are at the duke's already: You have been hotly
call'd for;

When, being not at your lodging to be found,
* The senate hath sent about three several quests,
To search you out.

Oth. 'Tis well I am found by you.
I will but spend a word here in the house,
And go with you.

[*Exit.*

Caf. Ancient, what makes he here?

Iago. 'Faith, he to-night hath boarded⁹ a land-
carrack;

If it prove lawful prize, he's made for ever.

Caf. I do not understand.

Iago. He's married.

Caf. To who¹?

Albanact is said to be attended by fourteen consuls:—again, the habits
of the consuls were after the same manner. Geoffery of Monmouth,
and Matthew Paris after him, call both dukes and earls, consuls.

STEEVENS.

* *The senate hath sent out—*] The early quartos, and all the
modern editors, have,

The senate sent above three several quests.

The folio,

The senate hath sent about, &c. that is, about the city. I have
adopted the reading of the folio. JOHNSON.

Quests are, on this occasion, searches. So, in Heywood's *Brazen
Age*, 1613:

“Now, if in all his *quests*, he be withheld.”— STEEVENS.

⁹ — a land-carrack;— A carrack is a ship of great bulk, and
commonly of great value; perhaps what we now call a galleon.

JOHNSON.

So, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Coxcomb*:

“— they'll be freighted;

“They're made like carracks, all for strength and stowage.”

STEEVENS.

¹ *To who?*] It is somewhat singular that Cassio should ask this
question. In the 3d Scene of the 3d Act, *Iago* says:

Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my lady,
Know of your love?

Oth. From first to last.

He who was acquainted with the object courted by his friend,
could have little reason for doubting to whom he would be mar-
ried. STEEVENS.

Re-enters

Re-enter Othello.

Iago. Marry, to—Come, captain, will you go?

Oth. Have with you².

Cas. Here comes another troop to seek for you.

Enter Brabantio, Roderigo, with Officers.

Iago. It is Brabantio :—general, ³ be advis'd ;
He comes to bad intent.

Oth. Hola ! stand there !

Rod. Signior, it is the Moor.

Bra. Down with him, thief !

[They draw on both sides.]

Iago. You, Roderigo ! come, sir, I am for you.

Oth. Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will
rust them.—

Good signior, you shall more command with years,
Than with your weapons.

Bra. O thou foul thief ! where hast thou stow'd
my daughter ?

Damn'd as thou art, thou hast enchanted her :

For I'll refer me to all things of sense,

If she in chains of magic were not bound,

Whether a maid—so tender, fair, and happy,

So opposite to marriage, that she shun'd

⁴ The wealthy curled darlings of our nation,—

Would

² *Have with you.*] This expression denotes readiness. So, in the ancient *Interlude of Nature*, bl. l. no date :

“ And saw that Glotony wold nedys be gone ;

“ *Have with thee*, Glotony, quoth he anon,

“ For I must go wyth thee.” STEEVENS.

³ — *be advis'd* ;] That is, be cool ; be cautious ; be discreet.

JOHNSON.

⁴ *The wealthy curled darlings of our nation.*] *Curled* is elegantly and ostentatiously dressed. He had not the hair particularly in his thoughts. JOHNSON.

On another occasion Shakespeare employs the same expression, and evidently alludes to *the hair*.

If the first meet the *curled* Antony, &c.

Sir

Would ever have, to incur a general mock,
 Run from her guardage to the sooty bosom
 Of such a thing as thou; to fear^s, not to delight:
 [6 Judge me the world, if 'tis not gross in sense,
 That thou hast practis'd on her with foul charms;
 7 Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,
 That

Sir *W. D'Avenant* uses the same expression in his *Just Italian*; 1630:

“The curl'd and filken nobles of the town.”

Again,

“Such as the curled youth of Italy.”

I believe Shakespeare has the same meaning in the present instance.

STEEVENS:

⁵ — to fear,] *i. e.* to terrify. So, in *King Henry VI*:

For Warwick was a bug that fear'd us all. STEEVENS.

⁶ Judge me the world, &c.] The lines following in crotchets are not in the first edition. POPE.

⁷ Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,

That weaken motion:] Brabantio is here accusing Othello of having used some foul play, and intoxicated Desdemona by drugs and potions to win her over to his love. But why, *drugs* to weaken motion? How then could she have run away with him voluntarily from her father's house? Had she been averse to choosing Othello, though he had given her medicines that took away the use of her limbs, might she not still have retained her senses, and opposed the marriage? Her father, it is evident, from several of his speeches, is positive, that she must have been *abused* in her *rational* faculties; or she could not have made so preposterous a choice, as to wed with a Moor, a Black, and refuse the finest young gentlemen in Venice. What then have we to do with her *motion* being weakened? If I understand any thing of the poet's meaning here, I cannot but think he must have wrote:

Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs, or minerals,

That weaken motion.

i. e. her apprehension, right conception and idea of things, understanding, judgment, &c. THEOBALD.

Hanmer reads with equal probability:

That waken motion.—— JOHNSON:

Motion in a subsequent scene of this play is used in the very sense in which Hanmer would employ it: “But we have reason to cool our raging *motions*, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts.”

STEEVENS.

Again, in *Cymbeline*:

“— For there's no *motion*

“That tends to vice in man, but I affirm

“It is the woman's part.”

Again;

That weaken motion:—I'll have it disputed on;
 'Tis probable, and palpable to thinking.
 I therefore apprehend and do attach thee,]
 For an abuser^s of the world, a practiser
 Of arts inhibited and out of warrant:—
 Lay hold upon him; if he do resist,
 Subdue him at his peril.

Otb. Hold your hands,
 Both you of my inclining, and the rest:
 Were it my cue to fight, I should have known it
 Without a prompter.—Where will you that I go
 To answer this your charge?

Bra. To prison; 'till fit time
 Of law, and course of direct session,
 Call thee to answer.

Otb. What if I do obey?
 How may the duke be therewith satisfied;
 Whose messengers are here about my side,
 Upon some present business of the state,

Again, in *A Mad World my Masters*, by Middleton, 1640:

“ And in myself sooth up adulterous motions,
 “ And such an appetite as I know damns me.”

Again, in *A Warning for faire Women*, 1599:

“ Pray God that captain Browne hath not been mov'd.”
 “ By some ill motion.”

Drugs or love-powders, as they are sometimes called, may operate as enflamers of the blood—may *weaken* motion. But I believe no drugs have yet been found out that can fascinate the understanding or affections; that can *weaken* the judgment without entirely subverting it. Opiates, or intoxicating potions may set the senses to sleep, but cannot distort or pervert the intellects but by destroying them for a time. However, it may be said, that *Brabantio* believed in the efficacy of such drugs, and therefore might with propriety talk of their *weakening the understanding*.—The reading proposed by Theobald is, it must be acknowledged, strongly supported by a passage in *King Lear*, Act 2. Sc. 4:

— His *notion weakens*, his discernings
 Are lethargy'd.” MALONE.

^s For an abuser, &c.] The first quarto reads, *Such an abuser*, &c. STEEVENS.

To bring⁹ me to him?

Off. 'Tis true, most worthy signior,
The duke's in council; and your noble self,
I am sure, is sent for.

Bra. How! the duke in council!
In this time of the night!—Bring him away:
Mine's not an idle cause: the duke himself,
Or any of my brothers of the state,
Cannot but feel this wrong, as 'twere their own:
For if such actions may have passage free,
¹ Bond-slaves, and pagans, shall our statesmen be.

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E III.

A Council-chamber.

Duke, and Senators, sitting.

Duke. ² There is no composition in these news,
That gives them credit.

⁹ *To bring—*] The quartos read—*To bear—* STEEVENS.

¹ *Bond-slaves, and pagans,—*] Mr. Theobald alters *pagans* to *pageants* for this reason, "That pagans are as strict and moral all the world over, as the most regular Christians, in the preservation of private property." But what then? The speaker had not this high opinion of pagan morality, as is plain from hence, that this important discovery, so much to the honour of paganism, was first made by our editor. WARBURTON.

The meaning of these expressions of Brabantio seems to have been mistaken. I believe the morality of either christians or pagans was not in the author's thoughts. He alludes to the common condition of all blacks, who come from their own country, both *slaves* and *pagans*; and uses the words in contempt of Othello and his complexion.—If this Moor is now suffered to escape with impunity, it will be such an encouragement to his black countrymen, that we may expect to see all the first offices of our state filled up by the *pagans* and *bond-slaves* of Africa. STEEVENS.

² *There is no composition—*] *Composition, for consistency, concordancy.* WARBURTON.

I Sen,

1 *Sen.* Indeed, they are disproportion'd;
My letters say, a hundred and seven gallies.

Duke. And mine, a hundred and forty.

2 *Sen.* And mine, two hundred:
But though they jump not on a just account,
(³ As in these cases where they aim reports,
'Tis oft with difference) yet do they all confirm
A Turkish fleet, and bearing up to Cyprus.

Duke. Nay, it is possible enough to judgment;
I do not so secure me in the error,
But the main article I do approve
In fearful sense.

Sailor within.] What ho! what ho! what ho!

Enter an Officer, with a Sailor.

Offi. A messenger from the gallies.

Duke. Now? the business?

Sail. The Turkish preparation makes for Rhodes;
So was I bid report here to the state,
By signior Angelo⁴.

Duke. How say you by this change?

³ *As in those cases where they aim reports,*] These Venetians seem to have had a very odd sort of persons in employment, who did all by hazard, as to *what*, and *how*, they should report; for this is the sense of man's *aiming reports*. The true reading, without question, is,

———— *where the aim reports.*

i. e. *where there is no better ground for information than conjecture*: which not only improves the sense, but, by changing the verb into a noun, and the noun into a verb, mends the expression.

WARBURTON.

The folio has,

———— *the aim reports.*

But, *they aim reports*, has a sense sufficiently easy and commodious. Where men *report* not by certain knowledge, but by *aim* and conjecture. JOHNSON.

To *aim* is to conjecture. So, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

“But fearing lest my jealous *aim* might err.” STEEVENS.

⁴ *By Signior Angelo.*] This hemistich is wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

1 *Sen.* This cannot be,
 5 By no assay of reason; 'tis a pageant,
 To keep us in false gaze: When we consider
 The importancy of Cyprus to the Turk;
 And let ourselves again but understand,
 That, as it more concerns the Turk than Rhodes,
 So may he with more ⁶ facile question bear it,
 7 For that it stands not in such ⁸ warlike brace,
 But altogether lacks the abilities
 That Rhodes is dress'd in:—if we make thought of
 this,
 We must not think, the Turk is so unskilful,
 To leave that latest, which concerns him first;
 Neglecting an attempt of ease, and gain,
 To wake, and wage ⁹, a danger profitless.
Duke. Nay, in all confidence, he's not for Rhodes.
Offi. Here is more news.

Enter a Messenger.

Mes. The Ottomites, reverend and gracious,
 Steering with due course toward the isle of Rhodes,
 Have there injointed them with an after fleet.

1 *Sen.* Ay, so I thought:—How many, as you
 guess?

⁵ *By no assay of reason.*—] Bring it to the *test*, examine it by reason as we examine metals by the *assay*, it will be found counterfeit by all trials. JOHNSON.

⁶ —*facile question*—] *Question* is for the *act* of *jeeking*. With more *easy* endeavour. JOHNSON.

⁷ *For that it stands not, &c.*] The seven following lines are added since the first edition. POPE.

⁸ —*warlike brace*,] State of defence. To arm was called to *brace* on the armour. JOHNSON.

⁹ *To wake, and wage, a danger profitless.*] To *wage* here, as in many other places in Shakespeare, signifies to fight, to combat. Thus, in *King Lear*:

To *wage* against the enmity of the air.

It took its rise from the more common expression, to *wage war*.

STEEVENS.

^{*} *Ay, so, &c.*] This line is not in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

Mes.

Mes. Of thirty sail; and now they do re-flem²
Their backward course, bearing with frank appear-
ance

Their purposes toward Cyprus. Signior Montano,
Your trusty and most valiant servitor,
With his free duty, recommends you thus,
³ And prays you to believe him.

Duke. 'Tis certain then for Cyprus.—
Marcus Lucchesé, is not he in town?

I Sen. He's now in Florence.

Duke. Write from us; wish him, post, post-haste:
dispatch.

I Sen. Here comes Brabantio, and the valiant Moor.

Enter Brabantio, Othello, Iago, Roderigo, and Officers.

Duke. Valiant Othello, we must straight employ
you

Against the general enemy Ottoman.—

I did not see you; welcome, gentle signior; [*To Brab.*
We lack'd your counsel and your help to-night.

Bra. So did I yours: Good your grace, pardon me;
Neither my place, nor aught I heard of business,
Hath rais'd me from my bed; nor doth the ⁴ general
care

Take hold⁵ on me; for my particular grief

² — *they do re-flem*] The quartos mean to read *re-flem*, though in the first of them the word is mispelt. STEEVENS.

³ *And prays you to believe him.*] The late learned and ingenious Mr. Thomas Clark, of Lincoln's Inn, read the passage thus:

And prays you to relieve him.

But the present reading may stand. *He intreats you not to doubt the truth of this intelligence.* JOHNSON.

⁴ — *general care*] The word *care*, which encumbers the verse, was probably added by the players. Shakespeare uses *the general* as a substantive, though, I think, not in this sense. JOHNSON.

⁵ *Take hold* —] The first quarto reads, *Take any hold*—

Is of so flood-gate and o'er-bearing nature,
That it engluts and swallows other sorrows,
And yet is still itself.

Duke. Why, what's the matter?

Bra. My daughter! O, my daughter!

Sen. Dead?

Bra. Ay, to me;

She is abus'd, stol'n from me, and corrupted
By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks;
For nature so preposterously to err,
Being not deficient, blind, or lame of sense,
Sans witchcraft could not——

Duke. Whoe'er he be, that, in this foul proceeding,
Hath thus beguil'd your daughter of herself,
And you of her, the bloody book of law
You shall yourself read in the bitter letter,
After your own sense; yea, though our proper son

⁶ *By spells and medicines bought of mountebanks:*] Rymer has ridiculed this circumstance as unbecoming (both for its weakness and superstition) the gravity of the accuser, and the dignity of the tribunal; but his criticism only exposes his own ignorance. The circumstance was not only exactly in character, but urged with the greatest address, as the thing chiefly to be insisted on. For, by the Venetian law, the giving love-potions was very criminal, as Shakespeare without question well understood. Thus the law, *Delli maleficii et barbarie*, cap. 17. of the Code, intitled, “Della promission del maleficio. Statuimo etiamdio, che se alcun homo, o femina harra fatto maleficii, iquali se dimandano vulgargmente *amatorie*, o veramente alcuni altri maleficii, che alcun homo o femina se haveffon in odio, sia frusta et bollado, et che hara confegliado patisca simile pena.” And therefore in the preceding scene Brabantio calls them,

—— *Arts inhibited, and out of warrant.* WARBURTON.

Though I believe Shakespeare knew no more of this Venetian law than I do, yet he was well acquainted with the edicts of that sapient prince king James the first, against

—— practisers

Of arts inhibited and out of warrant. STEEVENS.

⁷ *Being not, &c.*] This line is wanting in the first quarto.

STEEVENS

Stood

⁸ Stood in your action.

Bra. Humbly I thank your grace.

Here is the man, this Moor; whom now, it seems,
Your special mandate, for the state affairs,
Hath hither brought.

All. We are very sorry for it.

Duke. What, in your own part, can you say to this?
[To Othello.]

Bra. Nothing, but this is so.

Oth. Most potent, grave, and reverend signiors,
My very noble and approv'd good masters,—
That I have ta'en away this old man's daughter,
It is most true; true, I have married her;
⁹ The very head and front of my offending
Hath this extent, no more. Rude am I in my speech,
¹ And little bless'd with the set phrase of peace;
For since these arms of mine had seven years' pith,
² Till now, some nine moons wasted, they have us'd
³ Their dearest action in the tented field;
And little of this great world can I speak,
More than pertains to feats of broil and battle;
And therefore little shall I grace my cause,
In speaking for myself: Yet, by your gracious pa-
tience,

⁸ *Stood in your action.*] Were the man exposed to your charge or accusation. JOHNSON.

⁹ *The very head and front of my offending*] The main, the whole, unextenuated. JOHNSON.

¹ *And little bless'd with the soft phrase of peace;*] This apology, if addressed to his mistress, had been well expressed. But what he wanted, in speaking before a Venetian senate, was not the soft blandishments of speech, but the art and method of masculine eloquence. The old quarto reads it, therefore, as I am persuaded Shakespeare wrote:

— the set phrase of peace. WARBURTON.

Soft is the reading of the folio. JOHNSON.

² *Their dearest action*—] That is *dear*, for which much is paid, whether money or labour; *dear action*, is action performed at great expence, either of ease or safety. JOHNSON.

I will a round unvarnish'd³ tale deliver
 Of my whole course of love; what drugs, what
 charms,
 What conjuration, and what mighty magic,
 (For such proceeding I am charg'd withal)
 I won his daughter with.

Bra. A maiden never bold;
 Of spirit so still and quiet, that her motion
 4 Blush'd at herself; And she,—in spite of nature;
 Of years, of country, credit, every thing,—
 To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on?
 It is a judgment maim'd, and most imperfect,
 That will confess—perfection so could err
 Against all rules of nature; and must be driven
 To find out practices of cunning hell,
 Why this should be. I therefore vouch again,
 That with some mixtures powerful o'er the blood,
 Or with some dram conjur'd to this effect,
 He wrought upon her.

Duke. To vouch⁵ this, is no proof;
 Without more certain and more⁶ overt test,
 Than these⁷ thin habits, and poor likelihoods
 Of modern seeming, do prefer against him.

³ —*unvarnish'd*—] The second quarto reads—*unravish'd*—

STEEVENS.

⁴ *Blush'd at herself*;—] Mr. Pope reads—*at itself*, but without necessity. Shakespeare, like other writers of his age, frequently uses the *personal*, instead of the *neutral* pronoun. STEEVENS.

⁵ *To vouch*, &c.] The first folio unites this speech with the preceding one of *Brabantio*; and instead of *certain* reads *wider*.

STEEVENS.

⁶ —*overt test*,] Open proofs, external evidence. JOHNSON.

⁷ —*thin habits*,—

Of modern seeming,—] Weak shew of slight appearance.

JOHNSON.

The first quarto reads:

These are thin habits, and poore likelyhoods

Of modern *seemings* you prefer against him. STEEVENS.

I Sen. But, Othello, speak;—

Did you by indirect and forced courses
Subdue and poison this young maid's affections?
Or came it by request, and such fair question
As soul to soul affordeth?

Oth. I do beseech you,
Send for the lady to the Sagittary³,
And let her speak of me before her father:
If you do find me foul in her report,
The trust, the office, I do hold of you²,
Not only take away, but let your sentence
Even fall upon my life.

Duke. Fetch Desdemona hither.

[*Exeunt Two or Three.*]

Oth. Ancient, conduct them; you best know the
place.— [Exit Iago.

And, 'till she come, as truly¹ as to heaven
I do confess² the vices of my blood,
So justly to your grave ears I'll present
How did I thrive in this fair lady's love,
And she in mine.

Duke. Say it, Othello.

Oth. Her father lov'd me; oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life,
From year to year, the battles, sieges, fortunes,
That I have pass'd:
I ran it through, even from my boyish days,
To the very moment that he bade me tell it.
Wherein I ipake of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents, by flood, and field;
Of hair-breadth scapes i' the imminent deadly breach;

¹ — *the Sagittary,*] Means the sign of the fictitious creature so called, *i. e.* an animal compounded of man and horse, and armed with a bow and quiver. STEEVENS.

² *The trust, &c.*] This line is wanting in the first quarto.

STEEVENS.

³ — *as truly*] The first quarto reads, *as faithful.* STEEVENS.

⁴ *I do confess, &c.*] This line is omitted in the first quarto.

STEEVENS.

Of

Of being taken by the insolent foe,
 And sold to slavery; of my redemption thence;
 3 And portance in my travel's history:
 4 Wherein of antres vast, and deserts idle,

Rough

3 *And portance, &c.*] I have restored,
And with it all my travel's history:
 From the old edition. It is in the rest,
And portance in my travel's history.

Rymer, in his criticism on this play, has changed it to *portants*, instead of *portance*. POPE.

Mr. Pope has restored a line, to which there is little objection, but which has no force. I believe *portance* was the author's word in some revised copy. I read thus,

*Of being——sold
 To slavery, of my redemption thence,
 And portance in't; my travel's history.*

My redemption from slavery, and behaviour in it. JOHNSON
Portance is a word already used in *Coriolanus*:

— took from you

The apprehension of his present *portance*,
 Which most gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion, &c.
 Again, in the comedy of *Albumazar*, 1610:

“What a grave *portance*!”

Spenser, in the 3d Canto of the 2d Book of the *Faery Queen*, likewise uses it:

“But for in court gay *portance* he perceiv'd.”

Again, *ibid.*

“And by her stately *portance*, borne of heavenly birth.”

Again, b. 2. c. 7:

“His *portance* terrible, and stature tall.” STEEVENS.

4 *Wherein of antres vast, &c.*] Discourses of this nature made the subject of the politest conversations, when voyages into, and discoveries of, the new world were all in vogue. So when the Bastard Faulconbridge, in *King John*, describes the behaviour of upstart greatness, he makes one of the essential circumstances of it to be this kind of table-talk. The fashion then running altogether in this way, it is no wonder a young lady of quality should be struck with the history of an adventurer. So that Rymer, who professedly ridicules this whole circumstance, and the nobler author of the *Characteristics*, who more obliquely sneers it, only expose their own ignorance. WARBURTON.

Whoever ridicules this account of the progress of love, shews his ignorance, not only of history, but of nature and manners. It is no wonder that, in any age, or in any nation, a lady, re-
 cluse,

Rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads touch heaven,

It was my hint to speak, such was the process;

close, timorous, and delicate, should desire to hear of events and scenes which she could never see, and should admire the man who had endured dangers, and performed actions, which, however great, were yet magnified by her timidity. JOHNSON.

[Wherein of *autres* *vast*, and *deserts* *idle*, &c.] Thus it is in all the old editions; but Mr. Pope has thought fit to change the epithet. *Deserts* *idle*; in the former editions (says he) doubtless, a corruption from *wild*.—But he must pardon me, if I do not concur in thinking this so doubtless. I do not know whether Mr. Pope has observed it, but I know that Shakespeare, especially in descriptions, is fond of using the more uncommon word in a poetic latitude. And *idle*, in several other passages, he employs in these acceptations, *wild*, *useless*, *uncultivated*, &c. THEOBALD.

Every mind is liable to absence and inadvertency, else Pope could never have rejected a word so poetically beautiful. *Idle* is an epithet used to express the infertility of the chaotic state, in the Saxon translation of the Pentateuch. JOHNSON.

So, in the *Comedy of Errors*:

Usurping ivy, briar or *idle* moss. STEEVENS.

The same epithet is confirmed by another passage in this act of *Othello*: “— Either have it steril with *idleness*, or manured with industry.” MALONE.

Mr. Pope might have found the epithet *wild* in all the three last folios. STEEVENS.

— *autres*—] French, grottos. POPE.

Rather *caves* and *dens*. JOHNSON.

It was my hint to speak,—] This implies it as done by a trap laid for her: but the old quarto reads *best*, i. e. use, custom.

WARBURTON.

Hint is not *use* in Shakespeare, nor, I believe, in any other author. *Hint*, or *cue*, is commonly used for occasion of speech, which is explained by, *such was the process*, that is, the course of the tale required it. If *best* be restored, it may be explained by *handle*. I had a *handle*, or *opportunity*, to speak of cannibals.

JOHNSON.

Hint occurs at the conclusion of the 4th Act of *Measure for Measure*. It is derived from the Saxon *Hentax*, and means, to *take hold of*, to *seize*.

“ — the gravest citizens

“ Have *hent* the gates.”

But in the very next page *Othello* says:

— Upon this *hint* I spake.

It is certain therefore that change is unnecessary. STEEVENS.

And

And of the Cannibals that each other eat,
The Anthropophagi, and ⁶ men whose heads
Do grow beneath their shoulders. These things to
hear,

Would Desdemona seriously incline:
But still the house affairs would draw her thence;
Which ever as she could with haste dispatch,
She'd come again, and with a greedy ear ⁷
Devour up my discourse: Which I observing,
Took once a pliant hour; and found good means
To draw from her a prayer of earnest heart,
That I would all my pilgrimage dilate,
Whereof by parcels she had something heard,
⁸ But not intently: I did consent;

And

⁶ — men whose heads

Do grow beneath their shoulders.—] Of these men there is an account in the interpolated travels of Mandeville, a book of that time. JOHNSON.

The *Cannibals* and *Anthropophagi* were known to an English audience before Shakespeare introduced them. In the *History of Orlando Furioso*, play'd for the entertainment of Queen Elizabeth, they are mentioned in the very first scene; and Raleigh speaks of people whose heads appear *not above* their shoulders.

Again, in the *Tragedy of Locrine*, 1595:

“ Or where the bloody *Anthropophagi*,

“ With greedy jaws devour the wandering wights.”

The poet might likewise have read of them in Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* translated by P. Holland, 1601, and in Stowe's *Chronicle*.

STEEVENS.

⁷ — and with a greedy ear

Devour up my discourse:] So, in Marlowe's *Lust's Dominion*:

“ Hang both your greedy ears upon my lips;

“ Let them devour my speech.” MALONE.

⁸ But not intently:—] Thus the eldest quarto. The folio reads, *instinctively*. Perhaps it should be, *distinctively*.

The old word, however, may stand. *Intention* and *attention* were once synonymous. So, in a play called *the Isle of Gulls*, 1633: “ Grace! at sitting down they cannot *intend* it for hunger,” i. e. *attend* to it. Desdemona, who was often called out of the room on the score of house-affairs, could not have heard *Othello's* tale *intently*, i. e. with *attention to all its parts*.

Again,

And often did beguile her of her tears,
 When I did speak of some distressful stroke
 That my youth suffer'd. My story being done,
 She gave me for my pains a world of sighs:
 She swore,—In faith, 'twas strange, 'twas passing
 strange;
 'Twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful:
 She wish'd, she had not heard it; yet she wish'd
 That heaven had made her such a man: she thank'd
 me;
 And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her,
 I should but teach him how to tell my story,
 And that would woo her. Upon this hint, I spake:
 She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd;
 And I lov'd her, that she did pity them.
 This only is the witchcraft I have us'd;
 Here comes the lady, let her witness it.

Enter Desdemona, Iago, and Attendants.

Duke. I think, this tale would win my daughter
 too.—

Good Brabantio,
 Take up this mangled matter at the best:
 Men do their broken weapons rather use,

Again, in Chapman's Version of the Iliad. B. 6:

“Hector *intends* his brother's will; but first, &c.”

Again in the tenth Book; “—all with *intensive* ear

“Converted to the enemies' tents—”

Again, in the eighth Book of the Odyssey:

“For our ships know th' expressed minds of men;

“And will so most *intensively* retaine

“Their scopes appointed, that they never erre.”

STEEVENS.

* ——— a world of sighs:] It was *kisses* in the later editions:
 but this is evidently the true reading. The lady had been for-
 ward indeed to give him a world of kisses upon the bare recital of
 his story; nor does it agree with the following lines. POPE.

Than

Than their bare hands.

Bra. I pray you, hear her speak ;
If she confess, that she was half the wooer,
Destruction on my head ¹, if my bad blame
Light on the man !—Come hither, gentle mistress ;
Do you perceive in all this noble company,
Where most you owe obedience ?

Des. My noble father,
I do perceive here a divided duty :
To you I am bound for life, and education ;
My life, and education, both do learn me
How to respect you ; you are the lord of duty ²,
I am hitherto your daughter : But here's my husband ;
And so much duty as my mother shew'd
To you, preferring you before her father,
So much I challenge that I may profess
Due to the Moor, my lord.

Bra. God be with you !—I have done :—
Please it your grace, on to the state affairs ;
I had rather to adopt a child, than get it.—
Come hither, Moor :
I here do give thee that with all my heart,
Which ³, but thou hast already, with all my heart
I would keep from thee.—For your sake, jewel,
I am glad at soul I have no other child ;
For thy escape would teach me tyranny,
To hang clogs on them.—I have done, my lord.

Duke. ⁴ Let me speak like yourself ; and lay a
sentence,

Which,

¹ *Destruction, &c.*] The quartos read, destruction *light on me.*
STEEVENS,

² *You are the lord of duty,*] The first quarto reads,
You are lord of *all my* duty. STEEVENS.

³ *Which, &c.*] This line is omitted in the first quarto.

STEEVENS.
⁴ *Let me speak like your self;—*] It should be *like our self*, i. e.
let me mediate between you as becomes a prince and common
father

Which, ⁵ as a grize, or step, may help these lovers
 6 Into your favour.
 When remedies are past, the griefs are ended,
 By seeing the worst, which late on hopes depended.
 To mourn a mischief that is past and gone,
 Is the next way to draw new mischief on 7.
 What cannot be preserv'd when fortune takes,
 Patience her injury a mockery makes.
 The robb'd, that smiles, steals something from the
 thief;

He robs himself, that spends a bootless grief.

Bra. So let the Turk, of Cyprus us beguile;
 We lose it not, so long as we can smile.

He bears the sentence well, that nothing bears
 8 But the free comfort which from thence he hears:

father of his people: for the prince's opinion, here delivered, was quite contrary to Brabantio's sentiment. WARBURTON,
 Hanmer reads,

Let me now speak more like your self.

Dr. Warburton's emendation is specious; but I do not see how Hanmer's makes any alteration. The duke seems to mean, when he says he will speak like Brabantio, that he will speak sententiously. JOHNSON.

Let me speak like yourself:—] i. e. let me speak as yourself would speak, were you not too much heated with passion.

Sir J. REYNOLDS.

⁵ — as a grize,—] *Grize* from *degrees*. A *grize* is a step. So in *Timon*:

“ ——— for every *grize* of fortune

“ Is smooth'd by that below.”—

Ben Jonson, in his *Sejanus*, gives the original word.

“ Whom when he saw lie spread on the *degrees*.”

In the will of K. Henry VI. where the dimensions of King's College chapel at Cambridge are set down, the word occurs, as spelt in some of the old editions of Shakespeare. “— From the provost's stall, unto the *Greece* called *Gradus Chori*, 90 feet.” STEEVENS.

⁶ *Into your favour.*] This is wanting in the folio, but found in the quarto. JOHNSON.

⁷ *New mischief on.*] The quartos read—*more mischief.*—

STEEVENS.

⁸ *But the free comfort which from thence he bears:]* But the moral precepts of consolation, which are liberally bestowed on occasion of the sentence. JOHNSON.

But

But he bears both the sentence and the sorrow,
 That, to pay grief, must of poor patience borrow,
 These sentences, to sugar, or to gall,
 Being strong on both sides, are equivocal :
 But words are words ; I never yet did hear,
 That the bruis'd heart was pierced through the ear.
I humbly

° *But words are words ; I never yet did hear,*

That the bruis'd heart was pierced through the ear.] The duke had by sage sentences been exhorting Brabantio to patience, and to forget the grief of his daughter's stolen marriage, to which Brabantio is made very pertinently to reply to this effect: " My lord, I apprehend very well the wisdom of your advice ; but though you would *comfort* me, words are but words ; and the heart, already *bruis'd*, was never *pierc'd*, or *wounded*, through the ear." It is obvious that the text must be restored thus :

That the bruis'd heart was pieced through the ear.

i. e. that the wounds of sorrow were ever cured, or a man made *heart-whole* merely by words of consolation. WARBURTON.

That the bruised heart was pierced through the ear.] Shakespeare was continually changing his first expression for another, either stronger or more uncommon ; so that very often the reader, who has not the same continuity or succession of ideas, is at a loss for its meaning. Many of Shakespeare's uncouth strained epithets may be explained, by going back to the obvious and simple expression, which is most likely to occur to the mind in that state. I can imagine the first mode of expression that occurred to the poet was this :

" The *troubled* heart was never cured by words."

To give it poetical force, he altered the phrase :

" The *wounded* heart was never reached through the ear."

Wounded heart he changed to *broken*, and that to *bruised*, as a more uncommon expression. *Reach* he altered to *touched*, and the transition is then easy to *pierced*, *i. e.* thoroughly touched. When the sentiment is brought to this state, the commentator, without this unravelling clue, expounds *piercing the heart* in its common acceptation *wounding the heart*, which making in this place nonsense, is corrected to *pieced the heart*, which is very stiff, and, as Polonius says, *is a vile phrase*. Sir J. REYNOLDS.

Pierced may be right. The consequence of a *bruise* is sometimes matter collected, and this can no way be cured without *piercing* or letting it out. Thus, in *Hamlet* :

" It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,

" While rank corruption mining all within,

" Infects unseen."

Again,

I humbly beseech you, proceed to the affairs of state.

Duke. The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus:—Othello, the fortitude of the place is best known to you: And though we have there a substitute of most allow'd sufficiency, yet opinion, a sovereign mistress of effects, throws a more safe voice on you: you must therefore be content to stubber the gloss of your new fortunes, with this more stubborn and boisterous expedition.

Oth. The tyrant custom, most grave senators,
Hath made the flinty and steel couch of war
My thrice-driven bed of down: I do agnize
A natural and prompt alacrity,
I find in hardness; and do undertake
This present war against the Ottomites,
Most humbly therefore bending to your state,
I crave fit disposition for my wife;

Due

Again,

“ This is th' imposthume of much wealth and peace,

“ That inward breaks, and shews no cause without,

“ Why the man dies.” STEEVENS.

¹ To stubber the gloss, &c.] To stubber, on this occasion, is to obscure. So, in the First Part of *Jeronimo*, &c. 1605:

“ The evening too begins to stubber day.” STEEVENS.

² — thrice-driven bed of down:—] A driven bed, is a bed for which the feathers are selected, by driving with a fan, which separates the light from the heavy. JOHNSON.

³ — I do agnize] i. e. acknowledge, confess, avow. So, in the old play of *Cambyfes*:

“ The tenor of your princely will, from you for to agnize.”

In this instance, however, it signifies to know; as likewise in the following, from the same piece:

“ Why so? I pray you let me agnize.” STEEVENS.

⁴ I crave fit disposition for my wife;

Due reference of place, and exhibition, &c.] I desire, that proper disposition be made for my wife, that she may have precedence, and revenue, accommodation, and company, suitable to her rank.

For reference of place, the old quartos have reverence, which Hamner has received. I should read,

Due preference of place.— JOHNSON.

Exhibition is allowance. The word is at present used only at the universities.

Due reference of place, and exhibition;
With such accommodation, and besort,
As levels with her breeding.

Duke. If you please,
Be't at her father's.

Bra. I will not have it so.

Oth. Nor I.

Des. Nor I; I would not there reside,
To put my father in impatient thoughts,
By being in his eye. Most gracious duke,
To my unfolding lend a gracious ear⁵;
And let me find⁶ a charter in your voice,
To assist my simpleness⁷.

Duke. What would you, Desdemona?

Des. That I did love the Moor to live with him,
⁸ My down-right violence and storm of fortunes
May trumpet to the world; my heart's subdu'd

Even

So, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

“What maintenance he from his friends receives,
“Like *exhibition* thou shalt have from me.”

Again, in *King Edward IV.* by Heywood, 1626:

“Of all the *exhibition* yet bestow'd,
“This woman's liberality likes me best.” STEEVENS.

⁵ — *Most gracious duke,*

To my unfolding lend a gracious ear;] Thus the quarto 1622.

The folio, to avoid the repetition of the same epithet, reads:

“— your *prosperous ear*”; i. e. your *propitious ear*. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *a charter in your voice*] Let your favour *privilege* me.

JOHNSON.

⁷ *To assist my simpleness*.] The first quarto reads this as an unfinished sentence:

And if my simpleness — STEEVENS.

⁸ *My down-right violence and storm of fortunes*] But what violence was it that drove her to run away with the Moor? We should read,

My down-right violence to forms, my fortunes.

WARBURTON.

There is no need of this emendation. *Violence* is not *violence suffered*, but *violence acted*. Breach of common rules and obligations. The old quarto has, *scorn of fortune*, which is perhaps the true reading. JOHNSON.

I would

Even to the very quality of my lord¹:

¹ I saw Othello's visage in his mind;
And to his honours, and his valiant parts,
Did I my soul and fortunes consecrate.
So that, dear lords, if I be left behind,
A moth of peace, and he go to the war,
The rites, for which I love him, are bereft me;
And I a heavy interim shall support
By his dear absence: Let me go with him.

Oth. Your voices, lords²:—I do beseech you, let
Her will have a free way.

Vouch with me heaven, I therefore beg it not³,
To please the palate of my appetite;
⁴ Nor to comply with heat, (the young affects,
In me defunct) and proper satisfaction;

But

I would rather continue to read *Storm of fortunes* on account of
the words that follow, viz. *May trumpet to the world*.

So, in *King Henry IV.* P. 1:

— the southern wind

Doth play the trumpet to his purposes.

Again, in *Troilus and Cressida*:

“ ——— so

“ Doth valour's shew and valour's worth divide

“ In storms of fortune.” STEEVENS.

¹ *Even to the very quality of my lord:]* The first quarto reads,

Even to the utmost pleasure, &c. STEEVENS.

² *I saw Othello's visage in his mind;]* It must raise no wonder,
that I loved a man of an appearance so little engaging; I saw his
face only in his mind; the greatness of his character reconciled me
to his form. JOHNSON.

³ *Your voices, lords:]* The folio reads, *Let her have your voice.*

STEEVENS.

⁴ *Vouch with me—]* Thus the second quarto and the folio.

STEEVENS.

⁴ *Nor to comply with heat (the young affects,*

In my defunct) and proper satisfaction;] As this has been
hitherto printed and stopped, it seems to me a period of as stubborn
nonsense, as the editors have obtruded upon poor Shakespeare
throughout his works. What a preposterous creature is this
Othello made, to fall in love with and marry a fine young lady,
when *appetite* and *heat*, and *proper satisfaction*, are dead and defunct

But to be free and bounteous to her mind :

And

in him! (For, *defunct* signifies nothing else, that I know of, either primitively or metaphorically;) but if we may take Othello's own word in the affair, he was not reduced to this fatal state.

—— or, for *I am declin'd*

Into the vale of years; yet that's not much.

Again, Why should our poet say (for so he says, as the passage has been pointed) that the young *affect* heat? Youth, certainly, has it, and has no occasion or pretence of *affecting* it. And, again, after *defunct*, would he add so absurd a collateral epithet as *proper*? But *affects* was not designed there as a verb, and *defunct* was not designed here at all. I have, by reading *distinct*, for *defunct*, rescued the poet's text from absurdity; and this I take to be the tenor of what he would say; "I do not beg her company with me, merely to please myself; nor to indulge the heat and *affects* (i. e. affections) of a new-married man, in my own distinct and proper satisfaction; but to comply with her in her request, and desire, of accompanying me." *Affects* for *affections*, our author in several other passages uses. THEOBALD.

Nor to comply with heat, the young affects

In my defunct and proper satisfaction:] i. e. with that heat and new affections which the indulgence of my appetite has raised and created. This is the meaning of *defunct*, which has made all the difficulty of the passage. WARBURTON.

I do not think that Mr. Theobald's emendation clears the text from embarrassment, though it is with a little imaginary improvement received by Hanmer, who reads thus:

"Nor to comply with heat, affects the young

In my distinct and proper satisfaction.

Dr. Warburton's explanation is not more satisfactory: what made the difficulty will continue to make it. I read,

—— *I beg it not,*

To please the palate of my appetite,

Nor to comply with heat (the young affects

In me defunct) and proper satisfaction;

But to be free and bounteous to her mind.

Affects stands here, not for *love*, but for *passions*, for that by which any thing is affected. *I ask it not*, says he, *to please appetite, or satisfy loose desires*, the passions of youth which I have now outlived, or for any particular gratification of myself, but merely that I may indulge the wishes of my wife.

Mr. Upton had, before me, changed *my* to *me*; but he has printed young *effects*, not seeming to know that *affects* could be a noun.

JOHNSON.

Theobald has observed the impropriety of making Othello confess, that all youthful passions were *defunct* in him; and Hanmer's

reading

And heaven defend^s your good souls, that you think
I will your serious and great business scant,

For

reading may, I think, be received with only a slight alteration.
I would read,

“ ——— I beg it not,

“ To please the palate of my appetite,

“ Nor to comply with heat, and young affects,

“ In my *distinct* and proper satisfaction;

“ But to be, &c.”

Affects stands for *affections*, and is used in that sense by Ben Jonson
in *The Case is alter'd*, 1609:

“ ——— I shall not need to urge

“ The sacred purity of our *affects*.”

So, in Middleton's *Inner Temple Masque*, 1619:

“ No doubt *affects* will be subdu'd by reason.”

Again, in *Love's Labour's Lost*:

For every man with his *affects* is born.

Again, in *The Wars of Cyrus*, 1594:

“ The frail *affects* and errors of my youth.”

Again, in the *Pinner of Wakefield*, 1599:

“ Shut up thy daughter, bridle her *affects*.”

There is, however, in *The Bondman*, by Massinger, a passage
which seems to countenance and explain — the young af-
fects in me *defunct*, &c.

“ ——— youthful heats,

“ That look no further than your outward form,

“ Are long since *buried* in me.”

Timoleon is the speaker. STEEVENS.

I would venture to make the two last lines change places,

“ ——— I therefore beg it not,

“ To please the palate of my appetite,

“ Nor to comply with heat, the young affects;

“ But to be free and bounteous to her mind,

“ In my *defunct* and proper satisfaction.”

And would then recommend it to consideration, whether the word
defunct (which would be the only remaining difficulty) is not capa-
ble

^s — *defend*, &c.] To *defend*, is to forbid. So, in Chaucer's
Wife of Bathes Prologue, late edit. ver. 5641:

“ Wher can ye seen in any maner age

“ That highe God *defended* mariage,

“ By expresse word?”

From *defendre* Fr. STEEVENS.

For she is with me; No, ⁶ when light-wing'd toys
 Of feather'd Cupid, feel with wanton dulness
 My speculative and active instruments,
 That my disports corrupt and taint my business,
 Let housewives make a skillet of my helm,
 And all indign and base adversities
 Make head against my estimation 7!

ble of a signification, drawn from the primitive sense of its Latin original, which would very well agree with the context.

TYRWHITT.

I would propose to read, In my *defunct*, or *defenc'd*, &c. i. e. I do not beg her company merely to please the palate of my appetite, nor to comply with the heat of lust which the *young man affects*, i. e. loves and is fond of, in a gratification which I have by marriage *defenc'd*, or inclosed and guarded, and made my own property. *Unproper beds*, in this play, mean, beds not peculiar or appropriate to the right owner, but common to other occupiers. In the *Merry Wives*, &c. the marriage vow is represented by *Ford* as the ward and *defence* of purity or conjugal fidelity. "I could drive her then from the ward of her purity, her reputation, and a thousand other her *defences*, which are now too strongly embattel'd against me." The verb *affect* is more generally, among ancient authors, taken in the construction which I have given to it, than as Mr. Theobald would interpret it. It is so in this very play, "Not to *affect* many proposed matches," means not to *like*, or *be fond of* many proposed matches.

I am persuaded that the word *defunct* must be at all events ejected. *Otello* talks here of his *appetite*, and it is very plain that Desdemona to her death was fond of him after wedlock, and that he loved her. How then could his conjugal desires be dead or *defunct*? or how could they be *defunct* or discharged and performed, when the marriage was not consummated? TOLLET,

⁶ — when light-wing'd toys

Of feather'd Cupid, feel with wanton dulness

My speculative and offic'd instrument—] Thus the folio,

The quarto reads—

— when light-wing'd toys

And feather'd Cupid *foiks* with wanton dulness

My speculative and *active* instruments—

All these words (in either copy) mean no more than this; *When the pleasures and idle toys of love make me unfit either for seeing the duties of my office, or for the ready performance of them, &c.*

STEEVENS,

[7 — my estimation !] Thus the folio; the quarto—*reputation.*

STEEVENS,

Duke

Duke. Be it as you shall privately determine,
Either for her stay, or going: the affair cries—haste,
And speed must answer it; you must hence to-night.

Des. To-night, my lord?

Duke. This night.

Oth. With all my heart.

Duke. At nine i' the morning here we'll meet again;
Othello, leave some officer behind,
And he shall our commission bring to you;
And such things else of quality and respect,
As doth import you.

Oth. Please your grace, my ancient;
A man he is of honesty, and trust;
To his conveyance I assign my wife,
With what else needful your good grace shall think
To be sent after me.

Duke. Let it be so.—

Good night to every one.—And, noble signior,

[*To Brab.*

3 If virtue no delighted beauty lack,
Your son-in-law is far more fair than black.

3 *If virtue no delighted beauty lack,*] This is a senseless epithet. We should read *belighted beauty*, i. e. white and fair. WARBURTON.

Hanmer reads, more plausibly, *delighting*. I do not know that *belighted* has any authority. I should rather read,

If virtue no delight or beauty lack.

Delight, for *delectation*, or *power of pleasing*, as it is frequently used. JOHNSON.

There is no such word as—*belighted*. The plain meaning, I believe, is, if virtue comprehends every thing in itself, then your virtuous son-in-law of course is beautiful: he has that beauty which delights every one. *Delighted*, for *delighting*; Shakespeare often uses the active and passive participles indiscriminately. Of this practice I have already given many instances. The same sentiment seems to occur in *Twelfth Night*:

In nature is no blemish, but the mind;

None can be call'd deform'd, but the unkind:

Virtue is beauty.— STEEVENS.

Delighted is used by Shakespeare in the sense of *delighting*, or *delightful*. See *Cymbeline*, Act 5:

Whom best I love, I cross, to make my gift,

The more delay'd, *delighted*. TYRWHITT,

Sen. Adieu, brave Moor! use Desdemona well.

Bra. Look to her, Moor; ° have a quick eye to see;

She has deceiv'd her father, and may thee.

[*Exeunt Duke, and Senators.*]

Oth. My life upon her faith.—Honest Iago,
My Desdemona must I leave to thee:

I pr'ythee, let thy wife attend on her;

And bring them after in the † best advantage.—

Come, Desdemona; I have but an hour

Of love, of worldly matter and direction,

To spend with thee: we must obey the time.

[*Exeunt Othello, and Desdemona.*]

Rod. Iago,—

Iago. What say'st thou, noble heart?

Rod. What will I do, think'st thou?

Iago. Why, go to bed, and sleep.

Rod. I will incontinently drown myself.

Iago. Well, if thou dost, I shall never love thee
after it, Why, thou silly gentleman!

Rod. It is silliness to live, when to live is a torment;
and then have we a prescription to die, when death is
our physician.

Iago. O villainous! I have look'd upon the world
for four times seven years: and since I could distin-
guish betwixt a benefit and an injury, I never found
man that knew how to love himself. Ere I would
say, I would drown myself for the love of † a Guinea
hen, I would change my humanity with a baboon.

Rod.

° —have a quick eye to see;] Thus the eldest quarto. The folio reads,

—, if thou hast eyes to see. STEEVENS.

† —best advantage.—] Fairest opportunity. JOHNSON.

‡ —a Guinea-ben,—] A showy bird with fine feathers.

JOHNSON.

A Guinea-ben was anciently the cant term for a prostitute.

Rod. What should I do? I confess, it is my shame to be so fond; but it is not in my virtue to amend it.

Iago. Virtue? a fig! 'tis in ourselves, that we are thus, or thus. Our bodies are our gardens; to the which, our wills are gardeners: so that if we will plant nettles, or sow lettuce; set hyssop, and weed up thyme; supply it with one gender of herbs, or distract it with many; either have it steril with idleness, or manur'd with industry; why, the power and corrigible authority of this lies in our wills. If the balance³ of our lives had not one scale of reason to poise another of sensuality, the blood and baseness of our natures would conduct us to most preposterous conclusions: But we have reason, to cool our raging motions, our carnal stings, our unbitted lusts; whereof I take this, that you call—love, to be a sect, or scyon⁴.

Rod. It cannot be.

Iago. It is merely a lust of the blood, and a permission of the will. Come, be a man: Drown thyself? drown cats, and blind puppies. I have profess'd me thy friend, and I confess me knit to thy deserving with cables of perdurable toughness; I could never better stead thee than now. Put money in thy purse: follow thou these wars; ⁵ defeat thy favour with an usurped beard: I say, put money in thy

So, in *Albertus Wallenstein*, 1640:

“ — Yonder's the cock o'the game

“ About to tread yon *Guinea-ben*; they're billing.”

STEEVENS.

³ *If the balance*] The folio reads—If the *brain*. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *a sect or scyon*.] Thus the folio and quarto. A *sect* is what the more modern gardeners call a *cutting*. The modern editors read—a *set*. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *defeat thy favour with an usurped beard*.—] This is not English. We should read *disseal* thy favour, *i. e.* turn it out of its seat, change it for another. The word *usurped* directs us to this reading. WARBURTON.

thy purse. It cannot be, that Desdemona should long continue her love to the Moor,—put money in thy purse;—nor he his to her: ⁶ it was a violent commencement in her, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration;—put but money in thy purse.—These Moors are changeable in their wills;—fill thy purse with money: the food that to him now is ⁷ as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as bitter as coloquintida. She must change

It is more English, to *defeat*, than *diffeat*. To *defeat*, is to *undo*, to *change*. JOHNSON.

Defeat is from *desfaire*, Fr, to *undo*. Of the use of this I have already given several instances. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *it was a violent commencement in her, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration.*—] There seems to be an opposition of terms here intended, which has been lost in transcription. We may read, *it was a violent conjunction, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration*; or, what seems to me preferable, *it was a violent commencement, and thou shalt see an answerable sequel*. JOHNSON.

I believe the poet uses *sequestration* for *sequel*. He might conclude that it was immediately derived from *sequor*. *Sequestration*, however, may mean no more than *separation*. So, in this play — “*a sequester from liberty*.” STEEVENS.

⁷ — *as luscious as locusts,*—] Whether you understand by this the insect or the fruit, it cannot be given as an instance of a delicious morsel, notwithstanding the exaggerations of lying travellers. The true reading is *lobocks*, a very pleasant confection introduced into medicine by the Arabian physicians; and so very fitly opposed both to the bitterness and use of coloquintida.

WARBURTON.

—*bitter as coloquintida.*] The old quarto reads— *as acerb as coloquintida*.

Dr. Warburton, through his rage to introduce an uncommon word, is mistaken. At *Tonquin* the insect *Locusts* are considered as a great delicacy, not only by the poor but by the rich; and are sold in the markets, as larks and quails are in Europe. It may be added, that the Levitical law permits four sorts of them to be eaten.

An anonymous correspondent informs me, that the fruit of the locust-tree is a long black pod, which contains the reeds, among which there is a very sweet luscious juice of much the same consistency as fresh honey. This (says he) I have often tasted.

STEEVENS.

for

for youth: when she is sated with his body, she will find the error of her choice.—She must have change, she must: therefore put money in thy purse.—If thou wilt needs damn thyself, do it a more delicate way than drowning. Make all the money thou canst: If sanctimony and a frail vow,⁸ betwixt an erring Barbarian and a super-subtle Venetian, be not too hard for my wits, and all the tribe of hell, thou shalt enjoy her; therefore make money. A pox of drowning thyself! it is clean out of the way: seek thou rather to be hang'd in compassing thy joy, than to be drown'd and go without her.

Rod. Wilt thou be fast to my hopes, if I depend on the issue?⁹

Iago. Thou art sure of me;—Go, make money:—I have told thee often, and I re-tell thee again and again, I hate the Moor: My cause is hearted; thine hath no less reason: Let us be conjunctive¹ in our revenge against him: if thou canst cuckold him, thou dost thyself a pleasure, and me a sport. There are many events in the womb of time, which will be delivered. Traverse; go; provide thy money. We will have more of this to-morrow. Adieu.

Rod. Where shall we meet i' the morning?

Iago. At my lodging.

⁸ — *betwixt an erring Barbarian*—] We should read *erring*; that is, a vagabond, one who has no house nor country.

WARBURTON.

Hammer reads, *arrant*. *Erring* is as well as either. JOHNSON.
So, in *Hamlet*:

“Th’extravagant and *erring* spirit hies

“To his confine.” STEEVENS.

An *erring Barbarian*; perhaps meaning a *rotter* from *Barbary*. He had before said, “You’ll have your daughter covered with a *Barbary* horse.” MALONE.

⁹ — *if I depend on the issue?*] These words are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

¹ *conjunctive*. The first quarto reads, *communicative*.

STEEVENS.

Rod.

Rod. I'll be with thee betimes.

Iago. Go to; farewell. Do you hear, Roderigo?

Rod. What say you²?

Iago. No more of drowning, do you hear.

Rod. I am chang'd³. I'll go sell all my land.

Iago. Go to; farewell: put money enough in your purse⁴. [Exit Roderigo.]

Thus do I ever make my fool my purse:
For I mine own gain'd knowledge should profane,
If I should time expend with such a snipe,
But for my sport, and profit. I hate the Moor;
And it is thought abroad, that 'twixt my sheets
He has done my office: I know not, if't be true;
But I, for mere suspicion in that kind,
Will do, as if for surety. He holds me well;
The better shall my purpose work on him.
Cassio's a proper man: Let me see now;
To get his place, and to plume up my wills,
A double knavery,—How? how?—Let me see:—
After some time, to abuse Othello's ear,
That he is too familiar with his wife:—
He hath a person, and a smooth dispose,
To be suspected; fram'd to make women false.
The Moor is of a free and open nature⁵,
That thinks men honest, that but seem to be so;
And will as tenderly be led by the nose,
As asses are.

I have't;—it is engender'd:—Hell and night
Must bring this monstrous birth to the world's light.
[Exit.]

² *What say you?*] This speech is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

³ *I am chang'd.*] This is omitted in the folio. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Go to; farewell: put money enough in your purse.*] The folio omits this line. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *to plume up, &c.*] The first quarto reads—to *make up, &c.* STEEVENS.

⁶ *The Moor is of a free and open nature,*] The first quarto reads
The Moor, a free and open nature too,
That thinks, &c. STEEVENS.

ACT II. SCENE I.

*The capital of Cyprus.**A platform.**Enter Montano, and two Gentlemen.**Mont.* What from the cape can you discern at sea?*1 Gent.* Nothing at all : it is a high-wrought flood ;
I cannot, 'twixt the heaven and the main,
Descry a sail.*Mont.* Methinks, the wind hath spoke aloud at
land ;A fuller blast ne'er shook our battlements :
If it hath ruffian'd so upon the sea,
What ribs of oak, when mountains melt on them,⁷
Can hold the mortice ? What shall we hear of this ?*2 Gent.* A segregation of the Turkish fleet :
For do but stand upon the foaming shore⁸,
The chiding billow seems to pelt the clouds ;
The wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous
main,

Seems to cast water on the burning bear,

⁷ — *when mountains melt on them,*] Thus the folio. The quarto reads :— *when the huge mountain melts.*This latter reading might be countenanced by the following passage in the Second Part of *King Henry IV* :

— the continent

Weary of solid firmness, melt itself

Into the sea—— STEEVENS.

⁸ — *the foaming shore,*] The elder quarto reads—*laving shore*, which offers the bolder image ; *i. e.* the shore that execrates the ravage of the waves. So, in *King Henry VI*. P. 1 :“ Fell, *laving* hag, enchantress, hold thy tongue.”

STEEVENS.

And

And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole :
I never did like molestation view
On the enchas'd flood.

Mont. If that the Turkish fleet
Be not inhelter'd, and embay'd, they are drown'd ;
It is impossible they bear it out.

Enter a third Gentleman.

3 *Gent.* News, lords ! our wars are done :
The desperate tempest hath so bang'd the Turks,
That their designment halts : A noble ship of Venice
Hath seen a grievous wreck and sufferance
On most part of their fleet.

Mont. How ! is this true ?

3. *Gent.* The ship is here put in,
A Veronesè : Michael Cassio,

Lieutenant

And quench the guards of the ever-fixed pole :] Alluding to the
star *Arctophylax*. JOHNSON.

The elder quarto reads—*ever-fired pole*. STEEVENS.

The ship is here put in,

A Veronesè; Michael Cassio, &c.] The author of *The Revival* is of opinion, that the poet intended to inform us, that Othello's lieutenant Cassio was of Verona, an inland city of the Venetian state; and adds, that the editors have not been pleased to say what kind of ship is here denoted by a *Veronessa*. By a *Veronessa* or *Veronesè* (for the Italian pronunciation must be retained, otherwise the measure will be defective) a ship of Verona is denoted; as we say to this day of ships in the river, such a one is a *Dutchman*, a *Jamaica-man*, &c. STEEVENS.

Veronessa, a ship of Verona. But the true reading is *Veronesè*, pronounced as a quadrifyllable.

—The ship is here put in,

A Veronesè. —

It was common to introduce *Italian* words, and in their proper pronunciation then familiar. So Spenser in the *Faerie Queene*, B. iii. C. xiii. 10.

With sleeves dependant *Albenesè* wife.

The author of the *Revival* observes, that “the editors have not been pleased to inform us what kind of ship is here denoted by the name of *A Veronessa*.” But even supposing that *Vero-*

Lieutenant to the warlike Moor, Othello,
Is come on shore: the Moor himself's at sea,
And is in full commission here for Cyprus.

Mont. I am glad on't; tis a worthy governor.

3 Gent. But this same Cassio,—though he speak
of comfort,

Touching the Turkish loss,—yet he looks sadly,
And prays the Moor be safe; for they were parted
With foul and violent tempest.

Mont. Pray heaven he be;

For I have serv'd him, and the man commands
Like a full soldier. Let's to the sea side, ho!

As well to see the vessel that's come in,
As to throw out our eyes for brave Othello;
Even 'till we make the main², and the aerial blue,

nessa is the true reading, there is no sort of difficulty. He might just as well have inquired, what kind of a ship is a *Hamburger*. This is exactly a parallel form. For it is not the species of the ship which is implied in this appellation. Our critic adds, "the poet had not a ship in his thoughts.—He intended to inform us, that Othello's lieutenant, Cassio, was of *Verona*. We should certainly read,

—"The ship is here put in.

"A Veronese, Michael *Cassio*, (&c.)

"Is come on shore."—

This regulation of the lines is ingenious. But I agree with Hamner, and I think it appears from many parts of the play, that Cassio was a Florentine. In this speech, the *third gentleman*, who brings the news of the wreck of the Turkish fleet, returns his tale, and relates the circumstances more distinctly. In his *former* speech he says, "A noble ship of Venice saw the distress of the Turks." And here he adds, "The very ship is just now put into our port, and she is a *Veronese*." That is, a ship fitted out or furnished by the people of Verona, a city of the Venetian state. WARTON.

I believe we are all wrong. *Verona* is an inland city. Every inconsistency may, however, be avoided, if we read *The Veronessa*, i. e. the name of the ship is the *Veronessa*. Verona, however, might be obliged to furnish ships towards the general defence of Italy. STEEVENS.

² *Even 'till we make the main, &c.*] This line and half is wanting in the eldest quarto. STEEVENS.

An indistinct regard.

Gent. Come, let's do so;
For every minute is expectancy
Of more arrivance.

Enter Cassio.

Cas. Thanks to the valiant of this warlike isle,³
That so approve the Moor; O, let the heavens
Give him defence against the elements,
For I have lost him on a dangerous sea!

Mont. Is he well shipp'd?

Cas. 4 His bark is stoutly timber'd, and his pilot
Of

³ — warlike *isle*,] Thus the folio. The first quarto reads—
worthy isle. STEEVENS.

⁴ *His bark is stoutly timber'd,*——
Therefore my hopes, not forfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure.] I do not understand these lines. I know
not how *hope* can be *forfeited to death*, that is, *can be encreased, till*
it is destroyed; nor what it is to *stand in bold cure*; or why *hope*
should be considered as a disease. In the copies there is no va-
riation. Shall we read

Therefore my fears, not forfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure?

This is better, but it is not well. Shall we strike a bolder stroke,
and read thus?

Therefore my hopes, not forfeited to death,
Stand bold, not sure. JOHNSON.

Therefore my hopes, not forfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure] Presumptuous hopes, which have no
foundation in probability, may be said to forfeit themselves to
death, or forward their own dissolution. To *stand in bold cure*,
is to erect themselves in confidence of being fulfilled. A pa-
rallel expression occurs in *K. Lear*, Act 3. Sc. 6.

“ This rest might yet have balm'd his broken senses,
“ Which, if conveniency will not allow,
“ *Stand in hard cure.*”

Again,

— his life, with thine, &c.

Stand in assured loss.

In bold cure means, in confidence of being cured. STEEVENS.

A surfeit being a sickness arising from an *excessive* over-charge
of the stomach, the author, with his usual licence, uses it for

Of very expert and approv'd allowance ;
Therefore my hopes, not surfeited to death,
Stand in bold cure.

Witbin.] A fail, a fail, a fail !

Caf. What noise ?

Gent. The town is empty ; on the brow o' the sea
Stand ranks of people, and they cry—a fail.

Caf. My hopes do shape him for the governor.

Gent. They do discharge their shot of courtesy ;
Our friends, at least. [*Guns heard.*]

Caf. I pray you, sir, go forth,
And give us truth who 'tis that is arriv'd.

Gent. I shall. [*Exit.*]

Mont. But, good lieutenant, is your general wiv'd ?

Caf. Most fortunately : he hath achiev'd a maid
That paragons description, and wild fame ;
One that excels the quirks of blazoning pens,
And, in the essential vesture of creation,

Does

any species of *excess*.—The meaning, I think, is—*Therefore my hopes, not being destroyed by their own excess, but being reasonable and moderate, are likely to be fulfilled.*

The word *surfeit* having occurred to Shakespeare, led him to consider hope as a *disease*, and to talk of its *cure*. A passage in *Twelfth Night*, where a similar phraseology is used, may serve to strengthen this interpretation, while at the same time it shews that there is here no corruption in the text :

Give me *excess* of it ; that *surfeiting*,

The appetite may *sicken*, and *to die*. MALONE.

⁵ *Of very expert and approv'd allowance ;*] I read,

Very expert, and of approv'd allowance. JOHNSON.

Expert and approv'd allowance is put for *allow'd and approv'd expertness*. This mode of expression is not unfrequent in Shakespeare. STEEVENS.

⁶ *And, in the essential vesture of creation,*

Does bear all excellency—] It is plain that something very hyperbolical was here intended. But what is there as it stands ? Why this, that in the essence of creation she bore all excellency. The expression is intolerable, and could never come from one who so well understood the force of words as our poet. The *essential vesture* is the same as *essential form*. So that the expression is nonsense. For the *vesture of creation* signifies the *forms* in which

Does bear all excellency.—How now? who has put in?

Re-enter

created beings are cast. And *effence* relates not to the *form*, but to the *matter*. Shakespeare certainly wrote :

And in terrestrial vesture of creation.

And in this lay the wonder, that all created excellence should be contained within an earthly mortal form. WARBURTON.

I do not think the present reading inexplicable. The author seems to use *essential*, for *existent*, *real*. She excels the praises of invention, says he, and in *real* qualities, with which *creation* has invested her, bears all excellency. JOHNSON.

Does bear all excellency—] Such is the reading of the quartos; for which the folio has this :

And in the essential vesture of creation

Do's tyre the ingeniuer

Which I explain thus,

Does tire the ingenious versé.

This is the best reading, and that which the author substituted in his revival. JOHNSON.

The reading of the quarto is so flat and unpoetical, when compared with that sense which seems meant to have been given in the folio, that I heartily wish some emendation could be hit on; which might entitle it to a place in the text. I believe the word *tire* was not introduced to signify—to *fatigue*, but to *attire*, to *dress*: The verb *to attire*, is often so abbreviated. So, in *Holland's Leaguer*, 1633 :

“ — Cupid's a boy;

“ And would you *tire* him like a senator ?”

Again, in the *Comedy of Errors*, Act 2. Sc. 2.

“ — To save the money he spends in *tiring*, &c.”

The *essential vesture of creation* tempts me to believe it was so used on the present occasion. I would read something like this :

And in the essential vesture of creation

Does tire the ingenuous virtue.

i. e. invests her artless virtue in the fairest form of earthly substance.

In the *Merchant of Venice*, Act 5. Lorenzo calls the body—
“ the muddy *vesture* of decay.”

It may, however, be observed, that the word *ingenier* did not anciently signify *one who manages the engines or artillery of an army*; but any *ingenious person*, any *master of liberal science*.

So in B. Jonson's *Sejanus*, Act 1. Sc. 1 :

“ No, Silius, we are no good *ingeniers*,

“ We want the fine arts,” &c.

Ingenier therefore may be the true reading of this passage: and a similar thought occurs in the *Tempest*, Act 4. Sc. 1 :

For

Re-enter Gentleman.

Gent. 'Tis one Iago, ancient to the general.

Caf. He has had most favourable and happy speed:
Tempests themselves, high seas, and howling winds,
The gutter'd rocks, and congregated sands,—
Traitors ensteep'd to clog the guiltless keel,—
As having sense of beauty, do omit
Their mortal natures, letting go safely by
The divine Desdemona.

Mont. What is she?

Caf. She that I spake of, our great captain's captain,
Left in the conduct of the bold Iago;
Whose footing here anticipates our thoughts,
A se'nnight's speed.—Great Jove, Othello guard,
And swell his sail with thine own powerful breath;
That he may bless this bay with his tall ship,
Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms,
Give renew'd fire to our extincted spirits,

For thou shalt find she will outstrip all praise,
And make it *halt* behind her.

In the argument of *Sejanus*, Jonson likewise says, that his hero "worketh with all his *ingene*," apparently from the Latin *ingenium*. STEEVENS.

⁷ *Traitors ensteep'd*—] Thus the folio and one of the quartos. The first copy reads—*enscerped*, of which every reader may make what he pleases. Perhaps *enscerped* was an old English word borrowed from the French *escarpé*, which Shakespeare not finding congruous to the image of clogging the keel, afterwards changed.

I once thought that the poet had written—*traitors enscauf'd*, i. e. muffled in their robes, as in *Julius Cæsar*. So, in *Hamlet*: "My sea-gown *scarf'd* about me;" and this agrees better with the idea of a traitor: yet whatever is gained one way is lost another. The poet too often adopts circumstances from every image that arose in his mind, and employing them without attention to the propriety of their union, his metaphorical expressions become inextricably confused. STEEVENS.

⁸ *Make love's quick pants in Desdemona's arms*,] Thus the folio. The quarto, with less animation:

And swiftly come to Desdemona's arms. STEEVENS.

And bring all Cyprus' comfort!—O, behold,

Enter Desdemona, Iago, Roderigo, and Emilia.

The riches of the ship is come on shore!—
Ye men of Cyprus, let her have your knees:—
Hail to thee, lady! and the grace of heaven,
Before, behind thee, and on every hand,
Enwheel thee round!

Des. I thank you, valiant Cassio.

What tidings can you tell me of my lord?

Cas. He is not yet arriv'd; nor know I aught
But that he's well, and will be shortly here.

Des. O, but I fear;—How lost you company?

Cas. The great contention of the sea and skies
Parted our fellowship: But, hark! a sail.

Within.] A sail, a sail! *[Guns heard.*

Gent. They give this greeting to the citadel;
This likewise is a friend.

Cas. See for the news¹.— *[An Attendant goes out.*
Good ancient, you are welcome;—Welcome, mistress.
[To Emilia.

Let it not gall your patience, good Iago,
That I extend my manners; 'tis my breeding
That gives me this bold shew of courtesy. *[Kisses her.*

Iago. Sir, would she give you so much of her lips,
As of her tongue she oft bestows on me,
You'd have enough.

Des. Alas, she has no speech.

Iago. In faith, too much²;
I find it still, when I have list to sleep:
Marry, before your ladyship, I grant,

¹ *And bring all Cyprus comfort!]* This passage is only found in the quartos. STEEVENS.

² *See for the news.]* The first quarto reads, *So speaks this voice.*
STEEVENS.

² *In faith, too much;]* Thus the folio. The first quarto thus:
I know too much;
I find it, I; for when, &c. STEEVENS.

She puts her tongue a little in her heart,
And chides with thinking.

Æmil. You have little cause to say so.

Iago. Come on, come on; you are pictures out of
doors,

Bells in your parlours, wild cats in your kitchens,
³ Saints in your injuries, devils being offended,
Players in your housewifery, and housewives in your
beds.

Des. O, fie upon thee, slanderer +!

Iago. Nay, it is true, or else I am Turk;
You rise to play, and go to bed to work.

Æmil. You shall not write my praise.

Iago. No, let me not.

Des. What wouldst thou write of me, if thou
shouldst praise me?

Iago. O gentle lady, do not put me to't;
For I am nothing, if not ⁵ critical.

³ *Saints in your injuries, &c.*] When you have a mind to do injuries, you put on an air of sanctity. JOHNSON.

In Pattenham's *Art of Poetry*, 1589, I meet with almost the same thoughts:—"We limit the comely parts of a woman to consist in four points; that is, to be a shrew in the kitchen, a saint in the church, an angel at board, and an ape in the bed; as the chronicle reports by mistress Shore, paramour to K. Edward the Fourth."

Again, in a play of Middleton's, called *Blurt Mastier Confiable*; or, *The Spaniard's Night-walk*, 1602:

"—according to that wise saying of you, you be saints in the church, angels in the street, devils in the kitchen, and apes in your bed."

Again, in the *Miseries of incest'd Marriage*, 1607: "Women are in churches saints, abroad angels, at home devils."

Pattenham, who mentions all other contemporary writers, has not once spoken of Shakespeare; so that it is probable he had not produced any thing of so early a date. STEEVENS.

⁴ *O, fie upon thee, slanderer!*] This short speech is, in the quarto, unappropriated; and may as well belong to *Æmil*a as to *Desdemona*. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *critical*.] That is, *caustic*. JOHNSON.

Des. Come on, assay :—There's one gone to the harbour ?

Iago. Ay, madam.

Des. I am not merry ; but I do beguile
The thing I am, by seeming otherwise.—
Come, how wouldst thou praise me ?

Iago. I am about it ; but, indeed, my invention
Comes from my pate, as bird-lime does from frize,
It plucks out brains and all : But my muse labours,
And thus she is deliver'd.

If she be fair and wise,—fairness, and wit,
The one's for use, the other useth it.

Des. Well prais'd ! How if she be black and witty ?

Iago. If she be black, and thereto have a wit,
She'll find a white that shall her blackness fit ⁶.

Des. Worse and worse.

Æmil. How, if fair and foolish ?

Iago. ⁷ She never yet was foolish that was fair ;
For even her folly help'd her to an heir.

Des. These are old fond paradoxes, to make fools
laugh i' the alehouse. What miserable praise hast thou
for her that's foul and foolish ?

Iago. There's none so foul, and foolish thereunto,
But does foul pranks which fair and wise
ones do.

Des. O heavy ignorance !—thou praisest the worst

⁶ — *her blackness fit.*] The first quarto reads *bit*. STEEVENS.

⁷ *She never yet was foolish, &c.*] We may read,
She ne'er was yet so foolish that was fair,
But even her folly help'd her to an heir.

Yet I believe the common reading to be right : the law makes the power of cohabitation a proof that a man is not a *natural* ; therefore, since the foolishest woman, if *pretty*, may have a child, no *pretty* woman is ever foolish. JOHNSON.

best.

best. But what praise couldst thou bestow on a deserving woman indeed? ¹ one, that, in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?

Iago. She that was ever fair, and never proud;
Had tongue at will, and yet was never loud;
Never lack'd gold, and yet went never gay;
Fled from her wish, and yet said,—*now I may*;
She that, being anger'd, her revenge being
nigh,
Bade her wrong stay, and her displeasure fly;
She that in wisdom never was so frail,
To change the cod's head for the salmon's
tail ²;

¹ — *one, that in the authority of her merit, did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?*] Though all the printed copies agree in this reading, I cannot help suspecting it. If the text should be genuine, I confess it is above my understanding. In what sense can merit be said to put on the vouch of malice? I should rather think, merit was so safe in itself, as to repel and put off all that malice and envy could advance and affirm to its prejudice. I have ventured to reform the text to this construction, by writing *put down*, a very slight change that makes it intelligible. THEOBALD.

— *one, that in the authority of her merit did justly put on the vouch of very malice itself?*] The editor, Mr. Theobald, not understanding the phrase, *To put on the vouch of malice*, has altered it to *put down*, and wrote a deal of unintelligible stuff to justify his blunder. *To put on the vouch of any one*, signifies, to call upon any one to vouch for another. So that the sense of the place is this, one that was so conscious of her own merit, and of the authority her character had with every one, that she durst venture to call upon malice itself to vouch for her. This was some commendation. And the character only of clearest virtue; which could force malice, even against its nature, to do justice. WARBURTON.

To put on the vouch of malice, is to assume a character vouched by the testimony of malice itself. JOHNSON.

— *put on the vouch.*] *To put on* is to *provoir*, to *incite*. So, in *Macbeth*: — the powers above

Put on their instruments. STEEVENS.

² *To change the cod's head for the salmon's tail;*] *i. e.* to exchange a delicacy for coarser fare. STEEVENS.

She that could think, and ne'er disclose her
mind,

See suitors following, and not look behind;¹
She was a wight,—if ever such wight were,—

Des. To do what?

*Iago.*² To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer.

Des. O most lame and impotent conclusion!—Do
not learn of him, Æmilia, though he be thy hus-
band.—How say you, Cassio? is he not a most³
profane and⁴ liberal counsellor?

Cas.

¹ See suitors following, and not look behind;] The first quarto omits this line. STEEVENS.

² To suckle fools, and chronicle small beer.] After enumerating the perfections of a woman, Iago adds, that if ever there was such a one as he had been describing, she was, at the best, of no other use, than to suckle children, and keep the accounts of a household. The expressions to suckle fools, and chronicle small beer, are only instances of the want of natural affection, and the predominance of a critical censoriousness in Iago, which he allows himself to be possessed of, where he says, O! I am nothing, if not critical. STEEVENS.

³ — profane—] Gross of language, of expression broad and brutal. So Brabantio, in the first act, calls Iago profane wretch.

JOHNSON.

⁴ — liberal counsellor?] Liberal, for licentious. WARBURTON.
So, in the *Fair Maid of Bristow*, 1605, bl. 1.

“ But Vallenger, most like a liberal villain,

“ Did give her scandalous, ignoble terms.”

So, in *Hamlet*:

“ That liberal shepherds give a grosser name.”

Mr. Malone adds another instance from *Woman's a Weather-cock*, by N. Field, 1612:

“ — Next that, the same

“ Of your neglect and liberal talking tongue,

“ Which breeds my honour an eternal wrong.” STEEVENS.

How say you, Cassio, is he not a most profane and liberal counsellor?] But in what respect was Iago a counsellor? He caps sentences, indeed: but they are not by way of advice, but description: what he says, is, reflections on character and conduct in life. For this reason, I am very apt to think, our author wrote censorer.

THEOBALD.

Counsellor

Caf. He speaks home, madam; you may relish him more in the soldier, than in the scholar.

Iago. [*Afide.*] He takes her by the palm: Ay, well said, whisper: with as little a web as this, will I ensnare as great a fly as Cassio. Ay, smile upon her, do; I will give thee in thine own courtship. You say true; 'tis so, indeed: if such tricks as these strip you out of your lieutenantry, it had been better you had not kiss'd your three fingers so oft, which now again you are most apt to play the fir in. Very good; 'well kiss'd! an excellent courtesy! 'tis so, indeed. Yet again your fingers to your lips? 'would, they were clyster-pipes for your sake!—

Trumpet.

The Moor.—I know his trumpet.

Caf. 'Tis truly so.

Des. Let's meet him, and receive him.

Caf. Lo, where he comes!

Exit Othello, and Attendants.

Oth. O my fair warrior!

Des. My dear Othello!

Oth. It gives me wonder great as my content,
To see you here before me. O my soul's joy!
If after every tempest come such calmness,
May the winds blow 'till they have waken'd death!
And let the labouring bark climb hills of seas,
Olympus high; and duck again as low

Commentator seems to mean, not so much a man that gives counsel, as one that discourages fearlessly and volubly. A talker.

JOHNSON.

⁵ — *I will give thee*—] *i. e.* catch, snackle. POPE.

The first quarto reads—"I will catch you in your own courtship;" the second quarto—"I will catch you in your own courtship." The folio as it is in the text. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *well kiss'd and excellent courtesy*;—] This I think should be printed, *well kiss'd! an excellent courtesy!* Spoken when Cassio kisses his hand, and Desdemona courtesies. JOHNSON.

The old quarto confirms Dr. Johnson's emendation.

STEEVENS.

As

As hell's from heaven! If it were now to die,
 'Twere now to be most happy; for, I fear,
 My soul hath her content so absolute,
 That not another comfort like to this
 Succeeds in unknown fate.

Des. The heavens forbid,
 But that our loves and comforts should increase,
 Even as our days do grow!

Oth. Amen to that, sweet powers!—
 I cannot speak enough of this content,
 It stops me here; it is too much of joy;
 And this, and this, the greatest discords be [*Kissing her*],
 That e'er our hearts shall make!

Iago. O, you are well tun'd now!
 But I'll let down the pegs that make this music,
 As honest as I am. [*Aside*]

Oth. Come, let us to the castle.—
 News, friends; our wars are done, the Turks are
 drown'd.

How do our old acquaintance of this isle?—
 Honey, you shall be well desir'd in Cyprus,
 I have found great love amongst them. O my sweet,
 I prattle out of fashion, and I dote
 In mine own comforts.—I pry'thee, good Iago,

And this, and this, &c. Kissing her.] So, in Marlow's *Lust's Dominion*:

"I pry'thee chide if I have done amis,

"But let my punishment be *this and this*."

"*Kissing the Moor*."

MALONE.

Marlow's Play was written before that of Shakespeare, who might possibly have acted in it. STEEVENS.

News, friends;—] The modern editors read (after Mr. Rowe) *Now, friends*. I would observe once for all, that (in numberless instances in this play, as well as in others) where my predecessors had silently and without reason made alterations, I have as silently restored the old readings. STEEVENS.

I prattle out of fashion,—] Out of method, without any settled order of discourse. JOHNSON.

Go

Go to the bay, and disembark my coffers:
Bring thou ¹ the master to the citadel;
He is a good one, and his worthiness
Does challenge much respect.—Come, Desdemona,
Once more well met at Cyprus.

[*Exeunt Otello, Desdemona, and Attendants.*]

Iago. Do thou meet me presently at the harbour.
Come hither. If thou be'st valiant; as (they say) base
men, being in love, have then a nobility in their na-
tures more than is native to them,—list me. The
lieutenant to-night watches on the court of guard ²:
—First, I must tell thee this,—Desdemona is directly
in love with him.

Rod. With him! why, 'tis not possible.

Iago. ³ Lay thy finger—thus, and let thy soul be
instructed. Mark me with what violence she first
lov'd the Moor, but for bragging, and telling her
fantastical lies: And will she love him still for pra-
ting ⁴? let not thy discreet heart think it. Her eye
must be fed; and what delight shall she have to
look on the devil? ⁵ When the blood is made dull
with the act of sport, there should be,—again to in-
flame

¹ — *the master*—] The pilot of the ship. JOHNSON.

² — *the court of guard*—] i. e. the place where the guard
musters. So, in *The Family of Love*, 1608:

“ Thus have I pass'd the round and *court of guard*.”

Again, in the *Beggar's Bush*, by Beaumont and Fletcher:

“ Visit your *courts of guard*, view your munition.”

STEEVENS.

³ *Lay thy finger thus*,—] On thy mouth, to stop it while thou
art listening to a wiser man. JOHNSON.

⁴ *And will she love him still for prating?*] The folio reads—
To love him still for prating! STEEVENS.

⁵ *When the blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should be
a game to inflame it, and to give satiety a fresh appetite; loveliness in
favour, sympathy in years, manners, and beauties;*—] This, it is
true, is the reading of the generality of the copies: but, methinks,
it is a very peculiar experiment, when the blood and spirits are
dulled and exhausted with sport, to raise and recruit them by sport:
for *sport* and *game* are but two words for the same thing. I have
retrieved

flame it⁶, and to give satiety a fresh appetite,—loveliness in favour; sympathy in years, manners, and beauties; all which the Moor is defective in: Now, for want of these requir'd conveniences, her delicate tenderness will find itself abus'd, begin to heave the gorge, disrelish and abhor the Moor; very nature will instruct her in it, and compel her to some second choice. Now, sir, this granted, (as it is a most pregnant and unforc'd position) who stands so eminently in the degree of this fortune, as Cassio does? a knave very voluble; no farther conscionable, than in putting on the mere form of civil and humane seeming, for the better compassing of his salt and most hidden loose affection? why, none; why, none; A slippery and subtle knave; a finder out of occasions; that has an eye can stamp and counterfeit advantages, though true advantage never present itself: A devilish knave! besides, the knave is handsome, young; and hath all those requisites in him, that folly and ⁷green minds look after: A pestilent complete knave; and the woman hath found him already.

Rod. I cannot believe that in her; she is full of most bless'd⁸ condition.

Iago. Bless'd figs' end! the wine she drinks is made of grapes: if she had been bless'd, she would never have lov'd the Moor: Bless'd pudding! Didst

retrieved the pointing and reading of the elder quarto, which certainly gives us the poet's sense; that when the blood is dulled with the exercise of pleasure, there should be proper incentives on each side to raise it *again*, as the charms of beauty, equality of years, and agreement of manners and disposition; which are wanting in Othello to rekindle Desdemona's passion. THEOBALD.

⁶ — *again to inflame it,*] Thus the quarto 1622. It is the folio reads—*a game*. STEEVENS.

⁷ — *green minds*—] Minds unripe, minds not yet fully formed.

JOHNSON.

⁸ — *condition.*] Qualities, disposition of mind. JOHNSON.

thou

thou not see her paddle with the palm of his hand? didst not mark that?

Rod. Yes, that I did; but that was but courtesy.

Iago. Lechery, by this hand! an index, and obscure prologue⁹ to the history of lust and foul thoughts. They met so near with their lips, that their breaths embrac'd together. Villainous thoughts, Roderigo! when these mutualities so marshal the way, hard at hand comes the master and main exercise, the incorporate conclusion: Pish!—But, sir, be you rul'd by me: I have brought you from Venice. Watch you to-night; for the command, I'll lay't upon you: Cassio knows you not;—I'll not be far from you: Do you find some occasion to anger Cassio, either by speaking too loud, or tainting his discipline; or from what other course² you please, which the time shall more favourably minister.

Rod. Well.

Iago. Sir, he is rash, and very sudden in choler; and, haply, with his truncheon may strike at you: Provoke him, that he may: for, even out of that, will I cause these of Cyprus to mutiny; + whose qualification shall come into no true taste again, but by

⁹ — *an index and obscure prologue, &c.*] That indexes were formerly prefixed to books, appears from a passage in *Troilus and Cressida*:

“And in such indexes though but small pricks
To their subsequent volumes, there is seen
The baby figure of the giant mass
Of things to come at large.” MALONE.

¹ — *tainting*—] Throwing a slur upon his discipline.

JOHNSON.

² — *other course*—] The first quarto reads, *cause*. STEEVENS.

³ — *sudden in choler*;—] *Sudden*, is precipitately violent.

JOHNSON.

⁴ — *whose qualification shall come, &c.*] Whose resentment shall not be so qualified or tempered, as to be well tasted, as not to retain some bitterness. The phrase is harsh, at least to our ears. JOHNSON.

Perhaps *qualification* means *fitness to preserve good order, or the regularity of military discipline*. STEEVENS.

the

the displanting of Cassio. So shall you have a shorter journey to your desires, by the means I shall then have to prefer them; and the impediment most profitably removed, without the which there were no expectation of our prosperity.

Rod. I will do this, if you can bring it to any opportunity.

Iago. I warrant thee. Meet me by and by at the citadel: I must fetch his necessaries ashore. Farewel.

Rod. Adieu.

[*Exit.*]

Iago. That Cassio loves her, I do well believe it; That she loves him, 'tis apt, and of great credit: The Moor—howbeit that I endure him not,— Is of a constant, loving, noble nature; And, I dare think, he'll prove to Desdemona A most dear husband. Now I do love her too; Not out of absolute lust, (though, peradventure, I stand accountant for as great a sin) But partly led to diet my revenge, For that I do suspect the lusty Moor Hath leap'd into my seat: the thought whereof Doth, ⁵ like a poisonous mineral, gnaw my inwards; And nothing can or shall content my soul, 'Till I am even with him ⁶, wife for wife; Or, failing so, yet that I put the Moor At least into a jealousy so strong

⁵ — like a poisonous mineral,—] This is philosophical. Mineral poisons kill by corrosion. JOHNSON.

⁶ 'Till I am even with him,] Thus the quarto, 1622; the first folio reads:

Till I am even'd with him.

i. e. Till I am on a level with him by retaliation.

So, in Heywood's *Iron Age*, 1632, Second Part:

“The stately walls he rear'd, levell'd, and even'd.”

Again, in *Taucred and Gismund*, 1592:

“For now the walls are even'd with the plain.”

Again, in *Sneyburst's* translation of the first book of Virgil's *Æneid*, 1582: — numerum cum navibus æquat. —

“— with the ships the number is even'd.” STEEVENS.

That judgment cannot cure. Which thing to do,—
If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trash

For

† ——— Which thing to do,

If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trace

For his quick hunting, stand the putting on.] A trifling, insignificant fellow may, in some respects, very well be called *trash*; but the metaphor is not preserved. For what agreement is there betwixt *trash*, and *quick hunting*, and *standing the putting on*? The allusion to the *chace*, Shakespeare seems to be fond of applying to Roderigo; who says of himself towards the conclusion of this Act:

I follow here in the chace, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry.

I suppose therefore that the poet wrote;

If this poor brach of Venice, ———

which is a low species of *bounds of the chace*, and a term generally used in contempt: and this completes and perfects the metaphorical allusion, and makes it much more satirical. Vlietius; in his notes on Grævius, says, *Racha Saxonibus canem significabat, unde Scoti hodie Rache pro cane femina habent, quod Anglis est Brache. Nos verò* (he speaks of the Hollanders) *Brach non quemvis canem sed sagacem vocamus.* So the French, *Braque, espece de chita de chaffe.* Menage

Etimol. WARBURTON:

§ ——— whom I do trace

For his quick hunting, ———] Just the contrary. He did not trace him, he *put him on*, as he says immediately after. The old quarto leads to the true reading:

——— whom I do crush

For his quick hunting, ———

Plainly corrupted from *cherish*, WARBURTON:

——— whom I do trace] It is a term of hunting or field-sport; to trace sometimes signifies to follow, as *Henry VIII.* Act 3. Scene 2:

Now all joy trace the conjunction;

and a dog or a man traces *à bare*: but to trace a dog, in those sports; is to put a trace, or pair of couples, upon him; and such a dog is said to be traced. The sense, then, of

——— whom I do trace

For his quick hunting, ———

is this, whom I do associate to me for the purpose of ruining Cassio the sooner. T. Row.

If this poor trash of Venice, whom I trace

For his quick hunting, stand the putting on.] Dr. Warburton, with his usual happy sagacity, turned the old reading *trash* into *brach*. But it seems to me, that *trash* belongs to another part of the line, and that we should read *trash* for *trace*. The old quartos (in the same part of the line) read *crash*, signify-

ing

For his quick hunting, stand the putting on,
 'I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip;

ing indeed the same as *trash*, but plainly corrupted from it. To *trash* a hound is a term of hunting still used in the north, and perhaps not uncommon in other parts of England. It is, to correct, to *rate*. *Crush* was never the *technical* expression on this occasion; and only found a place here as a more familiar word with the printers. The sense is, "If this hound Roderigo, whom I *rate* for quick hunting, for over-running the scent, will but *stand* the *putting on*, will but have patience to be fairly and properly put upon the scent, &c." This very hunting term to *trash* is metaphorically applied by our author in the *Tempest*, V. I. Sc. 2. p. 13.

Pros. Being once perfected how to grant suits,
 How to deny them, whom t'advance, and whom
 To **trash* for overtopping.—

To *trash* for overtopping; i. e. "What suitors to check for their too great forwardness." Here another phrase of the field is joined with to *trash*. To *overtop* is when a hound gives his tongue above the rest, too loudly or too readily; for which he ought to be *trash'd* or *rated*. *Topper*, in the good sense of the word, is a common name for a hound. Shakespeare is fond of allusions to hunting, and appears to be well acquainted with its language. This explanation of *trash* illustrates a passage in the *Bonduca* of Beaumont and Fletcher, which has been hitherto misunderstood and misrepresented; and where the use of the word equally reflects light on our author. Act I. Sc. 1. vol. vi. p. 274.

Car. I fled too,
 But not so fast: your jewel had been lost then,
 Young *Hengo* there; he *trash'd* me.

Here *Bonduca* and *Nennius* are accusing *Caratach* of running away from the *Romans*. *Caratach* answers, "It is very true, *Nennius*, that I fled from the *Romans*.—But recollect, I did not run so fast as you pretend: I soon stood still to defend your favourite youth *Hengo*:—He STOPPED my flight, and I saved his life." In this passage, where *trash* properly signifies *check*, the commentators substitute *trace*: a correction, which entirely destroys the force of the context, and the spirit of the reply. WARTON.

To *trash* likewise signifies to *follow*. So, in the *Puritan Widow*, 1605: "A guarded lackey to run before it, and py'd liveries to come *trashing* after it." The repetition of the word *trash* is much in Shakespeare's manner, though in his worst. In a subsequent scene, *Iago* calls *Bianca*—*trash*. STEEVENS.

'I'll have our Michael Cassio on the hip;] A phrase from the art of wrestling. JOHNSON.

* Sir T. H. reads *plash*, which see.

Abuse

Abuse him to the Moor ¹ in the rank garb,—
 For I fear Cassio with my night-cap too;
 Make the Moor thank me, love me, and reward me,
 For making him egregiously an ass,
 And practising upon his peace and quiet
 Even to madness. 'Tis here, but yet confus'd;
² Knavery's plain face is never seen, 'till us'd. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E II.

A street.

Enter Herald, with a proclamation.

Her. It is Othello's pleasure, our noble and va-
 liant general, that, upon certain tidings now arriv'd,
 importing the ³ mere perdition of the Turkish fleet,
 every man put himself into triumph; some to dance,
 some to make bonfires, each man to what sport and
 revels his addiction ⁴ leads him; for, besides these
 beneficial news, it is the celebration of his nuptials:
 So much was his pleasure should be proclaimed. All

¹ — in the right garb,] The quarto reads in the rank garb,
 which I think is right. Rank garb, I believe, means, grossly, i. e.
 without mixing the matter. So, in Marston's *Dutch Courtesan*,
 1604:

“Whither, in the rank name of madness, whither?”

STEEVENS.

² Knavery's plain face is never seen,—] An honest man acts
 upon a plan, and forecasts his designs; but a knave depends upon
 temporary and local opportunities, and never knows his own pur-
 pose, but at the time of execution. JOHNSON.

³ — mere perdition—] Mere in this place signifies entire. So,
 in *Hamlet*:

“——— possess it merely.” STEEVENS.

So, in *A Warning for Faire Woman*, a tragedy, 1599:

“Why then you are persuaded certainly,

“That mistress Saunders is mere innocent.” MALONE.

⁴ — his addiction] The first quarto reads, his mind.

STEEVENS.

offices are open; and there is full liberty of feasting, from this present hour of five, 'till the bell hath told eleven. Heaven bless the isle of Cyprus, and our noble general Othello! [Exit.

S C E N E III.

The castle.

Enter Othello, Desdemona, Cassio, and Attendants.

Oth. Good Michael, look you to the guard to-night:

Let's teach ourselves that honourable stop,
Not to out-sport discretion.

Cas. Iago hath direction what to do;
But, notwithstanding, with my personal eye
Will I look to't.

Oth. Iago is most honest.

Michael, good night: To-morrow, with your earliest,
Let me have speech with you.—Come, my dear love;
The purchase made, the fruits are to ensue; [To Desd.
That profit's yet to come 'twixt me and you.—
Good night. [Exeunt Othello, and Desdemona.

Enter Iago.

Cas. Welcome, Iago: We must to the watch.

Iago. Not this hour, lieutenant; 'tis not yet ten o'clock: ^s Our general cast us thus early, for the

^s Our general cast us—] That is, appointed us to our stations. To cast the play, is, in the stile of the theatres, to assign to every actor his proper part. JOHNSON.

Perhaps cast us only means dismissed us, or got rid of our company. So, in one of the following scenes, "You are but now cast in his mood;" i. e. turn'd out of your office in his anger; and in the first scene it means to dismiss.

So, in the WITCH, a MS. Tragi-comedy, by Middleton:

"—She cast off

"My company betimes to-night, by tricks, &c."

STEVENS.

love

love of his Desdemona: whom let us not therefore blame; he hath not yet made wanton the night with her; and she is sport for Jove.

Caf. She's a most exquisite lady.

Iago. And, I'll warrant her, full of game.

Caf. Indeed, she is a most fresh and delicate creature.

Iago. What an eye she has! methinks, it sounds a parley of provocation.

Caf. An inviting eye; and yet, methinks, right modest.

Iago. And, when she speaks, is it not ⁶ an alarum to love ⁷?

Caf. She is, indeed, perfection.

Iago. Well, happiness to their sheets! Come, lieutenant, I have a stoop of wine; and here without are a brace of Cyprus gallants, that would fain have a measure to the health of the black Othello.

Caf. Not to-night, good Iago; I have very poor and unhappy brains for drinking: I could well wish courtesy would invent some other custom of entertainment.

Iago. O, they are our friends; but one cup: I'll drink for you.

Caf. I have drunk but one cup to-night, and that was ⁸ craftily qualified too, and, behold, what innovation it makes here: I am unfortunate in the infirmity, and dare not task my weakness with any more.

Iago. What, man! 'tis a night of revels; the gallants desire it.

Caf. Where are they?

Iago. Here at the door; I pray you, call them in.

Caf. I'll do't; but it dislikes me. [*Exit Cassio.*]

Iago. If I can fasten but one cup upon him,

⁶ — *an alarum*—] The voice may sound an alarm more properly than the eye can sound a parley. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *is it not an alarum to love?*] The quartos read, — 'tis an alarm to love. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *craftily qualified*—] Slightly mixed with water. JOHNSON.

With that which he hath drunk to-night already,
 He'll be as full of quarrel and offence
 As my young mistress' dog. Now, my sick fool,
 Roderigo,
 Whom love hath turn'd almost the wrong side
 outward,
 To Desdemona hath to-night carous'd
 Potations pottle deep; and he's to watch:
 Three lads of Cyprus,⁹— noble swelling spirits,
 That hold their honours in a wary distance,
¹ The very elements of this warlike isle,—
 Have I to-night fluster'd with flowing cups,
 And they watch too. Now, 'mongst this flock of
 drunkards,
 Am I to put our Cassio in some action
 That may offend the isle;—But here they come:
² If consequence do but approve my dream,
 My boat sails freely, both with wind and stream.

Enter Cassio, Montano, and Gentlemen.

Cas. 'Fore heaven, they have³ given me a rouse
 already.

Mont.

⁹ *Three lads of Cyprus,*] The folio reads—Three *else* of Cyprus.
 STEEVENS.

¹ *The very elements—*] As quarrelsome as the *discordia semina rerum*; as quick in opposition as fire and water. JOHNSON.

² *If consequence do but approve my dream,*] All the printed copies concur in this reading, but, I think, it does not come up to the poet's intention; I rather imagine that he wrote,

If consequence do but approve my deem,
i. e. my opinion, the judgment I have formed of what must happen. So, in *Troilus and Cressida*:

Cres. *I true? how now? what wicked deem is this?*

THEOBALD.

This reading is followed by the succeeding editions. I rather read,

If consequence do but approve my scheme.

But why should *dream* be rejected? Every scheme subsisting only in the imagination may be termed a *dream*. JOHNSON.

³ —*given me a rouse, &c.*] A *rouse* appears to be a quantity of liquor rather too large.

Mont. Good faith, a little one; not past a pint,
As I am a soldier.

Iago. Some wine, ho! [Iago sings.

And let me the canakin clink, clink;

And let me the canakin clink:

A soldier's a man;

A life's but a span⁴;

Why then, let a soldier drink.

Some wine, boys!

Caf. 'Fore heaven, an excellent song.

Iago. I learn'd it in England, where (indeed) they
are most potent in potting: your Dane, your Ger-
man, and your swag-bellied Hollander,—Drink, ho!
—are nothing to your English.

Caf. Is your Englishman so exquisite in his drink-
ing?

Iago. Why, he drinks you, with facility, your
Dane dead drunk; he sweats not to overthrow your
Almain; he gives your Hollander a vomit, ere the
next pottle can be fill'd.

Caf. To the health of our general.

Mon. I am for it, lieutenant; and I'll do you
justice.

Iago. O sweet England!

So in *Hamlet*; and in *The Christian turn'd Turk*, 1612:

" — our friends may tell

" We drank a rouse to them." STEEVENS.

⁴ *A life's but a span*;] Thus the quarto. The folio reads:

" *Oh, man's life's but a span.*" STEEVENS.

⁵ — *so exquisite*—] The quarto reads *so expert*. This accom-
plishment in the English is likewise mentioned by Beaumont and
Fletcher in *The Captain*:

Lod. " Are the Englishmen

" Such stubborn drinkers?

Piso. " — not a leak at sea

" Can suck more liquor; you shall have their children

" Christen'd in mull'd sack, and at five years old

" Able to knock a Dane down." STEEVENS.

⁶ King Stephen was a worthy peer ⁷,
 His breeches cost him but a crown;
 He held them six-pence all too dear,
 With that he call'd the taylor—⁸ lown.

He was a wight of high renown,
 And thou art but of low degree:
 'Tis pride that pulls the country down,
 Then take thine auld cloak about thee.

Some wine, ho!

Caf. Why, this is a more exquisite song than the other.

Iago. Will you hear it again?

Caf. No; for I hold him to be unworthy of his place, that does those things.—Well,—Heaven's above all; and there be souls that must be saved, and there be souls must not be saved.

Iago. It's true, good lieutenant.

Caf. For mine own part,—no offence to the general, nor any man of quality,—I hope to be saved.

Iago. And so I do too, lieutenant.

Caf. Ay, but, by your leave, not before me; the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient. Let's have no more of this; let's to our affairs.—Forgive us our sins!—Gentlemen, let's look to our business. Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk; this is my ancient;—this is my right hand, and this is my left

⁶ King Stephen, &c.] These stanzas are taken from an old song, which the reader will find recovered and preserved in a curious work lately printed, intitled, *Relicks of Ancient Poetry*, consisting of old heroic ballads, songs, &c. 3 vols. 12°. JOHNSON.

So, in Greene's *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*: "King Stephen wore a pair of cloth breeches of a noble a pair, and thought them paining costly." STEEVENS

⁷ — a worthy peer,] i. e. a worth fellow. In this sense *peer*, *fre*, and *phere*, are often used by the writers of our earliest romances. STEEVENS.

⁸ — lown.] Sorry fellow, paltry wretch. JOHNSON.

hand:—I am not drunk now; I can stand well enough, and I speak well enough.

All. Excellent well.

Cas. Why, very well then: you must not think then that I am drunk. [Exit.

Mont. To the platform, masters; come, let's set the watch.

Iago. You see this fellow, that is gone before;—
He is a soldier, fit to stand by Cæsar
And give direction: and do but see his vice;
'Tis to his virtue a just equinox,
The one as long as the other: 'tis pity of him.
I fear, the trust Othello puts him in,
On some odd time of his infirmity,
Will shake this island.

Mont. But is he often thus?

Iago. 'Tis evermore the prologue to his sleep:
He'll watch the horologe a double set,
If drink rock not his cradle.

Mont. It were well,
The general were put in mind of it.
Perhaps, he sees it not; or his good nature

* *He'll watch the horologe a double set,*] If he have no drink, he'll keep awake while the clock strikes two rounds, or four-and-twenty hours.

Chaucer uses the word *horologe* in more places than one.

“ Well likerer was his crowing in his loge

“ Than is a clock or abbey *horologe*.” JOHNSON.

So Heywood in his *Epigrams on Proverbs*, 1562:

“ The divell is in *horologe*, the houres to trye,

“ Searche houres by the funne, the devyl's dyall wyll lye.

“ The devyl is in *horologe*, nowe cheere in bowles,

“ Let the devyl kepe our clockes, while God keepe our
“ soules.”

Again, in *The Devil's Charter*, 1607:

“ — my gracious lord,

“ By Sitto's *horologe* 'tis struck eleven.”

Again, in the *Miracles of Moses*, by Drayton:

“ The cock the country *horologe* that rings

“ The chearful warning to the sun's awake.” STEEVENS.

Prizes the virtue that appears in Cassio,
And looks not on his evils; Is not this true?

Enter Roderigo.

Iago. How now, Roderigo?

I pray you, after the lieutenant; go. [*Exit Rod.*]

Mont. And 'tis great pity, that the noble Moor
Should hazard such a place, as his own second,
With one of an 'ingraft infirmity:
It were an honest action, to say so
Unto the Moor.

Iago. Not I, for this fair island:
I do love Cassio well; and would do much
To cure him of this evil. But, hark! what noise?
[*Cry within,—Help! help!*]

Re-enter Cassio, driving in Roderigo.

Cas. You rogue! you rascal!

Mont. What's the matter, lieutenant?

Cas. A knave!—teach me my duty!
I'll beat the knave² into a twiggen bottle.

Rod. Beat me!

Cas. Dost thou prate, rogue?

Mont. Nay, good lieutenant; [*Staying him.*]
I pray you, sir, hold your hand.

Cas. Let me go, sir,
Or I'll knock you o'er the mazzard.

Mont. Come, come, you're drunk.

Cas. Drunk? [*They fight.*]

Iago. Away, I say! go out, and cry—a mutiny.
[*Aside to Rod.*]

[*Exit Roderigo.*]

¹ — *ingraft infirmity:*] An infirmity rooted, settled in his constitution. JOHNSON

² — *into a twiggen bottle.*] A twiggen bottle is a wicker'd bottle; and so the quarto reads. STEEVENS.

Nay,

Nay, good lieutenant,—alas, gentlemen,—
 Help, ho!—Lieutenant,—sir,—Montano,—sir;—
 Help, masters! Here's a goodly watch, indeed!—
 Who's that that rings the bell?—Diablo³, ho!

[Bell rings.

The town will rise: Fie, fie, lieutenant! hold;
 You will be sham'd for ever.

Enter Othello, and Attendants.

Oth. What is the matter here?

Mont. I bleed still, ⁴ I am hurt to the death;—he dies.

Oth. Hold, for your lives.

Iago. Hold, hold, lieutenant,—sir,—Montano,—
 gentlemen,—

Have you forgot ⁵ all sense of place and duty?
 Hold, hold! the general speaks to you; hold, for
 shame!

Oth. Why, how now, ho! from whence ariseth
 this?

Are we turn'd Turks; and to ourselves do that,
 Which heaven hath forbid the Ottomites?

For christian shame, put by this barbarous brawl:
 He that stirs next to carve forth his own rage,
 Holds his soul light; he dies upon his motion.—

³ —*Diablo*—] I meet with this exclamation in Marlow's *King Edward II.* 1622: "*Diablo?* what passions call you these?"

STEEVENS.

⁴ —*I am hurt to death*— he dies.] *Montano* thinks he is mortally wounded, yet by these words he seems determined to continue the duel, and to kill his antagonist *Cassio*. So when *Roderigo* runs at *Cassio*, in the 5th Act, he says,—“Villain, thou art!”

TOLLET.

He dies, i. e. he shall die. He may be supposed to say this as he renews the fight. STEEVENS.

⁵ —*all sense of place and duty?*] So Hammer. The rest,
 — *all place of sense and duty?* JOHNSON.

Silence

Silence that dreadful bell, ⁶ it frights the isle
From her propriety.—What is the matter, masters?—
Honest Iago, that look'st dead with grieving,
Speak, who began this? on thy love, I charge thee.

Iago. I do not know;—friends all but now, even
now,

7 In quarter and in terms like bride and groom
Divesting them for bed: and then, but now,
(As if some planet had unwitted men)
Swords out, and tilting one at other's breast,
In opposition bloody. I cannot speak
Any beginning to this peevish odds;
And 'would in action glorious I had lost
These legs, that brought me to a part of it!

Oth. How comes it, Michael, you are thus forgot ⁸?

Cas. I pray you, pardon me, I cannot speak.

Oth. Worthy Montano, you were wont be civil;
The gravity and stillness of your youth
The world hath noted, and your name is great
In mouths of wisest censure; What's the matter,
⁹ That you unlace your reputation thus,
And ¹ spend your rich opinion, for the name
Of a night-brawler? give me answer to it.

Mon. Worthy Othello, I am hurt to danger;
Your officer, Iago, can inform you—
While I spare speech, which something now offends
me,—

Of all that I do know: nor know I aught,

⁶ — it frights the isle

From her propriety.—] From her regular and proper state.

JOHNSON.

⁷ *In quarter,*—] In their quarters; at their lodging.

JOHNSON.

⁸ — you are thus forgot?] i. e. you have thus forgot yourself.

STEEVENS.

⁹ *That you unlace*—] Slacken, or loosen. Put in danger of dropping; or perhaps strip of its ornaments. JOHNSON.

¹ — spend your rich opinion,—] Throw away and squander a reputation so valuable as yours. JOHNSON.

By me that's said or done amiss this night; -
 Unless ² self-charity be sometime a vice;
 And to defend ourselves it be a sin,
 When violence assails us.

Oth. Now, by heaven,
 My blood begins my safer guides to rule;
³ And passion, having my best judgment collid,
 Assays to lead the way: if I once stir,
 Or do but lift this arm, the best of you
 Shall sink in my rebuke. Give me to know
 How this foul rout began, who set it on;
 And ⁴ he that is approv'd in this offence,
 Though he had twinn'd with me, both at a birth,
 Shall lose me.—What! in a town of war,
 Yet wild, the people's hearts brim-full of fear,
 To manage private and domestic quarrel,
 In night, and on the court and guard of safety!
 'Tis monstrous.—Iago, who began't?

Mon. If partially affin'd ⁵, or leagu'd in office,
 Thou

² — self-charity—] Care of one's self. JOHNSON.

³ And passion, having my best judgment collid,] Thus the folio reads, and I believe rightly. Othello means, that passion has discoloured his judgment. The word is used in *The Midsummer Night's Dream*:

“ — like lightning in the collid night.”

To *colly* anciently signified to besmear, to blacken as with coal. So, in a comedy called *The Family of Love*, 1608.—“ carry thy link a 't'other side the way, thou *collyest* me and my ruffe.” The word (as I am assured) is still used in the midland counties.

Mr. Tollet informs me that *Wallis's Hist. of Northumberland*, p. 46. says, “ — in our northern counties it [*i. e.* a fine black clay or ochre] is commonly known by the name of *Collow* or *Kilow*, by which name it is known by Dr. Woodward, &c.” The Doctor says it had its name from *Kellow*, by which name, in the North, the *soot* or *grime* on the backs of chimneys is called. *Colly*, however, is from *coal*, as *collier*. Hammer reads—*choiler*.

STEEVENS.

⁴ — be that is approv'd in this offence,] He that is convicted by proof, of having been engaged in this offence. JOHNSON.

⁵ If partially affin'd,—] *Affin'd* is bound by proximity of relationship; but here it means related by nearness of office. In the first scene it is used in the former of these senses:

Thou dost deliver more or less than truth,
Thou art no soldier.

Iago. Touch me not so near :

I had rather have this tongue cut from my mouth,
Than it should do offence to Michael Cassio ;
Yet, I persuade myself, to speak the truth
Shall nothing wrong him.—Thus it is, general.

Montano and myself being in speech,
There comes a fellow, crying out for help ;
And Cassio following him with determin'd sword,
To execute upon him : Sir, this gentleman

Steps in to Cassio, and entreats his pause ;
Myself the crying fellow did pursue,
Left, by his clamour (as it so fell out)

The town might fall in fright : he, swift of foot,
Out-ran my purpose ; and I return'd the rather
For that I heard the clink and fall of swords,

And Cassio high in oath ; which, 'till to-night,
I ne'er might say before : When I came back,
(For this was brief) I found them close together,
At blow, and thrust ; even as again they were,
When you yourself did part them.

More of this matter can I not report :—

But men are men ; the best sometimes forget :
Though Cassio did some little wrong to him,—
As men in rage strike those that wish them best,—

Yet, surely, Cassio, I believe, receiv'd,
From him that fled, some strange indignity,
Which patience could not pass.

Oth. I know, Iago,

Thy honesty and love doth mince this matter,
Making it light to Cassio :—Cassio, I love thee ;
But never more be officer of mine.—

Enter Desdemona, attended.

Look, if my gentle love be not rais'd up ;—

“ If I, in any just term, am *affin'd*

“ To love the Moor.” STEEVENS.

I'll make thee an example.

Des. What is the matter, dear?

Oib. All's well now sweeting: Come away to bed.

Sir, for your hurts, myself will be your surgeon:—

Lead him off.— [*To Montano, who is led off.*]

Iago, look with care about the town;

And silence those whom this vile brawl distracted.—

Come, Desdemona; 'tis the soldiers' life,

To have their balmy slumbers wak'd with strife.

[*Exit &c. Manent Iago, and Cassio.*]

Iago. What, are you hurt, lieutenant?

Cas. Ay, past all surgery.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid!

Cas. Reputation, reputation, reputation! O, I have lost my reputation! I have lost the immortal part, sir, of myself, and what remains is bestial.— My reputation, Iago, my reputation.

Iago. As I am an honest man, I had thought you had receiv'd some bodily wound; there is more offence⁵ in that, than in reputation. Reputation is an idle and most false imposition; oft got without merit, and lost without deserving: You have lost no reputation at all, unless you repute yourself such a loser. What, man! there are ways to recover the general again: You are but now⁶ cast in his mood, a punishment more in policy than in malice; even so as one would beat his offenceless dog, to affright an imperious lion:—sue to him again, and he's yours.

Cas. I will rather sue to be despis'd, than to deceive so good a commander, with so slight, so drunken, and so indiscreet an officer. Drunk?⁷ and speak parrot?

⁵ — *there is more offence, &c.*] Thus the quartos. The folio reads, — *there is more sense, &c.* STEEVENS.

⁶ — *cast in his mood,*—] Ejected in his anger. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *and speak parrot?*—] A phrase signifying to act foolishly and childishly. So Skelea,

parrot? and squabble? swagger? swear? and discourse fustian with one's own shadow?—O thou invisible spirit of wine, if thou hast no name to be known by, let us call thee—devil!

Iago. What was he that you follow'd with your sword? What had he done to you?

Caf. I know not.

Iago. Is it possible?

Caf. I remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly; a quarrel, but nothing wherefore.—O, that men should put an enemy in their mouths, to steal away their brains! that we should, with joy; revel, pleasure, and applause, transform ourselves into beasts!

Iago. Why, but you are now well enough; How came you thus recover'd?

Caf. It hath pleas'd the devil, drunkenness, to give place to the devil, wrath: one unperfectness shews me another, to make me frankly despise myself.

Iago. Come, you are too severe a moraler: As the time, the place, and the condition of this country stands, I could heartily wish this had not befallen; but, since it is as it is, mend it for your own good.

Caf. I will ask him for my place again; he shall tell me, I am a drunkard! Had I as many mouths as Hydra, such an answer would stop them all. To be now a sensible man, by and by a fool, and presently a beast! O strange!—Every inordinate cup is unblest'd, and the ingredient is a devil.

Iago. Come, come, good wine is a good familiar creature, if it be well used; exclaim no more against

“ These maidens full mekely with many a divers flour;
 “ Freshly they dress and make sweete my houre,
 “ With *spake parrot* I pray you full courteously thei saye.”

WARBURTON:

So, in Lyly's *Woman in the Moon*, 1597:

“ Thou pretty parrot *speake* awhile.”

These lines are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

it. And, good lieutenant, I think, you think I love you.

Caf. I have well approv'd it, fir.—I drunk!

Iago. You, or any man living, may be drunk at some time, man. I tell you what you shall do. Our general's wife is now the general;—I may say so in this respect, ^a for that he hath devoted and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and denotement, of her parts and graces:—confess yourself freely to her; importune her; she'll help to put you in your place again: she is of so free, so kind, so apt, so blessed a disposition, that she holds it a vice in her goodness, not to do more than she is requested: This broken joint, between you and her husband, intreat her to splinter; and, my fortunes against any lay worth naming, this crack of your love shall grow stronger than it was before.

Caf. You advise me well.

Iago. I protest, in the sincerity of love, and honest kindness.

Caf. I think it freely; and, betimes in the morning, I will beseech the virtuous Desdemona to undertake for me: I am desperate of my fortunes, if they check me here.

Iago. You are in the right. Good night, lieutenant; I must to the watch.

^a —for that he hath devoted, and given up himself to the contemplation, mark, and devotement, of her parts and graces.—] I remember, it is said of Antony, in the beginning of his tragedy, that he, who used to fix his eyes altogether on the dreadful ranges of war:

“ — now bends, now turns,

“ The office and devotion of their view

“ Upon a strumpet's front.”

This is finely expressed; but I cannot persuade myself that our poet would ever have said, any one devoted himself to the devotion of any thing. All the copies agree; but the mistake certainly arose from a single letter being turned upside down at press.

THEOBALD.

Caf.

Cas. Good night, honest Iago. [*Exit Cassio.*]

Iago. And what's he then, that says—I play the villain?

When ⁹ this advice is free I give, and honest,
 Probable to thinking ¹, and (indeed) the course
 To win the Moor again? For 'tis most easy
 The inclining Desdemona to subdue
 In any honest suit; she's fram'd as fruitful
 As the ² free elements: And then for her
 To win the Moor,—were't to renounce his baptism,
 All seals and symbols of redeemed sin,—
 His soul is so enfetters'd to her love,
 That she may make, unmake, do what she list,
 Even as her appetite shall play the god
 With his weak function. How am I then a villain,
 To counsel Cassio ³ to this parallel course,
 Directly to his good? Divinity of hell!
 When devils will their blackest sins put on,
 They do suggest at first with heavenly shews,
 As I do now: For, while this honest fool
 Plies Desdemona to repair his fortunes,
 And she for him pleads strongly to the Moor,
⁴ I'll pour this pestilence into his ear,—
⁵ That she repeals him for her body's lust;
 And, by how much she strives to do him good,

⁹ — *this advice is free*—] This counsel has an appearance of honest openness, of frank good-will. JOHNSON.

¹ *Probable*] The old editions concur in reading *probal*. There may be such a contraction of the word, but I have not met with it in any other book. Yet, abbreviations as violent occur in our ancient writers. STEEVENS.

² — *free elements*:] Liberal, bountiful, as the elements, out of which all things are produced. JOHNSON.

³ — *to this parallel course*,] Parallel, for even; because parallel lines run even and equidistant. WARBURTON.

Parallel course; i. e. a course level, and even with his design.

JOHNSON.

⁴ *I'll pour this pestilence*—] Pestilence, for poison. WARBURTON.

⁵ *That she repeals him*—] That is, recalls him. JOHNSON.

She

She shall undo her credit with the Moor.
 So will I turn her virtue into pitch;
 And out of her own goodness make the net
 * That shall enmesh them all.—How now, Roderigo?

Enter Roderigo.

Rod. I do follow here in the chace, not like a hound that hunts, but one that fills up the cry. My money is almost spent; I have been to-night exceedingly well cudgell'd; and, I think, the issue will be—I shall have so much experience for my pains: and so, with no money at all, and a little more wit⁷, return to Venice.

Iago. How poor are they, that have not patience!—What wound did ever heal, but by degrees? Thou know'st, we work by wit, and not by witchcraft;

And wit depends on dilatory time.
 Does't not go well? Cassio hath beaten thee,
 And thou, by that small hurt, hast cashier'd Cassio:
 * Though other things grow fair against the sun,
 Yet fruits, that blossom first, will first be ripe:
 Content thyself a while.—By the mass, 'tis morning;

* *That shall enmesh them all.*—] A metaphor from taking birds in meshes. POPE.

⁷ — *a little more wit,*] Thus the folio. The first quarto reads — *and with that wit.* STEEVENS.

* *Though other things grow fair against the sun, Yet fruits, that blossom first, will first be ripe.*] Of many different things, all planned with the same art, and promoted with the same diligence, some must succeed sooner than others, by the order of nature. Every thing cannot be done at once; we must proceed by the necessary gradation. We are not to despair of slow events any more than of tardy fruits, while the causes are in regular progress, and the fruits grow fair against the sun. Hanmer has not, I think, rightly conceived the sentiment; for he reads,

These fruits which blossom first, are not first ripe.

I have therefore drawn it out at length, for there are few to whom that will be easy which was difficult to Hanmer. JOHNSON.

Pleasure, and action, make the hours seem short.—
 Retire thee; go where thou art billeted:
 Away, I say; thou shalt know more hereafter:—
 Nay, get thee gone.— [Exit Roderigo.
 Two things are to be done,—
 My wife must move for Cassio to her mistress;
 I'll set her on;
 Myself, the while, will draw⁹ the Moor apart,
 And bring him jump when he may Cassio find
 Soliciting his wife:—Ay, that's the way;
 Dull not device by coldness and delay. [Exit.

A C T III. S C E N E I.

Before the castle.

Enter Cassio, with Musicians.

Cas. Masters, play here, I will content your pains,
 Something that's brief; and bid—good-morrow, ge-
 neral.

[*Musick plays; and enter Clown.*

Clown. Why, masters, have your instruments
 been at Naples, that they speak i' the nose thus?

Mus. How, sir, how!

Clown. Are these, I pray you, call'd wind instru-
 ments?

Mus. Ay, marry, are they, sir.

⁹ — will draw] The old copies read—to draw, which may be
 right, and consistent with the tenor of this interrupted speech.
 Iago is still debating with himself concerning the means to perplex
 Othello. STEEVENS.

¹ Why, masters, have your instruments been in Naples, that they speak
 i' the nose thus?] The venereal disease first appeared at the siege of
 Naples. JOHNSON.

Clown.

Clown. O, thereby hangs a tail.

Mus. Whereby hangs a tale, fir?

Clown. Marry, fir, by many a wind instrument that I know. But, masters, here's money for you: and the general so likes your music, that he desires you, ² of all loves, to make no more noise with it.

Mus. Well, fir, we will not.

Clown. If you have any music that may not be heard, to't again: but, as they say, to hear music, the general does not greatly care.

Mus. We have none such, fir.

Clown. Then put up your pipes in your bag, ³ for I'll away: Go; ⁴ vanish into air; away.

[*Exeunt Mus.*]

Cas. Dost thou hear, my honest friend?

Clown. No, I hear not your honest friend; I hear you.

Cas. Pr'ythee, keep up thy quilllets. There's a poor piece of gold for thee: if the gentlewoman that attends the general's wife, be stirring, tell her, there's one Cassio entreats her a little favour of speech: Wilt thou do this?

Clown. She is stirring, fir; if she will stir hither, I shall seem to notify unto her.

[*Exit Clown.*]

Enter Iago.

Cas. Do, good my friend.—In happy time, Iago.

Iago. You have not been a-bed then?

Cas. Why, no; the day had broke
Before we parted. I have made bold, Iago,
To send in for your wife: My suit to her

² — of all loves,—] The folio reads—*for love's sake.*

STEEVENS.

³ — for I'll away—] Hanmer reads, *and bid away.* JOHNSON.

⁴ — vanish into air.] So the folio and one of the quartos.
The eldest quarto reads—*Vanish away.* STEEVENS.

Is, that she will to virtuous Desdemona
Procure me some access.

Iago. I'll send her to you presently :
And I'll devise a mean to draw the Moor
Out of the way, that your converse and business
May be more free. [Exit.]

Caf. I humbly thank you for't. I never knew
A Florentine more kind and honest.

Enter Æmilia.

Æmil. Good morrow, good lieutenant : I am sorry
For your displeasure ; but all will soon be well.
The general, and his wife, are talking of it ;
And she speaks for you stoutly : The Moor replies,
That he, you hurt, is of great fame in Cyprus,
And great affinity ; and that, in wholesome wisdom,
He might not but refuse you : but, he protests, he
loves you ;
And needs no other suitor, but his likings,
To take the safest occasion by the front,
To bring you in again.

Caf. Yet, I beseech you,—
If you think fit, or that it may be done,—
Give me advantage of some brief discourse
With Desdemona alone.

Æmil. Pray you, come in ;
I will bestow you where you shall have time
To speak your bosom freely.

Caf. I am much bound to you⁶. [Exeunt.]

⁵ *To take the safest occasion by the front,*] This line is wanting in the folio. STEEVENS.

⁶ *I am much bound to you.*] This speech is omitted in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

SCENE

S C E N E II.

*A room in the castle.**Enter Othello, Iago, and Gentlemen.*

Oth. These letters give, Iago, to the pilot;
 And, by him, do my duties to the state:
 That done, I will be walking on the works,
 Repair there to me.

Iago. Well, my good lord, I'll do't.

Oth. This fortification, gentlemen,—shall we see't?

Gent. We'll wait upon your lordship. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III.

*Another room in the castle.**Enter Desdemona, Cassio, and Emilia.*

Des. Be thou assur'd, good Cassio, I will do
 All my abilities in thy behalf.

Emil. Good madam, do; I know, it grieves my
 husband,
 As if the case were his.

Des. O, that's an honest fellow.—Do not doubt,
 Cassio,

But I will have my lord and you again
 As friendly as you were.

Cas. Bounteous madam,
 Whatever shall become of Michael Cassio,
 He's never any thing but your true servant.

Des. O, sir, I thank you: You do love my lord;
 You have known him long; and be you well assur'd,
 He shall in strangeness stand no farther off
 Than in a politic distance.

¹ *As if the case were his.]* The folio reads—As if the case were his. STEEVENS.

Caf. Ay, but, lady,
 8 That policy may either last so long,
 Or feed upon such nice and waterish diet,
 Or breed itself so out of circumstance,
 That, I being absent, and my place supply'd,
 My general will forget my love and service.

Des. Do not doubt that; before Æmilia here,
 I give thee warrant of thy place: assure thee,
 If I do vow a friendship, I'll perform it
 To the last article: my lord shall never rest;
 9 I'll watch him tame, and talk him out of patience;
 His bed shall seem a school, his board a shrift;
 I'll intermingle every thing he does
 With Cassio's suit: Therefore be merry, Cassio;
 For thy solicitor shall rather die,
 Than give thy cause away.

Enter Othello, and Iago, at a distance.

Æmil. Madam, here comes my lord.

* *That policy may either last so long,*] He may either of himself think it politic to keep me out of office so long, or he may be satisfied with such slight reasons, or so many accidents may make him think my re-admission at that time improper, that I may be quite forgotten. JOHNSON.

9 *I'll watch him tame,*—] It is said, that the ferocity of beasts, insuperable and irreclaimable by any other means, is subdued by keeping them from sleep. JOHNSON.

Hawks and other birds are tamed by keeping them from sleep, and it is to the management of those Shakespeare alludes. So, in Cartwright's *Lady Errant*:

“ — we'll keep you,

“ As they do hawks, *watching* untill you leave

“ Your wildness.”

So, in *Monsieur D'Olive*, 1616: “ — your only way to deal with women and parrots, is to *keep them waking*.”

Again, in *Sir W. D'Avenant's Just Italian*, 1630:

“ They've *watch'd* my hardy violence so *tame*.”

Again, in the *Booke of Hawking, Hunting, &c.* bl. l. no date: “ *Wake* her all nyght, and on the morrowe all daye, and then she will be *previ* enough to be *reclaymed*.” STEEVENS.

Caf.

Caf. Madam, I'll take my leave.

Des. Why, stay, and hear me speak.

Caf. Madam, not now; I am very ill at ease,
Unfit for mine own purposes.

Des. Well, do your discretion. [Exit Cassio.]

Iago. Ha! I like not that.

Osb. What dost thou say?

Iago. Nothing, my lord: or if—I know not what.

Osb. Was not that Cassio, parted from my wife?

Iago. Cassio, my lord? No, sure, I cannot think it,
That he would steal away so guilty-like,
Seeing you coming.

Osb. I do believe, 'twas he.

Des. How now, my lord?

I have been talking with a suitor here,
A man that languishes in your displeasure.

Osb. Who is't, you mean?

Des. Why, your lieutenant Cassio. Good my lord,
If I have any grace, or power to move you,
² His present reconciliation take;
For, if he be not one that truly loves you,
That errs in ignorance, ² and not in cunning,
I have no judgment in an honest face:
I prythee, call him back.

Osb. Went he hence now?

Des. Ay, sooth; so humbled,
That he hath left part of his grief with me,
To suffer with him: Good love, call him back.

Osb. Not now, sweet Desdemona; some other time.

Des. But shall't be shortly?

Osb. The sooner, sweet, for you.

² *His present reconciliation take:*] Cassio was to be reconciled to his general, not his general to him, therefore *take* cannot be right. We should read *take*. WARBURTON.

To *take his reconciliation*, may be to accept the submission which he makes in order to be reconciled. JOHNSON.

² — *and not in cunning,*] *Cunning*, for design, or purpose, simply. WARBURTON.

Des. Shall't be to-night at supper?

Oth. No, not to-night.

Des. To-morrow dinner then?

Oth. I shall not dine at home;

I meet the captains at the citadel.

Des. Why then, to-morrow night; or tuesday
morn;

Or tuesday noon, or night; or wednesday morn;—
I pray thee, name the time; but let it not
Exceed three days: in faith, he's penitent;
And yet his trespass, in our common reason,
(Save that, they say,³ the wars must make examples
Out of their best) is not almost a fault
To incur a private check: When shall he come?
Tell me, Othello. I wonder in my soul,
What you could ask me, that I should deny,
Or stand so mammering on⁴. What! Michael Cassio,
That came a wooing with you⁵; and so many a time,
When I have spoke of you dispraisingly,
Hath ta'en your part; to have so much to do

³ — *the wars must make examples*

Out of their best,—] The severity of military discipline must not spare the *best men* of the army, when their punishment may afford a wholesome *example*. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *so mammering on?*] To hesitate, to stand in suspense. The word often occurs in old English writings, and probably takes its original from the French *M'Amour*, which men were apt often to repeat when they were not prepared to give a direct answer.

HANMER,

I find the same word in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1529: "I stand in doubt, or in a *mamorynge* between hope and fear."

Again, in Thomas Drant's translation of the third Satire of the second Book of Horace, 1567:

"Ye, when she daynes to send for him, then *mammering* he dothe doute." STEEVENS.

⁵ — *What! Michael Cassio,*

That came a wooing with you;—] And yet in the first act Cassio appears perfectly ignorant of the amour, and is indebted to Iago for the information of Othello's marriage, and of the person to whom he is married. STEEVENS.

To

To bring him in! Trust me, I could do much,—

Oth. Pr'ythee, no more: let him come when he will;

I will deny thee nothing.

Des. Why, this is not a boon;

'Tis as I should entreat you wear your gloves,
Or feed on nourishing dishes, or keep you warm;
Or sue to you to do a peculiar profit

To your own person: Nay, when I have a suit,
Wherein I mean to touch your love indeed,
It shall be full of poize⁶ and difficulty,
And fearful to be granted.

Oth. I will deny thee nothing:

Whereon, I do beseech thee, grant me this,—
To leave me but a little to myself.

Des. Shall I deny you? no: Farewel, my lord.

Oth. Farewel, my Desdemona: I will come to thee
straight.

Des. Æmilia, come:—Be it as your fancies teach
you;

Whate'er you be, I am obedient. [*Exit with Æmil.*]

Oth. 7 Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul,

⁶ — full of poize—] *i. e.* of weight. So, in *The Dumb Knight*, 1633:

“They are of poize sufficient—”

Again,

“But we are all prest down with other poize.” STEEVENS.

7 *Excellent wretch!*—*Perdition catch my soul,*

But I do love thee! &c.] The meaning of the word *wretch*, is not generally understood. It is now, in some parts of England, a term of the softest and fondest tenderness. It expresses the utmost degree of amiableness, joined with an idea, which perhaps all tenderness includes, of feebleness, softness, and want of protection. Othello, considering Desdemona as excelling in beauty and virtue, soft and timorous by her sex, and by her situation absolutely in his power, calls her, *Excellent wretch!* It may be expressed:

Dear, barmys, helpless Excellence. JOHNSON.

Sir *W. D'Avonant* uses the same expression in his *Cruel Brother*, 1630, and with the same meaning. It occurs twice: “—*Excellent wretch!* with a timorous modesty she stifleth up her utterance.”

STEEVENS.

But

But I do love thee! and ^s when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again.

Iago. My noble lord,—

Oth. What dost thou say, Iago?

Iago. Did Michael Cassio, when you woo'd my
lady,

Know of your love?

Oth. He did, from first to last: Why dost thou ask?

Iago. But for a satisfaction of my thought;
No further harm.

Oth. Why of thy thought, Iago?

Iago. I did not think, he had been acquainted with it.

Oth. O, yes; and went between us very oft.

Iago. Indeed?

^s — when I love thee not,

Chaos is come again.] When my love is for a moment suspended by suspicion, I have nothing in my mind but discord, tumult, perturbation, and confusion. JOHNSON.

— when I love thee not,

Chaos is come again.] There is another meaning possible. *When I cease to love thee, the world is at an end*; i. e. there remains nothing valuable or important. The first explanation may be more elegant, the second is perhaps more easy. Shakespeare has the same thought in his *Venus and Adonis*:

“For he being dead, with him is beauty slain,

“And, beauty dead, black *Chaos comes again.*” STEEVENS.

The passage does not strike me in the same light in which it appeared to Dr. Johnson; as *Othello* had not at this time the smallest doubt of his wife's fidelity. *Muretus*, a poet of the 16th century, has exactly the same thought:

“Tunc meo elabi possis de pectore, Lacci,

“Aut ego, dum vivam, non meminisse tui?

“Ante vel istius mundi compage soluta

“Terra in antiquum sit reditura Chaos;”

The meaning of Shakespeare appears very clearly from the following passage in the *Winter's Tale*, where the same thought is more fully expressed:

“— It cannot fail

“But by the violation of my faith—and then

“Let nature crush the sides of the earth together,

“And mar the seeds within.” MALONE.

Oth.

Otb. Indeed! ay, indeed;—Discern'st thou aught
in that?

Is he not honest?

Iago. Honest, my lord?

Otb. Honest! ay, honest.

Iago. My lord, for aught I know.

Otb. What dost thou think?

Iago. Think, my lord?

Otb. Think, my lord!—By heaven, he echoes me,
As if there were some monster in his thought,⁹
Too hideous to be shewn.—Thou dost mean some-
thing:

I heard thee say but now,—Thou lik'dst not that,
When Cassio left my wife; What did'st not like?
And, when I told thee—he was of my counsel
In my whole course of wooing, thou cry'dst, *Indeed?*
And didst contract and purse thy brow together,
As if thou then hadst shut up in thy brain
Some horrible conceit: If thou dost love me,
Shew me thy thought.

Iago. My lord, you know I love you.

Otb. I think, thou dost;

And,—for I know thou art full of love and honesty,
And weigh'st thy words before thou giv'st them
breath,—

Therefore these stops of thine fright me the more:
For such things, in a false disloyal knave,
Are tricks of custom; but, in a man that's just,
They are close dilations, working from the heart,

That

⁹ — *By heaven he echoes me,*

*As if there were some monster in his thought, &c.] Thus the
eldest quarto. The second quarto reads:*

— Why dost thou echo me,

As if there were some monster in thy thought, &c.

The folio reads:

— Alas thou echo'st me,

As if, &c.—— STEEVENS.

² *They are cold dilations working from the heart,*

*That passion cannot rule.] i. e. these stops and breaks are cold
dilations,*

That passion cannot rule.

Iago. For Michael Cassio,—
I dare be sworn, I think that he is honest.

Oth. I think so too.

Iago. Men should be what they seem ;
Or, those that be not, 'would they might seem none !

Oth. Certain, men should be what they seem.

Iago. Why then, I think Cassio's an honest man.

Oth. Nay, yet there's more in this :

I pray thee, speak to me as to thy thinkings,
As thou dost ruminatè ; and give thy worst of
thoughts

The worst of words.

Iago. Good my lord, pardon me ;
Though I am bound to every act of duty,
I am not bound to that all slaves are free to.
Utter my thoughts? Why, say, they are vile and
false,—

As where's that palace, whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not? who has a breast so pure,

dilations, or cold keeping back a secret, which men of phlegmatic constitutions, whose hearts are not swayed or governed by their passions, we find, can do: while more sanguine tempers reveal themselves at once, and without reserve. But the Oxford Editor for *cold dilations*, reads *distillations*. WARBURTON.

I know not why the modern editors are satisfied with this reading, which no explanation can clear. They might easily have found, that it is introduced without authority. The old copies uniformly give, *close dilations*, except that the earlier quarto has *close denotements*; which was the author's first expression, afterwards changed by him, not to *cold dilations*, for *cold* is read in no ancient copy; nor, I believe, to *close dilations*, but to *close delations*; to *occult* and *secret accusations*, *working involuntarily from the heart*, which, though resolved to conceal the fault, cannot rule its *passions* of resentment. JOHNSON.

^a Or, *those that be not*, 'would they might seem none!] There is no sense in this reading. I suppose Shakespeare wrote,
— 'would they might seem knaves. WARBURTON.

I believe the meaning is, *would they might no longer seem*, or bear the shape of *men*. JOHNSON.

But

But some uncleanly apprehensions

³ Keep leets, and law-days, and in session sit

With meditations lawful?

Oth. Thou dost conspire against thy friend, Iago,
If thou but think'st him wrong'd, and mak'st his ear
A stranger to thy thoughts.

Iago. I do beseech you,

⁴ Though I——perchance, am vicious in my guesses,

(As,

³ *Keep leets and law-days,—* e. govern. A metaphor,
wretchedly forced and quaint. WARBURTON.

Rather *visit* than *govern*, but visit with authoritative intrusion.

JOHNSON.

Neither of the learned commentators seem to have explained these words properly. *Leets*, and *law-days*, are synonymous terms. "*Leet* (says Jacob, in his *Law-Dictionary*) is otherwise called a *law-day*." They are there explained to be courts, or meetings of the *hundred*, "to certify the king of the good manners, and government, of the inhabitants," and to enquire of all offences that are not capital. The poet's meaning will now be plain.—*Who has a breast so little apt to form ill opinions of others, but that foul suspicions will sometimes mix with his fairest and most candid thoughts, and erect a court in his mind, to enquire of the offences apprehended.* STEEVENS.

⁴ *Though I, perchance, am vicious in my guesses,*] Not to mention that, in this reading, the sentence is abrupt and broken, it is likewise highly absurd. I beseech you give yourself no uneasiness from my unsure observance, *though* I am vicious in my guesses. For his being an ill guesser was a reason why Othello should not be uneasy: in propriety, therefore, it should either have been, *though I am not vicious*, or *because I am vicious*. It appears then we should read:

I do beseech you,

Think *I, perchance, am vicious in my guesses,*

Which makes the sense pertinent and perfect. WARBURTON.

Though I—perchance, am vicious in my guesses,] That abruptness in the speech which Dr. Warburton complains of, and would alter, may be easily accounted for. Iago seems desirous by this ambiguous hint, *Though I—to* inflame the jealousy of Othello, which he knew would be more effectually done in this manner, than by any expression that bore a determinate meaning. The jealous Othello would fill up the pause in the speech, which Iago turns off at last to another purpose, and find a more certain cause of discontent, and a greater degree of torture arising from the doubtful consideration how it might have concluded, than he could have experienced

had

(As, I confess, it is my nature's plague
To spy into abuses; and, oft, my jealousy
Shapes faults that are not) that your wisdom yet;
From one that so⁶ imperfectly conceits,
Would take no notice; nor build yourself a trouble
Out of his scattering and unsure observance:—
It were not for your quiet, nor your good,
Nor for my manhood, honesty, or wisdom,
To let you know my thoughts.

Oth. What dost thou mean?

Iago. Good name, in man, and woman, dear my
lord,

Is the immediate jewel of their souls:
Who steals my purse, steals trash; 'tis something, no-
thing;
Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands;
But he, that filches from me my good name,
Robs me of that, which not enriches him,

had the whole of what he enquired after been reported to him with every circumstance of aggravation.

We may suppose him imagining to himself, that Iago mentally continued the thought thus, *Though I—know more than I choose to speak of.*

Vicious in my guess does not mean that he is an *ill-guesser*, but that he is apt to put the worst construction on every thing he attempts to account for. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *that your wisdom yet,*] Thus the folio. The quarto thus:

— I entreat you then

From one that so imperfectly *conject*s,

You'd take no notice—

To *conject*, i. e. to *conjecture*, is a verb used by other writers. So, in *Acolastus*, a comedy, 1529:

“ Now reason I, or *conject* with myself.”

Again,

“ I cannot forget thy saying, or thy *conjecting* words.”

STEEVENS.

⁶ — *imperfectly conceits,*] In the old quarto it is,

— *improbably conceits,*

Which I think preferable. JOHNSON.

There is no such reading as *improbably* in either quarto.

STEEVENS.

And

And makes me poor indeed.

Oth. By heaven, I'll know thy thought.

Iago. You cannot, if my heart were in your hand;
Nor shall not, whilst 'tis in my custody.

Oth. Ha!

Iago. O, beware, my lord, of jealousy;
It is the green-ey'd monster, ⁷ which doth mock

The

⁷ — *which doth mock*

The meat it feeds on—] i. e. loaths that which nourishes and sustains it. This being a miserable state, Iago bids him beware of it. The Oxford Editor reads:

———— *which doth make*

The meat it feeds on.————

Implying that its suspicions are unreal and groundless, which is the very contrary to what he would here make his general think, as appears from what follows:

That cuckold lives in bliss, &c.

In a word, the villain is for fixing him jealous: and therefore bids him beware of jealousy, not that it was an *unreasonable*, but a *miserable* state; and this plunges him into it, as we see by his reply, which is only

O misery! WAREURTON.

I have received Hamner's emendation; because *to mock*, does not signify *to loath*; and because, when Iago bids Othello *beware of jealousy, the green-eyed monster*, it is natural to tell why he should beware, and for caution he gives him two reasons, that jealousy often creates its own cause, and that, when the causes are real, jealousy is misery. JOHNSON.

In this place, and some others, *to mock* seems the same with *to mam-mock*. FARNER.

If Shakespeare had written—a green-ey'd monster, we might have supposed him to refer to some creature existing only in his particular imagination; but *the green-ey'd monster* seems to have reference to an object as familiar to his readers as to himself.

It is known that the *tyger* kind have *green eyes*, and always play with the victim to their hunger, before they devour it. So, in our Author's *Tarquin and Lucrece*:

“ Like foul night-waking cat he doth but *dally*,

While in his hold-fast toot the weak mouse panteth—”

Thus, a jealous husband, who discovers no certain cause why he may be divorced, continues to sport with the woman whom he suspects, and, on more certain evidence, determines to punish. There is no beast that can be literally said to *make* its own food, and therefore I am unwilling to receive the emendation of Hamner, especially

The meat it feeds on : That cuckold lives in bliss,
 Who, certain of his fate, loves not his wronger ;
 But, O, what damned minutes tells he o'er,
 Who dotes, yet doubts ; suspects, yet strongly loves !

Oth. O misery !

Iago. Poor, and content, is rich, and rich enough ;
 But riches, fineless, is ¹ as poor as winter,
 To him that ever fears he shall be poor :—
 Good heaven, the souls of all my tribe defend
 From jealousy !

especially as I flatter myself that a glimpse of meaning may be produced from the ancient reading.

In *Antony and Cleopatra* the contested word occurs again :

— tell him

He *mocks* the pauses that he makes.

i. e. he plays wantonly with those intervals of time which he should improve to his own preservation.

Should such an explanation be admissible, the advice given by *Iago* will amount to this :—*Beware, my lord, of yielding to a passion which as yet has no proofs to justify its excess. Think how the interval between suspicion and certainty must be filled. Though you doubt her fidelity, you cannot yet refuse her your bed, or drive her from your heart ; but, like the capricious savage, must continue to sport with one whom you wait for an opportunity to destroy.*

Such is the only sense that I am able to draw from the original text. What I have said, may be liable to some objections, but I have nothing better to propose. That jealousy is *a monster* which often *creates* the suspicions on which it feeds, may be well admitted according to *Hanmer's* proposition ; but is it *the* monster ? (*i. e.* a well-known and conspicuous animal) or whence has it *green eyes* ? *Yellow* is the colour which *Shakespeare* appropriates to jealousy. It must be acknowledged that he afterwards characterizes it as

“ ——— a monster,

“ Begot upon itself, born on itself.”

but yet — “ What damned minutes counts he o'er, &c.” is the best illustration of my attempt to explain the passage. To produce *Hanmer's* meaning, a change in the text is necessary. I am counsel for the old reading. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *strongly* loves !] Thus the quarto ; the folio, — *soundly* loves. STEEVENS.

⁹ *But riches, fineless, —*] Unbounded, endless, unnumbered treasures. JOHNSON.

¹ — *as poor as winter,*] Finely expressed : *winter* producing no fruits. WARBURTON.

Oth.

Oth. Why? why is this?

Think'st thou, I'd make a life of jealousy,
To follow still the changes of the moon
With fresh suspicions? No; to be once in doubt,
Is—once to be resolv'd: Exchange me for a goat,
When I shall turn the business of my soul
² To such exsuffolate and blown surmises,
Matching thy inference. 'Tis not to make me jealous,
To say—my wife is fair, feeds well, loves company,
Is free of speech, sings, plays, and dances well;
³ Where virtue is, these are more virtuous:
Nor from mine own weak merits will I draw
The smallest fear, or doubt of her revolt;
For she had eyes, and chose me: No, Iago;
I'll see, before I doubt; when I doubt, prove;
And, on the proof, there is no more but this,—
Away at once with love, or jealousy.

Iago. I am glad of this; for now I shall have
reason

To shew the love and duty that I bear you
With franker spirit: therefore, as I am bound,
Receive it from me:—I speak not yet of proof.
Look to your wife; observe her well with Cassio;

² *To such exsuffolate and blown surmises.*] This odd and far-fetched word was made yet more uncouth in all the editions before Hamner's, by being printed, *exsufficate*. The allusion is to a bubble. Do not think, says the Moor, that I shall change the noble designs that now employ my thoughts, to suspicions which, like bubbles *blown* into a wide extent, have only an empty shew without solidity; or that, in consequence of such empty fears, I will close with thy inference against the virtue of my wife. JOHNSON.

³ *Where virtue is, these are most virtuous.*] An action in itself indifferent, grows *virtuous* by its end and application. JOHNSON.

I know not why the modern editors, in opposition to the first quarto and folio, read *most* instead of *more*.

A passage in *All's well that ends well*, is perhaps the best comment on the sentiment of Othello: "I have those good hopes of her, education promises: his disposition she inherits; which makes fair gifts fairer." *Gravior e pulchro manens et corpore virtus.*

STEEVENS.

Wear your eye—thus, not jealous, nor secure :

I would not have your free and noble nature,

4 Out of self-bounty, be abus'd ; look to't :

I know 5 our country disposition well ;

In Venice they do let heaven see the pranks

They dare not shew their husbands ; their best con-
science

Is—not to leave undone, but keep unknown 6.

Oth. Dost thou say so ?

Iago. She did deceive her father, marrying you ;

7 And, when she seem'd to shake, and fear your looks,
She lov'd them most.

Oth. And so she did.

Iago. Why, go to, then ;

She that, so young, could give out such a seeming,

8 To feel her father's eyes up, close as oak,—

He

4 *Out of self-bounty be abus'd ;—*] *Self-bounty*, for inherent generosity. WARBURTON.

5 *— our country disposition—*

In Venice—] Here Iago seems to be a Venetian. JOHNSON.

9 *Is not to leave undone, but keep unknown.*] The folio perhaps more clearly reads :

Is not to leave't undone, but keep't unknown. STEEVENS.

7 *And, when she seem'd—*] This and the following argument of Iago ought to be deeply impressed on every reader. Deceit and falsehood, whatever conveniencies they may for a time promise or produce, are, in the sum of life, obstacles to happiness. Those, who profit by the cheat, distrust the deceiver, and the act, by which kindness was sought, puts an end to confidence.

The same objection may be made with a lower degree of strength against the imprudent generosity of disproportionate marriages. When the first heat of passion is over, it is easily succeeded by suspicion, that the same violence of inclination, which caused one irregularity, may stimulate to another ; and those who have shewn, that their passions are too powerful for their prudence, will, with very slight appearances against them, be censured, as not very likely to restrain them by their virtue. JOHNSON.

8 *To feel her father's eyes up, close as oak,—*] There is little relation between *eyes* and *oak*. I would read :

She feel'd her father's eyes up close as owl's.

As blind as an owl, is a proverb. JOHNSON.

He thought, 'twas witchcraft:—But I am much
to blame;

I humbly do beseech you of your pardon,
For too much loving you.

Oth. I am bound to thee for ever.

Iago. I see, this hath a little dash'd your spirits.

Oth. Not a jot, not a jot.

Iago. Trust me, I fear it has.

I hope, you will consider, what is spoke
Comes from my love:—But, I do see, you are mov'd;—
I am to pray you, not to strain my speech
To grosser issues, nor to larger reach,
Than to suspicion.

Oth. I will not.

Iago. Should you do so, my lord,
My speech should fall into such vile success
As my thoughts aim not at. Cassio's my worthy
friend:—

To feel her father's eyes up, close as oak,—] The oak is (I believe) the most close-grained wood of general use in England. *Close as oak*, means, *close as the grain of the oak*. I see no cause for alteration.

To feel is an expression taken from falconry. So, in Ben Jonson's *Catiline* :

“ — would have kept
Both eyes and beak *feel'd* up, for six sesterces.”

STEEVENS.

To grosser issues,] *Issues*, for conclusions. WARBURTON.

My speech would fall into such vile success,] *Success*, for success, *i. e.* conclusion; not prosperous issue. WARBURTON.

I rather think there is a depravation, and would read:

My speech would fall into such vile excess.

If *success* be the right word, it seems to mean *consequence or event*, as *successo* is used in Italian. JOHNSON.

I think *success* may, in this instance, bear its common interpretation. What *Iago* means, seems to be this: “Should you do so, my lord, my words would be attended by such an infamous degree of success, as my thoughts do not even aim at.” *Iago*, who counterfeits the feelings of virtue, might have said *fall into success*, and *vile success*, because he would appear to *Othello*, to wish that the enquiry into *Desdemona's* guilt might prove fruitless and unsuccessful. STEEVENS.

My lord, I see you are mov'd.

Oth. No, not much mov'd:—

I do not think, but Desdemona's honest.

Iago. Long live she so! and long live you to think so!

Oth. And yet, how nature erring from itself,—

Iago. Ay, there's the point: As,—to be bold with you,—

Not to affect many proposed matches,
Of her own clime, complexion, and degree;
Whereto, we see, in all things nature tends:
Foh! one may smell, in such, a ² will most rank,
Foul disproportion, thoughts unnatural.
But pardon me; I do not, in position,
Distinctly speak of her: though I may fear,
Her will, recoiling to her better judgment,
May fall to match you with her country forms,
And (hapily) repent.

Oth. Farewel, farewel:

If more thou dost perceive, let me know more;
Set on thy wife to observe: Leave me, Iago.

Iago. My lord, I take my leave. [Going.

Oth. Why did I marry?—This honest creature,
doubtless,

Sees and knows more, much more, than he unfolds.

Iago. My lord,—I would, I might entreat your
honour

To scan this thing no further; leave it to time:
And though it be fit that Cassio have his place,
(For, sure, he fills it up with great ability)
Yet, if you please to hold him off a while,
³ You shall by that perceive him and his means:

² — will *most rank*,] *Will*, is for wilfulness. It is so used by Ascham. A *rank will*, is *self-will* overgrown and exuberant.

³ *You shall by that perceive him, and his means*,] You shall discover whether he thinks his best *means*, his most powerful *interest*, is by the solicitation of your lady. JOHNSON.

Note, if your lady & strain his entertainment
 With any strong, or vehement importunity;
 Much will be seen in that. In the mean time,
 Let me be thought too busy in my fears,
 (As worthy cause I have, to fear—I am)
 And hold her free, I do beseech your honour.

Oth. Fear not my government.

Iago. I once more take my leave. [Exit.

Oth. This fellow's of exceeding honesty,
 And knows all qualities, ⁶ with a learned spirit,
 Of human dealings: ⁷ If I do prove her haggard,

⁴ — *strain his entertainment*] Press hard his re-admission to his pay and office. *Entertainment* was the military term for admission of soldiers. JOHNSON.

⁵ *Fear not my government.*] Do not distrust my ability to contain my passion. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *with a learned spirit,*] *Learned*, for experienced.

WARBURTON.

The construction is, He knows with a learned spirit all qualities of human dealings. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *If I do prove her haggard,*] A *baggard* hawk, is a wild hawk, a *barok unreclaimed*, or *irreclaimable*. JOHNSON.

A *baggard* is a particular species of hawk. It is *difficult to be reclaimed*, but not *irreclaimable*.

From a passage in *Vittoria Corombona*, it appears that *baggard* was a term of reproach sometimes applied to a wanton: "Is this your perch, you *baggard*? fly to the Jews."

Tarbovick says, that "the *baggart* falcons are the most excellent birds of all other falcons. *Latbam* gives to the *baggart* only the second place in the *valued file*. In *Holland's Leaguer*, a comedy, by Shakerly Marmyon, 1635, is the following illustrative passage:

"Before these courtiers lick their lips at her,

"I'll trust a wanton *baggard* in the wind."

Again,

"For she is ticklish as any *baggard*,

"And quickly lost."

Again, in *Two Wife Men*, and *all the Rest Fools*, 1619: "the admirable conquest the falconer maketh in a hawk's nature; bringing the wild *baggard* having all the earth and seas to scour over uncontrollably, to attend and obey, &c." *Haggard*, however, had a popular sense, and was used for *wild* by those who thought not on the language of falconers. STEEVENS.

8 Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,
 9 I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind,
 To prey at fortune. Haply, for I am black;
 And have not those soft parts of conversation
 That chamberers¹ have: Or, for I am declin'd
 Into the vale of years;—yet that's not much;—
 She's gone; I am abus'd; and my relief

⁸ *Though that her jesses were my dear heart-strings,*] *Jesses* are short straps of leather tied about the foot of a hawk, by which she is held on the fist. HANMER.

In Heywood's comedy, called *A Woman killed with Kindness*, 1617, a number of these terms relative to hawking occur together:

“ Now she hath seiz'd the fowl, and 'gins to plume her;

“ Rebeck her not; rather stand still and check her.

“ So: seize her gets, her *jesses*, and her bells.” STEEVENS.

⁹ *I'd whistle her off, and let her down the wind*

To prey at fortune.—] The falconers always let fly the hawk against the wind; if she flies with the wind behind her, she seldom returns. If therefore a hawk was for any reason to be dismissed, she was *let down the wind*, and from that time shifted for herself, and *preyed at fortune*. This was told me by the late Mr. Clark.

JOHNSON.

I'll whistle her off, &c.] This passage may possibly receive illustration from a similar one in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 2. sect. 1. mem. 3. “ As a long-winged hawke, when he is first *whistled off the fist*, mounts aloft, and for his pleasure fetcheth many a circuit in the ayre, still soaring higher and higher, till he come to his full pitch, and in the end, when the game is sprung, comes down amaine, and *stoupes* upon a sudden.”

PERCY,

Again, in *The Spanish Gypsie*, 1653, by Middleton and Rowley:

“ — That young *lannerd*,

“ Whom you have such a mind to; if you can *whistle her*

“ To come to *fist*, make trial, play the young *falconer*.”

A *lannerd* is a species of hawk. Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Bonduca*: “ — he that basely

“ *Whistled his honour off to the wind, &c.*” STEEVENS.

¹ *Chamberers*] i. e. men of intrigue. So, in the Countess of Pembroke's *Antonius*, 1590:

“ Fal'n from a souldier to a *chamberer*.”

Again, in Chaucer's *Romaunt of the Rose*, ver. 4935:

“ Only through youth the *chamberere*.”

Thus, in the French Poem:

“ Par la jeunesse la *chamberiere*.” STEEVENS.

Must

Must be—to loath her. O curse of marriage,
That we can call these delicate creatures ours,
And not their appetites! I had rather be a toad,
And live upon the vapour of a dungeon,
Than keep a corner in the thing I love,
For others' uses. Yet, 'tis the plague of great ones;
Prerogativ'd are they less than the base:
'Tis destiny unshunnable, like death;
Even then this ² forked plague is fated to us,
When we do quicken. Desdemona comes ³:

Enter Desdemona, and Emilia.

If she be false, O, then heaven mocks itself!—
I'll not believe it.

Des. How now, my dear Othello?
Your dinner, and the generous islanders ⁴
By you invited, do attend your presence.

² — *forked plague*—] In allusion to a *barbed* or *forked* arrow, which, once infix'd, cannot be extracted. JOHNSON.

Or rather, the *forked plague* is the cuckold's horns, PERCY.

Dr. Johnson may be right. I meet with the same thought in Middleton's comedy of, *A Mad World my Masters*, 1608:

“While the broad arrow, with the *forked head*,

“Misses his brows but narrowly.”

Again, in *King Lear*: — though the *fork* invade
The region of my heart. —

Mr. Malone supports the explanation of Dr. Percy, by the following passage in Machin's *Dumb Knight*, 1633:

“Women, why were you made for man's affliction?”

“You devils, shap'd like angels, through whose deeds

“Our *forked shames* are made most visible.”

Again, from *Tarlton's Newes out of Purgatorie*: “—dub the old Squire Knight of the *forked order*.” STEEVENS.

³ *Desdemona comes*:] Thus the quartos. The folio reads:
Look where she comes. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *the generous islanders*] Are the islanders of rank, distinction.
So, in *Measure for Measure*:

The *generous* and gravest citizens

Have hent the gates.

Generous has here the power of *generosus*, Lat. This explanation, however, may be too particular. STEEVENS.

Oth. I am to blame.

Des. Why is your speech so faint? are you not well?

Oth. I have a pain upon my forehead here.

Des. Why, that's with watching; 'twill away again;
Let me but bind it hard, within this hour
It will be well.

Oth. 5 Your napkin is too little;

[*She drops her handkerchief.*

Let it alone. Come, I'll go in with you.

Des. I am very sorry that you are not well.

[*Exeunt Desd. and Oth.*

Emil. I am glad, I have found this napkin;
This was her first remembrance from the Moor:
My wayward husband hath a hundred times
Woo'd me to steal it; but she so loves the token,
(For he conjur'd her, she should ever keep it)
That she reserves it evermore about her,
To kiss, and talk to. I'll have the work ta'en out,
And give it Iago:
What he'll do with it, heaven knows, not I;
6 I nothing, but to please his fantasy.

Enter Iago.

Iago. How now! what do you here alone?

Emil. Do not you chide; I have a thing for you.

5 *Your napkin, &c.*] Ray says, that a pocket handkerchief is so called about Sheffield in Yorkshire. So, in Greene's *Never too late*, 1616:

"I can wet one of my new lóckeram *napkins* with weeping."

Napery signifies *linnen in general*. So, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, 1635: "— prithe put me into wholesome *napery*."

Again, in Chapman's *Mayday*, 1611: "Besides your munition of manchet, *napery*, plates, &c."

Again, in *Hide Park*, by Shirley, 1637: "A gentleman that loves clean *napery*." *Naperia*, Ital. STEEVENS.

6 *I nothing, but to please his fantasy.*] Thus the-folio. The quarto, 1622, reads:

I nothing know but for his fantasy. STEEVENS.

Iago.

Iago. You have a thing for me?—it is a common thing.

Æmil. Ha!

Iago. To have a foolish wife.

Æmil. O, is that all? What will you give me now For that same handkerchief?

Iago. What handkerchief?

Æmil. What handkerchief?

Why, that the Moor first gave to Desdemona; That which so often you did bid me steal.

Iago. Hast stolen it from her?

Æmil. No; but she let it drop by negligence; And, to the advantage, I, being here, took it up. Look, here it is.

Iago. A good wench; give it me.

Æmil. What will you do with it, that you have been so earnest

To have me filch it?

Iago. Why, what is that to you? [*Snatching it.*]

Æmil. If it be not for some purpose of import, Give it me again: Poor lady! she'll run mad, When she shall lack it.

Iago. Be not you known on't; I have use for it. Go, leave me. [*Exit Æmil.*]

I will in Cassio's lodging lose this napkin, And let him find it: Trifles, light as air,

7 ——— to the advantage, &c.] I being *opportunistically* here, took it up. JOHNSON.

8 *Be not you known on't;*] Should it not rather be read, *Be not you known in't?*

The folio reads,

Be not unknown on't.

The sense is plain, but of the expression I cannot produce any example. JOHNSON.

The folio reads—

Be not ~~acknowledg'd~~ on't.

Perhaps (says Mr. Malone) *acknowledg'd* was a participial adjective from the verb to acknowledge.—Do not *acknowledge* any thing of this matter. STEVENS.

Are, to the jealous, confirmations strong
 As proofs of holy writ. This may do something.
 The Moor already changes with my poison:—
 Dangerous conceits are, in their natures, poisons,
 Which, at the first, are scarce found to distaste;
 But, with a little act upon the blood,
 Burn like the mines of sulphur.—I did say so:—

Enter Othello.

Look, where he comes! Not poppy,⁹ nor mandra-
 gora,

Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,

Shall ever med'cine thee to that sweet sleep

Which

⁹ ——— nor mandragora,] The *mandragoras* or *mandrake* has a soporific quality, and the ancients used it when they wanted an opiate of the most powerful kind. So *Ant. and Cleop.* Act. I. Sc. 6.

“ ——— give me to drink *mandragora*,

“ That I may sleep out this great gap of time

“ My Antony is away.”

So, in Heywood's *Jew of Malta*, 1633.

“ I drank of poppy and cold *mandrake* juice,

“ And being asleep,” &c.

Again, in *Muleasses the Turk*, 1610:

“ Image of death, and daughter of the night,

“ Sister to Lethe, all-oppressing sleep,

“ Thou, that amongst a hundred thousand dreams,

“ Crown'd with a wreath of *mandrakes*, fit'st as queen,

“ To whom a million of care-clogged souls

“ Lye quaffing juice of poppy at thy feet,

“ Resign thy usurpation!” STEEVENS.

† *Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep,*

Which thou hadst yesterday.] The old quarto reads,

Which thou owedst yesterday.

And this is right, and of much greater force than the common reading: not to sleep, being finely called defrauding the day of a debt of nature. WARBURTON.

To *owe* is, in our author, oftener to *possess*, than to *be indebted*, and such was its meaning here; but as that sense was growing less usual, it was changed unnecessarily by the editors to *hadst*; to the same meaning, more intelligibly expressed. JOHNSON.

So in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, by Cyril Tourneur, 1607:

“ The duke my father's murder'd by the vassal

“ Who *owes* this habit.”

So,

Which thou ow'dst yesterday.

Otb. Ha! ha! false to me? to me?

Iago. Why, how now, general? no more of that.

Otb. Avaunt! be gone! thou hast set me on the rack:—

I swear, 'tis better to be much abus'd,
Than but to know't a little.

Iago. How now, my lord?

Otb. What sense had I of her stolen hours of lust?

I saw it not, thought it not, it harm'd not me:

I slept

So, in *Albumazar*, 1610:

“ ——— Who art thou? ———

“ Th' unfortunate possessor of this house.—

“ Thou ly'st, base sycophant; my worship owes it.”

STEEVENS.

² *What sense had I, &c.*] A similar passage to this and what follows it, is found in an unpublished tragi-comedy by Thomas Middleton, called *THE WITCH*.

“ I seele no ease, the burthen's not yet off

“ So long as the abuse sticks in my knowledge.

“ Oh, 'tis a paine of hell to know one's shame!

“ Had it byn hid and don, it had ben don happy,

“ For he that's ignorant lives long and merry.”

Again:

“ Had'st thou byn secret, then had I byn happy,

“ And had a hope (like man) of joies to come.

“ Now here I stand a stayne to my creation,

“ And, which is heavier than all torments to me,

“ The understanding of this base adultery, &c.”

This is utter'd by a jealous husband who supposes himself to have just destroy'd his wife.—

Again, *Iago* says:

Dangerous conceits, &c.—

———with a little act upon the blood

Burn like the mines of sulphur.

Thus *Sebastian*, in Middleton's play:———

“ When a suspect doth catch once, it burnes maynely.”

A scene between *Francisca* and her brother *Antonio*, when the first excites his jealousy, has likewise several circumstances in common with the dialogue which passes between *Iago* and *Othello* on the same subject.

This piece contains also a passage very strongly resembling another in *Hamlet*, who says:—“ I am but mad north-north-west:

I slept the next night well³, was free, and merry;
 I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips:
 He that is robb'd, not wanting what is stolen,
 Let him not know it, and he's not robb'd at all.

Iago. I am sorry to hear this.

Oth. I had been happy, if the general camp,
 Pioneers and all, had tasted her sweet body,
 So I had nothing known: O now, for ever,
 Farewel the tranquil mind! farewel content!
 Farewel the plumed troop, and the big wars,
 That make ambition virtue! O, farewel!

4 Farewel the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,
 The

west: when the wind is southerly, I know a hawk from a hand-saw."—Thus, *Almabildes*:—"There is some difference betwixt my joviall condition and the lunary-state of madnes. I am not quight out of my witts: I know a bawd from an aqua-vitæ shop, a strumpet from wild fire, and a beadle from brimstone."

For a further account of this MS. play, see a note on Mr. Malone's *Attempt to ascertain the order in which the pieces of Shakspeare were written*:—Article, *Macbeth*. STEEVENS.

³ *I slept the next night well, was free and merry;*] Thus the quartos. The folio reads:

I slept the next night well, *fed well*; was free and merry.

STEEVENS.

⁴ *Farewel the neighing steed, and the shrill trump,*

The spirit-stirring drum, the EAR-PIERCING fife,] Dr. Warburton has offered *fear-sperfsing*, for *fear-dispersing*. But *ear-piercing* is an epithet so eminently adapted to the *fife*, and so distinct from the shrillness of the trumpet, that it certainly ought not to be changed. Dr. Warburton has been censured for this proposed emendation with more noise than honesty, for he did not himself put it in the text. JOHNSON.

The spirit-stirring drum, th' ear-piercing fife,] In mentioning the *fife* joined with the *drum*, Shakspeare, as usual, paints from the life; those instruments accompanying each other being used in his ages by the English soldiery. The *fife*, however, as a martial instrument, was afterwards entirely discontinued among our troops for many years, but at length revived in the war before the last. It is commonly supposed that our soldiers borrowed it from the Highlanders in the last rebellion: but I do not know that the *fife* is peculiar to the Scotch, or even used at all by them. It was first used within the memory of man among our troops by the British guards, by order

The spirit-stirring drum, the ear-piercing fife,
The royal banner; and all quality,

Pride,

order of the duke of Cumberland, when they were encamped at Maesricht, in the year 1747, and thence soon adopted into other English regiments of infantry. They took it from the Allies with whom they served. This instrument, accompanying the drum, is of considerable antiquity in the European armies, particularly the German. In a curious picture in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, painted 1525, representing the siege of Pavia by the French king, where the emperor was taken prisoner, we see *fifes* and *drums*. In an old English treatise written by William Garrard before 1587, and published by one captain Hiecock in 1591, intitled *The Art of Warre*, there are several wood cuts of military evolutions, in which these instruments are both introduced. In *Rymer's Fœdera*, in a diary of king Henry's siege of Bulloigne 1544, mention is made of the *drummes* and *vifcours* marching at the head of the king's army. Tom. xv. p. 53.

The *drum* and *fife* were also much used at ancient festivals, shews, and processions. Gerard Leigh, in his *Accidence of Armeric*, printed in 1576, describing a Christmas magnificently celebrated at the Inner Temple, says, "We entered the prince his hall, where anon we heard the noyse of *drum* and *fife*," p. 119. At a stately masque on Shrove-Sunday 1510, in which Henry VIII. was an actor, Holinshed mentions the entry "of a *drum* and *fife* apparelled in white damaske and grene bennettes." Chron. iii. 805. col. 2. There are many more instances in Holinshed, and Stowe's *Survey of London*.

From the old French word *whiffer*, above-cited, came the English word *whiffer*, which anciently was used in its proper *literal* sense. Strype, speaking of a grand tilting before the court in queen Mary's reign 1554, says, from an old journal, that king Philip and the challengers entered the lists, preceded by "their *whiffers*, their footmen, and their armourers." Eccles. Memor. iii. p. 211. This explains the use of the word in Shakespeare, where it is also literally applied. *Hen. V. Act. 4. Sc. ult.*

" — behold the British beach

" Pales in the flood with men, with wives and boys,

" Whose snouts and claps out-voice the deep-mouth'd sea,

" Which like a mighty *whiffer* fore the king,

" Seems to prepare his way."

By degrees, the word *whiffer* hence acquired the metaphorical meaning, which it at present obtains in common speech, and became an appellation of contempt. *Whiffer*, a light trivial character, *a fellows bired to fife at processions*. WARTON.

In

Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war⁵ !
 And O you mortal engines, ⁶ whose rude throats
 The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit,
 Farewel ! Othello's occupation's gone !

Iago. Is it possible ?—My lord,—

Oth. Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore ;
 Be sure of it ; give me the ocular proof ;

[*Catching hold on him.*

Or, by the worth of mine eternal soul⁷,
 Thou hadst been better have been born a dog,
 Than answer my wak'd wrath.

Iago. Is it come to this ?

Oth. Make me to see it ; or (at the least) so prove it,
 That the probation bear no hinge, nor loop,
 To hang a doubt on : or, woe upon thy life !

Iago. My noble lord,—

Oth. If thou dost slander her, and torture me,
 Never pray more : ⁸ abandon all remorse ;

On

In the old dramatic piece, intitled *Wine, Beer, Ale, and Tobacco*,
 2d edit. 1630. *Tobacco* says to *Beer* :

“ ——— it will become your duty to obey me.”

To which *Wine* replies :

“ You our sovereign ! a mere *whiffler* !”

Again, in *Ram-alley*, or *Merry Trisks*, 1611 :

“ ——— he was known

“ But only for a swaggering *whiffler*.” STEEVENS.

⁵ *Pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war* !] Sir William
D'Avenant does not appear to have been scrupulous of adopting
 almost Shakespeare's own words. So, in *Albovine*, 1629 :

“ Then *glorious war*, and all *proud circumstance*

“ That gives a soldier noise, for evermore farewell.”

STEEVENS.

⁶ ——— *whose rude throats*] So Milton, *P. L. B.* 6.

“ From those *deep-throated engines*,” &c.

The quarto 1622. reads—“ whose *wide throats*” STEEVENS.

⁷ — mine *eternal soul*,] Perhaps the quarto, 1622, more forcibly
 reads :

—— *man's eternal soul*.

Shakespeare might have designed an opposition between *man* and
dog. STEEVENS

⁸ — abandon all remorse ;] *Remorse*, for repentance.

WARBURTON.

I rather

On horror's head horrors accumulate;
Do deeds to make heaven weep⁹, all earth amaz'd;
For nothing canst thou to damnation add,
Greater than that.

Iago. O grace! O heaven defend me!
Are you a man? have you a soul, or sense?—
God be wi' you; take mine office.—O wretched fool,
That liv'st¹ to make thine honesty a vice!—
O monstrous world! Take note, take note, O world,
To be direct and honest, is not safe.—
I thank you for this profit; and, from hence,
I'll love no friend², sith love breeds such offence.

Oth. Nay, stay:—Thou should'st be honest.

Iago. I should be wise; for honesty's a fool,
And loses that it works for.

Oth. By the world,

I think my wife be honest, and think she is not;
I think that thou art just, and think thou art not;
I'll have some proof: Her name, that was as fresh
As Dian's visage, is now begrim'd and black
As mine own face.—If there be cords, or knives,
Poison, or fire, or suffocating streams,
I'll not endure it.—'Would, I were satisfied!

Iago. I see, sir, you are eaten up with passion;
I do repent me, that I put it to you.
You would be satisfied?

I rather think it is, Let go all scruples, throw aside all restraints.

JOHNSON.

I believe, *remorse* in this instance, as in many others, signifies
pity. STEEVENS.

⁹ *Do deeds to make heaven weep,*] So, in *Measure for Measure*:

“Plays such fantastick tricks before high heaven

“*As make the angels weep.* STEEVENS.

¹ *That liv'st*] Thus the quarto. The folio—*that liv'st*—

STEEVENS.

² —*sith*—] The word anciently used instead of *since*; and so
the quartos read. STEEVENS.

³ *By the world, &c.*] This speech is not in the first edition.

POPE.

Oth.

Oth. Would? nay, I will.

Iago. And may; But, how? how satisfied, my lord?

Would you, the supervisor, grossly gape on?
Behold her tupp'd⁴?

Oth. Death and damnation! O!

Iago. It were a tedious difficulty, I think,
To bring 'em to that prospect: Damn them then,
If ever mortal eyes do see them bolster,
More than their own! What then? how then?
What shall I say? Where's satisfaction?
It is impossible, you should see this,

⁵ Were they as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys,
As salt as wolves in pride, and fools as gross
As ignorance made drunk. But yet, I say,
If imputation, and strong circumstances,—
Which lead directly to the door of truth,—
Will give you satisfaction, you might have it.

Oth. ⁶ Give me a living reason that she's disloyal,

Iago. I do not like the office:

But, sith I am enter'd in this cause so far,—
Prick'd to it by foolish honesty, and love,—
I will go on. I lay with Cassio lately;
And, being troubled with a raging tooth,
I could not sleep.

There are a kind of men so loose of soul,
That in their sleeps will mutter their affairs;
One of this kind is Cassio:

⁴ *Behold her tupp'd?*] A ram in Staffordshire and some other counties is called a *tup*. So, in the first act:

— an old black ram

Is *tupping* your white ewe. STEEVENS.

⁵ *Were they as prime as goats,—*] *Prime* is *prompt*, from the Celtic or British *prim*. HANMER.

So, in the *Vow-breaker, or the Faire Maid of Clifton*, 1636:

“More *prime* than goats or monkies in their prides.”

STEEVENS.

⁶ *Give me a living reason—*] *Living*, for speaking, manifest. WARBURTON.

In sleep I heard him say,—*Sweet Desdemona,
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves!*"

And then, sir, would he gripe, and wring my hand;
Cry,—*O sweet creature!* and then kifs me hard,
As if he pluck'd up kisses by the roots,
That grew upon my lips: then lay his leg
Over my thigh, and sigh, and kifs; and then
Cry,—*Cursed fate! that gave thee to the Moor!*

Oth. O monstrous! monstrous!

Iago. Nay, this was but his dream.

Oth. But this denoted ⁷ a foregone conclusion;

⁸ 'Tis a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream.

Iago. And this may help to thicken other proofs,
That do demonstrate thinly.

Oth. I'll tear her all to pieces.

Iago. Nay, but be wise: ⁹ yet we see nothing
done;

She may be honest yet. Tell me but this,—
Have you not sometimes seen a handkerchief,
Spotted with strawberries, in your wife's hand?

Oth. I gave her such a one; 'twas my first gift.

Iago. I know not that: but such a handkerchief,
(I am sure, it was your wife's) did I to-day
See Cassio wipe his beard with.

Oth. If it be that,—

Iago. If it be that, or any, if 'twas hers,
It speaks against her, with the other proofs.

Oth. O, that the slave had forty thousand lives;
One is too poor, too weak for my revenge!

⁷ — a foregone conclusion:] *Conclusion*, for fact.

WARBURTON.

⁸ *Othel.* 'Tis a shrewd doubt, &c.] The old quarto gives this line, with the two following, to Iago; and rightly.

WARBURTON.

I think it more naturally spoken by Othello, who, by dwelling so long upon the proof, encouraged Iago to enforce it. JOHNSON.

⁹ — yet we see nothing done:] This is an oblique and secret mock at Othello's saying, *Give me the ocular proof.* WARB.

¹ Now do I see 'tis true.—Look here, Iago ;
All my fond love thus do I blōw to heaven :
'Tis gone.—

Arise, black vengeance, from thy ² hollow cell!
Yield up, O love, thy crown, and ³ hearted throne,
To tyrannous hate ! ⁴ swell, bosom, with thy fraught,

¹ *Now do I see 'tis true.*—] The old quarto reads,
Now do I see 'tis time.—

And this is Shakespeare's, and has in it much more force and solemnity, and preparation for what follows : as alluding to what he had said before :

— *No, Iago !
I'll see before I doubt, when I doubt, prove ;
And, on the proof, there is no more but this,
Away at once with love or jealousy.*

This time was now come. WARBURTON.

² — *hollow hell !*] This is a poor unmeaning epithet. The old quarto reads,

Arise black vengeance from thy hollow cell !

Which the editors not knowing what to make of, altered it as above. It should be read thus :

Arise, black vengeance, from the unhallow'd cell !

Meaning the infernal regions. WARBURTON.

The *hollow hell* is the reading of the folio. I do not perceive that the epithet *hollow* is at all unmeaning, when applied to hell, as it gives the idea of what Milton calls

“ ———— the void profound
“ Of unessential night.” STEEVENS.

³ — *hearted throne*] *Hearted throne* is strange nonsense. The old quarto reads,

— *and harted throne :*

Which the editors took for a word *mis-spelt*, whereas it was a word *miscalled*. We should read,

Yield up, oh love, thy crown and parted throne :

i. e. thy throne which was parted between me and Desdemona : this presents us with a fine image. The union of Othello and Desdemona was so perfect, that love divided his throne between them : which he is now bid to resume, and give to hatred.

WARBURTON.

Hearted throne, is the heart on which thou wast *enthroned*. *Parted throne* has no meaning. JOHNSON.

Iago uses the same word, though with a meaning somewhat different : “ — My cause is *hearted*.” STEEVENS.

⁴ — *swell, bosom, &c.*] *i. e.* *swell*, because the fraught is of poison. WARBURTON.

For 'tis of aspicks' tongues!

Iago. Pray, be content.

Oth. O, blood, Iago, blood!

Iago. Patience, I say; your mind, perhaps, may change.

Oth. Never, Iago: [⁵ Like to the Pontic sea,
Whose icy current and compulsive course
Ne'er feels retiring ebb, but keeps due on
To the Propontic, and the Hellespont;
Even so my bloody thoughts, with violent pace,
Shall ne'er look back, ne'er ebb to humble love,
'Till that a capable⁶ and wide revenge
Swallow them up.—Now, ⁷ by yond' marble heaven,]
In the due reverence of a sacred vow [*He kneels.*
I here engage my words,

⁵ — *Like to the Pontic sea, &c.*] This simile is omitted in the first edition: I think it should be so, as an unnatural excursion in this place. POPE.

— *Like the Pontic sea,*] Every reader will, I durst say, abide by Mr. Pope's censure on this passage. When Shakespeare grew acquainted with such particulars of knowledge, he made a display of them as soon as opportunity offered. He found this in the Second Book and 97th Chapter of Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* as translated by Philemon Holland, 1601: "And the sea Pontus evermore floweth and runneth out into Propontis, but the sea never retireth backe againe within Pontus."

Mr. Edwards, in his *Mil.* notes, conceives this simile to allude to Sir Philip Sidney's device, whose impress, Camden, in his *Remains*, says, was the Caspian sea, with this motto, SINE REFLUXU. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *a capable and wide revenge*

Capable] Ample; capacious. So, in *As you like it*:
The cicatrice and *capable* impressure.

So, in *Pierce Penniless his Supplication to the Devil*, by Nashe, 1595: "Then belike, quoth I, you make this word, Dæmon, a *capable* name, of Gods, of men, and of devils." MALONE.

⁷ — *by yond' marble heaven,*] In *Solimda and Persida*, 1599, I find the same expression:

"Now by the *marble* face of the welkin," &c. STEEVENS,

So, in Marston's *Antonio and Mellida*, 1602:

"And pleas'd the *marble* heavens." MALONE.

Iago. Do not rise yet.—

[Iago kneels.

Witness, you ever-burning lights above!

You elements that clip us round about!

Witness, that here Iago doth give up

The execution⁸ of his wit, hands, heart,

To wrong'd Othello's service! ⁹ let him command,

And

⁸ The execution—] The first quarto reads *excellency*.

STEEVENS.

⁹ — let him command,

And to obey, shall be in me remorse,

What bloody business ever.] Thus all the old copies, to the manifest depravation of the poet's sense. Mr. Pope has attempted an emendation, but with his old luck and dexterity:

Not to obey, shall be in me remorse, &c.

I read, with the change only of a single letter:

Nor, to obey, shall be in me remorse, &c.

i. e. Let your commands be ever-so bloody, remorse and compassion shall not restrain me from obeying them. THEOBALD.

— Let him command,

And to obey, shall be in me remorse,

What bloody business ever.] Thus the old copies read, but evidently wrong. Some editions read, *Not to obey*; on which the editor Mr. Theobald takes occasion to alter it to, *Nor to obey*; and thought he had much mended matters. But he mistook the sound end of the line for the corrupt; and so by his emendation, the deep-designing Iago is foolishly made to throw off his mask, when he had most occasion for it; and without any provocation, stand before his captain a villain confessed; at a time, when, for the carrying on his plot, he should make the least show of it. For thus Mr. Theobald forces him to say, *I shall have no remorse to obey your commands, how bloody soever the business be*. But this is not Shakespeare's way of preserving the unity of character. Iago, till now, pretended to be one, who, though in the trade of war he had slain men, yet held it the very stuff of the conscience to do no contrived murder; when, of a sudden, without cause or occasion, he owns himself a ruffian, without remorse. Shakespeare wrote and pointed the passage thus:

— Let him command,

And to obey shall be in me. REMORD

What bloody business ever.

i. e. however the business he sets me upon may shock my honour and humanity, yet I promise to go through with it, and obey without reserve. Here Iago speaks in character, while the sense and grammar are made better by it. So Skelton:

And

And to obey shall be in me remorse,

What

*And if so his fortune to write and plaine,
As sometimes be must vices remorse.*

And again:

Squire, knight, and lord,

Thus the charge remorse. WARBURTON.

Of these two emendations, I believe, Theobald's will have the greater number of suffrages; it has at least mine. The objection against the propriety of the declaration in Iago, is a cavil; he does not say that he has no principle of remorse, but that it shall not operate against Othello's commands. *To obey shall be in me*, for *I will obey you*, is a mode of expression not worth the pains here taken to introduce it; and the word *remorde* has not in the quotation the meaning of *withhold*, or *make reluctant*, but of *reprove*, or *ceasure*; nor do I know that it is used by any of the contemporaries of Shakespeare.

I will offer an interpretation, which, if it be received, will make alteration unnecessary, but it is very harsh and violent. Iago devotes himself to wronged Othello, and says, *Let him command whatever bloody business*, and in me it shall be an act, not of cruelty, but of *tenderness*, to obey him; not of malice to others, but of *tenderness* for him. If this sense be thought too violent, I see nothing better than to follow Pope's reading, as it is improved by Theobald. JOHNSON.

— *Let him command,*

And to obey shall be in me remorse,

What bloody work soever.] Mr. Upton, in his *Critic. Observ.* p. 209, proposes to read:

And to obey shall be in me no remorse.

This reading the author of *The Revival* approves; and Mr. Edwards seems to acquiesce in that of Theobald.

The different emendations of different commentators are laid before the public for its determination on their merits; and I believe the present one, who is to throw in his conjecture with the rest, may say at last with Deiphobus,

— *explebo numerum, reddamque tenoris.*

Iago offers, in the most solemn manner, to risque himself for the service of Othello. *Let him command*, says he, *whatever bloody business*, and the *remorse* that follows the perpetration of such a deed shall be *entirely my own*. It shall be *remorse in me, in me alone*. I not only undertake to execute the bloody part of the business, but likewise take upon myself the *horrors of remorse* inseparable from the action. Iago makes use of this specious argument, the better to prevail on Othello to entrust the murder to his hands.

After all, I believe Dr. Johnson's interpretation to be the best:

What bloody work soever¹.

Oth.

and can only claim the merit of supporting his sense of the word *remorse*, i. e. *pity*, by the following instances.

Thus, in *Measure for Measure*, Act 2 :

But you might do't, and do the world no wrong,
If so your heart was touch'd with that *remorse*
As mine is to him.

Again, Act 5 :

My sifterly *remorse* confutes mine honour,
And I did yield to him.

Again, in *Julius Cæsar*, Act 2 :

The abuse of greatness is, when it disjoins
Remorse from power.

In *Lord Surrey's Translation of the 4th Æneid*, Dido says to her sifter: "Sister I crave thou have *remorse* of me."

Again, in *King Edward III*, 1599, that Prince speaking to the citizens of Calais :

"But for yourselves, look you for no *remorse*."

Again, in *Sir Chyomon Knight of the Golden Shield*, 1599 :

"Who taketh no *remorse* of womankind."

Again, in *Sir John Oldcastle*, 1600 :

"Here stand I craving no *remorse* at all."

I could add many more instances, but shall content myself to observe that the sentiment of *Iago* bears no small resemblance to that of *Arviragus* in *Cymbeline* :

"I'd let a parish of such Clotens blood,

"And praise myself for charity." STEEVENS.

If I am not deceived, this passage has been entirely mistaken. I read :

"Let *him* command.

"An' to obey shall be in *me* *remorse*,

"What bloody business ever ——"

And for *if* is sufficiently common: and *Othello's* impatience breaks off the sentence; I think, with additional beauty.

FARMER.

Before I saw Dr. Johnson's edition of Shakespeare, my opinion of this passage was formed, and written, and thus I understood it :

"Let him command any bloody business, and to obey shall be in me an act of pity and compassion for wrong'd Othello. *Remorse* frequently signifies pity, mercy, compassion, or a tenderness of heart, unattended with the stings of a guilty conscience. So, in

The

¹ *What bloody work soever.*] So the quartos. The folio:
What bloody business ever. STEEVENS.

Oth. I greet thy love,
Not with vain thanks, but with acceptance bounteous,
And will upon the instant put thee to't :
Within these three days let me hear thee say,
That Cassio's not alive.

Iago. My friend is dead; 'tis done, at your request :
But let her live.

Oth. Damn her, lewd minx! O, damn her!
Come, go with me apart; I will withdraw,
To furnish me with some swift means of death
For the fair devil. Now art thou my lieutenant.

Iago. I am your own for ever. [Exeunt.]

S C E N E IV.

Another apartment in the castle.

Enter Desdemona, Emilia, and Clown.

Des. Do you know, firrah, where lieutenant Cassio
lies?

Clown. I dare not say, he lies any where.

Des. Why, man?

Clown. He is a soldier; and for me to say a soldier
lies, is stabbing.

Des. Go to; Where lodges he?

The Two Gentlemen of Verona, Act 4. Sc. 3. the crimeless Eglamour
is called *remorsefull*. So, in *King Richard III, Act 3. Sc. 7.*

“As well we know your tenderness of heart,
And gentle kind effeminate remorse.”

Again, in *King Lear, Act 4. Sc. 2:*

A servant, that he bred, thri'd with remorse,
Oppos'd against the act.

Here the servant had committed no previous crime, but touched
with pity and compassion for Gloucester's sufferings opposed the
aggravation of them. So, in Holinshed's *Conquest of Ireland,*
p. 13. “to have remorse and compassion upon others distresses;”
and in the dedication, “to have regard and remorse to your said
land.” TOLLET.

Clown. To tell you ² where he lodges, is to tell you where I lie.

Des. Can any thing be made of this?

Clown. I know not where he lodges; and for me to devise a lodging, and say—he lies here, or he lies there, were to lie in mine own throat.

Des. Can you enquire him out? and be edify'd by report?

³ *Clown.* I will catechize the world for him; that is, make questions, and make them answer.

Des. Seek him, bid him come hither: tell him, I have mov'd my lord in his behalf, and hope, all will be well.

Clown. To do this, is within the compass of man's wit; and therefore I will attempt the doing of it.

Des. Where should I lose that handkerchief, [Exit,
Æmilia?

Æmil. I know not, madam.

Des. Believe me, I had rather have lost my purse Full of ⁴ cruzadoes: And, but my noble Moor Is true of mind, and made of no such baseness As jealous creatures are, it were enough To put him to ill thinking.

Æmil. Is he not jealous?

Des. Who, he? I think, the sun, where he was born,
Drew all such humours from him.

² *To tell you, &c.]* This and the following speech are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

³ *Clown. I will catechize the world for him; that is, make questions, and by them answer.]* This *Clown* is a fool to some purpose. He was to go seek for one; he says, he will ask for him, and by his own questions make answer. Without doubt we should read, *and bid them answer*; i. e. the world; those whom he questions.

WARBURTON.

⁴ — *cruzadoes:—]* A Portugueze coin, in value three shillings sterling. GREY.

So called from the cross stamped upon it. JOHNSON.

Æmil.

Emil. Look, where he comes.

Des. I will not leave him now, 'till Cassio be
Call'd to him.—How is it with you, my lord?

Enter Othello.

Oth. Well, my good lady:—[*Aside.*] O, hardness
to dissemble!—

How do you, Desdemona?

Des. Well, my good lord.

Oth. Give me your hand: This hand is moist, my
lady.

Des. It yet hath felt no age, nor known no sor-
row.

Oth. This argues fruitfulness, and liberal heart;—
Hot, hot, and moist: This hand of yours requires
A sequester from liberty, fasting and prayer,
Much castigation, exercise devout;
For here's a young and sweating devil here,
That commonly rebels. 'Tis a good hand,
A frank one.

Des. You may, indeed, say so;
For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart.

Oth. A liberal hand: 'The hearts, of old, gave
hands;
But our new heraldry is—hands, not hearts.

Des.

⁵ *Hot, hot, and moist:*] Ben Jonson seems to have attempted a
ridicule on this passage, in *Every man out of his Humour*, Act 5.
Sc. 2. where Sogliardo says to Saviolina: "How does my sweet
Lady? *hot and moist?* beautiful and lusty?" STEEVENS.

⁶ —*The hearts, of old, gave hands;*

But our new heraldry is hands, not hearts.] It is evident
that the first line should be read thus,

The hands of old gave hearts:

Otherwise it would be no reply to the preceding words,

For 'twas that hand that gave away my heart:

Not so, says her husband: *The hands of old indeed gave hearts; but
the custom now is to give hands without hearts.* The expression of
new heraldry was a satirical allusion to the times. Soon after

James

Des. I cannot speak of this. Come now, your promise.

Oth. What promise, chuck?

Des. I have sent to bid Cassio come speak with you.

James the First came to the crown, he created the new dignity of baronets for money. Amongst their other prerogatives of honour, they had an addition to their paternal *arms*, of a hand *gules* in an *escutcheon argent*. And we are not to doubt but that this was the *new heraldry* alluded to by our author: by which he insinuates, that some then created had *hands* indeed, but not *hearts*; that is, *money* to pay for the *creation*, but no *virtue* to purchase the *honour*. But the finest part of the poet's address in this allusion, is the compliment he pays to his old mistress Elizabeth. For James's pretence for raising money by this creation, was the reduction of Ulster, and other parts of Ireland; the memory of which he would perpetuate by that addition to their arms, it being the arms of Ulster. Now the method used by Elizabeth in the reduction of that kingdom was so different from this, the dignities she conferred being on those who employed their *steel*, and not their *gold* in this service, that nothing could add more to her glory, than the being compared to her successor in this point of view: nor was it uncommon for the dramatic poets of that time to satirize the ignominy of James's reign. So Fletcher, in *The Fair Maid of the Inn*. One says, *I will send thee to Amboyna in the East Indies for pepper*. The other replies, *To Amboyna? so I might be pepper'd*. Again, in the same play, a sailor says, *Despise not this pitch'd canvas, the time was we have known them lined with Spanish ducats*. WARBURTON.

The historical observation is very judicious and acute, but of the emendation there is no need. She says, that her hand gave away *her heart*. He goes on with his suspicion, and the hand which he had before called *frank*, he now terms *liberal*; then proceeds to remark, that *the hand was formerly given by the heart*; but now it neither gives it, nor is given by it. JOHNSON.

— *our new heraldry, &c.*] I believe this to be only a figurative expression, without the least reference to King James's creation of baronets. The absurdity of making Othello so familiar with British heraldry, the utter want of consistency as well as policy in any sneer of Shakespeare at the badge of honours instituted by a Prince whom on all other occasions he was solicitous to flatter, and at whose court this very piece was acted in 1613, very strongly incline me to question the propriety of Dr. Warburton's historical explanation. STEEVENS.

Oth.

Otb. I have a ⁷ salt and fullen rheum offends me;
Lend me thy handkerchief.

Des. Here, my lord.

Otb. That which I gave you.

Des. I have it not about me.

Otb. Not?

Des. No, indeed, my lord.

Otb. That is a fault: That handkerchief
Did an Ægyptian to my mother give:
She was a charmer, and could almost read
The thoughts of people: she told her, while she
kept it,

'Twould make her amiable, and subdue my father
Intirely to her love; but, if she lost it,
Or made a gift of it, my father's eye
Should hold her loathly, and his spirits should hunt
After new fancies: She, dying, gave it me;
And bid me, when my fate would have me wive,
To give it her. I did so: and take heed on't,
Make it a darling like your precious eye;
To lose't, or give't away, were such perdition,
As nothing else could match.

Des. Is it possible?

Otb. 'Tis true; there's magic in the web of it:
A sibyl ⁸, that had ⁹ number'd in the world

⁷ — salt and sorry rheum—] The old quarto has,

— salt and fullen rheum—

That is, a rheum obstinately troublesome. I think this better.

JOHNSON.

⁸ *A sibyl*, &c.] This circumstance perhaps is imitated by Ben
Jonson in the *Sad Shepherd*:

“ A Gypsy lady, and a right beldame,

“ Wrought it by moon-shine for me, and star-light, &c.”

STEEVENS.

⁹ — number'd—

The sun to cross—] i. e. number'd the sun's courses:
badly expressed. WARBURTON.

The expression is not very infrequent: we say, *I crossed the clock
to strike four*; so she *number'd the sun to cross*, to run two hundred
circles, two hundred annual circuits. JOHNSON.

The fun to course ¹ two hundred compasses,
 In her prophetic fury sew'd the work :
 The worms were hallow'd, that did breed the silk ;
² And it was dy'd in mummy, which the skilful
 Conserv'd of maidens' hearts ³.

Des. Indeed ! is it true ?

Oth. Most veritable ; therefore look to it well.

Des. Then'would to heaven, that I had never seen it !

Oth. Ha ! wherefore ?

Des. Why do you speak so startlingly and ⁴ rash ?

Oth. Is it lost ? is it gone ? speak, is it out of the
 way ?

Des. Heaven blefs us !

Oth. Say you ?

Des. It is not lost ; But what an if it were ?

Oth. Ha !

Des. I say, it is not lost.

Oth. Fetch it, let me see it.

Des. Why, so I can, sir, but I will not now :

This is a trick, to put me from my suit ;
 I pray, let Cassio be receiv'd again.

¹ — to course—] The first quarto reads, — to make—

STEEVENS.

² *And it was dy'd in mummy,—*] The balsamic liquor running from *mummies* was formerly celebrated for its anti-epileptic virtues. We are now wise enough to know, that the qualities ascribed to it are all imaginary ; and yet I have been informed, that this fanciful medicine still holds a place in the shops where drugs are sold. So, in *The Bird in a Cage*, by Shirley, 1633 :
 “ — make *mummy* of my flesh and sell me to the apothecaries.”

Again, in *The Honest Lawyer*, 1616 :

“ That I might tear their flesh in mamocks, raise

“ My losses, from their carcases turn'd *mummy*.”

STEEVENS.

³ — which the skilful

Conserv'd of maidens' hearts.] Thus the folio. The quarto reads — with the skilful

Conservees &c.

STEEVENS.

⁴ — rash ?] Is vehement, violent. JOHNSON.

Oth.

Oth. Fetch me that handkerchief: my mind mis-gives.

Des. Come, come;

You'll never meet a more sufficient man.

Oth. The handkerchief,—

Des. I pray, talk me of Cassio.

Oth. The handkerchief,—

Des. A man that, all his time,

Hath founded his good fortunes on your love;

Shar'd dangers with you;—

Oth. The handkerchief,—

Des. Insooth, you are to blame.

Oth. Away!

[Exit Othello.]

Æmil. Is not this man jealous?

Des. I ne'er saw this before.

Sure, there's some wonder in this handkerchief:

I am most unhappy in the loss of it.

Æmil. 'Tis not a year or two shews us a man:

⁵ *I pray talk me of Cassio.*] This and the following short speech are omitted in all ancient editions but the first quarto. STEEVENS.

⁶ *'Tis not a year or two shews us a man:*] From this line it may be conjectured, that the author intended the action of this play to be considered as longer than is marked by any note of time. Since their arrival at Cyprus, to which they were hurried on their wedding-night, the fable seems to have been in one continual progress, nor can I see any vacuity into which a *year or two*, or even a month or two, could be put. On the night of Othello's arrival, a feast was proclaimed; at that feast Cassio was degraded, and immediately applies to Desdemona to get him restored. Iago indeed advises Othello to hold him off a while, but there is no reason to think, that he has been held off long. A little longer interval would increase the probability of the story, though it might violate the rules of the drama. See Act 5. Sc. 2. JOHNSON.

This line has no reference to the duration of the action of this play, or to the length of time that Desdemona had been married. What Emilia says, is a sort of proverbial remark, of general application, where a definite time is put for an indefinite. Besides, there is no necessity for fixing the commencement of Emilia's *year or two*, to the time of the marriage, or the opening of the piece. She would with more propriety refer to the beginning of the acquaintance and intimacy between the married couple, which might extend beyond that period. STEEVENS.

They are all but stomachs, and we all but food;
They eat us hungerly, and, when they are full,
They belch us. Look you! Cassio, and my husband.

Enter Iago, and Cassio.

Iago. There is no other way; 'tis she must do't;
And, lo, the happiness! go, and importune her.

Des. How now, good Cassio? what's the news with you?

Cas. Madam, my former suit: I do beseech you,
That, by your virtuous means, I may again
Exist, and be a member of his love,
Whom I, with all ⁷ the duty of my heart,
Intirely honour; I would not be delay'd:
If my offence be of such mortal kind,
That neither service past, nor present sorrows,
Nor purpos'd merit in futurity,
Can ransom me into his love again,
⁸ But to know so must be my benefit;
So shall I clothe me in a forc'd content,
⁹ And shut myself up in some other course,
To fortune's alms.

Des.

⁷ — *the office of my heart,*] The elder quarto reads,
—— *the duty of my heart.*

The author used the more proper word, and then changed it, I suppose, for fashionable diction; but, as fashion is a very weak protectress, the old word is now ready to resume its place.

JOHNSON,

⁸ *But to know so, must be my benefit.*]

“ Si nequeo placidas affari Cæsaris aures,

“ Saltem aliquis veniat, qui mihi dicat, abi.” JOHNSON.

⁹ *And shut myself up*——] This is the reading of one of the early quartos. The folio, and all the modern editions, have,

And shut myself up—— JOHNSON.

The quarto 1630 (like the folio) reads,

And shut myself up——

I cannot help thinking this reading to be the true one. The idea seems taken from the confinement of a monastic life. The words, *forc'd content*, help to confirm the supposition. The meaning will therefore

Des. Alas! thrice-gentle Cassio,
 My advocacy is not now in tune;
 My lord is not my lord; nor should I know him,
 Were he ¹ in favour, as in humour, alter'd.
 So help me every spirit sanctified,
 As I have spoken for you all my best;
 And stood ² within the blank of his displeasure,
 For my free speech! You must a while be patient:
 What I can do, I will; and more I will,
 Than for myself I dare; let that suffice you.

Iago. Is my lord angry?

Æmil. He went hence but now,
 And, certainly, in strange unquietness.

Iago. Can he be angry? I have seen, the cannon
 When it hath blown his ranks into the air;
 And, like the devil, from his very arm
 Puff'd his own brother;—And can he be angry?
 Something of moment, then: I will go meet him;
 There's matter in't indeed, if he be angry. [*Exit.*]

Des. I prythee, do so.—Something, sure, of state,—
 Either from Venice; or ³ some unhatch'd practice,
 Made demonstrable here in Cyprus to him,—
 Hath puddled his clear spirit: and, in such cases,
 Men's natures wrangle with inferior things,
 Though great ones are their object.

therefore be, "I will put on a constrained appearance of being
 "contented, and shut myself up in a different course of life, no
 "longer to depend on my own efforts, but to wait for relief from
 "the accidental hand of charity."

Shakespeare uses the same expression in *Macbeth*:

— and shut up

In measureless content.

Again, in *All's well that ends well*:

Whose basest fears do shut us up in wishes. STEEVENS.

¹ — in favour, —] In *love*, in *acquiescence*. JOHNSON.

² — within the blank of his displeasure,] Within the *silence* of his
 anger. JOHNSON.

³ — some unhatch'd practice,] Some treason that has not taken
 effect. JOHNSON.

'Tis even so ; 4 for let our finger ach,
 And it endues our other healthful members
 Even to that sense of pain : Nay, we must think,
 Men are not gods ;
 Nor of them look for such observancy
 As fits the bridal. — Beshrew me much, Æmilia,
 I was (^s unhandsome warrior as I am)
 Arraigning his unkindness with my soul ;
 But now I find, I had suborn'd the witness,
 And he's indited falsely.

Æmil. Pray heaven, it be state matters, as you
 think ;

And no conception, nor no jealous toy,
 Concerning you.

Des. Alas the day ! I never gave him cause.

Æmil. But jealous souls will not be answer'd so ;
 They are not ever jealous for the cause,
 But jealous for they are jealous : 'tis a monster,
 Begot upon itself, born on itself.

Des. Heaven keep that monster from Othello's
 mind !

Æmil. Lady, amen.

Des. I will go seek him. — Cassio, walk hereabout !
 If I do find him fit, I'll move your suit,
 And seek to effect it to my uttermost.

⁴ For let our finger ach, and it endues

Our other healthful members with a sense

Of pain. —] Endues with a sense of pain, is an expression,
 which, though it might be endured, if it were genuine, cannot de-
 serve to be introduced by artifice. The copies, both quarto and
 folio, read, *Endues our other healthful members even to a sense of pain.*
 I believe it should be rather, *Subdues our other healthful members to a*
sense of pain. JOHNSON.

⁵ — (*unhandsome warrior as I am*)] How this came to be so
 blundered, I cannot conceive. It is plain Shakespeare wrote,

— *unhandsome wrangler as I am.*

So, in *Antony and Cleopatra* :

— *sic wrangling queen.* WARBURTON.

Unhandsome warrior, is evidently *unfair assailant.* JOHNSON.

Caf. I humbly thank your ladyship.

[*Exeunt Desdemona, and Æmilia.*]

Enter Bianca.

Bian. Save you, friend Cassio!

Caf. What make you from home?

How is it with you, my most fair Bianca?

Indeed, sweet love, I was coming to your house.

Bian. And I was going to your lodging, Cassio.

What! keep a week away? seven days and nights?

Eightscore eight hours? and lovers' absent hours,

More tedious than the dial eightscore times?

O weary reckoning!

Caf. Pardon me, Bianca;

I have this while with leaden thoughts been press'd:

But I shall, in a ⁶ more continueate time,

Strike off this store of absence. Sweet Bianca,

[*Giving her Desdemona's handkerchief.*]

Take me this work out.

* — more convenient time] — The folio has,

— more continueate time;

Time less interrupted, time which I can call more my own. It gives a more distinct image than convenient. JOHNSON.

The word occurs again in *Timon*, Sc. 1.

— breath'd, as it were,

To an untirable and continueate goodness. STEEVENS.

Take me this work out.] The meaning is not, "Pick out the work, and leave the ground plain;" but, "Copy this work in another handkerchief." JOHNSON.

So, in a comedy, by Middleton, called *Women beware Women*:

— she intends

"To take out other works in a new sampler."

Again, in the preface to P. Holland's *Pliny*, 1601: "Nicophanes (a famous painter) gave his mind wholly to antique pictures, partly to exemplify and take out their patterns, after that in long continuance of time they were decayed." STEEVENS.

So, in Hearne's *Liber Niger Scaccarii*, vol. ii. p. 578. 581. and 585, "to take out the arms," means to copy them.

TOLLET.

Bian. O Cassio, whence came this?
This is some token from a newer friend.
To the felt absence now I feel a cause:
Is it come to this? Well, well.

Caf. Go to, woman!
Throw your vile guesses in the devil's teeth,
From whence you have them. You are jealous now;
That this is from some mistress, some remembrance:
No, in good troth, Bianca.

Bian. Why, whose is it?

Caf. I know not, sweet: I found it in my chamber.

I like the work well; ere it be demanded,
(As like enough, it will) I'd have it copy'd:
Take it, and do't; and leave me for this time.

Bian. Leave you! wherefore?

Caf. I do attend here on the general;
And think it no addition, nor my wish,
To have him see me woman'd.

Bian. Why, I pray you⁸?

Caf. Not, that I love you not.

Bian. But that you do not love me.

I pray you, bring me on the way a little;
And say, if I shall see you soon at night?

Caf. 'Tis but a little way, that I can bring you,
For I attend here: but I'll see you soon.

Bian. 'Tis very good; 'I must be circumstanc'd.

[*Exeunt.*]

⁸ *Why, I pray you?*] This and the following speech are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *I must be circumstanc'd.*] i. e. your civility is now grown conditional. WARBURTON.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

*An apartment in the castle.**Enter Othello, and Iago.**Iago.* Will you think so?*Oth.* Think so, Iago?*Iago.* What,

To kiss in private?

Oth. An unauthoriz'd kiss.*Iago.* Or to be naked with her friend abed,
An hour, or more, not meaning any harm?*Oth.* ¹ Naked abed, Iago, and not mean harm?
It is hypocrisy against the devil:

They that mean virtuously, and yet do so,

² The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven.*Iago.*¹ *Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean harm?**It is hypocrisy against the devil:]* This observation seems strangely abrupt and unoccasioned. We must suppose that Iago had, before they appear in this scene, been applying cases of false comfort to Othello; as that though the parties had been even found in bed together, there might be no harm done; it might be only for the trial of their virtue; as was reported of the Romish saint, Robert D'Arbrissel and his nuns. To this we must suppose Othello here replies; and like a good protestant. For so the sentiment does but suit the character of the speaker, Shakespeare little heeds how these sentiments are circumstanced. WARBURTON.*Hypocrisy against the devil,* means hypocrisy to cheat the devil. As common hypocrites cheat men, by seeming good, and yet living wickedly, these men would cheat the devil, by giving him flattering hopes, and at last avoiding the crime which he thinks them ready to commit. JOHNSON.² *The devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven.]* It is plain, from the whole tenor of the words, that the speaker would distinguish this strange fantastical presumption from other lesser kinds of indiscretion, where prudence is off its guard. But this reading does not distinguish it from any other, it being true of all who run

Iago. So they do nothing, 'tis a venial slip :
But if I give my wife a handkerchief,—

Oth. What then ?

Iago. Why, then 'tis hers, my lord ; and, being hers,

She may, I think, bestow't on any man.

Oth. She is protectress of her honour too ;
May she give that ?

Iago. Her honour is an essence that's not seen ;
They have it very oft, that have it not :
But, for the handkerchief,—

Oth. By heaven, I would most gladly have forgot
it :—

Thou saidst,—O, it comes o'er my memory,
As doth the raven o'er the infected house,
Boding to all,—he had my handkerchief.

Iago. Ay, what of that ?

into temptation, that *the devil their virtue tempts, and they tempt heaven.* The true reading, therefore, without question, is this :

The devil their virtue tempts not ; they tempt heaven.

i. e. they do not give the devil the trouble of throwing temptations in their way : they seek them out themselves, and so tempt heaven by their presumption. This is a just character of the extravagance here condemned, and distinguishes it from other inferior indiscretions. WARBURTON.

Shakespeare had probably in view a very popular book of his time, *The Beehive of the Roman Church.* “ There was an old wife, called *Julia*, which would take the young men and maides, and lay them together in a bed. And for that they should not one byte another, nor kicke backwardes with their heeles, she did lay a crucifix betweene them.” FARMER.

³ *Boding to all—*] Thus all the old copies. The moderns, less grammatically,

Boding to ill— JOHNSON.

The raven was thought to be a constant attendant on a house in which there was infection. So, in Marlowe's *Jew of Malta*, 1633 :

“ Thus like the sad presaging *raven*, that tolls

“ The sick man's passport in her hollow beak,

“ And in the shadow of the silent night

“ Does shake contagion from her sable wing.” MALONE.

Oth.

Oth. That's not so good now.

Iago. What if I had said, I had seen him do you wrong?

Or heard him say,—As knaves be such abroad,
Who having, by their own importunate suit,
Or voluntary dotage of some mistress,
4 Convinced or supplied them, cannot choose
But they must blab.

Oth. Hath he said any thing?

Iago. He hath, my lord; but, be you well assur'd,
No more than he'll unswear.

Oth. What hath he said?

Iago. Why, that he did,—I know not what he did.

Oth. What? what?

Iago. Lie——

Oth. With her?

Iago. With her, on her; what you will.

Oth. Lie with her! lie on her!—We say, lie on her, when they belie her: Lie with her! that's fulsome. Handkerchief,—confessions,—handkerchief.—To confess, and be hang'd for his labour^s.—
First,

⁴ *Convinc'd or supplied them,*] I cannot understand the vulgar reading. I read, *convinc'd or suppld.* My emendation makes the sense of the passage easy and intelligible: that there are some such long-tongued knaves in the world, who, if they through the *force of importunity extort* a favour from their mistress, or if through *her own fondness* they make her *pliant* to their desires, cannot help boasting of their success. To *convince*, here, is not, as in the common acceptance, to make sensible of the truth of any thing by reasons and arguments; but to *overcome, get the better of, &c.* THEOBALD.

Convinc'd] *Convinc'd*, for conquer'd, subdued. WARBURTON.
So, in *Macbeth*:

“——his two chamberlains

“Will I, with wine and wassel so *convince*.”

Again, in the same play:

“——their malady *convinc*es

“The great assay of art.” STEEVENS.

⁵ —to confess and be hang'd—] This is a proverbial saying. It is used by Marlow, in his *Jew of Malta*, 1633:

“Blame us not, but the proverb—*Confess and be hang'd*.”

First, to be hang'd, and then—to confess:—I tremble at it.—Nature would not invest herself in such shadowing passion, without some instruction. It is not words, that shake me thus:—Pish!—Noses, ears,

It occurs again, in *The Travels of the 3 English Brothers*, 1593; And in one of the old collections of small Poems there is an epigram on it. All that remains of this speech, including the words to confess, is wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

⁶ —*shadowing passion*—] The modern editions have left out *passion*. JOHNSON.

⁷ —*without some instruction*.—] The starts and broken reflections in this speech have something very terrible, and shew the mind of the speaker to be in inexpressible agonies. But the words we are upon, when set right, have a sublime in them that can never be enough admired. The ridiculous blunder of writing *instruction* for *induction* (for so it should be read) has indeed sunk it into arrant nonsense. Othello is just going to fall into a swoon; and, as is common for people in that circumstance, feels an unusual mist and darkness, accompanied with horror, coming upon him. This, with vast sublimity of thought, is compared to the season of the sun's eclipse, at which time the earth becomes shadowed by the *induction* or bringing over of the moon between it and the sun. This being the allusion, the reasoning stands thus: “My nature could never be thus overshadowed, and falling, as it were, into dissolution, for no cause. There must be an *induction* of something: there must be a real cause. My jealousy cannot be merely imaginary. Ideas, words only, could not shake me thus, and raise all this disorder. My jealousy therefore must be grounded on matter of fact.” Shakespeare uses this word in the same sense, in *Richard III*.

“A dire *induction* am I witness to.”

Marston seems to have read it thus in some copy, and to allude to it in these words of his *Fame*:

“Plots ha' you laid? *inductions* dangerous!” WARBURTON.

This is a noble conjecture, and whether right or wrong does honour to its author. Yet I am in doubt whether there is any necessity of emendation. There has always prevailed in the world an opinion, that when any great calamity happens at a distance, notice is given of it to the sufferer by some dejection or perturbation of mind, of which he discovers no external cause. This is ascribed to that general communication of one part of the universe with another, which is called sympathy and antipathy; or to the secret monition, *instruction*, and influence of a superior Being, which superintends the order of nature and of life. Othello says,

Nature

ears, and lips^s:—Is it possible?—Confess!—Handkerchief!—O devil!—

[Falls in a trance.

Iago. Work on,
My medicine, work! Thus credulous fools are
caught;
And many worthy and chaste dames, even thus,
All guiltless meet reproach.—What, ho! my lord!
My lord, I say! Othello!—How now, Cassio?

Enter Cassio.

Cas. What's the matter?

Iago. My lord is fallen into an epilepsy;
This is his second fit; he had one yesterday.

Nature could not invest herself in such shadowing passion without instruction. It is not words that stroke me thus. This passion, which spreads its clouds over me, is the effect of some agency more than the operation of words; it is one of those notices which men have of unseen calamities. JOHNSON.

Nature could not invest herself in such shadowing passion without some instruction.] However ingenious Dr. Warburton's note may be, it is certainly too forced and far-fetched. Othello alludes only to Cassio's dream, which had been invented and told him by Iago. When many confused and very interesting ideas pour in upon the mind all at once, and with such rapidity that it has not time to shape or digest them, if it does not relieve itself by tears (which we know it often does, whether for joy or grief) it produces stupefaction and fainting.

Othello, in broken sentences and single words, all of which have a reference to the cause of his jealousy, shews, that all the proofs are present at once to his mind, which so over-powers it, that he falls into a trance, the natural consequence. Sir J. REYNOLDS.

^s *Noses, ears, and lips:]* Othello is imaging to himself the familiarities which he supposes to have passed between Cassio and his wife. So, in the *Winter's Tale*:

Cheek to cheek,—meeting noses—

Kissing with inside lip, &c.—

If this be not the meaning, we must suppose he is meditating a cruel punishment for Desdemona and her suspected paramour:

———— raptis

Acribus, et truncas inhonesto vulnere naves. STEVENS.

Caf. Rub him about the temples.

Iago. No, forbear:

The lethargy must have his quiet course:
If not, he foams at mouth; and, by and by,
Breaks out to savage madness. Look, he stirs:
Do you withdraw yourself a little while,
He will recover straight; when he is gone,
I would on great occasion speak with you.—

[*Exit Cassio.*]

How is it, general? have you not hurt your head?

Oth. Dost thou mock me?

Iago. I mock you! no, by heaven:

'Would, you would bear your fortunes like a man.

Oth. A horned man's⁹ a monster, and a beast.

Iago. There's many a beast then in a populous
city,

And many a civil monster.

Oth. Did he confess it?

Iago. Good sir, be a man;

Think, every bearded fellow, that's but yok'd,
May draw with you: there's millions now alive,
That nightly lie¹ in those unproper beds,

Which

⁹ *A horned man*—] In *Much Ado about Nothing*, I omitted to attempt the illustration of a passage where Benedick says—“there is no staff more honourable than one *tipt with horn*.” Perhaps he alludes to the staff which was anciently carried before a challenger. Thus, in Stowe's *Chronicle*, edit. 1615, p. 669: “—his baston (a staffe of an elle long, made taper-wile, *tipt with borne*) &c. was borne before him.” STEEVENS.

¹ — *in those unproper beds*,] *Unproper*, for common.

WARBURTON.

So, in *The Arcadia*, by Shirley, 1640:

“Every woman shall be common.—

“Every woman common! what shall we do with all the
proper women in *Arcadia*?

“They shall be common-too.”

Again, in Gower *De Confessione Amantis*, B. 2. fol.

“And is his *proper* by the lawe.”

Again, in the *Mastive*, &c. an ancient collection of epigrams and fables, no date;

“Rose

Which they dare swear peculiar; your case is better.
 O, 'tis the spight of hell, the fiend's arch-mock,
 To lip a wanton in a secure couch,
 And to suppose her chaste! No, let me know;
 And, knowing what I am, I know what she shall be.

Oth. O, thou art wise; 'tis certain.

Iago. Stand you a while apart;
 Confine yourself but in a patient² list.
 Whilst you were here, ere while, mad with your
 grief³,

(A passion most unsuited such a man)
 Cassio came hither: I shifted him away,
 And laid good 'scuse upon your ecstasy;
 Bade him anon return, and here speak with me;
 The which he promis'd. Do but + encave yourself,

⁴ Rose is a fayre, but not a *proper* woman,

⁵ Can any creature *proper* be, that's common?"

STEEVENS.

² — *list*.] For attention: act of listening. JOHNSON,

It appears to me that a plain sense is on this occasion rejected in favour of one more remote; and perhaps no instance of such a use of the word *list* can be brought in support of it. The obvious meaning of *list*, or *lists*, is *barriers*, *bounds*. Keep your temper, says Iago, within the *bounds of patience*. So, in *Hamlet*:

The ocean over-peering of his *list*,

Eats not the flats with more imperuous haste, &c. COLLINS.
 Again, in *King Henry V.* Act 5. Sc. 2. "—you and I cannot be
 contain'd within the weak *list* of a country fashion."

Again, in *King Henry IV.* P. 1:

The very *list*, the very utmost bound,
 Of all our fortunes,

Chapman, in his translation of the 16th Book of Homer's
Odyssie, has expressed the same thought:

" — let thy heart

" Beat in fix'd *confines* of thy bosom still."

Again, in *All's well that ends well*, Act 2. Sc. 1: "— you have
 restrain'd yourself within the *list* of too cold an adieu." STEEVENS.

³ — *ere while, mad with your grief*.] Thus the first quarto.
 The folio reads:

— o'erwhelmed with your grief. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *encave yourself*.] Hide yourself in a private place.

JOHNSON.

And

And mark the fleers, the gibes, and notable scorns,
 That dwell in every region of his face ;
 For I will make him tell the tale anew,—
 Where, how, how oft, how long ago, and when
 He hath, and is again to cope your wife ;
 I say, but mark his gesture. Marry, patience ;
^s Or I shall say, you are all in all in spleen,
 And nothing of a man.

Oth. Dost thou hear, Iago?

I will be found most cunning in my patience ;
 But (dost thou hear?) most bloody.

Iago. That's not amiss ;

But yet keep time in all. Will you withdraw?

[*Othello withdraws.*]

Now will I question Cassio of Bianca,
 A housewife, that, by selling her desires,
 Buys herself bread and cloaths : it is a creature,
 That dotes on Cassio,—as 'tis the strumpet's plague,
 To beguile many, and be beguil'd by one ;—
 He, when he hears of her, cannot refrain
 From the excess of laughter :—Here he comes :—

Enter Cassio.

As he shall smile, Othello shall go mad ;
⁶ And his unbookish jealousy must construe
 Poor Cassio's smiles, gestures, and light behaviour,
 Quite in the wrong.—How do you now, lieutenant?

⁵ *Or I shall say, you are all in all in spleen,*] I read :

Or shall I say, you're all in all a spleen.

I think our author uses this expression elsewhere. JOHNSON.

A hare-brain'd Hotspur, govern'd by a *spleen*.—The old reading, however, is not inexplicable. We still say, such one is *in* wrath, *in* the dumps, &c. The sense therefore is plain. Again, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* :

That, in a *spleen*, unfolds both heaven and earth—

STEEVENS,

⁶ *And his unbookish jealousy—*] *Unbookish*, for ignorant.

WARBURTON.

Caf.

Caf. The worser, that you give me the addition,
Whose want even kills me.

Iago. Ply Desdemona well, and you are sure on't.
Now, if this suit lay in Bianca's power,

[*Speaking lower.*

How quickly should you speed?

Caf. Alas, poor caitiff!

Otb. Look, how he laughs already! [*Aside.*

Iago. I never knew a woman love man so.

Caf. Alas, poor rogue! I think, indeed, she loves
me.

Otb. Now he denies it faintly, and laughs it out.

[*Aside.*

Iago. Do you hear, Cassio?

Otb. Now he importunes him

To tell it o'er: Go to; well said, well said. [*Aside.*

Iago. She gives it out, that you shall marry her;

Do you intend it?

Caf. Ha, ha, ha!

Otb. ⁷ Do you triumph, Roman? do you triumph?

[*Aside.*

Caf. I marry her!—what? ⁸ a customer! I pr'y-
thee, bear some charity to my wit; do not think it
so unwholesome. Ha, ha, ha!

Otb. So, so, so, so: They laugh, that win. [*Aside.*

Iago. Why, the cry goes, that you shall marry her.

Caf. Pr'ythee, say true.

Iago. I am a very villain else.

Otb. ⁹ Have you scor'd me? Well. [*Aside.*

Caf.

⁷ *Do you triumph? Roman? do you triumph?*] Othello calls him
Roman ironically. *Triumph*, which was a Roman ceremony,
brought Roman into his thoughts. *What* (says he) *you are now*
triumphing as great as a Roman? JOHNSON.

⁸ *— a customer! —*] A common woman, one that invites
custom. JOHNSON.

So, in *All's well that ends well*:

I think thee now some common customer. STEEVENS.

⁹ *Have you scor'd me? —*] Have you made my reckoning?
hay:

Caf. This is the monkey's own giving out : she is persuaded I will marry her, out of her own love and flattery, not out of my promise.

Oth. Iago beckons me ; now he begins the story.

[*Aside.*

Caf. She was here even now ; she haunts me in every place. I was, the other day, talking on the sea-bank with certain Venetians ; and thither comes the bauble ; by this hand¹ she falls thus about my neck ;—

Oth. Crying, O dear Cassio ! as it were : his gesture imports it.

[*Aside.*

Caf. So hangs, and lolls, and weeps upon me ; so hales, and pulls me : ha, ha, ha !—

Oth. Now he tells, how she pluck'd him to my chamber : O, I see that nose of yours, but not that dog I shall throw it to.

[*Aside.*

Caf. Well, I must leave her company.

Iago. Before me ! look, where she comes.

Enter Bianca.

Caf. 'Tis such another² fitchew ! marry, a per-
fum'd

have you settled the term of my life ? The old quarto reads, *stored* me. Have you disposed of me ? have you laid me up ?

JOHNSON.

To *score* originally meant no more than to cut a notch upon a tally, or to mark out a form by indenting it on any substance. Spenser, in the first Canto of his *Faery Queen*, speaking of the Cross, says :

“ Upon his shield the like was also *scor'd*.”

Again, b. 2. c. 9 : “ — why on your shield, so goodly *scor'd*,

“ Bear you the picture of that lady's head ?”

But it was soon figuratively used for setting a *brand* or *mark* of disgrace on any one. “ Let us *score* their backs,” says Scarus, in *Antony and Cleopatra* ; and it is employed in the same sense on the present occasion. STEEVENS.

¹ — *by this hand*—] This is the reading of the first quarto.

STEEVENS.

² — *fitchew* !—] A polecat. POPE.

Shakespeare has in another place mentioned the lust of this animal,

fum'd one.—What do you mean by this haunting of me?

Bian. Let the devil and his dam haunt you! What did you mean by that same handkerchief, you gave me even now? I was a fine fool to take it. I must take out the whole work.—A likely piece of work, that you should find it in your chamber, and not know who left it there! This is some minx's token, and I must take out the work? There,—give it your hobby-horse: wheresoever you had it, I'll take out no work on't.

Caf. How now, my sweet Bianca? how now? how now?

Otb. By heaven, that should be my handkerchief!

[*Aside.*

Bian. An you'll come to supper to-night, you may: an you will not, come when you are next prepar'd for.

[*Exit.*

Iago. After her, after her.

Caf. I must, she'll rail in the street else.

Iago. Will you sup there?

Caf. Yes, I intend so.

Iago. Well, I may chance to see you; for I would very fain speak with you.

Caf. Pr'ythee, come; Will you?

Iago. Go to; say no more.

[*Exit Cassio.*

Otb. How shall I murder him, Iago?

Iago. Did you perceive how he laugh'd at his vice?

Otb. O, Iago!

Iago. And did you see the handkerchief?

Otb. Was that mine?

Iago. Yours, by this hand: and to see how he prizes the foolish woman your wife! she gave it him, and he hath given it his whore.

animal. He tells Iago, that she is as lewd as the *polecat*, but of better scent, the *polecat* being a very stinking animal. JOHNSON.

A *pole-cat* was anciently one of the cant terms for a strumpet.

STEEVENS.

Otb.

Oth. I would have him nine years a killing :—
A fine woman ! a fair woman ! a sweet woman !

Iago. Nay, you must forget that.

Oth. Ay, let her rot, and perish, and be damn'd
to-night ; for she shall not live : No, my heart is
turn'd to stone ; I strike it, and it hurts my hand^s.
O, the world hath not a sweeter creature : she might
lie by an emperor's side, and command him tasks.

Iago. Nay, that's not your way.

Oth. Hang her ! I do but say what she is :—So
delicate with her needle !—An admirable musician !
O, she will sing the savageness out of a bear !—Of
so high and plenteous wit and invention !—

Iago. She's the worse for all this.

Oth. O, a thousand, a thousand times :—And then,
of so gentle a condition !—

Iago. Ay, too gentle.

Oth. Nay, that's certain : But yet the pity of it,
Iago !—O, Iago, the pity of it, Iago !

Iago. If you are so fond over her iniquity, give her
patent to offend ; for, if it touch not you, it comes
near nobody.

Oth. I will chop her into messes :—Cuckold me !

Iago. O, 'tis foul in her.

Oth. With mine officer !

Iago. That's fouler.

Oth. Get me some poison, Iago ; this night :—I'll
not expostulate with her, lest her body and beauty
unprovide my mind again ;—this night, Iago.

³ — No, my heart is turn'd to stone ; I strike it, and it hurts my
hand.—] This thought, as often as it occurs to Shakespeare, is
sure to be received, and as often counteracts his *pathos*. So, in
Antony and Cleopatra, Act 4. Sc. 3 :

“ — throw my heart

“ Against the flint and hardness of my fault,

“ Which, being dried with grief, will break to powder,

“ And finish all foul thoughts.” STEEVENS.

Iago. Do it not with poison; strangle her in her bed, even the bed she hath contaminated.

Oth. Good, good: the justice of it pleases; very good.

Iago. And, for Cassio,—let me be his undertaker: You shall hear more by midnight. [*A trumpet within.*]

Oth. Excellent good.—What trumpet is that same?

Iago. Something from Venice, sure. 'Tis Lodovico,

Come from the duke: and, see, your wife is with him.

Enter Lodovico, Desdemona, and Attendants.

Lod. Save you, worthy general!

Oth. With all my heart, sir.

Lod. The duke and senators of Venice greet you.
[*Gives him a letter.*]

Oth. I kiss the instrument of their pleasures.

Des. And what's the news, good cousin Lodovico?

Iago. I am very glad to see you, signior;

Welcome to Cyprus.

Lod. I thank you: How does lieutenant Cassio?

Iago. Lives, sir.

Des. Cousin, there's fallen between him and my lord

An unkind breach: but you shall make all well.

Oth. Are you sure of that?

Des. My lord?

Oth. 'This fail you not to do, as you will—'

[*Reads.*]

Lod. He did not call; he's busy in the paper.

Is there division 'twixt thy lord and Cassio?

Des. A most unhappy one; I would do much
To + atone them, for the love I bear to Cassio.

* — atone them,—] Make them one; reconcile them. JOHNSON.
So, in *Cymbeline*:

I did atone my countryman and you. STEEVENS.

Oth.

Oth. Fire and brimstone!

Des. My lord?

Oth. Are you wise?

Des. What, is he angry?

Lod. 'May be, the letter mov'd him;
For, as I think, they do command him home,
Deputing Cassio in his government.

Des. By my troth, I am glad on't.

Oth. Indeed?

Des. My lord?

Oth. I am glad to see you mad.

Des. Why, sweet Othello?

Oth. Devil!

[Striking her.

Des. I have not deserv'd this.

Lod. My lord, this would not be believ'd in Venice,
Though I should swear I saw it: 'Tis very much;
Make her amends, she weeps.

Oth. O devil, devil!

5 If that the earth could teem with woman's tears,
Each drop she falls 6 would prove a crocodile:—
Out of my sight!

Des. I will not stay to offend you.

[Going.

Lod. Truly, an obedient lady:—

I do beseech your lordship, call her back.

Oth. Mistress,—

Des. My lord?

Oth. What would you with her, sir?

Lod. Who, I, my lord?

Oth. Ay; you did wish, that I would make her turn;
Sir, she can turn, and turn, and yet go on,

⁵ *If that the earth could teem, &c.*] If womens tears could impregnate the earth. By the doctrine of equivocal generation, new animals were supposed producible by new combinations of matter. See Bacon. JOHNSON.

⁶ *Each drop she falls*] To *fall* is here a verb active. So, in the *Tempest*:

— when I rear my hand, do you the like,
To *fall* it on Gonzalo. STEEVENS.

And turn again ; and she can weep, fir, weep ;
 And she's obedient, as you say,—obedient,—
 Very obedient ;— Proceed you in your tears.—
 Concerning this, fir,—O well-painted passion !—
 I am commanded home :—Get you away ;
 I'll fend for you anon.—Sir, I obey the mandate,
 And will return to Venice ;—Hence, avaunt !—

[Exit Desdemona.]

Cassio shall have my place⁸. And,—fir, to-night,
 I do entreat that we may sup together.
 You are welcome, fir, to Cyprus.—Goats and mon-
 kies⁹ ! [Exit.]

Lod. Is this the noble Moor, whom our full senate
 Call—all-in-all sufficient ? This the noble nature
 Whom passion could not shake ?¹ whose solid virtue
 The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,
 Could neither graze, nor pierce ?

Iago.

⁷ — Proceed you in your tears.—] I cannot think that the poet meant to make Othello bid Desdemona to continue weeping, which *proceed you in your tears* (as the passage is at present pointed) must mean. He rather would have said,

— Proceed you in your tears ? —

What ! will you still continue to be a hypocrite by a display of this *well-painted passion* ? WARNER.

⁸ Cassio shall have my place.] Perhaps this is addressed to Desdemona, who had just expressed her joy on hearing Cassio was deputed in the room of her husband. Her innocent satisfaction in the hope of returning to her native place, is construed by Othello into the pleasure she received from the advancement of his rival. STEEVENS.

⁹ Goats and monkeys !] In this exclamation Shakspeare has shewn great art. Iago, in the first scene in which he endeavours to awaken his suspicion, being urged to give some evident proof of the guilt of Cassio and Desdemona, tells him it were impossible to have ocular demonstration of it, though they should be “ as prime as goats, as hot as monkeys.”—These words, we may suppose, still ring in the ears of Othello, who being now fully convinced of his wife's infidelity, rushes out with this emphatic exclamation :—Iago's words were but too true—now indeed I am convinced that they are as hot as “ goats and monkeys.” MALONE.

¹ — whose solid virtue

The shot of accident, nor dart of chance,

Could neither graze nor pierce.] But it is no commendation to

Iago. He is much chang'd.

Lod. Are his wits safe? is he not light of brain?

Iago. He is that he is; I may not breathe my
censure.

What he might be,—if, what he might, he is not,—
I would to heaven, he were.

Lod. What, strike his wife!

Iago. 'Faith, that was not so well; Yet 'would I
knew,

That stroke would prove the worst.

Lod. Is it his use?

Or did the letters work upon his blood,

the most solid virtue to be free from the attacks of fortune: but that it is so impenetrable as to suffer no impression. Now to *graze* signifies only *to touch the superficies* of any thing. That is the attack of fortune: and by that virtue is tried, but not discredited. We ought certainly therefore to read:

Can neither raze nor pierce.

i. e. neither lightly touch upon, nor pierce into. The ignorant transcribers being acquainted with the phrase of a *bullet grazing*, and *shot* being mentioned in the line before, they corrupted the true word. Besides, we do not say, *graze* a thing; but *graze on* it.

WARBURTON.

I have ventured to attack another part of this sentence, which my ingenious friend slipped over. I cannot see, for my heart, the difference betwixt the shot of *accident* and dart of *chance*. The words and things they imply are purely synonymous; but that the poet intended two different things seems plain from the *discretive* adverb. *Chance* may afflict a man in some circumstances; but other distresses are to be accounted for from a different cause. I am persuaded our author wrote:

The shot of accident, nor dart of change, &c.

And, in a number of other places, our poet industriously puts these two words in opposition to each other. THEOBALD.

To *graze* is not merely to touch superficially, but to strike not directly, not so as to bury the body of the thing striking in the matter struck.

Theobald trifles, as is usual. *Accident* and *chance* may admit a subtle distinction; *accident* may be considered as the *act*, and *chance* as the *power* or *agency* of fortune; as, *It was by chance that this accident befel me*. At least, if we suppose all corrupt that is inaccurate, there will be no end of emendation. JOHNSON.

And

And new-create this fault?

Iago. Alas, alas!

It is not honesty in me, to speak
What I have seen and known. You shall observe him;
And his own courses will denote him so,
That I may save my speech: Do but go after,
And mark how he continues.

Lod. I am sorry, that I am deceiv'd in him. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

Another apartment in the castle.

Enter Otello, and Emilia.

Otb. You have seen nothing then?

Æmil. Nor ever heard; nor ever did suspect.

Otb. Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together.

Æmil. But then I saw no harm; and then I heard
Each syllable, that breath made up between them.

Otb. What, did they never whisper?

Æmil. Never, my lord.

Otb. Nor send you out o' the way?

Æmil. Never.

Otb. To fetch her fan, her gloves, her mask, nor
nothing?

Æmil. Never, my lord.

Otb. That's strange.

Æmil. I durst, my lord, to wager she is honest,
Lay down my soul at stake: if you think other,
Remove your thought; it doth abuse your bosom.
If any wretch hath put this in your head,
Let heaven requite it with the serpent's curse!
For, if she be not honest, chaste, and true,
There's no man happy; the purest of their wives
Is foul as slander.

Oth. Bid her come hither;—go.— [*Exit Æmilia.*
She says enough;—yet she's a simple bawd,
That cannot say as much. This is a subtle whore,
A closet lock and key of villainous secrets:
And yet she'll kneel, and pray; I have seen her do't.

Re-enter Æmilia, with Desdemona.

Des. My lord, what is your will?

Oth. Pray, chuck, come hither.

Des. What is your pleasure?

Oth. Let me see your eyes;

Look in my face.

Des. What horrible fancy's this?

Oth. [*To Æmilia.*] Some of your function, mistress;
Leave procreants alone, and shut the door;
Cough, or cry—hem, if any body come:
Your mystery, your mystery;—nay, dispatch.

[*Exit Æmilia.*

Des. Upon my knees, what doth your speech im-
port?

I understand a fury in your words,

² But not the words.

Oth. Why, what art thou?

Des. Your wife, my lord;

Your true and loyal wife.

Oth. Come, swear it, damn thyself;

Lest, being like one of heaven, the devils themselves
Should fear to seize thee: therefore be double-damn'd,
Swear—thou art honest.

Des. Heaven doth truly know it.

Oth. Heaven truly knows, that thou art false as
hell.

Des. To whom, my lord? With whom? How
am I false?

² *But not your words.*] This line is added out of the first
edition. Pope.

Oth. O Desdemona!—away! away! away!

Des. Alas, the heavy day!—Why do you weep?
Am I the occasion of these tears, my lord?
If, haply, you my father do suspect,
An instrument of this your calling back,
Lay not your blame on me; if you have lost him,
Why, I have lost him too.

Oth. Had it pleas'd heaven
To try me with affliction; had he rain'd
All kind of sores, and shames, on my bare head;
Steep'd me in poverty to the very lips;
Given to captivity me and my utmost hopes;
I should have found in some place of my soul
A drop of patience: but (alas!) to make me
A fixed figure, for the³ time of scorn

To

³ — *time of scorn*] The reading of both the eldest quartos and the folio is,

“ — for the time of scorn.”

Mr. Rowe reads “*band of scorn*;” and succeeding editors have silently followed him.

I would (though in opposition to so many great authorities in favour of the change) continue to read with the old copy:

— *the time of scorn*.

We call the *hour in which we are to die*, the *hour of death*—the time when we are to be judged—*the day of judgment*—the instant when we suffer calamity—*the moment of evil*; and why may we not distinguish the time which brings contempt along with it, by the title of *the time of scorn*? Thus, in *Saliman and Perseda*, 1599:

“ So sings the mariner upon the shore,

“ When he hath past the dangerous *time of storms*.”

Again, in Marston's *Insatiate Countess*, 1603:

“ I'll poison thee; with murder curbe thy paths,

“ And make thee know a *time of infamy*.”

Othello takes his idea from a clock. *To make me* (says he) *a fixed figure* (on the dial of the world) *for the hour of scorn to point and make a full stop at!* STEEVENS.

Might not Shakespeare have written—

— for the *scorn of time*

To point his slow unmoving finger at?

i. e. the marked object for the contempt of all ages and all time. So, in *Hamlet*:

For who would bear the whips and *scorns of time*?

To point his slow unmoving finger at,—
O! O!

Yet could I bear that too; well, very well:
But there, where I have † garner'd up my heart;
Where either I must live, or bear no life;
The fountain from the which my current runs,
Or else dries up; to be discarded thence!
Or keep it as a cistern, for foul toads
To knot and gender in!—^s turn thy complexion
there!

Patience, thou young and rose-lipp'd cherubim;
Ay, there, look grim as hell!

Def. I hope, my noble lord esteems me honest.

Oth. O, ay; as summer flies are in the shambles,
That quicken even with blowing. † O thou weed,
Who

However, in support of the reading of the old copies, it may be observed, that our author has personified *Scorn* in his 88th Sonnet:

“When thou shalt be dispos'd to set me light,
And place my merit in the eye of *scorn*”—

The epithet *unmoving* (which some of the editors changed to — *and moving*) may likewise be supported by Shakespeare's 104th Sonnet, in which this very thought is expressed:

“Ah! yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived,
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived.” MALONE.

† — *garner'd up my heart*;] That is, *treasured up*; the *garner* and the *fountain* are improperly conjoined. JOHNSON.

‡ — *Turn thy complexion there, &c.*] At such an object do thou, *patience*, thyself *change colour*; at this do thou, even thou, *rosy cherub* as thou art, *look grim as hell*. The old editions and the new have it,

I here look grim as hell.

I was written for *ay*, and not since corrected. JOHNSON.

§ — *O thou weed!*] Dr. Johnson has, on this occasion, been unjustly censured for having stiled difficulties where he could not remove them. I would therefore observe, that Othello's speech is printed word for word from the folio edition, though the quarto reads:

— *O thou black weed!*

Who art so lovely fair, and smell'st so sweet,
That the sense aches at thee,—'Would, thou hadst
ne'er been born!

Des. Alas, what ignorant sin have I committed?

Osb. Was this fair paper? this most goodly book,
Made to write whore upon? What committed!
Committed!—O thou public commoner!
I should make very forges of my cheeks,
That would to cinders burn up modesty,
Did I but speak thy deed.—What committed!
Heaven stops the nose at it, and the moon winks;
The bawdy wind, that kisses all it meets,
Is hush'd within the hollow mine of earth,
And will not hear it: What committed!—Impudent
strumpet!

Des. By heaven, you do me wrong.

Osb. Are not you a strumpet?

Had this epithet, *black*, been admitted, there would still have remained an incomplete verse in the speech: no additional beauty would have been introduced; but instead of it, a paltry antithesis between the words *black* and *fair*. STEEVENS.

⁷ Was this fair paper, &c.] Maffinger has imitated this passage in *The Emperor of the East*:

“ — can you think

“ This masterpiece of heaven, this precious vellum

“ Of such a purity and virgin whiteness,

“ Could be design'd to have perjury and whoredom

“ In capital letters writ upon't?” STEEVENS.

⁸ Committed!] This, and the three following lines, are omitted in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

This word in Shakespeare's time, besides its general signification, seems to have been applied particularly to unlawful acts of love. Hence perhaps it is so often repeated by *Othello*.—So, in Sir Tho. Overbury's *Very Woman*, 1610: “She *commits* with her ears for certain; after that she may go for a maid, but she has been lain with in her understanding.” The word is used in the same sense in *King Lear*: “Commit not with man's sworn spouse.”

Again, in Decker's *Honest Whore*, first Part:

“ — if all *committers* stood in a rank,

“ They'd make a lane in which your shame might dwell.”

MALONE.

Des. No, as I am a christian :
If to preserve this vessel for my lord,
From any other⁹ foul unlawful touch,
Be—not to be a strumpet, I am none.

Oth. What, not a whore?

Des. No, as I shall be saved.

Oth. Is it possible?

Des. O, heaven forgive us!

Oth. I cry you mercy, then;

I took you for that cunning whore of Venice,
That married with Othello.—You, mistress,

Enter Emilia.

That have the office opposite to Saint Peter,
And keep the gate of hell; You! you! ay, you!
We have done our course; there's money for your
pains;

I pray you, turn the key, and keep our counsel.

[*Exit,*

Emil. Alas, what does this gentleman conceive?—
How do you, madam? how do you, my good lady?

Des. 'Faith, half asleep.

Emil. Good madam, what's the matter with my
lord?

Des. With who?

Emil. With my lord, madam?

Des. Who is thy lord?

Emil. He that is yours, sweet lady.

Des. I have none: Do not talk to me, Emilia;
I cannot weep; nor answer have I none,
But what should go by water. Pr'ythee, to-night

⁹ — any other,] Thus the folio. The quarto reads—any
bated. STEEVENS.

¹ Who is thy lord?] This, and the following speech, are omitted
in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

Lay on my bed my wedding sheets,—remember;—
And call thy husband hither.

Æmil. Here is a change indeed! [Exit,

Des. 'Tis meet I should be us'd so, very meet.
How have I been behav'd, that he might stick
The small'st opinion on my great'st abuse.

Enter Iago, with Æmilia.

Iago. What is your pleasure, madam? How is it
with you?

Des. I cannot tell. Those, that do teach young
babes,

Do it with gentle means, and easy tasks:
He might have chid me so; for, in good faith,
I am a child to chiding.

Iago. What is the matter, lady?

Æmil. Alas, Iago, my lord hath so bewhor'd her,
Thrown such despight and heavy terms upon her,
As true hearts cannot bear.

Des. Am I that name, Iago?

Iago. What name, fair lady?

Des. Such as, she says, my lord did say I was.

Æmil. He call'd her, whore; a beggar, in his drink,
Could not have laid such terms upon his callet.

² *The small'st opinion on my least misuse?]* The old quarto reads:
The small'st opinion on my great'st abuse.

Which I think is better. JOHNSON.

³ — *upon his callet.*] *Callet* is a lewd woman; so called (says
Dr. Grey) from the French *calote*, which was a sort of head-dress
worn by country girls. This head-dress is mentioned by Ben
Jonson in his *Magnetic Lady*:

“The wearing the *callot*, the politic hood.”

The word is likewise found in *Cocke Lorrelles Bote*, a satyre, bl. l.
printed by Wynkyn de Worde; no date:

“Yf he call her *calat*, she calleth hym knave agayne.”

STEEVENS.

— *such terms upon his callet.*] This word is of great antiquity
in the English language. Chaucer has it in his *Remedy of Love*:

C, for calet, for of, we have O,

l, for leude, D, for demeanure, &c.

PERCY.

Iago. Why did he so?

Des. I do not know; I am sure, I am none such.

Iago. Do not weep, do not weep; Alas, the day!

Æmil. Hath she forsook so many noble matches,
Her father, and her country, and her friends,
To be call'd—whore? would it not make one weep?

Des. It is my wretched fortune.

Iago. Beshrew him for it!

How comes this trick upon him?

Des. Nay, heaven doth know.

Æmil. I will be hang'd, if some eternal villain,
Some busy and insinuating rogue,
Some cogging cozening slave, to get some office,
Has not devis'd this slander; I'll be hang'd else.

Iago. Fie, there is no such man; it is impossible.

Des. If any such there be, heaven pardon him!

Æmil. A halter pardon him! and hell gnaw his
bones!

Why should he call her, whore? who keeps her
company?

What place? what time? what form? what likeli-
hood?

The Moor's abus'd by some most villainous knave,
Some base & notorious knave, some scurvy fellow:—
O, heaven, that such companions thou'dst unfold;
And put in every honest hand a whip,
To lash the rascal naked through the world,
Even from the east to the west!

⁴ —notorious—] For *gross*, not in its proper meaning for
known. JOHNSON.

⁵ —such companions] *Companion*, in the time of Shakespeare
was used as a word of contempt in the same sense as *fellow* is at
this day. So, in the *Widow's Tears*, by Chapman, 1612: "How
now, base *companion*!"

Again, in the *Spanish Tragedy*, 1605:

"And better 'tis that *base companions die*,
Than by their life to hazard our good haps." MALONE.

Iago. ⁶ Speak within door.

Æmil. O, fie upon him! some such squire he
was,

That turn'd your wit ⁷ the seamy side without,
And made you to suspect me with the Moor.

Iago. You are a fool; go to.

Des. O good Iago,

What shall I do to win my lord again?

Good friend, go to him; for, by this light of heaven,
I know not how I lost him. Here I kneel ⁸ :—

If e'er my will did trespass 'gainst his love,
Either in discourse, or thought ⁹, or actual deed;

Or that mine eyes, mine ears, or any sense,
Delighted them in any other form;

Or that I do not yet, and ever did,

And ever will,—though he do shake me off
To beggarly divorcement,—love him dearly,

Comfort forswear me! Unkindness may do much;
And his unkindness may defeat my life,

But never taint my love. I cannot say, whore;

It does abhor me, now I speak the word;

To do the act that might the addition earn,

Not the world's mass of vanity could make me.

Iago. I pray you, be content; 'tis but his humour;
The business of the state does him offence,

And he does ¹ chide with you.

Des. If 'twere no other,—

Iago. It is but so, I warrant you. [*Trumpets.*
Hark, how these instruments summon to supper!

⁶ *Speak within door.*] Do not clamour so as to be heard beyond the house. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *the seamy side without:*] That is, *inside out*. JOHNSON.

⁸ *Here I kneel, &c.*] The first quarto omits the rest of this speech. STEEVENS.

⁹ *Either in discourse, or thought,*] The folio reads—*discourse of thought*—and perhaps rightly. See Milton, P. L. B. V. l. 488. STEEVENS.

¹ — *chide with you.*] This line is from the quarto, 1622. STEEVENS.

* And the great messengers of Venice stay :
Go in, and weep not ; all things shall be well.

[*Exeunt Desdemona, and Emilia.*]

Enter Roderigo.

How now, Roderigo ?

Rod. I do not find, that thou deal'st justly with me.

Iago. What in the contrary ?

Rod. Every day thou dost me with some device, Iago ; and rather (as it seems to me now) keep'st from me all conveniency, than suppliest me with the least advantage of hope. I will, indeed, no longer endure it : Nor am I yet persuaded, to put up in peace what already I have foolishly suffered.

Iago. Will you hear me, Roderigo ?

Rod. Faith, I have heard too much ; for your words and performances, are no kin together.

Iago. You charge me most unjustly.

Rod. With nought but truth. I have wasted myself out of my means. The jewels you have had from me, to deliver to Desdemona, would half have corrupted a votarist : You have told me—she hath receiv'd them, and return'd me expectations and comforts of sudden respect³ and acquaintance ; but I find none.

Iago. Well ; go to ; very well.

Rod. Very well ! go to ! I cannot go to, man ; nor 'tis not very well : By this hand, I say, it is very scurvy ; and begin to find myself fobb'd in it.

Iago. Very well.

Rod. I tell you, 'tis not very well. I will make myself known to Desdemona : if she will return me

² *And the great messengers of Venice stay ;]* Thus the quarto, The folio reads :

The messengers of Venice stay the meat. STEEVENS.

³ — *and acquaintance ;—]* Thus the folio. The quarto reads—*and acquittance.* STEEVENS.

my jewels, I will give over my suit, and repent my unlawful solicitation; if not, assure yourself, I will seek satisfaction of you.

Iago. You have said now.

Rod. Ay, and I have said nothing, but what I protest intendment of doing.

Iago. Why, now I see there's mettle in thee; and even from this instant, do build on thee a better opinion than ever before. Give me thy hand, Roderigo: Thou hast taken against me a most just exception; but yet, I protest, I have dealt most directly in thy affair.

Rod. It hath not appear'd.

Iago. I grant, indeed, it hath not appear'd; and your suspicion is not without wit and judgment. But, Roderigo, if thou hast that within thee indeed, which I have greater reason to believe now than ever,—I mean, purpose, courage, and valour,—this night shew it: If thou the next night following enjoyest not Desdemona, take me from this world with treachery, and devise engines for my life.

Rod. Well, what is it? is it within reason, and compass?

Iago. Sir, there is especial commission come from Venice, to depute Cassio in Othello's place.

Rod. Is that true? why, then Othello and Desdemona return again to Venice.

Iago. O, no; he goes into Mauritania, and taketh away with him the fair Desdemona, unless his abode be linger'd here by some accident; wherein none can be so determinate, as the removing of Cassio.

Rod. How do you mean—removing of him?

Iago. Why, by making him incapable of Othello's place; knocking out his brains.

Rod. And that you would have me to do?

Iago. Ay; if you dare do yourself a profit, and a right. He sups to-night with a harlot, and thither will

will I go to him ;—he knows not yet of his honourable fortune : if you will watch his going thence, (which I will fashion to fall out between twelve and one) you may take him at your pleasure ; I will be near to second your attempt, and he shall fall between us. Come, stand not amaz'd at it, but go along with me ; I will shew you such a necessity in his death, that you shall think yourself bound to put it on him. It is now high supper-time, and the night grows to waste ; about it.

Rod. I will hear further reason for this.

Iago. And you shall be satisfied.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III.

A room in the castle.

Enter Othello, Lodovico, Desdemona, Emilia, and Attendants.

Lod. I do beseech you, sir, trouble yourself no further.

Oth. O, pardon me ; 'twill do me good to walk.

Lod. Madam, good night ; I humbly thank your ladyship.

Des. Your honour is most welcome.

Oth. Will you walk, sir ?—O, Desdemona !—

Des. My lord ?

Oth. Get you to bed on the instant ; I will be return'd forthwith : dismiss your attendant there ; look, it be done. [Exit.

Des. I will, my lord.

Emil. How goes it now ? he looks gentler than he did.

Des. He says, he will return incontinent :
He hath commanded me to go to bed,
And bade me to dismiss you.

Emil.

Æmil. Dismiss me!

Des. It was his bidding; therefore, good *Æmilias*,
Give me my nightly wearing, and adieu:
We must not now displease him.

Æmil. I would, you had never seen him!

Des. So would not I; my love doth so approve him,
That even his stubbornness, his checks, and frowns,—
Pr'ythee, unpin me,—have grace and favour in them.

Æmil. I have laid those sheets you bade me on
the bed.

Des. All's one:—Good father! how foolish are
our minds?—

If I do die before thee, pr'ythee, shroud me
In one of those same sheets.

Æmil. Come, come, you talk.

Des. My mother had a maid, call'd—Barbara;
She was in love; ⁴ and he, she lov'd, prov'd mad,
And did forsake her: she had a song of willow,
An old thing 'twas, but it express'd her fortune,
And she dy'd singing it: That song, to-night,
Will not go from my mind; ⁵ I have much to do;
But

⁴ — and he, she lov'd, prov'd mad,
And did forsake her.—] We should read:
— and he, she lov'd, forsook her,
And she prov'd mad.—

WARBURTON.

I believe that *mad* only signifies wild, frantick, uncertain.

JOHNSON.

We still call a wild girl a *mad-cap*: and, in the first Part of
King Henry VI, are mentioned,

Mad, natural graces that extinguish art.

Again, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

Come on, you *mad-cap*.

Again, in *Love's Labour's Lost*: “Do you hear, my *mad*
wenches?” STEEVENS.

⁵ — I've much ado,

But to go bang my head—] *I have much ado* to do any thing
but bang my head. We might read:

Not to go bang my head.

This is perhaps the only insertion made in the latter editions
which has improved the play. The rest seem to have been added

for

But to go hang my head all o' one side,
And sing it like poor Barbara. Pr'ythee, dispatch!

Æmil. Shall I go fetch your night-gown?

Des. No, unpin me here.—

This Lodovico is a proper man.

Æmil. A very handsome man.

Des. He speaks well.

Æmil. I know a lady in Venice, would have walk'd
barefoot to Palestine, for a touch of his nether lip.

Des. ⁶ *The poor soul sat singing* ⁷ *by a sycamore tree;*
Sing all a green willow; [Singing.

Her hand on her bosom, her head on her knee,

Sing willow, willow, willow:

The fresh streams ran by her, and murmur'd her
moans;

Sing willow, &c.

Her salt tears fell from her, and soften'd the stones;

Lay by these:

Sing willow, &c.

Willow, willow, &c.

Pr'ythee, hie thee; he'll come anon.—

Sing all a green willow must be my garland.

2.

Let no body blame him, his scorn I approve,—

Nay, that's not next.—Hark! who is it that knocks?

for the sake of amplification, or of ornament. When the imagination had subsided, and the mind was no longer agitated by the horror of the action, it became at leisure to look round for specious additions. This addition is natural. Desdemona can at first hardly forbear to sing the song; she endeavours to change her train of thoughts, but her imagination at last prevails, and she sings it. JOHNSON.

From *I have much to do*, to *Nay that's not next*, was inserted after the first edition, as likewise the remaining part of the song.

⁶ *The poor soul, &c.*] This song, in two parts, is printed in a late collection of old ballads; the lines preserved here differ somewhat from the copy discovered by the ingenious collector. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *sat singing*—] Thus the old copies: but the song as published by Dr. Percy, in the first volume of his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, reads—“*sat singing*.” STEEVENS.

Æmil.

Æmil. It is the wind.

Des. ⁸ *I call'd my love, false love; but what said he then?*

Sing willow, &c.

If I court more women, you'll couch with more men.
So, get thee gone; good night. Mine eyes do itch;
Doth that bode weeping?

Æmil. 'Tis neither here nor there.

Des. I have heard it said so.—O, these men, these men!—

Doth thou in conscience think,—tell me, *Æmilia*,—
That there be women do abuse their husbands
In such gross kind?

Æmil. There be some such, no question.

Des. Would'st thou do such a deed for all the world?

Æmil. Why, would not you?

Des. No, by this heavenly light!

Æmil. Nor I neither, by this heavenly light;
I might do't as well i' the dark.

Des. Wouldst thou do such a deed for all the world?

Æmil. The world is a huge thing: 'Tis a great
price

For a small vice.

Des. In troth, I think thou wouldst not.

Æmil. In troth I think I should; and undo't,
when I had done. Marry, I would not do such a
thing for a joint-ring; nor for measures of lawn;
nor for gowns, petticoats, nor caps, nor any petty
exhibition: but, for all the whole world,—Why,
who would not make her husband a cuckold, to

⁸ *I call'd my love false love;—*] This couplet is not in the ballad, which is the complaint, not of a woman forsaken, but of a man rejected. These lines were probably added when it was accommodated to a woman. JOHNSON.

⁹ *I have heard it said so.*] This, as well as the following speech, is omitted in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

make him a monarch? I should venture purgatory for't.

Des. Beshrew me, if I would do such a wrong
For the whole world.

Æmil. Why, the wrong is but a wrong i' the world; and, having the world for your labour, 'tis a wrong in your own world, and you might quickly make it right.

Des. I do not think, there is any such woman.

Æmil. Yes, a dozen; and as many to the vantage¹, as

Would store the world they play'd for.

But, I do think², it is their husband's faults,

If wives do fall: Say, that they slack their duties,

And pour our treasures into foreign laps;

Or else break out in peevish jealousies,

Throwing restraint upon us; or, say, they strike us,

Or scant³ our former having in despight;

Why, we have galls; and, though we have some grace,

Yet have we some revenge. Let husbands know,

Their wives have sense like them; they see, and smell,

And have their palates both for sweet and sour,

As husbands have. What is it that they do,

When they change us for others? Is it sport?

I think, it is; And doth affection breed it?

I think it doth; Is't frailty, that thus errs?

It is so too: And have not we affections?

Desires for sport? and frailty, as men have?

Then, let them use us well: else, let them know,

The ills we do, their ills instruct us to.

¹ — to the vantage,] i. e. to boot, over and above. STEEVENS.

² But I do think, &c.] The remaining part of this speech is omitted in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

³ — our former having —] Our former allowance of expence.

JOHNSON.

Des.

Des. Good night, good night : † Heaven me such
usage send,
Not to pick bad from bad ; but, by bad, mend!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

A street.

Enter Iago, and Roderigo.

Iago. Here, stand behind this bulk ; straight will
he come :

Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home ;
Quick, quick ; fear nothing ; I'll be at thy elbow :
It makes us, or it mars us ; think on that,
And fix most firm thy resolution.

Rod. Be near at hand ; I may miscarry in't.

Iago. Here, at thy hand ; be bold, and take thy
sword.

Rod. I have no great devotion to the deed ;
And yet he hath given me satisfying reasons :—
'Tis but a man gone :—forth, my sword ; he dies.

[*Stands apart.*

Iago. † I have rubb'd this young quat almost to the
sense,

And

^a — *heaven me such uses send,*] Such is the reading of the folio, and of the subsequent editions ; but the old quarto has :
— *such usage send.*—

Usage is an old word for *custom*, and, I think, better than *uses*.

JOHNSON.

[†] In some editions,

I've rubb'd this young quat almost to the sense,

And he grows angry.] This is a passage much controverted among the editors. Sir T. Hanmer reads *quab*, a *gudgeon* ; not that a gudgeon can be *rubb'd* to much *sense*, but that a man grossly
deceived

And he grows angry. Now, whether he kill Cassio,
 Or Cassio him, or each do kill the other,
 Every way makes my gain⁶: Live Roderigo,
 He calls me to a restitution large
 Of gold, and jewels, that I bobb'd from him,
 As gifts to Desdemona;
 It must not be: if Cassio do remain,
 He hath a daily beauty in his life,
 That makes me ugly; and, besides, the Moor
 May unfold me to him; there stand I in much peril.
 No, he must die:—But so, I hear him coming.

Enter Cassio.

Rod. I know his gait, 'tis he;—Villain, thou dy'st.

[He runs at Cassio, and wounds him.]

Cas. That thrust had been mine enemy indeed,
 But that my coat is better than thou think'st;
 I will make proof of thine.

*[Fight. Cassio wounds Roderigo: Iago cuts Cassio
 behind in the leg, and exit.]*

Rod. O, I am slain!

deceived is often called a *gudgeon*. Mr. Upton reads *quail*, which he proves, by much learning, to be a very choleric bird. Dr. Warburton retains *gnat*, which is found in the early quarto. Theobald would introduce *knot*, a small bird of that name. I have followed the text of the folio, and third and fourth quartos.

A *quat* in the midland counties is a *pimple*, which by rubbing is made to smart, or is *rubbed to sense*. Roderigo is called a *quat* by the same mode of speech, as a low fellow is now termed in low language a *scab*. *To rub to the sense, is to rub to the quick.* JOHNSON.

So, in *The Devil's Law-case*, 1623: "O young *quat*! incontinence is plagued in all creatures in the world."

Again, in Decker's *Gul's Hornebook*, 1609: "—whether he be a *young quat* of the first yeeres revennew, or some austere and fullen-fac'd steward, &c."

Such another thought occurs in Ben Jonson's *Catiline*:

"—must have their disgraces still new *rub'd*,

"To make them smart, &c." STEEVENS.

⁶ — *my gain*:] The quartos read—*my game*. STEEVENS.

Cas.

Cas: I am maim'd for ever:—Help, ho! murder!
murder!

Enter Othello, above.

Oth. The voice of Cassio:—Iago keeps his word.

Rod. O, villain that I am!

Oth. Hark! 'tis even so.

Cas. O, help, ho! light! a surgeon!

Oth. 'Tis he;—O brave Iago, honest, and just,
That hast such noble sense of thy friend's wrong!
Thou teachest me,—Minion, your dear lies dead,
And your fate hies apace¹:—Strumpet, I come:
Forth of my heart² those charms, thine eyes, are
blotted;

Thy bed, lust-stain'd, shall with lust's blood be spotted.

[*Exit Othello.*]

Enter Lodovico, and Gratiano, at a distance.

Cas. What, ho! no watch? ³ no passage? mur-
der! murder!

Gra. 'Tis some mischance; the cry is very dire-
ful.

Cas. O, help!

Lod. Hark!

Rod. O wretched villain!

Lod. Two or three groans;—it is ⁴ a heavy night:
These

¹ *And your fate hies apace:*] Thus the first quarto. The second quarto and the folio read—*And your unblest fate hies.* STEEVENS,
² *Forth of my heart, &c.*] Thus the first quarto. The folio reads, *For of:* perhaps the true reading is, *For off,* &c.

STEEVENS.

³ *—no passage?*—] No passengers? nobody going by?

JOHNSON.

So, in the *Comedy of Errors*:

“Now in the stirring *passage* of the day.” STEEVENS.

⁴ *—a heavy night;*] A *thick cloudy* night, in which an ambush may be commodiously laid. JOHNSON.

These may be counterfeits; let's think't unsafe
To come in to the cry, without more help.

Rod. No body come? then shall I bleed to death!

Enter Iago, with a light.

Lod. Hark!

Gra. Here's one comes in his shirt, with light and
weapons.

Iago. Who's there? whose noise is this, that cries
out murder?

Lod. We do not know.

Iago. Did not you hear a cry?

Caf. Here, here; for heaven's sake, help me,

Iago. What's the matter?

Gra. This is Othello's ancient, as I take it.

Lod. The same, indeed; a very valiant fellow.

Iago. What are you here, that cry so grievously?

Caf. Iago? O, I am spoil'd, undone by villains!
Give me some help.

Iago. O me, lieutenant! what villains have done
this?

Caf. I think, that one of them is hereabout,
And cannot make away.

Iago. O treacherous villains!—

What are you there? come in, and give some help.
[*To Lod. and Gra.*

Rod. O, help me here!

Caf. That's one of them.

Iago. O murderous slave! O villain!

[*Iago stabs him.*

Rod. O damn'd Iago! O inhuman dog!—O!
O, O!

Iago. Kill men i' the dark!—Where be these
bloody thieves?—

So, in *Measure for Measure*:

Upon the heavy middle of the night. STEEVENS.

How

How silent is this town!—Ho! murder! murder!—
What may you be? are you of good, or evil?

Lod. As you shall prove us, praise us.

Iago. Signior Lodovico?

Lod. He, sir.

Iago. I cry you mercy; Here's Cassio hurt by
villains.

Gra. Cassio!

Iago. How is it, brother?

Cas. My leg is cut in two.

Iago. Marry, heaven forbid!—

Light, gentlemen;—I'll bind it with my shirt.

Enter. Bianca.

Bian. What is the matter, ho? who is't that cry'd?

Iago. Who is't that cry'd?

Bian. O my dear Cassio! my sweet Cassio!

O Cassio! Cassio! Cassio!

Iago. O notable strumpet!—Cassio, may you
suspect

Who they should be, that have thus mangled you?

Cas. No.

Gra. I am sorry, to find you thus; I have been
to seek you.

Iago. Lend me a garter²: So.—O, for a chair,
'To bear him easily hence!

Bian. Alas, he faints:—O Cassio! Cassio! Cassio!

Iago. Gentlemen all, I do suspect this trash
To be a party in this injury.

Patience a while, good Cassio.—Come, come;

Lend me a light.—Know we this face, or no?

Alas! my friend, and my dear countryman³,

² *Lend me a garter, &c.*] This speech is omitted in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

³ *Alas my friend, and my dear countryman!*] This passage incontestably proves that Iago was meant for a Venetian.

N. B. All the notes to which no names are subscribed, are taken from the last Oxford edition. STEEVENS.

Roderigo? no:—Yes, sure;—O heaven! Roderigo.

Gra. What, of Venice?

Iago. Even he, sir; did you know him?

Gra. Know him? ay.

Iago. Signior Gratiano? I cry you gentle pardon;
These bloody accidents must excuse my manners,
That so neglected you.

Gra. I am glad to see you.

Iago. How do you, Cassio?—O, a chair, a chair!

Gra. Roderigo!

Iago. He, he, 'tis he:—O, that's well said;—the
chair:—

[*A chair brought in.*]

Some good man bear him carefully from hence;
I'll fetch the general's surgeon.—For you, mistress,

[*To Bianca.*]

Save you your labour.—He that lies slain here, Cassio,
Was my dear friend; What malice was between you?

Cas. None in the world; nor do I know the man.

Iago. [*To Bian.*] What, look you pale?—O, bear
him out o' the air.—

[*Cassio is borne off.*]

Stay you, good gentlemen⁴.—look you pale, mistress?
Do you perceive the *gastness*⁵ of her eye?—

Nay, if you stare⁶, we shall hear more anon:—

Behold her well; I pray you, look upon her;

Do you see, gentlemen? nay, guiltiness will speak,
Though tongues were out of use.

Enter Emilia.

Emil. 'Las, what's the matter? what's the mat-
ter, husband?

Iago. Cassio hath here been set on in the dark,
By Roderigo, and fellows that are scap'd;

⁴ — *good gentlemen.*] Thus the folio. The quartos read,
gentlewoman. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *the gastness*] So the folio. The quartos read, *jestures.*

STEEVENS.

⁶ *Nay, if you stare,*] So the folio. The quartos read, *stirre.*

STEEVENS.

He's almost slain, and Roderigo dead.

Æmil. Alas, good gentleman! alas, good Cassio!

Iago. This is the fruit of whoring.—Pr'ythee,
Æmilia,

Go know of Cassio where he supp'd to-night:—
What, do you shake at that?

Bian. He supp'd at my house; but I therefore
shake not.

Iago. O, did he so? I charge you, go with me.

Æmil. Fie, fie upon thee, strumpet!

Bian. I am no strumpet; but of life as honest,
As you that thus abuse me.

Æmil. As I? foh! fie upon thee!

Iago. Kind gentlemen, let's go see poor Cassio
dress'd:—

Come, mistress, you must tell us another tale.—

Æmilia, run you to the citadel,

And tell my lord and lady what hath hap'd.—

Will you go on, I pray?—This is the night, [*Aside.*
That either makes me, or fordoes⁷ me quite.

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E II.

*A bed-chamber: Desdemona in bed, asleep. A light
burning.*

Enter Otello.

Oth. ⁸ It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,—
Let me not name it to you, you chaste stars!—

It

⁷ — or fordoes me quite.] To *forde* is to undo, to ruin, to de-
stroy. So, in *Hamlet*: “— did with desperate hand

“ *Forde* its' own life.”

Again, in the Interlude of *Jacob and Esau*, 1568:

“ If Got were so pleased, I would that were *for donne*.”

STEEVENS.

⁸ *It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul,—*

Let me not name it—] The abruptness of this soliloquy
makes it obscure. The meaning, I think, is this: “ I am here

It is the cause.—Yet I'll not shed her blood;
Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,
And smooth as monumental alabaster.

[Takes off his sword,

Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men².

¹ Put out the light, and then—Put out the light!

If I quench thee, thou flaming minister,

I can again thy former light restore,

Should I repent me :—but once put out thy light²,

“(says Othello in his mind) overwhelmed with horror. What is the reason of this perturbation? Is it want of resolution to do justice? Is it the dread of shedding blood? No; it is not the action that shocks me, but *it is the cause, it is the cause, my soul; let me not name it to you, ye chaste stars! it is the cause.*” JOHNSON.

Othello, full of horror at the cruel action which he is about to perpetrate, seems at this instant to be seeking his justification, from representing to himself *the cause*, i. e. the greatness of the provocation he had received. STEEVENS.

² *Yet she must die, else she'll betray more men.*] This is the second attempt of Othello to justify what he has undertaken. First he says, *It is the cause*, i. e. his own *cause*; now he is willing to suppose himself the preventer of succeeding mischief to others. STEEVENS.

³ *Put out the light, and then—Put out the light!*] So it should be printed. The meaning is, I will put out the light, and *then* proceed to the execution of my purpose. But the expression of *putting out the light*, bringing to mind the effects of the extinction of the light of life, he breaks short, and questions himself about the effects of this metaphorical extinction, introduced by a repetition of his first words, as much as to say, But hold, let me first weigh the reflections which this expression so naturally excites.

WARBURTON.

This has been considered as a very difficult line. *Fielding* makes *Betterton* and *Booth* dispute about it with the *author himself* in the other world. The punctuation recommended by Dr. Warburton, gives a spirit to it which I fear was not intended. It seems to have been only a *play upon words*. *To put the light out* was a phrase for *to kill*. In the *Maid's* tragedy, *Melantius* says,

—’Tis a justice, and a noble one,

“*To put the light out* of such base offenders.” FARMER.

Put out the light. This phrase is twice used in *Sidney's Arcadia*, for killing a lady, p. 460 and 470. edit. 1633. STEEVENS.

² — *put out thy light,*] Thus the folio. The quarto reads—*put out thine.* STEEVENS.

Thou

Thou cunning'st pattern of excelling nature,
 I know not where is that Promethean heat,
 That can thy light relumine³. When I have
 pluck'd thy⁴ rose,

I cannot give it vital growth again,
 It needs must wither:—I'll smell it on the tree.—
 O balmy breath, that dost almost persuade
 Justice herself to break her sword!—Once more.—
 Be thus when thou art dead, and I will kill thee,
 And love thee after:—Once more, and this the last:
 So sweet was ne'er so fatal. I must weep,
 But they are cruel tears: ⁵ This sorrow's heavenly;
 It strikes, where it doth love.—She wakes—

Des. Who's there? Othello?

Oth. Ay, Desdemona.

Des. Will you come to bed, my lord?

Oth. Have you pray'd to-night, Desdemona?

Des. Ay, my lord.

Oth. If you bethink yourself of any crime,
 Unreconcil'd as yet to heaven and grace,
 Solicit for it straight.

Des. Alas, my lord, what may you mean by that?

³ — *relumine.*] The folio reads—*relume*. The first quarto—*return*: the second quarto—*relumine*. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *thy rose,*] Thus the folio. The quarto reads,
 ——— the *rose*.

Again, the quarto reads,

“ I'll smell *it* on the tree.”

The folio,

“ I'll smell *thee* on the tree.” STEEVENS.

⁵ — *This sorrow's heavenly;*] This tenderness, with which I lament the punishment which justice compels me to inflict, is a holy passion.

I wish these two lines could be honestly ejected. It is the fate of Shakespeare to counteract his own pathos. JOHNSON.

Perhaps the poet would not have retained both these images had he published the play himself, though in the hurry of composition he threw them both upon paper. The first seems adopted from the fabulous history of the crocodile, the second from a passage in the *Amphitruon*. STEEVENS.

Oth.

Oth. Well, do it, and be brief; I will walk by:
I would not kill thy unprepared spirit;
No,—Heaven forefend!—I would not kill thy soul⁶,

Des. Talk you of killing?

Oth. Ay, I do.

Des. Then, heaven
Have mercy on me!

Oth. Amen, with all my heart!

Des. If you say so, I hope you will not kill me,

Oth. Hum!

Des. And yet I fear you; for you are fatal then,
When your eyes roll so: Why I should fear, I know
not,

Since guiltiness I know not; but yet, I feel, I fear,

Oth. Think on thy sins.

Des. They are loves I bear to you.

Oth. Ay, and for that thou dy'st.

Des. That death's unnatural, that kills for loving.

Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip?

Some bloody passion shakes your very frame:

These are portents; but yet, I hope, I hope,

They do not point on me.

Oth. Peace, and be still!

Des. I will so: What's the matter?

Oth. That handkerchief, which I so lov'd, and
gave thee,

Thou gav'st to Cassio.

Des. No, by my life and soul;

Send for the man, and ask him.

Oth. Sweet soul, take heed,

Take heed of perjury; thou art on thy death-bed.

Des. Ay, but not yet to die.

⁶ *I would not kill thy soul.*] Sir W. D'Avenant has borrowed this thought in his *Albovine King of Lombardy*, 1629:

“I am not fraught with devil's spleen; I would

“Not hurt *thy soul*.” STEEVENS.

Oth. Yes, presently:

Therefore confess thee freely of thy sin;
For to deny each article with oath,
Cannot remove, nor choak, the strong conception
That I do groan withal. Thou art to die.

Des. O, heaven have mercy on me!

Oth. I say, amen.

Des. And have you mercy too!—I never did
Offend you in my life; never lov'd Cassio,
But with such general warranty of heaven
As I might love: I never gave him token.

Oth. By heaven, I saw my handkerchief in his
hand.

O perjur'd woman! thou dost stone my heart,
And mak'st me call, what I intend to do,—
A murder, which I thought a sacrifice:
I saw the handkerchief.

Des. He found it then;
I never gave it him:—Send for him hither,
And let him confess a truth.

Oth. He hath confess'd.

Des. What, my lord?

Oth. That he hath—us'd thee.

Des. How? unlawfully?

Oth. Ay.

Des. He will not say so.

[A murder, which I thought a sacrifice.] This line is difficult. *Thou hast bardened my heart, and makest me kill thee with the rage of a murderer, when I thought to have sacrificed thee to justice with the calmness of a priest striking a victim.*

It must not be omitted, that one of the elder quartos reads, *thou dost stone thy heart*; which I suspect to be genuine. The meaning then will be, *thou forcest me to disinish thee from the world in the state of the murdered without preparation for death, when I intended that thy punishment should have been a sacrifice atoning for thy crime.*

I am glad that I have ended my revival of this dreadful scene.
It is not to be endured. JOHNSON.

Oth.

Oth. No, his mouth is stopp'd;
Honest Iago hath ta'en order for't⁸.

Des. O, my fear interprets then,—What, is he
dead?

Oth. ⁹Had all his hairs been lives, my great re-
venge
Had stomach for them all.

Des. Alas! he is betray'd, and I undone.

Oth. Out, strumpet! Weep't thou for him to my
face?

Des. O, banish me, my lord, but kill me not.

Oth. Down, strumpet!

Des. Kill me to-morrow, let me live to-night,

Oth. Nay, if you strive,—

Des. But half an hour.

Oth. Being done¹;

There is no pause.

Des. But while I say one prayer.

Oth. ²It is too late.

[He smothers her;

Æmil.

⁸ — *hath ta'en order for't.*] i. e. has taken measures. So, in Holinshed's *Reign of King John*: "—he took such order for him, that he was despoiled of all his goods and benefices," p. 174.

STEEVENS.

⁹ *Had all his hairs been lives,*—] This thought appears to have been very common, as it occurs frequently in dramatic performances prior to Shakespeare's *Othello*. So, in the *Devil's Charter*, by Barnaby Barnes, 1607:

"Know Cæsar, had I now as many lives

"As there are stones, or hairs upon my head,

"I would," &c.

Again, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *King and no King*:

— but if all

My hairs were lives, I would not be engaged

In such a cause.

STEEVENS.

¹ *Being done,*

There is no pause.] The first quarto omits this speech.

STEEVENS.

² *It is too late.*] After this speech of Othello, the elder quarto adds an invocation from Desdemona, consisting only of the sacred

name

Æmilia within.

My lord, my lord! what ho! my lord, my lord!

Otb. What noise is this?—Not dead? not yet quite dead?I, that am cruel, am yet merciful;
I would not have thee linger in thy pain.—
So, so.*Æmil.* What ho! my lord, my lord!*Otb.* Who's there?*Æmil.* O, good my lord, I would speak a word with you.*Otb.* Yes;—'tis Æmilia:—by and by.—She's dead.'Tis like, she comes to speak of Cassio's death;
The noise was high.—Ha! no more moving?
Still as the grave.—Shall she come in? Were't good?
I think, she stirs again:—No.—What's the best?
If she come in, she'll sure speak to my wife:—
My wife! my wife! what wife? I have no wife³:

name, thrice repeated. As this must be supposed to have been uttered while she is yet struggling with death, I think an editor may be excused from inserting such a circumstance of supererogatory horror, especially as it is found in but one of the ancient copies.

STEEVENS.

This alteration was probably made by the players, in consequence of a statute of the 21st of James I. to reform prophane cursing and swearing. Sir JOHN HAWKINS.The statute was necessary; for not only the ancient moralities, but the plays (those of *Chapman* in particular) abound with the most wanton and shocking repetitions of a name which never ought to be mentioned in such an irreverend manner on the stage.

STEEVENS.

Sir John Hawkins should have referred to the statute of the 3^d of James I. c. 21. which lays a penalty for the profane use of the name of God, &c. in stage-plays, enterludes, May-games, &c.

TOLLET.

³ *My wife! my wife! what wife?—I have no wife:]* Filium unicum adolescentulum habeo: ah! quid dixi habere me? imo habui, Chreme.*Ter. Hautout.* STEEVENS.

O insup-

O insupportable ! O heavy hour !
Methinks, it should be now a huge eclipse
Of sun and moon ; and that the affrighted globe
Should yawn at alteration.

Æmil. I do beseech you I may speak with you.
O, good my lord !

Oth. I had forgot thee : O, come in, *Æmilia* :—
Soft,—by and by :—Let me the curtains draw.—
Where art thou ? What's the matter with thee now ?

[*Unlocks the door.*

Enter Æmilia.

Æmil. O, my good lord, yonder's foul murder
done.

Oth. What ? now ?

Æmil. But now, my lord ?

Oth. It is the very error of the moon ;
She comes more near the earth than she was wont,
And makes men mad.

Æmil. Cassio, my lord, hath kill'd a young Venetian,
Call'd—Roderigo.

Oth. Roderigo kill'd !
And Cassio kill'd !—

Æmil. No, Cassio is not kill'd.

Oth. Not Cassio kill'd ? Then murder's out of
tune,

And sweet revenge grows harsh.

Des. 4 O, falsely, falsely murder'd !

Æmil.

⁴ *O falsely, falsely murder'd !*] It cannot be supposed that a person who had been effectually *strangled* or *smothered*, could speak again ; for if the power of breathing returned after the instrument of suffocation was removed, no act of violence had in reality taken place by which the conclusion of life could be brought on. But such is the peculiar fate of *Desdemona*, that she is supposed to be smothered, revives to acquaint us that *she smothered herself*, and then dies without any ostensible cause of death. I am of opinion that some theatrical direction has been omitted ; and that when *Othello* says :

Not

Æmil. Alas! what cry is that?

Otb. That! what?

Æmil. Out, and alas! that was my lady's voice:—
Help! help, ho! help!—O lady, speak again!
Sweet Desdemona! O, sweet mistress, speak!

Des. A guiltless death I die.

Æmil. O, who hath done
This deed?

Des. No body; I myself; farewell:
Commend me to my kind lord; O, farewell. [*Dies.*]

Otb. Why, how should she be murder'd?

Æmil. Alas, who knows?

Otb. You heard her say herself, it was not I.

Æmil. She said so; I must needs report the truth.

Not dead? not yet quite dead?

I, that am cruel, am yet merciful;

I would not have thee linger in thy pain:—

So, so.

He then stabs her, repeating the two last words, as he repeats the blow. Thus Virgil:

— *sic, sic* juvat ire sub umbras.

After a repetition of wounds, Desdemona might speak again, with propriety, and yet very soon expire; as says Cassio of Roderigo:

— even but now he spake,

After long seeming dead.

The first resolution of Othello was to poison her, but from this measure he is dissuaded by the policy of Iago. He is next determined to use the poniard; but, his tenderness awaking, he cannot bear to deform those beauties which he had so often approached with other sensations and for different purposes. Therefore, says he:

— I'll not shed her blood,

Nor scar that whiter skin of hers than snow,

And smooth as monumental alabaster:

And this resolution we are to imagine he would have kept, but that he was averse to employing those means again, which had already appeared to be uncertain in their effect.

If this apparent want of a play-house direction had occasioned any absurdity in the original representation of the play, probably it is glanced at by Ben Jonson in the *Alchemist*, Act 5: "Did'st hear a cry, said'st thou? Yes, fir, like unto a man that had been *strangled* an hour, and could not speak." STEEVENS.

Otb. She's, like a liar, gone to burning hell;
'Twas I that kill'd her.

Æmil. O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil!

Otb. She turn'd to folly, and she was a whore.

Æmil. Thou dost bely her, and thou art a devil.

Otb. She was ^s false as water.

Æmil. Thou art rash as fire, to say
That she was false; O, she was heavenly true!

Otb. Cassio did tup her; ask thy husband else:
O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell,
But that I did proceed upon just grounds
To this extremity; Thy husband knew it all.

Æmil. My husband?

Otb. Thy husband.

Æmil. That she was false to wedlock?

Otb. Ay, with Cassio. Nay, had she been true,
If heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I'd not have sold her for it.

Æmil. My husband?

Otb. Ay, 'twas he that told me first ⁶;
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.

Æmil. My husband?

Otb. What needs this iteration ⁷, woman?
I say, thy husband.

Æmil. ⁸ O mistress, ⁹ villainy hath made mocks
with love!

⁵ — *false as water.*] As water that will support no weight, nor keep any impression. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *that told me first;*] The folio reads, "— that told me *on her first.*" STEEVENS.

⁷ — *iteration,*—] The folio reads— *iterance.* STEEVENS.

⁸ *Æmil.*] The first quarto omits this and the following speech. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *villainy has made mocks with love!*] *Villainy* has taken advantage to *play upon* the weakness of a violent passion. JOHNSON.

My husband say, that she was false?

Otb. He, woman;

I say, thy husband; Do'st understand the word?

My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago.

Æmil. If he say so, may his pernicious soul
Rot half a grain a day! he lies to the heart;
She was too fond of her most filthy bargain,

Otb. Ha!

Æmil. Do thy worst:

This deed of thine is no more worthy heaven,
Than thou wast worthy her.

Otb. Peace, you were best.

Æmil. ¹ Thou hast not half that power to do me
harm,

As I have to be hurt. O gull! O dolt!

As ignorant as dirt! thou hast done a deed,—

I care not for thy sword; I'll make thee known,

Though I lost twenty lives:—Help! help, ho! help!

The Moor hath kill'd my mistress; Murder! murder!

Enter Montano, Gratiano, Iago, and others.

Mon. What is the matter?—How now, general?

Æmil. O, are you come, Iago? you have done
well,

That men must lay their murders on your neck.

Gra. What is the matter?

² *Thou hast not half that power to do me harm,*

As I have to be hurt. —] *Power for will*: for *will* signifying both ability and inclination, and *power* signifying ability, he uses *power* for inclination. But the Oxford Editor, not understanding his author's phraseology any better when he had ended than when he had begun with him, alters, *As I have to be hurt*, to, *As I have to bear hurt*: which yet does not mend the matter, had the poet here used *power* in the sense of ability. WARBURTON.

The Oxford Editor saw well the meaning of his author, but weakened his expression. She means to say, *I have in this cause power to endure more than thou hast power to inflict.* JOHNSON.

Æmil. Disprove this villain, if thou be'st a man:
He says, thou told'st him that his wife was false;
I know, thou did'st not, thou'rt not such a villain;
Speak, for my heart is full.

Iago. I told him what I thought: and told no more
Than what he found himself was apt and true.

Æmil. But did you ever tell him, she was false?

Iago. I did.

Æmil. You told a lie: an odious, damned lie;
Upon my soul, a lie; a wicked lie:—
She false with Cassio!—Did you say, with Cassio?

Iago. With Cassio, mistress; Go to, ² charm your
tongue.

Æmil. I will not charm my tongue; I am bound
to speak;
My mistress ³ here lies murder'd in her bed.

All. O heavens forefend!

Æmil. And your reports have set the murder on.

² — *charm your tongue.*] I know not whether I have read, or whether my own thoughts have suggested, an alteration of this passage. It seems to me not improbable, that Shakespeare wrote *clam* your tongue; to *clam* a bell, is to cover the clapper with felt, which drowns the blow, and hinders the sound. JOHNSON,

— *charm your tongue.*] By this expression, *Charm your tongue*, the poet meant no more than to make Iago say, Apply some power, strong as a *charm* would be, to your tongue; for nothing less can stop its volubility. So *Henry VI.* Part 3:

“Peace, wilful boy, or I will *charm your tongue.*”

So Ben Jonson, in *Cynthia's Revels*:

“—— *charm your skipping tongue.*”

Again, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, b. 5. c. 9:

“That well could *charm his tongue*, and time his speech.”

Again, in the *Yorkshire Tragedy*, 1619:

“The surest way to *charm* a woman's tongue,

“Is to break her neck:—a politician did it.”

Pliny informs us, that *favete linguis* was the constant exclamation before any religious *charm* was applied. From this circumstance the phrase to *charm* a tongue might have originated. STEEVENS.

³ — *My mistress, &c.*] This line, and the following six speeches, are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

Oth. Nay, stare not, masters; it is true, indeed.

Gra. 'Tis a strange truth.

Mon. O monstrous act!

Æmil. Villainy, villainy, villainy!—

I think upon't,—I think,—I smell't;—O villainy!

I thought so then;—I'll kill myself for grief.—

O villainy, villainy!

Iago. What, are you mad? I charge you, get you home.

Æmil. Good gentlemen, let me have leave to speak; 'Tis proper I obey him, but not now:—

Perchance, Iago, I will ne'er go home.

Oth. O! O! O! [*Otello looking on his wife.*]

Æmil. Nay, lay thee down, and roar;
For thou hast kill'd the sweetest innocent,
That e'er did lift up eye.

Oth. O, she was foul!— [*Rising.*]

I scarce did know you, uncle: There lies your niece,
Whose breath, indeed, these hands have newly stopp'd:
I know, this act shews horrible and grim.

Gra. Poor Desdemona! I am glad thy father's dead;

Thy match was mortal to him, and pure grief
Shore his old thread in twain: did he live now,
This sight would make him do a desperate turn;
Yea, curse his better angel from his side,
And fall to reprobation.

Oth. 'Tis pitiful: but yet Iago knows,
That she with Cassio hath the act of shame
* A thousand times committed; Cassio confess'd it;
And

* *A thousand times committed;*—] This is another passage which seems to suppose a longer space comprised in the action of this play than the scenes include. JOHNSON.

That she with Cassio had the act of shame

A thousand times committed.—

And again:

'Tis not a year or two shows us a man.] I am not convinced from

And she did gratify his amorous works
With that recognizance and pledge of love

from these passages only, that a longer space is comprised in the action of this play than the scenes include.

What Othello mentions in the first instance, might have passed still more often, before they were married, when Cassio went between them; for she, who could find means to elude the vigilance of her father in respect of Othello, might have done so in respect of Cassio, when there was time enough for the occurrence supposed to have happened. A jealous person will aggravate all he thinks, or speaks of; and might use a *thousand* for a much less number, only to give weight to his censure: nor would it have answered any purpose to have made Othello a little nearer or further off from truth in his calculation. We might apply the poet's own words in *Cymbeline*:

“ — spare your arithmetic;

“ Once, and a million.”

The latter is a proverbial expression, and might have been introduced with propriety, had they been married only a day or two. Emilia's reply perhaps was dictated by her own private experience; and seems to mean only, “that it is too soon to judge of a husband's disposition; or that Desdemona must not be surprized at the discovery of Othello's jealousy, for it is not even a year or two that will display all the failings of a man.”

Mr. Tollet, however, on this occasion has produced several instances in support of Dr. Johnson's opinion; and as I am unable to explain them in favour of my own supposition, I shall lay them before the public.

“ Act 3. Sc. 3. Othello says:

What sense had I of her stolen hours of lust?

I saw it not, thought it not, it harm'd not me:

I slept the next night well, was free and merry:

I found not Cassio's kisses on her lips.

On Othello's wedding night he and Cassio embarked from Venice, where Desdemona was left under the care of Iago. They all meet at Cyprus; and since their arrival there, the scenes include only one night, the night of the celebration of their nuptials. Iago had not then infused any jealousy into Othello's mind, nor did he suspect any former intimacy between Cassio and Desdemona, but only thought it “apt, and of great credit that she loved him.” What night then was there to intervene between Cassio's kisses and Othello's sleeping the next night well? Iago has said, “I lay with Cassio lately,” which he could not have done, unless they had been longer at Cyprus than is represented in the play; nor could Cassio have kept away, for the space of a whole week, from Bianca.”

Which

Which I first gave her; I saw it in his hand;

^s It was an handkerchief, an antique token

My father gave my mother.

Æmil. O heaven! O heavenly powers!

Iago. Come, hold your peace.

Æmil. 'Twill out, 'twill out:—I hold my peace,
fir? no,

No, I will speak as liberal ⁶ as the north;

Let

^s *It was an handkerchief, &c.]* Othello tells his wife, Act. 3.
Sc. 10:

— that handkerchief

Did an Egyptian to my mother give.

And here he says:

It was an handkerchief,—

My father gave my mother.

This last passage has been censured as an oversight in the poet: but perhaps it exhibits only a fresh proof of his art. The first account of the handkerchief, as given by Othello, was purposely ostentatious, in order to alarm his wife the more. When he mentions it a second time, the truth was sufficient for his purpose.

This circumstance of the handkerchief is perhaps ridiculed by Ben Jonson, in his *Poetaster*—“you shall see me do *the Moor*; master, lend me your *scarf*.” STEEVENS.

I question, whether *Othello* was written early enough to be ridiculed in the *Poetaster*. There were many other *Moors* on the stage. It is certain at least, that the passage,

“Our new heraldry is *bands*, not *bearts*.”

could not be inserted before the middle of the year 1611.

FARNER.

If the allusion in the *Poetaster* (which was printed in 1601) were to *Othello*, it would fix its date much earlier than I conceive it to have been written.—But the allusion in the passage quoted, is not to *Othello*, but to an old play called the *Battle of Alcazar*, 1594.—In the *Poetaster*, Pyrgus, who says, “you shall see me do the *Moor*,” proceeds in the same scene, and repeats an absurd speech of the Moor’s in the *Battle of Alcazar*, beginning with this line:

“Where art thou, boy? where is Calipolis?”

which ascertains the allusion to be to that play. MALONE.

^o — as *the north*;] The old quarto reads,

I’ll be in speaking liberal as the air.

Liberal, is free, under no controul. This quality of the North-wind is mentioned in *Victoria Coromona*, &c. 1612:

“And let th’ *irregular* North wind sweep her up.”

R r 4

Again,

Let heaven, and men, and devils, let them all,
All, all, cry shame against me, yet I'll speak.

Iago. Be wise, and get you home.

Æmil. I will not. [*Iago offers to stab his wife.*]

Gra. Fie!

Your sword upon a woman?

Æmil. O thou dull Moor! that handkerchief,
thou speak'st of,

I found by fortune, and did give my husband;
For often, with a solemn earnestness,
(More than, indeed, belong'd to such a trifle)
He begg'd of me to steal it.

Iago. Villainous whore!

Æmil. She give it Cassio! no, alas; I found it,
And I did give it my husband.

Iago. Filth, thou liest.

Æmil. By heaven, I do not; I do not, gentlemen;
O murd'rous coxcomb! what should such a fool
Do with so good a wife?

[*Iago stabs his wife, then runs out.*]

Oth. Are there no stones in heaven,
But what serve for the thunder?—Precious villain!

Gra.

Again, in *Jeronimo*, i. e. the first part of the *Spanish Tragedy*, 1605:

“Now let your bloods be liberal as the sea.” STEEVENS.

Are there no stones in heaven,

But what serve for the thunder?—] What occasion
for other, when those would serve his purpose? For he wanted
a thunderbolt for Iago. Without question, Shakespeare wrote
and pointed the line thus:

Are there no stones in heaven?

For what then serves the thunder?—

i. e. Are there no bolts in heaven for this villain? for what pur-
pose then serves the thunder, that instrument of his vengeance?

WARBURTON.

Are there no stones in heaven,

But what serve for the thunder?—This emendation of Dr.
Warburton's is surely unnecessary.

O'hello does not want a thunderbolt for Iago. He only asks, if
there are no lesser degrees of chastisement more proportioned to
the

Gra. The woman falls; sure, he has kill'd his wife.

Emil. Ay, ay; O, lay me by my mistress' side!

Gra. He's gone; but his wife's kill'd.

Mo. 'Tis a notorious villain. Take you this weapon,

Which I have here recover'd from the Moor:

Come, guard the door without; let him not pass,

But kill him rather; I'll after that same villain,

For 'tis a damned slave. [*Exeunt Mo. and Gra.*]

Oth. I am not valiant neither,

But every puny whipster gets my sword:—

But why should honour out-live honesty?

Let it go all.

Emil. What did thy song bode, lady?

Hark, can'st thou hear me? I will play the swan,

And die in musick. *Willow, willow, willow*.—

Moor, she was chaste; she lov'd thee, cruel Moor:

So come my soul to bliss, as I speak true;

So speaking as I think, I die,—I die. [*Dies.*]

Oth. I have another weapon in this chamber,

It is a sword of Spain, ' the ice-brook's temper;—

O, here it is;—Uncle, I must come forth.

Gra.

the guilt of mortals, ready to drop down on such villains as Iago, though Omnipotence withholds its thunder, as too noble an instrument for the punishment of crimes like his?

The same thought occurs in *The Revenger's Tragedy*, 1609:

“ Is there no thunder left? or is't kept up

“ In flock, for heavier vengeance?”

Shakespeare might however mean, does heaven reserve its thunder only to make a noise? has it no implements of mischief to punish as well as terrify?

“ — quam fulmina torques

“ Necquicquam horremus? cæcique in nubibus ignes

“ Terrificant animos, et inania marmura miscent?”

STEEVENS,

¹ *And die in musick, &c.*] This, and the two former lines of the speech, are wanting in the first quarto. STEEVENS.

² — *the ice-brook's temper;*] In the first edition it is, *Jehonke's temper*. Thence corrupted to *Ice-brook's*.—*Ebre's temper*; the waters

Gra. [*within.*] If thou attempt it, it will cost thee dear;

Thou hast no weapon, and perforce must suffer.

Oth. Look in upon me then, and speak with me, Or, naked as I am, I will assault thee.

Re-enter Gratiano.

Gra. What is the matter?

Oth. Behold! I have a weapon:

A better never did itself sustain

Upon a soldier's thigh: I have seen the day,

That, with this little arm, and this good sword,

I have made my way through more impediments

waters of that river of Spain are particularly famous for tempering of steel. The finest arms in the world are the Catalonian fuseses. POPE.

I believe the old reading changed to *ice-brook* is right. Steel is hardened by being put red hot into very cold water. JOHNSON.

The particular name of the *ice-brook* may be determined by the following passages in Martial. It was undoubtedly the *brook* or *rivulet* called *Salo* (now Xalon), near *Bilbilis* in Celtiberia. In this the Spaniards plunged all their swords and other weapons while hot from the forge; and to the *icy* quality of the waters, they were indebted for their stubborn temper:

Sævo Bilbilin optimam metallo

Et ferro Plateam suo sonantem,

Quam fluctu tenui sed inquieto

Armorum Salo temperator ambit.

Again,

Quibus remissum corpus astringes brevi,

Salone qui ferrum gelat.

Again,

Pugio, quem curvis signat brevis orbita venis,

Stridentem gelidis hunc Salo tinxit aquis.

Again, in *Justin*, l. 44. "Præcipua his quidem ferri materia sed aqua ipsa ferro violentior; quippe temperamento ejus ferrum acrius redditur; nec ullum apud eos telum probatur quod non aut in *Bilbili* fluvio aut Chalybe tingatur. Unde etiam Chalybes fluvii hujus finitimi appellati, ferroque cæteris præstare dicuntur." These parts of Spain have been at all times famous for the temper of their arms. STEEVENS.

Than

Than twenty times your stop:—But, O vain boast!
 Who can controul his fate? 'tis not so now.—
 Be not afraid, though you do see me weapon'd;
 Here is my journey's end, here is my butt,
 The very sea-mark of my utmost sail.
 Do you go back dismay'd? 'tis a lost fear;
 Man but a rush against Othello's breast,
 And he retires;—Where should Othello go?
 Now, how dost thou look now? O ill-starr'd
 wench!¹

Pale as thy smock! when we shall meet at compt,
 This look of thine will hurl my soul from heaven,
 And fiends will snatch at it. Cold, cold, my girl?
 Even like thy chastity.—

O cursed, cursed slave!—Whip me, ye devils,
 From the possession of this heavenly sight!
 Blow me about in winds! roast me in sulphur!
 Wash me in steep-down gulfs of liquid fire!—
 O Desdemona! Desdemona! dead?
 Dead? O! O! O!

Enter Lodovico, Cassio brought in; Montano, with Iago prisoner; and Officers.

Lod. Where is this rash and most unfortunate man?

¹ — *O ill-starr'd wench!*] This, and the six preceding lines, are omitted in the first quarto. *Wench* originally signified only a young woman. *Cassandra*, in Whetstone's *Promos*, &c. 1578, says of herself;

“ Oh wretched *wench*, where may I first complayne?”

Again,

“ Therefore, sweet *wenche*, helpe me to rue my woe.”

The word is used without any dishonourable meaning in the Bible. “ And a *wench* told him, &c.”

And again, by Gawin Douglas, in his version of the *Æneid*:

“ — audetque viris concurrere *virgo*.”

“ This *wenche* stoutly rencounter durst with men.”

STEEVENS.

Oth.

Oth. That's he, that was Othello; here I am.

Lod. Where is that viper? bring the villain forth.

Oth. I look down ² towards his feet;—but that's
a fable:

If that thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee.

[*Othello wounds Iago.*

Lod. Wrench his sword from him.

Iago. I bleed, sir; but not kill'd.

Oth. I am not sorry neither; I'd have thee live;
For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die ³.

Lod. O thou Othello, that wast once so good,
Fall'n ⁴ in the practice of a curied slave,
What shall be said to thee?

Oth. Why, any thing:

An honourable murderer, if you will;
For nought I did in hate, but all in honour.

Lod. This wretch hath part confess'd his villainy:
Did you and he consent in Cassio's death?

Oth. Ay.

Cas. Dear general, I never gave you cause.

Oth. I do believe it, and I ask your pardon.
Will you, I pray, demand that demi-devil,
Why he hath thus ensnar'd my soul and body?

Iago. Demand me nothing: What you know,
you know:

From this time forth I never will speak word,

Lod. What? not to pray?

Gra. Torments will ope your lips.

Oth. Well, thou dost best.

² — towards his feet;—] To see if, according to the common opinion, his feet be cloven. JOHNSON.

³ For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die.] The same thought has already occurred in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

— 'Tis well thou'rt gone—

If it be well to live.

STEEVENS.

⁴ — in the practice—] In the snare, by the stratagem.

JOHNSON.

Lod.

Lod. Sir, you shall understand what hath befall'n,
Which, as I think, you know not: Here is a letter,
Found in the pocket of the slain Roderigo;
And here, another: the one of them imports
The death of Cassio to be undertook
By Roderigo.

Otb. O villain!

Cas. Most heathenish, and most gross!

Lod. Now here's another discontented paper,
Found in his pocket too; and this, it seems,
Roderigo meant to have sent this damned villain;
But that, belike, Iago; in the interim
Came in and satisfied him.

Otb. O the pernicious caitiff!—

How came you, Cassio, by that handkerchief
That was my wife's?

Cas. I found it in my chamber:

And he himself confess'd, but even now,
That there he dropp'd it, for a special purpose,
Which wrought to his desire.

Otb. O fool! fool! fool!

Cas. There is, besides, in Roderigo's letter,—
How he upbraids Iago, that he made him
Brave me upon the watch; whereon it came
That I was cast: And even but now he spake,
After long seeming dead,—Iago hurt him,
Iago set him on.

Lod. You must forsake this room, and go with us;
Your power and your command is taken off,
And Cassio rules in Cyprus. For this slave,—
If there be any cunning cruelty,
That can torment him much, and hold him long,
It shall be his: You shall close prisoner rest,

- 5 — *in the interim*] The first copy has, *in the nick*. It was, I suppose, thought upon revival, that *nick* was too familiar.

'Till that the nature of your fault be known
To the Venetian state:—Come, bring him away.

Oth. Soft you; a word or two, before you go.
I have done the state some service; and they know it;
No more of that:—I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
6 Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice: then must you speak
Of one, that lov'd not wisely, but too well;
Of one, not easily jealous, but, being wrought,
Perplex'd in the extreme; 7 of one, whose hand,
Like the base Judean, threw a pearl away

Richer

6 *Speak of me as I am;—*] The first quarto reads, *Speak of them as they are*. The present reading, which is the reading of the folio, has more force.

JOHNSON,

7 ——— *of one, whose hand,*

Like the base Indian, threw a pearl away

Richer than all his tribe;—] I have restored *Judian*, from the elder quarto, as the genuine and more eligible reading. Mr. Pope thinks this was occasioned probably by the word *tribe* just after: I have many reasons to oppose this opinion. In the first place, the most ignorant Indian, I believe, is so far the reverse of the *dung-bill-cock* in the *fable*, as to know the estimation of a pearl beyond that of a barley-corn. So that, in that respect, the thought itself would not be just. Then, if our author had designed to reflect on the *ignorance* of the Indian without any farther reproach, he would have called him *rude*, and not *base*. Again, I am persuaded, as my friend Mr. Warburton long ago observed, the phrase is not here *literal*, but *metaphorical*: and, by his *pearl*, our author very properly means *a fine woman*. But Mr. Pope objects farther to reading *Judian*, because, to make sense of this, we must pre-suppose some particular story of a Jew alluded to; which is much less obvious: but has Shakespeare never done this, but in this single instance? I am satisfied, in his *Judian*, he is alluding to Herod; who, in a fit of blind jealousy, threw away such a jewel of a wife as Mariamne was to him. What can be more parallel in circumstance, than the conduct of Herod and Othello? Nor was the story so little obvious, as Mr. Pope seems to imagine: for, in the year 1613, the lady Elizabeth Carew published a tragedy called *MARIAM, the Fair Queen of JEWRY*. I shall only add, that our author might write *Judian*, or *Judean* (if that should be alledged as any objection) instead of *Judean*, with the same licence

Richer than all his tribe; of one, whose subdu'd
eyes,
Albeit unused to the melting mood,

Drop

licence and change of accent, as, in his *Anthony and Cleopatra*, he shortens the second syllable of Euphrates in pronunciation: which was a liberty likewise taken by Spencer, of whom our author was a studious imitator. THEOBALD.

Like the base Indian, throws a pearl away] The elder quarto reads *Judean*, and this is certainly right. And by the *Judean* is meant Herod, whose usage to Mariamne is so apposite to the speaker's case, that a more proper instance could not be thought of. Besides, he was the subject of a tragedy at that time, as appears from the words in *Hamlet*, where an ill player is described,

“ — to our-herod Herod.”

The metaphorical term of a *pearl* for a fine woman, is so common as scarce to need examples. In *Titus and Cleopatra*, a lover says of his mistress,

“ There she lies a PEARL.”—

And again,

“ Why she is a *pearl*, whose price,” &c. WARBURTON.

Like the base Judean, throw a pearl away

Richer than all his tribe.] I cannot join with the learned critics in conceiving this passage to refer either to the ignorance of the natives of India, in respect of *pearls*, or the well-known story of Herod and Mariamne. The poet might just as fairly be supposed to have alluded to that of Jephtha and his daughter.

Othello, in detestation of what he had done, seems to compare himself to another person who had thrown away a *thing of value*, with some circumstances of the *meanest villainy*, which the epithet *base* seems to imply in its general sense, though it is sometimes used only for *low* or *mean*. The Indian could not properly be termed *base* in the former and most common sense, whose fault was *ignorance*, which brings its own excuse with it; and the crime of Herod surely deserves a more aggravated distinction. For though in every crime, great as well as small, there is a degree of baseness, yet the *ferius agitated amor*, such as contributed to that of Herod, seems to ask a stronger word to characterize it; as there was *spirit* at least in what he did, though the spirit of a fiend, and the epithet *base* would better suit with *petty larceny* than *royal guilt*. Besides, the simile appears to me too apposite almost to be used on the occasion, and is little more than bringing the fact into comparison with itself. Each through jealousy had destroyed an innocent wife, circumstances so parallel, as hardly to admit of that variety which we generally find in one allusion, which is meant

Drop tears as fast as the Arabian trees
Their med'cinable gum: Set you down this:

And

to illustrate another, and at the same time to appear as more than a superfluous ornament. Of a like kind of imperfection, there is an instance in Virgil, B. XI. where after Camilla and her attendants have been described as absolute Amazons;

“ At medias inter cædes exultat Amazon

“ Unum exerta latus pugnae pharetrata Camilla

“ At circum lectæ comites,” &c.

we find them, nine lines after, compared to the Amazons themselves, to Hippolyta or Penthesilea, surrounded by their companions:

“ Quales Threiciæ, cum flumina Thermodontis

“ Pulsant, et pictis bellantur Amazones armis:

“ Seu circum Hypoliten, seu cum se martia curru

“ Penthesilea refert.”

What is this but bringing a fact into comparison with itself? Neither do I believe the poet intended to make the present simile coincide with all the circumstances of Othello's situation, but merely with the single act of having *basely* (as he himself terms it) destroyed that on which he ought to have set a greater value. As the *pearl* may bear a *literal* as well as a *metaphorical* sense, I would rather choose to take it in the *literal* one, and receive Mr. Pope's rejected explanation, *pre-supposing some story of a Jew alluded to*, which might be well understood at that time, though now perhaps forgotten, or at least imperfectly remember'd. I have read in some book, as ancient as the time of Shakespeare, the following tale; though, at present, I am unable either to recollect the title of the piece, or the author's name.

A Jew, who had been prisoner for many years in distant parts, brought with him at his return to Venice a great number of pearls, which he offered on the change among the merchants, and (one alone excepted) disposed of them to his satisfaction. On this pearl, which was the largest ever shewn at market, he had fixed an immoderate price, nor could be persuaded to make the least abatement. Many of the magnificos, as well as traders, offered him considerable sums for it, but he was resolute in his first demand. At last, after repeated and unsuccessful applications to individuals, he assembled the merchants of the city, by proclamation, to meet him on the Rialto, where he once more exposed it to sale on the former terms, but to no purpose. After having expatiated, for the last time, on the singular beauty and value of it, he threw it suddenly into the sea before them all. Though this anecdote may appear inconsistent with the avarice of a Jew, yet it sufficiently agrees with the spirit so remarkable at all times in the scatter'd remains of that vindictive nation.

Shakespeare's

And say, besides,—that in Aleppo once,

Where

Shakespeare's seeming aversion to the Jews in general, and his constant desire to expose their *avarice* and *baseness* as often as he had an opportunity, may serve to strengthen my supposition; and as that nation, in his time, and since, has not been famous for crimes *daring* and *conspicuous*, but has rather contented itself to thrive by the meaner and more successful arts of *baseness*, there seems to be a particular propriety in the epithet. When Falstaff is justifying himself in *Henry IV.* he adds, "If what I have said be not true, I am a Jew, an Ebrew Jew," *i. e.* one of the most suspected characters of the time. The liver of a Jew is an ingredient in the cauldron of Macbeth; and the vigilance for gain, which is described in Shylock, may afford us reason to suppose the poet was alluding to a story like that already quoted.

Richer than all his tribe, seems to point out the Jew again in a mercantile light; and may mean, that *the pearl was richer than all the gems to be found among a set of men generally trading in them.* Neither do I recollect that Othello mentions many things, but what he might fairly have been allowed to have had knowledge of in the course of his peregrinations. Of this kind are the similes of the Euxine sea flowing into the Propontick, and the Arabian trees dropping their gums. The rest of his speeches are more free from mythological and historical allusions, than almost any to be found in Shakespeare, for he is never quite clear from them; though in the design of this character he seems to have meant it for one who had spent a greater part of his life in the field, than in the cultivation of any other knowledge than what would be of use to him in his military capacity. It should be observed, that most of the flourishes merely ornamental were added after the first edition; and this is not the only proof to be met with, that the poet in his alterations sometimes forgot his original plan.

The metaphorical term of a pearl for a fine woman, may, for aught I know, be very common; but in the instances Dr. Warburton has brought to prove it so, there are found circumstances that immediately shew a woman to have been meant. So, in *Troilus and Cressida*:

"HER BED IS INDIA, there SHE lies a pearl.

"Why SHE is a pearl whose price hath launch'd," &c.

In Othello's speech we find no such leading expression; and are therefore at liberty, I think, to take the passage in its *literal* meaning.

Either we are partial to discoveries which we make for ourselves, or the spirit of controversy is contagious; for it usually happens that each possessor of an ancient copy of our author is led to assert the superiority of all such readings as have not been

8 Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk
 Beat a Venetian, and traduc'd the state,
 I took by the throat the circumcised dog,
 And smote him—thus. [Stabs himself.]

Lod. O bloody period!

Gra. All, that is spoke, is marr'd.

Oth. I kiss'd thee, 'ere I kill'd thee;—No way
 but this, [Falling upon Desdem.]
 Killing myself, to die upon a kiss? [Dies.]

exhibited in the notes, or received into the text of the last edition. On this account, our present republication (and more especially in the celebrated plays) affords a greater number of these diversities than were ever before obruded on the public. A time however may arrive, when a complete body of variations being printed, our readers may luxuriate in an ample feast of *thats* and *whiches*; and thenceforward it may be prophecied, that all will unite in a wish that the selection had been made by an editor, rather than submitted to their own labour and sagacity.

To this note should be subjoined (as an apology for many others which may not be thought to bring conviction with them) that the true sense of a passage has frequently remained undetermined, till repeated experiments have been tried on it; when one commentator, making a proper use of the errors of another, has at last explained it to universal satisfaction. When mistakes have such effects, who would regret having been mistaken, or be sorry to prove the means of directing others, by that affinity which a wrong reading or interpretation sometimes has to the right, though he has not been so lucky as to produce at once authorities which could not be questioned, or decisions to which nothing could be added? STEEVENS.

I abide by the old text, “the base *Judian*.” Shakespear seems to allude to *Herod* in the play of *Marianne*:

“I had but one inestimable jewel—

“Yet I in suddaine choler cast it downe,

“And dasht it all to pieces.”—— FARMER.

8 *Where a malignant and a turban'd Turk*] I am told that it is immediate death for a Christian to strike a Turk in Aleppo. *Othello* is boasting of his own audacity. ANON.

9 *Killing myself, to die upon a kiss.*] So, in the Second Part of Marlow's *Tamburlaine*, 1590:

“Yet let me kisse my lord before I dye,

“And let me dye with kissing of my lord.” STEEVENS.

Caf. This did I fear, but thought he had no weapon;
For he was great of heart.

Lod. ¹ O Spartan dog,
More fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea!
Look on the tragic loading of this bed; [*To Iago.*
This is thy work: the object poisons sight;—
Let it be hid.—Gratiano, keep the house,
And seize upon the fortunes of the Moor,
For they succeed on you.—² To you, lord governor,
Remains

¹ *O Spartan dog!*] The dogs of Spartan race were reckoned among those of the most fierce and savage kind. HANMER.

² ——— *To you, lord governor,*
Remains the censure of this bellish villain;] Rymer, who had neither vigour of imagination to make a poet, nor strength of judgment to make a critic, as appears from his *Edgar*, and his *Remarks on Shakspeare*, had yet just enough to play the buffoon and caviller. His criticism on the *Poets of the last age*, with only a mixture of trite remarks, transcribed from the French commentators on *Aristotle*, are one continued heap of ignorance and insolence. Almost the only remark on Shakspeare, which, I think, deserves an answer, is upon Iago's character, which he thus censures. *To entertain the audience* (says he) *with something new and surprising, against common sense and nature, he would pass upon us a close, dissimbling, false, ungrateful rascal, instead of an open-hearted, frank, plain-dealing soldier, a character constantly worn by them for some thousands of years in the world.* This hath the appearance of sense, being founded on that rule of *Nature* and *Aristotle*, that each character should have manners convenient to the age, sex, and condition.

Ætatis cujusque notandi sunt tibi mores, &c.

says Horace. But how has our critic applied it? According to this rule it is confessed, that a soldier should be brave, generous, and a man of honour. This is to be his dramatic character. But either *one* or *more* of any order may be brought in. If only one, then the character of the order takes its denomination from the manners of that *one*. Had therefore the only soldier in this play been Iago, the rule had been transgressed, and Rymer's censure well founded. For then this *eternal villain* must have given the character of the soldiery; which had been unjust and unnatural. But if a *number* of the same order be represented, then the character of the order is taken from the manners of the ma-

Remains the censure³ of this hellish villain ;
 The time, the place, the torture,—O inforce it !
 Myself will straight aboard ; and, to the state,
 This heavy act with heavy heart relate⁴. [Exeunt.

jury ; and this, according to nature and common sense. Now in this play there are many of the order of the soldiery ; and all, excepting Iago, represented as open, generous, and brave. From *these* the soldier's character is to be taken ; and not from Iago, who is brought as an exception to it, unless it be unnatural to suppose there could be an exception ; or that a villain ever insinuated himself into that corps. And thus Shakespeare stands clear of this impertinent criticism. WARBURTON.

³ — *the censure*] i. e. the sentence. So, in Hinde's *Eliosto Libidinoso*, 1606 : “ Eliosto and Cleodora were astonished at such a hard *censure*, and went to Limbo most willingly.”

STEEVENS.

⁴ *This heavy act with heavy heart relate.*] The beauties of this play impress themselves so strongly upon the attention of the reader, that they can draw no aid from critical illustration. The fiery openness of Othello, magnanimous, artless, and credulous, boundless in his confidence, ardent in his affection, inflexible in his resolution, and obdurate in his revenge ; the cool malignity of Iago, silent in his resentment, subtle in his designs, and studious at once of his interest and his vengeance ; the soft simplicity of Desdemona, confident of merit, and conscious of innocence, her artless perseverance in her suit, and her slowness to suspect that she can be suspected, are such proofs of Shakespeare's skill in human nature, as, I suppose, it is vain to seek in any modern writer. The gradual progress which Iago makes in the Moor's conviction, and the circumstances which he employs to inflame him, are so artfully natural, that, though it will perhaps not be said of him as he says of himself, that he is *a man not easily jealous*, yet we cannot but pity him, when at last we find him *perplexed in the extreme*.

There is always danger, lest wickedness, conjoined with abilities, should steal upon esteem, though it misses of approbation ; but the character of Iago is so conducted, that he is from the first scene to the last hated and despised.

Even the inferior characters of this play would be very conspicuous in any other piece, not only for their justness, but their strength. Cassio is brave, benevolent, and honest, ruined only by his want of stubbornness to resist an insidious invitation. Roderigo's suspicious credulity, and impatient submission to the cheats which he sees practised upon him, and which by persuasion he

suffers

suffers to be repeated, exhibit a strong picture of a weak mind betrayed by unlawful desires to a false friend; and the virtue of Emilia is such as we often find worn loosely, but not cast off, easy to commit small crimes, but quickened and alarmed at atrocious villainies.

The scenes from the beginning to the end are busy, varied by happy interchanges, and regularly promoting the progression of the story; and the narrative in the end, though it tells but what is known already, yet is necessary to produce the death of Othello.

Had the scene opened in Cyprus, and the preceding incidents been occasionally related, there had been little wanting to a drama of the most exact and scrupulous regularity. JOHNSON.

T H E E N D.

ACCIDENTAL OMISSIONS, &c.

I N

VOLUME I.

Add the following account of the descendants of our great poet, as a note to the name of JOHN HALL. Vol. I. Preface, page 212.

John Hall = Susanna daughter and coheirefs
of William Shakspeare.

Elizabeth Hall = Thomas Nash, Esq.

A daughter = Sir Reginald Forster of
Warwickshire.

Franklyn Miller = Jane Forster.
of Hide Hall, Co.
Hertford.

Nicholas Miller = Mary.

Nicholas Franklyn Miller
of Hide Hall, the only
surviving branch of the
family of Miller.

This descent appears from the old writings in the possession of that family. I am indebted for it to the kindness of the Rev. Mr. Whalley, the learned editor of the Works of Ben Jonson.

Add to the List of Plays altered from Shakspeare, p. 243.

Pyramus and Thisbe, a Comic Masque, by Richard Leve-ridge, performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields. 8vo. 1716.

Add page 244.

A Cure for a Scold, a Ballad Opera, by James Worfdale, 8vo. Taken from the Taming of a Shrew. 12mo. 1738.

Add

Add to the List of Detached Pieces of Criticism on Shakspeare, &c.
page 251.

Notes and Various Readings on Shakspeare, Part the First,
&c. with a General Glossary. By Edward Capell. 4to. 1775.

Merry Wives of Windsor, page 357.

*Let the sky rain potatoes,—bail kissing comfits, and snow eringoes:
let there come a tempest of provocation.]*

On this passage add the following note.

Holinshed informs us, that in the year 1583, for the entertainment of prince Alafco, was performed “a verie statelie tragedie named *Dido*, wherein the queen’s banquet (with Æneas narration of the destruction of Troie) was livelie described in a marchpaine patterne,—*the tempest wheremin it hailed small confects, rained roserwater, and snow an artificiall kind of snow*, all strange, marvellous and abundant.” On this circumstance very probably Shakspeare was thinking, when he put the words quoted above into the mouth of Falstaff. STEEVENS.

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